

GLOUCESTERSHIRE CAVALIERS

by Russell Howes

At the end of the civil war parliament imposed fines on the defeated royalists. The business was handled by two committees of parliament, the committee for compounding and the committee for the advance of money. Each left copious records, in which the part taken in the war by local people can be traced. At first parliament sequestered the estates of royalists (the king did the same to his opponents); then parliament permitted royalists to compound by paying a single sum or fine. The amount was assessed at between one tenth and one third of the value of the property, according to the degree of delinquency. If an estate were discovered to have been under-valued, more had to be paid. In each county a local committee gathered information. The committee for the advance of money originally requested loans from supporters of parliament; at the end of the war it demanded payments from royalists who did not pay their compositions. These were assessed at the rate of one twentieth of the value of their real property, and one fifth of their personal.

John Dutton of Sherborne was one of the two members of parliament for Gloucestershire. He went to Oxford, the king's headquarters, and sat in the so-called parliament there. He was fined at one tenth, £3,434.4s., but had to pay a further £1,782 for additional particulars, that is presumably because of undervaluation, and another £952 17s. 1d. for property inherited from his brother Sir Ralph Dutton. In order to pay he had to sell land.

In the parish church of Stow-on-the-Wold a tablet to John Chamberlain recalls that he was faithful to his prince. He was fined at one sixth, £316, and then a much larger sum, £1,180, for omissions. Any one who discovered undisclosed income could claim one fifth of the composition; Joseph Collett spent eighteen months and £140 prosecuting Chamberlain.

George Brydges, Lord Chandos, had published the king's commission of array calling up troops. He was fined at one third, £12,440, and at one tenth £4,976. The total was abated by £1,000 when he agreed to provide £100 a year for a minister at Haresfield;

another £1,000 was respite till the House of Commons knew his damages by the slighting of Sudeley castle.



John Dutton, of Sherborne, Esquire, M.P. Born 1594. Died 14th January, 1657. (From the original portrait by Dobson, at Sherborne House).

Sir Robert Tracy of Toddington was fined at one sixth, £1,500, and for omissions a further £500. He sold the manor of Fairford in order to pay. From this money parliament paid the citizens of Gloucester £590.18s. for clothing Sir William Waller's army. Sir Humphrey Tracy of Stanway was originally fined £2,250, but it was reduced to £1,500. This money was used to pay the guard of horse which attended parliament. £4,000 owed by parliament to the city of Gloucester was to be paid from money owed to Sir Humphrey by Sir Henry Poole of Sapperton.

A leading royalist in the south of the county was Sir Richard Ducie of Tortworth. He was in Bristol when it surrendered, but claimed that he had never borne arms. However parliament heard that Major Farrar and Henry Stephens, two officers of the Gloucester garrison, had been shot at from his house at Frocester, and voted him malignant. William Hill of Newport evidently made a business of arranging compositions for royalists, and offered his services to Ducie, and to meet him in the Crown at Newport. Ducie was reluctant to pay anything, and the committee of Gloucester threatened to send soldiers to him, who, being enraged for want of pay, would be harsh collectors. The committee used some money squeezed from Ducie to pay the troop of Major Oliver Cromwell; he was a cousin of the famous Cromwell, and served in Gloucester¹. Parliament put Ducie in prison, where he petitioned to compound, and a fine was imposed of £3,346 14s. 8d.

A more tractable man was John Smyth of North Nibley, the steward of Lord Berkeley. He too went to Oxford, and thence to Bristol. His fine was at the high rate of one third but as he was not a wealthy man it came to only £600. This he paid in two instalments, preserving the receipts among his papers². He was later assessed £30 for his fifth part, but he argued that he had provided two horses with arms and ten foot arms at Cirencester; because of this, and because he had given free quarter to parliamentary troops, his claim was allowed. John Smyth also wrote to the committee of Gloucester seeking a reduction in taxes for his neighbours, because they had given free quarter. William Sheppard wrote back grudgingly offering a reduction of £10, and a further £10, if the parish contributed £5 to repairing Gloucester cathedral and to the new public library there³.

LESSER MEN

The difficulties of royalists are illustrated by Thomas Rogers of King's Stanley. When he was under sequestration the county committee helped him by allowing him to be tenant on his own estate. His fine was only £130, but even though he sold land he could not pay, and became a prisoner for debt first in Gloucester castle, and then in the upper bench. When he came out he sold more land, and eventually paid the whole fine.

The events of the civil war, and the actions of individual royalists, are illustrated by the findings of the two committees. In February 1642 Prince Rupert captured Cirencester. John Coxwell of Ablington was a trooper at the taking of the town, and wounded a man there. John Prettyman of Driffield voluntarily assisted the king's forces. William Chapman of Tetbury was called 'a grand malignant'; he rode in the king's army and when Cirencester was a royalist garrison he plundered men's goods. Thomas Remington of South Cerney drank healths to the confusion of parliament!

Many local royalists were with the king at the siege of Gloucester. Lord Chandos had a troop of horse there; in it rode John Edwards of Shurdington, armed with sword, poleaxe and pistols. Another troop was led by Lord Herbert. When parliament attempted to charge Lord Herbert's son Henry (the future Duke of Beaufort) with riding armed at the siege, when the king reviewed the troop in which he rode, it was replied that he was only 13 at the time. Although William Dowell was accused of being in arms against parliament at the siege of Gloucester, witnesses said that he had gone into the Forest of Dean about a wife; the committee for sequestrations, by comparing times and circumstances, were convinced that this was true, and discharged the sequestration⁴. It was alleged that Richard Colchester of Westbury was at the siege; his family replied that he had a son, a lieutenant, in Gloucester at the siege, and that the father tried to save his life; however while the siege was still in progress the father died near Burford of 'the new disease'. Another father who lost a son at the siege was John Freeman of Bushley near Tewkesbury; his son John was killed by a shot from a musket, and buried in the churchyard of Hempsted, where his tomb can be seen; the elder Freeman's widow and his surviving son had to pay £380. John Keyt of Ebrington served with his sons at the siege; perhaps one of the sons was Hastings Keyt, who subsequently perished in the fight at Stow, and was buried before the chancel steps in Stow church.

Richard Atkyns of Tuffley marched with the king's army to Gloucester; in his autobiography he admitted that he was anxious



Richard Atkyns.

to secure his estate; his fine of £500 was reduced to £140. A royalist clergyman, Richard Bridges of Cromhall, was said to be very active at the siege; he rode to Gloucester with the king's party, and prayed heartily that they might take it. Each side had its spies. Thomas Savage of Weston, Warwickshire, was an intelligencer for the king, and gave tidings to the besiegers of the march of the Earl of Essex to relieve the city.

A FIFTH COLUMN?

There were royalists within Gloucester. The king's secretary at war, Sir Edward Walker, had a list of over one hundred names of 'such Inhabitants within ye City of Gloucr as are reputed to be loyall & dutifull subjects unto his Matye' (the list is in the British Library⁵). Some of these people were later fined. Sir Henry Anderson had a house in College Green, but took no part in local politics; his fine of £3,170 was reduced, following petitions, to £1,730. George Leigh of Wotton was captain of a troop of horse. William Capel, a former mayor, exchanged letters with John Smyth; Capel was anxious to be paid some money, and wrote that he would stand the loss if the messenger were attacked by the way. A receipt shows that the messenger got through⁶. Dr. John English, a prebendary of the cathedral, and also curate of Cheltenham, told his story on a monument in Cheltenham parish church

ON A COARSE STONE AGAINST THE EAST WALL.
THE SAD MEMORIAL OF JOHN ENGLISH, DOCTOR IN DIVINITY, TO JANE HIS MOST DEARE WIFE, DAUGHTER TO THE HONOURABLE ELIZABETH LADY SANDYS, BARONESE DE LA VINE COMIT. SOUTHTON; FROM WHOM HE WAS DIVORCED BY 18 WEEKES CLOSE IMPRISONMENT, WHICH SOONE AFTER CAUSED HER DEATH ON AUGUST 8, 1643. TO MARY HIS SECOND DAUGHTER, WHO DECEASED OCT. 23 FOLLOWING.
SIC CECINIT LUGENS, ET DISSOLVI CUPIENS,
PIUS CONJUX, AC MÆSTUS PARENS. I. E.
QUI MUNDO SUSPIRANS, ET CÆLUM ASPIRANS,
INDESINENTER CLAMAT
BONE JESU, ES TO MEVS JESUS.
SIS MEVS, O JESU, SIS JESUS (CHRISTE) MEORUM!
SWEET SAVIOUR OF MANKIND,
THE SAVIOUR OF MEE AND MINE.
SIC { SPIRANS ORAVIT,
EXPIRANS EXORAVIT,
RESPIRANS PERORABIT,
JOHANNES ENGLISH, SANCÆ VERITATIS STUDIOsus,
OBIIT ANNO CHRISTI. AMEN.

Inscription in Cheltenham parish church by Dr. John English to his wife Jane.

to his wife Jane; from her, he said, 'he was divorced by 18 weekes close imprisonment, which soone after caused her death' in the



Thomas Price.

same year as the siege. Another on Walker's list commemorated by a monument was Thomas Price; his tablet in St. John's church recorded his services to Charles I the glorious martyr, for whom he was often wounded and once left for dead. The county committee complained of John Theyer of Cooper's Hill that he was a man of so turbulent a spirit, and kept such company about him, that they knew not how to deal with him; as he was on Walker's list he was presumably in Gloucester before the siege. John Wagstaffe escaped any fine, and was one of the new members imposed on Gloucester city council after the restoration.

The presence of royalists within the city prompted attempts to get Gloucester to surrender. William Try of Hardwicke, a life guard to the king, tried to persuade parliamentary officers to betray Gloucester. William Bell of Sandhurst came to the Northgate with a demand for surrender. The garrison returned a defiant answer, which was celebrated by a verse, including the words

All know full well
That every Bell
Is uselesse till't be hanged⁷.

The committee for the advance of money learnt later that many officers of the king's party were quartered on Bell, and they compelled him to go with the message; Bell's tombstone is at the doorway of Sandhurst church.

OTHER ROYALISTS IN THE COUNTY

The troops left by the king in Gloucestershire were put under the command of Sir William Vavasour. William Essington of St. Swithin's parish and Morton had been made a prisoner of war by Colonel Massey, governor of Gloucester, but he broke prison and escaped to Vavasour at Tewkesbury. Although Lord Chandos went off to London, Sudeley castle remained a garrison for the king; Thomas Yarrton of Winchcombe kept the court of the guard, and exercised soldiers there. Berkeley castle was at different times held for the king. Colonel Thomas Veale was in command there, and was eventually fined at one sixth £1,243. Thomas, one of the sons of John Smyth of North Nibley, served under him. Another of Veale's captains was Thomas Hicks of Cromhall. Much later, on the eve of the restoration, Colonel Massey, now working for the king, sheltered in the house of Veale's son, another Thomas, at Symond's Hall. Ladies played their part in the king's cause; Elizabeth Lady Leigh of Longborough sent horses to her son Captain George Leigh, entertained the king's officers and soldiers, received goods taken from parliament's friends at the siege of Gloucester, and threatened to hang a servant for refusing to ride in the king's service.

The king's chief strength in Gloucestershire was the force led by Sir John Wintour of Lydney. At one time he left his wife in command; he wrote to Prince Rupert, beseeching him not to forget a poor lady, with her children and

family, at his house at Lydney⁸. After the war his estates were confiscated, and awarded to Colonel Massey. Wintour was proposed for perpetual banishment, but he ended up a prisoner in the Tower of London. Several local men served under him. John Millard of Cowley, Richard Aram of Newent and others were said to have been with Wintour at Lydney House. Edward Clarke and his son of Newent gave intelligence from Gloucester garrison to Sir John Wintour, and furnished his men daily with provisions. An important man in the Forest of Dean was Benedict Hall. He had been in Lord Herbert's troop at the siege of Gloucester. He kept a garrison of 40 or 50 in his house at Highmeadow. His servants Francis Smith and John Colcombe compelled several parliament soldiers to serve the king, and one of these was captured and



Sir Edward Massey. From a picture by Van Dyck, at Tehidy, Cornwall.

hanged by Massey. After the war another of his servants John Penn shot at a parliament soldier with a fowling piece.

To be in a garrison of the king was taken as evidence of delinquency. Several Gloucestershire men went, like John Dutton, to Oxford. Dutton's colleague in parliament, Henry Brett, sat in the assembly there. Sir Edward Bathurst of Lechlade seems to have been a prisoner in Gloucester, for a ransom of £80 from him was recorded in the accounts of Thomas Blayney, the treasurer of Gloucester garrison⁹; he was said to have paid £160 at Oxford for his baronetcy.

TURNING OF THE TIDE

King Charles I surrendered to parliament, but in 1648 there was a rising by English and Scots in his favour. Thomas Green of Painswick was a captain in this insurrection. Sir Humphrey Tracy was in arms in Kent. A letter was sent to Elizabeth Colchester by Thomas Colchester her brother-in-law, threatening to reveal that her son Duncombe had been in arms against parliament¹⁰. The belligerent clergyman Richard Bridges said in the pulpit that he hoped God would make parliament bow to the Scots.

Charles II endeavoured to win back his throne in 1651, again with Scottish help, but was defeated at Worcester. Anne Poole, a widow of Cirencester, was accused of having aided the army of the King of Scots with money, provisions and intelligence, and harboured royalists at the time of the Worcester fight.

It is remarkable how many royalists told the committees that they had served the king only because forced to do so. John Dutton said that, as his house at Sherborne was only 18 miles from Oxford, he had been obliged to comply with the king's party. The proximity of Bristol was given by Sir Maurice Berkeley of Stoke Gifford as his reason for siding with the king. When Rupert and Maurice took Cirencester, they quartered at the house of Sir William Master, and forced him, as he said, to sign warrants for contributions. Sir Edward Bathurst said that he signed warrants for the king, constrained by the nearness of the king's garrisons. William Poole of Sapperton said that he and his father were forced to comply with the king's party while they prevailed in the county. The threats and potency of the enemy constrained Sir Humphrey Tracy to yield to them. William Jones of Naas protested that his name had been inserted in a commission for the king without his consent by Sir John Wintour. The same excuse was given by Thomas Morgan of Hurst in the Forest of Dean, who asserted that he had been plundered by the king's party.

The royalists of Gloucestershire did not give up hope during the commonwealth. When the government in 1655 ordered lists of suspects to be drawn up in each county, Major General Disbrowe listed over 200 people in Gloucestershire¹¹. Of the 55 or so royalists named in this article eight were on Disbrowe's list. Whereas the committee for compounding and the committee for the advance of money inevitably dealt with men of property, the major general's list included royalists of humble occupation; for example, the 14 suspects at Berkeley included five labourers, two carpenters and two joiners. In the Forest of Dean and west of the Severn there were only 11 suspects, all of them gentlemen, even though this had been Sir John Wintour's area. In north east Gloucestershire were 28 suspects, 16 of them gentlemen. The greatest numbers in the Stroud area were eight at Horsley and six at Minchinhampton, and they included broadweavers and cordwainers. The 18 suspects at Cirencester ranged from Sir William Master to Samuel Stitch a labourer. The greatest concentrations of royalist suspects were in south west Gloucestershire: 14 at Berkeley, ten at Wickwar, nine at Cromhall, the parish of Richard Bridges, and 14 at Thornbury; most of them were in humble occupations.

REFERENCES

Most of the information in this article comes from the Calendar of the Committee for Compounding and the Calendar of the Committee for the Advance of Money.

Other sources, indicated by numbers in the text, are as follows:-

- ¹ Gloucestershire Record Office D 340a.
- ² Gloucester City Library, Smyth of Nibley Manuscripts, volume 14.
- ³ British Library Additional Manuscripts 33588, f. 60.

- ⁴ Public Record Office SP 20/1, f. 276v, January 17 1644/45.
- ⁵ British Library Harley Manuscripts 6804, f. 69.
- ⁶ Gloucester City Library, Smyth of Nibley Papers, volume 10, ff. 16, 18 and 19.
- ⁷ T. D. Fosbrooke, *An Original History of the City of Gloucester*, p. 42.
- ⁸ British Library Additional Manuscripts 18981, f. 309.
- ⁹ Public Record Office, SP 28 129/5, August 8 1643.
- ¹⁰ Gloucestershire Record Office D 36 F4.
- ¹¹ British Library Additional Manuscripts 34012.