

SUMMARY: The document below is a copy in Lady Anne Bacon's hand of a letter sent by her to Robert Devereux (1565-1601), 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Essex, on 4 December 1596.

For Lady Bacon's earlier letter sent to Essex on 1 December 1596 admonishing him for having compromised the reputation of her great-niece, Oxford's daughter, Elizabeth Vere (1575-1627), who had married William Stanley (1561-1642), 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Derby, at Greenwich Palace on 26 January 1595, see Lambeth MS 660 ff. 149-50.

For Essex' reply to Lady Bacon's letter of 1 December 1596 in which he partly refutes her allegation, see Lambeth MS 660, f. 281.

For an original spelling transcript of the letter below, see Allen, Gemma, ed., *The Letters of Lady Anne Bacon*, Camden Fifth Series, Vol. 44, (Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 267-8.

My singular good Lord, in your incessant & careful affairs to vouchsafe me, as one almost forgotten in the world, a letter even with your own hand is favour more than my poor thanks or ill parts can reach unto. God doth divers ways make manifest his love towards you, whereof his church here & our state do flow the sweet benefit to the praise of his name & your own honourable fame & the rejoicing in a good conscience. Yet such excellent persons never want *emulatores malignos cu{m} fastu* [=rivals malignant with pride]. But yet for all that, true godly virtue in the Christian children of God doth with the palm rise & increase still, though men strive to suppress & oppress it, & they still shall flourish in the court of the God of glorious majesty, & their seed shall be blessed. *Ab imis precordijs* [=from the deepest heart] as I am most bound, I beseech the living Lord to direct continually with his holy spirit your Lordship's heart to the love of him & of his eternal truth, & sanctify you through it ever to live in his reverent fear & to approve that which is pleasing in his sight, &, my good Lord, walk circumspectly, for the days through sin are evil, *ut ait apostulus* [=as the apostle says]. In peace God grant you safety from all crafty treacheries & subtle snare whatsoever, & in battle by sea or by land his mighty arm be your invincible puissance, & make you victorious, & send his holy angel to pitch round about you & your armies to watch over you for your safeguard, & with fullness of good days & years in this life preserve you to his heavenly kingdom for ever [Hebrew word = Amen]. The God of peace give you peace always by all means, my very singular good Lord.

A.B.

[Postscript to Anthony Bacon]

For dispatch I wrote late & ill. I would not send to you by his [=Essex's] man [interlined: thought it not best so]. Though you saw my Lord's letter, I send it enclosed. Send it back again.

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I send by this bearer, one Powle Roewly/newly(?) come to me. I think he would serve well in your buttry. He hath, he says, used that service. He seems yet willing & honest, plain, readeth but poorly. Larg(?) will be lavish to pickthank & crafty filching. Beside, he hath an old father-in-law. You will be worse thought of for calling to idleness where here(?) your own to make bate. It is true.

Three churches were here robbed in one night. Use not so much plate abroad to tempt the devil, alway as ready. Warn your brother, too, I pray you, to take heed in time for (illegible) suddenly. Vale. God bless you both(?) with his grace & love in Christ.

Endorsed: Le Madame Ann Bacon au Comte d' Essex et en hate sero a 'Monsieur le 4me de decembre 1596 [=From Mistress Anne Bacon to the Earl of Essex, sent in haste, late at night, to the Master on the 4<sup>th</sup> of December 1596]