

SUMMARY: The document below is a letter dated 6 October 1575 written by Benedict Spinola (1519/20-1580) to Lord Burghley advising that Oxford had arrived safely at Venice from Milan, and apologizing that while Oxford was in Genoa at a time of civil discord there, Spinola's brothers and relations were away from the city and not able to provide Oxford with 'good entertainment and courtesies'. However he says that his brother, Pasquale Spinola, will shortly be in Venice, and will pay his respects to Oxford there. Spinola advises that Oxford is unprovided of money, and offers to have his friends pay Oxford the 500 scudi Oxford has requested. Spinola also asks Lord Burghley to give order to Oxford's receiver, Edward Hubbard, to pay Spinola 1000 lire by 20 or 25 October, and says that his brother Giacomo Spinola had paid 1000 lire to James Harvey at Antwerp. Presumably these transactions were related, and the 1000 lira were intended to reach Oxford in Venice via Antwerp.

For other letters written by Benedict Spinola and Pasquale Spinola concerning Oxford during his continental tour, see TNA SP 70/135, ff. 173-4; TNA SP 70/136, ff. 113-14; and TNA SP 70/137, ff. 251-2.

For Oxford's purchase of the Great Garden property from Benedict Spinola by indenture dated 15 June 1580, see TNA C 54/1080.

For the will of Benedict Spinola, which mentions his brothers Pasquale and Giacomo also mentioned in the letter below, see TNA PROB 11/62, ff. 294-5.

References indicating that Oxford was in Genoa at the time of civil strife mentioned in the letter below are found in allegations by Charles Arundel regarding Oxford's 'lies':

Not much unlike to the lie that went before, I have heard him often tell, and as often heard it affirmed by his own knaves when he call them for witness, that at his being in Italy there fell discord and dissension in the city of Genoa between two families, whereupon it grew to wars, and great aid and assistance given to either party. And that for the fame that ran through Italy of his service done in the Low Countries under the Duke of Alva, he was chosen and made general of thirty thousand that the Pope sent to the aid of one party, and that in this action he showed so great discretion and government as by his wisdom the matters were compounded and an accord made, being more for his glory than if he had fought the battle. This lie is very rife with him, and in it he glories greatly; diversly hath he told it, and when he enters into it he can hardly out, which hath made such sport as often have I been driven to rise from his table laughing. So hath my Lord Charles Howard and the rest whom I named before, and for the proof of this I take them all as witnesses.

His third lie, which hath some affinity with the other two, is of certain excellent orations he made, as namely to the state of Venice, at Padua, at Bologna and divers other places in Italy, and one, which pleased himself above the rest, to his army when he marched towards Genoa, which, when he had pronounced it, he left nothing to reply, but everyone to wonder at his judgment, being reputed for his eloquence another Cicero and for his

conduct a Caesar, and for his senseless lies, as I will avow, both a fool and a knave. But when this is told, up starts a knave with three long legs and tells him his Honour said true. Thus much for his lies, the least of which will gain a whetstone.

See TNA SP 12/151/45, ff. 100-2.

The allegation concerning Oxford's 'lies' concerning his military exploits at Genoa is repeated by Arundel more briefly in TNA SP 12/151/46, ff. 103-4:

3 That he was in the way to Genoa with 3,000 horses, a 10,000 footmen, to take it for the King of Spain by Don John's direction when the Cardinal Morone took up the matter.

In the same document, there is a further allegation by Arundel concerning another of Oxford's 'lies' concerning Genoa:

8 That a merchant in Genoa hath a mantel of a chimney of more price than all the treasure of the Tower.

Most illustrious & excellent Sir etc., at this time I have received letters from Venice, and I send to your Excellency the chapter written to me by my friends touching the most illustrious Earl, rejoicing with your Excellency at the good fortune of his safe return from Milan. But I am very sorry that when he was at Genoa in the time of those discords he was not able to receive that good entertainment and courtesies that my brothers & relations would have done to him, all of whom were away from Genoa, & thus I hope that the said most illustrious Earl & your Excellency will hold me excused, accepting my good intentions, & since one of my brothers named Pasquale must be in Venice shortly, he will supply [+that lack] in doing his duty in all respects(?) towards the said Earl, who now finds himself unprovided of money, for the which I will take care to learn if it be your Excellency's will that I should give order to my brother to pay him a greater sum, & I will be ready to do all that pleasure to your illustrious Lordship to see that(?) my friends pay him the 500 scudi which he requested for his needs, and I believe that your Excellency will be pleased with that, & if you wish to write to the Earl, you can send me the letters by next Saturday [+when] the ordinary post has to leave.

Most illustrious sir, I will have occasion by the 20 or 25 of this month of October to pay some portion(?) of the money, & I would beseech your Excellency to be pleased to give order directed(?) to the Earl's receiver that he not fail to pay me the thousand lira in any case by the said time [=date] of the 25 of this month in order that I may serve my needs with it, in which your Excellency will do me great favour. In Antwerp my brother, Giacomo Spinola, has paid the thousand lira to Mr James Harvey, as your Excellency will see in due time by the acquittances.

From Genoa I have had good news which I send to your Excellency, knowing that through your good humane grace you will rejoice at it.

Concerning(?) the affairs of Zeeland & Holland, which it seems should go in favour of Spain/the Spanish, I refer myself to the distinguished advices which your Excellency should have.

I shall not trouble you further, praying you to keep me in your continual good grace as your most affectionate good servant, & humbly recommended to their most illustrious Ladyships, your consort and your daughter, praying the Lord God may grant to all long health and content. From London the 6 of October 1575.

Your most illustrious Lordship's most obliged servant,

Benedict Spinola

Endorsed: (1) To the most illustrious & excellent Lord High Treasurer of England etc., ever my most honourable lord and master; (2) Mr Spinola to my Lord.

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Ill{ustrissi}mo & ecc{ellentissi}mo sig{no}re & cij

1 In questo ponto ho riceputo littere da vinetia e mando a v{ostra} ecc{ellenz}a

2 lo capitolo scrittomi dalli mei amici tocante lo Ill{ustrissi}mo s{ign}or Conte

3 Ralegrandomi co' v{ostra} ecc{ellenz}a del buono Stato di esso ritornato saluo

4 da milano Ma molto mi dispiace che quando fu a Genoa in tempo

5 de quelle discordie no' li habbi potuto riceuere q{ue}llo bono trattenim{en}to

6 e Carezze che li hariano fatto li mei fratelli & parenti, liquali

7 tutti si trouauano fuori di genoa, & perCio spero che Il detto/

8 Ill{ustrissi}mo s{ign}or Conti & v{ostra} ecc{ellenza}a mi harano per scusato
Acettando Il

9 buono animo mio, & douendo vnodi mei fratelli nominato pasquale

10 trouarsi di breue a vinetia suplira in fare Il debito suo in tutto

11 quello acad[r]a' verso detto s{ign}or Conti Ilquale si troua hora

12 sprouedutodi denari per Il che haroCaro sapere se la volonta
 13 di v{ostra} ecc{ellenza}a sia che Io debbi dare ordine al mio fratello de pagarli
 14 maggior so{m}ma &saro prompto a fare tutto q{ue}llo piacera a v{ostra}
 Ill{ustrissi}ma
 15 s{igno}ria quale vedera come li mei amici li doueano pagare [scudi] 500 che
 16 Li Richiese per li suoi bisogni e Credo che v{ostra} ecc{ellenz}a ne sara Contento
 17 & se vuole scriuere al s{ign}or Conte puotra mandarmi le litere per
 18 sabato prossimo douendo partire la posta ordinaria/ Ill{ustrissi}mo s{ign}or
 19 Io mi trouero per li 20 /o/ 25 di questo mese di ottobre occasione
 20 dipagare qualche partita didenari & vorrei suplicare v{ostra} ecc{ellenz}a sia
 21 Contenta di dare or{di}ne con istanza al receuitore del s{ign}orConte, che
 22 no' manchi dipagarmi le lire Mille ad ogni modo p{er} detto tempo de 25
 23 diquesto mese per puotermine seruire amei bisogni, nel che v{ostra} ecc{ellenz}a

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1 Mi fara molto fauore/ In Anuersa Il mio fr{ate}llo Giacobbo Spinola
 2 ha pagato le lire Mille a m{esse}r Giemes haruy come v{ostra} ecc{ellenz}a vedera
 asuo
 3 luogo per le quitanze Dagenoa ho hauuto le buone noue che mando
 4 a v{ostra} ecc{ellenz}a sapendo che per sua buona humana gratia la sene Ralegrara
 5 delle cose di Zelanda & olanda quale pare vadino a fauore despagno[a/li]
 6 mine raporto alli distinti Auisi che v{ostra} ecc{ellenz}a deue hauere/
 7 no' la fastidiro piu oltra pregandola mi conserui in la continua sua
 8 buona gratia Come suo Aff{ezionatissi}mo buono ser{uito}re, & humilm{en}te
 raccomandato

9 Alle Ill{ustrissi}me sig{no}re sua consorte e figliola, pregando Il s{ign}or dio

10 conceda a tutti longa salute e Contento, Da Londra li 6 de ottobre

11 1575/

D{i} v{ostra} Ill{ustrissi}ma sig{nor}ria

Obligatiss{im}o ser{uito}re

Ben{edet}to Spinola

Endorsed: (1) All' Il{ustrissi}mo & ecc{ellentissi}mo sig{no}re Il s{ign}or Gram
Tesaur{ie}ro d'ing{lite}rra & cij s{igno}r e p{ad}rone mio sempre oss{eruandissi}mo;
(2) Mr Spinola to my Lord.