NA (PRO) SP 63/85/5
Grey to the Queen, 10 August 1581

Address and Endorsement

To the Queenes
most excellent
Maiesty./

10.º Augusti 1581
From the Lord Deputy of Irelande
to the Queenes Maiesty
Entred./.

Text

It may please your Highnes vpon the contention betwixt Tirlagh & Odonell and an ouerthrow therein fallen to Odonell (as formerly I advertized thether) yt was by your Highnes councell here thought necessary, that I with some parte of your forces here should make to Tirlogh ward, both for the saving of Odonelles utter spoile & suppressing, (who since my coming, hath ever most duetifully carried him self) as also to stay the sayd Tirloghs further attemptes against the Pale, which reason gaue greatly to bee mistrusted, or rather certeinly looked for. The order & purpose of my expe=dition was this; Liffer is a Rier, that parteth Tyrone & Tirconell: vpon yt are twoo castelles, the one called the Liffer the other Strabane; these Castelles are the onely keyes of Odonelles countrey towardes Tirloghs: Sir Nicholas Malbey I directed with fowre Companies that he had in Connagh and his horssmen to ioyne that way with Odonell & so drawe downe to the Liffer. My self with eight Companies of Foot. & 300 Horss. to marche by the black water, & to meete them at the sayd Castle: the purpose was to haue taken these Castelles & deliuered the one into Odonelles handes, namely the Liffer, & into Strabane to haue putt an English warde; in case Tirlogh came not vnto me to the black water. This plott layde; a day or two before I entred on my iorney, I dispatched lettres to ••• Tirlogh signifying vnto him that bycause I heard of a great stirre betwene him & Odonell, & the same to haue gone further then I liked, or ought on their sydes, in case theyr dutties ••• to your Highnes had rightly bene weighed, I could not but put them both in mynd of them selues, & for theyr owne behooves & quiett of their Countreys take the trauell to repaire into those partes, for the appeasing of the quarrell, and therefore willed him to surcease from further forceable dealing against Odonell, & with all convenient speed to repaire vnto mee to the Black water, where I would endeouer to compownd the cause betwixt Odonell & him, & besydes empart somewhat vnto him of your Highnes pleasure concerning parte of his Petitions: which though I had not then receiued, yett knowing that the same would be no small cause to draw him to talk, & hauing besydes former direction from my Lords of your Counsell to vse
myne owne discretion in yt, for the holding of quietnes with him, I tooke
the boldenes to giue him that knowledg. On my way now •• at Dundalk
lettres from Tirlogh mett mee that he would meete me, as I had appointed

him, & that he had vpon my warning surceessd from further inva=
ding of Odonell; marry that he merueiled why I should make such præ-
paration as he heard of to take his Castelles, which to præuent he signified
that he had broken & in maner razed, as indeed he had. In my answere to
tese I did comfort him to the meeting, I willed him not lightly to credit
rumors, I doubted not but he should bee well satisfied in all things at our
meeting, wherevnto I referred the rest.

So I came to the Black water, where I stayed twoo or three dayes before I
heard any thing of him, in no small lacke both of Beoffe & grasse; yet to auoyd
all causes of quarrell on his part (farre against nature I confesse) I would
nether remoue to the farsyde being his Countrey, nor yett take a Cowe of the
Galloglasses, whose creat lyeth all on this syde vpon your Maiesties owne grownd
without answering you any rent, nor yett owing you, at least affoording you
any trowth or alleageaunce, but in good or euill holde to him & bend against
you. At the last he comes, & first he sendes his wyfe vnto me both for the
appointing of the place for the Parlea, as also to impart vnto mee some of his
griefes: the place he desyred migt bee vpon the Riuer, hee on the one syde, and
I on the other: his griefes were partly for iniuries doen him by the Baron
of Dunganon, & agayne that his Messenger (so he termed him) Captein Piers
was so long stayed with his Petitions: I answered that the Place was very
vnfitt, for the Riuer beeing betwixt, causes of such weight could nether bee
well debated, nether was yt convenient that euery stander by should bee
priuie to the things that therein were to passe, which in this sorte could not
bee eschewed; I wished therefore that either he would come to my Campe
vpon sufficient Saufconduct or Protection, or els that wee might meete
in the playne field, equall numbers on eyther syde appointed. As touching his
griefes, I sayde that whatsoeuer iustly could bee challenged by him not onely
of the Baron, but any other Subiect, he should bee assured of all iustice
that was in mee to helpe him too, & that hisself knewe, how I had
purposely appointed Commissioners for the taking of order in those causes.
Concerning Captein Piers his stay, that I looked euery howre for his retourne,
& that I tooke his stay now rather to growe vpon his owne particula
businesse, then that he was not dispatched by your Highnes neverthelesse that
I had receiued some notice of your pleasure in some of his Petitions, which I
was to

was to emparte vnto him, in case I found his dealings to answere the office
of a good & duetifull Subiect; I added to this that as he seemed to fynd
him self grieued with the forereckened causes, I was no lesse but more iustly
to complayne of his carriage, first that he had often made shew of armes
against the state, espesially at such tymes, as he fownd me bent to iorneyes
against your Maiesties open Rebelles, that he demaundd justice still by force,
that he was a dayly receaver of Traitours messengers, & by their owne
reportes a Combiner with them, that contrary to his peace late made and sworne with the late Earle of Essex, namely that he should apprehend & deliuer any Traitor, that should come vnto him, & bee demaunded of him, he of late flatly refused it to the Knight Marschall, who hauing knowldge that William Nugent was with him, did earnestly demaunde him of him, lastly that before any complaint exhibited & redresse required at your Maiesties handes, he had invaded & fought with Odonnell one of your Highnes good & duetifull sujects. In her reply to this, the best shee could say, was, that the dislike her husband had taken agaynst the Baron, had carried him into farther shewes of offence, then he indeed euer meant, neither that messengers from the Traitours had bene with her Husband could she denye, but that he euer combined with them, that she withstood, nether could she excuse the charge for William Nugent, Odonoll\'es matter shee defended, in that Odonell had first broken truce, & sett vpon her husband: finally whether her Husband would come into my Camp, or haue talke any otherwise, then that the Riuver might part vs, she doubted, but the next morning early that I should haue knowledg: so shee departed. His answere the next day was, that onely vpon the riuer he would speake with me: as force was, I agreed, thincking that yt might yet bee an enteraunce to further talke by Commissioners, to how small purpose soeuer yt otherwise were: as I meant yt, so by his owne request occasion fell out; for after a very little talke with him, hisself required, that bycause of the vnaptnes of the place, & inconuenience it might bring to the cause, to haue so many hearers, I would send ouer some Commissioners to treat with him of the affaires, the choice I tolde him was his owne fault, yet since I was content in the worse to assent to him, I wold not refuse it in the better, & so I presently sent ouer Iustice Dowdhall & Lodouick Briskett our Clerk of the Councell here with Instructions; in summe these, that the Peaces heretofore taken & covenanted by him with Sir Henry Sidney late Gouernour & the Earle of Essex should stand & bee performed by him; next that the cause now betwixt him & Odonell should bee heard & determined by such Commissioners as I should appoint; lastly that for performaunce hereof he should putt in’ such Ostages as I should require or lyke of; To stand to the former peaces he ytterly refused; marry to holde the Composition that with me he tooke this last yeare, he was content till Captein Piers his retourne with your Highnes resolution to his demaundes. To putt the cause betwixt him & Odonell to Commissoners, with much adoe he was thus farre brought, that by my Commissioners yt should be heard but adiudged onely by my self. Pledges for performaunce of these, he in maner disdayned to heare of, to bee sworne to the keeping of these Conditions, was all the surety that could be wonne of him; the conditions of his part consisted onely to haue former orders (by the Commissioners therefore appointed) against the Baron of Dunganon & others for injuries towards him & his executed by a day, as he likewise was to answere right, for such as were on his peace by the same orders, & that all wronges hereafter to happen, should likewise be tyed to the Commissioners order. Thus is there a peace with him concluded, which though nether for the surety
of yt, nor honour I can greatly commend, yet weighing the dislike your
Highnes carryth to enter into force with him, & besides hauing by your Highnes
Lords of Counsell there bene giuen to vnderstand, that by any meanes
to holde him in, & temporize with him should bee accepted for no small
good seruice, I haue endeuered in all that I might to frame the course to
your Maiesties lyking & their Lordships direction; in discourse whereof though
I haue bene the longer & perchaunce tedious, I am to craue humble pardon,
& withall to say for just excuse therein, that fynding hard taking and
diuersly construing of all my doings here hath willed me to lay before your
Highnes the whole circumstance of the action, submitting the same to the
censure your Highnes shall thinck yt to deserue.
And now I am humbly to craue your Highnes direction, how I shall deale
with Tirlagh, in case he shall refuse to stand to the order that I shall
award vpon the examyning of the cause betwene him & Odonell;

and surely

& surely I feare, constraint must bee the cause, yf it doe take place: on
the other syde your Highnes is to waye the great touch to your honour, besyde
discoerragement to others, yf Odonell bee lefte so to the others ravine & spoile
without your protecting & assistaunce, considered that the thwart is happened
him, chiefly for that he would neither come to composition with Tirlogh without
our assent here, nor yet retayne any Scottes, being by vs forwarned thereof.
My next iorney, & that forthwith, God not letting shalbee to the Mountaynes
here, whence I meane not to depart, till I haue broken that nest; whereof,
with Gods fauour, I make no doubt, though some liues yt will cost.
I can certefy your Highnes of no great seruice doen by the garrisons there now in
myne absence, for that yt hath pleased God, so to visite them with a pestilent
feuer, as noe other then halfe of the numbers are layde, & many haue dyed, so that
rather to defend then offend they haue bene druen: yf it bee not the Lords pleasure
to stay this his hand, & to giue health to those that are fallen downe, surely
Madam I shall not know what to doe without a new supply, or els to fill vp the
bandes with Irish here, as continually by these accidents of sicknesse and
running away of our English soldiers we are enforced to doe, a thing yett I
cannot denye but very perillous.
Your Maiesty is to remember the gouernement of Mounster, & to resolue of
some meet English man for yt, in the meane season the direction that from
my Lords there I haue now receiued, shalbee followed. Iohn Zowtche, I heare,
hath agayne donne a good service vpon those Rebell & slayne about 60 of
their kerne & Galloglasse.
I heare of very few & none indeed of accoumpt that make any reckoning of
the pardons your Highnes wonted great mercy vnworthely, as it shewes, hath
vouchsafed; well I pray god that the error of this clemency, yt if bee clemency,
to spare justice, bee not too late in this land fownde.
To conclude, I see that the sore of this countrey without force will not bee cured,
I see that force is chargeable to your Highnes, I see that charge is grieuous &
dislyking.
I see, that it pleaseth not God to giue the short successe & end to things, that your Maiesty
expecteth, I see that my seruice thus becomes altogether condemned & disfauored,
the contrary whereof, God I call to record, hath euer bene the onely proiect of my
gayne: am I then to be blamed, if I seeke to bee rid of that, that causeth me my greatest
grief, which is your disfaour, & putts me hopelesse of my greatest comfort, which is your
Highnes fauour & good grace? I trust not, & therefore with all humblenes & duety I
beseech your Highnes to have consideration of mee, & take me from this place, which I perceau,
doe what I can, wilbee the dayly encrease of my hell & continuall stay of my

blisse. And thus as he that desires no greater earthly happines of
God, then in all thinges to serue & content your Maiestie I take most humble
leave, beseching the same God alwayes to defend, direct & prosper your
Highnes. Dublin. this xth of August. 1581.

Yowr Hyghnes moste humble seruant
& faythefull subiect,

Arthur Grey
Note on hands
The text of the letter, with the address, is in Spenser's formal Italian hand, the norm for official letters from the Lord Deputy to the Queen. Grey has added his own subscription and signature. The endorsement, in a later hand, was probably added by a clerk handling the letter during the filing process.

* 19 ***] 'him' deleted.
* 22 ****] 'doen' deleted.
* 33 **] 'to' deleted.
* 59 meeet] 'meete' inserted above the line, with a caret mark.
* 109 in] 'in' inserted above the line, with a caret mark.