



The Falstone Day Book By Jay Waylen 1894

The object of this paper is to exhibit some of the various methods of raising money put in practice in Wiltshire during the Civil War by such of the resident gentry as were favourable to the Parliament's cause.¹ The first standing Committee for the county was organised at the close of the year 1642, in pursuance of a Parliamentary Ordinance applicable to the whole of England, and levying a weekly assessment of so much in the pound; though this by no means represents the various forms of appeal made from time to time as the struggle went on. On the other hand, the King also had his Committee. At least he occasionally nominated local groups of his friends for a variety of objects in his own behalf; but their action was spasmodic and their existence very brief. The poor people, meanwhile, whenever this double action was put in force, found themselves ground between two millstones. If the Royalist visitations were sweeping and desolating, those of the Committees were systematic and perennial.

The first Wilts. Committee acting for the Parliament comprised only the fifteen following names:-²

Surname	Given Names	Title	Residence
Ashe	John		Heytesbury
Baynton	Edward		Bromham
Baynton	Edward	Sir	Bromham
Evelyn	John	Sir	West Dean
Goddard	Edward		Marlborough
Hollis	Denzil		Haughton
Hungerford	Edward	Sir	Farley
Jennour	Robert		Marston Meysey
Moore	Thomas		Heytesbury
Poole	Edward		Wootton Bassett?
Poole	Nevill	Sir	Oaksey
Thistlethwayte	Alexander, Jnr.		Winterslow
Tooker	Edward		Maddington
Wheeler	William		Westbury
White	John		Grittleton?

¹ The source from which the matter printed here is derived is the original manuscript, contained in two small vellum-covered folios which were copied by myself some forty years ago, when they were in the possession of a professional gentleman at Salisbury whose name I do not accurately remember - nor do I know what subsequently became of them.

² OPC Note - the tables in this transcription replace lists of text of names involved. The names have also been listed alphabetically rather than as in the originally documents.

The town of Malmesbury, as the spot in the county the most susceptible of fortification, became at first the most attractive place of meeting; but in the course of a few months the Committee greatly reinforced, in order to secure the combined object of maintaining a garrison at Malmesbury and securing the county generally. The names constituting this enlarged Committee are all set forth at page 637 of the sixth vol. of the Lords' Journals, and are as follows:-

Surname	Given Names	Title	Residence
	Charles	Lord Cranbourne	
	Philip	Earl of Pembroke & Montgomery	
	Philip	Lord Herbert	
	William	Earl of Salisbury	
Ashe	Edward	Esq.	
Ashe	John	Esq.	
Bailey	Thomas	Gentleman	
Baynton	Edward	Esq.	
Baynton	Edward	Sir	
Bennet	Thomas	Esq.	Norton
Brown	Robert	Gentleman	
Danvers	John	Sir	
Ditton	Humphrey	Gentleman	
Gifford	Richard	Gentleman	
Goddard	Edward	Esq.	
Goddard	John	Gentleman	
Goddard	Thomas	Gentleman	
Good	Robert	Gentleman	
Hippisley	Robert	Esq.	
Hodges	Thomas	Esq.	
Hollis	Denzil	Esq.	
Hungerford	Edward	Sir	
Jennour	Robert	Esq.	
Jesse	William	Gentleman	
Long	Robert	Gentleman	Whaddon
Long	Walter	Esq.	
Ludlow	Edmund, Jnr.	Esq.	
Ludlow	Edmund, Snr.	Esq.	
Martin	Edward	Gentleman	
Martin	Gabriel	Gentleman	
Moore	Thomas	Esq.	
Nicholas	Robert	Esq.	
Poole	Edward	Esq.	
Poole	Neville	Sir	
Popham	Alexander	Esq.	
Popham	Francis	Sir	
Sadler	William	Esq.	
Smith	Philip	Esq.	
Stokes	Edward	Gentleman	
Talboys	Richard	Gentleman	
Thistlethwayte	Alexander	Esq.	
Warneford	Edmund	Esq.	
Wheeler	William	Esq.	
Whitehead	Richard	Esq.	

Of this body three of more might at any time constitute a quorum, thus enabling them to act in sections in different parts of the county, as the exigencies of the war might require. Eventually they seem to have thought they would be more out of harm's way in a fortified house than in a town; and accordingly made choice of Falstone House, a little south of Wilton (the property of Sir George Vaughan). In this they were undoubtedly right; for in fact Malmesbury, as well as Marlborough and Devizes, was taken and re-taken half-a-dozen times in the course of the war. This

establishment was made in the spring of 1645. In the autumn of the same year Longford Castle, having been reduced by Cromwell, was occupied in a similar manner.

While this Falstone conclave dealt principally with the southern half of the county, other portions of the Committee were occasionally sitting and acting in Marlborough, Malmesbury, Devizes, and Salisbury; but I am inclined to think that this was the central place of business; for the Falstone, treasurers' accounts deal also with financial matters in the north of the county, though to a less extent; and further, because the county troops received their pay at Falstone; and, after the occupation of Longford Castle, William Ludlow, who commanded the horse, took up his station in and around the fortalice.

The names of some of the Falstone treasurers in succession were:-

Surname	Given Names
Cox	Thomas
Poulton	Thomas
Ditton	Humphrey
Good	Robert
Hill	Richard

- Salisbury men apparently; nomination to office by the month. The Committee's clerk was Mr. John Strange at a salary of £8 a month.³ In 1649 Mr. Strange was succeeded by Jonathan Hill.

When gathering for private use the memoranda here bearing the general name of The Falstone Day-Book, I had no expectation of their ever coming under the notice of your archaeological experts. A few miscellaneous entries have in consequence found place, which could not now be detached; but, as all the matters are homogeneous, it is hoped no objection will be taken. The verbiage is of course in numberless cases abbreviated; but no names are omitted; and the whole may form a sort of prelude to the narrative of the final settlements effected at Goldsmiths' Hall, already set forth in our Magazine, under the title of Wiltshire Compounders. (See vol. xxiii., 314; xxiv., 58, 308). To include a transcript of the various treasurers' accounts would have made the affair far too bulky. Neither have the charges been recited which were brought against some of the resident clergy, by which so many of them were displaced from their livings - those charges being creditable to neither party.

These County Committees had no authority to compound with Royalists by levies on real property; but they could deal with personals in the form of stock or rent, and re-let sequestered estates. A few more explanatory notes must close this introductory chapter.

"Delinquency" meant adherence to the King's party. A "Recusant" was a Romanist. The word "parsonage" must be taken in the modern sense of rectory. "A rowless thing," an expression often occurring in the terriers, otherwise spelt a "rowlist thing" and a "rowlass thing," seems to indicate wasted or unregistered land [?]. Money advanced "upon the propositions" was understood to rely on the public faith for re-payment - to what extent ever realized it were hard to say. "The twenty-fifth part," so called, was a direct levy on a man's personal property, if not under £200. "Illegal Assizes," another term of frequent occurrence refers to an action on the King's part, which the Parliament never forgave, namely, that of opening a commission at Salisbury to arraign for high treason the Earls of Salisbury, Pembroke, and Northumberland, and divers other friends of the Parliament. The "Negative Oath" was a promise not to take up arms against the Parliament. The "Covenant" embraced polemical issues of a far wider sweep.

THE LOG BOOK

1645 3rd June. Thomas Aylesbury, minister, of Kingston Deverill, subscribes upon the Propositions £20, to be paid presently; and engages to go home and live there quietly without prejudice to the Parliament, and to appear before us whenever we shall send for him to make his further composition. [Mr. Aylesbury must have been a prominent partisan in the Royal cause, for he is elsewhere styled "a great delinquent."]

1646 12th June. William Smith is become tenant to the State for the parsonage of Kingston Deverill for this year ending Lady-Day next, at £80. He is to discharge all duties and payments. The parsonage formerly belonged to Mr. Aylesbury, a great delinquent.

³ OPC Note £8 in 1642 would equate to more than £1500 in 2015
©Wiltshire OPC Project/2018/Dot Gurd, Teresa Lewis & Jodi Fuller