

SUMMARY: The document below headed ‘Advices from England, 19th September 1585’, states that Oxford and Sir John Norris (c.1547-1597) had arrived in Flanders with five or six thousands soldiers. The entry for Norris in *The Dictionary of National Biography* provides information concerning this expedition:

On 21 June, although no decision had yet been taken to enter the war outright, the privy council ordered Norris to prepare troops to serve in the Netherlands. However, negotiations between England and the United Provinces moved on apace as the danger to Antwerp increased, and eventually it was agreed that Elizabeth would aid the Dutch republic with a royal army. On 12 August Norris was commissioned ‘colonel-general and governor of the Queen's forces’. In addition, that same day the Dutch delegation commissioned him to raise and command an extra 3500 men in their pay, rather than Elizabeth's.

At this time Norris already had nearly 3000 men in the Netherlands, raised in expectation of both the queen's commission and the states' contract. By mid-September he commanded a force of over 7000 English troops, with 1000 more following. Only half of this army was in the queen's pay—but all were under his command, and within weeks he had successfully led his men into battle with the Spanish. . . .

In October 1585, even while Norris held Parma at bay near Arnhem, Leicester was appointed lieutenant-general of the queen's forces with full diplomatic and political powers to go with his military rank. There was a delay in leaving England, but after Leicester's arrival in the Netherlands in January 1586, Norris ceased to be commander of the army and instead became colonel-general of the foot, with the young Robert Devereux, second earl of Essex, as colonel-general of the horse—both under the new lieutenant-general. Leicester, in turn, swiftly accepted the post of governor-general, offered by the desperate states and so Norris continued to hold a states' as well as a royal commission, but there was no question that he was now part of the English military hierarchy.

Norris was resentful at being supplanted, even by such a great nobleman as Leicester. It did not help that Leicester showed little ability either in military operations or local politics, yet was unwilling to take Norris's advice.

Perhaps as a result of Leicester's appointment in October, Oxford returned to England on October 21 (see *CSP Foreign, 1585-86*, p.104)..

The document below also states that Thomas (c.1544-1590), 4th Lord Paget, his brother Charles Paget (c.1546-1612), Thomas Throgmorton, Thomas Morgan (1543-1611?) and Francis Arundel had all been declared guilty of high treason. There is no ‘Francis Arundel’ who could have been declared guilty of high treason at the time, and it seems certain that the person declared guilty of high treason was Charles Arundel, particularly since Don Bernardino de Mendoza (d.1604) had earlier mistakenly referred Charles Arundel as ‘Francis’ in a letter of 25 December 1581 to King Philip II of Spain. For the

roles played by Charles Arundel and Lord Henry Howard in events involving Oxford in 1580/1 see TNA SP 15/27A/46, ff. 81-2 and other documents on this website, in particular the letters of the Spanish ambassador to England, Don Bernardino de Mendoza (d.1604). The translation below is taken from Hume, Martin, ed., *Calendar of Letters and State Papers relating to English Affairs*, Vol. III, 1580-1586, pp. 546-7.

Advices from England, 19th September 1585

The Earl of Shrewsbury had left to go to Derbyshire, he being Lord Lieutenant of the two counties of Derbyshire and Stafford. When he took leave of the Queen of England he kissed her hand for having, as he said, freed him from two devils, namely, the Queen of Scotland and his wife.* He urged the Queen not to trust to foreign friendship, and to take Holland and Zeeland under her protection, offering, if she wished it, to go in person thither and to maintain 2,000 men at his own expense.

The Queen of Scotland is well in health and is guarded very strictly by Sir Amyas Paulet, who has placed 40 of his own men as her guard and watchers, and constant reports are made of what the Queen and her servants do and say. There is great disagreement between the Earl of Leicester and the Lord Treasurer, Cecil persuading the Queen not to break with the house of Burgundy whilst Leicester uses all his great influence with the Queen to bring her to an opposite course, and to weaken the party of the Lord Treasurer.

Five or six thousand English soldiers have arrived in Flanders with the Earl of Oxford and Colonel Norris, and it is said that Philip Sidney will follow them shortly to take possession of Flushing, whilst other gentlemen will go to assure the govern[or]ships of other towns, and the Earl of Leicester will then follow as chief of the expedition.

At the beginning of this month Baron Willoughby left for Germany for the purpose of raising forces for the King of Navarre.

The persecution and terror in England are so great that the majority of the Catholics are endeavouring to get exiled to Germany, and they offer full security that they will not enter into any plots against the Queen, or give her any reason for complaint. The principal people who are making this request are Master Thomas Tresham, Master William Catesby, and Master Tichborne.

The King of Scotland seems very dependent upon the Queen of England, and to follow her humour entirely. Towards the end of September, the Earl of Huntingdon and Baron Ewer [=Eure] for the Queen of England, and Baron Sinclair and the Earl of Northesk for the King of Scotland, will meet for the purpose of agreeing upon an offensive and defensive league.

Lord Paget, Charles Paget, his brother, Thomas Throgmorton, Thomas Morgan and Francis Arundel had been declared guilty of high treason.

It is reported from Scotland that Baron Fernihurst is still held prisoner in England on account of the death of the son of the Earl of Bedford. Father Edmund, the Scotch Jesuit who was in Scotland with another companion, claims to have reconciled to the Catholic church over 10,000 souls in six months.

* The custody of the Queen of Scots had been transferred to Sir Amyas Paulet, but Shrewsbury was not rid of his wife. In the following year an agreement for partial separation was agreed upon, particulars of which will be found in the Hatfield papers, part 3. Hist. MSS. Commission.