

**NA (PRO) SP 63/82/54**  
*Grey to the Queen, 26 April 1581*

**Address and Endorsement**

To her most excellent  
Maiestie

26 Aprill 1581  
To hir Maiestie from the Lord  
Grey.  
Entred

**Text**

It may please your Highnes The course of thinges here willeth me agayne to trouble  
your Maiesty with former causes and besides to sende this Bearer for solliciting of the same  
fynding resolutions there not to answere that which the necessitie here requireth. I haue  
often tymes advertised to my Lords and lately to your Highnes selfe the tickle hoalde or rather  
rebellious disposition that Tirlagh contynually resteth in, & dayly more and more makes  
shewe of, as the Marschalls lettres to mee herewith sent to your Highnes will nowhitt darkly display,  
besides a generall holownes of hartes here to your Maiesty The contentes whereof falling out  
true & the mammering condition of all the other provinces weighed, howe necessary yt is for your  
Maiestie to haue care of it, & in the meane how nerely yt toucheth me importunately to putt you  
in mynde of the same your Highnes selfe bee the decerner: To prouide for the worst hath neuer  
bene faulty, nor gone without commendation, though shewe haue not brought forth the effecte;  
to bee secure, and that in manifest warnings, besides great losse & late repentaunce, neuer  
with the wise escaped condemnation; If then no doubtfull signes of the perill appeare vnto  
you, & the looking to yt is to you ether the safetie or losse of this state, I most humbly beseeche  
your Maiestie in your own\* honours behalf & especially in gods respect, who hauing betaken vnto you  
the interest & gouernement of this land with nolesse duety of care and charge, then of the same

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wherein you abyde, will doubtles challenge nolesse accoumpt at your handes for the one then for the other, most humbly, I say, I beseche your Highnes to haue earnest regard in tyme of it & pardon likewise humbly I craue, if herein I exceede any thing the limits of becoming, the Lord is my witness true & earnest zeale to your honour and service is the onely cause of the miscarriage, yf any there bee. Vnlesse your Maiesty will affoord the encrease of force I late wrote for, I see not but one of these\* inconveniences will light, ether a most dishonorable composition with Tirlagh contayned in one Article or rather worde, namely his owne will, & the same to stand on no better certenty then his owne liking; or els hazard yf not losse of the whole; the numbers already here not being hable both to front him and leaue sufficient force to answeere the Rebelles of the other provinces, as but now they are, which weakenes in vs once fownde, & that your Highnes will not goe through with what you haue begonned, for one that is out now accoumpt then of tenne, & setled they will growe in their already commune boast, that for the chardge they will enforce your Highnes to giue them ouer. Your Highnes charge indeed is very great, I cannot denye & to God I would, that I might as well, as willing I am to helpe yt; but your Maiestie in this case is not to looke onely vpon the chardge, but vpon the cause as well, and then I doubt not but the cause shall appeare as rare as the charge vnwonted: That any needlesse or without good grownd hath bene raised or lenger contynued then the cause required, with your Maiesties indifferent favour I dare take vpon me to answeere; & where I beare some fault to be fownd at the number of Colonells that should be here, truly Madam there are in all but twoo, Sir George Bouchier for the Garrisons in

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the County of Limerick & Connelagh, which is very necessary the Lord Generall not being alwaies in the Prouince, and Iohn Zowche in Kerry a farre remoued place from all other companies, where necessitie nolesse required the like Officer I am also giuen to vnderstand that your Highnes is the more griued at your charges for that you find the same very sclderly answered in seruice; indeed so great seruices as such cost might seeme to craue, I will not affirme to bee doen nether doo I hope will your Maiestie measure accidentall euentes by such a continuall certein grownd, but if endeuour haue bene ouerslipped or trauaile & aduenture spared, then lett your threasure be accoumpted vaynely wasted & the burden on me layd. I haue

not euer certefied of euery seruice doen, because I expected still as I desyred such  
a one, as worthely might haue come to your Highnes eares but yf taking of Cowes, killing  
of their Kerne & churles had bene thought worth the aduertising I could haue had  
every day to haue troubled your Highnes the which seruices in totall yett not beeing to goe  
vnaccounted of, would in particular report haue brought but meane delight; marry  
now seing that by saying nothing, nothing is thought to be doen I thought good too  
commend to your Highnes by this Bearer a Colleccion of all the seruices doen here since my  
gouernement, so farre as may be remembred, which though not so great as ether your Highnes  
may expect or my self would wish, yett doubt I not but it shall appeare, God  
to haue fauored your Highnes forces as much in this tyme, as in any other heretofore  
I tarry not so long in this theme, that I would carry your Highnes to the contynuaunce  
or encrease of charges or proceeding in the Action further then apparent reason holde  
with me for your owne honour & safety of state here; yf any other shall bring better  
reason to the contrary & shall thinck with lesse charge & yett safety this gouernement may  
be carried, which I confesse to goe far beyond my reach ether in conceipt or execution  
I most humbly craue for furtheraunce of your Highnes service to be called home and such  
a one to haue the place: yett is it not vnknownen to me, that thinges might be patched  
vp, and a face of peace & quietnes made to appeare, but then the gouernement or rather  
Confusion must be this; that no vice, disobedience or insolencie should ether be punished,  
or brided, your Highnes lawes answered by none, but by a handfull of the English pale  
murder, stealth, rapes & all other insolencies to haue free allowaunce, otherwise the  
maske of this quiete would soone be throwen of, as daylie experience shewes; for  
he that to day semes a duetifull Subiect, lett him for any of these or other lesse crimes  
be to morrow called vpon to come & answere, streight a proteccion is demaunded  
& in the meane he wilbee vpon his keeping, as here they terme yt, which in plaine  
English is none other, then a Traitour that forcibly will defend his cause & not  
answere to

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answere to iustice: I know the great feare, due reverence & sownd knowledg  
your Highnes hath of god, besides the naturall regard to your honour & place cannot  
suffer you to like or rather not to detest such kynde of gouernement: your wisdom

then cannot but see **the** great vnsurety of **the** same, & as touching **the** sparing thereby  
 lett **the** forepast charges of so many yeares caused onely by this irresolute proceeding  
 in the action, shewe the gayne & whether in reason one eight or tenne of these  
 yeares charges bestowed at once vpon a thorough reformation had not bene a farre  
 more sparing way, besides other good, then to suffer yt to runne into this continuall  
 consumption of threasure **which** neuer wilbee helped vnlesse the plott bee altered. 90  
 A peaceable gouernement were **the** easiest & quietest trade for me or whosoever should  
 supply this place, & travaile enough well entended too, shall any Gouvernour here finde  
 of ciuile & politique causes, what reason should then induce me, to **that** labour to adde  
 care, toile, & hazard of warre\* causes, yf **with** duety & conscience to God & Prince  
 saued I might eschewe yt. Your Maiestie I heare, is in purpose ••\* bestowe a generall  
 pardon vpon this nation **with** some exceptions; I beseche your Highnes to consider well  
 of it: of myne owne tyme this prooffe I haue; in **the** proclayming of these mountayne  
 Traytours a generall pardon was graunted to all, certayn of **the** chief exempted, **that**  
 would leaue **the** rest, & reward **with**all sett downe, to whomesoeuer should bring in  
 aliuie {or}\* dead any of **the** Archknaues; since agayne infinite secrete offers of pardon  
 and hire haue I made to **the** chieffest for seruice vpon other chieffs: nay further  
 haue I aduentured my self vpon your grace in maner against one of my Instru-  
 ctions from your self at my coming away; I offerd to Desmond him selfe pardon,  
 in case he would quick or dead deliuer into mee his brother Iohn & Doctor Saunders;  
**which** most easely I knew he might haue doen, being hourelly & forcelesse in his hand:  
 what of all these offers is hearkned to, what thancks is giuen, what submission  
 is made, what grace accepted? nay in trouth Madam I neuer fownd but these  
 mercifull dealinges haue euer lifted them vp to greater insolencies, nether holdes  
 this my experience by **the** tyme of their most prosperitie, but in their most ebbe and  
 misery hath lenitie fownd this effect: after **the** Fortes wyning passed my offer  
 to Desmond since my coming into these partes very lately after many spoiles &\* slaughters  
 executed vpon Pheagh and his followers, so that his self demaunded **the** Parley;  
 sondry tymes like grace hath bene graunted, but in end Beggars fall to pride,  
 raile at your Maiestie leaue god, & onely relye vpon **the** Pope, & that charges shall in  
 end free them: herevnto laye for **the** good that pardons here worke, that in Sir  
 William fitz Williams tyme there was like to this now entended a graunt 105  
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of generall Pardon, and therevpon a great number were sent abroad,  
but somuch regarded, as three partes of them yett lye in Kilkenny, and  
neuer once asked for, as I am credibly enformed: to bee shorte vnder  
your Highnes correction pardon & protection next to the small care had of  
trew Religion & settling of Gods Worde hath bene the onely destruction of  
this Gouvernement which triall enforceth me to say, that onely sworde will  
salue the sore of. for the contrary I dare defend to haue essayed as much as  
any Gouvernour toofore, & will tye my selfe to your Maiesties iustice onely,  
yf it can be iustly layd vnto mee, that euer yet I tooke lyfe from any, how  
euer euill deseruing that submitted him self to your mercy: feare there=  
fore and not dandling must bringe them to the byarsse of obedience.  
I would gladly receiue your Highnes resolution touching 63. yt is a cause re=  
quireth not your least consideration: I did in my last say what I thought  
in it: very fewe that in priuate frendshippe .....  
....., nether that I thincke more .....  
..... 7. in any ..... onely excepted: thus doothe faythfull  
dutie & ..... sincere\* affection too 7. .... of ... that which ootherwyse ..  
.....,\*  
The Bearer now bringeth your Highnes an estimate of the benefitt that vpon  
these attaynders will fall to your Maiestie and he shall likewise enforme you  
of a Plott for the lightening your Highnes of 2000 mens pay by yeare, which in God  
I hope shall take effecte in short tyme, in case your Highnes shall thinck good to  
answere wantes here, & the same presently vpon the coming of the supplye  
now appointed hether shalbee entered into. /  
I beseeche God to direct your Highnes resolution to that course, that may most  
make for your owne honour & reformation of this yet most miserable nation  
vtterly deuoyde of his knowledg, & nowhitt regarding you his annoynted  
nor guided by any other rule then sensuall libertie.  
So fearing to haue held your Highnes too long, though not so long as the cause  
yet requires, were yt not in trust of the Messenger, whome I humbly  
commend to your Maiesties credit for the rest I take most humble leaue, besee=

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ching the Almighty to prolong your lyfe in all happinesse in this world, and  
send your Maiesty eternall ioy in that to come. Dublin the 26 of Aprill, 1581.

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Yowr hyghnes most humble seruant  
& faythefull subiect,

Arthur Grey

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#### Note on hands

The text of the letter is in Spenser's formal italic hand, typical of formal reports from Grey to the Queen. Grey has added the injunction and his signature in his own hand. A long passage in cipher on the final page uses codes distinct from those normally used by Grey in his letters to Walsingham; this probably represents a system designed for use only in letters to Elizabeth.

- \* **15 own]** Inserted above the line, with a caret mark.
- \* **22 of these]** 'of these' inserted above the line, with a caret mark.
- \* **85 •]** 's' deleted
- \* **87 ••]** 'to' deleted.
- \* **92 {or}]** A large inkblot has here obscured the word, but the reading is pretty sure from the context.
- \* **103 spoiles &]** 'spoiles &' inserted above the line, with a caret mark.
- \* **125 •••••• sincere]** A deletion of about eight characters (indecipherable); 'sincere' has been inserted above the line, with a caret mark.
- \* **122-26 •••••...•••••]** This whole section in an indecipherable (as yet) code (different from the one Grey usually uses).

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