

# CAPTAIN RAPHE MARGERY, A SUFFOLK IRONSIDE

by JEAN and RAY LOCK

EARLY IN THE new year of 1592 a son was born to Richard and Mary Margery of Swardeston, Norfolk. He was the first of their ten children and was baptised on 6 February 1592 in the parish church of Swardeston with the name of Raphe. The little church with its aisle-less 13th-century nave and Tudor brick porch is sometimes visited today by people interested in its connection with Nurse Edith Cavell, whose father was the vicar there for forty-six years. These visitors will be unaware that an infant baptised there almost four hundred years ago also emerged from obscurity and for a brief period played a part in our national history.

It is not known why Richard Margery, who was born in Walsham-le-Willows, Suffolk, where his forebears had lived for at least three hundred years, came to settle in Swardeston. His father, John Margery, who died in 1588 – three years before Richard's marriage – left him land in Walsham but none in Swardeston. It is possible that his wife had connections with this village and may have received property there as a dowry. Whatever the reason, they made their home there, but Richard retained his interest in Walsham, inheriting more land and the family house there from his elder brother Samuel in 1599.

There are records of the Margery family in Walsham from as early as 1283 – in the Lay Subsidy – and in court rolls, wills etc., through to the late 17th century. The 1577 survey of Walsham-le-Willows (Dodd 1974, 40) shows John Margery, Raphe's grandfather, holding about ninety acres; in 1588, when he died, he is shown by his will (N.R.O., Andrews 47) and probate inventory (N.R.O., INV 10, 111) to have been a prosperous yeoman, farming more land and occupying a well-furnished seven-roomed house, which unfortunately has not survived. The survey shows that it abutted upon the Game Place, the subject of an interesting study by K.M. Dodd (Dodd 1970, 125). The bulk of the property in Walsham was inherited by the elder son, Samuel, a bachelor, who in turn bequeathed it to Richard Margery for his lifetime and then to Richard's son Samuel, his godson. By 1624 Richard had risen above the yeoman status of his father, and was described in a document among the deeds of a piece of land in Walsham as 'Richard Margery of Swardeston, Gentleman' (S.R.O.B., EL 159/12/23–25).

Raphe's childhood and early manhood were probably spent in Swardeston, only a short distance from the city of Norwich, which was in the 17th century the second largest city in the kingdom. A contemporary pen portrait of Norwich described it as 'either a city in an orchard or an orchard in a city so equally are houses and trees blended in it, so that the pleasures of the country and the populousness of the city meet here together' (Fuller 1662, II, 274). The young Raphe may have visited Norwich frequently, perhaps on foot, but more likely on horseback, since his father kept a large stable of horses. Almost nothing is known of this early part of Raphe's life; he did not go to university as three of his brothers did, and he was not apprenticed to a trade in Norwich. Several specimens of his elegant handwriting which have survived indicate that he was an educated man, but it has not been possible to trace where he was educated. It is likely that after he had finished his education, he came back (as the eldest son) to Swardeston to help his father farm the land, and that he was greatly influenced by the proximity of Norwich, with its strong traditions of Puritanism and tolerance of the religious beliefs of the many refugees from the Low Countries who had settled there.

With no trace of him from his baptism to his marriage in 1619, apart from bequests in the wills of his uncles Samuel and James, we have little information to help us form an

impression of the young Raphe and even less about his wife-to-be, Abigail Hall, and how they met. She was born in August 1598, the daughter of William Hall, rector of Redgrave cum Botesdale, Suffolk. He had been a Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge for ten years from 1587 and then held the living at Redgrave, under the patronage of Sir Nicholas Bacon, until 1605 when he was deprived. The reason for his deprivation is not known; the diocesan records which might have shed a light on the matter are too fragile to be examined. The admissions register of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge shows a Mr Hall as the schoolmaster of students coming from Roydon and Stuston, villages not far from Redgrave, in the period 1606 to 1629, and it is thought that this must have been William Hall, earning a living preparing students for university until in his old age he went to live in Walsham with his daughter and son-in-law, and where in 1636 his licence to preach was renewed (N.R.O., VSC/2/4).

Raphe and Abigail were married in Hunston, a parish about three miles from Walsham. The curate there who officiated was Richard Chamberlain who, like Hall, came from Lincolnshire and had also come under the notice of the Norfolk Diocese in 1606, when he was reprimanded because 'he weareth neyther surples nor signe children with the signe of the cross in baptism . . . [and] have neyther hood, tippett nor common capp' (N.R.O., VIS 4). Chamberlain, who later was the spiritual adviser to Sir Symonds D'Ewes, appears to have been a lifelong friend of William Hall and was a beneficiary under his will.

The young couple settled in the Margery family home in Walsham and between 1620 and 1637 Abigail had eight children, six daughters, of whom two died in infancy, and two sons Theophilus and Eliazar, born in 1633 and 1637 respectively. The house and land had reverted to Raphe's brother Samuel after the death of his father in 1632, but it was transferred to him in 1634. With the income from this land and from property inherited from his father in Swardeston, and more Walsham land from his Uncle James, Raphe would have been able to live comfortably enough, and the entries in the Walsham herbage book showing tithes paid in 1625 and 1629 refer to him as Mr Margery, indicating that he, like his father, was accepted as a gentleman (S.R.O.B., EL 159/3/2/5, 2).

In the year following the birth of Theophilus, Raphe took the office of churchwarden. His period of office coincided with the arrival of Matthew Wren as Bishop of Norwich, followed by the purging of forty non-conforming ministers and the Visitation to Bury St Edmunds in 1636. In his autobiography, Sir Symonds D'Ewes says of the Visitation:

They examined the churchwardens upon many new and strange articles, never before used in the Visitations of former Bishops since the reformation of the religion in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign. This ensadded the souls of all men, that had any true piety, and these new impositions, many of them, were conceived to be so dangerous and unlawful as divers godly, learned and orthodox men, either left their livings voluntarily or were suspended and deprived in the two counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, because they would not yield unto them.

Raphe refused to take the oath or did not appear in court, and so was excommunicated. There are no surviving church records to substantiate this, but when the Suffolk Ministers' petition was discussed in Parliament in 1641, Sir Symonds D'Ewes recorded in his diary, 'Mr Margerie of Walsham excommunicated for not taking the oath ex officio' (Notestein 1923, 398).

In 1638 Abigail Margery was also excommunicated at Walsham; John Mayer the newly appointed rector of Finningham, a nearby village, came to pronounce the sentence of excommunication. Two men who witnessed the event, Edmund Albone and Nicholas Martyn, gave evidence against Mayer to the Committee for Scandalous Ministers some six

years later. Edmund Albone was a friend of the Margery family and obviously biased, but his indignation at the humiliation of Abigail can be sensed from their statement:

Nicholas Martyn and Edmund Albone of Walsham do say upon their oathes that the said Mr Mayer hath not been only forward in his owne parish to perform what hath beene required by the Bishopp's Injunctions, but he once went to Walsham and ther pronounced excommunication against Abigail Margery the wife of Raph Margery, who was a godly and pious matron (which the Minister of the parish would not do himselfe); and caused her to be carryed out of the Church, and after prayers were read, [she] cumminge agayne into the Church, he asked what that excommunicated woman did there, and caused her agayne to be putt out and would not suffer her to heare the sermon' (Holmes 1970, 51).

This conveys a picture of a very angry woman determined to fight for her beliefs and not at all abashed by her experience.

The information we have about Abigail's excommunication leaves two important questions unanswered – what was the reason for it and who was the minister who refused to pronounce sentence? The date suggests that her offence was connected with the ceremony of churching, which would have followed the birth of her younger son. One of Wren's injunctions required that 'women to be churched come and kneel at a side near the Communion Table without the rail, being veiled according to custom and not covered with a hat', a Laudian reform and a very divisive issue at the time. Abigail Margery was probably one of the many women who refused to comply with the injunction.

There is no record of the incumbents at Walsham, a perpetual curacy, but we know that William Hall's licence to preach was renewed there in 1636 and he may have been the minister concerned. On the other hand it seems unlikely that the response to the injunctions of Bishop Wren from father and daughter, living under the same roof, would have been so different that he would have complied with them while she actively opposed them. It is also difficult to envisage him initiating the processes of excommunication and then refusing to pronounce sentence.

In January 1639, a few months after her excommunication, Abigail died and was buried in the churchyard at Walsham. She must have submitted to John Mayer, who had pronounced sentence, so that she could be buried in consecrated ground. Her father died in August of the same year. His will (N.R.O., Green, 99) and inventory (N.R.O., INV. 15, 174) survive and the details of his furniture and of bequests to servants, who were later to benefit under the will of Raphe Margery, show that he had lived in the Margery household. He left books to four clerics, all known to have been of the Puritan persuasion, and including Richard Chamberlain. This does not suggest that he could have been responsible in any way for his daughter's excommunication.

Raphe Margery clearly refused to accept the Laudian reforms in the church but he did not align himself with those who, in 1640, refused to pay Ship Money. He paid 10s. 6d on his Walsham property, but many in Suffolk, as elsewhere, defaulted. Sir Symonds D'Ewes, then sheriff of Suffolk, was pressed by the Admiralty to expedite the raising of £8,000 'to set forth and furnish a ship of 640 tons with 56 men', and in his reply explaining the difficulty he had in collecting the money, he referred to pleas of 'deadness of trade, low price of all commodities raised from the plough and pail, scarcity of money, great military charges of last summer, accompanied with innumerable groans and sighs received instead of payment often pressed and demanded' (Harl. 7540-02).

The elections in the following two years resulted in Suffolk in the winning by the Puritans of the borough of Ipswich and the county seats but no change in the smaller

boroughs. Among the many petitions presented to the new parliaments was one from Suffolk to the Commons on 31 January and to the Lords on 9 February 1642. The first county petition, from Buckinghamshire, had proclaimed the signatories' readiness 'to live and die in the defence of the privileges of parliament' (Holmes 1974, 25), and with the outbreak of the Civil War in that year, the time had come for that readiness to be tested. In the person of Raphe Margery, Suffolk had somebody prepared to match the words of the petition with action. He had no doubt been active in the collection of signatures for the petition and he now succeeded in raising a cavalry troop of 112 men to fight for the Parliamentary cause. The Suffolk Committee of the Eastern Association showed no readiness to use this troop and in August 1643 Margery offered their services to Cromwell, then in Cambridge. Cromwell sent him with the following famous letter to two members of the Suffolk Committee, Sir William Spring, M.P. for Bury St Edmunds, who descended from the wealthy Springs of Lavenham, and Maurice Barrowe, one of the richest landowners in England with an income of £6,000 per annum, who left £500 for the erection in 1666 of a fine monument to himself in Westhorpe church. The tone of the letter suggests that their reluctance to recognise Margery was due to his not being of the gentry.

Gentlemen,

Cambridge—September 1643

I have been now two days at Cambridge, in expectation to hear the fruit of your endeavours in Suffolk towards the public assistance. Believe it, you will hear of a storm in a few days. You have no Infantry at all considerable; hasten your Horses; a few hours may undo you, neglected, — I beseech you be careful what captains of horse you choose, what men be mounted; a few honest men are better than numbers. Some time they must have for exercise. If you choose godly honest men to be captains of Horse, honest men will follow them; and they will be careful to mount such.

The King is exceeding strong in the West. If you be able to foil a force at the first coming of it, you will have reputation; and that is of great advantage in our affairs. God hath given it to our handful; let us endeavour to keep it. I had rather have a plain russet-coated captain that knows what he fights for, and loves what he knows, than that which you call a gentleman and is nothing else. I honour a gentleman that is so indeed.

I understand Mr Margery hath honest men will follow him; if so, be pleased to make use of him; it much concerns your good to have conscientious men. I understand that there is an order for me to have £3,000 out of the Association and Essex hath sent their part, or near it. I assure you we need exceedingly. I hope to find your favour and respect, I protest, if it were for myself, I would not move you. This is all, from

Your faithful servant,  
Oliver Cromwell

P.S. If you send such men as Essex hath sent, it will be to little purpose. Be pleased to take care of their march; and that such may come along with them as will be able to bring them to the main body; and then I doubt not but we shall keep them, and make good use of them. I beseech you, give countenance to Mr Margery. Help him in raising this troop; let him not want your favour in whatsoever is needful for promoting this work; and command your servant. If he can raise the horses from Malignants, let him have your warrant; it will be of special Service (Carlyle 1904, 1, 154).

The mounting of a troop which might fight anywhere in the kingdom required a large number of horses in reserve; later each cavalry captain in the New Model Army was allowed 2s. per day for each of his six horses. Margery's acceptability to the Suffolk Committee had not been enhanced by the tone of Cromwell's letter and they were not slow to pass on to him complaints of Margery's over-zealousness in his interpretation of 'malignants' when seizing horses. Cromwell replied on 28 September 1643:

I hear there hath been much exception taken to Captain Margery and his Officers for taking of horses. I am sorry you should discountenance those who (not to make benefit to themselves, but to serve their country) are willing to venture their lives, and to purchase to themselves the displeasure of bad men, that they may do a public benefit. I undertake not to justify all Captain Margery's actions, but his own conscience knows whether he hath taken the horses of any but malignants, and it were somewhat too hard to put it upon the conscience of your fellow Deputy Lieutenants, whether they have not freed the horses of known malignants; a fault not less, considering the sad estate of this kingdom, than to take a horse from a known honest man; the offence being against the public, which is a considerable aggravation. I know not the measure that every one takes of malignants. I think it is not fit Captain Margery should be the judge; but if he, in this taking of horses, hath observed the parliament character of a malignant, and cannot be charged for one horse otherwise taken, it had been better that some of the bitterness wherewith he and his have been followed had been spared. The horses his Cornet Boalry took, he will put himself upon that issue for them all.

If these men be accounted troublesome to the country, I shall be glad you would send them all to me. I'll bid them welcome. And when they have fought for you, and endured some other difficulties of war which your honest men will hardly bear, I pray you then let them go for honest men. [In the same letter he asks] That you may help forward in sending such force away unto us as lie unprofitably in your country, and especially that troop of Captain Margerys, which surely would not be wanting, now we so much need it (Carlyle 1904, i, 160-61).

This is the first mention we have of 'Captain Margery' and it is at this point that he and his troop leave Suffolk to join Cromwell's regiment as the thirteenth troop of 'Ironsides'.

It is not difficult to imagine the disruption caused by the events of 1643 and the uproar that Walsham and the surrounding villages would have been in. This letter to Nicholas Bacon from one of his tenants, Richard Humphrey, shows the effect on a farmer whose horses were seized:

I have received yor letter wherin you write for yor rent due for Fremnolls, but I well hoped I should have received withall some expressions from you and Sir Thomas Woodhouse, in answer to my severall requests made formerly unto you, for to give me some ease in my to extream hard bargaine which was to deare by £50 a yeare when times were at the best, (judg then what it is now the farme consistinge most of Tillage, and I have had all my horses taken away, whoe can bowdlie and trulie say am noe delinquent either in word or action, and have paid all payments whatsoever as it is well known). But it seemes the present necessitie is the cause and I hope I shall obtaine some order from the Committie for satisfaction for them. But my requests unto you and Sir Thomas Woodhowse once more is, that you will take into consideracion the Damages I sustaine to howldinge the farme (Bacon 4261).

It is likely that Humphrey's horses and that of John Mayer, the rector of Finningham, were seized by Margery's men. In the evidence against Mayer to the Committee of Scandalous Ministers, it was said that 'when troopers took his horse because of his disaffection to Parliament, he said he would lay felony to them if they came agayne' (Holmes 1970, 51). It is not difficult to see in this particular seizure the possible settling of an old score by Margery. Firth mentions actions being taken against those responsible for seizing horses and widespread sympathy from magistrates for those dispossessed, but a search of the records of the Suffolk Quarter Sessions and of the Committee of Indemnity has not revealed any such action against Margery.

In the first battle of the Civil War at Edgehill in 1642, where both sides claimed victory, Cromwell in a conversation with his cousin John Hampden after the event, deplored the quality of some of the Parliamentary soldiers, feeling that a more decisive outcome could have been achieved. 'Your troopers', he said, 'are most of them old decayed serving-men and tapsters and such kind of fellows, and their troopers are gentlemen's sons, younger sons and persons of quality' (Carlyle 1904, III, 65). In his correspondence with Spring and Barrowe in 1643 he exhorted them to choose their men carefully. He would have been pleased to receive Raphe Margery's troop, many of them from local yeoman families, while no doubt there were some members of the local community who were glad to see them go. Evidence to the Committee of Scandalous Ministers indicates that once they were armed and mounted, Margery's troopers were not well disciplined nor all of them the 'godly, conscientious men' referred to by Cromwell. Trooper Edward Hurt went into the church at Woolpit with a sword in one hand and a pistol in the other, and threatened the rector there, John Watson, a professed Royalist, whose parishioners gave this account of the coming of the troopers: 'they broke his house upon him, and riffled it and took away the best of his goods and horse, and one trooper, whose name was Hurt, a Mason comeing into the Church the following Sunday put the good man into such a great fear and fright that he excused himselfe from preaching. . . This bold trooper bid him read a chapter and pray as god enabled him, and he would set downe and hear him himselfe' (Holmes 1970, 29). In the vestry of the church at Woolpit hangs a list of rectors. Under the name of John Watson, is the legend 'killed by the Puritans 1646', but there is no surviving evidence to support this.

If the Suffolk Committee responded quickly to Cromwell's letter of 28 September 1643, Margery's troop would have been involved in the battle at Winceby, north of Boston, Lincolnshire, in October. No plans of this battle survive but those of Marston Moor, in July 1644, show the thirteen troops of Lieutenant General Cromwell's cavalry on the left of the Parliamentary forces. One of these would have been Margery's. This was the first great decisive battle of the Civil War, where the Parliamentary victory owed much to 'the Godly Ironsides'.

When the formation of the New Model Army was proposed, the Eastern Association opposed it. Their objections were based on a reluctance to relinquish control of their forces, which they now saw as needed to defend hearth and home, and to raise their share of the money needed to support the New Model which amounted to over half the national sum. The New Model Army however became a reality early in 1645 and Margery was accepted into the new force, his troop being one of the six in Colonel Sir Robert Pye's regiment. In a list given to the Lords when they were considering officer-entrants for the New Model, Margery is identified with two other officers as an Independent (H.L.R.O., SP28/29 1645, 147). The Independents regarded themselves as representing the middle way between the Presbyterians who believed in a carefully structured church, and the Brownists or Separatists who gave independence to each congregation. In balancing power and authority between elders and people, the Independents believed they 'might never

degenerate into Lordliness and Oppression', a reference no doubt to the abuse of power by the bishops.

Margery was fifty-four years of age when the New Model Army was formed. His age and the comparative obscurity of his background would have made the possibility of advancement extremely remote, and he was in fact never promoted above the rank of captain. Tracing the activities of an individual troop is extremely difficult, but we do have details of the movements of Colonel Pye's regiment; and from these it can be inferred that over the next eight years Margery and his troop covered a great deal of the country.

On 14 June 1645 the regiment took part in the great Parliamentary victory at Naseby (Rushworth 1721, vi, 32-42). The plan of the battle shows the six troops of Pye's regiment in the centre of Cromwell's cavalry on the right of the Parliamentary forces, with the regiments of Colonel Fairfax and Colonel Whalley on their right and left respectively - 3,500 trained and well-disciplined men. The early part of the battle favoured the Royalists. The Parliamentary cavalry on the left under General Ireton were in disarray after the charge of Prince Rupert's cavalry, while the infantry, though heavily out-numbering the Royalist force, was under pressure and giving ground. At this point Cromwell attacked on the right and routed the Royalist cavalry under Langdale. Then instead of allowing his men to pursue Langdale's retreating force, he turned his cavalry against the left flank of the Royalist pikemen, while Colonel Okey regrouped his regiment of dragoons on the left and attacked the Royalist Foot from their right flank. Within an hour the battle was over, and the King's cause lost. The Civil War went on, but there could no longer be any doubt about its eventual outcome. Margery and his troop of men from rural Suffolk had played an important part in the nation's history that day at Naseby.

After Naseby Pye's regiment took part in the siege of Bristol, one of the towns which continued to support the King, and after the fall of Oxford, which concluded the first Civil War, it was included in the force employed under Skippon to convey money to be paid to the Scottish army, and to take over the northern garrisons. Part of the regiment escorted the King to Holdenby House in Northamptonshire and remained there to guard him (Firth and Davies 1940, 129).

With the fighting at an end the Army now had the opportunity to make known its long standing grievance over arrears of pay. The troops demanded payment of the £300,000 owed to them and guarantees of prompt payment in future. Parliament, sensing popular resentment that the Army should rest under arms, responded with orders that it be disbanded. Each regiment was offered the choice of volunteering to serve in Ireland, with the payment of eight weeks' arrears and two weeks' advance pay, or disbandment with eight weeks' arrears only. Only six cavalry officers agreed to go to Ireland, one of them being Colonel Pye, but he was unsuccessful in his attempts to persuade the regiment, except ninety-three men of his own troop, to follow him.

At this time troops of Pye's regiment were separated and, although they refused Parliament's offer, they did not play an active rôle in the dispute between the Army and Parliament in the spring and early summer of 1647. While the main force of the Army under General Fairfax was at Saffron Walden and some of Pye's regiment were at Holdenby Hall, the one surviving muster roll for Margery's troop dated 10 May 1647 and certified on 24 May shows him to have been at Maldon, Essex with his lieutenant, cornet, quartermaster, three corporals, two trumpeters and forty-seven men, six of whom were from other troops (P.R.O., SP 28, 124). This list is the only record we have of the names of Margery's men and it is possible to trace the parishes from which many of them came by comparison with the 1638 list of the Able Men of Suffolk. Among the names is Trooper Thomas Roper, later to marry Margery's daughter Abigail and to become a Lieutenant.

At the time Margery was at Maldon, Colonel Pye was involved in a clash with his own troops and he left for London with the men who had agreed to follow him; the remainder of the regiment stayed loyal to General Fairfax. Major Matthew Tomlinson, who was shortly to succeed Pye as Colonel of the regiment, was in charge of the troops guarding the King at Holdenby when on 4 June 1647 Cornet Joyce and a force of men from various regiments came to seize the King. Tomlinson tried to oppose them but his men refused to obey.

Parliament had thanked Pye for his fidelity on 5 June and in July he was quartered with his men at Deptford where they were attacked by a party of cavalry. The following letter from a gentleman in Greenwich to a friend in London describes this skirmish and reveals his depth of feeling about the crisis:

Dear Sir,

4 September 1647

I have a sad subject to write unto you which makes me tremble; it is briefly thus; that Colonel Sir Robert Pye's troop quartered at Deptford within a mile of this Town; and at some other adjacent villages; a Party of Horse came upon them (as it is said they came over Henly Bridge, and so into Kent, and so wheeled about this way) they came to parly with the soldiers, intending (as it is believed, to have taken them Prisoners) but upon this parly some of them came to such high words, they called them Run-away Rogues; the others retorted to them again; and the meanwhile some got to Horse: but at last it came to Blows; Some they took in pursuit, four were slain in pursuit, and divers wounded of Sir Robert Pye's men. Here are Blows struck, here is blood shed; the Lord direct the Parliament and the City, and the Army to study how to compose these fresh Divisions, lest poor England be overwhelmed in the Red Sea of Sub-divisions (Rushworth 1721, VII, 741).

Pye escaped and on 3 August obtained permission from Fairfax to go abroad for his safety.

The men who attacked Pye's troop were part of the main force under Fairfax which marched on London at the end of July to press for redress of all the Army's grievances and for the restoration of those supporters of the Army who had been forced out of Parliament. Despite the fears of the people of London the Army behaved with restraint, and on 6 August Fairfax was received at Westminster. John Rushworth, Fairfax's secretary, gives this description of the day's events:

Members of parliament which were driven away by tumults from Westminster met the General at Earl Holland's House at Kensington. . . soldiers guarding by Hyde Park. . . the Lord Mayor and Aldermen congratulating the fair composure between the Army and the City. After a short Ceremony, then the following marched to Westminster:- Colonel Rush's regiment of Horse, Lt. General Cromwell's regiment, then came the General on horseback attended by his Life Guard, then the Lords in Coaches, the Speaker of the House of Commons and the rest of the members of the House. After these were past, Colonel Tomlinson's regiment of Horse brought up the Rear-guard; and it is not forgotten that every soldier had in his hat a Laurel. At the end of this show of friendship the House then sat. The House then proceeded to pass the resolution – This House doth approve of the coming up of the General and the Army for the safe sitting of the Parliament and that thanks be given to the General and the Army for the same – And to appoint a Committee – to find out who were the chief Authors, Promoters, Abettors and Countancers of the late design in forcing the Members from the Houses by the Tumult, and designing a New War, and to state the Matter of Fact against them, to the end they may be brought to speedy and condign Punishment (Rushworth 1721, VII, 756).



Margery is not mentioned in any of the descriptions of these events but it is reasonably certain that he was with his regiment in the procession to Westminster. In February 1648 he was at Ixworth, only a few miles from Walsham, attending a meeting there of the Committee of the Lords and Commons for the Judging of Scandal (Browne 1879, 612). In May of that year Tomlinson's regiment was in Devon and Cornwall, where local disturbances were soon suppressed, and by November they were quartered at Windsor. Tomlinson himself took over the custody of the King there at the end of December 1648, but it is not known whether Margery's troop was with him at this time. Tomlinson accompanied the King when he was removed to St James's, and on 30 January 1649 he went with the King to Whitehall, and handed him over to Colonel Hacker, bearer of the death warrant. He was also present at the scaffold with Hacker to supervise the execution. King Charles with great dignity commended Tomlinson to his son for his civility, and presented him with his gold toothpick and case. Could it have been that among the ranks of troops below the scaffold were Captain Margery and his men? It seems likely that these veteran Ironsides whose Colonel had been entrusted with the duty of guarding the King would have been on duty there in Whitehall.

After the execution of the King there is no mention of Tomlinson or his regiment until June when they were quartered in Sussex (Firth and Davies 1940, 131). In August the regiment was at Canterbury; a list of quarters of horse for September places them in Wiltshire, Hampshire, Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire in turn. In April 1650 Tomlinson's regiment was one of twelve named to form 'the moving body' of horse, and its strength was again brought up to 600. In August Tomlinson was ordered to march with four of his troops into Lancashire. The remainder of the regiment under Captain Margery with the troops of Major Husband and Major Audley, were to march immediately to Carlisle to strengthen the besieging troops there. On 4 September, the day after the battle of Dunbar, Cromwell asked Sir Arthur Hesilrige at Newcastle to send Tomlinson with the forces then ready to enable him to consolidate his victory. Before 10 October, Tomlinson and his regiment were at Edinburgh (Firth and Davies 1940, 132).

Raphe Margery was now 58 years of age and it says much for his constitution that he was able to ride such great distances. The summer had been a poor one and many soldiers were sick. Their reaction so far from home was no doubt echoed some years later, when they were fighting in the Highlands, by a woeful trooper who was quoted as saying 'our forefathers knew noe such wayes like these'. By the following September the regiment was back in England to fight at the battle of Worcester (Firth and Davies 1940, 132).

During the summer of 1651, Margery's troop was one of six guarding Parliament and the City. In August of that year the force was reduced to three troops including Margery's, and the remainder were ordered to join the marching forces (P.R.O., SP 18., Aug. 1651). At the end of 1651 Margery and his troop took part in an expedition to the Channel Islands, a detailed account of which gives an idea of the hardships endured.

Jersey was occupied by a force loyal to the Crown and it was proposed to send an expedition to reduce this force, but because arms and men were needed elsewhere, the expedition was not attempted until October 1651 when the autumn gales had already begun. The expedition comprised eighty ships, including transport vessels, under the command of Admiral Sir Robert Blake, his flag flying on 'The Happy Entrance'. The military forces consisted of Colonel Haines's regiment and six companies of Sir Hardress Waller's regiment of foot, and two troops of horse commanded by Captains West and Margery. On Wednesday 15 October the forces prepared to embark and on Friday the expedition sailed from Weymouth in good weather. By the time the fleet gained the open sea the weather had changed. A north-east gale was blowing with such force that it caused

considerable damage and the fleet was obliged to put back to Weymouth, as there was a danger of the open boats foundering in the heavy seas.

At 10 o'clock on the Sunday morning the rough weather having somewhat abated, a fresh start was made amid 'acclamations and encouragement' from the people of Weymouth and Melcombe Regis. This attempt to reach Jersey was successful and by midnight the fleet cast anchor under the lee of Sark, the island providing shelter from the north-east. They put to sea early on the following day and anchored in St Owen's Bay, Jersey. The next morning the fleet made its way round to St Brelade's Bay in very rough seas, which blew six ships off course. There was a great deal of concern for the horses on board, as they were running out of fodder and it was thought they might starve. This fear prompted an immediate attempt to land. The enemy on the island under the command of Sir George Carteret, the Governor, numbered about 3,000. He came from a notable Island family, and had had a distinguished career at sea before being appointed to this naval outpost by Charles I in 1643.

At a council aboard the flag-ship it was decided to storm the island at St Owen's Bay. The men were embarked in open boats, but the landing could not be accomplished because of the tide. The boats were anchored in the bay in high seas for six hours and at 10 o'clock at night, two hours after high tide, they cut their cables and ran ashore on the flood. They ran aground in water from three to seven feet deep, the men in the boats that drew most water clambering into the other boats before they jumped into the sea. Some men went in up to their waists and some up to their necks. The Royalists had sighted the invasion and were firing at them with their ordnance and small shot, and after the landing they attacked with cavalry. After half an hour's fierce fighting, the persistence of the invaders won the day and the enemy fled leaving behind thirteen guns, their colours, and some dead and wounded.

The Parliamentary force then regrouped itself into marching order while waiting for the horses to be landed. When this had been accomplished they marched for about two miles taking possession of three forts and their guns on the way. By this time it was 7 a.m. and the force was very weary, having had little food and rest for three or four nights. This day was 23 October and the soldiers remembered it was the anniversary of the battle of Edgehill. Prayers and gratitude were offered up to God for their deliverance from the many storms at sea. The scattering of the fleet had not been too disastrous, for the ships which had been separated from the main fleet had managed to find shelter in Guernsey, and they made contact that day. Some of the small boats had been broken up when they were beached, but no-one was drowned. On the whole there was much to be thankful for.

Later that morning an attempt was made to get some provisions for the tired and hungry soldiers, but this seems to have failed, and it was decided to march on to the main castles and strongholds. At about 3 o'clock in the afternoon they arrived in sight of Elizabeth Castle, at St Albans Tower where there were fourteen guns. Several shots were fired but the attackers were so elated with religious fervour and convinced of a speedy surrender that the danger was ignored. A summons was sent to the Tower demanding its surrender within two hours, and those inside gave up without a fight.

Sir George Carteret attacked with a reserve of horse, but as soon as his troops were routed, Carteret ran away like 'one riding Post'. He then entrenched himself in Elizabeth Castle, and his brother in Mount Orgueil Castle. The invaders then brought up their mortar pieces to 'fright them out, their hearts being very low as our Intelligence says'. On the night of 24 October the main force was drawn up on a rabbit warren in front of Mount Orgueil Castle and guards were posted within musket shot. On 29 October Mount Orgueil was captured and the next day the cannons and mortar pieces were made ready to plant

around Elizabeth Castle. Here the detailed description of the invasion ends, but it is known that Elizabeth Castle was also taken and the force settled down to occupy the islands. Their instructions were that 'the Islanders are to live peaceably at home, and have protection, and not bee troubled for anything done during the late warr'. The number of the invaders' dead was given as six with twenty wounded (Jeffs 1971, 1175 and Firth 1894, II, 230). It is not known how many men were left to occupy the island of Jersey, but Margery and his troop were still there in December; three months' pay was sent to him there for his men, and some more money to clothe them (P.R.O., SP 18, 4 Dec. 1651).

In March 1652 Margery's son Theophilus went up to Emmanuel College, Cambridge, which Archbishop Laud had once referred to, with Sydney Sussex College, as the nursery of Puritanism. Emmanuel was known to take more students from the Puritan gentry than any other college and this is the likely reason for Margery preferring this college for his son to Corpus Christi where his three brothers went. About this time he was able to increase his property substantially; he bought 'fee farm of the State' the hundreds of Clifton and Biggleswade in Bedfordshire and land in Poynton, Lincolnshire (P.R.O., PROB 11, 239, f. 340). By an ordinance of 24 December 1647 the lands of the bishops and much of the estates of delinquents were set aside to pay the arrears owed to the Army, and eighteen months after the death of the King the lands of the Crown were also made available for this purpose. In some instances estates were sold and the proceeds used for the arrears; in others the estates themselves were transferred to particular regiments. Margery presumably acquired his lands in one of these ways. No longer could he be called a man of little estate.

Dr Francis Walsall, late chaplain to Charles I, was the previous owner of a small estate in Sandy, in the hundred of Biggleswade, and he had appealed against the sequestration order. In 1650, in a renewed petition, he stated:

Being a poor man laden with debts and children, had his small estate seized for speaking against the engagement to the present government, but the County committee, though ordered by the Committee for Compounding and entreated by the Petitioner's wife – will not give their certificate, whereby he is at great expense and loses his harvest, and his congregation lose their ordinances, the glebe and tithes are also seized. Begg discharge having on better information subscribed the engagement on 6 May and acknowledge his error publicly and privately, and having a discovery pending before Parliament and the Council of State (P.R.O. SP 23 IV 2420).

Walsall appeared before the Committee again, but his petition was finally rejected. Although there is no record of the final order, the fact that Raphe Margery acquired the whole hundred is proof in itself.

In September 1653 Tomlinson's regiment was again ordered to Scotland, but Raphe Margery was unable to rendezvous as ordered. On 27 September he made what proved to be a death-bed will, witnessed by his friends Clement Raye, rector of Wattisfield, and Edmund Albone, who had described so dramatically the excommunication of Abigail Margery. The next day he died; the entry in the parish register reads: 'Captaine Raphe Margery dyed on Wednesday morning about 3 or 4 of the clock being the 28 September, and was buried the next day being Thursday towards evening'. These simple words marked the end of the man whose strong convictions had driven him to fight far away from his native Suffolk, but he had returned to rest in his ancestral village. Did he at the end reflect on the events which led to his enlisting his troop and on the dangers, hardships and deprivations of the last eight years and ask if his aims had been achieved? He had been

described as an Independent, a description which might also have been applied to Cromwell who 'had a vision of the English church as a multitude of congregations seeking truth in adversity' (Aylmer 1974, 103). Had Margery lived to see Cromwell made Lord Protector, he must surely have derived great satisfaction from the part he had played in making 'God's Englishman' Head of the State.

There is a sad postscript to Raphe Margery's story. His son Theophilus left Cambridge without graduating and enlisted in his father's old troop, then in Scotland under Captain Symnell. The troop took part in General Monck's campaign in the Highlands in 1654 and then formed the garrison at Innerwick, between Duns and Dunbar, the village guarding the highway to the south through the deep gorge at Cocksburnspath. Theophilus was killed there in 1656/7. There is no record of any military action there at the time; all we have is the note at the head of his brief will: 'Theophilus Margery, Souldier, of Walsham killed at Innerwick, Scotland' (P.R.O., PROB 11, 265, f. 243). With his death and that of his brother in 1672, followed by his cousin Simon's leaving the parish in 1680, the Margery name died and the family's part in four hundred years of the history of Walsham-le-Willows came to an end.

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##### *Abbreviations for MSS*

- Bacon            Bacon Collection, University of Chicago.  
 Harl.            Harleian MSS, British Library.  
 H.L.R.O.        House of Lords Record Office.  
 N.R.O.          Norfolk Record Office.  
 P.R.O.          Public Record Office.  
 S.R.O.B.        Suffolk Record Office, Bury St Edmunds Branch.