
SUMMARY: Dedicatory sonnet to Oxford by Edmund Spenser in the first edition of *The Faerie Queen*, published in 1590. In the sonnet Spenser celebrates Oxford's lineage, and says that it is alluded to in *The Faerie Queen* 'under a shady veil', as is Oxford himself ('and eke thine own long-living memory'). Spenser also refers to the love which Oxford bears to the 'Heliconian imps', and they to him. The phrase clearly signifies writers, likely the many who had already dedicated works to Oxford, including Robert Greene, John Lyly, Thomas Watson and Anthony Munday.

To the right honourable the Earl of Oxenford, Lord High Chamberlain of England etc.

Receive, most noble Lord, in gentle gree
The unripe fruit of an unready wit,
Which by thy countenance doth crave to be
Defended from foul envy's poisonous bit,
Which so to do may thee right well befit
Sith th' antique glory of thine ancestry
Under a shady veil is therein writ,
And eke thine own long-living memory,
Succeeding them in true nobility,
And also for the love which thou doest bear
To th' Heliconian imps and they to thee,
They unto thee, and thou to them most dear;
Dear as thou art unto thyself, so love
That loves and honours thee, as doth behove.