

# Transcript

## Editorial comments:

SP 12/144/1 f. 1r - 4v. William Herle to the Earl of Leicester. After his subscription to Leicester, Herle continues writing, perpendicular in the left hand margin.

## Address leaf:

[fol. 4v]

[Superscription:] To the R. honorable, mi verey good L. the Erlle of Lecester &c. gyve these with spede att the Cowrtt./

[Endorsement by Herle:] Supplicco a v. Excellentia di leger questa co la pria faculta che hauerete./

[Endorsement by unknown hand:] 10 Novemb. 1580. William Herle.

## Letter text:

[fol. 1r] I wrytt of late mi R. honorable good L. a lre to yow, conteynyng sondrye particularityes, which I hope cam saffelye to your hands, among which I gave your L. an advertisment, towching the Isles of Scyllye wherof it may plese yow nott to be unmyndefull./

I also shewed in the same lre the cawse of mi staye from mi pretended jorny into Wales, yn expectyng of master Prices coming hither of Cardygan shire./

I was yesterday also of purpose att the Cowrtt, to have spoken with your L. butt fyndeng yow grettly busy, I returned for that I had somwhatt to dispatche here, which coud suffer no delaye master Secretary wallsingham sawe me att the Cowrtt & spake to me./

~~I was yesterday also of purpose att the Cowrtt~~

On sonday I went to visite the frenche Ambassador, where I fownd sir William drewrye & his wife, after whose departure, the sayd Ambassador yntertayned me a grett while, marvayleng where I had byn so long, & in the end (knowing that I understod before of the sp: Ambassadors suppyng that night with hym, ~~I excused~~ wolld noles yntreatt me to accompany hym att supper, sayeng that Jacob *manntio*, & Caponi wolld be also there butt I excusyng mi selff uppon other occasions, told hym verily that it was a good sight to se the ij Ambassadors agre so well together abrode, that coud nott on abyde another att home, wheratt he sware by the bodye of God, that he had byd hym selff, & yett was no supper man comyng thither thrise a weke, fayneng occasyon to se his wife & to yntertayne her, & selldom spake to hym att all, which as he thought was only of a certayn spaynisshe yndustrye to bryng hym into gelowsye with the state here (he & his master being so yll lyked of as they were) so coud nott he honestlye avoid hym, having byn Awncyent frynds on with another, & sowdyers [of] oldd together, wheruppo entryng into deeper discowrse, he was [fol. 1v] glad he sayd, that he sawe [1 word expunged] ^owr^ Cowncell now, even whollye & generallye affected to further the frenche mariayge, wherof an ynvincible conjunctyon sholld be deryved, to the good of bothe Reallmes, & ~~to~~ the brydlyng of Spayn & of all Adversayes, & to his satisfactyon cheeffly (he sayd) that had travaylled these v. yeres theryn, & now hoped to repe som

frute therof: yett he was made a frayd som dayes past, that your L. was becom spaynissh, butt knowing the honorable mynde ye bare allwayes to frawnce, & the vertue of constancye that was in yow, he coud nott be ynduced to beleve, that yow woldd prefferre the fryndship of Sp: to frawnce, which dyd better agre with us than with ani other, & was more conveyent for ether estate: the frenche disposityon beyng suche (he sayd) as setting a syde, a certayn promptnes ( as he termed ytt), of their habilyte & corayge, where the justest & tollerablest natyon in the worlde, wheratt I truly blusshed, to here hym so ympudent, butt he contynueng on his purpose sayd, that he was of late well ny discredited with his K. when the Q. majestie here had broken of clene, her yntentyon to conclude the pretended mariayge, which she had so often & so solempnly vowed, & yn the end to swarve from the same, without just occasyon gyven ~~her~~, whye she sholdd do ytt, was to call her faythe (so grettly esteemed yn the worlde) into qwestion & reproche for ever. for his parte he sayd, he was more englyssh than frenche ~~he sayd~~ (his masters service sett a syde) & had this honor of a frenche man, nott to be hispaniolated, which natyon of Sp: he hated with his hart, & the more, for the practises & enterprises that they had addressed agaynst this Reallme of late, & agaynst Ireland: which enterprise of Ireland was offred above .5. yeres paste to the K. his master, butt that his sayd master, was nether unjust nor ambycyows, to accept ani thing agaynst his good sister & conffetherate, as the sp: K. had don, nott only against her, butt agaynst Portyngall allso, (a Conffetherate comprised yn the tripartite leage of [1 word expunged] A<sup>o</sup> 59.) the ynvestiture of whose kyngdom he sowght now by corruptyon & conqwest with a monstrows & unsuffrable example among christians of Tiranye **[fol. 2r]** & Avarice, compassyng all his actyons by corruptyon of mony & therby had gotten Elvas, Setuball, Caskays, St Johns fortresse, & Lusbon, havyng with lyke corruptyon bestowed a marvaylows som of mony in frawnce uppon pensyons, to discover, weken, & hynder the K. Cowncelles & executyons, which by Ires (he sayd) ~~that~~ he had admonished very vehemently the K. his master of, yett so uttred, as though the grownd herof proceded of the Q. of Englands oppynion & her Cowncelles, & not dyrectly from hym, addyng the discourses & advertisments of other contryes therunto, whatt ynconveniencis & mischeeff ympended therby to the person of the K. his master, & to the state of frawnce, yf it were nott ripely forsene & redressed, sweryng heruppon a terrible othe, that he had dryven even the grettest in frawnce to withdrawe their open favors & actyons from Sp: by the earnest ympressyon that he had made yn the K. & his mother, so often & so deeply putt in remembrance by hym./ And here pawsing a while, toke me hand by the hand, & with a grett othe sware, that he was nott bownd to gyve me or ani other accompt of his doyns, butt for the speciall lykeng that he had of me, he woldd make me partaker of a ~~partaker~~ grett secrett. which was that he was offred 50m. [crowns] to becom spaynissh & to breke of the mariayge, that was pretended by a Catholyck prince, with an ynffamows Lutherane, which mony he might have tomorow, yf he woldd consent to this platt. Butt sayth he, it is tyme for the Q. to loke abowtt her, as frawnce dothe who surelye by monsieurs mene, will make a firme peace with the Protestants, & send Strozzi into portyngall whose Ire I have to shew yow, & theruppon woldd have forced me to go ynto his study to rede the same, & to se yn whatt redynes ~~he was~~ the sayd Strozzi & his people were yn, butt I refused to do hym that wrong I sayd, for it appertayned nott to me to se his Ires, butt to credit fyrmly the lest word, that so grett a kings ambassador woldd utter./ Then he tordned agayne to the matter of Sp: sayeng that the sp: ambassador did burne with **[fol. 2v]** passyon agaynst drake, & woldd rowghly charge the Q. with hym, havyng collected somani artycles agaynst hym, as might occupye the Rowne of halff a Bibell, wheruppon he sayd, that it was no reson that xvm. marranes & a condempned race (menyng the spaniardes) sholdd possesse ~~without right~~ 3m. leages of land, withowt right to the same, & that your L. in sendyng .300. men in .3. shippes <sup>thither</sup> might becom a mightye K. there, wissheng

that frawnce & England (who might well spare iij Cm. ydell men) woldd joyne yn on to possesse the Este & Weste Indyes, beyng more honorable to conqwer the Conqwerors he sayd, than symplye to conqwer the ynhabitants there./ Butt he sayd that the sp: ambassador woldd departe hence within these xv. dayes, & sholdd be Lygier in frawnce, who had tolld hym that the P. of Parma, had Received more newes of late than the Q. of England wold willlynglye have spared hym, marvayleng heruppon that so bad a choyse was made of so vayne & distempred a fellow, as daniell Rogers was, to be sent inso weightye affayres, whose jorny & vaynesse he described to me as, by a lyne, from dover to the place he was taken, sayeng that som reported that he was of master Secretary Willsons choyse, & som others of master Sydney & master dyers commendacyon. Then he axed me yf it were trew that an Ambassador was com from the Turke to her majestie which I knew nothing of I sayd, butt he repplyeng affirmed that a marchant was com with lres from the sayd Turke (in a ship as he thowght thatt [1 word expunged] had byn att Chio./ wheryn truly, & in all other things besyde he & the sp: ambassador have grett intelligens, & on dothe serve anothers torne as proffessed brethern & the sayd frenche Ambassador visites hym secrettlye 4. or v. tymes a weke, beyng ynwardlye knitt together, by their masters appoyntment, to abuse the Q. majestie & to practis all they may together agaynst this state, namely to noryssh devisyon & irresolutyon among [fol. 3r] us. Beyng most trew that the frenche K. hym sellf dyd work Giraldo to becom spaynissh & therefore yntertaynes hym att his Table & otherwise with grett favors, allso that those poore men which be sent owtt of frawnce into portyngall be protestants the most parte, therof to weken that syde att home, & to comitt theme to the Bucherye abrode, further that Strozzi hath som secrett enterprise commytted to his charge, which onlye tyme is hable to discover, butt ytt is sure that they have yntelligens with do'begnye yn Scotland, & that somwhatt is a workyng there with the consent of Sp: & frawnce./ Bodnam is now contynuallye att the Cowrtt; with the partye your L. wotts, wherof more is to be suspected, than is convenient to be expressed, butt truly ytt ys to be loked to yn tyme, for the sayd Bodnam is a principall yntelligencer for the Ambassador, & sent of purpose hither by the Sp: K. to that effect. On charge that he hath now is to observe all that he can lerne of drakes vyage, & of the secretts therof att the Cowrt, & when & how he shalbe sett furth agayne for that nippes theme att the very harte. These partyes named yn the scedule yncluded be practisers & ernest spyes for the Sp: Ambassador./

The frenche Ambassador talkyng of Cymiers, sayd that he had reped the just frute of his <sup>^</sup>rasshe<sup>^</sup> negociatyon here & that he was clene owtt of favor with monsieur, & so were all those that depended of the sayd Cymiers, ynsomuche as he termed Combelles to be the sowll of Cymiers, butt that his sowll was very black & unsavrye./ The sayd Ambassador semed to be very glad of the last newes that cam towching the state of don Anthonio, & that he woldd write theme to the K. his master which was the substance of that which passed bettween us. I woldd gladlye waytt uppon your L. to speke with yow, so yow woldd vowchesave to here me with expedicyon, to which end I will gyve mi attendance uppon your L. tomorrow./ & so do I humbly take mi leve. Redcrosse strete in haste. the first of november. 1580. your L. with his harte & pray[ers] W. Herlleli.

[Postscript:] At my goyng from the Ambassador he hartelye yntreted me to pray your L. on his behallf, that yow woldd contynew good frenche, for so yow sholdd gather good frute before it wer long of your honorable devotyon that waye. He sayeth that du vraye kepes his credite well with monsieur & shalbe on of his negocyators here.

[fol. 4r] The frenche Ambassador./

- Portingalles.

- [Doctor] Hector becom spanish & an yntelligencer for that syde.
- Aluero de Lyma
- Spaniards.
- Peter Sebiors.
- Lewis de Paz.
- Alonzo du Bizurto /a shrewd fellow.
- ~~Swavingo~~
- swavingo.
- Baptist sempitrio
- Italyens.
- Gregorio a genovese & hoste to Lewis de Paz.
- sovingo.
- Acerbo Suspected./
- englishemen.
- Willford Presydent to the Sp: marchants trafficking hence into Spayne.
- William Bodnam./