

# Transcript

## Editorial comments:

TNA SP 84/5/133 f. 244r – 245v (and address leaf, fol. 247v). William Herle to Queen Elizabeth.

## Address leaf:

[fol. 247v]

[Superscription:] To the Queenes most excellent majestie

[Endorsement by unknown hand:] An especiall Ire written to the Q the 20 of decemb[er] 1585  
about matters of the low contries and other thinges [20]

[Endorsement by Burghley?:] William Herle

## Letter text:

[fol. 244r] Maie it please your right excellent majestie to be humbly remembred, of these pointes following.

first, that the key of the Boome at flushing, be in the custodie of your majesties governor, and not of the townsmen, otherwise they maie introduce and practise, with whom they will.

Lykewise, that there be so sufficient a garrison settled in the said towne, as maie repress civile mutenies, and insolences, that maie be offred by the townsmen, wherunto they ar easely inclyned.

That sir Thomas Cecill, do in convenient tyme, seeke to be possessed of maseland Sluse, and delphts haven: places of importance, to assure the whole river, and his charge the better at Breyle, without his cost or yours, and yet no great cost, whosoever dischargeth it.

That your majestie do procure especially, the possession of Enchusen, which is the key and bridle, of all north holland, and of the whole navie and trade, belonging therunto, a thing of infinite consequence, The having wherof, shall not be chargeable to your majestie, for I dare humbly undertake, that a governor and a sufficient garrison of your owne, shalbe received there, and willingly intertained by the towne, at their proper expenses, which is a case in necessitie and pollicie, to be accompted of and embraced, for king Phillip, hath sondrie daingerous freindes, and instrumentes thereaboutes, to win and alienate, the devotion of that towne.

Hessells of Antwerp, a man knowne for his lerning, experience, and calling, who was joyned, by those of Antwerp with Aldegond, to mediate the late peace, is retyred from Antwerp into Holland, discontented, and probably affirmes, that king Phillippes secret intention is to proceede against the whole low contries, by manner of conquest, when he hath thinges framed to his purpose which notices being discreetly handled and distributed, among the nobilitie of the malcontentes, may worke in them a sensible remembrance of their estate and dainger, least they be called to an arrere sharpe accompt.

The prince of Pinois (in my lowlie opinion) who (though a papist) a good patriote and trew gentilman: resideng now in france, maie be wrought an apt instrument, to breake the yse herein,

But principally mownteines mothers best, for the respect in nature and reverence, dew unto hir, and for the opportunitie and care she hath, to perswade hir son and the rest, from ruine evident.

The surprising of La Mote of Graveling, is a thing secure, easie, and faisible: as he rides on honnting weakly accompanied, or in passing betwene Graveling and St Omers by bote, on the river Aa, with his wyfe verie often: for the accomplishing wherof, the names inclosed within a schedule, shall serve both to intertaine and execute the enterprise: and to bring him awaie either to England, or to your generall in the low contries, prisoner.

[fol. 244v]

further: I dare constantly affirme (under the gage of a foole) that Calis, (which is negligently garded and growne secure by welthines) maie be surprised by such fitt instruments thereaboutes, as carry credit unsuspected, and therewith their ancient faithfull dutie to your majestie and crowne: Wherin is to be required your secret inclinacon, and the opportunitie observed of your affaires ^when it is meete to be attempted^ which from Ostend, might be comodiously exploited, without discoverie or dainger.

Yf the king of Navarr, and those of the religion in france, be backt, as your majestie alredie hath well begon, the enterprises of your majestie professed enemies abroad, as the pope, king phillipp, the howse of Guyse &c, ar broken and resolved into smoke, As lykewise the progression of the prince of Parma, made vaine and unhable, which happines by Goddes good providence, dependes of your majesties resolute proceeding not staieng to be amused with treatie or temporising, that shalbe ministred (*fides enim non est servanda haereticis*) By which resolucon in deede; yow shall conquer and prescribe, and not be made unprepared, to finishe the glorious course begon, for the service of God, the peace of Christendom, and preservacon of your estate.

Lykewise, your majestie maie diverte king Phillipp by Portugall and Barbarie, yf yow please, without your charge, or note anie waie of unlawfull act in seeking to repress unjust violence, by your wisdom and power and by such meanes, as yow shall deeme proper for the same, your said adversarie having conspired by a long laye, the destruction of your person and kingdom, to satisfie his unmeasurable ambition, That aspires to the v<sup>th</sup> monarchie of the worlde, under his unlawfull Catholick title. Your majestie in using the King of fesse &c, doth not arme a Barbarian against a Christian, but a Barbarian against an heretick, the most daingerous that was in anie age, the usurper of Kingdomes, and the subverter of Goddes trew religion, which ye ar bound as defendresse of the faith, to defend.

Whom: by pursewing of his fishing in new found land, and his trade out of Biskaie, for making of traine oyle by whales, ye shall mervailously hinder, and therby starve his contrie possesse his mariners, and shipping, wherin consistes his cheefe strength and cowntenance.

further, whereas great preparacon hath bin made of late in Dansk; for graine, and for other provisions necessarie, to furnishe a navie with, to the use of the said king, your majestie maie easely meete therewith, yf convenient order be given, to observe the passages of the narrow seas, As lykewise, the king of Denmark, your majesties faithfull and sincere allye, maie be informed from tyme to tyme, what passeth and maie accordingly, in favour of your majestie, and of the generall cawse, either impeache, or diverte the same.

[marginalia by Herle: 200./] There be shippwrightes sent of late from Gene in Italie to Antwerp by **[fol. 255r]** by land (as one Peerson a subject of your owne, and master of a shipp, can reporte for he travailed in their companie a good space, not without enticement to serve with them) who ar to build gallies in the river of Skeld: aswell to invade the straytes and passages of Holland and zeland, as to surprise your kingdom by the river of Thamis, yf they maie which hath bin a complatt ^of theirs, devised^ [1 word expunged] of manie yeres, and judged facile and faisible, both by La Mote of Graveling, and the Marquesse of Vitelli, either of them having bin employed as discoverers and vewers, to discerne the same here, in their severall ~~and~~ disguised ~~aetions~~ partes.

Great store of timber, planks, and other furniture to make shipping, is provyded in the contrie of Leege and upwardes, to com downe by the Moze to Brabant, and so to Antwerp, the lyke at Dansk, yf happily unawares, the same might be convayed by night, along the Weelinges, and the chanell called the Hound: to Antwerp, which foreseeene, is not easely that waie, accomplished, by anie attempt.

To conclude: yf your majestie do intertaine Erle Edzard of east frizeland, with som good negociacon, ye shall have the river of Embes free, at your devotion, and stopp the spanish course in these partes, Reducing Groningerland, and the rest of west frizeland, and Gelders, to an entyer obedience, and contribution.

Yf likewise, your majestie do voutsave, to cutt of the comixed governor of the provinces, under your gracious protection, Yow shall assure your owne estate strongly, and take awaie the innovacons, confusions, and inconveniences, that otherwise ar evidently and hourelly to ensew, To the which, the said provinces will gladly enclyne, for their owne benefitt and assurance.

Yf your majestie do plant sufficient Colonies, under discreete governors in the aptest places of *Terra Virginea*, yow may increase your navie by shipping made there, and be neere upon everie event, to possesse king Phillippes pursse, which is the sure waie, to ruine att one instant, both him, and all the usurers depending of him, that ar and have bin the only nurses of unjust warres in Christendom, by the space of manie yeres. for the substanciall ground worke, and effecting wherof, sir francis drakes enterprise, will shake even the kinges state there entierly, and enriche your majestie notably sondrie waies, and your whole realme, in traffick and comoditie.

By lres from Sivile of late is signified, that the shipp taken by sir Richard Greenefeild: had vj C. M. duckattes by register, besydes that comonly they bring as much unregistred, which is no treasure for private persones to usurpe, seing your majestie hath **[fol. 245v]** hath neede thereof, for the peace of the land, and must be chargeable for the same, when it comes to a reckoning.

These lres of mark, given to the french by Bernardine de Mendozaes practises, to annoy us by, be matters of great consequence and perill, and trymely to be provyded for.

Brancha Leone a florentine, and nere companion of Parries, Somtimes a follower of sir Edward Hobbeies, (now governing the french Embassador peacibly) is a persone necessarie to be noted, as a malicious practiser, poysoner, and intelligencer, nere of kin to the bishopp of Paris: by whom he is here, mainteined.

Ringowt, vander Aa, and doctor Josephe Michaeli, who ar presently resident in London, ar

daingerous fellowes also, and meete to be decyphered, and had in consideracon.

Thus right gracious Sovereaigne: in obeyeng your comandement, I have sett downe my knowledge in the premisses, comending them most humbly to your majesties high wisdom, censure, and secrecie, wherwith in all lowlie dutie I fynishe. London the 20<sup>th</sup> of December 1585./ Your Majesties loyall devoted pore servant.

[Postscript:] *postscript*: It may please your gracious majestie withall: to make a salamander of these my papers and observacons, for I have none to beholde nor trust to, but your self, nor after your lyfe anie assurance in earth, to buyld on. Be good to me therfore in tyme, least I perish by necessitie. *In fidos et sedulos sit Princeps propensior, quam in ceteros.*/