

Nicholas Payne

A true relation of a brave exploit . . . in taking of the
castle of Dover . . . on the 21 of August, 1642

London

1642

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A True
RELATION
OF

A brave Exploit performed by
Captain RICHARD DAWKS, in
taking of the Castle of
DOVER

For the King and Parliament,
and the safety of the whole Kingdom, the quiet
of the Town of Dover, and all those parts of
the Country thereabouts, on the 21 of
AUGUST, 1642.

Which was never conquered or taken before, but by
that worthy Gent', Captain Rich: Dawks aforementioned.
AND

Set forth by NICHOLAS PAYNE,
an Inhabitant of Dover, for satisfaction of the
whole Kingdom: And by the consent of both the
Honorable Houses of Parliament:

They have sent thither to be Lieutenant of that Castle, the Noble
and worthy Knight, Sir EDWARD BOYSE, one
of the Members of the House of COMMONS.

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A true Relation of a brave Exploit
performed by Captain Richard Dawks, in taking
of the Castle of Dover for the King and
Parliament, &c.

Courteous Reader, first observe with me the
situation of this Castle, which will make
the exploit in taking of it to be the better
judged of.

This Castle stands upon a very high Hill,
which way soever you come to it, and joyns fast upon
the Sea; and when you approach this Castle, there is
round about it, a wonderfull deep ditch before you
come to the wals, which ditch is so deep, and the bank
before the wall so steep and high, that you can very
hardly in any place of it attain to the walls of the ca=
stle, but you will be forced to crawl upon your hands
and your feet: And upon the top of this steep ditch,
the wall is of a very great height round about, so dif=
ficult it is by any part towards the land to enter; and
towards the sea it is an exceeding high and steep cliff,
so that it is impossible to enter that waves: And this
castle is as it were the Key of the Kingdom, in that
place, commanding both sea and land to obey, and in
this castle the whole country did ever confide in, to de=
fend them from forrain Enemies, and home-bred Re=
bellion.

This castle and place of so great consequence, hath for these many years been very much neglected by those that have had the charge of it committed unto them,

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insomuch as that all that did live in those parts, and all that knew the castle, and the consequence of it, were afraid of some bad design to be wrought upon this Kingdom at that place, either by a forrain or home-bred Enemy; For I must tell you, it being neglected so long, it was able to make no defence to seaward against a forrain Enemy; but the ditch and steep bank round about the castle being so difficult to get up to the walls, 20 men within the walls might keep out 1000; and as now it is, it doth command the Town of Dover, and two other Forts adjoining. And in this castle Sir John Ipsley being sometime Lieutenant, he left there between 40 or 50 pieces of Ordnance and Canon, all well mounted upon good carriages: Also, he left there a brave Armory for about 500 or 600 men, and 160 barrels of powder, with all other Ammunition fit for a place of so great a consequence; which was a great comfort to the country, and an honour to our Nation.

Since whose time, the Arms, Powder, and other Ammunition, is all gone, and no man can give an account what is become of it, and all the Ordnance in the castle dismounted; yet His Majesty still put to a great charge for to maintain and keep a Garrison there.

Now the Honorable Houses of Parliament well knowing the consequence of this castle, and the dangerous of the Malignant and seditious Sect, Sir Edward Dearing had made in those parts, were willing and desirous to have taken in this castle, and to put the same in some safe and good hand, that they and the Kingdom might confide and trust in; and to that purpose about six weeks ago last past, or thereabouts, a Commission was granted to a Gentleman of that country, to take it

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in for the King and Parliament, whose name I here forbear, but he found it to be so difficult a thing to do, that he gave over his proceeding in that businesse: And Captain Dawks coming up to London about his affairs and businesse, and meeting with some Parliament men of his acquaintance, who did ask him if it might be possible to take in the castle of Dover, for the safety of the King and Parliament, & to be put into some safe hand, that the whole Kingdom might confide and trust in; this castle being a place that was never conquered or taken before. Captain Dawks replied, and told them, If it were their Honorable pleasure to have it taken in, if they pleased for to give him a Warrant or Commission to take it in for the King and Parliament, he would adventure his life upon that service for the good of the whole Kingdom: And upon this valiant Resolution a Commission was granted to captain Dawks to take in this castle, with all the other Forts that the said castle did command.

And Captain Dawks having received this Commission from the Lord Generall, did upon the 21 day of August, 1642. about two of the clock in the morning at the North side of the castle, enter himself and ten men more to take the same Castle, and being all

gotten over the walls with a scaling ladder, did about four a clock walke about the castle, and finding all those that kept house within the castle walls to be safe in bed.

Then himself and the other ten men did repart to the castle gates, to see what guard was kept there, and there they found but four men with their swords whom he disarm'd, and put them into the Porters-lodge, and

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about two hours after this, the other Souldiers that did lodge within the castle being risen from bed and come abroad, as he met with them he disarm'd them, and put them in to the other four at the gate, and having disarm'd them all, Captain Dawks repaired to the Gentleman Porters lodging and found him in bed, and knocking at his door, the Gentleman Porter asked them what they would have, captain Dawks told him the keyes of the castle, and that he had a commission from the Honourable house of Parliament so to do, the Gentleman Porter at the first refused to open his door; But captain Dawks being no wayes dismayed at his answer, and resolved to go forwards with what he had begun, and to have the keyes, presently begun to shove open the door upon him, which the Gentleman Porter perceiving, cryed out to him to hold his hand, and hee would come to them, and immediatly he came to them, and desired captain Dawks to show his commission, which captain Dawks did, the Gentleman Porter at the first made light of it, and said that for ought that he did know it might be made under a hedge; captain Dawks being very angry at those words, forc'd him presently to deliver the keyes to him: having now gotten the keyes and possession, he put out all the Souldiers that did belong to the castle for some short time out of the gates, and then searching to see what Powder and Ammunition he could finde in the castle in the store houses, and after good search could not finde one pound of Powder in all the castle, which made him very much to wonder.

Now he hoped that some good and well-affected people in Dover would have been ayding and assisting

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to him about his good work, considering the dangerousnesse of these times; but the chiefest sort of the people in that Town, and the greatest number being so seasoned by Sir Edward Dearings circuit, that in stead of ayding or assisting of him about this businesse, they threaten to raise the Trained Band upon him, and to starve them out if they would not deliver the Castle back again, and they took such ayd away as was sent to him by some good and well-affected people of the Town, as powder, shot, and match, and some other Arms, not so much as his wearing cloaths were suffered to be carried to him, and to shew their indignation against Captain Dawks for this work, a Captain whose name I here forbear, set two pieces of Ordnance bolt upright to shoot into the Castle or the Air, thinking to finde him there, and thus for the space of four houres Captain Dawks was faine with ten men for to stand upon his guard with the Malignant parties.

At length the Noble Earl of Warwick understand=

ding what Captain Dawks had done, sent unto him 40 men with Musquets all very well provided, and also sent him some victuall, such as at present he could spare: And the Noble Earl hearing that the major part of the Town of Dover, to be so ill inclined to that good work, sent expresly to the worthy Citie of Canterbury, requesting them to afford Captain Dawks some aid from them; who no sooner had notice what was done by him, but presently the Drum beat about the Citie for Voluntiers to go to Dover Castle to aid Captain Dawks, and in a very short time there came in 160 able men, being all men of good fashion, who the next morning marched to Dover Castle, with their

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drums beating, and their colours flying, to aid Captain Dawks, and that worthy Citie of Canterbury, the better to encourage Captain Dawks, and to enable him, to defend him from all that should oppose him, sent along with their Souldiers a cartload of powder and other Ammunition, and also the Noble Earl of Warwick hath sent to captain Dawks more powder and Ammunition; And now Captain Dawks begins to take comfort, and Dearings faction in Dover are now afraid that they shall not rule as formerly they have done, and captain Dawks to get victuals for his honest Souldiers, like a brave Gentleman doth advance his own mony to provide fatt Oxen, and fatt sheep, with bacon, butter, cheese, yea bread, beer, and all things else that's fit for men, likewise for timber he doth not spare to mount his guns to put our enemies in feare, so now by Gods good blessing and Captaine Dawks brave and valiant adventure, that place is now in safe security to the good of the whole Kingdom.

FINIS.

<March 2013>