

SUMMARY: The document below is a translation in the Calendar of State Papers Venetian of a statement made to the Inquisition on 31 December 1618 by Diana Palermitana, mentioning Henry de Vere (1593-1625), 18<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, who had left Venice for England three months earlier. In her statement she declares that she did not know Henry de Vere's name, referring to him as 'the same Earl who brought so much gold and came to bring troops', and claiming that he had taken a woman named la Gritti, the wife of one Parvis, with him to England. For a statement made to the Inquisition on 28 December 1618 by Captain Baldassare Juven mentioned Henry de Vere, see Hinds, No. 672.

According to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, available online, after the death of his mother in early 1613, Henry de Vere 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.

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. 405-22. See also <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=88693>.

December 31  
Inquisitori di Stato  
Busta 1213  
No. 49  
Venetian Archives

677. Diana Palermitana, widow of John Bartlett, an Englishman, living at ca Moro at S. Giovanni in Bragora, vendor of tobacco, was summoned and cautioned. Before being questioned, when she mentioned her husband, she said: He is dead, thank God. Asked why she spoke thus, she said: He was a bad man, a heretic, who believed in nothing. The English ambassador protected him, and he lodged Englishmen without paying anything to St. Mark. Sometimes he had as many as twenty in the house, and he made me go to the ambassador when one of them was sick, to take care of him. I believe he carried this on for ten years. Two years ago he went out of sport to the wars, and returning sick, he died.

Asked if she still lodged foreigners, she said she did not wish to continue her husband's practices. Being poor, she could not bear the necessary cost. While she was away from the city on business, a French captain came to the house. She wished him to obtain a

licence, and so he did. Many asked her for lodgings, but she did not wish to be bothered with foreigners.

Asked where the English lodged who used to come to her husband, she said they go to the house of Signor Giovanni Battista Bragadino at S. Giovanni in Bragora at la Crosera, a very large house kept by one John Holland (Gio. Holandese), an Englishman, and his wife Lucretia, who was given for wife by Parvis, the husband of la Gritti who went with an Earl to England, the same Earl who brought so much gold and came to bring troops. Does not know the name. Thinks the English ambassador spoke for him in the Cabinet, but he was not accepted. He was lodged by Parvis. He left some while since. Thinks it was about the time of the conspiracy or soon after. There were more than twenty with him, who all disappeared. Does not know if they went to accompany him, or because of the disturbances of the time. They were of various nationalities, Savoyards, French, English and others.

When the troubles happened, the house of this John Holland was full of foreigners. She saw them all go, at least twenty. Had heard that this John Holland had been in prison at least twice for lodging foreigners without a bulletin, and had got out by the favour of the English ambassador. Did not know if those who lodged with him had bulletins. Her husband lodged foreigners without bulletins. No-one ever took any. If any official came and the ambassador heard of it, he at once sent his secretary to the place when her husband was cited. Other nationalities besides English came. She had seen many poor and beggars, without enough to pay their debts, who afterwards had money and were very well dressed. Does not know who supplied them. They have all gone, probably since the late disturbances.

Before the conspiracy these English went about seeing the city, taking notes and drawings and said, This is the fortress of the Venetians, but they did not speak of taking it. There were young students among them, and in conversation they said that their bertons could do this and that. They had great disputes about Palma, and talked of going to see it, and who would get there quickest. When they returned they praised the fortress and the country, calling it fine. Does not think they meant harm. They said, Would to God our King had such fine fortresses in England, and such a country.

Had heard in the house of the English ambassador of a Scotchman who they said had come with letters from the King to make a fountain in St. Mark's square and do other things, and that he could also make clocks, but it was a good while ago, probably three years. He was exceedingly well dressed, and made a fine appearance. Rather less than a year ago she had seen him very ill-clothed, and had heard him complain that the Signory would accept nothing, that he had done great things and could not do greater.

In conversation with the captain now lodging with her, who had made her eat with him and given her plenty to drink, he told her that he had done a good service to the Signory and spoke of the matters now in question. She had said that if she were a man she would go and warn the Signory that they would do well to keep a good lookout upon these lodging-houses. She had also told the captain that John Holland had been to ask her to

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take four or five English, whom she might have had under the cover of that captain, but she refused. Thinks the request was made three days ago. She told the captain that she did not want merchants to come and lodge with her, but to go to merchants, and the foreigners could go to hostelries.

Admitted and sworn to silence.

[Italian]