

# Transcript

## Editorial comments:

SP 83/16/44 f. 87r - 91v. William Herle to Sir Francis Walsingham.

## Address leaf:

[fol. 91v]

[Superscription:] To the R. honorable Sir francs Wallsyngham Knight her majesties pryncipall Secretorye gyve these att the Cowrte./

[Endorsement by unknown hand:] 26. June 1582 from Master William Herle

## Letter text:

[fol. 87r] I Receved yesterdaye R. honorable a lre from yow of the 24. of this present signe ffyeng therby the Receipt of on packett of myne delivered yow by the poste, Butt there is another which your honor shold have had sithens, by on Lyvetenant Denys, unles he be to long stayed by the waye./ Your charge, that I shold contynew writeng to your honor, shalbe performed with the best diligens I can use, & with the rediest will to obeye yow that may procede from ani of mi capacitye: Thanckyng your honor humblye, that the holld mi devoty on yn that degre, to use ytt: which I will studye to make the more acceptable unto yow: for God he knowith, that yn trew dutye, I Reverens yow with mi harte, & yf I may have your cowntenance here in som good maner, I will do her majestie suche service, as she shall have cawse yn deede to thanck yow. for suche is my poore credite & accesse, as I can penetrate ynto their secretts & have assmany menes with repputacion to decipher things, as ani on of my cote may presume, which yf I were Riche, her majestie & yow shold perceve yn a Larger sorte./

I do now send this mi servant of purpose ynto England, to procure som provisy on for mi chargs of those poore thyngs I have there, by whom, I do allso kepe promys with your honor: for herewith ye shall Receve certayn secrett observacions of myne, which I beseke yow to comitt to the fire, when yow have Red theme, & to attribute alonelye to the zeale born to her majesties estate, the Rowndnes & symplycitye that I use, ^therin^ without respect had to others./ I have acqwaynted non herewith butt onlye mi L. of Leicester, & nott soner than now, & yett have nott signe ffied unto hym, that your honor is pryvey therunto, which therefore I comend to your honorable discretyon, yn which I do reppose my self./

I have sent her majestie a platt of Owdenard, drawen exactly att Large, & the contry abowtt it, with the Breche that is made nere the Ravellyng of Gawnt porte. Nether the duke nor the Prynce have the lyke platt, nor ani on was made of that grettnes, butt the same by mi procurement, which is approved to be a verey perfect on. ytt might plesse yow to recomend it to her majestie as a myte that is presented of a zelows poore servant of hers./

The State of the Town att this present is thus, They have beten down the Curteyn [marginalia by Herle: & Ravellyng & parte of the gate] & ~~gate beffore sayde~~ beffore sayde, of the north syde, ^yn the platt^, where ye [fol. 87v] may se theme enter ^to the assallte, & ~~they~~ have^ filled up the diche

along a grett space, even to the poynt of their Battrye estwards, with faggotts browght from the [1 word expunged] wood under the hill of the sowth syde of the Town./ They were xv dayes a fylleng up the diche, by reson that the streme [2 words expunged] of the Ryver (increased by the ynundacion) ran there so swyffte, as it carryed the stuffe farther awaye, then it coud be caste yn: And tyll they with extreme dylygens, had made an ynfinite number of Bagges of their Tents (which beyng of grosse dowleyes, & fylled ~~up~~ with erthe) were cast yn, which sodeynlye raysed a mightye [1 word expunged] wall ~~of Bagges~~ that resisted the cowrse of the water) [marginalia by Herle: they coud advance nothyng, Butt ] then was it easye with faggotts & Rubbyssh, to occopye [1 word expunged] ~~by~~ the place ~~within~~, & to make it a firme passage, bettween the Argyne of Bagges, & the gate of the Town. By reson wherof, they browght their assallte under the cover of their Trenches to the verey breche, without danger of the Ravellyng, ~~which is~~ ( [4 words expunged] ~~of the canon~~) ~~as ye may be holld yn the sayd platt~~/ which Ravellyng is now won by the enmye yett they withyn, have so cowntertrenched the Breche, as the enmye hathe gyven over the hope to do ani more good there with his ordinance, & therfore leves shootyng, & deles att the foote of the Curteyn, by waye of myne, to overthrowe the gate & the walle along, to make passayge that waye, & to cutt bettween the Ravellyng & the Town. Butt to meete with this, they within have made a grett spaciows hallf moone, well flancked [marginalia by Herle: & dyched] att the end of ij Large streetes that meete together beffore the sayd gate, wherby they fere their myne the lesse, unles it shold breke ynward undiscoverd, nether fere they the losse of the gate & Ravellyng havyng thus provyded for the werst, ~~though these were taken from theme~~ havyng by good happe, detaineyd ij Ensynes within the Town, when the seege first began, who now may stand theme in ~~good~~ steede./

The howse that Receves their waters & Ryver, yn nature of a Sluse, marked with a yellow Romain T. is the preservatyon of the Town, for therby they overfflowe all the grene pastures abowtt (the Cyttye of Gawnt, stayeng allso the ryver with theme, cawsyng it to swell upward, to the advantayge of those of Owdenard) which barres the enmye to anoye theme more than yn ij placis, & so ar they nott subject to disperse their gardes, nor to weerye their people overmuch./

Within that waterhowse, was the duchesse of Parmas mother borne, dowghter of a Crossebowe maker that dwelte there./ And when the water is [fol. 88r] reduced ynto the forme of a Rownde poole, & wrytten uppon *Scheld* .f. there ys a howse over agaynst it marked with the figures of .50. havyng .3. grene trees beffore the same within an herbar, yn which was the duchesse her self born who for the favor she pretends to her byrthe place, sent theme of Owdenard 3. weekes past, a Blanck to wryte uppon, their own condycions, so they wold surrender theme sellves to the K. gouvernement./

The first Battrye was att the foote of the hyll & wood ~~north wardes~~ which by reson of abowndance of water on that syde, becam vayne./ To the wood & hill, synce master Norrys people cam to the Camp, ar the P. of Parmas horsemen retyred, ~~for [surety]~~, to lodge, who beffore laye att Large./

The Camp of the Enmye, conteynes within Trenches .3. englyssh miles full, The P. hym self is lyes among the Allmaynes, lodged att the Abbey with ij steeples./

On Tewsdaye Villyers marshall of our Camp, with xij C footemen, wherof were iiij C. armed pykes of our nacion, marched under the covert of woodds well gyded, tyll he made Alte, within half a Leage of the enmye; & thens sending Roger Williams with a 80. englyssh Lawncs & a dossen argolettys to discover the Camp, he verey valyantlye charged ~~charged~~ the enmyes Cors

de gard, consisteng of .3. Cornetts of Albaresses, & chassed theme within pystoll shott of the marqwesse of Ryssburgs Tents, where takyng 4. brave prisoners retorned yn saffetye to Vylliers, who sholdd have seconded hym with iiij C flemissh Lawncs, butt he was so respectyve ~~of his own saffetye~~, as the P of Orenge byd R. Williams att his comyng hither to daye, that another tyme yf the other Trowpes dyd nott charge with hym cheeke by cheeke, to suffer theme to go on hardlye theme sellves./ The Alarme was Terrible yn the Camp of the Enmye, supposyng that owr whole forces were com to charge theme, which made a grett confusyon./

Owr Camp is to remove to the Castell of Gawnt, nerer the enmye, & tomorow is the tyme expired that Monsieur promised uppon his honor to releve Owdenard, ether by dyvertymment or by fighteng with the enmye, & yett nothyng don./

The sayd Enmye hath sent v. dayes ago 22. cornetts of horse men into Arthoys to observe the Rutters./

We had an exploytt uppon Armentyers & uppon Cortryck, whither Rochepott & Captayn Yorck were addressed with iiij C horse, & a M. footemen, butt missed of bothe placis./ Att Cortryck, they made iij severall scalades & were repullsed with the Losse of 150. men. wherof ij were captaynes./ Thus, our dyvertements ar becom vayne, lyke as att Ayrschott allso: for **[fol. 88v]** ether the providens of ^the Enmye^ is grett (who sent foote & horse Bands to assiste these placis) or our purposes by lyghtnes, discoverd beffore we begyn./

They have another enterprise att Bullduck in handd, butt that is ^followed^ by practys rather ~~had with theme within~~ than by surprise, which hath byn longe a manegyng, butt nothyng effected. And now they have sent Strall the [Amant] within these iiij dayes, with on of the Coronelles of the Towne, to do somwhatt there of new, who ar nott yett retorned./ And yn these Termes stand we presentlye, ~~& the affayres~~ for Owdenarde & other affayres./ The d. havyng procured with mucche a do, that this Town hath undertaken yesterdaye to furnissh 60M. gylldernes, & flanders disburseth a C M. to muster therewith our whole Camp, asswell new Bands as olld, [marginalia by Herle: att Gawntt (for the Rutters be allredy payed)] & to gyve theme a monethes paye, that we may knowe our forcs, & consequentlye how to ymploye theme./

This daye is arryved here, the Cownt of mansfelit Conductor of our Rutters grettlye wellcomed of Monsieur & the P. of Orenge./ He cam from his Trowpes, (which ar .5. Cornetts contyeneng xv C. horse, well fylled with gentyllmen) to Bulleyn, & thens by shippe to Donkerck./

His sayd Trowpes be yn Arthois, accompanied with iij C frenche Lawncs, & ij C. Argolettyers, And iiij C frenche horse more, that com beffore into Cambresyes. They ar allso a iiij m. foote shott./ The footemen lye att Marqwyon, a strong grownd by reson of the marisshes. And the horse att Arlews & Lesclape. making daylye incursyons to the gates of Arras spoyleng & Branscattyng the whole Contrey, And do attempt to wyn Vys, a place of strengthe, within ij leages & a hallf of Arras, though it be nott hollden pregnable withowt the Canon; which therfore is to Amase & dyvert the Enmye./

Fervackes is com by this into Cambresis, & bryngs his Band of ordynance with hym, & a v C horse more, with the footemen of normandye, accompanied with Monsieur La forte./ Allso Lavall is lokd for daylye with his Trowpes, att Cambraye, beyng well onward in his waye a marchyng./

for the Swyttzers that Monsieur sholld have, ytt semes that they be stayed by their Cantons att home, synce the enterprise ~~yntended~~ agaynst Gyneva was discovered./

The new forcs that be yn Arthois in their marche hitherwards, sholld take their jorney by Bewmont, over the lyttell ryver Scarp to Rybbecowrtt, & to mownt depewle, levyng dowaye on the right hand & Lenz on the lefte./ procedyng to Pont a Bovyn, To Mewffville & Hallwyn, & so to Menyng uppon Lys, a place of our own. A fayre redy waye without ympechement of Ryvers or strong placis, yett levyng Lyssle ij leages on the [fol. 89r] left hand./ from Mennyng is butt vij leages to Owdenard & 10. to Gawnt. Butt the sure waye hither, is by Iper, dyxmude & Newport, & then alonge the sea syde to Bruges &c./ ytt is thowght that the P. of Parmas horsemen joyned with the garrisons of Arthoys, will ether fighte with the Rutters, or coste theme, to take som advantayge./

The frenche K. <sup>^his^</sup> promis for the shutting up the passaygs of Maziers & Calyce, is nott performed, which discoraygeth those of Holland & Zeland, & breedes grett Langwissheng to these affayres./ Sondry frenche men com to Monsieur daylye, & depart as they com (lyke unto the humor of that natyon) which they accompte here butt yntertaynments, & do mistrust the rest thereby of the frenche assurances, asswell for the contributyon that the sayd K. hath promised, as for the aydes of his Bands of ordynance &c. Wherof we conclude that his favorites ~~do lede~~ & som more secrett cawse, do leade him more than judgement or regard of his <sup>^owttward</sup> conposytyon doth<sup>^brother</sup>./ ytt is excused nottwithstandyng that the King doth differre thyngs for the best, & may nott discover him self, beffore he have planted forcs in Burgundye, which ar asending thither, they saye, to preoccupate placis of deffence, beffore the spaniards & Italyens com that waye./ There is passayge demanded of the d. of Loreyn for the sayd spaniards & Italyens to marche throw his contrey, butt nothyng grawnted as yett./ Att Colleyne there ys huge preparatyon made of munityon & Armes for the P. of Parma. And those of the Religyon demande there of the magistrate publyck placis for the exercise of ~~the Reli~~ their sayd Religion, which if it be denyed theme, wilbe strong ynowgh shortlye to urge ytt./

The menes how to have mony here for the mayntenance of the warres, & for the answeyng of the Contributyons promised by the Stats generall, growes harder & harder. And som begyn to accuse the yll choyse of offycers [marginalia by Herle: The Cowncell of Estate, by an agrement bettween the d. & the Estats generall ar changeable every vj monethes./] that this Cowncell of Estate hath establysshed yn the fynances, & that unles the husband man be diffended from the Enmye, & ryd from the sowdyor that is lodged uppon hym, The Townes onlye ar nott hable to bere the burden of these promised contributyons./ And withall by the departure of master Norrys owtt of Gellderland, that whole Contry is lyke truly to be loste, for Verdugos forcs be yncresed, & the nobylytye of Gellderland yll devoted to this State, & do urge the Religiows vrede, besydes that he which is master ones of the felld there, comandes the Townes yn lyke maner, which wilbe a grett wounde to this State, & a mayme to their fynances./ There be other pykes, & ynward gelowsyes, that begyn to rise yn this Town & elles where, wherof your honor shall here more shortlye [fol. 89v] And yf Owdenard withall be nott succord yn tyme, bothe Monsieur & the .P. will Taste of a strange ~~of~~ Allteracion./ ytt is hoped, that Monsieur solliciteng yn England for mony, will prevayll: for so be we born in hand. wherunto all men have their eyes bent, as to a sacred Reffuge./

They urge mariayge withall, butt mony is the cheeffe errand they wolld have./ Monsieur wolld

send over a present to her majestie of Tapistrye, (which I have sene) to the vallew of xviiiij m. gyldernes, butt he woldd have som good enterprise succord first, to recomend his present & menyng the more./

[marginalia by Herle: On parte of his instructyons is to confirme these ij Critzes or cyrcles of the Lowe contreyes under the obeysance of the Empire, yn all dutyes & rightes, & then to demande the dukes ynvestiture, as a prince of the Empire, the rest is the Justification of the stats. which I am promised with the other artycles, the weke that comes yn. ] Du Plessis, had his dispatche yesterdaye for his jorney to this ymperyall dyett, beyng first dyrected to the d. of Bullyon, who is principall Comissyoner for Monsieur, to negociate for hym, & for the cawses of these provynces united yn the sayd dyett./ yett by lres from grett personaigs of Germany, ytt canott be perceived, that there is ani certayntyte of the tyme, when the sayd dyett shall begyn./

St Aldegond is ~~nott yett~~ retorned owtt of Zeland, & his Tysyck is [4 words expunged] contynewes./

Coronell Steward was to have departed a senyght since to Battemburgh, & thens back to Campshire to take shippeng into Scotland. Butt a warrant of Monsieurs, wherby he sholdd have Receved xm. gyldernes hath byn differred yn the payment, which may staye hym longer here than he woldd./ He sholdd retorn with a vij or viij C. sowdors hither: Butt there is som speciall matter in handlyng besyde, from the d. & the P. by hym, with the Scottish K. wherof it may plese your honor to have good regarde./ for Steward ys a creature of do'bignyes, a favorer of the howse of Gwise, grownding his masters grettnes uppon that familye, yf his tytell in England sholdd be ether qwarelled ~~or delayed~~ with or delayed./ To conclude he ys frenche in affectyon, & scarce lukewarme in Religyon, wherof I can tell yow more when ye shalbe plesed to here partcyclerly so mene a on as I am./

In the mene tyme I am glad that our men among others, shall have som Trayneng here agaynst all events that might happen att home: Assuryng your honor that master norrys is a person of grett suffycyencye for his yeres, & of synguler judgement & scylens withall. beyng mucche humbled & Refformed synce the losse of the battell yn friseland, yett Monsieur yntends nott ^ether^ for [1 word expunged] his merytes, ^or for thatt which the^ ~~nether yett yn grateffyeing the~~ the Q. majestie ~~that~~ hath written so earnestlye yn his favor to contynew hym [fol. 90r] any other tytell of honor or prerogatyve, than the same of Coronell over the englyssh Regyments, so as the name of Generall or Campmaster, moste cesse./

Coronell Morgan hath the repputacion lykewise of ~~grett &~~ assured experyens yn martyall affayres, very honest & of assmuche vallew as may be joyned with Cowncell./ ytt may plese your honor to take som occasyon to lett theme understand that they ar beholldyng to me, & that there is accompte made bothe of mi speches & person, which may serve as matter hereafter, to do good yn, asswell for mi contry men, as for mi further credite, wheryn your honor shall Receve som servyce also. which I comend to your good consyderatyon & favor. & speciallye to cheryssh this nurserye of sowdyors that be here, A number Trulye of proper vallyant men, as ~~serves yn the world~~ may be sene./

The Coronelles of the new Regyments & the olld, ar partlye qwallefyed & Reconsyled, butt there ar Lewd ynstruments among theme, that do ynkyndell new matter daylye, which the follye of the

on syde canott eschew. I have don good offics theryn, thowgh I be hardlye rewarded of som./

The new Englyssh sowdyors of master northes Regyment & master Cottons, havynge nether mony nor meatt att St. Barnards, where they were putt ynto an emptye place, nott allowed ani other parte, have mutyned & taken prisoners & spoylles, which breedes muche ado./ master norrys his new Bands & Coronell Morgans ar well provyded for./

#### ~~Don Anthonios~~

Don Anthonios declaratyons that ar here publysshed yn printe, do Tend (yn Imitateng those heretoffore of Zeland & Holland) to make proffitt by sellynge of lycences to [1 word expunged] marchants that do traffyck ynto Spayne of whatt contry soever, who purchassyng their suretye this waye, ar born yn hand to be well protected. Butt this proves nott yn seqwell, that many becom Byers of the sayd Lycences, nottwithstandyng these grett assurances pretended, butt rather it hath discredited don Anthonios actyons, which they suppose wilbe now converted ynto pyracye or ymposture. And heruppon is risen a constant speche, that this declaratyon had his byrthe here, & nott att Towres ~~as the~~ [3 words expunged] And that Vylliers the prechers Cowncell was theryn, who beyng well payed for his Labor, devised & fasshioned the sayd declaratyon, to the shape that it is of./

don Anthonios Navye doth thretten to meete the west Indyas fleett, retornyng yn Awgust./

[**fol. 90v**] Even now here is advertisment com to Monsieur that those of the Castell of Lalaing lately submitted to his governement, have procured those of dowaye to follow their example, who uppon certayn condicyons of lybertyes is sayd, & Reservatyons of their Relygion, have Rawnged theme sellves under Monsieur allso. Butt this is dowtfull, asswell for that Chartyers is the Instrument to spred it, who hath gyven owt other untrew thyngs heretofore, as that it caryes nether lykelyhood nor necessitye, beyng a vehement papisticall Town, Butt rather I fere me, that there is som present danger ympendyng to Owndenard which they will (in followyng a comune Ruse used here) cownterpays with a sorye newes of vj dayes contynuanee, to cancell or qwalleffye the losse of the same./And I fere me further that the enmye att Owndenard may have som secrett myne, besyde that which is pretended owttwardlye, to lede him ynto the ynward parts of the Town, whens he may surprise the same by his sallye, when he sees his tyme./

Those of Vyllfford ar nott yett reconsiled, which is a grett contempt to awthoritye & a danger withall./

Att Bruxelles there is grett sturre abowtt the Religyows vrede, & the Town devyded, havynge sent a coople hither to sollicite Monsieur rowndlye to grawnt theme their Churches, who attended uppon Chartyers (a fytt ynstrument to yntertayn these devisyons) for their answer, when sodenlye the Coronelles of this Town, apprehended theme & sent theme prisoners to Bruxelles./ Other Insolencyes ar comitted daylye, with small regard of the duke, or of the [masters] of Justyce, wherewith feryng that I have weeryed yow, I very humblye take mi leve for this tyme. Andwarpe the 28. of June. 1582./ Your honor to comande. W. Herllely.