Sir M. Crosbie to H.R.H.

Dublin February 19th 1790

May it please Your Royal Highness.

Conceiving, Sir! it might be acceptable to your Royal Highness to read Lord Moira's speech in the House of Lords of Ireland this night, as early as possible, I made it my business to attend most carefully to the delivery of it; in the first instance to be able to present it to my Prince before it appeared in Print, & in the second, to give it to the press as far as my memory could permit, knowing that all the papers in the hire of Government here, will endeavour to garble and torture it to the utmost degree of misrepresentation.

I trust Your will be graciously pleased to excuse the extreme hurry I am obliged to write this in to get my packet off by this night's post, & when I mention to Your Royal

Highness that I am now in the printing office, correcting every column as it is printed & every sheet of my manuscript is copied by a clerk to present to your Royal Highness, that you will condescend to pardon the inaccuracies of the production.

Lord Glentworth a placeman replied to Lord Moira in a very violent speech, his turbulent manner & vociferation presented a complete contrast to the dignified manner & graceful utterance of Lord Moira. The chancellor followed & commenced at a very early period to date the beginning, &c. of our present discontents, but I have not time tonight to detail their sentiments, the mail will be dispatched in less than half an hour. I send this under cover to my Barber Mr Puget lest it should be opened at the Post Office. Lord Moira is very well & knows that I intended

Sir M. Crommie to H.R.H.

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to exert my humble abilities upon this occasion. His Speech from my compilation is to appear in the Dublin Evening post tomorrow.

I have the Honor to remain Sir

with the most unfeigned Duty and Respect, with everlasting attachment and Veneration

Your Royal Highness's

most devoted Subject

M. Crommie

Sir M. Comic
to
The Prince of Wales
19th Feby 1798.

Enclosure.

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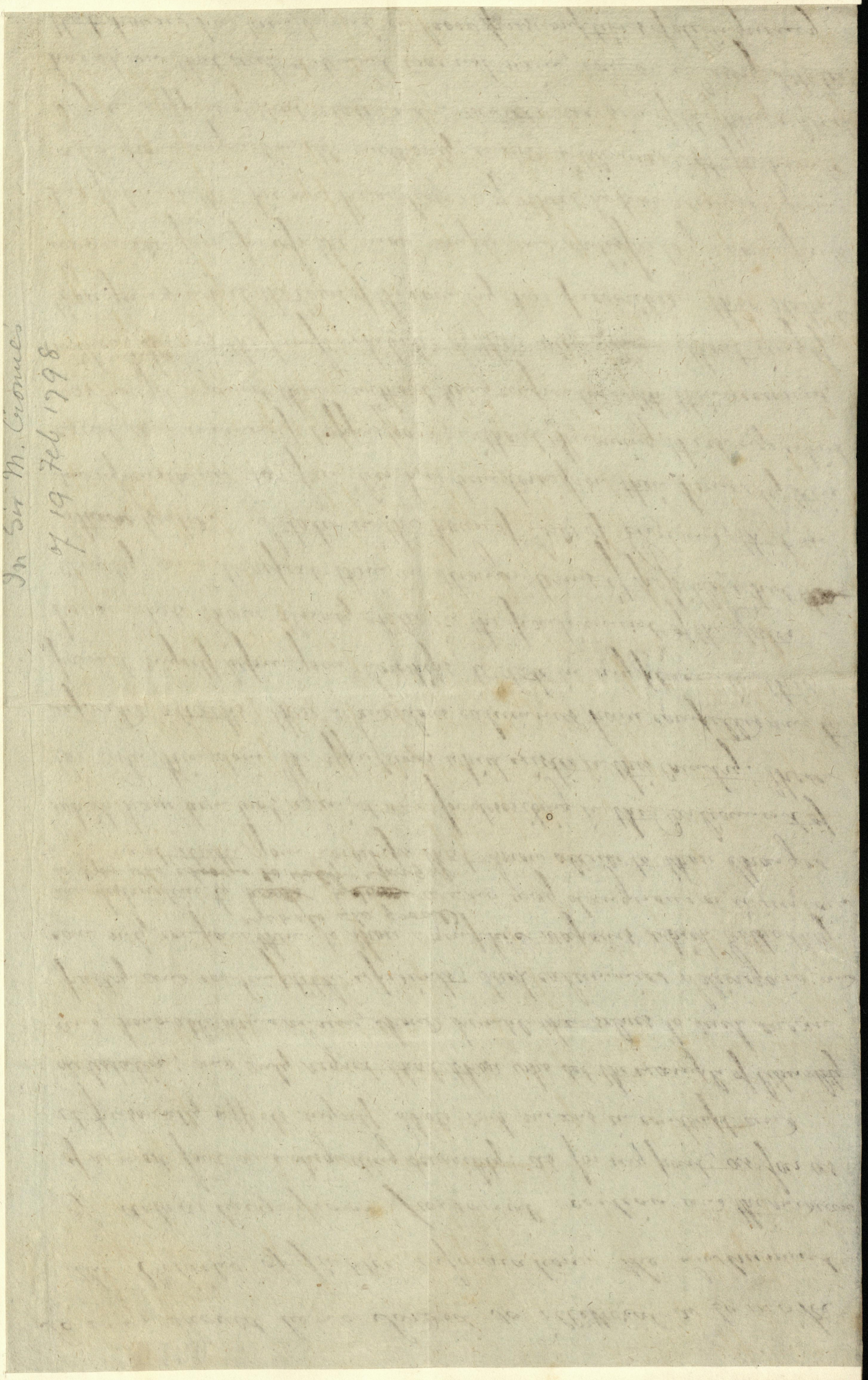
At four o'clock Lord Cloncurry Rose & Said

Natural that I who am not in the Habit of frequently arresting the attention of this House, should be desirous of Explaining the Motives which have Urged me to appear before your Lordships. Contemplating the Melancholy and Distracted State of this Country, I should feel myself lost to every Sentiment of regard to my Country; If I did not avail myself of my right to a seat in this house to institute an Enquiry into the Cause of this dreadful Calamity, I am Scrupulously Aware, my Lords, of the Extreme Sensibility of the Public mind, I am aware of the danger of encreasing any Animosity ~~Ill~~ Ill Will which may exist in the Country, and should be far, very far from appearing before your Lordships if I thought that any Speech ~~which~~ which I could make or ~~which~~ any Motion which I might offer, capable of Arousing the feelings or Exciting the passions of the People of Ireland. There is one Subject which I feel it my Duty to mention before I proceed to the more immediate Topic of my address. To your Lordships I cannot pass unnoticed the long Course of Scurrility which the Prints of Government, he lamented that any Government shd ~~be~~ have fallen

so low; should he so sordid so illiberal as to make the Vehicles of public information, the Instrument of detracting from personal exertion, and the medium of a most foul and disgusting scurrility: as for my part, as far as it personally affects myself, I hold such means in contempt and detestation; and only regret that those who set the example of liberality and honorable demeanour, should humble themselves to such mean paltry and contemptible expedients; such calumnies I disregard; and can only compare them to those Mempitic vapours which altho they are destructive to animals who grovel are no way dangerous or injurious to those who choose to walk upright. It must strike your Lordships that I now allude to those Charges which have been brot against me for describing in the Parliament of the sister Kingdom the oppressions which existed in this Country. These repeated attacks, these scandalous calumnies have compelled me to present myself before your Lordships, to state in my place in this house what I have already stated in the parliament of the sister Country, and to repeat them in stronger terms if possible, what they asserted. I stated in the house of Lords of England, that in many instances families had been torn from their homes by their cruel and unmerciful oppressors, without knowing the charge which was brought against them, without being confronted with their accusers, without having the proofs exhibited to their view, without any of those forms which the laws of the Country had prescribed - this statement was made from proofs the most ample and satisfactory - some facts had fallen within his own knowledge - of others he had received information from unquestionable authority, indeed little was left for him to say in support of that statement - a late decision of the Kings Bench had shewn that such statement was not vain, idle, or illusory; I stated that houses had been burnt on loose presumptions of delinquency.



I state too that in some instances torture had been applied, and that picketing in many instances had been resorted to and the unhappy victims of a misguided fury were sometimes half hanged or otherwise ill treated; such a statement as this it was impossible that I could have been induced to ~~make~~ have made without clear and satisfactory testimony; It was a representation too strong - it was if untrue an accusation too serious to pass unnoticed - at the Bar of the House of Lords of England I offered to substantiate this charge I had the evidence prepared before I brot forward the accusation, before I made the statement I informed myself on the situation of my Country; since my return I have further investigated the subject, and I now reassert more pointedly, and if possible more strongly that these cruel and sanguinary measures have frequently been resorted to. —

There is another topic my Lords which is a necessary preliminary to the immediate purport of my address to you; it is another gross artful and cruel misrepresentation - a misrepresentation calculated to wound every feeling of my soul and exhibit me in a point of view which my character has not I hope merited; possibly my Lords this misrepresentation may have been occasioned by the strange incorrectness of the London Newspapers - I hope I may ascribe it to anything so venial as incorrectness or misconception, to what I allude, is my having been accused of charging the Army of Ireland with all the cruelties, all the atrocities, all the barbarities which had taken place in this Country. No my Lords, never did I presume to charge the Army with any acts of oppression, the pride of my life is being a soldier, and I love the character of one too well to stain it with imputations of inhumanity, - from my earliest youth my pride was to be a soldier, with every rank and with every department of the Army have I been conversant, an attack therefore of such a nature would less become me, than any of my countrymen, and to the Army my Lords it would be the more galling, in as much to receive a wound from a friend is more excruciating, more inscrutable than to receive it from any other person - surely therefore

My Lords it is natural that I should experience strong feelings of regret at this most cruel, and to me the most injurious mistatement; No my Lords, comrades of every rank have always been objects of my affection and solicitude, and without vaunting of any personal exertions of my own, I think I have a right to claim the merit of being amongst the first to reward loyalty and extend to my comrades in every rank, every comfort and every happiness within my power – but exclusive of the personal love and veneration which I have for the brave defenders of my country, the very nature of the argument and the very object I had in view were sufficient to refute the calumny and blunten the edge of this cruel and mischevous misrepresentation. What my Lords could have been more absurd, what so truly an object of astonishment, that at the time when I was arraigning the conduct of the British Cabinet, when I was endeavouring to expose its wicked and arbitrary system towards Ireland, that I should change my ground of attack, and that I should act so childish a part as to exonerate the Cabinet and throw the charge on my brother Soldiers; No my Lords it was against the Cabinet of England that my attack was solely directed I accused it of having made the Army the instrument of a cruel and arbitrary system of vengeance and oppression towards this Country – under heaven I cannot conceive a more cruel and afflicting situation for an Officer than a command in one of those proclaimed and proscribed Districts, When an Officer is under the guidance of a Magistrate, acquainted with the Law, and called out to enforce it his situation is easy, he is relieved from responsibility, but when he is vested with a discretionary power, his feelings are tremblingly alive to his military reputation, he shudders lest his Loyalty should be questioned, and the high notions of discipline strongly seize on his mind and regulate his conduct; you touch by placing him in this situation the worthiest feelings of his heart – you touch him on every principle which can animate the bosom of a soldier; you touch him on his Zeal, his honor, and his courage; sent into a part of the Country with which possibly he is unacquainted, his difficulties are considerably ~~[illegible]~~

augmented — he entertains all the prejudices of education and early habits — and from being told of the disaffection which pervades the Kingdom, he is of course inclined to look with distrust and suspicion on the lower orders of the community, impressed with the idea of every mans plotting against the Government; timidity itself is construed into disaffection and in the dejected and broken looks of a wretched peasantry he flatters himself with the discovering the features of revolt and insurrection; under this impression it is easy to account for numberless mistakes and errors, his countenance assumes the appearance of anger and his actions are marked with animosity; it is then that the separation between him and the people which is commenced ~~between~~ by the invited arts of some pensioned informers, is compleated by mutual animosity; to this the estrangement of affection of the Irish Officer from the Irish people alone is ascribable; thus it is that the wound which mildness and moderation might have cured, and corrected; is fretted and gangrened by those foul and unworthy manoeuvres. with this view of the subject I am induced to call the attention of your Lordships to the situation of your country; and happy indeed shall I be should I be able to impress your Lordships with the necessity of putting some kind of termination to those cruel and distressing atrocities; the time my Lords is not yet lost for recovering the affections of your Countrymen — Can you hope that you can restore Ireland to peace by these acts of outrage and oppression; Conciliation may be deferred, but every day that it is deferred increases the difficulty of suppressing the vices of the discontented, and allaying the evils of insurrection and revolt. to disarm the Republican you must concede to the loyalist; far be it from me by any statement which I may make or argument I can use to occasion still stronger irritation — I conjure to attempt comprize with the discontented, and to abandon the constant recourse to Military assistance. The interference of the Army on these public occasions creates and inflames

animosity, it suspends the wholesome and salutary influence of the Laws and exhibits you to the world as dependants for an existence to Military authority. To England must this system prove ruinous and destructive. Involved in a Contest the most obstinate and severe she requires every energy that this Country could carry into the common cause - instead of being the seat of war herself had the cordial cooperation of the United feeling of this Country, she may meet every effort which is made by her most resolute and implacable enemy - Bold in her declarations does France aspire even to the empire itself - and disclaims every attempt which may be made for a pacific accommodation, If my Lords these perpetual plots, these constant insurrections can only be quelled by the bayonet, I am strongly apprehensive that instead of the whole force of England and of Ireland being directed against France, the whole must be directed to the subjugation of this Country. - France already formidable, great in Military exertion and having nearly accomplished all which in the commencement of the War she could have designed, requires no civil dissensions to make her present a formidable and terrific Appearance - Why does she not listen to peace - why dismiss your Negociator - because she sees the distracted State of your Country - and relies upon the dissensions which have been created in this Country. What then suffering your System to continue must be the Situation of the British ~~Constitution~~ Empire, how is she to be Represented to posterity boldly struggling with a Desperate Antagonist, No, she must Exhibit herself at a time when the whole energy of the Nation was requisite, when all this distressing Situation calls to my Recollection a beautiful apostrophe which may well be supposed to be put into the

Mouth of a Dejected Countrymen "if an open Enemy
"had been the Author of this I could have bore with, but
"if a Stranger I might possibly have Repelled it, but
"Since this injury has fallen from my old Companion
"& friend I know not how to bear it" what person my
Lords! Acquainted with the insecurity of such a
State, but must this night be inclined to Cooperate
in any humble attempt for its alleviation, the
disposition which these Acts of Outrage occasion
are not only deeply felt at home, but they may
make the ~~Country~~ Security of your Country
precarious, it makes you Vulnerable to
your Enemies despair operates most powerfully
on the human heart; if you shew no
disposition to alleviate the Sufferings of the
people Danger may become ~~awful~~ awful
indeed – let us be but united in Sentiment to
France and the World we may bid defiance;
be but united, and it signifies nothing if we had
not a Ship upon the Sea, we may brave any
Attack we would be certain of frustrating any
attempt of the enemy; do but abandon your
System of Severity, your distrust of the people

and those horrid Acts of outrage, and let France pour into either Country her most formidable levy and I answer for it my Lords, that in one fortnight that Army will not Appear, nay will not exist in this Country but in the Character of Prisoners. Your Security is in your Unanimity — the ~~[illegible]~~ Sums which you vote and the levies which you raise are useless unless you Concede to the people. Security would then be easy to all, Nor my Lords let it not be said, that Concession wd be ruin, you undervalue the Generous Character of your Countrymen; they are not insensible to kindness; they are alive to acts of friendship, they can Estimate the value and importance of a benefit, they will not, it is not in their nature to requite friendship by ingratitude, in the heat of party — and in the disturbed and agitated State of the Country, I fear that on both sides there have been infinite apprehensions. You say that plots have Existed that Conspiracies — have been detected that insurrections have taken place in the Country, Granted, but have you not

Laws the common rights of trial. Tear not them from their homes and make them the indiscriminate Victims of ungovernable fury, the time to punish was when the offence was proved but Sorry am I to think that punishment the most severe has been inflicted for offences the most vague, if sometimes excesses did take place Vigor might be used to repress them, but Vigor was most formidable when exercised with most prudence – All Goods have to repress this – Violence are they not sufficiently powerful for this purpose; do you complain of their wanting Severity, if you do why not appeal to the Wisdom of Parliament for some better Calculated to suppress those plots to defeat those Conspiracies; & to make the people amenable to Civil authority if there are delinquencies let the delinquents be punished, but let them be punished by Law; deny

I had not time to finish it: the Office will shut in five minutes – I have the Honor
&c &c &c
M C

12 o C the House sitting

Ld. Moira's Speech

(See Sir A. Fromin's
Letter to the Prince
of Wales dated
19 July 1798.