

SUMMARY: This offer for the tin monopoly made by Bevis Bulmer on 16 October 1599 may have been addressed to Sir Thomas Egerton since it is included among the Egerton papers. Bulmer offers the Queen £10,000 a year for the tin monopoly, in return for which he asks that she grant him both the right to purchase all the tin at a fixed price of £26 13s 4d per 1000 lbs. of tin, and the right to her custom of 16s 8d on every 1000 lbs. of tin. The large profits which could be realized from the tin monopoly can be inferred from Bulmer's offer of £10,000, more than fifteen times the value of the offer initially made in 1594 or 1595 by Oxford's competitors who at that time offered the Queen a mere 1000 marks [£666]. Oxford's undated tin mine letters and memoranda make no direct mention of Bulmer. However in a letter to Sir Robert Cecil dated 31 October 1599, Sir John Popham says that the Queen has directed that Oxford be made aware of Bulmer's offer (see CP 74/62).

An offer made to her Majesty for the farming of the tin the 16<sup>th</sup> of October, 1599.

If it may stand with her Majesty's good pleasure to grant her Highness' prerogative for the pre-emption of all the tin which shall be gotten and sold within the counties of Devon and Cornwall and the 40s upon every thousand weight due to her Majesty for coinage, with the custom of 16s 8d for every thousand weight which is transported unto any foreign parts beyond the seas, and the price to be made and continued with the tanners at the rate of £26 13s 4d the thousand weight,

It shall be undertaken to give her Majesty ten thousand pound by year if there shall be ten hundred thousand weight of tin delivered to the farmer, and if it shall happen to be above ten hundred thousand, then the farmer will allow after the rate of ten pound upon every thousand that shall be more, and if there happen to be less than ten hundred thousand, then her Majesty is to abate according to the proportion of ten pound for every thousand weight that shall be less,

Also he shall supply in loan to the tanners from coinage to coinage, upon good assurance to be answered in tin according to the price, so much money as they will require, so it exceed not ten thousand pound, and this is to be let without interest or use for the same,

And where there be sundry merchants and other buyers of tin who have disbursed divers sums of money amongst the tanners, the farmer will be contented to pay back such moneys as hath been lent, so that the merchant lender will allow after ten pound pro cento until the debt be paid unto the farmer, and also bear the hazard of the debt which he hath made, the which he must do if her Majesty deal not with the pre-emption at all,

It may be alleged this will be no certainty what yearly revenue her Majesty shall make hereby,

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For answer, her Majesty's coinage and custom is now more or less yearly according to the quantity of the tin is made and transported, and no certain yearly revenue, and her Highness having but £2 16s 1/2d upon a thousand weight, and may hereby have ten pound for every thousand weight, she may better bear the hazard of the mines than a merchant to pay for more than he receiveth.

A second offer.

If her Majesty shall be pleased to grant the premises for this coinage in farm, and that the now price of £29 a thousand shall stand to the tanners, her Majesty shall have according to the former rent, which will be £7 13s 4d upon every thousand of tin, where now she hath but 56s 8d [=£2 16s 8d] the thousand weight.

Finally, the author hereof desireth for her Majesty's better service, if it may stand with your Honour's good pleasure, that this offer may be made known unto the merchants who have gained greatly by the poor tanners, to try if they or any of them will offer better for the profit of her Majesty and the good of the tanners; if the[y] shall refuse, this offer shall be performed when her Majesty shall be pleased to command it.

Bevis Bulmer