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SUMMARY: The document below is a letter dated 24 September 1575 written by Oxford to Lord Burghley from Venice, thanking him for the news of his wife's safe delivery.

Oxford says he had waited a great length of time for a letter from Lord Burghley, and that he himself had sent packets three times to England, but these had all been returned to him because of plague in the passes. For a letter of the same date from Benedict Spinola to Lord Burghley concerning the stoppage of mail for six weeks because of plague in the passes, see TNA SP 70/135, ff. 173-4.

Oxford says further that he has been very ill with a fever which has prevented him from travelling, and requests that the Queen extend his licence until the end of the following summer so that he can see more of Germany.

He also requests that Lord Burghley regain for him certain leases made to his servant, Luke Atslowe. Atslowe has been reconciled to the Catholic church and has therefore likely forfeited the leases to the Crown, and Oxford has been advised by Francis Russell (1526/7-1585), 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Bedford, that his tenants have been harshly dealt with. For Luke Atslowe see TNA C 2/Eliz/A2/56 and TNA C 2/Eliz/A6/36.

Luke Atslowe's brother, the physician Edward Atslowe (d.1594), had married Oxford's first cousin, Frances Wingfield, the daughter of Roger Wingfield, esquire, of Great Dunham, Norfolk, and Elizabeth Golding, sister of Oxford's mother, Margery Golding (d.1568). See the Wingfield pedigree at:

<http://www.letheringhamlodge.com/wingfield-of-wingfield-and-letheringham/>

My good Lord, having looked for your Lordship's letters a great while, at length when I grew to despair of them I received two from your Lordship. Three packets which at sundry times I had sent this summer towards England returned back again by reason the plague being in the passages, none were suffered to pass, but as they came were returned back, which I came not to the knowledge of till my return now to Venice, where I have been grieved with a fever. Yet with the help of God now I have recovered the same and am past the danger thereof, though brought very weak thereby and hindered from a great deal of travel, which grieves me most, fearing my time not sufficient for my desire, for although I have seen so much as sufficeth me, yet would I have time to profit thereby.

Your Lordship seems desirous to know how I like Italy, what is mine intention in travel, and when I mean to return. For my liking of Italy, my Lord, I am glad I have seen it, and I care not ever to see it any more unless it be to serve my prince or country. For mine intention to travel, I am desirous to see more of Germany, wherefore I shall desire your Lordship, with my Lord of Leicester, to procure me the next summer to continue my licence, at the end of which I mean undoubtedly to return. I thought to have seen Spain, but by Italy I guess the worse.

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I have sent one of my servants into England with some new disposition of my things there, wherefore I will not trouble your Lordship in these letters with the same.

If this sickness had not happened unto me, which hath taken away this chiefest time of travel at this present I would not have written for further leave, but to supply the which I doubt not her Majesty will not deny me so small a favour.

By reason of my great charges of travel and sickness I have taken up of Mr Baptisto Nigrone 500 crowns, which I shall desire your Lordship to see there repaid, hoping by this time my money which is made of the sale of my land is all come in.

Likewise I shall desire your Lordship that whereas I had one Luke Atslowe that served, who now is become a lewd subject to her Majesty and an evil member to his country, which had certain leases of me, I do think according to law he leaseth them all to the Queen sith he is become one of the Romish church, and there hath performed all such ceremonies as might reconcile himself to that church, having used lewd speches against the Queen's Majesty's supremacy, legitimation, government and particular life, and is here, as it were, a practiser upon our nation. Then this is my desire, that your Lordship, if it be so as I do take it, would procure those leases into my hands again, whereas I have understood by my Lord of Bedford they have hardly dealt with my tenants.

Thus thanking your Lordship for your good news of my wife's delivery, I recommend myself unto your favour, and although I write for a few months more, yet though I have them, so it may fall out I will shorten them myself.

Written this 24th of September by your Lordship's to command,

Edward Oxeford

Endorsed: To the right honourable his singular good Lord, the Lord Treasurer of England

Endorsed: (in Lord Burghley's hand) 24 September 1575, Earl of Oxford to me