



THE PATRIOT

Quarterly Journal of The John Hampden Society
No. 6 - Spring 1994



MONUMENTAL PROBLEMS AT CHALGROVE

The Hampden Monument at Chalgrove, marking the site of the battle where John Hampden was mortally wounded on 18th June 1643, is in need of repair.

The foundations are unstable and appear to be moving, causing cracks to appear in the walling and some of the upper stonework to be dislodged. In addition, the iron cramps used to hold the panels together and the legs of the iron railings are rusting away, causing damage to the stonework through expansion. The top surface of the base has become dished, causing water to be channelled into the interior of the structure. This has resulted in frost damage.

Chalgrove Parish Council, who own the monument, have obtained estimates for repair from two firms of masons. One has quoted a sum of £1,872.00 plus VAT for washing and fine blasting the Monument, replacing some panels, and re-cramping movement cracks with stainless steel cramps.

The other firm has submitted a much more comprehensive report which demonstrates the serious nature of the problem, and has indicated the need to remove some of the stone to ascertain how the Monument and its core is constructed before producing a detailed estimate. For this work the firm would charge £400.

The Monument (*pictured here*) was erected in 1843 to mark the bicentenary of Hampden's death. The moving spirit behind the scheme was Hampden's first biographer Lord Nugent, who financed it by public subscription. One side of the Monument bears the names of the leading subscribers, including the Earl of Buckinghamshire (listed as John Hampden), the Earl of Bedford, Lord Breadalbane, two members of the Twistleton-Fiennes family, George Dashwood and, of course, Lord Nugent himself.

The title to the Monument was vested in the Rev. Renn Dickson Hampden, Rector of Ewelme and later Bishop of Hereford, a descendant of the Barbados Hampden's who may have been descended from John Hampden. Bishop Hampden's great-granddaughter, Mrs Moira Calvert, handed over the Monument to Chalgrove Parish Council in 1989.

The Committee of the John Hampden Society considers that the preservation of this Monument is of the highest priority and falls within the Society's aims and objectives. Having been successful in helping to save the memorials to the Patriot in Great Hampden Church, we must do our utmost to ensure that the Chalgrove Monument is similarly preserved.

There are a number of possible courses of action. It has been suggested that we contact the descendants of the 30-odd subscribers whose names appear on the Monument, to see if they will contribute to a fund for the repair. The Committee of the John Hampden Society has already decided to make a substantial donation to any fund that may be set up for this purpose, and we hope that individual members will do likewise. In addition, we shall be writing to such bodies as English Heritage and the National Trust asking for their help.

We have already written to Chalgrove Parish Council, expressing our concern at the deterioration of the Monument, urging them to take whatever remedial action may be possible, and assuring them of our support.

There is also a threat to the actual battlefield, part of which was recently the subject of a planning application for gravel extraction. The Parish Council successfully fought this at a Public Enquiry, but there is always the possibility that another application will be made. The problem is that the battlefield is one of the few that is not registered by English Heritage, and all attempts by the Parish Council to persuade them to list it have been unsuccessful. Apparently, English Heritage consider that the action of 18th June 1643 was not a battle but merely a skirmish, despite the fact that it is mentioned in most histories of the English Civil War and is marked as such on all Ordnance Survey maps. It is hoped that the Battlefields Trust, of which our President, Dr John Adair, is a Trustee, will throw their weight behind this appeal and persuade English Heritage that they are wrong.

● Another monument requiring attention is the Ship Money Monument at Honor End Farm, Prestwood, marking the lands for which John Hampden was assessed 20 shillings. The lettering is badly worn and needs recutting to make it legible. This monument is owned by Buckinghamshire County Council.



GEORGE HAMMOND

We regret to announce the death on 26th March of our Treasurer and Membership Secretary, George Hammond. An appreciation appears on page 3.

JOHN HAMPDEN'S BIRTH MARKED AT LORD WILLIAMS'S SCHOOL.

The 400th anniversary of the birth of John Hampden was marked by the planting of a tree in the grounds of Lord Williams's Upper School, Thame, on Thursday 24th March.

The tree, a field maple, was planted by the Mayor of Thame, Councillor Mrs Jane Morbey, in the presence of headmaster Mr David Kenningham and the Earl of Buckinghamshire, Patron of the John Hampden Society.



Photograph;
THAME GAZETTE

Lord Williams's School is the successor to the old Grammar School in Church Road which John Hampden attended, and which was visited by members of the Society last June. In his speech, Lord Buckinghamshire said, "Last year we remembered and honoured the 350th anniversary of John Hampden's death in Thame following the skirmish at Chalgrove Field."

"This year we celebrate the 400th anniversary of his birth. John Hampden was educated here in Thame at Lord Williams's Grammar School before going up to Oxford University."

"Compared to his cousin Oliver Cromwell, comparatively little is known about John Hampden. We know that his influence on events leading up to the English Civil War was immense."

"Today it is my pleasure to be involved in the planting of this tree in memory of my most illustrious forbear and Lord Williams's most famous 'Old Boy.' I am sure that John Hampden would appreciate his life being remembered in this way."

Other Society members in attendance were Bishop Dick Watson, Mr Maurice Kirtland, Mrs Rosalie Gibson and Mrs Marion Wierszycki, although some of them were representing other local organisations.

We applaud the decision to honour John Hampden in this way, but cannot help feeling that a beech would have been a more appropriate tree for a man whose family had inhabited the Chilterns for over 600 years.

Our photograph shows (left to right) Mr Kenningham, Councillor Mrs Morbey, and Lord Buckinghamshire.

TOURISM IN THAME

Thame Town Council are organising a meeting under the above title on Wednesday 4th May at the Town Hall.

This will discuss the potential for tourism in the town and surrounding area.

The John Hampden Society has been invited to send a representative, and to contribute to the display on Historic Thame.

LIFE MEMBERS

Mrs Lesley Wynne-Davies of London, and John and Gillian Goodall of Great Hampden have become the latest Life Members of the John Hampden Society.

It will be remembered that Gillian was seriously injured in a riding accident last year and is now confined to a wheelchair - nevertheless she has become an active member of the Committee.

COMMITTEE

The following were elected to the Committee at the AGM in February:-

Chairman- **TIM OLIVER**

Hon. Secretary - **ROY BAILEY**

Hon. Treasurer &
Membership Secretary -
GEORGE HAMMOND

Committee Members:

THE HON. JULIAN BYNG

MRS ROSALIE GIBSON

MRS GILLIAN GOODALL

MRS JANICE HANSFORD

DR FRANK HANSFORD-MILLER

DENNIS HARGREAVES

THE HON. IAN HOPE-MORLEY

RAYMOND JONES

MAURICE KIRTLAND

DEREK LESTER

Sadly, the posts of Treasurer and Membership Secretary are vacant again, and a volunteer or volunteers are urgently needed to take on these responsibilities.

RESIDENTIAL WEEKEND

Mrs Shirley Judges, Deputy Head of Residential Adult Education at Missenden Abbey, is anxious to know as soon as possible how many are likely to be attending the special John Hampden residential weekend on Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th September; advance notice of which was given in *'The Patriot'* No.5.

If you are interested in this, please contact the Abbey as soon as possible on **0494 890296**, mention your membership of the John Hampden Society and ask for a copy of the September '94 - March '95 brochure to be sent to you. This will contain a booking form.

The final cost will depend very largely on the numbers attending, but £70 per person is a likely figure.

THE HAMPDEN BOMBER

Further to his letter about the Hampden bomber in *'The Patriot'* No.5, Graham Barfield reports that this aircraft was named after the place rather than the man, although in his honour.

Interestingly enough, these aircraft were withdrawn from active service at the end of 1943 - the tercentenary of John Hampden's death.

SPECIAL SERMON

Great Hampden Parochial Church Council are holding a Flower Festival in the Church on the weekend of 25th/26th June.

The sermon at Morning Service on the Sunday, commencing at 11.15 am, will be about John Hampden.

☆☆☆

GEORGE MARTIN HAMMOND

1931 - 1994

George Hammond, Honorary Treasurer and Membership Secretary of the John Hampden Society, who died in his sleep on the night of Saturday 24th March, had three loves - his family, farming and the Church.

George was born on 29th September 1931 at Hemel Hempstead. His father farmed and ran a small milk business at Aston Clinton, which George eventually took over. It was here that he met his wife, Diana, who had two small children, and married her in 1956. They later moved to Berryfield at Quarrendon, on the other side of Aylesbury, where George carried on farming until about 3 years ago. He maintained an active interest, however; continuing to help his son William on the farm as much as possible, and was deeply concerned that so many farmers were being paid to leave fertile land uncultivated.

George was an active member of the Church of England and was elected Chairman of the Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance in 1979, having been a member for only 4 years. Prior to that he was totally inexperienced at public speaking, and the Bishop of Reading recalls that George's maiden speech at Synod was nearly a disaster! However, he learned quickly and continued as Chairman until 1989. He demonstrated a very sure grasp of finance (having done some training as an accountant in his younger days), a clear vision of what might be, and a refreshing optimism - as befits a true Christian. He was also a member of the Project Committee for the ecumenical City Church of Christ the Cornerstone at Milton Keynes, and had been attending a meeting of the Bishop's Council on the day he died.

George and Diana were interested to know how near to their land at Quarrendon the Battle of Aylesbury had been fought, as they had ploughed up a cannon ball, and this led them to join the John Hampden Society in January 1993. When it was announced that there was vacancy for a Membership Secretary, George volunteered and was co-opted into the post. Although he was unable to come to terms with my computerised membership system, he soon had a firm grip on the matter, and started to re-organise the records along more logical lines!

This naturally led to frequent communication between us, both by post and telephone, and I began to appreciate George's dry sense of humour. I recall receiving a large sheaf of paperwork from him one day with a little note saying, "Here's a jolly bundle!" He had a precise, elegant voice that was always a pleasure to listen to on the telephone. He took the job seriously, making great efforts to attend Committee Meetings, and he and Diana cheerfully gave up a Sunday last September to help man the Society's stand at the John Hampden Grammar School Bicentenary.

When Dr Frank Hansford-Miller announced that he was stepping down from the post of Honorary Treasurer, George immediately offered to take on the job. He believed that Membership and Treasurer went together, and he felt that his experience with the Board of Finance and other organisations would be useful. In Frank's absence he prepared draft accounts and was duly elected at the AGM at the end of February. Looking through his files, it is obvious that he had a thorough grasp of the matter and in one short month had made great strides in setting up his own efficient system.

Although we had only met face-to-face a few times, we talked frequently on the telephone, and I had begun to look upon George as a friend. I was saddened and shocked to learn of his death, and I am sure all members of the John Hampden Society who knew him will feel likewise. We have been enriched by his presence and are the poorer at his loss. We extend our sympathy to his widow Diana, his son William, his stepson Nicholas Rathbone, his grandchildren, and all his family.

A Thanksgiving Service for George Hammond's life will be held at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, on Friday 6th May at 11 am. In addition, a George Hammond Memorial Room is to be set up in the new City Church of Milton Keynes, for which he worked so hard. Donations can be sent to The Cornerstone Trust, c/o Canon David Goldie, 300 Saxon Gate West, Central Milton Keynes.

ROY BAILEY.

(The John Hampden Society would like to acknowledge the help of the Bishop of Reading, the Rt. Rev. John Bone; Mrs Christine Swart, Editor of 'The Door'; and Mr Nicholas Rathbone in the preparation of this appreciation.)



DIARY

DATES

1994

Fri 6 May. Memorial Service for the late George Hammond at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford at 11 am.

Sun 26 June. A Sermon on John Hampden at Morning Service (11.15 am) at Great Hampden Church as part of the Flower Festival

Fri 19 & Sat 20 Aug. Hampden (Maine) Bicentenary Celebrations.

Sat 10 & Sun 11 Sept. Adult Education Residential Weekend at Missenden Abbey.

October. House of Commons Reception. *(to be confirmed)*

MEMBERSHIP

The sad loss of our Treasurer and Membership Secretary George Hammond has naturally caused some problems.

George was in the process of dealing with membership renewals, which included the processing of standing orders and the issue of membership cards.

All members who have renewed should find a blue 1994 membership card with this issue of *'The Patriot'*, together with an up-to-date membership list and a copy of the minutes of the AGM.

If you feel that you should be on the list, please contact the Hon. Secretary at the address below.

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THE HAMPDENS AND DOWNING STREET

Some members appear to have misinterpreted a remark made by Dr John Adair in his book, 'John Hampden the Patriot', in which he states that 'The exact date and place of his (Hampden's) birth are unrecorded, but an early historian gives the latter as London.'

This has led to some people to believe that he was born at the Hampden family home which stood where No. 10 Downing Street now stands. However, this did not come into the possession of his mother until 1622, when Hampden would have been 28.

In 1581 Queen Elizabeth I granted to her Keeper of the Palace, Sir Thomas Knyvet the lease on the Axe brewery and Le Pecocke Inn, two old buildings which stood to the west of what is now Whitehall. Knyvet died in 1622, leaving the house that he had fashioned there to his wife, who also died a few months later, leaving the property in turn to her 'welbelov'd Neece Elizabeth Hampden, Widowe.'

This became the Hampden's London home, and it is possible that John Hampden spent some time there during 1627, when he was officially imprisoned at the nearby Gatehouse. This, however, may have been a form of open arrest which would have permitted him to spend some time with his mother.

George Downing was a Parliamentarian

who became a Member of Parliament and acquired the post of Ambassador to The Hague under Cromwell, where he spied on the exiled Stuarts. He appears to have been a most unpleasant character, changing sides just before the Restoration and treacherously delivering some of his former comrades-in-arms to execution. He was awarded a baronetcy for this.

During the Civil War he had acquired an interest in land and buildings to the west of Whitehall, but at the Restoration he was told that the properties had been taken back by the Crown. He petitioned the King that the properties be restored to him on the grounds, unsupported by any evidence, that they had come to him in lieu of a debt. In 1664 the King reluctantly granted him the lease of the site and the buildings on it, with permission to build, despite the fact that Elizabeth Hampden was still living there and paying a rent of £90 per year.

Her grandsons put up a fight as their lease still had 20 years to run, and Downing's attempts to get possession failed. Elizabeth died in 1665, but Downing doesn't appear to have gained possession until 1671, which suggests that the original grant from Queen Elizabeth was for 90 years. He then proceeded to pull down Hampden House and the surrounding buildings, and construct the world-famous street that bears his name.

☆☆☆

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Boleyn Cottage,
6 Coldharbour,
Tring Road,
Wendover,
Bucks HP22 6NR.

Dear Sir,

At the AGM of the John Hampden Society there was discussed under the Programme of Events the possibility of making an MP an Honorary Member of the Society.

Having given this some thought, I would be strongly against this idea.

In my opinion if a person is made an Honorary Member he must at least have shown some of those qualities of the Great Patriot which we so much admire. Two MPs were mentioned merely because they represented local constituencies. What the young Mr Liddington has shown of the qualities of a Hampden I am at a loss to fathom. It may be, of course, that in the future he will do some great act in support of democracy. We must wait with bated breath.

As far as Mr Heseltine is concerned, some may consider his walk from Mrs Thatcher's Cabinet (worthy of the great Gielgud) and his sword-like swinging of the Mace proof enough. Not for me, however. Mr Patrick Cormack has more claim as a persistent advocate of intervention in Bosnia. This is something that John Hampden in his day and age would, I believe, have supported.

As the local MP Mr Liddington must be well aware that there is a John Hampden Society since it has been well publicised in the Bucks Herald, which I am sure he reads. This is where I gained my knowledge of the Society.

If we must make Honorary Members, let us make them from people who warrant it. Lt. Gen. Rose might be the sort of person that John Hampden would have approved of.

Surely we are a Society dedicated to praising and spreading the great achievements of John Hampden. Let us not denigrate them.

Robert Hammond.

Editor's Note. It would be interesting to hear from other members on this subject. The only Honorary Membership that we have granted so far is to Mr Jonathan Taylor, Director of the English Civil War Society, in response to their request that they be affiliated to us.

MORE MEMBERSHIP

Although a number of last year's members have failed to renew, our membership at the time of publication was 110.

HOUSE OF COMMONS RECEPTION

About 35 people have so far returned the form printed in the last issue of 'The Patriot', reserving their place at this function.

We are advised that the House of Commons can hold receptions for up to 100 people, so anyone still interested in attending should return the form below by 7 May.

OFFERS

The 63mm x 32mm self-adhesive labels, which we have had printed on yellow paper, proved to be very popular at the AGM.

Packs of 50 are still available free in return for an SAE.

Also much in demand is the full-colour booklet 'John Hampden And His Times', which was produced by our Chairman's company Market Group Management plc as the 1993 contribution to their annual Hampden Lectures.

Copies of this are still available, post free, at £4.25 to members and £6.50 to non-members.

**To: The Hon. Secretary, The John Hampden Society,
The Malt House, Great Shefford, Newbury, Berkshire RG16 7ED.**

⑥

I/We wish to reserve places at the proposed House of Commons Reception at £25.00 each.

Name/s Membership No/s

Address

Postcode Telephone No.

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