

**THE CLARKE PAPERS.
SELECTIONS FROM
THE PAPERS OF WILLIAM
CLARKE. VOLUME III**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649187645

The Clarke Papers. Selections from the papers of William Clarke. Volume III by C. H. Firth

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

C. H. FIRTH

**THE CLARKE PAPERS.
SELECTIONS FROM
THE PAPERS OF WILLIAM
CLARKE. VOLUME III**

Camden Society, n.s. 60

THE CLARKE PAPERS.

SELECTIONS FROM THE PAPERS OF WILLIAM CLARKE

*Secretary to the Council of the Army, 1647-1649, and to General
Monck and the Commanders of the Army in Scotland, 1651-1660.*

EDITED FOR THE ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BY

C. H. FIRTH, M.A.

VOLUME III.

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

NEW YORK AND BOMBAY

1899

All rights reserved

105-492
7.10.10

PREFACE

THE documents contained in this third instalment of the 'Clarke Papers' are selected from volumes xxv. to xxxi. of the MSS. in Worcester College Library. Those volumes consist mainly of newsletters sent from the headquarters of the army in England, or from persons connected with the army, to the headquarters of the army in Scotland. Interspersed among them are a few private letters addressed to General Monck, and copies of other documents which came into William Clarke's possession during his tenure of office as Monck's secretary. Clarke had been left behind in Scotland in August 1651, when Cromwell marched into England in pursuit of Charles II., and there are many letters from him, giving an account of the progress of the subjugation of Scotland by Generals Monck and Deane. He acted as secretary to Colonel Robert Lilburne during Lilburne's command in Scotland, and when Lilburne left Scotland he recommended him warmly to his successor. After describing the position of affairs in Scotland to Monck, and stating the measures he thought expedient, he concluded: 'I presume to recomend unto you Mr. Clarke, an old Gentleman of the State's, and one that would bee most usefull and servissable to your selfe, havinge the transsactions of all affaires that have pass'd both in Major Generall Deane's time and myne in this Nation, and one whome I conceive you have sufficient experience [of], both for his abilitie and honestie, and knowes as well as I can informe you how serviceable he may be unto you if

you thinke fit to continue him in this place as Secretary, which he hath supplied since the late Major General Deane went hence, and wherein I thincke noe man could be more honest and active. Wherefore presuming that he is soe well knowne to you, and that his merrit will sufficiently speake for him, I shall not be further troublesome then to beg your pardon, and intreat you to be confident it is out of a reall respect and honour towards you that I have taken this confidence upon mee.' (*January 21, 1654.*)

A number of the letters and papers contained in volumes xxv. to xxxi. of the Clarke MSS. relate to the military administration of Scotland during the period from 1653 to 1659. These with other papers of the same nature have been collected and published for the Scottish History Society, in two volumes entitled 'Scotland and the Commonwealth' (1895), and 'Scotland and the Protectorate' (1899).

This volume of the 'Clarke Papers' contains therefore few references to Scotland. There is, however, a curious account of an interview between the Protector and the Scottish representatives in the Parliament of 1654, and there are some allusions to the debates on the union of the two nations in the Protector's Second Parliament (pp. 22, 80, 81, 96).

The greater part of this volume consists of newsletters sent from England to the headquarters of the army in Scotland in order to keep the commander there and his officers informed of the condition of affairs at home and abroad. Two or three such letters were regularly despatched every week by agents employed for the purpose, who were usually either officials or persons in some way connected with the army.

Of the newswriters whose letters appear in these pages, the chief were George Downing—sometime scout-master general of the army in Scotland, and subsequently one of Cromwell's diplomatic agents; Gilbert Mabbott, a connection of William Clarke's, many of whose letters are printed in the preceding volumes; and John Rushworth, the author of the 'Historical Collections.' All sign

the letters with initials merely. These newsletters are so numerous that it was impossible to print more than a selection from them, and in many cases a short extract from a letter has been considered sufficient. For much of the information which these letters generally contain is also to be found in 'Mercurius Politicus,' and it was not desirable to reprint matter already accessible, and in itself of no particular importance, which would have involved the exclusion of more valuable historical material.¹ On the other hand, these newsletters contain personal details about the Protector and other people of note which the newspapers do not give. They supply in addition a considerable amount of military news, as to promotions, movements of regiments, trials by court-martial, and other matters specially interesting to soldiers, of which the newspapers say little or nothing. They possess also a certain value as representing the impression which the political events recorded produced upon the army and persons connected with it, and the views which the military party wished others to accept.

The letter describing Cromwell's expulsion of the Long Parliament supplies an instance of this. There is an obvious attempt to soften and tone down the violence and illegality of the general's proceedings. Cromwell's denunciatory speech is merely alluded to as 'something said by the general;' the Speaker is described as 'modestly pulled' out of the chair, and Parliament as 'dissolved with as little noyse as can bee imagined' (pp. 1, 2). The letters which follow this contain many new details about the incidents of the few weeks which intervened between the expulsion of the Long Parliament and the meeting of its successor. Cromwell used his power with moderation, suppressing an abusive ballad against the late Parliament, which was sung generally through London (p. 3). But when eleven aldermen petitioned that that assembly might sit again, he told the petitioners 'hee took it ill they should goe about to

¹ Specimens of similar newsletters sent to and from one of the Protector's foreign agents are to be found in Robert Vaughan's *The Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell illustrated in a series of letters between Dr. John Pell, Sir Samuel Morland &c.*, 1838.

obstruct the proceedings for the good of the people, and that himself and those about him (turning to the officers) would make good what was done with their bloods.' The subscribers of the petition were promptly deprived of any offices they held under the state (pp. 6, 8).¹ Other letters describe the schemes for a new constitution, and the selections of the persons called together to form the Little Parliament (pp. 4, 6-8). Its sudden conclusion is briefly related, and the expulsion of those of its members who refused to abdicate their power is told in the same way as the expulsion of the Long Parliament was. Twenty-seven members remained in the House, to whom 'Colonel Gough presently came, and with all meekness told them that he was fearful their stay might prove prejudicial to the Commonwealth.' They asked if he had any authority, and he owned he had none, 'but sweetly argued it with them,' and when they refused to be convinced 'he opened the doore, and presently entered one file of Muskettiers, upon whose appearance the remaining part of the House withdrew' (p. 11).

In September 1654 the Protector called his first Parliament, and the dissatisfaction which the establishment of the Protectorate and the nature of the new constitution had produced among some of the officers began to reveal itself. Two Colonels, Oky and Alured, were tried by court-martial, and a third, Saunders, was called upon to deliver up his commission, for promoting a petition which attacked the Instrument of Government (pp. 10-12, 17). Two ministers, Feake and Simpson, preached against the Government, the latter denouncing the 'Triers' as anti-

¹ Another account of Cromwell's speech runs thus: 'The General told them, that what was done was done, that the King's head was not taken off because he was Kinge, nor the Lords layd aside because Lords, neither was the Parliament dissolved because they were a Parliament, but because they did not performe there trust; he told them that if any disturbance should hereafter arise about what was done that should occasion the shedding of blood, he should suspect them to be abettors and promoters thereof, and therefore warned them to looke to the peace' *Tanner MSS.* lii. 13.

christian, and saying 'that he could with as good a conscience goe to the Pope and his Cardinalls for their approbation as to them' (pp. 13-15). The Council of Officers, however, supported the Protector's Government, and presented a petition on behalf of liberty of conscience, which Parliament was then threatening to restrict (pp. 11, 13). At the end of December horse and foot regiments were quartered in Westminster and guns planted about Whitehall and St. James's, on the rumour of a plot to overthrow the Protectorate by aid of the army in Scotland (p. 16). But these precautions were more probably the result of the widespread plot for a Royalist insurrection which had long been in preparation. 'It was not thought fitt to lett the blades goe on any longer who were att worke to have brought new troubles uppon us,' and therefore at the beginning of January 1655 many of the chief plotters were arrested (p. 17). On January 22 Cromwell dissolved Parliament, asserting that 'under their shaddow and thorrow theire Howse and its resolucions, bryers and thornes were grown up, even to the hazard of all,' meaning that their hostility had encouraged the designs of the Cavaliers and the Levellers. Of this speech the newsletters contain brief summaries (pp. 19, 20).

In spite of the many arrests made the Royalists persisted in their design. The rising was originally fixed for February. 'Yesterday,' says a letter dated February 13, 'they intended to have taken away the life of his Highnesse, this day to rise in all the westerne partes, tomorrow in all the northerne partes of the nation' (p. 22). Through the vigorous measures of the Government they were obliged to postpone the date to March 8 (p. 27); but though there were gatherings of men in arms near Nottingham, Newcastle, York, Shrewsbury, and elsewhere, it was at Salisbury alone that action followed.¹ On March 12 Sir Joseph Wagstaff and Colonel Penruddock with 200 or 300 horse seized the judges on circuit at Salisbury and proclaimed

¹ For a full account of this rising see 'Cromwell and the Insurrection of 1655' in the *English Historical Review*, 1888, p. 323; 1889, p. 313.

Charles II. On the night of March 14 the party was routed by Captain Croke at South Molton, and the insurrection came to an end (pp. 25-30). The newsletters contain many details about the trial and punishment of the prisoners (pp. 32-38).

In the summer of 1655 the Protector made a considerable reduction in the numbers of the standing army and a small reduction in its pay which it was estimated would lessen the cost of the army by 28,000*l.* per month (pp. 39, 46, 49). At the same time a new standing militia of horse was organised in all the counties of England, partly to supply the place of the regular troops disbanded, partly as a military police to prevent future insurrections. England was divided into eleven districts, and a major-general appointed to command the militia of each district. The necessary funds were procured by a tax of ten per cent. on the incomes of the Royalists (pp. 39, 42, 50). In August 1655 the officers of the new militia were feasted by the Protector at Whitehall (p. 47). On March 5, 1656, the Protector made a speech to the Aldermen and Common Council of London, setting forth the reasons for the establishment of the militia and the major-generals, and explaining the beneficial results of the institution. 'This way,' he said, 'the Lord hath owned by making more effectually than was expected, and by receiving a good acceptance with those who of late stood at some distance with us' (p. 65).

In September 1656 the second Parliament of the Protectorate met. The newsletters give a summary of Cromwell's opening speech, and there is also a notice of one made by him to a meeting of officers a few days earlier (pp. 72, 73). About 120 republican members were excluded (pp. 73-75, 85). After their exclusion the war with Spain was approved, many of the Protector's ordinances confirmed, and great activity shown in legislation. 'The whole House,' it was asserted, 'are unanimous in carrying on the best things for the good of the nation both spirituall and temporall' (p. 76). This harmony was interrupted by the dis-