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BRISTOL AND THE CIVIL WAR

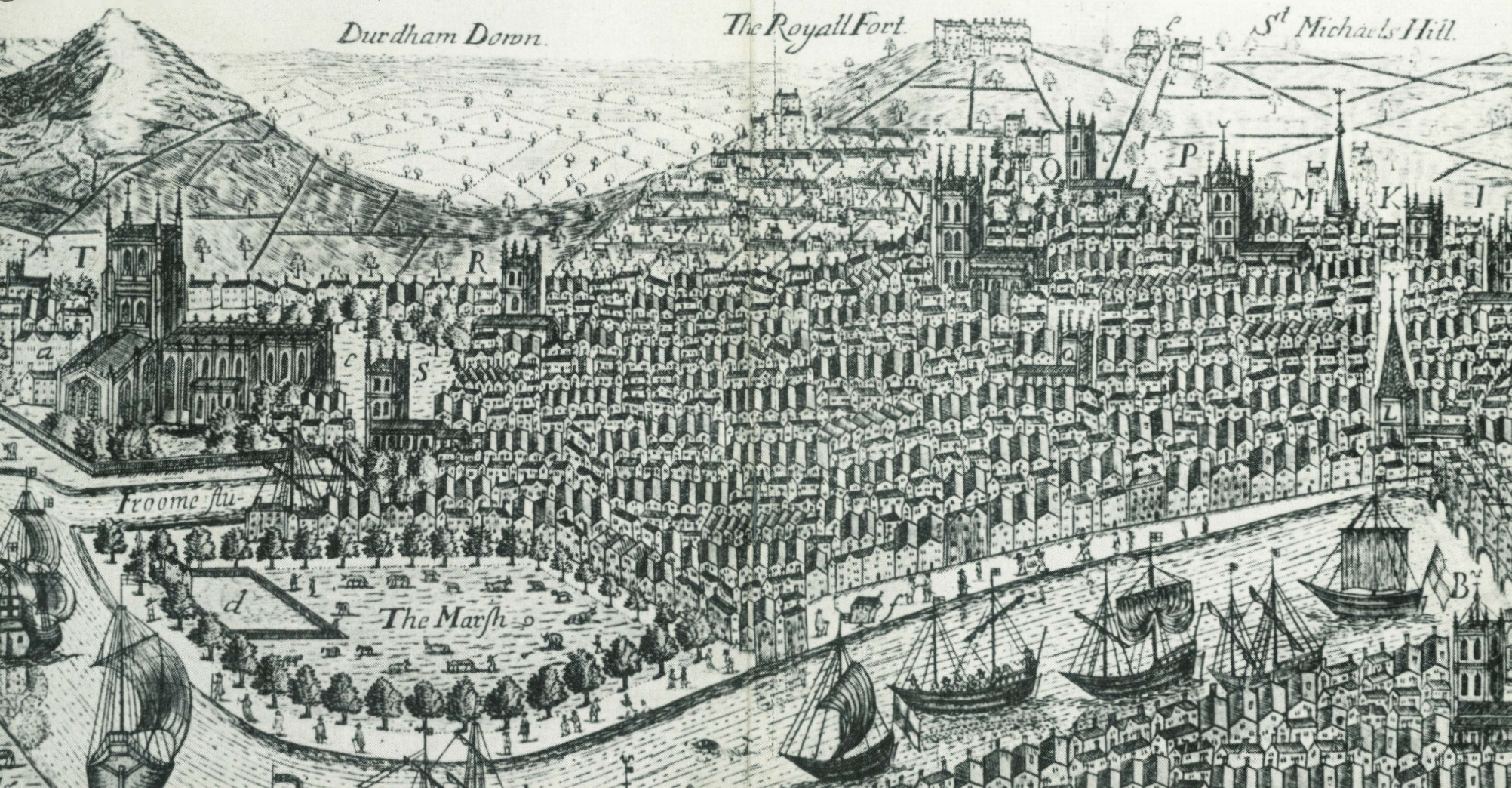
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BRISTOL BRANCH OF THE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

LOCAL HISTORY PAMPHLETS

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Bristol and the Civil War is the fiftieth pamphlet to be published by the Bristol Branch of the Historical Association. The first pamphlet appeared in 1960, and so this year also sees the twenty-first birthday of the series.

Many people, including the authors, have helped to make a success of the series, but special tribute must be paid to the work of Mr Peter Harris who first put forward the idea of publishing the pamphlets and who has acted as Business Manager as well as Assistant General Editor for twenty-one years. It is largely owing to his energy and enthusiasm that the series has survived financially.

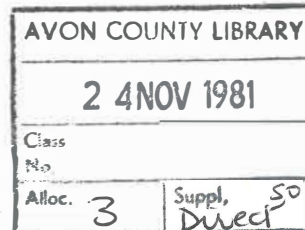
The initial capital of under £100 was raised by donations of £1 each from about forty members and by grants from the Gane Trust and the Bristol Education Committee. The pamphlets have covered many aspects of Bristol's history. A number of them have gone into more than one edition, and eight were published in book form under the title of *Bristol in the Eighteenth Century*.

In order to put the work on a sound financial basis for the future and to raise capital for reprinting some of the earlier pamphlets, the Branch has launched an Appeal under the patronage of the Lord Mayor of Bristol. Readers are asked to contribute generously. Donations should be sent to Mrs E. Venning, Pamphlet Appeal Fund, Bristol Record Office, The Council House, Bristol BS1 5TR. Cheques should be made payable to Historical Association, Bristol Branch, Pamphlet Appeal.

The Branch wishes to acknowledge grants towards the cost of this pamphlet from the Publications Committee of the University of Bristol and from an anonymous donor.

I should like to acknowledge the help I have received from the City Archivist, Miss Mary Williams, and her staff, and from Mr Langley and the staff of the Avon County Reference Library, Bristol. Mr Gordon Kelsey and the staff of the Arts Faculty Photographic Unit have been of great help with the illustrations. I am indebted to my wife for many valuable comments and for making the maps, which Mr Roberts kindly prepared for the printer.

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BRISTOL AND THE CIVIL WAR

In the late summer of 1642 England drifted slowly, unwillingly and incredulously into civil war, a horror which she had not experienced for over one hundred and fifty years. Bulstrode Whitelocke commented at the time: 'It is strange to note how we have insensibly slid into this beginning of a civil war, by one unexpected accident after another . . . and we scarce know how, but from paper combats by declarations, remonstrances, protestations, votes, messages, answers and replies, we are now come to the question of raising forces, and naming a general and officers of the army.'

On 23 October 1642 two armies faced each other at Edgehill in the first major engagement of war. There was a feeling that it could not really be happening in 'this warr without an Enemy', as Sir William Waller was to call it later when he confronted in arms his old friend and neighbour Sir Ralph Hopton.² Rudyard Kipling recaptured something of the feelings of the men who fought at Edgehill when he made the narrator speak

Of war, red war, 'twixt child and sire,
Household and kith and kin
In the heart of a sleepy midland shire
With the harvest scarcely in

and he went on

And the raw astonished ranks stand fast
To slay or to be slain
By the men they knew in the kindly past
That never shall come again.³

1. Bulstrode Whitelocke, *Memorials of the English Affairs*, 4 vols., Oxford, 1853, i.176.
2. Waller's letter is transcribed in F.T.R. Edgar, *Sir Ralph Hopton*, 1968, p.99.
3. *Rudyard Kipling's Verses*, definitive edition, 1948, pp.722-3.

It is, of course, wrong to imagine that every one in England was either a royalist or a parliamentarian, and historians in recent years have laid great stress on the importance of neutralism.⁴ Thomas Barrow, a linendraper in Cheapside, represented the views of many of his contemporaries when he wrote: 'If I might butt stand an newtrall I should then be well; for I should . . . butt follow my owne, and not looke after another's busines. . .'.⁵ Nevertheless, between 1642 and 1646 there were four years of fighting in which Englishmen killed and wounded each other and destroyed property on a large scale. People do not behave in this way unless they have strong motives, and so we must ask briefly what made Englishmen take up arms and how far these motives affected Bristolians.

For a number of politically-conscious people, the question was whether the king could be trusted to accept permanently the constitutional restraints placed upon him in 1641. Some thought that he could not be trusted and that further restraints must be imposed. Others thought that enough had been done and that parliament was now trying to seize power which rightfully belonged to the king. Another issue was religion. Should the Church of England be radically reformed, or even abolished and replaced by something else? Those who thought it should were opposed by religious conservatives, who feared both Presbyterians and Papists and who had no desire to tolerate the sects. Some fought, or thought they fought, for principles, but others fought for personal reasons, out of loyalty to king or parliament or to some nobleman or gentleman to whom they had obligations. In some counties, the civil war was primarily a conflict between rival factions. Many soldiers fought for pay and plunder. Large numbers were conscripted and had no choice. Motives were many and varied, and they changed from time to time in particular individuals. The majority of Englishmen managed to avoid fighting.

Before examining the attitude of Bristolians to the war, it is necessary to say a little about the city itself. It was a flourishing port trading primarily to the Iberian peninsular, France and Ireland. Regional and overseas trades, with all their subsidiary industries and services, were the most important characteristics of the place,

but there was a great variety of other occupations. It had a population of about 15,000 on the eve of the civil war. This was tiny compared with London, which had between a quarter and half a million people, but nevertheless Bristol impressed visitors, even Londoners, who compared it very favourably with the capital. During the war, Prynne wrote of it: 'The Parliament, his Excellency, London, and the whole kingdom, looked upon Bristol as a place of the greatest consequence of any in England, next to London, as the metropolis, key, magazine of the West . . .'.⁶

Bristol was governed by a closed oligarchy of some 43 members, consisting of a mayor, 12 aldermen and a number of common councillors. The merchants were the wealthiest and most influential group in the city and dominated the governing body. They also had their own organisation in the Society of Merchant Venturers, but in many ways the Common Council was simply the Society wearing another hat.⁷ However, the Common Council also included a small number of people from other occupations such as mercers, vintners, haberdashers, brewers and innkeepers. There were few gentlemen living in Bristol, and they played no part in the city's affairs. Some merchants, of course, had land in the neighbouring counties, but they lived and worked in the city. They were not country gentlemen, and they were not involved in county affairs. Moreover, the gentry of Somerset and Gloucestershire had not been allowed to take over the Bristol parliamentary seats, as they had in many other boroughs. The two Bristol M.P.s were normally merchants, although occasionally the City Recorder was allowed to hold one of the seats. Thus, as the country moved towards war, decisions about the role of Bristol were in the hands of some 40 people out of a population of 15,000, and these 40 were not closely involved with the gentry of Somerset and Gloucestershire and would not necessarily follow their lead.

When we try to assess the role of Bristolians, we must bear in mind the unsatisfactory nature of the evidence. As far as the records of the Society of Merchant Venturers are concerned, there might not have been a civil war, for it is not mentioned in them.⁸ The decisions, but not the debates, of the city's Common Council are recorded in the Books of Proceedings⁹, but these minutes are

4. For a very influential pioneer work, see B. S. Manning, 'Neutrals and Neutralism in the English Civil War 1642-1646', Oxford D.Phil., 1957. David Underdown wrote of Somerset: 'The war had been fought between two minorities, struggling in a sea of neutralism and apathy'. *Somerset in the Civil War and Interregnum*, Newton Abbot, 1973, p. 117.
5. *The Oxinden and Peyton Letters, 1642-1670*, edit. D. Gardiner, 1937, p. 41.

6. *A Complete Collection of State Trials*, edit. T. B. Howell, 1817, iv. 229.
7. *Records Relating to the Society of Merchant Venturers of the City of Bristol in the Seventeenth Century*, edit. Patrick McGrath, Bristol Record Society, xvii, pp. xxviii-xxx.
8. The Society did, it is true, get a new Charter from the king. See p. 31.
9. Bristol Record Office: Common Council Proceedings 1627-1642 and Common Council Proceedings 1642-1649.

often uninformative, and it is possible that there was no desire to write down evidence which might be dangerous. When we try to find out from the minutes what happened on 9 December 1642, when a parliamentary force first got into Bristol, we find that there are two relevant minute books. One goes up to 19 October 1642, then jumps to 7 December, and then has 15 double pages which have been left blank. The second book begins on 23 October, runs on to 7 December, for which it has a different entry from the first book, and then jumps to 23 January 1643, when it records the dismissal of a schoolmaster. Thus, as far as the official minutes are concerned, the dramatic events of 9 December did not happen, and during the critical period from 8 December 1642 until 23 January 1643 the Common Council not only took no action but did not even meet.

Much that was written at the time was straightforward propaganda. The often-quoted comment of the Puritan minister, John Corbet of Gloucester, that in Bristol '... the king's cause and party were favoured by the two extreames in that city; the one the wealthy and powerfull men, the other of the basest and lowest sort, but disgusted by the middle rank, the true and best citizens'¹⁰ has frequently been treated by historians as though it were a well-informed, balanced judgement rather than a piece of wishful-thinking meant to give comfort to the supporters of parliament.

A few contemporaries, and some later historians, have made generalisations about the attitude of Bristolians to the civil war which fail to take into account the fact that the number who can be shown to have given positive support to one side or the other is very small indeed. Even for these, we often do not know what their motives really were. John Latimer, who had a great influence on those who have written about Bristol, was very ready to attach the labels 'royalist' and 'parliamentarian' to people, merely because they made loans or gifts to the king or to parliament, even though their motives may have been no more than a desire to avoid trouble or to curry favour with the occupying forces.¹¹ Moreover,

people were not consistent, and their attitude often changed with circumstances. As the evidence to the Committee for Compounding amply demonstrated, men were very anxious to play down the help they had given to the side which eventually lost.¹²

Did Bristolians, or some of them, have any positive attitude to the conflict which broke out in 1642? Why did they go to war? As far as the Common Council, the governing body of the city, is concerned, it can be argued that it did not go to war. It was dragged very reluctantly into a conflict which it did not want and which it had done its best to avoid. It would have preferred to remain non-aligned. At no time in 1642 did the Common Council declare for king or parliament. It merely strengthened its defences and tried to keep both sides out. Although the war had begun some time before the king raised his standard on 24 August 1642, Bristol remained neutral until a parliamentary force somehow got into the city on 9 December without the consent of the Common Council.¹³

That Bristolians showed so little initial commitment is hardly surprising. In 1642 there were no deep political, religious or economic motives to make them anxious to support one side or the other, and there were certainly very strong reasons for keeping out of war. It is true that the city had had a number of grievances in the sixteen-thirties and that it was very vocal about them, but complaints from aggrieved merchants should not always be taken at their face value, and this city, which was supposed to have so many grievances, sent back to the Long Parliament two M.P.s who were certainly not ardent reformers and who were expelled in 1642 as favourers of monopolies.¹⁴ It then replaced them by two more members who were in due course to support the king and one of whom died defending the city against parliament in 1645.¹⁵ The grievances which had troubled the city had mostly been economic, and they had been dealt with before the war began. The great constitutional issues which stirred men like John Pym and William Prynne did not seem to have aroused much enthusiasm in Bristol, and the Bristol M.P.s were more concerned with local issues than great issues of principle.

Religious problems, too, seem to have aroused little interest.

10. John Corbet, 'An Historicall Relation of the Military Government of Gloucester', printed in *Bibliotheca Gloucestrensis*, edit. J. Washbourn, Gloucester, 1823, Part 1, p.14. The judgement seems to be accepted as valid by Brian Manning, *The English People and the English Revolution 1640-1649*, 1976, p.241.

11. John Latimer, *The Annals of Bristol in the Seventeenth Century*, Bristol, 1900, hereafter referred to as Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*. Latimer had a very detailed knowledge of Bristol history based on a study of original sources, but he also had a strong bias in favour of parliament and against the Stuarts.

12. *Infra*, pp.42-3.

13. *Infra*, p.12ff.

14. Humphrey Hooke and Richard Long. For the wine project in which Bristol merchants were involved, see McGrath, *Records Relating to the Society of Merchant Venturers*, Bristol Record Society, xvii, pp.221-5.

15. *Infra*, p.38.

There was hardly any trace of Puritanism in Bristol before 1640, and it was of no importance in the city on the eve of the war.¹⁶ No one in the governing body wanted radical religious change, and the city seemed well content with the established church. A visitor in 1634 remarked that the 18 city churches were all 'fayrely beautify'd, richly adorn'd, and sweetly kept, and in the maior part of them are neat, rich, and melodious Organs, that are constantly play'd on.' He added: 'Their Pulpitts are most curious all which the citizens have spared no cost, nor forwardness to beautify, and adorne . . . for they dayly strive in euery Parish, who shall exceed other in their generous, and religious bounty, most to decke and enrich those sanctify'd Places, and Heauenly Mansions, heere on Earth, to Gods glory, and good example to others.'¹⁷ The visitor may have been too enthusiastic, but it seems clear that Bristolians were taking a good deal of trouble to beautify their churches and were not going in for puritan simplicity. There may have been some dissatisfaction with the Laudian church, for, after the city had fallen to parliament, four aldermen took a petition to the king in January 1643 which refers, among other things, to prelates forcing new doctrines on the Church of England, but this is evidence of religious conservatism and not of religious radicalism.¹⁸ In 1645, a Puritan commented bitterly that the people 'sitt in darkness and the collegiate men still chaunt out the Common Prayer booke to the wonted height and in private pariches they thinke of noe other discipline, here being hardly three sermons in the whole citty, on the Lords-day, and but one upon the last fast, the late holly-dayes being more solemnly observed than the Sabbath.'¹⁹

It seems that neither politics nor religion moved many Bristolians to the point when they were willing to suffer and die for a cause. In so far as there still were economic grievances in 1642, they concerned the monopolies of the great London trading companies, which parliament had not abolished, but there were few who were prepared to risk their lives to destroy the privileges of the Merchant Adventurers, the Levant Company or the East India Company.

16. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, pp.150-1, gives a misleading picture of the strength of separatism.
17. *A Relation of a Short Survey of 26 Counties by a Captain, a Lieutenant and an Ancient*, edit. L.G. Wickham Legg, 1904, p.92.
18. For the Bristol petition and the king's answer, see British Library: *Thomason Tracts*, E 84131.
19. Historical MSS. Commission: *Manuscripts of the Duke of Portland*, i.310.

It is also necessary to remember that the people who governed Bristol were not men who would normally think in terms of carrying swords and fighting. They were merchants and business men, and war, particularly civil war, would be bad for business, as well as meaning high taxation. Some of the merchants, it is true, played at being soldiers in the sixteen-thirties, and we have an interesting account of the Trained Bands from the same visitor who remarked on the churches. He said that in the Marsh the City Captains constantly drilled and exercised and mustered the city forces. The river on three sides 'causeth a sweet and pleasant Eccho of their martiall Musicke, Drums, Fifes, and volleys of Shot'²⁰ He noted that the city had three foot companies 'besides a voluntary Company, of gentile, proper, martiall, disciplin'd men, who haue their Armes lodg'd in a handsome Artillery House, newly built vp in the Castle Yard, where once in a yeere, they inuite, and entertaine, both Earles, and Lords, and a great many Knights and Gentlemen, of ranke, and quality, at their Military Feast; And this yard affoords them, a spacious, and a large place to drill, and exercise in.'²⁰ The visitor may have taken the Bristol Trained Bands more seriously than they deserved, but there was a chance that they would be useful if the governing body decided to defend the city against outsiders. Bristol was protected by its rivers and its walls, it could keep out bands of soldiers in the way that country villages could not, and it would be difficult to take. No one dreamed that the war would last four years, and as long as there was some kind of balance between the military forces in the areas around Bristol, there was at least a chance of staying neutral.

It is not possible to examine in detail here all the actions of the Common Council in the critical months of 1642 after the king had left London and the slow drift towards armed conflict had begun.²¹ The city was busy looking to its stock of arms and taking various measures for its own security, but from May onwards it was also busy with a petition to king and parliament asking them to be reconciled.²² Latimer said that both 'parties' in the Common

20. *A Relation of a Short Survey of 26 Counties etc.*, pp.91, 93-4.
21. There is a great deal of material relating to the purchase of arms and to other military preparations in the Proceedings of Common Council and in the Mayors' Audit Books in the Bristol Record Office. The payments show that the Council was aware it lived in dangerous times, but not that it was preparing to fight for king or parliament.
22. Bristol Record Office: *Common Council Proceedings 1627-1642*, f.119. In July they decided not to send the petitions 'in regard they have bin soe long retarded.' *ibid.* 11 July 1642.

Council were equally represented on the committee for drawing up the petition,²³ but it is quite wrong to talk of 'parties' in Bristol at this time. Latimer was continually surprised to find that people often failed to behave in a way consistent with the labels he had put on them. Thus, when the two Bristol M.P.s were expelled from the House in May 1642, they were replaced in June by the Recorder, Sir John Glanville and Alderman John Taylor, both of whom subsequently adhered to the king. Latimer thought their election contradicted the policy of the Common Council which, he said, had by this time definitely abandoned the royal cause.²⁴ In fact, the Common Council was not committed, it wanted to remain non-aligned, and it was anxious to avoid giving offence to any one.

In June 1642, Parliament asked for a loan for the defence of the king and kingdom and for the support of the army in Ireland. The Council contributed £1,000, and various individuals lent £2,625. Latimer expressed surprise that Robert Yeamans and Thomas Colston who, he says, were 'afterwards famous as royalists', each contributed £50,²⁵ but the loan was not some kind of political test. Most Englishmen wanted to put down the Irish rebellion, and this was not an issue on which would-be neutral Bristol was likely to refuse cooperation with the House of Commons. Equally consistent with this desire to avoid making a stand was the willingness of the city to entertain the Marquis of Hertford when the king sent him to the west to execute the commission of array. On 11 July the Common Council decided to offer him suitable hospitality if he came to stay in Bristol.²⁶ The city could hardly refuse to entertain the king's representative, and as the country was not at war, this was not an obviously hostile act as far as parliament was concerned, although it might not be too pleased about it.

Fortunately from the point of view of Bristol's neutrality, the Marquis decided not to come to the city and eventually set up his headquarters in Wells. Clarendon tells us that those who urged the Marquis to come to Bristol pointed out that it was 'a great, rich, and populous city' and that from it he would be 'easily able to give the law to Somerset and Gloucestershire'. Those who advised him not to come said that it was not clear that he would be well received and that there were 'visibly many disaffected people in it,

and some of them of eminent quality . . .'²⁷ We do not know who gave this advice or whether they were really in touch with Bristol opinion. What was called disaffection may have been merely reluctance to admit troops of any kind. A little later the mayor refused permission to Hertford to send a troop of horse to Bristol, but he argued that this was simply because the king had ordered him not to admit troops.²⁸

The Marquis of Hertford at Wells had great difficulty in getting support, and in early August Alexander Popham and other Somerset gentlemen who were putting into execution the Militia Ordinance assembled at Chewton Mendip a force of about 10,000 men to oppose him.²⁹ This force was alleged to include not only men from Somerset, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and elsewhere, but also 'above 300 lusty stout men, of very good ranke and quality of the City of *Bristoll*, all of them on Horseback, with Swords, Pistolls, or Carbines', as well as two wains loaded with powder, bullet and match, and two more with small field pieces, sent from Bristol contrary to the order of the mayor and sheriffs. The evidence for this alleged contribution from Bristol is a letter of 7 August sent to the House of Lords by the wealthy clothier and committed parliamentarian, John Ashe.³⁰ Ashe was writing to urge the Lords to send the Duke of Bedford to support the parliamentarians in the west, and he was endeavouring to show 'the condition and stout resolution of our good Countrymen, however heretofore ill thought of . . .'. The Lords instructed one of the Bristol M.P.s, John Taylor, to thank the city for its help, but the story seems highly improbable, although it does credit to Ashe as a propagandist. It is difficult to believe that Bristolians, with or without official support, could have mustered 300 horsemen and sent them with ammunition

23. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, p.156.

24. *Ibid.*, pp.156-7.

25. *Ibid.*, p.156.

26. Bristol Record Office: *Common Council Proceedings 1627-1642*, 11 July 1642.

27. Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England*, edit. W.D. Macray, 6 vols., Oxford, 1888, ii.294-5. Hereafter referred to as *Clarendon's History*.

28. British Library: *Thomason Tracts*, E 83/3, pp.1-2; Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, p.157.

29. For developments in Somerset at this time, see David Underdown, *Somerset in the Civil War and Interregnum*, Newton Abbot, 1973, pp.28-38; *Bellum Civile*, edit. Charles E.H. Chadwyck Healey, Somerset Record Society, 1902, pp.2-10; *Clarendon's History*, ii.290-1; F.T. Edgar, *Sir Ralph Hopton*, Oxford, 1968, pp.34-40.

30. *Journal of the House of Lords*, v.278-9; *A perfect relation of all the passages and proceedings of the Marquesse Hartford, the Lord Paulet, and the rest of the Cavalleers that were with them in Wels . . . as also, what helpe was sent from Bristoll to theyr ayd*, etc. 12 August 1642, p.5. (Avon County Reference Library, Bristol).

and arms to Chewton. There is no evidence relating to this in the city's records, and such commitment is highly unlikely in view of the city's cautious neutralism.³¹

In the face of the strong parliamentary forces on Mendip, the Marquis of Hertford had to withdraw, and Somerset passed into the control of men favourable to parliament. It was going to be very difficult for Bristol to maintain its neutrality, but during the next four months it made determined efforts to do so.

In August 1642 the city obeyed an order from parliament that Denzil Holles should be admitted to review the Trained Bands.³² Latimer claimed that this was 'a fact which excludes all doubt as to the principal animating the majority both of the Council and of the civic militia,'³³ but he is wrong. The city had not declared for parliament and had no desire to do so.

In September, Richard Aldworth was chosen mayor. He was later to show sympathy for parliament, but his election does not mean that the Council supported parliament, any more than the choice of Alexander James as Master of the Society of Merchant Venturers in November 1642 showed that the Society was committed to the royal cause which James later supported.

On 19 October 1642 Bristol was asked to admit 2,000 troops who were on their way to Ireland. The cool attitude of the city to parliament is shown in its reply that it would admit as many troops at a time as might be consistent with its safety, but all must be disarmed except the officers.³⁴ A request for a loan conveyed through the two M.P.s was at first rejected, and although under pressure the Corporation and certain individuals eventually lent £2,600, it seems clear that Bristolians were not eagerly seeking to place their fortunes, let alone their lives, at the disposal of parliament.³⁵

A policy of non-alignment was, however, becoming increasingly difficult to maintain. On 23 October the Council considered a letter from the Association of Somerset, Gloucestershire and

Wiltshire desiring a mutual association with Bristol for the defence of the king and kingdom against all forces sent without the consent of parliament. The Council decided to agree to the association and set up a committee of four to confer about it. Nothing was done. Bristol was in no hurry to declare for parliament.³⁶

The real feelings of the city governors were probably better expressed in a motion passed in the Common Council on 5 November which stated that 'This day, the Mayor, Alderman, Sheriffs and Common Council have declared themselves to be in love and amity one with another and do desire a friendly association together in all mutual accommodation.' They proceeded to draw up for signature a petition appealing to the king and parliament to be reconciled.³⁷

On 24 November the Council ordered earthworks to be made at all needful places round the city for its necessary defence.³⁸ It might well be asked against whom they intended to defend it. The only troops in the area were the parliamentary troops of Somerset and Gloucestershire.

Alexander Popham now began to increase the pressure on Bristol to commit itself. He wrote to Captain Harrington, one of the captains in the Bristol Trained Bands, telling him to be ready to join forces with him when he came to Bristol. Harrington evidently ignored Popham's request that this should be kept secret, for the Mayor and Aldermen wrote thanking Popham but saying they did not need his friendly assistance at present. Popham, who had come as far as Pensford, denied that he intended to march on Bristol, but gave a warning that the city's lack of enthusiasm was a danger to the surrounding areas.³⁹

At the end of November, when the royalists were alleged to be threatening, the House of Commons ordered Bristol to admit into the city a force of foot and horse.⁴⁰ Before this was known, Bristol representatives met Popham and other gentlemen at Bath on 28 November, but would not commit themselves.⁴¹ They were still playing for time on 2 December when they wrote to Popham saying they were distracted by the movement of troops into

31. It is true that both Clarendon and Hopton say that Horner and Popham had help from Bristol, but they may simply have accepted what was being spread by the other side. Neither mentions 300 lusty horsemen.

32. Bristol Record Office: *Mayors' Audits 1640-1644*, fo.175.

33. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, p.159.

34. Bristol Record Office: *Common Council Proceedings 1627-1642*, 19 October 1642. It is curious that Latimer does not mention that the city insisted that the soldiers should come in without their arms.

35. *Ibid.*, 19 October 1642. A committee was set up to consult about the reasons to be given to parliament for not lending; Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, pp.159-60.

36. Bristol Record Office: *Common Council Proceedings 1642-1649*, 23 October 1642.

37. *Ibid.*, 5 November 1642.

38. *Ibid.*, 24 November 1642; *Mayors Audits 1640-1644*, f.237.

39. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, pp.162-3.

40. *Journals of the House of Commons*, ii.869, 29 November 1642.

41. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, p.163.

Bedminster and Westbury with intent to advance on Bristol. They wanted to know what all this meant.⁴²

According to one account, the city government, understanding that Colonel Essex was about to march on Bristol, sent three aldermen to him to ask him not to do so, but he 'finding the malignity of their Message, detained their persons, and set forward his march thither . . .'.⁴³ Colonel Essex was evidently not sympathetic, but the mayor and aldermen hoped for more considerate treatment from Popham and the Somerset militia. On 7 December they wrote again to Popham saying they had sent messengers to say what force of Trained Bands they were prepared to entertain, but the messengers had been detained by Colonel Essex who was at Thornbury with the intention of entering Bristol next day. They asked Popham to come to the city early next morning before Colonel Essex arrived 'to avoid effusion of Blood, which otherwise will undoubtedly happen.'⁴⁴ It looks at this stage as if the city government, with troops advancing from Gloucestershire and Somerset, had decided to come to terms and was trying to arrange a planned admission of troops to avoid bloodshed. The Council evidently feared there might be some resistance unless it allowed troops to enter. The government of Bristol did not declare for parliament, it merely recognised the reality of the situation. It had no heart for a fight. Yet even at this date it was giving orders to the committee for the defence of the city to treat with the people who owned houses against the castle with a view to demolishing them.⁴⁵ It seems as though it was trying to keep its options open to the last.

We have no really satisfactory account of how parliamentary troops got into Bristol. If the city government made some sort of agreement with Essex or Popham, we have no record of it. According to the eighteenth-century historian of Bristol, William Barrett, Colonel Essex's troops approached the city on 5 December. The citizens were preparing to defend it, and the Common Council was discussing how it might be best held for the king, when the mayor's wife and many more women came to the Tolzey

and persuaded the Council to agree to open the gates, to the great grief of the commons who were prepared to fight.⁴⁶ According to Samuel Seyer, Colonel Essex appeared before the city on 2 December, but was resisted for two days by the loyal citizens. The Common Council made a show of supporting the king, but in fact wished to surrender, and when a party of 100 women led by the mayor's wife came to the Tolzey 'in a tumultuous manner', the magistrates ordered the gates to be opened. There was, however, fighting at the Frome Gate, and while this was going on, Newgate was 'opened by the contrivance of a woman (as was said) . . .', and Colonel Essex entered with two regiments of foot. Seyer thought the smallness of Essex's force showed that 'they depended more on the favour of some within, than on themselves.'

There are accounts of the surrender in various pamphlets, but it is difficult to know how reliable they are, and they contain a good deal of propaganda. The most detailed account we have is in the form of a communication sent by Mr. John Ball in Bristol to James Nicolls in London. It is dated 23 December 1642, and it was printed and sold in London.⁴⁸ The writer was not a member of the Common Council and was presumably relying on hearsay for much of what he said. Ball deals at great length with the circumstances leading up to the entry of the troops, and his account is worth summarising.

Ball alleged that there were 'many malignants of the great ones amongst us as Colston, Yoemans, and their brethren' and also among some of the clergy, but he thought 'the major part of this city and best part stands firm for the Parliament.' He gave an account of a Council meeting of which we have no record at which the Council discussed a letter from the king telling it not to admit parliamentary troops, a letter from parliament requiring it to do so, and a letter from the Marquis of Hertford in Wales offering to

42. *Ibid.*, p.163.

43. Avon County Reference Library, Bristol: *A Letter from Exceter . . . Also, the true Copy of a Letter sent from Bristoll, declaring the manner and means how that city was secured from the Cavaliers*, B 10568, p.7.

44. Bristol Record Office: *Common Council Proceedings 1642-1649*, 7 December 1642.

45. Bristol Record Office: *Common Council Proceedings 1627-1642*, 7 December 1642.

46. William Barrett, *The History and Antiquities of the City of Bristol*, Bristol, 1789, p.226.

47. Samuel Seyer, *Memoirs Historical and Topographical of Bristol*, Bristol, 1823, ii.311.

48. British Library: Thomason Tracts, E 83/3, *A Declaration from the City of Bristoll: By the Maior, Aldermen, Sheriffes, and others of the City: Declaring their Resolution and fidelity to the Parliament and their designs: Also a Petition from M. Maioresse, M. Holworthy and 200 of the best Citizens wives in Bristoll, to the Maior and Common Councell of the City, for admitting the Parliaments Forces into their City, and many other things worthy of observation. Sent from M. John Ball in Bristoll, to M. James Nicolls, a Merchant in Fanchurch-street, London. Printed for Joseph Matthews and John Nicolls, and are to be sold in the old-baily, Decemb. 23 1642.*

send 1,500 men. Then Colonel Popham and Sir John Seymour came to Bristol, and 'there was much agitation of the question, some being for admitting forces, some against it.' Sheriff Jackson, Alderman Locke and Mr. James went to tell the Gloucestershire men that if they came with their forces, then 'upon their perill be it.' The Gloucestershire men were so incensed 'that they clapt them up, and would not set them at liberty, untill they had ingaged their lives for the admission of a Garrison in Bristoll.' Popham and Seymour came a second time to Bristol to ask for an answer to parliament's request, and then 'A very great combustion there arose.' Some said it would be 'an invitation of the Kings Army suddenly,' others argued that it would be best to join with the neighbouring counties against the Cavaliers. The writer then goes on: 'there is news brought that unlesse a strength were admitted into the City, the Country would starve the City'. Then 'The well affected women (some of the chieftest) as M.Maioriesse, M.Holworth and others, to the numbef of 200' came with a petition saying that if the parliamentary forces were opposed, 'the effusion of bloud would be great', and food supplies from Gloucestershire and Somerset would be cut off. To prevent this and 'the mischiefs that might arise by a violent entring the town', they asked that 'parliaments forces might in a faire and peacable manner be admitted.'

According to Ball's account, the Council agreed to act on the women's petition, but when the parliamentary forces reached Bristol the next day, the malignants tried to raise a mutiny and insurrection in the town. They hired some seamen and placed ordnance at the Frome Gate. When the mayor himself came to the gate and turned the ordnance away from it, they resisted him and turned it back again. They were however, 'prevented of their purpose', because the horse and foot entered at Newgate and 'Pitty-gate'. When they heard this, they ceased to resist.

Another pamphlet has an interesting variation on the theme of the three aldermen who went to meet Colonel Essex and the Gloucestershire men. Essex was so angry that he detained them and 'set forward his march thither, where he found strong resistance; but setting the aldermen in the front of the battell, by that means abated their rage, and with the assistance of the good party in the City, they got entrance.'⁴⁹

These accounts were pieces of propaganda written for a London audience, and we cannot be sure what went on when the

Gloucestershire men reached the city gates, but an interesting piece of evidence has recently come to light. This is a sworn statement made by Mary Stephens, wife of William Stephens, soapmaker.⁵⁰ She said that on Friday 9 December, the day the troops came in, Francis Belcher, soapmaker, came to the door of her house and 'demanded the bolt of the Chaine that goeth athwart the streete nere Froome Gate.' She asked him whether he would not obey the mayor and sheriffs who had been there a little earlier. He replied: 'litel care wee fore the Maior and Sherriffes. There are wiser than they'. He went on: ' . . if a daie should come as we hope will, we will remember you.' She continued: 'the said Belcher being verie earnest and much busying himselfe to kepe fast the said gate, the said examinants husband wishing him to give over and let open the gate, and Mr Butcher then coming by, the said Belcher spoke to the said Mr Butcher and said la saith he that Iacanapes (meaning the said William Stephens) would have us open the gate.' This evidence is difficult to interpret, but it seems that on 9 December there was talk of opening the Frome Gate and that the mayor and sheriffs were in some way concerned. Francis Belcher was trying to stop them. Belcher was later involved in the plot to let Rupert into the city.⁵¹ Mr Butcher may possibly be the George Butcher or Bowcher who was hanged for his part in the plot. He had a house in Christmas Street near the Frome Gate, and after the plot had failed, he confessed that he had provided chains and locks to bar the passage at St. John's Gate while the royalists were being admitted.⁵²

There is another deposition referring to events about this time.⁵³ On 10 December, the day after the troops had come in, Richard Tyler, baker, stated that on the 9 December in the afternoon he was standing in Wine Street where the parliamentary force of horse was standing when William Knight, a tailor, with 'either a small piece or carbine' on his shoulder asked one of the horsemen if all the foot soldiers had come in. The horseman said he did not know, and Knight said: 'Well now, if ye doe not plunder soundly, I would you were hanged, and we will show you the places.' The

50. Bristol Record Office: *Sessions 1634-1647*, 04446, 17 December 1642.

51. See List of conspirators printed in *The Copy of a Letter sent from Bristoll*, British Library, *Thomason Tracts* E 93/3, p.6.

52. *The Severall Examinations and Confessions of the Treacherous Conspirators against the Cittie of Bristoll*, British Library, *Thomason Tracts* E 104(4).

53. Bristol Record Office: *Sessions 1634-1647*, 04446, 10 December 1642.

49. *A letter from Exceter* etc. See footnote 43.

horseman replied that he should forbear of that then and that they would talk of it soon.⁵⁴

On 9 December, then, Bristol was occupied by troops supporting Parliament. Ten days later the Earl of Stamford informed the House of Lords by letter from Bristol that he had heard while he was on his way to the city that 'some commotion' had occurred after the entry of the troops, but that all was now in order. He said: 'I find the city infinitely well affected towards the good cause.'⁵⁵ In view of what was to happen in March 1643 he was clearly too optimistic, but it is interesting that no one was removed from the Common Council by the occupying forces.⁵⁶

Occupation by a garrison inevitably meant billeting of troops on civilians and large contributions in taxes and loans for maintaining the occupying forces and strengthening the defences of the city. Moreover, Bristolians cannot have found it pleasant to have to endure the presence of soldiers over whom they had no control.⁵⁷ Within a month of the occupation, four aldermen took to the king a petition asking him to be reconciled with parliament.⁵⁸ The petition stressed the economic consequences of the war: 'Our ships lie now rotting in the Harbor without any Mariners freight or trade unto forraigne partes by reason of our home-bred distraction'. The king returned a gracious answer, but the war went on.

In the early stages of the occupation, the troops were under the command of the drunken and unreliable Colonel Essex who was alleged to be much distrusted by 'the best affected of the City' and intimate with those suspected to be malignants.⁵⁹ In February, Colonel Nathaniel Fiennes was sent to Bristol to investigate. He arrested Colonel Essex and took over as military governor, but there was no decrease in the demands for money.

54. See *Clarendon's History*, iii.112 for an account of how some of Fiennes' men went over to the royalists after the fall of Bristol in 1643 and led their new friends to plunder the houses of alleged supporters of parliament.

55. *Journal of the Houses of Lords*, v.511, 22 December 1642. He gives Colonel Essex the credit for restoring order.

56. See pp.30-1, 41-2

57. A small illustration of the trouble from the soldiers is given in the *Mayors' Audits* 04026(ii)f.231: payde 2s 6d for a new Chamber pott for the Tolze, the other being stolen by the Souldiers.

58. British Library: *Thomason Tracts*, E 84/31. *The Humble petition of the Citie of Bristoll for an Accommodation of Peace between His Majestie and the Honourable the High Court of Parliament etc.* Oxford, 1642.

59. *A Full Declaration of All Particulars Concerning The March of the Forces under Collonel Fiennes to Bristol*, April 1643, British Library, *Thomason Tracts* E 97/6, p.2.

By March 1643 there was enough discontent in Bristol to lead to a formidable plot in which a hundred or more Bristolians were prepared to risk their lives to help Prince Rupert take the city.⁶⁰ It is impossible to say how far this was a reaction against the occupying forces and how far it was genuine royalist commitment. There must also have been considerable poverty and unemployment, and some may have come in for payment or in the hope of plunder. The chief leaders were Robert Yeamans and George Bowcher or Butcher, who were both Merchant Venturers. They had the support of some other merchants, including John Taylor, Thomas Colston, Edmund Arundel, Edward Caple, John Butcher John Heyman, Rowland Searchfield and William Yeamans. Other involved included 2 ropemakers, 2 hauliers, 2 Oxford scholars, a soapboiler, a vintner, a goldsmith, a doctor, a plumber, a tiler, a carpenter, a cooper, a hatter and a grasier.⁶¹ It was alleged that the leaders had associates to the number of 2,000 in and around Bristol, and that they hired the services of sailors, butchers, halliers and the like. There may have been exaggeration in all this by those who wanted to show how dangerous the plotters were and how much they deserved death, but it is clear that a considerable number of Bristolians were involved. This is one of the rare occasions in the war when they showed commitment in any numbers.

Yeamans had received some kind of commission from the king to raise troops in Bristol before it had fallen to parliament. He now belatedly acted on this and enlisted support in the occupied city.⁶² There seemed a good chance of success since some of the officers of the garrison were not completely loyal to parliament. Fiennes explicitly stated that it was 'a wicked conspiracy, plotted between divers inhabitants . . . and some of the officers of Col. Essex his regiment . . .'.⁶³ Contact was made with the king, and the plan was

60. There is a considerable pamphlet literature on the subject to be found in the *Thomason Tracts* in the British Library and in the excellent collection in Avon County Reference Library, Bristol. Seyer printed a number of the documents, including statements of the plotters, in his *Memoirs Historical and Topographical of Bristol*, Bristol, 1823, ii.341-400.

61. From various sources, Seyer compiled a list of over 100 conspirators. He was able to give their occupations in 32 cases. Seyer, *op.cit.* ii.359-62.

62. See his confession, printed in Seyer, *op.cit.* ii.389.

63. *A Complete Collection of State Trials*, edit. T.B. Howell, 1817, iv.195: ' . . . a wicked conspiracy, plotted between divers inhabitants . . . and some of the officers of Col. Essex his regiment . . .'. See also British Library, *Thomason Tracts*, E 93/10, *An Extraordinary Deliverance* etc. which says that Colonel Essex's regiment was 'something distempered' by his dismissal.

for Prince Rupert to come towards Bristol on the night of 7 March and to have his advance party as far forward as the gallows on St. Michael's Hill. One group of conspirators was to assemble at Yeaman's house in Wine Street, another at Bowcher's house in Christmas Street, and there were two other assembly points. The Frome Gate was to be seized with the help of Captain Hilsdon and disloyal troops from the Guardhouse, and the Guardhouse itself was to be surrendered to Yeamans' party by another traitor, Lieutenant Moore. When the Frome Gate had been seized, the church bells would give the signal to the conspirators outside and to Rupert's troops, and they would move in and take the city. All royalists were to wear white tape, and the watchword was 'Charles'.

On the night of 7 March 1643, the conspirators assembled at their rendez-vous points, and Rupert's troops came near the city, but the conspiracy was betrayed, possibly by 'some tattling-women', possibly by the parliamentary officers who were alleged to be involved, possibly by indiscretion on the part of some of the conspirators.⁶⁴ Fiennes moved quickly, and before morning some hundred people had been arrested. There was no serious resistance. The conspirators had been caught unawares and had no contingency plans.

Four of the conspirators were put on trial before a Council of War, Robert Yeamans, George Bowcher, Edward Dacres and William Yeamans. They were found guilty and were condemned to death. The royalists threatened reprisals if they were executed, and the king wrote to the mayor and aldermen ordering them to raise the city in order to rescue the condemned men, but Yeamans and Bowcher were hanged in Wine Street. They died bravely.⁶⁵ They left between them 16 children, and another was born posthumously to Yeamans' widow. Mrs Dorothy Hazzard, whom we shall meet later, was alleged to have said: 'it is a pity but that their childrens' brains should be dashed out against the stones, that no

more of their race might remain on the face of the earth . . .'⁶⁶

There are some puzzling features about the plot and its aftermath. If four officers of the garrison were involved, it is surprising that none of them was court-martialled. It is possible that they deceived Yeamans and never intended to help him, but on the other hand Fiennes explicitly said that some officers were involved. There is no explanation of why Dacres and William Yeamans were selected for trial, or of why they were spared. Since so many people were involved, one would have expected more to be put on trial. It is possible that Fiennes preferred to take money from the plotters, although he later complained that most of them were poor and that he did not get much from them.⁶⁷ It may be that the royalist threats made some impact and Fiennes may have thought that a large number of executions would be counter-productive. According to Clarendon, many fled from the city, and the affair 'exceedingly enraged a great part of the city, which longed to be freed from the yoke of servitude they were under.'⁶⁸

The attempt at self-determination thus failed, and the future of Bristol now depended on what happened elsewhere. On 13 July 1643 Sir William Waller was caught between two royalist forces at Roundway Down, and his army was destroyed as a fighting force. There was no longer an effective parliamentary army in the west, and Bristol and Gloucester were obvious targets for the royalists. On 18 July Prince Rupert rode out from Oxford, and on 23 July he took up his quarters in the College of Westbury-on-Trym. Meanwhile, the Western or Cornish Army, nominally under the Marquis of Hertford but in fact led by Sir Ralph Hopton and Prince Maurice, moved up from the south, and Bristol was surrounded.

A good deal had been done to put the city in a state of defence. Apart from the rivers Avon and Frome, the city walls and the castle, there was a new line of defences which the city had begun to construct at the end of November 1642 and which had been continued under Colonel Essex and Colonel Fiennes. This consisted of earthworks and ditches and a number of forts and strong points

64. Seyer, *op.cit.* ii.389; *Military Memoirs of Colonel Birch*, edit. T.W. Webb, Camden Society, 1873, p.2.

65. The documents relating to the attempt to save them are in Seyer, *op.cit.* ii.377-80. The best known of the royalist pamphlets is *Two state martyrs; or, the murther of R.Y. and G.B., citizens of Bristoll, committed on them by Nathaniel Fiennes*. Typical of the pamphlets on the other side is *An Extraordinary deliverance from a Cruell Plot and bloody Massacre, contrived by the Malignants in Bristoll . . . related in a letter from Colonel Fines . . . and three letters more*, Thomason Tracts, E 93/10.

66. *Records of a Church of Christ in Bristol 1640-1687*, edit. Roger Hayden, Bristol Record Society, xxvii, p.293.

67. Avon County Reference Library, Bristol: *A Relation Made in the House of Commons, by N.F. etc.*, August 5 1643 (ref: 10576, p.25). He said that since the stop of trade and the withdrawal of their estates from Bristol by many malignants, Bristol was not nearly as rich as some conceived, and he had not made £3,000 out of the plotters, 'there being never a rich man among them.'

68. *Clarendon's History*, iii.103.

extending for some four miles. On the north and west, the defences followed the line of the Brandon Hill to Kingsdown escarpment, but the rest of the line was on low ground in the valleys of the Frome and the Avon (see sketch, pp.26-7). The Dutch engineer, Sir Bernard de Gomme, who came to England with Prince Rupert and who was present at the storming of Bristol, wrote a long description of the line and works,⁶⁹ and some of the points in his account may be briefly noted. On the southern skirt of Brandon Hill was the Water Fort (more or less at the junction of the present Hotwells Road and Jacobs Well Road). Then the line ran up to Brandon Hill Fort, which was eighteen feet square and eighteen feet high. Here the moat was shallow and narrow because of the rockiness of the ground. The line then ran downhill to a barn and spur where the royalists eventually broke through, known later as Washington's Breach (near Bristol City Museum). From here the line and ditch went up the hill to the Windmill Fort (which was later enlarged under the royalists and called the Royal Fort). It ran on to a battery on St. Michael's Hill, near Alderman Jones's house, then to a redoubt on Kingsdown, and then on to Prior's Hill Fort. From here it ran down hill to a work at Stoke's Croft, and round to Lawford's Gate and the Avon. According to de Gomme, the curtain wall and ditch were on average about 4½ feet high and 6 feet at the highest, and about 3 feet thick at the top. The ditch was on average 6 feet broad and 5 feet deep, but was as much as 9 feet deep around the forts.

The long line of outer defences was on the face of it not easy to defend with a comparatively small force, and Fiennes was thought to have only 300 horse and 1,500 foot, while estimates put Rupert's total forces at between 14,000 and 20,000. In fact, the royalists were to find the defences much more formidable than they expected.

What was the attitude of those inside Bristol? There was certainly some sympathy for the royalists, and those in Rupert's army who argued for a siege rather than a storm thought that, given time, this sympathy would show itself openly.⁷⁰ As we shall see, two merchants did in fact arrange for 8 ships to be handed over to

Rupert.⁷² The civilian population cannot, however, have felt much enthusiasm about either a siege or a storm, and the status quo must have appeared less unsatisfactory than the prospect of the violent capture of the city by Rupert's men. Some of those who later gave evidence against Colonel Fiennes maintained that he was getting a lot of help from the citizens, and it seems that he had armed some of them with weapons he had taken from the Trained Bands.⁷² Sergeant Major Wood said that there were a considerable number of volunteers, 'for I had, as I believe, at that part of the Line that was in my charge, no lesse than one hundred Citizens that defended the work voluntarily'.⁷³ Mary Smith deposed that 'divers of the City . . . went out to the Works and fought Valiantly to her knowledge, she being oft among them to carry provisions'.⁷⁴ Moreover, there was the famous incident of the Frome Gate.⁷⁵ We must remember, however, that the horrors of a storm may have encouraged a number of people to try to keep the royalists out, and that such action did not necessarily mean commitment to parliament. Moreover, most of the evidence on this point comes from people who were trying to show that Fiennes should not have surrendered and that he was getting plenty of help from the inhabitants. Many soldiers died in the storming of Bristol in 1643, but there is no record of any civilian being killed or wounded.

On Sunday 23 July, the two besieging armies moved into position.⁷⁶ Between 2 and 3 in the afternoon Prince Rupert with a large escort, including Colonel Washington's dragoons, came to Clifton Church 'to take a view of their forts and line . . .' and to see where to put his batteries. De Gomme related how while he was in the churchyard, 'the enemies forts made two or three canon shot at us, but hurt nobody'. Colonel Washington was left in Clifton with a strong force. He repulsed an enemy skirmishing party and blazed

71. *Infra*, p.22.

72. British Library: *Thomason Tracts*, E 64/12, p.6: *A Relation Made in the House of Commons by Col. Nathaniel Fiennes, Concerning the Surrender of the City and Castle of Bristol*, August 5 1643. See also *Thomason Tracts*, 97/6, p.3, for a statement that Col. Essex refused to let the Bridge-men, that is the Roundheads, have their arms back for the defence of the city. Some of the wealthiest citizens had houses on the Bridge.

73. Avon County Reference Library, Bristol: *A True and full Relation of the prosecution . . . of N.F. late colonel and governor of the city and castle of Bristol* by William Prynne and Clement Walker, part ii, Catalogue of Witnesses, p.10.

74. *Ibid.*, p.33. William Powell deposed optimistically that there could have been raised in Bristol at least six or eight thousand men fit for service.

75. *Infra*, pp.29-30.

76. The account that follows is based on De Gomme unless otherwise stated.

69. Printed as 'The Siege and Capture of Bristol by the Royalist Forces in 1643,' edit. Sir Charles Firth and J.H. Leslie, *Journal of the Society of Army Historical Research*, iv.no.15, 1925. This is referred to hereafter as *De Gomme*. His account is also printed with modern spelling in Eliot Warburton *Memoirs of Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, 3 vols., 1849, ii. 236-264.

70. *Clarendon's History*, iii.108-9; 'Colonel Slingsby's Relation' printed in Somerset Record Society, xviii, 1902, p.92.

away at Brandon Hill Fort and the Water Fort, which fired back throughout the night.⁷⁷

On Monday 24 July, the whole of the Oxford army 'with a very Large front', as De Gomme puts it, 'marched to the edge of the downe that the forts might see them', and the Western Army likewise demonstrated its strength on the southern side of the city. Then, at 11 o'clock, Prince Rupert sent a trumpeter to summon Bristol to surrender. Colonel Fiennes, as was proper in a man of honour, replied that he could not relinquish his trust 'till he were brought to more extremitie.' The royalists then set up their batteries, and both sides blazed away at each other. De Gomme said that the guns firing at Brandon Hill Fort were meant 'onely to awe and keep them in, so that they did ours the lesse mischiefe. Onelye (as we heard) one of theyr Canoniers vapping in his shirt on topp of the fort was kill'd there for his foole hardynesse.' We do not know the name of this unknown soldier who seems to have been the first casualty.

This Monday, also, two Bristol merchants, Mr Fitzherbert⁷⁸ and Mr William Bevan⁷⁹ arranged for the handing over to the royalists of eight ships anchored in Kingroad. Clarendon says that the ships were 'not only laden with things of great value, as plate, money, and the best of all sorts of commodities, which those who suspected the worst had sent aboard, but also with persons of quality, who, being unwilling to run the hazard of a siege, thought that way to have secured themselves, and to have escaped to London; who were all taken prisoner.'⁸⁰

When darkness fell on Monday, the guns stopped firing, but at midnight two canon were fired by the royalists, and the defenders blazed off with shot and musket, expecting an attack. De Gomme remarked: 'Twas a bewtyfull peece of danger, to see so many fires incessentlye in the darck . . for a whole hower together . . And in these military Maskerado's was this Munday night passed.'

On Tuesday 25 July, Prince Rupert went over the river to the Western Army and held a Council of War about whether to proceed by way of storm or by way of approach (that is to say, by

gradually pushing the lines and works nearer to the defences and in the end mining or making a breach). Rupert's officers were for storming, but the officers of the Western Army favoured the approach method, since they thought the place would be difficult to storm, and if they proceeded slowly, the royalist fifth column in Bristol might be better able to influence the defending garrison.⁸¹ In the end, Rupert's officers prevailed. It could be argued, in view of the heavy casualties and the fact that the storm very nearly failed, that this was the wrong decision.

The attack was to begin at dawn on Wednesday 26 July. De Gomme tell us that 'The word for the Soldyers was to be Oxford: & the signe for the two Armyes to know one another, to be green Colours, eyther boughs, or suchlike: & that euery officer & Soldjer, to be without a band or hankerchief about his neck.' When the infantry had broken through the lines, they were to level the defences and fill up the ditches to let in the cavalry. The commanders-in-chief were to agree among themselves in what manner Redcliffe Church should be possessed, and if possessed, how maintained, and they were to appoint officers for that purpose. The signal for the attack was to be the firing of two demicanon from Lord Grandison's post near Prior's Hill Fort. Firing was to be kept up all night before the attach 'to interteyne the Enemy with Alarms.'

On 26 July, the Western Army, contrary to orders, began the attack before dawn, at about three in the morning, 'out of a military ambition (I suppose) to winne the worckes first . . ', according to de Gomme.⁸² When Rupert realised from the noise that the Western Army had begun the attack, he ordered the signal shots to be fired, and the attack began from his side too. This premature attack was unfortunate, since all the preparations in the way of ladders and other materials had not been completed.

There were three separate divisions or tertia attacking from the north-west. Lord Grandison's division was directed against the defences in Stoke's Croft and Prior's Hill Fort. Colonel Bellasis attacked first to one side and then to the other of the Windmill Hill Fort. Colonel Wentworth's troops attacked the line between Brandon Hill Fort and Windmill Hill Fort. The attacks went on more or less simultaneously.

77. *De Comme*, p.183.

78. William Fitzherbert was a member of the Common Council 1632-1645 and he was removed by parliament. He was sheriff 1632-3 and Treasurer of the Merchant Venturers 1638-9.

79. One of the captains in the Trained Bands. Sheriff 1644-5 and Warden of the Merchant Venturers 1644-5. Removed from the Council in 1645 and had to compound as a delinquent.

80. *Clarendon's History*, iii.108.

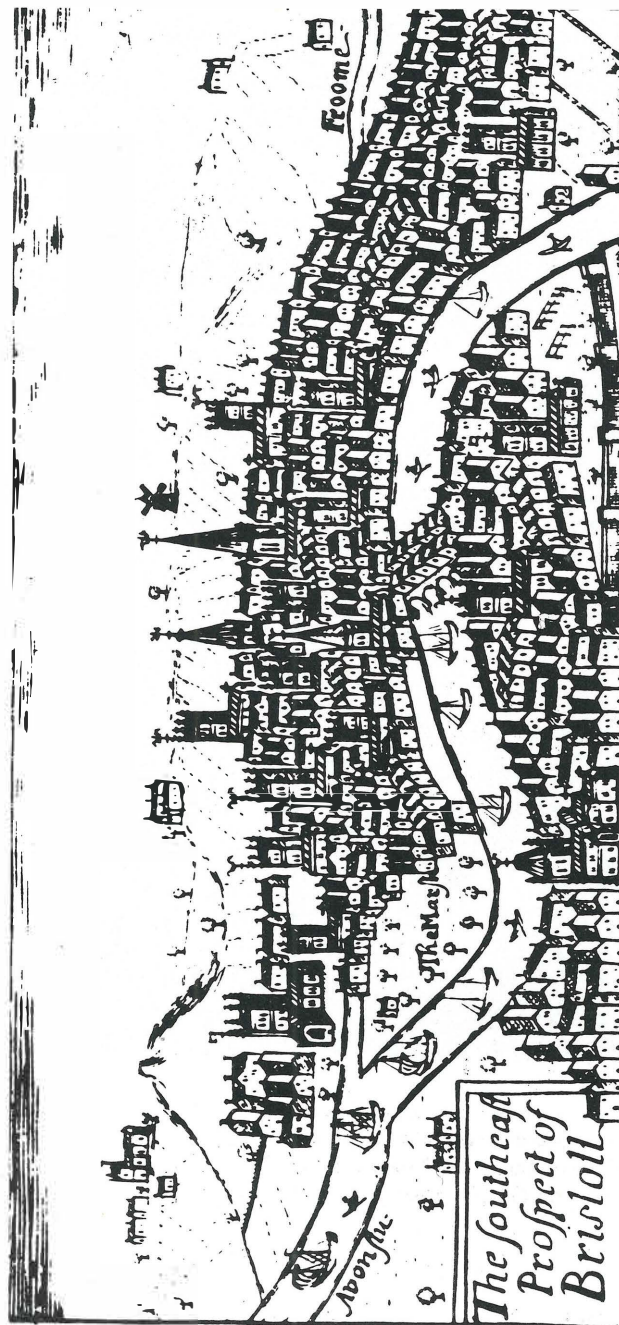
81. For accounts of the discussion, see *Clarendon's History*, iii.108-9; De Gomme, p.188; *Bellum Civile*, Somerset Record Society, xviii.92.

82. This suggests that they were enthusiastic, but Clarendon indicates that the Cornishmen were dissatisfied with the particularly difficult task assigned to them.

Grandison's men first attacked the Stoke's Croft fortifications, threw grenades into the works and exploded a petard on the entrance. It did not make a big enough hole, and the line held. After an hour and a half's fighting, Grandison shifted the attack to Prior's Hill Fort. His men got into the ditch around it, but the scaling ladders had not come up, because, says de Gomme, the attack had begun too soon. Colonel Lunsford found a ladder lying about and climbed up to the pallsadoes at the top, but he could not get over and had to come down again. The men retreated, but Grandison led them on again and was shot in the leg. The wound was eventually to prove fatal. Colonel Owen, to whom he handed over, was shot in the face, and the soldiers then retreated. When news came of the breakthrough at Washington's Breach, this force moved over to join the troops who had broken through.

Colonel Bellasis's men attacking on the right and left of the Windmill Hill Fort ran into great trouble. De Gomme states that 'fynding there an impossibilitye of entring, for that they wanted fagots to fill up the ditche, & Ladders to skale the Worcke', they retreated to a stone wall to the right of the fort. One group apparently fled even further back and was rallied by Prince Rupert, who had his horse shot under him.

Thus, at two points the attack failed, but Colonel Wentworth's men were successful. It has sometimes been suggested that this was a lucky breakthrough by Colonel Washington, but the attack had in fact been planned at a midnight meeting of the officers of the army group.⁸³ They decided to attack the line between Brandon Hill Fort and Windmill Hill Fort. Sir Jacob Astley's and Sir Edward Fitton's regiments were to lead, Colonel Bowles and Colonel Herbert were to follow, and Colonel Washington was to bring up the rear. It did not work out as planned, because of the uneven ground and the furze bushes, and because as they advanced from the area near the present Victoria Rooms, they came under heavy fire from the forts. The men ran as fast as they could to the line and found shelter in the dead ground between the forts. There was also a barn near what is now George's Bookshop which gave cover against the fire from Brandon Hill. De Gomme relates what happened next: 'being gotten to the Line, Leift. Wright, Leift. Baxter, with others, throwing hand-granados over among the Enemyes, made them stagger & recoyle a Little: so that ours more courageously coming on to storne over the Line, the Enemys quitt it, & rann towards the Towne. Ours thereupon helping over



South East Prospect of Bristol taken from the edge of James Millerd's Plan of Bristol, 1673. Compare with Millerd's Prospect of Bristol, 1673, part of which is reproduced on the cover. Note the line of hills to the north-west. Clifton Parish Church and Brandon Hill are on the left skyline, the Royal Fort in the left centre and Prior's Hill on the top right. The wall on either side of Temple Gate is at the bottom of the picture.
Photograph by Mr R. Kelsey

83. De Gomme, p.191.



Colonel Nathaniel Fiennes 1607-1669
 Second Son of Viscount Saye and Sele
 Portrait by Michiel Jansz van Miereveldt
 Photograph by Arts Faculty Photographic Unit

one another, fell presentlye to fling down the worck with theyr hands, halberts & partizans to Lett in theyr fellowes . . . In the meane tyme, Leift. Colonel Littleton ryding along the inside of the Line with a fire-pike, quite cleered the place of the defendants: some of them crying out Wyld fire. Thus was the Line cleared, for a great waye together.⁸⁴

There was later an argument about the strength of the line at Washington's Breach. Those who wished to show that Fiennes was inefficient as well as cowardly claimed that he had been warned about the weakness of the defences at this point. Thus, Captain Henry Loyde gave evidence that 'A Souldier of my company pointing with his finger to that Part of the Line between Windmill-Hill Fort and Brandon Hill Fort (where the said Line was not yet perfected, and where the Enemy afterwards entred) advised the Governor to have a care of that place as the onely likely place for the Enemy to enter at and further did admonish the Governor that the line in that place was very weakly manned, for which the said Governor called him sawcy knave.'⁸⁵ Fiennes maintained at one time that 'the place where the enemy entered, was not a likely place for the enemy to enter by, was weakliest assaulted, could not have been better guarded without drawing forces from other places, which were in more apparent danger . . .'⁸⁶ Elsewhere, however, he admitted that here 'the works were not quite perfected . . .'⁸⁷ De Gomme said that 'the conquest was not to be attributed so much to the weakness of the place, as to Gods blessing on our Soldjers courage.'⁸⁸ Colonel Birch, however, remarked acidly: ' . . the line was unhappily *entred*, for I cannot call it *stormed*, because at that entrance there was not a man slain on either part.'⁸⁹

Thus, between three and four o'clock a small force of infantry had got over the line. At Fiennes' court martial, a number of witnesses alleged that it was only a very small force of between 150 and 200 men, that they were not reinforced for a long time, and that they could easily have been destroyed. One witness main-

84. *Ibid.*, pp.191-2.

85. *A True and full Relation of the prosecution of N.F. etc.* by William Prynne and Clement Waker, part ii, Catalogue of Witnesses, p.20. See also pp.27-8.

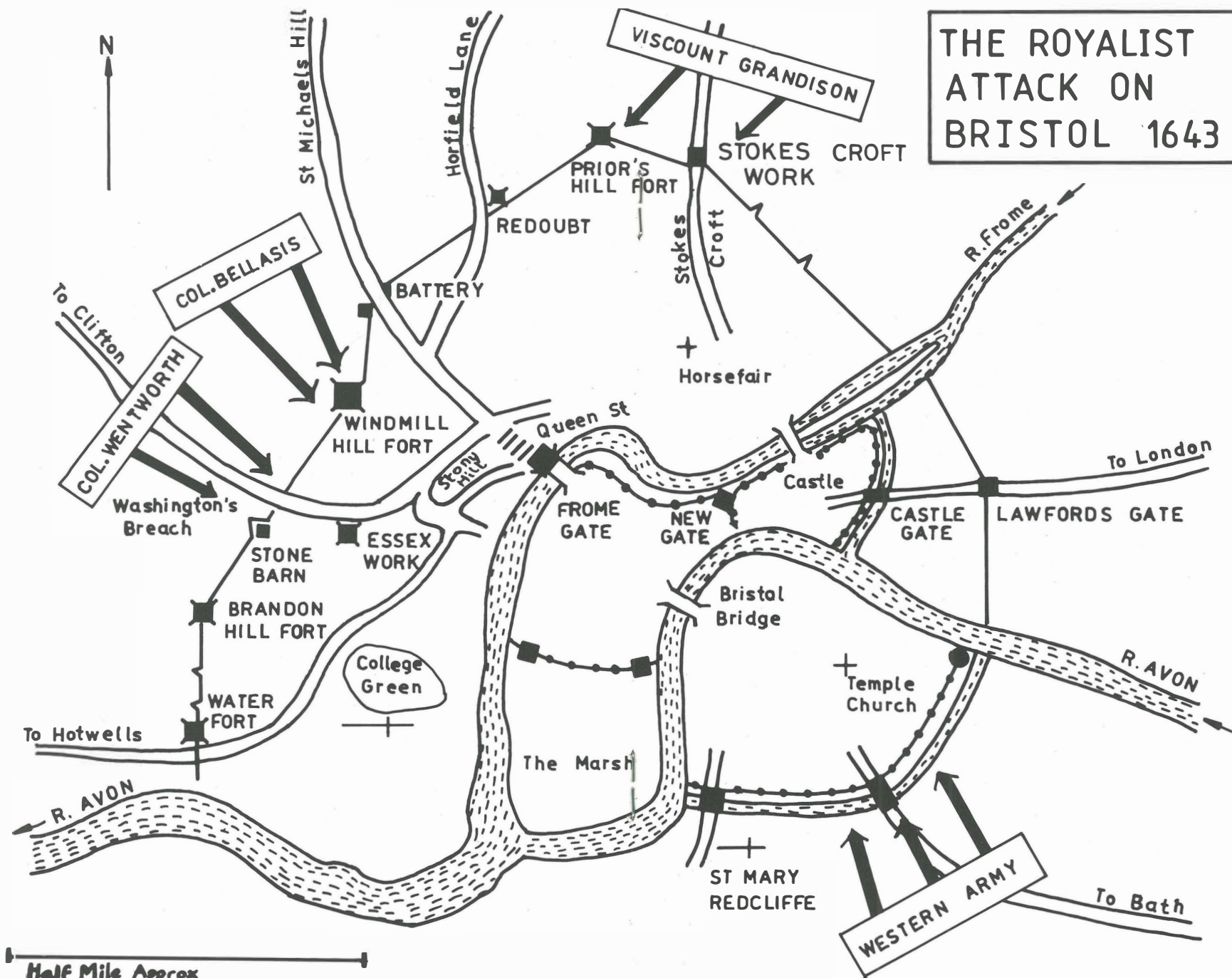
86. *A Complete Collection of State Trials*, edit. T.B. Howell, iv.200.

87. British Library: *Thomason Tracts*, E 64/12, *A Relation made in the House of Commons by Colonel Nathaniel Fiennes*, August 1643.

88. *De Gomme*, pp.192-3.

89. *Military Memoirs of Colonel John Birch*, edit. T.W. Webb, Camden Society 1873, p.3.

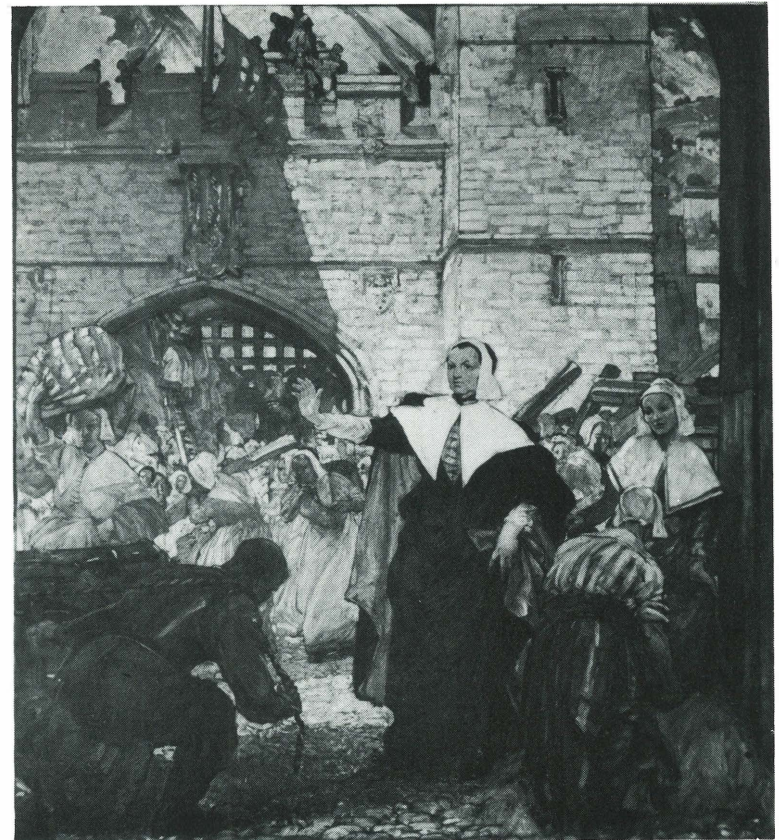
THE ROYALIST
ATTACK ON
BRISTOL 1643



tained that the men 'were so afraid of being cut off, that they gave themselves all for dead men . . . none of their own party knowing of their entry till two hours after they entered, nor sending any relief.'⁹⁰ Witnesses also stated that the men who got over the line had not been counter-attacked, as they should have been. Fiennes maintained at his trial that Sergeant Major Langrish had been ordered to charge with the horse if the line was broken and he failed to do so,⁹¹ but de Gomme says that the cavalry did attack the infantry more than once, and that there was fierce fighting. In the end, Captain Clerk, Ancient Hodgekinson and some others met the attackers with their fire pikes, and 'neither the men nor the horses were able to endure it.'

This breakthrough of the outer defences, which was at only one point in the line, did not mean that the city itself had been taken. One body of troops now moved towards the town, presumably along Park Row, not realising that in front of them lay a strong point known as the Essex Work, which was garrisoned by the enemy. It seems that some of the royalist foot were moving rapidly to get out of the way of the enemy horse, and, according to de Gomme, the defenders of the Essex Work, 'suspecting our mens running hast, to be the courage of such as pursued the victorie, & were resolved to carrye all before them', ran out of the Work.⁹² Colonel Wentworth and Colonel Washington found a ditch across the street near the Essex Work and filled it up to make a way for the horse. They came under fire from the town and the houses, but they held on to the Work and the lane until relieved by Colonel Bellasis's men. Other troops had come up by now. Colonel Wentworth and Colonel Washington's men marched to College Green and occupied the Cathedral and the two churches near it.⁹³ From here they fired on 'a Little Worck & a hows where the Enemy had a peece of Canon and beat them from it.' The royalist troops came under fire from the quay and from the houses as well

90. *A Complete Collection of State Trials*, edit. T.B. Howell, iv.222. James Coles deposed that the attackers 'thought they should have been shut in and the breach made good against them' (*A True and full Relation of the prosecution . . . of N.F. etc.*, p.30).
91. *A Complete Collection of State Trials*, edit. T.B. Howell, iv.222: *Thomason Tracts*, E 64/12, p.7.
92. *De Gomme*, p.193. At the Court Martial, two witnesses said that the Essex Fort commanded the place where the enemy entered and 'if manned with twenty or thirty Musketeers, would easily have kept out all the enemy partee . . . ' (*A True and Full Relation of the prosecution . . . of N.F. etc.*, p.9).
93. St. Augustine the Less (now demolished) and the present Lord Mayor's Chapel.



Imaginative reconstruction of Dorothy Hazzard and the women at the Frome Gate.

Painted by Professor Gerald Moira and hanging in the Old Council House, Broad Street.

Photograph by Mr R. Kelsey



Prince Rupert, Count Palatine of the Rhine, 1619-1682
 Portrait by William Dobson
 Photograph by Arts Faculty Photographic Unit

as from the redoubt below Brandon Hill (the Water Fort). They now advanced to near the quay and could have set fire to the ships, but when the Prince was informed, he forbade this, as he wished to preserve the town.

A number of witnesses at the Court Martial maintained that once the outer line had been pierced, Colonel Fiennes quite unnecessarily ordered all his men to come off the line into the town, even though they were extremely reluctant to leave it, and that he refused to authorise an effective counter-attack.⁹⁴

The way into the city was across the Frome river over the Frome Bridge and through the Frome Gate. This gate had two separate gatehouses, one at each end of the bridge. The inner gatehouse was eight yards long and had a stone room over it. Beneath this were two gates secured with chains. The outer gatehouse was six yards long and also had a room over it.⁹⁵ From this gate during the next two hours the defending garrison made a number of fierce sallies, and in one of them the royalist Colonel Lunsford was shot through the heart on what were later called Lunsford Stairs (Christmas Steps). There were heavy royalist casualties,⁹⁶ but the defenders also suffered, and, according to de Gomme, 'this made them thinck of nothing but Parlee: for now (they knew) could wee without interruption have brought our Canon or Petards up to the verve ports, or might have fired the Shipps and howses, or have mined.'

Nothing has been said so far about the attack by the Western Army on the other side of the city, except that it began prematurely. Three columns attacked with great courage, but the ditch before the walls was deep and full of water, and efforts to fill it up with faggots and carts were unsuccessful. The men tried to scale the walls, but were driven back with heavy casualties. As one observer put it: 'as gallant men was ever drew sword . . . lay upon the ground like rotten sheep . . .'⁹⁷ The Western Army had to fall back on its defensive positions, and after Rupert's men had broken through, the Prince ordered Maurice to bring 1,000 men round as reinforcements for the attack on northern side.

Before the surrender, there occurred the curious incident of the

94. *A True and full Relation of the prosecution . . . of N.F. etc.*, pp.15, 17, 24-7, 31, 33-4.

95. J.F. Nicholls and John Taylor, *Bristol Past and Present*, Bristol, 1881, i.64.

96. The total casualties in the attack were put between 1,000 and 1,400.

97. *Military Memoirs of the Civil War: Richard Atkyns*, edit. Peter Young, 1967, p.28. See also *Bellum Civile*, Somerset Record Society, xviii, pp.92-4, and *Clarendon's History*, iji.103.

women at the Frome Gate. The legend, as given by John Latimer, runs as follows: 'When the news of Washington's entrance reached the city, Mrs. Dorothy Hazzard, a Puritan lady . . . rushed with about two hundred women and girls to this Gate . . . and with the help to some men the portal was solidly blocked up with woolsacks and earth.' Mrs Hazzard then went to the Governor and urged him to stand firm, assuring him 'that her Amazons would face the besiegers with their children in their arms "to keep off the shot from the soldiers if they were afraid".' Latimer added that her entreaties were of no avail, but some of the women stood firmly with the gunners in the Gate, and it was not until after repeated assaults that the royalists were able to enter.⁹⁸

The story rests primarily on the evidence of three people who made statements at Fiennes' trial. William Deane, a baker and member of the Trained Bands, said that he had heard some women urging the soldiers to go courageously against the enemy. He went on: '. . . and if they feared the Canon, we (they said) and our children will put ourselves between the Canons mouth and you, to dead and keepe off the Bullets . . .'⁹⁹ Another witness, Joan Batten, said she was one of two hundred women who went to Colonel John Fiennes 'offering themselves to worke in the Fortifications in the very face of the Enemy and to go themselves and their children, into the mouth of the Canon to dead and keepe off the shot from the Souldiers . . .' She said that shortly afterwards a message came from Colonel Nathaniel Fiennes, the Governor, telling them to go to the Frome Gate and make a bulwark of earth, 'which by the direction of the Engineer they did.' However, when they had almost finished the bulwark, which was 15 or 16 feet thick, Colonel Fiennes surrendered the city.¹⁰⁰ The third witness, who in the course of time stole all the limelight, was Mrs Dorothy Hazzard. She deposed that with diverse other women and maids and with the help of some men, they stopped up the Frome Gate with woolsacks and earth. The women then went to the gunners and told them that if they would stand and fight, the women would stand by them, and they would not want for provisions.¹⁰¹ At the Court Martial, Fiennes denied that he had

heard about the women offering to dead the bullets with themselves and their children, and remarked that he did not think this was a fit means to dead canon bullets.¹⁰²

In her evidence Mrs Hazzard did not claim that she took the lead, and, indeed, it is possible that Joan Batten was the more important person in the affair. It also seems that the order to build the barricade came from Colonel Fiennes himself and was not a spontaneous reaction of the women, as has often been suggested. Mrs Hazzard may in the long run have got all the credit because she was very prominent in organising a fanatical group of separatists in Bristol.¹⁰³ She was furious that she had lost all the property which she had put in the Castle on the undertaking from Fiennes that the castle would be defended. She was hardly a typical Bristolian, and there were many in Bristol who feared 'the sad consequences of an enraged Enemy entring such a City by force, having been exasperated by the losse of above a thousand of their men . . .'¹⁰⁴ If we can believe Clarendon, the Bristolians, fearing they would be made a prey to the soldiers, urged the Governor to treat for terms.¹⁰⁵ It would have been possible for the garrison to defend the city street by street and to make a last stand in the castle, and Fiennes was accused of cowardice because he did not do this. In his defence, he maintained that his men were disheartened and were withdrawing from the colours to go off drinking or sleeping, and that when he ordered 14 companies to muster in the Marsh, not more than 100 men turned up. He said: 'they could not get six men a-piece of their companies together, they ran so fast over the key to the enemy.' He maintained that there was no hope of holding the castle for more than two or three days, that not more than 50 barrels of gunpowder remained and there was no match.¹⁰⁶ All this was denied by William Prynne who more or less compelled the House of Commons to put Fiennes on trial and who produced many witnesses, most of them refugees from Bristol, to give evidence against Fiennes. Fiennes was found guilty and condemned to death, but the Commander in Chief, the

98. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, p.179. He seems to suggest that the Frome Gate was stormed, but there is no evidence of this. For an imaginative reconstruction of the episode, see picture by Professor Gerald Moira reproduced opposite p.28.

99. *A True and full Relation of the prosecution . . . of N.F.*, part ii. pp.25-7.

100. *Ibid.* pp.31-2.

101. *Ibid.* pp.32-3.

102. *A Complete Collection of State Trials*, edit. T.B. Howell, iv.200.

103. For Dorothy Hazzard, see *Records of a Church of Christ in Bristol 1640-1687*, edit. Roger Hayden, Bristol Record Society, 1974, pp.12, 13, 18, 19, 154, 293.

104. Avon County Reference Library, Bristol: *A Check to the Checker of Britannicus*, p.10.

105. *Clarendon's History*, iii.105.

106. For his defence, see *A Complete Collection of State Trials*, edit. T.B. Howell, iv.194ff.; and *Thomason Tracts*, E 64/12.

Earl of Essex, pardoned the son of his old friend Lord Saye and Sele.

Before he surrendered the city, Fiennes had obtained good terms from Rupert, who was glad to end the storm in which he had suffered very heavy casualties, and the parliamentary garrison with a number of civilians marched out from Bristol. The terms were not properly kept and there was some violence and looting as the column left the city. Rupert and his officers did their best to prevent it, as Fiennes himself acknowledged, but some of the royalist troops got out of hand.¹⁰⁷

The fall of Bristol was a great encouragement to the royalist cause. As Captain Richard Atkyns put it: 'When we were possessed of Bristoll, and the lesser garrisons came tumbling in to the obedience of the king, I took the King's crown to be settled upon his head again'¹⁰⁸

A royalist garrison now occupied Bristol, and the city remained in royalist hands for over two years. Inevitably, the moving in of a conquering army meant disturbances and a certain amount of looting until things settled down.¹⁰⁹ Equally inevitable was the heavy taxation in the form of 'voluntary' gifts and assessments for the upkeep of the garrison and for strengthening the defences.¹¹⁰ Latimer gave various details of what Bristolians had to pay, and he seemed to think the burden was 'intolerable', but it must be remembered that the whole country during the war years was subject to systematic taxation on a scale never before known in English history. In the present state of knowledge it is not possible to say whether Bristol was particularly heavily burdened compared with other towns.

After the royalists had taken Bristol, they did not engage in a large-scale purge of the governing body or take reprisals against those who had favoured parliament. The mayor remained in office, and only two members of the Common Council were

removed.¹¹¹ There was some delay before the king granted a General Pardon, but when it was issued on 24 February 1644, the only people excepted were those who had been on the Council of War which condemned Yeamans and Bowcher to death.¹¹² This lenient treatment suggests that there were few Bristolians who had shown themselves deeply committed to parliament.

There were some compensations for Bristolians during the years of royalist occupation. In December 1643 the king granted a new Charter to the Society of Merchant Venturers of Bristol, throwing open to them the trades of the Eastland Company, the Russia Company, the Levant Company and the Merchant Adventurers of England, trades which had hitherto been restricted to London-dominated monopolies. The Charter was granted 'in consideration that the merchants of Bristol have expressed their loyalty and fidelity to us in these late times of differences, even when the merchants of London, who have enjoyed many more privileges and immunities, have many of them traitorously rebelled against us'¹¹³ The king was trying to build up Bristol as a counterweight to London, and had the fortunes of war gone differently, this Charter might have been of great value.

Other indications of the increased importance of Bristol were the establishment of a mint¹¹⁴ and the setting up of a printing press.¹¹⁵ Moreover, in spite of heavy taxation, Bristolians enjoyed relative peace and did not have to worry about marauding troops and threats from without. This relative security may have compensated in some measure for interference with trade at home and abroad.

During these two years, a number of prominent Bristolians became involved, willingly or unwillingly, with the royalist cause and were in trouble later as malignants.¹¹⁶ No doubt there were others who disliked the royalists, but there is little indication of active opposition. Clarendon, however, tell us that in March 1645

107. *De Gomme*, p.198; *Clarendon's History*, iii.111.

108. *Military Memoirs of the Civil War: Richard Atkyns*, edit. Peter Young, p.29.

109. For a propaganda piece on the horrors, see Avon County Reference Library, Bristol, B 10561, *The Tragedy of the Kings Armies Fidelity since their entry into Bristol, Together with the too late repentance of the Inhabitants Wherin is set forth the Extreme Plunderings, Rapes, Murthers and other Villanies*, London 1643.

110. According to *A True Relation of the taking of Bristoll* (Thomason Tracts, E6669, f.8(19)) Bristol paid £14,000 to save itself from plunder. Two documents relating to taxation and the royalist military establishment in Bristol were printed by Edmund Turnor in *Archaeologia*, xiv, 1803, pp.121-8.

111. Luke Hodges and Richard Vickris. See A.B. Beaven, *Bristol Lists*, Bristol, 1899, pp.198, 295, 311.

112. For the Pardon, see *Bristol Charters 1509-1899*, edit. R.C. Latham, Bristol Record Society, xii, pp.63-5, 166-175. Latham thinks that only three of those excepted from the pardon were Bristolians - Thomas and Robert Hippisley and Robert Baugh.

113. J. Latimer, *The History of the Society of Merchant Venturers of the City of Bristol*, 1903, pp.106-7; Patrick McGrath, *Records relating to the Society of Merchant Venturers*, Bristol Record Society, xvii, 1952, p.xx.

114. L.V. Grinsell, *The Bristol Mint*, Bristol, 1972, pp.17-18.

115. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, pp.188-9.

116. *Infra*, p.44ff.

Sir William Waller advanced with his horse and dragoons towards Bristol 'in hope . . . to have surprised that city by some treachery within, and being disappointed there, retired towards Dorsetshire . . .'¹¹⁷ Nothing seems to be known about this alleged conspiracy.

In 1645 the fate of Bristol was once again determined by the military situation outside. On 14 June the king was defeated at Naseby, and on 10 July General Goring was defeated at Langport. The king's forces were not totally destroyed, but the balance swung overwhelmingly in favour of parliament. The parliamentary armies now proceeded to reduce the royalist strongholds. Bridgwater was stormed on 21 and 22 July, Bath surrendered on 29 July, and Sherborne Castle fell on 14 August. Fairfax then had to decide whether to campaign against Goring in the south-west or to take Bristol. He and Cromwell feared that if they left Bristol alone, it would be reinforced from Wales and might also get help from the disaffected Clubmen of Somerset, Wiltshire and Dorset, once the parliamentary forces had turned their backs.¹¹⁸ Fairfax was aware that there was plague in and around Bristol, but he is reported to have said 'as for the sickness, let us trust God with the army, who will be as ready to protect us in the siege from infection, as in the field from the bullet.'¹¹⁹

As the enemy approached, Rupert asked the advice of his Council of War. The general view was that 'notwithstanding the Workes and Line were very defective, the circuit long, our number few; yet if we could repell one generall storm, the enemy would be discouraged from attempting the second time; and the season of the year might advantage us, and incommode them.' As there was some uncertainty, Rupert asked whether he should break out with the horse and leave what could be spared in the fort and castle, but it was felt that this was neither safe nor honourable. A suggestion that he should defend on the castle and fort was also rejected 'in regard of the Nobility, and Gentry and such of the

Town as appeared well affected'. It was not honourable to leave those who could not be accommodated in the castle and fort to the sword of the enemy. And so the decision was taken for a general defence.¹²⁰

Prince Rupert was confident that he could hold Bristol for a considerable time. His garrison was a good deal larger than that with which Fiennes had defended the place in 1643,¹²¹ and the defences had been greatly strengthened since then.¹²² The inhabitants had been ordered to lay in provisions for six months, and Rupert had bought a store of corn for those who could not afford to do so. Cattle were driven in from the neighbouring countryside as the enemy approached.¹²³

We have little information about the attitude of the citizens as the parliamentary armies closed in. At the end of May, the Committee of Both Kingdoms had written to Colonel Massey saying: 'We conceive that the townsmen may be very well affected to us if you can but find means of correspondence with them',¹²⁴ and a little later, when the attackers were considering whether or not to storm the place, Cromwell noted that one of the arguments against storming was 'the report of the good affections of some of the townsmen to us.'¹²⁵ On 25 August, Fairfax and Cromwell issued a statement promising pardon for past disloyalty to those who endeavoured to deliver the city into parliamentary hands. This was intercepted, and Rupert caused 'several suspected, and active persons to be restrained, which prevented the designe, and withall by his personal presence secured the great fort from surprizall.'¹²⁶ There may have been a small fifth column in Bristol,

117. *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England*, Oxford, 1843, p.544. Seyer, *Memoirs Historical and Topographical of Bristol*, ii.428, says two or three of the conspirators fled; Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, p.195.
118. *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* by W.C. Abbott, Cambridge, Mass., 1937, 4 vols., i.374, Cromwell to Fairfax, 14 September 1645. Hereafter referred to as *Abbott's Cromwell*. Joshua Sprigg, *Anglia Rediviva*, Oxford, 1854, pp.97-8. Hereafter referred to as *Sprigg*.
119. *Sprigg*, pp.98, 122. He says that when they came to Bristol people were dying in the city at the rate of a hundred a week and that the sickness was also in the towns and villages where they quartered their men, but only one man died of the plague. See also *Calendar of State Papers Domestic, 1643-1645*, pp.493, 495.

120. *A Declaration of his Highnesse Prince Rupert with A Narrative of the state and condition of the City and Garrison of Bristol, when his Highness Prince Rupert came thither*, London, 1645, pp.7,8. This is also printed in Eliot Warburton, *Memoirs of Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, iii.168-9.
121. *Sprigg*, p.97, says he could have put 3,000 men in the field and still have enough left to garrison Bristol. Latimer says his effective strength was nearly 4,000, exclusive of auxiliaries, but Rupert claimed that he had no more than 2,300.
122. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, p.197. Rupert and his officers maintained that the defences were still very defective. Eliot Warburton, *Memoirs of Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, iii.168-70.
123. Eliot Warburton, *op.cit.* iii.168. In Rupert's *Declaration* it was claimed that 'upon a strict survey' there were found to be 2,500 families in the city, of whom 1,500 could not maintain themselves.
124. *Calendar of State Papers Domestic 1644-1645*, p.519, 24 May 1645.
125. *Abbott's Cromwell*, i.375. Cromwell added 'but that did not answer expectation . . .'
126. Eliot Warburton, *op.cit.* iii.171-2.

particularly as it was now clear to many people that the royalists were not likely to win the war, but if there was, it has left very little trace in the records.

The Trained Bands were expected to play their part in the defence of the city.¹²⁷ In May 1644 the Common Council had decided to increase their numbers to 1,000, but by the time of the attack, they had been reduced to about 800 'by interruption of Trade and Commerce, by the Pestilence then raging there, by their poverty and pressures laid upon them.'¹²⁸ Indeed, on 3 September, the Common Council decided to give relief to the necessitous members of the Trained Bands and other auxiliaries, and Colonel Taylor and Colonel Colston were told to bring in lists of those in need.¹²⁹

It is likely that by this time morale was low among the civilian population. In Rupert's *Declaration* it was alleged that 'The Commissioners for the Contribution and support of the Garrison, upon the enemy's approach, abandoned the Towne, and many considerable persons had libertie given them, and quitted the Town which much weakned and dis-heartened the rest . . .'¹³⁰

The advance of the parliamentary army took the defenders by surprise. Ireton was sent ahead with 2,000 men to preserve the places adjacent to Bristol,¹³¹ and in addition, a regiment of foot reached Hanham, three miles from the city, before the garrison was aware of the imminent attack.¹³² The royalists set fire to Bedminster, Clifton and some other villages, and they would have carried this scorched earth policy still further but for the unexpected arrival of the parliamentary forces.¹³³

On 21 August the main army reached Chew, and Fairfax and Cromwell came towards Bedminster to view the town. They moved their headquarters to Hanham on 22 August, and to Stapleton on 23 August. On that day, the defenders made the first of a number of sallies which were to tax the besiegers to the full by imposing on them 'exceeding great duty' considering 'the paucity of our men to make good their posts, and the strength of the enemy within . . .'¹³⁴ There were further sallies on 24, 26 and 27

August.¹³⁵ There was the additional worry that General Goring seemed to be getting ready to move towards Bristol, but it was thought that Colonel Massey's brigade near Taunton would be able to hold him up till the horse could be brought from Bristol.¹³⁶

On 28 August the fort on Portishead point was taken by the parliamentarians, and the way was open for co-operation with the navy, which could now bring ships up the Avon to Kingroad.¹³⁷

A Fast was held among the parliamentary forces on Friday 28 August to ask God's blessing on the design, and there was a debate in the Council of War about whether to storm Bristol or besiege it. There had been bad news from Scotland where Montrose was moving on Edinburgh; the king had advanced to Bedford without being followed; and Goring was thought to be moving nearer Chard. An intercepted letter of Goring's, dated 25 August, said that he hoped to be ready to interrupt the siege of Bristol in about three weeks time.¹³⁸ Sprigg thought that the parliamentary army was 'in a great strait', since it was adequate to deal with Bristol, but no more. In view of all this, the Council of War decided to make preparations for a storm but to postpone the final decision.¹³⁹

On Monday 1 September Prince Rupert made a sally with 1,000 horse and 600 foot, but he was beaten back.¹⁴⁰ It is surprising that he was not able to inflict more damage in these sallies, since he could concentrate his striking force, and he was operating against an enemy spread out thinly over several miles.

There was a long debate on Tuesday, 2 September, about whether to storm the city. We know from Cromwell that 'there appeared great unwillingness to the work, through the unseasonableness of the weather, and other apparent difficulties.' Nevertheless, once the decision had been made to storm Bristol, it was accepted with great enthusiasm by both officers and men.¹⁴¹ A committee was instructed to prepare detailed plans and to report to the Council the next day.

The plan of attack presented on 3 September was as follows: Colonel Weldon with four regiments was to storm the city on the

127. There are a number of payments to Colonel Lathom for training the men recorded in the Mayors' Audits.

128. Rupert's *Declaration*, p.6.

129. *Common Council Proceedings 1642-1649*, 3 September 1645.

130. Rupert's *Declaration*, p.6.

131. *Abbott's Cromwell*, i.374.

132. *Ibid.* i.374; Sprigg, p.99.

133. *Abbott's Cromwell*, i.374.

134. *Ibid.*, i.375.

135. Sprigg, pp.101-2.

136. *Ibid.*, p.136.

137. *Ibid.*, p.101.

138. *Ibid.*, pp.103-4.

139. *Ibid.*, p.104.

140. *Ibid.*, p.104; *Abbott's Cromwell*, i.375.

141. Sprigg, p.104; *Abbott's Cromwell*, i.375. Enthusiasm may have been increased by the fact that the men were paid 6s. per head which the General had promised them for their service at Bridgwater.

Somerset side; Colonel Montague with four regiments was to attack on both sides of Lawford's Gate; Colonel Rainsborough's division of five regiments was to attack the line between Prior's Hill Fort and the Frome and was to take the fort itself. There were plans for some 200 soldiers to help the sailors take the Water Fort if the occasion arose. A regiment of horse and a regiment of foot were to move up and down before the Royal Fort to 'alarm' it, and a regiment of dragoons and two regiments of horse were to carry ladders with them and attempt the line by Clifton at Washington's Breach.¹⁴²

The plan obviously had some similarities with the royalist plan of 1643, but the main weight of the attack was now to be on the line from Prior's Hill Fort down to Lawford's Gate instead of from Prior's Hill Fort to Washington's Breach. Moreover, the whole defensive line was threatened or at least 'alarmed' in some way, which had not been the case in 1643.

At the Council of War it was also decided that the attack should be launched about 1 o'clock in the morning on Wednesday 10 September. It was hoped to achieve surprise. When the line and forts were taken, the troops were to halt until daybreak so as not to fall foul of each other.¹⁴³

On 4 September the weather 'that had been so extreme wet before, that many soldiers and horses died thereby (and with extreme hard duty) in that wet season' altered for the better, and the drooping spirits of the soldiers revived.¹⁴⁴ Furthermore, about 2,000 'well-affected countrymen' joined the besiegers. They were given quarters and assigned guards 'as an effectual caution against their revolt' and because their presence would discourage the defenders, rather than because they were likely to be of great use.¹⁴⁵ That day, Fairfax summoned Rupert to surrender.

There followed protracted negotiations, for Rupert was playing for time. He does not seem to have been in communication with either the king or Goring or to have had any assurance that help would come, and he wanted to postpone the crisis as long as possible.¹⁴⁶ At length, on 9 September Fairfax sent a trumpeter to say that if the terms were not immediately accepted, nego-

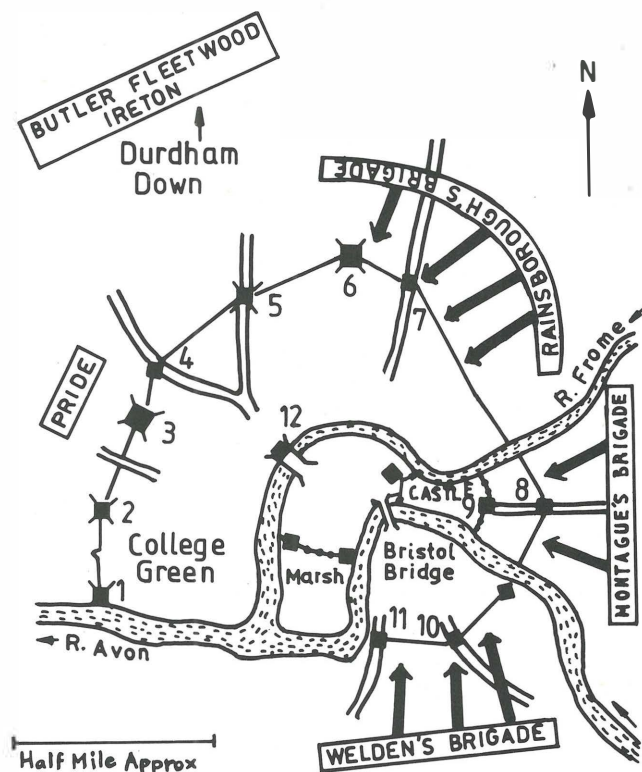
142. The plan is given in detail in *Sprigg*, pp.104-6. It was subject to amendment. No attempt was apparently made at Washington's Breach.

143. *Abbott's Cromwell*, i.375.

144. *Sprigg*, p.108.

145. *Ibid.*, p.110.

146. For the negotiations and the terms which Rupert would accept, see *Sprigg*, pp.105-115.



THE ATTACK BY THE PARLIAMENTARY FORCES

1645

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Water Fort | 7. Stokes Croft Work |
| 2. Brandon Hill Fort | 8. Lawford's Gate |
| 3. Royal Fort | 9. Castle Gate |
| 4. Battery | 10. Temple Gate |
| 5. Redoubt | 11. Redcliffe Gate |
| 6. Prior's Hill Fort | 12. Frome Gate |

tiations were at an end. Rupert kept the trumpeter until 10 at night and then sent back an unsatisfactory answer. At midnight Fairfax went into the field to give the order for the storm.¹⁴⁷

Cromwell states that the attack began about one o'clock in the morning. He notes that the burning straw and discharge of canon, which were the signal for the attack, were 'very well perceived by all' and 'truly the men went on with great resolution, and very presently recovered the line, making way for the horse to enter.'¹⁴⁸ According to Sprigg, the attack began about two o'clock with 'setting on fire a great heap of straw and fagots on the top of an hill' and the firing of the great guns against Prior's Fort. He adds: '... immediately the storm began round the city, and was terrible to the beholders.'¹⁴⁹

Four regiments were launched against the line on either side of Lawford's Gate. Cromwell tells us that Colonel Montague and Colonel Pickering stormed the double work at Lawford's Gate, beat the enemy from their works and took the cannon. They laid down bridges for the horse to enter, and Major Desborowe with the horse came in and seconded the foot. The foot then advanced to the city walls, took the gate opening into Castle Street and put a hundred men in it. Sir Hardress Waller and Lieutenant Colonel Jackson also broke through the line in this section and joined the rest of the brigade, so that four regiments and the horse were through the outer defences.¹⁵⁰

At the same time, an attack was launched against the line from Prior's Hill Fort down to the Frome. Colonels Rainsborough and Hammond attacked round the Fort itself and also had support from part of Colonel Pride's regiment, while Birch and Skippon attacked further down towards the Frome. Colonel Hammond got over the line very quickly and made way for the horse to enter, the line being broken down by the pioneers. Colonel Rainsborough had the hardest task of all and almost despaired of taking Prior's Fort. While he was still attacking it, the horse which had come in under Captain Ireton encountered a party of enemy horse and drove them off, mortally wounding Colonel Taylor who had been one of the Bristol M.P.s. The royalist horse were so disheartened

that they did not attack again but retreated to the protection of the Great Fort and Colston's Fort.¹⁵¹

It was very difficult to take Prior's Fort. It was very high and a ladder of thirty rounds hardly reached the top. Many of the ladders were too short. The royalists had four cannon there and fired round and case shot, and there was fighting with pikes for two hours. Colonel Hammond's men, attacking from inside the line, eventually got in the portholes and on to the roof. The royalists retreated to the inner rooms below, hoping for quarter, but after three hours of fierce fighting, the attackers were in no mood to grant it and they put almost all the defenders to the sword, including Major Price, the Welsh officer who commanded there.¹⁵²

Dawn was beginning to break when the fort was taken. Sprigg comments how fortunate it was that the attack began so early, for in daylight they could not have taken Prior's Fort. They would have been shot down by the guns from the Great Fort and Colston's Fort and from the castle. In the dark the royalists dared not fire in case they killed their own men drawn up between the Great Fort and Colston's Fort.¹⁵³

The attack from the Somerset side was as unsuccessful in 1645 as it had been in 1643. Cromwell noted that the works were higher than had been reported, that the ladders were too short and the approach very difficult. The attackers were repulsed and lost about 100 men.¹⁵⁴

Nothing very serious was attempted from the north-west, but three regiments of horse were on Durdham Down to prevent any attempt by Rupert to cut his way out, and some of these men 'alarmed' the Great Fort and the line there, while others 'alarmed' Brandon Hill Fort and the line towards Clifton, presumably to keep men tied down there so that they could not reinforce other places.¹⁵⁵ The attempt of the seamen against the Water Fort came to nothing because of the tide, but the seamen were used elsewhere on the line.

All this did not mean that Bristol had fallen. Cromwell relates what happened next: 'Being possessed of thus much as hath been related, the town was fired in three places by the enemy, which we could not put out; and this began a great trouble to the General

147. *Sprigg*, p.115.

148. *Abbott's Cromwell*, i.375.

149. *Sprigg*, pp.116-7.

150. *Abbott's Cromwell*, i.375. Cromwell says Hardress Waller and Jackson entered 'on the other side of Lawford's Gate, towards Avon River'. Sprigg says they entered between Lawford's Gate and the River Frome. Either Cromwell or Sprigg confused the Avon with the Frome.

151. *Abbott's Cromwell*, i.376; *Sprigg*, pp.116-7.

152. *Abbott's Cromwell*, i.376; *Sprigg*, p.117.

153. *Sprigg*, pp.117-8.

154. *Abbott's Cromwell*, i.376; *Sprigg*, p.118.

155. *Sprigg*, p.118.

and us all, fearing to see so famous a city burnt to ashes before our faces.' While they were discussing what to do next, Prince Rupert sent a trumpeter to request negotiations, and Fairfax agreed, provided that the fires were put out. It is not quite clear whether they had been started by accident or whether the garrison had deliberately started them, as Cromwell and Sprigg suggest.¹⁵⁶ If they were started deliberately, presumably the purpose was to make the attackers' task more difficult or to put pressure on Fairfax to come to terms.

Fairfax gave Prince Rupert very reasonable terms, and the next day at two o'clock in the afternoon the Prince marched out from the Royal Fort. A contemporary account states that he 'was clad in scarlet, very richly laid in silver lace, mounted upon a very gallant black Barbary horse . . .' He was accompanied by many ladies and persons of quality. Fairfax accompanied him for two miles over Durdham Down and treated him with great courtesy.¹⁵⁷

In his letter to the Speaker of the House of Commons, Cromwell concluded: 'Thus I have given you a true, but not a full account of this great business; wherein he that runs may read, that all this is no other than the work of God. He must be a very atheist that does not acknowledge it.'¹⁵⁸

The king's reaction to the disaster was to send Rupert a savage letter pointing out that the prince had assured him, that if no mutiny occurred, he would hold Bristol for four months. Charles asked bitterly: 'Did you keep it four days?' He required Rupert henceforth to seek his subsistence 'somewhere beyond the seas', and he sent him a pass to enable him to leave the country.¹⁵⁹ Rupert demanded to be heard, and he had printed a defence of his proceedings in *A Declaration of His Highness Prince Rupert with a Narrative of the State and Condition of the City and Garrison of Bristol*.¹⁶⁰ He put his case with great ability, and he had the support of his officers. Eventually, at his insistence, the matter was brought before the equivalent of a Court Martial on 18 October and 21 October. As a result of its findings, the king accepted that

Rupert was not guilty of treachery or cowardice, but still expressed the view that the Prince ought to have held the castle and citadel longer, since he intended to relieve the place.¹⁶¹ It is not clear that he was planning to do so, or that he had the necessary resources.

There has been much debate since then as to whether Rupert should have held out longer. On the whole, opinion has inclined to the view that he had little option but to surrender on terms, once the outer defences had been pierced. It is argued that the city itself was indefensible and that further resistance would have led to pointless slaughter of soldiers and civilians.¹⁶² Nevertheless, it is surprising that Rupert did not put up a more determined defence or even try to cut his way out with the horse, as the parliamentarians had done at Lostwithiel. He could have left some one else to negotiate the surrender of what remained. Common sense and accepted military conventions justified his action, but in desperate situations great commanders can sometimes successfully ignore these things. There does seem to have been a lack of determination and fighting spirit such as inspired, for example, Colonel Massey at Gloucester, Colonel James Wardlaw at Plymouth, the Marquis of Winchester at Basing House, the Countess of Derby at Lathom House, and a number of others who held out when the sensible course was to surrender.¹⁶³

The departure of Rupert meant that the fighting was over as far as Bristol was concerned, even though the conflict continued elsewhere and the king did not surrender until May 1646. And now those Bristolians who had unwisely committed themselves too far to the royalist cause had to pay the price. It was not in fact as high as they feared it would be.

The victors purged the Common Council much more drastically than the royalists had done in 1643. By an Ordinance of 28 October, Parliament removed from the governing body of Bristol those who had shown themselves so disaffected and so active in promoting the royalist cause that they could no longer continue. These consisted of the Mayor, Francis Creswicke, who had actually been chosen mayor after the city had fallen, five aldermen and seven common councillors. John Gunning junior was appointed

156. *Abbott's Cromwell*, i.376-7; *Sprigg*, pp.118-9.

157. *Sprigg*, pp.119-122 gives the terms of surrender and describes Rupert's march out of Bristol. See also Patrick Morrah, *Prince Rupert of the Rhine*, pp.195-6.

158. *Abbott's Cromwell*, i.377. Fairfax's letter to his father about the taking of Bristol, dated 12 September 1645, is in Bristol Record Office 8029(9).

159. Eliot Warburton, *Memoirs of Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, iii.185. The original pass granted by the king is in Bristol Record Office, 8029(8).

160. See note 120.

161. Patrick Morrah, *Prince Rupert of the Rhine*, pp.203-4.

162. *Ibid*, p.197. There is a good discussion in Maurice Ashley, *Rupert of the Rhine*, 1976, pp.100-107. See also Eliot Warburton, *op.cit.* iii.184ff.

163. There are a number of short studies of sieges in Peter Young and Wilfrid Emberton, *Sieges of the Great Civil War 1642-1646*, 1979. For Gloucester, see J.R.S. Whiting, *Gloucester Besieged*, Gloucester, 1975. Obviously, many more studies could be added to the list.

mayor, a fact which Latimer found puzzling, since he thought his previous record pointed to royalist sympathies. The sheriffs were instructed to assemble the Council as soon as possible to elect replacements for those who had removed. The new councillors were to be 'well-affected persons' and were not to include those who had been in prison or whose estates were liable for sequestration.¹⁶⁴ On 1 November another Ordinance put back on the Council Richard Aldworth, Richard Vickris and Luke Hodges who had been removed without lawful cause.¹⁶⁵ On 26 January 1646 Richard Aldworth and Luke Hodges were chosen M.P.s to replace John Glanville, who had been expelled for supporting the king, and John Taylor, who had been killed when the city was stormed in 1645.

There must have been considerable trepidation among those whose conduct left them open to the charge of being 'maligant', but it is clear from the papers of the Committee for Compounding¹⁶⁶ that in Bristol, as elsewhere, there was a good deal of obstruction and collusion when efforts were made to make the guilty men pay. No doubt there were a number of people in the governing body whose hands were not entirely clean and who did not want to proceed with excessive vigour against their fellow Bristolians. Some of them clearly wanted the unpleasant business to be conducted in as gentlemanly a way as possible. Thus, on 8 November 1647 the parliamentary committee in Somerset wrote to the mayor of Bristol, William Cann, and other committee men in Bristol, pointing out that they had said at a meeting in Bristol at Michaelmas 1646 that there were several gentlemen in Bristol liable for sequestration but that the Bristol committee had thought it better that these men should be asked to give an engagement to prosecute their sequestrations and that in the meanwhile their estates should not actually be sequestered. The guilty men had not in fact taken any action, and the central committee at Goldsmiths' Hall in London was getting impatient. The Somerset Committee said the

Bristol delinquents must compound quickly, otherwise every one would be in trouble for negligence.¹⁶⁷

In November 1650 a Captain Mason wrote to the Committee in London complaining that 'by the dark actings of men who are unwilling to come into light, because their deeds are so evil . . . malignants, both of this county and Bristol, are very well pleased, and in Bristol particularly, have time to convey away their personal estates.'¹⁶⁸ There were other complaints about the unsatisfactory behaviour of the Bristol committee, and allegations that Captain John Burgess associated with cavaliers, favoured malignants and was a drunkard, a swearer and a cheat.¹⁶⁹ It was also claimed that Edward Caple, merchant of Bristol, bribed an agent of the Committee of Sequestration not to prosecute him for delinquency.¹⁷⁰ As late as November 1651 the mayor and aldermen were accused of obstructing the Somerset committee, denying that it had jurisdiction in Bristol and refusing it access to the old records. The Committee for Compounding in London wrote to Bristol in February 1652 informing it that the city did come under the jurisdiction of the Somerset committee. It said that it was aware that Bristol wanted to manage its own affairs, but, it added sharply, 'We know not how far any not yet detected are concerned herein, but we believe there is a desire rather to conceal than punish offenders.'¹⁷¹

The number of Bristolians who eventually compounded was very small. It included about a dozen fairly prominent men, mostly merchants, and five or six smaller fry, one of whom alleged he had been falsely accused. Some of the accused minimised the role they had played and emphasised their subsequent loyalty. Thus William Bevan, who had been a captain in the Trained Bands, asserted that he had laid down his arms ten months before Fairfax took the city and that he had submitted, taken the National Covenant and lent money to parliament,¹⁷² and Humphrey Hooke alleged that he had never been active against parliament.¹⁷³

164. Firth and Rait, *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum*, i.797-8, 28 October 1645. The men removed were: Francis Creswicke (mayor), Aldermen Humphrey Hooke, Richard Long, Ezekiel Wallis, Alexander James, Thomas Colston, councillors William Fitzherbert, Henry Creswicke, William Colston, Nathaniel Cale, William Bevan, Richard Gregson, Giles Elbridge (A.B. Bevan, *Bristol Lists*, p.199).

165. *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum*, i.801.

166. *The Calendar of the Proceedings of the Committee for Compounding 1643-1660*, edit. H.M. Everett Green, 1892, 5 vols. Henceforth referred to as *Cal. Committee for Compounding*.

167. *Cal. Committee for Compounding*, Part i.453, 24 June 1651.

168. *Ibid*, Part i, 351, 6 November 1650.

169. *Ibid*, Part i.453, 24 June 1651.

170. *Ibid*, Part i. 227, 17 May 1650.

171. *Ibid*, Part i. pp.511, 545.

172. *Ibid*, Part ii. 1556, 3 November 1646.

173. *Ibid*, Part ii. 1629. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, pp.202-3, states that Hooke did 'something considerable' in support of the Puritans, and Sir Thomas Fairfax undertook that he would not suffer. When Hooke was in trouble for delinquency in 1650, Cromwell stayed proceedings against him and said what he had done was 'for many reasons desired to be concealed.' I have not been able to trace the reference in the Cromwell papers.

A study of the part played by Bristol in the first Civil War from 1642 to 1646 makes it clear that it was never a committed 'parliamentary' or 'royalist' city, still less a 'puritan' city. Of the 200 or so merchants in Bristol, not more than 30 showed even minimal commitment to one side or the other, and of these about 20 were involved with the royalists.¹⁷⁴ The generalisation that the wealthy and the basest elements supported the king and that the 'middle rank, the true and best citizens' supported parliament cannot be substantiated. The governing body would have preferred to adopt a policy of non-involvement. When this proved impossible, it co-operated without too much fuss with whatever garrison occupied the city. Bristol was twice taken by storm, but it was not a Plymouth or a Gloucester, and the role of the citizens in the fighting was of little significance. Bristol in these years failed to play the important part that might have been expected from a large and rich port, and it had no relish for a civil war in which men were fighting for reasons which did not fill most Bristolians with any great enthusiasm. War meant the presence of the brutal and licentious soldiery, threats to life and property, taxation on an unprecedented scale, and a decline in the foreign and domestic trade on which the city depended for its wealth. In the two sieges, many men died, but few were Bristolians. Yeamans and Bowcher gave their lives for the king, and Joan Batten and Dorothy Hazzard claimed that they were prepared to 'dead the bullets' with their bodies and those of their children, but these people were not typical Bristolians, and few of their fellow citizens had the political or religious commitment which made men ready to lay down their lives for the king or for the Good Old Cause.

174. This is based on a study of the merchants in the Civil War which I have not yet published.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The best account of the attack on Bristol in 1643 is by the Dutch engineer, Sir Bernard de Gomme, who came to England with Rupert and who was present at the storming of the town. It is printed with an introduction by Sir Charles Firth in *The Journal of the Society of Army Historical Research*, iv, 1925, pp.180-203. It is also printed with modernised spelling in Eliot Warburton, *Memoirs of Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, 1849, iii.236-264. There is some useful material in Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England*, edit. W.D. Macray, Oxford, 1887, iii.103-115; in *Bellum Civile: Hopton's Narrative of his Campaign in the West*, edit. Charles E.H. Chadwyck-Healey, Somerset Record Society, xviii, 1902, which also includes *Colonel Slingsby's Relation of the taking of Bristol*. There is a great deal of valuable but not always trustworthy detail in *A True and full relation of the prosecution, arraignment, tryall and condemnation of N.F., late Colonel and governor of the city and castle of Bristoll* by William Prynne and Clement Walker, 1644. Part 1 contains the trial and Part 11 the depositions of numerous witnesses. A good deal of this material is to be found in *A Complete Collection of State Trials*, edit. T.B. Howell, volume iv.

The best account of the attack on Bristol in 1645 is by Sir Thomas Fairfax's chaplain, Joshua Sprigg. His work *Anglia Rediviva*, Oxford, 1854, pp.97-131, contains a great deal of valuable information. The account which Cromwell was instructed by Fairfax to write to the Speaker of the House of Commons is found in Sprigg and also in *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* edit. W.C. Abbott, Cambridge, Mass., 1937, i.374-8.

There is a great deal of material in the contemporary pamphlets in the Thomason Collection in the British Library and in the excellent collection of pamphlets on the civil war in the Avon Central Reference Library, Bristol. Much of this is, of course, propaganda, and it is not always easy to assess its reliability.

Samuel Seyer, *Memoirs Historical and Topographical of Bristol*, Bristol, 1823, printed in volume ii a considerable number of

documents relating to the Civil War in Bristol.

Later writing includes *The Sieges of Bristol* by a Fellow of Queen's College in Oxford (R. Robinson), Bristol, 1868. This very useful little work was based on two lectures which the author delivered in Bristol under the auspices of the Clifton Committee for Promoting the Higher Education of Women.

There is a detailed account of the siege on 1645 in Clements R. Markham, *A Life of the Great Lord Fairfax*, 1870, pp.243-251.

John Latimer had much to say about the Civil War in his *Annals of Bristol in the Seventeenth Century*, Bristol, 1903. Latimer's very detailed knowledge was based on an examination of a great range of material, primary and secondary. Unfortunately, he does not give adequate references. He was a Liberal and a nonconformist, and he had a strong bias against the Stuarts and in favour of Parliament.

Bristol receives brief and not altogether satisfactory treatment in Peter Young and Wilfrid Emberton, *Sieges of the Great Civil War 1642-1646*, 1978. The map mistakenly shows the drawbridge and the stone bridge over the Frome which did not exist at the time.

PLANS OF THE DEFENCES OF BRISTOL 1642-1646

The earliest plan of the defences seems to have been made by Edmund Turnor who published it in an article entitled 'Remarks on the Military History of Bristol in the Seventeenth Century, with a sketch of the Outworks', *Archaeologia*, vol. xiv, 1803. Turnor used as a base Rocque's map of 1743 and made the very serious error of showing in his sketch a stone bridge and a drawbridge over the Frome which were not made until the eighteenth century. His errors have been copied by a number of later writers. It is not clear whether he had any earlier plan on which to work, but he remarked that traces of the fortification still survived in a number of places, and he sought to preserve 'the remaining military vestiges'. He left out of his sketch a number of fortifications which we know existed from De Gomme's contemporary account.

A much more satisfactory plan was made by Lt. Colonel W.G. Ross and published in *Professional Papers of the Corps of Royal Engineers, Occasional Papers*, xiii, 1887. He used Rocque, Millerd, De Gomme and Col. Slingsby. He shows three works which were

not in Turnor but which were described by De Gomme. They were a 'Spur' of 'Ravelin' at Washington's Breach, a 'great spur' with a 'traverse' of 'forework' at Stoke's Croft, and the Essex Work. Like Turnor, he mistakenly showed the drawbrige and stone bridge over the Frome, although they were not included in Millerd' 1673 map, and he placed the Essex Work some way down what is now Park Street but which did not exist at the time.

The map included in the transcription of De Gomme in the *Journal of the Society of Army Historical Research*, iv. 1925, no. 15 is a reproduction of Colonel Ross's sketch, but it is no longer orientated north to south, and it contains the same errors.

For 1645, there is a good sketch map in Clements R. Markham, *A Life of the Great Lord Fairfax*, 1870, facing p.243.

There is some very useful material on the Royal Fort in an article by George Potter, 'Tyndall's Park, Bristol, Royal Fort and the Fort House therein', *Transaction of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, 1929, i.123-41.

The sketch maps in this pamphlet were made by Mrs Sheila McGrath and are based on a study of earlier maps and on original sources as well as on a study of the ground. De Gomme is the most important source, but unfortunately he is not very informative about what happened to the line after it left Stoke's Croft and went round to Tower Harratz. He was not particularly concerned with this, as it was not involved in the fighting in 1643. For the sake of clarity, the contour lines have been omitted, and the sketch maps should be used in conjunction with Millerd's two prospects (see outside cover and illustration facing p.24).

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