

SUMMARY: The letter below was written at Poitiers on 10 July 1577 by the English ambassador in France, Sir Amias Paulet (c.1532-1588) to Sir Francis Walsingham. Paulet was appointed ambassador in September 1576, and served for three years. His letter books survive from May 1577 to August 1578 (see Bodl. Oxf., letter-books, MS Rawl. A. 331, Add. MSS c81-2). In the letter below, Paulet advises Walsingham that two of Oxford's cousins ('the two young Veres'), Oxford's servant, Denny, and Walter Williams are now in Poitiers, and are 'resolved to follow the Duke of Guise into Champagne'. The Duke of Guise was Henri de Lorraine (1550-1588), Duke of Guise, who in 1576 had formed the Catholic League. Damville was Henri I de Montmorency (1534-1614), seigneur of Damville. He became Duke of Montmorency on his brother's death in 1579. As a leader of the party called the Politiques he took a prominent part in the French wars of religion. The 'two young Veres' have been identified by Bossy as Sir Francis Vere (1560/1-1609) and his younger brother, Robert Vere, two of the sons of Oxford's youngest uncle, Geoffrey de Vere (see Bossy, John, 'English Catholics and the French marriage, 1577-81', *Recusant History*, 5:1 (1959), pp. 2-16). However *The Dictionary of National Biography* suggests that 'the two young Veres' were Francis, then about seventeen, and his older brother, John Vere (d.1624) of Kirby Hall. For the will of John Vere of Kirby Hall, see TNA PROB 11/143, ff. 510-15. For a letter written by Sir Francis Vere on 17 November 1605 mentioning his time in France in 1577, see Cecil Papers, 113/16. The copy of the letter below is taken from Ogle, Octavius, ed., *Copy-book of Sir Amias Poulet's letters written during his embassy to France (A.D. 1577)* (London: J.B. Nichols, 1866) pp. 55-6.

To Mr Secretary Walsingham

I cannot thank your Honour enough for your letters to Mr Jacomo, wherein you have comforted him and done me singular pleasure. As time and occasion shall serve, I trust you will have me in remembrance. This bearer intendeth nothing less than to remain here with me, whereof he hath not spoken one word, having resolved to follow the Duke of Guise into Champagne as the two young Veres, Denny, servant to the Earl of Oxford, and Walter Williams (who are now here) do the like. This said bearer was resolved to have followed Damville, and said no less to the gentlemen of my company at his first arrival, and before he had spoken with me, which proveth that he never meant to make his abode with me. And thus both you and I are honestly discharged of this matter, thanks be to God.