

SUMMARY: The document below is a letter dated 23 March 1576 written by Benedict Spinola (1519/20-1580) to Lord Burghley, advising that his brother had written on 26 February advising of Oxford's intention to leave Venice after the Carnival, which ended on 6 March in 1576. The mention by Spinola of money which Oxford did not take up in Naples indicates that Oxford had visited Naples during his continental tour. Oxford's servant 'Parrett' appears to be the Clement Parrett who wrote to Lord Burghley on 23 September 1575 from Venice concerning his service with Oxford, and who had witnessed Oxford's lease of his manor of Tresithney to Thomas Atkinson on 28 January 1575 (see CP 7/106 and CRO AR1/853).

On 15 June 1580 Oxford purchased the Great Garden property at Aldgate from Benedict Spinola (see TNA C 54/1080).

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (available online), a scudo was an Italian silver coin worth about 4 shillings. At 20 shillings to the pound, the 1800 scudi mentioned below would have been worth £360. However, there were also gold scudi, as mentioned in the will of Benedict Spinola, and it is not clear whether the 1800 scudi paid to Oxford were gold or silver scudi.

Most illustrious & excellent Sir etc.,

At this time I have received letters from Venice of the 26th of February from my brother, who writes me that the most illustrious Earl is very well, and continues in his resolution to return home, & has already sent his baggage by way of Lyon. I understand he will set out immediately after the Carnival, albeit his Lordship says that he wishes to leave sooner. I understand it has seemed strange to him that he did not have greater provision of money of the 1800 scudi which he did not take up in Naples or in other places in Italy, & at this time he is taking up only 800 scudi, & he wishes to have letters of exchange for the other 1000 scudi for Lyon, which I shall give him to the Buonvisi. It seems that Parrett, his servant, no longer remains in his favour, perhaps because he has spent too much.

I send your Excellency under this [=enclosed?] a packet which I have received directed to Mr Thomas Atkinson. Your most illustrious Lordship can do with it as you wish, & then at your convenience tell me how I am to conduct myself etc.

I send also advices from Italy, & with this I cease to trouble you further, regretting greatly your indisposition, & I pray the Lord God will soon restore your health for a long time, with prosperity, & if I may serve you in anything of yours, I beseech you to command & use me as your true assured servant while I live. Dated the 23 of March 1576.

To your Excellency.

Your humble servant, Benedict Spinola

Endorsed: (1) To the most illustrious & excellent Lord High Treasurer of England, etc., my most honourable master; (2) 23 Mart{ij} 1575 [=23 March 1576], Mr Spinola to my Lord, with a packet of letters

Ill{ustrissi}mo & ecc{ellentissi}mo sig{no}re &cj

In questo ponto ho riceputo l{itte}re da vinetia de 26 di Febraro dal mio fr{ate}llo quale mi scriue

che l'Ill{ustrissi}mo s{ign}or Conte staua benissimo e continuaua in la sua Resolutione de

retornarsene a Casa, &gia hauia mandato lisuoi Coffari de robbe per La Condotte

a lione, Credo che partira subito fatto il Carneuale, se bene sua s{igno}ria dice che

vuol partire prima, Credo li sia parso strano di no' hauere hauuto maggior

provigione di denari, delli [scudi] 1800 diquali no' si e seruito in napoli ni altri

luoghi de Italia, & hora ne prende solo [scudi] 800 & delli altri [scudi] 1000 ne vuole

hauere litere di Cambio per lione quale lidaro in li bonuisi, Il pareti suo

ser{uito}re non pare che resti piu molto in sua gratia, no' so' se forsi habbi speso troppo

Mando sotto questa a v{ostra} ecc{ellenz}a vno pachetto che ho riceputo dirretto a M{esser} Thom{as}o

Atchinson, vostra Ill{ustrissi}ma s{igno}ria puotra farne q{ue}llo liparera & poi con sua

Comodita' dirmi come mi haro a gouernare &cj:

l' mando alsì li auisi d'italia, & co questo faro fine di fastidirla dolendome

molto della sua indispositione & prego Il s{ign}or dio voglij(?) ristaurarli presto

la sanita per longo tempo co' prosperita', &si Io sono buono a seruirla

in cosa che sia La supp{li}co a Comandarmi & impiegarmi Come suo vero
aff{ezionatissi}mo

ser{uito}re si ch' io viua, Data alli 23 dimarzo 1576

D{ i} v{ostra} ecc{ellenz}a

Humiliss{im}o ser{uito}re, Ben{edet}to Spinola

Endorsed:

(1) All' Ill{ustrissi}mo & ecc{ellentissi}mo sig{no}re Il s{ign}or Gram Thez{orie}ro
d'ingl{ite}rra s{ign}or & cj p{ad}rone mio oss{ervandissi}mo

(2) 23 Mart{ij} 1575 [=23 March 1576], Mr Spinola to my Lord, with a packet of letters