

SUMMARY: The document below consists of an extract from the Acts of the Privy Council stating that on 6 June 1575 the Council ordered an inquiry on behalf of the Italian master of fence, Rocco Bonetti (d.1587), into the goods of his late wife, Ellen (nee Burbage), widow of Richard St. John.

Bonetti's skill as a fencer is alluded to in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, where he is described as 'the very butcher of a silk button'.

For the letter below, see also Dasent, John Roche, ed., *Acts of the Privy Council of England*, New Series, Vol. VIII, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1894), p. 395 at:

[https://books.google.ca/books?id=TOpFAQAIAAJ&pg=PA395&lpg=PA395&dq=%22Rocco+Bonetti%22+%22St+John%22&source=bl&ots=daLiNv1qrU&sig=I7VHqx0mS6XHf2Vmns4YgO21Rw8&hl=en&sa=X&ei=gz7\\_VJ7cEpHYoAT53YD4Bg&ved=0CCUQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=%22Rocco%20Bonetti%22%20%22St%20John%22&f=false](https://books.google.ca/books?id=TOpFAQAIAAJ&pg=PA395&lpg=PA395&dq=%22Rocco+Bonetti%22+%22St+John%22&source=bl&ots=daLiNv1qrU&sig=I7VHqx0mS6XHf2Vmns4YgO21Rw8&hl=en&sa=X&ei=gz7_VJ7cEpHYoAT53YD4Bg&ved=0CCUQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=%22Rocco%20Bonetti%22%20%22St%20John%22&f=false).

For Rocco Bonetti, see the will of his brother-in-law, Robert Burbage (d.1575), TNA PROB 11/57/448, the allusion to him in the anonymous *News From Heaven And Hell*, and direct references to him or discussion of him in the following documents on this website:

Folger MS L.b.37; Folger MS L.b.352; Folger MS L.b.356; Folger MS L.b.357; Folger MS L.b.446; Loseley MS No. 1396; BL Cotton Caligula C/VI; BL Cotton Galba C/V, f. 37; BL Cotton Galba C/V, f. 39; BL Cotton Titus B/VII, f. 225; BL Lansdowne 830, f. 249; TNA PC 2/10, ff. 395-6; TNA PC 2/12, ff. 261-2; TNA PC 2/12, ff. 261-2; TNA SP 12/175, f. 104; TNA SP 46/125, f. 130; TNA SP 52/31, f. 34; TNA SP 78/9, f. 90; SHC LM/COR/3/372; SHC LM/COR/3/382; SHC LM/COR/3/383; SHC LM/COR/3/384; SHC LM/COR/3/386; SHC LM/COR/3/387; SHC LM/COR/3/388; TNA PROB 11/62/182; and TNA PROB 11/98/226.

At Theobalds the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 1575

The Lord Keeper  
The Lord Treasurer  
The Honourable Lord Admiral  
The Honourable Lord Chamberlain  
Th' Earl of Leicester  
Mr Treasurer  
Mr Secretary Smith  
Mr Secretary Walsingham

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A letter to the Master of the Rolls, Mr Doctor Wilson and Mr Doctor Clerke, that whereas one Rocco Bonetti, stranger, being married to Ellen, late wife to Richard St John, esquire, had complained that during the time of his absence in Italy his wife died being seised of divers goods and movables of value which were come into the hands of one Vavasour, who not only detaineth the same but further molesteth the said Rocco by sundry other actions, for that it seemeth his case deserveth some relief and pity, they should call both the parties before them and either make some indifferent end between them, or else to advertise their Lordships what they shall find and in whom the default is etc.