

SUMMARY: The document below is a letter written by Oxford on 31 October 1572, expressing his relief that Lord Burghley has now conceived a favourable opinion of him, and attributing much of Lord Burghley's recent displeasure to 'sinister reports' made to him by 'backfriends' of Oxford's.

The letter is written in Oxford's usual italic hand, but is endorsed in what appears to be a modified secretary hand. Given the nature of the letter, it appears likely that Oxford himself wrote the endorsement, and if so, this endorsement is one of the few extant examples of Oxford's use of a modified secretary hand.

My Lord, your last letters, which be the first I have received of your Lordship's good opinion conceived towards me (which God grant so long to continue as I would be both desirous and diligent to seek the same), have not a little, after so many storms passed of your heavy grace towards me, lightened and disbur[de]ned my careful mind. And sith I have been so little beholding to sinister reports, I hope now, with your Lordship's indifferent judgement, to be more plausible unto you than heretofore, through my careful deeds to please you which, hardly, either through my youth, or rather misfortune, hitherto I have not done.

But yet, lest those (I cannot tell how to term them but as backfriends unto me) shall take place again to undo your Lordship's beginnings of well conceiving of me, I shall most earnestly desire your Lordship to forbear to believe too fast lest I, growing so slowly into your good opinion, may be undeservedly of my part rooted out of your favour, the which thing to always obtain, if your Lordship do but equally consider of me, may see by all the means possible in me I do aspire, though perhaps, by reason of my youth, your graver and severer years will not judge the same.

Thus therefore, hoping the best in your Lordship and fearing the worst in myself, I take my leave lest my letters may become loathsome and tedious unto you, to whom I wish to be most grateful.

Written this 31<sup>st</sup> of October by your loving son-in-law from Wivenhoe,

Edward Oxford

This bearer hath some need of your Lordship's favour, which when he shall speak with your Lordship, I pray you for my sake he may find you the more his furtherer and helper in his cause.

Addressed: (1) To the right honourable my singular good Lord, the Lord Treasurer, give these at court.

Endorsed: 31 October 1572. [*In Lord Burghley's hand: Earl of Oxford*] [*In another later hand: Upon a reconciliation of his father-in-law towards him.*]