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Abstract

This article explores the problem of recovering early modern utterances by focusing upon the issue of how the 'kingship debates' of 1657 between Oliver Cromwell and a committee of ninety-nine M.P.s came to be recorded, reported and printed. Specifically, it investigates the two key records of the kingship debates which, despite being well known to scholars, have extremely shady origins. Not only does this article demonstrate the probable origins of both sources, but by identifying the previously unknown scribe of one of them it points to the possible relationship between the two. It also questions whether the nature of the surviving sources has exacerbated certain interpretations about the kingship debates and their outcome.

To hear Oliver Cromwell speak could be an infuriating experience. Those members of the committee of ninety-nine M.P.s who filed out of Whitehall on 20 April 1657, after their fourth meeting with Cromwell in little over a week, would certainly have thought so. Appointed by the second protectorate parliament to convince him to accept their offer of kingship, the members of the committee hoped for a direct and positive answer from the lord protector. They had none. According to the parliament's diarist, and member of the committee, Thomas Burton, they received from Cromwell 'nothing but a dark speech, more promiscuous then before' and returned thoroughly 'unsatisfyed'.^[1]

Historians of the protectorate must share Burton's frustrations in their struggle to penetrate Cromwell's utterances. Yet, while Burton and his fellow M.P.s had the pleasure (or agony) of listening to Cromwell directly the historian must work from what are, at best, ear-witness accounts. Cromwell was himself only one, albeit an important one, of a number of people who created that amorphous corpus of texts that, after editing and collation, are printed in modern editions as the 'speeches of Oliver Cromwell'. Even leaving aside the possibility that those texts were deliberately manipulated to impart a particular message, there were several filters through which Cromwell's actual words passed before they were preserved in the form available to us now. Most obviously, his speeches had first to be heard and then noted or remembered by somebody: at all stages there was the possibility for meaning to be lost or modified. Perhaps a word or phrase was misheard; maybe the hearer summarized several sentences with just one, or substituted Cromwell's phrase with an idiom of their own. What if in their effort to capture every turn of phrase precisely the notes, scribbled at speed in cramped conditions, ultimately proved to be illegible? To perfect their account, various scribes may have compared notes to come to an agreed record of the speech. But what if one scribe heard (or noted) things slightly differently to another? How did they decide who had captured Cromwell's words better? Did they choose one version over the other or, failing to find agreement, incorporate both? The problem of editing, collating and presenting the records of Cromwell's speeches is not just a problem for modern editors, it also vexed contemporaries who created many of those records in the first place. Moreover, even after a record of any given speech was created there was further scope for meaning to be lost before it came into the form which survives today: copies, and copies of copies, were made with the predictable result that phrases went missing or were wrongly transcribed. Knowing which report of a speech is the more direct copy

can bring us closer to the version of the speech created by its hearer – if not to Cromwell's spoken words.

We must appreciate the dynamism of those records of Cromwellian utterances which survive; to excavate, where possible, the different layers of their creation. Of course, this can be best achieved by understanding as much as possible about the provenance of the surviving sources. Unfortunately, when it comes to the 'kingship debates' between Cromwell and the committee of ninety-nine, the two most detailed sources available to the historian have extremely shady origins. The first, and most comprehensive account is the anonymous pamphlet *Monarchy Asserted*, printed in 1660 by John Redmayne for the bookseller Philip Chetwind.^[2] This 118-page tract provides detailed reports of the speeches made by a number of key members of the committee in favour of Cromwellian kingship as well as the lord protector's replies to the committee on 11, 13, 20 and 21 April, plus his final rejection of the kingly title on 8 May 1657. Although the events recounted in the pamphlet were, by then, over three years old, this was the first time precise details of these speeches were disseminated to a wider audience. The second key source, which overlaps considerably with *Monarchy Asserted*, is an anonymous handwritten compilation of Cromwellian material.^[3] This volume, now deposited among the archives of the British Library as Additional Manuscript 6125, is perhaps the single most important source for Cromwellian utterances during the protectorate. Besides the kingship debates, it also includes a number of other important orations – including the only detailed account of Cromwell's speech at the opening of the second protectorate parliament on 17 September 1656.

This article focuses primarily upon the account of the kingship debates provided by these enigmatic sources to demonstrate their probable origins and the possible relationship between the two. By revealing the previously unidentified scribe of Additional MS. 6125, it is possible to draw conclusions about how, and when, that source came into being vis-à-vis *Monarchy Asserted*. The variations between both texts are also considered to assess which source is the more direct account of the kingship debates. While some recent scholarship has pointed to the deliberate manipulation of Cromwell's speeches to impart a particular message, it will be suggested that the significance of the textual variations, where they exist, has been overstated due, in part, to a misunderstanding of the sources themselves. That historians have tended to mistake the motives behind the publication of *Monarchy Asserted* has, in turn, also led them to misattribute its authorship. Finally, the article concludes by considering the ways in which these surviving sources, and the manner in which the text at their core was constructed, have influenced the scholarship of the kingship debates as a whole.

Traditionally, the authorship of *Monarchy Asserted* has been attributed to either Bulstrode Whitelocke or Nathaniel Fiennes.^[4] The two men are plausible candidates; they were members of the committee of ninety-nine M.P.s – Whitelocke as its chairman – and both are found in the pamphlet making lengthy speeches in favour of Cromwellian kingship. Their authorship could explain why the pamphlet emerged in 1660 and not before. Despite vigorously supporting the offer of kingship, and making powerful arguments that underlined the illegality of Cromwell wielding any other title, they had to reconcile themselves to the fact that, after his final refusal on 8 May 1657, they continued to serve a lord protector not a king. Printing their deliberations while the protectorate remained in existence would have been impolitic to say the least. Whether printing them in 1660 would have been any less detrimental will be considered in the final part of this article. For now, it seems logical to follow Benjamin Woodford's conclusion that 'whoever' the author of *Monarchy Asserted* was, 'he must have either been a member of the committee on kingship, or had access to a committee member's notes'.^[5]

Yet, this begs the question of why detailed notes of the committee's activities were taken in the first place. The circumstances of the committee of ninety-nine's creation offer some clues. Following Cromwell's initial refusal of the kingship on 3 April 1657, and the Commons' decision to renew their offer three days later, the committee was appointed on 9 April with the aim of getting Cromwell to change his mind. Specifically, it was to 'receive' Cromwell's 'Doubts and Scruples' concerning parliament's proposed constitution, the *Humble Petition and Advice*, and to provide answers for his 'satisfaction'. If there were any 'Particulars' that it could not 'satisfy his Highness in', the committee must 'report the same to the Parliament'.^[6] Therefore, from its creation, the committee was instructed to keep the House in the loop about its deliberations with the protector – particularly if there were any points, most obviously the kingship, upon which it could not satisfy Cromwell's doubts.

Initially, however, the committee was silent about its activities. Whitelocke kept the Commons informed about the timing of the committee's meetings, but offered no report of their contents.^[7] By 14 April, the prolonged silence prompted the Commons to order explicitly that 'the Committee' should '*make a Report* of their proceedings' by the following morning.^[8] But this was not the work of a moment and the next day Whitelocke asked for 'some further time' before making the report, because 'the notes upon the former meetings' were 'not perfectly transcribed'.^[9] Although the Commons agreed to defer the report for two days, there were further delays.^[10] On 17 April, Whitelocke simply 'acquainted' the House that the committee had met with the protector on the previous day and would be attending him again that afternoon.^[11] According to Burton, Whitelocke apologized to the Commons, telling them that the committee's 'Report was not ready' because 'the Committee had not met to direct about a Report'.^[12] Mr. Drake, a member of the committee, added that the Commons should 'not expect a particular Report till all is ready' and moved that they adjourn until Monday so that the Report 'may be perfected'.^[13] Once again, Whitelocke and the committee were granted more time; the 'Report of their proceedings with his Highness' would now be made on Monday 20 April instead.^[14] Another conference with Cromwell on 20 April, however, meant their report was deferred again.^[15] The following day, Whitelocke informed the House that the committee was again meeting the protector that afternoon to receive 'a paper' containing 'some other things which he had to offer to the Committee'.^[16] On 22 April, Whitelocke informed the House that the committee had received Cromwell's paper and added that it was 'preparing a Report of the whole business together'.^[17]

It was not until Thursday 23 April, a full two weeks after its appointment, that Whitelocke finally reported the committee's proceedings with the lord protector. While the Journal suggests that the report focused upon the 'substance of his Highness's speech to them, on the 21st of this month' and his paper of objections, Whitelocke's memoirs suggest the report was more detailed.^[18] It was not simply an account of what happened on 21 April but a 'report of the whole proceedings of the Committee with his Highness touching the Title of King, with the Protectors answers & papers given in by him to the Committee'.^[19] Even then, the report was not as full as some hoped. Although Speaker Widdrington, after hearing the report, moved that the House should 'approve of their words as well as their actions' – further suggesting that Whitelocke's report included substance of the committee's speeches to the protector as well as his responses – some M.P.s demanded more. Colonel White did not believe that members of the House were 'ripe for such approving' until they knew 'what it is' they must approve. White feared that it was the committee, not the Commons, which was effectively in control: the committee 'being the major part of the House', then 'what they agree to, must conclude us'.^[20] For his part, Whitelocke hoped the House had 'no such occasion to suspect their faithfulness'. The lack of detail or clarity was not out of any scheme to dupe the

Commons but reflected the incomplete state of the material from which Whitelocke delivered his report: he 'had no Report in writing', he claimed, 'but only some notes for my own memory'.^[21]

It is hardly surprising that the committee struggled to prepare its report on time. The frequent meetings with the lord protector – five since the committee was appointed – meant that the backlog of information to be reported back to the Commons was accumulating all the time.^[22] It hardly helped that members of the committee were left hanging around Whitehall on several occasions, only to be told that Cromwell was not well enough to see them.^[23] There is also a sense that the committee was waiting, in vain, for a definitive answer from the protector, hoping that it could present Cromwell's acceptance of the kingly title as a *fait accompli* and thereby obviate the need to give a blow by blow account of his scruples.

Whitelocke alluded to the fact that the committee needed more time 'for making of their Report in that business', because 'the notes upon the former meetings' were 'not perfectly transcribed'.^[24] But this raises the question of what exactly those 'notes' were. Those members of the committee who answered the protector during their meeting probably had draft speeches, or provided summaries from memory, of what they had spoken. Perfecting this report is therefore likely to have required a meeting between the committee's spokesmen to compare notes and agree on a final text. Yet, this proved difficult. As Whitelocke lamented on 17 April, the committee still 'had not met to direct about a Report'.^[25] Even more problematic was the question of Cromwell's speeches. While the committee members may have supplied notes of their own speeches, it is unlikely that the same was true of the lord protector, who was notorious for speaking extempore.^[26] The committee therefore had to ensure that the protector's speeches were recorded, not just to report their contents to the House but also to structure its own responses.^[27] How many people were asked to keep such notes is uncertain, but it is clear that one of those involved in processing this material – at the behest of the committee's chairman – was the parliament's diarist Thomas Burton. On 15 April, just after Whitelocke obtained an extension from the House to make his report, because the notes were not yet 'perfectly transcribed', Burton reveals that he left the Commons early that day 'upon Lord Whitelock's desire' in order 'to write out the conference with the Protector'.^[28] This seems to imply that the notes from which he worked were rough and probably taken in shorthand: Burton had to translate what he had before him and write it out into a fully fledged text which could be reported to the House. This arduous task clearly occupied Burton's time over the following days. On 21 April, two days before Whitelocke finally made his report, Burton again notes how he withdrew from the House early and 'went up into the Speaker's chamber to write out the speeches'.^[29]

Burton's activities explain the lacuna concerning the 'kingship debates' in his diary. For a man so assiduous in recording the debates of the second and third protectorate parliaments, it is odd that he records almost nothing about those momentous conferences. In reality, Burton felt no need to record these discussions in his diary because he knew that they could be found elsewhere. On 16 April, for instance, he records briefly how six M.P.s spoke 'learnedly and soberly' about the kingship, to which he adds the note: 'see book of speeches'.^[30] The like direction follows Burton's brief note concerning those 'dark' speeches delivered by Cromwell on 20 and 21 April.^[31] Most revealing, however, is Burton's account of Whitelocke's report to the House on 23 April. Although missed by Burton's editor, his manuscript makes clear that Whitelocke reported 'the proceedings of the Com[mitt]ee from *day to day*, As see the Report att large in the book of speeches'.^[32] Not only does this confirm that Whitelocke's report provided an account of all of the committee's proceedings, not just those of 20–21 April, but also that a copy of the committee's full report could be found in Burton's book of speeches.^[33]

Whether this book was owned and written by Burton himself is uncertain. Burton had access to parliamentary records, including the clerk's notes and draft journal, which he often consulted to supply detail in his diary whenever he had been absent from the House.^[34] It is possible that the clerk also had a 'book of speeches' as a companion to the draft journal. This would have included copies of the reports of parliamentary speeches made to the Commons, to be entered later into the 'finished' journal of the House (the draft journal merely having a note to the effect of 'enter the speech here'). So the 'book of speeches' could have been a book belonging to the clerk of the Commons, or Burton's copy of material in the possession of the clerk. Either way, the volume in question contained copies of reports of several speeches – at least some of which Burton helped to compile. As such, Burton did not feel the need to record the protector's speeches in his diary; he knew a full and complete account was accessible elsewhere. It was in this 'book of speeches' that the report of the transactions between Cromwell and the committee of ninety-nine M.P.s could be found: precisely the same material later printed in *Monarchy Asserted*.

Indeed, it seems beyond doubt that the text of *Monarchy Asserted* is based upon Whitelocke's report. The fact that Whitelocke himself, in his post-Restoration memoirs, endorsed the pamphlet as an accurate record of the committee's deliberations bolsters this conclusion. Recounting his chairmanship with a typical air of self-importance, he notes that 'when the Committee attended his Highness, Whitelocke spake to him upon the point of the Title of King, giving reasons why he should accept of the Title, the Protector urged his reasons against it, & Whitelocke replied'. Yet Whitelocke felt no need to elaborate upon what was said: as he noted, 'the whole debate is in print'.^[35] While this hardly means that Whitelocke orchestrated the publication of *Monarchy Asserted*, it does suggest that he accepted its contents were an accurate record of the committee's proceedings.^[36]

Everything points to *Monarchy Asserted* being a copy of the committee of ninety-nine's report. From where else could such a detailed account of those speeches derive? Getting all the speakers to provide notes of the speeches delivered to the protector, let alone all of the responses of the protector, would have been no easy task in 1660 – three years after the event. Rather, *Monarchy Asserted* has a completeness about it which suggests an earlier composition: it is not simply a number of half-remembered fragments, but a full transcript of the speeches arranged in the correct order too.^[37] This is confirmed by Burton's diary account for 16 April when he notes how '6 of ye Grandees spoke very learnedly & soberly to the point of kingship to reinforce their former reasons, vizt. L[ord] C[hief Justice] Glin, M[aste]r of ye Rolls, Col. Jones, Sr Ri[chard] Onslow, L[ord] ffiens & L[ord] Broghill'.^[38] Turn to *Monarchy Asserted* and we find that, besides Whitelocke's remarks as chairman, only six other M.P.s are recorded as speaking that day: the very same six, in the same running order, outlined by Burton.^[39]

But it is also unlikely that *Monarchy Asserted* was based solely upon the committee's report – supplementary material has been added. Cromwell's speech of 8 May 1657 printed at the conclusion of the pamphlet, for instance, could not have been part of the committee of ninety-nine's report. Not only had Whitelocke already reported from the committee on 23 April, but this later speech, in which Cromwell emphatically refused the kingship, was directed not to the committee but to parliament.^[40] Equally suggestive is parliament's 'order' empowering the committee to wait on Cromwell to 'receive ... his doubts and scruples', printed on the first three pages of the pamphlet along with a list of the ninety-nine committee members.^[41] The details provided are similar to those recorded in the Journal for 9 April, but there are subtle differences.^[42] Although the same ninety-nine names are printed in *Monarchy Asserted* and the Journal they are not in the same order or spelled in the same way: 'Sir Theophilus Jones' of the Journal, for instance, becomes 'Sir Thomas Jones' in *Monarchy Asserted*.^[43] Moreover, the fact the record begins with 'Ordered by the

Parliament', not 'Resolved ...' as in the Journal, suggests that what is printed in *Monarchy Asserted* is actually a copy of the 'order' from the parliament: the document given to the chairman of the committee to provide authority for its meetings with the lord protector.^[44] According to the account of the committee's meeting with Cromwell on 11 April, Whitelocke referred explicitly to the 'Order of Parliament' and recited 'the very words of the Order', suggesting that he was reading from a document then in his possession.^[45] The fact that the signature of 'Hen. Scobel, Clerk of the Parliament' appears at the end of the 'order' also hints that this is a copy of an official document, signed – and probably transcribed – by Scobell.^[46]

The order empowering the committee of ninety-nine M.P.s and the report of its deliberations with the protector were privileged documents that could only have derived from somebody close to the centre of affairs. Interestingly, *Monarchy Asserted* was not the first time that John Redmayne printed official parliamentary material. In late 1659, and throughout the first half of 1660, he was the printer of a number of 'official' parliamentary newsbooks which gleaned information from the Journals of both Houses, as well as reports of speeches, and which claimed to be 'Published by Authority' or 'Published according to Order'.^[47] Redmayne also printed a number of 'official' parliamentary documents, including *The Form of Writs to be issued forth under the Great Seal of England* for the elections to the Convention Parliament, and *The Oath of Allegiance and Supremacy Enjoined by Order of Parliament* (complete with the royal arms on its title page).^[48] It seems that, in 1660 at least, Redmayne was a printer with official connections.

Given that the pamphlet's contents derive from parliamentary sources, there remains the question of how that material came into the hands of the printer John Redmayne in 1660, and why it was published. A possible solution to the first problem is provided by the other major source for the kingship debates: Additional MS. 6125. This handwritten volume of 186 pages purports to be the second of, at least, three volumes of material relating to the protectorate. It begins *in media res*, with 'the remainder of the Conference w[i]th the Lo: Protector concerning Kingship', starting with Lord Broghill's speech on 16 April 1657.^[49] The manuscript ends midway through Cromwell's lengthy speech on 25 January 1658, the 'remainder' of which was to be found 'in the Thirde Booke'.^[50] The first and third volumes are lost, but their contents can be inferred; volume one must have contained earlier speeches from the kingship debates, while the third volume began with the remainder of Cromwell's speech on 25 January.

The overlap between Additional MS. 6125 and *Monarchy Asserted* is striking. From the beginning of the volume, with Broghill's speech, through to Cromwell's speech of 8 May, the content and running order of material is identical to that of the pamphlet. It is hard to disagree with Sophie Lomas's conclusion that, even 'allowing for the mistakes and misprints in *Monarchy Asserted*' and the 'small omissions here and there in both texts', it seems likely 'that the two were copied from a common source'.^[51] Of course, this does not necessarily mean that they are direct copies of the same document or of each other; it simply means that, ultimately, they had a *common source*, the core of which undoubtedly must be the committee of ninety-nine's report of those speeches as prepared by Burton and delivered by Whitelocke.

Yet, which source is most likely to be the 'closer' or more faithful copy of that common source? Recently, Benjamin Woodford has suggested that there is a 'pattern' in those minor textual differences between *Monarchy Asserted* and Additional MS. 6125 which points to the former having been manipulated by the pamphlet's author to impose a particular construction upon Cromwell's utterances. Whereas the Cromwell of the manuscript appears 'religiously radical' and a 'sympathiser of the sects', the Cromwell of *Monarchy Asserted* is 'portrayed as a conservative, a believer in the existing social structure, and a defender of order'.^[52] The implication seems to be that the

manuscript offers the more authentic account while the printed text was deliberately manipulated to make Cromwell appear more respectable.

However, there are serious problems with this thesis, not least the evidence. When comparing the textual differences between the manuscript and pamphlet versions of Cromwell's 20 April speech, for instance, Woodford, quite inexplicably, does not consult *Monarchy Asserted* but relies instead on the text of Ivan Roots's *Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*. Although Woodford felt this was justified because, as he notes, Roots uses 'the text of *Monarchy Asserted*' to produce the version of the 20 April speech printed in his edition, it is not a simple transcription of the pamphlet.^[53] In fact, Roots's edition is itself 'based largely' on Stainer's 1901 edition of Cromwell's speeches.^[54] But the way Roots employs Stainer's text is misleading. In particular, the square brackets that Stainer often (but not always) employed to insert elucidations upon the text are silently removed by Roots, with the effect that Stainer's clarifications become subsumed within the text of the speech itself. Little wonder that Woodford, relying upon Roots's text as if it were a literal transcription of *Monarchy Asserted*, concludes that 'Everything is spelt out in a clear fashion' in the pamphlet 'so as to leave no doubt as to what Cromwell was referring'.^[55] In reality, those clarifications were not the work of the author of *Monarchy Asserted* but have been added by its modern editors.

But if Woodford's failure to consult the original means he often overstates the textual differences between the pamphlet and manuscript, it is undeniable that subtle variations do exist. Perhaps the starkest example of this comes at the end of a passage in Cromwell's speech on 21 April that reflects upon the rule of both the Rump and Barebone's parliaments. In Additional MS. 6125, the text is:

you have ben delivered (if I thinke right) from 2. evils, the one a seculer evill, that would have swallowed up all civill interest, & put us under the most horrid arbitrarinesse that ever was exercised in the world ... this (I say) would have swallowed up the Civill Interest: & the other (meerly under a spirituall interest) had swallowed up againe all our religious interest, all our ministry, & the things we are beholding to God for.^[56]

In *Monarchy Asserted* the corresponding passage reads:

you have been delivered if I think right, from two evils; the one evil a secular evil, that would have swallowed up all religious and civil interest, and made us under the horridest arbitrarinesse that ever was exercised in the world ... I say that which swallows both the Civil and Religious interest. And the other meerly under a spirituall interest, had swallowed up again in another extreme, all our Civil and Religious interest and had made our Ministry, and all the things we are beholding to God for.^[57]

According to Woodford, the author of *Monarchy Asserted* wanted to emphasize Cromwell's commitment to a national church 'that would combine civil and religious power'.^[58] Whereas the scribe of Additional MS. 6125 seems to separate and contrast the civil evils of the Rump with the spiritual evils of the Barebone's Parliament, the pamphlet has Cromwell stressing the simultaneous and inseparable threat to both civil and religious interests posed by the two assemblies.

But there are surely more mundane explanations for the apparent differences between the texts. As already noted, Whitelocke's report, despite the efforts of Burton and others to transcribe all the speeches, was still not in a polished condition when he delivered it on 23 April 1657.^[59] As such, any variation between the two surviving accounts may simply betray the rough and ready nature of the text of the original report. Indeed, it is significant that the variation cited above, perhaps the most pronounced of all the kingship debates for which the pamphlet and manuscript overlap, derives from Cromwell's speech on 21 April. Not only was this the lengthiest oration of those recorded, it was also the most recent, occurring just two days before Whitelocke made his report. It

would therefore be unsurprising if the text of this speech was somewhat less perfect than those other portions which Burton had already started 'to write out'.^[60]

The variations in the surviving texts could therefore betray a number of things, not simply manipulation by the author of the pamphlet. They could point to the fact that more than one person, probably including Burton, took notes of the speech but were undecided as to what Cromwell had actually said: as Burton noted, he found the speech to be a 'dark' (that is, impenetrable) one.^[61] As it was the responsibility of the committee to report Cromwell's thoughts and scruples, it was up to its members to make sense of his utterances and present them in a cogent manner to the House. In the case of this portion of Cromwell's 21 April speech, it is possible that Burton, or some other scribe, struggled to draw the speech together and failed to perfect the text. Assuming that the text remained in an imperfect state when both the scribe of Additional MS. 6125 and the author of *Monarchy Asserted* encountered it, it would explain their alternative renderings of this passage – what one discerned in the excisions and interlineations of the text may have differed from the other.^[62]

On the whole, examples of substantive deviation between the text of the pamphlet and Additional MS. 6125 are relatively few. They certainly do not point to a sustained pattern of manipulation. Indeed, it is arguable that those few occasions where the text of the pamphlet and manuscript fail to agree only throw into sharper relief the vast majority of instances where they concur. Assuming that the author of the pamphlet was trying to manipulate Cromwell's utterances to make him appear more conservative, leaving aside the question of motive, we are left wondering why they did not do more than tinker with an odd word here or there. In fact, in the majority of cases, the differences in the text appear to be nothing more than genuine errors of transcription or printing. Indeed, it should also be noted that the fact that at least two different runs of *Monarchy Asserted* were printed in 1660 means that we must be sensitive to the minor variations between the pamphlets as well as between the pamphlet and the manuscript.^[63]

Overall there seems little reason to disagree with Sophie Lomas's conclusion that, where they overlap, the quality of the text in Additional MS. 6125 is often superior to that of *Monarchy Asserted*. The minor but frequent printing errors in the pamphlet mean that some sentences are often only intelligible by comparing them with the manuscript.^[64] A good example of this is a passage in Cromwell's speech of 20 April where he hoped that he would not be blamed for his unwillingness to 'comply with this Title, with the desires of the Parliament in it, as others doe'. In the manuscript the next part of this passage reads, 'for they that are in, would take it for an Injury to be outed'.^[65] In both versions of *Monarchy Asserted*, however, it is printed as 'for they that are in, would take it for an injury to be out it'.^[66] Perhaps the confusion arose from the fact that 'outed' and 'out it' are phonetically similar – did the person who took notes of the speech mishear Cromwell's words, or was somebody reading the text of the report to the compositor of the pamphlet to speed up the production process? Whatever the reason, the passage in the manuscript is much clearer than that printed in the pamphlet.

It is also possible to go a step further and pursue the possibility that *Monarchy Asserted* does not simply share a common source with Additional MS. 6125, but that the manuscript is itself the source on which the pamphlet was based. This theory rests not only upon the fact that the manuscript is often more coherent than *Monarchy Asserted*, and therefore probably a more direct copy of the original material; there are also clues in the physical appearance of *Monarchy Asserted*. In both versions of *Monarchy Asserted* a single line is printed across one page of the text to separate two of the speeches, for no apparent reason (see Figure 1). This happens nowhere else in the pamphlet; usually speeches are separated only by spaces and a simple heading including the name of the

speaker and date. There are no lines across the text to demarcate each day's debates – the speeches all run in a continuous sequence. All of them, that is, except Lord Broghill's speech on 16 April 1657: that same speech with which the text in Additional MS. 6125 begins.^[67] Is it too much of a coincidence? Perhaps the line was inserted by whoever was responsible for preparing the text for print. Maybe it was included to help the compositor of the tract or the proof-reader, so they could more easily find the point where one volume ended and the other began, thereby helping them to locate their 'place' when checking the text against the manuscript. Everything after the line derived from Additional MS. 6125; anything before the line was, presumably, from the now 'missing' first volume, which contained the rest of the 'Conference with the Lo: Protector concerning Kingship' before Broghill's speech on 16 April 1657.

Figure 1.

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The mystery 'line' in *Monarchy Asserted*.

Against this thesis, however, must be weighed the evidence of those occasions where the text of *Monarchy Asserted* deviates from that of Additional MS. 6125. While, in many cases, these differences are relatively minor, there are a few occasions where a whole clause or phrase is present in the pamphlet which is omitted from the manuscript. Take, for example, this passage from Whitelocke's speech on 16 April 1657 recorded in *Monarchy Asserted*: 'yet give me leave to say, that in private causes *between party and party and in publick matters, in nominall causes*, it was not easy to finde justice to be done by some Jurors'.^[68] The text in italics does not appear in Additional MS. 6125.^[69] Given that the missing clause and the passage that precedes it both end in the word 'causes' the scribe's mistake seems obvious enough. But the inclusion of this line in the pamphlet means that the publisher of *Monarchy Asserted* must have derived their text from elsewhere – most likely the source from which the manuscript was copied (or an iteration of it) – rather than from Additional MS. 6125.

Overall, it is possible to draw a number of conclusions about the relationship between the accounts of the kingship debates provided by *Monarchy Asserted* and Additional MS. 6125. First, although both texts are not totally identical, they are so close to one another – and often share the same idiosyncrasies – that it stretches credulity to believe that two different reporters produced such identical accounts of so many different speeches. Second, the common source shared between the two texts is the report of the committee of ninety-nine, as transcribed by Burton – a copy of which was recorded in his 'book of speeches'. Third, the textual differences that are apparent are most likely the result of ambiguity in the text of the original report, further attesting to its hurried and incomplete state. Finally, Additional MS. 6125, rather than *Monarchy Asserted*, seems a 'closer' copy of the report, albeit there are some words and clauses omitted from the manuscript which appear in the pamphlet. But this still begs the question of authorship – both of the manuscript and of the tract. Although Additional MS. 6125 is a compilation of material akin to Burton's 'book of speeches', it is not the book of speeches itself. Rather, it is a Restoration copy of the committee's report.

That Additional MS. 6125 was written no earlier than 1660 is proven by the identity of its scribe. The handwriting is not that of a Cromwellian insider or a member of the committee of ninety-nine; it is not that of Whitelocke, Fiennes or Burton. Rather, it is that of John Browne, the erstwhile clerk of the parliaments, who lost his position with the abolition of the house of lords in 1649 and was not reinstated until the meeting of the Convention Parliament in April 1660.^[70] Of course, Browne's authorship of Additional MS. 6125 raises a number of possibilities about the quality of the text it provides. In all likelihood Browne, as a professional scribe, would be well equipped to make a good copy of whatever material was before him. But it also raises the question of how he came into the possession of such material in the first place.

Browne suffered heavily following the abolition of the Lords in 1649, losing his office, salary and lodgings in Westminster.^[71] Although the Rump agreed to compensate him, the matter apparently remained unresolved at its dissolution in April 1653.^[72] Browne continued to find modest employment in the localities during the interregnum. He served as a J.P. for Middlesex and was appointed by the council of state to tackle a number of local matters, such as the disarming of royalist rioters in Twickenham in 1649 or dealing with petitions against the construction of a new river in the parks around Hampton Court in August 1653.^[73] Following the creation of a new upper chamber under the provisions of the *Humble Petition and Advice*, Browne petitioned Cromwell in December 1657 'to enjoy & exercise my place of Clerke of the Parliaments in the other house as is nowe called'. Given his toadying professions in May 1660 to be a 'good and loyall subject' to Charles II, it is amusing to observe how readily Browne recognized Cromwell's 'Other House' as the successor to the house of lords.^[74] That Browne still maintained prominent contacts is evidenced

by the fact that he wrote to Sir Gilbert Pickering and Edward Mountagu, both Cromwellian councillors, asking them to sponsor his petition.^[75] Impressive as these contacts were, however, his lobbying was unsuccessful. When the second session of the second protectorate parliament assembled in January 1658, it was Henry Scobell, the incumbent clerk of the Commons, who was elevated by the protector's patent to clerk of the Other House.^[76]

Assuming that the documents Browne copied into Additional MS. 6125 were official parliamentary reports and papers, it therefore seems unlikely that they came into his possession before 1660. The ownership of the parliamentary archives was, like the clerkship, hotly contested during the sixteenth-fifties. With the abolition of the Lords, the Commons decided that all the parliamentary records – both those of the former upper chamber and the Commons – should be amalgamated.^[77] Yet, Browne – still awaiting his compensation – would not part with the records in his possession. On 25 June 1650, the Commons ordered that ‘all the Records, late belonging to the late House of Peers, and this House’ should be delivered to Scobell and ‘that Mr. Browne be required to deliver over the same’.^[78] It was to no avail, however, as less than six months later the Rump once again demanded that Browne should surrender ‘the Keys of the [Jewel] Tower belonging to the House ... and likewise all the Records belonging to the Parliament ... to the Hands and Possession of Henry Scobell, Clerk of the Parliament’. To sweeten the pill, they also resolved that the committee dealing with Browne's compensation would be revived.^[79]

Browne's successor, Scobell, proved equally unwilling to part with the records in his possession. Despite his promotion to the clerkship of the Other House in 1658, he retained those records accumulated since 1649 as clerk of the Commons. On 22 January 1658, Burton notes how a Commons committee, searching for precedents for an oath to swear in their new clerk John Smythe, hit trouble when it discovered that Scobell had taken their records with him. Although the Commons resolved that Scobell should ‘deliver the records and writings belonging to this House’ to Smythe, he refused to co-operate.^[80] On 23 January, he sent the Commons a ‘humble Representation’ in which he claimed that he should continue to hold their records, audaciously citing the Rump's act of May 1649 by which he was ‘constituted Clerk of the Parliament for life’. The Commons were unimpressed, reiterating on 25 January their order that Scobell should ‘deliver the Journal-Books, Records, and Writings, that belong to this House’. As attorney of the duchy of Lancaster Nicholas Lechmere saw it, there was ‘nothing but profit in the case’ and he hoped that Scobell would ‘be so modest as to deliver the records’.^[81] Yet, Scobell remained obstinate. On 26 January, the Commons appointed a committee to receive an inventory from Scobell of the records then in his possession.^[82] When this inventory proved unsatisfactory, the committee went to Scobell's house in person to demand ‘all the Records’, adding that those he ‘had inventoried were not all, for there were none of the Bills nor Acts that had passed’. Scobell's feeble reply was that ‘all Acts ... after they were passed, were no more Records of the one or the other House, but the public Records of the nation; whereunto every one might resort’.^[83]

Scobell's chicanery, as Lechmere suspected, was probably related to profit. By 1658, he held a virtual monopoly over official government records: not only was he clerk of the parliaments, but he was clerk of the privy council too. Sir Arthur Haslerig later complained about this confusing arrangement: ‘Mr Scobell was made Clerk of the Council’, he explained, ‘and so our Acts and their Acts had all one signature, Henry Scobell’; it was ‘a fine strain of wit, to mingle these things’ – the council's orders – ‘with your records, foist, I will not say!’^[84] The exasperation felt by Haslerig and many of the Rumpers towards the activities of their erstwhile clerk during the protectorate ensured that when the Rump was restored in May 1659 they stripped Scobell of the clerkship and conferred it on Thomas St. Nicholas instead.

In their act establishing St. Nicholas as clerk, the Rump ordered explicitly that Scobell should deliver up 'all the Acts, Books, Records, and Writings' in his possession.[85] But despite the act being read and committed in August 1659, it was not engrossed until January 1660, just a few weeks before the Rump's final dissolution.[86] In the meantime, Scobell appears to have clung on to the parliamentary records. On 9 August 1659, for instance, the Rump Parliament turned its attention to the issue of a new representative – the very same issue that had preceded, and hastened, its dissolution by Cromwell on 20 April 1653. Before debating the business, however, the House first required the 'bill for a new Representative' on which its members had been working in 1653. According to the dramatic account of the dissolution provided by Ludlow, Cromwell had 'seized upon the records that were there [in Parliament], and at Mr. Scobells house'; he then 'went to the clerk, and snatching the Act of Dissolution, which was ready to pass, out of his hand, he put it under his cloak'. [87] When looking for the bill in 1659, however, the Rump assumed it was still in Scobell's possession: it ordered him 'to search for the ingrossed Bill for appointing a new Representative' and to 'deliver the same' to St. Nicholas.[88]

By the Restoration, Scobell was clearly in possession of a great deal of material – including parliamentary records and council papers – relating to the interregnum period. He certainly could have possessed all of the material later copied by Browne in Additional MS. 6125 and, in some cases, such as the order appointing the committee of ninety-nine, had written or signed many of the documents himself. It also seems entirely likely that Scobell was one of the scribes who kept notes for the committee of ninety-nine and had worked with Burton to draw up the report of its activities.[89] But, given Scobell's reluctance to part with official documentation throughout the interregnum, is it conceivable that he willingly surrendered this material to Browne in 1660?

Browne was reinstated as clerk of the parliaments by order of the Convention Parliament on 25 April 1660. On that same day, the Lords gave Scobell fourteen days to vacate the 'Dwelling-house in The Old Pallace at Westminster' traditionally belonging to the clerk and ordered him to deliver to Browne all 'the Acts, Ordinances, Journals, Records, Writings, and Papers, appertaining or any Wise belonging to the said Office'. [90] The Commons, too, wanted their records back – they resolved that 'Mr. Scobell, Mr. St. Nicholas, and all others, who have in their Hands or Custody, any Records, Books, Papers, or Proceedings, belonging to the House' should hand them over.[91] What happened next is unclear. Perhaps Scobell, judging it prudent not to infuriate the Restoration authorities, complied. But even if he disobeyed, by August 1660 Scobell was dead and his archives completely at Browne's disposal. On 22 August, the Lords authorized Browne 'to search amongst Mr. Scobell's Papers, in the Presence of the Executors; and to seize such Papers and Records as are properly belonging to the House of Peers'. [92] It was almost certainly at this juncture that Browne came into the possession of the bulk of Scobell's collection of parliamentary papers.

But if Scobell's papers did furnish Browne with all the material he needed to compile Additional MS. 6125, it is intriguing that he did not copy it in any strict chronological order. The volume opens with the remnant of the conference between Cromwell and the committee of ninety-nine, followed by the 'rejection' speech of 8 May. Immediately after, however, follows Cromwell's speech at the opening of the parliament on 17 September 1656, and then his speeches of 31 March, 3 April, 8 April and 25 May 1657. That the kingship debates are presented in order but out of sequence with the material that follows could mean that Browne copied this material from a discrete source, separate from the rest. It could also indicate the order in which Browne came by the material – perhaps he got hold of a copy of the committee of ninety-nine's report and the 8 May speech before he received those reports of the other speeches and documents which make up the remainder of the volume. Indeed, all of the material after the 8 May speech runs in chronological sequence.[93]

So perhaps Browne acquired the text of the committee's report and the 8 May speech before those other documents that he copied into the remainder of the volume. Of the speeches Cromwell made during the second protectorate parliament only those of 8 and 25 May 1657 and 20 January 1658 were entered into the Commons Journal.^[94] The rest, where reported to the House, were supposed to be entered in the Journal, but only spaces remain where the clerk failed to copy them out.^[95] With access to Scobell's papers, however, Browne would almost certainly have come into possession of those reports intended to supply the blanks in the Journal. That Browne copied out the speech of 8 May before the other (earlier) speeches makes sense. He could consult this speech, recorded in the Commons Journal, long before he came into possession of Scobell's papers.^[96] After all, Scobell had already surrendered the Journal to his protectoral replacement Smythe in 1658, so it was no longer in his possession at the Restoration. The copies of the speeches to be written into the Commons Journal were a different matter; these were more likely to have remained in Scobell's hands until his death in August 1660. Of course, if this is true, it complicates further the origins of the text relating to the committee of ninety-nine and their dealings with Cromwell. If that report came into Browne's possession before the subsequent material in the volume, then it is less likely that it was in Scobell's hands in 1660 and more likely that it derived from elsewhere – possibly from the diarist Burton or, more probably, from among those papers which were, along with the Journals, restored to the clerk of the Commons in 1660.^[97]

There also remains the question of why Browne felt compelled to copy this material. If he had access to the originals, why transcribe them? But, if the material derived from records belonging to the Commons, it made sense for Browne to make copies – the originals stayed among the records of the Lower House, only to perish in the fire at Westminster in 1834. This certainly seems to be the case for another Cromwellian document that survives only in Browne's hand: the Constitutional Bill of the first protectorate parliament. According to Gardiner, who discovered this document among the Braye manuscripts (see below), it was pieced together by Browne from 'the entries of clauses and amendments in the Journals of the House of Commons'.^[98] A more likely explanation, however, is that this was actually Browne's copy of the original draft bill, written by Scobell – or one of his underclerks – which came into his hands in 1660. Again, Browne would have copied it out, before depositing the original among the Commons archives.

That Browne copied and preserved these texts is unsurprising. The historian of the parliamentary archives, Maurice Bond, neatly sums up Browne as 'an administrator whose first instinct was to keep everything'.^[99] Somewhat ironically, however, his penchant for record-keeping almost brought total oblivion to the parliamentary archive. While reluctant to part with his records during the interregnum, he was more forthcoming after the Restoration. Sometime before 1682, Browne lent a number of important records in his possession to John Nalson, then in the process of writing his *Impartial Collection of the Great Affairs of State*. The manuscripts were apparently never returned, but instead came into the possession of the dukes of Portland and are now deposited in the Bodleian Library.^[100] Browne also kept many records at his country home at Eydon in Northamptonshire. When he died in 1691, the home and the papers descended to his son-in-law Sir Roger Cave of Stanford Hall – whose family later inherited the barony of Braye. Among these papers were many 'official' parliamentary documents written by Browne, including copies of minutes, draft parliamentary orders and transcripts of speeches intended for entry in the official Journal of the House – documents qualitatively similar to those Cromwellian records copied out in Additional MS. 6125.^[101] Although it is impossible to say how much material has been lost since 1691, most of those documents that were still in the possession of the Braye family in the early twentieth century were bought at a series of auctions from 1947 to 1987 and restored to the parliamentary archive.

It is therefore easy to see how Additional MS. 6125 itself came to be 'lost'. Perhaps the volume was one of the documents Browne lent to Nalson, or maybe it was among the large body of material cluttering his country residence at Eydon. Either way, this manuscript volume – along with its, still missing, sister volumes – became detached from Browne's papers. According to a note written in the inside cover of Additional MS. 6125, the volume eventually found its way onto the shelves of the London bookshop Lackington, Allen & Co., where it was purchased in 1804, and thereafter deposited in the British Museum.^[102]

Yet, if Browne's desire to copy out these speeches for his own archive is understandable enough, there remains the problem of how those same speeches came to be published in 1660. It is often assumed that *Monarchy Asserted* was promoted by one of the committee of ninety-nine to trumpet their pro-kingship sentiments in the wake of the Restoration. Woodford, for instance, notes how the speeches in *Monarchy Asserted* 'reveal the committee members to be loyal to the office of king, a necessary position for political survival in the Restoration'. Their speeches 'aligned the committee members with monarchical government, regardless of which family wore the crown'.^[103] But, surely, revealing oneself to be a supporter of monarchical government 'regardless' of the family was a dangerous position to take in 1660. If a spokesman at the committee – such as Fiennes or Whitelocke – was behind this publication, one cannot help but feel that they would have done more to hide those statements that directly prejudiced the Stuart cause.

And yet, throughout the debates printed in *Monarchy Asserted*, the committee's spokesmen assert not only the legal necessity of the kingly title, but the safety and security that it provided against a Stuart Restoration. Lord Broghill, for instance, warned Cromwell that there was 'at present but a divorce between the pretending King and Imperiall Crown of these Nations, and we know that persons divorc't may marry again, but if the person be married to another, it cuts off all hope'.^[104] Self-preservation rather than loyalty to the Stuart monarchy appears to have been a primary concern, hence their repeated references to the 1495 de facto act of Henry VII. As Broghill argued, if Cromwell took the title of king 'all those that obey and serve you, are secured by law ... 11 Hen. 7 where a full provision is made for the safety of those that shall serve whoever is King'.^[105] As the anonymous author of the introductory note 'to the Reader' suggests, it was 'out of love to themselves, and posterity' that they urged Cromwell to accept the kingly title.^[106] Little wonder, then, that when the tract was reprinted in 1680, during the height of the exclusion crisis, that its title was no longer *Monarchy Asserted* but *Treason's Master-piece*. The committee of ninety-nine, the reprint argued, had desired 'Oliver The late Usurper' to 'take upon him the Title of King of *England*, &c. with an intent to exclude the Royal Line'; it was 'not Monarchy alone they first struck at, but the utter Exclusion of the Royal Line'.^[107]

All this is reason enough to believe that the publication of *Monarchy Asserted* was deeply unwelcome for those whose speeches it printed. Take, for instance, the committee's chairman Bulstrode Whitelocke. It has already been noted that he felt no need to recount the details of the kingship debates in his post-Restoration memoirs because they were already available 'in print'.^[108] But, even if Whitelocke tacitly admitted that the pamphlet was an accurate record, this need not be a sign that he approved of its publication.

It is important to remember the context in which *Monarchy Asserted* is likely to have emerged.^[109] The Restoration was a dispiriting time for Whitelocke; he was 'full of trouble in the midst of all this jollity in others'.^[110] By 1 June 1660 his 'troubles began to multiplie, & he was threatned by some ag[ains]t whom he had acted ... that they would procure him to be excepted out of the Act of oblivion and generall pardon'. The Convention Parliament contained numerous enemies: William Prynne, for one, 'tooke much pains to search the journalls of Parlem[en]t to see what he could find'

against Whitelocke.[111] In response, Whitelocke called on his network of friends and family to work on his behalf, even managing to secure a valuable audience with Charles II in early June 1660.[112] The whole effort 'cost him a great deal of money in gratifications, & buying out of enemies from their designs of destroying him'.[113]

He also produced a written defence, entitled *The Case of Bulstrode Whitelocke Kt*, which he 'transcribed & delivered to his friends in both houses' to vindicate himself against those charges which he anticipated Prynne and others were concocting against him.[114] In the *Case*, Whitelocke strenuously denied his involvement in any of the constitutional changes of the sixteen-forties and fifties and professed his enduring support for Stuart monarchy. He had 'no hand in any changes of government, the greatest whereof', he claimed, 'were made when he was beyond Sea'.[115] In reality, Whitelocke was only abroad, on embassy to Sweden, in the winter of 1653–4; he was very much at the centre of affairs when the kingly office and the house of lords were abolished in 1649, yet it suited his purposes to make the Cromwellian seizure of power in late 1653 the revolutionary fulcrum of the period.

Equally ingenious, or rather disingenuous, was Whitelocke's claim that 'Cromwell suspected him to incline to the Kings restauration' and that for this reason Cromwell 'bare him no favor'.[116] In light of what Whitelocke later claimed in his memoirs about those private conversations with Cromwell, it is worth noting that he did not claim that he ever explicitly told Cromwell that he wanted the king's restoration – only that Cromwell had his suspicions.[117] Whitelocke was also at pains to point out that his embassy to Sweden, besides being an unwanted and heavy burden, 'did not derogate from the King nor dishonor or prejudice his Nation'; there was 'nothing personall in it'. Indeed, Whitelocke noted Queen Christina's admiration for how 'he spake of his Prince with respect, & of his adversaries like a gentleman'.[118]

The deafening silence throughout the *Case of Bulstrode Whitelocke*, however, concerns the offer of the kingship to Cromwell. Had Whitelocke truly believed there was any benefit to be gained from his support for Cromwellian kingship, surely he would have alluded to it in the *Case*. That he did not, however, suggests two things: first, that Whitelocke wished for the whole business of the kingship debates to be forgotten and was therefore unlikely to have welcomed publication of the details of his speeches in *Monarchy Asserted*; second, that the pamphlet itself is unlikely to have been published until after Whitelocke had composed his *Case*. In June 1660 Whitelocke felt no need to defend his actions of 1657 because the full record of those actions was not yet public knowledge.

Ultimately, Whitelocke's efforts to conceal his activities in the sixteen-fifties paid off. On 14 June 1660, after reading the 'humble Petition of Bulstrode Whitlock' – presumably one and the same as the *Case* – the motion to except Whitelocke from the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion was defeated in the Commons by 175 votes to 134, or 'carried by 50 voices' as Whitelocke exaggerated it.[119]

Another potential clue to the motives behind the pamphlet's publication is the inexplicable appearance of 'Oliver St. John, Lord chief Justice' as one of the 'Members of the Committee' listed on its title page. St. John was never one of the committee of ninety-nine; he was not even elected as an M.P. to the second protectorate parliament. Perhaps it was an honest mistake. The confusion probably arose from the fact that the initial speeches made by lord chief justice of the upper bench John Glynn simply list him as 'Lord Chief Justice'.[120] Only in the report of his speech on 16 April is he identified for the first time as 'Lord chief Justice Glynn'.[121] The uninitiated could therefore be forgiven for believing that there were two lord chief justices at the conference. But if it was a genuine mistake it surely means that whoever was behind the publication of the pamphlet was not a

first-hand witness of events; they were unaware that St. John had never attended the conferences and that 'Lord Chief Justice' referred to Glynne alone.

There could, however, be a more sinister explanation for St. John's prominent billing on the title page. On 13 June 1660, the Commons voted that St. John was to be one of twenty people excepted from the 'Act of General Pardon and Oblivion' who would be punished with 'such Pains, Penalties, and Forfeitures, (not extending to Life) as shall be thought fit to be inflicted on him'.^[122] Like Whitelocke, St. John responded with a paper professing his innocence, which circulated in print in July 1660 under the title *The Case of Oliver St. John, Esq.*^[123] St. John denied strongly those 'Rumours spread up and down, which if true would make me guilty of the King's Death, and of alteration of the Government, from King, Lords, and Commons'. He denied that he had been the 'dark Lanthorn ... in setting up and managing affairs in the late *Oliver* Protector's time'; or that he had conspired to restore Richard Cromwell over Charles II.^[124] Moreover, although he professed to be 'for King, Lords, and Commons', St. John denied any part in the offer of the crown to Cromwell. 'In the pretended Parliament 1656, when the Petition and Advice was made', St. John stayed away. Nor would he sit in the newly made Other House – he never accepted any 'Summons from *Oliver* or *Richard* though always summoned to sit in that called the other House'.^[125]

At around the same time, St. John's one-time servant John Thurloe sent a letter to the Speaker of the Commons to defend his former master. He denied that 'it was the judgment of my lord St John, that the king ought to be put to death' or that St. John did 'plott and endeavour the restoringe' of Richard Cromwell. All these reports, Thurloe asserted, were 'false and groundless'. When it came to St. John's secret dealings with Oliver Cromwell, however, Thurloe was conspicuously guarded. It was, '*soe farre as I know*', the case that St. John never had 'any comunication or counsells betweene Oliver and him, mediately or ymediately, touchinge the manadgment of any part of the publiqye affaires'. 'Nor was hee (*to my knowledge*)', Thurloe continued, 'advised with in the petition and advise'.^[126] Whether Thurloe's carefully chosen words played a part in lessening the severity of St. John's punishment is moot. On 2 August the Lords decided to add a clause to the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion, confirmed by the Commons eleven days later, which disabled St. John and fifteen others from holding any kind of office, thereby cancelling the earlier clause that left the extent of St. John's punishment indeterminate.^[127]

Patently, it could hardly have helped St. John's cause if, just as he tried to exonerate himself from charges of complicity with the Cromwellian regime, a pamphlet emerged boldly announcing his involvement in the offer of the crown to Cromwell. Like Whitelocke, St. John used his paper to rebuff claims that he conspired to keep the Stuarts away from the throne. He denied treating 'concerning the exclusion of his Majesty, or his Title' while on embassy in Holland for the fledgling Commonwealth.^[128] In January 1660, when the Rump discussed an 'Oath of Abjuration of his Majestie's Title', St. John 'came out of the Country on purpose to oppose that, or any other of that nature'.^[129] It would therefore have been highly prejudicial to St. John for his name to appear so prominently on a publication, the substance of which connived at the permanent exclusion of Stuart claims to the throne. By extension, it seems likely that *Monarchy Asserted* emerged only after St. John's petition was published; had it appeared beforehand, it is likely he would have addressed its misattribution of his involvement in the kingship debates more directly in his petition.

It is possible, therefore, that *Monarchy Asserted* was published to destroy political careers rather than to rehabilitate them. Even if it emerged too late to influence parliament in its deliberations over the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion, it would certainly have embarrassed many of those who had tried their best in the summer of 1660 to profess their constant loyalty to the Stuart cause. Those men who were Cromwellian insiders were certainly not without enemies; perhaps Browne, having

been snubbed for the clerkship in 1658, leaked the committee's report to the press to ensure that those who had denied him that employment would have their own taste of life in the political wilderness?

Unless further evidence emerges, however, the safest conclusion is that St. John's inclusion on the title page of *Monarchy Asserted* was a genuine mistake born out of ignorance and that the pamphlet was nothing more than a pro-Restoration propaganda exercise. Redmayne had already printed a number of parliamentary newsbooks and documents in late 1659 and 1660, and it seems logical that he also received this material through official, or semi-official, channels. By their own admission, the arguments of the M.P.s contained in the pamphlet stressed that monarchy was 'the best, most Ancient and legall form of Government'. The fact that they argued for Cromwellian monarchy was testimony to their perfidiousness and a matter for their own consciences. What mattered was demonstrating how even Cromwell's supporters believed monarchy was the only legitimate form of government. To this extent, the publication was indeed propaganda, but it cannot have been published with the backing of any of those who were spokesmen for the committee of ninety-nine.

It is easy to forget just how explosive this material would have been in 1660. As this was the first time these speeches were made publicly available, the details of the arguments – and the frankness with which the arbitrary and illegal nature of the protectorate was discussed – would have been revelatory to many who read them. The passage in Cromwell's speech of 20 April 1657, for instance, where he notes that some believed he wanted 'to gripe at the government of the Nations without a legall consent' was followed by the stark admission 'which I say I have done in times past, upon principles of necessity'.^[130] Sensationalism, then as now, was a publisher's dream. The fact that at least two of Redmayne's presses churned out copies of *Monarchy Asserted* in 1660 suggests that demand was, or was expected to be, high.

The circumstances of the pamphlet's publication, however, need not diminish the accuracy of the account that it provides. It has already been demonstrated that the pamphlet shows few signs of deliberate manipulation by its author to impart a particular message upon the text. The differences between the text of *Monarchy Asserted* and Additional MS. 6125 can generally be attributed to printing errors in the one and scribal errors in the other, rather than to an attempt to alter the text deliberately. The fact that John Browne is the scribe of Additional MS. 6125 means that we can be fairly confident that he copied from a very close copy of the committee of ninety-nine's report, most likely the original draft of that report which Burton had struggled to complete. Consequently, those subtle variations between Browne's manuscript and the pamphlet probably betray the rough, unpolished and, in places, incomplete nature of the text of the committee's report. That two copies of that same report should have minor differences should not surprise us; what is remarkable is that the disparities are not more pronounced.

Yet, if both manuscript and pamphlet can be considered to be relatively unadulterated transcriptions of the committee of ninety-nine's report, this does not mean that the report itself is without its own biases. The difficulties in capturing Cromwell's actual words are not simply the product of the surviving versions being copies of the committee of ninety-nine's report but are endemic to the report itself. In recording the kingship debates, the committee produced a report that vindicated its activities, and which made clear that it offered every conceivable argument to answer Cromwell's scruples concerning the kingly title. That Cromwell seems hesitant or pained in his responses, as opposed to the apparent confidence and coherence with which the committee made its case, may simply be because the committee members wanted to give the impression, or hoped to convince themselves, that their arguments were having some effect. It may also be a symptom of the fact that the spokesmen for the committee of ninety-nine were able to supply notes, clarify the meaning and

polish the text of their own speeches. Those speeches made by Cromwell, by contrast, were constructed from notes taken by others, so that much depended upon what they heard, or thought they heard, and the subsequent struggle to derive meaning from the scribbled notes they had taken. Cromwell's tortured style could be as much the result of the acoustics of the room in which he delivered a given speech, or the poor hearing and limited note-taking abilities of his audience, as merely of the way he spoke.

Above all, we must appreciate how the circumstances surrounding the creation and printing of the committee's report have accentuated certain interpretations of the kingship debates. For subtly different reasons, neither those who created the report nor those behind its publication in 1660 were disposed to give much credence to Cromwell's views on the matter. The committee's principal concern was to convince Cromwell to accept the title, not to be convinced by his arguments to the contrary. When printing the tract, too, it was those arguments in favour of monarchy, in which monarchy was 'asserted' to be the 'best, most Ancient and legall' form of government, that were emphasized. As the pamphlet's introduction notes dismissively, the 'Protector *seemed* very scrupulous to accept the Name and Title ... because Lambert and some leading Officers would not consent'.^[131] Just as the committee of ninety-nine M.P.s met Cromwell's final rejection of the crown with a shocked response, so the reader of *Monarchy Asserted* is invited to conclude that the lord protector's answer on 8 May, coming after the committee's lengthy and weighty speeches in favour of kingship, is something of a non sequitur. But this impression is largely symptomatic of the committee of ninety-nine's failure to take Cromwell's doubts seriously. Confident that its arguments for kingship were irrefutable, its members allowed expectations to overtake them and they refused to give credence to Cromwell's repeated claims throughout April 1657 that it was a title that he could never, in good conscience, accept.