

ORIGINAL PAPERS IN THE CASE OF ROUX DE MARSILLY.

Andrew Lang

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I. Letter of Mons. P. du Moulin to Arlington.

Paris, May ye, 1669.

My Lord,

Ever since that Monsieur de Ruvigny was in England last, and upon the information he gave, this King had a very great desire to seize if it were possible this Roux de Marsilly, and several persons were sent to effect it, into England, Holland, Flanders, and Franche Compte: amongst the rest one La Grange, exempt des Gardes, was a good while in Holland with fifty of the guards dispersed in severall places and quarters; But all having miscarried the King recommended the thing to Monsieur de Turenne who sent some of his gentlemen and officers under him to find this man out and to endeavor to bring him alive. These men after foure months search found him att last in Switzerland, and having laid waite for him as he came out from Monsr Baithazar's house (a commander well knowne) they took him and carryed him to Gex before they could be intercepted and he rescued. This was done only by a warrant from Monsieur de Turenne but as soone as they came into the french dominions they had full powers and directions from this court for the bringing of him hither. Those that tooke him say they found no papers about him, but that he desired them to write to Monsr Balthazar to desire him to take care of his papers and to send him the commission he had from England and a letter being written to that effect it was signed by the prisoner and instead of sending it as they had promised, they have brought it hither along with them. They do all unanimously report that he did constantly affirme that he was imployed by the King of Great Brittain and did act by his commission; so that the general discourse here in towne is that one of the King of England's agents is in the Bastille; though att Court they pretend to know nothing of it and would have the world think they are persuaded he had no relation to his Majesty. Your Lordship hath heard by the publique newes how overjoyed this King was att the bringing of this prisoner, and how farr he expressed his thanks to the chiefe person employed in it, declaring openly that this man had long since conspired against his life, and agreeable to this, Monsieur, fearing that Mylord Ambr. was come to interpose on the prisoner's behalfe asked him on Friday last att St. Germaines whether that was the cause of his coming, and told him that he did not think he would speake for a man that attempted to kill the King. The same report hath been hitherto in everybody's mouth but they begin now to mince it att court, and Monsieur de Ruvigny would have persuaded me yesterday, they had no such thoughts. The truth is I am apt to believe they begin now to be ashamed of it: and I am informed from a very good hand that Monsieur de Lionee who hath confessed since that he can find no ground for this pretended attempting to the King's life, and that upon the whole he was of opinion that this man had much better been left alone than taken, and did look upon what he had done as the intemperancy of an ill-settled braine. And to satisfy your Lordship that they are nettled here, and are concerned to know what may be the issue of all this, Monsieur de Turenne's secretary was on Munday last sent to several foreigne Ministers to pump them and to learne what their thoughts were concerning this violence committed in the Dominions of a sovereign and an allye whereupon he was told by one of them that such proceedings would bring Europe to the necessity of entering into a Croisade against them, as formerly against the infidels. If I durst I would acquaint your Lordship with the reflexions of all publique ministers here and of other unconcerned persons in relation to his Majesty's owning or disowning this man; but not knowing the particulars of his case, nor the grounds his Maty may go upon, I shall forbear entering upon this discourse. . . .

Your Lordships'

P. DU MOULIN.

II. Paper endorsed "Mr. Montague originally in Cypher. Received May 19, '69. Read in foreigne Committee, 23 May. Roux de Marsilli." [1]

[1] State Papers, France, vol. 126.

I durst not venture to sollicite in Monsr Roux Marsilly's behalfe because I doe not know whether the King my Master hath imployed him or noe; besides he is a man as I have been tolde by many people here of worth, that has given out that he is resolved to kill the French king at one time or other, and I think such men are as dangerous to one king as to another: hee is brought to the Bastille and I believe may be proceeded against and put to death, in very few daies. There is great joy in this Court for his being taken, and a hundred thousand crownes, I am told very privately, set upon his head; the French Ambassador in England wacht him, and hee has given the intelligence here of his being employed by the King, and sent into Switzerland by my Master to draw the Swisses into the Triple League. Hee aggravates the business as much as hee can to the prejudice of my Master to value his owne service the more, and they seeme here to wonder that the King my Master should have imployed or countenanced a man that had so base a design against the King's Person, I had a great deal of discourse with Monsieur about it, but I did positively say that he had noe relation to my knowledge to the King my Master, and if he should have I make a question or noe whither in this case the King will owne him. However, my Lord, I had nothing to doe to owne or meddle in a business that I was so much a stranger to. . . .

This Roux Marsilly is a great creature of the B. d'Isola's, wch makes them here hate him the more. The Spanish Resident was very earnest with mee to have done something in behalfe of Marsilly, but I positively refused.

III. [A paper endorsed "Roux de Marsilli. Read in for. Committee, 23d May."]

[1]

[1] State Papers, France, vol. 126.

Roux de Marsilly came hither when your Majesty had made a union with Holland for making the Peace betwix the two Crownes and when it was probable the opposition to the Peace would bee on the side of France.

Marsilly was heard telling of longe things but noe proposition made to him or by him.

Presently the Peace was made and Marsilly told more plainly wee had no use of him. A little summe of money was given him to returne as he said whither he was to goe in Switzerland. Upon which hee wishing his Maty would renew his alience wth the Cantons hee was answered his Maty would not enter into any comerce with them till they had sent the regicides out of their Country, hee undertooke it should bee done. Seven or eight months after wth out any intimation given him from hence or any expectation of him, he comes hither, but was so coldly used I was complained off for not using so important a man well enough. I answered I saw noe use the King could make of him, because he had no credit in Switzerlande and for any thing else I thought him worth nothing to us, but above all because I knew by many circumstances HEE WAS ANOTHER MAN'S SPY and soe ought not to be paid by his Majesty. Notwithstanding this his Maty being moved from compassion commanded hee should have some money given him to carry him away and that I should write to Monsieur Balthazar thanking him in the King's name for the good offices hee rendered in advancing a good understanding betwixt his Maty and the Cantons and desiring him to continue them in all occasions.

The man was always looked upon as a hot headed and indiscreete man, and soe accordingly handled, hearing him, but never trusting him with anything but his own offered and undesired endeavours to gett the Regicides sent out of Switzerland.

IV. Letter of W. Perwich to —.

[1]

[1] State Papers, France, vol. 126.

Paris: June 5, 1669.

Honored Sir,

Roux Marsilly has prudently declared hee had some what of importance to say but it should bee to the King himselfe wch may be means of respiting his processe and as he hopes intercession may bee made for him; but people talk so variously of him that I cannot tell whether hee ought to bee owned by any Prince; the Suisses have indeed the greatest ground to reclayme him as being taken in theirs. They have all his papers which speake much of the Triple Alliance; if they have no other pretext of hanging him I know not whether they can lawfully for this, hee having been naturallised in Holland and taken in a priviledged Country. . . .

V. Francis Vernon to [Mr. Williamson?].

[1]

[1] State Papers, France, vol. 126.

Paris: June 19/25, 1669.

Honored Sir,

My last of the 26th Curr't was soe short and soe abrupt that I fear you can peck butt little satisfaction out of it.

I did intend to have written something about Marsilly but that I had noe time then. In my letter to my Lord Arlington I writt that Friday 21 Curr't hee wounded himself wch he did not because hee was confronted with Ruvigny as the Gazettes speake. For he knew before hee should dye, butt he thought by dismembering himself that the losse of blood would carry him out of the world before it should come to bee knowne that he had wounded himselfe. And when the Governor of the Bastille spied the blood hee said It was a stone was come from him which caused that effusion. However the governor mistrusted the worst and searcht him to see what wound he had made. So they seared him and sent word to St. Germaines which made his execution be hastened. Saturday about 1 of the clock he was brought on the scaffold before the Chastelet and tied to St. Andrew's Crosse all wch while he acted the Dying man and scarce stirred, and seemed almost breathless and fainting. The Lieutenant General prest him to confesse and there was a doctor of the Sorbon who was a counsellr of the Castelet there likewise to exhort him to disburthen his mind of any thing which might be upon it. Butt he seemed to take no notice and lay panting.

Then the Lieutenant Criminel bethought himself that the only way to make him speake would bee to sende for a ministre soe hee did to Monsr Daillie but hee because the Edicts don't permitt ministres to come to condemned persons in publique but only to comfort them in private before they goe out of prison refused to come till hee sent a huissier who if he had refused the second time would have brought him by force. At this second summons hee came butt not without great expectations to bee affronted in a most notorious manner beeing the first time a ministre came to appeare on a scaffold and that upon soe sinister an occasion. Yet when he came found a great presse of people. All made way, none lett fall soe much as a taunting word. Hee came up the Scaffold, great silence all about. Hee found him lying bound stretched on St. Andrew's Crosse naked ready for execution. Hee told him hee was sent for to exhort him to die patiently and like a Christian. Then immediately they were all surprized to see him hold up his head wch he lett hang on one side before like a drooping calfe and speake as loud and clear as the ministre, to whom he said with a cheerful air hee was glad to see him, that hee need not question butt that hee would dye like a Christian and patiently too. Then hee went and spoke some places of Scripture to encourage him which he heard with great attention. They afterward came to mention some things to move him to contrition, and there hee tooke an occasion to aggravate the horreur of a Crime of attempting against the King's person. Hee said hee did not know what hee meant. For his part hee never had any evill intention against the Person of the King.

The Lieutenant Criminel stood all the while behind Monsieur Daillie and hearkened to all and prompted Monsr Daillie to aske him if hee had said there were 10 Ravillacs besides wch would doe the King's businesse. Hee protested solemnly hee never said any such words or if hee did hee never remembered, butt if hee had it was with no intention of Malice. Then Monsieur Daillie turned to the people and made a discourse in vindication of those of the Religion that it was no Principle of theirs attempts on the persons of King[s] butt only loyalty and obedience. This ended hee went away; hee staid about an hour in all, and immediately as soon as he was gone, they went to their worke and gave him eleven blows with a barre and laid him on the wheele. He was two houres dying. All about Monsr Daillie I heard from his own mouth for I went to wait on him because it was reported hee had said something concerning the King of England butt hee could tell mee nothing of that. There was a flying report that he should say going from the Chastelet—The Duke of York hath done mee a great injury. The Swisses they say resented his [Marsilly's] taking and misst but 1/2 an hour to take them which betrayed him [the monk] after whom they sent. When he was on the wheele he was heard to say Le Roy est grand tyrant, Le Roy me traite d'un facon fort barbare. All that you read concerning oaths and dying en enrage is false all the oaths hee used being only asseverations to Monsr Daillie that he was falsely accused as to the King's person

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ORIGINAL PAPERS IN THE CASE OF ROUX DE MARSILLY.

FRANS. VERNON.

VI. The Ambassador Montague to Arlington.

[1]

[1] State Papers, France, vol. 126.

Paris: June 22, 1669.

My Lord,

The Lieutenant criminel hath proceeded pretty farre with Le Roux Marsilly. The crime they forme their processe on beeing a rape which he had formerly committed at Nismes soe that he perceiving but little hopes of his life, sent word to the King if hee would pardon him he could reveale things to him which would concerne him more and be of greater consequence to him, than his destruction.

VII. The same to the same.

Paris: June 26, '69.

My Lord,

I heard that Marsilly was to be broke on the wheel and I gave order then to one of my servants to write Mr. Williamson word of it, soe I suppose you have heard of it already: they hastened his execution for feare he should have dyed of the hurt he had done himself the day before; they sent for a minister to him when he was upon the scaffold to see if he would confesse anything, but he still persisted that he was guilty of nothing nor did not know why he was put to death. . . .