

Transcript

Editorial comments:

SP 63/46/32 f. 63r - 64v. William Herle to Lord Burghely.

Letter text:

[fol. 63r] Collectyons of John Corbyns speche towching Ireland & the Erlle of Desmond./

Firste that he sawe the Erlle in the feld on ester even & on the Tewsdays in the Ester weke, accompanied with the grettest personaigs of the Contrey as mach morys, sir John of Desmond, James fitzmoris, macharte Rew & others, havyng with hym above 3000. men well appointed, & had taken pledges of Macharte moore, that he shold be with hym uppon a short warning with 1500. men furnished./

He had allso taken pledges of the Maylles, of the morach conderoryes, of the Donelles, [marginalia by Herle: of macharte Rew.] & of a nomber more to attend uppon hym with their forces when he shold appoint them aswell by sea as by land, having appointed the Donelles to prepare all the galleyes they had, so as his preparatyon wold rise to xxm. men & to a xxxviij galleyes, the sayd Corbin being offred the charge of a M. men & of viij galleyes./

Yt was concluded by the sayd Erlle & by all the nobility of that parte of Ireland on Ester even & pledges given uppon the same, that if the Q. majestie did not agre to suche requests as had bin made to her by the Erlle, & ^did not^ stay sending of ani President or of forces from hence to his Contrey (which he shold be advertised of within 48. howres as Corbin sayd) they wold att on instant every on overthrow his own Castell & strengthe, to th'end they might [1 word expunged] agre the better & joyne wholly in the feeld together, & hereby take away all hope of revoltyng on from another, or of treson that might be conspired, in trust that afterwards they might retyre to their Castelles. /

And heruppon will all their forces be assembled ^the Q. answer knowen^ determyneng resolutely to use all the cruelty they may towards the Q. majesties followers & frynds, with fire sword & torments, to th'end that they wilbe without all hope of pardon ~~for ever~~, & first they will destroy all the ~~Contrey~~ corn Contrey, the villaiges townes, & howses throwghowtt, that there may nether mete [1 word expunged], lodging, nor succor remayn for the Q. power [2 words expunged], when they marche against them.

Next they will skale Kill Mallog where therbe a 80. english sowdyors, to which effect the sayd Erlle hath cawsed 400. ladders to be made, & is allredy assured of the taking of it, wantyng nether powder nor shott, nor yett grett ordinance nor small, wherof he was partly furnished in the Castell Mungo or Mayn that he toke./

[fol. 63v] From thence he will procede to besege Corck, a town he sayth verey weke, without diche or ani good deffence, subject to a Sowthest hyll, from whence ~~Corbin sayth~~ he may overthrow the walles easely with his battrye, & kill them in the stretes as they go, offryng to lese his hed, if the Erlle gett nott that towne within vj dayes, & then by force & awthority to expell the

whole english natyon owtt of Ireland: for only Corck is a vehement enmy to the Erlle, & very [...] to the Q. majestie having Jochall, kinsall, & Galloway att his devotyon [1 word expunged] & as for Limbrick ^it is indifferent^ The merchants of which townes ar dayly with the Erlle in grett companies & do supplye hym of wyne & other necessaryes, complayneng that the imposts & executyons be so grevous that her majesties officers do raise of them more & more as they be nott hable to traffick & lyve therby, And in effect they be disportod to shake of the english yoke, & to purge the Contrey [3 words expunged] aswell of the name of England, as of the people./

Thatt these noble ~~men~~ men of Ireland, which the Q. majestie doth most [1 word expunged] repose in, & who dayly ar ~~benefited~~ benefited by her, do inwardly rejoyse ~~of these~~ in these sturres, & though they be nott openly of the actyon, yett under hand do they fede & incoraige the ~~matter~~ ^same^ & do expect the advantaige to make themselves grett when bothe sydes ar weakened, & that in the mene season they ceasse nott to crave things att her majesties hands, to awgment their credite & substance therby, or if they be denyed, the same may serve as matter of unkyndnes to object to the Q. majestie herafter./

Thatt Macharte moore in their foresayd assembly or parliament, did swere to be trew to the Erlle, & made a kynde of hommaige unto hym, so that the Q. majestie most loke for no service nor duty att his hand; He was overthrown by the Erlle in the felde when he had xv.C men to iijC of the Erlles, which hath so [mastred] hym, as bothe he & the rest ar throwly att his devotyon, & the Erlles credite is grett with them bothe for his coraige & Cowncell, & doth assure them of foreyn ayde, stayeng for the retorn of ^a son or a brother of^ James Fitzmoris ~~son or his brother~~ owt of Spaine./

There is a frenche merchant that hath bin twice with hym & [1 word expunged] ^was^ loked for again before Corbyns comyng owtt of Ireland, who hath furnished hym of powder calibers, shott, matche, mattocks, spades, wyne & other sorts of munition which merchant resorts hither ^to London^ verely often, & practiseth with the Erlle to bryng him men, money & shippeng, & to send hym a C or two of frenche carpenters to make galleys & shippes in Ireland./

[fol. 64r] He lokes to have ij shippes owt of portingall, & on owtt of Spayn, laden allso with like provisyon & with som wyne.

Finally the Erlle doth attend butt the Q. majesties answer, which if it like hym nott, he will presently putt all his determinatyons in executyon with as grett extremitye as ever may be used by savaige or cruell people. And if the Q. do temporize with hym in words, & yett send forces thither (wherof he hath good espiall to observe whatt is don) he will likewise procede in his purpose, & will make his advantaige in the begyneng to the disavantaige of his enmyes, aswell by sea as by land & of ani that shall arrive on that coste of the Q. majesties subjects or frynds. And to shew it in effect, he hathe a wathe uppon a vij english shippes that ar a fissheng in Balthemore, abowt bere & Croke havens, to sease them when he thinckes good. to his own possession./

He menes to fortifye the Ile called valencia. a place for ayre, frutefulness & strengthe, & seatt, hable to master all that parte of Ireland, & so dangerows as if it shold be ~~pressed~~ possessed by ani foreyn natyon, it were nott recoverable, & it did appere by Corbyns words, which were obscurely uttred, that those which cam to ayd the Erlle, shold have this place as a pledge to assure themselves of the Erlles good menyng towards them./

To conclude, I tolde the sayd Corbin that the Q. majestie had mani menes to cutt the Erlle of, without employeng of her forces against so unkynde a Rebelle as he was, considring how gracyowsly her majestie had delt with hym, & was bi her (nott withstanding his yll deservings) restored to land & liberty; that I might by this speche drawe owtt of hym whatt I cowd: who answerd me that there was no way to make an end of hym & his rebellyon butt on, which was to be don with spede, or elles the harme wold growe incredibell. The mene were to murther hym ~~that~~ by some whom he trusted, who might easely be corrupted, wherin he made a cowntenance, as though he cowd accomplish the matter, taking uppon hym the charge that was presented to hym ^by the erlle^ wherby the comodity wold be offred that the Erlle shold com amongst his Companies & abbord his galleys or shipping, & so the enterprise were easily effected.

I axed hym whatt the Erlle had enjoyned hym to do here, when he retorne, & from whatt parte of Ireland he cam & when. He answerd that he most [fol. 64v] bring over certayn things that the Erlle had nede of, & wold retorne with as much spede as he cowd. He imbarcked hym self in Ballthemore, & departed from the Erlle in Ester weke, arriveng here butt v. or vj dayes before he sent to me. This was his first conference with me, butt in the second, he denyed that he sholde bring over ani thyng for the Erlle, only he had busynes of his own there & was in good favor with the Erlle, to whom he had given a standing bed of scarlett embrodered with velvett, worth a C markes, for the which & other services, he hoped to have a good reward, as on that had deserved well of hym of long tyme, & was his awncyent frynd & acquaintance. [marginalia by Herle: also in the second conference, where he tolde me in the first of 400. ladders, he made them a 100. ladders more./] which was the som of that I cowd gather of hym, ~~when~~ after that your honor was desirows that I shold speke with hym Here is allso enclosed his own lre that he sent to me uppon his arrival to pray me to com to hym, for I had enjoyned hym ^before^ when I knew of his going into Ireland to the Erlle of Desmond, that he wold observe whatt he cowd of his doings & Councell; & to certeffye me therof. wherwith I most humbly finissh./ the 29. of maye. 1574./ Your honors most humblye. W. Herlleli.

29. Maij. 1574 William Herle to my L. Collections of Corbins speches.