

Some Sources of History for the Monmouth Rebellion and the Bloody Assizes,

BY A. L. HUMPHREYS.

UP to the present too much historical importance has been attached to the various printed Martyrologies and Assize books. Those who are curious about such matters, will have noticed, if they have made any bibliographical comparisons, that there are a number of different printed accounts of the proceedings which were taken against the rebels during the Bloody Assizes. These all contain lists, more or less full, of the names of those who were tried and suffered death, or who were pardoned or transported.

I do not know that any comparison with any finality in result has ever been printed respecting the differences which exist between these several lists as they appear in the Assize books. What was probably the first of these, and at any rate the best known, is *The Bloody Assizes*. This was not issued until 1689, four years after the events which it detailed, and when its origin is known you will probably feel less inclined than you may have been hitherto to regard this, or any of these Assize Martyrologies, as at all authentic.

The Bloody Assizes, London, 1689, owed its existence to John Dunton, the famous and eccentric publisher of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Dunton was no doubt assisted by John Tutchin, a man who was no better than a cheap penny-a-liner of the day. The author of the "Life

and Errors" had been at Amsterdam when Monmouth was there and took some interest in his career, but as soon as Monmouth was defeated, he left England for America. He says (*Life and Errors*, vol. i, p. 79) 'when I was seated to the best advantage at the *Black Raven*, in Princes Street, London, and was as happy in my marriage as I could wish, there came a universal damp on trade, occasioned by the defeat of Monmouth in the West.' Dunton thereupon left England and did not return for three years, and when he did he confesses 'I was all over infected with an itch of printing and I confess I have indulged this humour to excess.' The result was that Tutchin, and others equally unprincipled, set to work as quill drivers for Dunton, and *The Bloody Assizes* must be classed among the many other 'Errors.' Besides *The Bloody Assizes* there were, of the same class, *The Protestant Martyrs*, which bears no date; *The New Martyrology*, of 1689, which was, in part, a new edition of *The Bloody Assizes*, and which took a final form in *The Western Martyrology* and constituted the fifth edition of *The New Martyrology*. The final book, *The Western Martyrology*, was first issued in 1705, and was re-printed in London so late as 1873. There is also *The Merciful Assizes* issued at Taunton in 1701, which is the scarcest of these books, and is noted for its violent attack on Jefferies.

Now all these Assize books are books not for the historian's use, but for the collector of Somerset books only. They are full of errors, and in one case a remarkable anachronism has been perpetrated. An Edinburgh gentleman, possessing no special local knowledge, re-printed *The Bloody Assizes*, with the date on the title 1680, a date five years earlier than the events which it chronicled. Here, too, I will mention another feat in dates accomplished in Lowndes' *Bibliographer's Manual*. After describing an edition of Pope's works in five volumes, 1769, he mentions a fine copy of it in morocco, adding 'The Duke of Monmouth's copy, with the receipt signed by Pope.'

The Duke of Monmouth was beheaded nearly three years before Pope was born.

As to the number of victims on the western circuit, at the autumnal sessions of 1685, the evidence is rather conflicting. Many who have written of this period have not compared their authorities nor chosen the most accurate. Lord Lonsdale gives the number of those executed as seven hundred ; Burnet as six hundred ; Woolrych four hundred. Locke, whose pamphlet was first published almost a hundred years after the event, gives the number of those hanged as three hundred and thirty-one. Locke's lists differ in compilation from other martyrologies, and there is about them that which suggests that they might have been the copies of some attorney's clerk of the time. Macaulay stated that Locke's notes as to the Hewlings were inaccurate, but he used the book, then so scarce, for other parts of his narrative. Roberts took his list of victims from Locke's pamphlet, after comparing it with *The New Martyrology*, and the figures he arrives at are that three hundred and thirty-one were executed, eight hundred and forty were transported, and thirty-three fined or whipped. Now since Roberts's day, and within the last two years, another author on this period has arisen to inform us that *four* prisoners and *four only* were executed at Taunton during that memorable assize, which for two hundred years has not ceased to be called *Bloody*.

It is Mr. Inderwick who has come to this conclusion in his *Sidelights on the Stuarts*. He has, perhaps, like some few others, when dealing with the period, felt that unless he could contradict Macaulay over some point his task would be thought ill of, and in this he has distinctly run counter to the sagacious and accurate estimate of the numbers hanged, which Macaulay formed after consulting an original document in the Record Office, to which I shall refer. This is a document which should be well known to every student of the period as one of official authority, and the outcome of a return made to the treasury by the judges, including Jefferies, immediately after the conclusion

of the assizes. It is called "An account of the proceedings against the rebells and other prisoners in the severall counties of Soufhton, Wilts, Dorset, Devon, and Somerset, by virtue of his M^{ties} special commission of Oyer and Terminer and General Gaole Delivery dated the 8th day of July, in the first year of his Majesties Reigne over England Anno Dⁿⁱ 1685."

The results for Somerset are given as follows :—

One hundred and forty-three names of prisoners to be executed for high treason, who were convicted at Taunton (against three names the word reprieved has been written).

Eighty-four names of those who were to be delivered to Sir C. Musgrave for transportation.

Ninety-eight to be delivered to the Queen's order for transportation.

One hundred convicted at Taunton to be transported by Sir William Booth.

Twenty, who had certificates pursuant to his Majesties proclamation, which were allowed to be pardoned.

Twenty-three humbly proposed to his Maty for his gracious pardon.

Fifteen Prisoners in Gaole omitted in Warrant for execu^{cion} altho designed to be executed.

Thirty-three Prisoners remaining in Gaole till further orders.

Two prisoners bayled at Taunton.

The same record gives corresponding data for Wells; and in all cases the names are fully given, and we are able to recognise many families who still have representatives, in many cases, I have no doubt, labouring on the same farms, and at occupations similar to those followed by their ancestors.

The value and interest of the Gaol Delivery Roll, previously referred to, is, that it gives us one more list of prisoners and adherents to compare with other similar existing contemporary lists and thereby aiding in the compilation of a complete *Monmouth Roll of Adherents*. But this record, the original

of which is, I believe, in the custody of the Clerk of the Peace at Taunton, also gives us against the names of a great many brief observations, which appear in no other record, pointing to their stedfastness for Monmouth's cause. One Stephen Moore was arraigned for saying that he would not 'go to church until the Duke of Monmouth was king.' Another, John Palmer, 'I hear Monmouth is dead, but I hope he is not, for I wish him well as my own heart's blood.' Another, Morris Morgan, 'I am for Monmouth, and, by God, I will fight for him as long as I live.' Others were convicted for 'publishing Monmouth's Declaration'; and Charles Floyd, *alias* Lloyd, was charged with pretending 'himself to be the Duke of Monmouth.'

In the lists of those who were transported there is greater unanimity. Locke says eight hundred and fifty, Roberts eight hundred and forty-nine, no great difference; but the fullest list of those transported is in Hotten's *Original Lists*, the chief value of which consists in its giving the names of the towns and villages from which the prisoners came, and their occupations as 'comber,' 'riben-weaver,' 'plowman,' etc. It also gives the names of those who died before they got to their destination; the names of the ships where the luckless fellows were stowed, and the captains' names; also the names of the masters to whom they were consigned.

It has already been related how it was that at Wellington the news of Monmouth and Argyle's expeditions was received sooner than at most places. The quaint MSS. (*Harleian 6845*) says that one William Wey, of Combe St. Nicholas, was 'drinking at a tavern in Wellington with Mr. Cross, the coroner,' when, apparently becoming a little confused in his head, he confessed (? *In vino veritas*) that he had heard that the Duke of Monmouth was about to land in England and that he had not slept for several nights when thinking of it. There is also the account, which I have already printed, of Albemarle being stationed at Wellington and the somewhat

memorable correspondence which passed between the leaders of both sides. Whilst Christopher, Duke of Albemarle, was here he must have been amused at receiving the Duke of Monmouth's Proclamation, which commences 'Whereas Christopher, Duke of Albemarle, with several other persons are now in arms at Wellington,' and then proclaiming all who adhered to Albemarle as rebels and traitors. Albemarle, who could not have felt his position here very secure, for the Exeter Militia had strong sympathies with Monmouth, yet behaved with great tact, and writes to Lord Sunderland, enclosing him a copy of one of Monmouth's Proclamations, 'only for his diversion.'

I will now call attention to a most important MS. record which exists in the British Museum. A few years ago Mr. Barrett, a gentleman of Weymouth, purchased at an auction in Dorchester, an old manuscript which proved to be a very complete return, in answer to an order issued to the Constables of the Hundreds within the district of the Rebellion, of all those persons who were known to have been absent from their homes during the month of June, 1685.

Mr. Barrett very wisely reported upon this MS. (*Dorset Field Club, vol. 5*) and sold the MS. to the British Museum authorities, for which act we cannot be too grateful to him. When I say that this return deals with thirty-two Hundred districts, and one hundred and thirty-four villages of Somerset, in each case giving christian and surname of every man, and in most cases his occupation, we can in some measure understand its immense value. The part dealing with the district of Wellington consists of thirty-one folios, each with thirty names, so that we have a roll of a thousand names of men who were siding with Monmouth, and who lived here, which we have never before had access to.

In the Kingsbury West Hundred the record commences with Wellington, and gives thirty-two names of those who were 'absent from their homes in the tyme of the Rebellion.' It

includes William Bowreing, Robert Dawe, Christopher Jordan, William Timewell, Thomas Woodford, William Bishopp, Christopher Burrow, and many more. Then follows a list from West Buckland of twenty-one names, including those of two constables. I will give those of William Yendall, George Yendall, Robert Yendall, Robert Fry, and Simon Gifford. Following them, names from Ash Priors; then comes another list of thirty-seven Wellingtonians, greater offenders than the last, and who are marked as 'in Prison.' This list includes Samuel Tottle, Daniel Rutter, John Colborne, John Bennett, weaver, Ambrosius Winter, William Colborne, and John Rugg, against whose name are placed the words 'dead for Rebellion.'

Then I have long lists of names from Milverton, Langford Budville, Combe Florey, Bradford, Oak, Hillfarrance, Kittisford, Taunton (St. Mary and St. James), Chard, Ilminster, Wells and other places. The Taunton list is a very long one, consisting of 275 different names, and against 213 of these the occupations are given. There are 43 worsted combers, 42 weavers, 17 fullers, 10 tailors, 8 sergemakers, 6 shoemakers, 1 cobbler, 4 carpenters, 3 brewers, 3 barbers, 2 goldsmiths, 1 blacksmith, 1 tinman, 1 carrier, 1 apothecary.

So the theory that Monmouth's ranks were largely recruited from plebeian sources is fully substantiated by this new record.

There are many very curious names given, and some it would seem who had dispensed with a surname, and are described as "Aaron, Mr. Palmer's man, of Bishop's Hull; John, servant of Thomas Warren; Griffin, John Evans's man of Bishop's Hull."

In fact, this record is as entertaining as it is valuable. It is an immense help towards reconstructing the past of both Wellington and Taunton and the neighbouring villages, and the most important contribution to the Monmouth roll of adherents possible.

Hitherto the main manuscript sources for the Rebellion have

been the *Harleian MSS.*, 7,006 and 6,845; the *Lansdowne Collection*, 1,152; and the *Domestic Papers* in the Record Office. These, apparently for no other than pedantic reasons, were called by Roberts all sorts of different names when he was referring to one of the same collection.

These manuscripts formed the principal sources for Macaulay and Roberts's works; but as it was not the method of either to print documents as they found them, I have given below some extracts which have hitherto been left alone, though they seem to contain some most delicious sidelights upon the history of this time.

That which is known as Wade's *Further Information* (*Harleian 6,845*) was written after Wade had been injured at Brendon, in Devon, when arrested. He has here noted down a journal of each day's events.

"Thursday and Friday, the 18th and 19th of June. Wee marched to Taunton and encamped likewise in a field neare ye town and lay there all night and ye next day. . . . This day (Friday) ye Duke had intelligence of ye Duke of Albemarle having possessed himself of Wellington, a town within five miles of Taunton, which caused ye Duke to make some small entrenchments on ye road leading that way and to putt out strong guards."

Another MS. account, written in the same journal manner, is that of Dummer, the original of which is in the Library at Magdalene College, Oxford, but of which a transcript has placed in the British Museum (*Add. 31,956*). It is called "A journal of the Proceedings of ye Duke of Monmouth in his invading England kept by Mr. Edward Dummer, then serving in the train of artillery employ'd by his Majesty for ye suppression of ye same."

He enters—

"June 14. Duke Albemarle was now about Exeter raising the Devonshire militia. The Rebels with a Rable of Rascally People march out of Lyme towards Taunton wth them Field

Pieces and ammunition suitable.

June 20. The Rebels are about Bridgwater. The Duke of Albemarle at Exeter.

June 23. The Artillery joynes my Lord Churchill at Somerton and quarters there, not without fear of interruption. Our out-guards have frequent skirmishes with those of the Rebels, every moment Takeing someone or other. Jarvise, a Feltmaker, of Evell, (a notorious fellow), was also taken, and his brother, after a brief resistance, kill'd.

June 24. The Duke of Albemarle is now at Wellington, 5 miles from Taunton.

June 26. My Lord Churchill marches towards Bristoll : hangs Jarvise the Feltmaker, about a mile from Pensford, who dyes obstinately and impenitently.

July 6. At 2 o'clock this morning (securely sleeping) our camp was rous'd by the near approach of the Rebels ; a dark night and thick Fogg covering the moore : supiness, and a preposterous confidence of ourselves, with an undervaluing of the Rebels . . . had put us into the worst circumstances of surprise. Six of our nearest guns were advanced and did considerable execution upon the enemies. They (the rebels) stood near an hour and a halfe with great shouting and courage, briskly firing and then throwing down their armes fell into rout and confusion The dead in the moore we buried and the country people took care for the interment of those slaine in the cornfields."

When the news of Monmouth's probable landing first got abroad the local authorities acting for the king directed that letter bags should be searched in disaffected districts. In the papers endorsed "Mr. Axe, his papers," in the *Harleian 6845*, there are accounts of what transpired in this way.

A letter containing some note of alarm and signed "F.R." addressed to "Mr James, Carryer, Ilminster, in Somerset," was intercepted at Ilminster by Captain William Speake and "Mr. Clarke, vicar there, at the post house the 30th of May,

uppon the discovering of which the Captaine rides post with it to the king, haveing first sent away a man to the mayor of Taunton to give him notice of it and to advise him to search that Bagge likewise."

The Taunton bag, being searched, yields one suspected letter addressed, "Mr. Christopher Cooke, Mulnager, Taunton," and signed "S.E."

Again quoting from the *Harleian 6845 (Axe papers)* :—

"June 1. Monday morning. Affidavit was made by a woman that she saw the night before about eighty horsemen passe by Obridge mill (which is a back way neare Taunton). Uppon examination this was by some thought to be a Phantique invention."

Mr. Axe continues :—

"June 7. That the spirits of Mr. Justice Tymewell be kept upp, who hath bin very industrious and means well."

'Mr. Justice Tymewell' was no other than the zealous and loyal Stephen Tymewell, Mayor of Taunton. He had endeavoured to put a stop to the annual celebration of the raising of the siege of Taunton in the Civil War, and being at Wellington fair soon after, he was openly insulted, but said "that he had fought with thousands of the beasts of Ephesus, and overcome them." We would gladly know more of Stephen Tymewell, for he had a very uphill fight at Taunton, and Mr. Axe most appropriately expressed the wish that the spirits of Mr. Tymewell 'be kept upp.'

"June 12. Friday morning early came to Orchard (Portman) young Gustavus Venner, almost out of breath, from Sir Edward Phillips, to bring the certaine notice of Monmouth's landing at Lyme the night before."

When the Historical MSS. Commission issued the third part of their Ninth Report it revealed some very important records existing in Mrs. Stopford Sackville's Collection, relating to the Monmouth Rebellion. As these manuscripts are at a house in Northamptonshire they are not so accessible as if in London,

but the admirable report, which can still be bought for a ridiculously low sum, gives a good précis of their contents. These very valuable papers are believed to have come to Drayton House through the Bateman family, the first Lord Bateman having married Lady Anne Spencer, granddaughter of the Earl of Sunderland.

In these papers there are several fresh letters, written by Albemarle when he was hovering on the road between Taunton and Exeter. One of these letters, written probably from Wellington, says, "Spyes who came this day hither from Monmouth's army doe informe me that it is the generall discourse among the Rebels that they will mark (march) directly for London if possible, and they are now on the direct road thither."

"1685, July 2. An order to the high constables of Whiteigh to summon all the carpenters within the hundred, and 190 labourers, with spades, wheelbarrows, etc., to Bridgwater, to be employed on the King's business."

Which business must no doubt be taken to mean the erection of gallows and unceremonious burial.

"1685, Sept. 26th. Taunton, from Mr. Lyttleton (probably to Sunderland). Three of the prisoners in the Castle have escaped by filing one of the bars in the prison window and going down by a rope out of the window, leaving their shackles in the rooms where they lodged, which were opened, not cut or broke."

But most valuable of all, as far as the Calendar informs us, is the journal of that very active parson, Reverend Andrew Paschall, Vicar of Chedzoy: extending from the 20th of June to the 6th of July, after the battle of Sedgmoor, with plans of the battle and the marches. From this and appended documents we learn now for the first time "that Captain Hucker (who entertained ye Duke at his house in Taunton), was ye man who discharged the gun at Langmore Stone, which is say'd to have given the alarme, and that the Duke charged him with treachery. . . . 'Tis certain Hucker was extremely

odious to the party, as one that they believed had betrayed them, insomuch that when he was in prison he feared being torn in pieces by the angry women."

There are other very interesting particulars added respecting Captain Hucker, all of which are fresh additions to our knowledge.

The commissioner who is responsible for this report could, I suppose, hardly be expected to know Andrew Paschall, for he refers to him as a "man named Andrew Paschall." But there is sufficient material for a separate paper on Paschall, who, at the time of the Rebellion, was here, there, and everywhere. He was vicar of Chedzoy, and makes a very picturesque figure in his period. There are several letters of his in the British Museum; and a valuable account of the Rebellion by him is printed as an appendix to Heywood's "Vindication of Fox's History of James II." During the excitement of the Rebellion he lost his horse, and I have been amused at finding the appended advertisement in the *London Gazette*, July, 1685 (No. 2,052).

"There was taken the 22nd past from the Parsonage House at Chadsey, near Bridgwater, in Somersetsshire, a gray mare, upwards of fourteen hands high, and worth 14 or £15. Also the same day from Kings Sedgmore, an old black mare, between thirteen and 14 hands high. If anyone can give tidings of them in Chadsey, or at the post-house in Bridgwater, so they may be recovered, his charges shall be born(e), and he will be well rewarded for his pains."

Of the value of the pictorial sources I will say a little. In the print room at the British Museum there are in all twenty-one portraits of the Duke. Granger, quoted by Roberts, gives fifteen only. The handsome engraving, after Sir Peter Lely, is perhaps the one which will take the most prominent place. Of Christopher, Duke of Albemarle, there seems to be but one source, a painting by Murray, but there are five various engraved specimens from the same original.

There are six engravings of Jefferies' portrait after Kneller ; that by White, as at Taunton, is the best. There are two portraits of John Tutchin, and one of Benjamin Hewling. There is I believe a picture of Elizabeth Broadmead in the Taunton Museum, but I have not been able to trace the original.

The British Museum copy of *The Bloody Assizes* is an extra illustrated copy which descended from George Savage Nassau, a great collector of books at the beginning of this century to Dr. Bulkeley Bandinel, the Bodleian librarian. At his death the British Museum secured in this an unique copy, containing many curious illustrations, particularly that one of *The Lord Chancellor taken disguised in Wapping*. The print shews Jefferies standing and surrounded by a crowd of persons. Two men grasp his arm and various persons in the crowd cry,

‘ Remember ye West,
Remember mr Cornish,
Remember ye Bishops,
Knock his brains out.’

In a manuscript catalogue of additional prints in the British Museum there are the following rough memoranda, too rough I am sorry to say for the assistants to find the prints described. One is called *Drinking the King's Health in the West*.

This design shews Jefferies in his chancellor's gown with his hat off, drinking from a large glass. Three tobacco pipes, a paper of tobacco, and three bottles stand on the table before the chancellor, who is probably intended to be drunk ; five other men are in the room, the expressions of some of them evidently those of disapprobation.

The second shews Jefferies drinking, and is described as illustrating a little episode at the assizes.

“ In Taunton, August, 1685, Major General Kirke, while at dinner with his officers, ordered thirty condemned prisoners to be hanged while he was at table. Ten at a health to the King;

ten to that of the Queen; and ten to the Lord Chancellor's health."

Another existing print, which I have not a copy of, nor can I find one, is of "Kirke's villainy and cruelty to a young woman who had begged him to save her brother's life."

Finally I come to that, as far as I am aware, unique set of Playing cards which have lately been re-produced by Lady Charlotte Schreiber. The first note we have of them is in the *London Gazette*, 2085, dated November 12th, 1685, where they are described as—

"A new pack of cards representing (in curious lively figures) the two late Rebellions throughout the whole course hereof in both kingdoms. Price One Shilling. Sold by D. Brown at the 'Black Swan and Bible,' without Temple Bar; and A. Jones at the 'Flying Horse,' in Fleet Street, near St. Dunstan's church."

On the 13th June, 1889, a broken set of these cards was sold in London, and became the property of Mr. Hodgkin, a distinguished collector of Richmond. Lady Charlotte Schreiber, who also had a broken set, prevailed upon Mr. Hodgkin to yield up such of his cards as would complete her pack of the originals, and she, in turn, gave Mr. Hodgkin facsimiles of others to complete his lot, so I believe that Lady Schreiber's one is the only complete one of originals, for there is no mention of them in Willshire's catalogue, nor are they in any way to be traced in the British Museum.

They are very curious and crude designs, and their chief value lies in the fact that they were printed and published only a month after the Rebellion, when all the incidents were fresh in the minds of everyone.

On the knave of clubs Ferguson is preaching from the 22nd chapter of Joshua, and the 22nd verse—"The Lord God of gods, He knoweth, and Israel, he shall know, if it be a Rebellion, or if in transgression against the Lord, save us not this day"). On the nine of clubs Pitts, who must be understood

to mean Tutchin, appears barebacked, being thrashed, as we are told, through every town in Dorsetshire. The king of hearts shews the superstitions which were current at the time. It is called "Devils in the air bewitching Monmouth's Army." Even more quaint is the picture on the ten of hearts, of the nonconformist ministers "pressing ye Duke of Monmouth to set up for King." On the five of diamonds, six rebels are shewn hanging from a slender branch of a tree; and on the nine of diamonds the Duke of Monmouth is depicted writing one of those letters to the Duke of Albemarle, who was then at Wellington.