

CROMWELL'S ARMY

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CROMWELL'S ARMY

A HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH SOLDIER DURING
THE CIVIL WARS, THE COMMONWEALTH
AND THE PROTECTORATE

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BEING THE FORD LECTURES

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P R E F A C E.

IT is necessary to begin this book with an apology. A civilian who undertakes to write the history of an army courts many perils, and cannot hope to escape them all. The subject is full of pitfalls, which a little technical knowledge would enable a writer to avoid, and abounds with questions which it requires both technical knowledge and military experience to treat adequately. But though fully aware of the difficulty of the task and of the defects in my own equipment for it, I felt obliged to make the attempt. In studying the history of the Great Rebellion it became necessary for me to study every side of it, the military history as much as the political or the religious history. It was not enough to try to understand the characters of the leaders, and the beliefs and ideals of their parties. A civil war is not only the conflict of opposing principles, but the shock of material forces. It was necessary, therefore, to ask what the purely military causes were which led to the triumph of one cause, and the downfall of the other. How was it that the Parliament succeeded in creating an efficient army, while the King could not do so, and what was the secret of the efficiency

of the New Model? When I began to seek the answers to these questions it became necessary to go farther than I had at first intended. The political histories of the period and the standard histories of the English army left many things unexplained, and there were many parts of the subject on which they gave me no light. It was necessary, therefore, to try to get to the bottom of the whole matter; and to endeavour to find out all the details of the organisation of the army, even if those details appeared at first sight to have little bearing on the general result of the war. Because it was only by learning to understand the little things that it was possible to understand the important things, and to make certain of appreciating their significance. Chance threw into my way some papers which other inquirers into the military history of the seventeenth century had never seen, and by piecing together this new information with that which earlier writers had collected, it became possible to form a clear conception of the character and the organisation of the army which fought under Fairfax and Cromwell.

A brief account of some of the authorities used in this compilation will show the chief sources of information accessible, and may be of use to future inquirers into the same subject. Four general histories of the army are of special value to any student of the Cromwellian Army. Francis Grose's *Military Antiquities Respecting the History of the English Army* (two volumes, ed. 1801) contains a collection of facts and evidence relating to every side of its subject. Sir Sibbald Scott's *The British Army, Its Origin, Progress and Equipment* (three volumes, 1868-80) supplements and completes

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Grose on most points, and fills up the gaps in his treatise. Grose, for instance, says next to nothing on the subject of the Civil War, while Sir Sibbald Scott brings together a considerable amount of information relating to the armies of that period, although that particular portion of his book is still, in many respects, very defective. The best summary of the military development of England during the years between 1640 and 1660 is contained in the hundred pages devoted to that time by the Hon. J. W. Fortescue in his *History of the British Army* (two volumes, 1899). Colonel Clifford Walton's *History of the British Standing Army from 1660 to 1700* is a work of great and permanent value, founded on an exhaustive study of official records. Though dealing primarily with a later period, it throws much light upon the equipment and organisation of the Cromwellian Army, for the army of Charles the Second followed in most points the system which had existed in the army disbanded in 1660, at all events whilst Monck was commander-in-chief.

A very large number of books on the art of war were published in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, many of which are of considerable historical value. Captain Cockle's *Bibliography of English Military Books up to 1642, and of Contemporary Foreign Works*, published in 1900, is an indispensable guide to this literature. These books, however, need to be used with great caution by any one who is studying the organisation and tactics of English armies during the Civil War. For the most part their authors describe the military systems which existed in foreign armies, and set forth the results of their experiences and obser-