

Bess of Hardwick's Letters

Letter ID: 044 (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=044>)

From: Sir John Manners (Haddon);

To: Bess of Hardwick (Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire);

Date: 21 December 1602

Summary: Sir John Manners writes to Bess (dowager countess of Shrewsbury) in reply to a letter of hers regarding Sir Edward Dyer acting as executor of a Master Beresford. To aid Dyer in his office, Manners has sent two of his servants to Birchover (Derbyshire), 'who do their part honestly for they have found a good portion of wool that was hid in a rock'. This letter is a reply to letter ID 241.

Archive: Folger Shakespeare Library, Cavendish-Talbot MSS, X.d.428 (54)

Delivery status: to Bess, sent

Letter features: Seal intact - no. Ribbon/floss – no. Letter packet - tuck and fold

Hands: Sir John Manners | archivist |

Version: 1.0

Copyright Information

All material is made available free of charge for individual, non-commercial use only. The copyright and other intellectual property rights in the transcribed letter text, metadata about the letters and the design of the letter display are owned by the University of Glasgow.

You are permitted to access, print and download letters from this site on the following conditions:

- use of all material on this site is for information and for non-commercial or your own personal use only; any copies of these pages saved to disk or to any other storage medium may only be used for subsequent viewing purposes or to print extracts for non-commercial or your own personal use.
- the content must not be modified in any way.
- any use of the material for a permitted purpose must be accompanied by a full source citation.

No part of this site may be reproduced or stored in any other web site or included in any public or private electronic retrieval system or service without the University of Glasgow's prior written permission. Commercial exploitation of the transcribed letters, including use by radio or television programme makers and examination boards, is prohibited without licence from the University of Glasgow.

Further information on copyright and citation can be found at:- (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/background.jsp?id=171>)

People Associated with Letter 044: Sir John Manners

Sir John Manners (of Haddon Hall, not to be confused with John, the fourth earl of Rutland who died in 1588), was the son of Thomas, first earl of Rutland (c.1497-1526). He was the brother-in-law of Bess's fourth husband, George (sixth earl of Shrewsbury), through the latter's first marriage to Manners' sister, Gertrude (d.1566) - which is presumably why Bess refers to him as her 'brother' in her letters. He was the uncle of Edward (the third earl of Rutland), whom also figures in Bess's correspondence.

Other letters associated with Sir John Manners:

9 August 1593 (Recipient)(URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=108>)

2 April 1597 (Recipient)(URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=239>)

18 May 1601 (Recipient)(URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=240>)

20 December 1602 (Recipient)(URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=241>)

18 June 1604 (Author)(URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=45>)

16 December 1605 (Recipient)(URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=242>)

Bess of Hardwick's Letters

People Associated with Letter 044: Bess of Hardwick

Born Elizabeth Hardwick (in c.1521/2, d. 13 February 1608), the woman known to posterity as Bess of Hardwick married four times during her life, as a result of which her name changed from Hardwick to Barlow (or Barley), Cavendish, St Loe and then finally (when she was countess of Shrewsbury and then dowager countess) Talbot. As one of the five children of John Hardwick (1495-1528) of Hardwick, Derbyshire, and his first wife, Elizabeth (née Leake), Bess had three sisters (Mary, Jane and Alice) and one brother (James). The Hardwicks were established Derbyshire gentry who had inherited a modest manor house and c.400 acres in and around Hardwick. But when John died in 1528, and their lands were seized by the crown, Bess faced hardship. Bess's mother quickly remarried but her new husband, Ralph Leche of Chatsworth, Derbyshire, brought little land or money to the marriage, and three more daughters were born (Bess's half-sisters Elizabeth, Jane and Margaret). Little else is known of Bess's childhood but, while still young, she was married for the first time, to Robert Barlow (or Barley) of Barlow, Derbyshire, sometime in or before 1543. Barlow died in 1544 and Bess received a small inheritance. In 1547 she married the twice-widowed Sir William Cavendish, treasurer of the king's chamber. Bess and Cavendish had eight children, six of whom survived: Frances (1548), Henry (1550), William (1551, from whom the dukes of Devonshire are descended), Charles (1553, from whom the dukes of Newcastle and Portland are descended), Elizabeth (1554) and Mary (1556). Probably due to a mixture of affection and shared social ambition, Bess's second marriage was happy and fortuitous. She was now moving in courtly circles and experiencing (for the first time) considerable wealth. In 1549 Cavendish and Bess bought the estate of Chatsworth, which was held jointly in both their names and which he and then Bess, following Cavendish's death in 1557, ambitiously rebuilt. Soon after her second husband's death, and sometime before Elizabeth I's accession (in 1558), Bess married Sir William St Loe, a wealthy widower of ancient noble pedigree. St Loe was captain of the guard to the young queen and in addition to further improving Bess's finances, he also brought her into the queen's inner circle and she served briefly as a gentlewoman of the queen's privy chamber (in 1559). The marriage seems to have not been without affection; however, the two would have spent most of it apart - he serving the queen in London and Bess mostly at Chatsworth. Upon St Loe's death (probably in 1565), Bess inherited most of the estate. In 1567 Bess married for a final time, to George Talbot, sixth earl of Shrewsbury, one of the richest and most powerful men in England. To consolidate the union of their fortunes, the couple had Bess's eldest son, Henry, marry Shrewsbury's daughter (from his previous marriage), and Shrewsbury's eldest son, Gilbert (later the seventh earl), marry Bess's daughter, Mary. Also around this time, Shrewsbury was appointed to be the keeper of Mary Queen of Scots (from 1568-84). At first, relations between Bess and the Catholic Scottish queen seem to have been amicable; however, relations deteriorated all around as Bess's marriage to Shrewsbury broke down in the 1580s. An infamously nasty and highly public legal battle over estates ensued and finally the courts resolved that Shrewsbury provide Bess with a sizeable income from 1587 onwards (Shrewsbury died in 1590). In 1582, Bess took charge of the upbringing of her orphaned granddaughter, Arbella Stuart (1575-1615), claimant to the English

Bess *of* Hardwick's Letters

and Scottish crowns. In 1587, Bess undertook her remarkable building works at Hardwick: the house now known as Hardwick Old Hall was complete by 1591; next to it, the extraordinary building now known as Hardwick New Hall was complete by 1599 and is one of the greatest architectural ventures of Elizabethan England. It was at Hardwick that Bess spent most of the remainder of her life, much of it devoted to caring for and managing Arbella, who came to loathe her existence in Derbyshire and devised several bizarre plans for her escape (to Bess's great distress). Bess also quarrelled with her eldest son, Henry, and disinherited both him and Arbella in her will. She left most of her estate to her beloved and faithful son, William Cavendish, who continued her great dynasty into the seventeenth century.

Bess of Hardwick's Letters

Other letters associated with Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire

- 1 Dec [c.1564] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=30>)
- 20 Jan [c.1565] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=31>)
- [1574?] (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=41>)
- 3 Aug [1580s?] (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=205>)
- 2 Aug 1584 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=150>)
- 4 Aug 1584 (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=119>)
- 18 Feb [1591?] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=233>)
- 21 Sep 1592 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=163>)
- 11 Mar 1593 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=160>)
- 19 Sep 1594 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=1>)
- 20 May 1595 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=124>)
- 27 Feb 1596 (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=16>)
- 11 Aug 1597 (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=46>)
- 28 Feb [1598?] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=187>)
- [c.1600] (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=7>)
- 2 Jun 1600 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=125>)
- 6 Oct 1600 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=126>)
- 28 Apr 1601 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=127>)
- 9 Jan 1603 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=128>)
- 18 Jan 1603 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=139>)
- 29 Jan 1603 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=129>)
- 2 Feb 1603 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=130>)
- 6 Feb 1603 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=131>)
- 21 Feb 1603 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=132>)
- 3 Mar 1603 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=134>)
- 10 Mar 1603 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=135>)

Bess *of* Hardwick's Letters

- 18 Apr 1603 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=140>)
- 31 Jan 1604 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=161>)
- 12 May 1604 (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=63>)
- 18 Jun 1604 (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=45>)
- 4 Jul 1604 (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=21>)
- 16 Dec 1605 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=242>)
- 15 Jan [1606] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=180>)
- 7 Mar 1606 (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=49>)
- 13 Feb 1607 (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=14>)
- 25 May [1607] (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=3>)
- 22 Jun 1607 (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=34>)
- 27 Jun [1607] (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=4>)
- 30 Nov 1607 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=179>)
- 31 Dec 1607 (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=35>)

Bess *of* Hardwick's Letters

Other letters associated with Haddon

18 Jun 1604 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=45>)

Normalised view of Letter 044

To the Right honor[able] and my singlar good Lady the [Count]esse of Shrewesbury
at Ha[r]dwyke

Good Madam I was very glad of the receipt of your Ladyship's lettre and chefly for that I doo vnderstand theirby that you be in good helth which I pray allmighty god Long for to contynew. Towching your Ladyship's request in the behalf of Sir Edward Dyer this much may please you to vnderstand I receiued a lettre from the Erll of Shrewsbury by yong Sellers desiring me to take order for the saffe keping of Master Beresfords goods in Master Dyer right because the said Master Berisford had made him his executor wheirvpon I did presently send tow of my seruants vnto Bircheouer which is within tow mylles of me and their Left tow men to Looke vnto his howse and Cattail he hath their whoe doo their parts honestly for thei haue fownd a good porcion of Wooll that was hydde in a Rocke. and their I appointe them to remain and haue sett sealles vpon the Lockes wheir any goods be and haue charged them to haue good care also that their be no sheepe nor Cattail purloyned owt of the pastorrs so as I haue no dowt all things their shalbe in saftey vntill I hear forther. Their is at Byrcheouer a great quantite of Lead wooll sheep and somme Cattail but ... which he is thought not be withowt/ platte and stufte/. is at Bently whither Master Harpir had sent befor the receitt of my lettre to take ... order. Master Dyer[s] ag[e]ntes I am well knowen vnto but beeng your Ladyship's frend I [w]ill carrye the better ... either in this or any other seruice you may please to comma[un]de me/ and so I pray god almighty Long to preserue your good Ladyship ffrom haddon this xxjth day of December 1602

Your Ladyship's most humbly to comaunde

John Manners.

Diplomatic view of Letter 044

[Address Leaf]

[Address Leaf: Notes]

Birchover Curious [Later editorial note, hand: archivist]

To the Right honor... and my singule^f
good Lady the ...esse of Shre=wesbury

at Ha...dwyke

[Letter Text]

[Letter Text: Notes]

X.d.428

(54) [Item number, hand: archivist]

88 [Old foliation/item number, hand: archivist]

189 [Old foliation, hand: archivist]

Good Madam I was very glad of the receipt of yo^f La. *lettre* and chefly for that I doo vnderstand theirby that you be in good helth w^{ch} I pray allmighty god Long for to contynew. Towching yor La. request in the behalf of S^r Edward Dyer this much may please you to vnderstand I receiued a *lettre* from the Erll of Shrew. by yong Sellers desiring me to take order for the saffe keping of M^r Beresfords goods in M^r Dyer right because the said M^r Berisford had made him his executor wheirvpon I did presently send tow of my seruants vnto Bircheouer w^{ch} is wth in tow mylles of me and their Left tow men to Looke vnto his howse and Cattail he hath their whoe doo their parts honestly for thei haue fownd a good porcion of Wooll that was hydde in a Rocke. and their I appointe them to remain and haue sett sealles sealles vpon the Lockes wheir any goods be and haue charged them to haue good care also that their be no sheepe nor Cattail purloyned owt of the pastorrs so as I haue no dowt all things their shalbe in saftey vntill I hear forther. Their is at Byrcheouer a great quantite of Lead wooll sheep and somme Cattail but ... w^{ch} he is thought not be wth owt/ platte and stufte/~. is at Bently whither M^r Harpir had sent befor the receipt of my *lettre* to take ... order. M^r Dyer... ag...ntes I am well knowen vnto but beeng yo^f La. frend I ...ill carrye the better ... either in this or any other seruice you may please to comma...de me/ and so I pray god almighty Long to preserue yo^f good

Bess *of* Hardwick's Letters

La. ffrom haddon this xxjth day of Decembr 1602

[significant space]

Yo^r La. most humbly
to comaunde

John Manners.
§

Version: 1.0