

**TNA: PRO SP 63/94/15***Grey et al. to the Privy Council, 10 July 1582*

This letter was evidently sent to England along with a number of enclosures (five of which survive in the State Papers Ireland, though there could have been more). Together, these documents provide information about two developments in northern and western Irish affairs: the gathering of a large force of Scots under Con O'Donnell, believed by Grey, Nicholas Malby and others to be under the protection of Turlough Luineach; and the promises of obedience obtained from the Earl of Clanricard, and the English administration's attempts to use him to contain his sons. Taken together, and read alongside other correspondence from the time, they clearly reveal the importance and influence of Malby, Governor of Connaught, in regional and national Irish politics (and on this, see Brady 1994): not only gathering information for Grey and backing up his requests for more troops, but having considerable autonomy to prosecute English affairs in Connaught, and being personally rebuked and restrained by Elizabeth for his supposed expenses.

The letter is written in a neat secretary hand (not Spenser's); Grey and members of the Irish Council have added their autograph signatures. The address is in Spenser's usual secretary hand, and the later endorsement – probably added when the letter was being filed in London – is in a distinct hand.

**Address and Endorsements**

To the right Honorable our very good  
Lords and otheres of her  
Highnes privy Councell/

Lords  
10 Iuly 1582  
The Lord Deputy and  
Councel.

**Text**

It maye please your Lordshipes: Since the departure of Sir Nicholas Malbye with the Erle of Clanricard, whereof wee formerly enformed you wee have received advertizementes from him of a gathering of a greate force of horsemen Irishe footemen and Scottes, vnder the leading of Con ODonnell (butt beeing for the more parte of the retynewe of Turlough Lennoughe,) of purpose to invade Connaght and to make theire entrie vppon Oconnour Sligoes Cuntrey, to prevent which and to strengthen Oconnour / Sir Nicholas sent presentlie suche englishe forcies as hee hadd to those partes, and proclaymed an hostinge

of that Province to withstand the purpose of those of Vlster, butt the Province beeing drawn into many partes with pryvat quarrells have not vsed eny dilligence in the rysinge out or fidelitie one to another, whereby the Scottes have entred and spoyled the Countrey, as in the inclosed Lettre from the Governour maye appeere. Hee demandeth aide and reliefe from hence, which wee have nott to geve vppon eny soddein, for if wee shoulde remove theis fewe in the Pale which are placed for the prosecution of Th'oConnours wee give open waye to the spoyle of the whole Pale, or if wee shoulde direct the forcies in Mounster, which nowe are imployed vppon Desmond and FitzMorice to resorte to the aide of Mr Malby in Connaght, wee shoulde give scope to the Rebels of Mounster to spoyle all the Countie of Kilkenny, as they have alreadie Tipporarye./

This draught or device of Turloughe Lennoughe tendeth to this (as wee can gather) to withdrawe her Maiesties forcies from the action againste Th'oconnours and dothe make more playne thatt which wee have longe founde in his disposicion and have often advertized, to accepte euery oportunitie thatt hee can finde againste her Maiesty beeing no waye provoked with eny offence of discourtesye to the valewe of a heaire, and therefore if eny bee thatt have perswaded your Lordshipes that the Irishe woulde lyve in quyett, if they weere not provoked maye see his error by this outrage of Turlough Lennough, which is as wee take it, butt the begynning of the Northern troubles.

Wee perceave also by other privat Lettres, that Sir Nicholas Malbye hathe beene so rebuked in England for layinge charge partelie vppon hir Maiestie butt moste chiefly vppon the Inhabitauntes in his rules vppon suche like extremities, as hee will not attempte to stoppe this soddein mischief without warraunt, by eny charge to bee layed vppon her Highnes or the Countrey. And therefore as wee have alreadie given him auctoritie to vse his discrecion for this service: So are wee to crave her Maiesties resolucion from your Lordshipes what shalbee don for the suppressing of thies violencies, and the necessarie defence of the good Subiectes especially of Oconnour Sligo, whome wee esteeme one of the soundest of all Connaght, for the streight\* wherevnto wee are dryven by the restraynt given by her Maiestie nott to encrease eny extraordynarie chardge and the necessitie of the Service dryveth vs to this extremitye, thatt whatsoever wee see convenient, wee dare nott yett resolve vppon eny thinge without her Maiesties expresse direccion./

Finally, because your Lordshipes may also bee informed of the state of the rest of Connaught, wee sende you the Lettre, which Iohn and Vlick Burke have sent to Sir Nicholas Malbie, after they had parlee with their father beesides Galway, whereby yee maye gesse att their insolencies, and howe farre they bee from the Con디션 of beeing Pledgies, and howe farre different from their fathers opinion of them, appearing in his Lettre to Sir Nicholas which wee sende your Lordshipes also inclosed./ Whatt your Lordshipes shall nowe resolve for the Erle, wee wolde gladlie knowe, beeing willing to followe your direccions therein, butt if hee bee restrayned till his sonnes or eny of them shall yeelde them selves to prison, wee thinck hee shall neuer inioye his Libertie, and therefore have suspended the revoaking of him to Dublin, notwithstanding your late direccion: Hee is nowe at Galway sicke of the Iandies, and attended by some of the Governours servauntes, att whose request and by Sir Nicholas advice, wee have graunted

pardon to his sonnes if they will accept it. Whatt her Maiestie shall resolve in bothe theis cawses, and especially for the matter of the invasion, wee once agayne praye your Lordshipes presently to wryte And so committ you to the Lorde. Att Dublin the x:<sup>th</sup> of Iulye 1582.

Your Lordshipes assured to commaunde./.

Arthur Grey

Adam Dublin cancellarius

Henry Wallop

Lucas Dillon

Edward waterhouse

Geffray Fenton

## Annotations

**the departure . . . enformed you]** Clanricard had been committed to Malby's custody in June (see SP 63/93/35), but had not been committed to imprisonment in Dublin Castle; it is not certain whether the letter that Grey speaks of has survived.

**advertizementes]** Perhaps in SP 63/94/15/1, one of the letters that Grey will go on to mention enclosing (see below).

**a gathering . . . greate force]** The Privy Council had received, and would continue to receive, copious information about this gathering. Malby's letter to Walsingham of 12 July 1582, for example, speaks of 120 horsemen, 1200 footmen, and 800 'other loose kernes' (SP 63/94/20). Having passed over Con O'Donnell's country to Sligo, where they committed a number of preys and spoils, and having attacked the Castle of Sligo, they were repulsed. The Earl of Clanricard, evidently anxious to prove his loyalty, had written to Walsingham on 5 July, to warn him likewise: 'I thought good according my bonden duetie to advertise your honor aswell of the Comming of Certaine scottes into the northe of Conaght of whose employtes I herd nothing as yet' (SP 63/94/10).

**Con ODonnell]** Hugh O'Donnells's young rival in Tirconnell and, in Malby's words, 'Tirlaghe Lenoghs only fauorit' (SP 63/94/20); see biography of Hugh O'Donnell.

**Oconnour Sligoes Cuntrey]** In the north of Connaught. The O'Connor Sligo were a branch of the O'Connor family. The accompanying correspondence reveals that they had been especially hurt by this Scottish incursion. Malby spoke of the loyalty of the O'Connot Sligo himself, and urged that he be protected: '[he] is to be cherished, if the state will haue any care of souche a faithfull subiect' (SP 63/94/15/1).

**proclaymed an hostinge]** Called up armed forces in his assistance. *OED* claims that the word **hosting** is particularly applied to armed risings in Ireland. *A view* discusses occasions 'when the Lord deputye hathe Raised anie generall hostinges' (ll. 4607-13).

**drawen . . . another]** Local quarrels have prevented the hosting from taking place with any effectiveness or unity.

**the Scottes . . . the Countrey]** Abundantly described in the enclosed correspondence, not just the letter from Malby, e.g. a letter from William Clifford to Malby, which also tells that they have 'burnt slygoe & other townes adiacent, & toke xx hondred cowes' (SP 63/94/15/2).

**the incloased . . . Governour]** This is SP 63/94/15/1, a letter from Nicholas Malby to Grey, 8 July 1582. As well as describing the invasion of Scots from the North and remarking that 'sondrye of the Scottes wear slayne', Malby asserts the close connections between the Scots and Turlough Luineach: 'what *Ocane* is to Tyrloghe Lenoughe, your honor dothe well knowe'. He goes on to say that if 'Tyrloghe Lenoughe be not bridled in tyme he will pusshe at the best game, for if he may be suffred to bringe *Connought* to his obedience, then halfe the Realme is at his deuotion. This is the mann that is thought in Englande wilbe an honest mann if he wear lett alone'.

**wee have . . . eny soddein]** We cannot immediately give.

**the prosecution of Th'oConnours]** 'Thoconors be now assembled all togyther and do mynde to do their wourst. they wander from place to place. The captaines be after them but yet haue not met with them' (Malby to Walsingham, 25 June 1582, SP 63/95/56).

**Desmond and FitzMorice]** Gerald Fitzgerald, Earl of Desmond, and Thomas Fitzmaurice, sixteenth Lord of Kerry and Baron of Lixnaw, both in rebellion in Munster; see biographies.

**Kilkenny . . . Tipporarye]** The conflict between Desmond and the O'Connors in Tipperary was described by Grey to Walsingham on 2 July 1582 (SP 63/94/4).

**draught or device]** Both terms mean a plan, plot, or scheme.

**and have often advertised]** A common claim of Grey's.

**Nicholas Malbye . . . rules]** See Brady 1994: 285, on Malby's brief disgrace.

**as hee . . . her Highnes]** The charge against Malby seems to be that he has no warrant to use his discretion in the suppressing of rebels: a warrant that Grey has hitherto given him, and thinks it necessary to give him.

**the restraynt . . . chardge]** On this financial restraint, see, for example, SP 63/88/2 above.

**the Lettre]** SP 63/94/15/4, from Ulick Burke and his brother, 'Jo. de Burgo', to Malby, in which they write that they are willing to submit, if Malby can obtain assurances of their pardon from Elizabeth.

**Pledgies]** Pledges, or hostages given in assurance of obedient behaviour.

**his Lettre . . . also incloased]** SP 63/94/15/5. Clanricard writes that his sons are 'redy to searve her Maiestie against the scottes or any other that shall resist her highnes either with their owne Company or in Company with any other', but that they beseech Elizabeth's 'mercy [...] in granting them their pardon'. In his earlier letter to Walsingham (of 5 July), Clanricarde himself had said that on 4 July (by virtue of a commission from Malby), he had met his sons, had had 'Certaine conference and speche' with them, and had persuaded them 'to be in redines to searve against the scottes, and they haue aundwered me, that they are bothe willing and redy to do her Maiestie any service they cane' (SP 63/94/10).

**have suspended . . . direccion]** Discussion about the fate of Clanricard had been going on for some time: Grey and the Council write to the Privy Council on 22 June 1582 'Your Lordships seame to hould yt convenyent that for preventinge of all badd Attemptes hereafter by the said Earles sonnes against the State They should remaine as pledges by tornes fom three monethes to three monethes in the Castle of Dublin whervnto the Earle promised to procure them to giue their Consentes' (SP 63/93/45).

**Iandies]** Jaundice (of which Clanricard complains in a letter to Walsingham of 5 July, SP 63/94/10).