



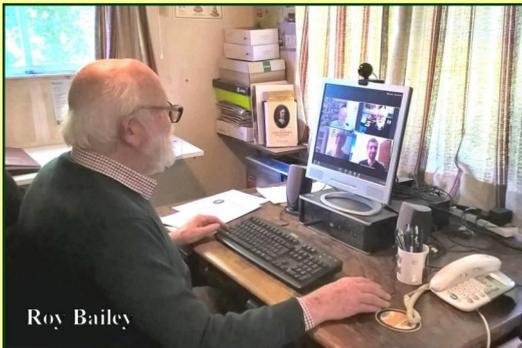
THE PATRIOT

Newsletter of the John Hampden Society
No. 94 - Summer 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 VIRTUAL SOCIETY



Roy Bailey



Sam Hearn



Anthea Coles



Phil Broomfield

As forecast in the last issue of *The Patriot*, the John Hampden Society has, like most other organisations, adopted the videoconferencing program Zoom to keep the Society running during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Thanks to Hon. Treasurer Sam Hearn's wife Sue, who has subscribed to a professional package which allows unlimited time online, we have been able to use this to conduct our business since March of this year. The members of the Executive Committee have, as our picture shows, held several meetings via Zoom, and have found it much more convenient to confer whenever we wish in the comfort of our own homes rather than travelling several miles to a hotel or pub.

On Sunday 17th May the Society tried to hold an online meeting of members, but this was thwarted by a widespread problem with the Zoom servers and had to be abandoned. A second attempt a week later was more successful and involved 17 members – two of them from the USA. Held in the form of an informal and unofficial AGM, it produced a good deal of useful conversation and exchange of ideas, and received the approval of those involved.

Comments such as, 'Extremely successful. It was good to put faces to names'; 'It was obviously a success and should be repeated' and 'It was great to be able to attend a meeting and to e-meet people' were received. The only minor criticism was that participants tended to talk over each other and that some sort of protocol is needed for indicating a desire to speak. This actually exists, and I apologise for not pointing this out at the time.

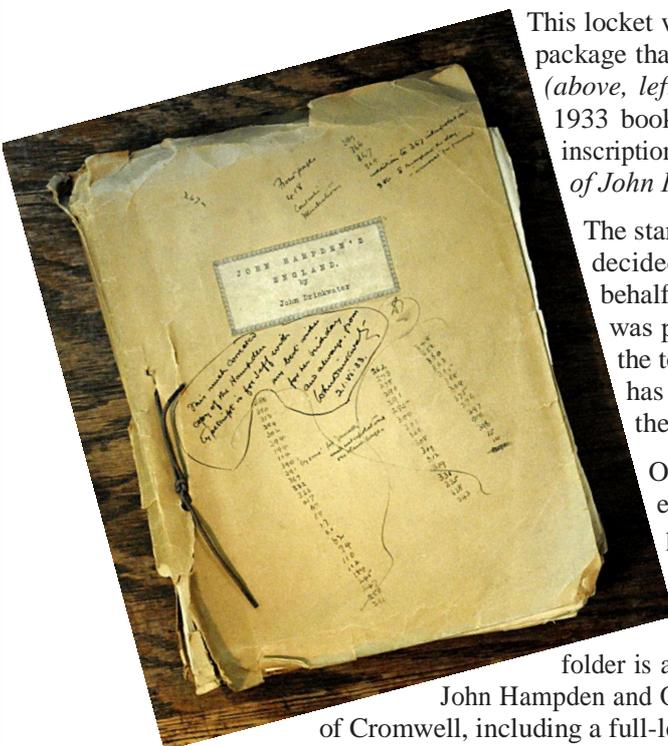
We will probably hold another such meeting in the near future, and even when social distancing and the 2-metre rule are no more and we can hold conventional AGMs, we will probably incorporate a form of videoconferencing into the meetings for the benefit of far-flung members.

As I pointed out at the time, such computer programs and methods of working now mean that distance from the John Hampden country is no excuse for not serving on the Executive Committee!

Roy Bailey

A NEW ACQUISITION

In May the Society was informed that a lock of John Hampden's hair enclosed in a locket (*below, centre*) was being auctioned at the end of the month at Dominic Winter Auctions in Gloucestershire. The information came from Darryl Saunders, a resident of the USA who claimed descent from a contemporary of John Hampden who was a captain in Arthur Goodwin's troop of horse at Edgehill.



This locket was mounted in a small, glazed wooden case and formed a part of a package that also included two unidentified portraits of the Drinkwater family (*above, left and right*) and a corrected typescript (*left*) of John Drinkwater's 1933 book, *John Hampden's England* (reviewed here), with a presentation inscription on the much-frayed cover. There was also a copy of *The Controversy of John Hampden's Death* by Derek Lester and Gill Blackshaw.

The starting price for this package was £300, and the Executive Committee decided that it was worth bidding for it. Thanks to the efforts on our behalf by member Peter Osborne, who is a professional art dealer, the lot was purchased for a hammer price of £320. With auctioneers' fees, etc., the total cost was £396. An appeal for members to contribute to this cost has met with a ready response, and the names of the contributors and the amount raised so far is published on page 3.

On examination the contents of our purchase were rather more interesting than we expected. On the back of a number of the typescript pages are handwritten notes by Drinkwater; some of them being copies of Hampden's letters to Sir John Eliot and others. As the handwriting is very tiny these notes are being carefully transcribed by member Annabel Bailey for further study. Also included in the folder is an 8-page extract - both handwritten and typed - from a play featuring John Hampden and Oliver Cromwell. Although Drinkwater produced a number of studies of Cromwell, including a full-length play, this extract does not appear to be a part of it.

The Executive Committee has yet to decide the future of these various items. The locket may go on loan to a local museum in order to promote John Hampden and the Society, but the other pieces require further study. Watch this space!

*(Editor's note: The Society already owns a similar alleged lock of Hampden's hair, which is lodged in the Thame Museum. Lord Williams's Grammar School at Thame owns another (see **The Patriot** no. 23), while a fourth is in the Museum at Carisbrooke Castle on the Isle of Wight (see **The Patriot** no. 15). Like all of these, our new acquisition was almost certainly taken from the body exhumed by Lord Nugent in 1828. Later research has decided that this was not that of the Patriot [see: *The Controversy of John Hampden's Death*] but probably that of his father, but that does not diminish the historical value of such a possession.)*

BOOK REVIEW

John Hampden's England

by John Drinkwater

Published in 1933 by Thornton Butterworth Ltd, London
320 pp



This account of John Hampden's life was published just over a century after Lord Nugent's two-volume book about the Patriot, and (as the author admits) draws freely on the previous work. John Drinkwater (*pictured*) displays an admiration for Nugent's scholarship which is not universally shared by today's historians.

John Hampden's England is not a biography of Hampden so much as a review of his life within the context of the political, religious and military conflicts of the first half of the 17th century. It leaves out much that other works include but contains information missing from conventional biographies. It deals more with Hampden's character and personality than his political or military achievements.

Drinkwater quotes at some length extracts from other works, notably that of Hampden's friend and lawyer Bulstrode Whitelocke, and includes a telling passage from the diary of William Laud, then Bishop of London. Laud details with relish the legal mutilation of 60-year-old cleric Alexander Leighton, who had severely criticised (indeed, libelled) the bishops and the Queen. There is the complete list of the Articles of Impeachment against the Five Members, and Oliver St John's opening address in defence of Hampden in the Ship Money Trial covers several fascinating pages.

There is no doubt that John Drinkwater was an admirer of the Parliamentary cause and of John Hampden. He is especially rough on the Royalists, describing Charles I as 'the worst king in English history' and 'a weak character', and considered him to be an energetic despot as opposed to his father, James I, whom he labels as an indolent one. Prince Rupert (as far as his behaviour at Edgehill was concerned) is described as 'an irresponsible blockhead'. Drinkwater is not above criticising Hampden – albeit mildly – for one of his actions during the impeachment of Strafford.

The passage of time and the work done by the John Hampden Society has rendered some of the information out of date, and there are one or two errors; the worst of which is having Arthur Goodwin slain at Chalgrove! There are a number of good prints and photographs, but from the various pictures and engravings alleged to be of John Hampden, Drinkwater selects for the frontispiece the Hampden House portrait, now generally accepted to be that of the Patriot's son Richard.

Despite a penchant for fairly long sentences, Drinkwater writes in an easy, flowing style; hardly surprising as he was chiefly a poet and playwright - he wrote full-length plays about Oliver Cromwell and Abraham Lincoln - and, with Rupert Brooke, Edward Thomas and others, was a member of the Dymock Group of poets based in Gloucestershire. Although born and brought up in East London, Drinkwater went to school in Oxford and developed a love of the area. He died four years after the publication of *John Hampden's England*, and was buried at Piddington, which he mentions in several of his poems.

Roy Bailey



DIARY DATES

2020

Saturday 24th October (*provisional*)
Bucks Local History Network Conference. No further details are currently available.

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/

THE LOCKET APPEAL

The appeal to members for contributions towards the cost of purchasing the locket package met with a gratifying response.

As of 25th June the total raised was £370.

The contributors are:

Bruce Alexander

Peter Aschenbrenner

Roy Bailey

Phil Broomfield

Miles Buckinghamshire

Brian Cox

Charles Harvey

Sam Hearn

Maurice Kirtland

Peter Osborne

John Pearson

Anyone wishing to add to the total should contact the Hon. Treasurer.

A final update will be published in the next issue of *The Patriot*.

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SHIP MONEY MARK 2

We celebrate rebellions against unjust taxation such as the Peasant's Revolt and the Boston Tea Party, or legends about them such as Lady Godiva and Robin Hood. So it is not surprising that John Hampden earned his reputation as a national hero for challenging taxation without representation. His opposition to the Ship Money is widely regarded as a key milestone for the Parliamentary movement, and of course he was vigorously supported by his cousin Oliver Cromwell. In the pre-Civil War years, Cromwell was urging his fellow countrymen not to pay illegal taxes, as to pay them was to betray their country.

Ship Money was a 'duty' that Charles I dragged from medieval precedents after he had dissolved Parliament and needed to raise revenue. His implementation differed from the origins of Ship Money because it was levied on inland counties as well as coastal, and in peacetime rather than wartime. In hindsight, we are now used to everyone contributing towards the Navy in peacetime, and prefer to focus on the principle that no tax should be introduced without Parliamentary debate and consent. John Hampden narrowly lost his case against Ship Money.

History is always repeating itself, and it did so very quickly in the 17th century. A merchant called George Cony is much less well known than John Hampden. Although the details of his case are different, the similarities are worthy of note. The dysfunctional 'Barebones' Parliament was dissolved in December 1653, and shortly after that Cromwell became Lord Protector. Other parliaments were called but were also short-lived. In 1654, Cony refused to pay import duties on his goods, on the basis that they had not been agreed by Parliament, was fined by a customs commissioner, and then imprisoned for refusing to pay the fine. His lawyers launched an appeal but were imprisoned for sedition and subversion. Cony then represented himself. The judge originally due to try the case resigned. A new judge was found, but Cony subsequently withdrew his case.

We must wonder, if John Hampden had lived, what he would have made of Cony's tax rebellion.

Beth Rogers

(Editor's note: The principle of no taxation without representation continues to resonate today. The UK Government stirred up a hornets' nest when it announced that from April 2019 probate fee charges would be linked to the size of the estate passing.

The Office of Budget Responsibility said that it would expect the Office of National Statistics to classify probate fees as 'a tax on capital rather than a payment for a service'. If probate fees were classified as a tax then any change in the fee structure would have to be voted on by Parliament.

Not surprisingly the Ministry of Justice disagreed. But the Institute of Chartered Accountants (ICAEW) fulminated that the proposed change was 'an abuse of power'. Ultimately the Government compromised, and a watered-down version of the changes was introduced. Sadly, however the Ministry of Justice refused to accept that probate fees are a tax that Parliament must vote on.)

WHO WAS ROBERT LENTHALL?

Robert Lenthall, a distant relative of William Lenthall, the famous Speaker of the House of Commons, was born around 1595. It is possible that, like William Lenthall and John Hampden, he was educated at Thame Grammar School. He subsequently attended Oriel College Oxford from 1611. In 1627 he succeeded his father as Rector of Great Missenden Church and married his first wife Susanna.

In 1637 Robert was invited to be the preacher of the church at Weymouth, Massachusetts. The original failed colony of Wessagusset had changed its name to Weymouth in 1635. He and his family emigrated in 1638. Unfortunately, after two years he was turned out of this notoriously intolerant colony for being too liberal. He moved to Rhode Island where he tried to establish a new church and a school. He abandoned this new venture and returned to England in 1642. His daughters Marianne and Anne remained in Connecticut with Susanna's brother.

On his return in 1642 Robert became the rector of the Hampden family at Great Hampden. It is certain that John Hampden would have played a part in this appointment and this sheds some light on Hampden's own religious affiliations. Robert Lenthall would have been known to John Hampden from at least the 1630's when Robert was the Rector of nearby Great Missenden. He and his family emigrated to America at the time when legend has it that Hampden and his cousin Oliver Cromwell were seriously considering the same course of action. It was Robert who officiated at Hampden's funeral and recorded his death in the parish register.

All Robert's family, apart from the daughters left behind in America, died of plague at Great Hampden between 11th August and 25th September 1647. (See: *The Plague Comes to Great Hampden –The Patriot* no 93.)

Robert somehow pieced his life back together after this personal tragedy and moved to the parish of Barnes in Surrey. He was rector there until his death in 1658 and is buried in the churchyard. He was survived by his third wife Margaret. Robert's will is famous for warning his daughters not to grumble about their stepmother inheriting some of his belongings.

Sam Hearn