The Copy of a LETTER presented BY A MEMBER of the COMMONS House of Parliament Concerning DIVERS PASSAGES at PORTSMOUTH

Read in the said House, the 17th day of August, 1642.

Ordered that the said letter be printed and published: *H.Elsynge, Cler. Parl. D. Com*.

*London* printed by *L N* and *I F* for *Edward Husbands* and *John Frederick*, and are to be sold at their shops in the middle Temple, and the Kings-head in Fleetstreet.

*August 19.1642*

The Copy of the Letter from Portsmouth

Sir, I sent you a letter by the foot-post which I hope came to your hands on last Saturday, wherein was contained all or most part of *Portsmouth* news, and now I herein send you all or most of what has happened since thereabouts: The Colonel having caused the Bridge called *Portsbridge* 3 miles from *Portsmouth* entring into the Isle of *Portsea*, (in which *Portsmouth* stands) to be made secure with a frame of timber work very strong, to hinder all from passing that way but he whom he pleased, and having built a little Fort or Bulwork of earth a little within that Bridge, and planted four pieces of Ordnance there to defend the Bridge, and having placed 10 or 12 horsemen there to watch there day and night, did on Wednesday last carry back to *Portsmouth* 3 of his Ordnance, and the fourth also about a mile, but the wheels broke, so that he was fain to leave that piece in the highway, all that he did fear the the Troopers which came from *London*, would by force or some strategem get them away, and then make use of them to offend the Colonel: yet when the pieces were gone he still kept horsemen day and night at the Fort, and the timber work upon the Bridge, to secure it as formerly, and all Wednesday Thursday & Friday last, he caused divers hundreds of cattell, sheep, and swyne in the fruitfull Isle of *Portsea* to be to be brought into *Portsmouth* there , whether they were fat or lean, to be all killed and salted up, and caused every house in that Isle to be searched and all manner of provisions to be taken away from the pwners, as corn, meal, flower, beefe, bacon, bread, butter , cheese, eggs, and all their poultry and ducks, not leaving half loaves of bread, nor pieces of bread, nor pieces of cheese, and drove away all the cattle what soever, to the great terrour of all the people, especially women and children, causing poor and rich to come away, and beg about for bread to keep them alive, and he made such men as he could find, help to drive their own cattell and carry their own provisions into *Portsmouth,* and then kept many of them by force, but the Kings Ships as soone as they heard of the cruel intentions, landed some men at the East side of the Island, and two pieces of Ordnance, and thereby kept off the horsemen, whilst the ship-men got over many women and children into *Hayling* Island and about 100 cattell and about 200 sheep, they got ropes over the cattels heads and made them swim over after the boats: Upon Friday last in the afternoon, I went purposely to *Portsdown* to see and heare what I could, at which place all this was credibly told me, and I then went as neer the Fort as I durst, which was dangerous to be fetched in by the horsemen that were guarding it, in regard all the Troopers were then in *Havant* Town & in *Southwick*, 4 miles distant where they lay, and came not abroad all that afternoon, by reason of the extraordinary rain which happened that afternoon: if the weather had been fair, as I was told in the presence of the Councell of war at *Southwick*,the Troopers had attempted to have taken the Fort that afternoon, and then I had seen it: but in the night time, that night some Troopers went down to the Fort , and were troubled to get down the timer-work, it being so strong, and whilst they were getting it down the horsemen rode all away from the Fort, and the Troopers afetr them, but could takwe but one of the men, and two horses, so as now the Troopers have the Fort, and have set there four pices of Ordnance, and this blocked up that passage, so as the Colonell and his company are all within the walls of *Portsmouth* as it were in a pound, not daring to encounter the Troopers; Although they last Saturday went almost to the Town Gates, to try if any dared to come forth to them, the Colonell sent out two pieces of Ordnance charged with musquet bullets, and two gunners to guard the piece with the broken whell, that the Troopers might not get it away: But on Saturday in the afternoon a valiant Trooper alone adventured to go and neer them, and cunningly got on the backside of the men, who could not suddenly turn about both or one piece, so as the Trooper shot off his Carbine at one of them with a brace of bullets, and spoiled his running away, for he fell down dead, I believe that this day they will attempt to take a Castle near *Portsmouth* called *Southsea* Castle, half a mile from *Portsmouth*, and make no question of taking it, and then to make use of it to shoot into *Portsmouth.* Master *Lukener*, Master *Bellingham, Christopher Bird*, and others of the County of *Suffolk*, I believe wish they were at *Chichester* again, every night some of of *Portsmouth* souldiers and gunners get away down the walls and come to the Troopers, utterly disliking the Colonells cause and usage of the Inhabitants of *Portsea* Island, by taking away their cattell and provisions,& c. And yet scorn to be thought cowards, for they offer to go in the forefront, and in most danger with the Troopers in any service whatsoever. Since *Chichester* men came to *Portsmouth* there hath been harder usage of people by the Colonell and his company than before, and some think by their or some of their advices, a young woman in *Portsmouth* being great with child, who got leave to come last Friday out of *Portsmouth*, and whom I met by the way, reports; that one of the *Chichester* men, but not Mr. Recorder *Lukener*, nor Mr. *Bellingham*, said to her that he would not have her go, because if the Town should be so put to it, as to want victuals, then that in her belly would eat as sweet as a young sucking pig by which we may guesse that they are inclinable to shew as much mercie as the Rebells in *Ireland*, but I hope that God will prevent all their wicked purposes. The Troopers I believe resolve to banish all fear of danger, and within fewer days, though with losse of men, to adventure to scale the Walls, and take the Town, and prevent the doing of any more mischief by them in the Town to the poor Inhabitants or any others: there is no great strength in the Town of men, & but 80 or 90 horses, there being about 240 horses, Troopers, and 500 foot, by the Parliamenst directions; but the Town is extraordinarily well provided with powder, and shot, and dyet, by reason of the fetching in of so much from the Inhabitants, there was a horse and a man taken on Saturday last about five of the clock at *Havant*, going to *Portsmouth*, with a suit of cloaths, for one Mr.*Bellingham* in *Portsmouth,* but not *Bellingham* of *Chichester,* yet his kinsman, in which cloaths, between the outside and inside were sowed up 16 Letters, and about that time our Troopers took a man, and a horse, and severall Letters going out of *Portsmouth* from the Lord *Wentworth* there, and divers other Letters are taken, so as the bottome of their plots I hope discovered: This morning one of the Isle of *Wight* was with me, and told me, All of their people there stand right for the King and Parliament, except the Captains of their Castles and some of the Gentry; one Sir *Robert Dillington* there would have sent so much corn to *Portsmouth* but was prevented by Master *Buckley* a Justice of peace there, who stands very right for the King and Parliament; there is in the Island much fear of the Captains of the Castles, whether they will prove right or not; they are such men as Col: IgoringI is; the peolple are in great fear of them, and wish that the Earl of *Pembroke* were come, and that they might Muster, &tc.

15 *August*: 1642

FINIS

17 *Augusti* 1642

Ordere that this letter shall be forthwith Printed and published.

H.Elsynge, Cler. Parl. D. Com.