
SUMMARY: The document below is a letter dating from April 1603 from Oxford to Sir Robert Cecil, concerning the death of Queen Elizabeth and the arrival in London of King James.

Sir Robert Cecil, I have always found myself beholding to you for many kindnesses and courtesies, wherefore I am bold at this present, which giveth occasion of many considerations, to desire you as my very good friend and kind brother-in-law to impart to me what course is devised by you of the Council & the rest of the Lords concerning our duties to the King's Majesty, whether you do expect any messenger before his coming to let us understand his pleasure, or else his personal arrival to be presently or very shortly, and if it be so, what order is resolved on amongst you either for the attending or meeting of his Majesty, for by reason of mine infirmity I cannot come among you so often as I wish, and by reason my house is not so near that at every occasion I can be present as were fit, either I do not hear at all from you or at least write(?) the latest, as this other day it happened to me, receiving a letter at nine of the clock not to fail at eight of the same morning to be at Whitehall, which being impossible, yet I hasted so much as I came to follow you into Ludgate, though through press of people and horses I could not reach your company as I desired, but followed as I might.

I cannot but find a great grief in myself to remember the mistress which we have lost, under whom both you and myself from our greenest years have been in a manner brought up, and although it hath pleased God after an earthly kingdom to take her up into a more permanent and heavenly state, wherein I do not doubt but she is crowned with glory, and to give us a prince wise, learned and enriched with all virtues, yet the long time which we spent in her service we cannot look for so much left of our days as to bestow upon another, neither the long acquaintance and kind familiarities wherewith she did use us we are not ever to expect from another prince, as denied by the infirmity of age and common course of reason. In this common shipwreck mine is above all the rest, who least regarded though often comforted of all her followers she hath left to try my fortune among the alterations of time and chance, either without sail whereby to take the advantage of any prosperous gale or with anchor to ride till the storm be overpast. There is nothing therefore left to my comfort but the excellent virtues and deep wisdom wherewith God hath endued our new master and sovereign Lord, who doth not come amongst us as a stranger but as a natural prince, succeeding by right of blood and inheritance, not as a conqueror but as the true shepherd of Christ's flock to cherish and comfort them.

Wherefore I most earnestly desire you of this favour, as I have written before, that I may be informed from you concerning those points. And thus recommending myself unto you, I take my leave.

Your assured friend and unfortunate brother-in-law,

E. Oxenford

Endorsed: To the right honourable my very good brother-in-law, Sir Robert Cecil,
Principal Secretary

Endorsed: 25.27(?) April 1603, Earl of Oxford to my Master