

SUMMARY: Dedicatory epistle to Oxford in the first edition of Angel Day's *The English Secretary, wherein is contained a perfect method for the inditing of all manner of epistles and familiar letters*, published in 1586. Day's work was the first letter-writing manual written in English. It was printed by Robert Waldegrave, soon to become the printer of the Marprelate tracts.

To the right honourable Lord, Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxenford, Viscount Bulbeck, Lord Sandford and of Badlesmere, and Lord Great Chamberlain of England, all honour and happiness correspondent to his most noble desires, and in the commutation of this earthly being, endless joys and an everlasting habitation

Zeuxis, endeavouring to paint excellently, made grapes in show so natural that, presenting them to view, men were deceived with their shapes and the birds with their colours.

When Apelles drew Venus (though the show of beauty seemed wonderful), he daunted not in his workmanship because he knew his cunning excellent.

If in penning I were as skilful as the least of these in painting, I should neither faint to present a discourse to Alexander, nor to tell a tale to a philosopher.

My honourable Lord, the exceeding bounty wherewith your good Lordship hath ever wanted to entertain the deserts of all men, and very apparance of Nobility herself well known to have reposed her delights in the worthiness of your stately mind, warranteth me almost that I need not blush to recommend unto your courteous view the first-fruits of these my foremost labours, and to honour this present discourse with the memory of your everlasting worthiness. And albeit by the learned view and insight of your Lordship, whose infancy from the beginning was ever sacred to the Muses, the whole course hereof may be found nothing such as in the lowest part of the same may appear in any sort answerable to so great and forward excellence, and that the continuance of this slender substance is in no point matchable to many things of greater science passing under your honourable countenance, yet may your Lordship please to consider that presents (not out of the rich store and plenty alone of the wealthiest) are always received as testimonies of regard in the reputation of the mightiest, but sometimes trifles also ensuing of less ability (not honoured or reputed of by their value, but by the generous estate and surpassing bounty of the receiver) are accounted of most especially.

For the shroud of my defence, that have so much dared upon presumption of your accustomed favour to infix your honoured name in the forefront of this my travail, I can propose no one in example unto your Lordship more worthy than yourself, who not unacquainted with the special parts and eternized memory of them all, have long since endeavoured yourself to become a noble pattern of them all, the exemplifying of whose

praise cannot by any speeches of mine be herein more greatly put forwards than the same long since hath been published by the renown of your own proper virtues.

My humble request unto your Lordship is that your gentle acceptance hereof may be an encouragement to my after-endeavours, for whose sake I know the same shall be of many regarded, and the insufficiency thereof the better protected. In which, besides the continual manifestation of your own worthiness, your Lordship shall bind me to honour you in all duty and humbleness, praying the eternal Creator and guide of all your stately enterprises to have the same with your Lordship in his favourable protection.

Your Lordship's most devoted and loyally affected,
Angel Day