

SUMMARY: The document below is a 1592 memorandum, partly in Oxford's hand, concerning his suit to the Queen for licence to import oils, fruits and wools. In it Oxford states that he will give the Queen £450 more per annum in customs fees than she receives from the current licencee/s. The suit was not granted. For a copy addressed directly to the Queen, see BL Lansdowne 71/10, f. 18.

For a letter dated 14 July 1592 from Lord Burghley to Alderman Henry Billingsley requesting information as to the customs fees charged for oils, wools and fruits in recent years, see BL Lansdowne 71/12, ff. 22-3.

For the 'certificate for the custom of oils, wools & fruits brought into the Port of London in 3 years ending 9 May 1592' provided by Alderman Billingsley in response to Lord Burghley's letter, see BL Lansdowne 71/11, ff. 19-21, and *Bibliotheca Manuscripta Lansdowniana*, Vol. I, p. 274 at:

https://archive.org/stream/BibliothecaManuscriptaLansdownianaA/Bibliotheca_manuscripta_Lansdowniana_A#page/n285/mode/2up.

Oxford states that his suit is pursuant to the Queen's promise to bestow some benefit on him in recompense for her refusal to allow him to pursue his suit for offices and rights claimed in the Forest of Essex, and for her rejection of a suit she had encouraged him to undertake involving the lands of Thomas Skinner (d.1596). For a discussion of Oxford's claim to offices and rights in the Forest of Essex, see TNA SP 14/2/63, f. 160. These rights were restored to Oxford by James I on 18 July 1603, shortly after his accession. For the fraud perpetrated against Oxford by Thomas Skinner, see *inter alia*, BL Lansdowne 68/11, ff. 22-3, 28, and the will of Thomas Skinner, TNA PROB 11/89/542.

In a later letter to Lord Burghley dated 25 October 1593, Oxford again mentions his suit concerning offices and rights claimed in the Forest of Essex, and his suit for licence to import oils, fruits and wool. See BL Harley 6996/22, ff. 42-3:

[T]hese are most earnestly to desire a continuance of your Lordship's favour and furtherance in my suit which I made at Greenwich to her Majesty, at her last being there, about three commodities, to wit, the oils, wools and fruits, in giving therefor as then my proffer was. I do the rather now renew the same for that I do not hear as yet they are disposed otherwise, and that the time is fittest, as well as for her Majesty's commodity as his that shall take it, and considering (if her Majesty will have a just consideration of the premises) I am to challenge and expect somewhat.

For the Queen's 1575 grant to Leicester of a 10-year monopoly to import oils and fruits in the name of Acerbo Velutelli, see:

'Cecil Papers: December 1601, 26-31', in *Calendar of the Cecil Papers in Hatfield House: Volume 11, 1601*, ed. R A Roberts (London, 1906), pp. 531-588. *British History*

Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-cecil-papers/vol11/pp531-588> [accessed 30 April 2017].

3. In anno 1575, her Majesty granted a licence to the Earl of Leicester, in the name of Acerbo Velutelli and others, prohibiting the bringing in of currants, wines and oils without the licence of the patentees, before which time the trade was free and no imposition or tax charged thereon.

There were numerous complaints against Velutelli in connection with his monopoly. See Lemon, Robert, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the Reign of Elizabeth, 1581-1590*, (London: Longman, Green, 1865), pp. 76, 148, 234, 258, 295, 311, 669.

For Velutelli, see also TNA E 101/129/13a (Papers relating to the affairs of Acerbo Velutelli, merchant of Lucca).

[f. 25r]

[*The section which follows is in a hand different from Oxford's usual italic hand.*]

My desire is to have licence from her Majesty for the bringing into the realm of these commodities following, and I will give her Majesty a yearly increase, as appeareth, over and above her usual custom, viz. for:

Oils	£200 per annum
Fruits	£ 50
Wools	£200, notwithstanding there are five years in D{octor}(?) Ritor's(?) grant yet to come.

So that I do give her a yearly increase of £450.

[*The section which follows is in Oxford's usual italic hand.*]

The reasons of this suit

Whereas after long suit for the title which I have to the Forest it was committed to the arbitrament of the Lord Chancellor, who having heard the cause was ready to have made his report to her Majesty, it pleased her I should let fall the suit, determining to dispose thereof at her pleasure. In the mean season she promised to do something for me in some other matter, whereupon I preferred to her Majesty the suit I had against Skinner, whereto she did grant, and to that purpose I had divers books drawn, but her Majesty did reject them all, putting me over to my Lord Treasurer, who, though he did so much as in him lay in my favour, yet it succeeded not, whereby I lost all my charge, and am to pay

arrearages to her Majesty for the time that Skinner's land was in mine hands, so that the consideration which her Majesty promised remains yet to be performed.

There is no suit which I may less charge her Majesty than in this where I increase her Majesty's sum £450.

Thus I most humbly beseech her Majesty to have a favourable consideration also of my attendance here upon her Majesty, which I am not able to continue if by this means my charges both for the time past in following that matter of Skinner's which succeeded contrary to mine expectation and other crosses of fortune be not helped, sith I have been so unhappy that her Majesty likes not that I should seek the Forest, which by all counsel in law that I can get I am made to believe I have good interest unto, and I am put by the same by her pleasure, and not by course of law, whereupon I hope her Majesty will think this suit [f. 25v] as fit for me as any other, and also for these considerations bestow the same on me, whereby I may ease mine debts and charges I have been at as is afore said.

Endorsed: (1) My suit unto her Majesty. (2) [*In another hand?*: For bringing into the realm fruits, oil, wool.] (3) Suits.