

NA (PRO) SP 63/78/29
Grey to the Queen, 12 November 1580

Address and Endorsement

To her Maiesty yeue
this. /

12 Nouember 1580.
To hir Maiesty from the lord
Gray.
Entred.

Text

It may please your Maiesty the vijth of this date I planted Campe
before the forte at Smerwick: three causes hindered greatly my marche:
provision of victaile, rying of waters, **which** very hardly & **with** no smal{1}^{*}
daunger we passed, and lastly staying for **the** fleete, of **which** for many d{ayes}
space wee could haue no voyce of, & **without which the** entreprice had bene {in}
vayne, no possibilitie being to drawe any ordinaunce **with** vs, nether hau{ing}
any shipping for such conveyance by sea; at **the** last worde came, that
Captein Bingham in **the** Swiftesure was arriued, and had anchored besi{de}
the Forte, I then moved campe and beeing come **within** viij mile of the forte, {I}
tooke my Horssmen & rode to the Hauen to haue talke **with the** said Cap{tein}
and learne what was become of **the** Admirall and the rest: I fownd{e}
by him **that** storme had parted them, and **that** after he had neuer heard
of them, but had well hoped to haue mett them there: entring then
into advice for the environing of **the** place, before the rest came, we fown{d}

5

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our selues altogether vnhabable, having nether Pioners tooles (a shipp of limb{...} therewith & victailes laden, not yett come about) nor his shipp altogether hable to supply the munition that the entreprize was lykely to require: soe better I helde yt, to forbearre approaching yt, not hauing to goe through with yt, then to make a brauery, & then enforced leaue yt, as I fownd yt. An{d} eight daies I so helde still my Campe in penurie of victells & great doubt of the becoming of our fleet and victells; such stormy & raging wether continually for this space had fallen with contrariety of windes; & nowe almost in despeire the ix Morning newes came vnto me first that thre{e} bandes which I had appointed to followe mee, were coming at hand, I was leaping to horss to meete them, when another Messenger in great haste brought worde that Sir William Winter with the shippes was at the Ven{...} & would next morning yf winde helde, bee at Smerwick. The next {day} therefore I roade thether, where I fownd him newly entered, •* & fow{nd} the cause of his stay to haue bene weather & vncerteyne intelligence of my beeing & the Enemies estate; conference then had & resolucion for the service, I returned; & the next day brought forward my Campe & pitched by the Dingle, caused there to stay for the taking in of certein victailes. The day following beeing the foresaid vijth I settled camp here, in which sp{...}

taking Captein Bingham with mee I went to viewe the Forte & grownd for the carriage of my Trench & planting of Ordinaunce. To lett vs in this, and to draw oures within the play of their Counterscarfe and Courteyne, where theyr Musketiers lay, x or xij Shott were putt forth, who were answered •* by 50 or 60 loose shott that I had with mee, to enterteigne them the whilest; the leaders of these were Iohn Zouche & Captein Mackworth, who very gallantly carried themselues. In this skirmish 3 of theirs were slayne, none of oures touched, sauing that Iohn Zouche had the graze of a bullet on the knee, but not to bee reckoned of. That doen that wee came for, I retyred: the same after-

noone we landed our Artillerie & munition. In **the** Euening we fell too
 worke, caried our trench **within** xiiij skore of **the** Piece, & planted 2 Culuerings
with which the next morning anone vpon day we saluted them, & they for an
 howre or 2 as freshly requited vs, till twoo of their best pieces at laste
 taken away, they had not on **that** side but Muskett & hackabuse-acroke too
 answer vs, **which with** good heat they plyed vs with. The day so spent, at night
 to spade wee fall agayne & by morning brought our trench **within** v score
 of theyr Dytche: this night they made 4 saylies to haue beaten our laborers
 from worke, & gaue vs their volleies very gallantly, but were as gallantly
 sett in agayne by Ned Denny and his company who had this night the
 watch: no sooner day peeped, but they played very hotly vpon vs, yett as
 god would, for a good tyme **without** hurt, till vnhappely good Iohn Cheeke
 too carelessly advauncing him selfe, to looke ouer **the** Trenche, stricken on
the head tumbled downe at my feete, dead I tooke him & for so I caused
 him to bee carried away, yet yt pleased God to send him spright agayne
 & yet doth liue in speache & greatest memory, that euer was seene
with such a wounde, & truly **Madam** so disposed to God, & made so diuine
 a Confession of his faith, as all Diuines in either of **your Maiesties** realmes* could not
 haue passed, yf matched, yt; so wrought in him Gods spirite, playnely
 declaring him a Childe of his elected, to **the** no lesse comfort of his good
 and godly frendes, then great instruction & manifest motion of euery
 other hearer **that** stood by, of whome there was a good troupe.
 Pardon mee I beseeche your Highnes in case my Digression bee tædious; the
 affection I beare **the** Gentleman causeth **the** fault, yf there bee anye. I there
 fore

fore knitte yt vp thus: if god doe take him, as such is the likelyhode, **your Maiestie**
 looseth a servaunt, whose matche for euery good vertue accompanied **with** {the}
 most true, duetifull, & zealous hart to **your** selfe (as his prayers in this {...})

case notably haue declared) in no great number wilbee fownd.
 Hee so had away, I stayed in **the** Trench, and fynding theyr shott mo{re zea}
 lously to beate at vs, & **that** oures did litle or nothing anoye them, for {that}
 wee did not discern eether by spike hole or smoke on the rampier wher{e they}
 lay; I endeoured as I might to watche their next volley, & happely did {...} 75
 yt to come from vnder a certeyn building of Timber, **that** at **the** point of **the** ca{mpe}
 was sett vp, propped outwardly like a houell, & inwardly slanting like {a}
 Pentisse. I went streight to **the** Barricadoase, I willed **the** Gonners to {...}
 their pieces at **that** place. Sir William Winter himself made **that** sho{t...}
 at 2 tyres our gentlemen were displaced & **the** Trenche at great good {...} 80
 and by that 2 other tyres were given, in great hast leapes one of the{...}
 to the toppe of their Vauntmure **with** an Ensigne of a sheete & craues a
 Parlea: hereof streight was word sent mee by Iohn Zouche, who then had
the warde, I willed him & **the** TrencheMaster (one Captein Piers, a very sufficient
 & industrious man) to know what they would: yt was retourned vnto 85
 mee, **that** theyr Coronell would send one out to mee, to treate **with** mee, in case
 his Messenger might safely goe & retourne; vpon aduice yt was graunted
 there was presently sent vnto mee one Alexandro their CampMaster: he tolde
 me that certeyn Spaniards & Italians were there arriued vpon fayre
 speaches & great promises, **which** altogether vayne & false they fownd; & {that} 90
 yt was no part of their entent to molest or take any gouernement from y{our}
Maiesty for proof, that they were ready to depart as they cam, & deliuer in{to}
 my handes **the** Forte: myne answere was **that** for that I perceyved theyr
 people to stand of twoo nations Italian & Spanish I would give no a{nsver}
 vnlesse a Spaniard were likewise by: he presently went & retourned {with} 95
 a Spanish Captein. I then tolde **the** Spaniard **that** I knew their nation {to}
 haue an absolute Prince, one **that** was in good league & amity **with** your M{aiesty}
which made mee to merueyle **that** any of his people should bee fownd associates {with}
 them, **that** went about to maynteyne Rebelles against you & to disturb
 any your Highnes gouernements & taking yt **that** it could not bee his Pri{nces} 100
 will, I was to know by whome & for what cause they were sent

his Replye was **that the** King had not sent them, but **that** one Iohn Martines de Ricaldi Gouenour for **the** King at Bilbo had willed him to levie a band & to repaire **with** yt to St Androes & there to bee directed by this theyr Coronell here, whome he followed as a blind man not knowing whether. The other avouched **that** they were all sent by **the** Pope for **the** defence of **the** Catholica fede. My answeere was **that** I would not greatly haue merveyled yf men beeing commaunded by Naturall & absolute Princes did sometymes take in hand wrong actions; but **that** men & **that** of accoumpt, as some of them made showe of, should be carried into vniust desperate & wicked actions by one, **that** nether from God nor man could clayme any princely powre or empire, but indeed a detestable shaveling **the** right Antichriste & generall ambitious Tyrant ouer all right principalities, & patrone of **the** Diabolica fede, I could not but greatly restate in wonder; theyr fault therefore farre to bee aggrauated by **the** vilenesse of their Commaunder, & **that** at my handes no condition of composition they were to expecte, other then **that** simply they should render me **the** forte, & yield theyr selues to my will for lyfe or death: **with** this answeere he departed; after which there was one or twoo courses two and fro more to haue gotten a certeinty for some of their liues, but fynding that yt would not bee, **the** Coronell him self about Sunne setting came forth, & requested respitt **with** surceasse of armes till **the** nexte morning, & then he would giue a resolute answeere; fynding **that** to bee but a gayne of tyme for them & losse of the same for my self, I definitely answered I would not graunt yt, & therefore presently either **that** he tooke my offer or elles retourne & I would fall to my busines. He then embraced my knees, simply putting him self to my mercy, onely he prayed **that** for **that** night hee might abyde in **the** Forte, and **that** in **the** morning all should be putt into my handes: I asked hostages for **the** performance; they were giuen. Morning come I presented my companies in battaile before **the** Forte: **the** Coronell comes forth **with** x or xij of his chiefe ientlemen, trayling theyr ensignes rolled vp, & presented **them** vnto mee **with** theyr

liues & **the** Forte: I sent streight certein gentlemen in* to see their weapons and
armures layed downe & to gard **the** munition & victaile there lefte for spoile: 130
Then putt I in certeyn bandes, who streight fell to execution. There were
600 slayne; munition & vitteile great store, though much wasted through the
disorder of **the** Souldier, **which** in **the** furie could not bee helped. Those that I
gaue 135

gaue lyfe vnto, I haue bestowed vpon **the** Capteines & gentlemen, whose seruice
hath well deserued: for though **your** Maiesty may, & I doubt not shall haue g{reat}
services donne, yet truly for toyle and misery susteyned in yt, through len{gth}
and hardnesse of wayes, extremity of weather, coldnesse of season, conty{nuance of}
watching, & penury of vittayle, hardly by other Souldiers will **the** like aga{ine} 140
bee performed. **Your** Maiesty at this service had here but 800; they haue p{utt}
out of a Forte well fortiefied, better victailed, excellently stored **with** armure {&}
munition, 600 whereof 400 were as gallant & goodly personages, as of any {...}
I euer beheld. So hath yt pleased **the** Lord of hostes to deliuer **your** enemies into {your}
Highnes handes, & so too, as one onely excepted not one of yours is els lost or hu{rt} 145
I had in this iorney a great iewell of Captein Bingham, whose restlesse traue{il}
& grownded skill hath bene no small cause of shortening **the** same. I mos{t}
humbly therefore commend him to **your** Highnes favour and good opinion; **which** ({with}
creditt I dare gage) shall shewe deservedly to bee bestowed in euery empr{ise}
The Coronell at his coming forth shewed to **the** gentlemen, that I had sent in 150
before, a Coffe of his wherein he told **them** was all the threasure he had; yt
was brought to mee vntouched; I caused yt by **the** same Gentlemen to be opened
& tolde; yt came to 329^{li} v^s all in double oyalls of plate. I caused yt streight
to bee distributed emongst **the** bandes **that** kept **the** stand in **the*** fielde & warde in **the**
Campe **that** day, & sondry priuate gentlemen, **which** I learned to haue sought for no 155
spoile, I relieued therewith so farre as yt would goe: I trust **your** Maiesty will
allowe of yt. Other particularities about this service to **the** Bearer hereof I

referre; whose forwardnesse I could of right commend to **your Highnes** but **that** I fe{ar}
 you will take yt rather partialitie, then desert: but sure Madam affec{tion}
 shall neuer draw mee to deliuer vnto you in anyes behalf, what theyr w{orth} 160
 shall not beare; I humbly therefore beseeche **your Highnes** to affoord him **your** g{ood}
 countenaunce & fauour: for in this action he hath & will I doubt not m{...}^{*}
 If tydings of this event stay yt not, there is a great remaynder of this for{ein}
 force to bee yet looked for. I haue thought good therefore to stay yet for a {...}
your Maiesties admirall, & then dismissing him, to reteyne for this winter C{aptein} 165
 Bingham **the** Viceadmirall **with the** Achates & Merlian. For **the** defence of {...}
 partes by land, I leaue Iohn Zowtch Coronell of 4000 footmen & 50 hors{s}
 The trauailes & toile of **the** Souldiers hath bene so excessiue, as they are cle{ane}
 out of clothes, the country & season so coald, as not possible in such plight to {con}

tynewe yt. I most humbly therefore beseech **your Maiesty** in consideration of 170
your owne service & compassion of **the** poore, ragged, & naked creatures to affoord
 them a thorough pay; otherwise sure great lacke to **your** seruice yt will
 bring & as little gayne to **your** threasure by **the** delay.
 What is donne in **the** English pale I cannot heare. Connagh is greatly troubled
 by **that the** Earle of Clanricardes sonnes. I meane therefore **with** Gods leaue to take 175
the Prouince in my retourne & leaue **with Sir Nicholas** Malbey some of my
 force for **the** tymely quenching of these sparkes. Surely Madam I cannot
 fynd but a most hard & stiffenecked people of this Nation and farre from **the**
 bent of loving obedience vnto you. I feare I shall doe **your Highnes** litle service
 amongst them; for certainly a harde & forcible hand, I too well fynd, must 180
 bring them to duety, **which** I confesse, falles not **with** my nature. Your Highnes
 must determyn absolutely **with your** owne forces to defend & keepe in awe this
 land; expecte no country ayd, vnlesse you would giue raynes to Poperie,
 stelth, murdering, & all other insolency of lyfe. This wilbee heavy for your
Highnes to doe, I know, in this sort **that** now yt goeth; but in myne opinion **the** way 185

might bee fownd, **that** would make yt light vnto you. What part of
Ireland is yt, **that** beareth not **the** charge of an idle villanous kind of kerne
iij tymes tolde aboute **the** number of **your** Soldiers? & **the** end they serve to, onely
to bee instrumentes of revenges in private quarrels, or els **the** force & strength
of publike rebellions: now half **the** chardge **that** this scumme putteth **the** country
vnto, and doth nothing for yt, but maynteigne quarels, committ murders and
stealthes, vphold Rebellions; would, I say, fynd a competent number of English
Souldiers, **that** should roote out this detestable crewe, whereby **the** Country should
be quieted, causes of quarels & wronges taken away, iustice & redresse onely
at your handes sought, factious & rebellious myndes should neuer trouble
nor putt to chardg **your** Maiesty wanting ministers & adherentes to execute, and
seeing still forces ready to prevent. Since thus **the** chardg of **the** Realme
might bee lessened, the quiete and good state greatly advanched, **your** Maiesties
service and governemt furthered & made safer, why should yt not be putt
in vre? I leaue yt to **your** Highnes consideration and good pleasure. Once this
I can say, since my coming into this Governement could I not see any man of
those that in defence or offence of priuate quarell would haue fownd
an hundreth swordes at his devotion, **that** euer yett **without** pay in this your
service

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200

service would affoord mee a man; and now in this action (to notch **the**
willes of **the** good people) they that before my coming had beene contynuall
ayders of the Strangers **with** all necessaries, & to theyr workes had help{...}
them **with** an Hundreth churles (of **which** kind I now stood in great need)
the same persons came now into mee, & submitted them selues, **which** I took
imposing onely on them to putt mee in sufficient pledges and to furni{sh}
me for money **with** Beofes, and to gette mee an hundreth Churles to labor{.}
I was driven of from day to day, and in **the** end did fynde **that** this
coming in was onely to play on both sydes, till **the** euent of this action

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210

were known; yf one way, a Rebell as before, yf **the** other, a Subiec{te}
 and yet* surely so* but in showe, and **the** other in hart; for not one thing **with** go{od} 215
 will, till to threaten I beganne, could I gett of them, nether yet {to}
 ouerthrow **the** Forte, can I emongst 3 or 4 of them gett half{e...}
 that **the** Enemy by one of them was serued **with** in the building {...}
 Thus too tædiously perchaunce haue I helde **your** Maiesty **with** this discourse
 but hauing thought yt not vnnecessary to acquaint **your** Maiesty **with** the 220
 duetifulnesse & good mynd, **that** I fynd **the** People to carry, did embolden
 mee to yt. And so submitting all to **Your** Maiesties iudgment I take m{y}
 humble leave, beseeching **the** Almighty god to prolong **your** lyfe **with** contynuall
 health, & to governe you **with** his spright for **your** owne avayle & his glory,
 and mee euer to serve **your** Maiesty as I desyre. / In campe at Smer{wic}k 225
the xij of November 1580.

Yowr Hyghnes most & faythefull*
 subiect & seruaunt,

Arthur Grey

Note on hands

The text and address of the letter are in Spenser's formal italic hand, which appears regularly in letters from Grey to the Queen during this period. Grey has added his own subscription and signature. As noted below, the letter has suffered substantial damage to one side. The letter was also annotated at some point, with portions of the text underlined; these emphases were probably added after the letter was received in Westminster.

* **3 no smal{}**] The first, third, fifth, and seventh pages of the manuscript have suffered damage to the right side of the page, cutting off many characters, and sometimes words, in the margin. Where the identity of the missing letters (or in rare cases, words) has appeared likely enough, we have supplied them within {};
 in more ambiguous cases, we have simply supplied the mark of omission {...}.

* **28 •]** Indecipherable single character deleted.

* **37 ••]** w^t deleted.

* **60 realmes]** This word inserted above the line with a caret mark.

* **130 in]** This word inserted above the line with a caret mark.

* **154 the]** This word inserted above the line with a caret mark.

* **162 m{...}]** The words 'more dese{ ...}' have been inserted here below the line; there is no apparent deletion above, but the sense of the phrase seems to be 'for in this action he hath [well deserved] and will I doubt not more deserve'.

* **215 yet]** Inserted above the line, with a caret mark.

* **215 so]** Inserted above the line, with a caret mark.

* **227 most & faythefull]** Judging from other comparable parting salutations (see, for example, the conclusion of NA/PRO SP 63/82/54), Grey probably intended to write 'most humble & faythefull...'

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