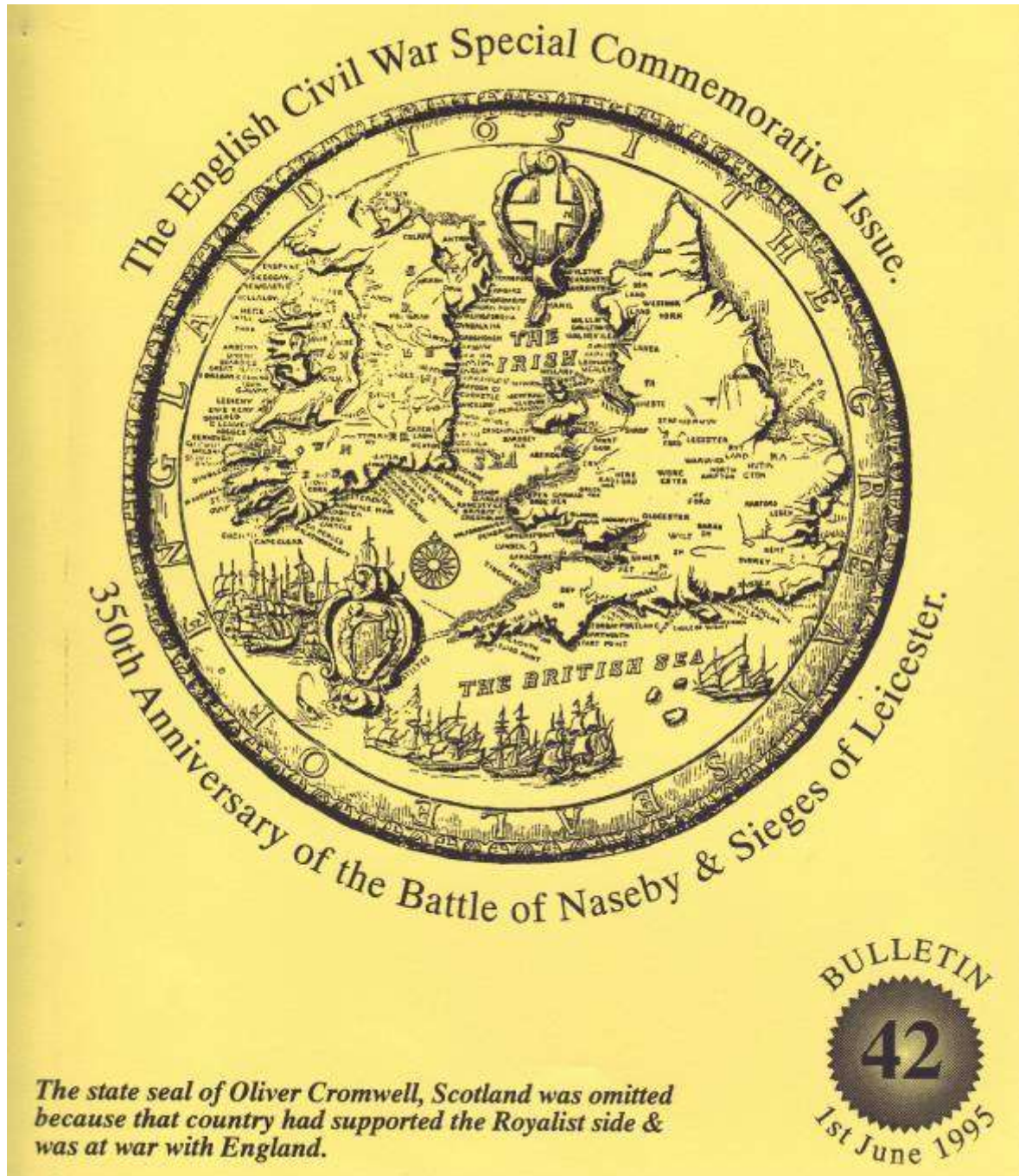




Greater Wigston Historical Society

White Gate Farm, Newton Lane, Wigston Magna Leicestershire



PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS JUNE 1995 TO FEBRUARY 1996

Wednesday 21st June 1995

Visit to Naseby Battlefield Museum - Guided by Mike Westaway, followed by a meal at Naseby Rectory (now a private house). Coach from Paddock Street Car Park. Meet 6.30p.m.

Wednesday 16th August 1995

"Grave Moments" a guided tour of Welford Road Cemetery, Leicester -Derek Seaton. Meet 6.45p.m. Paddock Street Car Park to share transport or 7p.m. at the Cemetery. Parking is permitted inside.

Wednesday 20th September 1995

'Coaching Days of England' an illustrated talk - Mr. K.F. Day. 7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

Wednesday 18th October 1995

'Keeping a Boarding House during the War' - Mrs. Garton. 7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

Wednesday 15th November 1995

'De Lisle & his 16 Children' - Bernard Elliott. 7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

***Wednesday 13th December 1995**

Christmas Party.
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

Wednesday 17th January 1996

'Theatre in Leicester' - Mr. Herbert Mason. 7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

Wednesday 21st February 1996

A.G.M. followed by film 'The Reluctant Squire' 7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

* Note this date is the second Wednesday in the month, not the more usual third one, which it was thought was a bit too close to Christmas & other commitments members might have.

THE COMMITTEE

As mentioned elsewhere, Peter Clowes has stepped down from the committee due to increasing commitments at the F.W.K. Museum. A warm welcome is extended to Peter Mastin who has kindly agreed to replace him.

The Bulletin is published three times a year on 1st February, June and October. Articles etc. (which are always welcome) should be submitted to either of the Joint Editors three clear weeks before the publication date please.

Joint Editors: Mrs. Chris Smart, 197 Queens Road-, Leicester.

Mrs. Tricia Berry, 7 Wensleydale Road, Wigston.

FEBRUARY MEETING

The Society held its A.G.M. & members evening with 43 people present. The evening commenced with:-

- 1) The Chairman, Edna Taylor, reading the minutes of the last A.G.M. which were agreed & signed as correct.
- 2) The Treasurer, Brian Bilson, explaining the year end accounts. He reported a balance in hand of £1117. 57. In view of this it was decided to leave the subscriptions unchanged, these remain £5 & £3 concessionary. A discussion followed on the best use of the surplus funds. It was agreed to donate £100 each to the Framework Knitters Museum & the Wigston Folk Museum, & also £100 to the Royal Leics. Society for the Blind, as Mr. Derek Seaton, who has written a book on its history to raise funds, is to be our guide round Welford Road Cemetery later in the year. A flag in the Parliamentary colours is to be ordered at an approx. cost of £75 to be flown on the Memorial Park as the Society's contribution to the local Civil War commemoration. The remainder of the funds to be retained to help with the production costs of various books in course of preparation. It was noted that the interest currently earned at the Bank was negligible & a better deal is to be sought.
- 3) The Chairman reporting a very successful year with meetings well attended & speakers enthusiastically received. The summer trips & Christmas party were very enjoyable & overall made a small surplus for the funds. Membership continued to rise & currently stood at 98. Two new books had been published by members, 'Wigston in 1891' by Bernard Elliott & Wigston Magna, Its Buildings Extant, Altered or Demolished by Jim Colver. Others in course of preparation are Wigston's Railways by Peter Mastin & Wigston Who's Who by Tricia Berry. The Bulletins continued to be published 3 times a year with Jim Colver providing the covers. Issue 42 is to have a special Civil War theme. Thanks were recorded to the late Fred Parsons who will be sadly missed by all. Always cheerful & willing, though suffering serious illness, he would arrive in good time for meetings & help with the setting out of the room.
- 4) The present officers & committee being re-elected unopposed. Peter Clowes wished to resign from the Committee due to commitments at the F.W.K. Museum & anyone who would like to fill the vacancy was invited to apply.

Colin Towell recorded the thanks of members for the work put in by the officers throughout the year. This was gratefully acknowledged.

Tony Lawrance explained how he had used the £50 donated to the Folk Museum last year to help with the costs of school visits. Colin Towell explained that the £50 donated to the F.W.K. Museum had been put towards the highly successful central heating installation.

Members were reminded that renewal subscriptions were now due & should be paid tonight if possible.

The second part of the evening was the usual members spot.

Bob Wignall described the 2 lines of succession of the Scottish kings starting in 843 when the Highlanders became united under one king. To 1034 when under Malcolm II they defeated the Northumbrian English & joined with the British kingdom of Strathclyde to form roughly the boundaries of the present Scotland under King Duncan. He was later slain by one of his generals, the treacherous Macbeth, & was succeeded by Malcolm III, from whom our present Queen is descended.

Michael Armitage told us what he had so far discovered about his own home, St. Wolstan's House, Church Nook. Thought to have been built by a William Morley from Derby in the 1850's on the site of an older property, it was then a farmhouse with approx. 100 acres of land & believed to have been known as Hungerton House. It passed through the hands of two more William Morleys before becoming separated from its land in the 1940's. After a spell as an A.R.P. Centre during the war it has continued as a private house. The land with a farm cottage, much enlarged, became known as St. Wolstan's Farm, & was an active farm until 1960's when it was sold & became Boulter Crescent & part of the Meadows Estate.

Tricia Berry read an account of her research into the life of Captain Charles Holland Baddeley who came from Newport, Shropshire & embarked on a colourful career with the East India Company. She described his return voyage with his little native son & subsequent marriage to a local heiress, Ann Clarke. The pair built Wigston Hall & lived there for 20 years in a style & elegance probably not seen in Wigston before or since.

Stella Tweed went back further in time with her account of the Battle of Cropredy just north of Banbury. It occurred at the beginning of June 1644 when King Charles who was based at Oxford moved his forces to Worcester. 4000 horsemen, 3500 foot soldiers with their 18' pikes & heavy artillery marched through the Cotswolds. At Cropredy Bridge on 29/6/1644 they encountered Parliamentary troops & in the ensuing fighting Charles lost few men but the Parliament side suffered many casualties. Every year there is a festival held in the area & a specially composed song 'Red & Gold'¹ is sung. Stella played a recording of this which made a fitting end to the evening.

MARCH MEETING

48 members assembled to hear a most informative talk by Mr. Derek Lewin on the English Civil War & the Battle of Naseby. He began by describing his own great, but in the end futile, battle to persuade the Dept. of Transport to re-route the A1/M1 link road away from the battlefield site.

He then outlined the circumstances of the time which led to the conflict. The Stuarts had inherited an economy heading for inflation & King Charles I demanded money for his adventures in France & to fund Court & the arts. Parliament desired moderation & there were rows over who had the authority to raise taxes. The King believed he ruled by divine right & was answerable only to God. He dismissed Parliament & ruled the country alone for 11 years. There was also a religious element. A wave of non-conformity (The Puritans) swept the country & people feared the return of Catholicism because Charles was high Anglican & his French wife, Queen Henrietta Maria, a Catholic.

The country was split. The King's supporters came mainly from the West Country & the North, while Parliamentary support was dominant in London, the Midlands (including Mr. Lewin's own family) & the East. This was to Parliament's advantage because 'their'¹ area was the most economically strong & it gave them control of the major ports. There was no standing army before the war. The defence of the country rested with the navy & county militia was under the control of the local lord lieutenant. Oliver Cromwell's New Model Army was the first proper army to be established.

The Battle of Naseby took place on 14/6/1645. The Royalists entered at a disadvantage. Their men were less professionally organised, Prince Rupert was headstrong & impulsive & they had suffered losses at the siege of Leicester. They were greatly outnumbered having approx. 7500 men to the 13000 Parliamentary troops under Col. Fairfax. After his defeat the King escaped, changed saddles at Wistow & went on to Ashby. Evidence was discovered that the rumour of his employing foreigners to help his cause was true & there was much cruel revenge meted out on his followers, particularly the women who were perceived as Catholic harlots.

There were other skirmishes after Naseby but that battle was decisive. Oliver Cromwell & most of the population did not want the King executed & attempts were made to compromise, but he would not recognise the court which tried him & was put to death on 30/1/1649. A huge groan was heard from the watching crowd as his head was held aloft. There followed 11 years of the Commonwealth period before, by popular demand, King Charles II came to the throne, but on different terms. Government & Constitutional Monarchy was established and the ceremony at each opening of Parliament of the door being slammed in the Monarch's face dates from this time.

There were many questions & much discussion afterwards before the Chairman, Edna Taylor, thanked Mr. Lewin for a really good evening.

It was reported that the 2 recent exhibitions at the U.R. Church Wigston & the Methodist Chapel South Wigston had both been a great success in terms of enjoyment & money raised.

Mr. Taylor suggested that the Civil War flag the Society plan to purchase as part of the local commemoration should be placed in All Saints' Church afterwards with an appropriate plaque. This was thought to be an excellent idea.

There are many Civil War events planned locally for the summer & the Chairman said she would co-ordinate all notifications received & make an announcement in due course.

APRIL MEETING

The Society had a completely different evening this month when it welcomed Mr. John Barton, the Head of Operations at Gartree Prison.

Mr. Barton explained that up to about 1800 crime was judged by the Church. Then gradually the present system evolved, where today the prison service costs the British Taxpayer 14.1 billion pounds per year. Gartree was planned as an open prison but by the time it came to be built, requirements had altered, & it was constructed as a high security establishment. The main block is designed in the shape of the letter H. Inside is an administrative area, education department, chapel, T.V. room, shop, 20 bed hospital, library, gym,

computer room for Open University courses, & various workshops where the prisoners work each day making slippers, fabric, socks, furniture & metal products. Much of the output is used within the prison service. There are 4 accommodation wings each housing 83 men who have their own 8' x 6' cell with bed, toilet, washbasin & folding table.

80% are doing life for murder, the remaining 20% are on sentences ranging from 5 to 35 years for various other serious offences. The oldest, who arrived recently, is aged 79 & is there for murdering his wife. He has told warders he will do as much of his sentence as he can! A few are mentally ill & are at Gartree due to lack of places because of the closure of many mental hospitals. They are kept permanently in the prison hospital.

It is possible for the staff to have a reasonable relationship with some of the men, & even friendships have resulted. A prisoner's advice is often sought when buying a new car because they are well aware of the makes to avoid as they are easiest to break into! Some undergo genuine character transformations & one was mentioned who uses all of his modest earnings to buy materials to make soft toys to sell for charity.

There are however inevitable troubles. Twice there have been major riots when the place was wrecked & there have been roof top protests & the famous helicopter escape which took just 7 seconds to execute. Assaults on staff do happen, though not too often. The trick is to remain one step ahead at all times. A particularly nasty incident (fortunately discovered in time) was razor blades wedged into a washbasin outlet which the prisoner then deliberately blocked up. Drugs is a problem in all prisons & the methods of bringing them in very inventive. The most effective way of reducing this would be to introduce the controversial restrictive access (glass screen to separate prisoner & visitor at all times).

During the evening many exhibits were passed round such as 'Hooch' an illicitly distilled drink made from sugar or lemonade, bread, potato peelings & anything else to hand. The meaning of 'hot cross bums' was explained. This is a sinister treatment meted out by inmates on their fellows for unacceptable crimes such as "grassing¹ rape & child molesting.

A warm vote of thanks was given to the speaker by the chairman, Edna Taylor, & an invitation offered by Duncan Lucas to make use of his powerful voice by competing in the planned Town Crier Competition on 29th April! Tony Lawrance asked for volunteers who might be able to man the Folk Museum on certain dates in June, otherwise it will not be possible to open for all of the usual times.

May meeting ...

On Wednesday the 15th of May approximately 45 members of the Society met to hear Steph Mastoris (Curator of the Market Harborough Museum) speak on "Counter revolutions - the history of shops and shopping in the twentieth century".

A history of shops and shopping, retailing and marketing is very much a reflection of the focus of the Market Harborough Museum. The Museum concentrates on the local history of common objects and their place in a wider historical field.

A recently published book about shops, shoppers and shopping has been the result of work carried out by Steph's predecessor. The project involved historical research and the oral history surrounding the development of the retail trade in Market Harborough. The aim of the evening's talk was to put the book into context and to discuss the debate surrounding Market Harborough and its shopping.

Market Harborough was a new town of the twelfth century. It was originally a trading post on the outskirts of Great Bowden established between 1150 and 1170 by the Lords of the Manor. In those days it was known as Haverberg, which literally means the hills where oats grow. It had, and still has, a large triangular north - south market place, it is near a fording place of the river Welland and on a trading route. The town's marketing function was the core of its existence.

The market at Market Harborough was first referred to in 1203. In the Tudor period some of the market stalls were made permanent and this was the beginning of the infill of the market area (originally known as Sheep Market). Evidence of the inherent wealth of the area can be seen in the extended church and the elegant Georgian Town Hall of 1788, with its brick vaulted butcher's shambles on the ground floor.

The layout of the town centre consisted of large timber framed houses at the front and either tenements or outbuildings at the back on long, narrow, burgage plots. Many of the

outbuildings were used for hand crafted products which were then sold from the front parlour. Over the years this retailing function developed, and more goods were being sold in shops that the shopkeeper himself had not produced. This was partially the result of a growing band of landless, urban dwellers who could not grow their own food. This group required permanent shops.

By the 1880s the balance was between weekly market and daily retailers in shops. Later conflict was between different types of shops, from small independent retailers to large commercial undertakings. In Market Harborough many of the shopkeepers were related by marriage, often they were Congregationalists and held power in the Council.

One of the many differences from the present day was that the shops operated on large amounts of customer credit. The shopkeepers worked long hours and many parallels can be drawn between shop businesses of this period and the Asian community of today. The first fifty years of this century saw the rise of the multiple. With the development of better transport systems and the growth of the British Empire, stores such as Home and Colonial and the Star Supply Stores flourished. The development of the Cooperatives, for example, the Market Harborough Industrial Cooperative Society, and latterly the Tesco and Sainsburys, meant that the customer had the advantages of bulk buying, bulk packaging and tight pricing.

The Second World War, rationing and the end of Retail Price Maintenance in the 1960s, meant that competition could be on price rather than service and credit as it had been before.

The next development in the history of shops and shopping in Market Harborough could be referred to as the "pack-Age". The introduction of motorized transport and electrical power, which came to Market Harborough in 1927, the end of rationing and the post-war economy brought the development of packaged and pre-packaged goods.

And finally, the last conflict in the retailing/shopping versus marketing debate is "Supermarket Harborough". This concerns the development of a new supermarket complex on the old cattle market site in the centre of the town. Hopefully it will mean that Market Harborough remains as it has been for centuries the shopping centre for South Leicestershire.

The meeting ended at 9.15p.m. after a lively round of questions and sincere thanks to Steph for a most interesting and entertaining talk.

TOWN CRIER COMPETITION

The competition, held on the Bank on 29th April, was good fun. The weather managed to stay fine though it was bitterly cold.

Mr. Norman Roberts, the Leicester Town Crier, acted as M.C. & the judges were his wife, Mary Roberts, the Mayor Councillor Jeffrey Morris, & Oliver Cromwell, who appropriately arrived on horseback, & bore quite a resemblance to our member Stuart Follows!

Four people entered & the eventual winner was Mr. Stan Croxtall of South Wigston. We shall no doubt be hearing more of him (literally) in the future!

WIGSTON WHO'S WHO NO; 11

WILLIAM ROMANIS M.A.

William Romanis was born on 30/4/1824 in the parish of All Hallows, Middlesex, which is to the north of the River Thames not far from the Tower of London. He was the son of John Romanis, a hosier, & his wife Ann Norris Romanis. The couple already had 2 daughters, Helen & Elizabeth, & possibly other children, & they maintained a home in Cheltenham as well as London.

William went to school at Christ's Hospital from where he matriculated at Michaelmas 1842. He then went to Emanuel College, Cambridge where he obtained Sen. Opt. 1st Cl. Class. Trip, and B.A. in 1846. Later that year he took up a position as Classical Master & Lecturer in Modern History at Cheltenham College. The following year, when aged 23, he was ordained a deacon at Gloucester & 2[^] months later, on 22/7/1847, he was in St. Martin's Church, East Looe, Cornwall, where he married Emma Gill, the daughter of George Gill, a naval lieutenant.

William took his wife to live in Cheltenham at Northwick Villa, where he continued his teaching work at the college. At the same time he furthered his studies being appointed a priest on 18/6/1848 & gaining his M.A. in 1849.

On 14/4/1848 the couple had a son, William Francis John, followed soon afterwards by a daughter Mary & then a second daughter Emma Janet. However, William's happiness must have been tinged with great sadness because about this time his wife developed epilepsy. It was this illness combined with the mis-carriage of what would have been the couple's fourth child that caused Emma's death on 15/3/1853 at the age of 32, after less than 6 years of marriage.

William, a widower before his 30th birthday, did not remarry. He remained in Cheltenham for 3 more years before deciding to take up an appointment within the Church of England. He accepted the position of Curate in the parish of Axminster, Devon, & moved down there, where he took up residence with his young family at Furzebrook House. He remained there about a year before moving to to be Curate at St. Mary's Church, Reading for the next 5 years. During this time he published a selection of the sermons he had preached there.

It was in 1863 that he was appointed by his old school, Christ's Hospital, to the living of Vicar of Great Wigston. The family moved into the Vicarage in Bushloe End, not the present one which dates from 1909, but a previous building described as "a good vicarage house erected in 1784" which stood on the site of the present Church Rooms. In addition to the Vicar, the household consisted of 15 year old William Jnr. (when he was not away at boarding school) the 2 daughters then aged 13 & 12 & probably the Vicar's two sisters, who had not married, & were present on both subsequent census returns. There was one resident servant employed to look after them.

The Vicar was to remain in Wigston for the following 25 years during which time his contribution to the good of the local community was considerable. He still enjoyed teaching & used to hold classes for local people most of whom were at this time illiterate. Those who had a basic education were introduced to the works of Shakespeare. Member, Ken Roe's father, was one to benefit from this instruction. The Vicar was assisted in this by his daughters as they grew old enough.

A very scholarly man, he joined the Leicester Literary & Philosophical Society & delivered a lecture on 'The Thirty Years War'¹ at their meeting on 14/11/1870. The following year he was elected President & his Address on 2/10/1871 at the New Walk Museum was entitled 'The Comparative Claims Of Literature & Science.'¹ Charles Darwin's 'Descent of Man'¹ had been published earlier that year & in referring to this a review of his address states "No opinion was offered on the physical part of that book, but it was argued that the theory of the origin & development of the moral faculties did not account for existing facts " The reviewer

then quoted from the actual address "In short, the author [Darwin] seems to me [Romanis] to be himself one of the facts not to be accounted for by his theory....." This was later published as were most of the Society's Presidential Addresses. William also wrote two hymns 'Round Me Falls The Night' & 'Lord Who Shall Sit Beside Thee'. These are printed as numbers 18 & 232 respectively in different hymn books in All Saints' Church.

10/10/1872 was a happy day for William when he officiated at his elder daughter Mary's marriage to Thomas Cotchett Lee of Knighton. Thomas, some 15 years older than his bride, was a boot & shoe & also a hosiery manufacturer with premises in Wellington Street & later, Rutland Street, Leicester.

It was in a very different frame of mind that the family gathered on New Year's Day 1875 for the funeral of the other daughter, Emma Janet, who had died 2 days previously, aged 23. This time William did not conduct the service or write the entry in the burial register. His son William Jnr., who had followed his father as teacher (at Charterhouse & Lancing) & priest stepped in to perform these sad tasks. Emma was buried in St. Wistan's (St. Wolstan's to them) churchyard & her father had "Thy Kingdom Come" engraved on her headstone.

There was further sadness on 11/8/1878 when little Mary Lee, William's grand-daughter, died 2 days short of her 5th birthday. Although she had lived in Aylestone it was decided she should be buried with Aunt Emma. Once again William Jnr. officiated & "Thy Will Be Done" was added to the headstone.

Life carried on & with effect from 20/7/1880 William was appointed officiating chaplain to the troops at Leicester. By 1888 he had decided it was time for a change & moved to Hampshire to be vicar of Twyford. His grateful parishioners organised a collection for a presentation. A special notebook was kept by the Churchwardens, A.A. Cooper & W. Egglestone, to record the details. This survives & many of the donors entered their own names to the list making it a kind of parish autograph book. £37 was collected & an inkstand, library clock & 12 dessert spoons & forks purchased. These cost £34 & the remaining £3 was spent on engraving & supplying a list of subscribers. Two versions of the proposed inscription are noted, one written in pencil, the other in ink & initialled, would appear to be the one chosen. It says: "Presented to the Rev'd William Romanis M.A. Vicar of Wigston Magna, Leics. by his Parishioners after twenty five years residence as a token of their affection. Jan'y 1st. 1889."

William left Twyford in 1895 & retired to Southsea where he died on 13/11/1899 aged 75 years. A memorial plaque in All Saints' Church has on the words "Unspotted from the World." His daughter Mary Lee & her husband went to live in North Avenue, Leicester to a house they named St. Wolstan's. They were still there in 1908 and afterwards other occupiers retained the name. There is no house of that name now but reference to directories suggest it is the one now named North House.

In the January 1903 issue of the Parish Magazine it is noted that Mr. W.F.J. Romanis is to preach at All Saints' on 18/1/1903 on behalf of the Chancel Roof Fund.

Tricia Berry

Sources: Alumni Cantabrigienses by J.A. Venn (Part 2 Vol V) Crockford's Clerical Directory. Centenary Book of Leics. Literary & Philosophical Society 1835/1935 by F.T. Lott. Marriage & Burial entries for Wigston Parish. Wigston Census returns. Marriage & Burial Certificates. Gravestone in St. Wistan's Churchyard. Plaque in All Saints' Church. Various Directories. Parish Notebook at L.R.O.

Thanks to John Royley for bringing to my attention the 2 hymns written by Rev. Romanis.

ROMANIS GRAVESTONE

The stone of Emma Janet Romanis & Mary Lee has fallen over & its two sections broken apart. Do Society members think it would be an appropriate use of our funds to get this put right, if the cost were not too great?

If members would like to voice any opinions they may have to a committee member it could perhaps be looked into if the response was favourable.

THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

The Editors would like to thank everyone who responded to their request for material for this special edition, & to Brian Bilson for suggesting the idea.

Most of the articles are credited with their authors, but in addition the copy for the front cover & the likenesses on Page 12 were supplied by Stella Tweed & the documents on Pages 19-23 by Brian Bilson. These last had to be transcribed because the print showed through from the reverse & made reproduction impossible.

The personality profiles on Pages 10-11 were compiled from information in the 'Dictionary of National Biography'¹ & 'Investigating the Civil War'¹ by the National Trust.

ENGLISH CIVIL WAR - THE MAIN CHARACTERS ROYALISTS

KING CHARLES I - Born in Dunfermline on 19/11/1600 the second son of King James VI of Scotland (& later England) & his wife Ann of Denmark. Physically weak as a child & with a slight speech impediment, he became heir apparent in 1612 upon the death of his elder brother Henry. Succeeded to the throne in early 1625 & on 1st May in that year married by proxy the French Princess Henrietta Maria. The couple had 4 surviving children, Charles, James, Mary & Henrietta. Believed he ruled by Divine Right & rows with Parliament over who had the authority to raise taxes & fears from the growing numbers of Puritans of his Catholic leanings caused the start of the Civil War in 1642. After his defeat & futile attempts by his opponents to reach a compromise he was tried & sentenced to death as "A Tyrant, Traitor & Murderer & Public Enemy to the good people of this Nation." Showing great courage he was executed on 30/1/1649 on a scaffold outside the Banqueting Hall in Whitehall.

PRINCE RUPERT, COUNT PALATINE OF THE RHINE & DUKE OF BAVARIA - Born in Prague on 17/12/1619, the 3rd son of Frederick V Elector of Palatine & later King of Bohemia & his wife Elizabeth who was a sister of Charles I. Due to unrest in their country the mother & her children were forced to flee first to Berlin & then to Holland. Rupert had a military training & then made his way to England where he was warmly welcomed by his Uncle. Known as the "Mad Cavalier" he was a brilliant commander & was appointed chief of the Royalist forces at the age of 25. He was, however, proud & headstrong & this made him unpopular with his fellows & Charles never really forgave him for surrendering at the Siege of Bristol. Did not marry but had 2 natural children. Died of the fever on 29/11/1682 & is buried in Westminster Abbey.

BARON GEORGE GORING - Born on 14/7/1608, the son of George Goring, Earl of Norwich, & his wife Mary nee Nevill. Married 25/7/1629 to Lettice Boyle. A skilled soldier, he was declared Lieut. General of the horse in the King's main army in 1644, but had a cruel streak to his nature & his troops were known for their ill-discipline & ran riot through the West Country. He was also inclined to drunkenness which made him unpopular with Charles. Shot just above the ankle early in his career he was lame & suffered trouble with it for life. Died in Madrid alone & destitute in August 1657.

KING CHARLES II - Born 2nd son of Charles I & Queen Henrietta Maria on 29/5/1630. Was only a child when the Civil War started but was present at the Battle of Edgehill. Later when Royalist fortunes turned he was sent abroad for safety. Was crowned King of Scotland on the execution of his father & led an unsuccessful attack against the Roundheads which was smashed at the Battle of Worcester in 1651. Fled abroad again & lived in exile in Holland for the next 9 years, after which England, dis-encharmed with military rule, invited him back to take the throne in 1660. Married at Westminster on 20/5/1662 the Portugese Princess Catherine of Braganza with whom he was not close & had no children. He did however father 14 natural children by a succession of mistresses. His 25 year reign was a time of revival for art & culture after the austere Commonwealth period. The King encouraged this, as he did science, & many important discoveries were made at this time. He died in 1685 & was succeeded by his brother James.

PARLIAMENTARIANS

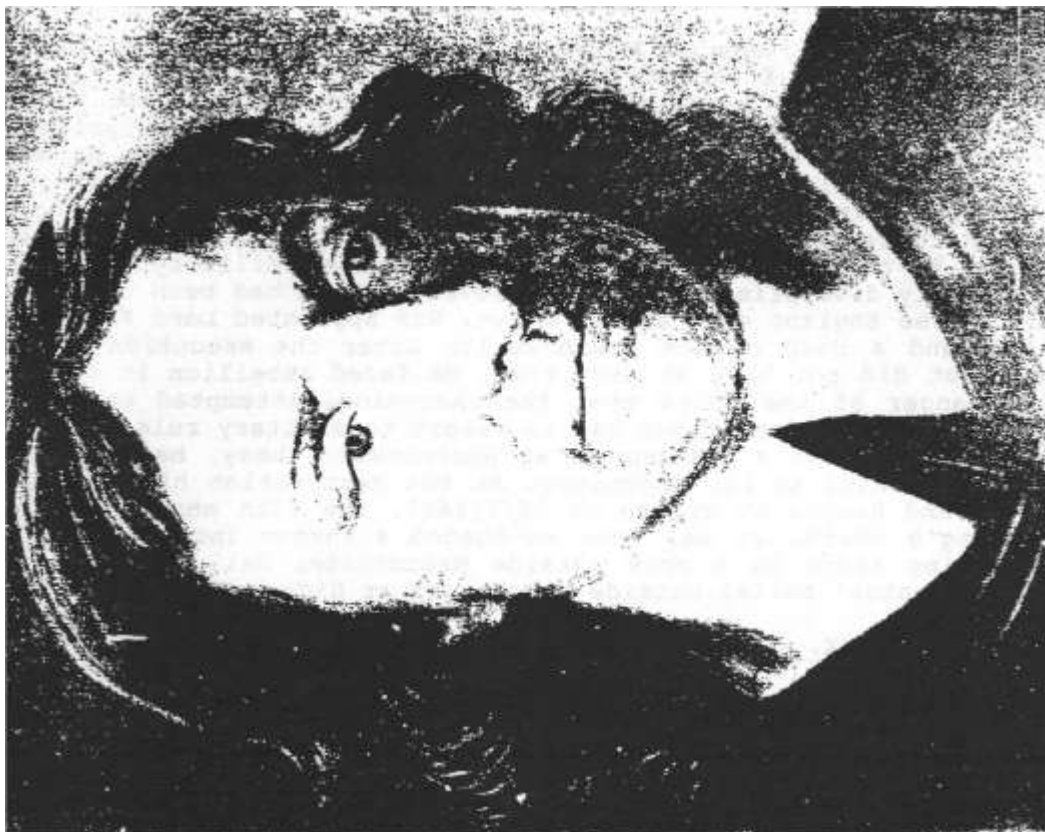
OLIVER CROMWELL - Born in Huntingdon on 25/4/1599, the 2nd son of Robert Cromwell & Elizabeth nee Steward. Named after his uncle Sir Oliver Cromwell of Hinchinbrook. Matriculated aged 17 from Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. Married at St. Giles Church, Cripplegate on 22/8/1620 to Elizabeth daughter of Sir James Bourchier, by whom he had 7 children, Robert, Oliver, Richard, Henry, Bridget, Elizabeth, Mary & Frances. Ran family estate in Huntingdon & elected to represent that area in Parliament in 1628. When the war started he quickly made his mark as a brilliant military commander with highly disciplined troops. Believed that he had been chosen by God to free England of Charles' reign. Was appointed Lord Protector of England & Head of the Commonwealth after the execution of the King, but did not have an easy time. He faced rebellion in Ireland & the anger of the Scots over the execution. Attempted to govern England with Parliament but had to resort to military rule. Died of fever on 3/9/1658 & was buried at Westminster Abbey, having named his son Richard as his successor. At the Restoration his body was dug up and hanged at Tyburn on 30/1/1661, the 12th anniversary of the King's death. It was then be-headed & thrown into a pit, the head being stuck on a pole outside Westminster Hall for 20 years before eventual burial outside the Chapel at Sidney Sussex College.

ROBERT DEVEREUX, 3RD EARL OF ESSEX - Born in 1591, the son of Robert, 2nd Earl of Essex, & Frances nee Walsingham. Had an arranged marriage on 15/1/1606, before his 14th birthday, to Frances Howard, daughter of the Earl of Suffolk. This was later annulled & in 1631 he married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir William Paulet, from whom he later separated, the couple having one child which did not survive. He was a brave & trustworthy man but no great tactician. He commanded the main Parliamentary army from 1642-44 & was responsible for relieving the Siege of Gloucester. Started the war pessimistically by taking his coffin & shroud around the country with him! Died 14/9/1646 in a hunting accident.

HENRY IRETON - Baptised 3/11/1611, the eldest son of George Ireton of Attenborough, Notts. Obtained B.A. at Trinity College, Oxford in 1629. On 30/6/1642 was nominated Captain of the Troop of Horse to be raised in the town of Nottingham. Led a troop of cavalry at the Battle of Naseby but was captured by the Royalists. Was married to Cromwell's daughter Bridget on 15/6/1646, by whom he had a son & 2 daughters. Trained as a lawyer, his plan for constitutional monarchy was rejected by Charles I in 1647, causing him to be a signatory of the death warrant. Was sent by Cromwell to Ireland in 1649 to deal with the rebellion & was created Lord Deputy of that country in 1650/1. Died of fever 26/11/1651 & was buried in Westminster Abbey. Body dug up at the Restoration, beheaded & re-buried at Tyburn.

SIR THOMAS FAIRFAX - Born in Denton, Yorks, on 17/1/1612, the son of Ferdinando 2nd Lord Fairfax. Educated at St. John's College, Cambridge & then went abroad to learn the art of warfare. Married on 20/6/1637, Anne Vere, daughter of his old commander. Known as "Black Tom" he was a brilliant military commander & created the "New Model Army" which was largely responsible for the defeat of the Royalists. After Naseby, Parliament presented him with a £700 jewel to commemorate the victory. Described as gentle & polite, he had a large following among his fellow Yorkshiremen. His wife was a strict Puritan but also a Royalist so he refused to sign the death warrant. He died on 12/11/1671 & is buried with his wife at Bilbrough, Nr.

York. Interested in history & literature he had presented many valuable manuscripts to the Bodleian Library.



OLIVER CROMWELL



KING CHARLES I

FORMING THE NEW MODEL ARMY

In June 1644, after the Battle of Cropredy Bridge, Sir William Waller, who had lost 700 men there, campaigned for Parliament to have a standing army with central direction. He stated "Unless you have an army merely your own, that you can command, it is impossible to do anything of importance."

Earlier, in a letter dated 29th August 1643 Cromwell, selecting officers had stressed "I would rather have a plain russet coated captain that knows what he fights for and loves what he knows." He wanted he wrote "a proper army, not one made up of discontented peasants, prisoners and pressed men who are indifferent to the cause." He wished for an army of courage and discipline.

It was in January 1645, the year of the Battle of Naseby, that it was finally decided that there should be an army of 22,000 men supported by a levy of £6000 per month, paid by districts controlled by Parliament. This would be called The New Model Army. It would consist of:

12 regiments of foot - each 1200 men 11
Regiments of horse - each 600 men 1 regiment
of dragoons - 1000 men

Sir Thomas Fairfax was appointed Commander in Chief at £10 per day. Philip Skippon was appointed Sergeant Major General at £2 per day. Oliver Cromwell was nominated Lieutenant General of the Horse on the eve of Naseby on the resignation of Col. Vermuyden at £2 per day.

The armies of the Earl of Essex, the Earl of Manchester and Sir William Waller formed the main army.

Volunteers for the cavalry proved no difficulty but 7000 foot soldiers were still wanted. Morale was so low among the foot soldiers after Cropredy that Waller's infantry had disintegrated. Men were pressed from the London area and the South East but many quickly deserted. On 2nd April 1645 the Earl of Essex resigned his commission. By May the infantry was still 4000 under establishment.

Whilst the majority of officers were gentlemen they were appointed more for efficiency than status. Regiments were no longer under local familiar leaders. Because of its social composition its efficiency was underestimated by the Royalists.

On 9th June 1645 Sir Samuel Luke saw the New Model Army for the first time. He wrote "Sir Thomas Fairfax's army quarters this night at Stoney Stratford which is the bravest for bodies of men, horse and arms, so far as the common soldiers, as ever *I* saw in my life."

Next day he wrote "I think these New Modellers knead all their dough with ale for I never saw so many drunk in my life in so short a time."

Later he wrote "The men are extraordinarily personable, well armed and well paid, but the officers you will hardly distinguish from common soldiers."

Regiments were numbered as they were raised.

The 1st Horse - consisted of 6 troops of Ironside's plus the Earl of Essex's life guards.

The 1st Foot - was mainly Essex's old army who were well trained men. Both regiments were under the command of Sir Thomas Fairfax who was also Commander in Chief. Fairfax made

it clear that there was to be no favouritism. When his men complained at taking their turn in the rearguard position he took the rear and marched ahead of them for two miles to teach them a little humility.

The 2nd Horse - should have been commanded by Lt. Gen. John Middleton (remember Cropredy Bridge?) but he was a Scot so he refused to serve so Col. John Butler from Waller's army was appointed instead.

The 3rd Horse - Col. John Fleetwood.

The 4th Horse - Col. Richard Graves.

The 5th Horse - Col. Henry Ireton - replaced Col. Sir Michael Lindsay from Waller's army who was accused of cowardice and disobedience at Cropredy Bridge.

6th Horse - Col. Robert Pye.

7th Horse - Col. Nathaniel Rich from Earl of Manchester's army.

8th Horse - Col. Edward Rossiter.

9th Horse - Col. James Sheffield.

10th Horse - Col. Vermuyden - replaced by Oliver Cromwell.

11th Horse - Col. Edward Walley (Cromwell's cousin).

12th Dragoons - 1 regiment - Col. John Oakley.

2nd Foot - Col. Fortesque (Ran away at Edgehill, now considered reliable).

3rd Foot - Col. Robert Hammond.

4th Foot - Col. Edward Horley (previously badly wounded. Took up post at end of 1645).

5th Foot - Col. Richard Ingoldsby.

6th Foot - Lt. Col. Walter Lloyd.

7th Foot - Col. Edward Montague.

8th Foot - Col. John Pickering.

9th Foot - Col. Thomas Rainsborough.

10th Foot - Major General of Foot Skippon - a soldier of great practical ability who had risen through the ranks. Said to be illiterate (probably just spite). He had to re-organise the Earl of Essex's infantry who were devoted to the Earl.

11th Foot - Col. Sir Hardress Waller (cousin of Sir William)

12th Foot - Col. Ralph Weldon.

As time went by many of the ranks began to see themselves as instruments of divine providence. Where there were no chaplains, soldiers organised their own services and took the role of preachers.

After the war it eventually became a political force, feeling that Parliament had failed it in not securing religious freedom and reform of Parliament.

Stella Tweed

Sources:

The Ordnance Survey Complete Guide to the Battlefields of Britain -David Smurthwaite.
Battles & Generals of the Civil Wars - Col. H.C.B. Rogers O.B.E. Civil War - Taylor Downing
& Maggie Millman (Tel. Series).

THE SIEGE AND CAPTURE OF LEICESTER - MAY 1645

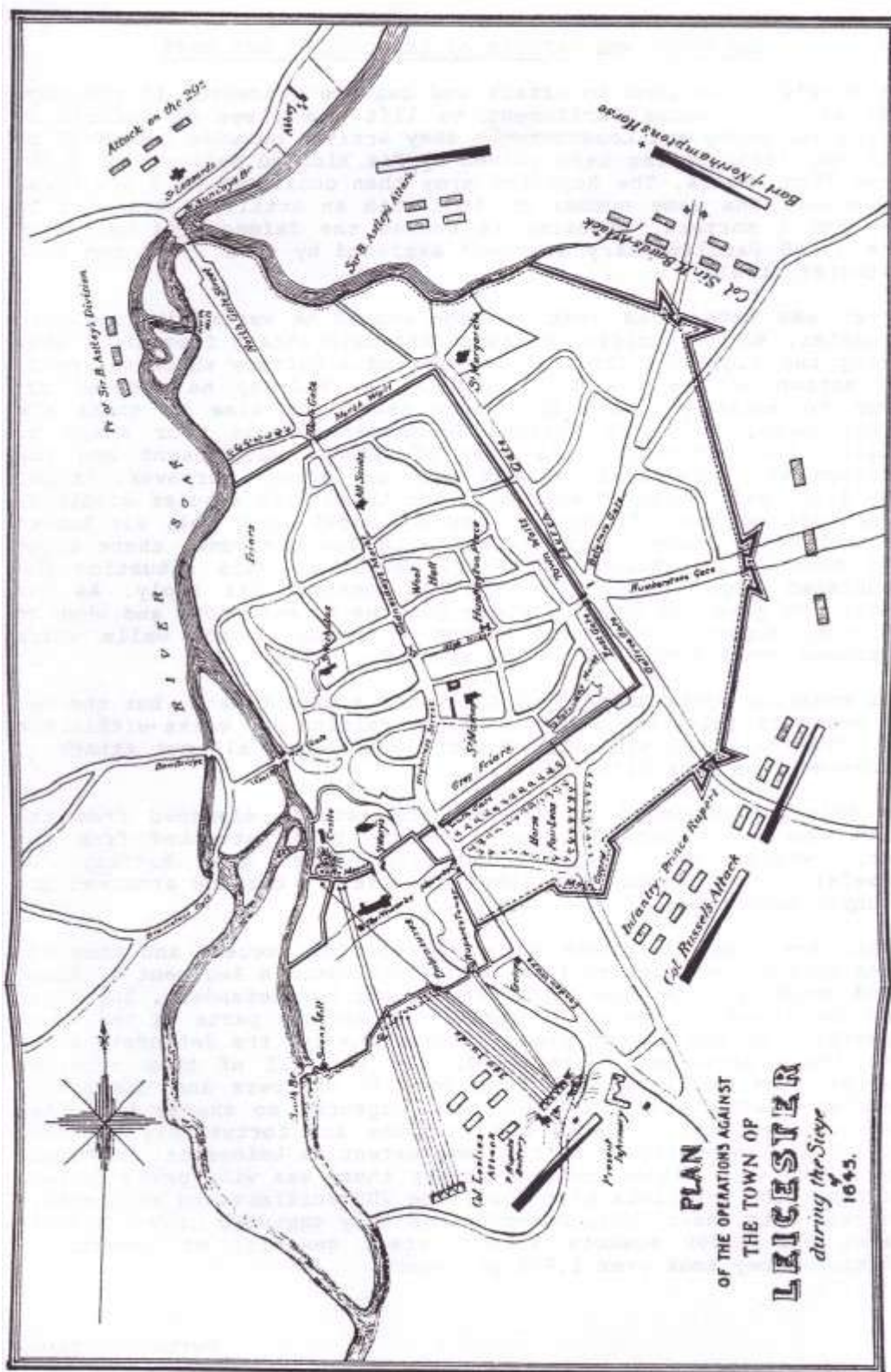
The Royalists decided to attack and capture Leicester in the hope that it would cause Parliament to lift the siege of Oxford. So moving via Ashby and Loughborough they arrived outside Leicester on 29th May 1645, having been joined by Sir Richard Wallys with 1,200 horse from Newark. The Royalist army then consisted of 5,520 horse and almost the same number of foot with an artillery train of 12 guns and 2 mortars. Opposing it behind the defences of Leicester were 1,200 Parliamentary soldiers assisted by some 1,000 men from Leicester itself.

Rupert was determined that no time should be wasted in capturing Leicester, so he decided to launch his main attack from the south. During the night of 29th May he erected a battery which was ready for action on the following morning. At mid-day he ordered the Mayor to surrender, but the Mayor asked for time to think the matter over. This was because Leicester was in poor shape to resist. Its Governor, Lord Grey of Groby, was absent and the garrison and fortifications had been neglected. Moreover, it had only 1,500 defenders, of whom only one third were regular soldiers. Indeed had not two officers of the New Model Army, Col. Sir Robert Pye and Major Innes, just arrived with 200 dragoons, there might have been no resistance whatever. Caught in this situation the frightened Mayor asked for time to consider his reply. As for Rupert, he gave the Mayor fifteen minutes to surrender and when he did not, Rupert started to batter a breach in the walls which continued until 6 o'clock in the evening.

This constant bombardment finally opened a wide breach, but the men and women of Leicester fought back by raising new works within the old. Eventually at mid-night Rupert launched an all out attack on Leicester from four directions.

One brigade commanded by Sir Bernard Astley, advanced from the north. Another, commanded by Sir Henry Bard, attacked from the east, while Col. Russell attacked the gun battery on Horsefair-Leys. At the same time Col. Lisle's brigade attacked the recently made breach.

Within one hour all these brigades reported success and then the gates were thrown open so that Lord Northampton's Regiment of Horse could enter with a view to finishing off the defenders. But still they continued to resist heroically in various parts of the town, especially in the market place. There finally, the defenders threw down their arms and surrendered, but not all of them received quarter. The Royalists had lost some 30 officers and the strong resistance after the town had been captured so exasperated them that the sack which ensued was terrible and fortunately no other city in England suffered to the same extent as Leicester. Moreover, many Scots were killed and inevitably there was widespread pillage and rape. The Royalists also lost some 200 soldiers and many others deserted with their loot. Nevertheless they captured nine artillery pieces and 1,000 muskets with a great quantity of powder. In addition, they took over 1,000 prisoners.



FROM 'GLIMPSES OF ANCIENT LEICESTER' by AGNES JOHNSON (1906)

Leicester and the Civil War

Because of its geographical position in the centre of England, Leicestershire saw plenty of action in the Civil War. Here are some places in Leicester with Civil War connections.

Cavendish House, Abbey Park

The Abbey of St. Mary of the Meadows, founded by Robert le Bossu in 1143, lay to the north of the medieval town of Leicester. It was completely destroyed at the dissolution of the monasteries and the site came into the possession of the Earl of Huntingdon. In about 1600 the Earl of Huntingdon built a house on the site from the remains of the Abbey. It later passed into the possession of the Cavendish family. The King is said to have rested here before marching to relieve Oxford. Later in the conflict it was burnt down. In 1925 the Abbey grounds, including the ruined Cavendish House, were incorporated into Abbey Park.

St. Martin's Church (The Cathedral)

In July and August 1642 King Charles *I* visited Leicester. He was met by the Mayor and Corporation at Frog Island, they then proceeded to Lord's Place in High Street, the route was lined with thousands of people. He made a speech expressing his belief in the loyalty of the citizens of Leicester.

I know you will bring horses, men, money and hearts, worthy of such a cause.

He attended a civic service in St. Martin's Church, proceeding there on foot with the robed Mayor and Corporation, via High Street, Highcross Street and St. Martin's (now Guildhall) Lane, probably entering the church by the west door.

The Newarke

Until the Reformation the Newarke i.e. New Work, was a walled enclosure with collegiate church, hospital, canons' and chantry priests' houses. The whole area was a garrison for the Parliamentary forces. For several days in 1645 the walls of the Newarke were pounded by Royalist artillery until they were breached. After a request to surrender was refused, street fighting ensued, but in a few hours it was all over. A fragment of the old wall survives behind the Newarke Houses Museum. Two of the chantry houses remain, one incorporated into the Newarke Houses Museum, the other incorporated into part of the former Portland Shoe factory. Remains of the collegiate church can be seen in the basement of the Hawthorn Building of the De Montfort University. Skeffington House, also forming part of the Newarke Houses Museum, suffered damage in the Civil War. **The Magazine**

The Magazine (now the Regimental Museum) was originally the main gateway to the Newarke. It served as a magazine store in the Civil War.

Turret or Rupert's Gateway

The Turret Gateway forms the entrance to the Castle precincts from the Newarke. It suffered damage in the Civil War and was further reduced in the nineteenth century.

The High Cross

Now situated in the Cheapside end of the Market Place the High Cross was originally sited at the junction of High Street (formerly Swinemarket) and Highcross Street (formerly High Street), the original Wednesday market place. There used to be a metal plate in the road marking its position.

Raw Dykes

On Aylestone Road is the last remnant of what is said to be a Roman aqueduct. At the time of the Civil War it was longer than it is now and therefore nearer to the town. It was used as a redoubt for Prince Rupert's guns. King Charles is said to have watched the battle from Raw Dykes, saying,

Dear and loving subjects, cry quarter, dear and loving subjects, obey.

The Angel

The Angel in Cheapside was one of the most important Leicester Inns of the medieval period. Fragments of this historic inn can still be seen high up in Morley's Arcade, one of the alleyways running between Cheapside and Gallowtree Gate, just where the sign says Angel Gateway. On the 12th of February 1646 the King slept there as a prisoner under guard.

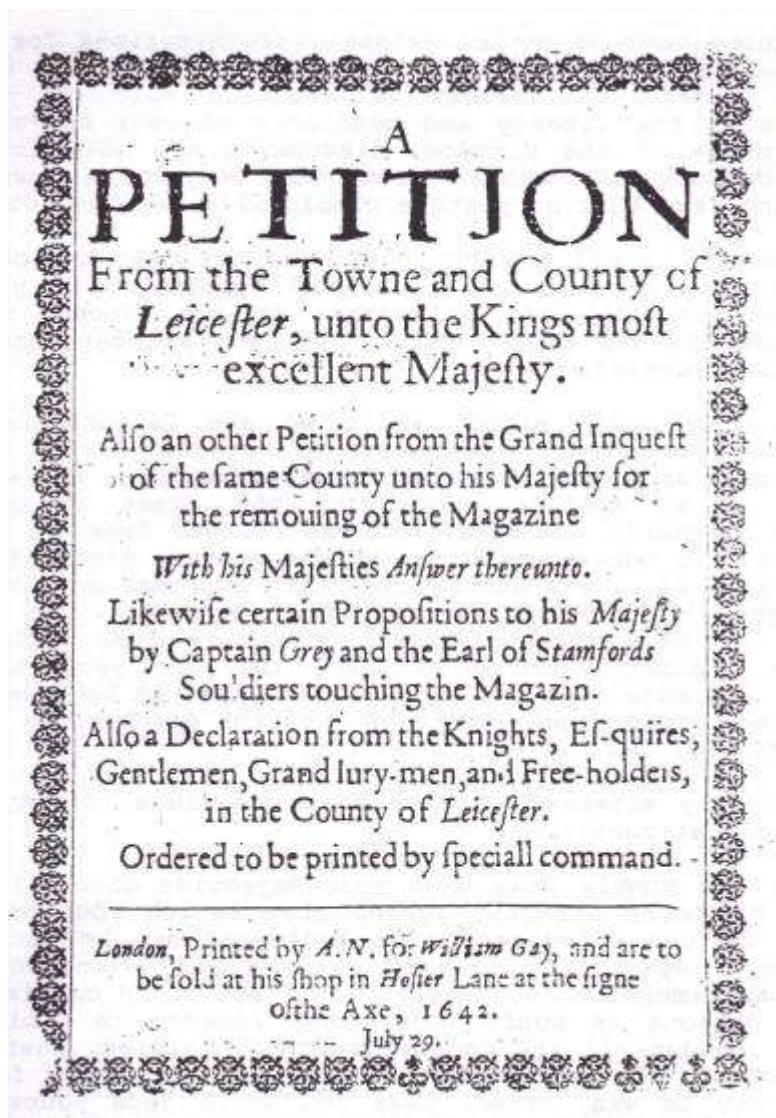
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Pevsner, Nikolaus. Leicestershire and Rutland. 2nd ed. Revised by Elizabeth Williamson. Buildings of England series. London : Penguin, 1984.

Pyrah, Chris. Inns and taverns of Leicester. Leicester : Anderson, 1984.

Chris Smart,



To the Kings most excellent Majestie

The humble petition of the Inhabitants of the Town and
County of Leicester.

July 22

Acknowledging your Majesties Princely protestations for defence of the Protestant Religion, the Lawes of the Land, (which your Highnesse makes the justest measure and rule of your royall prerogative), the liberty and obedience of your subjects as also for the peace of the Kingdom, disavowing not only intentions of war, as opening an issue to drown your Majesty & posterity, but also taking care that no posture should affright the subjects.

Yet we cannot in all humility expresse our deep sorrows for your Majesties long estrangement from, and opposition to your highest and safest Councill of Parliament; on the success whereof the safety, honour, and glory of your Majesty and happinesse of your subjects doth depend.

Well, we can never expect while we see Delinquents protected against the justice of Parliament, promoted to Honour and Offices of high trust and power, such as M Henry Hastings, who after he had appeared in an hostile manner to the great terrour of your Majesties peaceable subjects, and was rescued from the Minister of Parliament, did notwithstanding (to the greater affrightment of all & miscarrying of divers women) came with a troope of Horse and Foot at midnight to Leicester, demanding the Magazine, and proclayming the Earl of Stamford and divers others by name with all their adherents traitors, and after all this is protected (as wee conceive) and made high Sheriff, and an approved Gentleman cast out for no other cause appearing to us then the discharging of his duty to your Majesty and the parliament.

Wee are deeply affected with these proceedings, as presaging the ruine of all at once.

Therefore wee humbly pray that your Majesties Commission of Array declared to be so directly against Law (which your Majesty makes the rule of our allegiance and obedience) may be recalled, That justice may impartially proceed against all Delinquents, without which a parliament cannot subsist, That you would cashiere all such desperat persons as would ingage the Kingdom in a bloody civill War, and abandon all the Counsellours of Division, That the honour and innocency of our worthy Knight, and the other five Members impeacht may be vindicated, That you would joyn yourself to your parliament, as the only way to save ourselves and bleeding Ireland, and that our Magazine and Militia, may remain in the hands of the honorable Earl of Stamford, whois instrusted by the parliament. Wee stand resolved ever to maintain the true reformed protestant Religion, your Majesties person and authority, the Laws and free course of Justice, together with the high and honourable Court of parliament, as the Bottom wherein all is imbarqued. Wee are Enemies to all that divide betwixt your Majesty and your parliament, or that have or shall affront or cast base aspersions on that faithfull Assembly, and according to our just and free protestation, wee'l venture our estates and lives herein, and shall ever pray, &c. To the Kings most excellent Majestie

The humble Petition of the great Inquest for the County of
Leicester.

July 23

Wee doe in all humblenesse acknowledge that during your Majesties Reigne hithertowe have enjoyd that which is the greatest blessing that can befall a Nation, a stable and uninterrupted peace, your Declaration expresses your Princely desires of your subjects peace and welfare, being therfore the presages of bloud and ruine do impend and hang over our heads, wee are forced

to seeke a preservative by our addresses unto your Highnesse, if it may stand therefore with your Princely wisdome as wee judge it stands with the peace and safety of this County, our humble desire is that there may be a safe distribution of this Magazine to the severall Hundreds in this County to be dispersed therein according to due proportions, and this to be done immediatly from the Magazine, That since it stands with the peace and safety of this County it may never be re-assumed but by a legall power, that the Keepers thereof may have their liberty and protection from dangers, for discharging their trust. Thus shall you dissolve these clouds of calamities that threaten us and elevate us to higher hopes of peace.

And we shall ever pray, &c.

Propositions to his Majesty from Captain Grey, and the rest of the souldiers intrusted from the Earle of Stamford,

touching the Magazine.

I That there may be a safe distribution of this Magazine to the severall Hundreds in the County to be dispersed therein according to due proportion, and this to be done immediatly from the Magazine.

II That it may never be re-assumed againe but by a Legall power.

III That the Keepers of it may have their liberty and protection from dangers for discharging their Trust.

Given at the Court at Leicester, July 24,

1642.

His Majesty hath graciously considered this Petition, and commanded mee to returne this Answer, that as the Petitioners have enjoyed hitherto the blessing of peace under his Majesties Government, so he hath never expressed a greater love of it, and a care to preserve it, then by his late bearing so many indignities to avoid all disturbance of it, the which hee hopes will have that effect with his good subjects, that they will hence-forward have as great a regard to his honour, as hee hath to their peace, of which if all other were equally tender, no presage of bloud & ruine would hang over their heads. For your Magazine his Majesty had never looked upon this under any other consideration then to preserve it for the County whose it is. And therefore upon complaint heretofore made to him, that some persons had presumed in warlike manner to leavy it without any lawfull authority, his Majesty out of his good affection to this Countie gave direction to prevent future mischief, that the same should be restored to the disposition of those to whom it belongs, and therefore well approves, that it be disposed in such manner and such place as shall seeme be and fittest to the County, in which his Majesty will not intermeddle. For the freeing and protecting the Keepers of the Magazin or their Seconds, his Majesty knows not the meaning of the Petitioners, if they have had a lawfull trust committed and done nothing in discharge and execution thereof but what is warrantable, they need no other protection but that of the Law, but if in the violent and forcible removing the Magazine, and in the circumstances of keeping they have done any thing unjustifiable, his Majesty believes no trust boldly undertaken can excuse them; and therefore expects that this be immediatly delivered by the Keepers to the disposall of the County without condition.

FALKLAND

Charles Rex.

Our will and pleasure is, That all our Officers and loving subjects doe suffer the Bearers hereof to passe quietly to their own houses. Given at our Court at Leicester, the 24 of July, 1642.

Whereas the Grand Jury at the Generall Assizes held in the County of Leicester, did prefer a Petition unto his Majesty for the distribution of the Counties Magazin to be divided into every hundred, and therein dispersed into every Town, according to the charge leaved upon them for the providing thereof.

And whereas it was also further in the said Petition desired that the said Magazine might not be re-assumed again. Therefore the Baronets, Knights, Esquires, Gentlemen, Grand Jury-men and Free-holders, &c. doe hereby declare. That whosoever shall go about to re-assume or gather into one body again the said Magazine, or any part thereof by any Authority whatsoever, shall be adjudged, esteemed, reputed and taken to be an Enemy to, and a disturber of the publick peace of this County. And because no man may plead ignorance in this behalfe, It is agreed by all sorts, ranks, and degrees of persons above-named, That this Declaration be now openly read and published, with an audible voice, in the face of the County, at this Generall Assizes held for the County aforesaid, Dated the 25 of July 1642.

The Copy of that the Grand Jury gave the Commanders
of the Magazine.

We the Gentlemen of the Grand Jury for the County of Leicester, have received the Magazine thereof from the East gate in the Newwork, and do undertake so neer as we may, that it shall be distributed to the several Hundreds, and therein dispersed to every Towne so neere as wee can equally. And that it shall be never re-assumed to our power. In witness whereof we have subscribed our names the 25 day of July, Anno Domini 1642. Attested by all the Grand Jury.

FINIS.

ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH CASTLE

The castle played an important part in the Civil Wars. It stands, now a ruin, by the church, with parts of the hall, kitchen & chapel remaining, but the biggest fragment is the Hastings tower, like a Norman keep, with 4 storeys. It was the home of the Hastings family, made Earls of Huntingdon in Henry VIII's time, and it was the 5th Earl's 2nd son, Henry Hastings, who was the leader of the Royalists in Leicestershire.

The old walls, built by Sir William Hastings in the 1470's, would have been no match for 17th Century cannon, without some sort of earth work being thrown up to absorb the shot. The detached fort now known as Mount House was built in 1642 or 3 to protect the east side of the castle from a direct attack, also to guard a tunnel from the kitchen tower to the fort through which troops could be led.

It was Hastings' task to control communications between Oxford, the King's capital after the Battle of Edgehill in 1642, and York, his centre in the north. To this end, Ashby lay at the

centre of a web of garrisons which formed the 'Flying Army' of the North Midlands counties. This army took part in many actions as far away as York & Chester.

Hastings was not only responsible for fighting the war, he was also expected to raise the money & provisions to do so. Since he was one of a series of Local Commanders established by Charles throughout the kingdom, he had a good deal of independence of action in this.

Each garrison was allowed to demand supplies from a given area surrounding it. Ashby would gain its supplies from the Leicestershire hundreds of East & West Goscote, Sparkenhoe & Framland. Beds, blankets, food & horses were always needed, & the parish constables were warned that if these were not forthcoming "you must expect to be exposed to the plunder of the hungry soldiers."

Stealing horses from plough teams was forbidden, therefore horses had to be paid for. Money was raised by taxing the garrison town heavily. Sequestration was another method: land belonging to an enemy land-holder was taken over & the profits from the rents used to pay for the war.

Both Royalists & Parliamentarians used these methods, plus constant looting. The nick-name of Hastings was 'rob carrier.' Carriers were traders with packhorses or carts who plied between towns, & were considered fair game for looting, especially if they were taking goods to Leicester, held for Parliament by Hastings' long-time enemy the Earl of Stamford & his son Lord Grey of Groby. These two rival families used the Civil Wars to prosecute their ancient feud, to the detriment of the ordinary people of the county, who wanted nothing to do with the war.

A great cost to the Ashby garrison in 1643 was the visit of the Queen, Henrietta Maria, who had been selling part of the Crown Jewels in Europe to support her husband's cause. She needed protection on her way from Bridlington, where she landed, to Oxford where she would deliver the arms & ammunition so much needed by the King, and what better than to call in on Hastings at Ashby where she held court in great style & stayed in the rooms used by Mary Queen of Scots 100 years before. Not only did the town have to pay for her residence, but an army of 4500 had to be quartered in the area too. No doubt the soldiers would not be paid at all for months after this.

In the following year, 1644, a similar number of troops had to be accommodated in the town when Prince Rupert was ordered by the King to help Hastings, by now made Lord Loughborough, to relieve the Siege of Newark. Local labourers were conscripted to break down all hedges between Ashby & Rempstone so that the army could make a fast march to beyond Loughborough, and then by the Fosse Way to the besieged town. They must have been a colourful sight: 4500 of Rupert's men, 2700 men from Lord Loughborough's 'Flying Army,' with units from Dudley Castle, Belvoir garrison, Colonel Eyre's foot & horse from Derbyshire & Colonel Astley's troop from Staffordshire. Newark was rescued, Rupert offering free passing eastwards in return for the defeated Parliamentarians leaving behind all ammunition & weapons. The force from Ashby played no small part in this successful campaign.

Not all forays were so noble, however. One of the more unusual tasks of the Ashby garrison was that of capturing ministers of the cloth. As a condition of the Scots fighting on the side of Parliament, they insisted that English ministers sign the Covenant drawn up in protest at Archbishop Laud's religious reforms. On the date for signing, Cavaliers from Ashby rounded up about 100 ministers, but made sure they rounded up plenty of horses & cattle as well. They put up a-- Hinckley for the night, but were surprised by Captain Bodle from the Leicester garrison which took 50 prisoners & 150 horses, far more important to them than the 100 ministers.

The pulpit, nevertheless, was an important source of propaganda, and all outspoken Parliamentary sympathisers were removed. All, that is, except the preacher of Loughborough who, when a party of Hastings' horse rode into church at sermon time, to take him away, was rescued by the women of the congregation. They put their men to shame, but perhaps their husbands had heard enough of the sermon! Women often accompanied an army on the march as wives,

cooks, laundrywomen & hangers-on (to put it politely). In battle they stayed with the baggage train, protected by pikemen or musketeers. They did not usually suffer when their side was defeated. The major exception was after the Battle of Naseby when 100 women were killed & many cut about the face by the victors, the New Model Army, who thought they were Catholic Irish.

Before Naseby, the King and his army of 9000 men lodged at Ashby, moving to Loughborough before the Siege of Leicester. After Naseby, he fled to Ashby, little thinking his fate would be that of an earlier royal prisoner, Mary Queen of Scots.

The Ashby garrison did not surrender until March 1646. It had never been taken by force of arms, and its soldiers were allowed to leave with colours, weapons & one cannon still in their possession. Lord Loughborough, with 100 men, then had to slight all the new fortifications & blast away the southern half of the tower by gunpowder. He & his companions could then have passes to either Bristol or Hull. These were generous terms, and show the respect the enemy had for the castle & its owner.

Lord Loughborough resided in Holland during the Commonwealth period & became a founder member of the 'Sealed Knot,'¹ a Royalist underground movement. In 1660, he returned with Charles II & was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire. The ordinary folk of Ashby suffered greatly from having a garrison in their town: from heavy taxation, plague, sudden death & having their property destroyed. They were even fined at the end for having fought with or helped Lord Loughborough.

Yet, thanks to Sir Walter Scott's novel, 'Ivanhoe,' the place & the ruins have a romantic aura for many. Also, in the 40 's or 50's, there was a jolly pop song called 'Ashby de la Zouch Castle Abbey.' I wonder if anyone remembers that?

Edna Taylor

Note: Events at Ashby

Tues. 20th - Fri. 23rd June The Sealed Knot - Visit a small encampment of 17th Century soldiers.

Sat. 24th - Sun. 25th June The Sealed Knot - Re-enactment of the role of this Royalist stronghold.

Sources:

Stuart England by J.P. Kenyon. Leicestershire by Guy Paget. Rural Rides in Leicestershire & Beyond by Hugh Collinson. Lord Loughborough, Ashby de la Zouch & the English Civil War by Martyn Bennett.

BRADGATE & THE GREYS

As Henry Hastings represented the Royalist cause in Leicestershire during the Civil War, so the Parliamentary side was led by Henry, 1st Earl of Stamford (c!599-1673) , & his son & heir Thomas, Lord Grey of Groby (1623-1657). The family home & estates at Bradgate had been inherited via the Earl's ancestor John Grey of Pirgo, who was an uncle of Lady Jane. Although father & son were both on the same side, their positions were very different. The Earl went into the war intending only that the King should be restrained, whereas Thomas was something of a fanatic & became the second signatory of the death warrant.

The Earl had married Anne Cecil, daughter of Lord Burghley, & through this marriage obtained the castle, borough & manor of Stamford. He was summoned to Parliament in November 1620. On 9/8/1634 he & his wife entertained King Charles I & Queen Henrietta Maria at Bradgate while en-route from Nottingham to Leicester.

The break with the King seems to have occurred about 1639 when the Earl displayed disloyalty, by going to an unauthorised meeting with the Scots Army, while serving him at Berwick-on-Tweed. After this he moved more openly, both Nationally in the House of Lords, & locally in achieving considerable victory in elections for the Long Parliament in 1640 over his old adversary the Earl of Huntingdon (Henry Hastings' father) who was then Lord Lieutenant of the County. At the same time Thomas, aged only 17, was returned as one of the members for the Borough of Leicester.

On 12/2/1642 the Earl was appointed by Parliament to be Lord Lieutenant of the County in place of Huntingdon. On 18/4/1642 he presented the King with a petition from both Houses of Parliament calling for him to compromise. On 4/6/1642 he arrived in Leicester to train the militia & on 16/6/1642, having responsibility for the magazine, decided to move most of it to Bradgate for safety. For this the King declared him a traitor & gave orders for his arrest, though he was promptly granted an indemnity by Parliament. In July most of the arms were dispersed around the county (see the documents reproduced on Pages 20-23) which was fortunate for on 26/8/1642, 4 days after the start of the war, Prince Rupert & Henry Hastings attacked Bradgate House. There was little resistance because the Earl was away & "they took all his arms, & took away & spoiled all his goods, & also the cloaths of his chaplain, who was fain to fly for his life: And some chief ones asked, 'Where are the brats, the young children?' swearing, 'God damn them! they would kill them, that there might be no more of the breed of them.'¹ Fortunately although everyone present was very frightened, no serious harm was done. The Earl was raising troops locally & then went to join his kinsman the Earl of Essex where he saw action in the West. In December 1642 he was appointed Commander-in-chief of all forces raised in Hereford, Gloucester, Salop & Worcester & was also made General in Wales in the absence of Essex.

In 1643 his fortunes changed, he was blamed for losing the West Country to the Royalists. He suffered from gout & was short of money. He made a plea to the House of Lords that "he had been employed as general of the Western forces for the space of 11 months... and had not from that time received any moneys for the said entertainments; & had from time to time recruited his regiment & troop with men...upon his credit & charges....And, having had his house plundered, all his horses & cattle driven away, his tenants so plundered that they are made incapable of paying any rents; he humbly entreated, that some care might be taken for the satisfying his arrears; and that some malignant's house that was ready furnished might be allotted unto him for his family." He was granted money for a trip to France for his health & allowed the sequestrated estates of Lord Stanhope of Harrington his own "being under the enemy's power." He took no further active part in the war.

Meanwhile, Thomas spent most of the war period nearer home. He worked swiftly to secure Leicester for Parliament. Like his father he received his commissions from the Earl of Essex whose family life was unhappy & who appeared to regard him as a replacement son. On 15/12/1642 he was appointed Major General of the Midland Counties Association which was based in Leicester, but additionally covered the counties of Notts, Derbys, Rutland, Lines, Northants, Bucks, Beds & Hunts. On 1/4/1643 he was given authority to confiscate lands from local Royalists. In the August he took Rockingham Castle which led to the control of Rutland. He took part in many campaigns, notably Newark for which he was criticised & Newbury for which he was officially thanked. He then spent time in London being prevented from taking an active role by a newly passed rule that members of the Houses of Parliament should not hold high military command. It was probably this absence which contributed to Leicester's vulnerability & capture by the Royalists just prior to Naseby. After the hostilities he played a leading part in Pride's Purge (purging Parliament of remaining Royalist sympathisers, so that the death sentence could be passed unopposed). Father & son were now poles apart & when Thomas arrived at Bradgate (by then restored to his father) with news of the King's sentence, John Throsby writes that his

great-grandfather witnessed the following exchange between them. "'Well, Thomas,' says the father to the son, 'King, or no King?'" - "No King, my Lord,"¹ replied the son - "Then no Lord Grey," rejoined the father, & left him in disgust."

In 1649 Thomas was appointed to the Rump Parliament to govern after the execution & in 1651 he was once more in action against the Prince of Wales at Worcester. A grateful Parliament awarded him a £1000 per year pension. In 1653 his fortunes began to change. His behaviour caused Oliver Cromwell to look upon him as a rival & he had him arrested at Bradgate in February 1655 & imprisoned at Windsor Castle for 6 months. He was then implicated as a member of the Fifth Monarchy Men (an extreme Puritan group conspiring against Cromwell) & imprisoned again. He was released upon payment of a large fine. He died in 1657, probably of gout, aged only 34, leaving his wife, a son & 2 daughters.

Later, the Earl, by then a Royalist, tried unsuccessfully to raise troops in Leics. for Booth's Rebellion. For this he was committed to the Tower on 3/9/1659 on a charge of high treason. Upon the restoration he was freed & used his influence to prevent his son's body being dug up & degraded as happened to most of the deceased regicides. The Earl also suffered from gout, but lived to be 74, when he was succeeded by his grandson another Thomas. He is buried in the chapel at Bradgate. The house was not badly damaged as a result of the war. It continued as a family home during the life time of the Earl's grandson. The family then chose to live elsewhere & it gradually deteriorated into the ruin we see today.

Tricia Berry

Sources: Dictionary of National Biography, Nichol's History of Leics., The Greys of Bradgate in the English Civil War by J. Richards (L.A.H.S. Trans. LXII), Troublesome & Warlike Times, Info. Pack by L.R.O.

THE BATTLE OF NASEBY

After the Siege & Battle of Leicester, Prince Rupert suggested leaving a garrison under Lord Loughborough & then marching deep into the Midlands to draw Fairfax off from Oxford. However this suggestion did not find favour with the King, who wanted to come to grips with the enemy as soon as possible. Meanwhile, Fairfax having raised the Siege of Oxford, marched north-east as fast as he could in search of the King's army, hoping that he could engage it in battle before Goring's cavalry joined it & hoping that Cromwell, on his way from Huntingdon, would reach him in time to further strengthen his army. Even without Cromwell, Fairfax's army was still stronger than the King's, for he had over 6000 cavalry & nearly 7000 infantry, while the King had 3500 cavalry & just over 4000 infantry.

As soon as they learned of Fairfax's approach, the Royalist army made for Market Harborough. That night the King held a council of war at which there was much dis-agreement as to the best way of prosecuting the war. Some civilians such as Digby & Jack Ashburnham advocated attacking Fairfax as soon as possible, but Rupert opposed this plan, arguing that it would be better to wait before commencing battle until they were joined by Goring.

There was no such dis-agreement in the Parliamentary army. Cromwell consented to Fairfax's proposals without demur. So did Skippon, commander of the infantry; so did Ireton, who was to command the cavalry on the New Model Army's left wing. So early in the morning, the Parliamentary commanders moved off together towards Market Harborough where Charles was reported to be. They were encouraged by an interrupted letter addressed to Rupert by Goring, who said he could not leave the West Country for the moment. Near the village of Naseby, the Parliamentary army came across the King's outposts. Meantime, Digby & Ashburnham continued to plead with Charles that he should fight so that Rupert now gave in & agreed. So, he chose to occupy a ridge of dry ground facing almost due south over a shallow marshy valley of heath & open fields. The two armies were now separated by a piece of land known as Broad Moor & on

the far side Fairfax drew up his forces on a grassy shoulder of land which rose gently above the marshy ground between himself and the more northerly ridge where the Royalists had chosen to make their stand. The Parliamentary army still outnumbered the Royalists by about 5000 men, but their infantry was less reliable & less experienced than the Royalists & Fairfax took what measures he could to spare them the sight of the Royal army manoeuvring into position in the summer morning sunlight. The Royalist troops were certainly an impressive sight as they marched across the New Model Army's front, their colours flying in the wind, their arms & armour gleaming in the sun, the infantry wearing beanstalks in their hats as a field sign. Charles himself in full & shining gilt armour riding a Flemish horse. At this point, Fairfax ordered the whole of his line a hundred yards behind the brow of the ridge.

Fairfax's men did not have to wait long behind the brow for the battle to start, for Rupert, no doubt remembering the delay that had lost him the advantage of Marston Moor, determined to attack as soon as his army was ready. Shortly after 10 o'clock, after a few token shots from his forward guns, the first of his cavalry charges was made. Led in person by himself & Prince Maurice, the Royalists came thundering down the slope, keeping well together under heavy fire from Okey's dragoons, concealed behind a hedge on their right, making straight for the New Model Army's left wing. Ireton was in command & he led his men forward to meet the Royalists as they came up the rise towards them, pausing once to dress his lines, then charging forward so quickly through the enemy's lines, that he lost control of his soldiers. Then Ireton tried to rally his men, but failed to do so. As for the Royalists, they continued galloping away until they came up with Fairfax's baggage train. Rupert ordered the baggage commander to surrender, but the latter refused, so Rupert decided to return to the battle field, where he was appalled by the situation he found there.

Soon after Rupert's cavalry had attacked Ireton's troops, the Royalist infantry had lunged into the centre of the New Model Army's line, firing just one volley from their muskets, before gripping them by their barrels & wielding them as clubs. Although these Royalist musketeers had been advancing uphill, they & their supporting pikemen had soon gained the upper hand & now began to drive the Roundheads back. Skippon, in command of the wavering Roundhead infantry had been wounded by a musket ball piercing his breast plate & he could not prevent his first line breaking & his men falling onto the second line. Lord Astley, commander of the Royalist infantry, now began to hope for victory, as well he might have had, if it had not been for the Ironsides on their left. Here Cromwell had led his Ironsides on a successful charge on the Royalist left wing. The troopers of Colonel Walley's regiment attacked Langdale's Northern Horse, driving them back in utter confusion & at this point Cromwell & Colonel Rossiter came up to complete the rout of the Royalist army. Cromwell broke through the ranks of the struggling Royalists & suddenly appeared before the King's reserve on Dust Hill behind Astley's ranks on the moor below. Meanwhile, Charles lined up his Life Guards & would have led them against the Ironsides had not the Earl of Carnworth, a Scottish friend, intervened to stop Charles from advancing on the enemy. Carnworth's sudden action so startled the King's horse that it wheeled suddenly to the right followed by part of the reserve which rode away carrying the King with them.

Cromwell did not chase the Life Guards off the field. Instead he reformed his regiments so that they could charge down the slope into Lord Astley's unprotected infantry. Fairfax joined Cromwell in the charge, while Colonel Okey remounted his dragoons & brought them over from Sulby hedges to help Cromwell. By the time Rupert returned to the field of battle, most of the Welsh infantry had surrendered & there was little the Prince could do but cover the retreat of the King, who later called at Sir Richard Halford's house at Wistow, where he changed his highly decorated saddle for one less conspicuous.

Between 4000 & 5000 Royalist troops were captured on the field, while several hundred more lay dead & many wounded. Most of the prisoners not seriously wounded were herded into Market Harborough Church & afterwards marched to London to be paraded through the streets. Other Royalists sought to escape to Leicester, but they were cut down mercilessly as the victorious Roundheads pursued them right to the gates. Some were slaughtered in nearby

villages, as at Marston Trussell, where many were killed in the churchyard & their bodies thrown into a clay pit.

Bernard Elliott