Socio-Economic Status, Oliver Cromwell, the New Model Army and the Growth of Quakerism.

There has been much debate about the nature of the New Model Army during the English Civil War. The background to its creation is the importance of parliamentary constituencies and the way they affected the nature of Members of Parliament.

In 1660 the House of Commons was made up of 39 English Counties and 201 English Boroughs.[1] These boroughs were dominated by corporations which are known to have been strongly associated with puritanism. For example, a Durham cleric urged the king in 1640 not to 'suffer little towns to grow big and anti-monarchy to boot, for where are all these pestilent nests of Puritans hatched, but in corporations.'[2] Consistent with this statement was Clarendon's conclusion that the chief opposition to the king lay in 'great towns and corporations … not only the citizens of London … but also the greatest part of all other cities and market towns of England.'[3]

Contemporaries were unanimous that the inhabitants of the towns of England were the chief supporters of parliament during the civil war, and that tradesmen were some of their most ardent supporters. For example, this was the conclusion of Parker in his *Discourse of Ecclesiastical Politie.* He wrote that

> 'tis notorious that there is not any sort of people so inclinable to seditious practices as the trading part of a nation … And, if we reflect upon our late miserable distraction, tis easy to observe how the quarrel was chiefly hatched in the shop of tradesmen and cherished by the zeal of prentice-boys and city gossips.'[4]

Baxter claimed that tradesmen explained their support for Parliament 'because they say the Tradesmen have a Correspondency with London, and so are grown to be more intelligent sort of Men.'[5] He also claimed that religious awareness was particularly strong 'among tradesmen and corporation inhabitants.'[6]

Given the importance of borough constituencies in the electoral process, and their links with puritanism, Pym's tour of these constituencies in 1640 involving the promotion of puritanism, becomes significant.[7] Anthony a Wood wrote that Pym 'rode about the country to promote elections of the Puritanical brethren to serve in Parliament.'[8]The role of corporations in the membership of the Long Parliament is confirmed by events after the ending of the civil war. In 1661, the Cavalier Parliament passed the Corporation Act, designed to exclude Presbyterians from office, and stipulating that 'no person could legally be elected to any office relating to the government of a city or corporation, unless he had within the previous twelve

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[1] UK Parliament Online.
[2] Derek Hirst, *The Representative of the People? – Voters and voting in England under the Early Stuarts*, 1975, p. 47.
[3] Edward Hyde, *The History of the Rebellion*, Volume 2, 1888, pp. 236, 238.
[4] C. Hill and E. Dell (eds), *The Good Old Cause: The English Revolution of 1640-1660, Its Cause, Course and Consequences,* 1969, p. 238.
[5] R. Baxter, *Reliquiare Baxterianae*, Part 3, 1696, p. 30.
[6] Ibid, p. 27. Weber wrote 'with great regularity we find the most genuine adherents of Puritanism among the classes which were rising from a lowly status, the small bourgeois and farmers.' Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism,* 1904, p. 174.
[7] Hirst, *The Representative,* p. 147.
[8] S. Reed Brett, *John Pym*, 1940, p.156.

months received the sacrament of the "Lord's Supper" according to the rites of the Church of England.'[9]

This confirms the importance of boroughs and corporations in the Parliamentary cause, although elections were determined by a mixture of national and local issues. Cromwell's appointment as Member of Parliament for Cambridge in 1640 can be seen partly as a result of this process. Andrew Barclay has assessed in detail a contemporary account of Cromwell's background – James Heath's *Flagellum* published in 1665 – writing that 'the account of the Cambridge election in *Flagellum* has so far proved to be surprisingly accurate. Most of the details about the various individuals involved in it have been either confirmed or have at the very least been shown to be plausible.' [10]

The following is Heath's account of how Cromwell was selected as a Member of Parliament in 1640:

'… one Richard Tyms since Alderman at Cambridge[11] … [rode] to be at a Conventicle, (as he usually of every Sunday rode to the Isle of Ely to that purpose, having a brother who entertained them in his course), where he heard this Oliver, with such admiration … took such a liking to him, that from that time he did nothing but ruminate and meditate of the Man and his Gifts … this Richard Tyms before the Writs were issued … began to hammer in his head a project of getting him [Cromwell] chosen a Burgesse for Cambridge, himself being then but one of the 24, and with this device he presently repaired to one Mr Wildbore a Draper, a Kinsman of Cromwells and a Non-conformist likewise … to ask the advice of his Neighbour Ibbot a Tallow-Chandler whom he found working in his Frock … he told him, that the Mayor had power to make a Freeman, and saith he you know Mr Kitchman the Atturney (who was a Puritan likewise) … but the Mayor must not know the reason and design of it; for he is a perfect Royalist.

… Cromwell … came privately to Cambridge the day before, and took up his lodging at one Almond's a Grocer[12] … and a Fortnight after another Common-hall was called for the said Election of Burgesses … and Mr Mutis a Councillor [was called], and he had the Votes of a great many, all of them Royalists … lastly our Oliver was named, and the Faction bauled as if they were mad, and by a plurality of voces carried it clear…'[13]

According to Heath 'the Estate of his Uncle fell to him [Cromwell] and that at last (though wasted and gone) rendered him a Candidate for the ensuing Parliament.'[14] Cromwell was nominated by puritans on the local Cambridge council, and the nature of the corporation is indicated by its post-restoration history. In 1662 'the puritan corporation was drastically purged. The mayor, seven aldermen and 13 of the common council were removed.'[15] At least six of the seven aldermen were tradesmen, and as Andrew Barclay has written 'pretty much all members of the Cambridge corporation in this period were tradesmen resident in the town.'[16]

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[9] *Corporation Act 1661*, Wikipedia. For a detailed account as to how the Corporation Act affected three Kentish towns, see Colin Lee, 'Fanatic magistrates: religious and political conflict in three Kentish boroughs, 1680-1684', *The Historical Journal*, 35, 1991.

[10] James Heath, *Flagellum: or the Life, Birth and Death of O. Cromwell,* 1665, pp. 18-21. Andrew Barclay, *The Election of Cromwell: The Making of a Politician,* 2011, p. 115.

[11] Richard Tyms was 'described as a glover, but he went on to earn his living as a fellmonger, probably trading in cattle hides rather than sheep skins.' Barclay, *The Election of Cromwell*, p. 61.

[12] According to Dugdale, Cromwell had 'mean lodgings in Cambridge, at the time he was chosen burgess for the long parliament.' William Dugdale, *Short View of the late Troubles,* 1681, p. 460.

[13] Heath, *Flagellum*, pp. 18-21.

[14] Ibid.

[15] 'Cambridge Borough' *History of Parliament*, 1660-1690.

[16] Personal communication.

The description of the supporters for Cromwell's election - a fellmonger, a draper, a tallow chandler and an attorney - suggests that there was an important role for tradesmen in the election of Cromwell.

Cromwell himself was of a very modest socio-economic background. In 1628 Cromwell's 'subsidy by rating of £4 in goods was little more than that of Huntingdon's leading tradesmen.'[17] Heath gave the following account as to how Cromwell's status had deteriorated:[18]

'Oliver had run himself out of that little Patrimony he had, and brought his Mother to the same near ruine …he fell to his old trade, and frequented his old haunts, consumed his money in tipling… his Estate still decaying, he bestook himself at last to a Farm … took Servants, and bought him all utensils and Materials, as Ploughs, Carts, etc. … scarce half a Crop ever reared itself upon his Grounde, so that he was (after five years time) glad to abandon it, and set a friend of his to be the Tenant for the remainder of his time.'[19]

Cromwell's family had practised the trade of brewing, described by Heath as follows:

'tis reported Oliver kept a Brew-House, that is a mistake; for, the Brew-house was kept in his Father's time, and managed by his Mother and his Father's Servants … the Accompts being alwayes given to the Mistris, who after her Husband's death did continue in the same Employment and Calling of a Brewer; and thought it is no disparagement to sustain the Estate and Port of a Younger Brother as Mr Robert Cromwell was …'[20]

In 1664 a Mr Rawdon visited Huntingdon and confirmed the existence of a brewery associated with the Cromwell family:

'Mr Rawdon, visiting the town five or six years after the Protector's death, saw the brewhouse, which was yet still standing, in which Cromwell 'played the brewer for some years… the brook at Hinchin, running through their premisses at Huntingdon, offered clear convenience for malting and brewing …'[21]

There was a third account of Cromwell's family practising the trade of brewing. The royalist Member of Parliament Henry Coke told the governor of Great Yarmouth in 1656 that he knew Cromwell and 'his Father too when he kept his Brewhouse at Huntingdon.'[22] It is unclear whether Cromwell was directly involved in the brewery, and the first account suggests that the brewery was managed by Cromwell's mother, but that his father was also involved in the business.

Cromwell was supported by artisans and tradesmen in his election to parliament, linked to his own socio-economic status.[23] The origin of the social status of the New Model Army lies in the recruitment of officers to the Eastern Association. One of the officers of the army, Dodson a native of the Isle of Ely, had served with Cromwell from the outbreak of the war, and described how Cromwell had packed the army with officers sympathetic to the sectaries – that in choosing officers for his own regiment, he had dismissed 'honest gentlemen

[17] Members Biographies, *The History of Parliament, 1609-1629*; Oliver Cromwell.
[18] Barclay, *The Election of Cromwell*, p. 10.
[19] Heath, *Flagellum*, pp. 11-15.
[20] Ibid, pp. 8-10.
[21] Robert Davies, *The Life of Marmaduke,* 1863, p.112,
[22] Barclay, *The Election*, p. 24.
[23] Morrill has concluded that Cromwell was 'a man in humbler circumstances.' J.S. Morrill, 'The making of Oliver Cromwell' in *Cromwell and the English Revolution,* 1989, p. 19.

and souldiers that ware stout in the cause', and replaced them 'with common men, pore and of meane parentage, onely – he would give them the title of godly pretious men'[24]. Whitelocke, another contemporary, described Cromwell's men 'as being mostly freeholders and freeholders' sons, who had engaged in this quarrel upon a matter of conscience.'[25]

In August 1643 Cromwell justified his mode of selection in a famous speech.

'It maybe it provoked some spirits to see such plain men made captains of horse. It had been well that men of honour and birth had entered into these employments, but why do they not appear? Who would have hindered them? But since it was necessary the work must go on, better plain men than none. I had rather have a plain russet-coated captain that knows what he fights for and loves what he knows than what you call a gentleman and is nothing else.'[26]

The men who stamped the New Model with a distinctive character were a tight group numbering about 5,000 horse and 7,000 foot.'[27] The difficulty in analysing the New Model's composition is that 'of the total officer corps in 1648, half came from backgrounds so obscure that no information can be recovered about them.'[28] However, Gentles who has made the most detailed study of them concluded that of the officers in 1647 'twenty-two – about 9 per cent of the total – are known to have had some form of higher education ... Thirty-seven men or about one-sixth ... are known to have risen from non-commissioned rank ... [and] a high proportion ... even at the rank of colonel, were men of relatively low social status ... it is the strongly urban character of the officer corps that is most striking.'[29]

In order to confirm the low social status of the New Model, an analysis has been carried out to compare the socio-economic status through university attendance of Royalist and New Model officers during the civil war period. The essence of the analysis is to make a comparison using an identical methodology for both armies. It indicates that the Royalist officers were of significantly higher social status than those of the New Model, confirming the literary evidence reviewed above.

Table 1: Proportions of Royalist and New Model Army Officers Graduating from Oxford and Cambridge Universities[30].

	Total In Sample	Graduating from Oxford	Graduating from Cambridge	Total Proportion Graduating
Royalist Officers, 1642-60	100	27	25	52%
New Model Officers, 1645-49	100	9	6	15%
New Model Officers, 1649-63	100	7	10	17%

[24] C. Holmes, *The Eastern Association in the English Civil War*, 1974, p. 199.
[25] A. Fraser, *Cromwell Our Chief of Men,* 1974, p. 100.
[26] Ibid, pp. 66, 67.
[27] I. Gentiles, *The New Model Army in England, Ireland and Scotland, 1645-1653,* 1992, p. 40.
[28] R. Hutton, *The British Republic 1549-1660*, 2000, p. 6.
[29] I. Gentiles, 'The New Model Officer Corps in 1647', *Social History,* Volume 22, 1997, pp. 135, 137, 140, 143,
[30] I, Gentiles, *The New Model Army, Volume 2, 1649-1663,* 2016. The above figures are based on a hundred cases selecting the first five names in each alphabetical letter in the relevant biographical dictionaries, covering most alphabetical letters. The royalist figures are taken from P.R. Newman, *Royalist Officers in England and Wales, 1642-1660: A Biographical Dictionary,* 1981; the New Model Army ones are derived from M. Waklyn, *Reconstructing the New Model Army, Volume 1, 1645-49*, 2015; M. Waklyn, *Reconstructing the New Model Army, Volume 2, 1649-1663*, 2016.

There are probably too many false positives in all samples, as suggested by Gentles' finding that only nine per cent of New Model Army officers had received a higher education in 1648, including at the Inns of Court. This suggests that most of these officers were from non-gentry backgrounds.[31]

These conclusions are confirmed by literary accounts by both royalists and parliamentarians. The royalist Denzil Holles, believed that the officers of the New Model Army 'from the general ... to the meanest sentinel, are not able to make a thousand a year lands; most of the colonels are tradesmen, brewers, tailors, goldsmiths, shoemakers and the like.'[32] According to another hostile contemporary account it claimed that if you 'Deduct the weavers, tailors, brewers, cobblers, tinkers, carmen, draymen, broom-men, and then give me a list of the gentlemen. Their names may be writ in text, within the compass of a single halfpenny.'[33] The Earl of Manchester wrote in 1645, that Cromwell had chosen for his army 'not such as were soldiers or men of estates, but such as were common men, poor and of mean parentage, only he would give them the title of godly, precious men.'[34]

In a vindication of the New Model from the charge of intending to sack London, published in the summer of 1647, it is asserted: 'There are verie few of us, but have most of this world's interest in the Citie of London, being chiefly and principally raised thence, and verie many, especially of our officers, being citizens themselves having their wives and children therein.'[35]

Samuel Pepys in his diary for the ninth December 1663 confirmed the role of London artisans and tradesmen in the New Model Army:

'of all the old army now, you cannot see a man begging about the street. But what? You shall have this Captain turned a shoemaker, the lieutenant, a Baker; this, a brewer; that, a haberdasher; this common soldier, a porter; and every man in his apron and frock, etc, as if they had never done anything else – whereas the other [cavaliers] go with their belts and swords, swearing and cursing and stealing – running into people's houses, by force oftentimes, to carry away something. And this is the difference between the temper of one and the other.' [36]

This perhaps explains why this socio-economic group was so central to the foundation of the New Model Army. It is indicated by a speech that Cromwell made in 1651 when Charles II threatened to invade England with a Scottish army:

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[31] *Gentiles, The New Model 1645-1653.*

[32] F. Maseres, 'Memoirs of Denzil Lord Holles', *Select Tract Relating to the Civil Wars in England in the Reign of Charles the First*, 1815, p. 277.

[33] *Mercurius Elencticus*, 7-14 June 1648.

[34] C. Hill, *God's Englishman: Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution*, 1970, pp. 65, 66.

[35] C.H. Firth, *Cromwell's Army: a History of the English Soldier during the Civil War*, 1912, p. 47.

[36] Latham and Matthews, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, Volume 4, 1995, pp. 373, 374.

‘Cromwell announced to the army that, if he should fall, England would witness a universal crisis and change the numerous colonels, in all their splendour, who were once tailors, goldsmiths, and carpenters [and] would have to make way for the nobility and courtiers.’[37]

The New Model Army was noted for its harsh discipline ‘including penalties for drunkenness and fornication; blasphemers [who] had their tongues pierced with a hot iron.’[38] The army also had a reputation for being ‘the praying army’,[39] and their religious faith along with their discipline ‘explained why small handfuls of New Model soldiers were able to put much larger numbers of royalists to flight.’ As the Venetian ambassador observed of the New Model, ‘This much is certain that the troops live as precisely as if they were a brotherhood of monks ... It was observed in the late wars that when the royal forces gained a victory, they abandoned themselves to wine and debauchery, while those commanded by Cromwell, after their greatest successes were obliged to pray and fast.’[40]

The restoration of the monarchy did lead to the abolition of the New Model Army but resulted in many army officers retreating into the radicalism of Quakerism.

Socio-Economic Status and the History of the Quakers.

On the 31st of December 1660 a letter was written from York ‘concerning the Lord Fairfax raising the county in arms … [reporting] that Lambert was marching south from Newcastle to join the Quakers in Yorkshire.’[41] This indicates that Quakers were still participating in military activity until the very end of the civil war, potentially supporting General John Lambert in the New Model Army. Reay has provided detailed evidence for Quaker involvement in the army,[42] before they turned to pacifism in the early 1660s.

Many Quakers had been influential radicals in the civil war: the ‘future Quaker leader James Tyler, yeoman, [was a] quartermaster in Lambert’s forces in Scotland,’[43] and ‘Winstanley and the Leveller leader John Lilburne became Quakers.’[44] Quaker letters and journals mention progress in army garrisons in York, Bristol, Holy Island, Berwick-on-Tweed, Lancaster, Carlisle, Chester, Kent, Northamptonshire, Norfolk, London [and] Shrewsbury.[45] Additionally, ‘Quakers were particularly successful in the garrison towns of Ireland and Scotland.’[46]

This geographical distribution of Quakers is reflected in data from a demographic study.[47]

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37 ‘Relatzione of England by Giovanni Sagredo, 1656 in Edward and Peter Razzell, *The English Revolution: a Contemporary Study of the English Civil War* (1999), p. 19.
38 R. Tombs, *The English and their History,* 2015, p. 230.
39 Ibid, p. 95.
40 Relatzione of England by Giovanni Sagredo, 1656,, p. 19.
41 R.C. Latham and W, Mathews, *The Diary of Samuel Peps*, Volume 1, 1971, pp. 6, 7.
42 Barry Reay, *The Quakers and the Englis Revolution*, 1985. See also Christopher Hill, ‘Quakers and the English Revolution’ *The Journal of the Friends’ Historical Society,* Volume 56, 1992 and Kenneth L. Carroll, ‘Quakerism and the Cromwellian Army in Ireland’ *SAS Open Journals.*
43 Reay, *The Quakers*, p. 18.
44 Ibid, p. 20.
45 Ibid, p. 50.
46 Ibid
47 I have re-analysed Vann and Eversley’s reconstitution schedules lodged in Friend’s House, London. For their study see R.T. Vann and D.E. Eversley, *Friends in Life and Death*, 1992.

Table 2: Quaker Infants at Risk, 1650-1849.

Region	*1650-99*	*1700-49*	*1750-99*	*1800--49*
London	330	519	300	72
Bristol & Norwich	691	990	1062	505
Provincial England	2781	3768	4332	3381
Dublin	591	625	623	270
Cork, Wexford. Waterford, Limerick	966	1402	1300	676
Rural Ireland	1953	2964	2487	513
Total	7312	10268	10104	5417

Infants at risk were essentially children born to Quaker families, and Table 2 indicates that most Quakers were from rural and provincial areas both in England and Ireland. This was the pattern until the nineteenth century, when the overall number of Quakers was significantly reduced, and in Ireland became relatively concentrated in towns and urban areas,

According to Reay, Quakerism in the early period 'mainly drew its membership from what were known as the middling sort of people: wholesale and retail traders, artisans, yeomen, husbandmen.'[48] George Fox himself, the leader of the Quakers, was a shoemaker's apprentice. Reay's description of the socio-economic origin of Quakers is confirmed by evidence in marriage registers which list the occupations of grooms.[49]

Although the Quakers had relatively humble origins – many of them had come from a Baptist background – they were very literate and established their own libraries with printed books and tracts.[50] They turned out to be the most radical of the sects, including a refusal to pay tithes or to doth hats to superiors and recognize titles, which appeared extremely threatening to established authority. They also refused to recognize people in authority by use of special titles and addressed everyone by the terms 'thee' or 'thou'. In the early period they also interrupted Anglican services, shouting at and accusing the ministers of being "dumb hirelings". They refused to swear oaths in the belief that all testimony should be truthful without artifice. All this activity reflected a belief in equality, a belief which greatly shocked the authorities, Quakers claiming that the aristocracy and gentry owed their position to the 'Norman Yoke', who had seized land and property by forceful dispossession.[51]

They adopted fixed price trading where merchants set a single, fair price for goods instead of engaging in bartering or haggling. This policy, popularized by early Quakers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was based on religious principles of honesty, equality, and integrity. Because of their reputation for reliability and quality Quaker businesses flourished in manufacturing, commerce and banking.[52]

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[48] Reay, *The Quakers.*

[49] Vann & Eversley, *Friends in Life,* pp, 70, 71; A. Cole, 'The social origins of early Quakers', *Past and Present*, number 48, 1970; J. Jones Hurwich, 'The social origins of the early Quakers', *Past & Present*, Volume 48, 1970, pp. 156-162.

[50] S. B. Jennings, *The Gathering of the Elect: The Development, Nature and Socio-Economic Structure of Protestant Religious Dissent in Seventeenth Century Nottinghamshire,* D.Phil. Thesis, Nottingham Trent University, pp. 260, 261.

[51] Reay, *The Quakers*, p. 39; Jennings, *The Gathering*, pp. 17, 18

[52] Quaker Fixed Price Trading, *Online.*

A comparison of Quaker occupations taken from 250 marriage registers in London revealed the following:

Table 3: Select Occupations Among London Quakers, 1680 and 1780.[53]

	1680	1780
Banker	0	7
Merchant	14	20
Surgeon, Doctor	0	6
Stockbroker, Scrivenor, Land Surveyor	0	4
Craftsmen. Artisans	147	30

There was a strong polarisation in the socio-economic profile of Quaker occupations in London between the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. All the elite occupations – bankers, merchants, surgeons, doctors, stockbrokers, scriveners, land surveyors –increased significantly in number during this hundred-year period, whereas there was a major decline in the number of craftsmen and artisans.

Arthur Raistrick has documented in detail major Quaker achievements in science and industry during the eighteenth century. Among the most famous are Abraham Darby of Coalbrookdale, Joseph Fry chocolate manufacturer, John Lettsom and Baron Thomas Dimsdale medical practitioners, and David Barclay of Barclay's Bank and Charles Lloyd of Lloyds Bank.[54]

By the late nineteenth centuries, the Quakers were much wealthier than the general population. 45 Quakers who left Wills in 1868 left an average of £11,496, compared to the next 45 non-Quakers in the probate register, who left an average of £2,267. The 45 Quakers with Wills represented 30 per cent of 151 Quakers dying over the age of 21. This can be compared to 11 per cent of 110,510 men in the general population dying in 1858 who left Wills, suggesting overall that Quaker men were fifteen times wealthier than the general population.[55]

An analysis of Quaker Wills has been carried out for the period 1881-89, selecting the first 100 cases from the Quaker memorials website. The mean wealth of this sample was £20,105, compared to the next 100 cases in the probate register with a mean wealth value of £4,795. The Quakers were over four times as wealthy as the control sample, confirming the earlier analysis of Quaker wealth. In the Quaker sample, there were 8 esquires with mean wealth of £106,345, 28 gentlemen with a mean of £9,493, and 8 farmers with a mean of £265.

The success of the Quakers was based on their lifestyle. Not only were they a very cohesive group supporting each other in both adversity and financial activity but living a puritanical lifestyle – distrusting 'worldly' amusements – the arts, music and the theatre – and adopting a highly disciplined way of life.[56] They developed a very supportive community and were also highly educated, with an emphasis on practicality and science.[57]

The Quakers religious culture was also heavily shaped by the radicalism and puritanism of the New Model Army. The army was strongly influenced by the Leveller movement, and according to one account, it was the 'New Model army in which the Levellers had their primary

[53] A. Raistrick, *Quakers in Science and Industry,* 1950, pp. 30, 32.
[54] Ibid,
[55] A. Taylor, *Quakers and Industrialism in England & Wales*, Undergraduate Thesis Bedford College, 1973.
[56] Raistrick, *Quakers*, p.43.
[57] Ibid, pp. 32-34.

base,'[58] while 'several regiments had raised the sea-green colours at Ware', as they prepared to go to war.[59]

According to Baxter

'many honest men [in the New Model Army] ... made it ... their religion to talk for this Opinion and for that; sometimes for State Democracy, and sometimes for Church Democracy; sometimes against Forms of Prayer, and sometimes against Infant baptism, (which yet some of them did maintain); sometimes against Set-times of Prayer, and against the tying of ourselves to any Duty before the Spirit move us ... and sometimes about Free-grace and free-will, and all the Points of Antinomianism and Arminianism ... But their most frequent and vehement Disputes were for Liberty of Conscience as they called it ...'[60]

The emphasis 'against Set-times of Prayer, and against the tying of ourselves to any Duty before the Spirit moves us… about Free-grace and free will', as well as 'Liberty of Conscience' was central to Quaker belief, as 'God's message came to individuals directly through the inner light of their personal inspiration.'[61]

The socio-economic status of the New Model Army was very similar to that of the Quakers, documented by Cromwell and Samuel Pepys. In the nineteenth century, 'some Quakers went "gay" and lived according to the normal standards their wealth would secure for them in contemporary Society … with the inevitable result that many of the children brought up in such conditions married into county families and drifted into the Church of England and ceased to be Quakers.'[62]

Nevertheless, Quakers were a part of the 'protestant ethic' leading to the development of capitalism.[63] They were also leading members of humanitarian movements, such as the anti-slavery campaign. For such a minority within the English population, they made a highly significant and major contribution to the development of English society. However, their origin lay in the New Model Army, forged by Cromwell, with tradesmen and artisans playing a leading role, a radical contribution to England's social and political history.

[58] G. Milner, 'The Levellers and the 1640s English revolution', *Online.*
[59] Ibid.
[60] R. Baxter, *Reliquiae Baxterianae*, Part 3, 1696, p. 53.
[61] BCW Project, The Quakers.
[62] Ibid, pp. 342,343.
[63] See P. E Razzell, 'The protestant ethic and the development of capitalism: a natural scientific critique', *British Journal of Sociology,* Volume 28, 1977.