

SUMMARY: The document below is an undated petition from Isabel Frobisher, wife of Martin Frobisher (1535?-1594), to Sir Francis Walsingham (c.1532-1590), claiming that Frobisher has spent all that her first husband had left her and her children, and requesting financial relief.

For the circumstances surrounding Isabel's Frobisher's abandonment by Martin Frobisher because of her revelation to the Queen of certain 'conspiracies' in which Frobisher was involved, including a plan by Oxford to help his cousin, Thomas Howard (1538-1572), 4th Duke of Norfolk, escape from England, see TNA SP 12/95/92, ff. 202-3.

To the right honourable Sir Francis Walsingham, knight, chief Secretary unto the Queen's most excellent Majesty

In her most lamentable manner showeth unto your Honour your humble oratrix, Isabel Frobisher, the most miserable poor woman in the world, that whereas your Honour's said oratrix sometimes was the wife of one Thomas Riggat [=Rickard?] of Snathe [=Snaith] in the county of York, a very wealthy man, who left your oratrix well to live & in very good state, and good portions unto all his children, afterwards she took to husband Mr Captain Frobisher (whom God forgive), who hath not only spent that which her said husband left her, but the portions also of her poor children, & hath put them all to the wide world to shift, a most lamentable case, and now to increase her misery, she having naught to relieve herself, her children's children of her said first husband are sent unto her, having a poor room within another at Hampstead near unto London, for her to keep, at which place she & they are for want of food ready to starve, to your poor oratrix' intolerable grief and sorrow, your oratrix' humble petition is that whereas one Mr Kempe, gentleman, dwelling in the wool-staple at Westminster, gave his promise to pay her £4 for the said Mr Frobisher, which he will not now pay, that either he may pay the same or that it would please your Honour to help her with some relief until Mr Frobisher return, to keep them from famishing. And she, according to her bounden duty, shall daily pray to God for your Honour.

Endorsed: Isabel Frobisher