

The CASE of Algernon Sidney Esq; as it appeared before the Committee, Novemb. 10<sup>th</sup>. 1680

**A** Gmondesham is an ancient Borough, but for the space of near 200 years had sent no Burgesses to Parliament untill the year 1649.

Mr. Sydney believing, that of common Right those only ought to have Voices in Elections who pay Scot and Lot, unless there were Prescription to the contrary (which a Usage of Forty years if admitted cannot make) or the Case had been judged by the House, did by his Council desire the Opinion of the Committee thereupon; and the Committee did judge that none ought to have Voices but the Inhabitants paying Scot and Lot.

This point being determin'd, it was not necessary for Mr. Sidney to insist upon the Poll taken by *Humphry Gardiner*, (who took it by the appointment of *Francis Child* Constable, and had taken all the Polls that had been within Thirty years last past) nor that which was taken by Mr. *Henry Danvers* perfectly agreeing with it, whereby it did appear, that all the Housholders being admitted, he had 74, and Sir *William Drake* had but 64 Voices; and therefore for the ease of the Committee he did admit of the Poll taken by Sir *William's* Agents. Whereupon it did appear, that Mr. Sidney had Thirty nine Voices proved to be good; and of those remaining who paid Scot and Lot, there were but Twenty eight to vote for Sir *William*, though none had been liable to exceptions.

This being plain, Sir *Williams* Council accused Mr. Sidney of Bribery, and for proof of it, produced *John Clerk*, a poor Labourer; who said, that the day before the Election, Mr. Sidney in the presence of many had told him, that at present he could do nothing for him, but after the Election he would give him Satisfaction: That about a Month after, *Richard Norwood* Overseer of the Poor, who had voted for Mr. Sidney, gave him a Noble, and that others who had also voted for him, said, that *Norwood* had given a Noble to each of them.

*Clerk* and *Harwood* said, one *Luffeman* who had voted for Mr. Sidney told them, *Norwood* had given him a Suit of Cloaths.

*Harwood* and *Gillmer* said, that about a Month after the Election, Nobles apiece were delivered to divers of the Inhabitants by *Rich. Norwood*; and all three confessed they heard of no other Moneys given.

*Rich. Bachelor* said *Leered* told him, Mr. Sidney had given him Money after the Election.

It was also said, that some of those who were for Mr. Sidney had scandalized Sir *William*, saying, he was a Papist and a Pensioner.



*In Answer to these Calumnies,*

Mr. *Tanner* and *Rich. Norwood*, men of Credit, proved, that *John Clerk* had often desir'd to speak with them before the Election; which they, knowing him to be a dangerous fellow, refused, unless it were in the presence of three or four Witnesses, and that he did tell them, large Offers were made to him by Sir *William* if he would Vote for him; that he had a Letter from him to that purpose; that he knew enough to overthrow Sir *Williams* Election, though he had Twenty Votes more than Mr. *Sidney*; and would make the best of his Market.

They also say, that since the Election he affirmed, that he had given his Vote for Mr. *Sidney* freely, and that neither Mr. *Sidney* nor any other on his behalf had spoken to him for it.

Coll. *Danvers* and Mr. *Halford* Merchant of *London*, prove, that they were present when *Clerk* and several others came to offer their Votes to Mr. *Sidney*, and that he told them he would serve the Town and Countrey as well as he could, and hoped it would be to their satisfaction; but no mention was made of any Money or Personal Reward.

They also prove, that the day after the Election, Mr. *Sidney* being to return to *London*, many poor People came about his Coach, begging of him; and he being told it was a thing decent and customary to give something to them, did first oppoint Five pounds, and afterwards Five Pounds more to be given to them, which accordingly was put into the hands of *Rich. Norwood*, Overseer of the Poor, to be distributed amongst them.

*Richard Norwood* Overseer, and *James* his Son say, they did receive Ten Pounds by Mr. *Sidney's* Order, and did distribute it publickly to such as were Poor men, paying no Scot or Lot, and had voted for the most part for Mr. *Sidney*; but that they had done it on their own heads, without any Order's or Intimation from Coll. *Sidney* directly or indirectly to dispose of it otherwise than to the Poor of the Burrough.

*Norwood* further says, *Luffeman* had never any Cloaths from him in four years before the Election, nor at any time since, nor ever by Order from Mr. *Sidney*.

*Tho. Petit* says, *Horwood* an Innkeeper desir'd him not to give Evidence for Mr. *Sidney*, because they should get Money by a new Election, if his could be made void.

As to the reproachful Language against Sir *William Drake*, Mr. *Sidney* says, that he cannot rule other mens Tongues; that he no wayes approves of the Licence usually taken in such Cases by using ill Language; that Sir *William* must suffer that, as well as others: And if the Committee had not appear'd to be weary, he could have proved such Language was then and still is used of himself every day by Sir *William* himself and others, his Friends and Agents, which neither he nor they, as he believes, ~~will~~ undertake to make good.

Mr. *Sidney* proved by several witnesses, that Sir *William* and his Servants had endeavoured to deterr *Tho. Ley*, *Charsely*, *Petit*, *Tench* and



and others, from voting against him, by threatening to pull down their houses, or vexing them with suits; which having been done before the Election, hath been executed since the Election.

Hereupon Mr. *Sidney* desires it may be observed,

1. That the Ten pounds which he appointed to be given in the presence of many that begged of him, and to be put into the hands of the Overseer of the Poor, cannot be understood otherwise than that he designed it to be distributed unto such Poor only as then begged of him, and were under the care of the said Overseer.

2. That it was after the Election openly promis'd, and publickly distributed.

3. *Clerk* only pretending a Promise in obscure words, no wayes agreeing with the Testimony of Coll. *Danvers* and Mr. *Halford*, men of Reputation, nor justified by any others that were then present, though he said there were many; and his undue practices testified by *Tanner* and *Norwood*, shew that he no way deserves to be credited.

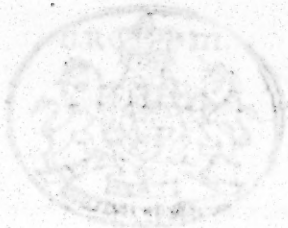
4. It is not pretended, that any one man paying Scot or Lot, received a Penny, and though Mr. *Sidney* could not hinder such as did not pay, to give Votes, he did think they ought to have none, and upon his Motion it was so judged by the Committee.

5. Whatsoever the distribution of that Money was, he is not to answer for it, it having been done not only without but contrary to his Direction, as is confessed by *Richard Norwood* who was trusted with it.

And Mr. *Sydney* doth further affirm as in the presence of God, (as he would have done to the Committee, had he not been told it was unusual for any person to speak there except by his Council) that he never did intend it should be otherwise disposed of than as Alms to the Poor that then begged of him, and such others who took Alms and did not pretend to have Voices; and he never knew, heard, or imagin'd it had been otherwise disposed of, till upon the Evidence before the Committee it did appear to be so. And Mr. *Sydney* is ready, if it be required, to produce his Servant who gave the 10 *l.* to the Overseer of the Poor, and several others whom he did not summon before the Committee, because he had no reason to believe any Objection could or would have been made against him for his said Charity, that can and will prove Mr. *Sydney's* directions for the distribution of the said 10 *l.* were such as he hath before alledged; and therefore he humbly hopes that the indiscreet or unfaithful disposal of his Charity by the Overseer of the Poor, shall not reflect upon him, or prejudice his Cause.

**F I N I S.**







THE  
CIRCUMSTANCES

Before and after the

SPEECH

OF

WILLIAM

LATE

Viscount Stafford.

**T**He two Sheriffs with a considerable number of Gentlemen on Horseback went to the *Tower-Gate*, and there demanded *W. Howard*, late Viscount *Stafford*. Between nine and ten a Clock, a Gentleman belonging to the Lieutenant of the *Tower* told the Sheriffs, that the Lieutenant would wait upon them presently, and bring the Prisoner to the Bars; to which the Sheriffs answered, that they must preserve the Priviledge and Bounds of the City: An Officer replied; Sir, we were ordered to draw up two Companies from the Gate to the Bar, and there you are to receive the Prisoner.

*Sheriffs.* Gentlemen, we will preserve the Liberties of the City, and are come at the Gate to demand the Prisoner; whether the Lieutenant will deliver him or no, we demand; and accordingly he was delivered to the Sheriffs between the Gate and Bars.

Before the Prisoner came, several people being upon the Scaffold; among which, two that were appointed to write.

The Heads-man came up with two Blocks, one old, one new, in a Bag; also the Axe covered with a Cloth. The Block being taken out, the new Block was covered over with black, and laid upon a piece of black Bays, about two yards and a half long, upon which the Prisoner was to stretch himself. Then the Coffin was brought up, being colour'd with two Letters, *W. S. 1680.* Then *W. S.* came upon the Scaffold, and asked for the Executioner.

*A.* Here he is.

*Staf.* Have you received money for the Cloaths?

*A.* No. Then his Man took out a Purse of five pound, which the H. man objected against, and *W. S.* gave him two Guinies more.

His Speech was every word writ; which after he had read to the people, being more than 30000 in number to see Justice done upon the Traytor, he turned about, and kneeling down prayed in *English* and *Latin*. Next he lifted up his hands, standing up, and said, *I beseech thee God not to avenge my Innocent Blood upon any man in the whole Kingdom, no not against those who by their Perjuries have brought me here; for I profess before Almighty God, that I never combined against the Kings Life, nor any body else; but whatever I did was only to procure liberty for the Protestant Dissenters, and the Romish Religion: And as for the D. of York, I do here declare upon my Salvation, I know of no Design that he ever had a-*