

DEFOE DANIEL

MEMOIRS OF MAJOR
ALEXANDER RAMKINS
(1718)

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**Memoirs of Major
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Memoirs of Major Alexander Ramkins (1718)

THE PUBLISHER TO THE READER

I Think it proper to inform the Reader that these Papers were deliver'd into my Hands by a near Kinsman of the Authors, who lately came from the Southern Parts of France. His Design in imparting these Memoirs to me, was (as I quickly perceiv'd) to know my Sentiments of the Performance. It seems the Gentleman had been sour'd by French Practises, and was willing that the World should be no longer a Stranger to what was the ground of his distast. The Author appears very well qualify d for his Task, and opens a Scene of Politicks which the good natur'd part of Mankind will scarce think human Race capable of. Those that are acquainted with the Person of Major Ramkins, assure me, that the late King fames never had a more active and diligent Servant, and that he was one never wanting in his Station. If I am of a contrary Opinion to the Publick in judging these Remarks worthy of the Press, 'tis what I do not at present find my self convinc'd of. One Benefit at least may be expected from 'em, that they will induce all true Britains to be cautious, and not imbark themselves in a foreign Interest for the future, if not for the sake of their Country, at least for their own Sakes. I will not anticipate the Contents, but only take the freedom to acquaint the Reader in General. That it will be one of the greatest Paradoxes in future Ages to read, that the Court of St. Germains should have been a Sleep, and impos'd upon for Twenty Eight Years successively, unless their being trick'd by the greatest of Politicians, be a Circumstance to take off from the Surprise.

THE MEMOIRS OF Alexander Ramkins, &c

I was not above Seventeen Years of Age when the Battle of *Gillycranky* was fought between the Two Highland Generals, the Lord Viscount *Dundee* and *Mackay*. And being then a Stripling at the University of *Aberdeen* and understanding that several Clans were gathering into a Body in defence of King *James III* sold my Books and Furniture of my Lodgings, and equipp'd my self to observe the Martial Call, I found my self prompted with. I arriv'd in a few Days near the Field of Battle, and joyn'd my self with a broken Body of Men who were making up towards the Mountains to recover themselves after the Fatigue of Battle. The Noviceship I went through in the *Highlands*, was no improper Foundation for the course Method of living I have been since engag'd in for above Twenty Seven Years; during which Time, I have run through all those Hardships which are incident to one who seeks a Preferment in Fire and Smoak.

While I strolled about in the *Highlands*, it was my good Fortune to be under the Tuition of an old Officer, who let me into many of those little Secrets which are not unserviceable to such as Design to make the whole Earth the Theatre of their Life; but what I chiefly valued this old Gentleman's Conversation for, was the Happiness I had to be a Hearer of some of his Politick Lessons, of which he was a great Master, having furnish'd himself by Fifty Years Practice, with the best Idea's of that kind.

Upon a certain Day when our Party were out, some upon Foraging, and others to get Intelligence, I being alone in a Cottage with this old Captain, and being desirous to know his Opinion of the Affairs of *Europe* in general, as also what was like to be the Issue of that Cause we had undertaken. The old Captain willing to satisfy my Curiosity as far as his Skill would reach, pulled out some Remarks he had made upon the Year 1640. Observe, *says* he, Child what I say to you, 'tis a Maxim never to be neglected among Politicians to keep up Divisions in an Enemies Country; you may, perhaps, imagine that this will be a short Game that is a playing, but depend upon it my Grey Hairs will not see an end of it. I allow the King of *France* has declar'd himself a Friend to King *James II*; He is a very powerful Prince, and if he would turn his Forces this Way, and be upon the Defensive near Home, a few Months would bring the War to a Period. But that Monarch has things in his Head which I must not mention. There will be great Skirmishing in the Dominions of *Great Britain*, but no decisive Action if *Lewis le Grand* can hinder it. He takes Cardinal *Richlieu's* Conduct for a Precedent. It would have been no difficult Task for the *French* to have joyn'd their Forces with King *Charles I*. and have made a short Hand of that Contest between the King and Parliament; but that Politick Cardinal instead of this Method, had Emissaries in the *English* Cabinet to exaggerate Matters between them. The same Method has been observ'd by that Nation ever since; and if *Lewis le Grand* does not make a Politick Use of King *James II*. without doing him any real Service, I shall be very willing to correct my self, and cancel that Paragraph in my Observations.

This was the first Politick Lesson I was entertain'd with by my old Master; which, though at that time my want of Experience did not permit me thoroughly to comprehend, yet since, a Resemblance of Circumstances has often reviv'd it my Mind; nor could I ever be well reconcil'd to that Piece of Morality, That it was a laudable Practice to set People by the Ears together.

The hopes of being releas'd, is the best Support to Men in Misery, and our small Body of Three Hundred Men wou'd not have remain'd so long under Discipline, if Expectation had not been nourish'd with daily Alarms of Assistance from *France*. Our commanding Officer was Romantickly Loyal, and look'd upon every little Hill we scrambled over, as an impregnable Fortress, from whose Summit he often took occasion to Harangue us, as if the Eyes of all *Europe* were upon us, and the Fate of the Three Kingdoms hung at our Swords Points. But the Truth was, I believe, we were unknown to all Mankind, and if those Villages we march'd by you'd but secure the Cattle from us, the State was in no great Danger from our Quarter.

As for the Hopes of being assisted from *France*, though our Commander neglected no Pains to instill such a Belief into the Generality of the Soldiers, in order to prolong his Reign in that honourable Post he enjoy'd, yet I read it plainly in my old Captain's Forehead, that *France* was not accustom'd to open their Treasures in countenancing Chimerical Adventures, and that the most we could expect from thence, would be a small *Dunkirk* Privateer, with a Hogshead or two of Brandy to keep the Cause alive, while he was pushing on his Conquests in other Parts of the Globe, in which the Glory and Interest of *France* was more immediately concern'd. For my own Part, as I was resolv'd to pursue my Fortune in the way of Arms, and finding that there was no appearance of *Scotland's* being a Place of Action, so I advis'd with my old Master what course I should steer to answer the Ends of my Call. The old Gentleman, though he might have deterr'd me from such an Undertaking, by proposing himself as an Instance how little you'd be gain'd that way, having nothing to show for near Sixty Years Service in the War, but a Bundle of Politick Remarks drawn from the false Steps he and others have made in endeavouring to make their Fortune, yet since every Man must spin out his Thread of Life one way or other, and that that was most likely to succeed well to which a Person found himself most inclinable, so he humour'd my present Dispositions; but at the same time, counsell'd me to Transport my self over to the Continent, where I might meet with something worthy my Curiosity. Islands, *says he*, are commonly won and lost in a Day, nor will they afford you that variety of Stratagems which will make you perfect in the Art of War. After this I only waited for a fit Opportunity to quit the Service I was in, for though I was no farther engaged than in the Quality of a Gentleman Volunteer, yet a Strain of Honour would not permit me to forsake my Companions, unless some more plausible Reason occur'd to me than what I could invent at that Time. But it was not long before an occasion offered it self to put my Project in Execution. By moving too and fro our little Army, I was within Twenty Miles of my Mother's House, (for my Father had been dead some Years) having therefor first communicated my Design to my old Master, whom I intended to invite along with me, if he approv'd of my Undertaking.

In conclusion, Things were order'd so, that the old Captain, with myself, and another, were detach'd out towards the Coast to get Intelligence, and that Night about Eleven we agreeably surpriz'd my Mother who had for several Months been lamenting the Loss of her darling Son, whom she suppos'd to be kill'd at the Battle of *Gillycranky*; for she had not justly inform'd herself of the precise Time I ran away from the College at *Aberdeen*.

I had Two elder Brothers, who both inherited the martial Spirit of our Family, had been a long time absent from Home; one of them was prefer'd in the Emperors Army in *Hungary*, the other belonging to the Guards of King *James II* follow'd his Fate into *France* and *Ireland*, and afterwards was kill'd in *Ireland*. My father had three small Lordships, which we were equally to be Sharers of, allowing proportionably for my Mothers maintenance, with a Thousand Pounds to be rais'd to marry our only Sister.

Now, as it was my Intention to Travel and gain Experience in the World, so my old Captain put it into my Head to raise a Sum of Money upon the Credit of my Land, assuring me it would prove my best Friend upon all Occasions, for that the World had but a very mean Opinion of Merit when strip'd of other Advantages to recommend it. This Affair took up more Time than my warm Temper could well bear, and the Lawyers threw in so many Delays, that had not the old Captain (who was well acquainted with Business) been at my Elbow to forward Things, I might have lost my Vocation of being a Soldier before any Agreement cou'd have been made. But after two Months were expir'd, I found my self Master of fifteen Hundred Pound, the Price of my share of Land after the Deductions made for my Mother and Sister; Twelve Hundred Pounds I lodg'd with a Banker at *Amsterdam*, the other Three was employ'd for an Equipage, and to supply my Necessities in the Tour I design'd to take. The old Captain I intended to take along with me to be my Guide as well as Adviser; for I saw so many Perfections in him, which the ungrateful World had neglected, That I judg'd it would be an honourable Omen in one that was beginning the World, not to let him leave the Stage of Life

unrewarded: But as his Years had render'd him incapable to attend me in my Rambles, so Death came in to release him, and this worthy Person was taken from me about Ten Days before the Time I had fix'd for my Travels. However, I must not let his Memory die, but give the World an Account of him as far as I cou'd gather from the Gentleman when he was disposed to Answer to Questions concerning himself, in which he always behaved himself with a well guarded Modesty.

I learn'd from him, That his Father was the Head of a Clan which was one half cut off by *Oliver Cromwell*, and the other half Transported into the *West-Indies*, with the fifteen Hundred *Scots*, that were condemn'd thither to Slavery by the Protector. My Friend being at that time about Twelve Years old, chose rather to share his Fathers Fate, and view the Western parts of the Worlds, than fall into the Hands of a Person who would stain the Beauty of his tender Mind, by giving him an unsuitable Education. After he had buried his Father in *Virginia*, he took the Opportunity of a *French* Vessel to pass over to *Brest*, and so to *Paris*, who by the Assistance of a *Scotch* Nobleman, who was acquainted with his Family, he pick'd up a liberal Education, and made himself Master of the *French* and *Latin*, and having it in his Election whether he wou'd engage himself to the Church or follow the Camp, he chose the latter, and after some Months spent in the Academy, he enter'd himself among the *Gens d'Arms*, and made very useful Observations in two or three Campaigns in *Germany*, in the last of which he was taken Prisoner and seduc'd into the Emperors Service by some of his Countrymen, who persuaded him the *Germans* were more accustom'd to advance Strangers than the *French*. In a little time he was observ'd by his Colonel to be a Person of Parts and Resolution, and so was gradually avanc'd from a Cornet to a Captain of Horse; and as a Man of Spirit and Action never wants Opportunity to shew himself, so this Gentleman met with many brave Adventures in the way of Soldiery, which some time he would occasionally recount to me, but they would be too tedious to insert in these Remarks. When King *James II* came to the Crown of *England*, he desired to throw up his Commission, it being suggested to him, that the Prince stood in need of some old experienc'd Officers to model an Army he was raising. Upon this Prospect he pass'd over to *England*, but being destitute of Acquaintance he loiter'd about the Court, till one of the Duke of *Berwick's* Retinue, who had heard of him at the Siege of *Buda*, made the King acquainted with him. So he was order'd down into *Scotland* with the Promise of a Colonels Commission, but the Revolution following soon after, he acted only as a Captain of Foot at the Battle of *Gillycranky*.

But to cut short this Digression, the time now drew near that I was to undertake my intended Ramble, and indeed it was high time; for it being whisper'd about in the Neighbourhood that I had been in Arms for King *James II*. *Home*, as the saying is, *was too hot a Place for me*; so I sent my Servant to enquire for a Conveniency to pass over to *Flanders*, and in two Days I was provided with a *Rotterdam* Vessel, and so with very little Ceremony took leave of my Mother, who though she was unwilling to part with me, yet she prefer'd the lesser Danger to the greater, and rather wish'd me expos'd to the Waves, than to the Insults of my Enemies at Home.

The Wind blew very fresh, but tacking about too much to the *North East*, it drove us upon Shore with that violence that we were oblig'd to put in twice to Land, once at *Scarborough*, and again at *Yarmouth*.

At this latter Place, a Pragmatical Searcher came aboard us with an Air of Authority as if he design'd to visit my Trunks; but one of the Sailors informing me that this was stretching his Commission, for he ought not to search after any Goods unless the Cargo was design'd for that Port, so I ridded my self of this Spark with a Half-Crown Piece; for I had no mind to enter much into a Parley with him lest he might discover my *Highland* Expedition, for Fear never wants Apprehensions. After two Days stay in this Port, the Wind proving favourable, we were not very long in making a Trip to *Rotterdam*, where I only refresh'd myself a few Hours, and pass'd on to *Amsterdam* to visit my Bank, and settle a Correspondence as to Returns of money.

I met with nothing in this City that made any Impression upon me to stay any longer than settling the small concern of Money I lodg'd there. The hurry of Business was too Mechanical an

Entertainment, for one whose Head was filled with high Flights of Honour, Sieges, Battles, and other such like Sports. The *French* Army at this time lay upon the *Rhine*, and my Design was to make that Way. When I arriv'd there, I found they had surrounded *Mentz* in order to Besiege it. I was glad to begin my first Campaign with so glorious an Undertaking, not doubting, but a great deal of Bravery would be shown where the Flower of the Houshold was design'd for Action; but before I could make any Advantage of this Occurrence, I was to make my self known to some Person of Character who might introduce me so as to be a Spectator of that noble Siege. At last I met with a *Scotch* Gentleman, who rid in among the grand Molquetains, who being fully inform'd of my Warlike Dispositions, assur'd me he would put me into the readiest Method he cou'd to gain Experience; but when he inform'd me that I must not pretend to great Things on a sudden, and that I had at present only two Things in Election, either to carry a Musquet in a Common Foot Regiment, during the Siege, or which he wou'd rather advise me to (in case I had Money to be at that expence) to go to *Strasburgh* and put my self under Discipline for six Weeks or two Months among the *French* Cadets.

I must confess this was a great balk upon a double account: It not only depriv'd me of the Satisfaction of seeing the Siege carried on, but it was a sensible check to my aspiring Humour, to think what Drudgery I was to undergo before I could be regarded by the World; but when I reflected on what I had often heard the old Captain (I buried in the *Highlands*) say upon this Head, it made me easier under the Disappointment, and the next Day I went on to *Strasburg*, and enter'd my self among the Cadets. 'Tis in the Nature of a College, where young Gentlemen are instructed in the Rudiments of War.

During my stay at *Strasburg* I omitted no opportunity of improving myself as to the *French* and *High Dutch* Fortifications, and other Parts of the Mathematicks which were useful in War. I was also present at some Lectures of Politicks which were given to those more advanc'd in Years, in which they handled the Interest of Nations, and brought down their Reflections to the present Times. This I look'd upon as an excellent Method of educating young Officers; for it qualify'd them to be serviceable to their Country under a double Capacity; that is, as well to Argue as to Fight for it, and defend it equally with their Tongue and Sword.

I remember an Antient Marquis who had a Superintendency over this Academy, entertaining us one Day with the Motives of the present War, and running up the Cause to its Original, laid it before us in this manner: *That the Monarchs of France wou'd look upon themselves as injur'd by the rest of the Princes of Europe, till the imperial Diadem was restor'd to France, who were first Possessors of it in the Person of Charles the Great; that they had made several pushes in all Ages to recover it, but without Effect; that while the English had footing in France, they were too lazy to extend their Conquests upon the Empire of the West; and when they had chased out the English, and were rid of that Incumbrance, the House of Austria, by the vast Acquisitions of the Low Countries, and joint Power of Spain, sat so hard upon 'em, that France was not in a Capacity to make any Advances towards recovering their Right to the Empire: What therefore they had been upon these latter Years, was to make a strong Party among the Electoral Princes, and by degrees secure a Majority in the Imperial Diet, in order to set aside the House of Austria, and settle the Imperial Crown upon the French Line, as it was in the Beginning.* To this he added, *That this invincible Monarch, Lewis XIV, had made considerable Advances of late Years, especially in bringing over several Electors, and now the Chapter of Cologne to chuse Cardinal Fustenberg for their Archbishop, who though a Native of Germany, yet was a Frenchman by Interest, and had given his Word to be very Industrious in settling the Imperial Dignity upon the House of Bourbon. And this Election of Cardinal Fustenberg being contested by the Emperor and Pope Innocent XI. was the Motive of the present War; for they put up the Duke of Bavaria's Brother in opposition against him.*

This Account of the occasion of the present War, vary'd very much from the Idea we in *Scotland* had of Affairs. We were made to believe, That the King of *France* being a zealous Roman Catholick Monarch, had engag'd himself in a War against the Allies, meerly upon a Religious Motive,

to re-establish King *James*, who was dethron'd upon no other Account but because he was a Roman Catholick. But I have since found by comparing Matters, that the Revolution in *England* was not the Occasion, but the Consequence of the War between the *French* and the Allies; for the Emperor, &c. understanding that King *James II.* was drawn into a Scrape by the *French* King, and that he made a Property of him to carry on his Ambitious Designs; 'tis not to be wonder'd at, if they prefer'd the general Good of *Europe*, and immediate Safety of their own People to the private Good of King *James II.*, who had been so indiscreet as to expose himself to Ruin by giving into a *French* Project. However this unpolitick Management proved very lucky to *France* upon a double Account; for tho' they had begun a War upon the disedifying bottom of Ambition, it was afterwards consecrated in many Peoples Thoughts, under a Colour of justifying a dethron'd Roman Catholick Prince, besides the Advantage of causing a considerable Diversion by fomenting a War in the Three Kingdoms of *Great-Britain*; for as for re-establishing that unfortunate Prince in his Throne, though I was a long Time of Opinion *France* really design'd it; yet since I have been convinc'd by undeniable Arguments, that it neither was his Interest to bring it about, nor that he ever seriously attempted it. I must own it was never very Intelligible to me, not even in my very darkest State of Bigottry for the *French* Interest, that the Emperor, the King of *Spain*, and Duke of *Savoy*, with many other Roman Catholick Princes, nay, the Pope himself should all fail in their Duty and Zeal for Religion, and the King of *France* (who was remarkable upon other Occasions for sacrificing it to Politick ends) should be the only one in *Europe* that wou'd stand up for it. It was not so in the Infancy of the *Dutch* Republic, when *France* concurr'd with the Seven Provinces to have them torn from the *Spanish* Monarchy, and by the same Assistance, enabled 'em to make head against the Church. It was not so when a Frown of *Oliver Cromwell* cou'd oblige *France* to lay aside the charitable Maxim of Royal Protection, and send *Charles II.* and his Brother the Duke of *York*, out of their Territories by an Infamous Condescension. But *James II.* had forgotten the Affronts offer'd to the Duke of *York*, and I suppose had a Mind to make a second Tryal of *French* Hospitality, and whether they would be more obliging to him in his old Age, than they had been in his Youth. Neither is this plausible Pretence of defending a Prince injur'd upon the Score of Religion, very consistent with their Conduct, in regard of the *Turk*. To maintain a Catholick Prince at St. *Germain*, and support the Enemy of Christianity at *Constantinople* with great Remittances of Moneys, and a constant Supply of Engineers; is a piece of State Casuistry above my Comprehension, and Prince *Eugene* had a great deal of Reason to knock his Breast, and hold up his Hands to Heaven, when he saw *French* Engineers dragg'd out of *Turkish* Mines in *Hungary* with *Agnus Dei*'s, and Relicks about their Necks as Ensigns of *Lewis XIV*'s Christianity, and Zeal for the Church.

But to proceed to my own concerns. As soon as the Time was expir'd, I propos'd to my self to stay in the Academy at *Strasburgh*, I provided my self with the Equipage of a grand Musketeer, and for a Present of 50 Pistols, and the strength of good Recommendation from my Countrymen, I was admitted to ride among 'em. But here I had a fresh Difficulty to struggle with. My Countrymen finding me pretty flush of Money, and that I was very generous, was as observant as a Spaniel, and so very Officious both early and late, that I found it impracticable to steal an Hour of Privacy to recollect my self, in order to model my Conduct after the best Precedents I met with in the course of the Day; and what made me yet more uneasy, he was not content to visit me alone, but had often a second or third with him; who as they were very obliging in informing me of the Methods of living in a Camp, so they was always very *adroit*, and gave me the Preference upon all Occasions; but then as I engross'd all the Ceremony of the Day, so I was thrown into unavoidable Circumstances of paying them for their Attendance. This constant Charge, though in Time it would have made me weary of acting the Grand Signior, yet I could better have bore with it, had I not smelt a Design they had to strip me of my Bank I had at *Amsterdam*; for I was so unguarded in my Conduct as to have acquainted my Countrymen with my Money concerns, which he and his Associates had already devour'd in their Imagination, and wanted but a fit Opportunity to draw me in at Play, and so at once put me upon a

Level with themselves and other Soldiers of Fortune: But being aware of the Trap that was laid for me, my whole Study was how to disengage myself from this Gang, so as to give no Suspicion that I understood their meaning; for this I imagin'd might be the ground of a Quarrel, and to perhaps have worse Consequences than if they really had strip'd me of my Substance. Arm'd with this Caution, I receiv'd 'em in the usual manner, but still kept off when a Motion was made either of high drinking or playing deep; for no Man is secure, when either Liquor or Passion gains the Ascendent over him. But this State of Violence could not continue long, sometimes I was at a loss for an Excuse to baffle their Importunity, other times I found them dispos'd to represent me as of an uncomplying Temper, so that there was no way left but either to draw or withdraw, for I saw plainly that if I staid among them a Quarrel would ensue. This Consideration, with the unheard of Devastation I saw in the Palatinate made by the *French* Troops, gave me a Surfeit of the *Rhine*. I am not Ignorant that no Part of the World is free from Sharpers, but I thought in another Place I might better resist their first Onset, and let them gain no ground upon me, while Rule I here neglected for want of Experience. And now I was oblig'd to make a Call upon my Banker at *Amsterdam* for Two Hundred Pounds, resolving not to break the remaining 1000 Pound Bulk, unless upon some extraordinary Emergency. I had sometime before intimated to my Officers and Comrades the Design I had to quit the Service upon the *Rhine*, assuring them it was not out of any Disobligation, having experienced their obliging Temper upon all Occasions; but as I understood King *James* was at the Head of his Army in *Ireland*, so I look'd upon my self in some Measure inexcusable if I serv'd in a foreign Army, when I might contribute more immediately to succour my Prince. My Reasons were applauded, and I not a little content to depart without giving Disgust. Without delay therefore I posted to *Paris*, where I design'd to make no very long stay, only what was necessary to recover my self from the Fatigue of the Campaign, and satisfy my Curiosity in taking a View of that noble City. I was happy in one thing during my stay here, that I was agreeably surpriz'd with the fight of my only Sister, whose Husband being under some malignant Court Influence, was oblig'd to withdraw with his Family out of *Scotland*. *Paris* is a Place like all other great Cities, where Persons of all Conditions and Characters may spend their Time agreeably, if that useful Trifle call'd Money be not wanting. Hitherto I had no occasion to be Melancholly upon that Score; for though I was not furnish'd to make any extraordinary Figure, yet being only a single Person, and as yet never launch'd out into any Extravagances, so within my narrow Sphere, I made a decent Appearance. But as no Man is prosperous at all Times, so it was not long before I found my self engag'd in an Affair which very much troubled my Repose, and which I would willingly have compounded for with my *Amsterdam* Bank. The Business was this, my Eldest Brother before he went with King *James* into *Ireland*, made some stay at *Paris* and *St. Germain's*, where he was order'd to collect some Recruits of the Three Nations, which he was to conduct over in the Quality of a Route-Captain. Now as he was a Person who had seen very much of the World, and was somewhat addicted to Gallantry and Intriguing with the Fair Sex, so he could not remain long in a Place without Publishing some Marks of his Vocation that way. It happen'd that a young Lady who lodg'd in the same House with him, had occasion to pay a visit to her Acquaintance; my Brother observing her in a Posture to go out of the House alone, offer'd to usher her to the place she design'd for. The Lady with the usual *French* Freedom and obliging Air, made him a Courtsey, and accepted the Offer. When he complied with this Piece of Civility, he took his leave, and return'd to his Lodgings. From this Accident my Brother dated an Intrigue. The Ladies Carriage (which by the way was nothing but what is customary there upon a slender Acquaintance) encourag'd him to make Advances; the next Step he made was to drink Tea with her in her Chamber, and afterwards he invited her to the *Opera*. But the young Lady as she was strictly Virtuous, never gave way to none of these Freedoms, but in the Company of her Landlady or her Daughter, who were both Prudes. In the mean time a Relation of this Gentlewoman's, who was a Lieutenant in the Regiment of *Navarre* came up to *Paris*, and had not been long in Town before he was inform'd by some busy Noddle, that his Cousin was either upon the Point of being married, or what was rather suggested to him, that one Captain *Ramkins* a

Scotch Officer, who lodg'd in the same House, had dishonourable Designs upon her. Now as Persons never want Arguments to induce them to take things in the worst Sense, (tho' I will not avouch for my Brothers Intention) so the *French* Officer being of a suspicious and also a fiery Temper, wanted no body to exasperate him. He took it for granted the Thing was so, and taking Coach he came to his Kinswoman, and after having attack'd her with a great deal of scurrilous Language, he waited not for her Reply, but flung away to find my Brother in order to cut his Throat. My Brother was then at St. *Germain's* receiving his last Orders from the Secretary for his departure for *Ireland*, but return'd that Night to *Paris*. His Landlady at his Return gave him a Note, which she said was deliver'd to her by the Post. The Contents were a double Surprize to him, first a bold and daring Challenge, and again, he neither knew whom he was to meet, nor upon what Account, only the Time and Place were mention'd. Thus doubtful with himself what Course to take, he acquainted his Landlady with the Subject of the Letter, but she was also at a loss, having neither seen the Lady's Relation, nor heard that he was come to Town, otherwise it might have created some Suspicion. But after Supper, according to Custom, she went up to have an Hours Chat with the young Lady, and among other Things, mention'd the odd Letter Captain *Ramkins* had receiv'd that Evening; the Lady suspecting what the matter really was, gave the Landlady sufficient Intimation by the Consternation she was in, that she was not unacquainted with the Occasion of that Letter. In the mean time, my Brother was gone to consult with some of his Acquaintance how he should behave himself in this juncture: Some advis'd him to neglect it as a sham Challenge, whereby some of his Acquaintance being merry dispos'd had a mind to divert themselves; others judg'd it might be a Design to Assassinate him upon account of some old Grudge now worn out of his Memory; in conclusion, 'twas order'd that he should present himself at the Place mention'd in the Challenge, and in case it was a real Thing, and that he escap'd with Life, a Horse should be ready to ride Post to *Brest*, whether he and his Recruits were order'd to take Shipping. But that he might not Alarm his Lodgings, he spent the remainder of the Night in the Tavern with his Friends, a fitter Preparation than praying for the Work he was about. About Five in the Morning he set out towards the Place of Battle, half a dozen of his Acquaintance following him at a convenient distance, to wait for the Issue, and to see Justice done in case he was assaulted against the usual Method of Duelling. When he came to the Place apointed, he saw a young Gentleman walking and musing under a Hedge with his Arms a Kimbo, whom he rightly judg'd to be his Man. When he came within Speech of him, the *French* Officer stop'd and ask'd him if his Name was not *Ramkins*, and whether he had not receiv'd a Note the Evening before upon such an Occasion? my Brother made no other Reply, but that he took himself to be the Person, and that he would indite an Answer with the Point of his Sword; for though, said he, I am a Stranger both to you and the occasion of this Trouble you have given me, yet as I take you to be a Man of Honour, so I suppose you think your self injur'd to that degree, that Satisfaction either cannot or will not be given any other way, and therefore I am here ready to make up this mysterious Quarrel after the Method you have made choice of. It sometimes happens that Peace is struck up between Two Nations Sword in Hand; but my Brother's Antagonist was too warm to stand a Parley and act the Part of a Plenipotentiary; upon which, without making the least Reply, he whips off his Cloaths into his Shirt, and open'd his Breast to show his Adversary he scorn'd to take any ungenerous Advantage. My Brother was also honourable upon the same score; for though he wore a short Buff Waiscoat without Skirts according to the Fashions of those Times, and which might have deadened a Push, yet he threw it off and put himself upon the Level with his Adversary in all respects, so to it they went. My Brother found himself much superior in Strength and Vigour, and that in all probability he cou'd Command his Adversary's Sword, paried with him a considerable Time, and put by several Pushes without attempting the Gentleman's Life, but finding him Resolute, and that one of them must fall, he made one home Thrust, and drove his Sword quite through his Adversary's Body, falling upon him at the same time; and thus fell this unfortunate young Gentleman a Victim to his ungovernable Passion.

It appear'd afterwards, that this *French* Officer having been often play'd upon by several in his Regiment, that he had been two Years among them and never yet made any Experiment of his personal Courage, told them at his going up to *Paris*, That they should here in a little Time he had qualify'd himself by killing his Man. Now it is suppos'd he thought the *British* Nation, not being fam'd for their Skill in handling the Sword, he had an excellent opportunity of showing his Manhood, and the Advantage of making his escape when he had done the Fact, because little or no Enquiry wou'd be made after a Stranger. My Brother being convinc'd his Adversary was incapable to Rally, made haste to gather up his Cloaths, exchanging the Evangelical Advice of *burying* the dead, to that natural Precept of *Self-preservation*, and I must leave him pursuing his Journey towards *Brest*, to return to his Lodgings, and give an account how this Catastrophe came to affect me at my coming to *Paris*.

The young Lady who was the Innocent occasion of this unfortunate Accident, took little Rest after she was inform'd of the Contents of the Note left by her Kinsman, and her Concern grew upon her when she understood Captain *Ramkins* was out of his Lodgings all Night; thus she remain'd under great Inquietudes till Three a Clock the next Day, when she, with her Landlady and Daughter, took a Coach privately and drove directly to the Place where the Gentlemen were to meet according to the Contents of the Letter. They discharg'd their Coach upon a pretence of taking a Walk in the Fields, and after a small Tour the Landlady's Daughter put her Foot into a Cake of clotted Blood, but it was so chang'd, as to the Colour, that she could not well distinguish what it was, but at a little distance finding a Glove, and several Blades of Grass ting'd with a Vermillion Dye, being press'd down and ruffled as it were with some Cattle weltring and tumbling about. They had a strong Suspicion one of the Gentlemen had ended his Days upon the Spot, and to clear their Suspicion, they walk'd back into the City till they arrived at the *Petite Chastelet*, which is a publick Room in the Nature of a Guard Bed, where all Corps are expos'd to view and whither People usually go in quest of any of their Friends, or Acquaintance that are wanting. And here the young Gentlewoman was quickly satisfy'd that her Cousin's Rashness had brought him to his End. This Accident happening not long before I came to *Paris*, the Discourse of it was very fresh, and what occasion'd me to have an account of it at my first Arrival, was my Lodging at the same House with my Brother, it being the usual Lodgings for *English* and *Scotch*. 'Tis true that Landlady and her Daughter were remov'd to *Orleans*, where they had an *Estate* belonging to their Family, but the young Lady, Cousin to the deceas'd Officer, was still in her old Apartment. I had not been above three Days, but my Name began to be known as well by the Direction of some Letters I receiv'd out of *Germany*, as by other means there are of having such Things divulg'd. The young Lady was not so struck with the Horror of the Name of her Cousins Murtherer, as not to have the Curiosity to peep at me as I came in and out of my Lodgings, and the more, because I had so great a Resemblance to him both as to Figure and Features, that without any extraordinary Skill in Physiognomy, she might conclude I was either his Brother or some near Relation. Now whether my Brother's Cavaliers Carriage had left an Idea in the Lady's Head which she could not conveniently part with, or her Inquisitiveness after me was only a Female Curiosity, I am not able to determine, but it was very unfortunate to me to have been so near a Kin to one she admired in case it was so, or that her Inquisitiveness should make me so publick; for I had not been in *Paris*

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