
SUMMARY: In this letter written on 11 January 1597, Oxford thanks Sir Robert Cecil for advising the Countess of Oxford, Elizabeth Trentham, of Thomas Gurley's petition against her to the Privy Council.

Good Sir Robert Cecil. Whereas my wife hath showed me a supplication exhibited to the Lords of the Council against her, I have longed both to yield you thanks for your courtesy to her and myself in making her acquainted therewith, and also to advertise you how lewdly therein he behaves himself, for as for my wife he chargeth with a matter whereto she was never acknowledging (as if you consider the date of his supplication which signifieth a five years agone, at what time I think she never knew the man, and much less had any dealings with him, as he cannot deny, and if I then were married unto her it was all). Whereas he pretendeth I made over to her my pension with a condition to pay all former warrants granted by me, it is merely false, neither hath he any ground to say it, wherefore how presumptuously he doth abuse her you may easily judge, as that dares to make so impudently his complaint of her, being as she is, and to such personages of quality and state as are the Privy Council. I do not doubt therefore, but as you have begun with so honourable a proceeding, but you will let him have his deserts according to his presumption. And in the mean season, for that a long letter may be troublesome unto you which have matters in hand of more importance, I thought it fit thus shortly to show the wrong done to her, and to refer the very ground and colour of his complaint unto another schedule which I shall send you.

Wherein if he hath had any cause to have complained, it should then have been against myself, as the same will explain. But his shifts and knaveries are so gross and palpable that, doubting to bring his parts and jugglings to light, he doth address his petition against her that is utterly ignorant of the cause. Thus desiring you to conceive how thankfully I take this honourable dealing with my wife and friendly care to me, I will the less set forth in words what I the more desire in deeds to show if I were so happy as to find opportunity. This 11th of January, 1597.

Your assured friend and brother-in-law,
Edward Oxford

Addressed: To the right honourable and his very good friend Sir Robert Cecil, one of her Majesty's Privy Council, and Principal Secretary.

Endorsed: 12 January 1596. Earl of Oxford to my master. The controversy between him and Gurley.