

Rolls 3 & 4 Edw. II. 49, 50.) In plea to a writ of quo warranto brought against them 15 Hen. VII. the burgesses of Middlewich claim—

Yearly, at the court next after the feast of St. Michael the archangel, to elect a chamberlain, whose duty was to serve for a year for his salary, receive moneys on behalf of the town, and account for expenditure, and to be assisted in his office by two bailiffs. These bailiffs to have at each court, which is to be held from 15 to 15 days, "unam sextam cervisie," to be there drunk, and not carried away, paying for each "lagena" of the said beer, a farthing below the usual price, which beer shall be supplied by two brewers at each court, going through the brewers in rotation. They claim also to boil and sell salt within their own vill, giving the thirtieth boiling to the prince, and to be free from toll, murage, and pannage, through the whole county of Chester.

In answer to questions put from William Grevyle, on the part of the crown, they explain, toll, to relate to exemption from duties on goods bought or sold in the county of Chester; murage, to exemption from employment on walls or camps; and pannage, to exemption from payment for the hogs which they may keep in the prince's woods in the fattening time (*temp'c pessionis*).^a

The township is now governed by constables, sworn in the usual manner in the court held by [the present lord of the manor, formerly by] the lessees under the crown; and there is nothing varying from ordinary custom in the form of their appointment, or the other usages of the court. [The collection of the tolls of the town has been discontinued for some years.]

Middlewich is situated on the bank of the Grand Trunk canal, contiguous to the confluence of the Dane and the Croco, about twenty miles east of Chester. The town is considerable, and extends into the adjacent vills of Kinderton and Newton; its trade chiefly consisting of the manufacture of salt from the brine springs. [But although a line of railway now passes by Middlewich, it seems to have done little to increase the trade or population during the last half century; and the town is clean and pleasant beyond comparison with many others.] There are fairs on Holy Thursday, and the 25th of July, and two weekly markets.

This place was the scene of two battles in the civil disturbances of the seventeenth century. The first was in March 1642-3, when sir Thomas Aston was defeated by sir William Brereton; the second, in December or the beginning of January following, when sir William Brereton and Colonel Ashton were in their turn defeated by the royalists (then reinforced by troops from Ireland), with the loss of two hundred men.^b

^cIn the first of these engagements the royalists lost two pieces of cannon, with proportionate ammunition, and nearly five hundred stand of arms. The number of the slain was small, and nearly equal, including none of the officers, but many of the principal royalists engaged were taken prisoners,^d and the townsmen were great sufferers in their properties. They were despoiled of their moveables, and the church was robbed of its plate, and whatever else was worth taking.

Sir Thomas Aston in a few days got back to Chester,

though with difficulty, where he suffered much censure for his conduct, was put under arrest, and ordered to remain at Pulford. In this situation he drew up a state of his case by way of vindication, addressed to the lords and others of the garrison of Chester, which is given, as follows, entire, from the MS. collections of Dr. Cowper.^e

"To the Right Honourable the Earl Rivers, the Lords Viscounts Cholmondeley and Kilmurray, to the Honourable Thomas Savage, &c. &c. &c.

"MY LORDS!

"Though I know not what it is to apprehend feare of any man's threates, nor know any cause given for them against mee in particular, yet I must thanke your care of my person, and shall have more cause to acknowledge your sense of my honour, if you will receive and divulge a true accompt of this unfortunate business, wherein I desire noe favour, but that truth may be knowne, and let that quitt or condemne mee.

"Your Lordships know how our progresse was retarded at our setting forth, the soldiers mutining for pay on the Fryday, and Mr. Bavand haveinge not issued it out on Saturday, nor the provisions, 'till it was soe late, I was forced to leave two troops of horse on the forrest to guard it to Over, though they lay in danger that night.

"At our arrivall at Midellwich, a letter overtooke us from the Governour, recommendinge to us certaine propositions from the lord Brereton, which were,

"That he might have a convoe for his ladie, children, and goods to Chester, and then he would bringe in his men.

"Upon consultation had with the sheriff, sir Edward Fytton, and colonel Ellis, it was held for a considerable addition, and that it was worth our stay, and thereupon sent him a letter under all our hands, desiringe, though it were Sunday, he would provide carriage for his goods and come away, for that further delays would not be safe for him, nor could our designs admit it; yet his lordship did not accordingly, but came on Sunday himselfe to Midelwich, to confer further with us: of this notice was very speedilie given to Northwich (as by intelligence since from them), which occasioned the suddaine attempt upon us, to prevent him from joyninge with us, whose intentions were judged by this appearance.

"The accommodatige this, togaither with the shcrife's desire to summon in the country, with their contribution and assistance, necessitated a joynte consent to stay there on Monday, the rather hopeinge diversion of danger from Namptwich, by prayinge the governour that they at that place might receive an allarum from Whitchurch forces; but in steed of a support or countenance from that quarter, the forces there were disbanded; and to whatever accident we studie to impute the miscarriage of this designe, that was the ruine of this, and (I pray God it prove not soe) of both counties.

"Their whole force and power beinge thereby let loose upon us, to assaile us on three sides, in an open towne, and where it was impossible for horse to doc

^a Vernon's MSS. preserved at Somerford, and Harl. MSS. 2115, 185.

^b See vol. I. p. 205. col. 1. [*nov* 247.—H.]

^c Sir Edward Moseley of Hough's-end bart, colonel Ellis, major Gillmore, captains Corbet, Morris, Lloyd, Eaton, Massie of Coddington, Hurlston, Jones, Horton, Starkie of Stretton, and Davenport of Woodford; lieutenants Dod, Chorley, Hosier, and Manley; ensigns Ward, Proudlove, Norreys, and Davenport; 3 cannoniers, 2 corporals, 2 quartermasters, 400 privates, and 100 horse.

^d There stated to be taken from a MS. copy in the possession of the rev. S. Aldersey of Aldersey.

^e Cowper's MSS. II. 35.

On the 18th of March following the raising of the siege, the garrison were alarmed by a predatory excursion

of royalists under colonel Marrow; but no serious attempt was subsequently made upon the place, which

Harwar, with a hundred and sixty men; they took it without resistance, though they had all necessaries for a fortnight, which the enemy got; Harwar and his men being sent off to Wem with their cloaths, not being allowed to go to Nantwich, which night and day they assaulted and harassed by their continual alarms.

Saturday, January 12. The besieged sallied out, and fetched in seven carriages, drawn with great oxen, and provisions in them, which so enraged them, that they fired Thomas Evenson's barn, Sabbath Church's lodge, and some others, and many stacks of hay.

About eleven o'clock at night the enemy planted a great piece of ordnance near Darfold House, and shot into the town many red-hot balls, one of which lighted into a rick of kyils in Mr. Wilbraham's back-yard, which made a terrible fire, but through God's mercy, and the industry of many women, who were employed to quench it, not much hurt was done, only the enemy shooting continually with their cannon, killed a daughter of John Davenport's, the first that was slain since the siege began. The

besieged seeing many of the enemy sheltered in and about Mr. Minshall's house and barn, sallied out again, fired the barn, and a cote or two of Dutton's, which they burned to the ground, took two prisoners, and killed nine or ten; they brought in a woman too, who had ten half-crowns in her pockets, without the loss of a man.

The siege had now continued from December 13th to the middle of January, and the town wholly without supply of provisions, for no market could be kept, nor were any suffered to bring in any, yet there was no want of necessaries during the time.

January 16th. Some of each company issued out at the sconce in Mr. Mainwaring's back-yard, where the enemy were entrenched; they quickly entered their works, killed some of them, drove the rest away, and brought in cloaths, arms, and ammunition, with the loss of one Blackshaw. The day after the enemy shot against the town very much, and discharged their cannon ninety-six times, but did no execution at all.

* Thursday morning at break of day they strongly attacked the town on

the town of Nantwich into my hands for his majesty's use, and submit yourselves to his majesty's mercy, which I am willing to offer unto you. Though I am confident that neither of yourselves, nor by any aid that can come unto you, there is any possibility for you to escape the hands of this army. If you please to send two gentlemen of quality to me, the one a commander, the other a town's-man, whereby you may receive better satisfaction, I shall give safe conduct and hostages for their return. I do expect a present answer from you.

Jan. 16th, 1643.

JOHN BYRON.*

To which the following answer was returned:

"We have received your last summons, and do return this answer; that we never reported, or caused to be reported, that your lordship or the army intended any such cruelty, we thinking it impossible for gentlemen and soldiers so much to forget humanity: and if any have informed you otherwise, it is their own conceit and no reality. Concerning the publishing of your former summons, it was publicly read among the soldiers and town's-men, as your trumpeter can inform you, and since that time multitudes of copies have been dispersed amongst the town's-men and others, and from none hath it been concealed or detained. For the delivery of this town; we may not with our consciences, credits, or reputations, betray that trust reposed in us for the maintaining and defending this town as long as any enemy shall appear to offend it. Though we be termed traitors and hypocrites, yet we hope and are confident, God will evidence and make known to the world in his due time (though for the present we should suffer) our zeal for his glory, our unfeigned and unspotted loyalty towards his majesty, and sincerity in all our professions.

"GEORGE BOOTH."

* The following extract from Partridge's History of Nantwich is more particular than Burghall's account, with respect to the assault and the relief of Nantwich, and it is therefore subjoined, together with the official dispatch from Fairfax to the earl of Essex. This extract agrees with Clarendon as to the royalists being divided when they were defeated, but differs in this point from Burghall and from the official dispatch, both of which agree in stating, that lord Byron's entire forces were collected at Acton.

"The assailants now, finding all their summonses disregarded, formed the resolution to attempt the capture of the town by storm; accordingly, the besiegers gave a general assault on the 18th day of January, from five different quarters at once, a little before day-break, on notice given to one another by a shot of one of their cannon, but were so warmly received by the garrison, that they were repulsed at every attack with great slaughter, and compelled to draw off with the loss of betwixt three and four hundred men; leaving dead, at the Wall Lane-end, lieutenant-colonel Bolton, one captain, and many officers, and the prime of their soldiers, of the red regiment. Many were cast into the river, and many others carried off dead and wounded. At Wicksted's Sconce (besides captain Sandford, mentioned before) were killed, his lieutenant and several soldiers, with many more carried off dead and wounded. At Pillory Street end left dead, one captain, two lieutenants, two ensigns, and seventeen common men of the green regiment, and sixty slain and wounded carried off. At the back of Mr. Manwaring's were killed two lieutenants and thirteen common men, besides many dead and wounded carried off. At the Sconce, near lady Norton's, one captain was killed and fifteen soldiers, besides the dead and wounded conveyed away; and there were taken prisoners by the garrison, eighteen officers and soldiers mortally wounded. Yet, notwithstanding the army suffered so greatly at this bloody attack, they still made good their siege, determined, if possible, to master the town, but success began now to forsake them; for this siege, hitherto protracted to a length which exhausted the patience of the assailants and baffled all their attempts, now drew towards a crisis. Fairfax, being victorious at Selby in Yorkshire, led a good body of horse hitherwards, and calling at Manchester, brought from thence and the neighbouring parts near 3000 foot, which being joined by sir William Brereton, who had left the command of the garrison to the next in rank, supposed to be the person who signed George Booth to the answer to lord Byron's second summons, and collecting the scattered forces of Staffordshire and Derbyshire, and the fugitives from the fight of Middlewich, his army becoming considerable by these reinforcements, determined him to attempt the relief of the town. Lord Byron had early intimation of his motions, but believing that his utmost design was to induce him to rise from before the town and to retire without fighting him; and prickt on by the success of his former exploits, became too confident and kept his posts too long, which in the end proved fatal to him. Yet resolutely waiting for Fairfax, a battle became unavoidable, the consequence whereof was a total defeat to the royalists, and the raising the siege of the town. One principal thing which contributed to lord Byron's defeat was, the inactivity of the horse, occasioned by the sudden thaw, which came on at this juncture, who, being confined in deep lanes with great and high hedges, were rendered incapable to sustain or relieve the suffering infantry. His troops occupying both sides of the Weaver, the thaw so swelled it, that it parted one body of his army from the other, which compelled him to fetch a compass of five miles about, in order to effect his junction with the separated corps. The experienced Fairfax took advantage of this incident, and (aided by a timely sally from the town) charged and defeated that body, which, before lord Byron could come to its relief, was entirely broken, and forced to take shelter in Acton church. Here they were soon compelled to surrender, being 1500 foot, with the cannon and carriages, besides a considerable number of officers, amongst whom was colonel Monk, afterwards a famous general, and the happy instrument of restoring king Charles II. Lord Byron, with all the horse and the rest of the foot, made good their retreat to Chester. I cannot quit the account of this memorable siege without taking notice of the great service and activity of the town's-women, headed by an heroine of the name of Brett, who defended the works with the utmost bravery, and did great execution on the 18th of January, when the desperate assault was given, by pouring hot brine upon the assailants, one of whom gaining the wall, too prematurely cried out, *the town is our own*. In commemoration of the raising the siege, which happened upon St. Paul's day, 1643, upon every anniversary of it, till of late, the inhabitants wore sprigs of holly in their hats in token of victory, and the day itself, upon that account, was called the Holly-Holly Day. Some remains of these earthen fortifications are still to be seen, which cost in constructing 335 pounds eight shillings and seven pence: a proof (it may be said) of the cheapness of labour in those days. I rather apprehend, the town and adjacent parts having been (as before was observed) cruelly and impolitely treated by lord Grandison, and dreading no doubt the same, or worse, from the army under lord Byron, did voluntarily and largely contribute to the construction of these works, both in labour and money." P. 616—19.

The following is sir Thomas Fairfax's letter to the earl of Essex, upon occasion of this victory:

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY.—I desire your pardon, that I have not given your Excellency an account before this, of the great mercy God hath shewed us, in giving us a happy victory over the Irish army, to the total ruin of their foot, and purchase of their chief commanders. Upon the 21st of January, I marched from Manchester towards Nantwich, to relieve that town, with 2500 foot, and 28 troops of horse: the enemies forces were above 3000 foot, and 1800 horse. The first encounter we had was with a party of theirs, upon the forest of Delamere, where about 30 were taken prisoners; about six miles further they maintained a passage (Bar-bridge) against us, with about 200 men. I caused some foot and dragoons to be drawn out to force it, which, by God's assistance, they did in half an hour's space, and there took a major and some prisoners. Having advanced some two miles further, we found a good body of them planted about Acton church, a mile from Nantwich. We drew up within cannon shot, which sometimes played

continued to be the head-quarters of sir William until Chester and the rest of the county were subjected to

the arms of the Parliament. After this the place was disgarrisoned, by order of the lieutenantcy, in Jan. 1646.

every side; and the soldiers and townsmen as stoutly defended themselves for an hour or more: very great valour was shewn on both sides, but at last the enemy fled away as fast as they could, leaving their scaling-ladders and wood-kids they had brought with them, some arms, and a hundred dead bodies behind them, whereof captain Sandford was one, who was killed upon the spot, where one of his firelocks was sore wounded and brought into the town, but died quickly. The town soldiers had the pillage of them all, and their arms, and lost but six common men. There was found in captain Sandford's pockets, when he was stripped, a paper containing the order of the assault for taking the town. The field word was, God and a good cause. A letter also was found upon him, dated January 13, in these words:

"To the Officers, Soldiers, and Gentlemen in Nantwich:
"GENTLEMEN.

"Let these resolve your jealousies about religion: I vow by the faith of a Christian, I know not one Papist in our army, and as I am a gentleman, we are not Irish, but true born English, and real Protestants born and bred. Pray mistake us not, but receive us into your fair esteem, and know we intend loyalty to his majesty, and will be no other than faithful in his service. Thus believe, from your's,

"T. SANDFORD."

Another was found, dated the 15th, viz.

"GENTLEMEN,

"Mr. Drum can inform you, that Acton church is no more a prison, but now free for honest men to do their devotion therein; wherefore be persuaded from your incredulity, and resolve: God will not forsake his anointed. Let not your zeal in a bad cause dazzle your eyes any longer, but wipe away your vain conceits, that have too long led you into error; loth I am to take the trouble of persuading you into obedience, because your erroneous opinions do most violently oppose reason among you; but, if you love your town, accept of quarter; and if you regard your lives, work your safety by yielding your town to lord Byron for his majesty's use. You now see my battery is fixed, from which fire shall eternally visit you day and night, to the terror of your old and females, and consumption of your thatched houses. Believe me, Gentlemen, I have laid by my former delay, and now am resolved to batter, burn, and storm you. Don't wonder that I write to you, having officers in chief above me; it is only to advise, because I have some friends among you, for whose safety I wish that you accept lord Byron's conditions, for he is gracious, and will charitably consider you. Accept of this as a summons, that you forthwith surrender your town; and by that testimony of your fealty to his majesty, you may obtain favour. My firelocks, you know, have done strange feats, by night and by day, and hourly we will not fail in our visits of you; you have not yet received my alarm, wherefore expect suddenly to hear from

"T. SANDFORD, Captain of Firelocks.*

"From my battery and approaches before the Welsh Row."

The siege continued; things began to be very scarce, both for man and horse; many cattle being within the walls, for fear of plundering, wanted forage; a special Providence now appeared, for it pleased God, upon the thawing of the snow, the Weaver began to rise, and the enemy fearing the water would take down the platt, which they had laid over it a little below

upon us, but without hurt, God be thanked. We there understood that the lord Byron, who had besieged the town on both sides the river, was prevented, by the overflowing of the water, from joining that party at Acton church; but heard that he was taking a compass to get over the river to join with it, we resolved to fall upon that party at the church before he should get up to it; but staying to bring up our rear and carriages, we gave him time to obtain what he sought for. Then we resolved to make way with pioneers through the hedges, and then to march to the town to relieve it, and to add some more force to ourselves, to enable us the better to fight with them; but being a little advanced on our march, they told me the enemy was close upon the rear; so facing about two regiments, being colonel Holland's and colonel Booth's, I marched not far before we came to be engaged with the greatest part of their army, then the other party presently after assaulted our front; there sir William Brereton and colonel Aslton did very good service, and so did colonel Lambert and major Copley with the horse. They were once in great danger, but that they, being next the town, were assisted with forces which came to their succour in due time. We on the other wing were in as great distress, but that the horse commanded by sir William Fairfax did expose themselves to great dangers to encourage the foot, though capable of little service in those narrow lanes; yet it pleased God, after two hours fight, they were forced by both wings to retreat to the church, where they were caught as in a trap. A list of what we took I have here sent your Excellency, &c. &c.

"Nantwich, January 29, 1643.

A list of the prisoners taken at Acton church, January 25, 1643, near Nantwich.

Major-general Gibson. Colonels, sir Michael Earily, sir Richard Fleetwood,.....Monk, and.....Warren. Lieutenant-colonels, sir Francis Butler,.....Gibbs. Major Hammond. Captains, Alkyns, Sydenham, Finch, Disney, Fisher, Cook, Ward, Dean, Lucas, Litcole, Betts, Spotswood, Bambridge, Willier. Licutenants, Long, Norton, Roe, Pawlet, Goodwin, Liverson, Dudleston, Fate, Morgell, Ixstrange, Shipworth, Ankers, Billingsley, Castillion, Milner, Bradshaw, Walden, Lyons, Poulden, Smith. Ensigns, Brown, Brereton, Bach, Fines, Wright, Davis, Touchwood, Addisse, Smith, Mahoone, Rise, Deudsworth, Musgrave, Pemicock, Dunsterfield, Elliar, Eiclash, Philips, Iheard, Thomas, Morgan, Lewis, Godsclue, Busby, Temingham, Wither. Cornets, Lee, Carpenter. Quarter-masters, Icc, Petty. Gentlemen of companies, 20. Serjants, 41. Drums, 40. Corporals, 63. Cannoners, 4. Colours, 21. Women, many of whom had long knives, 120. Common soldiers, 1500. Ordnance, whereof five were brass, 6. Carriages, 20. Divers waggons and rich plunder.

Besides these, sir Ralph Done, and the rev. Mr. Shurlock, a chaplain to a regiment, were taken prisoners; and lieutenant-colonel Vane was killed in the fight.

* This gentleman was of the family of Sandford of Sandford, co. Salop, and will be found mentioned in *The Cheshire Sheaf*, with a variety of interesting particulars.—H.

beam-bridge, for their free passage to relieve one another: they, therefore, on the 24th of January, conveyed all their ordnance over the river, together with their carriages, and most of their horse and foot, towards Acton church; and on the 25th, the river was risen so high, that their platt was carried down, so that they could not pass the river; which the townsmen and soldiers perceiving, took advantage thereof, and issued out to the enemy's works, driving such as were left in them away, throwing down their works, bringing in much hay and fuel, burning Mr. Jeffrey Minshall's new house, barn, and stable, and many other dwellings, where the enemy had been harboured. The same day, sir W. Brereton, Gen. Fairfax, and many other commanders, and the Lancashire forces, to the number of 3,550 horse, and 5000 foot, marched towards Nantwich, to raise the siege, and coming over Delamere Forest, they met with some of the royalists, and in the skirmish took forty prisoners, and killed some; at Barr-bridge they met more of them, killed some, and took thirty prisoners, and still drawing to Hurlston, they saw the whole body of the enemy at Acton: the battle began very fiercely about half an hour after three in the afternoon, and before five, many of the train-bands issued out of the town, and fell upon their rear, whereupon they fled, and were utterly routed. Sir Mic. Earnley, sir F. Butler, col. Gibson, col. Warren, col. Fleetwood, and many captains, lieutenants, and soldiers, about 1600, were taken prisoners. One brass cannon, four smaller, all their carriages, magazines, and provisions, which were all immediately brought into the town; and if day-light had not failed, but few of them would have escaped; but the night being very dark they did not pursue them, and many remained on the field all night: few were slain on either side; about forty of the king's, and three or four of the others, and but few wounded. The cavaliers in Acton church and Darfold quickly called for quarter, which was granted them; and the Saturday after the market began again, and plenty of all provisions at reasonable rates.

Monday, Steel, late governor of Beeston-castle, was shot to death in Tinker's-croft, by two soldiers, according to judgment against him; he was put into a coffin, and buried in the church-yard. He confessed all his sins, among the rest that of uncleanness; he prayed a great while, and to the judgment of charity died penitently.

Some parliament forces being billeted in and about Tarvin, were set upon by the Chester forces, and some wounded and others taken prisoners; but a company of parliament dragoons making haste, overtook and rescued them, killed a captain and some others, wounded many, and took eight prisoners, whom they sent to Nantwich.

Wednesday, January 30. A solemn thanksgiving was kept for removing the siege, but not in the church, for the prisoners had been kept there, and it was not yet cleansed, but in some houses of the town fitted up for that purpose.

February 4. The Nantwich forces assaulted Crewe-hall, then kept by captain Fisher, which was presently surrendered, on condition that he and his men, about 120, with the wounded, might depart safe, leaving their arms; many of them came that same day to Nantwich, where they were entertained.

February 7. Doddington-hall was likewise assaulted with great ordnance, and yielded on the like terms; and most of the garrison came to Nantwich, and were there entertained.

February 13. A solemn day of thanksgiving in Nantwich and Acton churches, and on Thursday after a day of humiliation.

"I am your Excellency's most humble servant,

"THO. FAIRFAX."

valour in any of the scenes of contention most distinguished in the annals of his time; but their influence was not the less injurious to the cause of their opponents. His early defence, and final relief of Nantwich (in co-operation with Fairfax), saved the only garrison which was left to the rebel interest in Cheshire or the parts adjacent, and his reduction of Chester deprived the royalists of this district of their main point of shelter, and the great centre for their exertions. By that fatal coincidence which arranged friends and kinsmen under the opposite banners in this contest, sir William Brereton, both at Nantwich and Chester, the greatest scenes of his exertions, was opposed to lord Byron, whose family was nearly allied to that of the parliamentary general, his brother and finally heir sir Richard

Byron, equally distinguished as a loyalist, having married Elizabeth, daughter of sir George Booth, and consequently sister of lady Brereton.

After the termination of the war, among other honorary offices conferred on him by the parliament, sir William Brereton had the chief forestership of Macclesfield, and the seneschalship of that hundred; he had also large allowances out of the personal estates of papists and delinquents, by an ordinance of the parliament; and after the death of archbishop Laud, received a grant of the archiepiscopal palace of Croydon in which he fixed his residence during the protectorate; and surviving the restoration a few months only, died April 7, 1661.^a

dyrecon to ye Sheriffe, Justices of ye Peace, and other officers, to require and command all ye popish recusants in that countie to confine themselves to their dwellings, according to ye statute in that case provided. And if any such recusant shall be found to transgresse therein, you and every of you shall cause the Justices of the Peace forthwith to bind them to their good behaviour; and upon refusal or neglect to give securitie accordingly to commit them to prison, and further to proceed against them according to the law.

"You shall also in the name of both Houses of Parliament require all such persons who have in their custodie any part of ye publique Magazine of your countie, to deliver the same unto some of you, to be employed for ye said countie. And you and every of you are lykwise to give charge from both Houses of Parliament to all Captaines, Lievetenants and other officers of the Militia, that they be observant to such dyrecons as they shall from tyme to tyme receive from the lievetenant of the countie or his deputies or any of them for due performance of any command of the said Houses. And you and every of you shall resist and repell and are hereby authorised to resist and repell by ye power of ye said countie and by all other waies and means all such force or violence as shall be raised or brought by any person or persons to the hindrance and disturbance of this present service or for the arresting or seising of the persons of you or anie of you, or of any other which shall be employed in the performance of ye ordinances, instruccions or commands of both Houses of Parliament for anything done in execution thereof. And the Sheriffe and Justices of the Peace of the said countie and all other officers and subjects are hereby enjoyned to be aydeing and assisting unto you and every of you for the better and more speedie execution of the premises.

"And the Lords and Commons doe hereby declare, that they will protect, defend and assist all manner of persons in such actions as they shall performe in pursuance of these instruccions and other orders and commands of the said Houses of Parliament.

"Jo: Browne Cler: Parliamentor."

"Jan. 1642.

"Hcn: Elsing, Cler:

"Parl. D. Com."

^a P. 326. *Sir William Brereton*. The following series of his achievements, recounted in Riecraft's *England's Champions*, may be an acceptable addition to the memoir of this celebrated parliamentary general, and to the details of many of his battles interspersed with the parochial topography.

Defeat of sir Thomas Aston at Nantwich, Jan. 28, 1643—of the earl of Northampton at Hopton Heath, March 26, 1644. Successive captures of Stafford, Wolverhampton, Whitechurch, and Eccleshall castle. Capture of Houghton (Halton) Castle, July 22, 1644. Defeat of lord Capel near Nantwich. Capture of Holt Castle Nov. 21, 1644—of Hawarden Castle—of Rippon, Dec. 3, 1644. Raising the siege of Nantwich and rout of sir John Byron, Feb. 14, 1644. Defeat of prince Rupert at Tarvin, Aug. 18, 1645. Siege and capture of Chester Jan. 29, 1645. Capture of Lichfield, March 6, 1645—of Dudley Castle, May 12, 1646, pp. 41-44.

To these achievements Vicas (in his *England's Worthies*, 1649), adds—

The battle of Middlewich. The defeat of the earl of Derby at Stockton Heath, and of sir Vincent Corbet at Drayton—of lord Capel at Lappington and at Leigh Bridge. The capture of Wrexham and Gusanna House. A victory at Welshpool, and another over sir Marmaduke Langdale at Malpas, 1644. A victory over sir Thomas Middleton in Montgomery Castle. The successive captures of Liverpool and Shrewsbury, a victory at Denbigh, and the reduction of Tutbury, pp. 71-76.

A very characteristic but rude print of Brereton is given in the latter work, that in the former has been already noticed.—*Ormerod's Additions*, vol. III. 450.

^a An ample statement of his operations against Chester is given in vol. I. p. 204-9, from Cowper's MSS. and another of those connected with the siege of Nantwich from Burghall's diary, in vol. III. p. 223. This latter account gives particulars of his siege of Eccleshall castle during which the bishop died, and of numerous other excursions of his troops in Staffordshire, Shropshire, Yorkshire, and other adjacent counties. Notices of him will also be found in Ducarel's account of Croydon, Pegge's tracts in the *Bib. Top. Britann. and Clarendon*, 8vo edit. 1717, vol. II. pp. 145-6-50-52, 439-57, chiefly relating to the battle of Hopton Heath, and the sieges of Nantwich and Chester; and a vast variety of minute details of his successive operations may be found by consulting the index to Hollis's *Memoirs*. A scarce print of him, from Riecraft's *Survey*, was re-engraved a few years ago by Richardson.

In the *Mysteries of the good Old Cause* 12mo. 1663, p. 3, (Lysons's *Environ*s, I. 175) he is described as "a notable man at a thanksgiving dinner, having terrible long teeth and a prodigious stomach, to turn the archbishop's chapel at Croydon into a kitchen, also to swallow up that palace and lands at a morsel."

Clarendon notices the devotion of the lower orders to "sir William Brereton and his companions, and their readiness to supply them with intelligence;" and though he allows their education had but ill fitted them for the conduct of a war, praises their execution of "their commands with notable sobriety and indefatigable industry (virtues not so well practised in the king's quarters), insomuch as the best soldiers who encountered with them had no cause to despise them." Vol. II. p. 147.

Dr. Gower in the account of his *Cheshire Collections*, p. 43, mentions the journals of sir W. Brereton in FIVE FOLIO VOLUMES, written in a small hand, describing every circumstance that occurred during the four years he was general. The author in 1819 had an opportunity of examining Dr. Wilkinson's *Cheshire papers*, among which sir W. Brereton's letters were preserved, being (with some very trifling exceptions) the only documents mentioned in Dr. Gower's prospectus which remained among the relics of his collections, and these had either been erroneously described, or a part of them had been otherwise disposed of. What remained were two folio volumes containing copies of letters from Oct. 1645 to Jan. 1645-6.