



THE PATRIOT



Newsletter of the John Hampden Society

No. 46 - Spring 2006

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

LUNCH TIME TALK AT HARTWELL HOUSE HOTEL - 31st March 2006

Heavy drinking, marital violence and obsessive gambling are not the usual topics for meetings of the Society but in the capable hands of Dr Tracy Borman we managed to take it all in our stride. In recounting a brief biography of the Patriot's great granddaughter, Henrietta Howard, Tracy tactfully spared us the more lurid details. These, she coyly advised, will be covered in her book to be published next year.



Lunch

The venue for the meeting was Hartwell House Hotel and Tracy's talk followed an aperitif in the library and an excellent three course luncheon. Although many members are familiar with the charms of this historic building this was the first time that the Society has held a function there.

The house has both Jacobean and Georgian features that nicely matched the joint themes of Hampden the Patriot and Henrietta Howard, Countess of Suffolk, official mistress of George II.



Dr Borman with the Earl of Buckinghamshire

Tracy's talk was introduced by Lord Buckinghamshire, a descendant of one of Henrietta's brothers the first Earl of Buckinghamshire. Henrietta's life was extremely eventful and if retold as a novel would be dismissed as far fetched. Ultimately in her

later years she achieved the security and happiness that had so long eluded her. Her lasting material legacy has been the architectural influence of the Palladian style house constructed for her at Marble Hill in Twickenham.



English Heritage

Henrietta Howard

Henrietta's privileged and happy childhood was shattered by her father's death from duelling wounds and her mother's death soon after. Her marriage to Charles the third son of the Earl of Suffolk rapidly turned into a nightmare. Charles was a violent drunk and a heavy gambler. Henrietta's £6,000 inheritance was quickly spent and the couple moved through a succession of cheap lodgings using false names to avoid their creditors.



Marble Hill House

There is insufficient space to retell here the story of how Henrietta became the long term mistress of the Prince of Wales (subsequently George II). Henrietta's marriage had broken down long before this relationship began but it was many years before her husband was finally paid off and eventually died. Henrietta was renowned for her tact and discretion and her increasing deafness was probably an enormous asset in dealing with the tedious Prince.

As an ex-royal mistress Henrietta enjoyed a new lease of life, moving into her beloved Marble Hill, marrying again and becoming the centre of a sparkling salon of writers and intellectuals that included amongst other; Alexander Pope, Jonathan Swift, John Gay and Horace Walpole. Tracy painted a convincing portrait of a determined and resourceful woman who throughout her life refused to play the role of victim. In taking the lead in divorcing her first husband she was, with hindsight, a radical trend setter.



Dr Tracy Borman talking to Lord Hollenden

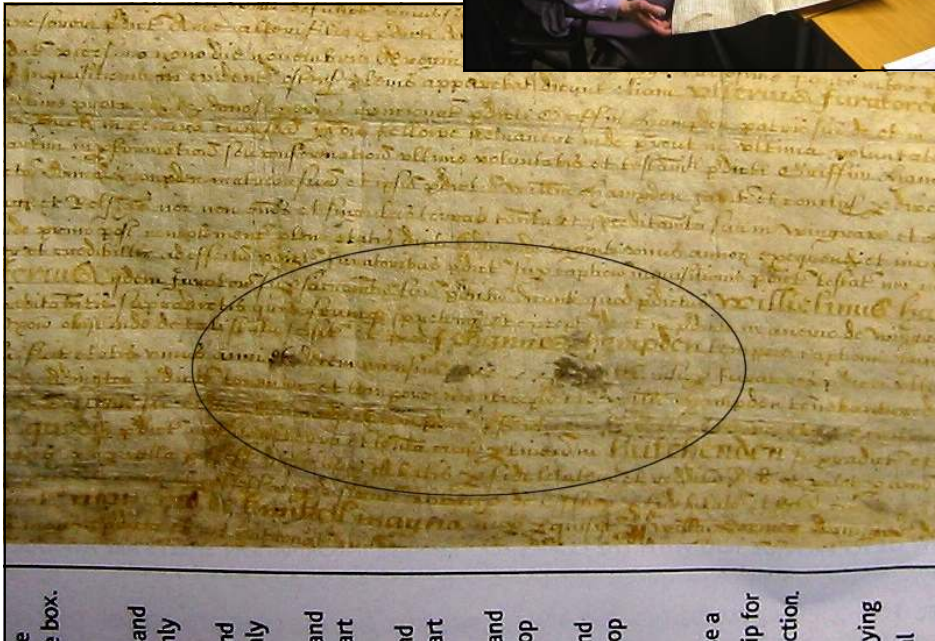
The Society is indebted to Dr Tracy Borman for her fascinating talk delivered with great panache and refreshingly with absolutely no visual aids. We look forward to her book and will review it in a future edition of *The Patriot*. The Society's Executive Committee has agreed to organise a trip to Henrietta's grand creation, Marble Hill House, now in the care of English Heritage.

The event was attended by around forty members and their guests. It was good to see so many new faces amongst the more familiar ones. Special thanks should be recorded to architect Eric Throssell who brought along detailed drawings of how the house and grounds at Hartwell would have looked at various stages in its development over the centuries.

Sam Hearn

MORE ON HAMPDEN'S BIRTH

As promised in the last issue of *The Patriot*, Lesley Wynne Davies and I met at The National Archives to have a look at the Inquisition Post Mortem of John Hampden's father William. I took along both a digital and a film camera, and Lesley had secured informal permission for me to photograph both the document and her inspecting it (right).



The former task proved to be frustrating. The document is almost impossible to photograph with conventional equipment, and although I took a number of pictures as close as possible of the line relating to John Hampden's birth, the quality was poor. How either Professor Earl Russell or Lesley managed to decipher anything is a mystery. The document has mended tears, dark smears and later annotations in darker ink. We tried inspecting it with an ultra-violet lamp, but this did not help.

Lesley had previously spent some time deciphering and transcribing the text, and reported that the Inquisition was held on 19 May 1597; William having apparently died the previous month. Sir Robert Dormer, Alexander Hampden esquire, Henry Fletewode gentleman, and William Fisse esquire were listed as the presiding commissioners. The section concerning John Hampden's birth read:

'And that John Hampden at the time of the taking of this inquest and at the time of the death of the said William Hampden his father was and is the son and nearest HEIR of the said William Hampden. And that the said John Hampden at the time of the death of the aforesaid William his father was of the age of one year and ten months ... and moreover the aforesaid jurors'

As our picture shows, the important line (circled) is smudged and appears to have been subjected to some alteration. Whether this affects the accuracy of the information is open to discussion, but if both an experienced historian such as Lord Russell and an experienced researcher such as Lesley Wynne Davies are happy with the authenticity of the entry, then we must accept it.

- Our front-page article on this matter in the last issue of *The Patriot* has caused some consternation among our friends in the Hampden Historical Society in Maine, who receive copies of our newsletter for their archives.

Writing in the February issue of the Society's newsletter, Alice Hawes points out that the town of Hampden adopted that name in 1794 and in 1994 celebrated both its 200th anniversary and the 400th anniversary of John Hampden's birth. A delegation from the John Hampden Society was present for those celebrations 12 years ago.

Naturally, the HHS members are interested in our research. 'We hold our breath hoping that the date of 1594 will be the correct one,' writes Mrs Hawes, 'otherwise there will need to be many changes in records around the world. And some of these records are literally etched in stone'.

Roy Bailey

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IN THE CHURCH OF THE PARISH WHERE HE DIED

Following what John Adair called 'the tumult' at the end of the 1629 Parliament Sir John Eliot, a close friend of John Hampden, was arrested and imprisoned in The Tower of London. Fifteen of Eliot's letters to Hampden, from The Tower, have survived along with nine of Hampden's letters to Eliot. Many personal details are revealed in these letters.

By 1632 six of the eight men arrested with Eliot had made submissions to King Charles and been released. Only Eliot, Strode and Valentine remained obdurate. Eliot fell ill in March 1632 and petitioned the King, "to set me at liberty, that, for the recovery of my health, I may take some fresh air". The King refused the request and Eliot died in The Tower on 27th November 1632. A striking portrait of Sir John standing by his sick bed survives and is owned by his descendant the Earl of St Germans.

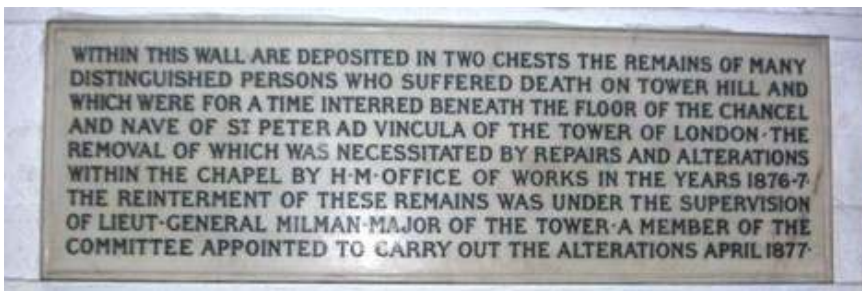
Eliot's son John petitioned the King for the right to remove his father's body from The Tower for burial at Port Eliot. This request was also refused. King Charles wrote on the document "Let Sir John Eliot's body be buried in the Church of that parish where he died". He was buried in St Peter ad Vincula (*St Peter in Chains*) one of the two churches within The Tower. Traditionally those who die within the precincts of the Tower are buried there. Originally this rule was to discourage cults such as the one that developed around the body of Thomas Beckett.

In 1876-7 the floor of the church of St Peter ad Vincula was replaced. The human bones found beneath the floor were reinterred behind a wall and a commemorative plaque erected (*see below*). These bones probably include those of Sir John Eliot. A small number of individual burials were identified and were reburied separately. The remains of Anne Boleyn were, for example, found in a box previously used to store arrows. Queen Victoria is said to have taken a close interest in the remains of England's first Protestant queen.

Access to the church is normally restricted to parties accompanied by a Yeoman Warder. A brass plaque on the church wall records the names of all those prisoners who died within The Tower including Sir John Eliot. The plaque pictured below is in a passage way at the rear of the church opposite a rather sombre memorial shrine to Saint Thomas Moore.

In September 2006 a new memorial to all those executed within The Tower will be unveiled on Tower Green. Technically Sir John Eliot died of maltreatment and his death will not be commemorated in this way. His memorial lies, perhaps, in something more profound - a nation that can still elect a parliament that refuses to contemplate any dilution of Habeas Corpus and that sets its face against sanctioning detention without trial for ninety days.

Sam Hearn



DIARY DATES

2006

Wednesday, 19th April An Illustrated talk on John Hampden to Olney & District Historical Society at The Olney Centre, Olney. 7.30 p.m.

Sunday, 23rd April The Society's AGM to be held in The Members' Rooms, Hampton Court Palace, Surrey, commencing 2.30 p.m.

Saturday, 24th June The Society's Annual Dinner to be held at The Spread Eagle, Thame. Guest Speaker - Dr Maija Jansson, Director of Parliamentary History, University of Yale.

All meetings commence at 8 pm, unless otherwise stated.

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

www.johnhampden.org/diary.htm

THANKS TO SAM

He was too modest to mention the fact in his account on page 1, but the splendid lunch and talk by Dr Tracy Borman at Hartwell House is due entirely to the organisational efforts of our tireless Hon. Treasurer, Sam Hearn.

Sam works for Historic Royal Palaces at Hampton Court, and therefore has good contacts with bodies such as English Heritage, where Dr. Borman is Director of Learning.

- Dr Borman was recently responsible for appointing the first Court Jester since the post was abolished by Oliver Cromwell.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members of the Society:

Mrs Christine Jeffreys of Cotgrave, Nottingham and
Alec Myres of California, USA.

Full details are published on the new membership list.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Members should note that all change of address details should be sent to
Membership Secretary Liz Morris at
31 Craigwell Avenue
AYLESBURY, Bucks HP21 7AF.
Tel: 01296 482488 e-mail: membership@johnhampden.org

If e-mailing, a copy should also go to Hon. Sec. Anthea Coles at
secretary@johnhampden.org



A TUDOR ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME?



One of the many puzzles that has intrigued members of the Society over the years is why John Hampden's grandfather was named Griffith. The Hampden family was traditionally unimaginative in its choice of the names for male offspring; Johns and Richards appear with monotonous regularity in the family tree, with the odd William and Edmund thrown in to add a little variety. It is hard to understand why the family broke with this tradition and chose such a distinctively Welsh name as Griffith.

Griffith or Griffin is an anglicised version of the popular Welsh name Gruffydd. Griffins are mythical beasts with the body and tail of a lion and the head and wings of an eagle. These beasts are renowned for the tenacity with which they guarded their stores of gold. Appropriately enough two Griffins support the coat of arms of The City of London.

It has been suggested that the adoption of a Welsh name was an attempt by the Hampdens to align their family with the Royal House of Tudor. Henry VII, the founder of the dynasty, was keen to emphasise his Welsh roots. The red dragon of Wales supported his coat of arms and his eldest son was named Arthur in honour of the legendary hero of the Welsh. Henry's body guards were dressed in green and white livery, colours long associated with the fighting men of Wales.

Intriguingly there is possibly another more intimate reason for choosing the name Griffith. The household book of Sir

Edward Don of Horsenden, a close neighbour of the Hampdens, survives and has been published by the Buckinghamshire Records Society. The book contains many references to Sir John Hampden of the Hill and there can be little doubt that the two families were well acquainted. Sir Edward Don was indeed the godfather of Richard Hampden (of Hartwell) Griffith Hampden's uncle.



The Dons were of Anglo-Welsh descent and were distantly related to the Tudors. Sir Edward's father Sir John had adhered to the Yorkist cause and was a strong supporter of Edward IV and Richard III. He made his peace with Henry Tudor after the Battle of Bosworth and within weeks was appointed Sheriff of Bedfordshire and Buckingham-

shire. The Hampdens would no doubt have felt it wise to be on good terms with such well-connected and astute neighbours.

Sir Edward Don had a younger brother Sir Gruffydd Don who moved in similar circles. He was knighted by Henry VIII in 1512 and Sir Edward and Sir John Hampden of the Hill were knighted in 1513. The three men subsequently accompanied the King to the Field of Cloth of Gold in 1520. All three held senior positions in Henry VIII's navy.

In naming his son Griffith, John Hampden (the Patriot's great-grandfather) may simply have been reflecting the closeness of the Don and Hampden families and perhaps a friendship between Sir John Hampden of the Hill and Sir Gruffydd Don. Sir John Hampden died without a direct male heir and bequeathed his Great Hampden estates to his distant eponymous relative. We can perhaps speculate that the naming of Griffith Hampden may have been a favour requested by the old Sir John that Griffith's father could not easily refuse.

Sam Hearn



A Griffin statant, wings endorsed.

THE HAMPDEN MONUMENT UNVEILED

By the time that this edition of *The Patriot* arrives on your doormat, the latest addition to the Society's library will have been published.

Gill and Derek Lester have produced this most interesting compilation of newspaper reports and Lord Nugent's speech at the unveiling of John Hampden's monument at Chalgrove on 19th June 1843.

The newspaper that prompted Derek and Gill to produce this book belongs to another member of the Society. The only problem is that the print is so small that most people can only read it with the assistance of a magnifying glass and it is greatly to Derek's credit that he persevered with copying the text in order that the content could be made available to all.



The book is available at a cost of £4.50 inc P&P to UK members for the next three months, and can be purchased, together with all other Society publications listed on the website [www.johnhampden.org] from:

**Park Meadow Cottage
Thame Park Road
Thame
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All remittances should be made payable in sterling to **The John Hampden Society**.

Postage charges apply to the British Isles only; overseas customers should check the international rates.

The Chilterns Conservation Board Annual Forum 25 November 2005 Whipsnade Zoo

'The Chilterns is a beautiful area of rolling chalk hills, woodlands, streams and quiet valleys with brick and flint cottages. In 1965 it was designated as an Area of Outstanding Beauty (AONB), in recognition that it is one of the finest landscapes in the country'

1 The Chilterns Conservation Board and The John Hampden Society

At the Society's 2005 AGM one of our new members, Mr Richard Pushman, suggested that it might be beneficial for the John Hampden Society to investigate ways in which it could collaborate with the Conservation Board. Mr Pushman is Buckinghamshire County Council's representative on the Board. The Executive Committee established contact with the Board and the Society's Honorary Secretary, Mrs Anthea Coles, was invited to attend the Conservation Board's annual forum. Anthea Coles was unable to attend and I volunteered to take her place.

2 A little about the Conservation Board

The Chilterns Conservation Board is the public body responsible for protecting and enhancing the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. In partnership with local organisations they run projects to encourage people into the countryside, to promote local products, to conserve wildlife and to highlight the special features of the Chilterns.

The Chilterns Branch was established by Parliamentary Order in 2004, following national legislation to improve the protection and management of AONBs. Its primary duties are:

- ❖ To conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB
- ❖ To increase the understanding and enjoyment of the AONB's special qualities

In addition, the Conservation Board has a secondary duty to foster the social and economic well-being of local communities, where that is compatible with its primary duties. The Board meets on a quarterly basis at venues around the Chilterns to discuss issues of concern and decide on policies and actions. It has 29 members drawn from a wide range of communities across the Chilterns, and has a number of task groups working on particular themes such as land management, access, transport and the historic environment.

The Ship Money monument at Prestwood

3 The Forum

The Annual Chilterns Forum which was held on Friday 25 November in the Cloisters Function Suite at Whipsnade Animal Park. There were around 170 attendees from all over the Chilterns. After coffee we were welcomed first by Cllr Robin Younger, Vice Chairman of Bedfordshire CC. and then by Sir John Johnson, Chairman of the Chilterns Conservation Board after which Steve Rodick, Chief Officer of the Chilterns Conservation Board, gave a Review of 2004-05. This was followed by individual reports from a number of the staff of the Conservation Board. The Rev Dr Stuart Burgess, Chairman of the Countryside Agency talked about the way ahead for 'Areas of outstanding beauty and natural England'. The forum ended with the presentation of the 2005 Chilterns Conservation Awards.

4 After the event

At lunch I found myself sitting next to a charming couple. The lady turned out to be a Chairman of a District Council in the area. I had to explain a bit about the John Hampden Society. Luckily, I had had the foresight to take along a few JH pamphlets. In our package for the event we were given a number of post-cards of outstanding beauty. By chance, one of these was of Prestwood, taken from the hills. I mentioned the fact that John Hampden had made his decision not to pay the ship money payment imposed by Charles 1st on these very hills. Indeed there is a monument in his name to this effect. They wondered whether some funding might be available from the Board to help preserve the Prestwood monument.

5 Reflections

It was a very good forum, well managed and in a lovely setting. I would go again next year if asked to do so in spite of the fact that I found getting there a bit of a problem. **The things we do for the John Hampden Society!** The Society should continue to reflect on how by working closely with the Conservation Board its objectives could be advanced, e.g. the preservation of the Prestwood monument. The thoughts and comments of other members would be welcomed.

Liz Morris
Membership Secretary



DOG BITES HAMPDEN!

This is not a headline that any one would have expected to read here, but there is a ready explanation.

Last year several members of the committee ordered 10" x 8" photographs of the plaque which the Society purchased in 2004. At a subsequent committee meeting, Derek Lester complained that Royal Mail had damaged his, and showed the result. Despite the fact that the photo had been despatched in a stout cardboard container, there was a hole right through the box - and therefore the photo - at one corner.

Given Royal Mail's track record, the committee was only too ready to accuse them, and suggested that Derek seek compensation. However, at the next committee meeting, he admitted that he had been mistaken.

On inspecting the box further, he noticed that there was a semicircular row of indentations, and swiftly divined that the culprit was the Lester dog, an Alsatian/Collie cross called Digsby, who nurses a deep hatred of postmen.

The committee offers its apologies to Royal Mail, for ever doubting such a wonderful body.

Roy Bailey

READING MATTER

The following are some of the publications available on application to the Society:

A Life of John Hampden The Patriot [1594-1643] by John Adair. £7.50 plus 50p p&p.

John Hampden of Buckinghamshire - The People's Hero. By Dr. Frank Hansford Miller. £2.50 plus 50p p&p.

The Controversy of John Hampden's Death By Derek Lester & Gill Blackshaw. £3.50 plus 50p p&p.

John Hampden and his Times [The Hampden Lectures] Market Group Management - 1993. £3.50 plus 50p p&p.

Bucks In the Civil War Exhibition [Catalogue] Buckinghamshire County Museum - 2004. £6.00 [£7.00 to overseas members] for a limited period.

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Thame Park Road
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SOME VILLAGE HAMPDEN

The poet Thomas Gray achieved immortality for himself and the church of St Giles at Stoke Poges with his beautiful poem "Elegy in a Country Churchyard". Many of you will be familiar with the famous lines;

"Some village-Hampden that with dauntless breast,

The little tyrant of his fields withstood,

Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,

Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood."

There is however another Hampden connection with St Giles that Thomas Gray may well have been aware of but for which I can as yet find no explanation. Close to the altar there are three ancient brasses one of which is a memorial to Edmund Hampdyn (*sic*) and his wife Elinor (*sic*).

The church's guidebook states, without any further explanation, that the couple are of the same family as John Hampden the 'patriot'. The Patriot's ancestry includes several Edmunds but who is the Edmund Hampden commemorated at Stoke Poges?

There are no obvious links between the Hampden family and Stoke Poges and if an Edmund Hampden and his wife are buried at the church the relevant records have not survived.

It is of course possible that the brass (pictured below) was originally erected in another church and transferred to St Giles at a later date. Again no record has apparently survived that would support this theory. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you think that you can throw any light on this puzzle.

Sam Hearn



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2006

This year's Annual General Meeting will be held at Hampton Court Palace on Sunday 23rd April at 2.00pm. Members are reminded that if they wish to attend the meeting they must contact Sam Hearn ASAP on 020 8995 2666.

Members should present themselves on the day at the Palace's Reception Office in Tennis Court Lane where a free pass will be issued to those whose name has been advised in advance to The Palace. The meeting will be held in the Members' Rooms, a former grace and favour apartment in the heart of the Palace. Members of the Executive Committee have volunteered to act as guides from the Reception Office to the Members' Room.

Members who arrive early can eat in The Tiltyard restaurant and visit the famous Hampton Court Palace Gardens. Parking at the Palace costs £3.50.

There will be a brief talk after the meeting about the Hampden links with Hampton Court including the results of new research into the life of Sybil Penn (nee Hampden) dry nurse to Henry VIII's son, Edward VI.



STOP PRESS

AGM 23rd APRIL

The St Mary's Church, Hampton, will not be open on the afternoon of Sunday 23rd so members will not be able to visit Sybil Penn's tomb as previously advertised.

The Church will be open that day at 6.30pm for a service and from 2.30pm – 4.30pm on every third Sunday in the month until September. If you are planning a visit to the church you may like to allow a little extra time to see the nearby Garrick's Temple. This shrine to Shakespeare was erected by the famous actor in 1756 and has been restored with the aid of £70k lottery grant.