

SUMMARY: In this letter written on 17 April 1595, Oxford says that he at no time showed Alderman John Catcher any letter of Lord Burghley's saying that Oxford's offer for the tin monopoly would be granted in preference to Lord Buckhurst's. Moreover Oxford has asked Alderman Catcher whether he made any such statement to Lord Buckhurst, which Catcher has denied. Oxford also mentions certain deceptive practices by Richard Carmarden. These incidents appear to have given Oxford his first inkling that Carmarden had been playing a double game, a point which Oxford expands on at greater length in SP 12/252/57. Oxford reiterates that his offer for the tin monopoly was for the Queen's service, not for his own profit, and says that if he did not succeed in rendering her service thereby, it was not for lack of his diligence, but rather because the merchants gave their promise and then broke it, and not for lack of his goodwill, but for lack of the Queen's support of him. He again requests that Lord Burghley further his suit for the licence to transport tin, a suit which would involve the Queen raising the export tax by either a crown [=5s] or a noble [6s 8d] the 100 lbs. of tin or fother of lead. At the end of the letter Oxford mentions that Lord Buckhurst has abandoned his suit for the tin monopoly.

My very good Lord, I have asked Mr Alderman Catcher whether he delivered any such speech or no to my Lord of Buckhurst as that I should show him a letter from your Lordship wherein I was promised this suit of the tin before him. He protests the contrary, & I do believe him, for that I assure your Lordship I neither showed him, or any other, any letter of yours. Nevertheless the Lord of Buckhurst he doth fear to become his heavy lord, for that he hath charged him how he should be the man that gave me information first of this suit, whereby (as he takes it) that he hath been greatly hindered.

But as for Carmarden, I do find that he hath not a little doubled with me by divers actions of his & manifest dealings, for whereas I sent him to your Lordship to confirm that which I had undertaken, which was true, yet as I perceive, he performed not what he promised. Also, whereas he told your Lordship, as I perceived by your letter, that he had talked with me and the alderman concerning the quantity, both the alderman and myself can assure your Lordship he spake not one word to us thereof. But, excusing himself that he had not dealt so liberally with your Lordship as he was determined, after his departure from me he persuaded the alderman to move me to join with my Lord of Buckhurst, and divers other speeches which tended to his dislike that the customers & officers of her Majesty should be looked into, and, for his part, if it should go forward, it was out of his way a hundred pounds a year, wherefore he would wish it rather to stand as it did than to proceed. By these dealings and many other I do find that he hath been no small hinderer.

Thus much I thought necessary to inform your Lordship, both in the alderman's behalf and mine own, for your satisfaction. As concerning the suit, that which I did was not my suit, but to further her Majesty's service, wherein, if I failed, was not my fault of diligence but the merchants', who first gave their promise and then brake it. And whereas I desired that the suit should pass in my name was not thereby to have gained, but to have

raised the rent the more to her Majesty. All which things, sith they have not succeeded, hath not been any want of goodwill in me, but want of credit from her Majesty.

Wherefore, as in the beginning I had your Lordship's promise to further me in my suit concerning the transportation of tin & lead, imposing thereon a crown or noble the hundred or fother, so still do I desire your Lordship to persevere, if it may stand with your liking, & that my Lord of Buckhurst dealeth no farther, as he giveth out himself. This 17th of April, anno 1595.

Your Lordship's to command,
Edward Oxenford

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

Endorsed: 17 April 1595, Earl of Oxford, tin