

THE ⁶/_C
HISTORY
OF THE
REBELLION and CIVIL WARS
IN
ENGLAND,

Begun in the Year 1641.

With the precedent Passages, and Actions, that contributed thereunto, and the happy End, and Conclusion thereof by the KING's blessed RESTORATION, and RETURN, upon the 29th of May, in the Year 1660.

Written by the Right Honourable

EDWARD Earl of CLARENDON,

Late Lord High Chancellor of *England*, Privy Counsellor in the Reigns of King CHARLES the First and the Second.

Κῆμα ἰς ἀεί. Thucyd.

Ne quid Falsi dicere audeat, ne quid Veri non audeat. Cicero.

VOLUME III. PART 2.

O X F O R D,

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Prelude to Hyde's Manuscript

Edward Hyde a Member of Parliament in the Short and Long Parliaments was a prolific writer who kept a journal of historic events. Edward Hyde became an advisor to King Charles 1 then followed him to York in May 1642 to become a Privy Counsellor. Civil War was declared 22nd August 1642 and after the Battle of Edgehill in October Oxford became the Royalists' headquarter. April 1643 the Earl of Essex took Reading and in June moved his headquarter to Thame which Edward Hyde recorded.

He was in Oxford attending the King when Prince Rupert, on Col. John Hurry's advice, decided on an expedition to Chinnor. Edward Hyde would have witnessed 2,000 Royalists marching out over Magdalen Bridge as they set out into the Oxfordshire countryside. He was there on their triumphal return to count the captured Standards and Ensigns being paraded through the streets. There followed 200 prisoners many of note with near 500 horses with all their tack, laden with bounty taken from Chinnor and Chalgrove. Edward Hyde's account of how Parliament's most senior officers came to be at Chalgrove without their regiments and then taken prisoner was told by those 'best officers', who earlier had been attending the Earl of Essex collecting their Regiment's pay. Records show that a pay convoy had arrived in Thame in the early hours of the 18th June 1643.

Edmund Ludlow's Parliamentary account of their Civil War 'Memoirs', published in 1698, was countered with 'The History of the Rebellion and Civil War' published in 1717. The source material for the History of the Rebellion was taken from Edward Hyde's manuscripts but clumsily edited to become Tory propaganda. The title page states, 'Written by the Right Honourable Edward, Earl of Clarendon', which gave authority to the publication. The Earl of Clarendon died 1674 but later historians quote 'Clarendon' as 'the' reference when referring to events of the English Civil War.

The manuscript 'Bodl MS Clar 112 Fol 366' is precisely transcribed in the footnote found in the 1888 publication of 'The History of the Rebellion'. The writers of the 1717 edition reinterpreted the manuscripts and adulterated their account with stories for propaganda purposes. They write of troops engaging in three encounters, marching 60 miles and being back in Oxford twenty two hour later. This and other fanciful stories held sway for over a hundred years.

Edward Hyde's 1643 account of events that describes the battle of Chalgrove concurs with the interpretation found in Oxoniensia Vol 80 pub Dec 2015, pp 27 – 39 'The Military and Political Importance of the Battle of Chalgrove (1643)'. 'The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England', Vol. III (Pub 1888) edited by W. Dunn Macray, footnote 3 pp 53 – 55 is a faithful transcription of Clarendon's manuscript. Dunn's account pp 53 – 61 §§ 74 – 81 acknowledges on page 56, footnote 1 that the encounter at West Wickham was on June 25 not June 18 as implied in the 1717 first edition.

Clarendon State Papers - The History of the Rebellion Bodl. MS. Clar. 112 Fol. 366 – 367

³ [The *Life* is here resumed at p. 224, for §§ 75 – 79 ; while the MS. of the *Hist.* continues as follows :-

‘At the same time when the earl of Essex began his march from Reading, (*Early June 1643*)¹ colonel Hurry, a Scotchman, who had served in that army from the beginning with great reputation, (as he was an excellent commander of horse,) till the difference that is before spoken of between the English and Scotch officers, (after which he laid down his commission, though, out of respect to the earl of Essex, he stayed some time after with him as a volunteer, and now,) came to the King to Oxford, having before given notice to the earl of Brainford that he meant to do so. He came no sooner thither, than, to give proof that he brought his whole heart with him, he proposed to prince Rupert to wait on him to visit the enemy’s quarters, and being well acquainted with their manner of lying and keeping their guards, undertook to be his guide to a quarter where they least expected : and the prince, willingly consenting to the proposition, drew out a strong party of one thousand horse and dragoons, (*350 dragoons commanded by Lord Wentworth & 50 Lieu-Colonel Lisle*)², which he commanded himself, (*4/500 musketeers Commanded by Col. Lunsford*)³ and marched with colonel Hurry to a town four or five miles beyond the head quarter, (*The attack on Postcombe at 3am came before the raid on Chinnor*)⁴ where were a regiment of horse and a regiment of dragoons, and about daybreak fell upon them, and with little resistance, and no loss of his own men, he killed and took the whole party, except some few, who hid themselves in holes or escaped by dark and untrodden paths. (*These survivors took the alarm to Thame*)⁵ From thence, in his way back, according to purpose, he fell upon another village, where some horse and a regiment of foot were quartered, where he had the same success, and killed and took and dispersed them all. (*This is the attack on Postcombe*)⁶ So he having fortunately performed all he had hoped, his highness hastened his retreat as fast as he could to Oxford, having appointed, a regiment of foot to attend him at a pass in the way of security. (*This refers to Chiselhampton Bridge*)⁷ But the alarm had passed throughout all the enemy’s quarters ; (*Reference to Gunter, Crosse, Sheffield, Sanders and Buller, 300 men, skirmishing at South Western is not mentioned*)⁸ - ⁹ - ¹⁰so that before the prince could reach the pass where his foot expected him, he found the enemy’s whole army was drawn out, and a strong party of their horse, almost equal to his own number, so hard pressed him that, being then to enter a lane, they would disorder his rear before he could join with his foot, which were a mile before. He had very little time to deliberate, being even at the entrance into the lane. (*The Prince had entered Upper Marsh Lane at Chalgrove*)¹¹ If he could have hoped to have retired in safety, he had no reason to venture to fight with a fresh party, excellently armed, and in number equal, his own being harassed and tired with near twenty miles’ march and laden with spoil and prisoners, scarce a soldier without a led horse (*The New Bedfordshire levies dragoons in Chinnor may have lost 3/400 horse.*)¹² : but the necessity obliged him to stay ; and after a short consideration of the manner of doing it, directing as a convoy as was possible to guard the prisoners, and to hasten with all the unnecessary baggage and led horses, he resolved to keep the ground he had in the plain field, and after a short pause, to charge the party that advanced, lest the body might come up to them. (*This scenario can be read in the Late Beat Up*)¹³ And they came on amain, leaving it only in his election, by meeting them to have the reputation of charging them, or by

standing still to be charged by them. Hereupon they quickly engaged in a sharp encounter, the best, fiercest, and longest maintained that hath been by the horse during the war ; (*The timing of the battle is found by locating Sir Philip Stapleton*)¹⁴ - ¹⁵ for the party of Parliament consisted not of the bare regiments and troops which usually marched together , but of prime gentlemen and officers of all their regiments, horse and foot, who being met at the head quarter, upon the alarum, and conceiving it easy to get between prince Rupert and Oxford, and not having their own charges ready to move, joined themselves as volunteers to those who were ready, till their regiment should come up ; (*The pay convoy had arrived in the early hours 18 June and officers were with Essex when the alarm came from Chinnor*)¹⁶ and so, the first ranks of horse consisting of such men, the conflict was maintained some time with confidence. In the end, many falling and being hurt on both sides, the prince prevailed, the rebels being totally routed, and pursued till the gross of the army was discovered ; (*The battle raged for over an hour*)¹⁷ and then his highness, with the new prisoners he had taken, retired orderly to the pass where his foot and former purchase expected him ; and thence sending colonel Hurry to acquaint the King with the success, who knighted the messenger for his good service, returned, with near 200 prisoners, seven cornets of horse and four ensigns of foot, to Oxford. (*By deduction 80 prisoners of quality with their horses were taken from Chalgrove as 120 men were captured Chinnor.*)¹⁸ On the King's part in this action were lost, besides few common men, no officers of note, but some hurt : on the enemy's side, many of their best officers, more than in any battle they fought, and amongst them (*Mercurius Aulicus reports, 'he slew above an hundred dead in the place*)¹⁹ (which made the names of the rest less inquired after by the one and less lamented by the other) colonel Hambden, who was shot into the shoulder with a brace of pistol bullets, of which wound, with very sharp pain, he died within ten days, to as great a consternation of all that party as if their whole army had been defeated and cut off.']

¹ Oxoniensia Vol 80 pub 2015 pp 27 – 39 ‘The Military and Political Importance of the Battle of Chalgrove (1643) Derek and Gill Lester [Page 32](#)

² Late Beating Up His Highness prince Rupert's late beating up the rebels quarters at Postcombe & Chinnor in Oxfordshire. Also his victory in Chalgrove Field. (1643) [Page 2](#)

³ Ibid [Page 2](#)

⁴ Ibid [Page 3](#)

⁵ Ibid Oxoniensia [Page 33](#) Rupert was laden prisoners and booty and was retreating to Oxford.

⁶ Ibid Late Beating Up [Page 3](#) Rupert beat up Postcombe before heading to Chinnor.

⁷ Ibid Pages [2](#) – [5](#) – [6](#) – [9](#) – [13](#) Chiselhampton Bridge is mentioned 5 times.

⁸ Essex Letters Thomason's Tracts, E55 (19) [Two Letters from his Excellencie Robert Earl of Essex](#)

⁹ Ibid Oxoniensia [Pages 33 - 34](#)

¹⁰ Late Beating Up [Page 5](#) refers to Gunter, Crosse & Sheffield skirmishing at South Western.

¹¹ Ibid Oxoniensia [Page 37](#) Rupert jumped the hedge in Upper Marsh Lane and his troops jumbled over after him to face the 8 Cornets of parliamentarians.

¹² Note : Essex was desperately short of horse and provisions. His army was diseased, hungry and dressed in rags. Chinnor had that week been reinforced with fresh troops and supplies. Essex lost a complete dragoon regiment including 3/400 horses and these on the retreat to Oxford had 120 prisoners tied to them and were laden with the bounty. At Chalgrove eighty of Essex's most senior officers were led away as prisoners on their horses. The gallant and unequal fight left over a 100 dead, it was reported. These overwhelming losses left Essex unable to defend himself and his army being exposed to total annihilation. To save his army Essex retreated to London. Essex's army was saved because the King demanded the arsenal of supplies be brought to Oxford. Queen Henrietta Maria, on receiving the news of Essex defeat at Chalgrove, left Newark Castle to join her King in Oxford to present him with a huge arsenal of arms. Newcastle went north and at Adwalton moor 30th June 1643 wiped out the Fairfax's Army of the North. The military and political ramifications of Essex's loss at Chalgrove include the disbanding of the Committee of Safetie in favour of the Committee of Both Kingdoms and the rise of Oliver Cromwell's power.

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- ¹³ Ibid Late Beating Up [Page 7](#) After jumping the hedge Rupert charged the 8 Cornets.
- ¹⁴ Ibid Oxoniensia [Page 35](#) Ref to Stapleton being in Thame after 9.30am then riding out to Chalgrove.
- ¹⁵ Ibid Late Beating Up [Page 8](#) Page 8 Refers to Stapleton who 'drew the Retreaters up into a body'.
- ¹⁶ Ibid Oxoniensia [Page 34](#) In the early hours the pay convoy came to Thame. The senior officers were collecting their regiments pay from Essex when the alarm came from Chinnor.
- ¹⁷ Ibid Oxoniensia [Page 35](#) Stapleton is in Thame at 9.30. Stapleton drew up the routing troops from the Chalgrove battle. Therefore as the gallop from Thame to Chalgrove is around 45 minutes the battle which began before 9am is seen to have raged for over an hour
- ¹⁸ Note : The Royalists took 120 prisoners from Chinnor and 200 prisoners were paraded through Oxford therefore 80 men were captured at Chalgrove.
- ¹⁹ Mercurius Aulicus – The four and twentieth Weeke – Cover page. Edward Hyde watched as the prisoners and booty was paraded before him and the King. His account in the manuscript was taken from the Parliamentary officers captured from Chalgrove.