# Cromwelliana

The Journal of

The Cromwell Association


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## The Cromwell Association



THE CROMWELL ASSOCIATION was founded in 1937 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:

a. the erection of commemorative tablets (e.g. at Naseby, Dunbar, Worcester, Preston, etc);
b. helping to establish the Cromwell Museum in the Old Grammar School at Huntingdon;
c. 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;
d. producing an annual publication, *Cromwelliana,* which is free to members;
e. awarding an annual prize for work on a Cromwellian theme;
f. maintaining a small reference library for the use of members;
g. supporting the formation of local groups of paid-up members of the Association meeting for study or social purposes;
h. acting as a 'lobby' at both national and local levels whenever aspects or items of our Cromwellian heritage appear to be endangered.



# CROMWELLIANA 2006

Editor Jane A. Mills

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

The image on the front cover of this edition is from the village of Bobbio Pellice in the Waldensian valleys. I must give special thanks to John Goldsmith for providing the image and granting permission to use it.

The quotation on the back cover is taken Oliver Cromwell's letter of 26 May 1658 to Sir William Lockhart, Ambassador at the French Court about his concern for the well being of the Protestants of the Waldensian valleys.

As promised this edition includes the section *Overseas Despatches* especially written by Richard Newbury an "Opinionista" who writes for *Corriere della Sera* and *La Stampa* among others. He is married to the Waldensian writer Erica Scroppo and has been adopted by the Waldensian valleys.



## CROMWELL DAY, 2005
## CROMWELL THE SOLDIER IN CONTEXT

*By Professor Charles Carlton*

When, the day after the July 7th bombings Queen Elizabeth declared that we should never let such atrocities interfere with what makes our way of life so special, I very much doubt that she had the Cromwell Association in mind. And yet there is something special about the Cromwell Association, something quintessentially English. I cannot imagine a group celebrating the Lord Protector's birthday on Edinburgh's Royal Mile, let alone doing so outside Dublin's General Post Office – without the protection of at least half the city's police force.

Normally, as you know, we meet beside Cromwell's statue in the grounds of the House of Commons. I have often wondered if that is such a good place for his statue, (even if he has his back turned to the house) for Cromwell had little patience with some parliaments. 'You have sat here too long for any good you have been doing', he told the Rump Parliament in April 1653, 'Depart, I say, and let us have done with you. In the name of God, go!'[1] Cromwell's genius was as a soldier, so it might be appropriate to have had his statue outside the War Office on Horse Guard's parade, except that the Lord Protector would be staring at the Banqueting House – hardly a tactful gesture since that was the scene of Charles I's execution.

I was first attracted to Cromwell because of his ability as a soldier.[2] If I had to go into battle I would prefer to do so under his command. For one thing he always cut to the chase, once telling his troops that 'to engage the enemy to fight was our business.'[3] For another Cromwell never wasted time, often scribbling 'Haste! Haste! Posthaste!' on his letters.[4] He believed in merit, preferring 'a plain russet coated captain that knows what he fights for and loves what he knows, than that you would call a gentleman, and is nothing else.'[5] He loved his troops, calling them 'honest men...gallant men.' Above all he loved a fight. After winning the Battle of Dunbar, 'he did laugh so excessively as if he had been drunk.'[6] When the Earl of Manchester complained 'If we beat the king nine and ninety times, he is king still', Cromwell angrily replied, 'My Lord, if this be so, why then did we take up arms first?'[7]

Cromwell first took up arms when he was forty-three, very old for a soldier. But as Professor Morrill has shown, war liberated him from the failures of peace.[8] While this may explain why he became a happy warrior as well as a holy one, it does not show why he was a great warrior.

His greatness first became apparent at the troop and regimental level. Unlike Prince Rupert and the cavaliers, Cromwell's Ironsides did not – as the Duke of Wellington complained about his horsemen – gad about 'galloping at everything.'[9] After shattering the enemy's flank Cromwell was able to stop his troopers from plundering the baggage train and instead return to the field of battle for the second decisive blow. This ability – which won Marston Moor and Naseby – set Cromwell apart from other great regimental commanders (of whom there were many on both sides), making him a uniquely great cavalry leader. It not only turned him into an important political figure, but gave him the job of being a theatre commander, one in which he excelled, defeating the Scots at Preston in 1648, at Dunbar in 1650, at Worcester in 1651 and conquering the Irish. These four great campaigns were his masterpieces in which he showed a genius at logistics, the ability to inspire men, the willingness to seize the main chance, to act with decision and (it must be admitted) with callous cruelty. Killing the Irish, Cromwell observed after the massacre at Drogheda, was 'a righteous judgment of God upon these barbarous wretches.' It was also a judicious use of terror 'that will tend to prevent the effusion of blood for the future.'[10]

Even though Lord Protector Cromwell was less successful militarily as Commander in Chief, there is no doubt that he was one the greatest of British soldiers. But where amongst them should he be ranked?

Although Sir Edward Creasy ranked Hastings as one of the world's decisive battles, we don't know enough about William the Conqueror to make a judgment of his military skills. Was the Norman retreat, which caused the Anglo-Saxons to break ranks and thus lose the battle, a real or a feigned one? We can never tell.

The popular knowledge of Henry V comes more from Shakespeare than history, the bard's view having become part of our cultural heritage. Churchill called Henry V 'the gleaming king'. The romantic figure of the play, who talked of 'we few, we happy few' and 'a band of brothers', was in fact a ruthless killer, who ordered the French prisoners to be murdered at Agincourt (the Bard has it the other way around). Within a generation of Henry's death (admittedly a premature one), England had lost its French possessions, demonstrating that the war had been a hundred years of bloody futility.

Marlborough, the victor of Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudenard and Malplaquet, commanded armies over ten times larger than Cromwell against far more





formidable enemies. His supply systems were much more sophisticated, and he was able to manage alliances with a tact and diplomacy that Cromwell lacked.

Wellington was the complete antithesis of Cromwell, a haughty aristocrat whose officers called him (never to his face) 'the peer'. Wellington loathed and feared plain russet coated captains, preferring instead gentlemen, who needed to know nothing else but the price of their commissions. Far from being an army of saints, Wellington's men were 'the scum of the earth', recruited from the dregs, disciplined by lash, motivated by rape, loot, plunder, and, above all, drink.[11] While the New Model Army was a radical one, which during moments such as the Putney Debates anticipated twentieth century ideas of democracy, socialism, even communism, Wellington's paid professionals and upper class officers looked back to the eighteenth century – that Age of Aristocracy – which was being displaced by the Industrial Revolution that was making Britain the world's dominant nation. Most important, Wellington fought in the Premier League. He beat Napoleon, heretofore one of history's greatest generals, ranked with Alexander or Caesar, while Cromwell fought second raters such as Rupert or Charles.

The general who most resembles Cromwell was Montgomery. Churchill thought so, since he told the Field Marshall, they 'praised the Lord and passed the ammunition.'[12] Both were puritans – whatever that might mean. Both went through a crisis of faith in their early thirties. 'Oh, I have lived and loved darkness and hated light', Cromwell confessed, 'I was the chief of sinners.'[13] Looking back on the horrors of the First World War, in which he was wounded, Montgomery wondered 'How could an all-wise God allow such things to happen?'[14] Both emerged convinced that God was on their side, reassuring their troops before combat, 'Let us pray that "The Lord Mighty in Battles" will go forth with our armies, and His special protection will aid us.'[15] That's Monty before Normandy: it could just as easily have been Oliver before Naseby, Preston or Drogheda. In order to find plain russet coated captains Montgomery's army used War Office Selection boards, choosing officers on merit – a concept that would have outraged Wellington. By 1945 the British Army, an army of conscripts that reflected society as a whole, had become almost as radical as Cromwell's army of saints. Unlike the latter they had the vote, and were able to elect a Labour government, which put many of their demands into effect.

So I suppose we will have to agree with the judgment of Brigadier Peter

Young, a great soldier and historian (as well as the founder of the Sealed Knot) that Cromwell 'was not quite in the class of Marlborough, Wellington or the great commanders of the Second World War.'[16]

And yet...

One could ask what difference did Cromwell the soldier make in history. Marlborough's victories got bloodier and less decisive. If Napoleon had not met his Waterloo at Waterloo he would surely have met it somewhere else. The Russian and American armies, not the British, played the dominant role in defeating Hitler, just as Cromwell did in crushing the royalists. To be sure Cromwell played little or no part at Edgehill, the only time the king had a chance of winning an outright victory. But he did save parliament's bacon at Naseby and Marston Moor, ensuring that any settlement with the king would be a radical one. When Charles refused to compromise, Cromwell, more than anyone else, was responsible for his execution, supposedly declaring with brutal frankness 'stone dead hath no fellow.'

It was at this time Cromwell, again more than anyone else, created a British state through his campaigns against the Scots and Irish. When in December 1653 he was declared Lord Protector, it was of 'the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland', the first claim of a unitary British state.[17] Perhaps as many as sixty thousand Scots died as result of Cromwell's campaigns, while the Cromwellian conquest and settlement of Ireland killed an immense number of people. The Irish, for one, never forgot the holocaust. 'Cromwell's men are here again', declared a 1972 Irish pop-song protesting the presence of British troops in Northern Ireland.[18] And yet the Cromwellian conquests laid the foundations of a British Empire in which the Scots and Irish found jobs and prosperity.

Many of them found employment in the British army, which Cromwell, again more than anyone else, founded. Within a decade the British army went from being a part time militia force to one of the best standing armies in Europe. In 1658, for instance, it routed the Spanish infantry, reputedly the finest in Europe, at Dunkirk.

To be sure the New Model Army, which unlike any other British army refused to demobilise at the end of a war, overstepped its bounds, becoming wildly unpopular under the rule of the Major Generals that grew more tyrannical with every telling. Nonetheless so important was Cromwell's military creation that after him a standing army became a hated necessity.





Not so hated and far more necessary was the Royal Navy, which being at sea or confined to ports was less of a threat to the liberties of trueborn Englishmen. During the first Dutch War Britain developed its first real blue water navy, and by capturing Jamaica laid the foundations for its lucrative West Indian colonies.[19]

In 1653 a pamphleteer complained that 'An army is a beast that hath a great belly, and must be fed.'[20] During that decade the army averaged 40,000 men, while the navy had over two hundred ships, costing 90% of the government's budget.[21] In sum, under Cromwell Britain experienced a Military Revolution, which like the Industrial Revolution promoted a 'take off' in British power.

Of course, the process was long and complicated. Initially Oliver seemed to have failed. After the Restoration his corpse was dug up and scattered to the wind. For two centuries his reputation suffered a similar fate. It is no coincidence that Thomas Carlyle resuscitated it in the 1840s, when parliamentary democracy and imperialism were making themselves felt. No one did more than Cromwell to create a unified British State, which went on to build a vast British Empire, using not just the armed forces but the initiative of many a plain russet coated gentleman. If Cromwell reached his nadir with the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, the monarchy began its inexorable decline with the revolution of 1688, which it could be argued was a vindication of Cromwell's career. The Glorious Revolution marked a triumph of a consensual and constitutional government in which parliament is sovereign. So – warts and all – Cromwell the Lord Protector's statue really does belong outside the House of Commons.

Notes.

1. Bulstrode Whitelocke, *Memorials of the English Affairs* (1682), p. 554.
2. Apart from A. Woolrych, 'Cromwell as a Soldier', in J. Morrill, ed., *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution* (1990), pp. 93-118, there are surprisingly few good works on this topic. Recent publications, S. Robbins, *God's General* (2003), A. Marshall, *Oliver Cromwell: Soldier, The Military Life of a Revolutionary at War* (2004), and F. Kitson, *Old Ironsides: The Military Biography of Oliver Cromwell* (2004), disappoint.
3. W. C. Abbott, *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (New York, 1937), Vol I, 190-91.
4. Ibid., I, 204.
5. Ibid., I, 256.
6. Ibid., I, 258.

7. PRO: SP 16/503/561X.
8. J. Morrill, 'The Making of Oliver Cromwell', *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution* (1990), pp. 21-25.
9. E. Longford, *Wellington: the Years of the Sword* (1969), p. 275.
10. 17 September 1649, Cromwell to Speaker Lenthall, T. Carlyle, *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* (1887), Vol II, 152-53.
11. Longford, *Wellington*, p. 322.
12. B. Montgomery, *History of Warfare* (1969), p. 282.
13. Abbott, Vol I, 96-97.
14. A. Chalford, *Montgomery of Alamein* (1976), p. 70.
15. Nigel Hamilton, *Master of the Battlefield: Monty's War Years, 1942-44* (1983), p. 615. For a similar message before Alamein see Hamilton, *Monty: The Making of General, 1887-1942* (1981), p. 420.
16. P. Young, *Cromwell and his Times* (1962), 137.
17. J. Morrill, 'Three Kingdoms and one Commonwealth? The enigma of mid-seventeenth century Britain and Ireland', in A. Grant, and K. Stringer, *Uniting the Kingdom: the making of British History* (1995), p. 17.
18. 'The Men behind the Wire', in C. Carlton, *Bigotry and Blood: Documents on the Ulster Troubles*, (Chicago, 1976).
19. D. Baugh, 'Great Britain's "Blue Water" policy, 1689-1815', *International History Review* 10 (1988), pp. 33-58.
20. Quoted by L. B. Smith, *This Realm of England, 1399-1688* (Boston, 1996), p. 298.
21. H. M. Reece, 'The Military Presence in England, 1649-1660', Oxford D.Phil. (1981), pp. 50-52, 286. J. Brewer, *Sinews of Power: War money and the English State, 1688-1783* (New York, 1989) p. 11. G. Parker, *The Military Revolution* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 62 & 81.

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*By Dr Peter Gaunt*

> Whosoever labours to walk with an even foot between the several interests of the people of God for healing and accommodating their differences is sure to have reproaches and anger from some of all sorts.[1]

Sometime in the opening weeks of 1655, possibly during the third week of January[2] in the troubled dying days of the first Protectorate Parliament, Cromwell opened his heart thus to an old army colleague, lieutenant-colonel Wilkes. Timothy Wilkes, who had campaigned in Scotland since the early 1650s, was fiercely loyal to the Protector and his regime and had just been involved in rooting out and arresting a clutch of conspirators, including major-general Overton; he had also written supportively to Cromwell, assuring him of his continuing support and telling him that the Lord was still with him, and in a later letter he sent the Protector 'My prayer...that you may stand fast, in these sad, declining, appostatising dayes and hould out to the end'.[3] In return, the Protector thanked Wilkes for his 'loving and kind expressions...and...your tenderness and sensibleness of the burden of my condition', acknowledging that his 'little faith and patience' were being sorely tried and noting that even former friends and supporters were now under a 'sad dispensation...being divided in opinion and too much in affection ready to fall foul upon one another'; moreover, Cromwell sadly noted, he had himself received 'not a few wounds' from some of his erstwhile friends and colleagues. As he wrote, Cromwell's mood lifted a little, for as ever he hoped for and looked to support from God, stressing that so long as he did the Lord's work, he in turn would be aided by the Almighty – 'He will make His own councils stand...I am persuaded the Lord will not suffer His people always to be deceived by such pretenders and pretences to righteousness and justice' – and he noted that the Lord had recently appeared in the discovery and apprehension of various anti-government conspirators.[4] Nevertheless, the overall tone is one of gloom bordering on self-pity in places, a letter written by a man whose faith, though still strong, was being tested and who was all-too-aware of enemies and divisions, of new threats to the cause and of a once clear path becoming hazy and uncertain. It was a bad start to a bad year, for 1655 was to be dominated by troubles and setbacks, and the 'sad, declining, appostatising dayes' turned into weeks and months. For Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell and for his Protectoral regime, 1655 proved to be a year of crisis.

For Cromwell, the first Protectorate Parliament, which he had welcomed in the previous September with such confidence and optimism,[5] had turned into an unmitigated failure. The institution in which he had invested so much hope and expectation had torn apart the existing constitution and sought to replace it with a new Government Bill which many, including Cromwell, feared would reduce liberty of conscience and open the way for tighter restrictions upon religion. Equally, via the Government Bill and other proposed measures, he feared that parliament would greatly reduce the size of the army by slashing the military budget and remove the guaranteed permanent joint control of the Lord Protector over the armed forces. There were reports that by the end of November 1654 Cromwell and his supporters had given up on the parliament and its draft constitution and were determined to slow down proceedings so that the session could be ended by a Protectoral dissolution as soon as possible and with the new Government Bill still incomplete.[6] With signs of opposition and trouble brewing outside as well as inside the parliament, Cromwell duly ended the session at the earliest opportunity on 22 January 1655. In an angry and bitter dissolution speech, he roundly condemned the MPs for undermining the peace and harmony they had inherited and creating division and discontent in their place, and for wittingly or unwittingly encouraging the activities of enemies at home and abroad, thus threatening the parliamentary cause and needlessly creating 'real dangers to the whole'. Alleging that the MPs had not fulfilled their duty to make 'good and wholesome provisions for the good of the people of these nations', he concluded that it was 'not for the profit of these nations, nor fit for the common and public good' for the parliament to continue.[7]

The abrupt dissolution of the first Protectorate Parliament marks one of the nadirs of Cromwell's rule and appeared both at the time and in hindsight as a key turning point of the Protectorate. In part, this was due to what the parliament had failed to do – it had refused to accept and thus give broader legitimacy to the army-backed written constitution, the Instrument of Government, of December 1653; it had failed to make any new laws, including in those areas which Cromwell had drawn to parliament's attention at the start of the session; it had failed to confirm and approve the Protectoral ordinances of the opening months of the regime; and it had failed to vote any new money or to strengthen or confirm the financial basis of the regime. In part, it was also due to what the parliament had done and signified during its twenty weeks – the outright opposition to the regime of the opening week and the more subdued and subtle chipping away at the existing constitution during the remainder of the session had made clear





that large parts of the political nation, even those parts enfranchised and allowed into the parliamentary process by the Instrument, did not share Cromwell's vision and agenda. In the wake of this, Cromwell and his circle certainly did not abandon or water down that agenda – if anything, in the aftermath of the first Protectorate Parliament their commitment to godly reformation was strengthened – but they now saw themselves more starkly as an embattled minority, doing the right thing but hedged in with threats, reversals and almost overwhelming opposition; Barry Coward has spoken of a resulting 'siege mentality' of Cromwell and his political colleagues during 1655.[8] In part, the failure of the parliament and the angry dissolution of January 1655 came to be seen as a turning point because they were followed in fairly quick succession by a number of other difficulties and reversals at home and abroad, with one trouble following on from and compounding another during the year, buffeting and bruising the regime. During the opening months of the Protectorate, in 1654, Cromwell and his council seemed to be in control of events, setting the agenda and making clear progress amidst a mood of general optimism; in contrast, during 1655 Protector and council were often not in control, were having to react to often unforeseen events and bad news and were struggling to keep their heads above water amidst a mood of pessimism or crisis, coming up with ad hoc responses of often dubious legal or constitutional propriety.

The string of problems and setbacks which beset the regime during 1655 are well known, have been thoroughly charted by a range of historians[9] and can be rehearsed here quite briefly. During the winter of 1654-55 there was an undercurrent of political disaffection within the army, leading to sporadic though limited outbursts of open opposition, all of them nipped in the bud. For example, in November 1654 three colonels, Matthew Alured, Thomas Saunders and John Okey, petitioned against the Instrument in general and its empowerment of a single head of state in particular, in the opening weeks of 1655 major-general Robert Overton, colonel William Eyers and major-general William Allen were apprehended on suspicion of working against the regime and in February another clutch of republican opponents, including major-general Thomas Harrison, colonel Nathaniel Rich and quarter-master-general Hugh Courtney, were arrested and questioned. In one or two cases these men were allowed to keep their commissions, but most were stripped of their commands and many were also imprisoned. During the opening weeks of 1655 the government, via the vigilant John Thurloe, became increasingly aware of royalist plotting, and responded by moving troops from Scotland and Ireland to England, raising new troops in and around London, clamping down on horse races

and other meetings and arresting key figures suspected of involvement in royalist plotting. Accordingly, the planned royalist risings which took place in Northumberland, Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and elsewhere during the second week of March were generally very feeble and quickly collapsed or imploded, though the rising led by John Penruddock in Wiltshire proved more substantial and drew in several hundred armed men before being crushed by troops in Devon. During spring 1655 there were several troubling legal challenges to the regime – although the judges gave Penruddock and his cronies short shrift when they tried to challenge the treasonable nature of their activities and a string of executions and transportations followed guilty verdicts, other judges sent north to try the Yorkshire conspirators seemed sympathetic to claims that the treason ordinance passed by Protector and council in January 1654 had no legal standing and thus that no valid statute made it treason to oppose the Protector and Protectoral regime, and the wavering judges were swiftly dismissed by Cromwell and his council upon their return to London; a London merchant, George Cony, was refusing to pay customs duties to the regime on the similar grounds that the customs ordinance of March 1654 had no legal standing and again he seemed to gain some support when his case came to court in May 1655, though once more Protector and council stifled the opposition by imprisoning Cony's lawyers and reprimanding the judge, who promptly resigned; in June 1655 two commissioners of the great seal resigned over their opposition to the implementation of the reformist 1654 Chancery ordinance; and in July 1655 Protector and council employed more heavy-handed tactics to crush opposition from Sir Peter Wentworth, a republican opponent of the regime who was refusing to pay his taxes on the grounds that the 1654 assessment ordinances had no legal standing.

If the domestic developments of the winter and spring had been unfavourable, evidence of a disaffection which was easily crushed, but through rather brutal actions of often questionable legality – up to and including indefinite imprisonment without trial – and which undoubtedly further shook the self-confidence of the regime, the news from overseas was even worse. In late May 1655, word reached London of the massacre of the Vaudois or Waldensian Protestants of the Alpine valleys of Piedmont in northern Italy at the hands of troops of the Catholic Duke of Savoy, an ally of the French. The godly at home sympathised and empathised with the suffering Waldensians – some saw the events as a replay of the terrible massacre of Protestants in Ireland in the wake of the Irish Catholic rebellion of autumn 1641 or believed that they signalled the start of a sequence in which Protestant churches and communities throughout





Europe might be at risk – and the events certainly struck a chord with a horrified Cromwell. He responded swiftly, acting energetically and eventually quite successfully both to raise support and cash for the Waldensians at home and to launch a diplomatic campaign abroad to end the massacres and to secure at least a measure of renewed toleration and security for the remaining Waldensian communities. Even worse, in July news reached London that the amphibious mission which had been dispatched to the Caribbean at the end of 1654, the so-called Western Design comprising 30 ships and 3,000 men intended to attack and capture Spanish possessions, particularly the island of Hispaniola, had instead been heavily defeated and repulsed by the Spanish around San Domingo on 25 April 1655. Although the survivors were then able to occupy and subsequently to defend and hold Jamaica, this was seen as no consolation. The failure of the Western Design was interpreted not just as a huge setback to Protectoral foreign policy but also, by Cromwell and by others at the heart of government, as a rebuke from the Lord. The double-edged sword of providentialism now bit deep, for if Cromwell interpreted the almost unbroken string of military victories of the previous decade, from Marston Moor and Naseby, through Preston, Drogheda and Wexford, to Dunbar and Worcester, as gifts from God and signs that Cromwell and his troops were doing God's work, so he had to see the failure at Hispaniola as not merely a military set-back but also a sign of God's displeasure, as a warning that the regime in general and perhaps its head in particular had somehow transgressed and moved away from God's mission. As demonstrated in detail by Blair Worden, it is clear that Cromwell did interpret the failure of the Western Design in precisely this way, triggering a crisis of confidence in which Cromwell sought to discover how the regime had lost God's support, contemplated whether his own actions had perhaps brought the Lord's displeasure, and searched for ways and means by which those sins and errors could be extirpated in order to reconnect with the Lord and recover divine support.[10]

In the light of these domestic and foreign reversals, Cromwell and his council pushed ahead with a clutch of new or modified policies during the summer and autumn of 1655 which could be interpreted both as reactions to a crisis at the heart of government but also as evidence of a further downward spiral, exacerbating or extending a continuing crisis and dragging the regime into unsavoury and potentially unconstitutional areas. There was a nibbling away at liberties and traditional forms, seen in August and September with a partial restoration of press censorship handled by a council committee and the resulting closure of most of the regular

newspapers, leaving just two tightly-controlled and ultra-loyal newspapers in circulation, and again later in September with a proclamation of Protector and council renewing and extending earlier parliamentary legislation prohibiting so-called 'delinquents' from holding municipal office[11] and leading on to a limited but significant purging of town government designed to root out opponents of the regime; at the same time, towns were encouraged to apply for new charters, again allowing Protector and council to alter and control the composition of town government. Above all, and most famously, at the beginning of autumn 1655 Protector and council extended to the whole of England and Wales the new tier of semi-military provincial government first tried earlier in the year in south-west England in the wake of the Penruddock rising. Groups of counties were placed under the supervision of major-generals, who had extensive power to clamp down on anti-government activities, to step up police action against suspected royalists, Catholics and other opponents, and to bolster and enhance existing measures against sinful activity, including drinking, swearing, gambling and sexual incontinence, thus also advancing the cause of godly reformation. The major-generals were to be assisted by new bodies of commissioners, overlaying rather than superseding the traditional forms of county government, and by a newly raised horse militia. The system was to be funded by a new tax of 10% levied upon wealthier former royalists. Just as Protector and council had acted with questionable legality in claiming the right to extend expiring parliamentary legislation on municipal government and with questionable commitment to the cause of liberty in reimposing censorship, so in establishing the system headed by the major-generals, Protector and council had stretched if not exceeded their constitutional powers by creating a new system of provincial government, by imposing a new non-parliamentary tax and by taxing people for past 'crimes' from which they had since been absolved by a subsequent parliamentary Act of Oblivion. Compounding this, towards the end of 1655 Protector and council issued a clutch of proclamations and declarations further clamping down on the activities of alleged or suspected royalists.[12]

All these problems, reversals and crises and the often dubious executive responses to them have been well-charted by historians. But there are other, generally lesser-studied developments and measures of 1655, which contributed to the growing difficulties of the regime. During 1655 the regime's financial situation worsened, in part because of the costs of the unsuccessful actions against Spanish possessions and of running the system of the major-generals, in part because – presumably in an attempt to court the public and win a degree of support, as well as to fall in line with views





expressed in the first Protectorate Parliament – Protector and council decided early in 1655 to lower the main, direct, regular tax, the assessments, from £90,000 to £60,000 per month in England and Wales. Coming on top of an earlier reduction from £120,000 to £90,000 per month in autumn 1654, this meant that in barely six months the executive had decided to halve its main source of income. Whatever the result in terms of popularity, this proved a disaster financially, reducing the regime's income by over £700,000 per annum and plunging it deep into the red, for by 1655-56 government expenditure was outrunning income by over £500,000 per year. Religion also gave rise to some difficulties during 1655. Personal meetings between the Protector and leading Quakers and Fifth Monarchists, including George Fox, John Simpson and Christopher Feake, during winter 1654-55, in pursuit of greater religious harmony and congruity ended in failure and in mid February 1655 Protector and council issued a proclamation which at least on paper restricted the position and activities of some religious groups, such as the Ranters and the Quakers.[13] Towards the end of the year the Protector championed the cause of the Jews, seeking in a series of conferences held between 4 and 18 December to secure a formal and binding judgment allowing them legally to enter and settle in this country. However, the weight of opinion came down against Cromwell's preferred policy and formal 'readmission' could not be secured. Constitutionally, too, Cromwell and his council found themselves in an uncomfortable position in 1655, for with the meeting of the first Protectorate Parliament they had lost their earlier power to make new laws and ordinances and so found themselves having to govern the nations for months on end without clear power to issue directives carrying legislative authority. In practice, Cromwell and his council steered an uncomfortable middle course during 1655, refraining from issuing directives under the explicit title of law or ordinance, but instead issuing assorted proclamations, orders and declarations which they certainly deemed to have legislative power and which renewed, extended or altered existing parliamentary legislation, reimposed old or imposed completely new taxes, restricted religious activity or made certain activities illegal. Many of these measures were themselves of doubtful legality and, lacking strong and clear constitutional authority, Protector and council found themselves treading on very thin legal ice during 1655.[14]

Personally, too, 1655 was a year of crisis for Cromwell. Occasional illness apart – he suffered a bout of ill health over the summer – Cromwell played an active role in government over this period, attending council meetings assiduously. Repeatedly during the year he noted and clung to evidence that

he was doing the Lord's work and had the Lord's support – thus in March 1655 he saw the failure of the royalist rebellions as 'a blessing of God' and 'of the hand of God going along with us' and in June he felt that a naval success against Tunis shipping was evidence of 'the good hand of God towards us'.[15] These signs were all the more precious because they went some way to countering the clear evidence of God's displeasure, seen in the Waldensian massacres and more piercingly in the failure of the Western Design. Cromwell quickly concluded that part of the problem with the latter had been 'the extreme avarice, pride and confidence, disorders and debauchedness, profaneness and wickedness' prevalent in the expedition which had thus earned God's displeasure and rebuke and he worked to remove 'all manner of vice' and to create 'virtue and godliness' amongst the surviving elements of the expedition.[16] But Cromwell was also concerned that he and his immediate family might have earned God's displeasure because of their own ambitions and he was clearly acutely aware of the persistent contemporary accusations that he was an ambitious, self-seeking hypocrite who sought power and wealth for himself and his family. Thus in summer 1655 he wrote to his son-in-law Charles Fleetwood in Ireland, denying rumours that he was about to replace Fleetwood with his younger son, Henry Cromwell, noting the current 'jealousies...and the spirit of calumny' and declaring that 'My heart is for the people of God: that the Lord knows, and I trust will in due time manifest; yet thence are my wounds'. Clearly worried by accusations of self-advancement, Cromwell went on both to deny rumours that he was about to make himself king and to express a wish that his sons had remained private men living in the country, before concluding by asking Fleetwood to 'Pray for me, that the Lord will direct, and keep me His servant. I bless the Lord I am not my own; but my condition to flesh and blood is very hard. Pray for me'.[17] The surviving evidence of Cromwell's own letters suggests, though never makes absolutely explicit, that by summer 1655 Cromwell was fearful that he had overstepped the mark and given way to the temptation of personal or family ambition, thus contributing to the withdrawal of God's support for him and his regime.

When he opened his second Protectorate Parliament in September 1656 Cromwell characterised the last twenty months, since the dissolution of his first Protectorate Parliament in January 1655, as a time of danger and menace, of threats to the regime and the people at home and abroad, so that 'the very being and interest of these nations, these nations in general, and especially...the interest of the people of God in these nations', had been under grave threat.[18] The failure and angry dissolution of the first





Protectorate Parliament had proved a turning point for the worse in the history of the Cromwellian Protectorate and the following months had seen set-back after set-back, troubles, divisions and reversals aplenty. The government had never collapsed, given up or ceased to function, nor had the executive itself become hopelessly divided or riven by faction. Indeed, for all the problems of 1655, there is remarkably little sign of significant divisions either between the Protector and his council or between different groups within the council, very little evidence, for example, of so-called 'military' and 'civilian' factions opening up and going different ways, as they were allegedly to do later in the Protectorate. But even if they remained substantially united and reasonably active, the events of 1655 clearly took their toll on Protector and council and there are unmistakable signs of siege mentality and crisis planning, with all their shortcomings. As the executive arm was buffeted by events and struggled to maintain a degree of control, rights and liberties were undermined, earlier ways of doing things were reversed, constitutional and legal niceties were flouted and a succession of rather drastic and dubious actions were taken. Although he never uttered the phrase itself or anything like it, 1655 must have been Oliver Cromwell's 'annus horribilis'. For the Protector and his regime, on many different fronts and in many different ways 1655 truly was a year of crisis.

Notes.

1. W. C. Abbott (ed), *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (4 vols, Cambridge, Mass., 1937-47), III, 572. This paper was delivered at the opening of a day conference entitled '1655 – Year of Crisis?' held at the Royal Armouries in Leeds in November 2005. The text has been slightly tidied-up and lightly referenced for publication, but otherwise remains true to the arguments presented at Leeds.
2. See C. H. Firth (ed), *The Clarke Papers* (4 vols, London, 1891-1901), II, 242, n. c for Firth's dating of this letter, from its position amongst other letters, to the period 14-18 January.
3. C. H. Firth & G. Davies, *The Regimental History of Cromwell's Army* (2 vols but with continuous pagination, Oxford, 1940), pp. 289, 292-97; T. Birch (ed), *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe, Esquire* (7 vols, London, 1742), III, 75-76, 197, VI, 71.
4. Firth, *Clarke Papers*, II, 239-42; Abbott, *Writings and Speeches*, III, 572-73.
5. Cromwell's very optimistic opening speech of 4 September is probably most accessible in I. A. Roots (ed), *Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (London, 1989), pp. 28-40.
6. The anonymous author of *A Representation Concerning the Late Parliament*

*in the Year 1654, to Prevent Mistakes* (London, 1655, British Library, Thomason Tract [hereafter BL, TT] E831 (13)), alleges that in late November or early December, in the light of parliamentary decisions disliked by the government and by 'some men of eminent Rank', a decision was taken 'to hold the House in debate without suffering a conclusion until the set time of months was wasted, and then to dissolve', in response to which supporters of the Government Bill tried to push ahead by sitting all day, every day, and excluding all other business. Although lacking clear corroboration, circumstantial evidence is consistent with it – the regime's supporters did receive various set-backs around this time, on 22 November the House resolved to hear no private business for a month, from the following week it began to sit morning and afternoon quite regularly and on 30 November there was a formal resolution to sit all day, every day.

7. Roots, *Speeches*, pp. 57-77.
8. B. Coward, *The Cromwellian Protectorate* (Manchester, 2002), pp. 52-58, a section headed 'The Protectorate's siege mentality' within a chapter on 'The crisis of the Cromwellian Protectorate, February 1655-June 1656'.
9. See P. Gaunt, 'The Councils of the Protectorate, from December 1653 to September 1658' (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Exeter, 1983), chapter 6; P. Gaunt, *Oliver Cromwell* (Oxford, 1996) chapter 6; B. Coward, *Oliver Cromwell* (Harlow, 1991), chapter 6; B. Coward, *The Cromwellian Protectorate*, chapter 3; R. Hutton, *The British Republic, 1649-1660* (2nd edn, Basingstoke, 2000), part 2.
10. A. B. Worden, 'Oliver Cromwell and the sin of Achan', in D. Beales & G. Best (eds), *History, Society and the Churches* (Cambridge, 1985).
11. BL, TT 669 f20 (15), with an original manuscript copy bearing Cromwell's signature at the National Archives, C82/2251.
12. See BL, TT 669 f20 (17), (20), (30).
13. BL, TT 669 f19 (68).
14. The constitutional uncertainty surrounding the position and powers of Protector and council in 1655-56 and the often dubious ploys they adopted are explored in far greater detail in Gaunt, 'Councils of the Protectorate', pp. 152-66.
15. Abbott, *Writings and Speeches*, III, 671, 745.
16. Abbott, *Writings and Speeches*, III, 858-59.
17. Abbott, *Writings and Speeches*, III, 756.
18. Roots, *Speeches*, pp. 79-106.

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# 'CRISIS? WHAT CRISIS?' WAS 1655 A 'YEAR OF CRISIS' FOR THE CROMWELLIAN PROTECTORATE?

*By Professor Barry Coward*

After that brilliant exposition of the argument that 1655 was a year of crisis for the Cromwellian Protectorate by Peter Gaunt, you may be asking how on earth am I going to be able to counter that case by putting the argument that the Cromwellian Protectorate did not face a crisis 350 years ago in 1655. If you are wondering how I am going to do that, could I say that I feel exactly the same, so strongly has Peter put his case. Indeed my discomfiture at this point is increased by the fact that only three years ago in a book called *The Cromwellian Protectorate* the chapter on the year 1655 was given the bold title 'The Crisis of the Cromwellian Protectorate, February 1655-June 1656', and the author of that book was none other than myself! So how on earth can I deny that that period was one of crisis for the regime?

Well, my starting point for making that case is that I now think that I was wrong to use that word about 1655, and if there ever is a second edition of my book I'll change the title of that chapter. And I'll do so because 'crisis' is a misleading word to use about what happened to the Cromwellian Protectorate in 1655. I say this because the word 'crisis' as applied to governments or states has (at least) three major implications, none of which applies to the situation the Cromwellian Protectorate found itself in during 1655. Firstly, the word 'crisis' implies that the government is so shaken by the situation facing it that its self-confidence drains away to such an extent that it is in danger of becoming a spent political force. Secondly, the word 'crisis' also implies a government that is shaken to the core in another sense, by internal disputes that are so serious that it loses its sense of direction and is (at best) forced to adopt different policies from the ones it originally followed in order to survive. And the third implication of a government in 'crisis' is that it faces a situation that is worse than all that: it faces a situation in which its very existence is put at risk. What I want to argue in what follows is that none of these three scenarios that go to make up what is often commonly meant by a 'crisis' of government applies to the Cromwellian Protectorate in 1655.

First of all, the leaders of the Cromwellian Protectorate, shaken though they probably were by the succession of events in 1655 that Peter has catalogued, certainly did not lose any of their initial self-confidence in what they were aiming to achieve; nor did it 'knock them off course' as many have often assumed. On the contrary, my belief is that the effects of these

events were the opposite of that. I think that what happened in 1655 increased (not decreased) their commitment to their agenda for bringing about change in Britain. There is, of course, no denying that the Cromwellian Protectorate in 1655 suffered a series of major setbacks. Peter has told you about these and so I don't need to go over the same ground at length. Undeniably the first of these setbacks was the sudden dissolution of the first Protectorate Parliament in January 1655. That parliament had hardly been what Oliver Cromwell and those around him hoped for when it had first met in September 1654. The Protector's angry speech at its dissolution reflected his bitter disappointment at the failure of MPs to carry on with the work of godly reformation that Protector and Council had begun in the series of reforming ordinances issued by them in the first nine months of the Protectorate. Nor could that disillusion have been lifted by the alarming evidence in 1655 that the ranks of the Protectorate's opponents and critics had grown greatly in recent months. That Levellers like John Wildman were now inveterate opponents of the Protectorate was not surprising, but more disappointingly so must have been the evidence of emerging dissatisfaction in the army, which led to the arrest and imprisonment of three colonels, Matthew Alured, Thomas Saunders and John Okey, as well as other army officers, for opposing the regime. And on top of that came evidence that the Protectorate not only faced enemies within but also without, notably in daily reports that came in of the activities of royalist terrorist organisations, principally the Sealed Knot, that were widely believed to be responsible for the royalist rebellion in March 1655 in Wiltshire led by Colonel John Penruddock.

Nor, it soon became apparent, were the regime and its cause of godly reformation only faced with threats in this country. In the summer of 1655 came evidence that the godly cause was imperilled in Europe as news filtered in of the massacre of Protestant communities, the Vaudois or Waldensians, in remote Alpine villages in Piedmont by Catholic troops of the duke of Savoy. The Cromwellian Protectorate sprang to their defence by organising financial relief and putting diplomatic pressure on the duke of Savoy to stop the massacres, actions that are still remembered with gratitude by the Italian successors of the Waldensians, as we saw on 3 September this year when some of them (including a splendid youth choir) came to our Cromwell Day service in London. And then, hard on the heels of that news of the Vaudois massacre, came reports of the defeat at San Domingo of the Western Design, the expeditionary force sent by the Cromwellian Protectorate to attack the heart of the Spanish Empire in the





Caribbean. To some in the Cromwellian circle, including Oliver himself, that perhaps raised the awful thought that God whose support they believed had been responsible for their earlier victories in the Civil War and after might now have turned his back on them.

Did not this series of events amount to a crisis for the Cromwellian Protectorate? Well, no is my answer, because the leaders of the regime did not react in a way that might have plunged it into a crisis, as would clearly have happened if they had been so demoralised by the setbacks that they lost the resolve to carry on with their pursuit of reformation. What I want to emphasise is that the leaders of the Cromwellian Protectorate did not react like that at all. On the contrary, the setbacks seem to have given them renewed strength and commitment to the cause of reformation. In order to understand this reaction, you need to get to grips with the godly mentality of those at the heart of the Cromwellian Protectorate. I use the word 'godly' not 'Puritan' here because that is what they called themselves in order to indicate that they had a burning zeal to bring about another reformation in Britain; not just a reformation of the Church that had been begun in the sixteenth century, but a godly reformation of people's thoughts and deeds, a reformation that sought to abolish sin. That aspiration was central to the revolutionary agenda of change they aimed to make a reality. And, not surprisingly, this was an agenda that was not shared by everyone. A campaign to abolish sin is not likely to get wide popular support at any time; and it did not get it in 1655. The godly were always in a minority and, like other minorities at other times and in other societies, their sense of being different, rather than weakening them, was a source of great strength. The fact that they were an embattled minority was a bond that unified them. Opposition only made them more determined to pursue their beliefs and aspirations.

That godly mentality (a siege mentality if you like – in fact if I were to re-title my chapter on 1655 in my *Cromwellian Protectorate* I'd call it 'the Siege Mentality of the Cromwellian Protectorate') is the key to understanding most of the decisions made by Protector and Council in 1655. These decisions (or so it seems to me) show how that siege mentality brought about, not a crisis that diverted them from the cause of godly reformation, but a renewed determination to press on with it with even greater zeal. Take, for example, the major proclamation that the Protector issued in February 1655, only days after the dissolution of parliament. This was a ringing declaration of a commitment to the core aim of the regime to promote religious unity of as wide a variety of different religious beliefs as

possible and as was consistent with the maintenance of public order. Of course this ideal is not equivalent to that of modern notions of religious toleration. It did not include Catholics or anyone who threatened public order, as did many of the early Quakers at this time. But it clearly set out a promise by the Protector to 'preserve and continue this freedom and liberty [to exercise their religion] to all persons in this Commonwealth fearing God, though of differing judgements, by protecting them in the sober and quiet exercise and profession of religion, and the sincere worship of God, against all such who shall, by imposing upon the consciences of their brethren, or offering violence to their person, or any other way, seek to hinder them therein'. And then having re-stated that ideal, Protector Cromwell then set about trying to make that ideal a reality. Cromwell himself took a major personal role in this, opening up dialogues with different religious groups at both ends of the Protestant spectrum, with Quaker leaders like George Fox and Fifth Monarchists like Christopher Feake on the one hand, and with a spokesman of Prayer Book episcopalian Protestantism, Archbishop James Ussher, at the other, trying to find ways to accommodate them within the Cromwellian Church.

These attempts failed, but my point is that what they show is the continued, strengthened determination to bring together all godly people (which I am arguing sprang from a siege not a crisis mentality in 1655), which is the proper context in which to put one of the most remarkable initiatives of the Cromwellian Protectorate in 1655: the attempt made by Oliver Cromwell and a few of the Council to bring about the readmission of the Jews to England, an attempt which was only partially successful in that, although the readmission gained tacit acceptance, it was never formally approved. It is a fantastic episode in the history of the Cromwellian Protectorate that undoubtedly will be commemorated next year in Jewish circles (next year rather than this since it was in 1656 that the unofficial readmission really took off), but the attempt to bring it about was made at a conference in Whitehall in December 1655. My point about it here is that Cromwell's main aim in pushing so hard for it at that conference was to allow the Jews back into the country so that their conversion to Christianity could be effected, thus fulfilling biblical prophecies that this conversion would herald the creation of a new Jerusalem that Cromwell hoped would take place in Britain. For me, a major significance of the events that led to the readmission of the Jews after 1655 is that they show that some of those at the helm of the Cromwellian Protectorate were committed more than ever to achieving the goals they had when the Protectorate was first established.





If I had time (which I haven't) I would explain at greater length how this same siege mentality also led to many other features of the Cromwellian Protectorate in 1655, like the way that major efforts were made to forge closer links with godly groups in the localities, like the mayor and inhabitants of Harwich who in a petition in February 1655 talked about their country as a 'British Jerusalem'. This same mentality too accounts for the authoritarian measures adopted by Protector and Council in 1655, like the way they threw the lawyers of the merchant, George Cony, into jail for having the effrontery to put their client's case that he should not pay customs duties since they had not been approved by parliament but merely by a Protectorate ordinance. Lord Chief Justice Rolle was reprimanded for allowing the case to proceed. And there were many other examples of similar high-handed, authoritarian measures taken by the regime in 1655, of which the outstanding example is the appointment of the infamous Major-Generals to oversee local government in England and Wales (a topic which we are going to hear about from John Sutton this afternoon). The rule of the Major Generals is a complex topic because one needs to separate the simple image of government by jack-booted upstarts from a more complicated reality. But there is no doubt that the decision to appoint the Major Generals was prompted in part by the siege mentality I've been describing, which led them to take extraordinary measures, including giving the Major-Generals wide powers to tax people with a royalist past by the so-called decimation tax, to keep track of (and if necessary imprison) royalists as suspected terrorists, and to take measures to stamp on those found guilty of drunkenness, excessive swearing, extra marital sex and other sinful practices.

My major point so far has been to explain why I think that what all this shows is that, far from being a regime that was knocked off its planned course by a crisis of confidences in 1655, the Cromwellian Protectorate remained strongly committed to its core aim of godly reformation and to do so by all means at its disposal.

Nor did 1655 (and this is my second line of argument against the notion that 1655 was a year of crisis for the Cromwellian Protectorate) see the opening up of cracks within the regime, fractures between so-called 'civilian' and 'military' Cromwellian factions that amounted to a 'crisis' that threatened to tear the regime apart and that resulted in a marked change of direction as the regime now adopted more conservative policies than before, which has been a common view of it in the past.

Now I am not for one moment going to claim that there were no differences of viewpoints within the ruling circles of the Cromwellian Protectorate. Every regime surely has people who disagree with others about matters of policy. Even from what has been in the past the tightly controlled arena of the Blair government, we are now getting reports of quite significant internal rows amongst those at the heart of the Blair government about matters like the introduction of a total ban on smoking in England and Wales! Differences amongst members of Protector Cromwell's government are even harder to see than amongst the members of the Blair government, partly because minutes of Council debates have not survived. Yet other sources show that such differences did exist. For example in 1655-6 in the period after the sudden dissolution of the first Protectorate Parliament there seems to have been quite a sharp debate in the Protectorate Council about the wisdom of calling a second parliament and, if one were to be called, its timing. Historians commenting on these divisions commonly talk about them taking place between so-called 'military Cromwellians' and 'civilian Cromwellians'. I don't feel strongly about this but I'm tempted to avoid those kinds of labels given the fact that most people in the Cromwellian Protectorate had some kind of military past. A much better distinction between factions in the regime I think is to be found on the issue of religious liberty, on the extent of religious liberty that could safely be allowed. On this issue there were quite significant differences between say radical Cromwellians like Charles Fleetwood and John Lambert and more conservative Cromwellians like Roger Boyle Lord Broghill. And there's no denying that these differences were to become significant in the latter part of the Oliver Cromwellian Protectorate and were to result in the ditching of the Instrument of Government and the making of a new Protectorate constitution in 1657, after which John Lambert withdrew from active participation in the affairs of the Protectorate for a time.

But the point I want to make is that these differences never, even in the context of the pressure cooker atmosphere of 1655, came near to tearing the Protectorate apart, which is a view you sometimes see, for example in the writings of Carol Egloff. Even after 1655, during the last years of the Protectorate, I don't think this true. It's even less true in 1655. To show you what I mean, take the relationship between Oliver Cromwell and the only man within the Protectorate with the political ability and support within the army to come anywhere near rivalling the Protector's dominant position, John Lambert. Now it's true that these men did fall out in 1657 when the





first constitution of the Protectorate, the Instrument of Government (which Lambert had had a major part in drafting) was ditched in favour of a new constitution, the Humble Petition and Advice, after which Lambert withdrew temporarily from politics. But it's a mistake (I think) to read history backwards and to see relations between the two men before that date as one of increasingly bitter rivalry, because in 1655 there is no evidence of this. Both men seemed to have worked together to try to make a success of the Instrument of Government and there is no evidence to assume (as some have done) that they disagreed on the establishment of the rule of the Major Generals.

Indeed so insignificant is the evidence of internal rifts within the Oliver Cromwellian Protectorate in this middle phase of its history that it becomes pertinent to ask why internal disagreements did not develop into a crisis for the regime. I have two suggested explanations. One is Oliver Cromwell's political skill, not in the public arena of parliaments, where his record is open to criticism in not paying enough attention to hands-on management of parliamentary business; where Cromwell's political ability shone more brightly is in the behind-the-scenes or what a later age called the 'smoked-filled rooms' arena of politics. There are not too many comparisons to be made between James VI and I and Oliver Cromwell, but this is one. Both men were adept at standing above the political factions around them and therefore being able to bring them together. My other explanation is to come back again to my point that, differences though there might be about details, most members of the Cromwellian Protectorate government had a shared attachment to basic aims.

What, then, finally, of the last argument I want to address: that 1655 was a year of crisis for the Cromwellian Protectorate in the sense that its continued existence was under threat? The evidence that this was not so is so overwhelming that I have no time at all to do it justice. Of course, I have to be careful not to overplay my argument here. It is true that, apart from local godly groups up and down the country, like the burghers of Harwich I mentioned earlier who talked about the country under the Protectorate as a 'British Jerusalem', it is difficult to find much evidence of positive support for the republican regime. But equally it is difficult to see much overt opposition to it. Indeed I think that as the 1650s wore on the vast majority of people in the country became reconciled to it as a regime that provided stability at home and security abroad (via a powerful Cromwellian navy) from external threats. But what about those people who were (to borrow a

phrase from the title of John Sutton's talk this afternoon) 'that irreconcilable generation'?

What I want to do in my last few minutes is to look at that group, die-hard royalists. They are a group that can be used (and have been) to buttress the view of a regime facing a crisis. After all did not the Protectorate face a royalist rebellion in 1655 led by Penruddock that was perhaps a symptom of a nation seething with resentment at the existence of a republic and yearning for the return of monarchy? Was that nationwide uprising by what we'd now call 'insurgents' only prevented by (again using modern terminology) vigilant 'government counter terrorist activity'? Was not the Protectorate only prevented from collapsing into crisis by a war waged against terror?

Certainly that is the view that you might think finds support in government sources. Look at the way that government newspapers in 1655 reported the arrest of people who were suspected of being royal terrorists, the recall of troops from Scotland and Ireland to meet the security threat in England and so on. I don't want to push modern parallels too far, but there are similarities between then and now in the portrayal of an axis of evil at work aimed at the very heart of the government and threatening its very existence. An important question about this is did the regime believe it? For what it's worth, I think they did. I don't think this is a case of cynical manipulation of opinion. But that is really not the most important question about this topic. It's much more important to ask how serious in reality was the royalist terrorist threat to the continuing existence or stability of the regime?

And what's interesting is that, when you look at the evidence of the royalist conspirators (through other lenses than the magnifying lenses of government propaganda) as was done by D. Underdown in his book, *Royalist Conspiracy in England 1649-60*, what you find is not a masterly-organised conspiracy but a picture of inept planning by royalist splinter groups divided amongst themselves, groups who had about as much chance of organising a successful uprising to overthrow the Cromwellian Protectorate as had the hapless conspirators in the Monty Python film, 'The Life of Brian', the Judean People's Front, the People's Front of Judea and the single-member Judean Popular People's Front, of combining to overthrow the mighty Roman Empire. Given the similarly shambolic state of the main royalist conspiratorial organisation, the Sealed Knot, and its internecine rivalries with other royalist émigrés groups, it's not surprising





that the planned nationwide royalist rebellions of 1655 never happened and that the one that did, Penruddock's, was so easily quashed. Significantly from 1655 right through to Booth's rebellion in the summer of 1659, royalist rebellions against the Cromwellian Protectorate got about as much committed support as did the Jacobites in England in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries; in other words, not very much.

So my final point is a simple one. Don't be misled by the words coming from the Cromwellian Protectorate about the extent and seriousness of the opposition it faced. My final point is that if there was crisis in 1655, it was certainly not one faced by the Cromwellian Protectorate. If 1655 was a year of crisis for anyone, it was one faced by its royalist opponents.

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# YEAR OF CRISIS OR TURNING POINT? 1655 IN ITS 'BRITISH' CONTEXT.[1]

*By Dr Patrick Little*

'British' history, or perhaps more properly 'British and Irish' history, is the height of fashion in historical circles. No longer can English history of the early modern period – and specifically the seventeenth century – be studied without reference to the other nations that formed the British Isles – Ireland, Scotland, and also Wales. Yet, like all fashions, 'British' history is prone to ego and excess. Particularly worrying is the creed of 'equivalence'. According to this dictum, not only must all nations be considered in historical writing, they must also be given equal weight. This may be politically correct, but it is far from being historically correct. To my mind, the only really successful attempts at an integrated 'British' history are those that recognise the primacy of England, as the richest, most populous, most powerful and most important of the three nations. This is especially the case when studying the civil wars and the interregnum. Although the crises in all the 'British' nations were interlinked right from the start (from 1637, if not before), the solution to them depended on decisions made in England, and only in England. Thus, the king's defeat at Naseby in 1645 was the decisive battle of the civil wars in Ireland and Scotland as well as in England. In the later 1640s, the future of Ireland and Scotland was settled by Englishmen in England, first negotiating with the king, and then executing him. The formal Cromwellian union of England, Ireland and Scotland established under the protectorate after 1653, with its attempts at economic, religious and political integration, and the calling of MPs from all three nations to sit in a union parliament at Westminster, is perhaps the most striking incidence of 'British' history in the whole century, but again, it would be a nonsense to suggest that England was anything other than the senior partner. This does not mean that Ireland and Scotland had no influence over English affairs (later on I shall argue that their influence was very great indeed), but it does mean that England was of paramount importance to contemporaries, and must be for us too. The purpose of this paper is to consider the influence of Ireland and Scotland on the Cromwellian state in the mid-1650s, and to put the protectorate into its 'British' context; but the story must start with a survey of the situation in England.

## I

Traditionally, the politics of the army have dominated our understanding of the 'English Revolution'. From its inception in 1645, the New Model Army was politically charged. In the spring and summer of 1647 the army





intervened directly in politics for the first time, allowing the Independent faction to face down its Presbyterian rivals, and seize control of affairs at Westminster. In December 1648 it was New Model officers, led by Colonel Thomas Pride, who purged the moderates and Presbyterians from the House of Commons, thus ensuring parliamentary support for the trial and execution of King Charles in January 1649. The success of the commonwealth at home and abroad depended on the victories of its armed forces on land (notably in Ireland and Scotland and at Worcester) and at sea (against the Dutch). When Oliver Cromwell closed down the Rump Parliament in April 1653 he did so as a general at the head of files of musketeers. At this stage, Cromwell was acting as an archetypal army officer. He saw the New Model as the guarantor of the political and religious revolution – an instrument of God's providence on the battlefield, a truer representative of the people in civil government than the corrupt and compromised Parliament. In the experimental governments that followed the dissolution of the Rump, Cromwell relied heavily on the army. Army officers were well represented in the Nominated Assembly (or 'Barebone's Parliament'); and they drafted the Instrument of Government that made Cromwell protector in December 1653. Cromwell's council was weighted towards the senior officers, with John Lambert, John Disbrowe, Charles Fleetwood, William Sydenham and others forming a powerful caucus at the centre of government, known as the 'army interest'. Their influence, already evident in 1654, reached its zenith in 1655, not only through the council and its committees, but also, in the localities, with the 'cantonisation' of England and Wales under the major generals. In 1655 there was much to suggest that the protectorate was indeed a 'military dictatorship'.

Yet the army forms only one side of the English equation. Throughout the later 1640s and 1650s, the greatest threat to the army came not from the disorganised and disillusioned royalists, but from what contemporaries called the Presbyterian party. This large, and at times rather amorphous political grouping, initially led by men like Denzil Holles, Sir Philip Stapilton and the Earl of Essex, had emerged within the parliamentarian camp at the same time as the New Model, largely in response to the creation of this professional army, which, it was feared, enjoyed too much independence from its parliamentary masters. Once the first civil war was won, the Presbyterians were eager to disband the New Model, and allow peace negotiations with the king to proceed without threat of military intervention. They missed their chance. The army's march on London in

the summer of 1647 led to the impeachment of eleven leading Presbyterians in the commons, and the triumph of the Independent faction; the Purge of 1648 removed the rank-and-file – the backbench Presbyterians, the country MPs, the moderates concerned at the turn of events – and destroyed opposition to the army in the Long Parliament. During the commonwealth, some of these Presbyterians went into exile or joined royalist plots against the regime; the majority retired to their homes, refusing to participate in the republican government, whether centrally or locally. At the foundation of the protectorate in December 1653, these men began to return to politics, however slowly and reluctantly, recognising that the discredited royalist cause had not recovered from the defeat at Worcester in 1651, and perhaps encouraged by the overthrow of the commonwealth regime and the failure of the Nominated Assembly. For the Presbyterians, the protectorate was the best of a bad bunch, and by September 1654, they were happy to be returned in large numbers to the first protectorate parliament.

The parliament of 1654-5 demonstrated the deep division which lay at the heart of the English state. Oliver Cromwell studiously avoided intervening in proceedings at Westminster (or so he claimed). The protectoral council was left to manage business in the commons, including the ratification of the Instrument of Government and the council's laws (or 'ordinances') passed in the nine months before parliament convened. In order to do so, they had to win the support of the majority of MPs. Yet that majority was formed by the loose coalition of interests that formed the Presbyterian (or the 'country' or 'moderate') group, led by men who had been imprisoned at Pride's Purge six years before, such as John Birch, John Bulkeley and Sir Richard Onslow. These men were intent on following a very different agenda from that wanted by the government, being eager to revise the Instrument of Government completely, taking power away from the council and the protector and vesting it in parliament itself; and questioning, even threatening to reject, the raft of non-parliamentary legislation passed by the council in the months before. The result was a bitter faction-fight, with the councillors and their allies unable to win crucial votes on the new constitution. To their dismay, the MPs voted instead that the powers of the protector were to be reduced, and the council's executive roles assigned to parliament. Religious liberty, so important for Cromwell and for the senior army officers, was to be restricted, and a Presbyterian-style confession of faith within a state church re-introduced. The revolution seemed in danger of going into reverse. In the face of certain defeat, in





January 1655 Cromwell closed parliament down, angrily telling MPs that 'it is not for the profit of these nations, nor fit for the common and public good, for you to continue here any longer'.[2]

The failure of the 1654-5 parliament did not just mark a further stage in Cromwell's tempestuous relationship with Westminster – it also demonstrated, publicly, just how weak the foundations of the protectorate were. The Presbyterians and their allies were not just a rival faction in parliament – they formed the vast majority of the political nation. The royalists had naturally been excluded from government, locally as well as nationally, during the 1640s, and this left the commissions of the peace, the assessment commissions, the administration of justice, the collection of taxation, the running of the customs and excise, the government of the boroughs, in the hands of the parliamentarian gentry and burgesses. Few of these were religious radicals or friends of the New Model Army; fewer still were ardent republicans. The remainder wanted a return to settled government, monarchical or otherwise, with laws respected and taxes reduced, but with the important caveat that the gains of the early 1640s (and especially those of 1641-2) should be upheld. It was this group that had coalesced to form the broad Presbyterian party in the mid-1640s, and which reappeared in 1654 after nearly six years in the political wilderness. The stormy session of parliament, and its sudden, dramatic end, revealed the uncomfortable truth that the protectorate was a minority government, heavily reliant on the power of the sword. The need to introduce major generals – an alien, military, and religiously extreme form of government – to keep the localities in hand in the summer of 1655, underlined how far the Cromwellian state had lost the confidence of the majority of former parliamentarians throughout England and Wales.

In this bleak picture, there was a glimmer of hope. The protectorate council of 1655 might have been dominated by the army interest, but it was not completely controlled by them; nor was the protector deaf to all advisers except the senior officers and the radical ministers. The council included more moderate, civilian members, such as Sir Charles Wolseley and Edward Montagu.[3] The protector was counselled, often privately, by these men and also by those officially and unofficially attached to his court. John Thurloe, as secretary of state and chief of intelligence, was a figure of profound importance within the government, but he was not a member of the council. Old friends and relatives from the 1640s, such as Oliver St John and William Pierrepont, had ready access to the protector. Bulstrode

Whitelocke was another trusted non-councillor. And Oliver seems to have welcomed the company of the younger set at court, led by his sons, Richard and Henry, and including Henry's friend, the Irish peer, Roger Boyle, Lord Broghill. It was probably the influence of this courtly group that lay behind two surprising decisions made in the spring of 1655: to send Henry Cromwell to replace Charles Fleetwood as effective governor of Ireland; and to make Lord Broghill president of the newly created Scottish council. In the remainder of this paper I shall argue that these appointments marked the turning point of the protectorate, bringing in far-reaching changes, from military to civilian rule, from minority to majority acceptance, from instability to stability; and that these changes were to have dramatic effects on the nature of the protectorate itself, not only in Ireland and Scotland, but also in England.

## II

Ireland in 1655 was a desolate place. The Irish Catholics, who had rebelled against the Dublin government in 1641 and come close to breaking free from English rule altogether in the mid-1640s, had lost ground steadily after Cromwell's invasion of 1649. Even then, the conquest had been long and hard-fought, and it was only in 1653 that the island was completely under English control. The defeated Catholic landowners had then been 'transplanted' – their estates in the richer parts of the country seized and redistributed to protestants, in exchange for smaller, and poorer, holdings in the western province of Connaught. The landless Irish had been kept on, to work for new masters; many of the soldiers had been shipped abroad to fight in the armies of France and Spain. The Scots of Ulster had sided with the royalists from the late 1640s onwards, and the English conquerors, although undecided what to do with them, were determined not to rehabilitate them. With the Catholics and the Ulster Scots effectively removed from the political nation, the only coherent community in Ireland was that of the Irish Protestants – or the Old Protestants as they came to be known – who had generally sided with parliament during the 1640s, and were thus spared the process of confiscation and transplantation. But they were still unable to reap the benefits of peace. Their estates had been ruined by a decade of war; and the new masters of Ireland, the English commonwealth and its military representatives, were unwilling to hand power back to the old proprietors of Ireland. Instead, all the plums were kept for the Cromwellian interlopers. Confiscated estates were used to pay the English soldiers who had come over in or after 1649, and to pay off the 'adventurers' who had invested money in the reconquest of Ireland as long





ago as 1642. The government was controlled by English officers: Oliver Cromwell, as lord lieutenant, remained in Ireland until May 1650, when he handed power to his son-in-law, Henry Ireton, as his deputy. Ireton died in 1651, and in 1652 Cromwell relinquished the lieutenancy. His new son-in-law, Charles Fleetwood, was made governor instead, being created lord deputy in his own right in 1654.

Cromwell had not been hostile to the Old Protestants *per se*, and relied on their support for taking control of the south and west of Ireland in 1649-50. Accordingly, useful men like Lord Broghill, Sir Charles Coote and Sir Hardress Waller had been treated with great favour during his time in Ireland. He also provided a sympathetic ear to Old Protestant complaints and requests later in the decade. But Ireton and Fleetwood were deeply opposed to allowing the Old Protestants to re-establish themselves. Fleetwood's antagonism was caused by two factors: his belief that Ireland could only be governed with a strong army; and his determination to promote radical religion throughout the island. The Old Protestants, with their desire for a return to the traditional way of ruling Ireland (with themselves in all the positions of influence, of course), and their attachment to an orthodox Calvinism, which bordered on Presbyterianism, were an obvious obstacle to these plans. As far as he could, Fleetwood kept the Old Protestants out of local and national government, placing authority in the hands of regional governors based in strong garrison towns, and encouraging the growth of Baptist congregations in the army and among the civilian population. Instead of the traditional four courts in Dublin, Fleetwood wanted a completely new system of administering justice, and in the provinces he relied on revenue commissions staffed by soldiers and recently arrived civilians, rather than the older system of justices of the peace. Although Fleetwood enjoyed the traditional post of lord deputy, complete with an advisory council, from the summer of 1654, his rule in Ireland bore little resemblance to the forms that had prevailed before 1641.

Although the authorities in Ireland were hostile to their concerns, the Old Protestants were not entirely without allies in England. Oliver Cromwell would do nothing to undermine Fleetwood's authority directly, but he did not discourage Irish suitors at London, and his son, Henry, who had fought in Ireland, became a focus for Old Protestant malcontents as early as 1653. Concessions were secured, including the right of some old soldiers to claim pay arrears for service before 1649, to be paid from the rapidly diminishing stocks of confiscated land. In the spring of 1654 Henry visited Ireland, and reported back to his father his misgivings about the strength of the army,

and, above all, the influence of the Baptists. The latter were hand-in-glove with the government in Ireland, and, as Henry complained, 'if they had been inclinable to have made disturbance, they had sufficient encouragement from those in chief place here, who have managed business of late with much peevishness and frowardness, endeavouring to render the government as unacceptable as possibly they could'.[4] Oliver appears to have appreciated his son's expertise, even if he was reluctant to follow his advice, and in December 1654 he appointed him to the new Irish council. Finally, in the summer of 1655, Fleetwood was recalled to London, and Henry took over as governor of Ireland, and head of the Irish council. There was one major snag. To keep Fleetwood happy, the protector allowed him to continue as lord deputy, while Henry's position was limited to that of general of the army in Ireland, and *primus inter pares* on the council. The results of this compromise were soon plain. Henry's programme of reforms was hampered by his lack of ultimate authority; and Fleetwood became the patron of those, especially among the army officers, who opposed what Henry was doing in Ireland.

Despite the difficulties, Henry Cromwell's arrival in Dublin in the summer of 1655 marked a complete change in the Irish government. In his religious policy, Henry turned his back on the Baptists, blaming them in part for stirring up unrest within the army. Instead, he fostered relations with the Independent congregations based in Dublin and other cities, and, increasingly, he promoted the interests of the long-established ministers, such as Edward Worth in Munster, who were moderate Presbyterians. He also made overtures to the Presbyterian Scots in Ulster, and from 1655 conducted negotiations to arrange for their ministers to be paid by the government. Henry encouraged the re-establishment of traditional forms of justice, removing the legal powers of the revenue commissions and local military governors, while backing the revival of the four courts in Dublin and ensuring that the commissions of the peace, reintroduced fitfully since 1651, covered the whole island. Such measures were part and parcel of his underlying scheme, to reduce the power of the army and to rely instead on the Old Protestant community. Influential families, including the Boyles and Wallers in Munster, the Kings and Cootes in Connaught, the Loftuses and Merediths in Leinster, the Clotworthys and Hills in Ulster, were brought into close contact with the Dublin government, and given increasing authority in their regions. As the historian of Cromwellian Ireland, Toby Barnard, has emphasised, Henry Cromwell's reforms were not uniformly successful; nor were they always completed; but they did





make Ireland a more stable place by the end of the 1650s. This was particularly true after November 1657, when Henry was at last created lord deputy in place of Fleetwood; but the turning point was his arrival in Ireland in the summer of 1655.

## III

The position of Scotland within the Cromwellian union was complicated by its history. The strength of Scottish adherence to their Presbyterian Church system had caused tensions with James VI and I, and even more so with Charles I, and in the late 1630s the Scots signed a 'covenant' refusing to compromise on their political and religious programme. This brought them into direct conflict with the king; it also provided inspiration for the English opposition in their own struggles with Charles I before and during the Long Parliament. Although the Scots did not join the rush to war with the king in 1642, they were acutely interested in events south of the border. In 1643 the Scots and the English signed their own Solemn League and Covenant, promising mutual support, and before long a Scottish army had marched south to support the parliamentarian cause. From then on, relations between the two nations became increasingly complicated, partly because the Scottish Presbyterians bridled at the radical solutions proposed by the Independents, backed by the New Model, at Westminster. The Independents, in turn, disliked intolerant Scottish Presbyterianism, and were suspicious of links between the covenanters and the Presbyterian party in England. In 1648 most of the covenanters supported Charles I in the second civil war against parliament, and, appalled at the execution of the king in 1649, they were keen to negotiate with his son, Charles Stuart. Indeed, Charles came over to Scotland in 1650, and was crowned by the Scots in January 1651 – an act of defiance that led to yet more conflict with England, and the defeat of Charles and his Scottish army at Worcester in the following September. Cromwell had already defeated the Scots at Dunbar in 1650, and had occupied much of the south of the country in the months that followed. After Worcester, the conquest of the rest of Scotland took a matter of weeks. Scotland was not treated as harshly as Ireland. After all, the covenanters were Presbyterians, not Catholics. The confiscation of estates was targeted against individual royalists, not the majority of the landowning population. And in 1652 there were attempts, however unsatisfactory they might have been to the Scots, to arrange a formal union between Scotland and England, and to extract a measure of consent for the new arrangement north of the border. Such gestures did little to placate the defeated Scots, who were faced by military rule. Local

government, taxation and justice were administered by military governors; the central government was headed by a series of commanders-in-chief, including (from the spring of 1654) General George Monck. These were not always unsympathetic to the plight of the Scots, but they were constrained by the need to keep the country under control – no more so than in the period from 1653 until 1655, when the royalist rising, known as Glencairn's rebellion, wrenched the highlands and islands from the tenuous grasp of the English army. It fell to Monck to put down the rising, which he did by tireless campaigning in the glens, burning and killing, and preventing the rebels from concentrating their forces. By the end of 1654 the rising had been contained, and the royalist leaders had fled to the continent, or surrendered to the English, by the middle of 1655.

Monck's approach to Scotland was very much that of a soldier. His pragmatism led him to improve the position of many of the landowners, who might be forced into rebellion if treated too harshly; and he was also keen to bring Scots back into the government, and to reward those who showed loyalty. But Monck also had a soldier's distrust of the Presbyterians. Instead of courting the majority party in the Scottish church, known as the Resolutioners, he condemned them for their residual support for the Stuart cause, and favoured instead the minority party, the Protesters, who were more prepared to work with the English regime. He also trusted the powerful, and duplicitous, marquess of Argyll, who was allowed to re-establish his hereditary jurisdiction over the west of Scotland in return for nominal loyalty to the English. Above all, Monck was limited by his dependence on London, and especially on the army interest in the English council. Charles Fleetwood's ally, John Lambert, who controlled both the council's army committee and its committee on Scottish affairs, was the real driving force behind Scottish policy between 1653 and 1655, and Monck did as he was told.

The reasons for the decision to appoint a new, civilian, council to rule Scotland in the spring of 1655 are obscure. Certainly, this would not have received the backing of Lambert or other influential officers on the English council; and it is more likely that the initiative came from the civilian councillors, or from the protector himself. The establishment of the Irish council in the previous year may have influenced the decision, although the Scots were not to have a lord deputy, but a president, who would chair the new council there. The choice of president also suggests that the army was not involved in the decision. Roger Boyle, Lord Broghill, was no friend to the army high command. A younger son of the influential 1st earl of Cork,





he had distinguished himself as a soldier in Ireland, fighting against the Catholic rebels, and in the early 1650s he had been favoured by Oliver Cromwell and became a close friend of Henry Cromwell and other members of the younger 'set' at the protectoral court. Broghill was a quick-witted, subtle politician; but he was also a man of principle, whose experiences in Ireland after 1649 had made him suspicious of military rule, and of the religious radicalism that was fostered by it. He favoured instead giving more power to his friends and relatives among the Old Protestants, as the surest way to settle the country, and a return to the situation that had prevailed before 1641. Broghill's ideas may have influenced Henry Cromwell's policies in Ireland; they certainly lay behind his own approach to governing Scotland.

Broghill was appointed as president in the spring of 1655, but his arrival in Scotland was delayed until September of that year, partly, one suspects, because of divisions within the English council over the extent of his powers and how they would coexist with those of George Monck, who was to be retained as commander-in-chief of the forces in Scotland. The problem of tensions between the two men was real enough, as Broghill's agenda cut across that of Monck and the army interest. There soon grew up personal differences between the two, and also a campaign of delay and obstruction against the president, waged by Lambert and others at Whitehall. This was particularly the case when it came to religious policy. Instead of relying entirely on the minority Protester faction within the Scottish church, Broghill made approaches to the larger, Resolutioner party. In October 1655, using his existing network of Presbyterian contacts, he managed to persuade the Resolutioners to stop praying for Charles Stuart in their public services; and this was soon followed by a public declaration that they would live 'peaceably and inoffensively' under the regime. A further coup was achieved in 1656, when he secured a series of measures designed to remove the right of the rival Protester group to vet the appointment of ministers throughout Scotland by controlling the allocation of stipends. Payments to ministers would now be organised by the Scottish council itself, in a move that was superficially neutral, but in practice gave a great boost to the majority party in the church. Broghill had succeeded where Monck had failed, and made the church a tacit supporter of the Cromwellian regime. At the heart of his church policy in Scotland was a recognition that settlement could not be achieved without broad support.

In other areas, Broghill sought to push 'civilian' reforms much further than Monck was prepared to go. When it came to financial affairs, Monck had

relied on increasing the tax burden as far as possible, and introducing new measures such as the excise. Broghill adopted similar methods, but sugared the pill by ensuring that only Scotsmen were involved in the collection of taxes, thus saving the fees paid to outsiders and (in theory at least) encouraging fairness. Monck had also raised the possibility of appointing JPs across Scotland – in an echo of the policy attempted by James VI and I earlier in the century, but the system was actually put into effect by Broghill. These commissions were largely made up of local landowners, and the surviving records and contemporary references to them suggest that it was locals, not English administrators and soldiers, who ran the show.[5] The JPs were linked with the assessment commissioners, who arranged the levying of taxation in the shires, and again these were local men. The role of the army was also reassessed. Circuit courts replaced the military courts instituted by Monck and his colleagues. Broghill was not afraid to tackle head-on the thorny problem of hereditary jurisdictions, which gave some Scottish nobles the powers of independent princes in their regions. This brought him into conflict with the marquess of Argyll in the western highlands, but such a showdown had its uses for Broghill, as Argyll was supported by Monck and Lambert, who turned a blind eye to doubts about the marquess's loyalty to the Cromwellian regime. An attack on Argyll would necessarily damage his allies on the English council.

The correspondence between Broghill and Henry Cromwell during 1655-6 does not survive, but there is little doubt that their policies were coordinated. Broghill kept a close eye on Irish-Scottish royalist connections, especially those between the western isles and Ulster, and he worked closely with Henry Cromwell and the officers in settling the north of Ireland. His moves to conciliate the Resolutioners were very similar to schemes encouraged by Henry Cromwell to win over the Ulster Presbyterians; Edward Worth, the leader of the Presbyterians in southern Ireland, was a friend of Broghill as well as Henry; and there are other indications that the church policies in Scotland and Ireland were running in parallel. It is also suggestive that Broghill and Henry Cromwell were both opposed by Lambert and Fleetwood in the English council. Indeed, the horrified reactions of the army officers indicate just how counter-revolutionary the Irish and Scottish reforms were. The deliberate reduction in army influence, the move towards mainstream Presbyterianism within the churches, the reliance on local forms of government, the involvement of natives in the administration – all were in direct opposition to the military state fostered





by the army interest, exemplified by the rule of the major generals in England and Wales. This challenge was deliberate. Henry Cromwell was open in his criticism of the major generals, who he saw as a destabilising influence in England. Broghill went even further. Just as his experience in Ireland had informed his actions in Scotland, so his time in Scotland opened his eyes to what could be achieved in England. His 'holistic' approach was made explicit in a report to the protector in February 1656, when he urged that all efforts must be made to reconcile the Scottish Resolutioners to the government, for by doing so 'the Presbyterians of England and Ireland, who are not inconsiderable, might probably be won unto your highness'.[6]

## IV

For Broghill, the English Presbyterians were the key to the permanent settlement of the Cromwellian protectorate. When he came south from Scotland in August 1656 to attend the second protectorate parliament, Broghill did not go straight to London, but stopped off first, to visit two influential relatives, the earl of Warwick and the earl of Suffolk, at their houses in Essex. Warwick's son was married to Broghill's sister, Mary; Suffolk was the brother of Broghill's wife; but this was no social call. Both men had been leaders of the Presbyterian party in England during the 1640s, and retained connections, especially in East Anglia, with gentry and ministers who championed the Presbyterian cause. Apart from Suffolk and Warwick, Broghill had personal connections with a number of Presbyterians in the southwest and the west midlands, and, through his Irish and Scottish friends, he also had links to the Presbyterian churches in London. These men were precisely those alienated by the army-led council in England, with its system of triers and ejectors in parishes, and the overarching powers of the major generals, whose authority extended to religious as well as political and social matters. With Henry Cromwell, who had his own connections with Presbyterian groups in England, Broghill formed a natural focus for English, as well as Irish and Scottish, resentments at military rule, and both men were a bridge between the critics of the regime and the sympathetic civilians within the court and the council. These resentments were soon to emerge during the 1656-7 session of parliament.

Divisions were apparent from the very beginning of the 1656 parliament. The exclusion of prominent Presbyterians after the elections, initiated by the English council, removed only a small proportion of the Presbyterians

from the commons, and antagonised the rest. The bitter debate over the fate of the Bristol Quaker, James Naylor, in December, raised religious tensions within the house. But the trigger for all-out confrontation came only in December 1656, when the prominent councillor, John Disbrowe, introduced the militia bill, designed to bolster the power of the major generals. The opposition to this measure came from a range of people, including courtiers such as Broghill, Thurloe and Whitelocke, but also Presbyterians such as John Trevor and Thomas Bampfield, supported by Irish and Scottish MPs loyal to Broghill and Henry Cromwell. The rejection of the militia bill on 29 January 1657 was a knockout blow to the major generals; it was also a sign of the potential of the new 'British' alliance between the civilian courtiers, the Irish and the Scots, and the Presbyterians. Within a month, Broghill and his allies had gone further, by introducing the Remonstrance – a new form of government, based on a return to the 'ancient constitution', two houses of parliament, and, at its centre, the crowning of Oliver Cromwell as king. This initiative probably originated with the civilian courtiers, with Broghill prominent among them, and was backed by a bloc of Irish and Scottish MPs; but, crucially, it also attracted strong support from the English Presbyterians. In the face of this 'kingship party', the army interest and their friends were reduced to impotent fury, as vote after vote was passed by large majorities in the commons. The resultant constitution, modified to take into account key Presbyterian demands, and renamed the Humble Petition and Advice, was accepted by 123 votes to 62 on 25 March 1657.

Cromwell's long period of deliberation following the offer of the crown, and his eventual rejection of kingship on 8 May, are familiar to anyone with a passing knowledge of his life. Less well known is the effect, not of his refusal of the crown, but of his acceptance of the rest of the Humble Petition, suitably amended to allow the inauguration of a new protectorate. The new constitution was not exactly the civilian rule that had been pursued by Henry Cromwell and Lord Broghill for the previous two years. The council's powers were scarcely altered; its membership remained almost the same, and the sacking of Lambert from his civil and military posts, with the cashiering of a few officers, did little to root out the military influences over the government. But it was not business as usual. The authority of parliament was strengthened; the religious settlement was noticeably less tolerant of radicalism; the Other House (as the new house of lords was termed) promised a return to more traditional ways of legislating and administering justice. Above all, whether through accident or design, the





Humble Petition was left open-ended. Certain matters, such as the powers of the Other House and the distribution of parliamentary seats, were left to be decided by later acts of parliament. There was even the suggestion that kingship could be reintroduced, if the protector (or his successor) could be persuaded to change his mind. Such omissions and imprecisions made the Humble Petition a less watertight constitutional document than the Instrument of Government; but it also made it more politically flexible.

There were perceptible changes across the three nations following the creation of the new protectorate in June 1657. More work needs to be done on the local impact, but my impression is that there was a general settling down in the English and Welsh counties. Without the major generals, traditional forms of government reasserted themselves, aided by the new assessment commissions established by parliament. The triers and ejectors continued, but with less vigour, and Presbyterian ministers were increasingly willing to work in support of the government. Commissions of the peace were conducted more enthusiastically. The size of the army was further reduced, and direct taxation came down accordingly. The economy flourished, with customs revenue and the export of key commodities (such as wool) rising to levels not seen since the later 1640s.[7] Similar processes were occurring in Ireland, where Henry Cromwell's position was strengthened by his appointment as lord deputy in November 1657. In Scotland, now ruled by a chastened General Monck, there was an acceptance of the regime, with burghs and lairds increasingly willing to sit on local commissions and to interact with the government either in Edinburgh or in London.

This gradual move away from military rule towards a more broadly-based, more stable, form of government, was far from complete when Richard Cromwell's protectorate was swept away in a military coup in May 1659, but the process of true healing and settling had at least started. Nowhere can this be more clearly seen than in the case of the Presbyterians. From the winter of 1656-7, as we have seen, this despised group was brought closer to the government. Within a year, even the bitterest enemies of the old protectorate had been won over to support the new. Critics of the government in the parliament of 1654-5, such as Sir Richard Onslow and Sir John Hobart, were appointed as lords of the Other House in December 1657. Others, like Thomas Gewen, John Birch, John Bulkeley and John Maynard, who had been excluded from the commons by the council in 1656, but were among the most active supporters of Richard Cromwell in

1659. Maynard is the most interesting example of this trend. A political Presbyterian from the 1640s onwards, and one of the 'eleven members' impeached in 1647, he had been excluded in 1656; but, in a remarkable *volte-face*, he was made serjeant-at-law by Oliver Cromwell in 1658, and became one of the most important 'court' managers in the commons in the parliament of 1659. The winning over of such men was not simply a matter of venality and corruption – it was a sign that the protectorate had itself changed. Before 1657 it had been a system controlled by the army, encouraged by religious radicals, without much support across England. Afterwards, it was civilian, Presbyterian, and increasingly popular. The Dorset Presbyterian, John Fitzjames, expressed a common attitude in the opening weeks of Richard's parliament: 'our eyes are all upon the parliament now, and from there we expect ease, and peace, and all sorts of blessings, and what not'.[8] In the new year of 1659, with the more moderate Richard Cromwell as protector in place of his father, the future looked bright.

## V

After that Cook's tour of England, Ireland and Scotland – an inevitable consequence of 'British' history, perhaps – it would be as well to recapitulate. When Henry Cromwell and Lord Broghill took control of the governments in Ireland and Scotland in 1655 they initiated a series of local policies for reducing the influence of the army and the religious radicals, and encouraging traditional civilian government in centre and localities. These policies not only increased support for the protectorate in Ireland and Scotland, but also provided a blueprint for reform in England and Wales. By the summer of 1657, Broghill and his allies had largely succeeded in replacing military by civilian rule, and had thus undone a great deal of the harm created by the involvement of the army in politics from the mid-1640s onwards. It was perhaps no coincidence that the settlement under the Humble Petition after 1657 resembled the restricted, constitutional monarchy promoted by parliament in 1641-2, and again in 1648; nor that such measures were broadly popular among the old parliamentarians, many of whom – whether Presbyterians or not – found themselves left behind by the increasingly radical agenda of the regicides and republicans. In some respects, Broghill and Henry Cromwell were engineering a 'retreat from revolution'. Whether this was a bad thing or not is a matter of opinion. But surely we must agree that the broad-based civilian settlement they craved was the only hope for the long-term survival of the Cromwellian dynasty. The tragedy was that the army, though down, was not out. In May 1659,





when Richard was forced to resign and the protectorate collapsed, it was not as a result of a popular uprising against it, but because a group of senior officers, led by Fleetwood and Lambert, had decided that enough was enough.

Notes.

1. This paper should be regarded as 'work in progress', and is only lightly footnoted as a result. In general, the best books on Ireland and Scotland in this period are Toby Barnard, *Cromwellian Ireland* (Oxford, 1975), and Frances Dow, *Cromwellian Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1979). For some of the details behind the broader argument posited here, see Patrick Little, *Lord Broghill and the Cromwellian Union with Ireland and Scotland* (Woodbridge, 2004), and Patrick Little and David Smith, *Parliaments and Politics during the Cromwellian Protectorate* (Cambridge, forthcoming).
2. Abbott, *Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, iii. 593.
3. Montagu was general-at-sea, but should be classed as a 'civilian' in political terms.
4. Birch (ed.), *Thurloe State Papers*, ii. 149.
5. I hope to explore this elsewhere.
6. *Thurloe State Papers*, iv. 557.
7. I am grateful to Dr Ben Coates for discussion of this point.
8. Alnwick Castle, Northumberland MS 552, fo. 71v.

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# OVERSEAS DESPATCHES II
# CROMWELL AND THE WALDENSIANS

*By Richard Newbury*

Twenty-six years ago, so as to arrange my wedding there to my Waldensian future wife, I went to collect the keys for the carefully disguised Waldensian church of Ciabas. Tucked into the hillside on the limit of the then permitted ghetto and built in 1555, it vies to be the oldest purpose-built Protestant church in Europe. The present larger parish church was built at the time of Napoleonic religious freedom. The farmer on giving me the keys exclaimed with satisfaction, 'Ah English. Cromwell'. It is a constant memory that it was the Lord Protector who also protected this tiny resolute native Italian Protestant church from confessional cleansing in 1655. In Bobbio Pellice at the head of the valley the dam which holds back the Pellice when in full flood is named after Cromwell – *la diga di Cromwell* – recalling too the vast sum of £39,000 collected by national fast to give aid and succour the harried Waldensians. In this Protestant Alpine village there is a fine old Waldensian church, but also a Catholic chapel, obligatory by Italian law, for the summer tourists. It is to be found in *via Cromwell*. When Erica my wife was a young girl in Bobbio only the priest and the policemen were faithful to what Milton called in his famous sonnet 'On the Late Massacre in Piedmont' 'the triple tyrant' who wears the Imperial/Papal triple tiara. However this is not a land of the vengefulness of the 'dreary steeples of Fermanagh and Tyrone'. Nevertheless it was two Irish Regiments in the French Army who were most systematic in turning regular oppression into mortal persecution in 1655.

The Waldensians are the oldest Reformed Church, taking their name from one Waldo, a rich Lyon merchant, who in around 1170 experienced a sudden conversion that led him to give all away and embrace a life of poverty and to preach the Gospel in the vernacular. It was this last that led to conflict with Rome and a long Calvary that continued until the granting of civil liberties in 1848 and full official recognition in 1984. St Francis of Assisi is thought to have been influenced by Waldo and to have had a Waldensian mother. He however talked to the animals and did not interpret Scripture. There were Waldensians 'underground' throughout medieval Europe from Poland to Calabria, and they were in close contact with Wycliffe and Hus, but the Alpine Valleys in Piedmont and Savoy became their refuge and stronghold against the many crusades against them. At the Synod of Chanforan in 1532 the Waldensians Europe wide voted to join Farel's Geneva Reformation, and this exposed outpost of Protestantism – a church of mountain farmers not city merchants – survived at least in val





Pellice, val Chisone and val Germanesca, the so-called Waldensian Valleys. Such was their resistance – a Protestant word – that the Treaty of Cavour in 1561 is the only contemporary case of a prince, the Duke of Savoy, allowing his subjects to be of a different confession. In the same year the Waldensians of Calabria, who like their brothers and sisters in Dauphine, had elected for non-resistance, were exterminated.

The Piedmontese Easter of 1655 came after a long period of tension and threats. For Anglicans the belief that St Paul had passed through the Waldensian Valleys saw a direct contact with the Primitive Church before Gregory the Great had corrupted it and to which the Anglicans were the heir. For the Cromwellian 'godly' the persecuted Huguenots and Waldensians were the two servants at the door killed as a sign of the arrival of the Beast of the Apocalypse. Either way the conqueror of England, Scotland and Ireland had both the army and the Mediterranean Fleet to overawe the Savoyard Court at Turin and the diplomatic muscle to delay a peace treaty with France that Cardinal Mazzarin, who could put pressure on Turin, was most anxious to sign.

John Milton, Cromwell's Latin Secretary, responsible for the outraged diplomatic notes, also galvanised public opinion in his Sonnet

> Avenge o Lord thy slaughtered Saints, whose bones
> Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold,
> Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old
> When all our Fathers worshipped Stocks and Stones,
>
> Forget not: in thy book record their groans
> Who were thy Sheep and in their ancient Fold
> Slayn by the bloody Piedmontese that rolled
> Mother and infant down the rocks. Their moans
>
> The Vales redoubled to the Hills, and they
> To Heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
> Over all the Italian fields where still doth sway
>
> The triple Tyrant: that from these may grow
> A hundred-fold, who having learnt thy way
> Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

The images in the poem are taken directly from diplomatic eyewitness reports and pictures that appeared in the scandalised Protestant press of Britain and Holland.

On 25 January 1655 the Savoyard Judge Andrea Gastaldo pronounced an Ordinance that the Waldensians who had descended into the prohibited valley floors at Torre Pellice, Lusema and the entrance to the Po Valley had to retire back to their mountainsides after selling their farms to Catholics. This seemed the usual diplomatic judicial dance once again only this time the Marquis of Pianezza, the greatest exponent of the Counter Reformation who shared the offence of the Bourbon Regent Queen Mother for the presence of these heretics decided with her Jesuit Confessor to rid the Duchy of these heretics once and for all. He advanced on 17 April with an army of 700 soldiers and a motley crew of land-hungry militia while the Waldensians sending women, children and animals to the valley heads defended with 500 men in trenches under the redoubtable partisan leader Bartolomeo Jahier. Pianezza occupied Torre Pellice and with Pianezza's troops looting, a stalemate would have ensued had not a company Catholic Irish mercenaries going to fight against the Spanish for the Governor of Villanova d'Asti appeared coming over the Sestrieres Pass in the Waldensians' rear and were invited in exchange for booty to massacre the Waldensians in their mountain refuge.

However what really made this the Massacre of the Piedmontese Easter (the Protestant Easter was different from the Catholic still Gregorian Calendar date) or The Bloody Spring was that Pianezza learnt that six French Regiments were also marching over the Alps going to besiege Pavia just captured by the Spanish. On 19 April 'there arrived here with great cheerfulness' Sir James Preston's Irish Regiment. 'I have lodged them to their satisfaction and had them provided with wine at the expense of these "barbette" (Waldensians). As far as bread goes I hope that they will be able to find plenty soon where we are headed to and perhaps some even better things.' On 21 April arrived the Chamblay Regiment, the Grancey on the 22nd, the Villa on the 23rd and the Carignan and the Mptpezat on the 29th. In all 5000 men were quartered with licence to massacre, rape and pillage among a population about twice that. The figure of 1,712 killed of both sexes is the most reliable. There followed the destruction now of Rora Valley with Gentile's Irish Regiment 'doing marvels' and the Gemanasca and Chisone Valleys. By 6 May Father Ceserana, the Queen Mother's Jesuit confessor accompanying Pianezza, could report 'that the heretics had been hunted and proscribed from every place, land, roof of the surrounding area and are vanquished, beaten and subjected.' On 18 May in the Cathedral Square in Turin forty odd Waldensians including 2 pastors made their abjuration. However from the heights of Rora, the Valley of the Invincibles and from Pramollo two masters of guerrilla resistance – Bartolomeo Jahier





and Joshua Janavel led an indomitable and exemplary resistance even in July briefly retaking Torre Pellice.

If Huguenot military help from volunteers was already forthcoming so too was pressure from 'The Protestant International' led by Oliver Cromwell stimulated also by the able media war the *Word* reading and writing Waldensians were conducting. No longer was this an ethnic cleansing land-grab but now The Waldensian Question mobilising the faithful in Huguenot France, Switzerland and of course Holland and above all the greatest Protestant European power, the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland, whose reactions were informed by the work of their chief secret service agent in this matter, the Italian speaking Swiss Pastor of the French Speaking Protestant Church in London, who was constantly travelling on the Continent. In the middle of negotiating a peace with Cardinal Mazzarin's France, Cromwell could put pressure on Mazzarin to put pressure on his client neighbour the Duke of Savoy and his all-powerful Bourbon mother. Then there was Admiral Blake's powerful fleet in the Mediterranean attacking white-slaving Barbary pirates, who could be diverted to bombard Nice. There was even the plan proposed for military action supporting the tiny remaining Waldensian army in val Chisone but, as Secretary of State Thurloe pointed out, nothing like that could be done without the support of the vacillating Swiss. Nevertheless military stalemate had been reached by the Savoyard, who now found themselves with the reputation of dirt throughout Protestant Europe and elsewhere. Mazzarin proposed compromise while the British envoy Morland issued threats written by Milton. For a-none-too-popular Cromwellian regime the popularity of the support for the Waldensians was a boost and was expressed in the £39,000 raised by a national day of fast in June to which Cromwell personally contributed £2000. (This is 80% of what it cost to send a fleet and an invading army to Jamaica).

The tale of what happened to this vast sum, half of which the Waldensians invested in the City, is another story unearthed by the late Giorgio Vola and merits separate space, though it again illustrates that the Waldensians never give up, but also how over the changes of Oliver, Richard and Charles II, public finances, the courts and parliament continued to operate with objectivity and probity even in a bankrupt and revolutionary State. Apart from aid in restoring the land, farmhouses and churches and providing for pastors, some of this sum will have gone towards continued resistance after the precarious peace down to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes that was achieved in the Treaty of Pinerolo on 18 August negotiated by a

Waldensian delegation led by their Moderator Jean Leger, a Savoyard one led by Count Truchi and one from the five Protestant Swiss Cantons led by Salomon Hirzel from Zurich and all under the decisive moderation of the French Ambassador in Turin Ennemond Servient, who knew what Mazzarin knew and Cromwell wanted. At this Agreement the Duke conceded Letters Patent granting freedom of worship in their three Valleys, reparations, permission to trade and exoneration from certain taxes – until the next time.

This is an albeit brief account of why the Waldensians recall Oliver Cromwell as a strong arm protecting them from annihilation. Cromwell buffs will be more familiar with the Council of State's reactions to this 'Late Massacre in Piedmont', though again the articles from the *Proceedings of the Society for Waldensian Studies* by Giorgio Vola, which I have translated for The Cromwell Association, illuminate many dark and clandestine corners and ripping yarns of skulduggery and heroism. Oliver in this affair could feel assured that he had been an instrument of God's mercy and grace.

Richard Newbury divides his time between the University Library in Cambridge and Italy where he writes for *Corriere delle Sera, La Stampa, Il Foglio* and Panorama as a commentator and columnist. He appears on all the major TV stations. In Italy his home and homeland are the Waldensian Valleys. He is married to the writer Erica Scroppo and they have three children. This year he has written biographies on *Edmund Burke – Rights and Wrongs; Elizabeth I* and *Elizabeth II*. His *Garibaldi's Englishmen* is due out in 2007 for the Garibaldi bicentenary.



# ROBERT GREVILLE, SECOND LORD BROOKE AND THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION: COMPARISONS WITH OLIVER CROMWELL.[1]

*By Professor Ann Hughes*

As a resident of Lichfield it is a pleasure for me to address the Cromwell Association on the occasion of its visit to this most royalist of cities. I have chosen as my subject the prominent parliamentarian 'martyr', Robert Greville, second Baron Brooke, killed here while leading forces besieging the city early in the civil war. A study of his career, and of the contrasts and comparisons with the life of Oliver Cromwell, will, I hope, provide some interesting insights into the nature of the civil war.

Brooke's death on 2 March 1643 – the day commemorating St Chad, the founder of the cathedral – was regarded by royalists as a providential judgement on a radical parliamentarian. For his own side, however, Brooke's death was a grievous loss. The title page of *Englands Losse and Lamentation* (London, 1643) compared him to Abner struck down by idolatrous enemies and the text made reference to Joshua as well as to another recent Protestant martyr killed in battle, Gustavus Adolphus. Lichfield was denounced as a 'sinke of iniquity' and cursed: 'Let it not faile that some of thy inhabitants be for ever visited with some diseases, fall by the sword and want bread'.

Of course, by the mid-1640s Cromwell too was compared frequently to biblical figures such as Gideon or Moses, but in the 1630s and early 1640s it was Brooke, the younger man (born in 1607) who was better educated, much richer and more eminent. Educated at Leiden, Paris and Geneva, Brooke had an annual income from estates in twelve counties of more than £4,000. Through his marriage to the daughter of the Earl of Bedford, Brooke was at the heart of an important 'parliamentary Puritan connection' including John Pym, Oliver St John and Viscount Saye and Sele. Cromwell, facing financial difficulties and spiritual crisis, was on the fringes of such circles although Brooke and Cromwell might be distantly connected through St John. Brooke's open hostility to Charles was demonstrated when the king visited Warwick in August 1636, while Brooke, whose seat at Warwick Castle would have been the natural base for the visit, returned earlier than normal to his London home. By the late 1630s Brooke was well known as one of the most committed opponents of the king: the Puritan town clerk of Northampton, Robert Woodford noted on a visit to Warwick in February 1639, 'I was refreshed to see the good Lord Brooke'. He was

coupled with Saye as one of 'twoe hereticall' Lords, 'most undevoted to the Church, and in truth to the whole government' according to Clarendon.[2] Brooke was briefly imprisoned in 1639 for his opposition to the Scots war, and was in close touch with the Scots leaders. In August 1640 he was one of the twelve peers who petitioned the king to call a parliament, and was prominent in the negotiations with the victorious Scots. Cromwell, of course, was not a direct participant in any of these developments.

But even in the 1630s some parallels between Cromwell and Brooke can be drawn. Cromwell, in the words of John Morrill, was the 'eldest (surviving) son of the younger son of a knight'.[3] Brooke, too, had a somewhat anomalous background. He was the heir but only a poor relation and the adopted son of the first Lord Brooke, the poet-politician, Fulke Greville; according to the Laudian polemicist Peter Heylin his father was the gamekeeper to the first Lord. He was something of an outsider in Warwickshire society, regarded with envy and suspicion by nearer kin of Fulke Greville. Both Robert Greville and Oliver Cromwell first entered formal national politics as borough members of the 1628 parliament, Cromwell for Huntingdon, Greville for Warwick. Greville succeeded to the barony in September 1628 following the murder of the first Lord, and so was not in the Commons for the stormy session of 1629. Both Cromwell, apparently, and Brooke, definitely, seriously considered emigration to New England. Brooke was heavily involved in Puritan colonial enterprises. He made enormous financial contributions to the Providence Island Company, a central plank in anti-Spanish, staunchly Protestant international initiatives, and, with Saye as usual, he underwrote the development of the Sayebrook colony in Connecticut and planned to settle in New England in 1635. Brooke, as a leader of Puritan colonisation, took a leading role in developing links with the London merchant community that were to be crucial to parliament's mobilisation and alliances in the early 1640s.

Neither Cromwell nor Brooke had any particular military training or experience before the 1640s. Cromwell's unexpected talent for soldiering was, as we know, crucial to his rise to political power, whereas for Brooke the opposite was the case: it was his political prominence that led to his brief, undistinguished and personally disastrous military career. The religious and political approaches of the two men had more in common. Brooke, like Cromwell, had a commitment to religious liberty that marked him out from most of his contemporaries, although Brooke's stance was less emotional, more intellectual than Cromwell's. Like Cromwell as Lord



ROBERT GREVILLE, SECOND LORD BROOKE AND THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION: COMPARISONS WITH OLIVER CROMWELL

Protector, Brooke supported ministers with a wide range of views: in the later 1630s his two chaplains were Simeon Ashe, a committed Presbyterian leader in the 1640s and 1650s, and the very different Peter Sterry, the mystical anti-formalist Platonist who later became chaplain to Cromwell. John Spencer, a lay preacher and founder of a separatist congregation, had been Brooke's groom or coachman. For Brooke, worshipping together was a voluntary act: in his anti-Episcopal tract *A Discourse Opening the Nature of that Episcopacie which is exercised in England*, first published in the autumn of 1641, Brooke insisted that you could not force people to choose their 'spiritual friends' any more than you could force them 'to marry such and such a woman, to take such a servant, to dwell with such a friend'.[4] He argued that religious diversity was inevitable and rejected a 'unity of Darknesse and Ignorance' such as that imposed by 'the Spaniard...by his cruel Inquisition'. He preferred 'the other way...of the United Provinces...who let every Church please her self in her own way, so long as she leaveth the state to herself. And how religion doth flourish there is known to most men'. He refused to condemn the strict separatists or Brownists and lay-preachers, whom most other parliamentarians condemned. Without openly endorsing such radical activity Brooke presented their arguments, noting that 'They have heard that God promised to poure out his Spirit upon all flesh, all beleevers, (as well Lay as Clergy).'[5] This sympathy for diverse views was also characteristic of Cromwell, while Brooke's hatred for episcopacy was equally determined: he argued there was no scriptural or historical justification at all for bishops and he hoped to see their tyranny overthrown in England as it had been in Scotland.[6]

It is thus unsurprising that Milton, a state's servant during the Commonwealth and Protectorate, wrote fulsome praise of Brooke in his 1644 tract *Areopagitica* which argued against the suppression of unorthodox opinions. Milton claimed:

> I shall only repeat what I have learnt from...a right noble and pious lord, who had he not sacrificed his life and fortunes to the church and commonwealth, we had not missed and bewailed a worthy and undoubted patron of this argument.

Brooke's 'treating of sects and schisms' in his tract was 'so full of meekness and breathing charity, that next to his (Christ's) last testament, who bequeathed love and peace to his disciples, I cannot call to mind where I have read or heard words more mild and peaceful.'[7]

There are similarities also in the political ideas and practices of the two men. For both there was perhaps some tension between religious radicalism and more conventional social attitudes. Brooke was in many ways an 'aristocratic constitutionalist' stressing the importance of an independent nobility as a counterweight to arbitrary monarchy. In his tract on episcopacy he denounced bishops as low-born creatures of the crown and one reason why he and Saye did not go to Massachusetts in 1635 was the refusal of the colonists to agree to establish an hereditary upper chamber in a future representative body. For Brooke, however, the dominance of the clergy and the lack of religious freedom were probably also important. We remember Cromwell's evocation of traditional social order in his speech of 4 September 1654: 'A nobleman, a gentleman, a yeoman? That is a good interest of the nation and a great one.'[8] On the other hand Brooke, like Cromwell, was a skilled and charismatic popular leader, willing to work with a broad social spectrum in the cause of parliament. In Warwickshire, Brooke rallied many volunteers to parliament's side in the summer of 1642 with a rousing campaign of petitions, oath-taking and feasts. He did not win overwhelming gentry support but relied on his own household servants, men from the Greville town of Alcester, radical friends such as the future regicide William Purefoy of Caldecote, and comparatively ordinary men from Birmingham and Coventry. The officers in the troop of horse and regiment of foot Brooke raised as part of Essex's army in 1642-3, included the future Leveller John Lilburne and his brother Robert, and the future New Model commander and republican, John Okey, who opposed Cromwell's assumption of personal power in the 1650s.

In an eloquent speech at the 'election' of his Captains at Warwick castle in February 1643, Brooke presented a broad view of the aims of parliament in the civil war, in which 'we are forced for the safeguard of our lives, the preservation of our liberties, the defence of Gods true religion (invaded by the practices of Papists and Malignants)' to become actors. The cause was both personal and general: 'for your wives, your children, and your substance, your lives and liberties, nay that which is more powerful to move mens affections, the testimony of a good conscience'. Brooke's speech included an anti-popish framework of attacks on Queen Elizabeth and the 'never to be forgotten powder plot' but there are some similarities with Cromwell's notion that 'religion' – religious liberty – was not the first thing contended for.[9] There are other common threads. On the first day of the Long Parliament, Cromwell delivered a petition to the Commons on behalf





of the young John Lilburne, imprisoned for his part in distributing seditious books. Brooke's rejection in his speech of the offer of help from German mercenaries – 'we must rather employ men who will fight merely for the cause sake' – echoes Cromwell's famous remarks to the Suffolk committee in 1642: 'I had rather have a plain russet coated captain that knows what he fights for and loves what he knows, than that which you call a gentleman and is nothing else. I honour a gentleman that is so indeed.'[10] As Cromwell might have done, Brooke concluded his speech with a prayer:[11]

> Lord we are but a handful in consideration of thine and our enemies, Therefore O Lord fight thou our battailes, goe out as thou didst in the time of King David before the Hosts of thy servants, and strengthen and give us hearts, that we shew our selves men for the defence of thy true Religion and our own and the King and Kingdomes safety.

On the other hand, Brooke's reference to Cicero – 'that great Commonwealths man of the Romans' – to support his argument that men had a duty to their friends and countrymen, reminds us that he was a self-conscious, cosmopolitan intellectual, the author of a philosophical treatise, his attitudes very different in many ways from the emotional, scriptural register of Cromwell's thinking.[12]

Let me conclude with some seductive, improper speculations on what might have been – had not Brooke's premature death removed him from the conflicts and dilemmas faced by parliamentarians and ex-parliamentarians in the later 1640s and 1650s. Brooke's military career at Brentford or Lichfield was unsuccessful, and he would presumably have been more at Westminster than in the field had Dyott's bullet not struck him down in March 1643. We can be pretty confident, I think, that like his close associate Saye, and like Cromwell, Brooke would have become increasingly disillusioned with the clericalism, intolerance and political moderation of the Scots. Like Saye, Brooke might well have cooperated with Cromwell and the New Model Army in 1647 and until late 1648 at least. Would he have opposed regicide or the abolition of the House of Lords? Brooke had no affection for the king, as we have seen, and he might well have shared the stance of his Warwickshire ally William Purefoy in December 1648 and January 1649. Purefoy was an enthusiastic regicide and leading Rumper but tried hard to preserve the second chamber.[13] Another possible parallel is the career of Henry Vane the younger whose religious

ideas have something in common with Brooke's. Would the aristocratic Brooke have sat with Vane and Purefoy in the Rump? Might he, like them, have opposed Cromwell's assumption of personal power?

Would a Brooke who lived into the 1650s have kept the approbation of Milton or would later dilemmas have produced a more ambiguous judgement analogous to the poet's complex views of Cromwell as 'our chief of men' and the betrayer of the republic? Would he have been an enthusiastic supporter of Cromwell's 'Western design' as the culmination of the work of the Providence Island Company? Would the peer who wanted a second chamber in Massachusetts have sat in the Protector's Upper House? Most speculative and unhistorical of all, would Cromwell have come to power if the younger man had lived? In June 1642 Brooke was named Commander of the forces to be raised to crush the Irish rebellion. The civil war intervened and it was not until Cromwell's 1649 expedition that the Irish were finally defeated. It is clear that Brooke lacked Cromwell's military talent, but the defender of Brownists, the master of the lay preacher John Spencer and the commander of John Lilburne, might have had more success than Cromwell at maintaining links between parliament and religious and political radicals.[14] Was Brooke then a potential Lord Protector? Of course these questions are unanswerable, but I hope the asking of them prompts some useful thinking about Cromwell, parliamentarianism and the civil war – as well as giving some insights into the life of Lichfield's parliamentarian martyr.

Notes.

1. This lecture was given on the occasion of the annual general meeting of the Cromwell Association in Lichfield on 23 April 2005. I have not offered detailed footnotes here, seeking to retain the general character of the original address. For Brooke readers can consult my biography of him in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* for references other than those given; for Cromwell I have relied on Barry Coward, *Oliver Cromwell* (Harlow, 1991) and John Morrill (ed), *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution* (Harlow, 1990).
2. I owe the Woodford reference to John Fielding: see John Fielding, 'Opposition to the personal rule of Charles I: the diary of Robert Woodford, 1637-41', *Historical Journal*, 31 (1988).
3. Morrill (ed), *Oliver Cromwell*, p. 20.
4. References are from the second edition, (London, 1642) p. 99.





5. Ibid. pp. 91, 106-7.
6. Ibid. pp. 68, 87.
7. Quoted from *Milton. Complete Prose Works*, II, edited E. Sirluck (New Haven, 1959) pp. 560-1.
8. I. Roots, (ed.), *Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, (Everyman Classic, 1989) p. 30.
9. *A Worthy Speech Made by the Right Honourable the Lord Brooke* (London, 1643) pp. 3-5; the 'election' of the Captains and Commanders is significant.
10. W. C. Abbott (ed.), *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (reprint edn, 4 vols, Oxford, 1988), I, 256.
11. *A Worthy Speech*, pp. 7-8
12. Ibid. p. 4. The work of platonic philosophy is *The Nature of Truth* (London, 1640).
13. See my article on Purefoy in *ODNB*.
14. In the 1650s one of the estate officials employed by Brooke's widow was Alexander Tulidah, a veteran of the Leveller agitation of 1647.

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# WRITINGS AND SOURCES IX. A 1654 PROTECTORATE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION RETURN

*By Professor Robert Temple*

I have in my collection approximately 200 manuscripts relating to the Protectorate period. One of them, obtained from a manuscript dealer as an individual item and not as part of a group, has a particular interest for students of the politics of the period. It is an original election return of the county of Norfolk, for the Protectorate Parliament of 1654. This election return gives the precise number of votes obtained by every candidate, and was obviously written down at the 'count' by the sheriff, who was the seventeenth century equivalent of what is today called 'the returning officer'. A close study of the document yields many fascinating conclusions about the unpopularity of the Protectorate with the voters, while at the same time indicating that the voters were essentially of parliamentary or republican sympathies, despite electing one prominent royalist as an obvious act of protest. Humiliation was heaped by the voters upon various leading pillars of the Protectorate who were not Norfolk men, in a manner most embarrassing to the government.

The reasons why this document is so important are that it gives the names of all the candidates including the defeated ones, and additionally it gives the numbers of votes cast for each candidate. Even Secretary of State John Thurloe, the Protectorate's spymaster, apparently did not receive or keep such documents. Amongst the Thurloe Papers there is a list reporting the election of Irish Members of the 1654 Parliament, but it only gives the names of those elected, not of those defeated, and no vote totals are recorded.[1] Furthermore, this list states of 'the Precinct of Londonderry' (in the Province of Ulster): 'No return come',[2] indicating that lists such as his were compiled on the basis of the victorious candidates appearing in the returns, whereas the document under our consideration here is an actual sheriffs return rather than a list merely summarizing such returns. The summary of returns for Ireland was evidently supplied to Thurloe by Lieutenant-General Charles Fleetwood,[3] who perhaps did not wish to report to London any embarrassing voting figures. This is hardly surprising, as Fleetwood was prominently rejected by the voters of Norfolk, as we shall see below, and calling attention to any figures might raise the question of his own results elsewhere!

In the document transcribed below, the first ten names on the list were selected to sit in the 1654 Protectorate Parliament for the county of Norfolk, and a line is drawn under the vote total for the tenth name on the





list, indicating that those below that line were rejected. For purposes of clarification, I should explain that a 'Knight of the Shire' was a type of MP; in earlier Parliaments, each county ('shire') elected two 'Knights of the Shire' to sit in parliament as representatives of the shire at large, whereas the remainder of MPs represented borough seats. This system was changed by Cromwell's regime, so that in the 1654 parliament there were many more 'Knights of the Shire' and fewer borough MPs. The distinguished historian Samuel Gardiner[4] explained the process and the intention behind it very well, and I can do no better than to quote his account:

> So far as the elections were concerned the framers of the Instrument (i.e., The Instrument of Government, sworn to by Oliver Cromwell in Westminster Hall on December 16, 1653, by which his Protectorate Government was established) had done their best to secure a favourable verdict. Resting, as they did, their hopes on the middle class, they had dealt roughly with the small boroughs, which fell naturally under the influence of the neighbouring gentry. Whereas the Long Parliament (elected in 1640) had contained 398 borough members, there were but 133 in the Parliament of 1654. The University representation (i.e., the Members for Cambridge and Oxford) sank at the same time from 4 to 2, whilst the number of county members (i.e., 'Knights of the Shire') was raised from 90 to 265. If the small boroughs were to be disenfranchised, it was impossible to divide the representation in any other way... Partly, perhaps, with a view to the avoidance of opposition, but still more, it may safely be conjectured, in order to favour the middle class, the right of voting, so far as the boroughs were concerned, was left untouched... In the counties more drastic measures had been taken. The time-honoured forty-shilling freeholder disappeared from political life, giving way to a new class of voters possessed of personal or real property valued at 200 pounds – equivalent to at least 800 pounds at the present day (1903).[5]

Hence it was that in this parliament, the county of Norfolk ceased to be represented by only two county MPs, and instead came to be represented by ten. The text of the document follows overleaf:

Official Election Return for the County of Norfolk:
1654 (July)

By the Lord Protector Cromwells Writ Ten Persons were chosen out of the following Number that stood to be Knights of the Shire.

| | |
|---|---|
| Sir Wm Doyley[6] | 2501 |
| Sir John Hobart[7] | 2152 |
| Sir Ralph Hare[8] | 1539 |
| Robert Wilton[9] | 1555 |
| Thomas Sotherton[10] | 1513 |
| Robert Wood[11] | 1369 |
| Philip Wodehouse[12] | 1439 |
| Philip Bedingfield[13] | 1378 |
| Thomas Weld[14] | 1753 |
| Tobias Frere[15] | 1167 |
| Ld Fleetwood Deputy Ireland[16] | 1054 |
| Brampton Gurdon[17] | 857 |
| Colonel Rob. Jeremy[18] | 647 |
| Major Haynes[19] | 501 |
| Henry King[20] | 601 |
| Sr John Palgrave[21] | 549 |
| Mr Buller of Geyst[22] | 578 |
| Philip Skippon[23] | 586 |
| Charles Geo. Cock[24] | 1040 |

It is interesting that in the above list, a major stalwart of the Protectorate, Lieutenant-General Charles Fleetwood, who had been appointed by Cromwell as Lord Deputy (equivalent to Viceroy) of Ireland, and who was Cromwell's own son-in-law (he was second husband of Cromwell's oldest daughter, Bridget), was unable to attract sufficient support from the voters to make it into the top ten. The following year, in 1655, Fleetwood would be appointed as 'Major General' (i.e. military governor) for the Eastern District of England, and Norfolk was part of this district and hence would come directly under his official command. His rejection by the voters there only a year earlier would have been a serious embarrassment, as he could only manage to come eleventh in a county which he was shortly to rule.

Also unable to obtain sufficient voter support was Major General Philip Skippon, an older man who had served with considerable distinction as one





of the more successful generals on the parliament side during the civil war. The fact that these two pillars of Cromwell's government were rejected by the voters indicates serious lack of public support for the military government of the Protectorate. However, Fleetwood was elected three times over anyway, as Knight of the Shire for Oxfordshire, as MP for the Wiltshire borough seat of Marlborough, and simultaneously for the Oxfordshire borough seat of Woodstock.[25] Cromwell was obviously taking no chances, and put him up as a simultaneous candidate in four different places (though his standing for the county of Norfolk has apparently not previously been known or recorded), so he got into the parliament despite his rejection by the voters of Norfolk.

Philip Skippon was also nevertheless elected for Norfolk in a roundabout way, having stood also to be a borough MP at Kings Lynn, called then Lyn Regis (and miss-named 'Lyme' in the *Dictionary of National Biography* entry for Skippon), one of only three borough seats permitted to hold elections in that county in 1654. In this borough seat, where it was easier to exert influence over the election result, Skippon was returned, despite being rejected by the voters of the county at large.[26] In the list as recorded by Browne Willis from official documents in London, Skippon is further described as 'one of his Highness's Council'. 'His Highness' is of course Oliver Cromwell at this period. The 'Council' is the governing body, the Council of State. Skippon was named a peer by Cromwell in 1657 and died in 1660.

Two men elected as Knights of the Shire in the above list are further distinguished in Browne Willis's list[27] as being 'Senior', i.e. to distinguish them from their sons of the same name: these were Robert Wood and Philip Bedingfield.

In the succeeding Protectorate Parliament of 1656, where tighter control was exercised over the election process, Charles Fleetwood heads the list of elected Knights of the Shire for Norfolk, so Cromwell's regime was successful at getting him in on the second attempt, presumably by intimidation. (Fleetwood was also simultaneously elected as the leading Knight of the Shire for Oxfordshire, just to be on the safe side.) In Willis's list for 1656, both Hobart and Hare are described as baronets. In 1656, Charles George Cock, who had been unsuccessful as a Knight of the Shire in 1654, managed to get in at Great Yarmouth. In 1656, the following 1654 Knights of the Shire did not manage to get elected: Philip Bedingfield, Thomas Weld, and Tobias Frere. Their places were taken by Fleetwood,

John Buxton and Sir Horatio Townshend, Bart. Of these, Sir Horatio Townshend (born circa 1630, died 1687) became a member of the Council of State in 1659, was active in the restoration of Charles II in 1660, and was ennobled by Charles II as First Baron Townshend in 1661, and raised higher as Viscount Townshend in 1682.

As can be seen, eight of the nineteen men who stood for election as Knights of the Shire for Norfolk had for years been members of the Norfolk committee, the committee established by parliament at the commencement of the civil war to run the county. It was natural for them to attempt to continue their control of the county and to wish to represent Norfolk in parliament, as they had been running its affairs for years. Many of them were not of true gentry status, but were of what was then called 'the middling sort', which is why so little information is available concerning them and their family backgrounds. Three others of the nineteen men, as has been seen, were clearly attempts by the Cromwell regime to impose its own men on the county, and at the county level, all three were soundly rejected. This fact, together with the triumph of an overt royalist, Sir William Doyley, indicates the level of opposition to the Protectorate in Norfolk in 1654. However, of the ten men elected as Knights of the Shire, no less than seven had been parliament's commissioners on the Norfolk committee. The fact that they were still so popular after years of rule indicates more than familiarity with local personalities; it appears to show that Norfolk was not hostile to the parliamentary cause, but merely to the Protectorate.

Notes.

1. T. Birch (ed), 'A List of the Persons Elected to Sit in Parliament for Ireland', *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*, (7 vols. London, 1742), Vol. II, pp. 445-6. I might point out that the 'Colonel Hawson' mentioned on the list should be Colonel (John) Hewson, and the 'Colonel Axtie' should be Colonel (Daniel) Axtell.
2. Ibid. p. 446.
3. The previous document appearing in *The Thurloe Papers* is a letter from Fleetwood to Thurloe dated 12 July 1654, saying 'We have received the writs for elections, which will suddenly be sent unto the respective sheriffs.'
4. It is an interesting fact that Samuel Gardiner was a direct descendant of General Henry Ireton, Oliver Cromwell's son-in-law.
5. S. R. Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate 1649-1659*, (4 vols. London, 1903), Vol. III, p. 172.





6. Sir William Doyley, or D'Oyley, had been knighted by Charles I on 9 July 1642 (William A. Shaw, *The Knights of England*, (London, 1906), Vol. II, p. 209). He was a royalist supporter during the civil war and fled to Holland. After the end of the war, he returned home and came to terms with the Cromwellian regime. The fact that he topped the poll in Norfolk in such dramatic fashion shows a distinct royalist tinge to popular opinion in Norfolk in 1654.
7. Sir John Hobart, Baronet, of Chapel Field and of Blickling, was one of the two Knights of the Shire for Norfolk in the Long Parliament of 1640, elected as a recruiter MP to fill a vacancy. Hobart was a member of the Norfolk committee appointed by parliament at the commencement of the civil war to run the county.
8. Sir Ralph Hare of Stow Bardolph was an elderly man in 1654. He had been created a Knight of the Bath at the coronation of King James I on 25 July 1603 (*Ibid.* Vol. I, p. 156). He must therefore have been in his seventies by the time of his election in 1654.
9. Robert Wilton of Wilby was a member of the Norfolk committee.
10. Thomas Sotherton of Taverham was a member of the Norfolk committee. His family in earlier generations had been a Norwich family, which had provided many civil dignitaries to that town.
11. Robert Wood, Senior, was a member of the Norfolk committee.
12. Philip Wodehouse, or Woodhouse, was probably son of Sir Thomas Wodehouse, Baronet (1585-1658), who had been MP for Thetford (in Norfolk) in the Long Parliament of 1640. His father, Sir Philip, the first baronet, who died in 1623, had also been an MP. The borough seat of Thetford was abolished in the Protectorate and returned no MPs. The Wodehouses, seated at Thetford, had been prominent in the county for centuries. Unable to stand in the family borough seat, Philip Wodehouse came seventh in the election for the countywide seats. Wodehouse was a member of the Norfolk committee.
13. Philip Bedingfield, Senior, was of an old Norfolk family, seated at Ditchingham. Anthony Bedingfield, doubtless a near relation, was MP for Dunwich in Suffolk in both the Short and Long Parliaments of 1640; Thomas Bedingfield, probably Anthony's father, had been MP for Dunwich in 1621. Bedingfield was a member of the Norfolk committee.
14. Thomas Weld was a member of the Norfolk committee.
15. Tobias Frere of Roydon.
16. Lord Deputy Lieutenant-General Charles Fleetwood, Lord Deputy of Ireland, and from 1655 'Major-General' for the Eastern District of England including Norfolk.

17. Brampton Gurdon was a member of the Rump Parliament, elected as a recruiter MP for Sudbury in Suffolk in 1645. He was undoubtedly the son of the radical MP John Gurdon of Great Wenham, Suffolk, who was MP for Ipswich in the Long Parliament of 1640, and whose own father had been named Brampton Gurdon, and who died in 1649, having been sheriff of Suffolk and MP for Sudbury in Suffolk in 1621. Sudbury was obviously a borough seat traditionally under the control of the Gurdon family. But Sudbury was in Suffolk, not in Norfolk, where Gurdon stood unsuccessfully in 1654. The Brampton Gurdon of the 1654 list was known as 'Brampton Gurdon Junior' until 1649 when his grandfather died (Ibid. p. 250, where he is entered as 'Junior').
18. Colonel Robert Jeremy or Jemy of Bayfield was a member of the Norfolk committee. During the second civil war in 1648, Jeremy had served as a Major in the Norfolk militia, and was specially praised by General Fairfax as being 'a faithful and stout commander' in the struggle against the renascent royalists (R. W. Ketton-Cremer, *Norfolk in the Civil War*, (London, 1969), p. 352).
19. Major Hezekiah Haynes was a New Model Army officer who had served as major under Charles Fleetwood when he was Colonel of the Fourth Regiment of Horse. In the New Model Army, horse regiments did not have lieutenant-colonels; so that directly under the colonel was the major. (Lieutenant-colonels only existed in the foot regiments.) Haynes was not Fleetwood's original Major – that had been Thomas Harrison the regicide – nor was he even one of Fleetwood's original captains. Harrison was promoted to Colonel in June 1647, and was first replaced as Major by Captain William Coleman (Robert K. G. Temple, 'The Original Officer List of the New Model Army', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, Volume LIX, No. 139 (May 1986), p. 64). Haynes in turn succeeded Coleman in 1649. Coming from Fleetwood's old regiment, Haynes was very much a protégé of Fleetwood, which is why he stood with him for Knight of the Shire of Norfolk. The voters, of course, rejected both. Later Haynes had served in Scotland in the early 1650s and in 1657 was serving under Colonel Henry Lillingston. Haynes became a Lieutenant-Colonel by 1658. An anonymous informer denounced him to Parliament in 1658 for being an irreligious drunkard who was 'against all profession of godlynesse' (Sir Charles Firth and Godfrey Davies, *The Regimental History of Cromwell's Army*, (Oxford, 1940), pp. 689-91, 679, 95).
20. Henry King is unfortunately apparently unknown, and I can find no trace of him.





21. Sir John Palgrave, Baronet, of North Barningham, was one of the two Knights of the Shire for Norfolk in the Long Parliament of 1640, elected as a recruiter MP to fill a vacancy in 1647.
22. Roger Bulwer or Builer of Guestwick.
23. Major General Philip Skippon was not a Norfolk man, but was a Londoner, and became 'Major General' for the London District under the Cromwellian regime. He had been MP for Barnstaple in Devon in the Long Parliament, having been elected as a recruiter MP in 1646.
24. Charles George Cock, who is listed as Cock by Browne Willis in the returns of the Parliament of 1656, is later listed by Willis as Cook for the Parliament of 1658/9 (Ibid. p. 290), and thus may have been of the family of the royalist Henry Coke (1591-1661) of Thorington, Suffolk, who was MP for Dunwich in the Long Parliament of 1640, and was fourth son of the famous Chief Justice Sir Edward Coke (died 1634). Henry Coke's brother John Coke was based at Holkham, and was thus a Norfolk man rather than a Suffolk man; furthermore, he was a parliamentarian sympathiser. It is highly possible that Charles George Cock was therefore the son of John Coke of Holkham in Norfolk. The spellings of Cock/Coke/Cook at that time were often interchangeable.
25. B. Willis, *Notitia Parliamentaria*, (London, 1750), pp. 264, 267, 211.
26. Ibid. p. 264.
27. Ibid. pp. 263-4.

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# CROMWELL PRIZE COMPETITION 2005
# OLIVER CROMWELL AND THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION

*By Louise Scrimshaw*

> ...the properly-trained historian's writing is an imperfect recovery of a past that existed and which exists in the form of the documents and artefacts that testify to their existence.[1]
>
> History is only curiosity about other humans, after all.[2]

At the end of September, 1647, a 'sharp debate' took place in the House of Commons as to whether 'the King should be sent any more (propositions), or whether they should forthwith proceed to the settlement of the Kingdom'. It appears that 'most of the orators' were against a further approach to Charles 'and in likelihood would have led the house that way, but that it was opposed by Cromwell and Ireton, who said it was no fit time to proceed with such vigour, the King having gotten so great a reputation in the army...'[3] The news-letter report (there being no official versions extant of the debate) ends with the enigmatic statement that whilst the 'civilities' of Cromwell and Ireton were 'visible...the reality of their intentions [was] not clearly discerned'.[4] This ambiguity of intent – who said what and why – became the subject of the opening discussions at the general council of the army in Putney a month later. On 28 October, Edward Sexby (not later renowned himself for clarity of intentions) took them to task for making it appear in parliament that all the army were keen to continue negotiating with the King when in fact many of the rank and file believed that 'except wee goe about to cutt all our throates' nothing would satisfy the King. Nor was his (or their) belief in the abilities of the current parliament to 'settle this Kingdome' any more favourable – 'a Company of rotten Members' was how Sexby described them, and declared that the 'creditts and reputation (of Cromwell and Ireton) hath been much blasted' by trying to please the King and parliament at the expense of the army.[5]

Cromwell ably defended himself against these charges with a skilful mix of denial, righteous indignation and vindication. The reports of his speeches and actions were 'false and slanderous' and he expressed surprise that Sexby should have singled out himself and Henry Ireton, when 'if there be a fault...itt hath bin the fault of the Generall Councill' on whose instructions they were acting. Finally, and crucially, he makes a distinction between his role as an MP and as an army leader – 'what I have spoken in another capacitie, as a Member of the House, that was free for mee to doe...what deliver'd there I deliver'd as my owne sence, and what I deliver'd as my





owne sence I am nott ashamed of. What I deliver'd as your sence, I never deliver'd butt what I had as your sense'.[6] Thus he defended his right to speak with more than one voice, to present more than one point of view, depending upon the 'capacitie' in which he spoke. It is this duality and sometimes plurality of roles of Oliver Cromwell that will be explored in this paper in the crucial period leading up to the purge of parliament at the beginning of December 1648.

Role-playing is an integral part of daily life and our language reflects that. Speaking 'as a friend', 'in my role as', with this or that 'hat on', 'in a professional capacity' are all recognisable ways of signalling 'where we are coming from' and how we wish to be heard. In the 1640s Cromwell had several roles to play as did many of his friends and fellow MPs – as land owners, county officials, merchants or lawyers – as well as being involved in family, social and religious activities. However, for part of the first Civil War, Cromwell was unique in being the only MP who was reengaged as a senior officer following the formation of the New Model Army and the imposition of the Self Denying Ordinance – a measure that Cromwell was partially responsible for promoting.[7] Whilst this had changed by the onset of the second Civil War in 1648, it will be the contention of this paper that Cromwell became adept at inhabiting both roles – as soldier and MP – simultaneously without always acknowledging that he was doing so and that he frequently used this strategy to wrong-foot or manipulate his opponents, and sometimes his allies.

The parliamentary debates, the subsequent public reporting of them and the reaction to them at Putney in the autumn of 1647 serve as a good opening example of Cromwell's style and also highlights the difficulties – of ambiguity, conflicting reports and perceptions, partial or missing documentation – inherent in any reading of the actions and motives of what Professor Colin Davis has called 'the historical Cromwell'.[8] Yet those difficulties can serve as a spur to yet another close reading of the evidence there is. Using that approach, this paper will consider how Cromwell portrayed himself, through role, in the drama that was unfolding on the Isle of Wight and in London in the autumn of 1648 and how that may have been perceived by both his opponents and his allies. Can such an approach throw any light on the crucial question of when Cromwell decided to move against parliament as a precursor to regicide?

On 17 August 1648, Cromwell wrote from Preston to the Committee of Lancashire in Manchester to inform them that 'It hath pleased God, this day, to show His great power by making the Army successful against the

common Enemy'.[9] The Scots army, under the Duke of Hamilton, had been routed and many thousands of prisoners taken. A further letter to Speaker Lenthall from Warrington on 20 August expounds, at much greater length, the details of the battle and at one point records the death and bravery of a 'worthy gentleman, Colonel Thornhaugh' who 'was a man as faithful and gallant in your service as any; and one who often heretofore lost blood in your quarrel, and now his last'.[10] '*Your* service...*your* quarrel'. Apart from real sadness at the loss of a good man he seems to be deliberately distancing himself from a parliament of which he was still a member and where, until the outbreak of this second war, he had been extremely effective – indeed, for some like Sexby, too effective. This presentation of himself as a soldier divorced from politics was technically correct, in that he was not attending parliament and was on active service. However, to see the current conflict in terms of 'your' rather than 'our' or even 'the' places him both outside the decision-making process and critical of it. It was a tactic he used repeatedly when wishing to make a political point whilst appearing apolitical. He knew that by addressing Lenthall he was observing the etiquette of parliament whereby, as an MP, he could address the Commons and by extension the Lords through the Speaker. However, he also knew from previous experience, that as a military report it could be censored if deemed too contentious.[11] In order to mix the two, the military and the political, he had to choose his words carefully. They needed to be sufficiently generalised to avoid the accusation of being partisan and yet sufficiently specific to comfort his allies and worry his opponents. It was in this context that his gift for ambiguity became a political strategy. At the same time he used another and far more powerful verbal strategy to both enlighten and obscure what was in his political mind, that of presenting himself and his actions entirely in the context of his most heartfelt role – that of a humble Saint, striving to serve God and justify His faith in the English Godly nation as His second chosen people. It was in this *conglomerate* role – of Godly soldier with a special access to parliament – that he frequently expressed his 'sence' of events and made his future actions and intentions extremely difficult to assess. Given that two of the elements within that role – faith and military ability – were difficult to criticise, it only left the political element open to question. For his opponents, and often his allies, that became increasingly difficult to isolate, as will be shown.

His men had fought long and hard and there was still more marching and fighting to do, despite being 'very dirty and weary' and having encountered some 'very wet' weather.[12] He writes that by the end 'we are so harassed and haggled out in this business, that we are not able to do more than walk





(at) an easy pace after them (Hamilton and the remnants of his army)',[13] but nevertheless celebrates their success in battle 'there being so much God in it'.[14] Then he moves from dutiful soldier – 'It is not fit for me to give advice' – to a new role as quasi-prophet – 'exalt Him, - and not hate His people, who are the apple of His eye, and for whom even Kings shall be reproved'.[15] It was in this role that he was at his most unreachable in terms of purpose and, it could be argued, most manipulative. His frequent resort to the Scriptures and specific Bible texts has been explored at some length in a search for political meaning but the argument proposed here is that whilst the meaning was (and still is) important, it was the *search* for that meaning and the confusion it engendered at the time that was one of the most crucial aspects of the pre-regicide period.[16]

As any good commander knows, confusion frequently causes panic or at least frustration and in so doing weakens the enemy and leads to mistakes. It is a standard tactic of warfare and ultimately has the same effect as the divide and rule manoeuvre that was always the King's preferred option. The danger of both styles was that they could rebound and engender mistrust and division within their own ranks – a central theme both of the many negotiations and schemes of the King and of Cromwell's political leadership, as the Sexby example has shown.[17]

Such confusion must have been caused by the final part of his letter to Lenthall in which he suggests to parliament that if they had the best interests of the country at heart, they would listen to 'all that will live peaceably' whilst 'they that...will not leave troubling the Land may speedily be destroy out of the Land'.[18] Sufficiently opaque to allow for various factional interpretations, despite Charles and his supporters being the most obvious targets, it must at best have been an irritant and at worst a cause for concern when it was communicated to the Commons.

The letter was delivered by Major Berry and it is recorded in the Commons Journals for Wednesday 23 August that he was paid 'Two-hundred Pounds' for so doing, whilst Edward Sexby 'who brought the very good news of the very great Success obtained, by the great mercy of God, against the whole Scots Army in Lancashire' had the sum of 'One-hundred Pounds'.[19] The following day, parliament repealed the Vote of No Addresses.

It is difficult to tell what part his letter had played in that Vote. It is most likely that those suspicious of Cromwell and his motives continued to be so and that the majority had already made up their minds as to the best way forward. Clearly the King and his supporters could easily be identified as

those not living 'peaceably' but what of the small but vociferous group of Republicans in the Commons centred around Scot, Marten and Chaloner who were pressing for radical constitutional change and their supporters at all levels within the army of whom Ireton, Cromwell's son-in-law, was a prominent member? Could they also not be, in the longer term, a threat to peace and stability? Cromwell, by not making his intentions clear, by blurring the roles of soldier, preacher and politician, had left ample room for manoeuvre by everyone. If parliament were finally able to achieve an acceptable settlement with Charles, then Cromwell's advice could be seen as a spur to the successful negotiations. If, on the other hand, parliament failed to resolve the matter, then he and they could reassess the situation *but he would not be responsible.* In the meantime, to be seen as a prophet waiting for God's will to be done could do him no harm at all and it is reasonable to accept that, middle-aged and battle-weary immediately after Preston, the most solace was to be found through his role as God's instrument. Seen in that light, his final exhortation – 'If you take courage in this, God will bless you; and good men will stand by you; and God will have glory, and the Land will have happiness by you in despite of all your enemies' was as much a religious mantra for himself in the face of the misery and destruction of war.[20] It was the consistent use of this 'Christian Soldier' role that proved difficult to attack or decry, even though, post-regicide, his critics would ally it to over-weaning ambition and destructive militarism by portraying him, anachronistically, in a full suit of armour.[21]

Throughout his military career, Cromwell always ensured he had adequate support for himself and his men in terms of food, clothing and armaments and on those occasions when he felt it to be lacking he would wait until the shortfall had been made good. He never moved until he was ready, could see 'a fit time to proceed'. He also liked to work in conjunction with others before taking overall control, through councils and debates, but that style of collective decision-making and shared responsibility did not extend to his relationship with parliament whilst he was a soldier – a legacy perhaps of his time employed by parliament on a series of short-term contracts. In that role, he always placed the political blame firmly at someone else's door under the guise of having followed orders or, as at Putney, of having 'deliver'd but what I had as your sence'. It was not his style, politically, to lead from the front and his correspondence bears witness to that fact.

A week later events in Westminster seem to weigh heavy with him. In a short letter to Lord Wharton, sent from Knaresborough on 2 September, he clearly felt slighted that 'the House' had not sufficiently appreciated the





'great mercy' of Preston and he translated this lack of recognition as a specific attack upon the Saints whom he and his soldiers represented, casting them as a maligned minority – 'despised, jeered saints! Let them mock on. Would we were all saints!' He then moves on somewhat reluctantly to congratulate Lord Wharton at becoming a father, trusting Wharton will not 'plot or shift for the young Baron to make him great' but rather 'You will say "He is God's to dispose of and guide for;" and there you will leave him.' It is as if to say 'Never mind the baby, there's more important things to think about and I need your support'. He reinforces that sense of an all-important adult world of networks and obligations when he sends 'My love to the dear little Lady, better (to me) than the child' and sends his 'love and service to all Friends high and low; if you will, to my Lord and Lady Mulgrave and Will Hill.'[22] It is a strange letter, yet perhaps gives a glimpse of Cromwell at his least confident, feeling undervalued and misunderstood and retreating still further into his religion and more particularly his role as leading member of that relatively small band of Saints from which his core support came. In that capacity he was capable of being petulant, brusque and bossy and yet still mindful of the need to reinforce his contacts, at all social levels. In the early autumn of 1648, when parliamentary allegiances were constantly shifting, it was wise not to lose touch.

Whilst this was what Carlyle calls 'A Private Note', his letter to Speaker Lenthall when on his way back from Scotland was clearly on public business. In complete contrast to the Wharton letter, he was in high spirits over his successful negotiations with Argyll and his supporters for they had gone to his liking and had not yet been clouded by the rumours that were to surface with regard to underhand pacts and double-dealing. His statement that he had 'proceeded thus far as a Soldier, and I trust, by the blessing of God, not to your disservice' shows that he felt confident enough openly to acknowledge that he had other roles but that he had not chosen to use them.[23] Or, alternatively, that he *had* used one of them – as parliamentary negotiator – but had been officially sanctioned to do so, via 'your Votes' and therefore there had been no blurring of boundaries. There had, in *public* political terms, been none of his 'owne sence' in it, though this was later challenged as will be shown. He then offered 'to do further as may be for His glory, the good of the Nation wherewith *you* are intrusted, and the comfort and encouragement of the Saints of God in both Kingdoms and all the World over'. There is a definite sense here of a division between 'the Nation' which is parliament's responsibility and 'the Saints' (whose potential for influence seems to be expanding) which are *his* responsibility.

It is this perception of himself as the leader, or a leading member, of a successful Godly minority that was prefigured in the Wharton letter and is crucial to subsequent events. On a purely political level, he makes no attempt to be ambiguous regarding the chief Scottish troublemakers – 'I mean Duke Hamilton, the Earls of Lauderdale, Traquair, Carnegy and their confederates' – but was still reluctant to name their English counterparts, referring simply to 'some in England (who have cause to blush)'.[24] This would seem to imply that his confidence in his proven abilities to 'settle' Scotland did not yet extend to being sure of achieving something similar in England without taking counsel, but he was buoyant and on the march, both literally and metaphorically, 'for he had seen what could be accomplished by committed religious and political minorities, given military support. Perhaps, at last, he had found the precedent that was needed to move politically against the King.

In Edinburgh, as a victorious soldier and statesman with responsibility for negotiating an Anglo Scottish settlement, he had been wined and dined with the most powerful men that, for the moment, Scotland had to offer and it had done his *earthly* sense of worth no harm at all. However, it was in stark contrast to what England had to offer over the coming weeks.

Since the middle of September, Fairfax and his troops had been stationed at St. Albans and the Army Council meetings had resumed. Arguments both within parliament and the army over the future of the negotiations with the King continued and there was a clear division amongst the army leadership as to what their next move should be. In the course of one debate, Ireton attempted to resign his commission and although not accepted by Fairfax, the impact on Cromwell must have been considerable. David Farr has suggested that there was already considerable tension between the two men or at least their supporters, with Ireton's increasingly strong army network at odds with the more social and political one, already touched on, of Cromwell.[25] The wrong move in the wrong place at the wrong time could prove fatal for them all, jeopardising not only careers and even lives, but also affecting whole families – many of whom were related through blood or marriage. At the same time, petitions against the Newport Treaty from both within the army and at county level were on the increase and in David Underdown's words 'A mood of violence was abroad'.[26] For Cromwell, that mood came closer to home when, on 29 October, Colonel Rainsborough was murdered at Doncaster by royalist sympathisers.

It was in this atmosphere that at the beginning of November, Cromwell wrote a private letter to his friend and cousin Robert Hammond, Governor





on the Isle of Wight, to warn him and 'brother Heme'. (Sir Henry Vane, one of the commissioners then negotiating the Newport Treaty) to be careful 'lest our friends should burn their fingers, as some others did not long since'. The letter, in coded language, contains a substantial section dealing with rumours concerning his negotiations in October with Argyll and other opponents of the Duke of Hamilton after Preston. The rumours were that he and 'Sir Roger' (possibly Lambert or Haselrig) had 'turned Presbyterians' in order to come to an accord with Argyll and his party; '...tell brother Heme that we have the witness of our consciences that we have walked in this thing (whatsoever surmises are to the contrary) in plainness and godly simplicity...' and that if such rumours were hindering the progress of the current negotiations '...I can be passive and let it go, knowing that innocence and integrity loses nothing by a patient waiting on the Lord. Our papers are public; let us be judged by them. Answers do not involve us.'[27] This is a refutation in the style of the one at Putney in which personal probity – his 'owne sence' – is separated from public accountability, but are allied in defence of his 'innoceney' and in his 'capacitie' as both friend and adviser presents himself as above the fray of worldly things, content to be God's servant. Yet he was clearly stung by the implied accusation of double-dealing, as he had been a year earlier at Putney, and continues to justify his actions to proceed through negotiation rather than conquest (as Vane favoured), on the grounds, once again, of orders – *'I was commanded ... by the two Houses'*. He ends, as he often did, with an assertion of humility – 'I am a poor creature that write to thee, the poorest in the work, but I have hope in God, and desire from my heart to love His people... '.[28]

This explanation, of actions taken 'in plainness and godly simplicity', may well have been only partly convincing, for Hammond and Vane, who, despite being part of the network of Godly, influential friends and acquaintances that Cromwell had assiduously cultivated over many years, were their own men and not part of Cromwell's serving soldier network – what Richard Baxter, retrospectively described as those 'proud, self-conceited, hot-headed sectaries...the soul of the Army'.[29] Hammond retained his misgivings in relation to the Scots negotiations and could not agree that his 'friends' were 'justified' in supporting 'a lesser party of a Parliament (that) hath made it lawful to declare the greater part a faction, and made the Parliament null, and call a new one, and do this by force'.[30] As a consequence, he himself would be removed by force as Governor before the end of the month. Both he and Vane would part company with Cromwell, not only because they could not keep up with the twists and turns of his 'owne sence' but also because they were not quite sure about

his 'innocency', about the 'means' of his approach even if they fundamentally agreed with the 'end' – namely the achievement of a peaceful and Godly nation.[31] There was no such confusion for Robert Blair, a Presbyterian minister present at the discussions between Cromwell and Argyll and their various supporters early in October 1648. He recorded his view that Cromwell had avowed his belief in 'monarchical government, and that in the person of this King and his posterity; that he was against religious toleration' but that he (Blair) did 'not believe one word he says. He is an egregious dissembler and a great liar'.[32]

After writing to Hammond, Cromwell embarked on the siege of Pontefract Castle and in a letter to the Derby House Committee of both Houses on 15 November he set out in full and very clear detail how things were in terms of men and supplies, together with the resources or lack of them in the surrounding countryside. He took the Committee to task for 'a Letter to the House of Commons; wherein things are so represented, as if the Siege were at such a pass that the prize were already gained' and then told them of 'the true state of this Garrison' – extremely well victualled and fortified whilst the rest of the countryside was 'exceedingly impoverished; not able to bear free-quarter; nor well able to furnish provisions, if we had moneys'. There then followed a list of things he would need, which included money, armaments and clothes for his men – 'shoes, stockings and clothes, for them to cover their nakedness'.[33] The tone was the careful and controlled one of a professional commander who knew he must not overstep the mark if he wished his request for supplies to be met. One senses an underlying anger at the apparent unconcern of the Committee as to the size of the task and the state of his troops fighting in the name of parliament yet was not overlaid with the religious indignation he expressed to Lord Wharton after Preston. There is no mention of God or Providence or religion in any shape or form and no hint of ambiguity. He is a commanding officer with a genuine concern for his men and, in this role, at his most accessible and most attractive. He is also, in a sense, the least like himself for his religious core is missing. Could it be that he had already transferred that core, that informed everything he did, to his political self in order that a Providential victory might also be achieved in parliament?

His anger with parliament, or at least two members of it, surfaces again on 20 November in a letter to Robert Jenner and John Ashe, who had pressed for leniency in the case of Colonel Owen, then being held by Colonel Hutchinson at Nottingham Castle. He reminds them, with heavy sarcasm, that it was not long since 'the House of Commons did vote all those





(persons) Traitors that did adhere to, or bring in, the Scots in their late Invading of this Kingdom...being a more prodigious Treason than any that had been perfected before; because the former quarrel was that Englishmen might rule over one another; this to vassalise us to a foreign nation'.[34] Cromwell's attitude towards the Scots had always been ambiguous, and despite his warm feelings of a month earlier, the rumours that he had rebutted in his letter to Hammond had clearly had their effect. As in the letter after Preston, he refers to '*your* Cause and Quarrel' and whilst religion is again not a central theme (it is only referred to twice) the second reference casts him as a spokesman for his Godly officers with their 'amazement; - which truly is not so much to see their blood made so cheap, as to see such manifest witnessing of God, so terrible and so just, no more reverenced' by the request for leniency for Owen.[35] Needless to say, he declined the MPs' request.

In London, matters were coming to a head between the army, the King and parliament. During a long and divisive meeting of officers of the Army Council at St. Albans, a radical document probably drafted by Ireton – '*The Remonstrance of the Army*' – was considered, whilst around the same time (15 November) the Commons voted 'that the King shall be settled in a condition of honour, freedom and safety, agreeable to the laws of the land'. On 18 November, after one last offer of terms to the King, which he set aside, the Council of Officers endorsed the *Remonstrance*, in which Charles was designated 'chief delinquent', and two days later the document was presented to the Commons. The officer who 'headed the deputation which presented the army's remonstrance' to the Commons was Colonel Isaac Ewer and it might be useful briefly to consider his career, as he was to play an important part in the events shortly to occur on the Isle of Wight.[36]

Isaac Ewer (d.1650/1651), was married to John Thurloe's sister (or was John Thurloe's half-brother through their mother) and assessment of his income placed him in the 'middling sort'. By March 1645 he had become a major of dragoons in the Eastern Association and later became a lieutenant colonel in Robert Hammond's Regiment of Foot in the New Model Army. In October 1647 he succeeded Hammond as Colonel when the latter went to the Isle of Wight and the following May he was left by Cromwell to besiege Chepstow Castle, which he eventually took, killing the Governor, Sir Nicholas Kemeys. By August 1648 he was one of the commissioners at the surrender of Colchester, where he may have been part of the Council of War that condemned Lucas, Lisle and Gascoigne, and soon after he was appointed Governor of Portsmouth. Like Cromwell, he had risen through

the ranks and was connected through marriage (or blood) to people close to Cromwell – in this case John Thurloe. His family connections with Thurloe, later to become Cromwell's Secretary of State, and his army association with Hammond, a relation of Cromwell's, serves as yet another reminder of the close-knit nature of some of the New Model regiments and the depth and breadth of Cromwell's networks.[37]

On 25 November Cromwell sent another letter to Robert Hammond who, at that date, was still in the Isle of Wight but unlikely to have received it there, having been ordered, ostensibly by Fairfax, to return to London.[38] In this letter, all Cromwell's roles so far noted seem to coalesce and he is, by turns, friend (and relation), spiritual adviser, prophet, debater, politician and soldier. With bewildering agility he moves from one 'capacitie' to another, his 'owne sence' merging with the apparent 'sense' of others, be they the Saints, the 'poor Army', 'the Northern Army', friends or, most notably, God. As a result it has been considered one of his most important and most opaque letters, with opinion divided as to what it reveals about his political intentions with relation to parliament and the King.[39]

The letter, written ostensibly in the guise of friend and spiritual adviser, was in response to one from Hammond who had clearly been seeking advice as to what he should do in the light of his conflict between his duty to God and God's appointed authority in England, namely parliament. The issue of the right of a minority to seize power, already rehearsed in the earlier letter of 6 November, re-emerges and Cromwell attempts once more, as 'so near a relation of love and Christian brotherhood' to explain his 'owne sence' of why his and 'his friends' actings' were just and lawful. He constructs a religious debater's argument of three points in which legalistic notions of *Salus Populi* and *in foro humano* are invoked.[40] In this context God's army and the King are placed in direct opposition to each other – 'Whether this Army be not a lawful power, called by God to oppose and fight against the King upon some stated grounds' – and, by extension, 'may (they) not oppose one name of authority, for those ends, as well as another', in other words also to oppose parliament His 'fleshly reasonings' in this respect, held together as they are by his 'owne sence' of God's intentions, His providences and the meanings of them, would appear in his mind to differ from those he warns 'Dear Robin' against, those ones that 'make us say, heavy, sad, pleasant, easy'. They would also seem to differ from his own bitterness against those who through 'Malice, swoln malice against God's people, now called Saints' had opposed the Godly in arms (also reflected in the earlier letter to Lord Wharton) and he confidently acts as spokesman for the collective views





of his officers and men – 'We in this northern Army'. It is in this military persona that he implies that neither he nor his men are or have been directly involved with the events unfolding in London, 'being in a waiting posture, desiring to see what the Lord would lead us to'. Indeed, when the *Remonstrance* is presented to parliament 'many are shaken: although we could perhaps have wished the stay of it till after the treaty, yet seeing it is come out we trust to rejoice in the will of the Lord, waiting his further pleasure'. It is an argument in which providence, in all its manifestations, can underwrite law, duty, action and inaction. It underpins his whole faith and always has the last word. In this letter it also allows him to play one last role, 'As a poor looker-on' awaiting events.[41] It is a manipulative *tour de force*.

On 26 November Colonel Ewer was sent to the Isle of Wight with orders to replace Hammond and secure the King in Hurst Castle. The records are silent on whether Cromwell was aware his letter would not reach Hammond in time but certainly Ireton is reputed to have also written a letter to the luckless Governor on 17 November, which was only to be delivered if Hammond 'seemed likely to abandon his scruples against military intervention'.[42] Hammond held firm and refused to leave without specific orders from parliament, at which point Ewer was obliged to arrest his former commanding officer and send him under guard back to the mainland.

Did Cromwell know this was an option for 'Dear Robin' as he watched and waited in the North, acting 'as a poor looker-on' whilst Providence took its course? There is very little written evidence concerning Cromwell or his movements in the days leading up to the army purge of parliament on or around 6 December, or of what he did during most of December whilst the charges for the King's trial were being formulated.[43] Rumours circulated of last minute attempts by Denbigh and others (possibly even including Cromwell) to do a 'deal' with the King, whereby even if he was tried he should not lose his life and as late as 21 December 'John Lawrans' (Nedham) sent a note to Secretary Nicholas in which he 'Thinks it probable that Cromwell will preserve the King'.[44]

The final letter extant from this pre-trial period is one written by Cromwell on 18 December to the Master and Fellows of Trinity Hall in Cambridge. It is a brief note concerning Dr. Isaac Dorislaus (Dorisla), asking that they should 'prefer him before any other' for the Chamber left vacant by Dr. Duck. Dorislaus, as Cromwell notes, had 'done service unto the Parliament from the beginning of these Wars' and that service, like Ewer's, was initially

army based. As a Dutch scholar, he had originally come to England in 1627 at the behest of Fulke Greville, the Lord Brooke, to give a series of lectures at Cambridge. His text, taken from Tacitus, gave offence for its perceived Republican slant and in 1628 Lord Brooke suggested he return to Holland. A year later he was back in England as a commoner in the College of Advocates and by 1640, possibly during the Bishops' War, was made a Judge Advocate. In 1642 he held the post of Advocate to the Army under the Earl of Essex and Philip Skippon and as a member of the 'Counsell of Warre' came into contact with Sir William Constable, a fellow member and later one of the Northern regicides; one of the Colonels in the Troops of Horse at that time, under the Earl of Bedford, was Bazil, Lord Fielding later to become the second Earl of Denbigh.[45] Dorislaus became a judge in the Court of Admiralty in 1648 and after the failure of his diplomatic mission to the United Provinces he returned to England and was one of those responsible for drawing up the legal case against the King.[46] Perhaps this further piece of evidence in respect of Cromwell's networks would repay further investigation, but for the purposes of this paper it must remain a loose end.

For Oliver Cromwell, his role in 'Pride's Purge' and the Regicide must also remain something of a loose end because he wished it to be so, just as throughout his career, he wished to use role to clarify or obscure his purpose. Examples have been given of his ability as a soldier sometimes to stay separate from, and sometimes mesh with, his role as a politician by using, without any apparent insincerity, his religious faith to connect one with the other – the Godly soldier with an access to parliament. It has been shown that this could lead, quite deliberately, to ambiguity of both content and intent and that whilst it gave him protection from outright accusations of political meddling, it also gave rise to mistrust and a reputation as a schemer amongst both his opponents and some of his allies. It is clear from the examples given that when he was acting overtly and *only* as a soldier he was capable of great clarity and simplicity and that confidence in his task aided that clarity. By the same token he was at his most opaque when attempting to manipulate his roles in order to gain himself a breathing space. Caught off guard or confronted with political rumours, as he had been by Sexby at Putney or Vane and Hammond over the Argyll negotiations, he had no compunction in shifting the blame onto the orders of others, in a desire to present himself as innocent and sincere. He appears to have needed constant approbation, thriving on his success in Scotland, yet willing to retreat into the role of misunderstood Godly messenger or poor, despised Saint when he did not receive it, as evidenced by the





Wharton letter. He was frequently disingenuous in his reasoning but was an able debater and was capable of moving from one role to another in an effort to convince fiends like Hammond on matters of law, conscience and the greater good.

For each plus in Cromwell's character, there always seems to be a minus. Professor Colin Davis has suggested that paradox and complexity are both an essential part of our understanding of the enigma of Cromwell and yet also undermine our ability to do so.[47] The attempt of this paper has been to offer the notion of role, of 'activitie' as one more way of considering that enigma and as a result throw further possible light on the crucial question of when he decided it was 'a fit time to proceed' against parliament and hence the King.

It would seem, on the evidence of this brief analysis, that there was a mood change after his negotiations with Argyll when it became clear that committed minorities, backed by sufficient resources, could win both on and off the battlefield; that by the time he wrote to Hammond at the beginning of November, he was already realigning himself from Godly soldier with a political input to Godly politician with a military input and it was in those capacities that he acted, out of sight, in Pontefract, under the guise of 'a poor looker-on', his military input being as back-up to the forces purging parliament should anything go wrong. This is not to deny but rather enforce the crucial role that his faith played in all his words and actions – what John Morrill has identified as his 'political psychology' – and, at the same time, the different roles he played in that faith, as a military leader, political voice and prophet of the minority but God-favoured Saints.[48]

Robert Blair's uncomplicated assessment of him as an 'egregious dissembler' and 'a great liar' has been toned-down somewhat over the centuries. Events surrounding the twenty-first century war with Iraq have shown that real intentions are always difficult to establish when language, chosen carefully, can be manipulated to have many, often conflicting meanings and that actions guided by faith – by doing what was believed to be right at the time – are always hard to challenge. Perhaps an alternative judgement to Blair's might be 'a stalwart soldier and a devoutly manipulative man'.

Notes.

1. J. Morrill, 'Rewriting Cromwell: A Case of Deafening Silences', *Canadian Journal of History* 38 (2003).
2. 'The Value of History', *The Week* (5 February 2005), p. 4.
3. W. Clarke, *The Clarke Papers*, ed. C. H. Firth, (London, 1992), vol. I, p. 230 n. a.
4. Ibid. p. 231.
5. Ibid. pp. 227-228, also p. 226, n. b. for the background to Sexby's remarks.
6. Ibid. pp. 229-230.
7. Austin Woolrych suggests that Cromwell was 'counting on being personally exempted from the ordinance' but also acknowledges an alternative reading by J.S.A. Adamson. See A. Woolrych, *Britain in Revolution 1625-1660* (Oxford, 2002), p. 303, n. 11.
8. J.C. Davies, *Oliver Cromwell* (London, 2003), p. 4.
9. T. Carlyle, *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and* Speeches (London, 1893), p. 282.
10. Ibid. p. 292.
11. As examples, see is letter to William Lenthall, following the Battle of Naseby, 14 June 1645, in which the final paragraph was censored by the Commons; also letter to Lenthall after Bristol, 14 September 1645, in W.C. Abbott, *Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* vol. I (Cambridge, 1937), pp. 360 & 377.
12. D. Underdown, *Pride's Purge* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 106 and n. 1.
13. Carlyle, *Letters and Speeches*, p. 292.
14. Ibid. p. 294.
15. Ibid. p. 295.
16. J. Morrill & P. Baker, 'Oliver Cromwell, the Regicides and the Sons of Zeruiah', in J. Peacey (ed.), *The Regicides and the Execution of Charles I* (Basingstoke, 2001). pp. 14-35. For a broader perspective see J.C. Davies, *Oliver Cromwell*, Ch. 6; N.H. Mayfield, *Puritans and Regicide* (London, 1988).
17. For an alternative view of the basis for mistrust of Cromwell by previous friends, see Morrill, 'Rewriting Cromwell', p. 562.
18. Carlyle, p. 295.
19. Ibid. p. 296.
20. Ibid. p. 295.
21. For a discussion of some verbal and visual images of Cromwell, see L. L. Knoppers, *Constructing Cromwell* (Cambridge, 2000), Chs. 1 and 2.
22. Carlyle, pp. 303-4. For a consideration of Lord Wharton's allegiances, see J. Adamson, 'The English Nobility and the Projected Settlement of 1647', *The Historical Journal*, 30 (1987), pp. 567-602. Lord Mulgrave later went on to serve in the Protectorate.
23. Carlyle, p. 328.
24. Ibid.





25. Taken from notes made at a seminar discussion with Dr David Farr and Professor Colin Davis, University of East Anglia, Autumn 2004.
26. Underdown, *Pride's Purge*, p. 115.
27. Abbott, vol. I, pp. 676-678.
28. Ibid. p. 678.
29. R. Baxter, *Reliquiae Baxterianae* (1696). Part I, pp. 71, 73, quoted in A.S.P. Woodhouse (ed.), *Puritanism and Liberty* (London, 1974), Appendix A, p. 388.
30. Ibid. Letter of 6 November.
31. Morrill, 'Rewriting Cromwell', p. 562.
32. W. Rowe, *Life of Robert Blair*, Thomas McCrie (ed.), Wodrow Society, 1848, p. 210 quoted in Abbott, p. 666.
33. Carlyle, pp. 331-2.
34. Ibid. p. 334.
35. Ibid. p. 335.
36. This quote and what follows in respect of Ewer has been taken from Andrew Hopper's entry on him in *The Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) vol. 18, p. 818. Timothy Venning's entry for John Thurloe, ibid, vol. 54, p. 711 was also consulted with regard to the Ewer/Thurloe relationship and as they differ, I quote Venning's version in brackets.
37. I am indebted to Professor Davis for pointing out that Cromwell's connection with Thurloe came through Oliver St John, for whom Thurloe had worked as steward and legal factotum.
38. Abbott, pp. 696-9.
39. Morrill & Baker, 'Oliver Cromwell, the Regicides and the Sons of Zeruiah', pp. 15-16.
40. For a brief analysis of the origins of *Salus populi* and its usage in the seventeenth century, see Sarah Barber, *Regicide and Republicanism* (Edinburgh, 1998), p. 14, n. 14, and 30.
41. Abbott, pp. 696-9.
42. Underdown, *Pride's Purge*, p. 120.
43. For the most detailed chronology, see Underdown, *Pride's Purge*, Ch. VI. David Farr has suggested that Ireton was the main organiser of Pride's Purge but that Cromwell would also have been involved and that any correspondence between them, before or after, would have been deliberately destroyed, U.E.A. Seminar, *Op. cit.*
44. Rev. O. Ogle and W.H. Bliss (eds.), *Calendar of the Clarendon State Papers in Bodleian Library*, Vol. 1 (Oxford, 1872), pp. 458-9; for a recent approach to the 'Denbigh mission', see John Adamson, 'The Frightened Junto: Perceptions of Ireland, and the Last Attempts at Settlement with Charles I' in Jason Peacey (ed.), *The Regicides and the Execution of Charles I* (Basingstoke, 2001), pp. 36-70; also Adamson, 'The English Nobility', *Op cit.*

45. The information regarding Essex' Army has been taken from Edward Peacock, *The Army Lists of the Roundheads and Cavaliers* (London, 1874), pp. 20-23, 47; for a consideration of the Northern regicides see David Scott , 'Motives for King-Killing' in Jason Peacey (ed.), *The Regicides and the Execution of Charles I* (Basingstoke, 2001), pp. 138-160.
46. For further insights into the significance of his diplomatic role, see John Adamson, 'The Frightened Junto', pp. 36-70.
47. J.C. Davis, *Oliver Cromwell*, Introduction.
48. Morrill, 'Rewriting Cromwell', p. 556.

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*By Dr David Farr*

On 15 May 1660 the Convention Parliament ordered that justice be meted out on the regicides Oliver Cromwell, Henry Ireton, John Bradshaw and Thomas Pride. For a parliament that had welcomed monarchy back to England there was nothing surprising about initiating revenge against those who had committed the act that had led to eleven years of republican rule. What of course was different was that all four men were already dead. For the justice required by this parliament to be enacted, their bodies would have to be dug up, taken to Tyburn, the traditional place for the execution of traitors, hung, decapitated and disembowelled before being publicly displayed.[1]

The horror of such a process is only heightened by the length of time these men had been dead. Cromwell died on the 3 September 1658; Pride on 23 October 1658; Bradshaw on 31 October 1659. Of the four Ireton, despite being the youngest, had been in the ground for the longest time, having died in Ireland aged forty on 26 November 1651. A royalist satire played upon the fact that Ireton had been dead for a considerable length of time.[2] Of the fifty-nine regicides, twenty-four died before the Restoration but of that number only these four were signalled out for such treatment,[3] a mark of how they were regarded 'as most guilty of the king's death'.[4] In a declaration of 26 August 1651 Charles Stuart had offered indemnity to all but the regicides, specifically naming Cromwell, Ireton and Bradshaw.[5]

In 1660 Cromwell naturally topped any royalist hit list. Bradshaw owed his selection to the fact that he had served as president of the court that had tried Charles I. Colonel Thomas Pride had given his name to the purge of parliament on 6 December 1648 that had made the trial of Charles I possible before then attending almost every session of its proceedings.[6] In the end Pride was not exhumed and Cromwell and Bradshaw's bodies were thus only accompanied by a third body, that of Henry Ireton.[7]

Royalist hatred of Ireton centred not just on the fact that he was Cromwell's son-in-law but that he was regarded as the individual, more than anyone else, even than of Cromwell, who had done most to bring about the execution of Charles I. In much royalist and other literature Ireton persuaded Cromwell to commit regicide.[8] While not as simplistic as this it is a view that has some validity.[9]

The hatred vented against the bodies of Ireton, Cromwell and Bradshaw was part of the revenge of returning royalism but also part of a necessary

reinforcement of the authority of monarchy, or rather the Stuarts, that had been undermined by the events of the previous eighteen years.[10] Zaller has argued that 'Charles's reinvestment of the sacred body of monarchy was paralleled by the desecration of the regicides'.[11] The violation of Ireton's corpse in 1661 tells us much about royalist perception of him and the atmosphere of the early Restoration. In contrast, what happened to Ireton's body almost ten years earlier illustrates the needs of another state, also unsure of itself and also seeking to make a political statement through public spectacle.

## I

On Saturday 26 January 1661 the tombs of Ireton, Cromwell and Bradshaw, which lay in the chapel of Henry VII in Westminster Abbey, were broken open in time for the anniversary of the regicide. Two contemporaries, Lucy Hutchinson and Edmund Ludlow, expressed some doubt as to whether Ireton's body actually was removed from his tomb. They felt that his body had not been transported from Ireland in early 1652. Hutchinson argued that 'whether his body or an empty hearse was brought into England, something in his name came to London...'. Ludlow appeared more certain, stating that 'the wise providence of God so ordered it that his body being interred in Ireland, that of Mrs. Claypoole's, a great friend of Charles Steward, was treated as his should have bin'. Such stories are most likely fanciful. The argument of McMains, which had been propounded in 1939 by Varley, that Ireton was buried in Ireland and that his funeral was a façade with another body substituted for his does not rest on any credible source material. In his survey of the evidence Peter Gaunt concluded that it was the bodies of Cromwell and Ireton which were removed from the abbey.[12]

On Monday night, 28 January, the bodies of Cromwell and Ireton were drawn in two carts from Westminster to Holborn to be followed by Bradshaw's body the next day. Then on Wednesday 30 January 1661 after a 'solemne fast and humiliation for the horrid murder of his late Majesty', observed in every parish church, the bodies of Ireton, Cromwell and Bradshaw were drawn on a hurdle to Tyburn. Ludlow states that before they had been dragged to Tyburn the bodies were 'first carryed to the Sessions Howse in the Old Baily, and there condemned'.[13] The bodies of Cromwell and Ireton had been 'wrapped in searcloth' but Bradshaw had been put in a 'winding sheete'. As a result the 'body turned to putrification, cast a most odious sent all the way it went'. At Tyburn their bodies were 'hung on the gibbet, in the view of thousands' by the common executioner





for Middlesex, with their toes apparently cut off by some apprentices. Ireton 'having been buried long hung like a dried rat'. Ireton, Cromwell and Bradshaw hung there 'from 9 in the morning' until 'sunset at which time they were cut down and their heads ordered to be set at Westminster Hall, directly over their High Court of Justice' with Bradshaw in the centre flanked by Ireton and Cromwell. It took four cuts to remove Ireton's head. Meanwhile 'their bodies thrown into a hole under the gallows' and 'then buried under that fatal and ignominious Monument, in a deepe pit'.[14] Heath sarcastically wrote that the 'qualities and conditions of Ireton were so congenial with others' that 'the evil spirit after his decease being doubled upon him by a mischevious Metemsychosis, a transmigration of soul, which assimilated their (Cromwell and Ireton) Ashes in the same grave at Tyburn'.[15]

Some of the feeling of revengeful royalism is clear in the enthusiasm with which some viewed the dismemberment of the corpses of Ireton, Cromwell and Bradshaw. John Evelyn believed the exhibition witnessed 'the stupendious, and inscrutable Judgements of God'.[16] Edward Nicholas, Charles II's secretary of state, reported on the day. He wrote at least five letters to acquaintances that commented on how the 'arch-traitor Cromwell, and two of his choicest instruments, Bradshaw and Ireton, finished the tragedy of their lives in a comic scene at Tyburn; a wonderful example of justice'.[17] Ludlow commented with regard to such men as Nicholas that, 'Yea so barbarous were these men growne that they tryumph over the bones of those whom they durst not looke in the face whilest living'.[18] It is likely however that most of the reputed thousands who watched the event did so because it was precisely that, an event.[19] Samuel Pepys's wife witnessed the spectacle, but not with her husband. Pepys did however see the heads of Cromwell, Ireton and Bradshaw when he was at Westminster on 5 February 1661.[20]

Restoration revenge appears to have been particularly called for by Henrietta-Maria. Yet Charles I's widow was not in the country to see the spectacle. The actual order for the disinterment of Ireton had been passed by the Covention Parliament on 10 December 1660. Charles II has generally been seen as quite forgiving after 1660, but he certainly did not apply this to the majority of the regicides. In June 1661, during an attempt to bring to trial nineteen regicides who had surrendered, Charles reputedly told Clarendon – 'I am weary of hanging except on new offences; let it sleep. You know that I cannot pardon them'.[21] As Nenner has pointed out Charles 'needed to react to the 'murder' of a parent while at the same time

fashioning his response to the dictates of political necessity'.[22] The continuing number of executions after Charles's restoration indicates that he, like others, wanted a bloody revenge upon the regicides.[23] Indeed the 'merry monarch' even allowed one Tench, the carpenter of the gallows for Charles I, to be executed.[24] In 1648-49 Ireton had been motivated, in part, by the notion of 'blood-guilt'. The retribution exacted on the surviving regicides who had not fled the country at the Restoration was in the same context.[25] Even those who had fled the country were hunted down. John Okey, who had left a pregnant wife behind him, was arrested at Delft and brought back to England for his execution.[26] Rather than any scruples on Charles II's part the executions ended because the most prominent regicides had been killed and the process was having damaging political consequences. By October 1660 a Paris based correspondent of Henry Oldenburg could comment, 'Every body here admireth ye constancy and resolution of those men, yt were lately executed in England for having Judged ye late king'.[27] A Dutch traveller recorded the courage with which John Okey met his death.[28] The state retreated on a promise to Okey's widow that they would return his body for a funeral due to reports of the numbers likely to attend.[29] By June 1662, following the trials of John Lambert and Henry Vane, Hutton has written that 'whereas Londoners had exulted over the deaths of the regicides in 1660, now they spoke only in praise of Vane and in criticism of the manner of his destruction. By overplaying his hand, Charles had turned a symbol of treason and schism into one of dignity and law'.[30] In particular the response to their fate of three of the regicides who had been particularly close to Ireton illustrated the danger that continued retribution would merely serve to stir further sympathy for their cause or reignite the resolve of the defeated.

Three of Ireton's closest comrades, the regicides Thomas Harrison, John Cook and Hugh Peters, were all executed in June 1662 proclaiming their continuing belief that what they had done in 1649 had been right. Cook, who had probably worked with Ireton in 1647 and was certainly with him later in Ireland, had been the prosecuting solicitor for the Commonwealth at Charles I's trial in 1649. Cook wrote to a friend before his execution proclaiming, 'We are not traitors, nor murderers, nor fanatics, but true Christians and good Commonwealth men, fixed and constant to principles of sanctity, truth, justice and mercy'.[31] As Peters approached execution he proclaimed 'this is a good day, he is come that I have long looked for, and I shall be with him in glory'.[32] When Harrison was derided on his way to his death 'where is your good old cause ?' he 'with a cheerful smile clapt his





hand on his breast, and said, Here it is, and I am going to seal it with my blood'.[33]

Such were the men with whom Ireton had decided publicly to commit regicide. With the defeat of the cause for which they had fought, their reputations, like Ireton's, were to be subjected to a written degradation that was as brutal as that which had been meted out physically on their bodies.[34] While the treatment of the bodies of Cromwell and Ireton was certainly macabre, the fate of Cook, Harrison and Peters was, if anything, more bloody. It also had its grisly features. In the sledge on 16 October 1660 that transported Cook to his death had been placed 'the face bare towards him, the head of Major General Harrison' who had been executed three days earlier. Cook's own head, with Harrison's, was displayed on Westminster Hall.[35] Peters was made to watch the execution of his friend Cook.[36] The execution of regicides like Peters, Harrison and Cook was part of the same process of reimposing monarchy that saw such brutal treatment meted out to the bodies of Ireton, Cromwell and Bradshaw. It may have enabled a returning monarchy to illustrate its power but its authority, after what Ireton, Cromwell and Bradshaw had done in 1649, could never be the same as it was before the regicide.[37]

## II

Almost a decade earlier what had happened to Ireton's body had been very different. As in 1661 John Evelyn witnessed the event. On 6 February 1652 Evelyn recorded

> this day I saw the Magnificent Funeral of that arch-Rebell Ireton, carried in pomp from Somerset house to Westminster, accompanied with divers regiments of Souldiers horse and foote; then marched the Mourners, Generall Cromewell (his father in Law) his Mock-Parliament men: Officers, and 40 poore-men in gownes, 3 led horses in housses of black-Cloth: 2 horses led in black-Velvet, and his Charging horse all coverd over with embrodery and gold on crimson Velvet: Then the Guidons, Ensignes, 4 Heraulds, carrying the armes of the State (as they cald it) namely the red Crosse, and Ireland, with the Casque, Wreath, Sword, Spurrs etc: next a [Charriot] Canopied, all of black Velvet, and 6 horses, in this the Corps, the Pall held up by the Mourners on foote: The Mace and Sword with other marks of his Charge in Ireland (where he died of the Plague) carried before in black Scarfs;

> Thus in a grave pace, drums covered with cloth, souldiers reversing their armes, they proceeded thro the streetes in a very solemn manner.[38]

Ireton had died on campaign in Ireland on 26 November 1651.[39] Whereas in 1661 Ireton was to be part of the spectacle of the reimposition of monarchy, the preparations for his funeral in late 1651 indicate that the Republic through his death wanted to illustrate its authority.

A newspaper reported that the 'preparations which are made for the Interrment of the late Lord Deputy of Ireland, which will now be speedie, and be very solemn and magnificent'.[40] In the State Papers Ireland the care taken over the planning of Ireton's funeral is clear from the details that were being considered.[41] The scale of the funeral is apparent from the fact that £60 was to be spent just on coats for six officers-at-arms to attend and £400 was set aside for some of the costs.[42] The new tabards embroidered with the arms of the Commonwealth, worn for the first time at Ireton's funeral, cost £220.[43] While Ireton's brother John, Sheriff of London was selected as chief mourner, he was accompanied by six assistants, one of which was Ireton's father-in-law, Cromwell.[44]

The State Papers Ireland also indicate that in planning for Ireton's funeral reference was made to previous formats, especially the funeral of the Earl of Essex, which itself was modelled on that for Prince Henry in 1612.[45] As with Robert Walker's portrait of Ireton his funeral appeared to be another example of the regime not clearly developing its own distinctive artistic forms for political ends.[46] Whereas what was done to Ireton's body in 1661 was all about the act of regicide, no reference was made to it in any aspect of Ireton's funeral. Yet descriptions of Ireton's funeral as 'little more' than a 'military parade' should not lead us to dismiss it as a political statement, if in some ways a conservative one, by the new regime. Indeed its overt military nature is in itself very telling.[47]

For the funeral Ireton's body was shipped from Ireland to Bristol.[48] A long boat covered in black cloth was sent out to collect Ireton's body from the ship anchored in Kingrode.

> There were great ceremonies over the body of Lord Deputy Ireton at Bristol. Placed on a car of black velvet it was followed by the governor and his officers, the mayor, council and other deputies to the castle, the guns firing the while. The same functionaries, dressed in mourning, followed it out of the city. The governor,





> with a part of his suite and some of the inhabitants of the deceased's friends, followed as far as the first stage.[49]

As the procession left Bristol through Lamsford gate there 'was at parting three Vollies of shot, after two Murderers placed for that purpose, and then all great Guns in Castle and Fort'. On the following day Ireton's body was taken to London, transported in a 'chariot' pulled by six horses accompanied and met by two regiments, one of infantry and one of cavalry, received in state and laid in Somerset House where rooms had been cleared for its reception.[50]

Ireton's funeral took place on 26 February 1652. At the funeral John Owen preached on the 'Labouring Saint's Dismission to Rest' from *Daniel 12:13* (But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days) outlining how he regarded Ireton as committed in his religious beliefs and actions.[51] After the funeral Ireton's body was laid in a specially constructed tomb in Henry VII's chapel in Westminster Abbey. It seems to have been as elaborately prepared as the funeral, costing £120 and with Hugh Peters apparently writing and paying for its epigraph.[52] The republican Algernon Sidney was told that Ireton's burial inscription was based on Pompey's and apparently believed, or wished to believe, 'that if Ireton...had not died the Republic would have been Established, and that he would have prevented Cromwell from aspiring to domination'.[53]

The funeral and monument disgusted some Fifth Monarchists. Jan Poortmans, serving aboard the Resolution, could still denounce the spectacle over a year later.

> I am glad to hear there is such a spirit in our rulers as to (discountenance) the very appearance of Antichrist in their practices, as the vain pomp at the funeral of Lord Ireton was very offensive to many. It will be disowned in the burial of Gen. Deane.[54]

One wonders what Ireton's own Fifth Monarchist brother Clement made of the spectacle that had been made of his brother's death and the effusive praise of the press? Given his refusal to accept all of the monetary awards offered to him during his life or purchase crown lands it seems unlikely that Ireton received the funeral that he would have wanted.[55] Indeed John Owen in the sermon he preached at Ireton's funeral portrayed Ireton as an example of the of idea of service not for its own reward but for God.[56] This

was also the refrain of another description of Ireton from John Cook who worked with him in Ireland:

> there was never a more able painefull, provident and industrious servant; that with more wisdom, prudence, faithfulnes, fortitude, and selfe-denial, discharged his duty to all people... if he erred in any thing (as error and humanity are inseperable) it was in too much neglecting himselfe.[57]

Hewson, who also served in Ireland and was governor of Dublin, also praised Ireton. He stated, 'Wee that knew him, can and must say truly, wee know no man like minded; most seeking their own things, few so singly minde the things of Jesus Christ, of publique concernment, of the interest of the precious sons of Zion'.[58] Ludlow, who worked closely with Ireton in Ireland, held a similar opinion. He wrote that Ireton 'was so diligent in the publick service, and so careless of every thing that belonged to himself, that he never regarded what clothes or food he used, what hour he went to rest, or what horse he mounted'.[59] Rushworth in a letter of January 1650 commented that, 'Major-General Ireton cannot well endure the yoke of his new honours, such is his modesty; indeed he is a good soul'.[60] Ludlow believed that Ireton 'would certainly have made it his desire that his body might have found a grave where his soul left it, so much did he despise these pompous and expensive vanities'.[61]

## III

As in 1661, what happened to Ireton's body in 1652 was more for public consumption as the image that each respective state wanted projected. The funerals of Isaac Dorislaus (14 June 1649), Edward Popham (24 September 1651) and, despite what Poortmans believed, Richard Deane (24 June 1653), were all designed to serve the same purpose.[62] As Seymour argued

> These were occasions upon which the state and its adherents spectacularly confronted the London population, and through printed accounts thereof, the political nation as a whole. These were occasions when the state chose publicly to demonstrate its power, if not its authority, and the solidarity of its adherents, if not their unity of purpose.[63]

The contrasting nature of what happened to Ireton's remains in 1652 and in 1661 is a simple reflection of how perceptions of the man were distorted by the perspective and purpose of each respective state. Yet as with any





caricature these created images of Ireton were based on already received contemporary perceptions of the man, which had grounding in the reality of his actions. They have historical validity as they resulted from how his actions were and could be seen and how each respective state wanted to be viewed. The real Ireton was, however, obviously a much more complex individual.

One of the most important influences on making Ireton who he was rather than as he was portrayed in the created images of two different states was his relationship with Oliver Cromwell. The royalist and Leveller image of a Machiavellian leading his father-in-law to kill Charles I is overplayed, but one of the most important influences on Cromwell during 1647-49, after God, was Ireton. The two men had worked very closely together since first meeting in 1643. There can be little doubt that they were close and that Cromwell respected Ireton's intellect and faith.[64] Cromwell and Ireton became an effective political partnership both guided by providence but with Cromwell's pragmatism also acting as a taming influence on Ireton's fanaticism.[65] Heath referred to Ireton as Cromwell's 'second self'.[66]

Yet their relationship must also be grasped at its more emotional level. Whitelocke wrote that Ireton's 'death struck a great sadness into Cromwell'.[67] A letter of Cromwell's from September 1652 illustrates his emotional need for political and religious guidance but may also indicate the loss he still felt from Ireton's death. Cromwell wrote, to an unknown correspondent,

> I make use of this for want of a better way of address to you. It's not hard to persuade I could have wished myself in the room of my letter, though but for myself, but indeed much more to have seen your face, and my dear Lady's though you in trouble, with which (if I know my heart) I have as truly sympathized as a naughty heart would let me. Indeed I have had ingenuity, for, that you are very dear to me, my thoughts and prayers can witness. Let me hear from you as you can. Instead of pitying you I can a little bewail myself. Have I one friend in our society to whom I can unbowell myself? You absent; Fleetwood is gone; I am left alone – almost so – but not forsaken. Lend me one shoulder. Pray for me. The Lord restore you. My hearty love to you and your dear Lady. If I had more you should have it. I rest Yours to love and serve you.[68]

It was apt that Ireton should hang next to Cromwell in 1661, for it was the depth of the relationship between the two men that did so much to shape the English Revolution of 1647-49 into the form that it took.

By their treatment of the bodies of Ireton and Cromwell in 1661 the royalists had tried to portray the recent past as transitory. Cromwell's faith led him to regard all the past as such. In the only recorded direct comment from Cromwell on Ireton's death he informed his sister Elizabeth that, 'What is of this world will be found transitory, a clear evidence whereof is my son Ireton's death'.[69] Yet, no matter what Cromwell thought, or what the republic of 1652 or the royalists of 1661 did to Ireton's remains, what Ireton had achieved alongside Cromwell could not be erased. As Ludlow wrote, Ireton had

> erected for himself a more glorious monument in the hearts of good men, by his affection to his country, his abilities of mind, his impartial justice, his diligence in the publick service, and his other vertues, which were a far greater honour to his memory, than a dormitory amongst the ashes of kings.[70]

Notes.

1. *CSPD*, (1660-61), p. 408; *CJ*, 8, 15 May, 27 June, 4 and 8 December, 1660. That their bodies were dug up at the Restoration was not novel. Other figures from the Interregnum who had also been placed in Westminster Abbey were disinterred. While Edward Popham and Richard Deane were transferred to nearby churchyards the body of Robert Blake was slung into a pit. Another body brought out of Westminster Abbey was that of Cromwell's mother.
2. BL, E1081(5), *The Speeches of Oliver Cromwell, Henry Ireton, John Bradshaw*, (1661), p. 7.
3. There is some debate about the exact number of men who should be termed 'regicide', see A.W. McIntosh, 'The Numbers of the English Regicides', *History*, 67:220, (1982). The general accepted number is the fifty-nine whose names are actually on the death warrant. McIntosh has argued that sixty-nine should actually be classed as regicides based on evidence of attendance at Charles' trial and the trial of regicides between 1660 and 1662. He includes ten men who were present at the last sitting of the trial on Saturday 27 January where the commissioners stood up and publicly declared agreement with Bradshaw's verdict but then did not sign the warrant. Partridge has written that only fifteen regicides died before Charles Stuart's return whereas twenty-four





actually appear to have died before the Restoration. R.B.Patridge, *'O Horrable Murder'. The Trial, Execution and Burial of Charles I*, (1998), p. 113.

4. *Calendar State Papers Venetian*, (1659-61), p. 148. Hereafter *CSPVen.*
5. 'Charles R', *English Historical Review*, 17, (1890), p. 118. The only other regicide named was John Cook, prosecutor at Charles I's trial.
6. Bradshaw's name was first on the document authorising the regicide, Cromwell's third, Ireton's ninth and Pride's fifteenth.
7. It is possible that Pride was not dug up because they were unable to find his body, see R. Hutton, *The Restoration. A Political and Religious History of England and Wales 1658-1667*, (Oxford, 1985), p. 328 n. 49. Pride had actually been buried in Nonsuch, Surrey, land he had bought from the crown; see *NewDNB* entry by Ian Gentles.
8. This is discussed further by the present author in *Henry Ireton and the English Revolution* (forthcoming).
9. The fact that Ireton was Cromwell's son-in-law was significant. That Ireton became Cromwell's son-in-law reflected the strength of their relationship and formed a direct link through which Ireton could exert influence over Cromwell. Cromwell's relationship with Ireton had more depth, politically and emotionally than those Cromwell had with other figures in his army such as Charles Fleetwood, who was to marry Ireton's widow, or John Desborough, who was Cromwell's brother-in-law. For details of Cromwell's kin see, S.J.Weyman, 'Oliver Cromwell's Kinsfolk', *English Historical Review*, 6:21, (1891).
10. K. Sharpe & S.N. Zwicker, (eds.), *Refiguring Revolutions*, (1998), p. 56; C. Hill, *The Experience of Defeat. Milton and some contemporaries*, (1984), p. 333.
11. R. Zaller, 'Breaking the Vessels: the Desacralization of Monarchy in Early Modern England', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 29:3, (1998), p. 775.
12. For a consideration of whether the bodies dug up in 1661 were Cromwell's or Ireton's see P. Gaunt, 'To Tyburn and Beyond: The Mortal Remains of Oliver Cromwell', *Cromwelliana*, (1986). Gaunt concludes that it was the remains of Cromwell and Ireton that were dug up in 1661. The following article in the same edition of *Cromwelliana*, Ivan Roots, 'Cromwell's Head', deals with the probable resting place of Cromwell's head. Ireton's kinswoman, Lucy Hutchinson, expressed her doubts, believing that Ireton was on the point of returning from Ireland just before his death to thwart Cromwell's growing ambitions. She wrote 'Ireton, Deputy of Ireland, would not be wrought to serve him, but hearing of his machinations, determined to come over into England to endeavour to divert him from such destructive courses. But God cut him short by death, and whether his body or an empty hearse was

brought into England, something in his name came to London...'. N.H. Keble, (ed.), *The Memoirs of Colonel John Hutchinson*, (1995), p. 250. Lucy's account is, however, wherever it touches upon Cromwell particularly shaped by her antipathy towards him. For Ludlow's doubts about Ireton's resting place see, A.B. Worden, (ed.), 'Edmund Ludlow. A Voyce From the Watch Tower. Part Five: 1660-1662', *Camden Society*, Fourth Series, 21, (1998), p. 272. Elsewhere comments attributed to Ludlow would tend to suggest that he believed Ireton's body was interred in Westminster Abbey. Ireton 'would certainly have made it his desire that his body might have found a grave where his soul left it, so much did he despise these pompous and expensive vanities', C.H. Firth, (ed.), *Ludlow's Memoirs*, (2 vols., 1894), I, p. 295; H.F. McMains, *The Death of Oliver Cromwell*, (Lexington, 2000); F.J. Varley, *Oliver Cromwell's Latter End*, (1939), p. 63.

13. Worden, (ed.), 'Ludlow', p. 283.
14. *CSPVen.*, (1659-61), pp. 226, 246; *CSPD*, (1660-61), pp. 500-01; *HMC Finch*, I, pp. 101-2; *Calendar State Papers Ireland*, (1660-62), pp. 195, 205; J. Bowle, (ed.), *The Diary of John Evelyn*, (Oxford, 1983), p. 187; BL, E192(16), *Mercurius Publicus*, no. 4, (24-31 Jan., 1661), p. 64; BL, E192(17), *Mercurius Publicus*, no. 5, (31 Jan.-7 Feb., 1661), p. 80; BL, E192(18), The kingdomes Intelligencer, no. 5, (28 Jan.-4 Feb., 1661), p. 72; BL, E192(20), *The kingdomes Intelligencer*, no. 6, (4-11 Feb., 1661), p. 86; Hutton, *Restoration*, p. 134; R.C. Temple and L.M. Anstey, 'The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, 1608-1667', V, *Hakluyt Society*, (1936), p. 130; Varley, *Cromwell's Latter End*, pp. 55-56; *LJ*, 11, 10 Dec., 1660.
15. J. Heath, *Flagellum, or, the life and death, birth and burial of O.Cromwell, the late usurper faithfully described, with an exact account of his policies and successes, not heretofore published or discovered*, (1665), p. 124.
16. Bowle, (ed.), *The Diary of John Evelyn*, p. 187.
17. *CSPD.*, (1660-61), pp. 500-01; *HMC Finch*, I, pp. 101-2; *CSPIreland*, (1660-62), pp. 195, 205.
18. Worden, (ed.), 'Ludlow', p. 272.
19. For the wider context of receptions of the Restoration and revenge on the regicide see, T. Harris, *London Crowds in the Reign of Charles II. Propaganda and politics from the Restoration to the Exclusion Crisis*, (Cambridge, 1987).
20. R.C. Latham and W. Matthews, (eds.), *The Diary of Samuel Pepys Diary*, II, (1970), pp. 26-7, 31. In June 1662 Pepys did attend the execution of Sir Henry Vane, III, pp. 108-9.





21. R.L. Greaves, *Deliver Us from Evil. The Radical Underground in Britain, 1660-1663*, (Oxford, 1986), p. 33.
22. H. Nenner, (ed.), *Politics and the Political Imagination in Later Stuart Britain*, (Woodbridge, 1997), p. 21.
23. *CSPD*, (1660-61), p. 500; J. Miller, *Charles II*, (1991), pp. 46-7.
24. McMains, *Death of Cromwell*, p. 139.
25. Nenner, *Politics and the Political Imagination*, p. 25. I would like to thank Kate Siddiqui for reference to this notion of blood guilt from her reading of an early draft of this article.
26. *NewDNB* Okey entry by Christopher Durston. For his wife's account of this period see PRO, C7/585/3; C7/84/60, and for a detailed consideration of this D. Farr, 'Marriage Settlement and Litigation in Early Modern England. The Experience of Mary Rose', forthcoming. A.R. Hall and M.B. Hall, (eds.), *The Correspondence of Henry Oldenburg*, vol.I, p. 402, (University of Wisconsin, 1965); C. Hill, *The Experience of Defeat*. p. 71.
27. A.R. Hall and M.B. Hall, (eds.), *The Correspondence of Henry Oldenburg*, vol.I, p. 402, (University of Wisconsin, 1965); C. Hill, *The Experience of Defeat*. p. 71.
28. 'The Journal of William Schellinks' Travels in England 1661-3', *Camden Society*, Fifth Series, I, (1993), p. 82.
29. *NewDNB* Okey entry by Christopher Durston.
30. R. Hutton, *Charles II*, (Oxford, 1989), p. 171.
31. T.B. Howell, (ed.), *State Trials*, (1809), V, p. 1265.
32. Worden, (ed.), *'Ludlow'*, p. 240.
33. C.H. Simpkinson, *Thomas Harrison. Regicide and Major-General*, (1905), p. 264.
34. See, for examples, *Justa sive inferiae regicidarum: or, Tyburns revels. Presented before Protector Cromwel, Lord President Bradshaw, Lord Deputy Ireton*, (1661), J1247/669f.26[58]; *The last damnable desinge of Cromwell and Ireton, and their junto, or caball; intended to be carried on in their Generall Councell of the army, and by their journey men in the House of Commons, when they have engaged them desperately in sinne, past all hope of retreat by murdering the king*, (29 Jan 1649), L480/669f.13[76]; *A new meeting of ghosts at Tyburn. Being a discourse of Oliver Cromwell, John Bradshaw. Henry Ioeton. [sic] Thomas Pride. Thomas Scot, Secretary to the Rump. Major Gen. Harrison. & Hugh Peters the divells chaplain*, (1661), N669/E1085(7).
35. Worden, (ed.), 'Ludlow', p. 266.
36. *NewDNB*. Entry for Peters by Carla Pestana.

37. Sharpe and Zwicker, (eds.), *Refiguring Revolutions*, p. 56; Hill, *The Experience of Defeat*. p. 333.
38. Bowle, (ed.), *Diary of John Evelyn*, p. 145.
39. BL, E791(25), *The Faithful Scout*, no. 47, (5-12 Dec., 1651), p. 368, 'Thursday Decem. 11. This day came a conformation of the death of Gen. Ireton: He fell sick on the 16 of Nov. On the 17 took a purge; On the 18 he was let bloud; On the 19 lay dangerous ill of a Fever; and on the 26 he died. On his Death-bed he had very heavenly expressions, and desired that the interest of the precious sons of Zion might be preserved'; BL, E791(27), *Perfect Diurnall*, no. 105, (8-15 Dec., 1651), p. 1502; BL, E791(24), *Perfect Passages*, no. 46, (5-12 Dec 1651); BL, E791(23), *Severall Proceedings*, no. 115, (4-11 Dec 1651), p. 1777; *Whitelocke Memorials*, (1762), p. 491; *CSPVen.*, (1647-52), p. 209; *HMC Ormond*, II, p. 247; *HMC De L'Isle and Dudley Manuscripts*, VI, (1626-1698), p. 610;
40. BL, E652(15), *The Weekly Intelligencer*, no. 58, (27 Jan.-3 Feb., 1652), p. 341.
41. *CSPIreland, 1625-1660 ADDENDA*, p. 385.
42. *CSPD*, (1651-52), pp. 586-7, 595.
43. C. Gittings, *Death, Burial and the Individual in Early Modern England*, (1984), p. 231.
44. *Evelyn's Diary*, p. 145. Another of Ireton's brothers, Clement, was probably one of the other mourners. It is possible that another of Ireton's brothers, Thomas, who had served as a Major alongside Henry in the New Model Army was too ill to attend. In his will of 20 May 1652 Thomas described himself as 'weake & sicke in body'. See, *Public Record Office*, Prob.11/224 fol. 569. It is not clear what happened to the last of Henry's brothers, Matthew, after his time at Oxford in the late 1630s. Heath, *Flagellum*, p. 124 wrote of Cromwell as chief mourner but the records indicate that this position was reserved for Ireton's brother. Heath naturally wanted to portray Cromwell in the position to add to the drama of his account.
45. J.S.A. Adamson, 'Chivalry and Political Culture in Caroline England', in K.Sharpe and P.Lake, (eds.), *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England*, (1994), pp. 191, 193. Essex's funeral is described in BL, E360(1), *The true mannor and forme of the proceeding to the funerall of the right honourable Robert Earle of Essex*, (1646). Essex's funeral was also a political statement. That Ireton and Cromwell did not attend it further marked them as opponents of the 'political presbyterians' in Parliament. See, I. Gentles, *The New Model Army in England, Ireland and Scotland 1645-1653*, (Oxford, 1992), pp. 143-44.





46. National Portrait Gallery, no. 3301. Only approximate date can be given for the commissioning of this work, c.1650. Another portrait, NPG 33, is also tentatively said to be that of Ireton. Sharpe has argued that the 'failure of republican politics was a failure to forge a republican culture that erased or suppressed the images of kingship', Sharpe and Zwicker, (eds.), *Refiguring Revolutions*, p. 26. Worden has also argued that 'supporters of the new regime, both inside and outside parliament, recognised that it could hope to survive only if it developed an identity opposite to, and ready to confront, that of the royalists', A.B. Worden, 'Republicanism, Regicide and Republic: The English Experience', in *Republicanism*, vol. I, (Cambridge, 2002), p. 325. However it is debatable how far it was a failure as previous formats, whether portraiture or even funerals, cannot be seen as exclusively royalist. See S. Kelsey, *Inventing a republic: The Political Culture of the English Commonwealth, 1649-1653*, (Manchester, 1997), p. 55.
47. Sharpe and Zwicker, (eds.), *Refiguring Revolutions*, p. 44.
48. *CSPD*, (1651-52), pp. 52, 56. Also in the ship was Hugh Dubh O'Neill who had defeated Cromwell and Ireton at Clonmel but had later to surrender Limerick to Ireton. In a Council of War Ireton had argued that O'Neill should be put to death but accepted its decision to spare him. *Ludlow's Memoirs*, I, p. 288; J.G. Simm, *War and Politics in Ireland 1649-1730*, (1986), p. 29. This dealt with in more detail in Chapter 8, Ireton in Ireland, of *Henry Ireton and the English Revolution*.
49. *CSPVen.*, 'Advices from London, 11 January 1652', p. 212.
50. *CSPD*, '1651-52', pp. 66, 546; BL, E791(33), *The Faithful Scout*, no. 49, (19-26 Dec., 1651),p. 382; BL, E791(34), *Perfect Diurnal*, no. 107, (22-29 Dec., 1651), pp. 1539-40; BL, E793(1), *Severall Proceedings*, no. 118, (24 Dec.- 1 Jan., 1651), pp. 1831-2.
51. BL, E654(3), John Owen, *The Labouring Saints Dismission to Rest. A Sermon Preached at the Funeral of the Right Honourable Henry Ireton Lord Deputy of Ireland: In the Abbey Church at Westminster, the 6th day of February 1651(2)*; P. Toon, *God's Statesman. The Life and Work of John Owen*, (Exeter, 1971), p. 83 states that it 'was essentially a funeral sermon and has no religio-political ideas in it'. J. Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers. Propaganda during the English Civil Wars and Interregnum*, (2004), p. 73 outlines how Owen's sermon was an example of how 'published sermons tended to be dedicated to friends of both the author and the deceased'. Owen outlined how he was going to dedicate the printed version to Ireton's widow, Cromwell's daughter Bridget. He did not do so however because she was still so stricken with grief. Instead he dedicated it to Cromwell's second son, Henry, who had been in Ireland

with Ireton. Bridget's second husband was to be another of Cromwell's soldiers, Charles Fleetwood. His wife had died at the same time as Ireton, November 1651. He married Bridget in June 1652, four months after Ireton's funeral and a month after she was left a ring in the will of Henry's brother, Thomas. Fleetwood was appointed to command the army in Ireland on 10 July 1652 after Lambert had refused the post as a lesser honour than the authority Ireton had wielded as Lord Deputy. Some contemporaries believed that Cromwell engineered the whole episode for the benefit of his daughter and new son-in-law. Indeed Fleetwood was appointed Lord Deputy on 27 August 1654, the title which had been denied Lambert. For this see D. Farr, *John Lambert.* (Woodbridge, 2003).

52. *CSPD,* (1654), pp. 5, 27, 35, 445. While Peters' epigraph was overblown it was nothing compared to some that appeared in the press, see BL, E793(27), *Faithful Scout,* no. 55,(6-13 Feb., 1651[2]):

H ere lies Valour it self, in whom alone,
E ach Limb enjoy'd its full perfection:

N ow thou mayst see (though valiantly he stood)
R eader, that Time Consumptions breed ith bloud;
Y oung, old, and all must go, both great and good.

I reland laments the loss, and England may,
R epent that ere she knew that dismal day;
E ach man may here see, t'what our glories come,
T here being no difference betwixt the House and Tombe
O nely Death's Conquest now's compleat I see,
N ature having suffer'd him to vanquish thee.

In another Ireton was compared militarily to Caesar and politically to Augustus but as someone who would not succumb to the temptations that they eventually did, see BL, E652(15), *The Weekly Intelligencer,* no. 58, (27 Jan.-3 Feb., 1652), pp. 341-43; D. Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic. Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics 1627-1660,* (Cambridge, 1999), p. 236.

53. J. Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the English Republic, 1623-1677,* (Cambridge, 1988), p. 105.
54. *CSPD,* (1652-53), p. 425. It was not. Deane's funeral was also a staged affair.
55. *Ludlow's Memoirs,* I, p. 286; I. Gentles, 'The Sales of Crown Lands during the English Revolution', *Economic History Review,* 26:4, (1973), p. 629.





56. BL, E654(3), John Owen, *The Labouring Saints Dismission to Rest,* pp. 17-18.
57. BL, 1238(1), John Cook, *Monarchy No Creature of Gods making,* (26 Feb., 1652).
58. BL, 791(23), *Severall Proceedings,* no. 115, (4-11 Dec 1651), p. 1780.
59. *Ludlow's Memoirs,* I, pp. 278-9.
60. BL, E533(37), *Perfect Diurnal,* (7-14 Jan., 1650).
61. *Ludlow's Memoirs,* I, p. 295.
62. Isaac Dorislaus, civil lawyer, counsel to High Court of Justice, assassinated in 1649 at the Hague when serving as special envoy to the States General; Richard Deane, civil war officer, regicide and general-at-sea who died in a sea battle against the Dutch in 1653; Edward Popham, civil war officer and general-at-sea.
63. M. Seymour, 'Pro-Government Propaganda in Interregnum England 1649-1660', *Cambridge University PhD,* (1986), pp. 195-6, 226-7.
64. Abbott, I, p. 327.
65. *NewDNB.* Ireton entry by Ian Gentles.
66. Heath, *Flagellum,* p. 122.
67. B. Whitelocke, *Memorials of English Affairs From the Beginning of the Reign of Charles the First to the Happy Restoration of King Charles the Second,* (4 vols., 1853), III, p. 371.
68. Abbott, II, pp. 575-76. The most likely recipient of this letter was Lord Wharton. For the importance of networks in Cromwell's life see, J.C. Davis, *Oliver Cromwell,* (2001), pp. 84-85, 157, 167-68.
69. Abbott, II, pp. 507-8.
70. *Ludlow's Memoirs,* I, p. 295.

David Farr is Head of History at Norwich School. In 2003 he published a biography of Major-General John Lambert. His biography of Ireton, *Henry Ireton and the English Revolution,* is published this year.

# PROFESSOR CHRISTOPHER GEORGE DURSTON (1951-2005)

*By Dr Frank Tallett*

The death of Christopher Durston from cancer at the age of 54 has robbed the historical world of an outstanding scholar. Chris, as he was generally and affectionately known, was born and educated in Bristol. He attended St Brendan's College where his talent for history was confirmed when he won the Vellacott History Prize offered by Peterhouse College, Cambridge. In 1969, he went on to win an Open Scholarship to read Modern History at Hertford College, Oxford. Here he was tutored by Robin Briggs and also some of the leading historians of the English Revolution, including Christopher Hill and Donald Pennington. After graduating, he taught in Stuttgart for a year before starting work on a doctoral thesis at the University of Reading, where his future wife was in her final year of undergraduate studies. He produced an excellent local study of 'Berkshire and its county gentry, 1625-1649', for which he was awarded a PhD in 1977.

The year before completing his PhD, Chris had been appointed to a post at St Mary's College, Twickenham, based at Strawberry Hill, Horace Walpole's famous Gothic residence, and this would be his scholarly base and spiritual home for almost thirty years. The estate, which had passed into the hands of the Waldegrave family, was acquired in 1925 by the Catholic Education Council, who transferred their existing College of St Mary's from its cramped site at Hammersmith to Strawberry Hill. Staffed largely by members of the Congregation of the Mission, the Vincentians, the College was devoted to teacher training. When Chris joined the College it had just embarked upon a period of change in which he would play a major role. The College expanded its student numbers dramatically from the late 1960s and began to offer Bachelor's degrees in Humanities Arts and Sciences. Chris would play a significant part in the growth and development of the College, serving on the College Board of Governors, the Academic Board and the Research Committee. Above all, he helped to turn the College, and especially the Department of History, into an outstanding centre of research and teaching, notably in the sphere of early modern British history. He led the way in the establishment of a Centre for Religious History, and in the setting up of Masters programmes in Religious History and in Religious Conflict. His closest intellectual collaborator was Dr Sue Doran, a historian whose research interests complemented Chris's own, and together they formed the nucleus of a distinguished cluster of early modern specialists





that was unique in a College of St Mary's size. Chris's contribution to the College and to the world of historical scholarship was recognised with the award of a chair in 2002.

Chris's own research interests remained focused upon the seventeenth century. His early interest in Berkshire led to a number of articles on religious radicalism in Berkshire and the surrounding areas. In 1989 he published the first of a series of books concerned with the Civil Wars, *The Family in the English Revolution*, followed by *Princes, Pastors and People: The Church and Religion in England 1529-1689*, co-authored with Susan Doran. His chapter in *The Culture of English Puritanism*, (1996), co-edited with Jacqueline Eales, entitled 'Puritan Rule and the Failure of Cultural Revolution', was one of a series of essays in which he sought to explain the failure of puritan efforts to achieve a thoroughgoing reform of attitudes and behaviour. His acknowledged 'masterpiece', however, was his 2001 work, *Cromwell's Major Generals: Godly Government during the English Revolution*. Though the significance of the Major Generals had long been acknowledged, the task of providing an account of their period of government had defeated a number of distinguished scholars, thwarted both by the nature and paucity of the source materials, and by the complexity of the task. Chris rose to the challenge and the resulting book was described by John Morrill as 'a tremendous achievement', which 'illuminates the whole of the 1650s and Cromwell's complex relationship with the people and the culture of the time'. Indeed, what draws together Chris's research is his feeling for the ways in which the seventeenth-century Revolution impacted upon the lives of ordinary people. His ability to convey ideas, information and a feel for the period was equally evident in his two Lancaster pamphlets on *James I* (1993) and *Charles I* (1998). These, together with a sourcebook on *The English Revolution*, co-edited with Barry Coward in 1997, were the works which are probably most widely consulted by sixth-formers and undergraduates. At the time of his death, he had a further five articles in press; a volume co-edited with Judith Maltby on *Religion in Revolutionary England* was due for publication in 2006; and he had begun work on a new book on the history of popular music.

Chris's scholarship was informed by a warm humanity and was full of insight. It reflected those human qualities which made him a delightful friend and such a gifted teacher, as so many students can testify. He was honest and forthright, yet always tactful and understanding; clear yet appreciative of another's point of view; learned but without any pomposity;

and he had a most delightful dry sense of humour which he used to excellent effect in lectures, tutorials and in his contacts with the scholarly community. He did extensive work for the Quality Assurance Agency. He was also a founder member of the History at the Universities Defence Group, which subsequently evolved into History (UK) and which he co-chaired. At the time of his death he had just moved to take up a new post at the University of Plymouth.

Christopher George Durston, historian, born Bristol, 11 July 1951, Lecturer at St Mary's College, 1976-2004 and Professor 2002, married Rosalind 1972 (two sons), died Plymouth, 5 August 2005.



# CROMWELLIAN BRITAIN XIX: FELSTED, ESSEX

*By Jane A. Mills*

The Essex village of Felsted is surrounded by the three towns of Braintree, Great Dunmow and Chelmsford. The county of Essex is derived from the Kingdom of the East Seaxa covering territory north of the River Thames and east of the River Lee, founded around 500 AD, during the period of occupation by Angles and Saxons. The region had been inhabited long before this by non-Belgic Trinovantes and then by the Romans, which is still evident today as old Roman roads link Braintree, Great Dunmow and Chelmsford. Around Felsted Roman remains have been found and near the old station a Roman villa was excavated. The church of the Holy Cross' tower was constructed in 1120-30 using Roman bricks and tiles.[1]

Felsted is mentioned in the Domesday Book as a manor, and was given by William to his half brother Odo, the Bishop of Bayeux; at that time it was 80% forest or woodland and the remainder cultivated land. It soon came under the control of Caen Abbey in Normandy, along with several other manors because William the Conqueror's wife Matilda had founded the Abbey and needed a source of income. It reverted back to the crown in 1338 and then was given to Sion Abbey in Middlesex from 1420 till the dissolution in 1536 when it became the property of Lord Rich.[2]

Felsted's chief benefactor was Lord Richard Rich (1496-1567) who came to prominence during the reign of Henry VIII. In 1533 he was knighted and became Solicitor General with responsibility for enforcing the Act of Supremacy; it was whilst in this capacity he had his friends Sir Thomas More and Cardinal John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester (Catherine of Aragon's chaplain) arrested for refusing to take the Oath of Succession; the evidence he gathered led to their imprisonment and execution. His reward was appointment as Chancellor of the Court of Augmentations to oversee the closure and confiscation of Roman Catholic property by the crown, a position which proved to be very lucrative, 'when the abbey lands passed through his hands many of them *stuck to his fingers*'.[3] The French Ambassador Marillac called him 'the most wretched creature..'. He became the owner of 100 manors and 20 advowsons[4] most of which were in Essex. In his enthusiasm to gain evidence to be used against Catherine Parr and some of the court ladies, Rich took the hands-on approach and personally tightened the thumbscrews and operated the rack on Anne Askew, hoping to gain evidence.[5]

On 26 February 1548 Edward VI made him Baron Rich of Leez taking his title Leez from Leez Priory (Leighs Priory) by the River Ter, the house of Austin Canons in Little Leighs two miles south east of Felsted. The Priory was a gift from Henry VIII.[6] Rich built a palace on the site, which was pulled down in 1753 by Guy's Hospital who owned the property.

Rich seemed to be like a chameleon overcoming several charges of corruption,[7] able to serve throughout the Tudor reigns and religious changes; though he remained Roman Catholic he showed no concerns in gaining evidence against Catholic or Protestant alike. During the reign of Mary he retired to his manor to re-establish the old religion in Essex and immerse himself in the role of persecutor. It was during this period in a possible act of atonement he set up his first foundation, creating a Chantry at Felsted Church (the church of the Holy Cross) to pray for his soul and where herrings were distributed to the poor of Felsted and two other parishes. When Queen Elizabeth abolished Chantries he still distributed herrings but found a legal way round the problem of praying for his soul. He decided to establish a school (second foundation) whose yearly service would include a closing prayer:

> Gratias tibi agimus pro benefactoribus nostris, supplices te orantes ut eorum beneficia complures alios excitare possint ad eandem benevolentiam aemulandam.[8]

Felsted school was founded on 21 May 1564 as a grammar school, 'the free school of Richard, Lord Rich', for eighty boys who were natives of Essex and priority was given to boys born on Rich estates.

His third foundation was almshouses[9] for the poor where six residents (one had to be a woman to do the housework and look after the housekeeping), would have to attend a daily service at the parish church to pray for Rich and his heirs. Lord Rich died on 12 June 1567 and is buried in Felsted Church. Rich's son, the 2nd Lord Rich, put in his will that a chapel should be built to honour himself and his father. The work was started in 1607 by the 3rd Lord Rich and completed by the 4th Lord Rich in 1619. The chapel is adjacent to the chancel and includes a tomb where the 1st and 2nd Lord Rich are laid to rest.

In 1620 Oliver Cromwell married Elizabeth Bourchier, the eldest of Sir James Bourchier's twelve children (nine boys and three girls). Bourchier had been knighted by James I in July 1603 and was a very successful fur-dealer





and leather dresser with property around Tower Hill and a manor in Little Stambridge, not far from Felsted. The manor at Little Stambridge was purchased by Elizabeth's grandfather Thomas Boucher (slightly different spelling) in 1587 but he did not live there; Elizabeth's father was the first to make it his home. It is quite possible that because of Cromwell's family connections with Essex (his aunt Joan who married Sir Francis Barrington of Barrington Hall, Essex), and the reputation the school already had he took advantage of his parents-in-law's location and sent his four sons to the school. In 1643 John Hampden wrote to his cousin Sir Thomas Barrington (their mothers were sisters) 'The power of Essex is greate, a place of most life of Religion in the Land; and your power in the Countie is greate too.'[10]

Cromwell's eldest son Robert died at the school in 1639 and is buried near the south porch of Felsted's Holy Cross Church. Robert's death is recorded in the Burials Register and is the twelfth for that year:

> Robertus Cromwell filius honorandi viri Mri
> Oliuari Cromwell et Elizabethe vxoris eius
> Sepultus fuit 31° die Maij. Iste Robertus fuit
> Eximie spei iuu enis deumque timens supra multos.[11]

There are no letters to Robert or references to Robert by Oliver except in a letter to his brother-in-law Valentine Walton (husband of Margaret) dated 5 July 1644 after Marston Moor: 'Sir, God hath taken away your eldest Son by a cannon-shot. It brake his leg. We were necessitated to have it cut off, whereof he died. Sir, you know my own trials this way: but the Lord supported me with this.'[12] After the death of his favourite daughter Bettie (Elizabeth Claypole) Cromwell's health began to suffer and he asked that Philippians 4 verses 11, 12, 13 should be read to him. When the reading was over he said 'This Scripture did once save my life; when my eldest Son died; which went as a dagger to my heart, indeed it did.'[13]

When Cromwell's four sons attended the school the headmaster was Martin Holbeach who had previously taught at Halstead and Braintree in Essex and due to his reputation, when he transferred to Felsted, many of the pupils followed. Other notable Holbeach students are Dr John Wallis whom Cromwell appointed Professor of Geometry at Oxford, (he was member of 'the invisible college' and Fellow of the Royal Society),[14] Sir Henry Mildmay,[15] and Isaac Barrow Fellow of Royal Society and Isaac Newton's professor at Cambridge.[16]

In May 1643 Sir Edward Hungerford and his Parliamentary forces besieged Lord Arundell of Wardour's castle in Wiltshire and they captured his two sons Thomas (eleven) and Henry (ten) who were sent to Felsted school. A year later Royalist forces attacked Lanhydrock House in Cornwall the home of John Robarts, 2nd Baron Truro, a Parliamentary commander for the southwest, and captured his three sons John (thirteen and half), Hender (ten) and Robert (nine) who happen to be grandsons of the Earl of Warwick. It was decided that the House of Commons would organise an exchange of prisoners – the Wardour children went home and Robarts' three sons completed their education at Felsted; Hender and Robert went on to be MPs and Robert died in Denmark where he was Ambassador to the Court.[17]

In a footnote to a letter addressed to John Rushworth Secretary to the New Model Army, the Earl of Warwick says:

> When I was with the Generall (Fairfax) last I desired him noe souldiers should quarter at Felsted in Essex by reason all the gentillmens sons are at schole thear 100 at least and they are much straitned for lodging for them, which the General promised, yett some have bin latly thear, prevent hearafter if you may.[18]

The Self-Denying Ordinance meant that Robert Rich, 2nd Earl of Warwick had to resign as Lord High Admiral of the Fleet in April 1645, and shortly afterwards in July he was sent back to Essex to preside over the summer assizes in Chelmsford. Among the county magistrates were Sir Henry Mildmay, ex Felsted pupil, and Sir John Barrington later High Sheriff of Essex 1654 to 1655. Little did he know that he was to preside over nearly fifty charges of witchcraft and listen to evidence given by the Matthew Hopkins the Witchfinder General. It is interesting to note that Warwick was concerned about the validity of the evidence given and nine convicted witches were reprieved and applications on their behalf were sent to Parliament.[19]

In June 1648 Leighs Priory was looted by Royalist soldiers from a combined force made up of troops of the Earl of Norwich, led by Sir George Lisle and Sir Charles Lucas. They were ransacking the county on their way to besiege Colchester.

> On the 10th (June) the Royalists advanced towards Braintree, Whalley following closely upon their





> movements, but not venturing to attack with his inferior numbers. On the way they turned aside to Warwick's house at Leighs, from which they carried off what arms they could find.[20]

The picturesque village of Felsted contains many old buildings and though Felsted School moved out of the village in 1802 to Ingrams House, 100 metres along the Braintree road, the original schoolhouse can still be seen together with the Church of the Holy Cross.

Notes.

1. *The Victoria History of the Counties of England: Essex*, vol. II.
2. Ibid.
3. W. Addison, *Essex Worthies* (Phillimore 1973), p. 155.
4. In ecclesiastical law it gives the right to recommend a member of the Anglican clergy for a vacant benefice, or to make such an appointment.
5. A. Fraser, *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1992), p. 387; C.R.N. Routh, *Who's Who in Tudor England* (Shepheard Walwyn, 1990), p. 131.
6. *Victoria History: Essex*, vol. II, pp. 155-57.
7. He was Executor for Henry VIII's will and bequeathed £200; this led to questions being asked.
8. A. Clark, *The Foundation Deeds of Felsted School and Charities*, pp. xxviii – xxix.

   > 'We thank Thee for our benefactors, humbly praying Thee that their good deeds may stir up many others to vie with their liberality.'
9. The Tudor buildings were replaced in Victorian times.
10. A. Searle, *Stuart Essex* (Essex Record Office Publications, 1974), p. 16.
11. Clark, *The Foundation Deeds*, p. xxxi.

    > Robert Cromwell, son of a honourable man Mr. Oliver Cromwell and of Elizabeth his wife, was buried on 31st day of May. This Robert was a lad of greatest promise and God-fearing beyond many.
12. T. Carlyle, *The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (4 vols, London 1897), vol. I, letter XXI, p. 188. Antonia Fraser, *Cromwell Our Chief of Men* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973), p. 129.
13. W.C. Abbott, *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (4 vols, Oxford UP, 1988), vol. 4, p. 867; Carlyle, *Letters and Speeches*, vol. IV, p. 198; Fraser, *Cromwell*, p. 666; P. Gregg, *Oliver Cromwell* (Dent, 1988), pp. 38-39.

14. C.P. Hill, *Who's Who in Stuart Britain* (Shepheard Walwyn, 1988), pp. 247-8; J.A. Mills, 'Invisible College' *Cromwelliana 2000* (The Cromwell Association, 2000), p. 54; J. Gribbin, *The Fellowship* (Allen Lane, 2005).
15. J.A. Mills, 'Cromwellian Britain XII Islington, London', *Cromwelliana 1999* (The Cromwell Association, 1999), pp. 69-70.
16. C.P. Hill, *Stuart Britain*, pp. 252-3; Gribbin, *Fellowship*.
17. M. Craze, *A History of Felsted School* (Cowell Ipswich, 1955), p. 61.
18. Craze, *Felsted*, p. 62.
19. M. Gaskill, *Witchfinders* (John Muurray, 2005) pp. 119-131.
20. S.R. Gardiner, *History of the Great Civil War* (Windrush, 1987), vol. 4, p. 148.

Jane A. Mills is the editor of *Cromwelliana*, and member of the Royal Historical Society and The Historical Association.



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Keith Roberts, *Cromwell's War Machine: the New Model Army, 1645-1660* (Pen and Sword Military, Barnsley, 2005) ISBN 1-88415-094-1, pp. ix and 274. £19.99.

The dust jacket of this book exuberantly claims that it is a 'fascinating analysis of how the New Model Army operated on the battlefield' which also provides a 'graphic account of the everyday life of the soldiers'. As such comments suggest, the book falls roughly into two halves. The first of these is a thematic treatment of the army and its soldiers, and the chapters on 'recruitment, uniforms, arms and equipment', 'pay, rations and free quarter', 'regiments, roles and responsibilities', 'strategy, tactics and siege warfare' and the like are the meat of the book. They are also the areas where the author has some claim to expertise, although there is little evidence of the 'extensive new research' heralded on the dust jacket. Nevertheless, he makes good use of the printed primary sources and contemporary pamphlet literature, and has found some nice illustrations. Occasionally the treatment of this evidence is uncritical. Can idealised training manuals give a true guide to practice in camp or in the field? Can lurid contemporary accounts of plunder and the riches gained there-from really be taken at face value? There are also some editorial problems, especially with repetition. It is not necessary to be told the colour of sashes (pp. 54, 56), the length of pikes (pp. 67, 69), the ins and outs of knapsacks (pp. 54, 72) or the intricacies of cuirassier armour (pp. 61, 118) more than once. On the whole, however, this half of the book provides a solid, readable account of the nitty-gritty of army life, to be read alongside the classic account of C. H. Firth (*Cromwell's Army* (1902)) and the relevant chapters of the definitive work on the army in this period, written by Ian Gentles (*The New Model Army* (1992)).

More problematic is the second half of the book, which gives a chronological account of the civil wars from 1637 to 1651 and then looks forward to 1660. The decision to split this narrative up, with chapter one taking the story to 1644 (and the eve of the foundation of the New Model) and then, after the thematic chapters, continuing it in chapters 10, 11, 12 and 13, is puzzling. Even when the chapters are read in succession, the history provided here is very odd. The author appears unaware of the extensive literature on the civil wars, the heated debates among historians. As a result, his account of the origins of the civil war is crude; he does not see the creation of the New Model in 1644-5 as controversial; nor does he consider the bitter historiographical dispute over the army's role in the 'projected settlement' of 1647. Can the events of 1647 really be described

as a 'mutiny'? The trial and execution of the king gets short shrift, with two, terse sentences sufficing: 'The Second Civil War created a major change in the thinking of the rank and file in the New Model Army. Previously there had been discussion over reconciliation, but now hard line opinion prevailed and led directly to the trial and execution of Charles I'. So that's that thorny issue sorted out, then. With the military campaigns of 1649-51 the story picks up a little, but 1651-1660 is dealt with in eight pages (and several of those are taken up with illustrations). There is no conclusion.

Perhaps the most glaring omission, both from the thematic chapters and the chronological ones, is the lack of any proper treatment of the army's religion. This will not do. How can a book that claims to provide a 'vivid portrait of Cromwell and his men' ignore the deep faith, which contemporaries (both friends and foes) recognised as their most distinctive feature?

Patrick Little

John Wroughton, *The Routledge Companion to The Stuart Age, 1603-1714* (Routledge, 2006) ISBN 0-415-37893-1, pp. vii and 314.

This volume was originally published in 1997 by Longman and now reintroduced by Routledge providing a useful reference point for high school or university students and professional and amateur researcher. The book is divided into seven parts and then subdivided into sections for ease of use. Part one covers domestic affairs subdivided into four chronologies dealing with the political, religious, military and cultural events. Part two covers foreign and colonial affairs, which is set out in a similar vein. For me parts three, four and five are extremely useful providing a complete list of major officers of state, a glossary of terms (succinct definitions) and biographies (each entry has a great deal of information). On the whole John Wroughton's book is well set out, easy to use and very interesting.

John Gribbin, *The Fellowship* (Allen Lane, 2005) ISBN 0-713-99745-1, pp. vii and 336.

John Gribbin is Visiting Fellow in Astronomy at the University of Sussex and quite a prolific science writer of fact and fiction (approximately 100 books). The book is supposed to give the background to the foundation of the Royal Society, how the founders worked together as a Fellowship. The beginning of the book discusses the work of Galileo, Bacon, Gilbert and





Harvey who were to influence the natural philosophers into becoming real scientists who experimented in order to gain proof. The majority of the book is taken up with biographies of the founders of the Royal Society, which in places becomes confusing, though the lion's share is devoted to Hooke, Newton and Halley who have been dealt with adequately in other publications. The lesser-known founders of The Royal Society were not covered in any great detail – that for me was a pity.

Jane A. Mills

Jeremy Knight, *Civil War and Restoration in Monmouthshire* (Logaston Press, 2005), pp. ix and 214; paperback £12.95.

Jeremy Knight has written a splendid county study of his home patch during the civil war and beyond, all the more welcome as an exploration of a *Welsh* county. The last thirty years has seen a steady stream of studies of English counties during the mid seventeenth century, some of them focused very much on the military events of the civil wars, others attempting a wider chronological sweep and placing the war years in the context of what came before and after, often bringing in substantial elements of social, economic, religious, administrative and political history. Welsh counties, however, have tended to miss out, perhaps because the bulk of the Principality (Pembrokeshire excepted) appeared solidly royalist throughout the war, so that its direct military history was fairly uneventful and the surviving primary source material tends to be fairly sparse (as usual in a civil war, the contemporary documentation of the losing side has not survived anyway near as well and as fully as that of the victors). However, by casting his net widely and by drawing on an impressive range of sources, Dr Knight has gone some way to redressing the balance through this solid and wide-ranging study of a Welsh county, albeit one on the English border, displaying many Anglicised features by the seventeenth century and with strong links to the English towns of Gloucester and Bristol.

The volume opens with three chapters setting the context for the conflict by exploring aspects of the county in the pre-war decades. They examine firstly the religious complexion of the county, with a Church of England which was often struggling to make headway in an area of often large and poor parishes, within the equally large and poor diocese of Llandaff, coming up against strong Catholic and recusant enclaves, especially inland, but also pockets of godly puritanism, especially the ports of Chepstow and Newport; then the agricultural and economic structure of the county, again surprisingly mixed, with arable and pastoral farming dominating different

zones, and with areas of nucleated settlements and of the scattered farms and hamlets typical of the forests and uplands, together forming almost a reverse of the classic chalk and cheese pattern which David Underdown detected in south-west England, for in Monmouthshire the nucleated settlements on or near the coast tended to be more fluid, radical and puritan, while the scattered settlements of the inland, wood/forest areas tended to be more conservative and, in the 1640s, more royalist; and thirdly the social structure of early Stuart Monmouthshire, exploring 'the great pyramid' of grandees, especially the Catholic and royalist Herberts, the gentry, a larger but far more mixed bag, and a few others outside the rural elite. Having thus set the context, a further three chapters focus on the war years, tackling in turn the years 1642-44, when both sides were jockeying for position but when the royalists usually had the upper hand and control of most or all of the county, the years of 'royalist ebb' in 1644-45 and then lastly the 'end game' of the period 1646-48, linking the story of the siege of Raglan Castle which ended the main civil war with Monmouthshire's involvement in the anti-parliamentarian Glamorgan rising of 1647 and the role of Chepstow in the second civil war of 1648, the latter giving rise to Cromwell's only direct involvement in Monmouthshire's war. The volume closes with two briefer and somewhat sketchier chapters, looking at aspects of the political, administrative, social and religious life of Monmouthshire firstly during the interregnum, and then over the generation from the Restoration to the Glorious Revolution. A chronology of events, detailed endnotes and a thorough bibliography round off this impressive volume.

The mainly military narrative which forms the core of the book is well told and engaging, though the overall sequence of events – the royalist disaster at Highnam, the early exchanges of Monmouth and Usk, the later parliamentary attacks upon and eventual capture of key towns, the king's visit to Raglan and the long and finally successful parliamentary siege of that castle – is familiar and has been adequately charted elsewhere. The assessments of Monmouthshire during the interregnum and in the post-Restoration era offered here break newer ground, though these chapters tend to provide a more disjointed story, picking out particular events, issues and developments, and the very long account of the county's connexions with the Popish Plot and of Monmouthshire's Catholic 'martyrs' which dominates the post-Restoration chapter seems a little self-indulgent. The real strengths of the volume lie in the way that the war-time military narrative is placed within, and makes much more sense when set against, the strongly researched and convincing context of early Stuart Monmouthshire offered in the opening chapters, suggesting reasons for





Monmouthshire's war-time allegiances and divisions. Moreover, the military account is enlivened and enriched by interesting vignettes and rich personal accounts – of Welch Thomas and John ap John, two Welsh veterans captured at Highnam, of Alan Boteler, a royalist messenger who had to pass through parliamentarian territory to reach the king's outpost of Raglan late in the war, of Richard Fitzgerald, a clearly unhappy and harassed tax collector during the 1650s, and of others. There is also a very strong sense of place, not surprising given the author's Monmouthshire origins and his professional archaeological and architectural background, so that events are often closely linked to particular locations; there are excellent black and white illustrations of a range of houses, castles and churches, of monuments, gravestones and inn signs, of pulpits and sun dials. All this for just £12.95, reflecting Logaston's usual practice of pricing their books very competitively. Both author and publisher are to be congratulated on this excellent and engaging study, full of good things and interesting ideas.

Diane Purkiss, *The English Civil War. A People's History* (HarperCollins, 2006), pp. xviii and 627; hardback £25.

Professor Purkiss has written an interesting, often fresh and undeniably detailed account of the civil war which draws very heavily upon a wide range of contemporary sources in order to view events through a variety of contemporary perspectives. The approach is not new – John Adair in *By the Sword Divided. Eyewitnesses of the English Civil War* and more recently Tristram Hunt in *The English Civil War at First Hand* have taken similar paths, as has Martyn Bennett's excellent *The Civil War Experienced*. But Professor Purkiss's account is longer than these, allowing her to draw upon a rather wider range of well-chosen sources and to use them more fully. The sources are quoted, paraphrased and summarised at length, allowing the stories to unfold and develop, often with a sense of immediacy, and enabling a variety of contemporary voices to tell or retell their tales. Some of these sources are well known and have already been very thoroughly quarried by civil war historians – for example, the papers and published accounts of the Harley and Verney families, of Isabella Twysden and Ann Fanshawe, of Richard Atkyns, Henry Foster and John Gwynne, of the Nehemiahs Wallington and Wharton, and many more besides; while not looming as large as some, Oliver Cromwell pops up quite often here, through his own letters and the writings of contemporaries. Other accounts have not been drawn upon so often and are fresher – of the cookery writer Hannah Wolley and the surgeon Richard Wiseman, for example. All sorts of characters weave their

way into, through and out of the narratives retold here, soldiers and civilians, men, women – lots of room for women in this account of the war – and children, the living and the dead, the mad and the bad, the maimed and the deranged. Like many recent mainly military histories of the 1640s, this volume stresses the destructive and disruptive nature of the civil war, makes clear that the conflict bit deep into the civilian population, and emphasises the horrors of the war – there is plenty here on death, suffering and mutilation, on massacres and butchery, including a particularly graphic contemporary description by Wiseman of a civil war soldier, still alive, but with most of his face, including eyes, nose, mouth, much of the lower jaw and most of his tongue shot away, trying to swallow his last bowl of milk.

The book is structured in a broadly chronological fashion, from the opening chapters covering the situation in the late 1630s through to closing chapters on the trial and execution of the king in 1649 and the immediate aftermath. However, the intervening chapters, some very short, some very long, do not follow a strict chronological pattern but instead tend to go off on tangents, exploring particular themes and retelling interesting stories. Some chapters focus very sharply on one or two primary sources and retell a particular tale – for example, chapter XVIII on cookery writing at the time, drawing heavily upon the works of Wolley and Kenelm Digby – while others cover a range of issues – thus chapter X provides a rather varied account of the setbacks and disappointments of 1643 – or rest more heavily upon secondary works – for example, chapter IV gives an account of the Bishops Wars drawn mainly, it appears, from the works of other historians, while chapter XXIV provides details of civil war weapons and tactics, again not tied particularly closely to any primary sources. This volume does not provide a clear or complete narrative of the civil war, though some chapters seem to be written as if that was the intention, but nor does it offer a purely or consistently thematic analysis. Despite all the interesting and colourful stories retold here, one cannot help wondering whether some rigorous editorial interventions and constraints might not have produced a shorter but crisper and more focused volume.

There are other significant problems here. As well as a peppering of factual errors, the informal and colloquial writing style, probably designed to give a sense of immediacy and relevance to the modern world, often grates and seems anachronistic. The author is given to occasional speculation, for example in chapter II imagining at some length what a range of civil war protagonists were doing and thinking in 1639. Above all, and most infuriatingly, Professor Purkiss gives not a single reference to her sources –





readers search in vain for any footnotes or endnotes. There is a fairly detailed guide to 'further reading' placed after the text, in which (with a fair bit of searching) many of the primary and presumably only a limited selection of the secondary sources upon which the book rests can be found, but the contents of this guide are not always arranged in the same order as topics are covered in the chapters of the book and on several occasions this reviewer has failed to find information about sources and works which have apparently or reportedly been used in the text. It is hard to understand why Professor Purkiss and her publishers have taken this approach. In an opening 'Epistle to the Gentle Reader' the author excuses the non-academic aspects of the book by suggesting that she is deliberately harking back to an earlier, more literary style of historical writing, in order to reconnect with a wider audience; while some readers will applaud this, others will doubtless be horrified by the shortcuts which this approach has entailed. Yet despite these flaws and frustrations, all readers will find much of colour and interest here. The hardback edition, coming in at well over 600 pages and with a generous selection of black and white plates, is already good value; a paperback edition, planned for early 2007, will offer an even better deal.

Mark Stoyle, *Soldiers and Strangers. An Ethnic History of the English Civil War* (Yale UP, 2005), pp. xiv and 297; hardback £25.

In this excellent and thoughtful study, Mark Stoyle explores the external or 'ethnic' contribution to England's civil war, charting the involvement and impact of the Cornish, the Welsh, the Irish and others from Ireland, the Scots and 'outlanders' – soldiers of fortune from the continent – within the English theatre. The book is divided into two parts. The first, 'The Influx, 1642-1644', examines the progressive engagement and involvement of these groups in the English conflict during the opening years of the civil war, so that by 1644 the 'accustomed English imperium in the British Isles' had completely collapsed, with the 'outlandish armies' of the Welsh, Cornish, Scottish and so-called Irish as well as assorted continentals tramping across the country; 'England lay a-bleeding', as contemporaries put it, and 'everywhere, there were strangers within the gates' (p. 113). The second half of the book, 'England's Recovery, 1644-1647', explores how the English parliamentary cause responded to this threat by creating a new, more dynamic and consciously English national field army, the New Model Army, which then served as 'England's antidote' in first re-conquering the bulk of the English homeland and then overcoming the Welsh and the Cornish and packing off the Scots and assorted foreign mercenaries.

The study effectively ends in 1646-47, with the English parliamentarian cause triumphant, though the closing pages briefly explore the legacy of this non-English involvement in the war – strengthening the 'deep-rooted English chauvinism', confirming English hostility to or mistrust of non-English groups and fostering a 'more virulent strain' of English nationalism – and go on to link these to the English parliamentary stance in the renewed war of 1648 and the successful reconquest of Ireland and invasion of Scotland in 1649-51, which served to bolster feelings of English 'exceptionalism' (pp. 203-04). The Welsh and the Cornish, meanwhile, might have found themselves in an uncomfortable position during the 1650s, but the English republican regimes attempted to conciliate them – Cromwell's own Welsh ancestry may have played a part here, it is suggested – and in any case at the Restoration the wheel turned once again and the Welsh and Cornish could revel in their royalist credentials.

Although not everyone might agree that Wales, and still less Cornwall, were as distinct and separate from England by this time as is suggested here, this volume explores in a new way an important aspect of the English civil war and it significantly deepens and enriches our understanding of it. The arguments are clear, lucid, well presented and generally convincing, and a wide variety of archival and printed sources are skilfully marshalled to produce a sophisticated interpretation of the war. Particularly valuable is the analysis of the numbers and origins of troops which crossed from Ireland to fight (on the royalist side) on the mainland, confirming once and for all that the numbers were quite low – almost certainly little more than 9,000 in all – and that less than 2,000 of these were native Irish. Thus in terms of sheer numbers, let alone military input and impact upon propaganda and morale, they were far less help to the king's war effort than the deal which the English parliamentarians made with the Scots, even though in time that Scottish alliance proved a double edged sword and a high price was paid for it. Dr Stoyle also explores the contribution of a little over one hundred continental soldiers, most of them from western Europe, who are known to have served with English armies, the majority fighting for the king, though a significant minority campaigned for parliament. Two appendices list the Irish reinforcements and provide details of the continental participants; the main text is also supported by a handful of maps, a selection of black and white plates, extensive endnotes and a detailed bibliography, confirming the depth and breadth of Dr Stoyle's meticulous research. In short, this is an excellent, attractive and readable new study of England's civil war, casting valuable new light on an important aspect of that conflict.

Peter Gaunt



## SUMMER SEASON 2006

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The Cromwell Museum,
Grammar School Walk,
Huntingdon.
Tel (01480) 375830.

April - October
Open Tuesday-Friday 11am-1pm 2-5pm
Saturday & Sunday 11am-1pm 2-4pm
Monday closed

November – March
Open Tuesday-Friday 1-4pm
Saturday 11am-1pm 2-4pm
Sunday 2-4pm
Monday closed

Admission free

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Oliver Cromwell's House,
29 St Mary's Street, Ely.
Tel (01353) 662062.

April - October
Open every day 10am-5.30pm

November – March
Open Monday-Friday 11am-4pm
Saturday 10am-5pm, Sunday 11am-4pm

Admission charge

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The Commandery,
Sidbury, Worcester.
Tel (01905) 361821.

Closed for refurbishment.
Scheduled to reopen April 2007

Admission charge

# CROMWELLIANA

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*...the restoring those poor distressed creatures to their ancient privileges and habitations, - are matter of so much grief to us, and lie so near our heart,...*

*Oliver Cromwell*

'promoting our understanding of the 17th century'