

SUMMARY: The document below is a letter dated 9 August 1597 from Sir Edward Fitton (d. 4 March 1606) to Sir Robert Cecil, advising that the officers of William Stanley (1561 – 29 September 1642), 6th Earl of Derby, had told the Earl that they would refuse to serve him if he continued his ill treatment of his wife, Oxford's daughter, Elizabeth de Vere (1575-1627).

For a letter from Fitton to Cecil dated two days later, indicating that relations between Derby and his wife had improved, see CP 54/21. See also CP 54/110.

In the Cecil Papers the letter below is said to be from 'Edward Mylar'. However the late Peter R. Moore discovered that 'Mylar' is a misreading of 'ffyton'. See Anderson, Mark, *Shakespeare By Another Name*, 2010, p. 584 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=kzav7JrRRJsC&pg=PA584>

Moore's finding can be verified by comparing the signature on the letter below with Fitton's signature on CP 54/110.

For earlier letters from Fitton to Lord Burghley, dated 30 June and 3 July 1578, concerning Oxford's manor of North Rode, see TNA SP 12/124/55, f. 161 and CP 10/4.

For Sir Edward Fitton, see his will, TNA PROB 11/107/223; the *ODNB* entry; and the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/fitton-edward-1548-1606>.

See also the will of his uncle, Francis Fitton (d. 17 June 1608), TNA PROB 11/112/118.

Right Honourable, although my Lady hath had a tedious journey, yet she hath by courtesy & virtue got the love of all here.

This journey hath also deciphered my Lord's humour of frenzy, for when her Ladyship lived at court in the eye of the world, then you know and with grief I witnessed his violent course, but now here yesterday, upon letters from my Lord Cobham, the Countess of Warwick and my Lady Raleigh, he is in such a jealous frame as we have had such a storm as is wonderful; but such it appeareth, though her Ladyship lived in a cell unseen, all is one.

Mr Ireland, the lawyer, did in wisdom upon conference with me prevail so much with all my Lord's officers, seeing my Lord's madness & my Lady's patience, whose only defence was patience with tears, as they all went to my Lord when he was looked to go to the court & leave my Lady here to shift for herself, & told him that as they had served him

and his father & been the same by them, if he held this jealousy in that force as he did, themselves, seeing my Lady's carriage of herself and managing my Lord's estate with that honourable care of his house & himself that never any the like, if he would hate her and [+not?] desist from this humour, they must all hate him and follow her in those honourable courses she professeth and performeth, wishing him to desist from this jealousy and bitterness to her Ladyship, & not dishonour himself, or else they would hate him, & bring her to my Lord and you, if all Ireland had would do it. If my Lord had come, I think scarce one man would have come with him to attend his Honour(?).

You, Sir, in my simple opinion, you may do well [+to ask?] my Lord Treasurer to write to my Lord without knowing of this. Assure yourself, my Lady wanteth not friends serviceable(?) to our purposes, wise and well experienced in this humorous house.

Thus having nakedly delivered the truth for the honour I bear to your old father, who I love above any subject, keep this from him till I see you, for now all is well, but write to my Lady to comfort her, and direct your letters to me. You may always send them in the packet to the mayor of Chester, who will convey them safe to me.

I have not seen my own house yet, but should have gone yesterday if this had not been.

Thus resting at your command, I leave you to God, and will ever remain your Honour's(?) as I am bound [] to all your house(?),

Edward Fitton

Knowsley this 9th of August

Endorsed: To the right honourable Sir Robert Cecil, knight, Principal Secretary to [+the?] Queen's most excellent Majesty.