

SUMMARY: In the intervening two days between this letter of Oxford's of 25 March 1595 and his earlier letter of 23 March 1595, Lord Burghley appears to have sent Oxford a second letter asking questions about points of comparison between Oxford's offer of £10,000 for the tin monopoly, and Lord Buckhurst's. Some of these questions had already been answered by Oxford in his letter of 23 March 1595, a fact which he draws to Lord Burghley's attention while at the same time answering them yet again in a separate document which appears not to have survived. Another question, dealing with the true value of tin production, he prefers to answer in person, likely because it involved divulging his sources. Lord Buckhurst appears to have raised the argument that since he was the first to make an offer of £10,000 to the Queen, he should prevail. Oxford meets this argument by stating ironically that, although it is true that Lord Buckhurst made the first offer, it was for the purpose of cheating the Queen, hardly a point which should grant him precedence. Moreover, as Oxford indicates, it was he who first urged the Queen to look carefully into the true value of tin production before granting any suit for the tin monopoly. There is some suggestion in Oxford's comment about 400,000 of tin that Lord Buckhurst has now been brought to acknowledge that more tin is produced each year than he had previously advised the Queen. Again, Oxford prefers to discuss this confidentially with Lord Burghley since it apparently involves chicanery on Lord Buckhurst's part.

My very good Lord, to set down that which should be fit for your satisfaction would require a long writing which should be too cumbersome at this present, and moreover I would gladly deliver my knowledge of the quantity of tin by mouth for that I think it not convenient by letter, wherefore when your Lordship shall have best time and leisure, if I may know it I will attend your Lordship as well as a lame man may at your house.

Those articles of my Lord of Buckhurst's offer I have already answered in my last letter, yet for more assurance I have sent mine answer again unto every point.

And whereas it hath been said (as I understand) that he was the first that moved this suit, I confess that he was the first that dealt in it to cozen her Majesty but not to profit her, as at my coming to your Lordship I will fully satisfice you.

For the 40 hundred thousand lb. weight of tin, if he had put in 60 hundred and 70 hundred thousand, yet I was the first (as I can prove by good testimony) that gave her Majesty warning to look well thereto before she made any grant, and gave inkling of those sums. And at what times he made his offer of 10 thousand pounds custom, and now the 40 hundred thousand lb. weight, when I shall have speech with your Lordship, you will judge thereof a great deal better.

Wherefore, lest I trouble your Lordship, I most heartily thank you for your most honourable dealing towards me, and earnestly crave that your Lordship will not suffer this matter so swiftly and hastily to pass till I have fully advertised your Lordship of my

knowledge of the 40 hundred thousand pound weight and what other means I know necessary for her Majesty to compass her intent, and without which being known it will be overthrown, and prove nothing to that which her Majesty expects and I do wish.

Your Lordship's to command.
Edward Oxenford

Addressed: To the right honourable & his very good Lord, the Lord Treasurer of England.

Endorsed: 25 Martij 1595, Earl Oxford, tin works