

# Cromwelliana



The Cromwell Association  
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## The Cromwell Association

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THE CROMWELL ASSOCIATION was founded in 1935 by the late Rt. Hon. Isaac Foot and others to help to preserve the memory of Oliver Cromwell the great puritan statesman, and to encourage study of the history of the Commonwealth protectorate and its leaders. It is not a political organisation and its aims are principally historical and antiquarian. The Association has at present over 300 members. It is anxious to extend its membership in order to widen its influence and increase its work.

Since the Association has come into existence it has:

1. Put up commemorative tablets at Dunbar, Edgehill, Naseby, Preston, Worcester, the Huntingdon Grammar School, and elsewhere, to mark the sites of Cromwell's victories or famous episodes in his career.
2. Helped to constitute a Cromwellian Museum at present housed in the Old Grammar School, Huntingdon. It arranges for lectures to be given, leaflets issued, etc., as required on Cromwellian subjects.
3. Established an Annual Service held on September 3rd each year, by Cromwell's Statue outside the Houses of Parliament, when the address is given by a distinguished Cromwellian.
4. The Association has also formed a small reference library from which books can be borrowed on written application, enclosing postage, from the Hon. Secretary, to whom communications and enquiries can be made.

## THE ACHIEVEMENT OF OLIVER CROMWELL

*The Address given at St. Margaret's Church, Westminster on September 3rd 1977 by Dr. Maurice Ashley C.B.E.*

Oliver Cromwell believed passionately that he had been God's chosen instrument to lead God's chosen people. On the night before he died he declared that though he would be willing to live to be of further service to God and his people, he knew that his work was done. In another prayer that he uttered as the day of his death dawned he reiterated this theme. 'Thou hast made me,' he said, 'though very unworthy, a mean instrument to do Thy People some good and Thee service'; 'many of them, he added, 'have set too high a value upon me, though others wish and would be glad of my death; Lord, however Thou do dispose of me, continue to do good for them. Give them consistency of judgment, one heart and mutual love' that the work of reformation may continue. This has the stamp of sincerity. I find it difficult to believe, as some historians have done at any rate in the past, that Cromwell was a man who mixed **hypocrisy** with **cant**.

But as he looked back on his life, what were the services that he believed he had done for God's people? First, it may be said that he converted England into a Great Power in the civilised world, much greater than it is today. What had been achieved during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I had been dissipated by the first Duke of Buckingham and by King Charles I who was obliged to conclude a humiliating peace with both France and Spain. Cromwell used the power of the navy, which Charles I admittedly had largely created, to defeat the monopolistic Dutch, then the wealthiest people in Europe, and to humble the Spanish Grandees with their far-flung empire. By conquering Jamaica and maintaining it against Spanish attempts to retake it, Cromwell raised the foundations of the first British empire, while the bravery of the red-coated soldiers he had helped to train, when they fought in the battle of the Dunes in 1658 impressed alike the French and the Spanish and even the exiled English Royalists. It was no shame, said Oliver, to be **Englishmen** and 'though not the greatest - yet a very great and the best people in the world.'

Some historians - the late George Macaulay Trevelyan, for example, - have also praised Cromwell for procuring domestic peace after ten years of civil wars. But to be fair, it must be admitted that there were still internal disturbances and unrest and that his triumphs over foreign enemies deflected martial energies away from the home front. As the poet Edmund Waller wrote in his ode on Cromwell's death:

Our dying hero from the continent  
Ravished whole towns; and forts from Spaniards reft.  
As his last legacy to Britain left,  
The ocean, which so long our hopes confined,  
Could give no limits to his vaster mind...  
From civil broils he did us **disengage**,  
From nobler objects for our martial rage:  
And with wise conduct, to his country showed,  
Their ancient way of conquering abroad.

'Our ancient way of conquering abroad' - thus the poet looked back to Edward III and Henry V - but Cromwell himself looked forward rather

to the Earl of Chatham and Admiral Nelson, to an empire based on expanding trade and naval power.

It was Oliver too who envisaged and in fact effected a union between England and Scotland. As early as 1650 he dreamed of a day of union and right understanding between the English and Scottish peoples based on love rather than conquest. And in the year of his death when the union had been attained he claimed that the Scots were better off than they had been under their great lords 'who made them work for their living no better than the peasants of France.' There is much good testimony to the fact that the Scots were more peaceful and more prosperous under the Cromwellian union than in the earlier time of constant internecine war between highland chieftains and between lowland nobility.

To turn now to what Cromwell could look upon as his services at home. First comes the reform of the law. He urged parliament out his career as Lord Protector to 'consider how the laws might be made less onerous to the people'; how to lessen expense for the good of the nation. The truth is, he said in 1656, 'there are wicked **abominable laws** that it will be in your power to alter. To hang a man for a trifle and pardon murder' he thought was shocking.

Needless to say, in seeking reform he met with considerable opposition from professional lawyers; and as Hugh Trevor-Roper has pointed out, 'Ignoring the great London lawyers with their obstructive legalities, he fetched a country lawyer from Gloucestershire (Matthew Hale) to advise him on reforming the law. Together they devised 'provincial courts throughout the whole nation and a register in every county'; they 'startled the lawyers and the City (of London) by 'courts of justice and equity at York', and sought to insist 'that all actions be laid in the proper county wherein the cause did arise.' Cromwell was insistent that poor debtors both in England and Scotland should not be cast into prison before they had been given a reasonable chance of repaying what they owed. English not Latin became the language used in the law courts and all prerogative courts were of course abolished and remained abolished; and Cromwell would have liked to have put an end to the long delays in the Court of Chancery.

Lastly, we come to the questions of religion and of liberty of conscience, about which I have written and spoken a good deal in my time. Cromwell on the advice of Dr John Owen created a Church that was widely embracing. Not only Congregationalists but Presbyterians and Baptists and even a number of former Anglicans were allowed to hold benefices, their honesty and morality being examined by Triers and those misbehaving being dealt with by local Ejectors; lay patronage except by sequestered Royalists was maintained throughout the Protectorate. After Bristol was occupied in 1645 Oliver wrote to the Speaker of the House of Commons: 'Presbyterians, Independents all had the same spirit of faith and prayer: the same pretence and answer: they agreed here, know no names of difference: pity it is that it should be otherwise **anywhere**.' That was to be the spirit of his ideal Church that he wanted to construct after he became Lord Protector.

Outside the State Church Cromwell permitted extreme sects to worship as they wished; Quakers and Fifth Monarchy Men were allowed to preach the Gospel in their own way so long as they did not dis-

turb the public peace or stir up sedition. Cromwell's blind spot was (of course) the Roman Catholics, but this he had in common with the vast majority of Englishmen in the seventeenth century as was to be trated after his death by the agitation over the Popish Plot and the movement to exclude the Roman Catholic James Duke of York from succession to the throne. Nevertheless he was able to assure Cardinal Mazarin - and this is now generally accepted - that the Catholics were **better** off during the Protectorate than before it, probably better off than they had ever been since the death of Queen Mary I. Indeed Dr Claire Cross in her stimulating article on the Church in England between 1642 and 1660 has written 'Contrary to what might have been predicted when the Puritans came to power Catholics did succeed in maintaining, even apparently **increasing** their church alongside the national church.'

As to the episcopalians, again to quote Dr Cross, 'not only the moderate episcopalians but also perhaps the majority of those episcopally minded among the laity seem to have succeeded in accommodating themselves to the latitudinarian form of church that developed under Cromwell.' Though Cromwell had attacked the bishops in his younger days, it had been more for political than religious reasons. In fact had English bishops been more like Scottish bishops in the extent of their authority the Cromwellian Church would have differed comparatively little in complexion from the Anglican Church which preceded it. Even the most dedicated Anglican Royalists could find a form of service that they liked. John Evelyn never had any difficulty in attending services in London conducted according to the Book of Common Prayer during the Protectorate. It is hardly too much to say that the Cromwellian Church was remarkably comprehensive, certainly more comprehensive than the Church of England has ever been since.

Like most men of good sense Oliver grew more tolerant as he grew older. He told parliament in 1654 that notions - **notions** - 'will hurt none but them that have them' and that 'it was **unjust and unwise** to deprive a man of his natural liberty upon a supposition that he **might** abuse it.' In 1656 he told the second Protectorate parliament how he 'had boxes (that is to say, buffets) and rebukes on the one hand and on the other; some censuring him for Presbytery; 'others (as) an inletter of all the sects and heresies in the nation.' 'I have borne my reproach.' he concluded, 'but I have through God's mercy not been unhappy in preventing any one religion impose upon another.'

Thus although when he lay dying Oliver Cromwell was exercised about whether he **himself** really was one of God's chosen, he was right in believing that he had done some service to the English people. He had made England into a Great Power; he had established union with Scotland; he had pressed for the reform of the law and the reformation of manners; he had created a comprehensive Church; he had fought for liberty of thought and liberty of conscience. Few men had more cause to look back on their lives with pride.

## OLIVER CROMWELL AND MONARCHY

Judith Stow

(Prize winning essay in the Association Essay Competition 1977)

In November 1644, in his attack upon the conduct of the Earl of Manchester, Cromwell included the charge that "he hath declared his dislike to the present warre, or the prosecution thereof, and his unwillingness to have it prosecuted unto a victory, or ended by the sword". 1 The business in hand was defeat of the Royalist forces, and if Cromwell had an inkling of the problems which would arise from the ending of the war by the sword, he was not seriously troubled by such thoughts at that time. By the summer of 1647 the situation was radically different: with the war over and the King in the hands of the Army, Cromwell was in a position to play a vital role in the settlement of the constitution. In the months that followed, Manchester's famous remark, "If we beat the King ninety-nine times, he would be King still" 2. might not unfittingly have been adopted by Cromwell himself.

Cromwell left London to join the Army on 4 June 1647, the day after Cornet Joyce had seized the King from Holdenby House. He had delayed for a considerable time before deciding to do so; according to Sir Gilbert Pickering, until issued with the ultimatum "from that violent and rash part of the Army. . . that if you would not forthwith, nay presently, come and head them, they would go their own way without you". 3 That Cromwell was at this stage already suspicious of the radical elements within the Army is quite possible. He had met Cornet Joyce in London on 31 May, and it is almost certain that he knew of the plan to abduct the King, but this fact does not necessarily mean that his opinions and those of the radicals were in harmony. Indeed, the indications are that he welcomed the opportunity to negotiate with Charles I, and made up his mind to join the Army only after hearing of the success of Joyce's operation. At Newmarket, where the Army rendezvoused at the beginning of July, and set up the Army Council composed of officers and rank-and-file soldiers, Cromwell and Ireton entered upon negotiations with the King via the Royalists Sir John Berkeley and John Ashburnham, which aroused the suspicions of the Leveller-inspired elements of the Army. According to Ludlow, the Agitators complained that "the doors of Cromwell and Ireton were open to (Berkeley and Ashburnham) 4 when they were shut to those of the Army"; and he asserted that

Cromwell appeared in all his conferences with Sir John Berkeley most zealous for a speedy agreement with the King, inasmuch that he sometimes complained of his son Ireton's slowness in perfecting the **Proposals** and his unwillingness to come up to his Majesty's sense. 5

The **Heads of the Proposals**, drafted by Ireton as a basis for negotiation with the King, appeared on 17 July; after a delay probably due to the upheavals of the Army's occupation of London, the Levellers published on 28 October **The Agreement of the People**, a document which amongst other things envisaged the abolition of monarchy. It was to debate the merits of these rivals plans for constitutional settlement that the Army Council met at Putney at the end of October.

The first day of the debates was spent in discussion of electoral

reform, and Cromwell left Ireton to argue the case against the Agitator's demands. On the subject of monarchy Cromwell had far more to say. He had made a three hour speech in Parliament on 20 October defending monarchical government, and on 1 November, the second day of the Putney Debates he took the lead in arguing against the assertion that there could be neither liberty nor safety under a monarchy. If Parliament could negotiate a settlement with Charles I which would safeguard his subjects from arbitrary action, he urged "I think there is much may be said for their doing of it". Above all, he warned the Agitators to beware of thinking that they possessed a monopoly of knowledge of God's will, and reminded his audience that "when we speak in the Name of the Lord it is of an high nature". 7. When Sexby argued that

We are going about to set up that power which God will destroy; I think we are going about to set up the power of Kings, some part of it, which God will destroy. 8. Cromwell replied that he wished that those who believed God intended to destroy certain persons would

make this a rule to themselves: 'Though God have a purpose to destroy them. . . yet God can do it without necessitating us to do a thing which is scandalous, or sin, or which would bring a dishonour to his name'. And therefore those that are of that mind, let them wait for God for such a way when the thing may be done without sin, and without scandal too. 9.

Ten days later the King had fled from Army custody to the Isle of Wight, whose newly-appointed Governor, Colonel Robert Hammond, had resigned command of his regiment because of misgivings about the Army's attitude to Charles I. It has been argued that Cromwell was involved in the King's escape; Christopher Hill remarks that if he was not, the event was truly providential. On 4 November the Army Council had voted for the extension of the franchise to all but servants; the following day a resolution was passed "that the Army might be called to a rendezvous and things settled". Cromwell and Ireton were losing influence with the rank-and-file, and prospects for acceptance of **The Heads of the Proposals** were bleak. Hill argues that Charles' escape, bringing with it the possibility of renewed war, enabled Cromwell to restore discipline and suppress republican sentiments for the time being. 10. It might be said, however, that the reminder of Charles I's unreliability could have given a boost to republicanism, and that the speedy restoration of discipline is tribute to Cromwell's strength of character and influence within the Army in a time of great uncertainty. Either way, the King's escape brought no progress towards a settlement; on the contrary, Charles I signed a treaty with the Scots which provided for the raising of an army on his behalf.

On 3 January 1648 Parliament voted that there should be no further addresses to the King. Yet despite Charles I's actions in the preceding months, Cromwell remained unconvinced that God was ready to destroy the power of Kings. Although Cromwell spoke in favour of the motion of No Addresses, 11. he still upheld the virtues of monarchical power, saying that only "necessity could force an alteration". 12. Throughout the summer the Army was engaged upon suppressing the Royalist risings of South Wales, Kent and Essex, and

defeating the invading Scots army; by the autumn this had been accomplished. The Second Civil War over, the task in hand was, once again the settlement of the kingdom; to this end Parliament had gone back on its earlier resolution and decided on 1 August that a personal treaty with Charles I should be concluded to enable negotiations to proceed. Originally for a period of forty days, the Treaty of Newport was extended in the hope that in time the King would agree to Parliament's proposals for a limited monarchy and a Presbyterian Church.

Meanwhile the Army – officers and rank-and-file alike – was growing increasingly impatient with the attempts to reach a settlement with the King. Ireton's mind at least, had changed since the debates at Putney. The Army Remonstrance of 20 November, drafted by him, called for the bringing to justice of the principal offenders against the Parliament; Charles I's defeat in the Second Civil War showed that "God would thereby declare his designing of that person to justice". 13. Not only renewed civil war but suspicion of Parliament's intentions contributed to this change of heart; justification for that suspicion came on 5 December when the Commons voted that the concessions which the King was prepared to make were sufficient basis for continuing negotiations. Cromwell, however, hesitated to accept the necessity of trying the King. In October he began the siege of Pontefract, where he remained, steering clear of the trouble brewing in the south. David Underdown cites a letter written by him to Robert Hammond on 6 November as proof that he was prepared to accept a Presbyterian State Church if this would further a settlement with the King. 14. Given his abiding dislike for the rigidity of the Presbyterian hierarchical system and his championship of toleration, the significance of such a concession is plain. As late as 25 November, when in another letter to Hammond he urged his friend to consider whether "the whole fruit of the war is not like to be frustrated, and all most like to turn to what it was, and worse". 15. If the King were not brought to justice, he gave away the fact that he himself continued to have doubts. Writing of the Remonstrance of 20 November, he remarked that "we could perhaps have wished the stay of it till after the treaty". 16. The best advice he could give was that Hammond should "look into providences; surely they mean somewhat". 17.

Cromwell's doubts lingered; the decisions were taken by others. At last leaving Pontefract, where his presence had not been a necessity, he journeyed slowly to London, and arrived there on 6 December, at the end of the first day of Pride's Purge. Professing "that he had not been acquainted with this design, yet since it was done he was glad of it, and would endeavour to maintain it", 18. he in fact, as Underdown and Blair Worden show, hoped to reverse it. 19. He worked towards the aim of allowing many of the secluded members back into the House of Commons, in the hope that the King could thus be saved, suggesting to Bulstrode Whitelocke that he "frame somewhat in order to the restitution of the secluded members". 20. Opposing Ireton's view that the King should be tried before all other offenders, he made a final attempt to negotiate with Charles I, the Earl of Denbigh acting as intermediary. It was not until 25 December, when it became clear that Denbigh could make no progress, that Cromwell abandoned the King as a lost cause.

Speaking the following day in Parliament, he admitted that the King must be tried: "Providence and necessity had cast them upon it". 21.

Finally convinced that in bringing the King to justice the Army and what was left of the Long Parliament were doing God's work, Cromwell had no room for second thoughts; neither his own nor those of anyone else. Brushing aside objections that the proceedings of the High court of Justice set up to try Charles I, were not legal, it was Cromwell who supervised the trial, and who forced those who at the last minute developed the doubts to which he had for so long been subject, to swallow them and sign the King's death warrant.

While Cromwell at last gave up Charles I as a lost cause, he did not despair of monarchy as an institution. The conservatism of his aims after the King's execution is striking. The early months of 1649 saw him attempting to persuade those M.P.'s who had withdrawn from Parliament to return, and to persuade his colleagues to agree to readmit the purged members. February saw a victory for Cromwell and for moderation over the issue of the oath to be taken by members of the Council of State. The original version, drafted by Ireton, was explicit in its approval of the execution of the King and the abolition of the House of Lords; it was unacceptable to a majority (twenty-two out of forty-one) of those chosen for the first Council of State. Cromwell's version, which replaced Ireton's oath, only required Councilors to "adhere to this present parliament in the maintenance and defence of this nation, as it is now declared by this parliament". 22. Cromwell himself had doubts about the abolition of the House of Lords; when this step was suggested soon after the King's execution, it made him wonder:

if they were all mad...to incense all the peers of the whole kingdom against them at such a time when they had more need to study a near union with them. 23.

On 6 and 7 February, it was voted that the House of Lords and the monarchy should be abolished. Later, contrary to the Commons' resolution that

the office of a king in this nation, and to have the power thereof in any single person, is unnecessary, burdensome, and dangerous to the liberty, safety and public interest of the people of this nation. 41. Cromwell was to assert that it was the individual, Charles I, rather than the institution of monarchy, which was objectionable. 25.

The years 1649 to 1651 were taken up with the conquest of Ireland, the invasion of Scotland and the defeat of the Scottish army whose leaders had engaged to put Charles I's eldest son on the throne. Once the threat to the Commonwealth posed by the Scots had been removed, Cromwell, in conjunction with Oliver St. John and Whitelocke, began to consider the possibility of bringing about a restoration of monarchy. At some time in the autumn or winter of 1651 a conference was held to inquire, in Cromwell's words "whether a republic, or mixed monarchical government will be best to be settled". 26. When Whitelocke suggested that it might one day be possible to come to a settlement which would put either Charles (II) or his younger brother James Duke of York on the throne, Cromwell replied:

That will be a business of more than ordinary difficulty.

That will be a business of more than ordinary difficulty. But really I think, if it may be done with safety, and preservation of our

Rights, both as English and as Christians, that a settlement with somewhat of Monarchical power in it would be very effectual. 27.

Cromwell held Charles II in contempt; the idea put forward at this conference by Sir Thomas Widdrington, that Charles I's third son, the Duke of Gloucester, might be made King, was more appealing. Worden says that Cromwell considered this to be a possibility and sought to sound others on the matter as late as September 1652. 28. Yet despite the fact that 1649 had seen the return to Parliament of many of the conservative-minded M.P.'s who had been secluded or withdrawn voluntarily at Pride's Purge, the Rump Parliament did not display any great interest in the idea. Worden suggests that one of the reasons for this may have been that the military victories in Ireland and at Dunbar and Worcester, England's increasingly impressive Navy, and the diplomatic strength of the Commonwealth engendered confidence in republican government: monarchy was no longer so widely regarded as a necessary institution. 29. At any rate, proposals for the restoration of monarchy were after 1652 abandoned for the time being.

It is true, as there are some things in the Establishment which are Fundamental, so there are others which are not, but are Circumstantial....The Government by a Single Person and a Parliament is a Fundamental!

30. asserted Cromwell in September 1654. His efforts before this date, first, to restore Charles I to some position in the constitution, and later, to win support for a plan to replace the Commonwealth by a form of mixed monarchy, make it plain that he never espoused republican ideas. What was it that convinced him of the desirability of monarchical government? Certainly it was not the reign of Charles I: together with the vast majority of M.P.'s in 1640, Cromwell had believed that constitutional restrictions on the King's power were necessary, a cause for which he fought hard and long; and it was Charles I's refusal to accept such restrictions, and his manifest untrustworthiness, which finally convinced him that the execution of the King was the only course open to those in power at the beginning of 1649.

Worden describes Cromwell as "a conservative by social instinct and early political training". 31. and it is in the beliefs and prejudices of his day, and of his class, that we should look for the explanation of his attitude to monarchical power. Ireton, in the Putney debates, distinguished between a natural right, as that of breathing, or that of being protected by law from arbitrary attack, and a civil right, as that of owning property or having a voice in elections. One of the dangers of all men having the vote was that those without property, once in power, might deprive those that did have it. The old order safeguarded the privileged from such dangers; the King, as representative and head of that old order, and as the fount of all privilege, safeguarded property rights. "No men," Cromwell told Sir John Berkeley in 1647, "could enjoy their lives and estates quietly, without the King had his rights" 32.

Had Sir Robert Filmer's *Patriarcha* been available for his perusal, Cromwell would have found much in it with which to disagree; Filmer's extreme position on the necessity of absolute monarchy would have been quite unacceptable to anyone who had supported the cause

of the Long Parliament. However, he would have been neither unfamiliar with nor unsympathetic to the belief underlying Filmer's thesis, namely, that government was paternal in nature, with the King at the head of government standing as *Pater patriae*. Filmer was not the first to analyse kingly power in this way: James I had likened the relationship of a King to his subjects to the relationship between the head and the rest of the body, to that between God and man and to that between a father and his children. *Patriarcha*, writes Laslett, "is representative of a whole tradition of speculation about politics". 33. At Putney in 1647, the radical Colonel Rainsborough referred to those with political power as "our (civil) fathers and mothers". 34. Just how generally patriarchy was accepted as political theory is illustrated by the fact that John Locke found it necessary to refute the argument of *Patriarcha* prior to advancing his own political theory; the reason for this, as Laslett writes, was not the brilliance of Filmer's argument but rather the appeal it made to "the assumptions of all his own readers and most of Locke's". 35. This appeal is easily explained, for not only natural fathers stood to gain from the analogy between their authority and that of the King, but also all those - employers of labour, masters of household servants and apprentices, landlords, the Church - who were seen as standing *in loco parentis*. As Gordon Schochet stresses, all authority in the seventeenth century was patriarchal authority. 36. Cromwell, as father, landowner, and political conservative, must early in his career have appreciated the importance of monarchical power in the preservation of the *status quo*.

However, while being politically conservative, Cromwell was a religious radical, and he was concerned with reform of the law and alleviating the hardship of the poor. James I said "No bishop, no King": events proved him right. Cromwell disregarded this maxim, but when he found that there were few, like him preferring a monarchy to a republic, and at the same time wishing for religious toleration and social reform, he might well have reflected upon the impossibility of his position. Worden argues that it is Cromwell's "ideological schizophrenia. 37. which provides the key to an understanding of his actions during the period from the dissolution of the Rump, on 20 April 1653 to the beginning of the Protectorate, on 16 December 1654.

Against the formerly established view that Cromwell dissolved the Rump because it was pushing through a bill for recruiter elections, Worden argues a persuasive case that he dissolved it because it was about to pass a bill providing for new elections and an end to its own life shortly before the new Parliament met. For many months Cromwell and the Army officers had pressed for a dissolution; in March the officers urged immediate intervention and again on 19 April demanded that the Rump be dissolved. Cromwell, however, with his usual regard for constitutional propriety, was reluctant to use force against Parliament, and until the very day of his sudden action used his influence to restrain the officers and to persuade them to attempt to reach a compromise settlement with the Rump. On the evening of 19 April he put forward the proposal that in the interval between dissolution of the Rump and the meeting of a new Parliament a committee of forty persons should be set up, to effect the beginning of godly reformation and to make the people "forget monarchy". 38. Yet on the morning of 20 April, all attempts at compromise were abandoned. On

hearing that the Rump, against their word, were pushing through the dissolution bill, Cromwell hastened to the Commons and proceeded to dissolve Parliament.

Worden's thesis is supported by an impressive body of evidence. Despite early accusations that the Rump had sought to perpetuate itself, there was no attempt to prove that there had been a recruiting clause in the bill, and such allegations gradually disappeared from the Cromwellian apologia. The True State of the Case of the Commonwealth, which was issued in 1654 as a justification of the Protectorate omitted any mention of a recruiting clause in the dissolution bill, on which Worden comments:

...given Cromwell's anxiety, which in the protectorate period bordered on the obsessive, to convince both his audience and himself of the justice of the dissolution, it is almost inconceivable that he and his colleagues would have failed to make such an accusation had there been grounds for doing so. 39. Moreover, contemporary critics of the dissolution accused Cromwell of acting as he did to prevent new elections. Streater, an Army officer, claimed that Cromwell argued that "the people (were) not fit to be trusted with their own liberty", a sentiment which he expressed at the meeting of the Council of State on the afternoon of 20 April: "the people shall not have their liberty, I say the people shall not have their liberty". 40. A letter attributed to Henry Marten accused Cromwell of "punishing" the Rump

for the best and most honest attempting they ever made, to wit they had (that) the settlement of these nations, which they saw themselves not able to accomplish, might be performed by others. 41

Lucy Hutchinson also claimed that the Rump "had prepared a bill to put a period to their own sitting, and provide for new successors". 42.

If Worden's thesis is accepted, it must be asked why Cromwell abandoned his earlier desire for a dissolution and fresh elections, and why, even more strangely, he wanted "the people" to "forget monarchy". Inconsistent though his words and actions may seem to have been, they are explicable in terms of his "ideological schizophrenia" already referred to. The Rump Parliament had been a disappointment to him; it had failed to pass the radical measures on matters of religion, law and social reform for which he had hoped. This need not surprise us in view of the large conservative element in the Rump, but that Cromwell had hoped for the impossible, or at least the highly improbable, is certain. Yet against a plan for fresh elections was the fact that any Parliament which might be elected to succeed the Rump could not fail to be still more conservative; and although, as we have seen, conservatism appealed to part of the political make-up of Cromwell, in April 1653 he was much under the influence of those of millenarian sentiments. His religious radicalism proved at that time to be the stronger of the two conflicting parts of his ideology. As in 1648-9 his moment of decision was preceded by a long period of withdrawal from the centre of the political stage, and he was later to claim that on the morning of 20 April he had acted whilst in a state of "spiritual intoxication". 43. He had waited on God for directions as to the course he should take, wishing that God "would rather slay me than put me upon

the doing of this work". 44. The outcome of his spiritual struggle was the Nominated Assembly, nicknamed Barebones Parliament.

If the Rump had disillusioned Cromwell, Barebones Parliament disillusioned him still further. The Saints summoned to bring about the reforms for which he longed failed in the task before them; as in many other Parliaments, the members of Barebones soon fell to arguing amongst themselves, with little productive result. Whereas in April 1653 Cromwell's religious radicalism triumphed over the rest of his ideological make-up, in December 1653 the need for a monarchical element in the constitution was uppermost in his mind and in those of his supporters. On 12 December the conservative element of the Nominated Assembly effected the coup of voting their own dissolution, before the radical members arrived at the House to object. On 15 December, the **Instrument of Government**, drafted by the leading army officers, was presented to and accepted by Cromwell; the following day he was installed as Lord Protector. Authority was once more vested (theoretically) in a single person and Parliament; Cromwell was now legally entitled to dissolve Parliament once it had sat for five months and he reserved the right to govern without Parliament for the first nine months of the Protectorate. Elizabeth I, James I and Charles I had all experienced the problem of dealing with intractable parliaments; Cromwell who had experienced similar difficulties, albeit in different circumstances, had by December 1653 fully realised the value of the monarchical power to govern, at least part of the time, outside Parliament.

The Instrument of Government had given Cromwell something aspiring to monarchical power, but his authority rested upon the strength of the Army alone, and the question of whether it would be best to settle the constitution along the old lines of King, Lords and Commons remained. In 1652 Cromwell had asked Whitelocke, "What if a man should take it upon him to be King?" 45. The following year, Lambert put forward the idea of making Cromwell King, as did Lord Broghill in 1654. Ludlow recalled that in January 1657, Colonel William Jephson "moved in the House, that Cromwell might be made King" and he claimed that despite the Protector's dismissal of the idea as madness, Jephson was rewarded for his suggestion by advancement for himself and his family. 46. The possibility that the Protectorate might actually be superseded by the reign of King Oliver grew stronger shortly afterwards when on 23 February Alderman Pack delivered in the House the proposals for constitutional change set out in the **Humble Petition and Advice**.

There was evidently much heart searching in the weeks that followed.

That was the thing will deserve deliberation, the utmost deliberation and consideration on my part, so I shall think myself bound to give as speedy an answer to these things as I can 47. Cromwell told the House on 31 March; it was not until 8 May that he finally refused to take the title of King. Indeed, as Hill argues, there was much to be said for the proposal that he should accept the Crown. 48. To the men who had, before the Civil War, been regarded as the natural rulers of the counties, a return to the old forms of government was eminently desirable. The military rule of the Major-Generals was

hated; perhaps if Cromwell became King, the Commission of the Peace would be restored to its former place as the chief instrument of local government. A hereditary monarchy would certainly make for a quieter time after Cromwell's death than could be hoped for if he left no obvious successor; and as Hill points out, Cromwell's age must have made this issue as urgent a matter to the Second Protectorate Parliament as it had been to Elizabeth's later parliaments. Furthermore, the position of a Protector was more vulnerable than that of a King: old ideas about the special status of a crowned king had not died with Charles I. The Royalist Penruddock had claimed in 1655 that "if Oliver had been crowned King he would have known his revolt was treasonable". 49. His words did not go unheeded. At a conference on 11 April between Cromwell and the Committee of Ninety-Nine appointed to discuss the **Humble Petition and Advice**, Lord Broghill pointed out that:

By an Act already existing (the 11th of Henry VII), all persons that obey 'a King *de facto*' are held to be guiltless; not so if they serve a Protector *de facto*. 50.

Not only would Cromwell's acceptance of the Crown make his own position more secure, his powers would be limited, thus securing the liberties of the nation for which men had in the first instance, taken up arms against Charles I. "The title of Protector is not limited by any rule of Law that I understand", remarked Lenthall on the same occasion: 51. that of King was.

The **Humble Petition and Advice** provided for the type of mixed monarchical settlement which Cromwell had long favoured; and he assured those who urged him to accept it that he was "hugely taken with the word settlement". 52. Why then, did he refuse the Crown? Ludlow argued that it was Army pressure alone which prevented him from accepting, 53. a verdict which Hill accepts arguing that it was "the lower-class upstart officers" who pressurised the rest of the Army into forcing Cromwell to refuse the Crow 54. There is something to be said for the view that Cromwell was strongly tempted by Parliament's offer. The long time he took to reach a decision, already referred to, might be an indication of this. Also his professions of unworthiness sound a little strange. In September 1654 he had protested to Parliament: "...though I told you in my last speech "that you were a Free Parliament" yet I thought it was understood withal that I was the Protector, and the Authority that called you! That I was in possession of the Government by a good right from God and men! 55.

However, before accepting the theory that Cromwell rejected the Crown against his will, a number of points must be considered. The Cromwellian court had been noticeable in its lack of ostentation, and the Protector protested his lack of personal interest in the title of King, saying to Fleetwood and Desborough that "monarchy...was but a feather in a man's cap". 56. Not only did he display indifference to the trappings of monarchy; he was also troubled by the thought that God might be against Kingship itself:

God hath seemed to deal with the Persons and the family that He blasted the very Title...I will not seek to set up that which providence hath destroyed, and laid in the dust... 57.

He told the Committee of Ninety-Nine on 13 April. If his lengthy deliberations failed to quiet such fears, this might account for his final decision as much as, or perhaps more than, Army pressure. And after all, why should he have been disappointed with the final settlement? He failed to see the absolute necessity of the title of King which others urged upon him: "As such a Title hath been fixed, so it may be unfixed"; 58. and throughout the period of debate on this issue he stressed that he liked the proposals of the **Humble Petition and Advice** well enough, excepting that of restoration of the title of King. C.H. Firth's verdict is that with the new constitution, which restored a Second Chamber, gave the Protector the right to appoint his successor, and provided a parliamentary, rather than a military, base to his power, "Cromwell had gained what he desired". 59. He may not have taken it upon him to be King, but whether that was of his own volition or as a result of outside pressure, he had without question gained a settlement with something of monarchical power in it.

Monarchical power was, throughout his political career, of fundamental importance to Oliver Cromwell. From the summer of 1647, when in the face of a challenge to established forms of government he was forced to express his ideas about the place of the King in the constitution, until his death in 1658, he remained convinced that the best form of government was that by a single person and a parliament. The one time when he envisaged government without an element of the monarchical was the short period during 1653 before he became disillusioned with the Nominated Assembly. He said that one of the tasks of a nominated body would be to make people "forget monarchy". Hill writes:

That he really intended to hand over power there can be no doubt. The Dutch Commissioners were instructed no longer to address their communications to 'His Excellency and the Council of State' but simply to 'the Council of State'. 60.

However his religious radicalism and his hopes for a parliament which would legislate for social reform, although irreconcilable with his political conservatism, served in the long run to strengthen his convictions about the necessity for monarchical power. For the failure of his radical aims taught him the lesson learned by so many reformers who are involved with practical politics, that people have to be made to do what other people think is good for them. As Underdown writes, "Cromwell had always preferred 'what's for their good, not what pleases them'". 61. When in 1653 the Saints failed to accomplish what Cromwell thought was good for the people of England, it became clear to him that the only hope lay in the authority of a monarch.

Notes: (1) Bruce (ed.), *The Quarrel between the Earl of Manchester and Oliver Cromwell*, Camden Society 1874-5, p. 80. (2) *ibid*, p. 93. (3) quoted C. Hill, *God's Englishman*, penguin 1973, p. 85. (4) E. Ludlow, *Memoirs*, Oxford 1894, Vol. I, p. 165. (5) *ibid*, p. 158. (6) A.S.P. Woodhouse, *Puritanism and Liberty*, Chicago 1974, p. 98. (7) *ibid*, p. 102. (8) *ibid*, p. 103. (9) *ibid*, p. 106. (10) Hill *op. cit.*, p.p. 92-4. (11) *ibid*, p.95 (12) quoted D. Underdown, *Pride's Purge*, Oxford 1971, p.167. (13) *ibid*, p.121. (14) *ibid*, p.119. (15) T. Carlyle (ed.) *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, London 1888,

Vol. I, Letter LXXXV, p.342. (16) *ibid*, p.343 (17) *ibid*, p.342 (18) quoted Underdown, op. cit., p.150 (19) Underdown, op. cit., p. 167 ff: B. Worden, **The Rump Parliament**, Cambridge 1974, p.67 ff (20) quoted Worden, op. cit., p.p. 67-8 (21) quoted Underdown, op. cit., p.172 (22) Worden op. cit., p.p. 180-1 (23) quoted Underdown, op. cit., p. 202 (24) *ibid.*, p.p. 202-3 (25) Hill, op. cit., p. 104 (26) Carlyle, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 312 (27) *ibid.*, p. 313 (28) Worden, op. cit., p.277 (29) *ibid.*, p.174 (30) Carlyle, op. cit., Vol. III, Speech III, p.53 (31) Worden, op. cit., p. 69 (32) quoted Hill, op. cit., p.87 (33) P. Laslett, 'Introduction' to Filmer's **Patriarcha**, Oxford, 1949 p. 26 (34) Woodhouse, op. cit., p. 61 (35) Laslett, op. cit., p. 22 (36) G.J. Schochet, 'Patriarchalism, Politics and Mass Attitudes in Stuart England' **Historical Journal** 12, 1969. (37) Worden, op. cit., p.69 (38) quoted Worden op. cit., p. 347. (39) *ibid.*, p. 360. (40) *ibid.*, p. 368. (41) *ibid.*, p. 365. (42) *ibid.*, p. 368. (43) *ibid.*, p. 381. (44) Carlyle, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 330. (45) quoted Hill, op. cit., p. 171. (46) Ludlow, op. cit., Vol. II p. 24. (47) Carlyle, op. cit., Vol. III, Speech, pp. 220-1. (48) Hill, op. cit., p. 171 ff. (49) quoted Hill, op. cit., p. 172. (50) Carlyle, op. cit., Vol. III, Speech X, p. 237. (51) *ibid.*, p. 236. (52) *ibid.*, Speech XIII, p. 266. (53) Ludlow, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 24 ff. (54) Hill, op. cit., p. 173. (55) Carlyle, op. cit., Vol. III, Speech III, p. 52. (56) Ludlow, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 24. (57) Carlyle, op. cit., Vol. III, Speech XI, p. 254. (58) *ibid.*, p. 243. (59) C. H. Firth, **Oliver Cromwell**, New York 1903, p. 427. (60) Hill, op. cit., p. 135. (61) Underdown, op. cit., p. 267.

**Bibliography:** Thomas Carlyle (ed.), **Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches**, London 1888. C. H. Firth, **Oliver Cromwell**, New York 1903 Peter Laslett, 'Introduction' to Filmer's **Patriarcha**, Oxford 1949. Edmund Ludlow, **Memoirs**, Oxford 1894. Gordon J. Schochet, 'Patriarchalism, Politics and Mass Attitudes in Stuart England', **Historical Journal** 12, 1969. David Underdown, **Pride's Purge**, Oxford 1971. A.S.P. Woodhouse, **Puritanism and Liberty**, Chicago 1974. Blair Worden, **The Rump Parliament**, Cambridge 1974.

#### CROMWELL AND REGALITY

*The Address given by Mr. Roy Sherwood at the Annual General Meeting, Hinchbrooke House, Huntingdon, April 22nd 1978.*

'I cannot undertake this Government with that title of King'. This, after two-and-a-half months deliberation was the answer of a one-time relatively obscure Huntingdon squire, Oliver Cromwell, to Parliament's Humble Petition and Advice that he should assume the 'name, style, title, dignity and office of King of England, Scotland and Ireland, and the respective Dominions and Territories thereunto belonging'.

Consequently the word King was struck out of the Humble Petition and Advice, which was promulgated on 23 May 1657, and Protector, the title with which Cromwell had ruled for the previous three-and-a-half years, inserted in its place.

But what precisely was the nature of Cromwell's office under this revised, compromise, constitution? Clearly the office of Lord Protector

was no longer what it had been under the Instrument of Government which had brought Oliver to power in December 1653. And as the Humble Petition and Advice did not contain the designation King it is generally believed that the powers of the Protector were not those of a King either. Or were they?

It would seem that there is evidence which suggests they were; that the powers and prerogatives inhering in the royal title had in fact been vested in the office of Lord Protector, and consequently even though, under the revised constitution, Cromwell continued to rule with the style of Lord Protector of the Commonwealth, he nevertheless now occupied the office of King.

The main body of evidence is twofold and is contained in

- (1) the extent to which the eventually accepted version of the Humble Petition and advice represented a compromise settlement; and
- (2) the extraordinary reinvestiture of Cromwell as Lord Protector on 26 June 1657.

Now the essential differences between the version of the Humble Petition and Advice originally submitted to Cromwell and rejected, and that accepted by the Protector, are confined solely to an alteration of the title with which Cromwell would rule and to that title's circumscription. Or, to use the term as then expressed in the House of Commons, the title was 'bounded, limited and circumstantiated'.

But what precisely does this mean? It would seem to mean that the office of Protector was circumscribed to make it conformable to that of King. This is borne out by an important amendment to the new constitution called the Humble Additional and Explanatory Petition and Advice which requested 'That your Highness will be pleased, according to the usage of former Chief Magistrates (i.e. Kings) in these Nations, and for the better satisfaction of the people thereof, to take on Oath in the form ensuing . . . .

This oath was in fact a form of the traditional tripartite coronation oath in which Oliver was asked to swear to uphold and maintain the true reformed Protestant Christian religion and to encourage the profession and professors of the same, to preserve the peace, safety, just rights and privileges of the people and govern them according to the law.

Now the reason why the essential differences between the version of the Humble Petition originally submitted to Cromwell and rejected, and that accepted by the Protector, were confined solely to an alteration of the title with which Cromwell would rule, and to that title's circumscription, was because Cromwell's objections to the revised constitution were also confined solely to his assumption of the title King.

These objections did not, however, extend to the restoration of the office of King. This is quite explicit in the statement which the Protector made in his declinatory speech on 8 May 1657: 'I thing the Act of Government (the Humble Petition and Advice) both consist of very excellent parts, in all but that one thing, the title, as to me . . . I cannot undertake this Government with that title of King'.

There are also the protracted deliberations on the subject of Cromwell and the crown. In these the Protector demurred in respect of

the restoration of the title, not the office, of King. The gist of Cromwell's argument had been, why should the person in which the supreme authority resides be any less a King simply because his style is spelled P-R-O-T-E-C-T-O-R?

'Signification goes to the thing, certainly it does, and not the name' asserted Oliver.

In answer to the contention that the style of Protector, being a new one, was not known by law (which is why in the revised Humble Petition and Advice it had to be 'bounded, limited and circumstantiated'), whereas the title of King 'is known by the law of England . . . and more conformable to the laws of the nation', Cromwell cited the proposal to alter James I's title from King to one that was also new and not known by the law, that of Emperor. This style had, in the summer of 1655, also been suggested as a suitable one for Oliver to adopt if he were to accept the crown.

Thus Cromwell, at least, would have seen nothing paradoxical in ruling as King, but with the title that had originally been bestowed upon him under the Instrument of Government in December 1653.

A month after the promulgation of the revised constitution there took place the re-investiture of Cromwell as Lord Protector, which brings us to the second part of the main body of evidence that would seem to suggest that Oliver occupied the office of King.

The event took place in Westminster Hall, as Cromwell's original investiture as Lord Protector had done some three-and-a-half years earlier on 16 December 1653. This previous occasion was a rather simple affair. It was, in fact, merely a swearing in ceremony which Cromwell attended modestly attired in a black suit.

Nothing could be further removed than this earlier ceremony was from the re-investiture of Cromwell on 26 June 1657, because it could be said that on that day Oliver became truly and legally a King. The kingly office, albeit not the title, had remained enshrined in the Humble Petition and Advice and now, by way of augmentation or amplification, all the essential processes required in the making of a King were to be effected at this second investiture.

There was the Earl of Warwick bearing the sword of state before the Protector as is the custom at a coronation, the Sword of State being representative of monarch's presence. Also borne before Oliver were three more swords of state, two symbolising justice and the third mercy, which, as those of you who have seen the film or telerecording of the coronation of Elizabeth II will know, is also the custom at a coronation.

And standing under a rich cloth of state Oliver was vested with a robe of purple velvet lined with ermine, being, in the words of a contemporary account of the ceremony, 'the habit anciently used at the investiture of princes'. He was then presented with a richly gilt and bossed bible, girt with a sword and furnished with a sceptre, signifying kingly power and justice.

Oliver then took his coronation oath. And after a dedicatory prayer he sat down to a trumpet fanfare in the ancient coronation chair which had been brought out of Westminster Abbey for the occasion. This was followed by a proclamation, read by a herald, commanding all persons to yield due obedience to Oliver, and the acclamation

'God save the Lord Protector'.

All of the essential elements in the ceremonial making of a King had been adhered to at this the second investiture of Cromwell as Lord Protector. The only significant ingredients of a true coronation that were missing at the re-investiture of Oliver were the anointing and the crowning.

Now the anointing of a monarch is regarded as the confirm of divine sanction upon his kingship. But if one takes the view of Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Cranmer the anointing is not necessarily an essential element in the coronation ritual.

The primate expressed his opinion on this subject when counselling the young Edward VI at the time of his coronation in February 1547. 'Kings', asserted Cranmer, 'be God's anointed, not in respect of the oil which the bishop useth, but in consideration of their power, which is ordained, of their sword, which is authorised, and of their persons, which are elected by God. The oil, if added, is but a ceremony; if it be wanting, that king is yet a perfect monarch notwithstanding, and God's anointed as well as if he was inoiled.'

It goes without saying that to many all of those necessary attributes of kingship espoused by Cranmer could be found in Cromwell, the confident assumption, for instance, that Oliver was 'elected by God' being embraced in his style and titles, which described him as Protector by the Grace of God.

As for the crowning, although in modern times it has come to represent the climax of the coronation ceremony it is nevertheless not a particularly significant ingredient in a coronation. It merely constitutes the outward assumption of the royal dignity, like the bestowal of the other insignia of office such as the sword and sceptre which were, as we have seen, accorded to Oliver.

Episcopacy having been formally abolished, there was, of course, no Archbishop of Canterbury to invest Cromwell with his royal robes and all the other ensigns of the kingly state, and to administer the oath. This was carried out by the Speaker of the House of Commons, signifying the primacy of Parliament. While the pronouncement of the dedicatory prayer, also by tradition the prerogative of the primate of all England, was made by a cleric of the independent persuasion, to which the Cromwellian regime adhered.

But as Cranmer had also opined in his counsel to Edward VI: 'The Bishops of Canterbury for the most part have crowned your predecessors and anointed them kings of this land: yet it was not in their power to receive or reject them, neither did it give them authority to prescribe them conditions to take or leave their crowns.'

It would appear then that the objection of the Council of Officers and others to the restoration of the kingly office had to all intents and purposes been circumvented with what can only be described as supreme subtlety. The eventual assumption of the title King, which was rumoured to be imminent throughout the remaining fifteen months of Oliver's life, would therefore have been a mere formality.

The extent to which this was so is illustrated by Cromwell's assumption, immediately after his re-investiture, of one of the most fundamental prerogatives of kingship. On 20 July 1657 the Protector created his first hereditary peerage, followed by another in April 1658, on the

letters patent of which appeared these words: 'Amongst other of the prerogatives which adorn the imperial crown of these nations none is of greater excellency or doth more amplify our favours than to be the fountain of honour'.

Cromwell's hereditary peers were expected to take their places in the newly constituted Other House, allowed for in the revised constitution, together with the commoners nominated to sit there by Cromwell, and certain members of the old nobility.

Although these representatives of the ancient peerage were somewhat lacking in enthusiasm for the composition of the Cromwellian Other House, or doubted its legality, some of them were, nevertheless, only too anxious to identify with the originator of a new dynasty, and consequently a substitute fount of honour and the embodiment of the hereditary principle.

Not least among the further possible proof that Oliver was in fact made a King in the Summer of 1637 was the assimilation, in the following Autumn, of the protectoral household to that of a crowned head. As in a royal court the household's administrative committee was to be the Board of Greencloth. A hierarchical structure, which contained elements found in the households of Oliver's royal predecessors but not hitherto in the protectoral household, was to be adopted. The office of Lord Chamberlain of the household was revived. It had, in fact, been originally instituted in the Summer of 1655, apparently in anticipation of the acceptance by Oliver of a crown at that time, and then shelved.

But surely most significant of all the further evidence which suggests that Cromwell was indeed made a King in 1657 was the appearance of imperial crown on the head of the Protector's funeral effigy, and in the left hand what is perhaps the most sacred ornament of the coronation regalia, an orb. Also, all the rooms used for the lying in state at Somerset House were 'completely furnished with escutcheons of his Highness's arms, crowned with an imperial crown'. While the standards of England and Scotland and the banner of the Union (between England and Scotland), borne in the funeral procession, were also adorned with an imperial crown, the standard of England and the banner of the Union carrying an additional embellishment in the form of the letters 'O' and 'P' for Oliver Protector.

Thus the reason for strict adherence to the procedure followed at the obsequies of King James I for Oliver's funeral was not simply that those who surrounded Cromwell were interring a head of state, it was because in their view they were burying a King. The reference to Oliver's son and heir as Richard the Fourth by a member of the younger Protector's Parliament would therefore appear to have been a fundamental truth, making the Restoration of 1660 that of the Stuart line and not the monarchy.

N.B. This thesis is advanced in greater detail in Mr. Sherwood's latest book *The Court of Oliver Cromwell* (Appendix A).

## CROMWELL IN SOUTH WALES

*J. L. Atkins*

What was the actual position in the early spring of 1648 as regards South Wales? The Royalist cause, that upheld the divine right of the King and passive obedience to him, had collapsed; the burning question now was as to the future policy of the Parliament and its army in the face of their recent and complete victory. The Presbyterian faction that had helped to overthrow the autocratic monarchy was certainly the ruling power; the King was a prisoner; and the key to the position centred in whichever of the two contending parliamentary parties was to prevail — the Independents with the army largely led by Cromwell, or the Presbyterian block with its ideals of limited monarchy and a Presbyterian church policy. In January 1648, the Parliament in London had decided by 141 votes to 92 to set aside the King and to settle the realm without him. This revolutionary decision had alienated a very large section of what we may call the Presbyterian moderates, and a movement at once started in which moderates began to join hands with the old cavalier party. It was a totally new phase of the civil war; one may call it perhaps a duel between the new Republican party under Cromwell, and a limited Monarchy party composed of defeated Royalists and loyal Presbyterians.

Under these new political conditions many of the old parliamentarians of note began to open secret negotiations with the imprisoned King. Amongst these malcontents we may mention three important persons in South Wales, namely Colonel John Poyer, the mayor and governor of Pembroke; General Rowland Laugharne; and Colonel Rice Powell. Of this trio Poyer is undoubtedly the most interesting. Carlyle unkindly and perhaps inaccurately describes him as a man "full of brandy and presbyterian texts of Scripture," but he was undoubtedly sincere, brave and capable, and fully determined to oppose the republican policy of Cromwell and the army. He had served the Parliament most ably and faithfully in the first part of the civil war, but this did not prevent his equal determination to serve the King in the new situation that had arisen. Clarendon speaks of him as "a very diligent and stout officer" and at this moment he was in command of both the walled town and strong castle of Pembroke. On being ordered from London to surrender his guardianship of the castle to a certain Colonel Flemyng, Poyer refused point blank to do so, and even drove off Flemyng's troops in an attempt to seize the castle by force. Poyer was then joined by Laugharne and Powell, and the three re-occupied the fortress and prepared to meet any emergency, openly declaring for the King. This was in March, 1648. On 9th April Poyer held a review of his forces on Colby Moor, near Haverfordwest, and then marched on to Carmarthen and thence eastwards towards Cardiff. All south Wales was now in full revolt, and the Royalist cause was once more very much in evidence.

This sudden insurrection in South Wales had by this date reached such serious proportions that the ruling powers in London hastily decided to send Cromwell to suppress it. This was on 1st May, but before Cromwell himself with the army could reach Wales, Colonel Horton had already broken the back of the revolt when he won the fiercely contested action at St. Fagans on 5th May, which checked the

advance of Poyer's troops on Cardiff. This seemed at crushing defeat at the moment; the rebels were utterly demoralised; General Laugharne was wounded; and about three thousand prisoners were taken. Colonel Horton with his victorious forces now marched towards the west and invested Tenby. As for Poyer and Laugharne, they seemed in no wise daunted by their smashing defeat, but retired to Pembroke, where they proceeded to dig themselves in and to prepare for a long defence of the castle and town, in expectation of the arrival of a fleet under Prince Charles, the King's son and heir, in Milford Haven.

It is at this point that Oliver Cromwell's military connexion with South Wales opens. Pembroke was likely to prove too hard a nut for Horton to crack, and on 1st May Lord Fairfax, the commander-in-chief of the army, deems Cromwell with his formidable force the most suitable person to crush the rebellion in the extreme west. Accordingly Cromwell arrives at Gloucester on 8th May, three days after the battle of St. Fagans; is at Monmouth on the 10th, and reaches Chepstow a day or two later. He takes the town of Chepstow and leaves his subaltern, Colonel Ewer, to deal with the castle and its garrison under Sir Nicholas Kemeys of Cefyn Mably, which surrendered later.

From Chepstow, Cromwell makes his way through Newport and Cardiff to Swansea, where he is received as the guest of that remarkable Welshman, Colonel Philip Jones, Member of Parliament for Glamorgan and High Steward of Swansea. Philip Jones, then aged thirty, was a most fervent admirer of Cromwell; but he was not as local tradition insists on having it, in any way related to the future Lord Protector either in blood or inter-marriage. (Cromwell himself was of Welsh ancestry).

It is evident, however, that the two men, one middle-aged and the other young, were great friends and close political allies. Indeed, it was commonly reported that during this visit to Swansea Philip Jones actually suggested to Cromwell the idea of assuming the British crown. The rumour was probably untrue, but it may be as well to mention here that Sir John Vaughan of Trawscoed, Member for Cardigan, was at a later date credited with giving a similar piece of advice.

From Swansea, Cromwell marches rapidly along the coast roads to Carmarthen. A popular tradition, relates that Cromwell went out of his direct route to spend a night at Golden Grove near Llandilo, the seat of the leading Royalist in South Wales, Richard Vaughan, second Earl of Carbery. The legend further relates that Lord Carbery, who was then living quietly in retirement, on learning of Oliver's approach, fled to a neighbouring farm-house, where he remained in hiding until his unwelcome visitor had departed. Still further the story proceeds to add that a year or two later Oliver sent his unwilling host a present of some deer from the royal parks, but with what object he did so is not clear, unless it were to be considered a belated return for Lord Carbery's involuntary hospitality.

From Carmarthen, Cromwell goes to Tenby, where he assisted Colonel Horton with men and advice for the reduction of this well-fortified little seaport. Time is pressing, and there is fear lest Prince Charles and his ships may arrive any day so as to relieve the garrison of Pembroke, the chief seat and starting-place of this revolt in South Wales. So he hastens from Tenby to Pembroke, and on his arrival the

famous siege, or leaguer, of Pembroke town and castle begins. This was on the 24th May, barely a fortnight after Cromwell's entry into Wales.

For his own headquarters Cromwell selected a small country-house about two miles to the west of Pembroke, the property of Captain Walter Cuny, or Coyney, who, though a brother-in-law of Colonel Rice Powell, was a sympathiser with the cause of the army and is described as "an honest real Gentleman". Poor Walter Cuny had, however, to pay pretty heavily for the honour of entertaining the great Oliver Cromwell, for all his stock and crops were appropriated for the use of the troops to the value of nearly £200, a large sum for a small squire of that day. It is true however, that five years later Coyney's appeal for compensation was admitted in London, and he ultimately received £150 from the Treasury.

During his stay at Cuny's house (called Welston) he was, in fact, laid up with a sharp attack of gout to such an extent that many of his despatches to the Parliament and to other correspondents were written in bed. Local tradition (for what it is worth) has it that the Coyney family long preserved in pious reverence a certain crimson and white quilt which covered Oliver's bed and was stained with the ink that fell from his pen whilst inditing his official letters.

Here then at Welston, Oliver was destined to remain for over seven weeks whilst suffering at intervals from gout and anxiously awaiting a belated consignment of heavy siege artillery from Gloucester, which was due to reach Milford Haven by sea. And if Cromwell was daily engaged in scanning the distant Haven for ships and guns, no less did the defenders of Pembroke constantly survey the same waters in the vain hope of seeing the vessels of Prince Charles's mythic fleet sail up to the beleaguered town and castle. Great was the determination of both sides, and high rose the hopes of relief of the besieged, who were holding out with the dogged zeal of desperate men with the prospect of the gallows before them.

This, then, was the task Oliver had been set to accomplish — the reduction of this formidable castle (the walls are 20 ft thick) manned by a posse of desperate and determined defenders. Cromwell's own letters, quoted by Carlyle and by other historians, tell the whole story of the leaguer and subsequent surrender of Pembroke castle and town. He was still without his expected artillery, though by a piece of unexpected good fortune a Parliamentary warship, the 'Lion', chanced to enter Milford Haven about the time of his arrival before Pembroke, and from this vessel Cromwell obtained two culverins, two demi-culverins, and two drakes or small cannons. The ubiquitous Hugh Peters acted as Cromwell's emissary on this occasion to commandeer these pieces of artillery from the 'Lion'. Not that they proved of any great value, for the first operation against the town, not the castle itself, on 4th June turned out to be a failure after a fierce skirmish.

Lack of ammunition was bad enough, and even worse perhaps was the lack of provisions, for the countryside had been wasted and despoiled; the inhabitants were for the most part unsympathetic to the intruding army, and in any case were too poverty-stricken to produce the required rations for Oliver's troopers. Cromwell himself was sincerely sorry for the miserable plight of the unfortunate country-

folk, who probably took little interest in the civil war that was being waged around them. Cromwell's own steward, John Maidston, relates how his master was "naturally compassionate towards objects in distress, even to an effeminate measure." Such being the case, he was, therefore, most anxious to reduce the town and castle of Pembroke as speedily as possible, but he was still thwarted in his endeavour by the non-arrival of his expected heavy artillery. Starvation of the garrison seemed to be, as indeed it proved, the only likely chance of victory.

"They begin to be in extreme want of provision," so Cromwell writes on 24th June, "so in all probability they cannot live a fortnight without being starved." He was also hoping that the hard-pressed men of the garrison would mutiny and seize Poyer with the object of surrender.

In fact, during the siege of Pembroke, the castle itself was hardly reached at all by the encompassing forces. The frequent skirmishes that were fought took place in and around the unfortunate town, where the cannon balls, that did so little injury to the castle walls, played sad havoc with the houses of the unhappy citizens. Cromwell expressed more than once his pity for these helpless folk, who were reduced to the extremity of starvation.

Yet this forlorn hope in Pembroke held out stubbornly, and on 24th June the besieged were able to meet and overcome another strong attack on the town in which Cromwell had the additional assistance of the troops from Tenby that had capitulated on 2nd June. We can but admire, even if we must condemn, the mistaken valour with which Poyer still held out against overwhelming odds. Scarcity of water, owing to the cutting of the water-pipe from the suburb of Monkton, was now added to the terror of famine, though it is pretty certain that there was a well in the great cavern known as the Wogan, below the castle green, which was never touched by the besiegers. On 10th July Cromwell was in a position to send an ultimatum to Poyer and on the following day, 11th July, was able to report to Speaker Lenthall the surrender of the town and castle of Pembroke after a fierce and contested siege that had lasted forty-eight days.

The three persons exempted from the subsequent pardon were Colonel John Poyer, General Laugharne and Colonel Rice Powell whose ultimate fate was decided later in London. At the last moment it was decreed that only one of the trio was to be executed. Lots were accordingly drawn to settle the individual who was to suffer death. Three slips of paper, two of them inscribed "Life given of God" and one blank, were drawn from an urn by a small child, and the fatal blank slip fell to poor old bibulous Poyer, who was duly shot in Covent Garden.

One cannot but feel pity and even respect for this pugnacious old merchant of Pembroke, who left behind him a beautiful memento in the fine chalice which he presented to the parish church of St. Mary in Pembroke in 1645. Around the bowl of this chalice can be read the inscription: "The Guift of Captayne John Poyer Governor of the Towne and castle of Pembroke to the parish church of St. Mary in Pembroke Anno dmni 1645."

On the next Sunday, 16th July, Oliver invited the Reverend Peregrine Phillips, vicar of Monkton, St. Mary's, Pembroke, and Coshes-

ton; to preach an official sermon of thanksgiving before himself and his staff, and during the few following days he made arrangements for the settlement of the district in the event of his imminent departure northward to meet the Scottish army. Colonel Horton, the victor of St. Fagans and the successful captor of Tenby, was put in command with a sufficient force for the purpose. "Pembroke happily is down; the war in South Wales is ended," exclaims Carlyle, thanks to the skill of Cromwell and the might of the Ironsides.

Before his departure from Pembroke, Cromwell issued a stringent order for the dismantling of the castles of South Wales. He had experienced much trouble at Chepstow and at Tenby, and last of all he had spent nearly seven weeks of previous time over the leaguer of Pembroke. He was now quite determined that none of these mediaeval strongholds should form a nucleus for any further insurrections. With this object in view, he sent letters to the authorities at Haverfordwest, Tenby, and elsewhere for the slighting, or levelling, of the towers, and this work was, if necessary, to be performed with the use of gunpowder. It is said, and probably with truth, that Oliver himself witnessed the dismantling and partial ruin of the great barbican tower at Pembroke. But the command was easier to pronounce than to enforce. At Haverfordwest the civic authorities found it not only a difficult and troublesome task, but also a very expensive one, to reduce their great citadel to a ruin; and in this case, and also in many others, this order was only partially carried out. I have already stated that these massive mediaeval walls were still proof against the artillery of the age, so that the common notion that Cromwell battered down our castles is incorrect, or at least only very partially correct. What damage was done to the fabrics during Cromwell's campaign in South Wales was the direct result of deliberate attempts to destroy after surrender; what has really brought our castles to the ruinous condition in which we see so many of them today was not the Parliamentary cannon during the civil wars, but subsequent efforts under treaty conditions to raze them. But even more efficacious than the half-hearted attempts of local authorities to carry out Cromwell's order was the fact that in later times many of these abandoned fortresses were utilised as quarries for building material, as their adjoining towns or villages grew in population and required new and better dwelling-houses.

One other matter remains to be discussed. Even before the fall of Pembroke, Cromwell in his despatches to the Parliament in London shows clearly his intention to divide his opponents into three classes of offender. First, there were what he calls the malignants, or incorrigible Royalists; secondly, there were the Presbyterians, who had (in his own words) been guilty of sinning against the light by taking up arms for the King in this second phase of the civil war, of whom Poyer and Laugharne were the ringleaders; and thirdly and lastly, there were the deluded followers, people of South Wales, who had obeyed Poyer and Laugharne without any clear understanding of the principles at issue.

It is a remarkable instance of Cromwell's clemency towards the peasants of South Wales that he highly approved of a curious but interesting suggestion put forward - of all people! - by Prince Charles Louis, titular Elector Palatine, elder brother of Prince Rupert and therefore a grandson of King James I and nephew of King Charles.

Unlike his two fighting cavalier younger brothers, Rupert and Maurice, Prince Charles Louis seems to have been an ardent admirer of the Parliament and was evidently trusted by the party in power. After the battle of St. Fagans in May, the Prince Palatine petitioned Parliament in a letter addressed to the Earl of Manchester, for sending abroad of a certain number of Welsh prisoners to serve in the forces of the Doge of Venice. It seems a strange proposal on the face of it, but it was decidedly a merciful one. Enrolment in the Venetian army must have been distinctly preferable to slave-labour in the hot cane-fields of Barbados, which was to be the punishment and fate of the irreconcilable cavaliers and of those Royalist Presbyterians "who had sinned against the light." It has been suggested that these deported prisoners would have to man the galleys of the Venetian republic, but that explanation appears to be incorrect. The real object was to use them as mercenaries, to fill the depleted garrisons of the Venetians dominions in the Levant. Though now a decadent power, Venice (in Wordsworth's fine phrase) still "held the gorgeous East in fee," and finding an insufficient number of volunteers amongst her own citizens, she was anxious to enlist foreign mercenaries in order to garrison and protect her remaining settlements in Crete, the Morea and the Ionian isles against the encroachment of the Turk.

Prince Charles Louis letter was dated 12th May 1648, a week after the battle of St. Fagans, and was favourably received both by the Lords and the Commons.

The Commons further stipulated that Prince Charles should have power to entertain and transport such persons 'as should willingly go' not exceeding the number of one thousand. But this choice of exile was to be confined "to the common people who are natives of Wales and whom Lieutenant-General Oliver Cromwell did but consider were but a seduced and ignorant people." For the "archcavaliering rogues" were to be kept close prisoners until such time as they could be transported to the West Indies, and the same treatment was to be applied to the Presbyterian captives who had sinned against the light.

This arrangement was notified to the prisoners taken at Tenby on 31st May, and no doubt was also offered to those Welshmen who surrendered later on at Pembroke, provided they were deemed eligible for selection.

Whether this humane proposal, which highly commended itself to Cromwell, was ever acted upon is uncertain. If it were, which I expect was the case, it would be extremely interesting to try and trace the subsequent fate of the Welshmen thus removed to Venice, and later on no doubt transferred to Athens, Crete, Zante, and the other Venetian dependencies in the Near East. The only case known is a mention in an unpublished MS, of two sons of Captain John Barlow of Slebech, who was a strong Royalist. These sons, William and Charles Barlow, are both mentioned as serving with the Venetian forces against the Turks, and one of them was killed in the course of the campaign.

Of Oliver Cromwell's second and last visit to South Wales in the summer of the following year, 1649, there is little to be said. In fact it was not a military campaign, but merely a rapid march towards Milford Haven in order to embark for Ireland.

The swift march of the imposing cavalcade through South Wales

must have acted both as a warning and a sedative against any lurking inclination to insurrection.

Oliver seems to have visited Colonel Philip Jones again at Swansea, from which place he hastened to Carmarthen, where he is stated to have rested at the Nag's Head in St. Mary street. An indignant Royalist in after years records Cromwell's sojourn in Carmarthen thus:—

This year, in July, that bloody Oliver Cromwell was at Carmarthen on his way to Ireland, where he committed many bloody massacres in Drogheda and Wexford.

From Carmarthen, the new Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland proceeded to Tenby, where, it is especially interesting to note, he made a handsome gift of £10, "left with the Mayor to be distributed to the poor by the churchwardens and overseers of Tenby, 19th August, 1649." No doubt both at Tenby and Pembroke Cromwell inspected the old ruinous fortifications before passing on to Milford Haven where he embarked for Ireland. It is amusing to read that on the crossing Hugh Peters who accompanies Cromwell's Irish flotilla, grimly related how "the Lord-Lieutenant was as sea-sick as ever I saw a man in my life." Oliver returned from Ireland the next year direct to Bristol.

It is however, with the long and stubborn leaguer of Pembroke town and castle that the name of the Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell, is closely associated with the history of South Wales.

## NOTES & NEWS

### The late Sir Dingle Foot — a tribute.

I have had the honour of being a member of the Council of the Cromwell Association for some years — which had happened because I came to know the Foot family; (previously all I had known about Oliver Cromwell was what little I had learned from books). After I began to work for Sir Dingle in 1940, at the Ministry of Economic Warfare, I was privileged to meet his father, the Rt. Hon. Isaac Foot, our founder.

Much has been written about Sir Dingle's work at the Ministry, but few people realise how hard he worked. I remember with pride a delegation which he led to Switzerland, when we joined the French and Americans in dissuading the Swiss from selling machine parts to the Axis powers. (Among my souvenirs I still have a case of ball bearings). On our arrival in Berne we were told that the Germans had intended attacking our train, as Mr. Foot (as he then was) was on the German list of War Criminals.

Of Sir Dingle's connection with the Cromwell Association I need say nothing, as members will recall his presence at many of our gatherings. One occasion particularly memorable to me was the unveiling of the tablet at St. Margaret's Church, Westminster.

Jenny Solomon

## **Dr Maurice Ashley honoured**

Members will be delighted to learn that our newly installed "Past President" was awarded the C.B.E. in the recent Birthday Honours List for his services to historical literature.

## **Annual General Meeting – April 22nd 1978**

Over 60 members and friends attended the Meeting, which was held at Hinchingbrooke House (now a comprehensive school) by courtesy of the Headmaster, Dr. Wakelin, and was preceded by a tour of the House and Tea.

## **Chairman's Report for the year 1977/78**

The Chairman referred to Dr. Maurice Ashley's retirement from the Presidency and to the outstanding service he had given to the Association. He reported with pleasure Dr. Ashley's consent to become a Vice-President with Lord Caradon, and then formally introduced and welcomed the new President, Dr. Ivan Roots of Exeter University. Professor Roots said he was honoured to become the President of the Association of which he had been a member for some years. Reading Dr. Ashley's first book on Oliver Cromwell had increased his interest in the subject and he had been following Dr. Ashley ever since somewhat as the page followed Good King Wenceslas! Like Cromwell, he had the capacity to wander from his notes when speaking, but he had hoped to reinforce members' enthusiasm and to learn from them.

**Membership.** 28 new members were enrolled during the year, and it was with regret that the deaths of Messrs. A.J. Covell, Eric Peters and D.C. Parker were recorded.

**Publicity.** Posters and new recruiting leaflets had been designed and a small advertisement in 'History Today' had brought enquiries and some new members.

**Annual Service.** The Service had again been held in St. Margaret's, Westminster owing to the continued closure of Cromwell's Green and the Statue. There was a good attendance and Dr. Ashley's stimulating Address is to be found elsewhere in this issue.

**Activities.** Through the initiative and enthusiasm of member Mr. D.B. Good, a lecture, exhibition and visit to a Puritan Chapel had taken place on April 15th at Otley, enjoyed by members and friends in the north. A tape recording of the lecture can be borrowed on application to the Hon. Secretary.

**Finance.** The Hon. Treasurer reported a credit balance of £427.65. Members paying by Bankers' Order were again reminded that the annual subscription was now £2 and advice to their Bank to this effect was imperative.

**Hilary Platt, Hon. Secretary**