

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CROMWELL ASSOCIATION

# The Protector's Pen

## **Civil War Fortifications**

**Royston War Memorial**

**Cromwell Museum**

**New President**

**Warwickshire Loss Accounts**

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Cromwell Day

Study Day

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Reviews

Vol 26 Issue 2 July 2024

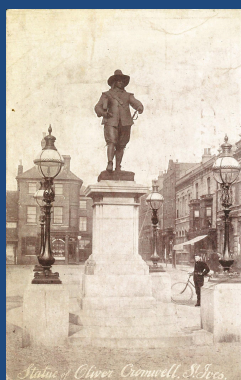
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*Statue of Oliver Cromwell, St Ives.*

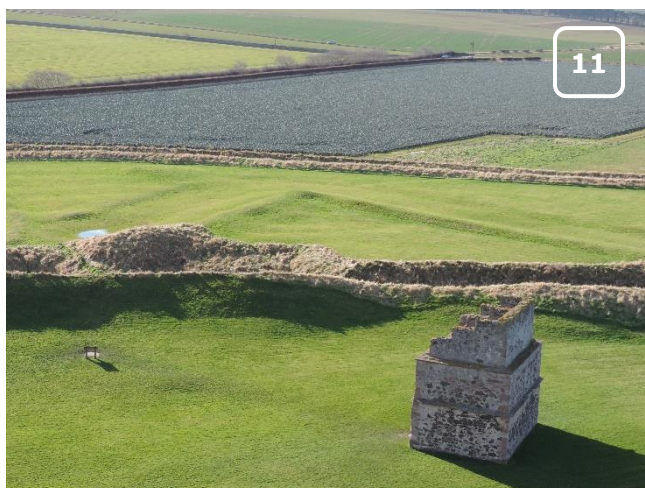
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Cromwell Statue, St Ives  
"Yes or No" postcard series  
(courtesy Cromwell Museum)



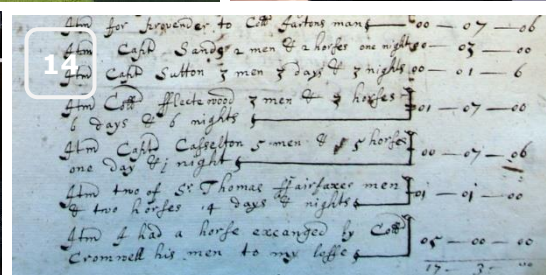
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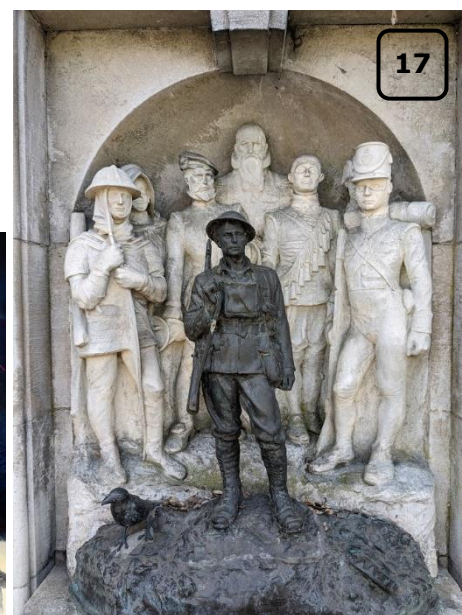
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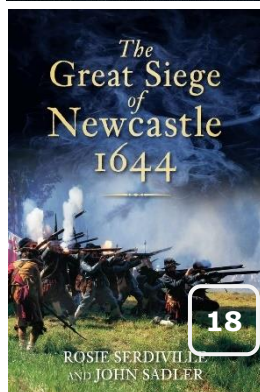
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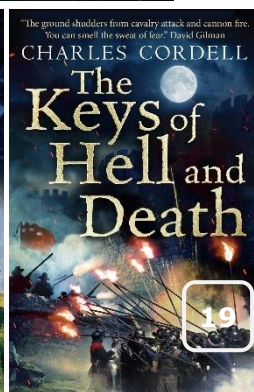
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*The Protector's Pen* is the newsletter of The Cromwell Association. Published twice a year and distributed to our membership, it is also available on our website in the members' area. If additional copies are required, to help promote the Association and our work, please contact our Chair.

The Association is governed by elected officers and Council members. For all matters relating to:

- subscriptions – contact our treasurer - [finance@olivercromwell.org](mailto:finance@olivercromwell.org)
- changes of address and email – contact our membership secretary, Paul Robbins - [membership@olivercromwell.org](mailto:membership@olivercromwell.org)
- all other matters – contact our chair, John Goldsmith - [chair@olivercromwell.org](mailto:chair@olivercromwell.org)

Full mailing addresses for these officers can also be found on your membership card.

|                      |   |                |
|----------------------|---|----------------|
| President            | : | Ismeni Pells   |
| Chair                | : | John Goldsmith |
| Treasurer            | : | Post vacant    |
| Membership Secretary | : | Paul Robbins   |



[www.olivercromwell.org](http://www.olivercromwell.org)



@Cromwellorg

All opinions expressed in *The Protector's Pen* are the views of the authors and not necessarily those of the Association. *The Protector's Pen* is produced twice a year (March and August) for the Cromwell Association and printed by Langham Press. All information is correct at the time of going to press.

Copy date for the next issue: 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025

# Notes from the Chair

Welcome to the summer edition of *The Protector's Pen*

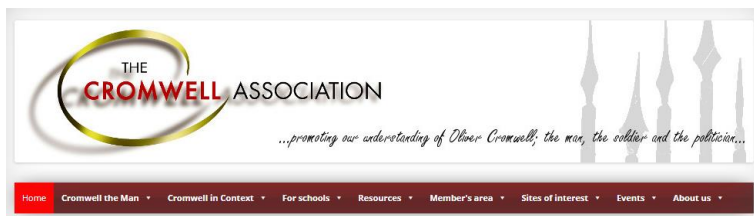
**The Cromwell Association punches well above its weight. Over the last twenty years or so, the range and quality of our activities has increased significantly. Our publications are more attractive and have consistently good quality content. Education activity is well supported and highly regarded. The pattern of an annual study day, which provides significant content for the following year's journal, is well established. The website is well-used and provides a valuable starting point for those who want to find out more about Oliver Cromwell.**

With all these positives it would be reasonable to expect that we would have an ever-increasing membership, and have no trouble in filling officer vacancies, but sadly that is not the case. The key measure of our membership is the number of new annual members we attract. Inevitably there is a churn in all membership organisations, but we are beginning to see a small reduction in our base level of membership. It is still healthy, but we need to be watchful.

I have thought long and hard about this issue, and the opinions expressed here are entirely mine and not an official view of the Association, but as our new president observes elsewhere in this issue, membership organisations are not as attractive as they once were. The answer as to why is not straightforward or simple. Across the board there seems to be a reduction in involvement in civil society. Single issues can motivate some but long-term support and commitment to organisations seems to be in decline.

Regarding the Association, I have a theory, which I am happy to share with you, but I am not sure that I have an answer. In the pre-internet age, which for most of us is now nearly thirty years ago, information retrieval, following an enthusiasm or a passion, usually involved discovering more from books, either in a library, bought or borrowed, and perhaps joining with like-minded people in a society of some kind or other. For those who found a passing interest in Cromwell, they might have come across a reference to the Association, and decided to sign-up, to find out more, and come to an Association event.

The internet has changed that mode of discovery. For those who, for whatever reason, find they have an interest in Cromwell, or more generally in the history of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the first port of call is the internet, and with luck and a helpful search-engine, they will stumble across the Association. All our resources are free, and so they should be (hiding behind a paywall would be totally counter-productive) but there is then little reason for most people to take the next step and actually join, and participate actively, in the Cromwell Association.



Our challenge is to find ways to persuade those with a casual interest to take it one step further and help us to continue to do the work that we do and explore new avenues of interest. Please don't be bashful about your membership, tell others about the Association and encourage them to join.

*John Goldsmith*

Chair  
[chair@olivercromwell.org](mailto:chair@olivercromwell.org)

## News from Council

Council has met twice since the last edition of *The Protector's Pen* was distributed. One was a hybrid meeting and the other entirely by Zoom. Both formats have their advantages and gradually we are adapting to this new style of meeting. There is one significant benefit to participating by Zoom which is that it requires no travel. Members may not be aware, but the Association has never been in a position to pay expenses to council members, who cover their own costs of travel to participate in the governance of the organisation. The most council members can hope for is a cup of tea, and occasionally a biscuit!

At both meetings there have been long discussions about the future of the annual service. Members who have given us an email address were invited to participate in an online survey about the service. There was a sufficient response to demonstrate that, for a significant proportion of the membership, the service is an important and valued part of what we do. For the time being the Association will continue to hold an annual service which will alternate between a London and an out-of-London venue, and will, whenever possible, be held on the first Saturday in September. If the service fails to attract a reasonable attendance, this will be reviewed.

The Association continues to use its resources to support activities that contribute towards our overall charitable objectives. To that end we agreed to support a publishing project by the Dugdale Society, full details of which are in this edition of the newsletter. Our support of postgraduate research continues as does work with schools and teachers. As history departments in many universities are under threat, it is important that we do as much as we can to bolster interest in 17<sup>th</sup> century history at A level, degree and postgraduate level.

The repair of the Cromwell family monument, at Hursley in Hampshire, progresses with the church making an application to the diocesan authorities for permission. Council agreed to fund the preparation of an estimate for a full restoration. Once we have an idea of the scale of costs, we can consider further work.

Council welcomed two new members to our most recent meeting, but the search for a new treasurer continues. It was decided that as appeals to the membership have so far failed, we must now consider other routes to fill this most important of posts.

Council meets again in mid-October. If you have an issue you would like to raise, please contact either the Secretary or Chair: all details are on your membership card enclosed with this mailing.

Contact [chair@olivercromwell.org](mailto:chair@olivercromwell.org) or write to:

John Goldsmith  
25 Fox's Way  
Comberton  
Cambridge  
CB23 7DL

## Association News

### Cromwell Day 2024

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September

This year, for the first time, the Cromwell Association's annual service of commemoration for the life of Oliver Cromwell will be held in St Ives, Cambridgeshire. Seventy-five years ago, in 1949, the Association held the first of many annual services by the Thorneycroft statue of Cromwell outside the Palace of Westminster, on the lawn known as Cromwell Green. It was a fitting location and served the Association well, but the development of the public access route via a ramp on the north side of the Green, and increased security measures and noise pollution, mean that it is no longer an appropriate venue.

Our service has taken place elsewhere on several occasions, memorably at Dunbar in 2000 and since then in Worcester and other locations in London with a Cromwell connection, but never in St Ives.

#### The Guardian

London, Greater London, England •

Sat, Sep 3, 1949

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#### CROMWELL'S DAY

##### To-day's First Memorial Service

By Maurice Ashley

Three hundred years ago to-day Oliver Cromwell began the siege of Drogheda; after the town had refused to surrender he ordered the entire garrison of three thousand to be put to the sword, an action which he mistakenly regarded as "a righteous judgment of God upon these barbarous wretches, who have imbrued their hands in so much innocent blood." Thus opened the campaign that swept Royalism (and perhaps in the long run the English) from Southern Ireland. Exactly a year later Leslie and the Scottish Presbyterians were made "as stibble" to the Round-head swords on the field of Dunbar. Another year went by and King Charles II was crushed—again on September 3—at Worcester, whence the young Stuart was compelled to flee in disguise for his life. Seven more years passed during which Oliver Cromwell rose to be Lord Protector and to refuse the Crown, and then, once more on September 3, he died, the Devil, according to the Royalists, "coming to fetch the regicide's soul."

It was not until some fifty years ago that a statue to the Lord Protector, who had treated his Parliaments in so cavalier a way, was erected outside the Houses of Parliament, the statue being paid for by the Liberal Prime Minister, Lord Rosebery, out of his own pocket. Oliver Cromwell was thus, as Sir Ernest Barker has written, "a late-comer into our national house of fame." And it is only this afternoon that, owing to the devoted efforts of Mr. Isaac Foot, Mr. Russell-Smith, and the Cromwell Association, a memorial service will be held for the first time at the statue on "Cromwell's Day" the scruples of those who could give or withhold permission having been overcome.

#### CHANGING OPINION

Why has this tribute to Cromwell's

veit, and John Buchan, have found a natural place as his biographers.

Thus in the last hundred years there has been a dualism in the appeal of Cromwell's memory: to the radicals, whose guiding star fell into the sea when Bonar Law said his piece at the Carlton Club, and especially to those of Puritan faith or upbringing he stands above all as the man who abhorred the idea of maintaining opinions in religion by force and the incarnation (to quote Sir Ernest Barker again) of the genius of English Nonconformity. To conservatives like John Buchan he is the embodiment of a "corporate discipline" when "minds surfeited with a sleek liberalism are turning to a sterner code." To them he is above all Carlyle's "godlike man" whose return to earth we need. So outside Eire and the narrow circle who worship at the shrine of Charles the Martyr there can be few anti-Cromwellians to-day, though no doubt the Marxists, if they set much store by individuals, would disapprove of a man who disturbed the Diggers and other proto-martyrs of their faith.

#### CROMWELL IN HISTORY

The historical wheel, then, has turned nearly full circle from the days that followed the stormy afternoon when Oliver Cromwell expired and his friends and servants started thinking about making terms with the enemy. And the service to be held at his statue to-day is symbolic of that change of opinion. To the young historian, who searches for an objective judgment and seeks no more to gloss over the massacre of Drogheda or the regime of the Major Generals than to ignore the treacheries and stupidities of King Charles I, perhaps neither Cromwell's advocacy of liberty of conscience nor his suppression of anarchy will count most. What he may remind himself is that without Cromwell's victories, pressing home the protests of the

The town is deeply connected to Cromwell and in many ways could not be a more fitting place to hold our service.

Cromwell only lived in St Ives for five years, from 1631 to 1636, but it was a critical period in his life.

Whilst he was there, he underwent some kind of conversion experience which drove him for the rest of his life. St Ives in the 19<sup>th</sup> and for at least the first part at least of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was not forgetful of Cromwell and was intensely proud of him. The same cannot necessarily be said of its neighbour, and Cromwell's birthplace, Huntingdon. The difference between the two towns was that St Ives was a



Cromwell statue outside the Free Church, St Ives, Huntingdonshire, located on Market Hill.

#### Timetable

- 12:00 Walking tour of St Ives for members and guests, led by Stuart Orme, Curator of the Cromwell Museum  
Followed by lunch
- 14:15 Service at the Free Church, Market Hill
- 15:00 Wreath-laying at statue (immediately outside the church)
- 15:15 Refreshments at Job Tookey's café (church entrance)

(cont'd)

Extract from Guardian in 1949:

First Cromwell Day Service

<https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-guardian-first-service-1949/144288030/>

place of religious independency from the 17<sup>th</sup> through to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The annual service will take place in the Free Church in St Ives at 2.15pm on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September. The Free Church, which is United Reformed, is part of the long non-conformist tradition in the town, and the successor to the first licensed meeting house of 1691. It was designed by John Tarring and was dedicated in 1864. The principal benefactor was local miller Potto Brown, who was himself a great Cromwellian who organised and hosted a Cromwell

Festival and Exhibition in his nearby village of Houghton in 1883.

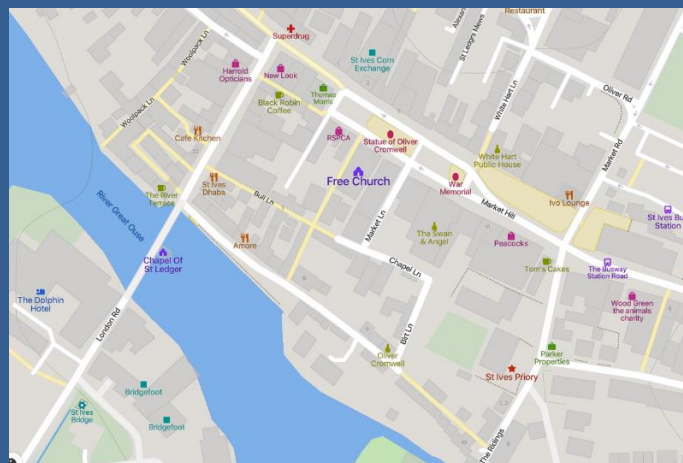
The church is in the marketplace, formally Market Hill (PE27 5AL). The service will follow the traditional pattern of an act of Christian worship and will be conducted by the Rev. Dr Tim Woolley. The address will be given by our new vice president, Dr David Smith, and is entitled *The Lord Protector and the Cavaliers, 1653–58* and will discuss Cromwell's toleration of individuals whilst hating the groups to which they belonged.

Immediately following the service, at approximately 3.00pm, a wreath to commemorate the Lord Protector will be laid by his statue which is immediately outside the church. It is the only statue of Cromwell funded by public subscription, and the only one which depicts him in civilian dress. Designed by Frederick Pomeroy, the statue was unveiled in 1901.

Following the wreath-laying there will be the opportunity to have refreshments in the church café, known as Job Tookey's – named after St Ives' independently-minded vicar, who was almost certainly known by Cromwell.

Prior to the service there will be a walking tour of St Ives for members and guests, led by Stuart Orme, Curator of the Cromwell Museum. Although the town has changed greatly since Cromwell lived there, it has not totally vanished. The walk will start from the statue at 12.00 noon, and places are limited and should be booked in advance. Please see the booking form enclosed with this mailing. There will be plenty of time for lunch before the service.

St Ives is an attractive town which should be hosting a Farmer's Market on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September, so make a day or weekend of it, and join us for our service. The level of support will determine what is organised in the future.



St Ives is not directly served by railways, but it is 5 miles from Huntingdon which is on the East Coast mainline, and 12 miles from Cambridge. A guided busway runs between Huntingdon and Cambridge (see <https://www.thebusway.info/routes-times.shtml>). There are also a number of car parks in the town centre.



## AGM 2024

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April

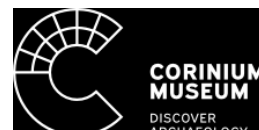
The weather on the nearest Saturday to Cromwell's birthday, 25<sup>th</sup> April, can be hugely variable. Over the last 30 years some have been very warm and sunny, this year it was not! Cirencester on 27<sup>th</sup> April was cold and grey, but thankfully mainly dry.

Our meeting was held in the very comfortable lecture room of the Corinium Museum which celebrates the town's Roman past. Approximately 30 members gathered to participate in the formal business of the AGM: a notable occasion as it was the last of Professor Peter Gaunt's presidency and saw the appointment of our new president, Dr Ismini Pells. After a review of the previously circulated Annual Report and Accounts, with contributions from various members of Council, the Chair, John Goldsmith, commented on how much the Association does. Delivery of the Association's events and publications takes a great deal of effort from a small pool of members to whom he expressed his thanks.

Elections saw the appointment of two new vice presidents, Professor Peter Gaunt and Dr David Smith, as well as two new members of Council, but alas the post of treasurer remains vacant.

There was a brief discussion of the future of Cromwell Day services which remains an unresolved issue. Opinions from members are still welcome.

The AGM concluded with a look forward to planned events for 2024 which promises to be another full and busy year. No decision has yet been made about the venue for the 2025 AGM but it is hoped that it will be possible for it to be held in the Midlands.



## New President

**It was a great honour to be elected president of the Cromwell Association at the AGM in Cirencester in April. When looking down the list of past presidents, it is rather a humbling experience to observe those who have held this position in the years gone by. Many of these names will be well known to members, by reputation and publication, if not in person.**

It goes without saying that my immediate predecessor, Professor Peter Gaunt, is not only amongst the foremost of these authorities on Cromwell and the Civil Wars but has been one of the most active contributors to the Association. Peter succeeded the late Barry Coward in 2009, and served for fifteen years, longer than any other president. His service to the Association is all the more remarkable for the fact that he was chairman for twenty years prior to that. He has presented numerous engaging talks at our events, written prolifically for our publications, and been an approachable and ever-present figure at our various gatherings during this time. We owe him an enormous debt of thanks and I am very aware that his are big shoes to fill.



I have been asked to share my thoughts on how I see the Association progressing over the next few years. So, as an historian when asked to think about the future, I cannot help but look backwards! My thoughts turn to the original purpose of the Cromwell Association when first established in 1937. The purpose of the Association is stated as 'to advance the education of the public in both the life and legacy of Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658), politician, soldier and statesman, and the wider history of the seventeenth century'. How might we fulfil our educational objectives best in the current climate and immediate future?

One of the most successful aspects of the Association's work over the past few years or so is the ever-growing programme for schools. Serrie Meakins deserves huge credit for creating this virtually from scratch and developing successful events such as the Annual Schools' Conference (typically sold out every year) and, for the first time this year, a teachers' inset day. In an age where teachers face extreme time and funding pressures, not to mention conflicts over the nature and

relevancy of the history curriculum, the value of providing tailored, low-cost educational resources cannot be underestimated. Sadly, I do not see these pressures abating any time soon, so I firmly believe that the educational programme is a feature of the Association's work which should continue to flourish and be given long-term sustainability.

Of course, the pressures that I have just described are not unique to the teaching of history in schools and it is well documented that many history departments in universities are facing similar challenges. It is therefore pleasing to see that the Association has, in its own small way, started to develop support for university students. In 2022, the Postgraduate Research Grant was established, which provides funding for postgraduate students engaged in research topics relevant to the Association's core objective. University personnel, especially postgraduate students and (often precariously employed) postdoctoral academics, ought to be a key target for fulfilling our charitable objectives and enhancing our membership. How we can provide support in this area should be a priority going forward.

Finally, education is not and should not be restricted to educational establishments. As members will know well, the Association supports a host of public-facing educational initiatives, including commissioning plaques, panels and monuments at sites associated with Cromwell, publishing the annual journal *Cromwelliana* and regular newsletter *The Protector's Pen*, and organising conferences, lectures, and other educational events. These are sustained largely by the income received from membership fees and any profits made on events. I am delighted that at this present time, both our membership and events programme are in a very healthy position. However, I do not think we should be complacent. It has been observed across the charitable educational sector that membership organisations are less attractive to the public than they once were. It is vital that we continue to evaluate what we offer to members, to ensure that it best meets their needs and interests. We may also need to consider shifting the responsibility for the balance of income further towards events, rather than relying on the membership model, so it is imperative that our events are attractive, value for money and in keeping with our core purpose and public need. The Council and I are always open for feedback and suggestions. Please do come and introduce yourself to me at future events – I shall look forward to meeting you and it will be both a pleasure and honour to serve you as president.

*Dr Ismini Pells*

## Postgraduate Research Grant 2024

The Cromwell Association's Postgraduate Research Grant of up to £1,500 was offered again this year. An academic panel from the Council assessed the applications, and the standard was very high. It was decided that three awards should be made to enable the students to carry out archival research. Our award winners and their thesis titles are:

**Euan McArthur** (University of St Andrews): 'The Isle of Man in English historical thought, c.1648–1776'

**Courtney MacPhee** (Stanford University): 'Imperial Apocalypse: Millenarian Visions for the British Atlantic World, c.1640–1660'

**Elizabeth Hines** (University of Chicago): 'Anglo-Dutch Commerce, Religion, and War, 1634–1652'

We look forward to hearing more from each of our winners about their research in due course.

## Study Day 2024 – New perspectives on the trial of Charles I

### Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2024 – Friends Meeting House, Oxford

This year marks the 375<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the trial and execution of Charles I. Our annual Study Day will focus on the legacy, memory and afterlives of these momentous events, featuring new research from leading academics into the people involved, and the impact on both them and society. The full programme and booking form is enclosed with this mailing.

Our Study Day provides the opportunity to explore a subject in depth and is a practical example of how the Association provides a bridge between the academic and non-academic worlds.

If you have never attended a Study Day before, please do take advantage of your membership and come along. The venue for the event is the Friends Meeting House in Oxford. It is a comfortable room set in the garden of 43 St Giles', OX1 3LW. The cost includes coffee on arrival and a buffet lunch. Priced at £40 for members it represents very good value for what promises to be an interesting day.

St Giles' is less than a mile from Oxford railway station, or if travelling by car the best option is to use the Pear Tree park-and-ride site, on the north side of Oxford, and allow approximately 15 minutes for the frequent park-and-ride buses which stop on St Giles'.



Friends Meeting House,  
43 St Giles', Oxford

## Schools' History Conference 2024

### Huntingdon, 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024

On the hottest day of the year to date, 130 A level students and their teachers met in the Assembly Room of Huntingdon Town Hall to participate in the Association's annual Schools' Conference. The format of the day followed the tried and tested model that has been developed over the last ten years. Four historians of the 17<sup>th</sup> century debated three subjects relevant to the A level syllabus.



The speakers for the day, l-r, Professor Peter Gaunt, Professor Jason Peacey, Dr David Smith, Dr Kate Peters.

Dr David Smith (University of Cambridge) and Professor Peter Gaunt (University of Chester) debated *Were long term factors more significant in the outbreak of war in 1642 than short term problems?* which was chaired by Professor Jason Peacey (University College, London). Professor Gaunt and Dr Kate Peters (University of Cambridge) debated *Was Charles I responsible for the royalist defeat in the civil war?* chaired by Dr Smith. Professor Peacey and Dr Peters concluded the morning session by debating *Was political radicalism or religious radicalism more important in shaping the course of events between 1646 and 1660?* which was chaired by Professor Gaunt.

The debates were listened to very attentively and pages of notes taken. To hear historians putting forward alternative views and interpretations is an important feature of the day, and helps students comprehend both how historians work and that there are no right and wrong answers, just different answers. The intention is to put audio recordings of the debates on our website – they are well worth listening to, and not just for those studying for A levels.

In the afternoon a series of workshops, led by the historians, looked in detail at documentary sources, while Stuart Orme of the Cromwell Museum looked at artefactual sources.



Dr Peters conducted her workshop under the watchful eye of Oliver Cromwell.

The day was a great success, and thanks are due to the quartet of speakers, the organiser Serrie Meakins and our host for the day, Stuart Orme and his team at the museum.

## Note from our Treasurer

### Subscription increases

Subscriptions for 2024/2025 are due and payable on 3<sup>rd</sup> September (except for life members). We have held the rate for UK members as before. However, the mailing costs for overseas members, especially for those outside Europe, have spiralled to such an extent that, regrettably, we are obliged to increase some subscriptions. Thus, non-UK members who wish to continue receiving hard-copy mailings will pay as follows:

- Members with addresses in Europe: the rate for a single member will rise from £35 to £40.
- Members with overseas addresses outside Europe: the rate for a single member will rise from £35 to £45.

If members outside the UK are happy to receive digital only instead of printed copy, membership is offered at the rate of £27 (the same as a UK member), irrespective of overseas geography.

Digital only membership is not, currently, available to members in the UK.

The new rates are on the enclosed Membership Renewal Form – we very much hope that you will renew your membership, whichever category you fall into.

### Are you paying twice?

Many thanks to the large number of donors each year.

However, there are some members who are unconscious donors by double-paying their subscriptions. They may have forgotten that they already have an annual standing order but still issue a cheque or make a Paypal transfer.

So can I please ask that members check they make just one annual subscription.

Of course, all donations are most welcome!

*Geoffrey Bush*

Retired, but still acting-Treasurer.

## Teachers Inset Day

### Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024



The first Teachers Inset day organised by the Cromwell Association took place at the National Civil War Centre in Newark, and we were very grateful for their kind hospitality (and excellent lunch!).

Twenty-six A level history teachers gathered to hear lectures, by our own Professor Peter Gaunt, and Professor Edward Vallance, about the new research that has been done over the last 10 years into the origins and causes of the Civil War and into the nature of Radicalism. Two experienced A level teachers, Carina Ancell and Alex Cazaly, gave a very well received workshop on using source material based on the Petitions Project. In the afternoon Ted and Peter led a Q&A session covering new research into Oliver Cromwell himself and into the Parliamentary experiments in the 1650s. Peter ended the session on a rousing note, with a recounting of new work that maintained that the Protectorate could have continued given the right circumstances.



The museum provided a very warm welcome and many teachers enjoyed touring the exhibits during the lunch period.

All the talks were very well received by the teachers, and it seems very likely that the Inset Day will become a regular feature in the future education calendar of the Association. My grateful thanks to Peter, Ted, Carina and Alex for making the day so successful, despite the best efforts of Network Rail to 'derail' us!

*Serrie Meakins*

## New Members of Council

**At the Cirencester AGM two new members were elected to serve on Council, as trustees, for the next three years.**

Michael Hardy, who has contributed to this issue of *The Protector's Pen* (the 'On my bookshelf' article), has recently retired from the post of Chief Executive of Northumberland Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority, having previously been a solicitor in private practice. His historical interests are wide-ranging, with a special enthusiasm for Cromwell and the civil war.

He is joined on Council by Waseem Ahmed who is currently researching his PhD at University College, London, on everyday politics from 1649 to 1660. Waseem is a graduate of the University of Birmingham, where he also studied for an MA in Early Modern History, with the submission of his dissertation *Monarchical Cromwellians and the Restoration*.

Our two new recruits to Council represent what the Association is all about: lay interest and enthusiasm for the subject, and new academic research. Both are very welcome.

# Walking tour of Cirencester

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Following lunch at the AGM, a group of members ventured out with local guide Ian Thomas to a thankfully dry, but slightly chilly day, to hear a very interesting and informative talk on the storming of the town in the year 1643. Cirencester had been held by Royalist troops previously, but it was now controlled by Parliamentary troops.

We were informed by Ian that due to the strategic position of Cirencester, both sides, Parliament and Royalist armies, were eager to hold the town.

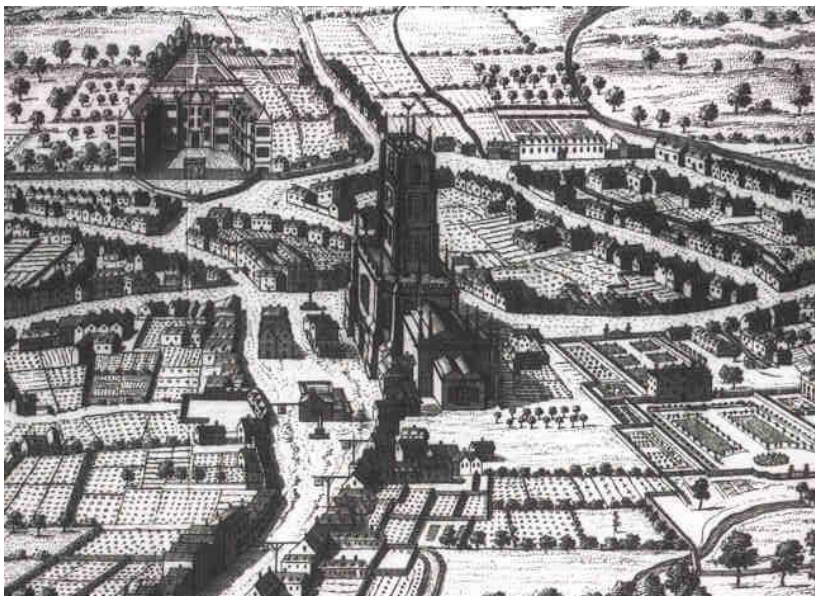
As we walked around this now peaceful and tranquil town, Ian painted a picture of determination, courage, and unfortunately, the brutality of this period of Cirencester's history. With Ian's descriptions of the events, maps and illustrations, which he passed around, it helped give a more comprehensive understanding of the positions of the troops. And with vivid descriptions of how the battle unfolded, Ian brought the events to life.

The tour lasted for an hour which quickly passed due to the expertise of our guide. We finished where we had started, outside the Corinium Museum. At this point questions were asked, which added to the value and enjoyment of the tour.

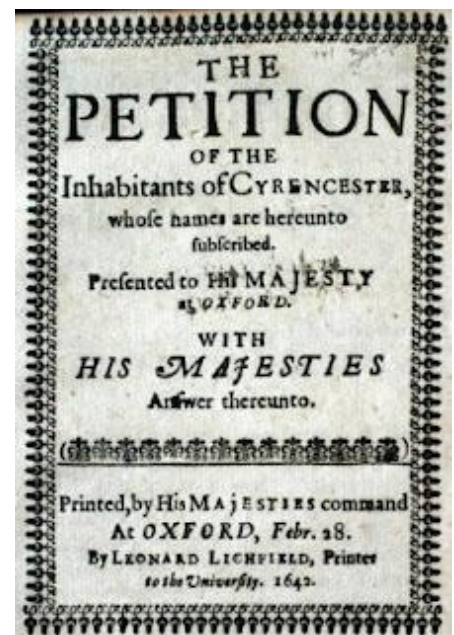


Cirencester is a town I wish to visit again to find out more about this period of Cirencester's history.

*Paul Robbins*



Town tour: Civil War print of Cirencester



## Uses and abuses

Member Gary Stocker has been in touch to say that his place of work, within the University of Warwick, regularly uses *Cromwell Tools* for the supply of a range of industrial products. Their name derives from where the company first started, Cromwell Crescent in Market Harborough. Presumably the street's name is linked to the nearby site of the Battle of Naseby. For many years the company logo was a lobster-tail helmet which played on the Cromwell link, but a quick look at their website, [www.cromwell.co.uk](http://www.cromwell.co.uk), reveals that they now use a stylised capital letter C.

Could this rebranding be linked to their takeover by an American company in 2015?

If you come across any uses, or abuses, of the name that strike you as odd or amusing, please send them in.



## AGM talk: Lord Chandos's Coach – Cirencester and the outbreak of the English Civil Wars

Nick Poyntz began his lecture by saying that he had been involved for a quarter of a century in studying the English Civil Wars. It was the incident concerning Lord Chandos's Coach that had been the catalyst which had drawn him into the study of this period and the local area. This event had taken place in Cirencester during 15–16 August 1642 and was one of the first skirmishes of the Civil War in England; indeed, Charles I didn't raise his Standard in Nottingham until a few days after this had happened.

He placed Cirencester in its wider context, both in its physical location and in the politics and wider social culture of the early 1640s. As a place on the map, Cirencester was a key crossroads for major routes and was therefore of strategic importance both militarily and economically.

By 1642 Cirencester had a population of about 3,000 people and had been for a long time a significant centre for clothmaking. The outlying areas would weave and spin the cloth and send it into the town for finishing; when processed it would be dispatched to London. In terms of politics, by 1640 and the elections to Parliament, the town had the widest franchise in the country, with the right to vote based not on property but on a wider male suffrage. As well, there was a pronounced Puritan influence. The local vicar was very much of that view and was installed as vicar by an organised Puritan group as far back as the mid-1620s. By summer 1642, Cirencester was fully aware of the politics of the day, both local and national.

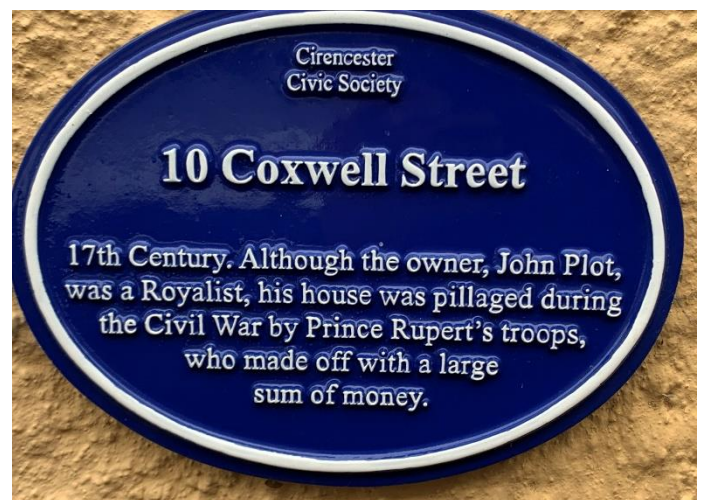
In the summer of 1642 Parliament and the king squared up to each other. Armed conflict was clearly coming. To this end, each issued their Commission to all the Lords Lieutenant requiring them to raise troops for *their* cause and their cause only. This compelled each Lord Lieutenant to decide who they were going to support and for whom they would raise troops – Parliament or the king. For Cirencester, the Lord Lieutenant was Lord Chandos and as a loyal state official he determined that his duty was to support Charles I and raise men for the king.

On 15 August 1642, Lord Chandos and some companions arrived in Cirencester to carry out his Commission to raise troops. He was not well-received by the Parliamentary-minded townspeople. Chandos was threatened and compelled to sign a pro-Parliamentary declaration. He retired to the major coaching inn in the town, the King's Head. During the night, after the crowd had dispersed, he was spirited safely out of Cirencester by his companions.

The next day, 16 August 1642, the townspeople discovered Lord Chandos was gone but had left behind his coach when making his escape. Faced with this, they vented their anger by dragging the coach to the market square and smashing it to bits. Politically, this had been an intervention by the people of the town in stopping Lord Chandos working for the king. However, that wasn't the end of the story.

In 1643, with the Civil War in full swing, the Royalists under Prince Rupert attacked and took Cirencester and much damage was caused to the fabric of the town. Those considered to be ringleaders in the incident were rounded up and marched to Oxford where they had to beg for their lives. Their lives were spared and they returned home. Once back, the radical unity of the town dissipated, and people opted for a quiet life.

The incident is marked in the town today by a Blue Plaque and a painting of the attack on the coach by nineteenth century artist John Beecham. Although clearly overshadowed by the Civil War which followed, the event remains a signal of note of the conflict which was to come and a sign of people standing up for themselves and of what they won't put up with.



*John Newland*

**Nick Poyntz** is an independent scholar with a long-term interest in the history of the area and was winner of the Cromwell Association essay prize in 2006.

He published an article on the subject of his talk in *Midland History*, 35, 1 (2010), a version of which is available at <https://mercuriuspoliticus.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/the-attack-on-lord-chandos-final.pdf>

### Social Media

The Cromwell Association's social media presence is expanding. In addition to our X (formerly known as Twitter) account, you can now find us on **Facebook** and **Mastodon**. Follow us to keep up to date with the Association's news and events, and contact us via any of these platforms if you have any events to share which would be of interest to our members.



@cromwellorg



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For any queries relating to our social media please contact [socialmedia@olivercromwell.org](mailto:socialmedia@olivercromwell.org)

# The Civil War Fortifications Register (CWFR)



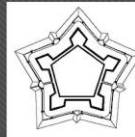
Cromwell's Castle (left) and King Charles' Castle, Tresco, Isles of Scilly

The violence and destruction of the Wars of the Three Kingdoms reached right across the British Isles. Even if an area was fortunate enough to escape any actual fighting, the sight of armed men would not have been uncommon. Who knew where warring armies might turn next or so-called friendly soldiers might turn hostile in search of food or shelter? Armies would strip the countryside for supplies, and once gathered, these would need to be transported: the resulting supply columns would be protected by hundreds of soldiers. Coastal districts faced the attention of opposing navies or privateers, and occasionally foreign warships too. So regardless of strategic importance or loyalty, places up and down the country protected themselves, and hundreds of towns, castles, and houses were fortified. But this might have been counter-productive and might actually have brought the war closer:

*The slight retrenching and garrisoning of many towns of no great strength by nature and situation, though it may by nature and situation, though it may serve for the present securing of particular counties, and particular men's estates from plundering parties, yet they are prejudicial to the public, and to the main of the wars, (Joshua Spriggs, Anglia Rediviva 1647).*

A 2012 study identified 242 sieges in England, and as some places were besieged more than once (Basing House and Newark are just two examples), 189 siege sites were identified in total; this compares with 30 major battles in England between 1640 and 1651. For every major battle which took place in England between 1642 and 1651 there were eight sieges. But for every major siege there would have been several other actions including the forced surrender of a garrison, a surrender resulting from an action elsewhere, or the fall of a town following a battle outside its walls. Then there were the places that were fortified, such as London, but were spared any actual fighting. Unfortunately, whether a place was besieged or not largely seems to be the determining factor whether a fortress was included in histories of the period.

One of the few surviving Cromwellian fortifications in England, Cromwell's Castle was built after the conquest of the Royalist-held Scilly Islands in 1651 and protects the anchorage between the islands of Bryher and Tresco. Cromwell's Castle is overlooked by the earlier Tudor fort, subsequently known as King Charles' Castle.



David Flintham - Military Historian

Home About King's Lynn Under Siege The CWFR Defences of London Civil War Fortifications Register (CWFR) EDW Sieges & Fortifications Helion Vaudan Gallery More

## Civil War Fortifications Register (CWFR)

The research undertaken by Glenn Foard and Richard Morris (*Archaeology of English Battlefields*, 2012) demonstrated that for every major battle which took place in England between 1642 and 1651 there were eight sieges. But as research carried out by the British Civil Wars Project demonstrates, this represents but a fraction of the actual fighting as for every battle there were numerous actions and other minor actions. The same applies to sieges, and for every siege there would have been other types of hostile activity including the forced surrender of a garrison, a surrender resulting from an action elsewhere, or the fall of a town following a battle outside its walls. Unfortunately, whether a place was besieged or not largely seems to be the determining factor whether a fortress was included in the histories of the period. Recognising the need to identify every place that was fortified during the Civil Wars (regardless of its actual role in the fighting), covering Britain and Ireland, and inspired by the British Civil War Project ([www.wiki.bcw-project.org](http://www.wiki.bcw-project.org)) led to the creation, in 2017, of a project to develop a list of every fortified place: the Civil War Fortifications Register (CWFR) was born.

It started with a list of 827 fortresses, and has since grown to 956, then 1,078, and now (1st May 2023) 1,104 fortresses.

The initial findings have been published as part of *The Town Well Fortified*.

Initially, the register is based on secondary sources (the guiding principle being that any entry would need to be listed separately in at least two sources), although as the project develops, entries are being cross-referenced with primary sources.

As a result, the need to identify every place fortified during the Civil Wars, covering both Great Britain and Ireland, and inspired by the *British Civil War Project*, led me, in 2017, to create the Civil War Fortifications Register (CWFR). Six years into the project, its initial results were presented at Helion's *Century of the Soldier* Conference in April 2023.

The register currently lists 1,105 places that were fortified, of which 675 (61%) witnessed some sort of hostile 'action'. Breaking this down by country, there were 662 fortified places in England, of which 393 (59%) saw some sort of action. In Ireland the figures were 231 and 109 (47%), for Scotland they were 118 and 94 (80%), and in Wales, there were 73 fortified places, of

(cont'd)

which 58 (79%) saw action. England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales each had differing fortress characteristics. For instance, the number of fortified towns, castles and manor houses combined make up more than three-quarters of the total number of fortresses in England. Nearly two-thirds of Irish fortresses were castles or artillery forts, whilst in both Scotland and Wales castles made up more than half of the total number of Civil War fortresses.



Tantallon Castle (David Flintham)

Tantallon Castle threatened the English line of communication during its conquest of Scotland 1650–1, and was successfully besieged by Monck in 1651. Of particular note is the V-shaped ravelin built by the defenders.

As a result of Tudor foreign policy, during the sixteenth century, the focus shifted from internal security to coastal protection, resulting in a significant number of fortifications being built along the coast from Cornwall around to Suffolk and beyond, whilst in Ireland, during the 40 years following the Spanish Armada, some 16 artillery forts were constructed. But come the Civil Wars, the trend was temporarily reversed, with seven (out of ten) of the most heavily defended English counties being landlocked.

Across England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, 235 towns, cities, and ports were fortified. England contributed two-thirds of these with 157 (this was just under a quarter of the total number of English fortresses). A total of 42 Irish fortresses were towns or ports, whilst in Scotland there were 17, and 19 in Wales. In Ireland, Scotland and Wales, castles remained the dominant type of fortress. This demonstrates both the importance of the urban-based garrison in England, and also suggests that the nature of the fighting in Ireland, Scotland and Wales was generally different.

In England, originally the building of castles was predominately a rural phenomenon. In the immediate post-Conquest period, most of the towns in England that were centres of Anglo-Saxon regional administration had castles imposed upon them, numbering some 48 places across England by the early twelfth century. By the end of the sixteenth century, England might have had as many as 1,474 castles, but by the time of the Civil Wars, most castles had long outgrown their usefulness as defensive structures, and many were ruinous.

However, the Civil Wars can be seen as the swansong of the castle, a time when this decay and decline was briefly paused, and many castles were pressed back into service, despite the fact that 'not all castles were fit for use at this time; indeed, the majority had undoubtedly passed beyond that stage' (M. W. Thompson, *The Decline of the Castle*, 1987). At the outbreak of the war, many castles, even those in a ruinous state, were reoccupied and garrisoned. In some instances, the internal fabric of the castle was repaired, strengthened, or improved. At Chepstow Castle, for instance, musket loops were cut into existing walls, and embrasures for cannon added; musket loops were cut into the walls at Raglan Castle; gun-platforms were constructed at Restormel, whilst an internal bastion-shaped earthwork was constructed at Corfe Castle to provide a view across the village below. But all sides took steps to refortify or reuse them, regardless of their state. There are many examples, including Oliver Cromwell's Cambridge, where the castle had been abandoned in the fifteenth century; the Parliamentary governor wrote in 1643 'our town and castle are now very strongly fortified being encompassed with breast-works and bulwarks'. In total, in England during the Civil Wars, some 142 castles were refortified, and of these, 96 were subject to attention by hostile forces. Elsewhere (the figures for hostile attention are bracketed), in Ireland, the figures were 71 (31) castles, Scotland it was 69 (59), and finally in Wales it was 39 (31) castles.



A fragment of Oxford's Civil War fortifications survives in the form of a stretch of rampart in the grounds of Wadham College (David Flintham)

During the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, landowners rejected their fortified castles in favour of the stately manor house. Like castles, country houses could be of considerable strategic importance, but as they tended to be owned by the leaders of the respective sides, they might be targeted simply because they belonged to a member of the opposition. Yet despite occupying properties built for peace rather than for war, many did try to defend their homes, and where the existing brick and stone walls seemed inadequate, they reinforced them with earthworks. Of the 662 English fortresses, 177 were fortified houses and represent the largest fortress type. Fortified manor houses were of far less significance elsewhere in the British Isles: in Ireland, Scotland and Wales combined, there were just 26 fortified manor houses.

(cont'd)

Churches could also be transformed into places of strength. According to the CWFR, 24 churches in England were thus transformed, and of these, 13 received some sort of hostile attention. Finally, the oldest site to be transformed into a fortress during the Civil Wars was the neolithic henge site of Maumbury Rings at Dorchester. The CWFR is also analysing and comparing bastions and defensive ditches, as well as identifying four, five and six-bastion forts.



Maumbury Rings, Dorchester (David Flinham)

Maumbury Rings is a Neolithic henge to the south of Dorchester. Modified during the Romano-British period; and again in the Civil War when a gun platform was added to the south-west, and possibly to the south-east and north-west

This project is revealing a fortified landscape previously only glimpsed at: the findings so far have been published in *The Town Well Fortified*. The register will expand as fresh discoveries are made, and it is anticipated that the CWFR will initiate new research into individual sites. It will continue to enhance and increase knowledge of this extremely significant aspect of the Civil Wars and, in so doing, raise the importance of the Civil War fortress amongst historians and public alike.

*David Flinham*

**David Flinham** is a military historian specialising in the fortifications of the 'English' Civil Wars. A member of the Cromwell Association, he is co-founder and project director of the 'King's Lynn under Siege' community archaeology project – see *The Protector's Pen* March 2023. In 2022 he co-organised the first ever ECW Fortress symposium and co-edited its proceedings. His latest book, *The Town Well Fortified*, was published by Helion in 2023 (reviewed in *Cromwelliana* in 2024)

**For further reading see:**

Glenn Foard and Richard Morris, *Archaeology of English Battlefields*, (Council for British Archaeology, 2012)

David Flinham, 'Seats of War', in the *Proceedings of the 2023 Century of the Soldier Conference*, (Helion, 2024)

David Flinham, *The Town Well Fortified, the Fortresses of the Civil Wars in Britain, 1639–1660*, (Helion, 2023)

David Flinham, Military Historian: <https://www.vauban.co.uk/>

## Reattribution of Cromwell portrait

The Cambridge college attended by Oliver Cromwell is putting right a centuries-old mix-up over one of his portraits. When Sidney Sussex received a pastel portrait of the Protector in 1766 the donor stated that it was 'drawn by Cooper'. This information was incorporated in the picture's label and copied in numerous guides. In his 1959 study of the contemporary portraits of Oliver Cromwell, David Piper of the National Portrait Gallery stated that it was after, and not by, Samuel Cooper. Then, in 1985, J.W. Goodison came to the conclusion that it was based on Sir Peter Lely's portrait-pattern of Cromwell, which has slightly more elongated proportions.

As the final part of an extensive campaign of cleaning and rehangng the college pictures, Richard Humphreys, the college's Keeper of Pictures, is commissioning new labels to reflect current art-historical knowledge. That for the pastel will read: Probably after Sir Peter Lely, *Oliver Cromwell*, 17<sup>th</sup> century.



Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658),  
Alumnus of Sidney Sussex  
(by permission of the Master and Fellows  
of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge)

The pastel is one of three portraits of Cromwell owned by the college, two of which are assigned to the Lely workshop. Dutch-born Peter Lely came to London in the early 1640s and established himself as one of the leading portrait painters, employing several apprentices or assistants who often completed his work. Sidney Sussex College archivist Nicholas Rogers said: 'Cromwell would have posed for an original drawing which was then used in the workshop to produce a number of official copies.' It was to Lely, according to George Vertue, that Cromwell addressed his famous instruction to paint him 'warts and everything as you see me'. After the Restoration Lely was appointed principal painter to Charles II and knighted in 1679.

Since the 2000s the pastel portrait has graced one of the wood-panelled walls of a college combination room, traditionally used for after-dinner drinks and conversation. It was previously on display in the dining hall where it was sometimes covered by a green curtain. According to local legend, it was hidden from view at dinner when the loyal toast was made to the monarch. But Mr Rogers said this was a 'story cooked up by the undergraduates'. The picture's donor, the 18<sup>th</sup> century republican Thomas Hollis, had simply stipulated it should be protected from sunlight. The curtain was taken down when it was rehung in the combination room which is heavily curtained and where there is not much natural light. 'I've seen a photograph of the late Queen at the Sidney Sussex Quatercentenary dinner with the uncovered portrait in the background, so I don't think anyone thought it was disloyal', Mr Rogers added.

# Warwickshire Loss Accounts

'Colonell Cromwells souldiers did breake [into] my house'



The Dugdale Society

The activities of Cromwell and his troops in the First Civil War in Warwickshire are revealed in a series of fascinating financial accounts (the subject of an innovative volunteer transcription project) to be published later this year by the county's Dugdale Society. Warwickshire has the largest number of Loss Accounts of any county in England and Wales and the volumes will include transcriptions of nearly 200 found so far, covering around three-quarters of the county's parishes. Since Warwickshire was, with its neighbouring counties, a major battleground, the Accounts offer a unique civilian perspective on the activities of hundreds of named individual officers and soldiers who caused widespread suffering to the county's inhabitants.

The Accounts emerged through the political tensions between County Committees conducting the war, and the local sub-committees of Accounts established to bring them to account (in every sense) for their military activity. The two Warwickshire sub-committees, in Coventry and Warwick, ordered local communities to account for all financial and material losses from Parliamentary activity from the beginning of the Long Parliament in November 1640 to December 1646, and often into summer 1647. They were to include costs from loans, taxes, losses of money, plate, horses, arms, household goods, rents or provisions, and the expenses of providing free quarter. The names of the officers, soldiers or officials who had received or

seized the items were also required, hence the many references to Cromwell's troops, and countless others. Most of the original documents can be found in the class SP 28, at The National Archives (TNA), but a few are elsewhere at TNA, in local Record Offices or, in one case, at the British Library.

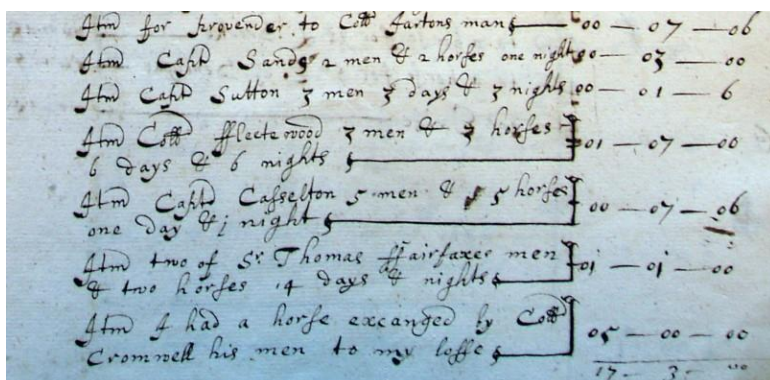
The resulting Accounts are a unique resource for family and parish historians, since hundreds of bills from named individuals, and the taxes paid to constables and local officials, are included. Lists of the clothes, household and shop goods, tools of trade, livestock and horses plundered by passing troops or in targeted night-time raids, provide evidence of lifestyles, livelihoods and farming. For military enthusiasts, hundreds of officers and soldiers are named, often with details of the free quarter they demanded or the plunder they took. One was Oliver Cromwell, usually described as *Colonel*, sometimes as *Lieutenant-General* or *General* and occasionally as *Captain*. A wealthy Warwick gentleman *a little after* Edgehill, for instance, claimed for hosting *Captaine Cromwell* and 25 horses, and later *Collonell Cromwell his sonn* (presumably Oliver junior), his quarter master, 2 servants, 5 horses for a night, providing them all with 2 meals.

What was Cromwell doing in Warwickshire between 1642 and 1647? Not a great deal, according to Philip Tennant who used the Loss Accounts extensively in his *The People's War in the South Midlands, 1642–1645*. Arriving late at the battle of Edgehill, a story arose of Cromwell hiding

in fear in Burton Dassett church tower, swinging down the bell-rope to flee across the fields. Tennant suggests lack of strategy and quarrels in the parliamentary hierarchy meant Cromwell was engaged 'in futile marching to and fro on the fringes of action' rather than taking a decisive role. He might have attacked the Queen's army crossing Warwickshire en route from Bridlington to Oxford in 1643, or taken Banbury during Parliament's siege in autumn 1644. In May 1645, shortly before the battle of Naseby, Cromwell with Major-General Browne made a *fruitless expedition into Warwickshire* with 7,000 New Model Army troops. Continually in the saddle, Cromwell dined at Warwick with the governor on 14 May and visited Coventry and Kenilworth for consultation with local commanders but was recalled to join Fairfax near Oxford on 22 May and then ordered to march into East Anglia.

The result of Cromwell's incursions were days, sometimes weeks, when his soldiers were quartered throughout Warwickshire, setting up Courts of Guard while he awaited orders. His men are found in over 60 parishes, not only in east Warwickshire but as far west as Wishaw, Knowle and Binton. It was not unusual for 100 or 200 troopers and horses to be billeted on one small community. *Freequarter Borne and Suffered* (as it was described by Brinklow's inhabitants) required suitable 'diet' and accommodation for officers and common soldiers and feeding over-worked army horses with precious malt, oats, barley and hay. In the impoverished parish of Lea Marston a weaver *quartered 4 men, 5 horses of Colonell Cromwells 4s, they had of him in money 2s* as even the poorest were forced to provide. Women often accompanied their menfolk on the march and a Southam man had to provide quarter for *Leivtenant Mercer under Comand of Collonell Cromwell & his wife & 2 men and 3 horses 3 dayes*. Parishes not required to provide quarter were forced to send provisions and fodder to those that were. Cavalry and pack horses, oxen and stolen cattle needed grazing and at Bubbenhall one man complained of *almost a whole regiment of Leivtenant Generall Cromwells horse in my mowing grasse, part of one night* as Cromwell and Browne marched to Oxford.

(cont'd)



'An extract from the account submitted by Clifton-on-Dunsmore parish, Warwickshire, CR4392. Thanks to Warwickshire County Record Office

in fear in Burton Dassett church tower, swinging down the bell-rope to flee across the fields. Tennant suggests lack of strategy and quarrels in the parliamentary hierarchy meant Cromwell was engaged 'in futile

Poorly-paid soldiers resorted to merciless plundering. On 19 and 20 May 1645, a *Reg[i]ment* of Cromwell's soldiers [took] *away Mault & oates & a locke broken, all my beare drunke my provision eaten & taken away with certaine of my goods valued at £4 by a Fillongley gentleman who had lost his and his wife's clothes, money and other goods the year before. Marching armies took food, livestock and plunder. A Stoneleigh resident susteyned losses by Colonell Cromwells men marching through taking 'bredd drinke meate butter Cheeses henns and other household goodes' worth £1. The theft of household goods often included personal*

items such as the *Bible & testament* plundered by Cromwell's men at Stretton-on-Dunsmore, while at Long Itchington his soldiers stole *3 Sheep and 5 lambes worth £3 3s 4d*. Horses were constantly required, sometimes bought, often exchanged for worn-out animals and frequently stolen.

What was the impact on the civilian population? The words 'suffering', 'damage' and 'loss' and incidents of night-time house-breaking, like that quoted in the title of this piece, occur frequently in the Accounts. Insights into the human cost of the war had a considerable impact on the 30 volunteers, inexperienced in reading Secretary Hand, who signed up for

the Loss Accounts project in 2018. Recruited from Local History and other groups across Warwickshire, they were supported by volunteers from the Dugdale Society, the County Record Office and its Friends group. This successful two-year project saw 26 volunteers complete

at least one transcription, and often many more, absorbing information from monthly workshops, expert talks, visits, reading and their own research, with 19 later progressing to another Dugdale Society transcription project. To ensure a physical copy of their transcriptions exists beyond the digital version launched in 2022, the Dugdale Society is publishing an edition of all the Loss Accounts with an introduction and full indexes, and we are most grateful to the Cromwell Association for its donation towards the cost of these volumes.

*Maureen Harris*

Note: The Dugdale Society has agreed to offer a discount to Association members on the volumes when published. Further details will be given as soon as they are available.

**For further reading see:**

Philip Tennant, *Edgehill and Beyond: the People's War in the South Midlands, 1642–1645* (Banbury Historical Society, Volume 23, 1992)

Ann Hughes, 'The Accounts of the Kingdom: Memory, Community and the English Civil War', *Past and Present* 230 (2016) Supplement 11 (2016), pp. 311–329

<http://www.dugdale-society.org.uk/>



Volunteer transcribers at a monthly meeting of the project (courtesy Maureen Harris)

## Family opening 17<sup>th</sup> century stately home to public

A Grade I-listed stately home, whose owner is one of the 12<sup>th</sup> generation of his family to live there, is to be opened to the public for the first time.

Blyth Hall near Coleshill, Warwickshire, was originally bought 399 years ago by historian Sir William Dugdale, who was part of King Charles I's court.



Blyth Hall, Coleshill, Warwickshire (Blyth Hall, One Media Shed)

The 17<sup>th</sup> century scholar Sir William Dugdale, who bought the hall in 1625, was 'arguably the greatest historian of his era', according to Blyth Hall. Mr Dugdale said he 'became the highest-ranked herald in the land, the Garter Principal King of Arms. In addition to sort of keeping track of which families had which coats of arms and stuff like that, he would also be responsible for the odd punishment as well of errant nobles'.



Sir William Dugdale was a 17<sup>th</sup> century scholar and landowner (Blyth Hall, One Media Shed)

Even under Oliver Cromwell, after Charles's execution in 1649, William's research was considered so important he was allowed to keep working while under house arrest and living quietly at Blyth.

*BBC News, 7 May 2024*

More information on the Dugdale Society can be found at: <http://www.dugdale-society.org.uk/index.html>



## Cromwell Curator's Corner

As alluded to in the last issue of this august newsletter, we've been in somewhat of a celebratory mood at the Cromwell Museum over recent months, tying with the 425<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Cromwell's birth here in Huntingdon.

Whilst many of you were at the Association's AGM in Cirencester, we were subject to a visitation by a couple of troopers from 'The Troop', recreating cavalry of the Civil War period for the day on Huntingdon's town square. Local people had the chance to find out more about Cromwell's Ironsides and meet the very friendly horses, just yards from where 'Old Noll' raised his first troop of horse at the Falcon pub in August 1642.

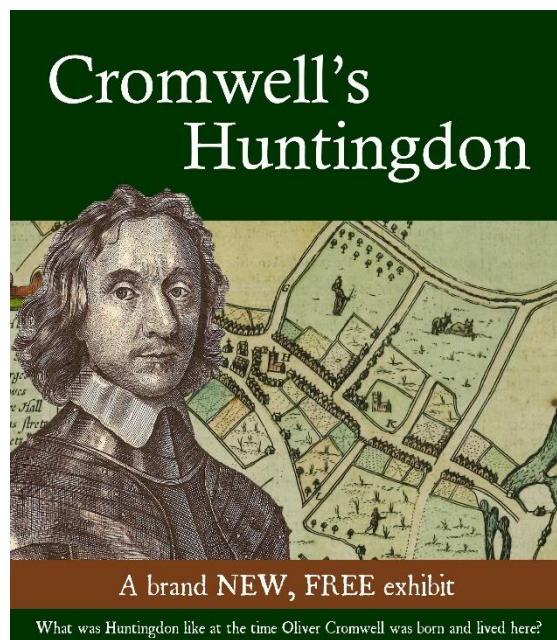
The same weekend we also relaunched an updated version of the 'Cromwell's Huntingdon' trail around the town. Originally produced in 1999, supported by the Association, and written by Professor John Morrill, the trail leaflet has been updated, redesigned and reprinted to take visitors around the town and the key sites related to him. An adapted audio version of the tour has also been produced and is available for purchase and download via <https://www.guidl.tours/>



Our new exhibit, *Cromwell's Huntingdon*, looks at what the town was like in the 1600s and tries to provide a context for Cromwell's early life here, as well as showcasing some rarely displayed items. These include the 1630 charter for the town, the debate over which was arguably the catalyst for his departure from Huntingdon a year later. It also reveals a tantalising possibility that Cromwell might have been witness to the funeral cortege of Mary, Queen of Scots – more in a future issue on this!

We're inching forward on our potential expansion plans, with surveys, negotiations and approvals ongoing with our various partners as to the possibility of acquiring our preferred building. Interestingly, parts of the building are much older than previously thought (unsurprising given its location) and most likely date back to the 1600s. We'll keep you updated over the coming months and will hopefully be able to make an exciting announcement later in the year.

Many of you will have enjoyed our latest series of online lectures; our next series will be in November when again we will be having online talks (recorded for ticket holders to view at their leisure if they can't watch live), with Charlotte Young (of this parish) on John Bradshaw; Alice Hunt on the Protectorate; Henry Reece on the last days of the republic and Ronald Hutton on the latest volume of his Cromwell biography. Tickets will be on sale from our website in September!



You can find more information on our exhibitions and events on our website at: [www.cromwellmuseum.org](http://www.cromwellmuseum.org),

or via our social media:

@thecromwellmuseum

@thecromwellmuseum

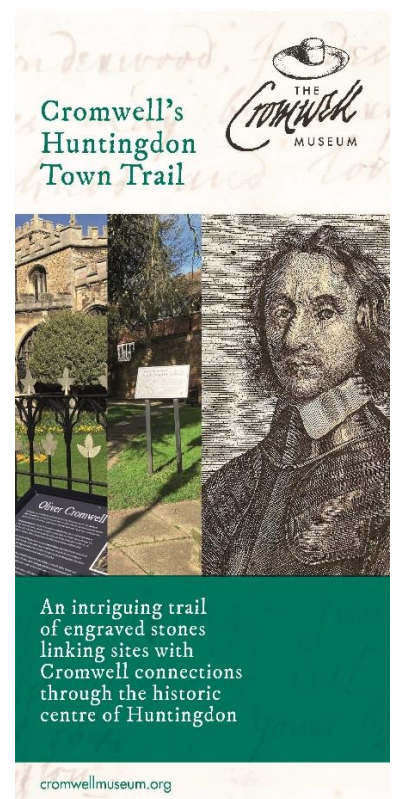
@museumcromwell

[www.youtube.com/c/CromwellMuseum](http://www.youtube.com/c/CromwellMuseum)

Do keep up to date with what we're up to by subscribing to our e-mail newsletter, becoming a Museum Member – details on these and our programmes can be found on our website at:

[www.cromwellmuseum.org](http://www.cromwellmuseum.org). I also hope to see many of you at the commemoration service in September – do also pay us a visit then!

Stuart Orme,  
Curator, The Cromwell Museum





## 'Extremely rare' gold ring found at Roydon linked to woman

A 'historically important' gold seal ring owned by a woman born in 1594 is expected to make up to £16,000 at auction.

It was discovered by a metal detectorist, Alan Rumsby, in a field at Roydon near Diss, Norfolk.

Coin expert Nigel Mills said it was 'extremely rare to find a seal ring of this period that was worn by a woman'.



(Image: Noonans/PA Wire)

Mr Mills said the arms etched on the ring were 'divided into four, each representing her ancestral family heritage, namely Ashfield, Tendring, Botelier and finally Mapersall.

The five-pointed star in the centre of the ring represents a third son.

'So we believe the ring was owned by Dorothy Ashfield, who was the eldest daughter of the third son Thomas Ashfield of Hopton in Suffolk and his wife Ellen Holditch of Ranworth in Norfolk,' he said.

He added this has made it 'historically important'.

The coin was found in October 2020, close to the old hall at Brockdish, which was owned by John Tendring and whose family arms appear on the second quadrant of the ring bezel.

BBC News, 29 February 2024

## An unusual war memorial

There are few towns and villages in the United Kingdom that do not have a war memorial of some kind or another. The Imperial War Museum's register of memorials lists over 100,000, the great majority of which were erected to commemorate those who died during the First World War, with very often a significant list of additions for those killed in the Second World War.

There are common elements to many of the memorials, often a figure in bronze or stone of a soldier, sometimes looking heroic, sometimes weary, and lists of names of those from the local community who never came home.



The memorial in Royston, Hertfordshire, on the edge of the parish churchyard on the south side of Melbourn Street is significantly different, and perhaps more interesting. It was designed by architect Percy Richard Morley Horder (1870–1944) who was primarily a designer of domestic buildings, and of some larger institutional buildings later in his career. Royston war memorial is one of a small handful of memorials he designed in the early 1920s.

It is a symmetrical design with a central feature, surrounded by flanking walls, and a stone-paved forecourt. True to form there is a bronze image of a 1914–18 'Tommy' with his rifle slung over his right shoulder, and the iconic Royston crow at his feet. But it is what is behind the soldier which is both surprising and interesting. A sculpture in Portland stone with figures larger in scale than the 'Tommy' overlook him. They are the shades of soldiers from previous centuries, from past wars, who have also died. There is a bowman from Agincourt, a Napoleonic soldier, an Elizabethan soldier, and yes, there is a soldier from the civil war too, from the parliamentary army who were camped nearby on Thriplow Heath in the summer of 1647.

Images of civil war soldiers are unusual in public monuments, and I suspect that Royston is unique in one being represented on a memorial to the dead of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



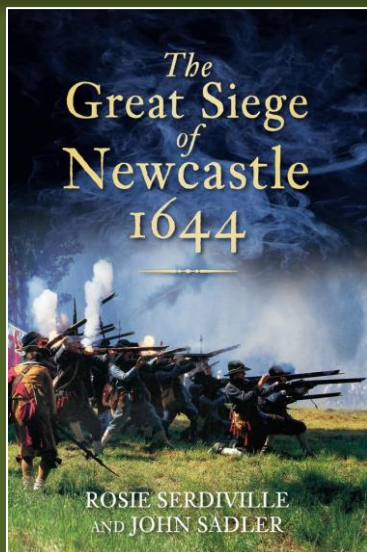
## On my bookshelf...



### *The Great Siege of Newcastle 1644*

by Rosie Serdiville & John Sadler

As a Geordie with a passion for the history of my hometown and a particular interest in the civil war, I have had an awareness for many years of Newcastle's part in the lead-up to and during the conflict itself. This comprised three main elements – the Scottish occupation, following the battle of Newburn in 1640; the siege of 1644; and the detention of the king in the town (Newcastle did not become a city until 1882) from May 1646 until February 1647. I was therefore very pleased in 2020 to discover Serdiville & Sadler's book which is now my point of reference for walks around Newcastle to visit locations associated with the above events.



The book is not a long one, with the narrative of the period covered, including leading up to the siege, being just over 70 pages, but that is sufficient for a reader wanting to make an acquaintance with the national and local context, as well as the siege itself. In addition, one's understanding is aided by a timeline, potted biographies of the dramatis personae and appendices, including on the art of 17<sup>th</sup> century warfare and sieges, the Scots army, and the battlefield trail today. Useful maps are also provided of the walls of the town and the wards which contributed to the defensive effort.

Turning to the account of events, the reader is taken through the build-up nationally to the outbreak of war in 1642, before the focus shifts to 'A view from the Tyne'. What must be remembered is that Newcastle was, in the main, strongly royalist. The history of the town, going back centuries, in being a bastion for the kingdom against the Scots in times of all too frequent conflict, meant that it was inbred into most of the governing elite to support the source of the rights and privileges

which were granted in return for their loyalty. This was personified by the mayor, Sir John Marley, whom Parliament pronounced a delinquent in 1642.

By January 1644 a Covenanter army from Scotland, led by Alexander Leslie, the Earl of Leven, had crossed the border into Northumberland. Just hours before reaching Newcastle, the royalist Marquis of Newcastle was able to get his forces into the town after hurrying back from York. With no sign of capitulation, Leven proceeded south, followed by the Marquis, culminating in the royalist defeat at Marston Moor, with the Marquis going into exile and the Scots returning north to lay siege to Newcastle.

It is here that Serdiville & Sadler come into their own, describing the course of the siege beginning in August and giving readers an 'I was there' feel, including contemporary accounts. With events developing from bombardment and mining of the walls to all-out assault and the fall of the town on 19 October, the trepidation of the inhabitants is well described, but the authors also make a good case for the relatively low level of bloodshed, demonstrating more discipline on the part of the Scots than might have been expected. Meanwhile, Marley, who had not courted popularity, retreated to the castle keep (within the town walls) as defeat loomed, surrendered unconditionally, only to then escape and live for the best part of another 30 years, whilst the Scots remained unwelcome visitors until the end of January 1647. Recognition of the town's sacrifice only came after the Restoration, with the granting of the town's motto in its coat of arms, *Fortiter Defendit Triumphans* (Triumphing by Brave Defence) which is retained to this day. One cannot escape the feeling, however, that the majority of the populace would have preferred grand events to pass them by and been able to live their lives in peace and such comfort as the age could afford them; but that was not to be, with cannon balls from the siege in the church of St Andrew's and the nearby ruins of the town walls providing a perpetual reminder of the horror of war, then as much as now.

*Michael Hardy*

Rosie Serdiville & John Sadler, *The Great Siege of Newcastle 1644*, The History Press, 2011, paperback 136 pp. ISBN 978-0752459899

## Recent publication

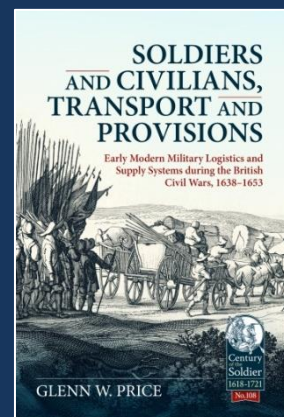
*Soldiers and Civilians, Transport and Provisions:*

*Early Modern Military Logistics and Supply Systems during the British Civil Wars, 1638–1653*

by Glenn W Price

'Until now historical works have neglected to fully consider the events of the British Civil Wars with respect to the logistics and supply systems. As such, this book evaluates and challenges these narratives of the wars by tackling historical debates through the lens of these logistics and supply systems at an operational level. How the military logistics and supply systems of the period functioned is revealed, including what methods of supply were used, what decisions and events these systems impacted, and how these related to strategic and tactical outcomes of the wars.'

Quote from Helion site: <https://www.helion.co.uk/military-history-books/soldiers-and-civilians-transport-and-provisions-early-modern-military-logistics-and-supply-systems-during-the-british-civil-wars-1638-1653.php>



## Book Reviews

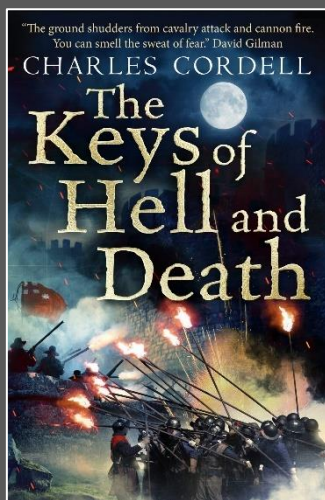


### *The Keys of Hell and Death*

Charles Cordell

*The Keys of Hell and Death* is the second novel in Charles Cordell's *Divided Kingdom* series of Civil War fiction, following 2021's *God's Vindictive Wrath*. The titles themselves give a flavour of what Cordell's books offer: full and unflinching accounts of the Civil War conflict suffused with religious and political fervour. This volume covers a particularly dramatic sequence of battles in the 1643 campaign, from the Battle of Lansdown Hill, via the Siege of Devizes and Roundway Down, to the storming of Bristol. Throughout, the reader is left in no doubt of the terrible toll taken in this war without an enemy as lives are shattered and lost.

The book offers a traditional cast of characters split across the two sides: professional soldiers, raw recruits, embattled civilians and a pair of warring half-brothers – the firebrand, Puritan Francis and the brave, reckless Ralph. While this approach may not be innovative, its virtue is that it enables Cordell to offer multiple viewpoints from within the same battle, contributing to the readers' immersion in the fighting. The number of voices occasionally confuses but it also enables the reader to experience the bewildering and partial perspectives of individuals caught up in large-scale warfare without the comfort of omniscience.



This bottom-up approach is one of *The Keys of Hell and Death*'s strengths. It plunges readers into the very trenches, hedgerows, ridges and streets of the war. The narrative unfolds hour by hour as we follow the rhythm of soldiering, sharing the men's frustration at dwindling supplies, lack of food and sleep and their all-consuming fear that their musket matches will go out. It is here, down in the detail of warfare, that Cordell's background as a professional soldier shines. This is not a story of high politics, nor even of personal drama spanning past and future, but of the precious, precarious present day, lived moment by moment.

*The Keys of Hell and Death* also excels at capturing the localism of the Civil Wars in the richly varied culture of regional regiments. The royalist Cornish regiments are particularly well drawn, the tanners and fishermen embracing the same traditional, independent heritage which renders them heathen barbarians to their opponents. The tortured fervour of some on Parliament's side is well captured in their biblical language even if this can at times feel too fanatical. Wider concerns are touched on – Ship Money, European conflict, trade disputes, slavery – but only in the way that they impact particular characters and inform their thinking.

Immersive and immediate, *The Keys of Hell and Death*, offers a valuable perspective on the early stages of the first Civil War from the people caught up in it. Fans of military history will relish the detailed descriptions of the battles, topography and logistics, while lovers of historical fiction by the likes of Ben Kane, Bernard Cornwell, Simon Scarrow, Conn Iggulden and Dan Jones will want to add the *Divided Kingdom* series to their reading pile.

Miranda Malins

Charles Cordell, *The Keys of Hell and Death*, Myrmidon Books, Publication date 6 June 2024, paperback 384 pp. ISBN 9781910183335



### Rare portrait of 17<sup>th</sup> century heiress is restored



Anne Clopton was one of the richest women in Suffolk during the 17<sup>th</sup> century (West Suffolk Council)

An 'extremely rare' 17<sup>th</sup> century portrait of a Suffolk heiress has been restored and is now on display for the first time in nearly 20 years. The portrait of Anne Clopton, heiress of Kentwell Hall in Long Melford, near Sudbury, dates back nearly 400 years.

Ian Shipp, West Suffolk Council's cabinet member for leisure and culture said the authority was 'delighted' to be able to share the portrait as part of an exhibition at Moyse's Hall Museum, Bury St Edmunds.

Born in 1612, Anne was the daughter of Sir William and Anne Clopton before she was orphaned at the age of seven. She became the sole heiress of Kentwell which made her one of the richest young women in Suffolk at the time.

In 1626, aged 14, she married Sir Simonds D'Ewes, an MP and the High Sheriff of Suffolk.

It is thought the portrait was painted to mark either the couple's engagement or their marriage.

Anne died of smallpox in 1641. She was 29 years old.

BBC News, 11 March 2024



Kentwell Hall © Tony Bennett (cc-by-sa/2.0)

## Token issued by Great Yarmouth businesswoman in 17<sup>th</sup> century found

A rare trading token issued by a 17<sup>th</sup> century businesswoman has been found by a metal detectorist.

Rebecca Murril took over her husband's bakery business in Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, following his early death.

She took over the bakery business and issued trading tokens in her own name between 1653 and 1655. These were essential to the smooth running of businesses in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century during a shortage of officially issued coins.

Merchants issued the coinage for local use, commissioning them from the Tower of London mint where the country's official coins were minted.

Coin expert Adrian Marsden said: "With two very young children, she did not shrink from going into trade in what was very much a man's world."

Mrs Murril was the only woman in Great Yarmouth to issue a token under her own name out of 43 businesses.

The trading token was found at Filby, near Great Yarmouth, and has been donated to Norwich Castle Museum.

BBC News, 14 Jan 2024



ANDREW WILLIAMS/NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL, The Bakers' Arms and her name was on one side, with Great Yarmouth and her initials on the other.

## Lost manor house unearthed in Devon

A long-lost manor house in East Devon has been unearthed by archaeology students and volunteers.

Remains of the Columbjohn – a mansion that was once at the heart of the National Trust's Killerton estate – have been discovered, including a cobbled courtyard, two buildings, parts of a demolished outer wall and what's thought to be a sunken garden.



Credit: University of Essex

The lost Elizabethan manor house swapped hands between the Royalists and the Parliamentarians during the English Civil War and even hosted Thomas Fairfax and Oliver Cromwell.

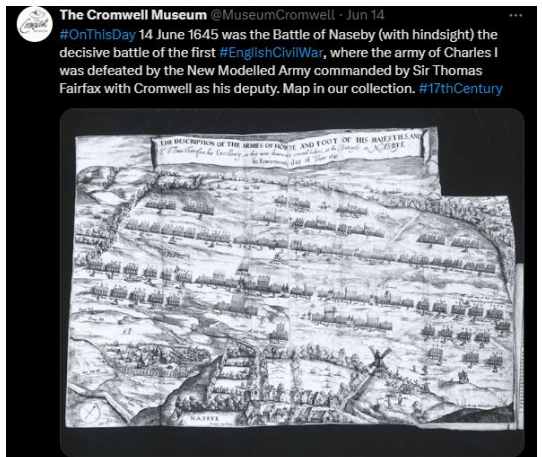
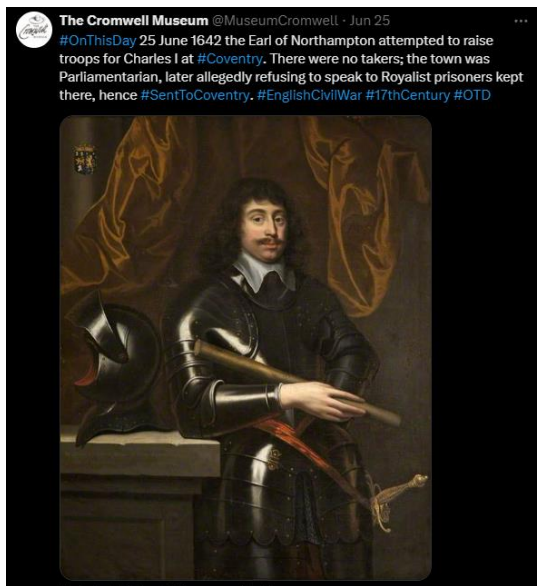
The project to unearth it was led by archaeologists at the University of Exeter, working in partnership with the National Trust, and alongside their Heritage Archaeology and Ranger Team.

A range of historical artefacts were also discovered, including 17<sup>th</sup> century coins, musket balls, keys and a twisted glass stem.

ITVX, 5 Jun 2024

## Xbox

A few select tweets from a quick search of X (formerly known as Twitter)



## Exhibitions and Events

| Date         | Details                        | Venue                         |
|--------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Sep 07, 2024 | Cromwell Day service           | St. Ives, Huntingdonshire.    |
| Oct 19, 2024 | Cromwell Association Study Day | Friends Meeting House, Oxford |

All information is correct at the time of going to press.