

**Royal and historical letters during the reign of Henry the Fourth
: king of England and of France, and lord of Ireland / Edited by F.
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XVI.

A.D. 1400.

LORD GREY DE RUTHYN TO GRIFFITH AP DAVID AP GRIFFITH.

Gruffuth ap David ap Gruffuth.

We send the greting welle, but no thyng with goode hert.

And we have welle understande thy lettre to us sent by Deykus Vaghan, our tenaunt, which maken mention and seist that the fals John Weele hath disseyved the.¹ And seist that alle men knowne welle

In answer to a letter complaining of treachery. Lord Grey recapitulates the points of this letter, and answers them.

XVL] MS. Cotton. Cleop. F. III. fol. 70 b.—On paper; a contemporaneous MS.

¹ The following is a reprint from Ellis of the letter here referred to, so far as it is quoted in this answer:—

“I wold pray ȝou hertli that ȝe wold her how the fals John Wele served me, as al men knoyn wel.

“I was under the protexion of Mered ap Owein; he sende to me be trefy of my cosynes Maester Edward and Edward ap David, and askyt ȝif I wold cum in, and he wold geteme the King's charter, and I schuld be Maester Forster, and Keyshat in Chirke is lond; and other thinges he behyt me, the qwich he fulfullyt not.

“Afterward he askyt me qwether I would go over see with hym, and he wold gete me my charter of the Kyng, and bringe me to hym sounde and saff, and I schuld have wages as muche as any gentilman schuld have that went with hym. And over thys he seide befor the Byschop of Seint Assaph, and befor my forsaede cosynes, that, rather then I schuld fael, he wold spene of his own godde xx marke.

“Her apon I trust, and gete me ij men, and boȝt armery at all pees,

and horses, and other araement, and come to Oswestre a nyȝt befor or thei went. And on the morw ther after I send Piers Cambr̃, the Resevor of Chirke is lond, thryes to him, for to tel him that I was redy. He saed that I schuld speke no word with him; and at the last he saed that he hade no wages for me; and that he hade al his retenev; but bade me go to Sr Ric. Lakin [MS. Kakin] to loke qwether he hade nede of me. With the qwych I had never ado nor no covenande made, for I wold a gon for no wages with hym over see, but for to have my charter of the Kyng, and sum levying that I myȝt dwel in pees and in rest. And this, as a wytnes of Sr Ric. Lakyn and of Straunge, I was redy and wyly for to a gon with hym, hedde he be truw.

“He come and saed prively to Sr Ric. and to Straunge (q^d he) her is Gruffuth ap David ap Gruffuth in this town, and has no savecondyt but in Chirke is lond, and ȝe mown take hym and ȝe wolle; and a gode frende come and told me this; and I hert this and trust me thens in al the haste that I myȝt. And so I was begyllyd and deseyved of that fals Wele, as al men knoyn welle.”

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A.D. 1400. that thu was under the protectionoun of Mered ap Owyn, and sent to the as thu seist by trete of thy cousynes, Maester Edward, and Edwarde ap David, and asked the if thu woldest come inne, and he wolde gette the thy chartere of the Kyng, and that thu sholdest be Keyshate in Chirklond; and other thyngis he beheght the, which he fullfyllled noght, as thu seiste; and after warde asked the whether thu woldest go over the see with him, and he wolde gette the thy chartere of the King, and bryng the to hym sounde and saufe, and thu sholdest have wages as moche as any gentelle man that went with hym. And overe thus thu seideist that John Welle seide befor the Bishope of Seint Assaph,¹ and befor thy cousynes, that, rather than thu sholdest faile, he wolde spenne of his oun goode xx marcis.

Heer up on thu trusted, as thu seiste, and duddest gete the two men, and boght the armoure for alle peces, horsen, and other araie, and comest to Oswaldestree a nyght befor that thei went; and on the morowe after thu sendest Piers Cambŕ, the receyvour of Chirklonde, thries to hym, to telle hym that thu was redy, and he seide that thu sholdest speke no worde with him. And at the last he saide he hadde no wages for the, as thu seiste; and he hadde fully his retenue, and bade the goo to Sir Richarde Laken to loke whether he hadde nede of the other noo, with the which thu, as thu seiste, hadde nevere ado, ne nevere madest covenant with. For thu woldest, as thu seiste, have goon for no wages with hym over see, but for to have thy chartere of the Kyng, and sume lyvyng that thu myghtest dwelle in pees.

And, as thu seist, Sir Richard Laken and Straunge wolle berre wittnesse that thu was redy and wyllly for to goon with hym giffe he hadde be trewe. And

¹ John Trevaux.

also thu seiste he cam to Laken and to Straunge and A. D. 1400. wolde have made hem to take the, and thu haddest witting ther of, as thu seiste, and trussed the fro thennes, and knowelechest¹ that thy men cam and breeke our parke by nyght, and tooke out of hyt two of our horses, and of our menis.

And, as hit is tolde the, thu seiste, that we ben in pourpose to make our men brenne and slee in what so ever cuntree thu be inne, and wilt withouten doute, as thu seiste, as many men as we slee and as many housen that we brenne for thy sake, as many brenne and slee for our sake. And, as thu seiste, thu wilt have bothe breede and ale of the best² that is in our lordshipe; and heer of thu biddest us have no doute, the whiche is agayn our wylle, gife any thu have breede other ale so, and ther as thu berrest up on us that we sholde ben in pourpose to brenne and sleen men and housen for thy sake, or for any of thyn enclinant to the, or any of hem that ben the Kinges trewe liege men, we was nevere so mys avised to worch agayn the Kyng no his lawes, whiche giffe we dudde, were heigh tresoun; but thu hast hadde fals messageres and fals reportoures of us touchyng this matere; and that shalle be welle knowen un to the King and alle his Counsaile.

¹ "And as I herd ther been taken ij horses of 3our men that wern pyte in 3our parke, thoo horsys I wod qwer thei ben; but for no hatered that I hade to 3ou or 3our Lordschip thei wern taken, but my men toke ham, and bo3t ham of hem.

"And hit was told me that 3e ben in purpos for to make 3our men bran and sle in qwade soever cuntre that I be and am sesened in. With owten doute as mony men that 3e sleu, and as mony howsin that 3e

bran for my sake, as mony wol I bran and sle for 3our sake; and doute not I wolle have both bredde and ale of the best that is in 3our lordschip."

The letter concludes thus:—"I can no more, but Gode kepe 3our worschipfull astate in prosperite.

"I wrettin in grete haste at the parke of Brinkiffe, the xj day of June.—From GRUFFUTH AP DAVID AP GRUFFUTH."

² *of the best.*] Added above the line.

A.D. 1400. Ferthermore, ther as thu knowlechest by thyn oun lettre that thy men hath stolle our horsen out of our parke, and thu recettour of hem, we hoope that thu and thy men shalle have that ye have deserved. For us thynketh, thegh John Welle hath doon as thu aboven has certefied, us thynketh that that sholde noght be wroken towarde us. But we hoope we shalle do the a pryve thyng; a roope, a ladder, and a ring, heigh on gallows for to henge. And thus shalle be your endyng. And he that made the be ther to helpyng, and we on our behalfe shalle be welle willyng. For thy lettre is knowlechyng. Written, etc.¹

¹ This remarkable letter is one of a series of three preserved in MS. Cotton. Cleop. F. III., two of which are printed in Sir Henry Ellis's "Original Letters" (2nd Series, i. 3—7).

It is there suggested, in a note at page 5, that this is the letter alluded to in that printed as No. I., in which Reginald Lord Grey de Ruthyn, writing to the Prince of Wales, says,—“the strengest thiefe of Wales sent me a lettre, which lettre I send to you.” It is clear, however, that the letter here alluded to is that printed as No. II. in Ellis's collection, to which the letter in the text is an answer, being from Lord Grey de Ruthyn himself, and addressed to, not written by, Griffith ap David ap Griffith. The true order is, therefore, as follows:—

I. From Griffith ap David ap Griffith to Lord Grey de Ruthyn, MS. Cotton. Cleopat. F. III. fol. 72; (Ellis, p. 5), June 11, 1400.

II. Lord Grey's answer, printed above, and dated on or before the 23rd of June, 1400.

III. Lord Grey's letter to the Prince of Wales (Ellis, p. 3), informing him of the receipt of Letter I., and that he had written an answer to it (Letter II.), of which he enclosed a copy. There can be little doubt that the MS. from which the text is printed, and which is pasted on the back of Lord Grey's letter to the Prince, is the “copy” here alluded to. The passage in full is as follows: “And, gracious Lorde, please hit you to witte that the day that the Kynges messenger cam with the Kynges lettres, and with youres to me, the strengest thiefe of Wales sent me a lettre, which lettre I send to you, that ye mowe knowen his goode wyll and gouvernance, with a copie of an other letter that I have send to him agayn of an answare.”