

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CROMWELL ASSOCIATION

The Protector's Pen

AGM at
Basing
House

Cromwell's
Coffin Plate

Update on
the Museum

In the Press

Vol 17 Issue 1
February 2015



The
CROMWELL ASSOCIATION

....promoting our understanding of the 17th century

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Front Cover : Artists impression of the storming of Basing House, 13 October 1645.

Image courtesy of Hampshire County Council, www3.hants.gov.uk



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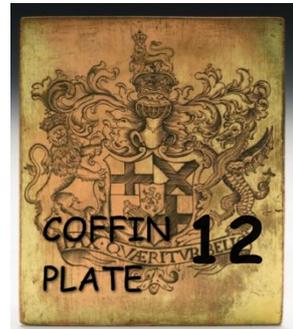
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A significant number of members have given an email address to the Association which is extremely useful as a way of contacting the majority of members quickly and easily. There are always, however, a few 'non-deliveries' where members' addresses have changed, or their in-boxes are full.

If you have not received an email from the Association in the last couple of months, please send your current email address to jrgoldsmith@talktalk.net headed 'Cromwell Association email', and provide your name and mailing address in the body of the email.

For reasons outlined elsewhere in this issue of The Protector's Pen, the only valid email address for communication with the Association on your membership is that provided above, or that of the Chairman plittle@histparl.ac.uk; please do not use the address provided on the web site.

President	: Peter Gaunt
Chairman	: Patrick Little
Treasurer (Acting)	: Geoffrey Bush
Membership Secretary (Acting)	: John Goldsmith

The Protector's Pen

Patrick's Little Note

Welcome to the spring issue of The Protector's Pen. Since the summer we have had two events: the Cromwell day service on 3rd September and the study day on 25th October 2014. The service was not very well attended, which is disappointing considering how much effort is needed to organise it. Maybe members were put off by the venue: as Parliament was in session we had to use Methodist Central Hall instead. Still, we did manage to lay the wreath at the statue at Westminster, accompanied by a 'protest' by an unholy alliance of Irish republicans and English monarchists; and the address at the service, by Professor Jason Peacey of UCL was excellent. I will do my best to make sure we are back on Cromwell Green on 3 September this year, but please try to join us this year - a very public service with barely 40 people in attendance does not do much to promote Oliver!

The study day on 'Cromwell's Army', held jointly with the Cromwell Museum at Huntingdon, was much more popular. We had the usual slate of four papers by leading experts, covering such matters as Cromwell's military prowess, the archaeological evidence that survives on battlefields, the fate of war widows and the way in which the army was disbanded.

We also had an introduction to the new Biographical Dictionary of Parliamentarian Officers by its general editor, Dr Stephen Roberts. We had hoped that the Dictionary would be online by now, but a complete re-design of the British History Online website has delayed us somewhat. More news on this in due course.



Street protest at the Cromwell Day Service



Professor Peter Gaunt and Professor Jason Peacey at the Cromwell Statue, Westminster

As you will see elsewhere in this issue, the Association is actively involved in the future of the Cromwell Museum, even though our most important recent link with it, the curator, John Goldsmith, resigned in the autumn. We also have a report on a major new initiative to encourage the teaching of Cromwell and the civil wars at secondary school level, led by Serrie Meakins.

Finally, as we go to press, I have just heard the very sad news that one of our vice-presidents, Professor Ivan Roots, died in hospital in Exeter on 8th February; our thoughts are with his family at this time. Ivan was president of the Association between 1977 and 1989. It is hoped that a full obituary will appear in this year's Cromwelliana.

Patrick Little,
Chairman, Cromwell Association

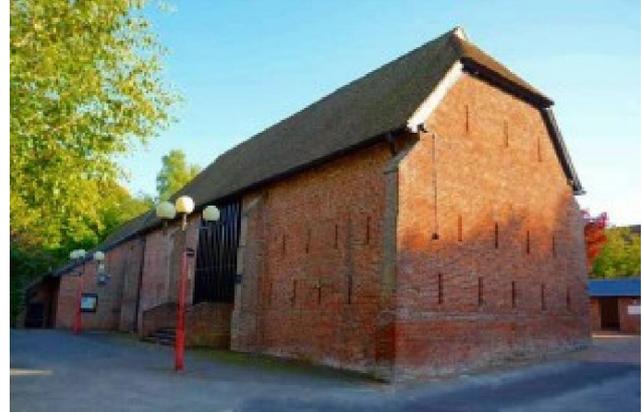
The Protector's Pen

Cromwell Association AGM : 25th April 2015

This year the Annual General Meeting is being held at Lychpit Community Hall, close to Basing House in Hampshire, on 25 April. The building is a converted 16th century barn which provides comfortable accommodation for the morning events and ample car parking space beside the neighbouring Tesco shop. A map is printed on the reverse of the agenda enclosed with this mailing, and for those with Sat Nav the postcode is RG24 8TF. The nearest railway station is Basingstoke. Taxis are available at the station (the journey is about 3 miles) and the Number 14 Bus leaves the Bus Station at Basingstoke at 9.50 and 10.50, taking 8 minutes to arrive at the 'Cromwell Inn' at Lychpit.

Please note in the agenda for the AGM, the elections for council members and in particular the positions of treasurer and membership officer, which are currently vacant. See page 15 for further details.

After the AGM there will be a lecture by a long-standing Cromwellian and former curator of Basing House, Alan Turton, on the Civil War in Hampshire. Following this, at 1 pm, there will be a buffet lunch which, if required, must be booked and paid for in advance (please see the booking form enclosed). This is an opportunity to meet other members of the Association and I very much hope that many of you will do so.



Lychpit Community Hall

Timetable:

- 10:30 Coffee/Tea at Lychpit Community Hall
- 11:00 AGM (agenda enclosed)
- 12:00 Lecture on the Civil War in Hampshire by Alan Turton
- 13:00 Break for lunch (see booking form enclosed)
- 14:00 Transfer to Basing House for guided tour
- 16:00 Close

After lunch we relocate to Basing House, which is a short walk or drive away from the Lychpit Hall. We will try to arrange for lifts for those who need them. Basing House underwent several sieges during the civil wars until it was finally taken by storm by forces under Oliver Cromwell in October 1645. Please note there is an entrance fee payable at the gate. Once everyone is assembled, there will be a tour of the ruins of Basing House led by Alan Turton, and there should be plenty of time to explore the site afterwards. The House and grounds shut at 4pm.

For those who wish to make a weekend of it, the area surrounding Basing has places of interest such as The Vyne and the Roman remains at Silchester, with finds displayed in Reading Museum.



Aerial View Basing House ruins, Museum and Garden
(Courtesy K Bates, Adventure Balloons)



The Vyne, Stratfield Saye (NT)

The Protector's Pen

The Fundamentalist Queen

My initial reaction to being told that Whistledown Productions had been commissioned by the BBC to make a 45 minute programme on Elizabeth Cromwell was 'what are you going to do in the other 40 minutes?' The truth is that we know very little of Elizabeth's life, apart from the bare bones - her marriage to Oliver, her children, where she was living (mostly), when she died - and when it comes to her personal relationship with Oliver only a handful of letters survive, all dating from the Scottish campaign of 1650-1. It turned out that the BBC was not going to let the lack of evidence get in the way of a good story.

The programme was made over the summer, and the Association was involved in it from the start. Peter Gaunt and I did our best to steer them towards a better subject, in particular we thought the Cromwellian court would make an interesting programme; but in this we were only partly successful and by the time the interviews were conducted, the focus was firmly back on Mrs Cromwell.

On a hot day in June I made my way over to Borough in South London to the Whistledown offices. The interviewer was Samira Ahmed, and the discussion took place in a tiny studio, with Peter (in Manchester) as a ghostly presence over the headphones. Peter talked about the early life, the letters with Oliver, and the spurious restoration cook book attributed to 'Joan Cromwell'. I described the protectoral court, introduced some suitable music, and tried to persuade them that the Pomade Chest in the Cromwell Museum was a diplomatic gift and not Mrs C's make-up kit. John Goldsmith had already shown off the chest and other relics at the Museum to the admiring presenter, which would have worked better on film than on radio.



Portrait of Elizabeth Cromwell painted by Robert Walker

Merchandise Update

A new addition to the merchandise available from the Association: a Parker Vector Rollerball pen. Full price details on the form at the back of this Newsletter.



After many months, the programme was broadcast as a Sunday Feature on Radio 3 on 7 December (and is still available on the BBC website: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04t9715>). The Association team came across pretty well, I thought, and the Association itself was mentioned four or five times.

But what, you might ask, were we paid for our efforts? A fat cheque? Lunch in a smart restaurant? Lavish expenses? I don't know about Peter and John, but I can reveal that I was richly rewarded with... a cup of BBC tea.

Patrick Little

The Protector's Pen

Digging for Britain

Living at Basing House was not just a job, but Alan Turton's passion, and it became mine too. Through Alan and Basing House, I became interested in the English Civil War, and to appreciate that this is pretty much the first time you hear the voice of the common man, and occasionally woman, as they tried to ease the yoke of the tyrannical King Charles. But I don't wish to teach the converted to suck eggs, and this is a short article about our recent adventure in Norwich.

Professor Alice Roberts presents a series called Digging Britain. Self-confessedly ignorant of the period, she thought it would be nice to cover Basing House, and Alan was invited to be briefly interviewed for the programme.



Professor Alice Roberts and Matthew Williams with Alan Turton

So we travelled to Norwich. Alan's bad back meant that I became native bearer, and I over-stuffed my rucksack with: a folder with several original illustrations, my birthday present, a 5lb saker shot from Basing House (found on e-bay), some musket balls, my BH postcard collection, a book called "Cromwell's Head" and Cromwell's head! No, we haven't been night-hawking in Sidney Sussex College, but it is in fact his life mask, done during the 1650s. I believe ours to be an early copy, and we are very fond of his dear face, despite the grim yellow varnish.

It's a long way to Norwich, but we did it with glad hearts, and at 8pm on a Friday evening, we entered Norwich Castle. The filming was to take place in the Keep, but the 'green room' was the café, and there we were met and given tea whilst we showed off our toys. To our great surprise and pleasure, there was our chum Mike Fulford, fresh from his interview about Silchester - it's a small world. After he left, one of the production team joked that he had been whisked away in his darkened limousine. Or was he joking...?

Then up to the Keep, where it seemed as bright as day. Alan was settled on the sofa with Alice Roberts and Matt Williams (sometime Time Team member), and Mr Cromwell was placed on the coffee table. The crew kindly let an excited Nicola take photos, then I settled down behind a display case, and watched both live and on the monitors. I was amused by two of the cameras which were shooting through metal shelves containing glass bottles. I guess that was for arty shots - simple angles of

the presenters and guests being just too dull darling. Alan had changed the script, so that Cromwell was described as "controversial" instead of "infamous", and away they went. The brief conversation was interspersed with film of the recent dig at Basing House. It was interesting to see that they do actually watch the tape, and are filmed, so that any responses, such as Alice's 'ooh' of delight at the Great Barn is entirely natural and real. Alan had to wear a blue jumper as his lightly checked shirt might have caused visual interference, so the glimpse of red tie at his neck is in fact the Cromwell Association tie.

It was great being in the museum at night - there could be a film in that - and very exciting to be there doing filming. After Alan's bit, Alice asked him about the Civil War, so he was able to tell her (the truth) about Cromwell, and she was genuinely interested.

When we left, the night had grown very hot and humid, and it was like stepping into a misty sauna, and waiting for the taxi, we were charmed by a pair of bats swirling about like swallows. It was a slightly surreal experience, and that feeling was compounded the next day when we returned as visitors to the museum. Of course the set and crew had gone, but it was all so vivid in our minds, that it felt rather odd to see the spaces where they had been. But isn't that just like life?

Nicola Turton

The Protector's Pen

Biological Warfare in the 17th Century?



Damage to choir stalls, St Mary's Church, High Street, Oxford

I recently visited St Mary's Church on the High Street in Oxford, as I am passionate about old churches. The chancel choir stalls are late 15th century and show tremendous damage. In fact they look as if they were attacked for many years by Teredo ship worm. Curious about the damage, I found a guide and asked what had happened. His reply will make you laugh and roll your eyes.

"The damage to the stalls was caused by Cromwell, and I don't mean Thomas, I mean the Other One."

Accompanied by much grimacing and glances to heaven.

"Really?" I said, *"But that looks like insect damage, as if the stalls were outdoors for many years."*

"No. Oliver Cromwell caused all that damage."

"I'm, sorry" I replied, *"Are you honestly telling me that Oliver Cromwell introduced wood worm to the church? Truly?"*

By now I was shaking my head in disbelief. *"I've defended Cromwell against many things in the past"* I said, *"but never against the charge of wood worm."*

But the guide wouldn't have it, and I employed my high heels to good effect, stomping off with a great deal of indignant clattering and muttering. Alan says the guide also looked indignant and muttered.

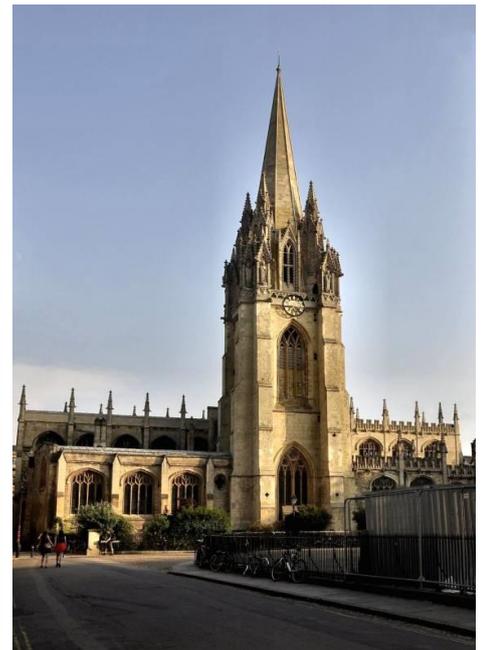
I didn't leave a donation, either.

A friend of ours says that woodworm was actually a secret Parliamentary weapon, and the Royalists had their own version, which they called the 'Sealed Nit'.

Nicola Turton



Damage to choir stalls at St Mary's Church, High Street, Oxford



St Mary's Church, High Street, Oxford

The Protector's Pen

Cromwell Association School's Project

On November 1st last year, the Cromwell Association launched a whole new website aimed at Schools and Colleges, prompted by the dearth in resources for teachers of this fascinating period of British history. On the new site, teachers, schools and colleges will be able to access a host of articles written by scholars of the period; there are also audio files on topics ranging from Cromwell and religion to Cromwell's activities in Ireland. Dr Patrick Little, Professor Peter Gaunt and others have contributed source analyses of Cromwell's speeches and letters, and Dr David Smith has written a piece on the historiography of 'Choosing Sides'. The intention is that the site will become an interactive resource for teachers, and to that end we have a space to showcase essays written by sixth formers and we also have a Revision Section where teachers are welcome to contribute worksheets which have worked well with their students.

There is a great deal more on the site and the content will be regularly updated; in fact, new content has been added since Christmas. The Events section lists any conference or meeting that might be of interest to members and, again, teachers can add in information or details of trips they wish to recommend.

We already have a number of schools signed up as members and we are keen to spread the word among as many teachers as possible. If you are a teacher, or have links with a local school please do urge them to consider joining the new website. Even if the school doesn't teach the topic at A level, the site would be invaluable to any pupil considering this period for an EPQ or I.B. extended essay. There is a link to it from the Cromwell Association main page. As a way of promoting and celebrating the new website, we are hosting a Teachers Day in Cambridge on 30th June this year. Four eminent historians, Prof John Morrill, Dr David Smith, Dr Patrick Little and Professor Ronald Hutton will be debating three contentious issues from the 1650's in a series of debates which will culminate in a plenary session. This will be a stimulating and exciting event and we hope as many teachers as possible will attend.

We are very proud of our new venture and we would encourage as many schools and colleges as possible to join us!

Serrie Meakins



Welcome to the Schools and Colleges section of the Cromwell Association website!

The Cromwell Association is passionate about supporting students of 17th century British history and that is why we have been working so hard on this project. As an A level teacher myself, I know that it can be difficult to get hold of resources for this period so my colleagues and I wanted to put together a selection of helpful material for schools and colleges to use.

We hope you will agree that we've made a good start. We will continue to add to the pages on offer and we would like you to make contributions too. We have a section to showcase the best work our students produce - could one of your student's essays be exhibited here? The revision area is meant to be interactive, so that we can all share activities that have worked with our classes in the past.

In addition to this, we have an exciting range of resources. There is a range of articles under seven different headings - I will continue to add new articles as they are written so that you can



<http://www.olivercromwell.org/wordpress/>

The Protector's Pen

Museum briefing

As many of you will know, John Goldsmith resigned last year from the post of Curator of the Cromwell Museum. John resigned in August and his last working day was 12 November, the day of the annual Cromwell Collection lecture at Huntingdon library, given this year by Dr Andrew Barclay of the History of Parliament Trust. John's departure marks the end of an era for the Museum and he will be much missed.

At the moment John's responsibilities are bumping up to me while we advertise for an Interim Project Officer. This is a part-time, fixed term position, and the appointee will assist County Council officers in setting up the proposed trust to run the Museum. Interviews will be held in February and I hope that we should have someone in post soon afterwards.

Back in November the Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee, which is the County Council committee responsible for the Cromwell Museum, agreed that the new trust should be a Charitable Incorporated Organisation or CIO. This sort of trust is becoming common in the museum sector because the regulatory workload is much lighter than it is for, say, a company limited by guarantee. Ultimately, of course, any trust is only as good as the individuals who become its trustees. The County Council has been taking guidance on the qualities and skills needed in museum trustees and we should soon be in a position to recruit to these roles.

The Museum has retained its accredited status for another year, and loan extensions for the Bush Collection and for the Royal Armouries items, up to 31 March 2016, have been agreed.

On 7 December BBC Radio 3 broadcast *The Fundamentalist Queen*, a programme by Samira Ahmed about Elizabeth Cromwell, wife of the Protector. Samira visited the Museum and talked with John as part of the programme. The programme is still available on the BBC's iPlayer site, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04t9715>

(See earlier article in this issue of Protector's Pen for more information on this programme)

Alan Akeroyd



The escutcheon travels to London



Elizabeth Wells (Westminster School), Anni Hammerton (Private collection), Hilary Kaye (Presenter), Esther Bellamy (Cromwell Museum), Hazel Forsyth Museum of London)

On Monday 12 January museum relief assistant Esther Bellamy took the Museum's recently purchased funeral escutcheon to the Museum of London, accompanied by John Goldsmith. The purpose of the trip was to reunite it with three other escutcheons and to carry out X-ray fluorescence (XRF) testing on them for a BBC TV programme called *Heirloom Detectives*, a spin-off of *Antiques Roadshow*.

The Cromwell Museum's escutcheon is firmly mounted to its frame and it was clear that there would not be enough time during the day to remove the escutcheon safely and without damage. Esther discussed the issue with the Museum of London's textile conservator and they agreed that the XRF examination could not be carried out. This is a pity, but XRF scans were performed on the other three escutcheons and the TV programme promises to be an interesting one. It will be broadcast later in the spring.

Alan Akeroyd

The Protector's Pen

Friends of the Cromwell Museum



Lindsay Cassedy (past member of Friends Committee)
Stephen Cockings (Friends Committee)
Linda Upham (Friends Committee)
John Goldsmith
Angela White-Horan (Friends Committee)
Caroline Clifford (Friends Committee)

Just one year ago the Friends of the Cromwell Museum were leading the campaign to keep the Museum open following Cambridgeshire County Council's announced intention to withdraw funding as from April 2015. There was local, national, and international interest at the time and enough local support, through a 4000-strong petition, for the issue to be raised at a significant County Council meeting last February. The petition asked for the County Council to continue funding the Museum until a viable alternative model had been put in place.

Since then the County Council deferred its funding withdrawal - but only for one year; a Consultant's report recommended setting up an independent Trust; and Huntingdon Town Council expressed interest in taking the building over from the County Council and members of the Friends have addressed many Committee and sub-Committee meetings during the year.

At the time of writing there is much still to do to secure a viable future for the Museum. Two key posts - a 'Project Officer' to help the transition from County Council ownership to a new Trust, and a Chair of Trustees - are still to be filled. Huntingdon Town Council are still in discussions with the County Council about the terms of any transfer and the costs of any required refurbishment of the building prior to transfer which, according to a survey may be of the order of fifty thousand pounds.

Despite assurances from Cambridgeshire County Council staff the Friends have seen little to allay their ongoing concerns that the Museum will have made a successful transition to a new Trust by the time the money runs out in April 2016.

In a presentation to Cambridgeshire County Council's Highways and Community Infrastructure sub-committee in December the Friends said that the Council may well end up meeting its resource savings but cast adrift a barely set-up Trust, poorly supported, staffed and funded, and with no chances of survival and that Huntingdon, the County, and Cromwell deserved better than that.

The Friends have welcomed the supportive interest shown by Huntingdon's local MP, Mr Jonathan Djanogly, throughout the campaign but also lost a tireless servant of the Museum when John Goldsmith resigned late last year.

John has served the museum, and the county and community with distinction, and made an amazing contribution to safeguarding the memory of Cromwell and all the excellent attributes that he stood for. It will not only be the museum but a much wider national and international community who will be the worse for John's departure, for reasons that the Friends all understand and share.

Before the Cromwell Annual Lecture in Huntingdon last November the Friends presented John with two silver coins of the period - a Charles 1st half groat and a Commonwealth penny. The picture shows John with some members of the Friends Committee at the presentation.

Bob Pugh

The Protector's Pen

Portrait Gallery of the Golden Age



Banquet of Guardsmen of District IX under Captain Jacob Backer and Lieutenant Jacob Rogh, Nicolaes Pickenoy (1591-1653)
Courtesy of Hermitage Amsterdam.

The tag line of the Cromwell Association is '*promoting our understanding of the 17th century*' and the current exhibition at the Hermitage Museum in Amsterdam certainly achieves that, without any mention of the English Civil Wars or Cromwell. So what is there to interest the reader of *The Protector's Pen*?

The Golden Age is defined as the years from 1588 - 1700. In English history a period from the Armada to the reign of Queen Anne, in Dutch history a period that saw the emergence of the Dutch republic and the rise of the mercantile wealth of the bourgeoisie. The city of Amsterdam and its institutions was more independent, and more powerful, than any city in Britain. To celebrate their wealth and power the burghers commissioned group portraits of themselves, in their roles as civic guardsmen - by 1620 there were 20 civic guard companies, as guardians of charities or as members of trade and craft guilds. This has left a legacy of around 140 large group portraits, the ownership of which is divided between the national collection, the Rijksmuseum, and the Amsterdam Museum. This new exhibition using the space in the Hermitage Amsterdam draws together about thirty of these paintings for the first time, and tells the story behind the paintings and the people they portray.

The most famous of these group portraits isn't here. Rembrandt's *The Night Watch* remains firmly at the Rijksmuseum where it is the star of their 17th century galleries. If it were displayed here perhaps it would be shown under its proper title of *Militia Company of District II under the Command of Captain Frans Banninck Cocq*, or *The Company of captain Frans Banning Cocq and Lieutenant Willem van Ruytenburch preparing to march out.* (It

became known as the *The Night Watch* later after dark varnish had been applied). Imagine being presented with another thirty paintings of equal fascination, if not necessarily of such high artistic achievement, and that is what this exhibition does.

Each of the portraits is full of immense detail, of costume, weapons, tableware and the faces of the individuals represented, many of whom are identified. Take for example the painting shown here by Nicolaes Pickenoy (1591-1653). It is titled *Banquet of Guardsmen of District IX under Captain Jacob Backer and Lieutenant Jacob Rogh* and was painted in 1632. Backer is shown seated at the left end of the table. He and the older men in the painting are wearing ruffs, the younger men lace collars. The folds of the standard carried by the bearer in the centre foreground are beautifully represented and this small image cannot do them justice. Please do look at what is on-line at <http://portraitgalleryofthegoldenage.com/#node-21> to get a far better idea of what is on offer.

There is more to the exhibition than the group portraits as the whole of the Golden Age, the development of the City, and the way in which it conducted its trade, are shown, but at its heart are these extraordinary paintings. Parallels are drawn with how Dutch society conducts itself today, governed by consent, respect and collective action. A parallel is found for the most contemporary way of funding social activities, crowd funding. A painting of 1592 depicts the draw of the lottery in aid of the Dolhuis, Amsterdam's lunatic asylum. The draw lasted a staggering sixty-eight days and nights. It makes our Saturday night lottery draw look very tame!

The Protector's Pen

Portrait Gallery of the Golden Age (cont'd)

The type of portraiture that was created, and survives from the same period in this country, comes nowhere near providing such richness. By looking at what was happening on the other side of the North Sea our understanding of the 17th century really is enhanced.

The exhibition runs until the end of 2016,
Hermitage Amsterdam, Amstel 51, Amsterdam.
Open daily 10.00-17.00 Admission €15.00

John Goldsmith



Interior view of the Hermitage exhibition in the building formerly known as the Besjeshuis – or Old Crone's Home, photo by Evert Elzinga, courtesy of Hermitage Amsterdam .

Cromwell's Coffin Plate Sold

The copper gilt coffin plate, that had rested on Cromwell's body at his funeral , was sold at Sotheby's on 9th December 2014 for a figure, with premiums, approaching £100,000.



The provenance of the plate is convincing. It was recovered at the exhumation in 1661 and an engraving was made of it in the 18th century and reproduced in Noble's Memoirs of the Protectoral House of Cromwell.

The catalogue note by Sotheby's fairly uses the word unique to describe the object,

and the sale prompted several items in the national press, on Radio 4 and on the BBC World Service. To suggest that the funeral ceremony " demonstrated the Commonwealth's inability to instil Republicanism into the British body politic as much as it did Cromwell's personal power" is a statement that could be debated for hours, but it cannot be denied that the funeral was a very elaborate affair indeed.

The more recent history of the object is interesting, but depressing. It was acquired in the late 19th or early 20th century by the Harcourt family most likely by Lewis Harcourt, First Viscount Harcourt, who claimed descent from Cromwell. Known to his friends as LouLou he was a Liberal MP and served in the

cabinets of Campbell-Bannerman and Asquith. Politically he clashed with Rosebery who was the donor of the Thorneycroft statue at Westminster. He was a trustee of several museums and galleries including the British Museum, the National Portrait Gallery and the London Museum. Harcourt committed suicide in 1922 when he was about to be publically exposed as a predatory paedophile.

The Harcourt family lent their two most significant Cromwell related objects, the coffin plate and a Cooper miniature of Cromwell to the London Museum shortly afterwards. The two objects remained in the collections and became part of the new Museum of London in the 1970s, when the London Museum and the Guildhall Museum merged.

The Cooper miniature was withdrawn several years ago and sold at auction in 2007 for a record price for a Cooper of £535,000. It remained in the UK and went to Compton Verney where it is displayed. The buyer of the coffin plate is unknown, so whether it will ever be on exhibition in the future remains to be seen.



As far as it is known, no national collection expressed any interest in acquiring the coffin plate to keep it in the public domain, nor was any negotiation entered into with the Museum of London.

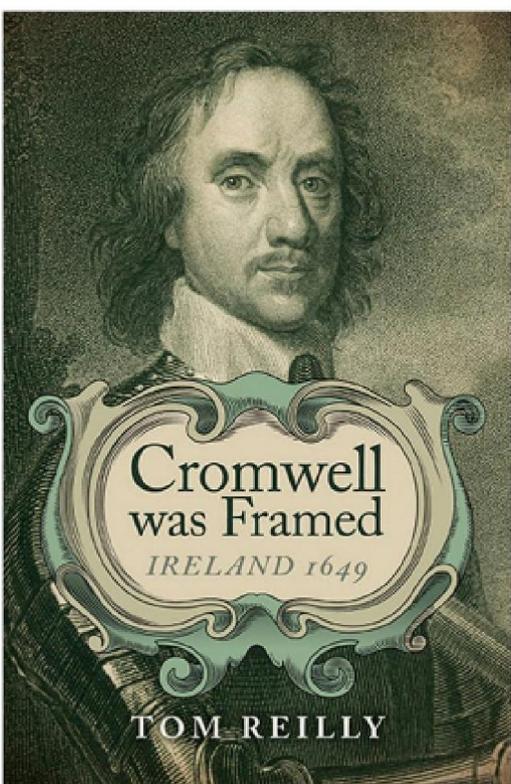
John Goldsmith

The Protector's Pen

In the Press

The name Cromwell has been mentioned more in the national press in the UK over the last few months than it has been for years, but the references have been to Thomas, master-manipulator of the Henrician court, rather than to his great-great-nephew Oliver. Thanks to Hilary Mantel's historical fiction making it to the television screen, Thomas Cromwell's name and exploits have been everywhere. Inevitably it confuses some (see <http://youtu.be/t5pIOU3Q2-E> and watch closely) and has prompted some discussion in the letters pages of The Times. A letter headed 'Wrong Cromwell' on 26.1.15 disagreed with the suggestion from the actor Mark Rylance that a figure of the calibre of Thomas Cromwell was needed in modern politics, instead it was stated that it was obvious that it 'was an Oliver we need'. With a general election looming one suspect that politicians of various ilk's will be taking Cromwell's (Thomas's and Oliver's) name in vain, until polling day.

A trawl through the press for references to Cromwell is sadly predictable. Get near to Christmas and the anti-Cromwell stories abound, and just as predictable are the less than balanced views expressed in parts of the Irish media. Tom Reilly's new book, 'Cromwell was framed', was reviewed at length in the Irish Times on 13.9.14 under the title of 'Do we owe Oliver Cromwell an apology'. It was by no means a completely negative review and concluded:



'The author is to be commended for highlighting a subject that academic historians neglect but piques public interest: the publisher of 'Cromwell Was Framed' asserts on its website that "the Irish nation owes Oliver Cromwell a huge posthumous apology for wrongly convicting him of civilian atrocities". They shouldn't hold their breath.'

What followed was sadly revealing about the depth of antipathy, if not to say downright hatred, of Cromwell in Ireland. Member of the Dail for Tipperary South, Mattie McGrath, had a letter published in The Drogheda Independent on 13.4.14 taking specific issue with the 'commemorative ceremony of Oliver Cromwell at the British Houses of Parliament at Westminster on 3rd September [which] appears deeply regressive'. His letter goes on to assert Cromwell's massacre of thousands and interprets the Association's annual service as the honouring of Cromwell by the British Government. Tom Reilly's rejoinder was masterful in its turning the tables by identifying McGrath's views as prejudiced, intolerant and bigoted.



For those familiar with Huntingdon you may be pleased to know that the historic Falcon Inn was reported locally as re-opening in December, after a long period of closure. Those who make the trip to Huntingdon might want to visit another local hostelry, The Lord Protector, where member Alan Butler spotted the following: Cromwell's five-a day breakfast challenge at £14.99, full refund if eaten:

5 x Pork Sausages, 5 x bacon, 5 x free range eggs, 5 x bread and butter, 3 x toast, 3 x fried bread, 5 x hash browns, tin of beans, tin of plum tomatoes, 5 x mushrooms, 3 x fried tomatoes and a cup of tea.

Must be eaten without any help within 45 minutes.

Winners go on a Wall of Fame, Losers go on a Wall of Shame.

Alan declined the challenge.

John Goldsmith

The Protector's Pen

Crossrail and The Levellers

Extract from The Independent, February 9th 2015

Could Crossrail have uncovered the last resting place of Britain's left-wing martyr in Bedlam burial ground under Liverpool Street station?

The site - part of a long-forgotten 16th/17th cemetery, known as Bedlam burial ground, in what is now central London - is being investigated in preparation for the construction of the eastern entrance of the new east-west London railway, Crossrail's station complex at Liverpool Street.

Archaeologists expect to unearth some 3,000 skeletons during the dig, potentially including that of the Leveller martyr - Robert Lockyer and also that of John Lilburne, the movement's most prominent leader.

Dying of natural causes at the age of 43, he was buried there in 1657. Known as 'Freeborn John', he was a thorn in the side of both Charles I and Cromwell. Charles had him flogged, pilloried, gagged and imprisoned, while the Cromwellian authorities had him arrested for high treason, and later exiled and then imprisoned.

Detailed knowledge as to exactly who lies buried in the cemetery had come to light only over recent months. Crossrail recruited a group of 16 volunteers to scour parish records throughout central London to discover which of those



Skeletons unearthed by Crossrail.

parishes' 16th /17th century residents had been buried in Bedlam - a graveyard that was created as an 'overflow' cemetery, primarily for use by poor residents of over 70 parishes who couldn't afford to be interred in their local church's graveyard.

Scholars specializing in working class history, see the upcoming excavations at the old Bedlam graveyard as particularly significant.

Council Vacancies

The continuing success of the Association depends on the dedication of its councillors and trustees, and there is always room for committed and energetic people to fill the ranks and spread the workload. Since the death of our treasurer, David Hall, last winter, the membership role has been taken on by John Goldsmith. John would like to relinquish this position to concentrate on his duties as press officer. If anyone is interested on finding out more about this crucial role, please let me know (email address below).

I am very sorry to report that David's replacement as treasurer, Andrew Constantine, resigned last October for personal reasons. Geoffrey Bush has been the temporary replacement, but would prefer to continue his work on the plaques and monuments. If you feel able to take over as treasurer, please let me know. It is a demanding (but, I hope, fulfilling) role and needs to be filled by someone with experience in financial affairs.

Patrick Little
Chairman, Cromwell Association
plittle@histparl.ac.uk

Siege of Colchester

Extract from The Daily Telegraph, July 25th 2014

When Humpty Dumpty had a great fall, all the King's horses and all the King's men couldn't put Humpty together again - but exactly who or what was Humpty Dumpty, and did he exist at all?

The nursery rhyme dates back to 1810 and became famous in Lewis Carroll's *Alice Through the Looking Glass*. The legend of Humpty, however, goes back much further and one thought is that it was a big cannon in the English Civil War that placed a crucial role in the siege of Colchester in 1648.

That summer the Royalists, led by the Earl of Norwich, retreated to Colchester after being attacked by the Parliamentarians commanded by Lord-General Thomas Fairfax. Colchester was rapidly blockaded by Fairfax and on June 13th he launched a ferocious attack to try to crush the Royalists. However, his forces were devastated by a withering bombardment from a big cannon, Humpty Dumpty, placed in the tower of St Mary's church, which guarded a key approach to the town. Fairfax was forced to retreat, but on July 15th his artillery blasted an enormous hole in the church. Humpty crashed to the ground and smashed and all of the King's troops were unable to repair or remount it; and so the Royalists lost their most powerful weapon.



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