

SUMMARY: This list of licences issued for travel beyond the seas from 1572 to 1578 includes Oxford's licence to travel for one year issued in January 1575 (New Style) and a one year extension granted on 2 March 1576 (New Style). Since Oxford set out for England from Venice on 5 March 1576, the extension of his licence was likely a mere formality to cover the duration of his return trip to England. Nathaniel Baxter's verses published in 1606 indicate that the Queen had directed Oxford to return:

*Vigilant then th' eternal Majesty . . . / Induced us to make speedy repair.*

It is perhaps significant that, unlike Oxford's, most licences were issued for periods longer than one year.

Oxford's licence is preceded in the list below by a licence issued to William Russell, esquire, to travel for three years. William Russell (c.1553–1613) was later 1st Baron Russell of Thornhaugh and Lord Deputy of Ireland. For a letter dated 31 March 1576 from Dr Valentine Dale (c.1520-1589) to Lord Burghley mentioning Oxford's return to Paris in William Russell's company, see TNA SP 70/137, ff. 322-3.

The list also contains a licence to travel for one year issued to John Russell of Worcestershire on 11 February 1576. It seems likely that this was Sir John Russell (1552-1593) of Strensham, the elder brother of Thomas Russell (1570-1634), the supervisor of the will of William Shakespeare (1564-1616) of Stratford upon Avon. If so, Oxford and Sir John Russell's continental tours overlapped by two months. Sir John Russell was brought up in the household of Francis Russell (1526/7-1585), 2nd Earl of Bedford, and had 'formed the closest ties' with his cousin, William Russell (c.1553-1613), mentioned above, the Earl of Bedford's youngest son, who arrived in Paris at the end of March 1576 in Oxford's company. See Hotson, Leslie, *I, William Shakespeare, Do Appoint Thomas Russell, Esquire*, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1937), pp. 21-2. Sir John Russell married Elizabeth Sheldon, whose sister, Katherine Sheldon (d.1633), married Oxford's brother-in-law, Francis Trentham (d.1626). For the will of Sir John Russell of Strensham, see TNA PROB 11/92, ff. 52-5.

Licences passed to go beyond the seas

1572

A licence for Nicholas Wendon, Doctor of the Civil Law and Archdeacon of Suffolk, 3 years, February 1572

Thomas Coningsby of Hampton Court in the county of Hereford, esquire, three years, January 1572

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1573

Roger Earth of Collingbourne in Wiltshire, gentleman, to go to the Spa, 6 months, June 1573

William Bromfield, one of the gentlemen pensioners, 2 years, June 1573

John Hanby, gentleman, 3 months, June 1573

William Loveday, one year, July 1573

Thomas Mansell, Rice Mansell, and Anthony Mansell, 3 years, July 1573

Simon Norris, gentleman, 3 years, July 1573

1574

Thomas Howard and Dorothy his wife, 2 years, May 1574

Richard Monk, gentleman, to go to the Spa, 4 months, July 1574

George Allen of Rossall in Bispham within Lancashire and Elizabeth his wife to go to the Spa, 2 years, July 1574

Sir Edward Umpton and Edward his son, 3 years, September 1574

John Delabere, Master of Art, 7 years, October 1574

William Russell, esquire, 3 years, January 1574

The Earl of Oxford, one year, January 1574

Christopher Lidcott, gentleman, two years, January 1574

Edmund Scheiz, one of the pages of the Chamber, tyme(?), January 1574

John Jerningham, esquire, three years, February 1574

Thomas Carne of Ewenny in comitatu Glamorgan, gentleman, with his wife and his son to go to the Spa, one year, February 1574

George Jermyn, gentleman, (blank) years, March 1574

Edward Trevagnan, esquire, 2 years, March 1574

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Edward Marne, 4 years, March 1574

Thomas Church, Master of Art, for 4 years & one man with him, 9th November 1574

Simon Norwich of Brampton in comitatu Northampton, gentleman, for 2 years & 2 servants, 17th November 1574

Robert Downes, gentleman, of Norfolk, his wife, one maid, and one man to go to the Spa for 2 years, 22nd martij 1574

1575

Henry Wayland and Robert Jacob, Masters of Art and Fellows of Trinity College in Cambridge, the space of two years, April 1575

Thomas Kitson of Hengrave in the county of Suffolk, esquire, one year and a half, April 1575

Thomas Vachell of Twooley in comitatu Berkshire, esquire, the space of 2 years, April 1575

John North, esquire, the space of two years, May 1575

John Bamford, gentleman, the space of 3 years, June 1575

George Watkins of Wayponder in comitatu Dorset, the space of 3 years, June 1575

Martin Frobisher the space of three years, July 1575

Doctor Fourth, the space of (blank), September 1575

Martin Frobisher to depart and return at his liberty the space of 3 years, October 1575

Richard Houghton, gentleman, the space of two months, March 1575

Thomas Dowse of Wiltshire, gentleman, to go to the Spa for 6 months, 17th majj 1575

Francis Brace of Busshock in comitatu Worcester for one year with one servant, 22nd majj 1575

Matthew Sutcliffe, Master of Art of Trinity College in Cambridge for 3 years so he pass over within 3 months after the date of the licence, 20th Iulij 1575

George Atkinson, Master of Art, for 2 years, 27th Septembris 1575

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John Russell of Worcestershire for one year, 11th February 1575

John Bamford, gentleman, for 3 years with permission to use the company of his wife & one Stapleton (being both beyond the seas) to the end he may persuade them to return, 11th February 1575

Peter Yorke of Yorkshire, esquire, for one year, 24th February 1575

The Earl of Oxford for one year after th' expiration of his former licence, 2nd martij 1575

William Stanley, esquire, for 2 years, 14th martij 1575

1576

Sir William Catesby of Warwickshire, knight, and the Lady Anne his wife for one year for health, 11th April 1576

William Gent of Northamptonshire, gentleman, for 2 years, 11th April 1576

Thomas Kellaway, gentleman, for 3 years, 2nd April 1576

Thomas Vachell of Coley in Berkshire, esquire, for one year after the 17th of April which shall be in anno 1577, 20th April 1576

Nicholas Dethick alias Blue Mantle, one of the pursuivants of arms, for 2 years, 20th Aprilis 1576

John Morgan of Mapperton in Dorsetshire for 3 years

Mr Anthony Mildmay for 2 years, 6th maij 1576

Roger Cholmeley of Yorkshire, gentleman, for one year, 13th Iunij 1576

Nicholas Sanders of Uxbridge in Middlesex for 3 years, 20th Iunij 1576 anno 18th domine Regine

Mr Anthony and Mr Francis Bacon for 3 years, 27th Iunij 1576

Francis Dymocke, esquire, for 2 years, 1576 Iulij

Richard Sandish, esquire, for 2(?) years, 13th Iulij

Lord Sandes for 2 years, 7th Iulij 1576

Mr John St. John for 2 years, 18th Iulij 1576

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Mr Edward Russell for 2 years, 17th Iulij 1576

John Hall of Middleton in comitatu Warwick and George Gilbert of Clare in Suffolk, gentleman, for 3 years, Iulij 1576

Thomas Dryland of Wye in comitatu Kantie for 3 years, 7th August 1576

Mr Henry Cheke for 2 years, 10th August 1576

Thomas Bodley, Master of Art, for 3 years, 28th August 1576

Mr Francis Hasting (blank) George Hasting for so long as his friends shall think good, 23 November 1576

William Butler of Gloucestershire for 2 years, 21st November 1576

John St. Leger, esquire, for (blank), 24th January 1576

Daniel Snow of Bedfordshire for 3 years, 27th February 1576 anno 19th domine Regine

1577

Thomas Boydell, gentleman, for 2 years, vltimo ffebruarij 1576

Theobald Greene of Uppingham in comitatu Ruthlandie for 2 years, 19th April 1577

Edward Denny for (blank), 26th April 1577

Thomas Skidolph(?) of Surrey, gentleman, for 4 months to go to the Spa, 15 Iulij 1577

George Torling, one of the gentlemen pensioners, for 3 months, 18th Iulij 1577

Edward Hobby for 3 years, 27th Iulij 1577

Humfrey Ashfield for 3 years, 4th September 1577

John Hendson, gentleman, for 3 years, and one servant with him, 12th October 1577

1578

Thomas Philips, gentleman, with one man, for 3 years, 26th Martij 1578

Nicholas Lauzer for 3 months to see his friends in France, 13th April 1578

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Henry Neville, th' eldest son of Sir Henry Neville, his schoolmaster and one man, vltimo April 1578

Peter Bizarro to continue (blank) years after th' expiration of his former licence, vltimo April 1578

William Pelham, th' eldest son of William Pelham, his schoolmaster & one servant, 3rd May 1578

Sir William Morgan, knight, for (blank) years, & to carry with him (blank) servants, 3rd maij 1578

John Bridges alias Bruges, gentleman, with two servants for two years, 4th maij 1578

Alfonso Ferrabosco with two servants for 6 months, 5th maij 1578

Transcript by Nina Green April 2005.