

The Correspondence of
JAMES USSHER

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The Correspondence of
JAMES USSHER
1600–1656

VOLUME I
1600–1627
Letters no. 1–232

edited by
Elizabethanne Boran

with Latin and Greek translations by
David Money



IRISH MANUSCRIPTS COMMISSION

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For Gertie, Orla and Rosemary — one each.

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INTRODUCTION

‘The most rich Magazine of solid learning, and of all Antiquity.’¹

JAMES USSHER, CHURCH OF IRELAND ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH from 1625 to 1656, has justifiably been described as Trinity College Dublin’s greatest scholar. He is best known for his scholarly computations on the dating of creation, work which was the result of decades of historical research and which ensured his status in the seventeenth-century pantheon of

European scholarship. John Selden (1584–1654), a celebrated contemporary, famously described him as ‘learned to a miracle, and born to the promoting of the most severe studies’ and it is clear that Ussher not only assiduously investigated a wide range of disciplines but also promoted other scholars’ projects by generously funding research proposals, loaning manuscripts and books, and using his own network of contacts to track down material further afield.² He did this by carefully constructing a circle of correspondents that spread all over Europe and which crossed religious boundaries and disciplinary fields. Ussher’s correspondence thus sheds vital light on the scholarly friendship networks of early modern Europe, how they were constructed, how they operated, and what were the dominant intellectual concerns of the era.

At the heart of the Ussher correspondence lies the conception of Ussher’s identity, as an Irishman, a British subject loyal to the crown, and a European intellectual. His correspondence reflects his political and ecclesiastical role as the head of the church in Ireland at a crucial time of forging its identity as a separate enclave from the Church of England while his scholarly network reveals his pivotal role in Irish, British and European intellectual life.³ Contemporaries recognised his importance. Roman Catholic writers such as David Rothe (c. 1573–1650), Bishop of Ossory, and William Malone (1586–1656), the noted Jesuit controversialist, were as anxious as the Calvinist clientele of Trinity College, Dublin, to avail themselves of his renowned historical research, not to mention the extensive library he amassed as archbishop of Armagh. In Britain he corresponded with the leading scholars of his day: famous historians such as William Camden (1551–1623), Sir Robert Cotton (1571–1631) and John Selden; celebrated mathematicians and scientists such as Thomas Lydiat (1572–1646) and John Bainbridge (1582–1643), and the radical educational and ecclesiastical reformers John Dury (1596–1680) and

1 Nicholas Bernard, *The life and death of the most reverend and learned father of our church, Dr. James Usher, late Archbishop of Armagh, and Primate of all Ireland* (London, 1656), p. 9.

2 On this see Elizabethanne Boran, ‘Ussher and the collection of manuscripts in early modern Europe’, in Jason Harris and Keith Sidwell (eds), *Making Ireland Roman: The Latin writing of early modern Ireland* (Cork University Press, 2008), pp. 176–94.

3 The most recent and authoritative assessment of Ussher as an ecclesiastical politician and theologian is Alan Ford, *James Ussher, Theology, history and politics in early-modern Ireland and England* (Oxford, 2007). Ussher’s relationship with John Bramhall is the subject of two other recent studies: Jack Cunningham, *James Ussher and John Bramhall, The theology and politics of two Irish ecclesiastics of the seventeenth century* (Aldershot, 2007) and John McCafferty, *The reconstruction of the Church of Ireland. Bishop Bramhall and the Laudian Reforms, 1633–1641* (Cambridge, 2007).

Samuel Hartlib (c. 1600–1662). In Europe he actively engaged in intellectual disputes about the identity of the ‘true church’. His connections ranged from the Low Countries to France, Switzerland and Germany and his correspondents included scholars such as Louis de Dieu (1590–1642), Louis Cappel (1585–1658), Constantine L’Empereur (1591–1648) and Johann Buxtorf II (1599–1664). His friendship network, though primarily with Irish, British and European correspondents, also extended across the Atlantic to include the prominent Winthrop family network: John Winthrop senior (1588–1649), Governor of Massachusetts, his son John Junior (1606–1676), Governor of Connecticut, and his brother-in-law, Emanuel Downing.

THE SCOPE OF THE PRESENT EDITION

The genesis of the current edition lay in a desire to present a critical edition of the Ussher correspondence. It soon became clear that this task would not only incorporate the tracking down of the sources for those letters edited by Parr and Elrington, coupled with the scholarly annotation of the texts, but also the inclusion of a host of letters, many of which had never previously been published before. The sources for these new letters are diverse. A few individual letters had come on the market after Elrington’s edition and had been purchased by a number of libraries, including that of TCD: five letters between Ussher and Sir Henry Spelman (sold in 1863) and two letters of Ussher to John Bramhall, the controversial Bishop of Derry in the 1630s (purchased in 1928).²⁶ Since these were in private hands prior to their purchase it is not surprising that Elrington did not know of their existence. Some of the new letters presented here had been published in the seventeenth century but had been neglected by Parr — an example being letters between Ussher and John Richardson, Bishop of Ardagh which were included in the latter’s *Choice observations* of 1655. Some of the new letters have already been published prior to the present edition, but since this edition aims at being comprehensive and since more information has come to light on these letter groups, they are included here. Specifically this concerns two groups of letters, published in articles by William O’Sullivan and Alan Ford respectively, and which cover Ussher’s correspondence with David Rothe on the one hand, and William Laud on the other.²⁷ Other letters have been located in printed collections of Ussher’s correspondents — for example abstracts and some texts are available in the Berwick edition of the letters of John Bramhall.²⁸ Yet others have been found in either draft or manuscript copies in a range of locations, most notably the Bodleian, the library of TCD, the British Library and the Huntington Library, California.²⁹

In the latter library the Bramhall letters present a significant cache of Ussher letters to John Bramhall, which came to light *after* Elrington’s edition. The originals, thirteen in all, survive due

18 A note on TCD, MS 1073 (1), which is Reeves’ annotated copy of Elrington’s volume xv, contains a letter entitled ‘Sale of Ussher manuscript letters. Extract from Publishers Circular, July 15, 1863’ which outlines the purchase. The five letters from Ussher to Spelman were part of a batch of 41 autograph letters in all of Spelman correspondence which had come on the market. The note ends with the significant information that ‘No letters of Archbishop Ussher have hitherto appeared at any public sale’. The five letters in questions are now divided between the British Library, the Royal Irish Academy, the Bodleian and the Pierpoint Morgan Library, New York.

19 William O’Sullivan, ‘Correspondence of David Rothe and James Ussher, 1619–23’ in *Collectanea Hibernica*, 36–37 (1994–5), pp 7–49; Alan Ford, ‘Correspondence between Archbishops Ussher and Laud’ in *Archivum Hibernicum*, 46 (1991–2), pp 5–21.

20 Edward Berwick (ed.), *The Rawdon papers* (London, 1819).

21 The above list of libraries is by no means exhaustive as stray letters have been found in libraries as diverse as the University Library, Cambridge, Lambeth Palace Library, the Public Record Office at Kew, Leiden University Library, the Pierpoint Morgan Library New York, Basel University Library and Kent County Archives.

to their inclusion in the manuscript collection of the Marquis of Hastings. Helen Graham, Bramhall's grand-daughter and his co-heiress, had married Sir Arthur Rawdon. From the Rawdons the manuscripts became the property of the earls of Moira who in turn married into the Hastings of Huntingdon. The majority of the new letters come from a steady trawl of the Ussher manuscripts in TCD. Indeed in all 213 new letters may be added to Elrington's edition.³⁰

It is probable that Parr and Elrington were unaware of some of this material but in some cases their exclusions were a result of deliberate policy rather than a lack of knowledge. One can at times sympathise with Parr's (and therefore Elrington's) decision to omit certain material. Though it is clear that Parr used Bodl., MS 313 for Ussher's letters to Thomas Lydiat, the appalling nature of Lydiat's drafted replies no doubt was sufficiently offputting to merit a silent exclusion. Similarly, though he includes Ussher's copies of letters to continental correspondents in TCD, MS 774, the rather more challenging drafts of letters from the enigmatic Francis Lunnet were ignored. All of these letters are included in the present volume though it should be said that at times sections of the letters are well-nigh unreadable.

The vast majority of these new letters are sourced in the British Library and, above all, in the Ussher manuscripts of TCD. Though some correspondence between Ussher and his continental correspondents has been retrieved the profile of the 213 new letters is predominantly Irish/English. Since nearly half are *from* Ussher this considerably augments our understanding of the correspondence as a whole since the Parr/Elrington collections concentrated on letters *to* Ussher (only 96 of the 461 letters in Elrington were from Ussher). The present collection therefore presents a more rounded collection.

Copyright Material: Irish Manuscripts Commission

1 Ussher to Henry Fitzsimon, c. July 1600¹

[Manuscript original: Bodl., Barlow MS 13, ff 83r–v, 84r.²]

Mr. Fitz-simon, although I, being certified by your letter of your resolution to break of the course of our conference,³ was almost induced for my part also to let the matter rest; as being not interrupted by any default of mine: yet now agayne, more deeply waying, how others, not acquaynted with my purpose might of ignorance miscontrue my intent, as though by reason of mine own insufficiency of the weakness of the cause I had forgowen the defence of the same; I determined at last, once agayne to sollicite you unto a farther triall and debating of these controversyes. If you demaund what cause of any such suspicion hath been offred: to go no farther, I suppose your writing had ministred unto me sufficient occasion to suspect what consequents might ensewe. For if to my face you make no scruple to charge me with mainteyning such assertions, as to a christian minde wear both offensive and odious: what manner of relation, trow you, may I expect to be reported behinde my back. Surely he hath seen how busilye you labour in objecting unto me, the defending of adinata⁴ (as you like to write) impugning common principles of truth; and, I know not what newe wines of youthful conceyts, venting but froth and fumes: might not without cause have deemed, that of purpose you had prepared an antidote for me least I should have surfetted with immoderat joye, hearing my selfe for forwardness and performance commended. Yet is not altogether unworthy of consideration to waye upon what sure ground you builde so deep an accusation. I denied forsothe, that Antichrist should openlye and in worde oppose him selfe to Christ; and therefore would not agree unto your conclusion, that the Pope was not Antichrist. Atque hinc illae lachrymae.⁵ You should also have added, that withall I affirmed, that Antichrist under the shaddowe of the name of Christ, did most notoriouslye oppugne the same; and howsoever in outwarde shew he be pretended the contrarye, yet indeed he blasphemed the name of God, and his tabernacle, and those that dwell in heaven. But this, say you, is contrarye to the prophet and common doctrine of all: And for the first, you solemnlye quote in your margent the 7 and 11 chapters of Daniel. An easye matter it is, to cite whole chapters, whear your answerer cannot divine, what part maketh for your purpose. If you had urged any particulars, I doubt not but with litle paynes you should receive a sufficient aunswear. Notwithstanding, if I be not deceived, the edge of this argument was, before this, somewhat abated; when it was told you, that out of Daniel no sure demonstration could be fetched in the question of Antichrist: but seing you scorne to be instructed by one of the meaner sort; I pray you be not ashamed that Bellarmine

1 Henry Fitzsimon (1566–1643), Jesuit (*DIB*; *ODNB*). Both this letter and the following one, also by Ussher to his cousin Henry Fitzsimon, evidently date from the period 1600 and are the earliest letters written by Ussher now extant. This particular letter is preceded in MS Barlow 13, f. 80r by a tract entitled ‘The argument of the conference betweene Mr Fitz-Simons and Dr Uscher in the Queen’s castle of Dublin the 27 June 1600, upon the Quaestion, Whether the pope be antichrist’. Clearly this endorsement was written some years later, when Ussher had attained his doctorate, but it helps to date these two letters to the second half of 1600. Fitzsimon had been eager to engage some of the better known Calvinist theologians in Dublin in a polemical battle and though imprisoned in Dublin Castle had issued challenges to ministers such as John Rider and Meredith Hanmer to defend their theological positions. Ussher, a youth of 18 or 19 years of age, was eager to prove himself and was the most enthusiastic opponent of Fitzsimon. His young age is a theme throughout the two letters, Ussher defending himself against Fitzsimon’s dismissal of his efforts by drawing analogies between the challenge of the young David to the Philistines.

2 This letter is torn in several places. Coupled with this the binding of the volume means that in some cases near the end of the letter a single word is missing in a number of lines.

3 Outlined in Barlow MS 13, ff 80r–82v; ‘The arguments of the conference betweene Mr. Fitz-Simons and Dr. Usch. in the Queen’s Castle of Dublin the 27 of June 1600 upon this Quaestion: Whether the pope be antichrist.’ This is in a question and answer format, in Ussher’s handwriting.

4 Possibly this may be a mis-reading of ‘adunata’: ‘impossible things’.

5 ‘And hence those tears’, quoting Terence, *Andria* 126.

should teach you out of Cyprian and Jerome that Daniel in these places speaketh, ad literam, of Antiochus;¹ and withall learne of your schoolmen that, symbolica theologia non est argumentativa.² Yea, but this is repugnant to the doctrine of [torn] if we may beleeve you on your worde. What (All) I pray you. If Popelings, you have found out a compendious way to determine all doubtfull poynts of your religion: if aswell theyr adversaryes as then your halfe perswade me, you told nothing but truthe, when you affirmed that you wear not greatly consant in matters of controversye; seing you know not in what poynts of doctrine the protestants are at variance with you. If you will take but the paynes to turne to Rob. Bellarmine de Roman. Pont. Lib. 3. Ch.14.³ I will referre it even unto your owne censure, to judge, whether your objection might not more justly be charged with petitio,⁴ then my answer with negatio principii.⁵ And seing I am proceeded thus far, I thinke it not much impertinent, seing you are so curious in espying moats in other mens eyes, wher [torn] are; to serve you with a messe of your own sauce, that you may a litle look toward manticæ quod in [tergo]⁶ est.⁷ You remember, that being pressed with the argument drawn from the principall seat of Antichrist; ye durst not (though provoked therunto) denye that it was Rome, knowing that you should most evidently be convicted by the manifest truthe of Gods worde: but was constraigned to elude the argument brought against you, by admitting the whole as impertinent, though playn contradictorie to that which your selfe formerly denied. Alas, Mr. Fitz-Simon, you are brought to a very hard extremitye, when you must admit that Rome must be throne of Antichristes kingdome. It litle avayleth the Jesuits to labour so much (against the authoritye of divine and humaine writers) in drawing Peter from his Apostleship to hold a bishoprick at Rome five and twentye yeares; if in the latter dayes Antichrist must thrust him out of his chayre: and no man may justly be blamed if he suspect that doctrine which is broched out of the citye which God hath forwarned should make nations to drinke of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. You wear afrayde to confess that Antichrist should be killed 45 dayes before the ende of the worlde (though Bellarmine prove it, by comparinge the 11 and 12 verses of the last chapter of Daniel together, and that place of the apostle 1 Thess 2.8 being urged, you affirmed very strangelye, that it was to be understood of Christ his comming in his saynts, not of his comming unto judgment. Little better was your exposition of Tobi 14. 16. at our first meeting, where when I offed to prove, that Toby lived above 99 yeares, contrary to your text in that apocryphall book; you thought this σοφὸν φάρμακον⁸ saved all, that he lived 99 yeares in timore Domini,⁹ but, it may be longer in a more dissolute or less strict kinde of life: for proof wherof you alledged a like phrase out of the gospell, wher it was sayd that the body of our saviour should be three dayes in the grave: and the dissimilitude being objected, that in the words of the gospell was a manifest synecdoche integri pro membro,¹⁰ which in Toby possiblye could have no place; you denied that the body of Christ lay in the sepulchre a part of three dayes, because it was written (sayd you) that

1 Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621), Jesuit theologian, cardinal from 1599 (*CE*). Bellarmine was the author of many works of religious controversy; St Cyprian (d. 258), bishop of Carthage; St Jerome (c. 345–420), biblical scholar; Antiochus Epiphanes (d. 164 B.C.), king of Syria (*ODCC*).

2 ‘symbolic theology is not argumentative’

3 Robert Bellarmine, *Disputatio R.B. de primatu episcopi Romani* (Rome, 1586).

4 ‘petition’

5 ‘negation of the principle’

6 DM suggests ‘tergo’ as the missing torn word.

7 ‘what is in your own wallet’. Lewis and Short give the full version of this proverb as follows: ‘non videmus, manticæ quid in tergo est’: do not learn to know ourselves.

8 ‘wise medicine’

9 ‘in fear of the Lord’

10 ‘synecdoche of the whole for a part’

he rose from death before the Sunne-rising: which what other was it then to denye that Christ rose the third day.

The like might I say of your distorted Syllogisme in Darii, with the assumption generall negative, pestered with more faults then sentences; and your excuse of the same, as if Christ and Antichrist being specious termes, wear not capable of a sound forme of syllogisme: your rash affirmation of the intent of Sir M[torn]styes edict concerning abstinence from flesh in certayne dayes, with other assertions of like nature: which if they had slipt from my mouth, I know not what tragedyes you would raise therupon (though I might shrewdlye guesse, by your to busye fault-finding, whear there is no cause) but for my selfe, I am sure I would be halfe ashamed, as long as I lived. And these things (cosen) do I repeat, not because I take any delight in exprobrating ignorance to any man: but partly, that your giving me occasion, Dum dicis quod vis audias quod non vis¹ and partly also that you may better consider your owne abilitye before you experience the chafe. If dallying with the weaker, you are driven to such exigences; beleeve me, it wear no boynt of policie to encounter with the stronger: unless you account it a greater glorye *Actus cecidisse man[u]*;² (that I may use your owne saying) in putting me downe, you vancquishe onely a batchelour of the arts.³ Indeed I see now, you are of the nature of Alexander that would strive with none but kings: where before by reason of your great challenges (in respect wherof I justlye resembled you unto the Philistine; not [sine]⁴ as you seem to charge me) I had thought you wear Goliath, that would not refuse the combat, un[til] Israel had sent out another giant to mate him, but be content to aunswear the least boye of the enemy campe. And, that I may freelye open my minde unto you as I have begonne, these proceedings of yours] bewraye some spice of an ambitious humour, and argue that you rather seek the glory of man then of [God] if you make not this pretence a covert to shrowde the weakness of your cause under; to which opinion I rather incline, because at my first coming I founde you so readye and desirous to conferre [with] divinitye or humanitye, but having profered to conferre syllogisticallye on the whole body of the contra[ry] versyes as in order they lay in Bellamine, and for a taste propounded but one argument, [scarce] could you be intreated to suffer one dayes conference; and now what starting holes goe you [about] to finde, wherby you maye avoyde further communications yow pretend that you have had blame of the state. It is not like you had, for any thing that [torn]st privatlye betwixt us both, except by [your] owne means you procured it. And I remember at our first meeting, you professed that you [were] readye to undergoe, not onely displeasure of the state, but bonds and death it selfe also; so that [might] me good, or any other that sought to be resolved of any poynt at your hands. Now wher[ceive] eyther youre minde is altered, or else you utterlye despayre to do me good. But perke your purpose [is to] deferre this matter, untill by greater ripeness other perswasions may be more aptly ingendred [and] after years move me to mislike my former conceyts. (For thus, I take it, your wordes sound.) Indeed you are to be commended for your forwardness and performance, in allotting such a time for perswasion when youre adversarye misliketh his cause; and assigning such a date for disputation, as in all liklyhood never will beginne: although yet methink's herin is litle reason, that you should despayre to winne [your] adversayre while he is young and weak, and hope to do great matters, when he is more ripe and strong. Lastly, rejecting me, as to ignorant and slender []⁵ a champion, you desire to experience

1 'while you say what you wish, you may hear what you do not wish'

2 'to have fallen by the hand of Achilles' (the implication being that to be killed by a hero as great as Achilles could be viewed as an honour).

3 Ussher received his M.A. in 1600 (AD).

4 From this point onwards the binding greatly interferes with the reading of this letter. It is clear, however, that only one word is missing from each line affected.

5 There is an unreadable deletion (one word) at this point.

[the] chiefe. Touching the chiefe, it lieth not in me to procure their conference with you: and as for my abilitye I had rather others should judge therof then my selfe; onely thus much I say, that of all others you [have] least cause to upbrayde me with ignorance; which if it wear admitted to be so great as you would [make] seem to be, yet wear it no sufficient reason why you should break your promise. By the very first you spake unto me, I had a promise of your willingnesse to conferre with me at any time; and by very last, a promise that you would deal with me in writing in some principall head of controversye: if after all this, upon some light surmises which you fayne unto your selfe, you refuse to go forward in th[at] [contest] which your selfe have agreed unto, pardone me if I thinke, that you eyther have small respect to your worde, or great diffidence in your cause.

As for the tearme of Boye, I count it not worth the s[tand] upon : though (to cleer my selfe of giving any rash credence to misreports) some of your own profession affirmed that they had you utter such speeches in the heering of Mr. Fitz-William of Miryon, and others.¹ But howe ever the matter is, I could well brook greater injuryes then this; so that through my [side] profession of Gods truthe be not thrust at.

To conclude therefore, I would wish you once [more be] advice of this matter, and in playn wordes signifye your determination: that we may eyther pro[ceed] or else by that which hath already past, publikely make knowen, whither I came unto you in the name of [the Lord] of Hostes, or whither you be against him.

James Usher.

To Henry Fitz-Simon, at the castell.

2 Ussher to Henry Fitzsimon, [1600]²

[Printed: Parr, p. 7; Elr I, pp 13–14.]

I was not purposed³ (Mr. *Fitz-Symonds*) to write unto you, before you had first written to me, concerning some chief points of our Religion, (as at our last meeting you promised) but seeing you have deferred the same (for reasons best known to your self) I though it not amiss to enquire further of your mind, concerning the continuation of the Conference began betwixt us. And to this I am the rather moved, because I am credibly informed of certain reports, which I could hardly be perswaded, should proceed from him, who in my presence pretended so great love and affection unto me. If I am a boy (as it hath pleased you very contemptuously to name me) I give thanks to the Lord, that my carriage toward you hath been such, as could minister unto you no just occasion to despise my Youth; your Spear belike is in your own conceit a Weavers Beam, and your abilities such, that you desire to encounter with the stoutest Champion in the Host of *Israel*, and therefore (like the *Philistine*) you contemn me as being a boy; yet this I would fain have you know, that I neither came then, nor now to come unto you in any confidence of any Learning that is in me, (in which respect, notwithstanding, I thank God I am what I am) but I come in the Name of the Lord

1 Thomas Fitzwilliam, of Ireland, son of Sir Thomas, of Meryon and Baggotrath, matriculated from Brasenose College Oxford in 1581 aged 19 (AO).

2 Parr implies that this letter was the last exchange between the two men, stating that he could find no answer to this letter.

3 Elr has 'prepared'.

of Hosts (whose Companies you have reproached, being certainly perswaded, that even out of the mouths of Babes and Sucklings he was able to shew forth his own Praises; for the further manifestation whereof, I do again earnestly request you, that (setting aside all vain comparisons of Persons) we may go plainly forward, in examining the matters that rest in controversie between us; otherwise I hope you will not be displeased, if as for your part you have begun; so I also for my own part may be bold, for the clearing of my self, and the truth which I profess, freely to make known, what hath already passed concerning the matter: Thus intreating you in a few lines, to make known unto me your purpose in this behalf, I end, praying the Lord, that both this, and all other enterprises that we take in hand, may be so ordered, as may most make for the advancement of his own Glory, and the Kingdom of his Son, Jesus Christ.

*Tuus ad Aras usque.*¹

James Ussher

3 Abel Walshe to Ussher and John Richardson, 13 June 1602, Galway²

[Manuscript original: Bodl., Rawl. MS C. 919, ff 83, 84.³]

Dear frends both and especially beloved in Christ our saviour I am myndfull of you in my prayers morning and evening dayly, and I pray you, may I hope you are of me and my worke. Nonewes to certifiye you of but of my health and the love which I bear unto you both, which God willing shall never decrease or wax cold, but encrease; and I pray you though we be far sondred in bodye, yet let us be near in affection, and nearer and nearer in soule; for in ioyfull tears at the [uniting] hereof I doe remember the great and waightie charge which was committed to unto us [ioyusly] you know whear; and the heavenly exhortations which with tears, and a fellow feeling of the mysteryes of this church, were with a more than fatherly love made unto us ioyusly; And surely if ther wer no other cause to knite and unite us in one, yet this it selfe were sufficient and more then a thousand other [obligations] I pray for me, and let me hear from you, and so I leave you to the comfort of the Spirit. Galway the 13th of June. 1602.

Yours both in the bond of love which Is in Christe.

Abell Walshe.

[It] is not forward of goodwill but I writt unto all the rest of the fellows, but want of tyme, and other things agreeing to my mynd; but if you thinke they will not be jelous that they wer not also written unto I pray commend me to them all by name; and least they should thinke I am or wilbe unmyndfull of them I will my selfe name them in order.

J. Dunne.⁴

1 'Yours as far as conscience permits'

2 At the time all three men, Ussher, Abel Walsh and John Richardson, were fellows of TCD. Walsh (d. 1625), the son of Nicholas Walsh, bishop of Ossory, had, like Ussher, been among the first scholars of TCD. He later became dean of Tuam, in Feb. 1610, and five years after was granted the vicarage of Eirck, in Ossory. Richardson (1579/8–1654), devoted himself to an academic career before his eventual elevation to the Church of Ireland bishopric of Ardagh (*ODNB*).

3 Due to the binding of this manuscript some words are missing. These are placed in square brackets.

4 Probably a reference to the 'Mr. Dun' mentioned in the Particular Book for the year 1601; see J. P. Mahaffy (ed.), *The particular book of Trinity College, Dublin. A facsimile from the original* (London, 1904), 24a.

Mr. Brereton.¹

Mr. Lee.²

Mr. James.³

Mr. Kinge.⁴

[forget] not my commendations to all the Bathelours and [the] rest, and my name to Sir Usher. Mr. Richardson [] that I know you will bid this bearer hartely welcome and make much of him, because he and yourself [be] [schane] fellows etc. I would have intreated you [stly] to have much esteemed him for my sake. He is Mr. Smiths man (unto whom I am most beholden of anie in this place), and one that doth use me very kindly. I remember I have sent them Commendations in the other letter.⁵

To my dear Friends Mr. Usher and Mr. Richardson Preachers of Gods worde in Trinitye Colledge neer Dublin these gyve.

4 John Richardson to James Ussher, 24 May 1603⁶

[Manuscript original: Bodl., Rawl. MS C. 919, pp 891, 892.⁷]

Mr. Usher, I formly writt by Mr. James, And now againe by Mr. Richards:⁸ And yet I have not hard from you. But I doubt not but you have already written, though it come not as yet to myne hands. Write me newes of our matters, though I write you none. For the bearer our kinde frende can well supply that parte of my letter and the [rather] I beinge now in hast. Yet it cometh now unto my minde, that viz [Fitkok] hath best preachinge.⁹ God keepe you, and sende you shortly [of] againe with good successe. I pray you commende me to Dr Chall:¹⁰ & his wife & houshold are alsoe well.

May 24. 1603.

Yours

John Richardson.

To the worshippfull and my very loveinge friende Mr. James Usher at London this.

1 John Brereton had been made a fellow of TCD in 1599, having previously been master of the Free School in Dublin from 1595 to 1598. He was subsequently appointed physician to the City of Dublin in 1613 (*AD*).

2 Matthew Lee had been appointed a fellow of TCD in 1601. He subsequently became vicar of Kilcowerin in the diocese of Ferns in 1615 and held the prebend of Kilrush in the same diocese from 1629 to 1662 (*AD*).

3 No reference to a fellow of TCD by this name may be found in (*AD*).

4 Edward King (c. 1576–1639), Church of Ireland bishop of Elphin (*ODNB*). At the time he was a fellow of TCD, having been appointed in 1600.

5 No longer extant.

6 For information on John Richardson, see letter no. 3.

7 The pagination of the manuscript is slightly mixed up from p. 890 onwards. It reads as follows: 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 892, 893, 894, 893. Ussher has listed a number of unrelated books by the side of this letter.

8 The former, 'Mr. James', is mentioned in letter no. 3 of Abel Walsh to Richardson and Ussher as a fellow of TCD. Unfortunately no reference to either man may be found in (*AD*).

9 Given the context, possibly a member of TCD, though no reference may be found in *AD* or the Particular Book.

10 Dr Luke Challoner (1550–1613), fellow of TCD (*AD*).