

24. *The Reformation of the Ecclesiastical Laws*, (1571) quoted in *Economic Problems of the Church*, Christopher Hill, Oxford, 1955, p. 77.
25. *Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, W. C. Abbott, Cambridge Mass., 1937-1944, Vol. 1, p. 628.
26. *Ibid* Vol. 1, p. 695.
27. *Ibid*. VII p. 277.
28. See 'Arise Evans: Welshman in London' in *Change and Continuity in Seventeenth Century England*. Christopher Hill, 1974.
29. Woodhouse, *op. cit.* p. 79.

### LUDLOW FINDS HIS 'VOICE'

Robert G. Temple

A major source for the history of the Civil War and the Interregnum has always been the *Memoirs* of Lieutenant-General Edmund Ludlow. Ludlow was the only one of the Regicides to have written autobiographical memoirs which survive. Colonel Valentine Wauton (or Walton), another Regicide and Cromwell's brother-in-law, wrote a history of the Civil War containing many original letters of Cromwell, the manuscript of which was still extant in 1733, as we are informed by C. H. Firth in his *Dictionary of National Biography* entry for Wauton. These are now lost. Imagine the sensation which would be caused if they were found. A similar sensation, though so far unduly confined to scholars, has occurred with the discovery of part of the lost manuscript of Edmund Ludlow's *Memoirs*. The reason for the excitement is that the manuscript is enormously longer than the printed version and also quite different in many ways.

The manuscript was discovered at Warwick Castle where it had been languishing in the enormous library for at least 125 years, since it bears the signature of an Earl of Warwick who died in 1853. After this manuscript was discovered, a search of the library was made, and a historian persisted in climbing to the top of a ladder to inspect a mysterious volume on a high shelf which he had been told was of no interest, simply an old family photograph album. It turned out to be another lost 17th century manuscript, though not by Ludlow. Apparently the surprises of this library are now exhausted, as I am reliably informed that they really have gone through the place with a fine tooth comb, <sup>now</sup> there are definitely no more lost manu-  
and that

scripts there. The Ludlow manuscript has been sold to the Bodleian Library at Oxford, where it is now to be consulted under the catalogue listing of *MS. Eng. hist. C. 487*.

I have personally found some important historical manuscripts in private libraries which are still unknown to historians. I have even located two hitherto unknown caches of letters of Regicides in the hands of descendants but in only one of these cases, papers held by the descendants of Miles Corbet, have I so far been able to persuade the owners to allow proper inspection or copying for historical study. I have also been told by staff at certain stately homes that the contents of the libraries are definitely not fully known. I am therefore absolutely certain that despite all the extensive efforts of the Historical Manuscripts Commission and of many individual historians and antiquaries over the past hundred years, many essential and highly important unknown manuscripts are preserved throughout Britain and Ireland in private libraries and could come to light at any moment, sometimes upon the death of an owner. The unexpectedness of the appearance of the Ludlow manuscript bears witness to this. All who are dedicated to the study of the seventeenth-century Interregnum period should be constantly alert for the possible existence of new manuscript material which can significantly alter our understanding of the period and provide valuable new insights. One agitated owner in his library once tore a fascinating manuscript from my hand and concealed it when he realized I was beginning to read it. The irrational and absurd jealousies shown by some owners of manuscripts surpass the capacities of any psychologist to describe or interpret. And as for the stately homes, they too can be hazardous. I was warned in one that if I were so incautious as to mention to the owner one of his close relations whom, it transpired, he hated, I would be thrown out and forbidden access forevermore. Another factor to be reckoned with is the violent passions still held by many of the aristocracy against Parliamentarians and Cromwellians of the seventeenth century. In my research I have encountered intemperate outbursts and vituperation and I know personally of many cases of distortion and suppression of information by such persons today, including erasures from pedigrees, denials of clear fact, invention of titles and falsifications of historical identities. Anyone who thinks the passions of the English Civil War are dead is entirely mistaken.

There are *Memoirs* of another regicide, Colonel John Hutchinson, but they are written by his wife Lucy and not by himself. Ludlow's

*Memoirs* are, therefore, unique. But I must confess that years ago when I first read them I was struck by something rather odd about the character and personality of Ludlow. He really seemed too good to be true. Yes, he was thoroughly admirable and upright— *but was he human?* He had the same bland goodie-goodie quality that a hero in a comic book has. I did not at the time dream for a moment that the *Memoirs* as printed had been tampered with, and so I was unable to put my uneasy feeling into the form of actually suspecting that the Ludlow of the published *Memoirs* was a fabricated projection of an image by someone else. Instead, I suspected that perhaps Ludlow was a brilliant self-publicist, or that in some blithe and somnolent way the Archangel Gabriel had come down to earth in the form of Ludlow in exile and written of a life and doings, and articulated sentiments, which were those of someone too perfect actually to have lived a normal human life and engaged in all the rough and tumble of politics and the bloody battles and pacification of Ireland which the historical Ludlow was known to have done. I did not smell a rat, I smelled frankincense. The only logical conclusion to which I could come was that Ludlow was simply amazing, a genuine hero, someone simply too perfect. I began to regard him as one of those miracles of Nature, like the rainbow.

The explanation for this is now at hand. The Ludlow of the published *Memoirs* never did exist; he was invented. The real Edmund Ludlow was a very different person. Certainly he was admirable, highly-principled, firm in his convictions, honest, and so forth. But he was also, true to his age, a religious enthusiast who quoted the Bible with every other breath, and was far more agitated, worried, dissatisfied, and downright human than the fantasy personality of the published *Memoirs*. For what happened was that Ludlow's text, to which the real Ludlow characteristically gave the devout and earnest title *A Voyce from the Watch Tower*, had been edited and *rewritten*. And how! The original manuscript in its entirety — parts of it are still missing — is known to have extended to about one million words!

A portion (covering the years of the newly-discovered manuscript) has recently been published in the Camden Series (4th series, Vol. 21) of the Royal Historical Society, under the title *A Voyce from the Watch Tower*, and superbly edited by Dr. Blair Worden of Oxford, who has written a lengthy introduction to it, displaying immense scholarship. (Obtainable through the Royal Historical Society, University College London, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT.)

Dr. Worden is best known as author of *The Rump Parliament*, published in 1974. Despite the length of his introduction, he does not discuss much of the important information to be found in the manuscript of the *Memoirs*, as he has more than enough to do trying to report the history of the work, how and why it was rewritten — apparently by the late seventeenth-century publicist John Toland — and the fabrication of the phantom Ludlow to accord with the need in the 1690s for the Whigs to project him as an image of an ideal aristocratic Whig country gentleman, barely religious at all, and rather like an animated stone statue of some stoical Roman senator. It used to be said of Marcus Cato, in the days when people still discussed the Romans (who are fast becoming as extinct in conversation as the dinosaurs are in zoos), that he was 'downright upright'. The idea was to go one better for Ludlow; Toland, an ally of the 'Roman Whigs' of the stoic philosopher Lord Shaftesbury (3rd Earl), as well as a member of a strange group called the 'Calves-Head Whigs' who were somehow more radical, aimed to create a real Clark Kent for the Civil War period. He got his hands on the authentic *Voyce from the Watch Tower* from Slingsby Bethell and created the *perfect Whig*. The Ludlow who emerges was strictly for public consumption in the 1690s, part of the political propaganda war at that time. Of course, these Whigs were very much in admiration of the real Ludlow, but the real Bible-thumping Puritan would have been indigestible by readers of the time, and so he had to make way for a mythical Ludlow.

The real Ludlow is far more earthy and exciting. He immediately comes alive from the pages of his authentic work, fretting and grumbling and complaining and criticizing and generally making his presence felt. He was not just standing around with his toga on his arm. Blair Worden gives a full and extraordinary account of the whole process of the transformation of the personality and manipulation of the texts. After reading his brilliant analysis, one cannot help but wonder how often this sort of thing went on in history, and whether it went into, say, the compilation of the Gospels!

From the Ludlow manuscript certain items of fact immediately emerge, clearing up minor mysteries. For instance, from his text we are able to ascertain that the Regicide William Goffe (or Gough) really was the brother of the Rev. Stephen Goffe (see MS. p. 1288, in the unpublished section). Discoveries associating William Goffe with Haverfordwest had thrown the entire question of his parentage and family into doubt; this is now finally resolved. Moreover, the



extremely obscure and shadowy Regicide Gregory Clement (direct ancestor of Samuel Clemens, who wrote under the pseudonym of Mark Twain) is now seen from remarks made by Ludlow to have been extremely rich for his day and possessed of a fortune of about £40,000 (MS. p. 868, p. 245 Blair Worden's edition). The manuscript is full of such new material, most of it of a personal nature. In the manuscript we learn the minute details of just where Ludlow went from hour to hour, how his watch broke and made him late for an appointment, how he had a strange childhood dream, what so-and-so said to him about it, which house he slept in, how he read a newspaper and what it said and how he felt about it, etc. All of this is omitted from the published work, in the attempt to remove from Ludlow the mere dregs of humanity, and to make him into an image rather than a man. In fact, Ludlow's rather awkward but engagingly bumbling and vivid style was entirely rewritten by the editor to flow in effortless cadences and to give the impression of great detachment and literary accomplishment. The most decorous phrases are inserted in place of Ludlow's continual religious expostulations. And, basically, the *meaning* of the whole work is changed. As Blair Worden points out, 'The manuscript is swamped with biblical references, a high proportion of them to the Book of Revelation. The biblical texts with which Ludlow prefaces each section of his table of contents illustrate his persistent search for the pattern of providence both in his own life and in public events.' Whereas the published *Memoirs*, marked by 'stylistic ease and polish', are 'predominantly secular', and are not in the least concerned with the true Ludlow's driving obsession with 'the worke the Lord is carrying on, and will carry on, be the earth never so quiet and the confederacy and uniting of powers never so strong against it . . .'

It is possible to clarify a few points in which Dr. Worden as editor is either not complete or mistaken, but not many. One relates to a blank resulting from the manuscript being effected by damp. On p. 103 of the Worden edition, it is possible to fill in the gap between the names of Miles Corbet and of Col. Matthew Thomlinson by inserting 'Colonel John Jones'. As if there were any doubts on this score, one has only to turn to p. 104 to find the three names repeated there together. More of this kind of patching together of missing pieces is no doubt possible.

A point stressed by Dr. Blair Worden in his article in *The Times Literary Supplement* for 7 January 1977, when he first announced the Ludlow manuscript publicly, and which is repeated again in his

Introduction, relates to Miles Corbet. He maintains that the Ludlow manuscript enables us to know that Corbet only joined the High Court of Justice after spiritual doubts and meditation upon a passage in the Book of Revelation. It is perfectly true that this is not in the published *Memoirs*. What Worden was unaware of was that the information has been publicly available elsewhere since 1662. It is recorded in the book of that date entitled *The Speeches, Discourses, and Prayers of Col. John Barkstead, Col. John Okey, and Mr. Miles Corbet*. In the edition of this book which I possess, the passage may be found on p. 33 (though my edition has an error in pagination, with many pages unnumbered, and another edition may differ). But Blair Worden is not the only historian of the period who has not read this book properly; Firth was guilty of the same omission. In his entry for Corbet, Firth was unable to estimate Corbet's date of birth, but on p. 25 of my edition *The Speeches* establishes that Corbet in 1662 was 67 years old, for he is quoted there as saying, 'Christ hath been a good master to me these threescore and seven years.' It should be noted that Corbet's confessional letters justifying his life, written in the Tower before his execution (of which two survive in MSS) show the same religious fervour and are probably as peppered with biblical quotations as Ludlow's long-lost manuscript. These two men were not only friends, they were fellow-enthusiasts for Christ, and Ludlow tells us of Corbet's religious associations (p. 300, Blair Worden edition).

For those interested exclusively in the lifetime of Oliver Cromwell or the Civil War period, the discovery of Ludlow's manuscript, while containing many illuminating retrospective allusions to the pre-1660 period and of course much of general value, will be to some extent a disappointment. For the part of the manuscript dealing with events prior to 1660 is still lost. Dr. Blair Worden has made many efforts to trace it, without success. I have made a few efforts myself, and shall continue to do so, as I am at the moment writing a biographical study of Ludlow. But it is as well to be absolutely specific about just what has been found and what has not. I said earlier that the whole manuscript was known to have contained about a million words. The manuscript was at some point divided into three portions. We now possess the middle portion only (and Worden has printed only a fraction of that), dealing with the years 1660 to 1677. This includes very exciting material, of course, covering the entire process of the Restoration, the trials and executions of the Regicides, how Ludlow escaped, and so on. There are accounts of the final conversa-

tions Ludlow had with John Cook, Thomas Scott, and others. Guizot, had he been alive today, would have done somersaults for the added information he could have had for a new edition of his *History of Richard Cromwell and the Restoration of Charles II*. And historians will go on profiting from the discovery of this manuscript as long as there are historians of the period at work. As for the third and final portion of the manuscript, which is also still lost, covering the years 1677 to 1685, Worden rightly points out that its loss is not so tragic, as it is likely to have been largely gossip and secondhand information about England written by an exile (for Ludlow did not return to England until 1689, when he is thought to have brought his manuscript over and given it to Slingsby Bethell) and rather tedious accounts of continental events. Furthermore, a very good table of contents for this portion does survive in the manuscript at the Bodleian, and may be consulted by those interested, who would like to know what the missing conclusion of the work did contain.

The real tragedy is that the pre-1660 section of the *Memoirs* in its original manuscript form is still lost. It was in existence after the *Memoirs* were published, for it was later consulted by John Locke the philosopher, who copied from it certain suppressed passages which were critical of the first Earl of Shaftesbury (Firth inserted these into his 1894 edition of the published *Memoirs*). It is my own feeling that this invaluable manuscript is still in a private library somewhere in England, possibly one of the stately homes of a descendant of one of the handful of key Whig peers of the 1690s period. But trying to trace such a thing is easier said than done. Even when there is a desire to be cooperative, it is difficult to persuade the relevant people that their libraries and possibly even their attics should be rummaged through. Amongst some of the younger aristocracy it is currently fashionable to adopt a pose of 'careless ease', and earnestness in all things is to be studiously avoided. Therefore, if someone comes along who is serious about finding a lost manuscript it provides an irritating ripple in the pond, and it spoils the impression of the 'careless ease'. On the other hand, older members of the aristocracy frequently cannot take seriously a scholar who is under 60 years of age. Then there are the salaried librarians in some great houses; the older ones tend to be so testy and jealous of their prerogatives that they pose greater obstacles than the owners. And on top of it all, the monetary value of manuscripts and old books generally has soared in these difficult economic times, leading to hoards being formed and actually concealed by 'investors', including many dealers, who

seal them up, sometimes without even looking through them properly, intending to sit on them for several years until their retirement, when they will 'cash them in'. Try and find something against all these odds!

Until such time as Ludlow finds his entire *Voyce*, we shall still be in suspense. But what has so far been discovered is a major event in seventeenth-century studies. The manuscript now available affords us an incredible degree of further insight into the workings of the minds of the men who made the history of the Interregnum. We must learn to approach them on their own terms, — if they rant about religion, we must accept the fact that that was how they saw the world. Nothing can be gained from ignoring this aspect of the true seventeenth-century reality. Cromwell's religious ecstasies are as important to a full understanding of him as his success on the battlefield. And let us not forget, as we read the works of men of this period, especially of those who died for the liberty of Englishmen, that in some deeper sense their deeds speak louder than any *Memoirs*, had they all lived to write them, would have done. As Ludlow says of his friend, the Regicide John Carew who was executed in 1660: 'But his blood, like that of Abel's, though he be dead yet speaketh' (p. 226, Worden edition). The blood of those who died opposing tyranny is never silent; this, more than mere words, is the true 'voyce' of England in the seventeenth century.