Cromwelliana

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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 and encourages the Cromwell Museum and Cromwell Collection in Huntingdon run by Cambridgeshire County Council
- 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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CONTENTS

CONTENTS (cont'd)

EDITOR'S NOTE

This edition of *Cromwelliana* has a distinctly military theme. We have two papers originally presented at the Association's study day in October 2014 by Peter Gaunt and David Appleby covering Cromwell's contribution to Parliament's military victories, and the fate of the New Model Army after the Restoration. In addition, related subjects include a study of Philip Skippon and the lessons he learnt from continental conflicts prior to the English civil war, and an account of Cromwell's generalship and the conquest of Scotland 1650–51.

In February we were very sorry to lose one of our most valued Cromwellian historians of recent times – Ivan Roots. He was a committed supporter and previous president of the Association; I am grateful to Stephen Roberts who has provided a fitting tribute to Ivan for this publication.

If you are interested in contributing to future issues of the journal, please contact the Cromwell Association via the email address:
editor.jca@btinternet.com

My thanks to all the contributors for their input to this edition.

Cover image:
Olivarus Britannicus heros. Print by William Faithorne, first published in Ludovici de Gand's panegyric Parallelum Olivae, 1656.
Courtesy of The Cromwell Museum, Huntingdon.

CROMWELL AND HIS PUBLIC

By Prof Jason Peacey

As anyone who has attended an event such as the Cromwell Day commemoration in recent years will attest, heightened security measures surrounding our Parliament provide very visible testimony to what many regard as the remoteness of modern politicians. This security is, of course, understandable given the fear of terrorist attacks, and yet it is hard to deny that the concrete barriers, armed police and airport-style security also send out a powerful message: the Houses of Parliament are a somewhat intimidating and unapproachable place. Security, in other words, comes at a price, just as the surveillance powers which some consider to be necessary to prevent terror plots inevitably impact on privacy and civil liberties. Such points are not necessarily intended to be politically loaded; rather they are intended to make the point that issues like terrorism provoke questions about how societies strike an appropriate balance between security, on the one hand, and liberty, privacy and an accessible political system on the other. That such things are worthy of debate seems to be clear from the fact that the physical remoteness of our representatives is, for some at least, a matter of serious concern. Indeed, it is hard not to think that there is a connection between the perceived insularity and inaccessibility of MPs – or perhaps even the sense that the Westminster bubble is somewhat easier to penetrate by lobbyists than by ordinary members of the public – and the much commented upon phenomena of voter apathy, public disgruntlement with political parties and general cynicism regarding the political system, not least in the wake of the expenses scandal.

Like all of the most interesting and troubling modern issues, of course, there is scope for historians to reflect on what might usefully be gleaned from the past, and if it can justifiably be argued that we have not yet had a satisfactory debate about the trade-off between security and political accessibility in our own time, then there is value in focusing our attention on a period in the past when our ancestors grappled with such issues much more directly. My suggestion, therefore, is that it is worthwhile examining Cromwell's age, and the parliaments of the mid-seventeenth century, for insights about how such a debate might be conducted. This is possible, in fact, because historians of political culture in the seventeenth century have become increasingly fascinated by the ways in which politicians and governments interacted with their publics, and engaged in what we would now call 'public relations' and

'spin'. As a result, we have discovered that the political elite in early modern Britain thought about such things in fairly sophisticated ways, in terms of everything from royal progresses and civic pageantry to the management and manipulation of the media, not least in relation to the reputations of individual grandees, and the risks associated with 'popularity'.[1] This makes it possible to reach some fascinating conclusions regarding the changes that took place in political culture during the Tudor and Stuart age, and particularly during the civil wars and interregnum, and the aim of this piece is to suggest that this picture can also be informed by looking closely at Cromwell's attitudes and behaviour, both before and during his time as lord protector. The result will hopefully be an instructive means of thinking about the kinds of ways in which it might be possible to have a productive debate about the political culture that we would like to foster in the twenty-first century.

I

In 1962, the German sociologist, Jürgen Habermas, published what was to become an extraordinarily controversial but influential book, entitled *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. His main purpose was to think about the media and communication in the twentieth century, but in critiquing what he considered to be the unfortunate effects of modern mass media, Habermas also discussed the past, and specifically the emergence of what he termed a 'public sphere' in England after 1695. This was marked, he believed, by a free press, and it involved the generation of a free space – between the private individual and the state – in which it was possible to conduct political discourse that was rational and commercial, and mostly free from government interference, at least amongst the bourgeoisie (or 'middling sort'). This book, together with Elizabeth Eisenstein's equally provocative account of *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (1979), has played a huge role in helping to provide structure for a wealth of scholarship on print culture and the 'print revolution' – or the 'unacknowledged revolution' in Eisenstein's phrase – of the early modern period.[2] Crucially, such scholarship has involved thinking about the ways in which the development of printing, and more specifically the kinds of printed texts that are likely to have had most 'reach', in terms of being accessible to a general audience, influenced political culture, and perhaps even political events. Central here, of course, have been cheap pamphlets and printed newsbooks and newspapers, of the kind that emerged in Europe in the

1620s, and then in England in the 1630s, and most obviously during the civil wars. Scholars have been particularly fascinated by such material – most obviously the 22,000 items collected by George Thomason during the 1640s and 1650s – and by the phenomena of pamphleteering and journalism, not least in order to understand the nature and severity of government censorship, and to analyse whether the so-called collapse of censorship in 1641, and the subsequent 'explosion' of cheap print, played a role in the political upheavals that followed.[3]

This is not to say that historians have necessarily accepted Habermas's conclusions, or agreed that a public sphere came into existence in the seventeenth century. It can certainly be shown, therefore, that governments remained determined to exert at least some control over the press, by means of either pre-publication 'licensing' or post-publication censorship, and by means of the punishment of offending texts and authors. In that sense, 'censorship' was no more swept away in 1641 than it was in 1695, and the story of the seventeenth century (and beyond) is one marked by fluctuations in, and a more or less experimental approach to, press control.[4] It also seems clear that governments, both before and after 1641, and before and after 1695, developed more or less sophisticated methods for producing what might be called propaganda, both in terms of printing official texts, such as declarations and proclamations, and in terms of exerting more subtle influence over authors, journalists and publishers.[5] Nevertheless, it has been hard to deny that cheap print provided a means for conveying messages to larger audiences, as the Scottish covenanters certainly recognised when they produced thousands of pamphlets for distribution in England in the late 1630s and early 1640s. Similarly, it has also been hard to deny that the print medium was exploited by those outside the elite who sought to engage in political and religious agitation and mobilisation, from the Levellers in the 1640s to the Quakers in the 1650s.[6] In these senses, it makes sense to argue that print provided a means to both foster and express public political engagement, as well as popular interest in political and religious issues and debates.

The relevance of such scholarship, and of the debates that have ensued, lies in the fact that the rise of pamphleteering and journalism, and of growing public interest in political life, raised questions about the accessibility of the political system. This partly involved issues relating to how much

information emerged from within Westminster and Whitehall, and to political secrecy and transparency, in terms of things such as the debates that took place within the two Houses, the decisions that were made, and the activity of individual MPs. But it also involved the porousness of Parliament in other respects, in terms of how easy it was for members of the public to make interventions in, and exert influence over, the political process, either by means of gaining physical access to the Palace of Westminster, or by submitting things such as petitions and getting grievances addressed effectively. And here, the Cromwellian age can be shown to have been extraordinarily interesting. Thus, it can be demonstrated not just that newspapers reported on domestic politics in ways that had traditionally been prohibited, but also that such reporting extended to the provision of detailed information about the workings of the parliamentary system, in terms of information about MPs and what they were up to.[7]

None of this is to say that Parliament became an entirely accessible and transparent institution during the 1640s and 1650s, although it is interesting to ponder whether such developments offered more meaningful evidence about the 'democratisation' of politics than debates about, and changes to, the franchise. It is certainly true that MPs, and more obviously members of the House of Lords, were nervous about change, and that there was sometimes alarm about how crowded the palace could become, and about attempts to draw back the veil of secrecy that had traditionally surrounded Parliament. There were certainly moments, therefore, when attempts were made to restrict access, at least to certain parts of the palace complex, and at least at certain times; there is also evidence of action being taken against those who printed parliamentary speeches, at least some of the time. However, the best way of characterising the developments that took place during the mid-seventeenth century is to suggest that members of Parliament accepted change while also seeking to retain the power to exert some control over things such as accessibility and transparency, and that this effectively involved debating how, and how far, Parliament might be opened up to public scrutiny. What seems clear, in other words, is that contemporaries recognised – more or less – the value of being accessible and transparent, and sought to find workable and acceptable means of making such things possible; that this involved more or less explicit recognition that the openness of Parliament was related to bigger issues

relating to political representation and accountability; and that the result was something like a transformation of political life, and one which had significant legacies and was remarkable given the very real security threats that might be thought to have existed, whether from a 'popish plot' or a royalist conspiracy.[8]

II

Thus far, however, very little of this scholarly attention – about the transformation of Parliament in the face of a media revolution and despite serious security issues, and about the relationship between politicians and the 'public' – has focused directly on Oliver Cromwell. I would like to suggest, however, that even though it is difficult to distil Cromwell's views on his 'public' with absolute clarity, there are grounds for thinking that he played at least a muted role in such debates, that he may have had a somewhat different view from many of those around him during the commonwealth period, and that by examining his very interesting outlook we can go some way towards addressing, if not entirely resolving, one of the important conundrums about the lord protector.

If we know anything about Cromwell, therefore, it is that he remains somewhat enigmatic and rather hard to pin down. This is why he continues to receive the attention of biographers, and to provoke controversy, both within academia and beyond.[9] We only need to think about all of the ink that has been spilt discussing his relationship with Parliament, or his attitude towards 'healing and settling', issues on which it is tempting to portray Cromwell as indecisive or erratic. On some such issues, of course, scholars have very profitably emphasised the importance of the idea of providence.[10] In relation to the trial of Charles I, for example, where Cromwell seemed both hesitant and capable of decisive action, it makes sense to think that this reflected his determination to understand God's will. On other issues, however, providence is probably less helpful, and scholars remain divided about how to deal with aspects of Cromwell's character and behaviour that seem surprising, contradictory or counter-intuitive.[11]

One of the most important and controversial of these difficult issues relates to the opulence and courtliness of the Cromwellian protectorate, and to the possibility of arguing that, even though Cromwell rejected the offer of the crown in 1657, he was nevertheless 'king in all but name'. This phrase is

9

pervasive but hugely problematic, and it seems to me to be undeservedly resilient – at least as far as my own experience with undergraduates suggests – even in the face of subtle but powerful criticism from scholars such as Laura Knoppers.[12] And the problem is that here too we are in danger of falling into one or both of two traps. The first involves thinking that Cromwell's so-called regality was curiously at odds with his famous pronouncement about preferring the 'plain russet-coated captain that knows what he fights for and loves what he knows' over 'that which you call a gentleman'.[13] The second involves suggesting that the young swollen-faced Cromwell who – accordingly to Sir Philip Warwick at least – made his debut in the House of Commons with a plain unclean shirt, specked with blood, lost out in later life to the ermine-clad, and indeed crowned, Cromwell of the funeral effigy; to the Cromwell who lived in opulent surroundings at Hampton Court.[14]

The problem with this image of the regal or monarchical Cromwell ought now to be well known: that it takes insufficient account of the importance of the Cromwellian 'plain style'. As Knoppers has shown so brilliantly, there is a very real danger that we fail to 'read' Cromwellian imagery in a sufficiently subtle way, and fail to recognise that Cromwell may not have been deeply involved in the construction of his image. The Cromwell we see in paintings and engravings, indeed, may more properly reflect how he was seen by others, and perhaps involved men close to him – not least his security chief (John Thurloe) and chief propagandist (Marchamont Nedham) – projecting an image that they wanted to see and promote. Indeed, the anecdote about Cromwell wanting to be painted with 'warts and everything', apocryphal though it might be, may also point to a deeper truth: that Cromwell was less than entirely troubled by how he was perceived and portrayed, and that his 'plain style' had deeper roots, and was more pervasive, than scholars have yet recognised.[15]

My suggestion, therefore, is that it is possible to go beyond the painted, printed and engraved 'image' of Cromwell, in order to examine his behaviour more generally, and to tease more meaning out of the evidence about his relationship with his public. This could be done, for example, by re-examining the speeches he made in Parliament, and it has already been done to good effect in relation to Cromwellian pageantry, where the vital distinction between grandeur and regality, and the modification of

monarchical forms into something more like civic (and at least quasi-republican) ceremonialism, can certainly be teased out.[16] But there is also mileage in introducing into this debate the related issues of print culture and political 'access', not least in order to draw attention to things upon which the ongoing work on the new edition of Cromwell's letters and speeches will hopefully shed light.

The most obviously relevant piece of evidence about Cromwell's attitude to print, for example, is one that might seem surprising. For when historians think about the press and print culture in Cromwellian England – recognising that this is an important guide to contemporary political attitudes and political culture – they tend to dwell on the fact that the period from 1649 to 1655 witnessed repeated attempts to introduce and tighten press regulation, and to re-impose the 'censorship' that had been swept away amid the reforming zeal of the early 1640s, thereby ushering in a remarkably free press, and a much-discussed explosion of pamphleteering and journalism. This freedom is thought to have come to an end during the republic and protectorate, and it has proved difficult to avoid noting not just the attempts to punish the authors of seditious tracts, like John Biddle, Abiezer Coppe and various Levellers, but also the restraint that was imposed upon journalists. This was done by co-opting some men and silencing others, to the point that by 1655 the only newspapers which contemporaries could read were official ones, such as Marchamont Nedham's *Mercurius Politicus*, which may have been more or less run out of, and directly overseen by, Secretary of State John Thurloe. Cromwell's own views, however, may have been somewhat more relaxed than those of some other courtiers and Cromwellian grandees.[17] He certainly seems to have expressed reservations about the wisdom or necessity of printing his speeches, as if he spurned the need for public relations, or at least did not wish to provoke public debate. Writing in February 1655, therefore, the French ambassador, Bordeaux, explained to Cardinal Mazarin that he had been unable to get a copy of Cromwell's speech at the dissolution of the 1654 Parliament, 'the fear of an answer having hindered the publication'.[18] On another occasion, Cromwell is even reported to have commented that if his government 'could not stand against paper shot', ie from journalists and pamphleteers, 'it was not worthy of preservation'.[19]

CROMWELL AND HIS PUBLIC

More important still is evidence about Cromwell's attitude to political access, in terms of the public's ability to reach him and to pass through the corridors of power. This too was something that was very obviously facilitated by the printing revolution, most obviously and most directly in terms of the volume of printed petitions with which Parliament became inundated during the 1650s. The ability of members of the public to print petitions which contained social, economic, political and religious grievances, provided an affordable and effective way of exerting influence over MPs, and can be thought to have democratised the political system, by facilitating a very direct kind of participation. Indeed, evidence indicates that this led to a 'commoning' of the petitioning process, in the sense that petitioning became more commonplace and more widely used by ordinary folk. Attention can thus be drawn to the way in which individual MPs, like Bulstrode Whitelocke, were inundated with printed petitions as they entered the House of Commons.[20] In addition, attention can also be drawn to printed appeals for help that were produced by a bewildering variety of humble individuals, from poor prisoners to crippled soldiers and the starving inhabitants of an underfunded almshouse. By the mid-1650s numerous commentators were struck by the volume of supplicatory material that was being printed in this way, in order that petitions could be thrust into the hands of MPs as they entered the House. Some, indeed, expressed concern that such behaviour would clog up the parliamentary process and divert members from more important 'public' business, although such reservations seem to have done very little to curtail the practice.[21]

Moreover, while Cromwell's own views on this use of print as a political tool by petitioners are unclear, it seems likely that he at least tolerated such novelties. The reason for thinking this is that Cromwell can be shown to have been fairly zealous in responding to, and promoting the interests of, those who directed petitions to him, both personally and in his capacity as protector. What has struck me, therefore, in dealing with my little corner of the Cromwell project – relating to the period between Cromwell's victory at Worcester (September 1651) and his nomination as lord protector (December 1653) – is the time and care that he seems to have taken in dealing with what may well have been a mass of supplicatory material. Not the least of the duties that he seems to have regarded as being part of his role as Lord General, therefore, involved the need to deal with the legacies of civil war, including the problems encountered by those who had suffered

for their service, especially those whose just claims were not being dealt with sufficiently quickly. Any number of documents survive in which Cromwell took it upon himself to respond to plaintiffs by promoting and forwarding petitions, and by taking up the causes of fairly humble individuals, by writing to the commissioners for compounding, to local JPs, and so on, in order to ensure the speedy despatch of particular orders and motions, to hasten reports, and to prevent petitioners from facing great charge and expense as a result of long delays.

A case in point involves a war widow, Deborah Franklyn, who had been waiting for payment of her husband's allowance, and whose situation was made worse by the fact that she had also lost her son in the first civil war. On this occasion, Cromwell's intervention came in response to a complaint that Franklyn made to Parliament in February 1650, as well as to a petition that she submitted in November 1651, and his responsiveness almost certainly reflected the fact that her son had died fighting alongside Cromwell at the storming of Lincoln in 1643. As such, Cromwell wrote to the Commissioners for Compounding in November 1651, recommending that her sufferings should be taken into consideration, and pressing them to show 'favour' by means of 'a speedy despatch of her business, she having long attended for some fruit of that which the Parliament were formerly pleased to order unto her'. Subsequently, moreover, Cromwell made another intervention in her cause by supporting yet another petition that she submitted in September 1655.[22] At other moments, Cromwell provided certificates for maimed soldiers, such as William Daws, in the hope of securing them pensions, and attested to the service of men like William Guttridge, a master gunner in the train of artillery who was 'slain in the Parliament's service in Scotland', in the hope of securing maintenance for his widow.[23] Writing from the Cockpit in Whitehall in December 1652, meanwhile, Cromwell endeavoured to secure payment for one Thomas Cave, 'who was of my regiment at Marston Moor', who had 'lost both his eyes' in such service, and who was in 'a very sad and perishing condition', and he did so by noting that this would be 'so good and charitable a work'.[24] It may even have been the case that Cromwell was somewhat more responsive to such petitioners than were other MPs. Indeed, some disgruntled petitioners, such as George Gill, singled out Cromwell as one of those MPs who proved helpful to petitioners like himself by writing letters on their behalf to the Speaker of the Commons, while also naming and

shaming others who had proved less useful.[25] Sometimes, indeed, Cromwell merely added a note to the bottom of a petition that he received, before forwarding it to the relevant committee, as he did with a petition from Lady Jane Gorges in June 1653, recommending 'speedy consideration of the cause, according to the justice of it'.[26] What is interesting with this last example is the likelihood that surviving evidence represents a mere fraction of the volume of petitions with which Cromwell dealt in a similar fashion, or the possibility that many other examples lie unnoticed in scattered archives.

Beyond noting the attention that Cromwell paid to the petitions he received, there are at least hints that this hands-on approach, and this willingness to respond favourably to plaintiffs and supplicants, and to get involved in humdrum business relating to ordinary citizens, went hand-in-hand with a fairly striking physical accessibility. Cromwell, at least to some extent, and to an extent that seems to have surprised and perhaps also worried those around him, was approachable. This is not just a matter of his willingness to speak with fellow MPs, like Bulstrode Whitelocke, whom he happened to meet during one of his perambulations of St James's Park, when Cromwell apparently 'desired me to walk aside with him, that we might have some private discourse together'.[27] Cromwell also seems to have been accessible to ordinary citizens. In February 1647, for example, it was reported that 'a whole gang' had detained him on his way to the Commons, and that they then followed him 'railing to the very door of the House'.[28] Such evidence suggests that Cromwell, like some of his fellow MPs who frequented Westminster Hall – then a fully accessible part of the palace, which was home to law courts as well as various shops – was prepared to run the risk of encountering more or less strange and aggressive members of the public, presumably on the basis that some kind of accessibility was taken to be acceptable and even normative.[29] That this was indeed a risky business seems clear from the occasion in April 1648 when Cromwell almost fell victim to the 'roaring boys' who 'layd weight for him', and who only escaped because he was riding in Lord Lisle's coach rather than in his own, although shots were subsequently fired at the windows of his house.[30]

Of course, such evidence must be approached with caution, and not overblown. The last thing I want to do is to fall into the trap of creating an exaggerated image of Cromwell, as a wild populist or a man of the people.

CROMWELL AND HIS PUBLIC

There were almost certainly limits to his accessibility, and here, as with the political culture of the interregnum more generally, there are grounds for thinking that Cromwell and others sought to adapt to new circumstances, and sought to find a way of accommodating new participatory political realities – public interest in politics and desire to take part in political processes – while also ensuring a measure of control, orderliness and decorum. It is certainly worth noting, therefore, that Cromwell's very reasonable concern regarding security ahead of the state opening of Parliament in 1656, led to a tightening of security, and a much more visible military presence, even if it did not lead him – as it had Charles I – to abandon the idea of a public procession through the streets of Westminster. Indeed, given that this occasion is known to have been targeted by would-be assassins, it might be considered remarkable that Cromwell remained as visible as he did.[31]

Moreover, what is striking about Cromwell's attitude towards the public is that he seems to have been particularly concerned about the honest, the valiant and the worthy, and with those who showed 'good affections' to 'this great cause of liberty and religion'.[32] But that being said, it is also striking that he was prepared to go out of his way for poor and injured humble troopers, and for the widows and orphans of rank-and-file soldiers, and that he included in his grand processions not just soldiers but also ordinary tradesmen.[33] And as such, it seems to me that there are things about Cromwell's attitude towards his public which we need to add to our wider understanding of his attitudes and character, in order to appreciate that the Cromwellian 'plain style' seems to have involved a healthy disdain for what we would call 'public relations' and 'spin', and a willingness to be at least somewhat accessible to, and helpful to, ordinary citizens.

III

The broader value of thinking about things such as political accessibility and transparency in the seventeenth century, and about the attitudes of men like Cromwell, lies in the light that might be shed on our modern conundrums regarding the need to strike an adequate and acceptable balance between security and openness at Westminster. What emerges from the seventeenth century evidence is not that there was a golden age in which the Palace of Westminster was entirely open and accessible to any member of the public, even if we might reasonably be struck by the contrasts between their

15

approach and our own. Indeed, the aim of this piece has certainly not been to suggest that the seventeenth century offers a model of accessibility that ought to be copied or reintroduced. However, it is instructive to observe how our ancestors – who faced very real challenges in terms of security, as well as in terms of an intrusive media – grappled with the situation in which they found themselves. This is because it might be possible to characterise their response as involving a considered reflection upon conflicting aspirations, rather than a drastic tightening of security, and a reaction that was informed by a determination to ensure access as far as possible, because this was thought to be central to a responsive and representative political system. The end result was that contemporaries proved willing to tighten security when this was thought to be necessary, but also to do so in a consciously measured fashion, and indeed to relax security where possible. Of course, it might justifiably be argued that our modern Parliament is not entirely inaccessible, and yet not everyone would agree that there has been an entirely adequate debate about the kind of security that is appropriate or desirable, or about how to balance the need for security with the vital importance of preserving a political system that is also open, accessible and transparent. In that sense, we may have something to learn from Cromwell and his contemporaries.

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[15] Knoppers, *Constructing Cromwell*, chapter 2; P. Little, 'John Thurloe and the offer of the crown to Oliver Cromwell', in P. Little, ed., *The Cromwellian Protectorate* (Woodbridge, 2007).

[16] Knoppers, *Constructing Cromwell*, chapters 3-4; J. Peacey, 'The street theatre of state: the ceremonial opening of Parliament, 1603-1660', *Parliamentary History*, 34.1 (2015).

[17] Peacey, J., 'Cromwellian England: a propaganda state?', *History*, 91 (2006).

[18] British Library (BL), Additional Manuscript 4156, fo. 142v.

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[20] Longleat House, Whitelocke Papers, Parcel 7.

[21] D. Hirst, 'Making Contact: Petitions and the English Republic', *Journal of British Studies*, 45.1 (2006); Peacey, *Print and Public Politics*, chapters 8-9.

[22] *Commons Journal*, iv. 686-7; *Commons Journal*, vi. 202-4; *Calendar of the Committee for Compounding*, ed. M. A. E. Green (5 volumes, London, 1890), ii. 1539; The National Archives (TNA), SP 23/86, pp. 420, 479-80, 490; SP 23/233, p. 33.

[23] Wiltshire and Swindon Archives, A1/110A/2; Pepys Library, Cambridge, PL 2504, pp. 902-3.

[24] TNA, SP 19/116, fos. 119-20v.

[25] G. Gill, *Innocency Cleared* (London, 1651), pp. 13-12.

[26] TNA, SP 23/25, p. 182.

[27] BL, Additional Manuscript 37345, fos. 240v-243v.

[28] Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Clarendon, 29, fos. 134-v.

[29] C. Kyle and J. Peacey, '"Under cover of so much coming and going": public access to parliament and the political process in early modern England', in C. Kyle and J. Peacey, eds, *Parliament at Work* (Woodbridge, 2002).

[30] BL, Additional Manuscript 78198, fo. 65.

[31] Peacey, 'Street theatre of state'.

[32] *Commons Journal*, iv. 686-7.

[33] Peacey, 'Street theatre of state'.

Jason Peacey is Professor of Early Modern British History at University College London, and is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society.

THE ANNUAL CROMWELL COLLECTION LECTURE 2012

FACTS, LIES AND STEREOTYPES – A LOOK AT THE
COLLECTION OF THE CROMWELL MUSEUM AND HOW IT HAS
DEVELOPED OVER THE LAST FIFTY YEARS

By John Goldsmith

The title of this lecture is a subliminal reference to the film *Sex, lies and videotape*; I can promise you none of the former or latter, and possibly only a smattering of lies. I am not intending to set out to wilfully deconstruct the museum and its collections, but rather to try and confirm what we do and do not have of significance and the reasons for that. To begin at the beginning…or rather before the beginning, because to understand what may, or may not, be plausible in terms of collecting Cromwelliana you need to look before Cromwell, and his antecedents, to comprehend what might be reasonable to expect to have survived from Cromwell's childhood and early life.

Oliver Cromwell's great-grandfather's maternal uncle, Thomas Cromwell, has recently been brought back to life in Hilary Mantel's fictional recreation of the Henrician court. In the first two novels of her trilogy (*Wolf Hall* and *Bring Up the Bodies*), Oliver Cromwell's great-grandfather, Richard, is a subsidiary but real character. It is to Thomas, executed in 1540, that the Cromwell family owed its initial wealth and property. Richard had worked closely with his uncle and, despite his fall, Richard kept what he had acquired. Religious houses at Huntingdon, Ramsey and St Neots, amongst others, became the property of the Cromwells. The right of primogeniture meant that the young Oliver Cromwell was not destined to live in a large house, or in great wealth. Cromwell's father, Robert, was the second son of Sir Henry Cromwell, Richard's son, and so it was Robert's brother and Oliver Cromwell's uncle, Sir Oliver Cromwell, who inherited the family estates.

Sir Oliver, despite financially lucrative marriages, managed to dissipate most of the family wealth and had to sell Hinchingbrooke less than a hundred years after the family acquired it. There was no large family house lived in by Oliver Cromwell, whose ancestors lived there before him and whose descendants inherited after him. In terms of property the young Oliver inherited little, and the family, after the move from Huntingdon in 1630/1,

had no stable family home for generations. The accumulated detritus of personal objects, household accounts, family portraits and furniture never existed in one place. The household of Oliver Cromwell was never going to leave much of a footprint.[1]

Any footprint that there may have been was actively erased by the Restoration. Oliver's widow, Elizabeth, was pursued for the return of 'the late King's goods' so there was no legacy of the Cromwell household to pass on for posterity. Cromwell's heir, his oldest surviving son, Richard, the second lord protector, was self-exiled and led a peripatetic existence around parts of France and Italy for most of the twenty years following his abdication. The only household in the immediate Cromwell line that had any element of physical stability was the one he left behind at Hursley in Hampshire, but even that was divided. Richard Cromwell's wife, Dorothy Major, died in 1676. Richard never returned to live at Hursley, and his son Oliver pre-deceased him.

Although most of Cromwell's family were able to live peacefully under the Stuarts, it would hardly have been wise or politic to have openly collected material relating to the successes of the lord protector. Cromwell's head was still gibbeted on Westminster Hall as a reminder to supporters of the Regicide. Pro-Cromwell antiquarianism could have been open to misinterpretation.

Nevertheless, Samuel Pepys notes in March 1663 that there was a market in the high quality coin designed by Thomas Simon depicting Cromwell. A five shilling piece was selling for five or six times its face value. And it was a coin of Cromwell that sparked a furious row, just over a century later, between James Boswell's father and Dr Johnson as recorded in Boswell's *Journal of a tour to the Hebrides*,[2] but these were literally small pieces. Some better quality portraits and portrait busts of Cromwell were displayed in private and predominantly Whig households, but museums of Cromwelliana were still some way off.

The origin of the modern museum, as an ordered and systematic presentation of knowledge, represented by specimens, is a 19th century construct that can trace its lineage to the cabinets of curiosities that a gentleman may have owned in the 17th or 18th century. Primarily these were

collections of what would now be termed 'natural history' specimens; there is nothing to suggest that Cromwell-related curios were being collected and displayed in this way. What is known is that some of the public shows of curiosities, referred to by their historian Robert Altick as the *Great shows of London*, did contain Cromwell material, but it is material that should be regarded cautiously, if not with scepticism.[3] For example, Don Saltero's coffee house had Oliver Cromwell's broad sword over the counter, alongside two arrows of Robin Hood's and William the Conqueror's sword. This material was imaginatively described, but not well provenanced.

The theory I am proposing is that given these circumstances, a collection of personal objects related to Cromwell, whose provenance can be confirmed and documented, is extremely unlikely to have survived the collapse of the Protectorate, and that the material that was collected and exhibited in the 18th century was not subject to any rigorous examination. This theory holds good with one partial exception and that exception is the collection which has formed the core of the Cromwell Museum over most of the last fifty years, and the collection of which we are currently the guardians, but not the owners. The collection has been referred to over many years as the Cromwell-Bush collection, and it is this material which has passed by family descent through the Cromwell family. It is an important collection, so important that it has been accorded the status of *conditional exemption*[4] by Her Majesty's Customs and Revenue, and the County Council and Huntingdon is fortunate to be able to display it to the public.

There is an implication in the words 'by family descent' that the collection has passed in a continuous line from Oliver Cromwell in the 17th century to modern times, but that implication cannot be supported other than for a small number of objects. The Cromwell-Bush collection was assembled from various sources, including the family, by Oliver Cromwell's descendant, also named Oliver Cromwell. He was born in 1742 and died in 1821, and was the Lord Protector's great-great-grandson. This Oliver Cromwell was the first for several generations who had the resources and the commitment to put a collection together. The collection only remained together for a few decades, fifty or sixty years at most, before it was dispersed, but it was mainly, if not wholly, kept within the confines of the family. It is to the family's huge credit that they have continued to keep the

collection together when, at times, it would have been far more convenient for them to have sent it all to the sale room.

The great revival in general public interest in Cromwell, prompting his acclaim and celebration by some, and loathing and vilification by others, was stimulated to a significant amount by the publication in 1845 of *The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, edited by Thomas Carlyle. It was hugely successful and remained in print throughout the 19th century. For the non-conformist, nationalist, if not to say imperialist, reader of Carlyle's densely-packed pages, Cromwell emerges as a figure worthy of respect, bordering on veneration. It is Carlyle's Cromwell who becomes the hero after whom countless roads are named, buildings decorated with his image and statues erected.

The same period coincides almost exactly with the rise of the municipal museum movement, when the growing towns and cities of the great industrial centres of the nation stimulated the growth of our great city museums in places such as Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds and Sheffield. On the face of it, it is surprising that not one of these institutions reflected the huge enthusiasm for Cromwell by developing a significant Cromwell collection. Why didn't the two go hand in hand to create at least one outstanding collection?

There are two or perhaps three good reasons to explain this:

Firstly there was, as I have already considered, no well provenanced collection looking for a home or being offered on the open market. The Bush family were proud to retain what they had and there were no other contenders.

Secondly there was no tradition, and still is no tradition, of museums of political personalities in this country. Indeed, in the 19th century there were very few museums of any kind dedicated to one individual. Museums of personalia are predominantly a 20th century phenomenon, and when you look, even now, at who has museums dedicated to them, it is mainly literary and artistic figures, and more often located in a house or home they once inhabited, rather than in a less 'personal' setting. We just do not 'do' overtly political museums, or at least museums about politicians.

Thirdly, and this is linked to the previous point but distinct from it, the very people who were followers of the 'cult of Cromwell' as Blair Worden has described it, were theologically iconophobic. The idea of collecting and displaying relics associated with Cromwell would have smacked of the worship of saints' relics, the style of religion that was swept away at the Reformation and which Cromwell fought the civil war against. It would have been irrational for Cromwell enthusiasts to have assembled personalia, provenanced or not.

The major collection of Cromwell-related material which was put together in the later 19th century, and which was subsequently absorbed into the collections of the old London Museum, now part of the Museum of London, was collected by a Cromwell devotee. His name was John De Kewer Williams who claimed some descent from Cromwell through the Williams' line.[5] He was fiercely anti-Catholic and a founder member of the Evangelical Protestant Alliance, with his own independent congregation in Hackney in north-east London. Williams collected assiduously but avoided anything that claimed to be a relic, partly because he never trusted the supposed provenance of such possible objects, but more importantly because he avoided that category of material. His collection contained prints, books, some decorative objects, a few paintings, but not those objects believed to have been owned, used, sat on or handled by his hero.

Williams' collection was rejected when offered to the National Portrait Gallery because it was secondary material. A fellow Cromwell enthusiast, and one much wealthier, purchased his collection and added it to his own, which did contain a few fragments of less rigorously judged items. The buyer was Sir Richard Tangye, and it was after his death that the collection was passed into museum hands.[6]

The highpoint of celebration of Cromwell's life and achievements was at the very end of the 19th century when the tercentenary of Cromwell's birth was marked by non-conformist meetings all over the country. It also led to an increase in books and newspaper stories on the great hero. The collection assembled by Cromwell's descendants was written about in an article in Lloyds newspaper on 23rd April 1899, under the sub-heading *A chat with a descendant of the Protector*. The interviewee was the Rev. Thomas Cromwell-Bush, whose father Paul Bush had married into the Cromwell line. The

article claims without equivocation or qualification that 'the memorials have not been collected but have been handed down from generation to generation ever since Oliver Cromwell's death to the present day'. Thomas Cromwell-Bush was very proud of his Cromwell heirlooms, and the belief that all of the collection originated from Oliver Cromwell, the Lord Protector, had been deeply ingrained in the tradition surrounding it.

The collection remained in the personal custody of the family for another generation until, because of lack of space, another home was sought. It was at this point that the Cromwell-Bush collection came to Huntingdon, when the family agreed to a joint loan to the Cromwell Association and Lord Hinchingbrooke for its display to the public at Hinchingbrooke House.[7] A special exhibition of Cromwell material was held there in 1951, with the Bush collection forming nearly half the items on show, and listed as being on loan from the Rev. Paul Cromwell-Bush, who had inherited it from his father Thomas. The Rev. Paul Bush died in 1954 and his son John could not (and never did) accommodate the collection, and so the loan continued.

The unanswered question is, what motivated the loan to the Association and Hinchingbrooke? Without any definitive evidence, I suggest that the key factor was Isaac Foot. He was a founder member of the Association in 1937, the head of the Foot political dynasty, one-time MP, Privy Councillor, and very well connected. Foot was almost certainly aware of the Bush collection and Lord Hinchingbrooke was chairman of the Palace of Westminster Works of Art Committee. The Cromwell Association, of which the late Lord Renton (who was at the time the sitting MP for Huntingdon) was also a member, had been assembling material for a museum dedicated to Cromwell for some time, and the loan of the Bush collection to Huntingdon was a very positive step for the Association, for the family, for Hinchingbrooke and for Huntingdon.

Isaac Foot had initiated a connection between the Cromwell Association and Huntingdon even before the Bush Collection went to Hinchingbrooke. One of the prime reasons for the creation of the Association in September 1937 was the self-appointed task of creating memorials to mark Cromwell's connection with particular buildings, places and battlefields. The Association's first successful proposal to create a memorial was to place something on the wall of Huntingdon Grammar School; this was achieved

in November 1938 when a simple stone was placed on the gable end of the building, now of course the Cromwell Museum. It was a prescient choice given what was to follow in 1962.

In 1938 the old Grammar School building was still part of the actual school, and although the school did not relocate until the following year, the building remained part of the estate of Huntingdon Grammar School until an exchange of property 20 years later between the governors of the school and Huntingdonshire County Council. Whether by chance or not, the actual completion date of the transfer was 3rd September 1958, the anniversary of Cromwell's death three hundred years to the day. A few weeks before, in late July 1958, Huntingdon Record Office, with the support and enthusiasm of the Cromwell Association, had organised an exhibition in the Town Hall to mark the tercentenary of Cromwell's death. Isaac Foot was once again a leading figure in this initiative. Before he formally opened the exhibition, he gave a lecture to a large and invited audience at the new Huntingdon Secondary Modern School, now known as St. Peter's.

The exhibition was very popular and had almost 3,000 visitors over eight days from 24–30 July. The key players locally in the initiation of the exhibition were Mr Findlay, the County Archivist for Huntingdonshire, and the chairman of the Archives Committee, Dr Powley. Of the two, I suspect that Powley was the more dynamic.

Edward Barziallai Powley had taken a first degree in philosophy and then taught in Peterborough, before serving in the navy in the First World War. After service, he pursued a further degree at Oxford, where he studied and researched under the great historian of the 17th Century, C.H. Firth. He spent the majority of his career teaching at the Merchant Taylor's School in Crosby, Lancashire. In his mid-60s, he took up the post of part-time organiser of education at Gaynes Hall Borstal, now H.M.P. Littlehey, near Huntingdon, where he arrived in 1953. The following year he was appointed to the County Council and his historical interests led him to serve on the Archives Committee.

The old Grammar School building had originally been acquired with the intention of using it for the storage of archives. In May 1959, the year after the exhibition, the Archives Committee were informed that the shelving

units had been installed and work was nearing completion. However, several months before the report that 'work was nearing completion', Isaac Foot informed the council of the Cromwell Association that Powley was 'endeavouring to interest the Hunts County Council…with a view to utilising the old Grammar School, now empty for a museum'. Powley attended the next meeting of the Association's council and advised that the Archives Committee were 'hoping to persuade the General Purposes Committee who held the Cromwell relics and Hinchingbrooke portraits', as by now the Montagus were in the process of vacating Hinchingbrooke, and 'to hand these over to the Archives Committee to form the nucleus of a permanent Cromwell exhibition'.

Powley was an effective operator, and, in conjunction with Mr Aylward, the Clerk to the County Council (the post equivalent to today's Chief Executive), the momentum for a museum in the old Grammar School gathered pace, receiving formal approval by the full council in February 1961. The formal approval was assuredly influenced, at least in part, by the offer on the table of a grant of £1,000 from the Pilgrim Trust towards the cost of conversion of the building. Aware that the Cromwell-Bush material was a strong core to the nascent museum, Powley and Aylward set about the task of assembling further material to exhibit.

Once again the Cromwell Association had a role to play. In 1950 it had set up a limited company as a separate organisation under the name of Cromwell Heirlooms Ltd, with the intention of providing an appropriate structure for the receipt and collection of 'relics, pictures, prints, manuscripts and other articles and things relating to Oliver Cromwell or in any way connected to him and his contemporaries'. The boom in the independent museum sector in this country did not take off for another 20 years, so the Association was feeling its way with little help or support as to how to go about the process of building a museum collection. By the late 1950s, they had assembled a small number of objects, but of good quality. For example, one of the founder members of the Association, Captain Christy Crawfurd (sic), an enthusiastic collector of civil war portraiture, had bought the painting identified as Sir Henry Vane the younger, at Sotheby's in 1936, and had either given it, or bequeathed it, to the Association. The entire Cromwell Heirlooms collection was loaned to the new Cromwell Museum.[8]

The collection available to Powley was still relatively sparse. Powley pushed for a letter to be sent to the national press, over the names of the Lord Lieutenant, the Chairman of the County Council and his own, appealing for material about Cromwell, 'to help us achieve in his birthplace, a collection of national interest'. *The Times* published the letter in February 1962 and it did prompt a small number of offers. What the tone of the letter makes perfectly clear is the scale of the ambition. It was always to be a museum of national, and not just local, interest.

This minutiae of municipal history may not be the most electrifying of tales but it is a significant and wholly commendable point that the museum is the result of local authority endeavour, an initiative of members, supported by officers, undertaking a project believed to be of public benefit and for the greater good. The ambition was reflected in the arrangements for the opening ceremony and the choice of principal guest, the Speaker of the House of Commons, Sir Harry Hylton-Foster. There was a formal lunch, speeches in the nearby Grand Cinema, before the actual opening of the museum on 19 October 1962. The idea of a public museum about Cromwell had taken a long time to come to fruition. Sadly, Isaac Foot did not live to see it happen, but the museum's creation in Huntingdon was not an insignificant achievement. But what is in the collections now and how has our interpretation and arrangement of what we have altered and changed?

Interpretation is a word used commonly in the museum and wider heritage world, but it is not a word, at least in this context, that Powley would have been familiar with. From reading the published catalogue that he produced of the museum, a couple of years after it opened, he regarded the museum's role to be as complete as possible. As a consequence, it was quite simply stuffed full of stuff. Contemporary portraits of significant characters were shown alongside photographs of portraits held elsewhere, facsimile documents alongside originals, and 17th century engravings of battles next to modern drawn plans. The density of the display was intensive and there was no linking narrative to guide the visitor. The catalogue-cum-guidebook was offered for those who wanted to do more than try and absorb what they were looking at by reading the labels alone. The museum is still quite dense in its ratio of exhibits to floor space, and it is, by the nature of the collection, an unashamedly traditional museum, but the changes in the way

in which museums present material to the public, and the way in which they work now, are significantly different to how they were in the 1950s and 1960s.

Although he may not have been aware of it, Powley was attempting to do something new, and something which has since become far more common: to use the museum format to tell a story, albeit in part mediated through the guidebook, about a particular period and historical events. What he was also trying to do, as has been said above, is unusual: to relate an account of an historical, but essentially political, figure.

The museum was clear from the outset about its intentions:

> The Museum is designed to illustrate, to the extent of its available resources and the limits which wall and floor areas allow, the course of the Parliament – Commonwealth side of the Great Rebellion or Puritan Revolution 1640–1660, but for Cromwell family material the former date is anticipated and the latter over-run.[9]

The museum opened with its 'omnium gatherum' approach, attempting to be comprehensive, and for those unacquainted with the history of the period it was probably a little overwhelming. There is little evidence of critical selection of material, rather a policy of displaying everything available if space permitted. It was an approach that expected a lot from the visitor.

Just as display techniques have altered over the last half-century, so too has the approach to provenance, although inconvenient truths about objects are not always spelt out. The foundation of the museum was based on two solid pillars. The first is indisputable, that Oliver Cromwell was born in Huntingdon in 1599 and that he lived for approximately a half of his lifetime in the town. The second is that he attended Huntingdon Grammar School, and in 1959 that building, the very building where Cromwell went to school, was available to the Archives subcommittee. As Powley's introduction to the visitor in the catalogue states: 'You stand where the boy Oliver was taught', which is then qualified by a reference to considerable restoration begun in 1876.

The inconvenient truth is that Cromwell would very likely not recognise the building as it now stands, and the spot where Oliver was taught was almost certainly three feet lower than the current floor level. The restoration of the building in the 1870s was substantial. The whole building was taken down and then rebuilt using, where possible, the Norman masonry, with some considerable additions. Maybe one pillar is a bit wobbly. The delicious irony is that the benefactor who paid for the restoration, Dion Boucicault, could only afford to do so because of the success of his play *The Shaughraun*, a melodrama set in the Fenian uprising of 1866, and a vehicle for expressing the playwright's commitment to Irish nationalism[10]. In reality there are very few post-conquest and early medieval buildings that look the same today as they did to someone in 1200 or even in 1600. Very few have escaped the restorer's hand. The hand in Huntingdon was rather heavy and the intention was to restore to a 12th century structure, rather than the early 17th century one known to Cromwell.

If the structure of the building is not quite, what has at times, been claimed, does the provenance of the collection, the Cromwell-Bush material, the paintings, the documents and the printed pamphlets, stand up to rigorous scrutiny? The easiest case to answer is that of the printed material. The amount of pamphlet literature produced during the civil war was enormous, and thanks to the energetic contemporary collector George Thomason, whose collection is in the British Library, it is well documented. The museum's own collection is nowhere near comprehensive, it never could be, nor does it aim to be, but pamphlets and their titles provide a fascinating insight into the progress of the war, and the conflicting propaganda produced by all parties. Similarly, the various Acts and Ordinances of the Commonwealth and Protectorate, of which the museum has a representative collection, are well documented, and again provide the opportunity of demonstrating the chronology of the period through original objects.

The museum actually has very few documents written by, or signed by, Cromwell himself. Although their provenance is varied, they have not all come from one source, and questions have not been raised concerning the authenticity of any of them. The same cannot be said for all Cromwell documents, as the current major project to record all of them is discovering. The popularity of Cromwell in the 19th century led to the creation of a

number of convincing forgeries, some of which have long-since been revealed, others possibly yet to be.

And then it starts to become difficult. When is a portrait authentic and when is it a copy? How certain can we be that the sitter, the subject, is who it is claimed to be, and the artist to whom it is attributed was indeed the artist? In museum terms we have what is termed a mixed collection, one made up of a wide range of different materials. We have oils on canvas, oils on panel, watercolours, miniatures, metalwork, woodwork, paper, parchment, costume, ceramics and glass, ranging over four centuries. This presents a range of conservation challenges. In terms of curatorship, the museum could really do with a team of fine and decorative art historians, an arms and armour specialist, a numismatist, a print curator, an archivist and a 17th century historian.[11] Instead the museum has a compromise at the moment, a generalist, and takes, begs, borrows and very occasionally pays for (if possible with someone else's money) expert advice from elsewhere.

Two years ago, the Pilgrim Trust, the same body whose grant of £1,000 helped to convince the County Council to progress the idea of a Cromwell Museum, responded positively to a grant application for the museum to undertake a full cataloguing exercise of its painting collection. The museum owes a debt of gratitude to the art historian Angus Haldane who catalogued the museum collection, even though his researches uncovered some uncomfortable findings.[12]

The museum has had on display for a very long time three portraits of Cromwell's antecedents: the one described as Cromwell's grandfather, Sir Henry Cromwell;[13] Robert Cromwell;[14] Oliver's father; and Robert's wife Elizabeth,[15] Oliver's mother.

Cromwell's mother was certainly a strong and almost permanent presence in his life. She lived to see her only surviving son rise from 'obscurity' to become head of state, the Lord Protector, living until her mid-eighties, dying in 1654. The portrait the museum has, of a lady of 60 or 70, in a black dress and bonnet, holding a red flower, makes an appealing Mrs Cromwell. She looks resolute, she has a big nose and is dressed modestly. But there is no evidence of it being Mrs Cromwell at all. Research has shown that the painting was bought by Lord Monson in the late 1930s from an unnamed

dealer. Monson acquired it because he thought it looked like another portrait he had called 'Cromwell's mother'. He took it to the National Portrait Gallery for an opinion where it was seen by the Director, Kingsley Adams. It was sold in the Burton Hall sale of 1958 and acquired by Bernard Barker, who offered it to the new Cromwell Museum. Kingsley Adams, in his retirement, served on the Cromwell Museum Management Committee but his opinion of the putative portrait did not hold sway. Adams commented wryly in a letter to Aylward, the Clerk to the Council, that, 'any portrait of a lady of almost any age in near-mid 17th century clothes is liable to be given her name'. [16] In truth there is no certainty that any portrait survives that can be confidently described as being of Elizabeth Cromwell, Oliver's mother. How likely is it that there ever was a portrait of Cromwell's mother? Possibly there was a painting of her from around the time of her marriage to Robert Cromwell, but would it have survived into the 1660s, let alone the 1960s? It is possible, but if so, undocumented, untraced and unknown.

Having questioned the portrait of Mrs Cromwell, how does the portrait of Robert Cromwell stand up to scrutiny? The same general points about the likelihood of a portrait being created and its survival apply, but the provenance is significantly better. The painting was in the possession of John Montagu, Earl of Sandwich, by 1824. It was lent to a major exhibition of 'National Portraits' in London in 1866 and exhibited as Robert Cromwell, and it has been published many times since. The purchase of the painting in 1980 from the Montagu family was based on that unquestioned description. But despite the long-standing identification of the sitter as Robert Cromwell, the evidence does not stack up. The inscription on the stretcher 'Robert Cromwell father of the Protector' is not contemporary. More significantly, the internal evidence of the painting does not support the identification. Robert died in 1617 and was born in the mid-late 1560s. At his death he was probably under 50 years old. The sitter looks older. Far more significantly, the style of dress indicates a date of production of c1640–1650, not a style of the early 1600s.

Having confidently dismissed the identifications of two of the museum's hitherto most important paintings, where will it all end? Are there doubts about the whole collection? Not at all, but some of the attributions and descriptions will be altered.

The third painting to be considered has a similar provenance to that of the Robert Cromwell portrait as it also came from the Montagu family, from whom it was purchased in 1980, though it had been on loan to the museum for many years beforehand. As well as thorough research of the history of a painting, and detailed examination of internal evidence, there is a third element to the opinions offered by art historians, and which is that less easily defined quality, connoisseurship – critical judgement based on knowledge and experience.

The portrait, an oil on panel, has always been displayed in the museum as 'Sir Henry Cromwell', despite the 18th century description on the painting as it being 'Sir Oliver Cromwell of Hinchingbrooke and Ramsey'. The style of the portrait and the costume puts it in the late 1580s when Sir Henry would have been in his forties. It appears more likely to be a man in his mid-late twenties. Sir Oliver was born 1562–3 so if the painting is from the later 1580s, identification as Sir Oliver makes more sense. The artist suggested is no longer Adrian Key, but a Flemish portrait painter Hieronimo Custodis, who created three signed and dated portraits which place him in London in 1589. The changed identification does not diminish the portrait in any way, but it does underline the value of challenging the received wisdom of what the museum holds.

The same point holds true for objects in the collection as much as it does for portraits, including material in the Cromwell-Bush collection. One of the most exquisite objects is what was long-described as being Oliver Cromwell's personal seal.[17] The seal is small, very finely made, and like other key items in the Bush collection, associated with the household of Richard Cromwell at Hursley in Hampshire. It is Oliver Cromwell's seal: the complicated monogram does read as his name, but it is the wrong Oliver Cromwell. It is the seal of Richard's son Oliver, who died in 1705. The identification of it as Cromwell's seal was probably based on a combination of wishful thinking and an 18th century slip of paper describing it as Oliver Cromwell's seal. A perfectly understandable mistake to make.

The heraldry on the seal matrix shows the Cromwell and Major family coats of arms conjoined. Dorothy Major was Richard Cromwell's wife. This correct identification has now been in the museum for a number of years, but the incorrect description still persists in print.

As an antidote to the account of the seal, I would like to focus on another object from the Cromwell-Bush collection, the Florentine pomade chest.[18] The cabinet is described in initial catalogues as being a gift from the Grand Duke of Tuscany to Cromwell. What evidence exists for such a gift having been made? Firstly, the cabinet. The quality and style is absolutely correct for *pietre-dure* work from the Grand Ducal workshops in the mid-17th century.[19] Secondly, the contents: analysis of the contents of some of the pots by Dr Andrew Hardy of Exeter University confirmed that they are olive oil-based soft soaps, consistent with the description of the contents being pomades from Florence.[20] Thirdly, and most critically, the documentary evidence stacks up.[21] The evidence is there of this gift being given to Cromwell. The cabinet is truly a stunning object, or more specifically a set of objects, with a good provenance and resonant of Cromwell's role as head of state, the lord protector. It is an extremely rare and unusual object that can be proved to be directly linked with Cromwell.

Well provenanced items connected with Cromwell are extremely rare, and for very good reasons, and the museum has more than any other institution. So is there very little chance of ever being able to acquire new material? To that the answer is no, because the study of Cromwell, the fascination of Cromwell, does not just rest solely on what he achieved in the 17th century. The study of Cromwell has a second track to follow, that of the changing image of Cromwell and his fluctuating reputation over time.

The cult of Cromwell in the 19th century produced not only public statues and street names, but also decorative objects for enthusiastic Cromwellians to display on their mantelpieces, for example, Staffordshire figures and bronze figures. The 20th century saw Cromwell's reputation decline and revive, and still in the 21st century Cromwell's image is familiar enough to be used by cartoonists for political allegory.

Documenting and collecting these various uses and misuses of Cromwell's image, along with increasing and extending knowledge and awareness of what did happen in the 17th century is both intellectually coherent and a worthwhile undertaking, as a genuine economic generator for the town.

The Cromwell Museum's creation in 1962 was a considerable achievement and the successive local authority guardians should be congratulated for it.

THE ANNUAL CROMWELL COLLECTION LECTURE 2012

But they were, and are, just that – guardians. The challenge will be to ensure that this responsibility is recognised and maintained.

Note : This article was presented as the Cromwell Collection Lecture in November 2012 to mark the Cromwell Museum's 50th anniversary. It has been tidied up for publication, with rhetorical flourishes excised. The lecture was heavily illustrated. References have been kept to a minimum.

[1] For more discussion on this point see John Goldsmith ' Does Cromwelliana exist?' in J.A.Mills (ed.) *Cromwell's Legacy* (2012)

[2] Ronald Black (ed.) *To the Hebrides: Samuel Johnson's Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland and James Boswell's Journal of a tour to the Hebrides* (2011) p.440

[3] Richard D.Altick *The shows of London* (1978)

[4] This provision enables the tax liability to be deferred whilst the collection is on public exhibition, but the provision is only granted if the material is deemed to be of sufficient historic significance.

[5] John Goldsmith 'The first Cromwell Museum in Huntingdonshire' *in Records of Huntingdonshire* (1999) pp18-24

[6] Francis Shepherd *The treasures of London's past* (1991)

[7] The Cromwell Association Newsletter 1948 report of the Annual General Meeting held 25.6.1948. The archive of The Association is deposited with Huntingdon Archives acc 4874/1-10

[8] Cromwell Heirlooms Ltd was never officially wound up. The assets passed to the Treasury Solicitor who agreed to their long-term loan to the Cromwell Museum

[9] As stated in *The Cromwell Museum, Huntingdon: catalogue* (1963)

[10] R.Fawkes *Dion Boucicault a biography* (1979)

[11] The museum has had three curators from 1962 to date, EB Powley, Brian Wormald and John Goldsmith; in addition there have been long-serving administrators and senior museum assistants, including Betty Giddens, Lilian Barraud and Alan Butler.

[12] Currently unpublished

[13] See   http://www.bbc.co.uk/arts/yourpaintings/paintings/sir-oliver-cromwell-15631655-48845

[14] http://www.bbc.co.uk/arts/yourpaintings/paintings/robert-cromwell-d-1617-48830

[15] http://www.bbc.co.uk/arts/yourpaintings/paintings/portrait-of-a-lady-48811

[16] See Museum accession file L016

[17] Museum acc no HUTCM: B34

[18] Museum acc no HUTCM: B35

[19] A Giusti *Pietre Dure and the art of Florentine inlay* (2006)

[20] A Hardy and G Rollinson 'A chemical study of some 17th century Italian soaps' in *The Pharmaceutical Historian* v41 n4 (2011)

[21] Thanks to Stefano Villani for access to his unpublished transcription of the correspondence of Amerigo Salvetti, Tuscan resident in England

John Goldsmith is former curator of the Cromwell Museum, and Press Officer and Trustee of the Cromwell Association.

CROMWELL'S GENERALSHIP AND
THE CONQUEST OF SCOTLAND 1650 - 1651

By Prof Malcolm Wanklyn

The lecture which I delivered to the Cromwell Association in April 2014 fell into three parts – a discussion of the way in which the New Model Army changed from an army of the southeast of England to a national army between 1645 and 1651; a review of the strategy pursued by Cromwell in the Scottish campaign of 1650–51; and a re-examination of the military planning which allowed the New Model to fight a battle on both sides of the River Severn at Worcester in 1651.[1] Here I intend to focus exclusively on the second, but with greater attention being paid to the innovative amphibious operation which enabled the English army to break the ten-month stalemate in the campaign caused by a missed opportunity in the aftermath of its crushing victory over the Scots at Dunbar on 3 September 1650.

The English forces, some 16,000 strong, left Berwick on 22 July 1650 and headed for Edinburgh. Newcastle was to serve as the magazine for the campaign, but the army's needs were to be supplied not by what was later to be called the Great North Road but by ports along its line of march.[2] David Leslie, who had led the Scottish cavalry in the First English Civil War, was charged with throwing back the invaders, but he was not his own master. The Scottish custom was for operational decision to be taken by a small committee of politicians and retired soldiers who accompanied the army. This had led to disaster at the battle of Kilsyth in 1645[3], but the decision to remain on the defensive whilst the English army mouldered away in front of the fortifications covering Edinburgh and Leith proved to be a sound one. After five weeks of trying to force or trick the Scots into fighting a battle Cromwell ordered a retreat to Dunbar. He was closely followed by the Scottish army, which took up an unassailable position on the hills above the town. At the same time Leslie sent a detachment to the pass at Cockburnpath on the road to Berwick, thus blocking overland communications with England. However, Cromwell was capable of remaining at Dunbar for some time. It had a good enough harbour for his troops not only to receive supplies by sea but also to leave by boat should military circumstances demand it.

On 2 September Cromwell began evacuating his sick and the wounded, and the Scottish managing committee assumed that the rest of the army would soon follow. This was too good a chance to miss and soon after midday,

possibly against Leslie's advice, their army began moving onto the low-lying ground to the south and west of Berwick so as to be better placed both to prevent a breakout and to disrupt the disembarkation.[4] However, Cromwell saw this move as a God-given opportunity to fight the battle which Leslie's Fabian strategy had so far denied him. To cause the maximum confusion in the minds of the Scottish high command it was to begin with an attack under the cover of darkness. Hopefully this would cause them to commit their reserves whilst being unable to see what was going on elsewhere.

What followed was Cromwell's masterpiece as battlefield commander. Unlike at Worcester he did not outnumber his opponents by a substantial margin, and he was not as at Preston the unwitting beneficiary of a number of fortuitous events that happened during the battle itself. At Dunbar the way in which the fighting developed was as he had planned with the enemy first lulled into a false sense of security by a frontal attack that seemed to be failing, and then struck in the flank in overwhelming force by his reserves as the day dawned. However, when it comes to winning a war exploitation of victory is much more important than victory itself, and on this occasion uniquely Cromwell missed a good chance of performing a devastating exploitation in textbook fashion.

The first stage, the immediate pursuit of the fleeing enemy, was as competently performed as at Naseby five years before with the New Model cavalry chasing the Scottish horse for ten miles or so to the west and north of Dunbar and turning their well-ordered regiments into an unruly mob. But then Cromwell failed to see that the geography of southern Scotland gave him the chance of inflicting a blow on the enemy, which would not only involve little risk, but also had a very good chance of forcing them to come to the negotiating table before the onset of winter.

The Firths of Forth and Clyde cut deeply into southern Scotland giving the country a pronounced waist between Glasgow and Stirling. To the north and the northwest lay the Highlands where there was little in the way of provisions for man and beast, no clear military objective, and plenty of places where an army might be ambushed. To the northeast, however, lay the Kingdom of Fife and Aberdeenshire with the best agricultural land in Scotland. Moreover, its well-populated countryside and towns would be very capable of providing infantry to replace those that Leslie had lost at

Dunbar. It was also well protected by the landscape. The route into northeast Scotland followed a narrow neck of land between the mountains and the sea, bisected by the valley of the river Forth. The only suitable crossing point for an army was a bridge immediately to the north of the town of Stirling, and both were guarded by the great royal castle at Stirling on its steep-sided volcanic plug.

The significance of Stirling Castle should have been no secret to Cromwell and his Council of War as the prospect of the surrender of the English garrison there provided the context for the battle at Bannockburn, which brought an end to the Plantagenet attempt to destroy Scottish independence three hundred years earlier. However, instead of trying to use his army to seize the castle and its bridge immediately following the battle of Dunbar, it was ordered to advance no further than Edinburgh and its port of Leith. Both fell to Cromwell in short order, but although occupying the enemy capital was of great symbolic importance to the English people and to the English government, it was not a key military priority. As for Leith, it would have been of limited importance had the gateway to northeast Scotland been secured and with it the ports along the coast of Fife. And Leith and Edinburgh still in enemy hands did not make an advance on Stirling in any way hazardous; neither was strongly garrisoned and the refugees from Dunbar were in no state to pose a threat. All Cromwell needed to do was station some cavalry in the Lothians to prevent his overland communications with England being cut.

The prospects of taking the pass at Stirling at the rush on the day or so after Dunbar were very good. Admittedly it would have taken three days or so for the whole army to reach there, but if Cromwell had ordered a substantial body of horse and dragoons supported by musketeers riding piggyback, to follow in the wake of what was left of the Scottish army they might very well have overrun town, castle and bridge. Although there was a small garrison in the castle, the appearance of hordes of defeated, disorganised and desperate cavalry closely pursued by an English 'flying army' would probably have been sufficient for the officer in charge to have had a crisis of nerves and abandoned the position. However, Cromwell having ordered the exploitation stage of the pursuit to come to a halt at Edinburgh, Leslie's mounted troops were able to pause for breath at Stirling and start thinking about its defence, but I doubt if they had the necessary infantry or artillery

to do so. Despite unsubstantiated claims to the contrary, the foot soldiers who managed to escape from Dunbar could only have done so in penny numbers and they would almost certainly have ditched their cumbersome weapons in the interests of speed.[5] As for the artillery pieces with the army, they all fell into English hands on the day of the battle, whilst those on the battlements of Stirling Castle or in its magazine could not be deployed in the town quickly enough to counter or deter a surprise attack.

To make matters worse, there seems to have been a paralysis in the Scottish high command. Not until 10 September did discussions at the highest level take place for securing Stirling and agreeing how the escapees from Dunbar might best be regrouped and deployed so that 'men's spirits (be) quieted a little'. As late as 16 September Lord Loudoun, the most senior member of the Scottish government politician at Stirling, remarked that the pass itself was not yet as fortified as it should have been. Moreover, divisions and factions amongst the officers were causing him grave concern.[6] Admittedly with each passing day and no English presence in the immediate vicinity, the forces quartered in the town increased in numbers possibly to as many as 5,000 men, but only 2,000 were foot and their martial qualities clearly left much to be desired. Loudon described them as 'raw and green', and it is not clear how well they were armed.[7]

Thus, a determined assault even then might have brushed the defences of the pass aside, clearing the way for the New Model Army to invade north-eastern Scotland , and to be fair to Cromwell he was quickly on the way again after capturing Edinburgh and Leith (but not Edinburgh Castle), despite his siege train being delayed by the muddy roads. However, having carried out a reconnaissance of the approaches to the town on 18/19 September, he decided not to proceed with an assault. It is possible that he was deterred by the heavy casualties his army had incurred when it stormed Clonmel less than six months earlier, but I doubt it. Irish historians have almost certainly exaggerated his losses there by pumping them up from the middle hundreds to 3,000 or so.[8] Moreover, Cromwell would have factored this in before deciding to take scaling ladders with him. He would have known that only the most fortunate of generals stormed a town without sustaining substantial losses.

CROMWELL'S GENERALSHIP AND
THE CONQUEST OF SCOTLAND 1650 - 1651

In a letter to his political masters straight after the event Cromwell emphasized two factors which influenced his decision to withdraw. Firstly, the approaches to Stirling were such that he could not make proper use of his cavalry. This was probably true if the meadows beside the Forth were waterlogged, but cavalry would only be of value if they could ford the river and threaten the enemy's line of retreat.[9] Secondly, he claimed that the town was occupied by a force of several thousand men, though he did not comment on their likely quality.[10] However, it is interesting that Cromwell mentioned the town. It would have to be captured first, the bridge being on the far side of the built-up area, but overrunning a seventeenth-century town was not an easy task even against raw troops, as General Fairfax had discovered at Maidstone in 1648: the buildings afforded musketeers with protection against incoming fire; if the Scots were armed with artillery pieces firing case shot, they were capable of inflicting very heavy casualties on the attackers due to the inevitable bunching caused by the narrow streets.[11] What Cromwell did not claim at the time was that he could easily have forced the pass at Stirling but chose not to do so. Later he argued that if he had attacked the Scots they would have fled without a fight and retreated to the hills where they would have fought a guerrilla campaign which could have lasted for years. However, such words look like an argument concocted to counter criticism of the slow pace of the war in the months that followed.[12] It is perhaps possible that he held back in the hope that the Scots would fall out amongst themselves, thus enabling him to negotiate peace with the dominant faction as he had done in 1648.

In the final months of 1650 the English army was busy consolidating its control of Scotland south of the Firth/Clyde line. Glasgow was occupied in November but not garrisoned; a small army from south-west Scotland was annihilated by John Lambert at Hamilton; and the siege of Edinburgh Castle was brought to a successful conclusion by negotiation. All of this appears to be preparing the ground for an assault on the pass of Stirling early in the following year, but this did not happen and it was a matter of concern. From the spring onwards the subtext of letters between the officers is lack of action. By early July there must have been worries that the best part of the campaigning season had passed and that another winter quartered in Scotland would ruin the fighting capacity of the army. Otherwise Cromwell would not have drawn attention to it once the impasse had ended.[13]

CROMWELL'S GENERALSHIP AND
THE CONQUEST OF SCOTLAND 1650 - 1651

It was customary at the time (and since) to put part of the blame for the lack of progress on Cromwell's falling ill in February and again in May, but this is a red herring. In the early months of 1651, and again in June and July, Cromwell tried to draw the Scots from their defensive position along the river Forth so that he could engage them in battle in the open ground to the south of Stirling, but Leslie refused to be drawn. Cromwell in his turn would not attack the Scots on ground of their own choosing because of 'too manifest hazards'.[14] There is no reason for thinking that matters would have advanced even if he had been in good health throughout the first seven months of the year.

Cromwell's defenders before the event, and Cromwell himself after the event, claimed that he was merely waiting on God as mere mortals knew not how to break the deadlock. This was an honest reflection of the way in which events turned out, but it does not tell the whole story.[15] There was a stratagem for breaking the deadlock, but the planning is clouded in obscurity with scarcely a mention in the correspondence between Scotland and London in the eight months it took to bring it to pass. This may well have been for reasons of security, but news leaked out nevertheless and found its way into the London journals. However, it is sometimes impossible to say whether their speculation was based on genuine information or on judicious guesswork. To make matters worse for the historian trying to trace the sequence of events, and the fine-tuning of the plan, is that even the first-hand accounts of the ending of the impasse focus on the operation itself, not how it came about. The narrative of the extensive preparations it required has therefore to be teased out from scraps of information in a scattering of sources, some of which are of doubtful veracity.

The alternative strategy to storming the pass at Stirling was to outflank it by landing substantial forces on the coast of Fife, which lies only five miles across the Firth of Forth from Leith. For the twenty miles to the west of Leith the distance between the two shores is three miles at most, with a pinch point between North and South Queensferry, a third of the way between Leith and Stirling, where a peninsula jutting out from the north banks reduces it to a mile. Evidence of preparations to carry out such an operation can be found in the order Cromwell issued on returning to Edinburgh for all the boats in harbours along the south shore of the Firth

of Forth to be brought to Leith. After the event the reason cited was that this was to prevent escapees from Dunbar reaching Fife, but it seems too late in the day for this to have been a main reason. Instead it seems more likely that Cromwell was assembling an invasion fleet, as he had also ordered 2,500 troops at Leith on 27 September. Indeed, some were already at sea when the project was abandoned.[16]

The problem was that assembling sufficient boats was only the first step. Horse and foot needed to be landed quickly and safely, and with normal seagoing vessels this could only be done via a port where men, horses, artillery and all manner of military supplies could be landed straight onto the quayside. But the English did not control a port in Fife, and the chance of taking one from the sea by surprise attack whilst the Scottish government and high command was still in shock after Dunbar had probably gone for good by the end of September. There were also intrinsic problems with such an operation however ill-prepared the defence. In the confined waters characteristic of the approach to most ports disaster could happen if the speed and direction of the wind changed; or if the pilot was unfamiliar with every rock and sand bar or with the speed of the incoming and outgoing tides.

But who had persuaded Cromwell to change his mind? The most likely candidate is Richard Deane, one of Parliament's three admirals. He had reached Leith in time to take part in the Council of War which must have taken place when the operation was called off, and he did not arrive back in England until mid-October. Soon afterwards he asked the English government to dispatch three or four shallops to Scotland to operate off the east coast. These were boats with a shallow draft capable of carrying twenty or so soldiers and of operating close to the shore with oars if necessary. As such they were ideal for the reconnaissance work preparatory to an armed assault on the coast of Fife. However, it was not until two months later that the Council of State authorized the construction of vessels each suitable for landing five times as many troops directly onto the shore.[17] This was on Cromwell's instructions,[18] but it would take time, and an amphibious assault on a defended shoreline was certainly not foolproof. He therefore worked for the moment on an alternative, namely an armed assault on Burntisland, the nearest port in Fife to Leith, using the boats he had to hand. There were two serious attempts to do so managed by Colonel George Monck. On the

night of 18 January he failed to put 1500 men ashore because of the weather. A week later he tried again, but this time the leading ship hesitated as it approached the harbour and the convoy halted. Before new orders could be issued, the tide had turned and the attempt was abandoned.[19]

However, in the weeks that followed something was done to prepare the way for an amphibious landing. Tantallon and Fast castles, artillery positions on the coast well to the east of the Firth of Forth, were besieged and captured by Monck in late February. Traffic passing between Newcastle and Leith carrying supplies for the army were safeguarded as a result, but there was a bigger purpose. A convoy of not particularly seaworthy vessels travelling slowly and hugging the coast would have presented an excellent target, and these were to be the means by which the assault on Fife was to be carried out. The first twenty-five or so specially-built vessels duly arrived at Leith in early April escorted appropriately by a squadron of naval vessels commanded by Richard Deane, and it had taken time getting them there, 'they not being so fit for all weathers'.[20]

Immediately after his arrival Deane increased the odds of success still further by an operation in the Firth of Forth itself. In early April the fortress of Blackness was captured. This lay on the south shore just to the west of the place where the Firth was at its narrowest point, namely between North and South Queensferry. Scottish guardships covering the island of Inchgarvie, halfway between the two and situated immediately under what is now the Forth railway bridge, were also eliminated. Inchgarvie itself, however, with its battery of 16 artillery pieces remained in Scottish hands until 24 July.[21]

In the spring and early summer there were several landings by small numbers of English troops on the far side of the Firth but the impression given by reports in the London journals is that they were no more than training exercises or feints to draw enemy forces from the pass of Stirling. The lack of detail concerning the landing and subsequent withdrawal of a much larger force of 1,000 or so men in early May suggests a large measure of journalistic licence, but it may represent a reconnaissance in force to secure a landing place on the north shore that was not overlooked by enemy artillery positions. If so, the speed of the Scottish reaction was seemingly a surprise and the troops were speedily withdrawn.[22] After this the decision

was apparently taken to effect a landing which could be easily made defensible, namely on the neck of the peninsula at North Queensferry. The short distance would optimize the number of transits that could be made before the Scots responded in force, and embarkation and disembarkation would be unproblematic as there were gently sloping beaches on both sides of the estuary. In addition, the neck of the peninsula was largely on dead ground insofar as Inchgarvie was concerned. This was thanks to the peninsula itself which was not a flat sandy spit but a rocky outcrop. The only problem therefore was the five great guns in a fort situated in the neck of the peninsula and a further twelve positioned along the shore. Most, however, would probably have been pointing out to sea rather than towards the mouth of the river Forth, but they would need to be quickly overrun before they could be repositioned.[23]

It is now necessary to describe how men and horses were to be transported safely to the shores of Fife. This was to be achieved by none other than the construction of a large number of purpose-built landing craft. The order made by the Council of State on 9 December mentioned above was for 50 flat-bottomed boats, each to be manned by a master and five crew. Half were to be constructed at Newcastle by Thomas Eastwood. The order for these was placed immediately with payments being made to Eastwood over the next four months. The second set was to be produced at Deptford, but only it seems after the first order had been completed, possibly on account of the cost.[24] The flat-bottomed boats carried masts and sails. Being flat-bottomed they could operate from a beach, and they would be fast with the wind behind them as they skated across the water rather than cutting into it like boats with keels; but without a keel they could not set their sails in order to change direction.[25] However, they clearly sailed to Leith. They were not towed behind conventional naval vessels as had been proposed, and they were not assembled in Scotland from materials crafted elsewhere.[26] The Deptford boats, on the other hand, were not ordered until April and were still fitting-out in late June and so probably may not have arrived in Scotland in time for the landing in Fife. They may also have been converted boats as they cost much less than those built at Newcastle.[27]

I therefore suggest that the flat-bottomed boats were similar to vessels plying between towns on the river Severn and ports on the Bristol Channel – the so-called Severn trows – which, when they reached open waters, used

draught boards let down over the boats' sides that acted as temporary keels. They were also to be much larger than shallops. Thirty were to be capable of carrying 100 foot soldiers. The remainder were to be each capable of transporting 30 horses.[28]

Reverting to the mode of construction, I wonder if those boats intended to carry horses were designed like the landing craft of the twentieth century, with hinged bows or partially hinged sides that could be let down at embarkation and disembarkation. Sadly, neither contract which might have described their design appears to have survived in the State Papers. This would hopefully have resolved a paradox concerning oars. These were most effective as a means of propulsion in long, narrow vessels which were streamlined and so cut easily through the water. Severn trows, however, were broad in the beam and would have made slow progress across the water propelled by oars. And the flat-bottomed boats constructed for the Scottish campaign to carry horses must have been broad to accommodate them. [29] However, the first set of boats only had oars added after they arrived in Scotland, whilst the second set was equipped with them from the start. All I can suggest is that, having looked again at the conditions in the Firth of Forth in late March, Deane decided that oars would be a useful addition to aid direction if the wind should drop close to shore, or if underwater rocks made the use of keel boards impracticable.[30]

The direction of the wind was therefore of crucial importance, and this favoured the operation consistently over a period of four days with the south-north crossing seemingly taking place in the morning. A report in a London journal unsurprisingly described this as a miracle.[31] However, alternating wind directions due to the difference in temperature between land and water during the course of a single day is a well-known phenomenon which occurs in estuaries as well as along coastlines. However, the breeze would have had to be both gentle and steady to prevent the boats hitting the shore too hard, even though there must have been ways in which a curb could be imposed on their speed by the quantity of sail they carried. In addition, the coming and going across the Firth would need to have been timed carefully to take into account the tides as seawater flowed into and out of the Firth. This may explain why the initial assault was from the west with boats seemingly leaving from Blackness rather than South Queensferry to take advantage of an ebbing tide sweeping the flat-bottomed boats

towards the sheltered side of the peninsula.[32] The need for the expertise and manpower for such activities may explain why the flat boats carried more crew than Severn trows.

As it was three and a half months between the arrival of the Newcastle boats at Leith and the seizure of North Queensferry, it seems likely that Cromwell took a long time to be convinced that the risks of an amphibious operation were manageable, and even then he hedged his bets by selecting troops for the initial assault force from regiments raised in 1650. These could be more easily spared than the regiments of 1645 vintage should Leslie respond to a successful landing by attacking the main body of the army facing the pass at Stirling. The date at which Cromwell agreed in principle was probably in late May, when Richard Deane was appointed as major general of foot in Scotland, thus giving him the command over forces on land as well as sea, which was necessary for overseeing the amphibious operation.[33] The rapid movements of the New Model Army across the Lowlands in June and early July involving the two stand-offs between the English and the Scottish armies should not, however, be seen as merely intended to distract the Scots from what was happening on the south side of the estuary.[34] Cromwell probably still hoped to tempt the Scots into fighting a battle, thus avoiding the need for an amphibious operation and all its attendant risks. As for Leslie, he knew full well that such an operation was a strong possibility. Flat-bottomed boats (which must have been locally sourced) were spotted on the far side of the Firth as early as February, and it would have been impossible for Cromwell to have concealed those that had arrived there in late March.[35]

On 17/18 July 1651 the initial descent on the shores of Fife took place. Under the cover of darkness the flat-bottomed boats landed a party of 1,400 foot and 200 horses under Colonel Overton's command at North Queensferry. This could have been accomplished without a return voyage with 14 transports for men and 10 for horses, but this is almost certainly more than he had available even if the London contingent had not yet arrived. Despite intense fire from Inchgarvie and the mainland, the fort on the peninsula and its attendant artillery positions were quickly overrun at the cost of only six casualties. The Scottish high command responded slowly as they were uncertain whether the landing was yet another distraction or a major military operation. This gave the English time to reinforce the

bridgehead without interruption as the wind continued to favour the flat boats, and within three days 4,000 more horse and foot had crossed the Firth.[36] Moreover, when Leslie did respond he sent a smaller force under the command of one of his deputies. A battle duly ensued on 20 July at Inverkeithing, three miles or so north of the landing beaches, in which the English army commanded by Major General Lambert was victorious.[37]

Inverkeithing was a more decisive victory than Dunbar as Lambert had successfully forced the lines of Stirling, and several thousand more English troops duly crossed over to Fife during the following week under Cromwell's command. Leslie's Fabian strategy had therefore run its course, but he did not have the prospect of a second battle in the approaches to Stirling. Instead the forces in Fife, now commanded by Cromwell rather than Lambert, marched northwards to Perth, blocking the Scottish army's line of retreat towards Aberdeen.[38] It is usual to credit him with deliberately leaving the door to England open by this manoeuvre, but I am not totally convinced. All that is certain is that the Scots' decision to set out for England rather than to stand and fight was not unexpected. They also probably went further and faster than Cromwell had anticipated. However, this meant that when they were utterly defeated at Worcester on 3 September 1651 they were too far from home to escape the precautions Cromwell, and local commanders such as Sir Arthur Haselrig at Newcastle and Colonel Robert Lilburne in Lancashire, took to block their return. In the meantime George Monck with the scratch force left behind in Scotland, mainly comprised of newly raised regiments, had to all intents and purposes completed the campaign. On 14 August Stirling Castle surrendered. A few days later his mounted troops captured almost the entire Scottish civilian leadership at Alyth, and on 1 September Dundee was stormed. There followed the one and only successful English military occupation of Scotland.

But what happened to the flat boats? Once Burntisland surrendered to Cromwell on 29 July their usefulness in the Forth of Forth had ended. When the English army set off in pursuit of the Scots in mid-August conventional vessels were used to ferry the New Model Army regiments back across the Firth of Forth. What happened to the infantry transports is unclear, though a few of the London contingent returned there and were laid up. However, some at least of the horse boats still had a part to play in

the occupation of Scotland. In early 1652, for example, four were used to transport troops to the Orkney Isles, whilst later in the year three sailed from Leith around the north coast of Scotland to assist the governor of Ayr. The latter were set upon by Irish pirates but managed to limp into Carrickfergus harbour where the damage inflicted was speedily repaired.[39] But a fuller discussion of the role of flat boats in the subjugation of Scotland awaits further investigation.

1   The first will appear in an expanded form in *Reconstituting the New Model Army April 1645 to June 1649* (Helion 2015). The third may in due course appear in an essay on operational innovation in a second volume covering the period 1650-1661.
2   J. Nicoll, *A Diary of Public Transactions* (Edinburgh, 1836), pp. 19-20.
3   D. Stevenson, *Highland Warrior: Alasdair MacColla and the Civil Wars* (Edinburgh, 1994), pp. 200-202.
4   For a discussion of the responsibility for this decision and of the battle that followed, see M. Wanklyn, *The Warrior Generals* (2010), pp. 217-20, 287-8.
5   I do not doubt that some of Leslie's infantry made their escape in ones and twos, but the claim that three of the brigades on the left of the Scottish line did so is based, seemingly, on taking the highest estimate of the size of the Scottish army at Dunbar and the lowest estimate of the number killed, wounded and marched off to England as prisoners: S. Reid, *Dunbar 1650* (Osprey, 2004), pp. 77, 81. For a more realistic assessment, see J. Scott Wheeler, *The Irish and British Wars 1637-1654* (2002), p. 234.
6   This information is provided by the correspondence covering the period 6 to 16 September in D. Laing ed.,   ' The Correspondence of the Earl of Ancram and the Earl of Lothian', *Bannatyne Club* 125 (1875), pp. 297-306.
7   Sir Edward Walker, *Historical Discourses upon Special Occasions: Journal of Affairs in Scotland* (1705), quoted by W. S. Douglas in *Cromwell's Scotch Campaign* (1898), p. 123.
8   Wanklyn, *Warrior Generals*, p. 213.
9   Admittedly, cavalry and dragoons were often used to storm enemy positions, but on foot, not on horseback.

10 Abbott, *Writings and Speeches* ii, p. 341-3; British Library, Thomason Tracts, E 613 (16); ibid, Mercurius Politicus, 3-10/10/1651.

11 Wanklyn, Warrior Generals, pp. 196-7.

12 Douglas, *Scotch Campaign*, pp. 125-6. I have not yet managed to locate Douglas's source.

13 Akerman ed., Letters, pp. 18-34; T. Carlyle, *Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (1847, 4 vols.) iii, p. 147.

14 H. Cary ed., *Memorials of the Civil Wars in England 1646-52* (1842, 2 vols.) ii, p. 288; A Perfect Diurnall, 12-19/5/1651.

15 British Library, Thomason Tracts, Perfect Occurrences, 4-11/7/1651; Carlyle. *Letters* iii,, p. 147.

16 BL, Thomason Tracts, Mercurius Politicus, 25/9-2/10/1650, 3/10-10/10/1650; Nicoll, *Diary*, pp. 33-4; A Perfect Diurnall, 7-14/10/1650; Henry Fletcher, *The Perfect Politician or a Full View of the Life and Actions of Oliver Cromwell*, (1660), p. 134.

17 Calendar of State Papers Domestic 1650, pp. 365, 464.

18 J. Nickolls, *Original Letters and State Papers addressed to Oliver Cromwell* (1743), p. 41.

19 BL, Thomason Tracts, Mercurius Politicus, 6-13/2/1651; Nickolls, *Original Letters*, pp. 57-8.

20 BL, Thomason Tracts, Perfect Occurrences 24-31/1/51; Ibid, Perfect Passages, 4-11/4/1651; ibid, A Perfect Diunrnall, 7-14/4/50; Fletcher, *Perfect Politician*, p. 169.

21 BL, Thomason Tracts, Weekly Intelligencer, 24-29/7/1651; ibid, Perfect Occurrences, 4-11/4/1651; ibid, Mercurius Politicus, 3-10/4/51; Cary, *Memorials* ii, p. 290.

22 Perfect Occurrences, 25/4-2/5/51; Mercurius Politicus,24/4-1/5/1651; ibid, 6-12/6/1651; Weekly Intelligencer, 28/4/1651, 6-13/5/1651.

23 Weekly Intelligencer, 22-29/7/1651.

24 CSPD 1651, pp. 558, 568, 574, 575, 582. The basic cost of the Newcastle boats was £2150, the Deptford boats £1250, but additional sums were required to fit out both sets: ibid, 1650, p. 464; ibid, 1651, pp. 537-9, 543, 546-7, 550, 552, 555. There are references to oars being purchased for boats being built at Newcastle, and these may have arrived in time as oared boats were used in the amphibious assault when it occurred: CSPD 1651, pp. 560-1

25 I am grateful for the advice offered by Mr. Michael Owen in the writing of this and subsequent paragraphs.

26 Perfect Occurrences, 4-11/4/1651; Mercurius Politicus, 17-24/4/1651; A Perfect Diurnall, 4-11/4/ 1651; Fletcher, *Perfect Politician*, p. 169.

27 See note 21 above.

28 CSPD 1650, p. 500.

29 If the boats had been designed for the horses to be stowed in a single line, they would have been impossibly long. Given the numbers they were required to carry it is most likely that they would have been accommodated on board in ranks of three.

30 CSPD 1651, pp. 555-61. However six crew members would have been insufficient to row the boats. Presumably if oars were needed the number of boats would have been reduced and the crews of the remainder used as additional rowers possibly assisted by soldiers who had some experience of rowing.

31 BL, Thomason Tracts, Weekly Intelligencer, 22-29/7/1651.

32 Ibid.

33 Perfect Occurrences, 30/5-6/6/51.

34 J. Grainger, *Cromwell against the Scots* (East Lothian, 1997), pp. 103-4. I do not agree with his argument that it was reinforcements from England that allowed Cromwell to give the go-ahead for the amphibious attack. They did not arrive until two days after it had gone in, and so therefore cannot have allowed him to run down his garrisons in Lothian in order to provide troops for Lambert. Moreover, the reinforcements were cavalry units, and large garrisons were invariably manned by infantry.

35 Bannatyne Club 125, p. 345.

36 Mercurius Politicus, 24-31/7/1651: Weekly Intelligencer, 22-29/7/1651; Bl. Thomason Tracts, Perfect Diurnal 21-28/7/1651.

37 For the battle itself and the reasons why Lambert chose to fight before receiving further reinforcements from across the Firth, see Wanklyn, *Warrior Generals*, p. 222.

38 Abbott, *Writings and Speeches* ii, pp. 434-5, 439-42.

39 CSPD 1651-52, p. 59; A Perfect Diurnall, 2-9/2/1652; ibid, 2-9/8/1652, pp. 2, 9.

Malcolm D Wanklyn is Emeritus Professor of Regional History at the University of Wolverhampton.

'CROMWELL'S WHELPS': THE DEATH OF THE NEW MODEL ARMY

By Dr David Appleby

On the morning of 29 May 1660, just before his triumphal re-entry into London, Charles II inspected 3,000 troopers of Cromwell's old cavalry at Blackheath. He declared that they 'were as brave troops as the world could shew', and that he would 'rather to have them loyal subjects as they now protested, than (what some of them had been formerly) violent enemies.' Sir Edward Hyde noted nervously that the troopers' faces 'did sufficiently manifest, that they were drawn thither to a service they were not delighted in.'[1] If the king had been assassinated at Blackheath the result would have been political chaos, but it was necessary to show the public that the army was no longer in charge.

The swift demobilisation of the old army after Blackheath has encouraged historians to underestimate the continued significance of the military after 1660. Richard L. Greaves and Joyce Malcolm have discussed facets of the issue in their respective works on radicalism and the re-establishment of the monarchy, and the deployment of civil war veterans overseas has occasionally attracted attention; but generally the process of demobilisation and the experience of non-radical veterans in Restoration communities have received a disjointed and perfunctory press.[2] Much reliance has been placed on Samuel Pepys' diary entry for 9 November 1663:

> Of all the old army, you cannot see a man begging about the streets; but what? You shall have this captain turned shoemaker; the lieutenant a baker; this a brewer; that a haberdasher; this common soldier a porter: and every man in his apron and frock, etc., as if they had never done anything else.[3]

This was in fact Pepys' recollection of a tirade by the radical republican Robert Blackborne, a former Admiralty colleague with whom he had been drinking that evening. Blackborne had complained about rowdy royalist veterans in the capital, comparing them with what he claimed were sober, industrious, law-abiding ex-parliamentarians. The reality was more complicated.

As long as Cromwell's old army remained in existence the Restoration remained in the balance. In May 1660 the army consisted of 36 regiments of foot, 20 regiments of horse, a regiment of dragoons, plus numerous independent companies and garrisons in Britain, Flanders and Jamaica: a total of around 50,000 soldiers, many of whom were battle-hardened veterans.[4] However, demobilisation would not in itself guarantee political stability. The Restoration authorities were worried that disbanded soldiers might cause mischief, as many of the thousands of able-bodied veterans who had previously returned to civilian life were already thought to be fomenting disaffection among the wider population.

The Restoration regime had another problem in that thousands of maimed parliamentarian veterans and war widows were still reliant on public charity in 1660. The authorities were also soon deluged with claims from thousands of destitute royalist veterans and widows. The economic difficulties caused by the competing needs of these rival groups had the potential to undermine the process of national reconciliation.

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General George Monck had led his regiments south from Scotland in January 1660 in an attempt to preserve the Commonwealth. He had no intention of restoring the monarchy or imposing a new military dictatorship. By April, however, he and a majority of MPs had concluded that in the interests of political stability, Charles II should return. Monck had kept the army reasonably quiet since being appointed commander-in-chief in February. The political experiments of the previous two decades had prompted waves of resignations, dismissals and reinstatements as officers fell in and out of favour. This instability had rendered the officer corps susceptible to manipulation, making it easier for Monck to cashier disaffected officers and promote others more amenable to regime change. The rank-and-file were less easily controlled.

The army remained riddled with discontent, although most grievances were practical rather than ideological.[5] Monck's own soldiers had remained loyal because they had been regularly paid, and the general had since repeatedly emphasised the need to do the same for the entire army. In addition, the common soldiers sought assurances that they would be indemnified for past

actions, whilst officers desired a fair settlement regarding Crown and Church lands given to the army in lieu of pay. Monck took care to be seen as a champion of soldiers' rights, a stance which helped him maintain order during the critical months of April and May. The Declaration of Breda (presented to Parliament on 1 May) confirmed that Charles and his advisors were equally aware of the need to placate the army. The Declaration carried a firm commitment to satisfy soldiers' arrears, but left a new parliament to adjudicate on the matters of indemnity, land settlement, and religious toleration.

On 16 May 1660 Charles wrote to Monck to express pleasure at the news that the army officers had been persuaded to support the restoration, claiming tactfully (or rather, tactically) that 'We shall always have an entire confidence in them.'[6] Monck ordered the letter to be published on the eve of Charles' arrival in Dover on 25 May, having given permission to selected royalist gentry to gather men in arms to attend the king's procession through Kent. The size of these assemblies and the routes and timings of their marches were tightly specified, however, in order to minimise the risk of clashes with army regiments then moving towards Blackheath.[7]

After Blackheath, Cavalier-Anglican journalists and preachers worked hard to refashion Monck as a lifelong royalist and hero of the Restoration. His loyal service to Oliver Cromwell was discreetly forgotten.[8] The boost to his moral authority was important, for having successfully stage-managed the king's return, Monck had now to dismantle the army.

Parliament had experienced difficulties when demobilising 18,000 men in 1647, as had Cromwell in 1654.[9] The demobilisation in 1660 was on a different scale entirely. John Childs has calculated that it eventually cost £835,819 8s. 10d., not including the forces in Dunkirk, Ireland and elsewhere.[10] The cost of paying off the Commonwealth navy was also considerable. The money was to be raised from monthly assessments, a dedicated poll tax, and the Crown's own resources. By the end of 1660, MPs had rushed through eight different Acts to finance the process; clear evidence that they had initially grossly underestimated the funds needed. This makeshift legislation confused provincial officials, and delays caused by widespread reluctance to pay the poll tax added thousands of pounds to the soldiers' arrears.[11] Monck (created duke of Albemarle in July 1660) and his

fellow commissioners began to use the army to coerce tardy taxpayers. Kentish commissioners were advised that prompt payment would help ensure that their county would avoid having to billet troops. When Cambridgeshire and West Country communities ignored such warning signs they found themselves forced to provide free quarter for the regiments of O'Neale and Ingoldsby until the troops could be paid off.[12]

Despite all the problems enough money was raised to enable disbanding to begin. Gentry were advised that they could demonstrate their loyalty to the new regime by helping with the project or (better still) lending money to finance it.[13] Even the national committee included prominent former parliamentarians such as Colonel John Birch and William Prynne. Nevertheless, discord occasionally surfaced. A Buckinghamshire tax collector wrote in the accounts for the parish of Little Hampden that the tax was to pay for the armies and navy 'of this Commonwealth of England'. His offended colleague scoured out the term 'Commonwealth', and inserted the word 'Kingdome' in thick black ink.[14] William Prynne committed a more public indiscretion. On 6 November Parliament was informed that several regiments in England and Scotland were yet to be disbanded, and that a further £422,000 would be needed. Prynne cautioned the House not to do anything which might encourage the soldiers to reunite. He was called to order and reprimanded.[15]

Parliament's anxiety was justified. Kentish Justices had already noted an increase in crime in their county, particularly a spate of robberies which had terrified the local population. Albemarle, now struggling with increasing indiscipline within the army, was forced to organise patrols in and around London to combat a rise in armed robberies. A royal proclamation in December 1660 deprecated the bad behaviour of hordes of dissolute and disaffected soldiery prowling around London and its suburbs. At least eight further proclamations were issued between 1661 and 1670, ordering demobilised veterans to leave London during festivals, and particularly during the traditional rioting month of May.[16]

Although provincial riots were traditionally resolved through rituals which tended to confirm rather than challenge the 'natural' authority of the state, disorder in London was viewed very differently. Rioting in the capital was potentially far more dangerous, particularly as the new regime could not

assume that rioters – particularly ex-parliamentarian veterans – would view the monarchy as the 'natural' form of government. Despite legislation such as the Act against Tumultuous Petitioning (1661) the establishment remained obsessed with the notion that demobilised soldiers were fermenting civil disorder.[17] In September 1660, Edward Hyde, now earl of Clarendon, informed Parliament of several seditious plots supposedly hatched by disbanded veterans. Some were real enough, as in January 1661 when Venner's Fifth Monarchists went on a lethal rampage through London. Royal proclamations in April and November 1661 alleged that demobilised soldiers had threatened 'mischiefs to Our Royal Person', and were plotting against the government and the peace of the realm.[18]

Several initiatives were already in motion to counter such threats. Charles II personally oversaw the appointment of the new county lord lieutenants and their deputies. The Lieutenancy's traditional policing powers were enhanced to guard against the disorder which, it was anticipated, would accompany the disbanding of the army.[19] The king was even willing to allow Cavalier-Anglican MPs to implement a divisive programme of religious repression in return for their endorsement of his royal prerogative as regards the county trained bands. Having said this, Charles and his advisors were not confident of the political reliability of the trained bands. Cromwell had set up an auxiliary body known as the 'select militia' during the Protectorate, which had relieved the regular army and county trained bands of many of their policing duties. This 'select militia' appears to have been made up of loyal parliamentarian veterans: 27,000 cavalry and 200 infantry. Royalist supporters assembled a similar paramilitary force after the Restoration. This was probably much larger than Cromwell's militia – over 90,000 men – and was intended to be self-financing. Like Cromwell's militia troopers, these royalist vigilantes tended to be mounted, in order to police a wide area. Many lord lieutenants found the volunteer militia useful in supressing disaffection, and allowed them considerable latitude in harassing former parliamentarians.[20] More than this, by deputising thousands of loyalists in this manner the state was better able to channel and restrain the more violent proclivities of popular royalism.

The bitter legacy of the civil wars had fuelled many local vendettas during the Interregnum. Some disputes were rectified peaceably, as when parish officials in Hampshire were ordered to make amends for having prevented a

royalist veteran from living in his own home.[21] Other royalists, however, were tempted to exact unofficial retribution. In 1661 John Maidstone, a former steward of the Lord Protector's household living in Great Horkesley, Essex, was attacked by three men from neighbouring Boxted. In nearby Braintree a royalist felt-maker clashed with two former Cromwellian militiamen over past loyalties.[22] Such episodes drove many ex-parliamentarians to procure weapons for personal protection.[23]

In more peaceful times the common people had been discouraged from keeping weapons by the Game Act (1609). However, weapons were plentiful after the civil wars, and thousands remained unaccounted for.[24] In October 1660 Hampshire deputy lieutenants were instructed to seize all arms held by any inhabitants suspected of disaffection. The searches became more robust in the face of local resistance, and the deputies were even lent a troop of the King's Lifeguard. The Privy Council spread the net more widely after Venner's Rising. Following a proclamation of 28 November 1661 deputy lieutenants and the 'volunteer militia' were given licence to enter any home in search of weapons.[25]

Caches discovered during these searches appeared to vindicate the Privy Council's policy. In January 1661 Laurence Moyer in Essex was found to possess five pistols, one carbine, two barrels of black powder and one small artillery piece. Moyer claimed that he needed the firearms for personal protection.[26] John Maidstone's kinsman, Robert Maidstone was found to possess several weapons, which he admitted was part of a larger hoard.[27] Similar discoveries were made in other counties. The volume of weaponry seized during 1661–63 eventually exceeded the storage capacity of the Tower of London, necessitating the construction of additional buildings.[28]

The most decisive initiative of all involved wedlock, as the treaty which sealed Charles II's marriage to Catherine of Braganza in 1662 also sealed the fate of thousands of veterans. Apart from offering the Portuguese possessions of Tangier and Bombay as part of Catherine's dowry, Portugal requested troops in order to resume its struggle for independence from Spain.[29] This was a godsend for the English authorities, who had been unable to raise sufficient money to disband the entire army. Three English foot regiments stationed in Scotland were reorganised into two units, and transported to Lisbon. They were joined by cavalry composed of ex-

parliamentarians, old royalists, and Irish troopers who had served Charles in Flanders. This cynical disposal of inconvenient flesh was promoted as an honourable and patriotic adventure by the royalist journal *Mercurius Publicus*, which alleged that the foot regiments had eagerly volunteered for the expedition. Their new commander, the earl of Inchiquin, was privately far less sanguine about morale when the soldiers arrived in Lisbon, although *Mercurius Publicus* reported that following a jovial quayside speech the soldiers had 'joyfully acknowledg'd him for their Generall.'[30]

In all, around 4,500 veterans were sent to the Iberian Peninsula. They suffered scandalous conditions and died in droves. Several officers resigned their commands and returned home as quickly as possible. There was no such escape for the common soldiers, who were forced to endure harangues from embittered ex-royalists such as Guy Molesworth, who said that they were 'Cromwells whelps and Rebels,' sent to Portugal 'for murdering the late King and were as banished men.' Molesworth was subsequently charged both with demoralising the soldiery, and insulting the king by asserting that honest Cavaliers had been sent to be destroyed in the company of rebels.[31] His court martial went unreported in the English press, as did a discreet official investigation, which resulted in a government whitewash.

Only 800 members of the Brigade survived to see Portugal and Spain make peace in 1668. Four hundred of these were reassigned to Tangier – a posting which had quickly acquired a reputation as a graveyard. Besieged by Moorish forces the colony had already used up some 2,500 troops.[32] Aside from Portugal and Tangier, approximately 500 soldiers were also shipped from England to the East Indies between February and March 1662. Within two years over 300 had succumbed to diseases and the climate.[33] In total, therefore, the Portuguese match enabled the Restoration state to eliminate almost 7,500 veterans.

Ian Green has suggested that the continuance of the army may have stayed the government's hand as regards a religious settlement until 1662.[34] Radicals were divided and comparatively few in numbers, but the frequency with which many within the Cavalier-Anglican establishment attacked Presbyterians in print suggests that moderate Puritans were perceived to be the greater threat. As regards the army, Monck's remodelling of the officer corps had restored many Presbyterians to military commands – men who

could be expected to resent, even resist, the ejection of moderate Puritan ministers from the Church of England. However, by the time the Uniformity bill received the royal assent on 19 May 1662, the Portuguese treaty had removed the army as a political force, and Cavalier-Anglicans had a free hand in religious and political matters. Even so, as 24 August drew near – the day by which all Church of England clergy were required to comply with the Act of Uniformity or quit their livings – many ex-parliamentarian officers around the country were arrested as a precaution. The episode gave Restoration officials a taste for maintaining records on rank-and-file veterans as well as officers.[35]

One category of veteran had long been the subject of scrutiny. The civil wars caused an estimated 90,000 casualties in England and Wales, burdening local communities with unprecedented numbers of maimed men, widows and orphans.[36] On his restoration, Charles II inherited a reasonably efficient war relief system and responsibility for thousands of 'enemy' pensioners. The 6,500 ex-parliamentarians and widows in receipt of pensions from Ely House and the Savoy military hospitals cost the state £30,000 per year alone.[37] In December 1660, with the demobilisation of the army well advanced, the inmates and pensioners of the two hospitals were quietly discharged.[38] If, as seems likely, they were referred to their parish of origin, they joined thousands of others already dependent on charity administered by county Justices and parish overseers. After 1660 the plight of these vulnerable individuals would exacerbate political tensions, and place strains on local economies.

Few Restoration Commissions of the Peace were purged so thoroughly as to remove all traces of the Interregnum: counties such as Wiltshire, Sussex and Essex retained a leaven of ex-parliamentarians on the Bench, whilst magistrates in areas such as Devon and Kent were overwhelmingly Cavalier-Anglican.[39] Kent certainly moved more quickly against parliamentarian pensioners than neighbouring counties. With one exception, all parliamentarian war pensions administered by the county were terminated at the Michaelmas Quarter Sessions in October 1660. By contrast, wholesale cessations of parliamentarian pensions did not begin in Essex until April 1661. Justices in Sussex and Surrey only began to terminate parliamentarian pensions in January 1662.[40] These pensioners ceased to be a charge on the

county stock, but as most were incapable of work the economic burden cannot simply have disappeared, and might yet be found in parish records.
Some able-bodied veterans almost certainly caused a further drain on local resources by resorting to crime. Although arguments that the disbandment did not lead to a national crime wave are still sound, the increase in criminality in and around London has already been noted. Early modern crime was closely linked with economic vulnerability; although the army was made up of volunteers by 1660, the depressed economy meant that many volunteers were actually economic conscripts. The authorities' awareness of this is evident in an Act to permit demobilised soldiers (at least, those who had been under Monck's command in April 1660) to set up in trade without completing their apprenticeships.[41]

The economic impact of mental health problems among returned veterans is harder to estimate. Provincial authorities did sometimes provide for traumatised soldiers and their families, as in 1661 when John Horne of Buckland, Kent 'in his madness did set on fire and burne his own house.' Horne and his homeless family were referred to Kent's Treasurer for Maimed Soldiers.[42] Other economic tensions arose from population displacement: when Kentish Justices later checked on the location of ex-parliamentarian pensioners they found many 'att some distance from their respective abode.'[43] There may therefore be more to the famous Settlement Act (1662) than a desire to restrict movement among the poor; it might also be seen as an attempt to reverse the effects of war-related economic migration.[44] At the same time as the authorities attempted to address these difficulties, however, they faced an equally large problem involving royalist veterans.

Ballads, pamphlets and published speeches by former officers have helped to create the impression that Charles II failed to provide for needy royalists.[45] In actuality, strenuous efforts were made to recompense those who had suffered in royalist service. Having dismissed their parliamentarian pensioners, for example, Kentish Justices immediately began to bestow pensions on royalist veterans and war widows.[46] The Essex Quarter Sessions order book up to 1662 (records after 1662 have not survived) shows that there were noticeably fewer royalist petitions than in Kent, despite the fact that a considerable number of Essex men had fought under royalist command in 1648. Moreover, in stark contrast to other Home Counties, no

royalist petitioner was granted a pension by the Essex Justices before 1662. Some Essex royalists were given gratuities and ordered to trouble the Justices no further, whilst others were simply referred to parish overseers.[47] Hampshire was similarly reluctant to grant pensions, as Justices there recorded in October 1661 that they were prepared only to make interim payments to royalist claimants. Meagre pensions were eventually awarded to fifteen royalists in July 1662.[48]

Hampshire's change of heart coincided with the passing of two pieces of Parliamentary legislation in 1662. The first of these, an Act for distributing £60,000 among 5,300 indigent royalist officers, was funded by diverting money from Charles' personal income.[49] The king's altruism was fortified by self-interest: to leave thousands of loyal gentry so impoverished as to be unable to participate in local society was clearly undesirable. The Act also strengthened the recipients' adherence to the Crown.[50] The Act to relieve poor and maimed royalist officers and soldiers is less well known, but probably had a greater impact on local communities.[51] If the continuance of the army stayed the government's hand on religious matters it is even more likely to have affected the timing of these two Acts. It had been impracticable to order royalists to be relieved from the county stock until sufficient numbers of parliamentarian pensioners had been dismissed. Wiltshire and Dorset alone ultimately maintained some 1,142 royalist pensioners.[52] In Kent zealous compliance with the Act created so many new pensioners by September 1664 that the Justices were obliged to restrict awards.[53] In their eagerness to dismiss former rebels and instead relieve royalist veterans and war widows, Cavalier-Anglican MPs and Justices had between them not only failed to deliver a peace dividend, but added significantly to higher parish rates, engendering an anxious search for additional sources of local income.[54]

Time and natural mortality eventually resolved the veteran problem, although rival folk memories continued to be handed on to subsequent generations. Despite the fact that many veterans presumably died during the plague epidemic of 1665–67, royalists were still petitioning for financial relief as late as 1678.[55] Ironically, the most prominent victim of veteran politics proved to be the earl of Clarendon himself: among the charges laid against him by his enemies in Parliament in 1667 was that he had attempted to maintain the army in order to encourage the king to rule as a tyrant.' The

charge was preposterous, but Clarendon received no sympathy from old parliamentarians. George Wither observed that, far from seeking to preserve the army, the Lord Chancellor had condemned thousands of brave Englishmen to death.[56]

The 'new Restoration historiography' which first emerged in the 1980s has demonstrated that the rehabilitation of the monarchy was protracted, complex, and far from inevitable. Nevertheless, the new historiography has tended to underplay the significance of the military within that process. This article has sought to re-evaluate the role of the military in the Restoration – in particular Monck's adroit handling of the army during the critical months of 1660 and the influence of veteran politics within local communities. Although the various events which followed the Restoration were not meticulously planned, the nature and timing of the measures taken indicates that the central authorities were aware that the various military issues were inextricably intertwined, and closely linked to wider issues.

* An earlier, detailed version of this article (entitled 'Veteran politics in Restoration England') is available on Open Access: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0268117X.2013.823101#.V UJT0sJ0xjo.

[1]   T. Gumble, *The Life of General Monck, Duke of Albemarle* (London, 1671), 389; E. Hyde, *The Continuation of the Life of Edward, Earl of Clarendon* (Oxford, 1759), ii, 18. G. Davies, *The Restoration of Charles II 1658-1660* (London, 1955), 353, gives estimates of numbers at Blackheath, although Gumble (*Life*, 392) indicates a larger presence.

[2]   R. Greaves, *Deliver Us from Evil* (Oxford, 1986); R. Greaves, *Enemies under His Feet* (Stanford CA, 1990); J. Malcolm, 'Charles II and the reconstruction of royal power', *Historical Journal*, vol. 35, no. 2 (June, 1992), 307-330; P. Hardacre, 'The English contingent in Portugal, 1662-1668', *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* [*JSAH*], 38 (1960), 112-25; J. Childs, 'The English Brigade in Portugal, 1662-1668', *JSAH*, ccxv (1975), 135-47; J. Riley, *The Last Ironsides* (Solihull, 2014); A. Smithers, *The Tangier Campaign* (Stroud, 2003). See also C. Firth and G. Davies, *The Regimental History of Cromwell's Army* (2 vols., Oxford, 1980,

rpt. 1991), i, xxxiii-xxxvi, *passim*; J. Childs, *The Army of Charles II* (London, 1976), 8-11; R. Hutton, *The Restoration* (Oxford, 1985), 129-30, 138-40; J. Miller, *After the Civil Wars* (Harlow, 2000), 163-5, 184-5.

3   R. Latham and W. Mathews (eds.), *The Diary of Samuel Pepys* (London, 1995), iv, 373-4.

4   Government accounts for the year ending 24 June 1660, *Calendar of Treasury Books* [*CTB*], Appendix III: Miscellaneous, 1660, vol. 7: 1681-1685 (London, 1916), 1634-5. A smaller establishment is indicated in *Commons Journals* [*CJ*], viii, 175-7 (6 November 1660). See also Malcolm, 'Charles II', 310; Firth and Davies, *Regimental History*, i, xxvii; Childs, *Army of Charles II*, 10.

5   G. Monck, *A Letter from his Excellence the Lord General Monck* (London, 1660), 1, 5; J. Miller, *Charles II* (London, 1991), 28, citing Carte, *Original Letters*, ii, 328-29; Historical Manuscripts Commission, *3rd Report*, 89; Clarke MS 72, fos. 4, 222.

6   *His Majesty's Letter to his Excellency the Lord General Monck* (Edinburgh, 1660), 1.

7   Gumble, *Life*, 381-2.

8   E.g., J. W., *England's Heroick Champion* (London, 1660); D. Lloyd, *Modern Policy Completed* (London, 1660); F. Walsall, *The Bowing the Heart of Subjects to their Sovereign* (London, 1660), 3.

9   J. Morrill, 'The army revolt of 1647', in Morrill (ed.) *The Nature of the English Revolution*, 326-8; Firth & Davies, *Regimental History*, i, xxviii; *Thurloe State Papers*, viii, 384, 553.

10   Childs, *Army of Charles II*, 10, 11-22; *CJ*, viii, 176-7 (6 November 1660).

11   *Statutes of the Realm: Volume 5: 1628-80*, ed. J. Raithby (London, 1819), 207-225, 225-226, 238-241, 241-242, 250-1, 268, 269-277, 277-282; Lancashire Record Office DDKE/acc. 7848 HMC/1/399; City of Westminster Archives Centre F4542; *Journal of the House of Lords* [*LJ*], xi, 172 (13 September, 1660); *CJ*, viii, 156-158 (7 September, 1660).

12   Centre for Kentish Studies, CKS-U1107/C30; BL Add. MSS 36832, fo. 74v.

13   *Statutes of the Realm*, v, 207-225, 250-1, 269-277.

14   Buckinghamshire Record Office D/LE/17/3/13.

[15] BL Add. MSS 36832, fos. 6-8v, 31, 32; *The History and Proceedings of the House of Commons, Volume I: 1660-1680* (1742), 25-31.

[16] CKS-Q/SO W1, fos. 61v, 63; Clarke MSS 49, cited in M. Ashley, *General Monck* (London, 1977), 219, 295 *n.* 26; *A Proclamation…* (London, 17 December 1660), Wing C3234; Malcolm, 'Charles II', 325-6, *n.*80; RYE/47/167/10.

[17] See the authorities' response to the Bawdy House Riots of 1668: BL Egerton MS 2539, fo. 182v.

[18] *LJ*, xi, 1660-1666, 237-239 (29 December, 1660); *By the King, a Proclamation* (London, April 1661), Wing C3556; *By the King, a Proclamation* (London, November 1661).

[19] V. Stater, *Noble Government* (London, 1994), 71-2; *LJ*, xi, 232 (29 December 1660).

[20] Malcolm, 'Charles II', 314-15.

[21] Hampshire Record Office, Quarter Sessions Order Book 1658-1672, Q1/4, fo. 92.

[22] ERO Q/SR 391/60; ERO D/DEb/95/117.

[23] E.g., ERO D/Deb/95/123.

[24] See P. Edwards, *Dealing in Death* (Stroud, 2000), 71, 179.

[25] BL Add. MSS 21922, fos. 240-241, 249; ERO D/DEb/95/112; *By the King, A Proclamation* (Wing C3557).

[26] ERO D/DEb/95/123.

[27] ERO D/DEb/95/126.

[28] H. Tomlinson, *Guns and Government* (London, 1979), 118.

[29] G. Chalmers, *A Collection of the Treaties between Great Britain and Other Powers* (London, 1790), 293.

[30] *Mercurius Publicus* (8 – 15 May 1662), 293; (31 July – 7 August, 1662), 506.

[31] TNA SP89/6/23-23v.

[32] Childs, 'English Brigade', 136.

[33] A. Mainwaring, *Crown and Company* (London, 1911), 2-10; BL Add. MSS 40698, fos. 46, 72.

[34] I. Green, *The Re-establishment of the Church of England, 1660-1663* (Oxford, 1978), 11-12.

35 BL Add MSS 21922, fos. 249, 250, 253v; TNA SP29/57/235, /237; SP29/58/35TNA SP29/56/216; SP29/58/139-146; ERO D/DEb/95, fos. 113, 115-126.

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37 *CTB*, Appendix III: Miscellaneous, 1660, vol. 7: 1681-1685, [pp.]1638, 1635.

38 *CJ*, viii (17 December 1660), cited in E. Gruber von Arni, *Justice to the Maimed Soldier* (Ashgate, 2001), 169; Parliamentary Archives, HL/PO/JO/10/1/302.

39 A. Fletcher, *Reform in the Provinces: The Government of Stuart England* (London, 1986), 12, 18-19; S. Roberts, *Recovery and Restoration in an English County: Devon 1646-1670* (Exeter, 1985), xiv, 148-9; A. Coleby, *Central Government and the Localities* (Cambridge, 1987), 90-1; P. Norrey, 'The Restoration regime in action', *Historical Journal*, 31, 4 (1988), 791, 805; D. Allen (ed.), *Essex Quarter Sessions Order Book, 1652-1661* (Chelmsford, 1974), xxxii-xli; D. Appleby, 'The Restoration county community: a post-conflict culture', in J. Eales and A. Hopper (eds.), *The County Community in Seventeenth-Century England and Wales* (Hertford, 2012), 107-109.

40 CKS-Q/SO W1, fo. 64v; ERO Q/SO1, fos. 224v, 239v, 240v, 248, 271v; East Sussex Record Office QO/EW4, fos. 30v, 41; D. Powell (ed.), *Surrey Quarter Session Records: Order Book and Sessions Rolls 1661-1663* (Guildford, 1935), viii, 18.

41 J. Childs, 'War, crime waves and the English army in the late seventeenth century', *War and Society*, 15/2 (1997), 13; *Statutes of the Realm*, v, 241-242.

42 CKS Q/SO E1, fo. 64.

43 CKS-Q/SO W1, fo. 71.

44 *Statutes of the Realm*, v, 401-5. I am grateful to James Collett-White for suggesting this link.

45 C. Mackay (ed.), *The Cavalier Songs and Ballads of England* (London, 1863), 209-12; Charles Hammond, *Truth's Discovery; or the Cavalier's Case Clearly Stated* (London, 1664); *My Lord Lucas His Speech in the House of Peers* (London, 1671), 4.

46 CKS-Q/SO W1, fos. 62-63v, 69-71, 74-76v, 79v, 83, 86, 91-92, 103, 120; CKS-Q/SO E1, fos. 55, 61, 66v.

[47] E.g. ERO Q/SO1, fos. 259v, 263v, 264v, 268v 266v.

[48] HRO Q1/4, fos. 70, 74.

[49] *Statutes of the Realm*, v, 380-389; *A List of Officers Claiming to the Sixty Thousand Pounds, etc.* (London, 1663).

[50] See Appleby, 'Restoration county community', 101-2, 112-113.

[51] 14 Car. II. c. 9.

[52] D. Underdown, *Revel, Riot and Rebellion* (London, 1985), 295-6.

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David J Appleby is lecturer in Early Modern Britsih History at the University of Nottinham, and is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society.

'…LOOKED ON AS A WONDER, THAT NEVER BEHELD HIS ENEMIES IN THE FACE BUT RETURNED FROM THEM CROWNED ALWAYS WITH RENOWN AND HONOUR…': CROMWELL'S CONTRIBUTION TO PARLIAMENT'S MILITARY VICTORIES, 1642–51.[1]

By Prof Peter Gaunt

Mercurius Civicus, London's Intelligencer of Truth Impartially Related from Thence to the Whole Kingdom, in its edition for the week 23–30 April 1646, by which time full parliamentarian victory in the main civil war was in sight, gushingly reported as its lead news item that:

> The active, pious and gallant commander, Lieutenant General Cromwell, being come to the city of London, not for any ease or pleasure, but with the more speed to advance the great cause in hand for the reformation of religion and the resettling the peace and government of the kingdom, he on this day, April 23rd, repaired to the parliament. As he passed through the hall at Westminster he was looked on as a wonder, that never beheld his enemies in the face but returned from them crowned always with renown and honour, nor ever brought his colours from the field but he did wind up victory within them. Having taken his place in the House of Commons, Mr Speaker by order of the whole House gave him great thanks for the unwearied services undertaken by him for the honour and safety of the parliament and the welfare of the kingdom.

Samuel Pecke's *A Perfect Diurnall of Some Passages in Parliament* of 20–27 April reported the same incident in similarly flowery tones, noting the return to London and to the Commons of 'the ever renowned and never to be forgotten Lieutenant-General Cromwell', upon whose arrival in the chamber his fellow MPs gave way to 'much rejoicing at his presence and welfare' and to giving 'testimony of their true respects to his extraordinary services for the kingdom'.

By the closing year of the civil war, Cromwell's fans were pouring high praise on his military record, picking him out for what was, even by the rather fulsome standards of the day, unusually glowing words and phrases –

an 'active, pious and gallant commander', who 'never beheld his enemies…but returned from them crowned always with renown and honour', who always wound victory within his colours, who performed 'extraordinary services for the kingdom' and who was to be 'ever renowned and never to be forgotten'. Most modern historians, both military historians of the civil war and biographers of Cromwell alike, have generally concurred in these assessments of Cromwell the soldier, albeit in more measured tones and employing more scholarly and academic language, with evidence adduced in support. Cromwell is often viewed and referred to as a natural military genius, the most successful and outstanding commander of the English civil war, a figure to be compared with England's and Britain's other outstanding military leaders – certainly with Montgomery, Wellington and Marlborough, and perhaps for the more imaginative, with King Alfred and King Arthur, too.[2]

There is no doubt that, backed up by other important attributes, of course – intelligence, hard work, a strong and fervent faith, a fair helping of good luck and the errors or shortcomings of his opponents and rivals – Cromwell's career was made by the civil war and by his successful military campaigns. Whatever his belief in a God-given mission, that alone would certainly not have led him so far and so high had he bombed on the battlefield and proved himself to be at best an adequate or rather mediocre military officer and commander – a Grey or a Stamford, a Fiennes or a Gell, or a godly Hutchinson, or one of the many middle-ranking regional commanders of the opening years of the civil war who plodded on for a while, with a mixture of successes and failures or disappointments, but whose military careers had peaked or fizzled out well before the end of the civil war, or before they were halted by the Self Denying Ordinance.

Cromwell's growing power as a politician and statesman, as a shaper of political and constitutional developments, rested on his position as a successful military commander who had a loyal and potent army behind him. Cromwell engaged with the Rump not as an MP or politician, still less as leader of any political party or clear group, but as Lord General of the New Model Army. He was only able to act as he did in April 1653 and expel the Rump because he had military backing. With the Rump gone, and again eight months later when the Nominated Assembly hastily resigned, political power and leadership effectively reverted to him, not because of his political

skill or standing, but as military commander-in-chief of a large and well-ordered army. During the 1650s and especially as Lord Protector during the last five years of his life, Cromwell undoubtedly did deploy very considerable political skills and was a statesman of high standing, much aplomb and significant success, and to some degree he drifted away from the army and sought to civilianise his government, or at least to give that appearance and patina to his regime. But he owed his position to the army – to the constitution cobbled together by a few senior officers in dark and smoky backrooms in December 1653, and to the continuing support of an overwhelmingly loyal army throughout his Protectorate, both before and after the army's constitution had been superseded by one drawn up in parliament. Cromwell never forgot that, never made the mistake of thinking that he could survive without the army's support or that he had an alternative, viable powerbase, and he was always anxious and active, employing carrot and stick, to ensure and to preserve continuing military backing. Thus, there is no doubt that Cromwell was made and propelled onwards and upwards by his military successes; military victories made Cromwell and without those victories and the durable military standing and backing which resulted, it is highly unlikely that he would have become Lord Protector, or that the 1650s would have developed politically and constitutionally in the way that they did under his leadership.

But in re-examining Cromwell's active military career, the purpose here is to turn the question around – ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country; and similarly ask not how far and in what ways Cromwell was made and his career advanced by his military victories and standing, but instead how far, in what ways and to what degree Cromwell contributed to the military victories and achievements of parliament and of the parliamentarian cause in general. In exploring that question, the focus will be on Cromwell's active military career and his campaigns in the field. These spanned just nine years, from August 1642 at the very outbreak of the civil war when he apparently picked up a sword in anger for the first time, to the crowning mercy and victory at Worcester on 3 September 1651. After Worcester, Cromwell quickly returned to London and only very rarely and very briefly left the capital thereafter, up to his death at Whitehall exactly seven years later. He remained Lord General and commander-in-chief until his death, he ensured the continuing loyalty and discipline of his army, and he actively engaged with soldiers and officers in

London and addressed their concerns. But never again after Worcester did he lead troops in the field. Equally, this assessment will not range over the wider impact of Cromwell as a military commander on broader political and religious developments – so there is no discussion here of his role in the Heads of the Proposals, the Putney Debates and army politics during 1647, of his contribution to the revolutionary events of winter 1648–49 in general and to regicide and the establishment of the republic in particular, and so on. Instead, the focus is on Cromwell's active field campaigns, of 1642–46 during the main or first civil war, of 1648 during the royalist rebellions of that year and the so-called second civil war, and during his Irish and Scottish expeditions of 1649–51, in order to explore how far Cromwell really did contribute to parliament's military successes.

It is reasonably easy to address and to suggest an answer to that question from 1648 onwards, when Cromwell held separate commands and operated largely independently of other senior commanders and armies. In this final phase of his active military career, there are controversies and divergent interpretations aplenty about some of his tactics and specific actions – most obviously his actions at Drogheda and Wexford – and about the wider political, religious, social and ethnic policies which followed in Scotland and Ireland and how far they were intended, envisaged and supported by him. However, the reality and nature of Cromwell's campaigns and victories of those years and that they were usually his, acting as the clear and independent overall commander in those theatres, are not in doubt.

Cromwell's campaign during 1648, in tackling royalist opposition during the so-called second civil war, fell into two phases: the first in South Wales focused on the siege of Pembroke, the second in north-west England focused on the operation and major field engagements around and south of Preston.[3] The main royalist rising in South Wales, led by Poyer, Powell and Laugharne, had already suffered a major set-back and had been broken as a field operation even before Cromwell arrived in the region, when on 8 May 4,000 locally-based parliamentarians under Colonel Horton engaged and routed an 8,000-strong rebel army outside St Fagans. By the time Cromwell entered South Wales in command of five New Model regiments he had led from London, plus further forces which had rendezvoused with him around Gloucester, bringing his army up to around 6,500 men, they hugely outnumbered the remaining rebels; that Horton's army was also now free to

operate with and under Cromwell's command strengthened the already massive advantage which Cromwell possessed in South Wales. He had plenty of men and resources to leave other officers to reduce the now isolated rebel strongholds of Chepstow and Tenby, while he set about besieging, bombarding and reducing the main surviving rebel stronghold: the walled town and castle of Pembroke.

Cromwell and the bulk of his army, around 6,000 men, arrived outside Pembroke on 24 May; inside, the rebels had just a few hundred men to defend town and castle. Despite Cromwell's huge advantages – the speed with which he occupied higher ground south of the town and began bombarding it with cannon and mortars plus his initial optimism that Pembroke would fall very quickly – events proved otherwise. With the benefit of hindsight, nearly two months later, on 23 July, his army chaplain noted more soberly that Pembroke was 'the strongest place' they had ever encountered, that the castle was 'impregnable' and that only after 'six weeks siege, constant rain and much hardship endured by us and them' could the place be taken.[4] Cromwell's problem was that he initially lacked the heavy ordnance needed to make much impression on Pembroke's mighty walls, and he was frustrated by the long delays in getting heavier weaponry to him by boat from Bristol and Gloucester. Impatient and perhaps miscalculating the strength of opposition, Cromwell made several premature attempts to storm Pembroke – on 6 June the attack was called off when the scaling ladders were found to be too short to carry the town walls, while on 19 June some of Cromwell's men were able to get into the town through a small breach which his guns had opened up, only to be expelled with losses by a rebel counter-attack. His hopes of a quick resolution and his optimistic reports during June that the defenders were desperate and divided, short of food and drink and on the brink of collapse and submission – all proved wide of the mark. Only at length and when their position became completely hopeless did the defenders open serious negotiations, leading to the surrender of Pembroke to Cromwell on 11 July on fairly generous terms, far more generous than those the officers in command of the operations against Chepstow and Tenby offered their opponents.

Overall, Cromwell's contribution to the campaign in South Wales during summer 1648 was largely competent but by no means crucial. The key victory in the major and only significant field engagement of the campaign

was not his. He possessed huge superiority in numbers, equipment and morale over an enemy already defeated in the field, broken and reduced to a few hundred men and a trio of isolated outposts; given such overwhelming advantages, any half-decent commander could, and should, have wrapped up the region. In practice, Cromwell's operation again Pembroke was adequate and eventually successful but it was not particularly good; he appears to have made significant miscalculations and it finally ended only when fairly generous terms were offered to his vastly outnumbered opponents. What might be said in Cromwell's favour, however, is not only the strength of Pembroke itself, which initially he seems not to have appreciated, but also his speed in moving against and into South Wales. He led his New Model troops west from the Windsor area on 3 May, was in Gloucester by 8 May and at Monmouth on 10 May. By moving so quickly, he may have compelled the South Wales rebels, who were still attracting fresh support and drawing in further followers in early May, to move on Cardiff sooner than they otherwise wished or than would have been to their advantage, and to offer battle prematurely at St Fagans, suffering a catastrophic defeat there, when ideally they may well have preferred to wait before engaging parliamentarian troops. With Cromwell and his main army so close and closing so fast, they perhaps had little choice but to offer battle.

Cromwell was anxious to conclude the Pembroke and South Wales phase of his campaign because, with Sir Thomas Fairfax and a large part of the New Model tied down in Essex undertaking the long and continuing siege of Colchester, it fell to him to attempt to block the advance of the Scottish-royalist army which crossed the border on 8 July 1648 and was marching south, presumably with London as its ultimate goal. In reality, the Scots were beset with problems – the deal they had made with the king at the very end of 1647 divided the Scots, helping to explain why it took so long to raise an army in Scotland and why that army numbered just 8,000 men when it eventually entered England. Many of its members were raw recruits rather than the veterans of the main civil war; it was short of money, arms and other supplies; it was poorly led by the lacklustre Duke of Hamilton, hindered rather than helped by the Earl of Callendar, and many other officers showed barely disguised contempt for the decisions of one or both of them. They attracted very little support as they moved south through what is now Cumbria and northern Lancashire; heavy rain and atrocious weather, combined with shortages of supplies and poor leadership, meant

that the army made very slow progress south, taking a month to reach Hornby and getting no further than the Preston area by mid August. As they trundled south the army became dangerously disjointed, with the horse moving well ahead of the foot and with the infantry itself physically divided between a unit of around 4,000 men commanded by Sir Marmaduke Langdale and the main body of Scottish foot under Hamilton.

In reality, therefore, once Pembroke had surrendered to him, Cromwell had time to move his army northwards. He adopted a circuitous route, retracing his steps along the South Wales coast and on to Gloucester, swinging across the Midlands to pick up supplies for his army, entering Yorkshire and rendezvousing with parliament's main northern commander, John Lambert, and other parliamentarian troops at Wetherby on 12 August. Only now turning westwards directly to move on the Scottish-royalist army in Lancashire, Cromwell led his combined force across the Pennines via Skipton and down the Ribble valley towards the Preston area. Staying on the north side of the swollen Ribble, Cromwell made a conscious decision not to attempt to get to the south of the Scottish-royalist forces and thus to block their line of advance and the road south towards London – a move which would also have allowed the Scots quite easily to turn back northwards and to return to the far north of England or across the border to their homeland. Instead, Cromwell made directly for the enemy forces, as 'it was thought that to engage the enemy to fight was our business',[5] as he put it, but in so doing he fell in behind them, adopting an approach which was apparently more dangerous, but which had the advantage of cutting off a shaken or defeated enemy from the obvious line of retreat to their homeland or any easy refuge.

While the ensuing major engagement is generally referred to by historians simply as the battle of Preston, in reality it comprised a series of related but essentially separate confrontations which took place north-east and just south-east of Preston during 17 August, as well as along the main road between Preston and Warrington over the following days. Surviving contemporary sources are unclear or inconsistent about the size of the two armies on 17 August, and modern estimates of Cromwell's army range from 8,000 up to 14,000 men, and of the royalists – had they properly combined into a single force – from 15,000 up to 18,000 men in total. It is clear that Cromwell would have been outnumbered, significantly or hugely, had he

ever engaged the full royalist force. However, because of the very disjointed and strung-out nature of his opponents, in reality Cromwell never had to face their full force, though whether he knew that when he decided to attack on 17 August is far from clear.

In the first major engagement, starting at around noon, Cromwell assaulted Langdale's 4,000 men, mainly foot, as they were moving down the Ribble valley towards Preston. Initially caught on the open moor between Preston and Longridge, Langdale's force fell back into and sought greater protection from enclosures on both sides of the road stretching for two miles down to the outskirts of Preston itself. However, many of Langdale's men never reached the town, for in a series of hard-fought cavalry and infantry assaults during the afternoon the huge numerical advantage which Cromwell possessed over Langdale swung the tide of battle decisively in his favour, and Langdale's men were routed. In the second phase of the battle, beginning around 6 pm and running on to nightfall, Cromwell raked with musket fire and then assaulted part of the Scottish-royalist army (comprising some cavalry and much of the Scottish infantry under Hamilton, together with Langdale's surviving troops) in the valley and low ground south-east of Preston, near the junction of the Ribble and the Darwen and the key bridges over those rivers. Those Scots who survived and who got away southwards, together with the bulk of the Scottish cavalry who were already well south of the town on 17 August and had played no part in the fight around Preston, were largely mopped up by Cromwell over the following two days. Ragged, demoralised, short of supplies and, given their losses of 5,000 or more killed or captured around Preston, probably now significantly outnumbered, the surviving elements of the Scottish-royalist army were no match for the victorious Cromwell.

Cromwell had fed off the mistakes and shortcomings of his opponents. Given the sort of numerical disadvantage which most historians think he would have suffered had the whole Scottish force and their few English-royalist allies combined in a single army around Preston, Cromwell should have lost. The strung-out and disunited nature of his enemies may have been vital in giving Cromwell victory, though we must also credit Cromwell's dynamism and aggression in closing on and attacking what turned out to be just a small part of the enemy force in the Ribble valley on 17 August, giving his opponents no chance to come together and to act as a

united army. Equally, it is fairly clear that the Scottish-royalist army of 1648 was pretty dismal, with many inexperienced troops, a divided and lacklustre high command, short of supplies and demoralised after having suffered several weeks of appalling weather by the time of Preston. So while Cromwell's role and more particularly the decisions he took on 17 August boosted the chance of parliamentarian victory, perhaps they were not crucial – after all, in John Lambert parliament already possessed a skilled, experienced and aggressive commander in northern England. But Cromwell's apparently risky decision – and I do believe it was a conscious and planned decision and not mere happenstance – to fall in behind the Scottish-royalist army, to get between it and its obvious line of retreat to (and a degree of safety in) its homeland, ensured that the victory in Lancashire was so complete and that the Scottish-royalist military threat to England was snuffed out so quickly and so thoroughly in mid-August 1648.

Cromwell's next direct military engagement in the field occurred in May 1649, when he helped to quell growing and often Leveller-inspired unrest in part of the New Model Army stationed in southern England. He spoke to troops mustered in Hyde Park on 9 May, allaying their fears with reassurances over regular pay and voluntary service in Ireland, and then accompanied them as they moved west via Andover to crush the mutiny. On the night of 14–15 May he was involved in swooping on Burford and in a largely bloodless operation in putting down a mutiny in one-and-a-half regiments which were occupying the town. Cromwell was always very firm on maintaining military discipline and clamping down on mutinous activities, particularly if they had any hint of Levellerism about them, so these actions undoubtedly had his very strong support and he took the lead in haranguing the recalcitrant troops the following day. But we should remember that Cromwell was only second-in-command and he was working directly with and under Lord General Fairfax in this operation. It was Fairfax, not Cromwell, who oversaw the brief campaign, including the summary execution of three ringleaders in Burford churchyard once order had been restored.

Cromwell's campaign in Ireland lasted nine months, from his landing near Dublin on 15 August 1649 to his departure from Youghal on 26 May 1650. As in South Wales in summer 1648, so in Ireland in summer 1649, Cromwell did not have to face a hostile force in the field – one of the

biggest and most potent enemy armies in Ireland had been engaged and destroyed by a more junior commander, in this case Colonel Michael Jones at the battle of Rathmines, less than a fortnight before Cromwell and his New Model expeditionary force landed. For Cromwell there followed a sometimes bitter and frustrating campaign of sieges, not battles, as he sought to take enemy strongholds, employing a New Model force 12,000-strong at its height, though often depleted by disease. At times, as at Drogheda and Wexford early in his campaign, he achieved brutal but swift successes, followed later by the equally swift though more orderly capture of places such as New Ross, Cashel, Cahir, Fethard and Gowran. At times, his siege operations became bogged down by bad weather and disease as much as by obstinate enemy resistance, leading him to abandon attempts on Waterford and Duncannon; and at times he secured an enemy stronghold only after long and expensive operations, for example, accepting the surrender of Kilkenny in March 1650 only after attempts to take it by storm had been repulsed with significant losses. Even worse from his perspective, his final significant operation in Ireland, the attempt on Clonmel in May 1650, went badly awry. Repeatedly ordering his troops to attack a breach opened in the town walls, they repeatedly fell into an ambush which the defenders had prepared, leaving wave after wave of parliamentarian dead. Estimates vary, but perhaps up to 2,500 of his men were killed at Clonmel and even if, as is likely, the death toll was much lower and perhaps closer to 1000, it remained by some margin the single most costly and, for their own side, most deadly day in the New Model's history.

Cromwell's campaign in Ireland was a little mixed. Again, his slight weaknesses in siege operations and his underestimation of his enemies in that context are evident, leading to premature, failed or costly attempts to storm. It was certainly limited in nature – again, he benefitted from someone else's victory in a key field engagement fought just before he arrived and he did no more than besiege strongholds. It was also limited in duration and location. Apart from the early strike against Drogheda, north of Dublin, he campaigned only in southern Ireland, generally along and round the coast between Wexford and Cork, and never moving much further than 35 miles inland from that coast. Geographically, therefore, Cromwell's direct involvement with Ireland and direct engagement with the English republic's enemies was focused on a very limited part of southern and south-eastern Ireland, and he only fought in eight of Ireland's thirty-two

counties. Nevertheless, although he left it to other commanders to complete the conquest of Ireland after his departure, and it took a further two years to end resistance in the west and north-west of the island and to extend English republican control to the whole of Ireland, Cromwell's campaign had broken the back of Irish resistance and was the decisive phase in the English re-conquest.[6]

Cromwell's military campaign in Scotland was longer than his Irish campaign, for he crossed the border near Berwick on 22 July 1650 and recrossed the Tweed on 9 August 1651 in pursuit of the Scottish-royalist army. Although in Scotland Cromwell also at times became becalmed by bad weather and disease – his own serious and protracted illness as well as disease in his army – overall it was very different from that earlier campaign, for it involved very few sieges, occasional but very important field engagements and long periods of manoeuvre-style campaigning. The latter was not Cromwell's forte and for significant periods he was outmanoeuvred by his canny Scottish opponents who stayed safe within very strongly fortified bases, against which Cromwell did not dare launch a frontal attack – in late July and August 1650 in Edinburgh and Leith, for much of spring and summer 1651 in Stirling – and who refused to be drawn out to offer battle in the field, however frequently Cromwell approached and criss-crossed the ground outside those two strongholds. The Scots correctly anticipated that shortage of supplies, poor weather – in summer as much as in winter – and generally dwindling morale would sap the English army.

Stunning victory though it was, against all the odds – engaging and defeating a much bigger, fitter and apparently more strongly-positioned Scottish army – the battle of Dunbar occurred when and where it did because Cromwell and his much depleted army were retreating. How often can we say that of Cromwell? His nervy, disjointed letter written on the eve of battle, though still hopeful of God's support, seemed to anticipate the possibility of serious military defeat, alerting the commander of parliament's forces in north-eastern England to the possibility of a triumphant Scottish army sweeping on southwards.[7] Even the dramatic, unexpected victory at Dunbar at dawn on 3 September 1650, testimony to Cromwell's skill in reading a battlefield and enemy dispositions and to his dynamism in seizing on opportunities he observed, altered the geography but not the overall pattern of the campaign. While Cromwell and his army were able to swiftly mop up most of the

lowlands and southern Scotland, including Edinburgh, Glasgow and the central belt, the Scots were able to pull back into the Highlands, where Cromwell dare not follow them, and to rebuild their army in and around Stirling, which Cromwell felt unable or unwilling to attack.

Having suffered serious ill health himself and seen his army struggle through the Scottish winter of 1650–51, Cromwell was determined to break the logjam and to avoid a protracted campaign and a second winter in Scotland. Thus he decided, sometime after Dunbar and the renewed stand-off in its wake, to send his troops north in summer 1651, forcing a crossing of the Firth of Forth and breaking into the rich agricultural lands of Fife, Kinrossshire and parts of Perthshire, upon which the Scottish army in and around Stirling depended for their supplies; such a move might threaten to outflank as well as to starve out the Scots in Stirling.[8] The forced landing and triumph against a Scottish brigade at Inverkeithing on 20 July was Lambert's victory, as the senior field officer and commander on the day, but it was Cromwell who had designed and laid careful plans for the move. In then throwing much of his army into Fife, moving as far north as Perth, as a consequence greatly running down the forces he had available in southern Scotland and also showing no great inclination to reinforce the Anglo-Scottish border or northern England, Cromwell may well have anticipated the Scottish-royalist sudden drive south and, through a mixture of threat and opportunity, he probably tacitly encouraged it. I believe, and have argued elsewhere, that this was a conscious decision by Cromwell, once again deliberately taking the potentially high-risk strategy of allowing his opponents to get on the English and London side of him and his main army, and who were thus able to engage the Scots somewhere well to the south, away from the Highlands and with little chance of part or all of the Scottish army being able to get back to their homeland.[9]

Cromwell's letters of late July and August 1651, once the Scottish-royalist army had started moving south, were calm and measured. He wrote that 'it will trouble some men's thoughts' in England that the Scot's were heading south and were several days' march ahead of his army, just as it 'may occasion some inconveniences' – a splendidly understated word, used twice in the letter to describe the consequences of the Scottish-royalist army entering England. But he went on to explain that he had needed to adopt that strategy, for 'if some issue were not put to this business, it would

occasion another winter's war [in Scotland] to the ruin of your soldiery'.[10] Never one to sit back and play the long game, Cromwell was determined to force events, even if that entailed apparent risks and generated unease and fear in others on his own side.[11]

Military historians, from Gardiner and Firth onwards, do not get very excited about the purely military and command aspects of the campaign and battle of Worcester. Cromwell was able to move his main army south in a fairly unhurried manner, picking up reinforcements and supplies en route, confident that further regular troops and militia forces in the Midlands would be able to slow and contain the Scottish-royalist army and keep it well away from London. He exuded the confidence of a commander who, by the beginning of September 1651, led an army which outnumbered the Scottish-royalists holed up in Worcester by around two-to-one, as well as of a man who felt assured of God's support. He was able to encircle and coop up his opponents, to launch assaults on a day and at times and places of his choosing, and to be able to divide his army to mount a two-pronged attack, with plenty of men held as a mobile reserve, together ensuring a crushing and complete victory, the crowning mercy of his military career. With such a huge numerical and material advantage at Worcester, the parliamentarians were almost bound to win, no matter how well Charles Stuart and his Scottish allies performed. It would have taken a fool of a parliamentarian commander to squander such advantages and to lose the engagement, and Cromwell – with his experience and godliness, his careful planning and preparations – was certainly no fool. His determination to avoid another Dunbar and another Scottish winter, his willingness to take a calculated risk which he believed was no real risk, even if others would be frightened, in allowing the Scots to drive south deep into England, all brought rich rewards on 3 September 1651.[12]

As in Ireland, so in Scotland, Cromwell's campaign was geographically restricted – a map of his Scottish itinerary shows that for most of the time he was shuttling backwards and forwards across the central belt within a narrow rectangle with Dunbar and Glasgow at its two ends and covering only a small fraction of the country. As in Ireland, too, the Scottish campaign was marked by short bursts of activity and key victories interspersed with long periods during which he and his army became bogged down. Together, this meant that when he left Scotland in summer

1651 much of the country remained unconquered and unoccupied and – once again, as in Ireland – it was left to other commanders to mount a three-year campaign to fully conquer and extend English control over the Highland zone and the islands in particular. But during his time in Scotland and despite the limitations of his campaign, by a mixture of good luck and decisive action Cromwell had broken the back of Scottish resistance and had firmly entrenched English power and control over most of lowland and southern Scotland, while his crushing victory at Worcester had destroyed the main Scottish army.

Overall, then, how should we assess Cromwell's contribution during the closing years of his active campaigning, the period of independent command 1648–51? It is a mixed record, revealing Cromwell's limitations in sieges and manoeuvre-type warfare, but also his dynamism and aggression in field engagements, twice – around Preston and outside Dunbar – pulling off that very rare civil war trick of defeating a much larger army. Adopting an apparently risky strategy in allowing his Scottish opponents to get to the south of him in August 1648, and again in summer 1651, in fact worked hugely to his advantage and ensured victories which were much clearer, fuller and more decisive than they would have been had some parts of the defeated Scottish armies been able to fall back to their homeland. Despite a rather mixed record in both Ireland and Scotland, he broke the back of resistance there and firmly extended English republican control to key parts, though by no means to all, of the two countries. His performance when he possessed a clear or huge advantage in numbers, supplies and morale was generally competent and efficient, though at times during 1648–51 he had such an advantage that any senior and experienced general would surely have done as well in his stead. Although inevitably speculative, it might be instructive to ponder how far things may have unfolded differently if in 1648 Cromwell had taken charge of the operation in Kent and Essex and become becalmed before Colchester, leaving Fairfax to command in South Wales and against the invading Scottish army; and again if Fairfax rather than Cromwell had led the expeditions to Ireland in 1649 and into Scotland in 1650.

It is much harder to reach clear conclusions about the importance of Cromwell's personal and direct contribution to parliament's victory in the main civil war of 1642–46, for two principal reasons.[13] Firstly, only

occasionally and then usually only for short periods during the main war was Cromwell acting completely independently and entirely on his own initiative; for most of the war he was serving under (and with) more senior – and often more experienced – officers and commanders. The degree to which he shaped broad campaigns and specific operations 1642–46 was clearly limited, as he was generally operating alongside and to a greater or lesser extent on the orders and under the oversight of military superiors. Secondly, as we will explore further, towards the end of this paper, there is an unresolved historical debate about whether the outcome of the war and the complete and unconditional military victory which parliament's armies achieved by early summer 1646 were due largely to the decisions and qualities of specific commanders (often those, on both sides, more senior than Cromwell), and to the planning, course and outcome of specific military operations on the one hand, or to a range of much broader, deeper and often resource-linked and not directly military factors on the other. The latter, of course, would accord little role to any individual commander, including Cromwell; even the former interpretation tends to lay greater stress on the decisions and actions, the successes and failures, of generals who for most of the war were more prominent and senior than Cromwell – who, let us remember, was until spring 1645 no more than second-in-command of one of parliament's regional armies and who was generally kept on a fairly tight leash by that army's commander.

From the outbreak of the war in summer 1642, Cromwell was a committed parliamentarian, one of the first MPs to take up arms, commissioned as captain of a troop of horse. His direct intervention in August to prevent the Cambridge colleges sending their plate off to support and help finance the embryonic royalist war effort was doubtless helpful but hardly decisive, as the king collected plenty of cash and bullion during the opening weeks of the war and his initial campaigns were not undermined by financial weakness. Cromwell's role during the Edgehill campaign of autumn 1642 is not entirely clear; the likeliest interpretation is that he was still raising troops in his home patch when the Earl of Essex's main army rolled out of London and across the Midlands, that he and his men arrived too late to play a significant role in the indecisive battle of Edgehill on 23 October, and that he remained with Essex's army as it returned to London and then turned back the king in the stand-off at Turnham Green, west of London, in early November. Even if we cannot always place Cromwell and be certain where

he was at this very early stage of the civil war, it is clear that his own direct and personal role, as an inexperienced junior officer, was minor.

Cromwell's contributions during 1643 were crucial to his unfolding military career, but probably not very important in terms of the overall war and parliamentarian war effort. Promoted at the start of the year to be colonel and commander of a cavalry regiment, he was charged with working with other officers in East Anglia and the East Midlands, initially to try to hold Lincolnshire against any drive south by the Earl of Newcastle's northern, Yorkshire-based army, and then, once much of that county had fallen, to protect the north-western frontier of parliament's East Anglian heartlands, shoring up the Nene and Welland valleys. Accordingly, within a quite narrow geographical range, Cromwell was very active during the year raising and training troops, gathering money and supplies, strengthening the defences of Cambridge, Peterborough and other key bases, in the process liaising closely with fellow-officers and county administrators within the region. But his involvement in military action and in engaging the enemy, and thus his direct contribution to military developments, were quite limited.

In spring and summer 1643 he was involved in two successful operations to clear royalists from bases they had secured in the Peterborough area, namely the town and abbey of Crowland and Burghley House. Both were short and aggressive operations, entailing a brief siege and bombardment, followed by a frontal attack and storming. For good or ill, this became Cromwell's usual approach to attacking enemy strongholds during his ensuing military career – long, patient, close sieges aimed at eventually starving out the defenders was never his style – and there is no reason to doubt his own letters written after both operations, suggesting that he had had a significant say in how they were conducted. But we have to exercise some caution here and add certain riders. Firstly, at both Crowland and Burghley he was operating alongside other parliamentarian colonels (and their regiments), some of whom had much more experience of military operations. Secondly, both strongholds were stormed primarily by infantry, so we might again question how far Cromwell, whose forte was or became cavalry operations and who commanded a horse regiment, really was in a position to shape events. Thirdly, these were in any case fairly minor and isolated royalist outposts – indeed, the small body of royalist troops in Burghley had probably only

occupied the house *in extremis* when they found themselves isolated and being hemmed into the Stamford area by converging parliamentarian forces – and even had the king's men enjoyed a longer or less harassed occupation of either or both bases, there is no indication that they would have posed much of a wider threat or been able to tip the balance of power in the region.

As for battles and significant field engagements, again Cromwell's experience during 1643 was quite limited and within his home region. He did not, for example, play any role in the first battle of Newbury, the biggest battle of the year, or in the relief of Gloucester, which some historians have portrayed as the turning point of the entire civil war. In July he engaged and defeated a royalist army outside Gainsborough, bravely attacking uphill in order to engage the king's forces, again showing dynamism and energy and a desire to take the fight to the enemy. At Gainsborough he also learnt the advantage of keeping men in reserve, for he noticed that while his troops had broken the bulk of the enemy army, his opponents had held back some of their horse to form an as yet uncommitted and well-ordered reserve. Quick to appreciate the danger of his opponents snatching victory from the jaws of defeat by employing this reserve against his own forces, who were losing shape as they pushed for victory and began pursuing broken remnants of the royalist army, Cromwell hurriedly ordered some of his own men to stay back and form up as a reserve of his own. In due course, this engaged and defeated the royalist reserve, ensuring a complete victory. As well as employing this tactic on the battlefield, Cromwell's letters of the time point to other factors which contributed not only to his victory at Gainsborough but also to his later successes – his close attention to logistics and supplies, his care in liaising with other commanders and administrators, his determination to keep close control of his men on the battlefield, and his overwhelming belief that he was engaged in a godly cause and had the Lord's support. On the other hand, Gainsborough was a modest engagement between small bodies of mounted troops – Cromwell had perhaps 1,200 men, while his opponents had a few more but their army was not significantly bigger. Moreover, it did not alter the general course of events in the area, for the approach of a larger royalist army shortly afterwards compelled Cromwell to fall back southwards and Gainsborough itself quickly fell to the royalists without much of a fight. While the engagement outside Gainsborough may have taught Cromwell valuable

lessons which he carried forward, it is hard to claim for Cromwell's victory there any significant role in the course of the regional campaign or of the tides of war during 1643.

Cromwell's other battle of 1643 also occurred in Lincolnshire, later in the year and towards the end of the campaigning season. On 11 October he was at Winceby, apparently commanding the front line of parliamentarian cavalry, which moved forward and engaged the royalist horse at the start of the battle. Again, this predominantly cavalry engagement resulted in a clear parliamentarian victory. Although sources for the battle are not plentiful and some aspects of it remain in doubt, we should be careful not to exaggerate either Cromwell's direct contribution or the role of the battle in the wider campaign. Cromwell was certainly not the most senior officer present and did not have overall command, as the Earl of Manchester, commander-in-chief of the Eastern Association army, was there and directed the battle. Cromwell's own role may have been rather mixed, as some accounts suggest or imply that he got too far ahead of his men, became a little detached and was thus very vulnerable when he was unhorsed, needing to be rescued by others and saved from imminent death. Contemporary accounts differ about the effectiveness of Cromwell's initial charge, some suggesting that, despite his own misfortune, his cavalry broke the royalist army and put them to flight; others indicate that it was much less effective and that it was the subsequent charge by the second or reserve line of parliamentarian cavalry, commanded by Sir Thomas Fairfax, that was decisive, inflicted serious damage and so secured victory. In any case, claims that parliament's victory at Winceby halted the advance south by Newcastle's northern royalist army, thereby saving the parliamentarian heartlands of East Anglia and warding off the danger of complete defeat for parliament in the civil war, seem misplaced and very wide of the mark. The potential drive south by Newcastle's army during the latter half of 1643 never, in fact, materialised. In part this was because of the threat posed by the parliamentarian port and garrison of Kingston upon Hull, from which destructive raids were being launched across Yorkshire, forcing the royalists to keep much of their army in the area, before, during and after Newcastle's failed siege of Hull, which he abandoned around the same time as Winceby. In part this was because there were growing indications of a military alliance between the English parliament and the Scottish government, and Newcastle was unwilling to move his army south in significant numbers when he was increasingly

fearful of a Scottish force crossing the border and attacking him from the north. Claims that parliament's – and to a degree, though only a limited degree, Cromwell's – victory at Winceby saved East Anglia or even the whole war for parliament seem wildly exaggerated, for there was no sign that a drive south in force by Newcastle's army was imminent or likely, let alone underway.

Cromwell played a more senior and elevated military role during the latter half of the main war: in 1644 as commander of the cavalry and second-in-command of the Eastern Association army, though under and subordinate to Manchester as that army's commander-in-chief; and in 1645–46 as commander of the cavalry and second-in-command of the New Model Army, though under and subordinate to Fairfax as that army's and parliament's commander-in-chief. For most of that time he did not hold an independent command and was operating directly with, and thus under, his military superior. Most of the operations – almost all of them successful – in which Cromwell participated in 1644–46, including the sieges of Bridgwater, Bristol, Exeter, Oxford and Sherborne and the battles of Langport, Marston Moor, Naseby, Newbury (the second battle) and Torrington, were not directed by him as overall commander or the most senior officer present. In many of those operations, it is hard to discern a distinctive, still less decisive, personal contribution by Cromwell. He did occasionally lead effective though quite brief and small-scale semi-detached campaigns in the Home Counties during these years, most notably in Buckinghamshire and the fringes of Oxfordshire for around ten days in March 1644, and for around four weeks between early April and early May 1645, but they had limited goals and outcomes.

More importantly, Fairfax entrusted up to seven New Model regiments to his command in autumn 1645, which he led on a short, sharp, successful, if occasionally brutal four-week campaign to mop up a handful of surviving royalist bases in central southern England, most notably Devizes, Winchester and Basing House, which all fell to him through a mixture of threat and the application of overwhelming military force. However, rather like his successful operation in South Wales in summer 1648 (though without the equivalent of being bogged down outside Pembroke), by that stage his hugely outnumbered opponents were marooned in isolated and already neutralised bases, and the vast numerical and material advantage he

possessed almost guaranteed success. The speed and force with which he took these strongholds, especially mighty Basing, are notable, but again given the wider context and circumstances and the advantage parliament held by that stage, any decent commander worth his salt should have been capable of mopping them up. Cromwell did so remarkably quickly, but in fact speed was not really of the essence and it did not turn out to be much of an overall military advantage, for by the time Cromwell's detached operation successfully ended and he rejoined the main army in late autumn, the New Model had become somewhat bogged down in the South West; they could undertake only limited campaigning in Devon and Cornwall during what transpired to be the cold and snowy winter of 1645–46. Although he could not have known it, Cromwell could probably have taken twice as long to capture the royalists' southern outposts and it would have made no great difference to either the course of the closing stages of the war, or the timing of the final parliamentarian victory.

More broadly and in the field, during the campaign of 1644 Cromwell failed to galvanise and was himself perhaps hampered by the rather lacklustre approach of his superiors, especially Manchester. Cromwell achieved very little militarily during high summer and early autumn – the thirteen weeks or so, from the battle of Marston Moor to the second battle of Newbury, were rather empty. At Newbury itself, the strange and over-complicated battle plan adopted by a group of senior officers – more senior than Cromwell – did not work well and so threw away the numerical advantage which they held over the king and his main Oxford army. During the afternoon of the lengthy battle, under Sir William Waller Cromwell commanded the left cavalry wing of that part of the parliamentarian army which attacked the western side of the royalist defensive position, but contemporary accounts of the battle are silent on what Cromwell achieved, suggesting that he actually achieved little. Cumulatively, the senior parliamentarian officers then allowed Charles I and his army to march away overnight unhindered and unscathed. All that can be said in defence of Cromwell's apparently very limited contribution to a disappointing operation is that he probably had little say in the overall battle plan, and did not have command of either part of the army which attacked the king's position on 27 October – Waller commanded the western part, Manchester the eastern.

Cromwell's main military contributions to the parliamentarian campaigns of 1644 and 1645–46, and thus to victory in the main civil war, probably lie in two other areas, one clear and well documented, the other far less tangible. The former is Cromwell's decisive contribution when given overall command of one wing of the parliamentarian army in the two most important and decisive set-piece battles of the period – the left wing at Marston Moor on 2 July 1644, the right wing at Naseby on 14 June 1645. In both cases, Cromwell was very successful in employing part of his cavalry to break the opposing royalist horse, in retaining tight control of his men in order to prevent his front line from charging off the battlefield in pursuit of plunder and fleeing royalists, and to prevent his rear line(s) or reserve from becoming involved in this phase of the fight; thus he had available a large part of his cavalry complete, in good order, fresh and as yet uncommitted, employed to devastating effect to tear into the now exposed flank of the royalist infantry in the centre of the battlefield. This may have been very important at Marston Moor, for on the other wing – the parliamentarian right – the horse under Fairfax had been repulsed, in the process also unhinging part of the parliamentarian infantry in the centre and apparently putting the outcome of the battle in doubt. Cromwell's success on the left and his ability to use his horse to begin overwhelming the royalist foot turned the tide of battle and ensured a full and decisive parliamentarian victory, which in turn swiftly delivered the whole of northern England to parliament and wrecked the king's war effort in the North. Cromwell played perhaps a lesser but similar and still significant role at Naseby, where parliament's other cavalry wing, this time under Sir Henry Ireton, struggled and became bogged down – though at Naseby, unlike at Marston Moor, it seems that the parliamentarian foot in the centre was strong and already getting the upper hand even before Cromwell's victorious horse gave support by attacking the royalist foot. Parliament's victory at Naseby contributed hugely to its overall victory in the war, as the king lost his last major field army and most of his best remaining infantry. But again we must add a word of caution, for at both battles parliament possessed a large or overwhelming numerical advantage from the outset – perhaps 28,000 to 18,000 men at Marston Moor, and 14,000 to 10,000 at Naseby. The scale and decisive nature of parliament's victories at both battles can be attributed in part to Cromwell, but even without his dynamic and successful cavalry charge on one wing and his intervention in the centre, an overall

parliamentarian victory remained very likely; in civil war battles, bigger armies usually defeated smaller armies.

Secondly and less tangibly, Cromwell may have raised and kept high the morale of the parliamentarian army – he was certainly given a rapturous reception by the troops when he joined the New Model in spring 1645. And, while he clearly failed to galvanise Manchester during 1644, he may have bolstered Fairfax's command in 1645–46 and ensured that he pressed on and took the fight to the royalists wherever possible – harrying the royalists in Somerset in summer 1645 and preventing them falling back in good order by launching a daring assault at Langport in early July; in a similar fashion smashing their way into Torrington on a dark winter's evening in February 1646 rather than give the king's men a chance to get away under cover of darkness. In addition, perhaps also encouraging Fairfax to try to keep the New Model's campaign moving through winter 1645–46 rather than going into winter quarters, even if both were defeated for a while by the harsh weather. Yet Fairfax probably did not need Cromwell or any second-in-command to play this role and to encourage him to pursue such direct and aggressive tactics. Fairfax had already proved himself to be a gambler, a commander able and willing to be aggressive, to launch surprise attacks in the depths of winter, to strike at apparently strong and impregnable enemy positions, and to undertake raids deep into enemy territory with the odds and the numbers stacked up against him; he had displayed all those traits when struggling to hold Yorkshire against Newcastle's royalists during 1643, even once he had been pushed back into Hull.

In assessing Cromwell's contribution to parliament's victory in the main civil war of 1642–46 we should also remember that, as in Ireland and Scotland in 1649–51, it was geographically limited. Cromwell's military career began and was grounded in East Anglia and the East Midlands. Indeed, it was perhaps fortunate for him that he was based in that region, largely sheltered from major royalist thrusts and advances, as he learnt his military trade during 1643. Had he been a newly-promoted and still quite inexperienced colonel and regimental commander in say Devon, Dorset, Somerset or Wiltshire, counties which fell to the king during the major, and for a while apparently unstoppable, royalist advance across south-western and southern England during summer 1643, one wonders whether he, like

so many other parliamentarian officers, would have been swept aside and swept away by the royalist steamroller, and whether his self-confidence, standing and military career would have recovered. As it was, moving out from the parliamentarian heartlands, Cromwell campaigned further afield during 1644–46, in the Home Counties, the South and the South West. But during the main civil war he played very little role in the whole of northern England (excepting only a few weeks in spring and summer 1644, outside, just west of and south of York) or in the West Midlands (excepting only his probable presence at the end of the day at Edgehill, and then marching around the area and away with Essex's main army). He played no part in the fighting in Wales and the Marches 1642–46. Apart from fighting on the fringes, or skirting the moors, of the South West, Cromwell's campaigns of the main war were therefore confined to the lowland zone. He had been born, was brought up and spent most of his life in the flatlands of the Fenlands and East Anglia, and lowland or at most gently rolling landscapes seemed to suit his style of warfare. The type of warfare to which Fairfax must have come accustomed in parts of Yorkshire, of Sir John Gell in the Peak District or of Sir Thomas Myddleton and the Harleys in Herefordshire and southern and western Shropshire, were outside Cromwell's comfort zone – that is apparent from the way he studiously kept out of the Highlands while campaigning in Scotland in 1650–51 – and he never fought there.

Finally, and by way of offering some conclusions about Cromwell's direct military contribution 1642–46 and the part it played in securing victory for parliament, we need to address the unresolved historical debate about the reasons for parliament's victory and the king's defeat in the main civil war. One group of historians, the majority, point to a number of broad and usually resource-related factors which made a parliamentarian rather than a royalist victory more likely from the outset and which, as the war went on and resources became more depleted, made that parliamentarian victory ever more probable. These factors include the way that, even when it was territorially squeezed by royalist advances during 1643, parliament always possessed the most populous, prosperous and urbanised parts of England and Wales, including many flourishing ports, and so had access to far more resources that the king; that parliament always held London, the nation's capital, its political, judicial, administrative and socio-economic centre and by huge margins the country's biggest town and most active port; that from

the outset and throughout the war, parliament possessed the navy and always had control of home waters; that its military alliance with the Scots proved very helpful for a time in bolstering the parliamentarian war effort, while the king's truce with the Irish Catholics and attempt to bring over reinforcements from Ireland proved to be both a propaganda own-goal and very disappointing in terms of the numbers of troops able to reach the English and Welsh mainland; that parliament's administrative structure was stronger and more effective than the king's at all levels, centrally, regionally and at county level; that during winter 1644–45 parliament reformed and greatly improved its command structure and military capacity, via the Self-Denying Ordinance and the creation of the New Model Army, to a degree and with a level of success way beyond anything attempted or achieved on the king's side; and that, particularly through their fervent godliness, parliamentarian troops were more strongly motivated than the king's men. Most of these factors and developments were not caused or shaped by Cromwell in any way, even to a small degree.

Cromwell had no part in determining the allegiance of London, of the provinces or of the navy, for instance, and even political decisions – such as making an alliance with the Scots in summer 1643 or setting up new wartime administrative structures, many of them also established during 1643 – taken and enacted by parliament, to which Cromwell had been returned as MP for Cambridge, were largely outside his control; as an MP he had just one voice and one vote, and in any case he was absent from London and from the House of Commons for most of the war years, including almost the whole of 1643, as he was away on campaign. The most that could be said of Cromwell in this context and as part of this interpretation is that he did strongly support the Self-Denying Ordinance and the creation of the New Model Army in parliament during the period from late November 1644 to late February 1645 when he was in London, and seems to have been taking his seat quite regularly, and that he represents a very good example – perhaps an archetype – of fervent godliness, with a forceful belief in God's support for parliament's war. But overall, Cromwell has a very limited part to play in the resource-based interpretations of parliament's victory.[14]

Another group of historians, generally the minority but a vociferous one, argues that although many of these points are evidently true and that overall the resources available to parliament exceeded those available to the king, in

practice there is little sign that the royalists lost militarily because of shortages. There were generally no great disparities, they argue, between the resources brought to bear by the two sides in key operations and campaigns down to, and including, the Naseby campaign of summer 1645; there is also little evidence that in key battles the royalist army was underfunded and had arms and equipment inferior to those of the parliamentarian army opposing them, for example, or lost because they were short of saddles, sword, bullets or powder. Several times, most notably at the key engagements of Marston Moor and Naseby, the royalists gave battle when they were significantly outnumbered and duly lost, with huge consequences for the course of the war, but historians who privilege operational factors rather than broader resource-linked factors incorporate this as part of their interpretation. They argue that the king's defeat and parliament's victory can be explained at least in part and probably in large part by operational decisions, including Rupert's decision unnecessarily to offer battle at Marston Moor with his exhausted and outnumbered army, at a time when the combined English and Scottish army may have been marching away, rather than wait and refresh his men, call up royalist reinforcements which were available in the region, and then offer battle under more propitious circumstances. They advance similar arguments regarding the king's decision to turn and offer battle at Naseby rather than push on northwards, rendezvousing with the large number of royalist troops still available in and around Newark, and perhaps even seeking to call up some of the numerous and experienced royalist cavalry which the king had (probably unwisely) left in South Wales, before offering battle. Some historians in this camp, particularly if they feel that the royalists had a chance of securing victory earlier in the war, have suggested that factors such as the king's failure to move quickly on and attack London after the battle of Edgehill in 1642, his approval of the successful but costly (in terms of royalist dead and injured) storming of Bristol, his long and fruitless siege of Gloucester, Newcastle's equally long and equally fruitless siege of Hull and the failure of the royalist army to resume the first battle of Newbury after the first day, instead allowing Essex's army to march past and away unmolested, all in the course of 1643, squandered that opportunity for royalist victory.[15]

Historians who privilege operational factors as a part or full explanation for the parliamentarian victory and royalist defeat tend to argue that on balance parliament had the better generals who took wiser decisions and made fewer

and less expensive mistakes than the king and his generals. In particular, they often focus on the negative consequences of perceived missed opportunities and mistakes made by leading royalists, outside London and at Bristol, Gloucester, Hull, Newbury, Marston Moor, Naseby and elsewhere. If this sort of interpretative line is followed, Cromwell has a role, as one of the better generals on parliament's side who, to the extent that he made key operational decisions during the civil war (although, as this paper has argued, that was not often), got it right more often and more importantly than his opponents. But it is hardly a ringing endorsement of Cromwell or one which has him anywhere near the top of the explanatory pedestal. The king, Rupert and Newcastle are accorded much larger (negative) roles. Given his brilliance as a cavalry commander in the field and given his performance at Marston Moor and Naseby, we might expect Cromwell to have a substantial part in operational explanations for parliament's victory in the civil war of 1642–46. In fact and perhaps surprisingly, Oliver Cromwell is again no more than a bit player in this version of the story.

[1] This is a slightly revised version of my lecture of the same title given at the Association's study day on 'Cromwell's Army' held at Huntingdon in autumn 2014. It has been tidied up and lightly referenced for publication, including restoring a few points that were omitted on the day for reasons of time, but it consciously retains the feel and rhythm of the original lecture, including some colloquialisms and the occasional use of first person singular.

[2] Military assessments and biographies of Cromwell include Peter Young, *Cromwell* (London, 1962), John Gillingham, *Cromwell, Portrait of a Soldier* (London, 1976), Austin Woolrych, 'Cromwell as a soldier' in John Morrill (ed.), *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution* (Harlow, 1990), Alan Marshall, *Oliver Cromwell, Soldier: The Military Life of a Revolutionary at War* (London, 2004) and Frank Kitson, *Old Ironsides: The Military Biography of Oliver Cromwell* (London, 2007).

[3] The main secondary accounts include the relevant parts of Ian Gentles, *The New Model Army in England, Ireland and Scotland, 1645-53* (Oxford, 1992), Robert Matthews, *'A Storme out of Wales': The Second Civil War in South Wales, 1648* (Newcastle, 2012), Stephen Bull and Mike Seed, *Bloody Preston: The Battle of Preston, 1648* (Lancaster, 1998), Malcolm Wanklyn,

Decisive Battles of the English Civil War (Barnsley, 2006) and Stephen Bull, *'A General Plague of Madness': The Civil Wars in Lancashire, 1640-1660* (Lancaster, 2009).

[4] Hugh Peters's letter printed in *A Copy of his Highness Prince Charles his Letter to the Commanders of his Majesty's Forces* (1648), p. 4.

[5] W.C. Abbott (ed.), *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (4 vols, Cambridge, Mass., 1937-47), I, p. 634.

[6] For starkly different assessments of Cromwell's campaign in Ireland, see the condemnatory Micheál Ó Siochrú, *God's Executioner, Oliver Cromwell and the Conquest of Ireland* (London, 2008), the much more positive assessment of Tom Reilly, *Cromwell: An Honourable Enemy* (London, 2000), a substantially revised edition of which is in preparation, and the more neutral James Scott Wheeler, *Cromwell in Ireland* (Dublin, 1999).

[7] For a reassessment of Dunbar and its links with Cromwell's unfolding Scottish campaign and with the Worcester campaign, see Peter Gaunt, 'Oliver Cromwell's last battle', *Transactions of the Worcestershire Archaeological Society*, series 3 20 (2006), reprinted in David Hallmark (ed.), *The Battle of Worcester, 1651: A Collection of Essays on the History of the Battle of Worcester* (Worcester, 2012). For other modern accounts of Dunbar, see Stuart Reid, *Dunbar, 1650: Cromwell's Most Famous Victory* (Oxford, 2004) and Peter Reese, *Cromwell's Masterstroke: The Battle of Dunbar, 1650* (Barnsley, 2006)

[8] When he decided to do this is unclear – perhaps not until spring or early summer 1651, though at a lecture given at the Cromwell Association 2014 AGM in Worcester, Professor Malcolm Wanklyn argued with supporting evidence that Cromwell took the decision at least to force a crossing of the Firth of Forth in autumn 1650, soon after Dunbar.

[9] Gaunt, 'Oliver Cromwell's last battle', *passim*.

[10] Abbott, *Writings and Speeches*, II, pp. 443-45.

[11] For accounts of Cromwell's campaign in Scotland, see also John Grainger, *Cromwell Against the Scots: The Last Anglo-Scottish War, 1650-52* (East Linton, 1997) and the relevant sections of R. Scott Spurlock, *Cromwell and Scotland: Conquest and Religion, 1650-60* (Edinburgh, 2007) and Stuart Reid, *Crown, Covenant and Cromwell: The Civil Wars in Scotland, 1639-51* (Barnsley, 2012).

[12] Gaunt, 'Oliver Cromwell's last battle', *passim*. For other modern accounts of the campaign and battle, see several of Malcolm Atkin's books, including *Cromwell's Crowning Mercy: The Battle of Worcester* (Stroud, 1998) and *Worcester 1651* (Barnsley, 2008), and parts of his broader studies of *The Civil War in Worcestershire* (Stroud, 1995) and *Worcestershire Under Arms* (Barnsley, 2004).

[13] All the accounts listed in note 2 explore Cromwell's military career during the main civil war. There are many broad military histories of the war, providing a wider context, but amongst others, see the classic account of Peter Young and Richard Holmes, *The English Civil War. A Military History of the Three Civil Wars, 1642-1651* (London, 1974), Malcolm Wanklyn and Frank Jones, *A Military History of the English Civil War* (Harlow, 2005) and Peter Gaunt, *The English Civil War. A Military History* (London, 2014). Cromwell's movements and itinerary throughout his military career, in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland, are reconstructed and charted in Peter Gaunt, *The Cromwellian Gazetteer* (Stroud, 1987).

[14] The neatest, most succinct and most recent iteration of this interpretation is Clive Holmes, *Why Was Charles I Executed?* (London, 2006), chapter 4.

[15] For a good, recent attack upon the resource-based explanations and an argument in favour of exploring operational factors (though it does not go into great detail on that alternative, operational interpretation), see Wanklyn and Jones, *Military History of the English Civil War*, chapter 2.

Peter Gaunt is Professor of Early Modern History at the University of Chester and President of the Cromwell Association.

PHILIP SKIPPON AND THE LESSONS LEARNT FROM
CONTINENTAL CONFLICTS IN THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

'this little Judgement which I have through my industry obtained unto, In
Forraigne Countries'

By Dr Ismini Pells

At a general muster of the earl of Essex's army at Maidenhead on 12 January
1643, Sergeant-Major-General Philip Skippon assured the men paraded
before him that:

> Gentlemen I must tell you, that your cause is so good, that God had
> never such a worke in hand, since the first Creation; And for the
> better encouragement of you all, I do protest and vow unto you, that
> as God hath beene pleased to infect upon me this little Judgement
> which I have through my industry obtained unto, in Forraigne
> Countries.[1]

Born into a minor Norfolk gentry family around 1598,[2] Philip Skippon had
begun his military career at a young age in about 1615 by joining the English
regiments in the Netherlands who supported the Dutch Revolt against
Spanish rule. He then joined Sir Horace Vere's expedition to the Palatinate
in 1620, before returning to the Netherlands. During his time in Dutch
service, he was probably also seconded to the regiments led by Sir Charles
Morgan in the service of Christian IV of Denmark in 1627–9.[3] On his
return to England, Skippon was appointed captain-leader of the City of
London's Artillery Company on 23 October 1639.[4] As part of parliament's
manoeuvres to wrest control of the militia out of Charles I's hands, Skippon
was appointed commander-in-chief of the London Trained Bands in
January 1642, before going on to be appointed sergeant-major-general (the
rank with responsibility for the entire infantry) of the earl of Essex's
parliamentarian army on 16 November 1642, and of the New Model Army
on 17 February 1645.[5] By the time Skippon addressed Essex's men at
Maidenhead in 1643, therefore, the wealth of military involvement Skippon
had accumulated during his time in 'Forraigne Countries' made him one of
parliament's most experienced commanders.

Historians frequently cite the array of military talent available to both sides
at the outbreak of the Civil War as a result of the opportunities provided by
Continental conflicts preceding it, but it is the aim of this article to use three

different themes to explore the impact of Skippon's European military
experience upon his conduct in the Civil War in England in more depth.
The themes that I will focus on are: siege warfare, pitched battles and
strategy, and religion and morality. I have chosen the first theme because, as
Barbara Donagan argued, sieges generally receive less attention than pitched
battles and are often placed in a local, rather than national, context or used
as an example to demonstrate the heroism of defenders. Yet, although the
long, drawn-out nature of sieges does not make for compelling reading, the
outcome could have an important impact on national strategy.[6] As Donagan
has provided an authoritative account of codes of conduct and the military-
civilian relationship in siege warfare in her own work, I shall not enter into
any discussion of these aspects here.[7] Nevertheless, in spite of what has
been said above, in more cases than not the outcome of war is decided by
pitched battles and it is for this reason I have decided to take pitched battles
and the role these played in Skippon's strategic decision-making as my
second theme. Finally, the rationale behind the selection of my third theme,
religion and morality, lies in Charles Carlton's argument that too many
historians focus on strategy and tactics at the expense of the 'actualities of
war'.[8] Quoting Tolstoy, Carlton claimed to be more interested to know
'under the influence of what feeling one soldier kills another than to know
how the armies were arranged'.[9] Carlton criticised historians for focusing on
generals at the expense of those under their command and pointed out that
in order to be successful, a general must bridge the gap between himself and
his men. One way of doing this is by encouraging them to identify with his
own vision of the war.[10] Thus, in the limited space available here, I will
outline some of the ways Skippon sought to maintain discipline and morale
amongst his men by convincing them that their cause was 'so good, that
God had never such a worke in hand'.

Siege Warfare

In 1632, John Cruso had observed that 'The actions of the modern warres
consist chiefly in sieges, assaults, sallies, skirmishes etc., and so affoard but
few set battels'.[11] Indeed, Skippon's Continental career had been dominated
by siege warfare. His time in the Palatinate in 1620–3 had largely been spent
ensconced in the stronghold of Frankenthal, whilst the English troops in
Danish service had been caught in strangleholds at Stade in 1627–8 and
Glückstadt over winter 1628–9.[12] During his service in the Netherlands,

Skippon experienced siege warfare from the other side of the walls. He participated in the attempted relief of Breda in 1624–5 and the Dutch offensives against s'Hertogenbosch in 1629, Maastricht in 1632 and Breda again in 1637.[13] Skippon went on to advise his soldiers in 1645 to spend their free time whilst in the leaguer 'inspecting the trenches and siegeworks to enable better service'.[14] He had perhaps been following his own maxim and inspecting the trenches and siegeworks at Maastricht when he 'disswaded and advised' Sir Edward Harwood, colonel of one of the English regiments in the Netherlands, to leave off inspecting the enemy's works after Harwood had been shot in the foot. Alas, Harwood, in his somewhat conspicuous scarlet coat, refused and was shot through the heart.[15]

Skippon thus returned from Europe with an intimate knowledge of siegeworks and fortifications and it is not surprising that, in his capacity as sergeant-major-general of the London Trained Bands, he was appointed on 7 September 1642 to lead a committee appointed by the Common Council to inspect the city and its liberties and consider the advisability of blocking unused passages and building watch houses for the city's defence.[16] On 18 October, during the run-up to the battle of Edgehill, the Common Council ordered Skippon and his committee to suggest improvements to the city's fortifications and following the battle, with fears growing that Charles might march on London, the House of Commons sent Sir Peter Wentworth and Cornelius Holland on 5 November to visit Skippon and find out if his recommendations were being carried out.[17] Skippon's close oversight of the new fortifications is seen in his inspection of the forts near Bermondsey Street and St Thomas Waterings in Southwark on 10 November.[18] The London fortifications consisted of ramparts and trenches around the city and its suburbs, with watch houses placed at strategic points and posts, chains and barriers blocking important streets into and around the capital.[19] The nature of these defences suggests that Skippon had drawn upon his experiences in the Netherlands for the siegeworks constructed under his supervision. It was the Dutch who discovered that walls made of earth and turf of sufficient thickness and suitably revetted could be an economical and efficient substitute for masonry, and, if this wall was protected by timber palisades, it was also just as difficult to scale.[20] However, it soon became apparent that the London defences, thrown up in haste in the face of the panic surrounding an expected royalist attack, would be inadequate for what was now clearly going to be a prolonged affair, not a conflict that would be

over by Christmas as first expected. Therefore, in spring 1643, new, more substantial works were designed in conjunction with engineers with European expertise and which closely resembled the Spanish siegeworks at Breda in 1624–5.[21] By this stage though, Skippon had been appointed to the earl of Essex's army and it is unlikely he had any substantial input into the new defences.[22]

Following his appointment as sergeant-major-general of Essex's army in November 1642, Skippon's first significant offensive operation was the siege of Reading in April 1643. On 15 April, Essex summoned the governor of Reading, Sir Arthur Aston, to yield the town upon quarter. When Aston refused, Essex unsuccessfully attempted to persuade him to send the women and children out of the town, which, by the rules of warfare, would now be subject to a storm.[23] However, Essex's council of war favoured starving the town into submission instead.[24] Skippon was presumably complicit in this resolution, as it was traditional for the sergeant-major-general to be president of the council of war.[25] Essex put Skippon in charge of the approach works for the siege and Skippon seems to have carried out his responsibilities competently enough, as the approaches proceeded apace.[26] Ultimately, bad morale in the royalist garrison, after falling masonry knocked Aston senseless, forced Aston's replacement, Richard Feilding, to surrender on 26 April.[27] However, the decision to besiege Reading had upset the London public, who had hoped for a quick victory and the press was forced to justify it on the basis that the town was strongly fortified and thus a storm would incur a significant loss of men.[28]

At Reading, Essex (who too had served under Vere in the Palatinate in 1620 and in the English regiments in Dutch service in 1621–5) and Skippon seem to have been following the cautious and conservative siege tactics of Maurice of Nassau.[29] These had been superseded by those espoused by Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden. According to *The Swedish Intelligencer*, in taking a town Gustavus 'would not stand entrenching and building redoubts at a mile's distance; but clap down with his army presently, about cannon shot from it. There he would begin his approaches, get to their walls, batter, and storm presently'.[30] In the New Model Army, generals largely preferred to follow Gustavus's methods and storm, even if there was only a marginal chance of success, rather than to use gradual approaches, which were slow but sure. This guaranteed a quicker outcome and, perhaps counter-

intuitively, fewer lives were lost in one brief and bloody struggle than in the sickness that almost inevitably accompanied a long siege.[31] Indeed, lying on the ground in the frost and rain before Reading lowered Essex's army's resistance to disease, and a sickness, probably influenza or typhus, ripped through his troops, killing many and preventing the rest from 'doing any great service in the field'.[32]

At the siege of Oxford in May 1646, however, even Sir Thomas Fairfax, whose 'suceesse hath run through a line crosse to that of old Souldiery, of long Sieges and slow approaches' was forced into a more conservative approach.[33] The rendezvous before Oxford on 1 May marked Skippon's first return to active campaigning with the New Model Army, following his serious wounding at the battle of Naseby a year earlier and he was greeted with 'much joy and many acclamations of the Souldiers'.[34] Fairfax, viewing the strength of the city's defences, 'concluded, that this was no place to be taken at a running pull, but likely rather to prove a businesse of time, hazard and industry'.[35] His council of war set up their headquarters at Headington Hill, where the construction of 'a very large and great Work, or Intrenchment, of capacity to receive and lodge three thousand men' was entrusted to Skippon.[36] The approaches were constructed from the fort on Headington Hill to Saint Clements and the 'management and carrying on of these Works, Lines and Approaches, was recommended to the care and skill of Major-general Skippon, who went through the same with much dexterity'.[37] Despite some determination on the part of the defending garrison, on 24 June, the royalist capital was surrendered to the victorious parliamentarians.[38]

In fact, unless it was possible to make an immediate breach and assault, besieging generals were often forced into drawn-out affairs by the deficiency in English engineers.[39] Although there was one company of pioneers attached to the New Model Army, these were unskilled labourers rather than trained sappers of artificers. The ranks of the pioneers were often reserved for punishment for soldiers who had committed crimes worthy of disgrace.[40] The lack of engineering skills was particularly apparent when the besieged stronghold was surrounded by a ditch or moat, as Skippon found to his cost at Boarstall House in June 1645.[41] In addition, Englishmen were notoriously reluctant to get their hands dirty. Part of Gustavus Adolphus's success had rested on the fact that he had been 'a great spademan' and

obliged his soldiers 'to work more for nothing than the States of Holland
could get wrought in three years, though they should bestow a ton of gold
every year'.[42] Yet civil war commanders found, like the Dutch, it was
generally necessary to give extra pay to soldiers to labour on siegeworks.[43]
At Oxford, Skippon's fort at Headington Hill was 'finished in three or four
dayes time, to admiration, the souldiers being paid so much by the rod for
working threat'.[44]

Pitched Battles and Strategy

The dominant role of siege warfare alluded to by Cruso was such that
during the entire time that Skippon served on the Continent, he did not
participate in a single major pitched battle. This had some serious
implications for his strategic decision-making during the Civil War. Skippon
must share some of the criticisms levelled at the earl of Essex. It is
customary to comment on Essex's 'slowness', 'want of energy' and
'incompetence', that he was a 'mediocre general' who had a 'complete
inability to grasp the elements of strategy'.[45] Yet the truth of the matter was
that Essex and 'the clique of professional soldiers and old cronies on his
general staff' were:

> …steeped in a military culture acquired from campaigning in the Low
> Countries where the enclosed landscape criss-crossed by numerous
> watercourses and dotted with powerful fortresses made for a form of
> warfare that was ponderous, immensely expensive in terms of military
> resources and almost invariably inconclusive.[46]

The most recent model of warfare was now reflected in the fast-moving
style of Gustavus Adolphus's Swedish army in which victory was sought
through pitched battles, espoused by the likes of Sir William Waller and
Prince Rupert, rather than the strategy employed by Essex and Skippon.[47]

Skippon seems to have been complicit in Essex's most questioned strategic
moves, not least in Cornwall during summer 1644. In May 1644, Essex and
Waller's armies had attempted to encircle the royalist headquarters at
Oxford but before they had accomplished this, Charles fled westwards.[48]
The parliamentarians set off in pursuit, but in a council of officers held at
Chipping Norton it was agreed that Waller would continue the chase alone,

whilst Essex went to relieve Lyme, which Rupert's brother Prince Maurice had begun besieging on 20 April.[49] Despite the fact that this has been dubbed 'a strategic blunder of the first order', as Skippon and the other officers pointed out to the House of Lords, Essex's army had the stronger infantry, which was better suited to siege warfare, whilst Waller had the stronger cavalry, which would be able to chase faster after the king.[50] Therefore, with his 'accustomed wariness and skill', Essex, 'with slow and settled Marches', made his way into Dorset without opposition.[51] He reached Blandford on 12 June, forcing Maurice to abandon Lyme. From there, Essex secured the surrender of Weymouth and resolved to capture the Queen, who had taken refuge at Exeter, but Henrietta Maria fled for the Netherlands before he arrived, so Essex decided to head for Plymouth, which was besieged by Sir Richard Grenville. Grenville abandoned the siege upon Essex's approach and withdrew into Cornwall.[52] According to the London diarist Thomas Juxon, Skippon supported Essex's decision to follow Grenville into Cornwall, against the advice of Sir William Balfour and Sir Philip Stapleton. Apparently, 'high words passed on both sides' and the decision upset Stapleton so much that he obtained leave to return to London.[53]

If there was a 'strategic blunder of the first order', then this was it. Charles had defeated Waller at Cropredy Bridge on 29 June and, concerned for his wife's safety, set off towards Exeter. He arrived too late to see the queen but joined forces with Maurice and tailed Essex.[54] When Essex marched into Lostwithiel on 2 August he had become trapped in a county hostile to parliament, with royalist forces on both sides.[55] As the royalists closed in, Essex abandoned Lostwithiel and withdrew to Fowey.[56] Viewing the cause as lost, on the night of 31 August, Essex ordered Balfour's cavalry to break out through the encircling royalist cavalry, which they accomplished without mishap. Meanwhile, Essex, Lord Roberts and several of the chief commanders fled by fishing boat to safety at Plymouth. Skippon and the infantry were simply left stranded and with little choice than to surrender.[57] Despite a royalist escort, hostile locals plundered parliament's soldiers as they made their way back through Cornwall and many died from hunger, exposure and exhaustion.[58] Of the 6,000 men who marched out of Fowey, it was estimated that only 1,000–2,000 made it to parliament-controlled Southampton.[59] However, that any made it at all was largely down to Skippon's leadership.[60] Parliament encouraged Skippon to use 'your great

influence with the soldiers to keep them together and keep up their spirits'.[61] According to one of his officers, Skippon 'stoutly urged the Condition severall times' and another noted that: 'In all this trouble, I observed Major Generall Skippon in his carriage: but never did I see any man so patient, so humble, and so truly wise, and valiant in all his actions'.[62]

Despite Skippon's strategic weaknesses, he enjoyed many successes with his infantry when it actually came to pitched battles, such as the first and second battles of Newbury. At the first battle on 20 September 1643, although neither side gained a clear advantage, Skippon's London Trained Bands withstood the hottest action and turned the tide of the battle in parliament's favour, forcing the royalists to retreat, leaving open the parliamentarians' route back to London.[63] At the second battle, a year later on 27 October, the earl of Manchester may have scuppered parliament's chances of outright victory by refusing to attack Shaw House but Skippon, with Essex's foot and the Trained Bands, succeeded in capturing the village of Speen.[64] Clarendon was of the opinion that much of the London Trained Bands' success in battle was down to the 'readiness, order, and dexterity in the use of their arms, which hath been so much neglected'.[65] Essex had ordered the officers in his 'regular' army 'not to bussy them [their men] in practizing the cerimonious forms of Military discipline, onely let them be well instructed in the necessary rudiments of Warre'.[66] However, as Keith Roberts argued, prior to the Civil War Skippon had drilled the Artillery Company officers of the London Trained Bands in Dutch infantry practices, which enabled them to keep the discipline amongst their soldiers necessary for set-piece battles.[67] Drill was perfectly suited to the Artillery Company's civic duties and the Company were keen to learn 'after the modern and best fashion and instruction then in use'.[68]

Skippon's skills as a drill instructor had been learnt in the Netherlands. As a captain, it was his responsibility to 'instruct, & informe his souldiers in the point of their duties, to traine them up, and to exercise them well in the use of their armes'.[69] Moreover, the service of the English troops in the Netherlands was dominated by garrison duty in strategically important towns and so the Dutch army used drill as a weapon to combat the tedium and indiscipline between engagements.[70] Contemporaries credited the Prince of Orange, Maurice of Nassau, with establishing 'an uniforme and Order and Discipline' in his army and present-day historians have hailed the Dutch

as the first nation to establish a 'modern army' by creating objective
standards for training and commanding soldiers.[71] It is true that many
European armies underwent similar changes at this time and the
development of these changes can be traced back to long before Maurice's
time.[72] However, what is important here is that in order to overcome the
mighty Spanish army, Maurice turned to tactics based on classical models,
which required more time in training and experience in teaching, especially
amongst the infantry.[73] The pikes and muskets that superseded bows and
bills did not necessitate the same years of training and sustained good health
to be militarily effective, but the need for drilling as whole units, rather than
as individuals, increased. Muskets and pikes required careful co-ordination
in order to avoid terrible accidents during the firing and reloading of the
muskets and to prevent the long pikes becoming more of a hindrance than a
help.[74]

Skippon's ability to turn raw recruits into trained soldiers capable of making
a significant contribution to the successful outcome of a pitched battle
reached its zenith with the battle of Naseby on 14 June 1645. In spring
1645, the New Model Army had been formed from the remnants of the
armies of Essex, Manchester and Waller, but the amalgamation had
produced only 7,174 infantrymen of the 14,400 required by the New Model
Ordinance.[75] The deficit was made up by conscripts from the London area
and the task of training these conscripts fell to Skippon.[76] As G. Goold
Walker argued: 'Historians are apt to give the entire credit for the "New
Model" to Cromwell' but it was Skippon who trained and led the infantry of
this army, considered 'the most efficient force that England had produced
for centuries and the direct ancestor of the Regular Army of today'.[77]
Naseby marked both the first major encounter and the acid test for the new
army. Given the political opposition to the New Model's formation, defeat
might have resulted in the whole project falling apart.[78] Soon after the battle
commenced, Skippon's infantry lay exposed on the left wing after Rupert's
cavalry had shattered the parliamentarian horse under Henry Ireton on that
side. They were hard pressed by the royalist infantry under Sir Jacob Astley,
forcing Skippon to bring up his reserve forces.[79] In many ways, as Glenn
Foard argues: 'This was THE decisive moment of the English Civil War'
because if Skippon's reserves were broken, the battle would have been
lost.[80] This is a view shared by Malcolm Wanklyn, who maintains that by
checking the royalist advance and pushing them back, it was the reserves

which enabled Cromwell to launch his battle-winning move.[81] Skippon's achievement was remarkable because as he brought up the reserves, a musket ball shot through his armour and lodged itself in his stomach, leaving him with an eight-inch-long wound under his ribs on his left side.[82] Fairfax urged Skippon to leave the field but he refused, answering that 'He would not go so long as a Man would stand'.[83] Parliament demonstrated Skippon's value to their cause by sending him doctors, as well as his own physician and surgeon, to tend him in Northampton at public expense.[84] It was a month before Skippon could be moved back to London and nearly a year before he returned to active campaigning.[85]

Religion and Morality

Discipline was an internal, as well as external process. In addition to instructing his men in Dutch drill methods, Skippon turned to the religious and moral concepts that had inspired him during his time on the Continent to make the rank-and-file militarily effective. Whatever the causes and nature of the civil war, as Carlton argued:

> Of one thing there can be no doubt – they were a complex series of wars, in which men, and women, killed and were killed, were wounded, and had their bodies maimed, and had to endure some of the most traumatic experiences any human being can face.[86]

In such circumstances, fear of battle would have been a perfectly natural emotion, even for those committed to the cause. Additionally, parliament frequently turned to conscription to make up the numbers in its armies and the commitment of such men to the parliamentarian cause was questionable and desertion common.[87] In order to win over his inexperienced and, in some cases, uncommitted soldiers, Skippon authored three devotional books for use in the field, dedicated to all soldiers 'of what degree soever'.[88] These books were based on material originally written by Skippon during his time in the Netherlands, from which he extracted the core messages 'for more brevity, and better portage' and highlighted passages that were particularly pertinent for soldiers.[89]

Skippon, who had fought exclusively for Protestant princes during his European military service, believed that the royalist armies had, like the

Continental Catholic armies, been raised for the 'Ruine and destruction of the Protestant Religion'.[90] Throughout his books, Skippon encouraged his men to buy into this belief and reassured them that their cause was 'the Cause of God, because his pure worship according to his Word is stood for, because we have been, and are grievously persecuted by tyrannous Idolaters'.[91] Consequently, 'the Lord will give us true valour, boldnesse, or courage of heart and enable us to fight resolutely against his and our enemies'.[92] Preachers such as Samuel Bachiler had encouraged the soldiers of the English regiments to liken the Dutch cause to that of the Israelites' against the Canaanites.[93] Similarly, Skippon likened the royalists to the Israelites' Old Testament enemies.[94] In *The Christian Centurians Observations*, Skippon revealed that when he had been 'in most extreame perplexity of spirit, and in great outward distresse, all threatening uttermost misery, even without appearance of remedy; knowing no other way to comfort and settle himselfe' in the past, he had turned to God's promises and 'choyce places of Scripture', which 'upheld him, he had else fainted utterly'.[95] In order to help his soldiers in similar difficulties, in *A Salve For Every Sore*, Skippon selected promises that God had made to his people and assured his soldiers that God 'will not fayle thee nor forsake thee', even 'In temporall things, in greatest outward calamities, when we see no way of helpe'.[96] Skippon laid particular emphasis on God's promises of assistance in situations specifically affecting soldiers, such as being sick, wounded, taken captive or facing death.[97]

True Treasure, which was intended as a companion to *A Salve for Every Sore*, contained thirty simple catechisms to help govern his soldiers' religious and moral lives.[98] The godly living favoured by Skippon (such as fasting, praying aloud and abstaining from alcohol, tobacco and whores) not only promoted a sense of unity but in addition was a visible sign of membership of God's elect, which would underline the divine sanction of the parliamentary cause.[99] The Cavalier ethos was one of social superiority that gave royalists natural self-confidence, but by encouraging his men to be a godly army, Skippon aimed to give his soldiers a sense of self-righteousness that boosted their own morale.[100] The royalists had a reputation of being able to 'out-swear the French, out-drink the Dutch, and out-paramour the Turk' and were often known as the 'Dammees', due to their reputation for prodigious blasphemy.[101] Skippon argued in *The Christian Centurians Observations* that the royalists' behaviour made their calling parliamentarians 'Puritaine' or

'Roundhead' badges of honour.[102] Furthermore, Skippon listed atrocities apparently committed by the royalist armies.[103] London citizens had devoured pamphlets that regaled, in gruesome detail, stories of the atrocities of the Catholic armies on the Continent.[104] Consequently, plundering royalists were labelled 'cavaliers', which alluded to the notorious Spanish cavalry.[105] By claiming that the royalists 'devour, rob and spoile all your goods, and by inhumaine tortures, would inforce you to confesse what you know not', Skippon was reinforcing this analogy between the royalists and Continental Catholic armies.[106] Of course, both sides committed plunder in the civil war and Skippon may have been perpetuating an inaccurate reflection of royalist conduct. Margaret Griffin pointed out that the 'average reader of English Civil War history might be startled to learn' that royalist armies held daily prayer services, fast days and sermons, whilst swearing and blasphemy were forbidden and drunkenness considered immoral.[107] However, in the civil war, 'mythologies won as much support for a cause as facts'.[108]

It is impossible to tell how far Skippon's men brought into his belief that the parliamentarian cause was God's cause. It is unknown how widely Skippon's books were distributed, and the ideas expressed in them were hardly unique. Indeed, to argue that God was on one's side was 'a near universal view' in the seventeenth century and a bipartisan appeal in the civil war.[109] Other parliamentarian publications, such as *The Souldiers Pocket Bible* and *The Souldiers Catechisme* fulfilled similar functions to Skippon's works, making it impossible to tell how far Skippon was personally responsible for inculcating soldiers with religious ideology.[110] Moreover, devotional works were not just produced for the edification of the rank-and-file but also as propaganda to show how religious one side's soldiers were.[111] Nevertheless, printed on coarse, hardy paper, folded into a duodecimo, with faults in the collation and inelegant print, these books were evidently designed to be produced cheaply, in large numbers, in a format that would survive the wear and tear of the field and fit neatly into a breast pocket. Many soldiers may have been illiterate but it was common for officers to read aloud to their men.[112] Skippon seems to have followed the educational theory of Ramism, popular with 'Puritan' ministers, which arranged knowledge methodically and proceeded by way of dichotomies for easy teaching and learning.[113] He also used the system of numbering his guidelines and organising them under headings that had been developed for sermon memorisation.[114]

PHILIP SKIPPON AND THE LESSONS LEARNT FROM CONTINENTAL CONFLICTS IN THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

The behaviour of Skippon's men, even in the New Model Army, was undoubtedly far from angelic.[115] However, the reports of the most destructive behaviour date from the early stages of the war, when Essex's *Lawes and Ordinances of War* were issued in response to complaints of disorderly conduct in September 1642.[116] These *Lawes and Ordinances*, reissued by Fairfax for the New Model Army, were very similar to the Dutch laws and ordinances issued in 1590 and laid out directives concerning religious offences (such as blasphemy and absence from sermons and public prayer) and moral offences (such as drunkeness, rape, adultery, theft, and murder), as well as military offences (such as neglecting to maintain arms, absence without leave, corresponding with the enemy and sleeping or drunkenness on watch). Punishments included boring through the tongue, imprisonment and, in many instances, death.[117] The implementation of the *Lawes and Ordinances* was entirely down to the initiative of the commanding officer of a regiment but it is likely that Skippon was rigorous in enforcing them, as he commanded his men to 'punish vice strictly'.[118] The parliamentarian newsbook *The Compleate Intelligencer and Resolver* described the 'strict order taken for the punishing those that are absent from their Quarters, Pillaging and Plundering the Country' and the 'Prayers and expositions of the Scripture at the Parad every morning and evening for an houre together' when Skippon was in command at Newport Pagnell in winter 1643–4 in Essex's absence.[119] Essex's infantry certainly seems to have improved over time, which may have been partly down to Skippon. The royalist Sir Edward Walker came to be of the opinion that 'to speak the Truth of him [Essex] and his Army, they are not guilty of those barbarous and ungentlemanlike Qualities which most of Waller's Army are possessed withal', an opinion with which Clarendon concurred.[120]

Conclusion

In the chaos and disorder surrounding the mobilisation for war in 1642, the talent pool of experienced military personnel who had cut their teeth fighting in the armies of Continental Europe was an invaluable resource that both sides drew upon. Men such as Skippon, who had a developed understanding of siegeworks, strategy, together with training, commanding and motivating men, were keenly sought after, a fact testified to by the king's attempts to win Skippon over to his side on more than one occasion.[121] Experience, however, had its limits. In the case of Skippon,

schooled in the Dutch army with its ponderous and often inconclusive warfare, his strategy is seemingly unimaginative in comparison with some of his less risk-averse contemporaries who had studied the lightning-fast tactics of Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden. At times, Skippon was clearly limited by the resources at his disposal, as the deficiency in English engineers available to besieging armies demonstrated, but it does not seem unfair to suggest that his strategic decision-making was nothing if not conservative. In contrast, the drill and discipline instilled in the Dutch army made Skippon a 'top trainer' of troops. His ability to call upon trained and disciplined troops gave him a distinct advantage when it actually came to pitched battle and contributed to the successful outcomes at Newbury and Naseby.

Perhaps the greatest lesson Skippon learnt from his European military experiences, however, was how to bridge the gap between himself and his men by understanding their fears and needs. Skippon's empathy with the private soldiers was no doubt helped by the fact that he had once been one himself. According to Clarendon, Skippon had begun his military career in the Netherlands as a 'common soldier' before he had 'raised himself to the degree of a captain and to the reputation of a good officer'.[122] As Aristotle's maxim put it, 'he could never (*præ-esse*) well lead, who knew not (*subesse*) well to follow'.[123] Skippon turned to the passages in scripture that had comforted him in his hour of need to inspire and reassure his men, and to the moral maxims that had given him a sense of his own righteousness to boost their confidence and morale. Whether or not Skippon's men ever fully subscribed to his vision of the war, he certainly seems to have won their respect. His plain style, address to his men as 'Fellow souldiers and friends' and, above all, his reputation for immense personal bravery – from the 'sore shot, through his necke, with which he was staggred, & for the present lost the use of his left arme' at Breda, to his refusal to leave the field at Naseby – made him something of a 'soldier's favourite'.[124] The 'little Judgement' that Skippon had through his 'industry obtained unto, in Forraigne Counties' was, in truth, a simple one: 'Soldiers will follow men they like, they respect, and with whom they can identify'.[125]

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[1]   P. Skippon, *A Most Joyfull Declaration Made by Colonell Skipon* (London: 1643), p. [4].

2   When Skippon's father Luke wrote his will in 1638, he claimed Skippon
     was forty years old, indicating that he was born around 1598 – see
     Norfolk Record Office, Probate Records, MF/RO 326, Archdeaconry of
     Norwich Probate Records, Will Register, 1638-1639, fol. 79 (Will of
     Luke Skippon of West Lexham).

3   In his dedication to Skippon in *A short Method for the Easie Resolving of any
     Militarie Question propounded* (Cambridge: 1639), John Cruso refers to
     Skippon's 'foure and twentie years' of military experience in 'Denmark,
     Germanie, the low countries and elsewhere'. This would put the start of
     Skippon's military career around 1615, when he would have been about
     sixteen to seventeen years old.

4   London Metropolitan Archives [hereafter LMA], Corporation of
     London, COL/CA/01/01/057 (Repertories of the Court of Aldermen, 6
     November 1638 - 25 October 1639), fol. 328.

5   LMA, Corporation of London, COL/CC/01/01/041 (Journal of the
     Common Council, 24 March 1640 - 2 June 1649), fols. 14v-15 and 41;
     W. H. Coates, A. S. Young and V. F. Snow, eds, *The Private Journals of the
     Long Parliament* (3 vols, London: 1982-92), I, pp. 30-1; LMA, Corporation
     of London, COL/AD/01/041 (City Letter Book, 1640-1647), fol. 52; C.
     H. Firth and R. S. Rait, *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642 – 1660*
     (London: 1911) [hereafter *A&O*], I, p. 614.

6   B. Donagan, *War in England 1642-1649* (Oxford: 2008), p. 293.

7   Ibid., pp. 295-388.

8   C. Carlton, *Going to the Wars: The Experience of the British Civil Wars 1638-
     51* (London: 1992), pp. 3-4.

9   Ibid., p. 3.

10   Ibid., p. 180.

11   J. Cruso, *Militarie Instructions for the Cavallrie* (Cambridge: 1632), p. 105.

12   Honourable Artillery Company Archives, The Ancient Vellum Book, fol.
     13v; E. A. Beller, 'The Military Expedition of Sir Charles Morgan to
     Germany, 1627-9', *The English Historical Review*, 43 (1928), pp. 528-39, at
     pp. 532-3 and 536.

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     1637), pp. [v] and 23-4; H. Hexham, *A Historicall Relation Of the Famous
     Siege of the Busse, And the suprising of Wesell* (Delft: 1630), p. [46]; H.
     Hexham, *A Iournall, Of the taking in of Venlo, Roermont, Strale, the memorable*

Seige of Mastricht, the Towne & Castle of Limburch vnder the able, and wise Conduct of his Excie: the Prince of Orange, Anno 1632 (London: 1633), pp. 9 and 25-7.

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[15] E. Harwood, *The Advice of That Worthy Commander, Sir Ed: Harwood, Colonel* (London: 1642), p. [x].

[16] LMA, Corporation of London, COL/AD/01/041 (Letter Book QQ, 1640-1647), fol. 48.

[17] LMA, Corporation of London, COL/CC/01/01/040 (Journal of the Common Council, 19 December 1639 - 11 January 1641), fol. 360v; LMA, Corporation of London, COL/CC/01/01/041 (Journal of the Common Council, 24 March 1640 - 2 June 1649), fol. 40v; LMA, Corporation of London, COL/AD/01/041 (City Letter Book QQ, 1640-1647), fol. 51; *JHC*, II, p. 837.

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[19] Ibid., p. 275.

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Ismini Pells has recently completed a doctorate at the University of Cambridge. Her thesis examined the religious and political thought and military career of Philip Skippon. She is a Fellow of the Wolfson Centre for Care, Welfare and Medicine during the British Civil Wars at the National Civil War Centre at Newark Museum and sits on the Council for the Society for Army Historical Research.

CROMWELLIAN BRITAIN XXV: PUTNEY, GREATER LONDON

By Serrie Meakins

Last year, as part of his Russian degree, my son spent eight months in Moscow. Whilst he was there, he kept a blog of his experiences and I was amused to read one of them, in which he was comparing staid, respectable Putney to his new and exciting residence. He wrote, 'The last time anything of excitement happened in Putney was in 1647, when a bloke called Oliver Cromwell stopped at a church to have a chat with a bunch of fellows called Levellers.. And that was it, no violence, no bloodshed, just a rigorous debate followed by some ardent prayers.'

It struck me then that, despite the levity of tone, he has a point. The Putney Debates are not Putney's only claim to fame but they were a magnificent example of the triumph of reason. The debates saw ordinary soldiers take on their generals to argue, among other things, the revolutionary idea that it was morally right to give the vote to all adult men – the first such debate in modern political history anywhere in the world. My students at Putney High School and I were involved in the 360th anniversary celebrations a few years ago and I would urge anyone reading this to consider paying a visit to the lovely little exhibition in St Mary's Church on the bridge at Putney, which was created for the anniversary. The exhibition focuses on Putney's role in the debates and why it is such a significant location.

So, why Putney? Putney has a long history, owing its importance to its geographical position by the Thames, at a point relatively free of marshland so that ford, ferry or bridge crossings were feasible. Since 1962, archaeological excavations have been ongoing and Stone Age and Neolithic evidence has been found. River finds have revealed a significant Iron Age settlement in the current Wandsworth/Putney section of the river. Roman Putney has been extensively excavated to reveal a thriving agricultural and fishing community, possibly a roadside settlement in control of the river crossing. There is less evidence for Putney's history after the Roman administration ended, but clearly the area continued to be inhabited and Putney is referred to in 1086 in the Domesday Book as part of the entry for Mortlake Manor.

Of course, it is Thomas Cromwell who put Putney on the map – the local boy made good, who was later granted the Lordship of the Manor of

Wimbledon. A less well known Tudor local boy was Nicholas West, born in 1461, probably son of a fishmonger. He was another protégée of Cardinal Wolsey and rose to become Bishop of Ely. Just before his death in 1533 he paid for the beautiful chantry chapel (which still survives) to be built onto St Mary's Church. It is, in fact in the Tudor period that Putney came into its own. The Tudors generally brought peace and prosperity to England, and as the economy became more dynamic, more people travelled more often. As road travel was so unpleasant, the majority of travellers used the river, and Putney developed accordingly. There were two routes from London to SW England. One involved travelling along the north of the river (the modern day Fulham Road – unless you were royal, in which case you could use the private Kings Road) to the short ferry crossing at Fulham to Putney; the other involved using the long ferry from Westminster to Putney. It is clear that Putney had a stranglehold on the crossing. It seems the short ferries were capacious, flat-bottomed pontoons, which were probably poled across the river at mid to low tide. James Yonge, a Plymouth surgeon, writes in his diary, 'Sunday 23rd May 1686. Sir Charles Carny and I rode from Guildford to London in my Lord Dartmouth's coach. We ferried over Putney passage, the coach and six horses together in the boat, and we in it, so that I rode over the Thames.' The long ferry was probably a more conventional sort of boat, probably rowed or paddled.

In 1647, Putney was a small Thames-side town of about 900 people, with most living along the current day High Street and along the river. Putney is just six miles from central London and this was as attractive to the army then as it is to professional families today. Around 40% of the householders employed locally were described as 'watermen', who worked the short passenger ferry to Fulham and the longer passenger and goods ferry to London. Putney had already been acknowledged to occupy an important strategic position in 1642 when the Earl of Essex had built a bridge of boats across the Thames here. In the tense year of 1647, Putney's position was critical: the army were happy to be able to access London easily yet the six mile distance reduced the intimidation factor, and helped preserve the façade of relations with parliament. The army were also drawn to the several large houses in Putney, which offered suitable lodging to officers. They belonged mainly to merchants and gentlemen and were used by them as summer houses or holiday homes. There were around 16 sizeable houses in Putney and their owners dominated the town, employing Putney inhabitants

as servants or tradesmen, controlling Poor Relief and owning most of the land. Some of these people did not welcome the arrival of the army. Soldiers had already been billeted on Putney earlier in the wars, bringing with them doses of the plague and leaving behind a few unexpected additions to the population. The most significant Putney landowner was Sir Thomas Dawes (whose father was a prominent Royalist) and he suffered badly, with heavy fines and long stretches in prison, finally losing most of his land.

However, in 1647 Putney offered a choice of attractive billets for the officers of the New Model Army. Sir Thomas Fairfax stayed with William Wymondsold, who probably lived in the house built by Sir Abraham Dawes (on what is now the site of Putney station), the largest house in Putney. Cromwell lodged at 'Mr Bonhunt's', although this has never been identified. Ireton stayed at Mr Campion's near the corner of High street and Putney Bridge Road. Rainborough stayed at his brother's house in Fulham. The Agitators lodged at Hammersmith, but it is known that they met at Hugh Hubbert's house, close to Putney Church.

It must have been a common sight to see soldiers walking up and down Putney High Street and crossing the short ferry to Fulham. The church, St Mary's, stood by the river where its successor still stands today. It had been restored and enlarged in the 1620s and it was crammed with pews. The clearest space was probably the chancel, only 15 ft wide, where there was a communion table surrounded by several 'kneeling benches'. It wasn't an ideal space for the debates, and many people must have had to spill out into the nave. However, important army meetings usually took place in churches, reflecting the belief that they were doing God's work, and from 9th September 1647 the General Council of the army met in Putney Church every Thursday.

By 1647, relations between parliament and the army were somewhat strained. The majority in parliament regarded the army as a hotbed of religious radicalism. They also considered it an unnecessary expense now that the war was won, and were set on disbanding it. The army thought parliament ungrateful and feared that their hard-fought-for liberties were at risk. Even so, the situation need not have got quite so badly out of hand. The New Model made up less than half the parliamentary troops, yet they were firmly bound by religious fellowship and a sense of egalitarianism, and

boosted by moral rectitude. Parliament's decision to pick on them first to be sent to Ireland or to be disbanded without pay or indemnity was foolish. The New Model felt hard done by and insulted – defiance was their response. Senior officers, the Grandees, had to choose which side to take and, in June, the die was cast with the seizure of the king by Cornet Joyce with the tacit agreement of the generals. The General Council of the army was established and the army moved to London to take up camp at Putney on 26th August. In June the army had made its famous declaration that it was 'not a mere mercenary army' but was working for 'the defence of its own and the people's just rights and liberties'. Yet even at this stage the army was still committed to working with parliament and reaching a settlement with the king and for much of September there was general agreement that peace should be pursued. Yet gradually doubts crept in – resentment at the Presbyterian majority in parliament and distrust of the slippery king. The resentment was fuelled by the radicals. The role of the Levellers in the debates is still unclear; predominantly London-based civilians, they had emerged from the ferment of new ideas in the 1640s with a central belief that all power originated in the people. In October 1647 their political stance was solidifying yet they were still a small group albeit reasonably organised; we know that two of them took part in the debates and they were certainly behind the demand for a wider franchise, and their ideas resound during the debates.

The General Council of the army met daily from 28th October to 11th November, but only three days at the start are fully recorded. We don't know the full list of who was there but we do know that Fairfax was ill, so Cromwell presided. There were 34 speakers and 46 other participants; it's clear that everyone present felt they could speak up, yet Cromwell and Ireton were the main speakers for the Grandees and Rainborough and Wildman put forward the more radical ideas. Five ordinary soldiers spoke too. Oddly enough, Rainborough's presence seems to have been accidental. He had come to Putney on personal business and he doesn't appear to have had previous links with the Levellers before this. Yet it is his words that leap down the years to us.

It is interesting to speculate about who would have been in Putney during the debates. There is no evidence that the fiery preacher Hugh Peters spoke in the church but we know he was present in Putney as he was Cromwell's

chaplain, and it's more than likely that he led the prayers. More speculative is the belief by Sue Rolfe, a local Putney historian who put together the information for the anniversary exhibition in St Mary's, that Elizabeth Lilburne would have travelled to Putney to hear what was being said and to report back to her husband. Who knows? But it's not inconceivable that some Leveller women were there witnessing this landmark occasion.

The surviving transcript tells of a series of remarkable exchanges, in the most passionate language, between members of the army. The matters at stake were fundamental to human dignity and to human governance and it is to the credit of Cromwell and Ireton that, even though they disagreed with the more radical ideas, they recognised the need for the army to express itself. The Levellers wanted a constitution based on adult male suffrage with equal parliamentary constituencies. They believed authority should be vested in the Commons, not the king and the Lords, and new parliaments should be elected every two years. They believed all Englishmen had native, inviolable rights, 'freedom of conscience, freedom from impressment into the armed forces, everyone equal under the law and no penalties should be made for not going to church, or attending other acts of worship.' Despite the Grandees' discomfort with these ideas, the debates saw men from all walks of life freely discuss such matters, talking bluntly and passionately about the sort of world they wanted to emerge from the fighting. It wasn't just the franchise that was argued over at Putney; soldiers debated how far rulers should be held accountable for their actions. What is remarkable is the freedom from deference to rank or established authority felt by the speaker; this was a genuine debate. In the end, the debates failed and Leveller ideas had to wait many more years before they saw the light of day. Cromwell was probably right when he argued that the sort of constitution envisaged by the Levellers could only have been imposed by force, and would not have been welcomed by the careworn population. He was also probably right to say that a wider franchise might result in a Royalist parliament. Even so, Rainborough's plea for the 'poorest he' is what moves us today. The argument started at Putney in 1647 has rebounded down the centuries and it is worth remembering that whilst in our country we now enjoy many of the things the Levellers demanded, there remain large parts of the world where Rainborough's plea would still be relevant. The Putney Debates were a hugely important step on the road to democracy and, to my mind, Putney can give Moscow a run for its money any day!

CROMWELLIAN BRITAIN XXV: PUTNEY, GREATER LONDON

Serrie Meakins has lived in Putney for over 20 years, and has taught A level history in several local schools. Since retiring, she has been studying the life of Elizabeth Murray, Countess of Dysart, 1626–98, for a Masters in Biography.

WRITINGS AND SOURCES XVII:
MINOR OPERATIONS IN THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

By Prof Peter Gaunt

Modern histories of the English civil war of the 1640s tend to focus upon set-piece battles and major sieges. This is understandable, as they were not only the biggest war-time military operations but also those which are most fully recorded in surviving sources and so most accessible to historians. However, they were not the commonest form of fighting, certainly not in England and Wales during the main civil war of 1642–46. Far more typical were much smaller and more limited engagements, ranging from skirmishes and raids to beating-up quarters and opportunist strikes. Each involved modest numbers of soldiers and resulted in equally modest casualties, although cumulatively they probably accounted for the majority of those killed and seriously wounded in action in England and Wales. Historians can never recover a complete picture of such small-scale operations, for they were only occasionally recorded in the weekly newspapers of the war years and in other contemporary accounts. Evidently, very many minor clashes of this ilk passed by entirely unrecorded. But where surviving sources do provide reasonably detailed accounts of this level of fighting, they can give an insight into the war at a local level and a flavour of the sort of operations which were typical of the local experience of the fighting.

The classic surviving account of a skirmish is that recalled and recorded many years later by the Shropshire antiquarian Richard Gough as the only significant fighting to have occurred during the war in his home village of Myddle in northern Shropshire. 'There was one Cornet Collins, an Irishman, who was a garrison soldier for the king at Shrawardine Castle. This Collins made his excursions very often into this parish, and took away cattle, provision and bedding and what he pleased. On the day before this conflict, he had been at Myddle taking away bedding and when Margaret, the wife of Allen Chaloner, the smith, had brought out and showed him her best bed, he thinking it too coarse, cast it into the lake before the door and trod it under his horse['s] feet'. Collins and seven royalist colleagues from Shrawardine halted in the village the next day, so that Collins could have his horse reshod at the smithy, but they stumbled into a party of eight parliamentarian troops from Morton Corbet garrison, commanded by Richard Maning. They had come to the village not in the hope of finding royalists but rather to search for, and to pursue, a grudge against a particular individual. 'This Maning and his companions…came into Myddle at the gate

by Mr Gittin's house, at what time the cornet's horse was a-shoeing. The cornet hearing the gate clap looked by the end of the shop and saw the soldiers coming and thereupon he and his men mounted their horses; and as the cornet came at the end of the shop, a brisk young fellow shot him through the body with a carbine shot, and he fell down in the lake at Allen Chaloner's door. His men fled, two were taken, and as Maning was pursuing them in Myddle Wood Field…Maning having the best horse overtook them while his partners were far behind, but one of the cornet's men shot Maning's horse which fell down dead under him, and Maning had been taken prisoner had not some of his men came to rescue him…The horse was killed on a bank near the further side of Myddle Field, where the widow Mansell has now a piece enclosed. The cornet was carried into Allen Chaloner's house and laid on the floor; he desired to have a bed laid under him, but Margaret told him she had none but that which he saw yesterday; he prayed her to forgive him and lay that under him, which she did'. Gough certainly recalled the aftermath, despite the passage of the years. 'Mr Roderick [the minister] was sent to pray with him [Collins]. I went with him and saw the cornet lying on the bed and much blood running along the floor. In the night following a troop of horses came from Shrawardine and pressed a team in Myddle and so took the cornet to Shrawardine, where he died the next day'.[1] This had been an accidental, unplanned and wholly unexpected encounter between two small groups of eight or so mounted troops based in rival garrisons in Shropshire, occurring in the no-man's land between them, a clash in a village which otherwise saw no fighting but which nonetheless left a man shot and slowly bleeding to death, a horse killed and two men taken prisoner, who were executed by hanging shortly afterwards.

Another example of a limited and opportunist operation was related by the secretary of the parliamentarian John Birch in his later biography of his master. He provided a colourful account of how one evening at the end of October 1644, shortly after the indecisive second battle of Newbury in Berkshire, they had been riding outside the town when they quickly drew aside on hearing the approach of coaches. Shielding their faces so as not to be identified in the moonlight as enemies, they were able to watch unmolested as a royalist mounted party comprising nearly 100 troopers, three coaches, waggons and unmounted horses, rattled past through the night. Holding up a straggler at pistol point, they discovered that it was the

royalist lord general, Lord Forth, together with his wife and female relatives, his goods and a mounted guard, travelling through the night from Donnington Castle, where he had remained after being wounded in the battle, in order to rejoin the king and the main royalist army. Determined to capture such a rich prize, Birch returned to the parliamentarian HQ in Newbury, but he was unable to interest a sleepy Earl of Manchester in the operation. Nonetheless, rousing some soldiers, Birch quickly managed to gather together a party of around 50 parliamentarian cavalrymen who were interested in the venture and the potential prize. They pursued Forth's party through the dark night, Birch several times feeling for the fresh coach tracks to guide them. Having travelled sixteen miles and with dawn approaching, they bumped into a small royalist party by a gate which Forth had cautiously left behind as a rear-guard. Pretending to be a traveller who had lost his way and was seeking directions, Birch approached a sentry, and not until too late did the man realise what was happening; he attempted to draw his sword, but Birch had his at the ready under his cloak and 'made such a hole in his skin as brought a groan from him'. Birch's colleagues then helped him overcome the remainder of the twelve-strong royalist rear-guard, who 'were quickly dispatched'. But the main royalist party, who had halted in the village beyond, saw or heard what was afoot and attempted quickly to turn out, whereupon Birch's party immediately attacked, as they did so attempting to unnerve their opponents by pretending that they were merely the advanced unit of a much bigger force, arranging for several trumpets to sound behind them and crying 'aloud "Gentlemen, let's not stay for the body of horse but fall on them instantly", which at a high trot was done and they presently routed'. Two bodies of royalist horse were attacked and put to flight, though this gave Forth and his party sufficient time to move off, some on horseback, others in the coaches. Birch and his men pursued the coaches for a further four or five miles, until they entered another village, where a substantial body of royalist lifeguards were stationed. Again, Birch bluffed that he had a much larger parliamentarian army just behind him by shouting out as if giving orders, 'Gentlemen, lay out quarters in this town presently for my Lord Manchester's regiment of horse' and 'in the next village let Sir William Waller's regiment quarter', accompanied by some of his party sounding trumpets behind him. Even though Birch's men were in fact outnumbered by three to one, the royalist lifeguards fell back and without further opposition Birch captured the coaches and waggons, including female members of Forth's family, horses and various prisoners,

though Forth himself had escaped on horseback. Although now a good twenty miles from their base and deep in royalist territory, Birch and his party managed to get their prizes safely back to Newbury.[2]

However, fascinating and colourful as they are, historians need to exercise caution in using largely uncorroborated sources of this sort. The story of the clash in Myddle related by Richard Gough is part of his much broader local history, an antiquarian account which appears to have no particular bias or slant beyond a keen ear for gossip and scandal. Moreover, the broader context is plausible, for Shropshire was a divided county for much of the civil war, Shrawardine and Morton Corbet did respectively house a royalist and a parliamentarian garrison during the war years and we know of a few other raids, counter-raids and minor clashes between rival garrisons in northern Shropshire. The only significant doubt is about how well Gough, who was born in 1635 and so would probably have been under ten years of age when these events occurred, could accurately recall them when he wrote this account in his old age during the opening years of the eighteenth century.[3]

The pursuit of, and attack upon, Lord Forth and his entourage, as recounted by John Birch's secretary, presents more difficulties. Again, the context is accurate, as we know from several other sources that Forth was wounded in the battle of Newbury, remained at Donnington Castle for a short while and then rode away to rejoin the king and his main southern army. On this occasion, we also have other contemporary accounts which partly corroborate the story of a daring parliamentarian pursuit, as it is briefly mentioned or alluded to in some of the newspapers of early November 1644. For instance, *The Parliament Scout* reported under the date 2 November 1644 that Forth, his wife and others, not wishing to find themselves besieged within Donnington Castle, had 'adventured out…in the fog, but were pursued, and had not his spare horse been nimble, he as well as the females and coach had been taken, but he escaped'.[4] More importantly and revealingly, a few months later, in spring 1645, one of the parliamentarian newspapers printed a fuller version of events by Lieutenant-Colonel Thorpe, who was commanding the parliamentarian guard on the north side of Newbury after the battle and who was ordered by Birch to provide forty mounted men for the venture. Birch, Thorpe and these forty troopers pursued Forth and his party for eight miles, whereupon they captured

Forth's wife, other distinguished prisoners, around fifty royalist troops, three coaches and a waggon full of supplies, all without the loss of a single parliamentarian. Thorpe claimed that he and just two other men rode after Forth for a further nine miles, having him in their sight much of the way, but eventually they gave up the chase and returned to Newbury, Thorpe 'having but some two men with him, and his horse being weary'.[5] Thus, Thorpe's account points to a somewhat more limited and less colourful operation than that recounted by Birch's secretary and, while acknowledging that the successful operation was triggered by Birch, ascribes to him a smaller role in subsequent events. This is what we might expect, for the account of Birch's war-time activities written by his secretary, reviewed and selectively corrected by Birch himself, repeatedly magnifies and at times probably exaggerates his role in the conflict, throughout stressing his courage and military success, in places emphasising his ability to fight against great odds or in positions of great danger, as well as his skill and ingenuity in deceiving and outwitting his enemies; at one point also claiming very implausibly that he fought on for a good while despite suffering grievous and life-threatening wounds.[6] While Gough's account may be coloured by the passage of time, that of Birch's secretary is certainly designed to exalt its subject. Historians of the civil war must keep in mind not only how the non-survival of source material sometimes limits or skews our knowledge of the war, but also how the slanted or selective nature of some of the extant contemporary sources often necessitates careful handling and cautious interpretation.

[1]   R. Gough, *The History of Myddle*, ed. D. Hey (London, 1981), pp. 73-74.

[2]   J. and T.W. Webb, *Military Memoir of Colonel John Birch…Written by Roe, his Secretary* (Camden Society, new series 7, 1873), pp. 17-21.

[3]   As Gough is our only source for this and his account gives few firm dates, we cannot even be certain when these events occurred. The two captured royalist soldiers were executed as so-called Irishmen, that is, men who had crossed from Ireland to mainland England and Wales to fight for the king; so this places the clash at Myddle after the first significant landing of royalist reinforcements during the closing weeks of 1643, and probably after parliament had passed an ordinance in October

1644 authorising and ordering such summary executions. Shrawardine was probably not garrisoned for the king until summer 1644 and it surrendered to parliament in June 1645, while Morton Corbet seems to have been garrisoned by parliament from autumn 1644. A decent, if far from exhaustive, search of the weekly newspapers of autumn and winter 1644–45, the most likely period for the raid on and clash at Myddle, and of other pamphlets of those months which give accounts of military activity in and around Shropshire, has so far failed to find any other reference to these events in Myddle.

4   *The Parliament Scout*, no. 72, 31 Oct.-7 Nov. 1644, p. 565. P*erfect Passages of Each Dayes Proceedings in Parliament*, no. 3, 30 Oct.-6 Nov. 1644, p. 22, in a report appearing under the date Friday 1 November, noted that Forth and a few others had got away from Donnington the previous Monday night, but made no mention of them being pursued.

5   *The Kingdoms Weekly Intelligencer*, no. 95, 8-15 April 1645, pp. 760-61.

6   J. and T.W. Webb, *Military Memoir of Colonel John Birch*, pp. 2-37 *passim*.

Peter Gaunt is Professor of Early Modern History at the University of Chester and President of the Cromwell Association.

BOOK REVIEWS

Peter Gaunt, *The English Civil War: A Military History.* I B Tauris, 2014. (256 pp.) ISBN 978-1848858817. £19.99 hardback.

Reviewed by Alan Turton

To write another general book on the military history of the English Civil War requires an author to approach the subject from a new angle, or, as is far more difficult, introduce fresh new evidence on this well-known period of our history. Professor Peter Gaunt's new book does not quite achieve either aim, yet he succeeds in producing a thoroughly readable and scholarly account.

Using well selected contemporary quotes as introductions to each chapter, and throughout the book, Professor Gaunt concentrates on the first four years of the main conflict in England and Wales, with only the briefest mention of the two 'Bishops Wars' and the succeeding 2nd and 3rd civil wars. Following an informative scene-setting introduction, each year is dealt with in a single long chapter, each of which contains the campaigns and actions of the main field armies, along with details of the innumerable smaller regional confrontations which tore the kingdom apart. Unusually for a military history, this is done without the use of campaign maps or battle plans, and relies purely on written descriptions; indeed, the only maps in the book are general overviews of the country, showing territory controlled by the opposing sides at various stages of the war, with a few glimpses of contemporary cartography scattered in the text. The book is, however, excellently illustrated, both in colour and black and white with well chosen views of sites and monuments, and portraits of the protagonists, along with a good selection of 17th century woodcuts and engravings.

Additionally, the author uses up-to-date information such as that obtained from battlefield archaeology, and where there is current debate, lays out the case from all positions and, when possible, draws his own conclusions.

Using recent research and the words of those participants who lived and died in those 'distracted times', Professor Gaunt weaves together the strands of military activity with its effects upon individuals and communities in a very lucid, structured and non-partisan way.

BOOK REVIEWS

Patrick Little, *The English Civil Wars: A Beginner's Guide.* Oneworld Publications, 2014. (176 pp.) ISBN 978-1780743318. £9.99 paperback.

Reviewed by Nicola Turton

My husband Alan Turton (civil war historian and erstwhile curator of Basing House) was invited to review Dr Patrick Little's new book, *The English Civil Wars*, but spotting that the series is called 'Beginner's Guides', he speedily passed the book to me, a relative beginner.

Before I married Alan and moved to Basing House, my knowledge of the English Civil War was limited to *The Children of the New Forest* and *1066 and All That*: Horrid old Cromwell, and poor little Charles. So for the past 20 years my education has been ongoing, and I have found this book to be a tremendously useful adjunct to my increasing knowledge.

The author has drawn together many threads, and should one ever doubt it, proved what a fascinating period the mid-seventeenth century was. For pretty much the first time, one hears the voice of the common man, and even the common woman. For example, Susan Rodway's letter to her long-absent husband is quoted in full, and I am always moved by both her restrained anger at the continued silence from her husband '…I do marvel that I cannot hear from you as well as other neighbours do…' and by her obvious love for him '…My King Love'. Even at 350 years distance, it is a comfort to know that Robert Rodway came safely home from besieging Basing House.

Of course Patrick is the chairman of the Cromwell Association, and could be suspected of bias, but I feel he is fair to both sides in the English Civil War. But even saying 'English' and 'both sides' is incorrect, I've now learned. The English Civil War also involved the Scots (variously on the sides of Parliament and the Royalists), the Welsh, and notoriously the Irish.

Dr Little addresses the causes of the wars, and one is left astonished that we entered into the conflict when it was so clear what a tragedy the Thirty Years' War was proving on the continent. But despite this, all sides persisted until civil war became inevitable. Even with his final words, Charles proved how dangerously single-minded he was '…their liberty and

freedom consists in having of government, those laws by which their life and their goods may be most their own. *It is not for having a share in government* [my italics]…'. To speak colloquially, even at the very end, he just didn't get it!

One aspect I really like about the book is the little sections of information, which are virtually bullet points covering topics such as 'The Levellers', 'Witchcraft', and brief biographies. But possibly due to the constrictions of layout and budgets, they break rather rudely into the text. However, this is a minor complaint in such a small yet splendidly concentrated book.

One other concern I have is the passage about Basing House '…the routine execution of Irish Catholic soldiers acceptable during the first civil war, and contributed to the massacres at Basing House in 1645…'. Although the Catholic priests at Basing were indeed dealt with, there is no real evidence of a general massacre of soldiers or civilians. In fact, around 200 were taken prisoner.

The *Beginner's Guide* is usefully ordered in sections which are as distinct as such a complicated subject can be. I especially enjoyed the sections on politics and religion, both interesting in their own right, but of course so inextricably a part of this war without an enemy. Many English Civil War historians will doubtless find this book passes over already familiar ground, but to the beginner, or to someone wishing to revise their knowledge, this publication will be endlessly useful.

J.F. Merritt, *The Social World of Early Modern Westminster: abbey, court and community, 1525–1640*. Manchester University Press, 2012. (392 pp.) ISBN 978-0-7190-8773-8. £13.99 paperback.

J. F. Merritt, *Westminster, 1640–60: a royal city in a time of revolution*. Manchester University Press, 2013. (304 pp.) ISBN 978-0-7190-9040-0. £75 hardback.

Reviewed by Dr Patrick Little

BOOK REVIEWS

The lineaments of Early Modern Westminster can still be traced in the streets of London today. Then, as now, the main thoroughfare ran from Temple Bar (which marked the boundary with the City of London) down the Strand to Charing Cross, and through the Whitehall complex to Westminster Abbey, following the curve of the Thames. To the north, urban development reached as far as Hyde Park, Southampton House (on what is now Bloomsbury Square), and Holborn. Some of Westminster's landmarks also survive: the Banqueting House, Westminster Hall and Westminster Abbey are recognisable four centuries on.

In one other respect early modern Westminster resembles the city of today: its identity was ill-defined. Nowadays, the area forms just another part of Central London; four hundred years ago, as these books reveal, the inhabitants also struggled to assert their identity against their more powerful neighbours. Chief in this respect were the dean and chapter of Westminster Abbey, which owned much of the land in the borough, and had the right to appoint its high steward. In 1585 an act of Parliament established a court of burgesses, but it lacked the power to pass local laws or levy taxes, and the new arrangements confirmed the controlling interest of the abbey. Westminster was granted the status of a city in 1601, with its own coat of arms, but the corporate structure that usually went with such an honour was lacking. Worse still, during the reign of Charles I the crown came into conflict with the abbey over who should control the borough. Frustrations came to a head in the parliamentary elections for the Short Parliament in April 1640, when opponents of the crown were returned. The king and his household fled at the beginning of 1642 and the power of the abbey was brought to an end soon afterwards, but the inhabitants did not gain from the civil war years: instead, they faced a great deal of interference from two other neighbours – the City of London and the House of Commons. With the building of defences, and the 'lines of communication' around the entire metropolitan area, London began to take responsibility for the military affairs of Westminster, and there were repeated attempts to unite the militias of the two. In the meantime, the Commons established a committee to run the affairs of the abbey, a body which, in 1649, became known as the 'governors' of Westminster. There was talk of incorporation during the commonwealth period, but this was opposed, first by the governors and then by the new high steward appointed by the lord protector in 1655, his councillor Sir Gilbert Pickering.

These books are, however, not only about the politics of the borough and its struggle for independence. Equally important are the religious changes throughout this period. Before the civil wars the area was affected by the rise of Protestantism under the early Tudors, the role of the abbey and the principal parishes of St Martin-in-the-Fields and St Margaret's in settling a conservative Anglicanism by the end of the century, and the challenges posed by Catholics and Laudians thereafter. From 1642 the city clergy became Presbyterian in sympathy, but attempts to set up a formal 'classis' for Westminster failed, and by the late 1640s there was considerable support for Christmas and other banned festivals. The third main strand running through these books is the urban economy. Throughout this period Westminster was the favoured residence for the well-to-do, including the nobility in their riverside mansions and the denizens of fashionable Covent Garden. The New Exchange, founded in 1609, was what amounted to a luxury shopping development on the Strand. At the other end of the social scale came the poor of Westminster, vulnerable to disease including the plague, and reliant on charity or poor rates. During the 1640s Westminster faced a fourth challenge, in the form of an increased military presence. The first civil war, with the recruitment of militias and the construction of the lines of communication was bad enough; but although the defences were razed at the end of that conflict, the army did not leave Westminster. This was, in part, because the sprawling borough contained the seat of government at Whitehall and the Houses of Parliament. New forts were constructed, and regiments garrisoned St James's Palace, the royal mews at Charing Cross and the palace of Whitehall itself. There was tension between the soldiers and the inhabitants that spilled over into violence, especially during the parliamentary elections of 1654 and 1656.

Julia Merritt's research is meticulous and her scholarship of a high standard; but she also writes in an accessible style, which allows the general reader to visualise the urban landscape and bring its people to life. The first volume is perhaps more impressive than the second, where Merritt's grasp of the political context is less sure. For example, eyebrows might be raised on reading that William Strode was 'hardly a major figure' in the early 1640s (p.98) or that Sir Gilbert Pickering was 'Cromwell's favourite' (p.181) in 1655. But these are minor quibbles that should not detract from the overall achievement. For, taken together, these two books form an impressive case study of the development of an urban area over 135 years, and, because of

the importance of the institutions that were based at Westminster, they also provide a valuable commentary on national affairs during a period of immense political, religious and social upheaval.

Jonathon Riley, *The Last Ironsides, The English Expedition to Portugal 1662–1668*. Helion & Company, 2014. (222 pp.) ISBN 978-1-909982-20-8. £25 hardback.

Reviewed by Dr Miranda Malins

As one might expect from so distinguished a soldier and author as Lieutenant General and Doctor of history Jonathon Riley, this is a meticulous account of a long overlooked military campaign. *The Last Ironsides* tells the story of the 2,000 foot and 1,000 cavalry – the last remnants of the New Model Army – who were dispatched to Portugal to help in its struggle for independence from Spain under the terms of the marriage treaty between the newly restored King Charles II and his bride Catherine of Braganza. This arrangement was an attractive one for the new king as it helped him to dispose of a large number of parliamentarian soldiers who represented both a grave threat and a vast expense to the new regime.

The political composition of the troops sent to Portugal set the stage for an intriguing campaign as former Cromwellian ironsides were forced to serve alongside, and in some instances beneath, professional royalist soldiers and Irish Catholics. This made for an intimidating fighting force rooted in Cromwellian discipline but suffused with internal tensions. On the battlefield, the English troops were praised by friend and foe alike – beyond the Portuguese, French and Germans they fought alongside – for their bravery and professionalism; in their own quarters, however, old rivalries provoked a number of disciplinary incidents which Riley brings to life through his close study of contemporary sources. Such tensions were not improved by the hard conditions the troops suffered in Portugal and the constant arrears of their pay; a casualty, in part, of misunderstandings between the Restoration regime and the Portuguese government as to who was responsible for the troops while they served in Portugal.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Portuguese expedition itself is an interesting yet understudied piece of military history. Portugal was in a precarious position in 1662, faced with the power of Spain at home and the Dutch abroad and having been deserted by its former ally, France. It needed a powerful ally and the intervention of England cemented an alliance which had existed since 1386 and which would continue for many centuries, culminating in Wellington's much better known campaigns against Napoleon in the Peninsular Wars. The two nations had been at war with each other briefly between 1652 and 1654 due to Portugal's royal government continuing to receive and recognise the Stuart princes and offering protection to the royalist fleet. However, a mutual fear of Spain overcame these hostilities and a treaty was signed between John IV and Oliver Cromwell in 1654. John IV maintained close links to the Protectorate, continuing under Richard Cromwell. However, as a careful statesman, he also kept good relations with Charles II – an approach that was later rewarded by the marriage of his daughter the Infanta Catherine of Braganza to the new king.

With the help of the English troops, Portugal's new international army waged a series of campaigns against the might of Spain. These encompassed long periods on the move punctuated by skirmishes, pitched battles – notably the Portuguese victory at the battle of Ameixial in 1663 – and some colourful sieges. While the Portuguese suffered some defeats, the contribution of the English and French troops in particular, together with the skilled leadership of the French Huguenot Lieutenant General Herman von Schomberg in overall command of the army, enabled them to triumph over their Spanish adversaries and win their independence. Schomberg himself thought highly of the ironsides under his command, considering 'the military men that had served under Cromwell… the best officers he had ever seen.'

Riley's military experience shines through this narrative in his eye for the details of the realities of campaigning, many of which remain the same today – the terrain, the weather, ensuring supply lines and maintaining momentum. He paints a vivid picture of how armies operate, using a strong sense of place and a keen storyteller's pace to keep the reader's interest. In his efforts at precision, Riley occasionally allows the narrative to veer off course into overly detailed bibliographical sections, but these rarely disrupt the story for long and his technical descriptions are consistently accessible.

The reader also benefits from many interesting observations that emerge from the narrative, such as the fact that the use of foreign soldiers under contract was commonplace in this period. Many defeated royalist troops and fugitive Catholics served the King of Spain under contract after Parliament's victory in the civil wars, for example. Riley urges us to see these soldiers not as mercenaries but rather as hired professionals loaned from one state to another.

The Last Ironsides provides many such points that enhance not only our understanding of Restoration foreign policy but of seventeenth century warfare more generally. For civil war enthusiasts, and Cromwellian scholars in particular, it is heartening to learn of one last campaign by the New Model Army demonstrating its superior skill on the European stage. As one Portuguese minister observed in gratitude: 'the English had done more than could be expected of men, and he believed there were no soldiers in the world like them.'

Alan Turton was curator of the English civil war site of Basing House, Hampshire for 24 years. He has written a number of books and articles on military aspects of the English civil war with particular reference to the armies of the Earl of Essex.

Nicola Turton is a keen amateur historian and archaeologist, and lived at the English civil war site of Basing House for many years, where she developed an interest in the upheavals of the mid-17th century.

Dr Patrick Little is a Senior Research Fellow in the 1640–60 section of the History of Parliament Trust, and Chairman of the Cromwell Association.

Dr Miranda Malins completed a PhD on the advocates of Cromwellian kingship at the University of Cambridge in 2010 and now works as a solicitor at Norton Rose Fulbright LLP. She has also been a Trustee of the Cromwell Association since 2014.

OBITUARY: IVAN ROOTS

By Dr Stephen Roberts

Ivan Roots, president of the Cromwell Association between 1977 and 1989, and its senior vice-president, died on 8th February at the age of 93. Tegwyn, his wife of over 67 years and who often accompanied him to our meetings, died just a few weeks later on 27th March. Distressing though this has been for family and friends, those who knew Ivan and Tegwyn will understand how difficult life would have been for one without the other, so devoted a couple were they. Ivan gave the 3rd September address to the Association at Westminster as long ago as 1971, and was a genial presence at many meetings subsequently. He was the principal speaker at the AGM in Huntingdon in 1999, a meeting to mark the 400th anniversary of Oliver's birth.

Ivan was born in Maidstone, Kent, but the Roots family one or two generations back hailed from the village of Halling, in the chalkland of the North Downs, and many of the family worked in the chalk quarries of that district. After Maidstone Grammar School, in 1938 Ivan won an exhibition to Balliol, Oxford, where he read modern history. The Balliol tutor who influenced him most was undoubtedly Christopher Hill, with whom he established a lifelong friendship. When some years ago obituaries of David Underdown (1925–2009) claimed that the last surviving early students of Christopher's at Oxford had died, Ivan affected mock indignation; he was himself in Christopher's first classes. Now, sadly, the last has indeed left the scene. Ivan's other tutors at Oxford included Mary Coate, who wrote what was for many decades the standard work on civil war Cornwall. Miss Coate once told Ivan and his fellow-students that she had seen Olivares (1587–1645), chief minister of Philip IV of Spain. Ivan recalled how their first reaction was that she was 'losing it', to use the modern idiom, but she went on to describe how she had been present at a disinterring of Olivares's body, which was in a state of perfect preservation. Ivan's time at Oxford consolidated and deepened the interest in the seventeenth century on which his later career was built.

In 1941, Ivan was called up into the Royal Corps of Signals after graduating, and served in India and Burma for the duration of the war. He was commissioned, and reached the rank of captain. It was often assumed that it was his army service that established Ivan's interest in Cromwell and the

English civil war. Not so: military history was not really one of his great interests, and Cromwell the man and politician fascinated him much more than Cromwell the soldier. At the end of the war Ivan was asked by his C.O. whether he had contemplated a career in the army. 'Yes, sir', Ivan replied, 'with horror'. What he gained from army life was an insight into the military mind, and his experiences during the action at Admin Box (February 1944) conveyed to him the confusion and chaos of battle in any age. He was also deeply impressed by India, 'that wonderful, terrible country', as he put it in one of his writings, using the kind of oxymoronic construction of which he was fond.

After the war, and after a brief return to Balliol, Ivan found a lecturing post at Cardiff University, as it is now known, and remained there for the best part of 20 years. He met Tegwyn there, and after their marriage, their children Gerrard and Catherine (Kate) were born there. Ivan spoke very frequently to extra-mural and WEA groups, Historical Association branches and school sixth-forms across South Wales, and began his serious book collecting. Ivan was a bookman through and through. It might be assumed that all academics are, but this is very far from being the case. He visited book auctions in Wales and the west of England during a golden age of country house sales, concentrating mainly on early modern books but also on all kinds of other interesting finds, and keeping up with the news in book trade periodicals. He dabbled in selling through the specialist auction houses. Many of his purchases lined the shelves he erected in his garage to house them, and some were later resold. Only recently a success was chalked up when a life of Bishop John Williams by John Hacket, published in 1693 and bought merely as a useful text, turned out to be the copy from the library of the philosopher John Locke. The sale helped fund another holiday to the hotel in south-west France where Ivan and his family loved to stay as often as they could.

While at Cardiff, Ivan began a collaboration with his Balliol friend, Donald Pennington, which resulted in the publication of *The Committee at Stafford*, an edition of the order book of the Staffordshire county committee during the civil war. This was and remains an important publication, which has provided a benchmark for detailed studies of local government in the civil war. Despite the wealth of state papers now available online, there will always be a place in scholarship for modern editions of such documents,

which provide context and clarification for the non-expert reader. It was also at Cardiff that he brought to fruition *The Great Rebellion*, a handy-sized single-volume history of the period 1640–1660, which has remained in print virtually continuously ever since first publication in 1966. Lively, elegant and judicious, the book remains a great starting point for serious study of the period, even if it largely sidesteps the contentions of academic historians in favour of clarity for the general reader. Ivan's interest in the 1650s, not a decade given extensive treatment by historians of the 1950s and 60s, was apparent, and the book gives as much attention to events after 30th January 1649 as to those before the regicide.

After moving to Exeter to take up a chair in history in 1967, Ivan produced a number of influential articles and essays on aspects of government during the interregnum. These included studies of Cromwell's ordinances, the major-generals of 1655–7 and developments in the parliaments of 1656 and 1659. He became interested in making available key texts of the period that had for various reasons become inaccessible, and under his auspices, reprints or new editions appeared of A.S.P. Woodhouse's *Puritanism and Liberty* (the most approachable text of the Putney Debates of 1647), *The Diary of Thomas Burton* (the vital text of speeches in Cromwell's parliaments), and in 1989 *The Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, in the Everyman series. In the days before electronic publication, with Maurice Goldsmith of the politics department at Exeter, he founded The Rota, a subscription short-run publishing venture which made available important seventeenth-century texts, each with a learned introduction. Some 26 texts had been published by The Rota by Ivan's retirement in 1986, the most impressive being the facsimile of Thomas Edwards' polemic against the Independents, *Gangraena*. He edited two collections of essays: one on Cromwell (1973) and another, *'Into Another Mould'* (1981), which ran to two editions. Ivan's own contribution to this collection was an early input to scholarly reconsideration of relations between the constituent nations of the British Isles in the early modern period. He also went on to produce a number of works on the history of south-west England: a short history of Devon in the seventeenth century, and a study of Monmouth's rising of 1685.

Ivan was the first president of the Cromwell Association to be a full-time academic. Under his friendly and encouraging supervision the Association began to broaden its horizons and to expand its membership. Since his

presidency the council of the Association has always been a mix of academics and well-informed lay enthusiasts. He involved his students in the Association's activities. I was recruited to develop the annual list in *Cromwelliana* of relevant publications, and Peter Gaunt was contracted to produce the indispensable *Cromwellian Gazetteer*. In the long run, Ivan's presidency will be seen as the watershed between the Association's former identity as largely the personal fiefdom of Isaac Foot, and the democratic registered charity as it is structured today. He was immensely popular as a lecturer, and wore his great learning very lightly. He was an eloquent speaker and an elegant writer. At the lectern, his style was informal. He was a self-confessed happy mixer of metaphors and used arresting images to convey his enthusiasms. Cromwell's humanity he would compare to an onion, each layer more tender as it reached its heart. To put across the importance of Burton's diary in understanding the Cromwellian parliaments, he would evoke from his youth an old lady in Maidstone earnestly calling to passing schoolboys, 'Read your Bibles!'. Ivan's injunction to his students was to read their Burtons.

The field of seventeenth-century studies has lost a great advocate, enthusiast and practitioner. The Cromwell Association has lost a loyal supporter and counsellor. We extend our sympathies and condolences to Gerrard, Kate and their families.

This obituary was written by Stephen Roberts a vice-president of the Cromwell Association and editor of the Commons 1640–60 section of the History of Parliament Trust.

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