

# LETTERS

Francis Bassett (–1645), Sherriff of Cornwall (1642–1645)

to Ann Trelawny Bassett, his wife

15 July 1644

Here is the woefulest spectacle my eyes yet ever looked on; the most worn and weak pitiful creature in the world, the poor Queen, shifting for one hour's life longer. Here is also Prince Maurice, but all the soldiers are fled from us. Essex is at this time at Barnstable, or near it, where there is at present great rebellion... Farewell sweet. Bless Tehidy. God bless us ever, sweet love.

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Lostwithiel (Cornwall), Saturday—sunset, 1644

This messenger will tell you how affairs go here and in these land parts. Here is infinite want of match. For God's sake, send to Mr. Lane as soon as this comes to your hands and cause him with all speed to press horses and bring away six hundred weight of match from the Mount<sup>1</sup> to this army, first to Lostwithiel and thence to the army, which I hope in Jesus Christ will so bless us as we shall be free and merry and joyful again in Cornwall.

My Lord Mohun has lent me £100. I trust my friend Rolle will do at least the like friendship, and I am sure you will procure what possibly you can. If it be but six-pence, my love is just and full to you still. Pray let Jack write to me truly what match he has in all; and I conjure you both to get as much as possible to be made with all possible haste, at what cost soever. Send to Fubbs for all his oakum.

I write in as much haste as ever in my life. I love you and Jane, and John, and Bess. God give me good news of you all, and of poor Punch. Dear heart, love still your own hearty part.

I thank Christ I am very gracious with King and Prince. I hope with all. Thanks to our Jesus.

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After the success near Lostwithiel, 2 September 1644

L– is the happy messenger to the West of Cornwall. Peace, and I hope perpetual. Sad houses I have seen many, but a joyfuller, pleasanter day never than this. Send the money, as much and as soon as you can. Send to all our friends at home, especially, this good news. I write this on my saddle. Every friend will pardon the illness of it, and you chiefly, my perfect joy.

The King and army march presently for Plymouth. Jesus give the King it and all. The King, in the hearing of thousands, as soon as he saw me in the morning cried to me “Dear Mr. Sheriff, I leave Cornwall to you safe and sound.”

R. Polwhele, ed. *Traditions and Recollections: Domestic, Clerical, and Literary* (London: John Nichols, 1826), I:17–20.

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<sup>1</sup> Saint Michael's Mount, an island village owned by Bassett