



THE PATRIOT



Official Newsletter of the John Hampden Society

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**REVOLUTION 250:
AMERICA'S
INDEPENDENCE STORY
1763-1783**



**24 JUNE TO
29 NOVEMBER 2026**

**THE NATIONAL
ARCHIVES**

KEW, LONDON

Mariette, Lady Saye and Sele

(1936-2026)

We are sad to record the passing of Lady Saye and Sele, devoted and loving wife of Nathaniel Fiennes, the 21st Lord Saye and Sele, who was a loyal supporter of the John Hampden Society.

She passed on 6 April 2026, at age 90.

When they moved into the Broughton Castle in 1970, Nathaniel and Mariette undertook numerous restoration and conservation projects on the early 14th-century fortified manor house.

Their work transformed the property into a favorite location for film, television, and model shoots.

We are profoundly grateful for their devotion to preserving this valuable historical asset.

Members will recall fondly how enthusiastically they were welcomed by the Fiennes to the Castle and gardens.

We have sent our sympathies to the family. RIP.

Elizabeth Cromwell Hampden and the Lord Knyvett Freeschool

By Amy Simes

Sir Thomas Knyvett was discoverer of Guy Fawkes during the Gunpowder Plot and Keeper of the Palaces to Queen Elizabeth I, who granted him a lease on “The House at the Back” next to the Whitehall Palace that is now 10 Downing St. He became uncle to Elizabeth Cromwell Hampden (ECH), John Hampden’s mother, when in 1597 he married her widowed aunt, Elizabeth Hayward..

After twenty-five years of marriage, Thomas and Elizabeth died within months of each other (he in July, she in September), leaving “Knyvett House” to their niece ECH, who until her death forty years later lived in what became the London “Hampden House.” Since the couple were childless, they appointed ECH executrix of their wills and heir to their estate.

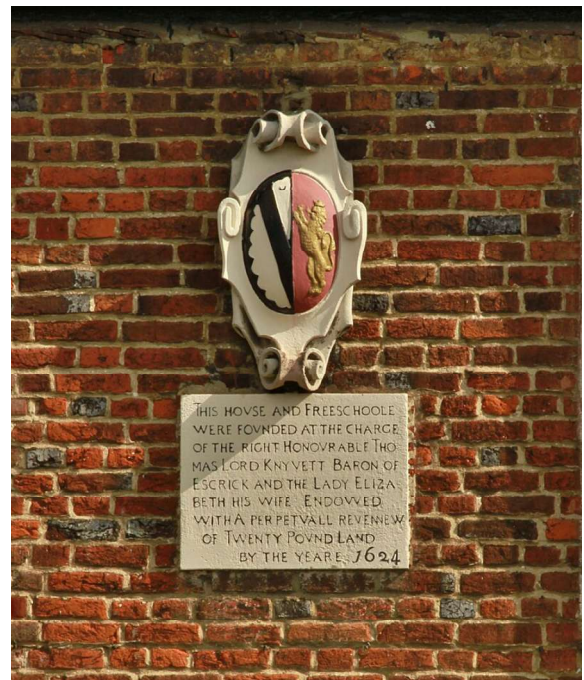
In his will, Sir Thomas specified that a freeschool for boys be built within two years of his death and, based on a lecture four years ago by museum curator Nick Pollard, ECH used her own money to fund construction of the “Lord Knyvett House and Freeschool” in 1624. Also according to Pollard, ECH’s servant Dorothy Leach donated ten pounds a year to apprentice two boys from the school, while a local physician provided for books and papers.

The building, now a community center, remains in its original state on the High St. in Stanwell, where Knyvett’s manor house once stood. Nearby is St. Mary the Virgin, a 12th-century church at the end of Lord Knyvett Close that holds the tomb and monument dedicated to Thomas and Elizabeth.

Did ECH also fund the memorials? It’s possible she did as a way to express gratitude for their providing housing and financial assistance after her husband William Hampden’s death during her subsequent struggle with the Court of Wards to retain her son’s inheritance.



The Lord Knyvett Freeschool (above) and plaque commemorating its founding in 1624 with the combined coat of arms of Knyvett and Hayward (right).



The Patriot and the Prince

By Sam Hearn

The lives of John Hampden and Prince Rupert were curiously intertwined: Whilst a student at Oxford University, Hampden composed a poem celebrating the marriage of Rupert's parents the Princess Elizabeth and Frederick the Elector Palatine (see Patriot No. 43). The poem was published by the University in an anthology of similar poems. Famously, Rupert led the Royalist raiding party at Chalgrove where Hampden was mortally wounded.

Rupert and Hampden fought at the Battle of Edgehill in October 1642. Hampden and his regiment were assigned the important task of escorting the slow-moving artillery train and remained to the rear of the main army when the battle began. However, Rupert's cavalry, after their initial successful charge, chose to turn their attention to looting the Parliamentarian's baggage wagons. It was here that they were confronted and ultimately repelled by Hampden's regiment.

Rupert and Hampden also played their part in the Battle of Brentford, the Royalist's surprise attack on the town largely a battle fought by the infantry and artillery.

As a cavalry commander, Rupert played little part in the main engagement, but Lord Patrick Ruthven, the King's Marshall General, was in command of the Royalist forces.

Hampden and his men having marched from Acton to Brentford covered the Parliamentarian retreat and successfully halted the Royalist advance on London.

The following day, at the battle of Turnham Green, the Earl of Essex used his army to block the Royalists route into the City of London. In his only aggressive action of the day, Essex dispatched Hampden to lead a force to "the heights of Acton," possibly to attempt an encirclement of the Royalists. After Hampden and his troops were in place, Essex countermanded his original order. Rupert and his cavalry arrived at the battle site, but there is no record they engaged with Hampden's regiment.

Historians conjecture that both Rupert and Hampden could, in slightly different circumstances, have changed the course of this important battle. The Royalist cavalry led by Prince Rupert tried, with little success, to encourage the men of the London Trained Bands to break ranks.

Continued on page 4



Portrait of John Hampden by William Dobson

Continued from page 3

At the start of fighting season in 1643, Hampden and his regiment took part in the siege of Reading as precursor to an advance on Oxford, the Royalist Capital. Rupert led the relief column sent from Oxford to break the siege, but their resolve was undermined when their commander was seriously injured by a falling tile. Under pressure from the town's inhabitants, an honourable surrender was agreed and Rupert's relief were forced to turn back, which enabled the Parliamentarians to continue their advance on Oxford.

A few weeks later, with the Parliamentary forces encamped in and around Thame, the Earl of Essex attempted to consolidate his forces for a siege of Oxford and was anxiously awaiting the arrival of a payroll wagon from London so that he could pay his soldiers. Members of the Society surely know the story about Rupert's daring raid out of Oxford, when attempting to intercept the payroll wagon and delivering in the process surprise attacks on isolated groups of Parliamentary soldiers billeted around the area.

Rupert's raid triggered a hurried and disorganised response from the Parliamentary commanders based in and around Thame. The ineffective tactic resulted in the engagement near Chalgrove where Rupert, who had been driving prisoners and captured livestock towards Oxford, turned to face his pursuers. It was here that Hampden famously received his fatal wound. Scholars surmise that he was pointed out by Colonel Urry, who at Oxford had deserted to the King from Hampden's regiment.

Legend often mistakenly holds that Prince Rupert accompanied King Charles to Parliament when the monarch attempted to arrest Hampden and the other five members in January 1642. However, it was Rupert's brother Charles who accompanied the King, because Rupert himself did not arrive in England until August 1642.



Portrait of Prince Rupert by Gerard van Honthorst

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