

## CHAPTER VI.

### The Battle of Rowton Heath.

It must have gladdened the hearts of the besieged in Chester, who doubtless crowded along the walls watching the enemy which had so fiercely and persistently hemmed them in and reduced them to such painful distress, making their careful way over the Dee, up to their middle in water. It does not appear that the Royalists attempted any pursuit, though Sir Wm. Brereton reports to the Committee in London that they had made good their retreat to the several garrisons without loss. What hearty congratulations there must have been exchanged within those much-battered walls! What good news to hear that some at least of the enemy had been taken in their bath at Pulford (Pulford brook must have been deeper and wider than it is at present) and that these Roundheads should have been obliged to take refuge and, naked, find their sanctuary in the Parish Church, which no doubt they had often desecrated in their fanatical spleen.

May 19. Nantwich.

Sir W. Brereton reports to the Committee of both Kingdoms that "forces have made good their retreat to y<sup>e</sup> severall garrisons without any losse, tho the enemy were nearer to Nantwich than we were."

On the same day Brereton writes to the Earl of Leven :—

On Saturday night soe soon as I received intelligence of their [the enemy's] cominge to Newport I commanded y<sup>e</sup> forces in y<sup>e</sup> Leaguer to be drawne together and those w<sup>h</sup> were on the Welch side part of them came over on boate at Eccleston a mile from Chester y<sup>e</sup> rest marched over y<sup>e</sup> floards three miles above Chester through w<sup>h</sup> our floote marched to y<sup>e</sup> middle in water and marched afterwards y<sup>e</sup> same day twenty miles to this garrison for preservation thereof the losse whereof would have bin the losse of the whole country.

May 15. 9 at night. Holt.—Coll. Trevor to Lord Byron.

My Lord,

I came this morneing to Holt where I mett with y<sup>r</sup> L<sup>pp</sup> orders about y<sup>e</sup> Cheshire quarters which as y<sup>e</sup> business now is I doe not hould it to be soe good, as to take advantage of these Rebbles that are now on retreate, as I came hither this morning there was a party of them on Cheshire side towards Alford, of which wee tooke twelve prisoners and killed three, about twelve of y<sup>e</sup> clocke that day wee fell up to Pulford where wee found them grasseing their horses and y<sup>e</sup> officers and troopers swimming in y<sup>e</sup> River. Wee took forty of their horses and armes and eight prisoners and y<sup>e</sup> rest fell naked into y<sup>e</sup> Church to their shelter on foote. If I can possibly leave as soon as they begin to move I will be in y<sup>e</sup> reare of him. This night about seven of y<sup>e</sup> clocke Capt. Carter came with his troope to Farne whence a party of ours took seven of his men and had taken himselfe and all y<sup>e</sup> rest but for the goodness of their horses. As soon as y<sup>e</sup> way is cleare I will waite on your Lordship who am

Your Lordsh<sup>pp</sup> humble servt M. TREVOR.

Brereton had already (May 13th) sent notice from Tarvin to the "Gentlemen of Nantwich that ample preparation should be made for emergencies. The Committee expect garrisons to be well provided. What is not brought in is but left to sustain and nourish y<sup>e</sup> enemy. Set all your people in town on worke to finish and strengthen your workes. Make Proclamation that every inhabitant in y<sup>e</sup> Towne make speedy provision for the month beforehand."

But he himself did not remain long at Nantwich. On the 21st he is at Knutsford, on his way to the great rendezvous at Barlow Moor in view of the King's movement in the direction of Yorkshire. The next day and the day following he is at Manchester, on the 24th at Stockport, then at Dunham, Withington, and back again for May 27th at Stockport [See Appendix I.].

1645. May 27.—Sir William Brereton to Mr. Ashurst.

Have been for five or six days at Barlow Moor. Have brought up Cheshire horse and dragoones and what foot could possibly be spared which was Col. Duckinfield's regiment, and have sent for more.

Chester, however was not to be delivered so easily from the net which the enemy had been so long drawing round the loyal city.



Though the Parliamentary forces had been withdrawn on the side of Wales ("in safety" as Brereton congratulates himself) and though this withdrawal was regarded by the Royalists as "a retreat," the blockade was continued unremittingly on the English side, and the "garrison" at Tarvin and Hooton were as watchful as before. While Hawarden Castle was left undisturbed the siege of Beeston Castle was maintained. Messengers and letter-carriers, when caught, were hanged without mercy.

1645. May 20. 2 in ye aftn.—To Sir William Brereton.

Noble Sir, Even now Tho: Welchman's wife of Chester being turned out of Chester came to us, and told us that Ralph Bennett (our foote post) was taken prisoner when he went with ye letter to Lt Coll. Jones on Saturday night and was hanged in Chester yesterday; he died with much couradge, and told them he was hanged for his other sinnes and not for his relacon to this Cause. Wee have two letter carriers now in Tarvin wee think fitt to mencon them unto you that (if you and ye counsell of warr think fit) they may undergoe ye like pleasure. Wee desire answer to

RO: VENABLES.

JOHN BRUEN—RO: GREGG.

1645. May 18. From aboard the Rebecka.—Capt. Stephen Rich to Sir William Brereton.

My bote was yesterday at Chester and gave the Towne an Alarum and shott in to ye Towne with one of our Gunnes, but by their slownes in shooteing, I conceive it may be very probable they are slenderly provided with powder. I wd desire yr honor to order me to be provided with some boates against ye next spring that I may be furnished to attempt some designes worth note. This night I intend to fetch of that ship that is under Flint Castell.

The besieged were still subject to alarums and endangered by bombardment. The country round was in a distressful condition, for the troopers did not cease their marauding expeditions of which so many complaints had been made earlier in the siege.

The Committee, June 3rd, complains to Brereton of "the intolerable miscarriage of your troopers by robbing, spoiling, and plundering of the people; swearing, drinking and all kind of debaucheries," and desires him to inflict exemplary punishment.

The humble and hasty remonstrance and complaint of ye reg<sup>t</sup> of Col. Duckinfield (now on service in ye leaguer before Chester) both in respect of themselves and others their distressed and grievously oppressed Parents and friends and neighbours.

To Sir William Brereton.

Constrained once more to complaine and say that they have soe often petitioned and sought for relief and redress of ye intollerable payments and pressing that long have and still doe lye, and are dayly increased and continued. They are impoverished and undone—burdened with such as pretend themselves to be friend and yet bye devouring and depriving them of their estates—not content with such provision of victuals as they have to relieve their poore families withall, but daily threatening them if they will not provide better, protesting that they will not remove their quarters until they have either eaten them up or be beaten out of them. In meantime wounding and abusing such of our friends and neighbours as doe not observe their comands. Before leaving their quarters, they will have such horses as they can find.

On Monday, June 9th, a party consisting of six companies of foot and three of horse, sallied out of the city towards Stapleford, to plunder the adjacent villages, and took Capt. Glegg and his troop of horse in their quarters. They were, however, speedily rescued by Lt.-Col. Venables, the Governor of Tarvin, who marched towards Christleton, cut off the retreat of the Royalists, and pursued them in the direction of Eaton, Rushton and Delamere forest, taking about two hundred prisoners, thirty horse, three hundred arms, a barrel and many bags of powder. At this skirmish, Sir John Powell, formerly High Sheriff of Cheshire, and one of the Commissioners of Array, was captured [*Civil War in Cheshire*, Rec. Soc., Vol. xix.]. Early in July, a small party of horse marched up to Chester and drew a troop of horse into an ambushade already prepared for them. Nine were killed, several taken prisoners, including thirty horse, and the remainder routed [Watson MSS. No. 1, fol. 216].

The inhabitants of Chester were to experience greater hardships and closer privation in the third stage of this long and eventful siege. The first stage ended with the visit of Prince Rupert which resulted happily in the temporary

raising of the siege, March 11, 1643-4. The second stage was brought to a close by the sudden abandonment of the siege of Hawarden Castle and the withdrawal of Brereton's troops in that part of the leaguer, in consequence of the King's alarming march northwards. Active proceedings however, against Chester, did not commence until late in September. Elsewhere, in the interval, events of considerable importance had occurred. Cromwell had been made Lieutenant-General of the Parliamentary forces (June 10th); and the battle of Naseby had been fought, so fatal to the Royalist cause (June 14th).

We can imagine how anxiously the Mayor, Charles Walley (in his second year of office), and his loyal fellow citizens followed the uncertain fortunes of their Royal Master. They had borne themselves stoutly during many long months, and had freely expended for his cause blood and treasure. Their loyalty and steadfastness were to be put to a more severe test.

The Assembly Book at this period has no entries after April 8th for more than three months, and the first order recorded after this interval is dated August 21, 1645, directing a thorough cleansing of the streets and backlanes in the city [A.O. 650]. This duty, we can quite understand, was most necessary after the crowded condition of the city during the preceding months of the close blockade.

Early in August, the Committee at Nantwich wrote to the Speaker, asking him to present to Parliament the Remonstrance of the county :

A Remonstrance of the Deputy Lieutenants and Gentlemen of the County Palatine of Chester of the condition of that county and of the great advantage the reducing of the city of Chester would bring to the State and their humble request thereupon . . . that it may please this honourable House—the wealth of the county being well nigh exhausted and not longer able to subsist—to afford such timely assistance of horse and foot as you in your wisdom shall think fit for the reducing of Chester, on which depends the well being of this County, Lancashire, Shropshire, North Wales and the North part of England and also of Ireland, and that these forces be not maintained at the charge of the County. That shipping may be appointed for the guard of the Irish seas to hinder the Irish

from landing in England or Wales, who are daily expected, and Sir Marmaduke Langdale now sent into Wales with a power of horse to attend their landing. That our horse and dragoons be armed . . . . [Portland MSS., 239].

Lenthall replied, August 28th

The House defers assistance in reducing Chester until September 8th, hoping affairs before then may be in a more certain condition with relation to the forces now with the King that give alarms to so many parts of this Kingdom and by their speedy motions make all such undertakings hazardous [Portland MSS., 262].

It would appear that the citizens were surprised when active operations were resumed on September 20th.

A force detached from the troops besieging Beeston Castle and consisting of 500 Horse, 200 Dragoons and 700 foot advanced stealthily "by byways through the country in the dead of the night" and at daybreak proceeded to storm the suburbs. Seizing with little loss (either by treachery or through the negligence of the garrison) a mount near Dee-side at Boughton, they set upon the main line of defences and captured all the mounts on that side of the city. Then forcing their way through the Bars into Foregate Street, they obtained possession of the north-western suburb up to the Eastgate, taking as a trophy and a token of "good presage" the sword and mace, which were probably in the Mayor's house in St. John's Ward afterwards occupied by Sir Wm. Brereton as his headquarters.

1645. September 23.—Sir Thomas Widdrington to Sir H. Vane, sen.

The outworks of West Chester are taken which gives some hopes of that city itself [surrendering]. In these outworks are taken, I know not by what accident, the sword and mace of the Mayor of Chester, so that the ensigns of the authority of that city are gained before the City itself, which may be thought for a good presage [S.P. Dom.]

This success encouraged the Parliamentarians to hope that, with a special effort, the siege of Chester might be brought to a rapid close, and the authorities in London at once dispatched urgent messages to the neighbouring counties calling for immediate reinforcements. The letters quoted show that Chester was regarded by both sides as "a

place of very great consequence both for the reducing and settling of all North Wales and for preventing the landing of any Irish supplies."

1645. September 26. Derby House.—Committee of both Kingdoms to Committee of County Stafford.

You must have heard of the taking of suburbs of Chester and know the importance to our N.W. parts to have that place reduced. We therefore desire you to send all the force you can spare with your own safety, to assist in that undertaking before the place receive further reinforcements from the enemy, which may render it more difficult of accomplishment. We are informed of the march of the King's forces that way and have given order to follow them closely, which we doubt not will prevent the besiegers from being interrupted by the enemy's forces.

1645. September 26. Derby House. Committee of both Kingdoms to Col.-Genl Poyntz.

We have information that the King, with most of his forces is marched towards Chester. If he be not closely followed our forces that have lately so happily surprised the suburbs and are in a fair way to take the town will be endangered. Chester is a place of very real consequence both for the reducing and settling of all North Wales and for preventing the landing of any Irish supplies. We desire to thank you for your diligence in following the King's party hitherto and now would have you to follow them so closely that they may not be able to give any impediment to the progress of the works before Chester.

1645. September 26. Derby House.—Committee of both Kingdoms to Governors of Montgomery and Oswestry.

You must have heard of the taking by our forces of the suburbs of Chester, and know the importance of that town which is more likely to be taken if the besiegers be reinforced, and the city itself kept from obtaining further supplies. We have written to the Committees of Stafford, Salop, and Lancashire to send what forces they can spare for that work, and have given orders to Col. Genl Poyntz to march close up to the King, who we hear is marched that way with most of his forces. We desire you to make the utmost improvement you can of your forces so as to alarm the Welsh, that they may not furnish supplies to the city of Chester on that side being there open. This we hope you may in a good measure prevent if your forces be active and stirring in these parts.

1645. September 26.—Committee of both Kingdoms to Committee of Shropshire.

You must have heard of the taking by our forces of the suburbs of Chester, and know the importance of that town which is more likely to be taken if the besiegers be reinforced, and the city itself kept from obtaining further supplies. We doubt not that with your usual promptitude you have already prevented our desires and sent some force to join with those of Cheshire for the taking of Chester. But knowing the importance of that place and the prospect afforded by this surprise of the suburbs for the capture of the city, if the siege be effectually followed and not interrupted, we have thought fit to desire you to send thither what force you can with safety to your own parts. We are informed that the King with his chief force is marched that way, followed by Col.-Genl Poyntz to whom we have again written to follow so close that the King may not interrupt the business at Chester.

The citizens were equally active in taking precautions against the expected assault in force. The Eastgate was rammed up with earth; the houses in Cow Lane and St. John's Lane and St. Thomas Street (on the Boughton side) were burnt to deprive the enemy of shelter, occasional sallies were made, with indifferent success, and marksmen on the walls and towers were keeping up a constant fire. The besiegers were equally busy on their side. From the steeple of St. John's Church they had an excellent position for annoying the citizens and on Monday, September 22nd, a large breach was made by their artillery in the walls near the Newgate sufficient to admit ten men abreast. Vigorous attempts were made to make good this breach with beds and woolpacks,<sup>85</sup> and after a sharp fight at eight in the evening

<sup>85</sup> 1645. 3 October.—Ordered the one half of the beddes, wooll packes & other necessaryes provided for the making upp of Breaches be forthwith carried to [S Bridge]'s Church into some house near there, & the other halfe to bee putt into the house of Alderman Harvey neare the Breach.

1645. 6 October.—Order to Alderman Holme to take from the Glovers such coarse wooll as they had to be made into packs, & employed in filling up the Breaches.

1645. 23 October. Chester.—To Mr. Ald. Holme and Mr. Edward Russell & either of them. I doe order and require that such bedds and other things which upon repaire of the severall Breaches shall bee taken out bee putt into the Common Store for that purpose appointed & that they be not disposed of from thence without expresse order.

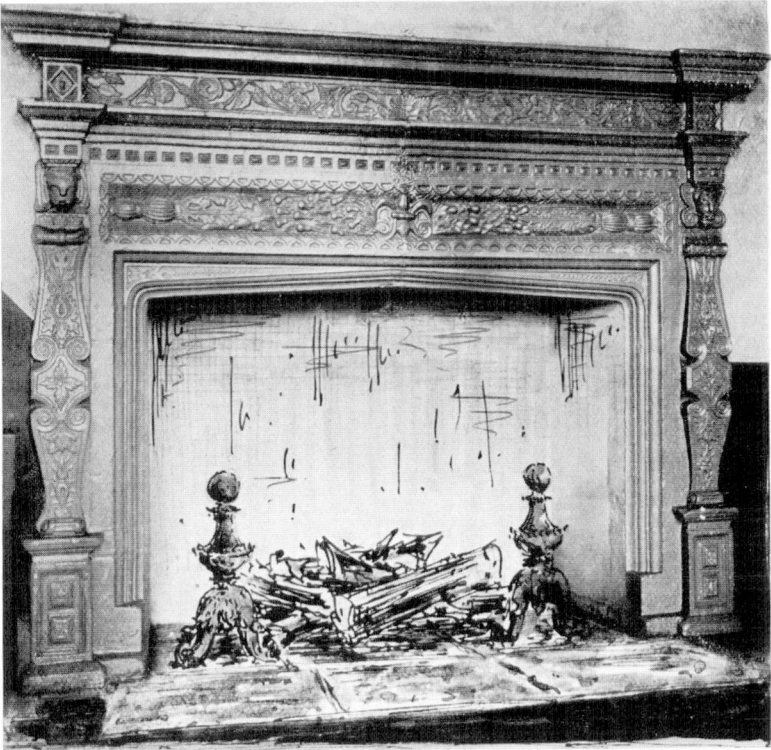
1645. 28 October.—To Alderman Holmes jun. You are hereby desired & required to deliver unto Lieutenant Colonel John Robinson for the use of the fort [on back 'for mount'] twelve woolpackes [H. 2135].

the enemy were beaten back with considerable loss by the courageous defence of the Chirk Castle troop. A simultaneous attempt was made by another body to scale the walls on the east between the Sadlers' Tower and the Eastgate, but they were beaten off with much loss.

King Charles at this time was on his way from Hereford, intending to pass through Lancashire and Cumberland into Scotland. On receiving information of the critical position at Chester, he marched at once for the city, which he entered with "some hazard" at Handbridge on Tuesday, September 23rd, attended by Lord Lichfield and Lord Gerrard and a small body-guard.

And thus we continued our march, until we came to Chester, where we found my L<sup>d</sup> Byron in command in y<sup>e</sup> town, and y<sup>e</sup> enemy in y<sup>e</sup> subburs, and so close y<sup>t</sup> it was some hazard to y<sup>e</sup> King to pass y<sup>e</sup> bridge [Slingsby's Diary, p. 168].

The King lodged that night at Sir Francis Gamull's house in Bridge Street. The remainder of the King's troops under Sir Marmaduke Langdale marched on towards Holt Castle, where Sir Richard Lloyd was in command, and crossing the Dee by the bridge took up a position on Rowton Heath about two miles from Chester. General Poyntz, of whose movements the Royal party seem to have been entirely ignorant, had been ordered by the Parliamentary Committee to follow the King, and prevent him from relieving Chester. By a shorter way he had already arrived at Whitchurch, intending to proceed to the assistance of the party before the walls of Chester. From Whitchurch he sent a letter to Col. Jones, who commanded the horse that besieged the city, informing him that he was coming to their assistance. This letter was intercepted by Sir Richard Lloyd. It had never been anticipated that they would have to meet Poyntz; but now that they knew his intentions, it was deemed advisable to assume the offensive, and to give him an attack. Not a word was sent to inform the King of his resolution; but Langdale, although his horse was tired with the long march overnight, rushed on recklessly, came upon Poyntz between the Dee and Beeston Castle, and drove him well back, but did not rout him. He



*Frank Simpson, F.S.A., Photo.*

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Jacobean Fireplace in the Gamull House, Lower Bridge Street, Chester,  
where Charles the First stayed September 23-25, 1645.





at once sent Colonel Shakerley to inform the King that he had obeyed his orders in checking Poyntz' advance, and to ask for further orders. "The Colonel executed his orders with better speed than could be expected for he galloped directly to the River Dee, under Huntington House, got a wooden tub (used for slaughtering of swine) and a batting staff (used for batting of coarse linen) for an oar, put a servant into the tub with him and in this desperate manner swam over the river, his horse swimming by him (for the banks there were very steep and the river very deep) ordered his servant to stay there with the tub for his return, and was with the King in little more than a quarter of an hour after he left Sir Marmaduke. This expeditious method saved him the going nine or ten miles about by Holt Bridge."<sup>36</sup>

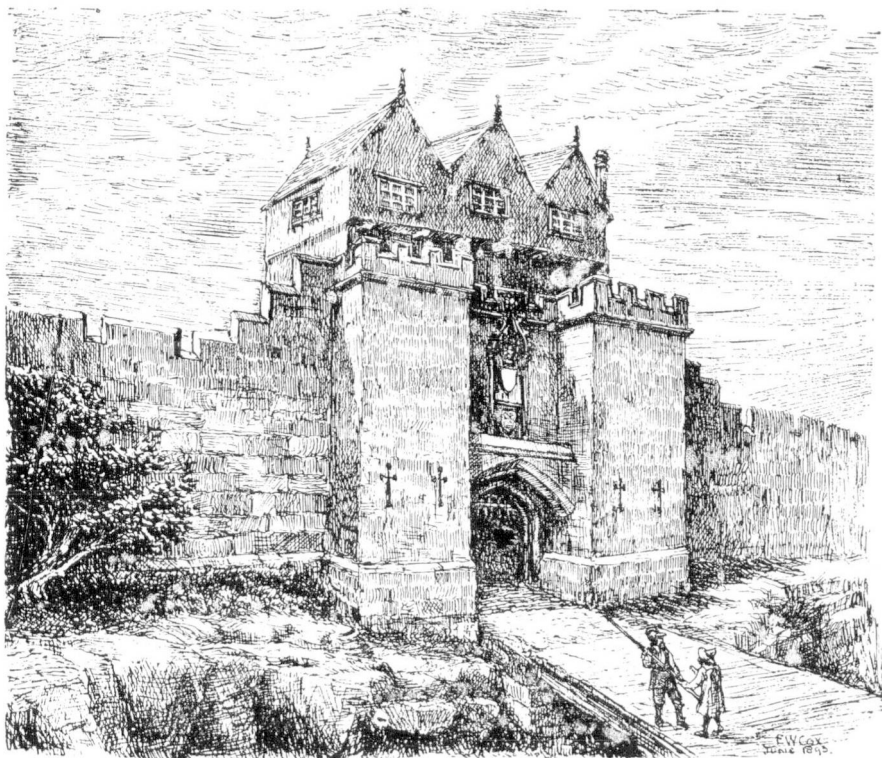
This speedy transmission of intelligence did not save the situation. Although preparations were made early in the day "to have a sally, and the citizens were busy in clearing out the dung y<sup>t</sup> barricaded y<sup>e</sup> gate y<sup>t</sup> led to y<sup>e</sup> suburbs [the East-gate—Slingsby] such delays were made by some about the King that no orders were sent, nor any sally made out of the city by the King's party till past three o'clock in the afternoon, which was full six hours after Poyntz had been beaten back" [Shakerley]. In all probability if the soldiers within the city had acted in concert with Langdale, the victory would have been on their side; but for want of intelligence, Gerrard and those who were with the King remained in Chester, ignorant of what was going on. Through some misunderstanding, Lord Gerrard ordered Langdale to draw nearer Chester, where some foot would be ready to support him. This was impracticable as Sir Marmaduke would then have been open to attack in rear as well as in front, for Poyntz had now had time to rally his forces, and in obedience to his message was reinforced about noon by 500 horse and 300 foot under Colonel Jones and Adjutant-General Lowthian, drawn hurriedly from the force besieging Chester. This hasty

<sup>36</sup> Mr. Peter Shakerley's account written on one of the blank pages of Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*.

march of the Parliamentarians was mistaken for flight, and a considerable portion of the garrison, with Lord Gerrard and Lord Lichfield were ordered to pursue, passing through the Northgate round by Flookers brook, as the direct way by the Eastgate had been blocked up. Before they could learn their mistake, Poyntz fell upon Langdale, who was then compelled to meet his assault in front as well as Colonel Jones' attack in rear, and notwithstanding a gallant resistance, he was routed and forced to retire in the direction of Hoole Heath. Here the Royalist horse became so disordered, and the narrow lanes and passes between this and Chester became so crowded, that they were unable to make an effectual stand, and, in fact, threw their own supporters under Lord Gerrard into irremediable confusion. Some made for Holt Bridge, others crossed the river at Dee Ford, and so into the city; but Poyntz, satisfied with his unexpected success, made no attempt to pursue them. Thus the victorious engagement in the early morning was changed in a few hours into a disastrous defeat. No less than 600 men fell in this fatal battle, among them several of high rank and distinction, and more than 800 prisoners were taken, the names of no less than 469 of whom, taken to Nantwich on September 26th, are recorded in Add. MSS. 11,332, folios 16-18. Amongst the slain was Bertie Stuart the young Earl of Lichfield, and Gerrard and Langdale were both wounded.

1645. September 25. 3 p.m. Chester Suburbs.—G. Boothe, Ph. Mainwaringe, Rog. Wilbraham to William Lenthall. Honourable Sir,

We still keep the Suburbs of Chester, and yesterday joyning our forces with Major Generall Poyntz, God gave us a great Victory over the Kings Army, whereby God hath not onely given us, but the Kingdom much cause of joy and thankfulness: We have such earnest business at present upon us, that we our selves cannot have time to represent to you the particulars, but have commanded the Chaplain to our Forces, who was an eye witnes to all that was done, to give you a full accompt thereof: All that we shall trouble you with at instant, is to renew our humble requests, that you will be pleased to expedite our Remonstrance, and procure a speedy Order for moneys to be with all possible speed conveyed to us; other-



The Old North Gate.  
From a Drawing by Randle Holme.



wise we shall not be able to keep such forces together as are necessary for this work :

And so with tender of our Service, rest

Your most humble Servants,

G. BOOTHE.

PH. MAINWARINGE.

ROG. WILBRAHAM.

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A true Relation of the great Fight and Routing the Kings forces on Routon Heath, Sept. 24th.

It pleased God upon Saturday morning, September 20, 1645, about break of day to deliver into the hands of the Cheshire Forces, though few in number, under the command of Col. Michael Jones, and Adjutant Louthian, The Suburbs of the City of Chester, formerly accounted for to Sir Wil. Brereton; in which expedition (though by storm) we lost but one man; the Enemy fired most part of the Suburbs, Cow-lane, St. Johns Lane, and the street without the North gate; our care was to hasten to the taking of the City, without which the diseased county could never be cured. Vpon the Lords day we brought in our Artillery, fixt a battery, & upon Monday made a great breach in the wall, resolving to storm it at night, which we endeavoured in three or four places, but the Ladders proved too short, and the breach too high on the inside, so they made their retreat with the losse of two men, and some wounded. The Suburbs were entred by Captain Gimbert, the breach by Captain Finch, both of them stout and trusty men; though God deferred that mercy we hoped for, in gaining the City, he gave us a better, the utter Routing and spoiling of the Kings Army; which was thus performed.

Our intelligence upon Monday September 21st, was, that the King was at Chirke Castle, intending for Chester: Upon Tuesday, two trusty men were sent to seek Major Gen. Poyntz, who was appointed to follow the King, but we heard nothing of him; they meeting with him at Whitchurch, and acquainting him with our present condition (who were like to be stormed that night) he hastned away, marched all night, though tired with long marches before: About six a clock Wednesday morning, he advanced within a mile of the Enemy, three miles from Chester, the one not knowing of the other; upon notice, both set themselves in a posture; Generall Poyntz upon Hatton Heath, divided from the Enemy on the Milne Heath by a Lane, they being betwixt him and the City: he first charged them though upon a disadvantage, because the Enemies whole body was not come up, but had a repulse, in which that gallant Gentleman Col. Graves was sore wounded, & Col. Bethell, but

not so dangerously; about twenty men slain, many wounded; but we hear the Enemies losse was greater, however, upon the retreat, it was noised that Gen. Poyntz was utter Routed, which was sad news to our Forces in Chester; who upon consultation, at first thought it fit to quit the Suburbs, least the Army miscarrying, all should be lost; but upon intelligence that Poyntz kept his ground and stood in a body, they resolved to keep what ground they had gotten for the gaining of Chester, and to assist Generall Poyntz with Horse and Foot, which he sent for, and they promised: The signall of their march from the Suburbs was the discharge of two piece of Ordnance, at which there was great shouting in Generall Poyntz campe, who without us could neither charge the Enemy, nor make good their Retreat if need should require: God in his good Providence deferred the work to that time of the day, that we might finde the fruit of many Prayers made for us, it being the monethly Fast, and by this accession to vindicate our innocency, who were asperst for a factious county, and mutinous Souldiery, though we can proffesse it before God and the world, that we know not that county where the Gentry and Commanders are more firmly cemented in the band of true affection than this, nor a Souldiery more obedient to commands, constant upon duty, and now free from mutinies. Many of the Gentlemen of the county resorted to us, gave their best assistance for the carrying on of this work, upon whose shoulder no small burden lies to regulate these troubled affairs: It was agreed by them, that Col. Jones, a dextrous and resolute Souldier, should go out with the command of Horse and Foot, 350 and 500. The Foot were led by Col. John Booth, governor of Warington, who was very forward in that Expedition: Adjutant Gen. Louthian, a man of known worth, was to keep the suburbs, a work of great trust & courage.

When these forces joyned with Gen. Poyntz there was a great joy in the camp, the Enemy formed themselves into a body upon Routon Heath, two miles from Chester, and stood in Batalia, being about 5000 as their owne party confesse, having drained their Garrisons: We hastned towards them in the best posture we could, the Horse was the Battell, because many, the wings were Foot because few; they had the Wind and Sun; we had God with us, which was our Word, counterpoising all disadvantages, and countermanding all strength; a little before five a clock, we joyned in a terrible storm, firing in the faces of one another, hacking and slashing with swords neither party gain'd or lost a foot of ground, as if everyone were resolved there to breathe their last: Whilst the dispute was so hot and doubtfull, our Musquetiers so galled their horse, that their

Rear fled, perceiving their losse by them, upon whom they made no Execution. Their Van perceiving that, faced about, and fled also : We had nothing then to do, but to pursue and make Execution, which we did to purpose, for though the ways were strewd with Arms, Portmantles, Cloakbags, and Horse, we left those to any that would pillage, and fell to Execution : Some part we chased to Holt bridge, the most towards Chester ; some say the King was in the field, others that he went out with a party, next after mentioned ; but certain it is, he went out from the City by the North gate, and thither retreated, for that gate is without our Works.

A memorable service was performed by the Shropshire Forces, at the appointment of Lieutenant Louthiane, who were part of them that kept the suburbs. When Collonel Jones was marcht out to joyne with Generall Poyntz, there issued out after him through the North-gate (with which party its affirmed the King went) about five hundred horse and three hundred foote of the Kings and Queens Regiments and General Gerrards Lifeguard. Adjutant Louthiane sent after them about two hundred of the Shropshire horse, commanded by Lieutenant Collonel Coote in chiefe, the second division by Collonel Prince, the last by Ma : Fenwick and two hundred foote commanded by Captain Daniell, these gallantly performed what they undertooke, routed and chased the enemy, slew the Earle of Leichfield and others, tooke divers principall officers and followed the execution foure miles.

After we thought the work was ended, the enemy made head againe, and they that escaped in the field and about Chester, joyned in another body, fell upon part of our forces with advantage (for they were desperate seeing they had lost the day) drave them to our mud walls, where the guards made execution on them, and some small measure upon ours in the reare, through mistake : so they fled towards Bridgetrafford being ignorant of the Foote, where they were driven into deepe ditches and boggy places. The Country men set on them there, tooke one hundred horse and sixty persons. Others fled into the forrest where they are met with.

Whilst wee were thus engaged in the field the enemy taking advantage of the small number left in the suburbs attempted the regaining of them in many places ; but were everywhere gallantly repulsed with losse by Adjutant Louthiane.

We cannot give a particular account of the number of the slaine, which were many, neither know we our owne losse, but that it is very small. Wee have taken the Earle of Portlands brother, with many considerable persons : Knights, and officers, above one thousand prisoners ; And its probable that



of the five thousand they say was in the field, the King will hardly rally one thousand, wee desire the honour of this victory may be given to God alone, to whom alone it is due, his Instruments behaved themselves gallantly, the Cheshire Horse were knowne most couragious, we desire not vainely to glory in any thing God hath done by us, but let the world say whether wee have been backward in the work committed to us as some have suggested.

Let Souldiers judge what it is for so small a force to maintaine the leaguer at Beeston, take and keep the outworks of Chester, to assist others a farre off, and these in the field, and runne all hazard, rather than quit a foot of what we have gained. Neither will we fixe here. These are but the beginning of action to us, since our new moddle, so successfull, so much despised.

Upon Parliamentary supplyes already Petitioned, we trust in him, whouse souldiers we are, to give as good account of our after proceedings, both in reducing this County and assisting the neighbourhood.

Prisoners taken at, and after the Rowting of the Kings Forces on Rowton Heath within two miles of Chester, the twenty-fourth of September, 1645.

Sir Philip Musgrave, Major  
Generall.

*Collonels :*

Sir Thomas Dawbridge-  
courte.<sup>87</sup>

Sir Thomas Dacres.

Sir Michael Constable.

Sir Thomas Goare.

Sir Henry Stradling.

Johan Philiem Heitter.

Weston, sonne to the late  
Lord Treasurer.

Gifford.

Cromwell.

Fletcher.

*Lieutenant Collonels :*

Mathon, Millington, Hat-  
ton, Salkeld, Ruly,  
Broughton, Rutherford.

*Majors :*

Williams, Morris, Magdug-  
gell, Magdoole, Lacy-  
mouth.

*Captaines :*

Martin, Swinhoe, Henshaw,  
White, Gibbon, Starling,  
Sheley, Conyers, Johnson,  
Dixon, Presse, Louthier,  
Willey, Moreton, Simp-  
son, Bell, Boulton,  
Vaughan, St. Michaels,  
Captain of the Queens  
Troop, with him a Scarfe  
taken, which the Queen  
took from about her  
necke, and gave him to  
weare as Colours for her.

<sup>87</sup> "In this last battaile att Chester it was my ill fortune to be taken prisoner, and am now at Nantwich, and heare this morninge I must be sent to Pomfrett Castle." Is without a penny and begs for an order to be speedily removed to London.—Letter to his friend John Crewe, Esq. [of Utkinton], at Westminster, dated from Nantwich, Sept. 29, 1645 [Sheaf, x, 81].

*Lieutenants :*

Cottrell, Morgan, Bartrom,  
Astelby, Story, Colborne,  
Constable, Mansfield,  
Skipwith, Jefferson,  
Power, Brooke, Whitney,  
Ellyott

*Cornets :*

Elsing, Julian, Rainsford,  
Morley, Pierson, Fitz-  
Williams, Smith.

*Quartermasters :*

Thomas Shelden, the Kings  
Quartermaster, Collizer,  
Lowe, Brere.  
Trumpets five.  
Corporalls two.  
Gentlemen of the Kings  
Lifeguards, seventeen.  
Twenty more Gentlemen.

Troopers between eight  
hundred and a thousand.

Master Sherburne of Stany-  
hurst, Master William  
Leighton, Master Lewis  
Darcy, Master Henry  
Boucher, Master James  
Mountague, Master Gil-  
bert Markham.

These very considerable  
Gentlemen.

*Slaine :*

Two Lords [Earl of Lich-  
field, one] two Knights  
[Sir Brian Stapleton, one]  
one Collonel, one Lieuten-  
ant-Collonel, and three  
hundred and more Offi-  
cers and Common Soul-  
diers.

[*Cheshire Civil War Tracts*, xxviii].

1645. September 25. Miller's Heath.—Colonel-General Sednham  
Poyntz to William Lenthall.

Sir,

In the conclusion of a hard march it hath pleased God to deliver the enemy into our hands, wherein he hath sufficiently manifested his providence. Yesterday we discovered the enemy on Millers heath within three miles of Chester, whereupon I sent to Chester for some foot, which was very seasonably sent me, and in my advance towards them we unawares met a body of them in a narrow passe on the top of the heath, where we had a very violent encounter, wherein we cut off many of the Kings Life-guard and routed the rest, then we retreated to our maine body, and toward foure of the clock in the afternoon we advanced toward them, and finding the enemy ready for battell we presently fell upon them, kild, tooke, wounded, and routed the whole army, and I am confident they never received a greater blow. I have onely a Catalogue of a few, the rest being sent to Tarvin and other garrisons in these parts, cannot as yet be collected. These Colonels, Sir Thomas Glenham, Sir Thomas Dacres, Sir Philip Musgrave, Sir Thomas Dawbridgecourt, Sir Tho. Gower, Col. Tho. Weston, sonne to the Earle of Portland, and Col. Cromwell, James Martin, Quartermaster generall, Col. John Gifford, Lieutenant Col. Edward Hatton, and Lieut.-Col. Constable, Cap. Wyvell, Cap. Cottrill, Cap.

Morgan, Cap. Mountaine, Cap. Le Strange, Cap. Swinho, and Cap. Constable. Its reported Sir Marmaduke Langdale is either killed or taken : you shall with all conveniency receive a compleat List from me. There was killed the Earle of Litchfield, brother to the Duke of Lenox, and Sir Brian Stapleton a notorious papist, who was lately in Ireland His Majesties solicitor for ten thousand men. In this tender of my service I desire it may be forthwith communicated to the House, from whom I desire to receive further orders, in the meantime I shall continue thereabouts, using my endeavours in reducing this City, wherein, and in all other my endeavours, shall ever rest,

Sir,

Your most humble and faithful servant,

SEDNHAM POYNTZ.

Gerrard is deadly wounded if not already slaine.

This Gentleman Colonell Parsons having the charge of bringing up the reserves, has done very good service in the discharge thereof. I desire the House may think of some further incouragement for the Yorkeshire horse.

Col. Beathell and Col. Graves deserves very much for their services.

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The Relation of Colonell Parsons communicated to both Houses of Parliament, September 29, 1645.

About the 18th of August last, the King with about 4000 horse and Dragoones advanced into Yorkshire. The 19th, Col. Rossiters horse came up to Generall Poyntz. The 21st, they joyned with the Scots and Cheshire horse, a dayes rest the Scots horse would have, the next day all marched ; But the King got by that meanes a dayes retreat before, whom Gen. Poyntz according to his Order from the Committee of both Kingdomes, through many difficulties pursued above 300 miles, not resting above a day in any place. The knowledge of the Kings advance for the reliefe of Chester, being the onely certain intelligence he received of his motion, he marched day and night to be there before him, and tooke in a strong house with a Draw-bridge, moted, (which stood in the way of his march, and opposed him) in lesse than an houres space ; And after a very hard march all night, on the 24th of this instant in the morning, his Van curriers discovered the enemy on a moore within two miles of Chester called Rowton-moore, whereupon immediately he drew into Order, and advanced upon them (though all his force were not then come up) for he supposed to take the enemy at unawares, it being probable they could have no intelligence of his being so neare, though it proved otherwise, for his Letters (written that night to the Commander

within the out-Lines of Chester, giving notice of his advance) were intercepted and the enemy being possessed of the advantage of ground, and in order confronted our van led by Colonell Hugh Bethell in the midst of a Lane betwixt two Moores covered with the armed men of both Battaliaes, where was given a very sharp and gallant charge by bothe parties, for after Pistolls were discharged at halfe Pikes distance, they disputed the matter with their Swords a full quarter of an houre, neither yielding ground to other, till at length the enemy were forced to retreat, whom, our men pursuing were re-encountred by a fresh reserve at the Lanes mouth, and they were likewise discomfited, and a third, but being over powred were in the end forced to retreat in the Lane, incapable of receiving a Reserve to second them : here wee had some losse, the enemy pursuing to the Lanes end, but were beaten back, for there was space for our reserves to advance, Colonell Bethell and Colonell Graves were then sore wounded, after this the Generall perceiving the enemy lay upon his advantage, only skirmished him with some flying parties, while he held correspondency with his friends in Chester Suburbs, whose signe was the discharge of two peeces of Ordnance when they would issue out with horse and foot to joyne with him, upon whose appearing the enemy quitted their station, and the Generall with a party advanced to take the most convenient ground giving command to Colonel Parsons Quartermaster generall of the Army, Col. Sandies who performed the duty of Commissary Generall of the horse, during the aforesaid march being then imployed to the Committee of both Kingdomes to order up the rest, which was opportunely done, for they joyned with the Auxiliary force of horse and foote in the enemies ground, and was drawn into many small divisions and reserves, being much overnumbered by the enemy, who accompted themselves 5000 horse, and Gen. Poyntz not above 2500 horse, besides two small bodies of foote, who were disposed in the two outmost intervals of horse; upon the very instant of this juncture the enemy advanced with their whole body, and the General (leaving the charge of the reserves to Col. Parsons) tooke care of, and led up the van divisions, with which after a round volley of shot from the foot, he joynd battell, charging the enemy in Front and Flank, where his horse was deeply wounded on the head, being continually seconded with reserves as often as there was occasion, the rest being kept intire followed at a due distance; The prevailing Generall who put the Enemy to a totall rout, and although the pursuit was as hot as could be expected from such wearied horse, through narrow dirty lanes and over ditches, the enemy rallied in a great moore wide of Chester in two vast bodies a

great distance asunder, the first (not without some dispute) were again routed, and the other likewise, who retreated upon the Warwick Regiment with such violence as bore them away confusedly, intermixed with the flying enemy up to the out-works of the Suburbs, the Musketeers within were never the lesse liberall of their Gunshot, but the Divine Providence appeared much in the distribution of the impartiall Bullets, few or none lighting upon our men, though many of the Enemy were found there expiring.

A body of horse all the while of these last disputes appeared fixed on the top of a Hill, a little distant on that side Chester, wherein the King was very confidently reputed to be, for confronting whereof a party of foot winged with Colonell Lidcot, and Colonell Bethells Regiments were drawn into a convenient Close in the bottome as a grand reserve; but the night by this time falling the body on the Hill appeared not, and those in the bottome returned to their comrades sated with slaughter, prisoners and booty of the vanquished Enemy; while these things were thus agitated in the field the remainder of foote left with Colonell Lowthian in the Suburbs were not idle, for the Enemy made a strong rally upon them out of the City, and were more strenuously repulsed, the number of the slaine of the prisoners and horse taken is not yet knowne, but is generally conjectured 800 slaine, 1500 men and 2000 horses taken, there was brought in that night the underwritten list [already given] of the considerablest men taken and slaine in the fight, the King with a party of about five or six hundred was seen going into Wales [*Cheshire Civil War Tracts*, xxix].

1645. September 27. Chester Suburbs.—Colonel-General Sednham Poyntz to William Lenthall.

In my last I promised a perfect list of our victory. . . . which according to our common collection I have sent you inclosed. There are many considerable persons omitted being sent to Stafford and Shrewsbury, whereof I could receive no list. Sir Thomas Glemham proved to be Sir Henry Stradling, the late Governor of Carlisle. I hope you will pardon my mistake. The next morning after the fight I drew my forces out of the suburbs to Rowton Moor, where I remained till two of the clock in the afternoon, where I was counselled to quarter about Northwich where I found a great inconvenience, so that I am moved this way, and do intend over the river into Wales, taking with me 1,000 foot to make good the Welsh side, and Colonel Jones on the other side, where I shall use my utmost endeavours in reducing this place, till I receive your orders to the contrary, and shall send about 1,000 or 1,500 horse to attend the King's motion with his ragged remnant. I desire

there may be some further encouragement thought upon for the horse, for this hard march hath been very heavy duty to them [Portland MSS]. Enclosed is a list of the prisoners and slain, the former consisting of six knights and colonels, five colonels, the adjutant general, eight Lieutenant-Colonels, seven majors, eight gentlemen of quality, reformadoes, twenty captains, sixteen lieutenants, seven cornets, four quartermasters, five trumpeters, seventeen of the King's Lifeguard, twenty gentlemen, 1,200 common soldiers, and 1,500 horse, and the latter of the Earl of Lichfield, and at least 300 commanders and soldiers besides [Portland MSS., 278].

The King, attended by the Mayor, Sir Francis Gamull, and Alderman Cowper, had the unhappiness of watching this disaster, first from the Phoenix Tower, and afterwards from the Cathedral Tower, "where, as he was talking with a Captaine, a bullet from St. John's gave him a salute, narrowly missing the King, hit the said Captaine in the head" and killed him on the spot [Appendix I. p. 226].

Owing to this disaster, it was not thought advisable that the King should remain in Chester. Before his departure on the following day, he called the Mayor and leading citizens together, and desired them if he was unable to send them the aid he expected within eight or ten days, to make the best conditions of surrender they could. Instead of pursuing his route to Scotland he returned into Wales, passing over Dee Bridge between nine and ten in the morning, accompanied by Sir Francis Gamull, Captain Throppe, and Alderman Cowper. After staying three hours at Hawarden Castle, he reached Denbigh Castle the same night, and on the following Sunday, September 28th, he passed on through Ruthin to Chirk Castle, where he was met by Prince Maurice.

We marched over ye bridge in ye day, having set up some blinds yt they might not take notice so easily when ye King pass'd over, and except one horse yt was killed, I think no other took any harm [*Slingsby Diary*].

Symonds's "Continuation of the Marchings of the Royal Army" [Harl. MSS., 944] provides an interesting commentary on these events:—

Monday, September 22nd. Over such mountaynes to Chirke Castle, com. Salop. There the King lay . . . Watts is

Governor. The guards to Llangothlyn, a market towne, com. Denbigh, three myle from Chirke. Newes this day that Col. Willm Legge, the Governr of Oxon, was committed. That P. Rupert's commission was declared null.

That part of the outworks at Chester were betrayed to the enemy by a captain and liett., both apprehended.

The King sent to Watts to send to Lord Byron to Chester to hold out twenty-four hours.

Tuesday, his Matie marched towards Chester, attended with Montague Ea. of Lindsey, Ea. of Cork, Ea. of Lichfield, Lord Digby, Lord Astley, Lord Gerard. His force with him were his own regt. of Life-Guards, consisting of these troops: the King's; the Queene's, commanded by Sr Edw. Bertt, the Major of the regiment; Earl of Lichfield's, Lt.-Col. Gourdon, Scot., commanded it. They were most Scotch officers; Sir Henry Stradling's troope which came from Carlisle with Sir Thomas Glemham. Toto, about 200. Lord General Charles Gerard was also there with the K., with his gallant troope of life-guards, 150 men. Col Herbt Price his horse; Sir Marmaduke Langdale's brigade; Sir Thomas Blakstone's brigade, and Sir William Vaughan's brigade, and General Gerard's horse marched before all night toward Holt Castle, a garrison of the King's commanded by Sir Richard Lloyd, where we have a pass of boats over ye river. Their business was to fall upon those horse and foot that lay before Chester. The King went into Chester and lay at Sir Francis Gamul's house: his guards watched in the street. The enemy, who were gotten into the outworkes which secured the suburbs, had made a breach the day before, and had entered had it not bin most gallantly defended.

Wednesday, 24th of September. Contrary to expectations Pointz his horse were come betweene Nantwiche and Chester to releve those forces of their party who were afore Chester, and to fight the King, as appears by his letters, intercepted by Sir Rich. Lloyd, to this purpose directed to Jones who sometimes was student in Lincoln's Inn, and commanded the horse that besieged Chester, thanking them for keeping their ground, notwithstanding the King's approach, and tells them a neare relation or accompt of the King's strength, of his tired over-marcht horse, of his number of dragoons, of his resolution to engage them if possible.

This morning, Sir Marma. Langdale, on Chester side of the river Dee, and not far from Beeston Castle, charged Pointz his horse, beat them, and took some cornets. But they beat us agen for't.

About twelve of the clocke, those horse which came with the King and 200 foot were drawne out of Chester. 900 prisoners

of ours taken and carried to Nantwiche, whereof about twenty gentlemen of the King's own troope. Beeston Castle was besieged at this time.

Thursday, 25th. This night I saw a rainbowe within a mile of Denbigh, at five in the morning, and the moone shined bright; 'twas just against the moone. About nine and ten in the morning the King left Chester and went to Harding Castle, governed by Sir Wm. Neale, stayed three houres, and that night to Denbigh Castle. Sir M. Langdale's rendezvous was early this morning within two myles of Holt Castle.

Lord Digby, on the part of the King, writing from Denbigh (September 26th) endeavours to comfort the Governor of Chester with the promise of a good supply of provisions and reinforcements, and urges him to encourage the citizens in holding out.

1645. September 26. Denbigh.—George Lord Digby to John Lord Byron.

His Maj<sup>ty</sup> very well pleased with the resolution expressed by town of Chester and sends them herewithal a letter of thanks. Here is now with His Maj<sup>ty</sup> the Archbishop of York, Sir John Owen and diverse others with whom he has taken the best order he can for the supply of Chester with provisions, viz. butter, cheese and cattle out of those countries, as also corn out of these. The King likewise resolves to send Sir Wm Blakestone to you to Chester with a good proportion of horse, and to have a considerable body under Sir W. Vaughan for the keeping of the Welsh side [of Chester] open. I beseech you encourage the town all you can, for I do not despair but we may ere long find means to ease you of your ill neighbours.

But the situation is distinctly unpromising, for a letter of Byron's of the same date to the Marquis of Ormond, appealing earnestly for a supply of ammunition and, if possible, of men, indicates how critical he considered the situation to be, and the tone of his letter to Lord Digby on the following day is still more gloomy and desponding. The movements of General Poyntz cause him deep anxiety.

1645. September 26. Denbigh.—George Lord Digby to Marquis of Ormond.

This enclosed relation of our condition will let you see the danger of Chester, which is somewhat more than is there expressed, through want of powder. You are conjured to hasten over some supply thither of ammunition and if possible



of men. You know the great importance of that place in relation to Ireland [*Carte's Ormond Papers, I, 90-95*].

1645. September 27. 5 p.m. Chester.—John Lord Byron to George Lord Digby.

At this instant all the enemy's horse appear before the town on the Cheshire side, to-morrow, as one who comes from amongst them assures me, Poyntz passes over into Wales; so that unless the King's horse be very active in beating up their quarters and cutting off provisions from the enemy this town will speedily be enforced to a parley. The same party who comes from amongst them speaks of the great joy they express for a late victory over Montrose, whereof they are so confident that they have shot off their cannon at Nantwich and other garrisons. I do not like this return of Poyntz's horse. I fear something is amiss with my Lord of Montrose. All that can be done for the present is that the King raise the whole force of Wales and command the horse immediately to advance this way, to straiten them in their quarters, and to procure good guides.

Lord Digby's reply (October 5th) is not a whit more cheerful. He can only "hope that the King's advance to Newark will have the wished result of drawing the rebels' great body of horse from the Welsh side of Chester," and he prays "God send that you may hold out till they come." Failing this, Byron is advised what measures to take on the King's behalf towards securing North Wales and Anglesea.

1645. October 5.—George Lord Digby to John Lord Byron (chiefly in cypher).

According to what I wrote to you at large from Chirk His Majesty is advanced as far as Newark, and we hope it will have the wished result of drawing the rebels' great body of horse from the Welsh side of Chester. As for any parties that they may leave, his Majesty will instantly send back Sir W. Vaughan with strength enough to master them. God send that you may hold out till they come. If this should not be possible, for all that is possible I am sure you will do, you are then desired to apply yourself to the securing of Anglesey and North Wales, particularly of Carnarvon and 105. For the government of Conway I send you herewithal a commission.

"The Committee for War" write in a very different spirit. Thanking Poyntz warmly for his success at Rowton Moor, which is rewarded by a grant to him of £500 and £5,000 to his troops for their "better encouragement,"

they direct him to follow up the King persistently, to prevent the plunder of the country, to hinder his recruiting, and to break up the remainder of those forces against which he had already had so good success. They order him at the same time, so far as he conveniently could, to be assistant to the forces now before Chester [S.P. Dom. Sept. 30th and Oct. 6th].

There is no lack of vigour or prompt resolution in the action of this Committee. The Committees in Lancashire, Staffordshire, Derby, Shrewsbury and Yorkshire, are exhorted to help as best they can, sending all the troops that can possibly be spared, for "the service is of very great consequence." Although the King has only a small force left ("a ragged remnant" as Poyntz calls it), the Parliamentarians are all aware how resolutely King Charles was set on relieving Chester.

1645. September 29. Doddleston, near Chester.—Colonel-General Sednham Poyntz to the Committee for War at York.

We hear the King has got a small body together, Prince Maurice and Sir Jacob Astley joining with him with all the forces they could procure from Worcester, Hereford and Wales. They are now about Denbigh and are moving this way with four fieldpieces intending to give us battle. I have written to London and to all our garrisons for assistance. One Nottingham regiment is returned and the rest with hard duty much discontented. We hear the Newarkers have orders to come this way. Therefore I earnestly desire you may give orders to the Yorkshire horse to attend their motion and to send your letters to Colonel Rossiter and Colonel Thornhagh to the same purpose for we hear the King hath vowed to raise this siege or lose England. He expects 5,000 rebels to come over to him from Ireland.

1645. September 29. From the Leaguer before Chester.—Sir George Boothe and other the Deputy Lieutenants to William Lenthall.

Since the House called up their members and committed the Militia to the Deputy Lieutenants, though we found the soldiers left in a mutinous condition for want of pay, and the country quite exhausted, yet it hath pleased God so to render our endeavours prosperous that the country and forces are now reduced to a cheerful and obedient condition ready and capable

of any proportionable design that can be presented them for the service of the Parliament. Nevertheless we are informed there are some factious petitions presented to you, bearing the character of the whole county, but indeed being the act but of a few, intimating a necessity of Sir William Brereton's return and so insinuating an odium and scandal upon us and our actions to the disturbance of the present condition we are in and the hazard of the great attempts now in agitation. Postscript.—Major-General Pointz' horse with Colonel Jones' 500 horse are passed over the river, and Colonel Booth and Colonel Duckenfield with such foot as we could spare, to expect the King's attempt on the Welsh side [Portland MSS., 279].

Of the prisoners sent to Nantwich, where they remained from Friday, September 26th to the Thursday following, about two hundred were sent to Middlewich and Northwich, the remainder being drafted into the Parliamentary garrison in the suburbs of Chester. A great brass piece and three great pieces of ordnance, siege guns newly arrived in Nantwich, were also brought into the suburbs to assist in the reduction of the city [*Civil War in Cheshire*, p. 185].



## CHAPTER VII.

### **The First Summons. Rumours of Relief. The Blockade Tightens.**

THE diversion created by the King's move to Chester, and the battle on Rowton Moor, had this result that the pressure of the blockade on the Welsh side was relaxed for seven or eight days, giving an opportunity to Colonel Mostyn and Colonel Wynn to bring in their regiments, as well as some troops from Ireland. On the 26th September the city was summoned to surrender, and after its refusal, for several days the artillery were at work battering the Eastgate and the wall on that side. The besiegers commenced a mine, which was met by countermining. On September 29th a breach was made near Newgate, by which the besiegers the same night attempted unsuccessfully to force an entry, while another party brought up scaling ladders, some of which were dragged over and the assailants thrown down and killed. Very considerable damage was done to the walls on October 4th, the Royalists driven from their posts, and one of the largest cannons dismounted and its muzzle damaged. The breaches in the walls were, however, quickly repaired, and the walls lined with earth as a protection. On the 7th the Parliamentarians placed four pieces of ordnance near Morgan's Mount, and two others on the east side with a seventh on Brewer's Hall Hill, with which later they were able to cause great annoyance and mischief. This preparation was followed by a second summons to surrender, in which reference was made to a "scornful rejection of a former summons." Lord Byron and the Mayor (Mr. Charles Walley) in reply stated that "the former summons never came to their hands or knowledge," and asked "liberty of fourteen days to give the King for whom they held the city in trust, an account of

their demands," and requesting also a cessation of arms for that time.

1645. October 8.—General Poyntz to the Mayor.

Sir,—Although our condition be such that we need not court you, and notwithstanding your scornful rejection of a former summons, to clear our innocence before God and men of desiring the effusion of Christian blood, or the ruin of this ancient city, we once more demand the same with the castle and fort, for the use of the king and parliament, upon such conditions as may be honourable to both parties; which offer not embraced, and the acceptance thereof not signified to us within this hour, what misery shall ensue by fire and sword and spoil from enraged soldiers, let be charged upon your head; and let the world witness our unwillingness to use extremities, if you constrain not.

SYDENHAM POYNTZ.

MICH. JONES,

JAMES LOUTHIAN.

1645. October 8.—Reply.

Gentlemen,—Your letter of summons, intimating a former letter to the same purpose (which never came to either of our hands or knowledge) we have received, and must thereto return this answer; that we neither apprehend your condition to be so high, nor ours (God be thanked) to be so low, as to be threatened out of this city; and that we have received his Majesty's express command for the keeping thereof, and therefore cannot without his Majesty's knowledge break so great a trust laid upon us, and therefore must require liberty of fourteen days to give his Majesty an account of your demands, and to receive his further pleasure. To which purpose we shall appoint a gentleman and a citizen, for whom we shall expect to have a free passage forthwith to travel to his Majesty, to return to us without any let or interruption, and to have the conduct of a trumpeter of yours. At the expiration of which time we shall hearken to a treaty upon honourable conditions for the city, castle and fort, if his Majesty do not relieve us. In the meantime shall expect that a cessation of arms and working be presently upon honourable terms undertaken and observed on both sides. If you shall refuse this customary and soldier-like proceeding, we do then declare, in the names of the noblemen, gentlemen, citizens and soldiers within the garrison, that we defy the fury of your enraged soldiers, and doubt not with God's blessing to defend and maintain this city for his Majesty and ourselves, as it now is, against any assault that

shall be made, with as much resolution and courage as formerly, and remain,

[Hemingway's *Chester* i, 179].  
JOHN BYRON,  
CHARLES WALLEY, Mayor.

This request was refused, and the siege was continued with all possible vigour.

1645. October 9.—General Poyntz to the Mayor.

Gentlemen,—Yours we have received, but cannot condescend to any of your requests therein. If you will not treat upon any condition, you must expect what you defy, the fury of enraged soldiers. An answer to this our last intended you must return within half an hour at furthest.

SYDENHAM POYNTZ.  
MICH. JONES,  
JAMES LOUTHIAN.

1645. October 9.—Reply.

Your refusal of our reasonable offer we have received, which argues you intended not that you pretended, which was the sparing of the effusion of Christian blood; we are therefore ready to defend ourselves against the uttermost of your rage, not doubting God's blessing and protection upon us, resting your servants,

JOHN BYRON,  
CHARLES WALLEY, Mayor.

During the parley, the citizens had been preparing as best they could for the threatened storm, lining the walls with earth, all helping far into the night, gentle and simple, without distinction of rank or sex.

On Thursday, October 9th, the besiegers' artillery opened a furious bombardment, which continued for two hours, and vigorous efforts were made a little before sunset to force an entrance by the breaches at several points, but the assailants were defeated with the loss of eighteen men killed and eighty wounded. Of the Royalists, Sir William Mainwaring and Captain Adlington fell with six or eight common soldiers.<sup>38</sup>

1645. October 10. From Chester suburbs.—George Booth and others to William Lenthall.

Upon Monday last we so straitly begirt the town on both sides the river that none can get forth or come in to them, of

<sup>38</sup> Letter of Sir John Gell (October 14th, Derby), to William Lenthall.

which Sir John Byron complained in two letters, the one to his brother, the other the Archbishop of York, intercepted by us that day. Yesterday we again attempted the City by storm. The most part of the day was spent in battery—after a parley of twenty-four hours held with them—we fell to the storm a little before sunset, which continued for the space of an hour and a half. The service was very hot, in which attempt we spent very much ammunition, for which the gentlemen of the County stand engaged. The service was performed by the expense of some blood, yet no considerable man lost. Amongst the wounded Lieutenant-Colonel Venables, a gallant man, received a wound in the arm, but not dangerous. The premises set out our necessity, and plead for a speedy supply of moneys, without which we cannot continue in this posture. The help of the adjacent counties in provision in a due way proportioned will be necessary, otherwise this overcharged county will be in danger to sink under the burden. Postscript.—Praising Col. Jones and Adjutant Louthian, and desiring that some notice be taken of them [Portland MSS., 288].

A marked feature in the conduct of the siege was the activity and courage of the women in helping on the defensive preparations at the hazard of their lives, for though the enemy had suspended active operations, desultory firing continued, causing several deaths. The besieged were cheerful, and according to one account had no scarcity of provision, while another complains "our men are very much spent with watching, having but a very little allowance of meate allowed them."

1645. October 17.—Roger Mostyn in Chester [Intercepted letter].

Here is more killed looking on than those that are on service. I am soe fearfull I goe noe whither out of dore and if any doe well I hope I shall doe well for none of us is in feare.

Hopes of speedy relief.

Defeat of Poyntz at Drayton by Sir W. Vaughan. Their quarters were beaten up at Eccleston upon Wensday last which took a great many men and officers beside.

1645. October 17. Chester.

Since last Thursday fortnight we have not had any allarm from the besiegers yet we keep very good and constant guard. Our men are very cheerful and so be the townesmen emulating one another who shall doe the best service. The towne is full of provision and wee that are strangers want nothing as long as

we have money. Here is as goode sixteene pence ordinary as ever was in tyme of peace. Our horse sallied out on Wednesday morning and beate up a quarter of ye Rebbles and took one horse, Collours and a trumpet and Carter's L<sup>ts</sup> and fower troope and about eight horses and some foote armes and has this day killed thirty upon the place. The besiegers have turned all the women and children whose husbands and friends beare arms in the citty from their quarters and they are received here. The rebbels have sett a bridge of boates over the river about a quarter mile above the bridge to secure their retreat.

HUGH WYNNE,  
ED. WILLIAMS,  
HEN. LLOYD,  
ROB. WYNNE.

We heare Vaughan has given a great defeat to Poyntz in Shropshire.

1645. October 17.—John Price to his mother [intercepted].

Our men are very much spent with watching, having but a very little allowance of meate allowed them. The enemy have turned out of ye suburbs all ye inhabitants and left them nothing but clothes on their backes.

1645. October 17. Chester.—Peter Griffith to his unkle Tho: Whitley [intercepted from Chester].

On Wednesday last about 4 a.m. our horse marched out to beat the enemy's quarters at Eccleston where we had good success. Killed thirty or forty, took six prisoners and one of their colours whereof one L<sup>t</sup> Maynwaring was taken prisoner.

As for Capt. Barneston some miscarriage was laid to his charge when the enemy entered the suburbs and he hath bin confined for it, but is since released and is at his former command. I do not heare of any but have carried themselves very loyall.

Early on Wednesday morning, October 15<sup>th</sup>, Captain Dutton and Captain Crosby made a successful sally on the enemy's quarters at Eccleston, capturing a good many prisoners. To prevent a recurrence of this, the besiegers formed a bridge of boats and cart bottoms "at the Lane ende beneathe Mr. Walleyes house," which throughout the siege was of great service, enabling them to cross the river for relief or retreat, as required. On October 24<sup>th</sup>, an attack was commenced upon Dee Mills and the next day upon the water tower on the bridge, two guns having been brought down from St. John's Churchyard to the Bowling Alley for



that purpose. The water pipes were cut through, and during the week considerable damage wrought, three of the mills being spoiled, and only two left standing [Malbon].

Brereton, who had now returned to his command, having intelligence of the landing of reinforcements from Ireland and the rallying of the Royalist forces at Denbigh under Sir William Vaughan, made hasty preparations for the dispatch of Jones and Louthian with 1,400 horse and 1,000 foot to stay their impending advance and prevent them uniting with the English forces under Sir Jacob Astley. The Royalists, though reported stronger in numbers, were actually weaker, being 1,700 horse and about 400 foot. On Thursday, October 30th, the Parliamentary forces reached Mold; the next day Ruthin, where they were joined by Col. Mytton. On Saturday, the hostile forces met in conflict. The fighting was for a long time indecisive, but ultimately the Royalists were defeated with about one hundred slain and four hundred taken prisoners, among whom were a number of officers and men of quality. The Parliamentary losses were slight. This was a terrible blow to the besieged in Chester. Help was almost beyond expectation, and the position of the city was becoming very serious.

1645. October 20. From the Leaguer.—Sir William Brereton to Mr. Crew.

Good Cosen,

I cannot omitt this oppertunitie, in giveing you some account of the affaires in these partes, wherein the Enimie are making strong preparacons, and in great forwardnes to relieve Chester, which they are unwilling to Loose, knowing that all theire Intereste in these parts of England and Wales, depends upon the Success hereof: To prevent which we sent letters to all parts of the Neighbourhood, as Shropshire, Staffordshire and Lancashire, who according to our desires afforded us assistance: We sent also to s'vall Points who could not spare us any Aid: Upon serious Consultacon, it was resolved, to be more for our Advantage to draw off a considerable partie of our fforces, And to find out the Enimie, and give him Battle rather than suffer them to Come and assault us in our Quarters and fight with us soe neare the Citty, they being judged to bee at least fifteen or sixteen hundred ffoote, which might be an Assistant unto them and a great Annoyance unto us: To this

end we have sent into Wales, under the Comand of Coll : Jones, Adjut. Louthian and Coll. Mitton, about twelve hundred Horse and twelve hundred foote, to find out the Enimie, which Partie I believe by this time are at that distance as to bee out of danger of beeing distrubed by them in the Citty whilst they are fighting with the Enimie : As well remembering when God delivered the Irish Army into our hands at Nampwich, Souldiers falling upon the Enimie Reare whilst we were fighting with them put an end to that Hot and till then doubtful dispute. The souldiers now left in the Leaguer are put upon heavy duty : though I hope God will enable us to maintainn that hee hath given us. The Enimie is full of ffury and Courage, and delight in and practise nothing more then Ruin and destruction, as shooteing ffierly Arrowes of ffire and Consume what remains unburnt of the Subburs, which they have this day attempted, and which was by an Extriordinary providence preserved by the suddaine turning of the Wind.

Wee have great Want here, of provision, Money and Amunition. I have written concerning it, both to the Speaker of the House of Comons and Committee of both Kingdoms : I shall desire you and the rest of our ffriends will sollicite for a supply : I have noe more at this time wherewith to trouble you : only desire my best respects may be present to my Cosen yor wife, Cosen Done and the rest of my ffriends : Conclude Remaining  
Your very ffaithful ffrend and Cosen

WILL : BRERETON.

My service to my Lord. Impart this to  
or ffrends from the Leaguer.

8ber : 20th, 1645.

Mr. Crew.

[This letter, although signed by Sir William Brereton, is not in his handwriting, but he has added the following postscript].

Mr. Ashurst can Impart some Latter Newes [*Cheshire Sheaf*, Vol x., p. 84].

1645. October 25. Dodleston.—Col. Mich. Jones

By all the intelligence it is evident the enemy will be a very greate bodye, therefore some letters should bee written to Poyntz to hasten hither—to Lancashire, Shropshire and Coll. Mitton to send us all the forces they possible cann—Duckenfield and all the Werral forces of Cheshire—Staffordshire may afford some force—the whole kingdom depends upon this bout. I would have the mount at Northgate Turnpike closed for all must bee quitt but that as few places in Eastgate streete must be kept as may bee—there must noe more bee left at Beeston then is requisite. Namptwich may lend two companies.

Letters must be written to all the parts of Cheshire for the sending in great fforce of provisions. A mound should be made on that syde for the defence of the Bridge—the mount at Boughton turnpike should be strengthened and cutt off from the line and lett oxen be ready to draw the peeces to Tarvin when there shall bee occasion—March night and day. Northgate Turnpike must be cutt from the line.

1645. October 27. Nantwich.—Sir William Brereton and Roger Wilbraham to Col. Jones and Louthian.

Cannot promise assistance though have written for troops. Can you delay engaging the enemy until assistance comes.

1645. October 27, 2 a.m., Dodleston.—Col. Jones to Louthian.

Enemy on march. Have all the foot you can to join with me. It may be we shall fight this day.

1645. October 27, 5 o'clock.—Louthian to Sir William Brereton.

Asks him to send to Northwich such foot as are upon their march towards us; march all night that they may be with us to-morrow morning. I am to march to Col. Jones to-night at twelve with what foote I can spare from these parts. Tarvin to be kept.

1645. October 28. Dodleston.—Col. Jones to Sir William Brereton.

Best not to draw off any Beeston forces. Have given directions to have a trench cast about each guard there. Have payed each guard 3<sup>li</sup>—sent twelve leane cattle to help them at Beeston.

There will be this day 1,000 Horse and Foote whereby those at Beeston will bee secured when more forces come up and things ordered at Chester, three parts of the Horse shall march towards Mould and the fourth parte shall remain at Wrexham until there be occasion. So if the enemie intend to relieve Beeston they must march by Chirk [Add. MSS. 11,332].

1645. October 29. Dodleston.—Col. Jones to Sir William Brereton.

Send up what forces you can that we may chase the enemy out of Wales.

Were there 500 men with spades, shovels and mattocks I am confident in four days to cast such a trench and workes on this side Chester from water to water that if the enemy were master of the field he should not relieve the city. I heare the foot on the other side grow unruly.

1645. November 2. 11 p.m. Suburbs Chester.—Sir William Brereton to W. Lenthall.

That party of horse and foot sent into Wales have routed the enemy, taken 500 or 600 horse and 300 or 400 prisoners and slain

a hundred in pursuit, which was most eagerly followed seven or eight miles by the Warwick and Derby Horse, who behaved themselves very gallantly. This victory [Nov. 1st] was obtained near Denbigh, where our forlorn hope consisting of about 500 or 600 horse commanded by Captain Otter, a very brave and valiant man, was only engaged, the enemy having made choice of such a place of advantage that the body of our army could not come up to fight [Portland MSS., 301].

Brereton continually complains that for the work in hand, which is very arduous, he is hampered seriously by the great scarcity of provisions, and an insufficient force of men. This want of food, "one of the sinews of war," and still more the want of money, gave rise to much discontent, and occasioned more than once serious mutinies and disorderly behaviour amongst the troops,<sup>39</sup> to check which he called for Martial Law in Cheshire and Shropshire.

1645. October 21. Coventrie.—Sir William Brereton to Mr. Ashurst.

Urges that Mr. Lisle be spoken to concerning the ordinance for executing Martial Law for Cheshire and Shropshire, otherwise wee cannot restraine the souldiers from mutinous and unlawful actions, especially in Wales, where they are most apt to plunder.

1645. October 26. Tarvin.—To Sequestrators of Northwich Hundred.

Great need of provisions within twenty-four hours. Send in all the bread, cheese, and other provisions you can and bake more bread. If not we shall not only lose the advantage gained, but disband the men and let the enemy at libertie to prey on you.

1645. October 27. 12 at night. Dodleston.—Col. Jones to Louthian.

Hasten hither the Shropshire horse, send to Col. Mitton to come unto Dodleston or Wrexham. I have now out towards Reabone [Ruabon] 100 Horse for the gaining of Intelligence. Mutiny not very violent but soon appeased.

1645. October 28. 4 a.m. Chester.—Louthian to Sir William Brereton.

The trained bands and others were yesterday in a mutiny for their pay. I desire they may bee satisfied and all relief hastened.

<sup>39</sup> All the trained and Freehold bands rise in a mutinie, shut ye Barr gates, came into ye headquarters, called for ye Gentlemen and Committees, using many unbeseeing speeches against them. Their carriage very high and insolent.

1645. October 29. Tarvin.—Sir William Brereton to Mr. Roger Wilbraham and other gentlemen of Nantwich Hundred.

Att my coming to the Leaguer I had no sooner dismounted at Tarvin but I was mett with complaints from Jones and Louthian of a very hot meeting amongst the souldiers for want of pay alledging the arrears of very neare two months' pay. It possessed the Commanders with great jealousies of a strong distraction, yet it was for the present appeased. Upon a further looking into the occasion, it appeared to bee want of the bringing in the weekly pay agreed upon. The framing of the best modell for the obtaining whereof there were undertakers in the several hundreds. I pray you use your best endeavours in the Nantwich hundred for the bringing in of the arrears.

Great complaint in the army for want of provision, whereof bread especially.

1645. October 29. 4 a.m. Dodleston.—Col. Jones to Sir William Brereton.

Col. Mitton's men come, but by reason of long march not able to goe along with us to-day, and therefore I resolve not to stir this day. Cattle and other provisions are to be orderly disposed. Bread must be sent thence for the Army. If you will send over Thrashers, you may have corne enough. Were there good store of Pioneers but for two dayes, I would cast up a worke that would hinder the relief of the citty. Direct that the sack cloth in store at Tarvin be made into sacks and sent hither for the conveying of corne into Chester to make bread for the soldiers.

1645. October 30. From the Leaguer at Chester.—Sir William Brereton to Mr. Ashurst.

Siege is very close.

On my coming here, I found a very great want of Comission for executing martiall law, without which the souldiers will not be kept in order. Instances—A trooper lately belonging to Capt. Bulkeley went forth to scout, and most treacherously betrayed three of his fellowsouldiers into the hands of the enemy, rebelled and hath borne armes against the Parliament and is now taken and is a prisoner. The enemy in Chester lately took one of our souldiers and executed him, whereupon our Commanders to terrify them from doing the like executed two Irish men of the Plunketts (two brothers). But wee shall be very cautious how we doe the like. Besides making some of our souldiers examples to prevent mutinies and plundering in Wales whereof you may heare very loud complaints which are not in our power to restraine.

Wherefore earnestly desire that the ordinance for martial law in Counties of Chester and Salop may be passed and sent downe with all convenient speede. Enemy at Ruthin. Sir W. Vaughan in command.

1645. October 30. From the Leaguer at Chester.—Sir William Brereton to Mr. Ashurst.

Frequent intelligence of advance of enemy to relieve Chester—sent for help in various directions and after Gen<sup>l</sup> Poyntz.

I went to Chester and soe over the water to Dodleston, where we resolved speedily to collect all our forces into a body and to follow the enemy, which was delayed one day longer in expectation of Col. Mitton's forces coming up who were not then far from us.

On Munday the Cheshire foote in high mutinie, but on my coming to them next morning they were appeased.

In a letter from the suburbs, October 31st, he refers to "the very hard duty" his men have to perform, "maintaining the advantages God hath given, notwithstanding the fury and courage of the enemy who practise nothing but waies of ruin and destruction. They shott yesterday fiery arrowes which kindled in parte of the suburbs remaining unburnt, in ye extinguishing whereof God appeared in his providence, the wind at first takeing stood to drive the fire along the building, turned immediatly and preserved the streete" [Add. MSS. 11,332]. Brereton is again criticized as he was at an earlier stage of the siege, for not protecting his leaguer by entrenchments.<sup>40</sup> He rejoins that he is "endeavouring to draw a line from water to water on the Welsh side" but is somewhat hindered by a Royal mount of great strength made earlier in the siege by the Royalists, and by the extreme foul weather. Some trenches have been made, but sufficient miners are not obtainable to complete the work. "The city is closely blockaded on the Cheshire side, there being posts at Pulford, Bretton, Dodleston, Eccleston and Brewers Hall. The guards are kept close up to the walls, and we have cast and

<sup>40</sup> For example the Committee of Salop write, December 28th, 1645, wondering why Brereton does not make trenches on the Welsh side, where the guards are weak. Besides making them safe, it would keep the soldiers from idleness.

made such defences and breastworks against their gates and sally ports as that there is no great danger of their issuing out to annoy and offend us in our quarters'' (November 8th).

1645. October 26th. 9 a.m. Tarvin. From Jonathan Bruen, Ro. Gregge and Tho. Partington to Sir William Brereton.

Provisions difficult. Since the leaguer, been forced to take so much round about us at divers times when present necessity required that little or none is left upon the sequestered lands or in this garrison, therefore we desire you to command what supply is possible from Namptwich, etc. Have sent for manye pyoneers to bee at Chester tomorrow earlye.

1645. October 26. Nantwich.—Sir William Brereton and others to Committees of Gloucester, etc.

The work before Chester and Beeston now in great forwardness—one or both will shortly be reduced if not relieved—send what help you can and speedily.

1645. October 28. Tarvin.—Sir William Brereton.

Order to the Hundreds of Northwich, Macclesfield and Bucklow for 100 men to be at Chester on Friday next by ten, and to bring with them a spade, mattock or shovel and six days' provision.

Order received on Sabbath day at noone and we sent them forth upon Monday morning very early [Add. MSS., 11,332].

1645. November 8. From my quarters in the suburbs of Chester.—Sir William Brereton and Robert Dukenfield to William Lenthall.

In my last [Nov. 2nd] I advertized you of that victory at Denbigh, November the 1st, when the enemies' whole body was routed and dispersed and at least 600 horse taken and brought away, but not altogether soe many prisoners. But soe many thereof as was brought into the countie I have herein enclosed sent a list of their names, the addicion of which number to those wee had before, doth much add to our trouble and charge, haveing not only soe many as all our prisons and garrisons are capable of, but wee are forced to disperse them into severall townes and parishes in open quarters at Stockport, Gropnall, Middlewich, Northwich, and Congleton, where wee are constrained to command the countrey to guard and secure them, of which trouble and charge it is humbly desired this countrey may be eased soe soone as conveniently may bee.

We are still endeavouring to draw a line from water to water on the Welsh side, wherein were it not that wee have received some interruption by a royall mount of the enemies, lately made before wee tooke the suburbs, and also by the extreame

fowle weather—which is so violent that our men cannot endure out of doores—it might have beene in much more forwardnes than now it is. Howsoever noe dilligence nor endeavours shall be ommitted that may conduce to the advance of this service, touching which I know not what more to add. Since wee cast upp one mount at our bridg to secure it and another mount higher to confront theire royall mount they can receive noe releefe at all, beeing our men are quartered at Poulford, Bretton, Doddleston, Eccleston and Brewers Hall, which doth soe blocke upp that side that noe releife at all is brought or attempted to bee brought into the citty, which on the Cheshire side is sufficiently begirte, for wee keepe our guards close to theire walls, and have cast upp and made such defences and breste workes against theire gates and sally-ports as that there is noe great daunger of theire issueing out to annoy and offend us in our quarters, wherein provision of victualls begin to bee much wanting, this countrey beeing wholly exhausted and Lancashire and Darbyshire affording noe manner of assistance for provisions. And Wales which is most plentiful stored and lyes most convenient contributes very sparingly, wherein the people remaine soe disaffected as that they rather preferr to bury and destroy or to carry away then that our men should partake thereof or our leaguer receive any benefit thereby.

The only expedient that I can propose for the prevencion of what mischiefe may ensue hereupon is:—that either collonel may bee ordered to lye about Ruthin or Denbigh, who may send in provision of beeves, muttons and corne, out of that plentiful countrey to our leaguer here at Chester: or that there may bee a considerable partie sent of hence that may have authority to quarter thereabouts, and send in provision for the supply of our army here. . . . Postscript.—I received this enclosed letter last night from Helbree, being a copy of Mr. Dalber his letter, touching the taking of Captain Bartlett's ship, which as I am informed is a ship of strength, and carries 20 pieces of ordinance with a little pinnance besides [Portland MSS., 305].

Whilst this anxious work is proceeding, an assembly is held, October 21st, with the undaunted Mayor, Charles Walley, in the chair, at which orders are passed for the collection of arrears of wages for the soldiers, and for a fresh assessment of £200 for the maintenance of the garrison. A fortnight later, this amount having been spent, a further like sum of £200 is ordered to be levied, November 6th, and yet a third on November 17th [A.O. 651, 652, 654]. To



alleviate the distress of the poorer citizens the Mayor is allowed discretion to augment the charge upon the richer inhabitants [A.O. 655].

We may be sure that these stout hearts quailed somewhat at the news of the surrender of Beeston Castle on November 16, 1645. The siege of Beeston Castle had kept engaged a considerable number of the Parliamentary forces; though it was not otherwise of such importance for their safety as was Hawarden Castle, as keeping open the Welsh quarter from which they could hope for a supply of provisions and ultimate relief.

1645. November 16. Nantwich. Sir William Brereton to the Speaker.

Worthy Sir,

I cannot but apprehend it my duty to let you know the goodness of God in restoring to us the strong Castle of Beeston to-day, which was lost about this time two years, and besieged by us about this day 12 months, since which time they have had no liberty, but what was obtained first by Prince Rupert and Prince Maurice, their army in March last, which raised us from that siege, which being after their return made good, we were again disturbed, the second time by the King's Army, who came within ten miles of Namptwich, as he marched towards Leicester. We found in the Castle about eighty arms, some little ammunition, but less provision. The Governor Captain Wallet, with about fifty of his soldiers, was permitted to march away on foote, with their arms, to Flint, and so to Denbigh and Bewmoris, there remaining about forty, who laid down their arms and submitted themselves, desiring liberty to live at home. The prize therein found being of very small value (but so much as it was), it is with equality to be distributed amongst the soldiers who have performed a very tedious siege.

A great part of that which they had exacted from ye Country was bestowed upon the reparation and furnishing of ye Castle. It is reported to be one of the strongest pieces in these parts of the Kingdom. We found their horses in a weak and languishing condition (the Governor's own horse being scarce able to go out of ye Castle). We were very exact in performing and making good the conditions agreed upon, which we hope may produce a good effect upon Chester, which is now so straightened on the Welsh side as no manner of provision can be brought unto them, touching which we hope to give a better

account ere long. The day before the Castle was yielded great preparation was made and many carriages in readiness at Holt to relieve same. It is humbly desired that ye money and ammunition may be speeded down and that there may be a supply of provisions more large and constant for the Leaguer before Chester, from the neighbour counties and especially from Wales, whereby we shall be better enabled to carry on the worke, wherein none shall serve you more faithfully than your humble servant.

WILLIAM BRERETON.

Shropshire and Staffordshire have sent in some provisions already [*Lords' Journals*, vii. 719; Portland MSS., 312].

Brereton took occasion of this success to send in, two days afterwards, a summons to Lord Byron, the Governor, and Mr. Charles Walley, the Mayor of Chester, demanding the "speedy surrender of the City, Castle and fort, for the use of the King and Parliament."

"The trumpeter sent with this" (Brereton reports to the Speaker) "was not admitted into the city."

1645. November 18. Chester Suburbs.

We have this day sent in a summons into the city, a copy of which is here inclosed.

The trumpeter herewith sent was not admitted into the city, but was stayed in their Royall Porte until such time as ye messenger returned, that went to make them acquainted that there was a summons sent, who brought the answer that it was their desire the summons might be sent in and promised speedily to returne an answer by a Trumpeter of their own.

But noe answer was sent that day, nor was any cessation admitted by them. Notwithstanding our souldiers did forbear shooteing, and did begin to discourse and debate familiarly and friendly until such time as some of their officers came up and did rebuke them upon the walls and they did endeavour to suppress the summons and conceal the same from the souldiers and common people who would not believe that any faire quarter was intended, their officers having often infused into them that wee were resolved to give noe quarter, which made them more desperate.

The reply sent on the following day by "Lord Byron and Charles Walley, the Mayor, for himself and brethren," was as follows:—

When we call to mind those antient and honourable privileges and immunities granted heretofore to the citizens and freemen

of Chester for their loyalty to the Crown, we cannot but wonder at your impertinency in urging that as an argument to withdraw us from our allegiance whereof (if all other respects were forgotten) we are most obliged unto it, even in point of gratitude as well as conscience. The care you profess to preserve the City, and to avoid the effusion of blood is so much contradicted by your acts that you must excuse us, if we give credit rather to your deeds. As for the fire and sword and famine you threaten us with, upon refusal of your unjust demands, we must tell you that, blessed be God, we have less cause to fear them now than when you first sat down before this City, and doubt not of the continuance of Divine Protection in the defence of this just cause, wherein our liberties, religion and allegiance to our Sovereign—whose service is inseparable from that of the kingdom—are so deeply engaged. This is all the answer we think fit to return you for the past, and so rest your servants.

JOHN BYRON.

CHARLES WALLEY.

To this Sir William Brereton replied :—

1645. November 19. Chester Suburbs.—Sir William Brereton's reply to the last.

Your rebellion and obstinacy is not the way to preserve the antient privileges granted unto that city. I know not what action of ours contradict our willingness to save the effusion of blood and preservation of that city, but it matters not what those people who are given over to destruction and make lies their refuge write or pretend. By the tender of honourable conditions I have discharged my duty and conscience. Your blood be upon your owne head and not on your servant.

WILL : BRERETON.

For the Mayor and his brethren and the pretended Lord Byron.

He reports the failure of his negotiations to the Speaker, William Lenthall, enclosing a copy of his summons to the besieged, and their reply, and suggests that this refusal was either because they were expecting relief or suspected the weakness of the Parliamentarians, or else trusted in the strength of the city.

1645. November 20. Chester suburbs. At my quarters in the Mayor's house.—Sir William Brereton to William Lenthall.

In my last I gave you intimation of the summons, and a copy thereof. Noe answer being returned, upon Wednesday,

Nov. 19, 1645, there was a drummer sent into the towne with this second also wherewith he was not admitted, but Sir Richard Grosvenor came downe and tooke his summons and returned answer that they had sent an answer by a Trumpet of their owne who was not then come to us. The answer is come whereof this inclosed is likewise a copy.

You may thereby guess that they either expect relief or suspect our weakness—unless stupid ignorance or stubborn infidelity possess them—or else trust in the strength of the city. Our siege is close, our soldiers resolved, our want is provision, one of the sinews of war, yet not so great, but it will endure a seasonable supply.

I humbly recommend that the counties formerly allotted to contribute for our relief of victual may again be put in mind of former orders. The Counties of Stafford and Salop have contributed, from Derby and Lancashire as yet nothing, and very little from North Wales, from which we might expect a large supply, maintaining no soldiers but what horse are quartered amongst them.

Copy of 2nd summons :

Gentlemen, Yesterday I sent you a summons by my Trumpett for the surrender of that citty Castle and Fort and to which noe answer is returned. I doe expect it by this drumme and rest. From the Leaguer before Chester, 9<sup>ber</sup> 19, 1645.

This parley was followed on November 21st by a sally of the Royalist horse. Another attack Brereton describes as "the most adventurous and gallant that they ever made." This was at midnight on Tuesday, November 25th, when a force of eighty or more horse and a strong contingent of foot soldiers sallied over the Dee Bridge and fell upon the guard on the Welsh side of the river, while at the same time two boats with powder and combustible materials were sent up the river with the strong high tide against the bridge of boats which they wished to destroy. This attempt failed because the tide was slower than was expected and too far spent for the purpose.

1645. November 26.—To Sir William Brereton.

Yesternight the enemy had a design to have burnt our bridge over Dee, at the same time to have fallen upon our guards both of horse and foot beyond the water, and we verily believe, when we had been in that distraction to have sallied out upon all our quarters. . . . They about twelve of the clock in the night issued out on the other side with a party of about eighty horse or more,

and a considerable party of foot, forced in our sentinels to the high mount, and came and charged our men within less than carbine shot of the mount, which our men maintained gallantly and our horse guard kept their ground, our foot gave them good store of shot, and after some of the enemy were fallen and others shot, they caused them to retreat before their relief came up to them, beat them into their mount. All this being in doing, at the same time two boats came up the river with the tide, filled with gorse, tallow, pitch, powder, and other combustible matter, and underneath them, and upon the sides of the boat in a frame of wood about twenty pieces of carbine barrels scarce full length and others pocket pistol length charged with powder and carbine bullets. The one of these came within six yards of the bridge and there fired, which gave a report like a peal of muskets so that we upon the higher ground did verily believe they had been a company of musketeers. A soldier stepped in, cast off the gorse and took the frame and brought [it] up with some six or seven of the pieces not discharged. The other boat gave fire over against my Lord of Darby's bowling alley and fired all the gorse and boat itself. We have found one of their men slain within forty yards of our mount, and believe more are slain and wounded. We have found four or five of their hand grenadoes [Portland MSS., 317].

The frequent rumours of the advance of a relieving force which so harassed the besieging force were on the contrary most encouraging to the troops within the city, and most nights, at the parade, letters of good news about the King's successes elsewhere were read to hearten the beleaguered citizens. The close watch which was maintained on river and road was repeatedly eluded, and large quantities of provisions were brought in from time to time. A letter of private intelligence from some disaffected person within the city indicates that the weak place in the blockade was by Poulton Green, Eaton Boat and Dodleston.

Col. Carter writes from Dodleston, December 25th, that the enemy had

attempted to drive in some cattle to Chester, encouraged by a flying report that we were all marched from this side into Cheshire to fight. They marched with 100 head of cattle almost to Holliwell, but there, hearing in what posture we were, made a stand. I sent out a party, but they dispersed over the mountains.

1645. November 2.—Ro. Venables and John Whitworthe to Sir William Brereton.

This night there is a sergeant, a drum and a musket [musketeer] seene come over the walls to us, their pretence they made (for they were let downe by a Rope) was to seeke for some pewter, brasse and other things y<sup>t</sup> were hid which the gunner that let them downe was to have a share of. They confirme three mylins spoiled and the waterpipe—noe scarcitie of victuals yet, but a many of the Welsh who begg their meate all they have and are almost famished, and both souldiers and cittizens in daylye discontent, but most nightes at the parade, letter of good newes are reade and that Sir Tho. Fairfax is routed, Poyntz routed, Morrice and Vaughan with 1,000 in Wales.

They doe believe in a weeke or a fortnight at most they will bee together by the eares for want of victualls.

1645. December 21.—Sir William Neale to Lord Byron.

That Capt. Dutton got into Chester safe with the money and ammunition, and the enemy had left Chester and gone over the Bridge. Asks for forces [Brogyntyn MSS.].

1645. January 7. 4 p.m. Col. Jones to Col. Carter.

Last night eleven men came from Chester to Holt and are to return to-night. One Starre is come from Chirk thither this morning with a great packet which is going into Chester this night. Pooter [Poulton] Green and Wayrookes Bridge are y<sup>e</sup> places to be watched.

All this tyme your centeries must be doubled one behind another else some of them will pass our single watches. The forces about Denbigh have some sudden design in hand. They have their scouts as far as Yale and take up Horses in y<sup>e</sup> country and keep them together and my intelligence thinks they will fite this night on this side Ruthin. If they came so near they will attempt another reliefe or storming.

Intelligence enclosed in Col. Jones' letter.

I am sorry to see so many as I do pass to Chester and back again, but I hope this my letter will make you more careful. There comes every day in the week four men and carry provisions in of ye best as pigges, Turkyes and other things for ye great men which makes them to stand out so. Some times there comes six or seven men and some of them carrie pike staves on their shoulders. The way they go is through the Wayrookes and Pooton and along the water to Eaton boate. Some tymes they goe through the fields between Panton Greene and Poulford and soe by the Gorstoloe [Gorstella] behind Doddeston. Set a stronge guard on Panton Greene and one by the waterside by

Poulton Hall neere Eaton Boate and one at ye Gorstilow in ye fields, but especially let there be a private guard of foote in ye Werhucks near the bridge under some hedge and you may be sure to take these wicked men who doe a great deal of hurt. Their tymes of going from ye Holt is two or three houres within ye night and when they come back from Chester is about three or four of ye clock in ye morning.

Have a strong companie on this side the water for there is provision providing for relief of Chester within this four or five dayes. The Lord S. Paule, General of ye horse in Chester, is moe out to hasten ye relief. Sir Rd Lloyd reports there wilbe reliefe at Holt within this five or six days. Have a special care of the sands that goes over the water betwixt Flint and Hawarden, for as I heare they will venture over and relieve Chester in at the Water Gate.

Have a careful regard of Panton Greene and see they make no private way for horse to march that way. Sir Richard Lloyd sent for hay to Aldford and Barton and for fouerty loade to Escoyde if you can prevent him—he saith forces will come to Holt. Have an eye to High Arcolde, Chirke, and the moun-taines, for take my words there are forces in private drawing nye.

1645-6. January.—Letter from a Prisoner in Chester.

Great scarcity here that ye souldiers mutiny. Noe forage for horse. They intend to break out and begone, which they brag they can at any time do. Our soldiers upbraiding theirs do much harm—folly—stirring up their pride to resist for spite agt their revilers.

They much jeer at your carelessness, saying they can fetch provision at will and march away.

But notwithstanding this weekly addition to their store, the provision of food for the great multitude cooped up within the walls (3,000 fighting men besides the ordinary inhabitants and the large number of non-combatants who had taken refuge in Chester) was becoming rapidly exhausted. Lord Byron, among other measures taken to deal with the scarcity, orders (November 19th) that any horses in the garrison unfit for duty be turned into the Roodee, where they would be able to live until the relief of the city.

1645. November 19. Chester.—Lord Byron to Randle Holme, alderman, and Wm. Williams, Muster Master.

For that it is evident that there are verie manie horses in this Garrison soe weake and poore that they are unable and

unfit for dutie or other service and yet notwithstanding live upon and consume the provisions thereof—ordered to make search and seize and cause them to be turned into the Roodee where they will be able to live till the Cittie shall be relieved, and prevent the unnecessarie destruction of the provisions.

Brereton was, not unreasonably, surprised at the "obstinacy" of the besieged.

1645. November 28. Sir William Brereton to William Lenthall.

The besieged in Chester remain still very obstinate, and do not seem inclinable to embrace any overtures made for their own preservation. They have not made many sallies on Cheshire side the water. But the most adventurous and gallant attempt that they ever made was upon Tuesday last. We cannot imagine upon what confidence they are induced to persevere in this stubbornness, unless it be so that Sir Francis Gamull and Sir Richard Grosvenor . . . do enslave and inaw them hereunto, for, if it be true which I have heard, Sir Francis hath wounded one or two with his own hands that were suspected to desire the delivery up of the city out of which we have heard very little. . . . They are very curious and scrupulous to admit our trumpets, or our drums into the city, wherein it seems those that command do most cruelly tyrannize over the poor inhabitants, as they dare not attempt anything. . . . They are the rather encouraged by the Commanding Castle and by the Royal Mount which they have lately made which commands much on the Welsh side, and is very strong and almost impregnable [Add. MSS. 11,332].

And a few days later, December 3rd, writing to this same correspondent, he pays unwilling honour to their "obstinate resistance" which he can only hope to overcome by starvation. "The increase of the enemy's wants is the greatest ground of our hopes, they beginning now to be more pinched than formerly, and therefore are less active. However, they have not as yet admitted of our parley."

Information reaches him that though "The better sort eat beef and bacon," there is a want of butter and cheese; no more malt to brew; the poor in very great want and many that have lived well formerly go a-begging, "the poorer sort of the city that are not of the soldiers are ready to starve, they are compelled to eat horseflesh." Another account states that "the Welsh soldiers are almost



famished." Brereton, in asking for help (Dec. 11th) from the Lancashire Committee "against the probable advance of the King's forces to relieve Chester" states that "they within the city are in a distressed condition, some of them having of late fallen dead in y<sup>e</sup> streets for want, and others extremely pinched with hunger and all of them very miserable."

There was, as might be expected, a great deal of discontent, and some suspicion that the wealthier inhabitants were able to fare better than the poor people and the soldiers. Many were willing that the city should be delivered up, and the long and stubborn resistance was attributed to the resolute attitude of the Mayor, Sir Francis Gamull and Sir Richard Grosvenor, who were said to "enslave and inaw those who desired to surrender."

1645. December 9. Salop.—Intelligence from Shrewsbury to Sir William Brereton.

The woman you sent to Worcester overheard a discourse between Sir W. Vaughan and another soldier at Bridgnorth on Saturday last y<sup>t</sup> hee was to pass over at Holt Bridge and to take some advantage against Tarvin which he heard was neglected and very slenderly manned and y<sup>t</sup> while he gave you a disturbance with the help of Holt men, on y<sup>e</sup> English side the enemy out of the city was to issue upon y<sup>r</sup> forces both wayes.

We cannot learn that with Sir W. Vaughan above 1,000, which lye quartered between Bridgnorth and Bewdley.

We have put some foot in two Churches near Escall and our horse quarter on y<sup>t</sup> syde the county.

Later intelligence—this force dispersed.

1645. December 11. Maior's House (Suburbs).

Sir William Brereton writes to Earl of Leven for assistance of 1,000 horse. News of orders for relief from Wales under Gerrard and Vaughan—this encourages besieged but the people is pinched—some have died for want of food, they have made use of horseflesh.

1645. December 16.—Statement of Marke Goodman, Gent. of City of London, servant to Sir Charles Gerrard, now Lord Brandon.

This morning about five he went with a party (100 horse compleat) to see how the Parl<sup>t</sup> guards lay towards Lache, which was about a mile from their new mount. He was centinell but escaped according to promise.

For the present provision there is a scarcity of provision in the city though there be yet about fifty live cattle. The better sort eat beef and bacon, but have not provision of butter and cheese and those that are provided eat but one meale a day and the poorer sort of the city which are not of the soldiers are ready to starve, the soldiers Irish and Welch have iij<sup>d</sup> a day which they bestow in bread and beere to boile it in and that is their dyet, the souldiers inhabitants maintaine themselves and the number in the whole 3,000 fighting men.

Their greatest want is of butter, cheese and fresh meat, their plenty of corne and beere which is now much exhausted and no more malt to brew, so as he conceives for that and want of fuell they cannot hold out a moneth with the best husbanding they can. Their ammunition he conceives to be about forty barrels of powder the greatest want of materials for making more is brimstone, having received none of late only this Vaughan at the last Denbeigh fight sent some into Hawarden which was intended for Chester, but came not any further.

The mortar peeces have done much execucon in breaking and reating houses and slaying some persons, and the same are the greatest terror to them and expect them nightly, at two of the clocke and when the first goes off the women and children in generall betake themselves to cellars the men to the walls.

They expect relief from Goring, Gerrard and Vaughan and out of Ireland. The tyme appointed was this day now put off till to-morrow sevenight. Their intent is to sally forth desperately when they have a signal either of a messenger or relief which signal was to be given by fires made either at Denbigh or Holt Castle. If no relief come in a fortnight they would deliver the town and most of the towne desire it may be rendered up rather than be put upon eating of horseflesh.

1645. December 17.

Giles Hurst, a maltster, a foot-soldier of Captain Whitmore under Col. Gamull, came over the walls, reports great scarcity. Poor in very great want and many that have lived well formerly go a begginge—little bread or bear left—Beefe is scarce yet on last Saturday beef was sold in market at 4d. the pound. The Welsh soldiers almost famished. Not above twenty cattle in City. They are expecting relief and they will shortly make a sudden sally out through the Eastgate and Northgate and their sally port under the Sadler's Tower. 3,000 fighting men in City, one half Welsh, about fifty horse. The poor people and soldiers willing the city should be delivered up.

John Fletcher, a soldier of Col. Gamull's company, reports same as Hurst. Soldiers discontented and twice mutinied of late.

The distress from want of food was aggravated by the incessant bombardment to which the inhabitants were subjected. During the month of October they had seen widespread damage done, and on some days it was not safe to walk in the principal streets. The mills were seriously injured, and the Water Tower was tottering. But as the siege progressed, the firing became more destructive. "By this time they have unmuzzled death," is the annalist's graphic description of the attack on November 10th and 11th, "and sweare they'll let him loose amongst us, grinding their dwellings into dust and ashes." Besides several other victims during this month, Lieutenant Morgell is slain upon his guard near the Newgate, November 6th, and the day following, the Sheriff, Ralph Richardson, was shot dead by a bullet out of St. John's Church steeple, "at ye bottom of Chickley the brewer's orchard."

Another "terrible night" was December 10th, when Eastgate and Watergate Streets, which had so often suffered from the grenadoes, were attacked and many houses, including the Talbot, shattered and set on fire, women and children struck and buried under the ruins. This death-dealing shower continued for five more days and nights. Despite these distressing experiences, the citizens were able to spend Wednesday, November 5th (Gunpowder Plot day), in prayer and thanksgiving, and at night make their annual bonfires under the enemy's cannonade; to hold their Council meetings in the usual hall for the dispatch of city business, levying further assessments for the maintenance of the garrison; ordering the committal of all who are recalcitrant to the Council's authority until they conform themselves; and, in consideration of the great neglect of appearance at the Assembly, even directing fines to be exacted for any such neglect in future, the fines to be converted to the use of the garrison.

The last assessment of £200, for the maintenance and use of Colonel Mostyn and Colonel Wynn's regiments, was made on December 18, 1645, when it was also agreed that "the Welsh souldiers shalbe hereafter duly payd, as they appeare

att the Parade, the sick and wounded only excepted." These entries are followed by a blank page, the City having surrendered February 3, 1646, and the next entry being a copy of the Order of Parliament removing from office the Mayor and his brethren, who, in their heroic and stubborn defence of the city had " bin violent opposers of the Parliament and their proceedings." Brereton was so concerned at the disappointing delay in reducing Chester, and withal so disturbed at the prospect of his prey being at the last snatched from him, that he issued an order for a public day of humiliation and prayer to be observed on Tuesday, December 23rd, throughout Cheshire.

16 December, 1645.

Whereas there is great occasions of high concernement to this Countye and alsoe to the Kingdom which call for solemful and earnest seeking of God by fasting and prayer as :

1st. In behalf of our Army now before Chester being the greate designe of the kingdome that God would be pleased to take away what sin may lye in the way and hinder the work and in his own good tyme deliver the city into our hands :

2nd. That those enemyes which are preparing and marching with what force they can to raise this siege that God would either turne them back or break them to pieces.

Tuesday 23 of December appointed for humiliacion and prayer and intreat all ministers of this County to give notice thereof the next Lord's day and presse the people to assemble and prepare themselves for such a service.—Signed by William Brereton, George Booth, etc. etc.

Rumours were again renewed of a strong force on the march to relieve the city. Though the apprehension of interruption from Wales was lessened by news of the victory won November 1st near Denbigh by the Warwick and Derby horse, Brereton and the Committee of both Kingdoms received frequent intelligence of a Royalist army advancing to raise the siege of Chester.

Now it was a strong body from Wales under Gerrard and Sir William Vaughan which threatened,—another from Worcestershire of 1,500 to 2,000 horse and foot; on December 15th 10,000 men are reported to be on their way, under the command of the Earl of Glamorgan; yet another body of

1,500 horse was expected under the Earl of Northampton; as well as the horse of Oxford and the adjacent garrisons numbering 1,000 or 2,000. Urgent messages are sent calling in all the power that can be raised. "Poyntz should be written to hasten hither; Lancashire, Shropshire and other counties should send in all the forces they possibly can; *the whole Kingdom depends upon this bout*, there must noe more be left at Beeston than is requisite." So it went on through November and December. Brereton reports an addition to the entrenchments at Eccleston lane, and Hough Green. "Wee have secured as well as we can the passage on to Saltney and Hawarden. Wee keepe strong guards of horse and foote at Eccleston, Lache, Brewer's Hall, Dodleston, Poulford, our horse being disposed of to y<sup>e</sup> outquarters at Bretton, Kinnerton, and Col. Mitton with y<sup>e</sup> Flintshire Committee and his forces at Wrexham." They had expended "between September 20 and December 16, 1645, no less than 140 barrels of powder and bullets proportionable, and forty thousands weight of match, in entering the suburbs, storming the city and about the city in Leaguer at Dodleston, Eccleston, and they had remaining in stock at Tarvin and at the leaguer thirty barrels of powder and bullets proportionable and three thousands of match" [Add. MSS. 11,333]. A Council of War was held in the suburbs, December 20th, at which it was resolved to go out to meet the enemy and engage them at a distance from the city, rather than close under the walls, where they might be assailed in their rear by the garrison.

Council of War held December 20, 1645 in Suburbs of Chester.

Resolved 1. that we go out to meet the enemy taking a considerable party, rather fight them at a distance than neare the City so that those in the City might issue with them or fall on our rear whilst we were engaged.

2. Warton Heath be the Rendezvous to-morrow by neene a clock for the forces about the Leaguer. For Warwick horse, etc. meet the forces at Mopas [Malpas] at one. Reformadoes also at Mopas or else come to us to Whitchurch where the whole body is appointed to quarter.

Horse 1,600	} to stay.	1,160	} to march
Foot 1,700		1,250	

1645. December 13. Chester Suburbs.—Sir William Brereton to William Lenthall.

We have had several strong alarms of the enemy's great preparations for their relief, in the belief whereof we have been the more confirmed by letters intercepted, one whereof is under Sir W. Vaughan's own hand, which was an answer of a letter sent to him from the Governor of Dudley Castle, desiring some assistance to take in Rotchlie [Rugeley] garrison lately erected in Staffordshire. Their extremities in the City are very great and their expectations of relief are no less, whereby they are encouraged in their obstinacy. We have made use of some mortar pieces which we lately borrowed from Shrewsbury, whereby great execution is done and on the 10th in the night fired in 3 several places in the city and killed and wounded divers in their beds, yet this nothing at all works upon them, but they seem still to remain as stubborn as formerly so as we judge it more easy as yet to fire and destroy than to reduce and subdue this strong city. The enemy hath prepared another fire-boat to set on fire our bridge over the river, for prevention whereof we have chained over the river and keep an extraordinary strong guard [Add. MSS. 11,333, fol. 14a].

1645. December 8.—Letter from Sir William Vaughan to the Governor of Dudley Castle, enclosed in above.

Having received his Majesties' commands to attempt the relief of Chester desiring to know by you what horse and foot can be conveniently spared for this expedition, I being here now waiting for further orders from his Majesty, being willing to do you any lawful favour, but for ye present can't spare any.

1645. December 15. Chester Suburbs.—Sir William Brereton and others to William Lenthall.

Though you may from other hands have received advertisement of the enemy's drawing together from Oxford and divers other of the King's garrisons, yet we have thought meet to send you the enclosed true copies of letters received from Coventry and Evesham, and of an intercepted letter of Sir W. Vaughan's intended for the Governor of Dudley Castle. All these hint the enemy's intentions to attempt the relief of Chester for their better encouragement wherein they have—as we are informed—lately received letters from the Earl of Glamorgan assuring them that he hath 10,000 men ready to transport and hath sent 200 barrels of powder, though we hear not of ye landing thereof, it is evident that the enemy will engage deeply for the relief of this city, which hath held out so long and so resolutely, this being of greater concernment to them than the rest of the

holds they possess in these parts of the kingdom. Whereof we doubt not but that you will be so sensible as that you will endeavour the procuring us timely assistance suitable to our condition [Portland MSS. 325].

1645. December 15, evg. Quarters in Leaguer before Chester.—  
Sir William Brereton to Sir Peter Wentworth.

Chester closely blocked up. All the ports made up and strong guards sett upon them, some of them within Pistoll shott soe that none remaine open but one little salley porte which is betwixte the Phenix Tower and the Eastgate.—[Passes refused] This city cannot be reduced unlesse it be by distressing them within.

It is true on the Welsh side wee cannot approach soe neare by reason of their royall mount which secures and commands Dee bridge. But wee have made two forts the one to command and secure our bridge of boates and the other to command that where we keepe a strong guard of horse and foote and from this mount we have drawn a line to Eccleston Lane, which we have trenched over. We have alsoe trenched over Hough Greene and secured as well as we can the passage on to Saltney and Hawarden. Wee keep strong guards of horse and foote at Eccleston, Lach, Brewers Hall, Dodleston, Poulford, our horse being disposed of to ye out-quarters at Bretton, Kinner-ton, and Coll. Mitton with ye Flintshire Comittee and his forces at Wrexham [Add. MSS. 11,333, fol 22].

1645. December 15.—Committee of both Kingdoms to Sir William Brereton.

News of horse of Oxford and adjacent garrisons 1,000 or 2,000 marched to relieve Chester. Given order to Col. Whalley with 3 reg<sup>ts</sup> of horse to march after and do utmost to hinder their interruption or relief.

Put yourself in best posture to prevent.

Hear from Governor of Gloucester that in Wales about 1,500 horse under Earl of Northampton intended to relieve Chester.

Have therefore written to Counties of Warwick, Stafford, Salop and N. Wales to send you what they can [S.P. Dom].

1645. December 20. Chester.—Sir William Brereton to Committee of both Kingdoms.

Lancashire horse come into County but not to us. Foot not yet come.

Want of money and extreme duty makes those forces with us unwilling to stay and any more of Lancashire to [come] up to us.

1645. December 20. Chester Suburbs.—Sir William Brereton to Col. Mitton at Wrexham.

Rec<sup>d</sup> certain intelligence that a great body of horse of King's approaching towards us, therefore fail not to send to all parts for all the force of horse and foot you can.

1645. December 25. Committee of both kingdoms to Sir William Brereton.

We did not in the least intimate anything which might occasion your drawing off any forces from the siege. On the contrary we acquainted you what forces we had appointed for your assistance. The forces are now returned to their several garrisons—desire you to proceed in your endeavours to reduce that town [S.P. Dom].

The guards on the Welsh side were very diligently maintained, and precautions taken elsewhere in the leaguer to prevent surprise.

1645. December 22. 1 p.m. Wrexham.—Col. Mitton to Sir William Brereton.

On my way to Oswestrie. Have sent for all ye foot that can be spared from castells in Montgomeryshire. Have special care on the Welch side.

1645. December 22. 4 p.m. Whitchurch.—Sir William Brereton to Col. Mitton, in answer.

Had given order before your letter to Montgomery horse and foot and my own dragoons to march back to ye leaguer, also ordered some more foot to Col. Duckenfield from Northwich and Tarvin. Nine troops of Lancashire horse which came up to us yesterday I sent back to Leaguer to be imployed where Col. Duckenfield, Carter and rest think fittest and most conducive both to blocking up ye citie and preserving the quarters on ye Welsh side from any Welsh enemy. Tho I would not order anie forces which might be anie waies irregular and make spoile in Wales and for ye end the rather propounded unto you yesterday Col. Carter's staying on ye Welch side.

We hear nothing of enemy's advance but rather of their retreat and dispersing themselves.

1645. December 23. Chester Suburbs.—H. Brooke, Dukenfield, John Legh to Sir William Brereton.

Col. Shuttleworth [Lancashire horse] was very earnestly by us importuned to rest his reg<sup>t</sup> of horse on Welsh side, but would not assent—only he will send 100 horse at once to guard at Lache and to relieve them from that side of ye watter. We have about forty Staffordshire horse in discontented condition. We get as much dutye out of them as we can, but because of ye



scarcitie of provision here in the suburbs for them we cannot stay them here from their commanders any longer than till to-morrow at noon. A companie of Col. Brooks and about twenty-four seamen of Capt. Rich's shipp are come to assist us yesternight and this day half parte of all our foot are forced to go upon dewtie every night here. Your dragoons are sent to Col. Coote. We retaine the guards at Northgate and Dodleston with two companies from hence. The guards on the Welch side have been very diligently maintained.

Passages toward Bretton and Harden Castell have been most open. Capt. Piggotts' companie are unwilling to advance further than Tarvin supposing you commanded them no further so that the hard duty of our forces here are put upon will not be endured by the soldiers without some assistance speedily. Col. John Booth offers to lend us a great mortar piece y<sup>t</sup> is at Warrington if we had shells for it.

In all this Brereton was admirably seconded by the commanders of the garrisons. Some anxiety was felt about the bridge of boats. It was temporarily broken up and rendered unserviceable for two days about Christmas by an extraordinary high tide forcing the ice, but repaired again by the last day of December.

1645. December 23. Dunham.—Sir Geo. Booth to Sir William Brereton.

Two of Lord Kilmorey's servants had come out of Chester, desiring to live at peace.

Report Chester in distress. The Governor had sent to King unless he sent relief by New Year's day they must surrender. King had replied that he would send some of his own horse to join with Morgan and come in on Welch side.

1645. December 25, in ye morning. Dodleston.—Col. Carter to Col. Duckenfield, Brookes and Massie.

Special care of bridge this thawe, and if you find it is likely to breake, please send over the Lancashire horse to us on the Welch side and if you can a company of foot.

1645. December 30. Chester Suburbs.—Sir William Brereton to Wm. Ashurst and Mr. Swinfen.

You write that some soldiers wonder we have not proceeded with mining. We have ordered to procure some miners but cannot obtain any, especially out of Wales (which are most convenient) but that which most dissuaded was the number of foot in ye cittie, more than those that lie about it. They have a great strength of Horse, so as if we should have sprunge

a myne and entred as formerly we could not in probability have expected anie better than to have been beaten out as formerly they have been.

Why there is soe great a number of foot in the citie. During that tyme that ye Citie remained unblocked up (which was after the battell at Rowton) on ye Welch side there was summoned and brought into the citty the Regiments of Col. Moston and Col. Wynne and soe manie Irish and others as they could collect in the space of seven or eight days.

Perhaps you may hear of some relief come into Chester. Upon ye change of ye weather we were constrained to hasten back from Whitchurch, but an houer or two before we came, our bridge was removed by ye ice, whereof the enemy taking notice and advantage brought in some meale which is said to be about fifty measures which was brought upon ye same horses they rid upon which will not enable them to hold out one day longer. Our horse went over on Saboth day at Blackon parth [Blacon point?] and lye now about Mould, Northoppe and Denbigh, and have conveyed over some foote by boates to strengthen the Welsh side and hope within a few days the bridge will be erected again so as there is no fear of further danger.

1645. December 31. Suburbs of Chester.—Sir William Brereton to Sir J. Glynne, Recorder.

Now our bridge is lyd again. . . . the troop from Flint and Hawarden, about 1,000 Horse and 2,000 Foot left to keep Leaguer, which we advanced to Whitchurch with 1,500 Foot and 1,500 Horse.

The weather this Christmastide continued to be so severe that the besiegers were subject to great hardships which were accentuated by scarcity of provisions, lack of clothing, and delay in the distribution of the soldier's pay so long in arrear. Brereton mentions as a special grievance that some officers are "constrained to drink water," and that others importune him to lend them money. "The army," he informs the Speaker, January 13, 1645-6, "grows every day more impatient of their hard duty and want of pay. Very many of our men daily fall sick; many leaving the Leaguer, many of the horse *beleaguering the Leaguer*, and refusing to be otherwise disposed of under pretence for want of pay; it being out of our power to satisfie them or the other necessities of y<sup>e</sup> Leaguer without greater

supplies and assistance not only of moneys but of provision."<sup>41</sup>

1645. December 17. Chester Suburbs.—The Committee at Chester to ye Speaker.

Sir,

We can't but with all thankfullness acknowledge ye great care which the honorable House of Commons have still had of ye safety and welfare of your poor county and in particular in expediting ye last ten thousand pounds assigned for ye payment of such forces as should be necessary [to be] employed for reducing Chester, which summ when first granted, your many other occasions and ye hopes we had of ye shortness of ye work considered, seemed competent. But ye great endeavours that have been made to raise this seige, hath occasioned such accession of forces for our assistance, and ye continuance of it hath been so much beyond our expectation that without further supply we are no ways able to carry on ye work, which God of his goodness hath brought towards an end, for it hath cost in amunition for ye Leaguer (before any came down from London) near 2,000£ and 1,000£ was disposed of by your own orders before it came down (viz.) 200£ to Coll: Gen<sup>l</sup> Pointz, 400£ to Coll. Jones and Adjutant Louthiane and near 100£ for messengers. The Darbyshire, Staffordshire, Shropshire, Montgomeryshire and Lancashire forces, both horse and foot, officery and soldiery, have received so much pay already as we were able to give them out of these moneys, and we can neither procure them to continue here nor more forces as we have occasion, without further satisfaction. And ye extraordinary incident charges of ye Leaguer together with ye payment of our own auxilliarie added to ye rest maketh up a vast charge. Our own county is so exhausted, having been a constant seat of war for ye three years, plundered by those potent enemies, which have come against us and marcht thro' us. And for ye fifteen months last past, none having been two months without great auxilliarie force for our assistance, which have lien upon free quarters and ye maintaining this Leaguer three months with provisions (no other part contributing anything except Staffordshire and Shropshire) together with ye maintaining of our trained and freehold bands, our horse and dragoons hath made ye charge so great that it is not long to be borne without utter ruin of ye willing county, it having cost 1,500£, besides ye maintenance of 1,000 horse of free quarter, insomuch that

<sup>41</sup> Of these, the Lancashire contingent was the most insubordinate, "those of Colonel John Booth's regiment under Major Peter Brookes marching back of their own accord to Lancashire."

we have been forced to make use of all ye rents and profits of sequester'd land, in cheese and other provisions [and this] not answering ye necessary expence, we are forced to bye much, for paying whereof we stand engaged, all which we refer to your grave wisdom to consider of and determine as you see cause—and we shall always remain,

Your most humble servants,  
 WILL. BRERETON, THOM. STANLEY,  
 ROBT. DUCKINFIELD, PH. MAINWARING,  
 ROGER WILBRAHAM JOHN LEGH.

All this is besides that which North Wales hath done in maintenance of these horse and foot, which have lien upon ye Welch side, which doth arise to a great summ.

We have here inclosed sent you an account of so much of ye 10,000£ as came into this county by your order; and there are diverse great sums of money yet to be paid at London for amunition, etc.

An account of all ye money that hath come to my hands out of ye 10,000£, as came into the county ordered by ye Hon. Houses of Parliament for ye forces against Chester and how ye same is disbursed.

	£	s.	d.
Received from Mr. Henry C      which came along with Sir W. Brereton from London at three several payments in all ye sum of      -      -      -	2000	0	0
Received from Mr. Richard Wyrall at two several payments      -      -      -      -      -      -      -      -	4300	0	0
	<hr/>		
	6300	0	0
Received in lot			
Paid to ye Lancashire forces Horse and foot in ye service in ye Leaguer before Chester as appears under ye hands of Lieut. Col. Chauntrill, Lt. Leigh, Capt. Ireland, Capt. Aspenall, Capt. Croste, Major Jackson, Lt. Wynstanley, Lt. Booth, Lt. Liddon, Major Willowbey, Capt. Standish, and ye rest of ye Officers, we being engaged to pay these more money on Saturday next who have been in great discontents for want of money      -      -      -      -      -      -      -      -	730	15	4
Paid to ye Stafford horse and foot in service in ye Leaguer before Chester as appears under ye hands of Col. Bowyr, Major Downs, Capt. Pudsey, Capt. Munk, Capt. Hunt, Lt. Ridgwaye and ye rest of ye Officers, we being engaged that these must have a very large summ of money on Wednesday next who are at present in great want	534	4	6

Paid to ye Shropshire Horse and Foot who are in Service in ye Leaguer before Chester, as appears under ye hands of Coll. Coote, Lt. Ashton, Major Fenwick, Quarter Master General Procter, Capt. Stanly, Lt. Barrow, Capt. Davenport, Capt. Smith, Lt. Fox and other officers, we being engaged to ye Shropshire and Staffordshire forces in ye payment of a greater summ than they have as yet received, having been very modest, ye same being far more than we have to satisfie withal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	568	6	1
Paid to ye Montgomery horse and foot as appears under ye hands of Col. Parker and Lieut. Colonell Twissleton, they expecting a second supply	-								500	0	0
									<u>2333</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>11</u>
Paid to Col. Jones, which was ordered him by ye house of Parliament out of ye 10,000£	-	-							200	0	0
Paid to Adjutant Genll. Louthian, being ordered him by the House of Commons out of ye sum above expressed	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	200	0	0
Paid to ye Darbyshire horse on Service in ye Leaguer before Chester as appears under ye hands of Capt. Watson, Capt. Hope and Capt.	-								319	7	0
Paid to Col. Greaves who was wounded at ye battle on Rowton Moor, where he did gallant Service and was at great expences in ye curing of his wounds	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	050	0	0
Paid to Mr. Barret, Chyrurgion to our Chester foot, for himself and his mates who was in want for Salves for ye wounded soldiers, having done gallant Service and hath not had any pay in long time and must have more presently	-	-	-						100	0	0
Paid to Mr. Sunderland for Powder and Match	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	268	17	6	
and for carriage of Amunition from London and great Bullich for ye Ordinance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	110	12	0	
In all-	-	-	-						379	9	6
Paid to Major Baker and Major Sleveny belonging to ye Reformadoes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		015	0	0
Paid to the Cheshire Gunners	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		047	10	0

# THE SOLDIERS' PAY

161

£ s. d.

Paid to ye Officers and some of Col. Duckinfield's Regiment of foot, being constant upon Service in ye Leaguer before Chester and receive no pay from ye country - - - - -	330	15	4
Paid ye Officers and Soldiers of Col. Jo. Leigh company, being in Service in ye Leaguer before Chester - - - - -	028	1	8
Paid to Col. Wm. Massye 20£, to Major Daniel 20£, Capt. Wm. Daniel and Capt. Jo. Brooke 10£ a man, this being besides their ordinary pay. According to ye Cheshire modell they having been constand upon Service in ye Leaguer before Chester, in all ye sum of - - - - -	060	0	0

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1730 11 6

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Paid to ye Officers and Troops of ye Cheshire horse who have been constant upon duty and received no pay since August last, 1645, as appears under ye hands of Col. Jones, Major Zankey, Capt. Clay, Capt. Wyan, Capt. [?] Lt. Smith, Capt. Edwards and ye rest of ye Chester Officers of horse that have received pay, in all - - -	1253	16	0
Paid to ye Cheshire Dragoons as appears under ye hands of Capt. Finch, Capt. Cynbart and Capt. Hall ye sum of - - - - -	0416	6	0
Paid Lt. Ely who was wounded being Lt. to Capt. Culmit troops - - - - -	0020	0	0
Paid to Lt.-Col. Venables in part of his pay, who did very good service being wounded in ye Storm and is much behind of his pay, being in necessitye	0050	0	0
Paid to Mrs. Culme and Mrs. Grant, whose husbands were slain in ye late Battle on Rowton Moor, near Chester - - - - -	0020	0	0

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1760 2 0

[Brought Forward] - - - - -	1730	11	6
[Brought Forward] - - - - -	2333	15	11

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5824 8 5

Paid to Messengers which had money allowed them by ye Hon. House of Commons out of ye 10,000£ and other incident charges - - - - -	475	11	7
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6300 0 0

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Ye particulars whereof being in my account and very large which will make up ye same here, express'd to be 6,000*g* besides all which Summs there hath been since ye first of Nov. Last received from this poor County above 3,000*£* all which is disbursed to ye trained and free hold Bands and to divers troops of horse yett many companys besides officers of horse and Dragoons are still unpaid being of our own Country forces upon hard Duty and in great want of Cloaths and necessities

December 18, 1645.

JAMES CROXTON.

	£	s.	d.
More paid to Genll. Points by order of Parliament	0500	0	0
To Mr Sunderland for Amunition to be paid him at London	0300	0	0

Divers other Summs have been paid by Mr. Worral, appointed Threasurer by ye Parliament as will appear by his Account for Amunition and ye like at London.

1645. December 22. Tarvin.

Col. Ashton about his Regiment (Lancashire) refusing to march without money from their homes.

1645. December 22. Whitchurch.—Sir William Brereton to Mr. Ashurst and Mr. Swinfen.

Encloses above letter. Urgent appeal. Lancashire forces refusing to march. Gentlemen of county making themselves responsible. Shropshire Foot have received seven or eight days pay for thirteen weeks.

Officers of Regiment of Reformadoes importuning him to lend £200 or £300, they had not cloathes to cover their nakedness, and officers and gentlemen of quality were constrained to lead their horses in their hands because they have not money to shoe their horses. Lancashire and Derbyshire have contributed none at all. The duty is extremely hard and much provision wanting and not only many soldiers but captains and other officers fall sick for want of accommodation and are constrained to drink water. It being most extreme hard for men to continue upon duty twenty-four houres together upon ayre as it is with us upon severall guards with us. We have had several great mutinies for want of money, and it cannot but be expected but sad effects will follow if they receive not a comfortable answer.

1645. December 23. Whitchurch.—Sir William Brereton to Committee of both Kingdoms.

Enemy holding out in expectation of relief from Ireland. Money wanted and provision. Country extremely impoverished. Our soldiers were necessitous, impatient and put to extreme duty—manie for want of fitting accommodation both officers and soldiers fall sick. Ask for provisions from neighbouring counties. Leaguer has continued already above thirteen weeks.

The strength of the blockading force under Brereton at this time was 7,100, of which 3,600 were foot and 3,500 horse. On the Cheshire side there were 2,500 foot and 1,800 horse and on the Welsh side 1,100 foot and 1,700 horse.

Several Councils of War were held, and fresh dispositions of troops made. The Cheshire and Derbyshire foot were sent back to Caerwys under Colonel Jones to strengthen the leaguer on the Welsh side.

A strong party of horse and foot was posted at Hawarden, Aston, and Shotton, and other bodies at Holt, Pulford, Dodleston, Lache, Saltney and Eccleston. Two hundred Staffordshire and Shropshire men were ordered to strengthen the guards at St. John's (where they had a useful battery); another guard from the Northwich, Edisbury, and Bucklow Hundreds was posted in Forest [Foregate] Street; and two hundred Lancashire men at the Northgate. The Stoope-bridge and all other bridges between Hawarden and Chester were ordered to be broken down, so that all communication with Wales should be stopped. To prevent a supply of corn, bacon and other provisions from being brought in to the garrison by water from Rhuddlan and Conway, Brereton manned several small barques with musketeers and ordnance, under the direction of Captain Stephen Rich. One of these was named *Rupert*.

1645. December 25.—Council of War at Whitchurch (Red Lion).

Whether the advance to Newport (resolved upon yesterday) be not only hazardous—the weather being changed—but of great hardship to y<sup>e</sup> soldiers, and whether upon y<sup>e</sup> change of weather and thawe in as much as there would be a necessity of taking up the bridge over Dee to make passage for the ice,



there would not be an absolute necessity of more forces to strengthen the leaguer on both side ye river.

Resolved that Cheshire and Darbyshire foot march tomorrow into Wales to strengthen leaguer on Welch side and that Col. Massies's foot coming from Nantwich Hundred with ye firelocks march with them for the same service. The rest of Cheshire foot march to leaguer on Cheshire side.

Reformadoes under Major Baker, Lancashire horse (Major Jackson), Warwickshire horse (Major Hawksworth), Staffordshire horse (Col. Bridges), Shropshire foot (Capt. Stanley), Staffordshire foot (Capt. Monke), Lancashire foot (Major Peter Brookes and Capt. Aspinwall), remain at Whitchurch.

1645. December 29. Chester Suburbs.—Sir William Brereton thanks Committee of Salop.

All possible industrie has been taken to entrench on ye other side. Have made two mounts above and about ye place where ye bridge was and there is one other work made near Brewer's Hall, a kind of entrenchment for securing our men there. Eccleston is also fortified and Poulford Church, and we did attempt, before ye frost first began, to draw a line upon ye Welsh side and gave liberally to those whom we could obtain to work, but these mounts did soe gall our men that we could make no further progress (being kept in continuall fight by ye enemy's mount) than to ye lane that goes to Eccleston. We are informed the City is desirous of and would willingly entertain a summons.

Reformadoes will not go without money and divers others are not only unwilling to work but to go upon duty.

1645. December 29.—Sir William Brereton to Capt. Glegg, Capt. Shipley, and all ye officers of horse and foote at Laich and at Mr. Browne's at Saltney side.

It is this day ordered that ye Captains of horse and foot at Lach Hall take with them a competent number of souldiers for their guard and some countrymen for their guide and breake down ye stoope bridge and all other bridges betwixt Hawarden and Chester forthwith that are upon Saltney that they may have no entercourse between the said garrisons. Give notice to our partie at Dodleston and Bretton.

1645. December 29. Dodleston.—Col. Carter to Sir William Brereton.

The Lancashire horse which were ordered to quarter at Browne's and Graye's house instead came up to Dodleston. About twelve o'clock the Lach scouts discovered a partie of about 100 horse which got into the Town before the Governor could get up to stop them, which they could never have done if

the Lancashire men had quartered at Gray's and Browne's according to order. As soon as I heard I sent a troop of my horse to joyne with Capt. Glegg and Edwards who was captain of the guard and ordered them to take a company of foot and attend their coming out of the city. In the morning our horse found a partie that went out nere half an hower and never bestowed one pistoll on them. But after they were drawn away Capt. Edwards pursued them to Hawarden and took a cornet and a soldier who say that the party were about 100 and carried in about seven stone a piece of meate.

I had an allarum to-day sent from Col. Duckenfield that the enemy was sending out two carriages to Flint. I commanded out a partie to Hawarden all over these sands but they never attempted any such thing. I took a cornet of Sir Wm. Neale's who will take the Covenant and Armes. He says there was mutinieing by the Poor last week in which they called Lord St. Paull a French Rouge [Rogue]. And that last partie carried in about forty measures of oatmeale and some powder but that was the most.

1645. January 2. Suburbs.—Sir William Brereton to Committee of Stafford.

We have herewith returned Capt. Ashenhurst his Troope whoe were ordered to come upon duty yesterday but refused, wherein I cannot see much blame the officers, for there was none with them but Cornet Oates who used his utmost endeavour to keepe them upon duty as the soldiers who were noe sooner over the water where they should have kept guard but they returned back and left the guard at large unprovided. The County much exclaimed that they should lye upon them as a charge and burden and refuse to perform duty, therefore they are sent back.

1645. January 10.—Aston.—Major Zanchy to Sir William Brereton.

Preparations of Ruthland for ye Relief of Chester. Have certain intelligence that they have loaded several vessels with wheat and taken great store of backon from the country to this purpose.

I desire that you will have an espeshall eye to ye Channell. I heare noe more of ye Anglesey and Carnarvon Horses. We are in very greate wante of victuall in our quarters.

1645. January 11.—From aboard ye Rebecka.—Capt. Stephen Rich to Sir William Brereton.

Reports delay in Liverpool boats, which prevents coals being sent. Have provided a boat of mine to watch and guard the

river for ye prevention of any vessels that should come up to relieve Chester.

The boate has two peeces of ordinance and twelve musqueteires which shall keep continual watch for them.

You advise me letter of 10th inst. to be carefull to prevent relief from Rutland [Rhuddlan]. I have as above and a barque at Mosten side if shee cannot loade coales this springe will man her with men and ammunition to lye at Dawpoole, and this next flood there will come a boate to your honour to lye at Blakenhead or where you will.

No more boats to be had—am persuaded there will be enough until next Springe, there not being water for five or six boats to lye at neapytde. Intend my own pinnace shall be coasting up and downe besides the boate I have written of—watch night and day.

1645. January 12. Aston.—Major Zanchy to Sir William Brereton.

Intelligence from one who saw the vessel [a woman from Conway] the provision was

300 measures of wheat

30 fitches of Bacon

4 fatt Beeves.

They sett forth yesternight [Sabbath evening—W. B.] and the wind turning forced them again. Therefore relief will be attempted. Vessel hath twelve oars and thirty soldiers besides those that belong to the ship, and are resolved to surprise the Robbin by the way. It came up above Mosten last night and returned back because of ye wind.

1645. January 13. Chester Suburbs.—Sir William Brereton to Capt. Hunter (Governor of Hooton) and Capt. Dukinfield.

Read and see need for vigilance and circumspection. Have a care about coals— send supply of oats of which there is a great present want.

Same warning to Capt. Rich and Major Ashurst, Governor of Liverpool.

Capt. Rich to Sir William Brereton.

I have three nimble vessels ready fitted inne with four peeces of ordnance, one with two pieces, besides my shallops [Add. MSS., 11,333].



## CHAPTER VIII.

### Starvation—Negotiation—Surrender.

THE blockade now was so close and complete on all sides that Brereton cannot imagine much further delay in the surrender. His strong persuasion of this is shown by a letter of his arranging for the appointment of "a man of resolution and courage to rule and govern the obstinate citie of Chester when it is reduced." This suitable man he finds in Alderman Edwards, and he promises to secure for him in his office a weekly allowance. He also proposes that Mr. Bradshaw should be burgess of Chester.

1645. December 30. Chester Suburbs.—Sir William Brereton to Alderman Edwards.

Seriously considering that when ye obstinate citie of Chester is reduced, it will be most necessary that those stubborne people should have a man of resolucon and courage to rule and govern them, for this employment there cannot possibly be found out anie man so fitt as yourself who best knows the constitution of the place and people.

A taske of great trouble—your friends hope you will let them press you for it and to enable you to maintain that parte with the dignity belonging to that office, and that there be respect had of your great sufferings and losses, I will endeavour to obtain proportionable weekly allowance out of the Exercise or some other publike revenue.

1645. December 30. Chester Suburbs.—Sir William Brereton to Mr. Bradshaw [ ? John Bradshaw, the Regicide].

I find the honest cittizens of Chester (upon my first mention) willing to elect you one of their Burgesses in case you will make yourselfe capeable thereof by takeing the oath of freeman amongst them. They in generall have a good affection unto you, yet stand upon this their antient privelidge (as they call it) that they count those Burgesses but out of their freemen. I cannot do less than endeavour the preservation and continuance of all their lawful privileges and customes. Therefore I desire if possible you will satisfie them soe far as to prepare for a journey to Chester when you may receive from them a

further relation for that purpose. Your very loving freind and kinsman to serve you,

WM. BRERETON.

There are many desire that I may be made free of the city, whereunto I shall the more willingly incline if I may receive a resolution from you touching the grants, deeds and charters whereby my lands are free from all common duties. The words run thus directed :—

Monialibus et eorum successoribus qui sunt infra gildam mercatoriam nec jurati ad libertatem civitatis quod sunt liberi de muragio, pontagio, toluet, stallagio, passagio et omnibus mizio et taxationibus universis.

I desire to be satisfied whether this doe not forfait or weaken the interest of those priveledges [Add. MSS., 11,333].

Letters received from partisans or prisoners within the city indicate that the stubbornness which so vexed the Parliamentarians was being broken down, the hope of relief was becoming vague, the discontent of the soldiers in the garrison increasing, and the want of provisions sorely felt. Every care was taken to economise the supply left in the city, and search was made daily in each ward of the quantities of corn and meal in each house. Lord Byron's warrant of January 14, 1645-6, together with a summary of the returns which reveal the desperate plight of the city, will be found printed as an Appendix. They give the names of the various householders, with the number of their families, and of the soldiers billeted upon them, and the quantity of corn, meal, beans or bread they had. Eastgate and St. Bridget's Wards appear to have been worst off. In the former there were about one hundred and sixty families, of whom over a hundred had "no corn." These families comprised about nine hundred persons, besides about one hundred and fifty soldiers. In the Bishop's kitchen, although there were twenty-four in the family, there was no corn. Other houses with two or three in the family were reduced to "one great loaf" [Harl. MSS., 2135, 98, *et seq.*].

1645. Sunday. Chester Castle.—Lt. Philemon Mainwaring to Sir William Brereton.

Having a convenient and trusty messenger, send intelligence. Town is in great distress—the poor cry out dayly in the streetes for want of meat, desiring the Maior and Lord Byron

to turn them out of Town. Whereupon the Lord St. Paul (on Saturday last) hearing them cry out so, found fault with them. Their reply to him was, 'Thou French rogue, hould thy Tongue, wee must obey thy command and be starved to death.' This one told me who vowed they heard it in the market place. Capt. Dutton who went out of the Towne upon Sunday night last being fourteen of this instant returned this last night. His newse (as the Cavalry report it) is that Relief is coming but I and the rest of our friends conjecture it be all false, for since his coming, they be all mightily dejected, only they raise rumours to kepe their souldiers in harte, otherwise they would mutinie. I believe that if you summons the town once more, the comon souldiers will force their officers to yeld. I asked a Comander in town the reason of the ordinance playing, his answer was you gave it over the walls that Hereford was taken, but he tould me it was like all our lyes for he said Capt. Dutton came from Hereford on Thursday last. What the matter was I cannot say, but it gave them such an allarum that I could not slepe in my bed for their crying Armes, Armes, up and down the streetes.

Lt.-Col. Vane, Sir F. Gamull and Mr. Maior are, as I am informed, the only instruments that keep the towne, otherwise it had been yealded ere this.

Examination of George Standford, aged 20 years, who came out of city December 24, 1645.

A musqueteer under Capt. Bavan hath bene this month endeavouring to get out but could not get opportunity till five o'clock this evening when he leaped over wall near Phoenix Tower. Want of enemy doe much increase—not above twenty live cattle—little or no corn that through want of malt most of ye Brewers have left of brewing—not any cheese—a turkey brought for Lord Cholmondley for 17/-. Soldiers do now believe the taking of Hereford and seem willing to have ye towne surrendered, having no hopes of relief notwithstanding the Commanders seek by all means possible to feed them with deluding expectations. The women gather themselves together every day crying out for relief to the Governor and the rest of the Commanders.

Cannot hold out 14 days.

No date.—Lt. Philemon Mainwaring to his brother out of Chester.

I have received yours as touching the parties which came in the other night certifie the Gents there have neither cheese nor bread, all was 120 measures of wheate and oate flower and the generall report is they intend to come again ere longe.

Some of the compaine gave it out in the towne that there was no relief for them of anie consequence. Whereupon the souldiers in the morning following began to mutinie insomuch that there was one clapt in prison, I saw him myself and remains in the castell yet. All the commanders harts are quite downe. This I am confident of, they themselves know not certainly of any relief. If they did they would divulge it and more then the truth. We have a great deal more freedom then usually, which is a verie evident signe of a declineinge age for otherwise I am confedent their malitious harts would not be so wanting in venting their spleene towards us as formerly.

Post. I desire to know the occasion of both your rejoicings though I have not soe broade a yarde to leape in as you heave yet when I heare the gunnes I leaped from one side of the Goblin's tower to ye other and with as light a hart as anie of you.

No date.—Intelligence out of ye citie.

Memorandum. That if you intend to storme, that it be at six o'clocke of the night at which tyme the halberdiers are not brought to the walls, and the horsemen and commanders will be at supper. Their horse will be drawne into the Abbey Courte. The towne is scarce of powder all falling on sound when cannons shouting of, and a great shoute to be made which will soe terrifie them that their greatest ayme will be to flye, and alsoe setting Torches in the steeple which will be a great terrour. A few shottes at ye waterworkes will bring it downe. There are three of the milles spoyled, only two left standing. The Maiors mayde brings them greate intelligence and severall other women come over the walles. The Lord St. Paull was found in bedd with a minister's wife and Grosvener with an other hore at ye Glover's stone. "Mr. Answorth."

1645. December 30. Chester Suburbs.—Sir William Brereton to Lord Byron.

Has heard that the prisoners have been treated hardly through want of victuals and other accommodation. Sends a drum, to satisfy him—if refused admittance will consider charge just and will retaliate.

1645. December 31.—Lord Byron to Sir William Brereton.

Have examined how your prisoners have hitherto been accommodated. Find, notwithstanding the siege, they have been provided far better than those of ours in your possession. We shall so far remember charity begins at home and as your design is to reduce us by starving not to suffer the plentiful provision of prisoners to straighten those who faithfully serve in the garrison. If you send any provision for them it shall be faithfully given.

1645. January 2. Chester Suburbs.—Sir William Brereton to Lord Byron.

Replies—am willing to exchange an equal number of prisoners with you.

1645. January 4.—Lt. Philemon Mainwaring, taken prisoner at Eccleston, October 15th.

The towne is in as ill a condition as almost you would wish.

On Thursday last in evening at ye Parade 300 Welshmen laid down their arms and told Lord Byron unless he would afford them more meat they would do no more duty, but rather chose to stand to ye mercy of the enemy then to be starved in Towne. The Lord Byron his reply (openly) that if they would but hold the Towne fourteen dayes if there came noe releife he would surrender it. But that would not stop the simple Welshmen's mouths for they cryed out soe much that ye Lord Byron was enforced to forsake the Parade and leave them to their Welsh officers' perswasions who could worke noe effects in them till such tyme as ye Lord Byron sent them money to appease their furye. Likewise I had private information they intend to relieve the towne with the same partie. It was ye last weeke, but that is beyond my beliefe. Notwithstanding it is good to be carefull. Am informed that the citizens now begin to perceive that they forge letters at their mount in ye King's name and send them into Towne only to encourage the souldiers and yesterday being Saturday, there were some who privately brought some provision into ye Castell for fear it should be taken from them by the search for it goes through the Towne every day and whosoever hath a little, halfe is taken from them. In a word they be all hopeless of reliefe both officers and souldiers and I am informed that they desire you would sumon the Towne, but only their proud hartes will not suffer them to call a parly first.

The daily acclamations and cries the poore people utter in ye streete I leave to ye bearer.

1645-6. January 8.—Intelligence.

Lord St. Paul came into Flint Castle privately without any forces—stayed not there but sent four men that night into Chester, and upon his going away a fire was made on ye top of Hawarden Castle to give them notice at Chester. Forty bags of meal left at Hawarden Castle when they relieved Chester and intend to bring more into Chester if they can.

1645-6. January 9, 10 p.m. Chester Suburbs.—Sir William Brereton to Sir Richard Skeffington.

Yesterday accidentally (some say purposely), a fire in the headquarters in the Maior's house at which time a great part of



the house was burned and much hidden goods and provision discovered, but little burned. My own chamber and three more in one corner of the house escaped the fire which was so repressed and restrained as is much to be admired.

1645. January 8. Chester.—Cornet Geo. Dodson to Sir William Brereton out of Prison.

Your marshall reckons 3d. per diem for ye county allowance and ours here reckons here nothing but diet by ordinaryes and lodging so that we fear it will be a long business.

Sixteen Prisoners in the Friars.

1645. January 13. Chester Castle.—Lt. Philemon Mainwaring to Sir William Brereton.

Acknowledges receipt of one cheese one loaf to Capt. Stopporte and myself. Another to Ralph Jackson, prisoner in ye Hospitall, three cheese six loaves of bread to be divided amongst ye common prisoners and 40s. in money to be divided amongst them [Add. MSS., 11,833].

Brereton was consequently urged to make a fresh attempt at a parley for surrender. He therefore called a Council of War in the suburbs, January 6th, to deliberate on the question. Colonel Jones and eight other members were in favour of sending in a summons, while Brereton himself and three of his colonels voted in the negative. A summons was accordingly sent, the inhabitants thronging upon the walls on the approach of the trumpeter at the Eastgate, some of them declaring that he was welcome.

1645-6. January 7th. Chester Suburbs.

Experience tells you on what foundation your hopes of relief were grounded: But that you may see my tender care of the preservation of the city and the lives and the estates of the inhabitants, once more I summon you to deliver the city, castle and fort into my hands, for the use of the King and parliament. Expecting your speedy answer I rest,

Your servant,

WM. BRERETON.

Lord Byron rejected the summons, and the trumpeter was fired at from the walls.

The trumpet was sent with this summons to the Estegate where he made a stand after he had sounded, and acquainted them that he had a summons for ye Maior and ye Lord Byron. Whiles he stayed for an officer the cittizens thronged upon the walles and when he tould them he came

to summon the Citty the cittizens upon the walls answered, You are welcome. But when the officer (that went to acquaint Lord Byron herewith) returned he would not accept but rejected the summons, and they gave fire att y<sup>e</sup> Trumpeter from y<sup>e</sup> Walles.

At Council of War in Suburbs, January 6.

For sending summons : Majors Daniell, Bradshaw, Lt. col. Carrington, Mr. Bruen, Col. Massey, Adj. gen. Louthian, Col. Jones, Col. Leigh, Col. Duckinfield.

No summons : Brereton, Col. Carter, Lt. col. Gerrard, Lt. col. Venables.

For letter asking speedy answer, January 8.

Yes : Daniell, Venables, Massey, Croxton, Dukinfield, Sir William Myddelton, Louthian, Jones.

No : Leigh, Brereton.

1645. January 7th.—James Sherracke came out of Chester, January 7.

Was in city when summons was sent. Citizens exceeding troubled that y<sup>e</sup> Lord Byron had rejected it—a mutinie in city this morning about provision. Cannot hold out a fortnight—so many will be starved. A Welsh captain was slain this night upon Castle from St. John's steeple. Heard it was Lord Byron ordered the Trumpet back. The letter which was thrown over walls—divers copies taken—and gents feare it will cause a mutiny amongst soldiers and citizens. Divers Welch are dead from hunger. No drink to be bought nor any bread but what is got away by soldiers very early in morning and all ye day none to be bought. Five Welsh died last Saboth day, were starved, formerly there died twenty-five in one week. No market these three weeks save for some oatmeal which was sold at 4d. ye quart and a guard set to prevent the soldiers from taking it. Morter did execution [Add. MSS., 11,333].

Reply to summons [to surrender] :

Keepe your foolishly senseles paper to yourselves and know there are none in this city such knaves or fooles to bee deluded thereby.

This was written by the Lord Byron in his own hand, but noe name subscribed therunto.

Brereton, not receiving an answer to this first summons, on January 8th sent in a second letter enclosing the same summons.

1645. January 8. Foregate Streete.

My Lord, yesterday I sent you this inclosed summons which as the trumpeter by whom it was sent informs me was rejected,

some of your officers affirme the contrary. I desire to receive a speedy answer herein and rest your servant,

WILLIAM BRERETON.

To this Lord Byron returned answer: "January 8th. Your lettre and sommons I have received and shall thereunto returne an answer by a trumpeter of my owne, resting your servant, John Byron." Not having received a reply as soon as he expected, Brereton sent again to the Governor a third letter "before their drum came forth." "I perceive my desires to preserve the city encourage so great obstinacie, as though you expected as good conditions, when you can hold out no longer, as if you had treated when you received the last summons which proceeded not from any fear of disturbance, for I cannot but believe you are hopeless of relief, but to prevent further misery and the ruin of the city, which will be remediless, unless speedily surrendered. Therefore you are to expect no treaty if your answer be not returned by three of the clocke in the afternoon.—Foregate Street, January 12, 1645-6. Your servant, WILLIAM BRERETON."

Before the trumpeter with this had reached the city the following reply from the Governor and the Mayor had been sent:—

1645. January 12. Chester.

Wee are not convinced by experience of the groundles foundation of our hopes of reliefe neyther (God be thanked) is our condition such as to precipitate us to a prejudiciall treatie. However if within twelve daies we bee not assured of our reliefe by a Gentleman and citizen whom we shall send for that purpose with a trumpet of ours and a passe from you, wee shall then be contented to enter into a treatie for the delivirie of the cittie Castle and fort uppon honourable and souldierly conditions, remaininge, Yor servants,

JOHN BYRON.

CHAS. WALLEY, for myself and all my brethren.

[Add. MSS., 11,333].

Brereton at once replied objecting to this as unsatisfactory and demanding a positive answer before ten next morning.

1645. January 12. Chester Suburbs.

The writeinge sent by the drum is noe satisfactory answer to the summons neyther will I assent to your desires in anie

part of it. If you return not a positive answer before ten of the clocke tomorrow morning, expect noe further treatie.

Your servant,

WILL : BRERETON.

1645-6. January 14. Chester Suburbs.—Sir William Brereton to Sir Henry Vane, Mr. Recorder, Sir William Strickland.

This inclosed will present you with ye stubborn resolution of some in the citty who are so deeply engadged by their unjust service and detaineing the estates of all the honest men as have forsaken ye citty so that they apprehend themselves in a desperate condicion whereof I was so sensible that I did not concur in judgment with ye rest for ye sending in of these summons though in a submission to their opinions it being so overruled in a Counsell of Warre I did conforme thereunto.

Which tenders being so scournfullie received wee must resorte to ye use of all these extreamities which wee are able though for want of powder and other materialls wee may be much disabled to doe that which might otherwise be expected.

It is true wee were furnished by the house with threescore and ten barrills of powder and it is as true before my comeinge downe fouerty [forty] barrills were spent that latter day they stormed. And we have soe many outguards which must be plentifully furnished with ammunicion least the enemy should suddainely salley out upon them as that greate quantity of ammunicion is dayly spent.

Wee have now a strong party of horse and foote at Hawarden, Aston and Shotton. We have ordered another strong partie of horse and foote to Holt. Wee have alsoe a party at Pooford; another at Eccleston; another at Dodleston; another stroung party at ye Lache; others at Brewers hall; others at Graye's house and Browne's house bordering upon Saltney; All which are upon the Welsh side besides that guard which constantly maintains the two mounts and sconces on the other side the water; all of which are supplied with ammunicion from hence; where wee could not possibly be furnished with such other materialls, granadoe shells for ye morterpiece and the like which might have expedited the carreing on of this worke. With the teadiousness whereof noe man is more affected then he who will leave noe meanes unattempted which may conduce to ye accomplishing thereof.

To this end wee are about to make some batteries and to use such other meanes as the engyneres here shall thinke fitt.

1645-6. January 14. Chester Suburbs.—Sir William Brereton to Speaker Lenthall.

Wors<sup>l</sup> Sir, In my last I did advertise that those in the citty did seeme very desirous of a summons which was not then

thought fitt to be rendered unto them though afterwards some amongst them did soe much constrain us as that wee were prevailed upon to send the inclosed sumons.

It seemes many of the cittizens remaine soe enthralled and enawed as that they dare not oppose nor resist; many more soe deeply engadged to hould out the citty as that they can expect noe less than inevitable ruine; were there noe more guilt and charge upon them than to make reparacon and satisfaction to those honest men whose estates they have seized and possessed after they had turned them out of Towne. Hence it comes to passe that all former faire tenders have been rejected. Such is the strength of this citty being a very compact place and the walles soe high and stronge, as that upon the Cheshire side our cannoneers could not find any convenient place to fix a battery to doe execucon either upon the walles or over the walles upon the houses in the citty though there have bin nere forty barrills of powder spent in one day and when a small breach have been made and our men entered by storme, they have bine beaten backe with losse whence the enemy alsoe is encourradged this longe to hould out. Nothing has bine soe formidable to ye enemy nor done soe greate execucon as a morterpeece which we borrowed from Shrewsbury, for which if we could have bin furnished with shelles we should have bine able to have given you a better account; the want whereof and alsoe of powder hath much disabled us vigourously to replie upon them when they have rejected faire tenders. Notwithstanding which I hope to give you an accompt very speedily.

Postst. A strong partie of three Cheshire foot companies under command of Col. Massey and one of Col. Mytton's under Lt.-Col. Twisleton who have blocked up Hawarden Castle and secured these passages and they are likewise seconded by the Regiments of Cheshire and Derbyshire horse. We have sent another party to blocke up Holt by means whereof Chester will be deprived of all intelligence [Add. MSS., 11,383, 117b, 118].

On January 15th at length a letter was received from the Mayor and the Sheriff of the County of Chester to the effect that Lord Byron had been prevailed upon to make proposals for a treaty on honorable conditions. Brereton, who throughout the negotiations had shown no conciliatory spirit, returned an ungracious reply, and several letters and messages passed between the two parties during the following week, Colonel Duckenfield and Adjutant General Lowthian, who had from the first been in favour of a parley, using a moderating influence on Brereton.

1645. January 15. Chester.

Sir,—At the entreaty of us the Mayor Noblemen and Gents, the Aldermen and Cittizens of Chester, the Lord Byron our Governor in whome the whole power of treaty rests is pleased to give way to a Treaty upon honourable conditions to which if you assent commissioners to y<sup>t</sup> purpose may be agreed upon by both sides. Expecting your answer, rest,

Your servants,

CHARLES WALLEY, Maior.

ROB. TATTON, vice comes, Com : Cestr :

1645. January 15.—Sir William Brereton to Charles Walley.

When I have soe long considered of an answer to your letter as you the Maior and Lord Byron took tyme to answer to my sumons you shall heare from me by a messenger of my own. In the meane tyme I rest Your servant,

WILLIAM BRERETON.

1645. January 17. Chester Suburbs.

Gentlemen, Wee have prevailed with Sir Wm. Brereton to give us leave to returne this answer to your last letter : that notwithstanding your former rejections of faire and honorable condicons and the expence of tyme and blood (which hath been occasioned by your obstinance) might justly provoake him to refuse any further treatie, yet that it may appeare that hee retaynes his wonted desires of the preservation of the Cittie and the Lives and estates of the inhabitants. If your Governors (in whom you say lyes the full power to treatie) send out reasonable propositions betwixt this and Munday noone, he will take them into consideration and returne such answer as may stand with honour and justice, and may prevent the destrucion of this auncient Cittie which is desired by

Your servants,

ROB. DUCKENFIELD,

JAMES LOUTHIANE.

1645. January 17. Chester.

Gentlemen,—We have acquainted the Lord Byron with your letter to us directed, whoe is pleased to promise that within the tyme lymitted, a full answer shall be thereunto returned.

We remayne,

Your servants

CHARLES WALLEY, Maior.

ROB. TATTON, Vice Comes : Cestr.

1645. January 19. Chester.

[For Sr Will : Brereton Bart<sup>t</sup> in the Foregate Streete].

Sir, I have been made acquainted with a letter sent by some officers under your command to Mr. Mayor and Mr. Sheriffe Tatton, intimating your intentions to enter into a Treatie, and

requiring that propositions might be sent this day by noone, whereto at their request on the behalfe of the Gentry and cittizens I have consented. But for that the propositions will concerne persons of severall capacities, as Soldiers, Gentry, Cittizens and Clergie, and there being only yesterday (a day designed to a more sacred use) between that letter and the tyme of answer, I find it impossible that the propositions should be by that tyme ready. Wherewith at their further intreatie I held it fitt to acquaint you and to assure you I shall take an effectuall course for their preparation and doubt not send them early tomorrow morning by Commissioners for that purpose appointed, a list of whose names are herewith sent and for whom I desire that passe and safeconduct bee sent to meet with such as you shall appoint either at Eccleston or Dodleston, places at such a distance whence they may returne at night, during which tyme I shall not admitt any cessation of armes or hostilities, and remayne,

Your servant,

JOHN BYRON.

A passe and safe conduct is desired for

Sir Edmond Verney,	John Werden, Esq.,	
Kt. and Colonell,	Christofer Blease, Alderman,	
Lt.-Col. John Robinson,	Wm. Ince, Alderman,	
Lt.-Col. Peter Griffith,	John Johnson, Merchant,	
Sergeant Major Tho. Thropp	Thomas Bridge, }	Divines,
Lt.-Col. [Henry] Leigh,	Doctor Moreton, }	
Tho. Cholmundeley, Esq.,		

their horse and servants [Add. MSS., 11,333, 120a].

To which Sir William Brereton (by the same trumpeter which brought the former) sent this answer directed to y<sup>e</sup> Lord Byron [Harl. MSS., 2155] :

I shall expect your propositions here tomorrow morning by a trumpett and when I have taken them into consideration I shall either graunt a safe conduct for Commissioners, or return you a resonable answer. I rest,

Your servant,

WILLIAM BRERETON.

The next day my Lord returned this answer to the foresaid letter.

To Sir William Brereton, Bart.

Sir,

I have received yours wherein you desire the propositions of treatie should be sent you by a trumpett, which haveing seriously considered of, I find to be of so high concernment, both to his Majesties service and preservation of this City

wherewith I am intrusted that I conceive it altogether inconvenient to committ a matter of so great consequence to such a messenger; it may be you thinke our condition far worse then (God be thanked) it is, and therefore enforced to entertaine conditions upon any termes, but you may be confident that nothing can necessitate me to treate upon othere then honourable conditions, and that all of us here as well inhabitants as others, are unanimately resolved rather to suffer the worst of conditions and extremities then anything that may blemish our actions in point of honor, if therefore ye intentions be for honour and the preservation of this Citty as you have formerly professed you will not deny to treat by commissioners which if you accept and send your engagement for their saffe goeing and returne they shalbe redy upon your answer to come with such propositions as I conceive to be both just and honourable for bothe sides: the reason why I admitt of no cessation of Armes dureing the treaty is to keep every man at his distance not knowing how things may take effect, and so rest

Your Servant,

Chester, Jan. 20th, 1645.

JO. BYRON.

Sir William Brereton's reply to my Lord's last letter.  
My Lord,

My former Sumons and sev'all tenders of honourable conditions doth sufficiently wittnesse to all men the reality of my desires for the preservation of that Citty wherin I have so great an Interest besides the publick concernment: yet neither that interest nor any othere shall incline me to an action of dishonour or disadvantage to more publique engagements, but I must tell you that it shalbe my care (after so many results of honourable conditions or the expence of so much tyme and effusion of so much blood) not to admitt of any but such as are fitt for me to grant as well as you to receive. There is a vast differance betwixt the conditions you might have expected when I first summoned you, and those I can now afford you, yet that all the world may see that I desire not the increase of the Cittys miseries and charge I am contented (if you thinke your propositions of too heigh concernement to be sent by a trumpett) to grant a passe for any two gentlemen you will appoynt to come along with them, and bring your propositions to my quarters this day or to-morrow by ten of the clocke, where they shall receive befitting respects and our resolutions to treat with Commissioners or a reasonable answer from

Your servant,

from my quarters in the suburbs  
Jan. 21, 1645.

WILL: BRERETON.



To which the Lord Byron sent this answer the same day.

Sir,

I have by my trumpett recived your letter and shall to-morrow by noone by Sir Edmond Verney and Sargt. Maior Tho. Throppe send the propositions required by your letter, and have therefore sent this Trumpett to desire a passe for them their horses and servants for their safe comeing to you and return back. I shall send my Trumpett to attend them to your bridge whence they will expect to be accompanied to your quarters, by such whom you shall appoint to meete them there, and conduct them thithere

I am,

Your servant,

Chester, Jan. 21, 1645.

JO. BYRON.

I expect that the proposition be sent back by whome you shall receive them, so rest

J. B.

By the same Trumpitter was sent back this letter directed to the Lord Byron.

Sir,

I have received your letter and have hereinclosed sent you a passe for those gentlemen you nominated, and will send a convey which shall receive them at your fort upon the sounding of your trumpett at tenne of the clock to-morrow morneing and in the meane tyme I rest

Your servant,

Chester suburbs.

WILL BRERETON.

January, 21, 1645.

On January 22nd, Sir Edmund Verney and Major Throppe, the Commissioners appointed by Lord Byron, went with the Governor's propositions to Brereton's headquarters, but the demands made appeared to the Parliamentary General so high and in some respects unparalleled, that they were rejected with scorn and disdain. They included not only the stipulation for the marching away of the garrison in " compleat armes, drums beating, collours flying," but also liberty to take away their goods and baggage unmolested.

Jan. 22. The day appointed being now come, the said two gentlemen went with the citty propositions from the Lord Byron to the Besiegers headquarter, where most of the officers commanders attended their coming. A breviat of which propositions are those which follow :

Imp. That the Lo. Byron himselfe, all noblemen, comandars, officers, gentlemen and soldiers of horse and foot in the city, castle and fort have liberty to march away in compleat armes, drums beating, collours flying, etc., and that such of the city as desire to stay may enjoy their armes, goods, etc.

2. That any person, nor the person of any nobleman, comander, etc., nor their servants, be searched upon any pretence whatsoever, but liberty to march or stay as ye see good, etc.

3. That none of ye Armye intice any officer or souldier from their regiment or colours under any pretence whatsoever.

4. That no person comprehended in these articles shall in their March or Randevouse be searched or plundered on any pretence soever.

5. That I have with me two pieces of brass canon, one case of drakes with their traine and equipage with as much powder to discharge them twelve tymes and ten barrells of powder, bullet and match proportionable.

6. That sick and wounded officers and soldiers y<sup>t</sup> remaine be provided for and when they recover have passes to their colours or what army or garrison of the King's they please.

7. That all military officers, gunpowder makers, etc., have liberty to march away with Bag and Baggage.

8. That such a number of carts, horses and boats as I shall desire to carry good[s] armes and baggage be made ready, etc.

9. That any person in the precedent or subsequent articles may have liberty to goe beyond seas at any time within three months.

10. That the wives of any officer or souldier whatsoever within or belonging to this citty may have liberty to stay and dispose of their states and to depart with their moneyes or goods any time within three months.

11. That the Earle of Litchfield's body may be conveyed to Oxford, and the Earle of Derby's body and others to such places as their friends desire to be interred.

12. That the Bishop of Armagh's library, the Countesse of Buckingham's goods and all others that have brought their goods to this garrison for safety may have liberty to take them away to Conway or to any other place whatsoever.

13. That the fort at Handbridge be demolished, etc.

14. That upon agreement betwixt Kinge and Parliament the citty and castle be delivered to the Kinge or whom he shall appoint to receive it, and that upon demand.

15. That a generall exchange be of all prisoners and what cannot be exchanged to be ransomed for a mounthe's pay.

16. That there be a cessation of Armes for tenne dayes in North Wales and that my selfe or what officers and gentlemen I please not exceeding fifty have a passe to goe to his Matie : and to returne into any part of North Wales within that tyme, and in the meane tyme no free quarter or taxation to be layd upon North Wales.

17. That a convey of 200 horse be appointed for our guard to Conway.

18. That sufficient hostages be delivered up such as I shall approve be delivered to the Governor of Denbigh till the Articles be performed.

19. That all cittizens as well souldiers as others together with the noblemen, officers, cittizens, etc., enjoy their lives and estates as formerly and that none be compelled to beare Armes against their will, and that Justice be administered according to the knowne lawes of the Kingdome by the civill Majestrate.

20. That all noblemen, gentlemen, officers, etc., have leave to live at their owne houses in England and Wales and enjoy all their estates as freely as formerly.

21. That no oath, covenant or protestation except such as be required by the Statutes of ye Kingdome be imposed upon any gentleman, officer, cittizen or other, etc.

22. That if any cittizen shall desire to goe beyond seas any tyme within six mounthes shall have liberty to that purpose.

23. That the Garrison which shalbe placed in the Citty be onely Cheshiremen.

24. That the Maior, Aldermen, Sheriffs and Cittizens, etc., shall injoy all there Auncient liberties, Immunities and free trade by land and sea, and that none be questioned for any act done formerly.

25. That noe Nobleman, gentlemen, etc., be questioned under pretence of any act done or word sayd or any commission or command executed before this tyme, etc.

26. That the whole Army shall not enter the Citty but the officers commanders and such a number of Souldiers as are agreed upon and those Cheshire men onely, etc.

27. That the dee mills and the causey with the water works and towre be not demolished, etc.

28. That all Citizens, gentlemen, etc., have the liberty of twelve mounthis to remove themselves and famelyes out of the Citty.

29. That all the persons that have dwellings in the Citty though absent have the benifite of these Articles.

30. That all maner of persons have liberty to take the benifite of the law for preservation of their estates.

31. That no Nobleman, gentleman, officer, etc., shalbe compelled to any excessive taxation but such as formerly.

32. That all the Clergie of or within the Citty have liberty to goe to their liveings and spirituall promotions and enjoy all their rights, tythes, etc., without any molestation and that such as have any presentation to any liveing may not be hindred to have institution and induction.

33. That no Church or Churches within the Citty be defaced, that all that belong to the Cathedrall injoy there places, and all Romes and furniture be preserved from violence or profane abuse.

34. That Sir Gilbert Houghton, Bart., etc, and what Noblemen, gentlemen, etc., will goe alonge with him have passes to goe to Oxford or any othere of the King's armys or Garrisons.

35. That all Ladyes and gentlewomen have liberty to goe away with their horses servants and goods, or take the benefite of the tenth Article as seemes good to them.

36. That such Merchants within the Citty as desire to goe into North Wales about their occations have liberty to goe and to returne to the Citty any tyme in six months.

Brereton tendered to the commissioners his reply and the conditions he thought fit to propose, neither of which would they receive. Copies of these conditions were thrown over the city walls. They offered liberty to all Welsh soldiers and officers to go away to their own homes; to the Irish who had not taken part with the rebels, liberty to return into Ireland, or to march to any of the King's garrisons; to the citizens who were not Commissioners of Array or Members of Parliament and had not borne arms, liberty of their estates and freedom of trade, taking only the National Covenant.

1645-6. January 22.—Sir William Brereton to Lord Byron.

I should not have expected proposition of so high demands as those you have sent. We know your wants are great, your hopes of relief desperate. I will not trouble myself with answering the particulars of your unparalleled demands, yet to witness my desire for the preservation of the city I have thought fit to tender these enclosed conditions for the performance whereof commissioners may meet and treat.

Imp: That the Citty Castle and fort without any slighting or defaceing thereof, with all the Ordinance, Armes, Ammunition or other furniture and provision of Warre therein whatso-

ever (except what is allowed to be carried away and is hereafter mentioned) with the County Palatynse seale, sword and all the Records in the Castle and City without diminution, imbezeling or defacing be delivered up to me, or such as I shall appointe for the use of the Kinge and Parliament upon Saturday the 24th of this instant January, by eleven of the clocke in the fore-noone of the same day.

2. That none of the comandars, officers or souldiers or any other at or before their marching away doe injure or plunder the person or goods of any within ye Citty nor carry any thing away but what is allowed by these Articles.

3. That such officers and souldiers as shalbe left sick or wounded in the Citty or Castle shall have liberty to stay untill their recoverie and then have safe conduct to goe to Bridgnorth, Ludlowe or such place as by Commissioners may be agreed on, and in the meane tyme shalbe protected.

4. That upon signeinge of these Articles all the prisoners in the Citty and Castle that have bine in armes for the Parliament, or imprisoned for adhearing thereunto shalbe imediatly set at liberty.

5. That such a sum of money as shalbe concluded upon by Commissioners on both sides be raised and paid for satisfaction of the souldiery to prevent the plunder and spoile of ye Citty.

6. That all cittizens and others now residinge within the City shalbe saved or secured in their persons, and their goods and estates preserved and kept from the plunder and violence of ye souldiers and have the like freedome of Trade as other Townes and Cittyes under the Parliaments protection have.

7. That all the Welsh officers and souldiers shall have liberty to goe and live at their owne houses, and that the Irish (who have not taken part with the rebels in Ireland) shall have licence to returne into Ireland or to march to any of the King's garrisons at their election.

8. That the Governour and such noblemen, gentlemen, cittizens and souldiers as are so minded, and are now in the Citty (except those that have bine members of this present parliament and have deserted the same; the Commissioners of Aray for the county and citty of Chester, and such as were of that grand jury that indicted many of high treason against the Kinge for their fidelity to the Kingdome) shall have liberty to march to such places as shalbe agreed on by Commissioners in maner following vizt. : the Governour with four horses and his Armes with not above 50<sup>li</sup> in money with him, every feild officer two horses, every Captain of foot and horse and Lieut. of horse one horse apeece, and none of them to carry with him above 10<sup>li</sup> in money, the Lieutenants of foot, ensignes and other

inferiour officers with swords only (without horse) non of them with above twenty shillings in money, and the common souldiers without Armes not any of them carrying above five shillings in money.

9. That the said Governour and such noblemen and gentlemen, commanders, officers, cittizens and souldiers as do march away shall have a sufficient convey to such places as Commissioners shall agree on, to secure them in their march from all injuries and incivillities that may any wise be offered them.

Brereton's account to the Speaker is as follows :—

1645. January 23. Chester Suburbs.—Sir William Brereton to William Lenthall.

The last night we took four of their spies, and by them and by letters intercepted from Sir Richard Lloyd to Watts, the Governor of Chirk Castle we discover their designs and strong hopes of present relief, which, I belief did encourage them by Sir Edmond Varney and Major Thropp their commissioners put out this day to make such high demands in their thirty-six propositions, whereof there cannot be six assented unto, and the rest some of them most high and unparalleled which were returned with as much scorn and disdain as they were sent out with confidence. I tendered unto them my answer to Byron's letter, and such conditions enclosed as I thought fit to propose, neither whereof would they receive. Our bridge over Dee was—by breach of the weather—disordered and made unserviceable two days, after which time it was repaired. The enemy is possessed of strong hopes of relief by sea, and to that end have at Ruthland and Conway prepared several vessels laden with corn, bacon and other provisions. For prevention whereof wee have provided several small barques, which are manned with musketeers and furnished with ordnance, where-with we doubt not—by God's blessing—to secure that passage and to seize or repel those that come to their relief, whereof I have received strong assurance from Captain Rich. We are now again furnished with some grenadoes for our mortar piece. We are making a battery in the steeple of St. John's Church whence only—upon the Cheshire side—we can command and shoot into the city. But we are so unprovided of tackles and other necessities for the firing and conveying up the great guns that we cannot yet perfect that work, which we hope a few days will finish. Postscript.—Whatsoever you have heard, I do assure you no relief, except a small proportion when our bridge was unserviceable, hath come into the city since I came down [Portland MSS].

1645-6. January 26.—Sir William Brereton to William Lenthall.

The citizens discourse very familiarly and friendly, and say they will be no longer deluded; but their grandees, who have enriched themselves by those honest men's estates which they have siezed and banished out of town, do know themselves in such a desperate condition that I cannot hope for the surrender of the town until they can hold out no longer, and the rather because they have an expectation of relief by Ashly and these forces that are preparing to join with them. To prevent the conjunction of the Welsh forces with them is that which is most necessary. To this end I have sent three regiments of horse, the Reformadoes, the Warwickshire, the Staffordshire, and my dragoons, which party I believe will make near 900 or 1,000, whereof Colonel Mytton takes the charge and command, who marched yesterday towards Ruthin to find out the Lord St. Paul, who hath gathered about 700 or 800 horse and foot, many of them forced men, whom if we could disperse might much advantage us, and disappoint and discourage the enemy. Postscript.—Yesterday the Mayor sent out to desire my propositions might be sent unto the town, whereunto I replied: If the Lord Byron sent out a pass this day by noon for two gentlemen they should be sent in, for whom I have now received a pass to meet in the midway but they will not admit them to come into town. The short note that I caused to be thrown over the walls expressing the conditions I offered did produce very good effect [Portland MSS].

Such hard conditions could not, of course, be accepted by the authorities in the city, and several efforts were made, in correspondence, to reduce the terms. Reference is made to the conditions granted to Dutch towns, and to York, Carlisle, and Beeston.

1645. January 27. Chester Castle.—Lord Byron to Sir William Brereton.

Sir,—Those demands of mine, which you term unparalleled, have been heretofore granted by far greater Commanders than yourself, no disparagement to you, to places in a far worse condition than, God be thanked, this is yet. Witness the Bosse, Breda, and Maestricht, and as many other towns as have been beleaguered either by the Spaniards or the Hollanders; or to come near, York and Carlisle, and nearest of all, Beeston Castle; and therefore you must excuse me, if, upon the authority of so many examples, I have not only propounded, but think fit to insist upon them, as the sense of all manner of people in the city. As for your conceit in demanding of myself, and the

rest of the commanders and officers, to be your prisoners, I would have you know, that we esteem our honor so far above our lives, that no extremity whatsoever can put so mean thoughts into the meanest of us all. That to submit to your mercy is by us reckoned amongst those things that we intend never to make use of. I am nevertheless still content that the commissioners whose names I formerly tendered unto you, meet with such as you shall appoint, in any indifferent place, to treat upon honorable conditions; and desire you to assuer yourself that no other will be assented unto, by Your Servant,

JOHN BYRON.

[Pigott's *Chester*, 307.]

Brereton's reply is stern and unflinching, concluding with a merciless threat :—

1645. January 27. Chester Suburbs.—Sir William Brereton to Lord Byron.

My Lord,—I cannot believe that you conceive the war betwixt the Hollanders and the Spaniards is to be made a precedent for us; neither can I believe that such conditions as you demand were granted to the Bosse, Breda, or Maestricht. Sure I am, none such were given to York, Carlisle, or Beeston, though some of them were maintained by as great commanders as yourself, and no disparagement to you. I shall therefore offer to your consideration the example of Liverpool, Basing and Latham, who, by their refusal of honorable terms when they were propounded, were not long after subjected to captivity and the sword. You may, therefore, in pity to all those innocents under your command, tender their safety and the preservation of the city; for which end I have sent your fair and honorable conditions, such as are the sense of all the officers and soldiers with me; which being rejected, you may expect worse from Your Servant,

WM. BRERETON.

[Pigott's *Chester*, 308.]

The Mayor and Mr. Tatton, anxious that no opportunity or excuse should be given to Brereton for the gratification of his implacable vengeance on Chester, sent, January 28th, requesting him to nominate his commissioners, with time and place to discuss terms.

1645. January 28. Chester.

To Sir William Brereton, Baronet, Commander in Chief in the Foregate Street.

My Lord Byron having acquainted us with a letter which he received from you the last night, in answer to his sent by the



said drum; by which we conceive you apprehend a rejection of your propositions, which we must wonder at, well knowing that my Lord writ unto you to appoint an indifferent place, where our and your Commissioners might meet, to treat upon the propositions on both sides, which is apprehended by us to be your sense also; your own propositions implying so much, and you having so often by letter expressed your tender care of the city's preservation, and prevention of the effusion of blood. Our desire therefore is that you will nominate your Commissioners, with the time and place, that ours and yours may meet to debate and treat upon the propositions tendered on both sides, without which there can be no hopes of a conclusion. So expecting your answer we rest, Your Servants,

CHAS. WALLEY, Mayor.

ROB. TATTON.

Brereton, in reply to this, appointed commissioners to meet the commissioners for the city at 10 o'clock the following morning, January 29th, in Foregate Street. Either this meeting was only preliminary, or there was some further delay, for on that day Brereton sends to the Mayor and Mr. Tatton an ungracious and peremptory message:—

1645. January 29.

To the Mayor of Chester and Rob. Tatton, Esq.

Gentlemen, Your several dilatory answers I have received and do assure you that if the Lord Byron, in whom (you say) the sole power to treat resteth, do not consent and act therein, you may forbear sending. Do not deceive yourselves in expectation that I will treat when you please. I am sorry my care for the city's preservation hath produced such unsuitable effects. The further misery that is like to befall the city be on your own heads, and not on, Your Servant,

WILLIAM BRERETON.

Whatever hopes of relief the citizens might have had, were dispelled by the retreat of the Welsh forces under Lord St. Paul before Col. Mytton at Ruthin on January 25th. By this success the intention of the Royalists under Lord Astley and Sir William Vaughan to join with the forces of Lord St. Paul, Col. Gilbert Byron and the Irish under Col. Roger Mostyn, was frustrated. Astley and Vaughan withdrew towards Worcester, abandoning any attempt at relief.

1645-6. January 2. Conway.—The Archbishop of York to the Marquis of Ormond.

May it please your Excellency,

Yours of the 12th of December I received not until yesterday, which was the 1st of this instant [January]. . . . Chester, with the help of some relief put in, on the Welsh side, may hold out three weeks, and much more, were not the poor unruly, who since the pulling down of so many suburbs, do pester that city. The Mayor's wife, always suspected, is gone to the enemy. Our forces from Wales, of some 100 horse (for foot we have none), under the conduct of Major Evet, put in this last supply of meal and powder, whilst the enemy were withdrawn in part to meet Sir William Vaughan, lingering at High Ercall, with 1,500 horse and foot (near which place he cut off 800 rebels in one quarter), in expectation of the main supply from Oxford and Worcester, under Lord Astley and Sir Charles Lucas, who should add unto his number in horse and foot, 2,200 more. We of the Welsh being quite frightened (and three of our five counties being for a great part of them under contribution to the enemy), are not able to make above 300 horse, and scarce so many foot, being, by a piece of ill-conduct in Prince Rupert when he was last in these parts, quite disarmed and discouraged. All these, joined with the foot mentioned in your Excellency's letter, will be more than able, with God's leave, to relieve Chester, and less will not do it. For they set their rest upon this business, and being defeated in this attempt are broken in these parts of the Kingdom.

And although, most excellent Lord, the place be in extraordinary danger, and that the loss of it will draw along with it all those hideous consequences mentioned by your Excellency, as the sudden loss of these parts and all communication with that Kingdom, yet dare not I to advise your Excellency to ship your men until I do hear more certainly of the approach of such succours as are destined by his Majesty. Sir William Vaughan himself being drawn to Wenlock to meet them, but expected by a French Lord, who serves the King, Mons. de Saint Pol [Paul], now in my house, to come down the end of this week. I do therefore send a copy of the effect of your Excellency's letter to Chirk and so to Wenlock, to understand punctually and precisely the time of the succour's falling down, that I may send your Excellency the very daily motions of that army, and hereof I look for an answer within three days.

But the exigency of Chester so requiring, I humbly submit it to Your Excellency's better judgment whether your Excellency will not with all speed transport those men, who need not advance further than Anglesey, Carnarvon, and the skirts

of Denbighshire, but remain so unengaged until the King's horse shall meet and receive them, and they in the meantime will secure these tottering counties. And the vessels that transport them may for eight or ten days lie to ride very securely in that sleeve between Anglesey and Carnarvonshire, until the foot shall punctually understand what to trust unto.

If your Excellency's men do arrive here, they shall be, by God's blessing, provided of good and safe quarters, all along to their joining with the relief, and have necessary refreshment; but I fear me the business will not suffer them to use that plentifully until the action be performed. But who shall assure you of this, my Lord Byron being in Chester, I do not know, but do write to him likewise of that point, and do promise faithfully my own diligence to the utmost of my power to effect it. But I must be clear with your Excellency that his Majesty hath given me no real commission or authority in this place (although I could have given him, whilst my body was able to bear it, a better account than he hath had of these town and counties). But what I do, is by private interest and for particular ends thwarted and opposed by such as should further the service; yet I hope, in God, I shall be able to do what your Lordship desires in this just and reasonable demand.

Your Excellency's most humble and faithful servant,

JO. EBORAC.

Writing to Lord Astley on the 25th of January, the Archbishop says:—

From the Lord-Lieutenant [Ormond] I have received no answer in writing as yet, though my letters to his Excellency were many since the 1st of January; nor from the Lord Digby any more to the purpose than this enclosed. There is, noble Lord, no relying upon these Irish forces for this service; though if they come they shall be carefully transposed to such a rendezvous as I hear is most fitting for the passage of your Lordship's army. And for that end your Lordship shall be punctually informed of their landing and condition. In the meantime, it is fit your Lordship should understand that under Col. Gilbert Byron, the Lord of St. Paul is in these parts, at the head of 600 (as he saith), but I believe of 500 horse and foot, good men and well-armed, to be directed and employed by your Lordship. Next, that Lieut.-Col. Roger Mostyn is landed with a piece of a regiment (some 160 men, as Col. Butler tells me) of the Lord Digby's raised in Ireland, of English and some Lorainuses [*sic*], and he will be able to make it up 200 upon his own credit (a Commissioner of Array and Peace in this country), and will be after a day or two's refreshment at your Lordship's disposal.

I have it from good and knowing hands, that the armed and fighting men at Chester are above 4,000, whereof many may issue forth [Tanner MSS., vol. lx., folio 386].

The following letter is said to have been flung over the walls into the city, a few days before the capitulation.

Gentlemen, You are renowned throughout this Kingdom, your fidelity, valour and patience those on this side testifie no less, ingeniously confessing that they have not met with a more gallant enemy in any part whatsoever. Goe on and proceed for I do assure you that this long and tedious winter siege is ready now to make a sudden rupture among us; much adoe we have to hold together, and if you do but once more bring provision into ye citty, you need no other friends to raise the siege, for they are much troubled at the former business and a second one will make them mad. You have relief coming unto you, to prevent which, forces are drawing hence, and of which you may make use as ye shall see occasion, for wee have here a number of rude ignorant country fellows which I am confident cannot endure a charge. The God of heaven bless you all and that most liall city which will be famous to all posterity. So praveth a welwisher of the same, who hereafter may be better knowne unto you.

To all comandars of forces and soldiers together with the Maior, aldermen and cittizens of his Majesties most liall city of Chester, a welwisher of theres desires earnestly that this upon receipt may be presented from the suburbs.

The commissioners met on January 30th to discuss the terms of surrender. Lord Byron selected eighteen commissioners, but a greater number were appointed on behalf of the Parliamentarians, because, as Brereton afterwards explained, he wished "the soldiers to be better satisfied with that which was agreed unto by their own officers, and the officers, he believed, would be more careful to keep the soldiers to an observance of those conditions, which they themselves had signed and ratified."

The conference continued for several days, as the city commissioners were not agreed upon certain points. At length the Articles of Surrender, eighteen in number, were agreed to and subscribed by twelve of the city commissioners. The others dissented from some of the articles

and therefore refused to sign the Treaty, which, however, was confirmed in due course by Lord Byron.<sup>42</sup>

#### THE ARTICLES OF SURRENDER.

ARTICLE I. That the Lord Byron, and all Noblemen, Commanders, Officers, Gentlemen, and Soldiers, and all other persons whatsoever, now residing in the city of Chester, and the castle and fort thereof, shall have liberty to march out of the said city, castle, and fort, with all their apparel whatsoever, and no other, or more goods, horse or arms, than are hereafter mentioned, viz. :—The Lord Byron with his horse and arms, and ten men with their horses and arms, to attend him; also his lady and servants, two coaches, and four horses in each of them, for the accommodation of them and such other ladies and gentlewomen as the said Lord Byron shall think meet; with eighty of the said Lord's books, and all his deeds and evidences, manuscripts, and writings in his possession. And the said Lord and Lady, nor any of his attendants, shall carry amongst them all above forty pounds in money, and twenty pounds in plate. The rest of the Noblemen with their ladies and servants, to march with their horses, each of the said Lords, attended with four men, their horses and arms; and every such Nobleman carrying with him not above thirty pounds in money. Every Knight and Colonel to march with two men, their horses and arms; no such Knight or Colonel to carry with him above ten pounds in money. Every Lieutenant-Colonel, Major, and Captain of horse, with one man their horses and arms; and such Lieutenant-Colonel, Major, and Captain, not to carry with him above five pounds in money. Every Captain of foot, Esquire, Graduate, Preaching Minister, Gentleman of quality, the Advocate and Secretary of the army, every one of them with his own horse and sword, the Ministers without swords; none of them carrying with him above fifty shillings; and the Ministers to have all their own manuscripts, notes and evidences. Lieutenants, Cornets, Ensigns, and other inferior Officers, in commission, on foot, with every man his own sword, and not above twenty shillings in money. All troopers, soldiers, gun powder-makers, cannoniers, and all others not before-mentioned, to march without horse or arms; and that none of the said persons before-mentioned shall, in their march, after they are out of the city and the liberties thereof, be plundered, searched, or molested.

II. That all women of what degree soever, that please to march out of the city, shall have all their apparel with them;

<sup>42</sup> The dissentients were Sir Francis Gamull, Thomas Cowper, Robert Brerewood, Charles Walley, Edward Morgell and Robert Harvey.

and such officers wives whose husbands are prisoners, or absent, may carry such sums of money with them as are allowed by these articles to commanders, officers, or gentlemen, of their husbands' qualities and no more.

III. That none of the commanders, officers, or soldiers, or any other, at or before their marching out of the city, castle, or fort, injure or plunder the person or goods of any; nor carry any thing away out of the city, castle, or fort, but what is their own, and hereby allowed.

IV. That all citizens and others now residing within the city, shall be saved and secured in their persons, and their goods and estates within the city and liberties thereof be preserved and kept from the plunder and violence of the soldiers; and have the like freedom of trade as other towns under the Parliament protection have, and such immunities as they of right ought to have. And that every such merchant and tradesman of Chester as shall desire to go into North Wales to look after his goods, shall have a pass to go thither and return back again, he first giving security that during his absence he will do no act to the prejudice of the Parliament; and that no such person shall at any time without license, carry more with him than sufficient to defray the charges of his journey. And that all citizens, and other inhabitants, who shall now or hereafter desire to march out of the city of Chester, and not to act any thing against the Parliament, their wives and families to have the benefits and privileges of inhabitants.

V. That such officers or soldiers as shall be left sick or wounded within the city of Chester, or the castle, or forts, thereof, shall have liberty to stay till their recovery, and have passes or convoy to any of the King's garrisons not blocked up; in the mean time to be provided for.

VI. That the said Lord Byron, Noblemen, commanders, gentlemen, officers, and soldiers, and all others that shall march out of town, shall have liberty to march to Conway, and five days are allowed them to march thither, with a convoy of two hundred horse; the Welsh officers and soldiers shall have liberty to go to their own homes, all of them to have free quarters on their march, and twelve carriages if they shall have occasion to use so many, which carriages are to be returned on the sixth day, and that passes be given them for their safe return to Chester, and that they be secured until they return thither.

VII. That no soldier on his march shall be inveigled or enticed from his colours or command, with any promise or inducement whatsoever.

VIII. That all such persons, citizens, or others, who have families in Chester, and are now in places remote, shall have the like benefit of these articles, as those who are now resident in the city.

IX. That the friends of the Earl of Derby, and Lichfield, or any of those whose dead bodies are not yet interred in Chester, shall have two months time to fetch them thence whither they please, provided that none of them come attended with above twenty horses.

X. That no church within the city, or evidence, or writings belonging to the same, shall be defaced.

XI. That such Irish as were born of Irish parents, and have taken part with the rebels in Ireland, now in the city, shall be prisoners.

XII. That all those horses and arms belonging to those that march out, and not be these articles allowed to be taken and carried out of the city, except such horses as are the proper goods of the citizens and inhabitants that shall remain in the city before the delivery of the same, be brought, the horses into the castle-court, and the arms in the shire-hall, where officers shall be appointed to receive them.

XIII. That in consideration of this, the said city and castle without any slighting or defacing thereof, with all the ordnance, arms, ammunition, and all other furniture and provision of war therein whatsoever, except what is allowed to be carried away and herein mentioned, with the County Palatine Seal, Sword, and all the records in the castle without diminution, embezzling, or defacing be delivered to the said Sir William Brereton, or such as he shall appoint, for the use of the King and Parliament upon Tuesday next, being the third of this instant February, 1645, by ten of the clock in the forenoon.

XIV. That the fort, with all ordnance, arms, ammunition, and provisions therein, of what sort whatsoever, not firmly granted or allowed of upon the signing these articles be delivered to Sir William Brereton, or such as he shall appoint.

XV. That upon signing these articles, all prisoners in the city, castle, or fort, that have been in arms for the Parliament, or imprisoned for adhering thereunto, shall immediately be at liberty.

XVI. That the convoys shall not receive an injury on their journey, going or coming back, and shall have three days allowed for their return.

XVII. That if any persons concerned in any of these articles, shall violate any part of them, such persons shall lose the benefit of the said articles.

XVIII. That upon signing of the articles, sufficient hostages (such as shall be approved of) be given for the performance of the said articles.

Signed by us the Commissioners appointed on the behalf of the Right Hon. Lord Byron,

Edmund Verney [knt., col.]	Christopher Blease
John Robinson [lieut.-col.]	[alderman]
Tho. Cholmondeley	William Ince [alderman]
[esquire]	John Werden [esquire]
Peter Griffith [lieut.-col.]	John Johnson [merchant]
Henry Leigh [lieut.-col.]	Edward Moreton [Divine]
Thomas Thropp	Thomas Bridge [clerk]
[sergt.-major]	

What is done by the Commissioners is confirmed by

J. BYRON.

Commissioners for Sir William Brereton :—

John Boothe [col.]	John Bowyer [col.]
Robert Duckenfield [col.]	John Carter [col.]
Chidley Coote [col.]	Jona. Bruen [esquire]
Roger Wilbraham [esquire]	Thos. Hunt [lieut.-col.]
Michael Jones [col.]	Rob. Venables [lieut.-col.]
Adjut. General Louthian	Richd. Bradshaw

I doe ratifie and confirm these articles,

WILL : BRERETON.

Hostages for the performance :—

Colonel Wynn

Colonel Waiate

[Harl. MSS., 2185; Pigott's *Chester*, 309-314].

In accordance with this treaty, the loyal city of Chester, which had held out so staunchly twenty weeks beyond expectation, reduced by the extremity of famine, was, on February 3, 1645-6, surrendered to the Parliamentary forces, who immediately took possession of it; and soon after 2,000 arms and 520 headpieces were brought into the castle, agreeably to the fourteenth article of the Treaty. The House of Commons (February 6, 1645-6), after the reading of a letter from Sir William Brereton of February 2nd, from the suburbs of Chester, reporting the reducing of Chester to the obedience of Parliament, and the conditions of surrender, ordered Mr. Recorder and Mr. Ashurst to prepare a letter of thanks to Brereton and his officers "in acknowledgment of their faithful and very good services, especially in this



great action of Chester." The messenger, Mr. Parker, who brought the letters and good news of the rendition of Chester, was voted the sum of £50.<sup>43</sup>

1646. February 2. Chester Suburbs.—Sir William Brereton to William Lenthall.

Honourable Sir,

The care of preserving this city from ruin (being the most considerable in this part of the Kingdom), invited [me] to entertain a treaty, wherein at least ten days were spent in several transactions, the enemy still using protraction and delays in hope of their expected relieve; for which end strong preparations were made, whereof we received frequent advertisements from several persons that Astley and Vaughan had united their forces, and lay hovering about Bridgnorth. Their intention was to have joined with the Welsh forces under Lord St. Paul, with those Irish that came over in December last, and those other now lately landed at Beaumaris, which were part of the Lord Digby's regiment, some whereof are English, and some Lorrainers, as these enclosed intercepted letters mention. To prevent the conjunction of which forces I sent three regiments of horse, the Warwickshire, the Reformadoes regiment, and part of the Staffordshire horse, and some of the Cheshire dragoons, together with Col. Mytton's horse and foot. This party was commanded by Col. Mytton, who marched to Ruthin upon Saturday night, January 24th, intending to fall upon the enemy in their quarters, but they escaped and marched to Denbigh, and so towards Conway. Nevertheless, our forces came most seasonably, for Ruthin Castle was so unprovided, as that we have now great hopes of reducing that strong castle. However, the conjunctions of the forces is hereby prevented, which probably occasioned the enemy's retreat after they had quartered three or four days about Bridgnorth and Shiffnal, and had drawn out some small pieces and two cases of Jacks [?]. So as the besieged, being now hopeless of relief, sent out their Commissioners on the 30th of January to treat with ours, whose names are herein enclosed.

The number was proposed by them, and assented to by us, to the end that better satisfaction might be given to the common soldiers when some of their own officers were entrusted and employed in treating and making compositions for them, that they might also be thereby obliged to restrain their soldiers from plunder and violation of what is concluded and agreed upon.

The first day nothing was concluded upon.

<sup>43</sup> £10 was given to the messenger who brought the news of the taking of Beeston Castle.

This day, January 31st, they were mighty importune that the treaty might be continued and respited until Monday morning at nine o'clock, which being refused, they delayed not to enter into a treaty. Whereupon it was concluded, to be delivered upon the enclosed conditions, whereunto it was the rather assented to prevent the plunder of the city, which could not have been preserved if it had not been taken by composition. That which further remains is the satisfying of the soldiers and the settling of the city, which will prove a work of great difficulty, wherein my endeavours shall not be wanting to the utmost of my abilities, or to serve the public in any other employment commanded, and shall ever profess myself to be Sir,

Your most faithful friend and humble servant,

WILLIAM BRERETON.

Though this letter was dated February 2nd, yet I thought fit to stay the messenger until we were able to send you the certainty that we were possessed of the city. What ordnance, arms, or ammunition, or what Irish are found therein, you may expect to receive an account in my next. I do not hear any further reports of the Irish, neither do I believe they will be now less forward to adventure into these parts.

WILLIAM BRERETON.

Chester, February 3rd, 11 of the clock [*King's Pamphlets*, 244-20].

The exultation of Parliament did not end with this grant of money and vote of thanks. It was "ordered that Thursday next should be set apart for a day of Public Thanksgiving to Almighty God for his great mercy in giving up the strong city of Chester into the hands of the Parliament, to be observed and kept in all churches and chapels in the cities of London and Westminster and within the lines of communications and ten miles of the said cities; and that the Lord Mayor be desired to give the several ministers within the limits aforesaid timely notice hereof, to the end they may stir up the people to a due thankfulness in regard both of the seasonableness and greatness of the mercy."

Colonel Michael Jones was appointed Governor of Chester, and Alderman Edwards, Colonel to command the City Regiment of Chester. Brereton was ordered to put the ordinance in execution against the Irish that were taken in Chester [*Commons Journal*].

Writing in February to the Speaker, he points out that the city is generally disaffected towards Parliament, and requires, for security, a strong force of men, and a considerable sum of money which must be expended in procuring a magazine of ammunition, and good store of provisions, as well as to alter and strengthen the fortifications. This means help from outside, for both city and county were exhausted by being for three years the seat of war, and by the burden of the long siege.

1645-6. February. Chester. Sir William Brereton and others to William Lenthall.

The city itself is generally disaffected towards us, so that without a strong force we shall be unable to secure the city or ourselves, no less than 1,500 foot and 200 horse being sufficient for that work. It will also require a large sum of money to lay in a magazine of ammunition, to have a store well furnished with provisions and also to alter and strengthen the fortifications, which cannot be done without assistance from neighbouring parts, none, as we conceive, being more obliged hereunto than the nearer parts of North Wales which, we must expect and shall desire to reduce by our own forces, Holt, Hawarden and Flint being three castles that in a manner block up this city on the Welsh side for present, and the Parliament's forces in North Wales being so inconsiderable that of themselves they are not able to reduce these holds. Also these parts having constantly had their livelihood by their trade and commerce with this city will be most awed to the Parliament and secured in their estates by the forces maintained in this place. We therefore crave that we may have the command of at least twelve miles in North Wales to assist for the maintenance of this garrison. The poverty of this place is such on account of their want of trade and the exactions, and the county so exhausted by being for three years a seat of war, and finally by the burden of this long siege that they cannot without assistance bear the burden necessary to be imposed [Portland MSS., 352].

1646. August.—Further inducements to move a speedy answer to the [Cheshire] petition.

That the small county of Chester, since the beginning of the war, was necessitated to raise treble the number of forces it was able to pay or the neighbouring counties proportionately raised, whereby the county is in great arrears to the soldiers.

That the charge of the leaguer before Chester being 19 weeks, was near £80,000, so that Sir William Brereton and the Deputy

Lieutenants engaged themselves for great sums for provisions, which are yet unpaid.

That upon the reducing of Chester they were also forced to engage themselves in £18,000 to the soldiers, a month's pay, otherwise they would not have been restrained from plundering the city and county of which there is near £8,000 yet unpaid.

That then the reducing of the forces had been attempted, but that many of the horse were ordered by the Committee of both kingdoms into Wales, and of the foot to the leaguer of Lichfield Close, whence they are all now returned and lie on free quarter expecting arrears and pay till they be reduced.

That some of the auxiliary forces yet unpaid of their month's pay promised at the reducing of Chester threaten to come and plunder the county for the same.

That the Excise is hitherto wholly obstructed and the people in a tumultuous manner have risen against the Commissioners and the soldiers express themselves against the Excise, so that there is little hope it can be set up till they are paid and reduced.

Among Brereton's manuscripts are preserved some notes showing the cost of this important siege, the number of troops engaged and the amounts paid to the several items.

A note of ye weekly charge of ye Leaguer before Chester from September 18<sup>o</sup> to January being more than 16 weekes, parte whereof is paid and a great parte is in arreare.

	£	s.	d.
On Cheshire side weekly provisions ffor foote			
being 2,500	-	-	- 0291 13 04
For ye horse, ye Reformadoes, Lancashire and Warwickshire horse included, being 1,800	-		0540 00 00
For ye quarters of ye officers in the suburbs which cannot otherwise be provided for weekly pay, paid or expected	-	-	- 50 00 00
ffor ye foote souldiers	-	-	- 583 06 08
More for ye Staffordshire foote who have provision out of their own county but have had and expect pay from us being 560	-	-	- 130 13 4
for ye horse at 5 <sup>s</sup> per weeke	-	-	- 450 0 0
for ye officers of horse	-	-	- 337 0 0
for ye officers of foote	-	-	- 520 0 0
On ye Welsh side weekly provision			
ffor 1100 foote	-	-	- 128 6 8
for ye officers	-	-	- 6 0 0
for ye horse being 1700	-	-	- 595 0 0
for ye headquarters in severall places	-	-	- 20 0 0



# FORCES BEFORE CHESTER

201

Foote									
Tarvin	Sr W. Brereton's owne company under ye								
	conduct of Lt.-Col. Venables	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150
Wirhall	Lt. Col Cooke	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100
Hooton									
Nantwich	Major Croxton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	160
At sall	Ld Calvin Capt. about	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100
Dragoon	Capt. Finch about	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70
Salop	Capt. Sadler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70
Staffe	Capt. Monke	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60
Wyre	Capt. Greene	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	120
Wirhall	Capt. Glegge now disposed of Capt. Birkened								160
	Capt. Grubert's Dragoons	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	160
	Capt. Hulse & Cholmunley	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60
Wyr	Capt. Rathbone	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80
Tarvin	Capt. Hardware	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60
Sallop	Capt. Spicere	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40
Wirhall	Capt. Wm. and Capt. Rich. Coventry and								
	Capt. Ball	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150
	Capt Houlte's ffirelocks	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80
									<hr/> 1520
	Adj. Louthane's Company Broxton Hundred								80
Dissolved	Col. Boothe's Regt. (his owne compy. under								
	Major Daniell)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70
	Lt.-Coll. Massyes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	160
Country	Capt. Alcocke	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Country	Capt. Grantham	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100
Salop	Capt. Geo. Massey	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Salop	Capt. Cartwright	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100
Both at	Capt. Wright and	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Salop	Capt. Whitney	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80
Nantwich	Two Nantwich Compies of Townsmen under								
	Capt. Geo. and Capt. Thos. Mauberne	-							200
									<hr/> 710
	Coll: Brookes his Regt. of ffoote.								
	His owne company under Major Church of								
	Bucklow Hundred	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	140
Houghton									
Castle	Lt. Coll. Rich. Brooke	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60
Bridge									
Strafford	Capt. John Brooke	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70
Tarvin	Capt. Wm. Daniell	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60

Nantwich	Capt Delves & - - - - -	}	160
both	Captaine Blomell of ye Towne of Namptwh		
Dissolved	Lt. Tutchet's country company - - -	-	80
			<hr/> 570

Collonell Duckenfeild Regt.			
	His owne company - - - - -	-	120
Country Companies	Capt. Boothe's & - - - - -	}	140
	Capt. Wattsones - - - - -		
	Capt. Syddall & - - - - -	}	120
	Capt. Sellmerdine - - - - -		
	Capt. Smyth [Wm. Duckenfeild erased] -	-	60
			<hr/> 580

Coll. Leigh's Regt.			
	His owne company - - - - -	-	100
Tarvin	Lt. Coll. Gerrard - - - - -	-	100
Country	Capt. Acton & Capt. Walley - - - - -	-	120
Northwich	Capt. Pigget of ye Towne of Northwich -	-	120
County	Lt. Birtle's County company - - - - -	-	80
			<hr/> 520

## Collonel Manwaireing his Regiment

Captaine	Leadbeater	}	about 160 all country men
"	Cotton		
"	Baskerville		
"	Hancocke		

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160

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Horse	790
foote	4140
<hr/>	
in toto	4930
<hr/>	

[Add. MSS., 11,831, 45].



## CHAPTER IX.

### The Devastation Caused by the Siege. Parliamentarians in Power.

It would be difficult to estimate the pecuniary losses sustained by the citizens of Chester during this most calamitous conflict. "For a period of three years," writes Hemingway in his *History of Chester* [i., 196], "nothing was heard but the sound of warlike preparation, and for a considerable portion of it they were shut up within the walls, the victims of starvation, while they were distracted with momentary apprehensions of the forcible entry of a vindictive and enraged soldiery. The incessant drains upon their property, in the shape of levies for the maintenance of the garrison, and the support of their fugitive prince, had levelled the different classes of the community, and reduced the whole to one common condition of absolute beggary. Desolation and destruction marked the suburbs, which presented an undistinguished mass of ruins, the only remains of dwellings, while our walls and edifices within the city were defaced or battered down by the destructive cannon. In addition to this, the city lands were all mortgaged, the funds quite exhausted, the plate melted down, and the churches, particularly St. John's, being so long in the possession of the enemy, greatly damaged."

Randle Holme, jun. has preserved for us a most pathetic description of the ruin caused in Chester through this disastrous war.

Thus of the moste anchante and famous cittie of Chester, in times past; but now beholde and mark the ruines of it in these present times, within these few years, namely, within these three years, 1643, 1644, 1645, the particular demolitions of it, now most grievous to the spectators, and more woefull to the inhabitants thereof.

*Imprimis*, without the Barrs, the chappelle of Spittle, with all the houses, and gardens, and edifices there, upon Sir Will : Brereton's first assault made upon the cittie.



All the houses, barns and buildings near to the Barrs, with Great Boughton and Christleton.

In the Foregate Street, Cow-lane, St. John's Lane, with those houses next to the Eastgate, all burned to the ground.

Without the Northgate, from the said gate to the last house, Mr. Duttons [Jollye's hall], all burned and consumed to the ground, with all the lanes to the same, with the Chappelle of Little St. John, not to be found, when the mud walls and suburbs were surprised, Saturday morning. . . .

From Dee-bridge over the water, all that long street called Handbridge, with all the lanes, barnes and buildings about it, ruinated and burnt to the ground when Holt bridge was taken by the Parliament partie and they came on Wales side. After a great part of it being built againe, was burnt to the ground after the rout of the King's partie at Namptwich and the Parliament partie comeing over the ford the second tyme into Wales.

All the glover's houses under the walles of the cittie taken downe about the same tyme.

All the buildings and houses at the Watergate, upon the Roodee, pulled downe at the same tyme.

Besides the Halls of severall gentlemen in the same cittie, and near to it, as the Bache hall, Mr. Edw. Whitbie's, ye recorder.

Blacon hall, Sr. Randall Crewe's.

Overleigh hall or Hough Greene house, Mr. Ellis.

Flookersbrooke hall, Mr. Shingleton's in lease, but Sir Tho : Smith's land.

The fullers or Walkers mills.

Hoole hall, Mr. Bunburie's.

The Water tower at Dee bridge, shot downe in tyme of siege.

Bretton hall, Mr. Ravenscroft's, plundered and burnt little after the parliament partie first goeing into Wales; when they fled back againe, Chester soulders tooke it and about twenty soulders that were in garrison in it.

The Nunne's within the cittie, Sr. Will. Brereton's plundered and plucked downe at the first beginning of the wars because he was of the parliament partie against King and cittie.

The Lord Cholmondeley's house in St. John's Churchyard, plucked downe and burnt by the Parliament partie as they lay in siege about Chester.

Mr. William Gamull's house nere the Newgate, with the new gate house which was his [Mr John Werden's house near unto it].

The destruction of divers other houses in the cittie, with grenades, not a house from Eastgate to the middle of Watergate street on both sides but received some hurt by them, many

sleyne by the fall of houses which were blowen up, St. Peter's Church much defaced and pews torne, and all windows broken by two grenadoes that fell therein.

The ruines of stalls, pentices, doores, trees and barnes, in divers lanes and places in the cittie.

The destroying of the Bishop's palace, with stables in the barne yard, and the ruine of the great church.

The charge of mudd walles, sodding, carrying, and edifying them, with centrye houses, both without the walles and within the walles.

The drawing dry of the cittie's stockes, plate, rentes, and collections, not knowne, all which losses, charges and demolishments, in opinion of most, will amount to two hundred thousand pounds att the least; so farre hath the God of heaven humbled this famous cittie; and note, here, that if Jerusalem, the particular beloved cittie of God, of which it is said in sacred writ, 'count her towers, marke well her bulwarkes,' in man's judgement invincible; yet her sinne provoked God soe, that he leaved not a stone upon another; this may be an advertisement to us, that God's mercy is yett to be found, since he hath left us soe many streets, lanes, and churches, yet unmolested. God grant us faith, patience, and true repentance, and amendment, that a worse danger befall us not. Amen [Harl. MSS., 1944, fol. 98, 99; Hemingway's *Chester*, i., 196-198].

Much information regarding the devastation wrought is contained in the Composition Papers of city Royalists. Extracts from some of these may be cited as typical examples. Alderman Thomas Throppe petitioned, July 28, 1646, that he held property in the city worth £64 13s. 4d. a year, "before the troubles," and deposed that he had housing destroyed and spoiled by grenadoes to the extent that its value was reduced by £15 a year. Widow Streete formerly paid him £13 for a house in St. Peter's parish, but one half the house having been "beaten downe by a granado" it will not yield more than £5 per annum. The chamber of premises in the same parish, let to Joseph Bruen at £4 10s. had also been "torn by a granado." He states that when the city was entered and fortified by the King's forces, he was constrained to accept the command of soldiers there, but never bore arms elsewhere. The sequestrators, in acceding to his request for a certificate of good conduct, exhibit the other side of the picture:

This gentleman, Mr. Thomas Thorpe [*sic*] hath been Maior of this Cittye, a Commissioner of Array and very active in it, hath acted the office of a Major in the souldiery and had a company under him whom he continually kept up violently against the Parliament. He with one or two other (after Sir William Brereton had been here to settle the Militia but could not at that tyme) wente to Yorke to his Majestie to procure a Commissioner of Oyer et Terminer (to keepe the Cittye in awe and feare) which he procured and brought with him to ye greate amazement and terror of all the well affected to the Parliament in this Cittye. Hee alsoe hath been very active in giveinge oaths to the citizens against the Parliament, and was one amongst others very active to keepe the Cittye soe longe against the Parliament to the greater expence of treasure, losse of many men's lives and ruininge of many faire buildings by fire about this Citty. Also he was a most active man in opposing Sir William Brereton when hee came by authority of Parliament to settle the Militia here at the beginning of the Warres.<sup>44</sup>

Alderman Richard Broster had lent much money to the Commissioners of Array, had been very active in giving Oaths against the Parliament and if it had lain in his power, would have kept the Parliamentary forces out of the suburbs. He held a certificate, August 27, 1646, from very many of the leading citizens testifying that upon the taking in of the suburbs he lost £2,500 and that during the siege several fine inns and houses of his formerly yielding £80 a year, were burnt to the ground, besides the loss of his share of the waterworks, which were of great benefit to him, and which were battered down.<sup>45</sup>

Alderman Walley, who held property in the city and county formerly worth £232 8s. 4d. yearly, petitioned, April 7, 1646, that he acted very little against the Parliament and was indeed a principal means for surrendering the city into the hands of the Parliament! It will be remembered that he refused to sign the articles of surrender. His estate was very much exhausted, his goods to the value of £1000 taken away and plundered. After the surrender he had conformed in all things to the command of Parliament, taking the National Covenant and Negative Oath, and was resolved to live in the

<sup>44</sup> *Cheshire Sheaf* (3rd Series), I, 8.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid* (3rd Series), I, 49.

Parliament's service. In addition to his losses and payments enumerated in the reference to him in the Introduction, he states that

*li*

At the army's coming into the suburbs they made my howse their headquarters during the siege, spent all manner of provision which I valeid not, but by unhappy accident as I believe, my howse was fyer'd most part of it burned downe, greater parte of my goods carried away and lost by the souldiers, those that remayned spoyled and pulled in peces which howse and goods will not be made good with - 250

I have one other house in the suburbs called the Red Lyon, parte of it burned, all the goods gone and the house ruined, which will not be repayed with - - - - 200

I had one other house in Boughton nere Chester, both house and outhouse burned down to ground worth<sup>46</sup> - - - 140

The demolition of the Globe Tavern without the Eastgate, the property of Alderman William Edwards and his brother, Mr. Evan Edwards, is also referred to in the following Assembly Orders :

Assembly. Friday, February 2, 1654-5. Richard Byrd, Mayor.

John Joynson, shoemaker, petition, that in the time of the late siege he had received great losse by fire, having had two houses and a kilue burnt to the ground besides many household goods, and that hee had all his bookes, shoes, materiall for his trade and other things, burnt in his shoppe and hee had a wife and six small children to maintaine and was destitute of a shoppe for himselfe and servants to worke in, whereby to maintayne his said charges, and desired the assembly to grant him in fee farme a certaine parcell of waste ground without the Eastgate whereon the Globe Tavern heretofore stood, promising by his said petition to procure a release and surrender from Mr. Evan Edwards, who claymed some interest therein, and that hee would erect a sufficient structure thereupon.—One halfe of the waste ground granted paying 30s. per annum [A.O. 847].

Assembly. Tuesday, August 21, 1655. Richard Byrd, Mayor.

In regard of the great charge Mr. Wm. Edwards, one of the aldermen and justices of the peace, hath been put unto in building a certain messuage called the Globe Taverne upon a certaine parcell of land belonging to the cittie with out the Eastgate, and for that the same messuage was unhappily burnt in the tyme of the late warre to his very greate losse and

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid* (3rd Series), I, 51.

damage, that therefore he shall have a fee farme of the said parcell of ground under the rent of 30s. per annum and likewise paying to the Treasurer by Michaelmas next the sum of £3 [A.O. 870].

As if this ruin and desolation were not ample enough to satisfy any vindictive spirit, a severe ordinance was issued for the city by Parliament on October 1, 1646, displacing the following Royalists from their office: Charles Walley, the Mayor, Nicholas Ince, Randle Holme the younger, Thomas Cowper, Thomas Throppe, Sir Thomas Smith, Sir Francis Gamull, Robert Brerewood, recorder, Richard Dutton and Robert Sproston, aldermen and justices of the peace, James, Earl of Derby, John, Earl Rivers, Richard Broster and Thomas Savage, aldermen, Humphrey Phillippis, Edward Hulton, Thomas Weston, Richard Wright, Humphrey Lloyd, Richard Tailor and Arthur Walley, sheriffs peers, and common council men. Alderman William Edwards, Brereton's friend, was appointed Mayor for the current year, and until the usual time for electing a new Mayor in 1647, and was authorized to call an Assembly for the election of sheriffs, aldermen and common council men to fill vacancies, no "delinquent" being eligible. The Irish and others (not qualified by birth or service) who had been admitted into the freedom of the city "while it was kept in hostilitie to the Parliament," were to be disfranchised. The Dee Mills and Causeway, the property of the staunch loyalist Sir Francis Gamull, were to be demolished within four months and the profits of the mills in the meantime granted to the Mayor towards the expenses of his office. Payments amounting to £470 per annum were to be made out of the revenues of the Dean and Chapter of Chester for the support of preachers at St. Oswald's, St. Peter's, Holy Trinity and St. John's, and £45 per annum to the headmaster and usher of the free school [A.O. 664]. The High Cross was pulled down and the fonts taken out of the parish churches.

It was also ordered that all who had "been expelled the City or occasioned to part thence by reason of there good affection to y<sup>e</sup> Parliament" should be restored to all such

places, etc., which formerly they held. Immediate advantage was taken of this by several disloyal citizens. Thomas Whittle, tanner, pleads October 23, 1646, that he was forced to fly from Chester "by reason of not complyinge with the malignant parties against the Parliament," his estate seized, and his wife and two children "turned out of the town in the depth of winter desolate of mayntenance." He asks for and succeeds in obtaining the appointment of Macebearer [A.O. 669]. Ralphe Minshull, cryer, avails himself of the same order, January 26, 1646 [A.O. 680] and John Iliffe, under keeper of the Northgate gaol is confirmed in his office [A.O. 681]. Upon a petition of a great number of free citizens, May 6, 1648, all "foreigners" who kept inns and victualling houses, were ordered to desist from infringing the liberties of the city [A.O. 690]. William Grice, yeoman, who had been enfranchised April 16, 1644 [A.O. 605] and disfranchised by the Ordinance of Parliament, succeeds in his petition, and is re-admitted September 8, 1648 [A.O. 704, 705].

On November 17, 1646, the election of city officials into the vacancies caused by the displacement of the Royalists was carried through. John Ratcliffe was chosen alderman and recorder instead of Robert Brerewood [A.O. 670] and Calvin Bruen (who had taken an active part in Prynne's affair), Robert Whitby, Robert Wright, Edward Bradshawe (a relative of Judge Bradshaw the regicide), Owen Hughes, Richard Bradshawe, John Whittell, Hugh Leigh, William Crompton and John Johnson were elected aldermen. The Hon. John Glynne, Recorder of the city of London, had previously (October 23rd) been elected alderman in place of James, Earl of Derby [A.O. 666, 667].

It is noteworthy how bad were the spelling and grammar, and how illiterate the writing in the Assembly Book for this year. The entries are carelessly made and after the record of proceedings at the Assembly, January 26, 1646-7, the following page is blank, and there are no more entries for nearly fourteen months. The year 1647 witnessed a terrible visitation of the Plague, the horrors of which were probably

aggravated by the neglect of public cleanliness and the unhealthy conditions which must have arisen from the crowded state of the city during the siege. It is recorded that between June 22, 1647 and April 20th following, no less than 2,099 persons died of the Plague in Chester. Grass grew at the Cross and in the most frequented parts of the city. Cabins for the infected were erected under the Water Tower, and in the adjoining salt-marsh.<sup>47</sup> The following description is taken from a printed contemporary account, probably one of the small quarto newspapers of the time, but it is not possible to say which :—

The Plague takes them very strangely, strikes them black of one side, and then they run mad, some drowne themselves, others would kill themselves; they dye within a few hours, some run up and down the streets in their shirts to the great horror of those in the City.<sup>48</sup>

The distress in the city was brought to the notice of Parliament, when the following ordinance was passed by the House of Commons in August, 1647 :—

Whereas Chester is grievously visited with the pestilence, very few families being clear; by reason whereof almost all persons of ability have left the said city, there remaining for the most part only the poor, who are altogether deprived of trading, and if not presently relieved are likely to perish for want, and endanger the adjacent counties: And whereas the county of Chester is exceedingly impoverished by the late war; 'tis ordered that the ministers of London and Westminster, those in the counties of Chester, Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Southampton, Middlesex, Essex, Hereford, Cambridge, Suffolk and Norfolk, do, on the next Lord's day after the receipt of this ordinance, earnestly move their people to contribute for the relief of the said distressed inhabitants.<sup>49</sup>

As the assembly of citizens could not be held without danger, Parliament issued an order, March 14, 1647-8, confirming the election on October 15, 1647, of Alderman Robert Wright as mayor, and William Wright and Richard Minshall as sheriffs, according to the ordinance of Parliament dated

<sup>47</sup> Ormerod, I, 247, quoting Cowper's MSS.

<sup>48</sup> *History of St. Mary on the Hill, Chester*, by J. P. Earwaker, p. 126.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

October 1, 1646. This order has been copied into the Assembly Book immediately before the record of the next Council meeting, March 17, 1647-8, when Wright and Minshull were elected common councillors and afterwards took their oaths as sheriffs [A.O. 682, 683]. An election of aldermen and common councillors followed on March 24th and on May 6, 1648, Mr. Peter Leighe, ironmonger, who had been concerned in Prynne's case, was elected an alderman [A.O. 685, 686, 688].

The citizens were so impoverished by the war and the Plague that they were quite unable to pay the assessments levied upon them by Parliament, from which they finally appealed to the Speaker.

1648. June 24. Chester.—Robert Wright, mayor, and others to William Lenthall.

The favour shown us by the House during the late plague here, encourages us to address them. This city before its surprisal by the King's forces, faithfully paid all assessments laid on it by Parliament, being about one eleventh of what was imposed on the county, but since then about a fourth part is burnt, the rest almost wholly worn out by the King's forces in their time, and by the payment of great sums by the most able citizens to the use of the Parliament after its reduction, and also by the devastating plague, together with the want of trading all this while. And now in the most miserable condition we are called on to pay assessments for the army and Ireland which we acknowledge are yet unpaid, not from disaffection, but inability. We therefore ask that all arrears may be remitted, and that for the future the city may be charged at only a reasonable rate [Portland MSS., 465].

On June 16th of this year a plot was discovered to betray the garrison into the hands of the Royalists, and four days later, in the absence of the Governor, Col. William Daniell wrote to the Speaker, informing him that

some of the greatest in this city and county that have served with and against the Parliament since the beginning of the late wars are accused to be prime actors in the business, and that God Almighty hath frustrated their expectations and preserved this place in safety and these parts of the Kingdom from an open and desperate war, and the lives of many godly persons from the malice of unreasonable men [Portland MSS., 463].



Swyndall, a common soldier concerned in the plot, turned informant, and the following letter from Col. Moldesworth was found in the pocket of Major Houghton, one of the accused :—

Deare Sr,

Prepare to morrowe betwixte twelve and one. I will come to you prsentlie so soone as you goe to worke. The word ys *ffreedom*; the marke a litle white upon yor lefte side at the harte. God speed us. Tuesday, I doubte not but before Nighte my Ladie Gamull will haue her Rents.

Your faythfull frend,

EDWARD MOLDESWORTH.

A number of the conspirators confessed that the city and castle were to have been surprised on Tuesday, June 20th, Moldesworth and others in readiness in a house adjoining the castle were to have been apprised by the firing of the great guns, and Capt. Oldham installed as Governor. Oldham and one Ashton, a corporal, were shot against a wall in the corn-market.<sup>50</sup>

At an Assembly held in the Inner Pentice, Tuesday, August, 8, 1648, the majority of those present "thought fitt and agreed" that Mr. Lancaster should continue Lecturer at St. Peter's and that a letter should be sent to him for that purpose [A.O. 695]. The Rev. Nathaniel Lancaster, B.D., of All Souls and Brasenose College, Oxford, was noted for his Presbyterian teaching. He held the living of Tarporley, where he died January 9, 1660-1. Many of the inhabitants, who had left the city for various reasons, did not return, as may be gathered from an order of this same Assembly [A.O. 696], directing that those citizens who were not returned to their habitations should likewise be assessed. The rising now known as the Second Civil War was at this time in progress, and as there was some fear of the approach of the Royalists, the city was put in a posture of defence. Capt. William Wright was appointed captain of a company of foot under the mayor for the time being with power to choose his own officers [A.O. 698]. The threatened insurrection was averted, but affairs in the city continued to be very

<sup>50</sup> *Cheshire Civil War Memorials*, Lanc. & Ches. Rec. Soc., XIX, 215.

unsettled. In July, 1649, Col. Robert Duckenfield was appointed Governor of Chester, and in the same year Charles II was proclaimed a traitor at the High Cross and other places in the city. The King's arms were removed from the Shire-hall, and those of the earls from the exchequer, and in the following year the bishop's palace with all its furniture was sold.<sup>51</sup>

Assembly, October 10, 1648.—Edward Bradshawe, mayor.

That an assessment should forthwith bee made upon the inhabitants of this cittie amountinge to Tenne Pounds a weeke to bee distributed to the poore of the same cittie. . . . And that such person or persons who shall refuse to paye his or their assessment shall forfeit and pay double the summe the said penaltie to be levyed by distresses or otherwise . . . . That the said assessment shall begin upon the 1st day of January next, to continue onely for the space of six monthes then next following [A.O. 718].

Assembly, Tuesday, last day of July 1649.—Richard Bradshawe, mayor.

Ordered, that a breach in the pavement in the florest streete neere the Redlyon shall forthwith bee made up at the costs and chardges of the inhabitants of Johnes ward . . . . to bee gathered or levyed by way of Assessment and Mr. Simon Ley and Mr. Robert Annyon are nominated and appointed assessors. The said worke to be perfected within one month next . . . . upon paine and penalty of twenty shillings to be forfeited and paid by the said ward [A.O. 742].

Assembly, Tuesday, March 25, 1651.—Richard Leicester, mayor.

Ordered that Mr. Maior, Mr. Recorder, Mr. Ald. Ince, Mr. Ald. Compton and Mr. Sheriff Anderson shall treat with Mr. Richardson for the purchase of the late Bishoppe's Pallace for the Cittie's use [A.O. 765].

At the same Assemblie Anne Baxter, widdow, late wife of Henry Baxter deceased, did prefer a Peticon whereby shee sett forth that the said Henry Baxter about eight yeares since was indebted to the Maior and citizens of this cittie as parte of the citties stocke in the severall sumes of twentie five powndes and one hundred powndes, for repayment whereof hee gave securities by Bonde with sureties, and that the said Henry Baxter at the tyme the late warrs began was possessed of woollen cloath and other goods of the value of three hundred and fortie pounds at least, all which hee left in his howse in

<sup>51</sup> Ormerod, I, 247, quoting Cowper's MSS.

this Citie. And that the same in his absence were seized by those who then had power in this cittie whereby the said debte might have bin paid. And therefore prayes to have the saide Bonde delivered up to be cancelled . . . . [A.O. 767].

Assembly. July 17, 1651. Richard Leicester, mayor.

Ordered that the heires of Mr. William Gamull, late Alderman of this cittie deceased shalbee sent unto concerninge the repaire of Wolfe's tower and the howse over the Northgate upon the walls of this cittie, and to knowe whether hee [*sic*] will pay the arreares of rent due to this cittie for the same [A.O. 775].

In order to render the city of little use to the opposing faction, Parliament resolved, November 4, 1655, that the castle should be made untenable and the city wall razed between the Eastgate and the Newgate,<sup>52</sup> but apart from the towers and ramparts, it is doubtful whether the latter intention was carried into effect.

Many years elapsed before the city recovered from the effects of the siege, and when in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the walls and gates were repaired and rebuilt, they had long outlived their ancient purpose and were already providing that pleasant promenade and vantage ground whence citzens and visitors alike to-day may muse upon the vicissitudes to which their stones bear silent testimony.



<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*