



THE PATRIOT

Newsletter of the John Hampden Society
No. 93 - Spring 2020



The John Hampden Society is a registered charity which exists to bring together people with an interest in John Hampden, and to encourage wider knowledge of this great 17th century Parliamentarian, his life and times

The Daily Telegraph

Life put on hold

◆ Whole households with symptoms of coronavirus should stay indoors for two weeks

◆ Avoid pubs, theatres, large gatherings and work from home if possible

◆ Third of the population warned to stay clear of social contact

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

This headline from *The Daily Telegraph* of Tuesday 17th March says it all. Along with every other organisation in the country, the coronavirus pandemic has adversely affected the John Hampden Society.

The AGM at *The King's Head*, Aylesbury, was the first casualty, and we are grateful to George Jenkinson and his manager Phoebe Storey for waiving any cancellation fee. We have postponed the meeting and any lunch until at least October, but in view of their co-operation we shall certainly go back there. The only other public event planned for this year was participation in the Thame History Fair on 7th June, which has also been postponed until September.

The Executive Committee meeting, held at *The Red Lion*, Chalgrove, on 15th March, will be the last one within the foreseeable future, but the committee members are able to keep in touch and run the Society thanks to modern technology such as e-mail, Facebook, Skype, WhatsApp, etc. We are now also using a new online conferencing facility called Zoom, and we will be inviting members to join in. We are obliged to continue unelected, but the constitution states that the AGM 'shall be held in the month of April in each year *or as soon after that in every year as is practicable thereafter*'. (My italics.) So that covers the present situation officially.

There are two or three projects which the committee can work on for later in the year and next year and which don't require face-to-face meetings. Details of these appear on page 2.

Even if there are not meetings and events to attend, there is much that can be done at this time to promote John Hampden, whether you are in the UK or elsewhere. Letters, articles, book reviews, news items, etc. for *The Patriot* are always needed. Hon. Treasurer Sam Hearn has written a topical article on page 4. If you are online, undertake research to produce more information about John Hampden. Find an angle on Hampden and/or the 17th century and write letters to the newspapers - national and local. Send us interesting and relevant photographs. Suggest activities that we can organise for when this coronavirus pandemic is over.

Keep the flame burning.

Roy Bailey

THE PLAY'S THE THING

THE
TRYAL
OF
John Hampden, Esq;
(Of *Stoke-Mandeville* in the County of *Bucks*)
In the Great CASE of
SHIP-MONEY,
BETWEEN
His Majesty K. Charles I. and that Gentleman.

Wherein are Interted,
The whole RECORD in *Latin* and *Englisb*: The Several Arguments of
COUNCIL Learned in the Law, on both Sides, in that most remark-
able CASE at the Bar; with the Opinions of all the Judges on the
Bench in the *Exchequer-Chamber*, &c.

AS ALSO
Mr. *St. John's* SPEECH in the HOUSE OF LORDS, *Jan. 7. 1640.*
concerning SHIP-MONEY.

With Mr. *Waller's* SPEECH to the HOUSE OF COMMONS, *April 22,*
1640. on the Same Subject: And,

His Famous SPEECH in Parliament, at a Conference of Both HOUSES,
in the Painted-Chamber, *July 6. 1641.* on the Exhibiting ARTICLES,
by the COMMONS, against Mr. Justice CRAWLEY, one of the Judges
who gave Judgment for the KING in that Cause.

To which is Added,
The TRYAL of THOMAS HARRISON, Clerk,
for Words spoken against Mr. Justice HUTTON (when sitting after-
wards upon the Bench of the Court of *Common-Pleas*, in *Westminster-
Hall*) Accusing Him of HIGH-TREASON, in Delivering his Opinion in
the *Exchequer-Chamber*, That the King had no Lawful Power in Levying
the SHIP-MONEY; and that He therefore denied the King's Supre-
macy: With the Proceedings thereupon, and his Sentence by the Court.

The Whole being Printed from Authentick Manuscripts.

L O N D O N:

Printed for D. BROWN, W. MEARS, F. CLAY, without *Temple-Bar*;
J. SACKFIELD, in *Lincoln's-Inn-Square*; B. CREAKE, at the *Bible* in
Jermyn-Street, *St. James's*; and J. PEELE, at *Locke's Head* within *Temple-
Bar*. 1719.

Long-standing Society member Jim Rodda has come up with an idea for a theatrical re-enactment of the Ship Money Trial, which helped to propel John Hampden to national fame. Inspired by Bruce Alexander's talk at the 2019 AGM, Jim has been liaising with Steve Pretty, producer of the Amersham Martyrs play for the past 4 years, and has produced a draft script.

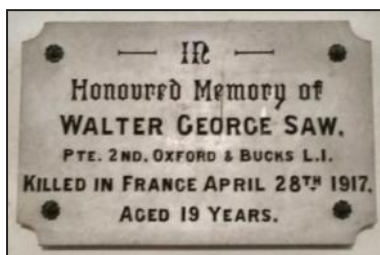
Jim's proposal is for the performance to take place at the John Hampden school in either High Wycombe or Wendover, and has written to Miss Tracey Hartley, head teacher at the Wycombe school, outlining his proposal. He has suggested that participation in the performance by the 6th form students would help to enhance their communication, presentation and motivational skills for technical and scientific specialists, which are the key to personal development as well as to career progression. He also pointed out that it might also be useful for students to know the background to the naming of their school – something the Executive Committee heartily endorses.

So far Jim has heard nothing – hardly surprising in these troublesome times – but committee members believe that this is an imaginative idea and we are supporting Jim's efforts. It will make a fascinating event next winter, when (hopefully) we can all foregather again.

(Editor's note: In 1511 and 1521 seven local followers of John Wycliffe (Lollards) were burned at the stake in Amersham for their religious beliefs. In March 2011, the 500th anniversary of the death of the first martyr, Amersham Museum put on a community play about this, and it has been performed annually since.)

A PLAQUE FOR THE PATRIOT

Amid all the various memorials to members of the Hampden family in Great Hampden church, there is none to its most famous incumbent. The Executive Committee has decided that this omission ought to be rectified, and on Sunday 15th March members met the Rector, the Rev. Deiniol Heywood, and some of his churchwardens at the church to put forward our proposal.



Near here lies the body of
John Hampden
1595 - 1643
Statesman - Soldier - Patriot.
Vestigia Nulla Retrorsum

To our delight, all the church team were wholly in favour of the idea, and a suitable position was selected just inside the chancel, near where it is believed John Hampden's body lies. We are considering a plaque similar to the one (above left), measuring about 80cms x 50cms, which is mounted on the west wall. The suggested style and wording (above right) is, of course, still open to discussion

We have written to the Oxford Diocese Advisory Committee informing them of our proposal and asking for advice on how to proceed, but the ongoing coronavirus pandemic may put everything on hold.

It will almost certainly delay the proposed re-decoration of the Church of St Mary Magdalene this year, and as the installation and dedication of our plaque would have to take place after that work was completed, it appears that we have plenty of time to get this right!

AGM 2021

Having had to abandon the 2020 AGM because of the coronavirus pandemic, the possibilities of holding the 2021 meeting in the Isle of Wight (below) are looking increasingly remote. But we remain optimistic.



Our Island member John Hobart is naturally in favour of the idea, and has used his contacts as a councillor to put us in touch with a company called IOW Tours Ltd, who specialise in organising group tours and events. They have just celebrated 30 years in business and they state, 'We work with the Group Organiser to pass on this expertise to help you plan and deliver a holiday or event for your club or association'.

We have written to the company and asked for quotes for travel to and from the Island and various combinations of bed and breakfast accommodation. We received an immediate response that they would be happy to offer some packages based on our requirements. .

As that was just before the national lockdown, understandably, we have heard nothing since, but, again, there is plenty of time. However, if you are interested in attending this event please let us know so that we have some idea of provisional numbers and can plan accordingly.

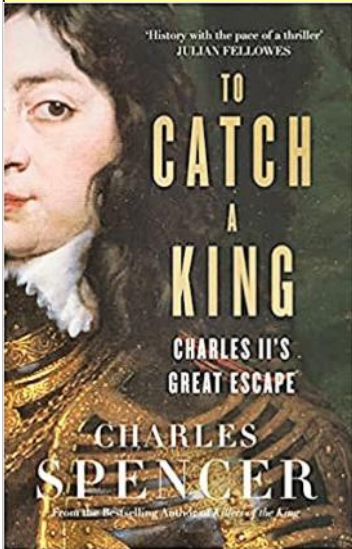
BOOK REVIEW

To Catch a King : Charles II's Great Escape

by Charles Spencer

with twelve portraits and a map of the escape route of Charles II after the Battle of Worcester

Published in 2017 by William Collins, London



This book is a well-written account of a piece of Civil War history covering a memorable period in King Charles II's early life. After the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660, he delighted in telling the story of his dramatic escape to France after his defeat at the battle of Worcester in 1651. One of the many people he talked with was the diarist, Samuel Pepys (1633-1702), who prepared an unpublished account on which Lord Spencer's book is partly based.

Having recently been invested as King of Scots, Charles came south in 1651 with a Scottish army in an attempt to gain the English throne. Parliament recalled Oliver Cromwell from Ireland to command the New Model Army at the Battle of Worcester. The Scots were no match in numbers or military skill for the combined forces under Cromwell and

Charles found himself on the run after the battle. Disguised as their servant he travelled with small groups of supporters, successfully avoiding capture and escaping into exile. He once hid in an ancient oak tree to avoid Parliamentary soldiers seeking him below and this adventure later led to hundreds of inns being named *The Royal Oak* after this part of his adventures. A Roman Catholic priest, Father John Huddleston, also helped, using his knowledge of priest's holes in various country houses to hide Charles overnight. After six weeks of wandering he escaped to France by ship in *The Surprise*, sailing from Shoreham in Sussex with a shipment of coal, reaching Fecamp on the French coast. He then joined his mother, Queen Henrietta Maria, in Paris.

29th May, the anniversary of Charles's restoration in 1660, became Oak Apple Day, an annual public holiday to celebrate his miraculous escape. Some of his brave helpers during his travels received pensions in reward, but these were not always paid regularly. Father Huddleston was again present at the King's death-bed in February 1685. Consequently, having helped to save his life in 1651 he also helped to save his soul in 1685. *The Surprise*, the vessel in which Charles escaped to France, was renamed *The Royal Escape* at the Restoration, becoming a part of the Royal Navy.

Brian Cox

ADULT EDUCATION

When I recently gave a talk to Newbury U3A Military History group about the Battle of Chalgrove Field, I naturally started by introducing John Hampden and briefly mentioning why he was such an important figure. When I came to Ship Money, the group leader, a highly-intelligent military history expert, interrupted and asked, 'What is Ship Money?'

So I had to digress and briefly explain the background to the tax. At least there are now a dozen or so West Berkshire residents au fait on this matter, and if Jim Rodda's project (*see page 2*) comes to fruition, we may send them tickets!

Roy Bailey

Printed by Sarsen Press
22 Hyde Street, Winchester
Hampshire SO23 7DR
Tel: 01962 854281
info@sarsenpress.com

Every effort is made to obtain permission to reproduce the images in this publication from the relevant copyright holders and to ensure that all credits are correct.

We have acted in good faith and on the best information available to us at the time of publication. Any omissions are inadvertent, and will be corrected if notification is given in writing.



DIARY DATES

2020

With the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, all events have been either postponed or cancelled, including the Society's Annual General Meeting.

It is hoped to re-schedule this for October or November.

Sunday 25th October (*provisional*)
Thame History Fair, Thame Town Hall, Oxon OX9 3DP. The Society will participate and volunteers should contact the Hon. Secretary.

For up-to-date information, see the Diary page on the Society's website at:

www.johnhampden.org/diary.htm

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

96 Church Road
Bebington
Wirral
CH63 3ED

Dear Sir,

It was a double pleasure to receive *The Patriot* the other day. First because there is always interesting news, but this time the mention of Sir Lindsay Hoyle and his becoming a Vice-President of the Society.

Before retiring I was Minister at a church in the village of Adlington, Lancashire, which is part of the constituency of Chorley with Sir Lindsay our Member of Parliament. As such Sir Lindsay and his father, Lord Hoyle, were great supporters of our work and much appreciated.

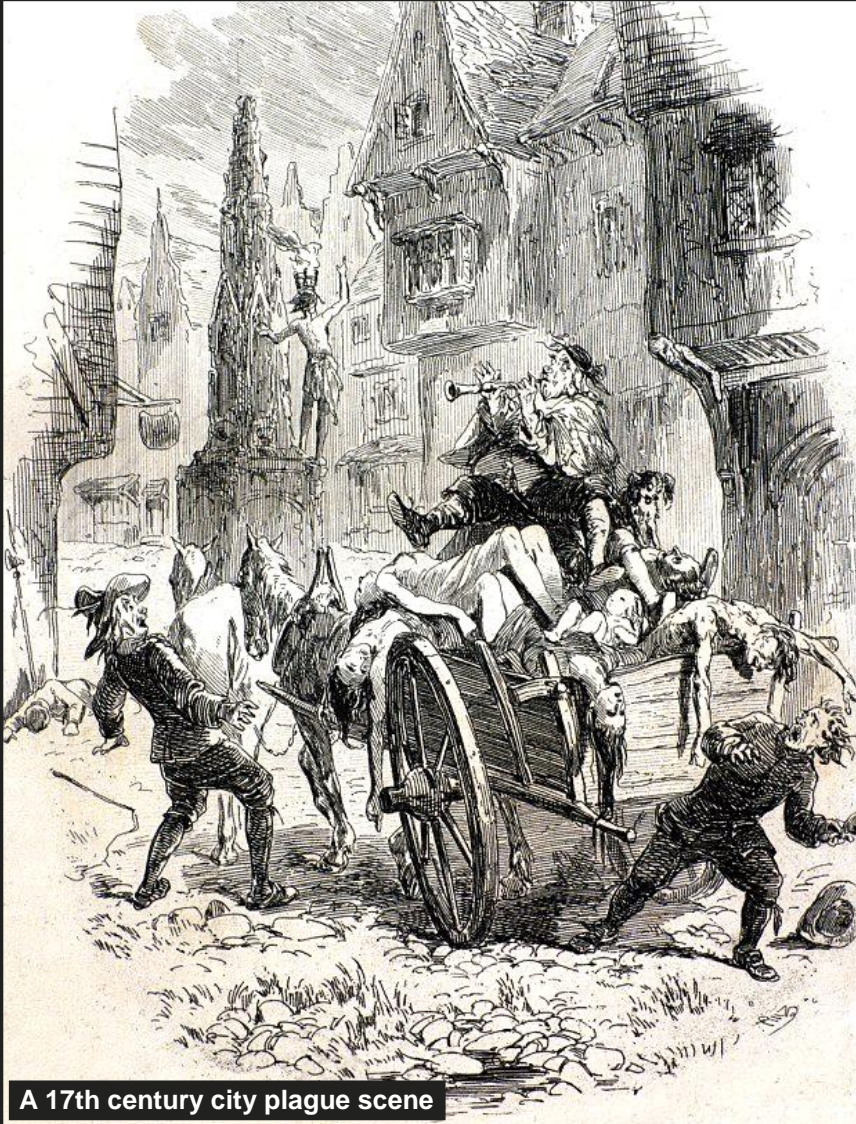
When Sir Lindsay became Speaker we sent a letter of congratulation; he graciously replied, remembering our earlier association. Now we have another connection. Thank you.

Richard and Mary Hambly

Published by
The John Hampden Society
Little Hampden
Cryers Hill, High Wycombe
Bucks HP15 6JS
Tel: 07543 054335

e-mail: *see website*
Website: www.johnhampden.org
Registered charity no. 1098314

THE PLAGUE COMES TO GREAT HAMPDEN



A 17th century city plague scene

In the 17th century the shadow of epidemic disease hung over the lives of everyone, particularly city dwellers. Directly and indirectly fear of sudden death from 'plague' influenced their thoughts, actions and ambitions. Diseases that today can be prevented or treated with powerful drugs were often fatal or led to permanent disability or disfigurement. Poor harvests, famine and the scourge of war weakened the ability of many to survive such infections.

When John Hampden's mother Elizabeth (1574-1664) was widowed in 1597 she was granted by the terms of her husband's will *'such apartments as she shall chuse'* in Hampden House at Great Hampden. For the duration of John Hampden's minority the house was occupied by a close relative, Sir Alexander Hampden of Hartwell. Elizabeth's apartments at Hampden House would nevertheless have been a convenient place for her to spend time with her two sons when they were not engaged in academic studies.

But perhaps when plague erupted in London the apartments at Great Hampden served another purpose? Elizabeth appears to have spent much of her long widowhood in and around the City of London. In 1622 she inherited from her aunt, Elizabeth Knyvet, the lease on a large property in Westminster. Possibly she was already living there when her aunt died. She renamed it Hampden House. 10 Downing Street now stands on the

land once occupied by the orchard of this property. Elizabeth Hampden and her sons may well have chosen to avoid the worst ravages of the London plague by temporarily relocating to Great Hampden or even Hartwell House.

Bubonic plague was endemic in London and other large cities and it would periodically flare up. There were particularly bad episodes in 1603, 1606, 1625, 1635 and 1636. Between 1640 and 1646 there were 11,000 deaths from plague recorded in the City of London. In 1647 alone there were 41,313 deaths. The horror returned with a vengeance in 1665 when an estimated 100,000 people died of plague.

When plague broke out it was normal for those that could leave to decamp to the surrounding towns and villages or country estates. The further away from London the better. Famously John Milton came to Chalfont St Giles in 1665 to escape The Great Plague. However, local towns were not immune to the virus. There were serious outbreaks of plague in High Wycombe in 1631/32 and 1635/36

The Rector of rural Great Hampden, Robert Lenthall, and his family must nevertheless have felt relatively safe when in 1647 plague once again ravaged London. Robert's tragic family tale unfolds in the laconic entries that he made in the parish register between 11th August and 25th September 1647.

First to die was his 14-year-old daughter Ann who was visiting from London. His wife Susanna was next. She died *'comfortably and in peace'* on the 26th August. John Gardiner, a child living at the same house, died on the 29th. His only son Adrian, aged 21, died on 2nd September and finally Robert's cousin John Pickering *'a lad of about 13 years'* died on the 25th September. How Robert survived it is hard to tell. His grief must have been unbearable even for a man with strong religious convictions.

Robert's entries in the Great Hampden Parish register have been transcribed and can be found in the Archive section of the Society's website under the heading 'Great Hampden Parish Register' (no access password is required).

Sam Hearn