# William Strode:

*One of the Five Members.*

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*Colonel in the Parliament Army.*

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THOSE who at any time have studied the history of the Civil War, must be familiar with the name—William Strode—and also, after but a short reading it must be clear that there were two of the name prominently active at the same time, so closely contemporary, so similar in character and political action, that it becomes difficult—in fact, impossible—to distinguish them. This confusion has been noticed by the historians of the time, but not explained. One of these two is known as "Colonel," the other as "One of the Five Members;" and whilst the life of the one claims really a national interest, the life of the other has an especial interest for us in Somerset. But the question has been whether William, the Colonel, was also William, One of the Five; and whether the William found elected to the Parliament of 1640, was the same William as found in the Parliament of 1629; and whether the William of 1629 was the William active in Somerset against ship-money, in 1637; and further, as a point of interest for us, which of the two was a Somerset, and which a Devonshire, man.

There were at this date Strodes in Somerset, in Devon, in Dorset, in Wilts, in Kent, in Sussex. Five at least contemporary in these counties about this time bore the name of William; one being of the Middle Temple, and another the Public Orator at Oxford. For the present purpose, by con-

fining attention to certain Members of Parliament connected with Devon and Somerset, the number for notice is reduced to two.

In the Parliament of 1623–4, 21st James I, Sir William Strode represented the county of Devon, and William Strode, gentleman, the borough of Beeralston. In 1625, 1st Chas. I, the Parliament met in May, and was dissolved in August. Here again William Strode, gentleman, appears for Beeralston, but with Sir William Strode now for Plymouth. In 1626, William Strode, gentleman, is again elected for Beeralston, the return being dated 18th January, with now William Strode, Esq., for Plymouth, the return being dated 24th Jan. Here then are two Williams in the same Parliament; one being distinguished as esquire, the other as gentleman.

In 1628, 3rd Charles I, William Strode, gentleman, was again returned for Beeralston, but fortunately no other Strode appears in the list, as to this Parliament, which met on the 17th March, 1628, and was dissolved on the 10th March, 1629, attention must be directed.

On the death of Queen Elizabeth, and the accession of James I, a heavy cloud seemed to hang over the hitherto most prosperous nation, for the change was by no means acceptable. James soon perceived that he had to deal with a House of Commons, and that his ideas of the royal prerogative would be opposed from that quarter. The conduct of his successor, his son Charles, soon drew out this possibility, as he, endeavouring to govern by Proclamation instead of the Law; to impose taxes by his sole will, and to tolerate the hated popery, raised such angry and determined feelings that a section of the Parliament combined to stop him. On endeavouring to impose, by his own authority alone, the tax of tonnage and poundage, —or, as we should say, Custom House dues,—the combination in opposition drew up a documentary protest, which it was decided should be read in the House. This being known, the King sent an order to the Speaker to prevent it; and before

a vote could be taken, he was to quit the chair, and adjourn. The question coming on, on the 2nd March, 1629, a scene ensued which has perhaps never been paralleled. When the Speaker announced that he could not hear the paper read and was about to leave the Chair, he was seized and forcibly held down by two Members who had placed themselves one on either side for that purpose. At this point Mr. William Strode, "in the heat of disobedience," rose, and demanded to have the paper read. The keys of the House being seized, the doors were locked, so that whilst none could get out, a messenger, sent to stop the proceedings, could not get in. Mr. William Strode then proposed that all who were for the paper should stand up, and in this way it was voted and passed.[1] The immediate consequence was that the offending Members were ordered, 4th March, to attend before the Privy Council as prisoners. Four did so, but with them there was no William Strode.[2]

The Parliament was then dissolved, 10th March, 1629, and it must be remembered that no other met for eleven years, not until the spring of 1640.

Besides a Proclamation against these "scandalous proceedings," "most wicked and dangerous to the kingdom," there came out another (20th March) for the apprehension of Wm. Strode, gentleman, son of Sir William Strode, of the county of Devon, Knt., for seditious practices and crimes of a high nature. The Proclamation declared that the messengers had used much diligence to find him, but in vain, and threatened "such punishment as should be just for so high a contempt," on any who presumed to harbour or entertain him.[3] This seems to have produced him, and by warrant under the hands of twelve of the Privy Council, 2nd April, he was committed to the King's Bench, and there kept a close prisoner, without

(1). *Carte. T.*, vol. iv. 203. (2). *Parliamentary Register*, vol. ii.

(3). *Collection of Proclamations*, Charles I, No. 106.

even the solace of pen, ink, and paper.[1] In the usual "course of law" he would have been bailed the following day, but by command of the King the keeper of the Tower was directed "to take the body of William Strode from our prison of our Bench," and keep him until further ordered.[2] Consequently, when the prisoner was called on to appear for trial and sentence he could not be produced, the keeper of the Bench stating that he had been removed the day before to the Tower, by the King's warrant. Thus there could be neither bail, trial, nor sentence. There seems to have been serious discussion on this proceeding, as three draft letters, all differing, are extant. The King wrote to the Judges, pretending to explain that "he had not removed the prisoners with intention of declining the course of justice, but that they should remain in custody until they carried themselves less insolently and unmannerly; and because he found it not safe to bring them to the Bench, lest they be delivered."[3] The Lieutenant of the Tower, in acknowledging that he had received the body of William Strode, asked whether he should be kept a close prisoner, or only safe with liberty to speak, "whereby his confederates would be known." As close prisoner his charges fell upon the Crown, "it would be equal punishment" suggested the Lieutenant, "to make him pay for his own diet."[4] Perhaps this latter reason was influential, as it was ordered that he be kept "safe, not close,"[5] and that he might have the liberty of the Tower and use the walks and leads for his health's sake. The Lieutenant was also ordered, December 28th, that "from henceforth you make no demands upon us either for diet, lodging, or washing; leaving him to come to your table or diet himself."[6]

(1). Verney, *Notes in Parliament*, p. 102.

(2). *Add. MSS.*, 15,561, fol. 118*b*; *Controlment Roll, K. Bench*, 5th Chas. I, mem. 65.

(3). *State Papers, Domestic*, vol. cxlv. Nos. 35 to 41.

(4). *S.P., Dom.*, vol. cxlv. No. 32.

(5). *S.P., Dom.*, vol. cxlv. No. 39. (6). *Egerton MSS.* 2,553, fol. 51.

The charge being referred to the Star Chamber Court, the information filed, 7th May, accused him, that, "maliciouslie and wickedlie under faigned colour and pretence of debate," he openly in the House falsly affirmed that his Majesty had conspired to trample under foot the liberty of the subject and the privileges of the Parliament, and that he combined and confederated to read publicly a certain paper prepared merely to express malice and disaffection. And for the further expressing his malignity, and in pursuance of the confederacy, he openly moved, and with much earnestness urged, that the paper should be read, that the "House might not be turned off like scattered sheep, and sent home with scorn put upon them."[1]

Being brought up, his examination was attempted by the Attorney-General. Strode demurred, and claimed that he ought not, by law, to be compelled to answer for things said or done in the Commons' House, the said House being then sitting.[2] Being asked whether he was in the Parliament on the 2nd March, he said he was there. Being further asked whether the Speaker did not on that day deliver the King's message for an adjournment, he answered that he did not well remember what was done on that day, neither did he desire to answer for anything done in the House, but in the House.[3] The evidence is signed in autograph, William Strode.

The prisoners—there were eight besides Strode—remained incarcerated all the long vacation. In October, they were conducted from the Tower to the chambers of the Chief Justice, in Sergeants' Inn, it "being thought easier there to work upon them," and being put in separate rooms, they were called in one by one. Liberty was offered if they would give a bond for good behaviour. Strode declined, and answered that he neither could nor would enter into any such bond. Exception, too, was taken to the writ, which was asserted to be illegal. On the 9th October they appeared in Court, and

(1). *Add. MSS.*, 12,511, fol. 151. *S.P., Dom.*, vol. cxlii. No. 37.
(2). *S.P.*, vol. cxliii. No. 12. (3). *S.P.*, vol. cxlii. No. 33.

again tendered bail, the Judges agreeing to accept it, with the addition of the bond for good behaviour. Bail alone was persistently claimed as a first and separate proceeding; then a trial; and then, according to the judgment, if necessary, a bond. All declined to submit, declaring that their long imprisonment of thirty weeks was inflicted upon them, not as private men, but as Members of Parliament. The "Judges shewed themselves marvelous shye" when the Parliament was mentioned, and "cut" the prisoners "off," asserting that it was for sedition, and not for anything done in the House, they were charged. They answered that no such charge had been made; that it was all for matters done in the Parliament. The Judges, however, "stood stiffly upon" the question. Being again asked if they would give the bond, they again only tendered bail. The Judge then threatened them that if they refused this "favour" now, they might "lye by itt for seven yeares," as no more writs of Habeas-Corpus could be issued. All refused, and were sent back to the Tower.

Mr. Strode propounded this syllogism. Whatsoever is contrary to Law and hurtful to the Liberty of the subject, ought not to be performed. But for me to be bound in this case to good behaviour is contrary to Law and hurtful to the Liberty of the subject. Ergo, I ought not to perform it. The Chief Justice told him they sat there not to answer syllogisms, and so "cut him off." Strode then made two requests: one, that he might be once a week permitted access to that Bar to plead for liberty; the other, that he might go to the Tower church on Sundays: "whereunto the Judges answered not a word."[1]

In the end, one died in prison; some paid a fine and were released on submission and giving a bond for £2,000 for their good behaviour, and a promise not to come nearer the Court than two miles.[2] Strode declined every offer. What he did;

(1). *S.P.*, vol. cl. No. 85. "A relation," &c.
(2). *Parliamentary History*, vol. ii. pp. 516—524.

what became of him, or how long he remained a prisoner has ever been a matter for doubt. Sir Horace Verney, in his *Notes* made at this time, says, p. 104, "one died in prison; some paid a fine; one imprisoned many years. So did Strode." Whether he mean that Strode paid, or that he remained in prison, it would be difficult to determine. But the astounding fact is that he remained in prison until just before the next Parliament was called in 1640, when he was released, after a seclusion of almost eleven years.

There were no newspapers in those days, even the small news pamphlet so interesting a year or two later had hardly commenced; instead, there were professional writers of News Letters, a weekly budget sent off to their patrons, with all the gossip likely to be of interest. By good fortune there is one preserved for us, dated 24th January, 1640, which begins: "This last week, Mr. Strode, who has been in prison since the last Parliament, to which he was committed till he should produce sureties for his good behaviour, which he did not, was set at liberty by a warrant under the King's hand."[1]

This release, perhaps forced upon the King by the political situation surrounding, came opportunely, as enabling Mr. Strode to again secure his old post, and to use his energies to pay for this long imprisonment.

After this lapse of eleven years, the King, finding it imperative for the purposes of supply, called a Parliament for the 13th April, 1640, but not getting what he wanted, he dissolved on the 5th May. This Parliament met about three months after the liberation of the prisoner, and in the list of Members returned, is William Strode, for Beeralston. This was either not expected, or not intended, as there was an opposition in the person of Sir Amias Meredith, who claimed to be returned. The Sheriff seems to have shirked the decision, as the official document is endorsed by him:—"Being prest and required to returne this second endenture for Beeralston,

(1). *Scudamore Papers*, vol. v. fol. 87.

wch concerns a Burgess of the Towne, I have thought it fitt and safest for me to leave the decision of the controversy to the Hon^ble. House of Parliament." The result was an Order of the Commons, 28th April, that the Indenture of Sir Amias should be removed from the file. William Strode was consequently elected.[1]

Finding it impossible to get on without aid, another Parliament was called in November, the same year, 1640, when again William Strode was returned for Beeralston. He now received a complimentary election for Tamworth, but chose rather to adhere to his old place. No other Strode was returned to this Parliament, known as the Long Parliament, so that there is again no confusion about identity

William Strode was soon active. In November he was on a Committee to consider a case against a papist, who had attacked a man in the service of the House, when collecting the names of papists about Westminster.[2] He was also on a Committee in December, about property; on another, to consider the case of the Bishop of Bath and Wells, and to take into consideration a Petition against the Bishop, sent up from Beckington. In December he was on Committee to consider the breach of the Privileges of the Parliament in 1629, especially as to the proceedings against the Members then imprisoned. This was a curious appointment, as he was considering his own case. In December, too, the House "fell upon" a charge against the Lord Keeper Finch, who asked to be allowed to make his own defence. Mr. Strode rose and offered his assent if the rules permitted, observing "that the House had once importunately desired my Lord (being then Speaker) to speak in the House, but he would not."[3] This was in the Parliament of 1629, when Strode was a party to his being held down in the Chair. On the 29th December, Strode brought in a Bill for annual Parliaments, to meet the first

(1). *Parliamentary Returns*, bundle 42.

(2). *Rushworth*, v. i. pt. 3, p. 63. (3). *Scudamore Papers*, vol. v. fol. 137.

Tuesday after Ash Wednesday; and if the usual royal writ for the election were not issued by forty days before that day, the Sheriff should issue it, and the elections proceed. Such Parliament not to be dissolved before it had existed forty days, except with the consent of both Houses. This bold proposition at once became the talk of the time, as it so evidently attacked the King's prerogative.[1] In October, 1641, Strode supported a claim for Parliament to negative Ministerial appointments; this being not agreed to, a petition was substituted, expressing the wishes of the House. In the debate on the Grand Remonstrance, 9th November, 1641, he was again prominent; and on the 11th November he moved that no money be given for Ireland until the Remonstrance were passed. He was appointed on the Committee to prepare the Bill against the Earl of Strafford, a matter which closely touched the personal feelings of the King. In November he moved boldly that the Kingdom be put in a "posture of defence," and means taken "for commanding the arms thereof;" that was, that the House should take commmand of the militia.[2] He had, too, in mind, an intention to charge the Queen for her intrigues for an army; and for her plotting with the Irish, and with the Pope and papists. All this was at last more than the King, or the Queen and her advisers, could bear, and so before the last charge could be brought forward, the King was induced to attempt the arrest of five of the most prominent, troublesome Members, as the surest means of getting rid of them. Having first accused them of High Treason, the attempt was made on the 4th January, 1642; "*dies mirabilis, dies terribilis*, a blissful morning, a bloody evening—a day of terror and wonder—a day never to be obliterated."[3]

The House being informed of the intention, and of the King's approach with an armed force, requested the Five Members to leave to "avoid combustion." To this wish four

(1). *Add. MSS.* 11,045, fol. 147.
(2). *Harl. MSS.* 162, fol. 191 *b*. (3). *Jehovah Jireh.*

yielded, "but Mr. Stode was obstinate," till an old and intimate friend pulled him out by force just as the King, with his "ruffians," was entering Palace Yard.[1] Leaving the soldiers in the Hall, the King entered the Commons House, the first time in history a King had ever done so, and looking round remarked that he perceived the birds had flown. Failing in his purpose he then returned. The Five Members, meanwhile, were secreted in the King's Bench Court, and eventually got by water to the City, where they were lodged in Coleman Street, and where they "wanted nothing." The same evening, dated at seven o'clock, a letter or warrant was sent off, addressed to the Mayor of Dover, or in his absence, his Majesty's principal officer there — "Hast, hast, hast, post hast, hast with all speed:"—that whereas Mr. William Strode and others have been accused of high treason, "being struck with the consciousness of their guilt, are fled," all diligence should be used to arrest them, and prevent their escape to foreign parts. Forthwith came out also a Proclamation for apprehending them, and charging all persons to search for them and take them to the Tower.[2] This the Lord Keeper refused to seal, so that it was posted only at Whitehall, and went no further. A day or two after, the Commons declared it false and scandalous, and that any one questioned for harbouring the run-aways should be considered under the protection of the Parliament. Mr. Strode made a speech in the House to clear himself of these accusations. He chose to consider that it was an attempt to get rid of him, to prevent his voting against the bishops, and that the King was guided by evil-minded persons—troublers of the State. He asked for a speedy trial, and hoped that the Parliament would go on with this work, and settle all troubles in Church and State.[3]

(1). *Parliamentary Register.*

(2). *Harl. MSS.* 4931, p. 100. (3). Mr. Strode: his Speech, &c.

As neither side would give way, the Civil War was the consequence in 1642. Strode was quickly and characteristically active. Both parties had contended for the mastery of the militia, a business in which Mr. Strode was especially prominent. He was on the Committee appointed to draw up a Declaration to be sent into all counties, to put themselves in a "posture of defence." On the 8th August an Ordinance was passed that the Lord Lieutenants should raise a force to oppose those traiterous persons who were gathered together against the Parliament and with them fight, etc., the especial allusion being to the proceedings of the Marquis of Hertford in Somerset. Mr. Strode carried the same to the Lords, and reported that they concurred. Early in 1643, during the success of the Royalists in Devon, his house in that county was pillaged by some of Sir Ralph Hopton's party, a proceeding which was followed, on the 20th February, by an Ordinance of Parliament sequestering Sir Ralph's estates into the hands of Mr. Strode in satisfaction for this loss. This was followed, on the 16th March, by a Royal Proclamation on behalf of Hopton, declaring that the Parliament had sequestered the estate into the hands of "that William Strode whom we have accused of High Treason," and that the House had no such power of disposal. In June, Mr. Strode, "a Member of the House," was furnished with complete armour for man and horse, in lieu of the loss of a similar equipment in the service of the Parliament. The cavalier feeling was strong against Strode, and during some carousal, a party, after drinking "destruction and confusion to the Parliament," vowed expressly they would be avenged on him.[1] On the 20th June, the King issued another Proclamation, offering a free and general pardon to all the Members of both Houses, excepting, with others, William Strode, a "principal author of these calamities, and against whom we shall proceed as guilty of High Treason."

(1). *Declaration of the Cruelties, &c.* By R. Andrews.

Nothing came of all this, as Mr. Strode continued his activity in the Parliament. In July he was on a Committee of Safety, with full power to encourage the nation, as one man, to come to the Parliament. In September he was on a Committee to consider the case of Col. Strode. So, constantly all through the year. In December, on the occasion of the funeral of Mr. Pym, he was one of the bearers:[1] and was afterwards on a Committee to consider Mr. Pym's affairs.

Throughout 1644, too, he is found constantly at work, on all sorts of business. Sometimes about currants, about conferences or accounts, or the militia. In July he was on a Committee to govern Somerset affairs. In the same month he was sent to the Lords to expedite an Ordinance for Martial Law, and to acquaint them with what had happened in the west, concerning the hanging of many honest men for adhering to the Parliament. This was in allusion to an episode at Woodhouse, near Frome, where some executions had occurred. He was busy always about western affairs, and was especially earnest for the relief of Taunton. It was by his work and energy that relief was sent. Committees and conferences occupied him almost daily, from ways and means, Mint and moneys, to questions concerning admission to the sacrament. In November he was sent to the Lords to desire them to expedite the Ordinance concerning the Archbishop of Canterbury, and in January, 1645, he was still busy on the same matter. A resolution for the Archbishop's death having passed, it was sent to the Lords, but it "stuck there" until Mr. Strode, "he that makes all the bloody motions," told their Lordships that the "City would bring a Petition "with twenty thousand hands to it," so that after "some heats" it passed on the 4th January.[2] A notice of his and his friends' activity in this business says—"these men are eminent in the work of Reformation, and it will be no small addition of honour to them to have furthered the trial of this

(1). *Perfect Diurnall,* No. 13. (2). *Mercurius Aulicus.*

matchless Traitor and Incendiary."[1] In February Strode was added to the Assembly of Divines, in the place of one deceased.[2] But all this work now became too much for him; his body being exhausted and his health impaired by his sufferings and services, he retired, during some illness, to Tottenham, where he died of fever, not of the plague as reported by some at the time. On the 10th September, 1645, the House being informed of the death of this "worthy Member, and faithful, religious, and unwearied patriot, one of the Five Members,"[3] ordered that his corpse should be interred in Westminster Abbey, near the body of Mr. Pym, in such a manner as may be fitting for a person of his quality and deserts. It was further ordered that the whole House should attend, and that Mr. Hicks should be desired to preach. The body was taken from Wallingford House to the Abbey, on Monday, 15th September, when Mr. Gasper Hicks preached, according to the order. The House also ordered that the £500 voted him for his illegal imprisonment should be paid to his executors; and later in 1647, after considering the wrongs and damages suffered by him in 1629, £5000 were voted, to be divided amongst his poor kindred.

From the sermon preached at the funeral, the contemporary opinion of him can be learned. After noticing that he died not of the plague, although many would doubtless say we have found this man the very pestilence, the preacher remarked that he had this honourable sepulture because he had done good in Israel. He then touched on the antiquity of his descent, the piety of his private life, his sweetness in conversation, his faithfulness in friendship. A warm and furious partisan, he was just and courteous, cordial to God and man. He was not one to peep into the House for recreation, he set his shoulder to the work, his speeches being characterised by a "solid vehemence and a piercing acuteness." He was not to

(1). *Merc. Britannicus.* (2). *Commons' Journals*, vol. iv. p. 50.

(3). *Perfect Diurnall*, No. 111.

be moved by menaces: he counted not his liberty so that he might do his work, as witness his tedious and heavy sufferings, his long imprisonment—and that in the prime of his time. Witness, too, the late accusation of the highest crime, his singular serviceableness specially marking him for destruction. He "sought no office, though he had spent or lost all his private estate; he rather cast himself on his friends," a proceeding averse to his spirit, although he enjoyed their heartiness and respect. Thus the Parliament had lost an ornament, the Ministry a friend, the Commonwealth a constant servant. He was, indeed, a very serviceable piece, a precious soul, profitable to his generation. If anything were wanting, said the preacher, to express his worth, it might be mentioned as the sum of honour, that he was one of the Five Members.

In 1661, after a quiet rest of sixteen years, his remains were childishly disinterred and thrown into a hole in St. Margaret's Churchyard.

# COL. WILLIAM STRODE.

Although the Strode name has been long connected with Shepton Mallet, as a county name it was hardly a prominent one. Keeping here to a local purpose, the name first comes to the front in 1625. On the 7th March in that year, a Bill was brought into the House of Lords, from the House of Commons, being an Act for the sale of the manor of Barrington in the county of Somerset, the inheritance of Arthur Farewell, an infant and a ward to his Majesty. It was then read on that day a first time; on the 11th March, the second time, and sent to Committee; and on the 15th March it was passed.[1] Barrington belonged to Sir Thomas Phillips, who had mortgaged it to Farewell, and this Act was necessary to enable them to deal with it.

Next, on the 6th May, in the same year, the property was sold by Sir Thomas Phillips, Bart., to William Strode, sen., and William Strode, jun., and to the heirs of William, sen.[2] Even in this transaction a little bit of character comes out, as the purchase was made without the usual license; consequently, when this was discovered, a fine of £3 was inflicted in 1626, when a pardon was duly granted.[3]

Again, in 1628 a license was granted to Alexander Deyer, gentleman, to alienate property at Street and Glaston, to Wm. Strode, sen., Esq., and Wm. Strode, jun., gentleman, and the heirs of the said senior.[4]

Thus, then, two William Strodes, as father and son, are

(1). *Lords' Journals*, vol. iii. pp. 519 *a*, 520 *b*, 524 *a*, 528 *a*.
(2). *Feet Fines, Somerset*, 1st Charles I, Easter, No. 1
(3). *Alienation Office*, vol. xv. p. 268, Michaelmas, 2nd Charles I.
(4). *Alienation Office*, vol. xvi. p. 28, Easter, 4th Charles I.

duly settled at Street and Barrington. Their coming or their settlement was aided by the fact that the father, a son of William, a clothier, of Shepton, had married in 1621, the only daughter and heir of Barnard, a clothier, of Downside, in Shepton, by which marriage his wealth was largly augmented. That wealth was already considerable, as before his marriage he had been a merchant in Spain, and had by good fortune accumulated there.

A notice of this Spanish connection is preserved through an extant Letter of Credit, given by one George Strode in 1622, to his agent at Bilboa, for the benefit of the Earl of Bristol who was sending there his hawks and dogs.[1]

After the dissolution in 1629, there being no Parliament to interfere with him, the King bethought him to pretend that the kingdom was in danger of invasion, and that a fleet should be provided for its defence. The plan ordered was that every county should find a ship ready for war, the size, etc., being specified; or failing a ship, a certain sum of money, the presumed cost or value of such a ship. As the inland counties, as a matter of course, could not provide a ship, it was certain that here money must be found instead; and it was money the King actually wanted. Besides that this tax was determined to be illegal, it was well understood that the money was wanted not for ships, but to raise soldiers who would be at the King's service to support his illegal proceedings and his tyrannical purposes: a determined opposition therefore arose against it. In Somerset the refusal to pay was general. The duty of collection was with the Sheriff, who had great difficulty in getting any return. In 1636, William Cox, "formerly" High Sheriff, wrote to the Council that Mr. Hodges, "late" High Sheriff, had promised to pay him some moneys, but had not done so, adding: "There is one man that much retards this service, and that is William Strode, the merchant, who,

(1). *Add. MSS.*, Mus. Brit., 29,975, fol. 58.

refusing to pay five marks had one of his cows distrained and suffered the Constable to sell her. The over-plus being tendered to Mr. Strode he refused it. Then hearing where the cow was, he fetched her away by replevin, and sued the Constable." The Council considered the case, and ordered that Mr. Strode the merchant, be sent for.[1]

There appears to have been some enemy at work in this affair against Strode (? Sir Thomas Thynne), who sought to pin all the opposition upon him, and who quickly reported that he was "laid by the heels." Strode, however, wrote from Barrington, March, 1637, that he feared him not.

In accordance with the order of the Council Strode appeared, and gave his own story to the King personally, "by word of mouth." He complained of being heavily rated, and declared that he had been charged as much as men of five times his estate. The tithing of Barrington, too, was over-rated, being charged at £15 10s.—instead of £11. The just rate being sent from Barrington to the Constable he refused to alter it, and so ultimately he distrained the cow, worth £6, and sold her for £3 10s. The Council ordered that Mr. Strode should pay the sum required of him and withdraw his suit upon the replevin; the distress to be returned to him. Enquiry was to be made, and if the Constable were wrong, he was to re-pay Mr. Strode all charges and be liable to further punishment. On the other hand, if Mr. Strode were found wrong, he was to pay all messengers' fees and charges and be liable to further punishment.[2]

One of the grievances of this time was the attempt to revive the authority of the bishops, by making them judges in personal matters—a proceeding which produced a deadly hatred against all things prelatical. Acting on this plan, this question was referred to Bishop Peirce, of Bath and Wells, who reported that the tithing of Barrington was properly assessed, and that

(1). *State Papers, Domestic*, Charles I, vol. cccxxxvi. No. 29.
(2). *S.P.*, Charles I, vol. cccxlv. Nos. 33, 34.

Strode's account of his own conduct was inaccurate and contradicted. The Bishop added that Strode "took the boldness to tell him in the hearing of all the company, that he did not examine the Sheriff as he should do, and that he did not look upon the business with an indifferent eye."[1] Upon this it was ordered, May 25th, that Mr. Strode should "acknowledge his sorrow" for such bold carriage and inconsiderate words and render full satisfaction, or the Court would proceed against him. He was also to pay the poor man, who, after buying his cow, had lost her upon replevin.[2] It must be supposed that there was no ready compliance with this order, as, under date August 1st, Strode wrote from Barrington to Secretary Nicholas, in reply to a letter from him, thanking him for his letter and advice, and stating that he had now complied and given the Bishop satisfaction, but the Bishop had refused to give him a written acknowledgement of it. The charges, too, he had paid, but he adds,—thus showing the struggle he had to comply,—"to pay for my own goods twice I cannot."[3] Although refusing a certificate to Mr. Strode, Bishop Peirce certified to the Council, in November, that he had given full satisfaction "by an ingenuous acknowledgement of his fault."[4]

Strode refused to pay in other places where he had property, as at Wherewell, in Hampshire, where "William Strode who lives at Barrington" was returned as refusing an assessment of £2, there being no distress available.[5]

Notwithstanding these troubles, cash was ready to purchase more land. In 1638, 9th March, William Strode, of Barrington, bought a considerable property at Sowthey, and Cotehay, and Wokey, and Newley; all in Martock and Coate:[6] and in 1638 a deed was enrolled of the purchase by the same William, for the sum of £10,000 in hand paid, of all the manor of

(1). *State Papers*, Charles I, vol. ccclv. No. 54.
(2). *State Papers*, vol. ccclvii. No. 65. (3). *State Papers*, vol. ccclxv. No. 8.
(4). *State Papers*, ccclxxi. No. 120. (5). *State Papers*, vol. ccclxxix. No. 133.
(6). *Close Rolls*, 14th Charles I, pt. 22, mem. 20.

Martock, with belongings, with Henton, Newton, Hurstcoote, and Westcombland. This is a long deed of several skins, with a schedule annexed of the various small properties included in the sale.[1]

Besides the attempt to raise men and money under pretence of finding a navy, the King, in 1640, pretending now an attack from Scotland, endeavoured to raise an army, but, it being well understood again that this was a part of his general scheme to get a force strong enough and willing enough to coerce the country, it was equally disapproved and opposed. An order being sent to the Lord Lieutenant to raise two thousand men in Somerset for this Scottish service, the Deputy-Lieutenants, May 26th, 1640, reported that they had duly impressed that number, and had appointed a rendezvous. They chose Mr. William Strode to be treasurer, to raise and receive the necessary money, and entreated him, as he dwelt near the place of meeting, to undertake the duty. They were obliged, however, to report that he "neglected and slighted the service," and consequently, the soldiers being without pay, "were unquiet spirits and unreasonable."[2] In fact, the discontent was now so general that the men disliked the service. On receiving this information, the Council sent off a letter for Mr. Strode, and ordered the Deputy-Lieutenants to charge him with this neglect. The letter was sent by the "common post," and was delivered on the training ground at Bruton; so that the Lieutenants being without the necessary letters and papers, no charge could be made. Strode's declining the work was a great hindrance, as the Constables having brought their money to his house and finding no one to receive it, became careless about levying more. To get any, a second warrant was sent out, and even a third was found necessary, and at last money was privately advanced "to appease the distempers" of the men; whereas, had Strode received it at his house, the

(1). *Close Rolls*, 14th Charles I, pt. 26, mem. 38

(2). *State Papers*, vol. ccclv. No. 6.

business would have "gone on with less noise and much more ease." The Deputy-Lieutenants in their letter to Strode, stated that they had appointed him treasurer, that the money might be paid at his house at Street, "not doubting his willingness to do the King and country this service." The letter was addressed:—

To our very worthy Friend, William Strode, Esq, hast these for his Mat$^{s}$ service att his house att Streete.

Mr. Strode, in reply, wrote:—

Right Wo$^{ll}$

Yesterday in the eveninge being ready to take horse for London, I received yo$^{r}$ Courteous Lr$\bar{e}$ dated y$^{e}$ 20th of this moneth in Tanton and was deliv'ed me by a Stranger that could not tell whence it came, nor whether it were written by y$^{e}$ Deputy Lieutenantes, wch I p'sumed might be so because it concerned Military Affayres for his Mat$^{s}$ service, therefore thought it very fitt to give you thankes for yo$^{r}$ good opinion of mee, though there be many other gentlemen in yo$^{r}$ country more worthy of this yo$^{r}$ place of trust. Yet if it be yo$^{r}$ Pleasures and can bestow it upon mee w$^{th}$ sufficyent authority and Commission to receive and discharge myselfe of y$^{e}$ moneyes you have thought on, I will to y$^{e}$ uttermost of my ability apply my selfe to p'forme y$^{e}$ service at my returne from London, wch shall be w$^{th}$ all speed and if possible I can before y$^{e}$ end of this Tearme. Soe take leave and rest,

Yo$^{r}$ Wopps humble servant,

22nd April, 1640.[1] Willi Strode.

The discontent, and the opposition to these proceedings, culminated in the outbreak of a civil war in 1642. The first occurrence in Somerset was the arrival of the Marquis of Hertford towards the end of July, bearing a commission to raise men for the King. Passing from Bath, he went to Wells as a central spot. On Monday, 1st August, he proceeded to Shepton, for the purpose of publicly reading his commission and calling out the militia, and arrived in the market place about eight in the morning, a hundred strong. Here he was promptly met by Mr. William Strode, a Deputy-Lieutenant, "and one of the Committee of both Houses" acting in Somerset, who with his son and servants,—in all, four armed, and two unarmed,—opposed him, and required him to depart.

(1). *State Papers*, vol. cccclvii. No. 50.

A struggle ensued; Mr. Strode was seized, and arrested for treason. One struck at him with a halberd, others with their swords, so that at last he was overpowered, secured, and handed over to the Constable. Still, when a captive, he continued to urge the people to obey the King when guided and counselled by a Parliament, and not as was then the case, when guided and counselled by evil counsellors. At this moment a rumour was spread that a great multitude of country people was coming in, when the royalists made off. As soon as they were gone the Constable was compelled to release his prisoner.[1] The power and influence exercised by this conduct can be judged by another report, which, recording the emeute, says that "one Master Strode, a gentleman of constant fidelity to the King and Parliament, showed such resolution, that the country people seeing it with admiration, got up their courage" for the fray.[2]

On Wednesday the cavaliers came again to Shepton, and "rode up a certain great hill called Mendeep," and "thereby stroke a great terror and affrightment." They would have succeeding in reading the Commission and would have forced the trained bands to yield obedience, "had not Mr. Strode and some other Deputy-Lieutenants very resolutely opposed them." Strode had not more than one hundred and fifty men, but under his influence and inspiration these were "so stout and resolute" that they feared not to encounter, the consequence being that several were wounded.[3] After refreshing themselves in Shepton, and robbing some houses, the cavaliers returned to Wells.[4]

Preparations for the war were now general. On the 5th August the House ordered that Mr. William Strode, a Deputy-Lieutenant of Somerset, should have a warrant for carrying down musquets and other ammunition into that county.[5] A meeting of the people was called for the Friday, the place

(1). A letter from the Committee in Somerset.
(2). "True News out of Somerset." (3). "More, Later, and Truer News," etc.
(4). A letter from John Ashe. (5). *Commons' Journals.*

being by Chewton above Wells. Mr. Strode did not appear at this muster, nor could he send his men, for the reason that, as they were coming up from Street, on Thursday, some troopers from Wells ranging the country thereabouts, met them on Polden Hill, and there, by an ambush, some were slain.

This was the first blood shed in the war.

Having lost their powder and bullets, and being otherwise disorganized, Strode's men returned home.[1] Negotiations were now opened by the Marquis of Hertford, shut up in Wells, but the Deputy-Lieutenants in reply, craved to delay any answer "as Mr. Strode had not come in," he "being principally concerned in the Shepton business." Presently Strode arrived, and taking up the post allotted to him, with three thousand men he camped on the hill on the east side of Shepton, to command the city of Wells;[2] but the Marquis saved further trouble by escaping to Sherbourne. Reporting the position to the Earl of Bedford, by letter, dated Street Grange, 11th August, William Strode enclosed the document to Mr. Pym and Mr. Strode with directions to them to forward it to the Earl. This letter was read in the House on the 13th.[3] Strode's influence was now very great, his activity constant in all things warlike. He was present at a fight on Siegemoor, on the 19th; he signed a relation giving an account of the fight on the 7th September, on Babel Hill, near Yeovil;[4] and his name is seen to a letter to the Mayor of Wells, requiring him to provide accommodation for the Earl of Bedford, as General of Horse; and later, he is found writing to the same to provide arms and armour. The plan adopted by the Parliament for raising a force and taking command in the county, was the appointment of a County Committee, to which instructions were sent, and whose duty it was to search for and seize all war material gathered by the royalist party; to call

(1). John Ashe's second letter. (2). "Joyful News from Wells."
(3). *Commons' Journals*, vol. v. fol. 86.
(4). "Exceeding Joyful News from the Earl of Bedford."

out the militia; to appoint officers; and to disarm all papists or others ill affected. On the Committee for Somerset was William Strode. This prominence had its penalties, as by Proclamation of the 9th November, the King declared that the "malice and industry of several seditious persons in the county of Somerset have raised means towards the maintenance of an army now in Rebellion against us;" but being ready to attribute the offence to the power of their seducers, a free pardon was offered to all inhabitants of the county, excepting, with two or three others, William Strode of Street, Esquire. Whoever after this Proclamation gave any obedience to any warrant of the said William Strode, was to receive condign punishment.

The royalist force was now gathered in Devon, where, in January, 1643, it met with some success under Sir Ralph Hopton. It was reported that Strode of Street, whom his Majesty had excepted out of his general pardon, was taken prisoner; but this was not so, as he lay with his force about Tiverton to stop Sir Ralph's advance.[1] He was next reported killed,—the wish, perhaps, being father to the thought,—but was soon found with his men at Sherbourne; from which place he was driven with others of his party.[2]

As the war became general, the mere county and local organization was found to be insufficient and produced too much division; consequently the western counties were associated, and placed under one general command. The Somerset men were either sent into Devon, or were posted on the borders of the county to stop the return of the royalists. It was thus that Mr. Strode was placed at Tiverton.

The Somerset men being away, about five hundred royalist troopers assembled near Bruton and Ilchester. This being reported, Colonel Strode, as he is now called, returned to check them with his "valliant band."[3]

(1). *Mercurius Aulicus*, 2nd week; Certain Informations, 16th January.
(2). *Mercurius Aulicus*, February 23. (3). *Special Passages*, 7th—14 h March.

To give an account of every action in which Strode was engaged would be to give nearly a full account of the war in Somerset; it must be sufficient therefore but just to trace his military career. On the 28th January the House ordered that his drafts upon the county funds should be honoured. On the 1st March he was on a County Committee to assess; and on the 31st March for seizing the estates of notorious delinquents. On the 11th April he was at Wells, with his men. On the 11th May he was at the taking of Wardour Castle.[1] On the 13th May he was at Mere, from whence he marched and joined Sir William Waller at Bath.[2] During a crisis here about a money supply, there being none in hand, Colonel Strode advanced a loan, which was repaid him in September, 1645.

The royalists, continuing their almost forced march from Devon, caused a panic in Somerset. A strong party left Bath for Bridgwater to meet them; some being reported as going to Shepton.[3] On the 6th June, Colonel Strode was at Somerton, the royalists having advanced to Langport. Strode then moved to Glastonbury,[4] where he was defeated; but by his great exertions his men were rallied, and so retired in good order through Wells, and "to the top of a hill called Mendip," above Chewton. After an encounter here, ending again in defeat, with what men he could keep together he returned to Bath and rejoined Sir William Waller. He was at Lansdown fight in July, and most bravely bore the brunt of a sudden attack made on him on Roundway Down: all again ending in an utter rout, and a retirement to Bristol. After the fall of Bristol, where he was specially prominent, obtaining special record as being "a man much relied on in these parts," he visited his house, and taking the route by Dorchester went to London.[5]

The King's party being everywhere victorious, Somerset

(1). *Ierfect Diurnal*, No. 48. (2). *Certain Informations.*
(3). *Perfect Diurnal*, No. 52. (4). *Perfect Diurnal*, No. 55.
(5) Clarendon.

was now occupied by his troopers as a conquered territory.

Strode was, however, constantly active in other ways. On the 3rd August he was appointed on a Committee of Assessment; on the 18th September he petitioned the Commons about the money raised in Somerset, the question being referred to a Committee, on it being Mr. Strode, and the knights and burgesses of the county. Next he is found quarrelling with Mr. Horner, and on the 23rd December, 1643, it was ordered that both should be sent for, in custody. Colonel Strode's word was taken that he would appear. On the 25th December the Committee considered the case, and again on the 1st January, 1644; but the cause of the quarrel is not stated. Throughout the winter and spring active preparations were made to recover Somerset from the King; prominent in activity was Colonel Strode. On the 15th July he was appointed on a County Committee to consider and try military offences; the origin being an attack by the King's force, on Woodhouse, near Witham, in which Strode had placed a garrison.

Throughout this year, 1644, was a sad time for Somerset, and all that Strode and his party could do had but little effect. In August he was at Ilchester raising a regiment of horse, "which I make no question he will do" wrote General Middleton; next he is found at Dorchester, in September, with the three hundred horse he had thus raised; with these troopers and a thousand arms he had gathered for his Somerset men, he then joined others, and camped between Taunton and Bridgwater.[1]

But these individual and voluntary efforts were seen to be not enough, and during the winter other plans were considered by the authorities in London. The result was a new army,—the new model—fairly organized, early in 1645, with a national, rather than a local origin. New regulations required all Members of Parliament, and some others, to resign any military

(1). *Perfect Diurnal*, No. 59.

command. In the list of those who did so occurs the name of Colonel Wm. Strode,[1] consequently he now disappears suddenly from the scene of war. The reason for this will presently appear. He was, however, still active in the county, on Committee and other business.

The Parliament now found it necessary to fill some of the vacant seats, and towards November the House "filled every day with new Members."[2] About Bristol and those parts there was a great "hold and pull" at the elections,[3] a position well exemplified in the election of a knight of the shire, for which Colonel Strode was nominated. A writ being sent down in November, the county Committee resolved on setting up Colonel Henley and Mr. Harington; but the freeholders pitched on Colonel William Strode for one, "having had good experience of his fidelity and abilities." The Committee then, to carry the first design, changed the meeting place. The Sheriff (Horner) joined in this, but rather wishing to set up his son George; a proposition which was "not much" opposed. The day of the election being come, the country people flocked to Ilchester, crying, "A Strode! A Strode!"—drowning all the other names. On seeing and hearing this the Court was adjourned to Camel, four miles off, whither went Colonel Henley with the county horse—"no fit garb for a free election." All this was a plot against Strode, but he, "in his subtiltie," turned everything to his advantage. Every endeavour was made to break his influence. He was charged with not giving in his accounts; with opposing the new model army; of favouring the malignants; and with an inclination to Independency. This, "though handsomely set on," was not taken by the voters as expected. The Sequestrators were next called into action, and these, taking notice of those who favoured Strode, bid them be cautious, or they would hear of it after the election. But all was useless.

(1). *Oldmixon*, p. 277.

(2). *Mercurius Viridicus*, No. 30. (3). *Moderate Intelligencer*, No. 40.

Strode's activeness for the Parliament; his many adventures; his "staying" at Bristol, and his great losses, were so publicly known that his credit was not to be shaken. The destruction of his houses was also added to his claims, but this was a contemporary confusing of the two men, as it was the houses of the Member which were so specially destroyed. Adjourning again to Ilchester, Colonel Henley returned with the county horse, and the Committee came to him. During the Saturday night there was a heavy fall of snow, so that Mr. Harington got only to Speckington; but of Strode there was no news, and success against him seemed certain. On Monday morning however, it was found that he had stayed at Townsend with a great number of horse, and by daylight his men began to fill the hall. Seeing this, the clerk had orders to adjourn to Camel but before this could be done Strode appeared, when his supporters, who filled the market place, made a "fearful cry," and no name was heard but Strode. The Committee declared every one of them malignants; but caring nothing for this they kept their ground. Strode coming into the Court, said he did not like the adjournment to Camel, it being against the free liberty of an election, and illegal; yet, if the legal time were not past, he would go there. Some one here charged him with not accounting for his money received, but his supporters swore they would pull his accuser from the bench, for defaming the only man they hoped in for the good of the county. It was only by Strode's own exertions they were restrained from violence, "otherwise it might have been a bad business." "You see," says the writer of this account, "how he hath bewitched his countrymen." As he left, again the shout arose—"A Strode! A Strode!" The women, from the windows, joined, and these "terrible cries" continued for about two hours. Strode managed to "shuffle off his horse" and get into a house, but as the shouts continued he got by the back way into Northover, when the "mad multitude" dispersed. On his reappearing presently the people began again

and continued shouting until he got from his horse and into the house where the Committee sat. The Sheriff now announced that he had postponed the election to the next day, at eight o'clock. This being done, Strode in the morning sent a servant to the Sheriff, declaring that the writ was now vacated, but that he would willingly join in a certificate for a new one. The Sheriff not regarding this, nor the protests of the freeholders, went to the election. Strodes' men declaring the whole proceedings illegal, would not vote, so that the Sheriff had all his own way, and without the Committee, and with only about sixty freeholders, returned his son George, "a known neuter, if not worse;" and with him Mr. Harington, who had eight votes only.[1] So far the county election.

On the 25th September, 1645, a new writ was issued for an election for Ilchester, and on the 27th January, 1646, the Sheriff was ordered to make his return. Strode offered himself here, the result being a continued effort at opposition, followed by a disputed election and a petition against him by the defeated candidates, Sir William Selby and Alexander Pym. On the 2nd February the Commons declared Strode to be elected, and so now his field of activity changes for a while. This election occurred a few months after the death of his namesake, William, one of the Five Members, and consequently the two were never Members together at the same time. In March he obtained an order from the House for repayment of money advanced by him; in June he is found interfering in the Somerset elections, and in the same month he obtained an order that soldiers should not be billeted in his house. In October he was on a Committee for selling Lord Capel's estates; and on another to consider and select fit men to be sheriffs; and in May, 1647, he was considering the cases of those "well affected" persons having claims from the "late times of imminent danger."

But now another political and ecclesiastical change came near.

(1). *Scottish Dove*, Nos. 113—119.

Colonel Strode was one who had taken the Solemn League and Covenant in 1643, by which he declared himself a Presbyterian, and bound himself to support the Presbyterian system, which was then established in England. His name is found on the list of elders for Somerset, and his family stands recorded by the minister of Langport, as "the most regular of any he had seen."[1]

The Independents being now dominant, likewise tendered their covenant, known as the Engagement, and those who refused to take it became marked men, considered as in opposition. Colonel Strode refused, and consequently fell under censure. The first note was sounded in an order of the House, of 17th May, 1647, that his "certificate of accounts" should be read and taken into consideration. On the 31st March, 1648, an information was laid against him for "words spoken in Candlemas term twelvemonths," and he was ordered to attend the House thereon. This matter will be better noticed by himself later on. He seems to have cleared himself from rebuke, as in September he was actively engaged on Committee for quickening the bringing in of arrears for the army, and so continued active until the 5th December, 1648, when by the action of Colonel Pride the Parliament fell under the power of the sword. Colonel Strode was one of the Members then secured and excluded from the House. The prisoners at the time were classed as prudential, assertors, and middle men. Strode was of the last, that is, not strong for the army, nor strong for the Parliament.[2] As a Member of Parliament, or as a public man, no more is heard of him.

Another turn in fortune's wheel, and, curiously, again Strode is in trouble. On the restoration of the monarchy, he found his Presbyterian prejudices too strong for the episcopacy then restored, and gave offence by some refusals to orders of the King's Deputy-Lieutenants. The consequence was a charge against him sent to the Privy Council, by Capt. William

(1). Calamy, *Nonconformists' Memorial.* (2). *Mercurius Pragmaticus*, No. 39.

Hellyer, the Sheriff, who took a bond, 27th September, 1661, for his appearance. On the 7th October he attended at the Board, and was ordered to continue his attendance until further information came from Somerset. On the 13th November he sent in his petition on the case, telling his own sad story. Here he set out: That, according to his best skill and ability, he had all his life obeyed, embraced with joy, and endeavoured to support the happy Government of these nations under one monarch, together with the Parliament, for which he had been a great sufferer, viz., being a Member of the Long Parliament, he was twice accused in the House—first, for saying he would never take up arms against the King, but against the Independents; and again, for reporting that the Scotch Commissioners had better arguments to keep his Majesty than we had to demand him, for that his person would be safer there.

In December, 1648, he was pulled out of the House and carried away prisoner to the Queen's Court, with forty-five more, and kept prisoner to the last, for seventeen weeks, and then went into the country. Not long afterwards the 'Rump' disarmed him, and took away his horses, because he refused the Engagement. For Worcester fight all his horses were seized, and he "taking means to get them back," his other goods were seized, and a fine of £50 in money inflicted.

A Captain Warrington, with others, searched his house, examined his servants, and took away all the arms; and because he opposed the decimators "they threatened to decimate him." The tail of the 'Rump' seized his horses, threatened to carry him away prisoner except he paid them £40, and they forced from him £20, for which he commenced a suit against "one they called Major Samson, a great informer against him."

Being in the Commission, and being most forward to bring in the King, he had endeavoured to keep out of the militia "debauched and plundering persons." For this his house was rifled and wholly disarmed; he and his two sons charged with

five horses to the militia, no other man in the county, even with estates four times his, being charged with more than three. His servants and tenants were not permitted to ride his horses in Captain Helyar's troop, but he was forced "to pay unfitting riders for spoiling them," viz., £11 for forty-four days, and £4 more for quarter; and this money "Cornet Higdon levied with sixteen troopers, most abusively." The same cornet, not long after, went to his house with a squadron and seized his person by warrant from Captain Helyar; and then, because of his indisposition, released him on a bond for £2,000, to appear or send one of his sons to Somerton before the Deputy-Lieutenants. Appearing accordingly, he complained of this violence, but "had only answer that it was done without orders."

The same cornet, on the 10th September, with about thirty troopers, came again to his house, and violently seized his person, without warrant or any given cause. Being asked for his warrant, he replied by "laying his hand on his sword, saying, 'That is my warrant.'" He was then sent away, accompanied by ten troopers, and kept prisoner in Ilchester gaol for seventeen days, though he entreated and petitioned that in regard to his old age he might have his own house for a prison; and further, even when the order came for his release, it was delayed a whole week.

After thus stating his misfortunes, and giving us a peep into the troubles of the time, he prayed to have his good name and goods restored, and to be allowed to live quietly in his country.

The Council made a temporary order that all proceedings should be respited until the Members for the county came up. In December the case came on again; the charge being considered, and both sides heard. The result was an order that Mr. Strode be required and commanded to repair forthwith to Ilchester, and there, "in the hands of the sheriff of the county remain confined, until upon his promise of conformity to the orders of the Deputy-Lieutenants he shall be released."

Probably after some communications had passed, on the the 8th January, 1662, it was ordered that Mr. Strode and as many Deputy-Lieutenants as may be in town should appear on Friday, the 10th instant. Accordingly, on that day, in the presence of many brother Deputy-Lieutenants or neighbours, Mr. Strode "made his humble submission, expressing his sorrow that his former actions had been a cause of offence to his Majesty, and promising for the future to live in all duty and obedience, and to observe the orders of the Lord-Lieutenant of the county and his deputies in all things that concerned his Majesty's service." His Majesty being pleased to accept this surrender, all former orders were revoked, the bond cancelled, and "Mr. Strode permitted freely to have his liberty to return to his country and habitation."

As this submission, according to custom, would be made upon his knees, the cup of humiliation must have been bitter indeed to the now aged, worn out man. It must be hoped that after such a life, so stubbornly fought, his few remaining years were spent in peace. He died in 1666, aged 77, and was buried at Barrington.

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By the aid of these notes, there is no longer doubt as to the exact identity of these two men, and the question of local interest for us is clear. That confusion should have existed is not to be wondered at, as whilst some of the facts, read by themselves, would seem to bear out the supposition that the Member of 1642 was a Somerset man, others point as strongly to the contrary.

Not only has confusion existed with us, it existed at the time. Sir Simond D'Ewes, writing to his wife, mentions a Triennial Bill as being brought into the House by one "Mr. William Strode, a young man, and unmarried." The implication here in no way identifying him with one who had been so marked so long before as the Parliament of 1629. Clarendon, who as a matter of course speaks severely and derogatively of both

Williams, gives no explanation, makes no attempt to discriminate between them.

Then the *Perfect Diurnal*, No. 52, of the 12th June, 1643, gives an account of a plot to "cut off" some Members of the Parliament, naming, among others, "Colonel" Strode; whereas "Mr." Strode, the Member at that time, was not the Colonel who was daily prominently active in the war. Also, as already noticed, the ruined house in Devon of the Member for Beeralston, was spoken of as the house of the Colonel.

Again, what might well be considered absolute, a contemporary diary of 1644,[1] made or kept by a royalist officer actually at Shepton in that year, when noting the Barnard monument in the church, records:—"Mr. Wm. Strowde, one of the Five Members, married this Mr. Barnard's onely daughter and heire (£2,000 per annum). Strowd lived at Barrington, three myle from Ilchester, another howse at Street; hath all the parsonages between this town and Barrington. He gott his estate by being a factor in Spain. His father was a clothier in Shepton Mallet. His father left him £740 in all. Barnard is descended of a clothier in this towne too."

Besides all this, at first sight the King's proclamations against these Strodes, when taken separately, aid in the confusion. Thus, one proclamation alludes directly to William Strode of Street as being beyond pardon, leading to the idea that he was the Member charged with high treason; more especially as a similar proclamation of the same date for the county of Devon strangely enough makes no mention of a Strode.

In the proclamation against the sequestration of Sir Ralph Hopton's estate, which followed, William Strode is there distinguished as "that William Strode whom we have accused of high treason;" a distinction not only very slight, but here actually again aiding the confusion, and confirming the Somerset idea, as it might be expected that Sir Ralph Hopton's property

(1). Symond's *Diary* (Camden Society).

would be coveted by, and sequestered to, a Somerset, rather than to a Devon man. Further, directly after the imprisonment of 1629, the immediate appearance of William of Barrington in opposition to ship-money, in 1636, seems, from similarity of conduct, to connect the two men, or rather to point only to one and the same: the actual whereabouts of the prisoner being unknown. Then when two Williams, a father and son, appear in arms at Shepton, in 1642, one might well be the Member, the other destined presently to be the Colonel of 1643; especially as one of the earliest orders of the House, 5th August, 1642, grants a warrant to Mr. William Strode for carrying musquets into Somerset. So that, arguing backwards, from the King's proclamations; from the emeute at Shepton; to the ship-money business, the conclusion might well be that William of Barrington was William of the Parliaments of 1640 and 1642. This conclusion being aided by the hitherto inexplicable fact that no other than the Somerset William was politically prominent during the ship-money time, to the meeting of the Parliament in 1640. But now it is known that the William of 1629 was in the Tower in 1637 and during the ship-money contest, and all the intervening years until 1640; that it was he who was in 1640 re-elected for Beeralston; that he was undoubtedly from Devon; that he died in 1645,—eleven years before the Somerset William,—acknowledged at the time as the prisoner of 1629, and also as one of the Five Members of 1642, the exact work of both these men can be traced, and all historic doubt is settled.