

SUMMARY: Oxford invested heavily in Martin Frobisher's voyages to the Canadian Arctic, known at the time as Meta Incognita. The document below is a copy of Oxford's letter dated 21 May 1578 offering to invest £1000 in Frobisher's third voyage, to be secured by a bond due on 29 September 1578. A useful source of information on the three Frobisher voyages is:

*Inuit and Englishmen; The Nunavut Voyages of Martin Frobisher* at [http://www.museevirtuel-virtualmuseum.ca/Search.do?ex=on&R=VE\\_403&lang=en](http://www.museevirtuel-virtualmuseum.ca/Search.do?ex=on&R=VE_403&lang=en).

For a letter from Michael Lok to Sir Francis Walsingham dated 14 January 1579 stating that Oxford owed £450 for his investment in the third voyage, see TNA SP 12/129/12, f. 26.

On the third voyage, a mountain on Ellesmere Island was named after the Earl of Oxford:

*The second of August the Gabriel arrived, who came from the Rear Admiral, and being distressed sore with ice, put into harbour near unto Mount Oxford. . . . And from that time, being about the seven and twentieth of July, could neither hear nor have sight of any of the fleet until the third of August when they descried a sail near to Mount Oxford, with whom, when they had spoken, they could understand no news of any of the fleet at all.*

See Collinson, pp. 258-9.

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To my very loving friends William Pelham & Thomas Randolph, esquires, Mr Young, Mr Lok, Mr Hogan, Mr Field, & others the Commissioners for the voyage to Meta incognita.

After my very hearty commendations, understanding of the wise proceeding & orderly dealing for the continuing of the voyage for the discovery of Cathay by the northwest which this bearer, my friend Mr Frobisher, hath already very honourably attempted, and is now eftsoons to be employed for the better achieving thereof, and the rather induced as well for the great liking her Majesty hath to have the same passage discovered as also for the special good favour I bear to Mr Frobisher, to offer unto you to be an adventurer therein for the sum of one thousand pounds or more if you like to admit thereof, which sum or sums, upon your certificate of admittance, I will enter into bond shall be paid for that use unto you upon Michaelmas day next coming. Requesting your answers therein, I bid you heartily farewell. From the court, the 21 of May, 1578.

Your loving friend,  
Edward Oxenford