

## CHAPTER II.

*New M.P. for Wigan—Earl of Derby at Lancaster—Lathom House—Sermon in Parish Church—Public Petition from Ormskirk to Pray for Lady Derby's Downfall—The Siege—Wigan Prayers unanswered—Colonel Rigby, M.P.—Relief of Lathom and Massacre at Bolton—Local Families and the Rebellion—Famine and Pestilence in Wigan—Scarcity of Money—Prices—Wigan Tokens—Manchester's first Member—Battle of Preston—Flight to Wigan—Confusion in Wigan—The Town Sacked—Letter of Sir James Turner—Cromwell's first Letter from Wigan—Second Letter written at Wigan by Cromwell—Behaviour of Cromwell's Troops in Wigan—Execution of the King—Proclamation at Market Place—Rigby—Work of the Long Parliament—Cromwell, Ruler—Commissions at Wigan.*

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**T**HE spirit of revolution was now thoroughly uncurbed, and the leaders themselves were amazed at the extreme policies adopted by their followers, as well as at the ungovernable speed at which they were proceeding. Agitation was doing its work, and was altogether beyond the expectation and control of the original mild agitators. Reform! Reform! had been the primary cry, but so thoroughly had Parliament and the populace been imbued with the spirit of reform, that they had now persuaded themselves that any means to obtain their ends were legitimate. The more men took part in the revolutionary agitation the more they departed from their original motives of gentle revolution, and, because their minds had become full to repletion of the thoughts of their own selfish ends, they disregarded or became blind to all legal procedure. The terribly radical changes which the Parliamentarians were constantly effecting, estranged moderate reformers who joined the royal party, but Parliament only took the more decided actions for self-protection and preservation. The House was purged of members unfavourable to Parliamentary Radicalism, and Wigan, amongst other places, was deprived of the valuable services of its loyal member, Orlando Bridgeman.

The rector's son had been returned for the borough in 1640, eight years after he had been called to the bar of the Inner Temple. In 1642 he was expelled from the House of Commons for "assisting in the defence of Chester against the

Parliament;" but he sat in the King's Parliament at Oxford in 1644, and thus showed his contempt for the Cromwellian legislators. He remained loyal to the king, and was often active in his cause, for which, after the Restoration, he received the highest honours and promotions. He was Lord Chief Baron, and presided at the trial of the regicides. The fifth baronet was made Baron Bradford in 1794, and the second baron was created Earl of Bradford in 1815. When Orlando was expelled the House a new writ was issued, 30th December, 1645, and the Parliamentary candidate, John Holcroft, took his seat. He was a cadet of an old Lancashire family. The following is an interesting will of one Gilbert Holcroft, of Wigan, doubtless a relative of the member for Wigan:—

I, Thomas Houlcroft, Citizen and Armorer of London, and of ye parish of Olives, in ye Borrow of Southwarke, beinge sicke in body but well in minde, doe make and ordaine this my last will and Testament in manner and forme as followeth. Imprimis, I doe will and bequeath my spirit unto ye Lord which bought it, and my body to the earth, of which it was att firste made, to be buried in decent manner. Alsoe I doe give and bequeath to my father, Gilbert Houlcroft, of Wiggan, in ye County of Lancasheere, my best suite of apparell, with my coate and best hatt and twenty shillings in money. Alsoe I doe give my mother, Jane Houlcroft, ye sume of xxs. Alsoe I doe give my brother, Hamlett Houlcroft, ye sume of vs. Alsoe I doe give to his sonne, my cosen, Thomas Houlcroft, ye sume of vs. Alsoe I doe give every one of my sisters, to Anne ye like sume of five shillings; The like sume of vs. to my sister Margaret; The like sume of vs. to my sister Katherine; The like sum of vs. to my sister Ellen; The like sume of vs. to my sister Elizabeth. And I will and bequeath all the Lord hath given me in this world to my loveing wife, Elizabeth Houlcroft. To thend she may be enabled to pay the foremenconed legacies, with such debts as I doe owe to any man whatsoever, within three months next after my departure out of this life, yf thoy shalbe demanded of her. And for that end I doe againe give and bequeath to my loveinge wife, Elizabeth Houlcroft, all my worldly goods, chattels, moveables, or whatever is myne in this life. And to thend she may enjoy it I doe ordayne and appoint her to be my sole executrix, to have and enjoy it for thuse of her self and heyres forever, with peace and quietnes, she p'forming those p'ticulers before menconed according to ye true intent of this my last will and Testament Sett to my hand and seale revoking all other wills, yf any such should happen to be p'tended to be made by me att or in any place whatever. Wittness my hand this sixt day of April, 1647, in ye yeare of our Sovereigne Lord the King, &c. THOMAS HOULCROFT. Witness. William Prudden, the marke of Christopher Gye. Proved at London, 19 June, 1647, by Elizabeth Houlcroft, the relict and Executrix.

(Prerogative Court, Canterbury, No. 119 Fines.)

The Parliamentarians were carrying everything before them, and consequently half-hearted and undecided persons espoused their principles, and became clamorous in their cause. Their originally raw levies had become veterans in the field, and the stern discipline of the leaders maintained uniformity of action in the ranks. Every town and fortified place, except Lathom House, had yielded. Greenhalgh Castle, built by Thomas, Earl of Derby, had also withstood a protracted siege, and finally yielded to Cromwell's forces, who destroyed it all except the tower, which still remains to mark the site of the castle and commemorate its siege. The hopes of the Cromwellians rose high, but the Royalists, impressed with a knowledge of

right on their side, determined to make another struggle to regain lost ground. The Parliamentarians, masters of exaggeration, held up every action of Derby's as a bloodthirsty massacre, whilst all their own were tempered by leniency and godliness. It was so at the siege of Lancaster, to the gates of which Lord Derby had marched with 4,000 troops, and there demanded a surrender, which was resolutely refused. The unexpected attack commenced, the enemy defeated and routed, and the Puritans declared that the enemy had entered the town and killed men, women, and children with barbarous cruelty, dragged poor people from their houses and cut their throats with butchers' knives, fired the town, and then departed for Preston, highly satisfied with their bloodthirsty victory. Lord Derby's letter gives a somewhat more humane description of the attack and its result, which flushed his hopes. He says:—

When I came before the town [Lancaster] I summoned it, in his Majesty's name, and the Mayor, as I heard, counselled by the commanders for the Parliament, made me so slight an answer, after I expected it for a whole day, that I, enraged to see their sauciness against so good a king, made bold to burn the greater part of the town, and in it many of their soldiers, who defended it very sharply for two hours. But we beat them into the castle, and I, seeing the town clear from all smoke, spared the remainder of the town, and laid siege unto the castle. There was no woman or child suffered, or any but those who did bear arms, for so I gave directions to my soldiers, except some three or four that I think as likely to be killed by them.—Extract from a Letter by the Earl of Derby in *Memoirs of Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*.

The siege of Lathom House, which had a formidable position in the midst of a boggy flat, surrounded by a wall six feet thick, strengthened by nine towers, each of which had six pieces of ordnance, the whole surrounded by a moat twenty feet broad, was now (1644) not only the talk of Wigan and county, but of the whole country. Lord Derby was in the Isle of Man. Lady Derby refused to listen to the terms of Sir Thomas Fairfax, treated with disdain and contempt the compromising conditions of his deputy officers, and shut herself up in her strongly fortified house. Within the fortifications there were six regiments, each headed by a volunteer county gentleman as captain. The captains were Ogle, Chisenhall, Molyneux, Farrington, Rawstorne, and Charnock. The commander of all, under the Countess, was Major Farnes, a Scotchman. Every Wiganer talked of the French Countess of Derby—some with admiration, others with contempt, all with concern. Even clergymen, who were always fond of a little harmless gossip, talked eagerly of her condition and prospects. They, too, took decided opinions for or against her, many of them as they judged would be best for their temporal good. It is on record that one holy Puritan, a clergyman, of Wigan, the Parliamentarian rector, Bradshaw by name, wrote two sermons against this noble lady, hoping thereby that his efforts for the Church and Parliament might be reported at head-quarters to his benefit. His ecclesiastic position was dependent on the satisfaction which he gave to his patrons, and, consequently, his advice was only a conscientious one when he was

assured it would be acceptable to them. Parliament and Parliamentarians were to him far above his own conscience or judgment, for he knew that by disobeying them he was doing a wrong which, unlike many moral wrongs, brought its immediate material downfall. Bradshaw may have been a very conscientious man, but, if so, his conscience must first have been subordinated to a habit ungoverned by temperate or logical reasoning. He did not consider himself the tool of the Parliamentarians; but he certainly acknowledged he was their servant, and so placed himself and zeal at their disposal. His first politically remarkable sermon was actually delivered, let us hope to a more than usually gullible audience, in the Parish Church of Wigan, during the siege, from the text in Jeremiah: "Put yourselves in array against Babylon (Lady Derby) round about: all ye that bend the bow shoot at her: spare no arrows: for she hath sinned against the Lord." As Lady Derby was too much for her besiegers, this unmanly Ranter was never called upon to deliver his (to him) invaluable composition on: "Shoot against her round about: she hath given her hand: her foundations are fallen: her walls are thrown down." The siege was the talk of the country and the disgrace of the Puritans, who held special prayer meetings to invoke divine help for the destruction of this noble lady. Even her very neighbours at Ormskirk issued the following petition:—

To all Ministers and Parsons in Lancashire, well-wishers to our success against Lathom House, theise.

Forasmuch as more than ordinary obstructions have from the beginning of this present service agaynst Lathom House interposed our proceedings, and yet still remaine, which cannot otherwise be removed, nor our success furthered, but onely by devine assistance: it is therefore our desires to the ministers and other well-affected persons of this county of Lancaster, in publike manner, as they shall please, to commend our case to God, that as wee are appoynted to the said employment, soe much tending to the settling of our present peace in theise parts, soe the Almighty would crowne our weake endeavours with speedy successe in the said designe.

Ormskirk, April 5th, 1644.

RALPH ASHTON.  
JOHN MOOR.

How very differently were people affected towards this brave lady. In Wigan, Ormskirk, and indeed all Lancashire, there were those who admired and those who defamed. Everyone believed the siege to be a hopeless one, for, if the strong walls were not battered down, her few brave men destroyed, nor the house fired, it was believed the enemy would lie there till starvation drove out the devoted band into the relentless power of the "inveterate rebel, Rigby." Some said the lady's followers were fools, others, that they were brave men and true. There were proud saints who prayed for her destruction, and humble sinners who wished for success. Such is the law or custom of human nature, that the losing cause soon loses its champions. Hope of relief daily grew less, and her enemies and detractors grew more.

"The cry is, 'Still they come;' our castle's strength  
Will laugh a siege to scorn. Here let them lie  
Till famine and the ague eat them up.  
Were they not forced with those that should be ours,  
We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,  
And beat them backward home."

Without and within there was still much praying—some for destruction, some for relief. All prayers, in faith, went to the same throne. She, the commander of one hundred devoted men, retired into the solitude of her chamber, in her own house—the abode of her guileless children, and, on her bended knees, with weeping eyes, earnestly sought help against the oppressing foe. “Good, Christian,” men and women without beheld or bewailed her success. They were grieved to think that more than ordinary obstruction successfully stopped the destructive career of the assailants, who had tried everything and failed; yea, had confessed their failure. They had prayed for power to destroy, and publicly confessed their prayers were unavailing, and in their agony, like the old worshippers of Baal, in bitter chagrin, they cried more earnestly that they, the offenders, might be able to destroy the inoffensive, but haughty, lady—the lady of Babylon. They called her by foul names in their prayers, yet vengeance came not. There were no signs of success. They besought the parsons, ministers, and well-wishers of Lancashire to meet publicly, and, on bended knee, with simultaneous voice, to call down vengeance. In Wigan, as elsewhere, prayers were again raised; but the walls fell not, although many, in their simple faith, had gone out to see the result. Even at the sounding of the trumpet the walls were not—Jericho-like—levelled with the ground; but, on the contrary, Lady Derby succeeded in stealing their great gun, much to their discomfiture. The weak were sustained, the strong, hard-hearted ministers, parsons, and well-wishers were discomfited, and the Wigan prayerful visitors went home with their prayers unanswered.

Fairfax besieged her from January to March, 1644, with no little loss and much chagrin, and was then replaced by Alexander Rigby, M.P. for Wigan, with as little success and more disgrace. Wigan, as the stronghold of the Cavaliers, played a very important part in the history of the Great Rebellion. It nursed a deadly enmity against Puritan Manchester. When other boroughs passed over to the victorious Roundheads, Wigan only grew the more defiant, and assisted in every possible way to further the interests of royalty, whose growing and darkening difficulties only increased the fury of its burning zeal. So loyally stubborn was it that it now acquired the distinguished title of “malignant Wigan.” Any borough in Lancashire was capable of returning a Puritan member except itself, until the daring, energetic lawyer, statesman, magistrate, and colonel, Rigby, knowing that without some extraordinary effort it would be lost to his party, gave over the work of representing Preston to another Puritan, and, by unwearied activity, gained the interests of the Wigan voters, and represented them in the Long Parliament, from 1640, in spite of the great political influence of the Bradshaighs of Haigh, and the Catholic gentry, although he neither forgave nor forgot the malignancy of his opponent constituents. He was a Parliamentarian in heart and soul. His earnest, one-sided, and bigoted energy deserved the esteem of

even his enemies, for hypocrisy, the most despicable unmanliness in man, was not a part of his character, whatever his faults were. He had espoused the cause of the rebel party and openly avowed his opinions, when, as yet, there was little or no hope of success, and great likelihood of losing all his property, which was staked on the actions proceeding from his conscientious convictions. It is true that, like most of the others, he was at first but an advanced Liberal, and, like others, only gradually became a red-hot republican by the force of circumstances. There was no more active zealot in the field or Senate-house than he. In body and mind he was as nearly ubiquitous as possible. The most active Englishman of his age, he was engaged on almost every Parliamentary Committee, and often visited his constituency. He commanded at the siege of Lathom House, fought at Furness, was at the capture of Thurland Castle, and took part in the defence of Bolton, and was one of the Judges, yet nobody loved him. To this zealous Puritan, active man, and subtle reasoner Wigan yielded, for in every great struggle there are people who will neither declare themselves to be of one side nor another until they know which is likely to be victor, and thus many of the wavering constituents of Wigan joined themselves to the now victorious Roundheads, and thus the half-hearted majority, caring less for the honour of themselves and their town than for the safety of their lives and effects, returned a Puritan member, who, with all his godly zeal, was unmanly enough to contrive a scheme and bargain by which the Royalist masters of three Cambridge colleges were to be sold to the Algerines. Such was the man who was outwitted and overmatched by Lady Derby at Lathom House.

Lord Derby's house had always been famous for magnificence and hospitality. He was an excellent landlord, and yet many of his tenantry stood aloof in the hour of trouble. A braver woman, more devoted wife or better mother than his lady, never came from France to England; yet she was disliked by many, simply because she was French. Yet it would seem that those of her neighbours who would not fight for her condescended to watch and send her intelligence, for signal fires could neither be lighted on Ashurst nor Parbold beacons, as they were in the possession of the rebels. The rebels, under Rigby, knew well she could only be taken by surprise, and so marched their armies as far as Wigan, Standish, and Bolton, under the pretence that they had been ordered to Westmoreland. But neither stratagem, assault, nor compromise was sufficient to cause Lady Derby to give up Lathom House. The besiegers were afraid to approach nearer than four or five miles, because of the daring sallies made on them. They were discontented, and they mutinied and deserted, because their pay was in arrear. Disheartening news had come of the success of the Royalists at Bradford, the besieged in Lathom were strong, and the whole neighbourhood favoured them at last with their sympathies and made them acquainted with the news of the day. Colonel Egerton,

in command of the besieging forces, in the absence of Rigby, wrote pitiful appeals to Parliament. Special committees in Manchester prayed for supplies of ammunition, men, and money, whilst sadly deploring the ruined state of the county. The Papist army of Lathom was the dread of the land, although the oldest and best soldiers were besieging it, for it was considered useless to send raw recruits against such a "strong and violent garrison;" moreover, the neighbourhood of Wigan was swarming with malignants, and the county was bankrupt and begging from other counties.—(For full particulars see Civil War Tracts on the siege). Three years of civil war had drained the county of labourers, and the fields were left untilled, or where seed perchance had been sown no one was left to garner in the crops. Every man had become a soldier, and was either in active service or waiting and praying for an opportunity to fight, either on the one side or the other. The soldiers had to be provided for before the women and children, and want and famine were already beginning to work dire calamity. The district was groaning under insupportable taxes: the usual government taxes, local taxes for carrying on the county war, an Irish tax, and £800 a month to pay the mercenary Scots. The county exchequer was drained, and local members of Parliament and Cromwellians of influence were holding special meetings to draw up petitions to present to the House of Commons for supplies and release from taxes they were unable to gather, for even the formerly rich were impoverished. Estates from the malignants and Royalists were greedily confiscated, their cattle and crops devoured, and their ruined demesnes glutting the market till there were more cheap estates than able buyers at the ridiculously low prices, for they were not even worth the taxes levied on them. The brave lady of Lathom still held out. The Parliamentary forces of 1,000 foot and 400 horse were divided into several parts, and quartered around, until her husband, on his return from the Isle of Man, came with reinforcements, defeated the besiegers and drove them, with great disgrace and slaughter, through Wigan to Bolton, when a terrible revenge was taken by Derby, in what was exaggerated as the Bolton massacre, on the 28th May, 1644. In December of the following year Lathom House was given up at the express command of the king, whilst Derby and his Countess were in Rushen Castle, Castletown, Isle of Man, which was then the Earl's own property.

In 1647 Thomas Markland was mayor. The aldermen were Thomas Stanley, Bart., Rarus Standish, Robtus Mawdesley, Josephus Rigbie, Chrophrus Bancks, Willus forth, Willus Pilkington, Jacobus Molyneux, Georgius Rudall, Laurencicus fford, Jacobus Scott, Michus Pennington, Ambrosius Jollie, and Willus Brown. The bailiffs were Willus Tempest and Edrus Ormeshawe.

The terrible effects of war are never confined to the field of battle. Comrades not only fall, but families are left destitute. Commerce and trade are interrupted

and often ruined. However great and glorious the victory of war, its ravages ruthlessly reach the hearths and homes of the poor. The king himself and his nobles were beggars, so what could his poor followers be? All the able-bodied Wigan men had become soldiers, and their wives were left to provide for themselves and their little ones. Trade was at a standstill. Many of the wealthier merchants and artificers of the town had given all they had for the support of their party. The Bradshaighs of Haigh, themselves, had taken no active part in the war, although many of their relatives were Parliamentarians, and many of their tenantry had fought and fallen in the Royalist cause. The Catholics of Wigan—a numerous body—were peaceably inclined and loyal, yet were driven by circumstances which governed their personal interests to take up arms for the king. The old Catholic families of the neighbourhood—the Gerards of Bryn, Blundells of Crosby, Blundells of Ince, Norrises of Speke, Scarisbricks of Scarisbrick, Molineux of Sefton, Harringtons, and Fazakerleys—actively took the part of their king, and the Ffaringtons of Worden, though opposed to the illegal principles and arbitrary acts of their sovereign, adhered steadily to his cause in many a fatal field. In town and country there was nothing but preparation for war. Fathers and sons had left those dependent on them with no other comfort but hope. Whole families had neither food, fire, nor clothing, and so pestilence and famine were added to the ordinary horrors of war. Houses in Wigan were desolate; swarms of beggars were in every street and at every country house. Many who had been brought up in comfort or luxury were themselves reduced to poverty. Because of their finer tastes, bashfulness, or opinions of the ignobleness of beggary, many of them shut themselves up in their comfortless rooms, and there remained until death released their wearied souls from their emaciated bodies. The doors of formerly hospitable houses were closed, and the inmates themselves gone begging for bread. Anything that was eatable was welcome, even carrion. There was little food in the town, and no money to buy it, nor men to take it by force. Collections were made in the Parish Church and in the Catholic chapels, but the relief they afforded was barely felt. So bad had the condition of the inhabitants of Wigan become that even Parliament, so busied in questions of war, ordered an inquiry to be made. The condition of Wigan may be best known from a memorial of the time, entitled “A True Representation of the present sad and lamentable Condition of the County of Lancaster, and particularly of Wigan and Ashton.” Verified by Hyet, Ambrose, and Tilsley, local ministers of the Gospel:—

“The hand of God is evidently seen stretched out upon the county, chastening it with a three-corded scourge of sword, pestilence, and famine, all at once afflicting it. They have borne the heat and burden of a first and second war in an especial manner above other parts of the nation. Through them the two great bodies of the late Scottish and English armies passed, and in their very bowels was that great fighting, bloodshed, and breaking. In this county hath the plague of pestilence been raging these



three years and upwards, occasioned chiefly by the wars. There is a very great scarcity of all provisions, especially of all sorts of grain, particularly that kind by which that country is most sustained, which is full six-fold the price that of late it hath been. All trade, by which they have been much supported, is utterly decayed; it would melt any good heart to see the numerous swarms of begging poor, and the many families that pine away at home, not having faces to beg; very many now craving alms at other men's doors, who were used to give others alms at their doors—to see paleness, nay death, appear in the cheeks of the poor, and often to hear of some found dead in their houses, or highways, for want of bread."

This statement was also signed by the Rev. James Bradshaw, the Presbyterian Rector of Wigan, and the mayor and bailiffs. Parliament was acquainted with the dire local calamity, and a public collection was made throughout the country on Thursday, 7th September, being the day appointed for solemn thanksgiving for Cromwell's recent decisive victory.

Competition is the life of trade, but Wiganers of the seventeenth century (the principles of political economy being misunderstood) considered it to be a certain destructive of all mercantile transactions. Before free trade gave all the world the opportunity of becoming competitors in the English markets, home producers had a monopoly in the home markets of what could be more cheaply produced abroad. Farmers and merchants, without competition, could make their own prices. A heavy shower of rain before the golden crops were cut meant an increase on the poor man's loaf, and an inopportune shower before the seed was sown had a similar effect. At this period of our history there was a great demand for oats, of which there was great scarcity, and the farmers again seized the opportunity of raising their prices, and yet farmers then, as now, were proverbial for grumbling. It would seem they have got into such a habit from merely at first pretending to grumble. Famine succeeded the pestilence in Wigan, and the monopolising grain merchants did their utmost to make capital out of the emergency. The relief society was a tardy one and ill-administered. Oats were sold at four pounds a bushel, wheat fifty-three shillings and fourpence a bushel, beans forty-eight shillings the bushel, barley forty shillings and upwards. How could the poor live when a bushel of the national food cost half a year's wages? The price of common field beans made even them luxuries that the poor could not afford. Many for days had nothing but a pitcher of water with a handful of meal or barley in it. Even many of the formerly rich were so reduced as to look gladly upon their former necessities as luxuries.

Large fortunes have been made in Wigan by far-seeing, cautious speculators, and in it there are at this day more ready-money transactions than in any other town of equal size in England. The individual transactions are small, but the aggregate sum, made up by the numerous purchasers from the neighbouring townships, whose inhabitants come weekly or bi-weekly for their stores, in very great numbers is large. Ready-money customers are always welcome to the merchants,

who keenly compete for quick returns by accepting small profits. Thus there is generally plenty of petty cash in hand, but it was not always so. During the troublous times of the Great Rebellion very little money was coined, what was in the market became scarce, and, as is always the case in bad times, money transactions were made on a small scale. Silver pieces were curiosities in the hands of the poor, and copper coins (a very few of which was all they got for their labour), being the only representatives of their marketings, were scarce. It might be said that for ordinary mercantile purposes there was no silver and very little copper. People could not purchase large quantities of commodities because they could not afford, and tradesmen could not sell small quantities because they could give no change. Thus neither wealth nor the necessaries of life could be distributed because of the scarcity of money, the representative of wealth. There was a special scarcity of small coins, which were alone suited to the condition of the poor, who were, and are, always the most numerous ready-money retail purchasers, and so business in Wigan was like to come to a standstill until necessity, the mother of invention, devised a sort of compromise between the seller and consumer, which compelled the latter to be dependent on the good faith of the former. Then, as now, it was a recognised fact that there can be no business transactions without confidence. Tradesmen, doing a good business, and trusted by their customers, did what the Government should have done, issued coins. Not only tradesmen, but corporations, capitalists, and gentlemen throughout the country struck for themselves coins which they called tokens. They were simply the representatives of pledges that their owners would pay on demand, or rather give goods in exchange for, their value. These tokens were only for pence, halfpence, and farthings, and were profitable to tradesmen, as each tradesman would only accept his own tokens. Of course, this barter system gave rise to many evils, and especially to the truck-system, only recently forbidden by Act of Parliament. In Wigan these coins were of divers shapes, generally round, although some were even octagonal. Sometimes on one side they had the issuer's name, with his and his wife's initials, so that if the husband died the wife was still pledged to return their equivalent. If the owner had a coat of arms, it was stamped on the same side. On the other side was the name *Wigan* and the value of the coin. Their issue was an opportunity not to be lost by utterers of base coin. The evils of this home-made coin system were so great and widespread and well-known that in the reign of Charles II. silver pennies and twopences were issued, with the express intent of stopping both the evils and the tokens, but business by their medium was lucrative, and tradesmen gave increased enticements to customers to use their tokens. In 1672, however, an Act was passed forbidding the further use of tokens upon pains and penalties.

Banks, of Winstanley Hall, issued tokens in 1652, with the name *Gerard Banks* on the obverse side, and his arms, a fleur-de-lis, in each quarter, whilst on the reverse side was stamped *In Wigan. 1652*, and in the centre three escalop shells. Another coin is stamped on the obverse *Gilbert Barrow. Of*—then the Apothecaries' Arms in the centre, and on the reverse side—*Wigan. His Half Penny*, and in the centre *G. E. B. 1669*. The E in the centre is the initial of Mrs. Barrow. Other Wigan specimens are—*Thomas Cooper*, in the centre Cooper family crest, obverse—*Of Wigan. 1666*, in the centre *His Half Penny*, reverse; *William Laithewaite*, in centre the Armourers' Arms, obverse—*In Wigan. His Half Penny. 1668* (octagonal coin), reverse; *Matthew Markland*, Markland family arms in centre, obverse—*In Wiggon. 1664. M. G. M.* (centre), reverse; *Matthew Markland. 1666*. Markland arms, obverse—*Of Wigan. His Half Penny*, reverse; *Robert Winstanley*, dove with olive branch (centre), obverse—*Of Wigan. 1652*, in centre *R. J. W.*, reverse.

The tokens issued throughout the country at this period were of various sizes, some being as large as the half-crown of the present day, others as small as the modern fourpenny-piece. The few specimens of the Wigan halfpenny still preserved as curiosities are of good copper, and are about the size of a modern sixpence, but specimens of the Wigan penny are about the size of our halfpenny.

The Puritans fought for freedom, but then Government had to be sustained. Freedom degenerated to a confiscating legal licence, by which many suffered in Wigan. Little property and money were left in the possession of persons suspected of loyalty. Heavy taxes were levied, and if any man had money or property he was sure to be suspected, and his goods confiscated to the Commonwealth, that, like the horse-leech, could never have enough. Royalists, who retired from the struggle, were reduced to beggary, and the properties of exiles were given or sold to successful rebels. Commissioners were virtually appointed to find out and confiscate properties and valuable livings. Wigan was at this time under the power of the local governor, Major-General Charles Worsley, of the Platt, who had first distinguished himself at Manchester, the chief of Puritan towns. The enthusiastic preaching of the Rev. John Wigan, Independent parson, of the blood and fire type, was the means of converting Charles, son of a wealthy Manchester haberdasher, although the younger son of an ancient and distinguished family. From the day of his conversion Mr. Worsley became a zealot in the Parliamentary cause, took up arms against his duly anointed king, and, forthwith became a dear friend of Cromwell. Success after success, and earnest devotion to the game of revolution, gained for him the unlimited confidence of his great, but stern leader; and among other dubious honours he was chosen, with Harrison, to put out by "physical force" the Speaker of the Rump, and Algernon Sydney, who sat next

him. He also carried away to his own house the mace, or "bauble," as Cromwell was pleased to call it. The Parliamentarians had felt it their duty to disfranchise many small boroughs, presumably because of their insignificance when compared with unrepresented large boroughs and counties, but really because of their loyalty. Although Wigan had been the very head-centre of Royalists, it was too important a town for even them to think of disfranchising, although they disabled one of the members, Orlando Bridgeman, from sitting in the Long Parliament. Of all places, of course, faithful Manchester was the first to be considered in the redistribution, and Charles Worsley, of the Platt, Esquire, for his faithfulness in the destruction of the monarchy, was appointed its first M.P. As Major-General or Viceroy of Lancashire, Cheshire, and Staffordshire, he ruled with a rod of iron, as became a Calvinistic Puritan, compelling the people "quietly" to pay an income tax of ten per cent., and taking security from disaffected persons—all who had property were suspiciously watched, and considered disaffected. Finding he could not send money enough to the Exchequer of the Cromwellian Parliament, he proposed to tax all with an income of £50, "for," says he, "if your Highness shall please but to order us to descend to estates of fifty pounds per annum in lands, and one hundred pounds in personal estate, we shall raise much more than else we can; for in those counties one hundred pounds per annum is a considerable estate, and many that justly deserved to fall under the tax (Royalists) might be fetched in at fifty pounds per annum, whose estates reach not one hundred."

In 1648 such events as historians relate as marking special eras in a country's annals were being vigorously enacted in the neighbourhood of Wigan. Every day was adding a new and important page to the narratives of English struggles for constitutional liberty. In the month of August there were 30,000 troops in the county, the Royalists being nearly three to one of the Parliamentarians. The former had determined to fight their way, under the Duke of Hamilton, from Preston to London, and the stakes won by the Parliamentarians during the past eight years would be lost if they succeeded. Cromwell, through his couriers and spies, knew every move and intention of the enemy. By quick decision, a special trait in a general, which he possessed in a high degree, he determined to give battle at once before the enemy's troops were all combined. Immediately he had determined to fight, the whole army became a machine in his hand, and yet every individual unit in that machine a fellow-man acting under impulsive enthusiasm. With a glance at the surrounding country, and his previous knowledge of it, he made his plan and placed the different parts of his forces in their places of advantage, some in valleys, some on hills, and some in enclosed fields, as unconcernedly as a chessman places his knights and pawns. The terrible game was about to be played near Preston. Skirmishers—the pawns of the play—were sent out to parley with the foe till the knights and the castles were more

advantageously placed. The opposing generals read each other's minds in the movements of the men, and encountered or counteracted them accordingly. At length all was ready. Messages were signalled, and couriers galloped from general to officer, who instantly acted as commanded. In the low-lying ground, in enclosed fields, stood Cromwell's horse, their hoofs sunk in the miry ground: his foot were lining the lanes and slopes: the intrepid enemy, confident of success, in vast numbers poured out of Preston, which was then but poorly fortified; their scouts were bravely attacked, and driven back to the main body: the well-disciplined assailants, confident of their leader and the justice of their cause, moved stolidly on, and met their outnumbering foes, who were determined to fight for God and their king. The flint-locks were fired, the booming sound of the field-guns resounded, and both the armies were hidden in smoke. The ranks were thinned, but there was neither giving nor gaining of ground. Mixed now with the war-cry was the moaning of the dead. The horsemen boldly essayed to break the serried ranks, but in vain. The impetuous excitement grew fiercer and fiercer, the voice of the commander was unheard in the noise, order and discipline forgotten, every man for himself eager to slay, and yet, with one combined impetuous charge, horse and foot commingling, hand to hand and man to man, they rushed at each other, like beasts of prey, until the Royalists wavered, looked behind, and rushed by the lanes back towards the town, or away over the fields, followed by the now infuriated Cromwellians, who thus won the field, after four hours' desperate fighting. The Royalists rallied in the town, but Cromwell was too great a general not to take immediate advantage of his enemy's discomfiture. He closely followed at their heels, and entered Preston with four of his own regiments, followed by others. Here the struggle and carnage were renewed, but the Royalists were too utterly beaten and dispirited to rally heartily long, and so those who were not killed or taken prisoners were scoured from the streets away into the fields. The Duke of Hamilton retreated over the Hodder Bridge with his horse and foot, who were there fiercely attacked by Fairfax, and beaten, chased, captured, or killed. Other fugitives were chased for ten miles towards Lancaster, and were nearly all captured or slain. Royalists were lurking in secret places in houses, in hedges, in woods, and on hills all over the district, like hunted and wounded game. Thus was the victory at Preston won. The victor thanked Heaven for the sanguinary success, and then the darkness of the longed-for night enveloped alike the fugitive and the pursuer, the dying and the dead, the vanquisher and the vanquished. Ammunition and arms of great store and four thousand prisoners fell into the conqueror's hands, and one thousand of the enemy were slain.

The momentous and critical battle of Preston had been lost. The main body of

remaining horse and foot of the Royalists were hurrying in disorder to Wigan by the road and byeways, and even where there were no ways. The vanguard and rearguard lost each other: men and leaders seemed demented. Many fled where none pursued. The weather was foul and the roads bad. One-half the faint and weary ones lagged behind, and were cut down by the infuriated pursuers. On the evening of that unlucky Friday, after the tolling of the Curfew, these distracted horsemen and pikemen entered Wigan by the Standishgate. The enemy had followed in hot pursuit, but deeming it inadvisable to enter the town they, weary and dirty, lay down to rest in the fields in the neighbourhood between Standish and Boar's Head. The Royalists, however, were still in great dismay, for they imagined themselves pursued within the very walls of Wigan. Some skirmishing took place near Wigan between the loitering or stubborn Royalists and Cromwell's party, when a hundred prisoners were taken, and a general (Druske) and a colonel (Thornhaugh) killed. Meanwhile things were come to a sad state in the town. The Royalist pikemen and bludgeon bearers were drawn up in the Market Place. A false rumour arose that the enemy were at their heels, and immediately horsemen and footmen were in dreadful confusion. The pikemen charged their own leader, Sir James Turner. There was a stampede of horsemen, who galloped over the footmen in their eagerness to escape towards Warrington; the pikemen, in utter despair, cast away their pikes, regardless of consequences, and, as if possessed by fiends, sacked every house and plundered wherever they had hopes of gain. Every soldier was unmanned and disgraced by his own actions. To rally them was an impossibility, so completely had fear and recklessness taken possession of them. Sir James Turner, the commander of the last brigade, has left the following account of affairs during this evening:— "As I marched with the last brigade of foot through the town of Wigan I was alarmed that our horse behind me were beaten and running several ways, and that the enemy was in my rear. I faced about with that brigade, and in the Market Place serried the pikes together, shoulder to shoulder, to entertain any that might charge, and sent orders to the rest of the brigades before to continue their march, and follow Lieutenant-General Baillie, who was before them. It was then night, but the moon shone bright. A regiment of our own appeared first, riding very disorderly. I got them to stop till I commanded my pikes to open and give way for them to ride or run away, since they would not stay. But now my pikemen, being demented (as I think we were all) would not hear me, and two of them ran full tilt at me. One of their pikes, which was intended for my belly, I griped with my left hand; the other ran me nearly two inches into the inner side of my right thigh; all of them crying, of me and those horse, 'They are Cromwell's men!' This was an unseasonable wound, for it made, after that night, me unserviceable. This

made me forget all rules of modesty, prudence, and discretion—my choler being up, and my blood flowing! I rode to the horse, and desired them to charge through these foot. They fearing the hazard of the pikes, stood. I then made a cry come from behind them that the enemy was upon them. This encouraged them to charge my foot, so fiercely that the pikemen threw down their pikes, and got into houses. All the horse galloped away, and, as I was told afterwards, rode not through but over our whole foot, treading them down." Such was the confused and desperate state of affairs on the streets of Wigan on that otherwise quiet summer night (18th August, 1648).

Now was England in deep tribulation. Her children had risen up, defied, defeated, and taken prisoner her king in 1648; her strongholds were in the hands of her rebellious sons, and her sacred places occupied by ranting clergymen, who declared they were not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, although that Gospel might well have been ashamed of many of them. The Roundheads were masters of the situation, although they still guarded with drawn sword what the sword had apparently won. They had played a deep game, but there was yet an odd chance of their losing, and so they struck terror into the timid, exacted homage from the discontented and suspected, flattered, and made great promises to their faithful adherents, and withal daringly called down the blessings of the Deity upon their blood-stained labours. It was after scattering the wearied and dispirited fugitive Royalists in Lancashire that Cromwell wrote the following letter to the committee at York, from Wigan:—

"Wigan, 23rd August, 1648.

Gentlemen,—I have intelligence even now come to my hands, that Duke Hamilton, with a wearied body of Horse, is drawing towards Pontefract, where probably he may lodge himself and rest his Horse; as not daring to continue in those countries whence we have driven: the country-people rising in such numbers, and stopping his passage at every bridge.

Major-General Lambert, with a very considerable force, pursues him at the heels. I desire you that you would get together what force you can, to put a stop to any further designs they may have and so be ready to join with Major-General Lambert, if there shall be need. I am marching northward with the greatest part of the army, where I shall be glad to hear from you. I rest.

Your affectionate friend and servant,

OLIVER CROMWELL."

Cromwell, in another letters, says:—"At last the enemy drew up within three miles of Wigan; and by that time our army was come up, they drew off again, and recovered Wigan before we could attempt anything upon them. We lay that night in the field close by the enemy: being very dirty and weary, and having marched twelve miles of such ground as I never rode in all my life, the day being very wet. We had some skirmishing that night with the enemy, near the town; where we took General Van Druske and a Colonel, and killed some principal officers, and took a hundred prisoners; where I also received a letter from Duke Hamilton, for a civil usage

towards his kinsman, Colonel Hamilton, whom he left wounded there. We took also Colonel Hurry and Lieutenant-Colonel Innes, sometime in your service. The next morning the enemy marched towards Warrington, and we at the heels of them. The town of Wigan, a great and poor town, and very malignant, were plundered almost to their skins by them."

From this short letter is known the general state of the Royalists all over the country; but the same pen, at the same table in Wigan, well describes the sad plight of his own followers immediately after the battle of Preston. Poor England! to what a sad state a foolish, headstrong king and an infatuated Puritan had brought you. But thus it is in every civil war, the great do wrong and the poor suffer; one man sins and a whole country suffers. The poor king is a prisoner, hearths and homes are desolate; the fields are left untilled; the bread-winners are targets for the guns of their fellow-countrymen on the battle-field, while the children weep at home because they have nothing to eat; every man's hand is raised against his fellow, and the victor thanks God for giving him power to bring his native land to such a pass. That Wigan letter of Cromwell's is as follows:—

"To the Right Honourable the Committee of Lords and Commons at Derby House: These. Haste, haste.

Wigan, 23rd August, 1648.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

I did not (being straightened with time) send you an account of the great blessing of God upon your army. I trust it is satisfactory to your Lordships that the House had it so fully presented to them.

My Lords, it cannot be imagined that so great a business as this could be without some loss; although I 'confess' very little compared with the weightiness of the engagement, there being on our part not an hundred slain, yet many wounded. And to our little it is a real weakening, for indeed we are but a handful. I submit to your Lordships, whether you will think fit or no to recruit our loss, we having but five poor regiments of foot, and our horse so exceedingly battered as I never saw them in all my life. It is not to be doubted but your enemy's designs are deep. This blow will make them very angry: the principles they went on were such as should a little awaken Englishmen; for I have heard it from very good hands of their own party, that the Duke made this the argument to his army, that the lands of the country, and [illegible the next line or two, from the ruin of the paper; the words lost mean clearly, "That the Scots were to share our lands among them, and come to inhabit the conquered country." A very high figure of rumour indeed!] which is done in part, there being a transplantation of many women and children and of whole families in Westmoreland and Cumberland, as I am credibly informed (for the moment). Much more might be said; but I forbear. I offer it to your Lordships that money may be sent to pay the foot and horse to some equality. Some of those that are here, seventy days before I marched from Windsor into Wales, have not had any pay; and amongst the horse, my own regiment, and some others are much behind. I wish your Lordships may manage it for the best advantage, and not be wanting to yourselves in what is necessary, which is the end of my offering these things to you. My Lords, money is not for contingencies so as were to be wished; we have very many things to do which might be better done if we had wherewithal. Our foot want clothes, shoes, and stockings; these ways and weather have shattered them all to pieces. That which was the great blow to our House was (besides the weather and incessant marches) our



march, ten miles, to fight with the enemy, and a fight continuing four hours in as dirty a place as ever I saw horse stand in, and upon the matter the continuance of this fight two days more together in our following the enemy, and lying close by him in the mire [moths again and mildew] . . . . . until at length we broke him at a near . . . . . a great party of our horse having . . . . . miles towards Lancaster, who came up . . . . . to us, and were with us in all the action. These things I thought fit to intimate, not knowing what is fit to ask, because I know not how your affairs stand nor what you can supply.

I have sent Major-General Lambert, upon the day I received the enclosed, with two thousand horse and dragoons and about fourteen thousand foot in prosecution of the Duke, and the nobility of Scotland with him, who will, I doubt not, have the blessing of God with him in the business. But indeed his horse are exceeding weak and weary. I have sent to Yorkshire and to my Lord Grey to alarm all parts to a prosecution, and if they be not wanting to the work I see not how many can escape. I am marched myself back to Preston, and so on towards Monro or otherwise, as God shall direct.

As things fall out, I shall represent them to you, and rest,

My Lords and Gentlemen,

Your most humble Servant,

OLIVER CROMWELL."

The behaviour of Cromwell's pious soldiers while stationed in Wigan was much to their credit. Most of them led an irreproachable life, and were to all appearance sincerely pious, for which they were much respected by the inhabitants. The wild licence almost invariably connected with military life was never seen in the camp, whilst habits of profaneness, debauchery, and intemperance were apparently unknown to his followers.

The historical English stain is now (1649) an accomplished fact. All England, terror-stricken, looks aghast at its own handiwork. Thousands of poor, deluded, self-denying men had been slain in the late wars with comparative unconcern, but now the death of one man, and that one man the king, sends an electric shock of consternation through the whole national system. The lives of English kings had often been threatened before, but here was one actually beheaded on the public street, apparently with a national sanction, and yet each individual felt in his heart he had not sanctioned so much. Those who had allowed it felt the tortures of the uncaptured guilty murderer, and those who refused to interfere in his behalf felt possessed of a coward's conscience. The dark deed had scarcely been done when all, for a moment, stood in blank amazement; then, as if awakening from an infatuated phrenzy, looked on all sides for a scapegoat. Oliver Cromwell would certainly have been marked out at this time as an object deserving the worst retribution, but his own diplomatic cunning made him master of the situation. The experience which his army had gained had made it the best in Europe, and, knowing what an instrument of power in his own hand it was, he petted it until it fawned upon him, as a dog does on its indulgent master. Politicians determined to make a blow at his great power by first abridging the power of the army and abolishing the duties of the chief officers, of whom he

certainly was now the recognised chief. He acted with a high and wary hand. Royalists, already condemned, were tried and executed designedly to terrify others who might still be bold enough to think of resisting a Government more burdensome and tyrannical than that of their martyr-king. An Act was immediately passed by the Cromwellians declaring it to be unlawful to proclaim any person King of England, and read in all market towns on market-days. It was by this tardy means that many first knew of the execution of their Sovereign. The new Act was publicly read in the Market Place of Wigan at eleven o'clock of the forenoon of the 9th February, being market day, ten days after the execution of the king. The Rump Parliament consisted of peers, soldiers, and lawyers. Of the lawyers one of the most indefatigable was Alexander Rigby, virtually now the only member for Wigan, as Orlando Bridgeman had long been disabled for joining Lord Strange in 1642, and beside whose labours those of the other member, Mr. Holcroft, sank into insignificance. Many small boroughs had been disfranchised because of their disaffection during the late troubles, and of all places Wigan had given great trouble; yet Rigby was true to the Parliamentary cause, and, therefore, was retained as a most useful member. He remained Wigan's only real representative till 1650, when he died, whilst on circuit at Chester. He was one of the fifty-nine members who signed the king's death warrant. At his death Wigan was virtually disfranchised, for Cromwell never could either forgive or forget its malignancy. It was not represented again during his lifetime, but in the protectorate of his son two members were again returned: Hugh Forth, merchant, of London, and Raufe Markland, an inhabitant of the town, and living at the Meadows. The latter is recorded as being the last member for Wigan who received wages for his representation. These gentlemen were the representatives during 1658-1659.

The Long Parliament entertained lofty notions of its mission on earth—for from the very fact that it was allowed to exist and prosper the belief in its special mission waxed stronger. To do things partially or by halves was, in the opinion of its enthusiastic supporters, altogether beneath such a well-appointed house. To banish kings—the authors of all English ills—from the throne, purge England of monarchies, purify the language, and rectify the machinery of politics was only a small portion of its labours of love. Its duty was to dissolve, decompose, and annihilate the very sources of all English evils, and restore to the nation a theoretically constitutional purity. To cure national epidemics was a great good, but its calling was to destroy the very causes of political disease. Great was the Herculean labour staring it in the face, but greater still was its confidence in itself. It is an easy matter to see faults. This Parliament saw evils, of no small magnitude, in the Church, and its efforts there to control local ecclesiastical matters, and compel Britons to be Christians, were not less than its indomitable efforts in the field.

Commissions were appointed to go down and examine minutely in every parish the state of the church, its wealth and appearance, the devoutness of the parishioners and priests, and how they were affected to the Parliament. Episcopacy was abolished, Calvinistic Puritanism alone was to be tolerated, and especially where the churches were well endowed. Poor parishes were of little consequence, doubtless because they were deemed of little power, but such as had good livings it was deemed advisable to take under the paternal care of the Parliament—so great were the temptations of wealth to lure aside from the straight and narrow path. It seemed no robbery on the part of this great Parliament to confiscate, for political purposes, the church livings of non-Puritan clergymen!

In 1650 the despotism of Cromwell asserted itself. Usurpers tried all they could to please their friends and win over or trample down their foes. Tyranny had been cut down in the person of the king, and again it rose in the conquering Cromwell. There were secret detestation and open rebellion. His enemies became bolder, and many of his friends and admirers lukewarm. He knew the exact state of affairs from his numerous spies. His high hand was lifted with the rod of iron, and his devotees were made major-generals of England. This, he declared, was a necessity for self-defence and national protection. These major-generals were specially commissioned to deprive all Episcopalian Churchmen and Royalists of power, especially in the shape of wealth. Hopes of reconciliation were gone. Negotiation and the Act of Oblivion had failed, and Parliament insisted that bishoprics should be dissolved, and that their lands should revert to the Government. These had caused him great trouble and expense, and so, he said, they deserved special punishing. Six of the eight newspapers then published in England defended his policy of exacting a tax of one-tenth upon the opponents' property above a certain amount. Of course, Episcopalian, Catholic, and malignant Wigan came in for her share in this arbitrary measure.

Wisdom is justified of all her children, and this Parliament was wise, even when unjust. Money was wanted, and Parliament knew that it was to be found in the churches and so determined to take it, but the means of stealing it wisely had yet to be suggested and adopted. There were many schemes for the crafty appropriation, but none seemed to assimilate more naturally with the Parliament's devout character than that of appointing a trial, or sort of Shibboleth, by which truly religious parishes should be distinguished from the merely pretentious. The determination was really to plunder ministers of the Gospel, who had hitherto been exempted from the confiscations visited upon all other property holders. There was no intention of plundering those who were not rich, whatever their creed or religious pretensions might be. The Cromwellians had hitherto spared no opposers, and now

clergymen were to be specially dealt with. Soldiers were allowed to pillage their houses, whilst they themselves were cast into prison, and their homeless families left to wander wherever they chose—often begging for a bare subsistence from door to door, or living on the charity of the loyal gentry. Before Cromwell's Commissioners visited the doomed towns a day of solemn fasting and thanksgiving was appointed, when certain special or test forms had to be gone through. There were sixteen inquisitions held by this Commission in Lancashire in 1649, and of these six were held at Wigan, being one of the most important livings in the county. This very Parliament, which now sent these Commissioners to Wigan, was the one that had robbed the borough of its representative member, Orlando Bridgeman, and deprived Dr. Bridgeman, the member's father, of his living there in 1645, after being rector for thirty years, and appointed in his place the ranting turncoat Presbyterian, James Bradshaw. When this plundering Commission came to Wigan Bradshaw held the living. Dr. Bridgeman and his successor, Bradshaw, should not be mentioned together, except to make the latter, by comparison, seem more odious. The bishop was what he pretended to be, a quiet, inoffensive, and useful Episcopalian clergyman, consistent in his acts, and exemplary in his life. Like a true Christian, his religious principles were unaffected by politics. He was of gentle parentage, his father, Edward Bridgeman, having been Sheriff of Devon in 1578. After being educated, and afterwards elected a Fellow and Master of Magdalen College, Cambridge, he was appointed chaplain to James I., by whom he was presented to the living at Wigan in 1615, which was then the second best living in the county, although only worth £80 13s. 4d. a year. He was also Prebendary of Lichfield and Peterborough, and on the 9th May, 1619, was consecrated Bishop of Chester, which high calling he held till Episcopacy was suspended by the Commonwealth, when, 15th December, 1650, all his effects were sold for £1,059, and he retired to his son's house at Moreton, where he died about 1658, and was buried at Kinnersley Church, in Shropshire, where his grandson, in 1719, erected a monument to his memory. Like a weather-vane, Bradshaw turned with every religious or politico-religious breeze, and these winds changed often in his day. When he was appointed in 1645, in place of the deposed Bishop Bridgeman, the town was very malignant, and he tried to please the people by seeming to be all for the King and Church, although his was distinctly a Nonconformist appointment. When the Parliamentarians took possession of Wigan he feared for his life much, and for his living more, and at once took to preaching Puritan cant of the most unmanly nature. Now he seems to see a glimmering hope of Royalist success, but, foolish in his wisdom, neglects to keep the fast on Thursday, 13th June, and so he was degraded from Wigan by his own quondam supporters. His degradation brought

repentance, and, after again conforming to the ruling party, he was appointed to the Chapel of Rainford, in Prescott. Here he kept comparatively quiet until the national favourite, Monmouth, rose in arms, and gained every prospect of success, when Mr. Bradshaw, of course, joined him; but, instead of the rich living which he expected, he was ignominiously imprisoned. The existence of this Nonconformist was a most unenviable one. His mind was full of hope and doubt: hoping for preferment, yet doubting his deserts. The half-smothered voice of his conscience was sufficiently audible to cause him disturbance. Though flattered by the success of his own designs, continual plotting and strategy were the necessary consequents of his unsettled ambition, and thus, whatever greatness he might have accidentally attained, permanent happiness was beyond his reach, for, like all men of his class, he was necessarily carried hither and thither by the rise and fall of the tide of affairs to which he had voluntarily subjected himself. Politics and religion were the disturbed affairs in which he trusted, and they could scarcely be more unsettled than in his time, and, consequently, he was tossed like a helpless and giddy waif on the ocean. So wavering was his ambition that he was willing to become the people's puppet, and woe to the man, in any age, who is so void of self-will as to allow himself to become the tool of others, for he must inevitably pay the ignominious penalties of unscrupulous popularity.

Wigan and every living in the neighbourhood were closely scrutinised by the Commission. Every witness who could give evidence was examined, every particular inquired into, and a voluminous report sent to Parliament. Particulars of these Parliamentary Inquisitions of 1649 and 1650 are to be seen in the Lambeth MSS. The Commissioners, in their reports, represented that there was a parish church within Wigan, and a mansion house, with the appurtenances, called the parsonage of Wigan. They found the glebe lands to be worth £30 a year, chief rents about £30 a year; tithe, corn, and privy tithe worth £40 a year. The whole tithes were valued at £417 10s. 8d., but from this there had to be deducted a rent charge of £20, payable to the Cathedral of Lichfield. The inquiry further elucidated the fact that the incumbent did not keep the Fast of June 13th, although reported to be a "painful, able, preaching minister"; so he was immediately deprived of the benefice, and the young Charles Hotham appointed in his stead. Hotham studied judicial astrology, and searched into the secrets of nature.—(Calamy's Nonconf. Man., vol. II., page 181). Half of the tithes of Haigh belonged to Roger Bradshaigh, Esq., and his ancestors, and they paid £16 per annum to the Rectors of Wigan for divers years, and also to Mr. Bradshaw, but they only paid £3 6s. 8d. before Dr. Massie's time (1604).—(Parl. Inq., Lambeth MSS.)

Those who look for faults very easily find them, and it was the duty of this Commission to look for them. To have wealth was sufficient ground for being

suspected. Parent parishes in towns and country offshoots were keenly scrutinised. It pretended to find out the able preacher and honest man. Mr. Richard Baldwin was then doing duty as incumbent of the old Parish Church of Holland, formerly a chapel belonging to Wigan Parish Church, but it discovered also he had not kept "the late Fast Day." This was sufficient, and his tithes were sequestrated. The Commissioners reported that there was a parsonage house, glebe, and housing at Bryn, of the yearly value of £161; three water corn-mills, with £30 a year and the tithes of corn; and small tithe, worth £445 2s. a year. Mr. Charles Herle was the incumbent, "one orthodox, Godly preaching minister, but did not observe Thursday, the 13th of June inst., as a day of humiliation." He had been presented by the Earl of Derby, who claimed to be patron.—(Parl. Inq., Lamb. MSS., vol. II.) In 1645 the committee of plundered ministers recommended, and the Parliament ordered on the 2nd March, that £40 per annum should be paid out of the tithes of Culcheth, sequestrated from John Culcheth, Esq., a Papist and delinquent, for the increase and maintenance of the minister of the chapel of the new church in Winwick, there being but £5 belonging to the said chapel. The brothers and sisters of Mr. Culcheth had been wrongfully deprived of these tithes, which had been settled by their father, John Culcheth, Esq., by deed dated the 14th of July, 16th Charles I., 1640, on his younger children. This plundering order was rescinded on the 29th August, 1648, although the grossly injured parties did not receive the benefit of the tardy and reluctant justice which was done them in the year 1650.—(Culcheth Papers). The Commissioners found that the godly and painful minister of Culcheth Chapel, Mr. Leigh, did not observe the Fast of 13th June. The tithe of Culcheth, worth £53 a year was sequestrated owing to the delinquency of John Culcheth, Esq. The chapel of Rakeden, two miles from its parish church, had a stipend of £3 1s. 7d. per annum, paid out of the Duchy of Lancaster, and a donation of £2 per annum, given by Mr. Richard Blackburne, late of Newton, for a preaching minister. The tithes of Newton were valued at £60 per annum, and £83 1s. 3d. "was lately received by Mr. Thomas Morrison, deceased, as his salary." The minister was Mr. Thomas Blackburne, who came to the place by the general consent of the whole chapelry. He was "a preaching cure, but did not observe the last fast." He had £23 1s. 7d. as his salary.—(Parl. Inq., vol. II.)

Like the postscript of a lady's letter, the last sentence is generally the chief information of all the Commissioners' reports.

The Charity Commissioners reported that the whole town of Orrell, half of Billinge, and a fourth of Winstanley, were divided from the parish of Wigan, and annexed to the parish of Holland. They found that the Curate of Billinge, who received £50 a year from the Rector of Wigan, led a quiet, honest life, and that he

seemed to have been a good Christian; but foolishly or otherwise he neglected to keep the Fast of 13th June, and, of course, was reported by the Parliamentary Inquisitors, and deprived of his living, just as his own patron rector, James Bradshaw, had been removed from Wigan.—(Parl. Inq., Lambeth MSS., vol. II.)

The old "call books" or jury lists are on stamped "pot" pages, each page having two "1 penny" stamps, and, in addition, having the Inland Revenue stamp, stating that the duty on the paper was "five pence a quire." Those for 1647, 1649, 1650, 1651, and 1681 have been placed at my service, and are specially useful in notifying the prevailing important trades: braziers, pewterers, mercers, smiths, coverlet-weavers, barbers, plumbers, dyers, and butchers being those most frequently mentioned. In 1649 there were no less than seventeen aldermen, exclusive of the Mayor, and in 1650 twenty-four. From these burgess-lists jurymen were drawn by lot to decide cases tried before the Mayor in the Moot Hall.

No documents during the Commonwealth bore any reference to the king in the date, as before and after that period, and in no Wigan date is his Highness mentioned, or even the year of the Commonwealth. The following examples are taken from the Wigan Call Book. All these Latin headings are full of strange contractions.

Noia Burgensin infra Vill & Burg de Wigan vocat ad le Session sive meeting day Tent in le Mooth hall infra villam & Burg de Wigan in Com Lanc Cora Josephe Rigby Gen. Major ejudem vill et Burgi die sabbati vizt xxii die Decembr p. ante festu na<sup>ta</sup> Dm 1649.

The Grand Jury List or Call Book for 1647 contains the following names:—

Robtus Markland, maior.  
 Thomas Stanley, barr., ald.  
 Radus Standish, ald.  
 Robtus Mawdesley, ald.  
 Josephus Rigbie, ald.  
 Chrophus Bancks, ald.  
 Willus forth, ald.  
 Jacobus Molyneux, ald.  
 Willus Pilkington, ald.  
 Georgius Rudall, ald.  
 Laurancius fford, ald.  
 Jacobus Scott, ald.  
 Michus Pennington, ald.  
 Ambrosius Jollie, ald.  
 Willus Browne, ald.  
 Willus Tempest, ball.  
 Edrus Ormshawe, ball.  
 Rogerus Baron, attor., jury.  
 G— Sherrington, attor., jury.  
 Willus Waletton.  
 Robtus Briggs.  
 Rogerus Scott.  
 Ricus Casson.  
 Willus Baldwin.  
 Willus Bancks.  
 Radus Browne, dyer.  
 Jacobus Croucke (?).  
 Willus Glover, jury.  
 Robtus Baron, jury.

Robtus Winstanley, jury.  
 Thomas Turner, gen.  
 Ango forth, gen.  
 Alex. Tompson, gen.  
 Willus fford de Swindley, jury.  
 Johos Standish.  
 Jacobus Atherton, jury.  
 Johos Hardie, jury.  
 Willus Gardn<sup>r</sup>, jury.  
 Robtus Langshaw.  
 Thomas Patricke.  
 Jacobus Langshaw, jury.  
 Thomas Leyland.  
 Rogerus Lathwate.  
 Radus Astley.  
 Gilbtus Ashton.  
 Jacobus Higham.  
 Robtus woods.  
 Robtus Markland, jury.  
 Arthurus Gibbon.  
 Thomas Bancks.  
 Thomas Barrow.  
 Edmundus Molyneux.  
 Thomas Bullocke.  
 John Platt.  
 Thomas Bancks, pewt<sup>r</sup>.  
 Rogerus wood, smith.  
 Henricus Lee.  
 Seath Mason.

&c., &c., &c.

The under-named list of burgesses for 1649 has the following heading:—

Burgus de Wigan } Visus franc pleg sive Seth Tent in le Mooth halle infra vilde Burg de Wigan in  
in Com Lanc } Com Lanc coram Ambrosie Jollie Gen. Major vill et Burgi pbd die sabti (vizt  
sexto die Octobris Anno Dm 1649.

These documents are endorsed outside as "Records of ye Qr. Sessions, Wigan."

Ambrosius Jollie, maior.  
Jacobus Comes Derby.  
Ricus Dus Molineux.  
Carolus Brandon.  
Ricus Houghton, barr.  
Thomas Stanley, barr.  
Willus Gerrard, barr.  
Georgius Middleton, barr.  
Alex. Radcliffe, balnei miles.  
Thomas Tildesley, miles.  
Orlando Bridgeman, miles.  
Cicild Trafford, miles.  
Johes Stanope, miles.  
Johes Talbott, miles.  
Robtus Wingfeild, miles.  
Thomas Perient, miles.  
Willus Bradshaw, miles mortuus.  
Vivian Molyneux, miles.  
Radus Blackstones, miles.  
Johes Booth, ar.  
Edrus Standish, ar.  
Ricus Shutleworth, ar.  
Petrus Venables, ar.  
Chrus Anderton, ar.  
Ricus Lathom, ar.  
Thomas Gerard, senior.  
Willus Norres, ar.  
Robtus Blundell, ar.  
Alex. Rigbie de Burgh, ar.  
Alex. Rigby de Middleton, ar.  
Ricus Holland, ar.  
Radus Ashton de Middleton, ar.  
Johes Moore, ar.  
Edrus Butterworth, ar.  
Edrus Ashton, ar. mortuus.  
Edrus Gerard, ar.  
Edrus Hyde, ar.  
Ricus Boyer, ar.  
Petrus Daniel, ar.  
Hugo Charnley, ar.  
Rogerus Newell, ar.  
Ricus Alport, ar.

Johes Meare, ar.  
Johes Gerard, ar.  
Edrus Bromley, ar.  
Radus Sneade, ar.  
Ricus Urmeston, ar.  
Robtus Gardner, ar.  
Abrahamus Langton, ar.  
Edrus Scarsbricke, ar.  
Johes Holecrofte, ar.  
Georgiu ffog, ar.  
Adamus Hulton, ar.  
Robtus Browne, ar.  
Bartholomeus Hesketh, ar.  
Thomas Lee, ar.  
Henr. Turvile, ar.  
Ricus Standish, ar.  
Josephus Climsman, ar.  
Willus Smith, ar.  
Samuell Bispam, ar.  
Willus ffarington, ar.  
Georgius Lee, ar.  
Thomas Worsley, ar.  
Edrus Chisnall, ar.  
Ricus Hatnall, ar.  
Thomas Longworth, ar.  
Abrahamus Launce, gen.  
Alex. Holt, gen.  
Oliver Markland, gen.  
Johes Bretherton, gen.  
Radus Browne, gen.  
Thomas Markland, gen.  
Georgius Warren, gen.  
Lyonall ffarington, gen.  
Johes Dunbabin, gen.  
Radus Heaton, gen.  
Thomas Ince, gen.  
Thomas Anderton, gen.  
Willus Westbye, gen.  
Ricus Fleetwood, gen.  
Henr. fleetwood, gen.  
Carolus Walmialey, gen.  
Thomas Berrington, gen.



Willus Dicconson, gen.  
 frus Sanders, gen.  
 Ricus Bishopp, gen.  
 Edrus Ashton, gen.  
 Petrus fulkes, gen.  
 Petrus Travers, clicus.  
 Robtus Fogge, clicus.  
 Petrus Shaw, clicus mortuus.  
 Johes fuge, clicus.  
 Jacobus Whittakers, clicus.  
 Edrus Eltonhead, gen.  
 Edrus Tarbuck, gen.  
 Alex. Bradshawe, gen.  
 Radcliffe Gerard, gen.  
 Thomas Sergeant, gen.  
 Willus Walton, gen.

Edrus Parr, gen.  
 Thomas Alburgh, gen.  
 Elizeus Heyes, gen.  
 Georgius Dalton, gen.  
 Phillippus Asley, gen.  
 Edrus Dicconson, gen.  
 Thomas Hey, gen.  
 Thomas Breares, gen.  
 Willus Turner, gen.  
 Egidius Heysham, gen.  
 Willus Prescott, gen.  
 Ricus Sankey, gen.  
 Robtus Roe, gen.  
 Johes Gardner, gen.  
 Robtus Woods.  
 Radus Scott de Pembton.