

TAKING OF DEAL CASTLE

Colonel Nathaniel Rich (c. 1620–1701)

to William Lenthall (1591–1662), Speaker of the House of Commons (1640–1655, 1659–1660)

Deal, 25 August 1648

Since the surrender of Walmer Castle, there has been no time lost to use all means possible to reduce Deal Castle, which was thought fit to be attempted first, because the strongest; the defendants of which were more numerous and active than those in Sandown, of which I hope now to give you also a good account in few days.

After many dangerous and difficult approaches upon a stony beach, where no less than six or seven pieces of ordnance, within pistol-shot of our work till it was perfected, annoyed us, all hopes of relief being cut off from the besieged, though in view of the whole fleet, it has pleased God to give this place in our hands, though very little necessitated to surrender, we finding in the castle a good proportion of powder, match, corn, meal, butter, cheese, beef, pork, peas, etc.; they wanting nothing but beer, instead of which they had enough of wine and water. The conditions which are given them I here send by the bearer, Lieutenant-Colonel Axtell, which are not limitation but to the soldiery.

The castle is much torn and spoiled with the granadoes, as Walmer was, or rather more; the repair of which, as well as that of Walmer, I submit it to you whether necessary before the winter come on.

In this and the other leaguer at Walmer, the bearer, Lieutenant-Colonel Axtell, has been extraordinary active and diligent and will, if your leisure permits, give you account of the several provisions we find here; and that this castle wanted not men to defend it, there being no less than two hundred and upwards that marched out.

I have formerly written to the committee at Derby House to take course for repairing-money for Walmer Castle, not thinking fit to trouble your more weighty affairs upon so slender a thing, I being something more than ordinary concerned in its accommodation since the General has pleased to commit it to my care at present. £300 will complete it. I fear £500 will scarce render this in so good a condition as it was before it was besieged.

The remaining castle (though I suppose upon some grounds will not hold out long yet) can be of little use now to the fleet here, we being able to prohibit their coming ashore for fresh water, without which these ships cannot be many days together. What service is as yet to be done here, there is no assistance of mine shall be wanting, which is but weak and at best scarce worthy your acceptance; and for what has been done of late here, that God may have all the glory, which is the desire of your most faithful and most humble servant...

Henry Cary, *Memorials of the Great Civil War in England* (London: Henry Colburn, 1842), II:3–5.