

SUMMARY: The document below is a letter written about 1 August 1574 mentioning Oxford's arrival at Dover. On 1 July 1574 Oxford had left England without licence, reportedly travelling to Calais in the company of Lord Edward Seymour (1548-1574), and from thence to Flanders, and 'carrying a great sum of money with him'. The Queen recalled him, and Oxford was back in England by 28 July. By 21 August Oxford had won back the Queen's favour because of his loyalty to her when approached by her exiled rebel subjects in Flanders, and had secured from her a promise to grant him licence to travel.

The letter below is said to be a copy, and appears on the same page as a letter in similar handwriting. Notes in a later hand concerning the second letter read 'Earl Morton, Regent of Scotland, 22 May 1574, Cal. Scotland'. The reference is to James Douglas (d.1516-1581), 4th Earl of Morton, Regent and Chancellor of Scotland. From the online edition of *The Dictionary of National Biography*:

Although in August 1565 Morton helped Mary to suppress the chaseabout raid, the earl of Moray's ill-advised attempt at rebellion, a few months later he became deeply implicated in the conspiracy against David Riccio, the queen's unpopular Italian secretary. . . . [T]he upshot for Morton was the loss of his chancellorship and another period of exile in England. This lasted until December 1566 when, being granted a remission for his complicity in the Riccio affair, he arrived back in Edinburgh. . . . Finally on 24 November 1572 at a convention of the Scottish estates in Edinburgh Morton was elected regent Although on 12 January 1573 Morton placated one of his most powerful antagonists, Archibald Campbell, fifth earl of Argyll, by appointing him chancellor, he still faced internal opposition. . . . With the considerable assistance of the English ambassador, Henry Killigrew, in February 1573 the agreement known as the pacification of Perth was reached with the Gordons and Hamiltons. . . . For nearly five years thereafter, with an administration largely dominated by his relatives and trusted supporters, Morton ruled Scotland on James VI's behalf.

The letter below mentioning Oxford's arrival at Dover thus seems to have been written to Morton by a correspondent in England.

My very good Lord, understanding of this messenger's repair unto you, though there is no great matter to advertise your Lordship of, yet I thought I would not turn him away without some few lines to witness that your Lordship is not forgotten amongst your friends here absent;

The chiefest news presently here is that the Earl of Oxford lately arrived at Dover, whose return hath very much qualified her Majesty's displeasure conceived against him. Yet I perceive her Majesty doth not mean to wrap up his contempt without using some kind of reprehension, that he may not think but that his fault is not only to be reproved but were

also to be corrected had he not cured the wound of his undutiful departure contrary to her Majesty's inhibition through his dutiful return upon her Majesty's revocation.

The Duke of Polonia about the end of this month will be at Lyons, as Queen Mother adviseth her ambassador. And so etc.