

Cromwelliana

The Journal of
The Cromwell Association



2001

The Cromwell Association

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

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

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CROMWELLIANA 2001

edited by Peter Gaunt

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CROMWELL DAY 2000
THE BATTLE OF DUNBAR AND
CROMWELL'S SCOTTISH CAMPAIGN

by Peter Gaunt

1. All ye nations, praise ye the Lord: all ye people, praise him.
2. For his loving kindness is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord.

According to an account written by Captain John Hodgson, one of the parliamentary officers who fought at Dunbar, Cromwell halted his army after they had broken the Scottish forces so that they could together sing these words, Psalm 117, before pursuing the fleeing Scots. As so often with Cromwell, religious motivation may have been underpinned by practical considerations - by halting to sing the shortest of the psalms, Cromwell ensured that his troops were in reasonably good order and back in line and formation before the horse embarked upon the pursuit of the remnants of the Scottish army. But there is no reason to doubt the sincerity of Cromwell's faith displayed on the battlefield of Dunbar - Cromwell chose the phrase 'The Lord of Hosts' as the parliamentarian rallying cry and call sign on the battlefield. His religious beliefs underpinned his actions at Dunbar, as they underpinned his whole military career.

On this the 350th anniversary of the triumph and the tragedy of the Battle of Dunbar, as well as Cromwell day, the 342nd anniversary of his death in 1658, I would like briefly to highlight and to explore several aspects of Cromwell's religious beliefs and personal faith, as seen not just at Dunbar but throughout his Scottish campaign of summer 1650 to summer 1651.

Firstly, Cromwell saw the Scottish campaign, at least in part, as motivated and justified by religious concerns. This attitude is seen most clearly in Cromwell's earliest recorded major speech, that to the General Council of the Army in March 1649, in which he reviewed the threats posed by both Scotland and Ireland. He portrays Scotland as a menace to the newly-won religious liberties enjoyed in England and Wales and he portrays the Scottish people as unwilling to accept that, by crushing royalism in the late 1640s and pushing through the regicide, the English army had been doing God's will and had shown itself to be God's chosen instrument: 'They that are displeased with the instruments, their anger reaches to God'. In working to restore the Stuart monarchy in England and in Scotland, the Scots were seeking 'the ruin and destruction of those that God hath ordained to be instrumental for their good'. In summer 1651 he wrote that 'this cause is

God's and his son Jesus Christ's and it must prosper'. And yet in his dealings with Scotland, Cromwell's surviving letters and speeches generally do not emphasise this religious element, do not seek to portray the Scottish campaign as a form of religious crusade with anything approaching the same strength and bitterness as Cromwell's colouring of his Irish campaign of 1649-50. As we shall see, religion cut both ways and at times made Cromwell uneasy, troubled or unsure. In summer 1650, as part of a delegation dispatched to persuade an uncertain Sir Thomas Fairfax to lead and command the proposed campaign to Scotland, Cromwell chose instead to emphasise the secular and practical rather than the spiritual motivation for and goals of the venture - the Scots, he argued, were evidently planning to invade England to restore the Stuart monarchy, and so it would be better to march north to ensure that the fighting, violence and bloodshed should take place on Scottish rather than English soil.

Secondly, Cromwell saw God as actively involved in the Scottish venture. God's messages directed the campaign, divine providences shaped actions and events, and the Lord intervened thus in favour of England. In August 1650, as Cromwell was pulling his forces back from the Edinburgh area, the Scots harried and began unnerving the rear of the English army around Haddington during the night-time retreat. Things looked bad until 'the Lord by His good Providence put a cloud over the moon, thereby giving us the opportunity to fall back with little loss'. Towards the end of the Scottish campaign, the decision to push the English army north into Fife was depicted by Cromwell as a move determined by God: 'After our waiting upon the Lord, and not knowing what course to take, for indeed we know nothing but what God pleaseth to teach us of His great mercy, we were directed to send a part to get us a landing [on the Fife coast]'. Once across, God was again looked to: 'The greatest part of the army is in Fife, waiting what way God will further lead us'.

Thirdly, and following on from this belief, Cromwell portrayed all the successes and victories of the Scottish campaign as the work of God, as evidence of the Lord's hand, and not as the fruit of mortal, secular activities of English troops or of their commanders, including himself. He wrote thus to the Speaker of the English parliament about Dunbar: 'It hath now pleased God to bestow a mercy upon you, worthy your knowledge, and of the utmost praise and thanks of all that fear and love His name; yea, the mercy is far above all praise'. But lesser actions, too, were ascribed to the Lord, so that when the Scottish commander Leslie attacked parliamentarian quarters at Hamilton, it was 'by the blessing of God, by a very gracious hand of Providence', that they were beaten off and that many Scots were killed or captured while just six parliamentarians perished. The surrender of Edinburgh castle, following protracted negotiations, was a gift from God:

'Sir, it hath pleased God to cause the Castle of Edinburgh to be surrendered into our hands, this day about 11 o'clock...I must needs say, not any skill or wisdom of ours, but the good hand of God hath given you this place'.

Fourthly, victories and military successes in turn strengthened Cromwell's belief that he was doing God's will and that the Lord was with him and his men. This belief drove him on not merely to continue the Scottish campaign and to take the huge risk in summer 1651 of allowing the Scots to march virtually unhindered through the lowlands and borderlands and into England; it also gave him the confidence to urge the English parliament onwards with its work of Godly reformation. After victory at Dunbar, he wrote to the Speaker: 'We that serve you beg of you not to own us, but God alone; we pray you own His people more and more, for they are the chariots and horsemen of Israel. Disown yourselves, but own your authority, and improve it to curb the proud and the insolent, such as would disturb the tranquillity of England, though under what specious pretences soever; relieve the oppressed, hear the groans of poor prisoners in England; be pleased to reform the abuses of all professions; and if there be any one that makes many poor to make a few rich, that suits not a Commonwealth'. Similarly, in the wake of the success at Inverkeithing, he wrote that 'I hope it becometh me to pray that we may walk humbly and self-denyingly before the Lord, and believingly also; that you whom we serve, as the authority over us, may do the work committed to you, with uprightness and faithfulness, and thoroughly, as to the Lord; that you may not suffer anything to remain that offends the eyes of His jealousy; that common weal may more and more be sought, and justice done impartially. For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro; and as he finds out His enemies here, to be avenged on them, so will He not spare them for whom He doth good, if by His loving kindness they become not good'.

All these are common traits in Cromwell's career, seen in other theatres and familiar from the outset of his military career as first a captain and then a colonel in East Anglia and the east Midlands in 1642-3 and on through his period as second in command of the New Model Army in England during the closing stages of the first civil war, in South Wales and on to Preston in summer 1648 and in Ireland in 1649-50. Throughout his career, Cromwell had viewed his own actions in religious terms, had put a religious spin on military developments and campaigns, had believed that he was doing God's will on the battlefield, had interpreted military successes as signs of the Lord's support, of God's beneficent providences bestowed on His chosen instruments, and had argued that the parliamentary cause in turn had a duty to perform God's broader task, that of advancing Godly reformation. There was nothing new or particularly unusual in the religious interpretations Cromwell placed on his Scottish campaign of 1650-51. But, unusually for

Cromwell, religion was also an unsettling factor in his dealings with Scotland, and it led to expressions of deeply held regret and unease rarely found in Cromwell's military career. Uncertainties grounded in his beliefs find expression in Cromwell's letters and speeches relating to Scotland and his Scottish campaign, in sentiments far clearer and more explicit than any such misgivings he may have had about dealing with royalists in England and Wales, and very, very different from his attitude to the Irish and the approach he adopted during his Irish campaign.

Cromwell's approach to Ireland had been shaped by beliefs shared by many of the English godly and many parliamentarians - a strong anti-Catholicism, exacerbated by the exaggerated and mythologised picture of what had occurred during and after the Irish Catholic rising of autumn 1641, and given yet further force by the truce which the English royalists had reached with the Irish Catholics in 1643 in order to bring troops back to the mainland to bolster the royalist war effort and by the king's attempts in 1645 to make a more extensive and more intimate deal with the Irish rebels which would have resulted in Irish Catholic forces crossing to England and Wales and fighting in the civil war. Cromwell's fairly crude image was of a rebellious, murderous, pro-royalist Irish Catholic population who inhabited a land which should rightfully be under English control. In 1649 he viewed Ireland and the Irish as the principal threat to the new English republic and seems never to have wavered in his belief that his brutal campaign in Ireland was necessary, just and Godly.

Scotland was very different, in the eyes of Cromwell and of many of his parliamentarian compatriots. As always, it is impossible completely to separate religious and military strands and Cromwell's attitude towards the Scots sprang not only from a shared or at least overlapping faith, a belief in essentially the same Protestant God, but also from recent military and political developments. After all, Scotland not England had led the way in resisting Stuart tyranny in the late 1630s and, by bravely and courageously rising against Charles I and by inflicting a crushing military defeat upon him, they checked his power in England, helped to restore government with parliaments south of the border and opened the way for both reform of, and effective resistance to, royal policies in England. It is clear that leading Scottish and English opponents of the king were co-operating and co-ordinating their efforts in the late 1630s and early 1640s. Moreover, in 1643-6 the Scots had been the military allies of the English parliamentarians. The alliance had not always been an easy one - in addition to the unavoidable strains and difficulties created when two nations and two largely separate armies attempted to co-ordinate their military efforts, many parliamentarians were deeply uneasy at the religious conditions of the alliance, namely the apparent agreement to introduce a Scottish-style

Presbyterian church in England and Wales as part of the post-war settlement. There is ample evidence that by the mid 1640s Cromwell was one of those parliamentarians who had misgivings about the Scots, rowing with Major General Crawford, underplaying the Scottish contribution to the victory at Marston Moor and, more broadly, distancing himself from the type of religious settlement which the Scots wished to see in England and Wales. But the Scots were allies - very different from the Irish - and they were good Protestants. Although Cromwell consistently opposed the imposition of Scottish-style Presbyterianism as the sole religion of England and Wales, he was quite relaxed about Presbyterianism being one of the forms of worship available and tolerated there. Several times, both during the English civil war and after it, he went out of his way to stress his respect for the Scottish religion, detecting God's presence in Presbyterianism, seeing an element of God's truth expressed through the Presbyterian church, and thus embracing Presbyterianism within his burning desire for liberty of conscience.

In 1647-8 the Scots had, in Cromwell's eyes, gone off the rails. A combination of royalists and moderate Presbyterians had concluded a treaty with Charles I, the Engagement, in the closing days of 1647, and had committed themselves to invade England in the king's name. That Scottish royalist army was crushed by Cromwell in and south of Preston in August 1648. The military defeat, and with it fear of English military intervention, led to a political coup in Scotland, with the Engagers displaced by firmer Presbyterians, the Kirk party, who disowned the alliance with the king and wished to avoid confrontation with the English parliamentarians. Thus Cromwell's first visit to Scotland, in late summer 1648, was not as an enemy invading Scotland, but as an honoured if powerful and slightly menacing potential ally of the incoming Scottish government, bolstering its position. Cromwell supported the new government and wished to maintain good terms with it, and his letters at the time make clear that he was relieved at this turn of events. He had not wished to mount an invasion of Scotland, to become embroiled in a campaign against the Scots in their homeland. Conquest, he wrote, 'was not very unfeasible, but I think not Christian'. He was criticised by hard liners in London, who thought he should have taken the opportunity to campaign in Scotland, to crush and overawe the Scots militarily, perhaps to extend a greater degree of English military if not political control over the Scots. Cromwell defended himself vigorously, and in so doing clarified his attitude towards Scotland and the Scots: 'Our brothers of Scotland were our greatest enemies. God hath justified us in their sight, caused us to requite good for evil...Was it not fit to be civil, to profess love, to deal with clearness with them for removing of prejudice...? This we have done, and not more. And herein is a more glorious work in our eyes than if we had gotten the sacking and plunder of Edinburgh, the

strong castles into our hands, and more conquest from the Tweed to the Orcades'. The Scots were 'brothers' who, having been shown the errors of their way by God's reproof at Preston, were now to be treated in a civil way, with love, to remove any remaining prejudice and to re-establish harmonious relations under a shared God.

But Cromwell's high hopes had proved short-lived. After the trial and execution of the king and the abolition of monarchy, it is possible that Cromwell and many other English parliamentarians may have been willing for Scotland to go its own way, independent of the new English republic, though presumably maintaining good relations and a Godly alliance with it - the type of settlement which, for political, religious and historical reasons was certainly not ever available to Ireland and the native Irish. But the Scottish proclamation of Charles Stuart, the late king's son, as king of England as well as Scotland within weeks of the regicide ensured renewed hostility between the two nations. Yet in the eyes of Cromwell and many of his compatriots, it would also be a conflict with former allies and good Protestants, and with an independent nation over which England had few claims. There is every sign it was a war which Cromwell did not want. Hence we see Cromwell expressing regret about the Scottish campaign, attempting to convince the Scots that the war was unnecessary, giving voice to a belief (almost certainly unfounded) that the majority of the Scots had no quarrel with the new English republic but had been led astray by the false arguments, deceptions and concealments of their political and religious leaders.

Repeatedly during the campaign of 1650-51 Cromwell stressed that the dispute between England and Scotland rested upon political not religious divisions. During the winter of 1650-51 Cromwell very visibly attended Presbyterian services in Edinburgh and Glasgow. The Army Declaration issued right at the start of the campaign stressed that there were no real divisions between the English faith and Scottish Presbyterianism, condemning denominational differences: 'Doth that name or thing give the difference between those that are the members of Christ and those that are not? We think not so'. A little later, Cromwell wrote to Leslie that 'it is no part of our business to hinder any Scots from worshipping God in that way they are satisfied in their conscience by the word of God they ought, though different from us'. On another occasion, he stressed to the Scottish leaders that 'we bear unto the Godly of Scotland the same Christian affection we have all along professed in our papers'. He proclaimed that he and his men were 'willing to lay our bones in the dust for your sakes', claiming that the English had no interest in imposing religious or civil conditions upon Scotland, no wish to seek 'dominion nor any worldly advantage'. His quarrel, he said, was simply that 'in the carriage of your affairs with your

king', the Scots were seeking to undermine and overthrow the divinely sanctioned political and religious settlement reached in England and Wales.

At times, Cromwell appeared uneasy with his role in Scotland, almost regretting what he was doing there. Thus, writing to the Committee of Estates, Cromwell lamented 'the daily sense we have of the calamity of war lying upon the poor people of this nation, and the sad consequences of blood and famine likely to come upon them', as well as the encouragement given to the enemies of both England and Scotland by this Anglo-Scottish war. Hence, he told his son in law Henry Ireton: 'We made great professions of love, knowing we were to deal with many who were godly; indeed our bowels were pierced again and again'. He told the governor of Edinburgh castle that 'our bowels do, in Christ, yearn after the godly in Scotland', noting that only personal prejudices divided them, 'for which we mourn'. Perhaps most forcefully, writing to the Speaker of the Rump at the end of 1650, Cromwell commented that 'those religious people of Scotland that fall in this cause, we cannot but pity and mourn for them, and we pray that all good men may do so too'.

One must assume that his expressions of regret at having to fight the Scots, his 'desire and longing to have avoided blood in this business', were genuine, for they were found in personal letters to close friends and colleagues as well as in more public correspondence. Similarly, his repeated suggestions that the 'good' people of Scotland were potential allies but that they were being misled and deceived by their leaders in order to wage an unnecessary, unwanted and ungodly war against their English brothers - again a line found in personal letters as well as in correspondence to both the Speaker of the Rump and the Scottish military and political elite themselves (the 'foolish shepherds', as he referred to them on one occasion) - were genuinely held and largely or wholly sincere. For example, in late September 1650 Cromwell wrote that, although thusfar the Scots had remained 'obstinate' and were given to 'most impudent lying and frequent swearing', he fully expected during the coming winter 'to give the people such an understanding of the justness of our cause, and our desires for the just liberties of the people' that the 'better sort' of the Scots would be won over. It was not to be and Cromwell hoped in vain that he could win over the majority of the Scots by somehow revealing to them the errors and deceit of their leaders. Despite all the evidence that this interpretation of the Scottish stance was groundless, he continued to peddle it even after the Scottish campaign had ended. But as Cromwell knew very well, such suggestions might also serve a political and propaganda purpose during the campaign, to drive a wedge between the Scottish royalists and those Covenanters who had formed an uneasy alliance with the future Charles II, to divide and thus neutralise if not rule the two ill-matched bed-fellows. In this he was only

partly successful, for the royalist-Covenanter allegiance held together well enough for a national army to invade England in summer 1651. As so often with Cromwell, religious attitudes and personal faith intermingled with, supported and bolstered secular political and military concerns. These views may also be evidence of a blind spot in Cromwell's outlook, an unwillingness or a failure fully to understand the deeply held fears and aspirations, religious as well as political, which were widespread amongst the Scottish people and which drove them on in their war against the English invaders.

Cromwell's faith and religious confidence never deserted him while in Scotland. Although for much of the first half of 1651 he lay seriously ill in Edinburgh, in his recovery he detected the hand of God: 'the Lord was pleased to deliver me, beyond expectations, and to give me cause to say once more He hath plucked me from the grave'. Even the nervy, somewhat disjointed letter he wrote to the governor of Newcastle while cooped up in Dunbar on 2 September, in which he confesses that 'we are upon an engagement very difficult' and comes close to contemplating the possibility of defeat, concludes that 'only the wise God knows what is best. Our spirits are comfortable (praise be the Lord) though our present condition be as it is. And indeed, we have very much hope in the Lord, of whose mercy we have had large experience'.

This was the Cromwell who, as dawn broke on 3 September in the midst of the battle and as the sun rose out of the North Sea, was heard to exclaim 'Now let God arise and His enemies shall be scattered'. Cromwell's religious beliefs, supported by his political skill and military experience, drove him forward and brought him victory at Dunbar and in the Scottish campaign as a whole. But there is a sense of sadness and unease, too, again grounded in religious as well as secular factors. As we meet today to commemorate the battle and Cromwell's life and achievements, we all perhaps share those mixed feelings, of triumph and of tragedy. 'We cannot but pity and mourn..., and we pray that all good men may do so too'.

Dr Peter Gaunt is Reader in History at Chester College and has been chairman of the Association since 1990. His most recent book is *The English Civil War* (Blackwell, 2000).

THE BATTLE OF DUNBAR

by Stuart Reid

The late Brigadier Peter Young once commented that the absence of even a single written account by a royalist infantry officer made it very difficult to reconstruct exactly what happened at the battle of Naseby in 1645. Dr Glenn Foard's subsequent archaeological investigations there have of course proved his caution to have been well-founded and revealed not only a more detailed but also a rather different story than the one previously accepted. Arguably, very similar reservations must apply to the received picture of what happened at the battle of Dunbar five years later. If anything, in fact, that picture actually rests upon far fewer and far shakier foundations than those so authoritatively undermined by Dr Foard at Naseby, and perhaps paradoxically a major impediment to our understanding of the battle of Dunbar, just as at Naseby before it, has been the involvement of one Oliver Cromwell.

Cromwell's role in the operations leading up to the battle of Dunbar and the major part which he played in the events of that morning and afterwards are very well documented, not least by himself, in marked contrast to the paucity of comparable evidence coming from the other side of the Broxburn. Of itself this might be handicap enough, but it would also be fair to say that subsequent generations of historians and biographers, far from seeking to remedy this imbalance, have been content to simply accept and enlarge upon the Cromwellian version of events and to dismiss the Scots merely as anonymous stubble to the Ironsides' swords.

From Doon Hill, however, it looked very different and to understand not only what happened at Dunbar, but also why it happened, we need to go right back to the beginning and to the signing of the National Covenant in 1638. The events which led up to its signing, and the immediate consequences of it, need not detain us. It is sufficient to know that opposition to the king was sufficiently widespread to unite against him all three Estates of the Scots parliament - the Lords, the Kirk and the Burghs - and so ultimately precipitate what has recently come to be called the War of the Three Kingdoms. The term is used here advisedly, for although King Charles I of England also happened by descent and great good fortune to be King Charles I of Scotland as well, the two countries were still both constitutionally and actually independent of each other. Moreover, the Scots' view of kingship was very different from that held or at least outwardly professed by their southern neighbours. As long ago as the famous Declaration of Arbroath in Guid King Robert's time, it had been

firmly asserted that the king ruled the Scots only by the will of the people and that ultimate authority lay with the Estates, and not with the man who happened to wear the crown. Consequently, when the Scottish Estates raised armies to fight the king of England in 1639 and 1640, and again in 1643, they did so not as rebels but as a legitimate sovereign power.

A little ironically, therefore, it was the king's more militant supporters who became the rebels, but following the defeat of Charles I in 1646 a new pro-royalist faction arose within the Scottish Estates themselves, which became split between the Kirk party and the Engagers - former Covenanters who now entered into an alliance with the king. As is well known, the army raised by the Engagers was destroyed by Cromwell at Preston in 1648, but what is perhaps less well known is that in the brief civil war which followed in Scotland it was Cromwell's threat of intervention which brought victory to the Kirk party just when they were on the point of military defeat.

So far so good, but then it all turned sour. The king, with some considerable justification, was executed on 30 January 1649 and England took the first steps towards formally becoming a republic. In Scotland, however, which was already a republic in all but name, the dead king's son was promptly proclaimed in due form as King Charles II. While this was regarded in England as a hostile act, particularly since it was followed by the lengthy negotiations which eventually brought the new king to Scotland and saw him formally crowned as such at Scone, it looked rather different from a Scottish perspective. In fact, when a gentleman named MacKenzie of Pluscardine responded to the proclamation by recruiting an army in the name of the new king, his 'uprising' was suppressed in very short order, as indeed was the potentially more serious affair led by the Marquis of Montrose which came to grief at Carbisdale in the following year.

By suppressing both risings promptly and efficiently, the Estates and more particularly the dominant Kirk party hoped to demonstrate to all concerned (and not least their English friends) that they were very firmly in charge. The lesson was certainly not lost upon Charles II, who thereupon gave over prevaricating and finally agreed to sign the Covenant as the price of being allowed to return to the land of his ancestors.

In the meantime England was preparing for war. The writer of this present paper professes no expertise in the English politics of the period, but it was a development to which the Scots reacted with both understandable concern and also a certain degree of bewilderment. Notwithstanding the more sanguine hopes of some English supporters at the new king's émigré court, the Scots government was prepared to accept him as a constitutional head of state, or to use a Dutch analogy which should in all conscience have been

obvious to English Presbyterians and Independents alike, as stadholder, but only under certain restraining conditions, and it was certainly not prepared to go to war in order to place him on the throne of England.

Scotland did have a standing army to be sure, but it was a small one which had been raised to deal with Pluscardine's rising the year before and then Montrose's ill-fated incursion into Sutherland. It comprised very few regiments and some of them were very small indeed. It was, in short, perfectly adequate for internal security and counter-insurgency operations, but for very little else and it was certainly not a threat to the peace and tranquillity of England's green and pleasant land.

Yet England's government resolved on war with Scotland, issued beating orders for raising new regiments and on 12 June nominated Fairfax and Cromwell as Lord General and Lieutenant General of the proposed invasion force. Significantly, the Scots' mobilisation in the face of this unprovoked act of aggression would not begin until two weeks later and even then the army thus hastily raised was quite unambiguously intended for no more than the defence of the country against the English invasion.

Even then it was touch and go. On 26 June Cromwell was appointed Lord General in place of Fairfax, who had displayed sufficient scruple to decline the charge, and by 19 July he had concentrated his forces at Berwick. Three days later he launched the invasion. Having thus had less than a month to prepare for it, the Scots' defensive mobilisation was far from complete and there could be no question of holding the frontier. Instead, obeying *King Robert's Testament*, they retreated without fighting, sweeping the countryside bare as they went. With no means left to him of subsisting his army except by laboriously carrying every morsel of food and every round of ammunition up a single road (and a singularly bad one at that), Cromwell's first objective was to occupy Dunbar, the first halfway decent port between Edinburgh and the border.

With supplies coming in by sea, Cromwell then pushed on to Haddington on 26 July and sent Lambert forward to Musselburgh with a cavalry brigade. There the first real contact was made with the Scots army, or rather with some cavalry pickets who immediately fell back on Leith and there revealed something which must have filled Cromwell with dismay.

When the Estates ordered the levying of an army on 25 June they also confided the command of it to Alexander Leslie, Earl of Leven. He was an old man by now, but while he might have been getting a little past it physically, there was no doubting his mental abilities, his firm grasp of military principles and above all his soldierly common-sense. Although he

had some experienced officers serving under him, his army was appallingly raw. After twelve years of intermittent warfare the mobilisation process was by now well-practised but there had barely been time on this occasion to assemble the conscripts, tell them off into companies and regiments and march them to the assembly point at Edinburgh. Some contingents from the northern sheriffdoms were still on the march. In the little time available, the recruits will no doubt have been given some instruction and practice in weapon handling, but manoeuvring as regiments, far less as brigades, will have been quite beyond them. In short, like the Massachusetts militiamen assembled on Bunker's Hill above Boston a century later, they were totally incapable of fighting in the open against regular troops, but asking them to defend solid fortifications was altogether a different matter.

Instead of offering battle on a 'playne feeld', therefore, Leven set his army to digging a formidable line of fortifications between Edinburgh and Leith, on a line subsequently taken up by the present Leith Walk. Secure within this great entrenched camp of a continental style not previously seen during the civil wars, Leven was content to await Cromwell's next move.

Naturally enough, the General had no intention of trying to mount a full dress frontal assault and instead essayed a rather half-hearted probe around the southern flank of Leven's position, but then it started raining and unable to hang around in the open, he decided to fall back. Rather predictably, no sooner did he begin to withdraw than one Scots cavalry brigade sallied out of Edinburgh's Canongate Port, and another from Leith. Cromwell's rearguard, comprising just 200 horse under Captain William Evanson of Whalley's regiment, was quickly driven in. Cromwell's regiment then put in a charge to rescue them, only to be beaten in their turn by the Scots. The rot was only stopped when Lambert's and Hacker's regiments and the remaining four troops of Whalley's came up, but Lambert himself was wounded by three lance-thrusts and captured for a time before the Scots broke contact. There was no doubting that the Scots had the honours of the day, and buoyed up by their success they tried it on again the following day. This time Major General Robert Montgomerie, with a brigade comprising the Earl of Leven's Lifeguard, Lord Brechin's, Sir James Halkett's, Colonel Archibald Strachan's and his own regiments of horse, came up to Musselburgh at 3am, crashed through the outer picket line and no doubt spread a good deal of fear and despondency before being driven off by Lilburne's regiment. Although in the end no great harm was done, the raid succeeded in persuading Cromwell that Musselburgh was far too exposed to serve as a forward base, and he therefore pulled right back to Dunbar and stayed there until 12 August.

Once again recognising that a frontal assault was out of the question, Cromwell swung to the south of Edinburgh and successfully established himself on the lower slopes of the Braid Hills. This appeared to offer him the chance to threaten Leven's communications. The old man, however, had no intention of being panicked into a battle on terms other than his own. Instead, he took up a strong defensive position at Corstorphine and invited Cromwell to attack him. One of his outposts at a house called Redhall was successfully stormed by Cromwell's men on 26 August, but the General flinched from taking on the main position and instead moved further west next day. Leven, taking full advantage of operating on interior lines, once again forestalled him by taking up an equally strong position at Gogar. Once again Cromwell at first seemed inclined to have a go and brought up his artillery, but then closer reconnaissance revealed that both Leven's flanks were covered by bogs, which meant a frontal assault or nothing.

It turned out to be the latter. In some superficial respects the campaign thus far was not unlike General Grant's operations against Richmond and Petersburg in 1864. Every time he was checked Cromwell, like Grant two hundred years later, extended to his left. Significantly, however, unlike Grant he enjoyed a superiority neither in manpower nor in logistics. In the end it was his men, not the Scots, who became over-extended. Running short of food and faced with the unpalatable prospect of the Scots countering his turning movements indefinitely - or at least until such time as he himself was cut off from his supplies, England, home and beauty - he gave up and on 28 August fell back, first to Musselburgh and then all the way back to Dunbar.

Now, at last, Leven made his move. The army had been together now for over a month, exercising and gaining confidence. Its officers and men had been granted precious time in which to get used to each other and for the unsuitable ones to be weeded out. The celebrated purging of the 'ungodly' is often advanced as an excuse for the army's apparently poor performance at Dunbar, but if the question is approached objectively this thesis is ultimately unconvincing.

There actually appear to have been two distinct purges of officers and Sir Edward Walker famously declared that as a result seasoned soldiers were wantonly cast out in favour of ministers' sons and fanatics who knew more of the sword of the spirit than of the one by their sides. The language is emotive, but Walker was an English royalist who had served as the late king's secretary during the first civil war. He was, to say the least, a hostile witness. There is certainly some (literally) material evidence of disruption to be seen on the infantry colours later captured at Dunbar. Some of those recorded by Fitzpayne Fisher¹ display both heraldic devices intended to

signify the precedence of the companies to which they belonged, and rather more crudely applied Arabic numerals indicating a totally different seniority. Of itself, however, this is far from conclusive evidence that the purges were directed at the professional soldiers, for the colours in question belonged to the old 1649 levy. The officers of these regiments should have been 'sure' men as far as the Kirk party was concerned and it is perhaps rather more likely that the actual process was a good deal more complicated than first appearances might suggest.

In the rush to arms which greeted the news of the impending invasion, there were no doubt a good many officers nominated by the local authorities who were regarded by the government as politically unreliable. There were no doubt also more than a few who had been appointed on the grounds of their social standing rather than any perceived ability. Both may well have needed weeding out, but at the same time it would also be surprising if experienced officers were not drafted in their turn from the regiments of the 1649 levy to infuse a degree of technical expertise and basic competence into the new raw levies of 1650. Some movement and consequent disruption will have been inevitable, but it was by no means the destructive process represented by royalists such as Walker; quite the reverse, and even if some of the replacements were indeed nominated on the grounds of religion rather than experience, it may be worth remarking that religious fanaticism and military ability are not mutually exclusive; often the contrary is true.

All in all, therefore, notwithstanding the inevitable but temporary disruption which accompanied the process, there is certainly a case to be made for arguing that the net result of both the changes in personnel and the additional month's training was a measurable improvement in the combat-readiness of the Scots army, and that it was this which gave Leven the confidence to take the army out of its trenches and to attempt to encompass the total destruction of the English army.

In any case, this time it was clear that Cromwell's withdrawal was not a mere tactical retirement and regrouping as before but a full-scale retreat. He could not be prevented from reaching his forward base at Dunbar, but from there the coastline and the coastal road to which he was effectively confined turns down in a jagged arc from the north point of a compass to somewhere around east-nor'-east, and then plunges due south through the defile at Cockburnspath. It was obvious that if Cromwell was to extricate his army successfully he needed to secure this defile as quickly as possible, but here Leven forestalled him. The English army marched into Dunbar on the evening of 31 August, only to discover that Leven, unencumbered by a heavy train of artillery, had managed to throw a brigade across the road at the entrance to the defile. Of itself this brigade could not have held

Cromwell up for very long, but on 1 September Leven brought up the rest of his army. Marching across country along the chord of the coastal arc, he by-passed Dunbar to take up a commanding position on Doon Hill.

Cromwell was now comprehensively trapped, just as surely as the Earl of Essex had been at Lostwithiel six years before. A partial evacuation might be possible by sea and, as at Lostwithiel, the cavalry might be able to cut their way out overland, but there could be no disguising the magnitude of such a defeat. A famous victory for the Scots seemed assured, but then they fumbled it.

The discussion was never minuted, but there can be little doubt that it all went wrong on the top of Doon Hill on the morning of 2 September 1650. Having out-maneuvred Cromwell and cut off his retreat, Leven can have been in no hurry to move down off the hill. Unfortunately he had to contend with a rather noisy collection of Presbyterian ministers and lay members of the ruling Kirk party dignified by the title of the Committee of Estates. These men were his political masters and their presence was not eased by the fact that his Lieutenant General, David Leslie, and Major General James Holburne were strong adherents of that party. Afflicted by a mind-set firmly rooted in the Old Testament, they are said to have cried out for a great smiting of the foe. They may very well have done so, but it might also be fair to suggest that their aggression was also fuelled by the prevailing bad weather and the sheer discomfort of sitting it out on a bare and lofty hill-top. Cromwell's men are known to have been suffering from sickness and probably from exposure as well and there is absolutely no reason to believe that the Scots were any better off; quite the contrary, in fact, up on that hill.

Leven was therefore faced with very strong pressure, some of it well founded, to descend the hill, but he undoubtedly argued that the very real discomforts and no doubt a corresponding sick list must be endured with soldierly fortitude. At any rate his ultimate opposition to the eventual decision to attack is all too plain from the fact that operational command of the army now passed to his deputy, David Leslie,² and that he himself afterwards bore no blame for the debacle.

Certainly it was Leslie who later that morning moved the army down off the hill and aligned it along a stream called the Broxburn. This feature might have made an admirable start-line for an offensive were it not for the fact that its upper reaches ran through a deep and for all practical purposes impassable ravine. There may have been some expectation on both sides that this would bring on a general engagement but in the event there was nothing more than a little bickering between outposts. It was not until

about 4pm that Leslie brought his guns down the hill and one is therefore led to wonder how seriously he intended attacking. Was the Broxburn now realised to be a greater obstacle than it had appeared from the top of the hill, or was Leslie only ever intending to take up a good defensive position in a far less exposed spot than the top of Doon Hill?

Be that as it may, Cromwell ordered his own forces to close right up to the Broxburn in their turn. There had been a considerable wastage in his strength over the last month and he could now muster only 7,500 foot and 3,500 horse, while on the other hand he estimated the Scots to number no fewer than 16,000 foot and 6,000 horse. Unfortunately, generations of careless historians have been content to take him at his word, but in reality the Scots could only muster half that number and both sides were in fact pretty evenly matched.

The *Brief Relation* claims that there were 18 regiments of foot and what appears to be an English intelligence summary compiled by interrogating prisoners³ identifies 15 of them. If a hypothetical 1,000 men were to be allowed for each, this may be the justification for Cromwell's claim that he was faced by 16,000 infantry, but it is plainly far too high. If, on the other hand, a more realistic average of 500 men for each regiment is allowed, as would seem to be indicated by a few surviving muster returns and by balancing out some of the large newly-raised units with the very small ones formed in 1649, then the true figure can have been no more than 8-9,000 and was in all probability rather less.

Similarly no fewer than 19 cavalry units are named in the intelligence summary, although this listing may be incomplete. Unlike English cavalry regiments, Scots ones tended to be quite small to begin with. Most had only three troops and a few may have been represented by only a single troop. If a total of only 50 troops were present, each in turn mustering an average of 50 men, this would produce a total of only 2,500 Scots cavalry at Dunbar. It is possible that this estimate may be a little on the low side but it is difficult to find much justification for increasing it to any great extent.

The Scots train of artillery was afterwards captured in its entirety and the highest estimate offered was '32 pieces of ordnance, small, great, and leather guns', although another gives only nine. At first sight the two figures might appear wildly incompatible, but no doubt Leslie had just nine cannon of conventional design and the balance of the total of 32 was made up of pack-mounted leather guns. Some of the latter were very light indeed, firing a half pound ball and 'handled like a musket'.

Notwithstanding his mistaken apprehension that he was outnumbered by more than two to one, Cromwell resolved to mount a pre-emptive attack on the Scots army. His plan was simple enough and succeeded admirably.

The intelligence summary names five of the Scots officers as brigade commanders, each presumably with three regiments apiece, and as far as can be ascertained, the right flank of the infantry lay somewhere near the Berwick road, with the greater part of the Scots cavalry ranged between there and the sea-shore. Accordingly Cromwell sent three regiments of horse directly across the Broxburn north of the road, while George Monck with a little brigade comprising three and a half regiments of infantry attacked straight up the road, with the intention of rolling up the Scots flank.

Initially all went well. Lambert got across the Broxburn, was checked for a time by a series of counter-attacks led by Colonel Archibald Strachan, but brought up his supports and eventually prevailed through sheer weight of numbers. Monck was equally successful in dealing with the Scots infantry facing him. We can be fairly sure that this was Sir James Lumsden's brigade. As the senior of the brigade commanders, his place was certainly on the right and not only was he himself captured but one of his colonels, Sir James Douglas of Kirkness, was killed. What is more, all three of his regiments - his own, Kirkness's and Balfour of Burleigh's - lost nearly all of their colours.

One reason for the swift destruction of this newly-levied brigade may well have been the well-attested story that all but the file-leaders had been permitted to douse their slow-match at some point during the night, but another tale that many of the officers had left their posts to take shelter from the weather seems rather less likely. It was the English army which held the town of Dunbar and there were precious few other houses to afford shelter in the first place. Nevertheless, while they were being overrun, the next brigade in line, commanded by Sir James Campbell of Lawers, was given precious time to get into action.

Unfortunately it was already too late. When the Scots army originally deployed along the Broxburn it did so on a front of about a mile. Now it was trapped there, prevented from swinging forward by the burn and prevented from swinging back by the steep slopes of Doon Hill. The army was, in short, in an impossible situation and for the moment the only thing preventing it from being rolled up regiment by regiment was Lawers's brigade.

Monck's brigade, although victorious, was played out and Cromwell related that he had to commit Pride's brigade:

...our first foot after they had discharged their duty (being overpowered with the enemy), received some repulse, which they soon recovered. But my own regiment, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Goffe, and my major, White, did seasonably come in; and, at the push of pike, did repel the stoutest regiment the enemy had there.

The identity of this Scots regiment is, surprisingly enough, open to question. Gumble, in his well-known *Life of Monck*, refers to it as being Lawers's regiment of highlanders, and on this rather shaky foundation C H Firth explained their gallant stand by theorising that since they were highlanders they must therefore have been armed with firelocks and so were unaffected by the unhappy inspiration to extinguish the musketeers' slow match. Needless to say, subsequent generations of historians have blindly accepted this ingenious but wholly unsupported speculation as being the gospel truth, just as another of Lawers's regimental commanders, Sir John Haldane of Gleneagles, has been forever condemned to obscurity by a casual English reference to him as the laird of 'Gleneggies'!

It would appear, in fact, that Lawers's brigade comprised three regiments. His own had certainly been raised in highland Perthshire by his father, Sir Mungo, back in 1642, but many of the original officers and men died with Sir Mungo at Auldearn in 1645, and more recent levies allocated as reinforcements had come from Linlithgow. There may well have still been some highlanders in its ranks, but it was by no means a highland regiment.

Nor, for that matter, is there any certainty that Lawers's own regiment was the one in question, for one of the few Scots accounts describes how not one but 'Two regiments of foot fought it out manfully, for they were all killed as they stood (as the enemy confessed)'. The regiments concerned must therefore have been Colonel Alexander Stewart's Edinburgh regiment, and Sir John Haldane of Gleneagles's regiment. Not only were both killed, but the latter also lost his lieutenant colonel and major and both regiments lost all their colours. Lawers's own regiment, by contrast, although no doubt engaged, evidently managed to fight their way out, for none of the colours taken at Dunbar can be linked to it with any confidence and it was still over 400 strong in the following July. Far from being destroyed at Dunbar, it was not given its quietus until Worcester a year later.

In the end it was Strachan's defeat which sealed the army's fate, for once Lambert finally knocked him out of the fight, some of the English cavalry came in on the flank of Lawers's brigade and, according to another Scots account, charged right through their ranks 'from end to end'. Once Lawers was knocked out of the fight, resistance collapsed, but the fate of the other

three brigades also requires some examination. Some of the fugitives, probably Strachan's men pushed back along the Berwick road, are known to have retreated to the defile at Cockburnspath, but the greater part of the Scots army tried to swing around to the west and make for Haddington.

This in itself is significant, for were the army to have simply dissolved in a panic-stricken rout as is generally assumed to have been the case, it would be more natural to find the fugitives fleeing southwards, directly away from the English. The fact that they retained sufficient sense of purpose to make for Haddington and the Edinburgh road strongly suggests that while Lawers's brigade fought it out, the rest of the army got clear of the Broxburn and attempted an orderly withdrawal. However, once Lawers had been disposed of, Cromwell sent his cavalry in pursuit and may have cut them up quite badly. Here once again it is impossible to avoid the suspicion that, just as at Naseby, there was rather more to this battle than was told in the official version. We now know that at Naseby, after having been abandoned by the horse, the royalist infantry, far from laying down their arms on the field, must have successfully retreated a considerable way back beyond their baggage train before finally being forced to surrender.

Something very similar must have happened at Dunbar with the vital difference that in the end the Scots infantry won clear. Cromwell claimed to have killed or captured them in positively biblical numbers, the absurdity of which may be gauged by the fact that his 10,000 prisoners approached and might even have exceeded the total number of Scots present. Instead, while admitting the severity of the defeat, Walker commented that 'not many of them in proportion were either slain or made prisoners' and next day Leslie was reportedly falling back on Stirling with an estimated 4-5,000 men, who must have included the better part of those three brigades. The army was battered, and no doubt very shaken, but it was certainly not destroyed and it served well enough to defend the Forth crossings for nearly a year before finally being led to destruction at Worcester.

1. British Library, Harleian Ms. 1460.
2. It should perhaps be made very plain that Leslie was neither the son, nephew nor any other kind of relation of Leven.
3. British Library, Harleian Ms. 6844, f. 123.

Stuart Reid, who was born in Aberdeen, is a prolific author on military history. His books include *All the King's Armies*, a military history of the civil war, and *Scots Armies of the English Civil War*. This is a version of a lecture he gave at Dunbar on 3 September 2000, on the 350th anniversary of the battle.

CROMWELL AND THE 'READMISSION' OF THE JEWS IN ENGLAND, 1656

by Barbara Coulton

On 5 February 1906 a banquet was held by the Anglo-Jewish Historical Society at the Hotel Grand Central in London, to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Whitehall Conference of December 1655. At that time 4 February was observed, mistakenly, as 'Resettlement Day'. A letter had been received from Theodore Roosevelt who had addressed the sister society in America on the 250th anniversary of Jewish settlement there. A toast to the king was proposed by the chief secretary for Ireland, James Boyce: 'At no time is this toast a mere formality in the Anglo-Jewish community, but tonight this great festival of Religious Liberty invests it with special significance'. Without apparent irony, the loyal toast prefaced speeches in praise of Oliver Cromwell, the saviour of Anglo-Jewry, and the 'great moral awakening' of which the Whitehall Conference was a manifestation. The banquet, the idea of the society's founder Lucien Wolf, was in honour of two men: 'Cromwell, the great-hearted Protector, and Menasseh ben Israel [of Amsterdam], the devoted Jew'. They were 'twin champions of a wronged people...and heralds of a free state'. Speeches by Chief Rabbi Adler and Lord Rothschild followed, Rothschild speaking of 'the Jews who have lived in England and become Englishmen'. Sir Edward Sassoon MP, a Sephardic Jew, paid tribute to 'that sagacious and far-seeing statesman, Cromwell'. Robert Crewe-Milnes, Earl of Crewe, a descendant of seventeenth-century London Jews, described Cromwell as 'no doubt part idealist and part man of business'; he praised him for his treatment of the Jews. Another speaker, Dr G W Prothero, evoked the image of Cromwell, like the Israelites of yore, going into battle 'with the name of Jehovah on his lips'. J M Hillesum of Amsterdam sent a message congratulating the Society, 'from Holland, the classic land of religious liberty'.¹

The Jewish Historical Society of England was inaugurated in 1893 at another eating-place, the rooms of the Maccabees, a dining club founded two years earlier by Jewish professional men. In an early address Lucien Wolf declared that the tracing of Anglo-Jewish history was a religious and moral task, 'for it stands in the same relation to a community that personal repute does to an individual'. There would also be a search for founding fathers. The Whitehall Conference was assembled by Cromwell to discuss readmission of Jews, which he favoured, hence his role, acclaimed in 1906, as 'saviour'. Numerous modern accounts refer to readmission as an event of 1656, the consequence of the mission of Rabbi Menasseh, but this version is now in need of revision. In fact, Lucien Wolf's pioneer research revealed the

existence and importance of a community of crypto-Jews already in seventeenth-century London: 'they have a right to be honoured as the founders of our Community'. At the same time, Chief Rabbi Nathan Adler paid 'Homage' to Menasseh ben Israel whom he claimed 'as the virtual founder of our London community'. In 1896 the then president of the Society, Joseph Jacobs, commented on Wolf's paper 'The First English Jew': 'Without detracting at all from the high services rendered by the Amsterdam rabbi who was the spiritual founder of the London Hebrew Community, Mr Wolf has shown that Antonio Fernandez Carvajal [a crypto-Jew] must be regarded as its material and actual founder'. Thus were established alternative narratives which will be seen to pervade Anglo-Jewish historiography; these will have to be disentangled.²

Rabbi Adler compared Menasseh to Moses: neither reached the promised land, but this was no failure; he went so far as to claim that Menasseh 'obtained for his brethren the privilege of readmission into England'. This interpretation will be shown to be inaccurate, yet, over a century later, it is still advanced, for example by Amy Sturgis: 'Menasseh ben Israel fought for and won *de facto* Jewish readmission into England'. A major historian in this mode of interpretation, centred on the millenarian ideology of Menasseh ben Israel, is David Katz. Katz has lamented the fact that 'mainstream English historians consistently demonstrate a blind spot about Jewish themes', but his own preoccupation with 'Jewish themes' and with philosemitism has led him to give undue emphasis to that aspect of the 'readmission'. 'It is quite clear that motives of economics or trade had little to do with the readmission of the Jews to England', he has stated; and, 'without the firm basis of philo-Semitism...the mission of Menasseh ben Israel would have been an utter failure'. This attitude has reinforced what we may call the Menasseh narrative. At a conference on Menasseh in the 1980s some speakers referred to 'our rabbi' with a passion like that of Rabbi Adler in the 1890s. The recent editors of Menasseh's *Hope of Israel* sum up that rabbi's role in a way reminiscent of Rabbi Adler: Menasseh 'led the Jewish people out of their isolation, heralded the imminent coming of a new era, and set out the divine plan for the destiny of the House of Israel which would be one day, according to Isaiah, the light of the world'.³ The year 1656 was indeed an important one for Jews in England, but the other narrative, that of the crypto-Jews, needs to be reinstated; Cromwell's role must also be considered.

The context for the actions of Cromwell and Menasseh involved protestant millenarianism and Jewish messianism, religious toleration, and the good of the state. Belief in the millennium and in the Second Coming of Christ was long-standing but received fresh impetus after the Reformation. A leading millenarian in seventeenth-century England was the Cambridge scholar

Joseph Mede (1586-1638), whose interpretation of the Book of Revelation traced the historical application of apocalyptic prophecy. Other Biblical works such as Zechariah and Daniel contained passages which Mede applied to the Jews, comparing their expected conversion to that of Paul; their conversion would be a witness to Christ, and a reproof to the church of Rome; it would herald or coincide with the Second Coming. On the other hand, some Jews believed that their messiah would appear when they had been scattered throughout the world; they would be gathered again and led to Sion; Menasseh ben Israel held this belief. The return of the Jews to England was important to both sides: the new chosen people, protestant England, would convert them; their reaching England would help the progress of Jewish messianism. (The two aims were, of course, incompatible.) Another factor in the acceptance of the Jews was the interest of puritan divines in the Hebrew language and its religious literature. In an extreme form this could lead to 'judaising' practices such as observing the Jewish sabbath; in general it took the form of 'philosemitism', examples of which will be cited.⁴

Despite the lack of information about Cromwell's early life, the period is not an entire vacuum. John Morrill, in an essay on 'The making of Oliver Cromwell', has identified a preacher referred to in a letter of Cromwell's in 1636: 'Dr Welles, a man for goodness and industry, and ability to do good every way, not short of any I know in England; and I am persuaded that sithence his coming, the Lord hath by him wrought much good amongst us'. This was Dr Walter Welles, preacher at Godmanchester near Huntingdon, who had studied at Leiden and was an acquaintance or friend of two very influential foreigners in England, Samuel Hartlib and John Dury. (Dury's father Robert had been minister to the Scottish church at Leiden; John had studied there and at Sedan.) These reformists had among their patrons Cromwell's kinsman Oliver St John. It was in a letter to Mrs St John in 1638 that Cromwell referred to his own 'conversion' (at a date unspecified): 'I hated godliness, yet God had mercy on me...pray for me, that he who hath begun a good work would perfect it to the day of Christ'. That last phrase is suggestive of the millenarian beliefs shared by many, including members of the Hartlib-Dury circle. Writing of this group, Hugh Trevor-Roper has pointed out that Cromwell's intellectual world was largely theirs; while Charles Webster has illustrated Cromwell's support for the group's plans for educational reform, particularly the founding of Durham College. Webster also shows the importance of millenarianism to reformers and puritans.⁵

The lawyer John Sadler, closely associated with the Hartlib-Dury circle, was, like Dury, a key figure in the story of his friend Cromwell and the Jews. In his 1649 tract, *Rights of the Kingdom*, he declared his millenarian

belief in the fifth monarchy prophesied by Daniel, the reign of Christ: 'I did, and still doe, believe there may, and shall, be such a Monarchy ere long, through All the World...I hope and believe, that God will come, and appear, ere long, to dwell in the World...I could desire Him rather (if He pleased) in the still quiet Voyce, then in the rushing Wind, or Fire, or Thunder Claps'.

Sadler, a noted Hebraist, was associated with the phenomenon of 'philosemitism'. This was also part of the Hartlib-Dury programme, described by Richard Popkin as aimed at making 'Christians more aware of what Jews actually believed and practised. This, in turn, would make Christianity "less offensive" to the Jews'. An Amsterdam rabbi, Menasseh ben Israel, was nominated for a chair at the proposed Jewish college in London (an unfulfilled design), part of a reformed university according to the Hartlib scheme. As Popkin remarks, it seems odd that the rabbi should have considered joining a venture aimed at converting Jews, but he had difficulties with his own synagogue, partly because of his association with Christians. While in Holland in the 1640s Dury, who wished for the conversion of the Jews as well as the reconciliation of all protestants, met Menasseh; he corresponded with him in 1649 on reports that the legendary 'lost tribes' of Israel had been identified in the Americas; this was important to the messianic dream of Menasseh and other Jews. Another philo-semite, the English baptist divine Henry Jessey, addressed his book *The Glory and Salvation of Jehuda and Israel* to the 'dear' and 'eminent' nation of the Jews, in particular Menasseh. Jessey drew on rabbinic and kabbalistic prophecies to prove that these authorities supported Christian views about the Messiah; he believed that the Jews would be converted by 1658. He corresponded regularly with Menasseh, who sent him a copy of his book *Esperanca de Israel - The Hope of Israel*; this work, also drawing on prophecy, aimed to show 'that the day of the promised [Jewish] Messiah unto us doth draw near'. Both books were published in 1650.⁶

Cromwell (guided by 'providence') was now a leading figure in national affairs. At a meeting of the General Council of the Army in November 1648 he dwelt on God's part in current events, with examples from the history of the Jews of the Old Testament. 'The end is to deliver this nation from oppression and slavery, to accomplish that work that God hath carried us on in, to establish our hopes of an end of justice and righteousness in it'. That same month he advised his friend and kinsman Colonel Robert Hammond, governor of the Isle of Wight and custodian of the king: 'seek to know the mind of God in all that chain of providence'. In another letter to Hammond he stated: 'I have waited for the day to see union and right understanding between the godly people (Scots, English, Jews, Gentiles, Presbyterians, Independents, Anabaptists and all)'. In December 1649, following the regicide and the setting up of a republic, Cromwell wrote

from Ireland to his 'very worthy friend' John Sadler: 'That a Divine Presence hath gone along with us in the late great transactions in this nation, I believe most good men are sensible of'. He hoped for peace and for God's 'bringing in that Kingdom of glory and peace which He hath promised'. (That promise was to be found in the New Testament, echoing Daniel: 'the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels'.) More apocalyptic prophecies could be found in the Book of Revelation. It was in his 1649 letter that Cromwell offered Sadler the office of Chief Justice of Munster, which he declined; instead, he became master of Magdalene College, Cambridge, in August 1650, a position which would later prove helpful to the Jews in London.⁷

In that year Menasseh dedicated the Latin version of his book *Spes Israelis* to the new government of England and to Cromwell: 'it is made known to me, and to others of our Nation [the Jewish community in Holland], by them who are so happy as near at hand, to observe your apprehensions, that you do vouchsafe to help us, not onely by your prayers'. Dury distributed copies of this Latin version, while an English translation was made by Moses Wall, millenarian friend of Hartlib. Cromwell's personal involvement is attested later in a petition (on behalf of Menasseh's widow) by John Sadler to Richard Cromwell: 'by some letters of your late royall father and others of note in this nation some of their synagogs were encouraged to send hither one of their cheife rabbines, Menasseh Ben Israel, for admittance and some freedome of trade in some of these ilands'. The importance of the Jewish community to Dutch commercial ascendancy in the seventeenth century has been shown by Jonathan Israel; from 1648 they were 'one of the vital components in the imposing edifice of Holland's global commerce'. In the spring of 1651 an important embassy went to Holland, in hopes of effecting a close protestant alliance. At this time, as Timothy Venning points out, Cromwell was not in full charge of policy, but 'as Commander-in-Chief he had the major responsibility for national security, and was in control of the men who would have to carry out the Rump's decisions'.⁸

The ambassadors to the United Provinces were Walter Strickland, who had been the agent there of the Long Parliament, and Oliver St John, a political lawyer with no experience of foreign affairs. Their secretary was John Thurloe, who had several meetings with Menasseh. The purpose of the embassy, St John told the General Assembly of the States General, was 'to enter into a more intimate alliance, and nearer union, whereby a more real and intrinsical interest of each other may be contracted for their mutual good'. Several historians have stressed economic motives, but Steven Pincus notes that 'those who played the largest role in formulating the Rump's foreign policy at this stage were committed to a godly and republican alliance'. As evidence for the ideological motivation for the mission, he

comments on the choice of Oliver St John: 'His religious commonplace book, his patronage of Samuel Hartlib, and his letters to Oliver Cromwell leave little doubt that he was a Protestant apocalyptic'. The proposed alliance would bring political and religious as well as commercial benefits. Jonathan Israel comments: 'Everywhere there was debate and discussion over both the economic and religious implications of Jewish admission'. He sets the English initiative in a broader context: 'This was precisely the time when the influx of Marrano refugees from Spain, and Sephardi exiles from Brazil, into Holland, was at its height and Dutch Sephardi Jewry at its most preoccupied with schemes for Jewish colonization'.⁹ The presence of a Sephardic merchant centre in England would benefit Dutch Jewry; it would also help English commerce – as Cromwell well knew.

Since before 1640 there had been established in London a small colony of Sephardic Jews, *marranos* or crypto-Jews, passing as Spanish merchants. The leader of the London group was Antonio Fernandez Carvajal whose history began with his leaving Portugal, possibly for the Canaries; trading interests brought him to London where he settled in the 1630s. By 1643 he had a position of importance, with a house and warehouse in Leadenhall Street; he traded with his own ships to the East and West Indies, Brazil, and other remote regions; his agents operated in all the mercantile centres of Europe. In 1643 he petitioned the House of Lords for payment for a shipment of gunpowder from Amsterdam; in 1649 he was one of five merchants to whom the Council of State gave the army contract for corn. As well as exotic imports, his trade in British manufactures brought in huge amounts of bullion, at a rate of £100,000 a year; this was particularly attractive to the government. Following S R Gardiner (a fellow-member of the Council of the Anglo-Jewish Historical Society), Lucien Wolf commented: 'It was really the deficiency of bullion in the country which, as early as 1643...suggested to Cromwell the desirability of settling Jewish merchants in London'. The presence of Carvajal and his associates in London, worshipping as Jews in the privacy of their own homes, adds a further dimension to the question of the 'readmission' of Jews to England. (When in 1645 Carvajal and his household were denounced for not attending church, proceedings were quashed.)¹⁰

It was possibly at the time of the embassy to Holland that Menasseh was encouraged to draft his 'Humble Addresses' for a proposed visit to England. As Lucien Wolf observed, 'the faithfulness and profitableness of the Jewish people were likely to weigh more with Cromwell than the relation of their dispersion to the Messianic age'. The case for readmission was argued almost exclusively on grounds of political expediency. Although Cromwell appears to have shared protestant millenarian hopes, his immediate concern was to legalise Jewish residence in England. That would have come about as a

consequence of the proposed alliance with Holland; but negotiations broke down. Soon after the return of the ambassadors to England the Council of State received a letter from Menasseh, the text of which does not survive. Anti-Dutch propaganda also followed the return; the Orangist support for Charles Stuart was perfidious, but God's mercy was soon evident in Charles's defeat at Worcester on 3 September 1651. Ralph Josselin, an Essex clergyman, wrote in his diary on 21 September: 'The Lord is to be feared for his judgments which he executeth, when the Hollander rejoyced in the false news of our fall, the enemy fell at Worcester...oh feare, England, and honour god, least he turne the wheele upon thee also'. Only two days earlier he had expressed a millenarian belief (although in no way a radical): 'I am perswaded the present dispensacon is the breaking in pieces the kingdoms of the earth which god is entring on, and some time when this worke is advanced, will the Jewes appeare; and then comes in the happy season of the flocke'. He shared the belief that 1656 might be the apocalyptic year.¹¹

After Worcester, as John Dury explained to a newly-arrived German diplomat in September 1651, Cromwell alone held the direction of political and military affairs. Hermann Mylius, representing the count of Oldenburg, kept a diary while he waited for the Council of State to deal with his affair (renewal of a safeguard of neutrality). He had documents to be translated from Latin, which Dury undertook to do, discreetly so as not to transgress protocol: 'as an Ecclesiastical Person who does not meddle in secular matters, he also avoids affairs of state'. Dury was now in charge of the library at St James's House (Palace), with lodgings there, across the park from Whitehall. Like Hartlib, he was part of an unofficial 'secretariat' which helped with translation of official documents. Another visitor to London was Roger Williams, founder of the colony at Providence, Rhode Island, friend of the native American Indians, and a proponent of complete religious toleration, in the hope that non-Christians would be won to participate in God's grace and mercy. Williams was staying near Charing Cross (possibly with his old friend Sir Henry Vane the younger). He wrote in April 1652: 'It hath pleased the Generall himself to send for me and to entertain many Discourses with me at Severall Times'; later he referred to Cromwell's interest in the American Indians. In 1652 Williams was re-working an earlier book, in response to further criticism by John Cotton of Boston. *The Bloody Tenent Yet More Bloody* reiterated the case for religious freedom. In the preface addressed to the parliament of the commonwealth, Williams cited the case of Holland: 'State-necessity compelled the States of Holland to a prudent permission of different consciences...Those prudent and prosperous States have gone far...in taking off the yoke from the necks of Dutch and English, French yea, Popish and Jewish consciences. For all which (though but Mercy, though but Justice and humanity to fellow

mankind) he that runs may read the truth of Gods never failing Promises, Blessed are the Mercifull for they shall obtain Mercy'. Why should England not follow this precedent: 'which may make your faces more to shine...with a glory far transcending all your fairest neighbours Copies'? It is likely that this issue was touched on in the discourses with Cromwell, since the Dutch ambassadors were then in England and the mission of Menasseh was still under active consideration. In November 1652, with John Thurloe now secretary of state, a pass was issued by the Council 'for Menasseh ben Israel, a Rabbi of the Jewish nation, well reported of for his learning and good affection to the State, to come from Amsterdam'. The failure of the Anglo-Dutch negotiations and the ensuing war delayed the mission.¹²

According to newsletters of July 1653, there were consultations in the new parliament (the Nominated Assembly, nicknamed Barebone's Parliament) 'for bringing the Jews again into England, especially in hopes of converting them'. John Thurloe wrote, on 29 July, that among the motions in the House were some that 'the Jews might be admitted to trade as well as in Holland;...but there is nothing yet done therein'. This parliament proved a disappointment to those hoping for a godly reformation; it resigned on 12 December. Four days later Cromwell accepted the role and title of Lord Protector; he would still need the approval of a conservative Council of State for measures he wanted to adopt, such as admission of Jews; there was also anti-semitism in London with which he would have to contend. In 1653 James Howell wrote to a friend at Amsterdam: 'touching Judaism, some corners of our city smell as rank of it as doth yours there'. The next move came from Amsterdam Jewry, when Manuel Martinez (David Abrabanel) Dormido came to London in the autumn of 1654; he was accompanied by Menasseh's son Samuel. Jonathan Israel describes Dormido as 'an influential figure in the western Sephardic world'. He may already have served Cromwell by passing intelligence from Amsterdam during the Anglo-Dutch war (which ended in April 1654). Dormido presented two petitions, endorsed by Cromwell: 'His Highnes is pleased in an especiall manner to recommend these...to the speedy consideracon of the Councell, that the Peticion may receive all due satisfaction, and withall convenient speed'. The endorsements bear the signature of John Sadler, then acting as private secretary to Cromwell. One petition was personal, concerning Dormido's attempt to get compensation for losses in Brazil; the Council declared that it could not act as Dormido was a Dutch national; Cromwell later wrote on his behalf to John IV of Portugal. The second petition was for admission of Jews - Dormido declared himself to be 'of the Hebrew nation' - 'to be dwellers here with the same eaquallnesse and conveniences which your inland subjects doe enjoy'. This was rejected by the Council as unlawful, but Dormido remained in England. Another member of Carvajal's group, Simon de Caceres, helped Cromwell in 1654 in his enterprise in the West

Indies, furnishing Thurloe with 'notes on Jamaica' and offering to engage young Jews secretly for an attack on Chile (an offer not taken up). In July 1655 Cromwell granted denizenship to Carvajal and his two sons; that December Carvajal asked the Protector to order his men-of-war to safeguard his ships.¹³

Menasseh arrived in England in September 1655; there is no evidence of contact with Carvajal. With him were his wife, his son Samuel, and certain Dutch Jewish merchants. A contemporary described him as 'of middle stature and inclining to fatness...his demeanour graceful and comely, his habit plain and decent, he commanded an awful reverence'. The English project was particularly important to him, and he had a sense of destiny to equal Cromwell's: 'the Lord who often works by naturall meanes, might have design'd, and made choice of me, for bringing about this work'. He was given lodgings in the fashionable and expensive Strand (presumably as a guest of the English government) where he received supporters, some of them belonging to the Hartlib circle. John Dury was absent on the continent, but he was kept in touch with events by Hartlib, then living at Charing Cross. John Sadler probably served as intermediary between the rabbi and the Protector. When Menasseh first visited Whitehall, with his 'Humble Addresses', Cromwell was not present; the Council instructed its clerk 'to go forth and receive the said books'; other business was then discussed. But a fortnight later Cromwell brought to the Council a petition 'which had been handed to him by the Jewish Rabbi, in which were set forth categorically the several "graces and favours" by which it was proposed that the Readmission of the Jewes should be effected'. As Gardiner pointed out: 'All that was required for the toleration of the Jews was the laying aside of ill-founded prejudices'. Cromwell apparently had another conference with Menasseh when a committee of the Council of State and others, mostly divines, were present. It was agreed that Menasseh's proposals should be taken into consideration.¹⁴

The petition presented in November by Menasseh 'on behalf of the Hebrew nation' asked that the Jews be accepted as citizens under the protection of Cromwell; that they be allowed public synagogues, their own cemetery, and the practice of their Mosaic law; that they be granted freedom of trade; that all laws against the Jews be revoked. Cromwell wanted immediate consideration of the petition, so seven members of the Council were asked to report, which they did next day. The calendared petition is followed by the 'report'. Lucien Wolf and Samuel Gardiner, who were both studying the documents in the late 1890s, agreed that the heading was a statement of the motion, not a recommendation: 'That the Jews deserving it may be admitted into this nation to trade and trafficke and dwel amongst us as providence shall give occasion'. The points of discussion minuted were not promising:

Menasseh's arguments (depending on prophecies of the Jewish messiah) were held to be sinful to Christians; there would be the danger of seducing people in matters of religion; open Jewish worship would be scandalous; Jewish marriage practices, and divorce, were unlawful; trade by native merchants would be harmed. The committee could not in conscience make a favourable decision; if the Jews were admitted there would have to be stringent regulations. To advance the discussion, Cromwell ordered the president of the Council, Henry Lawrence, to meet with three other members, those most likely to support him, Lisle, Wolseley and Pickering, to choose 'a certain number of persons' to meet with the committee at Whitehall on 4 December: 'to the intent some proposalls made to his Highness in reference to the nation of the Jewes may be considered'. So the famous Whitehall Conference was convened.¹⁵

There was considerable popular excitement when the Conference met at Whitehall on the first Tuesday in December. The assembly included various members of the Council; Walter Strickland (but not Oliver St John); Chief Justices Sir John Glynne and William Steele; merchant aldermen, and Sir Christopher Pack, a leading mercantile authority; sixteen divines including Henry Jessey, whose 'Narrative' is our main source of information on the Conference. Despite the presence of many supporters of the Jews, and the attendance of Cromwell, a decision in their favour was not reached, apart from an initial legal ruling by Glynne and Steele: that, since the banishment of 1290 was an exercise of royal prerogative and not an act of parliament, 'there was no law which forbad the Jews' return into England'. The second question formulated by Cromwell was: 'If it be lawful, then upon what terms is it meet to receive them?' There were arguments in favour of readmission: the debt owed by Christians to the Jews, brethren of the same spiritual descent from the patriarchs; common humanity; sympathy for Jews suffering in various countries; the special role of England as a protestant nation which could be instrumental in converting the Jews. Jessey wrote that some, 'though desiring heartily the Jews conversion', feared that they would subvert many, as the quakers and ranters were doing. During the meetings on 7 and 12 December the feeling of the clergy was apparently against Menasseh; so Cromwell added more Judeophiles, notably Hugh Peters who had advocated the cause of the Jews as early as 1647. At an extra meeting on 18 December, open to the public, some merchants protested against any concessions, fearing that English trade would suffer, but others argued that the possible lowering of prices of commodities to be exported would benefit English manufacture. A newly-drafted tract by the lawyer William Prynne inflamed anti-Jewish feeling. After private discussions were conducted, a proposal was made by Jessey that Jews should be admitted only to decayed ports and towns and should pay double customs. If that resolution had been voted in, the crypto-Jews of London

would be under threat. In Jessey's account, Cromwell 'professed that he had no engagement to the Jews, but only what the Scripture holds forth'. 'The preachers had not helped him 'as to conscience'; he would do nothing rashly 'and had much need of all their prayers, that the Lord would direct them [Protector and Council], so as may be to his glory, and to the good of the nation'. So the Whitehall Conference was dismissed without coming to a decision.¹⁶

The Conference caused a stir, with information leaking before it ended. John Evelyn's diary entry on 14 December - 'Now were the Jewes admitted' - must refer to the legal ruling. An Admiralty commissioner at Portsmouth, Captain Francis Willoughby, wrote on 10 December to a colleague in London: 'I observe the great business of the Jewes is under consideration'; he was concerned 'whether a nation shall be suffered by a law to live among us to blaspheme Christ'. On 17 December he wrote: 'It is a business of no small concern; they are a people to whom many glorious promises are made, but they are as full of blasphemy as any under the sun; a self seeking generation'. On 31 December a royalist intelligencer commented on the latest rumour: 'The Jews, we hear, will be admitted by way of connivancy, though the generality oppose'. Ambassadors reported on the issue, Peter Coyet to Charles X in Sweden, for example. On 7 December he wrote of the petition 'from some Jews, led by Rabbi Ben Israel of Amsterdam...in the hope that this may lead to their conversion, which is earnestly prayed for'. On 14 December: 'The question of giving the Jews liberty to trade has been debated for more than a week by the protector and his council'; and on the 28th: 'No decision yet about the Jews. The protector proceeds very cautiously: the theologians strongly oppose it, from every pulpit'. There was evidently concern in Holland that the economy there might be harmed; Menasseh was summoned by the Dutch ambassador Willem Nieupoort, who reported home on 31 December that the rabbi had assured him 'that he doth not desire any thing for the Jews in Holland, but only for such as sit in the inquisition in Spain and Portugal'. The Tuscan envoy, Francesco Salvetti, seems to have had inside information, possibly from the Livorno Jew Raphael Supino, then in London and probably in contact with the *marrano* group. On 28 January 1656 Salvetti reported to the Grand Duke that the Jews 'may meet privately in their houses, but they have not yet established a synagogue'. This must refer to the crypto-Jews whose anxiety had doubtless been aroused by the controversy. On 4 February Salvetti reported: 'It is thought that the Protector will not make any declaration in their favour, but tacitly he will connive at their holding private conventicles, which they already do, in their houses to avoid public scandal'. (This was later taken to indicate 'Resettlement'.)¹⁷

Menasseh continued to place his hopes in the Protector, although others lost heart. We learn from his *Vindiciae Judaeorum*, written that spring in answer to Prynne's *Demurrer*, that the rabbi's companions had left England: 'Insomuch, that as yet, we have had no finall determination from his most Serene Highnesse. Wherefore those few Jewes that were here, despairing of our expected successe, departed hence. And others who desired to come hither, have quitted their hopes, and betaken themselves some to Italy, some to Geneva [Genova?], where that Commonwealth hath at this time, most freely granted them many, and great priviledges'. Menasseh prayed that God would influence 'the mind of the Prince', the Protector, and the Council to determine what would be best. He quoted Zephaniah, 3: 'Therefore, wait ye upon me, saith the Lord...I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly'. He was still faithful to his Jewish messianic dream, but certain Christians had other hopes for the year 1656, calculating according to numbers in Daniel, or from the date of the Flood, 1656 years after Creation. (John Evelyn had a visit from the mathematician William Oughtred in 1655: 'He had strong apprehensions of some extraordinary event to happen [in 1656] from the Calculation of coincidence with the Diluvian period...possibly to convert the Jewes by our Saviours visible appearance or to judge the world'.) Jessey wrote of Menasseh's wait that 'other great affairs being now in hand [such as war with Spain], and this being a business of very great concernment, no absolute answer is yet returned to him'; he dated his tract 'vulgarly the first of April...but, according to the Holy Scripture, the fourteenth or fifteenth of Abib, the first month...at which time the Jewes feast of passover was to be kept'. Menasseh signed his *Vindiciae* on 10 April 'in the year from the creation 5416, and in the year, according to the vulgar account, 1656'.¹⁸

What actually happened in 1656 was more prosaic, although some might have interpreted events as the work of providence. The crypto-Jewish group had tacit permission from Cromwell to worship privately, but their public persona was that of Spanish merchants - and England was at war with Spain, so their goods could be forfeit. An informer brought a case against one of the group, Antonio Robles, who declared, 'I am a Portuguese Jew', in a petition in March for restitution of his goods; this was granted by the Council in May. Investigations revealed that over twenty Jewish families lived in London, many of them resident for years. In view of the Robles affair, Carvajal and other leaders of the community, in conjunction for once with Menasseh, presented a second petition to the Protector, from the 'Hebrews at Present Residing in this city of London'; Abraham Israel Carvajal, Jahacob de Caceres, and four others signed, after Menasseh ben Israel. Although this has been claimed as the rabbi's petition, it did not echo that of November 1655; it was, rather, a formal request by the crypto-Jewish group who thanked Cromwell for the favour already granted, to

worship privately in their own homes; they now prayed for protection in writing; they also wished to acquire their own burial place outside the city. Cromwell endorsed the Jews' petition on 24 March, and again on 26 June, but there is no record of written permission. Nevertheless, events prove that two privileges were granted to the London group: permission for a religious meeting-place and for a burial ground. A large house in Creechurch Lane became a private synagogue; Carvajal was a leading ratepayer in the parish of St Katherine Cree; the 'superior landlord' was the master of Magdalene College, Cambridge - John Sadler. The use to which the house was to be put was known to the parish authorities who mentioned in their accounts for 1656 work 'in building the Jewes Synagogue'. Carvajal brought over from Hamburg a cousin, Moses Athias, to be chief minister or hazan. By the beginning of 1657 Carvajal and Caceres (as wardens or *parnassim* of the synagogue) had taken out a lease for a burial ground at Mile End. Apparently, Menasseh had no role in this community; he came to feel friendless among strangers. Some scholars have speculated about his personality. Cecil Roth described him as 'the self-important, erudite, quarrelsome Amsterdam Rabbi'. S R Gardiner was more moderate in his description of the 'enthusiastic but somewhat dreamy Amsterdam rabbi and physician who took the cause of all Judaism upon his shoulders'; he described Menasseh as being insensitive 'to the danger of challenging public opinion by undue demonstrativeness'.¹⁹

The failure of Menasseh's campaign leads to a consideration of the term 'readmission': the rabbi's petition of November 1655 asked for admission of Jews on an equal footing with native English citizens, public synagogues, rights to their own law code, and freedom to trade. Jews from various parts of the world, especially those subject to persecution, were meant to benefit. Following this definition, we must concede that readmission was not achieved. This has been acknowledged by certain historians since Lucien Wolf. Albert Hyamson wrote in 1928 that 'the goal to which Menasseh ben Israel...had directed his efforts...was unattained'. In 1957 Israel Finestein's judgement was that the 'readmission' of the Jews 'took the form of an acknowledgement...and an authorisation of their Jewish worship...There was no "recall" of the Jews'. The authorisation was granted, as we have seen, to the existing crypto-Jewish community. Two modern London rabbis sum up events following the Whitehall Conference: Cromwell 'gave *de facto* permission to the existing *marrano* community...to continue undisturbed with its mode of worship. In this pragmatic way recognition of Jewish settlement was granted'. This narrative of Anglo-Jewry, beginning with the pragmatic Lucien Wolf, corrects the 'Menasseh version'.²⁰

To pick up a vital thread in the pattern of events we must return to December 1655. For five years Cromwell had shown a favourable attitude

towards the Jews, recognising the mercantile advantages of their presence as well as religious reasons for welcoming them. Carvajal had been endenized, and was at this time asking for protection for his ship coming from the Canaries - there is no suggestion that he allied himself to Menasseh. Cromwell's responsibilities as head of state were augmented by his sense of being an agent of God's will, and many people looked to 1656 as a year of apocalyptic importance. The divines at the Whitehall Conference proved unhelpful, but one divine was absent: John Dury. Early in 1654, Cromwell had sent him to the leaders of the Swiss cantons to continue his lifelong efforts at 'procuring harmony and fraternal union in the profession of the truth'. Cromwell described him, in the papers of credence, as 'that devout and learned man...minister of God's word and dear to us'. Dury was now in Hesse, where he received from Samuel Hartlib a letter asking his views on the questions posed by Cromwell: was it lawful to admit Jews into a Christian state, and if so on what terms? Dury replied from 'Cassel, in haste, Jan. 8th, 1656'; a second letter followed. Dury addressed Cromwell's questions: 'I know none of the reformed churches or divines, who make their admission to be unlawful; but it is a work which the civil magistrate takes wholly into his consideration'. He cited Paul's first letter to the Corinthians at length, concerning lawful and expedient actions. He concluded that Jews could be admitted into a Christian commonwealth, but restraints should be imposed. Dury added a significant postscript: 'Our state doth wisely to go warily, and by degrees, in the business of receiving them. Menasseh Ben Israel's demands are great, and the use, which they [the Jews] make of great privileges, is not much to their commendation here [in Germany], and elsewhere'.²¹

Dury's letters would have helped Cromwell: they would have reinforced his caution about Menasseh, while the advice about the lawfulness of admission with restraints would also have reassured Cromwell that his favours to the crypto-Jews were justified since Carvajal and his associates were discreet and unlikely to cause trouble. Dury advised that there should be no blasphemy of Christ, nor attempts at proselytising, nor dishonouring of any of the ordinances of Christianity. If this were achieved, 'then the first rule of expediency will be observed'. There should also be instruction of the Jews in the Christian religion, but this issue seems in practice to have been sidestepped. This treatment of the Jews would be a mark of Christian love and serve to the glory of God. For their part, the Jews should live by themselves and worship in their own tongue; and 'insolencies' from both sides should be prevented by laws and special orders. The matter of trade Dury was content to leave to the wisdom of the state. The substance of his letters was edited into a pamphlet by Hartlib, and published in June 1656. None of this would be of any consolation to Menasseh who had been hoping all spring for a favourable response to his own petition - especially as

the postscript referring to him was published. The rabbi himself was now a forlorn figure. A petition to Cromwell (of 1656 or 1657) reveals him as ill and in need of money: 'I make moan to your Highnesse, as the alone succourer of my life, in this land of strangers...having had great experience of your greatnesse in compassion as well as in majestie'. Cromwell ordered the grant of a pension of £100 a year, part of which was paid before another petition was presented by the rabbi in September 1657: his son Samuel had died and had wished to be buried in Holland; Menasseh asked for £300, offering to surrender his pension seal. A grant of £200 was authorised, as we see from John Sadler's petition to Richard Cromwell on behalf of Menasseh's widow. Sadler described the rabbi's disillusioned state of mind at the end of his stay in England: 'at length with his heart ever broken with griepe on losing heer his only sonne and his presious time with all his hopes in this iland', he reached Middelburg with his son's body, and himself died there in November 1657 (Kislev 5418). He was buried at Amsterdam with an epitaph in Spanish to 'the honoured Hebrew'.²²

Cromwell was the saviour of the first modern Anglo-Jewish community in London at a time when their legal position was anomalous; there was no ghetto, but unless they were endenized they had no political status. Under Cromwell's protection the synagogue in Creechurch Lane became, in Lucien Wolf's analysis, 'a duly organised public body', increasing by 1660 to thirty-five families. Its officials included Rabbi Moses Athias. Their accounts were kept in Portuguese by the treasurer; the surviving *Libro*, from 1663, was probably not the first. Their activities in the City were indicated by the membership of the Exchange granted in 1657 to Solomon Dormido. A visitor to the synagogue in 1662 was told that 'one year in Oliver's time, they did build booths on the other side of the Thames, and keep the Feast of Tabernacles in them'. (This was a kind of harvest festival, a joyous week-long celebration.) The importance of Cromwell's protection is attested by events as soon as he was dead. Thomas Violet laid a case against the Jews in 1659; the City Corporation also presented a petition against the Jews in 1660. Amid all the accusations against the Jews were some against Cromwell, 'the late Usurper', for admitting them to a free habitation and trading, and allowing them liberty to practise their religion 'to the great dishonour of Christianity and public scandal of the Protestant religion'. In 1660 the Jews held a meeting at the house of Senora Carvajal to draw up a petition to the king for protection. Charles II had his own commitment to Jews who had helped him in exile, so he asked the privy council to consider the community's protection. When the Jews in London had to petition again for protection in 1664, the king minuted the document himself: that 'they may enjoy the same favour as before, as long as they demean themselves peaceably and obey the laws'. The Cromwellian privileges were preserved. It was, wrote James Parkes, 'surely the simplest charter of

settlement in all Jewish history'.²³ Ultimately, it was the policy of Cromwell and the discretion of the Jewish community in London which established this settlement, rather than the mission of Menasseh ben Israel.

1. *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England* [hereafter *JHSE*], V (1908), 276-98. The Jews had been expelled from England in 1290.
2. *JHSE*, I (1893-94), 1-7, 47, 66-7, 160-1; *JHSE*, III, 13 (Joseph Jacobs's address).
3. A Sturgis, 'Prophecies and Politics: Millenarians, Rabbis and the Jewish Indian Theory', *The Seventeenth Century*, XIV (1999), 21; D Katz, in Tony Kushner (ed), *The Jewish Heritage in British History* (London, 1992), p. 61; D Katz, *The Jews in the History of England 1485-1850* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 109, 114; Y Kaplan, H Mechoulam & R.H Popkin (eds), *Menasseh Ben Israel and His World* (Leiden, 1989); Henry Mechoulam & Gerard Nahon, *Menasseh Ben Israel. The Hope of Israel* (Oxford, 1987), p. 95.
4. R G Clouse, 'The Rebirth of Millenarianism', in Peter Toon (ed), *Puritans, the Millennium and the Future of Israel* (Cambridge, 1970), pp. 56-65; *The Jewish Encyclopaedia* (12 vols, New York, 1901-6), under 'Messiah' and 'Manasseh [sic] ben Israel'; D Katz, *Philo-Semitism and the Readmission of the Jews to England 1603-1655* (Oxford, 1982).
5. John Morrill (ed), *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution* (Harlow, 1990), pp. 38-40, 34; W C Abbott (ed), *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (4 vols, Cambridge, Mass., 1937-47), I, 80-81, 96-7; *Dictionary of National Biography* [hereafter *DNB*], 'Robert Durie', 'John Durie', 'Hartlib'; R L Greaves & R Zaller (eds), *Biographical Dictionary of British Radicals in the Seventeenth Century* (3 vols, Brighton, 1982-4), 'Dury', 'Hartlib'; H R Trevor-Roper, *Religion, the Reformation and Social Change* (2nd edn, London, 1972), p. 281; C Webster, *The Great Instauration* (London, 1975), pp. 233, 19-31.
6. John Sadler, *Rights of the Kingdom* (1649), p. 49; Richard H Popkin, 'Hartlib, Dury and the Jews', in M Greengrass, M Leslie & T Raylor (eds), *Samuel Hartlib and Universal Reformation* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 119, 123-5; E G E Van Der Wall, 'A Philo-Semitic Millenarian...Henry Jessey', in D Katz & J Israel (eds), *Sceptics, Millenarians and Jews* (Leiden, 1990), pp. 161-84; D Katz, 'Henry Jessey and the Jews', in Kaplan et al, *Menasseh Ben Israel and His World*, pp. 117-38; Lucien Wolf (ed), *Menasseh Ben Israel's Mission to Oliver Cromwell* (London, 1901), xvii, xxvi.
7. Christopher Hill, *God's Englishman* (London, 1970), pp. 220-8; Abbott, *Writings and Speeches*, I, 540-51, 696-9; II, 186-7; *DNB* and Greaves & Zaller (eds), *Biographical Dictionary*, 'Sadler'.
8. Wolf, *Menasseh's Mission*, xxvii, lxxxvii, 4; Mechoulam & Nahon (eds), *The Hope of Israel*; Jonathan I Israel, *Empires and Entrepots, The Dutch, the*

Spanish Monarchy and the Jews, 1585-1713 (London, 1990), p. 418; Timothy Venning, *Cromwellian Foreign Policy* (Basingstoke, 1996), pp. 38-9.

9. *DNB* and Greaves & Zaller (eds), *Biographical Dictionary*, 'Strickland', 'St John', 'Thurloe'; Steven Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 24-5; Jonathan I Israel, *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism 1550-1750* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 154, 158-9: this author differentiates between 'New Christian' descendants of medieval Iberian Jews, and 'Marranos' - ostensible Christians who were crypto-Jews: *ibid*, pp. 3-4.
10. Lucien Wolf, 'The First English Jew', *JHSE*, II (1894-5), 14-23; Wolf, 'Cromwell's Jewish Intelligencers', in Cecil Roth (ed), *Essays in Jewish History* (London, 1934), p. 104; Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism*, pp. 26-8.
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A POLITICAL SCULPTURE? THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF MATTHEW NOBLE'S 'OLIVER CROMWELL'

by Stephen Porter

Anathema to some, yet greatly admired by others, Oliver Cromwell remained a politically divisive figure long after his death. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries he was a positive symbol for many radicals, nonconformists, and those who were generally dissatisfied and looked back to Oliver's days as a kind of golden age that they hoped would come again. Thomas Carlyle's *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, published in 1845, did much to enhance his status and broaden his appeal.¹ At the end of the century Robert Horton commented that through Carlyle's great work Cromwell's reputation had been transformed and he had been 'discovered, vindicated, and set among the greatest names of all ages'.² But this was something of an overstatement, for while interpretations of Cromwell's career were changing by the time that Horton wrote, and his radical credentials were becoming somewhat tarnished, he remained a controversial figure, representing the fall of the monarchy and the overthrow of the established order, as well as bloodshed in Ireland.³ It was small wonder that there were no public statues of him until well into the nineteenth century.

The earliest statue had been placed in Stocks Market, London, in 1672 at the expense of Sir Robert Viner. It ostensibly showed Cromwell being trampled beneath the hooves of Charles II's horse, but as the statue had been commissioned from Italy by the Polish ambassador in London, as king John Sobieski trampling a Turk, and as Cromwell appears to be wearing a turban, the representation was symbolic rather than accurate. It was removed in 1736. Edward Pearce's marble bust of 1672 was the earliest accurate three-dimensional depiction of Cromwell. Busts displayed within private buildings were not only not contentious but were popular in the eighteenth century, being produced by such leading sculptors as Rysbrack, Roubiliac, Wilton and Nollekens.⁴ But a proposal to raise a statue in a public place or on a public building was quite another matter. There was an opportunity to include him among the rulers of England in the decorative sculpture of the Palace of Westminster following its rebuilding under the direction of Charles Barry after the fire in 1834. Statues of the sovereigns of England were placed in niches on the front facing New Palace Yard. Whether Cromwell should be among them stimulated a correspondence in *The Times* in 1845, but his statue was not included. Indeed, there was no statue or representation of him on a public building

until the reconstruction of St Mary's church at Bicton in Devon by Lady Rolle a few years later. Here Cromwell's head is placed on the north porch in a sequence of the heads of the kings and queens. The church was consecrated in 1850.⁵

It must, therefore, have come as quite a shock, when, on 5 August 1871, a large maquette for a statue of Cromwell was placed in Parliament Square, on a temporary wooden pedestal resembling a plinth. This could hardly have been on a more public, and provocative, site, facing the entrance to the House of Commons, and it did attract much attention, especially as Saturdays were free days for viewing the Palace of Westminster.⁶ Yet it had been put there not to revive the debate of the 1840s, but as a stage in the plans to set out statues within the square, and especially those of Lord Derby, Sir Robert Peel and Viscount Palmerston, which were then being made. There was a committee for the supervision of the making and erection of each of the statues, and in the spring of 1871 they became concerned about where they could be placed. The Palmerston and Derby committees were keen to have their statues in the centres of the two plots of grass in the square, divided by the central avenue. This was unsatisfactory, for it made it difficult to place that of Peel, as a single statue would look awkward if it stood on the same plot as a central one.⁷ At this stage the Derby committee was by no means convinced that Parliament Square was the ideal location, for its chairman, Sir John Pakington, approached the Metropolitan Board of Works with a view to securing a site in Victoria Gardens.⁸

The matter fell within the jurisdiction of Acton Smee Ayrton, First Commissioner of Works since 1869, but William Gladstone, the Prime Minister, was also approached and the issue was important enough for him to appoint a committee to report on the problem. Accordingly, Edward Barry, Henry Weekes and James Fergusson were given a brief to report not only on the spaces available close to the Palace of Westminster for the statues of the three statesmen, but also on the number and scale of future statues, and to devise a plan that would allow for further statues to contribute to a coherent, not apparently piecemeal, layout.⁹ This reflected an awareness of the increase in the number of commemorative statues in London, for although just eleven had been erected in the first four decades of the century, a further twenty-five had been completed between 1841 and 1870.¹⁰ Any arrangement had to take account of the visual effect of Sir Richard Westmacott's statue of George Canning on the west side of the square, outside the central enclosure, where it had been placed in 1867.

Ayrton's appointment as First Commissioner of Works had caused some dismay within the architectural and related professions because he

combined an emphasis on cost cutting and economy with a generally unsympathetic attitude and offensive manner.¹¹ Their fears were justified, for he compelled George Gilbert Scott to alter his designs for the Home and Colonial Office building and constantly pressed G E Street to reduce the designs for the Law Courts in the Strand. Two members of the committee reporting on the statues in Parliament Square had fallen foul of Ayrton. Barry's connection with the Houses of Parliament, where he had been architect since his father's death, had been abruptly severed, and Fergusson had resigned his post as Secretary of Works and Buildings after Ayrton's appointment, because of his resentment at being asked to carry out what he regarded as petty secretarial duties.¹² But in the case of the Cromwell maquette, it seems to have been Ayrton's politics that were significant, rather than his pursuit of economy or relations with the artistic community. He sat as Liberal MP for Tower Hamlets from 1857 until 1874, taking a distinctly radical stance. He was a supporter of nonconformist and Low Church ideas, temperance and trades unions, and a champion of poor rate equalisation.¹³

The committee's solution was along Classical lines, envisaging five statues on each side of the central avenue and one or two at each corner of the central area.¹⁴ The three statues then being made could be fitted into this pattern, but Ayrton's response was unfavourable. He wanted a more immediate solution and preferred to approach Sir William Boxall, Director of the National Gallery, and the two sculptors involved, Thomas Woolner, who was responsible for the statue of Palmerston, and Matthew Noble, who had been commissioned to make those of Peel and Derby. Ayrton's own preference was for the statues of Derby, Peel and Palmerston to be placed looking outwards towards the chief approaches to the square, thus treating the plots within the central area as a single enclosure, not as two separate spaces divided by the avenue. Effectively, this meant siting the statues at the corners of the central area, facing Great George Street and King Street to the north-west, Parliament Street and Bridge Street to the north-east, St Margaret's Street to the south-east and Broad Sanctuary to the south-west. He accepted that the prominent lamps on the surrounding railings would have to be removed.¹⁵

It was in this context that the maquette of Cromwell was placed in the square. Ayrton wished to see the effect of a statue on the scale of those which were to be placed there, and had selected Matthew Noble's model for his statue of Cromwell for the purpose. In 1860 Thomas Goadsby, an alderman of Manchester, had suggested a statue of Cromwell for the market place there and had formed a committee to achieve that aim, each member subscribing £100. The impact of the cotton famine had prevented them taking any further action and nothing had been done before

Goadsby's death in 1866.¹⁶ His widow Elizabeth then married Alderman Abel Heyward, bookseller, publisher of radical literature, former Chartist and sometime Radical Parliamentary candidate. She decided to implement Goadsby's plans and by 1869 had commissioned the statue from Noble. He was the logical choice, for he had completed a bust of Alderman Goadsby during his mayoral year in 1861-2, and three of Cromwell, including that based on the death mask and Samuel Cooper's portrait miniature, which had been presented to the Reform Club in 1864.¹⁷ On 24 June Noble commented that it had not yet been decided whether the statue of Cromwell was to be placed outdoors or in the new town hall. The response was that it would be in the town hall, in which case it would be in marble.¹⁸

But why was the maquette of Cromwell selected for the experiment in Parliament Square? There should have been another figure available for display. Barry and his two colleagues had requested the preparation of a figure and pedestal of the size and proportions recommended by them before they completed their report. In April plans were put in hand to have this made and there is no reason to think that it was not completed.¹⁹ Why, then, was it not used by Ayrton a few months later? Perhaps it had already been destroyed, but as the question had not been settled, this seems unlikely. Nor, it may be assumed, would the maquette for the Cromwell statue have been the only one of the right proportions in a London studio at that time. Those for the statues of the three statesmen should have been available, and the actual statue of Peel was finished, for just a month earlier it had been suggested that it could be placed in the position proposed for it.²⁰ It may have been regarded as improper to unveil the statue itself prematurely, but the maquette should have been free for display.

The timing of the placing of the Cromwell maquette within the square may also have been significant. The choice of the site for Derby's statue was settled by 2 August, and by implication so were those for the other two.²¹ Ayrton was, therefore, under no immediate pressure to try the effect of the proposals. Presumably he could have waited to display the model until after Parliament was prorogued on 21 August, just over two weeks later, for there was no suggestion that the Members' reactions to the suitability of the scale and position of the statue were being sought. That was not Ayrton's approach. In an exchange with Lord Elcho, he made it clear that he preferred to submit matters relating to architecture, painting or sculpture to those who practised the relevant profession, rather than to a dilettante gentleman who claimed to have a general knowledge of the subject, or 'half a dozen gentlemen who professed to be great connoisseurs of art'.²²

Displaying the maquette of the Cromwell statue while the Members were sitting was bound to raise comments not related to its aesthetic value. Given its position, it could hardly be ignored, for it was placed not at one of the corners of the central enclosure, as Ayrton himself had suggested, but along its east side, south of the central avenue, and so directly facing New Palace Yard and the Members' entrance to the House of Commons. Its position is indicated by Frederick York's photograph (overleaf), which shows the central avenue to the right of the figure and the Middlesex Guildhall (the predecessor of the present building) in the background.²³ If Ayrton intended to provoke a response, then he was successful. George Whalley, Liberal MP for Peterborough and regarded as an ardent protestant, asked if the site would be permanently appropriated for the statue, which had 'elicited a manifestation of public opinion'. This gave Ayrton the opportunity to say that the MP for East Surrey, Peter John Locke King, had given him a subscription list signed by 10 temporal peers, 2 spiritual peers and 110 MPs for erecting a statue of Cromwell, and that if the public favoured the scheme, they could subscribe to the funds required. He did not confine himself to hinting at the completion of a statue such as Noble's and was obviously considering something even more ambitious when he added that an equestrian one would require a different site.²⁴

This was a sensitive time to have displayed Cromwell's likeness in this way and for the House of Commons to have discussed the possibility of a statue, for anti-monarchical feelings were running particularly high in the summer of 1871. To the Queen's reclusiveness and the private life of the Prince of Wales were added questions about the scale of the civil list. The Queen had fulfilled only one public engagement during 1870, the year in which the Prince's involvement in Sir Charles Mordaunt's divorce proceedings had seen him appear in court as a witness. In an article published on 22 July 1871 in *The Economist*, Walter Bagehot expressed the view that 'the Queen has done almost as much injury to the popularity of the Monarchy by her long retirement from public life as the most unworthy of her predecessors did by his profligacy and frivolity'. He also drew attention to the increasingly hostile reaction to the granting of dowries and allowances to members of the royal family 'for doing nothing'.²⁵

In 1871 the Queen asked for a dowry and annual income from the public purse for her daughter Princess Louise on her marriage to the Marquis of Lorne, heir of the Duke of Argyll, and for financial provision for Prince Arthur on his coming of age. Only three MPs voted against the Princess's dowry when the matter came before the House of Commons, but it provoked 'a great number' of meetings, at which people were 'really virulent' against granting the dowry, and much popular comment directed



Frederick York's photograph of the Cromwell maquette in Parliament Square (above); and from the same photograph, a larger reproduction of the statue and plinth (right).

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at the Marquis's inability to provide for himself and his family. A few months later Parliament went on to vote the Prince an annuity of £15,000, but only after a failed amendment to reduce the figure to £10,000 had attracted 51 votes in the Commons. During the debate, on 31 July, the MP for Birmingham, George Dixon, pointed out that republicanism was on the increase among the working classes of that city. A crowded meeting there during the previous week had resolved that the Queen should support her children, if they did not earn their own living.²⁶

Bagehot pointed out that it was not only the working classes who were exasperated by the scale and employment of the civil list, but that the middle classes, too, objected to paying so much for a monarchy which produced no pageantry. There was a widespread belief that the money which the Queen saved on public ceremonial went instead to her personal fortune. Furthermore, the Queen's parsimoniousness was such that royal guests were lodged in hotels, not the royal palaces. The recent example of the visit of the Prince and Princess of Prussia was a case in point, for they had not been entertained by the Queen, but had stayed in the German embassy.²⁷ A pamphlet that appeared in September 1871, entitled *What Does She Do With It? By Solomon Temple, Builder*, questioned the scale of the provision for the Queen's children and her employment of her income from the civil list, calling for an enquiry. The pamphlet was issued anonymously, but the author was G O Trevelyan, a former junior member of the government, and the financial cost of the crown was a major element in the campaign mounted by his friend Sir Charles Dilke, Radical MP for Chelsea and avowed republican.²⁸

In the spring the Prince of Wales's womanising produced talk of a possible divorce case in which he would be implicated. The Earl of Derby recognised that if that happened, following the reaction to the divorce proceedings in the previous year, the republicans' arguments would be strengthened. This caused alarm among the upper and middle classes and Robert Lowe was not alone in sensing 'an unpleasant feeling among the masses'. Their perturbation was increased by the events of the Paris commune and 'the outbreak', as Derby put it, of the socialist party there, which had increased republican support in Britain.²⁹ It was, indeed, both increasing and widespread, for eighty-four republican clubs were founded between 1871 and 1874.³⁰

Popular orators already were predicting the end of the monarchy after the Queen's death. On 30 July one of the largest crowds to have assembled in Trafalgar Square gathered there, in defiance of a government ban, to hear the leading republican Charles Bradlaugh. He parodied the language of the Queen's message to Parliament asking for an annuity for Prince Arthur,

provoking 'much laughter' in the process, and claimed to represent 'a vast mass of people' in protesting against any more grants being made to 'princely paupers'. He castigated Gladstone for trying to prohibit the meeting and for his argument that the Civil List was paid in lieu of the revenue from the crown lands, arguing that those lands belonged to the people and that, in any case, the sums paid to the Georges would have bought them several times over. His warning that the members of the royal family should pay their own debts and keep clear of demanding grants or 'an end would come of the English people's patience' was greeted with loud cheers.³¹

Cromwell symbolised the downfall of the Stuart monarchy, the execution of Charles I, and the establishment of the republic in 1649. The significance of his statue just outside the gates of Parliament at this juncture, only a few days after the demonstration in Trafalgar Square and the hostile reaction to Prince Arthur's annuity, was not lost, with a comment that some who saw it regarded it as a sign of the times and passed by on the other side.³²

There was discontent, too, with Parliament, which could be represented as mumbling on through debate after debate and achieving little. *The Times* drew a parallel between the commendatore in Don Juan, arriving at the end of a wasted life, and Noble's model, its extended hand reproaching the Members for the lost opportunities of the session, with months taken up in 'the riot of an Army Bill and the debauchery of a Ballot Bill'.³³ To be sure the religious tests in the universities were abolished, opening them to men of all faiths, and a bill introducing the secret ballot passed the Commons for the first time, as did the army regulations bill, abolishing the purchase of commissions in the army. Nevertheless, both the ballot bill and the army regulations bill were defeated in the Lords, and the abolition of purchasing was effectively achieved by cancelling the Royal Warrant on which the system was based, for when Gladstone made an announcement to that effect the Lords did a swift about-face and passed the bill, so that those with vested interests would receive the financial compensation which it provided.³⁴

The bitter struggle to get these bills through the Commons had seriously damaged the government's legislative programme, delaying measures concerned with Scottish education, control of the drink trade, local taxation and the regulation of mines. The momentum of reform achieved in the previous session seemed to have been lost. *Punch* referred to 'Bills by the dozen, all in a ruck, Each in the way of the other stuck'.³⁵ For those unhappy or exasperated with Parliament's progress, and particularly the Lords' unedifying manoeuvres, Cromwell's expulsion of the Rump provided a powerful image. A letter to *The Architect* supported the

proposal for a statue of Cromwell in Parliament Square and quoted Walter Savage Landor, that Oliver had 'walked into a den of lions, and scoured them growling out'.³⁶

The report in *The Times* contained a number of political allusions, but also commented on the suitability of the site, the ostensible reason for the presence of the statue. Remarking that it would be very appropriate for the statues of Derby and Palmerston, its correspondent could not resist adding 'but Cromwell was greater than they' and that Noble's statue of him was worthy of any site. The force and simplicity of the figure was characteristic of the subject, Noble's 'grand and simple' conception had achieved 'the greatest effect' and the modelling of the statue was 'bold and true'. It successfully conveyed Cromwell's wisdom in peace, strength in war, unflinching ambition and severe piety, and his physical characteristics were those represented in the best portraits. This was praise indeed, and the correspondent could find no fault with the statue, which was declared to be the finest in London.³⁷

The Times closed its report with the comment that Cromwell should take his place among the sovereigns in Westminster Hall. This was not to be, nor was there to be a statue of him elsewhere in London for the time being. Reporting on what it described as 'a miscellaneous Conversazione' in the Commons, *Punch* noted laconically that 'Cromwell is not to have a statue'.³⁸ Not until end of the century was there a public statue of the Protector in London. Even then Sir William Hamo Thornycroft's sculpture was completed and placed outside the Palace of Westminster only after bitter controversy. Meanwhile, Noble's statue had been cast in bronze by Cox and Sons of Thames Ditton and in 1875 was placed on a granite plinth in Manchester, outside the town hall, close to the spot where it was thought that the first blood had been shed in the Civil War. It had proved impossible to find a suitable site within the town hall for 'a colossal statue'.³⁹ The reaction to the statue was as favourable as that for the maquette and it was described as 'a work of true genius'.⁴⁰ The *Manchester Guardian* reported that the Queen and other members of the royal family had seen the statue before it left Noble's studio and had 'expressed their high admiration of it', although traditionally the absence of royalty from the opening ceremony and the Queen's supposed lasting antipathy towards the city was attributed to the presence of the statue.⁴¹ In 1968 it was moved to Wythenshawe Park, where it now stands, bereft of the sword which Cromwell had held in his right hand.

A statue of Cromwell was placed between those of Charles I and Charles II in a row of rulers of England on Bradford town hall of 1873, and free-standing statues were erected in Warrington and Parliament Square in

1899, and at St Ives in 1901. But an offer in the mid-1870s to present a statue of Cromwell to Leeds was declined, because 'public opinion was not ripe for such an innovation', and, at the end of the century, the citizens of Huntingdon also felt unable to erect such a statue.⁴² Noble's statue of Cromwell in Manchester was the first of the four free-standing statues of the Protector to stand in a public place, but its maquette was displayed even earlier, in Parliament Square for a few weeks in August 1871, coinciding with the high point of popular republicanism in Victorian Britain.

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5. I owe this information to the kindness of John Goldsmith.
6. *East End News*, 11 Aug 1871, p. 3.
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9. PRO, T/26/6, pp. 102-3; WORK/11/59, letters of 4 April 1871.
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16. *The Times*, 2 Dec 1875, p. 10d.
17. Rupert Gunnis, *Dictionary of British Sculptors 1660-1851* (revised edn, London, undated), p. 275.
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19. PRO, WORK/11/59, 19 April 1871.

20. PRO, WORK/11/59, Ayrton to Gladstone, 4 July 1871.
21. PRO, WORK/20/42, Pakington to Ayrton, 2 Aug 1871.
22. *The Builder*, 19 Aug 1871, p. 650.
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27. Taylor, 'Down with the Crown', p. 63. Bagehot, 'The Monarchy and the People', *The Economist*, 22 July 1871, p. 872.
28. Roy Jenkins, *Gladstone* (London, 1995), p. 345. William M Kuhn, 'Ceremony and Politics: The British Monarchy, 1871-1872', *Journal of British Studies*, 26 (1987), pp. 138-40; Kuhn, 'Queen Victoria's Civil List: What did she do with it?', *Historical Journal*, 36 (1993), p. 659.
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38. *Punch*, 19 Aug 1871, p. 66.
39. *The Builder*, 4 July 1874, p. 575.
40. *The Times*, 29 Nov 1875, p. 9e; 2 Dec 1875, p. 10d.
41. *Manchester Guardian*, 20 Nov 1875. I owe this reference to the kindness of John Goldsmith. Taylor, 'Down with the Crown', pp. 97-8, 264-5.
42. *The Times*, 7 Dec 1875, p. 12a.

Stephen Porter is Assistant Editor with the Survey of London section of English Heritage and is the author of *Exploring Urban History* (1990), *Destruction in the English Civil Wars* (1994), *The Great Fire of London* (1996) and *The Great Plague* (1999), and editor of *London and the Civil War* (1996).

WRITINGS AND SOURCES IV CROMWELL THE HUMANITARIAN

by Jane A Mills

Cromwell wrote a vast number of letters during his lifetime, an exceptional source of reference to try and understand the man. Many are despatches home to update others on the course of the war, the first hand accounts of battles or skirmishes or requests for supplies and pay. There are letters which illustrate the depth of his religious belief, where he seeks to advise and comfort his family and friends. The letters that I found the most interesting were those that showed him as a humanitarian. These letters were not confined to his early life, but were also present in later life when he was obviously busy, involved in the war and politics.

The following texts are taken from the 1897 edition of Thomas Carlyle's *The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*.

The first is a letter which dates from 1635, a time when Cromwell was a yeoman farmer in financial difficulties and renting a smallholding in St Ives. The letter is addressed to James Story, one of the Trustees of the Bishops' Lands, requesting payment for Dr Wells; it appears to be emotional and full of religious fervour. It was written after Cromwell had undergone a religious conversion to commit himself to furthering the work of Reformation. This would account for the style of the letter and his concerns that if Dr Wells was not paid and left, this would be tragic and seen as a failure.

To my very loving friend Mr Storie, at the sign of the Dog in the Royal Exchange, London: Deliver these.

St Ives, 11th January 1635.

Mr Storie,

Amongst the catalogue of those good works which your fellow-citizens and our countrymen have done, this will not be reckoned for the least, that they have provided for the feeding of souls. Building of hospitals provides for men's bodies; to build material temples is judged a work of piety; but they that procure spiritual food, they that build-up spiritual temples, they are the men truly charitable, truly pious. Such a work as this was your erecting the Lecture in our Country; in the which you placed Dr Welles, a man of goodness and industry, and ability to do good every way; not short of any I

know in England: and I am persuaded that, sithence his coming, the Lord hath by him wrought much good amongst us.

It only remains now that He who first moved you to this, put you forward to the continuance thereof: it was the Lord, and therefore to Him lift we up our hearts that He would perfect it. And surely, Mr Storie, it were a piteous thing to see a Lecture fall, in the hands of so many able and godly men, as I am persuaded the founders of this are; in these times, wherein we see they are suppressed, with too much haste and violence, by the enemies of God his Truth. Far be it that so much guilt should stick to your hands, who live in a City so renowned for the clear shining light of the Gospel. You know, Mr Storie, to withdraw the pay is to let fall the Lecture: for who goeth to warfare at his own cost? I beseech you therefore in the bowels of Jesus Christ, put it forward, and let the good man have his pay. The souls of God's children will bless you for it; and so shall I; and ever rest, Your loving Friend in the Lord,

Oliver Cromwell.¹

The next three letters deal with requests for compensation for families.

The first was written in 1648 on behalf of lieutenant-colonel Cowell's widow and children. The wife and children had had to lower their standard of living when Cowell gave up his successful business in order to fight on the parliamentary side. The letter was written during the second civil war, when Cromwell was busy pursuing the Scottish army who had crossed the border. But when Cromwell met Mrs Cowell in her sorry state of destitution, he was moved to write a request for help from Fairfax.

For his Excellency the Lord Fairfax, General of all the Parliament's armies:
These.

Alnwick, 11th Sept 1648.

My Lord,

Since we lost Lieutenant-Colonel Cowell, his Wife came to me near Northallerton, much lamenting her loss, and the sad condition she and her children were left in.

He was an honest worthy man. He spent himself in your and the Kingdom's service. He being a great Trader in London deserted it to serve the Kingdom. He lost much moneys to the State; and I believe few outdid him. He had a

great arrear due to him. He left a Wife and three small children but meanly provided for. Upon his deathbed, he commended this desire to me, That I should befriend his to the Parliament and to your Excellency. His Wife will attend you for letters to the Parliament; which I beseech you to take into a tender consideration.

I beseech you to pardon this boldness to, Your Excellency's most humble servant,

Oliver Cromwell.²

The second was written in 1650 to William Lenthall, Speaker of the parliament, on behalf of a widow and seven small children. Her husband had suffered during his service and gave the ultimate sacrifice of his life for the good of the cause. Cromwell wrote a letter giving a glowing report of his service and asking that she be rewarded with 'comfortable subsistence'.

To the Right Honourable William Lenthall, Esquire, Speaker of the Parliament of England: These

Edinburgh, 28th Dec. 1650.

Right Honourable,

It having pleased God to take away by death Colonel John Maleverer, a very useful member of this Army, I thought it requisite to move you on the behalf of his Widow and seven small Children.

I need not say much. His faithfulness in your service, and his cheerfulness to be spent in the same, is very well known. And truly, he had a spirit very much beyond his natural strength of body, having undergone many fits of sickness during this hard service in your field, where he was constant and diligent in his charge; and, notwithstanding the weakness of his body, thought himself bound in conscience to continue to the utmost, preferring the Public service before his private relations. And (as I have been credibly informed) his losses by the Royal and Malignant Party have been very great; being occasioned by his appearing with the first in his Country for the Parliament.

I have therefore made bold to represent these things before you, that you may timely consider of those that he hath left behind him, and bestow some mark of favour and respect upon them towards their comfortable subsistence. I rest, Your most humble servant,

Oliver Cromwell.³

The third letter was written in 1655 to Secretary Thurloe and deals with a special request for William Beacham's son to become a scholar at Charterhouse school. This letter is interesting in that, though it is another example of Cromwell's concern that a debt be paid for war service (in this case the father was disabled not killed), this time Cromwell is not humbly requesting help but is demanding 'the thing done', as he is now the Lord Protector.

To Mr Secretary Thurloe.

Whitehall, 28th July 1655.

You receive from me, this 28th instant, a Petition from Margery Beacham, desiring the admission of her Son into the Charterhouse; whose Husband was employed one day in an important secret service, which he did effectually, to our great benefit and the Commonwealth's.

I have wrote under it a common Reference to the Commissioners; but I mean a great deal more: That is shall be done, without their debate or consideration of the matter. And so do you privately hint to _____⁴ I have not the particular shining bauble for crowds to gaze at or kneel to, but - To be short, I know how to deny Petitions; and, whatever I think proper, for outward form, to refer to any Officer or Office, I expect that such my compliance with custom shall be looked upon as an indication of my will and pleasure to have the thing done. Thy true friend,

Oliver P.⁵

The underlining theme throughout Cromwell's letters is to do the 'right thing' and above all to be seen to be fair. The following two letters bring together his belief in honouring an entitlement and the importance of education.

On 14 February 1650 Cromwell wrote to Dr Greenwood, the Vice Chancellor of Oxford University, requesting the degree of doctor upon John Waterhouse, who served in Ireland as physician to the army. Cromwell felt he was worthy of the degree.

To my very worthy friend Dr Greenwood, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford.

Edinburgh, 14th February 1650.

Sir,

This Gentleman, Mr Waterhouse, went over into Ireland as Physician to the Army there; of whose diligence, fidelity and abilities I had much experience. Whilst I was there, he constantly attended the Officers and Soldiers, by his skill and industry; and being upon urgent occasion lately come into England, he hath desired me to recommend him for the obtaining of the Degree of Doctor in that Science. Wherefore I earnestly desire you, that you when he shall repair to you, that you will give him your best assistance for the obtaining of the said Degree; he being shortly to return back to his charge in Ireland.

By doing whereof, as you will encourage one who is willing and ready to serve the Public; so you will also lay a very great obligation upon; Sir, Your affectionate Servant,

Oliver Cromwell.⁶

The last letter, written three months before his death, is a mandate to the Vice Chancellor of Cambridge University on behalf of John Castle to be made Master of Arts. John Castle entered Cambridge in 1649 with fellow student John Dryden. He was absent from Cambridge because he was serving as minister with the fleet. Cromwell felt he should not be penalised for missing the time, when he was doing God's work, and therefore deserved the MA. The letter is written in a calm tone.

To our trusty and well-beloved, the Vice-Chancellor and Senate of Our University of Cambridge.

Oliver P.

Trusty and well-beloved,

Whereas by our appointment several Students in our University of Cambridge have been invited abroad to preach the Gospel in our Fleet, and for their encouragement have been by us assured that they should not suffer any prejudice in the University by reason of their absence in the said service: And whereas a petition hath been exhibited on the behalf of Mr John Castle of Trinity College, showing that whilst he was abroad as Minister in the Newcastle Frigate, he was disappointed of taking his degree of Master of Arts (as by course he ought), and that he cannot now, since his return, commence without the loss of one year's seniority, by reason of a statute of the University denying degrees to any non-resident:

In performance of our said promise, and for the future encouragement of others in the like service, We do hereby signify unto you, That it is our will and pleasure that the said John Castle be by you created Master of Arts, and allowed the same seniority which, according to the custom of your University, he had enjoyed had he been resident at the usual time of taking degrees.

Given at Whitehall, the 22nd day of June 1658.⁷

1. Thomas Carlyle, *The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (4 vols, London, 1897), I, 89.
2. Ibid, I, 365.
3. Ibid, IV, 260.
4. Name blanked out in the original.
5. Ibid, III, 215.
6. Ibid, II, 289.
7. Ibid, IV, 296.

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by Ivan Roots

Gerald Aylmer, an honorary Vice President of the Association, died after a short illness on 17 December 2000. He was born, a Shropshire lad, on 30 April 1926. From Winchester he went up to Balliol in 1944 as an Exhibitioner. Service as an able seaman interrupted his degree course from 1944 to 1947. Returning to Balliol, he took a first in 1950 in Modern History as a pupil of Christopher Hill who, as he did with so many of us, inspired Gerald's affection and respect. A Junior Research Fellowship enabled him to complete his three-decker blockbuster D.Phil. thesis on the Caroline civil service, not a detail or a phrase in it superfluous. But it led reputedly to a word limit for Oxford history dissertations. Out of it emerged in 1963 *The King's Servants*, first of a trilogy on the seventeenth-century civil service. (The second was *The State's Servants, 1649-1660* (1973); the third on the post-Restoration period was completed shortly before he died.)

After lecturing at Manchester, he became the first Professor of History at the new University of York in 1973. It was a propitious appointment, leading to a balanced and innovative (in content and assessment) syllabus, attracting and producing enterprising and enthusiastic students to a department distinguished for its research and teaching alike. Gerald took his fair share of the load aware, as so many academics seem not to be, of how much good teaching can inform and enhance research. As head of department he was no martinet. During my stints at York as an external examiner I saw him in action, relaxed as chair of the board, courteous and conscientious in directing the agonised (and agonising, sometimes) deliberations about those awkward candidates who would put themselves on the frayed edges of I/2 i and 2 i/2 ii, and coping quietly with the clash of academic temperaments that such situations are inclined to foster.

While at York he continued to publish, specialised studies such as *The State's Servants*, but others more accessible perhaps to students and to enquiring general readers - on *The Levellers in the English Revolution*, documents with critical commentary; *The Struggle for the Constitution*, a thoughtful textbook to be read with his later *Rebellion or Revolution?*; and editing *The Interregnum*, a collection of articles on the 'quest for a settlement'. Affection for York was expressed in *A History of York Minster* (jointly with R Cann), on the brink of his return to Oxford as Master of St Peter's in 1978, where he stayed until his retirement in 1991. Throughout, he published a swathe of articles. Particularly original were the lectures on seventeenth-century *mentalities* he delivered to the Royal Historical Society. He enjoyed

reviewing, always appreciative of the work of others in his field. His notices were always incisive, but no author could complain of being the victim of discourtesy, unfairness or even unkindness. What may have been his last - a short notice, succinct and stylish of a brave book by a friend of mine - appeared in the spring issue this year of *The English Historical Review*. It was a model of his work, Aylmer written all over it.

The erudite historian of administration was himself a skilled administrator. He held many professional and official positions, notably the chair of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts and the Board for the History of Parliament. To them all he brought his own amalgam of the aspirational with the practical, endowing the art of the possible with a conviction that it should, and could, be pushed a little harder. Above all, he was a considerate and helpful human being, whom many scholars, particularly beginners, will remember as generous and sensible in his gestures of encouragement.

For Gerald Aylmer, Oliver Cromwell was an appealing, difficult character, to be admired this side of idolatry, but he approved of the Cromwell Association as it approved of him. He gave a notable Cromwell Day address at Westminster in 1982 (reprinted here), making an eloquent plea for Oliver to be treated as 'a man of his own time and circumstances', which historians like himself were engaged in elucidating, an ongoing process calling on all the qualities of the dedicated historian he was.

I must add that my own warm memories of Gerald Aylmer, personal and professional, are shot through with my perception of him as a family man, linked with his charming wife Ursula, an unfailing equal partner. As members of the Association we may share - a little bit - her sad loss.

CROMWELL DAY 1982

by Gerald Aylmer

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 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 seventeenth 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 reactions 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 twentieth 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 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 even this 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 repressor 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.

[This paper first appeared in the 1983-84 edition of *Cromwelliana*.]

BARRY DENTON, MBE (1953-2000)

by Alastair Bantock

It is with great sadness that I have to report the death of Barry Denton after a short illness. Barry was born in Northampton and lived there all his life. His parents both worked in the shoe trade, and his father served in the Northamptonshire Regiment in Tunisia and Italy during the war. Barry was disabled at birth and his disability increased steadily and remorselessly during his life. His physicians made the diagnosis of Spinal Muscular Dystrophy, a very rare condition which in 38 years of medical practice I only met in one other case.

I first had the privilege of meeting him professionally in the late sixties and was impressed by the sharpness of his mind. I needed all my wits to keep abreast of him. At this time Barry was still able to draw, provided that he had support for his wrists. As his muscular weakness progressed, he lost the use of his hands and became increasingly reliant on his computer, which he operated by using a stick in his mouth. Through this medium he was active on the internet and became known to a large number of historians across the world. About seven booklets were followed in 1997 by his first hardback, *Only in Heaven. The Life and Campaigns of Sir Arthur Hesilrige, 1601-1661*. His last work, hopefully soon to be published posthumously, is on the formation of the New Model Army.

In 1973 he attended his first Sealed Knot muster at Castle Ashby. Fired with enthusiasm, he wrote to Brigadier Peter Young to ask whether his disablement would prevent his joining the Sealed Knot. The Captaine-General replied that he could always find a job for someone like him, and that he had a lot of people who were more handicapped through lack of trying! He joined the Earl of Northampton's Regiment, which I had the honour to command at the time, and was soon involved in the production of a regimental newsletter and other supporting activities. For a time he ran the Observer Corps, which issued unbiased reports on the musters that its members attended. The comments and criticisms in these reports (most justified) resulted in unpopularity in some quarters, and eventual disbandment after Peter Young's death. I personally always listened to his comments; an unafraid and unbiased view from the crowd line was always valuable.

He made a valuable collection of photos of civil war cornets, and became very knowledgeable on infantry colours - so much so that on my appointment as Lord General I appointed him to be 'Inspector of Colours', with a resulting improvement in the accuracy of our flags (see also one of

Barry's articles on this subject, reprinted here). He was for some years the Sealed Knot advisor on queries from schools, and he ran the National Events Office when Bob Platts was MMG. In association with Bill Craig of the United States, he was involved in the group working to promote Anglo-US contact, 'Heritage of Liberty', which provided the umbrella for our trips to Virginia in 1995 and 1997.

Barry was a Vice President of the Cromwell Association and had been awarded a Fellowship of the Royal Historical Society, an honour that he shared with the Captaine-General. He was latterly invited by the Oxford University Press to check the biographical entries of seventeenth century personages in their new edition of the *Dictionary of National Biography*. He was awarded an MBE on 1 January 2000 for his services to history. He was always ready to assist students with queries and problems, and is remembered by many with a well-deserved affection.

All this time, in spite of increasing physical weakness, his drive, zest for life and humour were an inspiration for all who came into contact with him. His booklet on the origins of the Coldstream Guards, published in 1994, resulted in a friendship with the Colonel of the Regiment and successive Adjutants. Detachments from the Regiment attended the 350th Commemoration service at Naseby, and also travelled to Virginia on our first visit. He was invited to attend the presentation of Colours to the Regiment by Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor last year, and to lunch in the mess afterwards - a great honour for what was very much a family event.

Thanks to the devoted care of both his parents, Barry was able to remain at home right up to his last illness. Those privileged to know him and be honoured with his friendship found their lives enriched through contact with him. We will not forget Barry - his encyclopaedic knowledge of the seventeenth century, his impish sense of humour, and his refusal to bow down under disability.

We will not see his like again.

This obituary first appeared in *Orders of the Day*, the journal of the Sealed Knot, and is reproduced here by kind permission of the author and the editor.

by Barry Denton

From the beginning of organised warfare, the Commander or Knight sought to show his identity by use of a symbolic or heraldic device, first on his shield or coat, then by personalised banners and finally by an official system of Colours, Standards and Guidons still used today. During the English civil war, every cavalry commander had as his means of identification a standard measuring two feet by two feet, carried by a cornet in each troop. Civil war standards are often said to carry painted upon them 'political cartoons'. In general terms this is indeed correct, but the pictures or mottos on standards of the parliamentary armies in particular often show more than a crude jest - they describe the belief in a cause, a statement to God and freedom of his cause in parliament.

In respect of declaring this cause of justice, the troop commanders associated with Cromwell's regiment, 'the Ironsides', were no exception. That we know of their belief is a fine tribute to the pedantic nature of a small number of little-known men who recorded in detail the standards of the captured royalist officers displayed in London, and the standards of parliamentary troop commanders as they hung in church and hall in glory of God's triumph. Two men in particular earn our gratitude - Mr Jonathan Turmile, whose sketchbook is deposited in Dr William's Library,¹ and Mr Thomas Blount, the translator of Henry Estienne's *The Art of Making Devises*.² Blount produced his translation in 1650, and in an appendix to Estienne's original work included descriptions of many contemporary civil war standards. Other sketchbooks are to be found in the British Library, National Army Museum and National Library of Scotland. A further volume was at one time in the Bodleian Library, but is unfortunately no longer known.

Upon examination of the various manuscripts devoted to standards, it is a simple matter to identify those with connection to Oliver Cromwell's pre-New Model regiment, and the standards they bore in the actual re-organised army. The 'Ironsides' troop standards fall into two groups, those carried under Oliver which are of a reddish hue and date prior to 1645, and the 'post-Ironsides' standards carried by old 'Ironsides' officers under Sir Thomas Fairfax which are blue in the field. The word field denotes the main coloured area of the standard, which was made of taffeta and edged with a coloured fringing usually in both field colour and either white or gold.

Oliver Cromwell was both colonel and patron of his Ironsides, the regiment in 1644 being a so-called 'double regiment' of fourteen troops. The standards

of this regiment appear to be of the reddish hue mentioned. This field colour survives later in Cromwell's New Model regiment as can be seen later in this article, but from this it is reasonably safe to state that Cromwell's standards were uniformly red during his war years. Four of these red standards are included by Turmile and Blount, three from 1643-5 - those of Berry, Thomson and Ireton - and one from the New Model - that of Blackwell.

The earliest of the red standards is that of Henry Ireton, who held a captaincy before his association with Cromwell. However, it was his friendship with Oliver that led to Ireton's social climb within the puritan and Independent faction in parliament. Henry Ireton became major to Sir Francis Thornhagh by early 1643, but soon left that regiment taking his ready-raised troop to join Cromwell as deputy-governor of Ely. With Cromwell, this troop served in the Eastern Association and fought in the major battles of 1644 - Marston Moor and second Newbury. The standard illustrated matches those of Cromwell's other troop commanders and appears to date from about August 1643. Ireton served in the regiment until the formation of the New Model when he became colonel of horse outright.

James Berry, the second red standard owner (see Berry no. 1) was captain-lieutenant to Cromwell's own troop in 1643 (the commission captain-lieutenant was usually held by the officer immediately under the colonel in his own troop, taking a command of the troop and occasionally the regiment during the colonel's absence.) In August 1644 Berry became captain of a vacant troop in the Ironsides and this standard obviously dates from this commission.

Also of the same red pattern in both Turmile and Blount is the standard of captain Thomson. This is certainly of the same date as that of Berry's. Unfortunately Sir Charles Firth and Godfrey Davies in their excellent *Regimental History of Cromwell's Army*³ make no mention of a captain Thomson during the year and further research has drawn a blank.

By far the most interesting of the red standards is, in fact, not of the 1642-5 Ironsides period at all, but belongs to captain Blackwell, a captain briefly under Oliver Cromwell in the New Model. The point of interest is, alas, not the brave exploits of Blackwell, but with Turmile and Blount calling his men 'The Maiden Troop'. The original 'Maiden Troop' was paid for by the young maids or virgins of Norwich in 1643. At the suggestion of Oliver Cromwell, a sum of £240 the maids had raised for a company of foot was used to arm and equip a troop of horse, Cromwell pledging to find horses if the maids did so.⁴ The troop was subsequently raised and commanded by captain Robert Swallow, seeing service at Gainsborough and throughout

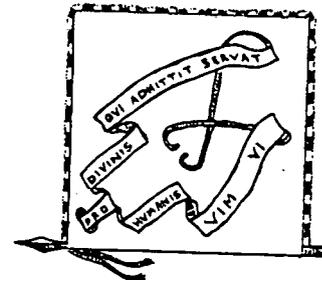
1644 until it became part of the New Model in line with other troops. Why both Jonathan Turmile and Thomas Blount refer to Blackwell's troop being 'The Maiden Troop' is a mystery. According to all research lines studies will not connect Swallow and Blackwell, but it appears too much coincidence for both manuscripts to be in error. The standard shows hearts - perhaps of the maids of Norwich - under a city representing Zion - that place the cause would establish on earth. This standard is a classic example of puritan faith that God supported the cause on earth as he did in heaven, a theme running through the majority of Cromwellian standards, and truly befitting a captain serving under 'God's Englishman'. If Blount and Turmile have made no mistake, it must be a distinct possibility that the standard carried in Blackwell's troop was originally that of Swallow and carried in honour of its worthy history, for the story of the Norwich maidens was a story of faith and Cromwell's victory.⁵

The history of the 'Ironsides standards' is continued in the regiment of Sir Thomas Fairfax in 1645. At this point the standards carried by Cromwell's old captains change to blue in line with Sir Thomas Fairfax's own. Fairfax's major was John Disbrowe, who had been Cromwell's own major prior to admittance in the New Model. Disbrowe was Cromwell's brother-in-law, having married his sister Jane, and therefore he was well established in the Cromwellian group. In 1642 Disbrowe was quartermaster in Cromwell's own troop, but took his captaincy in the Ironsides by April 1643 and became the regiment's major a year later. Disbrowe retained the commission to be major in Fairfax's New Model regiment. The blue standard is one of the more complex designs found on parliamentarian banners, depicting a helmet, swords, two foot colours, but strangely according to Turmile, no motto.

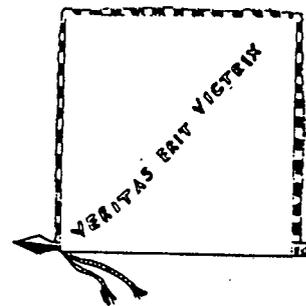
Further examples of ex-Ironside standards are found in the Fairfax blue belonging to James Berry (see Berry no. 2), William Packer and John Browne. Berry was captain under Fairfax and therefore retained his commission in 1645.

John Browne had inherited the Ironside troop of young Olliver Cromwell when he died of smallpox at Newport Pagnell in 1644. Browne, therefore, transferred as captain into the New Model.

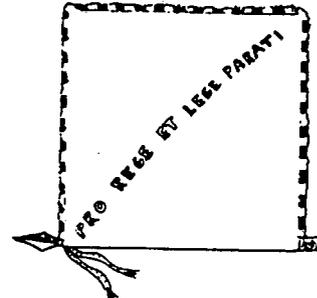
The troop of William Packer was originally that of Cromwell's nephew, the young Valentine Walton. Packer was lieutenant to Walton and it was perfectly natural for him to receive the vacant captaincy and troop upon the latter's death at Marston Moor. In 1645 Packer's was the other Ironside troop to be reformed under Fairfax.⁶



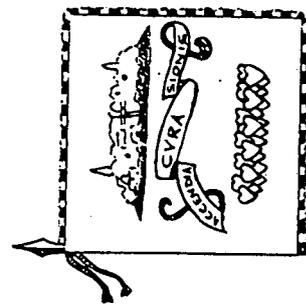
(a) HENRY IRETON



(b) CAPTAIN THOMSON



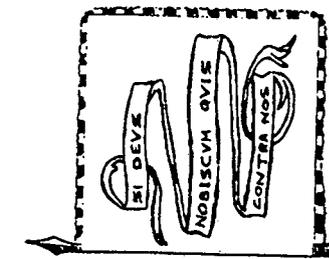
(c) CAPTAIN BERRY no. 1



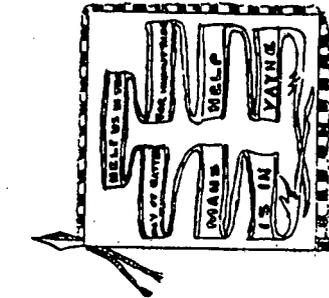
(d) BLACKWELL, THE MAIDEN TROOP



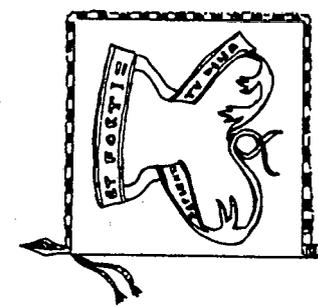
(e) DISBROWE



(f) BERRY no. 2



(g) BROWNE



(h) WILLIAM PACKER

Standards of the Ironsides, redrawn from contemporary illustrations (see note 6 overleaf).

The greatest disappointment in a study of Cromwellian troop standards is the fact that neither Blount nor Turmile records Oliver's own. Blount in his appendix makes no mention of Cromwell's standard for these formative years. Turmile, on the other hand, leaves an unpainted field and device on the space reserved for Oliver. From the Cromwellian standards that are recorded, it is a reasonable conjecture to assume Oliver's personal standard was of the set reddish hue, but whether a device or motto was painted upon this field - who knows? The reason for the standard being unrecorded has been given many improbable answers, but perhaps Thomas Blount gives a clue. Blount published his translation in 1650, and during the period he was noting the standards, Oliver was in Ireland. It may seem illogical that a cloth standard could survive the campaigns of Cromwell's life's work and still be fit for use in 1649, but it is just possible, and if the standard of Oliver Cromwell - old Ironsides himself - had proved to be the blessing to God's cause, why should he change it?⁷

1. Dr William's Library, Ms Modern, f. 7, Jonathan Turmile.
2. *The Art of Making Devices*, translated by Thomas Blount, 1650.
3. C H Firth & G Davies, *Regimental History of Cromwell's Army* (2 vols, Oxford, 1940), I.
4. Thomas Carlyle, *The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, letter XIII, 2 August 1643.
5. The author's unpublished research notes.
6. The accompanying illustrations are redrawn from the following sources:
a) Ireton from Turmile; b) Thomson from Blount; c) Berry no. 1 from Blount; d) Blackwell from Blount and Turmile; e) Disbrowe from Turmile; f) Berry no. 2 from Turmile; g) Browne from Turmile; and h) Packer from Turmile.
7. The author wishes to thank Mr P B Boyden and the National Army Museum for their assistance in his research on parliamentary standards in recent years.

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CROMWELLIAN BRITAIN XIV BELTON, LINCOLNSHIRE

by Jane A Mills

The counties of Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire and the North Sea surround Lincolnshire. The early history of this region was one of separation from the rest of Britain due to its natural barriers of the Rivers Trent and Humber and the Fens, which were an impassable area of swamp and meres. The early inhabitants of the region were invaders and to this day there are 300 towns and villages whose names have a Danish origin and the local dialect has a definite Norse mixture. There are important archaeological sites dating from the Iron Age and Romano-British period. The region was important to the Romans, as it was bordered on three sides by water, which offered an excellent means of communication.

Over the centuries, Lincolnshire has become an important farming area and the home of the first fishing seaport, Grimsby, named after a poor fisherman, Grim, who saved Havelok, the King of Denmark's son, and was rewarded with riches enabling him to found Grimsby.

The Major General for this county was Edward Whalley, cousin of Oliver Cromwell (his mother was daughter of Sir Henry Cromwell of Hinchingbrooke). He was a loyal and ardent supporter of the Protectorate and tried to be fair while carrying out his duties.

The village of Belton is situated on the edge of the 700-acre Belton Park, three miles north-east of Grantham. It is said that Belton is 'Willingham', the village in Sir Walter Scott's book *The Heart of Midlothian*, though this claim is disputed by nearby Syston and Staunton in Nottingham. Richard Brownlow, a lawyer during the reign of Elizabeth I and James I, originally owned the estate. Sir Christopher Wren designed Belton House for Richard's great-grandson, Sir John Brownlow, and finished it in 1689; the park dates from about the same period. Alterations were made to the house by James Wyatt in 1777, though the ceilings, the superb staircase and mantelpieces survived. The property boasts an Orangery by Jeffrey Wyattville, an untouched seventeenth-century stables and an original landscaped park. Sir Isaac Newton was born in nearby Woolsthorpe and educated in Grantham; descendants of his famous apple tree still flourish in the gardens of Belton House. In 1984 the property was acquired by the National Trust and is licensed for civil weddings.

In 1643 Lincolnshire came under threat from the Earl of Newcastle, who led the royalist forces in northern England. He had been successful at Tadcaster, Pontefract and Newark as he marched south from Yorkshire in an effort to link up with Oxford and the king. Lord and Sir Thomas Fairfax ably represented the parliamentary forces, and even though they were under pressure, Sir Thomas Fairfax was successful in January 1643 in capturing Bradford, Leeds and Wakefield and thus causing Newcastle to retreat to York.

During the same month, Cromwell was sent to Cambridge and by the beginning of February Lord Grey of Groby, the Commander of the Eastern Association, had promoted him to colonel. By March, his troop of sixty men and three officers had become an honest, godly and well-disciplined regiment ready to fight. Their objective was to rendezvous with commanders and men from the counties of Lincolnshire, Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire, to attack Newark and then press on to relieve the Fairfaxes in Yorkshire. Newark garrison was royalist and had become cut off from Lord Newcastle's forces when he was forced to retreat to York. However, the other parliamentary commanders failed to appear, believing they should stay and defend their counties. Cromwell suggested Grantham as a new meeting place and the House of Commons commanded them to attend.

Newark is situated on the lowest permanent crossing point of the River Trent and also controlled the cross-roads of the Great North Road and the Fosse Way. The Fosse Way linked the parliamentary strongholds of Lincoln, Nottingham, Derby and Leicester. The Great North Road was the communication and supply route for royalist forces between Yorkshire (with arms coming in from Low Countries with Henrietta Maria) and the king in Oxford.

Cromwell's Ironsides' first engagement with the enemy while en route for Newark took place on the evening of 13 May 1643 at Belton. This incident is notable because it was the first time Cromwell's Ironsides saw battle and Cromwell led a cavalry charge. On the evening of 13 May at Belton Cromwell's twelve troops met an enemy twice its size; after half an hour, Cromwell took the initiative and charged the royalists, routing them. A letter he wrote after the battle to Sir Miles Hobart was later published in a newsheet, *A True Relation of a great Victory obtained by the Parliament forces in Lincolnshire*. This contains letters from colonel Cromwell, master Bridge and others, printed for Benjamin Allen; it is preserved within the collection of Thomason Tracts in the British Library. In his letter, Cromwell describes the skirmish and how this handful of 'poor and broken' troops withstood musket-shot for half an hour, and then charged the enemy, who were routed

and ran away. Enemy soldiers were killed, forty-five prisoners taken, prisoners rescued and four or five colours captured. For Cromwell and his men to beat the enemy twice their strength in their first engagement must have had a psychological benefit.

The parish church of St Peter and St Paul at Belton has an entry in the register, which reads: 'May 1643 buried three unknown soldiers, slain in Belton fight'. Unfortunately, from the sources available it is impossible to say whether they are royalist or parliamentary troops. It is believed that at the end of the civil war, parliamentary troops may have been billeted at Belton. The church owns a silver Commonwealth flagon dated 1656 and of fine quality.

The original part of the church dates from the Norman times, with successive alterations carried out during the medieval, Georgian and Victorian periods. The upper part of the tower was rebuilt in 1638, and contains five bells; H Oldfield II cast the earliest in 1590 in Nottingham. The church contains several monuments of the Brownlow and Cust family by notable sculptors. Richard Brownlow's monument was by Joshua Marshall, master mason to Charles II, who carved the stone plinth for Charles I's equestrian statue at Trafalgar Square. He also worked on several of the City churches after the Great Fire of London. In 1640 Gervase Holles mentions two armorial stained glass windows, which have since been replaced, except for the north aisle west window, which contains a pre-Cromwellian royal coat of arms.

Gervase Holles, cousin of Denzil Holles, was born in Grimsby in 1606 and served as mayor and later MP, in which capacity he tried to enforce the payment of ship money. He sided with the king during the civil war, taking 117 men to Nottingham to aid the cause. He was promoted from captain to major, and served in colonel Sir Lewis Dyve's regiment at the battle of Edgehill. He served the king at Oxford and was appointed governor of Lynn-Regis, Norfolk, in 1644. As colonel of his own regiment of foot, he fought at Banbury, Brentford, Newark, Atherton, Bradford and Newbury. He was imprisoned after the siege of Colchester and later went to live in France and Holland, helping Charles II's cause. After the Restoration, he became MP for Grimsby again until his death in 1675. Before the war he had spent time researching and collecting information in order to write the history of Lincolnshire. His collection was destroyed during the war, so the history was never written, and instead he wrote about his family.

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[Several accounts of the battle fought around Belton in May 1643 appeared in the pamphlets and newspapers of the day.]

A True Relation of a great Victory obtained by the Parliament forces in Lincolnshire [British Library, Thomason Tract E104 (12), bearing a printed date 27 May 1643]

A Letter from Collonell Cromwell to Collonell Hobart from Shasten

Noble Sir, The God of glory hath given us this evening a glorious victory over our enemies, they were as we are enformed one and twentie Colours of horse troopes, and three or foure of dragoones; it was late in the evening when we drew out, they came and faced us within two miles of the town, so soon as we had the alarum we drew out our forces, consisting of about twelve troops, whereof some of them so poore and broken that you shall seldome see worse; with this handfull it pleased God to cast the scale, for after we had stood a little above musket shot the one body from the other, and the Dragooners having fired on both sides for the space of halfe an hour or more, they not advancing towards us we agreed (being thereunto enabled by the great God of heaven) to charge them, and advancing the body after many shootes on both sides, came with our troopes a pretty round trot, they standing firme to receive us, and our men chargeing feircely upon them, they were immediately rowted and rann all away, and wee had the execution of them two or three miles; I believe some of our souldiers did kill two or three men a pece, my youngest corporall killed foure with his owne hand, give glory to God, say the Lord be prayed; we have gotten some of their officers, and some of their Colors, but what the number of dead is, or what the prisoners, wee know not, but great is the goodnes of God to us.

[The same pamphlet also reprints a letter on this and other actions by William Bridge]

Good Friend, Since my last to you Gods providence hath led mee into the field, I shall therefore give you an account of such passages as I met there: On Satterday last I came to Sleaford in Lincolnshire where Colonell Sir Miles Hobart was quartered with his Norfolk forces 10 miles from Grantham where Lieutenant Generall Hotham, the Lord Willoughby, and Collonell Cromwell lay with divers troopes of horse. And on Satterday, it was noysed that the enemy was upon his march towards us with some thousands of horse and foot. Our men therefore did provide for them and expecting that they should have fallen upon our quarter, the Col. and

Captains went their rounds all the night but the enemy gave his Alarum to Grantham, where they were bravely encountered, they drew towards Grantham about 8 a clock in the evening, our men all mounted in a short time and drew out into the field, the commander in cheife commanded our men that they should not give fire till they came within halfe pistoll shot of the enemy, which being done, it was so dreadfull a charge, that the enemy were immediately routed and fled for their lives; as you may read in this letter which was sent from Collonell Cromwell to Collonell Hobart thus...

Whereby you see how God hath blessed this our association, for there went into Lincolnshire but two Regiments at first (though more are going dayly), Col. Cromwells of horse and Col. Hobarts of foot and both of them severally the great God hath done great things by... [Bridge gives a brief account of action at Crowland and reports that parliamentary forces should now have rendezvoused at Lincoln.]

In the Army there is good Discipline, men punished for swearing, drunkennesse, and stealing. I was many meals with them, and never heard an oath sworn by any of the Captains or Officers. I saw one souldier whipt most severely for theiving. Boston was very loving to our souldiers, sending in much provision, the train Bands of the County came in from al parts, so that through the prayers of good people, I hope that County will be soon settled in peace, which the Lord grant unto all other Counties in His due time.

[Several newspapers of May 1643 contain not only versions of Cromwell's letter to Hobart but also other accounts of the action at Belton. One of the most detailed, in *Speciall Passages and Certain Informations* of 16-23 May [Thomason Tract, E103 (7)] and reproduced below, was written by someone claiming to be an eye-witness of, and participant in, the battle. Indeed, it is possible that part at least of this account may be drawn from a letter by Cromwell. It should be noted that the version of Cromwell's letter to Hobart reproduced by Carlyle and Abbott is, in fact, an amalgam, compiled from the various texts of Cromwell's letter to Hobart and other first-hand accounts of the battle and its aftermath which appeared in pamphlets and newspapers published in mid and late May 1643.]

After our Colonells Troope had joyned with My Ld Willoughbie and Captaine Hotham at Sleaford, we marched to Grantham, being inall about fiteene troopes of horse and dragooners, where we quartered in the Towne neere adjoining, and rested one day; and the next day we gave the enemy an Alarum to Newarke, and so returned to our quarter; in the meanc time, divers troopes of the enemies (as we are informed) marched from

Gainborough and joyning with Newarke forces, were twenty-three Colours, Horse and Dragoones; and two troopes without colours. These secretly marching through by-wayes, and low passages, suddenly surprized some few of my Lords horse, and presently gave us the Alarum at Grantham; we made hast to horse, the enemy being within lesse than two miles of us, and drew forth into the field eleven troops, some few Dragoones, and many of the troops were very weake, and marching a mile from our quarter (being twilight in the evening) our Scouts discovered the enemy in a large body somewhat neere us; Whereupon we drew into a body and made a stand, where their Dragoones charged us (our Dragoones being then not idle) but it pleased God by his providence to carry the bullets over our heads. After almost halfe an houre in this posture, our Commanders agreed to fall on, and having spent some great shot on both sides, our men resolutely and valiantly marched up and such was the providence and goodnesse of God to us that the hearts of our enemies fayld them in so much that they durst not stand the charge, but immediately betooke themselves to a confused flight; and we pursued them with some violence about two miles; then being somewhat too darke to observe any order, or to keepe together, were constrained to returne to our body, keeping a partie in the field all night, the rest a little before day returned to our quarter. The certaine number of men slaine we are uncertaine of, but by the reports of our Souldiers and what I saw little lesse then an hundred of slaine and mortally wounded; and we lost but two men that I heare of kilde in the feild: we tooke prisoners of them fortie-five, besides divers of their horse and armes; and rescued many prisoners that they had lately taken; we tooke foure or five of their Colours, and are now marched into Lincolne, where we shall refresh ourselves till the next opportunitie.

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Representation and royalism are two current plangent themes in approaches to the civil wars and interregnum. They have come together lately in several volumes, monographs and collections of cognate articles, diverting, no doubt justly, our attention away from parliament - 'it is the English royalists not the English parliamentarians who are the peculiarity we should be attempting to explain'. Royalists themselves would hardly have seen it that way, confident that they were following normality, 'the ancient way'. But, then, so would the parliamentarians, seeing themselves as essentially conservative, maintaining an ancient constitution. Perhaps both were right, both were wrong - hence the ambiguities, the contradictions, misunderstandings, mysteries, even, which make for us so much of the fascination of the period.

Robert Wilcher's *The Writing of Royalism, 1628-1660* (Cambridge UP, 2001, £40), investigates how royalist writing both created and was moulded by developments over time. 1628-40 is polished off in a couple of chapters, in revisionist style stressing 'halcyon years', Kevin Sharpe's age 'without a language of opposition', hence no opposition. But Thomas Wentworth, no mean participant, topped in 1641, glimpsed in 1628 'distempered minds' unravelling 'subjection and sovereignty' in politics, church and society. If, as it seems so, there was no pre-war term 'royalist', there certainly was 'puritan', to be elided into parliamentarian. Wilcher pursues royalism - no inverted commas - in eight following chapters, taking in attitudes, ideas, values, aspirations, through a mass of texts in a variety of genres. Some of these are major and familiar, others ephemeral, polemical and philosophical, crude and subtle, published or circulated in manuscript, all in some measure supporting the king, his status and claims, set in changing contexts. Weaving writing and doing together, Wilcher achieves a powerful and compelling narrative, lively and complex. Abraham Cowley's *The Civil War* offers a particular example, presenting a Charles I 'strong in power, invincible in right', but breaking off in its third book, overtaken by history, leaving the author depressed and shaken by 'the royalist distress' of the execution and the rebels' 'double disobedience' to king and God. Yet during the 1650s Cowley evidently felt he must accept *de facto* rule. 'We must lay down our pen as well as our arms'. When Cromwell died, Cowley came back in denunciatory mood, ready to greet Charles II and to assume royalism again. But the royalism of the post-Restoration amalgam of old and new cavaliers neither would nor could be that of the 1640s. Altogether Wilcher gives us an appealing exercise in interdisciplinary studies, as well documented in the historiography and literary criticism as in the texts themselves.

John Barratt's *Cavaliers: The Royalist Army at War, 1642-46* (Sutton, 2000, £19.99) is more conventional, the first attempt since Ronald Hutton's *Royalist War Effort* (first published in 1981) at a comprehensive account of the royalist war effort, based on a wide range of printed primary and secondary sources. Not unexpectedly, the cavaliers - the term, which carries both laudatory and derogatory connotations, was taken by its recipients as a bright badge of honour - turn out to be, like parliamentarians, puritans, levellers and, later, whigs and tories, new Labour and Conservatives, a pretty heterogeneous lot, and certainly by no means all peers and gentry. The book comes in two parts, one descriptive (the horse, the foot, officers, logistics), bringing together scattered information; the second, a somewhat selective narrative of the war, backed by a chronology, maps and illustrations, with sidelong glances at particular topics, one, 'women at war', *de rigueur* these days. In an assessment of commanders, Sir Jacob Astley, defeated at Stow-in-the-Wold and quite phlegmatic about it, comes off well, Prince Rupert is credited with valuable assets but an often 'malign' influence, while Hopton and Goring are deplored. The role of war-weariness is well-explained, strong among the rural population, 'the bedrock of support'.

Rupert took off for Europe as military royalism collapsed. It was a kind of exile since he had become, unlike his elder brother, restored to the Palatinate, effectively anglicised. Naturally enough, he came back with a lot of others in Charles II's baggage. As governor of Windsor Castle he gave full rein to an enquiring mind - inventing the mezzotint and his famous glass drops. Of particular interest - not least because he smelled money - and drawing on his experience of war, was his speculative exploitation of a 31-year patent for 'a secret contrivance' for making 'turned and nealed [annealed] guns and other unspecified items' in cast iron in expectation of giving them the toughness of wrought iron, but with greater ease of manufacture. Some pieces were experimentally made at Windsor, where the Prince had a forge and furnaces, and in the royal furnaces in the Weald of Kent, with Ordnance Office help, but they were, it seems, not significantly better than existing versions. No one, not even the patentee, gained much from them. The story has been pieced together over some thirty years of close research into its many ramifications - military, technological, scientific, financial - by Barbara Bailey and published in an elegant paperback by the Royal Armouries Museum, Leeds as *Prince Rupert's Patent Guns* (2000, £10.95).

We are directed back to royalism and representation by Thomas N Corns's collection, *The Royal Image: Representations of Charles I* (Cambridge UP, 1999, £40), a baker's dozen of papers mostly by literary specialists, leavened with one musicologist and one historian, inevitably (almost) Kevin Sharpe,

who provides an overview afterword. The editor's own preliminary 'context' takes us to 1630. Together, the articles take 'the most recognisable' English king - who, it should be remembered, was not born to rule - from accession to martyrdom, tracing a carefully devised majesty in words and 'pictures', culminating in the religious symbolism of the frontispiece to *Eikon Basilike*, unsurprisingly a best-seller, one perhaps even closely read by all who bought it - not the usual fate. Sharpe stresses its remarkable durability, but it is, I believe, presently out of print. This composite work of propaganda, intended to appeal to the sympathies and consciences of all manner of folk, conceals the simple truth of Marvell's phrase in the *Horatian Ode* - 'the royal actor'. Surely that is what Charles was throughout the reign, in court masques, for example, presenting 'majesty in excess, art and life compounded, a glorious representation', which was, according to John Peacock, 'the real thing'. But was it? Sharpe sees masques as fundamentally 'acts of state', like Privy Council meetings. Both, of course, were theatrical with their rituals and conventions, but the outcome of the deliberations of the council was experienced widely in direct political action - taxes, books of orders - whereas the king-in-court came over generally only in representations, pictorial or verbal, which his government tried to control, but which as opinions polarised, slipped out of hand, reflecting conflicting interpretations and evaluations of the royal performance. Corpus magnus or that man of blood in representations and re-presentations offers rich fields for exploration and imagination by scholars glorying in (why not?) new approaches. Certainly, the results are often stirring, even convincing, and Sharpe is right to reprove revisionists, non- or anti-revisionists and post-revisionists alike for too deep a suspicion of the approaches of such as the contributors to this arresting volume, but surely he overdoes their actual hostility to literature, iconography or whatever as acceptable sources. (I might mention here the unfashionable Christopher Hill, with whom as long as sixty years ago I discussed historically the Andrew Marvell of the coy mistress as well as of 'the kingdoms old' cast 'into another mould'.) Surely historians are entitled to be suspicious of making realities out of representations, however helpful they may be - and they are - in getting us further on the way to the inwardness of what they represent, the elusive but always beckoning finger for historians.

From the image of Charles I we turn to those of Oliver in *Constructing Cromwell* (Cambridge UP, 2000, £37.50) by Laura Lunger Knoppers, a contributor to the Corns volume, who sets the many variegated representations of him into a chronological context from the early 1640s - there were few before - to the post-Restoration era, when, like the martyred king, he continued in many genres to be portrayed. Print culture - prose and verse, engravings and cuts - swelled to construct a shifting, many-sided representation of Cromwell and of his activities, real or imagined. Like that

of the king, it came (almost) to replace the Cromwellian image proliferated and diversified as his fame and influence spread. Official images emphasised monarchical forms as full of ambiguities as the republican representations of the Commonwealth portrayed in Sean Kelsey's *Inventing the Republic*. Oliver himself seems hardly concerned to put over a show of majesty. Though dignified, he was a pretty plain figure in the two protectoral inaugurations and was in attendance only as an effigy at the elaborate funeral over which he had no control. Knoppers argues wisely that it is an error to assimilate Oliver P into Oliver R, and suggests that valedictory texts by Marvell, Milton, Dryden and Payne Fisher made for 'a new aesthetic', one mediating between monarchy and republicanism. 'Our chief of men', 'the war's and fortune's son', 'the dissemblingest perjured villain alive' or dead, seems remarkably passive in all this construction work. But represented he was then and afterwards. The body hung in chains was thrown away, but in fact this brought the memory of the man and his image back into the public sphere. History may be written by the victors, but you cannot quite undiscover the losers.

An urge for the modern historian not to mistake representation for actuality drives Marion Gibson's *Reading Witchcraft* (Routledge, 1999, £15.99 paperback), modestly subtitled 'stories of early English witches'. She sets out to examine, dissect, interpret and reconstruct in the telling a range of cases, asking how it is possible - if it is - to reconcile conflicting accounts into some sort of synthesis out of a mish-mash of evidence. She avers that modern writers on the phenomena take things too easily, looking for and 'finding' patterns making for a coherence which may well be fictional. Gibson provides a systematic series of questions meet to be asked if truth is to be approached. Who are the tellers, and how, why and when did they record their stories? Are there stereotypes to be discerned, distortions to be exposed at every stage? What, indeed, was a witch? (Like a gentleman, perhaps, accepted as such by society or accepting the label, courting it even.) D H Lawrence said 'trust the tale, not the teller'. Trust neither might be safer. Some hard but absorbing work lies ahead. (Gibson's study stops with the death of witch-finder-turned-sceptic James I. A pity. But her approach should be equally fruitful for the later period of Hopkins, Sterne and Filmer.)

Iconoclasm is the tribute paid by one set of people to another's gods. It demonstrates fear, but also the hope that the destruction of artefacts - images and representations, mostly - can destroy an unacceptable rival faith. In England, it turned up particularly at the Henrician reformation in breakings and damages under one Cromwell, which have been too readily ascribed to a later one. That there was some iconoclasm during the 1640s is indisputable, but how much, where, by whom and with what success are difficult

questions. But there is a particular example for which we have long had an amount of documentary evidence - 'the campaign', for that is what it was, of William Dowsing, a Suffolk puritan, between late 1643 and 1644 in Cambridgeshire and Suffolk. We now have a full, extensively annotated edition of the journal he conscientiously and proudly kept, supported here by much additional material and commentaries by a team of unbiased experts, including our own past president John Morrill. This is a magnificent work of scholarship, beautifully produced, and emphatically not expensive at £50 - Trevor Cooper (ed), *The Journal of William Dowsing: Iconoclasm in East Anglia During the English Civil War* (Boydell Press and the Ecclesiological Society, 2001). I am reviewing it elsewhere but feel I have to draw the attention of Association members to a vital piece of the history of Oliver's times.

Whether as image or reality, Charles and Cromwell crop up, of course, in Graham E Seel, *Regicide and Republic: England, 1603-1660*, a new volume in Cambridge UP's inexpensive but useful 'Perspectives in History' series of paperbacks (2001, £15). Though directed at students, it has much of interest, attractively presented, to the curious general reader. Broadly chronological, it reaches 1649 in 100 pages and devotes another 70 to the 1650s, rounding off with a few pages for 'documentary study', too brief and snippety to be of real value. A section on 'economy and society' stresses change and some basic information on London, the radicals and, to be 'with it', witchcraft. Mingling pre-revisionism, revisionism and post-revisionism, this book could awaken a desire to go further - in, say, Peter Gaunt's *The English Civil War* in Blackwell's 'Essential Readings in History' (2000, £15.99 paperback), an expert selection of articles dating from 1972 to 1994, with a running commentary, the whole intended to convey a clear living picture of the problems of the period and the diversity of the historiography. To select only fourteen out of the wealth of material available and to bring out their places in approach and interpretation was a formidable task, triumphantly accomplished. There are, to be sure, other articles one would have liked to have seen here, but there are none among those included one would reject. It is good to see here Christopher Hill, so often these days dismissed as a mere classic - i.e. to be put on the shelf, displayed but not read. His article asking 'was there a bourgeois revolution?' will still infuriate some, but it is difficult to fault his conclusion that whatever else it was, it was 'a turning point in human history'.

Gaunt's first section - on 'approaches' - provides the contrasting answers of three historians to what caused the war. Contemporaries fought about that and scholars have done, do and, no doubt, always will. A current school, breaking up, as schools do, namely that of revisionism, is considered critically here by Mary Fulford and the editor himself points out its

description as 'an amorphous generational trend', citing Glenn Burgess, who has been as much a participant as an observer. In part III, on the 'course' of the war, religion, government (local and central) and popular reactions are *inter alia* essayed in a mosaic of impressionistic and meticulously detailed pieces. Part IV tackles 'consequences', short and long term, hard to establish, editor and contributors bringing out how much more work must be done here, calling historians away for a while from pursuit of that enticing will-o'-the-wisp, causation. Throughout, Gaunt's intelligent and original reflections run, pointing us this way and that, and providing a way through the historiography which enhances the essentiality of this Reader.

All the writings considered above are those of professional scholars. It is pleasant to conclude with a genuine (and able) amateur historian. At the Cromwell dayschool at Sherborne last autumn, I met Antonia Stuart, who told me of the work she had been doing on a quintet of 'soldier radicals' of the 1640s. It has now been published under the title *Forlorn Hope* by Guild Publishers (2001, £16.99), making a very attractive volume. Two of her five were brothers, Thomas and William Rain[s]borough. Thomas, prominent at Putney in 1647, was assassinated in 1648 by royalists at Pontefract. William became a Ranter - they did exist - and survived the Restoration, to die in New England, where he had lived for a while before the war. Edward Sexby, another Putney veteran, disillusioned, turned anti-Cromwellian plotter, advising the Protector to die for the good of the country, failed and died, reportedly, 'raving mad', in the Tower in 1658, remembered fondly for his claim that if the New Model Army rank and file had 'not a right to the kingdom, we were mere mercenary soldiers'. Of Roger Lockyer, the mutinous corporal hanged at Burford in 1649, little is known, but he died bravely for a cause recognised by the turnout at his funeral, like Thomas Rainsborough's, a public demonstration. Lastly, Richard Rumbold, consistent to the last in his refusal to bow to 'the idols of monarchy', was executed by James II in 1685 for taking part in Argyll's rebellion, defiantly speaking out - eloquently - for the equality of all men. These men deserve all the sympathetic attention Mrs Stuart gives them, in admiration of their qualities and regret that, in times which encouraged aspirations beyond the mundane, they were defeated. She suggests, however, that over the centuries since, most of what they looked for has come about - though one might feel, not as smoothly as she hints. The 'scufflings' that Thomas Rainsborough discerned in previous ages have been apparent and necessary since. This book, based on wide and thoughtful reading in printed primary and secondary sources, and well-presented, is a serious contribution, but it would have been more effective with a substantial introduction setting out in some detail the nature and development of the radicalisms from which the military versions emerged.

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