

# Documents relating to the Chaloner case.

**Author:** Isaac Newton

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<497r>

To the Honourable the Knights Citizens & Burgesses in Parliament assembled  
the humble Petition of William Chaloner Gent. Sheweth

That your Petitioner did in the last sessions of Parliament<sup>1</sup> discover several abuses committed in the Mint &<sup>2</sup> shewed by what methods false money was coyned,<sup>3</sup> that laws might more effectually be made to prevent the same & severall Acts were accordingly made against it, &<sup>4</sup> then some of the Mint threatned by some means to prosecute him & take away his life before the next sessions of Parliament,<sup>5</sup> telling him that this Honourable House had no power to meddle with the affairs of the Mint. therefore they would not obey the Order made by a Committee of this Honourable House

That the said Committee<sup>5</sup> promised your Petitioner he should suffer no dammage for his discoveries about the Mint & by the directions of this Honourable House a member thereof did represent his case to the King & his Majesty was pleased to say that he should suffer no dammage for the said matters, yet they committed him to Newgate & kept him in Irons for seven weeks alledging that he had abused the Mint in Parliament & they did falsly & illegally preferr a bill of Indictment against him but could bring no evidence against him to prove it altho they used strange methods to procure something. For many witnesses have made oath before a Iudge of the Kings Bench & some Iustices of peace, that some of the Mint have imployed & given Privilege to several persons to coyn false money who put it away among the subjects for good all which was done with an intent to draw him into coyning to take his life away & the better to effect the same they allowed the said persons money from time to time to buy tools & to carry on the said conspiracy against your Petitioners life. But all their endeavours could not get him to be concerned in coyning, but on the contrary he hath made it his business for a considerable time past to find out the Treasons & Conspiracies against the King & Kingdome & thereby hath discovered many who have been convicted for the same, & was this year writing a book of the present state of the Mint & the defects thereof (as he promised the said Committee) which he hoped would have been of service to the publick. But the Mint having notice of it they committed him to {Newgate} Prison & so prevented him from doing it. All which can be proved if this honourable House is pleased to require it.

That your Petitioner is utterly ruined by his endeavours to serve the King & Kingdom & by his discoveries against the Mint to this Honourable House

Your Petitioner therefore most humbly plays that this Honourable House will be pleased to consider his great sufferings & ruined condition as being incapable of providing for himself & family by what he intended for the service of the Publick & grant him such redress as shall seem best in your Honours great Wisdom & Iustice

And your Petitioner shall ever pray &c

W<sup>m</sup> Chaloner

## An Answer to Mr Chaloner's Petition.

M<sup>r</sup> Chaloner before a Committee of the last sessions of Parliament laboured to accuse & vilify the Mint & approve himself a more skilfull coyner then they that he might be made their supervisor & then supply Tho. Holloway with Tools out of the Tower to counterfeit his own milled money by a way which he then concealed from that Honourable Committee, boasting secretly that he would fun the Parliament as he had done the King & Bank before. And while he was upon this designe I gave the Chairman of that Honourable Committee minutes for a new Act of Parliament against Coyners & the Act was afterwards drawn up by some of the Iudges & Officers of the Mint & brought into the House of Lords without M<sup>r</sup> Chaloners assistance.

About the end of that Sessions M<sup>r</sup> Neale (as I have heard) moved the House to give leave that M<sup>r</sup> Chaloner might be prosecuted for taxing the Mint with coyning great quantities of false money but I do not know that there was any designe or menace to prosecute him for anything else then that calumny & much less to take away his life. Nor did I ever hear any one pretend that the Honourable House of Commons had no power to meddle with the Affairs of the Mint or that their Committee which then sat had not all the power which the House thought fit to give them: but when the Committee sent an order to me about preparing an Edger for M<sup>r</sup> Chaloner to grove new money, I told M<sup>r</sup> Chaloner that in regard of an Oath which I had taken I could not safely carry him to the Workmen of the Mint about it, but if he would give me directions I would take care of the matter; but M<sup>r</sup> Chaloner refusing to give me directions (as he ought to have done by that Order I directed the workmen (without him) to grove some half crowns shillings & sixpences & carried them to the Committee.

That his Majesty by order of this Honourable House was now moved in behalf of M<sup>r</sup> Chaloner I did not hear till after I had committed him which I was moved to do because he stood charged with new designes of counterfeiting Bills & Money forreign & domestick. And particularly upon the rising of the last sessions of Parliament he advised Tho. Holloway to take a house in the Country convenient for coyning & agreed with him that he should find materials & teach Holloway to coyn & Holloway & his brother Iohn should coyn together at that house & they three should share the money so made. And accordingly Tho. Holloway did take a house at Egham in Surrey & Chaloner did make some progress in teaching him & his brother & in preparing coyning tools, & for doing this & having coyned very great summs of Gold & not for offending the Mint he was committed & prosecuted. But the principal witness fled into Scotland & the Indictment being drawn wrong two others of the Witnesses were afterwards <498r> drawn off to swear against it & against the Mint, altho by swearing on both sides their credit fell & to draw off the Kings witnesses & swear them against the King gravells prosecutions & renders it dangerous for any man to prosecute & is therefore accounted a misdemeanour.

There are divers witnesses that M<sup>r</sup> Chaloner last spring & Summer was forward to coyn & I do not know or beleieve that any privilege or direction was given by any of the Mint to draw him or his confederates in or that any conspiracy was made against him or any money given to buy coyning tools. Neither can I find that he did ever make it his business to find out any treasons or conspiracies against the King & Kingdom but what were of his own contriving, as in the case of the Printers. And as for his intended book about the Mint I heard nothing of it till I saw it mentioned in his printed case & therefore did not commit him for that book. When I had committed him he told me he had written a book about preventing the counterfeiting of Bills & offered to let me see it, but said nothing of any book intended by him about the Mint.

If therefore he be ruined tis by his endeavouring not to serve the King & Government as he pretends but to coyn false money. And if he would but let the money & Government alone & return to his trade of Japanning, he is not so far ruined but that he may still live as well as he did seven years ago when he left of that trade & raised himself by coyning.

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