

case, and my affection for my lord such as is natural, I perceive a clear duty. I do not indeed suppose that any one can at this time of day effect that which the sense of all good men failed to effect while he lived—I mean the final killing of those rumours; nor is a plain tale likely to persuade those, with whom idle reports, constantly furnished up, of letters seen in France, weigh more than a consistent life. But my lord's case is now, as I take it, removed to the Appeal Court of Posterity; which nevertheless, a lie constantly iterated may mislead. To provide somewhat to correct this, and wherefrom future historians may draw, I who knew him well, and was in his confidence and in a manner in his employment at the time of Sir John Fenwick's case—of which these calumnies were always compact—propose to set down my evidence here; shrinking from no fulness, at times even venturing on prolixity, and always remembering a saying of Lord Somers', that often the most material part of testimony is that on which the witness values himself least. To adventure on this fulness, which in the case of many, and perhaps the bulk of writers, might issue in the surfeit of their readers, I feel myself emboldened by the possession of a brief and concise manner of writing; which, acquired in the first place in the circumstances presently to appear, was later improved by constant practice in the composition of my lord's papers.

And here some will expect me to proceed at once to the events of the year 1696, in which Sir John suffered, or at least 1695. But softly, and a little if you please *ab ovo*; still the particulars which enabled my lord's enemies to place a sinister interpretation on his conduct in those years had somewhat, and, alas, too much, to do with me. Therefore, before I can clear the matter up from every point of view, I am first to say who I am, and how I came to fall in the way of that great man and gain his approbation; with other preliminary matters, relating to myself, whereof