

16 March 1641/42, Castlelyons¹, Alice née Boyle Barry (1608-1667), 1st countess of Barrymore to Sir Ralph Verney² (Claydon House, Buckinghamshire. Verney, Letters 1642). Autograph. For sir Ralph Verney att his Lodgings in the Coven Garden these London. Endorsed: Countess of Barrimore 16 march 1641/2. Received 4 Aprill 1642.

Noble Enemy

If any accation[occasion] might be a just excuse for Letting this bearer my Cozen goe outt of my house , with outt writing, the daley distraction I am now in might pleade for me, butt that Can not make me forgit my many Serverall obligation I have to you though I Live everey houer att the mercey of our increasing enemyes³, and dare not as yett ster, because the Saftey of So many depends upon my staye heare , and we have daley the obgets of the papists⁴ Cruelty, which doth Some what terifey me, I will not enter in to any perticulars, for I desier you may onley heare of it by the bye , and never have a full relation of the many misereys this poore Kingdome is redust to, and much Like to be worse, with out you grave parlament men doe Speediley Send us more aide , which I begge you to doe that you may presarve in Ierland

Your unconstant enemy , butt faithfull

freind to Sarve you A Barrymore

< my humble Sarvis to your Lady , and your Sisters> <Castelyons the 16 of March 1641>

¹ Castlelyons is a small village in the east of County Cork, Ireland. It is also a civil parish in the barony of Barrymore from which Alice and her husband, David Barry, derived their noble title.

² See Susan E. Whyman, “Sir Ralph Verney, first baronet (1613-1696), landowner and politician,” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [ODNB]. The friendship between the Verneys and the Boyles began in 1626 when Alice and her husband David were offered assistance by Ralph’s father, Sir Edmund Verney, during a visit to England, see Claydon House, Buckinghamshire [CLY], “Letters 1626”, letter from Richard Boyle to Sir Edmund Verney, July 1626. Also, F.P.Verney, *Memoirs of the Verney family: during the civil war* (London, 1892), i, pp 195-7.

³ The Irish Rebellion broke out in Ulster on the night of the 22nd of October 1641 but it was several months before the fighting took hold and intensified in the remaining provinces. At the time Alice wrote to her friend, Sir Ralph Verney MP, Protestant settlers across Ireland were being attacked and forced to flee to nearby towns and better-fortified castles. In spite of his Catholic kinsmen, Alice’s husband, 1st earl of Barrymore, David Barry (1605–1642) played a prominent role in the local Protestant army. Many of the Barrymores’ Protestant neighbours and tenants came to rely on David and Alice’s homes at Castlelyons and at Barryscourt to provide refuge, which made both sites prime targets for besiegement. For more on the Rebellion in Munster see, Nicholas Canny, *Making Ireland British 1580-1650* (Oxford, 2009), pp 524-534; for the Boyle women’s siege experiences, see Chapter 3 of Ann-Maria Walsh, *The daughters of the first earl of Cork: writing family, faith, politics, and place* (Dublin, 2020).

⁴ “Chiefly derogatory. A Roman Catholic; an advocate of papal supremacy.” (“papist, adj.and n.,” A.1., *OED*).