

ENGLISH STATE PAPERS ON THE SIEGE OF CANDIA

In England, the siege of Candia made little impression until its very last months. Of the two great diarists of the period, Samuel Pepys makes no mention of it at all, though he was already in practice Secretary of the Admiralty, and his patron, Lord Arlington, was directly concerned in North African trade. John Evelyn mentions only the first outbreak of war in 1645, when he happened to be in Venice, and when a visit to the galleys for Crete was still a fashionable moonlight expedition for a Venetian gentleman and an operative star; and then, in 1668, one sentence, after dinner with the Venetian ambassador: — «Now was Candia in exceeding danger»¹.

The same lack of interest appears in the diplomatic and consular papers preserved in the Record Office. The Cretan War is mentioned only incidentally in the reports sent by the consuls and agents in Venice and Zante. A formal appeal from the Republic to the King of England emphasizes English mercantile interests in the Mediterranean, and how inconvenient it would be if Crete became a corsair base². But it is clear that English trade has not notably suffered by the presence of the Turks in Crete, and it may even be suspected that the interests of the Levant Company in the Eastern Mediterranean were too dependent on Turkish goodwill for any risks to be taken in helping Venice. In 1661 there is a complaint by the Venetian authorities that two English ships are being used by the Turks to transport troops from Constantinople to Crete; and it is implied that their owners and the English ambassador to the Porte, the Earl of Winchelsea, are conniving at this use³.

The Venetian ambassador in Paris at this time was Michele, son of Francesco Morosini, the Captain General of Candia. Included in the State Papers is a private «Memorial» of his to the King of England, asking for his help on behalf of the Captain General's son-in-law, who has the Cretan name, Marcantonio

¹) J. Evelyn Diary (ed. E. S. de Beer), Oxford 1955, ii 452, 457, iii 515.

²) Record Office, London; State Papers 99/45/177; 12 Oct. 1660 S. N.

³) SP 99/45/154; 10 April 1661.

Dictino. Dictino, «while he did perform the part of a stout and brave soldier in Candia, he was taken and made a slave by the Turks., with great care he was sent to the tower of Constantinople...», and the king is asked to instruct the Earl of Winchelsea to intercede for the prisoner and negotiate for his liberty⁴.

When it became obvious, in 1666, that the Turks were intending to bring the long campaign to a decision, the English government began to take more interest. Giles Jones, consul at Venice, is instructed to procure a series of charts and plans of Crete and neighbouring islands. These are sent, sixtyfour sheets of them, by April 1667⁵ and during the months that follow, Jones sends to the Chief Secretary of State, Lord Arlington, other documents relating to the siege. There are mentioned a «diary of Candia» in twenty - four pages, which seems to have been compiled by Jones himself, and a copy of Carlo Querini's report on the war⁶. These are not included in the collection, but still attached to it is a satirical «Last Will and Testament of the City of Candia», which bitterly criticizes the competence and honesty of some of the defenders⁷.

During the summer of 1669, there came to the besieged city an Englishman who was to become famous as that governor of Jamaica who first organized the buccaneers against Spain, and then, with equal vigour, suppressed them. Thomas Lynch was already well - known in Jamaica as provost - marshall, president of the council, and (irregularly) Chief Justice. He was forced to withdraw from the island from 1664 to 1670, and it is interesting to see him here, in this otherwise blank period of his career, acting as personal agent in the Mediterranean to Lord Arlington, who had already been his protector in the 1664 scandal.

He writes vigorously of the French fiasco at Sabbionera⁸:

Candia, 2 July 1669 S. N.

My noble Lord :

Writing about a fortnight since to Sir John Travers, (to be-

⁴) SP 99/45/175; no date, but perhaps 1662: the papers from these years are not all in chronological order.

⁵) Covering letters and references, SP 99/46/174, 200, 222.

⁶) SP 99/46/233 - 5.

⁷) SP 99/46/275; no date, but received at Whitehall in the first weeks of 1669. See Appendix.

⁸) Spelling and punctuation largely modernised. SP 99/46/291.

seeh him to attest a second time a letter of attorney I sent from Paris to Jamaica), I intimated to him my observations of the state of this garrison; from which, or from that I formerly writ Mr. Williamson^o, I suppose Your Lordship has the privilege of what I know, though nothing of them is so considerable as what has happened since.

For about ten days ago arrived the French fleet, consisting of about sixteen men - of - war and twenty other vessels. At sea they met the Venetians, and came all in together under the Pope's standard, Monsieur le Duc de Bewfort Generalissimo. In three or four nights they put ashore twelve small regiments, and about five hundred horsemen, which with the sea - regiment were judged to be 6500. Their General de Navail and other great officers (impatient, according to the humour of their nation) resolve to sally out and attack the weaker of the 'Turks' camps, which is at Sabbionera, at the East point of the town, by the seaside. It's said the Captain General M. St. Andre Monbrun, and the other generals, advised to expect the other forces, or at least to take some of these old troops with them. But they, (Frenchmen - like, mightily satisfied in themselves), would neither defer it nor have other than some Greek guides with them.

So, Monday evening, they drew up the foot and horse, and lodged them in the contrescarp of the outworks. About two hours afore day, the General advances with part of the foot into the adjoining campaign, thinking to lie there undiscovered until break of day. But, some Turkish scouts coming, he was constrained to charge them, so gave an alarm to the camp. This made him resolve to march directly to it and assault the enemy before they could embody, judging too (and that rightly) that the surprise would have facilitated the victory; as indeed it had, if the regiments had seconded the forlorn hope. And volunteers, who bravely entering the trenches made the enemy retire, and, attaining a certain battery, one of their granadas blew up three or four barrels of powder; which happening at the same time as the foot was in disorder (the left wing charging the right, supposing them to be enemies) made the soldiers cry «Mines», and fly. In which consternation it was impossible for their officers to stop them, though none pursued them, it being certain the gross of

^o) Lord Arlington's secretary.

the army saw no Turks. Those brave officers and gentlemen that were most forward and in the trenches only saw them in some small divisions, but being thus abandoned, the enemy's number and courage increased, so that most of them were killed or wounded. Yet they did bring away with them thirteen prisoners.

The horse acquitted themselves rather worse than the infantry, for they were beaten by some straggling Turks afoot, only with stones and scimitars in their hands; and being routed, so increased the fears and confusion the foot was in.

About break of day, the van of the runaways entered the town an hour after the rear. Of the lost, people speaks differently. Most conclude 300, and as many wounded. Monsieur Bewfort was with his guard of eighty persons at the head of the sea-regiment, but when, where, or how lost, nobody does know. There has been a report he was prisoner, and wounded in the shoulder, but yesterday a credible person told me he saw a letter to the Captain General, from his spy in the camp, that he was not found, only a rich cross with diamonds which he imagined to be his. There has perished besides him divers noblemen; those I remember are le Marquis de Faber, le Chevalier Clermont, and le Marquis Rosan, the Marquis of Blanchfort's brother, as I hear—I think he was brought off. The principal of the wounded are le Chevalier de Bouillon, and M. Chastillon; most of the rest are gentlemen; few of which will scape, for almost all wounds here are mortal, especially for newcomers.

Immediately after their coming they ordered the searegiment to embark, they pretending not to be obliged to obey the Lord General. And the rest of the French army begin to keep guare, which is but needful, for since this unhappy event the Turks are much advanced and more bold, and ours less than formerly. Nevertheless do we begin to hope something may yet be done for the delivery of the town, for yesterday arrived 1300 from Bavaria and Strassbourg, 400 from Venice, and 60 gunners. The galleys are every day expected, with 2000 of these French and Romans on them. But yesterday I heard of galleys of Naples with others went back from Corfu in disgust, so that of fifty and upwards expected, there will not come thirty.

However, the ships and galeasses that are here are resolved (according to Monsieur Bewfort's order before he was killed) to lie against the forts and batteries of the enemy at the east end

of the town, and batter them down. It has not yet (as they say) been executed, for want of calm weather.

I do not understand that anybody succeeds Bewfort in the generalship of the united forces under the Pope's standard. Nor is it imagined that this design of the ships, or anything that we can here do, will hinder the town's being taken, though we have about as many fighting - men within as they have without—which may be some 1500. The enemy's advantage has been in numbers of pioneers, gunners, and engineers, which we have wanted.

Divers great officers are of the opinion the peace will be speedily made, the Turks and the Venetians being equally weary and prejudiced by the war. Others say that the peace is already concluded by the ambassadors in the camp, and the conditions are to divide the kingdom, the Turks taking Candia Nova, and the Venetians Suda; but these are only agreed on if the Venetian can hold out the town till the beginning of September, which will be difficult enough to do, men fall sick and are wounded and killed so fast. For of the Luxemburgers that I came hither with, there's not a fourth part left to do service. And just now while I am writing, an Italian tells me he heard at the Captain General's that the Turks have received four thousand recruits. Above three of ours are killed to one of theirs, for the business of the janissaries and fighting - men is only to make the pioneers work. Two days ago we blew two fornellos that destroyed five hundred, but few or no soldiers.

But it's now time, my Lord, to beg your pardon, if not for the matter of this letter (because it's extraordinary there's no other Englishman to advise it), at least for the crude manner of discoursing it to Your Lordship. But my excuses were made, could you, my noble Lord, imagine what a fatal place this is, and that while I have been writing, this little ombre of a house that I am in has often trembled at its neighbours' ruins; and that I am not sure the fatal cannon or mortar may not put a period to my days before I do to this letter. But should I be so surprised, my Lord, I think it would be less ingrateful, because I should expire in protesting,

that I am, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most humble and most faithful servant,
Thomas Lynch.

This letter, which was sent «in a packet of General Waldeck's», is followed by another, written at Venice on the 27th. September ¹⁰.

He had stayed at Candia for some twenty days more, and then had left, judging that the end was near. His journey back to Venice, by way of Zante and Pesaro, had been painfully slow, and he had almost died of dysentery. He reached Venice just in time to see the preparations for honouring Morosini, but now the ceremonies have been cancelled on the Pope's intervention. News from Candia is grave. The 2500 Luxemburgers he travelled with are now down to 400; there are only three or four left of the English gunners or Scotch officers in the city. There are rumours that the chief officers have been blown up in a mine, and a purser (commercial agent) who has set up his office on Standia, reports three heavy attacks on the Sabbionera and St. Andrew bastions. Movements of English ships in the area are reported. The Tripoli pirates are swarming in the Straits of Otranto, but do not meddle with English vessels.

He ends with scandal about a great English lady and a Roman cardinal.

The news of the surrender arrives at Venice on October 18th. In a scrawled note, another agent, George Hayles, sketches to Lord Arlington the terms of peace ¹¹. The only comment he allows himself is that «This nobility is not over - well - pleased with this established peace».

APPENDIX

Il Testamento della Citta di Candia

Ritrovandomi Io citta di Candia gravemente inferma di corpo ma sana per grazia di Dio di mente e conoscendo di dover in breve renderlo preso alla forza ottomana per non lasciar le cose mie senza la dritta ordinatione instituisco ed ordino il presente testamento ed ultima mia volonta.

Voglio che nella Citta di Venezia dove si trovano huona parte delle mie ceneri, si bene in case particolari, sia nondimeno eretta la mia Arca nel cimitero delle publiche memorie appresso quelle de miei defonti fratri Negroponte e Regno de Cipro. La-

¹⁰) SP 99/46/299.

¹¹) SP 99/46/300.

scio per legato alle mie dilette sorelle Zante e Zephalonia, Zirigo, e finalmente al Golfo di Venezia mio prossimo germano, ed alli Regni Napoli, e Sicilia miei amorevoli parenti tutti gli abitanti, e famiglie delle mie terre che non verranno doppo di me venire sotto il dominio Turchesche con obbligo alli sudetti miei Legatarii di vestirsi in lutto nella mia morte e di fare il mio anniversario ogn' anno principiando la celebratione lugubre della mia annua memoria del giorno che eschano le fuste barbaresche dagli castelli de Constantinopoli, fino al tempo prescritto dal loro ritorno.

Voglio mi sia cantato il vespro di morti dagli orbi di Chiesa, cioè dagli Principi Christiani, e che loro si lasci l' elemosina per una volta tantino di tutti li presenti vantaggi che ricevono ne loro interessi della mia morte.

Alla chiesa Romana per non havermi assistito con quella carità spirituale che dovea non lascio altro che la sola autorita di elegere nell' avvenire vescovi titolari nelle mie Giurisdittioni.

L' Armati Christiani per esser stato lento insoccorrermi nella presente mia indispositione intendo che restino esclusi della Heredità de miei Patrimonii, dell' usufrutto delli rinforzi di gente, e come godevano, ma solamente lor lascio per semplice legato in avvenire tal volta alla sfuggita far acqua, e legni nelle mie spiagge.

Alla Republica di Venezia mia Principessa, e Signora alla quale ho anco servito lungo tempo per baglia, havendo allattati, e nutriti con le mie miserie molti suoi figliuoli, raccomandando hora la cura, e governo de miei, instituendola mia commissaria, e li lascio per legato perpetuo il mio Reggio, sopra il possesso del quale non credo havrà mai alcun litigio, e ciò, per havermi sostenuta, fino all' ultimo di mia vita.

Lascio il perdono a tutti li miei nemici così rappresentanti i Ministri publici capi di guerra, capi di mare, Governadori di 4 galeoni, e come ad ogn' altra persone che in qualunque maniera mi havesse offesa, abbraccio in particolare con animo intieramente reconciliato di pace Giovanni Capello, fù capitano Generale di Mare, et Antonio Novages, proveditor alla Canea, quali benchè m' habbino offesa mi conosco nondimeno tenuta a dir di queste Pater ignosce illis quia nesciunt quid faciunt.

Ad Andrea Cornaro fù mio Generale, e suoi heredi lascio tutto quello che indebitamente ha usurpato del mio nel tempo

dell' administratione della sua carica, non volendo che il nome di lui sia qui tenuto a render conto ne per mezo distante ne per qualsivoglia giustificatione, e ciò per l' anima mia.

Il residuo de mobili che restano alla mia dispositione, po⁷. che de stabili non posso testare per essere sotto fide commissio spettanti alla casa Ottomana, quelli miei beni mobili consistono per maggio ne capitali della gloria, e de gli honori, che posso di me lasciare a miei heredi, volio siano disposte nella seguen- te maniera.

Sia detto mio residuo in caratti 24, la quarta parte di quel- li, che sono caratti 6 di honore, e di gloria a Leonardo Moceni- go capitano Generale di Mare, a Tomaso Moresini fù capo delle Nave e molto mio ben merito lascio caratti 4. A Giovanni Al- uize eccellentissimo che doppo per il corso di anni 3 continovi sostentata la cura ed il Travaglio della mia infermità, finalmen- te sacrificó la vita in mio servizio lascio caratti 3, ed il rema- nente delli caratti che restano, voglio che siano destrubuti una parte alli poveri della citta di Candia, e dell' armata, che spen- dono il sangue per giovarme dovendosi fare la destrubitione co- me parerá alla coscienza del capitan generale di Mare, il quale però habbia sempre liberta di beneficiare come si usavano piu del altro de suoi amorevoli e perche intendo che¹³ orale confes- sioni della mia malattia Governadori, cioè delle provisioni ma- ritime come di terra hanno spogliato detto mio ressiduo haven- do indebitamente ruobato honori e glorie che non spettavano a loro, voglio che questi siano tenuti a render conto a tempo e luogo: Dovendosi in segno di mestitia per la mia mancanza e per segno di lutto come è lo stile ordinario in tale occasione spogliar la mia casa, e particolarmente la mia camera, lascio che le spoglie siano divise tra quali di numero de miei familiari che assisteranno alla mia Morte.

La cura ed assistenza particolare de miei funerali raccom- mando ad Antonio Giacomano, mio Generale, signior di molta pieta, e per l' affetto tanto religioso assai a proposito, e la pre- sente ordinare voglio che habbia vigore, ed intiera osserva- zione.

GARETH MORGAN

¹³) [siano]? But the passage is still not quite clear.