

Challenges (c. April 1602)

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

Transcript

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

96r

The Coppy 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[ril] 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 vnfitt For men of our Occupation / Seeke not by Frivelous Shiffes 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

96v

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[rds]hip to receyve

To this/ the Earle of Northumb[e]rland Replyed, 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[rds]hip 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[rds]hip 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[rds]hip 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 replyed/ 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

97r

Answered/ 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 replied/ [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]ties 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 privatelye 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 Authortie 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 replied 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

and

97v

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]ties 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 Answer 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 Rumor was spread,

both

98r

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 twise/ 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 dispipe private Combatinge/ especialye at this Tyme, [tha]t I am ingaged & in soe gr[ea]t, & importa[n]t an Actio[n] as yo[u]r Lo[rdshi]p 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 retorned 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]emtorye 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 verye 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>