

---

SUMMARY: In this letter written from London to Sir Dudley Carleton on 1 April 1620, John Chamberlain mentions the participation in a tilting on 24 March of Oxford's son and heir, Henry de Vere, 18<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, and a dispute with William Herbert, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Pembroke, concerning a matter of precedence. The transcript below is taken from McClure, Norman Egbert, *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, Vol. II, (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1939) pp. 297-300.

My very good Lord, I doubt my last letter sent by Dieston is not yet come to your hands, for the wind hath been almost ever since at east. The best is that there was nothing in it that required haste, neither have we anything since of any great moment more than the tilting on the King's day, which was reasonably well performed on all sides, specially by the Prince, who runs very fair and came in good fashion accompanied by his own people, six trumpets, four pages, six grooms and six footmen, all very well and richly apparelled in his colours, white, green and yellow, himself and his pages exceedingly well mounted with rich and dainty caparisons. He had likewise a fair tent of those coloured damasks to repose himself. Other shows there were none. Next him came the Marquises together in one suit of purple and white, they and their followers; then the four Earls Oxford, Rutland, Dorset and Warwick, all in a livery of crimson and white; then the Earl of Salisbury in white and green; a son of Sir Robert Carey's representing the Earl of Montgomery (who was hurt in the arm two or the days before at the same exercise); then the Earl of Desmond, the Lord Walden, the Lord Gerard, Sir Thomas Somerset, Sir Henry Rich, and the two Alexanders. The Lord of Arundel was Earl Marshall for the day, but every way so poorly accoutred that he did himself nor the place little honour. We are like to have another fit on Tuesday in Easter week, against when the scaffolds continue. There is a challenge wherein the Prince and the two Marquises undertake all comers; the Earl of Dorset ran against the Prince, and they both did best in the opinion of most men. The Spanish ambassador had a fair standing made for him over against the Prince's tent. The French ambassador was not there, though he were invited, by reason he could not be placed to his mind, which discontent may chance rub upon the old sore which was but newly skinned. The King was careful beforehand to have had him satisfied, but my Lord Chamberlain excusing himself in regard of the difficulty of the business, the Lord Digby undertook to make the case so equal that there should be no difference, and so no exception on either side, but the French refusing unless he might have the choice, they thought to satisfy him with telling him his wife should stand where the Queen used to do, but he would not take that in payment because (he said) she was no public person, and in truth in some men's opinion he should have been placed to his disadvantage in a corner of the Duke of Lennox' lodging. Upon his complaint, the King (weary of these disputes) told him he had no reason to be so careful of him, seeing his master had not declared for him nor his pretence in the same cause.

On Sunday in the afternoon the King came in pomp to Paul's Cross, where the Bishop of London preached upon a text given him by the King, being the 13 and 14 verses of the 102 psalm. The better half of the time (being above two hours) he spent in a pathological

speech for the repairing of Paul's. After the sermon the King had a banquet in the Bishop's house, where he moved the Lord Mayor and aldermen to undertake the work, protesting (as the Bishop had touched in his sermon) that he could be content to fast with bread and water to see it done. He was received at the Temple-bar by the Lord Mayor and aldermen, who presented him with a purse of gold of 1000 marks and another with £500 to the Prince. The citizens stood by companies with their banners and streamers all along the streets, and entering into Paul's he was received by the prebends and churchmen, where the Dean made a short speech in Latin that he was come to visit an old man whose head was bald with age, his shoulders bowing, and his legs failing, so that without the help of such a physician to restore him he could not long last. The King came along in his doublet and hose, and suffered the Prince to ride bare-headed before him all the way both coming and going. The train was not so great by reason of many disputes among his followers for place and precedence, as the Lord of Oxford with the Lord Chamberlain, the Master of the Jewel House with baronets, the Grooms of the Bedchamber with Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber, but the greatest of all was of noblemen's younger sons with the councillors *minorum gentium*, which being beforehand decided by the lords in commission for the office of Earl Marshall, the knights-councillors appealed to the King, who upon these difference was ready to turn back when he was getting on horseback, but in conclusion he left the matter as he found it, with order that none of the arguers on either side should accompany him, whereby he was but slenderly followed, having the want of his Treasurer, Controller, Secretaries, Chancellor of the Exchequer and the rest, who are in a peck of troubles for that these gallants (specially earls' sons, and among them Sir Edward Sackville and Sir Edward Cecil) make profession to take place of them as well at tables in private as all other public places, and say they usurp the title of honourable whereas in truth they are but right worshipful of the honourable Council.

That day there fell out a quarrel twixt one Greames, gentleman of the horse to Marquis Buckingham, and a brother of Sir William Fielding's, an equerry of the stable (as I take it). Upon the meeting in the field, Fielding was sore hurt, and they have both lost their places, but the Marquis gave his man 1000 pieces for his farewell.

The Lord Mayor and his brethren are about some course to provide money for Bohemia, and many noblemen make great show of forwardness, among whom the Earl of Dorset is the foreman, having already (they say) disbursed £1000, and promised to furnish as much yearly for four years to come if the war last so long. There is a collection likewise among the clergy, whereof divers have underwritten bountifully and cheerfully, yet I hear of one about this town that hath subscribed for half a crown. The motion for Paul's comes not very opportunely, for it cannot be but these contributions coming together must needs cross one another.

Master Sherburn was at me the other day for his bond wherein he stands bound to you, to make a just reckoning and account because he had performed the condition (though I know not whether I have it or no), yet I told him I could not deliver it without warrant from you, and that answer must serve till you give other order. I hear your nephew Dudley was sick in the country, but now on the mending hand. So with the remembrance

---

of my best service to my good lady (who no doubt hears that her sister Sedley hath a son), I commend you to the protection of the Almighty. From London this first of April, 1620.

Your Lordship's most assuredly at command,

John Chamberlain