

SUMMARY: The document below is a letter written from London by John Chamberlain to Ralph Winwood on 18 December 1604 in which Chamberlain mentions the forthcoming marriage of Oxford's youngest daughter, Susan de Vere (1587-1629), to Philip Herbert (1584-1650), later Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery. The transcript below is taken from McClure, Norman Egbert, *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, Vol. I, (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1939) pp. 198-9.

The marriage took place on 27 December 1604. For a description of the festivities by Dudley Carleton in a letter written to John Chamberlain on 7 January 1605, see Lee, Maurice, *Dudley Carleton to John Chamberlain, 1603-1624; Jacobean Letters*, (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1972) pp. 66-8.

For a description by Nicolo Molino, the Venetian ambassador, of his part in the day's events in a letter dated 12 January 1605, see Brown, Horatio F., 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. X, 1603-1607 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1900), pp. 206-7.

Sir, here is no manner of novelty or alteration since my last, and yet being to keep Christmas out of town, and even ready for my journey, I cannot forbear, though I be like to send out an empty letter. The King came back from Royston on Saturday, but so far from being weary or satisfied with those sports that presently after the holidays he makes reckoning to be there again, or as some say, to go further toward Lincolnshire to a place called Ancaster Heath. In the meantime here is great provision for cockpit to entertain him at home, and of masques and revels against the marriage of Sir Philip Herbert and the Lady Susan Vere which is to be celebrated on St John's day. The Queen hath likewise a great masque in hand against Twelfthtide, for which there was £3000 delivered a month ago.

Her brother, the Duke of Holst, is here still procuring a levy of men to carry into Hungary, but methinks they should have little to do that would adventure themselves so far with a man able to do them no more good. Here is an ambassador newly come out of Denmark, but I neither hear nor inquire after his errand. The Duke of Lennox is presently going in ambassage for France, and though it be thought that his own business is his greatest employment, yet for his countenance this place is imposed upon him, and £3000 to bear his charge. Here is speech that Sir Harry Maynard is or shall be appointed ledger for France, and Sir Richard Spencer, or as some say, Sir Harry Neville, for Spain. Our men complain of ill usage there, specially of the Inquisition, who will take no notice nor be tied to any capitulation that shall restrain their authority, as being no part of the King's jurisdiction, but we are still persuaded that the Lord Admiral's going will mend all, which will not be till February at the soonest. I hear he carries with him the title of Excellency, and hath £15,000 allowed for his expense, besides the charge of two of the King's best ships to transport him. The King sends a present of certain horses and

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hunting geldings, with two rich saddles and eight or ten horse-cloths of several coloured velvets with rich embroidery, whereby they are hot and heavy (and so very improper for that place), valued at eight hundred pounds apiece, as likewise the whole sort methinks nothing well, being as if we sent trees to the wood.

The Archbishop took possession of his See of Canterbury the 10th of this month, and was confirmed in the presence of the Prince and all the great lords and councillors about this town. Vaughan, late Bishop of Chester, was elected to London on Friday last. The tragedy of *Gowry*, with all the action and actors, hath been twice represented by the King's players with exceeding concourse of all sorts of people, but whether the matter or manner be not well handled, or that it be thought unfit that princes should be played on the stage in their lifetime, I hear that some great councillors are much displeased with it, and so is thought shall be forbidden. It is generally held and spoken that the Queen is quick with child. And so wishing a merry Christmas and many a good year to you and Mistress Winwood, I commit you to God. From London this 18 of December 1604.

Yours most assuredly,

John Chamberlain

To the right worshipful Master Winwood, esquire, agent for his Majesty with the United States of the Low Counties, give these at the Hague