



# THE PATRIOT

Quarterly Journal of The John Hampden Society

No. 14 - Spring 1996



## SOCIETY IN BID TO PURCHASE CHALGROVE BATTLEFIELD

**The John Hampden Society is leading a scheme to purchase the battlefield of Chalgrove, where John Hampden was mortally wounded, and open it to the public.**

Speaking at the Society's recent AGM, Derek Lester, who was one of the Chalgrove Battle Group which fought to get the site onto the Battlefields Register, pointed out that the area around Chalgrove is still under threat from the pressure to build 27 new towns by the year 2010.

He cited the case of Stone Basset, which was a proposal made in 1988 for a town of over 1200 acres between Tetsworth, Milton Common and Great Haseley. This proposal was defeated, as was one to extract gravel from Chalgrove battlefield, but the closure of the airfield could lead to renewed pressure for development in that area.

The committee of the Society has appointed Derek Lester to be our representative in discussions with other interested parties, such as Chalgrove Parish Council and Chalgrove Local History Group, in order

to investigate the possibilities of acquiring the battlefield. He has been making all the initial enquiries - but such a venture needs funds. The owners of the land, which covers about 45 acres, have been contacted and are prepared to entertain an offer. Mr Lester is therefore appealing to anyone with special skills or knowledge who may be able to help to come forward.

"When the Hampden memorials in Great Hampden church were under threat in 1992, the newly-formed Society was instrumental in helping to raise the money to save them", he said. "It was the expertise and the range of contacts of Society members that made this possible. But actually to purchase the battlefield is more complex, and we need help".

He went on to detail the requirements. "Firstly, in order to make any offer, we need to get the land valued. The minimum charge for this appears to be around £500 plus VAT. Is there anybody out there who can value land, or can give me an idea how to go about it?"

"At some stage we shall need to form a Trust. I have been advised that this will cost £1,500, mostly in legal fees. Is there anybody out there who has the legal expertise to help us here?"

"We need to raise something like £150,000 to just buy the battlefield, without considering the running costs. This is no mean sum, but could be obtained from such sources as English Heritage; the National Lottery Fund; the Millennium Fund. Does anybody out there know how to apply for these sort of funds?"

"I have also been told that owners of land can will it to the nation in lieu of tax or death duties. Is there anybody out there who can advise me on this?"

Mr Lester went on to point out that, if a charitable trust was formed, Chalgrove Parish Council might be prepared to

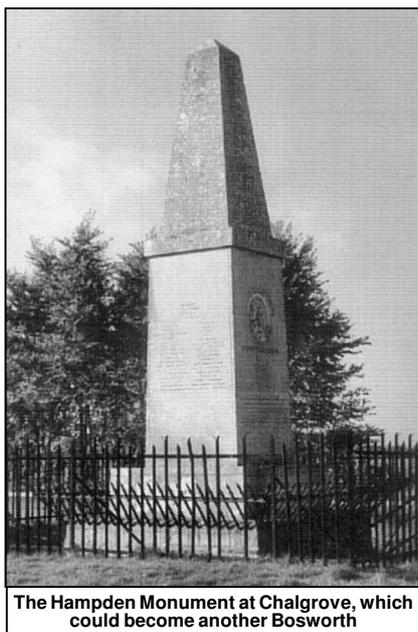
be the legal entity holding the land in perpetuity. He finished by pointing out that one of the aims of the John Hampden Society is 'to encourage and assist, where possible, in the preservation and/or renovation of the monuments and artifacts associated with him'.

"What better monument could there be to John Hampden", said Mr Lester, "than his battlefield which is now a world heritage site?"

● Anyone who is able to help in any way should contact Derek Lester at:

**8 Margaret Close,  
Waltham Abbey  
Essex EN9 1PZ.**

**Tel & Fax: 01992 701304**



The Hampden Monument at Chalgrove, which could become another Bosworth

### VICE-PRESIDENTS

Until now the Society has had a fairly large committee but, because of distance or pressure of business, some members have found it difficult to attend the meetings.

Consequently it has been decided to amend the constitution to enable the committee to appoint vice-presidents. There are a number of eminent and influential people among our membership who may wish to be of service to the Society but cannot serve on the committee for the above reasons. By accepting one of these honorary, non-executive posts they will add credibility and prestige to the Society and assist us in our objectives.

The following have agreed to become vice-presidents and their names will in future appear on our stationery under that of the President:

**The Rt. Hon. the Earl of Strafford**

**The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Hampden D.L.**

**The Rt. Hon. the Lord Donaldson of Kingsbridge O.B.E.**

**The Hon. Julian Byng**

**Professor Ian Beckett BA, PhD, F.R.Hist.S**

**Dr Frank Hansford-Miller MSc, PhD,  
F.R.G.S, F.S.S.**

**Elliott Viney DSO, DL, F.S.A.**

### LEAFLETS

Those of you who did not attend the AGM will find a copy of our new promotional leaflet enclosed. This is intended to replace the various sheets of paper that were sent out in reply to enquiries, and to generate interest in the Society.

We have had 2,000 of these printed, and the Chiltern Brewery generously sponsored the cost of printing by taking an advertisement. Many have already been distributed to various outlets in Buckinghamshire and beyond, and one of them has already resulted in a joint membership application.

We have also purchased some neat little clear plastic display boxes, which can either be free-standing or affixed to a vertical surface. Packs of the leaflets (with or without the boxes) are available to members who know of suitable outlets, such as tourist information offices, libraries, museums, schools, hotels, etc.

Application should be made to the Hon. Secretary.

● If you are unable to find an outlet for the leaflets, don't waste the one enclosed. Use it to sign up a new member.

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Tel & Fax: 01488 648441**

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The fourth Annual General Meeting of the John Hampden Society was held at Hampden House on Saturday 24 February 1996. 31 members and one guest attended.

## REPORTS FROM THE OFFICERS

The Honorary Secretary gave his report on the previous year, detailing the various successful events and mentioning a couple that had not come to fruition. His general theme was that it had been a quiet year after the excitement of the Chalgrove battlefield campaign.

The accounts were presented by the Hon. Secretary on behalf of the Hon. Treasurer, who was on holiday. The Society's bank account was well in credit, and the accounts were accepted by the meeting.

In his capacity as Membership Secretary, the Hon. Secretary reported that membership at the end of December was 128, of which 14 were life members. There have been some resignations, and some new members, and the current total stood at around 100, with about 29 renewals outstanding. 73 members renew by standing order each year, and Mr Bailey urged more members to consider this system, as it was of great benefit to the Society.

He went on to point out that interest in the Civil War had waned somewhat after the interest generated by the 350th anniversary in 1992. Other societies were experiencing the same problem, but more members were needed.

## AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION

The constitution was amended to enable the committee to appoint non-executive vice-presidents.

## HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

It was decided to extend honorary membership to the Hampden (Maine) Historical Society in order to maintain the links forged by our visit in 1994. This will be vested in a member of their committee, as was the case with the English Civil War Society.

## ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The following were elected to the committee:

**The Hon. Ian Hope-Morley** (Chairman)

**Tim Oliver** (Vice-Chairman)

**Roy Bailey** (Hon. Secretary & Membership Secretary)

**Mrs Rosalie Gibson** (Hon. Treasurer)

**Mrs Gillian Goodall**  
**Dennis Hargreaves**  
**Maurice Kirtland**  
**Derek Lester**  
**Miss Elizabeth Morris**

## ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

It was agreed that subscriptions should remain at their present level after the Hon. Secretary, speaking on behalf of the Hon. Treasurer, pointed out that, because of the standing order system, any alteration could only take effect in 1997.

## FUND RAISING

The committee had decided that, where possible, events should finance themselves by contributions from the members attending. Mrs Gillian Goodall had proposed holding a raffle at each event, and had contributed a bottle of whisky to be raffled at the meeting. Graham Barfield had a copy of Dr John Adair's biography of Hampden which he was prepared to donate to the Society to auction. Lady Buckinghamshire suggested that we print cards bearing the Hampden portrait but blank inside, which could raise money.

## PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

Mrs Sarah Barrington was invited to talk about the Annual Dinner in June, and Derek Lester reported on his attempts to organise a visit to Pyrton Manor on the same day. A visit to Broughton Castle was suggested for later in the year, and Lord Buckinghamshire proposed a special church service at Great Hampden Church on the day following the dinner. (*see 'Coming Events'*)

## ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Hon. Secretary announced the availability of the new promotional leaflets (*see 'Leaflets'*), and the letter about the Fairfax Collection documents (*see below*). Derek Lester spoke of the scheme to acquire Chalgrove battlefield (*see Page 1*).

Following the meeting there was a fascinating talk on the political life of Buckinghamshire during the 17th century by the Rev. Arthur Taylor, after which tea was taken in the Dining Room. Richard Jenkinson of the Chiltern Brewery was in attendance with some John Hampden's Ale, and the raffle for the bottle of whisky, which was won by Dennis Hargreaves, raised £40.



1996

**Sat 22 June 2. pm.** Meet at Plough Inn, Pyrton, for visit to either Pyrton Manor or Chalgrove battlefield, followed by (7.30 pm) Annual Dinner at the Spread Eagle Hotel, Thame.

**Sun 23 June 11.15 am.** Special Morning Service at Great Hampden Church.

**Sunday 8 Sept or 6 Oct. 3pm.** Visit to Broughton Castle, Banbury. (*Date to be confirmed*)

## BY GEORGE!

George Morris of Aylesbury has been an assiduous supplier of information on John Hampden which he has culled from various sources. His latest offering contains several little gems, thus:

(A) Aylesbury's busiest roundabout has been known for decades as 'The Hen and Chickens' after the neighbouring pub. Now that the latter's name has been changed to something totally bizarre, there is a move to re-name the junction, and the Bucks Advertiser is asking readers to come up with ideas.

One suggestion, from an anonymous resident of Aston Clinton, is to call it after John Hampden. Anyone wishing to support that proposal should write to the Bucks Advertiser, 2 Exchange Street, Aylesbury HP20 1UJ.

(B) A 15th century house called Ladyboys in Prestwood, currently on the market, has connections with John Hampden. According to the Bucks Free Press, he was one of the executors of the estate of a former owner, Dame Jane Boys, who assisted in the management of a charity set up to help poor boys of the parish learn a trade. Rent from the cottage helped to fund their apprenticeships.

(C) One of the best potted biographies of John Hampden yet to appear is contained in a book called 'World-Famous Rebels' by Charles Connell. Published in 1970 by Odhams Books (ISBN 600726533), it devotes 14 pages to the Patriot, and members will only quarrel with one sentence, which reads 'Henceforth Hampden's avowed aim was to incite the people of England to rebel against their oppressors'.

Perhaps a certain Thame member might care to comment on that!

## KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY

Mrs Jan Toms is researching the life of Robert Hammond (1621-54), Parliamentary soldier and son-in-law to John Hampden, and would welcome any information that members may have about him.

Hammond married Hampden's daughter Mary and became Governor of the Isle of Wight. This sinure became something of a poisoned chalice, since scarcely had Hammond settled in than Charles I fled from Hampton Court to Carisbrooke Castle and threw himself upon Hammond's mercy.

After his death Mary married Sir Miles Hobart and became the ancestress of the Hobart-Hampdens, Earls of Buckinghamshire.

Mrs Toms's address is:

**The Old Mill,  
Middleton,  
Freshwater,  
Isle of Wight PO40 9NX.**

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## COLLECTION

A collection of more than 100 17th century pamphlets from the Fairfax Library is being offered for sale by a firm of antiquarian dealers at prices varying between £40 and £125. The company claims that this is the finest collection of Civil War pamphlets ever made.

A catalogue is available from Paper Heritage, Berrow Green, Martley, Worcester WR6 6PL. Tel. 01886 821322. Fax 01886 821128.

## ARE WE THE FIRST?

There is a distinct possibility that this Society is not the first one dedicated to honouring John Hampden.

At our inauguration in 1992, we were informed by the Bucks Examiner that they had received a letter from a Mrs Pamela Goodwin of Princes Risborough stating that there was already a John Hampden Society in existence. We wrote to Mrs Goodwin, pointing out that none of the Hampden enthusiasts at the launch had ever heard of another society, and asking for further information. No reply was received and the matter was forgotten until earlier this year, when Berkshire member David Hickman drew attention to a book called, 'The Secret Memoirs of Lord Byron' by Christopher Nicole.

This is a rather salacious historical novel purporting to be the memoirs of the famous poet, supposedly written (conveniently) just before his death in 1820. On page 177 is the following:

*'...for during my brief absence I was elected to the Hampden Club, this being a perfect hive of reformers. Upon my return to town I duly attended this august gathering, into which I had been introduced by a nobleman I knew only slightly, the Earl of Oxford.'*

While researching Chalgrove battlefield in the British Library in 1994, Derek Lester came across mention of the Hampden Club, but was too busy to investigate further at the time. Despite being described by Lady Caroline Lamb as 'mad, bad and dangerous to know', Lord Byron was an ardent reformer and could well have been a member of such a club. At the beginning of the 19th century there was still a great residual admiration among the Whigs for the men who led the English Revolution of the 17th century. In 1774 Edmund Burke, in a speech

on American taxation, said, 'Would twenty shillings have ruined Mr Hampden's fortune? No, but the payment of half twenty shillings, on the principle it was demanded, would have made him a slave'.

It was only later on, in Victorian times, that what Dr John Adair has described as 'the Cromwell bandwagon' began to roll, and John Hampden sunk in to relative obscurity.

This has prompted us to make contact again with Mrs Goodwin, who believes that the John Hampden Society she mentioned was started after World War II by some radical journalists on a left-wing newspaper such as the Daily Worker, the Daily Herald, or Reynolds News. Her late father, James Heading, whom she describes as politically-minded, joined the society in the 1950s, and she remembers seeing his membership card.

Mrs Goodwin states that this society was never wound up but incorporated into another organisation.

And there the mystery rests - for the present.

● Our man in the Midlands, Graham Barfield, who lives only 25 miles from Lord Byron's former home, Newstead Abbey, reports that a 'kosher' biography of Byron does not mention a Hampden Club, but he is continuing his research. Ever the optimist, Mr Barfield has pondered on the possibility of the John Hampden Society being declared the rightful heirs and successors to the Hampden Club and says, 'I've just worked out that an unused balance of £50 left in the club's account since about 1810 at a modest 5% compound interest would by now have produced not far short of £14 million. Almost as good as the National Lottery!'

*(And with about the same likelihood of success! - Ed.)*

## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Welcome to new members Toby and Jo Lucas of Denner Hill near Great Misenden, who are the first to be recruited by means of the new leaflets.

Welcome also to Mrs Trixie Muldrew of Hampden, New Zealand, who has become a joint member with her husband Hugh, and to 12 year old Alice Bailey, daughter of the Hon. Secretary, who has frequently been pressed into service labelling and stamping envelopes.

Philip Vincent, Public Relations Officer for Tim Oliver's company Hampden Group Management, has converted to life membership, bringing the total in that category to 15.

● It has been decided that no more life members will be accepted in the foreseeable future, and the box for that category has been omitted from the new membership application forms.

## LIBRARY SERVICE

Graham Barfield's generous offer to donate a copy of Dr John Adair's biography of John Hampden to the Society has revived the idea of a Society library.

The current stock is as follows:

'John Hampden the Patriot' by Dr John Adair (1976) - £1.50

'The Sheriffs of Buckinghamshire' by Elliott Viney (1965) - £1

'Eye and Ear Witnesses' by Anna Milford (1992) - £1

'Notes of the Long Parliament' by Sir Ralph Verney (1845) - £1 \*

'For King and Parliament' by Philip Lindsay (1949) - £1 \*

'The King's Peace' (1955) and 'The King's War' (1958) by C.V. Wedgwood - £2 each \*

(\* property of the Hon. Secretary)

Any member wishing to borrow any of these books for a period of up to 3 weeks should send the indicated postage in stamps to the Hon. Secretary.

Regrettably, this service is only available to members in the U.K.

## COMING EVENTS

The Society's Annual Dinner has been arranged for Saturday 22 June at the Spread Eagle Hotel, Thame, commencing at 7.30 pm. A menu and booking form is enclosed, and the latter should be returned, with a deposit, to Mrs Sarah Barrington as soon as possible.

As you will see, the guest speaker is one of our new vice-presidents, Elliott Viney, DSO, DL, F.S.A. Mr Viney is President of the Bucks Archaeological Society and is a former High Sheriff of the county. He was formerly a director of Hazell, Watson and Viney, the printers, and has lectured on John Hampden many times.

Derek Lester is hoping to organise a visit that afternoon to Pyrton Manor, near Watlington, which was the home of John Hampden's first wife, Elizabeth Simeon. However, this depends on the availability of the owner, David McLaren, whose business takes him away at short notice. If this happens, the alternative will be a guided tour of Chalgrove battlefield. In either case, meet at the Plough Inn, Pyrton for a 2.30 pm departure.

Another visit of interest will be to Broughton Castle near Banbury in the autumn. Broughton is the home of Viscount Saye and Sele, whose 17th century ancestor was one of John Hampden's colleagues. Consequently the Castle contains a good deal of Hampden memorabilia.

There is a copy of the Walker portrait; a miniature said to be of Hampden; and a silver cup given by Hampden to John Fiennes in 1643 (see 'The Patriot' No. 7). There is also a room used by the first Viscount, Hampden, Pym and the other partners in the Providence Island Company for their meetings, which were actually meetings of the opposition to Charles I.

We have been given two dates for this visit - Sunday 8 September or Sunday 6 October; both at 3pm. The only difference is that the Castle is open to the public in September, whereas in October we shall have it (and Lord Saye and Sele) to ourselves.

The cost will be about £3 per head, depending on numbers, and we shall need to give some indication of these at a later date. Consequently there will be a booking form in the next issue of 'The Patriot', but this one contains a leaflet about the Castle to whet your appetites.



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Earlier this year we were saddened to learn from his daughter Deborah, very belatedly, of the death of former member William Wood more than a year ago. The following is an appreciation by someone who knew him well:

## WILLIAM ('BILL') WOOD

1919 -1995

by

Dr Frank Hansford-Miller

Bill Wood, who passed away suddenly on 11 January 1995, was one of the nicest persons anyone could wish to meet, and his untimely death will bring great sadness to all his many friends, of which I am proud to have been one.

As a member of the John Hampden Society he was one of the group of eight members who set out from England in August 1994 to participate in the Bicentenary celebrations of the township of Hampden (Maine), named after our own John Hampden. Bill set his own personal seal on the visit even before we left Heathrow.

He decided to do some last-minute shopping in the Duty Free Shop and then mistakenly took a wrong turning to our plane's departure gate. Frantic calls over the public address system failed to locate him and, as the minutes before departure time slipped away, the airport authorities (in accordance with anti-terrorist regulations) took the decision to remove his luggage from the plane. All we members waited with increasing anxiety as the last seconds ticked away with still no Bill Wood. At the very 11th hour, to loud cheers of relief, the diminutive figure of Bill emerged down the corridor of the plane, completely unperturbed. Being Bill he was immediately forgiven.

At the celebrations in Hampden Bill soon captured the hearts of our very hospitable hosts from the local Historical Society with his unfailing cheerfulness and good humour. For some undisclosed reason he took to wearing a very becoming headgear of what appeared to be an Army forage cap. This was in dark blue with red piping, and it suited him perfectly; being completely in tune with the mood of the celebrations. Photographs that I have of Bill show him wearing it in the Mayor's Chevrolet during the Children's Day procession; when he had a spade in hand planting the time capsule; and at a commemoration service (*above*).

He justifiably became very popular and received many invitations from his hosts to return. Sadly, his death only 5 months

later meant that this was something he was not destined to enjoy.

Bill will be greatly missed by all of us, and especially by me. I first met him over 30 years ago when his late wife Anita was a teaching colleague at a large London comprehensive school. Bill was a curator at the Science Museum in South Kensington, London, and an organiser of special exhibitions and displays, some of which I was privileged to attend. He was a skilled



craftsman and artist in his own right, despite his personal handicap, concealed from many, of an arm partially-withered from birth. One of my most treasured possessions, which I have here in my hand as I write, is a beautifully hand-painted wall plaque of the Tudor Rose of England, executed to his own design. He presented this to me, quite undeservedly, I am sure, on the occasion of one of my many St. George's Day Festivals which he helped me to organise in London's

Trafalgar Square in the '70s.

Bill and Anita Wood lived for many years in Golders Green in North London, but on his retirement he moved closer to John Hampden country at New Denham in Buckinghamshire. He is survived by his two daughters, Deborah and Cecily, and his grandchildren.

## BEGINNING OF THE END

by

Graham Barfield

On Saturday 8 June, to celebrate the 350th anniversary of the end of the first of the English Civil Wars, the Director of the Centre for Local History (part of the Adult Education arm of Nottingham University) is running a day school. Having pointed out to him the local significance of the fact that the war officially started and ended in Nottinghamshire, he has asked me to conduct the morning sessions.

We are calling the event 'Strongholds, Skirmishes, Sieges and Sallies'. I shall give a couple of talks entitled 'Taking Sides' and 'Counting the Cost'. The former, though concentrating on local divisions of loyalty within the East Midlands, will also look on a national level at why individuals chose the allegiances they did, and indeed why some of them changed during the course of the war.

One interesting example which bears quoting is that of the two Robert Pyes. The son married one of Hampden's daughters - the youngest I believe - and gave his father-in-law the ill-fated pistol which behaved so fatally at Chalgrove. (*Allegedly!* - Ed.) The elder Pye was a royalist supporter and in fact entertained the King at least once during the course of the monarch's somewhat aimless journeyings around his kingdom.

Another example worth quoting will be Colonel (later Sir) John Urry, the professional Scottish soldier originally in the service of Parliament who deserted to the King almost on the eve of Chalgrove, giving the information about the pay train which is supposed to have led Prince Rupert to mount his sortie. Urry was seen at Chalgrove with his new mates, pointing out which Parliamentary officers it would be most useful to shoot dead.

'Counting the Cost' will look at the damage the war caused to the country at large, and its cost in terms of disruption to the social and economic fabric and loss of life.

The afternoon will be spent in a walkabout of Newark, conducted by the Director, Dr Marcombe, who lives there. Newark withstood 3 Parliamentary sieges, and we shall be looking at the remains of the earthworks outside the town constructed during one of them.

The day will end, we hope, with a commemorative jar at 'The Saracen's Head' in Southwell, where Charles gave himself up to the Scots Commissioners.

The cost will be between £13 and £16 per head, depending on the requirements for coach transport, refreshments, etc.

Although Nottingham is some way off from the majority of the Society's membership, any one prepared to make the journey will be most welcome. Interested persons should contact me at:

31 The Lanes,  
Oakerthorpe Road,  
Bolehill,  
Matlock,  
Derbyshire DE4 4GP.  
Tel: 01629 822487

● Also at Newark, our friends in the Cromwell Association will be holding their AGM in the Tudor Hall, Appletongate (entered via the Museum) on Saturday 27 April, commencing at 10.45 am.

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