
SUMMARY: In this letter written from London to Sir Dudley Carleton on 12 June 1625, John Chamberlain mentions the death of Oxford's son and heir, Henry de Vere, 18th Earl of Oxford, and the succession to the earldom of Robert de Vere, 19th Earl of Oxford, son of Oxford's first cousin Hugh Vere. The transcript below is taken from McClure, Norman Egbert, *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, Vol. II, (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1939) pp. 622-4.

My very good Lord, we hear the ill news of the Earl of Oxford's decease, which is the more lamented for that he was the only hope and support of so ancient and noble a house, which is like to go to ruin, his successor (they say) being a man of mean worth or regard. But this is the common fate of all worldly honour, to fade and fall.

We do or say little here, but expect the Queen's coming, and marvel it is so long deferred. It should seem we have poor intelligence when the King posted hence the last of May to meet her, and the lords and ladies were sent somewhat before to attend her coming at Canterbury, where they have tarried ever since to their great trouble and charge, but the King cheers them up almost every day with messages from Dover, and persuades them to patience. On Whitsun eve he dined aboard the Prince Royal, and visited two or three of his ships more that lay in the road, but that evening there fell out such a storm that made them fall foul one upon another, and did much harm. The cause of the Queen's stay is said to be her mother's sickness on the way, and if all be true that is reported, they can make no great haste, being to march with a little army of 4000 at least, whereof the Duke of Chevreuse and his followers make up 300 and 60 that belong to his kitchen. He and his lady are to be lodged at Denmark House, where she is to lie in, and their allowance from our King is £200 a day, besides £100 a day for Ville-aux-Clercs and his consorts, but they come in an ill time, for the sickness increaseth and is spread far and near, so that 25 parishes in this town are infected already, and this week's bill ariseth to 434 in all, of the plague 92, so that if God be not merciful to us, this town is like to suffer much and be half undone, and that which makes us the more afraid is that the sickness increaseth so fast when we have had for a month together the extremest cold weather that ever I knew in this season. What are we then to look for when heats come on, and fruits grow ripe? I purpose (God willing) to go to Ware Park this next week. Your brother Williams and his retinue are already at Gilston. Orlando Gibbon, the organist of the Chapel (that had the best hand in England) died the last week at Canterbury, not without suspicion of the sickness. Our parliament should begin on Monday, but no doubt it will be put off again, which makes the knights and burgesses complain that they are kept here with so much danger and expense to so little purpose, for there is no likelihood they can sit here long, if at all.

The Earl of Montgomery, the Earl of Carlisle, and Secretary Morton are come out of France, where they and the rest were dismissed with bountiful presents. The Duke of Buckingham himself wrote to the King that he had already to the value of £80,000, the Earl of Carlisle to 22,000 crowns, the Earl of Holland to 20,000 crowns, Secretary

Morton to £2000. Sir George Goring had a diamond from the King of £1000, from the Queen Mother one of £300, and curious plate to the value of £1200, as likewise Sir Francis Nethersole the same quantity of plate. How much or how little of this is true I cannot affirm, having *nihil praeter auditum*. We hear that the Great Mogor hath imprisoned all our men and seized their goods at Surat by practice of the Hollanders, as is thought, which if it prove true, *actum est de amicitia*. Three posts arrived within these two days out of Scotland with news that the Earl of Argyle is come thither with forces to trouble that country or Ireland, to which he is a near neighbour. Surely we have small advertisement that could not discover nor prevent such a practice. Sir John Bennet hath lately penned and printed certain meditations upon the 51st penitential or psalm of mercy. It seems *afflictio dat intellectum*, and that he hath made the best use of it. At the closing of this letter I hear the Queen came to Boulogne on Thursday, and may by this time be got over if the northerly wind that hath reigned yesterday and today do not hinder her, and likewise that the sickness is come into the Lord Mayor's house so that he is driven to shut up his doors, to forsake the town, and hath left Sir Thomas Bennet his deputy. So with my best wishes for your health and happiness, and the remembrance of my service to my good lady, I commend you both to the protection of the Almighty. From London this 12th of June, 1625.

Your Lordship's most assuredly at command,

John Chamberlain

To the right honourable Sir Dudley Carleton, knight, Lord Ambassador for his Majesty at the Hague.