

---

SUMMARY: The historical inaccuracies in the excerpt below are typical of 19<sup>th</sup> century commentary on Oxford. The author, Thomas Wright, terms Lord Burghley the Lord Chancellor rather than Lord Treasurer, and is apparently unaware that Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, was Oxford's first cousin, not merely a 'friend'. He also erroneously states that Castle Hedingham was part of Anne Cecil's jointure, that Anne Cecil bore Oxford a son as a result of some stratagem on the part of Lord Burghley, that Elizabeth Trentham purchased Castle Hedingham when Oxford was 'about to sell' it, and that Oxford pulled down the walls which enclosed Castle Hedingham (no walls are known to have ever existed). The excerpt is taken from Wright, Thomas, *The History and Topography of the County of Essex*, 2 vols (London: George Virtue, 1836), p.516 as printed in Ward, B.M., *The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford 1550-1604* (London: John Murray, 1928) p.387.

EDWARD THE SEVENTEENTH EARL succeeded his father; he wasted and nearly ruined his noble inheritance. For having a very intimate acquaintance with Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, with cruel injustice condemned for his attachment to the Queen of Scots, he most earnestly interceded with Sir William Cecil, Lord Chancellor Burghley, to save the life of his friend, and failing in his attempt he swore he would ruin his estate at Hedingham because it was the jointure of his first wife, Anne, Lord Burghley's daughter. According to this insane resolution he not only forsook his lady's bed but sold and wasted the best part of his inheritance; he began to deface the castle, pulled down the outhouses, destroyed all the pales of the three parks, wasted the standing timber, and pulled down the walls that enclosed the castle. The father of the Lady Anne by stratagem contrived that her husband should unknowingly sleep with her, believing her to be another woman, and she bore a son to him in consequence of this meeting. The lady died in 1588. His second wife was Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Trentham, esquire, who when her husband was about to sell the castle and estate at Hedingham, contrived to purchase and preserve it for the family. He died in 1604, and was buried in a private manner at Hackney.