

Cromwelliana



The Cromwell Association

1983-84

The Cromwell Association

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THE CROMWELL ASSOCIATION WAS founded in 1935 by the late R. Hon. Isaac Foot and others to commemorate Oliver Cromwell, the great Puritan statesman, and to encourage the study of the history of his times, his achievements and influence. It is neither political nor sectarian, its aims being essentially historical. The Association seeks to advance its aims in a variety of ways which have included:

- (a) the erection of commemorative tablest (e.g. at Naseby, Dunbar, Worcester, Preston etc.). (From time to time appeals are made for funds to pay for projects of this sort);
- (b) helping to establish the Cromwell Museum in the Old Grammar School at Huntingdon;
- (c) holding two annual meetings, one the now traditional Memorial Service by the Statue outside the Houses of Parliament; the other a business meeting at which the Council presents a report on its year's work for discussion by members. At both meetings an Address is given by a distinguished Cromwellian;
- (d) producing an annual publication *Cromwelliana* which is free to members;
- (e) awarding an annual prize for an essay on a Cromwellian theme;
- (f) maintaining a small reference library for the use of members;
- (g) supporting the formation of local groups of paid-up members of the Association meeting for study or social purposes;
- (h) acting as a 'lobby' at both national and local levels whenever aspects or items of our Cromwellian heritage appear to be endangered.

CROMWELL'S DAY

The address by Dr Gerald Aylmer Master of St Peter's College, Oxford at the Annual Commemoration Service, 3 September 1982.

Every historical event or individual can be seen in two ways: either in terms of the meaning and significance which they have for the present day or in the strictly contemporary context of that person or happening. This applies alike to the remote and to the recent past. It is as true of Oliver Cromwell as it is of the Battle of Hastings or the Battle of Waterloo, of Queen Elizabeth I or of Sir Winston Churchill.

It is all too tempting to claim Cromwell for one's own prejudices, principles, or party position. Alternatively one is drawn into spending time apologising for him: apologising for the fact that he was *not* a democrat or a liberal, or a socialist, and was not prepared to extend religious toleration to Catholics and unbelievers.

Instead I wish this afternoon to make a plea for Cromwell's treatment as a man of his own time and circumstances. This is not, I hope, to down-grade him, but rather to try to locate and define his greatness more precisely. Firstly, he was an Englishman, born in the twilight of the Elizabethan era, raised in the Jacobean age, matured in the traumatic decade of the 1620s. Secondly, he was what we would call a 'born-again' puritan, a Calvinist believer in divine providence and — although this was of far less importance to him — in matters of church government a congregationalist. Thirdly, he was a member of the lesser landed gentry, one whose family had gone down in the world, but who then came to inherit additional property, giving him a particular interest in the wool trade through his flocks of sheep. By 1640, when he was already well into middle age according to the ideas of the 17th century, he had made his mark as a political and religious critic of the Court and as an opponent of the Court's fen drainage schemes, though not of fen drainage as such. His election for the town of Cambridge in the two successive parliaments of 1640 marks a decisive stage in his career, as is so well brought out in that brilliantly perceptive historical novel, Rose Macaulay's *They Were Defeated*.

He was an educated and literate person without being academic or intellectual. His positive principles and his negative reactions alike were usually based on common-sense intuitions; sometimes, perhaps as with the Rump Parliament's bill for a new representative, based on misunderstanding. His reaction to the Leveller spokesmen at Putney, to tell them that, although he realised that they were not anarchists themselves, what they stood for would lead to anarchy, may seem like class-biased prejudice, or else a self-fulfilling prophecy. But when we

recollect that scarcely any popular revolution in history ever succeeded before the 20th century, and that all popular uprisings were either snuffed out prematurely, or else degenerated into pointless violence, can we be so sure that he was wrong? Yet he was not typical of his class and his time in his reactions and his prejudices. His opposition to King Charles I and to Archbishop Laud went further and in a more individual direction than did that of other puritan parliamentarians. His perception of the kind of military force that parliament would need in order to defeat the King, once civil war had begun, carried within it the seeds of a religious and political, even if not also of an economic or social, revolution. Cromwell's leadership of the radical Independents in the House of Commons, his almost impregnable position as second-in-command and then commander-in-chief of the Army, and his championship of the puritan sects, Baptists and Millenarians as well as Congregationalists, led him — granted the character of King Charles and the other circumstances of the later 1640s, especially the clericalist claim of presbyterianism — inexorably to the revolutionary events of December 1648 to February 1649.

As S. R. Gardiner wrote in the 1890s, a close study of the year 1647 provides the test case for Cromwell's sincerity. His reactions in that year dispel the suspicion held by Leveller, Republican, and Royalist enemies, that he was a scheming hypocrite, aiming from an early date at the attainment of supreme personal power. But even if he was not a hypocrite, may he not — granted the non-intellectual, non-analytic, yet introspective nature of his reactions to events — have been capable of self-deception? We do not need to take entirely at their face value the descriptions by Bulstrode Whitelocke of their various conversations and discussions between 1649 and 1652, to suppose that Cromwell must have envisaged his personal situation changing, namely that a more lasting and durable political settlement would indeed require his own elevation to a position having, in his own immortal words, 'something monarchical in it'. At the same time, as C. H. Firth perceived in 1900 — and this is partly what makes his in many ways the best biography that we have of Oliver — dependence on his dual power base in the Army and Sects was bound to prove incompatible with any imaginable type of parliamentary settlement. If Cromwell had wanted to be an untrammelled military dictator his path would have been far easier. Only a much-reformed parliament of a near-Leveller type might have produced a House of Commons prepared to accept the Army's continued predominance and the special position of the Sects. Nor, of course, is there any guarantee

that event his would have been the case, any more than it was to be so with the only partially reformed parliaments of 1654-5 and 1656-8, called under Lambert's Instrument of Government.

You will notice that I have not so far mentioned Barebone's parliament or the Major-Generals. Do these show Cromwell in his true colours, respectively as a millenarian fanatic and as a puritan-militarist represser of popular customs and pastimes? No one who has read Austin Woolrych's masterly account in *Commonwealth to Protectorate* with an open mind can hold to that view of 1653. As to 1655-6, the story of the Major-Generals remains open to fuller retelling. Clearly it was never intended by Cromwell as a permanent substitute for a constitutional settlement, although paradoxically, as David Underdown has so cogently argued, it made the very sort of settlement that he so passionately wanted all the more difficult if not impossible of attainment.

Was Cromwell then successful only in what he defeated and at least temporarily destroyed, a failure in more lasting or creative terms? He would not be alone among the great figures of the past if that were so. And here we need to return to a strictly historical view: a determination to see Cromwell's successes and failures in his own terms as a man of his own time, and not according to our ideas of what he ought or ought not to have done. He failed as a hereditary ruler because of the timing of his own death (something over which few of us have much control) and the inadequacy of his eldest surviving son as a successor. Given all the other elements in the situation during the years 1658-60, this in turn was to lead to the restoration of the monarchy, of episcopalian anglicanism and of a hereditary House of Lords, and to the defeat of much more for which Cromwell had fought and which he had then struggled to maintain. Of the institutions which returned in 1660 and after, only the Bishops, together with a semi-Catholic form of worship and an all-inclusive, intolerant state church would, I believe, have been utterly incompatible with his principles. The Stuarts possibly, the House of Lords almost certainly, he could have accommodated in some kind of settlement. This raises the question of Cromwell's attitude towards the unicameral republic of 1649, which he himself helped to create, and which lasted indeed until the inauguration of the Humble Petition in 1657, though without a perpetual parliament after April 1653 and with something monarchical in it after December of that year. The events of 1648-9 — Pride's Purge, the High Court of Justice, the trial and execution of the King, the abolition of monarchy and House of Lords — were for him all surely means to an end,

namely the quest for a polity where the people of God and the rest of the people of England could co-exist together in peace and security.

As regards complete religious freedom for those outside the official church, parliamentary government on a democratic basis, the rule of law and the rights of the individual: it is quite impossible to know (and I fear largely unhistorical to argue) whether the achievement of these objectives was hastened or delayed, helped or hindered, as a result of Oliver Cromwell's career.

To believe that he set his mark upon his time, and at least in England for good more than for ill, and that he himself remained relatively uncorrupted even by semi-absolute power is, or should be, praise enough, that is, praise enough for Oliver Cromwell the man who lived from 1599 to 1658, rather than for Cromwell the myth, the monument, or the might-have-been.

The Cromwell Prize Essay:

CROMWELL, THE ARMY AND POLITICS 1642-1649

Dan Prosser

Even in 1643, in Parliament's darkest days, Cromwell, certain of fighting in God's war, was undaunted. A letter to the Eastern Association, shows clearly the cast of his mind: '... Gentlemen ... It's no longer disputing, but out instantly all you can. Raise all your bands; send them to Huntingdon; get up what volunteers you can; hasten your horses ... I beseech you spare not, but be expeditious and industrious. Almost all our foot have quitted Stamford; there is nothing to interrupt an enemy, but our horse ... You must ... neglect no means ...'

What was needed at Westminster was a cool head, a spirit as inflexible as Cromwell's on the battlefield, and a subtle way with parliamentary procedure. John Pym provided them. J. H. Hexter recounts how: '... From November, 1642 to August 1643 ... Pym had pressed his programme ... He would set a whole batch of defence measures before the House in a few days. Then, slowing the pace, he gave the more scrupulous members a chance to recover'. Then he would renew pressure for another scheme. Always resonant to the mood of the House, he took them point to point towards the achievement of a machinery capable of fighting and winning the war. When Pym died in December 1643, he had done most of what was required. The rest was up to them.

Pym's major *coup* was probably the Solemn League and Covenant. Without the Scottish Army, the Parliamentary cause was in jeopardy. Far from being without principle, Pym, like any supreme parliamentary manager, knew instinctively that politics is the art of the possible. Professor Ashton has corrected the view that the English Parliament capitulated utterly to the Scots, and shown that the latter were quite as eager for agreement. 'Here the crucial text is the first clause of the Solemn League and Covenant ...' This was only slightly toned down by Vane persuading the Scots to the addition of the words 'and the example of the best reformed Churches' ... But this mild modification of the originally proposed clause was not enough for the English Parliament ... hardly, it would seem, the action of a nation negotiating from a position of weakness with another negotiating from a position of strength ...'

The turning-point of the war was undoubtedly its bloodiest battle, Marston Moor. At the beginning of June 1644 the Earl of Manchester's men rejoined the two parliamentary armies besieging

York. In all this force amounted to some 9,000, a third of it cavalry under Lieutenant-General Cromwell. Prince Rupert, marching from Lancashire, slipped over the Ouse, and approached the Parliamentary forces. For three hours the armies faced each other, with sporadic exchanges of cannon fire. When the Roundheads began singing psalms, the Cavaliers felt that they could relax. Nothing could have been more mistaken. Psalm-singing was often the practice of the Parliamentary armies as they 'fell on' as they did now at about seven in the evening. Cromwell and his cavalry, including David Leslie's 800 Scots, formed the left wing and threw themselves upon the regiments of Lord Byron, on the Royalist right. Rupert sensing that this was where the battle would be won and lost led his men into the breach. In what was perhaps the most dramatic encounter of the whole war — two great cavalry commanders, with roughly equal forces, met in an eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation. Rupert broke through the first Parliamentary line; but Cromwell, though half-blinded by a pistol shot, rallied the second, where the Scots were fighting nobly in a flank attack. Together they drove the Royalist cavalry from the field. Important though this victory was from a military point of view, its psychological impact was probably of an even greater significance. At last Parliament's army had won a major victory; at last the legendary Rupert had taken a beating in what had made his reputation — cavalry charges. Understandably Cromwell exulted, '... Truly England and the Church of God hath had a great favour from the Lord, in this great victory given unto us, such as the Like never was since the war began ... We never charged but we routed the enemy ... God made them as stubble to our swords ... Give glory, all the glory, to God ...'

Nevertheless, many events immediately following Marston Moor were profoundly unsatisfactory to Cromwell. No effort seemed to be made to press home the advantage so bravely and brilliantly won. Leven moved to besiege Newcastle; Fairfax destroyed a few Yorkshire fortresses; Manchester returned unenterprisingly to the eastern counties. Meanwhile, Rupert was poised in Lancashire with 5,000 men: probably looking to Ireland for support. Parliament remained inert. Yet now surely, this was the moment to combine the victorious army with those of Waller and Essex, and go for outright victory by attacking the King head-on. The London Committee suggested as much to the generals; but there seemed always some reason for doing little or nothing.

Ironically major Royalist successes came on the heels of Marston Moor. As Essex marched south to relieve Lyme, Prince Maurice

raised the siege, falling back into Devon. Essex looked to have the upper hand, driving the Royalists from Plymouth. But he was unwise enough to follow them into their Cornish stronghold. On 2 September at Lostwithiel, Skippon and his foot were obliged to lay down their arms. The horse, under Essex, were lucky enough to be able to escape by sea, because Goring, commanding the Royal cavalry, was drunk. Meanwhile the King was moving eastwards. The next major engagement was a draw at Newbury, dishonourable from the Parliamentary viewpoint, since they had almost double the Royalist forces. The supineness of Manchester who led the Parliamentary army, saved the King; though Cromwell, too, probably suffering one of his periodical bouts of depression was far from at his best. Nevertheless, he had urged an attack on the King as he returned to Donnington. There had taken place a memorable exchange. 'If we beat the King ninety and nine times,' Manchester had said, 'yet he is King still, and so will his posterity be after him; but if the King beat us, then we shall all be hanged, and our posterity made slaves.' 'If this be so, my lord,' replied Cromwell, 'why did we take up arms at first? This is against fighting ever hereafter. If so, let us make peace, be it never so base.'

For Cromwell Manchester was now a stumbling-block. The earl was for peace by negotiation but Cromwell had long-since appreciated that peace would come only from victory in the field. Further, he knew that most of his best cavalymen were sectaries. He himself was politically and socially conservative, but understood that a successful general is one who can recognize and encourage a good soldier irrespective of his own prejudices to hold him back. Cromwell criticised Manchester in the Commons in a great speech: 'the members of both Houses have got great places and commands ... and ... will perpetually continue themselves in grandeur, and not permit the war speedily to end, lest their own power should determine with it ... if the Army be not put into another method, and the war more vigorously prosecuted, the people can bear the war no longer, and will enforce you to a dishonourable peace ...' The Commons, shaken by the disasters at Lostwithiel and Newbury, and goaded by these bitter phrases, at last ordered the enlistment of an auxiliary army for permanent service. The passage of the Self-Denying Ordinance signalled the coming of the New Model Army.

It was, Cromwell saw clearly, essential to have an army for general service, free from local loyalties and obligations. Pay must be regular from central funds and supplies generous. Conscription would fill out the ranks of an Army which when mustered at Windsor numbered

eleven regiments of horse, each 600 strong, twelve regiments of foot, each numbering 1,200, 1,000 dragoons, and a train of artillery, under Fairfax as Lord General, with Skippon as Major General. Fairfax urged Parliament to make Cromwell's nominal position of Lieutenant General official — a demand unwelcome to the Lords but acceptable to the Commons. When the news reached the troops the cry was 'Ironsides has come to lead us!'

Wasting no time, Fairfax attacked the King with his new army the day after Cromwell was officially installed. The forces met near the village of Naseby. The Parliamentary army was the larger, but most of its foot were newly-joined conscripts, while every Royalist was a tried soldier. Charles expected an easy victory. Cromwell alone of the Parliamentarians was confident, as he recalled a month later: '... I can say this of Naseby, that when I saw the enemy draw up and march in gallant order towards us, and we having a company of poor ignorant men, to seek how to order our battle — the General having commanded me to order all our horses — I could not (riding alone about my business) but smile out to God in praises, in assurance of victory, because God would, by things that are not, bring to naught things that are. Of which I had great assurance; and God did it...' Of all Cromwell's writings none is more typical: the apparent reliance on religious experience hiding the genuine scent of probable victory in the nostrils of a born soldier; the large-mindedness; the modesty; the generous appreciation of the enemy; the implacable will and the iron determination, the more impressive for not being brash — everything is there in these few words.

Cromwell's optimism was justified, thanks largely to his own work. The Royalists broke Skippon's foot and Ireton's attempt to meet Rupert on equal terms was disastrous. But seeing this, Cromwell, on the right, immediately attacked Langdale's horse. So fierce was his assault that Charles himself attempted to lead his reserve in resistance, until he was physically restrained by his advisers. Cromwell now turned to the centre, where the Royalist foot were showing amazing tenacity. Cromwell's horse and the re-formed infantry under Fairfax were required to break them. Soon only Rupert's horse remained. Unsupported, their task hopeless; they fled towards Leicester, which surrendered four days later. Fairfax now turned on Goring's army in the west. Victory at Langport, the taking of Bridgwater, and the Parliamentary hold on Taunton and other towns in mid-Somerset and Dorset right down to Lyme, confined the Royalist forces to Devon and Cornwall, where at length Fairfax and Cromwell destroyed Hopton, and brought resistance to an end.

Cromwell was voted the thanks of the House of Commons on 23 April 1646. On the 25th he read them Ireton's announcement of Charles's decision to surrender. But he blamed Ireton for not sending the letter direct to Parliament, and promoted a resolution that Fairfax should send up all royal communications and accept no peace initiative himself. In this he showed shrewd judgement, since a growing rift between Army and Parliament was the next problem that would have to be faced.

Parliament aimed to reduce the Army, whose arrears, despite the promises made, were now formidable. Tactlessly £400,000 had just been paid to the Scots in return for the person of the King (who had surrendered to them at Newcastle as a last hope) and for their peacefully retiring over the border. Parliament was increasingly dominated by men like Denzil Holles, always suspicious of Cromwell, and Philip Stapleton, who called the New Model 'that evil army'. On 11 March, Cromwell wrote to Fairfax: '... Upon the Fast (day) divers soldiers were raised ... near 200 in Covent Garden, to prevent (the sectaries) from cutting the Presbyterians' throats! These are fine tricks to mock God with ...' Even so, he continued to try to keep Army and Parliament together: and in a speech to the Army leaders in Saffron Walden Church on 16 May, declared that 'if that authority falls to nothing, nothing can follow but confusion'.

He reported to the House on the 21st his belief that, although the Army might refuse to go to Ireland, it would disband peaceably. Even so, Parliament still refused to consider arrears and, on the 27th, ordered immediate disbandment at widely-separated localities. The Army replied by concentrating itself on Newmarket. Parliament optimistically thought to bring the King to London, confident that the Scots and the City Militia could quell the recalcitrant New Model veterans. In these circumstances, Cromwell would not longer act as intermediary. If the Royalists could play off Parliament against Army, four years of sacrifice might be in vain. At this point came Cornet George Joyce's intervention which remains shrouded in mystery. Both Cromwell and Fairfax denied prior knowledge of it or compliance in it; but John Harris claims that Joyce was ordered (he does not say by whom) to secure 'the garrison magazine ... and then forthwith ... secure the person of the King ... or ... remove him to some place of better security ...' Harris also asserts that Joyce reported (again, to whom is not stated) that he had carried out his commission on the morning of 4 June. Perhaps significantly, on the 3rd Cromwell had set out for Newmarket, where he found the Army pledged not to disband until its demands had been met.

With the King in the Army's hands, Parliament sought to temporize, even talking of the full payment of arrears. But the soldiers now wanted more than that. Ireton prepared a Declaration, of its grievances and demands. Signed by the officers on 14 June, it pressed 'purging' of the present Parliament, and election of an entirely new representative House. Further, it insisted on a charge of high treason against those eleven members (Holles, Stapleton, Clotworthy and Maynard among them) seen as primarily responsible for recent grievances. Deserters, for instance, were being paid more than loyal New Model men, as were soldiers of fortune ('reformadoes'). A new army was being formed, ostensibly for Ireland, but obviously it could be used against the New Model. Cromwell, believing in the justice of the Army's case, himself signed the Declaration.

Parliament, which by the mere payment of arrears in May might have set everything straight, now had to listen to a more political Army. The Eleven Members withdrew from the House and negotiations began at High Wycombe on 1 July. At an Army Council at Reading on 16 July Cromwell calmed the hotheads who wished to march upon London, saying, 'I speak this to you out of a clear conscience before the Lord ... I would (say) ... that (what) we ... gain in a free way, it is better than twice so much in a forced, and will be more truly ours and our posterities.' On 1 August *The Heads of the Proposals*, largely the work of Ireton and Lambert, negotiations not merely between Parliament and Army but bringing in the King as well, were sent to London. Counter-revolutionary mobs surged around both Houses, denouncing any conciliation of the Army. Speaker Lenthall, the Lord Chancellor (Manchester), all that remained of the Lords (some eight peers), and fifty seven Independent M.P.s fled to the Army which refused to recognise the 'fagend' left in London, especially when the impeached members resumed their places. The city militia, mobilized under Major General Massey, could be no match for professional soldiers, and on 6 August the Army entered London.

On 18 August, the Army put out its 'vindication', claiming that there had been a plot to alter the Common Council and the Militia, to contemplate disbanding the New Model and raising a counter-revolutionary force. The Army still fully favoured a peace settlement; but had to act now to prevent a counter-revolution. It was intolerable that malignants, and slanderers of the soldiery could still sit at Westminster. If Parliament could do nothing about it, the Army would.

By October, the more forthright elements in the Army had the initiative and, on the 28th, a meeting of the Army Council at Putney considered the *Leveller Agreement of the People*, a more radical proposal for settlement than *The Heads of the Proposals*. The Council consisted of the generals and four representatives, two officers and two soldiers from each regiment. A few civilians, notably John Wildman, a Leveller, were also admitted. Cromwell took the chair for difficult discussions over the next few weeks. The Levellers' case seemed cogent. Cromwell and Ireton, they claimed, had tried to reach an agreement first with the King, then with Parliament, and had failed in both. Where could they, in sense and honesty, look now, except to the people? Cromwell argued from two main premises. Firstly, a 'clean slate', was impossible, since they were all irrevocably bound by certain 'engagements' to Parliament, and, through them, to the people. Wildman claimed that such obligations were not binding since they were not 'just and honest'. Whereupon, Ireton ironically remarked that the Levellers' main case against Parliament was precisely that it had violated agreements. Cromwell proposed that a committee be appointed to look into these matters, and then raised his second objection: the proposals were impractical. Admirable perhaps on paper: but could they be put into effect? Would the nation as a whole — not just the Levellers — accept *The Agreement*? As always, Cromwell claimed to be sincerely seeking the true 'word of God': '... I know a man may overcome all difficulties with faith, and faith will overcome all difficulties really where it is. But we are very apt to call that faith that may be but carnal imagination and carnal reasoning ...'

The Levellers were, on the whole, basically more interested in politics than religion, though they appealed to the latter when it suited their interest. Cromwell's suggestion that what they claimed to be the 'word of God' might in fact be no more than what we would call 'wishful thinking', was a shrewd move, since, to some extent it spiked their guns. They retaliated quickly with Wildman asserting that Cromwell's own 'timidity and dilatoriness' was a 'dishonouring of God'. Major General Thomas Rainsborough asked, if difficulties were the point at issue, why had the war been begun in the first place? The debate looked like degenerating into a 'Leveller v. Conservative' free-for-all. Rainsborough apparently demanded universal manhood suffrage as a natural right. Ireton replied that no man should vote who had not 'a fixed, permanent interest' in the kingdom, otherwise no property would be safe. To breathe the air, said Ireton, is a natural right; so, for that matter, is benefitting by laws made by Parliament,

and not by one man (the King). But universal suffrage could not in sense and justice be taken as a 'natural right'. There was never any likelihood of an agreement on this issue. Some moderate Levellers, such as Maximillian Petty, modified their views during the debate; but the 'hard-liners' certainly did not. With the 'Conservatives' as intransigent, the Army was divided against itself.

All this disturbed Cromwell. He tried to be conciliatory, pointing out that if Parliament, for all its faults, were not accepted, there would be no discipline left in the nation and, soon, none in the Army. Parliament, certainly, should be reformed; but must still be the final court of appeal in governing the country. It must not be dictated to. In reality, Cromwell was much less sure on this matter than Ireton, who was in effect his father-in-law's mouthpiece at this time. (He had married Bridget Cromwell earlier in the year)

On 11 November the King fled to the Isle of Wight. The Putney debates had solved nothing, and the Army was in an ugly mood. At Ware on 15 December there was actually a mutiny. Fairfax calmed Thomas Harrison's regiment; but Robert Lilburne's, inflamed by a Leveller tract, which they stuck in their hats, seemed determined to see the matter through. Resolute action by the 'grandees' saved the situation. The mutiny collapsed. One corporal was shot. Military discipline was restored. Over the next few months political developments brought the army more tightly together.

On 17 January 1648 Parliament passed 'the Vote of No Addresses', denying any further communication with the King. They expelled the Scottish representatives from the Committee of Both Kingdoms, making war with Scotland merely a matter of time. Charles had already been in touch with the Scots. On 26 December 1647 he and Commissioners for Scotland had signed a secret treaty, the Engagement, allying Royalist and Scot. By early April 1648 the Scots were raising an army of invasion; and at the end of the month Royalists seized Carlisle and Berwick. Fairfax hurried northwards while Cromwell went to subdue an outbreak in South Wales. By the time he arrived only Pembroke was still held for the Royalists. It surrendered to him on 11 July.

The climax of the Second Civil War came at Preston in August. On the night of the 16th, the Duke of Hamilton, the Royalists' Scottish leader, lay there with 10,000 foot and 1,500 horse. The Roundheads encamped at Stonyhurst, nine miles off, with about 9,000 men, about a third of them cavalry. The Royalist Lieutenant General, the Earl of Callander, was at Wigan with the larger part of the Scottish horse; while Major General Munro, with 3,000 Scottish veterans and

Musgrave's English Cavaliers, was at Kirkby Lonsdale. Between Hamilton and Cromwell was encamped Sir Marmaduke Langdale, with 600 horse and 3,000 foot. Cromwell was thus both outnumbered and surrounded. But Hamilton underestimated his enemy, pooh-pooed Langdale's warning of Cromwell's approach. Cromwell fell first upon Langdale, whose desperate appeals for help were ignored. Still fighting his troops fell back upon Preston. At that point Hamilton left and was pursued by Cromwell to Warrington. Conditions thereabouts were appalling. Cromwell reported that 'We lay that night in the field, close by the enemy, being very dirty and weary, and having marched twelve miles of such ground as I never rode in my life, the day being very wet ...' Next day, the Scottish infantry, caught at Winwick, made a gallant stand with their pikes. But, at last they capitulated giving Cromwell 10,000 prisoners. Well might he report 'a glorious day'.

Regardless of the Vote of No Addresses, as early as April 1648 both Houses were considering reopening negotiations with the King, infuriating the Independents. Thomas Scot argued that as the cause of all bloodshed, the King should stand trial and subsequently be hanged, drawn and quartered. This violent language repelled the former 'middle group' Independents, who saw regicide as a prelude to republicanism. The Independent party split with the moderates very much at a disadvantage. Treating at Newport from 18 September, Charles seemed conciliatory. But, in his extant correspondence he claimed to lull his captors into a false sense of security and so escape. He had no intention of keeping one iota of what he would agree to at the conference table.

Among the Army and its allies the more extreme spirits took a firmer hold. Fairfax, always a moderate, was rapidly losing his authority and his will to act. Somewhat cryptically Cromwell dallied in the north, at the siege of Pontefract. In London Ireton was the man of the hour. Renewed Civil War had embittered him. Now Charles, guilty and untrustworthy, must answer for all the blood he had shed. By October, Ireton was among the vigorous moving spirits behind the Army Remonstrance, which talked about 'the sovereignty of the people'. Indeed, it may well have been the work of his pen. If monarchy survived it must have no veto and, indeed, no powers not granted freely by the nation.

On 2 December the King was taken to Hurst Castle. On the 2nd, the Army moved from Windsor to Whitehall. On the 4th, the Commons deplored the removal of the King and, the next day voted by 199 to 83 still to negotiate with him. That vote was decisive. A

meeting between the Council of Officers and the hard-line Parliamentary Independents decided that the time for action had come.

On Wednesday, 6 December 1648, Colonel Thomas Pride led a troop of musketeers to St Stephen's Chapel. He dismissed the trained bands, and, helped by Lord Grey of Groby, standing by with a list of members 'faithful to the public interest', refused to allow some hundred others to enter the House. Those who protested were confined at a tavern 'dark and low' known as 'Hell'. Meanwhile, about 120 had entered the Commons. Although there had been strong argument; notably from Ireton, for dissolution, in fact Pride's Purge was probably the only sensible option open to the Army. Dissolution, followed by elections with a reformed electorate, would probably have given a majority to Presbyterians and Royalists. So the die was cast. Force alone prevailed.

That evening Cromwell slipped into London. On 28 November an urgent summons sent to him at Pontefract had ordered him to proceed to headquarters 'with all convenient speed possible'. Even in 1648 eight days for such a journey was hardly a swift one. Clearly Cromwell wanted no part (public anyway) in the purge: but, once it was a *fait accompli*, he accepted it as the only way of holding the Army together. Actuated, it seems certain, as much by chivalry as by conservatism, Cromwell sent the Earl of Denbigh to Charles I with a proposition which might have ensured him his throne and his life, if little else. But Charles, at this moment of truth, was now ready to face death for his — and he would claim, the nation's — fundamental rights. Denbigh was spurned. Charles's sad, but implacable tones ring down the ages: 'since the Providence of God hath cast this upon us, I cannot but submit to Providence'.

On 25 January 1649 a special court resolved to condemn the King to death as tyrant, traitor, murderer, and public enemy to the Commonwealth of England. Sixty-two commissioners supported this motion the following day; while sixty-seven were present on the 27th to witness the finish of the proceedings. Throughout, Charles had refused to plead. His courage and conviction held out to the end. On 30 January he was publicly executed as a man of blood and a traitor to his people.

In a sense Charles was not alone as he faced trial. England herself was on trial to ascertain whether she could govern herself without a monarch. Cromwell, too, was on trial. It was on to his shoulders that Charles's mantle would fall. It is not surprising that it would prove too heavy even for his giant strength, nor that in little more than a

decade England would appear to be clamouring for the return of monarchy. What is surprising is that 'the Lord Protector', as he became in 1653, accomplished so much as he did. Cromwell was a military commander of genius, it may be England's greatest; but as a statesman, he fell short. Perhaps he should have stayed with the army he knew and have left politics to those whose gifts enabled them to navigate in such murky waters. In short, Cromwell was not Pym; any more than Pym was Cromwell. But what they might have achieved together is one of the great imponderables of history.

Tragically, Dan Prosser, a 'mature' student at the University of East Anglia, died in April 1983, a short while before he would have been presented with his prize. His parents have kindly suggested that the prize money be devoted to the purchase of books for the Association Library.

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL MICHAEL JONES: AN UNSUNG HERO OF THE CIVIL WARS

John L. Atkins

Of the many 'unsung' heroes of the Civil Wars none is more impressive than Lieut-General Michael Jones, an Irish-born soldier of Welsh parents (a daunting pedigree!), who made possible Cromwell's invasion of Ireland.

Michael Jones was born, probably in Ardagh, about 1620, the youngest son of the Bishop of Killaloe, Lewis Jones of Merioneth, who, reputedly lived to be 104. The boy grew into a man of acute intellect, though his natural inclination remained more towards an outdoor life than one of academic seclusion. Strong of frame, he spent his youth in rural surroundings in the south-west of Ireland. When as a student at Lincoln's Inn he heard of the outbreak of rebellion in Ulster late in 1641, he eagerly abandoned his legal books for a helmet and sword and sailed at once to offer his services to the English commander, the Earl of Ormonde. Soon he was a cavalry officer campaigning against the insurgents in the south.

Service under Lord Broghill provided a classic example of Jones's courage. In February 1642 an enemy officer, Captain Fennell, rode out and challenged any of Broghill's men to meet him in single combat. Michael Jones immediately accepted. The rival champions, having first fired their pistols without effect, crossed steel before the fascinated eyes of their respective forces. Jones showed himself to be a dashing fighter and Fennell, outclassed, fled followed by Jones whose horse was shot from under him. A friend rode to his assistance but was himself mortally wounded. Jones, under enemy fire, tried to lift his friend on to his horse but failed and had to retreat himself. Next morning the body of the brave Downing was courteously returned by Fennell's men for burial.

Michael Jones, a staunch Protestant, decided when civil war broke out that he could best serve his religion by returning to England to fight for Parliament. He soon saw action in North Wales in the English border counties. Following the Parliamentary victory at Marston Moor in June 1644 Prince Rupert retreated towards Chester with the remnants of his force. Colonel Marrow, a Royalist colleague, took up position at Tarvin, about four miles east of the city. Brereton and Myddleton, the Parliamentary commanders there, made a swoop on Marrow's force inflicting a severe defeat. When some of the Cavaliers took refuge in the church at Tarvin, Michael Jones, now a Colonel, was given the task of reducing them. Storming

the building he killed or made prisoner all the defenders. Next day a Royalist force came out of Chester to avenge this defeat but met with disaster, losing 300 killed and 100 prisoners. Meanwhile the Royalist Sir Marmaduke Langdale, had begun a march from Cumberland through Lancashire with 3,000 horse. Brereton sent Michael Jones to intercept him and on 26 August at Malpass in Cheshire, Landale found his way barred by Jones's force of not above 800 sabres. Although Landale's troops had been reduced considerably en route by casualties and desertions, they must have outnumbered those of Jones by at least two to one. A desperate encounter took place but Jones's men, perhaps animated by higher ideals than the average Cavalier, held their own against all the odds. Fortunately Sir William Brereton appeared with a force large enough to make the Royalists scatter. During the fierce hand-to-hand fray, Landale was wounded, several of his officers were captured or slain.

On 18 September 1645 Michael Jones and his troopers stormed the eastern suburbs of Chester, assisted it was said by the treachery of some Royalist officers. Jones by now had so proved his capabilities that he was given command of all the horse of the besiegers. Another Roundhead officer, Colonel Poyntz, arriving at Whitchurch, sent to warn Jones of his imminent coming. His letter was intercepted and conveyed to Langdale who thought he would surprise Poyntz's force by a sudden attack. They met in a short encounter near Beeston Castle but, at the critical moment, some horse and musketeers sent by Jones to help Poyntz took Langdale on the flank. The Cavaliers were completely routed and the fate of Chester seemed sealed. Brereton, in command of the besiegers, heard that a hostile force was assembling at Denbigh. He determined to strike first and sent Jones and Adjutant-General Lothian with 1,400 horse and 1,000 foot (all picked men) to engage the enemy. On the 30 October they reached Mold and on the 31 Ruthin, where they were joined by Colonel Mytton. Next day they sighted the enemy who were about equal in numbers. The battle was hotly contested but at length the Cavaliers gave way and fled towards Conway. They had lost 100 killed and 400 prisoner. Parliamentary losses were negligible.

During December another attempt was made to relieve Chester but Michael Jones defeated the Royalists completely at Holt Bridge, capturing their commander, Sir William Byron (ancestor of the poet). On 30 January 1646 an offer of surrender came from Chester and on the 1 February articles for handing over the city were signed by twelve commissioners on each side. Amongst the twelve who represented Brereton was Colonel Michel Jones. Soon after the

surrender, Michael Jones was appointed Governor of Chester but it was a post he did not hold long for in the spring of 1647 he was called upon to go to Dublin as governor and commander of the Parliamentary forces in Leinster. No braver or better-qualified soldier could have been found for these responsibilities.

Returning to Ireland with a higher military rank than when he left, Michael Jones took with him a wife, one of high social standing, Dame Mary Culme. Evidently the marriage was a happy one as Jones, in his will, testifies warmly to the affection he felt for 'his Lady'. There were no children of the union, though the couple appear to have adopted a son.

Jones was in Dublin from June 1647. He faced a difficult task. The garrison's ammunition had been reduced to a mere seven barrels of gunpowder. The city walls were still in a ruinous condition dating from autumn 1641. But Jones eagerly organised re-building by soldiers and sailors from ships in the harbour. The work was completed none too soon, for the capital was to remain under threat during the next two years. Immediately on taking office Jones had summoned all the British troops who could be spared from Ulster to Drogheda for a general inspection. He consulted their leaders in private and received assurances that they would fight with him 'as long as the action of Parliament remained constitutional'.

On the 17 July, to deal with an attack from the Confederate Commander in Leinster, Thomas Preston, Jones sallied out with 1,000 foot and 400 horse and ravaged some of the enemy occupied territory. His rear was attacked when retiring and he lost several valuable officers. When a final clash with Preston seemed imminent, Jones with all the troops he could spare joined forces with Sir Henry Tichborne's army (1 August). Their combined force came to 5,000 foot and 1,500 horse. Eventually Preston drew up his army of some 7,000 foot and 1,000 horse on Dungan Hill confronting Jones's troops at Lynch's Knock. Soon the Parliamentary forces swept forward, Jones in the van. The Confederate horse under Lord Dillon of Costello advanced to meet them. From the *melée* that followed the poorly-trained Confederates soon fled with the swords at their backs. Some Confederate cavalry took refuge in a nearby bog, where they were trapped. No quarter was asked or given. Of 3,000 infantry all but 228 were slain. Preston himself escaped. Over 5,000 bodies were counted on that fatal field.

Jones's troops went on to retake Naas and Maynooth but the difficulty of maintaining a large force in the impoverished country forced a return to Dublin, victorious indeed, but full of anxieties

about the immediate future.

Meanwhile, Colonel George Monck had taken command of the parliament forces in the Ulster area and the new Confederate commander, Owen Roe O'Neill, could not prevent them from linking up with Jones's in October 1647. Together they captured a number of fortresses in Leinster. As Governor, Michael Jones had a busy and worrying time in Dublin throughout 1648. He had expelled from the city all suspect for their religious or political views, but he was conscious that enemy agents were still stirring up mutiny, trying to induce his men to desert. When absent on military matters he could never feel sure of finding the city safe on his return. Even so, by the end of the year Parliamentary garrisons held almost all the important places in the North, thanks mainly to Monck and Coote. The northern chieftains, quarrelling among themselves, now approached Jones to negotiate peace with the Parliament. An exchange of prisoners (among them Jones's brother Theophilus) was effected. In April Monck and O'Neill agreed to a three-month suspension of hostilities. But each side was in fact manoeuvring to use the other and it is doubtful if anyone really thought that a genuine peace would result.

In Dublin Jones's position was still unstable. Open mutiny was always a possibility and piecemeal-desertions by ill-fed, irregularly-paid soldiers impossible to stop. Moreover, to a man of Jones's energetic temperament life cooped up between garrison walls must have been tedious. Accepting that negotiation with Jones was not worthwhile, the Royalist leader Ormonde had assembled a force to advance towards Dublin. He captured Maryborough and then Athy (May 1647). By 30 May Ormonde and the former Parliamentarian Inchiquin, with 2,000 horse and 6,000 foot had left Kilkenny to march nearer the capital. By 21 June the Royalist army reached Castleknock to the north of Dublin aiming to cut Jones off from Monck's forces. But help was soon on its way; on 22 July three red-coat regiments of New Model infantry assembled at Liffey. Jones's delight can be imagined as the sturdy veterans of Naseby and Marston Moor filed past, with the news that Cromwell himself was about to sail for Ireland.

Meanwhile the Royalist army pushed ever closer. A minor skirmish in late July brought about a tragic event for Jones. Following the encounter some Royalist prisoners were taken, among them Jones's own nephew, his sister Mary's son, Richard Elliott, who had originally served Parliament but had defected. Defection meant death and Jones could not compromise on that, looking weak

or partial. Richard Elliott was hanged in front of an awestruck crowd. His mother, though heart-broken, recognised the inevitability of the execution. There was no personal rancour or vindictiveness discerned between brother and sister.

On the evening of the 1 August, the encirclement of Dublin by the Cavaliers was completed. Ormonde sent out Major-General Purcell with 1,500 foot on an errand which unexpectedly brought about the decisive encounter. Seeing an opportunity Jones hurled his whole force of 4,000 infantry and 1,200 horse at Ormonde's camp at Rathmines just outside the city. Taken by surprise some of the Royalists fled though others rallied to face oncoming Roundheads with determination. But as Jones pressed home cavalry flank attacks Ormonde's men broke and it was not long before they were streaming from the field. Jones reported that he had put 4,000 enemy to the sword and captured 2,500. Ormonde himself was lucky to escape to Kilkenny.

Henceforth the Royalists seldom ventured a pitched battle in Ireland, confining their efforts to the defence of garrisons. The well-situated harbour at Dublin was now open for the landing of Cromwell, where he would be secured from attack while disembarking his troops. The skill and daring of Jones had made an opening through which Cromwell could enter, at his won pace into the very heart of Ireland.

On 15 August 1649 Cromwell arrived in Dublin. Artillery roared from the forts and the ships, bells pealed and houses were decked with flags and bunting. Hopes were high. But with only Dublin and Derry effectively under Parliamentary control the task ahead was massive. The first blow was struck against Drogheda on 12 September amidst appalling scenes of carnage. After that Dundalk and Carlingford soon yielded. While Cromwell dealt with Wexford, Michael Jones reduced Rosslare fort without a blow struck. On 16 October the Protestant troops of the Royalist commander Inchiquin mutinied and declared for Parliament. New Ross capitulated after two-days siege on the 17th.

The autumn weather was now cold and stormy. On the road to Kilmacthomas, Jones began to feel the mental and physical effects of a sudden breathing-spell after prolonged and strenuous effort. He caught a fever and on reaching Dungarven had to take to his bed with symptoms typical of cholera. In the house of a local clergyman, suffering acutely, Jones asked to see Lord Broghill under whose command he had undergone his 'baptism of fire'. When Broghill arrived Jones apparently spoke of some doubts about the way

matters were going, though some doubt must be cast on this report. He died on 10 December 1649. The death of Michael Jones was a serious loss to the Parliamentary cause. Eulogies of his character and service were numerous. They included an emotional one from Cromwell himself. Jones was buried at midnight in the Earl of Cork's Chapel, St. Mary's Church, Youghal. Tradition tells of the spacious Church being completely filled with Cromwell's soldiers, many holding lighted torches — an impressive scene. Standing upon a muniment chest (still extant), Oliver Cromwell delivered a fitting encorium and exhortation.

It is believed that Jones's remains rest in a vault below the floor of the Boyle Chapel, formerly the Chantry of St Saviour. No monument marks the spot but perhaps the time will come when Irishmen and Englishmen will join to honour Michael Jones by erecting a memorial apt for a heroic soldier whose name is already written indelibly in their history.

A SERMON FOR THE PUTNEY DEBATES COMMEMORATION SERVICE

Preached at St Mary's Putney on 7 November 1982 at the close of The Cromwell Connection: Celebrations of the 335th Anniversary of the Debates

Long before I knew where Putney was, I had heard of the Putney Debates. Dr A D Lindsay, the Master of my college (Balliol) in Oxford, used to suggest that because of these debates Putney was a name more important than Athens or Gettysburg in the development of the true principles of democracy. But 335 years have passed during which Christians living in Putney have refrained from commemorating these debates in the Church where they were held; so the fact that we are doing so today is a fact of some significance. Our predecessors of not so long ago refused to accept a plaque, supposedly on religious grounds, fearful of mixing religion with the wrong sort of politics. What about us? Do we welcome it — as I hope — as a proud reminder of a notable event in the history of our country when religion and politics fruitfully interacted and Christian faith radically influenced the public life of the realm — a notable event which has lessons and challenges for us today?

First, a brief word about the background to the Putney Debates. Christopher Hill has told us about their political background. I will emphasise their equally — if not more — important religious background. In the first half of the seventeenth century England was, as it has never been since, essentially a Christian country; not just nominally Christian, but a country in which the literate population at least, as their letters show, were possessed of a deep, personal Christian faith. But it was a divided country, and the divisions ran along religious lines. In 1647, the year of the Debates, there were the Royalists, who were Anglicans and stood for Episcopacy and the Divine Right of the King, the Parliamentarians who were Presbyterians and stood for presbyteries controlling the Church and the sovereign right of a small and exclusive parliament: and the Independents, who believed that any group of Christian men and women were free to run their own church without the interference of Bishop or Presbyter, and wanted the State governed on similar lines.

Oliver Cromwell was an Independent, and when during the First Civil War he recruited his regiment, which later provided the nucleus of the New Model Army, he went for honest, godfearing men of the Independent persuasion. What a remarkable army that New Model Army was! A pious army which met for prayer on the eve of any

important happening and sang a short psalm in the heat of battle: but a difficult army which gave its general a world of trouble. In 1647 that Army virtually controlled England. The King was its prisoner and Parliament subdued and in disarray. Oddly enough, it represented England better than Parliament, for it was drawn from all over the country and from many different professions and trades. So it was not unreasonable for it to concern itself with the reform of the English constitution. But when it got down to that task, the trouble started.

The Independents, as their name would suggest, were not all of one mind. There were the 'Gentlemen Independents', led by General Ireton, who were moderate in their proposals for reform; but there were also the Levellers — a religious and political party led by John Lilburne with a strong following in the army rank and file — who were more extreme and wanted a clean sweep of the Monarchy, the House of Lords, the Church of England; a reconstituted House of Commons, universal manhood suffrage and religious liberty — indeed it was the religious liberty they were already experiencing which made them eager for civil liberty too.

In October 1647 a special meeting was called of the Army Council (made up of the Generals and representatives of the regiments) to sort out the differences between the moderates and the Levellers. The army was then in Putney and Putney Church was the obvious place to meet. Though Church of England it was a religious building and there was a real sense in which the Council saw their task as a religious as well as a political one: to mark this they broke up their proceedings with regular periods of prayer. When the meeting opened on 28 October Cromwell was in the chair and the main spokesman for the Levellers was Col. Rainsborough. His words in defence of universal manhood suffrage have won a firm place in the history books — 'I think the poorest he in England hath a life to live as the greatest he'. That is the authentic note of democracy. The poorest man or woman has the right to live his or her own life, not to have it managed for him; and has indeed the responsibility so to do, of which no one can divest him or her. Whatever big differences may exist between human beings, this remains true. It is God-given fact, a religious principle, a translation into practical terms of the priesthood of all believers. We thank God today for Col. Rainsborough and the Levellers who so clearly enunciated it.

But when it came to applying that simple principle questionings arose. Rainsborough went on to claim that therefore no man has a right to be governed save by his own consent. Here Ireton, the practical-minded soldier, intervened to point out that that means

anarchy. Government cannot be carried on if you have to get every man's consent to it, and it cannot be carried on if the Levellers also claimed, engagements could be broken and the law disregarded according to the dictates of individual conscience. Ireton showed, by common sense and logic, that much of the Levellers' political programme would not work — and he was right, certainly in the situation of that time. Yet you feel that he never got to grips with what was really moving them.

That is why today we thank God for Oliver Cromwell and are proud of our 'Cromwell connection'. Cromwell, despite the mistakes he made, was a very great man and a very great Christian, constantly 'wrestling with the Lord' and seeking a 'right, reasonable and Christian solution' to every problem. He saw what the Levellers were getting at, for he too had experienced the free democracy of the small Christian congregation. He was not as concerned as they were, or as Ireton was, with any particular form of government — 'socialism' or 'capitalism' as we might say today. The Jews had lived under different forms of government, he said, and what form you have at any time is 'dross and dung in comparison of Christ'. He did not forget they were discussing a constitution which must suit not just themselves but the whole nation. He believed in toleration and in learning even from those who were opposed to him.

Above all, Cromwell insisted that men who claim to speak in the name of God must be prepared for real discussion, must recognise that they are all fallible, that they need to correct one another. 'At such a meeting as this', he said, 'we should wait upon God and hearken to the voice of God speaking in every one of us' — in Private Buffcoat as well as General Ireton. Democracy for him was not primarily a method of voting but a process of discovery — discovery by hearing what each man's conscience has to say but also by frank and open discussion seeking to learn the will of God. It is the supreme insight, combining the Levellers' emphasis on individual conscience with the need for toleration and recognition of differences and the insistence that individual views should submit to the criticism of open discussion which was Cromwell's unique contribution to the Putney Debates and through them to posterity. And it was based upon his belief in the living God and in men made in God's image and capable to work together discerning God's purposes for the world.

Finally, what are the lessons we can learn from those Debates and their challenge to us today? That there are lessons to be learnt is evidenced by the interest in them now being shown by historians and political theorists and politicians: but sadly it is too often a

secularised and therefore distorted version on which they base their conclusions. Cut off from their religious source and inspiration, the deepest meaning of the Debates and their true relevance for twentieth-century England are lost. And therein lies the challenge to us.

By re-identifying this Church — St Mary's, Putney — with the Debates for which it is famous, have we not perhaps charged ourselves with the task of initiating a re-interpretation of them which might help towards drawing together religion and politics in the fluid situation of our own day? Though religion now lacks its seventeenth-century vitality, the God of the Putney Debates is not dead and He may be calling us — even you and me — to venture upon a fresh attempt, in the light of our faith and in the light of what happened here 335 years ago, to understand His purpose for the life of our nation and its democratic functioning?

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BOOK REVIEWS

(Cromwelliana's annual *Bibliography of Books and Articles* seems to have met a felt want. A review article singling out for comment some recent publications may be welcomed. The views of members upon this and other features of the journal — will be much appreciated by the Hon. Editor.)

There has been lately no new 'Life' of Oliver Cromwell, though no doubt somewhere one is in gestation. Members of the Association know that the last word has not been and never will be said about him. Charles I was a rather shallower character but his involvement, direct and indirect, with the problems of his times has inhibited biographers. In the last couple of years, however, there have been two substantial attempts to 'pin him down'. Pauline Gregg's *King Charles I* (Dent, 1981, £12.50) is the more successful — judicious, well-researched, and comprehensive, it is particularly stimulating on the early formative years of the first monarch to be brought up in the Church of England of the Elizabethan Settlement, for which in the eyes of many, including himself, he was a martyr. The publishers have sent the book handsomely dressed into the world — so have Routledge and Kegan Paul with *Charles I: The Personal Monarch* (1983, £14.95) by Charles Carlton. The title is ambiguous and the book itself does not clarify it. Does it mean that we must put a stress on a Charles really ruling as well as reigning, not only during the years 1629 to 1640, when there was no parliament and which have been traditionally labelled 'the eleven years' tyranny' and 'the personal government of Charles I'? Or is there a suggestion that this is a Life which more than most highlights on Charles's personality and its impact upon his kingship? A good deal of psycho-history is offered with much talk of the deployment of newer methodologies. Professor Carlton has read widely in both primary and secondary sources and certainly has some thought-provoking things to say and says them with confidence and panache — perhaps too much of both. There is a tuppence-coloured tone to this biography, odd inaccuracies and some dubious assumptions, such as that around 1630 Charles made a definite decision never again to call a parliament. Cromwell makes only flickering appearances, while Charles I himself remains somewhat like Napoleon III, 'an enigma without a secret' or has Professor Carlton perhaps failed to probe him?

The title of Caroline Hibbard's more specialised study — also American — excites curiosity: *Charles I and the Popish Plot* (Chapel

Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983, £21.00) Are we in the wrong reign? No. What she does is to take seriously the grievance so loudly and consistently uttered around 1640—42 — in the Grand Remonstrance and whatever — that there was a popish party, one perhaps not directly implicating the king himself but at any rate closely aligned with his court and his queen, aiming to obliterate English protestantism and national sovereignty at a stroke and to force the people willy-nilly back into a reactionary, absolutist Catholic fold. John Pym, a not unrealistic politician, by harping on this theme struck a resonant chord both within and outside the Long Parliament. One might argue that he was imagining first a threat and then cynically exploiting the tensions it raised — as Shaftesbury did forty years on, but Dr Hibbard's careful investigations show that if the danger was exaggerated by panic fears, there *was* 'something behind the persistent religious instability of the Stuarts' that ran from Mary Queen of Scots into the eighteenth century encouraging 'a nagging anxiety' even among men to whom religion was not necessarily a top priority. Their conspiracy theory was fed by rebellion in Ireland and by Charles I's own enquiries about bringing in foreign papist forces to assist him against what he saw as an assault on his legitimate prerogatives and responsibilities. Oliver Cromwell for all his association with Root-and-Branch does not appear in this lavishly documented monograph but students of the Great Rebellion and the Interregnum will find much to reinforce understanding of the circumstances in which Cromwell moved from being a private man to becoming a dynamic soldier and politician.

You will look for Cromwell in vain, too, in the index to Barry Coward's *The Stanleys: Lord Stanley and Earls of Derby 1385-1672* (Manchester U.P., 1983, £21.00), but this study of 'the origins, wealth and power of a land-owning family' over the later middle ages and the early modern period helps towards understanding the Stuart era which some historians have seen as witnessing not *a* but *the* 'crisis of the aristocracy' and 'the rise of the gentry', Civil war produced in Lancashire and Cheshire where the Stanleys had a traditional influence and interest something of a polarity among landed families for and against the king's cause. The 6th Earl's son, John Lord Strange, had managed in the 1630s to reconcile royal service as Lord Lieutenant with leadership of county society, but as war loomed up it was increasingly difficult to stay in the middle ground. Dr Coward argues he was 'working for some sort of accommodation against divisions which were threatening local peace and stability, maintenance of which he felt was in the public interest'. But for cavaliers he

was 'malcontent', 'unactive' and 'uncomplying' — the epithets are Clarendon's — whereas parliamentarians with equal certainty identified him with royal policies. All this enables Dr Coward to bring out the difficulties of choice which confronted the political nation at every level when fighting began, continued and gave way to a protracted search for a settlement. With the Stanleys it culminated in the vicious revengeful Anglicanism of the eighth Earl, which tarnished the Restoration. Dr Coward's study offers, of course, more than this. It is a detailed and convincing case-study of a great family, testing and finding, wanting in some respects and acceptable in others theories about the state of the peerage generally in Tudor and Stuart England. He uncovers in the Stanleys little to support the argument that the magnates' influence declined. What is most striking is evidence of continuity. His last sentence chimes with the current interest in the local dimension: 'The Stanleys exercised great power and influence within [their] communities and contributed to the permanent fact of life, insular provincialism, with which a centralising state had to live'. That applied equally to Stuart monarchy and Cromwellian Protectorate.

Twenty-odd years ago Professor George Yule's *The Independents in the English Civil War* (CUP 1958) intensified the never-ending controversy over the relationship between religious labels like 'Independent' and 'Presbyterian' and political 'parties' in the 1640s and 1650s. His latest major work — *Puritans in Politics* (Sutton Courtenay Press, 1981, £30.00) — is broader and deeper in scope. He provides a massive Introduction (300pp) to a diverse body of documents — many previously unprinted — in order to establish the significance of 'the religious legislation of the Long Parliament 1640—47'. He goes back a long way to the fundamentals of the continental reformers and the Tudor puritans, through the struggle with Land and the impact in England of the Scottish rising of 1637 to the conflict over Root-and-Branch and the rise of Independency and beyond. Cromwell said of the civil war that 'religion was not the thing at first contested for' — unfortunately we do not know just what he meant. What Dr Yule succeeds in reaffirming is that if religion was not *the* thing it was certainly one of the most absorbing and difficult of the issues that produced the crises of the 1640s. Throughout Dr Yule is concerned to put the religious content back into the writing of the history of this period. Twentieth-century historians' lack of theology had made them understate and misunderstand what men (and women) lay and clerical, were getting at when, like Cromwell, they attacked Laudianism and disputed with one another about

toleration, church discipline, structure and so on. He is surely right to argue that what historians 'have brought to elucidating the secular sphere has to be brought to elucidating the religion'. (*Puritans and Politics* is available as a paperback — the commentary without the texts — at about £10, if a bulk order is placed. Members of the Association interested should contact the Honorary Editor).

Dr Yule, of course, does not invite us to forget the more mundane politics of the age or its enquiry into the nature and purposes of human society. A very useful introduction to ideological conflicts these produced in the 1640s is provided by Dr Andrew Sharpe in *Political Ideas of the English Civil War 1641-49* in a new series of 'Documents in Political Ideas' (Longmans, 1983, £5.95 in paperback), a collection of representative textual extracts with a commentary and an informed if not entirely impeccable guide to further reading. Stress is placed on the view taken then by many — including Oliver Cromwell — that human beings were 'the instruments of God's will and that political activity was to be judged according to how it conformed with his plan'. 'Many conclusions were consistent with recourse to providence and prophetic history.' Dr Sharpe observes that in Cromwell and Ireton it led to 'a cautious empiricism' in decision-making followed by 'courage and thoroughness in execution' that was 'a consequence of an utter conviction of action as the Lord's impliments'. The same convictions led others in different directions, particularly in the 1650s and it is to be hoped that there will be a follow-up volume taking in Hobbes, the Engagement Controversy and Harrington.

The 'essential' texts of the 1640s and 1650s are legion and there is always room for handy collections. The latest is *Revolutionary Prose of the English Civil War* edited by Howard Erskine-Hill and Graham Storey (Cambridge U.P., 1983, £22.50 in cloth, £7.50 paperback) — a volume of the 'Cambridge English Prose Texts'. Cromwell's famous letter to Colonel Valentine Walton (5 July 1644) is prologue to selections from the Army debates of 1647 and tracts by e.g. Walwyn, Winstanley and Milton. Most of these are, in fact, readily available elsewhere. There is a helpful complement of historical, biographical and bibliographical information and a commentary, which curiously has more to offer historians than the English Literature students for whom the series is presumably primarily intended. The works included have always brought out vividly the age's 'remarkable literary self-consciousness [and] absolute belief in the power of the written or spoken word'. But so, of course, do many others and more enterprising editors could have cast a wider net into the turbid waters

of the 1640s.

More specialised texts reflecting the current (and entirely acceptable) view that nothing written during the period should be cavalierly (or for that matter roundheadedly) dismissed as beyond 'the lunatic fringe' of history are presented by Nigel Smith as *A Collection of Ranter Writings from the 17th Century* (Junction Books, 1983, £12.50 in cloth; £5.95 paperback). This is a really handsome paperback, remarkably cheap. It reinforces claims that have been made before by Christopher Hill, A. L. Morton, *The Rota*, and others that Ranters can tell us things we could not otherwise know about how 'the English imagination' — or rather some imaginations, for there was diversity — saw the world of the mid-seventeenth century. The editor's Introduction is intelligent, balanced and appreciative, setting out to answer such questions about the Ranters as John Everard's exasperated 'What manner of people are these?' The texts are difficult — 'uncouth' and 'vehement' — but fascinating in style and content. Some defy present elucidation, and perhaps always will, though few are as bewildering as Lady Eleanor Davies's as yet uncollected effusions. Gerard Winstanley — to his own surprise perhaps — has become a Penguin 'classic'. Perhaps someday the Ranters, with whom he had some contact, as he had with Lady Eleanor, will do so too. Keith Wrightson's *English Society 1580-1680* (Hutchinson, 1982, cloth £12.00; paperback £6.95) offers a survey of life in the England where Cromwell was born, grew up, flourished and died. Oliver does not appear in the index here either but is, in fact, mentioned at the opening of the Introduction as being confronted at the Putney Debates by an anonymous but critically articulate 'Bedfordshire man'. The reference underlines a main theme of the book — the strength of regional variations, in accent as in every economic and social activity. 'The impact of social change in 16th and 17th century England presents itself, ... as a series of localised social dramas.' Wrightson argues — and demonstrates — that much more can be found out about 'the general and common sort of people' than most historians in the past have cared to contemplate. There is more material than might be supposed and that material is very responsive if you persist with searching questions and stay for answers. Unlike Jesting Pilate Keith Wrightson does just that and the result is a lively, provoking and mostly convincing study.

Scotland played a vital role throughout 'the Wars of the Three Kingdoms', which led unexpectedly to the enforced unification of the British Isles under the Protectorate. Cromwell's victories at Dunbar

and Worcester were decisive and, as Dr F. D. Dow writes in her *Cromwellian Scotland 1651-1660* (Edinburgh, James Donald, 1979. £15.00), 'virtually destroyed Scotland's political and military independence'. The treatment of North Britain was, however, rather different from that meted out to Ireland and after pacification General George Monck, in military and civil command, was able to report that 'all things are quiet and well'. Dr Dow argues convincingly that the truth of that was 'amply demonstrated when Scotland remained passive after the death of Oliver and calmly accepted the accession of his son Richard'. Beyond that, as the English regimes collapsed between late 1658 and early 1660, though 'the state of Scotland on the eve of Monck's departure' into England (to do what?) 'is hard to assess', 'the careful balance between co-operation and control' which Monck, not discouraged by the Lord Protector, had earlier achieved, seems to have survived. *Cromwellian Scotland* provides ample evidence of the conciliatory nature of much government activity, whether directed from the centre or arising from local initiative, during the mid-1650s. It is a scholarly, well-organised study, not, of course, definitive in handling its complex subject, but stimulating historians to look beyond the confines of England for enhancing understanding of Cromwell and his times.

Mention may be made here of two other works which highlight the current renaissance in the study of early modern Scottish history. First, *The Party-Coloured Mind* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1983, £7.50) an anthology of prose relating to 'the conflict between Church and State in seventeenth-century Scotland'. The editor, Dr David Reid, admits that in literature it was a dull age, but in religion and politics one of the most exciting. For many 'the great affair of national life' was the struggle between the two. That was what 'men wrote most about' and 'on the whole they wrote most interestingly about'. In his Introduction, selection of material and commentary upon it, Dr Reid's intention is primarily a literary one but the obvious requirement to put everything into some sort of intelligible historical context has been well met. In the section on Civil War and Interregnum there are illuminating passages from Samuel Rutherford, Robert Baillie, Sir Thomas Urquhart and in particular from that ambivalent piece of clay, Archibald Johnson of Wariston, the fascinating vicissitudes of whose attitudes are summarised in Dr Dow's *Cromwellian Scotland*. Wariston's *Diary* brings out vividly a mind and soul at once messianic and legalistic, narrow and sanctimonious, but introspective and puzzled. Flawed certainly, Wariston could also be very human, eloquent with more

than 'a spark of heavenly fire'. After faltering (like Cranmer a century before) he recovered his nerve and faced execution at the Restoration in Edinburgh with a composure equal to that of the Regicides at Tyburn. *The Party-Coloured Mind* is an appealing book, well-produced and cloth-bound at the price of an academic paperback.

The second book is entitled *Captain Luckless* — the nickname which was Montrose's contemptuous coinage for James, first Duke of Hamilton (1606—1649), the principal adviser on Scottish affairs to Charles I in the 1630s and in 1640s, a royalist who was suspected by many, not excluding the king, of treachery. In 1648 he fought listlessly in the Preston campaign and surrendered to Lambert. His execution as a man of blood — 'stone death hath no fellow' — swiftly followed Charles's. He died as bravely, letting the sun shine full in his face, watched by Cromwell and others through 'perspective glasses'. Hamilton has had a bad press — 'a notable dissembler', 'a treacherous opportunist' prepared to betray his 'master with a kiss'. Here Hilary Rubinstein has attempted and on the whole achieves a more balanced portrait, scholarly and perceptive. He sees Hamilton as 'a man who tried to serve two masters', one of those awkward people who, when others make up their minds and follow their convictions through, see too much or not enough to be said for either side. Politically inept always, he could neither formulate nor stick to a calculated policy even of moderation, to which perhaps he was temperamentally most inclined. If he had he might, just might, have become 'Captain Lucky'. Published by the Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh, this excellent work is available still at the 1975 publication price of £7.50.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1983

The Annual General Meeting of the Association was held on Saturday, 23 April in St Mary's Church, Putney.

Present: Professor Ivan Roots, President; Mr Trewin Copplestone, Chairman; Lord Caradon and Dr Maurice Ashley, Vice-Presidents; Mr Geoffrey Woollard, Hon. Treasurer; Miss H. Platt, Hon. Secretary and 56 members.

The Chairman in welcoming members referred to the Plaque erected in the Church by the Association in commemoration of the Putney Debates of 1647. He thanked the Vicar, Miss Brewer and Mrs. Johnstone for enabling the Association to hold the Annual Meeting in such a fitting venue.

Professor Roots invited Dame Veronica Wedgwood, who had contributed so generously towards the cost of the plaque, to address the Meeting on 'The Putney Debates'. Her significant contributions to the history of the Cromwellian period meant she needed no introduction. Dame Veronica's lively and stimulating address was followed by a discussion opened by Dr Maurice Ashley, our former President. Mr Geoffrey Woollard in proposing a vote of thanks expressed appreciation of Dame Veronica's command of the English language as well as her qualities of humour and erudition.

Minutes of the last A.G.M. (24 April 1982), already circulated and taken as read, were approved and signed. The Chairman, before coming to his Report mentioned some queries which members might assist in answering:

- 1) the exact height of Cromwell, sought by an American writing on 'great figures of history';
- 2) the origin of an engraving of John Lilburne (on display);
- 3) the name of a reputable genealogist to help an American member to trace her descent from the Lord Protector;
- 4) a member willing to stitch a banner with the Lord Protector's arms for a Festival of Castles in Wales.

The Chairman reported that the Council had met 5 times during the year (average attendance, 7). Miss Pat Barnes and Mr Leslie Verity from the Midland Group and Mr Jervoise Newport Tinley from the South-East had joined. Mr Anthony Parsons from the South-West had been invited but had declined because of travel difficulties. The Chairman deeply regretted to announce the deaths of

Miss Jenny Solomon, Mr J. B. Fell and the Rev. J. L. Chown, all long-time and enthusiastic members. 36 new members had subscribed during the year. One lapsed member had re-joined as a Life Member.

In the ballot on the introduction or otherwise of a Constitution for the Association, 67 out of 163 paid-up or life members returning ballot papers had voted for a formal and written constitution, and 94 against. There was thus a clear majority *against* a constitution and, in accordance with the undertaking notified by the Council, this result would be binding for three years.

The 3 September Annual Service conducted by the Rev John McGuire had been well attended. The Address given by Dr G. E. Aylmer would be published in *Cromwelliana*. (A Cassette of the Service was available on loan.) A group from St Mary's Church, Putney, known as 'The Cromwell Connection' had organised celebrations during which the plaque donated by the Association had been unveiled by Dr Christopher Hill. The Appeal to pay for the Plaque had met with a generous response.

The Chairman congratulated the Yorkshire Group on their success in raising funds for the restoration of the Lambert Chapel at Kirkby Malham. Other projects were under way. The Vicar of Hursley was seeking financial help to place a tablet in his Church in memory of Oliver's eldest son Richard, who was buried there. There was no further news about the restoring of Thorpe Hall, Peterborough, as an English Civil War Museum.

To the formal objection to the plan for a trunk road across Naseby Battlefield sent to the Ministry of the Environment by the Chairman on behalf of the Association, a non-committal reply had been received. The Chairman read out a note from member Mr Barry Denton urging the Association to rally to the defence of this historic site. *Cromwelliana*. Members had recorded their appreciation of the journal's growing interest. Last year's Essay Prize winner, Mr Dan Prosser, was unfortunately unable to come to receive his prize in person. The Historical Group of the Recreational Association of the Ministry of the Environment had asked for a member of the Association to give a lunch-time Lecture on Oliver Cromwell. Mr John Langford had undertaken to give this. The Army Museum, Chelsea, had reported the re-equipment of galleries in which

Cromwellian armour was on view. On 18 March 1983, Lord de Lisle had formally opened the Court leading to Sidney Sussex College to be named Cromwell Court. Members re-assembled after tea to discuss matters arising from the Chairman's Report. Dr Hebbert, Chairman of the Sealed Knot Society, said that Naseby Field was in real danger. Letters of protest from members of the general public would carry more weight than those from interested groups. The Sealed Knot were organising an enactment of the Battle for August Bank Holiday.

Referring to the proposed tablet to commemorate Richard Cromwell in Hursley Church, Professor Roots said that he was well worth remembering. His nickname, 'Tumbledown Dick', was not a fair assessment of his capabilities. When after a serious effort he saw his position as Protector as untenable, rather than plunge England into another Civil War he had sensibly resigned. Members present favoured co-operating in efforts to erect a tablet.

For the Yorkshire Group Mr Hepworth gave further details of the restoration of the Lambert Chapel at Kirkby Malham, of which they hoped for an unveiling ceremony in Spring 1984. They were only £100 short of hitting their £1000 target. A portrait of John Lambert, copied from an original by member Miss Elaine Smith, which would be placed under the memorial tablet, was on view at the Meeting. The Group had carried out a varied programme of activities. For the Midland Group Miss Pat Barnes said though there were difficulties in getting members together for meetings they were enthusiastic for the cause. Mr Hambly reported a North-west Group in the making. They intended to commemorate Rampton Moor and were keeping a watch on the Warrington Statue, hoping that the Council and members would be involved in any ceremony associated with its re-siting. The Treasurer's Report in 1982 was a most interesting one. Mr Woollard said a comparison with the 12 months previous figures with the 9-month year's now under review was difficult. A deficit of between £400-£450 was likely by the end of the year. It was not easy to economise when printing and postage costs were rising. In contrast the response to the appeal for the Putney Plaque had produced an

excess of the sum required. The Treasurer suggested that after four years of an annual subscription of £5 it was now time to raise it to, say, £6, with Life Membership going from £25 to £30, and the special pensioners' rate of £15 raised to £18. He proposed a period of grace at the old rates with the new rates to take effect from 1 January 1984. Mr Butler seconded and after discussion and the defeat of an amendment to raise Life Membership to £50, the proposal was carried.

In further discussion the Hon Editor of *Cromwelliana* pointed out that now that the Exeter University Printing Unit had closed down he would have to seek a commercial printer for the next issue. Mr Newport Tinley suggested that a summary of the Minutes would be adequate to be printed in *Cromwelliana*. He also thought it would be helpful to separate 'subscriptions' from 'donations' in the Income and Expenditure Account. Finally, it was suggested that the 1984 A.G.M. might be held under the auspices of the Yorkshire Group to coincide with the unveiling ceremony of the Lambert Chapel Memorial at Kirkby Malham.