

SUMMARY: The document below is a letter from William Stanley (1561 – 29 September 1642), 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Derby, to Sir Robert Cecil concerning a request by his wife, Oxford's daughter, Elizabeth de Vere (1575-1627), whom he had married on 26 January 1595, that a young man be reprieved from a death sentence which had been passed on him for theft.

Derby mentions that Oxford's wife, Elizabeth Trentham, Countess of Oxford, had been lodging at his house at Isleworth, Middlesex, then called Thistleworth, and that he was to accompany her on her journey home. For Thistleworth see:

'Isleworth', *The Environs of London: volume 3: County of Middlesex* (1795), pp. 79-122.  
URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=45433>.

In the Cecil Papers the letter is said to be endorsed '1598, January – without date'. However on the original document the endorsement in the hand of Cecil's secretary appears to be merely 'January without date'. Another source states that the letter dates from 28 January 1599; see Nelson, Alan. H., *Monstrous Adversary*, (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2003), p. 374 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=ax36vm1CW08C&pg=PA374&lpg=PA374&dq=%22On+28+January+Derby+wrote+to+Cecil%22&source=bl&ots=a1nEOeWwEz&sig=E7KXnnfHuH1vubH4QtRqILxbVLE&hl=en&sa=X&ei=skBZU-3PLaKQyAGB4oHoBg&ved=0CCgQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=%22On%2028%20January%20Derby%20wrote%20to%20Cecil%22&f=false>.

My very good uncle, I was wished by my wife to move you for a letter to reprieve a poor young man for whom you have already written once before at her request. Tomorrow the man dies unless he be reprieved. It seems by his petition his offence was for stealing a little silver skillet out of her chamber, which being the first fault she was loath to have him die, yet nevertheless(?) he was condemned before he could make any means.

Thus desiring you to bear with these hasty lines in regard I am to wait on the Countess of Oxford home to her house, who lodged here at my house at Thistleworth [=Isleworth].

Your loving nephew and ready friend to my power,

William Derby

Endorsed: To the right honourable my very loving uncle, Sir Robert Cecil, knight, one of her Majesty's most honourable Privy Council and her Principal Secretary, these

Endorsed: January, without date, Lord of Derby to my Master