

Cromwelliana

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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 commemorate Oliver Cromwell, the great Puritan statesman, and to encourage the study of the history of his times, his achievements and influence. It is neither political nor sectarian, its aims being essentially historical. The Association seeks to advance its aims in a variety of ways, which have included:

- the erection of commemorative tablets (e.g. at Naseby, Dunbar, Worcester, Preston, etc);
- helping to establish the Cromwell Museum in the Old Grammar School at Huntingdon;
- holding two annual meetings, one the now traditional memorial service by the Cromwell statue outside the Houses of Parliament, the other a business meeting at which the Council presents a report on its year's work for discussion by members. At both, an address is given by a distinguished Cromwellian;
- producing an annual publication, *Cromwelliana*, which is free to members;
- awarding an annual prize for work on a Cromwellian theme;
- maintaining a small reference library for the use of members;
- supporting the formation of local groups of paid-up members of the Association meeting for study or social purposes;
- acting as a 'lobby' at both national and local levels whenever aspects or items of our Cromwellian heritage appear to be endangered.

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Editor Jane A. Mills

CONTENTS

Editor's Note	2
Cromwell Day, 2003. The Improbable Cromwellian: Sir Charles Wolseley. By John Sutton	3
"To create a little world out of chaos": The Establishment of the Protectorate, 1653-4. By Dr Peter Gaunt	29
Godly Governors: the Rule of Cromwell's Major Generals. By Professor Christopher Durston	52
The Experience of English Towns During the Cromwellian Protectorate. By Dr Stephen Roberts	65
The End of Cromwell's Protectorate, 1656-58. By Professor Barry Coward	73
Overseas Despatches I. The View from America: New England, the Civil Wars and Oliver Cromwell. By Professor Francis J Bremer	87
Writings and Sources VII. Cromwell's Watch: Somewhere in Time. By Jane A Mills	100
The Reading of a Revolutionary? The Reading and Prison Book List of Major-General John Lambert. By Dr David Farr	107
Cromwellian Britain XVII. Lyme Regis, Dorset. By Jane A Mills	123
Select Bibliography of Publications By Jane A Mills	131
Book Reviews By Dr Peter Gaunt, Glenn Foard and Jane A Mills	138

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EDITOR'S NOTE

We are embarking on a new phase with *Cromwelliana* where we will endeavour to find an interesting image for the front cover illustrating an article or theme featured in the edition.

The image on the front cover of this edition is of the gold 'Puritan' verge watch made by Robert Grinkin junior some time between 1630-1640. This superb watch is in the collection of the British Museum who have very generously given us permission to use the image, © Copyright The British Museum. I would like to give special thanks to David Thompson, Curator of Horology and an expert on 17th century watches, who has provided the image, his knowledge and enthusiasm.

The Cromwell Day Address given on 3 September 2003 by John Sutton, which appears in this edition has been greatly expanded by the author, to give us a deeper and better understanding of Sir Charles Wolseley.

This edition also contains a new section entitled *Overseas Despatches* launched with a piece commissioned from Professor Bremer (Editor of the Winthrop Papers), which acts as a complement to the four papers from the Birmingham Day school.

CROMWELL DAY, 2003 THE IMPROBABLE CROMWELLIAN: SIR CHARLES WOLSELEY

By John Sutton

1

Let us praise great men. Everyone in this audience will automatically assume that I am talking about Oliver Cromwell's greatness: that is a bedrock thing that cannot be gainsaid. No, I am referring to the lesser greatness of one of Cromwell's most dedicated supporters under the Protectorate: Sir Charles Wolseley, a man whom I would like to make the subject of this oration. On first inspection my choice of Wolseley might seem rather perverse and quixotic, for he has gone down in history as a renegade Cavalier who only joined the Cromwellian cause in July 1653 out of an avid thirst for power and who promptly deserted it again when he was denied the fruits of office in May 1659. In the harsh words of a contemporary critic, Wolseley was 'a gentleman who came something late into the Play on this side, being converted from a Cavalier in a good Hour... a Man of Constancy and Certainty in his Principles, much like the Wind'. But this portrayal of Wolseley does him a grave injustice, for while he undoubtedly trimmed his sails to avoid shipwreck at the Restoration he remained one of Cromwell's most ardent disciples. As I shall seek to demonstrate, his personal devotion to Cromwell was both sincere and genuine. But more than that, Wolseley never forsook the Cromwellian altar of faith in what was for him the long aftermath of defeat. Indeed, in the post-Restoration era he courted considerable unpopularity by robustly championing some of the ideals which Cromwell had held most dear. In spirit he was the most loyal of Cromwellians: a true believer. It is an inspiring story; and one worthy of a eulogy.

It must be admitted that Wolseley was a highly improbable Cromwellian. Baptised on 1 September 1630 in the Staffordshire parish of Colwich where his ancestors has been owners of the lordship of Wolseley since at least the twelfth century, he was the eldest son of Sir Robert Wolseley – created a baronet on 24 November 1628 – by his wife Mary, daughter of Sir George Wroughton, Knight, of Wilcot in Wiltshire. His father hailed from a cadet branch of the Wolseley family; but thanks to a prosperous career as Clerk of the Patents in the Court of Chancery from 1625 onwards he acquired a stranglehold over the estate of the head of the senior line, Sir Thomas Wolseley, who was in such a parlous financial situation that in 1630 he forfeited it completely for the not inconsiderable sum of £6,800. Both sides of the Wolseley clan were deeply conservative in matters of church and

state. The bankrupt older branch clung tenaciously to the time-hallowed Catholic faith; and though outwardly conforming to the Anglican rubric there is a strong hint that the usurping sprig, Sir Robert Wolseley, was 'a closet Papist'. Politically, too, the Wolseleys were diehard traditionalists. During the Civil War representatives from each section of the family espoused the royalist cause. One of the sons of the now deceased Sir Thomas Wolseley-Devereux raised a regiment of dragoons for the King; while his supplanter and distant cousin, Sir Robert Wolseley, was an active commissioner of array, winning Charles I's 'special trust and confidence' because of his 'approved fidelity'. He also bore arms for his royal master in Lichfield Close where he surrendered in July 1646. Significantly, for our purposes, when Sir Robert capitulated he was accompanied by his sixteen year old son Charles, who, by all accounts, had barely escaped from 'the tutelage of a schoolmaster' during his military service in the garrison. This, then, was the unpropitious background of the man who later became one of Oliver Cromwell's leading counsellors during the Protectorate!

But though 'at first a Cavalier' the young Charles did not remain one for long. On 21 September 1646 his father fell victim to a fever and died, enabling him to cut loose from his royalist upbringing. The new baronet must have really felt the sins of the father were visited upon the son, since he inherited an estate that lay under sequestration on account of paternal 'delinquency'. This unenviable situation was made worse by the fact that Sir Charles was still a minor; but he shouldered the responsibility with great maturity, raising a £2,500 composition fine to free the family lands from the burden of confiscation. Interestingly, during his negotiations with the parliamentary authorities over this matter, he adamantly maintained that any misdemeanours on his part arose because he 'was under age' with the clear implication that he had been misled by his royalist father. Already Sir Charles was ploughing his own furrow. However this is not to say that he rejected his father's memory altogether, for there had always been a strong bond of affection between them. In the words of the inscription on Sir Robert's monument in Colwich church:

Nothing this world affords will ere renew
Those comforts I enjoyed and lost in you.

What is true to say, however, is that, while his father's 'dear and beloved son' – a term of fond endearment to be found in Sir Robert's will – this did not prevent him from eschewing his family's political and religious affiliations. He was ever his own man.

That he was determined to strike out on his own was demonstrated by the unconventional marriage he contracted a few months before his eighteenth birthday. On 12 May 1648, at Hanworth in Middlesex, he wed Anne, the youngest daughter of William Fiennes, first Viscount Saye and Sele, who paid a dowry of £3000, a sum that more than offset the penal taxation recently inflicted upon him by Parliament. This was an extraordinary marital alliance, since as Christopher Morris observes Wolseley was tying the knot with a woman who belonged to a fanatically Puritan and Parliamentary family. His father-in-law, nicknamed 'Old Subtlety', was renowned for his aloof, austere religiosity. According to a contemporary newsheet he 'sparkled' among the godly, pricking 'the consciences of all that were near him'. He certainly made a deep and lasting impression upon Wolseley who was still in thrall to him over half century later when 'he spoke much of his great piety'. Beyond question it was now that Wolseley became 'the sober young man and the godly Cavalier' to use Cromwell's epithet for a royalist sympathiser of a similar ilk (Sir William Compton). Viscount Saye's political loyalties were also poles apart from those of Sir Charles and his father. Ever since the 1630s he had been 'averse to the Court' and his prominence on the Parliamentary side during the Civil War was even better known. This, too, seems to have rubbed off on Wolseley who imbibed Saye's preference for a King who ruled through, and not against, Parliament, though like him 'he had not the least thought of dissolving the monarchy, and less of levelling the ranks and distinctions of men'. In short, Wolseley had acquired a father-in-law who in the eyes of staunch royalists like Clarendon was notorious for his 'great malignity against the Church and State'. His break with family tradition could not have been more complete.

On a personal level, too, Viscount Saye was just the sort of man to encourage Wolseley's growing sense of independence. He shared his love of books and learning and encouraged him to become a scholar himself. He was also something of a loner, of a proud nature and with a known preference for going 'contrary to the wind', qualities which his new son-in-law was to share with him in spades! Thus one cannot stress enough the significance of Wolseley's marriage: it was the defining moment of his life shaping both his character and his ideas. But more than that, it also launched him on his political career, for there seems little doubt that his connection with Viscount Saye was chiefly responsible for his selection as

the representative of Oxfordshire – where the Fiennes' interest was strongest – in the Nominated Assembly which met in early July 1653.

This was to be Wolseley's first entrance upon the public stage; and he exploited it to the full. He was present right at the beginning of the Barebone's Parliament – as it is more popularly known – and immediately thrust himself forward by getting himself elected to the select committee authorised to draw up a declaration 'to invite all the People of God, within this Commonwealth, to seek the Lord, for a Blessing upon (its) Counsels and Proceedings'. Wolseley also ensured that he reported the committee's work on the proposed declaration back to the House on 12 July 1653: it expressed a fearsome trepidation at the 'mighty' task ahead but a glowing millennial confidence that God would 'complete His work'. The declaration's godly fervour and pious exhortations delighted Cromwell and he must have been impressed with Wolseley's role in its composition. Almost certainly, it was this sterling contribution which lay behind the recommendation that Wolseley be added to the Council of State only two days later. Then within a week of the calling the Little Parliament Wolseley found himself in the inner circle of Cromwell's government, an amazing coup. He took up his new responsibilities with great aplomb; and soon made himself indispensable to the Lord Protector, especially in army affairs. His rise to prominence was such that he sometimes acted as an intermediary between the Council of State and the godly MPs, smoothing transactions between them with considerable tact and discretion. Perhaps most remarkable of all was Wolseley's high profile inside the Nominated Assembly itself of which his membership of the crucial select committee determining the order of its business furnishes the best example. Wolseley must have been cock-a-hoop that his political career had got off to such flying start.

But there was 'trouble in paradise'. The gathering of saints proved far from harmonious; indeed, their proceedings grew more and more fractious as they became ominously polarised between a vociferous radical minority, centred on the Fifth Monarchy extremist, Major-General Thomas Harrison – who also came from Staffordshire – and an increasingly fearful conservative majority, of whom Wolseley was in the forefront. In the end there was a complete breakdown, prompting the 'sober' party to terminate the assembly by a mass walkout. This sabotage tactic was carefully planned: early in the morning of 12 December 1653 about eighty dissidents gathered in the Parliament house and, after some angry exchanges, duly voted for a

dissolution. Significantly, in this act of self-destruction, it was Wolseley who took the lead, delivering the first of the resignation speeches. He disburdened himself in a heart-felt manner but made his deadly intentions clear by first of all announcing that his discourse concerned "the Esse' or (very) being, rather than the ben esse, or well-being of the Commonwealth'. He then bluntly declared that the delegates had signally failed to fulfil the ends for which they had been summoned; indeed, he accused them of pursuing their own selfish ends and possessing a spirit of injustice. But his prime concern was with those of his colleagues 'whose designs and ends were destructive to the Commonwealth'. In particular he accused the rival faction of a sinister intention to alienate the army, to abolish property, to subvert the law and to overthrow the ministry, all charges which were vehemently denied by his outraged opponents. After this bitter tirade, followed by further well-orchestrated broadsides, Wolseley and his companions announced that they would sit no longer and then flounced off to Whitehall where they resigned authority to Cromwell who was now installed as Lord Protector. Wolseley thus earned a certain notoriety as the chief man 'who helped to break' the Barebones Parliament; but he had no qualms on that score, for as he declared to his intimate associate, Bulstrode Whitelocke, shortly afterwards, Cromwell's 'personal worth' made him pre-eminently qualified to rule as a single person.

Wolseley now entered upon the most exciting part of his political life. He was appointed a member of the new Protector's Council of State on 16 December 1653; and his first act was to issue, with his fellow councillors, the proclamation announcing the establishment of the Protectorate and urging 'every person of what quality and condition soever' to render strict obedience to it. Wolseley turned out to be an extremely vigorous councillor, immersing himself in a whole range of domestic and foreign business. With high office came wealth and status: Wolseley's official remuneration as a councillor of state amounted to a £1000 per annum; and he was also provided with lodgings in Whitehall and a stable and coach-house at the Mews. Though his energies were chiefly devoted to national affairs, Wolseley also became a highly influential figure in Staffordshire politics during the Protectorate. He had the honour, for example, of representing the county in Cromwell's two Parliaments. Typically, he was a very dynamic MP. During the first Protectorate Parliament he sat on sixteen select committees and on no less than thirty-five during the first session of its successor. Wolseley similarly played a key role in parliamentary divisions, acting as a teller on ten occasions in the case of the former assembly, and

on eight in that of the latter. Wolseley's immense standing in his native shire was further demonstrated by the fact that he was delegated to present the Staffordshire petition opposed to the disafforestation of Needwood Chase to the first Protectorate Parliament; and when this proved impossible due to its premature dissolution in January 1655 Wolseley was the political broker who then ensured that the petition was presented to Cromwell in person early the following February. Well might the petition's chief advocate and publicist, Zachary Babbington, describe Wolseley as a 'faithful patriote to his county'. Thus from every point of view Wolseley had become a power in the land. It was a remarkable achievement for a young man who was still only in his mid-twenties.

But not only did Wolseley play a prominent part in the Protector's government, he also became one of his boon companions. In his diary Bulstrode Whitelocke paints an engaging picture of the way Wolseley formed part of Cromwell's 'kitchen cabinet'. Apparently he, Whitelocke, Lord Broghill, John Thurloe and William Pierrepont were in the habit of retiring with the Protector to 'a private room' in Whitehall Palace where they would often be closeted together for anything from two to four hours. Open and frank discussions would then take place on the 'great businesses' of state; but these were occasionally interrupted, Whitelocke informs us, by 'some frolickes of diversion'. Apparently at such moments it was Cromwell's practice to call for tobacco pipes and 'now and then' he would light up himself. In a playful mood he took particular delight in compiling verses with his colleagues, the golden rule being that 'everyone must trye his fancy'. As we shall later see, Wolseley was particularly adept at this literary pastime. Once he had unwound in this manner, Whitelocke further observes, the Protector became not only positively 'cheerful' but 'exceeding familiar with us'; indeed, discoursing with them so 'freely' that he laid 'aside his greatness' altogether. But then the Protector would grow more 'serious' again and return to the discussion of public matters. By all accounts, he greatly valued these intimate conferences with his closest advisers, for no one else was 'admitted to come into him' while they took place. As a member of Cromwell's inner circle Wolseley had clearly acquired a privileged position and one which must have given him great personal satisfaction, since his friend Whitelocke assures us 'their counsell was accepted and followed by him in most of his greatest affayres'.

It was this deep personal friendship with Cromwell which enabled Wolseley to play such a major role in the parliamentary campaign to transform him

into a crowned head of state in the spring of 1657. From its very inception Wolseley had always regarded the Protectorate as a proto-monarchy. This was how he depicted it, for example, to his friend Whitelocke in early January 1654: 'The government now established is by a Lord Protector who hath much ye same power w(hi)ch the Kinge formerly had'. Indeed, in his opinion, Cromwell was 'the greatest monarck of ye world' even if he was an elective ruler and his power was tempered by a permanent Council of State and periodic Parliaments. But, along with the rest of Cromwell's more conservative advisers, Wolseley was thoroughly dissatisfied that his master held kingly power *de facto* and not *de jure*, and he wanted to clarify this anomalous situation. Accordingly, he threw his full weight behind Sir Christopher Packe's remonstrance, introduced into the Commons on 23 February 1657, to reconstitute the Protectorate on overtly monarchical lines. For example, Wolseley was the chief teller for the 'yes' vote in support of Packe's successful motion – given this direct involvement he may even have had a hand in drafting it in the first place. From then on Wolseley was in the vanguard of every move to draft a new written constitution (known as the Humble Petition and Advice) paving the way for Cromwell's installation as a fully-fledged king. The crucial division on the formal offer of the crown occurred on 25 March 1657; and among the hundred and twenty MPs successfully voting in its favour, dubbed 'the Kinglings', pride of place belonged to Wolseley. But would Cromwell accept the Kingly title?

Cromwell certainly thought it was 'a feather in his cap'; but he, nevertheless, procrastinated, pleading for time to 'ask counsel of God and of my own heart'. Aware that assuming a regal designation was the sticking point with Cromwell, the House of Commons appointed a deputation of MPs to wait upon him in the hope they might overcome 'his doubts and scruples'. A meeting was duly arranged; and took place at Whitehall on 11 April 1657. Needless to say, Wolseley was one of those in attendance; and his 'learned' speech to Cromwell on this occasion was subsequently published in a tract, entitled *Monarchy Asserted* (London, 1660). Nine other harangues were also included in this text; but it is Wolseley's disquisition with which we are here concerned. His contribution came fourth in order of priority, an indication of the importance assigned to him in this delicate task of winning Cromwell over to the cause of 'the Kinglings'. At the beginning of the proceedings the Protector had bluntly asked: 'the Government be well, why do you change it? And it was with this question in mind that the youngest of Cromwell's councillors essayed a reply that

furnishes a fascinating insight into his mind-set. Its contents reveal a man who was still a monarchist at heart and for whom the Protectorate had always been a poor substitute.

Wolseley began his speech on a positive note. 'Not only we that are here', he enthused, 'but many honest hearts in England rejoice to see this day', an optimism that he attributed to the apparent return to consensual politics at Westminster with the Protector and his parliament 'debating the settlement of the nation' in a constructive manner. Indeed, the very fact that they were now showing 'so much nearness and affection' convinced Wolseley that a permanent resolution of their political differences lay at hand. For him the chief stumbling block to the Protector's declared aim of 'healing and settling' was his dubious legal status 'in relation to the old government'. As 'chief magistrate' Cromwell ought to have been the symbol of national unity; but he was incapable of being so because, in Wolseley's trenchant words, 'The law knows not a protector: and requires no obedience from the people to him'. To emphasize this point still further Wolseley went so far as to attribute Cromwell's failure to achieve a viable new constitution since being made Lord Protector in December 1653 to the alien nature of his office. 'Truly, Sir', he roundly declared, 'the reason why things of late have been so unsettled throughout the nations (of Great Britain), hath been because that to the body of the people there hath not been a legal head'. Just as a 'right head' was absolutely 'necessary to the wholesome constitution of the body natural', so was it just as vital to the 'well-being' of 'the body politick'. In effect, Wolseley was saying that only when he became a proper king would Cromwell truly know the extent of his duties to the people or they to him. His authority would never command respect until it rested on regal foundations.

Wolseley did not flinch from exposing the central weakness of Cromwell's regime: it did not accord with the 'ancient constitution' and the known laws of the land. Cromwell had neither the traditional authority of the crown nor the backing of 'the great common law', which since time immemorial had always found its most authoritative expression through a monarchical framework. Besides, Wolseley continued, the institution of monarchy was at least a thousand years old, and though the occupants of the throne had 'often changed' the office itself had remained unimpaired down until recent times. (Wolseley clearly regarded Charles I's trial and execution as illegal and the abolition of the monarchy in its wake as a violent usurpation; but was too polite and diplomatic to say so.) In short, he contended, kingly rule

accorded not only with 'the custom of the nation' but had been tried, tested, and 'approved good by many ages'. No 'new' innovation, which laid aside that time-hallowed arrangement, could have any 'validity' in Wolseley's view. 'I may humbly tell your Highness', he triumphantly concluded, 'this nation hath ever been a lover of monarchy, and of monarchy under the title of a King'. He could not have been more explicit.

Yet while it was Wolseley's fervent belief that the Oliverian Protectorate must be recast in a monarchical mould, he also maintained that this still had to be underpinned by parliament and the rule of law. Despite his Cavalier upbringing Wolseley had never been a supporter of absolute monarchy: he was a constitutional royalist. Even so, this ardent young 'Kingling' was only too painfully aware of Cromwell's profound reluctance to ascending the throne even in the guise of a King-in-Parliament. Wolseley thus tried to win him round by advancing an extremely skilful argument. Simply put, he asserted that the Protector had a bounden duty to accept the offer of the crown because it was the collective desire of the political nation. Wolseley clearly saw the second Protectorate Parliament as the representative body of the British people fully attuned to their wishes and aspirations. According to him, MPs believed they had a mandate to press Cromwell to become King from their conviction that 'the minds of the people of these nations (were) much set upon this office and title'. Employing a very 'democratic' rhetoric, Wolseley argued that the people's spokesmen felt they 'ought to harken, and to be much inclined by the desires of them that sent them' to Westminster. Such things as were for the people's good were surely not to be denied? And that *summum bonum* consisted in the transformation of the Protectorate into an unalloyed parliamentary monarchy.

Here Wolseley was making a calculated appeal to Cromwell's genuine reverence for the institution of Parliament for which he had ventured both life and fortune in the first Civil War. As a former MP himself with a long-standing attachment to parliament as the champion of the people's liberties, how could he not pay heed to its call to make him King? 'I beseech your Highness', Wolseley expostulated, 'consider if you should refuse this title the parliament presents you with, you do not only deny yourself the honour they put upon you, but you deny the nation, you deny the people their honour, which by right they ought to have. 'Tis their honour and their birthright to have a supreme magistrate with the title of a King'. But from bitter experience Wolseley knew that Cromwell could speak a non-

parliamentary language that on occasion turned him into a destroyer as well as an upholder of parliament. So to lend weight to his argument he invoked a divine sanction for the parliamentary expression of the people's deep-seated desire for a return to a monarchical form of government. 'God hath by his providence put a general desire of it in the nation', Wolseley enthused, clearly implying that it would be provocative in the extreme for Cromwell to thwart the Almighty's purposes. Manifestly, he was putting forward an argument for the divine right of the people to be ruled by a King! It was a curious twist to a line of thought whose main thrust was secular rather than religious. In view of the immense piety of the man he was addressing, Wolseley would probably have been wiser to develop this biblical argument rather more; but he chose not to, preferring instead to impress Cromwell with his political message.

Wolseley now played what he thought was his trump card. He reminded the Lord Protector that during his speeches to parliament he had often referred to himself as its servant, a humble designation that Wolseley skilfully sought to capitalise upon. 'You are so indeed', he crowed, 'and 'tis your greatest honour so to be'. Granted Cromwell's acceptance of his role as Parliament's executive agent, it followed that he must obey its express desire to crown him. All the more so as Parliament was in turn the servitor of the people who wanted him to be their King. 'I hope then, sir', Wolseley exhorted Cromwell, 'you will give the people leave to name their own servant; that is a due you cannot... deny them. Their representatives desire you will serve the people under this title; and were there no other reason... it is the best'. This populist appeal became even more pronounced as Wolseley drew his oration to a conclusion. Over and over again he impressed upon Cromwell that he must submit to the will of the people as expressed through their delegates in Parliament and to swallow whatever personal reservations he might personally entertain about donning a regal mantle. 'I know, sir', he continued, 'though you can deny yourself, yet you will not deny the nation their due, when their representatives challenge it from you'.

Yet despite all his special pleading Wolseley could still sense Cromwell's deep-seated aversion for the monarchical estate; and to overcome this repugnance he insisted 'the people's good' must be his paramount consideration. 'And certainly, sir, whatever dissatisfaction be in this case, it ought not to weigh', Wolseley implored, since 'the whole people, represented together' in Parliament were unanimously resolved to elevate

him to the throne. For Wolseley the public interest could only be properly served when the Lord Protector became King Oliver the First; and he was convinced that in the end due consideration of this would tip the scales in his favour. 'I know this alone', he confidently told Cromwell in a final flourish, 'would sway you above anything, that what is before you is the advice of your great council, the parliament'. It was a forceful plea, and an extremely convincing one. To utter Wolseley's powerful words under Cromwell's imposing statue here in the precincts of Westminster on this special day gives me an extra buzz when describing his lobbying activities back in April 1657. He had mustered the most effective arguments in his political arsenal to persuade and to cajole Cromwell into accepting the designation of King. Surely, Wolseley reasoned, 'Cromwell's individual feelings had to take second place when parliament, supported by 'hundreds, nay thousands' of 'the good people of England', was clamouring to put a crown upon his head?

But Wolseley was a voice crying in the wilderness. Cromwell's powerful but wayward spirit blew where it listeth; and, for several weeks, he kept Wolseley and the rest of 'the Kinglings' in suspense as he agonised whether to embrace royal status. At a further conference convened at Whitehall on 13 April a doubt-ridden Protector declared 'I cannot undertake this name'; while in another session thirteen days later his angst was even more evident as he spoke of 'my griefe and the trouble I am under'. Finally, after much heart-searching, Cromwell announced his decision to a packed meeting of MPs – including Wolseley – in the Banqueting House on 8 May. It was a sombre, deeply 'unhappy' Lord Protector who confronted them with the disappointing news that despite all the intense lobbying to turn him into an outright monarch he had still not been 'convinced of the necessity of the thing'. So, although it was 'the product worthy of a Parliament', his conscience impelled him to return a negative answer to the offer of the crown. 'I cannot undertake this government with that title of King' was his impassioned *crie de Coeur*. Wolseley had failed.

Like all of 'the Kinglings', he must have felt badly let down by Cromwell, though this acute disappointment may have been tempered by an understanding of the Protector's genuine conviction that monarchy was an accursed institution. Why else had God permitted Charles I to be defeated in two Civil Wars and to be executed but to express his disapprobation of Kingly rule? At least Wolseley could console himself that there was still a strong monarchical element in the reconstituted Protectorate even if the

head of state was bereft of a crown. He also had the comforting assurance that it was not by the sword but by act of Parliament that his Highness now ruled. So ever the Pragmatist he reluctantly settled for half a loaf rather than no loaf at all. Thus he fully entered into the spirit of Cromwell's second installation as Lord Protector in Westminster Hall on 26 June 1657. For example, it fell to him, with a select band of MPs, to complete the last-minute preparations for 'the solemnity' including the provision of its regalia. Thanks in part to Wolseley the sword presented to Cromwell during the ceremony itself was not a military one. It was a civil sword, the political symbolism here being that this was a weapon 'rather of defence than offence' designed not just for the Protector's personal safety but also for his people as a whole. 'If I should presume to fix a motto upon this sword', Sir Thomas Widdrington, the Speaker of the House of Commons declared when conferring it upon Cromwell, 'it should be thus, *I am the Lord Protector, to protect my People*'. Wolseley would certainly have said amen to that.

Another aspect of the installation programme where we can detect Wolseley's influence was the enrobing of Cromwell in the trappings of monarchy: the gown of purple velvet, lined with ermine, with that vital accoutrement, the sceptre of massy gold, to remind him that he really was a King in all but name. Wolseley's guiding hand is also evident in the gift to the Protector of a richly gilt Bible, 'the Book of Books', which he was told 'doth contain both precepts and examples for good government'. This clearly conveyed the message that Cromwell above all must be a godly ruler. Wolseley doubtless also approved of the coronation-like acclamations that accompanied Cromwell's investiture, though he would have been less than human for not wishing the chants of 'Long live his Highness' had been 'God save the King!' instead.

Yet any lingering sense of betrayal harboured by Wolseley at Cromwell's refusal of the crown must have been allayed by the political promotion he received at his hands on 9 December 1657. He now became 'Lord Wolseley' in the upper chamber, which Cromwell had been designated to appoint under the terms of the new constitution enshrined in the Humble Petition and Advice. Contemporary opinion branded the members of this 'Other House' as Cromwell's political cronies, including Wolseley who was said to have 'done nothing' to merit such a distinction. But in Wolseley's case this charge was wide of the mark, for while one of the Protector's protégés he was manifestly a talented, high-flying politician. As Bulstrode Whitelocke also points out, he possessed the right social credentials, too,

for the membership of such a body, boasting a baronetcy with the added cache of belonging to that privileged group of 'ancient families and good estates' who had traditionally ruled England. In the upshot Wolseley proved a conscientious peer to judge from the register of his attendance of this short-lived institution, for he put in an appearance at sixty-two of its eighty-four meetings between 20 January 1658 and 22 April 1659. Wolseley had now reached the pinnacle of fame; but he did not have long to enjoy his success, for the Protectoral regime that had raised him up was about to collapse. On 3 September 1658 Cromwell died. Wolseley must have been devastated; but he dutifully paid his last respects to Oliver when he accompanied his funeral cortege from Somerset House to Westminster Abbey on the following 23 November. It marked the end of an era, for little did Wolseley realise it at the time but his own glittering career in politics was effectively buried with Cromwell.

2

But that is to anticipate. For the time being Wolseley continued to be a devoted henchman of the Protectorate. Apart from signing the Council of State's order proclaiming Richard Cromwell the new Protector on his father's death, he also presented him – at the end of September 1658 – with a petition from the gentry and freeholders of Staffordshire full of 'expressions of duty and love'. He remained one of the 'strict adherents of the protectoral party' until April 1659 when his attendance in the Cromwellian House of Lords fell off markedly, clearly indicating his loss of faith in the regime. During the stormy confrontation between Richard Cromwell's Parliament and the New Model army grandees in late April, his advice was sought by the second Protector; but he could do nothing to prevent the latter's abdication a few weeks later. The former Rump Parliament now returned to power: and since rule by a single person and an upper chamber were now brushed aside Wolseley must have felt his political world was falling apart. Now thoroughly disillusioned, he temporarily withdrew from public life and retired to his Staffordshire estate. It was at this critical juncture that he decided to throw in his lot with the exiled Charles II, a volte-face which owed much to his royalist friend Sir Robert Howard who visited him at Wolseley in June 1659. Howard persuaded Wolseley that he could depend on the King's mercy despite his Cromwellian past; and so he now agreed to take part in a plot to seize Stafford on the royal behalf the following August. But Wolseley proceeded with great caution, leaving it to his younger brother Robert to engage actively in the conspiracy. Subsequent events showed his prudence was

amply justified, since Robert's activities came to light and he was promptly arrested, though Wolseley himself escaped detection. Wolseley's flirtation with royalism cost him dear, since he now had to furnish a £1000 bail to secure his sibling's release from imprisonment; even so, his switch of allegiance proved an extremely shrewd move in the long run.

Despite the setback, Wolseley still had cause for optimism. Early in February 1660 General George Monck occupied London and successfully engineered the downfall of the Rump. The following April elections were held for 'a free Parliament' and Wolseley managed to get himself returned as member for Stafford. But, apart from being elected to three select committees, he did not play an active part in the proceedings of what subsequently became known as the Convention Parliament. He seems to have decided to adopt a low profile, since in the eyes of Charles II's supporters – Clarendon in particular – he was still remembered as 'a gentleman of great eminency in Cromwell's council, and one of those who had been sent by the House of Commons to persuade him to accept the crown, with the title of King', an unforgivable sin on the eve of the monarchy's restoration. In this recriminatory atmosphere, Wolseley concentrated his efforts in procuring a royal pardon, enlisting the aid of Sir Robert Howard and John Mordaunt, the two intermediaries of Charles II with whom he had conspired only the year before. He also hoped that he might become a servant of the King on his return. A little over a fortnight after Charles II's triumphal entry into London on 29 May 1660 a warrant was issued granting Wolseley legal indemnity for former misdeeds; but it was made abundantly clear to him that all hopes of his entering the royal government were out of the question. The King, however, did permit Wolseley to serve as a justice of the peace and an assessment commissioner in his native Staffordshire; but this was a poor recompense for a blighted career in national politics. And he was still only thirty years old.

But though in semi-disgrace Wolseley remained loyal to his Cromwellian heritage. It is all too easy – given his political tergiversations – to dismiss him, as a timeserving opportunist with his eye forever on the main chance. This is a travesty of the man. The fact is Wolseley had been profoundly influenced by his period in office under Cromwell. He was touched by Cromwell's greatness; and that experience stayed with him for the rest of his life. So, far from renouncing his great political patron after the Restoration, he cherished his memory and everything he stood for. Indeed, in the face of defeat and partial banishment, he became a born-again

Cromwellian. That Wolseley kept faith with the Protector and his legacy is highlighted in two pamphlets he published anonymously in 1668 advocating religious toleration. The first of these was called *Liberty of Conscience upon its True and Proper Grounds, asserted and vindicated*. The second bore the title *Liberty of Conscience, the Magistrate's Interest*. Both tracts were combined when he reissued them in a second edition in 1669. A careful reading of these twin works shows that for Wolseley Cromwell was the model ruler. Two particular aspects of the Protector's governance impressed him; the first related to his conduct of foreign affairs.

Here it is essential to remember the backdrop to Wolseley's 1668 publications. They were written in the immediate wake of the deeply humiliating Medway debacle in the second Anglo-Dutch war (June 1667). Charles II's subjects could be forgiven for making invidious comparisons between this nadir in England's naval fortunes and the glory-days of Admiral Blake under the Protectorate. Pepys captures the mood perfectly with his famous remark, 'It is strange how everybody do nowadays reflect upon Oliver and commend him, what brave things he did, and made all the neighbour princes fear him'. Understandably, after such a fiasco – especially at the hands of a former ally with religious affiliations similar to our own – Wolseley yearned for a return to the robustly 'Protestant' foreign policy championed by Cromwell back in the 1650s. As a member of the Protectoral Council of State – especially through his work on its foreign affairs committee – he had been privy and parcel to Cromwell's ceaseless efforts to forge a general Protestant league in Europe beginning with a defensive alliance between England and Holland in April 1654, followed by an entente with Sweden in the same month and concluding with an Anglo-Danish accord the following September. Wolseley himself had taken a particularly keen interest in Cromwell's overseas diplomacy. He took an active part, for example, in the negotiations with the United Provinces alluded to above, holding a series of meetings with their deputies in London. He also kept a close eye on dealings with Sweden, being the first to inform his fellow counsellor Bulstrode Whitelocke that he was being appointed the Protector's envoy to conduct the negotiations for a rapprochement with that country in August 1653. He also dined with Whitelocke before he set off on his mission later that year; and during his stay in Sweden was almost certainly the 'English gentleman' who sent him a Latin ode to recite to Queen Christiana during the ensuing peace negotiations. Apparently the Swedish monarch showed great delight with Wolseley's verses – even if they were rather florid – and 'read them over

several times'. Wolseley must have been cock-a-hoop on being told he had been 'highly recommended' for his literary endeavours; and even more by the news that they had contributed, in their modest way, to such a successful diplomatic outcome.

But concluding a series of alliances with Europe's principal Protestant powers was only one aspect of Cromwell's foreign policy. His next step – towards the end of 1654 – was to embark on an aggressive war against Catholic Spain, England's traditional enemy. This was a move of which Wolseley fully approved. In October 1656, for instance, he was appointed a member of the select committee set up by the second Protectorate Parliament to prepare a declaration showing the justice of England's hostilities towards Spain. His admiration for Cromwell's anti-Catholic stance was clearly unbounded. Even though the Anglo-Spanish conflict proved largely disappointing in its outcome – the only tangible territorial gains for England were the capture of Jamaica in the Caribbean and Dunkirk on the Continent – the broad thrust of that imperial venture was everything that Wolseley could hope for. He wanted an expansionist Britain with colonies in the New and Old Worlds.

All this helps to explain his deep disillusionment with Charles II's weak and ineffective foreign policy in the 1660s. War against Holland, a fellow Protestant state – even if it was a trade rival – and a growing friendship with the Catholic super-power, France, aroused profound misgivings in Wolseley as they did his great contemporary, Samuel Pepys, who confided in his diary that England's international standing had been permanently damaged 'though the negligence of our Prince...notwithstanding so much reputation got and preserved by a Rebell – i.e. Cromwell – that went before him'. Wolseley, too, must have looked back nostalgically to the days when the Lord Protector bestrode the foreign stage like a Colossus; but he felt it too impolitic to give voice to these sentiments in public. But while not mentioning Cromwell by name this did not prevent him from urging the Merry Monarch to return to the diplomatic ways of his predecessor. And that meant pursuing a foreign policy that was overtly Protestant. Thus in his 1668 joint-treatise Wolseley declared quite bluntly: 'How sadly England has miscarried when it has espoused any other collateral interest but the Protestant'. In view of the English ships recently burned by the Dutch fleet at Chatham, this must have had a cruel resonance! The lessons of this defeat for Charles II were plain enough, according to Wolseley: 'Tis the King of England's true interest to become Head of all the Protestant party

in the World'. Only by becoming the acknowledged leader of a union of European states of the reformed faith, he continued in the same vein, would the current sovereign make England invincible and himself 'the greatest and most powerful of all Protestant Princes'. Indeed, the national interest dictated that the King should be 'the Head of such a Union'. In Wolseley's considered opinion England could 'never be truly safe, nor secure' until it was 'invironed with all Protestant states adhering to it, and depending upon it'. Wolseley's bullish assertions were a splendid reaffirmation of the central Cromwellian goal operating in the field of overseas relations during the 1650s: the achievement of a Protestant world-order with England firmly at its centre. The Protector would have been proud of him.

But it was not just Cromwell's identification of England's interests with those of European Protestantism that Wolseley so admired after the Restoration. He also looked back with dewy eyes upon what he regarded as an even more significant legacy of the Cromwellian era: the establishment of a broad Protestant church at home. Wolseley particularly cherished the Protector's ecumenical vision during the 1650s when he had striven to establish an ecclesiastical dispensation that combined the twin principles of toleration and comprehension. All stripes of Protestant opinion were embraced within the Protectoral national church: Presbyterian, Independent, Baptist, Millenarian and even conforming Anglican. It was only those hotter sort of Protestants – like the more extreme Fifth Monarchy Men and the Quakers – who refused to keep the religious peace that incurred Cromwell's wrath and were policed. 'Our practice hath been', he averred in 1656, 'to let all this nation see that whatever pretensions to religion would continue quiet and peaceable, they should enjoy conscience and liberty to themselves'. Cromwell was as good as his word, though he did draw the line at granting toleration to Arminians and Roman Catholics whom he regarded as beyond the pale of his inclusive ecclesiastical policy. Within these limits, however, Cromwell's vision that 'no man in England' would 'suffer for the testimony of Jesus' was certainly one that struck a chord with Sir Charles Wolseley as can be seen by his post-Restoration assertion that all those adhering to the Protestant religion, despite their 'differing apprehensions', should be granted 'liberty of conscience'.

That Wolseley had shared the same tolerant instincts as Cromwell was demonstrated by the principled stand he took during the parliamentary hue and cry over the Quaker enthusiast, James Nayler, in early December 1656.

Nayler, of course, had deeply scandalised orthodox religious opinion by staging a triumphal entry into Bristol as a latter-day Jesus Christ the previous October, an action that not only led to him being labelled a blasphemer but also to his close confinement. Indeed the second Protectorate Parliament was so outraged that it voted that Nayler should be savagely punished – he was to have his forehead branded and his tongue bored through not once but twice over – bodily sufferings which the more moderate MPs thought excessive in the extreme. Among them was Wolseley who, whilst acknowledging Nayler's 'crime', pleaded for a lesser chastisement than that advocated by the majority of his colleagues. 'I would have us do justice in a just way', he expostulated, warning 'we have a Master in heaven, to whom we must give an account'. He also challenged whether under the terms of the Protectorate's written constitution, *The Instrument of Government*, the House of Commons had the judicial powers to pass such a draconian sentence (it didn't). His plea fell on deaf ears and the first instalment of Nayler's grisly punishment was carried out; but then Cromwell himself intervened in the case, saving Nayler from any further physical mutilation. On this issue he and Wolseley were at one, both 'merciful men' who thought it 'an ill precedent' to torture Nayler in such a barbarous way even if he was a deluded fanatic.

This tolerant spirit, however, was conspicuous by its absence in Restoration England. Although Charles II was even more enlightened than Cromwell from a religious point of view – he was willing to grant liberty of conscience to Catholics as well as Protestant Dissenters – his hands were tied by the intolerant Anglican majority in the Cavalier Parliament which from April 1661 onwards proceeded to enact a series of measures – known collectively as the Clarendon Code – that re-established the Church of England on strictly Laudian lines. Henceforth there would be a rigid insistence on Episcopal ordination and a uniform liturgy, accompanied by an implacable persecution of all those – ministers and laity alike – who refused to conform. Wolseley found this hard-line approach utterly deplorable; and in his book, *Liberty of Conscience*, said so in no uncertain terms. He berated the High-Church Anglicans for 'imposing conformity' and utterly rejected their 'yoke of uniformity'. Somewhat unfairly, he blamed the King for succumbing to this narrow and exclusive Anglican ascendancy. 'Tis no way prudent', he protested vehemently, 'for a Prince, when his subjects consist of many differing judgements, to resolve to have them all of one mind... or else to be their declared Enemy and Persecutor'. He particularly warned of the dangers posed to the monarchy by permitting

itself to become the prisoner of a single religious party: to favour Anglicans and to oppress Puritan nonconformists would only narrow the base of its national support. On the contrary Charles II's best interests were served when he showed an equal religious aspect to all his subjects.

But Wolseley was even more concerned to challenge the persecutory character of the newly restored Anglican Church. The mass ejections of dissenting clergymen on 24 August 1662 and the harassment of their flocks by the Conventicle Act of May 1664 greatly angered Wolseley who clearly regarded these actions as a flagrant violation of the King's own promise in the Declaration of Breda on the eve of the Restoration to permit 'differences of opinion in matters of religion'. Such a recourse to religious persecution, he passionately believed, was 'totally destructive', since it could provoke civil unrest. 'Where there are many (religious) differences, and a State denies any Liberty', he warned, 'but strictly imposeth the State-Religion upon all' there was a great danger that it would generate 'endless troubles and perpetual feuds'. Indeed, far from uniting men in one opinion, his grim prognosis continued, force and violence would only result in 'mass discontent' which 'upon any strait or emergency... either by Foreign Warr or Domestick Division' could erupt in 'such an Earthquake as may endanger the whole' State. Wolseley's dire warning to Charles II's intransigently Anglican regime had an added edge following as it did the successive crises of the Great Plague, the Fire of London and the Dutch incursion into the Thames estuary: at such a time 'a hot persecution' of Protestant Dissenters was manifestly a high-risk strategy for it could have 'driven (them) into a corner' and led to 'a united opposition'. Besides, as Wolseley argued at some length, 'an undistinguished severity' was simply counter-productive, for men only became more 'fixed and confirmed by such persecution, than any way removed from their Principles by it'. Thus 'the chain of Persecution' was to be avoided at all costs.

And in combating the 'odious superintendancy' wielded by the post-Restoration regime over men's religious beliefs Wolseley was inspired throughout by his experience of Cromwell's more enlightened approach during the previous decade. Never more so than over the vexed question whether the civil magistrate possessed the right to police the kingdom of God on earth. Remembering Cromwell's famous dictum that the nation's rulers should 'look to the outward man, not to the inward', Wolseley adopted a similar stance in his treatise on *Liberty of Conscience*. Like his master, he believed there should be limits to the coercive powers of the

State over religious expression. Hadn't the Protector laid down that unorthodox opinions in spiritual matters were to be tolerated so long as they didn't lead to violent disturbances of the public peace? 'Notions will hurt none but those that have them' was Cromwell's sage advice. Wolseley enunciated exactly the same sentiments: 'Religions are not always infallibly true', he proclaimed, 'and in that case a Negative Restraint upon the Magistrate's compulsion, is the only shelter of Truth'. In particular, Wolseley was haunted by the lessons of the James Nayler affair. Then one man's heretical views and conduct had led to such a draconian punishment by the House of Commons that the bell that tolled for him tolled for all men. Wolseley did not flinch from condemning such displays of religious intolerance. 'Where shall the definition of Heresie terminate, and who shall set the Magistrate bounds in such a case?' Wolseley asked with a pertinacity that was as relevant in 1656 as it was in 1668-9. 'As long as such errors lye in the understanding, and are only conversant about supernatural things', he pointed out with a gentle persuasiveness, 'they have no reference at all to the...well-being of Mankind as such'. Here Wolseley truly spoke with his master's voice.

In some ways, however, Wolseley's advocacy of religious toleration was more sweeping than Cromwell's. He had an almost Miltonic sense that God's truth could only gain by a free interplay of religious opinion. 'Liberty of Conscience is the great means to diffuse Gospel-Knowledge in Divine things', he confidently predicted. 'A wise and a knowing People' would never emerge whilst a tyrannical State opened windows into men's souls. 'Tis Liberty in Religion that breeds... noble and generous minds'. Like Milton, Wolseley was convinced that as theological knowledge increased it would diffuse itself into a 'variety of thoughts and principles': indeed religious pluralism was a *sine qua non* of divine illumination. In the same Miltonic vein Wolseley utterly rejected the conventional argument that the introduction of liberty of conscience would only lead to a Tower of Babel of sectarian discord and 'damnable heresies': that, as he trenchantly observed, was 'to put a Bear-skin upon it, and then to bait it'. But while it is possible to detect Milton's radical influence on Wolseley's intellectual case for religious emancipation, the prime inspiration for the notion itself undoubtedly came from Cromwell. This is evident from the Cromwellian phraseology he frequently used throughout his discourse. To quote but one example: 'T'will be impossible to find out a way for men of differing judgements in religion to live together...unless they exercise an Indulgence to each other in that variety as they stand in as Christians'. A finer

distillation of everything Cromwell had striven for in his governance of the English church during the 1650s it would be difficult to find.

But once again Wolseley was a voice crying in the wilderness. His impassioned plea for religious toleration fell on deaf ears. The legal proscription of Protestant Dissent continued as before. As for Wolseley himself, he was already under a cloud of suspicion with Charles II's government when it discovered that he had attended a nonconformist conventicle in Greenwich in May 1667 at which three other men formerly close to Cromwell were present, namely Bulstrode Whitelocke, Dr John Owen and John Thurloe. The same year he blotted his copybook even more by his association with the disgraced Duke of Buckingham who had fallen foul of the king for making himself the leader of 'the discontented party' in the political nation. Charles was not amused on being told by his leading minister (Clarendon) that Wolseley was rumoured to have given shelter to Buckingham at his ancestral home when the latter sought refuge from the royal wrath. It was noted the errant Duke 'mixed with persons the most suspected for seditious inclinations' – Wolseley was clearly a marked man.

But what finally made Wolseley *persona non grata* in the eyes of the Anglican establishment was his open championship of the nonconformist community in his two pamphlets on *Liberty of Conscience* in 1668-9. It really grated when he denied there was any connection between dissent and sedition. Wolseley openly averred that, far from being 'a Factious, Fanatick' generation 'of sick-brain'd men', separatists from the Church of England were in fact 'good subjects'. Significantly, he was removed from the Staffordshire bench in 1670, a dismissal almost certainly linked to the radical views he had aired in the same polemical literature on the role of the civil magistracy in religious matters. While conceding that JPs should show 'zeal and concern for the Truth of Religion', Wolseley was adamant that they should 'not lay violent hands upon men's persons' if their minds differed from their own. Under no circumstances whatsoever must they ever 'violate the due Liberty of any man's conscience' by resorting to coercion. Given that the Restoration regime relied on stand pat Anglican JPs to enforce religious conformity in the localities it is little wonder that Wolseley should be excluded from their ranks at the end of the 1660s. His political isolation was complete.

Wolseley, however, found solace in writing even more religious works. Over a period of eight years he produced no less than four major books,

the first on *The Unreasonableness of Atheism* (1669), the second on *The Reasonableness of Scripture Belief* (1672), the third on *The Case of Divorce and Remarriage* (1673) and the fourth on *Justification Evangelical* (1677). Wolseley approached all these theological issues 'with great caution, with great humility, and with great sincerity'. And 'with great integrity', too. In terms of his literary style Wolseley eschewed a 'multitude of words', preferring to express himself in a 'short' manner. His argumentation was also 'plain', for he deplored 'Polemick Intricacies'. Likewise, the tone of his writings was rational, non-dogmatic and judicious. As he felicitously put it, 'Discretion will instruct a man not to rush in violently, or suddenly to declare against any one side: or yet easily to suppose the truth wholly appropriated to any one party'. Wolseley was firmly resolved 'not to be engaged... upon any terms' by those contemporary polemicists who took 'delight in Contention, and love to turn all... Discourse into impertinent squabbles'. Such 'moderation and circumspection' was worthy of a Cromwellian disciple who shared his teacher's deep aversion to sectarian controversy and discord. The Lord Protector would have particularly warmed to Wolseley's declaration that 'the most essential part of Divinity' was 'to unite any good men who have differently conceived hereof'. However it was the religious content of Wolseley's works that would have specially commended itself to Cromwell and won his approbation. For Wolseley Christianity was a living as well as a justifying faith with the prime emphasis upon 'the Grand principle of Action'. And that meant leading 'a sober, righteous, religious life'. Simply and effectively put, one could almost hear Cromwell saying.

Wolseley was justifiably proud of his literary output during these wilderness years. 'What I have written, I have written', he declared with a flourish. In between wielding the pen he much preoccupied himself with gardening, and even after he had come in from the cold after the Glorious Revolution of 1688 this was still one of his favourite pastimes. Indeed, his niece, Mrs Celia Fiennes, tells us he was still 'takeing delight in his gardens' when she visited him at Wolseley in 1697-8. We also learn from Celia Fiennes that Sir Charles had been busy channelling his formidable energies into an ambitious remodelling of his country seat. This was built 'in the old-fashion' being described as a 'low' half-timbered edifice, huddled around a courtyard and moated, before its transformation by Wolseley after the Restoration. He redesigned the 'large parlour', inserted a 'noble staircase' and altered some of the upper rooms turning them into 'handsome chambers'. But for all these diversions Wolseley still yearned for a return to the public stage: how could it be otherwise when he was 'a very able man'

and so 'active'? His political talents were languishing: and he felt unfulfilled. Something of the bitterness of these long years in political exile is apparent in a waspish aside in his pamphlet, *Liberty of Conscience*, where he bluntly declared no man's religious opinions 'ought to put a Negative' on a career in the royal service. All that mattered was his personal 'Ability and Fitness' for employment 'in that kind'. Here Wolseley was surely thinking of himself? To act otherwise, he commented acerbically, 'is below the greatness of a Prince'.

Wolseley tried to stage a political comeback at the end of Charles II's reign. During the elections to the first Exclusion Parliament in September 1679, for example, he expressed 'a great desire to be a Member', declaring his candidacy as a 'worthy patriot' first for Stafford and later for Bramber in Sussex. But he was rebuffed in both places. At Stafford his election prospects should have been bright, since he lived only a short distance from that parliamentary borough; but the seat was pre-empted by the Duke of Monmouth's nominee, Sir Thomas Armstrong, whose Whig credentials were even more impeccable than Wolseley's. He stood less chance at Bramber because he was 'a stranger', though he had the backing of the radical republican, Algernon Sidney, who strove hard to get him elected there. To no avail, for 'his interest' in this constituency was simply too weak: and he had no choice but to desist. Interestingly, it seems he still suffered from the stigma of his former association with Cromwell, it being bruited around Bramber that he was 'one of Oliver's friends'. It was a similar story when he tried to get himself elected to the Oxford Parliament in early March 1682: this time he concentrated his efforts on the voters of Lichfield; but though he was reported 'to offer very bountifully' they resisted his blandishments, once again forcing him to withdraw ignominiously. This failure to become an MP undoubtedly rankled with Wolseley who was said to 'be mightily disgusted' that his parliamentary aspirations had come to nought. He remained 'a political untouchable'.

With the accession of James II in February 1685 Wolseley's exclusion from office seemed set to continue. Predictably, he came under suspicion during Monmouth's rebellion later that year, so much so that he was arrested and confined in Chester Castle. His future looked bleak indeed. Mercifully, his imprisonment did not last long and he was released on 4 July 1685. There then occurred a remarkable turn-around in Wolseley's political fortunes. In 1687-88 he unexpectedly found himself drawn to James II's policy of repealing the penal laws against Protestant Dissenters and Roman

Catholics. Wolseley must have blanched at the Catholic King's proselytising efforts to promote the old religion – he put it on record that he had 'the greatest aversion to Popery' – but he swallowed his reservations on that score, for he was genuinely attracted by James II's concerted drive to end the Anglican ascendancy in church and state and to grant toleration to the nonconformists. The King's promise to abolish religious tests for office under the Crown must also have been music to his ears!

Wolseley thus became one of James II's Whig collaborators, an extraordinary development but one fully explicable in terms of his passionate and long-standing attachment to the ideal of religious freedom. So in February 1688, with that laudable aim in view, he therefore 'declared himself right and ready to serve his Majesty in any capacity', an undertaking the King willingly accepted. For he now put Wolseley's name forward as one of the government candidates in the impending elections for a new Parliament which, it was hoped, would remove the civil disabilities suffered by Protestant and Catholic recusants alike. Wolseley hoped to secure election as one of the country MPs for Staffordshire but, bearing in mind previous snubs, was understandably pessimistic about his prospects. The King's electoral agents therefore recommended him to stand for the Oxfordshire constituency of Woodstock where they assumed the Fiennes influence would carry the day. The wheel had apparently come full circle! Wolseley's political career had begun in Oxfordshire back in the summer of 1653; and now it seemed that it would be re-launched there. But it was not to be, for the Glorious Revolution now intervened to blast Wolseley's parliamentary ambitions once and for all.

Ironically, Wolseley's younger brother, William, who had pursued an army career after the Restoration, played a prominent role in the ousting of James II. Early in December 1688 he helped to seize the garrison of Hull for William of Orange and was the leader of the Enniskillen Protestants against the Jacobites in Ireland the following year. His decisive victory over the Irish forces of the deposed King James at Newtown Butler on 31 July 1689 made him a national hero. His elder brother must have basked in his glory: and this doubtless spared him from any undue embarrassment for his former cooperation with James II's discredited regime. But Wolseley not only rode out the revolutionary storm with sang-froid, he also showed a cat-like facility for landing on his feet, for the new Williamite government bestowed two local offices on him: a Staffordshire deputy lieutenantancy and justiceship, posts he seems to have held from December 1688 until his

death in October 1714. Thus for the first time in nearly thirty years Wolseley experienced the trappings of power again; but only on a county level, for a seat in Parliament – which now met on a regular basis – still eluded him. But then some recognition for his political talents was better than none at all.

Ideologically, too, the new political landscape was more to Wolseley's taste. The world of the 1690s bore many resemblances to the Interregnum era. For a start the new Dutch King was a predestinarian Calvinist very much in the mould of Cromwell. He certainly had 'the root of the matter' in him. Likewise William III ruled as a constitutional monarch in a style the Lord Protector aspired to. His ecclesiastical settlement was not as generous as Cromwell's and could not have been entirely to Wolseley's liking, since the Anglican confessional state remained intact; but at least a limited toleration had now been granted to the Protestant Dissenters and, for good measure, Roman Catholicism was still politically proscribed. Yet again William of Orange was a robust asserter of 'the Protestant interest' abroad, revolutionising English foreign policy and placing his adopted country at the very heart of a series of defensive military alliances with Protestant European powers. In short, William III was Oliver Cromwell with a crown upon his head. Wolseley had come into his own.

Ahead of him lay a further quarter century, for he lived to see the Hanoverian succession. Throughout his twilight years Wolseley remained hail and hearty – even when compiling his will on 27 October 1706 at the grand old age of seventy-six he was still said to be 'in perfect health' and of sound memory. Even now he never lost his interest in biblical studies and devoted his time to preparing a manuscript for publication on Christian prayer. As he soldiered on into his eighties he befriended the nonconformist minister, Matthew Henry, who frequently visited him at Wolseley. The two men enjoyed many intimate confidences and Henry records in his diary that Wolseley now spoke 'with much savour of another world'. But as he looked back over his past life Wolseley apparently expressed a major regret, informing Henry 'he wished he had been a minister'. It was Wolseley's fervent piety which had first attracted him to Cromwell and made them such perfect soul mates. Had his old political boss been privy to this conversation we can rest assured that he would have fully sympathised with Wolseley's yearning for this alternative calling. But I like to think that, on reflection, he might have pointed out that the career Wolseley had actually led did him much credit, for he had fulfilled his

THE IMPROBABLE CROMWELLIAN

generation by staying loyal to the Cromwellian vision of the 1650s. Above all, he could take comfort in the fact that he had once been 'one of Oliver's friends'.

Notes on sources:

For general outlines of Wolseley's life see the appropriate entries on him in the *Old and New Dictionary of National Biography*. Also useful is the brief biography of him in Basil Duke Henning (ed), *The House of Commons 1660-1690*, The History of Parliament Trust, London 1983, vol III p. 754. Wolseley's speech before Cromwell on 11 April 1657 is published verbatim in *Monarchy Asserted*, London, 1660, pp. 19-21. I have drawn extensively upon both of Wolseley's 1668 pamphlets on *Liberty of Conscience* for reconstructing his post-Restoration stance on the issues of foreign policy and religious toleration.

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'TO CREATE A LITTLE WORLD OUT OF CHAOS': THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PROTECTORATE, 1653-54

by Peter Gaunt

My Lord, The state and complexion of affairs are much altered here since you left us and I think very much for the better. The parliament you left sitting, the main part of them delivered up their power to my Lord General from whence they received it. The government now established is by a Lord Protector (who hath much the same power which the king formerly) assisted with a council not exceeding 21 and parliaments to be chosen triennially who have the legislature wholly in them, save for some time till the first parliament be elected when it rests in the Protector and his council. The nation is much generally satisfied with it and providence seems to promise us a great deal of settlement and peace under this government. The present Protector is my Lord General, whose personal worth I think I may say without vanity qualify him for the greatest monarch of the world.¹

On 7 January 1654 one of the new Protectoral councillors wrote thus to the politician and diplomat Bulstrode Whitelock, then on a mission to Sweden and newly arrived at Gothenberg, to inform him of the recent constitutional developments back home. The letter was from young Sir Charles Wolseley, not yet 24 – he would live to see a Hanoverian on the British throne – the son of an active supporter of the king in the civil war who had compounded for his late father's royalism in 1647 in order to recover the family's Staffordshire estates. Wolseley had played a leading role in ending the former regime as one of the ringleaders of the Nominated Assembly's resignation on 12 December 1653, and he had been duly rewarded with appointment to the new Protectoral council. Thus he was an insider, with a case to make and a position to defend. Never the less, his letter to Whitelock, written within three weeks of the advent of the new government, captures the sense of enthusiasm with which many greeted the incoming regime, the widespread relief that the change had been effected so smoothly and peacefully – 'the nation is much generally satisfied' – and an optimism that the new regime would bring something better – 'providence seems to promise us a great deal of settlement and peace under this government' – shared by many both at the centre and in the provinces. Protector and councillors, administrators and publicists, felt a sense of a new beginning, a fresh start, a chance for order and stability after so much uncertainty. The day before Wolseley wrote his letter, the journalist and author Marchamont Nedham had also written to Whitelock, announcing

the change of government, noting in exultant tones that 'we have a new world formed (like the old) out of chaos, by the prudence and industry of that excellent person' the new Lord Protector,² while a few weeks later in his published pamphlet *A True State of the Case of the Commonwealth* of early February, he wrote of 'the beginning of a new Government, necessitated to create a little world out of chaos, and bring form out of confusion'.³

This paper will look again at the first phase of Oliver Cromwell's Protectorate, from its establishment in mid December 1653 through to the first Protectorate Parliament of September 1654 to January 1655, analysing the first year or so of the regime in order to address a number of related questions. How was the new regime structured and who exercised power in government, both in theory and in practice? What were the priorities, goals and objectives of the regime during this opening phase? Can we detect any clear and consistent government programme or philosophy, whether radical or conservative, in pursuit of reform or settlement, or did the Protectoral government – like so many other early modern regimes – merely respond to external pressures and emergencies, overwhelmed by a mass of routine business, unfolding events and unexpected crises over which it had little or no control? And, in the light of all the optimism and enthusiasm of its opening weeks, and – as we shall see – of the considerable energy and solid achievements of the regime in the months down to September 1654, why did things go so sour so quickly thereafter, with a failed parliament, the turning to dust of so much hope and optimism, and the striking sense of gloom which pervaded government by the opening weeks and months of 1655?

So, firstly, how was the new regime structured and who exercised power? In some ways these questions are very easy to answer, for the new Protectoral regime rested on a written constitution, the Instrument of Government. Its authorship remains uncertain, and although a range of contemporary evidence points to Major-General John Lambert as the key player in drawing up the document, probably during autumn 1653, several sources also suggest that he did not act alone. Several contemporary sources indicate that the authorship of the Instrument was principally military, suggesting that a small number of senior army officers drew up the constitution; as well as Lambert, James Berry, Thomas Kelsey and William Goff are named in sources as having had some hand in the preparation of the Instrument.⁴ However, at least one source suggests that a clutch of civilian politicians and administrators also took part in the process and names Henry Lawrence, John Thurloe and Oliver St John,⁵ all of whom

played a role within the Protectoral government and were personally close to Cromwell both before and after the advent of the new regime.

The draft constitution was in a sufficiently advanced state by 15 December and enough key players – chiefly the new Protector and Protectoral councillors – were on board to enable the new government to be formally inaugurated. A hastily arranged installation ceremony duly took place on the afternoon of Friday 16 December in Westminster Hall. It centred on the reading of the new constitution – 'the Rules for this New Government were then read, which consist of many particulars, expressed in an Instrument; the Instrument is large, which took up above half an hours reading'⁶ – though the precise wording of the document was probably still being finalised in mid December, a process which apparently continued through the remainder of the month. Not until 2 January 1654 was the Instrument of Government officially published, and both the full text and detailed summaries quickly appeared in print and were widely circulated. This is the definitive text, which has come down to us.⁷

Whoever they were, the authors of the Instrument had clear aims and intentions. The constitution drew on earlier draft settlements, including the Heads of the Proposals of 1647, the officers' version of the Agreement of the People of 1648-49 and the Rump's abortive Government Bill of 1652-53, but it did not slavishly follow any of these documents or adopt their texts and provisions wholesale and there was much that was new in the Protectoral constitution. The Instrument ended more than a decade during which representative assemblies, almost permanently in session, had exercised both legislative and executive functions, the latter through a string of dependant councils or committees of very limited power. Instead, it separated the two arms of government once more, creating a permanent, strong, largely independent executive – the Protectoral council – and an assured succession of elected parliaments. The council possessed wide but not boundless executive powers, parliaments wide but certainly not unlimited legislative powers. A series of checks and balances were written into the constitution to reduce the danger of direct clashes between the two arms of government, to prevent one attacking or undermining the other and to stop either going too far or doing too much without the consent of the other. There was also to be a single head of state, a Lord Protector or 'chief magistrate' as many contemporaries put it, who was to cooperate with, but also to coordinate the activities of, the executive and legislative arms.

The Instrument was a British constitution and it repeatedly stressed that it not only embraced England, Scotland and Ireland – Wales was deemed subsumed into England – but also viewed the three nations as comprising a single commonwealth. This union was particularly apparent in the provisions for the legislative arm, for there were to be single chamber, elected parliaments, meeting every three years, representing the whole of Britain. As well as 400 English and Welsh MPs, to be elected on a revised franchise for newly drawn constituencies which gave far more seats to the counties and far fewer to towns, the constitution laid down that Ireland and Scotland were to return 30 MPs apiece, though the Irish and Scottish constituencies were still unclear and were not finalised until summer 1654. The constitution contained various regulations and qualifications setting out who could stand or vote in parliamentary elections and who could sit in the Protectoral parliaments. Parliament was given extensive legislative powers and could pass Bills which would become law even if the Protector did not give his assent. However, the Protector had the right to veto any Bills which in his sole opinion, against which there was no appeal, ran counter to the written constitution. The regular triennial parliaments were guaranteed a minimum lifespan, during which they could be dissolved only with their own consent, though thereafter they could apparently be dissolved at will by the Protector. Further provisions allowed Protector and council to call extra parliaments if the need arose in the intervals between the regular triennial parliaments. The constitution set out very long and detailed provisions to ensure that parliament would be called, elections held and the resulting legislature assemble even if the Protector or local officials failed to act.

The Instrument established a permanent executive council of up to 21 members and named the 15 founder members who began meeting in mid December. Unlike the Privy Councillors who served the monarch, Protectoral councillors could not be appointed or dismissed at will by the head of state, for long and complex procedures were laid down which had to be followed both to remove any Councillors found guilty of corruption and to fill future vacancies caused by death or dismissal, procedures in which the council and parliament took the lead and in which the Protector had only a very limited role. Thus the constitution sought to give the Protectoral council an assured and at least semi-independent role in government. The council had very few powers of its own – to vet newly returned MPs, to play a part in appointing new councillors and to elect a

new head of state on the death of the old – and instead most conciliar powers could only be exercised in partnership with the Protector.

Nearly five years after the reigning monarch had been executed and monarchy abolished, the Instrument of Government restored a single head of state, a Lord Protector, and named Oliver Cromwell as the first Protector. The Protector was to hold office for life and was removable only by death, but the office was not hereditary and an incumbent had no direct say over who was to succeed him; the council alone, meeting upon the death of an incumbent, would elect his successor. The Protector was the font of honour and justice, with power to pardon, was invested with state property and was given an assured annual income to run civil government. But, like the council, the Protector possessed very few powers, which he could exercise alone. Instead clause after clause of the Instrument laid down that government and administration, including all the key governmental responsibilities and powers – the deployment of the armed forces, the making of war and peace, the appointment of senior officers of state and the raising and spending of state revenues – were to be shared between Protector and parliament or between Protector and council. In many cases those powers were vested jointly in the Protector and the council, though their decisions were to be reviewed and ratified by parliament when next it assembled.

The constitution made provision for a regular army of 30,000 men and a navy of unspecified size, though it also authorised the continued funding of the existing army, which numbered well over 30,000. In religion, the Instrument respected the compromise position which had been reached by 1653, with the ghostly remnants of the Church of England continuing through the appointment of parochial clergy funded, at least for the time being, by tithes, but with a guarantee that no-one was to be compelled to conform to this system and to worship under the regular parish ministers, and instead an unambiguous assurance that there was to be broad liberty of conscience for most Protestants. Roman Catholics, 'prelatists' – those actively promoting the restoration of bishops and an episcopal church – and anyone indulging in licentious practices were excluded from such broad toleration.

Overall, most historians see the Instrument as an honest and sensible attempt to blend selected traditional forms with new post-war ideas and innovations and so lay foundations for new a regime which stood some chance of providing stable government in the political context of 1653 and

the 1650s in general. There were a few ragged edges, indicative of hasty drafting or revision – thus in several places the constitution stated that Guernsey and Jersey were to be represented in the Protectoral parliaments, but in fact they were absent from the clauses which allocated and distributed seats. The Instrument provided for regular 'triennial' parliaments, but the meaning of that word was left uncertain, so while some clauses seemed to imply that a parliament would assemble every third year – 1654, 1657, 1660 and so on – and many contemporary commentators interpreted the arrangements in that way, other clauses stated that the next regular parliament would fall due three years after the dissolution (not the first meeting) of the preceding triennial parliament, which was of course a very different system. Some issues were clearly unresolved in December 1653 and the Instrument left them to be finalised later – the distribution of the seats in Scotland and Ireland, the size of a navy 'convenient' for guarding the seas and the size and funding of the army over and above the 30,000 men explicitly provided for. The Instrument contained no provision allowing and authorising its own subsequent amendment by Protector, council or parliament and, as it turned out, it also left Protector and council rather short of power and in a difficult position if there was a fairly lengthy interval between parliaments – Cromwell and his councillors certainly stretched and perhaps exceeded their constitutional powers in some of the policies they introduced and pursued in 1655-56, in the twenty months between the dissolution of the first Protectorate parliament and the meeting of the second.

The final version of the Instrument of Government laid down that the first triennial parliament would be elected in summer 1654 and would assemble on 3 September – the anniversary of the great victories of Dunbar and Worcester, even though in 1654 that fell on a Sunday and so probably was not envisaged as a working day for the MPs. Thus there would be an initial period of almost nine months during which Protector and council could work to establish the new regime, to set out its policies and to provide a stable and positive context for the holding of elections and the meeting of a parliament. As normal during periods when parliament was not in session, a range of powers were held and to be exercised jointly by Protector and council. But, recognising that this opening period of the Protectorate would be particularly difficult and that the executive arm needed firmly to establish the regime over these months, the final version of the Instrument gave Protector and council certain special, additional powers, which they were to hold only during this crucial period and which would automatically lapse,

never to return, when parliament assembled on 3 September 1654. These included authority to name and appoint a small number of additional councillors and power to raise money to pay for 'the present extraordinary forces, both at sea and land', for unless they were provided for, 'disorders and dangers...might otherwise fall out'. Tacked on rather clumsily to this article was another provision, granting Protector and council temporary powers during this period 'to make laws and ordinances for the peace and welfare of these nations where it shall be necessary'.

Armed with these permanent and temporary powers, Protector and council set about launching the new regime. On 19 or 20 December, attending one of the first meetings of the council, Cromwell made 'a sweet speech' to his councillors, seeking to lay down the regime's priorities and to point his colleagues in the right direction. We do not possess the full text of what he said, merely a brief summary which appeared in several newspapers. According to this account, Cromwell 'pressed the Council to act for God and the peace and good of the Nation, and particularly recommended to them to consider and relieve the distress of the poor and oppressed'.⁸ Thus Cromwell stressed a religious strand, 'to act for God', an agenda which for Cromwell meant both cementing liberty of conscience and pursuing a rolling programme of moral or godly reformation embracing the promotion of purity and the extirpation of sin as well as the moderation of the harshest and most unjust elements of the social and judicial systems – Cromwell's call to 'consider and relieve the distress of the poor and oppressed' chimes in with this agenda. But he also urged his council to act for 'the peace and good of the Nation', perhaps looking to policies which might promote internal stability and harmony, a nation at peace with itself, prefiguring the theme of 'healing and settling' which he made a major plank of several later state speeches. Accordingly, we can interpret this very early speech of Protector Cromwell as containing both radical and more conservative elements, as calling for both reform and consolidation. Certainly, the policies and programme of Protector and council as they unfolded during the opening months of the Protectorate contained elements of both.

During the opening months of the Protectorate Cromwell, his councillors and various diplomats were active in moving forward the foreign and diplomatic policies of the regime.⁹ In spring 1654 peace was concluded with the Dutch republic, so formally ending the rather moribund first Dutch war. The Protectorate appeared keen to end a war which had by 1654 fizzled out into a stalemate and to make peace with a fellow Protestant, non-monarchical regime, though Cromwell and his advisors were careful to

stand by the original English principles which lay behind the war and which had been cemented by earlier naval victories. Thus under the treaty signed on 5 April it was made clear that the Navigation Act remained in force and that Dutch vessels would continue to have to salute English ships and the Dutch pledged both to give no aid to any enemies of the Protectorate and never to restore the House of Orange – natural allies of the Stuarts – to power in their homeland. In the following months commercial and diplomatic treaties were also concluded with Sweden, Denmark and Portugal. During 1654 Protector and council reviewed the regime's relations with the two major powers of western Europe, France and Spain, negotiating with representatives of both states and encouraging a bidding war for the Protectorate's support. The regime was clearly divided about what course to follow and, as well as exploring ways in which the French Protestant minority might be helped, there were clearly substantial debates about the desirability of following a course which might or would provoke war with Spain. In what purports to be an account of a speech made by the Protector in the course of one such council debate, Cromwell is shown supporting war against Spain on a number of grounds, including the need to deploy the navy and so secure its reputation in Europe, the hope that rich Spanish pickings would make war not merely self-financing but actually profitable and, often Cromwell's clinching argument, the apparent lead given by providence.¹⁰ It is likely that an ingrained hatred of Spain and aggressive Spanish Catholicism also had some part to play in leading Cromwell and a majority of the council to support an active anti-Spanish policy, culminating in the formal decision of 18 August to prepare an expedition to attack Spanish possessions in 'America'.

Cromwell and his council also took steps not only to cement England's control over Scotland and Ireland but also, in keeping with the British tone of the new constitution, to bring the three nations closer together. In spring 1654 a new, more dynamic commander, George Monck, was appointed in Scotland, and given new powers, additional troops and ships and quite generous funds to promote order and stability north of the border. At the same time, a series of ordinances was passed formally to unite Scotland with England as a single political and economic unit, to extend a very broad pardon to the Scottish people, from which only continuing rebels in arms and less than 100 named individuals were excluded, though in fact many of the fines and forfeitures were later moderated or lifted, to give some help to those Scottish landowners who had fallen heavily into debt and who were being pursued by creditors and to introduce to the Scottish church an

English-style system in which bodies of central or provincial commissioners would examine and either approve or reject candidates seeking appointment and a parish stipend. The more brutal English reorganisation of Ireland was in many ways more advanced by 1654, for the policy of dispossessing and transplanting many native Irish Catholics and of reallocating land was in place before the advent of the Protectorate and a comprehensive Act of Settlement had been passed in 1652. During 1654 Protector and council instituted some new measures, encouraging further Protestant settlement in Ireland and also moderating the terms of the Act of Settlement as they affected Irish Protestants. In August the existing parliamentary commissioners for Ireland were replaced by a new Irish council, a sort of devolved administration in Dublin, which was to work with Charles Fleetwood, who remained in Ireland as Lord Deputy but who now had to operate in tandem with a more powerful council. Moreover, the Protectoral council requested that Henry Cromwell be sent to Ireland to serve under Fleetwood as commander-in-chief of the English forces in Ireland, though Cromwell did not authorise this development until the following year.

Protector and council also ensured continuing tight security at home, within England and Wales. The council's secretary, John Thurloe, inherited and further refined an efficient intelligence system established by the republican regimes and a close watch was maintained over potential religious and political opponents of the regime. In the opening weeks of the Protectorate the inflammatory preachers Christopher Feake and John Simpson were arrested and sent to Windsor castle and Thomas Harrison was placed under virtual house arrest at his father's home in Staffordshire. Only two, rather minor royalist plots surfaced during the first nine months of the Protectorate and both were nipped in the bud. The government got wind of a conspiracy in mid February and the ringleaders were swiftly rounded up, interrogated and imprisoned. Word of another, more extensive royalist plot leaked out during May and on the 21st its ringleaders were arrested. Protector and council used their legislative powers to set up a special High Court of Justice and during the summer a trio of royalist conspirators were tried for treason, convicted and sentenced to death; two of them, John Gerard and Peter Vowell, were executed, as was the brother of the Portuguese ambassador, who had been tried and condemned separately for involvement in the conspiracy. Although a French diplomat based in London, Baron de Baas, was also suspected of complicity, he was merely ordered out of the country. During spring and summer 1654 Protector and council also clamped down on a number of activities, which might provide

opportunity for clandestine plotting, lead to disorder and encourage sin. Thus a combination of security and reformation probably lay behind ordinances to prohibit cock matches, duelling and horse races.

In 1653-54 Protector and council made some changes to state finance. Although they largely worked within the framework which they had inherited, they sought ways to collect the established revenues more efficiently as well as to trim costs. The old Excise Act was renewed but the system was slightly amended, with a new scale of duties, a commission to examine and recover arrears and a new appeals procedure. The expiring Customs Act was similarly extended for a further term, with minor modifications. The established monthly assessments, the main direct tax, were also continued, though in summer 1654 Protector and council ordered that the monthly rate would fall from £120,000 to £90,000 from the autumn. At the end of December 1653 new Treasury commissioners were appointed with instructions to seek a reduction in the number of financial bodies and officials and to bring all revenues into a single channel. This resulted in two overlapping ordinances, passed in June and September, directing that all public revenues should henceforth pass through the single, central Treasury. In reality, complete centralisation in a single body was never achieved and a variety of other financial officials and commissions, including the sequestration commission and treasurers at war, continued to handle some financial affairs and revenues. Plans to restore a single Lord Treasurer were also shelved during the summer and instead a new body of Treasury or Exchequer commissioners was appointed during August.

During the spring Protector and council appointed a group of legal experts and others who were charged with considering and reporting on law reform in general and an overhaul of the Court of Chancery in particular. Although one or more bodies of lawyers and others sat intermittently during April and May and reported back to council in June, perhaps presenting a draft measure for reforming the Chancery, other accounts suggest that in the end the council itself took the initiative. By June a council committee was meeting and drafting an ordinance to reform Chancery. The final ordinance, issued on 21 August, sought to make access to the court swifter, easier and cheaper, to ensure that the court sat for longer hours and kept to a predetermined timetable for hearing and determining cases, to restrict the jurisdiction of the court and to establish a system whereby appeals could be heard against its decisions. Elsewhere, few major legal or judicial changes were effected during 1653-54 and the existing legal system inherited in December 1653 largely survived. Protector and council took care to ensure

that new judges were appointed to fill any vacancies on the bench and via ordinances they appointed a new chief justice for north Wales and revived the assizes of the city and county of Durham and the jurisdiction of the County Palatine of Lancaster; the separate Court of Lancaster at Westminster was also revived. The jurisdiction of the Court of Admiralty was periodically renewed and extended and although in early September, just before parliament assembled, Protector and council repealed many of the judges' powers, the Admiralty Court itself apparently continued. In line with Cromwell's speech to the council of the third week of December, much council time was given over to reviewing and seeking to revise the laws and judicial processes relating to creditors, debtors and poor prisoners, with a whole string of ordinances attempting to modify existing procedures and set out something better. The existing legislation was repeatedly suspended and eventually in the summer Protector and council established a new system, appointing a new set of judges and laying down more fair and equitable procedures for clearing debts.

Via ordinances and other orders, Protector and council dealt with a variety of social, economic and commercial matters in 1653-54, but they did so in a rather ad hoc and limited manner, and sweeping changes are again conspicuous by their absence. For example during 1654 the council arbitrated in disputes between the Muscovy Company and others over the right to hunt whales in certain waters and permitted the importation of cotton-wool from Continental merchants to overcome the shortage of Turkish wool which was harming the Lancashire fustian industry. An additional excise ordinance of early May refunded duties levied on imported goods which were subsequently re-exported, attempting thereby to boost certain home-based manufacturing industries. Other worthy measures included ordinances for the better repair and maintenance of highways, allowing old soldiers to enter any trade of their choice, free from apprenticeship and guild regulations, and reforming and laying down regulations for the running of the post office and the handling of internal and foreign posts.

The Protectoral constitution had established the basic framework of religion and the church and during 1653-54 Protector and council focused on important but secondary issues concerning the appointment, removal and maintenance of parish ministers. Following a conference with leading divines, in the spring an ordinance was issued appointing a central commission of 'triers', drawn from a wide variety of faiths and backgrounds, to determine the suitability of those proposed for vacancies

within the church and to approve or reject candidates for vacant livings. Although the question of judging the suitability of existing incumbents was being considered in council by that time, not until August 1654 was an ordinance passed to appoint local committees of 'ejectors' with powers to examine incumbent ministers and schoolmasters and to dismiss those found to be unsuitable. An ordinance of 2 September set out various provisions for the better maintenance and encouragement of ministers, including the uniting of parishes. While the Instrument had retained the tithing system of financing parish clergy, Cromwell and several of his councillors clearly had reservations about tithes. In April a council committee was appointed to explore alternative ways of maintaining ministers, but little more was heard from it and the old tithing system staggered on throughout the Protectorate.

Over and above the major lines of domestic and foreign policy, the handling of state business, in 1653-54 as throughout the Protectorate Cromwell and his councillors spent a great deal of time and energy handling local and private business. Protector and council were flooded with petitions from individuals, groups and localities, requesting money, land, office, pardon, redress, exemption, inclusion, reward or other support, direction, authorisation or reassurance from central government. Protector and council also acted as supreme arbiters and coordinators, supervising the actions of subordinate officials, handling difficult cases, resolving complexities, uncertainties and divisions, receiving complaints and requests from all quarters. Some of this business was delegated to other government departments and some was laid aside, but a mass of business of this sort was heard by Cromwell and his councillors and determined by them, via simple council orders or the full and more formal procedure of a conciliar ordinance. The latter give a flavour of the sort of issues coming before Protector and council in the opening months of the Protectorate. Thus ordinances relating to particular localities, buildings or institutions included measures imposing a new duty on ale and beer sold in and around Edinburgh, authorising the repair and maintenance of the drainage works of the Great Level, regulating hackney-coaches in London, reforming the administration of St Peter's school in York, addressing abuses committed by water-men on the Thames and Medway, funding the repair of Pidley church, uniting two rectories in Dorset, authorising and helping to fund the repair of Berwick bridge, reviving plans to drain and protect from flooding coastal areas of Norfolk and Suffolk, providing support for the Windsor almshouses, confirming the articles made at the surrender of Barnstaple,

appointing a preacher at West Cowes on the Isle of Wight and clarifying the financing of St Catherine's hospital at Ledbury. What might be termed 'private' ordinances, those relating to one person or to a small group of named individuals, typically granted arrears of pay, allocated money or land, pardoned past actions or ended sequestration proceedings, settled disputes over estates or entitlement to particular places and naturalised foreigners resident in England. For example, ordinances allowed Charles Cavendish, Viscount Mansfield, benefit of the Act of Pardon and Oblivion, settled the lease of Hartland rectory in Devon upon John Dury, ordered payment of money due to Daniel Hutchinson and Michael Casteel, certified that George Raleigh and Henry Clark had benefit of the articles issued upon the surrender of Oxford in 1646, naturalised Joachim Hane, settled Irish lands upon Colonel Robert Hammond and ordered payments of £1336 to Lionel Beacher of Barnstaple and of £1000 to Sir William Dicke.

During 1653-54 Protector and council issued directives and made public their decisions in a number of ways. Permits for the passage of people or goods were generally issued as passes or licences, signed by the president of the council, while orders to governmental officials and bodies to arrest, convey or release individuals or goods, to pay money or grant land and office were generally framed as warrants, signed not only the council president but also by six other councillors. Lesser council orders could be conveyed via a letter from the president or simply by a fair copy of the council minute, entered on a separate sheet and counter-signed by the council's secretary or an under-secretary. All these forms were commonly used in 1653-54 and throughout the Protectorate as a whole. Occasionally, Protector and council made public their decisions in much broader formats, as published 'declarations', such as those setting aside national days of fasting and prayer, humiliation or thanksgiving, or as 'proclamations', the well-established but sometimes contentious form in which the royal will had often found expression. In fact, in 1653-54, as during the Protectorate as a whole, Cromwell and his council issued proclamations only infrequently and cautiously, merely to advertise clearly non-legislative governmental decisions or to publicise forthcoming events. Only six proclamations were issued in the nine months up to the meeting of the first Protectorate parliament, two in December 1653 announcing the new government and directing that existing judges and legal processes should continue unaffected by the change of regime, a further three during the spring announcing peace with the Dutch and setting out procedures for settling any outstanding legal or material disputes arising from the war, and a sixth proclamation of late

May requiring parish constables to compile and return lists of people lodging in and around London, part of the increased security in the wake of the recently discovered royalist conspiracy.

While declarations and proclamations, as well as assorted orders, warrants, licences and so on, continued to be issued by Cromwell and the councillors throughout the Protectorate, during 1653-54 they also issued a particular type of order unique to the opening months of the regime. Looking to article xxx of the constitution, which had given Protector and council temporary powers down to the meeting of the first Protectorate parliament 'to make laws and ordinances for the peace and welfare of these nations where it shall be necessary', during 1653-54 Cromwell and his councillors issued some non-parliamentary legislation. It is not clear why the drafters of the Instrument had included this provision or what use they expected Protector and council to make of their temporary legislative power. Possibly someone had realised that some fixed-term Acts of Parliament passed by the Rump and Nominated Assembly in the early 1650s were due to expire between December 1653 and September 1654 and that, unless provision was made to give Protector and council power to renew them, some useful or important existing legislation would lapse. Certainly, during the winter and early spring of 1653-54 Protector and council did use their power in this way, to renew or extend several earlier Acts of Parliament, and they issued over a dozen ordinances to reactivate expired or expiring parliamentary legislation.

However, Protector and council quickly decided to use their temporary legislative powers far more extensively than this, and between 24 December 1653 and 2 September 1654 they completed and issued as law around 180 ordinances, which carried full legal and statutory authority unless and until modified or annulled by a future parliament. Of these, around 80 were printed and published at the time and their texts have come down to us. The remainder were not published or so widely disseminated at the time and, although the texts of at least 15 survive in manuscript form, in many cases little more than their bare title is extant and our knowledge of their contents is meagre. A further 50 or so ordinances were considered at some stage but were never completed and issued, some of them because Protector and council decided to drop the measure, to tack the business onto another ordinance or to make the change via a simple council order rather than a full statutory ordinance. Other draft ordinances failed to complete their passage by 2 September, for as the lapsing of their temporary legislative power loomed, Protector and Council tried to clear

the backlog – no less than 61 ordinances were passed and issued between 21 August and 2 September – and inevitably some measures failed to meet the deadline.

In terms of its bulk and number, this programme of ordinances appears very impressive, a body of legislation far more substantial than most seventeenth century parliaments managed to pass over a comparable duration. However, surprisingly few of these ordinances made a major impact upon public policy or altered state policy. Roughly half the completed ordinances referred to private or local business, with over 50 ordinances relating to one or two named individuals and another 30 or more to a particular town, county or locality. Of the remaining ordinances, those relating to wider, 'public' or state business, many were quite minor. Some continued existing provisions, such as the series of ordinances continuing and periodically renewing the excise, while others made limited changes to existing laws and provisions to bring them into line with the new Protectorate forms – altering the wording used in courts and judicial proceedings, redefining treason and abolishing the oath of allegiance to the republican government. There were important ordinances, which made significant changes – those appointing and empowering the 'triers' and 'jectors', the Chancery ordinance, those seeking to unify state finances and to reform the treatment of debtors and poor prisoners, the ordinance uniting Scotland with England and so on – but they were few and far between.

Overall, then, how should we assess the performance and achievements of the Protectoral regime and of Cromwell and his councillors in the opening months of the new government, down to September 1654? Firstly, it should be noted that this period was one of relative calm, especially when compared to the confrontations and overturnings of 1653 and the problems which loomed up during 1655, a blessed interlude during which Protector and council had space and time to set the agenda, to launch and advance policies, with few major distractions. The anti-English rebellion in Scotland of 1653, often dubbed Glencaim's Rising, was on the wane by spring 1654 and Monck quickly mopped up remaining opponents. Perhaps the biggest threat that would emerge in Ireland, the spread of radical religious views and political disloyalty amongst elements of the army stationed there, was not yet the major issue it would become in 1655-56, and the English hold over Ireland seemed secure. At home, political opponents did not seriously threaten the regime – there was little chance of royalists and anti-Protectorate republicans coming together and making common cause – and

not only were conspiracies against the government amateurish and easily thwarted but also the overwhelming loyalty of the army ensured order and security. Abroad, the regime was at peace for much of 1654 and was respected and wooed by most of the major powers of Europe. Thus Protector and council encountered few external military and political distractions during the opening months of the Protectorate, were largely spared the unexpected events and unforeseen crises of the sort which, then as now, often knock a government off course and which lay waste to aspirations and ravage neatly laid plans.

Secondly, in many areas Cromwell and his councillors used this oasis of calm to seize the initiative and to launch or advance policies at home and abroad. Energy, application and self-confidence underpinned much of the work of Protector and council during this period and they were determined to use their authority to sort out thorny issues. For example, the question of bringing England and Scotland together in a political and constitutional union had been under discussion since autumn 1651 and both the Rump and the Nominated Assembly had drawn up but had failed to pass legislation on the matter; within five months of taking power, Protector and council had not only issued an ordinance uniting England and Scotland but had also made provision for pardoning most Scots, for handling land forfeited from the small number excluded from pardon and for establishing in Scotland regular, local courts to hear small claims. Again, the regulation of the post office and mail services had been under discussion from 1651 and both the Rump and the Nominated Assembly had been weighing up the merits and demerits of different systems and also hearing the claims and counter-claims of various individuals and consortia who claimed prior right to run the posts, though no final decisions had been taken; in 1654 the Protectoral council reviewed and dismissed prior claims, set out a new system of their own and passed an ordinance to establish a new postal service. During 1653-54 Protector and council used their constitutional powers to the full, deploying the state's armed forces under article iv of the Instrument, as well as looking to Cromwell's existing and continuing authority as Lord General, conducting foreign policy and diplomacy under article v, raising, charging, levying and spending state funds under articles xxvii-xxx, overseeing and regulating religion under articles xxxv and xxxvi, and passing ordinances which had the force of law under article xxx. Indeed, some apparently felt that Cromwell and his councillors may have been stretching their powers a little too far, and on several occasions during 1654 Solicitor General Ellis questioned the use Protector and council were

making of their temporary legislative powers under article xxx. Noting that the constitution gave them power 'to make ordinances for the peace and welfare of the nation where it shall be necessary', he questioned whether one proposed ordinance was really aimed at 'the peace and welfare of the nation' and also queried whether it 'be necessary to be done before 3rd September', suggesting that there was no huge urgency in resolving the matter over the summer and that it could and perhaps should be left to the looming parliament. Again, Ellis was unhappy that Protector and council were using ordinances to over-ride existing claims to office or place of profit, he noted that many ordinances were 'very large and very restrictive to many people' and on one occasion he wrote directly to Cromwell expressing allied concerns - 'I do humbly propose it to your Highness whether you will be pleased to use your legislative power to conclude a man's right'.¹¹ In these and all similar instances, Cromwell and his councillors brushed aside these reservations and concerns and pushed ahead with their ordinances.

Thirdly, it is clear that the executive arm of government had worked hard during the opening months of the Protectorate - the council met on most weekdays and sometimes held two meetings a day, morning and afternoon - and by September 1654 could point to a solid and respectable body of work which addressed various agenda. Healing and settling had been advanced by securing peace and alliances abroad, uniting Scotland with England and treating the Scots very leniently, abolishing the oath of allegiance to the government, seeking greater efficiency in finance, not least the decision to reduce by a quarter the rate of the main direct taxes, and improving some public services. Conversely, godly reformation and radical reform were less apparent, though some legal and judicial proceedings had been usefully reformed, measures had been taken to ensure that the Protectoral church worked efficiently but was also broadly based and inclusive and sinful gatherings at horse races and cock fights had been made illegal. But despite these initiatives, it is apparent that Protector and council neither attempted nor achieved a sweeping and coherent programme of godly reform in 1653-54. The reforms of this period were generally quite limited, cautious, ad hoc and piecemeal and the overall record of the executive, while perfectly solid and respectable, was far from revolutionary. Protector and council had not established a 'new world', but equally they had not inherited the absolute 'chaos' which their propagandists claimed. Even though generally spared major and unexpected developments at home and abroad in 1653-54 and so freed from overwhelming distractions, like so

many early modern governments Protector and council felt the need to respond to requests and petitions and soon began struggling to keep on top of the rising waters of private and local concerns which flooded into the new regime. Like all early modern governments, the Protectoral regime quickly became overworked and distracted by a mass of often quite routine or mundane business. The rate at which ordinances were completed and issued itself suggests a degree of inefficiency, for after a slow start, 19 ordinances were issued during March, but then just 12 apiece in April and May. In June no less than 26 ordinances were issued, but then the number slumped to just 9 during July, a very poor show even allowing for the competing demands of electioneering. That Protector and council felt the need to rush through so many ordinances – covering important public measures as well as private or local matters – in late August and the first two days of September and that many draft ordinances failed to meet the deadline on 2 September and did not complete their passage before parliament met suggests a degree of inefficiency, bad planning and overwork.

Fourthly, the official and unofficial records shed some light on Cromwell's role and stance at this time and give some insight into the relationship between Protector and council. As the new head of state, Cromwell proved remarkably assured and adaptable, took to his position and learned very quickly. Even opponents grudgingly admitted that he was a dignified and plausible head of state. This was all the more remarkable as just twenty years before he had been working the soil as a tenant farmer on a downward trajectory in a small East Anglian town. Although in practice Cromwell had a great deal of power and influence during the Protectorate and towered over the regime as Protector and Lord General, on paper the constitution had given him very few powers which he could exercise alone and it compelled him to share power and to work with the council. In the event, Cromwell appears to have placed himself in the background during 1653-54 and to have left much of the work of government, at least as regards domestic business, to the council. Cromwell's attendance record at council meetings is interesting and perhaps unexpected, for while he was present at 10 of the 17 meetings recorded between 16 and 31 December 1653, he attended just 12 of the 73 meetings held during January, February and March. Although his attendance rate picked up a little during the early summer, overall the order books show him attending around 70 of the 211 formal council meetings recorded between 16 December 1653 and 2 September 1654, an attendance rate of almost exactly 33%. This contrasts

sharply with 1655, during which Cromwell attended over half the recorded, minuted council meetings. There is no sign that Cromwell suffered severe or lengthy ill-health during 1654 and, despite differences of opinion over the desirability of pursuing an anti-Spanish policy, no evidence that Cromwell was unhappy with or politically alienated from the councillors. Instead, he seems to have made a conscious decision to keep out of, and aloof from, much of the work of the executive arm during the opening phase of the Protectorate, contrasting with an apparently greater degree of involvement in 1655. In one of the very few extant personal and revealing letters of Cromwell of this period, a letter written in early May 1654 to Richard Major – the father in law of his son Richard and a rather inactive Protectoral councillor – Cromwell stressed that 'indeed I am so unwilling to be a seeker after the world, having had so much favour from the Lord in giving me so much without seeking; and so unwilling that men should think me so, which they will...'.¹² In this letter Cromwell was declining an invitation from Major to invest in some property in Essex, but perhaps he was making a broader point, and his expressed wish not to be 'a seeker after the world', consistent with earlier and later declarations that he did not seek earthly power or riches and that he was afraid of the corrupting nature of power, may provide an explanation for the slightly withdrawn role which Cromwell was apparently playing in day to day government at this time.

Whatever his active role in government during the opening phase of the new regime, when he opened his first Protectorate parliament – 'the greatest occasion that, I believe England ever saw' – Cromwell was able to point to an impressive list of achievements of the preceding months. In his speech of 4 September Cromwell suggested that his government had inherited 'a heap of confusions' in December 1653, but had since created order and harmony. The government had called together a group of people to advise on reforming justice, to make it swifter, cheaper and more accessible, the Court of Chancery had been reformed, good judges had been appointed and sound justice had been dispensed. Cromwell noted that the church had been reformed to establish new systems for the appointment and approval of ministers and the removal of those deemed unfit. The state's finances had been reformed to make them more efficient and better able to meet the military and civil costs and Cromwell drew MPs' attention to the decision by the executive to lower the main tax by £30,000 per month. Overall, the home nations were enjoying greater stability and security, which had made it possible for elections to be held over the summer and meant that parliament was meeting in orderly and hopeful

'TO CREATE A LITTLE WORLD OUT OF CHAOS'

circumstances. Abroad, peace had been made with the Dutch and a whole string of treaties had been secured with other European powers. Having highlighted the solid achievements and positive advances of the previous months, Cromwell urged the MPs to continue the good work and to provide the further push needed to guide the ship of state into a safe harbour. 'A door of hope is opened', he said, but he also cautioned that 'though God has thus dealt with you, yet these are but entrances and doors of hope, wherein through the blessing of God you may enter into rest and peace. But you are not yet entered'.¹³

Rest and peace proved elusive and the failure of the first Protectorate parliament marked a turning point, when optimism gave way to pessimism, and when carefully crafted policies launched calmly and without distraction gave way to a series of damage limitation responses to a string of set-backs, failures and disasters. The first Protectorate parliament itself proved unsatisfactory, derailed at the start by an outright attack upon the Protectoral system launched by a group of fervent republicans. Even after they had been weeded out on 12 September, when Cromwell briefly closed the House and introduced a new written test on Members, and the parliament proceeded upon more measured revision of the existing constitution, the results proved unacceptable to Cromwell and many of his supporters. The draft constitution seemed to narrow the parameters of religious toleration – parliament's harsh treatment of an anti-trinitarian radical, John Biddle, during December, hardly reassured those who favoured broad liberty of conscience – and its tight financial provisions seemed to herald a very substantial reduction in the size of the army. Worse still, permanent joint control of the army by parliament and Protector seemed under threat, for the draft constitution opened the way for parliament alone to gain future control over the armed forces. In January 1655, at the earliest constitutional opportunity, Cromwell angrily dissolved the parliament, before its new constitution or any other legislation had been completed. In his blunt dissolution speech, the earlier imagery of ships approaching a safe harbour and a top-stone added to an almost completed edifice gave way to talk of 'weeds and nettles, briars and thorns,...dissettlement and division, discontent and dissatisfaction, together with real dangers to the whole'.¹⁴ Although the failure of the parliament wrecked or at least severely set back many Protectoral goals and aspirations, even worse followed during the ensuing months, as it became apparent that many people did not support the Cromwellian vision and wished to advance very different agenda. Active opposition from royalists bubbled up

'TO CREATE A LITTLE WORLD OUT OF CHAOS'

again with the biggest rebellion of the Protectorate in south and south-west England, and hot on its heels came opposition to the legal standing of the regime with challenges to its financial powers and judicial questioning of its whole legitimacy. However, failure at home was soon overshadowed by events abroad, with news of the massacre of Protestants in Piedmont and of the stinging rebuke which the Protectoral forces had received at Hispaniola in the Caribbean at the hands of Catholic Spain but also, Cromwell and others believed, as a deliberate rebuke from a displeased Lord and as a sign of His divine displeasure.

Sometime early in 1655, even before many of these failures had materialised, Cromwell was writing in sombre tones to an old military colleague of 'the burden of my condition', noting that even those for whom he was ready to lay down his life had repaid him with 'not a few wounds' and that men appeared 'unwilling...to be healed and atoned'. Although in part Cromwell was writing about the position in Scotland, it is hard to believe that he was not also reflecting on recent developments in England in this and in further thoughts along the same lines –

And I am persuaded the Lord will not suffer His people always to be deceived by such pretenders and pretences to righteousness and justice, and care not how unjustly and unrighteously they walk, not to bring forth righteousness and justice, as they pretend, but most abominable unrighteousness, wickedness, impiety, and confusion upon all the world God hath wrought in the midst of us. I do verily suspect most guilty herein, because I find men acting here upon the same principles who have conceived to themselves also great hopes from the divisions and discontents amongst you.¹⁵

This was not the end. In due course, the Protector and his regime regrouped, recovered something of their former optimism and resumed their work both in support of and, they believed, again supported by, a beneficent if terrible God. But the enthusiasm of the opening months of the regime was gone, and the belief that the Lord's work was almost done and that ship of state was about to be steered into the safe harbour never returned. The opening months of the Protectorate, with its solid achievements and its calm and ordered context, had proved a false dawn which gave way to a thick and enveloping gloom. For the Protectorate, it would never be glad, confident morning again.

Notes.

1. British Library, Additional Ms 32093, f. 317.
2. Longleat House, Whitelock Ms XV, f. 1.
3. M. Nedham, *A True State of the Case of the Commonwealth* (London, 1654), p. 46.
4. R. Baxter, *Reliquae Baxterianae* (London, 1696); *Articles of High Treason and Grand Misdemeanours exhibited against Lt-Col Thomas Kelsey* (London, 1659); *A True Catalogue or an Account of the Several Places and Most Eminent Persons in the Three Nations and Elsewhere, where and by whom Richard Cromwell was Proclaimed Lord Protector* (London, 1659).
5. *A True Catalogue*.
6. Report in *Severall Proceedings of State Affairs*, 15-22 December, and other newspapers.
7. The full text is to be found in S.R. Gardiner, *The Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution* (3rd edn, Oxford, 1906), pp. 405-17 and in several other collections.
8. Reported in *Severall Proceedings of State Affairs*, 15-22 December, as occurring on Monday 19 December; some other newspapers report this speech in the same words but claim that it was made at the council meeting of Tuesday 20 December.
9. The following assessment of the work and achievements of Protector and council in 1653-54 draws heavily on the conciliar sources held at the National Archives (formerly the Public Record Office), especially the bound volumes of miscellaneous letters and papers at SP 18 and the various draft and fair order books, warrant books, petition books and so on at SP 25.
10. The veracity of this apparent report of Cromwell's speech in council, supposedly made on 20 July, is questionable. It was found amongst the papers of Edward Montagu and was printed by C.H. Firth, *The Clarke Papers* (4 vols, Camden Society, London, 1891-1901), III, 207-8.
11. National Archives, SP 18/74/26 I & II, 42.
12. W.C. Abbott, *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (4 vols, Cambridge, Mass., 1937-47), III, 280.
13. The full speech is to be found at I.A. Roots, *Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (London, 1989), pp. 28-40.
14. Again, for the full speech see Roots, *Speeches*, pp. 57-77.
15. Abbott, *Writings and Speeches*, III, 572-3.

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GODLY GOVERNORS: THE RULE OF CROMWELL'S MAJOR GENERALS

by Professor Christopher Durston

In the autumn of 1655 Oliver Cromwell appointed a number of his closest military colleagues as major-generals and dispatched them to the English provinces to act as representatives of his government at the local level. They were entrusted with a wide range of responsibilities, in particular the overseeing of local security arrangements and the regulation of the moral behaviour of the people. Although these were daunting responsibilities, over the course of the next few months the major-generals displayed great energy and commitment, and by the second half of 1656 they believed they were making real progress. In the autumn of 1656, however, their reform programme began to lose impetus. When the second protectorate parliament met in mid September, it was decided that the major-generals were needed at Westminster, and their absence from their districts during the autumn months inevitably led to the scaling down of their work. At the end of 1656 one of their number, John Desborough, attempted to obtain parliamentary sanction for the indefinite continuation of the decimation tax which underpinned their rule. His move, however, misfired disastrously, for in late January 1657 the House of Commons voted to end the tax and as a result effectively brought the major-generals' experiment to a close.

Cromwell's major-generals have traditionally received a very bad press, being condemned by both contemporaries and later historians as upstart military satraps, moral policemen and unwelcome agents of a centralising state. This short paper will attempt to go some way to set the record straight by answering four central questions: why and how was the major-generals' system set up; what sort of men were appointed; how did they carry out their duties in the areas of tax collection, security and moral reform; and what was the impact of their period in office?

The decision to erect the rule of the major-generals was informed by four main considerations: Cromwell's disappointment at the record of the first protectorate parliament; the royalist uprising of March 1655; a serious crisis in government funding and the consequent need to reduce the costs of the army; and the failure of the Western Design to the Caribbean.

The first protectorate parliament, which met on 3 September 1654, contained a substantial number of members who were representative of the traditional governing elites of the English localities, and Cromwell clearly hoped that he would be able to work with them to legitimise and

THE RULE OF CROMWELL'S MAJOR GENERALS

consolidate the new constitutional order established by the Instrument of Government the previous December. Such hopes, however, were very quickly dashed. The new members immediately launched into a frontal assault on the Instrument and after only a week Cromwell returned to Westminster to forbid all further discussion of its fundamental principles and to insist that all those who wished to continue sitting should sign a recognition of their support for the regime. Even after most of the government's fiercest critics had refused to do so and withdrawn, the remaining MPs continued to debate the clauses of the Instrument at interminable length over the ensuing months, an approach which Cromwell and his advisers believed cast serious doubt on legitimacy of the regime and encouraged their enemies in their efforts to destabilise it. To make matters worse, a committee of the House suggested that the government finance be restricted to just over £1 million, or only around half the sum needed to maintain the army and provide for the country's defence. Cromwell was forced to agree to a reduction in both the level of the monthly assessment and army establishment. Closing the parliament down prematurely in January 1655 Cromwell angrily declared to the MPs that 'instead of peace and settlement, instead of mercy and truth being brought together...weeds and nettles, briars and thorns have thriven under you'. His disillusionment with the parliament and fear that it was intent on weakening his regime, propelled him away from further attempts at cooperation with parliament and encouraged him instead to see the army's continued involvement in politics as the only sure bulwark for his regime.

Just six weeks after the end of the parliament the insurrection which Cromwell had warned of became a reality, when the ongoing underground conspiring of the royalists culminated in an attempt to stage a series of simultaneous armed insurrections in a number of locations throughout England. On 8 March 1655 abortive risings took place near Newcastle, York and Nottingham. Somewhat more seriously, on 12 March several hundred cavalry led by John Penruddock rode into Salisbury and arrested the high sheriff and the assizes judges. After proclaiming their support for Charles Stuart, they left Salisbury and rode westward in the hope that the royalists of Somerset and Dorset would come in to swell their numbers. Very few, however, joined them and several days later a small force of government troops from the garrison at Exeter caught up with them at South Molton in Devon. After a short skirmish the royalists were defeated and their leaders captured. Penruddock and the other ringleaders were subsequently tried and executed for treason. Although these events were

never a real threat to the government, they were to have a profound impact on subsequent political developments, for by considerably increasing the fears of Cromwell and his Council for the safety of the regime and by forcing them to contemplate unprecedented security measures, they proved a major catalyst for the introduction of the rule of the major-generals six months later.

The third impulse behind the decision to embark on the rule of the major-generals was the government's decision in the summer of 1655 to grasp the nettle of the extreme financial crisis it was facing by reducing the considerable and ongoing burden of a standing army of more than 50,000 men. In April 1655 a committee of army officers was asked by the government to consider how the expense of the army could be reduced without endangering the state's defences. After deliberating for some weeks, it recommended that the army establishment and the pay of the regular soldiers should be reduced, and that a new reserve of horse militia be raised. At the end of May, the Council accepted this advice and began to appoint the captains who would command these troops. On 1 June the Council dispatched instructions to these officers, telling them to enlist men who were 'well mounted for service and armed with one good sword and case of pistols'. The troops were to be recruited by 24 June and paid from that date. They were to be mustered four times a year and to be ready at forty-eight hours notice to march anywhere in the country to put down rebellion. It was envisaged that once they were raised, substantial reductions could then be made in the size of the regular army.

The final development which propelled Cromwell towards the appointment of the major-generals was the disastrous failure of the Western Design to the West Indies in the summer of 1655. When the news of the humiliating defeat suffered by Penn and Venables at Hispaniola reached London in late July 1655, it was interpreted by Cromwell as a clear sign of divine displeasure. Over the next few weeks he seems to have deliberated long over how his government had incurred God's displeasure, before arriving at the explanation that the cause was the failure of his government to make real progress in the task of the moral reformation of England. His resultant conviction that this work needed to be undertaken as a matter of great urgency strengthened his resolve to push ahead with the plans for the establishment of the rule of the major-generals and encouraged him to make the reformation of manners one of their chief priorities.

Most of the detailed arrangements for the construction of the major-generals' system were made during August and September 1655. At the beginning of August John Lambert, John Desborough and Sir Gilbert Pickering were appointed to work with Cromwell on drawing up the detailed operational instructions for the officers of the new county militia. On 22 August Lambert presented the Council with a set of seven draft instructions for ten new military governors. The text of the draft makes it very clear that their remit was to include not only purely military matters but also a range of other local governmental functions. They were to be required to suppress all tumults, insurrections and rebellions and to meet frequently with the captains of the county militias to discuss security matters. They were to disarm Roman Catholics and royalists, keep all disaffected persons under close surveillance, and prevent any of them gathering together either in private houses or at horse race meetings, cock-fightings or bear-baitings, both because treason and rebellion was frequently hatched at such gatherings and also because 'much evell and wickednes' commonly occurred at them. In addition, they were to be responsible for apprehending all idle and 'loose' persons in their areas and for either putting them to work or organising their transportation out of the country, and they were also charged with making the roads safer for travellers by seeking out thieves, robbers and highwaymen. The final draft instruction required them 'in their constant carriage and conversation to encourage and promote godliness and vertue and discourage and discountenance all prophaneness and ungodliness'. More specifically, they were ordered to work closely with JPs, ministers and other local officials to ensure that the laws against 'drunkenness, prophanenes, blaspheminge and takeing of the name of God in vaine by swearing and cursing and such like wickednes and abominations be put in more effectual execucon then they have been hitherto'.

At this point Cromwell was taken seriously ill and was unable to take any further part in government business until the last week of September. As the Council was reluctant to proceed with such an important initiative in his absence, remaining decisions which needed to be taken before the major-generals could begin work were put off for nearly four weeks. Momentum was only resumed on 21 September, when the Council considered drafts of two important documents which were once again presented to it by Lambert's sub-committee: the commission for the major-generals and a set of orders for them and the new county commissions for the securing of the peace of the commonwealth which were to work with them. The draft

commission declared that the government had been forced to raise the new county militias because the royalist community remained 'restlesse and implacable in their malicious designs against the peace of this Commonwealth', and that it had decided that they should be commanded by officers who had been chosen for their 'fidelitye, wisdom and circumspection'. The second document began by dividing the royalist community into three categories or 'heads'. In the first of these were grouped all those involved in the spring uprisings, who were to be imprisoned or banished by the commissioners and to have their estates sequestered. Under the second head were those royalists who, while they had not been conspicuously active in the spring, 'appear by their words or actions to adhere to the interest of the late king or of Charles Stuart his son and to be dangerous enemies to the peace of the commonwealth'; these, too, were to be imprisoned or banished but would not lose their estates unless they returned from exile without permission. More controversially, the third head encompassed all those who had fought against parliament or who had been sequestered for delinquency at any time since 1642. Although many of the individuals in this category had been politically quiescent for some years, all of them who possessed land worth at least £100 per annum or personal property valued at £1,500 or more would now be required to pay a ten per cent decimation tax to the government to meet the costs of the new militia. These documents were informed by a principle that was fundamental to the outlook of Cromwell and his advisers during the mid 1650s: that security and moral reform were indivisible goals and that, just as godly reform would only come out once the regime was fully secure, so real security would only be established once the godly reformation had taken firm root.

In all, nineteen commissions were issue to major-generals and deputy major-generals during 1655 and 1656. Three of these men were never active in the provinces, but the other sixteen held power within one of twelve associations into which the country was divided in the autumn of 1655 (for details see Appendix 1). Cromwell appointed as his major-generals high-ranking soldiers who were available and reliable, and whose loyalty to the new protectoral regime was beyond question. Several potential appointees were ruled out because they could not be spared from their strategically vital commands in Scotland and Ireland, and a number of other candidates had disqualified themselves by expressing doubts about the new constitutional order brought in by the Instrument of Government. Once these men had been discounted, there remained a relatively small pool of

reliable and available senior officers, out of which Cromwell selected those he considered most able and trustworthy and with whom he had had the longest personal association.

As a group the sixteen active major-generals and deputies shared a number of characteristics. They were relatively young; only four of them were over 40, and another ten were aged between 30 and 40. Most of them had some connection to the area they controlled; nine of the sixteen had been born in their association, and all but one of the others had some meaningful pre-1655 connection. In terms of social origins, they were generally undistinguished; only three were of magisterial gentry origin, another six were born into more minor landed families, and as many as seven seem to have come from families of below gentry status. There was thus some substance in royalist accusations that they were social upstarts. They all owed their position to their distinguished military careers, and, with the possible exception of Charles Howard, all of them were conspicuously godly in their religious outlook and saw their appointment as a divine mission.

One of the major-generals' first priorities was to collect the decimation tax which was to pay the costs of their militia troops. Decimation tax lists exist for sixteen of the fifty or so English and Welsh counties; in these around 500 royalists were assessed to pay c. £18,000 in total. While it is difficult to extrapolate from these figures, this suggests that somewhere between 1,500 and 2,000 royalists were obliged to pay the tax in the country as a whole, and also that the total yield from the tax was likely to have been well short of the £80,000 per annum needed to pay the new militia. In some counties, despite the best efforts of the major-general, significant shortfalls materialised quite quickly and finding payment for the militia troops became a serious problem.

Whether, following some fundamental review of its operation, the decimation tax could have provided the long-term financial underpinning for a secure, godly commonwealth, or whether conversely it would in time inevitably have provoked widespread royalist resistance and revolt can only be a matter for speculation. What is clear is that the thinking behind the original decision to impose the tax was fatally flawed. Strongly attracted to the prospect of punishing their enemies, reducing the overall burden of general taxation and enhancing the security of the regime, Cromwell and his advisers instituted the decimation tax in the autumn of 1655 in a hurry, without giving sufficient thought to how they would overcome the

administrative complexities attendant on its assessment and collection, and – more seriously – without having any real evidence that it could produce the kind of sums needed to support the major-generals and their new national militia. Had they been able to carry out a comprehensive valuation of the collective wealth of the royalist party, they would surely have realised that the decimation tax was, from the outset, doomed to failure.

Despite its brief lifespan, the decimation tax had a major impact on the politics of Interregnum England, in that it further polarised an already divided political nation and brought into sharper relief the differences between the supporters and opponents of Cromwell's regime. Equally significantly, the tax also divided the regime's supporters and exacerbated the tensions between the puritan hardliners, who saw it as a welcome and justifiable punishment for sedition and irreligion and an important element in the campaign to create a godly nation, and the protectorate's more moderate and pragmatic adherents, who believed it to be an unfortunate development which had set back the important process of healing and settling the nation's divisions.

In the area of security, the first task of the major-generals was to disarm royalists and Roman Catholics. This seems to have been done quickly and efficiently in the autumn of 1655; one royalist, Sir Roger Burgoyne, claimed that his major-general, Edward Whalley, had left him with 'not so much as a birding piece or a sword'. The major-generals also imposed bonds for good behaviour upon around 14,000 royalists and their male servants; if these men were subsequently adjudged to have plotted against the state they would be liable to forfeit sums up to £5,000. In an ambitious attempt to monitor the movements of the entire royalist community, a register office was also established in London. If any royalist left home and visited London, he was obliged to report to this office within twenty-four hours. Deputy-registers were also stationed in all the major ports to check on those entering the country. The new militia force appears to have been well trained and equipped, and firmly committed to preserving the regime. In many counties, however, its effectiveness was limited by the failure of the decimation tax to yield sufficient sums to provide it with regular pay.

The new security system presided over by the major-generals was extremely ambitious in scope. It attempted to regulate the movements and activities of a substantial section of the English population to an extent that had never been seen before in England and indeed would not be seen again until the industrial era. Given the scope of the experiment, it inevitably fell

somewhat short of its aims, but there can be little doubt that it nonetheless achieved a considerable degree of success. At the start of the second protectorate parliament in September 1656 Cromwell told the new MPs that the major-generals had proved 'effectual for the preservation of your peace' and that without them 'you had not had peace two months together'. His assessment was probably broadly correct, and, whatever their record in the other aspects of their work, the major-generals had undoubtedly succeeded in making it far more difficult and dangerous to engage in conspiracy against the Cromwell's regime.

The major-generals' work in the area of moral reform involved the regulation of alehouses, dealing with beggars and the more deserving poor, banning rural sports such as cock-fights and horse races, clamping down on sexual misconduct, making sure the puritan sabbath was properly observed, and attempting to purge suspect clergy from parochial ministry. Although a number of them worked tirelessly to achieve these ends, overall their impact here was extremely limited. There is no evidence that they had much success at all in reducing sexual offences or banning rural sports. Similarly, during their period in power only around 130 ministers, or two per cent of the total for the country, appear to have been ejected from their livings. With regard to the vagrancy problem, several major-generals did arrest large numbers of wandering beggars and imprisoned them to await transportation; the government in London failed, however, to organise any ships to convey the abroad, and most were subsequently released. There was perhaps rather more, albeit temporary, success in the attempt to close down unlicensed alehouses. Charles Worsley, in particular, destroyed his health in a monumental effort to deal with this problem in Lancashire and Cheshire, and forced several hundred illegal drinking establishments to shut down. This, however represented only a tiny fraction of the tens of thousands of such alehouses which existed throughout the country.

Although the major generals were utterly committed to the attempt to improve the morality of the English and Welsh peoples, ultimately they were unable to prevent large numbers of them from continuing to offend their religious values by frequenting alehouses, attending traditional sports and festivities, or indulging in illicit sexual activity. To a large degree, their failure in this area stemmed from their inability to remodel the county magistracy and parochial ministry and thereby to create a sufficiently large godly presence at the grassroots level which could regulate popular behaviour and punish transgressors.

With the exception of their work in the area of security, the major-generals failed therefore, to achieve the tasks they were entrusted with by Cromwell in the autumn of 1655. The main reasons for this failure were that they had been given far too ambitious a brief, far too little support from their masters in London and, as it turned out, far too little time in which to do their work. All of them were expected to perform a wide range of tasks, each of which was sufficiently onerous in its own right to keep them more than busy. As a result, their letters to Cromwell's secretary, John Thurloe, are peppered with complaints about their tiredness and sense of overwork. In January 1656, John Desborough told Thurloe that there was enough work in the west country for two major-generals, and the same month Edward Whalley exclaimed in another letter to him: 'Truly Sir, the worke his highness and the councill have put us upon is very great. I wish there had bin more maior generalls.' Hezekiah Haynes's serious illness in 1657 was probably not unconnected to his service as major-general, and Charles Worsley almost certainly worked himself into a premature grave by his superhuman efforts in the north-west.

Severely overstretched as they were, the major-generals could not even rely on the central government to provide them with the firm and prompt support which was so vital if they were to make any real progress. The government had failed to think through sufficiently carefully the idea of the decimation tax, and when the major-generals reported that the new levy would not produce enough money to pay the militia troops, it vetoed their proposal to lower the thresholds without producing any alternative remedy of its own. It also failed to organise the transportation out of the country of the vagabonds who had been imprisoned by some of the major-generals.

It is possible to argue that if Cromwell had possessed the human and financial resources which would have allowed him to appoint a major-general for each of the English and Welsh counties, if these fifty or so hypothetical major-generals been given the full and uninterrupted attention of the government in London, and if they had been allowed a minimum of five years in which to accomplish their work, their rate of success might have been considerably higher. Even given such an unlikely scenario, however, one could still not argue with confidence that they would have made much progress with their central aim of improving the moral calibre of the nation. Many governments, both before and since the 1650s, have failed in this endeavour, which, if it is attainable at all, can only be achieved through the exercise of a level of surveillance and oppression, which was far beyond the capability of any early-modern state.

The fact that Cromwell's major-generals failed does not, however, mean that they were, or are, unimportant. In constitutional terms, they were a radical innovation with no real antecedents in earlier English history, and their significance is attested to both by the degree of opprobrium they evoked while in office and the strength and persistence of the black legend which grew up around them after their demise. To some extent, this hostility can be attributed to the fact that they were agents of centralisation, for they had been sent into the provinces by the national government and throughout their period of office remained directly responsible to it. To a rather greater degree, it stemmed from the fact that they were soldiers. Although there had been a very visible military presence in England for some years before their appointment and would be for some time after their fall, for many contemporaries and later commentators the rule of the 'swordmen and decimators' nonetheless became a convenient and powerful symbol of the military nature of the unpopular Interregnum state.

Two additional, and perhaps more potent, reasons for the unpopularity of the rule of the major-generals, were its lack of constitutional legitimacy and its overtly godly nature. Undoubtedly, many of the major-generals' contemporaries objected to the arbitrary and unconstitutional nature of their rule. Evidence of the widespread disquiet this evoked is not difficult to find. At the end of 1656 William Prynne argued they were guilty of 'usurping all the civil as well as military power and jurisdiction into their own hands', and several months later in the debates in parliament on Desborough's militia bill, Sir John Trevor claimed that the effect of their rule had been to 'prostitute our laws and civil peace, to a power that never was set up in any nation without dangerous consequences'. In 1659 one of the MPs in Richard Cromwell's parliament, Sir John Stephens, declared: 'the little finger of the Major-Generals have I found heavier than the loins of the greatest tyrant kings that went before.'

Closely linked to the unconstitutionality of the major-generals' rule was its profoundly godly character. The major-generals had been prepared to ride roughshod over the English constitution because they believed that the end of establishing the godly state more than justified the means of their unparliamentary, and arguably illegal, jurisdiction. Thomas Kelsey had nicely summed up their collective outlook when he told Thurloe in August 1656 that 'the interests of God's people' had to be preserved 'before a thousand parliaments'. The major-generals arrived in the localities as the self-conscious champions of the godly cause and their subsequent

THE RULE OF CROMWELL'S MAJOR GENERALS

administration empowered small and deeply unpopular cliques of often socially insignificant local puritans and encouraged them to lord it over their neighbours and to seek to impose upon them their alien and unpopular moral and cultural values. In many parts of the country, these dedicated assistants of the major-generals, who rather than being imported from beyond the county boundaries had emerged from relative obscurity within them, spent much of 1656 re-opening the wounds which had been inflicted upon local society in the 1640s and had just begun to heal. In this sense, the rule of the major-generals did not so much attack the traditional autonomy of the provincial communities of seventeenth-century England and Wales, as distort their internal political structures by allowing them to be dominated by what bulk of their inhabitants regarded as highly unrepresentative elements from within them.

These godly minorities within the English and Welsh counties remained devoted to the major-generals throughout their period in power. They had greeted the major-generals with great enthusiasm on their arrival in the provinces, and they reacted to their departure with an equal measure of regret and sadness. Sometime in late 1656 or early 1657, the pastors of a number of gathered churches in Gloucestershire sent Cromwell a remonstrance, in which they expressed their concern at the course of events and the behaviour of their enemies since the recent recall of the major-generals. They declared to the protector:

We cannot but lay before you to what a height the malignant and persecuting spirit is of late risen in this nation, how they openly boast of laying leuell the Lord's blessed work among his poore people and what affronts and violence they meet withall from that party, especially upon the rumour of the major-generalls being voted down, under whom the Lord's people had comfortable protection.

Such comments make clear that, while the major-generals had fallen far short of their original aims, they had done enough during their short time in power to bring comfort to their religious friends and create anxiety amongst their religious foes, and to give both these groups ample notice that they were intent on building the kind of godly commonwealth which the former so fervently desired and the latter so vehemently rejected. The fact that they had not got very far with this work by September 1656 was little consolation to their opponents, who objected to them less for what they had so far done than for what they threatened to do and for what they epitomised: strident godly fundamentalism. The quintessential feature of the

rule of the major-generals was not that it was army rule, nor that it was London rule, but rather that it was godly rule, and it was as such that it was decisively rejected by the great majority of the English and Welsh people.

Note

This paper is a version of a talk given at the Cromwell Association study day on the Cromwellian Protectorate held at the University of Birmingham in November 2003. For more details of all the issues covered and for full references, please see my *Cromwell's Major Generals: Godly Government during the English Revolution* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2001)

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Appendix 1

by Dr Stephen K. Roberts

The Major-General and their Associations

ASSOCIATION	MAJOR-GENERAL
Middlesex, Westminster and London	Sir John Barkstead (as Philip Skippon's deputy in London)
Herefordshire, Shropshire, Worcestershire and Wales	James Berry (with deputies Rowland Dawkins and John Nicholas in South Wales)
Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	William Boteler
Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Somerset and Wiltshire	John Desborough
Norfolk Suffolk Essex Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely	Hezekiah Haynes (as Charles Fleetwood's deputy)
Berkshire, Hampshire and Sussex	William Goffe
Kent and Surrey:	Thomas Kelsey
Cumberland, Westmorland and Northumberland	Charles Howard (as John Lambert's deputy)
Yorkshire and Durham	Robert Lilburne (as John Lambert's deputy)
Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire	William Packer and, in Buckinghamshire, George Fleetwood (both as Charles Fleetwood's deputies)
Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Nottingham and Warwickshire	Edward Whalley
Cheshire, Lancashire and Staffordshire.	Charles Worsley and, after his death, Tobias Bridge

To judge from much of the writing on the topic, the experience of English towns and cities under the protectorate was both indistinct and dysfunctional. It was indistinct from urban life during the commonwealth, and dysfunctional because of problems of governance and managing religious diversity. The problems of governance in towns were fitfully addressed by successive central regimes and their agents, and difficulties arising from religious pluralism were badly managed by oligarchies in town halls. Modern historical scholarship on towns has generally considered the 'virtual commonwealth' of 1647-9 and the whole decade of the 1650s as a single entity, an illustration of what was until relatively recently a general trend in treatments of the whole period. The purpose of this paper is to try to identify distinctive aspects of the urban experience during the protectorate, and to offer some tentative assessment of how the short years of the Cromwellian protectorates should be viewed in the long-term development of English towns.

There is a case for studying towns in groups, in their regional economic and geographical context. The most persuasive advocate of this approach, though not in the context of either the 1650s or specifically of towns, is Charles Phythian Adams, who has demonstrated the insights afforded by studying 'cultural provinces'. These provinces are regions of a country shaped by drainage basins, which 'predispose their inhabitants to look inwards, to look along a broad natural axis, and to face towards and then share reactions to, prevailing incoming influences ...'¹ Drainage basins are wider in extent than river valleys, and within individual basins may be found more than one *pays*, but each *pays* will be economically interdependent with another in the same cultural province. The remainder of this paper will be based on a study of towns in Phythian Adams's Cultural Province no. 3, known to the rest of the world as the Severn/Avon basin. It is the area drained by the Severn and its tributaries: in county terms Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire and Shropshire. It is a region that contains a range of settlements that in the early modern context could be called urban. Allowing for a number whose smallness and lack of civic government cast a question over their standing, some seventeen towns can be firmly identified. They range in size from Bristol, on some reckonings England's second city, with a population of nearly 20,000, through Coventry (7,000), Gloucester and Worcester (5,000+), and a larger band of medium-sized towns

including Warwick (under 3,000), Bewdley (2,700), Tewkesbury (2,000) and Evesham (2,500) and to small towns such as Alcester and Bromsgrove where the population barely exceeded 1,000. These were county towns and market towns: only Bristol was a regional capital. Most had charters, although some like Kidderminster were newly chartered in the reign of Charles I; indeed, the absence of a charter (in the case of Bromsgrove) or a restricted charter (in the case of Alcester) will raise problems of definition at the margins of our enquiry.

There is plenty of evidence that the association of economic and social functions in the towns of this cultural province were recognised in the seventeenth century: in mutual exchanges between the towns' governing bodies, in circuitous visits by civilian and military dignitaries and by judges. Outside the world of civic ritual, we see them recognised in the entrepreneurial activities of a man like William Sandys, 'Waterworks Sandys' to his contemporaries, who improved navigation on the Upper Warwickshire Avon, and whose various other schemes were heard sympathetically by Bristol, Gloucester, Evesham and Coventry. The waterborne trade on the Severn and Avon, recently explored in studies by Malcolm Wanklyn and David Hussey, was the arterial economic system uniting all these places, and Bristol was the 'focal point of an extensive coastal and river network'. Sandys was only the best-connected figure to recognise the potential of this network, which linked Bristol, Gloucester, Worcester, Shrewsbury, Tewkesbury, and towns on the Avon to Warwick and beyond; and it developed through the efforts of countless merchants, mariners and tradesmen, rather than through civic or gentry patronage. We now understand that it was not just overseas trade that made Bristol a great city; domestic demand for goods in the inland towns in this cultural province was just as important an engine of the regional economy.

This leads us to consider the state of the economy in this region during the 1650s. The received view is that things were in a parlous state. Worcester, for example, was wrecked by the 1651 battle in and around the city, if not by the civil wars as a whole, and remained in difficulties throughout the decade. Its historian notes the scanty minutes in the city order book, and the efforts to cope with the 'almost desperate' financial problems there.² As a further consequence of the wars, Worcester held much fewer council meetings than its neighbouring towns. In the 1650s, Gloucester pursued its claim for reparations for war damage; Coventry continued in its long-term course of economic decline, and in Warwickshire as a whole, after the harvest failures of the 1640s allegedly came 'a general depression' in the

1650s. But there are counter-indications, of recovery. Council order books may not be the most appropriate sources by which to measure urban economic health, but other records in civic muniments suggest a recovery that was at least partly corporation-sponsored. Apprenticeships were again being enrolled across the region, after their collapse in the 1640s. Gloucester enrolments of apprentices between 1651 and 1660 showed a 45 per cent increase on totals for the decade before 1640. Post-war Bristol apprentice enrolments recovered quickly from 1647, exceeding 1640 levels from 1654. Even in Coventry, there seems to have been a mini-boom in the weavers' trade. At the 'value-added' end of the training process, when apprentices were enrolled as freemen, a similar pattern of healthy recruitment is observable in Gloucester and Bristol, and in Coventry, the weavers' company enrolled more freemen in the mid-1650s than at any time in the previous hundred years. The 1650s were not a boom decade everywhere, admittedly. Tewkesbury, for example, admitted 47 per cent fewer freemen to its corporation in the ten years of 1650-59 than it had in the bad years of the 1640s, but then, it was a notoriously poor area, to contemporaries redolent of 'old clothes, lice and shitten stiles'.

Economic evidence independent of the corporations confirms a modest upturn. The best run of grain prices that we have for the period, the Winchester series, shows that after a peak of high prices in 1647, there was then a steady drop to the mid-1650s, followed by a rise to 1661. Prices for the three principal grains, wheat, barley and oats, were at their lowest in the mid-1650s than at any time in the century and remained a low price watermark, as it were, even in the eighteenth century. This remarkable drop in basic commodity prices was not confined to Hampshire, and explains the comment on the price of wheat, 2s. 4d. a bushel, recorded by a Bristol annalist in 1654, of which more anon. The available economic evidence as a whole therefore suggests that urban conditions during the protectorate were more suggestive of plenty, of opportunities and of economic activity than had been the case at any time since 1640. This is useful background when considering town politics, since the economic functions of towns were uppermost in the urban experience. Whether we consider markets and fairs, or the regulated trading between individuals and cartels, or the organisational rules over property and space, or the ineluctable interactions between the elite and the common people, there was no escaping the economy in towns.

Economic opportunities go some way towards explaining the political agendas of towns. Corporations were quick to identify the benefits that

might accrue from intervention in the open land market that Interregnum governments seemed to be opening up. Coventry bought the crown's fee farm rents arising from the city in 1650, thus diverting revenues of £148 a year into the civic coffers. Bristol acquired its fee farm rents in the same way, as did Gloucester, and the process encouraged their use of London agents to do their bidding in the central courts and in parliament. John Wildman and Samuel Hartlib junior were two such agents, better known to history for other reasons, who were in negotiations for Gloucester and Bristol respectively. The agents complemented the older custom of high stewards and recorders as advocates, a tradition that still worked. William Purefoy, the most powerful figure in Coventry by 1650, helped secure the fee farm rent for the town, was rewarded with the post of recorder, and was then able to exploit his standing with the corporation to lobby them on behalf of ministers demanding better stipends and a militia captain seeking exemption from civic office. Among other notables who acted as either high steward or recorder for the towns of our catchment were Oliver and Henry Cromwell and Thomas Pury (Gloucester), the earl of Pembroke, Sir Henry Vane junior and Bulstrode Whitelocke (Bristol). The land and property gains made by towns largely took place through general legislation by the Rump Parliament to sell confiscated estates, and were thus opportunistic purchases. By the beginning of the protectorate, cities and larger towns had seen both their civic assets, and their skills in lobbying in London, enhanced as a consequence.

From 1654, there is evidence that towns were pursuing more of their own particular agendas in London. The classic work on this topic was B. K. Henderson's study of 'commonwealth charters', which is not mainly about charters or about the commonwealth. It is a study of the major-generals, the 1656 election and the miscellaneous ambitions of towns under the Cromwells. Of Henderson's 66 listed towns only 21 received grants of any kind, and of these only a small handful were municipal charters of incorporation; the majority were various grants and concessions that formed the usual traffic between towns and central government.³ In our cultural province, no towns received a new charter of incorporation in this period, and unlike the reign of James I, this was no great age for charter grants or even charter review. There is instead evidence of municipal corporations exploiting the value of parliament in helping them achieve their civic aspirations. Gloucester illustrates this process. The corporation considered its cathedral 'the great ornament of this city', and had begun a campaign to annexe the chapter house as a city library as early as 1646. In

the 1654 parliament, seeking to make the cathedral a parish church, it backed the bill 'for restoring cathedrals upon the several cities and counties where they stand', which fell with all the other legislation of that assembly. In 1656 a city fund-raising committee was set up to finance repairs - Henry Cromwell sent a £20 donation - and the lord protector and council bestowed the cathedral on Gloucester in July of that year. The whole exercise was part of a grand plan to municipalize and rationalise the city parishes, but the great achievement of the late 1650s was the public library. Thomas Pury junior secured twelve prized volumes for the library, the gift of the corporation: not theological or morally prescriptive works, but the works of Ulysses Alarovandus on natural history. When Pury came before exchequer commissioners in the early 1660s to account for himself, he was able defiantly to point to the library's continued existence and benefit to the Gloucester public.

Few towns nationally were able to match Gloucester's high-minded, public-spirited altruism, although Bristol Corporation was interested in a public library, and Coventry already had one. Coventry and Bristol used parliament to pursue grants for parkland, to improve maintenance for ministers, to acquire Bristol castle, to obtain special trading privileges. Smaller or less ambitious corporations might prefer to exploit their connections, rather than sustain a parliamentary project. When in 1658 Worcester council sent to Chief Baron John Wylde to remind him of his promise to bestow some 'publique work' upon the city, they opted for a fire engine. An alternative use of parliament was as a court of appeal for chronic local problems, and Bristol's behaviour in the Naylor case is illuminating. In this region, towns provided the cockpits for fights between Quakers, local authority and orthodox ministers. Some towns received passing visits from the Quaker missionaries, some like Evesham and Bristol became notorious hotspots, and others, like Stratford-upon-Avon, feared a visitation that never came. In Bristol there was a pre-history of sectarianism of a rather indeterminate sort making alliance with garrison soldiers. The July 1654 parliamentary election was thrown open to a wide freeman electorate in a city where the council had always privately selected the MPs. It was disputed, but all the electors were properly enrolled freemen, and all the candidates were members of the elite Society of Merchant Venturers. In December an anti-Quaker apprentice riot marked the end of a year when food prices were at their lowest for decades, as the annalist noted. These disturbances were not economic in essence, nor did the Quakers divide the Bristol voters. What there was in Bristol was a recalcitrant popular culture, which resisted the

council's attempts to stamp out plays, 'roughing at cocks and tossing of dogs', abusive outbursts against authority and unseemly displays such as that in May 1655 by Sarah Goldsmith, who wandered the streets in a long hairy coat, with two women attendants. Major-general Disbrowe intervened to advise the removal of three Bristol councillors in February 1656, not because they had Quaker sympathies, but because they were ungodly or in sympathy with the unreformed culture. Sarah Goldsmith's walkabout suggests a pre-Naylor symbolic procession, and although Braithwaite dates Naylor's own first visit to Bristol as occurring in July 1656, he was evidently well known to the authorities there as early as January 1655.

When Naylor came to Bristol in October 1656, the response of the authorities was a departure from what had been their custom in public disturbances of all kinds, which had been a hearing before the city session's court and punishment in the house of correction. Instead, they sent immediate word to one of their MPs in London, who doubled as their town clerk, and ten days later sent a carefully drafted remonstrance to parliament, which quickly opened the well-known floodgates. Parallels between notorious Quaker incidents in Bristol and Evesham, and the contrasting absence of trouble in Gloucester, Coventry, Kidderminster and other foursquare godly orthodox towns, suggest a problem over divided civic authority during the protectorate as a fruitful area for further enquiry in searching for the social origins of Quakerism. In Evesham the conflict turned on the minority Quaker sympathisers in the ruling body and from the town's poorest and most marginal parish. The Gloucester civic fathers brooked no such weak links in their city, which had since the 1643 siege rather played up to its image as 'the Ramoth Gilead of the good', the 'conservators of the parliament of England'.

Divided civic authority was another symptom of the pluralism struggling to get out that was at the heart of the protectorate. Difficult relations between corporations and their urban populations were another. It is in the context of increasing self-awareness by town and city councils of how they related to freemen and even the mass of the urban poor that a series of self-imposed regulations over the conduct of council business may be best located. In 1657, Evesham council reiterated an order it had made in 1646 that councillors must wear gowns; Stratford made a similar order in 1654. In Gloucester, civic elections were to take place at the Booth Hall after sermons, 'for preventing disorders and inconveniencies'; at Tewkesbury in 1657, a town clerk not the chamberlain was to write minutes, 'as it is in all other places, for sometimes the chamberlain cannot write his own name,

which is ridiculous'. In the same year, Tewkesbury began moves to acquire a new charter. In Worcester, from 1656 notices of council meetings were to be delivered to councillors' doors, to eliminate pleas of forgetfulness. The best-documented example of this kind of self-regulation by a council comes from Bristol, which had imposed on itself limited orders about election procedure, confidentiality, prayers and dress in 1651, 1653 and 1655. But in 1657, it agreed a whole code of conduct under eleven headings, which conform to what we would call modern rules for meetings. They covered agenda composition, the conduct of meetings and personal behaviour in them, strict adherence to time regulated by an hourglass, and fines for breaking the rules. Only in post-Naylor Bristol were the councillors' motives made explicit: 'for more regular and grave debating' and to achieve government 'with better port and honour, thereby to gain the more reverence and respect from the people'. The corporations passed these orders at various times between 1654 and 1657, and we might expect some kind of diffusion of this new civic culture to be at work.

The picture I have tried to paint of towns contrasts with the received narratives, which emphasise interference in the form of ejections from the councils of councillors unacceptable to central government, particularly under the major-generals. These did occur in most of the towns in our region, but apart from the blip during 1655-6, the pattern was towards stability not instability in council membership, and more settled government than under the commonwealth. For reasons of space I have had to leave out of account altogether the well-documented moves towards godly reformation, examples of which, varying in number and enforcement, may be found in all our towns. The entity and image of the godly commonwealth in these towns was fragile; even in Gloucester it was beginning to break up in 1659. On my account, however, the protectorate offered towns a breathing space between the political upheavals of commonwealth and restoration, a brief space in which corporations could begin to develop customised political agendas vis-à-vis the centre, and to develop their civic dignities and cultures in ways that helped them improve their conduct of business. These were gains transferable in the changed circumstances after 1660, when godly initiatives were not. Together with the revival I have noted in urban economies, they helped endow towns with a resilience they needed during the assaults on their privileges by the later Stuarts, and pointed the way towards the next great theme in the towns of this cultural province, the urban renaissance or the rise of the leisure town.

Notes

- 1 C. Phythian Adams, 'Introduction: an Agenda for English Local History', in idem, *Societies, Cultures and Kinship, 1580-1850* (Leicester, 1993), 13.
- 2 P. Styles, 'The City of Worcester during the Civil Wars, 1640-60', in R. C. Richardson (ed.), *The English Civil Wars. Local Aspects* (Stroud, 1997), 223.
- 3 B. L. K. Henderson, 'The Commonwealth Charters', *Royal Historical Society Transactions*. 3rd ser. VI (1912), 129-162.

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by Professor Barry Coward

There is a view that some people hold of the last years of Oliver Cromwell's Protectorate that goes something like this. Here, they say, was a regime staffed by people who by 1655-56 had lost their revolutionary, radical zeal. Any radical aspirations that they might have once had had by now seeped away as it became obvious from recent events just how little support they had in the country. After only a short session Cromwell had sent the first Protectorate Parliament packing in January 1655 because MPs had shown that they were much more concerned with attacking the army and eroding religious liberty than with continuing the work of reformation that the Protector and Council had begun with great energy and enthusiasm in the Protectorate's early days. And then during the next few months the regime faced a battering, beginning with a Royalist revolt in the West Country led by Colonel John Penruddock, closely followed by news that the godly cause was under threat not just in their own country but globally. In May 1655 those at the heart of the Protectorate were shattered to the core to learn of the massacres of Protestants in the upland Alpine villages of Piedmont by the Catholic forces of the duke of Savoy, provoking Milton's heartfelt sentiments in his famous sonnet on that event: 'Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones/ Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold'. Even more dispiriting was the news that came from the West Indies shortly after this of the humiliating defeat at San Domingo suffered by the combined naval-military expedition that the Protectorate had sent to attack the heart of the Spanish Empire. Cromwell's utter despair at the news (he is said to have shut himself away in a locked room for a day) was rooted in the awful thought that, just as his great military victories in the 1640s and early 1650s had been won by 'the hand of God', this defeat in the Caribbean might be a sign that God had turned his back on him and his regime. Moreover, what also seems to give substance to this picture of a shattered and increasingly demoralised regime is the episode we have heard about from Chris Durston today, the failure of the Major-Generals to make much headway with the brief they had been given. Their attempts to promote a godly cultural revolution in the country were met by stubborn, sullen non-co-operation by people who had no desire to stop doing things pleasurable like drinking, swearing and fornicating that their godly governors condemned as sinful. And at the general elections in the autumn of 1656, by voting against candidates thought to be sponsored by the Major-Generals, they made clear how much they were out of sympathy with the aspirations

of the Cromwellian Protectorate. The upshot of all this, it's sometimes said, is that the enthusiasm for godly reformation of its erstwhile backers rapidly cooled.

All that was in 1655-56. Much worse was to follow during the last two years of Oliver Cromwell's Protectorate – or so goes this story of a regime rapidly retreating from reformation. On this account in the autumn and winter of 1656-7 huge factional fractures appeared at the regime's heart between a so-called 'military' faction and 'civilian' opponents, a desperate struggle that not only threatened to tear the regime apart but also, since it was one in which the 'civilians' increasingly got the upper hand, pushed the Protectorate in an even more conservative direction than ever before. The outcome (so this story goes) was the abandonment of the Instrument of Government, the Protectorate's first constitution devised by army radicals like John Lambert and its replacement in 1657 by a new constitution, the Humble Petition and Advice, drafted by civilian Cromwellians like Roger Boyle Lord Broghill. On this interpretation the new constitution was at worst 'unworkable' or at best a move back towards an old style monarchical constitution, even if (as it turned out since Cromwell rejected the offer of the crown) it was as yet a constitution without a monarch. But he accepted the rest of the new constitutional package, including the restoration of a second (House of Lords-like) parliamentary chamber, and (apparently confirming this headlong conservative drift that was sweeping the regime along) Cromwell's reinstatement as Lord Protector under the new constitution on 24 June 1657 looked like a royal coronation. In contrast to the fairly bare ceremony that elevated Cromwell as Lord Protector on 16 December 1653, the ceremony in 1657 was much more splendid and regal, as Cromwell, dressed in an ermine-lined robe, was ceremonially offered the sword of state and sceptre of gold.

So you get the emergence of a view of the last months of the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell of a regime moving along a path that made inevitable the restoration of monarchy sooner rather than later. On some accounts the Lord Protector at this stage was a broken man, his energy sapped by the unremitting campaign he had waged in the harsh political world of post-Civil War Britain to press forward with godly reformation against constant opposition and now by the massive financial problems his regime faced as the costs of maintaining huge standing armies in all parts of Britain and Ireland and financing a war against Spain rocketed. On top of this early in 1658 news came out of criticism of the regime from within Cromwell's own regiment by soldier who openly voiced their discontent at the Protectorate's

deviation from the Good Old Cause, forcing Cromwell to wield the big stick and expel them from the army. And on top of this rumours grew that some army malcontents were talking to the regime's most inveterate enemies, civilian republicans, like Sir Arthur Heselrige, Sir Henry Vane and Edmund Ludlow, the so-called Commonwealthmen. And what finally broke Cromwell's will in these last few months (or so it's said) was an illness that would eventually kill him, together with the crushing blow of the death from cancer of his favourite daughter in August 1658.

If you go along with this view, then it seems perfectly plausible to believe those like Viscount Fauconberg who in April 1658 felt that, although Cromwell had turned down the crown in 1657, he would certainly accept it when a new parliament should repeat the offer. Moreover, if you go along with this view, the general thesis that the end of the Protectorate was characterised by retreat from reformation by men who were increasingly gripped by deep gloom and disillusionment seems incontrovertible.

But that phrase 'if you go along with this view' is a crucial one in pointing me towards what is to be the central thrust of this lecture. For the fact is that I don't go along with this view, and in the rest of the lecture I want to challenge some key components of it with the aim of putting before you a very different, alternative, interpretation of the last years of the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell, one that makes more sense to me and one that is closer to the historical evidence than the one I've been describing so far.

I'm going to single out for detailed critical attention three assumptions that underpin the view of the last years of the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell that I've just been describing, and in what follows I'll deal with each in turn. Beginning, first, with the assumption that the crisis situation in 1655-56 – the collapse of the first Protectorate Parliament followed by mounting evidence of both internal opposition in Penruddock's revolt and the lack of enthusiasm for the Major Generals and the battering given to the godly cause abroad in both the Italian Alps and the Caribbean – demoralised those at the heart of the Cromwellian Protectorate so much that it weakened their resolve to pursue their great vision of change that they had for Britain and Ireland. I think that this assumption is based on a misreading of the mentality of those who led the Protectorate at the centre and those who supported it in the country, a mentality that those who disagreed with them called 'Puritan' and one that they themselves called 'godly'. Let me try to explain what it was about the godly mentality that ensured that the reaction of the godly to setbacks and adversity was not

demoralisation. Let me try to explain how on the contrary it galvanised them and made them even more determined than ever to achieve major changes in the lives of their fellow countrymen. What was it about the godly mentality shared by men who governed the country in the 1650s that led them to react to adversity in this way? Since some aspects of the mentality of the godly have been mentioned in previous lectures today, I needn't go into this in great detail. But in order to make the case I need to say a little about it. My starting point for understanding the inner workings of the godly mind is the recognition that many of the core beliefs of the godly were not dissimilar from that of many other Protestants in post-Reformation England. Like them they were firmly attached to the theology of predestination that the fate of individuals after death was preordained by God long before their birth and was uninfluenced by any good works they might do on earth. Like them they were also committed to the primacy of the Bible and its message and therefore to making the exposition of that message the central part of church services. From that too sprang a common Protestant stress on the need for educated clergy who could preach clearly and spread the Word into the 'dark corners of the land' and especially (and it was this which especially bound all Protestants – godly and non-godly – together) to combat the dark, evil forces of Catholicism, which came, largely through the influence of John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, to be seen widely as the ideology of Antichrist. Most English Protestants formed their views of events in the past as well as in the present in millenarian terms as a continuing battle between the forces of Christ and Antichrist that the Bible forecast would one day end in the utter extirpation of Antichrist and the establishment of the Millennium, the thousand-year long reign of King Jesus on earth.

But, although the godly shared these kinds of Protestant core beliefs, it's clear that they also had other beliefs and attitudes that set them apart from many other Protestants and made them recognisable as distinct and separate people. For example, the godly had a much more intense commitment to the theology of predestination than many other Protestants. As one historian has put it, they were 'experimental' not 'credal' predestinarians. They did more than mouth a commitment to predestinarianism; every detail of their lives was dominated by it, and they spent long periods of often anguished introspection trying to convince themselves that they were the Elect chosen by God, that they had God on their side. They also followed the prescriptions of the Scriptures much more closely than other Protestants; daily Scripture readings and study were

regular features of the routine of godly households. They also were much more influenced by anti-Catholic zeal than other Protestants, and many of them became convinced that not only they but also the nation had been chosen by God, that England was an Elect Nation to lead the cause of international Calvinism against the dark forces of Antichristian Catholicism. Above all, though, what set the godly apart was their belief that the so-called Reformation of the sixteenth century was no reformation at all. What was needed, they were convinced was not just a reformation of church government and liturgy but a second Reformation of people's lives and thoughts, the kind of reformation that we've seen in Chris Durston's lecture the Major Generals were established to put into effect.

Now my point about these distinctive godly beliefs is that the godly were acutely aware that these beliefs made them different from the majority of their fellow countrymen. The godly lived every minute of every day in the knowledge that their aspirations and ideas were, at best, mocked and, at worse, scorned and loathed by those around them. And so (like other minorities in other societies at other times, like Jews and ethnic minorities) this feeling of isolation and realisation of how different they were from others became for them a source of strength. In fact, it seems to me that for the godly the sense that they were an embattled minority was absolutely essential to their existence. Like Oliver Cromwell himself in a throwaway line to a parliamentary committee at the end of 1654, when he said 'the major part [of the people], a great deal, are persons disaffected and engaged against us', the godly continually played on it in their writing and speeches, sometimes unconsciously exaggerating the ungodliness of the unregenerate multitude in order to highlight their unique godliness. My point quite simply about this mentality is that this feeling of uniqueness, distinctiveness, did not demoralise them at all; on the contrary it made them even more determined than ever before to remain constant in their attachment to their aspirations for godly reformation.

So to me, therefore, the main feature of the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell in 1655-56, a time when you might think that the crisis it faced (internal revolts, sullen opposition to the Major-Generals, setbacks to the godly cause in Europe and the Caribbean, and so on) would have stunted the regime's zeal for reformation, in fact had the opposite effect. In my view the main theme of the Protectorate at this time was the pursuit of reformation more zealously than ever before. Look for example at that remarkable proclamation on religious liberty issued by Protector and Council on 15 February 1655, which (far from deserving Ronald Hutton's

description of 'a proclamation to restrict religious liberty') was a clear signal to the godly in the country of the regime's commitment to the cause of religious liberty (limited though it might be by modern liberal standards). Groups like Ranters and Quakers who disturbed the public peace were condemned, but the proclamation in its own words avowed an aim 'to preserve and continue the freedom and liberty to all persons in the Commonwealth fearing God, though of differing judgements'. Nor was this all hot air. Despite the ban on their activities in the February 1655 proclamation, Oliver Cromwell made a major effort in 1655-56 to persuade prominent Quakers and Fifth Monarchists to accommodate themselves within the broad Cromwellian Church. He had long conversations with the Fifth Monarchists John Simpson, Christopher Feake and John Rogers, and the Quaker leader George Fox. Following on from this early in 1656 Cromwell had meetings with Archbishop Ussher and other 'Prayer Book Protestants' trying to persuade them to give assurances that they would not support plots against the regime by promises of freedom of worship. And perhaps the most remarkable example of all of the hope the Protectorate had of bringing together 'the godly people' was the attempt that was made at the end of 1655 to secure the readmission to England of the Jews. This is a topic far too big to tackle now, but as far as I can see one of the main reasons why the Protector tried so hard to secure the readmission of the Jews is that he believed their conversion was necessary in order to fulfil biblical prophecies that would propel the nation towards the creation of the new Jerusalem. For me, this is a splendid illustration of the extent to which visionary ambitions were still at the heart of the Protectorate's policies.

And these were ambitions that the regime was now willing to pursue more ruthlessly than ever before by forging links with small godly groups in the localities, and by brushing aside lawyers and judges who stood in their way (as in the infamous case of George Cony, a London merchant whose lawyers were thrown into prison for having the impunity to question the Protectorate's right to levy customs duties without parliamentary consent). Censorship of the press was tightened up. And, most famously (or infamously) the rule of the Major-Generals was embarked on. All of this, I am arguing, is of a piece, illustrating that the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell was a regime that as it entered what was to prove to be its last years was one that, when the cause most dear to its heart, godly reformation, was endangered, did not opt for the alternative, easier route of settlement and compromise, but instead pushed ahead with its reforming programme with great vigour.

But did not all that change in 1656-57? Surely, then, the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell began to fall apart riven by crippling factional struggle between 'military' and 'civilian' Cromwellians, forcing the regime to move in a conservative direction, symbolised by the replacement of its first constitution, the Instrument of Government, by a new, much more conservative, constitution, the Humble Petition and Advice? Well my answer to that question is no. What I want to argue now is that the question embodies a second set of assumptions about this period of the history of the Protectorate that are very shaky indeed, and that the pursuit of reformation remained very much at the forefront of the concerns of the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell in 1656-57. It would be foolish of me, though, to deny that there were no tensions between those in the inner circle of the regime. (What government is ever free of them?) Clearly in the winter of 1656-57 Roger Boyle Lord Broghill came to have a very important position in the ranks of the Protector's advisers and he became the focal point of the more conservative elements within the Cromwellian circle. Broghill was the son of an Anglo-Irish peer and as a member of the so-called 'Old Protestant' group amongst the Irish landed elite his commitment to Protestantism was not in any doubt. But he had little sympathy with religious Independent groups like Baptists, which he considered were a threat to the stability offered by a national Church. He was also keen to reduce the political power of the army and return to more traditional forms of government, even a monarchy. By 1656-57 he had connections with the more conservative-minded Cromwellian councillors and advisers, like Edward Montague, Charles Wolseley and Bulstrode Whitelocke. I think that many historians have exaggerated the cohesion of this group and that their cataloguing of this group into a 'civilian' opposed to another 'military' faction is too simplistic. Yet I don't want to deny the fact that that in the winter of 1656-57 those around Broghill were much more keen than others, including high-ranking army officers like Desborough, Fleetwood and Lambert, to see an end to the Instrument of Government constitution, and that during the winter of 1656-57 they worked to replace it with a constitution that was approved by parliament. Nor do I deny that Desborough, Fleetwood and Lambert organised fierce opposition to their plans, driven by a belief that a new constitution would mean a threat to the cause of religious Independency that was central to their political ambitions.

Clearly, then, there were serious tensions at the heart of the Protectorate at this stage, and these came into the open in December 1656 and January 1657 in two episodes, the case of James Nayler and the projected Militia

Bill. And there is no doubt that both episodes strengthened the campaign of the conservative faction around Cromwell to replace the Instrument of Government with a new parliamentary-approved constitution. Let me explain how both episodes strengthened the conservative cause, before I explain why I think that the outcome was not a 'new' Protectorate inexorably heading full-steam away from the good old cause of godly reformation (as some have supposed).

The case of James Nayler is a truly dramatic and tragic episode. We have heard something of the case already today in Stephen Roberts's talk, but let me put it into a wider context. Nayler was one of the principal leaders of the Quakers, a new religious group that was getting mass support, especially amongst the middling and lower sorts in English society, who were attracted by charismatic preachers like Nayler, who stressed that there were no limitations on what individuals could achieve. They preached that people should not be bound by what church ministers and those in authority told them to do simply because it was written down in books like the Bible, but that people should be guided in their lives by what they called their 'inner light', what their consciences told them was right. It is a great liberating idea and in the mid 1650s thousands flocked to hear his message and join the movement. In October 1656 Nayler did something that seems so extraordinary that later commentators have dismissed it as the 'comically, strangely pathetic' act of a deluded fanatic. In fact, Nayler's decision to re-enact Christ's entry into Jerusalem by riding into Bristol on a donkey with female followers laying tree branches in his path was a rational extension of the Quaker philosophy that individuals should live the Christian experience to the full. But that is not how many at the time saw it. To them Nayler was guilty of 'horrid blasphemy', and he was brought to London to be judged by a parliamentary committee and ultimately by the second Protectorate Parliament that was then in session. What increased the loathing his enemies felt for him was that Nayler and his followers had already got a reputation as dangerous subversives by their practices of refusing to doff their caps to their social superiors and by addressing them by the familiar 'thou' rather than the more normal 'you', by refusing to swear oaths, by violently interrupting church services, and by allowing women to preach. Behind the attack on Nayler lie layers of fears that Quakers were not just religious heretics, but also threats to the very fabric of propertied, male-dominated society. All this accounts for the extreme attacks on Nayler when his case came before parliament.

It's not just shortage of time that makes me pass over the religious intolerance displayed in many MPs' speeches in the Nayler case; I also do not want to offend your liberal sensitivities. No doubt many MPs felt that Nayler's punishment (he was pilloried and whipped twice, his tongue was bored, and he was imprisoned for life) was too lenient.

Clearly there are a lot of things illustrated by the Nayler case, but the one that bears on the theme of this lecture is the fact that during the proceedings on the case some at the heart of Protectorate government began to wonder if, when a single-chamber parliament was given such great power in defining the limits of religious tolerance, there was not need for some constitutional change. As Bulstrode Whitelocke, a conservative Cromwellian said in the parliamentary debate, 'one parliament may count one thing horrid blasphemy, another parliament another thing'. Undoubtedly the Nayler case swelled the ranks of those who were willing to consider jettisoning the Instrument of Government.

That cause was also strengthened, just as the Nayler case was coming to its grisly climax in parliament, by the ill-advised attempt of Major-General Desborough to bring a proposal to parliament on Christmas day 1656 for a Militia Bill that would have made permanent the decimation tax on royalists and by implication the rule of the Major-Generals as well. The effect of this was to bring into the open those who had been conspiring in private for months to bring in a new constitution. Within three weeks or so of parliament quashing the Militia Bill, on 23 February 1657 Sir Christopher Packe, almost certainly acting as the front man for a group around Broghill, presented a paper in parliament that is the first sight anyone had of what was to become a new constitution, the Humble Petition and Advice, one feature of which was a restored monarchy headed by King Oliver I.

All that I think is fairly uncontroversial. But what I want to argue now is that all these events did not amount to evidence that the Protector weakly allowed his regime to slide inexorably away from the cause of godly reformation. On the contrary I intend to argue that he played a very canny political game during the period covered by Nayler's Case, the Militia Bill and the discussions on the new constitution, the Humble Petition and Advice. My view is that by not aligning himself too closely with any of the competing factions around him, he ensured that the divisions within the Protectorate did not undermine the stability of the regime. He also helped to engineer an outcome, the revised and amended Humble Petition and

Advice that ensured that the continuing quest for a godly reformation was not sacrificed in favour of a conservative settlement.

This is a case that I've argued in more detail in my recent book, *The Cromwellian Protectorate*. But let me tell you the main features of it now. Historians differ about Cromwell's precise role in the presentation to parliament of a paper proposing a new constitution and when he made his decision to ditch the Instrument of Government. But he had certainly made that decision by 27 February 1657, when he faced a meeting of army officers who were very angry at rumours that he was considering abandoning the Instrument of Government. Cromwell did not back down in the face of this hostile demonstration; on the contrary, the account we have of his speech on that occasion makes it clear that he categorically confirmed the rumours that he was in favour of a new constitution. 'It is time to come to a settlement', he said, 'and lay aside arbitrary proceedings so unacceptable to the nation'.

Why did he make the decision? I think he had three main reasons. The first is that the Nayler case had taught him, like others, an important lesson: that unless checks were put on a single-chamber parliament the cause of promoting liberty for tender consciences was in danger. There is little doubt that this was one of his chief reasons, and the evidence is in the speech he made on 27 February 1657 when he tried to convince army officers of the need for a new constitution. The parliamentary proceedings in Nayler's case showed, he was reported as saying, that MPs 'stand in need of a check or balancing power (meaning the House of Lords or a House so constituted) for (he went on, hammering the point home) the case of James Nayler might happen to be your case'.

Cromwell's second reason for looking favourably on proposals for a new constitution is that he believed that the adoption of a new parliamentary-approved constitution would enable him to reap some useful advantages. Cromwell could not have missed the lesson to be drawn from the fact that on the day after the Militia Bill was defeated parliament granted a massive sum of £400,000 to pay for the expensive Spanish war. In the December 2003 issue of the *BBC History Magazine* Jonathan Clark writes that Cromwell 'revered parliament no more than Charles I'. In my view that is a total misreading of Cromwell's attitude. Cromwell wanted to rule with parliaments, and it is likely that what was in his mind early in 1657 is that one advantage of accepting the new constitution would be to increase his chances of doing so more harmoniously than he had ever done in the past.

But the reason why Cromwell gave his support for a new constitution that I want to emphasise most of all now is that he believed that a revised constitution could be a means of reuniting divided Cromwellians. Many of his comments on the proposed new constitution when it was being debated in the spring of 1657 suggest that this was the case. The Humble Petition and Advice, he said on 8 April 1657, provided 'the settlement of the chiefest things that can fall into the heats of man to desire'. A fortnight later he made the point that the new constitution would unite divided interests. 'You have provided', he told a parliamentary committee, 'for the liberty of the people of God and of the nation, and I say, he sings sweetly that sings a song of reconciliation betwixt interests ... I think in this government [the new constitution] you have made them to consist'.

And what for me is the clinching point of this argument that I am putting (that Cromwell saw the new constitution as means of maintaining a broad range of support for the Protectorate and at the same time not abandoning its core mission of godly reformation) is his rejection of one major element of the new constitution, the proposal that it should be headed by a king in the person of King Oliver I. Why did he turn it down? If I knew the answer to that question I would be in a very fortunate position. The reasons that I *think* he turned it down fall into two categories. The first are providential reasons that, following in the path of Blair Worden, others and I have explained in our books on Cromwell. What made it impossible for Cromwell to take the throne was his view that monarchy had been abolished in 1649 according to the will of God. Therefore to have restored it in 1657 would have been to have flown in the face of God's judgement, leading to the loss of God's support, and, without that, he believed he would have no chance of putting into effect his visionary ambitions.

But there was another consideration in the Protector's mind in May 1657 when he finally rejected the offer of the crown. And this is a consideration that bears directly on my argument in this lecture. He well knew that if he accepted the crown he would lose the support of many in the army and his chances of healing the divisions within the Protectorate would become even slimmer than they already were. The alternative course he took was not risk-free. By turning down the crown and accepting all other parts of the new constitution he alienated men from opposite ends of the spectrum of Cromwellian supporters. In the summer of 1657 both Lambert and Broghill withdrew temporarily from the political arena. But I think that he considered that these losses were worth what he gained by accepting the

new constitution. He well knew that King Oliver I would not have the trust of army officers and other radical Cromwellians that Lord Protector Cromwell still enjoyed. And he well knew that as King Oliver I he would have aligned himself so closely to Broghill and other conservative Cromwellians that he would have no other alternative but to accept their limited vision of reformation as a final settlement. My point simply is that he reckoned that by becoming King Oliver I he would have put constitutional shackles on himself that would have made the task of promoting his version of reformation even more difficult than ever and maybe impossible.

In other words what I'm arguing is that in 1657 (as at most periods in his life when he faced difficult choices) Cromwell put reformation above any other consideration. For that reason I don't see the Oliver Cromwellian Protectorate as it entered what was to be its last year as a regime that was retreating from reformation. On the contrary I think that it was one that was still firmly committed to it.

Let's assume that all that I've argued so far is plausible. Given that, there is a final assumption about the end of the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell that I need to address. This is that Cromwell's re-installation as Lord Protector under this new revised constitution in that regal-like, coronation-like, ceremony on 26 June 1657 marks a turning point to a so-called 'new' Protectorate, marked by increasing conservatism and disillusion, making inevitable the collapse of the Protectorate after Oliver Cromwell's death. Well, what's wrong with this assumption?

The first thing that's wrong with it is that as far as I can see there was little that was new about this so-called 'new' Protectorate. When the names of the new Protectorate Council appointed under the terms of the Humble Petition and Advice were announced, the only major change from the old Council was the absence of Lambert. The problems that it faced also remained unchanged. Tensions between conservative and radical Cromwellians continued to simmer beneath the surface of politics. People like Oliver's son, Henry Cromwell, Viscount Fauconberg and Lord Broghill continued to be suspicious of Desborough, Fleetwood and other army generals. Moreover, when parliament which had been adjourned in the summer of 1657 reconvened in January 1658, it contained many Commonwealthsmen who had been excluded from parliament in 1656 and, since many loyal Cromwellians had been elevated to the Upper House created by the new constitution, these critics of the Protectorate were able

to make a lot of political capital in the session, by attacking the Protectorate and gaining support amongst some rank and file soldiers, a situation that caused Oliver Cromwell to dismiss parliament angrily on 4 February 1658.

Clearly the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell still faced major problems, including the massive financial costs of its adventurous foreign policy as it entered its last months. Yet what I want to stress is that alongside those problems there is much evidence that the regime was still notching up successes. The most obvious area is in international affairs. This is one of the many aspects of the history of the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell that this conference has not touched on, but it needs saying, if only briefly, that by 1658 Britain under the Protectorate had achieved a position of Great Power status that it had never had before and was never to achieve again until the decades after the 1690s. This was an achievement which (in *realpolitik* terms) was underpinned by its success in building on the Rump's successes in bringing all parts of the British Isles under unitary rule for the first time ever, and building a powerful army and navy that ensured a degree of security from foreign invasion that must have given men reason to give the regime their support, even if it was not enthusiastic support.

On top of this there is a wealth of evidence that the regime still had the firm backing of the army. The dismissal of Lambert and the later cashiering of some protesting soldiers in February 1658 did not spark any significant army discontent. Nor does the available evidence support a picture of a Protector who had lost his grip and who had given up the struggle and was instead being driven to cave in and accept (when a new parliament should next meet) a return to monarchy and a conservative settlement. On the contrary the composition of the committee of nine councillors (a mixture of conservative and radical Cromwellians) appointed in 1658 to discuss what happened when another parliament met, suggests that Cromwell had not given up his determination to balance the factions around him. The radical Cromwellians on the committee would have opposed very strongly any idea that Cromwell should make any major constitutional concessions in order to buy parliamentary financial and political support. True, the sources for these last final days of the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell are sparse, but there is some evidence that when it did end the regime's visionary aspirations were still very much alive. This is a conclusion that underpins this lecture's main theme: that the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell never retreated from its revolutionary aspirations.

But I cannot just end there, because by confining this conference to the

Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell we have effectively excluded from our considerations the Protectorate of Richard Cromwell, which is a pity because it is a subject that is crying out for reinterpretation. For far too long it has suffered from being seen through the distorting lens of hindsight that suggests that since it only lasted for eight months it was bound to fail. There is no time now to deal with that assumption, but just let me say that I don't think that it is a valid one.

It is true that the new Protector was inexperienced, and for that his father must take a share of the blame. The history of Oliver's attitude to the succession is a murky one, about which there are few sources. This has allowed some to believe that in his last days Cromwell nominated Fleetwood as his successor, a suggestion I find implausible. I think that it is more likely that the dying Protector eventually confirmed that his choice was his eldest son. What is more certain is that Oliver failed to make provision for the succession long before he died, leaving ample room for speculation about his motives. My explanation is that Cromwell steered clear of the question of who should succeed him, because in his last months he was (as he always was) reluctant to be seen by God as guilty of the sin of the selfish pursuit of ambition for himself and his family. As I have been arguing throughout this lecture, Oliver Cromwell always gave priority to the cause of godly reformation.

So Richard's task when he became Protector in September 1658 was a very challenging one. Yet I have a feeling that his early exit from the political scene was not inevitable. I think he had more political ability than he had been given credit for and that the explanations for the collapse of the Cromwellian Protectorate in May 1659 are to be found in reasons other than Richard's lack of political ability. But I'll end without taking these ideas further. After all, consideration of these and other questions about the Protectorate of Richard Cromwell is clearly beyond the scope of a conference entitled the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell.

[The evidence for many of the assertions made in this lecture and the quotations used in it can be found in my book, *The Cromwellian Protectorate 1653-59* (Manchester UP, 2002)]

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OVERSEAS DESPATCHES I
THE VIEW FROM AMERICA: NEW ENGLAND,
THE CIVIL WARS, AND OLIVER CROMWELL

By Francis J. Bremer

Surely, Sir, the Lord is greatly to be feared, as to be praised! We need your prayers in this as much as ever. How shall we behave among ourselves after such mercies? What is the Lord a-doing? What prophecies now fulfilling?¹

This request for prayerful assistance and advice was sent to the eminent New England clergyman John Cotton in October 1651 by none other than Oliver Cromwell. The connection and mutual respect between the general and the clergyman may surprise current students of the period but it would not have raised eyebrows in seventeenth century England or New England. Colonial support for the Parliamentary opposition to Charles I had been clear from the outset of the crisis of the 1640s and would develop into a close relationship between puritan Massachusetts and the Protectorate.

The basis for this relationship was grounded in the events of the 1630s. Unlike the Separatist Plymouth colony of 1620, Massachusetts had been settled by reformers who affirmed their continuing membership in the Church of England. Dissatisfied with the progress of church reform, and concerned with growing pressure for uniformity that had led to the closure of lectureships and insistence on use of disputed ceremonies, those who emigrated in 1630 sought to create a new England. In the words of John Winthrop, in the new society the colonists were to dedicate themselves to do that which for many in England was a matter of profession only. 'Whatsoever we did or ought to have done when in England,' he told the colonists, 'the same must we do, and more also where we go.' If they succeeded in recreating and perfecting godly communities such as had existed in Winthrop's own Stour Valley, then the puritan settlement would be 'as a city upon a hill.' The eyes of all people would be upon Massachusetts and it would be an exemplar for those in England and elsewhere seeking to create reformed societies.²

Over the next decade the colonists shared their progress with English friends as well as with puritans resident in the Netherlands, and many of those who heard the good news from New England joined the migration to this New World. Among clergymen, John Cotton himself came to New England in 1633, as did Thomas Hooker. Hugh Peter arrived in 1635, and John Davenport in 1637. Some of the new arrivals stayed in Massachusetts,

others moved on to create Bible Commonwealths along the Connecticut River and Long Island sound. And it was not only clergy who emigrated. Henry Vane came to the new Boston in 1635 and was soon elected the colony's governor.

In 1632 a plan was initiated whereby a group of puritan grandees would establish a new colony in the future Connecticut. John Winthrop Jr. was engaged to lay the groundwork for the new plantation. Among the promoters who indicated an interest in migrating were Viscount Saye and Sele and Lord Brooke. Others involved included Sir Matthew Boynton, Sir William Constable, John Clotworthy, George Fenwick, Henry Lawrence, and Arthur Heselrige.³ In 1635 and 1636 some of the proprietors were making plans for emigration and, as John Morrill has shown, it is likely that Oliver Cromwell seriously considered joining in the venture.⁴ George Fenwick did play a role in the Saybrook settlement, but the others were inhibited by new government policies from emigrating. They would stay in England and play significant roles in the conflicts of the 1640s, but they never lost their interest in the puritan experiment in America.

Those who did settle in America set aside days to gather in their churches and pray for the reform of England and for the success of the broader Protestant cause in the Thirty Years War.⁵ Building upon practices that they had employed in England, the New Englanders organized particular churches and developed informal mechanisms of association that kept the various congregations on a common path. This congregational system was soon referred to as the New England Way. The eyes of their friends in the Old World were, indeed, upon them. Clergy answered questions from friends in England and the Netherlands about such new practices such as church covenants, congregational calls to the pastorate, and simplified forms of liturgy. Some English friends raised concerns that the colonists were drifting towards separatism. Others chastised those who had left England for abandoning the cause of reform. Such challenges were answered in scribal publications that circulated in manuscript until they could be published in the 1640s.⁶ When the harmony of the Bay was disrupted by what the majority saw as the antinomian teachings of Anne Hutchinson and her followers, the leaders of Massachusetts first expelled the irreconcilable dissidents, and then had to explain to an English audience how such errors could have arisen and how Congregationalism could successfully control heresy.⁷

Committed to the reform of the larger church, the New England colonists were hopeful when in December 1640 they received 'news of the Scots entering into England, and the calling of a Parliament, and the hope of a thorough reformation.'⁸ According to John Winthrop, 'some of us began to think of returning back to England,' but few did so at this time.⁹ All of the colonists had friends and relatives in England and as reform turned to conflict they feared the consequences for those they cared for. As Taunton's Reverend William Hooke expressed it,

If you should but see war described to you in a map, especially in a country well known to you, nay dearly beloved of you, yea where lately you dwelt, where you have received ten-thousand mercies, and have many a dear friend and countryman, how could you but lament and mourn?¹⁰

But fear was tempered by hope, and 2 September 1641 was observed in the New England churches as a special day of prayer and thanksgiving 'for the good success of the parliament in England.'¹¹ The Reverend Thomas Shepard spoke for most colonists when he referred to the events unfolding in England as a 'blessed work of a public reformation.'¹² The success of Parliament was, according to the Bay colony's Edward Johnson, 'an immediate answer of the Lord to his people's prayers and endeavors.'¹³

English correspondents regularly petitioned for New England's prayers, and interceding with the Almighty was a principal means whereby the colonists sought to influence events across the Atlantic. According to the Reverend Thomas Cobbet the colonial 'Churches of praying believers are terrible as so many armies with banners, as so thundering legions.'¹⁴ William Hooke depicted the churches of the Bible Commonwealths as 'so many several regiments, or bands of soldiers lying in ambush... under fern and brushet of the wilderness,... to come upon the backs of God's enemies with deadly fasting and prayer, murderers that will kill point blank from one end of the world to the other.'¹⁵ Between the first word of the Bishops War in 1639 and January of 1644 there were no fewer than twelve specially appointed days of prayer on behalf of English reform, and countless other local and personal occasions.

While in Winthrop's view the colonists had 'openly declared our affection to the cause of parliament by our prayers, fastings, etc.,' there were other, more tangible steps taken to ally the colonies with the Parliamentary cause.¹⁶ One such means was the tendering of advice. 'Great pity were it,'

wrote John Cotton, 'that they [Englishmen] should want any light which might possibly be afforded them.'¹⁷ The year 1641 saw the beginning of a flood of printed tracts and books offering New England advice on the religious and political reformation of England, written by Cotton, Hooker, Davenport, Cobbet, John Eliot, Richard Mather, John Norton and other colonial leaders. When Parliament created the Westminster Assembly to reconstruct the national church, a group of English leaders including the Earl of Warwick, Lord Saye and Sele, Thomas Barrington, Arthur Haselrige, and Oliver Cromwell invited Cotton, Hooker and Davenport to sit in the Assembly.¹⁸ Though Davenport and Cotton were initially inclined to accept, they were persuaded by English correspondents that they could better serve the cause by written advocacy in New England than by joining a small Congregational minority in the Assembly. The fact is that New England was not the only model for godly reform and other puritans looked to the Scottish Church for inspiration. Over the following years the New Englanders worked closely with Thomas Goodwin, Philip Nye and other friends who advocated the Congregational Way and in opposition to the Presbyterian majority in the Assembly and the Parliament. Goodwin, Nye and other Dissenting Brethren prepared New England tracts for publication and offered prefatory recommendations of these colonial works.¹⁹

While the three most eminent New England clergy stayed in the colonies, Massachusetts did dispatch two ministers on an embassy to the Parliament and English friends. The Reverends Hugh Peter and Thomas Welde, along with merchant William Hibbins, were dispatched to placate the colony's creditors, obtain economic assistance, and 'to give any advice, as it should be required, for the settling right form of church discipline.'²⁰ Welde and Peter were successful in raising funds for Harvard College and for Indian missions, arranged for orphans of English Protestant settlers in Ireland to be sent to the colonies, represented New England's interests before the Warwick Commission and Parliament, and advocated the New England Way in print and through personal witness.

Meanwhile, in May of 1643 Massachusetts struck the king's name from the colony's oath of allegiance, justifying the decision on the fact that the king 'had violated the privileges of parliament, and made war upon them.'²¹ The New Haven Colony followed suit a year later.²² Also in 1644 the Massachusetts General Court adopted an order that any colonist who shall 'by word, writing, or action endeavour to disturb our peace, directly or

indirectly, by drawing a party under pretence that he is for the King of England and such as adjoin with him against this commonwealth, to be proceeded with either capitally or otherwise, according to the quality and degree of his offense.'²³ Shortly thereafter the magistrates subpoenaed a militia captain for having publicly 'questioned the lawfulness of the parliament's proceedings in England,' and pressured him into acknowledging the rightness of their actions.²⁴ The Bay authorities approved the capture of a royalist prize in Boston harbour by Captain Thomas Stagg, who held a privateering commission issued by Parliamentary authority, and themselves seized a royalist vessel, sold its cargo, and distributed the proceeds to local merchants who had lost cargoes to the King's ships.²⁵ Such support was appreciated by the Parliament, which issued an order freeing New Englanders from paying customs duties until further notice.²⁶

Many colonists were not satisfied with assisting the cause from afar and so returned to England.²⁷ One such colonist who went back was Nathaniel Mather, who wrote to his colonial friends that 'Tis a notion of mighty great and high respect to have been a New-English man, 'tis enough to gain a man very much respect, yea almost any preferment.'²⁸ The flow began in the early 1640s and continued through the Protectorate. Some served in the army. John Winthrop's son Stephen as well as his (Stephen's) nephews Wait Still Winthrop and Fitz John Winthrop served in the army. Robert Sedgwick captured Acadia for the Protectorate, led reinforcements to Jamaica, and died while serving as commander of the English forces on that island. Hezekiah Haynes rose from captain to colonel in the army. George Fenwick commanded a regiment in the second Civil War and served as military governor of Berwick, Edinburgh, and Leith. George Cooke rose to the rank of colonel and served two years as military governor of Wexford. Colonists were especially prominent in the regiment commanded by the Winthrop's kinsman Colonel Thomas Rainsborough. Among these were Israel Stoughton, Nehemiah Boume, John Leverett, and William Hudson.²⁹

New Englanders sat in Parliament. These included Edward Hopkins and Samuel Desborough. John Winthrop's son Stephen represented Banff and Aberdeen in the 1656 Protectorate Parliament. Others served in the civilian government. John Winthrop's brother-in-law, Emmanuel Downing, served for a time as chief clerk of the Scottish Council. Samuel Desborough was a member of the Scottish Council and Keeper of the Great Seal in Scotland. Roger Ludlow served on the first Irish Commission appointed by

Cromwell. Edward Winslow served as a trustee to appraise the King's goods, a commissioner to compound with delinquents and manage sequestered estates, one of the commissioners to judge all treasons, and one of the three civil commissioners accompanying the Hispaniola expedition in 1655. Richard Saltonstall, Jr., was a member of the High Court of Justice established in 1650, a trustee for settling sequestered estates in Scotland, and one of the Commissioners of the Customs.

Numerous clergyman and aspiring clergyman joined the return migration. Robert Peck left Hingham, Massachusetts to take up again his former rectorship in Hingham, England. Thomas Welde, his agency completed, became rector of St. Mary's Gateshead. His brother Joseph became rector at Bildeston, Suffolk. Nathaniel Norcrosse became vicar of St. Mary's in Dover, Kent. Giles Firmin settled in the ministry in Shalford, Essex. Samuel Eaton organized one of the first congregational churches in Duckenfield, Cheshire. John Knowles became a preacher at Bristol Cathedral. Thomas Allen became pastor of St. George Tombland in Norwich. In addition to these and other returning clergy were many of the Harvard graduates of the 1640s and 1650s, including Nathaniel, Samuel, and Increase Mather. All of these men laboured to introduce congregational theory and practices into the English church.³⁰

The trial and execution of Charles I shocked some New Englanders, but failed to alter the pattern of colonial support for the reform cause in their homeland. John Brock recorded in his journal 'King is beheaded! O dreadful judgement!' but John Hull was perhaps more typical in laconically noting 'January 30. Great Charles the First was beheaded upon Tuesday, about two o'clock.'³¹ Following the news of Oliver Cromwell's victory over the Scots at Dunbar a day of thanksgiving was held in Massachusetts. During it John Cotton took the opportunity to calm any concerns that remained about the regicide and the subsequent events. In building his case, Cotton went back to Pride's Purge, justifying the action on the grounds that the excluded members had tried to reverse the decision to have no further addresses to the king. As for the decision to execute the king, Cotton reviewed scriptural precedents and concluded that it was not 'an unknown thing that loyal subjects of many a state have conspired against those that have been set down over them by the Lord, when once they [the rulers] depart from God and do such acts as have been dangerous and destructive to the commonwealth.' And God's approval was made clear at Dunbar. That had been 'a great and wonderful deliverance of the English army, in that great battle, when they were so weatherbeaten with rain and cold, and

charged upon with such advantage, and by a double number to their own; and upon the charge, when the English army began to recoil and fall, yet soon after, when the General's regiment came in, in one hour God had so ended the dispute.'³²

The allegiance of the colonies to the Parliamentary cause remained firm. In 1651 the Massachusetts magistrates drew the attention of the Parliament to the fact that 'we have constantly adhered to you, not withdrawing ourselves in your weakest condition and doubtfullest times, but by our fasting and prayers for your good success, and our thanksgivings after the same... as also by our sending over useful men... who have been of good use and done good acceptable services to the army, declaring to the world hereby, that such was the duty and love we bear unto the parliament that we were ready to rise and fall with them.'³³ Yet such was the emerging influence of Oliver Cromwell at the time that the magistrates also addressed a separate letter of support to him.³⁴

Cromwell was already known to New England's leaders when Cotton praised his latest military victory and the General Court wrote to him. Various New Englanders, including the Reverend William Hooke, were connected to him by ties of kinship (Hooke had married Cromwell's cousin Jane Whalley), while others knew him from his student days at Cambridge and others would have heard of him from common friends. New Englanders who returned to England, such as John Desborough and Hugh Peter, wrote admiringly of Cromwell's achievements and character in letters to colonial friends. As he rose to prominence he was singled out for praise by New England leaders. A group of colonial clergy including Peter Bulkeley, Thomas Cobbet, Samuel Whiting and John Knowles wrote to Cromwell in 1650 to congratulate him for his success in pacifying Ireland, referring to him as 'a glorious instrument of the execution of his [God's] just vengeance upon those bloody monsters of mankind,' and went on to 'thankfully acknowledge this as a superadded mercy ... that by his grace he hath kept it in the frame of your heart amidst all the glorious victories which under God you have gotten, thankfully to ascribe the glory thereof to him alone.'³⁵ John Cotton conveyed to Cromwell his belief that 'the Lord hath set you forth as a vessel of honour to his name, in working many and great deliverances for his people, and his truth.'³⁶ John Eliot dedicated his *Tears of Repentance* to Cromwell, claiming that 'the Lord hath raised and improved you in an eminent manner to overthrow Antichrist.'³⁷ Thomas Cobbet, John Norton, and others would likewise dedicate works to him.

When Cromwell became Lord Protector, New England approved. The Massachusetts General Court instructed its agent, John Leverett, to 'take the first opportunity to... let his highness understand how thankfully we accept and at all times readily acknowledge his Highness's favour and clemency towards us, and to assure him of our own real and sincere affection towards his highness and readiness upon all occasions to be serviceable unto him to the utmost of our power and ability.'³⁸ Such communications became common, Governor John Endecott sending what he called 'an anniversary acknowledgement of our obligation.'³⁹

Rightly or wrongly, the colonists saw Cromwell as sympathetic to the New England Way. He had sided with the Independents against Presbyterians, yet recognized the need to curb extreme heresies. He surrounded himself with religious advisors such as the former colonist Hugh Peter, the English advocate of New England Congregationalism Thomas Goodwin, and John Owen, who had been converted to a congregational stance by the writings of John Cotton. When William Hooke returned to England Cromwell named him as a household chaplain. Hooke wrote to New England friends that Cromwell was 'a godly man, much in prayer and good discourses, delighting in good men and good ministers, self-denying and ready to promote any good work for Christ.' Half of the thirty-eight clergymen he appointed as Triers responsible for examining and approving the qualifications of those nominated for church livings were Congregationalists. Congregational Calvinists likewise were strongly represented on the boards of clergy named to eject unfit ministers. Many of those who had been part of the Independent religious movement of the 1640s complained that the Cromwellian Church was moving away from broad toleration in the direction of a New England style establishment. John Leverett wrote to Governor Endecott that when, in his presence, someone complained to Cromwell of 'New England's rigidness and persecution,... his Highness was pleased to answer very much in favour of them, that they acted like wise men.' A good number of those named by Cromwell as governing Major-Generals were Congregationalists, and four of them – Desborough, Whalley, Goffe, and Haynes – had strong ties with New England. In 1658 the call for the reform synod that met at the Savoy to plan such a Congregational establishment came from within Cromwell's household.⁴⁰

Confident in their relationship with the Lord Protector, New Englanders sought and received help from Cromwell. They noted with approval the

'great respect shown to God's poor people from the highest Magistrate,' and the appointment of those with New England connections to positions of authority.⁴¹ Appraised of the shortage of servants in the colonies, Cromwell dispatched Scottish prisoners of war to the colonies.⁴² He interceded to help a New Englander gain compensation for a ship and cargo seized by Prince Rupert. And he offered military assistance to the New Haven Colony when it was threatened by the Dutch.

The New Haven colony that had been founded in southern New England through the efforts of John Davenport existed on territory claimed as well by the Dutch New Netherland colony. In 1653 rumours spread through the region that the Dutch authorities were stirring up the local Indian tribes to attack the English settlements. With England and the Netherlands at war, the New Haven leaders voted in June of that year to send to England their account of the boundary dispute and to appeal to Parliament for assistance. Later that year, having heard of Cromwell's dissolution of the Parliament, William Leete wrote to his former neighbour, Samuel Desborough, asking him to enlist Cromwell's assistance. William Hooke wrote to his kinsman asking that Cromwell 'procure two or three frigates to be sent for the clearing of the coast.' And the colony's General Court dispatched John Astwood to officially seek the aid of the Protector.⁴³

Responding to these requests, on 8 February 1654 Cromwell commissioned the New Englanders Major Robert Sedgwick and Captain John Leverett to command four vessels and a small contingent of troops to aid the New Englanders in the conquest of New Netherlands. While Massachusetts was reluctant, all of the Bible Commonwealths pledged aid and allowed Sedgwick and Leverett to recruit troops. It appeared that nine hundred infantry and a troop of cavalry would be ready to assault New Netherlands by the mid-summer. Before the expedition sailed, however, news reached the colonies of the end of the Anglo-Dutch War. Cromwell's most significant extension of aid to New England never accomplished its end, though the expedition was then used in the capture of French Acadia.

Cromwell's interest in the New World was not limited to this attempt. He was also committed to driving the Catholic Spanish from their American holdings. This was, in part, a revival of the projects of the Earl of Warwick and other of Cromwell's friends from the 1630s. But as he sought to institute his plans in the 1650s he turned for help to New Englanders. According to Roger Williams, who had a number of meetings with Cromwell around this time, the Protector had consulted John Cotton on

the prophecies of Revelation, and 'Mr. Cotton's interpreting the Euphrates as the West Indies' had encouraged Cromwell in his 'western design.'⁴⁴ New Englanders, including Robert Sedgwick and Edward Winslow, played key roles in the expedition that failed to secure Hispaniola but captured Jamaica. He hoped that New Englanders would join in the settlement of the new British possessions in the West Indies.⁴⁵

The death of Oliver Cromwell in 1658 and the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 brought an end to the puritan dream in England and challenged the purpose for which New England had been founded. The colonists appeared willing to accept Richard Cromwell as the new Protector, but hardly had they received news of his installation when they learned of his resignation. The uncertainty of the following months was hard for New Englanders to bear as they waited for the latest news on ships arriving from England and then had to sift rumour from truth. But there was no misunderstanding the fact or the meaning of the Restoration.

New Englanders recognized the new king but remained loyal to the puritan cause. Three of the condemned regicides – Edward Whalley, William Goffe, and John Dixwell – fled to New England and were successfully sheltered. But the restored monarchy began a policy designed to undermine the Bible Commonwealths. New Haven was merged into the Connecticut colony. Royal commissioners reported on violations of the Massachusetts charter. Eventually, in 1684, the Massachusetts Charter was revoked, and a year later the entire region was merged into a single Dominion of New England under the rule of Governor General Sir Edmund Andros. Never again would the New England colonies enjoy the type of close and mutually supportive relationship that had existed during the Protectorate.

Notes

1. Oliver Cromwell to John Cotton, 2 October 1651, in Thomas Carlyle, editor, *Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (New York, 1904), 240.
2. Winthrop's 'Christian Charity' quoted in Francis J. Bremer, *John Winthrop: America's Forgotten Founding Father* (Oxford U. Press, New York, 2003), 178.
3. See Bremer, *Winthrop*, 254-260.
4. John Morrill, 'The Decision to Stay: Oliver Cromwell,' paper read at the 1999 Millersville University Conference on 'The Worlds of John Winthrop: England and New England, 1588-1659.' Professor Morrill is continuing his work on this subject.

5. For more on these days of fast and prayer see William DeLoss Love, *The Fast and Thanksgiving Days of New England* (New York, 1895) and Richard Gildrie, 'The Ceremonial Puritan: Days of Humiliation and Thanksgiving,' *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 136 (1982).
6. For a discussion of these exchanges see Francis J. Bremer, *Congregational Communion: Clerical Friendship in the Anglo-American Puritan Community, 1610-1692* (Boston, 1994), esp. 113-122.
7. The best treatment of the controversy is Michael Winship, *Making Heretics: Militant Protestantism and Free Grace in Massachusetts, 1636-1641* (Princeton, NJ; 2002). For the context that gave rise to such divisions see David R. Como, *Blown By the Spirit: Puritanism and the Emergence of an Antinomian Underground in Pre-Civil-War England* (Stanford, CA; 2004) and Theodore Dwight Bozeman, *The Precisianist Strain: Disciplinary Religion & Antinomian Backlash in Puritanism to 1638* (Chapel Hill, NC; 2004).
8. John Winthrop, *The Journal of John Winthrop, 1630-1649*, edited by Richard Dunn, James Savage, and Laetitia Yeandle (Cambridge, MA; 1996), 341.
9. Winthrop, *Journal*, 341.
10. William Hooke, *New England's Teares for Old England's Feares* (London, 1641), reprinted in Samuel Emery, *The Ministry of Taunton* (Boston, 1853), 87.
11. Winthrop, *Journal*, 365.
12. Shepard quoted in Francis J. Bremer, *Puritan Crisis: New England and the English Civil Wars, 1630-1670* (New York, 1989), 101.
13. Edward Johnson, *Wonder-Working Providence of Sions Savior in New England*, edited by J. Franklin Jameson (New York, 1946), 161.
14. Thomas Cobbet, *Practical Discourse of Prayer* (London, 1657), to the reader.
15. William Hooke, *New England's Sence of Old England and Irelands Sorrows* (London, 1645) reprinted in Emery, *Taunton*, 116-117, 125-126.
16. Winthrop, *Journal*, 527.
17. Cotton quotes in Bremer, *Puritan Crisis*, 110.
18. The letter is printed in Thomas Hutchinson, editor, *A Collection of Original Papers Relative to the History of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay* (Boston, 1769), 100-101.
19. See Bremer, *Congregational Communion*, 123-143.

20. Winthrop, *Journal*, 353. The most complete discussion of the agency is to be found in Raymond Phineas Stearns, 'The Welde-Peter Mission to England,' *Proceedings of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, 32 (1937), 188-146.
21. Winthrop, *Journal*, 432.
22. Charles J. Hoadley, editor, *Records of the Colony and Plantation of New Haven from 1638 to 1649* (Hartford, CT; 1857), 136-137.
23. *Records of the Governor and Colony of the Massachusetts Bay*, edited by Nathaniel Shurtleff, 5 volumes (Boston, 1853), II, 69.
24. Winthrop, *Journal*, 518-519.
25. Winthrop, *Journal*, 524ff.
26. A copy of the order is entered in *Records of Massachusetts*, II, 34.v
27. An analysis of the return migration is to be found in William L. Sachse, 'The migration of New Englanders to England, 1640-1660,' *American Historical Review*, 53 (1948), 251-278, and Sachse, *The Colonial American in Britain* (Madison, WI; 1956). For the most complete catalogue of the return migration see Susan Hardman, 'Return Migration from New England to England, 1640-1660' (D.Ph. thesis, University of Kent, 1986).
28. Nathaniel Mather to John Rogers, 23 March 1653, *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, 4th series, VIII, 4.
29. For further details on those referred to in this and the following paragraph and specific citations see Bremer, *Congregational Communion*, 308-310 n 24.
30. See Bremer, *Congregational Communion*, 179-190.
31. Clifford K. Shipton, 'The Autobiographical Memoranda of John Brock, 1636-1659,' *American Antiquarian Society Proceedings*, LIII (1944), 101; 'memoir and Diaries of John Hull,' *American Antiquarian Society Transactions and Collections*, III (1857), 172.
32. See Francis J. Bremer, 'In Defense of Regicide: John Cotton on the Execution of Charles I,' *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, XXXVII (1980), 103-124, which contains the text of Cotton's sermon. The quotations have been modernized for this essay.
33. Petition of the Massachusetts General Court to Parliament, 1651, in Thomas Hutchinson, *A History of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts Bay*, edited by Lawrence Shaw Mayo (Cambridge, MA; 1936), I, 429.
34. Letter of the General Court of Massachusetts to Oliver Cromwell, 1651, in Hutchinson, *History*, I, 431.

35. Peter Bulkeley, Samuel Whiting, Thomas Cobbet, and others to Oliver Cromwell, 31 December 1650, *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, 4th series, II, 115-116.
36. John Cotton to Oliver Cromwell, 28 July 1651, in Hutchinson, *Papers*, 233.
37. John Eliot, *Tears of Repentance* (1653), dedicatory letter.
38. Massachusetts General Court Instruction to Captain John Leverett, 29 November 1655, Hutchinson, *Papers*, 273.
39. Address to his Highness, Oliver Cromwell from John Endecott, November 1655, Hutchinson, *Papers*, 274.
40. Bremer, *Congregational Communion*, especially 194-201.
41. Bremer, *Congregational Communion*, 179.
42. Charles Edward Banks, 'Scottish Prisoners Deported to New England by Cromwell, 1651-1652,' *Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings*, 61 (1927-28).
43. This paragraph and the following are based on Francis J. Bremer, 'The New Haven Colony and Oliver Cromwell,' *The Connecticut Historical Society Bulletin*, 38 (1973), 65-72.
44. Roger Williams to John Winthrop Jr., 15 December 1654, *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, 4th series VI, 291.
45. Sachse, *Colonial American in Britain*, 139.

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WRITINGS AND SOURCES VII. CROMWELL'S WATCH:
SOMEWHERE IN TIME

by Jane A. Mills

The invention of the mechanical clock or the appearance of clocks in Europe dates from the last quarter of the 13th century, but it was not until after 1580 that we had our own native school. By 1600 the watch had reached a fairly sophisticated state, but it was a bad timekeeper, the daily rate varied by a quarter of an hour and had to be checked by sundial every day. So watchmakers turned their attention to décor and mechanical complications such as calendars and astronomical devices. The Clockmakers Company was founded in 1631 and the quality of British watch making improved steadily, then in 1675 the balance spring was developed and British watchmakers took over the role of world leaders from the French, (the German industry had been crippled by the Thirty-Years War).¹

At the time of writing this article there are eleven watches, that have all been the property of Oliver Cromwell or so they claim. In some cases the actual appearance of the watch confirms it is of unsound pedigree, while others are more intriguing. Items are worth more if they are said to belong to someone famous; if disreputable dealers have falsified documents and items in order to achieve this end, then these are deliberate fakes. Families' traditional stories are believed from one generation to the next but unfortunately cannot always be proved.

There is a watch in the Clockmakers' Museum at the Guildhall Library. A genuine mid-17th century silver watch made by Thomas Taylor of Holborn, which is engraved on the inner case with the inscription: *OLIVAR 1658 TO JOHN MILTON*. The idea of an inscription proving an association with two very famous people just does not ring true and so this is thought to be an impostor.²

An alarm watch which is thought to be a 19th century fake with a silver pierced case and wooden fish skin outer case, is inscribed on the dial 'Olliver Cromwell 1648'. It was said to have been made by Bockel a Dutchman who only worked up until 1630.

There is another watch, which bears an inscription and belongs to the British Museum though it is not on permanent exhibition. When the watch belonged to Dame Harriet Fellows she allowed it to be exhibited in 1862 at the South Kensington Museum now the Victoria and Albert Museum. I was

CROMWELL'S WATCH: SOMEWHERE IN TIME

lucky enough to hold this watch and confirm it is not of a high quality and the inscription is very amateurish. In the catalogue from the exhibition it is described as a

Oval, silver-gilt watch, plain with pounced letters
O.C. and a sword in front, on the back –
"For God and the Commonwealth"
on the dial plate "A. Hooke 1661".³

The watch itself is correct for the period and looks as if it has been well used. The glass is missing from the lid and the watch has a very worn appearance. The makers name has been erased from the movement where it is usually located. This could be a sign that the watch was stolen at some point in its history; it might have been looted during the civil war. As the engraving is very amateurish it was probably undertaken by the owner out of respect for Cromwell and the Commonwealth and to signify his loyalty on its demise. Possibly T. Hooke was the owner and responsible for the engraving.

Dame Harriet Fellows bequeathed the T. Hooke watch to the British Museum in 1874 together with another Puritan watch. The movement of this silver watch dates from somewhere between 1620 to 1625 and was made by John Midnall of Fleet Street, Warden of the Clockmakers' Company in 1635. The case dates from about 1630 and therefore the movement and case are genuine and correct for the period. The watch is a nice little watch measuring 48mm length and 45mm wide (Length, 1⁷/₈ in; width, 1³/₄ in.), engraved with chapter numbers on the dial, which were originally filled with red engraver's wax. The watch is attached to a fob chain, which over the years has caused the most interest. The catalogue description reads:

Oliver Cromwell's watch

..... It is attached by three short silver curb chains to a small plate, on which the arms are engraved. To this plate are attached four short chains of a similar make for seals.

The crest of the Cromwell family was a demi lion holding a ring in the paw, but the Protector changed the ring for the handle of a tilting spear, as seen on the banner used at his funeral; this with the initials identifies it as the crest of Oliver Cromwell, and also the coat of arms.

There is every reason to suppose, from the appearance of the relic, that it was used by Cromwell, from 1625 until his death in 1658.⁴

It is interesting to note that when Sir Charles Fellows showed the watch to the Director of the British Museum at some point in the 1850s, the Director was unimpressed and wrote in his day journal 'I was unconvinced'. The Curator of watches at the British Museum showed me the watch and he felt it was a 19th century fake; the 'OC' initials seemed 19th century in style. There is a small triangular plate connecting the three chains to a hook, which attaches to the watch, and on this plate are the initials 'CF'; are these for Charles Fellows? But the real mystery is the whereabouts of the silver seals, which were supposed to be attached to the end of the chain. They were in the possession of descendants of the Cromwell family who gave permission to Fellows to take impressions from them. Both the seals and the impressions seemed to have disappeared.

There are four watches which have appeared in print but their present whereabouts are unknown; this could be because they either do not exist or would not stand up to close scrutiny. A watch by Jacob Collomby was attributed to Cromwell but there are only references to Collomby after 1660, therefore too late. There is a French watch made by Jacques Cartier in 1650 which appeared in *The Illustrated London News* of February 1850 and the *Antiquarian Gleanings in the north of England*, as an engraving, with a description stating it had a leather case with silver studs. It was a repeater, which struck the hour and had an alarm facility, and it was felt it was of a later date.⁵

In the December 1808 issue of the *Gentleman's Magazine* there are three drawings of a Puritan oval watch made by William Clay, a watchmaker who was working in London at King Street Westminster between 1652-80. In the publication there was a letter:

Nov. 4

Mr Urban

I send you three views (fig. 8, 9 and 10), of a Watch formerly belonging to Oliver Cromwell, which he took out of his fob at the siege of Clonmell, and presented to the ancestor of the present Colonel Bagwell, whose it now is. The name of the maker, William Clay, is engraved on the work within-side. The outer, or golden circle, indicating the day of the month, revolves

one division every 24 hours; whereby the number of the day is opposed to the index hand above.

P.Q.⁶

The campaign in Ireland had proved to be both a difficult and controversial event in Cromwell's military career; it was frustrating for someone who had been so successful up until that point. In May 1650 Clonmell was stormed in order to end the siege, but for Cromwell it was a disaster, culminating in the death of somewhere in the region of 2,500 Parliamentary soldiers. This catastrophe does not seem to be something that someone would want to mark by presenting an officer with a watch.

Also to add insult to injury the Irish Commander Hugh O'Neil and his army had fled in the night and therefore Cromwell had been duped when the articles of surrender had been signed. Cromwell obviously was happy to forget this episode and he does not appear to write about this siege or the watch.⁷ The watch is very similar to the watch which appears on the front cover; it would be correct for the period but unfortunately its present whereabouts is unknown.

The one which is the most far-fetched of the four is the Henry Harper watch. Harper only became an apprentice in July 1657 just a year before Cromwell's death and this particular silver watch with a plain inner case was engraved with the Protectoral and Royal arms combined – how bizarre!⁸

There is a watch that was part of the Sir Richard Tangye collection and a photograph of it appears in his catalogue, which he had privately printed in 1905. Sadly this watch was stolen from the showcase in the London Museum on 30 August 1926. This silver watch was made by Richard Barnes of Worcester and it is engraved with a view of the spires of Worcester Cathedral and rabbits. There are about five of his watches surviving and a fine example belongs to the Victoria and Albert museum; this one has a Biblical engraving of Nebuchadnezzar from Daniel chapter 3.⁹

The first half of the seventeenth century produced watches that were primarily to be worn as jewellery; decoratively around the neck or hanging from a girdle, (plain case watches were carried in a pocket).¹⁰ Watch makers like Barnes would make the mechanism and then purchase fine cases probably from Blackfriars where Frenchmen, especially Huguenots, plied their trade.

The Tangye watch was apparently given to the Prince Regent, George IV on 24 June 1816 by Barnard Attenhoffer from Zurzach.¹¹ There is not any provenance to prove Cromwell owned this watch and I think it would be strange that the Prince Regent would want such an article.

There is a photograph in Tristram Hunt's book *The English Civil War at First Hand* of a watch in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. William Bragge who had graduated from New College Oxford in 1797 presented it to the museum in 1824. The Ashmolean catalogue describes the watch as follows.

An oval shaped silver watch with solid dial, which belonged to Oliver Cromwell. It was left to the donor by Capt. Isaac Schomberg, R.N. who had it from his father, Dr Schomberg, a physician of Reading, who acquired it about the middle of the last century, and had a memorandum of the hands through which it had passed since it belonged to the Protector.¹²

The key words are 'had a memorandum' for by the time the catalogue was published in 1836 the memorandum had disappeared. The watch is French and the movement is signed 'Timothé Hubert à Rouen' and probably dates from the 1640s. The cast silver-gilt case is designed to look like a pineapple and the dial centre has an engraved landscape scene, therefore it has the appearance of a lady's watch. It is highly unlikely to be Cromwell's watch, but an interesting example of its time.

The eleventh watch is the one made by a member of the Blacksmiths Company, Robert Grinkin junior who worked in Fleet Street and became one of the first Free brothers when the Clockmakers' Company was founded in 1632. During the 1640s he held various levels of Warden and finally became Master in 1648, 1649 and 1654. His father Robert Grinkin senior was also a watchmaker and on his death he inherited his tools in 1626. Grinkin junior made the watch that appears on the front of this edition of *Cromwelliana* somewhere between 1630-1640; it is a gold 'Puritan' verge watch with date indicator correct for the period.

This gold watch is very rare as most Puritan watches tend to be silver and even Samuel Pepys writes in his diary of 1665 about his 'very neat Silver watch' and 'a good and brave piece it is'.¹³ The watch is also unusual, as it does not have soldered joints between the back and the band of the body, it is formed by beating. It has a gilt-brass dial with a thin overlaid plate of gold on the outside. The outer rotating silver ring is engraved 1-31 for the date

indicated by an engraved human hand at the top. There is a gold chapter ring with hours I-XII in black and arrowhead half hour marks. The hour hand is of blued-steel.

The watch has been refurbished by the British Museum and it is on exhibition in the Clocks and Watches gallery. Of all the watches this one has the best provenance for claiming to be Cromwell's watch. Sir Robert Rich presented this watch and a portrait of Oliver Cromwell to the British Museum in 1786, long before it became popular to claim to have a Cromwell watch. Cromwell had presented the watch according to family tradition to Colonel Nathaniel Rich. Cromwell had a close association with the Rich family: not only did his daughter Francis marry Robert Rich; his four sons attended the Felsted school in Essex founded by Sir Richard Rich in 1564. Cromwell had very strong ties to Puritan Essex: his mother was born in Little Stamburgh, his father-in-law had property in Felsted; his aunt Joan married into the Barrington family who were prominent gentry and magistrates.¹⁴ It is quite possible that Cromwell had a watch and a plain Puritan type would fit in with his plain tastes and his interest and support of the arts and sciences.

Notes.

1. Baillie, G.H., *Watches their History, Decoration and Mechanism* (N.A.G. Press, 1979), 90.
2. Sir George White Bt., F.S.A., Consultant Keeper of the Clockmakers' Museum, does not believe the inscription is genuine, though the watch is of the right period and 'lovely'. Thomas Taylor Senior was apprenticed 1638, free of Clockmakers' Company 1646 and died 1684.
3. Robinson, J.C., (ed) catalogue: *Works of Art of the Mediaeval, Renaissance and more recent periods*, on loan at the South Kensington Museum (Victoria and Albert Museum) June 1862. W. Chaffers, FSA wrote the section 35 on Clocks and Watches.
The name on the dial plate reads *T. Hooke 1661* and not *A. Hooke 1661*.
4. Robinson, J.C., (ed) catalogue: *Works of Art of the Mediaeval, Renaissance and more recent periods*.
5. There was a Jacques Cartier working in London between 1635-80.
6. British Library, *The Gentleman's Magazine* (December 1808), 1074.
7. Abbott, W.C., (ed) *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (Oxford, 1988), Vol. II, 245-253. Cromwell spent a majority of the time involved

in negotiations with Royalists who wished to give up fighting and all that remains are safe passes issued to various Royalists.

8. This watch was supposed to have been given to Cromwell's daughter Bridget and then ended up at the Schloss Museum in Berlin. Henry Harper's watch-making ability was brought into question when in 1688 the Lord Mayor's Court ruled that some of his watch chains were of inferior quality.
9. Hayward, J.F., *English Watches* (Victoria and Albert Museum HMSO, 1969).
10. Baillie, *Watches*, 90.
11. Downing, W., (ed) *The Cromwellian Collection of MSS., Miniatures, Medals &c, in the possession of Sir Richard Tangye*. (Privately Printed, 1905), 129.
12. Ashmolean Museum Catalogue (1836), 140, No.377.
13. Latham, R. and Matthews, W., (eds) *The Diary of Samuel Pepys* (HarperCollins, 2000), Vol. VI, 83, 100.
14. Gaunt, P., *The Cromwellian Gazetteer* (Sutton, 1987), 54.

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by Dr David Farr

Major-General John Lambert has long been recognised as one of the more culturally, by traditional criteria, and intellectually aware of those military men that came to be the dominant influences in Cromwellian England. In terms of scale most notable was Lambert's role in the formation of Durham College. Although not in total control of the project, Lambert was very much the guiding influence in the fulfilment of the long held desire of northerners for their own college with direct input at every stage of the college's foundation.¹ Lambert also employed the artist Baptist Gaspar. Their relationship may well have extended to the formation of a collection to be housed at Lambert's mansion, Wimbledon House.² This in itself was, in part, a further expression of his wider activity, as the extensive gardens were where Lambert aimed to pursue one of his other main interests. In the seventeenth century botany was seen more directly as a part of a 'cultural life'. Bacon, in *Of Gardens*, saw botany as 'the purest of human pleasures', and generally the relationship between man and the natural world was one of his favourite topics.³ Alongside his interest in such a wide variety of areas Lambert, as befitted someone of some education, clearly read.⁴

While Professor John Morrill has described Cromwell as 'not bookish' what we know of Lambert would indicate that he was. For Cromwell the only evidence we have for a book that he read, apart from his bible, is for Raleigh's *History of the World*.⁵ It is actually possible for Lambert, unlike for most of his contemporaries, to isolate quite a number of the works he read, or at least consulted. There are direct references to a few books that Lambert read before 1660 but, most notably, the survival of a 1667 book list from his twenty-four year imprisonment links Lambert with a substantial number of other works.⁶ However despite the apparent potential of this evidence Dr Peter Gaunt's warning, concerning speculation about Cromwell's early life, that 'Of necessity this psychological approach to history and to long-dead figures is speculative and often inconclusive' holds just as much truth for any attempt to draw conclusions from their probable reading material. I would argue, however, that despite the ambiguities of such evidence and the hazards of making any definite statements regarding the influence of reading certain material, the evidence of his reading, put firmly in the context of what else we know about him, allows us to add, or at least suggest, another layer to our picture of Lambert.

I

There are specific examples, which are clearly documented, of Lambert's reading material, even before the 1667 list of books. Lambert's list of books from 1667 was found in the 1640 edition of Francis Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*. Notable about this specific book is the fact that Lambert has signed it on the flyleaf, as well as adding the date, 1649, presumably when he got the book. Another example of a book that has been signed by Lambert, again no doubt as a sign of ownership, was Jacob Boehme's *XL Questions Concerning the Soule* (1647), now housed in Cambridge University Library.⁷ Unfortunately Lambert did not enter the date he acquired this work. We can presume that even if he did not read them in detail Lambert, at the very least, consulted both of these works. In 1649 the astronomer Jeremiah Shakerley dedicated his work, *The Anatomy of Urania Practice* to his 'worthy patron' Lambert.⁸ It is likely that Lambert read this work given what we know of another book dedicated to him.

In late 1653, just after Lambert had established Cromwell as Lord Protector under the powers outlined in the Major-General's written constitution, the Instrument of Government, through what amounted to a military coup, an associate of Lambert, John Webster, dedicated his *Advancement of Learning* to Lambert.⁹ Lambert was noted as having approved this work in manuscript. In the dedication to the work Webster commented on what he saw as Lambert's role as an instrument of religious toleration. Webster also noted that Lambert was ideally placed to promote the advancement of learning as he regarded him as

Having experimental knowledge and trial, not onely of your Honours Abilities that way, but also of your sincere affection and unparalleled love to Learning, and to all those that are lover and promoters thereof;...¹⁰

In some ways Webster's faith was partly borne out by Lambert's role in the formation of the first university outside of Oxford and Cambridge at Durham in 1657. Given the fact that Lambert had consulted Webster's work in manuscript it is very possible he did the same with one of Webster's other works from 1653, *The Saint's Guide*.

Indeed such an interpretation is suggested by the fact that this work, focused on religious toleration, had some comments that were mirrored quite closely by Clause XXXVII, the central religious expression of Lambert's written constitution, The Instrument of Government.¹¹ It is very

II

possible that Lambert consulted John Webster when drafting the Instrument. While Lambert retreated to Yorkshire from about mid-October to 19 November 1653, probably to finalise his draft of the written constitution, Webster was preaching with Erbery at Lombard Street, London. Yet the Instrument was probably in gestation from July 1653 and even in December it was still subject to redrafting. As such there were many opportunities for the two to discuss their apparent similar ideas about religion and the state.¹²

Webster was a fellow Yorkshireman who had also served in the Northern Army. Born in Thornton, Craven, Webster became, in 1634, the curate of Kildwick-in-Craven, formerly the base of the Grindletonian Roger Brearley and close to Lambert's estate. Here Brearley's followers converted him. Webster was also noted for actually preaching in Grindleton itself. The religious influences of the Craven area, particularly Grindletonianism, on both Webster and Lambert have been seen as making them 'completely tolerant of all opinions'. From Grindletonianism Webster moved closer to Quaker views.¹³

John Webster had some influence on those who became Quakers and was associated closely with another religious radical William Erbery, whose works were also said to have influenced Quakers. Erbery himself had been chaplain of Lambert's regiment in 1647, although it is possible that he was with them for longer. Lambert's approval of Erbery is further suggested by his encouragement to the antinomian Elizabeth Avery to attend his preaching in Oxford. At this time Lambert was governor of the town and, although he was probably not present at Erbery and Kiffin's famous debate with some of the Oxford Presbyterians, the 'chairman' was Lambert's close political ally and deputy Lieutenant-Colonel Mark Grime, who was later to join the Quakers. While we have no direct evidence of Lambert's reading of any of Erbery's work we can presume that he heard Erbery preach to his regiment. One can speculate, however, that, given their clear link, and what we know of Lambert he might have discussed with Erbery his ideas or even his published and unpublished work. Lambert, like Erbery, saw the New Model Army as the instrument of God and, in part, his interaction with Erbery may have helped him come to this position.¹⁴ Lambert may even have returned to Erbery's work during Webster's later editing of Erbery's posthumous writings, published in 1658.¹⁵

Interestingly one of the few contemporaries of Lambert, for whom we have very extensive evidence of their reading, is John Webster. This comes through the survival of evidence highlighting 1501 items that formed part of his 'library'. As with Lambert Webster undoubtedly had more books during the 1650s. As Elmer has pointed out Webster, in his *Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft*, referred to the loss of some of his books and papers in 1658, confiscated as part of an investigation into his activities. It says much for the relationship between the two men that Webster felt he was able to turn to Lambert for help.¹⁶ In the post Restoration period Webster's main 'sponsor' was one of Lambert's kin the naturalist Martin Lister.¹⁷

The record of Webster's books by Elmer indicates that there were a few specific works, such as More's *Conjectura Cabbalistica* and Browne's *Pseudodoxia epidemica*, as well as authors, Bacon, Boehme, Shakerley, de Groot, Ross and Daille for example, that Lambert had at some point. While nothing definite can be drawn from this, and some would appear on the 'reading lists' of most educated people of the time, if we were fortunate to have such documents, it is, nevertheless, of some interest to speculate as to whether, as part of their relationship, Lambert and Webster did discuss or correspond on the works and authors that they had in common, as well as others.

III

We have other more direct evidence from Lambert's own words of what else he read before 1660. Writing from Scotland during the English invasion of 1650-1651 one of Lambert's agents, William Walker, reported to Adam Baynes that he had received a copy of *Theologia Germanica* that Lambert had no doubt requested.¹⁸ Given Baynes' own religious radicalism the work could even have been his own copy. It is unclear exactly who wrote *Theologia Germanica*. Luther, who had found it without title or author, published it in 1516. Attacked as unorthodox it was believed that the book 'became the breviary of certain communities of Waldenses and of other groups of dubious orthodoxy'. Calvin rejected the work because it was opposed to institutionalism. The work is essentially devotional in tone with a strong mystical influence. Hegler wrote that 'the book was seized upon everywhere in the camps of mysticism as a common rallying point for the mystic-spiritualistic minds of every persuasion, both for those who remained within the Church and for those who broke with it and sought to set up their own conventicles'. In terms of its mystical flavour *Theologia Germanica* has been seen as a major influence on the religious beliefs of

Henry Vane. This should be borne in mind in terms of the reports that Frances, Lambert's wife, was a religious follower of Vane and the political alliance between the two men in 1659.¹⁹

The *Theologia Germanica* was translated into English in 1648 by Giles Randall. It would be wise therefore to examine the work in the context of Randall and its reception in Lambert's time. Randall, described by McGregor, alongside Erbery, as a 'Seeker', was brought before the Star Chamber for preaching 'anabaptism', 'familism' and 'antinomianism'.²⁰ In 1644 he was expelled from the church for 'anabaptism'. Thomas Edwards wrote that

Randall, the antinomian and Familist says, those persons are ever learning and never coming to knowledge who say that perfection is not attainable in this life.... This man who preacheth most abominable Familisme is suffered in and about London publickly, twice on the Lord's Day, to draw hundreds of Godly people after him!

This is the same Thomas Edwards who elsewhere in his *Gangraena* attacked Erbery.²¹

At the time that Lambert received a copy of *Theologica Germanica* he also received a work by the Castilian Juan de Valdes.²² This was most probably the 1638 Oxford translation of Valdes' *Divine Considerations*, described by Samuel Rutherford in 1648 as one of the 'poysonable' sources of 'Familisme, Antinomianisme, and Enthusiasme'.²³ Valdes, who was forced out of Spain in 1530 and into exile in Naples, was essentially an Erasmian who sought to integrate justification by works and faith. These two works can be seen therefore in the context of Lambert's reading of Boehme and his relationship with Webster.

Like Randall the German mystic Jacob Boehme's work was said to have influenced Quakers.²⁴ Webster certainly approved of Boehme given the evidence we have from the part of his library that has survived and it is all too possible that Lambert's ownership of Boehme's *XL Questions Concerning the Soule* may have been through Webster's influence. As part of his plans for learning, outlined in his work, *The Advancement of Learning*, which was dedicated to Lambert, Webster, according to Elmer, gave 'pride of place in the new curriculum' to 'men such as Paracelsus, van Helmont, Jacob Boehme and Robert Fludd'.²⁵ Indeed Debus has argued that Webster's

'critique of traditional learning was closely modelled on Fludd's "Tractatus Apologeticus"'.²⁶

All of the religious works that, at the least, Lambert consulted before 1660 can be described as unorthodox in terms of their views and certainly fit with the open approach Lambert appears to have taken to the subject. As has been suggested such reading material must have, in part, influenced Lambert's own reaction to the Quaker movement, as well as his response to meeting such individuals as the antinomian Elizabeth Avery.

These seven examples of Lambert's reading before 1660 would tend, along with what else we know about him, to confirm that Lambert read quite widely, not only in terms of religion, but as the Bacon and Shakerley books suggest in general terms as well. These non-religious works, like those that appear on the 1667 list, not only reflect Lambert's interests but are also a reflection of the lack of demarcation between what we now have a tendency to regard as distinct disciplines.

Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* was essentially part of his revaluation of learning and his call for its restructuring. Bacon, in part, argued that progress was possible through the co-operation of intellectuals and the active development of areas of learning. As such Lambert's ownership of this book should be seen directly in the light of his relationship with Webster and his role in the formation of Durham College.²⁷

Shakerley's *Anatomy of Urania Practica* was an attack on Vincent Wing's treatment of the lunar theory in his *Urania Practica*. Nathan Pigholls' attorney brother who lived in London, approached Lambert to be a patron for Shakerley, although in part it might have been through a shared link to the astrologer William Lilly, before his relationship with Shakerley broke down in 1649.²⁸ Lambert's interest in this work clearly fits with the pattern of his involvement in a range of subjects, such as indicated by his correspondence during his imprisonment with regard to certain mathematical problems.

From Lambert's correspondence we also know that in the 1650s, because of his interest in gardening, Lambert used various books relating to botany, having consulted the library of Dr. William How, as well as the man himself. Dr. How had actually produced a survey of plants in England, *Phytologia Britannica*, which possibly Lambert also consulted.²⁹ Clearly regarded as something of an authority How wrote to Dr Thomas Browne in

1655, when he was also in contact with Lambert, about plants and gardens. Given the presence of Browne's *Treatise on Vulgar Errors* (1646) on Lambert's prison book list it is legitimate to ask if, possibly through How, there was any more direct connection between Lambert and Browne in the 1650s.³⁰

Lambert's interest in botany did bring him into contact with what, initially at least, seem the most unlikely of people for a Major-General at the heart of the Protectorate. In July 1655 Lambert secured a travel pass for the royalist Sir Thomas Hanmer who he was connected with through their mutual interest in botany.³¹ In 1656 Lambert was writing to the royalist Lord Christopher Hatton who at that time was in Paris. In his letter Lambert referred to How and specifically his 'indisposition'. How was to die in 1656. Lambert sought Hatton's aid in securing for him various plants. In doing so Lambert recommended that Hatton refer to two catalogues, one referred to as the Duke of Orleans' and the other Morin's,³² clearly two other 'works' that Lambert had knowledge of. This interest is reinforced by the presence of Parkinson's *Herbal* on the 1667 list. Interestingly the royalist Hatton was to be Lambert's prison governor on Guernsey at the time of the 1667 book list, raising more questions about the way Lambert got access to the material. As his governor Hatton had the authority to stop Lambert having access to the books that appeared on the list but it is very possible that given their 'relationship' he may have helped Lambert either bring some of these books into Guernsey, allowed him to receive those published after 1660, or even provided Lambert with the books from his own collection. Given what we now know of Lambert's aid to other royalists and Catholics during the 1650s and how they in turn aided Lambert during his imprisonment this obvious co-operative relationship between Hatton and Lambert should not surprise us.³³ Indeed in the 1650s when Lambert was writing to Hatton he was also using his position as an MP in the Second Protectorate Parliament to effectively sponsor an action for Hatton to enable him to turn his house in Holborn into tenements.³⁴ The nature of their relationship is only further complicated by the fact that during his imprisonment one of Lambert's daughters, Mary, married Hatton's second son, Charles.³⁵ As a final layer of mist in 1670 this Charles Hatton wrote to his brother, Christopher, about the apparent theft of some books from his and their father's collection, including works such as Bramhall's *Church of England Defended* (1659) and More's *Antidote against Atheism* (1653), which also appear on Lambert's book list. Charles Hatton's

general unreliability as a source does not help any attempt at interpretation of what this may mean.³⁶

No other reading material can be pinned down with any direct written evidence to support it. It can be taken for granted that Lambert read his Bible. Despite the 'secular' image of him presented by Dawson his original letters and what we can retrieve of his speeches have biblical references.³⁷ One of the bibles on the 1667 list, 'One great Bible' was possibly the Lambert 'family bible'. Speculation can naturally be taken further. It is likely that Lambert had at least some knowledge of one work he was supposed to consider and report on as part of a Councillor committee, Samuel Moreland's *History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piedmont and the late Bloody Massacre*.³⁸ In the same role Lambert was one of a committee who were charged with speaking to Sir Timothy Tyrell about the library of bishop Usher.³⁹ Given his relationship with Henry Vane at the time and key role in 'settlement' it is legitimate to ask whether Lambert read the latter's *A Healing Question?* Similarly, given his relationship with Adam Baynes, did Lambert read Harrington's *Oceana*, which Baynes' own words indicate he was familiar with? How many of the numerous satires from the period 1660-1662 that commented on him did Lambert read? Did he read Hobbes' *Behemoth* in which he was referred to? In *Academiarum Examen* Webster recommended Hobbes' work. Indeed Lambert's engagement with Hobbes' work may even have been at a completely different level. Hobbes was directly criticised for his part in the controversy with Bramhall by the religious radical Philip Tandy who Lambert had sponsored.⁴⁰ Yet if drawing conclusions, albeit provisional from some of Lambert's most probable reading is hazardous, such further speculation is in danger of leading further down an ever-winding path.

What can be suggested, is that the impression from the evidence of the books we know Lambert read, or at least consulted in some form, before 1660, of an active consideration of religious questions alongside a wide-ranging interest in a variety of other subjects, is merely confirmed by the content of Lambert's 1667 book list.

IV

While this document is simply a list in shorthand of books, not bearing Lambert's name or its purpose, there is enough evidence to surmise why it was written and, generally, the works that are referred to. The list itself was certainly accepted by Charles Firth (who among his many works on the period wrote the original *DNB* entry for Lambert) and Lambert's previous

biographer, William Harburt Dawson, as being Lambert's. Indeed when he published his biography of Lambert in 1938 it was Dawson who showed the list to Firth and helpfully included a plate of one side of the list in his book, as well as his own full transcription and indication of which works he felt the shorthand referred to. This indicates, as no doubt accepted by both men at the time, that the list is in writing very similar to Lambert's hand. For example the formation of letters such as the r, e and a, have all the hallmarks of Lambert's hand as indicated by a range of surviving letters,⁴¹ as does the fact that at the end of the list is written

Beside severall loose papers & Acts & proclamations were left some in the parlour & some in my roome Feb. 26th, 1666 [1667], with a booke of my Ladyes, Diodates Annotations. Monsieur Daille in Mr. Applebyes hands yet.⁴²

This was taken by Dawson to indicate that

The authenticity of the writing is attested by the closing words, which clearly refer to the house in Guernsey in which the exile [Lambert], his wife, and one or more of his children occasionally lived. It is probable that the document was written in Castle Cornet [Lambert's prison on Guernsey] after his return thither from that house, or on the island in the Plymouth Sound, to which he was removed later.⁴³

While I would not be as definite as Dawson in accepting the key fact that the list was inside the Bacon book, bearing Lambert's name, and clearly at one point belonged to Lambert, and would therefore indicate that the list was also probably his.

Given that the list is dated 1667 it is possible that it was compiled in relation to his being transferred back into closer confinement in Castle Cornet as a result of a perceived threat from the Dutch, or even the French. Lambert produced the list to indicate what books he owned and what should be brought to wherever he had been moved to.⁴⁴ It is probable that the list did represent his whole collection given that it is relatively extensive and he was, after all, a prisoner, rather than being merely his selection for those books that he wanted from a wider collection.

While Dawson printed some basic details to suggest which works the shorthand notes referred to, his analysis of the forty-six items that appear on the list was limited.⁴⁵

V

Dawson clearly had no intention of drawing any wider conclusions about his idea of Lambert through a more considered analysis of the list. In many ways he might have been wise to avoid doing so. It must be admitted that there are obviously real dangers in making substantive judgements based on a person's reading. Did Danton really use the works of Sade to 'excite himself to new acts of cruelty during the Terror'?⁴⁶ Even where we have more extensive evidence for Lambert's colleague Webster, Elmer has rightly struck a note of caution in his analysis of it.⁴⁷ The nature of a person's reading can be very misleading if used in isolation, or even with other criteria, to make substantive judgments about the person concerned or their views. Clearly people read different works for a variety of different reasons, from the most mundane to the most obscure. Every reader necessarily has different reactions to exactly the same words. It becomes their own 'text'. Little definite can be drawn without a commentary by the reader themselves and even then some literary theorists would have us believe that the 'reception' of the reader almost defies analysis. While Kevin Sharpe has indicated the positive approach historians should adapt to textual analysis within a historical framework, the lack of a 'Lambert text' occludes an attempt at a detailed 'response' based analysis of any of his reading.⁴⁸

Given the above provisos I still believe that some comments with regard to what evidence we have, can be helpful in providing more gloss to the character of Lambert. Cromwell's suggestion in 1650 to his eldest son, Richard, that he study Walter Raleigh's *History of the World* is not information to be disregarded.⁴⁹ It is however important that such provisional comments on Lambert's probable reading are set in the wider context of what we know about him and are recognised as supportive and suggestive rather than definitive statements.

VI

Most of the books on Lambert's 1667 list are of a religious nature. While this may just reflect the fact that most works printed at the time were based on religious themes, Lambert obviously did not have to read them. What is also clear however is that these books were very contemporary. For example the works by Sergeant, Tillotson, Stillingfleet and Whitby were all, to a degree, in response to each other. They were published between 1662

and 1666. Of the forty-six books on the list which can be dated, nine were published in the 1660s, seven in the 1650s and seven in the 1640s.

Of interest is the high number of Anglican apologia. While we do not know exactly when, or how, Lambert acquired these works, those published after 1660 were obviously acquired during his imprisonment. In part then they may represent a 'response to defeat'. Yet other authors on the list, published before 1660, could also be seen in this regard. Andrews, Bramhall, Fuller, Gauden, Hammond, Sanderson, Taylor, Tillotson and Ussher are all essentially 'Anglican'. It is of course very possible that Lambert also acquired these works after 1660 as part of this 'response to defeat'. It might be argued that the preponderance of such work was merely a reflection of what Lambert was allowed to read or what he could get access to or, possibly, what Hatton gave him out of his own collection. Yet it is very possible that some of these books were in Lambert's hands before 1660. Thus of interest is of course the possibility that Lambert was reading Hammond's *Power of the Keys* at the time of his drafting, alongside Cromwell's son in law, Henry Ireton, of the *Heads of the Proposals* and Hammond's attendance on Charles I. Such is a real possibility because of the very fact that the 1667 list was found in Lambert's copy of Bacon, which he dated 1649. Nevertheless without any real specific dating context for these works trying to draw detailed conclusions would be ill advised.

What can be suggested from the evidence of the works listed is that Lambert's interest in religious matters clearly extended into his imprisonment and that despite his confinement he was engaging with a current ongoing theological debate. Dawson commented that the list shows that Lambert was not a Catholic or an atheist. I would not be willing to take merely this list as evidence of this. Yet what the list does confirm is the different impression of Lambert that has been suggested since Dawson's work. The issue of Lambert's religious beliefs was barely touched upon in his work. It was regarded as having little, indeed, no real influence on Lambert's actions. Yet the list would indicate, alongside evidence presented elsewhere, that Lambert was very much a man of his time, rather than preconceptions of someone who could be fitted in with certain preconceptions derived from what was, essentially, Dawson's Whig interpretation of the seventeenth century. Religion was very much part of Lambert's view of the world and his reading of such work indicates that he had a direct engagement with some of the theological disputes of the time, clearly before and after 1660.⁵⁰

I would tentatively suggest that if we accept the list as an indication of his reading the nature of the works on it are partly as a result of his reflecting on his defeat. He did not have to read them and they might indicate his need to accept his defeat, for Lambert certainly appears to have become resigned to his fate. There is no evidence, after 1662, of Lambert being a troublesome prisoner, indeed, quite the contrary.⁵¹ Yet in part such works could also be taken as a sign of his latitudinarian outlook. Even during the height of his power and when he was reading such radical work as Boehme Lambert had maintained links with those of orthodox and even Catholic faith. This is sometimes lost because of the 'image' of Lambert the 'military man'.⁵²

The non-religious work on the list covers many of the areas we would expect Lambert to have an interest in. For military, history, law and gardening were all covered by, for example, such works as *Theatrum Botanicum* (1640) by James I's botanist John Parkinson, Edward Coke's *Institutes*, Plutarch's *Lives*, Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities*, Hugo Grotius' *De jure belli et pacis* (1625), Bacon's *Henry VII* and William Bariff's *Military Discipline*. Again the influence of such work is difficult to ascertain but there are clear traces of Grotius' work in the political ideas of Ireton and Lambert, the chief political theorists of the revolutionary New Model during 1647 to 1649.⁵³

VII

While it would be wise to reflect on the comment of Lambert's 'associate' Philip Tandy to Hobbes, 'Excuse mee in Every Thing which you suspect mee in, I am a riddle, and you may bee mistaken in mee', some degree of speculation must be a necessary part of reflecting on the past.⁵⁴ Although it would be clearly ridiculous to state that Lambert from his reading of Boehme was a Behemist it is apparent that, at the very least, he was interested in such issues and it must have shaped his response to, for example, Quakerism. Similarly the list of 1667 indicates at least some kind of engagement by Lambert with religious debates. The list can tell us more than simply what Lambert read. Its very survival indicates that the nature of his imprisonment may not have been as harsh as we would commonly perceive. It reinforces the information we have of Lambert being allowed some latitude during his time on Guemsey, in particular being allowed to take a house with his wife and some of his children. Thus for Lambert, a prisoner still with some status and means the deprivations of loss of liberty could, to a degree, be eased. It reinforces the impression we have of a good

relationship between Lambert and his governor Lord Hatton. Certainly as implied already one interpretation of the list may simply be the books that Lambert had from Hatton. One of the most tantalising questions the list of 1667 raises is, however, why, given his intellect and diverse reading matter, did Lambert, in twenty-four years, not write something himself. If his reading did, in part, mark a reflection on defeat the absence of a recantation or apology might suggest that he remained true to what he saw as the fundamentals of the 'cause'. He may have been sufficiently cowed not to risk setting his thoughts or recollections to paper. More probable is that what he might have produced may, unfortunately, have been simply lost to us. Ultimately Lambert's 'reading' may simply be taken as yet another example of the apparent contradictory elements of his character and response to the 'English Revolution' of 1640-60. The radical and revolutionary set aside the moderate and reformist reading is mirrored throughout other aspects of Lambert's life and accounts for much of our, as well as his contemporaries', difficulties in truly grasping what kind of man Lambert was.

Notes.

1. C. Webster, *The Great Instauration. Science, Medicine and Reform 1626-1660*, (1975); D. Farr, 'The Military and Political Career of Major-General John Lambert 1619-57', Cambridge PhD, (1996).
2. D. Farr, 'John Lambert and the Roots of an Early Modern Collection', *Cromwelliana*, (2002).
3. J. Pitcher, (ed.), *Francis Bacon. The Essays*, (1985), p. 197.
4. D. Farr, 'The Education of Major-General John Lambert', *Cromwelliana*, (2000).
5. J. Morrill, (ed.), *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution*, (1990), pp. 8-9. Why Cromwell chose to recommend this work to his eldest son Richard is not known. J.C. Davis refers to it as a work as a conventional choice by the 1650s; see J.C. Davis in Morrill, *Oliver Cromwell*, p. 183. There can be little doubt that for Cromwell the Bible was the only book that needed to be studied.
6. D. Farr, 'New Information with Regard to the Imprisonment of Major-General John Lambert, 1662-1684', *Cromwelliana*, (1998).
7. Cambridge University Library, Syn.7.64.145 no.1.
8. J. Shakerley, *The Anatomy of Urania Practica*, (1649).
9. J. Webster, *Academiarum Examen*, (1653), dedication; D. Farr, 'The Quakers and the Religious Identity of Major-General John Lambert', *Journal of the Friends Historical Society*, 59:1, (2000).

10. Webster, *Academicorum Examen*, dedication.
11. J. Webster, *The Saints Guide*, (1653). For the Instrument of Government see, S.R. Gardiner, (ed.), *Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution, 1625-1660*, (1980).
12. See D. Farr, *John Lambert, Parliamentary Soldier and Cromwellian Major-General, 1619-84*, (2003); P. Gaunt, 'Drafting the Instrument of Government, 1653-4: A Reappraisal', *Parliamentary History*, 8:1, (1989); T. Liu, *Puritan London. A Study of Religion and Society in the City Parishes*, (1986), pp. 111-12.
13. R. Marchant, *The Puritans and the Church Courts in the Diocese of York 1560-1642* (1960), pp. 289-90
14. D. Farr, *John Lambert*, p. 174; According to McGregor one of the other people Erbery had some influence on was Cromwell's daughter Elizabeth. J.F. McGregor and B. Reay, (eds.), *Radical Religion in the English Revolution*, (1984), p. 127.
15. P. Elmer, *The Library of Dr John Webster: The Making of a Seventeenth Century Radical*, (Medical History Supplement no.6, (1986)), p. 31. It seems very unlikely that the tribute to Erbery produced in 1654 which was signed 'J.L.' was produced by Lambert, see B.L., E1472(2), *A Small Mite, In Memory of the late deceased (yet still living, and never to be forgotten) Mr William Erbery*, (20 April, 1654).
16. Elmer, *Webster*, p. 30.
17. Elmer, *Webster*, pp. 8, 17.
18. B.L., Add Mss 21426 fol. 349.
19. The paragraphs on Theologia Germanica are based on, *Theologia Germanica*, (1950), from which the Hegler quote is taken; Jones, *Spiritual Reformers*, C. Kirchberger, *A Catalogue of Bodleian Manuscripts Relating to Mystical Theology*, (1949); Bodleian Library, Rawlinson Mss C610; J.M. Patrick, 'The Careers and Opinions of Hugh Peters and Sir Henry Vane, the Younger', Oxford, B.Litt., (1936), p. 136.
20. McGregor and Reay, *Radical Religion*, p. 127.
21. T. Edwards, *Gangraena*, (1646), pp. 77-8, 89-90, 250.
22. B.L., Add Mss 21426 fol. 349.
23. R.M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th & 17th Centuries*, (1914), p. 238.
24. B. Reay, 'The Quakers, 1659 and the Restoration of Monarchy', *History*, 63, (1978), p. 16.
25. Elmer, *Webster*, p. 5.
26. A.G. Debus, *Science and Education in the Seventeenth Century, the Webster-Ward Debate*, (1970), p. 42.

27. However, and this should stand as an example of the dangers of drawing any definitive conclusions from reading material, Bacon was also used by Webster's enemies in their attack on him. Also in his work Bacon attacked astrology whereas Lambert approached William Lilly, at least twice, as one of the foremost astrologers of the day.
28. A. Chapman, *Jeremy Shakerley: Astronomy, Astrology and Patronage in Civil War Lancashire*, (privately printed by the author).
29. W. How, *Phytologia Britannica*, (1650).
30. B.L., Sloane 1911-15 fol. 84.
31. *Cal.S.P.Dom.*, (1656), p. 578.
32. B.L., Add Mss 29569 fol. 212.
33. D. Farr, 'Kin, cash, Catholics and Cavaliers: the Financial Management of Major-General John Lambert', *Historical Research*, 74:183, (2001).
34. T. Burton, *Diary*, 4 vols., (1828), II, p. 182. It appears to be merely coincidence that Lambert's close ally Captain Adam Baynes acquired Holdenby House which had originally belonged to Hatton before he passed it on to James I in 1608 because of debts from his father, see R.W. Hoyle, (ed.), *The Estates of the Crown, 1558-1640*, (1992), p. 84.
35. Farr, 'New Information', p. 45.
36. B.L., Add Mss 29571 fol. 100.
37. See for example Burton, I, pp. 240-41.
38. *Cal.S.P.Domestic*, (1657), p. 255
39. *Cal.S.P.Domestic*, (1656), p. 23.
40. B.L., Add Mss 32553 fol. 1.
41. For a comparison see the list reproduced between pages 432-433, W.H. Dawson, *Cromwell's Understudy. The Life and Times of Major General John Lambert*, (1938), and a selection of Lambert's letters in the British Library, see for example, B.L., Add Mss 21417 fols. 49, 69, 97, 187; 21418 fol. 55; 21426 fols. 184-92.
42. Dawson, p. 428.
43. Dawson, p. 425.
44. I do not see how the list could have been written, as Dawson stated, 'on the island in the Plymouth Sound' when it is dated 1667 and Lambert was not moved there until 'later', i.e. 1670.
45. Dawson, p. 428
46. D. Thomas, *The Marquis de Sade*, (1992). I would like to thank Roger Gardiner for this reference.

47. Elmer, *Webster*, p. 16.
48. K. Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions. The Politics of Reading in Early Modern England*, (2000), pp. 15-6, 19, 21, 27.
For the 'literary' perspective and the pitfalls of an overinterpretation of the influence of reading matter see for example, J.L. Lowes, *The Road to Xanadu. A Study in the Ways of the Imagination*, (1978). For the problems of the reception of texts by the reader see as examples, P. Macherey, 'The Text Says What it Does Not Say', and E.D. Hirsch, 'The Babel of Interpretations', both in D. Walder, (ed.), *Literature in the Modern World. Critical Essays and Documents*, (1990), W. Iser, 'The Reading process: a phenomenological approach', in D. Lodge, (ed.), *Modern Criticism and Theory. A Reader*, (1988). I would like to thank Mike Mulligan for referring me to these 'literary' works.
49. P. Gaunt, *Oliver Cromwell*, (1998), pp. 222, 226.
50. Farr, *Lambert*.
51. After his initial escape from the Tower of London in 1660 to stage a last desperate attempt at preventing the restoration of Charles II by assembling troops at Edgemoor Lambert consulted the astrologer William Lilly as to whether he should try once again to get out of his new imprisonment in the Tower. Yet by 1663 it was reported that Lambert deliberately refused the liberty allowed him in fear of the consequences of possibly being implicated in rumours of plots, Farr, *Lambert*, p. 221.
52. Farr, 'Kin'.
53. J.L. Dean, 'Henry Ireton, the Mosaic Law, and Morality in English Civil Politics from April 1646 to May 1649, Cambridge PhD, (1990).
54. B.L, Add Mss 32553 fol. 3

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by Jane A Mills

The Dorset town of Lyme Regis is situated on the south coast on the border between Devon and Dorset, though the inhabitants prefer to be part of Devon. The town is world famous for its fossils; this is because the town stands on a soft sedimentary rock called Blue Lias formed in the Jurassic Period about 180 million years ago. There have been settlements in the area since the Iron Age and excavations have unearthed a Romano-British farm two miles away at Holcombe, and a Roman villa at Harcombe. The Romans called the town *Lym Supra Mare*, Lym means torrent of water. In 774 the Abbott of Sherborne received a gift of land on the mouth of the river Lym from Cynewulf, King of Wessex. On this site a salt works was set up and the monks started to distil salt water from the sea. In the Domesday Book it is recorded as being made up of three manors with a mill and twenty-seven salt workers. In 1075 Lyme ceased to be part of the Diocese of Sherborne when the Bishop moved to Old Sarum.

It was probably during the reign of Henry III that the Cobb was built of timber and stone; as well as a harbour for the ships, it is a breakwater to protect the town from the great storms. The town had important trading links with France exporting wool and importing wine long before 1284, when King Edward I granted Lyme a Royal Charter giving the town the right to form a Guild and send two members to Parliament. The Charter also gave the town a new name Lyme Regis and recognition as one of the major ports in Britain. In 1328 the Cobb was the subject of a writ because of decay and a toll was granted on all merchandise for five years for the repair work.¹

Lyme was at its economic best between 1500 and 1700 with Lyme ships sailing to Newfoundland to collect cod, which they then took to Portugal and Spain, returning with cargo such as wines, oranges and lemons. Their trading routes took them to the West Indies, Americas and Africa for gold and ivory. The wealthy town Burgesses contributed to the defeat of the Armada in 1588 by sending ships to join the English fleet though there are plenty of documents to confirm they begrudged paying the lion's share of the Armada levy for the area.

Lyme Regis was the birthplace of Sir George Somers (1554-1610) famous as the discoverer of the Bermudas, and the inspiration for Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*. He was founder member of the London or South Virginia Company and it was while commanding a fleet of nine vessels to take

settlers to the colony that his ship the *Sea Venture* was caught in a hurricane and wrecked off the Bermudas on 25 July 1609. Somers and other survivors were on the islands for ten months and managed to build two small boats and reached James Town Virginia on 23 May 1610.

Somers' early career was as a buccaneer in the company of Sir Walter Raleigh. He commanded a ship, which was part of the fleet which attacked the Spanish fleet in Kinsal harbour in 1601. He was knighted in 1603, was elected M.P. for Lyme Regis 1603-4 and Mayor in 1605. He died on 9 November 1610 in the Bermudas; his heart is buried in the town of St George and his body was brought back to England and buried in the church of Whitchurch Dorset. In 1996 Lyme Regis became twinned with the town of St. George's Bermuda.

Lyme Regis had been a Puritan stronghold since well before the outbreak of the Civil War. During the 1620s and 1630s there was an influx of inhabitants due to the anti-Royalist Vicar John Geare; his successor Ames Short continued this strong stand throughout the 1650s and well after the Restoration of 1660. So it was not surprising that during the Civil War the Parliamentary garrison at Lyme Regis valiantly maintained their strength, even though the surrounding area was Royalist territory and remained so until the end of 1645 campaigning season, when parliament eventually made in-roads to the area.

Geographically Dorset was vitally important due to its close proximity to the French Coast. The Royalists sought to secure the coastal towns such as Lyme Regis as this would provide them with a means of communicating with their supply source in France. 1643 saw the Parliamentary defeat at Roundway Down, the surrender of Bristol, Lord Carnarvon taking the surrender of Dorchester, Weymouth and Portland, and Exeter capitulating to Prince Maurice. At the end of the campaigning season the only Parliamentary strongholds left in the West were Plymouth, Poole and Lyme Regis.

Since the beginning of the war the Lyme garrison had been active in sending out raiding parties to attack the Royalist held positions in the West Country, this had obviously annoyed the King who called it a 'rebellious town'.² The siege of Plymouth was proving to be a waste of men and resources, the Royalists abandoned it in December and Prince Maurice moved his army into winter quarters. It was Charles' decision at the commencement of the new campaigning season to concentrate on breaking

Lyme; he therefore sent Prince Maurice and his army of 6,000 men to claim this prize, which would enable them to successfully reduce Plymouth.

When Prince Maurice arrived on 20 April 1644, he thought the small garrison of 1,000 men would be easily broken, but he had not realised that the garrison and the town (about 3,000 inhabitants), were zealous Puritans who were united in their belief and encouraged by twenty-five Puritan preachers to keep fighting and hold the town for the Parliamentary cause.³ The women played a very important part in the siege by helping to dig the defensive line. They dressed as men so the Royalists would think the garrison was larger; as well as carrying food and ammunition to the front line many were active in the fighting. Their hard work was recorded in the poem *Joanereidos* written by James Strong, a Puritan preacher.⁴

The town was small and not well fortified; it had only four forts on the landside and five guns guarding the Cobb. The Royalist army was made up of Cornish, Devonshire, Irish, French and press-ganged regiments with a poor leader recovering from influenza. Whereas the Parliamentarians were united in their cause and in their midst they had the experienced Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Blake who had been present at the siege of Bristol where he gained a reputation as a determined fighter. Though he was a subordinate officer he seemed to be in command at Lyme.

...Generall Blacke (Robert Blake) who in the defending of Taunton and Lime for the Parliament did through his Stubborn sort of valour defend it the most opiniastrement (stubbornly) that ever any man did anything...⁵

It was his idea to shorten the perimeter to make it easier for the small garrison to defend. Most of the houses outside the defences were cleared so as to stop Royalists using them as garrisons.

The town had the advantage of the sea, Parliamentary ships were able to bring supplies and take correspondence to the Committee of Both Kingdoms. This proved to be vital when Maurice attacked the supply barges moored in the Cobb, setting them alight; all seemed lost.⁶ Two days later on 23 May the Lord High Admiral Warwick arrived in his flagship the *James* from Plymouth with six other ships carrying supplies and munitions. He put ashore 300 seamen to strengthen the garrison and Hugh Peters preached a thanksgiving sermon.⁷ Warwick then sailed towards Charmouth in order to draw the Royalist troops eastward away from the town, but this

only worked temporarily and the heavy bombardment continued. In June he sent word to the Committee of Both Kingdoms that he would stay at Lyme and use his ship to help defend the town but Vice-Admiral Batten and the rest of the fleet would resume their duties elsewhere.⁸

Essex's army were on their way to relieve the town; they completed the 110 miles in seven days, causing the Royalists to depart at 2 a.m on the morning of 15 June, leaving 2000 dead according to Warwick; this might be an exaggeration, but the Royalists did state that they had had higher losses than at Exeter or Bristol. Lyme's losses were only 120, which were probably due to the properties being very dense with vast merchant cellars; therefore the inhabitants were able to shelter from the bombardment and raids. Unfortunately when a fire broke out it did not stay in isolation for long and spread quickly, and during one incident twenty-three houses were destroyed or gutted.

Though Lyme had survived the siege their problems were not over. During the winter Goring was very active in Devon and Dorset, and Taunton was put under siege. The Lyme garrison renewed their operations of clearing outlying houses and carrying out raids on nearby royalist occupied towns, in order to keep the communication lines clear between Taunton and Lyme, the only two Parliamentarian garrisons left in the area. The spring and summer of 1645 saw the establishment of the Clubman association, a movement of war weary irregular troops whose aim was to clear the war from their area. In July they made a violent attack on the Lyme garrison.

Lyme spent £17,458 to keep the garrison going during the siege, and in return they lost property, ships and a lucrative trade. In compensation Parliament ordered collections in all parish churches for the relief of Lyme. Lord Paulett was ordered to pay £200 per annum and give 2,000 oaks from his woods to build new houses and ships for the town.⁹

Cromwell appointed his brother-in-law John Desborough, husband of Jane Cromwell, as the Major-General for the West. He was one of the oldest Major-generals and had been very active during the Civil War starting as quarter-master in his brother-in-law's regiment, and became a captain of horse in the New Model Army. He had played an important part as a Cavalry Commander at the storming of Bristol and the battle of Langport in 1645. He was a devoutly religious radical man who believed in the Republic, and he dealt severely with anyone who opposed the regime. In 1656 he proposed the introduction of a bill to make the decimation tax

permanent. He believed that 'It was blows not fair words, that settled and must settle the peace of England'.¹⁰ He spent a lot of time away in London due to the illness of his wife and other commitments.

Thomas Coram was born here in 1668. He went to Massachusetts and worked for ten years building ships in Boston and Taunton. He returned to England in debt, but continued to work to further settlement in America. It was while he was in America that he worked to try help the native peoples whom he felt were treated unjustly. He is famous as a believer in Women's Rights and equal opportunities for girls and it was with the support of twenty-one aristocratic women that he was awarded a Royal Charter to establish the Foundling Hospital in 1739, the first major orphanage for the care and education of abandoned children. The hospital was built in Lambs Conduit Fields, London, and the first governors of the hospital were prominent artists such as Hogarth, Gainsborough, Reynolds and Roubiliac. Their works were displayed and it became London's first art gallery. Handel left the rights of his major work the *Messiah* to the hospital and he held fund-raising concerts in the chapel where Coram's body was laid to rest in 1751.

On 10 June 1685 the Duke of Monmouth together with 84 companions landed on the beach west of the Cobb (now known as Monmouth Beach). He chose Lyme as it still maintained the strong anti-Catholic position it had held during the 1644 siege, and also it was very close to Taunton, which was the main location of the proposed uprising. On entering the town he found that the militia had fled and the town was pleased to welcome him as the saviour of the Protestant cause.

...At his landing, he published a Declaration, charging his Majesty with usurpation and several horrid crimes, on pretence of his own title, and offering to call a free Parliament. This declaration was ordered to be burnt by the hangman, the Duke proclaimed a traitor, and a reward of £5000 to any who should kill him.¹¹

He raised his standard in a field just outside the town and in a few days his force swelled to over 3,000 divided into five regiments.

Lyme, although a little place,
I think it wondrous pretty,
If 'tis my fate to wear a crown,
I'll make of it a city.¹²

The Old Monmouth hotel was established in 1630 as a Coaching Inn on nearly an acre, and it was here that Lord Grey and the cavalry lodged during their stay in Lyme. Though Grey commanded the cavalry at the battle of Sedgemoor he was pardoned for his part in the rebellion.

Monmouth and his army left Lyme on 15 June at 10 a.m. on his way to Taunton where he was proclaimed King on 20 June. The next day he departed with an army of 7,000 on route to Bridgwater and the battle of Sedgemoor, which was fought on 5 July.

Came news of Monmouth's utter defeat, and the next day of his being taken by Sir William Portman and Lord Lumley with the militia of their counties... Monmouth had gone sixteen miles on foot, changing his habit for a poor coat, and was found by Lord Lumley in a dry ditch covered with fern-brakes, ...his beard being grown so long and so gray as hardly to be known, ... The £5000 to be given to whoever should bring Monmouth in, was to be distributed among the militia by agreement between Sir William Portman and Lord Lumley...¹³

On 15 July he was beheaded at the Tower of London and Lyme Regis remained a town.

After the trial at the Dorchester Assizes (between 3-10 September), the beach at Lyme Regis was designated as the place of execution for the Lyme Regis twelve.¹⁴ On 12 September the twelve were hung and eleven of them were disembowelled and quartered. The quarters were covered in tar and displayed around the town, it was claimed that they could still be seen in 1723.

William Hewling was buried in the Lyme churchyard, saved from the disembowelling by his sister Hannah, who paid Judge Jeffreys £1000. Two weeks later their grandfather provided a further £1000 and Hannah paid Jeffreys for their brother Benjamin who was hanged at Taunton.¹⁵

During the early 18th Century Lyme Regis went into a decline and was saved after Dr Richard Russel published a book about medicinal properties of seawater. Soon everyone was flocking to the coast. Lyme became popular after the Earl of Chatham brought his sickly son (William Pitt the Younger) to take the waters. Jane Austen visited in 1803 and 1804 and her novel

Persuasion is set in the town. The town had a new lease of life, the old 17th century buildings were given new facades and there were Georgian and Regency villas built surrounding the town. In the old part of the town saw the destruction of historic buildings in the fires of 1803 and 1844. Some of the old coaching inns have survived such as The Old Monmouth and The Tudor House Hotel.¹⁶

Notes.

1. *The Victoria History of the Counties of England: Dorset*, Vol II, (1975), 184. In Antonia Fraser's book *The Weaker Vessel*, 183, it is claimed that the Regis came later when the town aided the escape of Charles II after Worcester. Charles Carlton in his book *Going to the Wars*, 165, gives the same reason but in the notes he gives *The Weaker Vessel* as a reference for the siege.
2. Lyme Regis Museum, Charles I's letter to Sir John Stawell, Royalist Governor of Taunton dated 11 February 1643 (1644) sent from Oxford and signed by Sir Edward Nicholas, Charles' secretary. It commanded Stawell to send forces against Lyme Regis.
3. G. Chapman, *The Siege of Lyme Regis*, (Serendip Fine Books, 1982), 16.
4. J. Strong, *Joanereidos: or, Feminine Valour; Eminently discovered in Western Women, at the Siege of Lyme*, (1645). R.H. Whitelocke, *Memoirs, Biographical and historical of Bulstrode Whitelocke*.
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15. Fowles, *Lyme Regis*, 22.
16. The Tudor House Hotel claims to have the mizenmast from *The Mayflower*, a plaster ceiling designed by Sir Walter Raleigh and a Jacobean staircase.

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BOOK REVIEWS

David Farr, *John Lambert, Parliamentary Soldier and Cromwellian Major-General, 1619-1684*. Boydell Press, 2003. pp. x + 268. £50.

While most of the major parliamentary and royalist generals of the English civil wars have attracted full-length biographies, the key military figures of the 1650s in general and the Protectorate in particular have not fared so well. Thus we have no substantial studies of either Charles Fleetwood or John Disbrowe, though a biography of the former is in preparation. There was one twentieth-century biography of John Lambert, the nearly-man of the Protectorate, a weighty 460-page tome by William Harbutt Dawson, published in 1938 as *Cromwell's Understudy*. Worthy and generally solid, it is also lightly referenced and both the text and intermittent footnotes suggest that, while the author had made good use of printed primary sources, the volume rested on only slight archival work and little recourse had been made to manuscript sources. There was a need for something fresher and more thoroughly researched, a detailed account of the man and his life drawing on the full range of surviving sources and with a firm grasp of the complex history and historiography of the period. Accordingly, it is a pleasure to welcome this fine, new, full-length study of Lambert, written by David Farr and springing from his 1996 Cambridge University doctorate.

Dr Farr's book is not a conventional biography, following its subject from cradle to grave in a strict chronological sequence. The whole life is here, from birth, upbringing and education in pre-war Yorkshire through to the long years of post-Restoration imprisonment on various offshore islands. But the chronologically based material is interspersed with other, more

BOOK REVIEWS

thematic chapters, exploring issues such as his network of colleagues, clients and agents, his relationship with his extended family, including his support for royalist and Catholic kin, and his rather ambiguous and uncertain religious beliefs and personal faith. A handful of chapters are revised versions of articles which first appeared in recent years in a variety of learned journals, including *Cromwelliana*.

Dr Farr presents us with an often detailed and generally convincing portrait of Lambert, broadly sympathetic but showing due detachment and balance. The footnotes are profuse and impressive, and both the references and the extensive bibliography confirm that this study rests upon substantial and impressive archival work. So when the author has little new to say and passes over some incidents and developments quite briefly – there is, for example, surprisingly little and very little new here on Lambert's role in the manoeuvrings of spring 1653 after Cromwell's ejection of the Rump or on his part in writing, revising, advancing and winning support for the Instrument of Government in the closing weeks of 1653 – we may assume that surviving sources simply do not throw any further light on these topics. Conversely, Dr Farr's work greatly expands our knowledge of Lambert's background, family and kinship and his discussion of these areas provides some of the richest and strongest material in this biography. He argues that Lambert's interaction with his kin, particularly the Lister family and their connections, in the 1630s and especially after his father's early death in 1632, was a key factor in shaping his allegiance to the parliamentary cause in the 1640s – the Lister network was, Dr Farr claims, 'essential to Lambert's social and ideological development and crucial when it came to the moment of war in 1642' (p. 30). The author also gives us detailed and impressive insights into Lambert's later social circles, showing the importance of patronage and clientage as he built up a network of agents, most notably Adam Baynes, into his elevated social status during the 1650s, with his acquisition of a grand house and garden at Wimbledon making him in many ways 'the epitome of the new men who had advanced to prominence' (p. 165) and into his continuing interaction with and care for his kin during the post-war decade, even those who clung onto their royalist or Catholic beliefs. 'Kinship was a significant determinant in Lambert's life and career and despite his increasing frustration with unrepentant Cavaliers, it shaped his general ecumenical outlook' (p. 167), an approach also seen in his tolerant and supportive dealings with a variety of individuals and faiths, including both Catholics and Quakers. The continuing support of his

immediate family and wider kin helped cushion his long years of imprisonment during the reign of Charles II.

Most of the more chronologically based chapters chart and examine Lambert's military and political career during the 1640s and 1650s. In exploring the campaigns he waged or led, mainly though not exclusively in northern England in 1642-46 and 1648, Dr Farr paints a picture of military success, growing confidence and rapid promotion and he suggests that Lambert's 'military record bears comparison with that of any of his contemporaries' (p. 44). In particular, he claims that Lambert played a key part in the defeat of the Scots in 1648, for his fierce attacks on Langdale's royalists around Carlisle induced the Scottish-royalist forces to come to their aid and begin rolling south before they were really ready. Dr Farr accords Lambert a vital role in all the key military successes of the Scottish campaign of 1650-51, including Dunbar, Hamilton, Inverkeithing and Worcester, and even suggests that by that time his military abilities were beginning to surpass those of Cromwell himself, whose powers, he claims, 'were on the wane' by this stage, so that Lambert 'was emerging as probably the most effective field commander' (p. 91). The experience of war and campaigning radicalised Lambert and tied him thereafter to a military agenda, which first advanced but then stymied his subsequent political career. For a time, in the early and mid 1650s, this approach gave him prominence and some power, especially as a key promoter of the Protectorate and as the main author of its first constitution, the Instrument of Government, which, Dr Farr suggests, reflected Lambert's distrust of (mainly civilian) parliaments in the way it closely limited the role and position of future parliaments. But Dr Farr sees Lambert then becoming increasingly out of tune with the drift of Protectoral politics in the mid and later 1650s. As Cromwell and many of his key supporters, including the more flexible military figures Disbrowe and Fleetwood, supported moves to give the regime a more civilian appearance, to pay more attention to parliaments and civilian politicians, Lambert was left isolated and alienated as he clung on to his more military agenda, continuing to support a settlement relying much more strongly upon, and giving more power to, the army. Never personally close to Cromwell and lacking Disbrowe's and Fleetwood's kinship ties with the Protector, by 1657 Lambert also lacked the power and solid political or military constituency to enable him to resist the new constitutional arrangements. This led to a remarkably swift fall from grace and an uneasy alliance with the republican opponents of the Protectorate and, even when restored to military command in 1659, it also

contributed to the disintegration of the force he led north to block Monck's progress in the opening weeks of 1660. 'Ultimately Lambert proved a political failure' is Dr Farr's bleak but perfectly justified conclusion (p. 213).

Overall, this is a strong, impressive and much-needed biographical study, throwing significant new light on many aspects of Lambert's life, career and context. Resting upon an impressive body of fresh research and developing important and generally convincing lines of argument and interpretation, this volume is unlikely to be the final word on Lambert but it does greatly add to our knowledge and understanding of the man, his career, his family and his wider connections. There is really only one major weakness with this volume, namely its price. £50 is an awful lot to pay for a book of around 270 pages, several chapters of which have already appeared in print elsewhere in slightly earlier versions and which contains just one illustration – a black and white reproduction of the Walker portrait of Lambert. Alas, the price may well restrict the sales and circulation of this fine and important study.

Robert Fallon (ed), *The Christian Soldier*. Medieval and Renaissance Texts & Studies, 2003. pp. xviii + 200. £25.

This volume gathers together and reprints the full texts of four civil war pamphlets originally published in the years 1642-45 and designed to circulate amongst and to give spiritual and a degree of moral and political guidance to the royalist and parliamentarian soldiers who were facing torment, temptation and possible imminent death both on and off the battlefield. The best known is probably *The Souldiers Pocket Bible*, a short and anonymous collection of selected and somewhat rewritten biblical texts intended to guide, instruct, encourage and reassure the parliamentary troops who were facing advancing royalist armies in the dark days of summer 1643. *The Souldiers Catechisme*, by far the most substantial text reproduced in this volume, sets out a series of questions and reassuring answers. Designed to give spiritual, moral and political guidance to the parliamentarians, it was written by Robert Ram, vicar of Spalding, and quickly ran through several editions in 1644-45, by which time parliamentary fortunes had revived. Here we are given the text of one of the later editions, set against the text of a mocking royalist edition, written by Thomas Swadlin of Oxford, who produced variant, satirical answers to Ram's questions, deriding parliament and condemning its soldiers. There follow two short royalist pamphlets, Thomas Swadlin's *The Souldiers Catechisme* of 1645, in which a parliamentary

soldier supposedly asks questions and is apparently won over by the enlightened answers of a royalist tutor, and Thomas Jordan's *The Christian Soldier* of 1642, encouraging the royalist troops to contemplate the godly cause for which they were fighting and to ensure that they would conduct themselves in a Christian manner. Also included here is the full text of a later pamphlet, *The Christian Soldier's Penny Bible* of 1693, a revised edition of the *Pocket Bible* of half a century before reissued to guide William III's troops, and short extracts from and brief summaries of a handful of other civil war tracts on a similar theme. Each of the main texts has a brief introduction and very helpful explanatory footnotes and the volume is topped and tailed by an introduction, setting the pamphlets in context and exploring the religious background to and nature of the civil war, and a select bibliography and index. This well-researched and well-presented volume will probably appeal most to a fairly specialist readership but all those with an interest in the military and religious history of the 1640s (and beyond) will find much of value here.

Peter Gaunt

S. Robbins, *God's General: Cromwell the Soldier*. (Sutton, 2003)
ISBN 0-7509-2879-4

There are perhaps too many studies of Cromwell, so to even contemplate another demands clear justification. This book has found such a niche but, as the first full length study for a century of Cromwell as a soldier, it sets itself a major challenge.

In its first objective, to provide a readable, coherent narrative of military campaigns in which Cromwell was involved, it can claim success. It draws a believable picture of a man new to military action that over a decade, between 1642 and 1651, learns the military trade. We see him building sound foundations at every step, as the stage on which he acts expands to meet his growing skills and confidence. But our appreciation of this story is compromised by the lack of adequate maps. Terrain had a central influence on the outcome of campaign and battle alike and Robbins attempts to convey it in words, but this can never succeed unless the reader already knows the battlefield. At times one becomes completely bemused as the places and events are reeled off without a map to place them in a coherent geographical framework. For his campaigns this book provides a poorer map base than Cromwell himself would have had access to!

The narrative itself is also uneven. Robbins really gets into his stride when dealing with the Preston campaign, for example, taking the reader along with him in a rapidly moving and engaging account of the three days of fighting that determined the outcome of the Second Civil War. In some other campaigns he is far less assured. On occasion the accounts are a little confused and one begins to wonder if the author has actually visited the battlefield. There are many pitfalls in summarising a major engagement in just a few pages. If working from just a few sources they must be the most recent or definitive to ensure that major re-interpretations are not missed and errors repeated that should have long been banished from serious studies. The most inexcusable here is the nonsense of the last stand of the Whitecoats on Marston Moor in White Sike Close, a field that did not even exist until the late 18th century. We have learnt in recent years that the traditional interpretations of major battles are often far from secure, yet in this account of Cromwell's battles there is certainty. The inadequacy of our knowledge of location and terrain are not raised, even though it may significantly affect our understanding of how and why a battle was won. Dunbar turns critically on terrain and deployment in relation to it, but we are never clear whether the inadequacy of its discussion here is due to the lack of a good modern study of the battle. A brief appendix providing such critical assessment of the secondary works on key battles and themes would have greatly enhanced the book.

What of the book's second and more exacting objective, an assessment of Cromwell's military abilities and effectiveness? Unfortunately here it rarely transcends the narrative. At various points there is brief consideration of well known issues such as Cromwell's choice of men for particular tasks, his care for his troops and above all his belief in the strength of God's support for the cause. But there are no new insights into Cromwell the soldier and the assessment is all too brief, the final chapter instead drifting off into a discussion of Cromwell's political actions during the Commonwealth and Protectorate.

To judge the soldier we need to set him alongside his contemporaries. In the Dunbar campaign there is a comparison of Cromwell with Leslie, the Scottish commander, but such analysis is rare. Rupert and Cromwell are contrasted as cavalry commanders but we never find what really distinguished the two men. How was it that over the three years between Edgehill and Naseby one apparently learnt nothing, while the other rose

from cavalry captain to second in command and architect of parliament's main field army, applying tactics on the field that quite simply destroyed the enemy. And what of a comparison with Waller, who is usually linked to the realisation and promotion of the need for the New Model and was initially a genuine contender for command of such an army? How did Cromwell manage to completely eclipse him by in the field by 1644? Surely the great difference between the two was that while Waller expressed the need for such a new modelled army Cromwell was out there creating one, and had been ever since 1642. But in all such comparisons how much was the man and how much the circumstance?

Most of all we need to understand Cromwell's relationship with his superiors, because for most of his military career, even when making arguably his greatest contributions to winning the war, he never rose above Lieutenant General. We do hear of his interaction with Wake, the first commander of the Eastern Association, which presages the pivotal events of autumn and winter 1644, centred on the conflict with Manchester. But given that Manchester was not a 'hands on' general, there need to be searching questions asked about who provided the drive and coherence of the Eastern Association army. More fundamental than anything else, we must understand the relationship between Cromwell and Fairfax between 1643 and 1648, for there can be little doubt that, from the outset, the New Model was Cromwell's army.

These omissions perhaps arise from taking too much at face value, and with Cromwell this is a dangerous mistake, as many of his contemporaries discovered to their cost. Here the contentious questions are not even asked, let alone answered. We are given matter of fact accounts of such things as Cromwell's appointment as Lieutenant General of the New Model yet why, one must ask, was that very post the only major one not filled in the New Model during its first two critical months?

Robbins' narrative provides interesting insights, especially into his early battles, and one can identify many valuable links. Thus at Gainsborough we see Cromwell employing the control and tactics which were to be repeated on a large scale two years later at Naseby, holding back a reserve from the initial attack and pursuit, to counter any enemy reserve and then throwing that force in at the most opportune moment to shatter the opposition. But other reasons for Cromwell's success are obscured by mistaken explanations, as where Robbins claims that in a charge Rupert's cavalry always galloped while Cromwell's troopers alone charged at a 'pretty round

trot'. The latter was not Cromwell's invention but rather standard military practice of the time. More often though it is not the fact but the interpretation one must question. It is true that not until Preston did Cromwell have independent command of a large army in a major battle, but was this really his first opportunity for the free exercise of his strategic skills? One needs to understand how the Eastern Association or the New Model commands actually functioned. How dominant was Cromwell in the strategic and tactical decision making before, and indeed after, he had independent command of an army? In the later years Robbins particularly remarks upon the signs of Lambert's hand alongside Cromwell's in major campaigns.

Neither should an assessment of Cromwell in the First Civil War, focus too narrowly on cavalry. He had a central role in building the whole Eastern Association army. His acolytes, such as Pickering and Mountagu, were promoted to command of infantry regiments, and this must surely be seen as part of a strategy to build effective teamwork within the command structure. At Marston Moor it was in fact not just Cromwell's cavalry but the Eastern Association army as a whole which swept the field, almost as an independent force, destroying the Royalist northern army. It was surely Cromwell who was the effective commander of the Association army that day, not Manchester and certainly not Crawford as Robbins would have us believe.

Indeed there is a naivety in the analysis which means that central themes are missed, none more so than where the appointment of Ireton as Commissary General of Horse immediately before Naseby is described as 'nepotism'. This shows a failure to grasp one of the central reasons for Cromwell's success, the building a 'team' that he could work with and trust. It also overlooks the fact that in the 17th century society, which was so much smaller and more intimate than that of recent centuries, to a significant degree family links were a normal part of administrative organisation. It was to highly trusted officers, like Ireton, that Cromwell gave critical roles, knowing in a way that Rupert could not, that they would fulfil their responsibilities within the agreed strategy. Thus it was to Whalley he gave the critical task of breaking Langdale's cavalry at Naseby, just as he had delegated to him the all important role of covering the tactical retreat at Gainsborough in 1643. Between Edgehill and Naseby Cromwell not only built a cavalry force unmatched in the war. He built a whole army, its officer corps and command, providing a coherence and unity of purpose

that his enemies, royalist and parliamentarian alike, could only dream of. The great success of the New Model at Naseby was not that the Ironsides swept the enemy from the field, but that when regiments broke, cavalry and infantry alike, the army still stood, brought in its reserves and counter attacked. Perhaps coloured by Clarendon's comparison of Rupert's to Cromwell's cavalry, and maybe dazzled by the glamour of the cavalry, the importance of the unity of purpose of the rest of the army is so often overlooked.

This review may seem unduly harsh, but Robbins set himself a daunting challenge and has to be judged against an appropriate standard. His subject is arguably the single most important theme in the history of the Civil War. It is therefore unfortunate that this book is too superficial to do it justice. If you want a readable account providing the sequence of events in Cromwell's campaigns then it will suffice. If you are expecting an 'in depth appraisal of Cromwell's unique gifts as a military leader', as promised on the book's dust jacket, then you will be sadly disappointed. There is still an important, but very demanding book waiting to be written!

Glenn Foard

While on a visit to Arundel Castle I purchased *The Sickly Stuarts* by Frederick Holmes (Sutton Publishing, 2003). The subtitle is *The Medical Downfall of a Dynasty*, as a Cromwellian I could not resist this book. Frederick Holmes is Professor of Medicine Emeritus at the University of Kansas Medical Centre; and while on sabbatical leave in 1991 he decided to study Modern British History and the late Professor J P Kenyon was his tutor. Holmes became addicted to the Stuarts and continued to study and attend courses whenever he was on leave. In 1998 he received his Master's degree in History at the University of Kansas and his thesis was the theory, which this book explores. This is a fascinating book to read whether you believe the theory or not. It has taken ten years of research to review letters, state papers and medical documents. He has reproduced post-mortem examinations, reports by the royal physicians and observations by members of court for all the monarchs and their families. He has put forward up to date medical diagnoses and ruled out some seventeenth century diagnoses. It was interesting to find out that Anne did not suffer from gout, but systemic lupus erythematosus, which finally killed her; her inability to produce an heir again was due to Lupus. Her son Prince William suffered

from hydrocephalus but died of pneumonia. James II lost his crown to William of Orange because he had not taken the situation seriously and suffered a series of disabling nosebleeds. I enjoyed this book and especially when he suggests the delusional Charles I died a surgical death.

The final three books have all been produced by Osprey Publishing who are accumulating a strong portfolio of Civil War publications written by very knowledgeable and well known authors. They are renowned for their high quality and reasonably priced publications, which are well illustrated throughout and have a universal appeal whether as a study aid for key stage 3 or for anyone who wants a succinct account of a particular aspect of the civil war period. *The English Civil Wars 1642-1651* by Dr Peter Gaunt is his first book for the publishing house. As well as writing the book Peter has included many of his own photographs. The maps and diagrams are well produced and are a complement to the text. Though the book is not a large tome it manages to cover the subject matter in chronological detail giving a balanced view of the events and supplying interesting facts along the way, such as a quarter of all deaths in action in England and Wales during the civil wars occurred in sieges. This book is more than just an introduction to the subject.

The second Osprey book is *Auldearn 1645* by Stuart Reid; it is more than up to his usual standard with incredible detail and excellently written. He discusses the opposing armies, level of combat experience and their origins. He has managed to unravel from the available accounts, which have a royalist bias, the events leading up to the battle. There are plenty of maps including bird's eye views, which help to illustrate the narrative and therefore readers appreciate how much the terrain played an important part in the battle ie the broken nature of the ground prevented Montrose from forming a conventional battle-line and therefore divided his army. In the 1980s Stuart was a great supporter of David Ryan's publishing ventures and One Day Conferences held at Southend Library twice a year. He featured heavily in *English Civil War Notes & Queries*, bringing to our attention obscure battles and the Scots army's role in the proceedings. He was involved in early research to help re-enactors. When he gave lectures on the Scottish army's role in the Civil Wars he spoke with passion on a subject he undoubtedly knew a great deal about. He wrote the first book which Partizan Press published *Scots Armies of the Seventeenth Century*, writing about a very neglected subject; as this was a huge success it was revised and expanded into an on going series which is up to volume four. He has also

BOOK REVIEWS

produced for Partizan Press *Officers and Regiments of the Royalist Army* in five volumes. Prior to Reid's publications on Scotland I can only recall C.V. Wedgewood's *Montrose* (a great read) and of course John Buchan's *Montrose* published in 1928.

The third book is the latest edition to the Fortress series, *English Civil War Fortifications 1642-51* by Peter Harrington. In 1990 Mancunian Peter was made Curator of the military collection at Brown University Providence Rhode Island, where he had been working since 1983. He is an expert on the defences and fortifications of the Civil War, having written previous books and articles on the subject; his best known publication is *Archaeology of the English Civil War* (1992). This publication discusses the part played by fortifications during the war and how badly towns and cities were fortified prior to the conflict, mainly because it was always thought that the threat would be from abroad and the Navy would defend the nation; civil war had not been considered. Europe seemed to be the masters of fortification and siege warfare, the Thirty Years War was the training ground for some of the personalities involved in the civil war. At the start of the conflict the royalists were superior but as it progressed Parliamentary engineers improved. The book discusses the type of defences and their effectiveness; the final assessment was that most fortifications seemed to discouraged storming but then rendered them open to siegeworks. In conclusion temporary civil war fortifications were a psychological barrier rather than a physical one and seemed to survive due to lack of resources to overwhelm them. The book is well put together and considering it is only 64 pages he manages to cover a great deal of information such as design, development, writers and publications of the time. The section on the building of town defences and how it disrupted everyday life and the whole livelihood of the town was so interesting. The book includes a chronology of sieges and battles and the sites today, both of which are very useful. The choice of illustrations were both useful and informative, and the book also contains seven specially commissioned colour drawings which do help to visualise the times. The subject matter of this book could be thought to be dry, but due to his expertise it is easy to read.

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Jane A. Mills

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Oliver Cromwell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'O' and a long, sweeping tail that ends in a vertical stroke.