



THE PATRIOT

Quarterly Journal of the John Hampden Society

No. 1 - Winter 1992/3



SOCIETY LAUNCHED IN IMPRESSIVE CEREMONY AT HAMPDEN HOUSE

Welcome to the first issue of *'The Patriot'* which will, we hope, keep you fully informed about the John Hampden Society's objectives and activities.

The Society was inaugurated in an impressive ceremony on 27th of October 1992, in the Great Hall of Hampden House, thanks to the kindness and generosity of Tim Oliver, Chairman of Hampden Group Management, the present owners.

The event was attended by more than 50 people from various parts of the country, plus several local newspapers and Central South TV. Representatives from a number of local councils were also present.

The ceremony opened with the entrance of a Guard of Honour from Colonel John Hampden's Regiment of Foote of the English Civil War Society, commanded by Captaine Derek Lester.

This was followed by speeches by the Earl of Buckinghamshire (Patron), Roy Bailey (Hon. Secretary), Dr Frank Hansford-Miller (Hon Treasurer) and Dr John Adair (President).

Lord Buckinghamshire welcomed the assembled company to the inauguration, and thanked the various people and organisations who had given their help and assistance in getting the Society started. These included Tim Oliver, for making the Great Hall available and for sponsoring the launch; Betty Boothroyd MP, Speaker of the House of Commons, for her letter of encouragement (*see Page 3*); the Earl of St. Germans, for giving the Society the rights to reproduce his picture of John Hampden; Buckinghamshire County Museum, for loaning the Hampden funerary helm; and the members of Hampden's Greencoats, for supplying the Guard of Honour. Lord Buckinghamshire stated that hitherto he had tended to concentrate on the Hobart side of his ancestry, but was now becoming much more interested in John Hampden.

In his speech, Mr Bailey stated that he considered John Hampden to be one of the greatest men in the history of our country, and deplored the fact that he had sunk into such relative obscurity. The Society was an attempt to correct one of the iniquities of history, and put Hampden back in his rightful place. Mr Bailey outlined the objectives of the Society and, pointing out that these could only be achieved by a large and active membership, called for volunteers to serve on the committee.

Dr Adair said that Hampden had challenged Charles I's autocratic rule and had fought for the principle that free Englishmen should not be taxed without their consent. He was the first great commoner to be the country's leader, and like Winston Churchill 300 years later, was looked upon by everyone as the pilot who would guide his country through the storm. His death at Chalgrove, when he seemed likely to succeed Essex as Lord General, was a great loss to the Parliamentary cause. In a nutshell, said Dr Adair, Hampden was a good leader, and a leader for good.

Dr Hansford-Miller outlined how his own political career had been stimulated by the character and achievements of the Patriot, and how this had led him into writing his book. Amid laughter, he stated that his position as an unelected Honorary Treasurer asking for subscriptions made him feel like Charles I demanding illegal taxes!

After Lord Buckinghamshire declared the Society in being, the founders were interviewed by the press and television, and then a buffet lunch with wine was served in the King John's Tower adjoining the Great Hall.

After lunch, there was a guided tour of the house by Tim Oliver, which gave visitors a chance to appreciate the renovations that had been done. The Church of St. Mary Magdalen was open for visitors to admire the Hampden memorials.

A formative meeting of the Steering Committee was then held in the Boardroom, under the gaze of a portrait of John Hampden's cousin, Oliver Cromwell.

Approximately 20 members enrolled at the launch.

COMMITTEE

At the first meeting of the Steering Committee, held at Hampden House immediately after the inauguration, the following members agreed to serve in various capacities:-

- DR JOHN ADAIR** (*President*)
- TIM OLIVER** (*Chairman*)
- ROY BAILEY** (*Hon. Secretary*)

The Malt House, Great Shefford, Newbury, Berkshire RG 16 7ED. 0488 648441.

- DR FRANK HANSFORD-MILLER** (*Hon. Treasurer*)

20 St. Mary's Meadow, Wingham, Canterbury, Kent CT3 1DF. 0227 722391.

- THE HON. IAN HOPE-MORLEY**
- THE HON. JULIAN BYNG**
- RAYMOND JONES**

In addition, it was agreed that the Patron, **Lord Buckinghamshire**, would be an ex-officio member of the Committee.

All Committee posts are required to be confirmed by the membership at the AGM, and all existing members are available for re-election.

CONTRIBUTIONS

It is the intention to publish *'The Patriot'* every quarter, on or about Christmas Day, Lady Day, Midsummer Day and Michaelmas. In order to make it effective, it will require contributions from members.

Letters, articles, anecdotes, etc, will be welcome provided they are relevant to the aims and objectives of the Society - and not too long!

Contributions should be typewritten, if possible, or neatly printed, and sent to the Hon. Secretary. If you have a computer/word processor and can supply your output on disk, please ring **0488 648441** for the technical details.

Photographs, prints and drawings will also be welcome, and will be treated with care. They will be returned to the sender provided a stamped, addressed envelope is enclosed.

EDITORIAL

By the time you receive this newsletter, the John Hampden Society will have been in existence for nearly 3 months. In that short time we have enrolled 76 members (including 6 Life Members), with applications and enquiries being received almost every day. To be sure, most of the support has come from Buckinghamshire, where the interest in John Hampden is greatest and where the local newspapers have done us proud.

However, the current figure is very good for a Society that has been going for such a short time and whose launch was completely ignored by the national media. A glance at the membership list will reveal that we have some very interesting and able people within our ranks, many with an interesting story to tell.

The Hon. Ian Hope-Morley is the great-nephew of the 8th Earl of Buckinghamshire and owner of the Hampden Estate; Tim Oliver is Chairman of Hampden Group Management, owners of the house; the Hon. Julian Byng, a Director of Hampden Group Management, is a descendant of the Earl of Strafford whom John Hampden helped to impeach for treason; Raymond Jones is Chairman of Great Hampden Parish Council.

Dr Frank Hansford-Miller stood for Parliament as a member of the John Hampden New Freedom Party; Miss Gileon Holroyd has run summer schools on John Hampden at Medmenham Abbey, and Andrew Mactavish is Head of the John Hampden Grammar School, High Wycombe.

The Rt. Rev Richard Watson is a retired Bishop, and he and Mrs Anne Marshall are President and Secretary respectively of the Thame Historical Association. Miss Jasmin Cameron was a pupil at Hampden House School, and during World War II Dennis Hargreaves used to travel to London with the 8th Earl, when they returned from leave. Elliott Viney is President of the Bucks Archaeological Society and has lectured on John Hampden many times. Ms Liz Morris has a video that she took of the re-siting of John Hampden's statue in Aylesbury Market Square in 1988.

Ian Hope-Morley, Lord Buckinghamshire and his sister Lady Helen Motteux, the Hobart family, the Woodd family, the Donaldsons, and Norman Lawrence and his cousin Ursula Pye all claim descent from the Patriot.

With such credentials, the future of the Society looks very good.

☆☆☆

BIOGRAPHIES

Contact was recently made with the History of Parliament Trust, and the following reply was received by the Hon. Secretary:-

**History of Parliament Trust
Public Bill Office
House of Commons
LONDON SW1A 0AA**

Dear Mr Bailey,

I have contacted the editors of the two relevant sections of the History of Parliament. I gather from Dr Andrew Thrush, editor of the 1604-29 section, that that section has no immediate plans to produce Hampden's biography. Dr John Adamson, the editor of the 1640-40 section, tells me that because the section has not yet embarked on the Buckinghamshire MPs for the period, he has as yet little material on Hampden; however, he thinks that in view of the forthcoming anniversary of Hampden's death, it might be a good idea to proceed with his biography ahead of the normal schedule. Dr Adamson would be interested to know of any "unpublished records of the Patriot", if and when these emerge, and the History would certainly be willing to make available to you any relevant material that we acquire.

I look forward to receiving your newsletter, and wish you well in your plans for the 350th anniversary.

Yours sincerely,

ROBIN JAMES

Secretary to the Trust.

● Anyone wishing to supply unpublished information to Dr Adamson is invited to contact the Trust at the above address.

SPOT THE PATRIOT

If you spent the post-Christmas period watching television, you may have seen the appalling film, 'Cromwell', with the quite unbelievable casting of Richard Harris in the title role. Despite the subject and the period, you will almost certainly have missed seeing John Hampden, as the actor playing him had no more than one line - if that.

The whole production was full of the most glaring historical inaccuracies, and is the sort of thing that makes a society such as ours so necessary.

It would be an interesting exercise to get a video of this particular film and see how many howlers one can find.



1993

Sat 6 Feb. Annual General Meeting at Hampden House, commencing at 2 pm.

Fri 18 and

Sat 19 June. Colonel John Hampden's Regiment of Foote will be holding a memorial service at Chalgrove Field, and a re-enactment of the battle, to commemorate the 350th anniversary.

Thur 24 June. 350th anniversary of John Hampden's death. The Earl of Buckinghamshire will represent the Society in laying a wreath at the Memorial in Thame.

Fri 25 -

Sun 27 June. Great Hampden Parochial Church Council's commemoration of John Hampden's life, comprising:-

Friday (evening) A musical concert in the Church.

Saturday. A display of traditional village games and pastimes on the lawns of Hampden House, followed by a lecture in the Great Hall by Dr John Adair, and a second concert in the Church.

Sunday (evening) Songs of Praise in the Church.

1994.

This year marks the 400th anniversary of Hampden's birth, which is thought to have taken place where Downing Street now stands. We are hoping to organise various events in and around the Palace of Westminster during the year.

Please make every effort to attend these various functions, and help in any way you can.

☆☆☆

POSTAGE

The cost of keeping in touch with members by post is an ever-present problem for societies such as ours, and is forming a large part of our expenditure. Despite the request on the application form, a number of members have failed to enclose a stamped, addressed envelope for the return of their membership card.

When writing to any of the Society's officers, please observe this requirement if you want a reply. It would also be useful if the envelope was a standard 110mm x 220mm DL.

STOP PRESS

The Society has already achieved one of its major objectives.

Full details in the next issue, which will be published on 25 March.

*Speaker's House
Westminster
London SW1A 0AA.
20 October 1992*

Dear Mr Bailey,

When I was elected Speaker of the House of Commons in late April of this year, one of my first and most important duties was to lay claim on behalf of the Commons to its undoubted rights and privileges, particularly to freedom of speech in debate, freedom from arrest, freedom of access to Her Majesty whenever occasion shall require and that the most favourable construction should be placed upon all our proceedings. That I should do so with the assurance of receiving a favourable reply from the Monarch is due in no small measure to the activities of John Hampden and others of his generation.

As members of the public wishing to watch our debates in the House of Commons or to lobby their Member of Parliament enter the Palace of Westminster, they pass through St. Stephen's Hall, site of the Commons Chamber until the nineteenth century. At the entrance to the central lobby stand two statues, representing two alternative visions of our Parliamentary development. On one side stands the Earl of Clarendon, in his Lord Chancellor's robes, symbol of the respect for law. On the other side is the splendid figure of John Hampden, dressed for battle, sword at his side, ready to defend Parliament's rights and privileges by any means necessary. Now that the struggles which divided these two great men lie in the distant past, we can cherish both visions.

John Hampden is, of course, most famous not so much for his activities in Parliament but for his steadfast refusal to pay a tax levied without Parliamentary approval - Ship Money. Yet throughout his political career he was dedicated to the idea that a free Parliament was essential to the defence of the King's subjects. In the Parliament of 1628 he was one of the first to argue that the policies pursued by Charles I amounted to "no less than the subversion of the whole state".

By the time Parliament finally met again in 1640 John Hampden was one of the most famous men in England. Throughout the Short Parliament he reminded Members that the freedom of speech in debate was the most important issue before them. The principle he asserted - that Members of Parliament should not be held to account in the courts for their activities in the House - is one that is now universally accepted, enshrined as it is in the Bill of Rights, and which is integral to the effective functioning of Parliament to this day. Nor is this essential democratic rule confined to the United Kingdom: the freedom of speech of Parliamentarians in the conduct of their duties is now accepted as one of the most significant benchmarks for assessing the democratic credentials of parliaments and international assemblies throughout the world.

John Hampden's virtues as a Parliamentarian are such as to commend him to a Speaker in any age. He did not favour long set-piece speeches but short well-timed interventions designed to influence the outcome of debate. He was obviously loyal to and well liked by his constituents. Five thousand inhabitants of Buckinghamshire came to London in his support after the King attempted his arrest.

His defence of Parliament led him, in Clarendon's phrase, to draw his sword and throw away his scabbard. After his mortal wound on the field at Chalgrove, he was buried at Great Hampden, a ceremony conducted by the Rector Robert Lenthall, brother of one of my most illustrious predecessors. Thus, his link to Parliament remained until the very end.

As Hampden had foreseen, his place in history was soon eclipsed by his cousin, Oliver Cromwell, whose statue has pride of place outside the Palace of Westminster. However, John Hampden's lasting contribution to the securing of modern Parliamentary freedoms should not be forgotten and I welcome the contribution your new Society will make to keeping his memory alive.

I am sorry that I cannot be with you on the Inauguration Day of your Society, but my first and paramount duty is my attendance upon the House of Commons. I am sure that is something John Hampden would have understood.

Yours sincerely

Betty Boothroyd

Speaker.

LETTERS

A large number of letters have been received by the Society since its inauguration last October, but the very encouraging one on the left arrived a few days beforehand.

The one below was the result of discovering that there are towns called Hampden in Newfoundland, New Zealand, N. Dakota and Massachusetts; Hamdens in Connecticut, New York and Ohio; and Hampden Highland in Maine - and writing to the respective Mayors.

**8 Short Wharf Rd.,
Hampden, Maine 04444,
U.S.A.**

29 December 1992

Dear Mr Bailey,

Your letter to "The Mayor, Hampden Highlands, ME." was turned over to me as a member of the Bicentennial Committee of the town of Hampden, ME. Within the last few years Hampden Highlands has been combined with other parts of this community into the U.S. Postal zone - Hampden 04444 - and exists now as a section of the Town of Hampden, Maine.

A Bicentennial Committee was formed earlier in 1992 to begin preparations for a celebration in 1994 of the incorporation of the town in February 1794. Previous to 1794 the town was called Wheelersboro. Then when settlers sought incorporation through petition of the General Court of Massachusetts (Maine was a part of Mass. until 1820) the name Hampden was suggested in honour of your Society's John Hampden. As a teacher in our local schools I suggested to the committee that a meaningful project for students might be finding out more about John Hampden, possibly through a John Hampden Society. We wrote an address in England but received no reply. (Most likely it was incorrect) Therefore the receipt of your letter is quite exciting for us as potential for research on our town's namesake as well as learning: about your society and its many activities.

I shall present your letter to the Bicentennial Committee at its next meeting on January 20. Also I shall inform the Hampden Historical Society of the John Hampden Society. I expect there will be a great deal of interest in this connection.

Sincerely yours,

Alice M. Hawes.

COL. JOHN HAMPDEN'S REGIMENT OF FOOTE

by

Maggie Hulme

The English Civil War Society comprises the Roundhead Association (parliamentarian) and the King's Army (Royalist). John Hampden's Regiment of Foote is one of the Regiments that makes up the Roundhead Association.

We seek to create the life and times of the 17th Century, bringing the English Civil War period to life. We organise major battles, skirmishes and living history events throughout the country. We have undertaken work for films, video productions and television programmes.

Our historical re-enactments are fun to take part in, enjoyable to watch, and fascinating and educational for adults and children alike. We are non-profit making, and our events are a success for spectators, members and sponsors alike.

Musters

In the 17th Century a muster was a gathering of soldiers, either for practice or for going on campaign to fight. Our present-day musters take place at week-ends between March and October. Battles are often fought in places with strong historical links, in open fields, by castle walls, or in the grounds of large country estates.

While John Hampden's Regiment, as a regiment of foot, contest the field with pike and musket, the roar of cannon and the charge of Horse through swirling smoke are provided by other regiments, all contributing to the battlefield spectacle.

Musters provide an exciting escape from 20th Century living: Members dress in 17th Century clothes for the whole weekend, camping near the battlefield. Campsites are provided with water points and portable toilets. At major musters there is a beer tent for the exclusive use of members, as well as a wide variety of food stalls. At Merchant's Row members can buy everything they would need for authentic 17th Century life: clothing, armour, muskets, cooking utensils and household items. When not battling or drilling in preparation, there is time for exploring local sites of interest, visiting inns, and carousing around campfires with song and music.

Living History

During 'living history' events, members of the Regiment act out roles of people from the 17th Century in encampments or historic buildings. It is easy for spectators to become enthralled in the sights and sounds, and provides a fascinating way to learn about the period. Members are often very knowledgeable about life during the Civil War, and their enthusiasm can be infectious.

BOOKLIST

Those of you wishing to know more about John Hampden will find the following books of interest. Sadly, they are all out of print, and not all of them are freely available in libraries. If anyone knows of any secondhand copies for sale, please inform the Hon. Secretary.

MEMORIALS OF JOHN HAMPDEN, HIS PARTY AND HIS TIMES

by **George Grenville, Lord Nugent.**

George Bell & Sons - 1831.

(ISBN 9999079373)

The first biography of Hampden, written by the man who erected the monument at Chalgrove, and who opened Hampden's coffin (or so he thought) to try to discover the truth about Hampden's death wound.

☆☆☆

JOHN HAMPDEN'S ENGLAND

by **John Drinkwater.**

Thornton Butterworth - 1933.

ISBN 9999069352)

Keystone Library - 1936.

(ISBN 9999074383)

As its title suggests, more a look at 17th century life as it affected Hampden than a biography. Contains the arguments put forward by both sides in the Ship Money trial in some detail.

☆☆☆

Taking part

The regiment is open to people from all over the country. We have members from Southampton to York, and from Norwich to Shrewsbury. You may join John Hampden's Regiment as a musketeer or a pikeman. If you do not want to fight, there are many roles for civilians. If you can think of a role someone may have played in the Civil War, then you can take on that role in the Regiment. This may mean carrying much-needed water to the troops, tending the wounded, or simply being a camp follower! All ages are welcome, and we have members from a few months old to those in retirement.

Events

On Sunday 2 May we will be taking part, with Bright's Regiment, in a small event at Chesham Grammar School.

On Bank Holiday Monday 3 May we will be participating in a fete and parade at

JOHN HAMPDEN - A LIFE

by

Hugh Ross Williamson

Hodder & Stoughton - 1933.

(ISBN 9999038541)

More of a narrative history of Hampden's life than the previous two, and much lighter going. The author is very critical of Nugent's work.

☆☆☆

JOHN HAMPDEN

by **Dr Frank Hansford-Miller.**

Shire Publications - 1976

(ISBN 08226322X)

A small illustrated life of the Patriot by our Hon Treasurer. The remaining copies have been bought by the Society and are available from Dr Hansford-Miller.

☆☆☆

A LIFE OF JOHN HAMPDEN THE PATRIOT (1594-1643)

by **Dr John Adair.**

Macdonald and James - 1976

(ISBN 0354040146)

Certainly the best of the full-length biographies, containing much new material not previously available.

● *There is also a large entry for Hampden by Sir Charles Firth in the Dictionary of National Biography.*

Chalgrove. A small skirmish will also be held.

We hope to hold a major muster at Chalgrove on Sat 19 and Sun 20 June. Details of this event are not yet confirmed, but we hope that members of the John Hampden Society will give us their support on that momentous anniversary.

Further details of these events can be obtained from Derek Lester on 0992 701304.

Joining

If you would like to join the Regiment, we would be very pleased to hear from you, and you can be sure of being made welcome. Membership Secretary until March is Angie Finemore, who you can contact on 0703 736246.

After March you should contact David Gabol on 0296 738808 for the name of the new Membership Secretary.