

SUMMARY: In this letter written from London to Dudley Carleton on 30 August 1598, John Chamberlain mentions that he has travelled to London to witness the funeral of Oxford's father-in-law Lord Burghley, and that Lord Burghley has left Oxford's two younger daughters, Bridget and Susan, the sum of £6000 together with £800 or £900 in land. Chamberlain's report of the terms of Lord Burghley's will is not entirely accurate (see TNA PROB 11/92). The transcript below is taken from McClure, Norman Egbert, *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, Vol. I, (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1939) pp. 41-4.

I came out of Oxfordshire on Saturday last, and on Monday came posting to London with your cousin Lytton to be a beholder of the solemn funeral, wherein he and your brother Carleton were actors. They are gone down together this day since dinner, and have left me to convey their letters and to write you such refuse news as peradventure might scape them. But the worst is I hear your boat goes away the next tide, so that I am forced to make huddling haste, which of all things I love not, and that causes me to tarry behind them for two or three days, for I am no friend to sudden motions, but of a settled constitution, and naturally loath to remove.

The Lord Treasurer's funeral was performed yesterday with all the rites that belong to so great a personage. The number of mourners one and other were above 500, whereof there were many nobleman, and among the rest the Earl of Essex, who (whether it were upon consideration of the present occasion, or for his own disfavours) methought carried the heaviest countenance of the company. Presently after dinner he retired to Wanstead, where they say he means to settle seeing he cannot be received in court, though he have relented much and sought by divers means to recover his hold, but the Queen says he hath played long enough upon her and that she means to play awhile upon him, and to stand as much upon her greatness as he hath done upon stomach. The Lord Treasurer hath left the Queen's coffers so bare that there is but £20,000 to be found, and the Queen is fain to demand in loan of the city £40,000, whereof they can presently furnish her but with the one half. Of his private wealth there is but £11,000 come to light, and that all in silver, whereof £6000 (with eight or nine hundred pound land) he bequeathed to his two nieces of Oxford, the rest in other legacies. And his lands seem not so great as was thought, for Master Secretary says his own part will not rise to £1600 a year upon the rack. It is much laboured to make him Lord Treasurer, wherein if he fail, it is assuredly thought he shall be Master of the Wards, for of necessity there must be one by opinion of all the lawyers. Master Maynard is become the Queen's man, and that with such high favour that in good earnest he is thought to be nearest in election to be Secretary, and the rather for that Master Secretary is altogether for him.

The States are gone away well contented in that they think they have tied us fast by offering to pay our men-of-war, garrisons and all, and to reimburse £30,000 yearly to the Queen till the whole debt be run out. Yet for all this it is thought we shall treat, marry, so that the States must be included with their own conditions. The Lord Cromwell sues hard

and makes large offers for government of the Brill, but it is thought, if the war go forward, that the Queen, with the States' consent, will translate that garrison to Armew, thereby to have her forces nearer together and to assure herself the better of Middleberg and the Isle of Walkeren. It is said your Lord Governor of Ostend shall continue his place, but most of your companies shall be called away for Ireland. We say that the late Cardinal is sworn and received Duke of Burgundy by 14 of the provinces, and that presently he made proclamation that he meant to renounce his father-in-law's quarrels and to entertain amity with all his neighbours, specially the ancient allies and confederates of the house of Burgundy, and that Englishmen, Scots and others might safely traffic in all his dominions, and that the States of Holland might likewise trade, go and come with all security during eight months till other order may be taken for continuance, and that all strangers' men-of-war are to avoid within two months. Further, that he is gone into Spain to fetch his bride, having obtained leave of the provinces to be absent one year, when if he return not, they are discharged from their oath and obedience, whereby we gather (as it is likewise reported) that the King of Spain is certainly dead. But these things must be better known to you, as being nearer the market.

We have lately received a great blow in Ireland. Sir Henry Bagnal, the Marshal, went with 3500 foot complete, and 300 horse, to relieve the fort of Blackwater distressed by Tyrone, and being come within two mile of it, in a pace or wood where the enemy had strongly entrenched himself, was so furiously set upon that himself was there slain with 16 other captains and above 700 soldiers. The rest retired to Armagh (having lost to the enemy seventeen ensigns), not knowing how to tarry there or remove thence in safety, the enemy being between eight and ten thousand strong, but news came yesterday that they had made their appointment, and that Tyrone, out of his merciless bounty, had granted them leave to bury their dead and to go away with all they had, so that the fort might be delivered him, to the governor whereof, Captain Williams, and his soldiers he would give no better conditions than to depart in their doublets and hose only, with rapier and dagger. This is the greatest loss and dishonour the Queen hath had in her time, and yet it seems we are not moved with it, which whether it proceed more of courage than of wit I know not, but I fear it is rather a careless and insensible dullness. Sir Samuel Bagnal went post for Ireland on Saturday last, but his course and plot must be quite altered, for it is to no purpose to go to Lough Foyle now that the Blackwater is lost. Sir Richard Bingham hath ten days' respite to set his things in order, and then to go Marshal of Ireland with 5000 men, but I doubt it will be rather in speech than in performance.

The Lord Cobham was installed Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports on Bartholomew day at Canterbury, at which ceremonious solemnity were assembled almost 4000 horse, and he kept the feast very magnificently, and spent 26 oxen with all other provision suitable. He, the Lord Thomas Howard, Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir John Stanhope are in speech to be sworn shortly of the Council. Our merchants have lost two or three ships going to Muscovy, and one is missing that should come from thence. Sir Charles and Sir Henry Danvers are come. I saw them both yesterday. Sir James Scudamore's lady that was so rich a marriage is lately dead in childbed. Mistress Vernon is from the court, and lies in Essex House. Some say she hath taken a venue under the girdle, and swells upon it, yet she complains not of foul play, but says the Earl of Southampton will justify it, and it is

bruided underhand that he was lately here four days in great secret of purpose to marry her, and effected it accordingly.

I thank you for the letter you wrote me hence, though it were long ere it came to my hands. I met your Alexander and Bucephalus at Sir William Spencer's, and delivered his letter to your brother Carleton, for he challenged it as by your appointment though he showed no commission. And thus having wearied both myself and you, I bid you farewell and commit you to God. From London this 30th of August, 1598.

Yours most assuredly,

John Chamberlain

To my very good friend, Master Dudley Carleton, attending on the Lord Governor of Ostend, give these.