

THE SEA APPROACHES
THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DEE AND THE MERSEY IN THE
CIVIL WAR IN THE NORTH WEST

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In general the maritime aspects of the Civil War have been neglected. Even those historians of the late 19th or early 20th century who thought Parliament's control of the navy a major factor in their victory did not look much below the surface. The reasons for this are not far to seek. The war at sea went on in the background, devoid of big battles, indeed any battles at all; a confusing catalogue of interception, evasion and occasional combat by single vessels or small groups of them. If it had any serious influence on the main outcome – there are some recent historians of the Civil War who doubt this¹ – then it was not obvious and dramatic but cumulative. In addition, it was only intermittently recorded and then often by those who had no understanding of it. So, the great national historians, although dealing with the war in areas where lay the important southern and eastern ports to which the principal trade routes led, tended to avoid the maritime issues. This being so, it would be natural to expect local historians like Dr. John Lowe and myself, writing about two remote counties in the north-west boasting only two ports of even moderate importance at the time, to do the same. And, indeed, we did. When, over twenty years ago, we published in this Society's *Transactions* papers on the coming over of units of the royal army in Ireland in the winter of 1643–4 and the campaign which resulted, we devoted hardly any space at all to the questions of how and why these troops were able to cross the Irish Sea.²

More recently, however, my involvement with those vast rag-bags of Civil War information, the Letter Books of Sir William Brereton,³ the principal parliamentary commander in the north-west, has brought the maritime struggle to my notice. Items in them made it obvious that Sir William, a very busy man with no inclination to waste his time on



inessentials, thought it of importance. This, in turn, led me to look once again at the evidence concerning the passage of the troops from Ireland across the sea and from this and yet other evidence to draw the conclusion that Sir William was not alone and that other leaders, local and national, royalist and parliamentarian, thought control of the sea a worthwhile objective. Of course, they may have been wrong but, as they were on the spot and we are not, this must be a sufficient starting point for further investigation into the role of sea power in the Civil War in the north-west.

Two main themes have emerged. First, the problem of why the royalists were able to transfer thousands of troops across the Irish Sea to the Dee in the winter of 1643-4 and never again during the war. Secondly, the question of whether there is sufficient evidence of any serious attempt by either side to use the sea approaches to the north-west for the movement of supplies. It should be said at the outset that the evidence relates almost entirely to Chester and Liverpool and their sea approaches via the Dee and the Mersey. Although some use was made of Beaumaris, Carnarvon and Conway, both they and the ports on the west coast north of Liverpool were too small and too remote from

the main areas of combat for them to be of major importance.⁴

A word should be said first about the condition of the two ports and their sea approaches at the outset of the war. Despite the problem of the silting of the Dee, Chester was still the only port in the north-west well known to the rest of the country. With a population of between 7,000 and 7,500, it was the main port for military and administrative traffic to Ireland. This had grown greatly since the days of Henry VIII because of the unsettled state of Ireland and the fear that Spain might take advantage of this. Liverpool was a rising port, rapidly overtaking Chester as far as trade with Ireland went. People with local knowledge, like Brereton, the Earl of Derby, Orlando Bridgman, revealed during the war that they were aware of its increasing usefulness. But it was little known to the rest of the nation and its small size (population under 1,500),⁵ its remoteness and poor landward communications prevented it rivalling Chester as a port of embarkation for troops going to Ireland. Besides, the limitations of its sheltered harbourage and the difficulties of navigating the entrance to the Mersey before the days of accurate charts, had up to this time outweighed the disadvantages caused by the silting of the Dee.⁶ Although this had begun to be serious three centuries before, the citizens of Chester had managed to preserve their city's maritime existence by the creation of a series of outports stretching right down the Wirral shore of the Dee. There is little doubt that the most important of these up to and during the Civil War was Neston. William Webb wrote of it in the 1620s:

Here is the station of the ships called the New Key, where they embark and dis-embark both men, horses and kine and all other commodities upon the back of this Neston.⁷

It should be noted that two out of the three sizeable consignments of troops that came from Ireland to the north-west during the war dis-embarked at Neston.

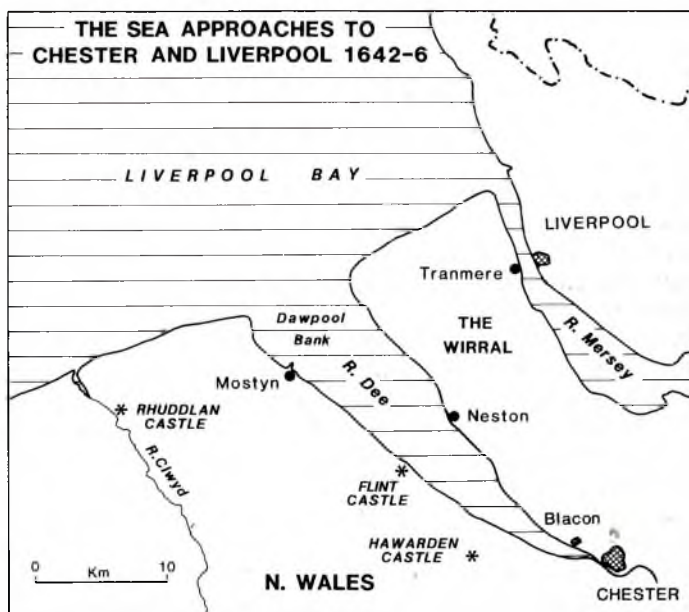
Chester was firmly in royalist hands at the outbreak of the war and remained so until its surrender to Brereton barely six months before the war ended. Probably the influence of the Cathedral, of the surrounding nobility and upper gentry (some of whom had a stake in the town's government), and of an inner ring of conservative aldermen would have made Chester declare for the King in any case. But his presence in Chester, immediately before he led his army from

Shrewsbury in its march on London, clinched the matter. The handful of puritan and pro-parliamentarian citizens either fled to Brereton or retired into obscurity. Although there was much discontent at the military dominance exercised by strangers during the war, there was no sign of any opposition inside the city that could be labelled pro-parliamentarian.⁸

What happened in Liverpool was a great deal more obscure. There is little mention of it in contemporary documentation until May, 1643, when the royalist cause in Lancashire collapsed and its leaders left the county; Derby to his seat in the Isle of Man, Tyldesley and Molyneux by differing routes back to Oxford.⁹ Then, during the siege of Warrington, we hear of a parliamentary ship anchoring off Liverpool and by its mere presence depressing the morale of the besieged.¹⁰ A month later, Brereton rode over to Liverpool with a troop of horse to oversee the unloading from a ship recently arrived from London of 'his great ordnance and ammunition' and to convoy it safely back to his headquarters at Nantwich.¹¹ Here the Liverpool Town Books, although they make little mention of the war itself, help us to an understanding of what happened through their recordings of outsiders admitted to the status of burgesses. In March and April the admission of several known royalists – Colonel Norris of Speke, the Welsh captains Thomas Salisbury and John Dolben and Molyneux Radcliffe, an agent of the Earl of Derby – indicate royalist dominance of the town. But in June several of the new admissions are of parliamentarians: Lieutenant Colonel Peter Egerton of Shaw, Captain Gilbert Ireland of Hutt and Robert Clarke, captain of an armed merchantman, the *Joscelin*. Furthermore these last admissions coincide with the arrival of the aforementioned ship from London carrying Brereton's arms and ammunition.¹²

So a parliamentary take-over, probably peaceful, appears to have occurred. But, despite the presence of the sea captain Robert Clarke, sea power seems to have had little part in bringing this about. It resulted from the collapse of the royalist land forces, the withdrawal of their commanders and the surrender of the garrison of neighbouring Warrington. By the end of the summer the whole of Lancashire, except for Lathom House and Greenhaugh Castle, was in parliamentary hands.¹³

Our knowledge of the maritime strength of both sides in the area of the Dee and the Mersey at this stage of the war is



extremely vague. A number of ships known as the Irish Guard were allocated for the protection of Irish waters by Parliament, but the base for these ships was back in the English Channel, usually at Plymouth, and their forward station no nearer to the north-west than Milford Haven. Their commander there, Richard Swanley, had many problems on his hands, including the likelihood that Milford would be captured by the land forces of the very pro-royalist Welsh.¹⁴ So it looks as if at this period of the war, parliamentary naval strength in the north-west relied almost entirely on what Brereton called 'the Liverpool ships'. He said in November, 1643, that there were six of them.¹⁵ We cannot identify any with certainty but it seems probable that most, if not all, of them would have been armed merchantmen of between 100–200 tons, with crews of between 40 and 60 men and 15–20 guns. There may have been one naval sixth rate with six guns. It should be said that most of the war vessels in Irish waters during the war appear to have been armed merchant men, but this does not mean that they were not adequate for the work they had to do. Although their ownership was private, their guns were supplied by the naval ordnance and their officers and many

of their crews had had naval experience. They were engaged in patrolling, raiding, interception and convoying, and never during the Civil War had to fight battles in formation.¹⁶

We have no more precise information about the royalist ships in these waters at this time. We know that, almost from the outset of the fighting, the two Bartletts, John and Thomas (perhaps brothers, perhaps father and son) declared for the King. John commanded the *Swan*, a naval fifth rate; Thomas the *Providence*, an armed merchantman of probably about the same strength. They and any lesser ships there may have been operated from Dublin Bay across to the North Welsh ports and the Dec. They appear to have been strong enough to maintain this sea lane at least as far as the North Welsh ports with little or no interruption, but not strong enough to turn the parliamentary shipping out of Liverpool waters.¹⁷

The weakness of the parliamentary naval force in the north-west was a basic reason for the royalist success in bringing some 5–6,000 troops from Dublin to landing places in the Dec between November, 1643, and February, 1644. By the time the troops were actually moved there were two additional reasons. The campaign was undertaken in winter, because it was rightly thought that the season would make it difficult for Parliament to attempt to re-inforce their Irish Guard swiftly and effectively and that this would outweigh all the disadvantages of a winter offensive. The royalist victories in the previous summer had given them Bristol and many smaller ports in the south-west. Plymouth and Lyme were under siege and Swanley at Milford had to send right back to Portsmouth for his naval supplies. Parliamentary shipping was under threat of attack the whole way from the mouth of the Thames to the Irish Sea by small royalist vessels aided by French and Dunkirk privateers.¹⁸ To these had been added the shipping of the Irish Confederates since in September, 1643, the armistice between them and the King, known as the Cessation, had been signed.¹⁹ Apart from Carrickfergus away in the north, every Irish port was now in the hands of those hostile to the Parliament, and Confederates ships might be used, not only to attack parliamentary ones, but to transport and guard royalist troops crossing the Irish Sea.

The Cessation, because it removed the immediate necessity of fighting the Confederates, also made it possible for a number of royal troops to be released for service in Eng-

land.²⁰ Why, considering the royalist successes of 1643, was it thought necessary to bring them over and why were the bulk of them eventually sent to the Dee approach and to campaigning in Cheshire? As to the first, the royalist successes of the summer of 1643, although as great in the north-east as in the south-west, had not been sufficient to carry royalist armies to the outskirts of London, their principal strategic aim. Localism was strong in them and, even though undefeated, their impetus weakened as they moved further and further from their homelands. It was hoped that the battle-hardened troops from Ireland who had long been severed from their local ties would not be similarly affected. In addition they would counter-balance the great army the Scots Covenanters had now agreed to send to Parliament's aid in return for a promise that Presbyterianism should be adopted as the religion of the whole of the British Isles. In the words of one of the King's principal advisers:

The expectation of the English-Irish aid is the daily prayer and almost the daily bread of them that love the King and is put into the dispensatory and medicine book of state as a cure for the Scotch.²¹

The earliest drafts of troops from Ireland had come mostly from Munster and been sent to the south-west in dribbles to prop up the failing royalist offensive there.²² But the later more substantial numbers came from Leinster and had a more specific task. Against the run of the war elsewhere, the parliamentarians had been unexpectedly successful in Lancashire and Cheshire. We have already seen that they controlled almost all Lancashire; in Cheshire the picture was much the same. Apart from Chester and the nearby hundreds of Wirral and Broxton, Brereton controlled all the rest of the county from his headquarters at Nantwich. In addition he had succeeded in establishing parliamentary garrisons in Wem in north Shropshire and in Stafford. If the royalists were to present a united front to the Scots army when it crossed the border, the situation in Lancashire and Cheshire had to be reversed quickly. Immediate action was made even more imperative when, in November 1643, Brereton with help from Lancashire invaded North Wales, cut Chester off from its supplies of food and fuel and threatened to force its surrender.²³

The onus of gathering and despatching the troops from Dublin and seeing to their safe convoy fell on the Marquis of

Ormonde, the royal commander-in-chief in Ireland whom the King was about to make Lord Lieutenant also. On October 19, 1643, writing to Orlando Bridgman, son of the bishop of Chester and a leading activist in securing Chester for the King, Ormonde said that he would soon be able to send at least 3,000 foot and 300 horse over. By the beginning of November Lord Digby, one of Charles's Secretaries of State, was writing that, if the Irish failed to supply ships, Ormonde should have some from Bristol. A week later he wrote again that some 12 or 13 ships had been sent from Bristol to transport the Leinster forces. (At this stage some troops from Ireland were still being landed in the south-west, but they came from Munster where the Earl of Inchiquin, and not Ormonde, was in immediate control.) Digby's letter crossed one from Ormonde to Bridgman saying that a naval officer, one Captain Baldwin Wake, had now arrived from Bristol with two ships and five barks and Ormonde hoped in a few days to embark 3,000 foot for Chester. Digby had originally spoken of Beaumaris as the port for dis-embarkation. But Ormonde had protested that he could not be responsible for the continued loyalty of the troops unless, after dis-embarkation, they were adequately supplied with pay, provisions and new clothing and brigaded with a competent strength of horse and foot from the King's English armies. This effectively ruled out all the ports in royalist hands other than Chester.²⁴

Information about the numbers and size of the vessels that eventually did convoy the force from Dublin Bay to the Dee comes from both sides but is confusing and conflicting. The looseness of the terminology used – often by writers with no knowledge of the sea – is an additional difficulty. The term 'ships' was then usually confined to naval men-of-war and armed merchantmen of equivalent tonnage, ordnance, and man power. Naval records reveal that during the Civil war the big men-of-war, the first and second rates, were never assigned to western waters and the third rates rarely. The work was done by the fourth, fifth and sixth rates and the equivalent armed merchantmen. Their tonnage varied from 400 tons to 40, their crews from 100 to 20 men and their number of heavy guns from 30 to six. As well there were smaller vessels, sometimes called 'barks', a term later reserved for vessels with a particular type of rigging, and sometimes simply 'boats'. The term 'frigate' was also used for a naval vessel smaller than a sixth rate.²⁵

Parliamentary letters – gloomy and alarmist – reported

the royalist fleet variously as being comprised of 11, 19 and 26 vessels, and the number of troops they were carrying as between 3,000 and 10,000 men. Brereton who was responsible for the figure of 26 vessels, said 11 were 'Bristol ships' and 15 'Wexford barques'. But we know from royalist sources that the Confederate leader, Castlehaven, had promised to provide two or three ships of about 400 tons. They had only 14-16 guns apiece, so in fire power were equal only to the naval fifth rates, although in tonnage to the fourth rates. Ormonde spoke of Wake having only two 'ships' when he arrived from Bristol, but these were presumably naval men of war. In addition there were the ships of the two Bartletts before mentioned. Whatever the totals, Brereton and Bridgman were definite that the royalist fleet was more than a match for the six parliamentary vessels at Liverpool. In fact there is no record of these making any attempt to oppose the crossing from Dublin or hinder the dis-embarkation of the troops.²⁶

The first landing was on 18 November at Mostyn on the Welsh side of the mouth of Dee, the second on 6 December at Neston. The combined force was probably about three thousand men, all infantry.²⁷ By the time the second force arrived, Brereton had withdrawn his troops from Wales and neither faced any serious impediment in their march to Chester. There they were refreshed, re-clothed, re-armed and taken over by their new commander, Lord John Byron, who had come up from Oxford with 1,000 horse and 300 foot. On 12 December Lord John marched out of Chester with 4,000 foot and 1,000 horse to destroy Brereton and re-build royalist power in the north-west.²⁸ There is no need to re-tell what followed in detail. Lord John overran all southern Cheshire and defeated a counter attack by Brereton and his Lancashire allies at Middlewich. Nantwich was then besieged and, although an assault was beaten back, an intensive blockade looked like succeeding when Sir Thomas Fairfax and Brereton arrived with a relieving army and defeated Byron just outside the town; the garrison playing a major part in the victory. Although casualties were light, half Byron's army was captured and all his senior officers except himself and his brother Robert.²⁹ They struggled back to a Chester that was far from welcoming. So, although a further consignment of 1,300 foot with a handful of horse landed at Neston in the week following the battle, it was thought wise to hurry them through Chester to greater safety in the Oswestry-Shrewsbury area before they

were re-furbished and re-grouped. As a separate army Lord Byron's Anglo-Irish force had ceased to exist.³⁰

Sea power had played no part in their defeat. The sea lanes remained open for the royalists at least until March, when Captain Baldwin Wake returned to Bristol. We have already noted the landing at Neston in February; whatever it was that made Wake return it does not seem to have been the arrival of new and more powerful parliamentary vessels.³¹ Nevertheless no other little armadas crossed the sea from Dublin Bay to the Dee for the remainder of the war, despite intense diplomatic efforts by the royalists to obtain more troops from Ireland. This was directed at the Irish Confederates, as it was their troops rather than those of Ormonde that the King now preferred. This was partly because, despite the Cessation, he did not want to denude Ireland entirely of his own troops and partly because it was felt that Parliament's anti-papist propaganda could hardly have the effect on the catholic Irish troops that some royalist commanders alleged it had had on the original English ones.³² The Confederates agreed to send 10,000 men in return for concessions over the status and practice of their religion. But tortuous negotiations concerning these between the Confederate leaders (themselves divided), Ormonde, Glamorgan (the King's special emissary) and Charles himself so delayed the implementation, that it was only just before the fall of Chester that some three thousand troops were got together for service in England. The problem of providing shipping for them had not been seriously tackled before the city surrendered.³³ So it is possible that, even if Parliament had not had adequate control of the Irish Sea, no more sizable bodies of troops from Ireland would ever have crossed it to aid the King. However, this having been said, there is plenty of evidence that Parliament did greatly increase its strength in western waters from the spring of 1643. It is reasonable to suppose that this, as well as their distrust of the King and his advisers, may have increased the reluctance of the Confederates to adventure their troops across the sea.

Although we shall see that some of the reasons for this increase in parliamentary naval strength were not maritime in their origin, there is no doubt that there was a conscious effort to build it up from the time of the landings in the Dee of November and December, 1643. These alarmed Parliament in a way that the earlier dribbles of troops from Ireland to the south-west had not. The Lord Admiral, the Earl of

Warwick, was brought back from mid-Channel to face a Commons angrily demanding to know why it had been allowed to happen. His reply was scathing. It was useless for the House 'to think they have a fleet on the Irish coast to keep off the rebels when they have none'. There were not enough ships and not enough ports either in Ireland or north-western England to enable a guard to be maintained there in winter time. As a result a new programme of commissioning and construction was undertaken.³⁴

By the summer of 1644 this was evidently having some effect. At the end of May Ormonde wrote to John Williams, Archbishop of York, whom the war had caused to retire to his native Conway, to say that, although Colonel Trafford with 300 well-armed men, six guns and proportionate ammunition were ready to embark for Anglesey (not any longer for the Dee, it should be noted), they were delayed because of the presence of parliamentary ships in Dublin Bay. A little later the Archbishop said there were nine 'great' parliamentary ships at Liverpool.³⁵ If he was accurate, this was an increase of three since the previous autumn. When Rupert on his way to relieve York besieged the town, they guarded the seaward approaches, and when after a brief siege he broke in, they carried to safety the governor, part of the garrison and many valuable supplies. After Marston Moor, during the two month parliamentary siege which recovered it, they helped the land forces to establish a complete blockade. They do not appear to have been challenged by any royalist vessels.³⁶

Ormonde's letter added that, although they had the protection of Captain John Bartlett's ship, Colonel Trafford's men were reluctant to embark because they had heard of the fate of some of Colonel Willoughby's men. Intercepted on their way to Bristol, 70 of the 150 men captured had been thrown over board 'under the name of Irish rebels'.³⁷ The perpetrator of this savage act was Richard Swanley, now established at Milford Haven with a strengthened squadron and the title of Vice-Admiral. His and its presence there for the remainder of the war was undoubtedly a major factor in the increase of parliamentary control over western waters.³⁸

Here again, however, the improvement in the naval situation was partly due to parliamentary successes on land. With the appearance of an able leader in Pembrokeshire, Colonel Rowland Laugharne, fear that Milford Haven would be overrun by local royalists receded, although it was

not long before it was revived by the arrival of troops from Oxford, led by an even abler commander, General Charles Gerard. In April, 1645, with the Naseby campaign about to begin, Gerard routed Laugharne at Newcastle Emlyn and overran all Pembrokeshire except Tenby and Pembroke. There, with the support of Swanley and his squadron, Laugharne was able to hold out until, after Naseby, Gerard and some of his troops were withdrawn and he could regain control of Pembrokeshire. So through the co-operation of land and sea forces, the base at Milford Haven was maintained.³⁹

Successes on land, in particular its great victory at Marston Moor in July, 1644, brought Parliament a most unexpected bonus in the shape of ports in southern Ireland. The circumstances of this were surprising. Up to the autumn of 1644 Ormonde's principal lieutenant in south-west Ireland had been Murrough O'Brien, Earl of Inchiquin. Although the chieftain of a major Irish clan, he had English blood on his mother's side and had been brought up as a protestant. So he had not only not joined the rebellion of 1643 but had been very active in suppressing it in Munster, where his devastations of the lands of his Confederate neighbours had earned him the name of 'Murrough of the Burnings'. He had not liked the Cessation but had co-operated in implementing its most immediate result, the sending over to England of troops from Ireland. Some of those he sent were his own clan followers. In reward for this he confidently expected that when his English father-in-law, William St. Leger, died he would be appointed to succeed him as Lord President of Munster. Instead Charles gave the position to an English titled nonentity, the Earl of Portland. Despite his fury at this, Inchiquin remained loyal until Marston Moor was fought. Then it became apparent to him that Parliament was likely to win the war and that it was on them he must depend for action essential to his survival, the defeat of the Confederates. So in August 1644, he came over and, being Murrough of the Burnings, did nothing by halves. In the correspondence of Sir William Brereton is a letter from Inchiquin apologising in fulsome terms for the confiscation by one of his raiders out of Cork of a cargo of Brereton's cheeses. He apologised further that necessity had prevented him from restoring the cheeses, as their capture was providential for his starving troops. He promised that if Parliament did not adequately compensate Brereton, he would do so himself. The letter finished with 'I

have heard so noble a mention of your gallancy and worth', unusual praise from a clan chieftain to a Cheshire squire of moderate status, only recently risen from obscurity through the exigencies of war.⁴⁰ But Inchiquin gave practical evidence of the extent to which he was prepared to back his new cause when he opened the ports of Cork, Kinsale and Youghal to parliamentary shipping and defended them against all attacks from the Confederates. The value which Parliament put on the use of these ports and the advantages which Swanley's establishment at Milford Haven gave them, were both shown by the constant passage of ships ferrying over horse, arms and ammunition and, after Naseby, by the despatch of a detachment of English troops to Youghal, the most threatened of the three ports.⁴¹

By the end of 1644, parliamentary shipping was not only crossing constantly from South Wales to the southern Irish ports, it was rarely absent from Dublin Bay. John Bartlett's famous *Swan* was eventually captured there, its crew ashore seeking their arrears of pay. The herring fishery, although operating out of enemy territory, sought surreptitious permission to continue from the parliamentary sea captains.⁴² Two small shipments of troops raised in Dublin did get across to the north-western Welsh ports, the first in the spring of 1645, the second in January, 1646, just before Chester fell. Only the first shipment struggled through to join the garrison.⁴³

So much for the convoying of men. What about the bringing over of provisions: food or arms and ammunition? The perishable nature of most food meant, of course, that it must come from the surrounding countryside. Only in the case of a seaport, cut off from its countryside by blockading troops but still open to the sea, would a situation arise where the bringing in of food by sea would be even contemplated. Such a situation arose only once in the north-west; in the last four months of the siege of Chester. In normal times Chester's supplies of food and fuel came mostly from North Wales. Brereton tried to cut these lines of supply by pushing troops into North Wales, first in November, 1643, and secondly in April, 1645. On both occasions his blockade was broken almost as soon as it was established, by the arrival of large-scale royalist relief. But in October, 1645, after Naseby and Rowton Moor had been fought, no royalist field army existed within striking distance of Chester and in the succeeding months Brereton drew his blockading lines tighter and tighter across the

Welsh approaches to the city. Even then it must be admitted that all our evidence concerning schemes to relieve Chester by sea comes from the parliamentarians and, in the last stages of the siege, they were in a state of jitters about anything that might prolong it. It was not so much fear that the long-talked of relief from the papist Irish might at last materialise, as concern for the state of their own troops, many of them scattered about in small detachments, poorly sheltered in the worst season of the year, unpaid and extracting provisions with great difficulty from a countryside that was either exhausted or hostile.⁴⁴ Very likely they exaggerated and, even if they did not, the amount of the provisions mentioned was not sufficient to have done anything more than prolong resistance for a short while longer.

In the spring of 1645, during the brief period of the earlier blockade, Lieutenant-Colonel Chidley Coote, the efficient and conscientious Anglo-Irishman who commanded for Brereton in the Wirral, had warned that Chester might be relieved from the sea. He could see 'boats' lying off Flint Castle ready to sail (or row) up the river and these could not be stopped 'by a stinking boat or two that are not able to do any good'.⁴⁵ Perhaps Brereton forwarded this warning to parliamentary headquarters, perhaps the Admiralty already intended to strengthen further the naval guard in the north-west, but a few weeks later there arrived the *Rebecca*, an armed merchantman commanded by Captain Stephen Rich. She was the equivalent of a naval fourth rate, the largest man-of-war normally seen in these waters, and Rich himself was prepared to go a great deal further in co-operating with Brereton than any of the previous captains out of Liverpool waters. He paid particular attention to the shoal-ridden waters of the final approach to Chester and armed his ship's boat and sent it to lie in them, action which Brereton had failed to get Captains Clarke and Tatum to take earlier. When Brereton returned in the autumn to undertake the final stages of the siege, Rich was still there. He fitted and manned a small vessel called the *Robin* and put her under the command of Mr James, the *Rebecca's* master. Besides her crew, she had 12 musketeers and two small cannon.⁴⁶

In the last weeks of the siege, information came through from parliamentary detachments in North Wales that the royalists had a twelve-oared galley at Rhuddlan loaded with '300 measures of wheat, 30 fitches of bacon, four fat beeves

and what other provisions they know not'. This had already set out for Chester but been driven back from the mouth of the Dee by contrary winds. It was said to have 30 soldiers aboard who intended to take the *Robin* by surprise, so Brereton warned Rich that he should be 'more than ordinarily vigilant'. But Rich was not greatly alarmed. He resisted the suggestion that he should risk any of his boats by sending them up the Clwyd to seize the galley at its moorings. He obviously suspected the information might be a hoax.⁴⁷ That vessel may be something for us to look upon and they acting in another place'. In any case he had several more boats fitted; one was lying at Dawpool, another he would send up to Blacon Head when the spring tide came. The *Robin* would not be surprised and 'I lay my life on it none of them (ie. royalist vessels) shall see Chester'. None did. We hear no more of the Rhuddlan galley.⁴⁷

In fact, the royalists seem to have returned to the land routes in their last attempts to run food into Chester. Because of the terrain, a mixture of tidal sands, marsh and woodland with few buildings in which to station troops, it was extremely difficult to close the south-western approaches to Chester completely. A month before the surrender Brereton had to admit to his Westminster supporters that some measures of meal had slipped through. He said he was taking steps to plug the gaps but, even at the very end, reports were coming through of 'wicked men' carrying in on their backs 'pigs turkeys and other things for the great men in Chester'. The ways they chose were tortuous and obscure. 'Through the Neerhacks and Pooter and along the water to Eaton Boat. Sometimes they go through fields between Pooter Green and Pulford and so through the Gorstella behind Dodleston.'⁴⁸

If the sea approaches were little used for the carriage of food stuffs in the north-west during the Civil War, the evidence is otherwise as regards arms and ammunition. Although these could be and sometimes were made in England, the best supplies, both as regards bulk and quality, came from the continent where warfare was endemic. For the making of gunpowder brimstone was essential and that could be obtained only from volcanic regions.⁴⁹ On the parliamentary side the entrepot for arms and ammunition was London and substantial, although scattered, evidence has now emerged that from May, 1643, on there was something approaching a constant service by sea from London to Liverpool to get these through to the

north-west. At first sight this may seem very surprising. It was a long voyage and it has already been noted that by the end of 1643 most of the south-western ports in England, Wales and Ireland were in royalist hands. Although after Marston Moor some of the Irish ports came over to Parliament and, after Naseby, the New Model recovered Bristol and eventually all the remaining ports in south-western England, this was a slow process and up to the surrender of Chester sufficient remained in royalist hands for the chances of interception to remain considerable.

On top of this there were the perils of the sea. That these were well enough appreciated, both by those who consigned the goods and those that had to carry them, is highlighted by the bill of lading of the *Sarah Bonaventura* bound from London to Liverpool in March, 1645, with a cargo of gunpowder, carbines, swords and headpieces for Brereton. Interspersed with business details are phrases such as 'shipped by the grace of God', 'John Green, master under God', 'by God's grace bound for the port of Liverpool' and 'the danger of the sea excepted'. The whole closes with 'and so God send the good ship to her desired port in safety'.⁵⁰

As against the perils of the sea, however, must be set the huge advantage that water had in the carriage of heavy goods before the days of metalled roads and railways. Later the canal builders, when pushing their enterprises, asserted that one sizable barge could carry as much as 50 wagons with 50 horses and 50 drivers or 500 pack horses with 50 riders. So, although we know that 'Shakeshaft the carrier' was employed on at least one occasion to transport a load of pistols, saddles, helmets and cuirasses through the midlands to Brereton, it would be well enough known to Brereton and his agents that he would face at almost any season of the year, not only the danger of interception by numerous royalist garrisons, but also the possibility of having his carts wedged up to the axle in mud.⁵¹

The evidence suggesting a constant flow of arms and ammunition coming by sea to the north-west is both particular and general. We learn of individual ships bound for Liverpool and we know that parliamentary leaders attached considerable importance to this method of supply and that knowledgeable royalists were anxious to prevent it by the capture of Liverpool.

'Lancashire's Valley of Achor', a parliamentary tract celebrating their successes in Lancashire in 1643, speaks of the ship which at the time of the siege of Warrington in

May, 1643, entered Liverpool waters and by its appearance helped to bring about Warrington's surrender. It was 'watching this friendly opportunity to unburden itself for Cheshire and supply us with powder, Liverpool readily giving entertainment to it'.⁵² A month later Thomas Malbon, the Nantwich sequestrator, has this entry in his Annals of the war:

On Tuesday the 13th of June Colonel Brereton, having been at Liverpool for the unloading of a great ship which was come hither from London with his great ordnance and ammunition, came with his troop of horse to Nantwich and brought with him . . . six loads of his own ammunition, being accompanied by many brave captains and commanders.⁵³

Later still in November, when Captain Wake and his little fleet set out from Dublin for 'the safe waftage' of Ormonde's troops across the Irish sea, Brereton said they had captured Captain William Lurtine's ship (the *George*) which was carrying ammunition for him and the Lancashire commanders.⁵⁴

We have already noted the despatch of the *Sarah Bonaventura* from London to Liverpool in April, 1645, with a cargo of arms and ammunition for Brereton. A month later, when Captain Stephen Rich signalled to Brereton the arrival of himself and the *Rebecca* at Liverpool, he said he had been engaged in convoying ammunition from Milford Haven. It is extremely unlikely that the original embarkation of such a cargo would have taken place at so remote a spot and much more likely that it would have been at London or some other port in the south-east.⁵⁵

It could be argued that five specific recordings of arms and ammunition carried by sea to Liverpool during four years of war do not constitute strong evidence that this was a regular practice. This would be true if they were not supported by statements both from parliamentary and royalist leaders that they considered this sea route a very important means of supply. When Brereton reported to the Speaker the inability of the Liverpool ships to stop Captain Wake and his fleet controlling the Irish Sea, he made almost as much of the dire consequences of the interruption of the sea route for arms and ammunition from London to Liverpool as he did of the impact of the troops from Ireland upon the land war in the north-west.⁵⁶ When, after the victory of Nantwich, he went up to Westminster to lobby for increased control over his forces and increased supply for

them, one of the ordinances he got the Commons to pass forbade the Lancashire commanders seizing or disposing of any arms, ammunition or ordnance sent through their county for the service of Cheshire.⁵⁷ As all the counties adjacent to Lancashire who might have sent arms and ammunition through it to Cheshire had been in royalist hands since the end of June, 1643, and throughout the crisis of the Nantwich campaign, this could only refer to supplies sent by sea through Liverpool. That this remained the route through which the supplies came and that Brereton continued to harbour suspicions of his Lancashire colleagues is shown by a letter to him from his London agent, Richard Worrall, who was arranging the voyage of the *Sarah Bonaventura* in April, 1645.

I have given order that they (the cargo) shall not be landed until you send for them. Therefore I desire you to lay wait for the ship against her arrival in Liverpool. John Sandiford promised me that as soon as they arrived he would send Captain Rathbone word.⁵⁸

Rathbone, himself a Wirral man, commanded a company of Brereton's own foot regiment that was stationed north of Chester during the last stages of the Leaguer. They were probably the nearest to Liverpool of any of the Cheshire troops.⁵⁹

However, to at least one other parliamentary leader, Brereton himself was the villain of the piece. When Sir Thomas Middleton, the official parliamentary commander for the six counties of North Wales, wrote to the Speaker on the 30th of October, 1644, explaining away his very modest successes, he complained, not only of shortage of man power, but of shortage of arms and ammunition. The arms and ammunition he had brought with him to Nantwich in the summer of 1643 had been taken from him for use during the siege and never replaced. But, in addition, 'I sent by sea to be landed at Liverpool a parcel of arms . . . but all are taken from me by one Captain Tatum without warrant'. He demanded that Tatum, Brereton or the Cheshire Committee should be ordered to make restitution or that Parliament should make up the deficiency to him.⁶⁰

Next spring it was Brereton who was asking Parliament to make up to him the losses he had suffered from the interruption to the sea route to Liverpool in the previous summer. Some of his arms and ammunition had been in Liverpool when Rupert stormed it in June, 1644; some failed to get through because of its occupation by the royalists

from then until November.⁶¹ From royalist correspondence it is evident that several of their leaders had for some time realised the importance of Liverpool to the parliamentarians and that this had its effect in persuading Rupert to turn out of his way during his march to York to take it.' If it be taken from the rebels they have no port to bring in new stores of arms and ammunition', said Bridgman.⁶²

The evidence shows that there was considerable maritime activity in the north-west during the Civil War. Both sides spent energy and resources in trying to control the sea approaches to Chester and Liverpool, the royalists sporadically and with only limited and temporary success, the parliamentarians throughout and with increasing effectiveness as the war progressed. This, of course, does not of itself prove that maritime factors were of major importance in determining the outcome of the struggle in the area. J.R. Powell, the only Civil War historian in recent years to concentrate on maritime affairs, while emphasising their importance, has pointed out the limitations of sea power. It cannot survive without bases, whose possession by one side or the other usually depended on the outcome of land fighting.⁶³ If this was demonstrated as late as the last war by the examples of the German conquests of Norway, Greece and Crete, despite their huge sea coasts and the British command of the sea, how much more was it likely to operate in the 17th century when ships found it difficult to maintain themselves at sea for more than a week or two? As we have seen, the putting together of the mixed royalist and Confederate fleet which brought the Anglo-Irish army across to the Dee in the winter of 1643-4 was made possible by the royalist victories in the previous summer and the signing of the Cessation. The first gave them Bristol and most of the other ports of south-west England, the second almost all the ports of Ireland. In turn parliamentary successes on land – first the minor victories of Rowland Laugharne in Pembrokeshire, then the major triumph of Marston Moor – meant the securing of Milford Haven and the acquisition of Cork, Kinsale and Youghal. The possession of these ports was an important factor in Parliament's recovery of control of the Irish Sea and the prevention of any further sizeable bodies of royalist troops crossing from Ireland. It also enabled it to resume sending valuable cargoes of arms and ammunition to its forces in the north-west by the sea route to Liverpool.

These events, however, only brought about the conditions

by which ships could be assembled and men and provisions embarked. That the troops were embarked and actually did cross the sea and fight in England and that arms and ammunition continued to be brought by the long sea route to Liverpool was due first to the foresight of men like Brereton on the parliamentary side and Ormonde and Bridgman on the royalist. Yet in the last resort it depended on the courage and maritime skills of sea captains like Wake, Bartlett and Rich and their crews and the seaworthiness of the *Swan*, the *Providence*, the *Sarah Bonaventura*, the *Rebecca* and the other craft in which they sailed. It has been the purpose of this paper to bring their efforts to the attention of those interested in the Civil War in the north-west.

NOTES

Abbreviations used for Sources given in the Notes

<i>Brereton Letter Books</i>	R.N. Dore ed., <i>The Letter Books of Sir William Brereton</i> , I, Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 123 (1984).
Broxap	E. Broxap, <i>The Great Civil War in Lancashire 1642-51</i> , 2nd ed. (1973).
Carte	Thos. Carte, <i>Life of the Duke of Ormonde</i> , 6 vols. 2nd ed. (1851)
Carte, L. & P.	Thos Carte, ed., <i>A Collection of Original Letters and Papers of the Duke of Ormonde</i> , 2 vols. (1739).
Dore	R.N. Dore, <i>The Civil Wars in Cheshire</i> , (1966).
C.J.	<i>Journals of the House of Commons.</i>
L.J.	<i>Journals of the House of Lords.</i>
Malbon	'A breefe and true relation' in James Hall, <i>Memorials of the Civil War in Cheshire</i> , Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 19 (1889).
<i>Portland I,</i>	Hist. Man. Com. 13th Report App. I <i>Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Duke of Portland</i> , I, (1891).
Powell	J.R. Powell, <i>The Navy in the English Civil War</i> , (1962).
Powell & Timmings	J.R. Powell & E.K. Timmings, <i>Documents relating to the Civil War</i> , Navy Records Society, 103 (1963).
<i>T.H.S.L.C.</i>	<i>Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire</i>
Wedgwood	C.V. Wedgwood, <i>The King's War</i> , (1958).

- 1 J.S. Morrill, ed. *Reactions to the English Civil War 1642-9* (1982), p. 8; M.D. Wanklyn, 'Royalist Strategy in the South of England 1642-4', *Southern History*, No. 3, (1979), p. 56.
- 2 John Lowe, 'The Campaign of the Irish Royalist Army in Cheshire

- November 1643–January 1644', *T.H.S.L.C.*, 111 (1959); R.N. Dore and John Lowe, 'The Battle of Nantwich 25 January 1644', *T.H.S.L.C.*, 113 (1961).
- 3 *Brereton Letter Books* The references given for this work are to item numbers and not pages. As these have been made up for Vol. II, I have been able to give them, although this volume has not yet been published. (It is hoped it will come out in 1988.) But I have here added references to the original MSS, Add. MSS 11332 and 11333, in the British Library. B in front of the numerals stands for MS 11332, C for MS 11333.
 - 4 Aled Eames has published much of interest on the war at sea off the north Welsh ports; in particular 'Sea Power and Carnarvonshire, 1642–60' *Trans. Carnarvonshire Hist. Soc.* (1955), 'The King's Pinnace, the Swan, 1642–5', *Mariner's Mirror*, 47 (1961), 'War at Sea off Anglesey, 1642–60', pp. 54–98 in *Ships and Seamen of Anglesey, 1558–1918* (1973). But (p. 56 'War at Sea off Anglesey') he admits that, though more accessible from the sea than Chester and the Dee, the region was too remote and its hinterland too difficult for what happened there to have much effect on the fighting in the main areas of conflict.
 - 5 Population figures for Chester and Liverpool, based on the Hearth Tax returns of 1664–5, are given in J.H. Hodson, *Cheshire 1660–1780*, (1978), pp. 92, 95, 112, and B.G. Blackwood, *The Lancashire Gentry and the Great Rebellion 1640–60* (1978), p. 8. They are very unlikely to have been higher in 1642. Liverpool's population was not only lower than that of Manchester (3,960) but also than those of Wigan, Preston, Bolton and Bury (c. 2,000–1,500).
 - 6 For Chester's trade in the early 17th century and comparisons with Liverpool see W.B. Stephens, 'The Overseas Trade of Chester in the Early Seventeenth Century', *T.H.S.L.C.*, 120 (1968) and D.M. Woodward, 'The Overseas Trade of Chester 1600–1650', *T.H.S.L.C.*, 122 (1970). For the problems of navigating the entrances to Liverpool see A.S. Mountfield, 'Admiral Denham and the Approaches to the Port of Liverpool', *T.H.S.L.C.*, 105 (1953).
 - 7 For Chester's outports in Tudor times see L. Toulmin Smith ed., *The Itinerary of John Leland* (1964), III p. 91; for the inability of sea-going vessels to get right up to Chester and the use of Neston see Webb's Perambulation, in Daniel King, *Vale Royall of England* (1656 & 1972), pt 2, pp. 16, 125, or in George Ormerod, *The History of the County Palatine and City of Chester* (2nd ed. 1882), I, p. 185, II, pp. 360–1; for transportation of troops to Ireland from Chester, Ormerod, I, pp. 237–8.
 - 8 There are a number of works dealing in whole or in part with Chester during the Civil War: R.H. Morris and P.H. Lawton, *The Siege of Chester* (1925); R.N. Dore, *The Civil Wars in Cheshire* (1966); A.M. Johnson, 'Politics in Chester during the Civil Wars and Interregnum 1640–62', in P. Clark and P. Slack eds., *Crisis and Order in English Towns 1500–1700* (1972); J.S. Morrill, *Cheshire 1630–60* (1974); A.M. Kennett ed., *Loyal Chester* (Chester City Record Office Historical Publications, No. 1, 1984).
 - 9 Broxap, pp. 81–6; J.M. Gratton 'The Military Career of Richard, Lord Molyneux, c. 1623–54', *T.H.S.L.C.*, 134 (1984), pp. 23–4. Tyldesley joined the Queen in Yorkshire, Molyneux went south through Cheshire.
 - 10 Geo. Ormerod, ed., *Tracts relating to the Civil War in Lancashire*,

- Chetham Society, old series 2, (1844), pp. 102–6, 138. The first reference, an ambiguously worded pamphlet called 'Exceeding Joyfull News out of Lancashire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire', has led some later writers (not Broxap) to think that Liverpool, rather than Warrington, was besieged and captured at this time. But the second reference, the pamphlet called the Valley of Achor, makes it plain that, although the ship was at Liverpool, the town besieged and captured was Warrington. This is supported by references in other contemporary authorities to the capture of Warrington but none to the capture of Liverpool (Malbon – see next note – is one of these; p. 56).
- 11 See 'The Brief and True Relation of Thomas Malbon', the Nantwich sequestrator, in James Hall ed., *Memorials of the Civil War in Cheshire*, Rec. Soc. Lancs. & Chesh. 19 (1889), p. 61.
 - 12 The parliamentary take-over may well have occurred earlier. On 31 May the Town Books record an agreement between the mayor and aldermen and Colonel Holland, military governor of Manchester, for the loan of 100 muskets, bandoliers and rests, returnable when and if Holland so required. He was unlikely to have made such an agreement before he was satisfied that Liverpool was firmly in parliamentary hands. On 29 April Henry Rydney and Thomas Whiteside were admitted freemen. They were still freemen in 1645, which would have been very unlikely had they had any discernible royalist leanings. Parliamentary influence in the neighbourhood seems to have been on the increase even earlier. By the end of March David Ellison, a puritan, had replaced William Lewis, a royalist, as the vicar of Childwall, barely five miles east of Liverpool. G. Chandler and E.K. Wilson *Liverpool under Charles I* (1965), pp. 313, 314, 317, 402; *T.H.S.L.C.*, 65 (1913), pp. 121–2. I am indebted to Mr J.M. Gratton for drawing my attention to this additional evidence.
 - 13 Broxap, p. 88.
 - 14 Powell, p. 45; Powell & Timmings, pp. 21, 71–2.
 - 15 *Portland*, I, p. 157; Brereton to the Speaker, 21–11–43.
 - 16 Powell p. 9; Powell & Timmings, pp. 7, 9.21.
 - 17 Powell p. 49; Carte, V, pp. 477, 480, 527. From time to time the royalists captured parliamentary ships *Calendar of Moore MSS*, Rec. Soc. Lancs. & Chesh. 67 (1913), pp. 50, 60.
 - 18 Powell p. 49; Wanklyn, 'Royalist Strategy', p. 56.
 - 19 Wedgwood, pp. 261–8.
 - 20 Wedgwood, pp. 256–8.
 - 21 Carte, V, p. 521, Trevor to Ormonde, 21–11–43.
 - 22 Ralph Hopton, *Bellum Civile*, (1902), p. 61; Carte, pp. 498, 502, 517; G.N. Godwin, *The Civil War in Hampshire*, (1882), pp. 80, 109, 118, 131. Godwin is wrong, however, in thinking that Inchiquin, their commander (see below), came in person or that any of these Munster troops were brought over by the ships from Bristol and Wexford that gathered in Dublin Bay in November, 1643. Their task was to bring over the troops intended for Cheshire.
 - 23 Dore, pp. 28–31.
 - 24 Carte, V, pp. 478, 498–500, 502, 503, 505.
 - 25 Powell & Timmings: see p. 7 for a survey of the fleet in 1642 and *passim* for annual lists of ships for the Summer and Winter Guard and the Irish Guard. See the *Oxford English Dictionary* for older usages of terms like 'ship', 'boat', 'bark', 'frigate', 'pinnace', 'shallop'.
 - 26 *Portland*, I, pp. 156, 157, 158, 161, 162; these are letters from

Brereton, the Lancashire Committee at Manchester and the Shropshire Committee at Wem; Powell, p. 49.

- 27 *Mercurius Aulicus* (bound-up royalist news-sheets 1642-5), vol. 1, has the places of landing pp. 668, 701. Various figures for the number of troops brought over from Ireland to the Dee are given in contemporary documents. Those likely to be the most accurate come from Ormonde, who sent them, and the field officers who commanded them. Ormonde, writing to Bridgman shortly before the first consignment sailed, said he hoped to send in all about 3,000 foot. Ernley, in charge of the first consignment, reported that on embarkation they were 1,800; Robert Byron, in charge of the second, 1,300. Carte, V, p. 505; Dore and Lowe, p. 98 n.6. these last figures come from the Carte MSS in the Bodleian Library, Vol. VII p. 537, Vol. VIII, p. 7.

I am aware that Dr. Joyce Malcolm in her book, *Caesar's Due* (1980) p. 116, gives 1,000 to 1,500 more men for the November-December landings and a landing in January, 1644, in addition to the accepted one of February, 1644. These figures are part of an overall total of 20,000 troops from Ireland which, she says, landed in England and Wales during 1643-4 (p. 116). This is more than double any estimate by previous writers on the subject. However, I find the sources for these figures as presented by her highly unconvincing. These are not given in *Caesar's Due* but in an article called 'All the King's Men' which appeared in *Irish Historical Studies*, 21 (1878-9), p. 251. Although numerous they are chaotic, unassessed and unspecific. This last makes them almost valueless for checking statistics. It is left to the readers - if they get as far and perhaps the hope was that they would not - to decide which source relates to which statistic. In addition, far too much reliance is placed on sources that depended largely on rumour e.g. the Venetian envoy and parliamentary spies who got no nearer to the troops in question than Oxford.

- 28 Carte, V, p. 520 - Trevor to Ormonde 21-11-43; Carte, *L&P.*, I p. 29-Captain Byrch to G. Carr, Ormonde's secretary, 12-12-43. There may have been some troops from the garrison of Chester with them originally but, if so, they went no further than Beeston Castle which was captured on the succeeding day. Malbon p.91; R.N. Dore, 'Beeston Castle in the Great Civil War 1643-6', *Trans. Lancs. & Chesh. Antiq. Soc.* 75-76 (1965-6), pp. 119-21.
- 29 There have been many accounts of the campaign and battle of Nantwich. Readers are referred to two papers published earlier by this Society, *T.H.S.L.C.* 111 (1959) and 113, (1961); see note 2. These give sources, a considerable amount of detail and references to local topography.
- 30 Carte, VI, pp. 16-7, Ormonde to Bridgman, 19-1-44; pp. 30-5, Digby to Ormonde, 8-2-44; Richard Symonds, *Diary of the Marches of the Royal Army* ed. C. Long, Camden Soc. (1859), p. 255; *Portland*, I, p. 170; anonymous letter from Shrewsbury, 23-2-44; Add MS 18980 (Rupert MSS in Brit. Lib.) p. 51, Lord Byron to Rupert, 20-2-44.
- 31 Ormonde obviously did not expect the Bristol ships to stay in the north-west; letter to Byron, 16-1-44, Carte, VI, pp. 10-1. Yet Digby said Wake had been commanded to do so as late as March, 1644, but replied that he had been forced to alter course and sail for Bristol by a threatened mutiny among his men; Digby to Ormonde, 8-3-44, Carte, VI, p. 55. There is plenty of evidence Wake had difficulty in getting his little fleet provisioned while in the north-west; Powell &

- Timnings, p. 107; Norman Tucker, *North Wales in the Civil War*, (1958), pp. 109–10 (with sources).
- 32 Carte, *L.&P.* I, p. 36, Lord Byron to Ormonde, 30–1–44; p. 40, Robert Byron to Ormonde, 31–1–44. Even before the first consignment of troops from the royal army had left Dublin Bay for the Dee, Digby wrote to Ormonde that the King's view was that it would be preferable to get the Confederates to provide most of the future detachments for service in England. This was not because they might prove more reliable but because it would weaken their forces in Ireland rather than the King's. See Carte, V, p. 197.
- 33 Wedgwood, pp. 408–9, 471–2, 522–3, 534–8.
- 34 Powell, pp. 52–3; *L.J.* V, p. 343, p. 332 : *C.J.* III, pp. 345.400, 412. Despite Warwick's spirited reply the Commons stuck to their allegations that his captains in Irish waters had been negligent, if not pusillanimous.
- 35 Carte, *L.&P.* I, p. 48, Ormonde to Archbishop Williams 27–5–44; p. 50, Archbishop Williams to Ormonde 19–6–44.
- 36 Broxap, pp. 127–8 and 135–7 for general accounts of the two sieges of Liverpool. For the part played by the ships in Colonel Moore's withdrawal, see (i) *H.M.C. Report X App. IV*, p. 101, an examination of Captain Andrew Ashton concerning the loss of Liverpool; (ii) *T. R.H.S.* new series, XII (1898), pp. 69–71; also Peter Young, *Marston Moor*, pp. 210–11, an anonymous account of Prince Rupert's march through Lancashire from Carte MSS X p. 664 in the Bodleian Library. For letters on second siege of Liverpool see Carte, *L.&P.* I, p. 61, Trevor to Ormonde 13–9–44; *Calendar of State Papers Domestic, 1644–5*, pp. 67, 77, 80, 91, letters from Brereton and Sir John Meldrum to the Committee of Both Kingdoms from 23 October to 4 November, 1644.
- 37 Carte, *L.&P.* I, p. 48, Ormonde to the Archbishop of York 27–5–44; Powell, pp. 71–2; John Vicars, *God's Arke* (1647), p. 136.
- 38 Powell, p. 58; Ronald Hutton, *The Royalist War Effort* (1982), p. 73; See *C.J.* III, p. 570 giving Swanley a specific appointment to lie at Milford. It was not, however, the first time he had been there; see Powell, p. 45.
- 39 Powell, pp. 58, 78, 86, 92; Hutton, pp. 73–4, 138–9, 152–3, 174, 188–9, 195–6.
- 40 *Brereton Letter Books*, I, items 35–7. For further information on Inchiquin and sources see n.1 to item 35.
- 41 Powell, pp. 92–3.
- 42 Powell, p. 93; *Brereton Letter Books*, II items 789, 834, 835 (B MS 47, 50, 62).
- 43 *Brereton Letter Books*, I, item 195 for first landing. Lord Byron's account of the siege of Chester from Rawlinson MS B210 in the Bodleian Library (printed *Cheshire Sheaf*, 4th series, 6 (1971), p. 11) shows there were 100 'Irish' in the garrison a few months later. For the second landing see Tanner MSS Codex 60 f.386 in the Bodleian Library (printed in J.R. Phillips *Memoirs of the Civil War in Wales and the Marches* (1874), II, pp. 290–1) – Archbishop Williams to Sir Jacob Astley 26–1–46.
- 44 Dore, pp. 30, 47, 54.
- 45 *Brereton Letter Books*, I, item 308.
- 46 *Brereton Letter Books*, I, items 523, 544, 576; II; items 1239 (C MS 116). As long ago as October, 1644, when Brereton was overrunning the Wirrall, he suggested to the Committee of Both Kingdoms that,

instead of remaining at Liverpool, 'Captain Clarke's ship or some other' be assigned to ride near Neston (see n.36). Tucker, *North Wales in the Civil War*, p. 11 and Powell, p. 119, so far from thinking Coote's protest brought about the sending of Rich, believe that he was including the *Rebecca* in his 'stinking boat or two'. But a comparison of items 308 and 523 in the *Brereton Letter Books* shows that Rich did not arrive in the north-west for some weeks after Coote made his remarks. In any case (see n.23) he is unlikely to have referred to Rich's 'ship' as a 'boat', 'stinking' or otherwise. Presumably he meant fishing smacks.

- 47 *Brereton Letter Books*, II, items 1233, 1234, 1236, 1237, 1238 (C 113, 114, 115).
- 48 *Brereton Letter Books*, II, items 1143, 1146, 1202, 1203 (C 79, 82, 103, 104)
- 49 W.Y. Carman, *A History of Firearms*, (1955), pp. 157-161.
- 50 *Brereton Letter Books*, I, item 139.
- 51 *Brereton Letter Books*, I, item 472.
- 52 *Civil War Tracts of Lancashire*, p. 138.
- 53 Malbon, p. 61.
- 54 *Portland*, I, p. 157.
- 55 *Brereton Letter Books*, I, item 523.
- 56 *Portland*, I p. 153.
- 57 *C.J.* III, p. 484.
- 58 *Brereton Letter Books*, I, item 159.
- 59 *Brereton Letter Books*, I, items 158, 385; II 703(B 3); J. Atkinson, ed., *Tract relating to the Civil War in Cheshire*, Chetham Society, new series, 65 (1909) p. 153. The cargo might have been sent by smaller vessels to Tranmol (Tranmere). This is where Brereton's cheeses (see n.38) were first embarked.
- 60 *Portland*, I, pp. 191-2.
- 61 *Brereton Letter Books*, I, item 98.
- 62 Back in the winter of 1643-4 Bridgman had emphasised the importance of Liverpool to Ormonde and Ormonde, in turn, to Byron on his arrival in the north-west: Carte V, p. 525; VI p.10. In April, 1644, Byron wrote to Rupert that its capture would be the main benefit of Rupert's coming to Lancashire: Additional MS 18981 (in British Library) f.137.
- 63 Powell, pp. 42, 43, 46, 77, 86-9.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am grateful to Mr J.M. Gratton for reading this paper and suggesting emendations and additions, all of which have been adopted.

