

CHALLENGE  
OF  
OLIVER NEVE, ESQ. TO SIR HENRY HOBART.

COMMUNICATED

BY THE REV. RICHARD HART,  
Honorary Secretary,

IN

A LETTER TO DAWSON TURNER, ESQ., V. P.

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MY DEAR SIR,

As I understand that our forthcoming number will contain some extremely valuable documents connected with the Hobart and the Le Neve families, in which\* mention is made of the unhappy duel which cost the life of an illustrious member of the former, I venture to hope that *a Copy of the Original Challenge* may prove generally acceptable to our readers.

That original is now in the possession of my friend and relative, S. H. L. N. Gilman, Esq., the representative of that branch of the Le Neve family from which I am descended. He kindly allowed me to make a transcript, with a view to its publication by our Society.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely,

RICHARD HART.

\* See p. 30 (*Note*).



*Original Challenge of Oliver Neve, which led to the fatal  
Duel on the Heath at Cawston Woodrow, 20 Aug.  
1698, in which Sir Henry Hobart\* lost his life.*

Honored S<sup>r</sup>,

I am very sorry I was not at Reifham yesterday, when you gave yo<sup>r</sup>self the trouble of appearing there, that I might not only have further justified the Truth of my not saying what is reported I did, but that I might have told you that I wrote not that Letter to avoid fighting you; but that, if the credit of yo<sup>r</sup> author has confirm<sup>d</sup> you in the belief of it, I am ready & desirous to meet you when & where you please to assign. If otherwise, I expect your Author's name in return to this, that I may take my satisfaction

\* "Sir Henry Hobart, who was the fourth baronet, was elected a Burgess for King's Lynn in the Parliament that met at Oxford in 1681, and sat with his father, who served then as Knight of the Shire for Norfolk. He was a very great friend to, and promoter of, the Revolution; and in the Convention Parliament (being then Knight of the Shire for Norfolk) he declared for the vacancy of the throne. Afterwards, he was Gentleman of the Horse to King William, and attended him at the Battle of the Boyne in Ireland. In 1695 he was again elected to serve in parliament for the county, and always behaved like a man of honour in that post; but, being disappointed of his election in 1698, and resenting some words said to be spoken by Oliver Le Neve, Esq. (which Le Neve denied under his hand), a challenge was given, and a duel ensued, in which Sir Henry passed his sword through Le Neve's arm, and Le Neve ran his into Sir Henry's belly, of which wound he died the next day, being Sunday, 21st August, 1698, and was interred in the vault at Blickling. He married the eldest daughter and coheir of Joseph Maynard, Esq., son and heir of Sir John Maynard, Knight, one of the Commissioners of the Great Seal in the reign of King William. She died his widow 22nd August, 1701, and is in the vault with him: they had three daughters." (Blomefield, *History of Norfolk*, second edition, VI., p. 402.) A monumental stone, surmounted by a broken urn, still marks the spot on Cawston Heath where Sir Henry fell.



there; or else conclude the Imputacōn sprung from Blickling,  
& send you a time & place; for the matter shall not rest as it  
is, tho' it cost the life of

Yo<sup>r</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>,

OLIVER NEVE.

Aug. y<sup>e</sup> 20<sup>th</sup>, 98.

*Endorsed*:—"A letter sent from Oliver Neve, Esq<sup>re</sup>, to S<sup>r</sup>  
Henry Hobart, the consequence of which  
was a duel upon Cawston Heath, in which  
Sir Henry was killed."