

REVIEW ARTICLE

Collective Biography and the Interpretative Challenge of
Early-Stuart Parliamentary History★

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The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1604–1629. Edited by Andrew Thrush and John P. Ferris. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2010. 6 vols. 4,686 pp. £460.00. ISBN 97811070022589 [the set].

Volume I. Introductory Survey and Appendices. lvi, 611 pp.

Volume II. Constituencies. xxvii, 586 pp.

Volume III. Members A–C. xxv, 795 pp.

Volume IV. Members D–J. xxv, 933 pp.

Volume V. Members K–Q. xxv, 813 pp.

Volume VI. Members R–Z and Appendix. xxv, 948 pp.

King James VI and I and his English Parliaments: The Trevelyan Lectures Delivered at the University of Cambridge 1995. By Conrad Russell. Edited by Richard Cust and Andrew Thrush. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2011. ix, 195 pp. £62.00. ISBN 9780198205067.

With the appearance of *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1604–1629*, edited by Andrew Thrush and the late John Ferris, a grand project as first conceived back in the 1930s and subsequently resuscitated in the 1950s, is nearly complete. Thirty-seven volumes have, to date, been published on the period 1386 to 1832, with only the years 1422–1504 and 1640–1660 remaining to be covered. The approach from the outset has been mainly biographical, focusing on the individual lives and political

★ Most history writing is a collaborative process and the parliamentary variety probably more so than most. In the present context I am especially grateful to Christopher Thompson, for making available his extensive collection of unpublished research theses relating to early Stuart parliaments, and to Brett Usher, who shared with me his remarkable knowledge of puritan genealogy especially as regards the Culverwell family. I must also thank them, along with Kenneth Fincham and John Walter, for commenting on this article in draft.

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activities of past members of the house of commons. Until lately, coverage of the house of lords was excluded. Volumes devoted to the Lords in the period 1604 to 1715 are, however, currently in preparation, along with further volumes on the Commons after 1832.¹ Nevertheless, a more fundamental question remains as to whether *The History of Parliament* – to give the series its official title – is best constructed along such biographical lines. Are parliaments really the sum of their members? Growing awareness of this problem no doubt partly explains the increasingly-lengthy introductions provided by the more recent section editors. Thrush, for example, devotes most of a volume to providing what he describes as an ‘institutional history’ of the Commons in the early 17th century.² His contribution is a fine piece of scholarship. But, one may still legitimately ask, what about some of the wider political, religious, financial, and socio-economic aspects of the subject?

At the most mundane level, of course, the paucity of records surviving for the early history of parliament provides a compelling reason to adopt a biographical approach. Yet such a justification, in terms of insufficient information, cannot hold good for later periods. A more convincing rationale is that the academic founding fathers of the project saw themselves as being in the business of establishing a mass of hard ‘scientific’ facts, or what today would be called a parliamentary history database. Such an approach had the added attraction of transcending differences of historiographical outlook among some of those involved, notably J.E. Neale and L.B. Namier. For although Namier is said to have been hostile to the kind of whig interpretation of history favoured by Neale, the historian of Elizabethan parliaments, the latter can be found praising the methodology of the former and singling out for special mention his *Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III* (1929). ‘The essence of the game . . . is to “biograph” everyone, ask the right questions, and assemble the facts in tables where their significance may be readily grasped.’ So Neale stated in 1950, when addressing the Anglo-American Historical Conference. This was the way ‘to get behind the formal architecture of constitutions to the men who worked them’.³

A similar consensus was also possible as regards making available in print the parliamentary diaries which survive from the later 16th century onwards. In the event, the pioneer here was the American, Wallace Notestein, who, from 1921 to 1966, was mainly responsible for the editing of a succession of such diaries dating from the early Stuart period.⁴ It would, indeed, be difficult to deduce from the rather austere editorial introductions with which these volumes are furnished that Notestein, like his friend Neale, was a so-called whig, subscribing to the view of English constitutional development summed up

¹ D. Cannadine, ‘The History of Parliament: Past, Present – and Future?’, *Parliamentary History*, xxvi (2007), 366–86; D. Hayton, ‘Colonel Wedgwood and the Historians’, *HR*, lxxxiv (2011), 328–55.

² *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1604–1629*, ed. Andrew Thrush and John P. Ferris (6 vols, Cambridge, 2010) [hereafter cited as *HPC*, 1604–29], i, p. xxii and *passim*.

³ L. Colley, *Namier* (1989), 46–61; J.E. Neale, *Essays in Elizabethan History* (1958), 227, 232, 235.

⁴ *Commons Debates for 1629*, ed. W. Notestein and F.H. Relf (Minneapolis, 1921); *The Journal of Sir Simonds D’Ewes: From the Beginning of the Long Parliament to the Opening of the Trial of Strafford*, ed. W. Notestein (New Haven, 1923); *The Parliamentary Diary of Robert Bowyer 1606–7*, ed. D.H. Willson (Minneapolis, 1931); *Commons Debates in 1621*, ed. W. Notestein, F.H. Relf and H. Simpson (7 vols, New Haven, 1935); *The Journal of Sir Simonds D’Ewes: From the First Recess of the Long Parliament to the Withdrawal of King Charles from London*, ed. W.H. Coates (New Haven, 1942); *Proceedings in Parliament 1610*, ed. E.R. Foster (2 vols, New Haven, 1966).

in Alfred Tennyson's memorable phrase as a process 'where freedom slowly broadens down from precedent to precedent'. In this scenario, by the end of Elizabeth's reign: 'parliament was ready to claim a greater share in government and to limit the power of the sovereign'.⁵

Notestein himself never completed the full-scale history that he had sketched out at the beginning of his career in 1924, when he delivered his groundbreaking lecture 'The Winning of the Initiative by the House of Commons'. His protégé, D.H. Willson, however, fleshed out at book length, in 1940, one part of the argument in his *The Privy Councillors in the House of Commons, 1604–1629*. The story which they told between them concerned the waning of crown influence over the conduct of business in the Commons, due to procedural changes – notably the use made of committees – and a lack of effective leadership by government spokesmen. Moreover, the introductory account provided by Andrew Thrush is recognizably in this same tradition.⁶ But while Notestein devoted much of his energy to editing MPs' diaries, from the reigns of James I and Charles I, Neale, in contrast, concentrated on writing up the raw materials for Elizabethan parliamentary history, thereby fulfilling an agenda which he, too, had first adumbrated in 1924 with his article on 'Peter Wentworth' and his essay on 'The Commons' Privilege of Free Speech in Parliament'. The puritan firebrand, Wentworth, was portrayed both as playing a formative role in the growth of organised opposition in the Commons and as a spokesman for the allied cause of unrestricted freedom of discussion by MPs. Conflict over Elizabeth's 'church and succession policies . . . hurried on the growth of the House of Commons, as a hot-house hastens the growth of a plant'.⁷

It was not, however, until nearly 20 years later that Neale attempted a general synthesis in his Ford Lectures of 1942. By then his interest in collective biography was very much in evidence. Entitled 'The Elizabethan Parliament' and surviving in typescript, the six lectures are a summary version of the famous trilogy of books that Neale went on to produce.⁸ His audience in 1942 was treated at the outset to a statistical

⁵ W. Notestein, *The English People on the Eve of Colonization 1603–1630* (New York, 1954), 5, 8 n. 7; *The Poems of Tennyson*, ed. C. Ricks (1969), 489–90. Notestein and Neale established a close working relationship in the early 1920s, which was to endure for almost 50 years.

⁶ W. Notestein, 'The Winning of the Initiative by the House of Commons', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, xi (1924–5), 125–75; D.H. Willson, *The Privy Councillors in the House of Commons 1604–1629* (Minneapolis, 1940); *HPC*, 1604–29, i, esp. 369–439.

⁷ J.E. Neale, 'Peter Wentworth', *EHR*, xxxix (1924), 36–54, 175–205; J.E. Neale, 'The Commons' Privilege of Free Speech in Parliament', in *Tudor Studies*, ed. R.W. Seton-Watson (1924), 285. It was also in 1924, something of an *annus mirabilis* for Tudor-Stuart parliamentary history, that R.G. Usher published his article 'The Institutional History of the House of Commons, 1547–1641', *Washington University Studies*, xi (1924), 187–254. The Commons' diaries for the Elizabethan period were eventually to be edited in three volumes by T.E. Hartley.

⁸ University College London [hereafter cited as UCL], Neale MSS (uncatalogued): 'The Elizabethan Parliament' (Ford Lectures, 1942); J.E. Neale, *The Elizabethan House of Commons* (1949); J.E. Neale, *Elizabeth I and her Parliaments 1559–1581* (1953); J.E. Neale, *Elizabeth I and her Parliaments 1584–1601* (1957). These lectures also serve to refute the claim made by G.R. Elton that Neale changed his mind between writing *The Elizabethan House of Commons* and the two successor volumes: review of Neale, *Elizabeth I and her Parliaments 1584–1601*, *Cambridge Historical Journal*, xiii (1957), 187–9. Elton, of course, went on to become one of Neale's fiercest critics: G.R. Elton, *The Parliament of England, 1559–1581* (Cambridge, 1986); G.R. Elton, *Studies in Tudor and Stuart Politics and Government* (4 vols, Cambridge, 1974–92), iii, 156–82. See also M.A.R. Graves, *Thomas Norton: The Parliament Man* (Oxford, 1994); D.M. Dean, *Law-Making and Society in Late Elizabethan England: The Parliament of England, 1584–1601* (Cambridge, 1996).

demonstration that by the time of the parliament of 1597–8: ‘the country gentleman and his brother, the lawyer, had captured the House of Commons’, since ‘of the 419 members who can be sufficiently identified for classification only about sixty were of the citizen and burgess class’. Numbers were, again, invoked at the beginning of the second lecture, in order to demonstrate the ‘phenomenal growth’ of Commons’ membership during the 16th century, from 296 to 462.⁹ Having covered county and borough elections, along with ‘procedure’, Neale devoted his three remaining lectures to a ‘chronological study’, the purpose of which was ‘to give . . . some idea of the main issues before each parliament, and to build up a picture of the house of commons at work, especially in its relations with the crown’. Freedom of speech provided ‘the central theme’, particularly as regards Church reform. By the 1580s, puritan clergy and laymen working together had come to constitute ‘an opposition party on a national scale, with a parliamentary programme’. This culminated in 1587 with a campaign of ‘amazing political precociousness’.¹⁰ Albeit the puritans failed to achieve their religious ends, the constitutional consequence was an ‘unstable equilibrium’ between the rival claims of crown and Commons. Moreover, in his concluding peroration, Neale insisted that: ‘Elizabethan parliamentary history is a story of progress’ and, as such, part of the ‘steady march from precedent to precedent’, as well as a ‘prologue to the later drama’ of Stuart parliaments.¹¹

Nevertheless, a striking feature of the analysis provided by Neale in these lectures and something on which he further elaborated in the last book of his trilogy is the claim that puritanism by the end of the 16th century was a largely spent political force, its rise and decline closely linked to the fate of the conference movement which Archbishop Whitgift and his protégé, Richard Bancroft, had effectively destroyed in the early 1590s. As a result, during the last two parliaments of Elizabeth, in 1597–8 and 1601, a ‘change in temper and character’ is detectable. Indeed, Neale went so far as to write that the Commons in 1601 exhibited a distinctly ‘secular’ bias.¹² This diagnosis, furthermore, would appear to have been broadly in line with that of Notestein; certainly there is not very much about puritanism in his treatment of Jacobean parliaments. It also fits with the starring role he ascribed to that very un-puritan MP, Sir Edwin Sandys, the great admirer of Richard Hooker. According to Notestein, Sandys was ‘the uncrowned king of the Commons in the early years of James’.¹³ A much more recent historian, however, who definitely took his cue from Neale, was Roger Munden. Picking up on the theme of the ‘increasingly secular pre-occupations of the last two Elizabethan parliaments’, Munden wrote of the ‘dismal failure’ of the puritans in the Jacobean parliamentary session of 1604, the first of the new reign, and that puritanism if ‘not actually dead . . . came close to being

⁹ UCL, Neale MSS: ‘The Elizabethan Parliament’, Lecture I, pp. 1–2; Lecture II, p. 1.

¹⁰ UCL, Neale MSS: Lecture IV, p. 1; Lecture V, pp. 11, 22.

¹¹ UCL, Neale MSS: Lecture VI, pp. 18, 24. Note here the apparently Tennysonian echo.

¹² UCL, Neale MSS: Lecture VI, *passim*; Neale, *Elizabeth I and her Parliaments 1584–1601*, pp. 371, 436.

¹³ W. Notestein, *The House of Commons 1604–1610* (New Haven, 1971), 40–1 and *passim*; W. Notestein, ‘The Winning of the Initiative by the House of Commons’, 164 n. 1; T.K. Rabb, *Jacobean Gentleman: Sir Edwin Sandys, 1561–1629* (Princeton, 1998), 13–16.

moribund'. There was now a 'general lack of enthusiasm' for Church reform. Munden later broadened his investigation of political developments to cover the years 1597 to 1610. The unimportance of puritanism, he argued, was part and parcel of a general absence in the Commons, of anything worthy the name of 'opposition'.¹⁴

Yet Munden also provided an appendix to his unpublished 1985 doctoral thesis, which serves inadvertently to undermine his claims about the insignificance of puritanism. This appendix lists 'the top 20% "most active" MPs in each session' between 1597 and 1610. 'Activity' is measured in terms of the aggregate of 'individual nominations to committees', 'recorded reports from committees', and 'recorded speeches in the House'. Remarkably, each of the three sessional lists, provided by Munden, between 1605 and 1610 is topped by Nicholas Fuller, an MP for London and one of the most radical puritans in the Commons.¹⁵ Applying the same criteria to the Addled Parliament of 1614, Fuller again comes first.¹⁶ The only Elizabethan parliament in which he had sat was that of 1593, clashing on that occasion with Edwin Sandys and other supporters of a government measure aimed at redefining recusancy so as to include extreme puritans under the same rubric. But it was in the law courts, rather than on the floor of the house of commons, that Fuller had initially won his spurs, first as counsel for Thomas Cartwright and other puritan ministers put on trial in the Star Chamber in 1591 and then, again, appearing for the defence in two high-profile prosecutions brought by the monopolist, Edward Darcy, in 1594 and 1603.¹⁷

Although still surprisingly little is known about the background of Nicholas Fuller, a forthcoming book by Brett Usher, on the Culverwell dynasty, sheds some crucial new light. Thus Usher has established that Cuthbert Fuller, brother of Nicholas, was the brother-in-law of Laurence Chaderton, the two men having married Culverwell sisters in about 1578. Cuthbert Fuller died shortly afterwards and his widow Susan, *née* Culverwell, then married William Whitaker. Hence Nicholas Fuller was closely connected to the Cambridge puritan establishment, Chaderton and Whitaker going on to become college heads, respectively, of Emmanuel and St John's. Usher also plausibly argues that Nicholas was the nephew of the former Genevan exile and unyielding puritan layman, William Fuller. The latter had begun his career as an auditor in the Court of Augmentations and, as such, is likely to have first got to know Walter Mildmay, the future founder of Emmanuel College. Moreover, the

¹⁴ R.C. Munden, 'The Politics of Accession: James I and the Parliament of 1604', University of East Anglia MPhil, 1975, pp. 323, 326, 328, 347; R.C. Munden, 'Government and Opposition: Initiative, Reform and Politics in the House of Commons 1597–1610', University of East Anglia PhD, 1985, pp. iv–vi, 177–9. See, however, the rather different account of these events provided in R.C. Munden, 'James I and "the Growth of Mutual Distrust": King, Commons and Reform, 1604–1604', in *Faction and Parliament: Essays in Early Stuart History*, ed. K. Sharpe (Oxford, 1978), 66–8.

¹⁵ Munden, 'Government and Opposition', 325–9.

¹⁶ *Proceedings in Parliament 1614*, ed. M. Jansson (Philadelphia, 1988), 536–7 and index *passim*.

¹⁷ T.E. Hartley, *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I*, ed. T.E. Hartley (3 vols, Leicester, 1981–95), iii, 162, 167; Rabb, *Jacobean Gentleman*, 16–17; R.G. Usher, 'Nicholas Fuller: A Forgotten Exponent of English Liberty', *American Historical Review*, xii (1907), 743–60; S. Wright, 'Nicholas Fuller and the Liberties of the Subject', *Parliamentary History*, xxv (2006), 176–213; *The English Revolution c.1590–1720: Politics, Religion and Communities*, ed. N. Tyacke (Manchester, 2007), 14–16.

London merchants, Nicholas Culverwell, father of Susan, and his brother Richard, were important figures in helping to sustain Elizabethan puritanism.¹⁸

Nor can Nicholas Fuller be dismissed as an isolated figure in the first Jacobean parliament. Thus, another very active puritan MP was Sir Robert Wingfield, who during the three sessions between 1604 and 1607, oscillated in Munden's rankings from fourth to second place. Other active MPs by the same measure, listed in descending order, included in 1604, the puritans, Sir Francis Hastings, Sir Henry Beaumont, Sir John Heigham, Humphrey Winch, Sir Nathaniel Bacon, Sir Francis Barrington, Sir John Thomas Hoby, Sir Edward Montagu, Sir Edward Lawkenor, Sir William Strode and Thomas Wentworth.¹⁹ Including Fuller and Wingfield, these 13 were all in the top 47 and their main estates were located in 11 counties.²⁰ Furthermore, Conrad Russell has argued, in his posthumously-published Trevelyan Lectures, that there was a puritan majority in the Commons at the beginning of this parliament, on the basis of a vote in favour of sitting on Ascension Day – taken on 15 May 1604 and won by 137 to 128. As Russell explains: 'those who thought it a holy day would not wish to sit' unlike 'those who thought it idolatrous to attach holiness to days'.²¹ In similar vein, Thrush writes that: 'in 1604 a great swathe of puritan members . . . re-entered the House determined to complete, if possible, the reformation of the Church'.²²

Munden's claim that puritanism was now verging on the 'moribund', is also difficult to reconcile with the very considerable evidence of politico-religious agitation in the months after the accession of James I. Much of this took the form of petitions to the new king. One of the most intriguing of these is that dealing with 'things grievous and offensive' in both 'Comonwealth' and 'Churche' and probably dating from April, or even March, 1603. The 15 Commonwealth grievances are headed by 'monopolies or pattents' while the 16 Church grievances begin with 'subscription urged upon the ministers to certen articles'.²³ Given the highly-critical remarks also made in this document about leading members of the government, including Robert Cecil, it manifestly came from outside such circles – despite Thrush's wild surmise that the author was Sir Julius Caesar, a civil lawyer and senior judge in the high court of

¹⁸ B. Usher, *The Culverwells: The Rise and Influence of a Tudor Family* (forthcoming); S. Bendall, C. Brooke and P. Collinson, *A History of Emmanuel College Cambridge* (Woodbridge, 1999), 33–4, 104; *The Seconde Parte of a Register*, ed. A. Peel (2 vols, Cambridge, 1915), ii, 56, 58; W.C. Richardson, *History of the Court of Augmentations* (Baton Rouge, 1961), 280, and 'Mildmay, Sir Walter', index refs.

¹⁹ Munden, 'Government and Opposition', 326–8.

²⁰ Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Devon, Essex, Leicestershire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Somerset, Suffolk and Yorkshire: *HPC, 1604–29*, iii, 97–102, 142–86, 169–70; iv, 324–33, 574–83, 619–23, 735–40; v, 117–20, 362–9; vi, 473–82, 695–702, 802–6, 806–14.

²¹ Conrad Russell, *King James VI and I and his English Parliaments: The Trevelyan Lectures Delivered at the University of Cambridge 1995*, ed. Richard Cust and Andrew Thrush (Oxford, 2011), 38. The force of this argument is, however, diminished by the facts that in 1607 and again in 1610, this same parliament adjourned for Ascension Day: *HPC, 1604–29*, i, pp. xxxv–vi.

²² *HPC, 1604–29*, i, 84. Nevertheless, puritanism does not feature greatly in the subsequent accounts of parliamentary developments provided by either Thrush or Russell.

²³ R.G. Usher, *The Reconstruction of the English Church* (2 vols, 1910), i, 285–333; ii, 358–65; P. Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (1967), 452–9; Munden, 'The Politics of Accession', 347; TNA, SP14/1, ff. 127–32; N. Tyacke, 'Puritan Politicians and King James VI and I, 1587–1604', in *Politics, Religion and Popularity in Early Stuart Britain*, ed. T. Cogswell, R. Cust and P. Lake (Cambridge, 2002), 38–42.

admiralty.²⁴ This petition may, in turn, relate to two extant lists of proposed parliamentary legislation dating from 1604, one now in the National Archives and the other among the Northumberland manuscripts at Alnwick.²⁵ Historians disagree about the provenance of these lists, Thrush, for example, describing them as 'an ambitious schedule of legislation' drawn up by 'the government', whereas Munden chose to follow Notestein, who, in his last and posthumously-published book of 1971, suggested 'that two, three, or more MPs confabulating together about the coming session of parliament set themselves to hammer out a list of reforms deemed desirable', and 'having completed such a list they passed it around among their parliamentary colleagues who made copies for themselves'.²⁶

The most authoritative discussion of these two 1604 lists of proposed legislation is that by Brian Dunn, again in unpublished thesis form. Revising Notestein's figures, Dunn has calculated that out of a total of 126 suggested bills, 56 are common to both lists. The titles of many of these bills also make it extremely unlikely that they emanated from the government. Under the heading 'matter of estate' they include: 'an acte for the confirmation of the great charter and some additions of liberties of his majesty's princely grace' and another 'declaring sundry priveledges, liberties and orders of the common house in parliament'. A subsequent section 'concerninge the reformation of the church' itemizes 'an acte for the reforming of certaine points in the book of common prayer, and the rytes and ceremonies of the church, and the establishment of a learned mynistry' and, among further measures, 'an acte againste pluralities of benefices and non residences'. At least as controversial, however, were some of the suggested 'acts concerninge the generall relief and comfort of the realm', such as those 'declareing the common lawes of the realme concerninge priveledges, monopolies, and lycenses' and 'against purveyors'.²⁷

The precise origins of these various legislative proposals remain shrouded in obscurity, as does the genesis of the petition or memorial presented to King James concerning 'thinges grievous and offensive' in Commonwealth and Church. Apropos this last, however, the present writer has argued that it emanated from some of those associated with the late earl of Essex and his failed coup in 1601, and that their chosen messenger was Sir Henry Bromley, who rode post-haste to Scotland in March 1603. Bromley had the requisite *entrée* having attended the christening of Prince Henry at Stirling in 1594 and kept in touch thereafter with the Scottish court. He was also a long-standing supporter of James VI's claim to the English throne, a former Essex conspirator, and a puritan in religion. Furthermore, he was specifically identified in April 1603 as being a puritan emissary to the new king. Apart from his collaboration with Peter Wentworth

²⁴ *HPC, 1604–29*, i, 174 n. 71. Thrush's suggestion derives from the plea on behalf of civil lawyers included among the list of 'thinges grievous' – itself almost certainly the work of more than one person: TNA, SP14/1, f. 128v. A more convincing candidate in this particular instance, however, is the puritan civilian and former Essex follower, Henry Hawkins: B.P. Levack, *The Civil Lawyers in England, 1603–1641* (Oxford, 1973), 186–7, 237.

²⁵ TNA, SP14/6, ff. 181–2; BL, Alnwick MS, microfilm 252, vol. 7, ff. 114–15. These lists are transcribed in B.R. Dunn, 'Commons Debates, 1603/4', Bryn Mawr College PhD, 1987, pp. 24–34.

²⁶ *HPC, 1604–29*, i, 308; Munden, 'The Politics of Accession', 152; Notestein, *The House of Commons 1604–1610*, pp. 47–54.

²⁷ Dunn, 'Commons Debates, 1603/4', 4–7, 24–34. Dunn did not commit himself as regards the provenance of these lists.

over the succession question, the main evidence that Bromley was, indeed, a puritan is twofold: first, his apparent passing of a religious test administered by Thomas Cartwright, Stephen Egerton and Walter Travers, at the time of his marriage to Elizabeth Palmer in 1591, and second, a religious treatise dedicated to him in 1595, which includes calls for a 'learned ministry' in order to 'deface idolatrie' and advance the 'gospell'.²⁸

Nevertheless, scepticism has been expressed about the foregoing analysis by Ben Coates, author of the entry for Sir Henry Bromley in the Thrush volumes. His principal counter-argument is that in 1593, Bromley 'entertained' Bishop Richard Fletcher of Worcester at Holt Castle and was, therefore, no puritan, a deduction that seems to confuse good manners with religious outlook.²⁹ Ironically, however, Coates and his colleagues, elsewhere in these volumes, also provide further evidence of the puritan links of Bromley. In an excellent piece of detective work, Coates himself reveals that Francis Ligon, brother of Bromley's fellow Worcestershire MP in 1604, Sir William Ligon, was a patron of puritan preachers, including Thomas Cartwright.³⁰ Again, Andrew Thrush notes that in 1605, Anne Fuller, daughter of Nicholas, married Sir John Offley, albeit failing to correlate this with the fact that in the previous year, 1604, Sir John's great-aunt, the widowed Anne Offley (*née* Beswick), had married Sir Henry Bromley at St Lawrence Pountney, London, as his fourth wife.³¹ This family connection between Bromley and Fuller is especially intriguing. Lastly, Simon Healy provides evidence that Humphrey Winch was a puritan, which serves to demonstrate that at least five of the six other MPs associated with Wentworth and Bromley over the succession question, in 1593, were all of the same religious persuasion.³²

Granted that most elections at this period were not contested and that MPs were, instead, 'selected', it does not follow that the process was ideologically neutral. The motives of candidates and their backers were, indeed, both varied and mixed, ranging from the highly personal to the overtly political.³³ Although much angst has been expressed over the years about the appropriateness or otherwise of employing the term 'opposition', it probably makes best sense to envisage a combination of critics and reformers, the most coherent among them being certain puritans.³⁴ As regards other groups involved, a very important role appears to have been played by Henry Wriothesley, earl of Southampton and former Essex conspirator. An extant portrait of Southampton, probably painted during his sojourn in the Tower of London, records the dates of his imprisonment, accompanied by the inscription '*in vinculis invictus*' which

²⁸ Tyacke, 'Puritan Politicians and King James VI and I, 1587–1604', 21–44.

²⁹ B. Coates, 'Sir Henry Bromley', in *HPC*, 1604–29, iii, 316–19.

³⁰ B. Coates, 'Sir William Ligon', in *HPC*, 1604–29, v, 129–31.

³¹ A.D. Thrush, 'Sir John Offley', in *HPC*, 1604–29, v, 550–1; Coates, 'Bromley', 316; *The Heraldic Visitation of Staffordshire in 1614 and 1663–4*, ed. H.S. Grazebrook (1885), 224–6.

³² S. Healy, 'Humphrey Winch', in *HPC*, 1604–29, vi, 802–6; Tyacke, 'Puritan Politicians and King James VI and I, 1587–1604', 23–5.

³³ M.A. Kishlansky, *Parliamentary Selection. Social and Political Choice in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1986), 3–101; *HPC*, 1604–29, i, 73–93.

³⁴ C. Russell, *Unrevolutionary England, 1603–1642* (1990), pp. xiii–iv, 1–57; Tyacke, 'Puritan Politicians and King James VI and I, 1587–1604', 21–44; R. Cust, 'The "Public Man" in Late Tudor and Early Stuart England', in *The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England*, ed. P. Lake and S. Pincus (Manchester, 2007), 116–43.

literally translates as ‘unconquered [albeit] in chains’. One might render the Latin more freely as ‘bloody but unbowed’ or ‘down not out’.³⁵ This defiant statement has gone unremarked by historians, although it fits with the argument advanced by Neil Cuddy that Southampton, after his release from prison in April 1603, established a distinct ‘parliamentary following’, the members of which were, nevertheless, willing to co-operate with Robert Cecil – most obviously in backing plans to reform feudal wardship. Conversely, they were opposed to James’s scheme for Anglo-Scottish union. One of their most prominent spokesmen, according to Cuddy, was Sir Edwin Sandys (knighted in 1603). Furthermore, it has been suggested that Sandys was instrumental in converting Southampton from Roman catholicism to protestantism. By the end of 1610, Sandys had emerged as the second most active member of the Commons after the puritan Fuller in first place. Four others identified by Cuddy as being in this Southampton group of MPs are Sir Maurice Berkeley, Sir Herbert Croft, Sir Henry Neville and Sir Thomas Ridgeway, none of whom were obvious puritans.³⁶ Along with Sandys, their estates were located in five counties.³⁷

Cuddy, like Russell, is adamant that the parliamentary proposals in 1604 for the reform of feudal wardship were the brainchild of Cecil, but an alternative, and more plausible, tradition ascribes them to puritan circles outside government: ‘attempted first by a sort of phanaticks in the beginning of K[ing] James’, as Sir Edward Nicholas wrote in 1641.³⁸ Thus wardship features prominently in the 1603 enumeration of ‘things grievous and offensive’ in the Commonwealth and the payment of an annual rent in lieu, by tenants in chief, is proposed: ‘and so the mother or the next of kynne in the ascendant lynne to enjoye the wardship of the childe, a thinge more naturall and Christian’. As already indicated, the second part of this document is taken up with ‘Churche’ grievances. Moreover, the manuscript has subsequently been endorsed on the back with the words: ‘A Puritans Plott’. There is evidence, too, that puritans objected especially on religious grounds to the sale of wards. Hence in 1606, and again in 1610, Nicholas Fuller can be found arguing that the practice contravened biblical teaching.³⁹ At the same time, of course, wardship was very much resented by nobility and gentry right across the religious spectrum. Accordingly, in 1604, Fuller and Sandys were able actively to collaborate on this issue. Nevertheless, puritan involvement may also help to explain why the wardship negotiations which had got under way in March 1604, with

³⁵ A.L. Rowse, *Shakespeare’s Southampton. Patron of Virginia* (1965), pp. xi, 165. Rowse made no comment on this inscription. For advice concerning it, I am grateful to Timothy Duke and Benet Salway.

³⁶ N. Cuddy, ‘The Conflicting Loyalties of a “Vulgar Counselor”’: The Third Earl of Southampton, 1597–1624’, in *Public Duty and Private Conscience in Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. J. Morrill, P. Slack and D. Woolf (Oxford, 1993), 121–50; Rabb, *Jacobean Gentleman*, 78–9 n. 26; Munden, ‘Government and Opposition’, 329.

³⁷ Berkshire, Devon, Herefordshire, Kent and Somerset: *HPC, 1604–29*, iii, 207–14, 748–58; v, 493–502; vi, 57–61, 163–96.

³⁸ Cuddy, ‘The Conflicting Loyalties of a “Vulgar Counselor”’, 128, 130, 134–5; N. Cuddy, ‘The Real, Attempted “Tudor Revolution in Government”: Salisbury’s 1610 Great Contract’, in *Authority and Consent in Tudor England*, ed. G.W. Bernard and S.J. Gunn (Aldershot, 2002), 249–70; C. Russell, *The Fall of the British Monarchies 1637–1642* (Oxford, 1991), 253; Russell, *King James VI and I and his English Parliaments*, 21. The present writer has changed his mind on this subject. Cf. N. Tyacke, ‘Wroth, Cecil and the Parliamentary Session of 1604’, *BIHR*, xlx (1977), 120–5.

³⁹ TNA, SP14/1, f. 128; *The Parliamentary Diary of Robert Bowyer*, ed. Willson, 201 n. 2; *Proceedings in Parliament 1610*, ed. Foster, ii, 396.

the apparent blessing of the government, came to an abrupt halt in the following May. Arguably, the rock of offence was the draft petition agreed by the Commons and intended for joint presentation to the king in the name of both houses of parliament. This petition adduced as the first of a series of 'reasons', for 'taking away the tenures *in capite* and knight service, and the burdens depending on them', that 'it is but a restitution unto the original right of all men by the law of God and nature, which is that children should be brought up by their parents and next of kin, and by them be directed in their marriages'. Invocation of 'the law of God' in this way not only served to raise the legal stakes but also brought into question the propriety of compensating the crown for the redress of such a manifest injustice.⁴⁰

Addressing the Commons in July 1604 at the end of the first session, King James remarked with reference to 'religion' that: 'I can not enough wonder that in three dayes after the beginning of the parlement men should goe contrary to theyr othes of supremacy. In my first speech I did litlely note those of that novelty. I did not think they had been so great, so proude, or so dominant in your house.' In that earlier speech he had referred explicitly to 'the puritanes and novelists', with 'their confused forme of policie and paritie', as a 'sect unable to be suffred in any well governed commonwealth'.⁴¹ The issue of Church reform had, indeed, been raised on 23 March, the third day of parliament, in motions by Sir Robert Wroth and Sir Edward Montagu and a number of bills had resulted, including three on the subjects of 'pluralities of benefices with cure', 'scandalous and unworthy ministers', and 'for the providing of a learned and godly ministry'. Yet Munden is very dismissive of such measures, none of which reached the statute book, along with the petition for 'dispensation' of 'some godly ministers in matters indifferent and of ceremony'. They consisted, in his words, of the 'same old bills' and the 'same old petitions' from the past.⁴² Nevertheless, the very fact of their reappearance from session to session between 1604 and 1610 served to keep alive in the minds of puritans, the possibility of an alternative to the religious *status quo*. Moreover, ecclesiastical and temporal grievances were, in 1610, to be spliced together by the Commons in petitions to the king reminiscent of that of 1603 on 'thinges grievous'.⁴³

Whereas Church reform was of continuing concern throughout the first Jacobean parliament, the issue of wardship remained in abeyance after 1604 for some six years – despite an attempt by Fuller to revive it in 1606. Meanwhile, the question of Anglo-Scottish union increasingly took centre stage. Critics were understandably alarmed by the royal proposals and their potential threat to English common law by the erection of 'a new kingdom of Great Britain'.⁴⁴ Nor would a reading of the published works of

⁴⁰ P. Croft, 'Wardship in the Parliament of 1604', *Parliamentary History*, ii (1983), 39–48; Rabb, *Jacobean Gentleman*, 97–102; *CJ*, i, 227–8; Russell, *King James VI and I and his English Parliaments*, 88.

⁴¹ Dunn, 'Commons Debates, 1603/4', 93, 1268; TNA, SP14/8, f. 188; *The Political Works of James I*, ed. C.H. McIlwain (Cambridge, MA, 1918), 274.

⁴² *CJ*, i, 150–1, 235; *LJ*, ii, 353–4; Munden, 'The Politics of Accession', 346.

⁴³ S.B. Babbage, *Puritanism and Richard Bancroft* (1962), ch. 8; *Proceedings in Parliament 1610*, ed. Foster, ii, 253–71.

⁴⁴ *The Parliamentary Diary of Robert Bowyer*, ed. Willson, 201 n. 2; Russell, *King James VI and I and his English Parliaments*, 138. Russell makes a powerful case that the union debates involved issues of 'basic constitutional principle'. King James held 'a view of the state far more personal and paternalist than was congenial to many of the Commons': Russell, *King James VI and I and his English Parliaments*, 72–3.

James have afforded them much reassurance on this issue, his claim that Scotland was an absolute monarchy conflicting, for example, with the views of Sandys who postulated a contractual basis for kingly rule. Similarly, the king's exegesis of the Book of Samuel, along absolutist lines, was at variance with Fuller, who maintained that the power of rulers was limited by the law of God. In the event, such was the opposition to the union that the government was forced to scale down its legislation to an act repealing hostile laws.⁴⁵ All this, however, was against the backdrop of deepening financial difficulties due to a mismatch between government revenue and expenditure, which had first manifested itself during the Elizabethan war with Spain.⁴⁶ Peace in 1604 brought a brief respite, but the need to increase income, whether by parliamentary or prerogative means, remained urgent. Hence, on the one hand, the initial interest expressed by the government, during the 1604 parliamentary session, in commuting the profits of wardship into a higher yielding and more regular source of income. Cecil hoped, in addition, to reach a similar arrangement over the even more unpopular royal right to purveyance. On the other hand, in 1606 he also embarked on the high-risk strategy of increasing customs revenue by virtue of the royal prerogative and in the form of impositions.⁴⁷

This 'problem of money' is, indeed, a theme to which Conrad Russell repeatedly returned in his ongoing investigation of early Stuart politics. It was not enough, he convincingly argued, to explain away the financial difficulties of James I simply as a function of royal extravagance. There existed a deeper structural problem, of how to harness the wealth of the nation more effectively to the growing revenue needs of the state. To this subject we can now turn for a final summation by Russell in his Trevelyan Lectures. The need for enhanced 'military spending', in time of peace as well as war, was a key element in the situation. Even 'had James's extravagance been controlled, much, or even all, of the saving would have been eaten up in the things on which he should have been spending money: the gross shortage would have remained'. Nevertheless, the spendthrift ways of the monarch served to make matters worse. Despite his reputation as a 'revisionist', Russell was clear that the financial problems of the government had constitutional implications, threatening the very survival of parliament as an institution. Here it is also worth recalling the remark of Henry Howard, earl of Northampton, in 1606 that: 'if the king should work by his prerogative he should be rich as Croesus'.⁴⁸

Financial matters were, in fact, the main preoccupation of the two parliamentary sessions of 1610, focusing on the Great Contract, of which wardship provided the central plank, until overtaken by the explosive issue of impositions. Eric Lindquist has persuasively argued that the crown and its critics had different ends in mind throughout,

⁴⁵ *The Political Works of James I*, ed. McIlwain, 53–70; *Proceedings in Parliament 1614*, ed. Jansson, 312; N. Tyacke, 'The Puritan Paradigm of English Politics, 1558–1642', *HJ*, liii (2010), 538–9; B. Galloway, *The Union of England and Scotland 1603–1608* (Edinburgh, 1986), 120–7.

⁴⁶ F.C. Dietz, *English Public Finance 1485–1641* (2nd edn, 2 vols, 1964), ii, 49–99; *The Estates of the English Crown 1558–1640*, ed. R.W. Hoyle (Cambridge, 1992), 16.

⁴⁷ Croft, 'Wardship in the Parliament of 1604', 39–48; E. Linquist, 'The King, the People and the House of Commons: The Problems of Early Jacobean Purveyance', *HJ*, xxxi (1988), 549–70; P. Croft, 'Fresh Light on Bate's Case', *HJ*, xxx (1987), 523–39.

⁴⁸ Russell, *King James VI and I and his English Parliaments*, 164,–7, 175; *CJ*, i, 271.

the enormous demand of the former for £200,000 annual support and £600,000 supply being at cross purposes with the desire of the latter to abolish wardship followed by impositions. It is also an extreme example of what Russell has called 'a dialogue of the deaf'. As in 1604, Sandys emerged as the leading Commons' negotiator.⁴⁹ Although Fuller was now seemingly kept on a fairly tight leash as regards wardship, he and his fellow puritan, Thomas Wentworth, son of Peter, managed ultimately to stir up an ideological hornets' nest over the legality of impositions. Not content to argue that these levies on trade were against the law of the land, they also invoked the Bible. In this context, Fuller used some of the same texts of scripture which he had earlier deployed to prove the illegality of monopolies, notably Deuteronomy 24.6: 'No man shall take the nether or the upper millstone to pledge: for [thereby] he taketh a man's life to pledge.' According to Fuller, in June 1610, just as 'the king may not take from any subject his lawful trade or restrain him thereof, so can he not take from him the profit of his trade' or 'lay a charge upon his goods without his consent'. In the following November, Wentworth expounded Ezekiel 45.9 in support of the same case: 'let it suffice you, O princes of Israel, remove violence and spoil, and execute judgement and justice; take away your exactions from my people, saith the Lord God'. Aspects of this latter speech infuriated King James so much that he called for its author to be imprisoned.⁵⁰

Dissolution of parliament, in December 1610, was a direct result of the impasse reached over the Great Contract. At the time, explanations for the failure varied. A draft royal proclamation, never in the event issued, ascribed it to:

such an excess of liberty taken by some particular men to rip up and determine the ancient rights and prerogatives that have slept in peace under many kings our progenitors, as we know not to what to impute this strange encroachment (so far different from the ancient reverent forms) except it be conceived that this is the time wherein there shall be a court of inquisition erected over all the powers and privileges of the monarchy, and the arbitration thereof reserved to those persons in the Lower House who, being displeased with their own fortunes and in love only with their own wits, do give themselves wholly to censure magistracy and to call in question both the judgements of grave judges and practice of some of their best princes in cases of greatest consequence.⁵¹

Meanwhile, from a very different perspective, Fuller explained the lack of success as regards the negotiations concerning wardship in terms of a divine punishment for the 'public sins of the land', and more particularly due to the blocking by the house of lords of the bills for Church reform passed by the Commons and covering such subjects as blasphemy, clerical subscription, ecclesiastical canons, high commission, the oath *ex officio*, pluralism and non-residence, provision of a 'learned and godly ministry', the

⁴⁹ E. Lindquist, 'The Great Contract: Parliament and Royal Finance in the Reign of James I', Harvard University PhD, 1984, pp. 228–403; Russell, *King James VI and I and his English Parliaments*, 95; Rabb, *Jacobean Gentleman*, 140–73; *HPC*, 1604–29, vi, 167, 174–5.

⁵⁰ *Proceedings in Parliament 1610*, ed. Foster, ii, 159–60; *Parliamentary Debates in 1610*, ed. S.R. Gardiner (Camden Society, old ser., lxxxi, 1862), 144; TNA, SP14/58, ff. 109–10.

⁵¹ HMC, *Salisbury MSS*, xxi, 321.

sabbath, and scandalous ministers. Although we know that the upper House included some members sympathetic to these aims, led by Lords Saye and St John, they proved no match for the serried ranks of the bishops and their lay supporters. None the less, in Fuller's opinion, 'reformation' of both 'Church' and 'Commonwealth' remained a *sine qua non*.⁵²

Over three years were to elapse before another parliament was summoned. By then Robert Cecil, earl of Salisbury since 1605, was dead and the royal favourite, Robert Carr, earl of Somerset, had emerged as a major political player. The Addled Parliament of 1614, however, is an episode which continues to puzzle historians. What, above all, was the role of Sir Henry Neville? A former leading Essex conspirator, released in April 1603 along with Southampton, Neville had kept a fairly low profile during the first Jacobean parliament, but in the autumn of 1611 he came forward with a plan to restore political harmony. Writing many decades later, the grandson of Neville (another Henry) claimed that his grandfather had grasped that the old way of doing things was no longer working because of long-term changes in society and economy. The gentry landowning class, so the argument ran, had prospered mightily during the previous century at the expense of the monarchy, with the resulting imbalance of 'property' now producing stalemate. The solution was to translate this new-found wealth into effective power, through the medium of parliament. According, at least, to Neville jr, only by agreeing to an 'abatement' of the royal prerogative could an impoverished crown hope to secure requisite funding for the future. Such a Harringtonian spin on events is, of course, a far cry from the views of most present-day historians. Yet it does contain at least an element of truth. Moreover we should also ponder the encomium delivered on Neville by his contemporary, the lawyer James Whitelocke, who described him as 'the most sufficient man for understanding of state business that was in this kingdom'.⁵³

Superficially, the scheme now advanced by Neville was much the same as that which had been tried and failed in 1610, that is to say the offer of bills of 'grace' in conjunction with a request for subsidies, but with the key difference that a committed reformer would be at the helm. Thus the plan was for Neville himself to become secretary of state, a post to which he had previously aspired at the time of Essex's rebellion. From his surviving memoranda, he appears to have favoured the retrospective legalisation by statute of existing impositions and none 'to be henceforth raised without consent of the parliament'.⁵⁴ Furthermore, in an earlier discussion with the king, in November 1610, he had conceded that 'where your majesty's expense groweth by the Commonwealth we are bound to maintain it', significantly adding, however, that despite having 'already given four subsidies and seven fifteenths', the Commons still 'had no relief of their grievances'. Neville also possessed an impressive range of political contacts, including Sandys and Wentworth, with both of whom he discussed his ideas.⁵⁵

⁵² *Proceedings in Parliament 1610*, ed. Foster, i, pp. xxv, 53, 72, 75–6, 99, 122, 197, 224–5, 231; ii, 405–10.

⁵³ *HPC*, 1604–29, v, 493–502; H. Neville, *Plato Redivivus*, in *Two English Republican Tracts*, ed. C. Robbins (Cambridge, 1969), 133–5, 144–51, 184–5; *The English Revolution c.1590–1720*, ed. Tyacke, 7–10; *Liber Famelicus of Sir James Whitelocke*, ed. J. Bruce (Camden Society, old ser., lxx, 1858), 46–7.

⁵⁴ *Proceedings in Parliament 1610*, ed. Foster, i, 15–16; BL, Cotton MS, Titus F iv, ff. 350r–v; *Proceedings in Parliament 1614*, ed. Jansson, 247–56.

⁵⁵ *Proceedings in Parliament 1610*, ed. Foster, ii, 338 n. 16; *Proceedings in Parliament 1614*, ed. Jansson, 244–6; *HPC*, 1604–29, v, 497–8.

Yet when the Addled Parliament met in April 1614, the state of play remained somewhat confused. Neville had failed in his ambition to become secretary of state and on one reading the so-called 'undertaking' had been abandoned along with him. Nevertheless, the fact that the post of secretary went, instead, to his erstwhile friend and ally, Sir Ralph Winwood, must give pause for thought, as do the opening parliamentary moves now made by James, which seemingly followed the Neville formula.⁵⁶ At the same time, Fuller now sought to revive the failed religious legislation of the previous parliament, something supported by Wentworth who linked this with the king's offer of further 'graces'. On the other hand, Russell has pointed out that a motion to sit on Ascension Day was lost by a significant margin; this, he writes, 'tends to confirm the impression from the debates that the 1614 Commons were a much less godly house than their immediate predecessors'.⁵⁷ But it is also the case that the question of impositions came increasingly to overshadow all other business, a bill calling for their abolition being introduced on 12 April by Robert Myddelton – a fellow London MP of Fuller. The upshot, after much discussion in committee, was a resolution to join, instead, with the Lords in a petition to the king. This was despite a pre-emptive speech by James in which he claimed impositions as of 'right'. Matters came to a head on Saturday, 21 May, when a formal request was made to the Lords for a conference. Having converted themselves into a committee of the whole House, the Lords agreed to a meeting, as opposed to a conference, in order to hear what the Commons had to say. In reaching this decision, a leading role was played by Southampton, who had previously backed Neville's scheme to manage the Commons. Southampton was seconded by, among others, the puritan Lords Rich (the future Warwick), St John, and Saye. The last named had inherited the title in 1613 and was a more extreme puritan than his father. Nevertheless, on the following Monday, 23 May, the Lords revisited the question and voted first to consult the judges, who, in the event, declined to pronounce on the legality of impositions. Next day, 24 May, the Lords decided not to grant the Commons even a meeting.⁵⁸

The explanation for this about-turn by the Lords would seem to lie in a debate about impositions staged by the Commons on 21 May. Up until then, they had presented a fairly united front, but now Sir Henry Wotton and Sir Ralph Winwood began to chip away at some of the claims which the Commons' spokesmen proposed to advance in conference with the Lords. Wotton and Winwood argued, between them, that 'the power of imposing' belonged to hereditary monarchs by their 'prerogative royal'. This elicited especially fierce responses from Sandys and Wentworth, the former claiming that all monarchies were, in origin, elective, 'with reciprocal conditions between king and people', yet such is the 'daily increase' of impositions in England that it has 'come to be almost a tyrannical government'. In addition, Sandys implied that the recent assassination of Henry IV of France was causally connected with him being a 'great imposing prince'. Wentworth, however, compounded the offence by describing Henry as having 'died

⁵⁶ T.L. Moir, *The Addled Parliament of 1614* (Oxford, 1958), 73–5, 78–96; *HPC, 1604–29*, vi, 816–26; *Proceedings in Parliament 1614*, ed. Jansson, 17, 43–6.

⁵⁷ *Proceedings in Parliament 1614*, ed. Jansson, 35, 57, 60; Russell, *King James VI and I and his English Parliaments*, 107 n. 51. The voting is variously reported as 248 to 191, or 248 to 141.

⁵⁸ *Proceedings in Parliament 1614*, ed. Jansson, 59, 138–44, 309; *HPC, 1604–29*, v, 464, 497; HMC, *Hastings MSS*, iv, 249–65; *Salisbury MSS*, xx, 47–8.

like a calf that had his throat cut by a butcher', adding 'but far be it from my lord the king that aught so should befall him'. Worse still, he asserted that 'besides the laws of nations impositions were cried out against in scripture', applying Ezekiel 45.9 to the fate of the French king. According to Bishop Neile, this speech by Wentworth and its use of 'scriptures ill applied' was particularly in his mind when, on 23 May, he expressed the fear that were the Lords to meet with the Commons about impositions, 'there would passe from them undewtyfull and seditious speeches unfitte for us to heare'. By this stage, King James and the privy council are also likely to have learnt the gist of what had been said in the Commons. Heavily outnumbered two days before in his opposition to meeting with the Commons, Neile now found himself in the majority.⁵⁹ As with the failure of the wardship negotiations of 1604, so ten years later, puritan extremism was probably, at least partly, to blame for the abandonment of the meeting about impositions and with it any prospect of achieving a resolution at this point.⁶⁰

The ensuing deadlock, with the Commons refusing to grant supply, resulted in the dissolution of parliament in June 1614. Another was not to meet for almost seven years and this interim has been dubbed by Thomas Moir, the 'personal rule' of James I. Andrew Thrush, however, favours applying this term to the longer time span of 1611 to 1620, given the stillborn nature of the Addled Parliament.⁶¹ Both historians have in mind here a comparison with the 1630s. During the 1614 parliament, the king had warned that if a grant of taxation was not forthcoming he would be 'forced to stretch my prerogative', and following the dissolution, the crown resorted to the levying of a benevolence – in effect a subsidy by prerogative means. Understandably there was widespread opposition, apparently spearheaded by Lord St John and his kinsman Black Oliver St John, both of whom had been involved with Peter Wentworth in 1593 over the succession question. Black Oliver St John argued that the benevolence was contrary to 'law, reason and religion'. But unlike ship money under Charles I, benevolences did not become an annual event, the next one not being levied until 1622.⁶² Instead, the politically most dangerous attempt to exploit the royal prerogative for fiscal ends at this time was the pursuit of a Spanish marriage alliance and the accompanying prospect of a handsome dowry. Puritans especially, but also many committed protestants more generally, were opposed to this plan, not least because of the virtual certainty that toleration of catholicism would be insisted on by the Spaniards as a condition of the marriage going ahead.⁶³

Royal calculations, however, were badly thrown out in 1618 by the renewed outbreak of war in Europe, which threatened to draw in England willy-nilly because of the involvement of the king's son-in-law, the elector Palatine. Against this background, James was persuaded to summon a parliament in 1621. Indeed war, or the prospect of war, was to prove a major driver of parliamentary politics during the 1620s, serving, in

⁵⁹ *Proceedings in Parliament 1614*, ed. Jansson, 311–17, 384.

⁶⁰ According to Russell, Neile was consciously playing the role of saboteur on behalf of King James, for whom impositions were non-negotiable: *King James VI and I and his English Parliaments*, 118–21.

⁶¹ Moir, *The Addled Parliament of 1614*, 169; A.D. Thrush, 'The Personal Rule of James I, 1611–1620', in *Politics, Religion and Popularity in Early Stuart Britain*, ed. Cogswell, Cust and Lake, 84–102.

⁶² *Proceedings in Parliament 1614*, ed. Jansson, 144; R. Cust, *The Forced Loan and English Politics 1626–1628* (Oxford, 1987), 153–60; *Acts of the Privy Council, 1613–14*, pp. 582–3; Neale, 'Peter Wentworth', 187–91.

⁶³ Tyacke, 'Puritan Paradigm', 540–1.

turn, ruthlessly to expose the pre-existing problem of money. But other issues did not simply fade away; rather, they were recontextualised. Russell, in his very influential book about the parliaments of the 1620s, gave short shrift to the role of puritans, going so far as to claim that he could only discover one genuine example of the species in the person of Ignatius Jordan, who favoured introducing the death penalty for adultery. Yet by the time of his Ford Lectures, some ten years later, he described the civil war battle lines as having been drawn between the advocates of 'further reformation', defined as those who wished to advance upon the Elizabethan settlement of religion, and their opponents. Moreover, in his view this division was long-standing.⁶⁴ Of the 127 MPs in 1642 identified by Russell as being in favour of further reformation, almost half (62) had sat in previous parliaments during the 1620s, or even earlier.⁶⁵ His preferred term for such people was 'the godly'. In the Trevelyan Lectures, however, Russell finally conceded that they were also 'puritans' according to the 'widest possible definition', all-in-all a notable instance of a revisionist revising himself.⁶⁶

By the time of the 1621 parliament, most of the earlier generation of puritans were dead, including Nicholas Fuller. Insofar as the latter had a direct successor in the field of religious reform, it was Sir Walter Earle, who in 1614 served his apprenticeship alongside Fuller on the committee charged with surveying the failed legislation from the previous parliament 'concerning matters of Church and Commonwealth'. In 1621, Earle introduced a number of these same religious bills into the Commons, coming under attack in the process from Thomas Sheppard, who accused him of being a 'puritan'.⁶⁷ Among those who defended Earle were Thomas Crewe, John Pym and Sir Nathaniel Rich, all of them advocates of further reformation. Earle himself was a prominent member of the Dorset gentry, his estate located only 13 miles from Dorchester, with whose puritan community he developed close links. Crewe, a more senior figure, was similarly connected with the godly of both Northamptonshire and its county town.

⁶⁴ C. Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics 1621–1629* (Oxford, 1979), 25–32; C. Russell, *The Causes of the English Civil War* (Oxford, 1990), 20, 85, 220–6.

⁶⁵ Sir Henry Anderson (1614), Sir Willam Armyne, Ralph Ashton the younger, Sir Edward Ayscough, Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston, Sir Thomas Barrington, Sir William Brereton, John Browne, Sir Richard Buller, William Cage (1614), Sir Thomas Cheke (1614), Miles Corbett, William Coryton, John Crew, Oliver Cromwell, Henry Darley, Sir Walter Earle (1614), Sir John Evelyn of Surrey, Sir John Evelyn of Wilts, Sir Ferdinando Fairfax (1614), Sir Miles Fleetwood (1614), Sir Gilbert Gerrard (1614), Arthur Goodwin, Robert Goodwin, Sir Harbottle Grimston (1614), Mr Harbottle Grimston, John Hampden, Sir Robert Harley (1604), John Harris, Denzil Holles, Thomas Hoyle, Sir Edward Hungerford (1614), Sir Thomas Hutchinson, Sir Arthur Ingram (1609), Sir Anthony Irby, Sir Thomas Jervoise, Sir Oliver Luke (1597), Sir William Masham, John Maynard, Sir Henry Mildmay, Sir Sidney Montagu (1593), Sir Edmund Moundeford, Sir Roger North, Samuel Owlfield, Edward Owner, Sir Thomas Pelham, William Purefoy, John Pym, John Pyne, Sir Samuel Rolle, Francis Rous, Sir Benjamin Rudyard, Anthony Stapley, Nathaniel Stephens, William Strode, John Upton, Laurence Whitaker, William Whitaker, John Wilde, Sir Christopher Wray, Sir John Wray (1614) and Sir Christopher Yelverton.

⁶⁶ Russell, *King James VI and I and his English Parliaments*, 38–9. One should not, however, exaggerate the extent of his conversion, since Russell still felt able to describe Nicholas Fuller and Thomas Wentworth as examples of the 'Bolsover tendency in politics' – a reference to the obstreperous Labour MP, Dennis Skinner: Russell, *King James VI and I and his English Parliaments*, 65. Elton allegedly drew the same rather dismissive analogy apropos Peter Wentworth: P. Croft, 'The Parliament of England', *TRHistS*, 6th ser., vii (1997), 218.

⁶⁷ *Proceedings in Parliament 1614*, ed. Jansson, 35; *Commons Debates in 1621*, ed. Notestein, Relf and Simpson, ii, 34 n. 3, 82; v, 353.

Pym, thanks to his Rous relatives, had extensive west country contacts, while to the east, Rich could count on the backing of the Warwick interest, especially in Essex.⁶⁸ Yet like their predecessors, the concerns of such puritan MPs extended far beyond the question of Church reform. Thus Rich and Crewe also featured prominently in the 1621 bid to outlaw patents of monopoly. After a damping down of this issue in the early years of James, monopolies were, again, emerging as a grievance by 1614, when Fuller can be found attacking the glass-making patent and predictably citing Deuteronomy 24.6. Such grants, he said, were 'as dangerous as the impositions – now to glass, after to iron, after to all other trades'.⁶⁹

During the last two decades of Elizabeth's reign, monopolies had been increasingly resorted to by the monarchy, as a means of rewarding royal service. The growing chorus of complaints, however, from, among others, the fishermen of Devon and Cornwall, the salt makers of Boston and Hull, and the leather sellers of London, culminated in a demonstration outside the house of commons in 1601 by those describing themselves as 'Commonwealth men'. In the wake of this, some of the most offensive monopolies had been cancelled by royal proclamation and Darcy's notorious playing card patent adjudged to be illegal.⁷⁰ But by 1621, a number of these same patents were back in existence along with many new ones. Indeed, the recurring agitation about monopolies has some claim to be regarded as a classic case of what has been called 'the politics of the public sphere' in action.⁷¹ Industrial patents, especially, both threatened livelihoods and tended to push up prices. They were also a form of indirect taxation, levied under the auspices of the royal prerogative and against which parliament emerged as the court of appeal.

A shared ideal of public duty, derived from a mix of Cicero and the Bible, served to unite MPs of varying religious views in the campaign against monopolies.⁷² Sandys and Southampton were both still alive and politically active in the early 1620s. Newer voices, however, were those such as Sir Robert Phelips and, above all, the formidable Sir Edward Coke, the latter, who having lost judicial office, now reinvented himself as a tribune of the people. Neither Phelips nor Coke can be classified as a puritan. Nevertheless, a major achievement of the combined forces led by Coke was to be the passage into law of a Monopolies Act in the last Jacobean parliament of 1624, fulfilling, at least on paper, something for which critics of the government had been pressing since 1601.⁷³ Coke also masterminded the revival of parliamentary judicature in 1621,

⁶⁸ *Commons Debates in 1621*, ed. Notestein, Relf and Simpson, iv, 62–4; v, 500–3; *HPC, 1604–29*, iv, 149–57; iii, 736–48; v, 797–808; vi, 33–45. This was a precursor of the political grouping identified by Christopher Thompson as active in the period 1625 to 1629, but the presence of Crewe also indicates that the roots go back much earlier: 'The Origins of the Politics of the Parliamentary Middle Group, 1625–1629', *TRHistS*, 5th ser., xxii (1972), 71–86. See also J.H. Hexter, *The Reign of King Pym* (Cambridge, MA, 1961), 63–99.

⁶⁹ *CJ*, i, 249; *Proceedings in Parliament 1614*, ed. Jansson, 111.

⁷⁰ *The English Revolution c.1590–1720*, ed. Tyacke, 14–16; Neale, *Elizabeth I and her Parliaments 1584–1601*, p. 383.

⁷¹ *Commons Debates in 1621*, ed. Notestein, Relf and Simpson, vii, 311–564 (see esp. 339–40, 359–60); *The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England*, ed. Lake and Pincus, 1–30.

⁷² Cust, 'The "Public Man" in Late Tudor and Early Stuart England', 116–43.

⁷³ *HPC, 1604–29*, iii, 560–97; v, 681–704.

impeachment thenceforward serving as a mechanism to bring erring ministers and others to justice.⁷⁴

On the subject of impositions, which had dogged the parliament of 1614, there seems to have been a widespread willingness to postpone discussion until the next reign when a new Tonnage and Poundage Act would, anyway, be required, covering the main customs revenue.⁷⁵ Meanwhile anti-popery proved a phenomenon with continuing broad-based appeal. Requests that the recusancy laws be strictly enforced were a regular feature of early Stuart parliaments and something to which neither James I nor Charles I ever signed up wholeheartedly. Although the related fear of Spain had diminished somewhat after 1604, the prospect of a marriage treaty combined with the fate of the elector Palatine now served to revive such concerns. The new mood became apparent in February 1621, when on the first day of business in the Commons, Phelips spoke about the threat posed by recusants, who now 'have more hope than ever they had since the beginning of reformation'. The following November, when the Commons turned to a consideration of foreign affairs, Phelips and other speakers took up the theme of a Spanish catholic menace. 'Spain hath ever and will still make the Romish religion the great wheel or engine to effect his ambitious ends.'⁷⁶ It was a puritan, however, who pushed the boundaries of this consensus and in so doing, ended up shattering the spirit of co-operation with the government which had characterised the early months of the 1621 parliament. Not content with urging James to terminate the Spanish marriage negotiations as a preparatory step to war, Thomas Crewe persuaded the Commons in that December, to include in their intended petition to the king, a request that Prince Charles 'may be timely and happily married to one of our own religion'. In justification, he quoted the Bible on the dire consequences of marrying an idolater. But this intervention by the Commons was deemed by the king to be a 'breach of prerogative royal' and led, in consequence, to an adjournment and then the dissolution of parliament in January 1622.⁷⁷

Urgently in need of money, the government now resorted, again, to levying a benevolence. Despite this being tailored explicitly to the Palatine cause, resistance was still much in evidence. The most prominent refuser, and imprisoned for his opposition, was Lord Saye.⁷⁸ Yet what temporarily transformed an unpromising political situation for the better was the decision of Prince Charles and Buckingham, in the course of 1623, to espouse the cause of war with Spain, in spite of the continuing reluctance of King James. Hence there followed the unusually harmonious parliament of 1624 and with it the passing of the act relating to monopolies. Reformers pinned their hopes on the royal favourite, Buckingham, as they had earlier on his predecessor, Somerset, but

⁷⁴ C.C.G. Tite, *Impeachment and Parliamentary Judicature in Early Stuart England* (1974), 83–148.

⁷⁵ Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics 1621–1629*, pp. 93, 99, 198–9.

⁷⁶ *HPC*, 1604–29, i, 10–11; *Commons Debates in 1621*, ed. Notestein, Relf and Simpson, iv, 12; *Proceedings and Debates of the House of Commons in 1620 and 1621* (2 vols, Oxford, 1766), ii, 223–4.

⁷⁷ *Commons Debates in 1621*, ed. Notestein, Relf and Simpson, iv, 440; ii, 487–98; Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics 1621–1629*, pp. 133–44; J.P. Kenyon, *The Stuart Constitution* (2nd edn, Cambridge, 1986), 41; Tyacke, 'Puritan Paradigm', 541–2.

⁷⁸ Cust, *Forced Loan and English Politics*, 157–8. Saye had also apparently failed to contribute to the 1614 benevolence: TNA, E351/1950.

this time on the prince of Wales as well.⁷⁹ The honeymoon period, however, came to an end soon after the accession of Charles in 1625, as the strains of war exposed the ramshackle nature of naval and military preparedness. There was disagreement, too, over strategy, concerning whether to attack the enemy mainly on land or at sea. Especially in his capacity as lord admiral, Buckingham, in the event, bore the brunt of the blame for failure. Nor did the acquisition by Charles of a French catholic bride, as opposed to a Spanish one, do much to diminish fears for the future of English protestantism. Here it is notable that King James, at the close of the 1624 parliament, had vetoed a bill against recusancy, along with another concerning the sabbath. As regards the latter, he reasoned that if passed, it would 'give the puritans their will, whoe think all [religion] consists in two sermons a day'.⁸⁰

Unsurprisingly, therefore, in 1625, at the start of the first parliament of the new reign and before relations began to turn sour, the Commons joined with the Lords in a joint petition to Charles concerning religion, as they had to his father in 1621 and 1624.⁸¹ Jointly drafted by Pym and Sandys, most of this petition was taken up with catholic recusancy. But unlike its predecessors, it also included a section on 'silenced' ministers. As originally envisaged in June 1625, the king was to be requested:

to advise the bishops to restore such learned and painful ministers to the liberty of preaching the word of God and catechising of children, as have been formerly silenced, provided that they demean themselves peaceably and orderly, without impugning the government of the Church or the ecclesiastical rites and ceremonies by law established.

During the subsequent debates, Sir Robert Hatton and Sir Dudley Digges took 'exception' to this proposal, while Sir Thomas Hoby and John Crewe defended it. The division of opinion thus revealed led to Charles being presented with a watered-down version, requesting him 'to advise the bishops, by fatherly entreatment and tender usage, to reduce to the peaceable and orderly service of the Church such able ministers as have been formerly silenced'. The king agreed, 'so as it be applied only to such ministers as are peaceable, orderly, and conformable to the Church government'.⁸² Despite this royal caveat, it is known that around this time two formerly-silenced ministers, John Dod and Arthur Hildersham, were licensed to preach on lenient terms.⁸³ Meanwhile a related subscription bill, the first to be introduced into the Commons since 1614, got as far as a second reading in 1625. Like its predecessors, this measure aimed to limit the criteria

⁷⁹ T. Cogswell, *The Blessed Revolution: English Politics and the Coming of War, 1621–1624* (Cambridge, 1989), 135–261; Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics 1621–1629*, pp. 145–203.

⁸⁰ Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics 1621–1629*, pp. 204–59; T. Cogswell, 'The People's Love: The Duke of Buckingham and Popularity', in *Politics, Religion and Popularity*, ed. Cogswell, Cust and Lake, 211–34; TNA, SP14/165, ff. 143–4.

⁸¹ R. Zaller, *The Parliament of 1621* (Berkeley, CA, 1971), 41–5; R.E. Ruigh, *The Parliament of 1624* (Cambridge, MA, 1971), 238–44; *Commons Debates in 1621*, ed. Notestein, Relf and Simpson, v, 458–60; J. Rushworth, *Historical Collections* (7 vols, 1721–2), i, 141–3.

⁸² *Proceedings in Parliament 1625*, ed. M. Jansson and W.B. Bidwell (New Haven, 1987), 157, 262, 265.

⁸³ S. Clarke, *The Lives of Thirty-Two English Divines* (1677), 122; S. Clarke, *The Lives of Two and Twenty English Divines* (1660), 202; T. Morton, *The Episcopacy of the Church of England Justified to be Apostolical* (1670), preface by Henry Yelverton, p. xlviii. I owe these references to Kenneth Fincham.

for holding clerical office to acceptance of the doctrinal clauses of the thirty-nine articles – excluding, that is to say, those relating to liturgy and polity.⁸⁴

Ominously, however, Charles failed to secure a grant of tonnage and poundage in 1625. According to Conrad Russell, a deal including impositions had been on the cards, but the onset of plague led the Commons to pass an emergency measure for one year only, which was rejected by the Lords, at government behest, as unacceptable. A note among the surviving papers of Phelips indicates that he, at least originally, envisaged that this temporary grant would be ‘for a limited time of years’. It may be significant that Earle was one of those strongly urging limitation to one year, given the history of puritan hostility to impositions. Similar intransigence, however, was evinced by Sir Francis Seymour, whom Russell classifies as being opposed to further reformation in 1642. Seymour was also among the first to attack Buckingham in 1625.⁸⁵ At the time, this latter largely fell on deaf ears but was subsequently taken up by the Commons in the 1626 parliament. The most serious of the charges then made was that Buckingham had interfered medically during the final sickness of King James. By this date, too, leading puritans were becoming disillusioned with the favourite, not least because of his support for the cleric, Richard Montagu, whose case Pym had first brought to the attention of the Commons in 1624.⁸⁶

Montagu was the author of two books, *A New Gagg* and *Appello Caesarem*, published successively in 1624 and 1625, which his critics claimed propagated both ‘popery’ and ‘Arminianism’. Equally important, however, was that Montagu had Bishop Neile as one of his principal backers. The religious *bon fides* of Neile had been questioned at the time of the Addled Parliament in 1614, when Fuller claimed that he discountenanced preaching and his ‘disposition to Rome’ was said by another puritan, Sir William Cope, to be ‘not well known’.⁸⁷ Appointed bishop of Durham in 1617, Neile had come to play a crucial role as regards the alternative approach to the problem of northern catholicism adopted by the Jacobean regime after the death of Salisbury. Originally directed by Somerset and his brother-in-law, Lord Howard de Walden, much of the responsibility for the new policy subsequently devolved on Neile. Persecution of catholics was now increasingly replaced by a policy of religious bridge-building, to be achieved via a more ceremonious and sacrament-centred form of worship than the iconoclastic and sermon-centred protestantism of the past, with the remodelled services in Durham cathedral serving as an exemplar. Albeit pioneered in the north, clearly the longer-term aim was to extend this policy to the whole of England, protestant as well as catholic, and, hence, the significance of the Montagu case. Neile himself remained a

⁸⁴ *Proceedings in Parliament 1614*, ed. Jansson, 75, 88 n. 1, 91; *Proceedings in Parliament 1625*, ed. Jansson and Bidwell, 238, 253; N. Tyacke, *Aspects of English Protestantism, c.1530–1700* (Manchester, 2001), 63–5.

⁸⁵ Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics 1621–1629*, pp. 227–9, 242–3; Russell, *Causes of the English Civil War*, 226; *HPC, 1604–29*, vi, 283–92.

⁸⁶ *Proceedings in Parliament 1626*, ed. W.B. Bidwell and M. Jansson (4 vols, New Haven, 1991–6), i, 472–3; T. Ball, *The Life of the Renowned Dr Preston*, ed. E.W. Harcourt (1885), 123, 141–53; N. Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism, 1590–1640* (2nd edn, Oxford, 1990), 127–8, 130–1, 147.

⁸⁷ K. Fincham and N. Tyacke, *Altars Restored: The Changing Face of English Religious Worship, 1547–c.1700* (Oxford, 2007), 126–31; Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, 106–26; *Proceedings in Parliament 1614*, ed. Jansson, 365; *Commons Debates in 1621*, ed. Notestein, Relf and Simpson, vii, 648.

key figure, related through his wife to Buckingham as well as to Somerset, and a close confidant of King James.⁸⁸

From the point of view of advocates of further reformation, this rolling back of the Reformation, as they saw it, presented a double threat. The relatively-meagre evangelical gains of the previous 60 years were now being sacrificed on the altar of 'Popish Arminianisme', to employ the terminology of Peter Smart – one of its most strident critics. Worse, this redefinition of the doctrine and practice of the English Church made the accommodation of puritans far harder. The 'Mountagutians', as some of their opponents initially called them, were 'popish' in the sense that they sought radically to diminish the religious differences separating the churches of England and Rome, and 'Arminian' or anti-Calvinist because they rejected the type of predestinarian teaching which had previously passed for orthodoxy in the English Church. Although the genealogy of the English Arminians, as *faute de mieux* we may call them, can be traced back to the early days of the English Reformation, not until the 1620s did they begin to move into a position of dominance.⁸⁹ Initially very dependent on the support of the monarchy, they emerged as some of its most ardent supporters, building here on a tradition of absolutist political thought associated earlier with Archbishop Bancroft and reflected in the canons passed by convocation in 1606, which condemned the view that 'civil power, jurisdiction and authority was first derived from the people'.⁹⁰

It would, however, be a serious mistake to underestimate the radical potential of puritanism at this time. Hence, much more was involved than simply a reaction to the rise of Arminianism by the occupants of a previous Calvinist centre ground.⁹¹ On the contrary, advocates of further reformation continued to challenge the ecclesiastical *status quo*. They did so most obviously via the introduction of a subscription bill into the 1625 parliament, as already remarked. The absence of such bills in the parliaments of 1621 and 1624 was almost certainly a reflection of the known views of James I. During the 1626 parliament, a version of this same bill was reintroduced in the company of six other bills, all seven of them described by the future Archbishop Laud as being 'against the Church'. The six additional bills concerned citations out of ecclesiastical courts, clerical justices of the peace, excommunication, hearing of sermons, prohibited times for marriage, and scandalous ministers. Moreover, the puritan ambience of these measures tends to be confirmed by the recurring names of some of the committee members to whom they were entrusted. Thus each of the 15 following puritan MPs was nominated to at least two of the seven committees involved: Sir Francis Barrington, Sir Thomas Barrington, John Crewe, Sir Walter Earle, Sir Gilbert Gerard, Sir Robert Harley, Sir Thomas Hoby, Ignatius Jordan, Sir William Masham, Sir James Perrot, Sir Nathaniel Rich, John Pym, Francis Rous, Christopher Sherland and Sir William Strode. A similar conjunction of

⁸⁸ N. Tyacke, 'Iconoclasm, Alienation and Rebirth: Peterhouse and its Chapel in the Context of the English Reformation', in *The Peterhouse Part Books*, ed. S. Mandelbrote (forthcoming).

⁸⁹ *The Correspondence of John Cosin*, ed. G. Ormsby (2 vols, Surtees Society, LII, LV, 1868–72), i, 162; J.S. Macauley, 'Richard Mountague', ODNB, 535; Tyacke, *Aspects of English Protestantism*, 176–202.

⁹⁰ *The Parliamentary Diary of Robert Bowyer*, ed. Willson, 61; *Proceedings in Parliament 1610*, ed. Foster, i, 188; ii, 78–9; *The Anglican Canons 1529–1947*, ed. G. Bray (Church of England Record Society, vi, 1998), 454, 558–9. These 1606 canons did not receive the royal assent; J.P. Sommerville, *Royalists and Patriots: Politics and Ideology in England 1603–1640* (1999), 9–54, 224–54.

⁹¹ Tyacke, *Aspects of English Protestantism*, 61–89; Tyacke, 'Puritan Paradigm', 539–46.

puritan men and measures is discernible in the 1628 parliament, with the names of John Hampden and Richard Knightley now needing to be added to the list.⁹²

Buckingham survived the attempt to impeach him in 1626, but Charles was left with no parliamentary grant of taxation while fighting both Spain and France, hostilities having also broken out with the latter. From a government point of view, the argument from 'necessity' became, as a result, particularly compelling. Parliament having failed in its duty, the king claimed to have been left with no alternative but to levy the required money on the basis of his own authority. Yet the situation was now definitely more fraught than in the past, an attempt, once more, to levy a benevolence having to be abandoned due to the extent of resistance. Instead the regime switched to a forced loan. Successful in that the equivalent of some four parliamentary subsidies was raised, the opposition encountered was of a qualitatively-different kind from that generated by previous resorts to prerogative taxation. Thus the judges declined to endorse the legality of the loan, leading to the dismissal of the lord chief justice, Sir Ranulph Crewe, brother of Thomas and uncle of John – both puritans. At least six peers also refused to lend, including the puritans Lincoln, Saye, and Warwick (the second earl). Moreover, widespread resistance on the part of the gentry led to the imprisonment of over 100 such refusers, drawn especially from the four counties of Essex, Gloucestershire, Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire.⁹³

Although these gentry resisters came from a variety of religious backgrounds, one can distinguish among them a puritan core, its leaders straddling the generations. Sir Francis Barrington was the senior figure among the Essex refusers. In his youth he had visited Geneva and was related by marriage to Sir Henry Bromley. An ally of the Rich earls of Warwick, he had sat for the county as early as 1601 and been a prominent advocate of Church reform throughout his career. He was to die in 1628.⁹⁴ By contrast, Richard Knightley, the effective head of the Northamptonshire refusers, was a much younger man but with strong puritan credentials. Brought up by a puritan guardian, Sir Thomas Smythe, Knightley supported the 1628 Subscription Bill and was the patron and protector of the veteran puritan cleric John Dod, for whom, in about 1630, he was to set up a trust fund administered by Saye (now a viscount), John Crewe, John Hampden, John Pym, Sir Nathaniel Rich and Christopher Sherland.⁹⁵ But that leading lay puritans

⁹² *Proceedings in Parliament 1626*, ed. Bidwell and Jansson, ii, 44, 238, 246, 479; iii, 120, 180, 329; *Proceedings in Parliament 1628*, ed. R.C. Johnson, M.F. Keeler, M.J. Cole and W.B. Bidwell (6 vols, New Haven, 1977–83), ii, 444, 479, 510, 564; iii, 3, 22, 44; TNA, SP16/105, ff. 44r–v. The comment by Laud has reference to these bills as reintroduced into the 1628 parliament. For Laud's growing alarm about puritanism more generally, both real and imagined, see J. Peacey, 'The Paranoid Prelate: Archbishop Laud and the Puritan Plot', in *Conspiracies and Conspiracy Theory in Early Modern Europe: From the Waldensians to the French Revolution*, ed. B. Coward and J. Swan (Aldershot, 2004), 113–34.

⁹³ Cust, *Forced Loan and English Politics*, 3, 91–149, 218; Dietz, *English Public Finance*, ii, 238 n. 66; HPC, 1604–29, iii, 731–48; TNA, SP16/41, f. 3.

⁹⁴ Cust, *Forced Loan and English Politics*, 220–1; HPC, 1604–29, iii, 142–8, 316–19, 774–8.

⁹⁵ Cust, *Forced Loan and English Politics*, 233–4; HPC, 1604–29, v, 37–9; vi, 363–8; TNA, PROB11/92, ff. 317v–320v; WARD 9/160, ff. 250v–251; Tyacke, *Aspects of English Protestantism*, 19–20, 115–17; Russell, *Unrevolutionary England*, 207–8 n. 10. The puritanism of Sir Thomas Smythe eluded Thrush's team partly because of a systematic failure to consult the invaluable F.B. Williams, *Index of Dedications and Commendatory Verse in English Books before 1641* (1962). As well, however, as receiving dedications from Ezekiel Charke and Jonathan Negus, Smythe had clashed with Archbishop Whitgift over the renovation of Cheapside Cross: Fincham and Tyacke, *Altars Restored*, 91; TNA, SP12/279, f. 19v.

should have been in the forefront of opposition to the forced loan was no accident. Barrington and Knightley were very much in the tradition of the Wentworths, father and son, and Nicholas Fuller. The 'liberty' which they were wont to invoke was not just a function of their understanding of the English constitution; rather, it was underpinned by a religiously-inspired antipathy to unjust rule.⁹⁶

Crisis, however, was averted in 1628 by the decision of the king and his advisers to summon another parliament. Applying the Russell test, there was now a puritan majority in the Commons, the vote to sit on Ascension Day (22 May) being won by 116 to 104.⁹⁷ An impressively united front on the part of Commons and Lords, the proceedings ably compered by Sir Edward Coke, induced Charles to grant the Petition of Right, which effectively ruled out the raising of forced loans for the future. In return, parliament voted five subsidies. But this conciliatory mood was overshadowed two months later by the assassination of Buckingham. Moreover, the unresolved question of tonnage and poundage, together with the continuing agitation over Arminianism, served to wreck the ensuing 1629 session of parliament and usher in the Caroline 'personal rule'. Analysing these events, Russell identified the presence of a 'vocal minority' of MPs who were characterised by 'an ideological approach to politics'. He also linked this group with 'the future Providence Company', a body widely regarded by historians as having provided a base for critics of the regime during the 1630s. (Those being alluded to here are the likes of John Pym and Sir Nathaniel Rich.)⁹⁸ Although Russell apparently remained of the view that he was describing an essentially Caroline phenomenon, ideologically-motivated and vocal minorities of this kind can also be found operating throughout the Jacobean period and, indeed, earlier.⁹⁹ Furthermore, puritan colonists, alienated by the turn of both political and religious events in 1629, embarked shortly thereafter on a remarkable experiment in constructing a new polity across the Atlantic.¹⁰⁰ It remains a moot point whether or not such activities constitute 'opposition'. Nevertheless, Peter Heylyn, preaching at Oxford in July 1630, was confident that the puritan 'faction' had now 'made themselves so strong a partie, that the maine counsels of state are crossed or carried by them'.¹⁰¹

Collective biography provides one of the basic building blocks for the writing of informed parliamentary history. So, too, does a firm grasp of institutional developments. We also need to guard against anachronistic assumptions derived from later periods.

⁹⁶ Tyacke, 'Puritan Paradigm', 527–50. As Sir Walter Earle put it, apropos the Petition of Right, 'the cause of justice is God's cause': *Commons Debates for 1629*, ed. Notestein and Relf, 18.

⁹⁷ *CJ*, i, 901. The religious significance of this vote, however, is somewhat diminished by the knowledge that in 1628, the Commons also 'sat over Easter, Whitsun . . . and the Feast of St John the Baptist', a sense of time running out probably being the main consideration: *HPC, 1604–29*, i, p. lii n. 84.

⁹⁸ Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics 1621–1629*, pp. 424, 429.

⁹⁹ Tyacke, 'Puritan Politicians and King James VI and I, 1587–1604', 21–44; R. Cust, "'Patriots" and "Popular" Spirits: Narratives of Conflict in Early Stuart Politics', in *The English Revolution c.1590–1720*, ed. Tyacke, 43–61.

¹⁰⁰ D.D. Hall, *A Reforming People: Puritanism and the Transformation of Public Life in New England* (New York, 2011); M.P. Winship, *Godly Republicanism: Puritans, Pilgrims and a City on a Hill* (Cambridge, MA, 2012); N. Tyacke, 'Godly Reformers of Church and State in New and Old England during the Seventeenth Century', *Reviews in American History*, xli (2013).

¹⁰¹ A. Milton, *Laudian and Royalist Polemic in Seventeenth-Century England: The Career and Writings of Peter Heylyn* (Manchester, 2007), 25–6.

In all these respects, Andrew Thrush and his team have performed a signal service.¹⁰² Their work is richly complemented by that of Conrad Russell, with his mastery of the detailed politics of the period and grasp of some of the underlying structural problems – notably as regards finance.¹⁰³ On the other hand, an unfortunate legacy of revisionist historiography is a continuing reluctance to develop new explanatory frameworks. These latter are probably best generated from within the period itself, especially via the wealth of material contained in the magnificent run of surviving parliamentary diaries now available in good modern editions.¹⁰⁴ (Early modernists generally owe a great debt to all the scholars involved in these various enterprises.) But it is also becoming increasingly evident that puritans played a major role, both ideological and organisational, in the shaping of politics at this time – their dual programme as regards reform of ‘thinges grievous and offensive’ in Commonwealth and Church, first clearly formulated in 1603.

¹⁰² Nevertheless, a cause for regret is the lack of an index to *HPC, 1604–29*, apart from the first volume. An online version is, however, promised.

¹⁰³ Cust and Thrush are to be congratulated on providing a fine memorial to a great historian.

¹⁰⁴ In 1966, J.H. Hexter inaugurated the Yale Center for Parliamentary History, which continued the earlier work of Notestein and his colleagues, and under successive directors has produced editions of parliamentary proceedings for 1625, 1626 and 1628.