

**TNA: PRO SP 63/88/40***Grey to Walsingham, 27 January 1581/2*

This plainspeaking letter from Grey to Walsingham reveals the several fissures within the Dublin administration, and between Ireland and England, that would result in the collapse of Grey's government and his revocation: his betrayal by Fenton, Malby, and Loftus; the growing impatience of Burghley; the animosity of the Countess of Lincoln; Grey's exorbitance in dispensing rewards to his friends and allies in the Irish service; his increasing reliance on private communication with Walsingham to manage his failing relationship with the Queen; and his total opposition to the instructions being sent him from Westminster (particularly in regard to leniency for the Earl of Kildare and Baron of Delvin, and the general discharge of the soldiers). The letter is interesting for the way in which it shows Grey using the vagaries of the post, and the multiple copies and drafts of letters being sent him from London, as a means to anticipate and propitiate the Queen, and of course to lie to her. It is also interesting for the way in which its gossipy tone – complaints about Burghley, hyperbolic deflections of whispered accusations reported against him – conveys his trust in, and reliance on, Walsingham's favour and support. The text and subscription of this letter are in Grey's characteristic italic hand, and the signature is his customary mark. Spenser's usual secretary hand appears in the address; the endorsement, added upon filing of the letter in London, is in a distinct, later italic. An addressee note in Grey's hand (reading 'Mr Secretary'), appears on the fold below the address, indicating that Grey folded the letter before leaving it for Spenser to address and dispatch.

**Address and Endorsement**

To right Honorable  
my assured good  
frend Sir Fraunces  
Walsingham Knight  
Chief Secretary  
to her Maiesty./.

27 Ianuary 1582  
The Lord Gray.  
Lords

**Text**

Sir, the xx<sup>th</sup> of this moonethe I receaued yowr letters with a Copie of her Maiesties for reducyng of the whoale garrison heere too 3000. the accomplysshynge wherof I presently entered into as a booke heerwith sent shall particularly sheowe the same:\* The xxiii<sup>th</sup> after Ritch arryued with the originall of the forsaied Copie & oother yowr letters of the

xij<sup>th</sup> of December; by first & last of which I fynde what ientle enformations arre made of mee & how eazely her Maiestie is caryed too conceaue the hardliest of mee, well my God is yet styll where hee was & my rest as euer onely on Hym; yowrsellf I greatly thanck for the warnyng, & yowr aduyce I haue followed in wryghtyng to her Maiestie the Copie wherof I allso send yow, & therefore too yowr sellf wyll no further stande in my cleering for the guyftes I am chardged with; A note therof I thowght necessarie too beetake vnto yow that my faulte at onece, if there bee any, myght appeere & receaue iudgement: \* a forme lykewyze of the Custodiams I send wherby it maye appeere whyther the guyftes bee so free & withowte proffitt to her maiestie as the enformation woold affirme; but the best is her maiestie maye chooze whyther the guyftes shall stande or no of the landes & as for the goods, in Gods name, if they shallbee thowght so greate a matter lett them bee turned vppon myne owane head & verifie scripture, hee that hathe lyttle et cetera: and\* for the great studderies that I shuld guyue, I woonder wheruppon it is ment, truly Sir I neuer yet hard of any sutche petition, neyther doo I knowe of any of these pale rebels that hathe a stud of vj mares, & for the Irisshe, if it were a stud of 1000: the partie that woold fetche them myght very well dezerue them; but Lord what inuentions ar these, in trowthe they offend mee not so mootche in myne owane beehallf, as that any sutche shuld haue the daryng too abuse so her Hyghnes eares & beeleeff: Further that the Captaynes heere shuld bee in dislyke with mee for my guyuyng to oother & beestowyng nothyng on them; truly mysellf could yet neuer fynde any sutche lykelyhood, too the contrarie, it hathe been heere my chyeffiest coomforte lykyng & wyllyngnes that I haue\* tryed in them towards mee; neyther is there allmost a Captayne or officer of note heere that hathe not tasted of rewarde from mee how so euer my masters the enfourmers please too certifie, well my God I thanck that hoaldes my steps from farther awrye: But in deede my state is hard, I serued onely for my Princies fauoure & my Cuntries good, the one I haue lost, the oother lyttle auayled in; my sellf in pryuate condition halff vndoon,\* add to this that not one of my assocyats\* I can bynde vppon, thowghe cause I knowe noane, vnless it bee that\* so many shrappes\* fall not too\* thier shares\* as woont was & no small pleasure I am sure it dyd them to finde\* by yowr letters\* that 60\* was so mootche offended\* with mee.\*

I perceaue by oothers pryuate letters from hym that 324\* is a greate obseruer\* & fawltfynder with thynges heere; I neyther waye it, nor dowght but too bee fownde euer honester & iuster in dealyng then hymself & so I leaue hym, onely I wysshe of God that hee woold bee my chardger face too face beefore her Maiestie & the rest of yow. In a letter to 111\* hee fyndes fyrst fawlte with the beestowyng of the landes, as yf they had been all guyuen awaye in feesymples, next at the chardge of the pencioners as thowghe the same were alltoogether my default, where how lyttle therin I am too bee tootched my late aduertissement by Sir Nycholas Mallbye declares, & heere fursoothe a specyall note hee makes of hys seeyng of them there in England, as thowghe it were an vnwoonted thyng\* a Ientleman seruyng heere too haue lycence for a tyme too repayre ouer, & yet truly Sir I dare auowe that\* by\* my passpote there were neuer twoo pencioners seene there attonece; lastly hee falls into a detestation of this place & termes it a gullf of consumyng threasure, as in deede truly hee maye, & the more throwghe hys good meanes & aduyce, for which if repentance & Gods mercies befall not the greater hys soale wyll

awnsswer in the gullff of hell.

Amongst these dischargies Ned Dennie is one; & if now hee bee putt from the Custodiams that I haue guyuen hym it wyll goe hard with hym; I wysshed too hym allso an oother thyng if it had stooode in my guyft, which myght in deede doo hym sum good the oothers beeyng but very tryffles; it is the abbey of Fowre in westmethe wherof my Lord of Delluyn hathe by lease onely an estate of\* three or xxiiij yeares: gett it for hym Sir & hee shall haue good cause too thynck yow freend hym: In the rest if the discreditt bee layed vppon mee that the grawntes maye not stande; healp yet what yow maye that Ihon Dyue & Warrham St linger maye haue theyrs & the bonde of the benefitt too yow shall bee myne.\* I long now to heare of the resolution of the plott yow wrote of: but whyther that fall owte or no, I beeseetche yow forgett nott my plott\* too bee taken from this miserable place; which obtayned my earthely blyss restored I shall accounte.

The Baron of Dungannon this oother weeke dyd\* a seruyce of greate importance, in takyng one Ihon Cusacke the princypall practizer in this last consspiracie, the aduyce & perswasion of Sir edward Moore was no small furtherance therof I praye yow therefore haue mynde of that that by Ned Denny in hys beehallff I requested; & if miserie drowned not ryght & pollicie, it were requysite that the Baron had a fee farme of a hundrethe marckes or powndes of those landes that by this meanes wyll bee brought too her Maisties handes; hyssellf meanethe, if God lett not shortly too repayre ouer, & then my thowghroghe commendation hee shall haue,\* thowghe perchaunce hys speede bee the woors for it./

Now too the partie apprehended; hee reuealethe mootche & yet is not halff sease ouer, the particulares of the matter prezent tyme woould not suffre too bee emparked, a note of theyr names that hee hathe detected allreadie heerwith is sent:

The Lord & Lady of Deluin\* hee vtterly confowndes: & whowme beesydes hee tootchethe the\* parable enclosed wyl sheowe\* yet too mee it seemes not of any regard in 10\* behallf, but rather a forgerie of deluin\* too encourage the rest by the hope of\* 10.\* vnsowght or vnthowght of it was delyuered & so yow haue it too vze at yowr owane\* best discretion, myne opinion I haue said of it.

There arre Sir Lucas & Sir Robart Dillons with Sir Ihon Pluncnett that haue & doo styll dischargd the partes of zelus & vpryght seruantes for shame lett them taste of sum rewarde beesydes woordes in the disposition of these esscheated landes.

And lastly Sir I beeseetche yow gett mee warrant for my due entertaynement, & thowghe no gayne maye bee affourded mee or myne, yet for Gods sake lett not my ryght bee withheald, yet take mee awaye quyckly & guyue mee what yee lyst. The allmyghtie God euer keepe, guyde & bless yow. Dublin xxvij<sup>th</sup> of January 1581.

Yowrs most assuredly  
euer,

## Arthur Grey

I fynde by letters from my lady\* of lincolne\* that the cause of 76\* continuance in this sorte is long of my not aduertising the state of\* his cause; wherein as I am wrong conceaued of, so I praye yow that I maye bee cleered by yow as occasion serueth; all my knowledge & presumption is long since & sundrie tymes delyuered, neyther doo I fynde, if that serue not any thyng of new too tootche hym\* neyther doo I thynck it amyss that hee\* were called ouer.\*

Iames Fitz Christopher there yow arre to see well looked too for greate matter is lyke too fall owte agaynst hym, & if Ihon Cusacke saye trowthe there wyll not one honest Nugent bee fownde heere.

As I was sealyng vp heerof yowr packett of the xx<sup>th</sup> of this date came vnto mee, wherein I fynde nothyng requyres awnsswer\* in these not tootched; & as for the oother entended dischargd, a Gods name, lett it coome, there shall no more any bones bee made at\* it, & then Caueat ademptor, is all the care I wyll take: good Sir, stryke hard the iron whyllst I perceauie it is hott now, for my callyng hoame, the lyttle hoape wherof that these yowr letters browght mee, made mee eate my supper with a better appetite then at any meale these twoo moonethes past I had, a thowzande thanckes I render for the newes, onely feare of a cosnerlyng carde by the next beereaues the full coomfort of the ioye, but perfect it\* good Sir, I wyll not bee vnthanckfull.

## Textual Notes

\* **same:]** Immediately to the left of this word, and on three further occasions on the same page, oblique lines appear in the left margin. These (occasionally accompanied by the word 'wanting', and keyed to underlinings in the text of the letter) appear to be marks added to the manuscript during the extensive Victorian cataloguing process that resulted in the *Calendars*. We have ignored them here.

† *after judgement:]* Single-character deletion, possibly '&'.  
†

\* **et cetera: and]** Four- or five-letter deletion *after et cetera:* (possibly 'next'), and 'and' inserted above the line.  
†

\* *after I haue]* 'ty' deleted.  
†

\* *after halff vndoon]* '&', and two or three other illegible letters deleted.  
†

\* **assocyats]** In cipher.  
†

\* **that]** Inserted above the line.  
†

\* **shrappes]** In cipher.  
†

\* *after not too]* 'theyr' deleted.  
†

\* **thier shares]** In cipher.  
†

\* **them...finde]** In cipher.  
†

\* **yowr letters]** In cipher.  
†

\* **60]** Queen Elizabeth.  
†

\* **offended]** In cipher..  
†

\* **mee]** In cipher..  
†

\* **324]** William Cecil, Lord Burghley.  
†

\* **greate obseruer]** 'oberse' deleted *after greate*, and 'obseruer' inserted above the line.  
†

\* **111]** Unknown cipher.  
†

\* *after vnwoonted thyng]* 'that' deleted.  
†

\* *after auowe that]* 'I since' deleted.  
†

\* **by]** Inserted above the line.  
†

\* *after estate of]* 'xx' deleted.  
†

\* *after myne.]* 'I long' deleted.

- †
- \* *after my plott]* Five- or six-letter deletion, beginning 'da'.
  - †
  - \* **oother weeke dyd]** Four-letter deletion *after weeke*, and 'dyd' inserted above the line.
  - †
  - \* **haue]** Inserted above the line.
  - †
  - \* **the Lord & Lady of Deluin]** In cipher (the actual transliteration would read 'the L and La of...').
  - †
  - \* **hee tootchethe the]** In cipher.
  - †
  - \* **enclozed wyl sheowe]** In cipher.
  - †
  - \* **10]** Unknown cipher.
  - †
  - \* **deluin]** In cipher.
  - †
  - \* **the hope of]** In cipher.
  - †
  - \* **10]** Unknown cipher.
  - †
  - \* **owane]** Inserted above the line.
  - †
  - \* **my lady]** In cipher.
  - †
  - \* **lincolne]** In cipher.
  - †
  - \* **76]** Gerald Fitzgerald, eleventh Earl of Kildare.
  - †
  - \* *after state of]* 't' deleted.
  - †
  - \* **hym]** In cipher.
  - †
  - \* **that hee]** In cipher.
  - †
  - \* **called ouer]** In cipher.
  - †
  - \* **awnsswer]** 's' deleted at the end of this word.
  - †
  - \* *after made at]* 'then' deleted.
  - †
  - \* *after perfect it]* 'god' deleted.

## Annotations

**a Copie of her Maiesties]** See SP 63/87/45, the Queen to the Lord Deputy on 12 December 1581. Note that Grey claims in a letter to the Queen on 25 January (SP 63/88/39) that he had received her letter on that very day; in this letter he admits to Walsingham that he knew of the order for the reduction of the garrison five days previously.

**a booke heerwith sent]** The enclosure, listing the names of the soldiers discharged, is extant; see 63/88/40/1; 63/88/40/2, a companion book, lists the names of those footmen and horsemen still in service throughout Ireland.

**Ritch]** Barnaby Rich, the soldier and author; see biographies.

**the guyftes I am chardged with]** Grey had recently been accused, in letters written by his associates in Dublin, of exorbitant and unlicensed largesse in the rewards shown to his servants (like Spenser) and strategic allies; these charges would contribute substantially to the perceived disfavour attending his ultimate recall. The informations made against him seem to have originated with Thomas Jenyson, the auditor, and with a subset of the Council – Loftus, Fenton, and Malby – who all wrote privately to Burghley and Walsingham (see SP 63/86/71 and 63/86/72, with the enclosure 63/86/72/1, dated 20 November 1581, for Fenton's backstabbing report; and 63/87/42, dated 11 December, for the first of Jenyson's reports to Burghley). Grey informed Walsingham in early January (63/88/9) that he had recently discovered the machinations of some of his most esteemed associates, but by then it was too late. He always maintained that he had shown neither more nor less independence or profligacy than his predecessors in the post.

**Custodiams]** A term used in Irish law to describe the three-year grant of the benefit (or 'use') of crown land; see glossary. Such grants were commonly made of newly-escheated estates, as a short-term benefit made to loyal servitors while the crown's ultimate plans for the land were decided.

**hee that hathe lyttle et cetera]** Grey is presumably thinking of the parable of the talents, Matthew 25:14-30. His point is that, if the gifts of goods be found upon consideration excessive, they should be charged upon his own estate, so that he may prove the truth of the scripture, that the poor shall be made poorer.

**studderies]** Grey had apparently been accused of appropriating the very valuable commodity of an established horse studery; given his response, it seems that Walsingham's information must have been fairly vague.

**awrye]** Misdoing (a noun).

**in pryuate condition halff vndoon]** His personal fortune by this time half spent in the Irish service.

**bynde vppon]** Depend upon.

**thowghe cause...as woont was]** 'I don't know why my associates are so unreliable, unless it is because they receive fewer favours and rewards than from former Deputies'. Grey's representation of his 'associates' and clients in the Pale government as dogs, used to scraps ('shrappes') from his table, prepares the way for Spenser's later representation of the recall of Artegall, in *The Faerie Queene* V.xii, from Irena's island.

**feesymp]** A fee simple was the simplest common law form of the customary inheritable estate in land; it is described in the first chapter of the first book of Sir Thomas Littleton's fifteenth-century *Tenures*, reprinted with annotations as Sir Edward Coke's *The First Part of the Institutes of the Lawes of England* (1625). Grey's point is that he had not made permanent grants of the estates, but only three-year grants of the benefits arising therefrom.

**chardge of the pencioners]** Burghley had apparently received further complaints about Grey's creation of 'pensioners' – discharged soldiers who were granted permanent livings by the Deputy when cashiered.

**my late . . . Mallbye]** Grey had written to the Privy Council by Sir Nicholas Malby on 11 December 1581 (SP 63/87/38), accounting for his conduct in respect of pensioners, and enclosing a list of all the new pensioners created during his deputyship (63/87/38/3).

**Ned Dennie]** Sir Edward Denny; see biographies.

**Ihon Dyue]** One of Grey's 'special favourites', who allegedly profited excessively from the Lord Deputy's grant to him of the lands and goods of the traitor David Sutton; Grey reported the gift in his letter to the Privy Council of 9 December 1581 (SP 63/87/18), and again in the book recording his gifts, 63/88/40/3, an enclosure to the present letter.

**Warrham St linger]** Sir Warham Sentleger; see biographies.

**the bonde . . . bee myne]** Grey here touches lightly on the complex traffic in benefits and loyalty which the patronage system could quickly generate. Effectively he asks to stand as broker to Walsingham's favour to John Dive and Warham St Leger.

**the resolution . . . yow wrote of]** Obscure.

**Ihon Cusacke]** Geoffrey Fenton forwarded to Walsingham and to Burghley the confessions of John Cusacke, one of the Baron of Delvin's supporters, on 28 January 1582 (SP 63/88/47, 63/88/47/1, 63/88/47/2, 63/88/48, 63/88/49). In addition to conspiring with Delvin and his wife, he had raised money for the rebellion by mortgaging his estate to a relative.

**Sir edward Moore]** One of the leading Leinster captains, who commanded a band of horsemen until the discharge reported here, but still kept the ward of Philipstown. He had been knighted, apparently some time in 1579, for his service.

**miserie]** Niggardliness.

**fee farme]** A fee simple; see note above.

**hysself meanethe...too repayre ouer]** O'Neill seems not to have made this journey.

**thowghe perchaunce...woorss for it.]** Grey worries, perhaps slightly histrionically, that Hugh O'Neill will receive less favour from the Queen by bringing Grey's letter of commendation, than if he were to repair to England uncommended.

**the partie apprehended]** John Cusack.

**hallf sease]** Obscure; Grey seems to be saying that the process of examination is not yet half completed.

**prezent tyme]** The heavy volume of business at the current time.

**detected]** Implicated.

**forgerie of deluin]** False information supplied about the Baron of Delvin; Cusack seems to have claimed that Delvin had been in contact with the King of Spain.

**Sir Lucas & Sir Robart Dillons]** Sir Lucas Dillon and Sir Robert Dillon, councillors in Ireland; see biographies.

**Sir Ihon Plunckett]** Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench in Ireland, he died in September 1582.

**the disposition of these esscheated landes]** The title to the lands of traitors passed to the crown; these lands were then often redistributed to faithful subjects as rewards.

**warrant for my due entertaynement]** As usual, Grey closes with a plea for remuneration, and a following plea for recall.

**my lady of lincolne]** Elizabeth Fiennes de Clinton, sister of Gerald Fitzgerald, eleventh Earl of Kildare; see biographies. As the Queen's second cousin, she had substantial access at court, and Grey understandably feared her after the arrest of the Earl.

**the state of his cause]** The Countess of Lincoln had obviously alleged that her brother remained imprisoned in Dublin not through his own guilt, but through the Lord Deputy's dilatoriness in proceeding with charges against him. The Countess, along with Kildare's wife Mabel, was at this time pressing for Kildare's removal to England (see e.g. 63/80/46), to answer the allegations against him in front of the Privy Council (which she rightly believed he would find much more sympathetic than Grey).

**too tootche hym]** To bring him into suspicion.

**James Fittz Christopher]** James FitzChristopher Nugent. Malby and Fenton wrote to Walsingham in 3 October 1581 (SP 63/86/7) requesting that James Nugent, who had got into England with the Lady of Delvin, be apprehended. He was subsequently captured and interrogated by Robert Beale and Sir John Popham (SP 63/89/29).

**see well looked too]** Grey warns Walsingham to keep James FitzChristopher under surveillance for, as one of the Nugents, he is likely to be named by Cusack as a conspirator.

**the oother entended dischardge]** The queen required a further discharge of 700 soldiers, the direction for which (dated either 25 or 28 January) Grey received almost immediately (see SP 63/88/42 for a surviving draft of Elizabeth's letter).

**no more any bones bee made at it]** It will not be resisted.

**Caueat ademptor]** Let the buyer beware.

**cosnerlyng carde]** A 'cozenerling' (diminutive of 'cozener') is apparently a petty cheater or fraud, and his card the false promise – i.e. of his revocation – that the weary Grey fears Walsingham has sent him.