

# FINANCING THE CIVIL WAR

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THREE documents that the author has acquired recently may be of general interest in showing local experience of the parliamentary financial arrangements for the Civil War. They concern the affairs of "Christopher Egleton of Ellesborow, Gent.", viz:

- I a receipt for a £40 loan, with endorsements showing its repayment—1642 to 1646,
- II a receipt for silver plate to the value of £14.15.8, with a note of a claim for its repayment—1642 to 1653,
- III a detailed statement of payment due for personal service in the parliamentary forces during the Civil War—1650.

I. In the troublous times leading up to the outbreak of the Civil War much concern was felt about the Catholic rising in Ireland in October, 1641. Without describing in detail the events that can be found in the history books, we may note Clarendon's statement<sup>1</sup>: parliament "fell to raising of money under pretence of the relief of Ireland, and, for that purpose, prepar'd an Act for the payment of £400,000 to such persons as were nominated by themselves, and to be disbursed and issued in such manner, and to such uses, as the two Houses should direct . . . his Majesty was necessitated to pass the Act with such general clauses, that it might be in their power to divert the money to other uses than those to which it was given . . ."

The receipt, endorsed "copia" and dated 22nd April, 1642, is signed by Tho. Saunders and Tho. Westall, "Commissioners of our soueraigne lord the Kinge in the said county [Bucks] appointed by an act made this present parliament for ye speedy contribution & loane for the affaires of Ireland". Christopher Egleton had loaned £40 gratis, to be repaid to him or his assignees according to the order of parliament "made the ninth day of this instant Aprill out of the subsydey of foure hundred thousand pounds granted" by the act.

There are two endorsements on the back of the receipt. The first records the repayment of £20 on 23rd July, 1642; the second reads: "The 8th day of febr: 1646. Rec. then of Mr Will: denton high collector the sum' of twenty pounds in full of forty pounds lent by me gratis towards the affaires of Ireland et. per Chr: Egleton".

It seems surprising that half of the money should have been paid back in so short a time as three months. Egleton had to wait four years for the remainder; even so, it is again surprising that he should recover it while the Civil War was still in progress and Cavaliers and Roundheads were "living off the country".

II. The second receipt is on a printed form having spaces for the insertion of appropriate details, shown in italics in the following transcription.

*August the 19th: 1642*

Received the day and yeer above written, by us whose names are subscribed (being Treasurers ordained by an Ordinance of both Houses of this present Parliament, to receive all such Moneyes and Plate as shall be brought in, according to certaine propositions printed and published together with the said Ordinance) of *Christopher Egleton of Ellesbrough in ye County of Bucks. Gent ffifty ffower Ounces  $\frac{3}{4}$  of Silver Plate Troy-weight, amounting in value with the Fashion at 5s 4d per Ounce, to the Summe of with 3s 8d gilt ffowerteene pounds ffifteene shillings 8d* which is to be employed according to the said proposition. We say received

li s d  
14: 15: 8

[signed]

John Towse  
Tho' Andrewes

Endorsements on both the front and back of the receipt have essentially the same wording: "Delivered in a Claime for the abovesaid Debt by appointmt. of the sd Chr Egleton the fowerteenth day of Febr 1653 per me [signed] Tho Baldwin of Ailesbury in the County of Bucks".

Thus Egleton was still waiting for this money eleven years after giving up his plate, and four years after the declaration of the Commonwealth. The other documents in the collection do not reveal when, if ever, the debt was repaid.

III. The third document, of which there is also a contemporary copy, is a single foolscap sheet of manuscript dated 26th October, 1650 and headed "To the Right Honoble the Committee of parliament for the Army". It is signed by C. Henn, Thomas Ligo and Wm. Russell "the Commissioners for the monthly assessments & disbandinge supernumeraries in the County of Bucks", who certify that the "accompt of Sergeant Maior Christopher Egleton is iustly allowed by us all deductions beinge made accordinge to the Ordinance of parliament of 24<sup>o</sup> december 1647 and there appeares due unto him the some of three hundred & nineteene pounds & ten shillings". This was the sum was arrived at as follows:

ffor his seruice as Captaine of a foote  
Company in Collonell Thomas Tirrells  
regiment from 7<sup>o</sup> April 1643 incl (the  
date of his Commission) to 20<sup>o</sup> May 1644  
incl (the day the said regiment was  
reduced) beinge 409 dayes at 15<sup>s</sup> per diem\_\_\_ 306-15-00  
ffor his seruice as Sergeant Maior in  
Collonell George ffleetwoods &  
Collonell Thomas Bulstrodes regiments of  
foote from 6<sup>o</sup> August 1645 incl (the date  
of his Commission) to 26<sup>o</sup> August 1646

incl (the date of his disbandinge) beinge		
386 dayes at 24 <sup>s</sup> per diem	_____	463-04-00
		<u>769-19-00</u>
Against w <sup>th</sup> the said sergeant Maior Egleton hath receaved—(viz)		
as Captaine of foote under Coll: Tirrell	101-13-00	} 450-09-00
as Sergeant Maior under Collonell fleetwood & Coll Bulstrode	242-06-00	
to be deducted for free quarters according to the ordinance of 24 <sup>o</sup> decemb $\frac{1}{4}$ th of the arreare	106-10-00	
Rests due to him		319-10-00

The commissioners "likewise find by the certificate of Maior Generall Harrison that the said Sergeant Maior Christopher Egleton was entertained & in actuall seruice in Command in the Army under the Command of his Excellency the Lord ffairfax before & on the sixt of August 1647 & and was after the said sixt of August disbanded w<sup>th</sup> other supernumeraries that were disbanded beinge aboue the establishment of the army, but what is due to him for that seruice hath not bin certified to us".

Thus monies due to Egleton for his military service until August, 1647 were not certified for payment until October, 1650. The lack of money available to the forces during the Civil War is well-known and, for example, is the subject of frequent complaint by Sir Samuel Luke<sup>2</sup> when governor of the garrison at Newport Pagnell ("the men want clothes and the horses shoes").

Egleton's pay at 15s per diem as captain, and 24s as sergeant major are to be compared with the £400 per month allotted for 2,000 men in the Newport Pagnell garrison<sup>3</sup>: an average of just over 1½d per day for each man. There is no reason to suppose that Egleton would have received more favourable treatment than others of his rank. He did not merit mention in Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, and the family seems to have been relatively obscure.

Robert Hewster conveyed the Manor of Grove, or Seyton's Manor, Ellesborough to Nicholas Egleton in 1564 and it descended in due course to Christopher Egleton, who settled it on his son, also Christopher, on his marriage in 1631 to Margaret, daughter of Thomas Style. The second Christopher is, doubtless, the person named in the documents described above: he was succeeded by his son Thomas, whose daughter and heiress Amy married into the Pilkington family, taking ownership of the manor with her<sup>4</sup>. Lipscomb<sup>5</sup> reports the conveyance in 1649 of Rookes Farm in Walton, Aylesbury, from Robert Lee and his wife Elizabeth, of Great Missenden, to George Gosnold of Beaconsfield, Christopher Egleton of Ellesborough, and Thomas Fryer of Walton: the farm was "part of the lands forfeited to or seized by the Parliament". This would imply that Egleton, if not outstanding, must have been in favour with the parliamentarians. Support for this view is the fact that "C. Egleton" was one

of the 21 commissioners working with George Fleetwood and Packer, the deputies of Major-General Fleetwood, who was one of the eleven major-generals appointed by Cromwell in 1655/6 to act with the militia in suppressing "plots and imagined plots and insurrections".<sup>6</sup> Egleton would, of course, have been well known to John Hampden because they were both appreciable landowners in the same part of the country. However, Hampden died before the debts to Egleton became payable.

<sup>1</sup> Edward Earl of Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England*, O.U.P. (quoted from 1712 edn., I, 435).

<sup>2</sup> H. G. Tibbutt (editor), *The Letter Books 1644-45 of Sir Samuel Luke*, H.M.S.O., 1963.

<sup>3</sup> *V.C.H., Buckinghamshire*, IV, 538, quoting Lords' Journ.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, II, 335.

<sup>5</sup> George Lipscomb, *History and Antiquities of the County of Buckingham*. John Bowyer Nichols & Son, 1831, II, 70.

<sup>6</sup> *V.C.H., Buckinghamshire*, IV, 544.