

## FAC-SIMILE OF A LETTER

FROM

SIR HORATIO (AFTERWARDS LORD VISCOUNT) NELSON  
TO THE MAYOR OF NORWICH;

COMMUNICATED

IN A LETTER FROM CAPT. G. W. MANBY TO DAWSON TURNER, ESQ., V.P.

MY DEAR SIR,

I beg you to do me the favor to present to the Norfolk Archæological Society the accompanying fac-simile of the hand-writing of the Naval Hero, who has done immortal honour to our county; and I trust they will regard it as an offering worthy of their acceptance and not altogether unfit for a place in their annals. I need not say I am well aware, that a man, who, like Nelson, must have been personally known to many of our members, can by no means be regarded as a legitimate subject of antiquity; but I hope I am not mistaken when I consider that the Society has another, and I might almost say a higher, object than that of investigating matters of times long past—I mean, the recording of whatever appertains to our local history; and who has here a higher claim than Nelson?

I might perhaps be allowed to say, that this letter, as written early in his career, before the loss of his right arm, may be looked upon as somewhat of a rarity; for it was only after he became the acknowledged defender of his country—after he

“Had hurled the thunderbolt of war

“At Egypt, Hafnia, Trafalgar,”—

that his autograph was prized and sought, and the merest scrap from his pen regarded as a treasure. Its claims to



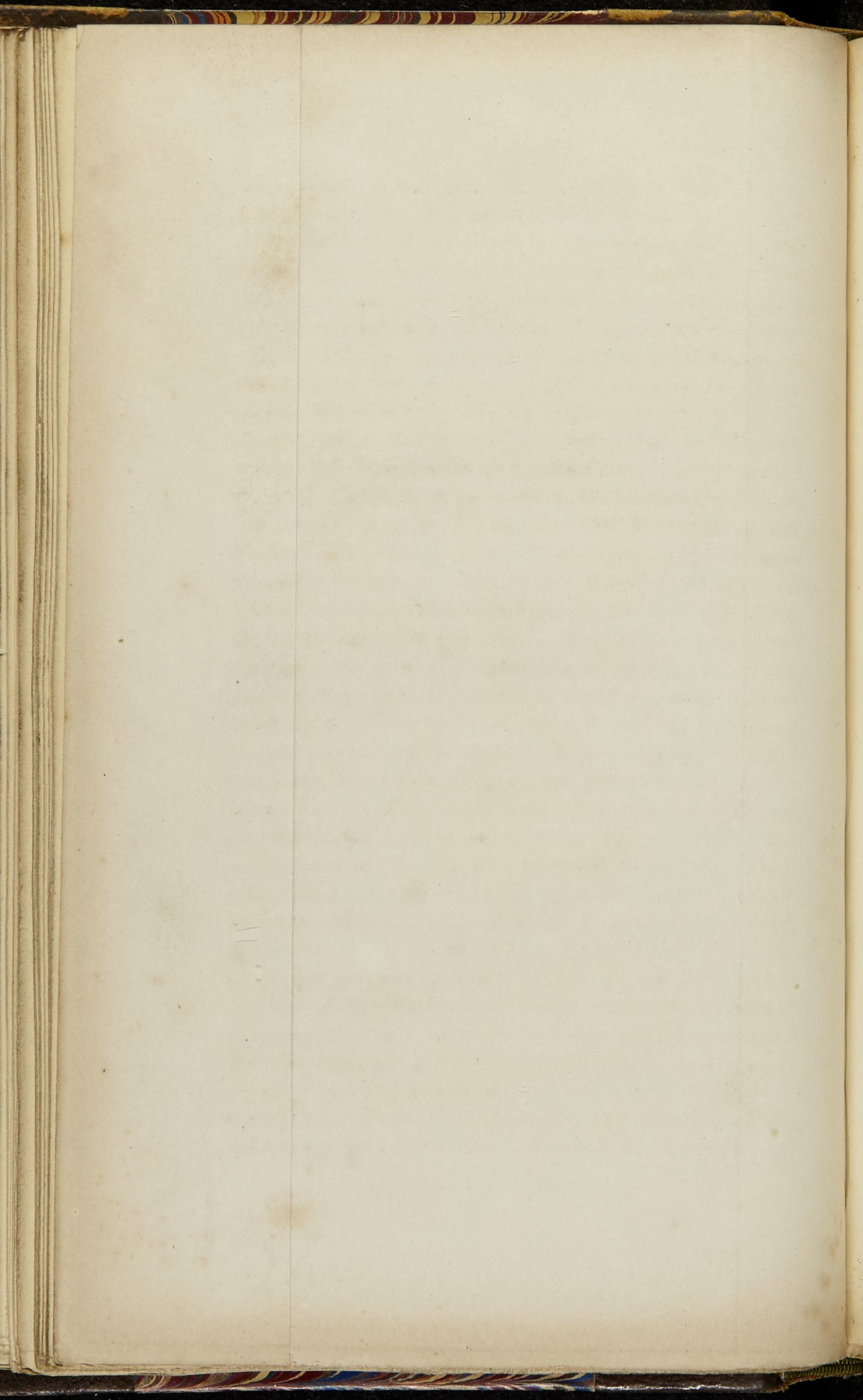
Ines is table off his bon Feb. 14 1796  
1797

Sir,

Having the good fortune on the  
most glorious 14: Feb. to become possessed  
of the Sword of the Danish Rear Admiral  
Don Danier Francisco Win they seen in  
the way sett forth in the paper transmitted  
herewith. And being Born in the County  
of Norfolk, I beg leave to present the  
Sword to the City of Norwich in order to  
it being preserved as a Monument of this  
event, and of my affection for my Native  
County. I have the Honor to be Sir  
Your most Obedient Servant  
The Mayor of  
Norwich

Forators' Kelly





be valued stand on a very different ground, and such as cannot fail to give it in the eyes of a Norfolk man peculiar interest. As regards indeed the sword which it accompanied, it very much tells its own tale; but it does not tell that this sword was taken on the first great occasion on which the hero pre-eminently distinguished himself; that the successful issue of the battle, *that* of Cape St. Vincent, was in no small degree owing to his having disobeyed the signal of his commanding officer; that this same officer, who was indebted to it for his peerage and his title, nevertheless insisted upon Nelson's retaining the so honorable trophy, which had been delivered into his own hands; and that the latter, in determining to send it to its present destination, declared that "he knew no place where it would give him or his family more pleasure to have it preserved than in the capital city of the county in which he was born." To Norfolk he always felt, and lost no opportunity of expressing, exceeding attachment. You yourself, Sir, must recollect—for you were present on the occasion—how, on his landing at Yarmouth in the November of 1800, after having visited the wounded sailors in the hospital, and attended Divine service, where, with Sir William and Lady Hamilton, he publicly returned thanks to Almighty God for preservation from numerous perils by land and by sea, he showed himself to the townsmen on the balcony of the Wrestlers' Inn, then kept by his maternal relative, Mr. Suckling, and shouted to them, "I am myself a Norfolk man, and I glory in being so."

These anecdotes, I am aware, may be regarded as trifling; but I hope that nothing connected with such a man can be justly so; and for myself I claim peculiar indulgence in quoting them. Nelson has at all times been the pole-star by which I have endeavored to steer my course; and I believe I am the only man now living who can say that he was with him at the very first school to which he went on



leaving his father's roof. The school in question was at Downham Market, a school altogether for children, kept by a man of the name of Noakes. The very fact of Nelson's having been placed there has escaped the notice of all his biographers, and would probably never have come to light, but for the researches of the Rev. Edward Bushby, Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, who detected it, and inserted a paragraph to the effect in the number of the *United Service Journal* for April, 1841. The same gentleman very kindly wrote to me upon the subject a few months since, and revived a multitude of recollections of my childhood, or, I might almost say, of my infancy. From him I learn that Noakes was, like Nelson, a native of Burnham; so that it is probable they emigrated together thence to Downham. But when he went, or how long he remained, or indeed at what time he was removed to North Walsham, which he left at twelve years old in 1770, we have no record. Neither will my own memory help me to the facts, or serve me with any anecdotes; nor have Mr. Bushby's very industrious inquiries been able to trace anything of him during his residence at Downham, save that he wore a green coat, and frequently employed his school-fellows at the pump in the Market-place, amusing himself by launching paper boats into the stream, and delighted to watch their course down the gutter which then ran in the middle of the street. The same gentleman adds, upon the authority of Mr. Wales, a medical practitioner there, that William Patman, a cordwainer, who died about seventeen years ago, used to tell his neighbours that he made shoes for Master Horace Nelson, and that the young gentleman, one day, coming to his house, jammed a pet-lamb between the door and door-post, and cried bitterly at the pain he had occasioned the poor animal; whence, as the old man always declared, he was sure he had a good heart, which would never be spoiled by any of the horrors of warfare his profession might lead him into. An



honest and natural inference this; and no less natural the pride with which Mr. Wales has been assured that old Crafer, the tailor, would boast, after the battle of the Nile, that he had many a time thrashed the great hero.

The Society will pardon me, I trust, for such recitals, and will allow me to close this long letter by stating, that a feeling, very similar to that which led Nelson to present the city of Norwich with the sword of the Spanish Admiral, also induced me to place within the very room where you hold your meetings, models of my inventions for the preservation of the sailor's life, and pictures illustrative of the success with which it has pleased the Almighty to crown my efforts—a blessing that I do indeed feel most deeply, and for which I trust the last words of my dying lips will be the utterance of humble thanksgiving.

I am, my dear Sir,

Very truly yours,

GEO. W. MANBY, Capt., F.R.S.

Southtown,

29th August, 1846.

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QUEEN'S MESSENGERS' BILLS,

1558 & 1562;

COMMUNICATED IN A LETTER FROM THE REV. JAMES BULWER.

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*To the Secretaries of the Norfolk and Norwich Archæological Society.*

DEAR SIRS,

Since the publication of the last part of the Society's papers, Mr. Dawson Turner has very kindly sent me transcripts of the two following memorials in his collection on the same subject as the bill of John Sharpe, printed