

The Derbyshire Petition of 1641.

Contributed by SIR GEORGE SITWELL, BART.



WE are fortunate in possessing information as to the part which Derbyshire has played in the great events of the last four or five hundred years. The roll of those who fought at Agincourt and Crecy has been printed by Mr. Yeatman, and the names of the subscribers for the defence of the county in 1588, 1745, and 1794 are to be found in Simpson's "Derby," and in the newspapers of the time. But I have always regretted that we have no list of the Derbyshire squires who followed the Earl of Devonshire to Derby and Nottingham in 1688, or any record to show us who took the side of king or of Parliament at the outbreak of the Civil War. It was, therefore, a real and an unexpected pleasure to me, when lately glancing at Dr. Pegge's collection in the College of Arms, to find in one of his "miscellaneous" volumes the following petition from the "Baronets, Knights, Esquires, Gentlemen, Freeholders, and others, inhabitants of the county of Derby." Two or three similar petitions are preserved in the National Library, as may be seen by referring to the general catalogue under "Derbyshire," but this differs from them in having the names of those who signed it attached. It is endorsed "1640," probably by Dr. Pegge, but the signatures of Sir John Harpur, the High Sheriff, and of Luke Whittington, Mayor of Derby, proves that it was drawn up in the following year. The position occupied by the names of Sir William Every, who was created a Baronet on the 26th May of that year, and of Sir Samuel Sleight

and Sir Francis Rhodes, who were knighted on the 8th July and 9th August, give a nearer indication of the time when it was presented.* On the 11th of that month the King was at Derby, on his return from Scotland; but the general tenour of the petition (had it not been for the circumstances I have mentioned) would appear to agree better with the date of August, 1642, when Charles (I believe) passed through Derby on his way to set up the Royal standard at Nottingham. However that may be, there can be no doubt that this was the last united effort made by the gentlemen of Derbyshire, before events broke them off into the opposing parties of Cavaliers and Roundheads, to press for a reconciliation between King and Parliament, and thus to avert the dangers which threatened the whole kingdom. On the 13th September, Charles with the Royal army returned to Derby for a single day on his way to Shrewsbury; and he is said to have borrowed the sum of £300 and all the small arms the Corporation could furnish, on a promise of repayment when the rebellion was suppressed. In August, 1645, he was again in the county, and the following particulars of his marches are given in the *Iter Carolinum*, published in 1660:—

"Tuesday the 12 to <i>Tutbury</i> castle <i>pr. in camp.</i> ,	Nights.	Miles.
and lying at the Lord <i>Loughbrows</i> - - -	i.	xij.
Wednesday the 13 <i>Ashborn</i> i'th <i>Peake</i> , Mrs. <i>Cakaines</i>	i.	xiv.
Thursday the 14 to <i>Chattisford</i> , near <i>Bakewell</i> , E.		
of <i>Devonshires</i> - - - - -	i.	xiv.
Friday the 15 to <i>Welbeck</i> Marquess of <i>Newcastles</i> -	ij.	xij."

The petition is as follows:—

To the Kings most excellent Majesty.

Yo^r Maties Loyall & peacefull subj^{ts}, the Barronetts, Kn^{ts}, Esq^{rs}, Gent., ffreeholders, & others, Inhañts of the County &

* See also a letter from Sir Francis Rhodes, Gilbert Clarke, Lionel Fanshawe, Henry Wigfall, George Sitwell, and Edward Revell, six "Noble Lords," urging that the King be petitioned to return from the North and meet his Parliament. This is dated 21st March, 1641.—Hist. MSS. Comm., 1883-4, 39, a.

Town of Derby, whose Names are hereunto annexed, humbly crave Leave to shew & pray as follows.

Whereas We are distracted with y^e general ffears of the Kingdom y^t yo^r Maties removall from yo^r Parliam^t will be a Dissolution of yo^r gracious intent, & their pious Endeav^r, for y^e Reformation of those great grievances which had crept both into y^e Church & Comon Wealth, & likewise an Obstruction to y^e Redress of those pressures under which we groan, & an absolute hindrance to y^e releife of y^e Calamitous Distresses of Yo^r Maties Subjects of Ireland.

With bleeding hearts we h^{bly} beseech yo^r Matie y^t You will be graciously pleased to return unto & reside near Your Parliam^t, Yo^r highest Co^rt & Councill, whereby we conceive yo^r Royall Crown is made most glorious to Yo^r self & Yo^r Posterity, o^r Religion Lives & Libtys secured unto us & ours, & is the only Means to expedite releife to Yo^r Maties s^d distressed Protestant Subjects in Ireland; without which we can conceive no probabylity of Safety to Yo^r sacred Majesty, to them or us. Who shall most readily, according to our protestation, wth our Lives & ffortunes, maintain and defend Yo^r Maties royal Person, Honour, & Crown, the Power & Priviledges of Parliam^t, the rights & Libertys of the Subject, & the Power & Purity of the Protestant Religion. And we shall ever pray y^t yo^r days may be as the Dues of Heaven & Yo^r Posterity Kings and Princes to all Generations.

John Harpur Sherif.

George Gresley.

Tho^s Burditt.

W^m. Every.

ffr. Rodes.

John Gell.

Sa : Sleigh.

Tho^s Gresley.

Row : Moorewood.

Michael Burton.

Luke Whittington Mayor of
Derby.

Rich^d. Clarke.

John fflamsted.

John Jackson.

Anthony Moorewood.

Chris : Horton.	William Sale.
ffran ^s . Burdett.	Daniel Eyre.
Jacinth Sacheverell.	Rob ^t . Mellor.
Henry Gilbert.	Geo : Sellors
Gilbert Clarke.	William Willot.
ffrancis Munday.	Antho : Senior.
Edw ^d Revell.	Edw ^d . Newton.
Jo : Greaves.	Tho ^s . Vicars.
Jo : Milward.	Ja ^s . Abney.
Gilbert Thacker.	Sam ^l . Sleigh.
John Bullocke.	Tho ^s . Gerye.
W ^m . Woolley.	Geo : Columbell.
Rob ^t . Eyre.	Leo : Gill.
Rob ^t . Wilmot.	Geo : Gill.
Geo : Pole.	Rowl ^d . Eyre.
Tho ^s . Sanders.	Arthur Mower.
Lio : ffanshau.	Godfrey Watkinson.
Henry Wigfall.	Tho ^s . Eyre.
Geo : Sitwell.	Geo : Alsop.
John Lowe.	Ro : Allestrye.
Edw ^d . Gill.	John Meynell.
James Bullock.	Sym Yate.
John Wiersdale.	Edw ^d
John Dalton.	Rowland Moorewood.
John Spateman.	Joseph Parker.
John Wigley.	Tho ^s . Horton.
Rich ^d . Coke.	Tho ^s . Sleigh.
ffrancis Revell.	Tho ^s . Youle.
Tho ^s . Burton.	Rob ^t . Hope.
Godfrey Clarke.	Berr. Wells.
J. Woolhouse.	