THE SIEGE OF BRIDGWATER.

By
Clement Trenchard
(Headmaster of Dr Morgan's School, Bridgwater)
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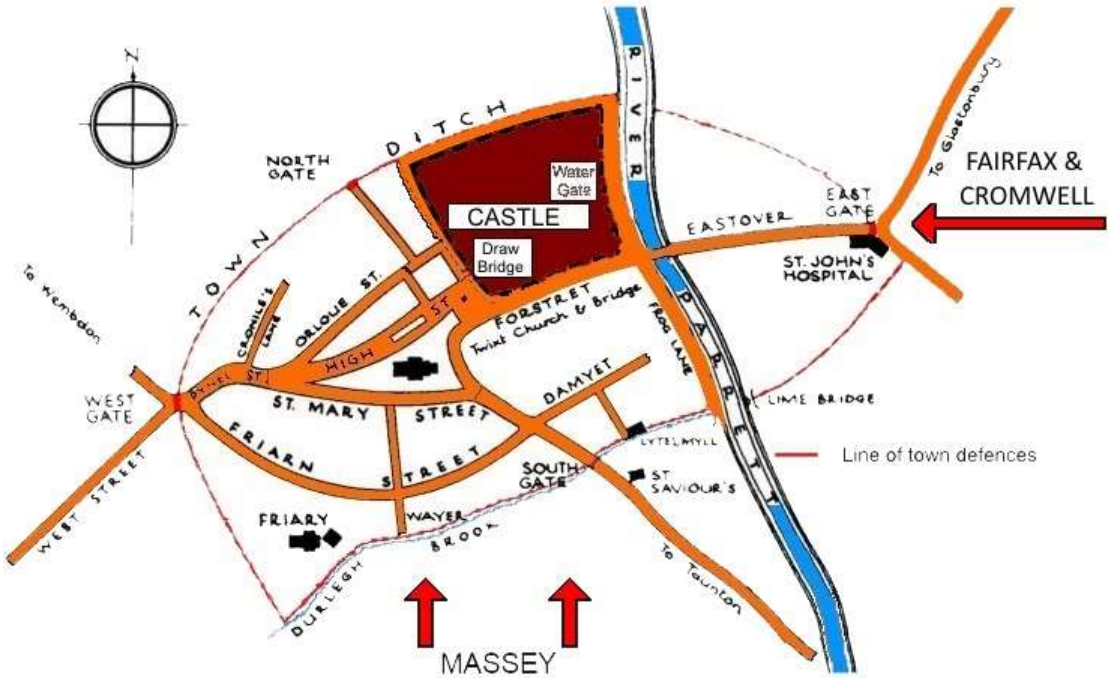

Bridgwater's defences

LITTLE remains to-day to remind us of the siege. Except for the magnificent Church, Bridgwater of early days has gone. An antiquarian or military engineer can still trace, in the lie of the ground, the general position of the castle and its moat, but the only masonry remaining is the part of the water gate that may still be seen in the business premises of Messrs. Major & Co., some cellars, and a piece of wall in Chandos Street.

The ruins of the Hospital of St. John, the scene of some of the fiercest fighting, have disappeared so completely that its position cannot be traced with certainty. Moat Lane and the Mount record the general line of the town fortifications, and now and again a cannon ball may be dug up in the gardens of Eastover.

But though Bridgwater possesses one of the most typically Georgian streets (Castle Street) outside Bath, the casual observer will find very little standing of any earlier date (the Church and a few houses excepted), and it is not easy to reconstruct the Bridgwater of July, 1645, when, for two days and one night, the town continued on fire, the townsmen ran about crying "Mercy for the Lord's sake," and the Cavaliers rang the bells in defiance.

In the Civil War between Charles and the Parliament, Somerset was one of the first areas of conflict. Before the skirmish at Powick Bridge, which is usually reckoned the first bloodshed, and even before the Royalist Standard was set up at Nottingham, August 25th, 1642, the Marquis of Hertford, accompanied by Sir Ralph Hopton and other Royalist gentlemen, arrived at Wells on August 1st with the king's Commission of Array to call out the train bands. However, he soon found that he had only stirred up a hornet's nest, and, after some skirmishing near ells, drew

himself into Sherborne Castle. Later, finding no help coming either from the King or from elsewhere, he made his way through a sullenly hostile country and embarked his foot for Wales at Minehead, while Hopton, with a few horse, made his way into Cornwall.

But next year, 1643, saw the King's cause in the West more flourishing. Hopton emerged from Cornwall, and swept through Devon and Somerset. Taunton, Bridgwater, and Dunster Castle fell into his hands, and the Royalist tide of success flowed on till Bath and Bristol were both taken and Gloucester closely besieged by Charles himself. Here the Royalists received a severe check, for the Londoners came to the city's relief, but most of England, west of Salisbury, remained in Royalist hands for about two years. Plymouth, however, was held by the Parliament throughout, and so was Lyme Regis, in the defence of which Blake distinguished himself. In 1644 Taunton, captured and held by Blake, was a thorn in the side of the Royalists for the rest of the war.

In wars between nations we may generally assume that the armies in the field on either side are the shield as well as the sword, and though guards may have to be left on lines of communication, the home base is friendly and does not require a large garrison either to protect it or to hold it down. Even the American Civil War resembled to a great extent a war between two nations, with well defined areas from which recruits or supplies could be drawn.

But the peculiarity of the English Civil War was that although in broad lines the East stood for the Parliament and the North and West for the King, this is only partly true. In the West the King's cause was stoutly upheld by force of arms and the energy of the strong section of the landed gentry, but many of the townsmen were Parliamentarians in sympathy. On the other hand, while Kent was in the hands of the Parliament, there was a good deal of latent Royalism that flared up, too late to be of service to the King, in the "Second Civil War" of 1648. The result is that both sides, the Royalist side specially, were compelled to maintain garrisons to collect supplies and money, to guard the area under contribution, to keep the disaffected in check, and to guard their supporters from possible raids by the enemy. During most of 1643 and 1644 the King had enough troops locked up in garrisons to have effected a decisive issue in the war if they could have been concentrated. But neither could he have concentrated them, nor could he have fed and paid them when concentrated.

The defence of the West was one of the problems of any Royalist disposition of force. The first line was at Bristol and Bath. Communications with Oxford were liable to be threatened from Gloucester while, to the South, posts like Wardour Castle and Corfe Castle hardly counterbalanced the Parliamentarian occupation of Poole and Portsmouth. The second line was the line of the Parrett. Bridgwater secured the chief crossing of the river. Borough Bridge was held as a small post from time to time, and Langport was garrisoned. But the steady hold that the Parliament kept on Lyme prevented the cordon from ever being drawn effectively from the Bristol Channel to the English Channel, and the seizure and defence of Taunton by Blake in 1644, combined with the fact that Plymouth was for the Parliament throughout the war, tended to loosen the Royalist hold on the Western Counties. Garrisons had to be maintained or the West would be lost to the cause, and, as we have seen, Bridgwater was the most important of these ports west of Bristol, and the main link in the principal chain.

The Governor appointed to take charge of this fortress was Colonel Edmund

Wyndham, one of the Kentsford Wyndhams, a branch of the Wyndhams of Orchard Wyndham His younger brother, Francis, was Governor of Dunster Castle, and subsequently instrumental in the escape of Charles II. after Worcester.

Edmund Wyndham himself had seen service in the Low Countries, and was about forty years of age at the time of the siege. His wife, Christabella, daughter of Sir Hugh Pyne, was accounted one of the most beautiful women of her age. She had been nurse to the Prince of Wales (Charles II.), and either, because of, or in spite of, this motherly relationship, the Prince "had an extraordinary kindness for her," and when holding a kind of court at Bridgwater early in 1645 "was diverted by her folly and petulency" from applying himself to the serious consideration of his business. Certainly the boy (he was only 15), was father to the man. Clarendon disliked her immensely, and described her as "a woman of great tenderness and country pride, nihil muliebre praeter corpus germs." Possibly the West Country gentry and their wives were not greatly impressed by the grave councillors that accompanied the Prince from Oxford, and the dislike was mutual.

The coming of the Scots and the defeat of Rupert at Marston Moor in 1644, was a severe blow to the Royalists, and the year 1645 saw the ruin of the King's cause. The new Model Army under Fairfax and Cromwell defeated Charles I. and Rupert at the decisive battle of Naseby, June 14th, 1645. The King was forced to retreat to Wales and while he was making unsuccessful endeavours to recruit his army there, Fairfax and Cromwell were free to reduce the West.

Goring, the Royalist leader in the West, could dispose of an army of about 4000 foot and 3000 horse, a force that would have made all the difference, had Charles been able to concentrate all his strength at Naseby. But the reduction of Taunton had been considered essential for the Royal Cause, and Goring was instructed with his considerable force for the task. He and his lieutenants fared dismally. Taunton was three times relieved. Further, in his attempts to stem the advance of the New Model Army into the West, Goring was hopelessly out-manoeuvred. He failed to hold the crossings of the Yeo, was brought to battle near Langport, July 10th, and signally defeated, his infantry surrendering in crowds in the pursuit across Sedgemoor and the cavalry retreating precipitately. Langport fell at once. There does not appear to have been any attempt to defend it. Some time before it had been reduced to two days' provisions, and the governor, Sir Francis Mack-worth, had declined the responsibility of holding it. Borough Bridge surrendered on July 13th, and, of the line of the Parrett fortresses, only Bridgwater remained. Meanwhile Goring had retreated through Bridgwater on the 10th, and left the place to its fate. Fairfax fixed his headquarters at Middlezoy on the 10th, and at Chedzoy on the 11th. It was probably on the 12th that Sydenham House, which was held as an outpost of Bridgwater, fell, and the reduction of Borough Bridge the following day disposed of danger in the rear. Bridgwater's hour was come.

Bridgwater was naturally strong. It is true that its position was low, but so was the surrounding country. No eminence commanded it, and the ground immediately outside the fortifications was easily swept by its guns.

True, the river Parrett cut the town in two, but this was rather to the advantage of the defence. The stone bridge gave communication to the garrison, and the river was not easily crossed either immediately above or below the town, as Fairfax discovered later to his cost. Further, the flatness of the terrain and the plentiful

supply of water enabled the ditches to be flooded. At high tide Bridgwater could be made almost an island fortress.

The permanent fortifications were by no means contemptible. The castle, the walls of which were 15 feet thick, not only served as a citadel, but also commanded the bridge, while its northern face formed part of the enceinte of the town. The Hospital of St. John in Eastover, was a solid building which might serve as a bastion to flank the East Gate. Its extent and condition at this time is a matter of some uncertainty. It appears to have had a gateway and drawbridge of its own, which would serve as a kind of postern or sally-port. It may fairly be assumed that the four gates were guarded by fortified gatehouses.

The Town ditch ran along the northern face of the Castle. The steep slope from King's Square to Northgate still marks the fall of it. It ran along the south side of Mount Street, and through what is known as the Cattle Market to West Gate. From there Moat Lane probably indicates its line till it joined the Durleigh Brook which formed the principal water defence on the south side. Ditches also ran from the Parrett to East Gate both on the north-east and on the south-east sides of Eastover. They were 30 feet wide and were filled to the brim at high tide.

It is not very clear to what extent any of the ancient town walls, never extending further than from North Gate to West Gate, formed part of the defences at this time. Probably little or none except, of course, the north wall of the Castle and possible portions of the old wall by Northgate. The defenders relied chiefly upon earthworks or redoubts described as "mounts." A chain of these ran from St. John's Hospital to Dunwear, while another line covered the north west face of the Town. Here also there was an outwork on the further side of the ditch, (probably in the form of a horn-work, i.e., two demi-bastions joined by a curtain) which enabled enfilade fire to be brought to bear towards Northgate or Westgate. The position of this work is doubtful, but it probably was erected near the present position of the Electric Light Works, and has given its name, "The Mount" to the present street.

Such was the task that faced Fairfax and Cromwell. A council, held at Chedzoy on July 14th, debated on attempting the place by storm. No decision was arrived at, but preparations were pushed forward. Batteries were erected not only on the east or right bank of the river, but also on the west or left bank, at Ham, or Hamp. Presumably the guns were brought round by Borough Bridge. Communications from one side to the other must have been very difficult, as the muddy bottom and tidal character of the river prevented fording, so troops and supplies must have crossed by boat. Fairfax himself had a narrow escape from drowning, being almost caught by the " bore " on the 14th. Oldmixon says he was " fording " the river between Dunwear and Ham, which suggests he was crossing on horseback, but the fact appears to have been that he was crossing by boat, and missed the tide by two minutes.

The command on the western side was given to Massey, the defender of Gloucester. He fixed his headquarters at Hamp. He had with him six regiments of foot (Welden's, Ingolds-by's, Fortescue's, Herbert's, Birch's, and the Major-General's*). On the east side remained the General's— (Fairfax's) the Lt.-General's (Cromwell's), Pulteny's, Montagu's, Sir Hardress Waller's, Pride's, and Rainsborough's. Presumably the horse remained this side only, and were quartered in the villages on the moor. The infantry amounted to about 6,000 to 7,000 and the number of the horse must have been nearly

General (Cromwell) were saluted by a cannon shot made by the famous Lady

Wyndham who bad the Trumpeter tell the General she could do no less, and if he were a courtier he would do the like. The shot narrowly missed Cromwell and killed a cornet by his side.". Ladies are notoriously bad shots, but one is sorry for the cornet. i.e. Skippon's , but Skippon had been badly wounded at Naseby, and Massey seems to have been acting as Major-General. General officers in these days still retained the command of their own regiments though they exercised the colonel's duties by deputy. This seems to have been the origin of the rank of Lt.-Colonel. as great, including all outlying detachments. There was also a considerable train of artillery which may have included a few "cannon" and culverins in addition to the demi-culverins, sakers, and minions that formed the field artillery of the day.t Colonel Hammond acted as chief engineer officer and constructed eight portable bridges 40 feet long with which to cross the moat. Two days seem to have been spent in these preparations and in erecting and strengthening the batteries.

To meet the storm Wyndham had thirty or forty guns and a force of about two thousand men, probably less by the hundred that garrisoned Sydenham and had been captured with the house.

It is doubtful whether Fairfax had his full siege train at Bridgwater. If not, he had nothing beyond pieces of 91b. or 181b. at the most. For details of these guns see appendix.

Wyndham had two large pieces, about demi-cannon size, 301b. approx., and most of Goring's train of artillery which, except for two guns, had been sent to Bridgwater before the battle of Langport.

Oldmixon estimates the number of guns as forty. Contemporary tracts vary between thirty and thirty-six.

He could rely on no assistance from the townsmen, many of whom would have opened the gates to the enemy if they had had half a chance.* His own men too, were shaken by the defeat of Langport, at which some at any rate may have been present, and were demoralised by the bad discipline that had prevailed in the King's army of the West.

On Wednesday, July 16th, a further council of war was called by Fairfax at Chedzoy and the question of an immediate storm was again the question of debate. The place was strong, and the cost of a storm might be considerable. On the other hand the King might be raising fresh forces in Wales and Goring doing likewise in Devon and Cornwall. The Parliamentarians could hardly be aware that Charles was having very indifferent success in his recruiting, and Goring even less. If the besiegers sat down to a regular blockade, which the river rendered difficult, they might be caught between a hostile town and, not one, but two relieving armies. Moreover, a siege protracted, as it might well be, into the autumn and winter would be a very uncomfortable business. Heavy rain in the autumn would favour the garrison by filling the ditches and hinder the besiegers by flooding the trenches. To "rise and leave the town unattempted" was unthinkable. It would mean throwing away the moral advantages of Naseby and Langport. Bridgwater must fall, and fall at once, if the fruits of victory were to be reaped.

Sunday, July 20th, was given up to spiritual exercises, a summons to surrender was met by a scornful reply, and that night the troops moved off quietly to their places of assembly.

The plan was well laid. At 2 a.m. on Monday, July 21st, three guns discharged on the east side of the river gave the signal to Massey on the western side. He came on at once. Probably his attack was only intended

as a diversion. If so, it succeeded in its object, and drew the attention of the defenders while the principal attack developed elsewhere. The main blow fell on the northern defences of Eastover.

The General's and Lt-General's own regiments of foot, under the command of their Lt.-Colonels Jackson and Ashfield, and headed by a forlorn under Lt.-Colonel Hewson, broke in, crossing the ditch by means of Colonel Hammond's portable bridges. The greater part of the works along that front fell into their hands, and the guns turned upon the garrison. The defence of Eastover was turned inside out. What follows next is not quite clear. Either the troops who had entered the north-east face succeeded in taking East Gate from the rear, or, according to Oldmixon, a detachment of Cromwell's own regiment of horse succeeded in mastering the postern gate at St. John's, and, opening the East Gate, lowered the drawbridges and admitted their fellows. But one thing is clear, that Captain Reynolds of Cromwell's own regiment of horse entered Eastover with his men mounted, and scoured the street right up to the Bridge. This finished the business. Infantry of that day, especially if shaken, could not face cavalry, and the garrison of Eastover, cut in two, attacked on several sides at once, and demoralised by the horsemen in their, midst, surrendered, to the number of 600, and Bridgwater, east of the river, was in Roundhead hands.

This does not mean that the whole town had fallen. Far from it. The bridge was barricaded and the drawbridge pulled up.* Moreover, there was still the west part of the town, including the Castle, to be reckoned with. The Castle had a strong front on the river side, looking into Eastover, and commanding it with its guns. These could not be fired while there was a danger of shooting friend and foe alike, but when it was clear that Eastover was entirely in Roundhead hands, the Castle guns let fly. "Granades and slugs of hot iron" were poured into the houses on both sides of the street and in the course of a few hours the whole place was in ruins.

Major Cowel, of Colonel Harley's regiment, with a body of horse stood his ground in the midst of the burning street, ready to repel the sally that seemed imminent. Another summons to surrender was treated with the same contempt as before, and the Cavaliers rang the bells in mockery and defiance.

Meanwhile the Parliamentarians were not idle, and a counter bombardment, mainly from the batteries on the southern side, started fires in Friam Street, Silver Street, and the Pig Cross.* A night of horror and confusion followed, the townsmen convinced that the Cavaliers were burning the Town, and the Cavaliers, knowing that the sympathies of the inhabitants were for the Parliament, suspecting incendiarism to rendert their position in the Town untenable.

The next morning Fairfax resolved to reverse the plan of attack of the previous day, and, while "alarming" the Town on the east side, to storm it on the south, but the order was afterwards countermanded, and the effort confined to an "alarm" upon both sides. This had effect. The Royalists, reduced in numbers by the 600 captured in Eastover, demoralised by the bombardment and a danger of a rising in the rear, and threatened by the fires in Friam Street, abandoned the southern defences and retreated to the centre of the Town and the Castle.

At 2 p.m., Fairfax, with the courtesy that was so often a distinguishing feature of the English Civil War, allowed a two hours truce for the women and children to withdraw. Lady Wyndham and others availed themselves of this opportunity after

which, the fighting recommenced. Possibly the Parliamentarians had made use of the time to bring their guns forward, for, in the bombardment which followed, fires, fanned by a high wind, broke out in the Comhill and High Street, while grenades and hot shot were used freely by both sides. Bridgwater seemed doomed, and while the more courageous stolidly set about removing their goods from the flames, others beset the Governor with prayers that he would surrender.

After several hours of pandemonium, Wyndham, prevailed upon rather by the desperate situation than by the pleadings of the townsmen, sent to ask for terms. He got no better than freedom from plunder for the townsmen, their lives for the soldiers, and for their officers "to be disposed of as the Parliament should appoint." This somewhat enigmatic reply was rejected as unsatisfactory, and subsequent events, when Fairfax shot Lucas and Lisle in cold blood after the surrender of Colchester in 1648, rather justify Wyndham's decision. But his messenger, Tom Elliot, fearing that an immediate storm might lead to even worse evils, busied himself by going to and fro and arranging more satisfactory terms. Quarter for life was granted, and hostages having been given by the garrison, Fairfax consented to suspend the assault that night. Accordingly there came out as hostages six Royalist gentlemen, including, curiously, George Speke, who lived to become a strong Monmouth man. The next day the rest of the Town and the Castle were surrendered.

As we meet both Wyndham and Elliot again as companions of Charles II. in exile, we may assume that they werejeither "exchanged," as frequently happened in the Civil War, or were allowed to proceed overseas. What became of the rank and file is unknown, though we may surmise that their fate was similar to that of the Naseby prisoners. Some three thousand of these, mostly Welsh, were led in triumph through London. About a thousand either took service with the Parliament for employment in Ireland or were recruited by the Spanish ambassador for his master's service in the Netherlands.* Probably the Bridgwater prisoners suffered a similar fate. They numbered 1,700, including the garrisons of Sydenham and Eastover, some two or three hundred having perished in the fighting. Two hundred had already fought on the Parliamentary side, and would again.

The plunder in material was considerable. Forty guns, with a good supply of powder and match, and provisions for four months fell into the hands of Fairfax, and, although the townsmen were, by the terms of surrender, exempt from plunder, considerable treasure was captured, for the Royalist gentry of Somerset had deposited there for safety plate and richest household furniture to the value of nearly a hundred thousand pounds. All this personal property, "plate and rich hangings," was sent to London to be sold in the best market to raise bounty money for the soldiers who had taken part in the storm. No doubt they needed it, for their pay was always in arrears, even in the New Model Army. We read that in 1647 the pay of the foot was eighteen weeks in arrears, and that of the horse, who may have been able to forage for themselves better, as much as forty-three.

Not by any means a needless precaution. George Trevelyan of Nettlecombe Court commanded a regiment of horse (and later of foot) for the King. During his absence the rector (I), a bitter Roundhead, attacked the house and burnt the out-buildings. After the King's defeat, Trevelyan was given a pardon, but this did not prevent his kind neighbours from plundering his house and driving off his stock. Mrs. Trevelyan went to London and obtained a "full pardon" for

him—at the price of £1,500—and died of smallpox on the way home.

It is generally believed that the Royalists were the only plunderers in the war. This is hardly in accordance with facts. Plunder they certainly did, for their pay was even in worse arrears than that of the Parliamentary armies, and, not having possession of so good a market as London, they probably plundered with greater extravagance and less system. Possibly some of the Bridgwater treasure was loot. A tumult arose at East Brent in April, 1645, owing to some men from Colonel Tynte's regiment looting the houses and carrying off the feather beds, and these may have found their way to the Castle.

In the distribution of rewards after the Western Campaign, the principal officers of the Parliament were not forgotten. In December the Commons, when drawing up proposals for peace, stipulated for Cromwell an estate of £2,500 a year and the King was asked to make him a baron. As the negociations fell through, the barony never materialised, but the estate did—out of the sequestrated property of the Royalists. Fairfax also did pretty well out of it, on the principle that the labourer is worthy of his hire.

Colonel Birch was made the new Governor of Bridgwater, but the post was no longer such an important one, for, as the West rapidly fell into the hands of Parliament, there was less need of garrisons. The defences were "slighted" and the Castle partly demolished. The only portion suffered to remain was part of the residential buildings, a comparatively new block not fifty years old at the time of the siege. It was in this building that the Duke of Monmouth took up his residence and from which he rode out to the ill-omened field of Sedgemoor. The place on which it stood is now occupied by King's Square.

There can be no doubt that the town, especially Eastover, suffered very severely in the siege, and the wonder is that the Church was not destroyed.

The fall of the town caused as much consternation to the Royalists as it caused jubilation among the Parliamentarians. Clarendon writes, "It was in truth matter of amazement to all men, nor was it any excuse, that it was not of strength enough against so strong an army; for it was so strongly situated, that it might well have had all those additions which were necessary, by fortifications, that it was inexcusable in a governor, (who had enjoyed that charge above three years, with all allowances he had himself desired, and had often assured the King 'that it was not to be taken') that it was not able to resist any strength that could come before it for one week ; and within less than that time it was surrendered and put into Fairfax's hands." But, as we have already shown, he was rather prejudiced against Wyndham. Nor is his military judgement worth consideration. After pointing out that the fall of Bridgwater put a stop to his Majesty's project of crossing from South Wales to Bristol and thence to the West, he remarks that the resolution "had been even then (after the fall of Bridgwater) much better pursued for nothing could have hindered his Majesty from going to Exeter, and joining all his forces." (i.e. from uniting his army with that of Goring). Nothing indeed, except the victorious New Model Army in the way, to say nothing of the squadron under Vice-Admiral Moulton, cruising in the Channel !

It cannot be said that Wyndham surrendered too easily. He was beaten out of Eastover and his men driven from the southern defences before he considered terms. True, he might have withdrawn into the Castle and held out there. He probably would have, if he could have trusted his men. The collapse of the southern part of the

line suggests that their morale was breaking down, and they were not likely to rise to a desperate defence which might lead to a refusal of quarter in event of the worst.

The fact is that the fall of Bridgwater was a natural result of the Battle of Langport. Goring was so heavily defeated there that he fell back as far as Barnstaple, and the King was only as yet considering coming to the West himself. The consequence is that Wyndham had to face the full force of the New Model Army. We may even go further back and say that if Blake had not held Taunton so stoutly, the King's forces would never have been divided. Goring's army would have been with the King at Naseby and the odds at that battle would have been more even. In which case the situation that led to the siege would never have arisen. However, to the framing of hypotheses there is no end, and we must admit that the defence of Bridgwater, though maintained stoutly enough to satisfy military punctilio, hardly reaches the heroic, like the defence of Taunton or the defence of Gloucester. On the other hand, though the odds were heavily on their side, Fairfax and Cromwell deserve every credit for the expeditious manner in which the operation was carried out. They could hardly have been justified in gambling on the dilatoriness of the Royalist forces in the field and risking a siege.

A word or two of praise is due to Massey for the way in which he carried out the secondary role of making holding attacks upon the southern side. He would have been in an awkward position, too, if Goring had reappeared, with 5,000 horse he still could muster. Was he given this task of less glory and greater risk because he was a Presbyterian, and of the contrary faction ? I wonder.

APPENDIX I.

Note on Seventeenth Century Armies.

Horse. The term "horse" was applied to two kinds of mounted soldiers :—

(a) The horseman armed cap-a-pie, with visored helmet, body and leg armour, and long boots. Though this was the prevailing type earlier in the century, it was the exception in the English Civil War, though, on the Parliamentary side, Sir Arthur Haslerigg commanded a regiment known as "the Lobsters," from their full armour, which weighed between 301b. and 401b.

(b) The ordinary type was the "light horseman." We should hardly call his equipment "light" to-day. He wore a helmet (3Jib.), with single or triple bar to protect the face, steel breast and back (6Jib. and 3Jlb.), and a bridle gauntlet (31b.) on the left arm :—total about 161b. to 171b. For weapons he had a sword and pistols.

Dragoons. These were not strictly "horse," but mounted infantry. They wore no body armour, but carried a carbine. They dismounted to fire.

Foot. As the bayonet was not yet invented, it was necessary to have two sorts of foot soldiers :—

(a) Pikemen. These wore steel helmets, breast and back, and tassets or thigh pieces. They carried a long pike and, usually, a sword.

(b) Musketeers. They wore no defensive armour and carried a musket in place of a pike. The musket weighed about twice as much as a modern rifle and required a "crutch" to support the muzzle when it was fired.

The Royalists, owing to lack of means, could not afford body armour for all their pikemen or for their horse. Possibly this accounts for the fact that, as a rule, they marched rather more quickly.

Artillery. The guns in the field were usually demi-culverins (91b. shot) and sakers (3$lb. shot) Culverins (181b.), demi-cannon (301b.) and cannon (401b.) were

used in sieges towards the close of the war. The really big gun was the Cannon Royal of 601b., but its use was rare. Cromwell took two with him to Ireland.

"Cannon" were only for "battering." "Culverins" were rather long guns with a good range. Guns below the size of "saker" were called falcons, minions, and drakes with bewildering variety.

Fortification and Siegecraft.

The 15th century proved that the medieval castle could not stand against cannon and in the sixteenth century the fortified town took the place of the baronial stronghold. Leonardo da Vinci and Albert Durer lent their brains to the problem of military engineering, and the game went on till towards the close of the 17th century. Scientific fortification reached its zenith in the genius of Vauban. But there was hardly any war in England during the Tudor Period and consequently very little fortification approaching the continental scale. Soldiers of fortune, trained in the Thirty Years War, brought home a little of the science, and the principle of replacing the masonry obstacle of the Middle Ages by the ditch, wet or dry, was understood, and the principle of cross fire from bastions was sometimes applied. But no town in England possessed a complicated system of successive lines of defence.

The means of attack were :—

(a) Blockade. The slow method of starvation, but a certain one unless relief arrived, as at Gloucester, or unless the besieger starved first, as Gustavus Adolphus did at Nuremberg.

(b) Approach by the digging of saps to give cover for the approach of storming parties when the fortifications were breached.

Neither of these methods was used at Bridgwater. The overwhelming numbers of the attackers and the single line of defence allowed the place to be rushed by "escalade." Bridges spanned the ditches, ladders scaled the walls, and over the stormers went. Wellington took Badajoz the same way, and for the same reason. He could not spare the time to do otherwise.