

LETTER TO FATHER LUKE WADDING, 1642.

On the point of leaving Brussels, Owen wrote to father Luke Wadding, impressing on him the necessity of sending supplies of money and arms to Ireland, and beseeching him to obtain for all those joined in the enterprise his holiness' benediction. Everything being ready for the voyage, he went aboard the ship in the neighbourhood of Dunkirk, and despatched the following, which we translate from the Spanish:—

Taken from the book 'The Fate and Fortunes of Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, and Rory O'Donel, Earl of Tyrconnel; Their Flight from Ireland and Death in Exile' by Rev. Charles Patrick Meehan.

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‘Rev. father,—The day before my embarkation, which was the eve of Holy Trinity, thirty Dutch men-of-war having extended themselves, and taken up all the passes from before Gravelines to Ostend, in such sort that, finding myself in the impossibility of coming out with my frigate, in order to lose no time, I resolved, and on two occasions attempted, to get out of this in a small boat, with two little pieces, fifteen soldiers, and some ammunition. I intended making another attempt to-night, but have been dissuaded by the captains, on account of having no means of defence beyond what I have stated. My nephew, therefore, Don Bernardo, will go with the captain of the man-of-war and some ammunition, in order to apprise [our people] of my arrival. I expect to leave this with the frigate by the twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth, when we shall have no moon, dark nights, and high tides. It may also happen that by this time the king’s frigates will put to sea, and thus render our passage more secure.

‘I beseech your paternity to oblige me by undertaking the affair I have confided to you, and to hasten, without loss of time, the business you have on hands. Communicate to me all the news you can gather from Ireland and England, as also from foreign parts, and in like manner what they say of me, as I am given to understand that all [my affairs] are publicly spoken of everywhere. Send me a full account of all [you know] by this messenger, whom I sent solely for this purpose; and, as I said, spin out the time until the twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth of the present month. May God guard your paternity as I desire.

‘At sea, on board the frigate Saint Francis, 18th June, 1642.

‘DON EUGENIO O’NEILL.’