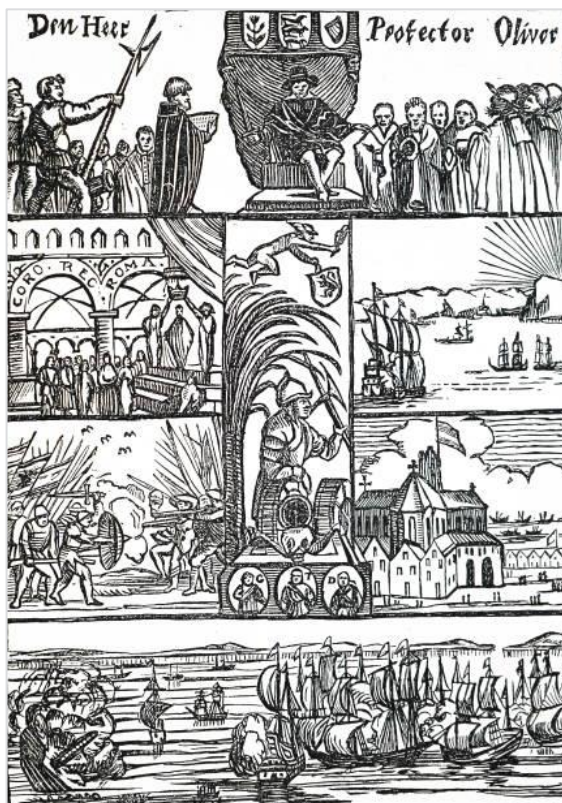


Cromwelliana

The Journal of

The
Cromwell Association



2018

The Cromwell Association

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The Cromwell Association was formed in 1937 and is a registered charity (reg no. 1132954). The purpose of the Association is to advance the education of the public in both the life and legacy of Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658), politician, soldier and statesman, and the wider history of the seventeenth century.

The Association seeks to progress its aims in the following ways:

- campaigns for the preservation and conservation of buildings and sites relevant to Cromwell
- commissions, on behalf of the Association, or in collaboration with others, plaques, panels and monuments at sites associated with Cromwell
- supports the Cromwell Museum and the Cromwell Collection in Huntingdon
- provides, within the competence of the Association, advice to the media on all matters relating to the period
- encourages interest in the period in all phases of formal education by the publication of reading lists, information and teachers' guidance
- publishes news and information about the period, including an annual journal and regular newsletters
- organises an annual service, day schools, conferences, lectures, exhibitions and other educational events
- provides a web-based resource for researchers in the period including school students, genealogists and interested parties
- offers, from time to time grants, awards and prizes to individuals and organisations working towards the objectives stated above.

Editor of *Cromwelliana*: Dr MAXINE FORSHAW, BSc, PhD

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Editor: Dr Maxine Forshaw

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Cover image:

Print of a woodcut – Den Heer Protector Oliver – title-page to *Hollantsche Mercurius*, part 4 (1653); seven compartments; at top, Oliver Cromwell seated on a throne between various figures; left centre, a coronation scene and a battle; right centre, ships and a church; centre, a soldier beneath a tree, with Mercury above; bottom centre, a naval battle.

Held by the British Museum.

Opinions expressed herein are solely those of the contributors and do not express the views or opinions of the Cromwell Association.

EDITOR'S NOTE

On 2 September 2017 our Cromwell Day commemoration service was held in St Giles' Cripplegate church in the City of London, where Cromwell was married on 22 August 1620; the address was given by Dr Stephen Roberts. This marked the start of holding our annual ceremony at places other than on Cromwell Green at the Houses of Parliament, due to the refurbishment programme of this iconic building, which is scheduled to take many years.

In this edition I am very pleased to be able to include contributions from four of the speakers who presented at the Association's study day on *Cromwell and Europe*, held in October 2017 at City Temple, London. In view of the UK's present relationship with Europe, these articles make fascinating reading. The cover illustration is from the Dutch news sheet *Hollantsche Mercurius*, published in 1653.

Other articles include an account of the taking of Peterborough in 1643; an entertaining read concerning the surveys of the clergy in Huntingdonshire in 1641 (perhaps an early form of what we now call annual job appraisals?); in the *Writings and Sources* section, Peter Gaunt explores an overlooked civil war battle in Gloucestershire which, again, in the wider sense, has modern-day parallels.

A good variety of book reviews are included, alongside the regular bibliographies of both journals and books.

My thanks to all the contributors for their valuable input to the journal, which I gratefully acknowledge.

If you are interested in contributing to future issues of the journal, please contact the Cromwell Association via the email address:
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THE POLITICAL VISION OF OLIVER CROMWELL

by Dr Stephen K Roberts

How unusual was Oliver Cromwell? We are used to thinking of his exceptional gifts. We think of his untutored, natural military genius; we think of his valour, both on the battlefield and in his relationships with political enemies and rivals. We have the evidence of his letters, speeches and ephemeral writings. He was a much-noticed person, so we have the impressions and observations of the many people who thought it worthwhile to preserve a record of their brush with greatness or notoriety. His exceptionalism is striking. The brilliant soldier who, as far as we know, had not so much as even experience in his county's trained bands before 1642; the speeches to his Parliaments as head of state that abandoned the usual formal rhetorical devices in favour of freewheeling if tortuous oratory; above all, the rise from 'living neither in any considerable height, nor yet in obscurity' to become head of state.

Because of his exceptional rise to high office, as the first member of the House of Commons ever to become head of state in England (only his son Richard briefly and weakly attained the same pinnacle), Cromwell's political vision is obscured from us by the scale of his achievement. Did he have what we would recognise as a political vision at all? The preponderant impression from the range of modern writing on Cromwell is one of inconsistency and indecisiveness, clothed in the language of Christian providentialism.

Indeed, a number of Oliver's own alleged pronouncements focus on his apparent political uncertainty: 'I can tell you Sirs, what I would not have, though I cannot what I would' (1641); 'No one rises so high as he who knows not whither he is going' (1651); and we recall the episodes of waiting on providence sometimes portrayed as indecisiveness around the great political set pieces in Cromwell's career: over the regicide in 1649, the dissolution of the Rump in 1653, and the offer of the crown to him in 1657. Some, perhaps most, of his recent biographers have depicted him as a pragmatist, and there are episodes in which his efforts to reconcile and preserve unity, such as at the Putney Debates in 1647, were articulated in cautious and conservative terms. 'The state in choosing men to serve them, takes no notice of their opinions, if they be willing faithfully to serve them, that satisfies' (July 1644); 'feigned necessities, imaginary necessities ... are

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the greatest cozenage that men can put upon the providence of God' (September 1654).

There can be no statistical way of measuring Cromwell's typicality, but at least a heightened kind of impressionism can be achieved by comparing him with his contemporaries in the context of a biographical dictionary. The History of Parliament volumes which I have been editing, on the House of Commons 1640–1660, subject the life of every MP to the same set of enquiries, ranging from basic data on birth, education, marriages, children, through office-holding in central and local government and military service to inheritance and death. Every one of the 1,803 biographies of MPs in that 20-year period passes across my desk as editor, so I've enjoyed an opportunity to compare Oliver with his contemporaries at Westminster. In his early life and into early middle age, before 1640, there is nothing in this data set to mark him out from his fellows, in terms of his education, marriage and family size. Indeed, the only striking sociological observations about Cromwell before the Long Parliament one would wish to make are that his profile is that of a prominent townsman, not that of a county gentleman, and that even his local office-holding experience was somewhat restricted by comparison with that of a typical Commons man. But it is not in quantitative but in qualitative judgments that the interest in Cromwell lies. How does he compare with his colleagues in terms of motivation?

The widest range of motives impelled men to seek a seat in the House of Commons. Many, particularly from the county gentry class, sat through a strong sense of entitlement, as the descendants of earlier parliament-men. Others were propelled there 'for the private ends of great men', as an aggrieved elector in Wales expressed it – as clients of peers or of more powerful gentlemen. Others (a small minority, it must be said) sought a seat to avail themselves of the parliamentary privilege that would prevent their arrest for debt for the duration of the parliament. The parliamentary boroughs, that sent 'burgesses' to the Commons, selected their representatives with a wildly varying degree of care and attention, and with a wide range of political involvement, from consensus behind closed doors to riotous crowd action – sometimes with an instrumental view to what a parliament could do for them; or, in some cases, in effect outsourcing their choices to powerful external interests. My reading of the generality of these motivations and selection processes suggests to me that Oliver's experience

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of being selected by Cambridge borough as one of its MPs, even though he was not a Cambridge man himself, was hardly unusual. Boroughs often chose outsiders. What was distinctive, however, was that the citizens of the university town, or at least an influential element within Cambridge, elected Cromwell knowing him to be a vigorous champion of puritanism.

In the particular nature of that puritanism lay principles that marked Cromwell out as unusual. Even before 1640 he had taken on himself the identity of one who championed a degree of protestant plurality. His boldness in 1636 in lobbying a wavering City of London sponsor of a weekday lecture or sermon captures his determination: 'Far be it that so much guilt should stick to your hands, who live in a city so renowned for the clear shining light of the gospel. You know, Mr. Storie, to withdraw the pay is to let fall the lecture ... Let the good man have his pay'. A lectureship, in Oliver's vision of it, was more than simply an augmentation of a parish ministry. It was the admittance of a plurality of voices and opinions into a Church of England led by those who sought to impose on it a stifling uniformity. On my reading of Cromwell's early years in the Long Parliament, he was more adept and sure-footed than many historians have allowed. He played no part in the impeachment of the Earl of Strafford and various other momentous projects that occupied so much parliamentary business in 1641; but in September that year, just as the official business of the House was about to be suspended for nearly six weeks, he secured the Commons' consent to his own motion that not only could afternoon sermons be established in parishes where none were currently delivered, but also that they could be funded by the inhabitants themselves. This order gave ammunition to godly parishioners seeking to challenge clergy who were inadequate or hostile to hotter varieties of Protestantism. The order, larded with scriptural quotation and godly editorial comment, was printed on the authority of the Commons alone, and I believe that Cromwell himself was the author of such fervent glosses as 'The bishops sought to overthrow lectures, prohibiting it as unlawful to preach twice on the Lord's day; what a misery was then coming upon us, likely to befall us!' The order was a concrete manifestation of Cromwell's interest in the funding of lectureships evident since 1635, and it secured for him an immediate kudos in the eyes of oppressed parishioners from other parts of the country as a specialist advocate for religious liberty.

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This concept of religious freedom we know to have been stiflingly restrictive by the standards of modern, Western pluralist societies. It created a freedom of thought and expression only for trinitarian protestant Christians, despite Oliver's own personal sympathies towards groups who, in the context of the English republic, sought to push out the boundaries further, such as Friends and other seekers. But the ideal of pluralistic fellowship under the protection of a benign state is visible throughout the rest of Oliver's career. We see the concept in the first soldiers he raised for Parliament, the 'lovely little company', a gathered church in arms, he commended to his friends. By the end of his life he had striven with a degree of success, though hardly complete success, to enshrine this godly pluralism under state protection, narrow and constantly under siege though it was, within the paper constitutions by which he governed four nations. Liberty of conscience was one of the 'fundamentals' or non-negotiable elements he was obliged to remind the 1654 parliament of. In 1655 he delivered himself of another reminder: 'I desire not to keep my place in this government an hour longer than I may preserve England in its just rights, and may protect the people of God in such a just liberty of their consciences'. In a retrospective of his own career as well as of the recent history of England, this assertion of his to the recalcitrant parliament has been interpreted variously by historians: religion was 'no part of the contest we had with the common adversary, for religion was not the thing at the first contested for, but God brought it to that issue at last, and gave it to us by way of redundancy'. In my assessment, Cromwell meant by 'religion' his idea of pluralist devotion, and by 'redundancy' he meant, using the common 17th century meaning of the word, 'abundance', so that the whole passage reads as another expression of wonder at the workings of divine providence, under which he had been – uniquely – privileged to see his political vision enshrined in the state.

Oliver was famously indifferent to political forms. He was of course not a principled republican, and did what he could in 1649, against the prevailing political tide, to defend the House of Lords. He was consistently in favour of parliaments and made them another of his fundamentals, but was willing in 1647, 1648, 1653 and 1656 to see parliaments purged, regulated or even expelled. We look in vain for consistency here, though the inference must surely be that he saw a parliament, at least in part, as analogous to the human body, an organic whole that could be healed or cured by purging or

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amputation. The whole country, he thought, in one of his most famous phrases, should be subject to healing and settling, the ‘healing’ another example of the imagery of the body never far from his political rhetoric. Compared with the driving dynamic of his religious vision, these features of his political outlook were ill-formed, even embryonic. But Cromwell’s political vision, based though it was in pluralist religious principles, was not monocular. He sought no theocracy. As we all know, he was no one-cause obsessive. As also we know, he was a man with an extensive ‘hinterland’, to use the word for the life outside politics that Denis Healey thought Margaret Thatcher conspicuously lacked. In the pages of *Cromwelliana*, we have read of Oliver’s interests in horses, in country pursuits and the other leisure interests typical of an English gentleman. He enjoyed as far as we know a long and happy marriage and again as far as we know, cordial and affectionate relations with all his children. I understand that at a recent Cromwell Association study day it was suggested that Oliver was disloyal to his friends. I would suggest that the direct opposite was in fact the case. Witness his boundless patience with the impossible John Lilburne, and the pet names he used for Sir Henry Vane (‘Brother Heron’) and Sir Arthur Hesilrige (‘Sir Roger’) until their friendship was broken in 1653, but only after many years of good fellowship. And witness the friends that served with him in the first civil war and stayed loyal to the end, some of them elevated to the Other House during the last years of the protectorate.

Cromwell’s private life hinterland served as a perspective on what a truly settled country might look like. Nine months before his death his – ‘The greatest demonstration of His favour and love appears to us in this: that He hath given us Peace’ strikes me as unquestionably heartfelt, an old man’s gratitude for troubles ended. Most, if not all, in the country would have applauded the sentiment. After I have finished speaking we will listen to a passage from Izaak Walton’s *The Compleat Angler*, first published in 1653, and said to have been printed subsequently in as many editions as Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*. I’m not aware that Cromwell was a fisherman, though if he was, it would have been of a piece with his interests in rural pursuits. Walton was an ‘unwavering royalist’ (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*), and the text, with many accretions during the subsequent decades of the seventeenth century, is generally taken to embody the royalist’s principle of political quiescence during the commonwealth and protectorate, a text for a withdrawal from political engagement as a response to a hostile

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Cromwellian state. To me, however, Walton's vision of a simple life, a sufficiency of possessions and above all a quiet conscience was an impossibilist's dream in the absence of the peace for which Cromwell actively strove. In the circumstances of the 1650s, it was Cromwell's programme of 'healing and settling', not the royalists' attempts to stir up rebellion, that offered the only prospect of peace. And in my reading of Oliver's character, motivations and political vision, he would have found nothing to dissent from in Walton's earnest injunction: 'Let us all therefore be thankful for health and a competence; and above all for a quiet conscience'. And, nearly four centuries on, who among us would not recognise the truth in those sentiments?

Dr Stephen Roberts is director of the History of Parliament, and is a vice-president of the Association.

CONSISTENCY AND CONTRAST IN CROMWELL'S POLICY TOWARDS EUROPE

by Hugh Dunthorne

In choosing 'Cromwell and Europe' as the theme of its annual study day held in October last year, the Cromwell Association was being deliberately topical, and the theme remains just as topical now. Whether we like to or not, we are all thinking at the moment about where our country's relationship with the European mainland is heading. And if we are at all historically-minded, we will be thinking too about the directions which that relationship has taken in the past.

But while our theme is topical, it is also strangely neglected. Just how neglected was brought home to me twelve months ago when I picked up in my local bookshop a copy of a new biography of Cromwell published in the Penguin Monarchs series.¹ Conscious that I would soon be giving a talk about the protector, I wanted to know what the author had to say about Cromwell's foreign policy in particular. And what did I find? Nothing, or almost nothing. The subject was alluded to in just a few lines on one page; and that was all. This was disappointing, especially when you consider the high international reputation which the protector built up for himself and for his country during the 1650s.

All the more credit, then, to the Association for making Cromwell's foreign policy the focus of our attention, both at the 2017 study day and now in the pages of this journal. It is a subject which surely deserves to be brought out of the shadows. It is a subject, moreover, which might even have something to teach our present policymakers in their dealings with the European Union.

The aim of this essay is to offer an overview of Cromwell's policy towards Europe, and in the process to indicate the underlying principles – political, commercial and religious – which drove his policy forward and gave it consistency. But that policy also displayed inconsistencies, or at least contrasts. The way in which Cromwell acted towards different European powers was not everywhere or always the same. That is why I have entitled this paper '*Consistency and Contrast* in Cromwell's policy', and I will return to some of the contrasts in due course.

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To begin with, though, we should bear in mind the kind of Europe that Cromwell was facing during the 1650s. In the first place, Europe at this time was a warlike, conflict-ridden part of the world, not unlike the Middle East today. The Thirty Years War, the great multinational civil war within the Holy Roman Empire, had ended in 1648. But other bilateral or regional wars continued to occur. From 1652 to 1654 England and the United Provinces of the Netherlands fought a bitter trade war at sea. Over a much longer period, from 1635 to 1659, a dynastic war was fought between Bourbon France and Habsburg Spain. And in the Baltic from 1655 to 1660 a regional war was fought as Sweden and Denmark-Norway, also long-term rivals, wrestled with each other for dominance in that area.

If Europe of the mid-seventeenth century was conflict-ridden, it was also politically dangerous: a Europe consisting overwhelmingly of princely states – empires and monarchies – almost all of which were potentially and in some cases actively hostile to the upstart English Republic, a state which had emerged out of armed rebellion, the overthrow and execution of a king, and the abolition of a monarchy. Thirdly, the Europe of the 1650s was a continent still divided by religion, a place where religious minorities could be persecuted, driven from their homes, and even massacred. This is what happened in 1655 to the Protestant Vaudois, or Waldensians, living in the Alpine regions of western Piedmont – an episode to which Cromwell reacted swiftly with a combination of international diplomacy and the threat of force, in order to constrain the actions of the Catholic Duke of Piedmont-Savoy.²

In dealing with the Europe of his day, Cromwell was in some ways experienced and well-qualified, in other ways much less so. In an age of war, he was himself a warrior. As a young man in the early 1630s he had watched the progress of the Thirty Years War – admittedly at a distance – admiring what he later called the ‘great campaigns’ of King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden ‘to quell the power of the papist’ states.³ When Britain’s civil wars broke out a decade later, war became Cromwell’s profession. Like Clausewitz in the nineteenth century, he regarded it as an instrument of policy. And he thought it his duty to make use of the arms which God had placed in his hands. To go to war was to ‘appeal to the judgement of heaven’; without war, there was ‘great silence in heaven’.⁴

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But conducting foreign policy towards Europe required peacemaking as well as war. It involved patient diplomacy and negotiation – what Cromwell called ‘healing and settling’ – and in this respect he was much less experienced and less well-qualified. He had no first-hand knowledge of any of the European countries with which he had dealings. At the time of his appointment as Lord Protector he had not set foot on the European continent, and would never do so. Apart from English (a tongue which at that time was as little known outside Britain as it is widely known today), he spoke no modern European language: ‘a matter of grief to him’, as he confessed to the Swedish ambassador, Christer Bonde.⁵ His knowledge of Latin, still the language of international diplomacy, was rudimentary. As the letters of his contemporaries show, moreover, Cromwell was quite open in admitting his limitations in foreign affairs and in making clear that his policy towards Europe was formulated with the help of others. He relied on the advice of members of his Council: men who had diplomatic experience or had lived abroad such as Walter Strickland, John Thurloe and Henry Lawrence. He sought advice too from his own ambassadors abroad – William Lockhart in France and Philip Meadowe in Denmark – and even from foreign ambassadors in London. On one occasion when Cromwell confessed his ignorance of Baltic affairs to Johann Friedrich Schlezer, the envoy of Brandenburg, Schlezer in response ‘obligingly gave him a short lecture on the subject, illustrated with maps’.⁶

For Cromwell, then, the conduct of foreign policy was what today we could call a learning curve, all the steeper considering that he began to undertake it when he was already well into his fifties. Yet for all his inexperience in this area, he never retreated into isolationism or disengagement. He believed that God, having brought him so far at home, had work for him to do abroad. As a result, for better or worse, Cromwell became involved, and got his country involved, in all three of the European conflicts that I have mentioned, in the process building up for himself and for England a formidable international reputation. As Clarendon famously put it, Cromwell’s ‘greatness at home’ was as nothing compared to ‘the glory he had abroad’ – a glory which was reflected also in the comments of foreign observers. The Franco-Dutch diplomat Abraham de Wicquefort, for example, spoke of kings ‘prostrating themselves’ before the protector. His ambassador Lockhart, Wicquefort tells us, was ‘received in France with all

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the honours that could have been done to the first monarch of Christendom'.⁷

In order to trace this process of engagement with Europe and the growing reputation that came with it, let us begin close to home with the first of the conflicts I have referred to, the one we now call the First Anglo-Dutch War. Of the three naval wars which England fought with the United Netherlands between 1652 and 1674, the first was certainly the most successful from England's point of view. In the course of 1653 the reformed, 'new-modelled' English navy won a series of victories which gave it command of the Channel and enabled it to blockade the Dutch coast. Anyone who has visited the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich will probably have seen Willem van de Velde's large grisaille painting of the last of these victories, the Battle of Scheveningen of 31 July 1653, in which the Dutch Admiral Tromp was killed. To emphasize that the picture was an eye-witness record, the artist included himself in the foreground, seated in the stern of a galliot sketching the action as it raged around him. But command of the Channel, which this victory helped to achieve, was not everything. Elsewhere – in the Mediterranean and the Baltic – Dutch fleets had the upper hand. And since the war was extremely costly in men and materials, both sides by this time were ready to talk peace.

Cromwell certainly welcomed this, partly for religious reasons, since he was always averse to Protestant countries fighting each other.⁸ Although not made Lord Protector until the end of 1653, he was already becoming more influential in the making of foreign policy, and he used his growing influence to push the peace talks forward. He knew, of course, that this was a war about trade. But, unlike the London merchant community, he did not believe that the only way to increase England's share of world trade was by defeating and punishing the Dutch in order to decrease their share. On the contrary, as he told Dutch negotiators in London, he believed that 'the world was wide enough' for trading nations to coexist and grow alongside one another; and he knew that no peace would last long if its terms were not fair and 'honourable'.⁹

Cromwell also recognized that continuing war between the two republics would destabilize them politically. In the Netherlands this was already happening. The defeats which the Dutch had suffered in the course of 1653

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had provoked growing opposition to the regime of the grand pensionary Johan de Witt, opposition stemming mainly from those who wanted to see a prince of the House of Orange restored to power in the country. Moreover, since the princely dynasties of Orange and Stuart were closely linked by marriage, there was a danger that Orangist opposition to De Witt's regime in the Netherlands could prompt royalist, pro-Stuart opposition to Cromwell's regime in England.¹⁰

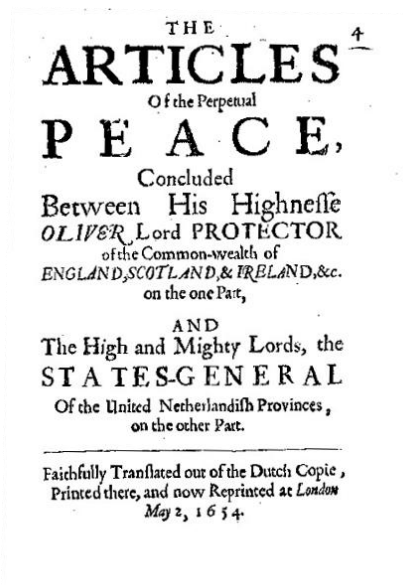


Plate 1 News pamphlet giving the terms of the Anglo-Dutch Peace Treaty signed at Westminster on 5/15 April 1654.

As contemporary news pamphlets remind us (Plate 1), the peace treaty which eventually ended the war in April 1654 was made between Oliver Lord Protector and the Dutch States General, and it is not surprising that its terms reflected Cromwell's priorities. From an economic point of view the treaty was moderate or vague, for example over the disputed right of search at sea. Beyond agreeing to pay compensation for English ships seized in the Danish Sound since the outbreak of war, the Dutch made no commercial concessions. But politically the terms were more stringent and precise. Both sides agreed not to help or shelter 'enemies or rebels' of the other. And, in a

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secret article separately negotiated between Cromwell and De Witt, the States of Holland even undertook to bar members of the Orange family from the office of stadholder which they had traditionally held.¹¹ In short, all Cromwell's underlying principles were met. Protestant states were now at peace with each other. Trade on both sides could develop freely. And the security of their governments, if not guaranteed, was at any rate substantially strengthened.

Following the Anglo-Dutch peace, commercial treaties were concluded by Cromwell with other European powers. Denmark, which had been Holland's ally during the war, agreed in September 1654 to reopen the Baltic Sound to English shipping on equal terms with the Dutch. And before that, in April and July 1654, commercial treaties were signed with Sweden and Portugal respectively, the latter including exceptionally favourable terms for English merchants which laid 'the foundation of English commercial ascendancy in Portugal during the eighteenth century'.¹²

So far, so good. But the conclusion of the Anglo-Dutch war also had a more ominous sequel. The very success of the war and the popularity of the peace boosted the confidence of the protector and his council and encouraged them to intervene in other European conflicts. By the end of 1654 England was embarking on a war with Spain and anticipating an alliance with Spain's enemy, France. Two years later in 1656–57 it had begun – rather more cautiously – to intervene in the conflict between Sweden and Denmark in the Baltic. In both cases this came about initially because one or more of the belligerent powers appealed to England for help, for a wartime alliance. In responding to these appeals Cromwell's policy was based on his usual principles of security, trade and the Protestant cause. But in other respects the actions which he took in these two theatres of war were strikingly different from each other. They illustrate the element of contrast in Cromwell's European policy which I mentioned earlier and which is worth examining more closely now.

Let us start by considering the long-running Franco-Spanish war. When in the spring of 1654 the French and Spanish ambassadors began bidding against each other to secure England's alliance, there seemed good reasons to respond. For one thing, the subsidies which they offered would help pay for England's armed forces and hence for its security. And secondly, if

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England were to reject their approaches and stand aloof, France and Spain could well sink their differences and combine to restore the Stuart monarchy in England. At first Cromwell and his council seem to have been drawn towards alliance with Spain and dreamed of giving armed support to a Huguenot uprising against the king of France. 'England had ruined the party of the Huguenots', Cromwell said (alluding to the Duke of Buckingham's failed expedition to La Rochelle in 1627), 'and it was for England to re-establish it'.¹³ But reports from the protector's agents in France soon showed how unrealistic this expectation was: French Protestants had no stomach for a new rebellion. At the same time, negotiations with Spain broke down, partly because of the monarchy's evident inability to pay the subsidy it had promised, but also because of restrictions placed on English merchants living in Spain, especially on those trading with English possessions in the West Indies. What is more, contrary to the terms of existing treaties between England and Spain, Spanish forces were attacking English ships and settlers in the Caribbean. All this caused Cromwell to change tack and come round in favour of a war not against France but against Spain, a colonial war which came to be known as the Western Design.

Not everyone in the council was convinced by this change of direction. At a meeting held in July 1654 Major-General John Lambert pointed out the expense and difficulty of fighting a war at such a distance and in a tropical region. But Cromwell insisted that the expedition would pay for itself from captured Spanish shipping and silver. Besides, he said, a war fought 'to advance the Protestant cause' against its greatest enemy was surely what God wanted. God had work for Englishmen to do 'in the world as well as at home'.¹⁴

As things turned out, Lambert's practical warnings proved right and Cromwell's faith in providence wrong. Hampered by tropical conditions and disease, the attempt by England's expeditionary force (commanded by Colonel Robert Venables and William Penn, General at Sea) to capture the island of Hispaniola was a disastrous failure – a setback which demoralised Cromwell because it seemed a clear sign of God's disapproval. Nor did things improve much when, as expected, the war against Spain escalated and moved into Europe. Only in September 1656 did an English squadron off Cadiz manage to capture part of the returning Spanish silver fleet. And it

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was not until the following March (1657), after long delays and interruptions, that Cromwell finally concluded an offensive military alliance with France, committing the two states to a combined sea and land campaign in the Spanish Netherlands, which finally forced Spain to make peace.¹⁵ So far as the English were concerned, the high point of that campaign was the capture of the port of Dunkirk after the Battle of the Dunes. A contemporary map of the siege (Plate 2) shows the English naval blockade of the port while Turenne's army (which included about 6,000 British troops) prevented the advance of Spanish forces from the north-east. When, shortly after this encounter, the poet Edmund Waller praised Cromwell for leading the English back to 'their ancient way of conquering abroad' it was the conquest of Dunkirk that he had in mind. It was Cromwell's 'last legacy to England' and a place which he valued not only for strategic and commercial reasons but also as a base from which to encourage the revival of Protestantism in Flanders and north-eastern France.¹⁶

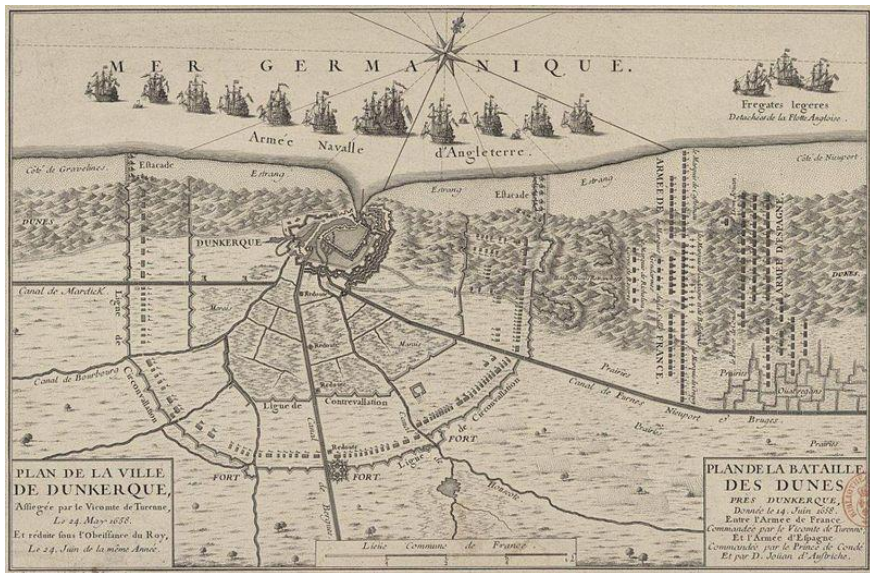


Plate 2 Contemporary French map of the Siege of Dunkirk and the Battle of the Dunes, May–June 1658.

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Compared with the aggressive and ambitious stance which Cromwell took in his dealings with Spain and France, his intervention in the Northern, or Baltic, War looks quite different, marked by caution, restraint and the desire to achieve a balanced peace. But why should Cromwell have wanted to intervene in the affairs of the Baltic at all? The reasons were commercial and strategic. All English governments in the seventeenth century wanted free trade with the Baltic countries because they were vital sources of 'naval stores' such as timber, pitch, tar and hemp – things that were essential to the English navy and hence to England's security against foreign attack. Denmark controlled access to the Baltic Sea, levying tolls on all ships passing through the Sound; and since most of those ships were Dutch, the Dutch government was able to negotiate preferential rights. What is more, thanks to their pact with the Danes, the Dutch had been able to close the Baltic altogether to English shipping during the First Anglo-Dutch War. Thus, when access was restored to the English in 1654 under the terms of Cromwell's commercial treaty with Denmark, the protector determined to protect England's interests there. Hence his concern when in 1655 Charles X of Sweden invaded Poland, threatening to spark off a general war in the Baltic in which England's access to the region might once again be cut off. And the threat of a general northern war increased in 1657 when Frederick III of Denmark declared war on Sweden, and the Swedish king in turn appealed for help to England.

Cromwell considered this appeal seriously. Charles X was, after all, the nephew of Gustavus Adolphus, the great Protestant hero whose campaigns Cromwell had admired as a young man. But as the war turned quickly in Sweden's favour, Cromwell decided to take a more cautious line, opting not for alliance with Sweden but for a policy of mediation, designed to secure peace in the north and to maintain a balance of power between the two rival kingdoms. In line with this policy, Cromwell's ambassador in Denmark, Philip Meadowe, and the French ambassador Terlon brokered a settlement which early in 1658 was duly signed by Denmark and Sweden as the Treaty of Roskilde. It divided control of the Sound between the 'two emulous crowns', as Meadowe called them, and moderated some of Sweden's territorial demands.¹⁷

That was not the end of the northern conflict, however. In August 1658, in defiance of the peace treaty, Charles X launched a new attack on Denmark,

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occupying part of the island of Zealand and laying siege to Copenhagen. Cromwell died soon after, on 3 September 1658. But his policy of mediation survived, now taken up by the Dutch leader Johan de Witt who for some time had favoured a similar line. Backed by a show of naval force from Dutch and English fleets sent to the Baltic in the autumn of 1658 and spring of 1659, a peace agreement was negotiated at The Hague by De Witt himself and the ambassadors of England and France, and then imposed on the warring northern states. As the Treaty of Copenhagen, signed in June 1660, it largely conformed to the terms which Cromwell had initiated at Roskilde.

In collaboration with other powers, Cromwell had thus helped to achieve a balanced peace in the Baltic, which, by dividing control of the Sound, ensured England's access to its most important source of naval supplies. What is more, he had done this not by war but by diplomacy, by mediation backed by a show of force.

What conclusions can be drawn from this overview? In sketching the outlines of Cromwell's relations with the states of Europe, I have tried both to draw attention to what he called the *fundamenta* of his policy, the underlying principles which run consistently through it, and at the same time to point out its contrasts, the noticeable difference there is between Cromwell's moderate, even cautious dealing with the Dutch and Scandinavian states and the more aggressive stance which he adopted towards Catholic Spain and, to a lesser extent, towards France.¹⁸

Cromwell's policy towards Europe was criticised as well as praised by his contemporaries and by later generations. Republicans – commonwealthmen, as they were called – complained that he had put the security of his own regime before the interests of the nation as a whole. He had made a 'deplorable' peace with the Dutch, they said, 'without those advantages for trade which they who beat them did intend to have had'. And by allying with France in a war against Spain, he had broken the balance of power in Western Europe, hastening Spain's decline and making France 'too great for Christendom'.¹⁹

But are these criticisms just? It is true that Cromwell acted to secure his regime, as all governments do. But his belief in freedom of trade as the basis for peaceful competition between commercial countries like England and

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Holland was not mistaken. By the 1670s, after two further and equally damaging Anglo-Dutch wars had been fought, Cromwell's belief had become almost a commonplace of economic thought. As one pamphleteer put it, trade was not 'a mistress that only one can marry'. The world was 'wide enough and the sea large enough for both nations to exercise their skill and industry'.²⁰ Nor was Cromwell's league with France against Spain really the 'false step' which it seemed in hindsight to some of his detractors.²¹ In the 1650s France's aggressive expansion still lay in the future and the more immediate danger to England came not from French but from Habsburg power. As the best of Cromwell's early biographers, the nonconformist John Bancks, pointed out in 1742, 'the king of Spain, in particular, was possessed of the Netherlands, just in our neighbourhood, which rendered him formidable and made it the interest of England' – 'the general and national' interest, Bancks emphasized – 'to support France against him'.²²

Despite Cromwell's critics, then, there are good reasons to be positive in reaching a final assessment of our subject. It is true that the protector's European policy was hugely expensive, mounting up debts reckoned at almost £2 million in 1659.²³ Even so, it achieved a good deal. As Toby Barnard has pointed out, it 'kept the British Isles safe from foreign or royalist invasions'. It asserted and promoted English interests, protected and advanced English trade, and dramatically raised the international standing of the country and of its new regime. Many contemporaries, and especially foreign contemporaries, compared all this favourably with the relative weakness of Stuart foreign policy before and after Cromwell's time.²⁴ For a man who was in some ways, and by his own admission, ill-qualified by education and experience to conduct foreign policy, it is surely remarkable that Cromwell, with the help of his council and his diplomats, achieved as much in Europe as he did.

This paper was presented at the Cromwell Association Study Day, October 2017: 'Cromwell and Europe'.

¹ David Horspool, *Oliver Cromwell: England's Protector* (London, 2017).

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- ² For this aspect of Cromwell's foreign policy, see the paper by Richard Newbury, *Cromwelliana* 2018, pp 25–38
- ³ M. Roberts (ed.), *Swedish Diplomats at Cromwell's Court, 1655–1656* (Camden Society, Fourth Series, 36; London, 1988), pp. 83–84.
- ⁴ Quoted in S.R. Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate, 1649–1656* (4 vols., London, 1903), vol. iii, p. 41; and in B. Worden, *The Rump Parliament 1648–1653* (Cambridge, 1974), p. 304.
- ⁵ Roberts, *Swedish Diplomats*, p. 114.
- ⁶ M. Roberts, 'Cromwell and the Baltic', in Roberts' *Essays in Swedish History* (London, 1967), p. 179, n. 48.
- ⁷ E. Hyde, earl of Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England*, ed. W.D. Macray (6 vols., Oxford, 1888), vol. vi, p. 94 (xv.152); A. de Wicquefort, *The Embassador and His Functions* (1681; trs. J. Digby, London, 1716), p. 17. For other examples, see my chapter, 'Cromwell and Europe', in *Cromwell's Legacy*, ed. Jane A. Mills (Manchester, 2012), pp. 229–30.
- ⁸ Toby Barnard, *The English Republic 1649–1660* (London, 1982), pp. 19, 43.
- ⁹ *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, ed. W.C. Abbott (4 vols., Cambridge, Mass., 1937–47), vol. iii, p. 73.
- ¹⁰ In 1641 Prince William II of Orange had married Mary Stuart, eldest daughter of King Charles I. The marriage was short-lived, since in November 1650 the prince died of smallpox and the office of stadholder which he had held was left vacant in the majority of the Dutch provinces. His widow, however, and her infant son (the future William III) born a few months later, continued to live at the Orange court in The Hague, making it the focus of a resurgent Orangist party. See P. Geyl, *Orange and Stuart 1641–1672* (London, 1969).
- ¹¹ *Writings and Speeches of Cromwell*, vol. iii, pp. 897–911.
- ¹² D.B. Horn, *Great Britain and Europe in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1967), p. 271.
- ¹³ Quoted in Gardiner, *Commonwealth and Protectorate*, vol. iii, p. 115 and n. 3.
- ¹⁴ *The Clarke Papers*, ed. C.H. Firth (4 vols., Camden Soc., New Series, 49, 54, 61, 62; London 1891–1901), vol. iii, pp. 207–8.
- ¹⁵ For the tortuous negotiations which led to the Anglo-French Treaty of Paris of 23 March 1657, see the valuable article by David L. Smith,

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- 'Diplomacy and the religious question: Mazarin, Cromwell and the treaties of 1655 and 1657', *E-rea: Revue électronique d'études sur le monde Anglophone* 11.2 (2014): <http://erea.revues.org/3745>.
- ¹⁶ 'Upon the Late Storm', in *the Poems of Edmund Waller*, ed. G. Thorn Drury (London, 1893), pp. 162–3.
- ¹⁷ P. Meadowe, *A Narrative of the Principal Actions Occurring in the Wars betwixt Sweden and Denmark* (London, 1677), p. 60.
- ¹⁸ Cf. the perceptive conclusion of Roberts, 'Cromwell and the Baltic', pp. 172–4.
- ¹⁹ *Diary of Thomas Burton*, ed. J.T. Rutt (4 vols., London, 1828), vol. iii, p. 474; S. Bethel, *The World's Mistake in Oliver Cromwell* (London, 1668), pp. 3–4, 9.
- ²⁰ [J. Hill], *The Interest of these United Provinces* (Middelburg, 1673), sig. G2 verso.
- ²¹ For example, Bishop White Kennet, *A Complete History of England* (3 vols., London, 1706), vol. iii, pp. 208–9.
- ²² [J. Banks], *A Short Critical Review of the Political Life of Oliver Cromwell* (2nd ed, London, 1742), pp. 199–200.
- ²³ R.E. Mayers, *1659: the Crisis of the Commonwealth* (Woodbridge, 2004), p. 117 and n. 20.
- ²⁴ Barnard, *English Republic*, p. 76.

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CROMWELL'S INTERVENTION IN 1655 TO HALT THE CONFESSIONAL CLEANSING OF MILTON'S 'SLAUGHTERED SAINTS' IN PIEDMONT

How and why did Cromwell intervene in 1655 to support the Protestant sect most remembered now by Milton's lines?

by Richard Newbury

I first came across the Waldensians at 14 years old, as part of the then O-level European History syllabus at about the same time as I came across Oliver Cromwell in the English History syllabus and also learnt Milton's outraged agitprop lines. This was fortunate because 15 years later in Venice I met a member of this audience [at the Cromwell Study Day] and her sister and her dog, and mentioned I could find Venetian baroque oppressive – perhaps because I was a Protestant. We are Protestants too. Waldensian? 'Avenge O Lord thy slaughtered saints ...'. Milton's words won the heart of a determinedly anti-matrimony journalist and teacher!

Cromwell himself would have learnt about the heroic proto-Protestant Waldensians living their faith 'underground' from Calabria to the Baltic, at Huntingdon Free Grammar School, where the Master Rev Thomas Beard taught through his textbook *Theatre of God's Judgements*, that all Nature mirrored God's all-seeing will. The deeds of this man of action were thus 'Not Mine O Lord but Thine', and both success or failure marked divine approval or disapproval! Thus, Cromwell's great victories were blessed, but his failures such as the 1655 'Western Design' in the Caribbean, and his temptation over taking the crown were marks of divine disapproval. His success, as in the survival of the Waldensians, marked the relief of evident approval. *The Book of Revelations*, the source of so many of his strategic plans – for were not the persecuted Huguenots and Waldensians the two servants killed at the Door of the Beast of the Apocalypse!

With John Milton it was personal. Milton's dearest friend at St Paul's School had been Charles Diodati, whose early death broke John's heart. Charles was the nephew of Giovanni Deodati whose Italian translation (in exile) of the Bible, the first in the vernacular, was to be used by the Waldensian Church.

It has been claimed, and believed by many in England, that St Paul had taken the shortcut through the Cottian Alps and the Waldensian Valleys on his way to Provence and Marseilles. 'Anglican' divines such as Hooker the

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theologian and the bibliophile Archbishop Ussher of Armagh and Primate of Ireland believed that St Paul had founded a primitive church in the Alps and that the Waldensians were the survivors of this. They therefore provided a living link with the Pre-Gregorian Early Christian Church. So the reformed Catholicism of the Church of England, rather than the post-Gregorian Church of Rome, was the true successor to the Primitive Church.

However, it was at the rich crossroads of Europe, in Lyon, that in c.1180 Waldo, a rich merchant, sees a friend suddenly die during a party. He repents, embraces poverty and follows Jesus' instruction to his disciples and travels along with his followers as Christ had instructed his disciples to do and preaches the gospel in the vernacular. This was dynamite. The interpretation, or even the translation, of the Word was exclusively the property – and power – of the Church of Rome.

This way lay heresy. Francis, a generation later, was tolerated, and then encouraged, because he did not preach the Word. The Waldensians went underground; centring on Alpine holes-in-the-wall in the Cottian Alps such as Pra del Torno in val Angrogna, where the barbets [uncles] studied the Bible in the winter and then set off in pairs as 'merchants' with 'a pearl of great price' to visit isolated little communities throughout Europe. What we know of them is from transcripts of the Inquisition interrogations in trials for heresy.

Throughout the Middle Ages the underground clandestine Waldensian Church also inspired important Reformation figures. Richard II's queen was Anne of Bohemia and, via her connections, Wycliffe's chief follower Peter Payne linked up in Prague with the Hussites, the Taborites and the Moravian Brethren and through them the Waldensians. 'I shall be condemned and called a Waldensian and a Wycliffite', wrote Luther. Calvin as a law student in Bourges was encouraged to study Luther's works by his landlord, a Waldensian cloth merchant. 'Waldensians grow everywhere like parsley' is the saying.

The ideas of Luther and his follower Melancthon quickly spread south of the Alps from 1519, and two students at Turin University became Waldensian barbas [uncles] or preachers. Luther himself wrote to Duke

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Charles III of Savoy in 1523 to promote the preaching of the gospel. In 1526, two barbas, Giorgio from Calabria and Martin Gronin from the Angrogna Valley were sent north by Synod to discover more and met William Farel who provided them with a large quantity of Reformation literature to take back. This studied, the Synod of Merindol of 1530 sought clarification on questions of doctrine, especially predestination, morality, liturgy, discipline and church organisation, and then returned to be welcomed by the Reformer John Oecolampadius of Basle, who sent them on to Martin Bucer (later Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge) at Strasbourg. William Farel from Geneva accompanied them back to the 1532 Synod of Chanforan, high in val Angrogna, which voted, after long and contentious debate, to join Farel's Genevan Reformation – and also to pay for a new French translation of the Bible to be made in the Coleg de Barba, the small theological faculty high up in the natural hole-in-the-wall of Pra del Torno. 'Make your own Reformation but have much regard to your own heritage as to that of others', had been the considered advice of the Czech Christian Brothers in a letter to the 1533 Synod in Prali, but the dye had been cast. Now too, the itinerant ministry, confession and vows of poverty and chastity were also abolished.

The Waldensian resistance in their mountain fastnesses was so determined that in 1561 the Duke of Savoy, with the Treaty of Cavour, granted, alone at that time in Europe, toleration of a different confession from that of the ruler; however, only within strict bounds outside the plains and valley bottoms and with the order to keep their settlements and churches above 600 metres.

Yet in the same year of 1561, the Waldensians in Philip II's Italian Province of Calabria, the Waldensian community in Guardia Piemontese was massacred at what is still called the 'Bloody Gate'. The characteristic traditional Waldensian dress still remains; but no Waldensians. Again in 1561, their Waldensian brothers and sisters in Dauphiné just over the Alps from the Italian Waldensian Valleys, who had also voted as congregations for non-resistance, were summarily exterminated.

Farel had been impressed by the Bible study of the Waldensians in tiny matchbook-sized Gospels. However, these were in the 'old French' dialect

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(by the 1530s barely comprehensible) and so these versions of the Good News needed modernising as well. The Cambridge University Library has a collection of these 'jewels of great price' rescued from the flames by Samuel Morland, Cromwell's Commissioner Extraordinary to Turin, from the week-long burning of religious books that followed the fall of Pra del Torno in 1655.

The Reformation was triumph of the Word over the Image; indeed it was often iconoclastic towards 'distractions' such as painted walls and sculptures. The pulpit replaced the rood screen. The resurrected, therefore risen, Christ replaced the crucified dead Christ suspended over the rood screen, half hiding the priest as he performed the miracle of the elements becoming the body and blood of Christ.

For Luther the miracle was that as in Romans 1,17 'The just shall live by faith'. No human action can save sinful man, but only what God does through the believers when they believe in the power of His son's death on the cross and resurrection which alone can bring forgiveness and salvation. There was no church and no priest with a bank account of Masses to mediate between the individual man or woman and God. For Luther there was 'a priesthood of all believers'. Luther was locked up, disguised as a knight in the Wartburg Castle, but printing – the new 'internet' of its time – meant that his books were everywhere; and above all, Luther's translation of the Bible, which created a unified German language, but divided Christendom. In modern times, the internet too brings unanticipated consequences.

It was Calvin's cousin Pierre Robert Olivetan, a Hebrew scholar, hidden in the Couleg de Barbi in the hole-in-the-wall of Pra del Torno at the end of val Angrogna, who newly translated the Old Testament from Hebrew and revised Lefèvre d'Étaples' New Testament from the Greek and signed it off on the final page: Des Alpes, Fevrier 1535. In his forward he wrote:

The poor people [Waldensian shepherds] who make you this gift have been banished and separated from you for more than 300 years. Ever since, they have been regarded as the most wicked, execrable and ignominious of all time. Their name has become a byword, a

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term of reproach and abuse. Yet they are truly patient people who by silence and hope have overcome all the assaults and violence of their enemies.

In 1534 Olivetan's young cousin, John Calvin, resigned his Catholic benefice in France and moved to Basle. 'Without the Gospel we are useless and vain, without the Gospel wealth is poverty, wisdom is folly before God, strength is weakness. But through the power of the Gospel we are made children of God'. So wrote Calvin in the Latin preface to what became, until the 19th century, the accepted French Protestant version of the Bible, just as Luther's was the German one. In 1588 its English translation became the English Geneva Bible – the Bible used by Cromwell throughout his life! This was the moral and even physical world that Oliver and his contemporaries inhabited.

This, however, was the 'pure' Genevan translation, which gave its adherents the name of 'Puritans'. Here was no biblical evidence for bishops, copes or choirs but rather *washing* for 'baptism', and *congregation* instead of 'church'. The intra-Protestant battle had moved from the fight to print the Bible to the battle for which Bible. In the spectrum of church and chapel, Cromwell was a Congregationalist, who firmly believed that we reach faith through individual error. He dissolved all three of his Parliaments because they sought to impose, after abolishing Anglicanism, Presbyterian confessional uniformity. For Cromwell and his soldiers this was jumping out of the frying pan into the fire – in imposing on the individual seeker after truth another exclusive authoritarianism. We advance in faith through responding to God's blessing, or otherwise, of our actions. Individual faith made each sinner responsible for his actions. Science, for we are in the age of Newton and Boyle, is equally a testing of hypotheses – of trial and error. Cromwell is a Janus figure on the cusp of modernity!

If the tiny Waldensian Church of 'slaughtered saints', whose church had reputedly been formed by St Paul while crossing the Alps, could produce this 'pure' version of the Bible, and also bear a huge cost of up to 1,500 gold ecus to do so, no wonder the Lord Protector felt and reacted, as Samuel Morland, the ambassador to Turin, said: 'as if the massacre was happening to his closest family members'.

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No less impassioned was John Milton, Cromwell's Latin Secretary and writer in Latin, the language of diplomacy, of dispatches. These, in the case of the Piedmontese Easter of 1655 were so intemperate and 'undiplomatic', that the young ambassador, Samuel Morland, thought it would be counterproductive to present them unvarnished directly to Madama Cristina, the Dowager Duchess of Savoy and Regent on behalf of her son, for she had not only initiated the persecution but was also the sister of Charles I's widow, Queen Henrietta Maria. But then the children of converts are invariably bigots!

Milton also galvanised British public opinion with his famous sonnet, in which gory and graphic images describe massacres also seen in English and Dutch woodcuts taken from eyewitness diplomatic descriptions.

On the Late Massacre in Piedmont:

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold,
Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipp'd stocks and stones;
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese that roll'd
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubl'd to the hills, and they
To Heav'n. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
O'er all th' Italian fields where still doth sway
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundred-fold, who having learnt thy way
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

The Massacre

On 25th January 1655 the Savoyard Judge Andrea Gastaldo pronounced an Ordinance that the Waldensians who had descended into the valley floors at Torre Pellice, Luserna and the entrance to the Po Valley, all places

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prohibited to the Waldensians under the 1561 Treaty of Cavour, had to return to their mountainsides after selling their farms to Catholics.

This legal proceeding seemed to be the usual diplomatic/judicial dance once again. However, this time a powerful and determined trio had combined at the Turin Ducal Court at Rivoli to deal with these polluting heretics once and for all. The Marquis of Pianezza shared the counter-Reformation repugnance so keenly felt by the Madama Cristina and her Jesuit confessor. Pianezza advanced the 35 miles to val Pellice on 17th April 1655 with an army of 700 soldiers and a motley crew of land-hungry militia while the Waldensians sent their women, children and animals a la Rua, to the high pastures at the head of the valleys. Meanwhile 500 men stayed in trenches under the redoubtable partisan leader Bartolomeo Jahier.

Pianezza occupied Torre Pellice on the valley floor and, with Pianezza's troops busy looting, a stalemate would have ensued had not a company of Irish Catholic mercenaries (going to fight against the Spanish for the Governor of Villanova d'Asti) appeared over the Sestriere Pass at the head of val Chisone, the neighbouring Waldensian valley. Thus, they threatened the Waldensian rear. Pianezza invited these willing freebooters to rape and massacre the Waldensians in their mountain refuge in exchange for booty and wine.

However, what made this the massacre of the Piedmontese Easter – the Protestant Easter was different from the Catholic which was still adhering to the Gregorian Calendar date – was that Pianezza learnt that six French regiments (again, often composed of, or with, Irish mercenaries) were also marching over the Alps on their way to besiege Pavia which had just been captured from the French by the Spanish.

On 19th April Pianezza reported 'there arrived here with great cheerfulness' Sir James Preston's Irish Regiment. 'I have lodged them to their satisfaction and had them provided with wine at the expense of these "barbette" [Waldensians]. As far as bread goes I hope that they will be able to find plenty soon where they are headed to and perhaps even some better things'. The Chamblay Regiment arrived on 21st April, the Grancey on 22nd, the Villa on the 23rd and the Carignan and the Montpezat on 29th. In all, 5,000

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men were quartered with license to pillage, rape and massacre among a population of around 10,000. A figure of 1,712 killed (of both sexes) is the most reliable.

At the end of April, Pianezza reported:

Yesterday they began to throw away their arms wherever they happened to be and simply pleaded for mercy. It is amazing to see to what misery they have been reduced; losing themselves in flight across the snow, abandoning their own children of whom some have died ...most of the heretics have crossed the mountains though many have died from cold and avalanches.

A Jesuit priest, Fabrizio Torre, whose task was to deal with Waldensian recantations wrote to a fellow Jesuit:

It is not a matter of war, but rather of exterminating a multitude of enemies of God and rebels against their prince....And who can tell of the public devotions, the confessions, the communions and prayers before the Blessed Sacrament, so that the troops imbued thereby with faith and courage swept over the snow-laden Alps hunting down the wild beasts of hell with such butchery that to escape death by steel they rushed headlong with wives and children into the valleys where they saw nothing but fire and slaughter...the soldiers terrified these wretches , who could find no better way to escape than to kill themselves. Others taking better advice came in their hundreds, in remorse and humility, to the Holy Catholic Faith.

Given the bestial behaviour of these egged-on troops illustrated, described and witness-signed by Waldensians and Catholics in Samuel Morland's 700 page book of 1658, 'With a most naked and punctual relation of the late Bloody Massacre in 1655', suicide would have seemed a wholly rational option.

There followed the destruction of the Rora Valley (with Gentile's Irish regiment 'doing marvels') and that of the Germanesca and Chisone Valleys. By 6th May, Father Ceserana, Madama Cristina's Jesuit confessor,

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accompanying Pianezza, could report 'that the heretics have been hunted and proscribed from every place, land, roof of the surrounding area and are vanquished, beaten and subjected'.

On 18th May in the Cathedral Square in Turin, the remarkably low number of 40 Waldensians including two pastors made their abjuration. However, on the heights of Rora, the Valley of the Invincibles above Villar and from Pramollo, two masters of guerrilla resistance – Bartolomeo Jahier and Joshua Janavel – led an indomitable and exemplary resistance: even indeed in July briefly retaking Torre Pellice, though Jahier was surrounded and killed with his 50 men. Janavel's guerrilla manual of instructions is difficult to better.

If Huguenot military help from volunteers was already forthcoming, so too was pressure from 'The Protestant International' led by Oliver Cromwell. This was stimulated also by the able media war the literate Bible-reading Waldensians were conducting. No longer was this just a confessional cleansing land-grab. Now the Waldensian question mobilised the faithful in Huguenot France, Switzerland, and of course Holland, but above all in the greatest Protestant European power that was the United Republic of England, Scotland and Ireland, whose reactions were informed by the work of the Waldensians' chief secret service agent in this matter: the Italian-speaking Swiss pastor of the French-speaking Protestant Church in London, Pastor Stoppa, who was constantly travelling on the Continent.

Being in the midst of negotiating a peace with Cardinal Mazzarin's France, Cromwell could put pressure on Mazzarin to dictate terms to his client neighbour the Duke of Savoy and his Bourbon Regent mother, Madama Cristina. Then there was Admiral Blake's powerful 25 ship Mediterranean fleet (one of three Cromwellian fleets) attacking white slavery by Barbary pirates. Blake could be diverted to bombard the Savoyard port of Nice, as international opinion believed imminent. Cromwell also proposed British military action to support the tiny remaining Waldensian army in Val Chisone but, as Secretary of State Thurloe pointed out, nothing like that could be done without the support of the vacillating Swiss, who were themselves involved in an armed spat between the Protestant and Catholic cantons.

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Already military stalemate had been reached by the Savoyards, who now found themselves with a terrible reputation throughout Protestant Europe and beyond. Mazzarin proposed a compromise peace, while Morland, the British ambassador at Turin, issued Latin threats written by Milton. For a domestically none-too-popular Cromwellian regime, the popularity of the support for the Waldensians from Fifth Monarchists to Anglicans was a boost and was expressed in the £39,000 raised by a national day of fasting in June which kicked off with a personal contribution of £2,000. [Note that £39,000 is 80 per cent of the cost of Cromwell's 'Western Design' of sending a fleet and an invading army to Hispaniola and then Jamaica.] Apart from aid in restoring the Waldensians' land, farmhouses and churches and providing for pastors, some of this sum will have been spent on continued resistance after the precarious peace which lasted down to the 1684 Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. But that is another story – which Napoleon called 'One of the finest actions in military history!'

Meanwhile, the Treaty of Pinerolo (then French Territory and garrisoned with 10 per cent of the French Army) on 18th August 1655 was negotiated by a Waldensian delegation led by the moderator Jean Leger, a Savoyard delegation led by Count Truchi and one of the five Swiss cantons led by Salomon Hirzel from Zurich, and all under the decisive moderation of the French ambassador to Turin, Ennemond Servient, who knew what Mazzarin knew Cromwell wanted. By this agreement, the Duke of Savoy conceded Letters Patent granting freedom of worship to the Waldensians in their Three Valleys, as well as reparations, permission to trade and exoneration from certain taxes – until the next time!

Only then did Cromwell sign a military treaty with France against Spain. At the Battle of the Dunes, what the French Army called 'the best troops in the world' captured Dunkirk and its hinterland from Spain. The port, previously a nest of Royalist privateers under Prince Rupert, was England's first Continental outpost since the loss of Calais a century before, and crucially provided control of both sides of the Straits of Dover.

Not for nothing did Pauluzzi, the Venetian ambassador to London, report in a dispatch to the Doge that 'the Court of England by sheer force has made itself the most dreaded and conspicuous in the world'.

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John Thurloe, the all-seeing Secretary to the Council, effectively was of the decided opinion that 'The Protector in all these cases governs himself by the Protestant cause'.

The relief of the Waldensians gave every appearance of being a blessed success. The Treaty of Pinerolo August in 1655 could have been more generous – and would have been – if the 'Western Design' to capture Hispaniola with a fleet and army had succeeded. Spain would have been severely reduced in power, the flow of silver and gold to Spain severely curbed. At this point the threat of the reality of an Anglo-Spanish alliance against France would have forced Mazzarin's hand further.

Indeed, was the humanitarian support for the Waldensians a strategic miscalculation leading to an alliance with a rising powerful enemy, France, rather than allying with a declining enemy, Spain? This remains an open question for armchair war-gamers.

However, I think one finds the key to Cromwell's foreign policy back in 1630 when he sells up, moves to St Ives, convenient for embarking his worldly goods to King's Lynn, so as to be ready to join the next flotilla across the 'desert' of the Atlantic to the Promised Land. As a shareholder in the Providence Island Company, however, would his destination be not Massachusetts but rather off the coast of Nicaragua, ready to 'reverse the Euphrates' [Revelations] of Spanish gold that was financing the Hapsburg war machine. The 20 Board of Directors seem to be a list of the leading political leaders of the Parliamentary Opposition and of the Protectorate: Lords Warwick, Holland, Bedford, Brooke, and Saye and Sele, all of whom raised regiments for Parliament, while the Earl of Essex was Commander of the Army, Oliver St John was the company lawyer, John Pym was treasurer and Oliver's cousin John Hampden was the contact between the shareholders and their agents on the islands. The settlers had to be 'godly' and be able to mix growing cotton and tobacco with privateering against the Spanish bullion fleet. Card-playing, gaming, whoring, drunkenness and profanity were banned. The historian C V Wedgwood noted wryly that 'a carefully chosen minister – a German Calvinist refugee from the Palatinate – was expelled for singing catches on a Sunday. The Earl of Warwick and his

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friends were sincerely trying to create three nests of pirates with the behaviour and morals of a Calvinist theological seminary'. Paradise found!

Anyone studying the massacre of the Waldensians in 1655 and its wider ramifications owes a great debt to Dr Giorgio Vola of Florence University, whose premature death lost me a friend and removed the most assiduous Cromwell hound to be found in libraries and archives wherever the trail led. His forensic labours in tracking the remains of the monies donated in 1655 have opened up a fascinating trail as to how money flowed through the financial system of a country which, unlike France, Spain and Holland, did not have a national bank, but used the resources of the great city financiers, and the international connections of the exiled Protestant churches in London. He deserves a lecture on his own.

I choose to end on a positive, even a miraculous, note. Pope Francis, the first Jesuit to become a pope, was the son of dirt-poor Piedmontese emigrants to Argentina. He became Head of the South American Jesuits and then Archbishop of Buenos Aires, where he got to know the Spanish-speaking Waldensian church colony in Montevideo and invited one retired Waldensian pastor to take a room in the Jesuit retired priests' home. So when Francis became pope he made contact, with the result that a meeting was arranged when the Pope came to Turin as part of the Turin Shroud celebrations – not something a Jesuit would be over-enthused about. And so on 22 June 2015, on prime morning TV time, the Pope came to the Waldensian Church just round the corner from Corso Madama Cristina – yes, her!

On a dias before the pulpit (no altar of course) with lots of jolly body language with the moderator – Pope Francis asked pardon for 800 years of persecution and kissed the moderator's gift of the Olivetan Bible, which the Pope has since placed conspicuously in the Vatican Library. The blessing at the end of the service was given by a Waldensian Methodist clergywoman. When you think about it, it takes your breath away. You cannot, indeed should not, forget the past, but you can use it to rise to another level, as Archbishop Rowan Williams commented. I think Cromwell would have found much to commend in this. He believed in long learning curves!

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This paper was presented at the Cromwell Association Study Day, October 2017: 'Cromwell and Europe'.

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REFORM, REPUBLICANISM AND REFUGE: ANGLO-SWISS RELATIONS IN THE MID-SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

by Dr Vivienne Larminie

The topic of Anglo-Swiss relations, especially in the seventeenth century, has not featured greatly in recent early modern historiography. Sixteenth-century historians have explored the debt owed by English reformers to Uldrych Zwingli and the Swiss reformation.¹ Eighteenth century historians have looked at the Swiss sojourn of historian Edward Gibbon, the grand tour, cross-currents in the development of pietism, and the interactions of Enlightenment and early Romantic figures resident in the Confederation.² But despite some notable Victorian and early twentieth century research and publication, our period has remained largely unknown territory.³ The exceptions this side of the Channel have generally occurred where Swiss matters have intersected with studies of Geneva, the concerns of Huguenots, or the diplomatic activity attendant on the Thirty Years War and the wars of William III.⁴ In Switzerland attention has been greater, but some important pioneering work was not translated and now understandably shows its age, while the next generation of scholars emerged only very recently.⁵

At one level, this might seem hardly surprising. For some in this country the Swiss Confederation was – perhaps still is – a small land-locked collection of territories in the middle of the European continent, isolated by mountains, bewildering in its complex political structures and its confessional divisions, and impenetrable in its linguistic divisions and dialects. When I first plunged into Lausanne archives in the mid 1990s, there was surprise (as well as pleasure) that an English historian should bother to investigate them.⁶ In anticipation of the bicentenary of a seismic revolution in 1798, Swiss historians were then beginning to rescue the early modern Pays de Vaud from what seemed like the deep shadow of an *ancien régime* during which, according to tradition, nothing much had happened, and there had been very little interaction with the outside world.⁷

Since then, perspectives have begun to change. It seems that there is much to be gained from further probing of Anglo-Swiss networks; seemingly isolated instances of interaction invite closer analysis. To list the most obvious, thanks partly to the ‘lurid’ report by the Grisons-born government agent and minister of the French church in Threadneedle Street, Jean-

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Baptiste Stoupe, English men and women were motivated to offer humanitarian relief to the persecuted Waldensians; this involved communicating with the Confederation.⁸ A couple of years before the massacre in Piedmont, Johann Jakob Stokar of Schaffhausen had been despatched by the Protestant cantons to mediate in the first Anglo-Dutch war.⁹ Diplomats and ecumenists of note including Oliver Fleming, John Pell and John Durie, engaged with those Protestant cantons.¹⁰ After the Restoration, among several regicides who took refuge on the shores of Lake Geneva, Edmund Ludlowe lived there for thirty years, and it was from this vantage point that he wrote his manuscript memoirs.¹¹

The subject is a developing one, and here there is space only to introduce a few themes. It seems wise to start with a short sketch of the seventeenth century Swiss Confederation, which was not co-terminus with its modern successor. It continued more or less unchanged between 1536, when the powerful and expansionist German-speaking canton of Bern captured the French-speaking Pays de Vaud from the Duke of Savoy, and presided over a Protestant reformation there, to the aforementioned revolution of 1798. The thirteen cantons of the old *Eidgenossenschaft* included the city states of Bern, Zürich, Lüzern and Basel, and rural cantons including the founding trio, deep in the Alps. On some issues newcomers like Basel, Schaffhausen and the linguistically divided Fribourg/Freiburg had to defer to longer-established members in the deliberations of the diet. Outside the confederacy, but associated with it to a greater or lesser extent, were allied and immensely varied autonomous territories. These included on the one hand the sophisticated independent city-state of Geneva (crucially, separated from the Confederation by French enclaves) and on the other the federated communities of the Valais and the Grisons/Graubünden, the latter in turn enjoying their own links with the Valtellina (one of the regions inhabited by Waldensians). Then there were condominiums, subject territories with diverse jurisdictions, including Aargau on the northern plateau and the Ticino, far away over the Alps.¹² Political relations between the component parts were complicated by intersecting jurisdictions and treaties, by the traditional deference to older cantons previously mentioned, by the strategic position of cantons like Lüzern in relation to the mountain passes on the military routes from Spanish Italy to the Holy Roman Empire, and not least for our purposes, by confessional divisions.

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At the risk of over-simplification, most of the *relatively* economically advanced and *relatively* outward-looking city-states of the northern plateau were Protestant, whereas Lüzern led the agriculturally-dominated Catholic inner core. While the Protestant cantons were more populous and numerous, a balance of power was maintained because of the greater clout wielded in the diet by the older cantons, of which the majority were Catholic.¹³

To some seventeenth century Britons and Europeans such a regime was impenetrable, or repellent, or both. Notably, on 28 October 1647 Oliver Cromwell reached for a Swiss simile to illustrate his argument against multilateral proposals for political settlement:

How doe we knowe if whilst wee are disputing these thinges another companie of men shall gather together, and they shall putt out a paper as plausible perhaps as this? ... Would itt nott be utter confusion? Would itt nott make England like the Switzerland Country, one Canton of the Switz against another, and one County against another?¹⁴

The term ‘cantonisation’, of course, has been applied pejoratively to the rule of the major-generals, following its use in a hostile speech by John Trevor in the 1656 Parliament.¹⁵ Furthermore, diplomats and politicians who dealt with the *Eidgenossenschaft* sometimes despaired of its dilatoriness. In 1617 Sir Isaac Wake, a member of the Vere circle and a well-wisher to Swiss Protestants, had complained of the ‘naturall diffidence and tautelous proceedinge of the Helvetian States’, and admitted that ‘my negotiation ... hath beene so intricate ... that I did almost despaire of being able to unwinde myselfe out of that endlesse labyrinth’.¹⁶ The label labyrinth, or something like it, recurs. In January 1656 from his base in Geneva Samuel Morland was frustrated by lack of concerted action on behalf of the Waldensians, telling John Thurloe that ‘for my part I doe now beleive, as I alwaies did, that nothing will make the Switzers either speake plain or engage any further then their privat interest’.¹⁷

Yet this was by no means the only view current. The diarist John Evelyn, passing through in 1646, recorded that he considered the ‘country to be the

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safest spot in all Europ'; its inhabitants lived 'in greate simplicity & tranquillitie, & though of the 14 Cantons halfe be Roman Catholics, the rest Reformed; yet they mutually agree'.¹⁸ As early as 1642 the parliamentarian propagandist Henry Parker, in contemplating the 'better compacting' of England, Scotland and Ireland 'into one monarchy' apparently thought the Confederation had something to teach the British Isles: with accuracy as to the form of government, but with what might be seen as an excess of optimism, he related that 'the canton towns in Helvetia, though of severall professions in Religion, and Aristocratically governed, yet adhere lovingly in one Symetricall Body together, and this is by the sweetnesse of Equity'.¹⁹

It is certainly true that misconceptions about Switzerland circulated in the mid-seventeenth century. The most common – that it was a democracy, accountable to the people – appears for example in a sermon by Archbishop James Ussher to Charles I on the Isle of Wight in 1648 and to a lesser extent in James Harrington's *Oceana* in 1656.²⁰ That it was no such thing was what made the Confederation a potentially attractive model to patricians like Henry Parker's patron Nathaniel Fiennes, briefly a student at the University of Basel, and so aggravating to exiled radical Edmund Ludlowe after the Restoration.²¹ The Protestant city republics of the northern plateau, in particular, were aristocratic oligarchies, ruled by a small number of families with exclusive privileges, whose wealth might be replenished by high-status mercantile activity from time to time, but who had castles, estates and seigniorial jurisdictions in the countryside.²² The structures of inner and outer conciliar government were little different to those found in the Dutch republic and across Europe, and were moderately familiar to most in the English national and civic elites.

Some English commentators displayed a remarkably nuanced grasp of Swiss polity, and deployed it to advantage. A clear instance of this is knowledge of the Swiss church and who wielded authority over it. Preaching to London civic dignitaries in April 1652, the eminent minister Stephen Marshall understood the distinction between full-blown clericalist Genevan and Scottish Presbyterianism, which was not a very attractive prospect for many in England, and the lay-controlled Erastianism of the theologically Calvinist but ecclesiologically Zwinglian Swiss Protestant churches, which were plausibly a rather more appealing model to many in the English political

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nation. In the course of a survey of the Reformed churches, Marshall invited his hearers to 'goe to Helvetia amongst the Switzers', where 'generally the churches there are against all Divine-right of any Church-government, and require nothing but the help of the Magistrate to keep their people in order'.²³

How did seventeenth century English clergy and politicians come by their information? In ecclesiastical matters one answer is that the English church and latterly the Westminster Assembly had carefully maintained formal fraternal correspondence with the other Protestant churches of Europe.²⁴ Another, more general answer relates to travel. As has become evident in the 1640–1660 section at History of Parliament, and has been implied previously in this paper, a significant number of the political elite spent time on the continent as part of their education. Despite the perils of the mountain passes, Switzerland was a well-trodden route for Englishmen travelling between the Low Countries and Italy.²⁵ Those who went there related their experiences, and there was an appetite for further knowledge at critical moments. For example, the first publication of Sir Isaac Wake's discourse 'concerning the thirteen cantons of the Helveticall League' occurred over twenty years after his death, just as the Valtelline appeal was in full swing.²⁶

However, the transmission of people and information was not just one-way. This theme runs through the rest of my paper as I turn to draw out more directly some aspects of Anglo-Swiss relations in the 1650s.

At first sight the peacemaking initiative of Johann Jakob Stokar in the first Anglo-Dutch war appears to come out of nowhere and to have yielded nothing. According to the *Historisches Lexicon der Schweiz*, his mission had no direct effect because the parties arranged things among themselves.²⁷ A letter of intelligence reaching John Thurloe from The Hague put it more baldly:

'men have an opinion' that both England and the Netherlands have a desire to make a final end of their differences, since they have referred it to the Switzers, who have very good knowledge of the Alps; but what knowledge have they of the Ocean, and of

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navigation? *Ergo*, if men will not stand to the judgment of ignorant men, they must agree amongst themselves.²⁸

But if Swiss knowledge of the ocean might be debatable, their acquaintance with the protagonists in this conflict was deep and ongoing, and as Swiss work on Stokar has revealed, he was a very plausible mediator.²⁹ I have yet to embark on detailed analysis from an English standpoint of Stokar's account of his stay in England in 1653–4, but several things can be noted.³⁰

There is the potential influence of Oliver Cromwell's cousin Oliver Fleming, who had been ambassador to Switzerland from 1628 to 1642, and was subsequently master of ceremonies dealing with, among other things, the reception of foreign dignitaries.³¹ As early as April 1649 Fleming used a general diplomatic briefing to the Council of State to focus in considerable detail on Swiss protocol.³² Fleming was in continuing contact with Zürich – where a cache of his letter survives – and conceivably promoted the Swiss peace-making initiative among his English contacts.³³ In March 1653 he told his old friend Johann Jakob Ulrich, the 'Antistes' or most senior pastor of the church in Zürich, that all men of worth detested the Anglo-Dutch war.³⁴ It may be no coincidence that around the same time it was Cromwell who reported to Parliament from the Council of State the news of Stokar's imminent arrival.³⁵

Possibly at least as important for the mission was the credibility and engagement of Stokar himself. His promise when he came to leave for home in January 1654 that he would continue his advocacy of English interests, and his assertion that it was 'the great desire and longing' of his 'Masters and Superiours' 'to approve themselves the true and unfeigned Friends of this Republicq, whose peace and wellfare they do wish with all their hearts', may be dismissed as standard ambassadorial language, but Stokar's words arose from a personal investment in the country.³⁶ He had visited England in the 1630s and signed his name in the register of the University of Oxford.³⁷ A man with broad networks and interests, in 1653–4 he had a secondary commission, to seek out catalogues of Arabic manuscripts in English libraries. Accordingly, during his stay Stokar was also in contact with English scholars such as Archbishop James Ussher and MP John Selden.³⁸

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Stokar's scholarly commission came from Zürich-born academic Johann Heinrich Hottinger (1620–1667), who with his friend Johann Heinrich Ott (1617–1682) had also been a student in England just before the civil wars. It was probably then that Hottinger first met John Durie and Jan Comenius, and he certainly met Ussher and Selden, as well as Archbishop William Laud, laying the groundwork for the later scholarly exchange.³⁹ The fashion for young Swiss to take in England on their educational travels, and its potential consequences, has been rather overlooked.⁴⁰ A fourth student of the 1630s was Sigmund von Erlach (1614–1699), Baron von Spiez and a native of Canton Bern, whose family had long-lasting interaction with English diplomats, including Oliver Fleming. In January 1652 he was Bern's chief representative at a conference of Protestant cantons which discussed the English republic and its relations with the Dutch.⁴¹

Perhaps the linchpin of Anglo-Swiss relations over the mid-seventeenth century, at least from the Swiss end, was a fifth man who had once been a London student: Johann Heinrich Hummel (c.1611–1674). After the Restoration, when Erlach was the most important man in Bern, and the final arbiter on the fortunes of the exiled regicides, Hummel, dean of the city republic's church, was their champion. Hummel's assurance to Edmund Ludlowe, when the refugees got into trouble over their religious consciences, that 'he well understood the Customes and conscientious Reasons of the Independents in England', is borne out by his autobiography and by remarkable correspondence stretching from the 1630s to the 1670s.⁴² Hummel had arrived in London in 1634, initially lodging with a table-maker from Winterthur in Canton Zürich, who seems to have been part of a Swiss artisan community in the metropolis which was complemented by regularly visiting merchants, like the Zollikofers of St Gallen who periodically turn up in mid-17th century English state papers.⁴³ In London Hummel encountered Sigmund von Erlach and his brother, and probably other fellow-countrymen at the Dutch church, Austin Friars, whose pastor was the well-connected scholar, Wilhelm Thilenus.⁴⁴

But Hummel did not associate only with fellow speakers of Germanic dialects: he communicated also in Latin and in English. He made friends among scholars, including Samuel Hartlib and members of his circle; among clergy including Jeremy Leech the biblical scholar and rector of St Mary le

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Bow, and Thomas Gataker, vicar of Rotherhithe; and among lay puritans. Since the celebrated household seminary of English and foreign students at the house of Thomas Gataker was apparently too full to receive him, Hummel was accommodated instead with Francis Taylor, vicar of Clapham, where he preached at least one sermon in the church.⁴⁵ Hummel drew on funds supplied to him via the Anglo-Genevan banking family of Calandrini, who feature regularly in records of Anglo-Swiss interchange.⁴⁶ When his money ran out, Hummel was then taken in by the brother and sister-in-law of MP and regicide Isaac Penington. Daniel and Elizabeth Penington treated him as their son, paid for him to visit Oxford and Cambridge, and took him to godly sermons.

Following Hummel's return to Switzerland in 1636, his friends wrote to him.⁴⁷ Taylor and Gataker, who became members of the Westminster Assembly, sent fraternal greetings. The Peningtons sent altogether more revealing and personal missives, which testify, among other things, to the regular despatch of English devotional literature to Switzerland several decades earlier than previously detected. Sometimes the Peningtons sent books via the diplomatic bags of Oliver Fleming; sometimes they took advantage of commercial networks used by German and Baseler scholars and booksellers.

The fruits of such contact later became apparent. In 1650 and 1659 Hummel published, in Bern, translations from English of devotional works by Sir John Hayward.⁴⁸ He was not alone: among others, for instance, was Johann Zollikofer of St Gallen who visited England in the 1650s, befriended Oxford academic and Independent minister John Owen, and subsequently translated works by English writers such as Bishop Joseph Hall.⁴⁹ Meanwhile, Hummel, as the highest ranking pastor in Canton Bern, became a valuable ally. In touch with old friends in the Dutch scholarly community like Henry Alting, in 1652 he was a well-informed advocate of peacemaking between England and the United Provinces.⁵⁰ That he was more in tune than many with the aspirations of political radicals in both countries is suggested by the unusual and courageous mediatory role he played in the Swiss Peasants' War of 1653, which was savagely put down by von Erlach. That he had relatively tolerant theological views is apparent from 1654 when he proved much more sympathetic to the ecumenical missions of

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John Durie than did his counterpart in Zürich, Fleming's conservative friend, Johann Jakob Ulrich.⁵¹

From 1655 Hummel was in a good position to sooth friction arising from what the English and Dutch considered a rather limp response from the Swiss Protestants to the massacre in Piedmont.⁵² Samuel Morland in Geneva described it as a judgement from God when, just as relief funds for the Waldensians were beginning to arrive in Switzerland for the authorities to deploy as needed, a civil war broke out between Protestant and Catholic cantons, the latter allied with the villain of the massacre, the Duke of Savoy.⁵³ Hummel worked to clear up misunderstandings with the Bernese authorities, as he told Pell in a letter of Easter Day 1656, while Stokar, with whom Hummel was also in touch, played a similar role elsewhere.⁵⁴ '...If I cann doe you heerabout any service, spare me not', said Hummel as he forwarded important notes for Durie.⁵⁵ Hummel's rewards included a copy of puritan bestseller Dr William Gouge's *A guide to go to God*, and he reciprocated with parallel gifts.⁵⁶ A letter of February 1658 sent the greeting: 'The Lord Gott preserve you and yours and all our friends in England: Especialy the L[ord] Protector his highnesse and your whole state, this year and forever'.⁵⁷

As remarked earlier, Hummel's lasting commitment to his English friends and his understanding of their political and religious opinions underpins the regicides' Restoration exile. That exile does not now look like a disappearance into obscurity and isolation beyond the mountains. At Vevey, Edmund Ludlowe received visits not just from fugitive republican Algernon Sydney, but also from Bulstrode Whitelocke's respectable son James, passing whilst on his grand tour. In 1663 Ludlowe thought it worthwhile to publish in French in the Pays de Vaud, for a European audience, *Les Juges Jugez, se Justifians*, the account of the punishment by Charles II of the regicides who had stayed in England, and of their heroic demeanour, translated directly from English without explanatory comment.⁵⁸ International Protestant networks – scholarly, religious, commercial, personal – and the dissemination of books meant that Ludlowe kept in touch with political and religious developments in England and across Europe, and these fed into his long-running narrative of the civil wars and their aftermath.⁵⁹

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It is clear that other aspects of Anglo-Swiss exchange in the mid-seventeenth century would repay further investigation. I have concentrated on Bern because I know more about it. I have only glanced at the Zollikofers and apparently developing commercial links, and said nothing at all, for example, about the links with the Pays de Vaud of the fashionable physician Sir Théodore Turquet de Mayerne, member of the French church that jostled with MPs and soldiers for space in the Savoy, Westminster, or about the fake news in royalist intelligence that Cromwell planned to use funds raised for the Waldensians to recruit Swiss soldiers to quench rebellion in Britain.⁶⁰ The decentralised nature of much Swiss history, and the wide European canvas against which its interaction was conducted, remains a challenging feature of research. However, I hope this paper has rendered more comprehensible the relations between the Commonwealth and a federation of oligarchic republics, the Protestant members of which were a lot less unfamiliar than first appears.

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- ¹ Diarmaid MacCulloch, 'Heinrich Bullinger and the English-Speaking World', in *Heinrich Bullinger (1505–1575): Leben, Denken, Wirkung*, ed. Emidio Campi, 2 vols. (*Zwingliana* 32, 2005), i. 891–934.
- ² E. Giddey, *L'Angleterre dans la Vie Intellectuelle de la Suisse Romande au XVIIIe Siècle* (*Bibliothèque Historique Vaudoise* [BHV], 51: Lausanne, 1974); Pierre Morren, *La vie lausannoise au dix-huitième siècle* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1970); Brian Norman, *The Influence of Switzerland on the Life and Writing of Edward Gibbon* (2002).
- ³ See for example: Robert Vaughan, *The Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell and the State of Europe during the early part of the Reign of Louis XIV* (2 vols., London, 1839), which focuses on correspondence from and to John Pell, ambassador to the Swiss Cantons; Karl Stehlin, 'Über die diplomatischen Verbindungen Englands mit der Schweiz im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert', *Beiträge zur vaterländischen Geschichte* 7 (1860), 47–102; Alfred Stern, *Briefe*

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englischer Flüchtlinge in der Schweiz. Aus einer Handschrift des Berner Staats-Archivs (Göttingen 1874).

- ⁴ See for example: B. Gagnebin, 'Cromwell and the Republic of Geneva', *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society* xviii (1948), 158–180; V. Larminie, 'The Jacobean diplomatic fraternity and the protestant cause: Sir Isaac Wake and the view from Savoy', *English Historical Review*, cxxi.494 (Dec. 2006), 1300–26; and 'Exile and belonging: the English service and the international links of Philibert Herwarth (1644–1721), ambassador to Switzerland and governor of the French Hospital', *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society*, xxviii (2006), 509–23.
- ⁵ See for example: Wolfgang Schneewind, *Die diplomatischen Beziehungen Englands mit der alten Eidgenossenschaft zur Zeit Elisabeths, Jakobs I. und Karls I* (Basel, 1950). For recent work see: Sarah Rindlisbacher, 'Zur Verteidigung des "Protestant Cause". Die konfessionelle Diplomatie Englands und der eidgenössischen Orte Zürich und Bern 1655/6', *Zwingliana* 43 (2016), 1–142. I am very grateful to Ms Rindlisbacher for her comments on this article, and for sharing some references.
- ⁶ Among those who welcomed and encouraged me, I should particularly like to thank Pierre-Yves Favez (formerly of the Archives cantonales vaudoises), Lucienne Hübler (formerly of the *Historisches Lexicon der Schweiz*), Marianne Stubenvoll, and Professor Danielle Tosato-Rigo (Université de Lausanne).
- ⁷ For the classic view see: Henri Vuilleumier, *Histoire de l'Église réformée du Pays de Vaud sous le régime bernois* (4 vols., Lausanne, 1927–1933). Cf. *De l'Ours à la Cocarde: Régime bernois et révolution en Pays de Vaud*, eds. F. Flouck, P.-R. Monbaron, M. Stubenvoll and D. Tosato-Rigo (Payot: Lausanne, 1998).
- ⁸ 'Jean-Baptiste Stoupe', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) and online at <http://www.oxforddnb.com>; see also the paper by Richard Newbury, *Cromwelliana* 2018, pp 25–38
- ⁹ Early intimations of the impending visit of 'Stockarus' or 'Stockart' surface in *Journal of the House of Commons*, vii. 279b. See also *Thurloe State Papers* [hereafter *TSP*], i. 323.
- ¹⁰ See their respective biographies in *Oxford DNB*. For a recent re-examination of the subject see: Pierre-Olivier Léchoy, *Un christianisme*

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- ¹⁴ *The Clarke Papers*, ed. C. H. Firth (Camden Society, ser. 2, xlix, 1891), i. 237.
- ¹⁵ *The Diary of Thomas Burton*, ed. John Towill Rutt (1828), i. 316; J. Sutton, ‘Cromwell’s commissioners for preserving the peace of the Commonwealth: a Staffordshire case study’, *Soldiers, Writers and Statesmen of the English Revolution*, eds. Ian Gentles, John Morrill and Blair Worden (2007), 152.
- ¹⁶ British Library [hereafter BL], Add. MS 18640, ff. 45v–48 (Wake to Secretary, 30 May/9 June 1617).
- ¹⁷ *TSP*, iv. 418.
- ¹⁸ *The Diary of John Evelyn*, ed. E. S. de Beer, ii (1955), 518.
- ¹⁹ Henry Parker, *The Generall junto, or The councill of union* (1642), 5 (669.f.18.1).
- ²⁰ James Ussher, *The Rights of Primogeniture* (1648), 8; James Harrington, *The Commonwealth of Oceana* (1656), 19.
- ²¹ ‘Nathaniel Fiennes I’, draft biography by Vivienne Larminie, *History of Parliament, House of Commons 1640–1660*.
- ²² François Walter, *Histoire de la Suisse II: L’Âge Classique (1600–1750)* (Éditions Alphil-Presses universitaires suisses: 2d edn., Neuchâtel, 2010), 11–17.
- ²³ Stephen Marshall, *A sermon preached to the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor, and Court of Aldermen* (1653), 29. See also Jeremy Taylor, *Of the Sacred Order and Offices of Episcopacy* (1648), 8–9, on distinctions between cantons.

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- ²⁶ Sir Isaac Wake, *A three-fold help to political observations* (1655, E.1671.2).
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- ²⁸ *TSP*, ii. 345.
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- ³² *CSP Dom.* 1649–50, p. 115.
- ³³ Vaughan, *Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell*, i. 210, 423.
- ³⁴ 'Il n'a pas un homme de bien, qui n'abomine pas cette guerre': T. Ischer, *Die Gesandtschaft der protestantischen Schweiz bei Cromwell und den Generalstaaten der Niederlande 1652/54* (Bern: Buchdruckerei Gustav Brunau, 1916), 23.

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- ³⁶ TNA, SP46/116, f. 12.
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- ⁴⁶ Vaughan, *Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell*, i. 302, 308, 354, 391.
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- ⁴⁸ Edgar C. McKenzie, *A catalog of British devotional and religious books in German translation* (Berlin, 1997), 255–6.
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- ⁵⁸ See esp. Gaby Mahlberg, 'Les Juges Jugez, se Justifians (1663) and Edmund Ludlow's protestant network in seventeenth century Switzerland', *Historical Journal*, lvii (2014), 369–96.
- ⁵⁹ Bodl. MS Eng. hist. c. 487.
- ⁶⁰ *CSP Domestic* 1655, p. 336; 1655–6, p. 68.

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'PERMANENT AND INVIOABLE': OLIVER CROMWELL AND THE IDEA OF ANGLO-DUTCH UNION IN 1653

By Prof Jason Peacey

In reflecting on European affairs in the seventeenth century, it is very easy to emphasise war rather than political cooperation. On and off, England was at war with Spain, France and the United Provinces; indeed there were three Anglo-Dutch wars between the 1650s and the 1670s. More generally, of course, this was the period of the 'thirty years war', a religious and geopolitical conflagration that was one of the deadliest and most destructive in European history; and although the English were less involved than some, a failure to participate was itself controversial, beyond which the war obviously affected relations between states of all kinds.

At the same time, it is also tempting to stress the importance of the Peace of Westphalia (1648). This is not because Westphalia brought an end to European wars, but rather because it is often seen as a turning point which created the basis for national self-determination and the modern state system. Historians write, therefore, about the emergence of a new system of political order – the Westphalian system – which was based upon the concept of coexisting sovereign states. Aggression between such states, it is said, was held in check by a 'balance of power' between nations which did not interfere in each other's domestic affairs. Each prince or state, in other words, had exclusive sovereignty over lands, laws, people and religion. Westphalia is often seen, therefore, as bringing an end to attempts to impose supranational authority on European states, and the Westphalian system is sometimes said to have prevailed until 1945, after which it came to be criticised by many world leaders precisely because it left insufficient space for the 'community of states', and was based upon competition rather than integration. In 1999, Tony Blair claimed that a 'post-Westphalian' system involving an 'international community' was more appropriate for an age of globalisation. Joschka Fischer explicitly argued that the post-1945 European community ideal was an alternative to an obsolete Westphalian model. An avowed federalist, Fischer claimed that the 'core of the concept of Europe' ought to involve 'a rejection of the European balance of power principle... that had emerged following the peace of Westphalia in 1648', in favour of the 'closer meshing of vital interests and the transfer of nation-state sovereign rights to supranational European institutions'.¹

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This rather neat history provides the context for this article, which seeks to complicate matters somewhat, by focusing upon the possibility not just for peace in the seventeenth century, but also for something like 'integration'. This will involve focusing on Anglo-Dutch relations, and indeed on Cromwell's attitude towards an Anglo-Dutch 'union', not least at a time when some English commentators looked admiringly at Dutch economic, political and religious culture. The article will suggest that Cromwell, famed as a warrior, had interesting ideas about the possibility for a 'union' of the two commonwealths, and that these are significant even though they did not come to fruition. This will involve looking closely at Cromwell's participation in formal negotiations to end the first Anglo-Dutch war, and at his informal conversations with Dutch diplomats. Such evidence has not been thoroughly examined or properly understood, particularly because the contemporary language can be confusing, not least in the sense that 'coalition' sometimes meant what would nowadays be called 'union', while 'union' sometimes referred to a less formal alliance.

I

By way of background, it is worth introducing the first Anglo-Dutch war, demonstrating how it has been discussed, and observing how Cromwell's attitude has been debated. In terms of the conflict, therefore, fighting began in May 1652, at the Battle of Goodwin Sands, and war was declared the following July. This was followed by English naval victories at Kentish Knock (October), but also defeats at Dungeness and Leghorn (Livorno), before the English regained the ascendancy with the Battle of Texel in the summer of 1653. The war eventually came to an end following the dissolution of the predominantly warlike Rump Parliament, whereupon protracted and difficult discussions eventually resulted in the Treaty of Westminster (April 1654). The historiography on the war, meanwhile, has been dominated by issues relating to its causes rather than its aftermath and consequences, and debates have centred upon whether or not it sprang from economic competition. Many historians have regarded the war as a consequence of the 1651 Navigation Act, which decreed that English trade should be conducted in English ships, and as a means of combating the economic threat posed by the Dutch Republic. This consensus was challenged, however, by Steve Pincus, who set the war in the context of English attempts – earlier in 1651 – to promote 'a more intimate alliance

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and nearer union' with a 'sister republic', which had failed because they were predicated on English attempts to claim 'sovereignty' over the 'British seas', something which the Dutch rejected. The importance of Pincus's intervention was that it identified a significant mismatch between the English, who sought closer union, and the Dutch, who sought an alliance that would foster trade, and Pincus contended that English willingness to go to war resulted from frustrated ambitions regarding closer union, from anti-Dutch sentiment in the country at large, and from the perceptions of 'apocalyptic' republicans. The latter, he argued, regarded the Dutch as being neither good Protestants nor good republicans, not least because they clung to the quasi-monarchical House of Orange. As such, Pincus argued, the war represented a 'punitive move against a corrupt polity'.²

In terms of Cromwell, meanwhile, attention has tended to focus on the degree to which he was wedded to the idea of peace with the Dutch. Pincus regarded him as someone who, by 1653, was 'willing to accept peace' but only if the Dutch displayed 'contrition', and as someone who was not 'ideologically opposed to the war'. As with the Scots, therefore, Cromwell was 'committed' to the view that the Dutch were Protestants (and republicans) who had gone astray, even if they should not be punished excessively.³ Austin Woolrych, meanwhile, claimed that peace with the Dutch became the 'touchstone' of Cromwell's foreign policy, and that he played a leading role in keeping negotiations going in the face of aggressive attitudes within the Council of State and outright hostility to the Dutch from radical sectarians. Woolrych even saw Cromwell as offering at least some support for 'a partial fusion of sovereignties'.⁴ The aim here is to grapple with this apparent disagreement, and to develop a clearer picture of Cromwell's position, not least by examining evidence of his involvement in the war and references to the Dutch, and his speeches to, and conversations with, Dutch ambassadors in 1653.

II

That Cromwell was interested in the Anglo-Dutch war had been clear for some time, in ways which do not immediately suggest that he was a peacenik. In May 1652, for example, he was delegated to visit Dover and prepare a report on the state of the English fleet, and apparently did so by referring to the 'imperiousness' of the Dutch as causers of the war.⁵ During

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the spring of 1653 Cromwell's rare visits to Parliament related to the war, and it seems likely that he increasingly inclined towards peace, thereby putting him at odds with hardliners who thought that the Dutch should be 'destroyed'. Nevertheless, Cromwell remained involved in the war effort, not least in recruiting troops for 'sea service' in March 1653.⁶ More striking still was the declaration issued in his name on 12 June, after the English victory at the Battle of the Gabbard, the event which prompted the Dutch to despatch a negotiating delegation to London. In it, Cromwell described the victory as 'a most signal and... seasonable mercy... in abasing pride, haughtiness and fleshly confidence, and in discovering hypocrisy'. Cromwell concluded, indeed, that 'it was an answer to the faith and prayers of God's people, and to their great hopes and expectations from the Lord'.⁷

This provides the context for the talks that began in London in June 1653, talks which were always likely to be hampered by uncertainty over Cromwell's position, as well as by divisions within the Dutch delegation. It seems likely, therefore, that of the Dutch commissioners, only Hieronymus van Beverningh really inclined towards what he called 'a perfect amity and indissoluble union', something which will have relevance as we trace the story of Cromwell's activity in the months that followed. More importantly, the official English position involved a mixture of hard-line demands (for reparations and an admission of aggression) and a revival of radical ideas about union. In 1653, therefore, it was the English who advocated a union in which each state would retain its local laws and institutions while also creating common citizenship, common trading privileges and equal rights to both reside in either country and hold property, with at least some kind of joint sovereign body.⁸

What seemed apparent at first was that, while Cromwell was thought to be somewhat difficult to read, his opening speech to the Dutch commissioners on 29 June was far from conciliatory. Cromwell told the Dutch that they had 'appealed to the judgment of heaven' and that 'the Lord has declared against you', and that the logical response was to 'associate yourselves with your formidable neighbour to work together for the propagation of the kingdom of Christ, and the deliverance of the people groaning under oppression'.⁹ Cromwell's position, however, may not have been as hard line as it appeared; he certainly supported William Penn's controversial decision

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to lift the naval blockade of Dutch ports, not least because he felt that it would have a positive effect on the peace talks.¹⁰

As such, it is worth examining closely what happened next, beginning with Cromwell's speech to the Dutch commissioners on 13 July. What immediately became clear was that there was a debate about what should be discussed in what order. The Dutch, naturally, were reluctant to dwell on the issues of 'satisfaction' (ie reparations) and 'security' for the future, but sought instead to proceed to the issue of 'alliance and closer union'. Although Cromwell professed to be ambivalent on this issue – 'it did not make much difference which point was dealt with first' – he added that 'on this occasion the responsibility for the war had above all to be taken into account as being the fundamental part of the whole work'. He considered it problematic that the Dutch persisted in claiming to be innocent of starting the war, while the English 'called the Lord God to witness to this our declaration', and he believed that 'the Lord had shown to a certain extent his mercy', although not to the extent that the English had 'become proud or conceited because of this'.

The upshot was that Cromwell backed the idea that it was necessary for the English to seek satisfaction for the 'great inconveniences' that they had suffered, and that they would have suffered without God's help. He also explained that, having supported the idea of reducing the size of the English navy, Dutch aggression ensured that the English were 'forced to put the navy on a better footing'. Insisting that the English had obeyed the 'rules of war', and that he saw no need to 'cause ruin to the Dutch', Cromwell explained that England required a 'decent satisfaction', if not perhaps 'large sums', 'by which the way could be cleared for the work on the principal points'. If the Dutch resisted, however, he believed that the English could legitimately 'demand it from them and... receive it'. On the issue of 'security', meanwhile, Cromwell said that the English were aware of the situation faced by the Dutch, both domestically and internationally, adding that there was also a legitimate fear of resurgent Orangism, and that 'spirits' within the Netherlands 'pretended to seek an accommodation with England, but only with the intention of gaining time... in order... to overturn everything again'.

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Cromwell therefore insisted that the Dutch needed to think about more than 'mere considerations of profit and friendship based on worldly motives', adding that God had 'delivered' the Dutch out of 'Spanish slavery', and that the English 'honoured and loved them', but also that people sometimes became 'careless, and did not sufficiently apprehend the intrigues which were used against them'.¹¹ This task, he said, was one that was 'better understood' in England than in the United Provinces. Such claims seem to support Pincus's suggestion that if Cromwell favoured peace, then he also insisted on 'satisfaction and security', on how the 'humours and spirits of many... governors in the Netherlands were against this commonwealth', and on Dutch 'miscarriages', and that he not only expressed hostility to the House of Orange but also threatened that England 'might prosecute our revenge'.¹²

At the same time, however, Cromwell's larger point was that it was necessary to concentrate on 'the preservation of freedom and the outspreading of the kingdom of Christ'. He insisted that some way needed to be found to build an agreement which respected 'the form and character of the respective governments', but which would also be 'permanent and inviolable'. He also noted that 'it had often happened that, after a quarrel friendship became stronger and faster than before', adding that 'neither of them knew what God the Lord... might intend to accomplish by the two republics'. This suggests that Cromwell sought to think about the future, rather than just about the past, and whether or not he looked to 'satisfaction and security', with one eye on English radicals, he was also willing to contemplate a new kind of relationship with the Dutch for the future.¹³

Indeed, Cromwell's private conversations were much less combative, not least the one he had with van Beverningh in St James's Park the following day (14 July), ahead of the next formal meeting on 15 July. On this occasion, Cromwell defended his recent actions (in dismissing the Rump), and insisted that he sought 'a good and durable peace', because 'he knew well what management the papists everywhere employed to attain their object'. He then explained that many people in England were unhappy that the Dutch 'had overreached them everywhere in commerce', and that the Dutch had exploited England's 'domestic troubles'. He also expressed concern that the Dutch might have 'hidden secret schemes', which they 'intended to cover by a display of friendship and alliance'. Nevertheless, Cromwell insisted that

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'explicit rules' were needed to ensure 'the welfare of commerce and navigation', and to 'adjust and regulate our common interests in commerce and navigation if we wanted to live in peace and unity'. He pointed out that '[t]he world was wide enough for both; and if the two peoples could only thoroughly well understand each other, the two countries could overrule all others and control the markets and dictate the conditions'.¹⁴ This suggested that Cromwell looked to a future not of competition with the Dutch, but one in which the two would join forces to maximise their economic might and pursue a Protestant agenda.

The challenge for the Dutch, however, was to determine whether Cromwell's position reflected the views of the Council of State, and whether this provided realistic grounds for a settlement. On 21 July the English commissioners reiterated the need for 'satisfaction', but approached the issue of 'security' by means of a 'revolutionary proposal': 'this state is willing to expect the said security by uniting both states in such manner as they may become *one people and commonwealth for the good of both*'. What they had in mind was not so much a 'league' between sovereign states, but rather 'the making of two sovereign states one', as a federation in which the domestic laws of each country would remain unchanged, but in which they would be 'so united as to be under one supreme power', consisting of 'persons of both nations'. The people of both commonwealths would 'enjoy the like privileges and freedoms in respect of habitations, possessions, trade, ports, fishing, and all other advantages whatsoever in each other's countries, as natives without any difference or distinction'. This was what the Dutch statesman, Johann De Witt, called 'a single and unified sovereign government, composed of representatives selected equally from the two nations', or a 'single Anglo-Dutch state'.¹⁵

Such ideas were entirely unacceptable to the Dutch, and their response, on 27 July, was emphatic. Such a union – based upon 'mingling the sovereignties' – was 'impossible and unreasonable', and having fought against Spanish rule, and created a confederation which protected local sovereignty for individual Dutch provinces, they refused to 'join... more straightly to others than we are amongst ourselves'. As such, the Dutch sent back two of their representatives to the United Provinces for further consultations and advice. What is interesting, however, is that at this point Cromwell seems to have been instrumental in keeping open channels of

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communication, and although Pincus warns against overstating his support for peace without security, and without the expulsion of the Prince of Orange, close attention needs to be paid to his ongoing talks with members of the Dutch delegation. It is no coincidence, indeed, that such talks involved van Beverningh, given that the latter evidently felt that if his countrymen 'would agree to a union after the same form as we have in the United Provinces ourselves, that we should be soon agreed'.¹⁶

III

That the Dutch – and especially van Beverningh – saw in Cromwell the best hope of moderating the English position seems clear from what happened next: a conversation between the two men in St James's Park on 6 August. This involved van Beverningh raising 'questions and objections' to Cromwell, in order to 'entice and allure' him out further, and Cromwell's answers, while not entirely clear, are nevertheless revealing. First, van Beverningh asked 'whether the intention... was to have any footing in our country', or to 'encroach upon the sovereignty of the Netherlands'. To this, Cromwell replied 'no, neither upon our sovereignties or privileges', either of the republic or its towns and provinces. Cromwell gave 'no distinct answer', however, to the question 'whether the pretended alliance and union should comprehend the protection of all those from without who should desire our amity'. And when asked whether 'we should have common privileges and sovereignties', Cromwell replied that such questions 'required some time to consider of, and could not be answered *extempore*', adding that 'he did discourse with me but as a particular man, without having any order thereunto'. Cromwell seems to have been uncomfortable about discussing the 'coalition' (ie union), van Beverningh noting that he said 'not a word' on this issue, but he was much more comfortable talking about 'union' (ie an alliance), which he did 'for a great while together', albeit 'without concluding anything'.

Eventually, however, Cromwell felt compelled to give a clearer opinion, and at this point he seemed to suggest that there ought to be a kind of 'supreme direction', which would have control over matters concerning the points of mutual protection against aggression. He made reference, indeed, to the 'league of neighbours' in ancient Greece, which involved 'common friends and enemies and a common board', but which did not infringe upon the

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sovereignty of any one member. When it was pointed out that this was a somewhat different idea to the one proposed by the Council of State, Cromwell 'confessed that he had not considered the affair so closely and promised to think it over', pointing out that the idea for a more ambitious union was only a suggestion, and a matter for discussion. Finally, Cromwell 'discoursed on the advantages of the league to be expected by the Dutch, the opportunities offered by the English and Scottish ports, of the fisheries, of the similarity in customs and taxes, of the laws regulating the sale of landed property, of the ways of investing money, the navigation of the British islands etc'.¹⁷

Van Beverningh could not help concluding that Cromwell was not 'well informed', and he reflected that 'truly I know not almost what to advise'.¹⁸ However, while we should not rule out the possibility that Cromwell was not on top of his brief, there may also be other explanations. It would have been understandable for Cromwell to triangulate his own ideas about how to proceed with the demands of stakeholders in England and with Dutch responses, by toning down ideas about union while also recognising the need for caution. First, it is notable that Cromwell told one envoy that he was minded to drop the idea for a 'coalition' (ie union), so long as a firm peace and Protestant alliance could be obtained.¹⁹ By September 1653, indeed, the Dutch were fairly confident that at least some Englishmen sought 'no more than an accommodation', and believed that Cromwell, at least, had accepted that 'the word coalition should be no more named'. Nevertheless, they also believed – and heard from men such as Cornelius Vermuyden – that Cromwell was proposing something like an offensive and defensive alliance, in which each state would be 'governed by their own laws independent from one another', but one which would also involve a joint navy and a permanent Anglo-Dutch board of commissioners or arbitrators resident in each country.²⁰

Second, Cromwell seems to have been navigating the challenges involved in creating a Protestant bloc in Northern Europe while also dealing with the economic interests of those involved. In persuading Bulstrode Whitelocke to undertake an embassy to Sweden in early September, therefore, he referred to the 'Protestant interest' but also emphasised the need to settle the 'matter of trade', not least because the Dutch had been making approaches to Queen Christina. In their discussions in October, moreover,

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it became clear that Whitelocke saw his mission as being to gain control of the Sound 'against the Dutch and Danes', and Cromwell confirmed his fear that 'the Dutch will endeavour to overreach us', adding that 'it were good to prevent them, and... to serve our own interest', although this was also intended – as Whitelocke said – to 'bring the Dutch to reason'.²¹

IV

Cromwell thus seems to have been aware of, but struggling to find a way through, the difficult business of reaching agreement with the Dutch while also recognising anti-Dutch sentiment in England. This became clearer still once the two Dutch commissioners returned in October 1653, with instructions to reject the proposed union, and to seek instead a close alliance. This was perhaps a hopeful sign, as was the election of a more moderate Council of State on 1 November. Naturally, difficulties remained, and although attempts were made to avoid the issue of trade outside Europe, the English seemed determined to retain the Navigation Act, while the Dutch were intent on involving the Danes. Beyond this, there remained the vexed issues of reparations and the future role of the Prince of Orange. Nevertheless, Cromwell urged the Dutch to be patient, and the talks eventually resumed under Cromwell's chairmanship on 17 November.²²

Key to this phase of the talks, indeed, is Cromwell's speech at a conference with the commissioners on 17 November. In it, Cromwell reiterated English 'affection' towards the Dutch, and the 'inclination' towards 'a good peace'. He also recognised that English proposals for a 'coalition' – a 'permanent union between the two republics', in which 'the mutual interests of state and of the nations would be combined without any distinction in such a way that no differences or misunderstandings... could be feared or expected' – 'did not please' the Dutch. He also recognised that the Dutch favoured a 'union' that would involve something more like an alliance; a 'league and confederation as close and strong as had ever been established between two sovereign republics'. And he also indicated that, although the English 'had good reasons' to 'insist on the preliminary points of security and satisfaction', they were willing to talk about other issues, so long as this could be done in 'strict secrecy'. This last move seems to have been a clear sign that Cromwell recognised the delicate problems that both he and the

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Dutch faced in terms of dissenting opinions within their own states and societies.

In setting out his vision for Anglo-Dutch relations, it is possible to see Cromwell trying to walk a line between what we might call the need to protect national interests and the necessity for some kind of integration. Cromwell insisted that what was needed was 'not a union or peace for a short period... but a permanent one between the two states and nations', and that steps needed to be taken to 'eliminate from the start all points that could eventually lead to new disputes or animosities'. At the same time, he made it clear that the English would insist on 'their right and dominion in the Narrow Seas... as well as their rights on the point of fisheries'. The problem here was that the Dutch wanted to prioritise discussions about 'union' before turning to 'all points concerning commerce and fishery', and also that, while their ships could 'pay due respect to foreign flags', they believed that 'the seas of the world were open to everyone'. Interestingly, Cromwell's response was to emphasise once again the need for some form of substantive cooperation. He insisted, therefore, that if the English 'coalition' had been accepted, 'all interests of government and nation... would have been mutual', and worried that since the Dutch were 'speaking of another union', in which 'the interest of each party should remain distinct', new conflicts were likely to arise 'time and again'. As such, he thought it necessary to 'make full use of this occasion to eliminate all causes of conflict'.²³

The difficulty of walking this line was clear from the less than enthusiastic Dutch response – van Beverningh apparently felt conned by Cromwell – and hopes for an amicable settlement faded further on the following day (18 November). Yet again, therefore, the Dutch reiterated that, while they sought friendship and peace, they would not accept a union which affected the sovereignty of their republic, and this prompted Cromwell to say that, since the Dutch were interpreting the proposed coalition 'in their own way', he would do likewise. He repeated, therefore, his belief that an alliance which existed 'only in appearance and in words' would be insufficient, and his determination to find a 'permanent' solution, which 'would not only take away the present differences of opinion but also... provide for the future and regulate all troubles and... new disputes'. He then affirmed his support for the idea of a formal union, wherein 'the whole sovereignty and

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government... would be made common between the two republics and nations, with the sole exception of the administration of justice according to the municipal laws'. However, he then explained that both he and the Council accepted that the Dutch had 'refused this proposal', in favour of 'a close union and confederation, keeping distinct the interest of each party', and were 'persuaded' to pursue a different model of cooperation. Nevertheless, he suggested that *some* means needed to be found 'to eliminate all present and future inconveniences and to assure confidence', and argued that this would not be served by the Dutch plan for what he called a 'mutilated coalition', insisting once again that he had 'no other intention than peace and security'.

Such comments were to no avail, however, and the Dutch made it perfectly clear that they sought a 'defensive alliance', and what is interesting is not just that at this point Cromwell became frustrated, but also that he made a revealing comment about the basis on which he approached Anglo-Dutch cooperation. He began by describing Dutch attempts to draw a 'parallel' between a 'coalition' and a 'union' as 'totally incorrect', but in making clear that he wanted something more than a mere alliance (what the Dutch called 'union') he also reflected on the issue of 'sovereignty', to which they were so obviously attached. Cromwell explained, therefore, that 'those special words of sovereignty were not very important'. Indeed, he suggested that the term 'sovereignty' was 'only a feather in the hat' and that 'the burden of government was only a bauble', adding that such things were much less important than achieving 'our principal aim', which was to 'obtain security against this house of Austria', and 'to organize our affairs in such a way that we did not need to fear anybody's power' and that together 'we could dictate the law concerning commerce to the whole world'.²⁴

Thus, while it is clear that talks were not going well, it would be a mistake to suggest that this simply reflected Cromwell's hard-line stance regarding peace terms. Neither might it be accurate to say that Cromwell was hamstrung by the need to placate the still-buoyant Fifth Monarchists, who were so hostile to the Dutch. It is certainly true that the final weeks of 1653 saw increasingly vociferous denunciations of Cromwell and of leniency towards the Dutch, from men like Thomas Harrison, and that Cromwell felt compelled to meet Christopher Feake in person.²⁵ What also needs to be recognised, however, is that the talks faltered over what kind of alliance or

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union might form the basis of future relations, that the Dutch were unwilling to accept anything more than a fairly conventional alliance, and that Cromwell's attempts to keep the talks going proved very revealing about his attitude to Anglo-Dutch cooperation.

V

The subsequent story of the road to peace lies beyond the scope of this article, although it is clear that the situation became much more promising after the dissolution of the Barebones assembly and the eclipse of the radicals; that Cromwell remained involved in searching for a settlement; and that this entailed a secret agreement with De Witt and van Beverningh to exclude the Prince of Orange, albeit without the knowledge of States General. In the end, the Treaty of Westminster involved a very weak form of alliance; it did not provide for an offensive alliance, or 'much physical security for the future of peaceful relations between the two regimes'. A formal union was 'not even hinted at'. What makes this scrutiny of Cromwell's role during 1653 interesting, however, is what can be concluded about his approach to European relations. What emerges is that Cromwell was almost certainly less bothered about 'union' than about the need to secure peace, in order to undermine the Spanish interest. However, if this settlement reflected a 'neo-Elizabethan' policy, as Pincus has argued, then we should not underestimate the importance and interest of Cromwell's active involvement in Anglo-Dutch talks during 1653, not least because of his concern about precisely how best to secure such aims.²⁶ What these talks made clear was that Cromwell not only developed a clear vision of a Protestant foreign policy – 'the preservation of freedom and the outspreading of the kingdom of Christ' – but also recognised that this required a 'permanent and inviolable' settlement, rather than just a 'mutilated coalition'. For Cromwell this meant that what was needed was something other than the protection of national sovereignty, and something more like cross-border cooperation. Of course, the political and religious atmosphere in England made it difficult to avoid the idea of a harsh peace settlement, but more interesting is Cromwell's willingness to think in creative ways, particularly in his more or less discreet and private comments. And while it might be true that he had not thought through his ideas very clearly, it would perhaps be unfair to suggest – as the Dutch sometimes did – that he was simply confused. Rather, his willingness to shift between

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different models of a more substantial 'union' probably reflected the fact that he considered the ends – a stable Protestant peace, with economic benefits – to be more important than the means, and a reluctance to place too much store in particular constitutional forms. At root, however, Cromwell demonstrated an intriguing willingness to recognise that some kind of 'union' might be necessary to overcome the fragility of a mere 'alliance', and that in the grand scheme of things state 'sovereignty' was a mere 'bauble'.

More broadly, this episode makes it possible to suggest that there is value in looking closely at the ways in which certain Englishmen were capable of thinking in novel ways during the seventeenth century. This may not have involved a noble vision of European cooperation and integration, as became evident in the eighteenth century, in the post-1945 world, and in some parts of Europe in the twenty-first century, but it did involve a willingness to think beyond national sovereignty in certain circumstances; to think about Europe in terms other than of war, peace and alliances; and to think again about how political cooperation might happen after Westphalia. As such, Anglo-Dutch negotiations in 1653 may suggest that the solution to the 'problem' of the Westphalian system could take many different forms. In the seventeenth century, of course, it is probably understandable that this can be glimpsed most obviously in relations between England and the United Provinces, given their history and the growing admiration within certain English circles for the Dutch political system, and for its social, economic and religious culture. Nevertheless, it is also intriguing to reflect on a time when it was the English, more obviously than the Dutch, who thought about how best to maximise the benefits to be gleaned from facilitating trade and the movement of people across borders, and from novel forms of political cooperation.

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¹ A. Bellamy and P. Williams, *Understanding Peacekeeping* (Cambridge, 2010), p. 37;

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https://web.archive.org/web/20020502231325/http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/www/en/eu_politik/ausgabe_archiv?suche=1&archiv_id=1027&bereich_id=4&type_id=3.

- ² S. Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism. Ideologies and the Making of English Foreign Policy, 1650–1668* (Cambridge, 1996).
- ³ Pincus, *Protestantism*, pp. 122, 126.
- ⁴ A. Woolrych, *Commonwealth to Protectorate* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 279, 280.
- ⁵ *Commons Journal*, vii. 135; *Calendar of State Papers Domestic [CSPD] 1651–2* (ed. M. A. E. Green, London, 1875–86), p. 260; *Mercurius Politicus*, 103 (20–27 May 1652), p. 1624; *Perfect Diurnall*, 129 (24–31 May 1652), p. 1911.
- ⁶ Woolrych, *Commonwealth*, p. 56; British Library [BL], Egerton MS 2126, fos. 25–26v.
- ⁷ *A Declaration from the Generall and Council of State* (London, 1653).
- ⁸ Woolrych, *Commonwealth*, p. 282; S. R. Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate* (4 vols, London, 1903), ii. 345.
- ⁹ Sirtema de Grovestins, *Historie des Luites Et Rivalités Politiques* (8 vols, Paris, 1851–4), i. 204.
- ¹⁰ BL, Add. MS 70,100, fos. 190–91v.
- ¹¹ H. Scheurleer, *Verbael Gebouden door de Heeren H. van Beverningke W. Nieupoort, J. van de Perre, en A. P. Jongestael* (The Hague, 1725), pp. 41–3.
- ¹² Pincus, *Protestantism*, p. 136.
- ¹³ Scheurleer, *Verbael Gebouden*, pp. 41–3.
- ¹⁴ Scheurleer, *Verbael Gebouden*, pp. 45–7; Gardiner, *Commonwealth*, iii. 43–4; Pincus, *Protestantism*, pp. 139–41.
- ¹⁵ Pincus, *Protestantism*, pp. 137–9; Bodleian Library, Oxford [Bodl.], MS Rawlinson A4, p. 290; The National Archives [TNA], SP 105/98, fos. 18v–21v; Bodl. MS Clarendon 46, fo. 188.
- ¹⁶ Gardiner, *Commonwealth*, ii. 341–3, iii. 44–5, Pincus, *Protestantism*, pp. 140–2, 149–50; Woolrych, *Commonwealth*, pp. 281–3, 286–7; T. Birch, ed., *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe* (7 vols, London, 1742) [TSP], i. 382, 386–7, 394–5, 410, 438; TNA, PRO 31/3/91, fos. 66, 69.
- ¹⁷ Bodl. MS Rawlinson A5, fos. 102–v, 123r–24v; Scheurleer, *Verbael Gebouden*, pp. 143–6; Gardiner, *Commonwealth*, iii. 45–8; TSP, i. 418.
- ¹⁸ Woolrych, *Commonwealth*, pp. 282–3.

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- ¹⁹ TNA, PRO 31/3/91, fo. 96.
- ²⁰ Pincus, *Protestantism*, pp. 152–3; Gardiner, *Commonwealth*, ii. 350–1; *TSP*, i. 157, ii. 125–6.
- ²¹ BL, Add. MS 4902, fos. 5–6, 9–10v, 24–25.
- ²² *TSP*, i. 500–1, 519, 521, 535, 540–3, 582–4, 600–1; Woolrych, *Commonwealth*, pp. 312–13, 322–4; Pincus, *Protestantism*, pp. 156–8; Scheurleer, *Verbael Gebouden*, pp. 182, 187–8; Gardiner, *Commonwealth*, ii. 363; TNA, PRO 31/3/91, fo. 108; PRO 31/3/92, fos. 2, 18; *CSPD 1653–4*, p. 201.
- ²³ Scheurleer, *Verbael Gebouden*, pp. 187–96; TNA, PRO 31/3/92, fo. 46; *TSP*, i. 601.
- ²⁴ Woolrych, *Commonwealth*, p. 323; Gardiner, *Commonwealth*, ii. 364–5; *TSP*, i. 616; Scheurleer, *Verbael Gebouden*, pp. 187–96; TNA, SP 105/98, fo. 41; TNA, PRO 30/3/92, fos. 46–7; Bodl. MS Rawlinson A8, pp. 170–2.
- ²⁵ Pincus, *Protestantism*, pp. 158–63; Woolrych, *Commonwealth*, pp. 323–5; Gardiner, *Commonwealth*, ii. 364–5; Bodl. MS Rawl. A9, p. 9.
- ²⁶ Pincus, *Protestantism*, pp. 168, 180, 189, 191.

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'A BRAVE, BAD MAN'. HOW FAR DO YOU AGREE WITH EDWARD HYDE'S ASSESSMENT OF OLIVER CROMWELL?

by Kate Dorkins

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Edward Hyde's description begs two different questions regarding Oliver Cromwell. Firstly, how brave was Cromwell? Bravery is someone's willingness to endure danger for what they believe in. Cromwell was brave in two contexts – on the battlefield, and in creating and continuing the Interregnum. Secondly, how good, or bad, was Cromwell? Rather than questioning Cromwell's achievements, the phrase 'bad man' is assessing Cromwell's personality and motivations, which have been intensely debated. Leveller contemporaries believed him to be an ambitious figure who would stop at nothing to further his hold on power. Meanwhile, Trevor-Roper would call Cromwell a member of the 'declining gentry', whose involvement in the Civil War aimed to boost his income. Cromwell's actions in Ireland certainly seem to support the conclusion that he was a 'bad man'. Meanwhile, how important was desire for a Godly Reformation in motivating Cromwell? In answering these questions, it's important to think about Edward Hyde, the Earl of Clarendon, himself – and the possible reasons for his description of Cromwell.

Clarendon's description of Cromwell as 'brave' is striking. Why would a Royalist be willing to compliment his enemy in such a way? Clarendon was much more explicit in criticising several Royalist Commanders than Cromwell. For example, Clarendon said that Lord Goring, a Royalist Commander whose loyalty to Charles I was not seriously doubted, would 'without hesitation have broken any trust, or performed any act of treachery, to satisfy an ordinary passion or appetite'.¹ Clarendon calling Cromwell a 'bad man' suggests dislike of Cromwell's policies, so admiration wasn't the reason for terming him 'brave' – which makes it likely that the claim was based on evidence. Alternatively, it's possible that Clarendon wanted to represent Cromwell's military prowess in the best possible light; Royalist defeat was less humiliating to a more skilled victor. However, Clarendon didn't fight in the Civil War, so wouldn't need to explain away Parliamentary victory. Moreover, the context in which Cromwell was termed 'a brave bad man',² is a passage describing Cromwell himself rather than analysing the Royalist defeat – which makes the assertion that

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Clarendon exaggerated Cromwell’s bravery illogical. The first interpretation, that Clarendon decided Cromwell was brave based on evidence, is therefore much more likely.

Some cite an episode in the battle of Marston Moor to assert that Cromwell was not as brave as claimed. On sustaining a neck wound, Cromwell left the field to get it dressed, thus ‘he used his wound as a cowardly excuse to duck the fighting when it was at its fiercest’.³ However, Cromwell’s absence was brief and he was back for the climax of the fighting. Hence claims about Cromwell’s cowardliness cannot withstand closer inspection. Moreover, Cromwell spent most of 1642–50 fighting in various conflicts. He was not someone who avoided the battlefield out of fear, and felt instead that ‘God was almost palpably immanent’.⁴ Therefore, in military terms, Clarendon’s description is valid.

Cromwell held a Calvinist belief in Divine Providence – the belief that ‘nothing at any level happens randomly or by chance, since God is in charge of everything’.⁵ A victorious battle was God’s doing. Cromwell stated ‘wherever they [his regiment of horse] were engaged against the enemy, they beat [them] continually. And truly this is matter of praise to God’.⁶ It was this belief that he had discerned God’s Providence that bred Cromwell’s bravery and confidence – he was doing as God desired, so he had Divine Blessing in all his military endeavours. Therefore, Cromwell’s military bravery stemmed from his religious beliefs.

Cromwell exhibited bravery in contexts other than the battlefield. According to Cromwell, God had allowed Charles I to deliberately restart conflict (the Second Civil War), and then for Charles to be easily defeated, which showed God’s desire for Charles’ death. Once he had reached this decision, Cromwell involved himself in Charles’ trial and execution without regard to the danger that this put him in. Cromwell’s signature was third on Charles’ death warrant, and signing his name to such a radical action doubtless required considerable bravery. At the Restoration, the Regicides were not included in the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion, which pardoned the rest of the nation, so Cromwell’s body was dug up, beheaded, and his head displayed outside the Houses of Parliament. If this is the treatment that Cromwell received even after death, one can only imagine his fortune had the Interregnum not lasted until he died. In involving himself in the regicide,

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Cromwell was pushing for what he believed God wanted, even though it put him in great personal danger. In conclusion, Cromwell was clearly an extremely brave individual, both militarily, and in terms of politics. Yet, in both cases, his bravery came from religious beliefs.

That Cromwell had an insatiable ambition for power is not a new assertion: ‘Cromwell... was pious and conscionable in the main part of his life till prosperity and success corrupted him. Then his general religious zeal gave way to ambition which increased as successes increased’.⁷ To evidence these claims, there were several odd coincidences in Cromwell’s career – his exemption from the Self-Denying Ordinance, his return to London just hours after Pride’s Purge, and the abandonment of the Rule of the Major-Generals shortly before the Humble Petition and Advice was announced. Despite this, Cromwell rejected all claims that he sought power: ‘I would have been glad, as to my own conscience and spirit, to have been living under a wood-side to have kept a flock of sheep, rather than to have undertaken such a place as this was’.⁸ These claims should be treated sceptically, but two occasions make it highly unlikely that Cromwell’s motivation was power. Firstly, Cromwell denied himself easily accessible power by choosing not to sit on the Council of State of the Nominated Assembly. Secondly, Cromwell refused the Crown in 1657. There was a parliamentary campaign for him to take the crown, and Cromwell was aware of the need for the greatest possible political stability. However, Cromwell believed that ‘God... hath not only dealt with the persons and the [Stuart] family, but he hath blasted the title [of monarch]’,⁹ so decided that God would interpret his taking the crown as ‘the sin of pride, ambition, and self-advancement’.¹⁰ Cromwell, ‘by his own scruples’,¹¹ refused to be King. This cannot be the mark of someone motivated by power.

Was Cromwell money-grabbing and greedy? To ensure that his uncle, Sir Thomas Steward, did not divide his estate, and gave everything to Cromwell, he tried to have Steward declared a lunatic in 1635. This backfired; but was undoubtedly a money-grabbing move. However, Cromwell’s spiritual rebirth left him with a vastly different outlook on money. Cromwell’s reason for joining the army cannot have been money, as his eventual large income resulted from rapid promotion. Furthermore, Cromwell gave up over £3,000 of his back pay when he was Lieutenant General. Most of Cromwell’s earnings were spent financing seven marriages

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of his children. In 1651, parliament granted Cromwell £4,000 a year, but £2,300 was used to fund his son Henry’s marriage. Cromwell’s later annual income of £2,700 was ‘a very slender income for the *de facto* head of state’,¹² and he subsequently had to sell further estates to finance the dowries of his two remaining unmarried daughters. When Cromwell’s estate was valued at the restoration, his possessions in England were found to be worth next to nothing. Cromwell’s lack of financial desire shows his selflessness and generosity, a favourable contrast to monarchy’s extravagance.

Cromwell’s worst trait was his attitude concerning the Irish Catholics. The 1641 Irish Catholic rising – and inflated rumours that were relayed to parliament, panicked Cromwell ‘so much so that his principal declared motive for conquering Ireland later in the decade was to avenge the Catholic atrocities of 1641’.¹³ Cromwell’s desire for a united Commonwealth combined disastrously with this ingrown mistrust of Irish Catholics. At his first battle in Ireland, Drogheda, Cromwell breached the town walls, and, when the garrison refused to surrender, he ‘in the heat of passion’, (Cromwell later stated), ‘forbade them to spare any that were in arms in the town’.¹⁴ This resulted in a death toll of 3,000 – including friars and civilians. Cromwell has since been a hated figure in Ireland, and the Irish historian Micheál Ó Siochrú believes that Cromwell ‘was guilty of war crimes, religious persecution and ethnic cleansing’.¹⁵ However, concerning Ireland Cromwell ‘simply shared the attitudes of most Englishmen’.¹⁶ So, his Irish views were the trait of a ‘bad man’ – but this was ‘a shortcoming that he shared with the great majority of his countrymen’.¹⁷

Cromwell’s desire for a Godly Reformation was the centrepiece of his Interregnum. In Cromwell’s eyes, the first Civil War had two causes. The parliamentary cause was shared by many of his comrades – Charles had threatened parliament’s authority. Cromwell’s religious cause, however, wasn’t a key concern of the Parliamentarians. Before 1648, both causes favoured waging war against the King. However, in 1648, when parliament’s negotiations with the King threatened, according to Cromwell, to betray the religious cause, Cromwell was forced to accept that the religious and parliamentary causes were now opposite. ‘He [Cromwell] had had to choose between the two ‘causes’ for which he had striven since 1640, and reluctantly he had sacrificed the parliamentary cause for the godly cause’.¹⁸ By the end of 1648, Cromwell favoured religious reform over parliamentary

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liberties. Yet, Cromwell was equally aware that Godly Reformation wasn't a desire of the political nation – in fact 'the First Civil War had ended in 1646 with a parliamentary reaction against the growth of heresy and schism at least as severe as the reaction against the perceived growth of popery and Arminianism during the 1630s. Against such a reaction, Cromwell's version of godly Protestantism... could only be secured...with the backing of military strength'.¹⁹ The military dissolution of the Rump was caused because it was trying to rush through elections for a body that would not have allowed Cromwell to continue his Godly Reformation. The dissolution limited political stability, something Cromwell was committed to maintaining – but even this was secondary to his desire for religious reform. It was Cromwell's downfall that not more of the political nation shared this desire, because his attitude towards non-conformists was the most positive part of his regime. In conclusion, by choosing the godly cause over the parliamentary cause in 1648, and in infringing parliamentary liberties on a scale comparable to Charles I in 1653, Cromwell marked Godly Reformation as the pre-eminent aspect of his regime – 'we should see his religious attitudes and views as the most important thing about him'.²⁰ The fact that Cromwell's foremost motivation was the Godly Reformation, which was undoubtedly good in its attitude to Reformation of Manners, Law Reform, Poor Relief, and Liberty of Conscience, therefore supports the opposite conclusion to Clarendon's 'bad man'.

Was Cromwell a 'Brave, Bad Man'? Cromwell was brave both in terms of his exploits on the battlefield, and the radical path he followed, without fear of potential danger. Clarendon, a Royalist, wouldn't have termed Cromwell 'brave' without necessary evidence; and I agree wholeheartedly with this part of his conclusion. Concerning goodness, Cromwell's yearning for a Godly Reformation, rather than money, or power, was his predominant motivation – which leads to the conclusion that he was a 'good' man; however, his enmity towards Irish Catholics suggests the opposite. Yet the 'good' about Cromwell: his desire for Godly Reformation, and his Providence-driven bravery, came from radical religious views following his spiritual conversion of the 1630s, whereas the 'bad' – Cromwell's views concerning Irish Catholics – was an inherited view from the society in which he lived, which contextualises, without excusing, Cromwell's actions in Ireland. Therefore, rather than a 'brave, bad man', Cromwell was, on balance, a 'brave, good man'. However, aren't 'good' or 'bad' and 'brave' or 'cowardly' simplistic

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labels for anyone – let alone someone as riddled with complexities and contradictions as Oliver Cromwell?

- ¹ E. Hyde; *The History of the Rebellion (Abridged ed.)*, Oxford University Press, 1888, p.231
- ² E. Hyde; book xv, para. 156
- ³ I. Gentles; *Oliver Cromwell – God’s Warrior and the English Revolution*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011 p.35
- ⁴ J. S. A. Adamson, *Oliver Cromwell and the Long Parliament*, in: J. Morrill (ed.); *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution*, Longman, 1990 p.56
- ⁵ I. Gentles p.92
- ⁶ S.C. Lomas (ed.), *The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell with Elucidations by Thomas Carlyle*, 1904, volume III, p.66
- ⁷ M. Sylvester (ed.), *Reliquiae Baxterianae*, 1696, Part 1, p.99
- ⁸ W. C. Abbott, *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, Clarendon Press, 1937–47, Volume IV, p.729
- ⁹ W. C. Abbott, vol. IV, p.443
- ¹⁰ B. Coward, *Oliver Cromwell*, Longman, 1991, p.152
- ¹¹ J. Morrill, *Introduction*, In: J. Morrill (ed.) *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution*, Longman, 1990, p.1
- ¹² I. Gentles p.141
- ¹³ I. Gentles p.94
- ¹⁴ S. C. Lomas (ed.) vol. I, pp.468–9
- ¹⁵ Online at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/this-britain/the-big-question-was-cromwell-a-revolutionary-hero-or-a-genocidal-war-criminal-917996.html> on 20/07/17
- ¹⁶ D. Stevenson, *Cromwell, Scotland and Ireland*, In: J. Morrill (ed.) *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution*, Longman, 1990 p.150
- ¹⁷ I. Gentles, p.202
- ¹⁸ B. Coward, p.68
- ¹⁹ J. S. A. Adamson, *Oliver Cromwell and the Long Parliament*, In: J. Morrill (ed.) *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution*, Longman, 1990 pp.89–90
- ²⁰ G. Drake, ‘*The Ideology of Oliver Cromwell*’, *Church History* XXXV, 1966, p.259

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SURVEYS OF THE CLERGY OF HUNTINGDONSHIRE EARLY IN 1641

by Dr Clive Holmes

In the archive of Sir Sydney Montagu, knight of the shire for Huntingdonshire in the Long Parliament, four papers survive concerning the state of the clergy in the county he represented. Three of them are compiled through the machinery of local administration; the fourth, 'a Certificate of unworthy Ministers in the county of Huntingdon', originates in a more informal initiative.¹ They are among the rare surviving records of what should have been a national survey mandated by the House of Commons late in 1640. Before examining the documents in detail, it is worth setting out the process from which they stemmed and the ideas this embodied.

On 19 December 1640 the Commons, overwhelmed by the 'numberless' petitions from parishes concerning the inadequacies of their local ministers, including one from Huntingdonshire,² sought to establish a more efficient mechanism to handle these complaints.³ A week previously the Grand Committee of Religion had set up a sub-committee to consider the lack of a preaching ministry in many parishes. The House elevated this sub-committee to the status of a full committee, directly empowered by the House. It nominated a larger group of MPs to its membership, and it widened its remit to 'inquire of the true Grounds and Causes of the great scarcity of preaching Ministers through the whole Kingdom; and to consider of some Way of removing scandalous ministers'. As a prelude to this, it instructed MPs 'upon their own knowledge and upon information' to survey 'the state and Condition of their Counties concerning preaching Ministers' and to report the results of their survey within six weeks.⁴ A version of this order was soon available in print, published by the bookseller Henry Overton.

This publication, brought to the attention of the Commons by Speaker Lenthall, led to a sharp dispute in the House on 9th January. The previous day MPs agreed swiftly that Overton had 'false printed an order of the House without any authority ... and made additions of his own' and that he must be summoned to attend the House.⁵ Overton could not deny that he had horribly garbled the names of committee members, and the substantive additions were obvious to anyone who consulted the Commons' Journal. Overton had added further instructions to the order of 19th December on

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the form the survey was to take, suggesting a four-fold analysis under which information should be gathered – (1) parishes with pluralist ministers; (2) parishes with inadequate financial provision; (3) parishes where there was a paucity of preaching; (4) parishes ‘where there are persecuting, innovating or scandalous ministers, that they may be put out’. He had also added a clause inviting ‘all ingenious persons...to be very active to improve the present opportunity’ and assist in compiling the survey.⁶

Overton’s appearance sparked a long and bad-tempered debate: a ‘great party of the House thought it deserved severe punishment’ and, when that motion was defeated, sought to have Overton interrogated further as to who brought him the order and suggested the additions. The parliamentary diarist, Sir Thomas Peyton, stated the obvious: many of those MPs who opposed a heavy penalty and further interrogation were ‘privy to the printing’. Ultimately, Overton escaped with a ‘sharp reprehension’ from the Speaker and an instruction to destroy all copies in his shop.⁷

Despite the order that Overton should call in and destroy his publication, it circulated and was studied in the localities. The incumbent of Santon Downham on the Suffolk-Norfolk border read it, and transcribed it at length into his diary, along with his collections of parliamentary speeches, ‘railing rimes’, prophecies, and snatches of national and international news.⁸ It was read by a Northamptonshire clergyman, who published a clever response in which he argued that the Parliamentary inquiry was missing the point. The fundamental weakness of the Church was the damage that had been done to its finances, and those of its clergy, by a century of lay rapacity. It was the livings that were ‘scandalous’, not the clergy. Good quality incumbents could not be found for impoverished livings, drained out by impropriations, by adverse deals on tithes, by long (and often fraudulent) leases of lands and profits.⁹

There is also some evidence, though less than we might expect, of official circulation of the text and local attempts to conform to its formulae. Kentish parishes had been swift to send their individual complaints to the Commons against ministers thought to be inadequate, but from late January 1641 several of their petitions directly refer to the order of 19th December.¹⁰ It is possible that Sir Edward Dering, MP for Kent and a major player on the Parliamentary committees reviewing the state of the church, sent out

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printed copies of the order to the parishes. The information from Goudhurst, 'draughted, as neere as we could, in all particulars, according to the order of your Honourable House', was returned directly to Dering.¹¹ A more comprehensive report, with a clear official provenance, is that compiled for Herefordshire.¹² The godly MP, Sir Robert Harley, sent a copy of the order to his wife, the equally godly, Lady Brilliana, who became 'very active in so great a business', discussing the task with Puritan JPs and ministers in the county. It was agreed that copies of the order were to be sent out to a cadre of 'men well affected to this service of god, King, Church, Kingdome and Countrey', who were to bring information from parishes in the areas where they resided for collation into a general survey at the next quarter sessions for the county. The subsequent work of synthesis was undertaken by the fiercely anti-episcopalian minister, Stanley Gower, incumbent of the Harleys' own living of Brampton Bryan. The report was bitterly critical of individual parochial ministers. Only 20 of the county's 225 churches had ministers who conformed to Gower's exacting standards, as 'constant & conscionable preachers'. 'All the rest are Non-resident, Pluralists, insufficient or scandalous', he reported.¹³ But Gower had an additional agenda: he spun the report to savage the bishop and cathedral clergy, the upholders of 'a world of Ceremoniall trinkets & fopperies', and to demand the establishment of a Presbyterian system of church government.¹⁴

In his report on the compilation of the survey in Herefordshire, Gower complacently anticipated that the document would be read in the Commons, and 'would give the casting voice' against the bishops. But there is no evidence that the survey was ever formally received at Westminster. The same is true of the reports from the third county where an official survey was undertaken: Huntingdonshire.

Sir Sydney Montagu was a younger son of an eminently godly family, whose members were committed Calvinists in theology, and actively involved in schemes of moral and social reform.¹⁵ Sir Sydney continued the family tradition in the early months of the Long Parliament, to judge by his appointments to committees in the Commons. It is unsurprising, then, to find him engaged in the surveys required by the order of 19th December. What persuaded him to establish the local system which was employed in Huntingdonshire to collect the required data is unknown. He was a London

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lawyer by profession, and a comparative newcomer to Huntingdonshire, with negligible engagement with local government previously. His brothers, Edward, Lord Montagu and Henry, Earl of Manchester were both very experienced figures in local administration, Edward as a leading JP in Northamptonshire, Henry as Lord Privy Seal, and he may have taken their advice when he turned to the high constables with the 19th December order.¹⁶

For administrative purposes Huntingdonshire was divided into four Hundreds: Norman Cross in the north; Hurstingstone in the east; Toseland in the south; Leightonstone in the west. Each of the Hundreds had two high constables, with responsibility for half the parishes in their Hundred. Montagu's papers contain reports from Thomas King, high constable of parishes in the north of Normancross (dated 13th January); Thomas Fillbrigg, from parishes in the east of Leightonstone (12th January); and Hugh Wye from the south of Toseland (22nd January). The three men completed their surveys with the categories established by Commons' order of 19th December in mind. All report on non-residence, on the values of the livings, on the availability and quality of preaching, and on ministerial inadequacy. There are interesting divergences of coverage among them. Thomas King is laconic, providing a rough estimate of the value of the living, the name of the minister, his university degree, and a short comment on his performance in his function: 9 of the 13 ministers upon whom he comments are 'resident upon the same, painefull in his calling'; the four non-resident pluralists all provide curates, and King estimates the stipend the latter receive, but does not comment on their performance.¹⁷ Fillbrigg provides no names, but lists the ministers' degrees and the value of the living, and provides a short evaluation: 10 of the ministers serving the 12 parishes in his division, including two poor curates, he describes as 'a preacher and paynefull, resident'. Fillbrigg provides some detail on the true value of impropriated livings, and notes the names of those to whom the impropriator leased his property.¹⁸ The fullest report is that of Hugh Wye from the southern parishes of Toseland Hundred. He provides the most detail on the financial situation in the parishes – so of Abbotsley, worth £43 pa to the vicar, he adds 'the parsonage impropriated to Bellial Colledge in Oxford worth one hundred pounds ... And alsoe Robert Bretton hath a tythes thereof 10l per Ann'. His comments on the ministers are also fuller than those of his colleagues: Wye notes that Robert Bell of Abbotsley

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preached every Sunday morning and catechised in the afternoon, but added 'for his lyfe troublesome and hath raised maney suites in law'.¹⁹

This is a very different world from that described by Gower in Herefordshire. The Huntingdonshire high constables are reasonably satisfied with the state of the clergy in their divisions. King makes no direct complaint; Fillbrigg notes that the incumbent of Grafham 'doth seldome preach', but 'often doth provide on to preach for him'. Wye is fuller, but guarded: Thomas Atkinson of Paxton, aged 80, is 'paynefull in his calling to his abillity'; Nathaniel Lawrence of St Neot's is 'paynefull in his calling, preaching once a sabbath', but his soft voice made him inaudible to a third of the congregation 'our church being great'; rumours of improper behaviour swirled around the impecunious curate of the non-resident pluralist, Dr Pocklington, at Waresley, but Wye made no direct charge.

If we accept the accounts of the high constables, the condition of the Huntingdonshire clergy was reasonably good early in 1641. That was not the view of those who prepared the 'Certificate of unworthie Ministers'. This document, returned to Montagu before April 1641, was, it seems, undertaken in haste and it does not employ the categories of the Commons' order of 19th December. Its writers may simply have been responding to their knowledge of the ongoing information gathering by the high constables. The Certificate is certainly not exhaustive. Some ministers later expelled as objectionable, like Matthew Hewson of Ellington and Simon Paige of Hemingford Abbots, both of whom bowed to the altar and favoured the Book of Sports, go unremarked in the Certificate.²⁰ The document is anonymous and unofficial. It was probably organised by men from Cromwell's old parish of St Ives.²¹ The denunciation of the clergy in that borough is venomous, 'defamed for proud men, superstitious Arminianes and bitter enemies to the power of godliness', and the writers subsequently contrast the absence of 'good men' at Warboys to act as a check to the evils of their 'prophane and naughty' minister, in contrast to the situation at St Ives. The list, organised using the four Hundreds, ostensibly covered the whole of Huntingdonshire, and its creators found fault with the quality of the ministers in 36 of the 108 livings there.

The nature of the perceived ministerial inadequacies is worth analysing. Only 7 of the 36 are denounced for Arminian or superstitious practices, as

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‘no friend of preaching’ or as ‘bitter enemies to the power of godliness’. Eighteen ministers are accused of drunkenness, ‘given to the pot too much’, or ‘common tipling’; in three cases there are dark hints of unspecified sexual immorality.²² Twelve ministers are listed as ‘drones’; men ‘given to the world’, rich farmers, covetous and litigious: Tredway of Offord D’Arcy wholly neglected his clerical function, not even bothering to read prayers, and lived by moneylending. Seven ministers are ‘weak’ – a combination of the elderly, the sick and the poorly paid curates of non-resident pluralists.

Those who compile the Certificate are less obviously committed to an alternative ecclesiology than their colleagues in Herefordshire, and they have a less bleak view of the religious situation in their area. But their evaluation is far less complacent than that of the three high constables whose reports survive. In 12 cases the reports of the constable and the Certificate can be directly compared. At Waresley, both sources note the non-residence of Dr Pocklington, a well-padded pluralist, but the Certificate comments bitterly on his ceremonialist and Arminian convictions. The vicar of St Neots, a painful preacher but barely audible in the great church according to Wye, is simply dismissed as ‘able but idle & defamed for tipling’ in the Certificate. At Grafham, Fillbrigg reports that the incumbent seldom preaches but often provides a substitute; for the writers of the Certificate he is not only a non-preacher, but debauched, covetous, and suspiciously rich. Of the other nine cases, the high constables employ some version of the ‘resident, preacher, painful in his calling’ formula: the writers of the Certificate record a rich grazier and a ‘deboished wicked man’ at Spaldwick; three tipplers (Ellington, Haddon, Paxton); and four ministers who combined Arminian religious practices and a taste for the bottle (Chesterton, Leighton, Stanground, Woodson). Perhaps most telling of the different standards being employed are the reports on Edmund Marmion of Eynesbury. For Hugh Wye he was a paragon, ‘paynefull in his calling preaching every saboth day twice, charitable to the poore, loving and being beloved by his parishioners’; the Certificate acknowledged his good nature, but noted he was ‘defamed for tipling, and often drunke’.²³

The certificates returned in consequence of the Commons’ order of 19th December – or, rather, of Overton’s reworking of it – appear to have made little impact. Sir Sydney filed the reports with his papers, but his enthusiasm for religious reform was waning as more radical schemes were advanced by

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the godly. His one contribution to the debates on episcopacy in June 1641 suggest deep uncertainty at the developments at Westminster: he hoped 'God can so illuminate our eyes that we may do all for the glory of God and the peace of this commonwealth'.²⁴ But it was not just Montagu's unease that led to no further mention of the surveys. There seems to have been no discussion of the results during the Commons' and its committees' abortive attempts to produce a general Bill against scandalous ministers. The Kentish materials fed into the ongoing process of hearings against individual incumbents, which took up inordinate amounts of parliamentary time in 1641 and early 1642.²⁵ Not until the Commons empowered local authorities to hear and determine cases against scandalous ministers, as with the Earl of Manchester's Ordinance of 22 January 1644 for the counties forming the Eastern Association, including Huntingdonshire, was much headway made in purging the local ministry beyond London and the counties immediately adjacent to it.²⁶

But the order of the 19th December did have a broader significance. It is one of the earliest occasions on which the Commons were split, and that division occurred in relation to religious tensions that were to provoke the ultimate polarisation into Parliamentary and Royalist parties, and later armies. Late in 1640 the Commons were virtually unanimous in their endeavours to destroy the constitutional policies of Charles I. But religious issues were already divisive. And one of the dimensions of the fears of religious conservatives that drove their growing support of the King, was the readiness of some MPs to employ the press to propagandise for their favoured policies, and to invite popular participation in their favoured schemes – the 'all ingenious persons' to whom we may attribute the 'Certificate of the unworthy Ministers in the County of Huntingdon'.²⁷

¹ Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Carte 103, fos 58, 60, 62 are the 'official' papers; fos 64–65 is the 'Certificate'.

² Simon Paige of Hemingford Abbots: see Parliamentary Archives HL/PO/JO/10/154 fos 156–163.

³ William A. Shaw, *A History of the English Church during the Civil Wars and under the Commonwealth*, 2 vols. London, 1900, i, 15; ii, 177.

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- ⁴ *Proceedings in the opening session of the Long Parliament: House of Commons* ed. Maija Jansson, 7 vols Rochester NY, 2000–2007, i, 667, 669
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, ii, 144–6.
- ⁶ *An order made to a select committee chosen by the whole house of Commons* (London, 1640: RSTC 7747)
- ⁷ *Proceedings in the opening session*, ii, 151–4.
- ⁸ *Diary of John Rous, incumbent of Santon Downham*, ed. M.A.E. Green (Camden Society, old series lxvi, 1856), 111–113.
- ⁹ *A certificate from Northamptonshire* (London, 1641: Wing. C1776): the author is anonymous, but the argument is so relentlessly hostile to the lay plunder of the church that it is highly likely to be by a clergyman. It is tempting to ascribe authorship to Peter Hausted, vicar of Grendon: the author of the certificate shares the sardonic style and fierce hostility to ‘the sinister influence of the laity’ exhibited in Hausted’s work. But the author of the certificate draws his examples from the west of the county, whereas Hausted was from north-east Northamptonshire. For Hausted, see Peter Lake and Isaac Stephens, *Scandal and Religious Identity in Early Stuart England: A Northamptonshire Maid’s Tragedy*, Woodbridge, 2015, 77–96.
- ¹⁰ *Proceedings principally in the county of Kent in connection with the parliaments called in 1640 and especially with the committee of religion appointed in that year*, ed. L.B.Larking (Camden Society, old series lxxx, 1862), 149, 156, 173.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, 142–5.
- ¹² Gower’s report of 23 January 1641 on his efforts is BL, MS Additional 70105 unfol., folder ‘Stanley Gower’: the original certificate is Corpus Christi College, Oxford, MS 206. There is an excellent discussion of these documents in Jacqueline Eales, *Puritans and Roundheads: the Harleys of Brampton Bryan and the Outbreak of the English Civil War*, Cambridge, 1990, 108–111.
- ¹³ Corpus Christi College, MS 206, fo.1v.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, fos 10, 10v
- ¹⁵ See the biography, by Simon Healy, in Andrew Thrush and John F. Ferris (ed), *The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1604–1629*, 7 vols, Cambridge, 2010, iv, 381–5.
- ¹⁶ Henry and Edward had discussed at length the Book of Orders, drafted by Henry, in 1631: the high constables were made responsible for

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collecting a good deal of data concerning social welfare. For this, see B.W. Quintrell, 'The Making of Charles I's Book of Orders', *English Historical Review* xcv (1980), 553–572, in particular 564–5.

¹⁷ Bodl. Lib., MS Carte 103 fo. 58

¹⁸ Ibid., fo. 62

¹⁹ Ibid., fo. 60

²⁰ For Hewson, see *The Royalist Clergy of Lincolnshire* ed. F. Hill, (Lincolnshire Architectural and Archaeological Society, new series, ii 1940) 44; for Paige, see Parliamentary Archives, MS HL/ PO/JO/10/1/154 fos 148–168.

²¹ For the activities of an aggressive Puritan group at St Ives, see A. Barclay, *Electing Cromwell: the Making of a Politician*, London 2011, 65–67: their objections to Henry Downhall, the vicar, are Parliamentary Archives, MS HL/PO/JO/10/1/148 fo.271.

²² 'Naughty' is used of one minister; 'deboyshed' of two; in one of the latter cases, Shepherd of Grafham, his subsequent sequestration was noted as being for offences that were 'of a very foul nature', his 'scandalous life and ungodly conversacion': 'Royalist Clergy of Lincolnshire', 121, 122.

²³ Marmion was sequestered from Eynesbury by the Earl of Manchester (BL, MS Additional 15669 fo. 228) but no record of the accusation survives, nor of the divisions that must have existed in the parish.

²⁴ *Proceedings in the Opening Session*, iv, 99.

²⁵ For the complex history of the bill, and the vast expenditure of parliamentary time in pursuing objectionable clerics in 1641 and 1642, see *The Suffolk Committees for Scandalous Ministers 1644–1646*, ed. C.Holmes (Suffolk Records Society xiii, Ipswich, 1970), 10–13.

²⁶ For Manchester's Ordinance, and the proceedings upon it, see *The Cambridgeshire Committee of Scandalous Ministers 1644–1645*, ed.G.Hart (Cambridgeshire Records Society xxiv, Cambridge, 2017), 6–17. Manchester appointed a committee for Huntingdonshire, and he ousted at least five incumbents, but a record of proceedings survives in only one case, that of Hewson of Ellington: see note 17 above.

²⁷ See, in general, Jason Peacey, *Print and Public Politics in the English Revolution*, Cambridge, 2013. Peacey's reference (p. 180) to the 19th December order underestimates the significance of Overton's additions. John Walter has analysed a similar incident in the early summer of 1641,

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when Puritan MPs and their allies in the country employed the press to promulgate a more radical text of the Protestation than that agreed in the Commons and to encourage wide participation (John Walter, *Covenanting Citizens: the Protestation Oath and Popular Political Culture in the English Revolution*, Oxford, 2017, 4–6, 10–49).

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‘BESTOWING A VISIT UPON THAT LITTLE CITY’
CROMWELL AND THE TAKING OF PETERBOROUGH,
APRIL 1643

by Stuart Orme

Cromwell’s early military career is one that tends to be treated in a cursory fashion. Most writers tend to focus on his later victories, discussing briefly the oft-debated point as to whether or not he was present at Edgehill, and then glossing over his activities for the early part of 1643, until his first substantial action at Gainsborough in May. These early few months were crucial for Cromwell, both in expanding his troop of horse to a full regiment with his new commission as colonel at the end of January, and in subduing any pockets of Royalist resistance in the vicinity of his base in Huntingdon. One of these ‘malignant’ outposts was the small cathedral city of Peterborough, some 17 miles to the north of Cromwell’s home town. This was the first significant target to be seized by Cromwell and the results of his occupation are well documented through several sources. The seizure of Peterborough is significant, both to provide him with a strategically important base of operations to take Crowland, and as it was Cromwell’s first field experience in conducting military action against a hostile town with an independent command.

Two key accounts of the seizure and occupation of the town survive, published in the 1686 *History of the Church in Peterborough*: one written by a cathedral’s canon, Symon Gunton, who had spent most of his life in the city and comments at length upon the Parliamentary occupation, as well as containing an eyewitness account by Francis Standish, subsequently the cathedral’s precentor. Some writers, such as Antonia Fraser, have been dismissive of these descriptions, treating them as being hardly more reliable than the hyperbolic accounts contained within contemporary Royalist newsbooks, little more than simple propaganda. However, to do so ignores the mute testimony of the cathedral building and the repairs that had to be made to it thereafter from the iconoclastic activities of the troops under Cromwell’s command. Recent archaeological evidence uncovered in the summer of 2016 adds credence to these accounts. The aim of this article is to look at the collected evidence and try to present what happened in April 1643.

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CROMWELL AND THE TAKING OF PETERBOROUGH,
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Cromwell in early 1643

After the early months of the Civil War, Oliver Cromwell was located, by the spring of 1643, back in his home county of Huntingdonshire and was active in securing a base of operations, and expanding and training his forces. As Peter Gaunt has observed, at this time Cromwell’s military career ‘comes across as that of an inexperienced but keen regional commander; a man acquiring military skills and struggling to overcome local apathy as well as Royalist opponents’. ⁽¹⁾ By the end of January he had been promoted to colonel and was expanding his regiment of horse on the principles that would make them famous throughout the rest of the conflict, described by Bulstrode Whitelock as freeholders who joined up ‘upon a matter of conscience... And thus being well armed within, by the satisfaction of their consciences, and without by good iron arms, they would as one man stand firmly and charge desperately’. ⁽²⁾ By March 1643 the regiment had swelled to five troops in strength; John Vicars described this expansion as being due to the ‘Noble and Active Colonell Cromwell... Thus we see how God infuses and inflames into the hearts of his people, to show themselves ready and cheerful to come forth to help the Lord against the mighty Nimrods and Hunting Furies of our time...’. ⁽³⁾

Not everyone was so devoted to Cromwell’s cause, and he was determined to ensure that his men were strictly disciplined. In early April 1643 he had two troopers flogged in the market square in Huntingdon for attempting to desert, and said of the discipline he enforced that ‘no man swears but he pays his twelvepence, if he be drunk he is set in the stocks or worse; if he calls the other roundhead, he is cashiered...’. ⁽⁴⁾ Cromwell’s troopers had searched the Huntingdon home of Robert Barnard, a member of the Midland Counties Association and his local rival, upon information that he was not as loyal to the Parliamentary cause as he had professed. When Barnard protested at this treatment, Cromwell wrote back on the 17th April, stating very simply that it was true that ‘my Lieutenant with some other soldiers of my troop were at your house... the reason was, I heard you reported active against the proceedings of parliament, and for those also that disturb the peace of this county and this kingdom...’. ⁽⁵⁾ Cromwell was obviously keen to ensure loyalty in the area that he had responsibility for,

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and by the end of April this would mean beginning to secure other towns in the area which had more overt Royalist sympathies.

Peterborough on the eve of the Civil War

Peterborough had been a prosperous market town during the late medieval period, dominated by the Abbey of St Peter. Not only was the abbey church (later Peterborough Cathedral) an imposing physical presence over the town, but the abbey was the local landlord, rent collector, tax collector, owner of many local pubs, custodian of the markets, and guardian of law and order in the town. The town also had the honour of the burial of a queen of England, with Katherine of Aragon's remains being laid to rest within the abbey church on 29th January 1536. Such a burial was not to ensure the abbey's prosperity for long. ⁽⁶⁾

Peterborough's economy suffered with the dissolution of the abbey in November 1539. The church and its environs survived the Reformation relatively intact due to the pragmatism of the last abbot, John Chambers, who threw the gates open and welcomed Henry VIII's commissioners; and also because of the co-operation of the monastic community, as well as the influence of John Russell, steward to the abbey and one of Henry VIII's intimates. Although the medieval wall paintings were whitewashed over and the monastic dormitory and refectory stripped of their lead roofs, most of the other monastic buildings remained untouched. The cloister – famed for the quality of its stained glass – was preserved, as was the church itself. Some 18 months later, the church, and indeed Chambers himself, were both elevated by the creation of the Diocese and its attendant Cathedral of Peterborough in 1541. However, the impact of the Reformation was such that neither the church nor the town fully recovered from the impact of half its wealth being confiscated by the Crown. ⁽⁷⁾

By the early 1600s Peterborough was then an unremarkable market town, like so many others across the country, albeit dominated by a magnificent cathedral church, as shown in John Speed's map of the town published as part of his county map of Northamptonshire in 1611. The population numbered perhaps 2,000, with the economy centred around the twice-weekly markets held on the central Marketstede, the wool trade, and the

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commerce brought in from river traffic, the river Nene being navigable to this point. ⁽⁸⁾

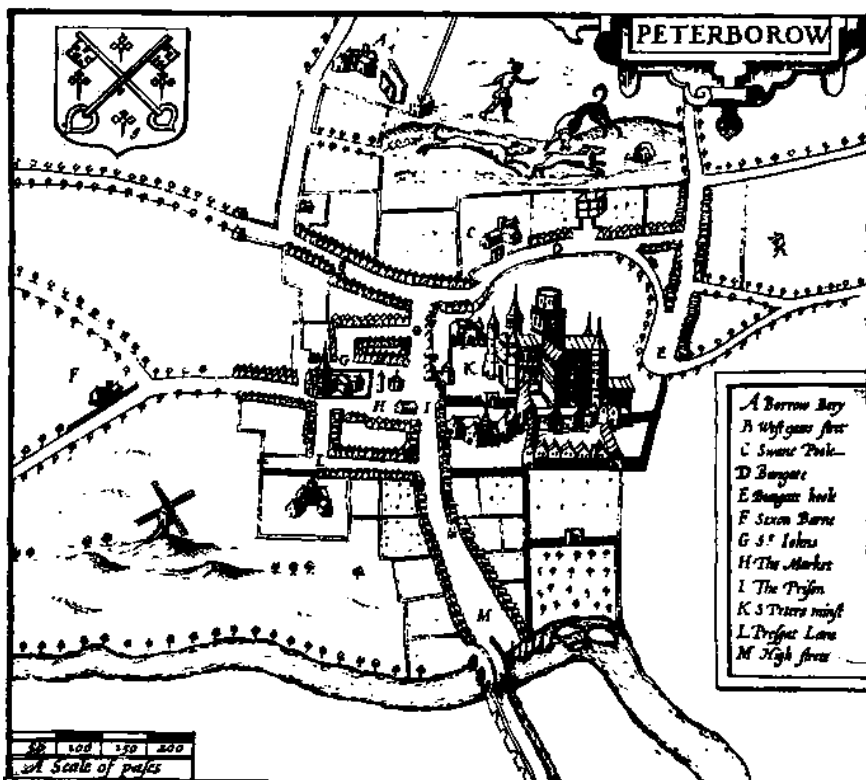


Plate 3 John Speed's Map of Peterborough, from the County Map of Northamptonshire, 1611 (*Author's collection*)

The town held a strategically important position, controlling an important river crossing across the Nene, and being situated just off the Great North Road. By this period the political power had passed from the church (although the incumbent bishop and dean were always important) to elected local burgesses (or ‘feoffees’) and local gentry families. These included the Fitzwilliam family of Milton Hall, who had taken the opportunity to increase their landholdings by purchasing lands before and during the Reformation, and the Orme family. Humphrey Orme had been a Groom of the

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Bedchamber under Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Elizabeth I, under whom he had leased substantial landholdings around Peterborough, including West Deeping and Warmington. His son, also Humphrey, had purchased a knighthood from James I in 1604 and was now resident in a substantial mansion, Neville Place, on Priestgate in the town (today the site of Peterborough Museum). ⁽⁹⁾

With the outbreak of the Civil War in England in August 1642, Peterborough declared for the King. The local elite families such as the Ormes and Fitzwilliams were Royalist in sympathy, and the local clergy were of high church inclination. Bishop John Towers (appointed in 1639) was one of the twelve bishops imprisoned in the Tower of London for protesting against the Bishop’s Exclusion Bill of 1642, and after his release the following year he spent the duration of the first Civil War in the Royalist capital, Oxford. ⁽¹⁰⁾ A substantial number of local worthies were known to be away from Peterborough serving the Royalist cause. In 1643, as part of the Parliamentary ordinance denouncing known ‘delinquents’, the following Peterborians were named as being active Royalists: ⁽¹¹⁾

Captain Styles, Walton
Dr. Cosin, Dean of Peterborough
Matthew Robinson, Longthorpe
Thomas Dove, Upton
John Bourne, Ufford
Robert Dixon, Peterborough

Newdigate Pointz of Dogsthorpe
William Hake, Peterborough
John Towers, Bishop of Peterborough
James Carrier, Helpston
Mr Styldolph, Wittering
Millicent Pratt, Dogsthorpe

Peterborough had no substantial defences and does not even seem to have had a garrison of troops. Given its position as a river crossing and its proximity to the other ‘malignant’ town of Crowland (thus acting as a potential staging post for an assault), it was a prime military target.

The accounts of Cromwell’s occupation

Our two accounts of what happened next were published in the same volume *The History of the Church of Peterburgh* by Symon Gunton, in 1686. The book, published posthumously, was edited by the subsequent Dean of Peterborough Cathedral, Simon Patrick, who, in view of the significance of

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the Civil War occupation, appended a second and more detailed account of the Cromwellian occupation by the cathedral’s precentor, Francis Standish. It is worth taking a moment to consider the careers of these two men and what effect this might have on the reliability of their accounts.

Symon Gunton was born in Peterborough and baptised at St John’s Church on 30th December 1609, the third child of six. His father was the cathedral’s registrar, with the duties of keeping ‘leases, patents, confirmations and all other instruments’. ⁽¹²⁾ His mother died when he was four years old and was buried in the cathedral’s Lady Chapel. Gunton was educated at the King’s School in the town and went on to Magdalene College in Cambridge, graduating with a BA in 1630, and an MA in 1634. The following year he was ordained as a deacon, and then a priest the following year. The Bishop of Peterborough who performed these acts was Francis Dee, a man whom Gunton called ‘a man of very pious life and affable behaviour’. ⁽¹³⁾ Dee was a strong Laudian, and it is likely Gunton shared this outlook. Gunton married in 1636 and had six children; by 1637 he had been appointed as the Vicar of Pytchley in Northants, and by 1643 a minor canon at Peterborough Cathedral. It is unlikely he was able to assume this duty as the Civil War interceded, and instead he remained in his parish, sheltered from any comeback due to his beliefs because of the influence of the local landlord, the Duke of Richmond. After the Restoration, Gunton assumed his duties at the cathedral, becoming sub-treasurer, and spending much of his time recovering land and property belonging to the cathedral’s chapter. He was also appointed as Vicar of St John’s Church in the town, a role which he held nobly during an outbreak of plague in September 1665, which killed 543 townspeople in weeks. Whilst many clergy, and those who could, fled the town, Gunton remained to bury his parishoners. He subsequently became Vicar of Fiskerton in Lincolnshire, where he died in 1676. ⁽¹⁴⁾

Gunton’s great legacy was his history of Peterborough Cathedral, utilising a number of key medieval chronicles and being the first detailed account of its story in English. He did comment on its more recent story, including the Cromwellian occupation, which is recounted in hostile, even scurrilous, terms. Given Gunton’s own religious inclinations this is perhaps less than surprising, and the fact that Gunton was not present in Peterborough at the time of the Civil War does strain the credibility of his account. However, his

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book was completed and published by Simon Patrick a decade after his death. Patrick, the new cathedral dean, saw the value in Gunton’s careful history, and added his own sections to it.

It was Patrick that asked Francis Standish to add a further, more detailed account of the Parliamentary occupation in 1643, appended as an essay *A Short and True Narrative of the Rifling and Defacing the Cathedral Church of Peterburgh in the Year 1643*. Less is known about Standish, but that he was born and bred in Peterborough, and although not yet a priest, was present at the time of Cromwell’s arrival and can be seen as an eyewitness account. Standish is also much more balanced in his account, careful to refute some of the more outlandish accusations in the Royalist newsbooks about Cromwell’s occupation, saying of these things that he must ‘clear the Souldiers of, which Mercurius Rusticus upon misinformation charges them with...’. ⁽¹⁵⁾

Cromwell occupies Peterborough, April 1643

Gunton states that the town was taken by Parliamentary forces on the 18th April 1643, ‘in order to the besieging of Croyland’, ⁽¹⁶⁾ with a more detailed description from Standish that it was Colonel Miles Hobart’s regiment of foot that arrived first to take Peterborough. Standish added that ‘some persons of the Town, fearing what happen’d afterward, desire the Chief Commander to take care the Souldiers did no injury to the Church: This he promis’d to do, and gave orders to have the Church doors all lockt up’.

Standish then continued: ‘Some two days after comes a Regiment of Horse under Colonel Cromwell, a name as fatal to Ministers, as it had been to Monasteries before. The next day after their arrival, early in the morning, these break open the Church doors, pull down the Organs, of which there were two Pair...’. ⁽¹⁷⁾ The destruction of many decorative parts of the cathedral by Parliamentarian troops began here, with Gunton stating that ‘Their Commanders, of whom Cromwell was one, if not acting, yet not restraining the Souldiers in this heat of their fury’. ⁽¹⁸⁾

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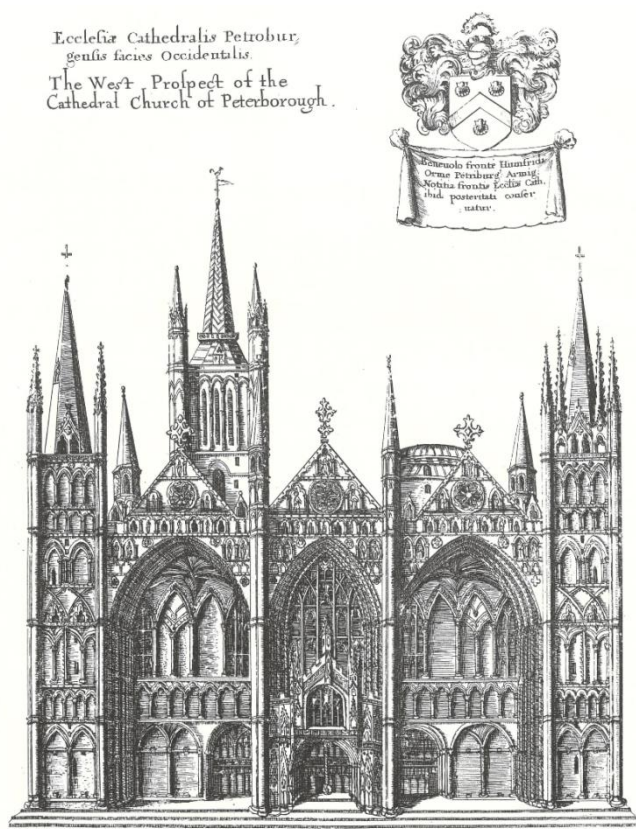


Plate 4 West front of Peterborough Cathedral – Frontispiece from Gunton’s ‘History of the Church in Peterburgh’ (1685) (*Author’s collection*)

Standish describes in some detail how Cromwell’s troops ransacked the high church cathedral ‘with such a strange furious and frantick zeal, as cannot be well conceived, but by those that saw it’. ⁽¹⁹⁾ The altar screen was pulled down, the Lady Chapel so badly damaged it had to be subsequently demolished, stained glass smashed, tombs vandalised, metalwork from the doors removed, statues used as target practice, metalwork looted and papers burnt. At some points the officers did step in, Colonel Hobart insisting that the Bible and Communion ware was restored back to the Communion

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table.⁽²⁰⁾ Local people did try to intervene, Standish describing how ‘A well-disposed person standing by, and seeing the Souldiers make such spoil and havock, speaks to one that appeared like an Officer, desiring him to restrain the Souldiers from such enormities. But all the answer he obtained, was only a scoffing reply, to this purpose, “See how those poor People are concern’d to see their Idols pulled down”’. Standish accounts this attitude as being that ‘the Inhabitants of Peterburgh at that time, were accounted by these Reformers, as both a malignant and superstitious kind of People’. ⁽²¹⁾

For the duration of his stay, Cromwell was quartered in the house known as the Vineyard at the north-east end of the precincts, and by now most prominent Royalists in the town had been secured with little resistance. Gunton, in a slightly scurrilous fashion, describes an incident where Cromwell was injured entering the property when ‘some two or three days after a finger of divine vengeance touched Cromwell... there was a passage into the Churchyard (which since is mured up) ascending by 3 or 4 stone steps, Cromwell (as others did) riding up those steps, his Horse fell under him, and rising suddenly under the lintels of the door, dashed his head against the lintels, so that he fell to the ground as dead, was so carried into the house, and it was about a fortnight ere he could be recovered...’. ⁽²²⁾ Given that Cromwell was associated with the taking of Crowland just over a week later, laying siege on the 25th April and accepting the surrender of the place on the 28th, Gunton’s account of this injury seems exaggerated to say the least.

The destruction continued for some days, with some using statues and images for target practice, one ‘Daniel Wood of Captain Roper’s company was the chief’. [Ref for this?] Standish discounts statements in Royalist newsbooks that divine judgement meant one soldier was hit by a rebounding bullet and another driven mad because of the damage he did: ‘though I have made it my business to enquire of this, I could never find any such judgement befall them...’. ⁽²³⁾ The greatest damage, arguably, was the loss of the cathedral’s medieval stained glass, particularly that within the cloisters, which was accounted amongst the finest in England. Many of these windows depicted scenes from the history of the former abbey. The other was the former monastic library, its contents taken out and burnt within the cloister. Along with many learned volumes, most of the

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cathedral’s paperwork was destroyed. One of the few volumes to survive was the *Register of Robert of Swaffham*, dating to about 1250. This volume contains the history of the abbey written by Hugh Candidus with a continuation by the abbey’s cellarer, Robert of Swaffham, as well as other documents and is today our key source for the history of Peterborough Abbey. This had been secreted along with some gold coins, only to be found by the questing soldiers. One of them, Henry Topclyffe, was taking it to be burnt when he was intercepted by one of the cathedral’s singing men, Humphrey Austin, who persuaded the soldier that the Latin volume was a Bible. Whether it was the thought of burning a Bible, or the 20-shilling bribe that Austin offered, is unclear, but either way Topclyffe was persuaded to hand the book over, and wrote a receipt that still survives inside the volume today. ⁽²⁴⁾

Standish sums up the Parliamentary occupation thus:

Such was the Souldiers carriage and behaviour all the time during their stay at Peterburgh, which was about a Fortnights space: they went to Church duly, but it was only to do mischief, To break and batter the Windows and any Carved work that was yet remaining, or to pull down Crosses wheresoever they could find them: which the first Founders did not set up with so much zeal, as these last Confounders pulled them down. Thus in a short time, a fair and goodly Structure was quite strip’d of all its ornamental Beauty and made a rueful Spectacle, a very Chaos of Desolation and Confusion, nothing scarce remaining but only bare walls, broken Seats and shatter’d Windows on every side. ⁽²⁵⁾

News of the fall of Peterborough and the occupation provided grist to the mill for the Royalist newsbooks. Within two weeks *Mercurius Aulicus* described the damage wrought thus:

It was advertised this day from Peterburgh, that Colonell Cromwell had bestowed a visit on that little City, and put them to the charge of his entertainment, plundering a great part thereof to discharge the reckoning, and further that in pursuance of the thorow Reformation, he did most miserably deface the Cathedrall Church, breake downe

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the Organs, and destroy the glasse windowes, committing many other outrages on the house of God which were not acted by the Gothes in the sack of Rome, and are most commonly forborn by the Turks when they possesse themselves by force of a Christian city. ⁽²⁶⁾

Mercurius Rusticus took similar delight, accusing Cromwell of ‘eating up the fat clergy of Peterborough’ whilst claiming that he told spectators that he and his men were doing ‘God great good in that action’. ⁽²⁷⁾ The account of some of the depredations cited was undoubtedly exaggerated for effect, as Standish was to point out.

The damage did have an unintended effect though: with the doors left off their hinges local children were able to wander into the cathedral at will. Two got themselves lost in the roof spaces for several days before being discovered, whilst another clambered up on to the roof leads in an act of daring, and sadly fell to his death. He seems to have been the only recorded fatality of the Cromwellian occupation.

There is an interesting coda to the occupation of the cathedral precincts in April 1643. In June 2016 an archaeological dig was conducted on land to the north-western side of the precincts, in a garden near the Deanery. The dig, conducted by Access Archaeology Cambridge with a team of volunteers as part of the cathedral’s outreach programme, expected to find medieval fishponds and part of the Anglo-Saxon monastic defences. What they also found, unexpectedly, was a deposit of early/mid-1600s pottery, clay pipes, animal bones and musket balls, along with broken stained glass and window leading. This has been interpreted as being most likely a rubbish pit relating to the Cromwellian occupation, and a rare example of material culture left behind by a Civil War soldier’s camp. ⁽²⁸⁾

The Parliamentary occupation

Whilst Cromwell and his main force moved on from Peterborough, a garrison was left behind in the area, commanded by Colonel Palgrave. Parliamentary patrols took it upon themselves to visit local churches. On June 10th troopers from Captain Beaumont’s company arrived in the nearby village of Yaxley. There they broke into the church, and according to

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Gunton’s account, did ‘piss in the Font, and then baptize a Horse and Mare, using the solemn words of Baptism, and signing them with the sign of the Cross’.⁽²⁹⁾

There was a brief attempt to retake Peterborough, the attack coming from the midland Royalist capital of Newark. In July 1643 a thousand Royalist troops tried to retake Peterborough, but were driven off by Colonel Palgrave in a brief skirmish on the north side of the city at Millfield. A letter attributed to Henry Cromwell, writing on behalf of his father to troops stationed at nearby Whittlesey on July 18th instructed them to ‘hold Peterborough at all costs, as if it is the Key to the Fen, which if lost much ill may ensure’.⁽³⁰⁾ Enough forces were mustered to persuade the Royalists to withdraw towards Stamford, pursued by Palgrave who was joined by Cromwell, who had been at Rockingham.

Initially the Royalists attempted to defend Wothorpe Tower near Stamford, but thought better of it and withdrew to Burghley House. Cromwell surrounded the house until reinforcements arrived, ‘whereupon the Colonel caused the ordnance to play upon the house...’.⁽³¹⁾ After this brief artillery barrage the Royalists surrendered with some 200 prisoners taken on 19th July. These were sent to Cambridge, but then sent on quickly to London by the Cambridge Committee who wrote on the 27th July that the prisoners were causing disease and were a threat to converting local people to their sympathies as ‘the town of Cambridge in malignant enough...’.⁽³²⁾ After his success in this area Cromwell was appointed Governor of the Isle of Ely in August 1643.

The Parliamentary occupation left other visible remains, still extant today. To the south of Peterborough, in modern-day Stanground, are the remains of Civil War earthworks at Horsey Hill. These were almost certainly built in 1643 under the auspices of Parliamentary troops. Here, at the south-eastern corner of the city, the fort could dominate the approach to Peterborough by road (part of the so-called ‘Fen Causeway’), an ancient byway which ran between the Nene and the northern reaches of Whittlesey Mere. Most likely it was constructed during the summer of 1643 as a means of securing the main road into the Fens and to Ely after Cromwell had been appointed governor and the Royalists had attempted to retake Peterborough. Had a

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future attempt to retake the town succeeded, the fort would have provided a means of delaying a follow-up action against Ely and the Cromwellian heartlands. This would tie in with a small defensive work at Stanground Sluice. ⁽³³⁾

Other than garrisons being stationed locally (and therefore one assumes at such a strategically important position), there is no evidence to suggest that any military action took place at the fort site. Given the fact that substantive fighting in the area had finished almost certainly by the time the fort was completed, there would probably have been only a limited garrison on site. This is evinced by the fact that in October 1644, after the Royalists recaptured Crowland, the Eastern Association felt the need to rush an additional 300 men from Cambridge to hold 'Horsey Bridge Pass'. ⁽³⁴⁾

The fort at Horsey Hill is a very fine example of an artillery fortification of the Civil War period. It is similar to the 'sconce' type of artillery fortifications found elsewhere, such as those at Earith and March and further afield the stunning example of the 'Queen's Sconce' at Newark. ⁽³⁵⁾ Unlike these other examples, Horsey Hill has five, as opposed to four, bastions and is arranged in a pentangular form, with the entrance on the south curtain wall covered by a salient. Each bastion would have been built as a gun emplacement, and it is significant that three of these cover the river/western approaches to the fort, indicating that it was most likely built to cover the river, crossing and road.

Cromwell used Peterborough as an occasional base, again staying at the Vineyard within the precincts several times during 1643 and 1644. There was a brief scare that King Charles had seized Peterborough at the end of May 1645, in the manoeuvring that was taking place in the run-up to the Battle of Naseby. Cromwell was confident that the town was secure, writing that 'Peterburgh hath divers troops and companies of dragoons who will be able to make that good'. ⁽³⁶⁾ As it transpired, there were no further events of note for the remainder of the first Civil War, although local tradition has it that Charles I spent two nights as Parliament's prisoner en route to Holdenby House in Northamptonshire, confined in the King's Lodging above the cathedral gateway in Peterborough. The area did play a role in the

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second Civil War, and indeed during the Commonwealth and Protectorate, which may feature as the subject of a future article.

Conclusions

The occupation of Peterborough in April 1643 illustrates an interesting early episode in Cromwell’s career, and a demonstrable incidence of iconoclasm conducted by troops under his direct command. Whilst many churches and cathedrals across the country point to historic damage to their building and blame Cromwell, much of this is usually attributable to his namesake in Henry VIII’s reign, or enthusiastic iconoclasts in the reign of Edward VI. The substantive part of the damage wrought on Peterborough, though, is clearly a result of the actions of Oliver Cromwell’s troops during their occupation.

Why did Cromwell allow it? Royalist newsbooks portrayed it either as being an act of a man who was irreligious and perpetrating an act of barbarism and/or the actions of undisciplined soldiers. Both of these are clearly inaccurate and pure propaganda. Although still inexperienced, Cromwell took pride in the discipline of his soldiers, and, having punished two of them harshly for attempted desertion only days before arriving in Peterborough, was determined to demonstrate this, saying of his men that they were ‘a lovely company, they are no Anabaptists, they are sober, Godfearing Christians’. ⁽³⁷⁾ Nor does it appear that Cromwell took direct part in his soldiers’ activities in the cathedral, as Standish suggests he let it happen.

May be there were a number of issues at play here. Firstly, Peterborough was seen as a ‘malignant’ town, having sided with the King; by doing so the cathedral was considered ‘fair game’ as it were. Secondly, there was an increasing movement in Parliament and the Eastern Association for the promotion of iconoclastic practices, with ordinances introduced throughout 1643 for the removal of such images, not least in the Eastern Counties. It is noteworthy that when York was taken the following year, after the victory at Marston Moor, Sir Thomas Fairfax posted guards on York Minster lest any of the Eastern Association troops carry out their practices on the medieval stained glass there. Peterborough, as a high church associated with Laudian

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clergy and having an episcopal role would have been an anathema to many of Cromwell’s soldiers and officers, and ripe for ‘cleansing’. In their eyes, stripped of decoration which might be deemed to be ‘popish’, the cathedral would have been made more fit for Godly worship, one man’s art to glorify God being another’s worship of false idols, as it were. Finally, there is the possibility that Cromwell was making an example of Peterborough, in the hope that other such places would take note and either reconsider their support or surrender more easily. It is an argument that has been applied to other situations in Cromwell’s career to understand or justify his actions, and may well be the case here.

1. P. Gaunt, *Oliver Cromwell* (Blackwell, 1996), p.44
2. Quoted in A. Fraser, *Cromwell: Our Chief of Men* (Granada, 1973), p.100
3. J. Vickers, *God in the Mount*, England’s Parliamentary Chronicle etc, 1646
4. Fraser, *Cromwell: Our Chief of Men*, p.101
5. *Ibid*, p.99
6. See W. T. Mellows *The Last Days of Peterborough Monastery* (Northants Records Society, 1947) for a full discussion of this.
7. *Ibid*; M. Barcroft *Luckiest of All* passim (Minimax, 1983)
8. *Ibid*
9. S. Orme, ‘The Orme Family’ in *People of Peterborough* (Peterborough Museum, 2009), p. 68–70
10. *The Bishops of Peterborough*, Cathedral publications, 1984
11. *Fenland Notes and Queries*, Ed: Rev W.D. Sweeting (Vol. 45, 1900)
12. See Jack Higham’s introduction to S. Gunton, *History of the Church in Peterborough* (1686; reprinted, ed. Jack Higham, Clay Books, 1990), p. xi
13. *Ibid*.
14. *Ibid* – Higham gives a more thorough biography of Gunton and Standish.
15. *Ibid*, p. 336
16. *Ibid*, p. 92
17. *Ibid*, p. 333
18. *Ibid*, p. 92
19. *Ibid*, p. 333
20. *Ibid*, p. 334
21. *Ibid*.

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22. *Ibid.* p. 92
23. *Ibid.* p. 335
24. The volume is now kept at Cambridge University Library.
25. Gunton, *History of the Church in Peterborough*, p. 337–8
26. *Mercurius Aulicus*, Friday 28 April 1643
27. Ryves, *Mercurius Rusticus* (1685), p. 213
28. R. Newman & C. Collins, Peterborough Cathedral Archaeological Report
www.access.arch.cam.ac.uk/news/1365PeterboroughCathedral.pdf, p. 66
29. Gunton, *History of the Church in Peterborough*, p. 335
30. T. Carlyle, *Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, (London, 1845) Vol 1 p. 116
31. Letter from the Committee for Huntingdon, 19 July 1643, quoted in Kingston, A, *East Anglia in the Great Civil War* (London, 1897), p. 117
32. *Ibid.*
33. M. Osborne, *Cromwellian Fortifications in Cambridgeshire*, (Cromwell Museum, 1990) p. 15–16
34. P. Harrington, *English Civil War Archaeology*, (English Heritage, 2004), p. 98
35. See Osborne and Harrington for detailed analysis of these sites
36. Kingston, *East Anglia in the Great Civil War*, p. 203
37. Fraser, *Cromwell: Our Chief of Men*, p.101

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WRITINGS AND SOURCES XIX:
AN OVERLOOKED CIVIL WAR BATTLE IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE,
NOVEMBER 1642?

by Prof Peter Gaunt

True Newes out of Hereford-shire

It is not unknowne to this whole Kingdome how perverse a malignant William L. Marquesse of Hartford hath declared himselfe in all these late distractions betwixt the King and the High Court of Parliament, being imagined a chiefe fomentor and assister of the said distempers, as he gave good testimony thereof in his striving to put the Commission of Array into execution in the West parts of this Kingdome, till being expelled from Sherborne Castle by the valour and industry of the Earle of Bedford and his Forces, and pursued to Mine-head, with some five hundred of his Cavaliers getting shipping in some Cole-boats, he escaped into South-Wales, and surprising Cardiffe Castle, the ancient Seat and Barony of the Right Honourable the Earle of Pembroke, and hath ever since made his abode thereabouts, by his perswasions partly, and partly through feare of his power, drawing the poore ignorant Welsh-men to side with him in his unjust quarrell, keeping correspondence with another principall and powerfull malignant in those parts, the Lord Herbert of Ragland, sonne and heire to the Earle of Worcester, a notorious Papist, till between them they had raised some seven thousand men, and conjoynd them into a body about the fourth of this present Moneth [November 1642] near Cardiffe Castle, whence with Colours flying and Drums beating, they marched downe from the mountaines, along the pleasant bankes of Severne, which they pass'd into Hereford-shire, intending to take Hereford in their way, and if they could possible surprise and plunder that City, and so as it is conjectured, meant to take their way towards these parts to unite themselves to the rest of the malignants hereabouts. Their daily Passes being notified to the Earle of Stamford, Lord Lieutenant in those parts of the Parliament Forces, he used all meanes convenient for the augmenting his Forces by calling in the Trayned Bands of that and the adjoyning Counties to his ayd, resolving if he had opportunity to stop their passage in their journey, and they being ferried over the Severne, on Tuesday the fifteenth of this present Moneth, harrasing and pillaging the Countrey, they left Hereford, it being strongly fortified, and made

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up towards Tewkesbury in Gloucester-shire, of which their proceee[d]ings the Earle having notice, with some foure thousand men he made after them, and on Wednesday Morning found them quartered on that Plaine neare Tewkesbury, where the great Battell was long agoe fought between Edward the fourth, and the followers of Henry the sixth, being in view one of another, with glad and courageous hearts they prepare themselves for battell. The Marquesse, the Lord Herbert, with their wilde Welsh-men assuring themselves of an absolute victory, and so furiously with the Horse, which were some five hundred of the Marquesse[s] old Cavaliers, they charged into the Front of the Earles Forces, who nothing amazed with their violent encounter, allayed the heate of their courages by heating them with good store of Lead about the hearts, out of their Carbines, Pistols and Muskets; yet the force of those Demi-devils was so outrageous, that nothing could withstand their fury but that they fell pell mell into the body of our Foot, so that some men were slaine on our side, but more on theirs. My Lord of Stamfords owne Regiment at push of Pike keeping off the Horses while his Musketiers through their Buffes and Corslets sent death into their bosomes.

My Lord Seymour, Brother to the Marquesse, by this time came up with some of his Foot Companies, their horse wheeling about so it were to take breath, left our Infantry engaged against theirs. Then might easily be perceived the difference between the Earles Regiment of old souldiers, and those ragged and unexperienced Welsh-men, giving fire twice to once upon them, that they fell by rankes, till the Marquesse himselfe rallying up his Horsemen came into his brothers rescues. Those Cavaliers hoping to regaine their losse, came on very resolutely, and were as valiantly entertained by some three Troops of our Horse, who were as a reserve to the Foot, the Malignants beginning to make a stand and the Welsh Foot-men being to be scarcely beaten on by their Commanders, one Sir Rice ap pew Granock, a Colonell being slaine, to the great discouragement of his Country-men. The Earle of Stamford in the meanetime having got the Hill and the winde, added new terrour to them that were already halfe discomfited, pawning incessantly upon them fresh vollies of shot, having also two Field-peece, they having then opportunity to

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play were discharged, killing whole squadrons of the poore half-armed Welsh-men.

My Lord Seymours horse was shot under him, and in much danger of his life; and those forces ready to be put in rout, when my Lord Herbert with some Welsh Gentlemen of quality, as Master Jenkin Vaughan and Captaine Owen ap Griffith with the residue of their forces charged into their succours, and made some, though not much slaughter of our men, (the Welsh musquetiers very bad fire-men, and their musquets not very serviceable) when the rere of our foot, being train'd bands, stept upon the theatre of death and danger, and like good actors, perform'd their parts very resolutely, giving in a broad front fire, they gall'd their rere insufferably, so that the Welshmen, in spight of the Lord Herberts perswasions, betooke themselves to a shamefull flight, leaving all the weight of the battell on the Marquesse and his Cavaliers, who stood to it still very stoutly, reviling the cowardise of the Welshmen, and resolving to sell their lives at deare rates, or purchase their liberty, if not victory; so that fighting, as it were, in a ring, they made the successe of the day something doubtfull, till one of their chieffes, by a musquet shot, fell from his horse, (who it was is not certainly knowne, but it was imagined to be my Lord Paulet) they then getting up his body, and with the Marquesse, the Lord Herbert, and others, fled upon the spur over the plain, our horsemen not following them, but doing execution on the Welsh foot-men who, poor mis-led creatures, came as so many Asses to the slaughter, many of them flung away their Armes, and cryed out for mercy, which the Earle of Stamford very nobly granted, there yeelding themselves to the number of twelve hundred of those Britaines prisoners, whom the Earl, after a modest reproof for their boldnesss in taking up Arms against the Parliament, making them sensible and sorry for their error, sent in peace to their houses, onely detaining their Captaine, who appeared perverse and incorrigible malignants.

The Marquesse in the meane time, with his Cavaliers, as fast as their fear would carry them, which added swiftnesse to their horses, made towards the Severne, over which getting passage, they are said to be

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retreated, or rather fled backe into South-wales; there were slaine of the Marquesse his Army, some five and twenty hundred, as their bodies did testify on the place, besides good store wounded, most of the slaughter hapning on the Welsh foot-men of my Lord Herbert his Regiment. The Earle commanded pits to be made, and their bodies, with those of our men, which were not above an hundred and sixty, most of the train'd bands, to be buried together on the place. There were taken some eight Colours. The Earle with due thanks to the most High, the giver of all Victories, acknowledged to him alone the glory of the day, and so with his victorious forces, he marched backe to Hereford, keeping that City and the adjacent parts in very good order, and peaceable condition from the fury of the Cavaliers and Malignants, from whose mischievous malice, pray heaven deliver us.¹

This gripping and colourful narrative, apparently written by an eyewitness and appearing in a printed pamphlet shortly after the event – George Thomason acquired his copy on 19 November – gives an account of a significant and, in the end, decisive battle fought on the plain outside Tewkesbury in northern Gloucestershire in mid-November 1642. It relates how around 7,000 royalists of the Marquis of Hertford and Lord Herbert, a mixture of Hertford's more experienced English cavalry and Herbert's recently-raised Welsh infantry, attempted but failed to take parliamentary-held Hereford and then turned south in the hope of capturing Tewkesbury. Near the town they were engaged by a parliamentary army of 4,000 men

¹ *True Newes out of Hereford-shire. Being a certaine and exact Relation, of a Battell fought betweene the Lord Marquesse Hertford, the Lord Herbert, and their Cavaliers, in number six thousand men. Against the Earle of Stamford, and his Forces in those parts, being the Trained Bands of that Countrey, and others adjoining, as also some Companies left there with the said Earle of Stamford, by his Excellence the Earle of Essex* (1642), pp. 3–6. The pamphlet closes with a completely different and separate news item, a brief account of a night-time disturbance and false alarm in London (pp. 7–8). The pamphlet is anonymous but, according to the title page, it was printed for 'Fr. Wright' in London. In this transcription the original spelling and capitalisation of the printed pamphlet have been retained, but the text has been very lightly repunctuated to assist comprehension.

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led by the Earl of Stamford, again a mixed force comprising regular troops and members of the local militia or trained bands. With around 11,000 men involved, this was one of the larger and more significant battles of the civil war and also one of the bloodiest, for the account goes on to claim that in the wake of a hard-fought and clearly very substantial engagement, no fewer than 2,500 royalists lay dead on the battlefield, most of them Welsh infantry, together with around 160 parliamentarians, most of them members of the trained bands rather than Stamford's regular troops. Throughout England and Wales less than a dozen civil war engagements resulted in 1,000 or more dead in total, so with well over 2,600 fatalities this was one of the deadliest battles of the civil war.

Thus we possess a contemporary account of a large, decisive and unusually bloody battle fought in the southern Marches early in the civil war, an account which is, moreover, rich in military detail and which throws important and valuable light on the nature of civil war engagements. There is just one problem, however: none of this happened. Most historians of the English civil war do not mention this engagement and, with good reason, the battle of Tewkesbury of 16 November 1642 has been overlooked in recently-published histories of the conflict. The story told by this pamphlet is fictitious and, for all its plausible touches and its undeniably interesting detail, it is an invention. In reality, no such battle took place, as a range of other contemporary sources, not least Stamford's own regular reports to parliament at this time, make abundantly clear.² The piece may have been written and published to bolster support for parliament in and around London – the title page claims it was printed there for 'Fr. Wright'³ – and to

² R. Hutton, *The Royalist War Effort, 1642–1646* (Harlow, 1982), p. 34, P. Gaunt, *A Nation Under Siege: The Civil War in Wales, 1642–1648* (London, 1991), p. 29 and D. Ross, *Royalist, But... Herefordshire in the English Civil War, 1640–1651* (Logaston, 2012), p. 49 all refer to or assess this pamphlet and all conclude that its story is entirely fictitious.

³ Not much is known about Francis Wright, though he was a London-based printer or publisher of a small number of pamphlets during the first half of the 1640s and has a brief entry in H. R. Plomer, *Dictionary of the Booksellers and Printers who were at Work in England, Scotland and Ireland from 1641 to 1667* (London, 1907) p. 197. However, unlike the much

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boost morale during the closing weeks of 1642, or it may simply have been produced with an eye on turning a handsome profit, as there was clearly a considerable thirst for these sort of pamphlets during the war.⁴ Either way, this is a good example of the type of grossly exaggerated or wholly invented accounts of military actions to be found in pamphlets and also within newsbooks from time to time throughout the civil war, but particularly during the opening months of the conflict and often linked to invented engagements in the West Midlands and along the Marches.

Despite focusing upon an invented engagement which never took place, the broader context of this account is largely accurate. In autumn 1642, in the weeks after the battle of Edgehill, Henry Grey, first Earl of Stamford, was commanding forces in parliamentary-held Hereford, of which he had been made governor at the beginning of October, and he was mounting raids against royalist forces in the region, including across the Welsh border. William Seymour, first Marquess of Hertford, had been active for the king in the South West during the opening weeks of the war, successfully holding Sherborne Castle against an ineffective parliamentary assault led by the Earl of Bedford in early September (despite this pamphlet suggesting otherwise), before being hassled out of Somerset later in the month – whereupon he and his men boarded boats at Minehead and sailed across to royalist South Wales, where Hertford raised further troops, as this account relates. Meanwhile, Edward Somerset, generally styled Lord Herbert at this point (a courtesy title he held as eldest son and heir of the Catholic Henry Somerset, fifth Earl and first Marquess of Worcester) was also active in South Wales in the king's cause in autumn 1642, fortifying the family seat at Raglan and also securing, garrisoning or supplying several other key towns in south-east Wales. Thus the wider context and background to the major

more active and prominent John Wrights (senior and junior) of London, Francis Wright generally does not receive much notice in the various studies of the London press, pamphlets and newsbooks of the civil war era by Joad Raymond and Jason Peacey.

⁴ S. K. Roberts, in his *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* biography of 'Somerset, Edward, second marquess of Worcester, (d. 1667)' speculates that the story may have originated as propaganda in parliamentary-held Gloucester.

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clash at Tewkesbury, as sketched out in the first part of this account, are fairly accurate and plausible.

The account of the battle itself, clearly written from a parliamentary perspective, is full of valuable information and insights, suggesting that whoever wrote it had some experience and knowledge of warfare and of the practicalities of fighting and of field engagements. The author was well aware of how important previous military experience could be in battle, so that well-trained and experienced soldiers could stand up to a larger force of inexperienced men, firing their muskets at around twice the rate that raw recruits could manage. The assertions that an enemy cavalry advance could be halted and the position of the defending army stabilised by a resolute stand of pikes, and that lightweight artillery pieces could serve as deadly anti-personal weapons in field engagements, were both true and are substantiated by contemporary accounts of other genuine civil war and seventeenth-century field engagements. Similarly, the author's comment that troops held back from the initial encounter might serve as a reserve and could play a decisive part in support of the foot or in the later stages of a battle was also borne out in many civil war encounters; Cromwell for one came to appreciate the value of holding some horse back to form a reserve as the battle of Gainsborough of July 1643 unfolded, and it was his customary practice thereafter. The developments noted in the later stages of the battle outside Tewkesbury – that killing just one or two key commanders could demoralise an army and turn the tide of battle, that even once a unit was on the back foot and under pressure it could continue to fight and defend itself quite effectively so long as its unity and discipline held, but that once unit cohesion failed all was lost, and that in defeat the cavalry might be able to save itself but the defeated infantry was helpless and foot soldiers became sitting ducks, picked off at will – all ring true and were seen time and again in later civil war engagements and in accounts of genuine battles.

The pamphlet also throws fascinating light on a racial element of the war, indicating how the English parliamentarians felt both contempt for the overwhelmingly royalist Welsh but also an element of pity for them, seeing them as misled and tricked into taking up arms by royalist grandees. Once again, further developments in the unfolding war and other accounts confirm that some parliamentarians took this view and, indeed, it became a

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mainstay of parliamentary propaganda about the Welsh for much of the civil war.⁵

For all its fabrications, therefore, *True Newes out of Hereford-shire* is certainly not without historical value and interest, and it offers historians of the civil war two potentially fruitful avenues of investigation. Firstly, while only the most careless and naïve historian would be taken in by this blatant act of invention and by this heady concoction of seventeenth-century ‘fake news’, having recognised it and others like it for what they are, historians can explore how and why and, if possible, by whom these printed accounts were prepared and to whom they were pitched. Was this pamphlet a metropolitan invention aimed at the London market or did it originate as a piece of propaganda-cum-wishful-thinking in the (southern) Marches region in which the action was set? How many copies were run off the presses, who read it and how many others who may not have been fully literate nonetheless became aware of the stories put out in these pamphlets? Were those who read *True Newes out of Hereford-shire* taken in by it and did they accept the story as related and at face value? Or did they, like many modern consumers of current newspapers, read this and other accounts of stunning parliamentary victories achieved often against the odds during the opening months of the war, with a semi-sceptical eye and understand the likely biases within, and the propaganda element of, the printed material they were reading? Historians have become far more attuned to questions of this ilk – of the nature of wartime propaganda, of the manipulation and circulation of news and of the tone, content, readership and reception of the mass of printed material which appeared during the 1640s (and the 1650s) – and they have become matters of far greater historical concern and research over the past few years. Secondly, while its story of the battle fought outside Tewkesbury in mid-November 1642 is an invention, we should recognise that on closer reading many of the details and traits of a civil war field

⁵ See especially M. Stoye, ‘Caricaturing Cymru: images of the Welsh in the London press, 1642–46’, in D. Dunn, ed., *War and Society in Early Modern Britain* (Liverpool, 2000), M. Stoye, *Soldiers and Strangers: an Ethnic History of the English Civil War* (New Haven, 2005) chapters 1 and 8, and L. Bowen, ‘Representations of Wales and the Welsh during the civil wars and interregnum’, *Historical Research*, 77 (2004).

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engagement found within the text turn out to be remarkably accurate and prescient. Whoever he was, the author clearly had a decent grasp of the nature and features of a civil war battle, perhaps gained from reading existing printed works, or more likely acquired from direct prior experience of warfare. Had the author taken part in the Edgehill campaign or did he have earlier experience of continental warfare? Again, historians have recently become much more interested in how the civil war was fought at grassroots levels, in the real battlefield experience of the ordinary rank-and-file soldier, and in how officers who had command of those troops (and who played a leadership role on the battlefield) acquired the knowledge and skills which enabled them effectively to plan, to fight and to win English civil war field engagements – or, as *True Neves out of Hereford-shire* lyrically put it at one point, how they were able to learn their parts ‘like good actors’ before they stepped ‘upon the theatre of death and danger’, many of which, unlike the battle of Tewkesbury, were all too real and deadly.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Barry Coward (author) and Peter Gaunt (contributor), *The Stuart Age (England, 1603–1714)*. Routledge, 5th edition, 2017 (650 pp.) ISBN 978-1138944176. £34.99 paperback, £27.19 kindle.

reviewed by Serrie Meakins

In all the years that I taught 17th century British history, Barry Coward's *The Stuart Age* (3rd edition) kept pride of place on my desk. It was the indispensable text book for my A-level classes, because I knew that my students would take top class notes from its clear and cogent text. If I needed source material for an exercise or a quote for a provocative essay, I would turn to its pages. When I had to teach an in-depth paper on the Glorious Revolution and felt my knowledge needed updating, it was to Barry I turned. I know I was not the only teacher of the period who relied on his clarity, scholarship and accessibility to introduce the period to their students.

So, I was very keen to read the 5th edition of this seminal work, which has been prefaced with a new introduction by our own Peter Gaunt. This alone justifies the cost of the new volume because, in his distinctly scholarly way, Peter masterfully surveys the vast quantity of new writing which has been published since the last edition came out in 2012. This is a very useful historiographical survey for students and it neatly summarises all of the recent key work on the period, whilst showcasing Peter's inimitable style – who else would compare historical revisionism in the Stuart period to the history of punk rock?

Peter's deep-seated knowledge of this period of history can be seen in other areas of the book, where chapters have been expanded to take in new scholarship in areas such as colonial expansion and key military events, among others. Yet the essence of the book remains. Barry Coward had the ability to make complicated things seem simple to understand; he would lay out his point of view, give a clearly signalled list of reasons why he held it, use primary evidence to support it, then neatly sum it up. On p.297 he displays this adroitly in his section on Cromwellian government, which starts 'Opinions about the Protectorate differ almost as greatly as do those about the Protector himself'. This is followed by a short explanation of what he means, then a heading 'Achievements of Cromwellian Government', beautifully laid out and clearly signposted in terms that even the most

recalcitrant 6th former could understand, followed a few pages later by a heading 'Failures of Cromwellian Government'. The whole section is wrapped up with a short paragraph which gives a balanced conclusion. A master class in how to write... no wonder the blurb in the book says that '*The Stuart Age* enjoys a hard-won reputation as one of the best introductions to the British Isles during a period of civil war and revolution'.

Lastly, this new edition contains many more pictorial sources than my old much-thumbed 3rd edition. In addition to the many maps and useful tables contained in earlier editions, we now also have woodcuts of 'henpecked' husbands, the famous pictures of the Gunpowder plotters, and *Oliver Cromwell between two pillars*, to mention but a few. To the visually sensitive 6th former, this can only be a good thing. The Bibliographical notes and the Timeline have been updated and are as useful as they ever were. This latest incarnation of Barry Coward's seminal work will bring tears of joy to the eyes of history teachers everywhere and deserves to be enjoyed by all students of the period, of whatever age and inclination!

Chris Scott and Alan Turton, ***Hey for Old Robin! The campaigns and armies of the Earl of Essex during the First Civil War, 1642–44***. Helion and Company, Century of the Soldier no.14, 2017 (xiv+240 pp.). ISBN 978-1-911512-21-9. £16.95 paperback.

David Flinatham, ***Civil War London: a military history of London under Charles I and Oliver Cromwell***. Helion and Company, Century of the Soldier no.17, 2017 (119pp.) ISBN 978-911512-62-2. £25 paperback.

reviewed by John Morrill

Helion's 'Century of the Soldier' is rapidly developing into an important series of attractive books with very high production values and some fascinating texts. Eleven of the first seventeen titles thus far have focused on aspects of the British Civil Wars of the 1640s and 1650s, and the remainder on continental wars or the part played by British armies in Continental wars across the whole of the seventeenth century. All are in paperback on high quality paper that allows, as in the two books under

review here, the large number of contemporary and modern maps, photographs, images of paintings and engravings to be displayed with excellent resolution. For example, many of the 66 illustrations in Scott and Turton's study of the campaigns of the 3rd Earl of Essex, are beautifully crisp copies of engravings in Alan Turton's excellent personal collection, and Turton has also provided a series of admirable line drawings of the lines of marching made by armies at key stages. The illustrations in Flintham's book are a bit less imaginative, but that book, like Scott and Turton's, contains a really helpful bibliography. One small gripe is that both books would have benefitted from an index.

Of the two, Flintham's is, I think, the more successful, and its success lies in what it offers which is more than is revealed by the title. For well over half the book is a thoroughly well-made and interesting gazetteer in two parts – an alphabetical account of places of interest 'inside the lines of communication' (pp.52–97) and those 'outside the lines of communication' (pp.98–115). Indeed, not the least interesting entry is that for 'the lines of communication' itself, the 11 miles of fortification thrown up in the winter of 1642–3. This offers a brilliant short account based on Flintham's 48-page *The English Civil War defences of London* (Stuart Press, 2014 but currently out of press). I drew up a list of ten items I hoped I would find in the gazetteer (Drury Lane [where Cromwell lived], Essex House, Goldsmith's Hall, New Artillery Ground, Petty France, Tower Hill, Tyburn; and for the area outside the Lines of Communication, Croydon Palace, Harrow-on-the-Hill, and Wimbledon). All are there and all give interesting detail I did not know. There are a small number of factual errors (eg Henrietta Street – 'Built between 1631 and 1634, it was named after Queen Henrietta Maria. On Henrietta Street was the studio of Samuel Cooper who famously was commanded to paint a portrait of Oliver Cromwell "warts and all"'. Alas, the apocryphal story of Cromwell's words to his portraitist involved not Samuel Cooper but Peter Lely). This small error is indicative of a wider problem in that Flintham is consistently sure-footed on all matters military but always stumbling on matters political or religious. Before the gazetteer, we get 44 pages of discursive narrative telling the story of London from the winter crisis of 1641/2 to the Restoration, in eight short chapters. This is all pretty lumpy, with matters that interest Flintham getting much more space than other major parts of the story. Compare the 12 pages (almost 30 per cent of the total) on London's armaments industry with the hasty discussion

of the location of the Army within London across the 1650s. All the ‘chunkier’ sections are well worth reading, but there is some thin material in between. But given that the gazetteer adds to its value by clearly distinguishing places where there are still civil war things to see from places that were important but no longer exist, this can be warmly recommended for days out in the capital. I will certainly use it for recreational pleasure.

Hey for Old Robin! is magnificently illustrated, but the text is much less interesting, for much the same reasons as the main text of *Civil War London*. It is not reliable or accurate on non-military matters. The meat of the book is a rather relentless account of the marches made Essex’s army or armies (such is the turnover) to the West and to the Midlands across 1642, 1643, 1644, to the campaigns that culminate in the battles of Edgehill, the first and second of Newbury, Lostwithiel and the relief of Gloucester. A major aim of the book is to challenge the charge so long held against Essex that he was over-cautious and strategically sluggish. This defence of him is a mixed success. Apart from the sheer weight of detail, there are three main problems with the book. There is a lot of padding out with detail which anyone interested in buying this book will already know – tables giving the size of artillery pieces from demi-canon down to robinet, colour pictures of dragoons, troopers, cuirassier, drummers, etc, and long appendices on the component elements of the army. There are long lists, frankly fairly meaningless as names only of the regimental and company commanders at various points (which omit, too, the names of majors). So there is much padding. Then there is the bewildering decision to give very detailed accounts of the build-up to battles and their aftermaths (eg the fate of the wounded in the bitterly cold night after Edgehill) but then to suppress all discussion of the battles themselves. So for Edgehill we are told that ‘we recommend that readers interested in the battle of Edgehill consult one or more of the following [six items listed but not evaluated]. I find it incomprehensible that we are not offered a short summary of each battle focused on Essex’s battlefield decisions. Finally, the book cannot make up its mind whether to tell a one-sided story about the movements of Essex’s army or to contextualise that story by giving a parallel account of royalist movements and preparations. It is just inconsistent. These are harsh but honest regrets. I am still glad to have this book, I learnt from it, and I luxuriated in its rich illustration.

Kirsteen M. MacKenzie, *The Solemn League and Covenant of the Three Kingdoms and the Cromwellian Union, 1643–1663*. Routledge, 2018 (xii + 210pp.) ISBN 978-1-409-41869-6. £104.54 hardback, £39.98 kindle.

reviewed by Patrick Little

This is an ambitious book that studies the Solemn League and Covenant and its adherents across the three kingdoms of Scotland, England and Ireland over a 20-year period. Few historians have attempted a genuinely ‘integrated three-kingdoms perspective’ (p. 2), but Dr MacKenzie manages the difficult juggling act with some skill, constructing a narrative that takes the reader through the genesis of the Covenant in the late 1630s and early 1640s, a time that also saw the emergence of a ‘covenanted interest’ which upheld its principles, and beyond into the choppy waters of the late 1640s and 1650s. Integral to the Solemn League and Covenant signed in 1643 was the desire to foster unity between England and Scotland, to promote religious reformation along Presbyterian lines, and to bolster the existing military alliance. As Dr MacKenzie explains, this plan was challenged by the Independents, who were more Anglo-centric, and opposed strict hierarchies within the church; and it was their opposition, as well as the failure to strike a deal with Charles I, that led to a split in the movement, with many Presbyterians in all three kingdoms allying themselves with the royalists in 1648. This royalist alliance, based on a monarchy considered essential for underpinning the rule of law and the liberties of the subject against military tyranny, was naturally strengthened by the regicide and became the hallmark of the covenanting interest during the early 1650s.

From the Cromwellian point of view, the most interesting chapters of the book are 4 and 5, which deal with the very gradual process by which the Presbyterians became reconciled with the protectorate between 1653 and 1659. According to Dr MacKenzie, ‘Cromwell wanted Presbyterians to be part of his broad religious settlement which aimed to unite the godly Protestants of all forms of worship in the three kingdoms’ (p. 126). The softening of the government’s line can be seen in the inclusion of Presbyterians in the Triers and Ejectors scheme which approved or removed ministers in England, and by the more moderate and inclusive policies adopted in Scotland (by Lord Broghill) and Ireland (especially under Henry Cromwell). These concessions encouraged the Presbyterians to begin

to cooperate, although the limits they set on state involvement in the church could cause problems. Perhaps the most striking example of the willingness of Presbyterian ministers to at least consider ways of collaborating is the presence of rival parties from the Scottish Kirk in London in 1657, when they lobbied the protector and council with the assistance of the English Presbyterians. The death of Oliver did not halt this process of reconciliation, as Richard Cromwell continued to encourage the Presbyterians, but the fall of the protectorate and the return of the king led to the restoration of the established, Episcopalian churches in all three kingdoms and the repeal of the legislation that had underlain the covenanting experiment.

The territory covered by this book is difficult, but Dr MacKenzie is a sure guide, explaining matters concisely and clearly, and setting out a narrative that interweaves the rather different experiences of the three kingdoms. My only criticism is that her findings are not given the prominence they deserve. Chapters end abruptly, without summaries or conclusions drawing together the points made, and many important arguments that could have been underlined at each stage tend to get lost. The conclusion to the book does summarise the story but does not analyse it, teasing out the wider implications and explaining how they change our view of the subject as a whole. To take but one example, the argument that the protectorate was a period of reconciliation should have been given more prominence, as it provides a new 'take' on Cromwellian religious policy, and one that fits well with recent research on the politics of the regime. Indeed, it could be argued that the high-point of this was the protectorate of Richard Cromwell, who was much less equivocal about the Presbyterian interest than his father had been. While this is noted, and the 'serious consideration' given to resurrecting the Presbyterian church as the 'national church of the three kingdoms' (p. 174) during the third protectorate Parliament is mentioned, the significance of this is allowed to pass by without further comment. This overly reticent approach means the overarching themes are not explored properly, and opportunities to make bold statements are lost. Despite this, there is much to recommend this book, as it will provide much food for thought for other historians working in the field, and allow the general reader a fascinating insight into the religious history of this most complex and difficult of periods.

Robert Hodkinson, *Cromwell's Buffoon. The Life and Career of the Regicide Thomas Pride*. Helion and Company, Century of the Soldier 1618–1721, no. 12, 2017. (223 pp., 15 b&w illustrations, 6 maps.) ISBN 9781911512110. £25 hardback.

reviewed by Dr Stephen Roberts

Thomas Pride is one of the best known of Cromwell's officers, as prominent in biographies of Oliver as others such as Philip Skippon, John Disbrowe, John Lambert and Thomas Harrison, close associates of his at various points on his path to becoming lord protector. Pride's name is forever linked to the celebrated episode of 6 December 1648, when elements of the New Model army staged a putsch against Parliament, preventing some MPs from taking their seats and imprisoning others. 'Pride's Purge' alone might have been thought to have guaranteed the eponymous army officer a biography during earlier waves of attention to Cromwell's officer corps, for example in the Victorian period or between the world wars of the twentieth century. But Robert Hodkinson has given us the first monograph biography of the man, his only competitors being shorter accounts in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and its predecessor, and forthcoming in the *History of Parliament, House of Commons 1640–60* volumes, still in draft.

Pride was born in Somerset around 1608, but moved to London to serve an apprenticeship in the Haberdashers' Company. His yeoman background and commercial education accounted for much of the opprobrium inevitably levelled against him by his enemies, and, in a very illuminating chapter, the author explores the strands of satire (and plain abuse) flung against Pride, much of which stuck. The social origins of the new men of the 1640s and 50s were fair game for royalist commentators and others, who often exaggerated the lowly occupations their targets had risen from. In Pride's case, he was forever the brewer, and in this at least they were accurate. Hodkinson memorably describes one of his literary detractors conjuring 'the smell of yeast hanging around Pride like a cheap aftershave'. The title of the book might seem to perpetuate this tradition of denigrating Pride, but the book is no hatchet job. It is in fact a sympathetic assessment of Pride's exploits and achievements: measured in its judgments, and shrewd in its delineation of the man's character and motives.

Pride was indeed a brewer, probably during the 1630s and certainly by the early 1640s – though he was a prosperous brewery proprietor, not an artisan. He was in fact one of those energetic and successful London businessmen whose puritan outlook made them natural supporters of Parliament during the civil war. Hodkinson carefully traces Pride's military career, which took off from his membership of the Honourable Artillery Company. Inevitably, Pride's personal role in campaigns, battles and skirmishes is not always readily distinguishable beyond the fact that he was present, but in this account the reader is given a judicious and reliable assessment of what we can know and what we can reasonably infer, the distinction being maintained and kept sufficiently and convincingly sharp. Naseby, Bridgwater, Bristol, Berkeley Castle and Dartmouth were places where Pride saw action in the New Model army phase of his career. The author differs from earlier historians, notably R.G.K. Temple, in his account of how Pride acquired a New Model army commission, rejecting the assertion that it was through the personal influence of a number of sympathetic peers in the House of Lords, and inclining to the view that his was an appointment solely on military merit.

While Pride has not been identified with any particular church, he nurtured long-standing associations with men prominent in the cause of the Baptists, and there is no doubt of his inclination towards Independency, both as a religious tendency and as a political cause. In this respect he was on a collision course in 1647 with the colonel of his regiment, Edward Harley: a conflict resolved by Harley's resignation and Pride's assumption of command, only after their clash of principles (and probably of personalities) had fed into worsening relations between Parliament and its own army, explored in this book with characteristic care and attention to detail by the author. By the time of the events of 6 December 1648, Pride was among the most outspoken officers of the New Model, forthright in his assertion of the rights of the soldiery and critical of any attempts by Parliament to refashion an agreement with the king. Historians have been divided on the extent of Pride's own agency in the purge: was he an architect of it, or merely a tool in the hands of others? He seems in fact to have been one of three officers who met with an equal number of MPs on the night of 5th December to plan the following day's operation, suggesting that his contribution was essential to it. He went on to be one of the most regular

attenders of the king's trial, and signed the death warrant probably without qualm.

After 1649 Pride won a lucrative navy victualling contract, and after a period of involvement in the civic governance of London was able to acquire the estate of Nonsuch Great Park (Worcester Park) in Surrey, land confiscated from the outlawed monarchy. However, he never gave up his army commission, and was influential in persuading Cromwell to turn down the offer of the crown. His demise, two months after Oliver's own, spared him the inevitable agonising death suffered by regicides still living in 1660, though his estate was seized by the crown when he was posthumously attainted for high treason. Another order, that his body should be disinterred and hung up at Tyburn, was never carried out, partly no doubt because he died and was buried in Surrey. In the climate of petty acts of revenge surrounding the Restoration, Pride's corpse may have escaped this indignity also because of a family association by marriage between Pride and George Monck, at the height of his kudos and political influence.

Robert Hodgkinson's book is not only the first full-length biography of its subject, but is also a readable and informative one, based on a wide range of sources, and to be commended for its accuracy, attention to detail and mindfulness of context. There are helpful appendices providing details of Pride's family connections and potted biographies of important associates who figure in the subject's story. Thomas Pride, no one's buffoon, has – eventually – been fortunate in his biographer.

Eric L. Jones, ***Small Earthquake in Wiltshire. Seventeenth-Century Conflict and its Resolution.*** The Hobnob Press, 2017 (xii + 125 pp.) ISBN 9781906978471, £9.95 paperback.

reviewed by Prof Peter Gaunt

The starting point of this short and lively study is the unsuccessful royalist rising of spring 1655 led by the Wiltshire gentleman John Penruddock, the high-point of which was the seizure, early on 12th March, of Salisbury and of a clutch of Protectoral judges and officials who were there. The rising soon petered out, however, and within days the remaining rebels had been

defeated, scattered or captured in Devon and, following his trial and condemnation, Penruddock was beheaded in Exeter in mid-May. While this volume retells the story of the rising, it is more concerned with its broader context and repercussions. Accordingly, the events of mid-March are related quite briefly – there is more to be said about both the rising itself and the resulting prosecutions, and surprisingly thin use is made here of the extant printed accounts of Penruddock's trial and of the defence which he and his fellow conspirators offered as well as of his supposed correspondence with his wife while he was awaiting execution. On the other hand, we have much fuller discussion of the standing and family connections of the Penruddocks and of other key players in the conspiracy, notably John Wildman, Hugh Grove and Francis Jones, and this book provides a wide-ranging analysis of how Wiltshire society responded to the rising and its aftermath, both in the short and the longer term, through to the Restoration and beyond.

This book is in many ways typical of the work of an enthusiastic amateur historian, with all the swings and roundabouts often found therein. Academic reviewers will regret the absence of footnotes or proper references, though key authors whose views are being followed are often named within the text; they will note that the section providing guidance to 'sources and further reading' near the end of the volume omits some important primary and secondary material; and they will highlight some rather dated or oversimplified opinions aired within the main chapters. For example, the main source used for information on Oliver Cromwell – who at one point is condemned as a 'quasi-dictator' – seems to be Antonia Fraser's biography of the early 1970s; now very dated works by William Dodd, Christopher Hill and Jack Plumb are acknowledged as the main sources for (differing views on) the longer-term consequences of the 1650s; and Alan Everitt's studies of the 1960s and early 1970s stressing the localist outlooks of county elites are acknowledged and assessed, but not the mass of more recent published work which has transformed our view of provincial society and provincial outlooks at both elite and non-elite level and which offers a very different perspective from that of Everitt. Equally, the regime of the Major-Generals is roundly condemned here as 'something so un-English as to attract horrified attention then and ever after' and the individual Major-Generals as 'prominent among the parvenu groups and predictably enough [they] tended to be the most insecure, vindictive and unbending', thus ignoring recent detailed reappraisals by Christopher

Durstun, Henry Reece and others which give a far more positive view of the system as a whole and of many of the individual Major-Generals. There are a few factual slips. For example, John Desborough is described at one point as ‘Cromwell’s sycophantic son-in-law’. We might question his characterisation as a sycophant – in spring 1659 Richard Cromwell certainly discovered he had a very different side to his character – but we can be sure that he was not Oliver’s son-in-law, as he had in the 1630s married Oliver’s sister Jane and was therefore his brother-in-law.

However, there is much here to admire and to engage the reader. The author is at his best, strongest and most assured when exploring the intricacies of Wiltshire society in the mid and latter half of the seventeenth century. His overarching thesis, that Wiltshire (and broader) landed society came back together, both before and after the compromise Restoration Settlement, and that this coalescence ensured continuing and enduring dominance, is strongly argued and convincing. En route, the discussion and analysis take the reader in a number of fruitful directions, interestingly comparing and contrasting the Protectoral intelligence system with that of modern East Germany and China, evaluating kinship and family ties as possible determinants of allegiance, and reconstructing the lives, families, landholdings and social networks of some of those caught up in the rising, notably Francis Jones, the Goldstones and the Coopers. This leads the author into a fascinating discussion of how surviving church and funerary monuments can be a potentially rich source of information – this is very interesting and perhaps could have been taken further – as well as an equally interesting discussion of how several local and regional families intertwined or had overlapping involvement in the manor of Newton Tony in Wiltshire. There is a strong feeling of local connection as the author discusses these issues, enhanced by a small selection of photographs, together giving a sense of immediacy and locality often absent from more detached academic works.

The closing chapters usefully explore the fate and later fortunes of some of the people, their families, property and places caught up in the Penruddock rising, stressing not only the flexibility of many individuals, who moved smoothly between serving the Cromwellian Protectorate and the restored monarchical regime of Charles II, but also the longer-term vibrancy and endurance of the landed elite, of the rural sector and of a predominantly

agrarian regional and national economy. The involvement of Martin Noel, both as a financier, businessman and landowner and as one of those involved in transporting convicted Penruddock rebels as indentured labourers (or, more crudely, as ‘slaves’) to Barbados, is also stressed and explored in several places, the author rightly pointing out that we need more work on this still rather shadowy figure, who does not even have an *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* entry. Overall, therefore, while it undoubtedly lacks some of the analytical depth, focus and other attributes expected of an academic study, this book is enjoyable, enthusiastic and engaging, wide-ranging in its compass and full of interesting ideas and thought-provoking suggestions.

Angus Haldane, *Portraits of the English Civil Wars*. Unicorn, 2017 (158 pp.) ISBN 9781910787380, £25 paperback.

reviewed by Prof Peter Gaunt

This very attractive and large-format (300 x 235 mm) book does exactly what the title would lead readers to expect. It reproduces a selection of portraits of just over fifty individuals of the civil war era, the majority of them men who fought in or who commanded troops during the wars, but including also a few lawyers, politicians, administrators and religious figures, plus self-portraits of the artists William Dobson and Robert Walker, whose works loom large in this collection. A handful of women appear as sitters – Lady Jane Fisher, Lady Brilliana Harley, Lucy Hutchinson and Henrietta Maria. Striking a good balance between royalists and parliamentarians, we get generally familiar images of some of the most important figures on both sides, such as Charles I, his son the Prince of Wales, his nephews Princes Rupert and Maurice, Jacob Astley, John Byron, George Digby, George Goring, Ralph Hopton and the Duke of Newcastle for the royalists; Oliver Cromwell, the Earl of Essex, Sir Thomas Fairfax, Sir Arthur Hesilrige, Henry Ireton, John Lambert, the Earl of Manchester, George Monck and Sir William Waller for the parliamentarians. But some slightly lesser figures appear alongside them, men like John Belasyse, resplendent in a slashed doublet of crimson satin and white lace, a pensive-looking Sir William Compton, John Russell in contrast oozing swagger, poise and confidence, Arthur Goodwin dressed in shades of plain or golden brown, John

Hutchinson and Sir John Lucas in black body armour, and Sir Thomas Chicheley and Richard Neville being admired by their dogs (a typical seventeenth-century touch).

Reproduced here in full colour and to a high quality, the portraits bring out the tones of the age – Henrietta Maria's rich blue satin gown catches the light, but some of the men are equally flamboyant, none more so than the royalist Sir John Mennes, with his sumptuous red satin doublet and hose, while the author comments that Chicheley's exuberant red sash, worn over an embroidered yellow-gold tunic, is 'so broad and fulsome, it seems as if he may have wrapped himself in a curtain'. Other figures, royalists as much as parliamentarians, are portrayed in dark or muted colours or – like Hugh Peters and Bulstrode Whitelocke – seem to be looming out of the darkness, not much more than their faces and collars visible. With such colour and vibrancy abounding, it is almost a shock and a disappointment to find that the image of the Duke of Newcastle reproduced here is an engraving, while for some reason the lovely Dobson head and shoulders portrait of a rather simple and restrained-looking Prince Maurice has been reproduced here in black and white.

We will all have favourites we would have liked to have seen here and whose omission we might regret. For this reviewer, the equestrian portrait of Alexander Popham capturing the spirit of the war, Van Dyck's stunning image of the Earl of Warwick, the painting of Sir Thomas Salusbury departing from his sombre and almost mournful family (indeed, by the time it was finished Salusbury may already have succumbed) and Arthur Capel's happier-looking family portrait (though in fact his story had an even less happy ending than Salusbury's) might have found a place here. But readers of this journal can rest assured that both Oliver and Richard are well represented: Oliver in the three-quarter length portrait by Walker, the head and shoulders by Sir Peter Lely, a Samuel Cooper miniature and the slightly odd equestrian portrait attributed to Thomas Wyck; Richard in the form of the oval half-length by John Hayles, and the downright bizarre and even rather disturbing anonymous painting with a head and shoulders of Richard encircled by six chubby putti with adult male faces, some of whom may have been intended to represent (perhaps satirically) the cardinal virtues.

Each portrait or other illustration reproduced in this volume is accompanied by some text, generally just a brief entry of a few hundred words on the facing page. These entries provide some information about the life and career of the figure portrayed, linked to comments about elements of the image and the imagery, about overt and implicit messages being conveyed by the artist, and about the iconography of the portraiture. Given the design and layout of the volume, these comments are inevitably quite brief and are generally interesting and useful rather than providing deep or sustained analysis and interpretation. Doubtless that was in part determined by the readership for which this volume (the first in a planned series) is designed, apparently aimed at making available to an interested but broad audience attractive and high quality colour reproductions of contemporary portraiture, at an attractive and reasonable price, rather than pitched at a specialist art historical market. If so, this volume succeeds admirably in doing that, and both the author and the publisher are to be commended for producing such an elegant and handsome book.

Gill Blanchard, *Lawson lies still in the Thames: The Extraordinary Life of Vice-Admiral Sir John Lawson*. Amberley Publishing, Stroud, 2017. (287 pp, 27 colour images.) ISBN 978-1445661230. £20 hardback.

reviewed by Dr Richard J Blakemore

This engagingly written and well-paced biography brings into the foreground a lesser known figure of the civil wars, Interregnum, and Restoration era. Like many biographies, it often borders on adulation for its subject, and to describe Vice-Admiral John Lawson as an ‘almost forgotten hero’ as Gill Blanchard does, is emblematic of this enthusiasm. Nevertheless, Blanchard is right to emphasize Lawson’s important political and military role in this dramatic period, and the book provides a welcome narrative and reassessment of Lawson’s previously overlooked career, from his origins as a merchant seaman to his death in the second Anglo-Dutch war.

Blanchard begins with Lawson’s family, many of them sailors, shippers, and merchants, and with Scarborough, a busy port in the coal trade to London

and the town where Lawson was born around 1615, raised, and first went to sea in coasting colliers. By the outbreak of the civil wars Lawson was part-owner of a ship, with which he joined the parliamentary forces at sea, later taking a commission ashore in the New Model Army. Through the vicissitudes of the wars, as Scarborough changed hands and local commanders changed sides, Lawson suffered temporary exile and substantial financial losses for his loyalty to parliament. In the later 1640s, however, he was appointed to command the garrison of his home town, and possibly also dabbled in radical Leveller politics.

During the Commonwealth he returned to the navy, captaining the *Fairfax* in the first Anglo-Dutch war and rising to rear-admiral. He later became embroiled in Fifth Monarchist plots against Oliver Cromwell's protectorate, for which he was cashiered, subjected to surveillance by both Cromwell's and royalist spies, and briefly imprisoned. In the turmoil after Cromwell's death Lawson was reappointed to command, and in 1659 he brought his fleet into the Thames at a critical moment of political crisis. Despite his previous republicanism, Lawson then supported the Restoration, along with other former parliamentary commanders like George Monck and Edward Montagu. He spent the last years of his life as vice-admiral in the Royal Navy, including a posting at England's new colony of Tangier and ending with his eventual death from an injury at the Battle of Lowestoft.

As Blanchard notes, Lawson's career 'provides a lens through which to view the personal and political conflicts of the period' and sits 'within the wider context of England's transformation into a global political and economic power' (p. 6). Yet at the core of Blanchard's story is the moment when Lawson intervened in national politics in December 1659 – this is reflected in the book's title, a quotation from the very first entry in Samuel Pepys's diary, begun the following January. In the power vacuum following Richard Cromwell's downfall, John Lambert and other army hardliners seized London, and Blanchard argues that 'it was [Lawson's] decisive action in positioning his fleet in the Thames that forced the army to yield' (p. 137), just as much as the more well-known march south of Monck and his soldiers. These events ultimately paved the way towards the Restoration, and Lawson's part in them deserves wider recognition. Indeed, Lawson's career also highlights the pivotal role that naval force could play in domestic

as well as international politics; the Restoration itself was only possible because of naval support, led by Lawson and Montagu.

Blanchard weaves in this wider political context, and the causes of the civil wars and the upheavals of the following decades are narrated deftly but concisely, framing Lawson's story without slowing the pace – although in a very Anglo-centric mode: Scotland, Ireland, and further afield appear only as extensions of the English theatre of action. One of the strengths of the book is that it highlights the challenges that individuals faced in navigating the uncharted waters of revolution, and the ways in which personal and political dimensions collided. This is best illustrated by Lawson's relationship with his sometime mentor Henry Vane. Both served parliament in the 1640s (Vane was the parliamentary navy's treasurer), and both then opposed Cromwell's elevation as Lord Protector. In 1659, Vane sided with Lambert and the army and was sent by them to persuade Lawson to come over, to no avail. After the army capitulated, Lawson sought to have Vane restored to his seat in parliament – again, unsuccessfully. As Blanchard writes, 'the internal conflict, shifting allegiances, political accommodations and broken loyalties these two men experienced at this time encapsulate national and familial divisions across England' (pp. 122–3).

Despite his significant role, especially in 1659, Lawson has remained in the background in many historical accounts, perhaps because the source material concerning him is scarce compared with other figures from this time. Blanchard has done a masterly job of piecing together local records, the writings of contemporary diarists, published pamphlets, and official documents, and includes an appendix of primary sources containing, among other things, some of Lawson's own letters and his ship's journal. Yet Lawson's own writings only afford glimpses of his life, and in the other sources that Blanchard includes Lawson is mentioned fleetingly. One result of this is that his own motivations and opinions are dealt with either swiftly or speculatively; Blanchard describes Lawson as 'a plain, down-to-earth but tough and at times belligerent Yorkshireman' (p. 195), but there is not much direct evidence to support such a characterisation. Similarly, Lawson's republicanism, 'godly' beliefs, and attachment to 'liberty of conscience' are all touched upon, but might have been contextualised or explored further, and Blanchard skates over those aspects which seem less palatable to modern sensibilities. Lawson's republican ambitions probably aimed at a

fundamentalist government, not a freely elected one; his calls for 'liberty of conscience' probably did not extend to Catholics or non-Christians (as Blanchard briefly notes); and he engaged in financial speculation alongside his military activities during the 1640s–50s, profiting from the wars he waged.

Moreover, this book largely tells the story of Lawson's public life and military career, and there is a surprising unevenness in places. The battles in which Lawson fought are dealt with very quickly, though they must have been important and possibly traumatic moments for him, and some episodes are left almost unfinished, as when in 1648 Lawson was 'ordered to sail the *Covenant* north to bring [royalist privateer Browne Bushell] in' (p. 45), and the narrative then leaps to Bushell's execution without explaining how he was captured. We learn relatively little about Lawson's daily life whether ashore or at sea, although Blanchard has gone to some length in investigating his family, and the fortunes of his children are carefully mapped out. This focus, too, may be the result of the available source material, but a wider sense of everyday life in this period would have added colour to the narrative.

Finally, Blanchard's argument that Lawson 'was an ordinary man, who led an extraordinary life' (p. 195) needs some refining. The idea that Lawson, as a 'tarpaulin officer', was '[a]lmost unique among seventeenth-century naval officers in not having first been a gentleman soldier' (p. 13) probably exaggerates his humble origins and his distinctiveness. Even if he was not genteel or aristocratic, Lawson's family, as merchants and ship-owners, places him among the increasingly prosperous middling sorts, setting him apart from most maritime labourers; his will mentions land that he owned in Essex and Scarborough. Several other men – among them William Rainsborowe and his son Thomas, Thomas Trenchfield, William Batten, Richard Swanley, Richard Badiley, William Penn, and Samuel Pepys – were of a similar social status and served the government (both monarchy and parliament) as naval officers and administrators, as well as being politically active. Lawson's experiences are therefore not unique, but reflect the English state's reliance on the commercial sector and shipping community at this early stage of imperial development.

BOOK REVIEWS

There are, then, several aspects of the book which are open to debate. Nevertheless, Blanchard has made a significant and highly readable contribution to our understanding of this period by opening up that debate, and by seeking to place John Lawson in a more prominent position within the history of mid-seventeenth-century England than he has hitherto enjoyed.

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Opening times

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