

SUMMARY: This letter from Nicholas White, Master of the Rolls in Ireland, to Lord Burghley dated 4 November 1573 is principally concerned with White's intervention in a quarrel between the Lord Deputy and the Treasurer. However at the end of the letter White mentions 'the great bruit made here of my Lord of Oxford coming into Connaught'. In August of 1573, just three months prior to this letter, Walter Devereux, 1st Earl of Essex, had arrived on his ill-fated expedition to Ireland. It seems that Oxford had in mind raising a force to join him. However it would appear that in the end the Queen denied Oxford permission to go.

My singular good Lord, I saw such apparent likelihood of new falling out betwixt my Lord Deputy and Mr Treasurer for the money lately come over as I of goodwill to all the parties that depend upon their concording gave adventure to prevent the same. And first dealing apart with Mr Treasurer, I found him very willing to recover my Lord Deputy's favour, affirming himself ready any way to deserve the same, with protestation from his heart to forget all things past and to join unfeignedly with his Lordship in the service of this realm.

When I had thus gained him I took opportunity to break with [sic] at large with my Lord Deputy for a reconciliation to be had betwixt them in respect of God's cause, the service of her Majesty, the contentation of their wisest friends, and their own commodities, humbly craving his Lordship's good allowance of my entering into this office. The Deputy with the present motion hereof became very passionate and so oppressed with grief for the Queen's severe writing to him as we two with tears disputed the matter awhile, and he besought God that the better part of him might in this case prevail against flesh and blood, which could hardly bear so great an injury as the unjust drawing upon him of her Highness' displeasure, whose gracious favour he always esteemed before all worldly riches. I told his Lordship that the Queen's goodness in making choice of him to so great a place hath well declared her good opinion of him, and deserved also patient sufferance of her will in all things, specially when the same tendeth to no other end but to signify her mind touching the correction of an inferior officer by his superior, both deriving their authorities from her Majesty, and each authority measurable at her pleasure, and that albeit the words seemed to make the reprehension severe, yet it carried with it no other malice than parents bare in reprovng their children, and to be it [sic] the best way for his Lordship to leave the quality of th' other's fault, to her Majesty's great consolation. And to lead him further, that to continue the Treasurer in her Majesty's service and to encourage him by good usage as a counsellor of this state could not but be well liked of her Majesty.

Whereunto in th' end he mildly yielded, and said that for the time of his abode here he would lay aside all private injury and accept Mr Treasurer's good assistance in the public service of her Majesty, and give him therein both goodwill, good countenance, and the best furtherance he could, whereby the world shall take no advantage by opinion of their discord to nourish stirs abroad or breed contempt at home in this factious land. And as a

good beginning to their reconciliation Mr Treasurer hath of his part determined to endanger his self for the satisfying of my Lord Deputy's demand touching the distribution of the money. And the Deputy hath likewise of his part made choice of Mr Treasurer to accompany him in a present journey towards Ormond, Cashell, and those parts to redress disorders grown betwixt my Lord of Ormond's country, Sir William O'Carroll up Ossory, and others.

And as I will not leave to water this plant from time to time the best I can, so I pray him which is the author of all peace and concord to give it increase to his glory, the benefit of this poor realm, and their own comforts, and to grant also (considering the faithfulness of the Deputy's heart to serve her the best he can) he may receive a few drops of her Majesty's dulce speech to blot out that number of lines that hath so much grieved his heart.

And my good Lord, whatsoever may be thought of myself, I never held my hand from anything of purpose to unfriend him, but as my conscience led me, and if my endeavour for his good and direction had been as well accepted as I willingly and truly meant it, I would spare neither body nor living to requite in him some part of the great debt I owe to his best friends, to whom under God I acknowledge myself most beholding. And rather than I would be drawn to anything that stood not with my conscience's judgment in public matters, I would sooner become a suitor to your Honour to be mean for my discourselling, and suffered to live in th' execution of mine office the best I can. And as my Lord Deputy for my good meaning in this matter hath given me great thanks, so shall his Lordship with my plains [sic?] and best advice find me ready to deserve the same from time to time. And I protest it is one of my greatest fears, and whereof I would be soonest deluded, that my Lady Burghley should suspect me of any unfriendliness towards so dear a kinsman, wherein I will be tried by Mr Chief Baron, one of her daily beadmen here, and I wish of God that he had a wife of my Lady's disposition to peace and concord.

Thus having thought good to advertise your Honour how far & in what sort I waded in this office, I humbly take my leave with my continual prayer to God for your Lordship's health and prosperous estate. I will at more leisure write to your Honour mine opinion touching the north, and what I think of the great bruit made here of my Lord of Oxford's coming into Connaught.

From Dublin this 4th of November 1573.

Your good Lordships' most bounden during life,

N. White