

# Bess of Hardwick's Letters

**Letter ID: 025 (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=025>)**

From: Hugh Fitzwilliam (London, Greater London);

To: Bess of Hardwick (Chatsworth House, Derbyshire);

Date: 28 July 1570

Summary: Hugh Fitzwilliam writes an account of current news to Bess (countess of Shrewsbury), covering politics and conflicts across Europe. He also writes of England and the court, chiefly to do with Elizabeth I, Mary Queen of Scots and the Northern Rebellion.

Archive: Folger Shakespeare Library, Cavendish-Talbot MSS, X.d.428 (28)

Delivery status: to Bess, sent

Letter features: Seal intact - no. Ribbon/floss – no. Letter packet - slit and band

Hands: Hugh Fitzwilliam | archivist |

Version: 1.0

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## People Associated with Letter 025: Hugh Fitzwilliam

Little is known of Hugh Fitzwilliam other than that he was perhaps a relative of Bess and sent her news of the court and abroad.

Other letters associated with Hugh Fitzwilliam:

[23?] January 1568/9 (Author)(URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=164>)

31 August 1570 (Author)(URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=170>)

21 September 1571 (Author)(URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=26>)

3 February 1573/4 (Author)(URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=27>)

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## People Associated with Letter 025: 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

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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.

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## Other letters associated with Chatsworth House, Derbyshire

- 15 Mar [1550s?] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=200>)
- 31 Mar [1550s?] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=198>)
- 13 Apr [c.1550] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=13>)
- 14 Nov [1552] (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=99>)
- 13 Jan [c.1560] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=47>)
- 4 Sep [1560?] (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=59>)
- 12 Oct [c.1560] (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=60>)
- 24 Oct [c.1560] (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=61>)
- 18 May 1562 (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=55>)
- 20 Nov [1565?] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=17>)
- 8 Dec [c.1565] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=28>)
- 26 Feb [1566?] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=18>)
- Jun [1568?] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=157>)
- 28 Jun [1568?] (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=64>)
- [1570s?] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=210>)
- [1570] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=178>)
- 31 Aug 1570 (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=170>)
- 21 Sep 1571 (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=26>)
- [1577] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=182>)
- 2 Aug 1578 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=197>)
- 23 Sep 1578 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=121>)
- 22 Jun 1579 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=189>)
- 15 Jul 1582 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=175>)
- 8 Apr 1594 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=236>)
- 8 May 1594 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=102>)

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## Other letters associated with London, Greater London

- 14 Nov [1552] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=99>)
- 25 Feb 1558 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=112>)
- 24 Oct [c.1560] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=61>)
- 4 Nov 1561 (destination) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=54>)
- 14 Dec [1564] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=50>)
- [23?] Jan 1569 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=164>)
- 31 Aug 1570 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=170>)
- 21 Sep 1571 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=26>)
- 13 Oct 1571 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=225>)
- 3 Feb 1574 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=27>)
- 9 Jul 1582 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=191>)
- 21 May 1591 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=215>)
- [c.1600] (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=22>)
- 12 Nov 1600 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=20>)
- 4 Jul 1604 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=21>)
- 23 Apr 1605 (origin) (URL: <http://www.bessofhardwick.org/letter.jsp?letter=23>)

## Normalised view of Letter 025

[T]o the right honorable [countess] of Shrewsbury [at] Chatesworthe ... wheare.

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My moost humble duetie remembred vnto your honorable good Lady may it please the same tunderstand, that by lettres of the xxiiiijth of the last out of Spayne from a towne bordering vpon the Mores; saythe that the King hathe driven them in to the mountaynes agayne, after the accustomed sorte; for that thei hauing no horse men; thei be fayne to retire whan the Kinges approchethe nere; and whan the forrage is wasted, than the horsemen retire; and than the Mores dothe occupye the Vallyes, as more stronger than the King in foote men.

The brute goethe heare that the Admirall is come to Montarges a place of the duches of fferrares .xxviij. beyond Paris, and so myndethe to comme in to picardie; to finishe his generall visitation; and for his resistance thei brute apeaux a fresshe; for other assistance I do not feare of the kinges syde; by cause his confederates be so occupyd in their owne particular affayres, of suche waightie moment; as the Emperor and his frendes in Germany standethe in feare at this present of their owne estates; The Italians be fully occupyd with bothe their particular and their common ennemye the great Turk; and King Philip is occupyd with the Mores; and in Barbry; and to defend against the Turk in Italy; in suche sorte as the ffrenche King is very lyke to be driven to a great after deale.

At Rochell thei say the Protestantes haue preualed greatly against the King, and hathe taken the Isle of Burwage, and other places wheare all the Baie salte is made; and hathe put to the sword all the Italians to the nombre of .iij.ml and their owne contrimen thei haue suffered to departe, and monsieur delano hathe loste his arme (which was the levetenant and the leader of that intrprise of the protestantes parte; for whom thei do make great lamentation, being in great dannger.

The Emperor remanethe at Spires wheare he cannot goo forward nor backward without dannger, being in haterd of the princes protestantes, till some agreement be made.

The duke of Alva goethe on with his preparations of his Navie, and the Lord Admirall is at gillingham to see the quenes Navie in setting forward The duke saythe that the preparation is made to no other end than to transporte the quene his mystres in to Spayne, and so after to serve against the Mores; and the quene our soverayn sayth that by cause the quene of Spayne shall haue no harme of the Englishe coste, she shalbe whafted with .x.ml men; and by the same purpose the capitaynes and the men be in redynes, and the shippes are in preparing with all diligence with as muche speede as the duke makethe of his.

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Thei say monsieur Rambolet hath donne the ffrenche Kinges message; for the libertie of the Scotishe quene, and that she might enioye her owne realme and to governe it and to se the bringinge vp of her owne child; the quenes majestie answered that she marrveled the King wold troble him self in matters so farre from him; having so muche to do at home; as for the matters betwene her syster of Scotland and her; thei wold agree well inough, he shold not nede to care for it; and so it is thought as yet, she shall not comme to the speche of the quene of Scotland and muche lesse to goo into Scotland.

The Lordes of the kinges syde continue still in their consultation at Edenburgh; and the lordes of the quenes syde be in the earle of Argiles contrye and stureth not.

My Lord of Sussex hath discharged of late .xvj.c men and the reste is lyke to be discharged shortlye; and thei say he laborethe to be dispatched both of his levetenantslipp, and also of his presidentslipp; and hath a grante so to do, with fauor, of the quenes majestie

The earle of Linaux hath writen to his wyfe yat the king his son hath the printe of a Lion on his syde.

The duke of Norfolk hath set out a submission in writing; and hath declared his perfite seale in the quenes majestie religion; and hath vttraly renounced the mariage with the Scotishe quene, and how to subpresse the Rebelles; it hath comme to divers mens handes, but yet I haue not sene it.

There is divers of the Rebelles endited at Norwich at this last assyse and .v. of them be loked for to comme to the tower shortly; and for the rebellion this time twelmonethe there abowte, be condemned to perpetuall pison with the losse of landes and goodes.

Sir Thomas Cornewalles and his son in lawe Master Kytson be at libertie, by cause thei be contented to come to the devyne service.

There hath bine seditious billes hurled in the courte, and at Northampton at the assises and in other places; for which cause besides the proclamations made in that behalf the counsell hath directed their lettres in to the contries for the ponishing of suche bawde dealing.

And thus with my moost humble commendacions, I take my leave of your honorable good Ladyship wishing vnto my lord and yow and to my frend all helthe to godes pleasure scribeled at London the .xxviij. of Iuly .1570.

Your honorable good Ladyship's ever to command during lyfe



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Hugh ffitzwilliam

## Diplomatic view of Letter 025

[Address Leaf]

### [Address Leaf: Notes]

3 Curious Letters of M<sup>r</sup>  
Hugh Fitzwilliam a Relation  
of ye Countess of Shrewsbury  
for he called her Son W<sup>m</sup> Cavendish,  
& her Brother in Law M<sup>r</sup> Ant.  
Wingfield his Cousins. [Later editorial note, hand: archivist]

...o the right honorable  
... of Shrewsbury  
... Chatesworthe  
... wheare.

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[Letter Text]

### [Letter Text: Notes]

X.d.428  
(28) [Item number, hand: archivist]  
172 [Old foliation/item number, hand: archivist]  
125 [Old foliation/item number, hand: archivist]

My moost humble duetie remembred vnto yo<sup>r</sup> honorable  
good .L. may it please the same tunderstand, that by  
*lettres* of the xxiiij<sup>th</sup> of the last out of Spayne from a  
towne bordering vpon the Mores; saythe that the King  
hathe driven them in to the mountaynes agayne, after  
the accustomed sorte; for that thei hauing no horse men;  
thei be fayne to retire whan the Kinges approchethe  
nere; and whan the forrage is wasted, than the  
horsemen retire; and than the Mores dothe occupye  
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beyond Paris, and so myndethe to *comme* in to picardie;  
to finishe his generall visitation; and for his resistance  
thei brute apeaux a fresshe; for other assistance I do  
not feare of <sup>^</sup>the kinges syde<sup>^</sup> ; by cause his confederates be so occupyd  
in their owne particular affayres, of suche waightie  
moment; as the Emp.<sup>or</sup> and his frendes in Germany  
standethe in feare at this p<sup>r</sup> sent of their owne estates;  
The Italians be fully occupyd w<sup>t</sup> bothe their *particular*  
and their *common* ennemye the great Turk; and  
King Philip is occupyd w<sup>t</sup> the Mores; and in Barbry;  
and to defend against the Turk in Italy; in suche  
sorte as the ffrenche King is very lyke to be dri=ven to a great after deale.

At Rochell thei say the Protestantes haue p<sup>r</sup> valed  
greatly against the King, and hathe taken the  
Isle of Burwage, and other places wheare all the  
Baie salte is made; and hathe put to the sword all  
the Italians to the *nombre* of .iiij.<sup>ml</sup> and their owne  
contrimen thei haue suffered to *departe*, and mns.<sup>f</sup>  
delano hathe loste his arme (w<sup>ch</sup> was the levet<sup>n</sup> nt  
and the leader of that intrprise of the protestantes  
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[page break]

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agreement be made.

The duke of Alva goethe on w<sup>t</sup> his p<sup>r</sup> parations  
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to see the quenes Navie in setting forward  
The duke saythe that the p<sup>r</sup> paration is made  
to no other end than to transporte the quene  
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that by cause the quene of Spayne shall <sup>^haue^</sup> no harme of the Englishe coste, she shalbe whafted w<sup>t</sup> .x.<sup>ml</sup> men; and by the same purpose the capitaynes and the men be in redynes, and the shippes are in preparing w<sup>t</sup> all diligence w<sup>t</sup> as muche speede as the duke makethe of his.

Thei say mns.<sup>r</sup> Rambolet hath donne the ffrenche Kinges message; for the libertie of the Scotishe quene, and that she might enioye her owne realme and to governe it and to se the bringinge vp of her owne child; the quenes ma:<sup>tie</sup> answered that <sup>^she marrveled^</sup> the King wold troble him self in matters so farre from him; having so muche to do at home; as for the matters betwene her syster of Scotland and her; thei wold agree well inough, he shold not nede to care for it; and so it is thought as yet, she shall not *comme* to the speche of the quene of Scotland and muche lesse to goo into Scotland.

The Lordes of the kinges syde continue still in their consultation at Edenburgh; and the lordes of the quenes syde be in the earle of Argiles contrye and stureth not.

My Lord of Sussex hath ~~of late~~ discharged of late .xvj.<sup>c</sup> men and the reste is lyke to be discharged shortlye; and thei say he laborethe to be dispatched both of his levet<sup>n</sup> ntshipp, and also of his president=shipp; and hath a grante so to do, w<sup>t</sup> fauor, of the quenes ma:<sup>tie</sup>

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There is divers of the Rebelles endited at Norwich  
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time twelmonethe there abowte, be condemned to  
perpetuall prson w<sup>t</sup> the losse of landes and goodes.

S.<sup>r</sup> Thomas Cornewalles and his son in lawe  
M.<sup>r</sup> Kytson be at libertie, by cause thei be *conten*=ted to *comme* to the devyne s<sup>r</sup> vice.

There hathe bine seditious billes hurled in  
the courte, and at Northampton at the assises  
and in other places; for w<sup>ch</sup> cause besides the  
proclamations made in that behalf the counsell  
hathe directed their *lettres* in to the contryes  
for the ponishing of suche bawde dealing.

And thus w<sup>t</sup> my moost humble *commendacions*, I  
take my leave of yo<sup>r</sup> honorable good .L. wishing  
vnto my lord and yo<sup>w</sup> and to my frend all  
helthe to godes pleasure scribeled at London  
the .xxviiij. of Iuly . 1570 .

Y<sup>r</sup> honorable good .L. ever to *command*  
during lyfe

Hugh ffitzwilliam  
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Version: 1.0