

## William Cavendish as a military commander:

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William Cavendish was the foremost of Charles I's "grandee" commanders, those generals appointed in 1642–3 because of their wealth and status rather than their military experience. The king believed their example would stimulate patronage networks into the Royalist camp, yet historians have long considered their military record to be dismal.<sup>1</sup> However, P.R. Newman's detailed work on northern royalism has defended his reputation, lamenting that no other Royalist grandee had been "so consistently denigrated by historians as he." He pointed out that Cavendish was general of the largest royalist army of the First Civil War. He also stressed the wisdom of his choices of subordinate commanders, remarking that no other grandee commander had a greater capacity or potential to deliver a decisive royalist victory.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, for a while during late summer, 1643, Cavendish's military success appeared to suggest that a decisive Royalist victory was close at hand.<sup>3</sup> Despite the historical emphasis that has been placed on Parliament's advantages in wealth and resources, we have recently been reminded that military leadership was no small influence on the outcome of the wars.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, a fresh understanding of Cavendish's generalship is timely and worthwhile.

Newman's admiration of Cavendish was a reaction to a negative tradition that stretched back to the Royalist historian, Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon. Cavendish had refused to assist Clarendon in writing his history, which helps to explain the censure of him that followed.<sup>5</sup> Clarendon considered Cavendish personally courageous, but ill-suited to generalship and the rigours of field campaigning. He claimed that he was negligent of the king's orders and hostile to peace negotiations, a man estranged from the court, unacquainted with and distrustful of the Privy Council. Supposedly, Cavendish was diverted from command by "delightful company, music" and "softer pleasures", so that he would not

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<sup>1</sup> Gentles I., "The Civil Wars in England", in Kenyon J. - and Ohlmeyer J. (eds.), *The Civil Wars: A Military History of England, Scotland and Ireland, 1638–1660*, (Oxford: 1998) 108.

<sup>2</sup> Newman P.R., *The Old Service: Royalist Regimental Colonels and the Civil War, 1642–1646* (Manchester: 1993) 79–80.

<sup>3</sup> Scott D., "Rethinking Royalist Politics, 1642–1649", in Adamson J. (ed.) *The English Civil War: Conflict and Contexts, 1640–1649* (Basingstoke: 2009) 46.

<sup>4</sup> Wanklyn M., *The Warrior Generals: Winning the British Civil Wars, 1642–1652* (London: 2010).

<sup>5</sup> Binns J. (ed.), "The Memoirs and Memorials of Sir Hugh Cholmley of Whitby, 1600–1657", *Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series*, 153 (2000) 123.

consult his principal commanders “from whence many inconveniences fell out”.<sup>6</sup> His detractors have long highlighted his military inexperience. Sir Philip Warwick, having served on Cavendish’s staff, praised his “grandeur, generosity, loyalty, and steady and forward courage”, but reflected “he had the tincture of a romantic spirit, and had the misfortune to have something of the poet in him.”<sup>7</sup> It seems that several contemporaries unfairly used Cavendish’s literary and artistic interests to undermine his military reputation.

Such contemporary criticism was reinforced by Victorian historians, such as the editor of the *Fairfax Correspondence*, who jibed that Cavendish was a better horseman than a musician, a better musician than a poet, and a better poet than a general.<sup>8</sup> Sir Charles Firth concluded that his campaigns against the weaker northern Parliamentarians “can hardly be considered very creditable to his military talents.”<sup>9</sup> Often criticized for being over-cautious, during 1642–3 he took three attempts to dislodge and defeat a weaker enemy. Consequently, his military attributes continue to be compared unfavourably with his Parliamentary rival, Sir Thomas Fairfax.<sup>10</sup>

Recently, Malcolm Wanklyn has pointed out the problems of attempting to “audit” the performance of Civil War generals. He argues that many historians have been beguiled by Clarendon’s ascribing of blame for the king’s defeat, overlooking how this was shaped by Clarendon’s personal animosities.<sup>11</sup> Rather than apportioning praise or blame according to previous historical judgments, a fresh analysis of Cavendish’s generalship should encompass the multiple roles fulfilled by Civil War commanders in pursuit of military success in Civil War England. Therefore, this chapter will consider Cavendish’s importance in the mobilization and maintenance of the Royalist war effort, as well as evaluating the success of his strategy and tactics.

## I

Clarendon harboured a nostalgic, rose-tinted view of the noble-driven nature of Royalist mobilization in 1642. In this, he happily praised Cavendish’s mustering of the northern army “purely by his own interest,

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<sup>6</sup> Seaward P. (ed.), *Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon: The History of the Rebellion. A New Selection* (Oxford: 2009) 215.

<sup>7</sup> Warwick Sir Philip, *Memoires of the Reigne of King Charles I with a Continuation to the Happy Restauration of King Charles II* (London: Richard Chiswell: 1701) 235.

<sup>8</sup> Bell R. (ed.), *The Fairfax Correspondence: Memorials of the Civil Wars* (London: 1849) I, 243.

<sup>9</sup> Firth C.H. (ed.), *The Life of William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle to which is added the true relation of my birth breeding and life by Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (London: 1906), ix.

<sup>10</sup> Wanklyn, *Warrior Generals*, 48.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 228–9.

and the concurrence of his numerous allies in those northern parts".<sup>12</sup> To accomplish this, Cavendish was invested with unique powers and the largest territorial base of any Royalist commander, encompassing authority over thirty-two garrisons across the North. He demonstrated his vice-regal status by dubbing twelve knights, coining money and raising taxes.<sup>13</sup> By late 1643 he was appointed general for all counties north of the Trent, as well as Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Rutland, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire and Norfolk.<sup>14</sup> His unique position was underlined by the separate orders the king published for governing his army. Any soldier who drew his sword in Cavendish's presence meaning harm was to lose his hand. Any individual corresponding or treating with the enemy without Cavendish's leave could be executed.<sup>15</sup> The extraordinary powers invested in him reflected his importance to Royalist strategy. With the queen gathering officers, arms and munitions in the Netherlands for a projected landing in north-east England, Walter Strickland, the parliamentarian envoy at The Hague, informed John Pym in November 1642: "they hope to make Newcastle able to command Yorkshire, and be a seed plot for greater hopes."<sup>16</sup>

Royalists tended to stress personal loyalty over service to a cause, so with the king distant in Oxford, Cavendish's person became an important focus for northern royalism. His wife's claim that he raised 100,000 men for the king, "and those most upon his own Interest, and without any other considerable help or assistance", is clearly wildly inflated.<sup>17</sup> Yet, even his enemies ceded the centrality of his person to the northern Royalist efforts. Lucy Hutchinson praised his excellent hospitality and long residence in the North, remarking that he was "a lord once so much beloved in his country", and that "no man was a greater prince than he in all that northerne quarter."<sup>18</sup> In 1641 his rents supposedly brought him £22,393 per annum, making him one of the wealthiest peers in England. His estates stretched across Northumberland, Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Somerset and Gloucestershire. His army recruited many soldiers from all these counties save the last

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<sup>12</sup> Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, 214.

<sup>13</sup> Roy I. - Macadam J., "Why did Prince Rupert Fight at Marston Moor?", *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* 86 (2008) 236.

<sup>14</sup> Wanklyn, *Warrior Generals*, 45; Hulse L., "William Cavendish, first duke of Newcastle-upon-Tyne (bap. 1593, d. 1676), writer, patron, and royalist army officer", *ODNB*).

<sup>15</sup> This anxiety may have reflected uncertainty over the allegiance of those Yorkshire royalist gentry who had negotiated a short-lived local peace with the Fairfaxes in September 1642: BL, Thomason, E127(23), *Orders and Institutions of War, made and ordained by His Majesty, and by him delivered to his Generall His Excellence the Earle of Newcastle. With the said Earles speech to the army at the delivery and publishing the said orders prefix* (1642), 4-6; Woolrych A., "Yorkshire's Treaty of Neutrality", *History Today* 6 (1956) 696-704.

<sup>16</sup> Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, Osborn Shelves fb94, folder 23.

<sup>17</sup> *Life*, 109.

<sup>18</sup> Keeble N.H. (ed.), *Lucy<delete? Hutchinson Lucy: Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson,<cut comma* (London: 1995) 84.

two, in addition to Cumberland, Durham, Lancashire and Westmoreland. Men from Durham and the Tees valley were heavily recruited.<sup>19</sup> He issued so many commissions that Sir Philip Warwick considered the cohesion of his army compromised by under-recruited units, and Newman conceded that Cavendish was “consciously creating an army which would reflect upon his own grandeur”.<sup>20</sup> Whilst this method of building an army might not have resulted in the most militarily effective end product, it was undoubtedly an efficient way of mobilizing Royalist sympathies among the landowning elites. Around a third of these commissions went to Catholic officers, and, as the Catholic gentry tended to have a closer relationship with their tenants, it has been suggested that they were better able to mobilize their tenantry than their Protestant counterparts.<sup>21</sup>

Although some of Cavendish’s infantry originated as trained band units, most were regiments mustered by their own colonels, as, for example, the foot levied through the Commission of Array by Sir Marmaduke Langdale in the East Riding in March 1643 and armed out of the munitions brought by the queen. Sir Henry Slingsby received his commission to raise a regiment of volunteers on 13 December 1642. He beat his drum in and around York, enlisting 200 men and billeting them on his tenants. Like most Civil War armies, on occasion Cavendish had to resort to impressment to recruit his infantry, particularly in response to the Scottish invasion.<sup>22</sup>

Having coordinated the mustering of such large numbers of men, their training was no doubt improved by the numerous professional officers who landed with the queen at Bridlington in February 1643. Cavendish not only successfully armed these recruits, but established his own Ordnance Office. Peter Edwards has shown how his army drew from private armouries and some northern manufactories such as York’s saddle-makers, but was mainly supplied by imports from the Netherlands, landed on the north-east coast by privateer merchants such as the Fleming, Jan van Haesdonck. On top of equipping his own forces, the king expected him to send convoys to Oxford, writing to Cavendish: “I have no greater want then of Armes nor means to supply my selfe than from you.”<sup>23</sup>

Cavendish was also effective in gathering intelligence and acting upon it. Unlike many other royalist commanders, he employed a Scoutmaster-General and was careful to use codes to convey

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<sup>19</sup> *Life*, 97–8; P.R. Newman, >Newman P.R., “The Royalist Army in Northern England, 1642–1645”, <cut comma (D.Phil. thesis, University of York, 1978) I, 11, 94, 256.

<sup>20</sup> Warwick, *Memoires of the Reigne of King Charles I*, 236–7; Newman, “Royalist Army” I, 106; Newman, *Old Service*, 263.

<sup>21</sup> Malcolm J., “A King in Search of Soldiers: Charles I in 1642”, *Historical Journal* 21 (1978) 271.

<sup>22</sup> Parsons D. (ed.), *Sir Henry Slingsby: The Diary of Sir Henry Slingsby of Scriven, Bart.*, <cut comma (London: 1836) 87, 93; Newman, “Royalist Army”, I, 24, 28–9, 62, 239–40, 282.

<sup>23</sup> Edwards P., *Dealing in Death: The Arms Trade and the British Civil Wars, 1638–1652* (Stroud: 2000) 31, 50, 171, 203, 227.

sensitive information. He has recently been credited with establishing “a sound base of intelligence-gathering”, aided by a broad base of popular sympathizers across the north. Successes included the early interception in 1643 of Sir Thomas Fairfax’s letters to his father. Cavendish’s acting upon useful and timely intelligence reports led directly to the victory at Seacroft Moor.<sup>24</sup>

Cavendish’s arrival in Yorkshire was intended to resuscitate the floundering Royalist war effort there, and was in response to the “the earnest Sollicitation and Intreaty of the Prime Nobility and Gentry of *Yorkshire*”.<sup>25</sup> He forced his army’s passage across the River Tees at Piercebridge on 1 December and arrived in York two days later. Pledging to avoid plundering civilians, he aimed to maintain his army through three means: loans, taxation and the sequestration of enemy estates. Firstly, he invited the Yorkshire gentry to lend him money for the king’s war effort.<sup>26</sup> The means by which he raised loans became formalized with the Yorkshire Engagement, a document popularly known as the Yorkshire Magna Charta. Lenders were promised reimbursement from the Engagement’s signatories, who pledged to repay loans according to their estates’ size. As a result, over 100 people subscribed and £19,445 was raised very quickly. Many were forced to make contributions or sign the Engagement against their will, under threat of plundering, or to procure their release from imprisonment.<sup>27</sup> Despite the Scots’ invasion, the scheme remained in operation in February 1644.<sup>28</sup> Cavendish also donated large sums of his own money to the Royalist war effort; Margaret, his wife, later calculated the losses he suffered during the wars as £941,303.<sup>29</sup>

Secondly, from April 1643 Newcastle imposed upon Yorkshire what became known as the “Great Sesse”, a scheme which emulated the assessments placed upon territories under Parliamentary control. It was designed to raise £30,000 per month to support his army. Subdivided into the county’s Ridings and Wapentakes, it was collected by parish constables. Its surviving documentation is fragmented, but its collection continued until Cavendish’s flight into York in April 1644.<sup>30</sup> So, rather than

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<sup>24</sup> Ellis J., *To Walk in the Dark: Military Intelligence during the English Civil War, 1642–1646* (Stroud: 2011) 40, 55, 58, 97, 102–4, 112–3, 124, 207.

<sup>25</sup> Wing / N875A, *An Answer of the Right Honourable Earle of Newcastle, His Excellency &c. to the six groundless aspersions cast upon him by the Lord Faifax in his late warrant (here inserted) bearing date Feb. 2, 1642 by the Earl himselfe* (Oxford, 1643), <cut comma 5.

<sup>26</sup> Binns J., *Yorkshire in the Civil Wars: Origins, Impact and Outcome* (Pickering: 2004) 57.

<sup>27</sup> TNA, State Papers (hereafter SP) 19/8/248–52, 353–4; SP 19/10/ 308; SP 19/119/2, 25, 46, 48, 61; SP 19/120/72, 76, 84, 111, 120.

<sup>28</sup> TNA, SP19/122/70.

<sup>29</sup> *Life*, 102.

<sup>30</sup> Bennett M., *The Civil Wars in Britain and Ireland, 1638–1651* (Oxford: 1997), <cut comma 179, 208; see Page W. (ed.), *The Victoria History of the County of York, North Riding* (London: 1923) II, 137–8, 214–6, 282–6, 309–14, 383–5.

maintaining his forces by plunder and free quarter, as claimed by Parliamentary propaganda, Cavendish developed several financial mechanisms to support his forces on a long-term basis. Given the size of his army, reported by Sir George Goring to be 18,000 men on 22 April 1643, this was no mean achievement.<sup>31</sup>

In the war of words that accompanied his mobilization, Cavendish proved himself an effective propagandist, despite his subsequent maxim that “it is a great Error in a State to have all affairs put into Gazettes, (for it over-heats the peoples brains”.<sup>32</sup> In March 1642 the king had established Stephen Bulkley’s royalist press at York, which printed at least 74 different tracts that year alone. Cavendish later used this facility to propagate print that explained his actions, reinvigorated his supporters and perhaps also to win over converts.<sup>33</sup> Upon his southward march into Yorkshire, he circulated 500 copies of a manifesto explaining his actions to the people of Durham and Northumberland, to keep them from thinking he was deserting them.<sup>34</sup> His wife later credited him with winning over the Parliamentarian, Sir Hugh Cholmley, by making “rational and convincible Arguments”.<sup>35</sup> Cavendish’s efforts were in response to personal attacks upon him in the London press that branded him as “the Atheisticall Marquess” or a “Semi papian” on account of the Roman Catholic nature of his forces.<sup>36</sup> This reflected the fear his army inspired among parliamentarians, but also of the Catholic presence within his officer corps. Initially, the second article of the king’s martial code sent to govern Cavendish’s forces commanded “No Papist of what degree or quality soever shall be admitted to serve in our Army.”<sup>37</sup> Yet, when the king wrote to him on 23 September 1642, he commanded him to “make use of all my loving subjects’ services, without examining their consciences”. Thereafter, many Catholics were commissioned into Cavendish’s forces: about thirty-six per cent of his officers and forty per cent of his colonels.<sup>38</sup> Some, such as Lords Belasyse and Widdrington, were in positions of high command. Consequently, Parliamentary propaganda played on popular anti-Catholic prejudice, blaming Cavendish’s forces for their rape and “barbarous

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<sup>31</sup> Warburton E. (ed.), *Memoirs of Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers* (London: 1849) II, 182.

<sup>32</sup> *Life*, 173.

<sup>33</sup> Hanson L., “The King’s Printer at York and Shrewsbury 1642–3”, *The Library* 23 (1943) 129–31; Sessions W.K., *Stephen Bulkley: Peripatetic Royalist Printer of London-York-Newcastle-Gateshead-Newcastle-York, who died in 1680, and his son John Bulkley who died in 1695* (York: 1997).

<sup>34</sup> Trease G., *Portrait of a Cavalier: William Cavendish, First Duke of Newcastle* (London: 1979) 98.

<sup>35</sup> *Life*, 24.

<sup>36</sup> BL, Thomason E252(22), *A Perfect Diurnal of Some Passages in Parliament*, 19–26 February (London, 1644) 242; BL, Thomason E267(2), *A New Discovery of Hidden Secrets: In Severall Letters, Propositions, Articles, and Other Writings concerning the Earle of Newcastle, Captaine John Hotham, and many other Malignant Gentry of the Northerne Counties*, 3 November (London, 1645) 2.

<sup>37</sup> BL, Thomason, E127(23), *Orders and Institutions of War*, 3.

<sup>38</sup> Newman, *Old Service*, 87, 212–4, 266; P.R. Newman, “Catholic Royalists of Northern England, 1642–5”, *Northern History* 15 (1979) 91.

usage” of civilians, fusing this with xenophobia by highlighting the foreign and French component of his army.<sup>39</sup> As David Scott has recently argued, the purpose of much of this was to convince the Scots that the royalists were a threat to the Protestant religion not just in England but throughout the three kingdoms.<sup>40</sup>

Yet, unlike some Royalists, Cavendish appreciated the power of print. Allegiance was to be negotiated, not commanded, and he did not let Parliamentary propaganda go unanswered. Needled by enemy declarations about his employment of papists, he published three personal declarations both to vindicate his own honour and to chastise the enemy.<sup>41</sup> These included a brave personal defence of his Catholic soldiers that he ordered to be published in all churches and chapels within the county of York: “That I have in mine Army some of the Romish Communion I do not deny... These I admitted for their Loyalty and Abilities, not for their Religion.” He claimed that Parliament’s armies included foreigners who were Roman Catholic, against whom no exception had been made. Then he contrasted the loyalty of his Catholic supporters with the rebellion of Fairfax’s “Sectaries, Brownists, Anabaptists, Familists.” He depicted the Parliamentarians as deceivers of their own followers, insurgents who did “prostitute the Ordinance of God to the rebellious designes of ambitious men.”<sup>42</sup> Then, in a move calculated to appeal to the gentry’s nightmarish memories of Tudor popular uprisings, he also accused the Fairfaxes’ men of being sacrilegious iconoclasts with a leveling and anarchic design against the honour and property of the landed elite:

They have spared no places, The Churches of Christians which the Heathens durst not violate, are by them prophaned: Their Ornaments have been made either the supply of their necessities, or the subject of their scurrilities, their Chalices, or Communion Cups... have become the objects of their Sacriledge, the Badges and Monuments of ancient Gentry in Windows, and Pedigrees

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<sup>39</sup> Hopper A., “The Popish Army of the North: Anti-Catholicism and Parliamentary Allegiance in Yorkshire, 1642–46”, *Recusant History* 25 (2000: <replace : with >) 12–28; BL, Thomason E104(13), *A Miraculous Victory obtained by the Right Honorable, Ferdinando Lord Fairfax* (London, 1643) 5.

<sup>40</sup> Scott D., *Politics and War in the Three Stuart Kingdoms, 1637–49* (Basingstoke: 2004) 42.

<sup>41</sup> BL, Thomason, E83(1), *A Declaration made by the Earl of Nevv-Castle, Governour of the town and county of New-Castle: and Generall of all His Majesties forces raised in the Northern Parts of this Kingdom, for the defence of the same. For his resolution of marching into Yorkshire. As also, a just vindication of himself from that unjust aspersion laid upon him, for entertaining some popish recusants in his forces* (London: 1642); Wing / N875A, *An Answer of the Right Honourable Earle of Newcastle, His Excellency &c. to the Six Groundless Aspersions cast upon him by the Lord Fairefax in his Late Warrant (here inserted) bearing date Feb. 2, 1642 by the Earl himselfe* (Oxford: 1642); Wing (2nd ed.) / N874A, *The Answer of His Excellency the Earle of Newcastle, to a late declaration of the Lord Fairefax dated the 8. of June, 1643* (York: 1643).

<sup>42</sup> Wing / N875A, *Answer of the Earle of Newcastle*, 1, 3, 5, 7; BL, Thomason, E83(1), *Declaration made by the Earl of Nevv-Castle*, 5.

have been by them defaced; Old Evidences, the Records of private Families, the Pledges of Possessions, the boundaries of Mens Properties have been by them burned, torn in Pieces, and the Seals trampled under their Feet. Ceilings and Wainscot have been broken in Pieces, Walls demolished... And all this by a Company of Men crept now at last out of the Bottom of Pandora's Box.<sup>43</sup>

In a similar vein, Cavendish had earlier compared Fairfax's men to the German peasants of the 1520s and the Anabaptist commune at Munster. These insurgents would "attempt the cutting of Throats of all Landlords and Magistrates, and will maintain, That it is against the Law of God for any Man to hold an Estate by Law or Birthright, but only according to Merit and Worth."<sup>44</sup>

On 8 June 1643 Cavendish personally responded to another of Fairfax's declarations, admonishing Fairfax for having "perfidiously broken" the peace treaty at Rothwell and thereby causing an unnecessary armed conflict in Yorkshire. He refuted Fairfax's accusation that the Parliamentary prisoners captured at Seacroft Moor had been unlawfully and tyrannically imprisoned and maltreated, with hundreds sick and dying, despite having quarter promised them. As well as denying that such a promise had been made, he also declared that the wounded prisoners had been treated by the Royalist surgeons and given medicine by the queen's own physicians. Far from seeking their destruction, Cavendish sought to keep them from harm and reform them into good subjects. Charitable collections for the prisoners and visits from their female relatives had been permitted. Instead, he diverted blame for deaths in his custody onto Lord Fairfax himself, who had led them into rebellion, and who denied them their liberty when he had the means to exchange them and fair offers to do so. ~~from Newcastle.~~<sup>45</sup> Cavendish was also at pains to point out that Fairfax's army was illegal and therefore incapable of treating: "neither hee nor any of his pretended Captains in this Warr, can challenge any Interest in the Law of Arms".<sup>46</sup>

## II

Cavendish's success as a military commander was not underpinned by the formal military education experienced on the continent by so many other Civil War commanders. His first commission was as

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<sup>43</sup> Wing / N875A, *An Answer of the Earle of Newcastle*, 9.

<sup>44</sup> BL, Thomason, E83(1), *Declaration made by the Earl of Nevv-Castle*, 8.

<sup>45</sup> Wing (2nd ed.) / N874A, *Answer of the Earle of Newcastle*, 6–13.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

captain of the Prince of Wales's troop during the First Bishops' War, commanding knights and gentlemen, whom he had done much to raise himself. Although he appears to have seen no action during the Bishops' Wars, he did challenge his commanding officer, Henry Rich, Earl of Holland to a duel for affronting him by deploying the prince's troop in the army's rearguard. The affair suggests that, like many other aristocratic commanders, Cavendish had difficulty reconciling his self-regard to service to a broader cause. The king intervened to prevent bloodshed yet this episode may have enhanced Cavendish's standing when Holland fell into royal disfavour in 1641–2.<sup>47</sup>

In January 1642, soon after the king failed to arrest his leading Parliamentary opponents, Charles urged Cavendish to gain for him the vast arms magazine stored in Hull for use against the Scots. He secretly appointed Cavendish governor of the town on 11 January 1642, but the earl was rebuffed and refused entry on 15 January. Lacking the military means to coerce them, and anxious about provoking armed hostilities. As he explained to the king: "the town will not admit me by any means, so I am very flat and out of countenance here".<sup>48</sup> Instead, John Hotham, MP for Scarborough, talked his way into Hull, backed by companies from his father's regiment of trained bands.<sup>49</sup> Yet Cavendish experienced more success further north when he secured Newcastle-upon-Tyne for the king without a fight on 17 June, garrisoning Tynemouth Castle and fortifying Shields harbour soon after.<sup>50</sup> His immediate strategic objective was to mobilize the North-east for the king and control enough of the coastline to allow the queen to land safely with munitions from Europe. With this in mind, he was ill-inclined to co-ordinate with other royalist armies, despite Charles ordering him south in November and December 1642, and again in April and May 1643.<sup>51</sup> Predictably, as Cavendish's army increased, rival Royalist leaders grew jealous of its size and his autonomy of command. Indeed, because he did not deplete his field force by establishing too many garrisons, it soon swelled to rival the Oxford army in size.

By December 1642 Cavendish controlled Northumberland, Durham, Cumberland and Westmorland, almost without a fight. Establishing himself at York, he split the local Parliamentarians in two, won the support of the county's Royalists and made an example of double-dealers and fence-sitters such as Thomas, Lord Savile. In January 1643, the king's secretary, Sir Edward Nicholas, gave Cavendish "great thanks for his discovery of the Lord Saviles Treacherie saying that the said service was

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<sup>47</sup> Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, 37.

<sup>48</sup> Ryder I.E., "The Seizure of Hull and its Magazine, January 1642", *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 61 (1989) 141.

<sup>49</sup> Hopper A. (ed.), "The Papers of the Hothams: Governors of Hull during the Civil War", *Camden Society*, 5<sup>th</sup> series, 39 (2011) 11–12.

<sup>50</sup> Woolrych A., *Britain in Revolution, 1625–1660* (Oxford: 2002) 228.

<sup>51</sup> Wanklyn, *Warrior Generals*, 45, 77, 243.

no lesse acceptable to him then if hee had wonne a battle.”<sup>52</sup> Nowhere in England had such territorial success been replicated, while his foresight in planting garrisons at Pontefract and Newark would later prove very costly to Parliament’s war effort.<sup>53</sup> On 15 December 1642 the king wrote to Cavendish stating that he “would always look upon you as a principal instrument in keeping the crown on my head. The business of Yorkshire I account almost done.”<sup>54</sup> Nonetheless, from the queen’s landing at Bridlington in February until her departure in June 1643 Cavendish’s strategy was constrained by having to play the courtier and provide her escort southward. As a considerable proportion of the arms required for the Royalist war effort were imported through north-eastern ports and conducted southward in such convoys, it was imperative for Cavendish to ensure they were strongly protected. By June he had assembled 4,000 men for a convoy which delivered the queen to her husband safely and boosted the supply of arms to the Royalist forces further south.<sup>55</sup>

Despite this success, given his superior manpower and resources, Cavendish has been blamed for not subduing all the North for the king. However, his freedom of action was limited by the elusiveness of the enemy and by the composition of his own forces. Firstly, he understood that his Yorkshire enemies were geographically and politically divided, between the Hothams in Hull and the Fairfaxes in the West Riding. Their mutual loathing afforded him the opportunity to negotiate a secret treaty with the Hothams in order to concentrate his efforts against the Fairfaxes. Of the elder Hotham, Sir Henry Slingsby fondly recalled that Cavendish “knew how to work upon his distemper when he once found his pulse”.<sup>56</sup> This was a shrewd move and it spared the queen from military confrontation in her passage from Bridlington to York.<sup>57</sup> In the West Riding, no such accommodation was possible and the forces commanded by Ferdinando, Lord Fairfax, proved difficult to engage. As it was numerically inferior and weak in cavalry, it therefore inclined to urban battlefields, hoping to win small, incremental engagements through speed and surprise to buy time and boost morale. The military theorist, Stanley Carpenter, has called this a “Fabian strategy”, or “attrition by strategic defensive.”<sup>58</sup> Whether this indicates, as Carpenter argues, that Fairfax’s strategic vision was superior remains debatable, but

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<sup>52</sup> BL, Harleian MS 164, fo. 281r. For the substance of Newcastle’s charges against Savile see Bodleian Library, MS Clarendon 22, fos. 53–60.

<sup>53</sup> Newman, *Old Service*, 82, 263, 266, 278.

<sup>54</sup> Trease, *Portrait of a Cavalier*, 101.

<sup>55</sup> Wanklyn, *Warrior Generals*, 60; Newman, *Old Service*, 137, 265; Cromwell estimated the size of the queen’s retinue as 3,000 foot and 1,200 horse: *Lowndes MS, HMC, 7<sup>th</sup> Report, Appendix, Part 1* (London: 1879) 551–2.

<sup>56</sup> Slingsby, *Diary of Sir Henry Slingsby*, 92.

<sup>57</sup> Binns, *Sir Hugh Cholmley*, 127; Hopper, *Hothams*, 19, 73–82.

<sup>58</sup> Carpenter S.D.M., *Military Leadership in the British Civil Wars, 1642–1651: “The Genius of this Age”* (London: 2005) 59, 63.

Fairfax's guile certainly frustrated Cavendish. A sign of this is glimpsed in his challenge to Fairfax to name a time and place to fight him in the open, according "to the Examples of our Heroick Ancestors, who used not to spend their Time in scratching one another out of Holes, but in pitched Fields determined their Doubts."<sup>59</sup> Cavendish's desire for trial by battle reflected his attachment to chivalric concepts of honour, but also his confidence that in a set-piece battlefield encounter, his substantial advantage in cavalry would prove decisive. This posturing was intended to present himself in a more honourable light and no doubt antagonized the Fairfaxes, but Lord Fairfax's reply, quoting Ben Jonson to the playwright's old patron, that he had no regard for "knights of the Sun or Amadis de Gauls", must have irked Cavendish further.<sup>60</sup>

So, Cavendish was compelled to develop a patient strategy for rooting the Fairfaxes out of their hole, firstly by isolating them, secondly by disrupting the cloth trade, food supply and provisions upon which their Pennine hinterlands depended and finally by striking at their support base with overwhelming force. After the queen's landing, Cavendish welcomed the defection of Sir Hugh Cholmley, the Parliamentarian governor of Scarborough, and neutralized the Hothams in Hull through secret negotiations. Then, he turned on the West Riding Parliamentarians, routing their rearguard on Seacroft Moor on 30 March 1643 after they had abandoned their defensive positions at Selby. Thereupon, Cavendish triggered panic at Westminster when it was reported that he was besieging Lord Fairfax in Leeds with 10,000 foot and 30 troops of horse.<sup>61</sup> Whilst the queen and Sir George Goring favoured assaulting Leeds that April, Cavendish exercised greater caution with his men's lives. Appreciating the heavy losses a major assault on a large town might inflict, he favoured the advice of General King and his professional officers who recommended a temporary withdrawal.<sup>62</sup> Given the performance of Fairfax's army in urban encounters thus far at Tadcaster and Leeds, this was sound advice, and significantly came at a time when Cavendish was mourning the death of his first wife at Bolsover on 17 April.<sup>63</sup>

Thereafter, the queen's letters grew impatient and undermined him, despite his army's successes in capturing Rotherham and Sheffield in early May. In a letter to the king on 18 May, she called him "fantastic and inconstant". On 27 May she advocated renewing the siege of Leeds, adding

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<sup>59</sup> Wing/N875A, *An Answer of the Earle of Newcastle*, 11.

<sup>60</sup> Adamson J., "Chivalry and Political Culture in Caroline England", in Sharpe K. - Lake P. (eds.), *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (Basingstoke: 1994) 183.

<sup>61</sup> BL, Harleian MS 164, fo. 364v.

<sup>62</sup> Trease, *Portrait of a Cavalier*, 115; Green M.A.E. (ed.), *The Letters of Queen Henrietta Maria including her Private Correspondence with Charles the First* (London: 1857) 184, 189.

<sup>63</sup> Trease, *Portrait of a Cavalier*, 113.

that if she went south she would be “enraged to go away without having beaten these rascals... and if I go away I am afraid that they will not be beaten.”<sup>64</sup> The queen’s censure seems to have caused Cavendish some unease. For instance, in his secret correspondence with John Hotham, the latter played upon his concerns, assuring him that Lady Cornwallis had mocked him at court, saying, “that you were a sweet general, lay in bed until eleven a clock and com’d till 12, then came to see the Queen, and so the work was done, and that General King did all the business.” Hotham went on: “My Lord you can expect nothing at court but tricks. The women rule all... You have now done great service that will be forgot when they think they can shift without you.”<sup>65</sup> Such rumour reawakened Cavendish’s debilitating anxieties about his status at court, which he had nursed since his days as tutor to the Prince of Wales. His worries were heightened by the distance of his removal from Oxford, so much that the king and queen felt it necessary to reassure him on several occasions that his reputation remained untarnished.<sup>66</sup>

Cavendish was also constrained by the conditional nature of his Yorkshire forces’ allegiance. The county’s Royalist gentry had invited him into Yorkshire, and because of this they considered his command over the Yorkshire portion of the army to be “nominal and by agreement”.<sup>67</sup> At his council of war at Pontefract on 4 June 1643, Cavendish acknowledged in the queen’s presence that when he had arrived in Yorkshire he had promised that he would not march south until the county was pacified.<sup>68</sup> This could only be accomplished by forcing the Fairfaxes out of their urban strongholds to give battle: Lord Fairfax from Leeds and Sir Thomas from Bradford. As early as 17 April Sir George Goring had highlighted the means to achieve this: “wherefore if you can get between Bradford and Leeds, you will so annoy, divert and separate them in all their Designs... This will so bare them.”<sup>69</sup> Cavendish’s eventual pursuit of this strategy paid off, obliging the Fairfaxes to gamble on a desperate surprise attack that backfired, crowning Newcastle with a crushing victory at Adwalton Moor on 30 June that reduced the Fairfaxes to the status of virtual fugitives. This was the largest battle since Edgehill, and with the exception of Lostwithiel, arguably the Royalists’ greatest victory of the war.

For his personal role in the victory, Newman applauded Cavendish as a “general of perception and capacity”, who personally turned the tide of battle.<sup>70</sup> Yet Malcolm Wanklyn has recently

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<sup>64</sup> Green, ed., *Letters of Queen Henrietta Maria*, 205, 212; BL, Harleian MS 7379.

<sup>65</sup> Hull History Centre: Hotham MS, U DDHO/1/12; Hopper, *Hothams*, 93.

<sup>66</sup> Roy - Macadam, “Marston Moor”, 238.

<sup>67</sup> Newman, *Old Service*, 263.

<sup>68</sup> Wanklyn, *Warrior Generals*, 77.

<sup>69</sup> Wing (2nd ed.) / F121B, *A Miraculous Victory obtained by the Right Honorable, Ferdinando Lord Fairfax, against the army under the Command of the Earl of Newcastle at Wakefield in York-shire* (London: 1643) 8.

<sup>70</sup> Newman, *Old Service*, 79, 137, 262.

contradicted him, arguing that the victory “owed little” to Cavendish or General King, accusing them of giving battle without a tactical plan and on ground that favoured the enemy.<sup>71</sup> Newman’s evidence was a report of Cavendish’s valour in *Mercurius Aulicus* on 3 July, which held that the earl had steadied the wavering royalist line as it was giving ground:

he presently alighted from his Horse, went himselfe to his Foot, and taking a Pike into his hand, bid them follow him assuring them, not a man should goe further than he himself would lead them, bidding them now shew themselves for King Charles and their Countrey, and by the help of God they would not leave one Rebel in the North.<sup>72</sup>

The tract claimed that Cavendish’s personal intervention so infused his soldiers with his noble courage that the tide of battle turned, the rebels fleeing in astonishment at the Royalists’ bravery. Such reports constructed cults of personality around officers because the need to demonstrate bravery in battle remained an important facet of command. A narrative with a similar purpose, yet conflicting in detail, was published in 1667 by Margaret Cavendish as the prologue to the patent that created her husband a marquis. This stated that his army was on the point of fleeing until he personally intervened in the battle at the head of two troops of horse, and that he “by his Wisdom, Virtue and his own Hand, brought death and flight to the Rebels”.<sup>73</sup>

Another tract, *An Expresse Relation*, published in Oxford soon the battle and possibly Cavendish’s own account, did not mention personal heroics. Instead it exaggerated the size of Fairfax’s army to underline the victory’s importance. Fairfax’s infantry were said to outnumber the Royalist foot and to consist almost entirely of musketeers, while the cavalry were inflated from thirteen to twenty troops. This tract also credited the Royalist artillery with precipitating the enemy’s collapse.<sup>74</sup> Sir Henry Slingsby ascribed the victory to General King, and Sir Thomas Fairfax’s later memoirs blamed one Colonel Skirton as intervening at the critical moment: “A wild & Desperate man”, who “Desired his Gen: to let him Charge”.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Wanklyn, *Warrior Generals*, 60.

<sup>72</sup> BL, Thomason, E60(18), *Mercurius Aulicus*, 27<sup>th</sup> week (Oxford: 1643) 350.

<sup>73</sup> Wing / N853, *The Life of the Thrice Noble, High and Puissant Prince William Cavendishe*, 126.

<sup>74</sup> Wing / E3893, *An Expresse Relation of the Passages and Proceedings of His Majesties Armie vnder the command of His Excellence the Earle of Newcastle: against the rebels, under the command of the Lord Fairfax and his Adherents* (Oxford: 1643), 2.

<sup>75</sup> Slingsby, *Diary of Sir Henry Slingsby*, 96; Bodleian Library, MS Fairfax 36, fo. 8v.

Whatever the reasons for the victory, there was embarrassment among Royalists that the battle had been so hard fought and that Fairfax's smaller army had proved so difficult to beat. Following the example of *An Expresse Relation*, both Margaret and Jane Cavendish exaggerated the size of Fairfax's army. The latter's poem, "On the 30<sup>th</sup> of June: to God," implausibly referred to her father's army as a "little flock".<sup>76</sup> In his thanksgiving sermon for Adwalton Moor, John Bramhall, bishop of Derry, praised Cavendish's generalship, saying God had favoured his forces at "*Seecroft, Tankersley, Yarum, Atherton, &c*". He claimed that the victory was especially providential by insinuating that the rebels held the advantage of numbers, ground and wind. In explaining Cavendish's previous setbacks at the hands of the Fairfaxes, Bramhall blamed being taken by surprise, and "the negligence of Scouts."<sup>77</sup> The victory raised Cavendish's stock in Oxford, where it was celebrated with a public thanksgiving, bonfires and bells in all the city's churches.<sup>78</sup>

Samuel Rawson Gardiner, Charles Firth and Cavendish's wife, Margaret, have all agreed that he might have ended the war on the back of this success, had he marched south to join the king.<sup>79</sup> There was no immediate obstacle to this. Bradford and Leeds fell to him within days of the battle. Remaining Parliamentarians were driven from the West Riding and Royalist garrisons were established in the clothing towns. Yet Cavendish's failure to capture the Fairfaxes and their senior officers allowed his enemies to escape and rebuild a new army behind Hull's formidable fortifications.<sup>80</sup> With the West Riding pacified, Cavendish did eventually move southward. Recapturing Gainsborough on 30 July and reaching Lincoln on 4 August 1643, his army forced the Parliamentarians south-eastwards, causing panic in East Anglia. Yet at Lincoln, came news that Fairfax was overrunning the East Riding and threatening the estates of Yorkshire's Royalists. Therefore, Cavendish had to inform the king that he was duty bound to return to besiege Fairfax in Hull.<sup>81</sup> In many respects this decision had been forced upon him; the Yorkshire gentry refused to march further and Sir Marmaduke Langdale warned Cavendish that if he forced the issue, "they should say he had betrayed them."<sup>82</sup> Despite this, Sir Philip Warwick considered that Cavendish's vanity was to blame because if he marched south, he would have to relinquish personal

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<sup>76</sup> Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Osborn Shelves, b233, fo. 38.

<sup>77</sup> BL, Wing / B4233, John Bramhall, *A Sermon Preached in the Cathedrall Church of York before Hi[s] Excellence the Earle of Newcastle and many of the prime nobility and gentry of the northerne covnties: at the publick thanksgiving to Almighty God for the late great victory upon Fryday, June 30, 1643, and the reducement of the west parts of Yorkeshire to obedience* (York: 1643), epistle dedicatory and 23.

<sup>78</sup> BL, Thomason, E60(18), *Mercurius Aulicus*, 350.

<sup>79</sup> [David Johnson](#) > Johnson D., *Adwalton Moor, 1643: The Battle that Changed a War* (Pickering: Blackthorn Press, <cut publisher for consistency 2003), <cut comma xv.

<sup>80</sup> Hopper A., *"Black Tom": Sir Thomas Fairfax and the English Revolution* (Manchester: 2007) 46.

<sup>81</sup> Wanklyn, *Warrior Generals*, 78.

<sup>82</sup> Bodleian Library, MS Clarendon 23, fo. 229v.

command and his status as the war's decisive general might be called into question. Yet Warwick's lament smacks of the retrospective apportioning of blame that became so common among Royalist writers, signifying more about the nature of internecine Royalist politics than the reality of the strategic situation.<sup>83</sup>

This has not prevented other historians echoing Warwick's criticism. Ian Gentles suspected Cavendish was "hampered by the same dilettante attitude as the other royalist peers", and that he was "deficient in strategic consciousness".<sup>84</sup> Even Newman acknowledged that Cavendish's geographical immobility brought about his final defeat.<sup>85</sup> His failure to march south may have pushed the king into the fateful siege of Gloucester to occupy his forces until Cavendish's army arrived.<sup>86</sup> The subsequent failure to capture Hull, either by force or treachery, owed much to Parliamentary vigilance, naval support and the formidable strength of Hull's defences. Having procrastinated too long, Sir John Hotham and his son were arrested before they could change sides, undermining Cavendish's patient strategy of converting them.<sup>87</sup> Thereafter, between August and December 1643, Cavendish switched his attentions to Nottingham Castle, where he offered large sums to the governor, Colonel John Hutchinson, and his officers. They were warned that the king held keeping a castle against him as more treasonous than service in Essex's army. Yet, the strategy backfired.<sup>88</sup> In such futile efforts against Parliamentary strongholds, Cavendish's strength was dissipated for the remainder of 1643. With hindsight, he lost the initiative in 1643 due to poor strategic decisions, but in mitigation it must be recognized that his freedom of action was constrained.

From January 1644, the long-negotiated invasion of northern England in Parliament's favour by the Scottish Army of the Covenant, commanded by Alexander Leslie, Earl of Leven, threw Cavendish onto the defensive. On 27 October 1643 the king had rewarded him with the title of marquis, reminding him with the acclamation: "he who defends the Borders, should be created by Us Governour, or Marquis of the Borderers."<sup>89</sup> Cavendish's strategy was to impede and delay the invaders, and it was pursued with limited success. Despite being heavily outnumbered, he checked the Scots at Corbridge on 19 February,

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<sup>83</sup> Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Osborn Shelves, fb87, fo. 80v; Warwick, *Memoires of the Reigne of King Charles I*, 244–5.

<sup>84</sup> Gentles, "Civil Wars in England", 123.

<sup>85</sup> Newman, *Old Service*, 262.

<sup>86</sup> Wanklyn, *Warrior Generals*, 63, 76–7.

<sup>87</sup> Hopper, *Hothams*, 21–24, 73–99.

<sup>88</sup> John Hutchinson publicized that Newcastle offered him a barony and £10,000 to deliver the castle: Hutchinson, *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson*, 121–26; BL, Harleian MS 165, fo. 258r; Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 62, fo. 467; BL, E79(30), *A Discovery of the Trecherous Attempts of the Cavaliers, to have Procured the Betraying of Nottingham Castle into their Hands* (London: 1643), sig. A2v, A3v.

<sup>89</sup> Newman, "Royalist Army in Northern England", II, 158.

Boldon Hills on 7–8 March and Hilton on 24–25 March. Edward Furgol has considered these successes were due to Cavendish’s “cool head and devoted, veteran troops”.<sup>90</sup> With their inferior cavalry mounts, the Scots were also anxious about Cavendish utilizing his dangerous cavalry in open country. Leven’s progress was slowed as he kept his army in terrain that was difficult for the Royalist cavalry. Therefore, it was not Cavendish’s faulty strategy but the Fairfaxes’ defeat of Sir John Belasyse’s Yorkshire portion of Cavendish’s army at Selby that forced the latter’s return southward to garrison York.<sup>91</sup>

Cavendish proved himself an effective garrison commander in York, dispatching his cavalry southward and enduring a ten-week siege from 23 April to 1 July. The city was well supplied with provisions. He imposed an oath against treachery upon the inhabitants and strung out negotiations with the besiegers in the expectation of relief.<sup>92</sup> Margaret Cavendish later claimed that her husband advised Rupert not to fight at Marston Moor, believing that relations between the Scots and English Parliamentarians would deteriorate and that the allied army would divide itself.<sup>93</sup> This smacks of hindsight, but the decision to give battle was very much Rupert’s, acting on the king’s orders. Driven on by fear of underhand courtly treachery against him, Rupert hoped to find a kindred spirit and ally in Cavendish, a nobleman who flattered him in letters and shared his suspicion of the court.<sup>94</sup>

As a consequence of being overruled, Cavendish appears to have abdicated command once his army’s late arrival prevented Rupert from exploiting the unpreparedness of the allied armies. Whether his inertia extended to a “malign” influence, as suggested by some, seems too harsh.<sup>95</sup> Ill-discipline among the soldiery rather than the outright hostility of Cavendish and General King seems the better explanation for the late arrival of Cavendish’s infantry on the scene.<sup>96</sup> Yet his late arrival in a coach rather than on horseback suggests his disinclination to force an engagement. Owing to the enemy’s surprise attack, Cavendish exercised no tactical role and his status in the chain of command beneath Rupert remains unclear. His battlefield heroism as described by his wife reflects more the role of a cavalry captain than a commanding general.<sup>97</sup>

Had he chosen to fight on foot as he was claimed to have done at Adwalton Moor, he would have been fortunate to come away alive. His famous infantry regiment, the Whitecoats, were refused

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<sup>90</sup> Furgol E., “The Civil Wars in Scotland,” in Kenyon – Ohlmeyer, *Civil Wars*, 51.

<sup>91</sup> Newman P.R., “The Defeat of John Belasyse: Civil War in Yorkshire: January – April, 1644”, *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 52 (1980) 123–33.

<sup>92</sup> Wenham P., *The Siege of York, 1644* (York: 1994 edn.) 15–17, 48–55.

<sup>93</sup> *Life*, 46–7.

<sup>94</sup> Roy - Macadam, “Marston Moor”, 245, 256; Warburton, *Memoirs of Prince Rupert*, II, 275, 309.

<sup>95</sup> Barratt J., *The Battle of Marston Moor, 1644* (Stroud: 2008), 150.

<sup>96</sup> Roy - Macadam, “Marston Moor”, 239–40, 251.

<sup>97</sup> Wanklyn, *Warrior Generals*, 107.

quarter. Killed where they stood, fewer than 30 were left alive. In all, between 4,000 and 6,000 royalists were slaughtered in just ninety minutes, making this encounter the bloodiest engagement of the Civil Wars in England.<sup>98</sup> Cavendish seems to have remained on the field longer than many other Royalist commanders. Yet, many of the dead were his own infantry, as “good foote as were in the world” as he had boasted.<sup>99</sup> From their perspective, there can be no questioning his failure of leadership, as ultimately he abandoned them to escape on horseback. The psychological blow wrought by their massacre made this too painful an episode for him to reflect upon in writing. Instead, his wife later excused his defeats as having occurred in his absence through “Jugling, Treachery, and Falshood” amongst his subordinates.<sup>100</sup> This is unpersuasive; rather than admit to their mistakes or shortcomings, bewailing treachery and blaming others to deflect responsibility was a common response of Civil War commanders trying to come to terms with defeat.<sup>101</sup> In this way, Cavendish’s admirer, Sir Hugh Cholmley, along with Sir Philip Monckton, voiced rumours that the side-changer, Sir John Urry, betrayed Rupert’s cavalry at Marston Moor.<sup>102</sup>

Supposedly unwilling to “endure the laughter of the court”, Cavendish considered that his reputation would not survive the disaster. Indeed, Gavin Robinson suggests he was “running away from the court as much as from Parliament.”<sup>103</sup> Cavendish would have shared Rupert’s embarrassment that their armies had been ordered to stand down immediately prior to the enemy attack.<sup>104</sup> Cavendish rode to Scarborough and took ship for Hamburg. According to Sir Hugh Cholmley, if Cavendish had remained, it would have done much to rally Royalist support; but, persuaded by General King that all hope was lost, he set a corrupting example by his passage to Hamburg. Seventy peers and gentlemen accompanied him in two ships from Scarborough.<sup>105</sup> In response other Royalist officers laid down arms and went home. York was left with little hope of relief.

Cavendish’s injured honour and fear of ridicule had massive consequences far beyond his personal allegiance: ultimately, it brought about the decapitation of the Royalist cause in the North. Cavendish hoped that his past services would outweigh the disservice of his flight. In this, he lacked the

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<sup>98</sup> Newman P.R. – Roberts P.R., *Marston Moor, 1644: The Battle of the Five Armies* (Pickering: 2003) 124.

<sup>99</sup> Wanklyn, *Warrior Generals*, 90; Binns, *Sir Hugh Cholmley*, 136.

<sup>100</sup> *Life*, 21, 50, 118.

<sup>101</sup> Hopper A., *Turncoats and Renegades: Changing Sides during the English Civil Wars* (Oxford: 2012) 134–8.

<sup>102</sup> Bodleian Library, MS Clarendon 23, fo. 153v; BL, Lansdowne MS 988, fo. 328r; Wanklyn, *Warrior Generals*, 107; Binns, *Sir Hugh Cholmley*, 137.

<sup>103</sup> Firth, *William Cavendish*, 41n; ~~Gavin Robinson G.~~, *Horses, People and Parliament in the English Civil War: Extracting Resources and Constructing Allegiance* (Farnham: 2012) 210.

<sup>104</sup> Newman and Roberts, *Marston Moor*, 74.

<sup>105</sup> Binns, *Sir Hugh Cholmley*, 139.

resilience of the Fairfaxes, who responded to their defeat at Adwalton Moor very differently. Cavendish was ill-equipped to emulate them, as Eliot Warburton observed, “the weary and disheartening prospect of recommencing an almost hopeless strife... was too undelightful for his temperament.”<sup>106</sup> In adversity, Cavendish’s brittle honour and overriding concern for his status was an important military weakness. He had tried to resign his commission as early as March 1644, but the king rejected this and responded: “All courage is not in fighting; constancy to a good cause beeing the chiefe, and the dispysing of slanderous tongues and pennes being not the least ingredient.”<sup>107</sup> Cholmley perceived that Cavendish’s retirement from command had been brewing for months before the battle, and later considered that even if the Royalists had won Marston Moor, Cavendish had intended to resign his commission.<sup>108</sup>

### III

In conclusion, recent assessments of Cavendish’s generalship remain mixed. Despite his admiration for Cavendish and his achievements, including the manner in which he “so successfully out-generalled the Fairfaxes”, Newman concluded that the successes of his army “did nothing whatsoever for the king further south, in the Midlands and the West.” His final verdict was that the “single long-term contribution that Newcastle made to the war may have been the ultimate embroilment of Parliament with the Scots.”<sup>109</sup> Similar conclusions have been reached more recently by David Scott and David Johnson: Cavendish’s success as a general widened the conflict and raised the stakes, forcing Parliament to procure an alliance with the Scottish Covenanters and the king to recall more of the English army in Ireland.<sup>110</sup>

Although far from being a great general, Cavendish was certainly foremost among the king’s “grandees”. Despite being blamed unfairly by many for the failure of the king’s 1643 campaign, he remained the most successful Royalist commander of that year. Exceeding his initial objectives, he did much to raise, maintain and protect the largest Royalist army of the First Civil War. In this he was a great coalition builder, sustaining a large multi-confessional armed force for two years. He proved an effective figurehead, organiser and propagandist, although perhaps a poor reader of the terrain. His personal courage and loyalty go unquestioned. On occasion, he showed himself a successful tactician,

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<sup>106</sup> Warburton, *Prince Rupert*, II, 467.

<sup>107</sup> Barratt, *Battle of Marston Moor*, 32; Trease, *Portrait of a Cavalier*, 127.

<sup>108</sup> Binns, *Sir Hugh Cholmley*, 138.

<sup>109</sup> Newman, “Royalist Army in Northern England”, I, 26; Newman, *Old Service*, 262, 264.

<sup>110</sup> Johnson, *Adwalton Moor*, 119; Scott, *Politics and War in the Three Stuart Kingdoms*, 49.

overcoming his lack of pre-war military experience.<sup>111</sup> Dependent on professional advice, he took it, choosing talented and experienced subordinates such as James King, Sir Thomas Glemham and Sir Marmaduke Langdale. His army's series of victories at Piercebridge, Tadcaster, Seacroft Moor and Adwalton Moor raised the possibility of an outright Royalist victory.

Yet Cavendish was unable to capitalize on his military successes. Lacking in ruthlessness and tenacity, his failure to finish the Fairfaxes cost the Royalists dearly. Had he ordered his Yorkshire regiments to garrison the North and contain Hull, allowing him to march south with his other forces, he may have panicked Parliament into peace negotiations. If so, the outcome of the Civil Wars may have proved different. Even though this argument is highly speculative and driven by hindsight, it did not prevent his fellow Royalists from voicing it when explaining their defeat. It must be remembered that their criticisms of Cavendish had a personal edge and remain far removed from dispassionate objectivity. However, as a battlefield commander it seems that Cavendish was fundamentally flawed. Indeed, he seems to have recognized this by wisely leaving tactics to others. Whilst his concern for his reputation and status did much to inaugurate his armed royalism, these considerations ultimately undermined his resilience once his army was decisively defeated in the field.

THIS IS MY FINAL PASS OF THE ESSAYS SO PLEASE LOOK AT MY AMENDMENTS- IN RED- AND REPLY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. ELSPETH AND I ARE AIMING FOR AN END OF JANUARY DEADLINE.

THERE'S NOT MUCH TO DO, MOSTLY SOME TIGHTENING OF THE SYNTAX. PLEASE CHECK AND LET ME KNOW IF YOU ARE HAPPY WITH WHAT I HAVE DONE. ELSPETH AND I HAVE HAD TO MAKE SOME EDITORIAL DECISIONS RELATING TO CONSISTENCY IN THE TEXT. THUS, NEWCASTLE IS GOING TO BE CAVENDISH AND, ALTHOUGH IT LOOKS WRONG IN YOUR ESSAY, IT'S BETTER OVERALL. WE HAVE ALSO DECIDED TO GIVE ROYALISTS AND PARLIAMENTARIANS CAPITAL INITIAL LETTERS.

I HAVE ALSO GONE THROUGH YOUR FOOTNOTES, CONVERTING THEM TO BRILL'S HOUSE STYLE. IF SOME OF THE REFERENCES LOOK SPARSE, IT'S BECAUSE THE VOLUME WILL START WITH A LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.

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<sup>111</sup> Wanklyn, *Warrior Generals*, 7.