

## **Humphrey Peake and Siege Warfare**

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**Source:** *Midlands Historical Review*, Vol. 2 (2018)

**Published:** 05/07/2018

**URL:** <http://www.midlandshistoricalreview.com/humphrey-peake-and-siege-warfare/>

## Humphrey Peake and Siege Warfare

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During the English Civil Wars of the 1640s and 1650s, siege warfare was a central aspect, which has nonetheless been overlooked by the historiography. Often the major focus of historians of the wars has been major battles such as Marston Moor and Naseby; important sieges such as Newark and Colchester get little attention. For instance, the small section on sieges in Charles Carlton's *Going to the Wars* reads more like a list of anecdotes than a serious critical approach to the concept of siege warfare.<sup>1</sup> Dedicated monographs are similarly lacking: Peter Young and Wilfred Emberton's *Sieges of the Great Civil War*, for example, is very 'operational' in style, focused almost entirely on the military side of sieges, with noticeably little attention paid to the civilian side.<sup>2</sup>

Barbara Donagan states that it was in sieges that the military and civilian spheres began to merge – many sieges took place in garrisoned towns, and even sieges of country houses had an impact on local communities.<sup>3</sup> John Barratt's recent work is commendable for including the impact of sieges on society, but still contains flaws, such as omitting the siege of Colchester.<sup>4</sup>

My approach to siege warfare in civil war England has been influenced by the recent trend of third-wave military history, which considers the culture and cultural impact of war.<sup>5</sup> In particular, I have taken inspiration from John Walter and his study of popular violence in the 1640s, in which he takes one relatively small event – the 'Colchester Plunderers' in 1642 – and uses it as a window to discuss popular violence in the period.<sup>6</sup> Humphrey Peake's book *Meditations Upon a Seige* (1646) will be the lens I use to examine siege warfare and its impact, not only militarily but also from a socio-economic perspective.

Humphrey Peake was a clergyman based primarily in Kent, whom, in the preface of *Meditations*, shows his royalist alignment.<sup>7</sup> The exact date of Peake's birth is unclear. The *Alumni Cantabrigienses* puts his date of birth in 1592, though the registers of his local parish

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<sup>1</sup> C. Carlton, *Going to the Wars: The Experience of the British Civil Wars, 1638-1651* (London, 1992), pp. 154-72.

<sup>2</sup> P. Young & W. Emberton, *Sieges of the Great Civil War, 1642-1646* (London, 1978).

<sup>3</sup> B. Donagan, *War in England 1642-1649* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 312-3.

<sup>4</sup> J. Barratt, *Sieges of the English Civil Wars* (Barnsley, 2009).

<sup>5</sup> J. Black, *War and the Cultural Turn* (Cambridge, 2012), pp. 153-4.

<sup>6</sup> J. Walter, *Understanding Popular Violence in the English Revolution: The Colchester Plunderers* (Cambridge, 1999), p. 6.

<sup>7</sup> H. Peake, *Meditations Upon a Seige* (N.L., 1646), pp. i-ii.

reveal only one Humphrey Peake born in the 1590s, specifically 1597.<sup>8</sup> He studied at Trinity College, Cambridge, where his high church views would have seemed out of place amongst the college's mostly-Presbyterian student body.<sup>9</sup> Early in his career he showed ties to Charles I. Charles attempted to give Peake, by now 'Chaplain in Ordinary to the King', a lectureship at St. Mary's church in London in 1627.<sup>10</sup> Peake was made vicar of Acrise in Kent the same year and by 1632 was appointed Canon of Canterbury Cathedral.<sup>11</sup> The 1630s and 1640s appear to demonstrate his growing commitment to Laudianism, becoming known among anti-Laudians, with presumably-exaggerated depictions of Peake appearing in print.<sup>12</sup> Peake also maintained ties to Charles throughout his career, calling the King the one 'to whom I owe all'.<sup>13</sup>

Published posthumously in 1646, *Meditations* is seemingly Peake's only surviving work, though it is not a simple religious tract. It is a thorough, in-depth examination of siege warfare in the style of a military manual. How Peake came to have such knowledge of sieges with no apparent military experience is unknown. The fortification of Canterbury in 1642 may have allowed him to attain some information, and Fiona McCall raises the possibility of Peake being in Oxford while it was besieged, being Doctor of Divinity in the city in 1645.<sup>14</sup> The small size of *Meditations* also supports this point, it making sense to print a pocket-sized book while under siege to save paper. Moreover, Peake uses the word 'we' to describe the besieged.<sup>15</sup> Another possibility, though unverifiable, is that Peake was somehow related or connected to the Peake family of painters. Robert (c. 1551-1619), William (c. 1580-1639) and Sir Robert Peake (c. 1605-1667) were all prominent painters and print sellers in London

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<sup>8</sup> A Cambridge Alumni Database, 'Humphrey Peake', <http://venn.lib.cam.ac.uk/cgi-bin/search-2016B.pl?sur=peake&suro=w&fir=humphrey&firo=c&cit=&cito=c&c=all&z=all&tex=&sy=&eye=&col=all&maxcount=50> (accessed 24<sup>th</sup> February 2017); London Metropolitan Archives, P69/MRY9/A/01/Ms6984, unfoliated.

<sup>9</sup> The Clergy Database, <http://db.theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/persons/DisplayPerson.jsp?PersonID=39030> (accessed 8<sup>th</sup> February 2017); W.W.R. Ball, *Trinity College Cambridge* (London, 1906), pp. 71-3.

<sup>10</sup> TNA, C 8/41/16, unfoliated; J.F. Merritt, *The Social World of Early Modern Westminster: Abbey, Court and Community, 1525-1640* (Manchester, 2005), p. 344.

<sup>11</sup> A.G. Matthews, *Walker Revised* (Oxford, 1948), p. 223; J. Walker, *An Attempt Towards Recovering an Account of the Numbers and Sufferings of the Clergy of the Church of England* (London, 1714), part II, p. 8.

<sup>12</sup> W. Prynne, *Canterburies Doom, or, the First Part of a Compleat History of the Commitment, Charge, Tryall, Condemnation, Execution of William Laud, Late Archbishop of Canterbury* (London, 1646), pp. 78-9; *Englands Loyalty, in Joyfull Expressions, for the City of Londons Safety, Being a True and Reall Relation of Many Most Remarkable Passages Which Have Been Lately Divulged by One D. Peake* (London, 1641); Matthews, *Walker Revised*, p. 223; R. Culmer, *Cathedrall Newes from Canterbury Shewing the Canterburian Cathedrall to bee in an Abbey-Like, Corrupt, and Rotten Condition, Which Calls for a Speedy Reformation or Dissolution* (London, 1644), p. 10.

<sup>13</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, p. i.

<sup>14</sup> W.D. Hamilton, *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the Reign of Charles I, 1641-43* (London, 1887), pp. 416-7; F. McCall, *Baal's Priests: Loyalist Clergy and the English Revolution* (Farnham, 2013), p. 119.

<sup>15</sup> British Library, General Reference Collection, 8405.a.18; Peake, *Meditations*, pp. 19-20.

during Humphrey's lifetime.<sup>16</sup> Sir Robert served with distinction at the siege of Basing House and was renowned for his military knowledge.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, Humphrey was born a mere half a mile away from a tenement Robert rented in the 1590s.<sup>18</sup> A connection between Humphrey and the Peake family would explain not only the former's closeness to the King, but also his interest in and knowledge of sieges.

What makes Peake's work exceptional is its focus on the 'human' side of sieges compared to the other military manuals of the time. Manuals by the likes of Thomas Venn and David Papillon are both technical and matter-of-fact, including diagrams, figures, charts and specific examples.<sup>19</sup> Peake's is entirely different in style. It pays attention to morale, exhaustion and the psychological impact of being under siege. Even the chapters on weapons and tactics include long exposition on religion or themes like bravery, as in the chapter on petards.<sup>20</sup> It is also more general, with no specific examples of sieges in England or elsewhere given. His language is emotive and colourful, for instance talking of 'those [under siege] that have eaten their own children, nay their own flesh from their armes'.<sup>21</sup> *Meditations* is not a mere military manual. It is a vital source in understanding both the military and socio-economic aspects of siege warfare, as well as its impact on English society. Despite this, *Meditations* has been misunderstood and overlooked by historians. Carlton wrongly calls it a sermon despite it being a military manual, while McCall only briefly touches on Peake.<sup>22</sup>

To contextualise *Meditations*, I shall consider sieges in England between 1640 and 1660 due to this being the area where Peake would likely have the most experience. The experiences of non-besieged garrisons – such as Newport Pagnell – will also be of interest. In terms of sources, I will draw frequently from contemporary printed accounts. F.E. Dolan rightfully cautions against over-reliance on print, but the use of multiple printed accounts, alongside manuscripts, calendars and secondary research, should help overcome print's 'partisan' nature.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> K. Hearn, 'Robert Peake (c. 1551-1619)' (2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21685?docPos=1>, accessed 13<sup>th</sup> April 2017; A. Griffiths, 'Sir Robert Peake (c. 1605-1667)' (2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21686?docPos=2>, accessed 13<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

<sup>17</sup> Hearn 'Peake'; Griffiths, 'Peake'; *A Panegyrick on the Late Honourable Sir Robert Peake, Knight Vice-President and Leader of the Honourable Artillery Company* (N.L., 1667).

<sup>18</sup> Hearn, 'Peake'.

<sup>19</sup> T. Venn, *Military and Maritime Discipline in Three Books* (London, 1672); D. Papillon, *A Practicall Abstract of the Arts of Fortification and Assailing* (London, 1645).

<sup>20</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, pp. 40-4.

<sup>21</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, p. 6.

<sup>22</sup> Carlton, *Going to the Wars*, pp. 241-2; McCall, *Baal's Priests*, pp. 119-20, 184-5.

<sup>23</sup> F.E. Dolan, 'Scattered remains and paper bodies: Margaret Cavendish and the siege of Colchester', *Postmedieval – A Journal of Medieval Cultural Studies*, 4/4 (2013), p. 454.

Some brief context on the background of siege-craft in England prior to the civil wars is required to enhance our understanding of what took place after 1642. In terms of fortification, even the most modern garrisons like Portsmouth dated back to the mid-sixteenth century and were thus in a state of disrepair by 1642.<sup>24</sup> The primary reason for this was England's long period of internal peace before the 1640s. John Angier complained of how knowledge of war had slipped, with the country 'being born and educated in a land of peace, where no enemy was left ... to teach them warre'.<sup>25</sup> M.C. Fissel does however raise an important point in bringing up the role of English mercenaries in continental Europe, for this was the basis of almost all of England's awareness and knowledge of siege craft at this time.<sup>26</sup> Advances in continental siege craft were brought back to England by soldiers that had fought in foreign armies.<sup>27</sup> Often, however, this was observational knowledge rather than in-depth understanding.<sup>28</sup> This led to a sense of confusion at the siege of Reading in 1643 as few knew how to proceed in a siege, and in the early stages of the war, advantage often lay with the defenders.<sup>29</sup> Foreign experts, like Bernard de Gomme for the royalists, filled the gap initially until an understanding of siege warfare developed.<sup>30</sup> By the time Peake wrote *Meditations*, the environment would have been one in which unfamiliarity with siege craft had rapidly transformed by necessity into a deeper and more effective understanding. *Meditations* is an essential work in comprehending the cultural impact siege warfare had on English society in the mid-seventeenth century and beyond.

## Weapons and tactics

Peake talks extensively about weapons throughout *Meditations*, with chapters on topics such as 'petarrs', 'case-shott' and 'muskets, pikes, halberts, pistols, hand-grenadoes'.<sup>31</sup> The focus here, however, will be on three of Peake's chapters: 'granadoes', 'fire-balls', and 'poysoned bullets'.<sup>32</sup> These are all strong examples that show the cultural and social impact siege

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<sup>24</sup> E. Broxap, 'The sieges of Hull during the Great Civil War', *The English Historical Review*, 20/79 (1905), pp. 459-60; Barratt, *Sieges*, p. 2; J. Webb, 'The siege of Portsmouth in the civil war', *The Portsmouth Papers*, 7 (1969), p. 13.

<sup>25</sup> J. Angier, *Lancshires Valley of Anchor is Englands Doore of Hope* (London, 1643), p. 7.

<sup>26</sup> M.C. Fissel, *English Warfare 1511-1642* (London, 2001), pp. 182-3.

<sup>27</sup> C. Duffy, *Siege Warfare: The Fortress in the Early Modern World, 1494-1660* (London, 1979), p. 145.

<sup>28</sup> J. Burke, 'The New Model Army and the problems of siege warfare, 1648-51', *Irish Historical Studies*, 27/105 (1990), pp. 2-3.

<sup>29</sup> E. Hyde, earl of Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England Begun in the Year 1641, Volume III*, ed. W.D. Macray (Oxford, 1888), p. 14; Burke, 'New Model', p. 28.

<sup>30</sup> R. Hutton & W. Reeves, 'Sieges and fortifications', in J. Kenyon & J. Ohlmeyer (eds.), *The Civil Wars: A Military History of England, Scotland and Ireland 1638-1660* (Oxford, 1998), p. 208.

<sup>31</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, pp. iii-v.

<sup>32</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, pp. 26-34, 37-40.

warfare had on English society. *Meditations* also covers the tactics that could be used in sieges, with that of firing especially interesting due to Peake's break with contemporary moral norms. Like his writings on weapons though, Peake does not approach it from a technical standpoint, instead demonstrating the ways in which sieges led to pragmatism prevailing over cultural norms.

Peake's chapters on 'grenadoes' and fireballs are among the more intriguing of *Meditations*. Claiming collectively that they have killed 'thousands', Peake uses language that is strikingly similar to modern-day discourse around nuclear weapons, saying 'no engine or instrument of warre doth more mischief, nor imprints a greater, or juster terror'.<sup>33</sup> Contemporary descriptions of 'grenadoes' being powerful enough to 'bury men in stones and dust' have crept into the historiography, with the historian Tim Warner branding them a 'most terrible weapon'.<sup>34</sup> They were also perceived as expensive, specialist weapons. Jeconiah Abercromby makes specific mention of 'men who know how to use [...] grenadoes', which supposedly cost £20 apiece.<sup>35</sup>

The actual effectiveness of fireballs and 'grenadoes' in sieges does not seem to match their reputation. While at Brampton a sally targeting a house making 'grenadoes' suggests that they were of significant strategic importance, at Nantwich 80 to 100 'fiery hot Bullets' managed to only destroy 'a stack of wood', with multiple accounts of fireballs and 'grenadoes' being rapidly extinguished.<sup>36</sup> Regardless of their actual effectiveness, what matters is that fireballs and 'grenadoes' were *seen* as awful. Peake makes an outright comparison between fireballs and Hell, and the sight of fireballs flying 'thorow the ayre like so many falling Stars' would naturally cause a sense of terror.<sup>37</sup> The fear of fireballs and 'grenadoes' had a tangible impact on the conflict. They induced panic at Chester, people fled

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<sup>33</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, p. 28.

<sup>34</sup> M. Carter, *A Most True and Exact Relation of That Honourable as Unfortunate Expedition of Kent, Essex and Colchester* (London, 1650), p. 163; T. Warner, *Newark: Civil War & Siegeworks* (Nottingham, 1992), p. 15.

<sup>35</sup> S. Luke, *The Letter Books 1644-45 of Sir Samuel Luke, Parliamentary Governor of Newport Pagnell*, ed. H.G. Tibbutt (London, 1963), p. 466; *A True & Exact Relation of the Several Passages at the Siege of Manchester* (London, 1642), p. 11.

<sup>36</sup> R. Hudson (ed.), *The Grand Quarrel: from the Civil War Memoirs of Mrs Lucy Hutchinson; Mrs Alice Thornton; Ann, Lady Fanshawe; Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle; Anne, Lady Halkett, & the Letters of Brilliana, Lady Harley* (London, 1993), p. 88; *A Catalogue of All the Names of Prisoners Taken at the Raising of the Siege at Nantwich by That Valiant Commander, Sir Thomas Fairfaxe* (London, 1643), p. 1; J. Dorney, *A Briefe and Exact Relation of the Most Materiall and Remarkable Passages That Hapned in the Late Well-Formed (and as Valiantly Defended) Seige Laid Before the City of Gloucester* (London, 1643), p. 6; S. Porter, *The Blast of War: Destruction in the English Civil Wars* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) (Stroud, 2011), p. 51.

<sup>37</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, pp. 33-4; T. May, *The History of the Parliament of England, Which Began November the Third MDCXL, with a Short and Necessary View of Some Precedent Yeares* (London, 1647), p. 100.

their homes in King's Lynn, and they contributed to the surrender of Devizes.<sup>38</sup> Samuel Luke reveals the views of fireballs in warfare, recounting the example in February 1645 of the rival garrisons of Melcombe and Weymouth, who both forwent the use of fireballs as it was not 'fair play'.<sup>39</sup>

How can this dichotomy between, on the one hand, the apparent ineffectiveness of fireballs and 'grenadoes', and on the other, the contemporary view of those armaments be reconciled? 'Journalist exaggeration' must be considered, with stories of defenders easily putting out fires being a natural boost to morale, especially against such a feared weapon.<sup>40</sup> Equally, the very idea of them propagated by the likes of Peake, could have overridden any logical assessment of their danger. Peake's chapters on 'grenadoes' and fireballs reveal that often the psychological impact of siege weapons in the civil wars could be as important, if not more so, than their physical impact.

Poisoned (or chewed) bullets were bullets notched or in other ways altered to make them rougher and inflict 'horrendous wounds', used, in Peake's words, 'amongst the baser sort of people'.<sup>41</sup> The siege of Colchester demonstrates the fixation participants in the civil wars had on poisoned bullets. Each side complained of their use by the other side, with parliamentarian commander Lord Fairfax promising 'no quarter' should they continue to be used.<sup>42</sup> Their use was seen as a top-down, conscious strategic decision, evidenced by the fact it was blamed on the royalist commander the earl of Norwich and later used as a reason to execute another senior royalist, George Lisle.<sup>43</sup> Examples were even sent to the Speaker of the House of Commons, William Lenthall, demonstrating the way in which poisoned bullets were seen as thoroughly breaching the accepted practices of war.<sup>44</sup> Colchester also saw the use of a distinct type of poisoned bullet by the defending royalists, ones 'coated in vedigris [verdigris]' (green pigment that occurs when copper oxidises).<sup>45</sup> Either the bullets themselves had developed verdigris, meaning they were old, exposed and made of metals other than lead, or they had been 'coated' verdigris. The former suggests that supplies were low, with lead having to be replaced with other metals that would weaken the bullet and make it more likely to break apart on impact (which would naturally incur the disgusted

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<sup>38</sup> P. Edwards, *Dealing in Death: The Arms Trade and the British Civil Wars, 1638-52* (Stroud, 2000), p. 10; *A Briefe and True Relation of the Seiege and Surrendering of Kings Lyn to the Earle of Manchester* (N.L., 1643), p. 1.

<sup>39</sup> Luke, *Letter Books*, p. 172.

<sup>40</sup> D. Pennington, 'The war and the people', in J.S. Morrill (ed.), *Reactions to the English Civil War, 1642-1649* (Basingstoke, 1982), p. 124.

<sup>41</sup> M. Bennett, *The Civil Wars in Britain & Ireland, 1638-1651* (Oxford, 1997), p. 302; Peake, *Meditations*, p. 37.

<sup>42</sup> D.J. Appleby (ed.), *V13136 Source Book, 2016-17* (Nottingham, 2016), p. 41; *A Diary of the Siege of Colchester by Forces Under Command of Generall Fairfax* (London, 1648).

<sup>43</sup> ERO, T/Z 245/1, unfoliated; Burke, 'New Model', p. 25.

<sup>44</sup> ERO, T/Z 245/1, unfoliated.

<sup>45</sup> ERO, T/Z 245/1, unfoliated.

reactions of Fairfax).<sup>46</sup> The latter possibility would increase the abrasiveness of the bullet and also cause more damage. Whatever the reality, it is not hard to see how Peake's view of poisoned bullets as unchristian and dishonourable developed.<sup>47</sup>

Donagan does however raise the point that many poisoned bullets were simply homemade bullets that lacked the refinement of professionally-made ones, rather than the product of a conscious decision to inflict more damage.<sup>48</sup> A shortage of ammunition at the siege of Reading meant defenders were reduced to using stones instead of bullets, with a commander killed in a similar manner at Gloucester.<sup>49</sup> These selected chapters from *Meditations* on weapons demonstrate the grip fireballs, 'grenadoes' and poisoned bullets had on the popular psyche as well as the military side of sieges.

A tactic often used in sieges was the firing of buildings around a garrison. Peake writes how, along with felling trees, this was necessary for maintaining a suitable line of sight.<sup>50</sup> This was in line with the 'moderna' style of defences developed in the sixteenth century, demonstrating how continental siege techniques had reached England, with Edward Massie utilising this technique at Gloucester to make the land around the city 'an obstacle-free killing zone'.<sup>51</sup> Fears of firing, however, existed as early as 1642, and Peake is also concerned with the consequences of such tactics, being wary of the loss of houses and possibly disastrous depopulation.<sup>52</sup> Colchester is a prime example of this, considering England's population growth of an annual average of 0.58 per cent between 1540 and 1650.<sup>53</sup> Firing also served the purpose of being a scorched-earth tactic, as happened at Chester where 'much provision' was burnt.<sup>54</sup>

Peake differs from contemporary military manuals on this topic, with Papillon highly critical of those who fire suburbs, saying they were 'voyd of all Christian charity', and Henry Robinson, who places firing alongside rape in terms of 'villanie'.<sup>55</sup> Yet Peake, a clergyman, sees firing as 'inevitable' and a necessary evil - one that is 'justifiable', whilst also leaving a

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<sup>46</sup> W.F. Gale & T.C. Totemeier (eds.), *Smithells Metals Reference Book* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.) (Oxford, 2004), pp. 22-37, 22-47.

<sup>47</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, p. 38.

<sup>48</sup> Donagan, *War in England*, p. 342.

<sup>49</sup> *The Second Intelligence from His Excellency, His Quarters Before Reading* (N.L., 1643), p. 2; Dorney, *Gloucester*, p. 2.

<sup>50</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, pp. 109-12.

<sup>51</sup> R. Matthews, *The Sieges of Newark, 1643-1646* (Epsom, 2013), p. 13; I. Gentles, *The English Revolution and the Wars in the Three Kingdoms, 1638-1652* (London, 2007), p. 188.

<sup>52</sup> *Articles or Demand Made by the Kings Excellent Majestie to the Gentry and Commonalty of the County of Salop on Saturday the 8 October 1642* (London, 1642), p. 6; Peake, *Meditations*, p. 113.

<sup>53</sup> J. Mokyr, 'Review: Three Centuries of Population Change', *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 32/1 (1983), p. 186.

<sup>54</sup> W. Brereton, *Sir William Brereton's Letter Sent to the Honourable William Lenthall, Esq.; Speaker of the Honourable House of Commons, Concerning All the Passages and Treaties of the Siege and Taking of the City of Chester* (London, 1646), p. 23.

<sup>55</sup> Papillon, *Arts of Fortification*, p. 9; H. Robinson, *Liberty of Conscience, or the Sole Means to Obtaine Peace and Truth* (N.L., 1643), p. 3.

'bitter relish' that should not be enjoyed.<sup>56</sup> The reasons for Peake's beliefs are unclear. It could be that years of war made him more pragmatic and willing to make sacrifices. But this is unusual, as works written after Peake's still share the views of the aforementioned Henry Robinson earlier in the wars.<sup>57</sup> This can be tied to J.A. Adams's work comparing the 'reality' and 'discourse' of war, in which pre-existing ideals interact with the experiences of war to create new military cultures, Peake's case being an example of this and showing the significance of siege warfare.<sup>58</sup>

These selected chapters from *Meditations* on weapons demonstrate the grip fireballs, 'grenadoes' and poisoned bullets had on the popular psyche as well as the military side of sieges. It is a brilliant example of the benefits of a work such as Peake's against standard military manuals like Venn's or Papillon's which are less likely to dwell on more 'human' issues such as the disgust directed to those who used poisoned bullets. Thus, while Peake does not reveal much about the practical usage of weapons in sieges, he does enhance our understanding of the impact they had on culture and discourse in English society. Crucially, he also shows the lengths participants in the war would go to win, even if it challenged social norms, demonstrative of Adams's 'reality' and 'discourse' theory.

## Mentality

One of the most intriguing aspects of *Meditations* is that it equates psychological and physical trauma, saying sieges 'doe afflict the mind, and tyre and decay the spirits, as toyle and labour doth the bodie'.<sup>59</sup> This sentiment is shared in some elements of the historiography, notably Peter Harrington who identifies psychological factors as the 'most significant'.<sup>60</sup> Peake's role as a chaplain may have exposed him to the psychological trauma of siege warfare. *Meditations* includes sections on the mental damage sieges caused, as well as the importance of other issues like morale, building on the earlier discussion on fireballs and 'grenadoes' to reveal the impact sieges could have on participants' mental wellbeing.

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<sup>56</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, pp. 113, 115.

<sup>57</sup> May, *History of the Parliament*, p. 7; *Colchesters Teares: Affecting and Afflicting City and Country, Dropping from the Sad Face of a New Warr, Threatening to Bury In Her Own Ashes That Wofull Town* (London, 1648), p. 8.

<sup>58</sup> W.C. Pruett, 'A history of the organisational development of the Continental Artillery during the American Revolution' (U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, M.M.A.S. dissertation, 2011), p. 134.

<sup>59</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, p. 9.

<sup>60</sup> P. Harrington, *English Civil War Fortifications 1642-51* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) (Oxford, 2009), p. 49.

Peake is aware of the physiological consequences of exhaustion, a view shared by Angier.<sup>61</sup> Exhaustion would have been a major issue in sieges, with the garrison at Basing House supposedly operating 48-hour shifts.<sup>62</sup> Peake also raises the issue that simply being awake isn't enough; one has to be *alert*. 'One minutes negligence' could cost a garrison dearly, with Donagan outlining harsh punishments for sentries who lapsed.<sup>63</sup> This impacted upon siege participants' mental health, with one account suggesting fraught nerves through making a comparison that implies some were 'frightened with every blast of winde' - a symptom that raises the possibility of post-traumatic stress disorder.<sup>64</sup> This would have been exacerbated by attempts at psychological warfare by both the besieged and besiegers, which in some cases made them lose their 'tranquillitie of minde'.<sup>65</sup> Massie at Gloucester tried to undermine the besiegers through keeping 'his Enemies waking by continuall Alarms, to wast and weary them'.<sup>66</sup> Peake proceeds to make suggestions as to how to cope with the psychological trauma caused by sieges, as well as by warfare in general. He suggests taking time to mourn, recharge and recover from the stresses of combat.<sup>67</sup> That he mentions this speaks volumes, suggesting that people could have sought Peake's advice about this, likely in his role as a clergyman.

Peake makes abundantly clear that morale was one of the most important psychological factors in sieges during the civil war, stating 'the Souldier can be either perswaded or constrained to enter the jawes of Death'.<sup>68</sup> He clearly believed it difficult for either side to maintain morale. For the besiegers, they face the issue of knowing that 'scarce one of a hundred ... doth not miscarry' in an attack.<sup>69</sup> Peake is right to raise this point. The siege of Hull in 1642 failed in large part because the royalist besiegers were 'completely demoralised', and even the victorious besiegers at Colchester were so lacking in morale they paid others to take their place.<sup>70</sup>

Morale could be boosted during a successful siege by news from deserters of those inside the garrison, as happened at Basing House.<sup>71</sup> The issues facing the morale of the besieged

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<sup>61</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, p. 10; Angier, *Englands Doore of Hope*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>62</sup> W.G. Ross, *Military Engineering During the Great Civil War* (Huntingdon, 2006), pp. 95, 99.

<sup>63</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, p. 19; B. Donagan, 'Codes and conduct in the English Civil War', *Past & Present*, 118 (1988), p. 86.

<sup>64</sup> *A Declaration of the Besieged Soldiers in the City of Colchester and Their Resolution Concerning the Surrendering of the Said City* (London, 1648), p. 4; *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition* (Washington, D.C., 2013), pp. 271-2.

<sup>65</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, p. 14.

<sup>66</sup> May, *History of the Parliament*, p. 100.

<sup>67</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, pp. 78-9.

<sup>68</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, p. 2.

<sup>69</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, p. 2.

<sup>70</sup> Broxap, 'Hull', p. 465; Carter, *Colchester*, p. 155.

<sup>71</sup> *A Description of the Siege of Basing Castle; Kept by the Lord Marquisse of Winchester, for the Service of His Majesty: Against, the Forces of the Rebels, Under Command of Colonell Norton, Anno Dom. 1644* (Oxford, 1644), p. 19.

were 'full of wonder too', in the words of Peake.<sup>72</sup> Promise of relief seemed to sustain the defenders at Colchester through their prolonged siege, and other garrisons endured via religious belief, which Peake makes reference to, or simply money, as during the desperate defence of Leicester.<sup>73</sup> The defence of Portsmouth was blighted by rates of desertion so high they invalidated the effective preparation made for the siege, primarily caused by soldiers' distrust that their commander, George Goring, would offer pay.<sup>74</sup>

Peake found that of paramount importance for a leader was the ability to instil discipline.<sup>75</sup> He was most likely aware of the failure of the second siege of Newark in which the besieging parliamentary armies of John Meldrum were hindered by lack of discipline, with Meldrum finding it especially infuriating, having been used to professional continental armies.<sup>76</sup> Similarly, Papillon noted that 'the Souldiers are most commonly the first Aggressours' when trouble arises, and as such commanders were required to train their men in discipline.<sup>77</sup>

Peake also stresses the importance of commanders acting justly, lest soldiers outright reject orders as happened at Gloucester.<sup>78</sup> This just behaviour by commanders ties in with the almost paternal role Peake viewed them as holding, noting 'protection, is the first, and greatest thing expected from a leader'.<sup>79</sup> Examples of this sentiment abound, from Nathaniel Fiennes being seen as solely responsible for Bristol, and Samuel Luke bluntly saying his role was to 'look after' his men.<sup>80</sup> The clearest example of this is during the siege of Colchester, where Charles Lucas shows a paternal inclination towards the people of Essex, being much criticised by Matthew Carter for giving them too much food.<sup>81</sup> The Duke of Beaufort is also critical of Lucas' 'excesse of charity', and it seems this sympathetic feeling towards the people of Essex did not extend to his men.<sup>82</sup> Even this paternalism, however, is only extended to royalists, with parliamentarians like Ralph Josselin complaining of being

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<sup>72</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, p. 2.

<sup>73</sup> W.D. Hamilton (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the Reign of Charles I, 1648-1649* (London, 1893), p. 137; *Siege of Manchester*, p. 4; Peake, *Meditations*, pp. 13-4; *A Narration of the Siege and Taking of the Town of Leicester the Last of May, 1645, by the King's Forces* (London, 1645), p. 7.

<sup>74</sup> Webb, 'Portsmouth', pp. 8-9, 11, 19-20.

<sup>75</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, p. 67.

<sup>76</sup> A.C. Wood, *Nottinghamshire in the Civil War* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) (London, 2007); Duffy, *Siege Warfare*, p. 146.

<sup>77</sup> Papillon, *Arts of Fortification*, p. 95.

<sup>78</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, p. 72; Dorney, *Glocester*, p. 8.

<sup>79</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, pp. 73-4.

<sup>80</sup> A.B. Hinds (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts, Relating to the English Affairs, Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice, and in Other Libraries of Northern Italy. Vol. XXVII, 1643-1647* (London, 1926), p. 6; Luke, *Letter Books*, p. 110.

<sup>81</sup> Carter, *Colchester*, pp. 158-9.

<sup>82</sup> HMC, *Duke of Beaufort*, p. 29; Whitelock, *Memorials II*, p. 332.

plundered 'of all that was possible' by Lucas' men.<sup>83</sup> Peake's narrative makes it clear what contemporaries regarded as a good commander, even if at times the realities of war made this difficult.

One psychological aspect of sieges that Peake overlooks is the morale of civilians in garrisons, which was important due to the converging of military and civilian spheres that Donagan highlights.<sup>84</sup> Generally, Peake is disparaging towards civilians under siege, seeing their predicament as punishment from God for sins such as 'pride and vanitie'.<sup>85</sup> Peake is maybe here sympathising with the high-ranking commanders he probably knew (or was possibly related to, in the case of Sir Robert Peake). Local populations were often at odds with the military governments of garrisons, a prime example being Colchester. Despite the initial hopes of Charles Lucas to win over the locals, after weeks of close siege, anger was directed at commanders such as the earl of Norwich through protests and petitions.<sup>86</sup> Peake evidently also fears social breakdown, warning of the poor who may be forced to steal food, resulting in 'sinne' and crime increasing.<sup>87</sup>

While his neglect of civilians' morale may be due to his own social status, another explanation for Peake's perspective can be found in his religious views. As underlined above, *Meditations* frequently interprets sieges as deserving punishments from God for sins committed. This could be due to the contemporary perception amongst royalists, like Peake, of parliamentarianism being prevalent in urban areas, with Peake showing notable hostility to towns and cities.<sup>88</sup> Some even saw sieges as essentially purifying urban areas, with the siege of Exeter being said to have allowed the city to maintain its 'virgin honour'.<sup>89</sup> The references of Peake and others to religion underlie the significance of siege warfare in that people of various religious persuasions based arguments around their respective Christian principles.

## Economics, society & memory

*Meditations* also discusses sieges in the wider context. Peake covers the same ground as other manuals, notably Papillon's, such as issues pertaining to food supplies and social

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<sup>83</sup> Carter, *Colchester*, p. 48; R. Josselin, *The Diary of Ralph Josselin, 1616-1683*, ed. A. Macfarlane (London, 1976), p. 128.

<sup>84</sup> Donagan, *War in England*, pp. 312-3.

<sup>85</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, p. 7.

<sup>86</sup> Carter, *Colchester*, p. 129; *Diary of the Siege of Colchester*; Donagan, *War in England*, p. 354.

<sup>87</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, pp. 8, 14-5; Carlton, *Going to the Wars*, p. 164.

<sup>88</sup> R. Howell, 'Neutralism, conservatism and alignment in the English Revolution: the case of the towns, 1642-9', in Morrill, *Reactions*, pp. 67-8, 71; Peake, *Meditations*, p. 7.

<sup>89</sup> J. Bond, *Occasus Occidentalis, or, Job in the West* (London, 1645), p. 63.

order within a garrison. Though, more notable still is what Peake omits, especially disease, which receives only tacit acknowledgement despite its high presence in sieges.<sup>90</sup>

Issues of economics also weigh on Peake's mind. His approach to fortification strays from the technical advice of the likes of Papillon in favour of considering the economic cost. Again, Peake's background is beneficial. His closeness to Charles probably means that he was privy to the King's financial concerns.

Sieges also had a non-economic impact on society, becoming entrenched in discourse and memory during and after the civil wars, thus providing insight as to why Peake likely wrote *Meditations*. Peake gives special notice to food provisions, calling hunger 'the cruellest engine whereby to subdue the strongest resolutions'.<sup>91</sup> The besieged frequently endured a difficult diet, with meals at Colchester ranging from 'soape and candle' to rotten horsemeat, though even in this especially tough siege I have not come across examples of cannibalism.<sup>92</sup>

Another difference with Papillon on this subject relates to alcohol consumption in sieges. Peake clearly believes that sieges are a punishment from God for specific sins committed in a garrison, a common one being drunkenness.<sup>93</sup> Here, Peake's religious beliefs cloud military judgement. Papillon gives 'bread and beere' equal importance, and alcohol-induced courage at Gloucester seemed to make sallies out of the garrison especially effective.<sup>94</sup> Peake's discussion of provisions show differing aspects of *Meditations*. There are the striking descriptions of hunger, most likely concocted from Peake's 'hectic imagination', which demonstrate the hardship those under siege would have faced, something not reflected in Papillon's more operational manual.<sup>95</sup> Conversely, Peake's religious background is wholly on show during his discussions of alcohol, being less pragmatic when it comes to this subject compared to Papillon.<sup>96</sup> Curiously though, this contrasts with his apparent pragmatism when it comes to firing and using churches, and is an example of warfare altering discourse and culture unevenly rather than uniformly.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> I. Roy, 'England Turned Germany? The Aftermath of the Civil War in Its European Context', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 28 (1978), p. 142.

<sup>91</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, p. 5.

<sup>92</sup> Historical Manuscripts Commission (ed.), *The Manuscripts of the Duke of Beaufort, K.G., the earl of Donoughmore, and Others* (London, 1891), p. 29; *Diary of the Siege of Colchester*, Donagan, *War in England*, p. 312.

<sup>93</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, pp. 8, 57-8.

<sup>94</sup> Papillon, *Arts of Fortification*, p. 98; Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion Vol. III*, p. 167.

<sup>95</sup> McCall, *Baal's Priests*, p. 120.

<sup>96</sup> M. Airs, 'David Papillon (1581-1659)' (2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21245>, accessed 29<sup>th</sup> March 2017.

<sup>97</sup> W. C. Preutt, 'A history of the organisational development of the Continental Artillery during the American Revolution' (U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, M.M.A.S. dissertation, 2011), p. 134.

Sieges saw the perfect conditions for disease to spread, and while the risk of disease could sometimes be lessened, often sickness was endemic and spread easily between military and civilian populations.<sup>98</sup> It is therefore surprising that Peake hardly talks of disease. Contemporaries saw death by disease as equal to death by combat, as evidenced in an account of the siege of Exeter referring to plague as the 'pestilentiallemie'.<sup>99</sup> The most likely explanation for Peake's omission can be found in David Pennington's comment that 'plague was so common and so unpredictable' it could not be ascribed to warfare.<sup>100</sup> Quite simply, Peake may not have seen disease as noteworthy enough to require comment as well as not specifically relating to sieges.

One example of Peake addressing economic concerns is his chapter on fortification. Unlike Papillon, Peake talks more of the expense of fortifications and their effect on morale than of how to construct them.<sup>101</sup> Fortifications, Peake believes, should be 'workes of magnificence' and not constructed 'without a vast charge'.<sup>102</sup> The fortifications of Oxford, where Peake was likely based as he wrote *Meditations*, cost a massive £30,000 and resulted in them being 'made incomparably more strong then ever'.<sup>103</sup> Insistent on spending as much as possible, Peake underlines how 'a litle sav'd proves a great deale lost'.<sup>104</sup> Peake's strong emphasis on the need to spend on fortifications suggests there was wider public sentiment in favour of spending less. This can be seen at Newport Pagnell, the crumbling defences of which lead governor Samuel Luke to brand those opposed to spending money on improvements 'enemies to security'.<sup>105</sup>

Lack of funds was a persistent issue, with Manchester's 'mud-walls and chains' early in the war indicative of the 'ad hoc' nature of many fortifications.<sup>106</sup> Not only does Peake demonstrate the financial tensions fortifications could cause, he also underscores the potential benefits they gave to soldiers' morale. The men fighting 'with the spade as well as the sword' at Reading served the purpose of keeping them busy, thus avoiding mutiny.<sup>107</sup> Likewise Colchester, a place 'unfitt for a garrison', was nonetheless able to construct

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<sup>98</sup> Roy, 'England turned Germany?', p. 142; Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion Vol. III*, p. 16; S.B. Jennings, "'A miserable, stinking infected town": pestilence, plague and death in a civil war garrison, Newark 1640-1649', *Midland History*, 28/1 (2003), p. 51.

<sup>99</sup> J. Sprigg, , *Anglia Rediviva: Englands Recovery, Being the History of the Motions, Actions, and Successes of the Army Under the Immediate Conduct of His Excellency Sr. Thomas Fairfax* (London, 1647), p. 88; Bond, *Occasus Occidentalis*, p. 63.

<sup>100</sup> Pennington, 'War and the people', in Morrill, *Reactions*, p. 133.

<sup>101</sup> Papillon, *Arts of Fortification*, pp. 88-9.

<sup>102</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, p. 82

<sup>103</sup> Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, *Newark on Trent: The Civil War Siegeworks* (London, 1964), p. 30; Sprigg, *Anglia Rediviva*, p. 249.

<sup>104</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, p. 82.

<sup>105</sup> Luke, *Letter Books*, pp. 31, 132-3, 137, 606-7.

<sup>106</sup> *Siege of Manchester*, pp. 1-2; Harrington, *Fortifications* p. 6.

<sup>107</sup> *Good and True Newes from Redding* (London, 1643), p. 4; Peake, *Meditations*, pp. 83-4.

efficient defences, with the besieged seemingly motivated and working 'like the Jews in Jerusalem'.<sup>108</sup> Peake's chapter on fortification is of great use to historians. It shows the reaction to the severe economic cost of fortifications and suggests notable resistance to construction, as well as the importance of keeping soldiers busy to avoid mutiny or desertion.

The considerable costs of fortification were raised primarily through taxes, a subject Peake does not mention. Nevertheless, an examination of the wider economic burden of sieges puts *Meditations* into context and furthers our understanding. To raise these funds, garrison commanders could be especially burdensome. The governor of Aylesbury boasts he was able to raise the same amount of money in 15 days that would take Parliament 15 weeks, and while likely an exaggeration, this demonstrates that commanders were willing to squeeze surrounding areas.<sup>109</sup> People around Basing House were forced to ask for poor relief due to heavy taxation.<sup>110</sup> This cost could be felt well after the wars. York required £5,000 of relief from Parliament in November 1646 for repairs, Exeter took a 'great many years' to recover, and Bristol remained in debt for forty years.<sup>111</sup>

Hence sieges had an economic impact both during and after the civil wars. As the examples of York, Exeter and Bristol show, the economic impact of siege warfare was felt for years, leading to it also affecting aspects of popular culture and discourse and becoming entrenched in memory following the civil wars in ways that can still be seen today. This in part demonstrates why Peake came to write *Meditations*.

Even those not in sieges would have been aware of them, not only due to rapidly-expanding print media and journalism, but also through sermons.<sup>112</sup> Joseph Caryl and Thomas Case both preached sermons on the victory in the siege of Chester.<sup>113</sup> Some sieges, such as Taunton, served to raise morale so much in the surrounding area that their symbolic importance exceeded their strategic importance.<sup>114</sup> That news of sieges travelled might be an obvious fact, but it had a noticeable impact on how people acted through the civil wars. Take Great Yarmouth for example, which showed deep-seated hostility to being fortified lest it lead to a siege. Yarmouth received slight improvements to its defences during

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<sup>108</sup> HMC, *Duke of Beaufort*, p. 25; Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, Vol. IV, p. 359; ERO, T/Z 245/1, unfoliated.

<sup>109</sup> Luke, *Letter Books*, p. 34.

<sup>110</sup> Hamilton, *State Papers 1644*, p. 2.

<sup>111</sup> M.A.E. Green (ed.), *Calendar of the Proceedings of the Committee for Compounding, &c., 1643-1660*, Vol. I (London, 1889), p. 798; M. Stoye, "'Whole streets converted to ashes": property destruction in Exeter during the English Civil War', in Richardson, *Local Aspects*, p. 140; Carlton, *Going to the Wars*, p. 158.

<sup>112</sup> A. Tubb, 'Independent presses: the politics of print in England during the late 1640s', *The Seventeenth Century*, 27/3 (2012), p. 287.

<sup>113</sup> J. Caryl, *Joy Out-Joyed, or, Joy in Overcoming Evil Spirits and Evil Men, Overcome by Better Joy* (London, 1646), p. 24; T. Case, *A Model of True Spiritual Thankfulness* (London, 1646).

<sup>114</sup> Hutton & Reeves, 'Sieges', in Kenyon & Ohlmeyer, *Civil Wars*, p. 200.

the First Civil War, but by 1644 the 'well affected gentlemen' of the town showed hostility to further fortification.<sup>115</sup> Papillon refers to sentiment existing as early as 1645 that the war was nearing its end, dampening desire to build further fortifications.<sup>116</sup> This seems a likely explanation for Yarmouth's hostility to further garrisons, especially with the large economic cost. But even during the Second Civil War the town remained ardently opposed. Repeated letters from Parliament encouraged Yarmouth to develop its fortifications, invoking the ongoing siege at Colchester as a warning, yet Yarmouth still held firm.<sup>117</sup> This reveals not only that Parliament believed reference to Colchester could sway towns reluctant to fortify (suggesting it had cultural gravitas), but it also demonstrates that by 1648 even during war there was a reluctance to fortify, even if, as with Colchester, it meant capture. Sieges evidently contributed considerably to war-weariness by this time, their horrors, conveyed by the likes of Peake, having an impact and arguably vindicating Thomas Morton's idea that the fear of siege warfare could dissuade conflict.<sup>118</sup>

Sieges became entrenched in popular culture after the war's end. The siege of Colchester, for example, left a deep impact on the surrounding area. The hunger felt in the siege is referenced in a sermon nearly a decade later, and the poor weather endured there was still memorable as late as 1665.<sup>119</sup> Even a lewd song about Quakers refers to Colchester's siege.<sup>120</sup>

Attempts were also made to forget sieges rather than remember them. In many cases, castles and fortifications were slighted to remove traumatic memories, tying into a wider reluctance to discuss the war once it was over.<sup>121</sup> There was a conscious effort to avoid a repeat of sieges. Thomas Fairfax ordered the successful slighting of London's vast fortifications in 1647 due to fears of a siege (as well as maybe cost), with William Prynne essentially campaigning against all fortifications.<sup>122</sup> Moreover, in Nottingham, long-standing popular hostility to fortification led to the 'speedy demolition' of the castle after the wars' end with little opposition.<sup>123</sup> This shows that it is unsurprising that Peake came to write about siege warfare.

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<sup>115</sup> Harrington, *Fortifications*, p. 28; Hamilton, *State Papers, 1644*, p. 144.

<sup>116</sup> Papillon, *Arts of Fortification*, p. intro.

<sup>117</sup> Hamilton, *State Papers, 1648-1649*, pp. 199, 218-9.

<sup>118</sup> Morton, *Englands Warning-Piece*, p. 3.

<sup>119</sup> N. Rogers, *The Fast Friend, or, A Friend at Midnight* (London, 1658), p. 98; R. Boyle, *Occasional Reflections Upon Several Subjects* (London, 1665), p. 247.

<sup>120</sup> A. Brome, *Rump, or, An Exact Collection of the Choycest Poems and Songs Relating to the Late Times by the Most Eminent Wits from Anno 1639 to Anno 1662* (London, 1662), p. 361.

<sup>121</sup> Barratt, *Sieges*, pp. 169-71; Harrington, *Fortifications*, p. 57; Duffy, *Siege Warfare*, p. 146.

<sup>122</sup> I. Gentles, 'The struggle for London in the Second Civil War', *The Historical Journal*, 26/2 (1983), p. 284; see appendix B; W. Prynne, *Eight Military Aphorismes Demonstrating the Uselessness, Unprofitableness, Hurtfulness and Prodigall Expensiveness of All Standing English Forts and Garrisons* (London, 1658), pp. 11, 14-5.

<sup>123</sup> L. Hutchinson, *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson*, ed. J. Hutchinson (London, 1968), p. 128, 284.

## Conclusion

In line with John Walter's method, the intention of this piece has been to use Peake's work as a demonstration of the impact siege warfare had on English society during the period of the civil wars and the decades after. An overview of the major aspects and themes of Peake's work shows how siege warfare challenged the norms that existed over topics such as poisoned bullets and the use of churches in conflict. This ties into Adams's idea of the realities of war affecting discourse, though this pragmatism is not consistent throughout – most notably in Peake's comments on alcohol. Evidently, some things still held firm despite the pressures of war.

Peake's personal background as a clergyman and chaplain means *Meditations* also focuses on aspects overlooked by more typical military manuals. While he may not have had the military expertise of the likes of Papillon and Venn, Peake offers insight in other areas. The psychological impact of siege warfare, for example, is a running theme. Whether it is the panic induced by fireballs that often out-weighed their material effectiveness, or the mental strain of sieges that threatened the participants's 'tranquillitie of minde', Peake has a firm grasp of the 'human' side of siege warfare.<sup>124</sup> Morale is tied into this, as is leadership, with the former an especially good example of Peake acknowledging the mental strains of a siege for both sides. Peake's closeness to key leadership figures – and possible relation or connection to the distinguished commander Sir Robert Peake – may be an explanation for civilian issues like morale being comparatively overlooked. The repeated mentions of besieged populations being somehow deserving of what Peake sees as their divine punishment, and thus not worthy of sympathy, is indicative of the impact sieges had on society as sieges were clearly a serious matter that people felt needed to be explained and justified in religious terms.

While lacking detailed military strategy or instructions, the general messages of being virtuous, prepared, and temperate which is found in *Meditations* would have been highly applicable to sieges. Siege warfare would have been a subject that was both topical and understood by many due to the vast impact of sieges, and the knowledge and awareness of siege warfare due to hearing of events in continental Europe. Socially, sieges persisted in popular culture – such as in Essex – for decades after the end of the wars, with the heavy economic burden of maintaining garrisons meaning that even for those not in or close to a besieged garrison the impact of siege warfare would have been felt. Efforts to slight castles and fortifications after the war also show the traumatic memories that siege warfare left

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<sup>124</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, p. 14.

behind, and the general feeling that it should not be repeated, something both Harrington and Barratt touch upon.<sup>125</sup> The popular efforts to forget siege warfare brings into question the reason for *Meditations*'s publication. Clearly a book which triggered traumatic memories was unlikely to be a bestseller. Though evidently aware of this trauma, Peake still intended to publish his book regardless. Perhaps he intended it to assist said trauma, with suggestions given, for example, on how to cope with the stress of combat.<sup>126</sup> The lack of technicality in *Meditations* coupled with its more general messages and advice suggests that Peake's audience was at least partially non-military.

*Meditations* thus demonstrates the impact of siege warfare on civil war England. Sieges impacted almost everyone economically, challenged pre-existing religious and military norms, and left long-lasting traumatic memories still visible today in the slighted castles and fortifications across England. The fact Peake was writing a book like *Meditations* also underlines the large degree to which siege warfare was seen as being of the utmost importance during the civil wars, even if its enactment did not match the scale of its continental counterparts. Peake's work has been sorely overlooked by historians, with his conscious appreciation of the socio-economic side of sieges making *Meditations* a source that should be held in much higher esteem. *Meditations* enhances our understanding of not only military, but also religious, social, cultural and economic history. More widely, this underlines how overlooked siege warfare has been by historians, with *Meditations* suggesting sieges made a considerable impact on society. Further research is needed not only into siege warfare during the wars, but the long-lasting impact it had on English society (and, indeed, the societies of the other nations involved in the civil wars who also experienced siege warfare). A move away from the traditional operational history of the likes of Young and Emberton, and a greater appreciation of the principles of New Military History in accounting for the social and economic factors of siege warfare would be of historiographical benefit. Some encouraging progress has been made in this regard, with Donagan acknowledging the melding of military and civilian spheres in sieges.<sup>127</sup> *Meditations* is of tremendous help in furthering this progress. To conclude, siege warfare was a major - albeit hitherto neglected by historiography - element of civil war in England, and Humphrey Peake's *Meditations Upon a Seige* is an excellent window to demonstrate this point.

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<sup>125</sup> Barratt, *Sieges*, pp. 169-71; Harrington, *Fortifications*, p. 57.

<sup>126</sup> Peake, *Meditations*, pp. 78-9.

<sup>127</sup> Donagan, *War in England*, pp. 312-3.

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