

**TNA: PRO SP 63/81/1***Grey to Walsingham, 1 March 1580/1*

This short letter bears witness to the copious and urgent correspondence that passed between Ireland and England throughout 1581 on the subject of the Earl of Kildare's involvement in the rebellion of James Eustace, Viscount Baltinglass. Kildare was suspected as 'a principall comforter of the vicecounte to enter into this action', on the specific charge that 'he certainelie knewe the vicecount woulde breake out, and hadd assured intelligence of diuers his principall Councillors and partakers, and that notwithstanding hauing the vicounte after in his companye, hee rather guarded him from apprehention, then assented or liked to haue apprehendid him' (SP 63/79/26). He was imprisoned in Dublin Castle with Baron Delvin, who was likewise suspected of involvement in the rebellion.

A crucial piece of evidence against Kildare was the testimony of Adam Loftus, Archbishop of Dublin, who had met him during a muster on the Hill of Tara, County Meath on 4 July 1580. A record of their exchange, in which Kildare was not only said to have refused, against Loftus's advice, to apprehend the Viscount by means of the soldiers gathered there, but also to have sheltered him and to have been privy to his plans for rebellion, is preserved (in the form of a dialogue) as SP 63/79/26/1. Loftus's information was summarized and repeated in several items of correspondence sent to England, including, for example, a digest made by John Hammond for Walsingham; 'The Erle', writes Hammond, 'went to the hill of Taraghe to meete with the Archbishop of Dublin there and to viewe the musters. The Vicount in that iorney was in the Erles companie, but went not through to the musters, staying with the Erles horsemen at Killilen. The Erle nether required the Vicount to goe forward with him to the hill, nor fownd fault withe his staye [. . .] After the Erles returne from the sayd hill the Vicount accompanied him backe to Killmyllen'. Loftus's testimony, writes Hammond, is 'that at this meetyng at the muster, which was the 4th of Iulye, 1580: and xii dayes before the Vicounts revolt: The Erle tould him that the Vicount and other purposed to rebell, & the B: aduisyng him to take the present oportunitie of Sir Henrie Harrintons horsemen for the apprehension of the Vicount, he tooke tyme to consider thereof vntill wedensday followyng, on that daye he further declared that he knewe the whole conspiracie & the maner of everie mans othe & the chiefe cownsellor Rocheford: but excused him selfe that he could not without perpetuall infamie of his howse apprehend the Vicount' (SP 63/81/48/1; see also SP 63/81/47, in which Hammond urges Walsingham that 'the credite thereof might mutche have been encreased (in my simple opinion) by prooffe made of the circumstances deposed by the bishopp').

Loftus's conduct in this affair earned him the praise of Grey, who wrote to Elizabeth to say that he 'hath shewed no small trouth and Constancy in this service having not a litle endangered him self by avouching his Charge against the Earle.' (SP 63/79/24/1), and also praised Gerrarde's role in prosecuting the case: 'The Lord Chauncellour his

great pollicie & intolerable travaile to the great empairing of his health and no lesse perill of his life hath Chiefly yf not onely beaten out this matter. I therefore humbly beseeche your Highnes that he maye have his deserved thanckes'.

The text of the letter is written in the hurried and cursive secretary hand of Edward Waterhous, Receiver General in Dublin: an unusual and unaccustomed secretary for Grey. As often, Grey has penned his own subscription and signature. The address is in Spenser's usual, bold secretary hand.

### Address and Endorsement

To the Honorable  
my very loving  
frend Sir fraunces  
Walsingham\* knight Chieff  
Secretary to  
her Maiestie

1 Marche 1580  
From the Lord Deputy

### Text

Sir, Since the enclosing of my other letters it seemid good to the rest of the Counsaill that two examinacions shold be sent you, which\* in part concerne therle of kildare and both approve that conference passid betweene the Archbisshop & therle concerning Iames Eustace, Sir henry bagnoll allegith that the day after the assembly at Tarragh when the first Speach passid betwene the lord Keper & therle, the archbisshop revealid to him some part of their talke, Burnell A man well knowen to you is the only Counsaillor in lawe to therle and he doth in sort •••\* witnes that the erle was movid by the Archbisshop to apprehend him, though not presisely as apperith in the 7 Article / I leave it to be iudgid by your self thinking neuertheles that you haue alredy the copy of burnells confession And so I committ you to god. At Dublin the first of March 1580

Yowres euer assured,

Arthur Grey

## Textual Notes

\* **Address Walsingham]** Inserted above the line.

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\* **sent you, which]** 'that' deleted *after sent you*, and 'w<sup>ch</sup>' inserted above the line.

†

\* **after in sort]** A three- or four-letter deletion appears here, possibly 'conf'. It may be that Waterhouse was intending to write 'confirm', but changed it to 'witnes' instead, suggesting that the letter was drafted directly from dictation.

## Annotations

**the enclosing of my other letters]** It seems impossible to say to which letters Grey here refers, and they may not have survived; he was in frequent correspondence with England, in particular with Walsingham, throughout January and February 1580/1.

**two examinacions]** Examinations are formal records of answers to interrogation. Neither of these examinations seems to have survived.

**therle of kildare]** Gerald Fitzgerald, Earl of Kildare; see biographies.

**approve]** 'Attest (a thing) with some authority, to corroborate, confirm' (*OED*, v. 1, 2).

**the Archbisshop]** Adam Loftus; see biographies.

**James Eustace]** James Eustace, Viscount Baltinglas; see biographies.

**Sir henry bagnoll]** Knight Marshal; see biographies.

**the lord Keper]** Loftus, who acted as Lord Keeper of the Great Seal between 1573 and 1581.

**Burnell]** Henry Burnell, Kildare's attorney, later to be justice of the common pleas in Ireland, and in previous years prominent opponent of the cess, a general levy collected throughout the country (see glossary, and Brady 1994: 235-37). In 1577, he had been taken to England and examined on the matter beside Richard Netterville (see SP 63/52/81), another lawyer and landholder in the Pale; the Privy Council wrote to Lord Deputy Sidney on October 14 to tell him that these men had 'conceyvid a Malitious & obstinat opinion', and had been committed to the Tower. It appears, though, that whatever renewed suspicion is suggested by the present document, Burnell was not irrecoverably tainted by his proximity to Kildare: there survives a letter of recommendation from Loftus himself to Walsingham, dated 15 March 1583, in which he speaks of his 'wisdome gravitie and good behaviour', describes him as 'verie Learned in the Lawes', and points out that 'in theis late seruices he hath so carried him selfe that he resteth free from any suspicion of vndutiefull entencion' (SP 63/100/16).

**in sort ... 7 Article]** 'In sort' might be translated by the modern idiom, 'in a way'; Grey means 'Burnell as good as witnesses this, though perhaps not precisely as it is set down in the seventh article against the Earl of Kildare'.

**you haue ... burnells confession]** Walsingham may have had it; unfortunately, we do not.