

SUMMARY: The document below is a translation in the Calendar of State Papers Rome of excerpts from a letter dated 22 January 1575 written from Venice by Don Cesare Carrafa to Marcantonio Colonna (1535-1584) describing the funeral in Venice of Oxford's brother-in-law, Edward (1532?-1575), 3rd Lord Windsor, the husband of Oxford's half-sister, Katherine de Vere (1538-1600).

The date of Lord Windsor's marriage to Katherine de Vere is not recorded. However their eldest son, Frederick, was born, according to his father's inquisition post mortem, on 2 February 1558/9 (see *The Complete Peerage*, p. 798).

Lord Windsor made his will on 20 December 1572, and added a codicil on 18 June 1573 while at the Spa in Germany. Although he is said to have entertained Queen Elizabeth 'in great splendour' at Bradenham in 1566 on her return from visiting the University of Oxford, at the time of the making of his will it would appear that Lord Windsor was contemplating leaving England for good, and that his will was designed to put his financial affairs and the succession to the barony in order. No mention is made of Oxford or his sister Mary in the will, which suggests that the relationship was not a particularly cordial one. Other evidence to that effect is Lord and Lady Windsor's challenge to Oxford and Mary's legitimacy in 1563 (see TNA SP 12/29/8 and Huntingdon Library EL 5870).

For the will of Edward, 3rd Lord Windsor, see TNA PROB 11/57, ff. 216-19. For the will of Oxford's half-sister, Katherine (nee de Vere) Windsor (1538-1600), see TNA PROB 11/95, ff. 186-7. For the wills of their two sons, Frederick (1559-1585), 4th Lord Windsor, and Henry (1562-1605), 5th Lord Windsor, see TNA PROB 11/69, ff. 2-3 and TNA PROB 11/105, ff. 223-7.

The transcript below is taken from Rigg, J.M., ed., *Calendar of State Papers Relating to English Affairs Preserved Principally at Rome in the Vatican Archives and Library*, Vol. II, 1572-1578, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1926), p. 194. See also <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=92622>.

Arch. Particolare

376. Don Cesare Carrafa to Marco Antonio Colonna.

We are here in great grief by reason of the death of Milord Edward Windsor, one of the chief nobles of England, beloved by all the city, and particularly by the Patriarch [of Aquileia], by the Spanish ambassador, by the Legate, and particularly by me, who from the day of his arrival in this city, for respect to his great virtue and religiousness, had him ever in loving protection, so that we were never seen save in company. This death has marred all our pleasures. He was twelve days a dying, and his end was as holy as had

been his life. By the testimony of the Spanish ambassador and other gentlemen it is many a year since a more blessed man has been seen. He has left his body to Mr. John Pole, and as to all else that pertained to him here, his will was that the Prior of England and I do as God should inspire us, as well in beneficence to his servants as in almsgiving and in his obsequies, which have been solemnized in such a sort that it is current in the city that nothing grander has been seen, to which matter I paid particular attention. A chappelle ardente was made, and I resolved that it should be borne on the bier according to the custom of Naples with a great pall, a thing not till then seen in Venice, which all deemed very meet. I followed the corpse with the train, as did also many other persons of quality. The Spanish ambassador awaited it at the church. All the English nobility here followed the corpse with their hoods on their heads according to the English custom. So I have been for the last fortnight busy serving him in life and in death.

He has left 4,000 crowns in ready money, and 10,000 in jewels, silver plate and movables. I would not omit to give your Excellency an account of the death of this Lord because he was truly the most devout Lord of his great name, and though he has annoyed me many a time, I have done him reverence.

As to some other matters that are worth reporting, your Excellency must know that his Excellency Soranzo is made ambassador to the new Grand Turk. Sad indeed it is that he should go on such a mission, but men of such capacity must needs be employed in affairs of great importance such as this on which depends the peace of this Republic. Everyone believes that this new [Grand] Signor is likely to desire peace with the Signory, but yet one is apprehensive of evil on the part of a young and brave man set in his place in time of peace, very wealthy, very powerful and so well obeyed as he is, more especially as he has on his croup a Porte and a Goletta, which tend to make him the more haughty and vainglorious.

For my part I hope for the best. I believe that Signor Soranzo will not depart so soon, and it is also supposed that a Chiaus will come here, that folk may be reassured in mind, and that there may be no thought of recourse to measures that might be injurious to that Power.

As to France, I understand that the King is not likely to live long. The death of this Lord has prevented me from learning anything more.

Don John quitted Barcelona for the Court on the vigil of Christmas, so that he should now be on the defensive and offensive in regard to the late losses. God teach him to order his ways better than he has done in the past.

While I write to your Excellency my Patriarch Grimani has sent to invite me to dine with him, and from his messenger I learn that the last news is that the new Grand Turk has had all his brothers poisoned. Consider, your Excellency, what we may anticipate.

The courier has not yet arrived from Flanders. If there shall be any news of importance this evening, I will write to your Excellency.

And having nothing else to say, I commend me ever to your good grace, and humbly kiss your hand.

22 January, 1575
Venice

Postscript: I have just returned from the Patriarch's, and, by what I understand, the report of the death of the Turk's brothers comes not by public advices but by others.

John Soranzo is appointed ambassador at Rome in place of his brother. I have been a while with his Excellency Soranzo, who goes cheerfully to serve his country, notwithstanding the discomforts of the voyage. I kiss your Excellency's hands, as does likewise the Patriarch.

[Italian]