



# THE PATRIOT

Quarterly Newsletter of The John Hampden Society

No. 21 - Spring 1998



## PREDECESSORS

Members may recall that, just after our inauguration, we were informed by a Mrs Pamela Goodwin of Princes Risborough that there had been another John Hampden Society before us.

As reported in issue no. 14 of *'The Patriot'*, we were unable to discover anything about this other organisation other than that it was started after World War II by some radical journalists, and that Mrs Goodwin's late father, James Heading, was a member in the 1950s.

Now **Dennis Hargreaves**, also of Princes Risborough, has come up with some further information, in the shape of a cutting from the *Bucks Advertiser* of 31 January 1964. Under the headline 'John Hampden Society May Contest Local Elections', the article quotes from the Society's January newsletter their intention to field candidates in four local parish council elections the following May, if possible.

Comments in the newsletter about council budgeting, planning, education and the police make it fairly clear that this organisation was in the nature of a residents' association with political aims, rather than a historical society.

The article mentions both the J.H. Society of Princes Risborough, which had a membership of 100, and also the John Hampden Society of Bucks, and pays tribute to one of the founders, Mr J. Turner, who had resigned from the committee.

## OBITUARIES

The month of March has seen the death of two stalwart members of the Society, **The Rt. Rev. Richard Watson** and **Lord Donaldson of Kingsbridge**, and news of the passing of another, **Richard Millard**.

Appreciations of all three are on pages 2 & 3.

## THE DEATH OF JOHN HAMPDEN

by  
**John Adair**

*(This article was written by Dr Adair in 1979 for a history magazine, and is reprinted here with his permission.)*

'Poor Hampden is dead ... I have scarce strength to pronounce that word.' So wrote Anthony Nichol, M.P., on hearing that John Hampden had died of wounds received on Chalgrove Field on Sunday June 18th, 1643. 'Never Kingdom received a greater loss in one subject, never a man a truer and faithful friend.'

Colonel Arthur Goodwin, Hampden's fellow M.P. for Buckinghamshire, wrote on June 26th in a similar vein to his daughter:

'I am here at Hampden doing the last duty for the deceased owner of it, of whom every honest man hath a share in the loss, and therefore will likewise in the sorrow ... All his thoughts and endeavours of his life was zealously in this cause of God's, which he continued in all his sickness, even to his death. For all I can hear the last words he spake was to me, though he lived six or seven hours after I came away as in a sleep. Truly, Jenny, (and I know you may easily be persuaded to it), he was a gallant man, an honest man, an able man, and take all, I know not to any man living second. God now in mercy hath rewarded him. I have writ to London for a black suit, I pray let me beg of you a broad black ribbon to hang about my standard ...'

Clarendon, who did not conceal an admiration for his old opponent Hampden, reported the universal wave of grief that swept through London, Parliament and the people throughout the land, one so great that it was 'as if their whole army had been defeated: his private loss is unspeakable'.

Why did the death of one man cause such a poignant sense of bereavement among so many? The great Ship Money trial of 1637 had made Hampden a national figure, but it was his qualities as an Englishman and as a Puritan gentleman that won him the love of those whom he met or who set eyes on him from afar. These qualities had given Hampden pre-eminence in the Long Parliament. He was

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**The 1998 Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held at Hampden House, Great Hampden, on Saturday 18 April 1998, commencing at 2.30 pm.**

Members should receive all the relevant paperwork with this newsletter, and are reminded that any candidates for election to any of the posts must be proposed and seconded, and must indicate their willingness to stand.

There will be no guest speaker at this AGM, but there will be a guided tour of the House, courtesy of **Tim Oliver**, after the meeting.

## ANNUAL DINNER

**The Society's Annual Dinner will be held at The Spread Eagle Hotel, Thame, on Saturday 20 June 1998.**

A menu and booking form is enclosed with this newsletter, and should be returned to Mrs Sarah Barrington at the hotel.

We have not yet organised a guest speaker, and as there will not be another issue of *'The Patriot'* until after the dinner, the name will have to be a surprise.

Bon viveurs among the membership will be pleased to know that plans are being made for two more Society dinners.

It has been suggested that we organise one at John Hampden's old college, Magdalen in Oxford, either later this year or next year, and this possibility is being investigated.

In addition, Richard Jenkinson of the Chiltern Brewery is keen to host a function in their new dining room, with the theme as John Hampden and someone to talk about the man and the Society.

Watch this space!

continued on page 4



**The Spread Eagle Hotel**  
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ACCOMMODATION, RESTAURANT  
 & BANQUETING

## The Rt. Rev. Richard Watson 1923 - 1998

We regret to announce the death, on 28 February, of The Rt. Rev. Richard Watson, former Suffragan Bishop of Burnley.

Bishop Dick, as he preferred to be known, was a native of Dinton, near Thame. He attended Rugby School and was commissioned into the Royal Artillery of the Indian Army, where he served in the famous siege of Imphal in Burma.

After demobilisation he trained at Cambridge and undertook several chaplaincy jobs at Oxford before becoming a Vicar at Hornchurch in Essex and then at Burnley. He served as Suffragan Bishop

there from 1970 to 1988, and retired to Thame, where he lived with his wife Anna in a little cottage in Church Road.

Although officially retired, Dick Watson continued to live a full and useful life, and made many friends. He continued as Assistant Bishop of Oxford, helped out at services in St Mary's Church, visited the smaller parishes, and often took Sunday services at St. Catherine's in Towersey, where his concept

of Family Communion will continue.

He was President and unofficial chaplain of the Thame branch of the Royal British Legion; Chairman of the Friends of St Mary's; former President and an active member of the Thame Rotary Club; President of Thame Historical Society; and a keen member of the John Hampden Society. In the week following his death Bishop Dick was due to take part in a long series of sessions with students of Lord Williams's School to prepare them for job interviews.

Nobody who knew Dick Watson could doubt what a truly Christian gentleman he was. During the last few years of her life, his wife Anna was blind, and Dick cared for her devotedly until her death just over a year ago. Despite his loss, he continued to be active in the pastoral work to which he had devoted so much of his life.

His many friends paid glowing tributes to him. Paul Hayward said, "He was an outstanding committee man, always prepared to listen, always prepared to give sound advice. He never 'got across' anyone. He had a marvellous sense of

humour, and was completely devoid of temperament. Everyone was fond of him."

"He was a very kind man", said Mrs Margaret Youens, "especially to his immediate neighbours, and was concerned about people."

Mrs Rosalie Gibson said, "Terry and I felt very privileged to have known Dick and Anna almost from the day they arrived in Thame. We went on a holiday/pilgrimage to Israel with them, and we were also neighbours on the allotments. This was a pastime Dick very

much enjoyed and, as always, he was never short of a tale to tell when we were doing our digging."

Maurice Kirtland told the Historical Society of a time when he and Anne met Dick one day in the churchyard. They had their 12-year-old son with them and the lad felt awkward with the Bishop, but Dick said, "I've got one of these new-fangled watches and I don't know how to set it. Can you help me?" This put Matthew at

ease straight away.

Honorary Secretary Roy Bailey said, "Before I met Dick Watson I felt much as did John Hampden's neighbour and colleague Sir Edmund Verney, who said, 'As you know, I have no reverence for Bishops'. Dick was the exception; a man of great charm and character, whom no one, whatever their beliefs, could fail to admire and respect."

Bishop Watson was a long-standing member of the John Hampden Society and a great admirer of the Patriot. He conducted the service at the Commemorative Ceremony in Thame in 1993, and his last appearance for the Society was in June last year, when he attended the Annual Dinner and said Grace. He will be greatly missed by those members who had the privilege of knowing him.

Dick Watson is survived by his son David, daughter Rachel and two grandchildren. He was buried beside his wife Anna at Dinton on 11 March, and there will be a Memorial Service at St. Mary's Church, Thame on Friday 27 March at 2 pm.



Bishop Dick Watson conducting the service at the Commemorative Ceremony in Thame in June 1993

## John, Baron Donaldson of Kingsbridge 1907-1998

Lord Donaldson of Kingsbridge, who died in March aged 90, was a Vice-President of the John Hampden Society and a descendant of John Hampden.

John George Stuart Donaldson was the son of the Rev. Stuart Donaldson, Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge, and of Lady Albinia Hobart-Hampden, sister of the 7th Earl of Buckinghamshire.



He was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he played clarinet and saxophone for a group called the Cambridge University Quinquaginta Ramblers. Although this band did not survive the members university careers, it did make a number of recordings for the Brunswick and HMV labels in 1927.

Jack Donaldson became the first graduate trainee at Lloyds Bank, but his social conscience led him to join the Labour Party at the time of the General Strike in 1926, and he assisted at the pioneering health centre in Peckham from 1935 to 1938.

After service in the Royal Engineers in World War II, from which he emerged with the rank of lieutenant-colonel and an OBE, he farmed in Gloucestershire and then Buckinghamshire. He became chairman of the British Egg Association and in 1969 he and his wife published *Farming in Britain Today*.

He remained zealous in his voluntary activities, especially those concerned with prisoners welfare, and with the arts. He was made a life peer by Harold Wilson in 1967, and became Chairman of the short-lived Consumer Council.

On Labour's return to office in 1974, Donaldson became Parliamentary Under-Secretary to the Northern Ireland

## THE ACID TEST

The committee has been mulling over a rather bizarre suggestion put forward by Derek Lester at last year's AGM.

It is that we should carry out DNA testing on those willing persons who are descendants, or claim to be descendants of John Hampden, plus the lock of hair in Carisbrooke Castle (see *'The Patriot'* No. 15).

DNA testing has now been perfected to such an extent that only a few strands of hair are required, and the results can prove relationships quite conclusively.

Members will recall that the Marquis of Bath's butler was proved to be descended from a man several thousand years old whose body was recently discovered near Cheddar, in Somerset.

Carrying out such an exercise would settle beyond doubt the authenticity of the Carisbrooke artefact; the claims by members of kinship with John Hampden; and the relationship between the Barbados Hampdens and the main family. It would also provide useful evidence of identity should there ever be another exhumation of John Hampden's supposed body in Great Hampden church.

Unfortunately, as former member Dr John Whitehead has confirmed, such testings cost around £1,000 a time so, unless we can find a friendly university or scientific organisation prepared to do them for free, such a project will have to remain a pipe dream - and the claims to descent from the Patriot will have to remain unproven.



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The John Hampden Society  
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Hungerford, Berkshire RG17 7ED  
Tel & Fax: 01488 648441  
E-mail: [jhs@westberks.demon.co.uk](mailto:jhs@westberks.demon.co.uk)  
<http://www.westberks.demon.co.uk/jhs/>

## MILLENNIUM MATTERS

With the Millennium celebrations only a couple of years away, the Society is already making plans.

The period from 17 - 25 June 2000 is being earmarked for another week of activities in Thame, similar to last year's John Hampden Week.

Col. John Hampden's Regiment will be organising another big Living History event, and the John Hampden Society's contribution is being planned as a two-day exhibition in the Masonic Hall on Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th.

This will be held in association with Thame Historical Society, and we hope to put on a really comprehensive display about John Hampden, 17th century life, and the Society.

To do this, we need as much material as possible, so anyone who has any artefacts or memorabilia relevant to John Hampden and/or the 17th century is requested to loan them to the Society.

## WORLD WIDE WEB NEWS

**The Society's presence on the Internet is increasing.**

The towns of Thame and Hampden (Maine) now have their own websites (<http://www.thame.net> and <http://www.hampdenmaine.com> respectively) and these contain information about John Hampden and the Society.

So, too, does a site called South Oxfordshire Links run by a resident of Chalgrove on: <http://www.avnet.co.uk/russ-sky/wcto/oxlink.htm>.

In addition, a new company, Netindex, is producing an information website for various English towns. They have already put up a page about the Society in the Aylesbury section, and are looking for regular contributions from us of a local nature for the monthly on-line magazine.

Their Internet address is:

<http://www.netindex.net/netindex/towns/Aylesbury/>

## APPOINTMENT

As there have been no candidates for the post of Honorary Secretary and **Roy Bailey** will be continuing for another year, the committee has appointed **Mrs Anthea Coles** as Assistant Secretary.

Sale or return

Free glass loan



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Advice and suggestions

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1998

**Sat 27 March** Memorial Service in honour of the Rt. Rev. Richard Watson at St. Mary's Church, Thame, at 2 pm.

**Sat 18 Apr** Annual General Meeting at Hampden House, Great Hampden, commencing at 2.30 pm.

**Sat 20 June** Annual Dinner at The Spread Eagle Hotel, Thame. 7.30 for 8 pm. Bookings to Mrs Barrington at 01844 213661.

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Office and was Minister of Arts from 1976 to 1979. In 1981 he joined the new Social Democrat Party, and after its amalgamation sat for the rest of his life in the House of Lords as a Liberal Democrat.

Jack Donaldson was described as a man who exuded goodwill, worked hard for the maintenance of high cultural standards in Britain, and never ceased in his efforts to help those who had fallen by the wayside.

His wife Frances, whom he married in 1935, was the daughter of playwright Frederick Lonsdale and a noted biographer. They had a son and two daughters.

● The John Hampden Society acknowledges the contribution made by *The Daily Telegraph* in the preparation of this appreciation.

## RICHARD MILLARD

1914-1997

**The John Hampden Society would also like to acknowledge the memory of Richard Millard, whose death at the age of 83 last summer was only recently made known to us.**

Mr Millard was Clerk to Buckinghamshire County Council from 1955 to 1974, and was one of the leaders in the successful fight to prevent the third London Airport from being sited at Cublington, north of Aylesbury. He was noted for his integrity, wisdom, gentleness and a sense of humour.

A man very much in the mould of John Hampden.

## NEW MEMBER

Welcome to the first (and, hopefully, not the last) new member of 1998, **Miss Dilys Hampden** of Rickmansworth.

Miss Hampden's family name is actually Hampden-Yates, and comes from an ancestor named Yates who was a Chartist in the early 19th century and served a prison term for his views. On release he gave his son Jeremiah the additional names of Emmet Fitzgerald Hampden, after radical people that he admired.

# THE DEATH OF JOHN HAMPDEN

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a good listener, an attribute his first cousin Oliver Cromwell may well have learnt from him. A humorous and pleasant man, he possessed a will of steel and an intelligence of exceptional keenness. In the House of Commons his leadership was exercised largely behind the scenes.

Yet Clarendon, who coupled his name with that of John Pym as the leaders of the Commons, pointed out that he had a popularity in the country at large denied to Pym; so that in November 1640 'the eyes of all men were fixed on him as their Patriae pater, and the pilot that must steer their vessel through the tempests and rocks which threatened it...'

Unfortunately, few of Hampden's papers and letters have survived; nor can his portrait convey his charm. There are several testimonies, however, to his self-mastery, which made him a calming, steadying influence in the hour of crisis.

For example, during the debate on the Grand Remonstrance in the small hours of November 23rd, 1641, in the dim candle-lit chamber an eye-witness compared to the Valley of the Shadow of Death, for it seemed the members would sheath their swords in each others' bowels 'had not the sagacity and great calmness of Mr Hampden prevented it'. As Clarendon perceived, Hampden was more than a party man; he was a great Englishman. A new word, introduced from the French language during his lifetime, summed him up: he was a patriot.

During the Civil Wars Hampden threw himself into the cause, and displayed much courage and practical ability. As a wealthy Buckinghamshire landowner, and one of the Five Members (all of whom received commissions as colonels with the exception of Pym, who was no soldier), Hampden raised a regiment of Greencoats in his own county; and, having energetically helped to secure Buckinghamshire for Parliament, he re-joined the main army of the Earl of Essex.

When the Battle of Edgehill opened, on October 23rd, 1642, he was some miles away escorting the artillery train; but he pressed forward and arrived as dusk fell at the head of a brigade. He urged a further attack; but the Earl of Essex heeded the advice of senior professional officers and broke off the fight.

Again at Brentford, November 12th, it was Hampden who reached the village in time to reinforce the two regiments that had borne the brunt of the sudden Royalist thrust on London.

The following spring he divided much of his time between the army at Windsor and Parliament, using all his considerable powers to prevent a split between the two, as the 'hawks' at Westminster became more vocal in their criticism of the lethargic,

incommunicative Lord General. Hampden, trusted alike by the 'violent spirits', not least by his cousin from Huntingdon, and by the Earl of Essex, did more than any other to hold together that coalition of interests which made up the cause in 1643.

His efforts could not have been helped by a report on April 11th, in the Royalist newsbook *Mercurius Aulicus*, 'how it was noised in the City that the Earl of Essex was to leave the place of General unto Mr Hampden, as one more active and so by consequence more capable of the style of Excellency'.

Hampden and others urged the Lord General to attack Oxford; but instead he marched on Reading, which fell after an inglorious siege on April 27th. In early June the Army at last set out towards Oxford and took up quarters in east Oxfordshire.

Hampden laboured to build up its strength for the impending great battle, as his last extant letter from Stokenchurch on June 9th witnesses. But, late on Saturday June 17th, Prince Rupert led a flying column of a thousand troopers and dragoons on a raid into enemy territory. After attacking quarters at Postcombe and Chinnor in the night, the Royalist column turned their weary horses homewards.

On Chalgrove Field, three miles from the bridge at Chislehampton over the River Thame, they faced about to confront the various Parliamentary troops of horse that were in close pursuit of them. One of them, a troop belonging to Captain Crosse and quartered in Thame, had cheerfully accepted Hampden's offer to lead them; and he rode at their head.

Prince Rupert arrayed his regiments in line behind a long hedge. After some galling fire from the parliamentary dragoons, he could contain himself no longer and crashed over the hedge at the head of his startled lifeguard. In a short time the Cavaliers had advanced and engaged the eight parliamentary troops, who had just time to fire their pistols before receiving the full force of the first charge. To the surprise of their opponents, the Parliamentary horse stood their ground re-forming and fighting vigorously with sword, pistol and carbine.

But the superior numbers of the Royalists began to tell; and the Roundhead officers could be heard shouting above the din to get their men to withdraw in good order towards their reserves, who stood watching near Warpsgrove House. Yet the Cavaliers pressed hard on their heels and broke the newly-rallied troops; so that they scattered each man for himself over the sloping fields of Oxfordshire.

Hampden suffered his fatal wound at the first charge in the fight. The newsbooks

published in London within days of his letter, following the Earl of Essex's despatch, said that he was 'shot into the shoulder'. Clarendon's account mentions 'a brace of bullets which broke the bone'.

A Parliamentary trooper, taken prisoner later that day, told his captors 'that he was confident Mr Hampden was hurt for he saw him ride off the field before the action was done, which he never used to do, with his head hanging down, and resting his hands upon the neck of his horse, by which he concluded he was hurt'.

Tradition relates that Hampden rode towards his father-in-law's house, Pyrton Manor, three miles away from Chalgrove Field, before turning his horse's head northwards and riding five miles to Thame, where he took to his bed.

At first, it looked as if he would recover. An account of the fight, printed in London as he lay at Thame, reported that it was 'certain that Colonel Hampden, that noble and valiant gentleman, received a shot with a bullet behind in the shoulder, which stuck between the bone and the flesh, but is since drawn forth, and himself very cheerful and hearty, and it (through God's mercy) more likely to be a badge of honour, than any danger of life'.

Alas, it was not to be. Inflammations, spasms and possibly gangrene caused much concern; and on June 22nd a letter-writer in London noted that three more physicians had been sent to his bedside. In Hampden's quarters the London doctors joined a Mr Delafield, surgeon to the soldiers in Thame, who later lived in Aylesbury.

A descendant of his compiled a family memoir, which mentions that Hampden died after 'receiving a musket shot in the shoulder'. It is possible that this represents a piece of family tradition handed down from father to son.

If Sir Philip Warwick, a gentleman volunteer in the King's Lifeguard at Oxford, is to be believed, the King offered to send one of his own physicians. Warwick met Dr Giles, the parson of Chinnor, in an Oxford street and learned from him the news of Hampden's fever. Warwick blamed it on the poor quality of Hampden's blood, which 'in its temper was acrimonious, as the scurf on his face showed'.

Instructed by the King, Dr Giles sent a messenger to enquire about his condition. It was not so much a humanitarian gesture, for the King looked upon Hampden's support 'if he could gain his affection, as a powerful means of begetting a right understanding betwixt him and his two Houses'. Although Hampden was 'in a high fever and not very sensible', he was 'much amazed' to hear of this messenger from Oxford.

to be continued