



MATTHEW BRICKDALE,
probably about 1770, aged circa 35 years

By Henry R. Morland



ELIZABETH, WIFE OF MATTHEW BRICKDALE
Born 1732 or '33, married 1758, died 1801

By Henry R. Morland (died 1797)

Military Subscriptions of the County of Somerset for Internal Defence, 1794

BY SIR CHARLES FORTESCUE-BRICKDALE, F.R.G.S.

WHEN, in 1793, the British Government felt itself obliged (as, afterwards, in 1914) to take an active part in a big continental war, a number of contingencies, remote before, became suddenly and unpleasantly imminent. Invasion was one of them. To meet this the Ministry formed plans, which they communicated to the Lords-Lieutenant and these, in turn, to the leading people in their counties. The plans included the raising of subscriptions to meet expenses. Matthew Brickdale (Plate XVII)¹ who had lately retired after twenty years' service, off and on, as Member of Parliament for Bristol, and who lived at West Monkton, was made treasurer of the subscriptions for the County of Somerset. He was a very methodical man and, apparently, carried about with him a series of 'pocket ledgers' in which he entered all his receipts and payments of every description. Two of these have been preserved, including the one in which the military subscriptions were entered.

It is probable that as descendants of several of the subscribers are still living in the county the following particulars may be interesting. By a happy coincidence, while preparing these

¹ Born 1735, died, aged 96, 1831; M.P. for Bristol 1768-74, 1780-84 and 1784-90. A memoir of him appeared in the *Bristol Times and Mirror*, 24 February, 1931, and an account of his family, dating from Tudor times and earlier, in the *Genealogical Quarterly* for March, 1933. The plate also includes a portrait of his wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Smith, of Bristol and 'Mack's Mills' (probably now Max Mills, Winscombe), Lord of the manor of Sandford, Som., and Lucy, daughter of Thomas Carew, of Camerton and Crowcombe. The portraits are by Henry Robert Morland, d. 1797, father of the celebrated George Morland.

notes, I chanced to come across the reprints published a few years ago by the *Bristol Times and Mirror* (now discontinued), of sundry historic items from former issues, among which was the notice of the meeting at which the movement was started. It is as follows :—

COUNTY OF SOMERSET.

March 29th, 1794.

EARL POULETT, Lord-Lieutenant of this County, having communicated to us the Grand Jury, now assembled at Taunton, the Plans proposed by Government, for raising forces for the Internal Defence of the Kingdom,

Resolved unanimously, that we are and shall be at all times ready to stand forward in the protection of this Kingdom; and that the Sheriff be requested to call an early meeting to obtain the sense of the county as to what plan will be best in the present state of public affairs for this county to adopt in order to carry the measure into execution.

Resolved that these Resolutions be inserted in the public papers.

JOHN STRODE, *Foreman*.

TAUNTON, March 29th, 1794.

Agreeable to the above request of the Grand Jury, I appoint a meeting of the Gentlemen, Clergy and Freeholders of the County of Somerset, to be held at the Swan Inn, in Wells, on Wednesday the 9th of April next.

CHARLES KNATCHBULL,
High Sheriff.

The Accounts are headed ‘Military Subscriptions of the County of Somerset for Internal Defence’.

The following is a complete list of all the individual subscriptions, classified according to amounts.

£300. Earl Poulett.

£200. Edward Clarke, Sir Philip Hales, Sir John Trevelyan, Lady Tynte. =£800.

. . . William Hyatt (see *Note* below).

£100. Sir Thos. Acland, Matthew Brickdale (and see *Note* below), John Evered, John Fisher, John Lethbridge, John Fownes Luttrell, William Ayshford Sanford, John Slade, Sir John Hugh Smyth, Bt., John Tyndale Warre. =£1000.

- 50 guineas. John Somerville. =£52 10s.
- £50. Lady Harriet Acland, Miss Acland, Jeffreys Allen, Lord Bridport, James Coles, John Raw Collings, Rt. Hon. Jas. Grenville, John Hanning, Francis Milner Newton, George Templer, John Tucker, Henry Whitmash. =£600.
- 30 guineas. Robert Evered, John Hallett, Stuckley Lucas. = 94 10s.
- £30. Dr. Dunning, John Templemore. =£60.
- 25 guineas. James Ireland. =£26 5s.
- £25. Richd. Thos. Combe, Revd. Dr. Crossman, William Speke, John Whitmash. =£100.
- 20 guineas. Revd. Chas. Hobbs, Samuel Simmons, Henry Strangways, Thomas Woodforde. =£84.
- £20. Revd. Saml. Alford, James Bryant, Richd. Field, Wm. Gardiner. =£80.
- 10 guineas. Revd. Jas. Campling, Revd. Richd. Codrington, Revd. Anty. Freston, Revd. Thos. Hopkins, Revd. Robt. Jarrett, Revd. John Jeremy, Charles H. Lewis, Robt. McGhie, Revd. John Michell, Revd. Hy. Parsons, Revd. John Price, Prockter Thomas, James Simmons, Revd. Hy. Stambury, Willm. Withycombe. =£157 10s.
- £10. Peter Dupuy Abbott, Revd. Jos. Aldridge, J. & I. Badcock, John S. Bluett, Revd. John Gardiner, Richd. Gatcombe, Richd. King, Revd. Jas. Shipton. =£80.
- 6 guineas. John Beague. =£6 6s.
- 5 guineas. Revd. A. A. Baker, Wm. Blackburrow, Revd. J. Chaffie, Revd. W. Chapman, Revd. Andrew Daubeny, Jos. Jeffery, Dr. McDonald, Rev. George Nibbs, Mrs. Price, — Sanders of Langport, Saml. Thomas, William Barry Wade. =£63.
- £5. William G. Arcombe, William Gatcombe, Revd. W. Leeves. =£15.

The total of these subscriptions is £3,519 1s. 0d.

Note.—There are also two sums, entered at the end of the receipts, the nature of which is not quite clear. One is £121 ‘Wm. Hyatt’s draft on Messrs. Hoares’; the other is £218 11s. 6d. ‘Cash p^d. by Wm. Provis to Lefevre & Co. on my acc^o.’. I incline to think that both these are in effect contributions by Wm. Hyatt and Matthew Brickdale respec-

tively. W. Hyatt was not otherwise a subscriber but was much employed in the administration of the fund—most of the payments *out* appearing as paid by his drafts. M. Brickdale had already subscribed £100, so, if I am right in my conjecture, his total contribution was £318 11s. 6d. If these two sums are added, the total of individual subscriptions comes up to £3,858 12s. 6d.

The parish collections (in all but two cases forwarded by the clergy) ranged from £72 14s. 0d. to 6s. The circumstances of different parishes no doubt varied greatly. The fact that nearly all the figures end in odd shillings and sixpences shows that they were probably made up of small amounts contributed by the comparatively poor. The following list shows (in alphabetical order) the several sums collected in the various parishes.

Ashcott, £8 . 8 . 0 ; Banwell, £19 . 5 . 0 ; Bawdrip, £5 . 15 . 6 ; Blagdon, £12 . 8 . 0 ; Bradford, £10 . 10 . 6 ; Buckland St. Mary, £2 . 3 . 0 ; Chedzoy, £11 . 1 . 0 ; Churchill, £11 . 7 . 6 ; Cleeve (*see* Old Cleeve) ; Compton Bishop and Weare, £6 . 16 . 6 ; Congresbury, £15 . 0 . 0 ; Creech St. Michael, £11 . 3 . 0 ; Cutcombe and Luxborough, £3 . 4 . 0 ; Fitzhead, £10 . 17 . 6 ; Halse (*see* Heathfield) ; Heathfield, Norton and Halse, £16 . 12 . 0 ; Huntspill, £22 . 1 . 6 ; Luxborough (*see* Cutcombe) ; Monkton (*see* West Monkton) ; Moorlinch, £16 . 5 . 0 ; North Petherton, £72 . 14 . 0 ; Norton (*see* Heathfield) ; Old Cleeve, £4 . 7 . 6 ; Pawlett, £9 . 19 . 6 ; Petherton (*see* North Petherton) ; Publow, £5 . 4 . 0 ; Puxton, £1 . 13 . 6 ; Ruishton, £7 . 12 . 6 ; Staplegrove, £3 . 8 . 0 ; Uphill and Worle, £13 . 11 . 0 ; Weare (*see* Compton Bishop) ; West Monkton, £9 . 0 . 6 ; Withycombe, £0 . 6 . 0 ; Worle (*see* Uphill) ; Wrington, £29 . 13 . 6 ; Wick St. Lawrence, £6 . 7 . 6 .
—Total, £346 19s. 6d.

By marking on a map the towns and parishes which sent contributions one at once sees that they fall into a few well-defined groups, probably due to local and personal influences. For instance, the first four to come in are West Monkton, where the treasurer lived and his son-in-law, Dr. Crossman, was rector, Creech St. Michael, Ruishton and North Petherton, where the Rev. Joseph Aldridge, who was evidently an en-

thusiast, produced not only the highest general collection (£72 14s. 0d.) in the county, but also three separate contributors—himself one of them—of £10 each and four of £5=£122 14s. 0d. in all. This happened in May. By June the movement had spread to Publow in the north-east and Cutcombe and Luxborough in the far west, after which the meleé becomes general. By November, when the list closes, large portions of the county (where, very likely, there were other outlets for patriotic effort) are still blanks and the contributing towns and parishes are almost entirely in the following closely contiguous groups, viz. (1) in the northern part—Axbridge, Banwell, Blagdon, Churchill, Congresbury, Puxton, Uphill, Weare, Wrington and Wick St. Lawrence; (2) more or less on the Bristol to Taunton road—Bawdrip, Bridgwater, Chedzoy, Creech St. Michael, Huntspill, North Petherton, Pawlett, Ruishton, Staplegrove and West Monkton—with two stragglers, Moorlinch and Ashcott, not far off; (3) another road group in the south-west—Bradford, Fitzhead, Halse, Heathfield and Norton with Buckland St. Mary close by; (4) in the extreme west—Cutcombe, Luxborough, Old Cleeve and Withycombe.

In addition to the direct subscriptions, a sum of £90 was obtained as interest on the portions of the fund from time to time in hand—nominally 3 per cent. on £1,500 for the two years from 2 February 1796 to 2 February 1798.

Putting all these sources together we get the following :

	£	s.	d.
Individual subscriptions	3,858	12	6
Parish collections	346	19	6
Towns	184	13	4
Interest	90	0	0
	Total		
	£4,480	5	4

It would have been interesting to know how the money thus collected was spent. Unfortunately the treasurer's accounts in this respect are limited to a list of the payees,¹ without stating

¹ The payees were as follows : Andrew Bain, Wm. Hoskins, Sir Philip Hales, Earl Poulett, Wm. Hyatt, Jno. Hanning, Lord Somerville, Major Thos. Allen, John Tyndale Warre, Saml. Daniell, John Whitmash, R. Messiter, Geo. Donisthorpe, Capn. Cha^s. Searle.

what the payments were for. In 1794 £1,400 was paid out ; in 1795, £863 2s. 0d. ; in 1796, nothing. In 1797 £348 15s. 0d. was paid, and in 1798 £1,823 15s. 6d., leaving a balance of £44 12s. 10d. in the treasurer's hands ; where it remained till 1800. On 28 March in that year the account was passed by the Committee, and on the 14 April the balance was paid to a Captain Searle and the account ended, the £4,480 5s. 4d. subscribed having been duly accounted for.