

Challenges (6 September 1613)
Lord Edward Bruce and Sir Edward Sackville

Transcript

British Library, Additional MS 73087, ff. 47v–52v

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The Combatt betwixt the Lord Bruce, and Sr: Edward Sackvill

A mounseieur mounseieur Sackvill I: that am[m]e in Fraunce, heare howe much yow Attribute to yor: selfe in this tyme, that I haue given the world leave to Ringe yor: prayses, and ffor mee the truest Alminacke to tell yow howe much I sufferr, And yf yow call to Memorye, when I gave yow my hand last, I tould yow I reserved the harte ffor a truer Reconcillyac[i]on, Nowe by that noble gentleman my Love once spoke, and com[m]e, and doe him Right, that could Recyte the Tryalls yow owe yor: Birth, and Countrye, were I not Confident yor. honor: gives yow the same Courage to doe mee Right, that it did to doe mee wronge, Bee Mr: of yor: owne weapons, and tyme, the place wheresoever I will wayte on yow, By doeinge this, yow shall shorten Revenge, and cleare the ydle opinyon the worlde hath of both our honors: Edward Bruce

A Mounseieur

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A mounseieur mounseieur Le Baron de Kinlosse:

As: it shalbee allwayes ffarre from mee to seeke a Quarrell, soe will I bee allwayes readye to meete w[i]th any that desire to make Tryall of my vallour by soe ffayer a Course as yow Re quyere, a meanes whereof yor: selfe shalbee, whoe wthin a Moneth shall receyve a stricte Accompte of tyme, place, and weapon, where, yow shall ffinde mee Readye disposed to give yow honnoble: satisfacc[i]on, by him that shall Conducte yow thether, In the meane tyme, bee as secrett of the Appointemte: as it seemes yow are desirous of it: Edward Sackvill

A mounseieur mounseieur Le Baron de Kinlosse

I: am[m]e readye att Tergose, a Towne in Zealand, to give yow that satisfacc[i]on yor: sworde cann Render yow, Accompanied w[i]th a Worthie gentleman ffor my second, in degree a knight, And ffor yor: com[m]einge I will not Lymitte yow a peremptorye daye, Butt desire yow to make a deffinyte and speedye Repayer, ffor yor: owne honor: and ffear of prevention, untill

wch tyme

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untill w[hi]ch tyme yow shall ffinde mee there, Tergose, the, 10th: of August, 1613: Edward Sackvill

A mounseieur mounseieur Sackvill: I haue Receyved yor: L[ett]re, by yo[u]r: Man, and acknoeweledge yow haue dealte noblye w[i]th mee, And nowe I com[m]e w[i]th possible hast to meete yow: Edward Bruce

Sir Edward Sackvill his Relac[i]on of the ffight, Betwene him and the Lord Bruce: Worthie: Sr: as I ame not ignorante (soe ought I to bee sencible) of the Falce Aspertions Authorlesse Toungues haue layde uppon mee, in the Reportes of the unffortunate passage, latelye happened, Betwene the Lord Bruce, and my selfe, w[hi]ch as they are spread heere, soe maye I iustlye ffeare they Raigne alsoe where yow are,

There are

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There: are butt Two wayes to Resolue doubtles, of this nature, By oath, or by sworde, The ffirst is due to Magistrates, and Communicable to ffrindes, Theother to such, as Maliciouslye slaunder, and impudentlye deffend their Assertion, yor: Love, not my merit Assures mee, yow hould mee yor: ffrinde, wch I esteeme I am[m]e much desirous to Retayne, doe thereffore the Right to understand the truth of that, and in my behalfe to infforme others, whoe eyther are, or maye bee inflected w[i]th sinister Rumors. much priudicyall to that ffayer opinyon I desire to hould amongst all worthie Person[n]s, And on the ffaith of a gentleman the Relac[i]on I shall give, is neyther more nor lesse, Then the Bare truth:

The: inclosed Contaynes the ffirst Citac[i]on, sent mee from Paris, by a Scottishe gent', whoe delivered it me in Darbisheire att my ffather in Lawes howse,

After: it fffollowes my then Aunswere returned him by the same Bearer,

The: next is, my Accomplishemte: of my ffirst promise, beinge a particuler Assignac[i]on of place, and weapon, w[hi]ch I sent by a servante of myne by Post from Rotterdam, assoone as I landed there: The Receipte of wch., ioyned w[i]th an acknoweledgmt:

of my

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of my to ffayer Carryage to the deceased Lord, is Testiffyed by the last, w[hi]ch Perioodes the Busines, till wee mett at Tergose in Zealand, it beinge a place Allotted for Randevous, where hee accompanied wth Mr: Cranfforde an Englishe gentleman, For, his second, a Chirurgeon, and a Man, Arryved w[i]th all the speede hee could, and there haveinge once Rendered himselfe, I Addressed my second, Sr: John Heydon, to lett him understand, that nowe all fffollowinge should bee don[n]e by Conscent, As Conscerninge the Tearmes whereon wee should ffight, As alsoe the place, To our secondes wee gave power ffor their Appointemt[es], whoe Agreed wee should goe to Antwerpe, ffrom thence to Bargaen=^{up}=zome, where in the midwayne, butt a village devides the States Territoryes ffrom the Archdukes, and there was the destined stage, to the ende that haveinge ended, hee that could might prsentlye exempt himselfe ffrom the Justice of the Countrye, by Retyreinge into the domynion not offended:

Itt: was ffurther Concluded, that in Case any should ffall, or slipp: that then the Combatt should Cease, and hee whose yll ffortune had soe subiected him, was to acknowledge his lyfe to haue been in theothers handes, Butt in Case one partyes sworde should Breake (Because that could onely Chaunce by hazard) It was agreed that theother should take noe advaun

tage

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advantage, Butt eyther then bee made ffrindes, or els by even Tearmes goe to it agayne;
Thus: theise Conclusions beinge by each of them Related to his partye, were by both of us
Approved, and Assented to, accordinglye, wee embarqued, ffor Antwerpe, And by reason[n]
my Lord (as I Conceyve because hee could not handsomelye without daunger of discoverye)
had not payred his sworde, I sent him att Paris, one of the same length but twyce as Broade,
My second excepted against it, and Advised mee to Match myne owne, and sent him the
Choyce. w[hi]ch I obeyed (it beinge as yow knowe the Challengers: privelidge to ellect the
weapon), Att that deliverye of the swordes (wch was p[er]fformed by Sr: John Heydon, It
pleased the Lord Bruce to Choose myne owne, and then past expectac[i]on, hee tould Sr: John
Heydon, that hee ffounde himselfe soe farre behinde hand, as a little of my Bloode, would
not serve his turne, And thereffore hee was nowe Resolued to haue mee alone, Because hee
knewe, (ffor I will use his owne wordes) that soe worthie a gentleman, and my ffrinde could
not endure to stande by, and see him doe that hee must to satisfye himselfe, and his honor:
Heereunto: Sr: John Heydon Replied, that such intenc[i]ons, weere Bloodye, and Butcherlye,
ffarr

unfittinge

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unfittinge soe noble a Personage, whoe should desire to bleed ffor Reputac[i]on , not ffor
lyfe, wthall Addinge hee thought himselfe Iniured, beinge com[m]e this ffarr, nowe to bee
prohibited ffrom the executeinge those honnoble: offyces hee came ffor:

The: Lord ffor Aunswere onely Reiterated his fformer Resoluc[i]on:

Whereuppon: Sr: John leavinge him the sworde hee had ellected, delivered mee theother,
wth his determinac[i]on, The wch, (not matter but manner) soe moved mee, Although to
my Remembraunce I had not of a longe tyme eaten more Liberallye then att dynner, and
thereffore unffitt ffor such an Acc[i]on, seeinge the Chirurgeons hould a wounde uppon a ffull
stomacke much more daungerous then otherwise, I requested my second to Certiffye him, I
would presentlye decyde the difference, and thereffore hee should ymediatelye meete mee on
horsbacke, onely wayted on by our Chirurgeons they beinge unarmed:

Together: wee Rode, (But one beffore theother som[m]e twelve score) aboute some two
Englishe Myles, and there passion haveinge soe weake an enemye to Assayle, as my
direction, my passion easely becam[m]e victor, and useinge hir power made mee obedyent to
hir Comaundemte: I beinge verely madde w[i]th Anger,

the Lord,

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the Lord Bruce should thirst after my lyfe, w[i]th a kind of Assurednes, seeinge I had come
soe farr, and needleslye to give him leave to Regayne his lost Reputac[i]on, I Badd him alight,
w[hi]ch w[i]th all willingnes hee quicklye graunted, and there in a Meadowe (Anckle deepe
in water att the least) Biddinge ffarewell to our dublett[es], in our shirtes began to Charge
each other, haveinge affore Commaunded our Chirurgeons to wthdrawe themselves a prettye
distaunce ffrom us, Coniureinge them besides, as they respected our favors: or their owne
saffetyes, not to stirre, Butt sufferr us to execute our pleasures, wee beinge fullye resolued,
(god fforgive us) to dispatch each other by what meanes wee could:

I: made a Thrust att him myne enemye, But was shorte, and in draweing Backe myne Arme, I receyved agreate wounde, w[i]th a Blowe thereon, wch I interpreted as a Rewarde ffor my shorte shooteinge, Butt in Revenge, I prest it to him, though I then mist him alsoe, And then receyvinge a wounde in my Right papp, w[hi]ch past levell through my Bodye, and almost to my Backe, and there wee wrestled ffor the two greatest, and dearest prises wee could ever expect, Tryall for honnor: and lyfe; In w[hi]ch wrestlinge, my hande haveinge butt an ordinarye glove on it) lost one of hir

Servant[es]

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Servant[es] (though the meanest:) w[hi]ch hunge by the skinne, And to sight yett remayneth as beffore, and I am[m]e putt in hope, one daye to haue the use alsoe, Butt att last Breathlesse (yett keepinge our houldes) there past on both sides Proposic[i]ons of quittinge each others sworde, Butt when Amitye was dead, Confidence could not lyve, and whoe should quitt ffirst, was the question, w[hi]ch on neyther parte, eyther would perffourme; Restriveinge a ffresh, w[i]th a Kicke, and a Wrinche together, I ffreed my longe Captived Weapon, w[hi]ch incontinentlye Levyeinge att his throate, (beinge Mr: still of his) I demaunded yf hee would Aske his lyfe, or yeild his sworde, wch both (though in that emyent daunger) hee Bravelye denied, to doe, My selfe beinge wounded and ffeelinge losse of Bloode (haveinge three Conduites Runninge in mee) Begann to make mee fainte, and hee Couragiouslye persistinge not to Accorde to eyther of my proposic[i]ons, Remembraunce of his fformer Bloodye desire, and ffeelinge my prsent estate, I stroke att his harte, Butt w[i]th his avoydinge mist him agayne, yett past through the Bodye, and draweing thorough my sworde, Repast it through agayne through another place, when he Cryed, Oh I am[m]e slayne, secondinge his speech, w[i]th all the fforce hee had to cast mee, Butt beinge to weake, after I had deffended his Assaulte, I easelye becam[m]e

Mr:

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Mr: of him, layeing him on his Backe, when beinge over him, I redemaunded yf hee would Request his lyfe, Butt it seemed hee prized it not att soe deare a Rate, as to bee behouldinge ffor it, Bravelye Replyeing hee scorned it, w[hi]ch Aunswere of his was soe noble, and worthie, as I protest, I could not ffinde in my harte to offerr him any more vyolence, onely keepinge him downe till att length his Chirurgeon a ffarr of Cryed out, hee would ymediatlye dye, yf his woundes were not stopped, whereuppon I asked, yf hee desired his Chirurgeon should com[m]e, w[hi]ch hee Accepted of, and soe beinge drawne a waye I never offered to take his sworde ffrom him, Accomptinge it inhumaine to Robb a dead Man ffor soe I Counted him to bee)

Thus: theis ended, I Retyred to my Chirurgeon, in whose Armes, After I had Remayned a while, ffor wante of Bloode, I lost my sight, and w[i]th all, (as I then thought) my lyfe alsoe; Butt sytronge water, and his dilligence quicklye Recovered mee, when I escaped a greate daunger, ffor my Lordes Chirurgeon, when noe Bodye dreamte of it, Ranne ffull att mee, wth his Lordes sworde and had not myne w[i]th my sworde interposed himselfe, I had been slayne by those base handes, Although the Lord Bruce, welteringe in his owne Bloode, and past expectac[i]on of lyfe, Con=

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Confformable to his fformer Courage w[hi]ch was undoubtedlye noble, Cryed out, Rascall
hould thie handes:

Soe: maye I prosper, as I haue dealt sinceerelye wth yow in this Relac[i]on, w[hi]ch I praye
yow, wth the inclosed L[ett]re, deliver to my Lord Chamb[er]leyne, And soe, {&c[es] }:
Lovyane the viijth: of September, 1613:

Yo[u]rs: {&c[es] } Edward Sackvill:

Other manuscript witnesses

- British Library, Additional MS 22587, f. 25v
- British Library, Additional MS 4149, ff. 210r–211r
- British Library, Additional MS 44848, ff. 177r–179v
- British Library, Additional MS 72407, ff. 52r–52v
- British Library, Hargrave MS 226, ff. 244r–249v
- British Library, Harley MS 4761, ff. 127r–132v
- British Library, Harley MS 6854, ff. 3r–14r
- Beinecke Library, Osborn b50, ff. 65r–76v
- Beinecke Library, Osborn b8, ff. 88x–93x
- Bodleian Library, 4o Rawl. 550, ff. 29r–v
- Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 781, ff. 67–70
- Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 82, ff. 81v–87v
- Bodleian Library, MS Willis 58, ff. 207r–v
- Cambridge University Library, MS Ee.5.23, pp408–412
- Huntington Library, EL 244
- Huntington Library, EL 245
- Inner Temple Library, Petyt MS 538/18, ff. 244r–v
- Queen's College, MS 121, f. 493
- Queen's College, MS 130, f. 118
- Queen's College, MS 32, ff. 9v–11v

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<https://mpese.ac.uk/t/BruceSackvilleChallenges1613v8.html>