

SUMMARY: The document below is a translation in the Calendar of State Papers Venetian of the report of an audience given by the authorities in Venice to the English ambassador, Sir Henry Wotton (1568–1639), on 5 November 1617.

According to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, available online, after the death of his mother in early 1613, Henry de Vere (1593-1625), 18th Earl of Oxford, 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. This offer is alluded to in the report below.

The Doge mentioned below was Giovanni Bembo (1543-1618), who died on 16 March 1618.

For other documents in the State Papers Venetian mentioning Sir John Vere, see Hinds, Nos. 32, 196, 297, 322, 382 and 579.

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 Majesty's Stationery Office, 1909), pp. 35-44. See also <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=88664>.

November 5
Collegio Secreta
Esposizioni Principi
Venetian Archives

73. The ambassador of England was summoned to the Cabinet, and the deliberation of the Senate, similar to the one read to France, was read to him. He said:

I am obliged by this confidence. The particulars are of great importance. I informed his Majesty by the courier of the day before yesterday of what the Senate informed me last week. I will do the like with these at the first opportunity, and I can assure your Serenity that you will find the King a good friend, especially at this crisis if matters go further, though I hardly think they will. Your Serenity will recall the King's goodwill in his instructions sent from Scotland, which I read. I have observed that so long as the Duke of Savoy remained with war in his house he suffered severely. Necessity proved a good councillor; he entered the Milanese and improved his position, and would have done even better had he persevered. It is impossible to understand the hostile action of the governor of Milan under the cloak of his word and the peace. But it is easy thus to threaten the

confines, another matter to advance. I console myself that your Serenity disposes of sufficient forces to prevent the enemy from making any progress until the spring, when I feel sure that things will turn out well.

The Doge replied, thanking the ambassador. The ministers of the Republic would not fail to do the utmost that could be done in such an unexpected crisis with other distractions in Friuli and at sea. They had confidence in the King.

The ambassador asked that some decision should be made with regard to the Earl of Oxford, Captain Bell and Mr [John] Vere, and then took leave.

[Italian]