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 Edited by James Arthur Muller
 Excerpt
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INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO NOS. I–II

These letters were written while Gardiner was in Wolsey’s service. The first, to Erasmus, contains the only autobiographical reference to Gardiner’s early youth that we have. Nos. 2 and 3 were written on his first mission to the Pope, in 1528. Eighteen other letters, written by him in the names of himself and one or both of his colleagues (Edward Fox and Sir Gregory Casale) while on this embassy, are not here printed (*see* above, p. xvi). The object of the embassy was to secure a Papal commission enabling Wolsey and Campeggio to examine the validity of the dispensation of Julius II, which had permitted Henry VIII to marry his deceased brother’s wife, and to give sentence accordingly on the marriage. It was desired that this commission contain a Papal pronouncement or decretal settling certain questions of law, hence it was called a ‘decretal commission.’ The commission granted by Clement VII and taken to England by Fox was not in this form, hence Gardiner remained at the Papal Court until he succeeded in persuading the Pope to issue a secret decretal commission which Campeggio was to bring with him. *See* No. 3. This was granted at the moment of some French military successes in Italy, but by the time Campeggio reached England (October, 1528) the power of Charles V, nephew of Catherine of Aragon, was once more in the ascendant, and Campeggio was instructed to delay the trial and give no decision without new orders from the Pope. He refused, moreover, to put the secret decretal in Wolsey’s hands.

Further delay resulted from Catherine’s production of a copy of what was said to be a brief of Julius II remedying all defects in his bull of dispensation. Gardiner was again dispatched to the Papal Court, in January, 1529, whither Sir Francis Brian and Peter Vannes had been sent shortly before, to secure the Pope’s decision that the brief was false. The undated letter, No. 4, a graceful farewell note to a fellow-member of Wolsey’s household, is probably to be placed, as in *L.P.*, on the eve of Gardiner’s departure. Nos. 5–10 were written while on this mission, No. 11 just after his return. He found Imperial pressure on the Pope stronger now than in the previous year, and although there is some evidence that Clement expressed his private opinion that the brief was a forgery (*L.P.*, IV, 5181, 5733, 5742), he said he could give no decision without hearing both sides (*ib.*, 5474, 21 April, 1529). He acted, thought

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Gardiner, as if he did not care how Henry's case was settled, so he did not have to settle it himself, and said he wished Catherine were in her grave (Nos. 9, 10).

For joint letters from Gardiner and his colleagues, and instructions to Gardiner during this mission, see *L.P.*, IV, 5183–5576, *passim*.

Meanwhile Wolsey and the King had decided to begin the trial, and Gardiner was summoned home to assist in it. For his activities at the trial see Janelle, *Obedience in Church and State*, pp. xvii–xix. Campeggio succeeded in putting off a decision, and, on 23 July, 1529, prorogued the court for vacation till October. On 28 July Gardiner became Principal Secretary to the King.

The court never sat again, for, although Campeggio was as yet unaware of it, Clement had signed, on 15 July, the advocacy of the case to Rome. The French had been thoroughly defeated in Italy, and Clement had gone completely over to the Emperor, sealing this alliance with him by the Treaty of Barcelona, 29 June.

For fuller references to authorities on matters connected with Gardiner's two missions to the Papal Court see J. Gairdner, 'New Lights on the Divorce of Henry VIII,' *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, XI, XII.

I. To ERASMUS

[London?], 28 February, [1526 or 1527]

Stadtbibliothek, Breslau, Codex Rehdigeranus 254, 177–8.* Enthoven, *Briefe an Eras.*, 73. Allen, *Ep. Eras.*, VI, 265.

Recalls how, when a lad in the Eden household in Paris (in 1511), he daily prepared a salad for Erasmus, and how Erasmus later offered to take him into his service. (If Gardiner be correct in placing the publication of the *Moria* sixteen years before he wrote, and if the *Moria* appeared, as it almost certainly did, in 1511, the year date of this letter would be 1527. But the reply of Erasmus is, in all the authorized editions of his letters, dated 3 September, 1526. Leclerc changed this to 1527, which is followed by Horawitz and Enthoven. Mr P. S. Allen, however, sees no reason for doubting the earlier date, and gives one good reason for retaining it—*Ep. Eras.*, VI, 404. For a free English translation of Gardiner's letter see my *Gardiner*, 4; for Erasmus' reply, *ib.*, 5, and Allen, VI, 404.)

S. Gardinerus Erasmo Rhoterodamo S.P.

Quantumcunque reclamet infanciam meam, ne ad Erasmus scribam, in omni eruditionis genere principem virum, illud tamen a me impetrare

non potuit, ut sileam omnino; tam potens alioqui ipsa viribusque tam valida, ut modum pro imperio posset adhibere. Nam nec sinit interdum quod sentio exprimere, et tamen surdis nunc canit affectibus meis, ne tibi se prodant quoquo modo, tam commoda presertim occasione oblata tum scribendi tum scripta per tabellarium mittendi ad te. Vel scribentibus certatim ex Anglia reliquis, solus taceret Stephanus ille qui, quoties de Erasmo sermo incidit, se illi coquum aliquando fuisse gloriose satis iactitare solet? hoc modo scilicet eruditionis sue fidem audientibus factururus; non aliter profecto quam qui sanctos eo nomine se volunt haberi, quod Sanctam semel Terram pedibus calcarunt. Scribendum certe fuit, ne vel circa te ingratus amicis tuis videar, qui non illi gratias habeam, in cuius scriptis aliquamdiu versatus nonnihilo inde frugis collegerim, vel aliis mentitus, dum me tibi tam notum ubique predicarem olim fuisse et familiarem. Ceterum si fas sit memoriam istam tuam optimis quibusque rebus diligentissime adservandis a te destinatum ob rem quandam nugatorium ad preterita revocare, annon recordaris sexdecem abhinc annos, cum apud Edenum quendam Anglum, in vico Sancti Ioannis Lutecie tum divertentem, hospes esses, quo tempore primum Moriam edidisti, ni fallor, tuam, et iam magnam librorum vim tibi comparasti tum Grecorum tum Latinorum, fuisse id temporis cum Edeno illo puellum quendam, cui cotidie iubebas ut lactucas pararet tibi cum butiro et omphatio coctas, atque illum tibi cibum ab eodem tam eleganter instructum diceres ut nunquam alias? Ipsus ego sum, Stephanus Gardinerus, tui amantissimus ac tecum absente absens hucusque bona fide versatus, sed aulicis iam tandem negociis a te sic distractus, ut te[†] amare, quod facio, deinceps liceat, frui vero dulcissima illa scriptorum tuorum consuetudine vereor ut liceat aliquando. O me certe infelicem, cui illam conditionem amplecti non contigit, quam tu per Gerardum, bibliopolam Cantabrigensem, mihi obtulisti! si tamen is mihi non est mentitus, nimirum ut tibi inservirem; tum quidem pro mutis illis literis tuis quas utcunque degustavi¹, vivi tui pectoris energiam preceptorem habiturus. Sed stultus qui queror que mutari non possunt. Et plura verba facturo manum iam iniicit ipsa quam dixi infancia, nec sinit hoc tempore esse loquatiorem. Itaque vale, doctissime Erasme, et Stephanum ut olim palato tuo in parandis certe² lactucis non ineptissimum coquum, sic nunc, si qua te possit fortuna iuvare, amicum non infidelem tibi

¹ vi c.o.

² certes w. s c.o.

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futurum velis existimare. Iterum vale. Ex edibus Reverendissimi
 Cardinalis, ultimo Februarii.

Tibi deditissimus,

STEPHANUS GARDINERUS

2. *To WOLSEY*

Calais, 18 February, 1528

R.O., S.P. 1, 46, 270–1.* *L.P.*, IV, 3938. Pocock, I, 78.

Sir Robert Wingfield has shown him the defenceless condition of Calais.

Pleasith it your Grace to understande that synnes my cumming hither to Calays, Master Deputie, in whom for your Graces sake I have founde moch kindnes, hath at lenght declared and shewed unto me the poore state and condition of this towne, gretly mornyng and lamenting the same; and, upon such letters as he hath receyved from the capitain of Boleyn, wherof I suppose he hath advertised your Grace, moch more perplexed and troubled in mynde howe the necessites of this towne, if wer shulde nowe ensue, as it is spoken, shalbe releved, oonles your Grace cause provision to be made in tyme, like as, I doubte not, and have also said unto him, your Grace hath already doon. Nevertheles, hering with myn eres complayntes made on every partye, aswel of extreme povertie and det as also want and skarcyte of vytal, I thought I coulede noo lesse doo but to advertise your Grace therof; whom I wel knowe to have singuler respecte and consideration to the mayntenaunce of this towne, which nowe specially requirith your Graces help and counfort to be adhibite in tyme.

This night arryved here the Popes ambassadour, having very fayre passage. I harde say by his servauntes that Thadeus was at Dover; but as yet he camme not here. Tomorowe in the mornyng Master Fox and I take our jounray by post towards Parys, God willing; Who preserve your good Grace. At Calays the xvij day of February.

Your Graces most humble
 servaunt and dayly bedeman

STEVEN GARDYNER

Addressed: To my Lord Legates good Grace.

Endorsed: Doctor Stevyns, the xvijth of February, 1527 <28>.

3. To HENRY VIII

Viterbo, 11 June, [1528]

R.O., S.P. 1, 48, 162–3.* *L.P.*, IV, 4355. *St. P.*, VII, 77.

The Pope is sending the secret decretal commission with Campeggio; thinks the Pope has a sincere love for Henry; has been troubled by Henry's displeasure. (If word of Henry's displeasure reached Gardiner, as is here suggested, from Tuke, the letter is lost, but an extant letter from Edward Fox mentions it—*L.P.*, IV, 4290. For the Pope's letter to Henry, mentioned here, *see ib.*, 4348.)

Pleasith yt your Highnes to understande that, endeavoring myself as far as my poore wit, lernyng, industrie, and diligence coulede extende, I have at the last conduced the setting forwarde of the Cardinal Campegius, as shal appere unto your Majestie by such letters of the said Campegius as he wrote unto me, and as^t I sende unto Master Fox to be declared unto your Highnes at lenght; not doubting but, whenne your Grace shal have herde the processe of our doinges here, and what we have doon for the diligent and spedy accomplishment of your Graces commaundementes, I shal appere unto your Majestie always in good mynde and wil to have been, and to be, of oon sorte; and in your Highnes causes soo to have conjoyned faith and diligence, grounded upon a sincere mynde and intent, as hitherto I have had them in like consideration, with noo lesse studye and desire of mynde to declare the oon thenne the other; being to me, in myn opinion, asmoche hevynes to be accused or suspected in the jugement of your Majestie of my diligence or sincerite in this matier, as if it wer doubted *de fide*, which offense is *infamis et capitalis*. Wherfor most humbly and upon my knees I desire your Highnes to here my justificacion in that behaulf, accompting al the poore service I have or maye do to be wel employed and highly rewarded, if it may suffise *ad probandum fidem et diligenciam Maiestati vestre*.

It may like your Highnes to be also advertised that, after moche difficulte, many altercacions, and other meanes used to compasse and conduce the atteyning of the commission decretal in secrete maner, and finally moche travayling howe to assure the Popes Holynes that the same shuld soo be secretly kepte, at the last, upon difficultie founde of the sure conveying therof to your Highnes, and chaunces which might fortune in the waye, his Holines coulede oonly satisfie himself in sending it by the Cardinal Campegius, and soo hath promised us, like as by his letters

your Majestie shal understande. Which, knowing it to be nowe more tyme your Highnes had dedes then promises, and wolde therfor not somoch regarde our relation, we caused, with moch difficultie, his Holynes to wryte; in which letters we wold have had his Holines to expresse the matier in special termes, but for feare *ne litere interciderent*, we coule not obteyne that of him; but he said your Majestie shal understande his mynde by these wordes: *Inventuri sumus aliquam formam satisfaciendi Maiestati tue etc.*; assuring your Highnes that his Holynes hath, in myn opinion, a fast and sincere love towardes your Grace, not grounded upon his necessites, but upon such devocion as he hath perceyved and doth dayly understande to be in your Majestie towardes this see. In the jugement wherof, like as I maye be deceyved, and with protestacion therof write unto your Highnes, soo I have good matier, outwarde and apparaunt, wherupon to grounde my said opinion, and therfor have thought convenient to signifie the same unto your Grace. Wherin if I sawe otherwise, I wolde likewise soo write; being of this determination evermore, al other respectes set aparte, to saye and write unto your Majestie the truth and lightlywodes of truth as they shal appere unto me, whether the same shal delighte and please for the tyme or otherwise[†]; knowing wel that to be the oonly thing which shal obteyne *solidam veram et perpetuam gratiam a Maiestate vestra, que templum est fidei et veritatis unicum in orbe relictum, in quo certa harum numina esse creduntur*.

Which thing moved me by myn other letters to expresse such dispayre as I thenne had, being moch more thenne I coulede by wordes in convenient maner expresse; trusting always that in compassing and conducing such thinges as depende upon a nother mannes acte, your Highnes wil not conjoyne *studium et voluntatem meam cum eventu*; but perceyving *fidem, studium, et voluntatem meam* to have effectually concurred, as it hath and shal ever doo, soo to accepte and repute the same accordingly; as my trust is, and ever hath been, your Highnes wil graciously doo, and esteme me a true and faythful subgiet, and for the benevolence which your Majestie hath above my merites shewed unto me, as sincerely, earnestly, and <with> asmoch good wil to the uttermost of my litel power *etiam cum iactura vite*, being in that cace *non iactura sed lucrum*, in the execution of your Highnes commaundementes and accheving of your desires¹, to procede and employe *pro portione facultatum* as any other.

¹ *alt.* from desirous

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Thus your Majestie nowe understandith howmoch the wordes spoken by your Grace to Master Tuke doo prik me; and having, bfore the receipte of those letters, as this berer canne tel, brought al thinges to conclusion, compelle me to trouble and moleste your Highnes with moo wordes thenne wer convenient for me to use unto your Grace, soo^t rudely cowched and inelegantly writen. Nevertheles, considering they procede *ex iusto dolore meo*, I ha[ve] good hope your Highnes wil soo accepte and take them in good parte accordingly. Thus I praye Almighty God long to preserve your most noble and royal astate. At Viterbe, the xjth day of June.

Your Highnes most humble subget,
servaunt, and dayly oratour,

STEVEN GARDYNER

Addressed: To the Kinges Highnes.

Endorsed: Master Gardyner to the Kinges Highnes, from Viterbe.

4. *To* [THOMAS] ARUNDEL

Westminster, [c. 18–20 January, 1529]

R.O., S.P. 1, 52, 149.* *L.P.*, IV, 5184.

Bids Arundel good-bye (before starting on his second mission to the Pope).

Gentil Master Arundel: By these letters I shal take youe by the hande and byd youe most hartely fare wel, supplying that which I coulede not yesterday doo; aswel for that ye, wayting upon my Lordes Grace, and I, hasted to² repare hither, were sodenly sondred, as also that, in very deade, my stomak wold not suffre me soo to doo. But thowgh I departe from youe in body, I departe not in mynde and sowle; which, considering it may be where I lyst, ye may be wel assured it shalbe ever where youe be during my lif, whersoever this body shal fortune to wandre. As knowith God, Who sende youe most hartely wel to fare. At Westmester, this mornyng.

Entierly your own,

STEVEN GARDYNER

1 ear c.o.

2 c c.o.

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[More information](#)

5. *To* WOLSEY

Dover, [22] January, [1529]

R.O., S.P. 1, 52, 161–2.* *L.P.*, IV, 5195.

Has embarked for Calais. (Gardiner's date, 21 January, is an evident slip for 22 January. See n. in *L.P.*)

Pleasith your Grace to understande that this Friday in the mornyng, the tyde and wynde being propicious, I entred the ship to passe to Calays, entending from thens to passe with al diligence towards Parys and there to abyde my letters. Thus Almighty Jesus preserve your good Grace and sende me good passage with like spede in my journey. From Dover, this Fryday, the xxijth day of January.

Your Graces most bounden servaunt
and dayly bedeman,

STEVEN GARDYNER

Addressed: To my Lorde Legates good Grace.

Endorsed: Doctor Stevyns, of the¹ xxijth of January.

6. *To* WOLSEY

Lyons, 31 January, [1529]

B.M., Vit. B, XI, 46–7.* Mutilated. *L.P.*, IV, 5237.

The Pope is ill; the effect his death would have on the commission to Wolsey and Campeggio. (For instructions to Brian and Vannes and prophecy concerning Angelus see *L.P.*, IV, 4977, 5014. Wolsey feared that Charles V intended to raise to the Papacy Cardinal Quiñones, whose monastic name was Francis of the Angels.)

Pleasith it your Grace to understande that, arryving here a[t Lyons] this Saterday in the mornyng by vijth of the klok, and intendi[ng] this day to my expedition from hens with Master Secretary and Master Doctor Benet, whom I founde here abyding my cummyng, as it was ordred by your Graces letters, I entende, God willing, to morowe to departe hens towards Rome; from whens, by reaporte of diverse that I have encountred in the waye, I here confirmation of such tydings concernyng the Popes extreme sikenes as I wrote unto your Grace from Parys of the relation of Bayly Robe[r]t. N[evertheles], whether the Pope be recovered or noo it is [here in doubt], and it is supposed by conjecture

¹ the repeated

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Excerpt
[More information](#)

that he is rather amen[ded then] otherwise, for that there cummith noo tydings to¹ the contrary; w[hich] is to be thought shal soone be spred abroad. Howbeit, forasmoc[h] as your Grace, in instructions nowe geven to Master Brian a[nd] Master Peter, notith the prophicie of² Angelus to [be the] pope, there chaunces in this tyme of the worlde soo m[any] thinges *vaticiniis predicta* that these tidinges doo moch a[lter] <i.e., disturb> me, considering that of oon writing *de calamitatibus P[ape] subiungitur*, ‘*Papa cito moritur*,’ which if it shulde chaun[ce, as] God forbede it shulde³, the commission geven to your Grace [and to] my Lorde Campegius *morte pontificis concedentis* wer [wholly] extincte and adnihilate, oonles the same wer *in illius [v]it[a in]cepta exequi et perpetuare*, which may be doon *solo decre[to] citacionis*, as Master Doctor Wolman and Master Doctor Bel can shewe unto your Grace. *Fortasse quod etiam spero frustra timeo ac nimis timeo, nec satis probabitur quare locum aliquem vaticiniis vanis ac stultis predictionibus dem*⁴; *tamen animo reputans quam egre laturo sit regia maiestas que hactenus impetrata sunt sic frustrari* I cannot am compelled to communicate unto your Grace *vel stultum vel temerarium* knowing wel that your Grace [hath] soo to harte this thinge⁵ *nemo ne quid secus accidat magis timeat. In omnem eventum* these thinges lettith not my journ[ey] ne shal not hindre my diligence, but shal procede in the same accordingly, ⁶by the grace of God, Who preserve your good Gr[ace]. From Lyons, the last day of January.

Your Graces most humble ser[vaunt]
and bedeman,
STEVEN GARDYN[ER]

Addressed: To my lorde Legates good Grace.

7. To HENRY VIII

Rome, 15 February, [1529]

R.O., S.P. 1, 53, 16–17.* L.P., IV, 5294.

Fears his coming will be useless.

Pleasith it your Majestie to understande that, albeit I have noo matier of importaunce to signifie unto the same, yet I have thought good by these my letters to advertise your Highnes of myn arryval here; with this also,

1 † <i>abv.</i> th(?) <i>c.o.</i>	2 frier <i>c.o.</i>	3 y <i>c.o.</i>
4 † <i>abv.</i> asculitem <i>c.o.</i>	5 ut <i>c.o.</i>	6 b <i>writ.</i> over Al(?)

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that oonles I finde the Popes Holynes of other disposition then as yet by conjectures I canne perceyve he shulde be of, I shal not doo that service to your Highnes by my cummyng hither that I wolde have doon; like as your Majestie shal more particularly perceyve by such letters as Master Bryan writeth unto the same at this tyme, the specialtes wherof I am not pryve unto, by reason of my late arryval here, but oonly by hym perceyving. Nevertheles, by such thinges as I have herde before my cummyng here, and that which I have seen and herde synnes my cummyng hither, that al thinges be not here in such trayne as I trusted to have founde them, but very far discrepaunt from lightlywode of atteyning your Highnes purpose, nevertheles, these lightlywodes shal in noo parte let me to experiment al wayes and meanes possible for comprobacion of my fidelite and due obsequie in the accomplishment of your Highnes commaundement. In doing wherof my trust and hope is your Highnes wil accepte my true intent and diligent service, which I shal not fayle to employe according to my most bounden dutie during my lif, by the grace of God, Who ever preserve your most noble and royal astate. From Rome, the xvth day of February.

Your Highnes most humble subget,
 servaunt, and dayly oratour,

STEVEN GARDYNER

Addressed: To the Kinges Highnes.

Endorsed: Doctor Stephens to the Kinges Majestie.

8. To HENRY VIII

Rome, 3 March, [1529]

R.O., S.P. I, 53, 85–6.* *L.P.*, IV, 5348. *St. P.*, VII, 152.

Has little hope of succeeding with the Pope, for the Imperialists now have the upper hand in central Italy; why the Pope's promise (made the previous summer, not to revoke the commission and to confirm the Legates' sentence—see Ehses, *Römische Dokumente*, No. 23) has not been sent. (See also No. 9.)

Pleasith it your Majestie to understande that, like as we by our commen letters have signified to my Lorde Legates Grace, to be declared unto your Highnes, we cannot as yet have accesse to the Popes presence, ne, by reason of the variete of his sikenes, canne tel whenne to have. The Bishop of Verone shewed us that, in his opinion, he thought we shulde