
SUMMARY: The document below is a letter dated 8 December 1558 from John de Vere (1516-1562), 16th Earl of Oxford, to Sir William Cecil, advising the latter of the current state of the Earl's claim to the office of the Lieutenancy of Waltham Forest and requesting Cecil's assistance in preventing the office from being given by the Queen to another before William Paulet had reported to her on the Earl's claim. Queen Elizabeth had come to the throne only three weeks earlier on 17 November 1558. The other persons mentioned in the letter appear to have been William Paulet (1474/5?-1572), 1st Marquess of Winchester, Sir Gilbert Gerard (d.1593), Thomas Seckford (1515/16-1587), and Richard Weston (d.1572). The letter is written by the Earl himself in a secretary hand from his house at London Stone.

Besides my hearty commendations, these shall be to signify unto you that my suit unto the Queen's Highness for the Lieutenancy of Waltham Forest being committed unto the hearing of my Lord Marquess of Winchester (unto whom I have showed my evidence concerning the premises), I can by no means entreat to make report thereof unto her Highness until the same have established her counsellors learned in the laws of this realm with whom he will confer concerning my said suit, which thing he certifieth me by his letters (which this bringer shall show you) cannot conveniently be done before the next term. Sir, I have likewise showed my evidence to Mr Gerard, Mr Seckford and Weston, solicitor, and they all say to me I have good right to the said office, wherefore I most heartily pray you, although I be delayed until the time before limited, yet stand you so much my friend in the meantime as to move the Queen's Majesty that nothing be done or granted to my hindrance before my title shall appear unto her Highness. And this doing, God willing, I will recompense your gentleness. Fare you heartily well. From my house at London Stone this 8th of December.

Your loving friend,

Oxenford

Endorsed:

To his very loving friend, Sir William Cecil, knight

1558, 8th of December
Earl Oxenford