



Two Letters by the Beverley Family of Huntington, near Chester

BY JAMES HALL

(A short Paper read 17th December, 1912)

IN the time of Queen Elizabeth there lived at Huntington, an outlying part of the parish of St. Oswald's, Chester, a gentleman named GEORGE BEVERLEY, who for his military service in Ireland was knighted on 8th May, 1604. He had married a daughter of Edward Cludd of Oulton, Salop, Esq. The baptisms of two sons of that marriage are recorded in St. Oswald's register; one in 1596 and the other in 1597. His daughter, Frances, became the wife of Richard Browne of Upton, gent.¹

Sir George Beverley was buried in Chester Cathedral on 8th August, 1618. By his will, proved 4th October, 1620, he bequeathed to his son and heir, LENNOX BEVERLEY, the unexpired leases of his

¹ *Visitation of Cheshire in 1613*, Record Society, Vol. LVIII., p. 47; and the *Cheshire Sheaf for 1891*, p. 178.

manors, messuages, and lands. The late Mr. Earwaker printed that will fully in the *Cheshire Sheaf* for 14th October, 1891.

I.

George Beverley's letter, dated 10th March, 1597 [-8], was addressed to the "R^t Worshippⁱ M^r Thomas ffletcher Maior of her Ma^{ties} Cittie of Chester"; and was written at London; apparently from the Commissariat Department, relating, as it does, to the supply of provision for soldiers transported to the seat of War in Ireland. The original document is preserved in the *Letter-Book* of the Corporation Records in the Muniment Room of Chester Town Hall. It is No. 588 in Vol. II., p. 308, and reads as follows:—

"It maye please yo^r Wo^r:

The Lorde Treasuror by his letter dothe make yt Appere vnto you The present wante of Bread Corne w^{ch} her Ma^{tys} Garrison At Carrickfergus dothe stande in nede of, wherein his Lō[rship] is resolved to vse your Care and traveill [*i.e.*, diligence] for their relief wth the greatest expediçon.

"I therefore haue thought yt my Partie to praie your wo^r to haue A speciall Care of his Lo. direction in this behalfe, Wherein in my opinion, It shall be good you do pforme the same in all secresie, As thoughe the proviçon weare ffor yo^r self, or for suche as you shall emploie. The quantitie Required by my Lord is not greate, yet it is good you give it out, you are to provide and shippe no more but 80 qrters. If the scarsitie of this kind of Graine be so greate, as I hope in God it is not, then Rather then ffaile you must

Require ffor her Ma^{ty}s service suche as have stoore or any Porcion of that Kynde to deliu'[er] everie man A parcell to make up this proporcion. Consider of the Gentillmen dwelling nere the Cittie [of Chester], that are Come to lye wthin the Cittie, ffor they are like to sell you Wheate. And take Care they sett on an extraordenarie nomb^r of thrashers, because the expedicon of this matter is much looked After.

"Also it maye please you to be presentlie provided of A Good Barck to lye in Readines, where they Maye Make sayle wth the ffirst Wynde, And not to staie for springtydes.

"If I should Appointe any of my Servaunts to Attend you in this matter, It wolde make to[o] great a showe, And therefore I do fforbeare, praing to vse yo^r owne discretion. It is good you do Sende A Measure wth thos[e] that Receive the Graine into their Chardg to transporte it to Advoide all questions on the other syde. And Cause the M^r of the Barcke to Receive his lading by Indent[u]re and enter the same wth the Costomer [Custom officer]. And retorne good Certificats of the Deliverie to suche as are auctorised to be Clarck of the Stooore or Victuallo^r At Carrick-fergus. The Reste I leave to yo good Consideracon, And I will praie to God ffor yo^r healthe [*i.e.*, salvation].

"And I will vse the beste Means I Cann to Supplie the Poorte of Chester wth some Rie ffrom hence, or ffrom other Partes. If I Maye knowe it will please the Countrie [*i.e.*, neighbourhood].

"Written At london the xth of Marche 1597 in the Afternowne

Yo^r Wo^r all power to vse,

GEO: BEUERLEY."

"Thes to be deliu'd. Haste post Haste."

II.

LENNOX BEVERLEY'S LETTER TO RANDLE HOLME, ESQ.,
MAYOR OF CHESTER 1644.

LENNOX BEVERLEY of Huntington, gent., was twice married. His first wife, Elizabeth, dying young, was buried at St. Oswald's Chester, on 17th August, 1619. His second wife, also named Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Henry Birkenhead of Backford, Esqr., bore him six sons and four daughters.² She died on 19th January, 1656, and was buried at Backford. Her husband, Lennox Beverley, who died 5th April, 1660, was also buried at Backford; where a tablet on the church wall still remains to their memory.

Lennox Beverley, who lived through the times of the early Stuart kings and the Commonwealth period, took no active part in the Civil War that broke out in 1642; probably, because he was then about 50 years of age; although his sons entered the army in the King's service. But before the rumbling of cannon was heard on Rowton Moor; and before Chester city was in the throes of the great siege; Lennox Beverley had contributed largely both in money and kind in aid of the Royalist cause; and thus it was, that the second year of the War found him in very reduced circumstances.

His letter, addressed "*To the wor: Randle Holme Esqr. Maior off the Cittie of Chester,*" and dated "*Huntington 10 ffebr: 1643*" [-4] implies that further demands on his goods had just been issued by the City authorities.

The letter reads thus:—

"Maye it please yow: it is trew: I tooke backe
ffrom Selbye one ffeild of [*i.e.*, for] 7^{li} [£7] pte of my

² *Cheshire Funeral Certificates*, Record Society, Vol. VI., pp. 17-18.

Land Liabile to his Ma^{tie} for 3 yeares. I hadd noe grounds In my {owne hands, In regard I hadd noe Cattle. But when my sonnes entredd Into the Kings service I tooke the same [field] ffor their horses, and theire servants synce which tyme to this p^rsent, I haue hadd more or lesse. besides, I hadd at one tyme for a weeks space, at the least, 29 ho[rse] and some tymes above, of My Lord Capewells [*i.e.*, Arthur Lord Capell's] troope: it hath Cost me v^{li} [£5] In a morn- inge at the Butchers besides my owne pvitiō: I haue hadd latelie off foote, aboue 20, all which I haue willinglie received and Depted with full Content: which hath beene noe wronge to the Contrie, nor I no annoieaunce to my Neighbours. his Ma^{tie} hath a 100^{li} [£100] ayeare of my meanes, 40^{li} [£40] a yeare I paye In cheif rent, under nomine pænæs: which at our lady Daye next wil be 60^{li} [£60] vnpayde. In regarde my Tennant Cannot vent [*i.e.*, sell] his Comodities nor paye me rent: I Cannot pcure money on any termes, In these distracted tymes: I haue but a few household goods of smale value: wherevppō I am driuen Into Debt, and when all was at the best I hadd but 24^{li} [£24] a yeare, to Mayntayne my self and familie.

"The p^rmises Considered, I referre My selfe to you^r worshippes fauorable Censure, restinge at you^r service,

LENNOX BEUERLEY."

"Huntington
10 febr: 1643."

The above letter in autograph, together with two other MS. documents, were kindly presented to the Library of the Chester Archæological Society in the year 1912 by Mr. Morys Parry of Chester and Shrewsbury. They are now preserved in Cabinet Press 20, Drawer E, in the Grosvenor Museum Library, Chester.