

DIARY OF COLONEL THOMAS BELLINGHAM

Colonel Thomas Bellingham of Castle Bellingham, Co. Louth, acted as William's aide-de-camp during the march from Dundalk to the Boyne. After the battle, he accompanied William to Duleek. As a result, Jacobites destroyed Castlebellingham by fire. His father, Henry, a cavalry officer, came to Ireland during the Cromwellian war, and was granted the estate named after him, in which he was confirmed in 1666. The family represented Co. Louth in the Irish parliament continuously from 1660 until 1755.

While he was not present at the siege of Limerick, the diary illustrates news of the siege as received in the east of the country. Entries in the diary were written some time after the events – he is one week out on the arrival of William's army at Limerick, 2 August instead of the 9th.

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July the 28, 1690. Very hot. I went with Mr. Tysdell towards Dublin. Dined at Drogheda and had news of Douglas rising from Athlone.

The 29th. The king came to Chapelizod.

The 30th. Much rain. Great concourse to see the king.

The 31st. Some rain. I waited on my Lady Bellingham to see the king.

August the 1st. Some rain. I gave in my petition to the commissioners. The king went to the camp which is on its march to Limerick.

The 2nd. Very fair. We arrived before Limerick after beating the enemy out of all the fields and ditches. I went to Dubber on the 3rd and on

The 4th. I went to Sir Rich. B. to Raboth. Nothing material till the 10th. I went to Clontarf, dined there, and went to Dubber.

The 11th. I went to cousin Swan's and spent most of the day. This night about 12 o'clock Sarsfield with a party of horse seized our great guns at Cullen and spoiled our boats, but 6 of 8 guns were again recovered. Women and children killed by the enemy.

The 17th. Still fair weather. We opened the trenches this night and beat the enemy out of several forts and sconces, and in one fort we killed 80, Kirk giving them the same quarter which they gave our wagoners.

The 18th. This night by mistake our men fell foul on each other, and fired and killed about 20. The enemy made a



Delftware dish decorated with the figure of William, c. 1690. Victoria & Albert Museum.

sally, but were repulsed with considerable loss.

The 19th. Our men relieved their guards about 4 in the afternoon to prevent the inconvenience of last night's mistake occasioned by the darkness of the night.

The 20th. In the morning we battered the remaining fort the enemy were possessed of without their counterscarp. About 2 in the afternoon we stormed it with a detachment of grenadiers, who within half an hour took it, putting 150 to the sword, sparing only their Captain Barrett by the king's order. About 5 the enemy made a vigorous sally with the best of their force, both horse and foot, and after near an hour's dispute were beaten back into the town leaving 500 dead in the place.

The 22nd. About 5 this morning the enemy made another sally, but their

last loss and defeat made them more wary and retired in less than a quarter of an hour with some loss.

The 27th. This day the king ordered the counterscarp to be stormed, which our men did with great bravery, and beat the enemy into the town, and after whom our men, pursuing too far, several both of officers and soldiers were killed by springing up of several mines and the rest forced to retire. This day I returned home.

The 29th. The king designed to storm the town this day, but the rains falling so heavily these two days past, and the trenches so full of water, it was thought fitter to raise the siege. This day Mr. Foulkes died.

The 30th. Mr. Foulkes buried at Ardee. This morning our army decamped from before Limerick, and the king went to Waterford in order to embark for England.