

TNA: PRO SP 63/91/53*Grey to Walsingham, 30 April 1582*

This short letter illustrates some of the perils and vicissitudes of military service in Elizabethan Ireland, as well as contemporary networks of patronage, commendation and reward, and the way in which these were supported by epistolary practices. James Vaughan may have been a member of the eminent Vaughan family of Tilleglas, or Talgarth (in Breconshire, or Brecknockshire, Wales). This is one of a series of letters written on his behalf from Ireland to England in 1582, including two others in Spenser's hand: SP 63/91/52, from Grey to Burghley (also dated 30 April), and SP 63/92/30, from Grey and the Council to the Privy Council in England (dated 11 May). The three letters are written with almost identical wordings (the other two mentioning that Vaughan had lost 1000 pounds at the hands of Turlough Luineach). The production of such similar letters, using similar phrases in a different order, dispatched several weeks apart, suggests the use either of some form of letter-book (containing notes about the soldiers, to be used in such letters, and/or templates of suitable letters of commendation), or of a letter book containing copies of letters sent. Nicholas White wrote to Burghley on 9 May, suggesting that Vaughan was Burghley's kinsman (SP 63/92/24), and indeed the majority of the further letters of commendation that pass from various hands in Ireland, either on Vaughan's behalf or referring to him, are sent to Burghley (22 June 1582, from Henry Sidney, 63/93/51; 4 December 1582, from Nicholas White, 63/98/11; 5 May 1583, from Nicholas White, 63/102/7; 28 May 1585, from Adam Loftus, 63/116/61; 4 June 1585, from Nicholas Bagenall, 63/117/6). This connection with Burghley seems to have been profitable to Vaughan, who wrote to his patron on 13 September 1583, to thank him for a grant of attainted lands (63/104/74).

The address and text of the letter, including the subscription, are in Spenser's characteristic cursive secretary hand. Grey has added his signature. The endorsement, presumably added when the letter was being filed in London, is in a later hand. An addressee note ('Secretary./') appears at the left foot of the letter's recto, in Spenser's mixed hand.

Address and Endorsement

To the Honorable my
very especiall good frend
Sir Fraunces Walsingham
Knight Chief Secre-
tary to her Maiesty. /

31 April 1582*
From the Lord Deputy
on the behalfe of
Iames Vaughan

Text

Sir, this bearer Iames Vaughan late lieutenant vnto Captein Ienkins having by the space of these xx^y yeares very well and painfully served her Maiesty both here in this Realme & in Fraunce, whereof xv yeares he bare office in the field, and in the same lost both some of his lymmes & the most part of his substaunce being taken Prisoner by Tirlagh Lenagh, and in all that tyme reported to be a tall Soldier & an honest man, is now amongst the rest discharged of her Maiesties pay. Wherevpon intending now to repaire ouer into England he hath earnestly required my favorable lettres vnto you in his behalf to testify his long good service here. Somuch whereof as hath bene performed since my Coming into this land, I can assure you to have bene both full of good indeavour & valewe. The rest before my tyme is likewise wittnessed by those which are of very good creditt here, to have bene no lesse Commendable. And therefore I beseech you to shewe what favour & good Countenance you may in such reasonable Causes as he meaneth to sollicit, the rather to encorage both him & otheres by his ensample to the like good endeavour. And so leaving him to your favorable Consideracion, I betake you to Almighty god. Dublin the last of Aprill. 1582. /

Youres most assuredly,

Arthur Grey

Textual Notes

* **31 April 1582]** Obviously a secretarial mistake for 30 April.

Annotations

Captein Jenkins] William Jenkins is listed in January 1582 as being in charge of one of the companies of foot discharged in Leinster. SP 63/88/40(1).

in Fraunce] Vaughan may have been involved in the failed English expedition to Newhaven (Le Havre) in 1562-3: a report was made to Cecil on 7 January 1563 about one 'young Vaughan', who had just been made lieutenant there (*CSPF 1563*, p. 30).

tall] Courageous, valiant (*OED*, *a.* 3); see 63/90/1, *supra*.

lost both . . . substaunce] Vaughan's loss of his **lymmes** may be less serious than it sounds: the word may refer to any part of the body, and Grey may just mean that he has sustained bodily injury; his **substaunce** is his wealth, property (*OED*, *n.*, 16a). See headnote.

amongst . . . Maiesties pay] On the discharges and their consequences, see SP 63/90/1 (above) and notes.

good Countenance] Favour, approval, patronage.