

SUMMARY: The document below is a letter dated 2 December 1575 written from Venice by Don Cesare Carrafa to Sir Philip Sidney mentioning that a servant of Oxford's (seruitor del Conte D'Vsfrort') had arrived in that city, and also allegedly requesting Sidney to extend Carrafa's greetings to Oxford ('Milorth Auberth'). With respect to the latter, Carrafa was well aware that Oxford was in Italy at the time, and he thus cannot have intended to send greetings to Oxford via Sidney, who was at the English court. Thus, while 'Conte D'Vsfrort' is assuredly Oxford, 'Milorth Auberth', would appear to be Carrafa's rendering of 'Lord Howard', although which of the Lords Howard is unclear. It is possible, since Carrafa refers to Philip II of Spain as his King, that by 'Milorth Auberth' he intended Oxford's first cousin, Lord Henry Howard, who is known to have had connections to Spain at the time.

According to Kuin, *infra*, the writer of the letter below, Don Cesare Carrafa (fl.1575-1585) is difficult to identify. See p. xxxvii:

There were many branches of this great Neapolitan noble house (the name of which is indiscriminately spelt Caraffa, Carrafa, and Carafa), and several had Cesares. The Spanish-and Tuscan-language poet suggested by Buxton and Osborn is tempting, but has since been shown to have been serving a life sentence from 1552 for sedition before being amnestied by King Philip II after 1578. More likely is a Cesare Carrafa mentioned by Tuscan ambassador Orazio Urbani as being in Venice in the spring of 1575: this was a Neapolitan nobleman who specialized in settling conflicts of honour. He may be the same as the Cesare Carrafa (of the Nocera branch) mentioned as killed in a duel by Giovan Luigi Carrafa-Caracciolo.

In a letter to Lodowick Bryskett dated 22 October 1575, Carrafa speaks of himself as a friend of Oxford's deceased brother-in-law, Edward Windsor (1532?-1575), 3rd Lord Windsor, the husband of Oxford's half-sister, Katherine de Vere (1538-1600). For other letters written by Carrafa in 1575, see BL Add. 15914, ff. 15-16 (which describes Lord Windsor's death and funeral); CSP Rome, No. 376 (which also mentions Lord Windsor's death), and CSP Rome, No. 395, all on this website.

Lodowick Bryskett, who is mentioned in the letter below, accompanied Sidney from 1572 to 1574 on his continental tour. See the will of his father, Anthony Bryskett, TNA PROB 11/56/381; Sisson, Charles J., ed., *Thomas Lodge and Other Elizabethans*, (New York: Octagon Books Inc., 1966), pp. 254, 278; the *ODNB* article on Lodowick Bryskett; and Stewart, Alan, *Philip Sidney: A Double Life*, (London: Chatto & Windus, 2000), p. 71 at:

https://books.google.ca/books?id=_XEjWSmFeacC&pg=PA71&lpg=PA71&dq=%22Anthony+Bryskett%22&source=bl&ots=xAZvQgPexg&sig=8AQWcmCh6OclYxalFvRuvh5I7G4&hl=en&sa=X&ei=5K0NVdbcKojroATHj4KYCw&ved=0CDQQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q=%22Anthony%20Bryskett%22&f=false

Philip [Sidney] was also accompanied by Lodowick Bryskett, whose capacity hovered between friend and servant. Bryskett, seven or eight years Philip's senior, had multiple links with the Sidney family. His father was a Genoese-born merchant named Antonio Bruschetto, who came to England in 1523 and was 'denized' on 4 December 1536 as Anthony Bryskett. Anthony soon established himself as one of London's most successful merchants (with large houses in St Gabriel Fenchurch and suburban Hackney), a recognisable face at court, and friend of the great London merchant Sir Thomas Gresham and the famed Italian, Benedict Spinola. Bryskett also had useful connections on the Continent: his elder sister Lucrece had married Vincent Guicciardini, part of the powerful Florentine merchant clan, which had links across Europe.

Thomas Sandys mentioned in the letter below would appear to have been the son of Henry Sandys by Elizabeth Windsor, the daughter of William Windsor (1498-1558), 2nd Lord Windsor, and sister of Edward Windsor (1532?-1575), 3rd Lord Windsor. In the latter's will, TNA PROB 11/57/332, he leaves a bequest to his nephew, Thomas Sandys:

Item, I give unto my nephew Thomas Sandys my best gelding, with £20 in his purse towards his journey into Italy.

The Italian transcript below is taken from Kuin, Roger, ed., *The Correspondence of Sir Philip Sidney*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), Vol. I, pp. 585-6, at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=hngIsH1gDRgC&pg=PA546&lpg=PA546&dq=%22Carrafa%22+%22Philip+Sidney%22&source=bl&ots=r-KpfHI-8K&sig=7OLZR14eSNWaEkfYTAZmCed47eM&hl=en&sa=X&ei=V4oZVePrCYG3oQTh6YDQCw&ved=0CCQQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=%22Carrafa%22%20%22Philip%20Sidney%22&f=false>.

It is followed by two English translations, the first from Osborn, James Marshall, *Young Philip Sidney, 1572-1577*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), pp. 395-6, and the second from Kuin.

Kuin notes that Carrafa's optimism concerning the plague was not borne out by subsequent events:

In fact, the new wave of plague was about to break over Venice: in 1576 it killed nearly 50,000 people, a third of the city's inhabitants.

All. Illustrissimo signor. mio osservandissimo Il signor Filippo Sedine

Illustrissimo signor mio

Con messer Lodouivo Bruschet ho scritto longamente a vostra signoria. et per il desiderio che ho de seruiria non ho uoluto manchare di far seco il debito mio con la occasione, che se mi ripresenta del ritorno del signor Tomaso Sans al quale ho pregato, che abbracci vs. in mio nome e che li faccia fede di quanto io l'amo, et osseruo, Qui e giunto un seruitor del Conte D'Vsfort col quale pensai auer lettere di vostra signoria dal quale intesi che la staua bene et ingrata della Maesta della nostra [sic] Regina et amato da tutta la corte, il che mha dato grandissimo contento. Questa settimana se son dette gran cose de Inghilterra ma il signor Imbasciator di Spagna dice che non son vero et che I Mercantanti scriuono il falso diceuano, che sua Maesta. hauea fatto rettenere l'Armata del mio Re che andaua in Friandra [sic], et tolto li sette Cento Milia Ducati et che haueua reuocato un Imbasciator che hauea mandato al Re mio signor. Le cose di Genoua se tengono per accomodate et gia quei de dentro haueuano licentato tutte le Genti. Di Franza se intende, che sia fatto sospention de Arme per sei mesi, con gran disauantaggio di quel Re. De Constantinopoli se intende gran preparatorii de Armata, et qui si uiue nella pace de Ottauiano, con la molto prudenta et bon gouerno di questi Signori et del suspetto del Mal Contagioso si passa assai bene. Al Illustrissimo. signor. suo Padre bascio la Mano et al signor. Milorth Auberth et me ricomando al honoratissimo messer Lodouivo Bruschet. et nostro. signor dia a vostra signoria ogni desiderato contento.

Di Venetia il di ii Decembris.M.D.LXXV

priego, Vostra Signoria a far humilmente reuenza [sic] a sua Maesta in mio nome, e farli fede de la mia deuotione uerso i suoi gran meriti

De Vostra. Signoria. Illustrissima.

Seruitor afficionatissimo

don Cesare Carrafa

Endorsed: 1575 from Don Cesare Carrafa the second of December J

Osborn translation:

My very noble Sir,

I wrote your Excellency a long letter via Master Lodowick Bryskett; and such is my desire to be of service to you that I did not wish to let pass the occasion, offered by the departure of Master Thomas Sans, to discharge my obligation. I have asked him to greet your Excellency warmly in my name, and to tell you how much I love and honour you.

A servant of the Earl of Oxford arrived here, who I thought would bring a letter from your Excellency. From him I heard that you are well, in great favour with her noble

Majesty your Queen, and beloved of all the court, all of which has made me extremely happy.

This week great things have been said about England, but the Ambassador of Spain says that they are untrue and that what the merchants write is false. They said that her Majesty had intercepted the fleet my Sovereign had sent to Flanders, had impounded one hundred thousand ducats, and captured an ambassador my lord had sent to the King.

The Genoese troubles have apparently been settled, and already the inhabitants have dismissed everyone. From France we hear that a six months' truce has been concluded, with great disadvantage to the King. From Constantinople there is news that a great fleet is being prepared. Here we live under a peace of Octavian--under the excellent and prudent government of our present Signori, compounded with the prospect of plague, we are fairly well.

Please greet your most noble father and my lord of Oxford most reverently from me, and give my respects to the most honourable Master Lodowick Bryskett. And may our Saviour grant your Excellency the fulfilment of all your desires. Venice, December 2, 1575.

I pray you most humbly and reverently to greet her Majesty in my name and assure her of my devotion in recognition of her great favour.

Your Excellency's most affectionate servant,

Don Cesare Carrafa

Kuin translation:

With Master Lodowick Bryskett I wrote your Lordship a long letter, and through the desire I have to serve you I did not want to miss the opportunity to do my duty that presented itself to me in the return of Master Thomas Sands, whom I have asked to embrace you in my name and to assure you how much I love and honour you.

A servant of the Earl of Oxford has arrived here, who I had thought would bring me a letter from your Lordship. He gave me to understand that you are well and in favour with her Majesty, our Queen, and beloved by all the court, which has pleased me enormously.

This week great things have been said about England, but his Excellency, the Ambassador of Spain, says that they are not true and that the merchants are writing untruth. They said that her Majesty had had the war fleet of my King, which was on its way to France, arrested, and confiscated the seven hundred thousand ducats, and that she has recalled an ambassador whom she had sent to the King, my master.

In Genoa matters are said to have been arranged, and the inhabitants have already sent away all the gens d'armes. From France we hear that a six months' truce has been concluded with great disadvantage to that King. From Constantinople we hear of great preparations of a war fleet, while here we live in the peace of Octavian with the careful and excellent government of these Signori, and as for the apprehension of the contagious disease, so far things are not too bad.

My greetings to his Excellency, your father, and to my Lord Oxford [sic], and commend me to the excellent Master Bryskett, and may Our Lord grant all your Lordship's desires. From Venice the 2nd day of December 1575,

Your Excellency's most devoted servant,

Don Cesare Carrafa