

MONARCHICAL CROMWELLIANS AND THE RESTORATION

By Dr Miranda Malins

For the politicians who sought to make Oliver Cromwell king and supported his son Richard as Lord Protector, the collapse of the Protectorate in May 1659 was a unilateral disaster.¹ They had invested more in the Protectorate than in any previous political regime, seeing in it the greatest chance to realise the moderate monarchical settlement they craved safe in the hands of their great friend and ally, Cromwell. Their admiration for and loyalty to Cromwell and his sons Richard and Henry was total, and with the family's fall in 1659 these monarchical Cromwellians faced a multitude of dangerous and complex choices which would determine the course of the rest of their lives.

For the exiled Stuart court, in contrast, the failure of the Protectorate represented a great opportunity to build a consensus for the restoration of Charles II. The court, and in particular Edward Hyde and his agents, watched and courted the monarchical Cromwellians, believing them to be the most useful converts to the royalist cause through whom the Stuart restoration might at last be achieved. Lord Culpeper best expressed this ambition in a letter to Hyde in June 1659 when he explained his hopes of: 'uniting to the King's party all the Monarchical party that looked upon Cromwell as the fittest person to attain their ends by. Their golden calf is now fallen, they can no more hope in him, neither will they depart from their Monarchical principles, they will not (I cannot fear it) submit to this rascally crew, and more so, see they cannot possibly set up any other besides the right owner'.²

This article considers the attempts made by Hyde and his agents to secure 'the Monarchical party' to the royalist cause in the year preceding the Restoration of Charles II in May 1660, and the decisions that their Cromwellian targets made in response to these overtures. In this 'age of conscience', such choices came at enormous personal and political cost – something acknowledged by Hyde as much as the Cromwellians themselves – and they reveal much of both the balance and the perception of political power in this turbulent year.³

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I

The ‘Monarchical party’ on whom Hyde and his network focussed their attention encompassed those politicians who spearheaded the campaign to offer the crown to Oliver Cromwell in 1657 and then supported Richard Cromwell as his closest civilian advisers. These men were identified by contemporaries and subsequently examined by historians as a loose political grouping.⁴ While accounts of the group’s exact make-up differ to a degree, there is a strong case for identifying them as: Lord Broghill, Oliver St John, William Pierrepont, Bulstrode Whitelocke, Edward Montagu, Charles Wolseley, Nathaniel Fiennes, John Glynne and Philip Jones. David L. Smith and Patrick Little have identified these same men, along with John Claypole, as the ‘leading civilian courtiers’ of the Protectorate.⁵ Following Gerald Aylmer’s analysis, John Thurloe, Henry Cromwell and General Monck should also be considered as allied to this group and Hyde and his informers certainly considered each as central to a successful restoration of the king.⁶ This group has been described variously as a ‘court party’, a ‘kingship party’ or as ‘new Cromwellians’ or ‘conservative Cromwellians’.⁷ It seems most apt, however, particularly in the context of their labelling as the ‘Monarchical party’ by Hyde’s informant, to refer to them here as ‘monarchical Cromwellians’. This description at once captures the essential features common to all men (and deemed most notable to their royalist observers), namely, their principled adherence to a monarchical settlement and personal allegiance to the Cromwell family.⁸ Hyde himself recognised the unifying effect the offer of the crown to Oliver Cromwell had upon these politicians, observing years later: ‘This proposition found a marvellous concurrence; and very many who used not to agree in any thing else were of one mind in this, and would presently vote him [Oliver Cromwell] king’.⁹

The monarchical Cromwellians thrived under the Protectorate, rising to prominent positions on the Council of State, important military and administrative postings and with many ennobled to the Other House. While it has always been accepted that they were loyal to Oliver Cromwell, a re-examination of contemporary sources, in particular Peter Gaunt’s edition of the Henry Cromwell correspondence, demonstrates their equally close and developing relationships with his sons Richard and Henry. As Andrew Barclay observes, ‘Broghill, Montagu and Wolseley were the next generation, all at least twenty years younger than Cromwell and so closer in age to the

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Cromwell sons. These were the men to perpetuate the rule of the Cromwells after Cromwell himself was dead¹⁰

This is exactly what the monarchical Cromwellians attempted to do, not only during Richard's rule, but also for many months afterwards. Indeed, their strong support for Richard is a key aspect of the recent reassessment of Richard's Protectorate by Jason Peacey, Peter Gaunt, David L. Smith and Patrick Little in particular. They suggest that Richard's Protectorate was more viable than its detractors have allowed, with his personal qualities, rather than hampering Richard's efficacy, helping him to build a broader base of support among those who could not support his father.¹¹ The contemporary evidence points to Richard's reliance on the monarchical Cromwellians – and on Thurloe, Pierrepont and St John in particular – who assume a far greater importance within this new analysis. Hyde's pronounced focus on this triumvirate, as described later in this article, further supports this view.

The continued viability of restoring Richard Cromwell to power only complicated the options open to the monarchical Cromwellians at the fall of the Protectorate in spring 1659. As Richard Ollard argues, the choice should have been a simple one: logically, a Cromwellian who had become a Cromwellian in order to re-introduce the monarchical element into the constitution had a clear choice between restoring Richard or Charles Stuart. If an alternative military candidate such as Lambert or Monck were elevated, that would entail a military *coup d'état* setting an unfortunate precedent and which would have been, in any event, anathema to the civilian principles of the monarchical Cromwellians.¹²

However, the reality of political life was more complicated. Circumstances had placed each man in a unique position, with a different balance of responsibilities, expectations and opportunities and, as such, they responded to these pressures in a range of ways. At one end of the spectrum, for instance, Montagu and Broghill kept a safe distance from the new republican regime, having officially accepted its rule; at the other, St John, Whitelocke and later Thurloe remained in London and continued to work with the republican regimes. While this divergence may seem contradictory, it is more readily explicable when the men's personal and professional situations are taken into account and placed in a wider understanding of

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how choices of allegiance were envisaged at the time. Those Cromwellians who distanced themselves from the new regime were, for the most part, men of private means able to retire to country estates or military postings, such as Broghill and Montagu. Those who continued to work with the republican regime were based in London and reliant on the continuation of their professional legal practices. Of these, St John and Whitelocke believed, moreover, that they had a duty to preserve and continue the rule of law, necessitating some cooperation with the *de facto* government; an attitude they later relied on in their defence at the Restoration.¹³

For each man, these practical considerations were balanced to a greater or lesser degree by questions of conscience. Loyalty to the Protectorate and the Cromwell family weighed heavily on their minds and their responses to the republican regime, exiled court and later writings demonstrate the lengths they went to justify – both to themselves and to others – that any change in allegiance did not entail the betrayal of a prior commitment and any consequent loss of honour. Keith Thomas captured these struggles in his description of the period as the ‘age of conscience’. As he argued, ‘there has been no period in English history when men and women were subjected to so many religious and political conflicts of duty and allegiance or responded to them in so intensely scrupulous a fashion’.¹⁴

II

No one was more aware of this complex political and emotional landscape than Edward Hyde. Writing to an agent in the context of their plans to convert Montagu to the royalist cause in February 1660, Hyde mused: ‘I have no better opinion of the honesty of the age than you seem to have, and do not look that conscience and repentance shall dispose men to lose all they have got, yet how to apply a general remedy to that disease is above my skill in physic’. Although he could not think of a ‘general remedy’ to the problem of how to engineer the conversion of former enemies, Hyde recognised the importance, in particular cases, that ‘care is taken that all be said that is necessary’ to reassure potential collaborators that they would be safe from retribution.¹⁵

In the months surrounding Richard’s abdication, Hyde instructed his network of informants to work on the monarchical Cromwellians, seeking

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ways to win them over to the royalist cause. He first attempted to reach a settlement with Richard Cromwell himself through his agent John Mordaunt but, to his surprise, the long-standing partnership of Thurloe and St John (his 'master' as Hyde often referred to Thurloe's former employer¹⁶) proved an insurmountable obstacle to this: 'I cannot comprehend', Hyde wrote to Mordaunt, 'why Thurloe and even his master St John should not be very ready to dispose Cromwell to join with the King, and why they should not reasonably promise themselves more particular advantages from thence, than from anything else that is like to fall out?'¹⁷

Nevertheless, Hyde continued to hope that the monarchical Cromwellians would choose to align with the royalists at this stage, failing to believe that they could reconcile themselves, or indeed be acceptable, to a republican regime. 'Nor is it possible', he wrote in March 1659, 'that St John can ever find his account with the Republican party. I know the man very well, and the part he hath had throughout those troubles, yet methinks it should not be impossible to persuade him, that he might find most security and most advantage by serving the King'.¹⁸ In fact, to Hyde's mind, St John's conversion was not so much desirable as essential: 'St John is so considerable that I wish him well disposed'.

As so often in Hyde's correspondence, the triumvirate of St John, Thurloe and Pierpoint are accorded particular significance and influence. As Hyde continued to explain, he expected St John, once he had realised the 'necessary of calling in the King' to 'press that all should be settled upon the old foundation... especially if he can draw his friends Pierpoint and Thurloe to the same concurrence, who have enough manifested that they are not enemies to a single person, and they can never be secure under any other than the right one, whom they would love if they knew'.¹⁹ Hyde's network had always considered the three men as central to the government of the Protectorate. As one agent wrote about Richard's Protectorate, 'the present government... is managed by St John, Peirpoint, and Thurloe; what these resolve on in their Cabal is presented to the Council, and there confirmed' while another reported Fauconbridge as saying that 'Thurloe governs Cromwell, and St John and Pierpoint govern Thurloe'.²⁰

Once this alliance was identified as the principal obstacle to Hyde's advances to Richard Cromwell, Hyde instructed his agents to concentrate

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on either securing them to the royalist cause or sabotaging their power. This manifested itself in a variety of tactics: 'We know Pierpoint is well, and that he will never be severed from St John', Hyde wrote,

but if he were once broke, the other would look about him, indeed if those two were out of the way, Cromwell himself would quickly find the only course to preserve his family... We have taken the best care we can that Pierpoint might be better disposed; but those who know him best, dare not approach him, till the other two are humbled; therefore I pray do all that may be to prosecute Mr. Thurloe and his Master, which will produce excellent effects.²¹

Despite initial reports that Morduant had secured a deal with Richard, nothing came of it however, possibly due to Thurloe delaying the process and Richard getting cold feet.²²

Looking beyond Richard, Hyde targeted those Cromwellians who held strategically important military posts around the British Isles, including Henry Cromwell, Monck, Montagu and Broghill. In a letter of June 1659, he set out his interpretation of their reluctant acceptance of the republican regime and hopes for their conversion:

Truly if with reason and honesty we consult both [Henry and Monck], their best game lies that way: for neither upon their owne score can keepe possession, and by a submission here, both lost; which by a compliance with the right owner what hath power to make good whatt he promiseth a preservation to them selfs and their alliance may be obtained: The like game may Montagu play, beinge in the same predicament; which is feared all three will doe; then assuredly our Idoll, The good old cause falls eternally.

Montagu was a particular focus for Hyde's hopes and he was approached as early as May 1659 with a letter from Charles himself. In this, Charles wooed Montagu, writing: 'it is very longe since I have promised my selfe your intire affection and all the offices you can performe towards the restoringe me to what is my right, and your Country to the happinesse it hath been so long deprived of'.²³

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Hyde approached Lord Broghill through his agent Villiers whom he told that the 'King looks upon Lord Broghill as a person who may be most instrumental to do him service there, and he does not believe he will have any adverseness to it when the season shall be proper'. Villiers was instructed that 'the King very much desires... that you would haste into Ireland, and that you would assure Lord Broghill of all that he can wish for from the King, if he will perform this service'.²⁴ Charles Wolseley was another target: 'If Sir Charles Wolseley be disposed', Hyde wrote, 'he can easily possess Stafford, which is no ill post, he may very securely depend upon his Majesty'.²⁵

In each case, Hyde's correspondence reveals the understanding and sympathy he and his agents felt for the monarchical Cromwellians' quandary. In Montagu's case, for instance, Hyde wrote years later of how Cromwell had charmed Montagu into his service and of how Montagu had been, quite understandably, 'passionately adhered' to him.²⁶ Hyde's informants, working on Montagu, recognised this and also understood that Montagu had responsibilities at home; a great stake to be lost should he gamble on a Stuart restoration and lose. As Samuel Morland wrote to Charles, 'having understood your Ma^{ty's} great desire that Gratt: Montague should quit that Jewish Party to wch he hath so long adhered, & become at length a faithfull & loyall subject':

...he was wholly devoted to old Noll – his countrey man, & for his sake a great lover of all his family, but a perfect hater of the men y^t now rule, as he has often told me privately... the trueth is he hath left behind him a very good stake; two thousand pound per annum, with a wife & ten small children, & it's no small matter will reward him for such a losse.²⁷

Hyde understood that the monarchical Cromwellians would need a great deal of reassurance that the King would treat them kindly and reward them for their help in recognition of the great risks they would take on his behalf.

III

Despite this conciliatory attitude, correspondence with the exiled court remained one-sided and nothing came of Hyde's agents' negotiations. In the

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summer of 1659, Hyde received a series of disappointing reports describing an apparent resurgence in fifth monarchism, Richard Cromwell's diminishing importance and the monarchical Cromwellians' withdrawal from the centre of power.²⁸ Hyde made a final attempt to bring Richard on board in July but his emissaries drew a blank when they visited him.²⁹ Hyde's agents suggested that St John, Thurloe and Pierrepont were actively opposed to such an alliance which, if true, may suggest they continued to believe that Richard's cause was salvageable and doubted that they could ensure Charles was restored with appropriate conditions and safeguards for themselves or for the nation. Even if Hyde were to promise indemnity to them, he could not guarantee what a restored Long Parliament might choose to do.

It certainly seems that the monarchical Cromwellians continued to explore the viability of restoring Richard Cromwell for some time after his fall. Both Hyde and ambassador Bordeaux of France reported these activities. The ambassadorial correspondence records a series of negotiations between Bordeaux, Thurloe and Fiennes in May and June. Acting on behalf of Cardinal Mazarin, Bordeaux approached Thurloe initially to pledge the support of French troops to restore Richard. Thurloe was unsure whether Richard had fallen too far into disgrace for his restoration to be achievable, and had misgivings about the consequences of failure. The ambassador wrote that the Secretary agreed 'that it would be an undertaking which would lead to his total ruin and to the ruin of his friends, and which might also be prejudicial to France, were it not successful'. This came to nothing, however, with Fiennes explaining later that Thurloe 'was not a man to enter into any warlike designs, and that as Divine Providence had seen fit thus to dispose of the government of England, no other course remained open but submission'.³⁰

This account affords a glimpse into the precarious position in which Thurloe and his fellow monarchical Cromwellians found themselves. The restoration of Richard would undoubtedly have been the most desirable eventuality for them, and yet it was a considerable risk. Nevertheless, reports of these designs were reaching Hyde as late as March 1660. 'Various are the opinions, even of the wisest men', wrote one informant, 'whether there be not a combination between St John, Pierpoint, Thurloe, Montague, Phil Jones and others, to reinvest Richard Cromwell'. Another agent wrote on 3

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March 1660 that: 'This is the first night that Thurlow sits in the Councell as Secretary of State: Hee, St Johns, Montague, and that Caball have been of late finding a way to let Dic Cromwell in againe'. Montagu himself told Pepys three days later that 'there was great endeavours to bring in the Protector again'. However, he went on to comment that 'he did not believe it would last long if he were brought in'.³¹

It is impossible to be sure of how long individual monarchical Cromwellians continued to work towards Richard's restitution. What can be ascertained, however, is a more detailed and accurate understanding of their feelings towards Richard and the Protectorate that had turned to dust in their hands. The evidence amassed above leaves little doubt that Richard's Protectorate was the monarchical Cromwellians' regime of choice. It was their strong commitment to both the Cromwell family and the Protectorate which fuelled their immense efforts to prevent its collapse, their expressions of grief when it did so, and their continued longing for Richard's return.³² As Thurloe wrote to William Lockhart on Richard's abdication in May 1659: 'How this change doth afflict all of us here who had the honour to be related both to his Father and himself I need not trouble your Excellency with. I am in so much confusion that I can scarce constrain myself to write about it'.³³

However, the monarchical Cromwellians' active support for Richard diminished as the months wore on after his abdication. This did not represent any cooling in their affections for him and his family, but instead a lessening of their belief in his capabilities and in their ability to restore him (as evidenced in Thurloe's reluctant negotiations with ambassador Bordeaux). This accords with the pragmatism which this particular group of politicians displayed throughout their political careers and which led at various points to their castigation as self-interested time-servers. There was a strong sense too, among some of the monarchical Cromwellians, that Richard had failed in some degree to prevent his fall. After the Restoration, Montagu told Samuel Pepys 'of the simplicity of the Protector in his losing all that his father had left him'. Montagu blamed Richard's failing to listen to the counsel of the monarchical Cromwellians in particular.³⁴

Likewise, when ambassador Bordeaux sought an audience with Fiennes 'in order to ascertain whether any hope remained for the Protector', he learned

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that Fiennes ‘blames his [Richard’s] conduct and compares it to that of Rehoboam’.³⁵ (Rehoboam, the son of Solomon who reigned after his father’s death, went against the counsel of his older advisers and increased the taxes upon his subjects who rebelled as a result and created the new Israel.) This comparison suggests that, like Montagu, Fiennes blamed Richard for ignoring the advice of his closest civilian advisers inherited from his father – the monarchical Cromwellians.

Taken together, these considerations helped to ease the monarchical Cromwellians’ consciences as they began to look beyond the Cromwell family to explore the other options available to them. It would have been natural for them to brood over such a ‘case of conscience’, surrounded as they were by casuistical debate in the privacy of men’s homes, at the universities and in the press.³⁶ Their need to reconcile themselves to such actions echoes through their later writings, but they also made their justifications clear at the time. Monck explained that: ‘Richard Cromwell forsook himself else had I never failed my promise to his Father, or regard to his memory’.³⁷

Montagu took a similar view, as one of Hyde’s informants reported: ‘He [Montagu] told me lately in private... as others had accused him for treating with the King, & the like, but he valed his Honour more than all that Family; But if Richard had not so foolishly broken his Parliament both he & Monke would have stood by him; And this, so farr as I know, is his true sence’.³⁸ Whitelocke used this same practical approach to Richard’s fall in his explanation to Broghill of his decision to work with the *de facto* military authorities in October 1659: ‘Whitelocke had resolved in his mind the present state of affayres, that there was no visible authority or power for government at this time, butt that of the Army’.³⁹ The line of reasoning that in Richard’s absence they were absolved from their ties to him – almost universal among the monarchical Cromwellians – explains how, once the time was right, they felt able to look beyond the Cromwellian dynasty and, in particular, to begin to respond to their courtship by the royalist cause.

IV

Discussions between the two sides only really got under way in the early months of 1660. Once the Rump had reassembled in December 1659 and,

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with Monck's march to London and the return of the secluded members in February, those Cromwellians who had stayed away during the Republican interlude returned to London with renewed confidence: Thurloe was reinstated as Secretary of State in February; Montagu and Broghill returned to Parliament, Broghill as a Commissioner to rule Ireland; Pierrepont and Montagu joined the Council of State; and Monck and Montagu became joint Generals at Sea. From this power base the monarchical Cromwellians began to reassess their relationships with the exiled court.

Thurloe made his move some time after resuming office. The evidence of Richard Willis, the double agent who served both Thurloe and Hyde, suggests that Thurloe may have been in contact with the court the previous year, although it is difficult to verify this, and Willis's account must be approached with caution as he used it to defend his traitorous behaviour after the Restoration.⁴⁰ Thurloe certainly contacted Hyde in the spring of 1660, as Hyde told Sir John Grenville on 13 April that he had received overtures from him. He remained cautious, however, and would not submit any commitment in writing.

Hyde and Charles observed Thurloe's apprehension with much less sympathy than they accorded to Montagu. While they accepted Montagu's reluctance to commit to their cause they did not doubt his wish to do so. Notwithstanding his silence, they remained convinced of Montagu's loyalty and were thus far more delighted when he appeared to have changed his mind about supporting Charles' restoration. It seems likely that Montagu was one of the first to come to the private decision that the King's restoration would be the best available outcome, as reported by a royal agent: 'Montagu has absolutely forsaken Thurloe, St John and all that Caball, and doth now wholly cleave to his father-in-law and his Party'. Furthermore, the source reported Montagu to have said to a mutual friend that 'the true reason why I left the one, and cleave to the other, is, because I playnely see, there is an utter impossibility of settlement without bringing in the King; and I professe, I had rather the Nation were settled, though I and my whole Family suffer by it, as I know I shall'.⁴¹ Montagu's tone here seems more resigned than fervent; his acceptance of this course was a pragmatic rather than an ideological decision.

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Montagu was careful, however, to hold out as long as possible before agreeing to support Charles and, when he did so, to keep his support utterly secret. We know from the *Clarendon State Papers* that Montagu was in contact with Charles in April 1660 through the mediation of a relation. Charles assured Montagu that he understood the delicate nature of his position: 'I know too well the use you may be of to me in a good conjuncture, to expose you unnecessarily, and in an unfit season; therefore all that I desire of you is that you will give me your word, that you do and will take my business to heart'. Charles promised Montagu not 'to say anything of what hath been done in former times, in which I know well by what reasons and authority you were led, and I doe assure you I am so far from remembering any thing to your disadvantage, that I look upon you as a person to be rewarded'.⁴²

Montagu was finally persuaded by this letter to respond favourably to Charles' overtures on 10 April, assuring Charles that 'I am unalterably a most dutiful subject and faithful servant of yours to the uttermost of my power', adding that 'the resolution I have fixedly taken, and shall never be cancelled'.⁴³ Once he had written this, Montagu considered himself bound in honour to Charles and it was on the following day that Pepys first noted Montagu's having a 'mind clear to bring in the king'. Six days later Montagu told his clerk 'his thoughts that the King would carry it, and that he did think himself very happy that he was now at sea, as well for his own sake as that he thought he might do his country some service in keeping things quiet'. On 3 May Montagu declared for the King and revealed to Pepys that 'there hath been many letters sped between them for a great while'.⁴⁴

These successes boosted the royalists' confidence to the point where they began to wonder why some other Cromwellians had not made contact. As Hyde wrote of Broghill: 'if Lord Broghill had that zeal of the King's service, which some of his friends think him to have, or that entire confidence in Ned Villiers that he imagines, sure he would have sent an express to him in all this time, and not expected one from him'.⁴⁵ Despite Hyde's anxieties, his informants continued to believe Broghill loyal, although they could only speculate as he still refused to speak openly of his commitment. Thus Hyde received word on 16 March: 'Noe letters from Ireland these last two posts: Jones, Coote, and Broughill, are the chief actors there. Soe farr as we understand they are all there disposed for the King'.⁴⁶

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This silence may be explained by the pragmatism of the monarchical Cromwellians, many of whom continued to keep their options open. This is not to argue that the information Hyde received of their genuine interest in his cause was inaccurate – it did indeed have its attractions for them – but to suggest that they continued to explore other alternative courses of action; courses available to them only as long as they did not commit themselves fully and openly to one cause. As set out above, reports reached Hyde as late as March 1660 that some monarchical Cromwellians were exploring a final attempt to restore Richard Cromwell.⁴⁷ Hyde would not believe this of his favourite Montagu, writing: ‘some would persuade us that he [Montagu] is most desirous to set up Richard again, which is so ridiculous that I cannot believe it. I wish you would say somewhat to me of him, and whether he be again to go to sea’.⁴⁸

Montagu certainly knew about the plan, for he confided in Pepys ‘that there was great endeavours to bring in the Protector again’.⁴⁹ However, the fact that Montagu told Pepys that he thought the enterprise unlikely to succeed suggests that he was not involved in the plot.⁵⁰ This is perhaps the most convincing piece of evidence to suggest that the other monarchical Cromwellians were launching a last ditch attempt to restore Richard. Rumours to that effect were certainly circulated widely, as Pepys recounted aboard Montagu’s flagship four days earlier: ‘Great is the talk of a single person, and that it would now be Charles, George or Richard again. For the last of which, my Lord St Johns is said to speak high’.⁵¹ Montagu’s prediction was proved right, however, and the plan to restore Richard came to nothing. Most Cromwellians soon abandoned the plot, as Hyde heard on 9 March: ‘Last week there was great caballing to bring in Dick Cromwell by Thurloe, St Johns, Montague, & others, but that designe proving too weake, St Johns and Thurloe have this week assisted the Rump in fomenting discontents amongst the Officers of the Army’.⁵²

Of all the monarchical Cromwellians, St John seems to have been the most trenchant in his opposition to a Stuart restoration. While exploring the potential for Richard’s restoration in private, he worked tirelessly to safeguard the Commonwealth.⁵³ He displayed his true feelings at the turbulent first meeting of the new Council of State where Hyde’s informant told Hyde that ‘St Johns and his party [are] for any thing or person to be sett up but y^e king’.⁵⁴ St John was powerless to prevent the Restoration,

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however, and when his arguments fell on deaf ears he withdrew from the Council, speaking angrily of Monck's conversion to the royal cause 'that nothing troubled him more then that Monke was a Rigid Chavaleere, both hee and his man Thurlo are oul att heeles'.⁵⁵ Thurloe then was equally powerless.

In resisting the Restoration so passionately, St John continued to confound all of Hyde's expectations. His reasons for resisting the Restoration are likely to have been complex. He had indeed always desired a monarchical settlement, but his personal hostility to the Stuart dynasty had a long history. The hostility was mutual. Over the months, Hyde received hysterical reports of St John's – and naturally Thurloe's – activities in the most colourful language: 'Thurloe is semper idem; but I hope his hornes will never grow so long as formerly to push the King's friends. St John is a great pike that's loath to be beaten into the nett. He & Thurloe have been labouring of late to blow up the sectarys and discontented officers, but I hope it will come to nothing'.⁵⁶ It was not for nothing that another informant declared St John to be 'the most deadly enemy the King has in England'.⁵⁷

It was unfortunate for St John that his actions were so closely scrutinised as he was not the only monarchical Cromwellian working to prevent a Stuart restoration. Broghill, while corresponding with the royal court on the one hand, continued ostensibly to work with Thurloe against a royal return until late April. He wrote to the Secretary, partially in code, assuring him: 'They have had odd plots 6 29 32 40 39 6 heere concerning the king, and all means used to win me; and thos failinge, other things were thought on; but I can assure you, I has intirely secured Munster 38 17 16 5 81 against any, that shall be for the king, or not for the council of state or parliament'.⁵⁸

By this stage, what the monarchical Cromwellians feared most was that Monck would restore the King without sufficient conditions. Whitelocke was one of the first to guess Monck's true intentions and it was because of this that he urged Charles Fleetwood either to bid to control the King's restoration or else to oppose it militarily. When Fleetwood eventually refused to do either, Whitelocke rightly observed: 'you will ruine your selfe and your friends'.⁵⁹ Broghill expressed similar concerns to Thurloe, writing: 'Wee all hope thos pretious rights we have soe longe, and we thinke justly contended for, will not be exposed, but provided for'.⁶⁰ Montagu, for his

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part, entertained suspicions that Monck was aiming at his own dictatorship.⁶¹ Hyde refused to believe that Monck's colleagues had guessed Monck's true intentions, however: 'It is not possible', he wrote, 'that Pierpoint and St John would be so impertinently violent against the King, if they believed Monk would ever be wrought over to him'.⁶² Generally, Hyde's informants were unconcerned, as one wrote: 'Thurloe is not much in use, and his good old Master [Oliver St John], after his lost hopes, is returned to keep his cushion till Wednesday morning. Pierpoint is still inveterate'.⁶³

V

These observers were proved right. When Charles Stuart was restored on 8 May 1660, it was done so remarkably easily and entirely unconditionally. Gradually over the past months, most of the monarchical Cromwellians had accepted the likelihood of restoration and sought to influence it. This acceptance represented more a pragmatic resignation than an ideological commitment, however, even on the part of those who corresponded with the King. Their experience of the civil wars had left them with a mistrust of unbridled kingship and their admiration of Oliver Cromwell bequeathed them higher expectations of a monarch grounded in his superior behaviour rather than his divine right to rule. As Montagu observed dispassionately: the King would not last long 'unless he carry himself very soberly and well'.⁶⁴

Examining the monarchical Cromwellians' relationship with the exiled court in this troubled time reveals a number of conclusions. It reinforces the monarchical Cromwellians' position at the centre of government and influence, particularly under the Protectorate. Hyde's instructions reveal the importance he placed on securing them to the royalist cause while his agents' obsession with St John, Thurloe and Pierrepoint in particular, rescue them from something of the obscurity into which their own skilled attempts to distance themselves from the Protectorate and republican regime at the Restoration cast them. This whitewashing disguised the monarchical Cromwellians' firm commitment to the Protectorate and to the Cromwell family which they otherwise demonstrated in their attempts to restore Richard, their agonising over changing their allegiance to the royalist course – made possible in many of their minds only by Richard's own actions

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releasing them from their bond to him – and by Hyde and his royal master's own acknowledgement of their former loyalty.

But as their royalist observers correctly identified, the key feature of many of the monarchical Cromwellians' political views was their desire for a monarchical settlement and this rendered many of them both attractive and, ultimately willing, converts to the King's cause. The finer points of their conversion – its tone and timing – cast a long shadow over their future careers under the Restoration. Those who, like Montagu, Monck and Broghill, negotiated their relationship with the exiled court well, enjoyed royal favour while those who, like Thurloe, St John and Pierrepoint, resisted the Restoration for too long, or who were thought to do so, never regained their public positions. Age and utility may have also played a part, with the younger members of this group more able to distance themselves from the civil wars and to promise decades of loyal service to the new King than their older colleagues.

The wide variation in the success with which the monarchical Cromwellians' loyal submissions were received at the Restoration closely reflected the royalists' experiences of dealing with them throughout the preceding year. Those Cromwellians whom the exiled court came to consider as hostile obstacles to the Restoration were damaged for life. 'Without doubt', one agent wrote to Hyde of St John, Thurloe and Pierrepoint on 13 May 1660, 'there are not in nature three such beasts, from whose villainy and treachery I beseech God defend His Majesty'.⁶⁵ The contrast between this vitriol and Hyde's desires only a year earlier that his agents secure the services of these same men, illustrates the high price the monarchical Cromwellians paid for the choices they had made in the intervening twelve months.

¹ This article is taken from my PhD thesis 'Conservative Cromwellians and the Restoration: c. 1657 – 1677' (University of Cambridge, 2010).

² Lord Culpeper to Edward Hyde, 17 June 1659, in *Clarendon State Papers (CSP)*, III, p. 493.

³ Keith Thomas, 'Cases of Conscience in Seventeenth-Century England' in John Morrill, Paul Slack and Daniel Woolf (eds.) *Public Duty and Private Conscience in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1993), p. 29.

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- ⁴ See for example: Major Anthony Morgan to Henry Cromwell, 24 February 1657, *The correspondence of Henry Cromwell, 1655-1659: from the British Library Lansdowne Manuscripts* ed. Peter Gaunt (2007), pp. 204-5; Bulstrode Whitelocke, *Memorials of the English affairs from the beginning of the reign of Charles the First to the happy restoration of King Charles the Second*, (4 vols., Oxford, 1853 edn), IV, 289; and Robert Beake to Leonard Piddock, 28 March 1657, Coventry City Archives, BA/H/Q/A79/302. This letter appears in Carol Egloff, 'Robert Beake and a letter concerning the Humble Petition and Advice, 28 March 1657', *Historical Research*, 68 (1995), 233-9.
- ⁵ Patrick Little and David L. Smith, *Parliaments and politics during the Cromwellian Protectorate* (Cambridge 2007), p. 108 & note 35.
- ⁶ G. E. Aylmer (ed.), *The Interregnum: the quest for settlement 1646-1660* (1972), pp. 187-8.
- ⁷ See C. H. Firth, 'Cromwell and the Crown', *English Historical Review*, 17 (1902) & 18 (1903), 18, 68; H. R. Trevor-Roper, 'Oliver Cromwell and his Parliaments', in Ivan Roots ed. *Oliver Cromwell: A Profile* (1973), p. 128; G. E. Aylmer (ed.), *The Interregnum: the quest for settlement 1646-1660* (1972), pp. 187-8; Barry Coward, *The Cromwellian Protectorate* (Manchester, 2002), p. 82; and Miranda Malins 'Conservative Cromwellians and the Restoration: c. 1657 – 1677' (PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 2010).
- ⁸ For a more detailed investigation of the make-up and description of this group of Cromwellians, please see my PhD thesis 'Conservative Cromwellians and the Restoration: c. 1657 – 1677' (University of Cambridge, 2010).
- ⁹ Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England begun in the year 1641*, ed. W. Dunn Macray (6 vols., Oxford, 1888), VI, 21.
- ¹⁰ Andrew Barclay, 'The Lord Protector and his Court' in Little (ed.) *Oliver Cromwell: new perspectives*, pp. 209-10.
- ¹¹ See Jason Peacey, 'The Protector Humbled: Richard Cromwell and the constitution' in Little (ed.) *The Cromwellian Protectorate* and "'Fit for public services": The upbringing of Richard Cromwell' in Little (ed.) *Oliver Cromwell: New Perspectives*; Peter Gaunt, 'Richard Cromwell' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004; online edn, January 2008);

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- 'Richard Cromwell and Parliaments' in Little and Smith, *Parliaments and politics*; and Miranda Malins, 'My solitary life: Richard Cromwell, 1659-1712' (*Cromwelliana*, 2010) and PhD thesis 'Conservative Cromwellians and the Restoration: c. 1657 – 1677' (University of Cambridge, 2010).
- ¹² Richard Ollard, *Cromwell's Earl: A Life of Edward Montagu 1st Earl of Sandwich* (1994), pp. 73-4.
- ¹³ Oliver St John, *The Case of Oliver St John, Esq. concerning his actions during the late troubles* (1660); and Bulstrode Whitelocke, 'The case of Bulstrode Whitelocke Knight' in *The diary of Bulstrode Whitelocke 1605-1675*, ed. Ruth Spalding (Oxford, 1990).
- ¹⁴ Keith Thomas, 'Cases of Conscience in Seventeenth-Century England' in John Morrill, Paul Slack and Daniel Woolf (eds.) *Public Duty and Private Conscience in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1993), p. 29.
- ¹⁵ Edward Hyde to Mr Hatton, 17 February 1660, in *CSP*, III, 701-02.
- ¹⁶ See *Ibid.*, pp. 427-8, 448-9.
- ¹⁷ Edward Hyde to Mordaunt, 4 April 1659, in *CSP*, III, 448-9.
- ¹⁸ Edward Hyde to Mr Broderick, 10 March 1659, in *Ibid.*, p. 434-5.
- ¹⁹ Edward Hyde to Mr Broderick, 21 March 1659, in *Ibid.*, p. 710.
- ²⁰ Mr Robinson to Edward Hyde, 2 December 1658, in *CSP*, III, 421; Mr Mordaunt to Charles II, 10 February 1659, in *Ibid.*, p. 423. For further examples of this see: Mr Robinson to Edward Hyde, 2 December 1658, in *CSP*, III, 421; Mr Crimson to unknown, 13 February 1659, in *Ibid.*, p. 424; and Edward Hyde to Mr Broderick, February 1659, in *Ibid.*, pp. 427-8.
- ²¹ Edward Hyde to Mr Broderick, February 1659, in *Ibid.*, pp. 427-8.
- ²² Mordaunt to Charles Stuart, 11 May 1659, in *Ibid.*, p. 469; and Guizot, *The History of Richard Cromwell*, I, 142-3.
- ²³ There are three alternative drafts of this letter written in Hyde's hand in the manuscripts of the *Clarendon State Papers* altogether. See also Charles Stuart to Edward Montagu, draft by Edward Hyde, 9 May 1659, in Bodl., MS Clarendon 60, f. 436.
- ²⁴ Edward Hyde to Ned Villiers, 20 June 1659, in *CSP*, III, 500-02.
- ²⁵ Edward Hyde to Mr Mordaunt, 25 July 1659, in *Ibid.*, pp. 534-5.
- ²⁶ Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, VI, pp. 186-8.
- ²⁷ Samuel Morland to Charles Stuart, 15 June 1659, in Bodl., MS Clarendon 61, f. 195.

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- ²⁸ Mr Broderick to Edward Hyde, 24 June 1659, in *CSP*, III, 505-06 and 16 July 1659, in *Ibid.*, pp. 526-8.
- ²⁹ Ollard, *Cromwell's Earl*, p. 268.
- ³⁰ Guizot, *History of Richard Cromwell*, I, Appendix, 389-93, 393-8, 402-05.
- ³¹ *CSP*, III, 693-4; Bodl., MS Clarendon 70, f. 85; and *The diary of Samuel Pepys*, I, 79.
- ³² For a detailed analysis of this commitment please see my PhD thesis 'Conservative Cromwellians and the Restoration: c. 1657 – 1677' (University of Cambridge, 2010).
- ³³ John Thurloe to William Lockhart, 5 May 1659, in *CSP*, III, 461; Butler, *Richard Cromwell*, p. 125.
- ³⁴ *The diary of Samuel Pepys*, I, 180.
- ³⁵ Guizot, *History of Richard Cromwell*, I, Appendix, 402-05.
- ³⁶ See Thomas, 'Cases of Conscience' in Morrill, Slack and Woolf (eds.), *Public Duty and Private Conscience*, pp. 29-56.
- ³⁷ Mr. Hancock (Broderick) to Edward Hyde, 16 December 1659, in *CSP*, III, 628-9.
- ³⁸ Unknown to Edward Hyde, 9 March 1660, MS Clarendon 70, f. 132.
- ³⁹ *The diary of Bulstrode Whitelocke*, p. 538.
- ⁴⁰ David Underdown, *Royalist Conspiracy in England 1649-1660* (New Haven, 1960), p. 250.
- ⁴¹ Mrs Harrison to Charles Stuart, 19 March 1660, in *CSP*, III, 703.
- ⁴² Charles Stuart to Edward Montagu, April 1660, in *Ibid.*, p. 719.
- ⁴³ Edward Montagu to Charles Stuart, 10 April 1660 in *Ibid.*, pp. 724-5.
- ⁴⁴ *The diary of Samuel Pepys*, I, pp. 106-07, 110 & 124-5.
- ⁴⁵ Edward Hyde to Mr Wright (Rumbold), 26 March 1660, in *CSP*, III, 707.
- ⁴⁶ Unknown to Edward Hyde, 16 March 1660, in T. H. Lister, *Life and Administration of Edward, First Earl of Clarendon* (3 vols., 1838), III, 90.
- ⁴⁷ *CSP*, III, 693-4; Bodl., MS Clarendon 70, f. 85; and *The diary of Samuel Pepys*, I, 79.
- ⁴⁸ Edward Hyde to Mr Hatton, 17 February 1660, in *CSP*, III, 701-02.
- ⁴⁹ *The diary of Samuel Pepys*, I, 79.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 74.
- ⁵² An informer to Edward Hyde, 9 March 1660, in Bodl., MS Clarendon 70, f. 132.

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- ⁵³ See Monck's praise of St John for these efforts in George Monck to Oliver St John, 21 January 1660, in *The Clarke Papers: selections from the papers of W. Clarke, Secretary to the Council of the army, 1647-9, and to General Monck and the commanders of the army in Scotland, 1651-61*, ed. C. H. Firth (4 vols., 1891-4), IV, 249.
- ⁵⁴ Letter from an informer to Edward Hyde, 29 March 1660, Bodl., MS Clarendon 71, ff. 81-2.
- ⁵⁵ Miles Barton to Edward Hyde, 30 March 1660 in *Ibid.*, f. 107.
- ⁵⁶ Unknown to Edward Hyde, 16 March 1660, transcript from an original MS in the Bodleian Library in Lister, *Life and Administration of Clarendon*, III, 90.
- ⁵⁷ Unknown to Edward Hyde, 23 March 1660, transcript from an original MS in the Bodleian Library in *Ibid.*, III, 93-4.
- ⁵⁸ Lord Broghill to John Thurloe, 24 April 1660, in *A collection of the state papers of John Thurloe, Esq; secretary, first, to the Council of State, and afterwards to the two Protectors, Oliver and Richard Cromwell*, ed. T. Birch (7 vols., 1742), VII, 908. There is no evidence that anyone has yet broken this cipher.
- ⁵⁹ *The diary of Bulstrode Whitelocke*, pp. 551-2.
- ⁶⁰ Lord Broghill to John Thurloe, 2 May 1660, in *TSP*, VII, 911.
- ⁶¹ *The diary of Samuel Pepys*, I, 75.
- ⁶² Edward Hyde to Mordaunt, 17 March 1660, in *CSP*, III, 701.
- ⁶³ Mr Samborne to Edward Hyde, 23 March 1660, in *Ibid.*, pp. 731-2.
- ⁶⁴ *The diary of Samuel Pepys*, I, 79.
- ⁶⁵ Mr Broderick to Edward Hyde, 13 May 1660, in *CSP*, III 747-9.

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