

SUMMARY: In this letter written from London to Sir Dudley Carleton on 18 April 1621, John Chamberlain mentions a quarrel involving Oxford's son and heir, Henry de Vere, 18th Earl of Oxford, and a rumour that he is to marry the eldest daughter of John Egerton, 1st Earl of Bridgewater. The transcript below is taken from McClure, Norman Egbert, *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, Vol. II, (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1939) pp. 362-5.

My very good Lord, I sent you a large packet the last week, and this enclosed from my Lord of Winchester should have made it greater if I had received it in time, but it came a day after that was gone. On Tuesday his Lordship sent to me to go with him the next day to Stepney to the warming of his brother Salmon's house, who hath lately bought there as handsome and convenient a house with fine gardens and orchard as I have lightly seen. There was a great meeting of all the kindred, where you were often remembered, and in truth you could not have done a favour or kindness to more thankful people, or that would better acknowledge it. My Lord himself drank two several healths to you, which went round. I was glad to see him so well disposed, and not tie himself to strict diet in respect of his late indisposition, which continued not long, though he told me he made very hard shift and was put to great pain to preach on Easter day morning to the Lords, and minister the communion to the King. The sermon is excellently commended (being upon the remainder of his text the last year), but he will not be entreated to let it come abroad unless the King command him as he did for the copy of that he preached the first day of the parliament, but what is become of it we cannot learn. At his entering into the coach as we went out, one came to him to request a letter to your Lordship in his own behalf, which he put off in good terms, and he told me a large story that he had been sometimes his man in his younger years (for he is now grey), and what parted them. He is a handsome soldier-like man well apparelled in a scarlet cloak, and all the rest suitable, and says he came over with the States, but I forgot to ask his name.

On Sunday the King, Prince, and most of the court began to mourn for the King of Spain, and is thought will so hold on till St. George's day. After the King's being at Guildhall, there came out a proclamation to restrain prentices and other base people from abusing or offering wrong to ambassadors, their follower, lords, ladies, gentlewomen or other persons of quality in gesture, word or action, and my Lord Mayor for his part hath set out another to the same effect, and strict order is taken by every alderman and his deputy by going from house to house to charge men to look well to their children and servants in that behalf.

Sir John Bennet begins to make buttons, for divers complaints and petitions are preferred against him to the committees that are to prepare matters against the parliament sit, but he hath many good friends in the house, and his own fair and temperate carriage no doubt will procure him favour. If they undertake such particular and personal faults, they will have more work on their hands that they shall be able to dispatch.

Sergeant Finch is committed to the Fleet for setting out a book on the conversion of the Jews, wherein he discovers himself to hold many foolish and fantastical (if not impious) opinions. Tilenus is gone back to Paris ill satisfied (as it should seem), for he took no leave. There is a new office erected at court, a Remembrancer of the Green Cloth, bestowed upon one Harvey, sometime the king's grocer, and now lastly a receiver. His entertainment is 22s per diem. He pretends by his industry to save the King £10,000 a year. The Lord Digby is thought shall shortly be created Earl of Sherborne, for I hear the patent is drawing. The Earl of Hertford hath left his lady in good state, better than £4000 jointure, besides his house in Cannon Row to her and her heirs, and a fair house with a park and three or four hundred pound a year belonging to it (not thirty miles from London) to her and the heirs of her body lawfully begotten, whereof there is no great danger. The Lord St. John, eldest son to the Marquis of Winchester, is said to be dead or dying. There was a quarrel growing twixt the Earl of Essex and the Lord Gerard, but it was taken up in time. There was a brabble likewise this week twixt the Earl of Oxford and the Lord Mordaunt, but they came off without hurt on either side. That Earl is in speech to marry the Earl of Bridgewater's eldest daughter, with assurance of £2000 land and £4000 in ready money, besides promise of £2000 land more if Bridgewater die without issue male.

As I was now finishing this letter your cousin Rowland Lytton tells me that he will be going for the Hague within two or three days, which makes me defer the closing for so long.

It is now Wednesday, and I hear not of him, and your nephew Dudley, being (he says) upon his dispatch, I will make it ready for him that comes next.

The parliament began to sit yesterday, and Sir John Bennet's business is appointed to be heard at a general committee in the house this afternoon, and he is allowed counsel. I wish him well, and if they prove not contracting, or taking on both hands, I should think it hard to have him disgraced and condemned for gratuities. The King was expected yesterday in the higher house, but he sent them a message by the Lord Treasurer that the Lord Chancellor had been with him overnight and would have resigned the great seal, which he would not receive, but wished him to clear himself, adding withal that he would have him heard, and his excuses admitted with favour and even his extenuations if they found cause, but if matters proved foul, to proceed as they thought good. I send you here a psalm or kind of Pharisaical prayer of his made since his trouble, which methinks savours little or nothing of true humiliation.

We hear that the Lord Digby is shortly to return to the Archdukes, from thence to the Duke of Lorraine, to the Emperor, thence into Italy and to the Duke of Savoy, and so into Spain, which will be a great expense of time and money, being to have £30,000 *por ayuda de costa*, so desirous are we to be truly and in deed (as well as in title) *Pacifici*, and to follow that good rule *omnia experiri* before we come to blows. But in the meantime we have ill news that the princes of the union are disbanded and have made their peace, that Bohemia is quite gone and all thereabout, that the Hungarians have submitted themselves, that the upper Palatinate together with the electorship is bestowed upon the Duke of

Bavaria, and the nether upon Leopoldus, whereof he hath the greatest part in possession, whence it will be hard removing them if they have time to nestle. But I hope all is not so bad as it is made, though this be the common voice among us. The Countess of Bedford is preparing to go to the Hague, though I think not so soon as was pretended. So with the remembrance of my best service to my good lady, I commend you both to the protection of the Almighty. From London this 18th of April, 1621.

Your Lordship's most assuredly at command,

John Chamberlain

To the right honourable Sir Dudley Carleton, knight, Lord Ambassador for his Majesty with the States of the United Provinces at the Hague.