

# Transcript

## Editorial comments:

BL MS Lansdowne 28 f. 84r - 85v. William Herle to Lord Burghley. This letter is scribal, with marginal annotations in Herle's hand. Herle also adds this sentence into a blank space within a line of script: "when they first inserted these words, which is a frawd confessed by som" (f. 84v).

## Address leaf:

[fol. 85v]

[Endorsement by :] To mi L. Thresuror The copi of the Ire sent your L. on wensdaye the 19. of marche 1577. in answer to the complaynt exhibited in the name of the Cardiganshire men. Towching the Ragler./

[Sign manual:] William Herlle.

## Letter text:

[fol. 84r] I have ben sent for my L: vj or vij tymes of late to the Courte, and so am this day by my L: of Leycester, which my sicknes doth hinder, that I cannot obey as I would, and this may crave pardon of your good L: yf I be not able to answerre the writinge of the Raglership as I determined which it pleased your L. to send me yesterday, the [marginalia by Herle: Besyde the fallshod of their suggestyon, they leve all owtt that appertaynes to the matter in theyre complaynt. The residue is wretched.] which with moste humble thancks, I doe return Included./ The proposicon in grownde, in continuans, and in conclusion (~~and~~ with pardon be yt spoken) is mere falce Slawnderous and Contryved, as shall appere by these broken papers included withall, which arre of recorde, whereof I doe beseke your L: to collecte my answeere till my helthe be able to comyle yt, in a brieffe abstracte, And that you will commaunde that the same partie which exhibited this complaint unto your L: be furthe Comminge, for he ys some suborned partie, and his acte no waye justifiable, for beside the falcenes of the matter, there ys a complaint in record exhibited by the Sheriffs deputie of Cardigan shere, in Mighellmas Terme, that the Inhabitants desire to be meyntheyned the Q. majesties Tenaunts, and to be defendede from the Injurye and violence of the gentlemen, and from the exactions and contribucons that they arre compelled to yelde unto against ther soveraigne./ Ther Constables be made to leavie, and [distreyne,] suche somes as the justics doe ymposse upon them, as though they were privey Seales for debt, whereby a thowsand marks have ben gathered this way, by stronge hande to meyntheyne the suyte against her majestie. Suche qwarrells, ymprisonments and owtcryes, with bludshedd doe ryse for this, as it is tyme to loke unto yt, unles her majestie will abandon the [marginalia by Herle: They alledge that nether awditor nor Recevor hathe demanded the rent insomani yeres. & it is proved by a Comission sett upon in theyr contrey, tryed by theyr own men yett sueng, that the rent was yerely demanded & not answerd, & is so certefyed into the Excheqwer./] Contrye, to the spoile & havock of a fewe, and in the meane tyme, they blushe not to abuse your L: with Calaminzacons of me. Where they speake of iijm of the poorest people in Cardigan shere, that this burden is to fall upon, makinge thereby as though the gentlemen were exempted of the matter, first my L: upon my creditt, there ys not so many men in the whole shere of all sorts, as they woulde suggest to be subject to this tenewre: and next the gentleman is aswell a Tenant to the Custome, as the meanest man there. I have

surveyed by two severall surveyes an viijC and upwards which I will shewe your L. in fare recorde, when yt shall please you, And this <sup>^is^</sup> the moste I can make of yt./ [fol. 84v] And they are all willinge save ix or x, that doe tyrannye over the rest, to yelde to all duties, and to have her majestie for ther Ladie and [marginalia by Herle: nota./] soveraigne, otherwise my L: all the lande they <sup>^have^</sup> ys forfeyed. for it is an auncient royaltie, belonginge to the Prince pallytie of Wales, Lands gevon (I speake by auctoritie) to holde by that Customarye service, and is a verey rent of assise, And nowe as unkynde men (where I am charged with unkyndnes) woulde expulce ther Lord and doner, when he comes to Demaunde his owne./ That it is so, they can neither buye, sell, nor morgage lands, but by leave: payinge a fyne of alienacon to the Ragler of us to kepe the Custome in perpetuitie, withe speciall words. *Kennyad y werthie Teere* viz. leve to sell or alienate ther lands, yt is not otts my L: a lone that is ther rent (the measure whereof ys certefied into the Eschecquer, by deposicons of ther honestest and cheefest men, but shepe, kyne, marriage money, doggs meate, amerciaments swyne tack ,advowry money, plowinge of lande, mowinge, carrienge of the Lords stufte and necessaries, fishinge, and sundrye other matters of ymportance [marginalia by unknown hand: I think that I have don her majestie in this behalf, to my greate charge, travell and consumption of tyme, as good service as may be don in matter of that qualitie, sence she came to the Crowne: to conserve & wynne unto her suche a Royaltie which otherwise was lost. /] which they woulde defraude her majestie of, with the glose of *Avena pro equo pro nocte* and rayse compassion to them selves by the words *si debito modo petatur* when they never ment to answer her any thinge when they first inserted these words, which is a frawd confessed by som./ Nowe howe I have behaved my self towards them aswell in mylde procedinge as temperately in every degree./ I first in presence of master Pheteplace ther justyce of assise, presented to put the matter in arbitrament, Chusinge for me the saide master Pheteplace and master Brumley her majesties solliciter, and they to take two other, to the ende we might decyde things amiably togeather, avoydinge rigor of the lawe: In which offer I was contented to be enterteined a whole twelve monethe, till I sawe that they had neither gratuytie nor honestie./ Sence that tyme I have at ther owne request, ridden downe a seven or viij tymes (which cost me lxli and odd at a tyme) to have the matter taken upp, and still they sought to wynne but tyme, and to pay my tractablenes with deceit and ingratitude, hopinge (as some sayd) that either her majestie (whome god long preserve) the L: Threasaurer or I, should dye, or happely some Innovacon of the State woulde happen, to overthrow the whole suyte, and these be the plaine honest men that I have delt with, In which tyme, havinge sondrye Injunctions broken, & parties [fol. 85r] brought uppe by attachements of proclamacon, I never woulde suffre man to be ymprisoned, but was a suter withall to the Court, to have ther fynes remitted, hopinge that this would be considered of in the ende, suche an unkynde, combersom, subtill and wolvishe man I have ben, and your L: sees of the other side, with what men yow deale and howe true and simple they be / yt is true that I woulde never dishonest my self, by sayinge nothings, [marginalia by unknown hand: I have paide beside all other chargs & travell my yeres rent and [di] & have not enjoyed a penny againe but her majesties Injunctions & writts <sup>^ar^</sup> used as if they were sent into the wilde of Ireland so as it is tyme to loke to yt for example sake] or by surcessinge my sute, to sell away her majesties right, as Jenkin Gwynne did, but yet uppon suche composicon as might content me, I offred to be a suter to your L. and her majestie and to use my best indevor and credit, to have ther former Charter confirmed, by some ordre of the Courte, before I had proceded to judgement, for all which I am mocked and sclaundered which is a true relacon of my procedinge with them; wherewith verey humbly I take my leave from my Chamber the xix<sup>th</sup> of marche scribled in hast 1577 your [L moste] humble W Herlleli

[Postscript:] The Abbey of Stradlere in Cardigan shere hath the like Customes so hath the Q. L of Iscoyed, So hathe private men as the B of St Davies, master meckmer and John Pryce in Gemerglyn and sundrye other So had the d. of Buckingham in his honor of Brecknock which Custome the Q. majestie nowe hath./

They have made an Exposicon that the Raghler is [Cuscos Com.] howe true it is, the thinge it self will declare, whereof they [marginalia by Herle: The Ragler was long before the Conqwest & was a sheriff, which name & office contynewes to this daye & not begon in ani tyme of Rebellyon, to be abrogated when the cawse of his office cessed./ ] woulde force this consequent: That *Cessante causa, cessat effectus* hereof dothe pryse bragg, that he deceaved her majesties Councell, and the L: Threasaurer then, with the saide glose, whereat [1 word expunged] he and his frends doe hartely laughe at yet, sayinge that they sould those wise men and Councelors an olde cappe./