

**A RELATION, OR RATHER  
A TRUE ACCOUNT, OF  
THE ISLAND OF ENGLAND**

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A Relation, or Rather a True Account, of the Island of England by Charlotte Augusta Sneyd

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**CHARLOTTE AUGUSTA SNEYD**

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A TRUE ACCOUNT, OF  
THE ISLAND OF ENGLAND**



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A RELATION,  
OR RATHER A TRUE ACCOUNT,  
OF THE  
ISLAND OF ENGLAND;

WITH  
SUNDRY PARTICULARS OF THE CUSTOMS OF THESE PEOPLE,  
AND OF THE ROYAL REVENUES UNDER KING  
HENRY THE SEVENTH,  
ABOUT THE YEAR 1500.

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TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN, WITH NOTES,  
BY CHARLOTTE AUGUSTA SNEYD.



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## P R E F A C E.

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The MS. from which this is translated was formerly in the library of the Abbate Canonici at Venice, and is now in the possession of the Rev. Walter Sneyd. Neither the name of the writer of this history, nor that of the person to whom it was addressed, is known. It appears, however, to be the work of some noble Venetian, who accompanied an ambassador from Venice to the court of England, and who was employed by him to write the report usually made to the Senate by every ambassador on his return from his mission, of the country to which he had been sent. In the annexed list of Venetian ambassadors and their Relations of this country, for which I am indebted to the researches of John Holmes, Esquire, F.S.A. of the British Museum, through whose kindness so valuable an addition is given to this little volume, it appears that Francesco Capello was the earliest Venetian ambassador, on record, to England. It may have been the work of his secretary; but I am rather inclined to



suppose that it was written prior to the embassy of Capello; for, according to Rymer's *Fœdera*, a treaty was signed by Henry the Seventh at Windsor, in September, 1496, in which that King agreed to take part in the league formed by the Italian States against France, "*the Venetian and Milanese ambassadors being both present*;" and, as there is frequent mention of a Milanese ambassador, as the writer met Don Peter de Ayala the Spanish ambassador to the King of Scotland, through whose mediation the treaty of Ayton was brought about in Sept. 1497, and as he was only *one* whole winter in England (vide p. 12), it must have been that of 1496-97. It is most probable, therefore, that he accompanied a special mission from Venice to England, to conclude this treaty, and that Capello was the first resident ambassador sent after, and in consequence of it.

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"THE following list of Venetian ambassadors to England does not purport to contain the names of all who have ever been sent to England in that capacity; it consists only of the scattered notices which have been found in various places, and which are here arranged chronologically, in order to show the various "*Relations*" of England which still exist, and which it may be thought desirable to present to the English reader at some other time. It may also stimulate to further search for the *Relations* of those ambassadors whose names are here given, and who in the fulfilment of their instructions must have written *Relations*, which



as yet lie hidden in the libraries of Italy, if they have not altogether perished in the dispersion of the archives of Venice.

The Relation of England, now printed for the first time, is very probably written by the secretary of Francesco Capello. In point of date, it is the earliest Venetian Relation on record. The next is that of Spain, by Vincenzo Quirini, in 1504. Of Germany, the earliest is by Cardinal Contarini, in 1525. Of France, that by Andrea Navagero, in 1528. Of Tuscany, that by Marco Foscarelli, in 1530. Of Rome, that by Antonio Suriano (who, as it will be seen, had been ambassador to England) in 1535. And of Turkey, that by Cardinal Bernardo Navagero, in 1552.

A.D.

1502. Francesco Capello, who was knighted at Greenwich, 18 May, 17 Henr. VII.

1514. Vincenzo Capello, to whom arms were granted by Letters Patent, dat. 1 July, 6 Henr. VIII. In 1538, when 73 years of age, he commanded the Venetian fleet, which, with the Emperor's fleet under Andrea Doria, was sent to oppose Barbarossa, then Capitan Pacha of the Turks.

1515-19. Sebastiano Giustiniani and Pietro Pasqualigo, who were sent by Lionardo Loredano, then Doge of Venice, in pursuance of the acceptance by the Seignory of the treaty of 7 August, 1514. The letters of credence from the Doge, addressed to Cardinal Wolsey in their favour, are dated 2 Feb., 1514.

Pietro Pasqualigo had been previously ambassador to Portugal in 1501, but no Relation by him is known to be extant. In the British Museum there are several letters of Giustiniani, but not his Relazione of England. A compendium of it was in a volume of transcripts relative to England, formerly in the possession of Benj. Heywood Bright, Esq., who communicated a short extract, containing a description of the person and manners of Henry VIII., to Sir Henry Ellis. This extract is printed in "Original Letters," second series,

A.D.

- vol. i. p. 177. The MS. now belongs to Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bart.
1519. 15 April, Ind. 7. Sebastiano Giustiniani and Antonio Suriano, commissioned by Lionardo Loredano to give the consent of the Seignory, to be included in the treaty between Henry and Francis. Their credentials are printed in Rymer. Suriano was afterwards sent as ambassador to Rome.
1522. Jan.-Nov. A Venetian orator was at this time resident in London, but his name has not been found. He may be the same with Antonio Suriano.
1525. Mar. 31, Ind. 13. Lorenzo Orio; sent by Andrea Gritti: his credentials are printed in Rymer. Orio died in London, and was succeeded, apparently in the same year, by Gaspar Spinelli, secretary to the senate, who was specially appointed to negotiate in the affairs consequent upon the captivity of Francis I. who had been taken prisoner by Charles V. at the battle of Pavia. His original commission is extant. About the year 1532 Spinelli was elected grand chancellor of Cyprus.
1526. 23 July, Ind. 14. Marcantonio Veniero; sent as orator by Andrea Gritti. His credentials are printed in Rymer.
1545. Francesco Bernardo; who was employed as a secret agent in the time both of Henry VIII. and Edw. VI., was knighted 37 Henry VIII. and had a special grant of arms.
1548. Domenico Bolani, ambassador of Venice, was knighted 2 Edward VI.
- 1548-1551. Daniele Barbaro, who was appointed ambassador to England, 12th Oct. 1548. During his embassy he was named by Julius III. on the 17th Dec. 1550, as coadjutor to Giovanni Grimani, patriarch of Aquileia, and he was thenceforward called Patriarch Elect. Arms were granted to him by patent, dat. 12 Feb. 5 Edw. VI. (1551.) He was one of the prelates who assisted at the Council of Trent. His death took place 12th April, 1570. Several of his works have been