

LETTER

FROM

SIR PHILIP STAPLETON TO OLIVER CROMWELL,

AND

Four Letters from Oliver Cromwell himself.

COMMUNICATED BY

DAWSON TURNER, ESQ., V. P.

THE letters, which I have here the pleasure of submitting to the Norfolk Archæological Society, passed into my hands upon the purchase of the manuscripts of Dr. Cox Macro, which included those of our great Norfolk antiquary, Sir Henry Spelman, and of his sons. But whether these letters formed part of the latter collection, or had been obtained by Dr. Macro, who was himself indefatigable, from any other quarter, is a point that it would be, most probably, now impossible to ascertain; nor could the determining of it be of any importance, further than as it might be supposed to tend to establish their originality, of which they bear too strong internal evidence to leave room for doubt. None of them, to the best of my knowledge, have ever been published. The first, from Sir Philip Stapleton, was written two days after that from Cromwell to Mr. Barnard, upon altogether a different subject, printed by Mr. Carlyle, I. p. 158. Its address puts an end to a doubt, expressed by that gentleman, how far the subsequent Lord Protector held the rank of captain or colonel on the 23rd of January 1642-3. The very able editor states that he finds him on the 14th of the preceding September, in a "List of the Army, under the command of the Earl of Essex, Lord General for King and

Parliament," enumerated as " Captain in troop sixty-seven," while on the second of the following March his name appears with the higher grade. But it seems certain that he was not raised to the latter till hard upon the date last mentioned. He was at the same time Member for Cambridge. Materials for Cromwell's biography are very scanty in 1642; and nothing appears to be left us which may throw light, either upon the person said by Sir Philip Stapleton to have been sent into Norfolk, or upon the contents of the letter of which he was the bearer. The Gaudye, more particularly pointed out in it as an object of suspicion, was, most probably, Framlingham Gawdy, Esq., of West Herling, Member for Thetford in the Parliament of 1640, and one of those secluded by the Army immediately before the trial of the King. He died in 1654; and his son, Sir William Gawdy, was created a baronet nine years afterwards. By Benefield, I apprehend is to be understood Sir Henry Bedingfield, of Oxburgh, Knight, who, upon the breaking out of the civil war, flew to the Royal Standard, with his two sons, Thomas and Henry, and rendered himself conspicuous for his conduct and courage, till he was made prisoner and committed to the Tower; shortly after his release from which he died, Nov. 22, 1656, at the age of 70. Of Sir Philip Stapleton himself, we read in Collins' *Baronetage*, III. p. 53, that he was a younger branch of the Wighill family, and purchased Warter in the Wolds, in the East Riding of Yorkshire. The same author goes on to say—"He was one of the five Members of Parliament whom the King went to the House of Commons to demand, and was very eminent for his personal valour. His extraordinary mettle and boldness of spirit may be conjectured by his attempt to cope singly with Prince Rupert; but afterwards, discerning Cromwell's influence upon the army, he so resolutely opposed their designs, that he was one of eleven members against whom charges were exhibited; and my Lord Clarendon mentions them as men of parts, interest, and signal courage, who

heartily abhorred the intentions which they discerned the army to have. He afterwards went beyond sea, and, dying at Calais, in August, 1647, was denied burial, upon imagination that he was infected with the plague." We are further told respecting him, by Clarendon, (II. p. 462, Oxford, 1807,) "He was a proper man, of a fair extraction; but, being a branch of a younger family, inherited but a moderate estate, about five hundred pounds a-year, in Yorkshire; and, according to the custom of that country, had spent much time in those delights which horses and dogs administer. Being returned to serve in Parliament, he concurred with his neighbours, Hotham and Cholmondley, being much younger than they and governed by them in the prosecution of the Earl of Strafford; and so was easily received into the company and familiarity of that whole party which took that work to heart; and, in a short time, appeared a man of vigour in body and mind, and to be rather without good breeding, than not capable of it; and so he quickly outgrew his friends and countrymen in the confidence of those who governed; they looking upon him as worth the getting entirely to them and not averse from being gotten, and so joined him with Mr. Hambden in this their first employment (and the first that ever a Parliament had of that kind) to be initiated under so great a master, whose instruction he was very capable of."

*ffor my noble freind Captayne Oliver Cromwell
at Cambridge or else where,*

these.

Worthy Sr,

There is one gonne into Norfolke, described to you in this inclosed paper. He carries a letter thither from Oxford, to encourage the Papists, generally, to take up armes. It would be of greate advantage to us, if wee could take this man and his letter. He is to goe through Cambridge,

where we hope you may have him; but, if he be gonne into Norfolke, you are desired to use what meanes you can that the good partye in that Countye doe seaze upon Gaudye and Benefeild, upon this just ground, that they intend to take armes: they may be likewise searched for this letter, which we would gladly have.

S^r, I have a particular suite to you for myselfe. I have lost one of my horses lately. If, amongst the horses you take up for this service, you light upon any large, strong, stond horse, that is nimble and full of mettall, I entreate you will send him to me. I shall be ready to pay what you please for him, and shall putt this courtesy upon the account with those many other I have received from you. I pray God for a prosperous successe upon all your employments, restinge,

Your most faithfull

Windsor, Jan. 25th
1642.

freiend and servant,

PH: STAPILTON.

Indorsed,—"A lett^r ffrom S^r Philip Stapleton to Captⁿ Cromwell."

So carefully has the name been erased from the address to the subjoined letter, that it is impossible to offer even a conjecture on the subject. Considered conjointly with the following, and with a third, published by Mr. Carlyle, I., p. 182, and also dated from Huntingdon, July 31, the reader is put into full details of the memorable exploit, whereby Gainsborough was relieved, though ineffectually, and "Colonel Cromwell, in giving assistance to the Lord Willoughby, and performing gallant service against the Earl of Newcastle's forces, made a beginning of his great fortune, and now began to appear in the world." The interest of the three letters is increased by

their being all addressed to different persons. Mr. Carlyle's is written to the Committee of the Association sitting at Cambridge.

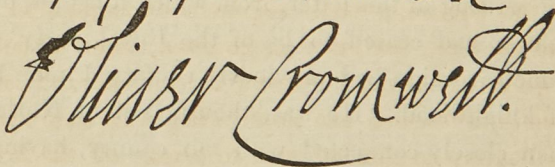
*To my noble friend Sr John * * * * *, Knight
and Baronett, present these.*

Sr,

The perticular respects I have received att your hands doe much oblige me, but the great affection you beare to the publike much more: for that cause, I am bould to acquaint you with some late passages wherein it hath pleased God to favor us, w^{ch}, I am assured, wilbee welcome to you. After Burlye house was taken, wee went towards Gaynsbrowe, to a generall rendevouze, where mett us Lincolnesheire troopes, soe that we were nineteene or twentye troopes, when wee were together, of horse, and about three or foure troupes of dragoons: wee marched with this force to Gainsbrowe: upon fryday morninge, being the 28th day of July, wee mett with a forlorne hope of y^e enimie, and wth our men brak it in: wee marched onn to the townes end, the enimie beinge upon the top of a very steepe hill over our heads, some of our men attempted to march up that hill: the enimie oposed: our men drove them up, and forced their passage: by that tyme wee came up, wee saw the enimie well sett in two bodyes; the former a large fayre body, the other a reserve, consisting of six or seaven brave troopes: before wee could gett our force into order, the great body of the enimie advanced: they were wth in muskett shott of us when wee came to the pitch of y^e hill: wee advanced likewise towards them; and both charged, each upon other: thus advancinge, wee came to pistoll and sword's point both in that crosse order, that it was disputed very strongly whoe should breake the other; but, our men pressinge a little heavilye upon them, they begun to give backe, w^{ch} our men perceavinge, instantly

forced them, brake that whole body; some of them flying on this side, some on the other side of the reserve: our men pursuinge them in great disorder had the execution about 4 or, some say, 6 miles with much a doe: this donn, and all their force beinge gown, not one man standinge, but all beaten out of the field, wee drew up our body together, and kept the field; the half of our men beinge well worne in the chase of the enimie. Upon this wee indeavored the businesse wee came for, which was the releife of the towne wth ammunition: wee sent in some powder, which was the great want of y^t towne; w^{ch} down, word was brought us that the enimie had about 6 troupes of horse and 300 foote a little onn the other side of the towne: upon this we drew some musketeers out of the towne, and with our body of horse marched towards them: wee saw two troupes towards the mill, w^{ch} my men drove downe into a little village att the bottom of the hill: when wee came wth our horse to the top of that hill, wee sawe, in the bottom, a whole regiment of foote, after that, another and another; and, as some counted, about 50 colours of foote, wth a great body of horse, w^{ch} indeed was my Lord Newcastle's Armie, wth which hee now beseiges Gainsbrowe. My Lord Willoghby com'anded mee to bringe off the foote and horse, w^{ch} I endeavoured; but the foote (the enimie pressinge onn wth the armie) retreated in some disorder into the towne, beinge of that garrison: our horse, also beinge wearied, and unexpectedly pressed by this new force, soe great, gave off, not beinge able to brave the charge; but wth some difficulty wee gott our horse into a body, and wth them faced the enimie, and retraited in such order, that, though the enimie followed hard, yett they were not able to disorder us, but wee gott them off safe to Lincolne from this fresh force, and lost not one man: the honor of this retraite, æqual to any of late tymes, is due to Maior Whalye and Captaine Ascough, next under God: this relation I offer you for the honor of God, to whome be all the praise; as also to lett you know you have some servants

faythfull to you, to incite to action. I beseech you, lett this good successe quicken your cuntainen* to this ingagement: its great evidence of God's favor: lett not your businesse be starved. I know if all bee of your minde we shall have an honorable return: its your owne businesse: a reasonable strength, now raised speedilie, may doe that w^{ch} much more will not doe after sometime. Undoubtedly, if they succeed heere, you will see them in the bowells of your Association. For the tyme, you will have itt from your noble kinsman and Colonell Palgrave: if wee bee not able in ten days to releive Gainsbrowe, a noble Lord wilbe lost, many good foote, and a considerable passe over trent into these parts: the Lord prosper your indeavors and ours. I beseech you p^{se}nt my humble service to the High hon^{ble} Lady. Sr, I am

your faythfull servant

 Oliver Cromwell.

July 30th 1643.

P. S.—I stayed two of my owne troupes, and my maior stayed his, in all three: there were in the front of the enimies reserve three or four of the Lincolne troupes yett unbroken: the enimie charged those troupes, utterly broake and chased them; soe that none of the troupes on our part stood but my three: whilst the enimie was followinge our flyinge troupes, I charged him on the reere with my three troupes, drove him downe the hill, brake him all to peices, forced Leiuetenant General Cavendish into a bogg, whoe fought in this reserve:

* Ita. continuing.

one officer cutt him on the head ; and, as hee lay, my Cap^t Leiuettendant Berry thrust him into the short ribbs, of w^{ch} hee dyed about two hours after in Gainsbrowe.

Looking in order to the “four noble friends” to whom the ensuing letter is addressed, I must commence with stating, that I have found nothing farther recorded of Sir Edmund Bacon, than that he was the eldest son of Sir Nicholas, the first baronet, and succeeded him in his honors, and died 1649. The part he took in the civil wars I nowhere see mentioned. Sir William Springe, of Pakenham, Suffolk, was created Baronet by Charles I. in 1641, only two years antecedently to the writing of this letter, from which it cannot but be inferred that he had ceased to be of the Royal party. And yet the same sovereign had previously conferred upon him the honor of knighthood. He was, though not of Norfolk himself, a man closely connected with our county, having married the daughter of Sir Hamond L’Estrange, of Hunstanton, by whom he had two daughters ; one, the wife of John Palgrave, Esq., particularly mentioned in the foregoing letter ; the other, of Sir Christopher Calthorpe, of East Barsham, K.B. A farther tie to Norfolk was afforded by three of his sisters, whose respective husbands were Sir Thos. Gaudy, of Gaudy Hall, Knight ; James Hobart, of Langley, Esq. ; and John Sidley, of Morley, Esq. Sir Thomas Barnardiston was of Cetton, Suffolk, where the family, an old and distinguished one, had long resided. He succeeded a father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, all of the same name and all knights ; and he was himself succeeded by the more eminent Sir Nathaniel, who was five times Knight of the Shire for Suffolk, and once for Sudbury. I have nothing to report of him per-

sonally; nor of Mr. Maurice Barrow, save that the latter represented the borough of Eye in the parliament of 1640, and was one of the Members excluded by the army in 1648. This letter is of even greater interest than either of the other two of the same date and subject; so clear are its details, so graphic its style, and so strong the light it throws on the character of the writer.

*To my noble friends S^r Edmon Bacon, K^t and
Barroñt, S^r Will^m Springe, Knight and Baronett,
S^r Thomas Bernardiston, Kg^t, and Maurice Bar-
rowe, Esq., p^sent theise.*

Gentlemen,

Noe man desires more to present you with incoragment then my selfe, because of the forwardnesse I finde in you (to your honor bee it spoken) to promote this great cause; and truly God followes you wth incoragements, whoe is the God of blessings; and I beseech you lett him not loose his blessings upon us: they come in season, and with all the advantages of hartninge. As if God should say, "Up and be doeing, and I will helpe you, and stand by you:" there is nothinge to bee feared, but our owne sinn and sloath.

It hath pleased the Lord to give your servant and souldiers a notable victorie now att Gainsbrowe. I marched after the takinge of Burlye house upon Wednesday to Grantham, where mett mee about 300 horse and dragoones of Notingham: with theise by agreement with the Linconers wee mett att North Scarle, w^{ch} is about teen miles from Gainsbrowe, upon Thursday in the eveninge, where wee tarried untill two of the clocke in the morninge, and then, with our whole body, advanced towards Gainsbrowe. About a mile and halfe from y^e towne wee mett a forlorne hope of y^e enimie of neere 100

horse: our dragoones laboured to beate them backe; but, not alighting off their horses, the enimie charged them, and beate some 4 or five of them off their horses: our horse charged them, and made them retyre unto their maine body: wee advanced and came to the bottom of a steepe hill, upon w^{ch} the enimie stood: wee could not well gett up but by some tracts, w^{ch} our men assayinge to doe, a body of the enimie indeavoured to hinder, wherein wee prevailed and gott the top of the hill: this was down by the Linconers, whoe had the vantguard: when wee all recovered the top of the hill, wee saw a great body of the enimies horse facing of us att about muskitt shott or lesse distance, and a^r good reserve of a full regiment of horse behinde itt: wee indeavoured to putt our men into as good order as wee could; the enimie in the meane tyme advanccing towards us to take us att disadvantage. But in such order as wee were, wee charged their great body; I havinge the right winge: wee came up horse to horse, where wee disputed itt with our swords and pistoles a pretty tyme; all keepinge close order, soe that one could not breake the other: att last, they a little shrinkinge, our men perceaving itt, pressed inn upon them, and immediately routed this whole body; some flyinge on one side, others on the other of the enimies reserve; and our men pursuinge them had chase and execution about 5 or 6 miles. I, perceavinge this body w^{ch} was the reserve standinge still unbroken, kept backe my maior Whaley from the chase, and with my owne troupe and one other of my regiment, in all beinge 3 troupes, wee gott into a body. In this reserve stood Generall Cavendish, whoe one while faced mee, another while faced 4 of the Lincolne troupes, w^{ch} were all of ours that stood upon the place, the rest beinge ingaged in the chase: att last the Generall charged the Linconers, and routed them. I immediately fell on his reere with my three troupes, w^{ch} did soe astonish him, that hee gave over the chase, and would fayne have delivered himselfe from mee:

but I, pressinge onn, forced them downe a hill, havinge good execution of them, and belowe the hill drove the generall wth some of his souldiers into a quagmire, where my Cap^t Leuientenant slew him with a thrust under his short ribbs: the rest of the body was wholly routed, not one man stayinge upon the place. Wee then, after this defeat, w^{ch} was soe totall, relieved the towne wth such powder and provisions as wee brought, w^{ch} donn, wee had notice that there were 6 troupes of horse and 300 foote on the other side of the towne, about a mile off us: we desired some foote of my Lord Willoghby, about 400, and with our horse, and theise foote, marched towards them: when wee came towards the place where their horse stood, wee beate backe with my troupes about 2 or 3 troupes of the enimie, whoe retyred into a small village att the bottom of the hill. When wee recovered the hill wee sawe in the bottom, about a quarter of a mile from us, a regiment of foote; after that, another; after that Newcastle's owne regiment, consistinge in all of about 50 foote colours, and a great body of horse, w^{ch} indeed was Newcastle's armie, w^{ch} cominge soe unexpectedlye putt us to new consultations: my Lord Willoghby and I, beinge in the towne, agreed to call off our foote: I went to bringe them off, but before I returned diverse of the foote were engaged: the enimie advancinge with his whole body, our foote retraits in some disorder, and with some losse gott the towne, where now they are. Our horse also came off wth some trouble, beinge wearied wth this longe fight and their horses tyred, yett faced the enimies fresh horses, and by severall removes gott off, without the losse of one man; the enimie followinge in the reere with a great body. The honor of this retraits is due to God, as alsoe all the rest: maior Whaley did in this carry himselfe with all gallantrie becominge a gentleman and a Christian. Thus have you this new relation, as short as I could: what you are to doe upon it is next to bee considered. If I could speake words to peirce your harts with the sense of our and

your condition I would ; if you will raise 2000 foote, att the present, to encounter this armie of Newcastle's, to raise the seige, and to inable us to fight him, wee doubt not by the grace of God but that wee shalbe able to relieve the town, and beate the enemie on the other side Trent: whereas, if somewhat bee not donn in this, you will see Newcastle's armie march up into your bowells; beinge now, as it is, on this side Trent. I know it will be difficult to raise thus many in soe short tyme; but let mee assure you its necessarie, and therefore to bee donn: att least, doe what you may, with all possible expedition: I would I had the happiness to speake wth one of you: truly I cannott come over, but must attend my charge: our enemie is vigilant: the Lord direct you what to doe.

Gentlemen, I am,

Your faythfull servant,

OLIVER CROMWELL,

July 31, 1643.

Huntingdon.

P. S.—Give this gentleman credence; hee is worthy to bee trusted; hee knowes the urgency of our affaires better than myselfe: if hee give you intelligence in point of tyme of hast to be made, believe him: hee will advise for your good.

It will be observed that, in the subjoined and following letter, Cromwell only addresses Sir W. Springe and Mr. Barrowe. His reasons for so doing must, perhaps, always remain in obscurity. There can be little doubt but that these gentlemen were a committee, or a part of a committee, of some kind or other; but when or where, with what object, and with what powers, no books that I have access to in so out-of-the-way a

place as Yarmouth enable me to say. It is extremely to be regretted that the writers who profess to furnish us with lists of the high offices and officers of state, usually pass over the time of the Commonwealth, where information is peculiarly needed, *sub silentio*; as do the churchwardens and clergy in their town-books and parish-registers, apparently fearing lest their loyalty to Church and State, or, in plain English, to Episcopacy and Monarchy, should otherwise be called in question. Rushworth is very brief in his account of what was passing in the Eastern Counties at this period, except as regards the sieges of Hull and Lynn; and Mr. Carlyle, after a short letter of Cromwell's, dated from Boston, Sep. 11, 1643, has met with no other till Jan. 10, 1643-4. The latter, which consists of but a few lines, is written at Ely, and addressed to a clergyman there, desiring him to discontinue the choir-service, "as unedifying and offensive," and advising him to read and expound the Scriptures to the people, and to make his sermons more frequent. It touches on no other topic whatever. The following letter is therefore the more interesting. It is the only account we have of Sir Thomas Fairfax's escape from Hull; and it brings down the narrative of events, under Cromwell's own hand, to within a fortnight of the Winceby fight. What he says regarding the seizing of horses I am not aware is to be found elsewhere.

*To his honoured friends S^r Will^m Springe & M^r
Barrow,*

these present.

Gentlemen,

It hath pleased God to bring of S^r Thomas ffairfax his horse over the river from Hull, being about one and twenty troopes of horse and dragoones: the Lincolneshire horse laboured to hinder this worke, being about thirty foure coullours of horse and dragoones: we marched up to their

landing place, and the Lincolneshire horse retreated: after they were come over, we all marched towards Holland; and when we came to o^r last quarter upon the edge of Holland, the enemy quartered wth in foure miles of us, and kept the field all night with his whole body: his intendment, as we conceive, was to fight us, or hoping to interpose betwixt us and our retreat; having received to his 34 coulours of horse twenty fresh troopes, ten companies of * * * and about a thousand foote, being Generall King's own regiment. Wth these he attempted our guards and our quarters, and, if God had not beene mercifull, had ruined us before we had knowne of it, the five troopes we set to keepe the watch faileing much of their duty: but we got to horse and retreated in good order wth the safety of all o^r horse of the Association, not looseing foure of them that I heare of, and we got five of theirs; and for this we are exceedingly bound to the goodnes of God, who brought o^r troopes of wth soe little losse. I write unto you to acquaint you wth this; the rather that God may be acknowledged, and that you may help forward in sending such force away unto us as lye unprofitably in yo^r countrey, and especially that troope of Cap^t Margerie's, w^{ch} surely would not be wantinge now we soe much neede it: the enemy may teach us that wisdom, who is not wanting to himselfe in making up his best strength for the accomplishm^t of his designes. I heare there hath beene much exception taken to Cap^t Margery and his officers for taking of horses. I am sorry you should discountenance those, who (not to make benefitt to themselves but to serve their countrey) are willing to venture their lives and to purchase to themselves the displeasure of bad men that they may doe a publique benefitt. I undertake not to justify all Captaine Margerie's actions; but his owne conscience knowes whether he hath taken the horses of any but malignants; and it were somewhat too hard to put it upon the consciences of yo^r fellow deputy-lieftnants whether they have not freed the horses of knowne malignants, a fault

not lesse, considering the sad estate of this kingdome, then to take a horse from a knowne honest man; the offence being against the publique, w^{ch} is a considerable aggravation. I know not the measure every one takes of malignants. I thinke it is not fitt Cap^t Margery should be the judge; but if he in this takeing of horses hath observed the plain character of a malignant, and cannot be charged for one horse otherwise taken, it had been better that some of the bitterness wherewith he and his have been followed had been spared. The horses that his coronett, Boallry, tooke, he will put himselfe upon that issue for them all: if these men be accounted troublesome to the countrey, I shalbe glad you would send them all to me. He bid them welcome, and, when they have fought for you, and indured some other difficulties of warre w^{ch} yo^r honester men will hardly beare, I prayou then let them goe for honest men. I p^rteste unto you many of those men w^{ch} are of yo^r countrey's chooseinge under Cap^t Johnson, are so farre from serving you, that, were it not that I have honest troopes to maister them, although they be well payd, yet they are soe mutinous that I may justly feare they would cut my throate. Gentlemen, it may be it provokes some spiritts to see such plaine men made captaines of horse: it had beene well that men of honour and birth had entred into those imployments, but why doe they not appeare? who would have hindered them? but, seeing it was necessary the worke must goe on, better plaine men then none; but best to have men patient of wants, faithfull, and conscientious in the employm^t; and such I hope these will approve themselves to be. Let them therefore, if I be thought worthy of any favoure, leave yo^r countrey with yo^r good wishes and a blessing. I am confident they wilbe well bestowed; and I believe before it be longe you wilbe in their debte; and then it will not be hard to quit scores. What armes you can furnish them wthall, I beseech you doe it. I have hitherto found yo^r kindnes great to me. I know not what I have done

to loose it. I love it soe well, and price it soe highe, that I would doe my best to gain more: you have the assured affection of

Yo^r most humble & faithfull servant,

OLIVER CROMWELL.

28th Sept. 1643.

P.S.—I understood there were some exceptions taken at a horse that was sent to me, w^{ch} was ceized out of the hands of one Mr. Goldsmith of Wilby: if he be not by you judged a malignant, and that you doe not approve of my haveing of the horse, I shall as willingly returne him againe as you shall desire; and therefore I prayou signify yo^r pleasure to me herein under yo^r hands: not that I would for ten thousand horses have the horse to my owne private benefitt, saving to make use of him for the publique; for I will most gladly returne the vallue of him to the state, if the gentleman stand cleere in yo^r judgments. I beg it as a speciall favour, that, if the gent. be freely willinge to let me have him for my money, let him set his owne price. I shall very justly returne him the money; or, if he be unwilling to pt wth him, but keepes him for his pleasure, be pleased to send me an answeare thereof. I shall instantly returne him his horse, and doe it wth a great deale more satisfaction to myselfe then keepe him: therefore I beg it of you to satisfy my desire in this last request; it shall exceedingly oblige me to you: if you do it not, I shall rest very unsatisfied, and the horse wilbe a burthen to me so long as I shall keep him.

I have placed the subjoined letter, as being without a date, at the end of the series; but I conceive that it ought to precede the foregoing one, and was probably written about the

first of September; for in it Cromwell speaks only *by hearsay* of the £3000 assigned him out of the Association; whereas in that of the 11th of September from Boston, published by Mr. Carlyle, (see p. 46) he writes, “of the £3000 allotted me, I cannot get the Norfolk part nor the Hertfordshire: it was given away before I had it.” Mr. Carlyle’s remark, touching the state of things in the associated counties at the end of August and beginning of September, is quite confirmed by this letter. “Matters go not well: nobody to put on: nobody to push: cash, too, is and remains defective.” He adds, “Here, however,” (in the letter of Sep. 11) “is a glimpse of the *Ironsides*, the first specific glimpse, which is something.” May we infer that “Mr. Margery’s honest men to follow him” are of that number? Who shall answer this question? and who shall tell us who Mr. Margery, so prominent in this letter and in the last, was?

*To my noble friends S^r Willm. Springe, knight and
Barronett, and Maurice Barrowe, Esq. etc.
present theise.*

Gentlemen,

I have beene nowe two dayes att Cambridge in expectation to heere the fruite of your indeavors in Suffolke towards the publike assistance: believe itt, you will heer of a storme in few dayes: you have no infantrie att all considerable. Hasten your horses: a few howers may undoo you neglected. I beseech you bee carefull what captaines of horse you choose, what men be mounted: a few honest men are better then numbers: some tyme they must have for exercise. If you choose godly honest men to bee captaines of horse, honest men will followe them; and they will be careful to mount such: the Kinge is exceedinge strong in the west. If you bee able to foyle a force att the first cominge of itt, you will have reputation; and that is of

great advantage in our affaires. God hath given itt to our handfull: lett us indeavor to keepe itt. I had rather have a plaine russett-coated captaine, that knowes what Hee fights for, and loves what Hee knowes, then that w^{ch} you call a gentleman and is nothing else. I honor a gentleman that is soe indeed. I understand Mr. Margery hath honest men will followe him: if soe, bee pleased to make use of him: it much concernes your good, to have conscientious men; I understand that there is an order for mee to have 3000th out of the Association; and Essex hath sent their part or neere itt. I assure you wee neede exceedinglye. I hope to finde your favor and respect: I protest if it were for my selfe I would not move you: this is all from

Your faythfull Servant

OLIVER CROMWELL.

P.S.—If you send such men as Essex hath sent, it will be to little purpose: bee pleased to take care of their march, and that such may come along wth them as wilbe able to bringe them to the mayne body; and then I doubt not but wee shall keepe them, and make good use of them. I beseech you give countenance to M^r Margery: helpe him in raisinge this troupe: lett him nott want your favor in whatsoever is needfull for promoting this worke, and coñand your servant: if he can raise the horses from malignants, lett him have your warrant: it wilbe of speciall service.