

## Letter to the Mayor of Marlborough (1614)

Oliver St John

### Transcript

Norfolk Record Office, HMN 7/307, 772X8, ff. 175r–175v

#### 175r

This kind of Beneuolence is against lawe, Reason & Religeon

[*Left margin:* Against lawes ] The lawe is in [th]e statutes called Magn(-)a Carta .9. H. 3. Cap. 29. That no such free man bee anie way destroyed but by [th]e lawes of [th]e lande/.

[*Left margin:*2] Secondlie (beside [tha]t [th]e sayd Statute of Magna Charta is by all Princes tyme established & confirmed) [tha]t is in this especiall Cause of voluntarie or fre graunts marked and decreed .25. Edw .1. Ca .6. That none such be drawn into Castome, And. Ca .6. [tha]t henceforth be taken noe such Aides, taskes, free graunts or prises but by assent of all [th]e Relme, and for [th]e good of [th]e same, And in primo Ric .3. Ca .2. That the Subiectes & Comones of this Realme from hencefourth shall in noe wise be charged by anie Charge or Imposic[i]on callede a Beneuolece or anie suchlike Charge, And [th]at such Exactiones called a Beneuolence shalbe damned & adnulled for euer/.

[*Left margin:* Against Reason ] It is not onelie without but against Reason [tha]t the Com[m]ones in these seueralls and p[ar]ticuleres should be made reliueres & supplires of his Ma[jes]ties wantes whoe neither knowe his wants nor [th]e som[m]es of monie [tha]t be this waie raised to supplye [th]e same/.

[*Left margin:*2] Secondlie it is against reason, That [th]e p[ar]ticuler seuerall Com[m]ons distracted should oppose their Iudgmentes and distruc[i]on to [th]e Iudgments and distraction of [th]e wisdomes of [th]e land assembled in p[ar]liment. whoe ther haue denied ani such Aide/. or anie such aide

[*Left margin:* Against Religeon ] If argueth in us want of [tha]t lawe & due respecte of our soueringue Lorde and kinge, w[hi]ch <sup>ought</sup> to be {staire} <sup>in</sup> euerie of vs towards each other, w[hi]ch is to staye euerie one whome whome wee see fallinge and to reduce [th]e Errant, what p[ro]speritie can ther be expected to befall either o[u]r kinge or nac[i]on, when [th]e kinge shall happilie of ignorance or (as I hope) out of for<sup>e</sup>etflness & vnheedious comytt soe great a sinne against his God As is [th]e violating of his greate and {solempue} Oathe taken at his Coronac[i]on for the may[n]taynence of [th]e lawes Liberties & customes of this Noble Realme, And his Subiecte, som for f{-}eare, some in pride, som to pleas<sup>e</sup>{-} others shall Ioine hands to forward soe vnhappie ann acheiuement.

#### 175v

Can he anie way offend [th]e dyuine Ma[jes]tie whome he hathe in vocated, as alsoe ca[n]n hee give annother H: [th]e 4th if such {a<sup>u</sup>one} <sup>an one</sup> sholde rise vpp (which god forbide) a greater aduantage? Let his Articles put vp in p[ar]liment against R. [th]e 2. be looked on, {it}[i]t will appeare that [th]e breache of [th]e lawes, Infringinge[th]e libertes & failing in this his Oath were the maine blemishes ~~and fayling~~ when w[hi]ch he could spott and distayne

[th]e honor of [tha]t good and gentel Prince, whoe indeede {was} rather by otheres abused, then of himselfe anie way mischeuouslie disposed/.

[*Left margin:2*] Secondlie as verie irreligeouslie & uncharitablie w<sup>h</sup>ee helpe forwarde [th]e kinges Ma[jes]tie in [tha]t greeuous sinn of p[er]iurye, Soe into what a hellish danger wee prolonge our selues (euen soe manie of us as doe contribute) [i]s tabelarned out of [th]e seuerall Curses & Sentences of Excommicatione giuen out agaynst all such Giueres, and Namelie [th]e .2. followeinge, viz. [th]e greate curse giuin out – 51 – H – 3 against all breakers of [th]e libertes & Customes of [th]e Realme of England, w[i]th those albettores, Counsalors and {ey} {es} wherein by [tha]t sentence of Boniface Archb[i]sho[p] of {Cahto} & [th]e cheefe p[ar]t of all [th]e {-} <sup>then</sup> Bishopes of this land they are ipso facto Exco[m]iat And [tha]t of .25. Ed. 1 denonced Imediatlie uppon [th]e Acts made against such Beneuolenc or free grantes and imposiones had & taken w[i]thout Co[m]mon assent, w[hi]ch becaus it is not soe longe as [tha]t former, I will sett downe as Jo[h]n bookes deliuer the same ./ In the name of etc.

### Other manuscript witnesses

- British Library, Additional MS 40838, ff. 19v–20v
- British Library, Additional MS 4108, ff. 50v–51v
- British Library, Additional MS 44848, ff. 95v–97r
- British Library, Additional MS 44848, ff. 305r–306r
- British Library, Additional MS 48044, ff. 305r–306r
- British Library, Additional MS 69394, ff. 29r–30r
- British Library, Harley MS 6255, pp.183–190
- British Library, Sloane MS 1856, ff. 1r–2v
- British Library, Harley MS 4264, ff. 92r–94v
- Bodleian Library, MS Carte 103, ff. 8r–9v
- Bodleian Library, MS Eng. hist. d. 89, ff. 499–505
- Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 82, ff. 139v–142r
- Folger Shakespeare Library, MS V.a.121, ff. 74r–75r
- Folger Shakespeare Library, MS V.b.277, ff. 70r–71v
- Huntington Library, EL 2506
- Huntington Library, HM 213, pp153–160
- Queen's College, MS 121, ff. 466–467
- Queen's College, MS 130, ff. 73–74
- Senate House, University of London, MS 308, ff. 73x–76x
- The National Archives, SP 14/78, /23
- Woburn Abbey, MS 192, pp82–90

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<https://mpese.ac.uk/t/StJohnLetterMayorMarlborough1614.html>