

**WIGAN AND
THE
ENGLISH
CIVIL WARS
1637–1662**

**A BETA
RESEARCH BOOK**

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INTRODUCTION TO PROJECT

This project was researched and written by Eileen Bithell and Eileen Walsh together with BETA students, who have learning/physical disabilities.

We have a passion about Wigan's history and the idea for the project came about as Wigan's very important role in the English Civil Wars has been largely neglected. Also, May 2012 was the 350th anniversary of the granting of King Charles II charter to Wigan in gratitude for the town's loyalty to both him and his father King Charles I. The charter acknowledges Wigan as an ancient town and was henceforth known as the Ancient and Loyal Borough of Wigan.

BETA successfully applied to Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant to carry out research, print a book, hold a number of English Civil War exhibitions and organise an English Civil War re-enactment day. We were supported in the application by Lord Peter Smith, Leader of Wigan Council; Ray Hutchinson, Rector of Wigan; Rachel Bryant, Museum of Wigan Life; John O'Neill; James Maloney, Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester; and Lisa Nandy M.P. for Wigan.

The project has proved both enjoyable and successful which can be seen in this book and from the English Civil War Day which was watched by 6,000 people, some from overseas and other areas of the country. The feedback from this day can be summed up in one of the comments we have received via email:

Hamish Lancaster wrote: "Brilliant and about time Wigan recognised its important historical role in the English Civil Wars. Cmon' the Royalists!!!!"

Our aim is to inform people of their local history in an enjoyable, visual way, especially young people who may not be aware of Wigan's long and fascinating history. We do hope you enjoy reading this book.

RESEARCH FROM

Visits to:

Bolton and Ye Olde Man and the Scythe
Boscobel House
Chester
Dunham Massey
Knowsley Hall and interview with the present Earl of Derby
Lancaster and Lancaster Castle
Leeds Armouries
Leigh and Leigh Parish Church
Liverpool
Manchester
Nantwich
Ormskirk and Ormskirk Parish Church
Warrington
Wigan Archives, Leigh
Wigan Parish Church
Wigan Town Hall
Worcester and The Commandery
York

Books:

Cavalier Generals
Gerrard Winstanley – A Common Treasury
History & Guide Wigan – John Hannavy
History of Wigan – Sinclair 1882
The Civil Wars in Lancashire – Stephen Bull
The English Civil War around Wigan and Leigh by Fred Holcroft
The Great Stanley – Joseph G. Cumming
Women of the English Civil War

Internet:

www.british-civil-wars.co.uk
www.british-history.ac.uk
www.parliament.uk
www.socialhistory.org
www.wiganworld.co.uk
www.wikipedia.co.uk



Visit to the Houses of Parliament



ECW Collection Leeds Armouries



Ormskirk Parish church, Lady Derby's font



The actual 1662 Charles II Charter



Lord Derby's English Civil War Papers



Researching grave papers in Leigh Parish Church



Westminster Hall where Charles I stood at his trial



Bolton Civil War memorial



The Shambles, York



The Commandery, Worcester



Dunham Massey – painting of Lord Grey of Groby - Regicide



Lancaster Castle

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Bradshaigh, Sir Roger - born 14th January 1628 at Haigh Hall, Wigan. Oldest surviving son of James Bradshaigh of Haigh Hall and Anne daughter of Sir William Norris of Speke Hall, Liverpool. Inherited Haigh Haigh in 1641 on the death of his Father. His guardians sent him to the Isle of Man to be educated in the household of the Earl of Derby.

During the Interregnum (Rule of Cromwell and Parliament), Bradshaigh concentrated on improving the collieries on his estate by extensive draining operations and increasing the fertility of his land by liming. He developed coal and cannell pits under his Haigh Hall estate. To drain the pits, a 1.2 metre tunnel (The Great Haigh Slough) was driven under the estate between 1653 and 1670.

In 1660, he was elected Member of Parliament and was knighted on 18 June 1660. In 1661 he was re-elected MP until 1679.

He served as High Sheriff of Lancashire for 1679 and was created baronet on 17 November 1679. Bradshaigh died 31st March 1684 and was buried at Wigan. He had four sons but only one survived to succeed him.

Bradshaw, Rector James, born 1613 in Bolton. He was installed as Rector by the Parliamentarians in 1643. In 1644 he encouraged the siege of Lathom House by comparing the 7 towers of Lathom House to the 7 heads of the beast (Jeremiah XV). He was removed from the rectorship in 1653 on the death of Orlando Bridgeman. He died in 1685 and was buried in Bolton.

Bridgeman, Rector John – born 2nd November 1577. He became Bishop of Chester in 1613 and Rector of Wigan in 1615. He had a son Orlando. He repaired Wigan Parish church and installed an organ (later destroyed by Parliamentarians). He also re-arranged the seating in the church, the higher seats for "the best", men on one side and their wives on the other all in order of rank, excluding children and servants from sitting with their masters.

Rector Bridgeman was a Royalist and was replaced as Rector by the Parliamentary Commissioners in 1643 and fined £3,000. He died in 1652.

Bridgeman, Sir Orlando – born 30th January 1606 the son of Rector John Bridgeman. In 1640 Elected as MP for Wigan. Later in 1640 he was appointed Solicitor General to Charles, Prince of Wales. In 1642 he assisted Lord Strange against the Parliamentary forces and was then prevented from sitting in Parliament. He was knighted by King Charles I in 1643.

In 1660, Orlando Bridgeman was made Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer and was created a Baronet. He presided at the trial of the Regicides in 1660. He died 25th June 1674.

Cromwell, Oliver born 25th April 1599. In 1620 he married Elizabeth daughter of Sir James Bouchier and they had 9 children. He became M.P. for Huntingdon in 1628. He was a farmer and kept chickens and sheep. He was a Puritan and very religious.

Cromwell helped form the New Model Army, this was well-trained and promotion was given to ability, thus working-class soldiers could become officers. These soldiers were very religious Puritans and sang psalms when going into battle. Cromwell trained the Cavalry and this led to many victories against the Royalists. He became one of the principal leaders of the Parliamentarians and was nicknamed "Old Ironsides".

Cromwell was the third signatory on the Death Warrant for Charles I. He became the first Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland 1653 to 1658. He died on 3rd September 1658 and was buried in Westminster Abbey. Oliver's son Richard became Lord Protector until the Restoration of Charles II in 1660. After the Restoration Cromwell's body was dug up and hanged.

Gerard, Sir William born in 1611. He was a supporter of the king and he gave £1,000 to the Earl of Derby and Marquis of Worcester for the Royalist cause. After the Royalist defeat, his estate in Bryn was sequestered and he had to purchase it back from Parliament. Sir William had 4 sons and 1 daughter. He died in 1681.

Hotham, Rector Charles – born 1615. He was interested in chemistry and astronomy. He was appointed Rector of Wigan by Parliament in 1653. In 1656 he married in Wigan. In 1660 after the Restoration he was pronounced unorthodox and there was an attempt to get rid of him. In 1662 he refused to conform and was removed as Rector and went to the West Indies as a minister in Bermuda. He died in 1672.

King Charles I was born in Fife, Scotland on 19th November 1600. In 1603 his father, King James VI of Scotland also became King James I of England. He suffered with rickets as a child which left him with some physical weakness and a slight stammer. In 1625 he became King Charles I of England and Scotland upon the death of his father. 3 months later he married Henrietta Maria of France and they had 7 children, two became kings of England – King Charles II and King James II. Queen Henrietta Maria was very unpopular because she was a Roman catholic.

King Charles I believed that kings were appointed by God with a divine right to rule. He was executed by Parliament on 30th January 1649.

King Charles II was born on 29th May 1630. He was pronounced King Charles II in Scotland on the death of his father, but Parliament proclaimed this unlawful.

Charles was recognised as king when he was restored to the throne on 29th May 1660.

In 1661 he married Catherine of Braganza (Portugal) who brought, as part of her dowry, the seven islands of Bombay, the beginning of Britain's involvement in India. The queen had 3 miscarriages, but no living children, but Charles did have 8 illegitimate children whom he recognised and granted titles to them. King Charles II died in 1685 and his brother James succeeded him as king.

Lilburne, Robert born 1613. Joined the Roundheads at the start of the Civil Wars and became a captain. After joining Lord Fairfax and the new model army he became a Colonel. He was a commissioner at the trial of King Charles I and was one of the signatories (Regicides) on the death warrant.

Like his brother John, he was sympathetic to the Levellers cause. In 1656 he was elected to Parliament and became Governor of York.

After the Restoration of King Charles II, Robert was arrested along with the other Regicides still living. He was tried and found guilty and sentenced to hung, drawn and quartered, but this was commuted to life imprisonment and he died on Drake's Island, Plymouth in 1665. Robert Lilburne was survived by his 3 sons.

Prince Rupert born 1619 in Prague. He was the nephew of King Charles I. He was in Military Service with the Prince of Orange (Holland) from the age of 14yrs. In August 1642 he arrived in England with English and Scottish veterans of European wars to fight for King Charles I. He was Captain General of the Royalist Army and after some successes, he was defeated in 1645 at the battle of Naseby. In June 1646 Parliament banished him from England.

In 1647 he joined Queen Henrietta and Prince Charles in exile in Paris. With Prince Charles he took command of a number of warships that had defected from Parliament. After heavy losses he took the remaining 8 ships and attacked English merchant ships.

After the Restoration he returned to England and was appointed to the Privy Council. He died in 1682 and is buried in Westminster Abbey.

Rigby, Alexander born 1594. In 1610 he became a lawyer and in 1640 was elected as MP for Wigan. In 1643 he became a colonel in the parliamentary army and purchased land in America. In 1644 he was chief parliamentary commander and he led the siege on Lathom House.

He was appointed a judge at the trial of King Charles I, but refused to attend. He died in 1650 and was succeeded by his son Alexander who erected the Tyldesley monument on Wigan Lane in 1679.

Stanley, James the 7th Earl of Derby born at Knowsley Hall on 31st January 1607. His paternal great great grandmother Eleanor, was the daughter of Charles Brandon, 1st Duke of Suffolk and Mary Tudor, sister of Henry VIII and also sister of Lady Jane Grey the nine day queen of England. The first Earl of Derby was step-father to King Henry VII and was given the Earldom after helping him win against Richard III at the battle of Bosworth.

Lord Derby was also called the Lord or King of the Isle of Mann. In 1765 this title was revested to the Crown and thus the Queen is now "Lord or King of Mann".

Lord Derby called the Civil Wars "a general plague of madness".

Stanley, Charlotte 7th Countess of Derby born in 1599 as Charlotte de la Tremoille daughter of a French Duke, her grandfather was William, Prince of Orange.

On 26th June 1626 she married James Stanley, Baron Strange. In September 1642 her husband became the 7th Earl of Derby on the death of his father and she became Countess Derby. They had 4 daughters and 5 sons, only one son, Charles and 3 daughters lived to get married. Charles became the 8th Earl of Derby, Henriette married the 2nd Earl of Strafford, Amelia married the 1st Marquess of Atholl and Catherine married the 1st Marquess of Dorchester. Charlotte died in 1664.

Tyldesley, Sir Thomas born 3rd September 1612. He lived with his family at Morleys Hall, Astley. Sir Thomas studied law, but became a professional soldier during the 30 Years War in Germany. He married Frances Standish in 1634 and had 3 sons and 7 daughters. The Tyldesleys were Recussants, meaning Roman Catholics. On Easter Day 1641 a Catholic Priest, Ambrose Barlow, was saying mass at Morleys Hall when he was arrested by a mob led by the vicar of Leigh. He was taken to Lancaster Castle where he was hung, drawn and quartered.

In October 1641 Thomas Tyldesley was a Royalist Lieutenant Colonel at the Battle of Edgehill. In July 1643 Queen Henrietta needed to cross Burton Bridge with supplies for King Charles I. Thomas Tyldesley successfully led a Royalist Cavalier charge and defeated the Parliamentarians. King Charles made Thomas Tyldesley a knight. He served in all 3 Civil Wars and was with Prince Rupert at the Bolton Massacre. Sir Thomas was killed at the Battle of Wigan Lane on 25th August 1651 and buried in the family chapel, Leigh Parish Church.

Winstanley Gerrard was born in Wigan in 1609 and christened in Wigan Parish church. His family were in the textile trade. In 1630 he moved to London as an apprentice and in 1638 became a freeman of the Merchant Taylors Company. He married Susan King a London surgeon's daughter. He lost his business in 1643 and moved to Cobham where his wife's family had property. Gerard then herded cows for a living and became a high constable and churchwarden.

Gerrard was a deeply religious man and in 1648 he started to write and print pamphlets he wrote that the relation of Master and Servant has no ground in the New Testament, in Christ there is neither bond nor free.

Gerrard started the Digger movement in 1649 by digging up common land on St. George's Hill, Weybridge, Surrey and planting vegetables, they described themselves as the True Levellers. John Lilburne, brother of Robert Lilburne, had started the Levellers movement and like the Diggers advocated Christian communism based on the New Testament. The Diggers believed and taught, absolute human equality even between men and women. They believed that the earth was "a common storehouse for all". In April 1649 Gerrard wrote: *"Die Pride and Envie; Flesh, take the poor's advice. Covetournesse be gon; Come, Truth and Love arise. Patience take the Crown; throw Anger out of dores; Cast out Hypocrisie and Lust, which follows whores: Then England sit in rest; Thy sorrows will have eng; Thy sons will live in peace, and each will be a friend Signed: Jerrard Winstanley a lover of Englands freedom and Peace."*

At first Gerrard supported Oliver Cromwell, but became disillusioned as he felt that Cromwell and the Parliamentarians reform didn't go far enough, e.g. giving everyone the vote, including women.

Gerrard's wife died in 1664, he married Elizabeth Stanley in 1665 and became a corn dealer, he died in 1676. There is a memorial plaque to Gerrard in St. Andrew's church, Cobham, Surrey.

In 1776, the American leaders based their Declaration of Independence on the Levellers' beliefs and the Declaration starts with *"We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal and are endowed by their Creator with inalienable rights among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness"*.

"England is not a free people, till the poor that have no land, have a free allowance to dig and labour the commons..."
Gerrard Winstanley, 1649





Charles I statue Whitehall London where he was executed in 1649



Cromwell statue outside Houses of Parliament – wreath laying ceremony



James 7th Earl of Derby



Charlotte Countess of Derby



Charles II



"When did you last see your father?"

Walker Art Gallery - Liverpool



Stone found at remains of Lathom House used as mould for cannon balls



Chopping block – Tower of London



Ordsall Hall, Manchester



Charles II sword Wigan Town Hall



Sword play at Leeds Armouries



Piece of wood from Lathom House used as part of Lord Derby's scaffold

Wigan Life in the 1600's

Before the Civil Wars, Wigan was a town more significant than today and had a population of about 2,000. Wigan had four gates into the town, Hallgate – near the entrance to The Rectory, Wigan Hall, Frog Lane Wallgate – near to the North West Railway Station Millgate – near the River Douglas, the waters of which were clear Standishgate

Outside of these gates were tanneries, gardens, orchards and beyond that dense woods. The main streets in the town were paved with boulders, but outside of these the roads were so muddy that often it would take 6 horses to drag a coach through them. Wigan town comprised of winding alleys, crooked streets and narrow courts, all unlit.

Wigan had a grammar school, but the vast majority of people could not read or write. Even children as young as six had to work for a living.

The town produced, coal, copper, pewter, brass and corn. Wigan was the most significant producer of coal in the Country and several thousand tons were extracted each year. Wigan was also famous for its Lancashire black longhorn cattle. Wigan was the second most important centre for pewter after London.

According to the International Institute of Social History, in the early 1600's a carpenter could earn 12 pence per day, a labourer 8 pence per day. From 1642 Carpenters wages were 18 pence and a labourer's 12 pence per day. On average a labourer would be expected to work for 80 hours each week over 6 days for just $\frac{3}{4}$ pence to 1 pence per hour, Sunday would be a day of rest.

D/D An/Bundle 16/23 These documents are held at Wigan Archives ROYALIST ORDERS DRAWN UP IN WIGAN, AND SIGNED BY THE EARL OF DERBY dated *30th day of December, 1642*

Within these orders it is stated that in Wigan the Earl of Derby paid: *10d a peece to the 20 men and 40s for the Lieftennant.*

Some food costs in Wigan were also mentioned in the above orders:

*3d a pound of butter, 2d a pound of cheese,
bread at the rate of 16 pounds XlId,
Hay at 2d a stone.*

(s = shilling; d = pence) (XIIId = 12 pence) A stone = 28lbs

Further Food costs in a 17th century market:

1 fat pig 1 shilling and 4 pence

2 chickens 8 pence

1 pound of tallow candles made of wick 4 pence

Average life expectancy in the 1600's was 35 years.

NOTE: 12d(pence) = 1 shilling; 240d = £1. 12 shillings = £1

2½d is approximately 1p in our decimal currency.

Today 1 pound of butter would cost on average £2, cheese £3per pound
2-lb or large loaf today on average £1.

1 pound = 454grams

From records of The Leet Court held in Wigan Moot Hall, we have been able to compile a list of occupations in Wigan during the English Civil Wars.

Records from trials in the Leet Court have also given us an opportunity to know what life was like in Wigan during the 17th century.

Wigan was governed by the Rector of Wigan who lived in Wigan Hall at the top of Hallgate (Frog Lane) and the Mayor who was elected by the Burgesses. The Burgesses were property and business owners and were entitled to vote.



17th century Wigan pewter
Victoria and Albert museum,
London



17th century Wigan pewter plate
Wigan Town Hall

Wigan Occupations during the 17th century

Alderman

Badger – a buyer of grain and other commodities to sell at another location.

Bailiff

Barber surgeon

Blacksmith

Bowmaker

Brazier

Bricklayer

Butcher

Clerk

Collier

Cooper

Coverlet Weaver

Doctor of Physicke

Feltmaker

Flax trader

Gatewater

Gentleman

Glazier

Glover

Gunsmith

Hatter

Joiner

Labourer

Linen Weaver

Mercer

Miller

Nailor

Panmaker

Panner

Pewterer

Plasterer

Plasterer

Roper

Sadler

Schoolmaster

Servant

Shoemaker

Skinner

Smith

Tailor

Weaver

Whitesmith - tinsmith

Yeoman – Farmer who owns his own land.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT IN WIGAN DURING 17TH CENTURY

Examples from the Wigan Moot Hall Court Leet Rolls

Gilbert Hoghton and Ralph Baron assault.

Ralph Baron to sit 2 hours in the stocks.

Joan the wife of Thomas Wood abused James Molyneux the Mayor.

She was to wear the bridle from the Moot hall to her own house and back again and to "aske Mr Mayor forgiveness or otherwise from thence to the brockstoole"

"Wee present William Wood of Wigan Naylor for beateinge a drum twixt twelve and one a Clock in the night tyme to the disturbance and terror of his majesties Leige people"

He was to sit 6 hours in the stocks in the Market place.

Isabel the wife of William Nightgale abused Ellen the wife of Robert Greene, pillar.

"wee order that Isabella Nighgall shall att or before two of the Clocke bee brought to the backstoole and sitt upon the same and have sixe good swinges therein and afterwards retorne her backe againe to the hall and their to were the brydle downe from the hall all alonge the Walgate unto the towle Barres".

Thurban Crosse labourer assaulted and abused William Forth alderman.

He was to sit 4 hours in the stocks in the Market place.

William Never presented for taking thornes from the hedge between the lands of Ralph Foster and William Marsh.

4 hours in the stocks in the Moot hall.

Edmund Winstanley, smith, for abusing John Standish gentleman, "and swearing an Oath att the same tyme"

Fined 12d. for abuse and 3s. 4d. for the oath.

Judith the wife of John Baldwin for abuse of Ellen the wife of Robert Boyes and John Standish. **Fined 16s. 8d. for 3 oaths**

Anne, the wife of William Foster butcher, for selling flesh on Sunday 15th June 1656, and Margery the wife of John Landers for the same, also Elizabeth the wife of Ralph Deane. **Each fined 6s 8d**

Gerrard Lee, George Shawe, Laurence Sterky, James Bibbye, Ralph Bullocke, William Whitle, Arthur Winstanley, Hugh Deane, Parson Banckes, James Harvey the younger, William Suxsmith, Laurence Anderton, William Farbrother, Gilbert Orrell, Barnett Lynney, Robert Brown, and Thomas Kerkby for playing bowles. **Fined 12d. each**

That Mary the wife of Thomas Bavington of Whelley had given birth to a child about a week previously. And on the afternoon of Oct 1st Ellen Bavington called the said Mary "a bitch and a mare and many other reproachfull and disgracefull words which for modesty this examinat cannot repeat" and the said Ellen "prophanely and wickedly sweare ten oathes and many more" and "Curse about six severalle tymes and oftener" and continued "Cursing rayling chidding and swearing for the space of one whole houre together," so that Mary Bavington "by greaveing and weeping fell into much paine and anguish that this examinat and others much feared her death". Attested by Katherine the wife of John Cowper of Whelley. **Ellen Bavington to wear the bridle from the Moot Hall to the higher end of Scoles.**

Anne the wife of William Foster butcher for selling flesh on Sunday 15th June 1656, and Margery the wife of John Landers for the same, also Elizabeth the wife of Ralph Deane. **Each fined 6s 8d**

Mathew Johnson for digging the highway. **6 hours in the stocks at the Market Cross**

William Pilkington, gentleman, for saying at the Great Leet on 4th Oct 1656, "he that presented me was a Rascald and they that found me guilty were Knaves and Rascalds meaning the jury aforesaid". **Fined 20s.**

James Browne presented for assaulting his father Roger Browne. **He was ordered 4 hours in the stocks at the Cross "and a paper written with his offence on it and pinned upon him"**

Miles Gerrard, Roger Wood, John Wood all of Aspull and Thomas Rylands for playing cards. **Fined 10s. each.**

Roger Browne dauber presented for abusing Mr Robert Baron the Mayor with "many foule and disgracefull speeces". **Ordered to sit 6 hours in the stocks in the Marketplace on Market day with "the contentes of his offence written in Large Letters upon a paper and Fixed upon his hedd"**

Ellen Scott widow for abuse of Mrs Ellen Forth widow, and scandalous words against Mr William Forth deceased.

She was to wear the bridle and acknowledge her offence in open court.

Alice Orrell widow and Margaret Cowbone for persuading Thomas Almond the younger to commit fornication with Elizabeth Burges in the said Alice's house. "Wee order that the persons shall all Carted through the Towne" Surety Seth Mason. Thomas Almond for the above offence.

"Wee order that hee bee Carted through the towne with the woman and bee banished the Towne" Surety Gilbert Langshawe.

Peter Rigby, Richard Marsden, John Naylor, William Sayle, Humphrey Naylor, Alexander Woodward, William Bate and Jeffrey Bamber strangers **Fined 6s. 8d. a month for selling beer and ale in the town.**

Roger Wood, hatter "for disgracefull words spiken against Robert Penington".

"Wee order him to sitt two hours in the stockes att the Markettcrosse in the open day about noone on the Markettday"

Jeffrye Scott bellfounder for receiving of Fower Mares of Geldings out of the Custody of Thomas Leyland feltmaker being taken for doinge damag feazunt **Fined 6s. 8d. each.**

For crimes such as murder, the criminal would be sent to Lancaster Castle for trial and punishment.

The Moot Hall was built in the 16th century and was located between the east and south entrances of Wigan Parish Church. In 1618 there was a dispute between the Rector and Wigan council as to the possession of the Moot Hall. It was referred to the King and 4 Arbiters found that the use of the Moot Hall was to be shared by both.



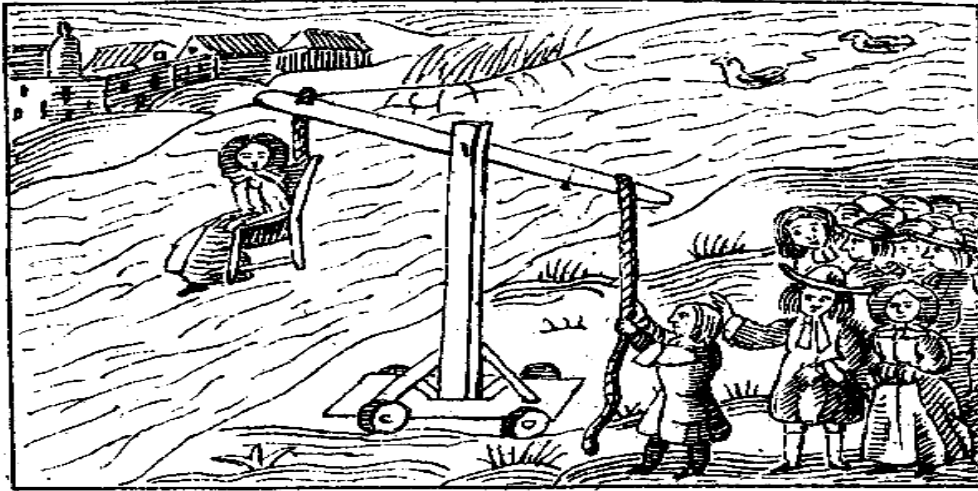
Old Moot Hall Wigan



Wigan's 17th Century Town Hall



17th century inn, The Queen's Head, Market Place, Standishgate, Wigan



The Brockstoole or Backstoole was a punishment for women instead of the stocks.



Scold's bridle from Lancaster castle

(The Scolds Bridle was a form of social control, used exclusively on women at a time when the law did not recognise the individual rights of women. Made of metal and with a vicious bit that held down the tongue, women who had spread malicious gossip or nagged their husbands too much in public were often subjected to a few hours in the bridle).



Stocks similar to those used in Wigan

SHIP TAX

Ship tax had been an ancient custom for kings, in times of threats of invasion, to demand towns to provide ships or money for ships to be built. King Charles I saw this as a way to raise money without going through Parliament. This law was abolished by Parliament in July 1642.

In 1636 Lancashire had to provide King Charles I with a 400 ton ship and 160 men or £1,000. Wigan had to provide £50 towards this, Preston £40, Lancaster £30, Liverpool £25.

Wigan sent a petition to the Admiralty about the Ship Money in July 1637. The petition stated that the sum demanded of £50 was wrong as they only had their small burgages and the making of pots and pans. Wigan Council was behind the people and the petition, but the petition was ignored and everyone still had to pay.

In 1638 The Archbishop of York sent an order for a tax on clergy, to the Rector of Wigan. This said that the King wanted a sum of 3s.10d in the pound of the annual value of their livings. The Rector, Bishop Bridgeman, paid £200.

In 1638 John Brighthouse became Mayor of Wigan followed by James Molyneux in 1639.

The Bradshaigh family of Haigh Hall founded a school in 1639 and endowed this with property yielding £50 per annum.

1640 ELECTIONS IN WIGAN

Political control of the town was with the Burgesses, they elected the mayor and two Members of Parliament. The Burgesses had a variety of privileges within the Borough and only burgesses could put themselves forward for election. In 1640 there were 123 burgesses and 173 honorary burgesses. Honorary burgesses were those who had paid to be registered as voters in Wigan. Wigan had a population of about 2,000.

In April 1640 elections took place in Wigan for what became known as the Short Parliament. The following were elected as M.P.'s for Wigan

Orlando Bridgeman (Royalist)	112 votes
Alexander Rigby (Parliamentarian)	104 votes

In October 1640, another election took place in a very crowded Wigan town hall. 109 burgesses voted and 55 honorary burgesses. The Mayor had two votes, one as a burgess and one as Mayor. The voters' names were read out and the person declared verbally which two candidates he wanted to vote for. Votes were as follows:

Alexander Rigby (Parliamentarian)	136 votes
Orlando Bridgeman (Royalist)	128 votes
Robert Gardner (Royalist)	57 votes
John Standish	4 votes
Badus Standish	2 votes
Sir Dudley Carleton	1 vote

Alexander Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman were elected to the 1640 Parliament as M.P.'s for Wigan, this became known as the Long Parliament.



Alexander Rigby



Orlando Bridgeman

In 1640 John Bullock became Mayor of Wigan



The gate to Wigan Rectory looking up Hallgate



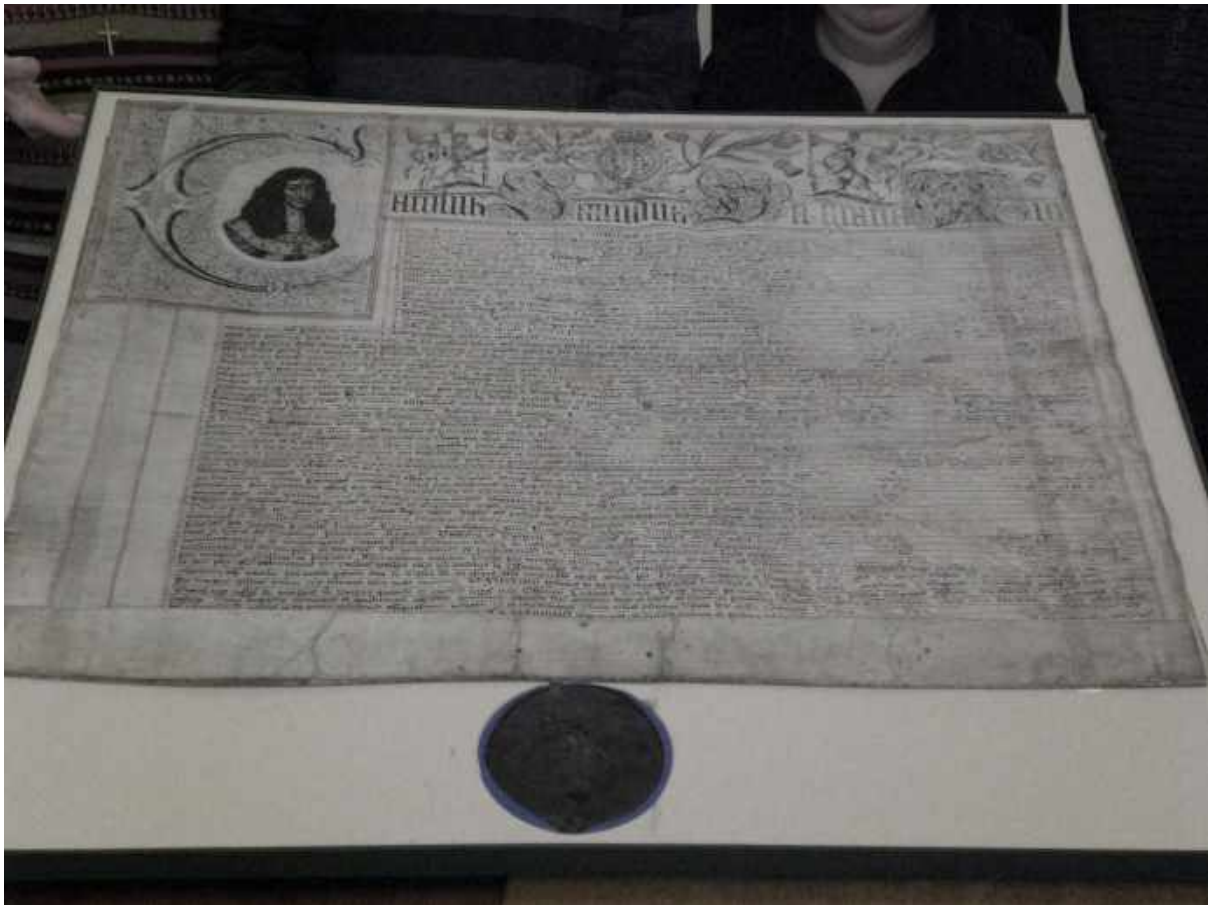
The Wiend, Wigan, looking towards Standishgate. Typical of how 17th century streets would have looked



Wigan Market Place 17th century



Gerrard Winstanley House, Wigan



1662 Charter given to Wigan by Charles II

START OF THE ENGLISH CIVIL WARS

In 1640 King Charles I asked Parliament for more funds for a war against Scotland. The members of Parliament were not happy as King Charles had never consulted Parliament before and this Parliament was the first for 11 years. M.P.'s expressed their dissatisfaction with the king. This was the 'short' Parliament because after only 3 weeks the King dissolved Parliament on May 5th 1640.

A new election was called in October 1640 and both Wigan M.P.'s were re-elected, but this time Alexander Rigby polled 136 votes and Orlando Bridgeman 128 votes. Parliament met in November 1640 and this Parliament became known as the 'long' Parliament because it wasn't dissolved for 20 years.

King Charles I expected Parliament to provide him with funds and soldiers to use against the Scots. Parliament demanded an Act stating that Parliament should meet once every five years and also demanded the arrest of King Charles' adviser the Earl of Strafford. King Charles had to comply. On 20th May 1641 the Earl of Strafford was executed for treason, the King having signed the death warrant. In Summer 1641 'The Triennial Act' was passed, this allowed Parliament to meet without Royal command and declared 'ship money' to be illegal. 'Ship Money' had been a private tax imposed and collected by the king. In November 1641 Parliament led by Pym gave Charles 'The Grand Remonstrance', a document outlining 11 years of grievances against the king.

After his father died in 1641, the young Sir Roger Bradshaigh inherited the Haigh Hall estate at the age of 13 years.

In 1641 Edward Lloyd became Mayor of Wigan followed by William Forth in 1642.

On 4th January 1642 King Charles I instructed his Attorney General to issue a charge of treason against one peer and 5 members of Parliament. Parliament refused to recognise these charges. Charles sent a group of horsemen into Parliament to make the arrests, but the members had been warned and had escaped. This made King Charles I very unpopular with people and he decided to leave London with his family and sent his Queen abroad to try and raise funds.

In April 1642 Orlando Bridgeman, one of Wigan's M.P.'s, was expelled by the Parliamentarians because of his loyalty to King Charles I.

In June 1642 Parliament passed 19 propositions calling for a new constitution, demanding that ministers and judges should be appointed by Parliament and that all church and military matters should be under Parliament's control and not the king.

On 22nd August 1642 King Charles I raised his standard at Nottingham and the Civil War began.

In September 1642 the first skirmish of the Civil War was in Manchester by a small Royalist force led by Lord James Strange, the Earl of Derby's son. A few weeks later William Stanley, Earl of Derby died and his son James became the 7th Earl of Derby.

Lord Derby made Wigan his headquarters and his forces were camped just outside the town centre, with Lord Derby in the town. These forces became known as the "Wigan Cavaliers".

'Wigan was better manned with soldiers than Preston, it being the next garrison to the earl's house and the most malignant town in all the county; for there were (for anything that was heard) not many in it that favoured the Parliament;' Lancs. War (Chet. Soc.), 16. Wigan, however, had joined in the Protestation of 1642; Pal. Note Bk. i, 81.

The Mayor of Wigan, William Forth, was appointed General Major of Wigan.

During these early skirmishes of the war, communication mistakes happened. One mistake that is recorded and kept in Wigan's archives, is of a soldier who lost the note from the local Royalist commander, the note was requesting re-inforcements for Wigan.

In early 1643 the Wigan Cavaliers led by the Earl of Derby, tried unsuccessfully to take Bolton, but they did capture Preston from the Parliamentarians.

A Parliamentarian Spy in Wigan

On 13th January 1643 Margaret Hulme, travelling from Warrington to her home in Bolton was arrested in Hindley. She was taken to Derby's headquarters in Wigan, searched and found to have £100 hidden on her and a letter.

The Earl of Derby conducted Margaret's interrogation himself. Margaret said the money was from Mrs. Wooley to John Morris of Bolton, she denied she knew the contents of the letter. The letter was from a Mr. Wooley of Warrington warning that there were 800 soldiers, 300 armed townspeople and 80 dragoons in the town and that a further 2,000 infantry and 1,500 dragoons were expected.

The letter also stated that if Parliament was to attack Warrington, Wooley would do his best to undermine the defenders' cause in Warrington and when the Parliamentarians arrived he would guide them in and lead them to the powder magazines.

Margaret admitted travelling from Warrington with a Hindley man, William Aspull, and staying free at his house overnight. Margaret was found guilty of being a spy for the Parliamentarians. The following is a translation of documents from Wigan Archives, but there are no records to tell of what happened to her.

*EXAMINATION OF CAPTURED MESSENGER
"The examination of Margaret Hulme, wife of Edward Hulme of Bolton, Fustian Weaver, taken at Wigan before the Right Honble The Earl of Derby, the XIIIth day of January.....1643".*

"This examine confesseth" that she left Bolton on Monday IXth January to visit her husband, a prisoner at Warrington. She carried with her a letter from Mary Morris daughter of John Morris of Bolton to Mr Wolley of Warrington.

She stayed in Warrington until Thursday night, when she was given a bag of money and a letter (No.24?) for John Morris by Mr. Wolley.

She journeyed from Warrington with William Aspull of Hindley, a badger, who carried her basket on one of his horses. She obtained free lodgings at his house at Hindley on Thursday night. She also stated that Henry Mollineux (sic) of Westhoughton "bideth nowe at the house of yonge John Norres in Deane Streete in Bolton but denyeth that she had any 1re (i.e. letter) or other busnies to or from him". Endorsed: "Examination of Margaret Hulme of Bolton from whome was taken 100 li".

Charles I Acknowledges loyalty of Wigan

On hearing of the loyalty of Wigan, on 25th February 1643, King Charles I sent a letter to the Mayor of Wigan stating:

"Trusty and Wellbeloved Wee Greete you well. Whereas We have received particular information of the singular affection you have lately expressed in your great expense, approved fidelity, and indefatigable industry against the Rebels in those parts, we doe hereby returne Our Royal Thanks for the same and Assure you We will always remember your loyal and faithful Endeavours in Our service abovsайд upon all occasions for your advantage.

And soe We bid you heartily Farewell.

Given att our Court att Oxford the 25th of February in the eighteenth year of our reign."

On 10th February 1643 The Parliamentarians broke through the Earl of Derby's defence and captured Preston. After this, Derby attacked Bolton, but slowly the Royalists were pushed back. On hearing that Parliamentarian reinforcements were coming, The Earl of Derby left taking with him three cartloads of dead bodies and leaving a dozen dead and mortally wounded.

On 28th March 1643 the Wigan garrison again tried to take Bolton, but without success.

Christopher Bankes became Mayor of Wigan in 1643.



Archive Documents of Lord Derby's interrogation of the spy caught in Wigan

Parliamentarians attack Wigan

The Parliamentarians under the command of Colonel Holland and Lieutenant-Colonel Rosworm, decided to attack Derby's headquarters in Wigan on 1st April 1643. They had 2,000 men, over 200 men on horse, 8 cannons and plenty of ammunition. In less than an hour the Parliamentarians had broken the defence and entered the town.

86 Royalist Musketeers ran into Market Place, Wigan, then climbed up to the top of Wigan Parish church tower. From this vantage point the musketeers continually fired at the Parliamentarians and killed more Parliamentarians than in the first part of the attack. On hearing that Royalist reinforcements were on their way, Colonel Holland gathered up his men to retreat. Rosworm didn't want to retreat and persuaded Holland to stay until the parish church was captured.

Rosworm set up his cannons on a hill overlooking Wigan Parish church and threatened to blow up the church if the defenders didn't give themselves up. The 86 Royalists surrendered and Colonel Holland retreated with his men, leaving Rosworm with only a few men and so Lt.Colonel Rosworm jumped on his horse and ran.

The places where Rosworm set up his cannons were afterwards called Longshoot and Lower Longshoot in Scholes.

As Wigan was the Earl of Derby's headquarters, it was considered safe and about £20,000 worth of money, jewellery and valuables had been stored in the Moot Hall. All this was stolen, the town records destroyed, the Parish church ransacked, furniture destroyed and the Cloth Hall looted leaving a trail in Market Place of linen, wool and cloth. According to the Parliamentarian pamphlet "Manchester Joy":

Wigan had been looted and stripped of all valuables and munitions. Many of the enemy had been killed and copious prisoners claimed.

Countess Derby wrote from Lathom House to Prince Rupert asking for his help:

My Lord, I have just received the disastrous news of the loss of Wigan six miles from this place. My husband was 12 miles off and before he could help it was surrendered. Have pity on my husband, my children and me who are lost forever if God and your Highness do not take pity on us.

The Earl of Derby returned to Wigan as fast as he could, but arrived too late to stop the looting. He then went to his home, Lathom House, 6 miles from Wigan.

Wigan attacked again

Three weeks later on 22nd April 1643 Wigan was being defended by Colonel Thomas Tyldesley for the Earl of Derby. The Parliamentarians, led by Colonel Ashton, again attacked Wigan.

According to the Parliamentary journal:

Colonel Thomas Tyldesley had only a small Royalist troop, 9 troops of horse and 700 foot soldiers and so he retreated to Lathom House, then on to Preston. The Parliamentary soldiers looted Wigan and left great heapes of woollen cloth from the Drapers in the street".

The Parliamentarians burned the newly constructed gates of Wigan, destroyed the outworks and fortifications. Colonel Ashton and the Parliamentarians made the people of Wigan swear that they would never again take up arms against the King and Parliament.

Queen Henrietta Maria had returned from France, landing in Bridlington, with 2,000 cases of pistols, £80,000 in cash and over a thousand experienced soldiers. She had traded some of the crown jewels and her own jewellery. The Royalists in Lancashire hoped the Queen would stay and become the "she-generalissima" of the north.

From her Lathom home, Lady Derby wrote a letter to the Queen appealing for help asking for 3,000 horse and foot to stop disaster happening.

Just the day before Wigan's defeat Queen Henrietta Maria had written to her husband, the King, offering to stay in the North and join the Earl of Derby. She said she could clear Lancashire of Parliamentarians in 10 or 12 days.

Just a few weeks later these plans were changed because of the Parliamentary successes.

The Siege of Lathom House

In 1644 The Earl of Derby was in his Isle of Man home on the orders of King Charles I to try and stop Scottish forces joining the Parliamentarians. His wife Charlotte, Countess Derby, was in their home near Wigan, Lathom House. The house was more like a fort and was surrounded by an 8 yard moat and comprised of 6 foot thick walls and 9 towers each containing 6 cannons. Countess Derby had a company of 300 soldiers.

The Parliamentarian Rector of Wigan, James Bradshaw preached in Wigan Parish Church the following sermon against Lady Derby quoting from Jeremiah:

Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about; all ye that bend the bow shoot at her; spare no arrows; for she has sinned against the Lord. (Jeremiah 50.14)

On 28th February, the Parliamentarians led by Sir Thomas Fairfax, together with Wigan's Parliamentarian M.P. Alexander Rigby, laid siege to Lathom House. Sir Thomas had 500 cavalry and 1,500 soldiers. Lathom had a garrison of 300.

On 24th March Countess Derby was asked to surrender. She met with Sir Thomas Fairfax and Alexander Rigby, insisting they visit her in Lathom House. She told them she would reply in two days. Sir Thomas Fairfax then left Lathom to Alexander Rigby. Countess Derby sent this reply to Colonel Rigby via his messenger:

"Carry," said she, "this answer back to Rigby (tearing the paper), and tell that insolent rebel, he shall have neither persons, goods, nor house. When our strength and provisions are spent, we shall find a fire more merciful than Rigby; and then, if the providence of God prevent it not, my goods and house shall burn in his sight; and myself, children, and soldiers, rather than fall into his hands will seal our religion and loyalty in the same flames."

Lady Charlotte organised many successful sorties on the Parliamentarians outside of Lathom House. One sortie on Tuesday 10th March, saw 30 Parliamentarians killed and 50 arms captured as well as 1 drum and 6 prisoners taken.

Sustained bombardments and attacks of Lathom House took place, but the Royalists snipers were excellent shots and the Parliamentarians lost 500 men with 140 wounded. Only six Royalists were killed.

On 26th May after three months of the siege, the Parliamentarians received information that the Earl of Derby with Prince Rupert (nephew of Charles I) were on their way to Lathom with re-inforcements. Just after midnight, the Parliamentarian soldiers fled to Bolton.

The paper "Scottish Dove" reported that Lady Charlotte had stolen the earl's breeches in his absence, to 'play the man'.

Countess Derby retired to the Isle of Man with her children.

On 27th May 1644 Prince Rupert and the Earl of Derby attacked Bolton, a Parliamentary garrison of about 4,000. Alexander Rigby, Eigan's M.P., had arrived at Bolton from Lathom House and joined the Commander Colonel Shuttleworth. Prince Rupert didn't expect the town to be so heavily defended. Despite heavy rain, however, Prince Rupert ordered four regiments to attack immediately. They were beaten back with casualties of around 300 men, including Colonel Russell, the commander of Rupert's own regiment of foot, who was wounded. Colonel Shuttleworth's men had hanged one of the Royalist Prisoners saying he was a catholic, this had incensed the Royalists and Sir Thomas Tyldesley's mainly Lancashire Catholic regiment. The Earl of Derby led the second attack and successfully stormed the walls and fighting in the streets of Bolton. The town was sacked and all the Parliamentarians either killed or captured. Senior officers, including Wigan's Alexander Rigby, had escaped on their horses.

The Earl of Derby has been accused of not only looting and pillaging Bolton, but of raping and murdering innocent civilians including women and children, this became known as "The Bolton Massacre". The Earl of Derby always denied this accusation, but the Parliamentarians used this as the reason he was executed.

Wigan Under Attack





At Bolton, Prince Rupert captured 22 regimental flags and these he presented to Countess Derby in admiration of her courage.

Prince Rupert then went to Wigan where he was warmly welcomed. The Mayor of Wigan, Christopher Bankes, held an official banquet in Prince Rupert's honour at a cost of £20. After his short stay in Wigan, Prince Rupert proceeded onto battles in Liverpool.

In 1644 Ralph Standish became Mayor of Wigan and in 1645 Sir Thomas Stanley became Mayor of Wigan.

On December 6th 1645 General Egerton and his Parliamentarian roundheads successfully attacked Lathom House and the house was destroyed.

In 1646 Robert Markland became Mayor of Wigan followed by Richard Pennington in 1647.

In 1648 Duke Hamilton's forces occupied Wigan after their defeat by Cromwell near Preston, but after plundering the people 'almost to their skins,' retired to Warrington, pursued by Cromwell.



Cromwell statue in Warrington

Oliver Cromwell visits Wigan

In 1648 Oliver Cromwell and his Parliamentary army visited Wigan on his way to Preston where he was victorious over the Royalists.

The following are letters from Oliver Cromwell

Dated 20th August 1648:

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 any thing 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 about a hundred prisoners; where I also received a Letter from Duke Hamilton, for civil usage towards his kinsman Colonel Hamilton, whom he left wounded there. We took also Colonel Hurry and Lieutenant-Colonel Innes, sometimes 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.

For the Honourable the Committee at York:

Wigan, 23d 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 him; 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 Northwards with the greatest part of the Army; where I shall be glad to hear from you.

I rest, Your very affectionate friend and servant, OLIVER CROMWELL.

**From House of Commons Journal No. 6 dated 25th September 1648
Forces in Lancashire.**

Sir John Danvers reports from the Committee at Derby House, a Letter from the Committee of Lancashire, from Wigan, of 15 Septembris 1648: The which was read.

Ordered, That this Letter be referred to the Consideration of the Gentlemen of this House, that are of the County of Lancaster; to propound to the House some ready Way for the Pays of the Forces under the Command of Colonel Ralph Ashton, and for Relief of the Country.

Gen. Ashton.

Resolved, &c. That the Committee at Derby House do grant, unto Colonel Ralph Ashton, a Commission to be Major General of the Forces of Lancashiere; and to receive Orders from both Houses of Parliament, the Committee at Derby House, or from the General, or Lieutenant General: And that this Commission do bear the same Date as the Commission he received from the Committee in Lancashier.

Ordered, That the Entertainment of Colonel Ralph Ashton, as Major General, shall be Forty Shillings per diem, over and above his Pay as Colonel of Horse, and Colonel of Foot.

Ambrose Jolley was Mayor of Wigan in 1648 followed by Joseph Rigbye in 1649.

King Charles I was beheaded on 30th January 1649 in Whitehall, London. Colonel Robert Lilburn was one of the signatories on his death warrant.

The king's eldest son became King Charles II.

Wigan Devastated by Plague

Wigan Archives holds documents referring to Plague in Wigan, the records of the Court Leet. Seven years of war, bad harvests and food shortages had left Wigan's population weak and prone to disease. Plague broke out and the 1649 victims' names are listed in the church registers. There had been an epidemic in 1648 but the records have been lost.

In 1649 the Court Leet was petitioned by John Catterall a local Wigan cooper:

"That your petitioner lately before the sickness called the plague or pestilence fell amongst us took a cottage and garden in Gidlow Lane for which your petitioner paid £7 consideration, intending to have come to lived at it at May last, was disappointed in the making of cabins for sick persons of the same cottage so that your petitioner was constrained to pay rent for another place during that time, and since the sick persons or some of them pulled down some of his walls and doors about it and burned them to his great loss and hindrance". Catterall was awarded 15s.8d.

Wooden 'plague houses' or cabins for those infected already existed just outside town (the present Woodhouse Lane is named after them). The above petition shows that this must have been a large outbreak as more cabins for isolation of the plague victims was needed. The Wigan archives list the names of those that died from plague and many are listed as dying in the plague houses - 'de cabin'.

March 1649

Elizabeth daughter of Richard Rycroft de Wallgate

Anne Penkieman widow de Millgate

Richard Rycroft de Gidloe lane

Alise wiffe of Edward Preston de Hallgate

Elizibeth wiffe of Thomas Starkey de Hallgate

April 1649

Thomas Starkey att de cabin

Elizabeth bast(ard) daughter of Anne Brockells at de cabin

James ffinch de Wallgate

John Aspinall de Millgate

Elizebeth daughter of John de Millgate

Elizebeth daughter of Edward Prescott de Hallgate

Elizebeth Banks att de cabin
Ann wiffe of Richard Crochley de Millgate
Humphrey son of Robert Crochley de cabin
Grace daughter of Robert Whittle de cabin
John son of Edward Orrell de cabin
Elizabeth wiffe of Thomas Brockell de cabin
Robert Whittle de cabin
Elizebeth Trelfall de cabin
Jane daughter of Thomas Whally de Wallgate
Thomas Brochell de cabin
Ellen daughter of Edward Lee de Wallgate
Robert son of James ffinch de cabin
Gerrard ffinch de cabin
Ellen Gregson de cabin
Edward Lee de Hallgate
Mary daughter of Jeffrey Crochley de Hallgate
Jane wiffe of James ffinch de cabin
Mary daughter of James ffinch de cabin
Anne daughter of Thomas Pilkington de cabin
Ellice son of Hugh Mather de Wallgate
Jane wiffe of Robert Whittle de cabin
Elizibeth daughter of Thomas Scott of Pemberton
William Barron the younger
Roger Orrell de cabin

May 1649

Ellen wiffe of William Barron de cabin (senior)
A poor woman in Hugh Bullocks new house
William ————— de cabin senier
————— Crochley de cabin
————— daughter of Robert Shaw de cabin
A poor wench in Hugh Bullocks new house
Robert Pennington de Millgate
Katherine wiffe of Robert Pennington de cabin
Ralph son of Lawrence Anderton of Hallgate
Robert Townlee of Hallgate
Peter son of Humphrey Gregson de cabin

June 1649

*John son of Robert Mollinex de cabin
Thomas son of Robert Townlee de cabin
Anne Orrell of Gidloe Lane
John son of Robert Townlee de cabin
Gilbert son of Ralph Leigh of Wallgate
Robert son of Ralph Leigh of Wallgate*

July 1649

*Margret daughter of Robert Lee in Standishgate
Ellen wiffe of Robert Lee in Standishgate
Anne daughter of Robert Lee de cabin
John son of Oliver Leigh de cabin
Mary wiffe of Oliver Leigh de cabin
Oliver Leigh de cabin
Elizabeth daughter of Oliver Leigh de cabin
Grace wiffe of Ralph—————*

In 1649 James Finch, one of the town administration servants, asked for financial compensation from the Court Leet:

"Your petitioner in these late distressed and distracted times of the great visitation of the sickness that was amongst us called the plague and pestilence, was constrained to attend Mr Mayor and do what service he could in that behalf. Having a wife and a number of small children sent them into the country upon great cost and charges until such time as the town by God's providence was set clean. Notwithstanding it was reported your petitioner had allowance, which was not true. Please commiserate his great charge and losses he hath sustained for want of his wife's industry so long confined from him".

There are three aspects here: his missing wages, his extra expenses and his wife's lost income, probably from handloom weaving. Nevertheless the town officials declined to pay, coldly advising Catterall to apply to the Mayor himself (Ambrose Jolley) who presumably would have to reimburse Catterall out of his own pocket! Some chance!

It might have been expected that the doctor who attended the sick would have been treated rather better. Later in 1649 William Getenby ("Physician and servant to your town in these late and distressed times of sickness amongst you" as he put it) also petitioned the Court Leet:

"At the mention and request of the last mayor Mr Jolley and some others of his brethren and burgess did undertake with his best endeavours to visit the sick persons and to minister to them as occasion should serve, and was to have for his pains and industry until such times as the town was set free and at liberty, 30s. [£1.50] a week, in which time the said William received in part payment £13 and served 24 weeks.

The premises considered, the said William in regard that he was constrained to send his wife and children to Standish to dwell and inhabit being at charge of two houses and losing his practices in other places."

So, Wigan's physician, Gatenby, was entitled to £36 but had only been paid £13.

The Court Leet paid him £7 "out of such monies as shall come into the hands of any for the use of the lately restrained poor". The Doctor was £16 underpaid.

Conditions were so difficult that in 1648 public meetings were banned and the fortnightly Court Leet not held between 4 February 1649 and 1 September 1649.

A petition was sent to Parliament signed by the town's officials and endorsed by four church ministers:

"The hand of God is stretched upon the country, chastising it with the three-corded scourge of sword, pestilence and famine all at once afflicting it In this county hath the plague of pestilence been raging these last three years and upward. There is a very great scarcity and dearth of all provisions especially all sorts of grain which is sixfold the price of that it of late hath been. All trade is utterly decayed. It would not meet any good heart to see the numerous swarms of begging poor and the many families that pine away at home not having face to beg. Very many now craving alms at other men's doors were used to giving alms at their own 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. In the town of Wigan with the neighbouring parts are full two thousand poor who for three months and upwards have been restrained. No relief to be had for them in the ordinary course of law.

The collections in our congregations (their own supply hitherto) being generally very slack and slender, those wanting ability to help who have hearts to pity them. There are no bonds to keep in the infected hunger-

starved poor whose breaking out jeopardises all the neighbourhood. Some of them already being at the point to perish through famine have fetched in and eaten carrion and other unwholesome food to the destroying of themselves and increasing of the infection. And the more to provoke pity and mercy it may be considered that this fatal contagion had its rise evidently from the wounded soldiers of our army left there for air.

Of Wigan - Ambrose Jolley, James Bradshaw, John Standish, Ralph Markland

Ministers – James Hyett, John Tyldesley, Isaac Ambrose, Richard Hollingworth”.

(From the Civil War Tracts, 278).

In April 1649 Wigan had 2,000 poor people who for 3 months and upwards had been restrained. For them the ordinary course of law offered no relief.

On 23rd July 1649 was the last recording of a burial for someone who had died from plague.

In 1650 Robert Baron became Mayor of Wigan followed by Alexander Thompson in 1651.

In 1650 King Charles II landed in Scotland to renew the battle for his throne.

Sir Roger Bradshaigh of Haigh Hall was only a teenager and hadn't taken part in the Civil War, but after King Charles II landed in Scotland he was arrested as a Royalist supporter. He was imprisoned in Chester.

Sir Roger was later released after assuring the Parliamentarians he would not help the Royalists.

In June 1651 King Charles II led a Scottish army into England and on 14th August King Charles II spent the night at Bryn Hall the home of Sir William Gerard.

THE BATTLE OF WIGAN LANE

On the 25th August 1651, the Earl of Derby and Sir Thomas Tyldesley were leading their Royalist forces to join up with King Charles II at Worcester. Parliamentarian commander, Colonel Robert Lilburne, knew of Derby's movements and waited for him beside the River Douglas.

"The King and the Earl of Derby" cried the Royalists - "Liberty! Liberty!" cried the infuriated foe.

There was in the midst of bitter determination, no calling for quarter, for death or victory was the object of the brave. Derby himself was ever in the heat of the battle and seemed to have a charmed life. Again and again he charged past bullets and sword - his horse was slain and he was severely wounded, yet he seemed not to be inconvenienced nor even feel his wounds.

Although many of his men were already wounded and submitting as prisoners of the foe, Derby re-mounted on a riderless horse and re-charged calling his men to follow. He was shot at and hacked at with swords, yet he galloped through the masses of the enemy (the wonder and admiration of friend and foe) slaying and wounding as he rode. Again his horse was shot under him and he was wounded afresh.

Derby fought all in vain, more hopeless grew the battle. The gallant Cavalier, Sir Thomas Tyldesley, had been no less courageous than Derby. Again and again had he renewed the attack, showing an example of envious bravery yet in a desperate onslaught he was slain and his men fell easy victims to the foe."

In a few hours the Battle of Wigan Lane was fought and lost. It is said that Wigan Lane ran with blood and this site is shown on maps as the 'Bloody Mountains'. Sir Thomas Tyldesley, the local commander was killed. The Earl of Derby was wounded in the arms and shoulders, but escaped into Wigan town centre and took refuge in the 'Dog Tavern' (later known as the 'Old Dog Inn' or 'Legs of Man' - from Lord Derby's coat of arms - this tavern was demolished in 1971 for the New Arcade, later Marketgate).

Hearing about the Battle of Wigan Lane, Sir Roger Bradshaigh, went to the site of the battle in Wigan Lane. He rescued Sir William Throgmorton who had been wounded and left for dead. Sir Roger took him back to Haigh Hall to treat him and allowed him to stay until he had recovered from his wounds.

Robert Lilburne wrote the following letter to Parliament:

Mr Speaker,

My Lord Generall being pleased to command me to stay here to assist the well-affected against the Lord Derby, who was then at Warrington in this County, with some considerable force both from the Isle of Man, and which he had from the Scots army, wherewith he did not only much encourage the Enemies, but also discourage all the well-affected in these Counties of Lancashire and Cheshire, and whereof he thought himselfe wholly Master (as indeede he was), and none in those Counties were able, or durst appear against him; and began to beate Drums, and raise men in all places where he came, and would have been very strong in a short time, not only through the accesse of many Malignants, Papists, and disaffected Persons, but that assistance the Ministers and those who are called Presbyterians afforded, and would more abundantly have appeared, for they are the men who are grown here more bitter and envious against you than others of the old Cavaliers stamp; the power of the Almighty was very much seene in the total overthrow (I hope) of that wicked designe which was laid and hatched not only here, but through the whole North of England, which was getting into the like posture, as you may further understand by those papers I have here sent you; but that God who hath all along appeared with us and for us, hath shewed himself very good, and powerful in the discipating of his Enemy, who was about fourteen to fifteen hundred strong; I had only three companies of Foot, about fifty or sixty Dragoons, and about thirty Horse from Liverpoole, with my own wearied and somewhat scattered Regiment through our tedious March from Scotland, and hard duty we had here. Yesterday morning, about eleven or twelve a clock in the night, the Enemy marched from Preston, we lying within two or three miles of them, where we expected those supplies of Forces which came not, some of our intelligence informing us the Enemy were running away towards their army with what they had gotton; we pursued them hither with some confidence, that intelligence was true, and the rather we believed it

because of some discouragement we put upon them the day before; but upon our approach hither we found it otherwise, for they were bending their course towards Manchester, where they had not only very great hopes of surprising my Lord Generall's Regiment of Foot, but also assurance of the assistance of five hundred men in and about the Towne, but, upon the sight of our near approach, they unexpectedly put themselves in a posture of fighting with us, which then we endeavoured to decline, in regard to the very great advantage they had by their many Foote and Hedges, and the danger we apprehended my Lord Generall's Regiment of Foot at Manchester to be in, we were drawing off, thinking to have marched in the left flanke of them thither, to have gained a conjunction with our Friends, who too, had order to march that day to me to Preston; we had thought to have met them on the way, having sent severall messengers to let them know both the Enemies and our motion, but the enemy perceiving us to draw off, quickly advanced upon us with their Horse and Foot, which we perceiving, and that we could not goe off safely enough, we fell to dispute with them, which lasted almost one houre; our horse being not able to doe any service but in Lanes, and they overpowering us so much in Foot, made the businesse very difficult that we hardly knew whose the day would be for so long; but therein was the Salvation of God the more seen, and the greater opportunity we had to destroy them. I desire that he may have the praise and glory of that happy successe he was pleased to give unto his poor creatures. Having given you this narrative in general, which I thought it my duty to doe, this inclosed list will inform you further of the particulars. I desire the Lord would teach us to walke in some way answerable to those manifold and gracious Dispensations he daily gives us experience of, and manifests his love to us, in that, His name may be magnified in all we do in our severall places and stations; this great mercie to us here I hope is the earnest of his further tendernesse to the great concernment of all good people in this Nation, which is the hearty desire of Yours faithful and most humble Servant to my power, Rob Lilburne.

This Bearer was all the while in Engagement, and is able to give you further relation. I have not lost an Officer in this Engagement, but one Corporal and not above ten soldiers slaine, but very many wounded. Present these to the Right honourable William Lenthall Esq. Speaker of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of England – Haste

A List of the Prisoners taken at Wigan, August 25th 1651.

*Col. Throgmorton
Col. Richard Legge
Col. John Robinson
Col. Baynes
Col. Ratcliffe Gerret
Adjutant General Lieut-Col. Creson Rigby
Lieut-Col. Francis Baynes
Lieut-Col. Galliard
Lieut-Col. Constable
Major Gower
4 Captains, 2 Lieutenants
1 Quarter-master
Twenty gentlemen and Reformadoes
400 Private Prisoners*

Slain and dead since they were taken:

*The L Witherington
Major General Sir Tho Tilsley
Col Math Boynton
Major Chester
Major Trollop and divers others of quality whose names are not yet
brought in besides 60 private men.*

*All their Baggage and Sumptures, Armes and Ammunition,
the L.Derbies three Cloakes with Stars, his George Garter and other Robes*

Colonel Lilburne's victory for the Parliamentarians ended Charles II's hopes of support from northern England. The following is an extract from House of Commons Journal No.7 dated Saturday 30th August 1651.

A LETTER from Colonel Robert Lilburne from Wiggon, of the Twenty-fifth of August 1651, with a List of the Prisoners taken, and Officers and Soldiers slain: Which were this Day read.

Thanksgiving Day.

The Parliament having received Intelligence of the taking of the Castle of Sterling in Scotland, wherein were the Records of Scotland, 40 Pieces of Ordnance, 5000 Arms, with several Provisions and Ammunition; as also of the dispersing of the new Levies of the Enemy in Scotland; and likewise, of the total Rout and Overthrow of the Earl of Derby, and all the Forces under

his Command, in Lancashire, by the Parliament Forces under Colonel Robert Lilburne; the Particulars whereof, together with the Number and Names of divers of the Colonels slain, or taken Prisoners, is contained in a Letter sent to the Parliament from the said Colonel Robert Lilburne, do order, That, on the next Lord's Day, Thanks be given to Almighty God by the Ministers in all Churches and Congregations within the late Lines of Communication, and weekly Bills of Mortality, for these great and seasonable Mercies: And that they do then also beg of Almighty God a Blessing upon the Parliament's Army, now ready to engage with the Enemy: And that the Lord Mayor of the City of London do take Care, that timely Notice be given to the said Ministers, accordingly.

Resolved, That this Order be forthwith printed and published.

Resolved, *That, in Satisfaction of the 1,000£. formerly ordered by the Parliament, by Order of the Eighteenth of March 1650, unto Colonel Robert Lilburne out of Discoveries; and of 1,000£. more, which the Parliament doth now bestow on the said Colonel Robert Lilburne, as a Mark of Honour for his Fidelity and great Service, the Sum of Five hundred Pounds be forthwith paid unto the said Colonel Robert Lilburne, or his Assigns: And, that Lands of the clear yearly Value of Two hundred Pounds, be, by Act of Parliament, settled on the said Colonel Robert Lilburne, and his Heirs, of the Lands of some new Delinquent in this Business of Lancashire: And that the Committee for Obstructions do prepare an Act, and present the same to the House, for that Purpose.*

Resolved, *That the Council of State do take Care and give Order for the speedy Payment of the said Five hundred Pounds to the said Colonel Lilburne, or his Assigns.*

Resolved, *That a Letter be written to Colonel Robert Lilburne, taking Notice of his good and faithful Service; and to give the Thanks of the Parliament to him and his Officers and Regiment and other Soldiers who engaged with him in this Service: And that Colonel Marten do prepare the Letter, and that Mr. Speaker do sign the same, accordingly.*

The Earl of Derby left Wigan on the night of the 26th August and rode to his friends at Boscobel House before travelling to Worcester to join King Charles II.

He fought with King Charles II against Cromwell at the battle of Worcester on 3rd September 1651. Colonel Lilburne helped lead the

Parliamentary forces at Worcester and defeated the king and the Royalists.

The Earl of Derby helped King Charles II to escape by taking them to his friends at Boscobel House. Firstly he hid in an oak tree whilst the Parliamentary soldiers searched for him. Afterwards he hid in a priest's hole concealed under the floor in the bedroom closet (toilet).

King Charles II, dressed as a servant, left with a lady to go to Bristol from where he managed to obtain travel on a boat to France. The Earl of Derby rode in the opposite direction and came upon Parliamentary soldiers. He surrendered to Captain Edge.

From Parliamentary Journal dated 11th September 1651:

Persons to be brought to Tryal.

Mr. Scott reports, from the Council of State, That it be represented to the Parliament, as the humble Opinion of this Council, That James Earl of Derby, Colonel Edward Massy, Duke Hamilton, John Earl of Lauderdale, the Earl of Cleveland, Captain Bendbow, Sir Timothy Fetherston Haugh, and the Mayor and Sheriffs of Worcester, are fit Persons to be brought to Tryal, and made Examples of Justice.

That the Earl of Derby be tried at Chester, by a Court Martial, erected by the Commission of the Lord General, upon the Act of the 12th of August. (No persons to hold correspondence with Charles Stuart or his party.; Or aid them High treason.) That whosoever shall offend against this Act and Declaration, shall or may be proceeded against by a Council of War, who are hereby Authorized to hear and determine all and every the said Offences; and such as shall by the said Council be condemned to suffer Death, shall also forfeit all his and their Lands, Goods and other Estate, as in case of High-Treason.

The Earl of Derby was taken to Chester on 29 September. The Earl of Derby was tried by court-martial on charges of assisting the declared traitor Charles Stuart to invade England. He was found guilty and sentenced to death. He appealed for clemency on the grounds that he had surrendered to Captain Edge on promise of quarter but despite the support of Oliver Cromwell, the appeal was rejected. Whilst in prison in Chester the Earl of Derby sent a petition to Parliament:

S^r,...Being now, by the will of God, for aught I know, brought to the last minutes of my life, I once more most humbly pray the Parliament will be pleased to hear me before my death,

" I plead nothing in vindication of my offences, but humbly cast my selfe downe at the Parliament's feete, begging their mercy.

" I have severall times addrest my humble petitions for life, and now again crave leave to submit my selfe to their mercy, with the assurances that the Isle of Man shall be given up to such hands as the Parliament entrust to receive it : with this further engagement, (which I shall confirm by sureties), that I shall never act or endeavour any thing against the establisht power of this nation ; but end my daies in prison or banisht, as the house shall think fit.

" S^r; it is a greater affliction to me than death it selfe, that I am sentenct to die at Bolton ; so that the nation will look upon me as a sacrifice for that blood w^{ch} some have unjustly cast upon me, and from w^{ch} I hope I am acquitted in your opinions and the judgment of good men, having cleared my selfe by undeniable evidence.

" Indeed, at my triall it was never mentioned against me, and yet they adjudge me to suffer at Bolton, as if indeed I had bin guilty. I beg a respite for my life on that issue, y^t if I doe not acquit my selfe from that imputation, let me die without mercy.

" But, S^r, if the Parliament have not this mercy for me, I humbly pray the place appointed for my death may be altered, and that if the Parliamt thinke it not fit to give me time to live, they will be pleased to give me time to die, in respiting my life for some time whilst I may fit my selfe for death ; since thus long I have bin perswaded by Col Duckinfield the Parlt would give me my life. S^r, I submit my selfe, my family, wife, and children to the mercy of the Parliamt and shall live or die, S^r,

" Your contented and humble Servant,

Octob. 11, 1651. DERBYE."

[On the margin.] " S^r, I humbly beg the favour that the petition of a dyeing man, inclosed, may by your favour be read in the house.

" For the Right Honourable William Lenthall, Esq^r, Speaker f the Parliamt of the Common Wealth of England."

From the House of Commons Journal:

Mr. Speaker, by way of Report, acquaints the House with a Letter, which he had received from the Earl of Derby: And The Question being put, That the said Letter be now read; The House was divided. The Yeas went forth.

<i>Sir Wm. Brereton,</i>	<i>Tellers for the Yeas:</i>	22.
<i>Mr. Ellys,</i>	<i>With the Yeas,</i>	
<i>Mr. Bond,</i>	<i>Tellers for the Noes:</i>	16.
<i>Maj. Gen. Harrison,</i>	<i>With the Noes,</i>	

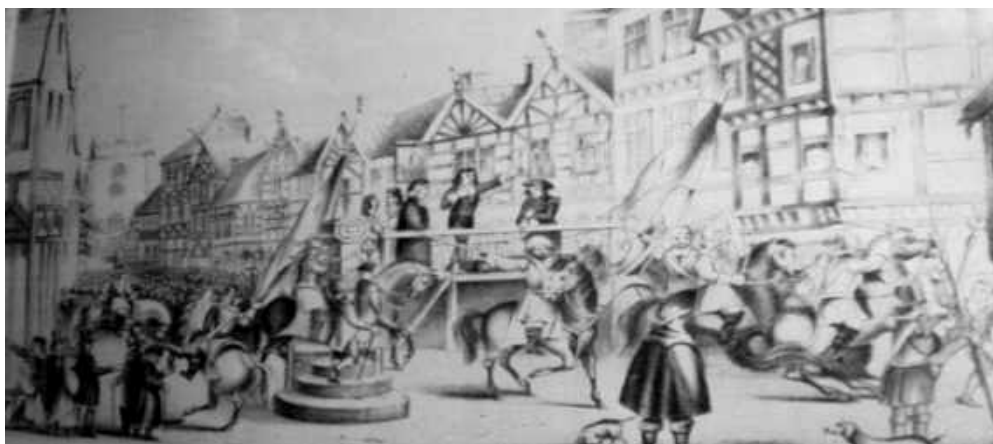
So it passed with the Affirmative.

A Letter from the Earl of Derby, of the Eleventh Day of October 1651; with a Petition therein enclosed, "The humble Petition of James Earl of Derby," was this Day read.

The Earl of Derby was sent to Bolton to be executed. The scaffold was built using wood from his home of Lathom House. His son Charles, Lord Strange, was with him.

James Stanley, Earl of Derby was beheaded on 15th October 1651 and Alexander Rigby, M.P. for Wigan supervised the execution. The Earl of Derby's body (head in a separate casket) was taken to Wigan where it lay overnight at Haigh Hall, then taken to Ormskirk Parish church and interred in the Derby Vault under the church.

In Bolton, there is a large memorial at the site of his execution. Nearby is the 'Ye Old Man and Scythe' inn where The Earl of Derby had his last drink and they still have the chair upon which he is said to have sat just before his execution. The inn was owned by the Stanley family and had been since 1160.



Drawing of the Execution of the 7th Earl of Derby, Ye Old Man & Scythe inn Bolton)



Old Man and the Scythe. Bolton



Chair from the Old Man and the Scythe on which Lord Derby sat to have his last drink



Stool on which Lord Derby knelt to be executed, now in Knowsley Hall



Archive documents of seized property and goods belonging to James the Earl of Derby



The Tyldesley monument Wigan Lane



Tree planted over buried plague victims in Wigan Parish church grounds

INTERREGUM

Rector John Bridgeman died in December 1652 at his son's house, Morton Hall in Oswestry.

In 1652 William Glover became Mayor of Wigan followed by James Scott in 1653.

James Bradshaw lost the Rectorship of Wigan in 1653 because of the legal rector (John Bridgeman's) death. Soon afterwards James Bradshaw was appointed to Macclesfield, where he remained till the Act of Uniformity of 1662 was enforced.

Thirty-fourth Rector of Wigan

In 1653 Charles Hotham was presented to the rectorship of Wigan by the Hotham Trustees on the death of Rector John Bridgeman. Charles Hotham was a son of Sir John Hotham and ancestor of the present Lord Hotham. He was educated at Christ's College, Cambridge. Rector Hotham paid his first-fruits on 9th May 1653.

Oliver Cromwell made Lord Protector

In December 1653 Oliver Cromwell was made Lord Protector. He set out the ideals of the Protectorate; "to act for God and the peace and good of the Nation, and particularly...to consider and relieve the distress of the poor and oppressed". The Protectorate also considered having a written constitution, whether Parliament should have two elected chambers and no religion tied to the state.

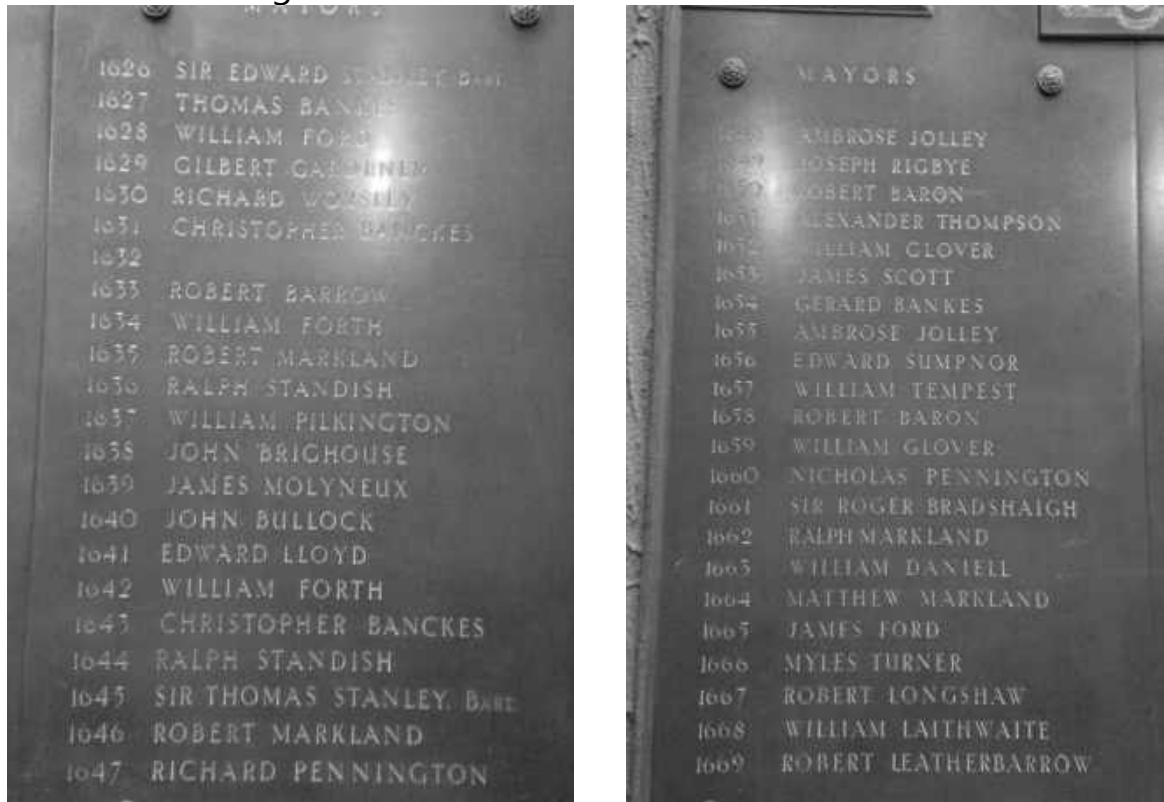
Under Oliver Cromwell there was religious freedom, but he did ban celebrations at Christmas and other feast days. He also championed the idea that rulers should be accountable to the people. The House of Lords was abolished and so was torture. Cromwell had also established the New Model Army who were properly trained and good soldiers were promoted to officer status regardless of title or wealth. For the first time working class men could become army officers.

Gerard Bankes became Mayor of Wigan in 1654 followed by Ambrose Jolley in 1655 and Edward Sumpnor in 1656 and William Tempest in 1657.

In 1656 Oliver Cromwell and the Protectorate allowed Jews to return to England, they had been banished in 1290 by King Edward I.

In September 1658 Oliver Cromwell died and his son Richard became Lord Protector. Richard summoned a new Parliament and elections began in Wigan.

Robert Baron became Mayor of Wigan in 1658, William Glover in 1659, Nicholas Pennington in 1660.



Mayors of Wigan from 1626 to 1669, Wigan Town Hall

King Charles II was restored to the throne of England in May 1660.

In 1660 John Burton was presented to the rectory of Wigan King Charles II. Charles Hotham was removed and accused of heterodoxy (giving out unorthodox opinions at variance with the official line). On the 8th October 1660 Charles Hotham was reinstated as Rector of Wigan.

In 1661 Sir Roger Bradshaigh was Mayor of Wigan followed by Ralph Markland in 1662.

Charles II Charter to Wigan

In May 1662 Charles II issued Wigan with a special charter and gave Wigan the title of Ancient and Loyal. This charter acknowledged Wigan's help to him and his father (King Charles I) during the Civil War. The charter confirmed the previous charters, but unlike the other Wigan charters this charter gave the rights and privileges not to the Rector, but to Wigan Corporation.

The charter also granted that the Mayor was to act as magistrate for the borough of Wigan and this was to be quite separate from the Lancashire justices. Wigan Corporation had the right to hold 'Pie Powder Courts'. Wigan had always held court leets over its own residents, but this gave them the right to fine outsiders to the town. Wigan was a popular place to visit on market days and fairs and the town was able to collect a lot of money through court fines to visitors.

Sir Roger Bradshaigh of Haigh Hall was confirmed as mayor and the charter also named and confirmed to office the Recorder, 11 aldermen and 2 bailiffs. For the first time a 'common clerk' (later Town Clerk) was defined as a Crown appointment for life.

The charter granted an additional fair to be held on 3 days commencing 16th July each year. The Corporation was also given the right to acquire and dispose of real estate.

King Charles II gave Wigan a ceremonial sword to be carried at state occasions. On one side of the sword are the royal arms of Charles II and on the other the arms of Sir Roger Bradshaigh. The sword is kept in Wigan Town Hall and the charter in Wigan Archives, Leigh town hall.

Thirty-fifth Rector of Wigan

In 1662 Charles Hotham was removed from the Rectorship of Wigan because he refused to comply with the Act of Uniformity. George Hall was presented to the post of Rector of Wigan by Sir Orlando Bridgeman. Rector Hall was also made Bishop of Chester in 1662 and was Archdeacon of Canterbury. Sidesmen of the church are first mentioned during Rector Hall's time.

In 1663 William Daniell became Mayor of Wigan followed by Matthew Markland in 1664, James Ford in 1665, Myles Turner in 1666, Robert Longshaw in 1667 and William Laithwaite in 1668.

John Dwight

John Dwight, the famous potter lived in Millgate, Wigan from 1665 to 1671. John's 3 children were baptised in Wigan between 1667 and 1671.

John experimented with local clays and discovered a "transparent porcellane and opacous redd and dark coloured porcellane".

In 1671 he was granted his first patent for "the mystery of transparent earthenware" commonly known by the name of porcelain or china.

In 1671 he moved to Fulham where he founded the Fulham Pottery.



bust of King Charles II

1673 John Dwight "Porcelain"



Rector of Wigan Bishop George Hall died in 1668 from an accident whilst gardening, when he fell on a knife which was in his pocket. He was buried in the sanctuary of Wigan Parish church.

In 1668 John Wilkins was presented to the Rectorship of Wigan by the Bridgeman Trustees. John Wilkins was originally a Royalist, but became a Presbyterian during the Civil War and married Oliver Cromwell's sister.



Rector John Wilkins was a brilliant mathematician and scientist, in 1660 he was one of the founders of the Royal Society. He wrote a treatise about the possibility of a 'flying chariot' going to the other side of the world or even the moon.

In recognition of his theories in "The Discovery of a World in the Moone", one of the mountains of the moon is named after him. On the restoration of King Charles II in May 1660, Bishop John Wilkins again returned to the Church of England.

In 1669 John Leatherbarrow became Mayor of Wigan followed by Myles Turner in 1670, Ralph Markland in 1671, William Glover in 1672 and Robert Baron in 1673.

Thirty-seventh Rector of Wigan

In 1673 John Pearson was presented to the post of Rector of Wigan by the Bridgeman Trustees. Rector John Wilkins had died on 19th November 1672.

Rector Pearson had remained loyal to the king and during Cromwell's Protectorate had hidden in London.

After the Restoration in 1660, he became Master of Trinity College, Cambridge for 11 years. During this time he wrote many essays on doctrine and theology. He wrote "Exposition of the Creed" and this was considered to be a perfect theological work and was re-printed many times.

On being made Rector of Wigan he lived at Wigan Hall for a time each summer. He had three curates carrying out his regular parish work. In 1674 Nicholas Pennington became Mayor of Wigan followed by James Ford in 1675, Alexander Rigby in 1676, Ralph Holmes in 1677 and Robert Leatherbarrow in 1678.

On 5th October 1678 Potato marketing is first mentioned in Wigan's records. The North West of England was the first part of mainland Britain to grow potatoes, they were first grown in Ireland. Potatoes were easy to grow, easy to cook and very filling.

In 1679 King Charles II created Sir Roger Bradshaigh of Haigh, a baronet. Sir Roger became Mayor of Wigan in 1679.

In 1679 Alexander Rigby, M.P. for Wigan constructed a monument to Sir Thomas Tyldesley on Wigan Lane where the Civil War battle took place and where Sir Thomas died. The plaque on the monument states:

*A high act of gratitude erected this monument, and
conveys the memory of Sir thos. Tyldesley
to posterity,
who served King C. 1st, as Left.Col. at Edghill battell,
after raised Regiments of horse, foot, and dragoons,
and for the desperate storming of Burton upon Trent
over a bridge of 36 arches
Received the honour of knighthood.
He after served in all the wars in great commands
was Governor of Litchfleld
and followed the fortunes of the Crown thro' the
3 Kingdoms
would never compound with the rebels tho strongly
invested
and on the 25th Augt, 1650,
was here slain commanding as Major Genl. Under the E. of Derby,
to whom the grateful erector
Alexr. Rigby, Esqre. Was Comet,
and when he was High Sheriff of the Co. of Lancaster
anno.1679, placed his high obligation
On the whole family of the Tyldesleys.*



BETA students with the present Lord Derby



Knowsley Hall as it is today



The original Knowsley Hall prior to extension



Countess Charlotte with messenger
From Sir Thomas Fairfax



Countess Charlotte in old age



Portraits of the Earl and Countess of Derby with their four children

All these paintings are hanging in Knowsley Hall

BETA Interview with Edward the present Earl of Derby – Knowsley Hall, August 2011

Knowsley Hall, near Liverpool is the ancestral home of the Stanley family, the Earls of Derby. The original ancestral home was Lathom House, and Knowsley Hall was the Earl of Derby's hunting Lodge. Lathom House was completely destroyed by the Parliamentarians in 1645 and after James, the 7th Earl of Derby was executed in 1651, Knowsley Hall was extended and became the ancestral home.

Edward Richard William Stanley, the 19th and current Earl, kindly agreed to BETA's request to interview him regarding his ancestor, James Stanley, the 7th Earl of Derby, for our research book "Wigan and the English Civil War".

On a glorious, sunny day we all arrived at Knowsley to be greeted by Lord Derby who took us through into his private sitting room where we all sat down to talk to him. BETA students had thought of questions to ask Lord Derby and written them in notebooks. The questions they asked were as follows:

Question 1 - Did Lord Derby help King Charles II to escape after the Battle of Worcester?

Answer – Yes, he did – together with a small group of the King's supporters, Lord James Derby took the King to Boscobel House, home of the Pendrell family. King Charles hid in the priest's hole in a bedroom and later in the now famous oak tree.

Question 2 – Do you have any records of the Battle of Wigan Lane?

Answer – Lord Derby was not aware of any records of the Battle of Wigan Lane here at Knowsley though he thought they no doubt do exist. Lord Derby was very interested to hear about his ancestor, the 7th Earl's role in the battle at Wigan and all the information we have researched so far.

Question 3 – What happened to Lady Derby after the execution of her husband?

Answer – Lady Derby (Charlotte de la Tremoille) retired to Knowsley Hall where she died in 1664 and was then buried alongside her husband in the Stanley Vault at Ormskirk Parish church.

Question 4 – What happened to Lord Derby's children after his execution?

Answer – After the Restoration, King Charles II's ingratitude to Lady Derby and her children must have been hard to bear especially after the execution in 1651 of her husband, one of King Charles's most loyal supporters. Lady Derby did not receive any reward for her bravery throughout the Civil War, even though she had successfully defended Lathom House in 1644 against a 3 months siege by Sir Thomas Fairfax and the Parliamentarians.

Question 5 – Is this house haunted?

Answer – Lord Derby had not personally seen any ghosts, though it was said that various ghostly figures have reportedly been seen in parts of the house.

Question 6 – Do you know the Queen?

Answer – Yes, Lord Derby and his family spend time with the Queen at Sandringham and one of his sons is a page to Her Majesty on State occasions.

Lord Derby then took us on a tour of the house, showing us portraits of the 7th Earl and his family. One portrait of Charlotte showed her in old age, dressed in black, looking very severe and unhappy. This was in contrast with portraits of her and her children in happier days.

As we walked through the library, we came to a large portrait of James, the 7th Earl, which hangs over the fireplace. Beneath the portrait is a wooden low backed wooden chair upon which the Earl knelt to be executed in Bolton. We invited the Earl to our English Civil War re-enactment day in May 2012.

The Earl of Derby kindly sent us digital images of paintings of James the 7th Earl, Countess Charlotte and their children for BETA to use in the research book "Wigan and the English Civil Wars".



















