

# Surrey in 1648

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*The Devil's in't if all won't doe  
Come Charles and take thy crown.  
Surrey; nay London's for thee too  
All vow the saints shall down.*<sup>1</sup>

The year 1648 was a crucial one in the course of the Great Rebellion. The Parliamentarians had won the war, but despite more than a year without hostilities they had not yet proved capable of winning the peace. It was, moreover, becoming increasingly apparent that the divisions within the Parliamentary side (particularly between the Army and the majority in the House of Commons) were likely to prevent a satisfactory conclusion from being reached. This failure to reach a settlement and continued heavy taxation exacerbated by local grievances caused a nationwide reaction in favour of the old form of government, described by the Earl of Holland as 'King, Parliament, religion and the known laws and peace of all His Majesties Kingdoms'.<sup>2</sup>

In each county, however, this reaction manifested itself in a different way during the course of the year. Grouped together these events have been called the Second Civil War; in fact they proved to be a series of largely spontaneous risings and riots almost completely uncoordinated.

Surrey, though little ravaged by the enemy, had suffered severely from the army that purported to fight for it. Parliament had never managed to pay its southern army very well, and this led to official and unofficial units living at the county's expense, often the ill-disciplined, mutinous troops of Sir William Waller based at Farnham or worse still the Kentish levies of Sir Michael Livesey. This led to reluctance and sometimes inability to pay the equally heavy burden of taxation. If the country folk managed to pay both of these they had nothing left to pay their rents with and were threatened with legal action, while the landowner more heavily assessed for tax purposes was deprived of his income from rents which he needed if he was to pay the collector. In 1647 this vicious circle was aggravated by a poor harvest (the first of a series) and a consequent rise in the price of necessities. This coincided with the New Model Army encamping across Surrey and Middlesex while their leaders debated in Putney Church. The historian may be impressed with the range of political thought exhibited in these debates; the county folk saw only the idle troops quartered over the whole shire from Guildford to Bletchingly 'like so many Egyptian locusts'.<sup>3</sup> It should not be thought that the soldiers were unsympathetic to the county's sufferings. *The Case of the Army Truly Stated*, dated Guildford 15 October 1647, remarks on the heavy burden the army was to the country so that it was said the soldiers 'take bread out of our children's mouths: so that many souldiers are ashamed of themselves'.<sup>4</sup> But the incidents remembered were rather those like that recorded in Reigate parish register upon the burial of

two parishioners wounded 'by some of the soldiers in Capt. Winthrop's Troop in Coll. Harrison's Regiment' who 'being quartered in the Town fell out with the Country men and these two murdered by them and many more dangerously wounded'.<sup>5</sup>

Nor did their prowess in political theory sound like anything other than a tendency towards anarchical, impious thinking. There seems little doubt that in as far as the majority understood what the war was about they had swallowed the Parliamentary propaganda that they were fighting to save the King from his evil ministers and were probably genuinely baffled by Parliament's reluctance to bring His Majesty home now he had been rescued.<sup>6</sup> 'Here is one of those soldiers who would have no King' was one of the cries at the Whitehall riots in May.

In December 1647 the Surrey farmers had gone so far as to petition Fairfax to get their landlords to reduce their rent, saying

your Petitioners all rack-rented have for nigh six years past born the charge of free Quartering Soldiers without any deduction of Rent of the Landlord's part, till now of late since the Army's advance from London; this Charge being doubled, with some of us treble, our rent decayeth our estate that little subsistence is for ourselves for our families and those many labourers employed by us, left us ...<sup>7</sup>

Nothing seems to have been done and this explains why the petitioners in May were so insistent there should be an equal tax laid on all to pay for the charge of the army.<sup>8</sup> Having failed to move the General and mistrustful of the army's intentions they turned to the Parliament. Under the stress of the situation the inhabitants of Surrey were finally, though briefly, brought together as a community; an event unique in such a fragmented county at least during the period 1640-1660 (unlike its neighbour Kent).<sup>9</sup>

This was to be a carefully organised petition with meetings in all parts of the shire. Warrants were sent to all parishes. One such to the parish of Mortlake has survived.

Worthy Gentlemen.

These are to give you notice, the sense of this committee is, to prefer a petition unto the Houses of Parliament wherein they desire you to join with them.

The Heads of Their Desires and Requests are these viz.

Imprimis, That they may be a personal Treaty between his Majesty and His Parliament.

Secondly. That the Armies may be disbanded.

Thirdly. That the arrears of the armies may be satisfied and paid.

And this is the request of the Gentlemen of the Great Inquest at the Assizes and likewise of the Gentlemen of the Grand Jury at Quarter Sessions and divers others Knights and Gents of this said county.

The place appointed for the meeting is Leatherhead on the 2nd of May next.

The constables of Mortlake were always in favour of Parliament and this one sent the warrant to the House of Lords. Parliament sent the deputy lieutenants and justices an order to take care to prevent tumults and preserve the peace.<sup>10</sup>

Since it seems that most of the justices supported the petition this was no hindrance. A further meeting was held at Dorking on the 8th at which it was resolved to have 500 copies printed and 'that the High Constables should in their several divisions make their returns of subscriptions of the said petition engrossed in parchment, one for the House of Lords and another for the House of Commons and that they be delivered to Mr John Evershed'.<sup>11</sup> Evershed was a member of the Eversheds of Leigh, a family, Aubrey tells us 'here rather before than since the conquest' and noted for their independence.<sup>12</sup> At another meeting, in the White Hart in Guildford, Evershed was confronted by Sir Richard Onslow, M. P., one of the leading Parliamentarians in the shire. Onslow later seems to have claimed that he said if the petition went forward he would bring 2,000 horse on the county and the story reached Evelyn that he had strongly opposed it.<sup>13</sup> However, two reliable witnesses, Charles Howard and Sir William Elyott of Godalming, stated he said 'he would not discourage them or any from petitioning for it was their right'.<sup>14</sup> Sir Richard's motives and actions were never very clear even to contemporaries, while most of our accounts are hampered by the fact that they use sources written after 1660 when he was determined to show himself a crypto-royalist. A royalist agent touting for support in the 1650's reported that 'Sir Richard Onslow would appear fierce upon the Presbyterian score and also upon the King's but he was thought to be so totally guided by the Presbyterian ministers that the cavaliers were not willing to trust him'.<sup>15</sup> As a member of that party which wanted to change the government no more than they had to, and as a life-long enemy to military rule and supporter of local rights and liberties, he must have sympathised with the views of his fellow countrymen.

The petition therefore went forward. On 16 May they met on Putney Heath at eight o'clock as had been agreed at Dorking. Since John Evershed did not possess enough social standing to present the petition in that hierarchical age, Sir Edmund Bowyer of Camberwell and Mr Price of Esher were actually to present the petitions to the two houses. Both were considerable gentlemen; neither had fought in the war; neither had taken any part in the work of any of the local Committees. They represent the normally silent majority, now crying out against their continued burdens and lack of a settlement.

The petition itself deserves to be printed in full. It is full of the phraseology

of an intensely religious age and also in its wording echoes the key phrases of the Parliamentary propaganda of the Civil War. Throughout runs a tone of real feeling culminating in the conclusion of the final sentence 'that we may enjoy without Terrors and Jealousies a blessed and long lookt for peace'.

Your humble petitioners having earnestly besought of God and expected many years from your wisdoms and counsels a full and comfortable Redress of the grievous Miseries of this Kingdom, which Blessing having hitherto failed us, through the manifold Sins of us all, and divers Miscarriages, we among others the freeborn subjects of this Realm crave humble leave to express our pious Affections to the public Good and our earnest Desires for the preventing of the continuance and increase of further Evils as followeth.

That the Kings Majesty, our only lawful Sovereign, may be restored to His due Honour and just Rights according to our Oaths of Supremacy and Allegiance, which have been taken by us in the Sight of God and from which our Souls do yearn, and our Consciences do groan for it, that His Majesty may forthwith be established in His Throne according to the Splendor of His Ancestors and that His Majesty may for the present come up to this Parliament at Westm'r with Honour and Safety to enter with you into a Personal Treaty, for the composing of all former Differences, and the granting of all lawful Desires.

That we and all the Freeborn Subjects of this Realm, may be governed no otherwise than by the Known Laws and Statutes now in Force in this Kingdom.

That Speedy and grave Wisdom may prevent the miserable and unnatural Wars beginning again in this distracted and exhausted Kingdom; and to prevent, by fair Treaty, the Forces ready to be brought in from the Neighbouring Kingdom and from other Nations not unlike to invade us; which we conceive, through the Mercy of God may be soon effected by the timely providing for the Premises.

That not only the Ordinances made of late by the Goodness and Wisdom of the Two Houses of Parliament against the unsupportable and most wasteful Burthen of Free Quartering of Soldiers may be duly executed, but forthwith Order and Care may be taken as becometh Patriots that love their country, for the Disbanding of All Armies (having their due arrears paid) that we may enjoy without Terrors and Jealousies a blessed and long lookt for peace.<sup>16</sup>

With an estimated 5,000 signatures the petitioners reached London as an enormous crowd, a number of known royalists being seen to join them. At their head was a group of musicians, which struck more sober observers as a little out of place. A sudden shower of rain caused a temporary diversion into the ale-houses for some which their enemies alleged accounted for a great deal. The majority no doubt came from around London, including

a large number of watermen from the Surrey Thames side settlements, but others included men from as far away as Lingfield.

The petitions were presented by the two leaders, and the Lords gave a pleasant conciliatory reply thanking the county for its loyalty in the past and promising relief for the future. The lower House was considering its reply when they were interrupted by a commotion outside. The crowd waiting in the courtyard had grown impatient and some had forced their way up the stairs and were demanding an answer. Other cries of 'High for King Charles', 'An Old King and a New Parliament', 'We'll have the King home right or wrong' were heard. Doubtless as at modern demonstrations the slogans seemed more extreme to the hearers than to the shouters, but the Commons ever mindful of their dignities, and perhaps remembering the riots in 1647 which had been the occasion of the Army marching into London 'to protect the Parliament', refused to give any answer until order was restored. Sir Edmund Bowyer pleaded with them to return to the courtyard which they did, but at this moment soldiers of Colonel Barkstead's Regiment arrived, informed of a riot and that several of their comrades had been wounded, if not killed. They did not stop to ask questions, but joined battle with the petitioners. Who struck the first blow was not resolved then, and cannot be now. Even if the petitioners had provoked them, the soldiers showed little restraint and not content with breaking up the crowd, pursued them down the alleys dragging men from houses with little respect for persons, robbing them and stripping them of their clothes. Two hundred and fifty, a pamphleteer proclaimed, had had their pockets picked, though we might expect to find the contents in the hands of professional pick-pockets rather than the soldiers whom he accused. How many fatalities there were remains uncertain, seven is the most modest estimate, Evelyn put it at 20 with a hundred wounded.<sup>17</sup>

This event precipitated a crisis in the country amongst the previous supporters of Parliament. Until then petitioning had seemed the natural course for them to take. Beforehand 'Mercurius Elenctius' had written of the Surrey petition, after repeating its demands,

This is the sense of that county but I much wonder why they or any other should not petition since they have seen what answer the Essex Gentlemen etc have to theirs for disbanding the army, which is no other then, that the armie shall be recruited and another armie of 10,000 horse and foot speedily raised.<sup>18</sup>

On 27 May a copy of what purported to be a 'letter sent from a well-affected Gentleman of the County of Surrey to a Gentleman in Kent' was printed. It may in fact have been written by a royalist, but it could well have been written by such a man as Sir Edmund Bowyer. He could not, he said, condemn the Kentishmen's resolution to present a petition, for his county had already shown the way, but would the men of Kent be so eager when they reflected on the fate of the Surrey petitioners? It was the first time in history that the Parliament hall had been made a field of blood. He recalled

when the King complained of tumults not so much above six years ago the Parliament declared that if the subjects came unto them with a petition, though they were ten thousand, though a hundred thousand, though a million yet it was no tumult.

The Surrey men, he claimed, had been scarce a thousand, yet they were proclaimed a tumult and Parliament had now decreed that only five or six could present a petition. This seemed hard to those who saw Parliament as the protector of their liberties. 'They by an easie and retrograde Alchymie have turned all our Gold into Iron' he continued, eloquently giving voice to the belief of the county.

We have neither been committee men or sequestrators. We see ourselves looked upon with as ill and suspicious eye as if we had been (which I could wish we had been) malignants all this while.<sup>19</sup>

The immediate consequences were that after the Surrey men had returned to their homes in anger, Parliament sent the Surrey members down under the leadership of the Lord Lieutenant the Earl of Northumberland. One at least, George Evelyn, the brother of the diarist, refused to go to try to pacify his fellow countrymen. John rejoiced that 'Sir Richard Onslow has utterly lost himself' (that is had lost his influence in the shire).<sup>20</sup>

Before they departed, the more moderate petitioners had held a mass meeting at Guildford and drawn up their declaration 'concerning the late Petition and Slaughter'.<sup>21</sup> If it really was the view of the majority, with its sad expression of being caught between two extremes and being in sympathy with neither, it goes a long way to explain why there was no mass rising as there was in Kent. In the seventeenth century each county had its own traditions of independence; for Kent it was that of Wat Tyler and Jack Cade; for Surrey it was an attitude of minding their own business and pretending the capital was not quite so near.

This Declaration reasserted Surrey's right to Petition. At the same time they admitted their duty to accept Parliaments reply. They admitted

we know well (although the stream of many of our country men's affections run strongly toward the bringing in of the King upon any terms, nay without any conditions) yet should it be so the Kingdom must of necessity be miserably enslaved. For the King must by the ruin of his opposers advance those that sided with him and have suffered by him; and what discontents and commotions this will produce we that have faithfully served the Parliament are not a little sensible of.

Such political realism led to an impasse. The county could not urge a settlement if they could not provide adequate safeguards that the King would not take vengeance on them. Yet no one was certain what those safeguards would need to be if one could not trust the King's word. (The debates amongst the Army leaders had reached a similar situation.<sup>22</sup>)

Realising that the army, with revolts springing up all over the country and the Scots army threatening to invade, was hardly likely to be disbanded as their petition had requested they now asked that an equal tax be substituted for free quarter. After demanding that a period be set to the present Parliament, they announced in terms reminiscent of the Levellers that they would not petition further since 'it is much below the People of England to Petition their trustees', and declared they would associate themselves by an oath to get a safe settlement 'so that it shall not be in the power either of the King, Parliament, or Army, to destroy us at pleasure, either by Committees, taxes or freequarters as formerly'. A brave cry yet in 1648 hardly likely to come to pass.<sup>23</sup>

Meanwhile a *True relation of the passages between the Surrey Petitioners and the Soldiers* had been published to the chagrin of the petitioners consisting almost entirely of depositions by various members of Colonel Barkstead's regiment. This brought forth an angry *Remonstrance or Declaration from the County of Surrey to City and Kingdom*.<sup>24</sup> Also tempers had been further enflamed by the alleged discovery of more bodies in a cellar and by publicity concerning the murder of the miller of Wandsworth, one of the petitioners.<sup>25</sup>

On 26 May Northumberland reported to the Lords events at a meeting with the gentlemen of Surrey held on Monday 22nd. These gave him a list of demands; firstly that the Commons answer their petition (this answer eventually came); secondly justice against those who spilt the first blood and restoration of the stolen property (nothing came of this beyond the return of a few confiscated horses) and finally 'that no soldiers be permitted to come and abide in the said county'.<sup>26</sup> This, remarkably enough, seems to have been respected. True, most of the army was needed in the rest of the country, but even in July there were no soldiers within the county borders.

On the 28th Fairfax arrived in Blackheath having marched through Surrey. His instructions from Derby House had read

We hear that many of the inhabitants of Surrey are very unwilling that any forces should enter into their county, therefore if you see any necessity to send any forces that way we desire you that they may be careful to carry themselves inoffensively to the people of the country and to their own quarter.

Evelyn wrote to Paris that Fairfax marched

through Surrey where... neither he nor any of his durst adventure to lie in beds or in towns, but kept the field all night for fear of the incensed countrymen.<sup>27</sup>

The county however did not stir. While the Kentish rebels were at Deptford and Greenwich no attempt was apparently made to associate with each other or to assist one another. This insularity of the Englishman is clearly out-

lined in Professor Everitt's book. Some Surrey men were there as individuals and some of the rebels fled westward leaving their arms and mounts in Surrey. The Bailiffs of Guildford for instance gathered some of their horses.<sup>28</sup>

Plotting amongst the discontented continued, but, by and large, the conspirators were not inhabitants of Surrey. A group of royalists gathered at Tunbridge Wells and were reputed to have crossed into Surrey.<sup>29</sup> Possibly it was these men for whom a warrant was issued on 30 June when they were thought to be at the house of John Kennard at Chaldon. These were believed to include Viscount Molyneux (who in the event did not take part), Edward and Sir George Villiers of the Duke of Buckingham's family, and Thomas Howard who was to die at the fight near Nonsuch.<sup>30</sup>

The real leaders were in London. Of these only the young Earl of Peterborough, whose mother lived near Reigate, had any connection with Surrey. The Earl of Holland, the principal conspirator, was not a welcome figure in Surrey. His actions when Chief Justice in Eyre for forests this side Trent were hardly likely to commend him to a county that believed it had only escaped being engulfed in Windsor Forest by the actions of the present Parliament. Nor was he a man fitted for leadership. He had changed sides twice during the war for purely personal reasons. A man who proved himself to be indecisive in peace time, he was to show this failing even more during his rising. The others, the Duke of Buckingham and the Earl of Peterborough, were too young and inexperienced to make good leaders. Furthermore though their plans were well noised in London those in Surrey knew little of them. The Government was well aware that a rising was intended, but so vague were the leaders that the Committee of both Houses at Derby House did not know when this rising was to occur.

On 30 June, on hearing of the cavaliers at Tunbridge Wells on the move they wrote to Sir Richard Onslow (since 1 June a member of that committee)

We doubt not you being now in the country are informed of the designs now in hand to begin some new insurrection, and thereby interrupt the peace of the county . . . we . . . desire you to improve your interest in those parts for suppressing all such beginnings and so to preserve the peace of your county.<sup>31</sup>

The same day they wrote to the committee of Kent to secure Sterborough Castle from surprise. Yet on the 4th apparently on the refusal of that county to cross the border, or perhaps on discovering for the first time that it was in Surrey, they wrote to Sir John Evelyn of Godstone to visit it and to see if it was defensible.<sup>32</sup>

The Committee was still apparently expecting a rising in the Kent/Surrey border region which would join the insurrection at Horsham in Sussex. It was not until the 4th that letters were written to the Committee of Surrey to see Farnham Castle dismantled within 14 days and to the owners of Merton Abbey, Reigate Castle and Betchworth Castle to secure them against insur-



gents.<sup>33</sup> Sir Ambrose Brown of the latter was requested to come to London about 'some things concerning which you are able to give us more full information' including no doubt the activities of his son Adam lately one of Hopton's followers. None of these orders seem to have been carried out for there was hardly time before the rising began. Yet on the 5th Sir Richard Onslow was in London apparently satisfied that all was well in his county.

On the night of the 4/5th however the conspirators assembled 120 strong on Hounslow Heath and rode to 'the two walls near Kingston' at Hampton Court where they met the Earl of Holland and others who had come by water. Here he made what a royalist present described as 'a hollow speech' against 'an arbitrary way of Government' and for the King. They then proceeded to Kingston having seized what horses they could.<sup>34</sup> A correspondent there wrote that morning

We are suddenly surprized and I know not what condition. We had talke yesterday and somedays before that Surrey was rising for the King but could not understand the meaning of it.

The writer was not clear whether the royalists would try to raise the siege of Colchester or to take Lambeth House and threaten London but wrote

I am confident that within these two nights they will give an Alarme to London either on the Lambeth side or the west side.<sup>35</sup>

Although the Derby House committee had had information on the 4th of a rendezvous at Hampton Court, at 6 a.m. on the 5th they seem to have done nothing about it except make a note to write to Fairfax.<sup>36</sup> The *Moderate Intelligencer* published on the 5th informed the public that

this morning came intelligence that near 500 horse were got together about Kingston well armed, most out of London, and that they were like to increase much.

They were not named

because its possible it may be but a hunting journey into Windsor Forest ...<sup>37</sup>

Such was the state of affairs in an age when communications were slow and rumours fast. The month before a fracas between a gentleman and three highwaymen dressed as soldiers had reached London as a full scale rising in Surrey!<sup>38</sup> As an example of the slowness of news Lady Winwood at Ditton not three miles from Kingston sent off a letter to her son-in-law on the 5th saying 'We have not any news at all here but paying of our monthly taxes'.<sup>39</sup> It is perhaps questionable whether some parts of the county heard about it until it was all over.

What Holland's intentions were no one knew; probably not even himself. His assertion at his trial that he stumbled into the rebellion need not be taken seriously, but that he was not certain what to do is most probable. Bulstrode Whitelocke remembered afterwards that Holland had had a conversation with him in which the Earl had expressed an opinion that the people were set on a treaty 'and if a considerable part should show themselves in arms for it, that they would soon rise in a great body and be able to bring the Parliament to reason'.<sup>40</sup> If this was the Earl's view then all he needed to do was to show himself in arms and stay within striking distance of London until the country had risen for him. A month ago that might have worked in Kent. Surrey was too relieved to find the soldiers gone to wish them back again.

Despite the fact that the Earl was already in arms, Derby House wrote to the Deputy Lieutenants and Committees of the shire warning of

the danger your county is in ... by the resort thither of a great number of persons from London ... who have an intention to embody within your county which must necessarily draw a war and ruin upon you if not timely prevented

and authorising them to raise any forces they needed.<sup>41</sup> The committee for Surrey did not need to be told. At least two members were captured at Kingston, one, Sir John Evelyn, was immediately released with apologies, while Sir John Dingley (one of the leading committee men in those parts) had had his horses taken. It is important to note that from first to last this rising was something that happened to Surrey, rather than something the inhabitants of the shire took part in.

The authorities were in an awkward position. They had some troops near Hounslow under Major Audeley apparently to block any entrance into the capital. The only others were Livesey's regiment engaged in quelling a rising at Horsham, the garrison at Windsor and Major Gibbons apparently somewhere in Kent on his way from the continuing siege of Walmer Castle. They directed Sir Richard Onslow, Francis Drake and Colonel Lloyd to join Captain Pretty from Windsor at Kingston. Pretty arrived at Kingston first finding the main body of insurgents gone but taking 17 prisoners. He then ignored, or had never received, instructions to join the others and to quarter at Hampton Court, and returned to Windsor.<sup>42</sup> Holland marched with 600 men for Reigate over Banstead Downs (where the authorities were expecting a rising the following day). He found Reigate undefended and occupied it. Thus ended Wednesday the 5th.

On the Thursday morning the royalist writer tells us

we somewhat increased our number there in the morning when some few of the enemies horse discovered themselves unto us from the distant hills and upon our approach retreated.

He continues that they marched from Reigate to Dorking arriving very late

and found some arms yet little care was taken to arm the foot that came into us, or to mount some gentlemen that waited for that purpose.<sup>43</sup>

Meanwhile, it being assumed that London was now safe, Audeley was sent into Surrey. He arrived to find Reigate occupied and instead beat the guards off Redhill where he remained as 'the enemy were afraid of us and we of them'.

From this point Audeley sent messages to Gibbons and Livesey. That same night Gibbons arrived and 'found the town neglected by us and also quitted by the Enemy' yet apparently did not occupy it in the dark.<sup>44</sup> On the Friday on information that Reigate was as yet unoccupied the Royalists set out 'very early' to take the town, the ranks being told there were 400 horse and 200 foot to fight. Our writer characterises the march as having

so great security and disorder (no care being taken for setting forth of scouts, forlorn hopes or Rearguards), as might have given assurance unto any acquainted with military affairs that no enemy was in that country . . . Yea the confusion amongst us was so great that we gave accidentally alarm unto and routed ourselves!

Sir John Evelyn was seen approaching expecting to parley with Holland.

Some in Col. Legg's troop seeing a party whom before they had not noted gave the word to face about, whereupon ensued such a rout that divers quitted their horses, the foot their armes, our wagons were overthrown, divers betook themselves into the adjoining woods.

Unfortunately what passed between Evelyn and Holland we do not know; presumably he informed him that Reigate was now occupied. He was never a very strong supporter of the Parliament, though a member of Parliament and a committee man. He was also a close neighbour of the Countess of Peterborough and may have been trying to help her son.

In any case Holland now made for Kingston 'as carelessly as ever' along the 'ready road'. Two hours later Livesey arrived at Reigate bringing the Parliamentary forces to over a thousand.<sup>45</sup> At Ewell Livesey's advance guard caught up with some stragglers and took six prisoners after a skirmish. Just beyond Nonsuch Park the forlorn [vanguard] began to encounter the tail end of Holland's force. The impression in the royalist ranks was that this was only a small force. The carriages and foot were sent on to Kingston and the horse drew up on a hill. Single men were sent out by both sides 'who plaid valiantly whilst the bodies on either side seemed to stand in suspense'.<sup>46</sup> Livesey had reason to stall, for his main forces had not yet come up; indeed the foot did not arrive until well into the night. It was now beginning to grow dark and had Holland been bent on flight he

could have got most of his force away. At this point he still did not seem to realise the size of the enemy he was dealing with. When the Parliamentary van charged, he replied and would have succeeded had not Major Gibbons brought up the second wave, while dragoons and musketeers in the bushes opened fire. At this, panic seized the royalists and a cry went up

The Armie, the Armie [that is the New Model Army under Fairfax] we are all betrayed and no stop could be made of our running until we came into Kingston.

Here the foot called them cowards for running and when Livesey came up he found the town too well defended to risk an engagement.

Thereafter Holland's army melted away. Those Surrey men who had joined, like the sons of John Turner of Ham, the bailiff of Reigate, Adam Brown and Sir Edmund Bowyer retired to their homes if they could.<sup>47</sup> The Earl fled to the north and was finally captured two days later at St Neots in Huntingdonshire.

The royalist pamphleteer was so disgusted with Holland's leadership that his pamphlet sets out to prove the whole thing was a Cromwellian trick to get the royalists to declare themselves openly and thus be rounded up. Clarendon, trying to discover what was going on from France, decided that the itinerary of the Earl was too unlikely and in his history wrote that the royalists stayed in Kingston the whole time.<sup>48</sup>

Our royalist gives thirteen reasons why the rising was a failure. The most important were:

the distrust of the whole party in him [the Earl] which could not in such an undertaking be but of dangerous consequence; the want of due notice given to the countries to joyne with us, divers gents telling the commanders they never heard of such an undertaking for his majesty;

the open carriage of the design in London;<sup>49</sup>

the neglect of a place of retreat the main thing in such a business as whereunto all loyally affected Horse and Foot might repair unto us;

the want of money and arms;

finally, the carelessness in four days not marching above ten miles [rather more in fact] from the first rendezvous and so near to London.<sup>50</sup>

The real cause must be seen as the failure of the county to rally to the Earl as he had expected. In the last week of May it might have done, but with the failure of Kent there was little success with which to build up a dying enthusiasm; moreover as already stated the immediate grievance was free quarter and for the first time in six years this burden had vanished. The Derby House committee noted with satisfaction 'the country people here made wiser by the suffering of Kent and Essex do not join with them'.<sup>51</sup>

There still remained plots and rumours of risings. On the 9th, the day after the fight, Livesey was ordered to send forces to the parts about Croydon, Epsom and Ewell 'being very much malignant and like to make new troubles'.<sup>52</sup> It was unfortunate the troops had to be Livesey's for Surrey had suffered under them too often already. He was ordered to consult with the gentry of Surrey and leave no more forces behind than they saw need for.

In the meantime your soldiers may not seize upon or meddle with the horses or the goods of any in the country upon pretence of their delinquency but that business be left to the sequestrators and those appointed by the Parliament . . . also the horse and arms taken by the soldiers may not be carried out of the county.<sup>53</sup>

He replied that by the advice of the county he was leaving only two troops behind—

As for the countrymen's horses to be returned again I am confident there is not any one to be found in the whole brigade.<sup>54</sup>

If they thought they had heard the last of Livesey's horse and complaints from Surrey, they were mistaken. On the 17th he was ordered to draw away his troop about Sterborough Castle

as it is now about to be demolished. We are informed of great disorders amongst your soldiers especially in Major Reynold's troop whereby they become a great increase burden to the country and the disaffection which is already as you know too great.<sup>55</sup>

Even this was not strong enough to restrain the troops. On the 20th the Committee wrote

We must again bring to your notice that many complaints are made against your forces both from Sussex and Surrey for their disorders and plunderings, without distinction of friend or enemy whereby the peoples' disaffection is increased. We are sorry that there is no better discipline among your forces.<sup>56</sup>

Another local tyrant Lord Monson (the future regicide) was discovered filling his pockets at his neighbours expense and reprimanded. The committee wrote,

We are informed that your Lordship is proceeding to the sequestration of some of the inhabitants about Reigate who are now attending here by order of the Committee. We conceive it fit to forebear that it be done by the whole committee of the county, meeting at Kingston for that purpose. We are also informed that your castle is garrisoned at the charge of the country whereby the people are much discontented and their disaffection increased.

They continued that this was unnecessary if the castle was dismantled according to the vote of the Commons and urged him to carry this out.<sup>57</sup>

In August there was another alarm about disaffected people lying about Epsom and Ewell ready to take to arms, but they never materialized.<sup>58</sup> In the west of the county there were constant rumours of men being listed for a rising with Hampshire to seize Farnham Castle and there were periodic reports of them actually in arms. If so they vanished again at the least sign of opposition.<sup>59</sup> With the defeat of the Scots at Preston towards the end of August all really serious threats vanished.

Though exciting events are news, and too often catch the eye of the historian, it must be emphasised that throughout the year besides the excitement of the petition ordinary life continued and many villages in the county can have heard little of these events. During 1648 as ardent a royalist as John Evelyn had ample time, between writing letters of intelligence to France under the name Aplanos, to look at works of art, to sell an impropration in Sussex for £3,000, to buy a manor from his brother in June and sell it for a £100 more in December.<sup>60</sup> Lady Winwood at Ditton seems to have been more interested in the marriage portions old Mr Holman might give his son, or in her son's small-pox than in the doings of the Earl of Holland<sup>61</sup>. Despite the strange news of the purge of Parliament and of the approaching trial of the King, the inhabitants of Surrey were more concerned with the bad harvest and rise in food prices and the murrain which caused such a heavy mortality amongst their cattle.<sup>62</sup>

## NOTES

### *Abbreviations:*

C.S.P.D. Calendar of State Papers Domestic 1648-9

E British Museum Thomason Tract Catalogue Number.

H.M.C. Historical Manuscript Commission publication

Evelyn J. *Diary and Correspondence* (1859) Ed. Bray W.

L.J. Journal of the House of Lords.

1. E. 443. 6. *The Parliamentary Kit* (1948).
2. E. 451. 33. *The Earl of Holland's Declaration* (1648).
3. Petition of the inhabitants of Middlesex and others of the South and East counties 1644, quoted in *The Victoria County History of Middlesex* II, 43.
4. *The Case of the Army Truly Stated* (1647).
5. Quoted in Hooper W., *Reigate: its story through the ages* (1945), 145.

6. For instance John Baxter's comment: 'Except a very few inconsiderable persons, we were unfeignedly for king and parliament; we believed that the war was only to save the parliament and the kingdom from the papists and delinquents.' Baxter J., *Reliquae Baxterianae* (1925), 49.
7. Rushworth J., *Historical Collections*, Part IV, II, 936
8. E. 443. 8. *A Declaration of the Knights Gents etc concerning the late Petition and Slaughter* (1648).
9. For a discussion of the community of the shire see Everitt A., *The Local Community and the Great Rebellion* (Historical Association Pamphlet, 1969) and *The Community of Kent and the Great Rebellion* (1966).
10. L.J. X 239a.
11. H.M.C. 29; 13 Report I (Portland I), 453.
12. Aubrey, J., *Natural History and Antiquities of Surrey* (1719) IV, 179.
13. Evelyn, J., III, 18.
14. Loseley MS 111/10/5. I am indebted to Major James More-Molyneux for allowing me to consult both those manuscripts deposited at Guildford and those remaining at Loseley.
15. H.M.C. 29; 13 Report I (Portland I) 582.
16. L.J. X 260.
17. This account is compiled from the following accounts: Evelyn, J., III, 18-21; Whitelocke, B., *Memorials of the English Affairs* (1682), 305; E 443. 5 *True Relation of the Passages between the Surrey Petitioners and Soldiers* (1648); E 443. 8 *A Declaration of the Knights Gents etc. concerning the late Petition and Slaughter* (1648); E443. 17 *The Sad and Bloody Fight at Westminster* (1648); E445. 8 *A Remonstrance or Declaration from the County of Surrey* (1648); E445. 3 *The Copy of a letter sent from a well affected Gentleman of the County of Surrey to a Gentleman in Kent* (1648).
18. E 443. 7. A large number of pamphleteers christened themselves Mercurius. Generally rightly so for not only was Mercury the messenger of the gods, he was also the god of lies.
19. E 445. 3. For a good account of simultaneous events in Kent, see Everitt, A., *op. cit.* (1966), VII. The differences are considerable. The Surrey Committees contained no one as harsh as Weldon and never lost the confidence of the county in the way Kent's did.
20. Evelyn, J., III, 18.
21. E. 443. 8.
22. *Clarke Papers* (Camden Society 1891), 88, *et seq.*, 186, *et seq.*

23. E 443. 8.
24. E 443. 5; E 445. 8.
25. Evelyn, J., III, 25. Clarendon MS 2786.
26. L.J.; X, 283; E 445. 4 *The Desires of the County of Surrey* (1648).
27. C.S.P.D., 82; Evelyn, J., III, 22.
28. C.S.P.D., 95; 113; 148.
29. Everitt, A., *op. cit.* (1966), 269.
30. C.S.P.D., 148.
31. C.S.P.D., 148.
32. C.S.P.D., 149; 158.
33. C.S.P.D., 156-161.
34. The main accounts of the rising are: E 451.30 *A True Relation* (1648) written by Lewis Audeley, a parliamentary officer and E 453. 40 *The Decoy or a practice of Parliament's to discover and destroy the loyal party* (1648) written by one of the rank and file royalists from London which gives a more reliable account of Holland's movements than H. E. Malden had access to and a comparison of his version in *Victoria County History of Surrey* (1912), I, 418 will show where I differ from him in point of fact and information.
35. E. 451.16 *A letter from Hampton Court* (1648).
36. C.S.P.D., 157.
37. E. 451.15 *The Moderate Intelligencer* (1648).
38. E. 443. 9 *A Declaration of Kent and Essex* (1648).
39. H.M.C. 53 Montague, 161.
40. Whitelocke, B., *op. cit.* (1682), 313.
41. C.S.P.D., 163. The difficulty with using the Derby House material is that those at London frequently were not sure where the commanders they wrote to were; and we have no means of knowing whether the orders were received or obeyed. Malden who used the Letter Book of the Committee rather hurriedly was led into several errors by it; for instance in thinking Livesey was still at Sevenoaks whereas he seems to have been at Horsham.
42. C.S.P.D., 162; 164; 166; H.M.C. 53: Montague 162.
43. E. 453. 40.



44. E. 451. 30. There is some confusion in the sources about what happened at Reigate on the 6th. Malden thought Holland withdrew during the night. The royalist account gives no indication that they retreated through fear. It may be that the main force withdrew before Audeley arrived and he confronted only a part, left to garrison the town (a fact he might wish to conceal from his superiors). A number of minutely varying hypotheses are possible, none of them verifiable with the state of the evidence.
45. C.S.P.D., 169; E. 451. 30.
46. E. 451. 130.
47. Kingston Borough Records, K. B. 16/7/45; C.S.P.D. 174, 184.
48. Clarendon, E., *History of the Great Rebellion* (1888), IV, 384.
49. E. 451. 40. These two points together illustrate rather well how isolated Surrey could be from London at this time.
50. E. 451. 40.
51. C.S.P.D., 173.
52. C.S.P.D., 181.
53. C.S.P.D., 181.
54. H.M.C., 29; 13 Report I (Portland I) 481.
55. C.S.P.D., 194.
56. C.S.P.D., 205.
57. C.S.P.D., 196.
58. C.S.P.D., 229; 251.
59. C.S.P.D., 191; 261; E. 451. 29 *Mercurius Melancholicus*; Clarendon MSS 1131.
60. Evelyn, J., I, 254-5.
61. H.M.C. 53 Montague 162, 164.
62. Evelyn, J., I, 256.