

SUMMARY: The document below is a translation in the Calendar of State Papers Venetian of the report of an audience granted on 1 June 1618 to the secretary of the English Ambassador, Sir Henry Wotton (1568-1639), by the authorities in Venice.

The arrest of Sir Henry Wotton's steward while he was in the company of servants of Henry de Vere (1593-1625), 18<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, was a calculated insult. It may have been related to events in Venice in early 1618, as indicated by the mention in the report to 'those who were hanged'. See Ogilvie, James, trans., *The Civil History of the Kingdom of Naples by Pietro Giannone*, Vol. II, (London, 1731), pp. 719-20, available online at:

[http://books.google.ca/books?id=dG5UAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA720&lpg=PA720&dq=%22general+barbarigo%22&source=bl&ots=M8cO3UdARk&sig=cczNT1dj6R0yVhd\\_29Fyv\\_jGHrTk&hl=en&ei=smy5Toe-GoOeiQLqw\\_D9BA&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=4&ved=0CCUQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q=%22general%20barbarigo%22&f=false](http://books.google.ca/books?id=dG5UAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA720&lpg=PA720&dq=%22general+barbarigo%22&source=bl&ots=M8cO3UdARk&sig=cczNT1dj6R0yVhd_29Fyv_jGHrTk&hl=en&ei=smy5Toe-GoOeiQLqw_D9BA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=4&ved=0CCUQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q=%22general%20barbarigo%22&f=false).

The insult may also have been related to the duel which had been fought between Sir John Vere and one Milander at Cortello near Udine on 23 March 1618. Sir John Vere had been imprisoned afterwards, and the matter was complicated by the fact that his second cousin, Henry de Vere, 18<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, had come to Udine 'incognito last Carnival to fight as Vere's champion against any one who should take the part of Milander' (see Hinds, Nos. 297, 322).

According to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, available online, after the death of his mother in early 1613, Henry de Vere embarked upon an extended tour of Europe, remaining overseas for over five years, first in the Spanish Netherlands, then in France, and finally, in Venice. He returned to England in October 1618.

With King James' approval, he offered to raise 6000 men for the Republic's service, an offer which the Venetian Senate declined.

Sir John Vere was the illegitimate son of Oxford's first cousin, John Vere (d.1624) of Kirby Hall. In his youth Sir John Vere had been a page to Prince Maurice (1567-1625) of Nassau, and had served as Lieutenant to Count John Ernest (1582-1617) of Nassau in the Low Countries, and as a captain in Flanders for 20 years (see Hinds, Nos. 32, 196). For the will of Sir John Vere, dated 13 December 1630 and proved 14 November 1631, see TNA PROB 11/160, ff. 433-4. For other documents in the State Papers Venetian mentioning Sir John Vere, see Hinds, Nos. 73, 400 and 579.

The Doge of Venice at the time was Antonio Priuli (1548-1623), who held office from 17 May 1618 until his death on 12 August 1623.

The transcript below is taken from Hinds, Allen Banks, ed., *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts Relating to English Affairs Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice and in Other Libraries of Northern Italy*, Vol. XV, 1617-19 (London: Her

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Majesty's Stationery Office, 1909), pp. 224-36. See also <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=88677>.

June 1  
Collegio, Secreta  
Esposizioni Principi  
Venetian Archives

382. The Secretary of the ambassador of the King of Great Britain came into the Cabinet and said:

An event has happened upon which his Excellency has made complaint to the Council of Ten. They have given a gracious reply, but he has directed me to inform your Serenity also. The day before yesterday the Lord Chamberlain of England was dining at the ambassador's house, where he remained at table till about five in the evening. At that hour the Earl of Oxford entered his Excellency's gondola, accompanied by the steward, who was to see him to his apartments. At a short distance from the house they met a barque with men. These challenged and them [sic] stopped them, taking the steward prisoner to the magistracy of the Arsenal where he remained the whole night, and though they might easily have taken information, they would not do so. This seemed very strange to his Excellency as they could not have treated worse the greatest rascal imaginable, or have dealt more severely with an enemy. But this was the Earl's gondola, the servants were known and in livery, and when he said he was the steward of his Excellency, they spoke sneeringly, saying: What ambassador of England? steward? and such things. In the morning he was released by the Council of Ten. On the following day he met with one Count Piero, who was present at the arrest of the steward. He said in a jesting manner: I would give a sequin, Mr. Steward, that yesterday evening's event had not happened. The majordomo, who is a man of some sense, replied that he might well say so. The other passed all bounds of respect, and began to speak freely in the Venetian dialect (we do not know what he was after at Venice, but he was associated with those who were hanged), If it had been anyone but the English ambassador, I would have respected him. The Secretary continued: The English ambassador, who has always shown his esteem for the Republic, has instructed me to make the liveliest representations to your Serenity.

Councillor Valier promised that the matter should be duly considered. Procurator Lando said that this behaviour of an ignorant obscure person should be treated as it deserved.

The Secretary asked for the release of Sir [John] Vere, an Englishman, detained at Udine because of a duel in which he was wounded by his adversary Milander twice in the arm. His adversary is free.

Councillor Valier said that they would take information, and the Savii promised to do what was proper. At this the Secretary took leave.

[Italian]