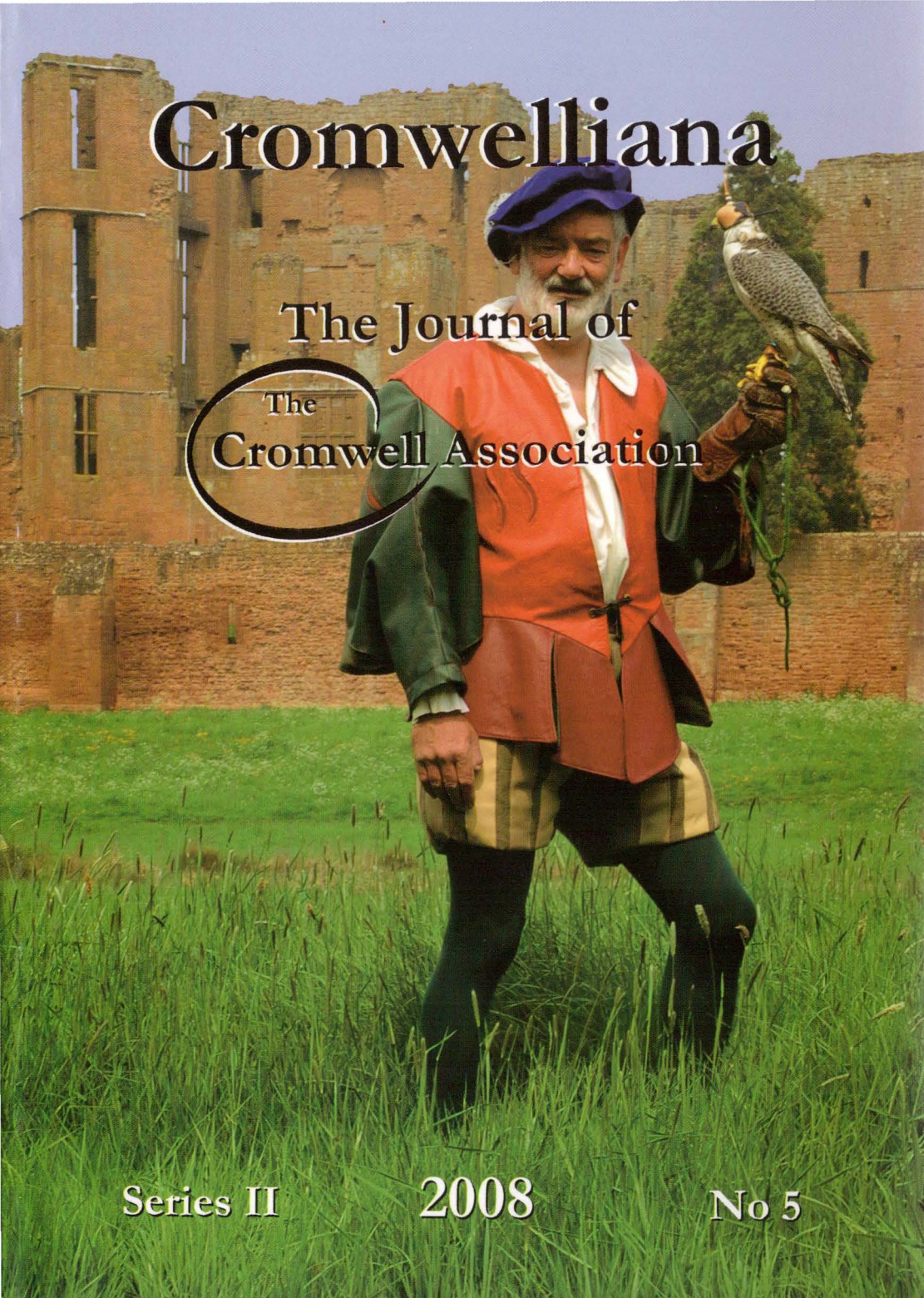
Cromwelliana

The Journal of

The Cromwell Association



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CROMWELLIANA 2008

Editor Jane A. Mills

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EDITOR'S NOTE

The 3rd September 2008 marks the 350th anniversary of Oliver Cromwell's death and as Cromwelliana is published earlier in the year, articles and papers marking this important event will be published in the 2009 edition.

2008 is also notable for the Quatercentury (400th anniversary) of John Milton's birth and many events are taking place this year. The Cromwellian Britain section is devoted to Chalfont St Giles, which has connections to both Milton and Cromwell among others.

I would like to give special thanks to Professor Peter Gaunt for his excellent paper written especially for the Writings and Sources section.

This edition also includes three of the four papers that were presented at the Manchester Day school in April.

The image on the front cover was taken at Kenilworth Castle Warwickshire, which was a Parliamentary garrison from 1642-3. Bob Edwards of Falconry-Days.Com is wearing an Elizabethan/Jacobean costume and his hawk is Jack, a 7 year old Gyr-peregrine falcon. On the back cover is a detail image of Jack without his hood.

I would like to thank Bob Edwards for providing and giving permission to use the images which were taken by photographer Steve Senior (steve.senior@ntlworld.com). Information regarding falconry and flying days can be obtained from www.Falconry-Days.com or by email info@falconry-days.com.

CROMWELL DAY ADDRESS 2007
OLIVER CROMWELL AS A POLITICIAN AND PARLIAMENTARIAN

By Lord Naseby

This talk is about Cromwell as a politician and parliamentarian. My credentials to do this are that I came up through local government; indeed I was the only Tory leader in Islington in the last century. I sat for a marginal seat of Northampton South, had majorities of 179 and 142 but lasted twenty three and half years – Northampton, a town which received the wounded from both sides after the battle of Naseby.

Never a minister, too rebellious, but it paid off as I was elected Chairman of Ways and Means – a post that almost goes back to Cromwell. I had to preside over the Maastricht Treaty; it took twenty five days including five all night sittings, and the government had no majority. I even suffered a 'no confidence' motion principally because I would not allow filibustering. The 81 rebels were seen off by a majority of 369. I have spent my last ten years in the Lords as a back bencher trying to stick to my own vision of 'righting a few wrongs'.

Finally I am Patron of Naseby Battlefield Trust and an admirer of Cromwell. The key part of my maiden speech in the House of Lords referred to him and he was the reason for taking the title of 'Naseby'.

My sources are the History of the Parliamentary Trust, original *Journals* because there was no Hansard and articles by eminent historians, and my text is from H.R. Trevor-Roper who wrote:

> Ironically the one sovereign who had actually been an MP proved himself as a parliamentarian the most incompetent of all.

Let's analyse the validity of this viewpoint by asking a few questions.

Phase one might be the early years and his election in 1628. His background suggests that politics and parliament were to some extent part of family life. His father was an MP in 1597; he had cousins involved in politics; and his wife's family were also in politics. He himself appears to have followed the traditional route to Westminster which lasted until very recently, which was through local government. Cromwell was a Justice of the Peace, bailiff and a common councillor at twenty-two.

He was elected in 1628 for the parliament that only last a year and the only recorded speech we know about concerned a local matter. Should we be surprised? I say no – if you are newly elected and suspect the parliament will be short then you make sure your electors know you are acting on their behalf.

The next period runs from 1629 to 1640 – eleven years without a parliament. Cromwell appears to have busied himself in local affairs. Some criticise him for not being outspoken about the 'ship money' and others insist that he is still pretty junior and locally orientated. The local politics turn dirty and he finds himself elbowed out when he discovers he is not to be one of the twelve aldermen for Huntingdon's new charter. So he decides to move to St Ives.

Sometime, probably in 1638, he finds his 'vision and faith' written in a letter, which will take him forward into politics and beyond. Politicians need a vision – both Harold Wilson and Margaret Thatcher had theirs, but Tony Blair appears not to have had one. It is Cromwell's faith and vision that help to explain his reluctance to be wedded and glued to any particular form of government.

So as we approach the 1640 election my impression is of a young man of ability, argumentative, opinionated, who made friends and enemies, and in a hurry, all backed up by a vision which made him a conviction politician. He is elected just as he turns forty, which was the average age when I was first elected in 1974.

Now we come to the Long Parliament which commenced in 1640. Some would argue that the majority of elected MPs were not thinkers, but plain, conservative, untravelled country gentlemen whose passion came not from radical thought or systematic doctrine but from 'indignation'. These MPs were turned into a political force by the electioneering ability of a few great Lords and the parliamentary genius of John Pym. In time, they became the Independents and allegedly Cromwell was typical.

Whilst many had sponsors few could have had as good connections as Cromwell – the Earl of Warwick, Viscount Saye & Sele, Lord Brooke; influential MPs like John Hampden, Oliver St John and the Barringtons. And Cromwell does not sit on his hands as he responds to the leadership of John Pym who dominated the parliament until his death in 1643. Cromwell was not quiet or slow to start. He espoused resolutions, acted as teller and

messenger to the Lords. He spoke without notes on issues to do with the agenda of Godly reformation.

In August 1641 he moves the appointment of Saye and the 5th Earl of Bedford as guardians of the Prince of Wales. When the crisis over the central issue of the militia looms in winter 1641/42 it is Cromwell who is the first and loudest voice arguing that supreme military command must rest with the Earl of Essex.

At this stage he seems to be a political realist and before this he was not seen as a leader of any particular faction but he was certainly keen, outspoken, active in seconding a bill for annual parliaments, and on numerous occasions he moved bills or seconded bills, all of which failed but were of substance like 'The Grand Remonstrance'. He did, however, have one major success, the Militia Ordinance, placing the military forces in the hands of the well-affected nobility. This followed the king's attempt to arrest five MPs and it was Cromwell's motion to set up the committee.

So when he returned to Cambridge in 1642, he could state that his objectives of ensuring the armed forces of the kingdom should be in the hands of those who would use them to uphold the authority of parliament had been achieved. I personally think that any back bencher in any parliament to have achieved what he did in just two years was quite exceptional.

So we come to the next phase, August 1642 to September 1651. Cromwell is really in the field and not at Westminster, nine years of uninterrupted work when he is primarily focused on the battlefield. Cromwell's stature rises with his successes; he even understands the importance of 'spin' getting alongside the *Parliamentary Scout* in 1643 – with good pamphlets being published on him. Whilst in the field he probably has no close friends at Westminster (true of most MPs) but he is content to have matters in the hands of those who are like minded – Saye, Lord Wharton, Vane, Evelyn, all of whom believed in the cause and all did work pretty well until 1648. In April 1648 Cromwell and Saye undertook their mission to the king to dissuade him from his alliance with the Scots, but they failed.

The second civil war starts and off goes Cromwell again but many MPs do not really know what to do – why does the king have to be so stubborn? – and clearly a lot of back biting is going on. And in the winter of 1648/49 Cromwell feels many of them, including a number of key political friends,

have lost their way or, in Cromwell's words, 'withdrawn their shoulder from the Lord's work through fleshy reasonings'.

Cromwell is clearly losing faith with some MPs and decides to agree that the army must step in, which it does on 6 December – Pride's Purge. Cromwell is conveniently still on his way back; parliament is now half its size, the House of Lords gone and the monarchy gone.

Cromwell goes off to Ireland in 1649-50 thinking about a new parliament; he holds consultations in 1652-53. He really wants a parliament generously representative of the people, made up of MPs who broadly followed the true faith but would exclude any former royalists or neutrals – a little like today's Conservative 'A' list and Tony Blair forcing people to retire so that new Labour could be parachuted in.

Barebones Parliament is created; however, it is high-jacked by a revolutionary element of Fifth Monarchists who quickly control committees; some have control of the media, that is the pulpits and pamphlets. It is dissolved. A boundary committee is set up and a sort of electoral commission – all agreed to make it fairer and helpful to the Commonwealth.

I do not have time to go through the further machinations or the role of the Major Generals or the two Protectorate Parliaments.

It is clear to me and I think to most historians that Cromwell actually believes in the institution of parliament. He seems to believe that those attending will act responsibly. He understands there are radicals, republicans *et al* but knows their numbers are small and believes the majority of good men will win through.

His primary failure is not as a parliamentarian but as a politician. Even when Lord Broghill in the Second Protectorate Parliament virtually serves on a plate a ready made front bench, he wavers and does not support him. In fact, if you look back over his whole non-military career you can trace his belief in parliament *but* his failure to act as a politician. I am unclear why he was not one of the twelve aldermen given his influence.

He certainly tried hard to get a structure that would work with boundary changes, electoral commissions and so on., but it all came to nought. So my conclusion is that he did well as a parliamentarian and to some degree a politician up to 1648 – but then frustration sets in. Frankly, I do not believe

any man in any age can lead an army in active campaigning and also lead in parliament. You just cannot stay in touch. His failure was in not recognising that 'the cause' was open to interpretation and he needed people with leadership abilities to promote it whilst he was away; sadly they did not.

The Rt Hon the Lord Naseby PC represents the Conservative Party in the House of Lords and is a Vice President of the Cromwell Association.

FOUR CHURCHES AND A RIVER: ASPECTS OF THE CIVIL WAR IN CHESHIRE[1]

By Professor Peter Gaunt

For three years, from spring 1643 until the conflict in the county effectively ended with the surrender of the county town at the beginning of February 1646 and with a complete military victory for parliament's forces, Cheshire was caught up in an intensive, well-organised and bitter civil war. As in most counties, the conflict quickly turned into a dour and long-drawn-out territorial war, a war of garrisons, of holding down and drawing resources from towns and countryside, of intermittent raiding and counter-raiding and occasional, fairly small-scale local engagements, rather than major, set-piece battles between the principal field armies of king and parliament. Cheshire's civil war was, quite typically, a local and regional war of supply and demand, of attrition and exhaustion, as much as – indeed, far more than – of blood and guts.

From early 1643 until early 1646 Cheshire was a divided county, with territory held by both king and parliament and with a potentially explosive fracture line or frontier between the two rival areas running through the county. But it was also a remarkably static frontier, very different from the ebb and flow of fortunes in other areas of England and parts of Wales, which saw huge changes in the territory held by king and parliament in the course of 1643-46. While in south-west Wales, parts of the Midlands and the north and much of central southern and south-western England the fortunes of war and with it territorial control swung backwards and forwards dramatically between 1643 and 1646, leading to hundreds of square miles of territory changing hands (often more than once), Cheshire saw no such swings. Instead, from spring 1643 the parliamentarians were fairly secure in control of eastern and central Cheshire, over two-thirds of the land mass of the county, with their HQ at Nantwich, while the king's men held the western parts of the county, including much of the Dee valley, the Wirral and, above all, the county town and port of Chester. Thereafter, changes were modest and slow, as the parliamentarians sought (with mixed fortunes) to extend their control into the Dee valley, eventually over-ran the Wirral and finally brought great pressure to bear upon royalist Chester.

On the parliamentarian side, it is unusual that the commander-in-chief of the military forces and of the war effort right through to 1645-46 was also the county's political boss, dominating the political and administrative life of parliamentarian Cheshire for almost the whole period of the civil war. Indeed, Sir William Brereton, the only Cheshire MP to support the

parliamentarian cause from the outbreak of the war, quickly emerged as the county boss *par excellence*, the dominant, active, highly energetic leader of the parliamentarian cause in the county. On the one hand, he stamped his authority on Cheshire's war effort to such an extent that, unlike most other English counties largely or wholly under parliamentary control for much of the war, Cheshire was excluded from the principal series of 'associations' – that is, groupings of neighbouring counties – which parliament established in 1643-44 in an attempt to gather resources and to beef up its war effort. On the other hand, Brereton was no blinkered, ultra-localist; indeed, far more than many of his colleagues in Cheshire parliamentarian circles, Brereton saw the need to adopt a wider regional approach, to co-operate with parliamentary forces and commanders in adjoining counties, to deploy Cheshire troops and resources to bolster parliamentary operations in Staffordshire and Shropshire and to pool resources in order to attempt to break into royalist north Wales. However, there is also clear evidence that the parliamentary high command (political and military) in London did not accord the Cheshire and north-western theatres a particularly high priority and instead in the latter half of the war judged that it was far more important to the overall war effort to bring the king's main field armies to battle and to defeat them, probably somewhere in the south or Midlands. Hence, while Brereton was not starved of resources and the operation against Chester and its annoying outrider, Beeston Castle, was never put on hold, the parliamentary high command in London accorded neither this operation nor suggestions that the campaign be carried west into royalist north Wales, the men, money and other resources required for such major undertakings.[2]

Although his supporters were penned up into the western parts of the county and the county town, Cheshire was probably always accorded a higher priority by the king and the royalist cause. Chester and west Cheshire served to act as a buffer against possible parliamentarian attacks into the royalist heartlands of north Wales – the nursery of the king's infantry, as one contemporary called it – as well as themselves being supported and re-supplied by resources from Wales. Even more important, Chester and its out-ports along the Dee estuary would be ideal west coast ports where reinforcements from Ireland could be landed to fight for the royalist cause on the mainland. Although the numbers actually landed in this way turned out to be modest, to the end Charles was hopeful that his various truces, negotiations and deals with the majority Irish Catholic group in Ireland, who in the wake of the rebellion of autumn 1641 controlled most of the island of Ireland, would at least free English and Welsh troops serving there

to return to the mainland and possibly even provide him with an Irish Catholic army which could turn the tide for him in England and Wales. Chester and its hinterland were therefore vital to the king as a key port for landing such troops from Ireland. Hence, Charles visited Chester in person twice during the civil war, at the start of the conflict seeking to drum up support and to ensure the loyalty of the county town, and again close to the end, in September 1645, attempting to relieve the pressure on Chester and to hold onto it. In the course of the war, he appointed a succession of regional commanders, seeking to beef up the royalist hold over north Wales and with it the western parts of Cheshire, and he also dispatched north in 1643, 1644 and 1645 royalist field armies from the south and the Midlands, commanded by himself or by his nephews princes Rupert and Maurice, tasked with marching towards, into or through Cheshire and so to compel Brereton to pull back and thus at least temporarily relieve the pressure on Chester. Not until September 1645 did Brereton feel sufficiently strong and confident to stand and give battle in such circumstances, the resulting defeat of a royalist relieving army on and around Rowton Moor effectively sealing Chester's fate and marking the beginning of the end for the royalist cause in the county.

Bunbury

The focus of this brief introduction has been on a civil war which engulfed Cheshire from the early months of 1643 onwards. But the English civil war formally began significantly earlier, with the raising of the king's standard in Nottingham in August 1642, followed by the creation of two major field armies which, having shadowed each other for several weeks in the Welsh Marches and the West Midlands, finally clashed on the Warwickshire plain in the shadow of Edgehill in late October for the first major, though indecisive, battle of the civil war. Shaken, a bit bloody, but otherwise in tact, the two armies then followed different routes to London, the parliamentarians arriving first and organising such a strong defence of the capital that the king's army held back from launching an attack on London and instead fell back on Oxford and into winter quarters. What was Cheshire's role in all of this?

As war approached in summer 1642, both king and parliament looked to Cheshire for support and both attempted to recruit within the county. However, both sides met with little success at this stage. In July, a petition was issued in the name of the people of Chester opposing the king's attempt to raise troops using a commission of array and summoning all the citizens to a meeting on the Roodee on 1 July. The petitioners pointed out

that 'it is a sacred truth that a kingdom divided cannot stand, so it is a legal principle that his royal majesty is the head and parliament the representative body of this kingdom, and that in the cordial union of his majesty and the parliament consists the safety, glory and hope thereof.' The clear evidence that such cordial union was now under threat and would be further weakened by the king's attempts to raise troops in Cheshire led the authors, while stressing their unquestioned loyalty to the king as well as to God, to say that they could not support armed conflict and instead to press for peace and an accommodation.[3] But equally, when in early August Brereton sought to raise troops for parliament in Chester, he was given a very rough ride by the authorities and citizens. Brereton went around with a group of his supporters, literally banging a drum to attract attention and gather a crowd. On the direction of the mayor, the recorder and some constables succeeded in confiscating the drum, only for Brereton to get the 'common bell' rung so that he could continue his recruiting activities. But this met with such hostility from the people of Chester that eventually Brereton was escorted out of the city under guard, reportedly as much for his own safety as to thwart the parliamentarian recruitment drive.[4]

From the outset, king and parliament did win the support of a number of active and committed participants within the county, but their activities were generally limited and met with a poor response at this stage. The king's presence in the region, based at Shrewsbury, for three weeks in late September and early October did galvanise into action some of his leading supporters, who succeeded in capturing Nantwich, already seen as a centre of anti-royalist sentiment, and various houses and potential strongholds in the area. The king himself received both expressions of loyalty and a flow of money and volunteers when he briefly visited Chester in late September, while also taking the submission of a handful of Cheshire gentlemen who had been active in opposing the commission of array. However, the departure of the king, back to Shrewsbury and then away south out of the region, taking with him not only most of the active royalist Cheshire gentry and newly-raised troops but also leading Cheshire gentlemen who had opposed the array – together with the absence in London of the leading Cheshire parliamentarian, Brereton, who was attending parliament and seeking to raise support there – meant that there was a distinct lull in activities in Cheshire during the closing weeks of 1642.

The position in late 1642 was complex. Although the royalists had briefly appeared dominant while the king was in the area, his departure had led to a decline in their fortunes locally. By the end of the year, they appear to have

held Chester and the surrounding area, plus a dozen or so strongpoints mainly in the west of the county. Assessing the strength of the parliamentarians is more difficult, for at this stage it is sometimes hard to distinguish between the active neutralists and the committed parliamentarians who together made up the ranks of the non-/anti-royalists. Certainly, by the end of the year much of central and eastern Cheshire, including Nantwich and Knutsford, was held by forces who were opposing the king and sympathetic to parliament. It is, however, evident that both parties were still struggling against the indifference, apathy and desire to keep out of war and to maintain peace shown by many in Cheshire, at gentry level and below, and that they were experiencing real difficulties in raising men and money. With a stalemate of sorts reached, at least for the time being, and with both sides finding it difficult to gather the resources needed to mount a serious campaign, shortly before Christmas representatives of both sides came together at Bunbury to sign a peace treaty.

By December 1642, key players on both sides in Cheshire were keen to make a pact to take Cheshire out of the civil war and at least on paper to demilitarise the county. During the third week of December, leading members of the county elite – Lords Kilmorry and Cholmondeley for the royalists, Henry Mainwaring and William Marbury for the parliamentarians – met at Tarporley, roughly equidistant between the fledgling royalist and parliamentarian HQs of Chester and Nantwich respectively, and agreed a ceasefire.[5] Further discussions followed at nearby Bunbury, with the royalist Orlando Bridgman replacing Cholmondeley on the royalist side. In truth, it is not certain exactly where these discussions, which led to the signing of the treaty of Bunbury on 23 December, were held, but although no contemporary document clearly identifies the church as the location, it is generally and plausibly assumed that these events took place in the late medieval parish church of St Boniface, the first of my four churches. The eight-point treaty committed both sides to 'an absolute cessation of arms from henceforth within this county', to disbanding all troops by the following week, to exchanging and releasing all prisoners, to destroying all the urban fortifications in Cheshire and to restoring captured goods and making reparation to owners who had lost goods and property. In the remaining clauses, both sides pledged not to recruit further troops in Cheshire, to resist any outside forces who might march into Cheshire attempting hostile acts, and to urge king and parliament to resolve their differences.[6] The treaty was probably in part genuine, a sincere attempt to demilitarise Cheshire and to keep it out of an unfolding national civil war,

though from the outset it was probably seen by some as merely a useful breathing-space – both sides were short of, and finding difficulties in raising, men, money and supplies from within Cheshire, but both sides were anticipating or at least hoping for reinforcements and new supplies from outside the county to arrive early in 1643.

These attempts to make peace in Cheshire were far from unique and the resulting treaty of Bunbury was fairly typical of treaties and cessations concluded in and between at least twenty English counties during the winter of 1642/43. For example, a little earlier in 1642 the gentlemen of Yorkshire had concluded and signed a fourteen-point peace treaty, involving the disbandment of all troops, the cessation of all acts of hostility, a pledge to attempt no further recruitment on either side, release of prisoners, return of weapons, reparation for loss and damage and so forth.[7] In some areas, the treaties went rather further. Thus in the opening months of the war, Cornwall was more royalist than parliamentarian in sympathy, Devon more parliamentarian than royalist, but in both counties there was little enthusiasm for war and activists were experiencing apathy and opposition in their attempts to bring either county firmly into the war. Accordingly, and in a rare example of hands stretched in peace across the Tamar, a regional treaty was concluded between the leaders of Devon and Cornwall which for a time took the whole south-western peninsula out of the war. Closer to home, the gentry leaders of neighbouring Staffordshire not only committed their county to keep out of the civil war but went further in raising and making provision for a Staffordshire third force, a body of armed men which was neither royalist nor parliamentarian but neutralist, and which would attempt to confront, halt and turn back any outside royalist or parliamentarian army which tried to enter the county.

The collapse of the treaty of Bunbury and of the attempt to take Cheshire out of the unfolding civil war was also fairly typical and was repeated in many other counties and regions. It broke down for two reasons. Firstly, at the local level there was too much suspicion and distrust, too many allegations of the terms being broken and of hostilities either continuing or being actively planned by those who had agreed to the treaty half-heartedly and insincerely as well as by those who did not feel themselves bound by its terms. For example, a parliamentarian pamphlet points to various breaches of the terms by royalists, though these tend to be rather small beer – such as an outbreak of alleged royalist plundering in and around Tarporley, involving the theft of hay and barley, as well as of finished shoes, leather and other goods from three shoemakers of the town, plus further similar

outrages in the neighbouring villages of Utkinton, Stapleford, Rushton and Bunbury itself (where the 'pastor' or vicar allegedly had some goods stolen from his house).[8] Secondly, at a national level neither king nor parliament supported these county-based treaties, as they would inhibit and disrupt the broad, national war effort which both sides were seeking to launch in 1643. For example, parliament published a declaration roundly condemning the Cheshire peace treaty, pointing out that none of the Cheshire-based signatories and participants had the power or authority to make such a treaty, that 'it is very prejudiciall and dangerous to the whole kingdome that any county should withdraw themselves from the assistance of the rest, to which they are bound by law', that the people of Cheshire were legally bound to obey the various laws recently passed requiring them to resource and support the war, and that 'many things in that agreement are very unequal, contrary to the nature of a neutralitie'.[9] With both king and parliament strongly antagonistic towards these attempts at the local level to declare UDI and to take counties and whole regions out of the war, they were condemned and swept aside by renewed military impetus from London and Oxford during the opening months of 1643.

Middlewich

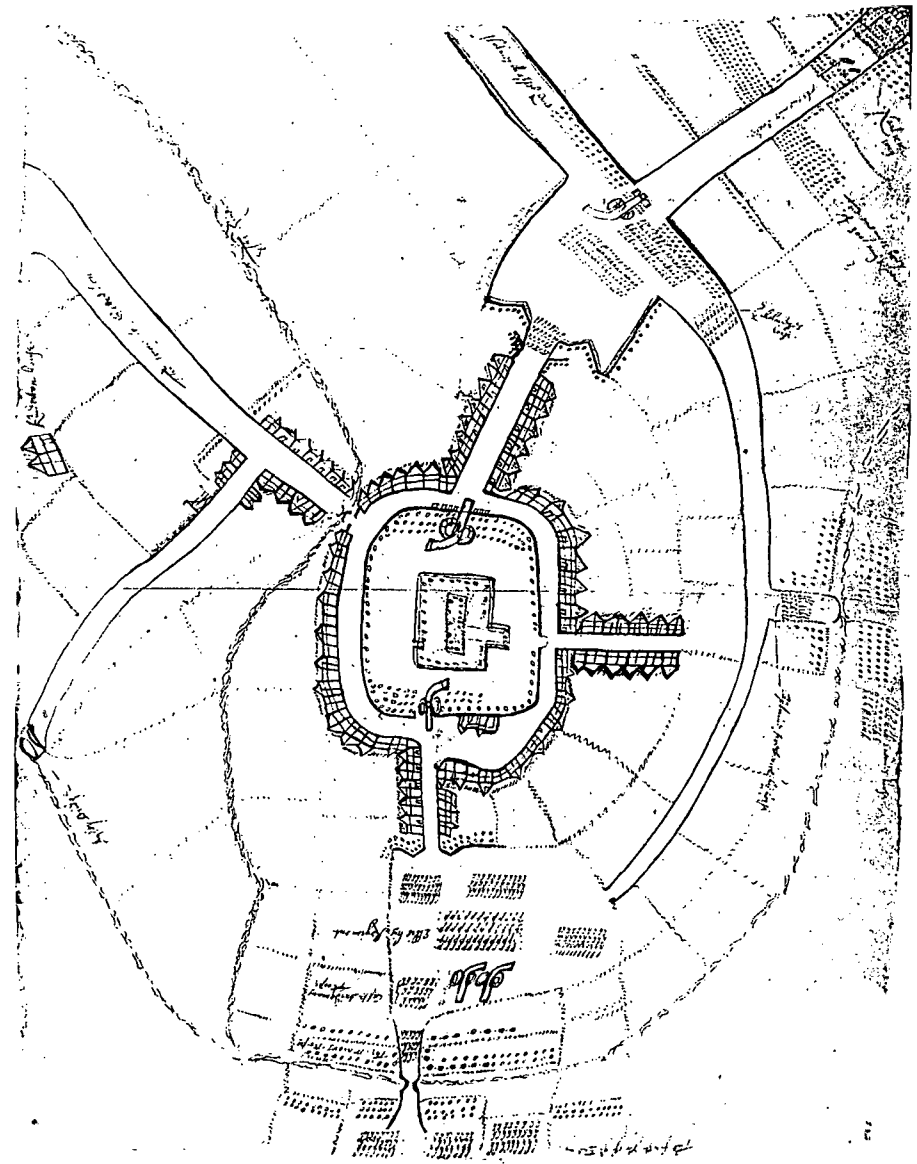
The confused and uncertain position in Cheshire during the first phase of the war was changed and clarified during the opening months of 1643 with the direct military intervention of Sir William Brereton at the head of a small body of (non-Cheshire) horse and dragoons. Entering the county in late January 1643, he moved quickly to secure Nantwich, Cheshire's second town and an important centre of communications, which became his HQ and was further fortified with earthen ramparts. Over the following weeks, he firmly secured most of the others towns of central and eastern Cheshire, including Northwich, Middlewich and Knutsford; Beeston Castle was also secured around this time. In the process, Brereton scattered and defeated royalist forces in a series of limited engagements, the largest outside Nantwich on 28 January and at Middlewich on 13 March. By spring 1643, both royalism and neutralism had been largely overwhelmed and most of Cheshire had been firmly secured for parliament, leaving the royalists with just the western parts of the county, including Chester and the Wirral. Henceforth, the Cheshire royalists were a spent force and were on the defensive for the remainder of the war, trying to preserve Chester and its hinterland and attempting nothing more than occasional, limited raids on parliamentary bases.

After months of indecision and setbacks, the parliamentarians had been able to secure most of the county remarkably quickly. Why? Part of the explanation lies in the energy and well co-ordinated efforts of the local parliamentarian activists, bonded together under Brereton's dynamic leadership. By spring 1643, they had also been able to win over many of those Cheshire gentry who had previously appeared inactive or neutralist. In comparison, the royalist leadership was poor and divided – the very limited military skills of the royalist leader, Sir Arthur Aston, were cruelly exposed at the engagements at Nantwich and Middlewich, while within Chester several military and civilian royalists squabbled for supremacy. Moreover, having drained away from Cheshire so many locally-raised troops in autumn 1642, to fight and in many cases to die in the Edgehill campaign, the king and the royalist high command in Oxford were slow to respond to the threat posed by Brereton and initially did little to aid or reinforce Cheshire royalism in its hour of need.

Again, the way in which Brereton dragged Cheshire firmly into the civil war early in 1643, overcoming apathy and organised neutralism, is far from unique and is seen broadly repeated in other counties and regions at this time. The most obvious comparison is with the figure with whom Brereton is often likened. Oliver Cromwell, newly promoted to be colonel of a cavalry regiment and governor of Ely, secured and strengthened Cambridge around the same time and invigorated the defence of the area we now call Cambridgeshire, with forays to overcome resistance in neighbouring counties. But there were other such figures, now a little less familiar, such as Sir John Gell in Derbyshire and Colonel John Hutchinson in parts of Nottinghamshire on the parliamentarian side, Sir Ralph Hopton in Cornwall for the royalist cause. Generally, these men were natives of the area to which they were returning and which they secured, they arrived at the head of a small body of non-local troops, often wholly or mainly cavalry, but they then set about boosting local recruitment, and they were usually from the landed elite, but not from the very highest levels of county society. Brereton conforms to this pattern, too, for his inheritance and estates in and around Handforth were modest and he was from the low to middling ranks of the Cheshire gentry.

The engagement which Brereton fought against Aston at Middlewich on 13 March is unusually well documented, for we possess several royalist and parliamentarian accounts, including versions of events by the two commanders.[10] Although they put particular spins on events – Brereton stressing the active involvement of the Lord in giving him victory, Aston

seeking to defend himself and to lay the blame for defeat elsewhere, chiefly on his troops and junior officers who allegedly broke and fled when under little pressure and failed to give him proper support – they tell a broadly consistent story of the engagement. The royalists under Aston captured Middlewich, encountering little opposition, on 11 or 12 March, and set about both seeking resources from the town and fortifying it with ditches and banks better to hold it against an anticipated parliamentarian counter-attack; Aston also sent for reinforcements. When he heard the news, Brereton was at Northwich with a small body of troops – possibly no more than 200 men – for his main force, over 800-strong, was at Nantwich. Nevertheless, he decided to counter-attack without delay, launching an attack on the western side of Middlewich at 8 am on 13 March, fighting alone and initially encountering solid royalist opposition, until by late morning he was running short of gunpowder. However, sometime between 11 am and noon the much larger body of Nantwich parliamentarians at last arrived and began attacking the southern and south-eastern side of the town. Despite royalist advantages – the king's men had artillery while the parliamentarians apparently had just two small guns, they had been able to dig banks and ditches and to prepare ambushes and they had selected advantageous spots to make their stand – repeated parliamentarian attacks overwhelmed the royalists who were trying to hold the approaches to the town, forcing them back towards the town centre. The royalist horse, hemmed in by narrow streets and unhinged by the sometimes wayward fire from their own ordnance, began to break and seek an escape route. Others, mainly the foot, fell back on the church and churchyard in the town centre and made some attempt to hold that position. However, 'wedged up like billets in a wood pile, no man at his arms',[11] they could not be rallied by the royalist commander, and instead, after a final, unsuccessful attempt to halt the parliamentarian advance by firing his remaining ordnance, Aston soon joined his cavalry fleeing along the Kinderton Lane. The parliamentarians, now clearly triumphant and having captured much of the royalist ordnance, launched a one-sided attack upon the royalists in the church – my second church, the late medieval, mainly perpendicular church of St Michael, at this time newly refurbished with a ceiling, screen and stalls dating from the 1620s and 1630s. The parliamentarians surrounded the church, 'slew divers upon the top of the steeple and some they say within the church'. Major Lothian and Captain Hyde 'fired the church door and thrust at them with their swords as they looked out of the windows'. At this point the royalists in the church 'cried for quarter, which was granted them';[12] although the royalists lost only 30 or so dead, around 500 fell prisoner.



Sketch plan of the battle of Middlewich, 13 March 1643.
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As well as detailed published accounts of the battle of Middlewich, we also possess an apparently contemporary sketch plan of this engagement. Plans and illustrations of civil war battles are very rare and those few which are extant are often hugely informative, so the survival of this plan amongst the Aston papers is potentially of great value to our understanding of the battle and of the civil war in Cheshire.[13] The sketch (reproduced on the previous page) is rather crude and is of variable scale, with the town centre depicted at a much larger scale than the surrounding area. However, it shows quite clearly and in some detail the disposition of the forces at the start of the engagement. It is drawn from a royalist perspective, possibly by or for Aston himself. Thus, several of the royalist officers, troops and regiments are named, but the parliamentarians are uniformly referred to as 'the enemy'. The sketch shows the church and churchyard at the centre of Middlewich, the street running around the churchyard and four roads branching off it, each lined with houses. It shows a 'river' skirting the north side of the town; really no more than a stream, Sanderson's brook, it flowed into the river Dane some way outside Middlewich. The sketch shows the river Wheelock running to the west and south of the town. Field boundaries are also marked. Aston makes reference in his account to various newly-dug defensive earthworks; these may be indicated on the plan, but they are not shown clearly and precisely.

The sketch indicates how Aston planned to defend Middlewich. He sought to hold the western approach to the town, principally the bridge which carried this road over the river. The bridge was held by mounted troops, marked 'h', of the major's troop and Captain Bridgman's troop. The adjoining hedges were lined with musketeers, represented by dots or small circles. In a more open area east of the bridge, probably Sheath Heath, Aston placed reserves of horse and of pikemen, marked 'p', many of them of Ellis's regiment, together with two artillery pieces. More musketeers lined the hedge on the eastern side of this open area, at the point where it narrowed into one of the main streets of the town and the houses began; this is probably the 'breast work' referred to in several published accounts. This western approach was the first to be assaulted, from early in the day by Brereton, 'the first party of the enemy' attacking with both horse and foot.

The town was also attacked later in the day, from the south and south-east, by parliamentarians from Nantwich. To the south, Aston again sought to hold off the parliamentarian horse and foot by securing and holding the bridge over the river or stream here; he referred to it in his account as

'Waring bridge'. Here were stationed Captain Prestwich's horse, together with musketeers lining adjoining hedges. The parliamentarians, too, deployed horse and musketeers at this point. To the south-east, along 'Nantwich way', also known as Booth Lane, there was no easily defendable bridge on the road and instead Aston sought to hold the top of the road, at its junction with Holmes Chapel Lane, where it opened out to form a large, unenclosed area. Aston mounted a gun pointing up Booth Lane, supported by musketeers and cavalry, including Lord Cholmondeley's horse. Again, the townward side of this open area, where it narrowed to form one of the streets into Middlewich, was defended with pikemen in the road, flanked by musketeers; this is probably the area referred to in some accounts as 'Newton'. The parliamentarians attacked up Booth Lane with two small guns – 'drakes' – and a body of horse, with musketeers giving support in the adjoining fields.

The sketch shows that, probably from the outset, Aston had made provision to hold the town centre should these outer defences fail. Musketeers were stationed in the area and he had mounted two guns here, pointing directly up the western and south-eastern approach roads. Conversely, there is no sign of any royalist or parliamentarian troops around the northern side of the town, and thus the main road leaving the north-east corner of the town, running past Kinderton Hall and then swinging east to Holmes Chapel and Brereton Green, was not contested. This was the route that Aston and much of his cavalry took as they fled the scene of this decisive royalist defeat.

Barthomley

Having secured most of Cheshire in spring 1643, Brereton's control over the county was challenged only occasionally by the intervention of royalist forces based, not in Cheshire itself or even in the neighbouring counties, but from much further afield. In 1644 and 1645 various royalist relieving armies marched towards, into, or through the county, designed to ease pressure on Chester and to disrupt Brereton's operations. Thus in May 1644 Rupert and an army of around 10,000 men were in Cheshire for a little over a week, part of the slow and circuitous march to relieve York culminating in his shattering defeat at Marston Moor; he passed through again, with a greatly depleted and demoralised force, on his way back south after the battle. Rupert and Maurice returned briefly in early spring 1645, though they swiftly had to return south, and in May Rupert was with the king and the main royalist field army as it marched north, towards Cheshire,

only to swing away east and then south-east across the Midlands, en route to shattering defeat at Naseby. The king returned for the last time, in September 1645, but on this occasion the relieving army he brought in his wake was engaged and destroyed in Cheshire, on and around Rowton Moor.

Potentially far more serious to parliamentarian fortunes in Cheshire was the intervention in the closing weeks of 1643 of a rather different external royalist force. Around 3,100 foot and up to 500 horse (five foot regiments, plus several troops of horse) landed from Ireland along the Dee estuary,[14] part of the English and Welsh army which had been dispatched to Ireland in 1641-42 to crush the Irish Catholic rebellion and which the king, having concluded a truce with the Irish Catholics, was now shipping back to the mainland to fight for him in the civil war. Combined with reinforcements which the new royalist commander in the region, John, Lord Byron, had brought up from Oxford, they provided the king with a formidable new field army in Cheshire. Having refreshed in and around Chester, this army roamed the county for several weeks in December 1643 and January 1644, brushing aside parliamentarian forces and capturing strongholds with an efficiency and brutality not hitherto seen in Cheshire. The main objective of this army was the parliamentarian HQ at Nantwich, tightly besieged by the third week of January. It took the intervention of another 'foreign' force, Sir Thomas Fairfax's Yorkshire and Lincolnshire army, to save Nantwich and the parliamentarian cause in Cheshire. In one of the most decisive battles of the civil war, Fairfax and his forces, who had crossed the Pennines in the middle of winter, engaged and destroyed Byron's army outside Nantwich on 25 January. Thereafter, despite continuing royalist hopes and parliamentarian fears, no further large batches of royalist reinforcements reached the mainland, either at Chester or elsewhere, from Ireland. In large part this was because parliament, which had naval supremacy throughout the civil war, stationed ships in the Irish Sea specifically to hunt down and to intercept any further shipments of royalist reinforcements from Ireland and to ensure that the men never reached the mainland, a task which was undertaken effectively and brutally by the parliamentarian naval officers.

The brief royalist campaign in Cheshire of mid-winter 1643/44 involved two particularly notorious or infamous episodes. Firstly, on 13 December, the royalists attacked and captured with remarkable ease the mighty medieval castle of Beeston, dominating the Cheshire plain and repaired and garrisoned by Brereton when he took control of most of the county earlier in 1643. Despite much later colourful stories that the castle was captured by

a small but daring group of royalists who climbed the sheer cliff face upon which the castle stands, contemporary sources point to a less dramatic but more plausible sequence of events.[15] The royalists may have distracted the castle's governor, Captain Thomas Steele, and much of the garrison by attacking or at least gathering near the lower ward, perhaps in the area of the outer gatehouse, while a small group of picked men 'gott into the upper warde of Beeston Castle, by a byeway, through treachery, as was supposed'. Steele swiftly surrendered the castle, invited the royalist commander 'into his lodginge in the lower warde...where they dyned together' and sent 'much beere' to the upper ward for the benefit of the royalist troops there.[16] Losing such an apparently strong and well-equipped castle so quickly and easily and acting in this way towards the royalist attackers was all too much for the parliamentary commanders. Closely imprisoned at Nantwich, in part to protect him from being lynched by parliamentary troops there, Steele was condemned by a council of war and on 29 January 'was shott in the Tynkers Crofts att Namptwich behind the churche, leanynge his backe to the crosse wall theire (after a very longe confession and repentance of his synnes made) by two common soldyers, the one shott him in the belly and the other in his throate, whoe was presentlie carried awaye, beinge laid in a coffin standinge on the grounde by him, broughte into the churche yarde and buryed ymedyatlie neeare the rowe of gravestones on the northe side of the heighe chauncell'.[17] Parliamentarian accounts dwell upon the sinful and immoral ways of Steele, noting how before being shot he had confessed various misdeeds: 'Being a cheese factor, he was about in the country and came late to his inn. The maid of the house got up to let him in, and was all bare, and partly undressed. He took fire at this sight of her and offered lewdness to her, which she resisted not; and so whenever he came that way, he lived in this sin with that woman. And now the Lord hath brought this shameful and untimely end upon him, as he acknowledged, in just judgement for that foul wickedness he lived in'.[18] The area around Nantwich church became a favourite site for military executions – for example, in January 1645 an 'Irishman' who had been captured fighting for the king was condemned and shot 'at the chauncell end in Namptwiche'[19] – and in the twentieth century various burials believed to be military burials from the civil war era were found in and around St Mary's church.[20]

The second notorious episode linked with the royalists' mid-winter campaign is the massacre which occurred at Barthomley just before Christmas 1643. Although some details are disputed, the main sequence of events is clear. On 23 December a party of royalist troops entered Barthomley, whereupon a group of around twenty locals (mainly men but

including a few women) sought refuge in the tower of St Bertoline's church – my third church. The royalist troops, under the direct command of Major Connaught, entered the church and forced the locals to come down, both by burning pews and rushes at the foot of the tower to smoke them out and by offering them quarter. However, when they emerged they were stripped and attacked, with twelve men killed on the spot and several of the eight survivors left badly injured. The royalists themselves plundered but soon moved on. A couple of days later, Lord Byron crowed to a fellow-royalist commander that 'I put them all to the sword; which I find to be the best way to proceed with these kind of people, for mercy to them is cruelty'. Some royalist sources suggest that quarter had initially been offered to but refused by those in the church, while later accounts have suggested that one of the villagers may have shot and killed or wounded a royalist soldier, thus provoking the vengeance which followed, although this version of events does not seem to be supported by the contemporary sources.[21]

Whatever the exact sequence of events, the killings at Barthomley became notorious and led to retribution eleven years later. The royalist commander, John Connaught, was brought before the regular Cheshire assizes at Chester in October 1654 charged with the murder of 'several persons' in the church. The trial focused on the killing of one of the group, the Barthomley schoolmaster John Fowler. The jury heard evidence that Connaught had struck Fowler with a battleaxe (valued at 6d) held in his right hand, which had inflicted a wound on the left side of Fowler's head just one inch long and one inch deep but instantly fatal. The jurors found the case proved and that the accused 'feloniously, voluntarily and of his malice aforethought did kill and murder against the publique peace'. Connaught said nothing in mitigation and judge John Bradshaw passed sentence of death by hanging.[22] He was duly hanged at Boughton, on the outskirts of Chester, on 17 October 1654, protesting his innocence to the end, while freely admitting a range of other sins, 'as gaming, drinking, nay conjuring'.[23] Although other royalist commanders were tried, condemned and executed by parliament, particularly in the immediate wake of the renewed fighting of 1648 and 1651, to find a relatively junior officer – a major – being tried and executed by a regular, civilian, assize court in the mid 1650s for war crimes committed over a decade before, in the course of the main English civil war of 1642-46, is very unusual.

The Dee and Chester

Brereton and the parliamentarians had little to fear on Cheshire's northern, eastern and southern borders. To the north, the river Mersey was crossed in

several places, but for the most part these bridges did not need to be strongly defended; during spring and summer 1643, for reasons which are not entirely clear, the apparently strong initial royalist position in Lancashire collapsed and thereafter the parliamentarians were firmly in control of most of the county, including the southern parts adjoining Cheshire and the town of Manchester. To the east, the Pennines provided a strong frontier and buffer, but in any case from 1643 onwards parliamentarians controlled most of Derbyshire. The southern frontier was potentially more problematic, for no clear and clearly defendable frontier – no deep and wide river, no range of bleak and bare hills – separated Cheshire from Shropshire; instead the Cheshire plain merges into the north Shropshire plain. Brereton was well aware of this and, unlike some of his colleagues, he took a regional perspective, only too happy to devote Cheshire men and resources to bolstering the initially very fragile parliamentary position in mainly royalist Shropshire. In part because of this support, by 1644 the balance both there and in Staffordshire was tipping in parliament's favour and thenceforth both northern Shropshire and northern Staffordshire were reasonably secure in parliamentarian hands. Instead, for most of the war the greatest threat and potential danger lay to the west, where Cheshire bordered the royalist heartlands of north Wales, and it was this western frontier, marked for much of its length by the river Dee – the river of my title – which was most strongly defended and contested.

Although fordable in places – notably near Eccleston and near Aldford – during dry summers, for much of its lower course the Dee presented a formidable obstacle to civil war armies, and both major attacks and large-scale crossings were only really possible at the bridging points. In the seventeenth century, very few bridges crossed the lower Dee. Indeed, apart from the old bridge at Chester, which was firmly under royalist control until the very end of the war, Cheshire's only other bridge across the Dee was the Farndon/Holt crossing. The river was the scene of much sparring, as the Cheshire parliamentarians intermittently tested royalist control of the Dee and the Dee valley, including the Farndon/Holt bridge, but only rarely did Brereton seriously attempt to carry the river or to acquire and hold territory to the west. Late in 1643 Brereton led an expeditionary force which successfully forced its way across the heavily defended Farndon/Holt bridge, entered Wrexham, and then pushed northwards up the west side of the Dee and Dee estuary, heading towards Point of Ayr. But this 'invasion' of north-east Wales proved premature and unsustainable, and both the rallying of the Welsh royalists and the landing along the estuary of royalist reinforcements from Ireland persuaded Brereton very

swiftly to turn around and to pull back into Cheshire, leaving the royalists once more in control of the Farndon/Holt bridge. Not until the second half of 1645, in the latter stages of the war, were the parliamentarians able to carry the Dee and to retain significant territory west of the river, though in this case the focus was further north. As part of the operation late in the war to isolate royalist Chester by establishing parliamentarian outposts immediately to the south and south-west, Eccleston, Lache and Dodleston were secured and held by parts of the besieging army.

The defence afforded by the river Dee, which loops around its southern and western sides, provides part – but only part – of the explanation why Chester held out for so long as a royalist centre.[24] Although by spring 1643 Brereton's parliamentarians had secured most of the county, he could not feel secure while the king's men continued to hold the largest and wealthiest town in Cheshire, its natural focus for political, administrative and social life, its major port (served by out-ports on the estuary) and centre of commercial activity and an obvious landing and marshalling point for possible royalist reinforcements from Ireland. Indeed, the capture of Chester became one of Brereton's main objectives and from summer 1643 he began mounting operations against the city. However, only very gradually were the parliamentarians able to gain greater leverage by taking the surrounding area, including the Wirral and parts of the Dee valley, and almost three years elapsed before the county town surrendered on terms at the beginning of February 1646.

Chester's long survival in the face of parliamentarian pressure rested in part upon the city's location and the nature of the surrounding territory. The city not only protected the main route into north Wales but also was itself strengthened and relieved by the flow of men, money and supplies from this solidly royalist region. Unless and until they could sweep round west of Chester and break its lines of communications with north Wales, the parliamentarians would find it very difficult to end Chester's resistance. The strength of royalism west of Dee, the ability of royalist forces to hold the line of the Dee and the bridge at Farndon/Holt, together with the nature of the land immediately south-west of Chester – until the lower Dee was straightened and partly canalised in the eighteenth century, this was a watery area of low-lying marshland, making it almost impossible for an attacking force to prevent men and supplies slipping into and out of the city – do much to explain why Brereton's parliamentarians found it extraordinarily difficult to control this area and thus completely to surround and isolate Chester. Even in autumn 1645, when the parliamentarians surrounded

Chester on three sides with an arc of bases, they were unable completely to sever the city's communications with Wales, as amply demonstrated by the ease with which the king was able to enter and then leave the city via north Wales in late September. These natural defences were bolstered by the man-made defences of the city, both the hastily repaired, complete circuit of Roman and medieval masonry walls which surrounded the historic core and a new outer line of earthwork bank and ditch, complete with salients, bastions and mounts, running from the north-west corner of the walls around to the river Dee east of Chester, which the royalists constructed in spring 1643 to enclose and defend the northern and eastern extra-mural suburbs of Chester. On top of this, the resolute leadership provided by successive royalist governors of the city, especially by John, Lord Byron, the determination of the king to hang on to Chester for as long as possible, leading or dispatching royalist relieving armies towards, into or through Cheshire to disrupt Brereton's operations against the city, and the decision of the parliamentarian high command in London in 1644-45 to focus resources on defeating the king's field armies in battle rather than on major operations against royalist bases such as Chester or solidly royalist territories on the peripheries such as Wales, all contributed to the long survival of royalist Chester.

During 1643 and 1644 Brereton tested Chester's defences with occasional blockades and raids, but he mounted no sustained operation or serious attempt to storm the city. Not until the beginning of 1645 did Brereton launch a more focused attack, a pre-dawn assault on 27 January on the northern line of outer bank and ditch which protected the northern suburb of the city. Although this assault was repulsed, the royalists responded in dramatic fashion by shortening the outer defensive line in this area, abandoning the northern suburbs and pulling back to the inner, northern masonry wall; as they did so, they deliberately flattened both the northern outer earthen bank and ditch and the buildings of the northern suburbs in order to deny the parliamentarians any shelter or vantage points in that area. The royalists did retain the eastern suburbs of the city, still protected by a now shortened line of outer earthwork bank and ditch, and it was at this point that the parliamentarians launched their next major attack later in the year, a pre-dawn assault on 20 September. Although the parliamentarian scaling ladders proved too short to carry the earthen bank, this attack caught the royalists by surprise, the outer line was breached and parliamentarian attackers flooded into the eastern suburbs as the royalists attempted to fall back behind the inner line, the old stone walls of the city, closing and securing the east gate as they did so. Once more, the royalists

were keen to deny the incoming parliamentarians any shelter or vantage points, so they sought to set fire to the buildings in the eastern suburbs as they fell back. For the most part and despite the royalists' necessary haste, this tactic worked well enough, and most of the timber and thatch buildings in the eastern suburbs caught fire and were wholly or partly destroyed. However, there was one major exception, the mighty stone – and thus largely fire-proof – church of St John, my fourth and final church.

St John's church, founded before the Conquest and holding cathedral status from 1075 until the new diocese of Chester established by Henry VIII at the Dissolution focused on the former Benedictine abbey in the centre of the city, was unusual in that it lay away from the historic core of the city and stood a short distance outside the circuit of Roman and medieval stone walls. Too large and too strong to be destroyed by the retreating royalists on 20 September, it quickly became the principal base for parliamentarian operations against the walled town. The church and churchyard became a parliamentarian strongpoint, with artillery hauled up into the tower. A sustained bombardment was directed at the adjoining section of the town wall and by the afternoon of 22 September a substantial breach had been opened there, wide enough, Byron thought, for six cavalrymen to enter side by side.[25] However, by the time the parliamentarians tried to assault the town that evening, the breach had been sealed using woolpacks and feather beds, and repeated attempts by the parliamentarians in late September and on into early October to storm the city both there and elsewhere were firmly beaten back by the king's men.

Indeed, the capture of the eastern suburbs and especially of the mighty church of St John proved not to be the knock-out blow which the parliamentarians hoped and the royalists feared. It took another four months of bitter fighting, with Chester increasingly surrounded and isolated and with the parliamentarian besieging army lobbing mortars – explosive shells – into the city, where they caused death and destruction, before resistance dwindled and eventually ended. At length, the dire conditions of starvation, destruction and disease within the city, the awareness that with royalism defeated or collapsing elsewhere there was now both no possibility of relief from outside and not much point in continuing hopeless resistance within the city, and with royalism in north Wales in particular crumbling and fading away, so ending Chester's civil war lifeline, the civilians inside Chester brought pressure to bear upon Byron and terms for surrender and an orderly handover were agreed and largely honoured. St John's survived the war damaged but in tact; however, over two hundred years later, in

1881, the upper levels of its mighty sixteenth-century tower suddenly collapsed, a much delayed result, it was and is sometimes suggested, of the damaging vibrations and shock waves it sustained when it became a platform for parliamentarian ordnance during the final stages of the civil war operation against Chester.

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There are several distinctive features of the civil war in Cheshire as a whole, many of them explored in this paper: the early apathy and desire to hold aloof from the conflict, seen most clearly in the organised neutralism of Bunbury; the way in which most of the county was firmly brought into the war on parliament's side early in 1643, exemplified by the crushing defeat of royalist opposition in the well-recorded battle of Middlewich; the brutal short campaign of Byron's new royalist army, in part formed from troops freshly shipped back from Ireland, in mid-winter 1643/44, reaching its low point in the notorious massacre at Barthomley just before Christmas; the contested but fairly static western frontier of the county, marked by the river Dee and the Dee valley, a dividing line between solidly royalist territory to the west and largely parliamentarian territory to the east; and the prolonged and stubborn resistance of royalist Chester, caused by a range of natural and man-made features and of military and political factors, which persisted well into the closing year of the civil war and which continued against the odds even after its suburbs and greatest suburban building had been lost or abandoned. In exploring these different phases and locations, this paper has also sought to bring out other features: the way in which Cheshire was a divided county for much of the war, but with a remarkably static and inactive dividing line between royalist and parliamentarian zones; that the civil war in Cheshire can only really be understood when placed in a wider regional context and when Cheshire's relationship with her English and Welsh (and Irish) neighbours are taken into account; the low-key nature of most of the fighting in Cheshire, with the Chester royalists on the defensive and not particularly active or enterprising, very different from the parliamentarian garrison in Gloucester who found themselves marooned in largely royalist Gloucestershire in 1643 and who reacted by punching well above their weight and launching an aggressive strategy which made life very uncomfortable for the king's men in the county; the differing priorities which the two sides accorded the Cheshire theatre in the latter half of the war, with the king determined to hang on to Chester for a long as possible and prepared to devote dwindling resources to that cause, while the parliamentarian high command in London had other and much higher

priorities; and the way in which one man, Sir William Brereton, quickly secured and then retained remarkable control over the parliamentarian cause in the county, dominating the military, political and administrative life of parliamentarian Cheshire – becoming, for a time, Cheshire's Cromwell perhaps – but then, unlike Cromwell, fading away remarkably quickly once the civil war had been won.

Notes.

1. This paper was given at a day conference on 'The Civil War in the North West' held at the John Rylands Library in Manchester in April 2008. It has been slightly tidied-up and very lightly referenced for publication – generally just to provide reference to specific sources quoted or alluded to here – but it largely retains the feel and rhythm of a lecture rather than of a closely argued and heavily referenced academic paper. The best general works on the civil war in Cheshire remain R.N. Dore, *The Civil Wars in Cheshire* (Chester, 1966) and J.S. Morrill, *Cheshire 1630-1660* (Oxford, 1974), though see also the introductions to R.N. Dore, ed., *The Letter Books of Sir William Brereton* (2 vols, Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 123 (1983-84) and 128 (1990)).
2. I argued this case and presented the evidence to support it in an unpublished lecture, 'Regional capital or red herring?: Chester's role in the regional civil war, 1642-46', given at a day conference on 'Changing Chester: Aspects of Archaeology and History from the Last Three Millennia', held at the Grosvenor Museum, Chester, in June 2006.
3. *The Petition and Resolution of the Citizens of the City of Chester* (1642).
4. British Library, Harleian Ms. 2155, f. 108.
5. The ceasefire and resulting treaty are analysed by Morrill, *Cheshire 1630-1660*, pp. 66-69.
6. The text of the treaty is to be found at British Library, Harleian Ms. 2135, ff. 96-96v.
7. The text of the fourteen-point Yorkshire treaty is found interspersed with a series of rebuttals by one of the leading parliamentarians in the area, the governor of Kingston-upon-Hull, explaining why he thought the terms unreasonable and would not observe them, *Reasons Why Sir John Hotham...Cannot in Honour Agree to the Treaty of Pacification* (1642).
8. *The Unfaithfulnesse of the Cavaliers and Commissioners of Array in Keeping their Covenants* (1643).
9. *A Declaration of the Lords and Commons Assembled in Parliament Concerning the Late Treaty of Peace in Cheshire* (1643).

10. The main sources for the battle of Middlewich are: *Cheshires Successe Since their Pious and Truly Valient Collonell Sir William Brereton Came to their Rescue, Set Forth in 4 Chapters...Confirmed by a Letter Sent from that Industrious and Faithfull Collonell* (1643); Thomas Malbon, *Memorials of the Civil War in Cheshire and the Adjacent Counties*, ed. J. Hall (Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 19 (1889)), pp. 39-42; Aston's account at British Library, Harliean Ms. 2135, ff. 102-103v and Additional Ms. 36913, ff. 120-121v; and accounts in the weekly newspapers, including *Mercurius Aulicus* 12-19 March, *Certaine Informations* 13-20 March, *The Kingdoms Weekly Intelligencer* 14-21 March, *The Kingdoms Weekly Intelligencer* 21-28 March and *A Continuation of Certaine Speciall and Remarkable Passages* 16-23 March.
11. From Aston's account at British Library, Harliean Ms. 2135, ff. 102-103v and Additional Ms. 36913, ff. 120-121v.
12. From the main parliamentarian account *Cheshires Successe Since their Pious and Truly Valient Collonell Sir William Brereton Came to their Rescue, Set Forth in 4 Chapters...Confirmed by a Letter Sent from that Industrious and Faithfull Collonell* (1643).
13. British Library, Additional Ms. 36913, ff. 129v-130.
14. The troop landings from Ireland on the English and Welsh mainland during the civil war have been investigated in detail by Mark Stoyle, *Soldiers and Strangers* (New Haven, 2005), especially chapter 3 and the table on pp. 209-10, from which these figures are taken.
15. This is clearly and convincingly argued by John Barratt, 'Beeston Castle in the civil war', *English Civil War Times*, 51 (January 1995).
16. Malbon, *Memorials of the Civil War*, pp. 91-92.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 117-18.
18. Henry Newcome, *Autobiography of Henry Newcome*, ed. R. Parkinson (Chetham Society, old series 26 (1852)), p. 95.
19. Malbon, *Memorials of the Civil War*, p. 158; see also pp. 124, 141 and 149 for other military executions at Nantwich.
20. J.P. Mann, *On the Civil War Trail in Cheshire* (Chester, 1983), p. 51.
21. The main sources for the events at Barthomley are Malbon, *Memorials of the Civil War*, pp. 94-96 and the letters quoted and reproduced in J.R. Phillips, *Memoirs of the Civil War in Wales and the Marches* (2 vols, London, 1874), I, 189 and II, 116-17. I have written at greater length about Barthomley and its civil war connections in two overlapping articles, 'Barthomley church and the civil war', *Cheshire History*, 35 (1995-96) and 'Cromwellian Britain VII: Barthomley church', *Cromwelliana* (1994), the latter now available online at <www.olivercromwell.org>.

22. National Archives, CHES 21/4, ff. 299-300, CHES 24/130/4, CHES 29/446, m. 57.
23. Newcome, *Autobiography*, p. 51.
24. Chester's role in the civil war has been studied at length and in depth. As well as the works by Dore and Morrill mentioned in note 1, see: J. Barratt, *The Great Siege of Chester* (Stroud, 2003); G. Forster, 'Civic government in Chester, 1642-60', *Northern History*, 37 (2000); P. Gaunt, 'Chester's role in the civil war', *Cromwelliana* (1995); S. Harrison, A.M. Kennett, E.J. Shepherd and E.M. Willshaw, *Loyal Chester* (Chester, 1984); A.M. Johnson, 'Politics in Chester during the civil war and interregnum', in P. Clark and P. Slack, eds, *Crisis and Order in English Towns 1500-1700* (Oxford, 1972); C.P. Lewis and A.T. Thacker, eds, *Victoria History of the County of Chester, V, i: The City of Chester* (Oxford, 2003); S. Ward, *Excavations at Chester: Civil War Siegeworks 1642-46* (Chester, 1987).
25. Byron's account of the siege is printed in *Cheshire Sheaf*, 4th series 6 (1971). The other main contemporary accounts are those of: Randle Holmes in R. Morris, *The Siege of Chester* (Chester, 1924); Nathaniel Lancaster in *Cheshire Sheaf*, 3rd series 38 (1943); Thomas Malbon in his *Memorials of the Civil War*; and Brereton and his correspondents in *The Letter Books of Sir William Brereton.*

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THE CIVIL WAR GOVERNOR, 1642-1651: THE CASE OF LIVERPOOL

By Dr Malcolm Gratton

It is now well understood that the civil wars consisted not simply of important battles but scores of sieges and skirmishes. Particularly affected by the struggle were governors. Their ranks contain many memorable or notorious personalities. Major Francis Windebank, governor of Bletchingdon House, surrendered his position and was shot on the orders of a royalist court-martial in April 1645. Quicker on his feet was Colonel Thomas Ravenscroft, governor of Hawarden Castle, Flintshire, who surrendered to parliament in the autumn of 1643 and promptly changed sides. Colonel Richard Holland, governor of Manchester, was long suspected by some colleagues of wanting to deliver the town to the king but never took that final step. Finally, John Morris had turned himself over to parliament in 1644. Four years later he reversed the process by not only betraying Pontefract Castle but also his bedfellow, the existing governor. Governor Morris proved an active defender and achieved celebrity amongst royalists by planning the capture of Colonel Thomas Rainsborough, the besieger of Pontefract, based at Doncaster. Morris hoped to exchange Rainsborough for Sir Marmaduke Langdale but Rainsborough resisted arrest and was murdered. Morris escaped to Lancashire but was arrested and executed at York in the summer of 1649.[1]

Most civil war governors played their part in rather more mundane circumstances but still deserve scrutiny. Indeed, I submit that despite carrying out important military functions and wielding significant power at local and sometimes regional level, governors have not enjoyed the attention devoted, for example, to regimental and regional commanders. Consider that in his *Biographical Dictionary of Royalist Officers*, Peter Newman's total of 1629 field officers contained 161 men who had served as governor. Many other governors who were captains or of lesser rank were not listed.[2]

Governors appear to have been few and far between in the early part of the war as the main armies flexed their muscles and sought the upper hand. From the beginning of 1643, the amount of garrisons and governors grew. Aside from the main field campaigns, the protagonists increasingly waged local wars of attrition. *Der Kleine Krieg*, in which they competed for scarce resources, be they livestock, provisions or money, assumed much greater significance. As the war intensified the number of garrisons increased. Over the period early 1643 to mid-1645, governors were fully occupied in the main theatre of war such as the West and East Midlands. In the final years

of the war to mid 1646, the rapid collapse of the royalist cause in the Oxford valley and the south-western counties saw 40 royalist garrisons fall to Fairfax's army.[3]

In Lancashire, where the period of fighting was comparatively short, from the siege of Manchester in September 1642 to the 'battle' of Whalley on 20 April 1643, lasting only seven months, the number of garrisons was still over 20. The king's party relied on a quadrilateral of strongpoints at Liverpool, Preston, Wigan and Warrington. Three had governors with professional experience, while one, Preston, had a town major. These were supplemented by small out-garrisons. Those surrounding Wigan at Ince, Ashton and Hindley fulfilled that function. Elsewhere there were gentry strongholds such as Greenhalgh and Hornby Castles, Houghton Tower, Lathom House and Thurland Castle. In addition, there was a garrison at Clitheroe Castle during the Rupert phase in mid 1644.

Parliament's chief garrison was Manchester. In the east of the county were fortified Blackburn, Bolton, Bury, Heptonstall, Blackstone Edge and Rochdale. In addition, parliament installed governors in ex-royalist towns such as Liverpool and Warrington and also fortified Lancaster town and castle. Following Rupert's loss at Marston Moor on 2 July 1644, the Lancashire royalists were reduced to three garrisons. Liverpool played a defensive role but both Greenhalgh Castle and Lathom House proved to be formidable fortresses until their surrenders in the summer of 1645 and 2 December 1645 respectively.[4]

The second civil war was more limited in scope, which meant fewer garrisons and governors. In addition, the interwar period from 1646 was subject, to a greater or lesser extent, to a process of normalisation and rationalisation. Works were dismantled or left to ruinate, soldiers clamoured for the satisfaction of their pay demands and attempts were made to disband large numbers of New Model Army regiments and local forces. But the move to reorganise had positive consequences for some. On 12 April 1647 the Committee of Both Houses for Irish Affairs suggested a formula for governors' pay. Nine garrisons constituted a top tier – Pendennis, Chester, Plymouth, Hull, Gloucester, Liverpool, Lyme, Newcastle and Portsmouth. None of these towns figured prominently in the disturbances of 1648. The year threw up several interesting instances of governor participation that related to the Scots invasion of the summer and the anti-parliamentarian uprisings in South Wales and Essex.[5]

Several key garrisons were governed by former parliamentarian officers, notably Colonel John Poyer at Pembroke, Colonel Mathew Boynton at Scarborough, Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Lilburne, brother of John and Robert, at Tynemouth Castle and, already alluded to, Colonel John Morris at Pontefract. Stiff resistance was found in the north at Cockermouth Castle, Carlisle, Appleby, Berwick and Beaumaris in Anglesey. The last to surrender was Pontefract in March 1649. Throughout 1649, 1650 and 1651 opposition governors proved to be a dying breed as the growing efficiency of the army signalled the complete destruction of the anti-government forces. Only in Ireland was the governor certain of continuing employment.[6]

The nature and scope of the governor's tasks depended on his garrison's size and importance. At the simplest level, the governor safeguarded the strongpoint, fed and housed his men, cared for such horses as were available and, wherever possible, collected levies for maintenance. Very small garrisons that were not part of an administrative structure would fall back on supplies from sympathetic locals or rely on plunder. Examples of very minor garrisons include Wythenshaw at just over 50. When Beeston Castle fell to the royalists in December 1643 the garrison numbered 60, but although small this represented a formidable obstacle.[7]

Governors of larger garrisons would aim to enhance the defensibility of their position by strengthening works or destroying property. They would take the initiative and seek to disrupt their opponents. Lathom and Skipton are good examples, while Nantwich, with a complement of 600-1000, was not only the most significant parliamentarian garrison in Cheshire, but also influenced Byron's defeat on 25 January 1644.[8] Governors would also try to keep on good terms with townsfolk, especially the mayor and council, in order to mitigate the less palatable aspects of playing host to a garrison. Sometimes strict military discipline needed to be imposed by suspending quarter sessions, petty sessions and courts and introducing high taxation. Governors would rely heavily on the regular collection of tax from the surrounding areas to maintain the garrison over several years if possible. Thus Lichfield yielded £48 per month in 1643, rising to close to £100 in late 1645. But other governors had difficulty in reaching this level. The governor of Tutbury, Sir Andrew Knieveton, rarely enjoyed the luxury of regular contribution and was so hampered by enemy incursions that he was forced to approach individuals to donate small sums. Resorting to plunder was common. Frequently, however, such practice alienated areas which had previously been sympathetic. The depredations of the governor and

garrison of Berkeley Castle is a case in point.[9]

Finally, there were 'supergarrisons'. The governors of these towns, Oxford, Exeter and Worcester for instance, would carry out all the functions itemised above and in addition would be intimately involved in the overall organisation of the war effort. They would co-operate closely with other significant garrisons, play an important role in the field and carry out a wide range of financial and administrative tasks. The Earl of Stamford, governor of Exeter, is a prime example. Governors also had experience of civil administration. Sir William Russell was both governor of Worcester and high sheriff of Worcestershire, while parliamentarian governors doubled as committeemen. Thomas Mytton, governor of Oswestry and a Shropshire committeeman, was said to have gained his military preferment thanks to the patronage of the Earl of Denbigh. Conversely, one governor's early career on garrison duty led to a political career, as in the case of Thomas Croxton, governor of Nantwich and later a member of the Cheshire county committee.[10]

So much for the governor's role; but what of the circumstances of the appointment? Most governors were commissioned. Ultimate authority lay with Charles I or the Earl of Essex, but senior commanders such as Fairfax senior and junior, Hopton and Newcastle also had the power to grant commissions. Sir John Mallory, governor of Skipton Castle, was thrice commissioned by the Earl of Cumberland, the Earl of Newcastle and Lord Digby. Parliament's procedure could be more convoluted. Colonel John Hutchinson was commissioned as governor of Nottingham Castle by general Sir John Meldrum but the colonel's appointment as governor of Nottingham and Nottingham Castle was at the request of parliament and a commission from Lord Fairfax commander of the Northern Association. A governor's appointment frequently caused disputes. The capture of Sir Nicholas Byron, governor of Chester, in January 1644 led to an acrimonious debate as to his successor. Likewise, the elevation to governor of Shrewsbury of Sir Francis Ottley sparked a clash between king and corporation. As for Colonel John Hutchinson, both his appointments were opposed by every group and faction in the town. At Monmouth in October 1644, the parliamentarians agonised over a choice of governor with no success.[11]

Political considerations weighed heavily over the choice of governor. At Chester Francis Gamul was debarred from the post on account of a stubborn royalism that alienated various elements among the king's

supporters in the city. Especially hostile to Gamul was Lord John Byron on the grounds that the power of the corporation would undo Rupert's avowed intention to appoint professional soldiers to key positions. The Prince's choice as governor of Chester was Sergeant Major General William Legge. He proved unpopular with the locals and Byron himself. Colonel John Hutchison, governor of Nottingham town and castle, fell foul of Cromwell when he refused an offer to become governor of Hull. Hutchinson felt that the existing governor, Overton, had been unfairly treated. Religion lay behind some issues which affected governorship. Sir John Cansfield of Robert Hall, Lancashire, one of the foremost cavalry officers of the first war, failed to become the governor of Oxford on account of his Catholicism. The parliamentarian governors of Newcastle, Colonel Robert Lilburne and his deputy Colonel Paul Hobson, owed their appointments as much to their religious zeal as their military competence. Sir John Marley, who became governor of Newcastle in 1642, was 'the implacable Foe of the Puritans'.[12]

A key factor in the appointment was experience. Those who presided over important garrisons often had substantial pre-war experience. Arthur Aston had served in Russia, Lewis Kirk, governor of Bridgnorth, had continental experience, as had Sir Thomas Glemham, governor of Carlisle, York and Oxford. Others were, like Glemham, 'professional governors'. William Saville had three governorships, Henry Washington commanded the key posts of Evesham and Worcester and Colonel Richard Herbert was governor of no fewer than four strongholds. Some governors were drawn from local gentry. Of Worcester's nine governors, two were local gentlemen. Furthermore, amateurs sought to emulate the practices of career soldiers, thus laying themselves open to the disapproval of friends and neighbours. Samuel Sandys, governor of Worcester in mid 1645, was one example of this; another was Henry Bold, governor of Camden House, Gloucestershire, who 'exercised an illimited tyranny over the whole country'.[13]

Governors often required a degree of obduracy to carry out their tasks. Lord Byron revealed tenacity during his governorship of Chester, while Sir Thomas Glemham was said to be a very resilient and competent governor. Some prominent women exercised command and were governors in all but name. Lady Mary Bankes defended Corfe castle in the summer of 1643. The Countess of Derby was commander-in-chief at the first siege of Lathom; Captain William Farmer was 'major of the house'. Lady Brillianna

Harley was the garrison commander at Brampton Bryan, Herefordshire. All were lauded for their bravery and pertinacity.[14]

Other governors acquired a less savoury reputation. Sir Arthur Aston, governor of Reading and Oxford in the first war, was deemed testy and overbearing. Captain Cuthbert Bradkirk, governor of Clitheroe Castle, almost certainly a Rupert nominee, was said to be a person of 'ill carriage'. Michael Woodhouse, governor of Ludlow, was termed 'the bloody butcher' over his capture of Hopton Castle and the resultant murder of the garrison.[15]

This brief survey has highlighted certain aspects of civil war governorship which will now be examined in more detail in the context of Liverpool.

In the 1640s Liverpool was a comparatively small town of around a thousand inhabitants. Its medieval street pattern lay undisturbed and its economic fortunes were as much bound up with Ireland as its rural hinterland. Dominated by the two great families of Stanley and Molyneux, Liverpool was also overshadowed by the administrative and commercial power of neighbouring Chester. Towards mid-decade, however, there was an upturn in Liverpool's fortunes. Its Irish trade became more significant and the new charter of 1626 gave the burgesses extended powers of legislation over mercantile matters. But tensions increased over the Molyneux claims of jurisdiction over the town and, in addition, the development of puritanism within and outside Liverpool foreshadowed conflict with the Roman Catholic gentry that ringed the borough.

During 1641 the Irish rebellion began to impact heavily on the port and Liverpool shared in the 'Catholic Fear', compounding the already confused and volatile atmosphere that eventually led to civil war in mid-1642.

Liverpool could hardly be numbered amongst the most significant English provincial towns but the prospective civil war governor could not have failed to be impressed by Liverpool's military tradition. From the early thriteenth century the town was a convenient base for offensive operations in North Wales and Ireland. Against this backcloth the town's vulnerability to land attack from the surrounding heights of Everton Hill was inconsequential.

As the conflict intensified from the autumn of 1642, the advantages that possession of Liverpool would bring became increasingly apparent. For the royalists, Liverpool would work in tandem with Chester to continue the

domination of the Irish Sea that they had enjoyed since the onset of the war. The king's control of both ports ensured control over Wirral, a fertile source of agricultural produce. Moreover, Wirral provided useful landing places for troops. Royalist possession of Liverpool could also release the resources of the surrounding rural areas that were overwhelmingly sympathetic to the king's cause.

But most of all, Liverpool's importance to Charles lay in its relationship to Ireland. As Orlando Bridgeman, the royalist organiser in the North West, wrote to Ormonde in November 1643, '...this town of Liverpool is of great consequence, in respect of the mutual intercourse of these 2 Kingdoms...'. In essence, royalist Liverpool opened up the prospect of unlimited amounts of men and resources from across the Irish Sea to underpin the king's war effort.

Parliament had an even greater need of Liverpool than its opponents. On land, the garrison could hold a royalist area in check, maintain communications in the Mersey valley with Warrington, Manchester and Cheshire and participate in the siege of Lathom House, the seat of the Earl of Derby. Regarding the sea, parliament's control of the town was even more crucial. It could confront the power of Chester and Bristol in the Irish Sea and also harass the royalist recruiting grounds of North Wales. With Liverpool as a base, parliamentary ships were also in a position to disrupt the flow of goods and men from Ireland. In addition, Liverpool could develop a vital naval link with London. Finally, a parliamentarian Liverpool could open up lines of communication with Cheshire and the West Midlands where Sir William Brereton and Sir Thomas Myddleton were in need of reliable flows of food and armaments.

The royalists were the first to take the initiative. The town's magazine was seized in June 1642 and by October a garrison had been installed, its size uncertain, under a Welsh captain David Lloyd. Like many of his compatriots, Lloyd had escaped identification. His appointment was doubtless due to the authority of James 7th Earl of Derby, who as lord lieutenant of North Wales exerted wide influence in that important recruiting area. It also reminds us that substantial amounts of Lancashire forces were operating away from home in the Edgehill campaign of October 1642. Nor was the presence of Welsh forces in Lancashire unusual. Several companies were stationed in Warrington in early 1643. The Liverpool town books are silent on Lloyd's governorship. It is presumed

that he was still governor up to the time that the town was occupied by parliament either in late April or early May 1643.[16]

The new holder of the post was John Moore of Bank Hall just outside Liverpool. The Moores had maintained a considerable presence in Liverpool since the fourteenth century, deriving wealth and position from their landholding and shipping interests. In 1640 Moore, a merchant and lawyer, was elected MP for Liverpool in the Long Parliament, at the age of 41. Moore was a most influential figure both in Liverpool and West Derby hundred. He was a JP in 1634 and mayor of Liverpool in 1633. After 1642 he became a member of the county committee, deputy-lieutenant and vice-admiral of Lancashire. An active puritan, Moore was well fitted to the governorship, for in addition to his substantial administrative and legal experience, he had served as a trained band officer in the 1630s and had been acting as parliament's security officer in London from October 1642 to August 1643. There is no evidence that Moore's appointment as governor was opposed and Colonel Moore took up his new post on 18 August.

Moore's arrival signalled parliament's intention that Liverpool would play an increasingly important role in the overall war effort. John Moore remained governor of Liverpool until 18 March 1645, save for the royalist interlude between June and November 1644. His resignation preceded the Lords approval of the Self Denying Ordinance on 3 April 1645. This device sought to differentiate between military and civil responsibility by forbidding military officers from holding civil positions, including membership of the House of Commons.[17]

During the royalist intermission in the summer and autumn of 1644, the governor of Liverpool was Colonel Robert Byron. A Rupert man with Irish experience, Byron was brother of Lord John Byron, the noted royalist commander. Robert emerged from the royalist disaster at Nantwich in January 1644 with some credit and his choice as Liverpool governor was an example of a new breed of royalist commanders and governors who had wide military experience and were not drawn from regional and local grandees and gentry.[18]

Moore's successor was Major John Ashurst from Radcliffe. He had wide experience in the first war serving in Colonel Ralph Ashton's foot regiments. His brother was William Ashurst, the influential Lancashire MP, who acted as agent at Westminster for Sir William Brereton, the Cheshire

commander. Brereton was anxious to continue his influence north of the Mersey and John Ashurst had done his own cause no harm by having served on a council Brereton set up to investigate the fate of cattle and sheep taken in Wales. Ashurst had no Liverpool connections and as a Presbyterian he was divorced from the radicalism of his predecessor John Moore. Finally, Ashurst was noted for his 'even and civil' behaviour, during the first siege of Latham. These qualities would be tested to the full in his two tenures as governor.

Appointed as governor in May 1645, Ashurst served in that post until March 1647 when he was re-nominated by the Commons on 13 March, the appointment being approved on 17 June 1647. It is not altogether clear when Ashurst relinquished his post. He was intent on serving in Ireland in November 1648 but had probably vacated his governorship at the end of 1647. His successor was Robert Venables of Antrobus, Cheshire, a lieutenant-colonel in Brereton's foot regiment in the first war. He had governor experience, having commanded the garrison of Tarvin during Brereton's siege of Chester in late 1645. Why Venables was chosen is unclear. He had a growing influence in the army as indicated by his presence at the council of war meetings in December 1648, yet in religious persuasion he appears to have been a moderate. Nor was he a regicide. At Liverpool Venables had some Cheshire officers with him.[19]

Like John Ashurst, Venables wished to serve in Ireland. He seems to have given up his governorship of Liverpool in September 1649 and handed over responsibility to Colonel Thomas Birch of Rusholme. Birch had risen rapidly in the military hierarchy, having been commissioned as a colonel of foot by Lord Fairfax on 15 March 1643. He became one of the foremost radical elements in Lancashire, frequently clashing with his more moderate colleagues on the county committee. His appointment followed an uncertain period during which several factions lobbied for the return of Colonel John Moore as governor of Liverpool. Birch's arrival represented the triumph of the Independent army-backed elements over the Presbyterian group. Still smarting from the derogatory epithet 'Lord Derby's carter', which he acquired after the affray at Manchester on 15 July 1642, Birch detained two of the Earl of Derby's daughters at Liverpool in what royalist commentators declared as a personal vendetta against the Stanleys. Birch's governorship lapsed in 1655.[20]

Of Liverpool's six governors, only two were put to any military test, John Moore and Robert Byron. Moore acquitted himself well during his service

in Ireland but his military reputation in England stands or falls on his defence of Liverpool in June 1644. As governor, Moore had to take full responsibility for the severity of Rupert's attack and its consequences. All acknowledged the enormity of the task facing the garrison and Moore was supported by some of his officers. Opposition to Moore, however, was widespread. The townsfolk were infuriated over Moore's ability to ship his own possessions into the safety of the Irish Sea. He also attracted criticism for failing to sue for terms, thereby safeguarding the town from unnecessary damage. Nor were his county committee colleagues impressed with his conduct. Moore's position was secured by the commander-in-chief, Sir John Meldrum, who reappointed him as governor of Liverpool on 11 November 1644.

In other aspects of his work as governor, Moore did well. He took care over fortification, expelled royalist sympathisers, maintained the garrison, encouraged the Liverpool ships and supported other parliamentarian garrisons as at Warrington. Considering the multiplicity of tasks that he had to carry out, Moore was able to perform well in his capacity as governor.[21]

Colonel Robert Byron found himself completely on the defensive virtually from the start of his governorship. A string of royalist defeats at Marston Moor (2 July), Ormskirk (20 August) and Montgomery (18 September) meant that Liverpool's days as a royalist garrison were numbered. Byron's plans to strengthen and redesign Liverpool's fortification on a continental model came to nought and he was largely sustained by provisions shipped over from Wirral, still at this stage in royalist hands. The capture of royalist outposts at Brimstage and Tranmere in October led to Meldrum and Brereton formulating a plan to attack the port. Before this could happen, mutinous Irish soldiers in Liverpool garrison sealed its fate and the town surrendered on 1 November 1644. Byron, who had been governor for four-and-a-half months, was sent as a prisoner to Manchester, but not before he was able to sample the delights of the 'George' Inn where he and his senior officers were held. Byron was a competent officer who never had an opportunity to show what he could do as Liverpool's governor.[22]

Other military-related tasks awaited the governors of Liverpool. During Moore's governorship a considerable amount of work was done to prepare for royalist attack, especially in the first months of 1644 when an onslaught from across the Irish Sea or from the Midlands was expected. Following the royalist surrender of November 1644, the town made strenuous attempts to demolish the works but to no avail. Both Ashhurst and Venables were

continually pressed over this issue and finally the mayor and council tried to take their case to Westminster. When available, John Moore, no longer governor but still the town's MP, attempted to help the town. In September 1648 governor Robert Venables oversaw the repair of Liverpool Castle. It was eventually demolished in 1725.

Another concern of the governor was security. John Moore was instrumental in ejecting papists and malignants at the end of 1643. There do not appear to have been subsequent attempts, though in June 1647 and February 1649, Ashurst and Venables together with their soldiers were involved in anti-sickness measures to free the town of plague.

The governors were embroiled in disputes over the use of townsmen on garrison duty. On 30 April 1646, the common council attempted to thwart the arrival of 600 men to the garrison. They also wanted the castle garrison reduced by 200 and have a company of townsmen paid the same as regular soldiers. Ashurst was involved in further attempts to force through the enlistment of townsmen in the port's defence, but the citizens refused. They preferred to be called upon to help the governor in times of danger only. The increasing importance of Liverpool as a port for Ireland, the quartering of soldiers and the issue of fortifications all adversely affected relations between the governor and town. A meeting held in late June 1647 aimed to ease relations but no real progress was forthcoming. Nor had a free gift to the governor of a hogshead of wine produced any lasting results.[23]

Like many other civil war governors, those who filled the Liverpool post were not immune from political tides and currents. No sooner installed as governor, Robert Byron clashed with a royalist council that had been appointed by Rupert and met at Liverpool. The council aimed to carry out sequestration business and hear petitions but instead became embroiled in internal feuds among extremists and moderates from the Lancashire gentry. When Byron, as governor and council member, claimed that Sir Gilbert Houghton had not paid assessments, the administrative process disintegrated. As we have seen, John Moore invited widespread criticism from both his parliamentarian associates and Liverpool's inhabitants over his conduct during the Rupert siege. John Ashurst's governorship became increasingly difficult after the end of the first war because of local and national political developments which had wide-reaching implications for Ashurst's military career and Liverpool's future.[24]

As governor, Ashurst had to steer a delicate course between various competing agendas. For Liverpool, normalisation and demilitarisation were crucial to the search for peacetime stability and prosperity. But in parliament's overall strategy for the war in Ireland such a policy would have been unthinkable. With Chester's royalist credentials still fresh in the mind, it was vital that Liverpool continue to function as the most reliable port on the west coast.

The reordering of garrisons highlighted already was part of an attempt by the Presbyterians, led by Denzil Holles, to separate the radical elements in the New Model Army from the loyal. Holles's plan involved sending an army to Ireland, keeping troops in selected English garrisons and maintaining a small contingent of standing cavalry. The rest, 10,000 New Model Army and the bulk of local forces, would be disbanded in order to reduce the financial burden on the population. As one of the nine prime ports identified in April 1647, Liverpool required a reliable governor of experience. Ashurst was that man. But he would already have been well aware of the implications for himself and the town as the stream of soldiers destined for Ireland had turned into a flood in late 1646. Between 26 October and 4 November 17 men were admitted as burgesses of Liverpool. Fourteen of these related to Irish service. They included two knights, three colonels or lieutenant colonels, six army captains, one ship's captain and two senior officers – James Pittson, Scout Master General for the kingdom of Ireland, and John Hailles, Commissary of the Muster for Ireland.[25]

The Presbyterian group at Westminster would have been keen to keep John Ashurst as governor to counteract Independent elements within the town. The latter would have been hoping for the return of John Moore as governor. Ashurst's re-nomination as governor in March 1647 represented the triumph of the Presbyterian strategy but by the end of the year Ashurst was no longer governor. The struggle between the Presbyterians and Independents had become more vociferous and had begun to swing in favour of the latter. This was no better illustrated in 1649 than with the search for a new governor of Liverpool.

Around about May 1649 two petitions were presented, both asking that Colonel John Moore be appointed governor of Liverpool. One petition was from the mayor, aldermen and council, the other, directed to Lord General Fairfax, was from the gentlemen, freeholders and other inhabitants of West Derby hundred. The occasion of the petitions was the desire of Robert Venables to resign his post as governor in order to serve in Ireland. Moore

himself had been serving in Ireland periodically from June 1646. He must have been aware that several Liverpool inhabitants were still seething over the circumstances of Rupert's siege and that a petition to that effect was lodged on 28 January 1649. Despite the town's continuing dissatisfaction over the Rupert siege, its damaging consequences and Moore's part in it, the mayor and aldermen still supported his return as governor!

The West Derby petition mentioned the fidelity and aptness of Colonel John Moore, 'a person of knowne intregrity to the state' and 'a great sufferer'. For good measure, it was noted that he possessed a considerable estate locally which was 'a further tye on him'. Such an outcome, the petitioners said, would enable Moore to 'command the godly party' and please the rest 'of the well affected godly party in that county'. The signatories were a roll call of prominent Independents in West Derby hundred along with influential pastors such as Richard Day of Huyton and Nevill Kay, vicar of Walton-on-the-Hill. The Liverpool petition was headed by the mayor along with important pastors from parishes in south-west Lancashire. The intention was to cement the position of the Independents in the area and deal a further blow to the Presbyterians who by mid 1649 were rapidly losing authority. An illustration of the infighting between the groups is the letter written to Moore in Dublin in 1650 by Nevill Kay. Of William Ward his predecessor at Walton, Kay wrote, 'God deliver the parish from such a malicious classical Presbyterian pastor'.[26]

Conclusions

Civil war governors frequently had an impossible task. They tried to form a bridge between the community and those who implemented military strategy but this was never going to be straightforward. The six Liverpool commanders were typical of civil war governors in general only in the diversity of their backgrounds and the complexity of their experiences.

Captain David Lloyd resembled many governors of small garrisons whose identities have remained largely hidden. In Robert Byron the royalists had a practised officer who had already proved himself in his brother's campaign in the winter of 1643/44. But the successive defeats in the summer of 1644 meant that Byron's surrender would be sooner rather than later. John Moore's spell as governor was largely bound up with his unsuccessful defence of the town when Rupert's army attacked. His later military career displayed tenacity and courage. John Ashurst's military credentials predated his governorship. From then on he was immersed in local affairs which became increasingly complicated. Of the others, Venables and Birch both

held high rank, in Brereton's army and the Northern Association army respectively.

The governors all had to deal with the thorny issue of town-garrison relations to governors. MPs for Liverpool, committeemen and radicals, it would be fair to say that Moore and Birch proved relatively supportive over town concerns and used their Westminster positions effectively. John Ashurst bore the brunt of Liverpool's desire for normality and found it difficult to sustain a balancing act between the town's growing significance and the unpalatable implications of this for its citizens. Even the relatively uncontroversial decision to appoint an outsider, Thomas Morecroft of Ormskirk, as his marshal had a potential to upset the townsmen.

The Liverpool governors were affected by the politicisation which became an important feature as the 1640s progressed. John Ashurst's position in 1647 was intimately bound up with the national struggle for influence between Presbyterian and Independents. The fact that William Ashurst, John's brother, while still Presbyterian in belief, had moved to the 'middle group' at Westminster in 1647-48 could only unsettle the Liverpool governor.[27]

Initially benefiting from the demilitarisation plan of Holles, Ashurst was out of his job at the end of the year. Robert Venables might be termed a moderate army man and does not seem to have been tinged by the radicalism of his fellow governors, Moore and Birch. Both these men were among the more extreme members of the Lancashire county committee. They pursued careers at Westminster and were instrumental in overcoming the Presbyterian faction in Lancashire. To an extent their hold on the governorship was subordinate to their other interests – Moore at Westminster and in Ireland and Birch as a 'county boss'.

So far, the experience of Liverpool's governors could be replicated by colleagues across the country. Yet in one respect, the circumstances facing one governor were unique. Lieutenant-Colonel John Ashurst was confronted by three situations that eventually contrived to make his governorship untenable. All communities desired a return to normality and Liverpool was no exception. But its importance as a port from which soldiers could be transported to Ireland meant that Ashurst was unable to satisfy the town's desire for demilitarisation. The governor himself bore no direct responsibility for the transit of forces to Ireland, but the related aspects such as the strengthened garrison, involvement of relevant

townsmen on guard duty, billeting and upkeep of defences were his responsibility. Moreover, as a Presbyterian sympathiser in a town increasingly dominated by Independent influences, Ashurst was in danger of jeopardising good relations with the town's authorities and inhabitants. Taken individually, these problems were not insurmountable, but taken together the situation facing Ashurst eventually led to his resignation towards the end of 1647.

For much of Liverpool's population, the war in Ireland was at best an unnecessary distraction. For some, the continuing war across the Irish Sea coupled with Liverpool's growing status as parliament's chief port on the west coast opened up immense opportunities for economic and commercial success.

Finally what happened to our six governors? Of Lloyd we know nothing. The other royalist governor, Robert Byron, was exchanged, fought at Naseby and later imprisoned throughout the 1650s. After the Restoration, still a professional soldier, he commanded various positions in London until his death around 1673. John Moore, apparently a man of great energy, combined a military career in Ireland, where he was governor of Dundalk and Louth, with extensive work at Westminster. A regicide, he died in Ireland in June 1650. John Ashurst was implicated in the 1651 rising of the Earl of Derby and may have gone to live in Ireland in the 1670s.

Robert Venables went to Ireland in 1649 and saw active service for five years. He was rewarded with the command of the expedition to the West Indies in 1654-55, but its failure led to his disgrace. After the Restoration Venables concentrated on fishing, dying in 1687. The ambitious Thomas Birch continued as governor till 1655. He had further spells as MP for Liverpool in 1654, 1656 and 1659. Still politically active in the 1660s and thought to be involved in the dissenters' plot of 1663, he died in 1678.[28]

Notes.

1. P.R. Newman, *Biographical Dictionary of Royalist Officers* (New York, 1981) nos. 1013, 1194, 1591; G. Ormerod, ed., *Tracts Relating to Military Proceedings in Lancashire during the Great Civil War* (Chetham Society, 2 (1844)), p. 222; R. Ashton, *Counter-Revolution. The Second Civil War and its Origins, 1646-48* (New Haven, 1994), pp. 405-06. This paper was delivered at a day conference entitled 'The Civil War in the North West' held at the John Rylands Library, Manchester in April 2008. The text

has been subject to a few minor amendments, but the arguments presented at Manchester remain the same.

2. Newman, *Royalist Officers*, pp. vii, viii.
3. G. Parker, *The Military Revolution* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 40-42.
4. See J.M. Gratton, 'The Parliamentarian and Royalist War Effort in Lancashire, 1642-1651' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Manchester, 1998), pp. 478-92
5. R.P. Mahaffy, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, 1647-1660* (London, 1903), p. 741.
6. Ashton, *Counter-Revolution*, chapters xi and xii; I. Gentles, *The New Model Army in England, Ireland and Scotland, 1645-1653* (Oxford, 1992), chapter 8.
7. J. Groves, *The impact of Civil War on a Community: Northenden and Etchells in Cheshire, 1642-1660* (Chester, 1992), p. 7; R.N. Dore, 'Beeston Castle in the Great Civil War', *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society*, 65 (1975), pp. 105-07, 118-21.
8. Ormerod, *Civil War Tracts*, pp. 155-84; R.T. Spence, *Skipton Castle in the Great Civil War 1642-1645* (Skipton, 1991), pp. 78-79; R.N. Dore and John Lowe, 'The battle of Nantwich, 25 January 1644', *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 113 (1961).
9. M. Bennett, *The Civil Wars Experienced; Britain and Ireland, 1638-1661*, (London, 2000), p. 114; I. Roy, 'The English Civil War and English Society', in B. Bond and I. Roy, eds, *War and Society: Yearbook of Military History* (London, 1975), pp. 34, 40.
10. M. Stoyle, *From Deliverance to Destruction. Rebellion and Civil War in an English City* (Exeter, 1996), p. 74; R. Hutton, *The Royalist War Effort 1642-1646* (London, 1982); R.N. Dore, ed., *The Letter Books of Sir William Brereton* (2 vols, Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 123 (1983-84) and 128 (1990)), I, 193.
11. Spence, *Skipton Castle*, pp. 52, 54; Lucy Hutchinson, *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson* (London, 1908), pp. 123-27, 153-54; J. Barratt, *The Great Siege of Chester* (Stroud, 2003), pp. 40-43, 53; Hutton, *Royalist War Effort*, p. 38; J. Knight, *Civil War and Restoration in Monmouthshire* (Logaston, 2005), p. 79.
12. Newman, *Royalist Officers*, no. 583; Barratt, *Siege of Chester*, pp. 55-66, 71; Hutton, *Royalist War Effort*, p. 38; Hutchinson, *Memoirs*, pp. 53-54, 271; R. Howell, *Newcastle upon Tyne and the Puritan Revolution* (Oxford, 1967), pp. 46, 248.
13. Newman, *Royalist Officers*, nos 41, 614, 719, 833, 1267, 1276, 1530; I. Roy, 'England turned Germany? The aftermath of the civil war in its

European context', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 28 (1978), p. 135.

14. Ormerod, *Civil War Tracts*, p. 184; C. Carlton, *Going to the Wars* (London, 1992), p. 166; see also K. Walker, 'The military activities of Charlotte de la Tremouille, Countess of Derby, during the Civil Wars and Interregnum', *Northern History*, 28 no. 1 (2001), pp. 47-64.
15. Newman, *Royalist Officers*, nos 41, 1602; W. Beamont, ed., *A Discourse of the War in Lancashire* (Chetham Society, 62 (1864)), p. 53.
16. J.M. Gratton in J. Belchem, ed., *Liverpool 800: Culture, Character and History* (Liverpool, 2006), chapter 1, pp. 97-111; Malcolm Gratton, 'Liverpool and the Civil Wars 1642-1651', *Liverpool History Society Journal*, no. 6 (2007), pp. 40-47.
17. There are many references to John Moore in Malcolm Gratton, 'Liverpool under parliament: The anatomy of a civil war garrison, May 1643 to June 1644', *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 156 (2007), pp. 51-74; R.D. Watts, 'The Moore family of Bank Hall Liverpool: Progress and decline, 1606 to 1730' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Wales, Bangor, 2004); Gentles, *New Model Army*.
18. Newman, *Royalist Officers*, no. 234.
19. Ormerod, *Civil War Tracts*, pp. 77, 81, 168; Dore, *Brereton Letter Books*, I, 51, 328; *Calendar of State Papers Domestic, 1645-47*, p. 563.
20. J. Booker, *A History of the Ancient Chapel of Birch* (Chetham Society, 47 (1859)), p. 91; Ormerod, *Civil War Tracts*, pp. 2, 31, 33, 74, 84, 282; M. Power, ed., *Liverpool Town Books* (Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 136 (1999)), p. 85.
21. Gratton, 'Liverpool under parliament', pp. 53-55, 57-61, 64-70, 72-73.
22. *Calendar of State Papers Domestic, 1644*, pp. 543-44; *1644-45*, pp. 77-78, 80; Liverpool Record Office, MD 324.
23. G. Chandler and E. Wilson, *Liverpool under Charles I* (Liverpool, 1965), pp. 323-25, 359, 376, 397-98, 405, 416; Belchem, *Liverpool 800*, pp. 148-49.
24. Gratton, 'Parliamentarian and royalist war effort', pp. 275-76.
25. M. Kishlansky, *The Rise of the New Model Army* (Cambridge, 1979), pp. 164-67; Chandler and Wilson, *Liverpool under Charles I*, pp. 365-66.
26. Liverpool Record Office, MD 340, 341, 576; Chandler and Wilson, *Liverpool under Charles I*, p. 423.
27. Dore, *Brereton Letter Books*, I, 51; D. Underdown, *Pride's Purge: Politics in the Puritan Revolution* (Oxford, 1971), p. 89.
28. Newman, *Royalist Officers*, no. 234; Dore, *Brereton Letter Books*, I, 51; J.M. Gratton on Moore in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (61 vols,

Oxford, 2004), 38, 962-63; J. Morrill on Venables in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 38, 962-63; Booker, *Birch Chapel*, pp. 90-98; R. Bradshaigh, 'Sir Roger Bradshaigh's letter-book', *Transactions of Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 63 (1911), pp. 143-44.

A retired teacher from Liverpool, Dr Malcolm Gratton has written and lectured extensively over the past 35 years. His main research interest is the seventeenth century and his book on *The Parliamentarian and Royalist War Effort in Lancashire, 1642 to 1651* is shortly to be published by the Chetham Society.

By Dr Stephen Bull

The civil wars have been famously described as the 'revolt of the provinces',[2] and in many respects it is the second civil war of 1648 that fits this description best of all. A four year 'Great Civil War' had only recently come to an end and Britain was close to anarchy in 1647, an all-out clash between a Presbyterian leaning parliament and the New Model Army – its own creation – being only narrowly avoided. A protest over the discontinuance of Christmas festivities in Canterbury boiled over into violence, and there was a rejection of parliament's peace demands by the king. Early 1648 saw an escalation of tension: royalist inspired apprentice riots, rebellion in both North and South Wales, and Scots 'Engagers' in secret negotiation with Charles.

The causes of the new unrest were as disparate as its geographical locations, for whilst parliament had undoubtedly won the war in 1646, she was beginning to lose the peace. This was partly because the king would not acknowledge he was beaten, but also because it had been opposition to militant royalism that glued together the parliamentarian alliance. Without a royalist army to fight, the differing aspirations of moderate parliamentarians, the army – more strictly 'armies'[3] – Scots and local factions came to the fore. Parliament was undoubtedly aware that there were also financial grievances fuelling the discontent: the king's advisors had been portrayed as rapacious and venal opportunists who had squeezed every possible penny from Englishmen through monopolies and corruptions. Yet to fight the king's armies, parliament had required stronger forces, fuelled by the excise, monthly assessments, and other unpalatable innovations.

Now, in what we might portray as an Orwellian change of masters, it was the parliament which was seen as bringing unjust exactions. With the shooting war over, disbanding units, slighting garrisons and general military cost cutting seemed the obvious way out of trouble. Yet paradoxically attempting to solve one problem created others: disbanding partially paid units caused discontent, and meant that the armies with which parliament might have to fight got weaker. Moreover achieving peaceful 'normality' in a kingdom militarised, ravaged by war, and attempting to adapt to an entirely novel situation in which the kingdom had a king weaker than his parliament, appeared an almost intractable problem.

So it was that the course of events of the 'tempestuous' summer of 1648 was dictated not from the centre but from the periphery. Parliament and army, hitherto at loggerheads over political direction, were forced into concert by the sudden realisation that the emerging alliance of Scots, royalists and general malcontents had more than enough potential strength to overthrow the new regime. Opposition to parliament also had a genuine popular element: food prices were high, and petitions were raised for the ending of the 'committee' system by which parliament had run its war effort in the localities.

Interestingly, relations between parliament and the New Model had now become cordial enough for the latter to accept direction from the former without significant demur. Nevertheless the strategic clarity of parliament's conception is open to debate, for its first decision was to split its already small main force, the vaunted 'New Model', into two. The largest body, under army commander Lord General Thomas Fairfax, was originally intended to march north to confront the Scottish menace. A detachment under Lieutenant General Cromwell was to advance to South Wales, to quell Pembroke, Chepstow and Tenby, where unpaid garrisons had refused to disband. Nevertheless events in the south-east quickly derailed this initial deployment, and Fairfax and the bulk of the army was held back to strike at the main threat to London, and by extension to parliament itself: royalist rebellion in Kent. Perhaps surprisingly, Cromwell's expedition to South Wales was his first major independent command at national level, for whilst he had played a significant political role, especially in 1647, and had commanded portions of the armies at Marston Moor and Naseby, he was essentially untried as army commander.

Inexperienced at this level or not, the energy of Cromwell's leadership is beyond dispute. The march from Windsor to Gloucester took no more than five days, and happily when he arrived at Chepstow, on 11 May, capitulation was already in the air: Colonel Horton had already defeated some of the insurgents at St Fagan's, and Tenby surrendered not long afterwards. Pembroke was a tougher nut to crack, Cromwell being forced to call up siege artillery from Wallingford. These guns met, however, with what he called 'an unhappy accident at Berkley', being deposited in the Severn and only recovered with difficulty.[4] Growing frustration and concern over the apparent imminence of invasion from Scotland was now only balanced by the good news from Kent. This 'blessing of God' was Fairfax's defeat of the royalists at Maidstone on 1 June that, for the time being at least, removed the threat to London.

A second stroke of good fortune was that the much feared Scottish attack was dilatory and, though still made in overwhelming strength, smaller than first planned. The Duke of Hamilton had at first hoped that an army of over 36,000 could be raised, but recruiting difficulties, poor logistics, and realisation of the over ambition of this target led to it being scaled back to 20,000. Adding to the Scottish Engagers' problems was the fact that parliament's Northern Association army, though tiny at less than 2,000 men, had not been entirely disembodied. It was also extremely well led. General Poyntz had been dismissed during the unsettled summer of 1647 and been replaced by the youthful, and arguably brilliant, Yorkshire general 'honest John' Lambert.[5]

So it was that whilst Cromwell first attempted to storm Pembroke, and then sat out the defenders waiting for his guns, the angry but agile mosquito of the Northern Association first interfered with local royalist attempts to secure Cumberland and Westmoreland for the king, then played Hamilton's rapacious behemoth of an army a merry dance about the Borders and Pennines. The diminutive Northern Association can never realistically have hoped to defeat the combined forces of Marmaduke Langdale and the Scots, but by buying time without being crushed by the invaders it performed a service out of all proportion to its scale. By 16 June Lambert had managed to gather his men at Penrith, where, a week later, they were joined by an almost equally small force of Lancashire militia commanded by Colonel Ashton. It was no forgone conclusion that the Presbyterian leaning county troops of Lancashire would throw in their lot with parliament, the New Model, and reinvigorated Northern Association. Many Lancastrians maintained royalist sympathies that stretched back to 1642, and those that were staunch parliamentarians were often at odds with what they perceived as the strange religious and political stance of the New Model. Yet fear of the Scots now proved a more powerful motivator than the scruples that divided them from their new comrades in arms. Parliament now had about 5,000 men with which to harass an equal number of English royalists, and the massive Scottish army which eventually crossed the border on 8 July 1648. Lambert would be outnumbered by almost five to one, but succeeded in misleading, annoying and delaying the enemy to an extraordinary degree.[6]

Pembroke finally rendered to Cromwell on 11 July, and a few days later his New Model detachment was on the road for the north. The obvious routes from South Wales to the border take one via Shrewsbury and Chester, or possibly, for ease of terrain, Worcester and Stafford. Cromwell had indeed

already dispatched the few horse that he felt he could spare in advance of the fall of Pembroke on the western route via Chester. His summer march of 1648 therefore appears outlandish to the uninitiated. It took him first to Gloucester, then out to the rough geographic centre line of England at Leicester, which was achieved on 1 August, then on to Doncaster, distinctly to the east side of England. From here the army advanced to Wetherby. As a correspondent to the *Moderate Intelligencer* explained, with considerable justification,

> Our marches [are] long, and want of shoes and stockings gives discouragement to our soldiers, having received no pay these many months to buy them, nor can any procure unless we plunder, which was never heard of by any under the Lieutenant General's conduct nor will be, though they march barefoot, which many have done, since our advance from Wales.[7]

The explanations for this extraordinarily indirect line of approach, taking the New Model miles out of the direct path, when time was known to be so important, are two fold. Firstly gaining the centre of England put Cromwell squarely between the Scots and London: the Scots might still have decided to head east through Yorkshire, and being in the centre would mean that the New Modellers were well placed to intercept them. Secondly it enabled Cromwell to replenish the strength that had been depleted during the campaign in Wales. Boots were collected at Leicester, and Midland recruits filled up the gaps in the ranks. Nevertheless this masterly strategic approach also carried with it extreme risk, for Lambert might well have been defeated whilst the New Model slogged its way east and then north.[8]

In the event Cromwell's confidence, in his maker, and in General Lambert, proved well founded. Hamilton's advance was almost glacially slow. In the month following his crossing of the border the southward progress of the Scottish army was just a hundred miles: an average rate of march of under four miles a day. His progress was hampered, not only by harassment from the Northern Association, but by laggardly reinforcements from Ireland under General Munro that trailed even further behind, and by the conduct of the troops whose plundering served only to harden the resolve of the English they despoiled. Cromwell, in stark contrast, marching 'very sore', covered more than three times the ground of his enemies, managing to rendezvous with his allies near Knaresborough on 12 August, and this on top of the earlier march from the south-east to Wales. Though the

parliamentarian forces were now almost 10,000 strong they were still outnumbered by a factor of over two to one.[9]

Commonsense suggested that Cromwell's best prospect of victory would now be to turn south, ahead of the Scottish invaders and the English royalists under Langdale, and take up a position of strength. Here the enemy would be forced to attack them, or attempt to push their way laboriously around, giving the New Model its best chance to fight at advantage, or execute a counter strike. Cromwell, however, was not about to fight a campaign of slow, logical, dispassionate strategy. Rather, redoubling his drive to the fore and making good use of his scouts, he 'cast off' his supply train of heavy wagons and marched as swiftly as possible for a direct interception of an army far bigger than his own.

Within a few days Marmaduke Langdale, riding with his little army on the eastern side of the Scots advance, was receiving disquieting intelligence. A large force of parliamentarian troops was in the Ribble Valley, threatening the flank. According to Langdale's own account he immediately informed Hamilton, but the latter gave his story 'little credit'. Indeed, so lacking was Hamilton's belief in the seriousness of the menace that he allowed his horse to ride out miles to the front, and continued to allow the rest of his army to proceed undisturbed, widely distributed along the north-south road that approximates to the modern A6. With the hindsight of history Hamilton's conduct from 15 to 17 August appears suicidal, if not criminal complacency. Yet we can see why the Scottish commander acted as he did. Cromwell was known to have been in South Wales just four weeks since, with what must have seemed modest strength. The Duke of Hamilton, by contrast, was at the head of the biggest army seen in the north for years. That the New Model could possibly have advanced at such speed and, with small forces and apparently reckless abandon, now be ready to risk all by throwing themselves into their enemy, beggared all credence.[10]

Arguably this one act, or failure to act – born of complacency – cost the Scots a battle; the battle the campaign; the campaign the war; and king Charles his head. Yet for this train of events to unfold required a still heavily outnumbered Cromwell to keep pushing the element of surprise, and his tired men, ever onward through appallingly wet weather and mud. One suspects that there was little that could have diverted Cromwell from his chosen course of action: but his officers – least of all Lambert and Ashton - were no fools, and there was one last discussion of the course of action on 16 August at a council of war by the Hodder Bridge. The

commander's plan was greeted with determination, if not enthusiasm. As Cromwell himself reported, 'it was thought that to engage the enemy was our business'. Thereafter there would be no turning back.[11]

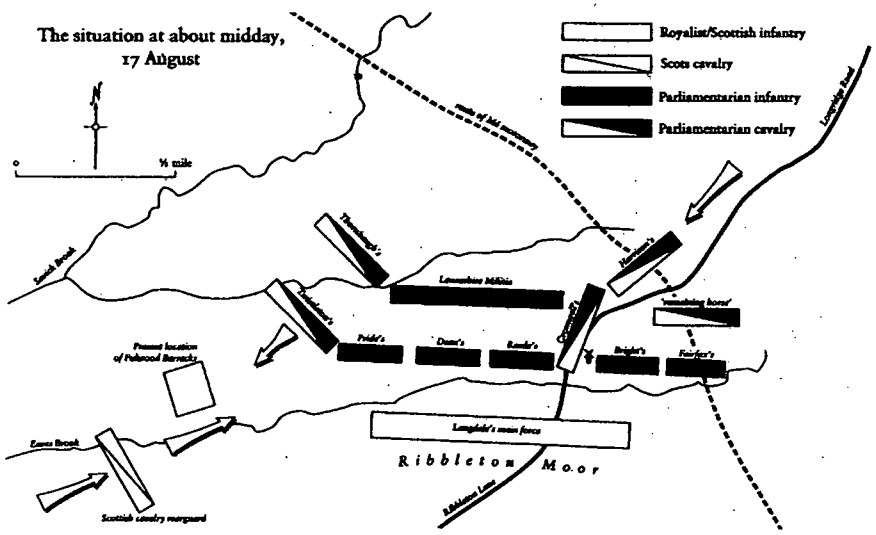
The following morning the parliamentarian advanced guard made contact with Langdale's outposts near Longridge. Given what he suspected, and that without the support of the Scots he was outmatched, Langdale made the best decision under the circumstances: immediate and urgent communications with the Duke of Hamilton, and a fighting retirement in the direction of Preston. For here he might find a secure position, covering the crossing of the Ribble – and surely the Scots, realising the fault of their intelligence, would come rapidly to his aid. Cromwell would be crushed, and the road to London would be open. So it was that Langdale formed up his main body behind the trickle of Eaves Brook and, as Cromwell's army deployed from the line of march, gave battle on Ribbleton Moor.

At first the fight was fairly even, for the parliamentarians had to advance into the teeth of fire, negotiate the brook, then fall upon their adversaries. The royalist line, once pushed back, succeeded in regaining their ground. Then hard pressed they were relieved to some degree by the appearance of a small body of Scottish lancers whose arrival it was hoped would herald the onslaught of main strength of Hamilton's army. But it was not to be. Little more than a mile away, many of the Scots infantry had now reached Preston Moor: here they halted in some confusion with Hamilton arguing with his second in command, the Duke of Callandar. The one ordered a halt pending further information, the other urging the columns south across the Ribble and away from the already significant battle developing so close to their left flank.[12]

Cromwell had deployed the New Model infantry across his front behind a thick screen of skirmishers. To the rear was a second line reserve made up of Lancashire militia; the cavalry occupied not only both flanks in the conventional manner, but the muddy north to south lane in the centre, down which they would eventually thrust when Langdale's men became tired. Significantly the parliamentarian army was wider than that of the English royalists, who were threatened by envelopment – which they could only avoid by shuffling backwards. This unequal fight 'waxed very hot, and there was furious dispute for the space of two hours or thereabouts', before Deane's and Pride's regiments began to press upon the royalist left, and Ashton's Lancashire foot found a route down the high Ribble bank by which they could work their way around the right.[13] The fight was now

being pushed southwards with the royalists dodging back from hedge to hedge, through what is now Deepdale towards the river. By late afternoon the first phase of the battle was drawing to a close: those of Langdale's men who had not fallen began to take to their heels, and Cromwell's men surged forward.

With the breaking of Langdale's command the royalist-Scottish force lost some of its best men, and almost a quarter of its total strength. Yet even now Hamilton's troops outnumbered those of Cromwell, and had the Scots used the opportunity presented by Langdale's staunch resistance to get into battle order they might yet have swung the day. As it was just 600 musketeers were now in place around the Ribble bridge, and these were

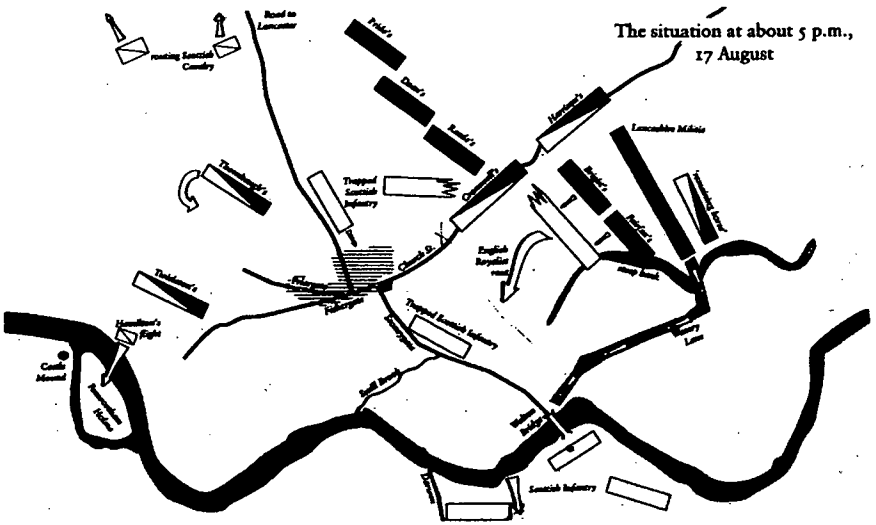


now assaulted from the flank, as well as the front, as the parliamentarians pressed home their advantage. Fairfax's regiment brought fire from the slope down to the bridge, and Adam Sydall's 'forlorn hope' of Lancastrians emerged from Watery Lane on the right. Exposed to fire from a point of advantage, and close assaulted, the Scots on the bridge faltered and retired. Hamilton's own brother fell, wounded by a musket ball to the arm. Now the Scottish army was sliced in two, with some regiments in good order south of the crossing – but many others in confusion and fighting for their lives, in danger of encirclement north of the river. Hamilton escaped from

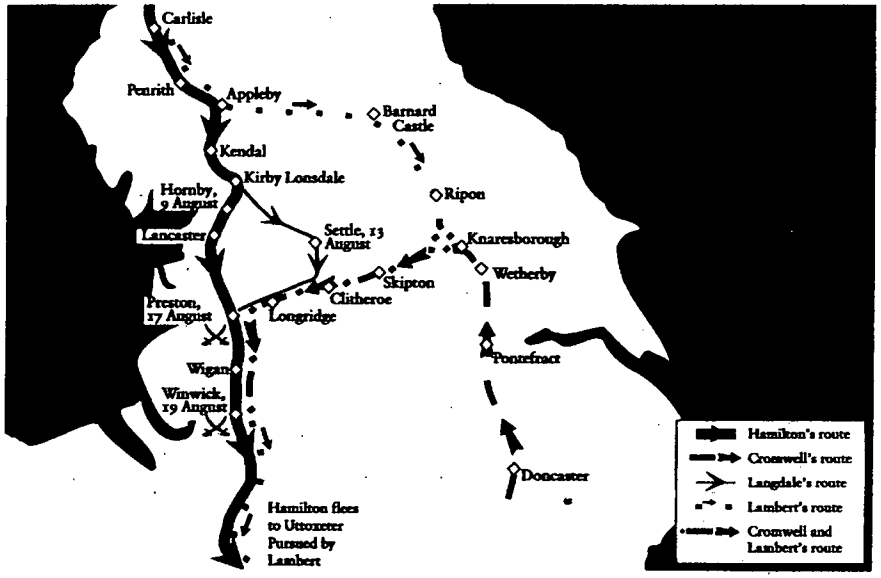
this debacle only by fighting off enemy cavalry and swimming the river with some of his staff.[14]

With the bulk of the remaining Scots struggling up Walton hill in an endeavour to find a secure position, and the parliament men now in control of the Ribble and establishing a hold on the smaller Darwen crossing beyond, there now came a lull. Cromwell took the opportunity to write a dispatch to parliament, Hamilton to reorganise and call together his generals for a council of war. Interestingly, whilst Cromwell had good reason to be pleased, he was by no means certain of total victory; Hamilton, by contrast, was unsure whether to stand or to run.

In the event Cromwell need not have worried, for the dispirited Hamilton was about to make another serious error. Rather than wait upon the hill, with his guns and superior strength, for his own cavalry and stragglers to rally to him, he decided to slink away in the night, a 'drumless march', on which he hoped to rendezvous with his horse on the road south. Sir James Turner says that being aware of the extreme hazard of this course of action, he attempted to dissuade Hamilton, but to no avail. Everything that could possibly go wrong then proceeded to do so. Men left behind to look like an army, then to destroy the artillery and supplies, failed in their duty, and the cavalry which Hamilton had hoped to meet took a different road. Lastly the parliamentarians realised fairly quickly what had happened, and soon set of in relentless pursuit.[15]



The next day in a series of running actions, with Cromwell's troops 'killing and taking divers all the way', the Scots were pushed approximately 17 miles south – quite the fastest movement that they had yet achieved – to Wigan, where they failed to make a determined stand. The next day they were running again, and though they made one serious attempt to stem the rout at Winwick near Warrington, their enemies overtook them and 'made a great slaughter'. Surrender of the remaining bulk of the Scottish infantry followed at Warrington Bridge. Hamilton and some of his cavalry continued to flee as far as Uttoxeter; nevertheless the three day battle was all but over. An apparently overwhelming force had been torn apart, as much by surprise and sheer force of will, as by force of arms.



Cromwell was in Lancashire less than a week, but that week decided a war. Colchester, which had been holding out for the king in hope of relief, soon surrendered. Scotland had been effectively divided and crippled, and New Model troops would be in Edinburgh two months later. The purging of parliament and the trial of the king, hitherto unthinkable, were now possible. The victors were sick of war, and were not about to repeat the mistake of protracted negotiations which would give this 'man of blood' another chance to plunge the kingdom into war.[16]

Notes.

1. This piece builds upon, and updates, two earlier pieces, namely S. Bull and M. Seed, *Bloody Preston: The Battle of Preston, 1648* (Lancaster, 1998); and, S. Bull 'The Battle that led to the English Republic? Preston 1648', *Regional Bulletin* (Lancaster University Centre for North West Regional Studies), 14 (summer 2000), pp. 25-34.
2. John Morrill's phrase and part of the title to his *The Revolt of the Provinces: Conservatives and Radicals in the English Civil War* (London and New York, 1976, reprinted 1980).
3. The New Model, formed at the behest of parliament in late 1644 and early 1645, is what most people now refer to as 'the army'. It was definitely the strongest force – but in fact only one of several bodies now answerable to parliament. Some old 'association' forces remained in being, as did some county militias. See also I. Gentles, *The New Model Army* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 1-52.
4. T. Carlyle, ed., *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* (4 vols, London, 1866), I, 269-76.
5. See D. Farr, *John Lambert, Parliamentary Soldier and Cromwellian Major General* (Woodbridge, 2003), *passim*, and W.H. Dawson, *Cromwell's Understudy: The Life and Times of General John Lambert* (London, 1938), *passim*.
6. Bull and Seed, *Bloody Preston*, pp. 51-57; on the sympathies of the Lancashire gentry, see B.G. Blackwood, *The Lancashire Gentry and the Great Rebellion* (Chetham Society, Manchester, 1978), and J.M. Gratton, 'The Parliamentarian and Royalist War Effort in Lancashire, 1642-1651' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Manchester, 1998), *passim*.
7. British Library, Thomason Tracts E58/84 (72)
8. Carlyle, *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, I, 278; A. Woolrych, *Battles of the English Civil War* (2nd edn, London, 1991), pp. 161-63.
9. Detail of Cromwell's frenetic itinerary can be found in P. Gaunt, *The Cromwellian Gazetteer* (Stroud 1987), pp. 224-35.
10. Marmaduke Langdale, *An Impartiall Relation of the Late Fight at Preston, 1648.*
11. Cromwell's letter of 20 August 1648 to Speaker Lenthall, reprinted in Carlyle, *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, I, pp. 288-95.
12. G. Burnet, *The Memoirs of the Lives and Actions of James and William, Dukes of Hamilton* (Oxford, 1852), p. 454; Sir James Turner, *Memoirs of his Own Life and Times* (Bannatyne Club, 1829, reprinted Tonbridge, 1991), pp. 60-64.

13. J. Walton, letter reprinted in *The Bloody Battle at Preston in Lancashire*, (1648); Bull and Seed, *Bloody Preston*, pp. 63-76.
14. An incident commemorated in Cattermole's famous nineteenth-century painting, now in the Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Preston. See also 'The Diary of Samuel Birch' in Historical Manuscript Commission, *Fourteenth Report, Portland Manuscripts, Volume 3* (London, 1894), *passim*.
15. Turner, *Memoirs of his Own Life and Times*, p. 65.
16. Bull and Seed, *Bloody Preston*, pp. 78-103; C.V. Wedgwood, *The Trial of King Charles I* (London, 1964, reprinted 1983), pp. 14-145; also Wedgwood in R.H. Parry, ed., *The English Civil War and After* (London, 1970), pp. 41-58.

Dr Stephen Bull studied at University College Swansea, and has since worked for the BBC and National Army Museum. He is now Curator of Military History and Archaeology for Lancashire Museums, lectures in Archival Studies for the University of Edge Hill, and acts as an external examiner. This year sees the publication of two of his books on the civil wars: *The Furie of the Ordnance*, with Boydell and Brewer, and a history of the wars in Lancashire, with Carnegie Publishing.

OVERSEAS DESPATCHES III: BEYOND CRUEL NECESSITY – CROMWELL'S IRISH LEGACY

By Tom Reilly

'I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, think it possible that you might be mistaken' – Oliver Cromwell

Father Denis Murphy was a native of County Cork, Ireland's rebel county. He was born on 12 January 1833, at Scarteen, one mile east of Newmarket. His formative years were dominated by Ireland's Great Famine. Few topics of Irish history (with the exception of Cromwell) have attracted as much popular interest as the Great Famine of 1845 to 1852. Wherever the Irish diaspora reaches, like Cromwell, the Famine is never far beneath the surface. Over the years, various people have argued that the Famine had a single cause: whether that be an overpopulation by the Irish working class or a genocide by the then British government.

It is worth quoting the foreword to the 1956 book *The Great Famine: Studies in Irish History 1845-52*, by Dudley-Edwards and Williams, which was written to commemorate the centenary of the Famine.

> It is difficult to know how many men and women died in Ireland in the famine years between 1845 and 1852. Perhaps all that matters is the certainty that many, very many died. The Great Famine was not the first, nor the last period of acute distress in Irish history. The Great Famine may be seen as but a period of greater misery in a prolonged age of suffering, but it has left an enduring mark on the folk memory because of its duration and severity. The famine is seen as the source of many woes, the symbol of the exploitation of a whole nation by its oppressors.

Denis Murphy would emerge physically, but perhaps not mentally, unscathed from the Famine and would live to make his own unique impact on Irish history.

In 1847 at the height of the Famine, the evicting landlord, Major Denis Mahon of Strokestown House, Roscommon was murdered. In the subsequent fanfare of publicity the most sensational claim was that the local parish priest had preached the previous Sunday that 'Major Mahon is worse than Cromwell and yet he lives'. Two centuries after his brief nine months in Ireland, Cromwell's name was so talismanic that its very invocation could plausibly be cited for sufficient cause for a bloody murder. The young

James Joyce, exploring 'the long memory of the Irish', wrote 'He does not forget the sack of Drogheda and Wexford. How could he forget? Can the back of the slave forget the rod?'

The very name 'Cromwell' had become shorthand for a complex set of attitudes, all resting not so much on the man himself, but on him being symbolic of a defining moment of Irish history. In the demonology of that history, pride of place, without a shadow of a doubt, goes to Cromwell, a fiend in human shape.

The new landed gentry of Ireland were primarily established on the back of Cromwell's conquest, as was the crushing defeat of Catholic Ireland. For winners and losers alike the name evoked that moment when, in the words of bishop Nicholas French, 'Cromwell came over and like a lightening passed through the land'. Nothing was to be the same afterwards. He remains a major figure in the conquest and colonisation of Ireland in the interests of expanding English nationalism-cum-commerce. Religion, politics and economics were intertwined in both countries and all three areas would be affected by comprehensive land acquisition in Ireland by the English. No wonder that Cromwell became a *bête noir* in Catholic circles.

For the Catholics, Cromwell stood for their definitive dismissal from public life in Ireland. They were now 'like worms – trod upon a mean and regicide colony'. After Cromwell, Catholics saw themselves living in conditions 'worse than the Christians under the Turks or the Israelites in the bondage of Egypt'.

The effects of the Cromwellian conquest and subsequent plantation were long lasting. Partly because of Cromwell and largely because of the English imperialist Protestant project, Ireland became one of the great emigrant nations of the world. Yet we Irish owe a debt to a world that took our emigrants in, and, though sometimes harshly treated them, gave them opportunities and a prosperity they could never have hoped to have attained in this country.

Given Cromwell's significance in the evolution of English democracy, it is not surprising that his statue occupies a place of honour in front of the House of Commons or that he was short-listed as one of the ten greatest Britons ever by a BBC television poll in 2002. He earned tenth place from a list of 100 luminaries. The Unknown Soldier, an iconic representation of those young men who fought for their country in the world wars, only

reached number 76 in the list. (Irish nationals Bob Geldof and Bono occupied places 75 and 86 respectively).

Cromwell has remained the historian's Hamlet, to be re-interpreted by each succeeding generation, as the founder of liberty or military dictator, the scourge of tyrants or tyrant himself, the champion of parliament or its betrayer, executioner or reformer. His career is the classic example of how what was good for England was a disaster for Ireland. Glorious revolution for England translated subsequently into the most inglorious defeat for Ireland. Indeed, Cromwell has a deeper resonance and implication for contemporary Ireland. The Good Friday Agreement for once arrived at a position where what was good for England was also good for Ireland. On the surface we were left with the dying embers of anti-British sentiment in Ireland. But just beneath the surface it is a different story.

A history book currently on the Irish school curriculum (*Focus on the Past 2*) today states: 'Cromwell stormed Drogheda and killed 3,000 men, women and children'. Some years ago a research project was undertaken on the ability of schoolchildren to assess historical evidence. Catholic children in Drogheda were presented with evidence carefully selected to suggest that Cromwell's actions in Ireland were reasonable and justified. Protestant children in Belfast were presented with the opposite. Notwithstanding the slanted nature of the evidence in both cases, the children in Drogheda reached a hostile verdict on Cromwell, while those in Belfast reached a complimentary one. Surely Cromwell is Irish history's most resistant figure to a favourable re-interpretation.

In 1848, at the height of the Great Famine, young Corkman Denis Murphy entered the novitiate of the Society of Jesus at Clongowes Wood, County Kildare. Murphy was described by one who knew him as 'a holy priest, a very entertaining companion, a man of bright wit and tender heart, indefatigable in serving his friends and assisting the distressed of every kind'.

During his lifetime Murphy was the author of a large number of valuable papers on historical and topographical subjects. His last work was *Our Martyrs: A Record of those who Suffered for the Catholic Faith under the Penal Laws.*

At the time he penned his *Cromwell in Ireland*, in 1883, Ireland was perceived by England to be in a relatively calm state. If the status quo was to endure, the future of the country would continue to be determined by foreigners with external accents, just as the past had been. Most of them, however,

never came to grips with the intensity of the Irish culture or spirit, nor would they ever comprehend the passionate desire of successive groups of Irish revolutionaries to be free from English domination, despite immense odds. The very idea of Ireland taking its place among the nations of the world was unfathomable to the vast majority of Englishmen.

Like the rebellion of 1798, Robert Emmet's innocuous twenty-minute attempt at insurgency was consigned to the historical dustbin by this time. The failure of the Fenians' attempted revolution in 1867 was a distant memory. To the English, these incidents emphasised Ireland's military incompetence and served to prevent future idealistic notions. To the now emerging Irish patriots, the failed uprisings of the past provided the inspiration to achieve freedom in memory of Ireland's hapless heroes.

This was an environment that Oliver Cromwell had helped to create. His only trip abroad during his lifetime resulted in the entire island of Ireland being controlled by the London government for the first time in antiquity, a scenario that lasted until the early twentieth century.

But Ireland was far from calm in the late nineteenth century. Things were changing. Poets and playwrights walked the boreens of Ireland's desolate countryside, and looked beyond their dreary façade to discover a character that made them stir within. Soon would emerge a plethora of nationalist groups such as Arthur Griffiths's Sinn Féin, the Gaelic Athletic Association, the Gaelic League and *Cumann na nGaedheal.* These organisations were founded and inspired by people who were keen to revive the Irish language, culture and spirit.

In 1851 a quarter of the Irish population spoke Irish. By 1890 the figure was down to an eighth and falling. The alarming pace of the Anglicising of the Irish people had to be halted. In 1899 the Gaelic League started a newspaper called *An Claidheamh Soluis* (The Sword of Light), which carried articles, poems and stories in the Irish language and fostered writers like Padraig Pearse, who (along with others) was to spearhead the 1916 Rising. It was into the early days of this climate that emerged Father Denis Murphy's *tour de force* on Ireland's greatest bogeyman ever, Oliver Cromwell.

Because Cromwell left such a bitterly divisive legacy, he also left an equally divisive historiography. This climaxed in the late nineteenth century when the revamped and triumphalist Catholic Church occupied centre stage in Irish life. One of its manifestations was a thorough revision of Irish history to emphasise the indestructible age-old bond between Catholicism and the

Irish nation. In this narrative Cromwell was a vital character. Murphy's book created a politically correct Catholic version of Cromwell in Ireland, one that was accepted universally and without reservation.

Thanks to Murphy, the memory of Cromwell remains at the heart of Irish history, and it was this memory that greatly determined the lingering atmosphere within the nation after the wars of the mid-seventeenth century. The historian James Graham Leyburn has said of Cromwell's campaign in Ireland: 'What Cromwell did deserves to be ranked with the horrors perpetrated by Gengis Khan. His "pacification" of Ireland was so thorough that it left scars on that country which have never been forgotten or forgiven'.

As a result of the work of the nineteenth-century nationalists, Cromwell has for most Irish people become the personification of barbarity, religious intolerance and English conquest. He has been accused of being a war criminal and of being the first ethnic cleanser.

Murphy's book *Cromwell in Ireland* immediately filled a void that existed in the poorly documented chronicles of Irish history. Here was practically virgin territory. Few books existed on the subject and the Jesuit priest's tome soon became the leading work in that area. In the intervening years there have been in excess of 4,000 books (and counting) written about Cromwell. Yet, even in the most sycophantic of works, Cromwell's most controversial actions in Ireland are glossed over as a blip in his otherwise impeccable military career.

The historian and documentary maker Simon Schama – who accepts the rehabilitated version of Cromwell in Ireland – describes Drogheda in 1649 and a 'war crime' and 'an atrocity so hideous that it has contaminated Anglo-Irish history ever since'. This alleged blip is said to have caused the deaths of thousands of innocent Irish civilians who played no part, hand or act in the wars that devastated their country. But take that blip away and a different Oliver Cromwell emerges, a Cromwell who upheld the letter of the laws of contemporary warfare and who restricted his actions to the military domain – unlike many of his peers.

It is the contention of this writer that the blip never occurred. Murphy pulls no punches and paints a scenario that has seeped deep into the Irish psyche. He recounts tales of thousands of defenceless Irish citizens, men, women and children, all put to the sword at the hands of Cromwell and his men. The subject has been debated inexorably through the years and yet

today Murphy's analysis largely stands firm as an accurate version of events.

Cromwell: An Honourable Enemy first saw the light in 1999 and has been chiefly dismissed by most scholars. Although some academics welcomed it with a certain ambivalence, it has certainly not been adopted by many, although it has been received much more generously outside Ireland. The thesis in the book has not been seriously challenged by any (Irish) seventeenth-century historian, despite being contemptuously (and sometimes viciously) dismissed by several. Not surprisingly, English historians differ. Thus John Morrill has said that 'I am totally convinced by your evidence that no civilians died in cold blood at Drogheda. I am not quite clear that some would not have been caught up in the crossfire and died in hot blood', while Peter Gaunt has said that 'I am broadly sympathetic towards, and in agreement with, the line which you take'.

Drogheda's municipal records from 1649 still exist. There is no evidence whatsoever here for a massacre of civilians on any scale. Thousands of Drogheda's inhabitants are documented as being alive during the 1650s and beyond. Tradesmen, businessmen and all manner of civilians went about their daily business in the days following Cromwell's takeover. The complete mechanism of local government was up and running just days after news broke in London that Cromwell had captured the town – 5 October 1649.

There is a deafening silence from those who were in Drogheda and Wexford to support the stories of wholesale indiscriminate deaths. In the case of both battles, there are no eyewitness statements that provide details of civilian deaths. And that silence is from those who were there and saw exactly what happened. The facts are there for historians to evaluate further and it is not the solo role of this writer to exculpate Cromwell from the charges of genocide, although it sometimes appears that way. The facts speak for themselves.

The implementation of the Adventurer's Act, where soldiers and investors were granted land in Ireland after its submission, is also personally accredited to Cromwell, although he was just a small cog in the large wheel whose brainchild it was. 'To hell or to Connaught' is a phrase that emanated from the period as those Irish landowners who took the side of the king in the wars were dislocated from their properties.

Honourable Enemy's publication saw public displays of outrage in Drogheda

in the first instance and across the whole of Ireland in the second. Its arrival was subject to a media blitz. A subsequent exhibition of Cromwell's death mask in the town caused the then deputy mayor of Drogheda to be quoted in the *Irish Daily Mirror* as saying: 'Bringing Cromwell's mask to Drogheda is like asking a Jew to meet Adolf Hitler. The people of this town are in no doubt that he (Cromwell) was responsible for putting thousands of innocent civilians to the sword, no matter what some authors might say'.

It is certainly true that Cromwell's Irish reputation owes more than a little to the propaganda of his opponents and that this was seized upon by the nationalist historians of the nineteenth century, notably John Prendergast and Murphy. Drogheda is now described as Ireland's own 11 September.

History has a habit of not going away in Ireland, as the Irish know to our cost. It has defined and divided us. Many of our certainties have had the inconvenient edges shorn off and the basic facts changed to suit a political viewpoint. History and myth have always been close companions; indeed one is frequently mistaken for the other. Myth is a powerful tool that has been used to shape nations. It can provide a bulwark against the complexities of life. It is the perfect example of not letting the facts get in the way of a good story.

John A. Murphy, emeritus professor of Irish history at the National University of Ireland (Cork), agrees that few historical personalities have made such a deep impact on Irish tradition as Cromwell. Yet he says: 'Much of the history that the present generation of Irish adults was given was palpably untrue. What they were taught up to 20 or 30 years ago was propaganda'.

After Lloyd George's first meeting with Eamon De Valera in July 1921, the English Prime Minister told his secretary that he had to listen to a long lecture from the Irish leader on the wrongs done to Ireland by Cromwell. The story illustrates more than simply that Cromwell is a figure that the English can never remember – and that the Irish can never forget.

Cromwell Association member Tom Reilly is a local historian in the town of Drogheda, Ireland. Drogheda features prominently in Cromwell's Irish campaign of 1649-50 and is said by some to be the biggest blot on his career. Reilly has written several local history studies, including his tour de force, *Cromwell: An Honourable Enemy*, which was published on the 350th anniversary of Cromwell's death in 1999.

By Dr Patrick Little

Like so many of his other interests, Cromwell's love of falconry has been noted, but not explored in any detail. Among the biographers, Sir Charles Firth and Peter Gaunt both include hawking among Cromwell's 'favourite sports' but do not pursue the matter, and even the comprehensive character study by Antonia Fraser provides only a little more detail.[1] This attitude has allowed one of Cromwell's earliest letters to be passed over as a mere curiosity. The letter in question, dated from Huntingdon on 1 April 1631, and addressed to the Warwickshire landowner, John Newdigate, concerns a hawk lost by a friend of Cromwell, which had been wearing his 'varvells', or rings, indicating ownership. It is worth quoting in full:

> Sir,
> I must with all thankfullnesse acknowledge the curtesye you have intended me in keeping this hawk soe long, to your noe small trouble, and although I have no interest in hir, yet if it ever fall in my way, I shalbe ready to doe you service in the like of any other kinds. I doe confesse I have neglected you in that I have received two letters from you without sending you any answer, but I trust you will pass by it and accept my true and reasonable excuse. This poore man, the owner of the hawke, who, living in the same towne with me, made use of my varvells, I did dayly expect to have sooner returned from his journey than he did, which was the cause whie I protracted time, and deferred to send unto you, until I might make him the messinger, whoe was best able to give an account, as also fittest to fetch hir, I myself being utterly destitute of a falconer att the present, and not having any man whom I durst venture to carrie a hawk of that kinde soe farre. This is all I can apologise. I beseech you, command me, and I shall rest, your servant,
>
> Oliver Cromwell.
> Huntingdon,
> April 1, 1631
> [P.S.] My cousin Cromwell of Gray's Inn was the first that told me of hir.

Cromwell's early enthusiasm for falconry, apparent in this letter, reveals far more than a vague sense of his 'humanity'. For a start, it places him squarely within the ranks of the gentry. As Felicity Heal and Clive Holmes have pointed out, hawking and hunting were 'the most routine of diversions

for the gentry' and 'an engagement with such rural pastimes was often seen as a test of gentility'.[2] Robert Burton, in his *Anatomy of Melancholy* of 1621, was emphatic: 'he is nobody that in the season hath not a hawk on his fist'.[3] We must bear this in mind when considering Cromwell's status in the early 1630s. John Morrill claims that when Cromwell sold up his modest estate at Huntingdon and leased a farm at St Ives in May 1631, he became nothing more than 'a yeoman farmer' – indeed, we are told that 'his economic and social standing was ... brittle' throughout his early life, and that 'the yoke of husbandry' had already beckoned.[4] The letter concerning the lost hawk was written at the very brink of his departure for St Ives, and it suggests that the picture was much less clear-cut. Economically, Cromwell's move from Huntingdon freeholder to St Ives tenant was certainly a step down; but socially he was still a gentleman, doing the things that gentlemen were expected to do.[5] The way in which the hawk was returned is noteworthy, as the Warwickshire gentleman who had discovered the bird managed to trace its owner's identity (mistakenly, as it turned out) through his nephew, who was at Gray's Inn with Cromwell's cousin, Henry. Oliver was still very much part of the gentry network, and his 'varvells' (with his coat of arms?) not only identified what appeared to be his property but also ensured the 'curtesye..., to your noe small trouble', of its speedy return.[6] This fits with other evidence, such as the official demand that Cromwell take up a knighthood, made (and rejected) later in April 1631, which indicates that he was still considered to be of gentle status ten days before he sold his Huntingdon lands.[7] Whether his status suddenly changed once the ink was dry on the deed of sale is a moot point.

We can perhaps go still further back than 1631. Robert Burton's remark that all gentlemen indulged in falconry is particularly significant, as it was made during the last years of widespread enthusiasm for the sport, in the reign of James I. During the 1610s, no fewer than four books about falconry were published, with the works of Simon Latham being especially popular.[8] *Lathams Falconry* was originally published in 1614, and new editions came out in 1615, 1633 and (perhaps significantly) 1658; his sequel, *Lathams New and Second Booke of Falconrie*, came out in 1618 and was also republished in 1633.[9] Cromwell – who turned fifteen in 1614 and nineteen in 1618 – was thus a young man when falconry's popularity was at its height. The Jacobean fashion for falconry inevitably caused some debate among puritans, wary of extravagant luxuries, but the consensus in this, as in so many other 'frivolous' gentry pastimes, was that they were not sinful if conducted with moderation.[10] One puritan, Sir Edward Lewkenor (who died in 1619), retained his hawks and hounds on the grounds that 'he knew

right well to put a difference between the use and the abuse'.[11] There are parallels here with Cromwell's own attitudes, voiced in September 1656, when he explained that recent bans on horse-racing and other sports were not because they were unlawful in themselves, 'but to make them recreations, that they will not endure to be abridged of them, is folly'.[12] This shared belief that gentry pastimes were essentially lawful, if practised in moderation, is another useful reminder that the 'making' of Oliver Cromwell was as much a Jacobean as a Caroline process.

James I's reign had in fact seen the end of an era, as after the old king's death the sport of falconry declined. The reasons for this long-term decline are complicated. The development of more accurate 'fowling pieces' encouraged gentlemen (and their gamekeepers) to take up shooting, which had the added benefits of being relatively cheap and easy to master.[13] Enclosure of open fields may also have made falconry – where clear lines of sight are important both in seeing the hunt and not losing the bird – much more difficult. One factor that can easily be dismissed, however, is 'the changing pattern of life during the Commonwealth when the Puritans held their sway and forbade many of the country's traditional pleasures'.[14] Jacobean puritans did not come down firmly against falconry as a sport; and, as we shall see, their Cromwellian successors proved enthusiastic falconers, just as they were hunters and horse-racers.

Although there is no evidence for Cromwell's continuing involvement in hawking during the later 1630s and 1640s, it is probable that he retained an interest in the sport, despite its decline. It is tempting to see Andrew Marvell's use of falconry as a metaphor in his great *Horation Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland* of 1650 as a very personal comment, reflecting his subject's private interests, as well as his public willingness to submit to his parliamentary masters:

> So when the falcon high
> Fall heavy from the sky,
> She, having killed, no more does search
> But on the next green bough to perch,
> Where, when he first does lure,
> The falc'ner has her sure.[15]

As far as I can gather, this is the only use of a falconry metaphor in Marvell's poetry, and this perhaps indicates how far falconry had fallen out of fashion. The decline was linguistic as well as sporting. One only has to

glance at Shakespeare's plays to see how falconry was integral to literary (and popular?) culture only fifty years before. Shakespeare not only referred to falconry, but was confident that his audience would understand its very technical language.[16] Marvell, by contrast, does not use such terms, instead creating an image that is generalised, and pastoral. It is the language of someone who has perhaps seen a bird of prey in action, but not flown one himself. It was, however, an appropriate metaphor for Cromwell.

That Cromwell was actively practising falconry at this time is confirmed by an incident in the autumn of 1651. After the victory at Worcester on 3 September, Bulstrode Whitelocke and three other MPs set out to meet Cromwell and his senior officers as they approached Aylesbury, *en route* for London. According to Whitelocke, 'the general received them with all kindness and respect, and after salutations and ceremonies passed he rode with them cross the fields, where Mr Winwood's hawks met us and the general, and many officers went a little out of the way a hawking, and came that night to Aylesbury'.[17] This entertainment may have been intended as a compliment to Cromwell by Whitelocke, who had also had a passion for hawking since boyhood.[18] Cromwell's enthusiasm for the sport was certainly public knowledge by 1653, when one satirist challenged his apparent hypocrisy in print, for 'Do you not hawk? Why mayn't we have a play?'[19]

Evidence for Cromwell's interest in falconry can also be found during the Protectorate. According to John Aubrey, his friend, the 'great Falkoner' Colonel (later Sir) James Long, met Cromwell 'hawking at Hounslowe-heath' near Hampton Court. The Protector, 'discoursing with him, fell in love with his company, and commanded him to weare his sword, and to meete him a Hawking', despite the fact that Long was a notorious cavalier.[20] In December 1654 the council issued a pass to servants of the Prince of East Friesland 'who brought a present of hawks to the protector'.[21] The procession for Cromwell's state funeral, in November 1658, included two falconers and a bird keeper retained by the late Protector.[22] Cromwell's enthusiasm was probably behind the revival of falconry as a fashionable sport, which can be seen in the later 1650s.[23] In fact, contemporary evidence completely disproves any notion that the commonwealth authorities suppressed falconry – rather the opposite. Birds were imported in huge numbers. In March 1658, for example, one Mr Povall (or Poxall) was freed from paying customs duties for 114 hawks that he had imported from Flushing.[24] Povall was a professional falconer, based at Ludgate, and his customers included the Presbyterian MP, John

Fitzjames, who corresponded with him in 1656 about exchanging a lanner falcon for a lanneret and the safe carriage of the lanneret and a goshawk to his Dorset home.[25]

The domestic sources for birds of prey could be very remote. The correspondence of Henry Cromwell reveals not only his interest in the sport but also that the best birds were taken from the far west coast of Ireland, including Inishbofin and the Aran Islands. In 1657 William Jephson, in London, begged Henry to secure an Irish goshawk for him.[26] Another Irish source was Ulster, and George Rawdon, acting for Lord Conway at Lisburn, was inundated with requests from a wide range of sources: the Presbyterian, Sir John Clotworthy, the former royalists, Colonel Marcus Trevor and the 2nd Earl of Cork, and the English colonel, Jerome Sankey (on behalf of the lord deputy, Charles Fleetwood). In addition, Rawdon said that he had promised a goshawk and a tiercel (a male of the same species) to Henry Cromwell, and was trying to supply other hawks to Lord Broghill in London.[27] As president of the Scottish council, Broghill was well-placed to benefit from birds brought from the north of Scotland. In September 1656 the Burntisland merchant, John Moncreiff, was granted a pass 'with sevrall Hawkes for the Lord Broghill by sea or land unto London'.[28] Moncreiff was not only acting for Broghill, moreover, as he was later referred to as being 'imployed for getting the Hawkes belonging to his Highnesse in Orknay'.[29] Others with ambitions to import Scottish falcons included John Lambert, who used the commander-in-chief in Scotland, George Monck, to negotiate with the Marquess of Argyll for 'some hawks' from the western highlands.[30]

The efforts made to bring the very best falcons and hawks from Europe, Ireland and Scotland, speak for themselves. Not since Jacobean times had falconry been so fashionable. It is also interesting to note that the new falconry craze knew no political boundaries, with royalists, Presbyterians, civilian courtiers and their opponents in the army, all joining in. The parallels between falconry and horse-breeding in this respect are also revealing. As I have suggested elsewhere, the Protectorate did not see a decline in such 'elite' activities, which were fostered by the court and especially by Cromwell himself, and these can be seen as broadening the support of the regime, or at least allowing contacts to be maintained between the Cromwellian government and former royalists or disillusioned former parliamentarians.[31] The difference is one of scale. To import, breed and train horses took enormous amounts of money, and was usually the preserve of the nobility; falconry, as we have seen, was open to even the

most modest of gentlemen. While Cromwell was eager to associate with equestrian enthusiasts such as the Earl of Warwick or Lord Fauconberg, and a shared passion for horse-breeding could leave the door open to such men as the Earl of Northumberland, falconry could be equally useful in reaching out to lesser mortals. Like his insistence in 1654 that he was 'by birth a gentleman, living in neither any considerable height, nor yet in obscurity',[32] Cromwell's encouragement of falconry may have been influenced by a desire to impress on others that the Protectoral regime was essentially conservative, that social upheaval was not part of godly reformation, that he was, at heart, an ordinary gentleman. Falconry was also rather different from horse-breeding because it was considered an old-fashioned pastime. While Cromwell was busy importing exotic horses, including Arabians rarely seen in this country before, and made a point of keeping up with the latest equestrian fashions from the continent, he was also encouraging a sport that had last been modish some thirty years before. Falconry thus reminds us that Cromwell looked backwards as well as forwards. The Protectorate was not only a new beginning, an attempt to impose a godly republic; it was also an attempt to recreate England as it should have been, to return to a world before Charles I and Laud, when the 'ancient constitution' was in good working order, the church was not infected with Arminianism, and a gentleman had the leisure 'to walk abroad in the fields' with a hawk on his fist.[33]

Notes.

1. C.H. Firth, *Oliver Cromwell and the Rule of the Puritans in England* (Oxford, 1966), p. 448; Peter Gaunt, *Oliver Cromwell* (Oxford, 1996), p. 224; Antonia Fraser, *Cromwell, Our Chief of Men* (London, 1973), p. 42.
2. Felicity Heal and Clive Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales, 1500-1700* (Basingstoke, 1994), pp. 289, 291.
3. Robert Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy* (Everyman edn, 3 vols, London, 1932), II, 72.
4. John Morrill, 'The making of Oliver Cromwell', in his *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution* (Harlow, 1990), pp. 24, 32.
5. J.C. Davis, *Oliver Cromwell* (London, 2001), p. 71.
6. W.C. Abbott, *Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (4 vols, Cambridge, Mass., 1937-47), IV, 69-70.
7. Morrill, 'Making of Oliver Cromwell', p. 36.
8. George Turberville, *The Booke of Falconrie* (1611); Simon Latham, *Lathams Falconrie* (1614); Latham, *Lathams New and Second Booke of Falconrie* (1618); Edmund Bert, *An Approved Treatise of Hawkes and Hawking* (1619).
9. These are the editions available on Early English Books Online.
10. Even dancing, 'being moderately and modestly used', was indulged: see Patrick Little, 'Music at the court of king Oliver', *The Court Historian*, 12 (2007), pp. 173-74.
11. Timothy Oldmayne, *God's Rebuke* (1619), quoted in Heal and Holmes, *Gentry*, p. 292.
12. Ivan Roots, *Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (London, 1989), p. 105.
13. Heal and Holmes, *Gentry*, p. 292.
14. Allan Oswald, *The History and Practice of Falconry* (St Helier, Jersey, 1982), p. 28.
15. Marvell, *Horation Ode*, lines 91-96.
16. A point made eloquently in T.H. White, *The Goshawk* (1951, reprinted New York, 2007), pp. 157-59, 180-81; see also Oswald, *Falconry*, pp. 34-45. The play most influenced by falconry is *The Taming of the Shrew*.
17. Bulstrode Whitelocke, *Memorials of English Affairs* (4 vols, Oxford, 1853), III, 351.
18. Ruth Spalding, *The Improbable Puritan: A Life of Bulstrode Whitelocke, 1605-1675* (London, 1975), pp. 30-31, 130, 136; Whitelocke was born in 1605, so he may also have been influenced by the Jacobean fashion for falconry.
19. *The Queen* (1653), quoted in Fraser, *Cromwell*, p. 42.
20. Oliver Lawson Dick, ed., *Aubrey's Brief Lives* (London, 1949), pp. xli-xlii.
21. *Calendar of State Papers Domestic, 1654*, p. 443.
22. Roy Sherwood, *The Court of Oliver Cromwell* (London, 1977), pp. 85, 171.
23. Cromwell's revival of falconry's fortunes probably led to the 'slight revival of interest' in the sport after 1660 (see Oswald, *Falconry*, p. 28).
24. *Calendar of State Papers Domestic, 1657-58*, p. 348.
25. Alnwick Castle, Northumberland MS 551 (Fitzjames letterbook), fos. 61v, 63v.
26. Peter Gaunt, ed., *Correspondence of Henry Cromwell* (Camden, 5th ser., 31, (2007)), pp. 197, 268, 284.
27. See *CSPI 1647-60*, pp. 631-5, 638, 641, 667; for Broghill, see also National Library of Ireland, MS 6256 (2nd Earl of Cork's accounts, 1656-59).
28. Worcester College, Oxford, Clarke Papers 3/11, unfol.: 12 Sept. 1656; for Moncreiff, see National Archives of Scotland, B9/12/11, fos. 37, 47.

29. Worcester College, Oxford, Clarke MSS 3/12, unfol.: 22 Apr. 1659. The 'highness' in question is Richard Cromwell, but it is likely that Moncreiff was also employed by his father.
30. C.H. Firth, ed., *Scotland and the Protectorate* (Scottish History Society 31, Edinburgh, 1899), pp. 82, 132.
31. See Patrick Little, 'Uncovering a Protectoral stud: horses and horse-breeding at the court of Oliver Cromwell, 1653-8', *Historical Research* (forthcoming, 2008).
32. Roots, *Speeches*, p. 42.
33. Roots, *Speeches*, p. 76.

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By Professor Ivan Roots

Donald Pennington, the distinguished historian of the seventeenth century, died on 28 December 2007, aged 88. A scholar of Balliol College, he was one of the first and most appreciative pupils of Christopher Hill on his return to Oxford in 1938. Pennington took a First in Modern History in 1941. As a conscientious objector he taught in schools during the next few years, meeting Marjorie Todd, whom he married in 1947, when he was also appointed to teach a wide swathe of history at Manchester University, under L.B. Namier. There he made a deep mark on colleagues and students alike by his erudite, organised and witty teaching. In Manchester, too, he became, not unexpectedly, a founder of CND, with an impact locally, nationally and indeed, internationally. A Reader by 1965, he was elected to a Fellowship vacated by Christopher Hill on his elevation as Master of Balliol. There he played a constructive role in the development of the College, particularly during the disturbed late 1960s. He also gained the affection and the respect of many demanding students, some of whom became professional historians, among them the former Present of the Cromwell Association, John Morrill. His courses included not only aspects of the English Revolution – or whatever may be the current ascription – but also the Scientific Revolution. He retired with his Marjorie in 1985 to a cottage on a ridge near Ross-on-Wye, in a village with dwindling services and amenities but with an enduring prospect over five counties. (Their two children, Gail and Piers, visited often).

Pennington's first book was *Members of the Long Parliament* (1953) – a prosopographical study. Douglas Brunton his collaborator died while work was in progress. Donald finished it, trawling wide and deep in the archives the haul transmitted by head and hand to hundreds of cards, compiled, indexed and cross-referenced entirely without the help (or hindrance) of computers, the web or whatever else researchers these days take for granted. The discovery that royalist MPs were on average ten years younger than the parliamentarians raised speculation. What could it mean? What indeed? Next came *The Committee at Stafford 1643-1645*, an edition of 'The Order Book of the Staffordshire Committee', with Ivan Roots (1957), which uncovered many aspects of parliament's war effort in the localities. *Seventeenth Century Europe* (1970; 2nd edn, 1989) was an incisive synthesis of crisp narrative and thoughtful exposition, still the best one-volume history of a puzzling period. With Keith Thomas, Pennington edited in 1978 a *Festschrift* for Christopher Hill, *Puritans and Revolutionaries*, with contributions from a wide range of friends and pupils (also friends) diverse in their

approaches to the period, but united in their admiration for the man and the scholar. Some years later Pennington would write for the British Academy an obituary of Hill which, beginning with 'Christopher Hill was a great historian' – and he certainly was – was a work of art, elegant and evocative.

Over several decades Donald Pennington published a goodly number of articles and essays in *Festschriften*, thematic volumes and journals. A collection of them would be a worthwhile enterprise, bringing out how effectively his consummate scholarship was deployed. As one of the last survivors of a generation of historians nowadays somewhat undervalued by a newer lot – post-revisionist, post-post-revisionist – Pennington was a fine historian to the last, genuinely puzzled, asking hard questions and providing thoughtful answers. But I can say, too, of my oldest and best friend that he was, along with all the other things he was, without cavil, a humane and unique human being.

By Stephen K. Roberts

With the death of Dr Geoffrey F. Nuttall last year, English and Welsh scholarship lost the last historian of puritanism to have lived the life of the puritan. Although never a member of this Association, he was representative of the Congregational tradition in regarding Cromwell as 'our chief of men', and at his memorial service mention was made of Oliver as among Geoffrey Nuttall's small pantheon of seventeenth-century heroes.

Geoffrey Fillingham Nuttall was born in Colwyn Bay, and although his father was a medical man, he came, on both sides of his family, from a line of nonconformist ministers. He himself professed a determination, at the age of five or six, to become a minister. A typical birthday present for a middle-class 13-year-old boy in 1924 might have been a Meccano set or one of the new *William* books of Richmal Crompton. Nuttall's gift from his mother was Mackennal's *Story of the English Separatists* (1893), the copy she had been given by her own father when she was 13. The boy read the book avidly, and discovered in it for the first time the story of John Penry, 'the morning star of Welsh puritanism'. His academic talent was evident at an early age, and he read Greats (Classics) at Balliol, Oxford. Given his precocious intellectual ability, his third class degree was an oddity, explained apparently by the distractions of helping a scholar work on a Latin edition of the complete letters of the sixteenth-century Renaissance scholar, Erasmus. The degree was no barrier to progression to training for the Congregational ministry, and he was duly ordained. He always considered himself a minister, but only very briefly was he the pastor of a church: at Warminster, Wiltshire, between 1938 and 1943. His research on seventeenth-century puritanism had begun before the war, and had been heavily influenced by contacts with German Protestant theologians. These contacts ended in 1939, and Nuttall, a pacifist, spent the war as a minister and then in Birmingham, where he was a research fellow at Woodbrooke, the Quaker institute. He stuck with his own denomination none the less, and moved cautiously with the majority of Congregationalists when they migrated into the United Reformed Church, but his sympathies with, and ease among, the Society of Friends was evident. His wife was a prominent Quaker. Thus it was said of him that he was equally at home in Old and New Dissent.

From 1946 until his retirement, Nuttall was lecturer in church history at the now defunct ministerial training institution, New College, part of London

University. The modest title of his official post gives no hint of the international intellectual eminence he attained. He was rare among nonconformists in achieving an Oxford DD, the fruits of which were published as a monograph, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience* (1946). He was a gifted linguist, and had at his command no fewer than seven languages: the three ancient tongues needed for Biblical scholarship, but also German, French, Italian, Dutch and Welsh. He once told me that languages were easy: all you needed were a grammar and a dictionary. His scholarly published output was enormous, and was marked by meticulous attention to detail and to economy of expression. He is said to have published some work of scholarship – be it book, article, review, sermon – in every year between 1938 and 2005. Among the first papers, 'Was Oliver Cromwell an Iconoclast?' (1938); among the last an annotated list of books of Welsh interest at Bristol Baptist College. He had to wait until he was eighty before he was made a Fellow of the British Academy, which says much about the collective mind of the British academic establishment, and nothing whatsoever about his intellectual distinction.

Even higher than Cromwell on Geoffrey Nuttall's podium of seventeenth-century heroes was Richard Baxter. He published an accessible biography of the Kidderminster controversialist in 1965, but his *magnum opus* in Baxter studies is undoubtedly the edition of the minister's letters, which he produced with Neil Keeble in 1991. Among other books of his on the century that are consulted regularly are *The Welsh Saints* (1957), explorations of the lives and work of key mid-century Welsh radical ministers, and *Visible Saints*, a study of Congregationalism, 1640-60 (1957). His interests ranged much wider than puritanism of the mid-seventeenth century. He was the leading published authority on the eighteenth-century Northamptonshire clergyman, Philip Doddridge, and was a devotee of Dante, on whose *Divine Comedy* he published a book and several essays. Where other academics might pick up the latest paperback blockbuster at the airport, Nuttall's typical holiday reading was the medieval Welsh poet, Dafydd ap Gwilym: to be read in the original, of course.

Nuttall's principal interest was in the history of puritan ministers, whose ideas he took as seriously as they did themselves. His approach was to study them first and foremost from their own words. His was therefore a text-based scholarship. In these days of Early English Books Online it is easy to overlook how much of a pioneer he was in the 1940s, in rescuing the history of dissent from hagiography and stale repetition. He never approached his heroes uncritically, and acknowledged that they needed to

be set in social and political context, even if there were strict limits in how far he was prepared to go in exploring such background. The obvious figure with whom to compare Nuttall in terms of scholarly standing is Christopher Hill. They are the two outstanding post-war historians of seventeenth-century English puritanism. The parallels are interesting. They were born within three months of each other, both came from middle-class backgrounds rooted in Protestant nonconformity, both were privately educated in Yorkshire, and both went to Balliol. Both threw themselves into the study of puritanism and each possessed an encyclopaedic knowledge of seventeenth-century printed material. Neither had much interest in pursuing non-printed material in record offices; Nuttall certainly studied the manuscript letters and diaries of puritans at Dr Williams's Library and elsewhere, but I doubt whether he ever spent any significant amount of time in the Public Record Office.

The differences between the two were just as striking. Hill was interested as much in the wider social, political and intellectual context as in the words of the puritans, and is usually summarized with the adjective 'marxist'. Over the course of his career, his approach became more subtle, but he never wavered from the principle that we should seek social and political meaning in history. Hill's scholarship is marked by deep and wide human sympathies, and by an acute social awareness. Nuttall, by contrast, was instinctively elitist, and showed little interest in the history of peoples or of broad social movements. His puritans were the leaven, the remnant; and while his scholarship was both profound and usable by other scholars, he never deviated from his Christian commitment, albeit of an ecumenical kind based on shared experience of the Holy Spirit. Oddly enough, given the decline of organized Christianity in Britain since the 1950s, Nuttall's scholarly reputation today is arguably higher than Hill's. His *Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience* was re-published in 1992, with an introduction by one of the leading academics in what is now called the history of religion rather than church history. What is attractive about Nuttall's work to scholars of religion who have no religious commitments of their own is the taking seriously of the puritans' own ideas, to which Nuttall had initially been drawn by his own spiritual commitment. The fragmentation of left-wing politics in western culture, by contrast, and the dominance of post-modernist relativism in the academy, have, for the time being at least, left Christopher Hill's work looking embattled and old-fashioned in its sociological positivism.

GEOFFREY F. NUTTALL (1911-2007)

Geoffrey Nuttall was by modern standards an ascetic. He was a life-long teetotaller, a non-smoker, who lived without TV and radio, and for news read only *The Times;* I'm not sure whether he read that daily. When he moved to a retirement flat in Birmingham he kept only a minimum of books, rather reminiscent of the Desert Island castaway, but without any gramophone records. He could be tactless in dismissing academic work which looked at the seventeenth century from perspectives other than his own, and could get people wrong: for example mistaking a serious scholar who went on to acquire a chair in history for a mere amateur genealogist. On the other hand, once he decided that an inquirer had 'the heart of the matter' in him or her, he was encouraging and ever-helpful with scholarly references and illuminating observations. He loved the Welsh border country, which he regarded as *terra sancta* because of its importance in nurturing early puritanism, and I cherish the memory of a trip we made by car to Leominster and Talgarth, to seek out Penyrwrlodd, the home of William Watkins, sidekick of Colonel Philip Jones, and Llwynllwyd, the dissenting academy. He even looked benignly and tolerantly on my quest for some quality Herefordshire cider to take home. As for his books, he once wrote that 'so long as [Morgan] Llwyd is studied,...the Welsh Saints of the Commonwealth and Protectorate will not wholly be forgotten'. Geoffrey Nuttall stands in the same relation to English and Welsh puritanism.

CROMWELLIAN BRITAIN XXI: CHALFONT ST GILES, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

By Jane A Mills

The county of Buckinghamshire has several connections to Oliver Cromwell either due to the time he spent in or travelling through the county during the civil war period; or via family, friends and colleagues who lived there.

The small village of Chalfont St Giles is situated on the A413 halfway between London and Oxford. The origin of the name Chalfont has been attributed to various sources; it could be derived from the old English *cealc* (chalk) and *funt* (spring), the Celtic *Celyddon* or *Celdenes* (Chiltern) and *funtan* (springs), or even the Anglo-Saxon *cald* or *ceald* (cold), which eventually became Chaldfont and then Chalfont. Before the Norman Conquest the area was known as *Ceadeles funta* (Ceadel's spring). In the Domesday Survey of 1086 Chalfont Manor is recorded as *Chelfunte* and was held by Manno the Breton. The manor originally belonged to Tovi, a thane of King Edward. Its total worth was £6 10s. By the thirteenth century Chalfont Manor was recorded as Chalfont St Giles: *Chalfund Sancti Egidii* (1237) and *Chaufuntseyntegyle* (1262).[1]

For many years it has been argued as to whether Chalfont St Giles is situated on a Roman road linking St Albans to Silchester. An archaeological investigation was carried out in the 1960s and the findings were published in *The Roman Roads in the South-East Midlands.*[2] An alignment was found to follow Vache Lane through the grounds of The Pheasant Inn, through the churchyard of St Giles church and in the fields above Milton's cottage. It is probable that there would have been a road between St Albans and Silchester, as they were important Roman towns and there were several Roman villas located in the vicinity. There are also references to the existence of a road in various land deeds of the fifteenth century and the Court Roll of 1540.[3]

It has been documented in various publications that Cromwell visited Chalfont St Giles and stayed at the Stone, the seat of the Ratcliffe family. This house burnt down and was replaced by a new property on the London road. Cromwell was the guest of Anthony Ratcliffe and his wife Elizabeth; he was grandson of Anthony Ratcliffe who was Master of the Merchant Taylors' Company in 1577 and an Alderman of the City of London from 1586 to 1596. This Ratcliffe owned numerous properties in Ironmonger Lane, the manor of South Hall Rainham in Essex and held the mortgage

for manors in Yorkshire, though his grandson sold these properties during the 1630s.[4] The Anthony Ratcliffe of Cromwell's acquaintance is recorded as a commissioner for the county of Buckinghamshire in June 1644 and December 1648.[5]

Cromwell was captain of a troop of sixty horse which he had raised in Cambridgeshire during the summer of 1642. He spent most of his time defending Cambridge and preparing for war. When Charles left Nottingham on 13 September to march on London, Cromwell and his troop received orders to join the army commanded by the Earl of Essex. His troop was number 67 of the 75 troops of horse which formed part of the Lord General's regiment commanded by the Earl of Bedford. At daybreak on Sunday 23 October the royalists took up position at Edghill and Rupert assembled his cavalry on the escarpment. Essex's forces reached Kineton but several units of cavalry were far behind, quartered five miles from Edghill as Essex was not planning to engage the royalists. Unfortunately Cromwell was one of those who arrived late according to Captain Nathaniel Fiennes's account.[6] Cromwell joined Captain John Fiennes and others to make a stand on a hill and then together they rode to Kineton to engage the royalists; at this stage it was mostly skirmishing. Eventually Essex made a disorderly withdrawal heading towards London.

On 1 November Sir William Balfour together with a force of 1,500 went to the assistance of the Aylesbury garrison which was now under threat from Prince Rupert; this resulted in a battle taking place outside the town and the royalists were routed. Cromwell could have been present and then rode through Aylesbury Vale, Dinton, Great Hampden through Great and Little Missenden and Amersham, arriving at Chalfont St Giles to spend the night with the Ratcliffes.[7]

Cromwell's troops encamped in the Silden and Stone meadows and it is believed that his troops fired at the church. In 1861 repairs were undertaken on the chancel and the timber roof was removed in order to repair and replace stonework. The east window had a number of perforations to the stonework caused by small cannon balls; the balls and lead shot were found in the roof and from their position it proved they were fired through the east window.[8] Three of these cannon balls are on show in Milton's cottage museum.

The rector of Chalfont St Giles church from 1624/5 to 1661/2 was Thomas Valentine M.A. He had quite an eventful rectorship, as he was

suspended in 1635 by Sir John Lambe, Dean of Arches, for refusing to read from the *Book of Sport* and not repairing the chancel. In 1636 he sought protection from William, Bishop of Lincoln, but was suspended again. He appealed to Archbishop Laud and was supported by Anthony Ratcliffe and twenty-seven parishioners and he was reinstated in 1638.[9] In March 1654 Cromwell appointed him as a member of the commission to examine the qualifications of ministers, which was surprising considering he was solemnising marriages in church despite their prohibition under the Civil Marriage Act of 1653. Cromwell could have heard him preach, as Valentine delivered sermons before the House of Commons (1643), at St Margaret's Church Westminster before the House of Commons (1647) and in Westminster Abbey before the House of Lords (1647). He was ejected from his living in 1662 because he refused to accept the *Book of Common Prayer*; together with his congregation he formed an independent group and worshiped in private houses. This led to the first chapel being built in 1721, though he had died in 1665.[10]

This small village has another connection to Cromwell by way of the Fleetwood family. A mile north-east of the village is a sixteenth-century manor house called the Vache; it was part of an estate which was originally granted to the de la Vache family by William the Conqueror. In 1564 the estate was purchased by Sir Thomas Fleetwood, Treasurer of the Mint and High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire. Thomas was married twice and had eighteen children. He died on 1 November 1570 and is buried in the church of Chalfont St Giles; his tomb is on the north side of the chancel. He was succeeded by his son, Sir George, who died in 1620 and who is also buried in the church. George's son Charles took over the estate but very sadly died in 1628, leaving his five year old son George to inherit the estate.[11] At the outbreak of the civil war, when George was nineteen, he took parliament's side, raised a troop of dragoons and defended the Chiltern Hills as a barrier for London. He went on to hold important positions in the county of Buckinghamshire and was appointed a commissioner on the High Court of Justice for the trial of King Charles I and signed the death warrant in January 1649. During the Commonwealth and Protectorate he represented Buckinghamshire in the Nominated Assembly and became the county's MP in the First Protectorate Parliament. When his distant relation Charles Fleetwood (he married Bridget, daughter of Cromwell and widow of Henry Ireton) was appointed Major-General for East Anglia, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire and Oxfordshire, he served as his deputy. He was knighted by Cromwell in 1656 and became George, Lord Fleetwood, when he was appointed to the Upper House in 1657. In

1659 he raised a troop of volunteers to stop the royalist uprising in Cheshire by Sir George Booth, but later in 1660 he supported General Monck during the restoration of the monarchy. As a regicide, George Fleetwood was put on trial and sentenced to death; he petitioned parliament, claiming he was forced into being a commissioner at the king's trial and Cromwell had pressured him into signing the death warrant. General Monck and Lord Ashley spoke on his behalf, which resulted in him escaping death, though he remained imprisoned in the Tower until 1664 when he was transported to Tangiers, where he died in 1672. There is another version which states that his wife Hester Fleetwood pleaded for his release and he was allowed to emigrate to America. The Vache and his estates were confiscated and given to the Duke of York.[12]

The Duke of York sold the Vache in 1665 for £9,500 to a relation of the Fleetwoods, Sir Thomas Clayton, who was Warden of Merton College Oxford; then the property passed down the family until 1771, when it was sold to Admiral Sir Hugh Palliser.[13] Captain James Cook had been mid-shipman under Palliser and remained his friend until he was killed by Hawaiians in 1779. As a mark of respect for his friend, Palliser erected a monument to Captain Cook in the grounds at the Vache.

In the parish of Chalfont St Giles is a small village called Jordans; it was originally a farm sold by the Fleetwoods in 1618 to the Russell family. During the seventeenth century it became the centre for Quakerism. It is here that the oldest Quaker meeting house can be found and where 164 Quakers were buried between 1671 and 1724. This is the resting place of William Penn (son of Admiral Penn), founder of Pennsylvania, Issac Penington and Thomas Ellwood. Nearby is old Jordans farm house and Mayflower Barn, reputed to be built from the timbers of the Mayflower ship that took the Pilgrim Fathers to America.[14]

In 1662 John Milton's doctor Nathan Paget introduced him to Thomas Ellwood, a twenty-two year old Quaker who needed help with his Latin – his education had suffered due to his ill health and his religion – and in return he would read to the blind Milton.

> Thus by the mediation of my friend Isaac Penington with Dr Paget and of Dr Paget with John Milton, was I permitted the liberty of coming to his house at certain hours when I would, and to read to him what books he should appoint me, which was the favour I desired.[15]

During Ellwood's new job he had bouts of ill health and imprisonment in Bridewell for attending a Quaker meeting in Aldergate. On his release he went to visit the Peningtons at Chalfont Grange; Isaac asked him to become Latin tutor to his three children. Ellwood felt an obligation to accept and stayed in his new employment until 1669.

In 1665 as the deaths from the plague in London were increasing at an alarming rate, Milton decided to ask Ellwood to find him a house near him.[16]

> I was desired by my quondam master, Milton, to take a house for him in the neighbourhood where I dwelt, that he might go out of the city, for the safety of himself and his family, the pestilence then growing hot in London. I took a pretty box for him in Giles Chalfont, a mile from me, of which I gave him notice, and intended to wait on him, and see him well settled in it, but was prevented by that imprisonment.[17]

The imprisonment Ellwood refers to was caused by him attending the funeral of Edward Perrot, when he was arrested with Isaac Penington and eight others as they were taking the coffin to Jordans for burial. They were imprisoned for one month.

Milton moved into the cottage, which had been built in 1580 and was part of the Fleetwood estate (over the entrance is a shield bearing the Fleetwood arms); he brought with him his third wife Elizabeth, his daughter Deborah and his *Paradise Lost* manuscript which he showed to Ellwood on his release from Aylesbury prison.

> When I came home, and had set myself to read it, I found it was an excellent poem which is entitled *Paradise Lost*...I made him another visit...He asked me how I like it, and what I thought of it...'Thou hast said much here of *Paradise Lost*, but what hast thou to say about *Paradise Found*?'[18]

It was two years later that Milton started *Paradise Regained* and on its completion he showed it to Ellwood:

> This is owing to you, for you put it into my head by the question you put to me at Chalfont, which before I had not thought of.[19]

Milton only lived in Chalfont for six to nine months and, as he was a city man, he returned to London as soon as the plague subsided. He was born and lived in London in an area that was destroyed by the Great Fire of 1666 and World War II, so the cottage is important as it is the only Milton home that still remains. The Grade I listed, timber-framed cottage was bought by public subscription in 1887, and it has a large garden stocked with flowers, fruit trees and herbs which are mentioned in his poems. The cottage is now run as a museum with four ground floor rooms devoted to his life and works.

Notes.

1. H.A. Clarke, *A History of the Parish Church of St Giles, Chalfont St Giles* (Beaconsfield, 1961); L.E. Pike, *Chalfont St Giles. The Official Guide* (Croydon, 1949); W. Page, ed., *Victoria History of the Counties of England: A History of the County of Buckingham, Volume 3* (London, 1925), pp. 184-93.
2. I.D. Margary, *The Roman Roads in the South-East Midlands* (London, 1964).
3. Chalfont Saint Peter Manor Court Roll, 26 Oct. 1540, Buckingham Record Office, D/BASM/15/9/e.
4. D.J. Keene & V. Harding, *Historical Gazetteer of London before the Great Fire* (London, 1987), pp. 118-25; W. Page, ed., *The Victoria History of the Counties of England: A History of the County of York North Riding, Volume 1*, (London, 1914), pp. 71-84; W. R. Powell, *The Victoria History of the Counties of England: A History of the County of Essex, Volume 7*, (London, 1975), pp. 126-34.
5. C.H. Firth & R.S. Rait, eds, *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642-1660* (London, 1911), pp. 455-58 & 1233-51.
6. Thomason Tracts E.126/38.
7. An excellent article written by Robert Hammond appears on the John Hampden Society website, *Was Cromwell present at the Battle of Aylesbury?*
8. W.P. Phipps, *Chalfont St Giles Past and Present* (2nd edn, London, 1896), p. 27; Clarke, *Parish Church*, p. 7; Pike, *Chalfont St Giles*, p. 12.
9. Page, *Buckingham*, pp. 184-93.
10. Clarke, *Parish Church*, pp. 48, 54; D.G. Law, *John Milton and Chalfont St Giles. A Tercentenary Publication* (Chalfont St Giles, 1965), p. 44.
11. Phipps, *Chalfont St Giles*, p. 11; Page, *Buckingham*, pp. 184-93.
12. Law, *John Milton*, p. 44; C. Durston, *Cromwell's Major-Generals* (Manchester, 2001), pp. 236-37; Clarke, *Parish Church*, p. 67; Page, *Buckingham*, pp. 184-93.

13. Clarke, *Parish Church*, p. 74; Page, *Buckingham*, pp. 184-93.
14. Clarke, *Parish Church*, pp. 69-70; Pike, *Chalfont St Giles*, p. 16.
15. M. Webb, *The Penns and Peningtons of the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1867), p. 123.
16. In May 1665 the reported deaths from the plague were 43, by June they had risen to 6,137, but the figure for July had more than doubled to 17,036.
17. Webb, *The Penns*, p. 185.
18. *Ibid*, p. 188; A.N. Wilson, *The Life of John Milton* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 228-29.
19. Webb, *The Penns*, p. 189.

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WRITINGS AND SOURCES XI: MARY SPRINGETT'S ACCOUNT OF HER HUSBAND, COLONEL SIR WILLIAM SPRINGETT

Mary Proude was born near Faversham, Kent, in 1623, the daughter of Sir John Proude, who fought in the continental wars of the early seventeenth century and who perished in battle in 1628. Her mother died in the same year, and, as an orphan, young Mary was then brought up as a member of the family of Sir Edward Partridge and of Sir Edward's widowed sister, Lady Katherine Springett. In 1642, Mary married Lady Katherine's eldest son, Sir William Springett (born 1621/22), a man of godly religious principles, who served as a colonel in the parliamentarian army from the start of the civil war and as a deputy lieutenant for Kent. However, he died in Sussex in February or March 1644, shortly after successfully besieging Arundel Castle, and Mary Springett was left a young widow with a son, John (who died young), and a second child on the way, a daughter Gulielma who was born after Sir William's death.

After a decade of widowhood, spent at least in part in London, Mary married a second time, in May 1654, to Isaac Penington, the prominent Quaker and religious author. Mary and Isaac and their growing family – they had two sons and a daughter during the 1650s and at least two more sons were born during the 1660s – resided at properties in London, Caversham in Berkshire and Datchet in Buckinghamshire, but they spent much of their time at The Grange, near Chalfont St Peter in Buckinghamshire, which the couple had been given by Isaac's very wealthy father, the London alderman Isaac Penington, senior. As prominent Quakers with links to the parliamentarian cause, the family suffered after the Restoration – for a time The Grange became the centre for an increasingly ostracised Quaker community but was sequestered in 1665, Isaac spent many years imprisoned at Aylesbury and both Isaac and Mary lost land and property. In the late 1660s, Mary acquired a farm near Amersham, from where during the last decade or so of her life she was able to keep in close contact with the now covert and persecuted Quaker community in the Chalfonts (see the 'Cromwellian Britain' article above).

The death of her husband, Isaac, in 1679 may have prompted Mary's own writings during her closing years, down to her own death, which occurred in September 1682 at the Sussex property of her eldest daughter, Gulielma, and her husband William Penn (the founder of Pennsylvania). Although

very little of her work was published in her own lifetime – and that appeared not in her own name but in publications by her husband or her son John Penington, himself a prominent Quaker – she left a number of autobiographical manuscripts which stressed the spiritual nature of her life and demonstrated the impact of her profound Quaker beliefs. These writings were first published in 1821, as *Some Account of Circumstances in the Life of Mary Penington, from her Manuscript, Left for her Family*; in 1911, Norman Penney edited *Experiences in the Life of Mary Penington.*

The account reproduced here takes the form of a long letter which Mary wrote in 1680, addressed to her grandson, Springet Penn, the eldest son of her daughter Gulielma and William Penn. It opens with an account of her own parentage and upbringing, showing how she came to know and to marry Sir William Springett through her association with Lady Katherine Springett, who is described in some detail. Mary goes on to narrate her husband's civil war service, with a long and moving account of his final illness and death – like so many soldiers, from disease rather than in battle or from wounds – at a bleak and war-torn Arundel. The closing part of the letter, omitted here, explains that the debts which Sir William left her had been incurred through his own goodness and Christian charity and gives examples of his personal and godly virtues. The text is from *Gentleman's Magazine*, new series 36 (July-Dec. 1851), where it appeared with a brief introduction by Hepworth Dixon, an early biographer of William Penn.

A Letter from me [M. P.] to my dear grandchild Springet Penn, written about the year 1680, and left to be delivered to him at my decease.

Dear child, Thou bearing the name of thy worthy grandfather Springet, I felt one day the thing I desired was answered, which was the keeping up his name and memory, not in the vain way of the world, who preserve their name for the glory of a family, but in regard that he left no son his name might not be forgotten. He dying before thy mother was born, thou couldst not have the opportunity of her putting thee in remembrance of him, so I am inclined to make mention of this good man to thee, that thou mayest preserve the memory of this just one in thy mind, and have [him] for a pattern to thee, that imitating him, and following him as he followed Christ, thou mayest continue his name in the family, not only by being called after his name, but more especially by walking in his footsteps, and bearing his image, and partaking of his renown, by being the virtuous offspring of this truly happy sire.

Well, dear child, I will give thee some account of him. Thy dear mother's father was of religious parents; his father, thy great-grandfather (though a lawyer), was religious and strict, as I have heard of him, in those things wherein the administration of that time consisted, zealous against popery, scrupled putting his money to use, and was of a sober conversation, and in the exercise of what (in that dim day of light) was accounted holy duties. He was much in praying (though in a form), reading scripture by himself and in his family, exercised much on such like things on that day which they then accounted their Sabbath Day. He died of a consumption, leaving thy great-grandmother with two sons, and with child of a daughter. She was married to him about three years, and left a widow about twenty-two or twenty-three. She was an excellent woman, and had a great regard to the well-being of her children, both in the inward and outward condition, and that she might the better bring up her children lived a retired life, refused marriage (though frequently well offered, as I have heard her say). She suffered pretty hard things from his two brothers, Sir Thomas Springet and a brother-in-law, who were his executors, through their jealousy that she being so very young a widow would marry. They refused her the education of her children, and put her upon suing for it, which she obtained with charge, and some years' suit. She lived a virtuous life, constant in morning and evening prayer by herself, and often with her children, causing them to repeat what they remembered of sermons and scripture. I lived in the house with her from nine years of age, till after I was married to her son, and after he died she came and lived with me and died at my house; in all which time I never saw, or heard, as I remember, of any immodest, indiscreet, or evil action. She spent her time very ingeniously, and in a bountiful manner bestowed great part of her jointure yearly upon the poor, and in physic and chirurgery. She had about twelve score pounds a-year jointure, and with it she kept a brace of geldings, a man and a maid servant. (She boarded at her only brother's, Sir Edward Partridge's.) She kept several poor women constantly employed in simpling for her in summer and in winter, procuring such things as she had use of in physic and chirurgery, and for eyes, having eminent judgment in all these, and admirable success, which made her famous and sought out of several countries by the greatest persons and by the low ones. She was daily employing her servants in making oils, salves, balsams, drawing spirits, distilling of waters, making syrups, conserves of many kinds, purges, pills, and lozenges.

She was so rare in taking off cataract and spots in eyes, that Stephens the great occulist sent many to her house where there was difficulty in cure. She

cured in my knowledge many burns, and desperate cuts, and dangerous sores that came by thorns, and broken limbs; many of the king's evil, taking out several bones. One burn I in especial manner remember,— a child's head, [which] was so burnt that its skull was like a coal, she brought to have skin and hair, and invented a thin plate of beaten silver, covered with bladder, to preserve the head in case of a fall. She frequently helped in consumptions beyond the skill of doctors to help. Through her care and diligence, in the village about her, several patients that came some hundreds of miles for cure lay there sometimes a quarter of a year from their families. She has had twenty persons in a morning to dress, men, women, and children, of wounds, and for sore eyes, and to apply physic. I have heard her say she spent half her revenue in making all these medicines which she needed for these cures, and never received a penny for any charge she was at, but hath often returned presents of value; only this she would do, if the patients were able and needed not what she had in the house, she gave them a note of what things they should buy, and she made their medicines. Her man spent great part of his time in writing directions and fitting up salves and medicines. She was greatly beloved and honoured for this in the place where she dwelt.

She since the wars, in her latter time, was one called a Puritan in her religion, and after an Independent, and kept an independent minister in her house, and gave liberty to people to come twice a week to her house to hear him preach. She set apart constantly the seventh day, about three or four hours in the afternoon, for her family to leave all their occasions, and this minister preached and prayed with them for a preparation for the morrow. She was a most tender and affectionate mother to thy grandfather, and always showed great kindness to me; indeed she was very honourable in counselling her son not to marry for an estate, and put by many great offers of persons with thousands, urging him to consider what would make him happy in a choice. She propounded my marriage to him because we were bred together of children, I nine years old and he twelve, when we (first) came to live together. She would discourse with him on this wise, that she knew me and we were known to one another, and said she chose me for his wife before any with a great portion, if I had no portion, because of these things and our equality in outward condition and years. She lived to see thy mother three or four years old, and was very affectionate to her, and took great delight to see her wisdom.

Now to come to thy grandfather, she having, as I said, educated him and

the rest of her children in the fear of the Lord, according to the knowledge given in that day, and took great care in placing him both at school and university, she sent him to Cambridge (as being accounted more sober than Oxford), and placed him in a Puritan college called Katherine's Hall, where was a very sober tender master of the house, and a grave sober tutor; as also she appointed one Ellis, who was accounted a Puritan, she having brought him up in his youth, and got the preferment of a Fellow in that college. Thy grandfather coming from Cambridge young, was placed at the Inns of Court, but he being religiously inclined, stayed not long there, but came into Kent, where his mother was, and he heard one Wilson, who had been suspended for not conforming to the bishops (for about three years); he was an extraordinary man in his day. Thy grandfather declined bishops and common prayer very early. When he was between twenty and twenty-one we married, and without a ring, and many of their formal dark words left out (upon his ordering it), he being so zealous against common prayer and such like things. His averseness to common prayer and superstitious customs, made him a proverb and a reproach amongst his intimates and acquaintance, and to dishonour him they reported many false things; his averseness to common prayer, they reported that he should say he never asked God forgiveness, but for two sins; one was for going to church and another for saying the Lord's Prayer. Indeed he was so sensible of their blind superstition concerning that they call their church as he would give disdaining words about it, and speak about [putting ?] their church timber to very common uses, to show his abhorrence to their placing holiness in it. When he had a child he refused the midwife to say her formal prayer, and prayed himself, and gave thanks to the Lord in a very sweet melted way, which caused great amazement. He never went to the parish church, but went many miles to this aforementioned Willson. Nor would he go to prayers in the house, but prayed morning and evening with me and his servants in our chambers, which wrought great discontent in the family (we boarding with his uncle Sir Edward Partridge). He would not let the parish priest baptize his child; but when it was eight days old had it carried in arms five miles to this Willson above mentioned, about the time called Michaelmas. There was great seriousness and solemnity in the doing of this thing, we then looking upon it as an ordinance of God. Notes were sent to the professing people round about more than ten miles distant, to come and seek the Lord at such a time for a blessing upon his ordinance. There was none of their superstitious customs, and that they call gossips, nor any person to hold the child but the father, whom the preacher, when he came, spoke to, to hold the child, as being the fittest person to take the charge of

him; it was a great cross to him, and a new business, and caused much gazing and wonderment for him, (being a gallant, and very young man,) in the face of so great assembly to hold the child in his arms, and receive a large charge of his educating the child, and declaring to him his duty toward his child. This was so new that he was the first of quality that had refused these things in their country. In this zeal against dark formality, and the superstitions of the times, he having taken the Scotch Covenant against all popery and popish innovations, as also the English Engagement, when his child was about a month old, he had a commission sent him to be colonel of a regiment of foot, when the fight was at Edge-Hill, and he raised without beat of drum eight hundred men, most of them professors and professors' sons, near six score volunteers of his own company, himself going a volunteer, and took no pay. He afterwards was made a deputy lieutenant in the county of Kent, in which employment he was zealous and diligent for the cause, insomuch as they looked upon him as like to be mad, because he reproved their carnal wisdom in managing of things, and told them it was the cause of God, and they should trust God in it, and do what in them lay to act according to their Covenant and Engagement which they had taken to oppose with their lives popery and popish innovations. Within a few days after his regiment was raised there was a rising in the vale of Kent of many thousands, to the suppressing of which he and his new-gathered and undisciplined soldiers were commanded from their rendezvous at Maidstone, where it was said that the vain company in the town had a design of doing them injury by gunpowder. He having placed his men in such order as their youth and the time would permit, came to me (who had then lain in about a month) to take his leave of me, before they encountered the enemy, but when he came he found me in danger of being put out of the house, in case the enemy proceeded so far. He having had orders that morning (being a fifth day) to march with his regiment in company of some other regiments to keep a pass where it was reported Prince Rupert was coming over to join with the risers. It was a great surprise to him to find me in that danger, and it put him upon great difficulties to provide for my security and to return to his regiment at the time appointed. But he being of a diligent, industrious mind, and of a quick capacity, found out a course that did effect it, which was this: he fetched a stage-coach from Rochester (which was about seven miles off Maidstone, in which parish I was), and in the night carried me and my child, to whom I gave suck, and my maid-servant, to Gravesend, and there hired a barge for me to go to London, and took a solemn leave of me, as not expecting to see me again, and went post to his regiment. So soon as I came to London the

whole city was in arms, and there was nothing but noise of drums and trumpets, and clattering of arms, and crying 'Arm, arm!' for the enemy was near the city; which proved to be that bloody fight between the parliament's forces and the king's at Hounslow Heath. Not many days after, the risers being dispersed in Kent, he came to London, having behaved himself very approvable in endeavouring to get restored the cattle and horses to the persons that had been plundered by the risers, who had taken a great quantity, but were in possession of the soldiers, by their being dispersed. Thy grandfather, being advised with what place they should secure this stock in, that the owners might come and claim what was theirs, he appointed them what they call their church, which he saw done; but being applied to by the owners for their cattle, he went with them to this place; but when he came he found the cattle driven away by a colonel of that county, into an island of his own in that county, accounting it [h]is spoil for his service. This proved honourable for thy grandfather, he having no less share in the suppression of them than that other party, but he applied himself to relieve them that were oppressed by plunder, and the other endeavoured the enriching himself.

He went upon several services with this regiment, as at the taking of the Lord Craven's house in Surrey, where several of his own company of volunteers, men's sons of substance, were of the forlorn hope. He was also at the fight at Newbury, where he was in imminent danger, a bullet hitting him but had lost its force to enter. He lay some nights in the field, there being neither time nor conveniency to fetch his tent, which he had with him. He lay in the Lord Roberts's coach. They had scarcity of salt, and so would not venture upon eating flesh, but lived some days upon candied green citron and biscuit. He was in several other engagements. Then he carried his regiment back into Kent. The last service he was in was at Arundel in Sussex, where he died, as I may further give thee an account, but I am not willing to let slip the taking notice to thee of his gallant and true English spirit. He opposed all arbitrariness in discipline of an army; to which purpose he claimed his right as a colonel to sit in their council of war, which (there being) a selfish cabal refused, engrossing the management of secret designs to themselves, which he gave testimony against, saying it was contrary to all military laws. Those of the cabal were one Merrick, whose name was ----, and a Scotchman whose name was ----. He had his eye so much upon them, and discovered so much of their intending a trade in this engagement, or at least a compliance with the king for their own advantage, that he constantly published his dislike, insomuch that he was

warned by several of his intimates of having some mischief done to him, if not his life sought. But he received in such a sense, by their secret and selfish management of things, together with the exaltedness and bravery of the captains and colonels that went out at first with Colonel Hollies, many of them that went out being very mean men, and the consideration of what glory he had parted with, and into what meanness we had put ourselves for the cause; that he concluded the cause was lost for which he engaged, and thereupon resolved not to go forth any more, and so returned with his regiment after the fight into Kent.

Not long after his own native country, Sussex, was in danger of spoil by the cavalier party, who had taken Arundel town, and fortified the town and castle; Sir William Waller commanded in chief against them, to whose assistance the associated counties were sent for. Amongst the several regiments thy grandfather's regiment was invited. He looking upon this engagement as a particular service to his own county, with great freedom went to Arundel; there they had a long siege before the town. After they had taken the town they besieged the castle; it was a very difficult, hard service, but being taken, thy grandfather and Colonel Morley had the government and management of the castle committed to their charge. But few weeks after this the disease of the soldiers that were in the town and castle, called the calenture (or sun-fever, frequent at sea), seized on him at his quarters, at one Wade's, near Arundel, whither he sent for me in the depth of winter frost and snow, from London, to come to him, which was very difficult for me to compass, being great with child of thy mother, the waters being out at Newington and several places, that we were forced to row in the highways with a boat, and take the things in the coach with us, and the horses to be led with strings tied to their bridles, and to swim the coach and horses in the highways...[further details of the journey given]

Coming by a garrison late at night, the colonel whereof required the guard to stop the coach, and give notice to him by firing a gun, which he did; upon which the colonel came immediately down to invite me to stay, and, to encourage me, told me that my husband was like to mend, and that he understood I was near my time, beseeched me I would not hazard myself. Upon which the coachman (being sensible of the difficulties he should undergo) would needs force me to lodge in the garrison, saying his horses would not hold out, and they would be spoiled, to which I replied, that I was obliged to pay for all the horses if they suffered, and that I was resolved not to go out of the coach unless it broke until I came so near the house that I could compass it on foot, so finding my resolution he put on. When

we came to Arundel we met with a most dismal sight: the town being depopulated, all the windows broken with the great guns, and the soldiers making stables of all the shops and lower rooms; and, there being no light in the town but what came from the light in the stables, we passed through the town toward his quarters. Within a quarter of a mile of the house the horses were at a stand, and we could not understand the reason of it, so we sent our guide down to the house for a candle and lantern, and to come to our assistance; upon which the report came to my husband, who told them they were mistaken, he knew I could not come, I was so near my time; but they affirming that it was so, he commanded them to sit him up in his bed, 'that I may see her', said he, 'when she comes'; but the wheel of the coach being pitched in the root of a tree it was some time before I could come. It was about twelve at night when we arrived, and as soon as I put my foot into the hall (there being a pair of stairs out of the hall into his chamber), I heard his voice, 'Why will you lie to me! if she be come, let me hear her voice'; which struck me so that I had hardly power to get up stairs; but being borne up by two, he seeing me, the fever having took his head, in a manner sprang up, as if he would come out of his bed, saying, 'Let me embrace thee before I die; I am going to thy God and my God'. I found most of his officers about his bed attending on him with great care and signification of sorrow for the condition he was in, they greatly loving him. The purple spots came out the day before, and now were struck in, and the fever got into his head, upon which they caused him to keep his bed, having not been persuaded to go to bed no day since his illness till then, which had been five days. Before his spots came out, they seeing his dangerous condition (so many Kentish men, both commanders and others having died of it in a week's time near his quarters,) constrained him to keep his chamber, but such was the activeness of his spirit and stoutness of his heart that he could not yield to this ill that was upon him, but covenanted with them that he would shoot birds with his cross-bow out of the windows, which he did till the fever took his head, and the spots went in; and after that the fever was so violent, and he so young and strong of body, and his blood so hot (being but about the age of 23) that they were forced to sit round the bed to keep him in, but he spoke no evil or raving words at all, but spoke seriously about his dying to my doctor, whom I brought down with me by his orders. He appointed him what physic he should give him, saying also to him, 'What you do do quickly; if this does not do, nothing will help me'. He spoke most affectionately to me, and very wittingly to his officers, as the marshal and others, about keeping their prisoners and making up the breach, and to keep watch, which he meant [?] his getting

out of bed, which he attempted to do often, or putting out his legs and arms. His breath was so scorching that it made his lips chap. He discerning my mouth was cool, did hardly permit me to take it off to breathe, but would cry out, 'Oh! Don't leave me'; which the doctor and my own maid servant and the attendants were very much troubled at, looking upon the infection to be so high that it endangered the infecting myself and child by taking his breath into me. I being also very near my time, found it a very uneasy posture for me (two hours at times, if not more,) to bow myself to him to cool his lips with my mouth. The physic which he ordered being applied to him, he observed the manner of its operation to be a signification of death, and called out to the doctor in these like words: 'This will not do, I am a dead man'. The same the doctor had concluded upon the like sign, though he said nothing. He called upon me again to lay my mouth to his, which I did for a considerable time; and he would lie very quiet while I was able to bear this posture of bowing over him, and in this stillness he fell asleep, which they that were by observing, constrained me to go to bed, considering my condition, and that I might leave my maid-servant with him, who might bring me an account of him. I was prevailed with, and went to bed; and when he awoke he seemed much refreshed, and took great notice of the maid-servant, saying, 'You are my wife's maid (for she waited on me in my chamber), Where, where, is my wife (said he)? How does my boy?' And many particulars he inquired of her concerning me. 'Go to my wife', saith he, 'and tell her that I am almost ready to embrace her, I am so refreshed with my sleep'. She came up, and gave me this account, upon which I would have risen and come down to him, but she persuaded me not, saying, he would go to sleep again, and I would but hinder it; so I sent her down with a message to him, and went to rest, not thinking but that there (according to the description she made) might have been a probability of his recovering, so I lay late. In the morning, when I came down, I saw a great change upon him, and sadness upon all faces about him, which thing stunned me, I having let in hope as before. He spoke affectionately to me, and several weighty serious expressions he had. At last he called me to him, saying, 'Come, my dear, let me kiss thee before I die', which he did with that heartiness expressive of his tender regard: 'Come, once more, let me kiss thee, and take my leave of thee', said he, which he did in the same manner as before, saying, 'Now, no more, no more, never no more', which having done he fell into a very great agony. He having had but about seven days' illness of this violent contagious fever, it having not impaired his strength, but inflamed his blood and heightened his spirits, and being a young lusty man, he in this agony snapped his arms and legs with that force

that the veins seemed to sound like the snapping of catgut strings tightened upon an instrument of music. Oh! this was a dreadful sight to me, my very heart-strings seemed to break. The doctor, and my husband's chaplain, and some of the chief officers that were by, observing this violent condition, that the bed seemed to be as if it would fall in pieces under him, considering together what to do, and taking notice that this befell him upon his taking leave of me, they concluded that they must either persuade me or take me by force from the bedside, his great love for me, and beholding me there, being the occasion of this. Upon which they came to me, and desired me to go to the fire, for my being there occasioned this deep perplexity, and whilst I stood there he could not die, which word was so great, that I, like an astonished, amazed creature, stamped with my foot and cried 'Die, die, must he die! I cannot go from him'. At which two of them gently lifted [me] in their arms, and carried me to the fireside, which was a pretty distance from the bed, and there they held me from coming to him again, at which time I wept not, but stood silent and struck. Soon after I was brought from the bed, he lay very still, and when they thought his sight was gone, that he could not see me, they let me go; I, standing at his bedside, saw the most amiable pleasant countenance that ever I beheld, just like a person ravished with something that he beheld, smiling like a young child, when (as the saying is) they see angels. He lay about an hour in this condition, and towards sunset turned quick about, and called upon a kinsman of his, 'Anthony, come quickly'; at which very instant we found him come riding into the yard, being come many miles to see him. Soon after this he died, it being in the twelfth month. When he was dead, then I could weep, so soon as the breath was out of his body, they immediately took me up into a chamber, and suffered me no more to see him, for fear that in my condition it would affright me.

He was put into a coffin the next morning early, and privately carried away in his own ammunition wagon to Ringmore, a parish in which he was born, and some of his ancestors lay, he being accompanied by his officers and soldiers, that no notice might be taken of his being buried, because it was expected, and intended, that a funeral should be made according to the formalities and manner of one of his condition in the army, and accordingly there was orders taken with the officers and soldiers to put themselves in a posture for the time appointed. But when I returned to London, and the will was opened, and the condition he died in examined, it was found that things were not in a condition to admit of such a charge, which would have been some hundreds. He died two thousand pounds in debt...

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John V. Jeffery, *Cromwell's Deputy: The Life and Times of General Charles Fleetwood* (Ulric Publishing, Church Stretton, 2008). 368 pp.

This, the only full-length study of the career of Charles Fleetwood to date, looks at first sight to be an essential addition to historical bookshelves. Fleetwood was undoubtedly an important figure of the Cromwellian period, whether as a civil war soldier, son-in-law to Oliver Cromwell (who famously dismissed him as a 'milk sop'), lord deputy of Ireland, or a major player in the crisis that brought an end to the Protectorate and eventually led to the Restoration. A detailed study of his life is long overdue, but I would hesitate to recommend this book to the student, or to the general reader, for three reasons.

First, it is riddled with factual errors. Edgehill is misdated, and the details of the battle itself muddled (p. 34); surely the Scottish army that marched across the border in January 1644 did not really have 118,000 foot soldiers? (p. 47); the Earl of Leicester would have been surprised to be introduced as 'a relative of Monck' (p. 48); the second civil war did not happen in 1647 (p. 89). And so on.

Secondly, the 'supporting cast' is routinely misrepresented. The author says that Oliver Cromwell had 'a penchant for nepotism' (p. 136), he was 'vain' (p. 166) and even a 'despot' (p. 254), who only criticised Fleetwood's character because he dared to disagree with him (p. 236). Is this the *real* Oliver Cromwell? Henry Cromwell, Fleetwood's rival in Ireland, 'jumped to the conclusion that Fleetwood was conspiring to depose him' (p. 187) not because he had hard evidence that this was the case: rather, we are told, he was suffering from 'a paranoid obsession' (p. 188). Another of Fleetwood's enemies, 'the aristocratic Fauconbourg', was by 1658 'secretly on the royalist side' (pp. 256-57), and his very name (usually the less dastardly-sounding 'Fauconberg' or 'Falconbridge') implies that he was a foreigner, and not to be trusted. When the Protectorate was brought down, we are told that General John Lambert was the true villain of the peace – by contrast, Fleetwood tried his best to protect Richard Cromwell (while deposing him). And when the restored Rump was also ousted in a military coup in October 1659, it was Lambert again who was the chief culprit, with Fleetwood reluctantly following him, as 'Fleetwood was ever reluctant to oppose parliament' (p. 302). As will already be apparent, this misrepresentation has a knock-on effect: with the secondary characters caricatured, the picture of the hero also becomes distorted.

A third problem is the author's use of evidence. To take but one example (chapter 9), events surrounding the succession of Richard to the office of Protector on his father's death are famously obscure. Oliver had the right to name his successor, but when he was near to death no written order could be found, and he had to make his wishes known verbally – allowing rumours to spread that Fleetwood, not Richard, had been his first choice, but that the written order to that effect had been deliberately destroyed. We cannot know the truth for certain, but historians, looking at the wider historical context, have invariably concluded that Richard was the only serious candidate. In this book, however, the author poses the question 'was Charles Fleetwood nominated by Oliver Cromwell to succeed him?' and answers 'It seems probable he was...' (p. 249). He then concocts an extraordinary 'likely explanation of events' that hinges on Fleetwood deciding that 'he did not wish to follow Cromwell as Protector, perhaps knowing his own limitations and realising he would not be capable of performing this onerous and, as he probably thought, unpleasant task' (p. 251). Indeed, he speculates, it may have been Fleetwood's own wife (Oliver's daughter, Bridget) who destroyed the written order. This is romantic fiction, not history.

The 'acknowledgements' and 'bibliography' of this book are revealing. It is a shame that the author did not read more of the (widely-available) secondary literature, or approach any of the established professional scholars, who would have been more than happy to give guidance. Instead, he went his own way, unguided. Surely even a 'milk sop' deserves better?

Peter Gaunt, ed., *The Correspondence of Henry Cromwell, 1655-1659* (Camden Society 5th series, vol. 31, 2007). xi and 545 pp.

The collection of original letters sent to Henry Cromwell in Ireland, contained in the Lansdowne Manuscripts in the British Library, has long been recognised as one of the greatest sources for the history of the Cromwellian Protectorate – second only to Abbott's *Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* and the *State Papers of John Thurloe*. It is astonishing to think that this is the first time that they have appeared in print.

The letters cover not only internal Irish affairs but, perhaps more importantly, they also include accounts of affairs at Whitehall and Westminster during a crucial period that saw the rise and fall of the Major Generals, the kingship debates, the declining months of Oliver's life, the

succession of Richard Cromwell, the acrimonious parliament of 1639 and the subsequent fall of the Protectorate at the hands of the military. For the political historian, the 'in-letters' from England are uniquely valuable, as they often provide a series of perspectives on the same event. Two examples may suffice. On 24 February 1657, the day after the Remonstrance which first offered the crown to Oliver was introduced to parliament, Henry was sent five letters: from his agents William Jephson, Anthony Morgan and John Reynolds, his father-in-law, Sir Francis Russell, and his brother-in-law, Charles Fleetwood. Just over two years later, in the midst of Richard's parliament, on 8 March 1659 Henry was sent four letters, from his agents Anthony Morgan and Thomas Gorges, and also from two figures more critical of the regime: Arthur Annesley and Hierome Sankey. The correspondence does not deal solely with politics, moreover. There are personal letters from the Cromwell and Russell families, from old friends and associates, discussing horses and hunting, the birth of children, the death of mutual acquaintances and of Oliver himself. Through these pages, one can begin to appreciate the ties that bound together the ruling family, but also the personal tensions that developed between Henry Cromwell and Charles Fleetwood as the decade continued.

The introduction to this volume sets the letters into their wider context, explaining the background to the period and also showing where this material fits in with Thurloe's *State Papers* and other sources. Professor Gaunt's expertise as a historian is matched by his skills as an editor. The text is uncluttered and easy to read; the index is excellent; the annotations detailed without being obtrusive. Altogether, this is a major contribution to historical scholarship.

Dr Patrick Little

Patrick Little, ed., *The Cromwellian Protectorate* (Boydell, 2007). xii and 218 pp.

This volume consists of the edited proceedings of a now celebrated day-school held by the History of Parliament Trust in January 2004, which brought together most of the current scholars of English history in the 1650s. As such, it represents a major contribution to the subject, and also a remarkable demonstration of the currently flourishing condition of the latter, something to which the Trust has itself greatly contributed. In his introduction, Barry Coward suggests that the previous relative neglect of the period can be blamed on the revisionist movement of the 1970s and 1980s, which emphasised the early Stuart and civil war years instead. It

seems more true to say that the 1650s have always lacked an appeal for historians of both the preceding and succeeding ages, seeming to belong neither to one nor the other. Revisionists tended to ignore them simply because there seemed to be nothing much there to revise.

There are nine contributors: from the generation established before 1990 come Blair Worden, Peter Gaunt, Stephen Roberts and the late and much mourned Christopher Durston, while younger scholars are represented by David Smith, Jason Peacey, Paul Hunneyball, Patrick Little and Lloyd Bowen. Together they cover most aspects of central and local government and political culture in England, with an extension into Wales by Bowen and into Scotland and Ireland by Little. The space allowed to this review precludes a discussion of each, and invites instead a summary of what the collection, overall, tells readers about the nature of the Protectorate. To an extent, it reinforces what we had thought or suspected. The regime restored order well enough for trade to flourish and urban life regenerate after the disruptions of civil strife, and introduced no distinctive style of art or architecture. Where it definitely did not represent business as usual was in its commitment to godly reformation and liberty of conscience, which ran directly counter to the beliefs of most of the political nation, and probably of most of the nation. This clash made it unable to secure a working relationship with parliaments, and so ultimately rendered it completely unworkable. To modern liberals, the relative religious toleration of the regime can look admirable, but from the House of Commons to rural Wales, it was identified with extremism and fanaticism instead.

In other respects, the essays alter the received view. Suitably for readers of *Cromwelliana*, they tend to reinforce the importance of Cromwell as the central figure of the regime. Apart from John Lambert, his councillors lacked both stature and vision, and were divided over fundamental issues. They drew what prestige they possessed from the presence among them of military men, and Cromwell both dominated their proceedings and regarded the army, instead, as the true motor of policy. In some respects he was even less of a stereotypical puritan than had been thought, hanging his palaces with tapestries showing classical myths, and decorating their gardens with statues of pagan deities, to the horror of some of his followers. The same collection also, however, emphasises the serious limitations on the effectiveness of the regime, so that in all three kingdoms its policies and followers faltered and underachieved because of a lack of central support.

The Protectorate was simply too overworked, and too unpopular, to

accomplish much of what it wished, at least in the four and a half years that were allowed to it under a leader who could not be effectively replaced and whom the burdens of office were pushing towards the grave. Patrick Little and his talented team have, therefore, presented with a portrait of Cromwell as an even more remarkable, and powerful, individual, presiding over a government that was even less successful in accomplishing its own aims, than has formerly been supposed.

Professor Ronald Hutton

Patrick Little & David L. Smith, *Parliaments and Politics during the Cromwellian Protectorate* (Cambridge University Press, 2007). xiii and 338 pp.

For too long, the three parliaments of the Protectorate have languished in relative neglect, the subject of assorted specialist articles in journals and the odd doctoral thesis, but not given the sort of detailed attention via full-length monographs which has been accorded the Long Parliament, its Rump and the Nominated Assembly. Too often, these parliaments have been portrayed simplistically as rather arid failures, addled, torn apart by exclusions and divisions, the little legislation they did pass soon wiped from the statute book, adjuncts of a short-lived, transient regime which achieved little in their own day and left no legacy. At last, these parliaments have been accorded the attention they deserve in this rich, thoughtful, impressively-researched and well-presented volume, jointly written by two of the leading authorities on the Protectorate.

Dividing the chapters between them, the authors explore many different aspects and facets of these parliaments, adopting a generally thematic approach, though generally assessing the three parliaments in turn within each chapter. The opening chapters examine what might be called the functional side of these parliaments: their place within the written constitutions of the period and their work revising or seeking to revise those constitutions; the elections to and the exclusions from the parliaments; evidence for factional politics and the attempts by different groups to control and manage the sessions; and the attitude and approach to these parliaments taken by the two Protectors, Oliver and Richard. The latter half of the volume is given over to a series of analytical chapters which assess the work of these parliaments in key areas of policy: law reform and judicature; religious reform; representation and taxation; Scottish and Irish affairs; and (particularly welcome and too often ignored

or underplayed) the role of these parliaments in the development and oversight of foreign policy.

The authors do not disguise – indeed, in places they stress and highlight – some of the negative aspects of the parliaments, including the unrealistic hopes and aspirations of Oliver Cromwell, the sweeping exclusion of commonwealthsmen and others at or soon after the opening of the first two parliaments and a bitter factional strife which is portrayed as dividing all three parliaments, though in different ways (supporters of the regime against the Presbyterians in the first parliament, civilians against the military interest in the second, and Presbyterians against commonwealthsmen in the third). The authors also make the point that many of the wider problems, unresolved issues and centrifugal forces seen in the regime as a whole in 1653-59 were reflected and to some extent played out in the parliaments of the period. On the other hand, the authors find positive traits here. They see clear evidence for change and flexibility, as well as a strong desire to reach a stable, long-term settlement. Their findings point to a positive and constructive side to these parliaments and to the Protectoral regime, as well as to the degree to which circumstances shifted and outlooks and objectives changed markedly within this five and a half year period – not only the obvious change when Richard succeeded his father in 1658 but also the changing perspective of Oliver over the years of his Protectorship.

Clearly, three such different parliaments and four such disparate sessions, lasting around 18 months in total, can be explored and assessed only selectively in a volume of this length – this is neither a comprehensive nor a definitive account of these parliaments. Some questions linger. Was the division between military and civilian cliques during the latter half of Oliver's Protectorate, the decline in the power of the council from 1657 and the assorted factional and party groupings portrayed in all three parliaments as marked, as clear-cut and as durable as the authors suggest? There is scope here for further work and for the sort of healthy debate and difference of opinion which should keep the history of the Protectorate as a whole and of its three parliaments in particular vibrant and productive. By throwing important new light on the parliaments of the Protectorate and by presenting such a clear, strongly-argued and fresh portrait, far more detailed and far more rounded than anything hitherto available in print, the authors have made a major contribution to our understanding of the period. This excellent and important volume will deservedly serve as the benchmark for all future work on these parliaments.

Professor Peter Gaunt

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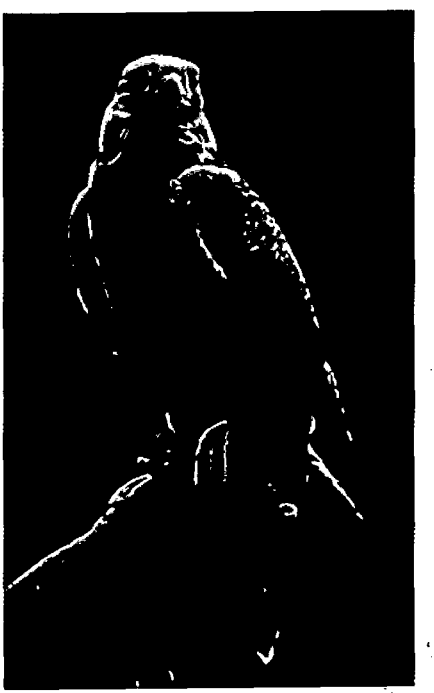

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