

Challenges (c. April 1602)

Henry Percy, 9th Earl of Northumberland and Sir Francis Vere

Transcript

British Library, Additional MS 22591, ff. 96r–98v

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The Cobby of the Challenge, sent by the Earle of Northu[m]b[e]rland
to Sir Frauncis Veere, on St Georges daye, the last yeare
Queene Eliz: An[n]o 1602, and S[i]r Frauncis his Aunswere

The right hono[ra]ble the Earle of Northu[m]berland, hauing iust Cause / to Call S[i]r
Frauncis Veere in question/ For diuers wro[n]ges done vnto him/ As by the Reporte of
Sundrye men of good credit hee was infformed/ on Saterdaye the Foure and twentieth of
Ap[ri]l sent him / by Captayne Whittlocke A letter, w[i]th this Sup[er]scripti[on] one the Out
Syde /

To the Vallorous and Worthie Captaine S[i]r Frauncis Veere, Lord Governor
of [th]e Brill/ and Comaunder of [th]e Eng[lish] vnder [th]e States/

I tould you at Ostend, that then was noe fitt Tyme to expostulate matters / Nowe I hould it
proper to call you to an acco[m]pt For those wronges you haue done mee/ you love to take
the Ayre and to Ryde abroade / appointe therefore A Place/ and Tyme to yo[u]r likeing / that
I maye meete you / Bringe you A Freind w[i]th you, I wilbe accompanyd w[i]th another, that
shall be wittnesse / of the Thinges I will laye to yo[u]r Charge / you you Satisfie mee wee will
returne good Freindes / yf not, Wee shall doe/ as God shall putt in our Myndes/ I will eschewe
all bitter words/ as vnfit For men of our Occupation / Seeke not by Frivelous Shifftes to
divert this Course of Satisfacc[i]on For all other meanes then this, that I haue pr[e]scribed/
I shall call as an Affirmac[i]on of that I haue heard/ w[hi]ch will Cause mee to p[ro]ceed in
writting in my Selfe, as the wronge requires/ make noe Replies by Letter/ but send mee your
will by this bearer directlie that you will/ or you will not, For, From mee you shall noe more /
give noe Cause of noyses in the world/ to hinder this Cou[r]se / least you baffle your owne
reputac[i]on/ w[ha]tsoever ells I shall doe in this Iust Cause of offenc[e] Fewer wordes/ I
would not haue vsed/ to haue expressed my mynd

After he had Receyved and read this Letter/ hee asked Captayne Whitlocke / yf he had
nothing to deliver him/ by worde of Mouthe/ Hee replyed that in Case S[i]r Frau[n]cis Veere,
should offer to write an Au[n]swere by him / then the Earle of Northu[m]b[e]rland gaue him
Chardge to saye/ that, hee was Forbidden to take any Letter, but to Crave A direct Answere
by worde of mouthe/ w[hi]ch the Earle did Assure himselfe S[i]r Frauncis Veere would not
refuse to send

Then S[i]r Frau[n]cis Reading the Letter once againe/ he willed Captaine Whittlocke/ to
Signifie vnto the Earle of Northu[m]b[e]rl[and] that vpon such A Sub[jec]te as that was / hee
could not soe suddainely

giue

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giue any Answer, either by word/ or writting/ but that he would thincke of itt/ and send it by one/ Wherevpon Captaine Whitlocke asked him / yf hee should not name to the Earle of Northu[m]b[e]rland anye p[re]ffixed Tyme, Hee tould him againe/ in theis expresse words, that he would not name the Tyme pr[e]ciselye/ For in his resoluc[i]ons, when he tooke, then hee was Suddaine, and therefore hee knewe not howe soone he should be readye to au[n]swere him / Thus Captay[n]e Whittlocke parted w[i]th him

The Sundaye Morning the xxvth Captayne Ogle / came to the Earle of Northu[m]berlandes Lodging / and tould his Lordship that S[i]r Frauncis Veere/ vpon the Receipt of his Letter/ had noe disposition to laye himselfe open to the bearer thereof, As to lett him vnderstand his mynde / For that he had advised since w[i]th him selfe/ and sent him an Answer of his Letter in another / w[hi]ch Capt Ogle intreated his Lo[rdshi]pp to receyve

To this/ the Earle of Northumb[e]rland Replied, that hee was Resolved to stand to that, hee had sett downe in his Letter sente by Captaine Whittlocke/ that he would receyve noe letter, but a direct Answer/ appointing the Tyme/ and place/ where they should meete/ and bring either of them A Freinde/ to be witnesses of [tha]t should be sayde betwixt then both/ His Lo[rdshi]pp asked him w[i]thall whether hee had anye thinge to saye by worde of Mouth/ He Answerd that S[i]r Frauncis Veere/ willed him to saye / that his Lo[rdshi]pp tyed him to Conditions / that were over harde / by calling him / to any such place abroad / To w[hi]ch the Earle of Northu[m]b[e]rland/ aunswered [tha]t it was noe disparagem[en]t to S[i]r Frauncis Veere/ to saye A Truth in anye place/ or in anye Mans p[re]sence/ And if he would iustifie himselfe in anye thinge that should bee layde to his chardg, there was noe place Fitter, then such as hee required/

Captayne Ogle Answered, that S[i]r Frau[n]cis Veere, woulde bringe noe Bodye w[i]th him/ But was desirous to meet his Lo[rdshi]pp alone/ Soe that it might bee in Place/ For the respect where of there ought to bee noe Scuffelling / or drawing of Swordes /

To this the Earle of Northu[m]berland replied/ that he would not sticke w[i]th him / to meete him alone/ but to stand vpon anye respecte of place/ it was to noe purpose; For neither his owne house/ nor S[i]r Frau[n]cis Veere, nor the Courte/ nor the M[ar]ket place were fitt/ For the deciding their Controversies / and that he might be sure wheresoever hee should meete him/ he would not goe w[i]thout the Weapons he did ordinarilye weare, neith[e]r would barre [th]e vse of them / yf it were requisite/ W[i]th this/ Captaine Ogle being vpon his departe / Offered to deliver his Letter the Seconde Tyme, saying hee knewe not howe to acquite himselfe of his duty towards S[i]r Frauncis Veere/ if he did not deliver itt/ accordinge/ as hee gaue him in Charge.

The Earle of Northumberland asked him/ whether hee badd him leave ^{the letter} it in his Chamber / yf in Case, hee would not receyve it, Hee au[n]swered yes/ that hee badd him expresslye leave it/ The Earle of Northumberland badd him laye it downe vpo[n][th]e Table w[hi]ch hee had noe sooner done / But the sayd Earle/ stepping to his Sworde/ that was hanging vpon the Wall/ Hee drue it halfe out, and badd Captaine Ogle/ carrye backe the Letter / saying with his hand/ vpon his Sworde/ this is sufficient for yo[u]r discharg of duetie towards S[i]r Frauncis/ Captaine Ogle tooke [th]e Lett[e]r vpp againe/ and went downe, when he was gone soe farre as in to the Streete/ the Earle of Northu[m]b[e]rland made him to be called backe againe/ and badd him tell S[i]r Frau[n]cis/ that hee stayed in London expresslye fro[m] his Busines/ els where to haue an

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Answere/ whether he would appointe A Tyme/ & place / or nott; Captaine Ogle/ made yett the Third Tyme / an Offer to deliver Sir Frau[n]cis his letter / The Earle badd him/ hee should not offer itt anye more/ vnlesse he had A Fantasie that they two should haue A Thrust together/ And thus Captaine Ogle p[ar]ted/ with [th]e Earle the Sundaye Morning/

The same Sundaye/ after dynner Captayne Ogle came to the Earle of Northu[m]b[e]rland with A newe discourse / that S[i]r Franu[n]cis Veere was willing to Satisfye his Lo[rds]hipp But/ that he was desirous to meet him in some place in London/ each of them accompayned w[i]th A man of gravitie / and of some Rancke in the State/ And named for his choise S[i]r Edward Stafford/ or some such like, To this the Earle of Northu[m]b[e]rland replyed/ [tha]t he thought it noe fit Cou[r]se, to trouble such men/ For that knight/ and another his equall were men like enoughe to acquainte the Queene/ and Councell/ yf they sawe anye difference betwixt them that might breed further Contenc[i]on / and bringe them both vnder the power of hir ma[jes]tes Comau[n]dm[en]t, by their Infformac[i]on/ Agayne if they should not doe this/ att the least they would hinder them, From goinge together into the Feilde / yf either p[ar]tie should haue Iust Cause soe to doe/ A p[ro]ceeding/ Flatt against his meaning / Because hee desired no noyse, but privatlye to be satisfyed / as in his L[ett]res did appeare // And because he held S[i]r Frau[n]cis For A gallant Gent & A Worthie Com[m]aunder / hee was resolved to deale w[i]th him in the Stile of A Soldier/ And to bee Shorte/ Least S[i]r Frau[n]cis shoulde in his Scoffing waye saye / that he knew howe to handle A Lord/ he would not accept of States men/ But willed Captaine Ogle/ to tell him that he would be sted fast to his First designe/ to bringe him A Gent and A Soldier/ over whose Sworde hee was assured, hee had absolute Authoritie For this Tyme/ and in this matter, betwixt them two/ and could Comaund him in hono[r]able Cou[r]tisy, not to drawe/ but onelye to be wittnesse ~~{gap: illegible}~~ of their Confere[n]ce/ & appointm[en]tes/ least S[i]r Frau[n]cis/ or himselfe/ after they were p[ar]ted, should saye / more/ or lesse/ of each other/ then indeed/ had beene sayde / Such another he willed S[i]r Frau[n]cis to bring w[i]th him, such another that hee should remember once agayne [th]e Co[n]tents of his letter / to send him an absolute au[n]swere/ wheth[e]r he would do it or no/

The same Sundaye toward Evening/ For/ the last Tyme [tha]t Capt Ogle came to the Earle of Northu[m]b[e]rland/ hee brought worde that S[i]r Frau[n]cis thought it not reasonable/ to satisfye him/ after the Manner he did appointe / and therefore hee would not doe it, But/ desired ^{to} haue vnder his hand / the p[ar]ticuler Causes/ For w[hi]ch he Found himselfe agreived/ The Earle of Northu[m]b[e]rland replyed that to writte would bee tedyous/ & against his p[ro]mise/ & his L[ett]res/ and that he would not make his wronges knowne / vnlesse he might be assured of Satisfacc[i]on/ either by worde or Sworde/ in such place/ as was fitt For A noble man/ that p[ro]fest Armes to receyve it in That he should tell S[i]r Frau[n]cis how by this refussall/ hee was throughlye perswaded/ he had done him those wrongs/ w[hi]ch hee meant to laye to his Chardge/ that he would laye vpp this Iniurioulye dealing in his harte/ and right himselfe thereaft[e]r, as he shall thinke fit

The matter resting thus/ after three dayes/ on Thirsday following / S[i]r Noell Caroone/ Agent/ For the States/ & cheife dealer For the Businesse/ S[i]r Frauncis Veere hath now in hand, did acquainte the Queene/ and Cou[n]cell/ w[i]th theis differences

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and Suddainelye it pleased hir hig[h]nes/ to send an honorable person to the Earle of No[rt]humb[er]land/ and to laye A Comaund vpon him/ to Forbeare anye Acc[i]on against S[i]r Frau[n]cis Veere, at that Instant imployed in her Service/ w[hi]ch hee in all humility did accept/ of making noe Reckoning of anye thinge touching his owne p[ar]ticuler/ in respect of her Ma[jes]tes Service/ and Com[m]au[n]dem[en]t Hee onelye made the Companye there present to vnderstand, that hee referred himselfe to all men of Iudgment, that made p[ro]fession of honor And that he hoped they would not blame him/ yf that in Attending his Satisfacc[i]on/ hee p[ro]tested that S[i]r Frau[n]cis Veere was A knave/ and Coward/ that in Flearing & gearinge like A Com[m]on Baffoone would wrong men of all Condi[i]ons and had neither the honestie / nor the Courage to satisffy anye

Sir Fra: Veere his Answere to [th]e Earle of Northu[m]b[er]la[n]ds Challenge

The Earle of Northumberland/ making Profession/ to haue S[i]r Frau[n]cis Veere vpo[n] divers Sinister Reportes/ made by base and Factious Persons / where hee might haue drawne from S[i]r Frau[n]cis Veere/ Satisfacc[i]on in the matters hee were to obiect/ either by word or Sworde/ w[i]thout anye hinderance/ or daunger/ of the Lawes/ neu[er] called him to Accompte / or Charged him directlye w[i]th any matter/ thoughe S[i]r Frau[n]cis Veere did offer to giue him Satisfacc[i]on / know-inge him selfe Cleere From wronging the Earle/ in his Reputaci[on], thoughe hee must, and will Confesse / vpon the Certayne knowledg hee had of the Contynuau[n]ce and Favour, the Earle shewed to certaine meane p[er]sons / And the Contentment hee tooke in [th]e bitt[er]nes of their Backbitting of S[i]r Frau[n]cis Veere, [tha]t he grew into Contempte of this humor of [th]e Earles / & afforded him litle respecte/ Their First meetinge in England was in the Cou[r]te/ the 13: Aprill, Sir Frau[n]cis Veere being sent to her Ma[jes]tye by the States as a publique p[er]son/ vpon verye waightie/ and important Affayres where the Earle passing by S[i]r Frau[n]cis Veere/ asked softlye if hee went to London that night/ Wherevnto S[i]r Frau[n]cis Veere answered he knewe not it being knowne to A Gent of greate Worthe in Courte / that S[i]r Frau[n]cis Veere, attended [th]e Com[m]inge of A Cou[n]cellor to Courte/ throughe whose handes his busynes must passe/ And was determined if he came Earlye, after Speech w[i]th him / to goe to Londo[n] yf late to haue stayd in Cou[r]t [tha]t night

The Earle made noe Replye/ but passed/ Wherevpon[n] Sir Frau[n]cis Veere followed him/ asking him / if he would Com[m]au[n]d him anye Servece/ if he went to London / To w[hi]ch the Earle made noe au[n]swere at all / S[i]r Frau[n]cis Veere/ whoe tooke this/ as the Earle meante/ whoe Since confessed to Captayne Ogle / [tha]t hee purposed to sett vpon S[i]r Frauncis Veere vpon [th]e Waye/ For sakinge his Former Resoluc[i]on of Attending the Arryvall of the honorable parsonage/ passed towards his Lodginge/ And on the Greene/ before the Courte/ hee sawe the Earle/ And soe soone as his Coache was made readye/ S[i]r Frau[n]cis Went to London and Found noe Encou[n]ter/ Here vpon A Rumou[r] was spread,

both

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both in Courte and Cittie/ that the Earle had Challenged Sir Frau[n]cis Veere / the 24: Aprill in the Evening/ about sixe of the Clocke/ One Captayne Whitlocke came vnto S[i]r Frau[n]cis

Veeres Chamber, and after some Speeches of other Matters/ hee drew a L[ett]re out of his Pockett / and sayd the Earle sent it to him/ Sir Frau[n]cis Veere tooke the same, and read it twice/ Whitlocke required an Answer/ S[i]r Frau[n]cis told him/ the matter was of a greate Moement / to be suddainelye au[n]swered / Hee asked when the Earle might Expect an au[n]swere/ S[i]r Frau[n]cis Replyed, that his Speede would be more then ordinarye / The same Evening he Framed his Au[n]swere/ but wanting A Convenient Messing[e]r, For he was to choose one/ to whom hee might Communicate his L[ett]re, it was not sent vntill the next morning / and then he gave the same to Captaine Ogle his Leivten[an]t Collonell/ willinge him, yf the Earle refused the L[ette]re, to deliver by worde/ the co[n]tents thereof w[hi]ch was as Followeth

Your Lo[rdshi]pp required in the L[ette]re sent mee by Captayne Whittlocke/ that I should retourne A direct au[n]swere by word of Mouthe/ to the Contents/ w[hi]ch at the Instant I forbore/ the matter being of Moement/ and not to be resolved of soe suddainelye/ and nowe For good respects I Chose rather to let yo[u]r Lo[rdshi]pp knowe my Mynde / by writting/ then by anye Mans reporte/ yf yo[u]r Lo[rdshi]pps meaning bee/ yf your Lo[rdshi]pp meaninge be by the meeting you appoynte, to drawe A Verball satisfac[i]o[n] From mee/ in the obiections you are to make / The manner of the Meeting in my opinion is not the best/ in regard that Truth delivered/ where Swordes might bee drawne / is subiect to harde Construction/ w[hi]ch I desire to avoyde/ yo[u]r Lo[rdshi]pp shall therefore be pleased to nominate some Fitt place, for com[m]unicac[i]on whether I will repayre/ w[i]th much willingnes to Cleere my Selfe / of haueing given yo[u]r Lo[rdshi]pp the First Cause of Offe[n]ce For Truthes Sake/ For the respect of yo[u]r greatnes required & for that/ I disperse private Combatinge/ especiallye at this Tyme, [tha]t I am engaged & in soe gr[ea]t, & importa[n]t an Actio[n] as yo[u]r Lo[rdshi]pp knoweth

This Cou[r]se reiected by yo[u]r Lo[rdshi]pp I shall not leave to follow, the occasio[n] [tha]t drew mee w[i]th the poore Trayne attending mee/ ordinarilye / Confident, that yo[u]r Lo[rdshi]pp will attempt noething vnfitting yo[u]r Selfe vppo[n] mee/ that haue allwayes lived in good reputac[i]on/ and am discended From A Graund Father of your Owne Rancke/ Fro[m] my Lodging in Aldersgate Street 25: of Aprill

Frauncis Veere/

Where of the Superscription was/ To the right hono[ur]able The Earle of Northu[m]b[er]land k[nig]ht of [th]e most Noble order of the Garter /

The Earle refused the L[ett]re, And Captaine Ogle/ layeing the same/ On the Boord / The Earle tooke his Sworde &c And Capt Ogle/ as I had instructed him / tooke the L[ett]re/ and delivered the Contents by worde / The Earle replyed that there was no place pr[i]viledged From drawing of Swordes/ But the greene Cha[m]b[er] of pr[e]sence/ the Garden; or the Markett place / and that theis were noe places to Speake in/ And w[i]th this Captayne Ogle Retu[r]ned to S[i]r Frau[n]cis Veere/ whoe said to Captaine Ogle/ that to him / all places were alike / yf the distinction then / was

proper

proper For Treatie/ and expostulac[i]on/ and that it was Indifferent to him/ where it were/ and what Companye on the Earles parte were pr[e]sent/ Soe/ hee might heere some Gent

quallified/ Such as S[i]r Edward Stafford/ to be A wittnes what should passe/ W[i]th this Answere Captaine Ogle returned to the Earle/ the Third Tyme / to Signifie vnto him / that since his Lordshipp would accept of Noe in different & Co[n]venient place of meeting / For Comunicac[i]on / that S[i]r Frau[n]cis was resoved/ not to satisfye in the manner hee required/ And moreov[e]r to lett him vnderstand / that where / and wheresoever [th]e Earle should meete w[i]th S[i]r Frau[n]cis Veere / where there were noe priuledge of drawing of Swordes/ and should expostulate w[i]th S[i]r Frauncis, hee would never au[n]swere him to his demaundes/ but willinglie laye his hande on his Sworde/ And Soe this Negotiac[i]on of Capt Ogle bracke of.

With in some Fewe dayes/ her ma[jes]tye had knowledge/ w[ha]t had passed ~~{gap: illegible}~~ it being divulged by the Earles Followers/ that he had sent S[i]r Frau[n]is Veere A Challenge/ Wherevpon the 30: of the Foresayde Monthe/ her Ma[jes]tye sent Comau[n]dem[en]t vnto the Earle/ not to haue to doe w[i]th S[i]r Frau[n]is Veere/ Then the Earle as by Circumstances appeare/ haueing brought Matters to the passe hee desired published the manner of his p[ro]ceedings/ in the Englishe Frenche/ and Italian/ whereof S[i]r Frau[n]is Veere could nott procure anye Coppe/ till some Fewe days before his dep[ar]ture, nor Answere the same soe pr[e]sentlye / as/ hee willinglye would for his Affayres otherwise/ And For that in the same/ the Earle went beyond the true groundes of Iudgment and honour/ Sir Frau[n]cis Veere / thought it necessarye to send to the Earle / This L[ett]re Following/ w[hi]ch he offered to the world / w[i]th the reste of his Proceedings to be Iudged of /

Because I refused to meete you / vppon yo[u]r p[er]emptorye and Foolish Sum[m]ons/ you Conclude mee/ in A discourse sente abroade vnder yo[u]r Name/ to be A knave/ A Coward/ and A Baffoone/ wherein you haue p[ro]voked mee/ to sett asyde all respect to you p[er]son / and to saye / that æ you are a most lyinge/ & vnwoethie Lord/ you are bounde, by her Ma[jes]tes Comaundem[en]t not to assayle mee, And I by the Busynes Com[m]itted to mee/ not to seeke you/ when you shall be Free / as God shall make vs meete/ I will maynetayne it/ w[i]th my Sworde /

Frauncis Veere/

Examined w[i]th the Coppye, w[hi]ch Sir Frauncis Veere Sent vnto mee/ at the verrye First daye / taken Forthe of it, w[hi]ch was even vpon his dep[ar]ture/ out of London/ For [th]e Lowe Cou[n]tryes/ Soe went, all the Waye by Land/ From Londo[n] to Thames/ where hee tooke Shipping/ Mr White his man brought it vnto mee/

Other manuscript witnesses

- British Library, Additional MS 11308, ff. 86r–96v
- British Library, Additional MS 44848, ff. 270r–276r
- British Library, Additional MS 34218, ff. 33r–34v
- British Library, Egerton MS 2592, ff. 1r–v
- British Library, Harley MS 532, ff. 6r–9v
- Houghton Library, fMS Eng 1206
- Huntington Library, EL 404
- Somerset Archives, DD\AH/51/1, item 6

Manuscript Pamphleteering in Early Stuart England

<https://mpese.ac.uk/t/PercyVereChallenges1602.html>