

## V.

A BRONZE MEDALLION PORTRAIT OF OLIVER CROMWELL, SIMILAR TO THE BUST REPRESENTED ON THE "DUNBAR MEDAL" STRUCK BY THOMAS SIMON BY ORDER OF THE PARLIAMENT. BY WILLIAM FRASER, F.R.C.S. DUBLIN, HON. MEM. S.A. SCOT.

An oval bronze plaque or medallion of large size, measuring upwards of 6 inches in length by 4 inches broad, bearing the portrait of the Great Protector of the Commonwealth, which came into my possession some years since, represented his features as more youthful than they are shown upon his ordinary coins in gold and silver. The uncovered head and armoured bust are in high relief, and a quantity of flowing locks of hair descend over his shoulders. On examining recently some medals and coins of Cromwell in my cabinet I recognised a striking resemblance between this medallion and the beautiful and much prized medal struck by direction of the House of Commons to commemorate that "greate mercie" the Battle of Dunbar, with its inscription of the historic word of the day, "the Lord of Hosts,"—having on its reverse a representation of the House of Parliament and its Speaker in full session, by whose supreme authority the medal was prepared.

This Dunbar Medal possesses additional importance in the medallic history of England, as it is the first military medal ever issued for active service in the field, alike to officers and men of all ranks serving in battle, similar to the usual practice adopted at the present day, but the example was not followed subsequently until the well-known Waterloo Medal succeeded to that distinction.

The following order for its preparation is taken from the journals of the House of Commons, vol. vi. page 465 :—

"Die Martis, 10th Septembris 1650.—Ordered that it be referred to the Committee of the Army to consider what medals may be prepared, both for officers and soldiers, that were in the Service in Scotland, and set the proportions and values of them and their number, and to present the estimate of them to the House." From a subsequently dated letter of the

Lieutenant-General to the Committee of the Army on the 4th of February 1650 (old style), written in consequence of the action taken to carry out this intention of issuing a medal, it appears that the celebrated medallist Thomas Simon, or Simmons as the name is sometimes written, was sent by special order from London to Edinburgh to obtain a suitable authentic portrait of Cromwell for the medal about to be made. A skilful artist, in preparing such a portrait, would, we may believe, set about its execution in the usual manner, by preparing, in the first place, a working model or design in wax of greater size than the steel die he intended to engrave. This model ought to agree in all important and essential particulars with the working die, such as the distinctive and characteristic features of the person intended to be commemorated, his ordinary attire, and the posture selected by the artist for his model. The Medallion now shown does agree in all particulars with the figure of Cromwell on the Dunbar Medal.

It is, however, a cast in bronze, and, so far as I can ascertain, unique ; if obtained from the artist's original wax model, it must have been copied by the peculiar art process known and practised at the time, and sometimes employed in our own day with success, termed "ciré perdu," that is, the soft waxen design was embedded in a mass of suitable modelling-clay to retain the impression, which during a subsequent process of baking became heated, and the wax melted out, after which a metal casting could be obtained, and the resulting bronze medallion would preserve a permanent record of the sculptor's original workmanship in wax.

Cromwell's portrait, both on the Dunbar Medal and my Medallion, agree in being much raised. Such high relief is characteristic of Simon's usual manner of design ; and in further confirmation of its being the handiwork of this special individual, we find no tradition or record existing of any other person whatever being allowed the privilege of engraving or modelling the portrait of the Protector for either the dies of medals or coins. He seldom gave permission even to painters to portray him ; hence genuine authentic contemporaneous portraits in oil are rarely met. All known likenesses of Oliver Cromwell, so far as I know, and certainly all his portraits on medals and coins, can be divided

into two distinct classes, according as they belong to two different periods of his remarkable career. The Dunbar portrait and this Medallion were taken when he was comparatively a young man. Born in the year 1599 he was fifty years of age when he fought his "crowning victory." He appears in full vigour of life, a leader of men, every feature denoting strong will and stern resoluteness of character. He is recognised by his portrait to be as history tells us, and long curling locks of hair in ample profusion fall down upon his armour over his neck and shoulders. When Cromwell subsequently placed his image and superscription on the coinage of Great Britain as Lord Protector of the Commonwealth (on these also Simon engraved his likeness), he is shown with rounded and more developed features, considerably aged in his appearance, and his abundant and flowing hair becomes shortened, still covering his neck to some extent, but not his shoulders. Whether he is represented in earlier life on the Dunbar Medal, or in more advancing years upon the gold and silver coins of the Commonwealth, we notice he is invariably portrayed as having a quantity of long curling hair, altogether different from the prevalent popular ideas entertained about Puritans and Roundheads, who, to distinguish them from the Cavalier followers of Charles, are usually supposed to be cropped as close as a French *sans-culotte* during the times of the Revolution in France one hundred years ago.

The history of the Bronze Plaque can be traced without difficulty, and affords a reasonable voucher for its antecedent reliable character. It came into my possession direct from the Whaley family, one of whom during the latter part of last century was a well-known figure in Dublin society, distinguished as "Buck Whaley," a member of the last Irish Parliament, and related to the Earl of Clare, who was married to his sister Anne, eldest daughter of Richard Chapel Whaley of Whaley Abbey, Wicklow.

It is, however, through their relationship with the well-known Colonel Whalley, the near relative, cousin, and vigorous supporter of Oliver Cromwell, subsequently one of the judges at the trial of Charles the First, and therefore called in history the "Regicide," that the Whaley family obtain their best claims to distinction.

Through the kindness of my friend George Dames Burtchaell, Esq.,

LL.B., I obtained the following memoranda relating to the Whalley and Whaley families.

Richard Whalley of Kirkston Hall, M.P. for Nottinghamshire, married Frances, third daughter of Sir Henry Cromwell of Hinchinbrooke, grandfather of Oliver Cromwell the Protector, and had four sons and three daughters.

The second son, Edward Whalley the Regicide, was actively engaged in the Commonwealth wars as Colonel, fled to America, and died there before 1679.

The third son was Henry Whalley, who was Accountant-General in Ireland, and M.P. for Athenry from 1661 to 1665. He left a son, John Whalley of Athenry, Co. Galway, who left five daughters, one of whom, the youngest, Susanna, married Richard Whaley or Whalley, M.P. for Athenry from 1692 till his death in 1725. He was the son of Richard Whaley, a Cornet of Horse, who had a grant of land in the counties of Armagh and of Kilkenny under the Act of Settlement in 1666. Of his parentage there is no record, nor whether he was a connection of the Regicide's family.

Richard Whaley and Susanna Whalley had a son, Richard, who was father of Thomas Whaley—Buck Whaley, also known as "Jerusalem" Whaley, from a successful bet he gained, by walking to Jerusalem and back within a year, and playing a game of ball against its walls. His departure on this memorable expedition is commemorated in a Dublin publication of the period, in doggerel rhymes. This work is named "Both sides of the Gutter." Mr Burtchaell further adds: "Jerusalem Whaley was thus, through his grandmother Susanna Whalley, descended from the brother of the Regicide, he and his brother being first cousins of Oliver Cromwell the Protector. It is curious that the two families of Whalley and Whaley should have become connected by marriage. There is nothing to show that they were originally of the same stock, but they probably were."

So far for the pedigree. The Whaleys had an estate in the County Wicklow termed Whaley Abbey, and a fine Dublin mansion in Stephens Green, still recognisable by the figure of a recumbent lion carved in stone over the portico. When the last of the family died, this house was sold;

with its family pictures and furniture, and the Cromwell Medallion then came into my hands. The house itself was purchased for the Catholic University of Ireland, and still remains in their possession.

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