

# THE TREATY HOUSE, UXBRIDGE ; ITS HISTORY AND ASSOCIATIONS.

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There is perhaps no period in history more difficult to analyse in all its bearings than that of the Civil War.

The most impartial observer is at a loss to determine the varying statements on both sides, so as to arrive at a just conclusion.

Saved from the ravage of the contending armies, certain places of historic importance have been left which are monuments of national interest both to the historian and antiquary.

These localities and buildings have become household words: such are the familiar names of *Basing House* (Hants), *Bostal* (Oxon.), *Boscobel* (Stafford), *Latham* (Lancashire), *Compton* (Warwick), *Godstow* and *Gaunt House* (Oxon.), *Longford* (Shropshire), with the castles of Donnington near Newbury, and many others. The great battles of Naseby, Worcester, Marston Moor, Newbury, Chalgrove Field, and Edgehill, are again sufficient to tell the tale of the times.

The year 1643 was the turning-point of King Charles's fate, which was really sealed by the battle of Naseby, 16 June, 1645. After the siege of Oxford the country southward was disturbed; meantime, there was a desire for peace, and this took a more tangible form in the proceedings at Uxbridge, where the memorable but ineffectual Treaty occurred, January 1645.

Uxbridge, written in old records *Oxebridge*, *Oxbridge*, and *Woxeburge*, is the last town in Middlesex, next to Buckinghamshire, in the north-west corner of the county; the termination "brugge" certainly implies the word bridge, which exists at this day, both over the canal and the adjoining river Colne.

The town was a member or hamlet belonging to Great Hillingdon, the adjoining parish; a chapel of ease was built at Uxbridge in 1447, and dedicated to St. Margaret, on whose festival day (July 20th) the annual Uxbridge fair is kept.

The condition of the chapel at the Commonwealth time according to the Survey of Church Lands (Lambeth Library) was as follows :

“Item. Wee present that wee have a chapell of ease for our populous market town of Woxbridge in the parish of Hillingdon without presentacon, which is aboute a myle distant from the church of Hillingdon afore said, and which said church is not able to conteyne the multitude of people belonging to our chapell if they should every day repaire there unto; and the maintenance of our towne of Woxbridge, arysing out of orchards and other petty tythes, amounts not to above eight pounds per annum, by w<sup>ch</sup> meanes wee are altogether destitute of a preaching minister, and wee conceive it fit and humbly pray (if no neighbouring parish be joyned to us) that our towne may be established a distinct parish of itselfe and be allowed a competent mayntenance for a deserving minister according to the Act of Parliament in that behalf.”

Leland, in his Itinerary, speaks thus of Uxbridge :

“In it is but on large street, that for timber well builded.

“There is a celebrate market once a week, and a great fair on the feast of St. Margaret.

“There be two wooden bridges at the west end of the town, and another to more west goeth the great arm of Colne river.”

The market-house, mentioned in the old historians, with several modernized inns, remain to this day.

The house, however, around which all interest centres, is the Treaty House (long ago converted into an inn, “The Crown”), standing at the extremity of the town near the bridges above mentioned.

At the Civil War period this house was the residence of a Mr. Carr, and had formerly been the seat of the Bennet family; the greater part of it has been refronted and stuccoed. Some portions however retain their character. Of greatest interest is the richly-panelled room where the King’s Commissioners sat during the progress of the Treaty.

The original house appears to be of the latter part of the sixteenth century; old prints represent a tower or lodge standing before the house; but this may have been to give it importance, or, more likely, as a defensive outwork for this border town; the tower is now demolished.

The best view of the house is to be obtained from the adjoining river (Colne) side; here the clustered chimney-shafts and the brick-work are well shown.

Thanks to the owner of the property, T. O. Wethered, Esq. M.P.

of Great Marlow, the historic part of the building will probably be conserved as an heirloom to all time.

The inns of the middle and succeeding ages have often formed subjects for local and personal incidents; their history is sufficient for a separate work, one of certain merit being that by M. Michel entitled *Histoire des Cabarets et des Hôtelleries*, 1854.

Many hostelries in London and the country were recognised centres of entertainment and resort. We have abundant authority in the pages of the Elizabethan and later dramatists for their use as the rendezvous of daily intercourse and discussion.

Sir Walter Scott places his opening chapters of *Kenilworth* (a sixteenth century romance) at the "Black Bear," Cumnor.

In Shakspeare's time these houses had a more diversified and social character than to-day; thus, in *Henry IV.* is the following allusion:— "Shall I not take mine ease in mine inn?" And the *Comedy of Errors* has, "What, will you walk with me about the town? and then go to my inn, and dine with me."

The famous "Mermaid" in Cheapside, illustrious as the resort of Jonson, Beaumont, and Fletcher, and other wits, was established by Sir Walter Raleigh in 1603. Hardly a London inn but has not some reminiscence of the past; the "Tabard," the "Boar's Head," Cheapside, and many others. Their purposes were various—sometimes as a temporary theatre for acting plays, for which the galleried court-yards afforded good accommodation. Those, too, on the great roads for pilgrimages have retained striking memories—specially the once famous "Chequers" at Canterbury—others existed on the Walsingham, Glastonbury, and similar processional routes to shrines, monuments, and abbeys. They have also been strangely perverted in becoming from a place of entertainment a receptacle for a prison. Stow, in his *Survey*, says of the "White Hart," Southwark:

"There is the White Hart, a gaol so called for that the same was a common hostelry for the use of travellers." The house was used as a gaol till the prisoners were removed to another house at Newtonne (Newington). The Southwark inns have been specially famous; they have been fully described in the *Surrey Archaeological Collections*, vol. ii. (1864), also in the *Builder*, vols. xvi. xix. and xx.

The importance of inns as centres of information has long passed away, perhaps with the last stage-coach! Their value as identifying topographical research will always be great.

Satirical prints of the eighteenth century often contained a view of a well-known hostel, and, to insure accuracy of locality, representations of existing inns were introduced. Thus, in Hogarth's print of the *Harlot's Progress*, the "Old Bell Inn," Wood Street, Cheapside, can be recognised in his print of the *Stage Coach*, accompanying that series.

The documents of the Civil War period are so numerous that it is difficult to select one of more interest than another in respect to the Treaty House. The principal references to it are, first, in MSS., second, in printed books.

The Harleian MSS. (Nos. 22, 24), British Museum, "Transcripts and Extracts of the most material passages entered into the Journal of the House of Lords, sitting at London, during the Civil War, from 9th Dec. 1642 to 22nd Feb. 1645, ending abruptly in the 'Treaty of Uxbridge.'" "

These notes, written by command of the Earl of Radnor, Lord Privy Seal, who has often added his own notes, to be met with nowhere else.

Again, the Additional MSS. 5461:—

"Noms des deputez du roi d'Angleterre pour le traité d'Ausbrick, où ce doit faire une conférence pour la paix d'Angleterre."

These particulars and others touching the Treaty have been copied by historians, who appear to have searched diligently into documentary evidence, and to have transferred it to the printed page.

The Ashmolean MSS. at the Bodleian refer to this Treaty, but the Cambridge MSS. have no account of the proceedings.

The Carte papers, both in the Bodleian and Record Office, are most of them original, and relate specially to the Civil War period.

Among private collections we have those of Earl de la Warr (now Sackville), at Knole in Kent, a large proportion of which consists of the correspondence of the first Earl of Middlesex, who was Lord High Treasurer in the Civil War period; reference is also made to the Uxbridge Treaty in a letter of Joseph Jackman to the Earl of Bath, dated 23rd Jan. 1644.

The Sutherlands papers at Trentham have the following, showing that, even after the failure of the Treaty, Uxbridge was the headquarters of the armies:—

"The general's head-quarters are at Uxbridge, the King at Hatfield."

*Printed Books.*

The historians who have fully, or in part, entered into the Treaty proceedings are, Clarendon, Rushworth, Whitelock, Rapin, and Dugdale.

Some of their accounts entirely agree, while others differ as to language only; the following passages from Clarendon and Whitelock may be sufficient to show this agreement:—

Earl of Clarendon's *History of the Civil Wars*, p. 426:—"About the end of January or the beginning of February the Commissioners on both sides met at Uxbridge, which being within the enemy's quarters, the King's Commissioners were to have such accommodation as the other thought fit to leave to them, who had been very civil in the distribution, and left one entire side of the town to the King's Commissioners, one house only excepted, which was given to the Earl of Pembroke; so that they had no cause to complain of their accommodation, which was as good as the town would yield, and as good as the other had.

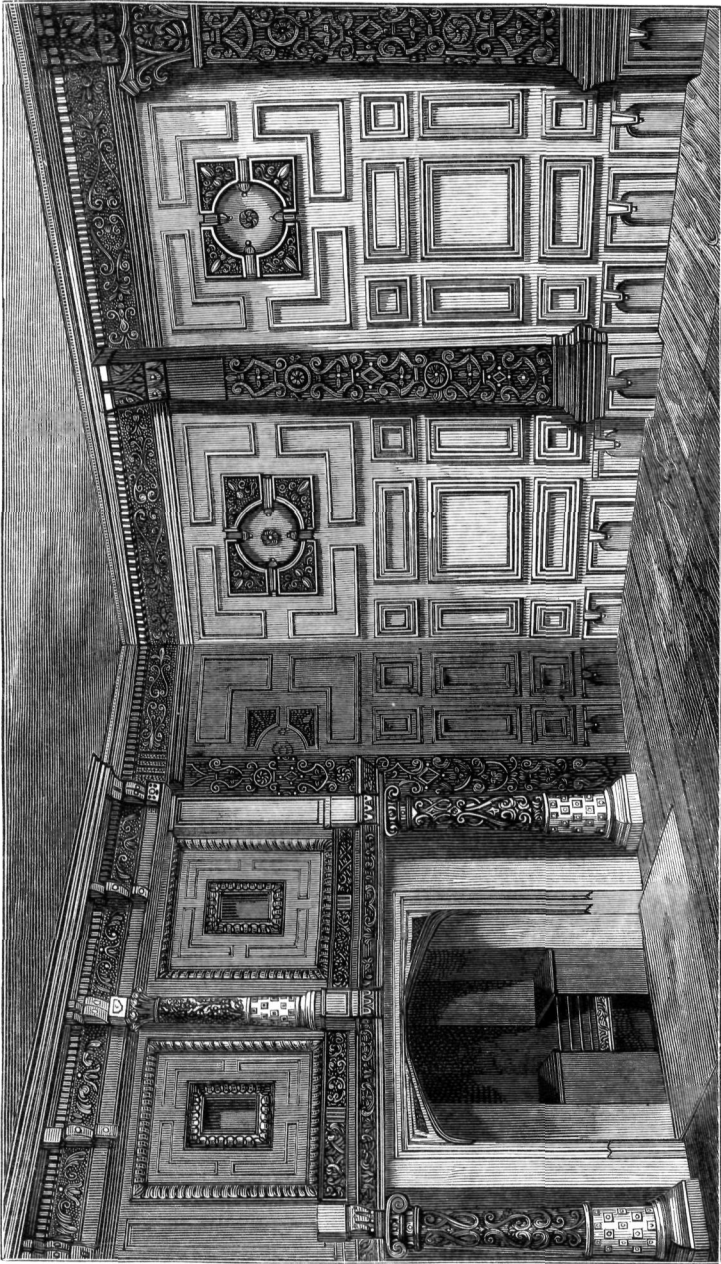
"There was a good house at the end of the town, which was provided for the Treaty, where there was a fair room in the middle of the house, handsomely dressed up, for the Commissioners to sit in; a large square table being placed in the middle with seats for the Commissioners, one side being sufficient for those of either party, and a rail for others who should be thought necessary to be present, which went round.

"There were many other rooms on either side of this great room for the Commissioners on either side to retire to when they thought fit to consult by themselves, and to return again to the public debate; and, there being good stairs at each end of the house, they never went through each other's quarters, nor met but in the great room."

Whitelock's *Memorials*, p. 123:

"Jan. 9, 1645.—The Commissioners for the Treaty on both parts met at Uxbridge, and had their several quarters; those for the Parliament and all their retinue on the north side of the town, and those for the King on the south side, and no intermixture of the one party of their attendants with the other; the best inn of the one side was the rendezvous of the Parliament's Commissioners, and the best inn of the other side of the street was for the King's Commissioners.

"This place being within the Parliament quarters, their Commis-



PANELED ROOM IN THE TREATY HOUSE, UXBRIDGE.

sioners were the most civil, and desirous to afford accommodations to the King's Commissioners, and they thought fit to appoint Sir John Bennett's house at the further end of the town to be fitted for the place of meeting for the Treaty.

"The foreway into the house was appointed for the King's Commissioners to come in at, and the back way for the Parliament's Commissioners; in the middle of the house was a fair, great chamber, where they caused a large table to be made like that heretofore in the Star-chamber, almost square, without any upper or lower end of it.

"At each end of the great chamber was a fair withdrawing-room and inner chamber, one for the King's Commissioners to retire unto and consult when they pleased.

"A safe-conduct was provided for the Commissioners from Uxbridge to London and for their retinue on their journey. Given at our Court at Oxford the 21st of January, 1644."

Dugdale, in his *View of the Troubles in England*, printed at Oxford, 1681, adds a "perfect narrative of the Treaty at Uxbridge," and devotes pages 737-959 to the proceedings thereof. For genealogical and antiquarian purposes, the names of the Commissioners on either side will have interest.

*The Royalist side.*

Duke of Richmond	Lord Capel.
Marquis of Hertford.	Lord Culpepper.
Earl of Southampton.	Sir Thos. Gardner.
Earl of Chichester.	Mr. John Ashburnham.
Sir E <sup>d</sup> . Hyde (L <sup>d</sup> . Clarendon).	

*The Parliament.*

Earl of Northumberland.	Sir Henry Vane, Junr.
Earl of Salisbury.	Oliver S. John.
Denzel Hollis.	Bulstrode Whitelock.
William Pierrepont.	

John Thursloe, friend of Milton, afterwards secretary to Oliver Cromwell, acted as secretary to the English Parliament; Mr. Cheesly, secretary for the Scotch Commissioners.

The letters from Queen Henrietta to Charles I. relating to the Treaty are mostly printed in Rushworth's *Collections*, also in the

*Harleian Miscellany*, and are described as "Letters and secret papers written with the King's own hand, and taken in his cabinet at Naseby by General Fairfax ; some were written in cypher hand, and all are interesting as to the period."

Lastly, the printed books in the British Museum have the following :—

Speeches at Guildhall concerning the Treaty at Uxbridge. 4to. 1644.

Relation of the passages concerning the Treaty at Uxbridge. 4to. 1645.

Propositions of the King's Commissioners at Uxbridge. 4to. 1645.

We can picture the inhabitants in no little fear on finding their town during the Treaty Conference, and till 1647, constantly invaded by the contending armies, who were also quartered at Watford, Ickenham, Hillingdon, Cowley, and Staines. In Uxbridge itself, General Fairfax's quarters were at one Mr. Henrie's, Cromwell's at the "Crown" Inn, and Col. Fleetwood's at the "Chequers"; it was called the garrison town.

The Civil War period called into existence an abundance of literature at once—political, caustic, and rare.

This is best represented in the rich collection at the British Museum known as the Bagford ballads, and by a large series of proclamations, broadsides, and other fragments in nine or ten volumes. Most of these have woodcut illustrations, medallion portraits of the rival leaders on each side, and satirical allusions in plenty. The Earls of Essex and Warwick, Sir W. Waller and Mr. Pym, figure on one sheet, but I have been unable to discover any rhymes on the Uxbridge Treaty.

Among the Cromwellian pamphlets the following occurs :—

"A proclamation for a solemn fast on Wednesday, the 5th of February next (1664), upon occasion of the present treaty of peace." Printed at Oxford by L. Lichfield, Printer to the University. This sheet has the royal arms with the initials C.R. In the same volume is a MS. letter, dated 20 Feb. 1644 (Uxbridge), apparently from the Royalist side.

The illustrated newspaper may almost be said to have taken its rise during this period. The first number of the *Mercurius Aulicus* appeared on 2nd June, 1643, and contains a portrait of the King and an engraving of a new weapon called the "Round head."



Again the *Mercurius Britannicus*, May 1645, contains plenty of abuse of *Aulicus*, the King's newspaper.

No price is mentioned on the early newspapers. They were probably sold for  $1\frac{1}{2}d.$  a copy, as Needham, who wrote the *Mercurius Britannicus*, observes in alluding to some Royalist success, "Will ye buy three halfpenny tickets?"

The *Kingdom's Weekly Post*, 1645, contains the account of the capture of Basing House by Cromwell.

The *Mercurius Aulicus* was commenced at Oxford, 1st June, 1642, the King and his court being resident there. Indeed the King's printer was truly itinerant; the Royalist newspapers were in all cases secretly printed, and they appeared to have followed the fortunes of the King at Oxford, Reading, Newcastle, and elsewhere.

The usual slashing satire was indulged in by both the contending parties, such as the "Scottish dove sent out and returning," in allusion to King Charles I. with the Scots at Newcastle, 1646. Again, the Royalist press alludes to the enemy's faction as "the Parliament kite, or the tell-tale bird," 1648. King Charles is described as the "Glory of all Christendom" and the "peerless jewel of Christendom."

Another of the literary exigencies of the time, unsettled as it was, without certain law and a general disregard of right, was the strict supervision of the press, which resulted in a fresh order, dated 14th June, 1643, to suppress the "false, forged, scandalous, seditious, libellous, and unlicensed papers, pamphlets, books," as follows:— "That no book, pamphlet, or papers be printed, bound, stitched, or put to sale by any person or persons whatsoever unless the same be first approved of by a licenser, under the hands of such person or persons as both or either of the said houses shall appoint for the licensing of the same, and entered in the register book of the Stationers' Company, the printer to put his name thereto."

Certain licensers were appointed to particular classes of literature. In the famous sermon by Christopher Love on the Uxbridge Treaty the name of Mr. James Crauford appears as licenser.

The style of prevailing literature in the pamphlets and periodical lore of that day may best be gathered from the following, which are only a tithe of what were issued; most of them are preserved among the Cromwellian pamphlets, British Museum:—

"A spiritual song of comfort to encourage the soldiers that are gone forth in the cause of Christ." 1643.

*Single sheet.* Printed in the year when Antichrist is falling.

2. Englands wolfe in the Eagles claws, or the cruel impieties of Royalists and Anti-Parliamentarians. 1646.

3. Englands distemper having division and errors as its cause, wanting peace and truth for its cure; set forth in a sermon preached at *Uxbridge*, Jan. 30, 1644, being the first day of the treaty. By Christopher Love. This sermon of the well-known Puritan divine caused much dissension.

He told the people that the King's Commissioners were come with the treaty of blood, and that there was as great a distance between the treaty of peace as between heaven and hell. Mr. Love was afterwards imprisoned by the Parliament.

This chapel in which Love preached was doubtless the same as that mentioned in the Parliamentary surveys. As a further illustration of the times, we may remark various Ordinances, printed copies of which are to be found in the British Museum collection.

I. An ordnance for felling of timber trees in the woods of several delinquents for the use of H.M. Navy Royal.

II. That the candlesticks, crucifixes, and other plate that stood heretofore on the altar in St. Paul's be sold by the committee at Grocers' Hall, and the money employed for the public safety of the kingdom.

The religious meetings of that period are also connected with the Treaty House, for we learn from Clarendon, vol. iii. p. 577, "That the King's Commissioners would willingly have performed their devotions in a church, nor was there any restraint upon them from so doing; the Book of Common Prayer was not permitted to be read, nor the rubrics or the ceremonies of the Church to be observed.

"So that their days of devotion were observed in the great room of the inn (the Crown), whither many of the country and other persons who came daily from London usually resorted."

Prints and drawings of the Treaty House are to be found in the British Museum and Guildhall Libraries.

In the Guildhall is a drawing, dated 1798, also one by Prout, 1814, with other views of the house.

The following books contain views:—

1. Lysons' *Environs*. Supplementary volume. View of house from river.
2. Knight's *Old England*, vol. i. Knight's *Pictorial History of England*.
3. *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. lix. 1789.

It would be a suggestion whether each local Archæological Society should not undertake to give an account of historical houses still remaining in their several districts, the northern and midland counties being most concerned. We should then have a monograph of the Civil War period, its houses and other buildings, which, not so far removed by time, have long formed subjects for the pen of the writer and the pencil of the artist.

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