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Godfrey Goodman, Bishop of Gloucester

by R. Austin
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GODFREY GOODMAN, BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER

by ROLAND AUSTIN, F.S.A.

THE troubles of Godfrey Goodman, Bishop of Gloucester from 1625 to 1643, when the See was sequestrated, are well known, and in particular his conflict with Parliament and the Committee of Sequestration. In 1643 his palace was sacked by the parliamentary soldiers, who destroyed almost all his library and papers, and for protection Goodman left the city and took up residence in Carnarvon, where he had a small estate. His persecution and his means of living were such that in 1649 he petitioned Parliament for relief, and this was supported by the Mayor of Carnarvon and well-known persons in that town. A strong appeal was made on his behalf to William Lenthall, Speaker of the House of Commons, and Recorder of Gloucester (1638-60), by many of the most influential men in Gloucester and the County. The combined appeals were printed as a broadside which is of interest for the names of those who supported Goodman, and for its rarity. It seems useful to print the full text in our Transactions from the copy which is among the City Records, and was no doubt sent to the Mayor at the time of its circulation. Among those who attached their names to the petition are several who had held high office in Gloucester and will be known to those who have studied the history of the City.

The broadside measures $17\frac{1}{5}$ inches by $12\frac{1}{5}$ inches, the actual measure of the text being $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches across.

To the Supreme Authority, the right Honorable the Commons of England assembled in
PARLIAMENT.

The humble Petition of Godfrey Goodman, late Bishop of Gloucester.

Sheweth,

That your Petitioner hath suffered in these times, as much proportionably, and in as hard a manner as any other man hath done (as verily he beleeveth.) Though no man can produce better Certificates, or give greater assurance of his innocency, than your Petitioner can doe ; That his Pockets have been twice searched, all his Letters perused, and much enquiry made to finde out accusations against him : Yet he humbly thanks God that he hath ever been found innocent ; That he hath not only lost in effect, all his owne Monies, But very much what belongs to others, insomuch that for Orphants alone he hath past over a Lease which in former times would have yealded fouteene or fifteene hundred pounds, besides great Arreares which are behind and unpaid, and for which he should make satisfaction to a great value ; though he used all possible meanes to preserve them, sending moneys beyond Seas to *Hamborow* by Bill of Exchange, yet were they called back againe, and paid to the use of the Parliament, as may appeare by the Acquittance, the like whereof he conceives hath not befallen any other man though the greatest delinquent. That notwithstanding all his former sufferings, yet he still cannot be freed. Lately there came an Officer to demand Ninty six pound, pretending it to be a debt due to your Pet. and that he was to receive it for the use of the Parliament. Within this month two of his neighbours were brought up to *London* living above 40 miles distant, onely to be examined what debts were due to your Pet. that others might receive them. Your Pet. holding one Personage in *Commendam*, one Mr *Newbery* now for some years hath enjoyed the whole

benefit, upon pretence that your Pet. is Sequestered, and his serving the Cure there. Whereas your Petitioner is freed from Sequestration by the Articles of *Anglesey*; neither hath he discharged the Cure, for that he hath not administred the Communion all his time, nor Baptized their children: The Parishioners have generally made their Certificates in the behalfe of your Pet. who in his wants desiring to have some reliefe out of his Parsonage, it being well worth 180l, *per annum*. Mr *Newbery* gave him him (*sic*) this answer, that he ought to have none, because he had neither wife nor children, though indeed your Pet. had very well deserved of him. That while he enjoyed his preferments, he takes God to witnesse, that he never thought it lawfull for him to enrich himselfe by any Church meanes, but did ever desire God to direct him, that he might spend his Church meanes in a Church-like manner, and to the best uses: Insomuch that being of himselfe meanelly provided, and having lived seven years without Rentes, upon his owne stock; which being now wholly exhausted, he wants meanes to subsist, and doth humbly begg some maintenance for his Reliefe, and that he may be freed from Sequestrations or any Delinquency, protesting that wittingly and willingly he never did, nor ever shall offend the Parliament.

And your Petitioner shall daily pray God to reward you.

August 31. 1649.

Godfrey Goodman.

(The two testimonies from Carnarvon follow)

Quarto Aprilis 1649.

We whose names are hereunto subscribed do hereby certifie: That *Godfrey Goodman*, late Bishop of *Gloucester*, hath lived in this Countrey and County, now for the space of sixe yeares or thereabouts, in effect during the whole time of the Warre, in which time there have beene here diverse and severall Armies, some for the King, some for

the Parliament: Yet we neither know, nor ever heard that the said *Godfrey Goodman*, did ever enterpose or intermeddle in any matters of Warre; but hath ever lived quietly & privately. And this we can do no lesse than testifie at his request, now at his departure out of this Country.

Tho: Madrin. Vic. Car. John Owen.

Tho: Williams Io. Parry

We also whose names are hereunto subscribed, doe hereby testifie that the above mentioned *Godfrey Goodman*, for the space of a yeare last past since our residence in *Carnarvon* hath not intermeddled with any businesse concerning Warlike affaires; but hath demeaned himselfe as is above specified by the Gentlemen of that Countrey.

Tho: Mason.

Marke Mould.

(The Petition)

To the Honourable *William Lenthall*, Speaker of the Parliament of *England* and Recorder of the City of *Gloucester*, and to the Knights Citizens and Burgesses of the said City and County of *Gloucester*.

attending in *Parliament*

Honourable,

At the earnest request of our late Bishop Doctor *Goodman*, who by his owne relation hath suffered in these times as much proportionably as any man hath done; Yet hath Certificates from the high Sheriffe, Justices, Committees, Governours of Castles where hee lived, that he never inteposed in any matter of Warr. Having lost in effect all his meanes, and not onely his owne, but very much what belonged to others, by whom he was intrusted, and for which he must make satisfaction, to a very great

value. Though we write nothing in commendations of him (which he in his Modesty desires may be forborne) Yet surely we can do no lesse than give him this Testimony, that he hath lived very quietly and lovingly amongst us for these twenty yeares. And considering the course of his expence, we conceive he could not enrich himselfe by his Bishopprick. And having now lived for the space of Seven yeares wholly upon his owne stock, and that now utterly exhausted. Our humble desire is, that ye move the Honorable House of Commons, that he may have some meanes wherewith to subsist, and that ye would be pleased to further him in his Petition, which we hope will be done, the rather upon our recommendations whom you represent in Parliament; And this we earnestly desire, ever resting

Your humble and faithfull Servants,

Gentlemen of
Gloucester-shire.

William Shepheard

William Stafford

Edward Kingscot

Richard Yate

John Brayne

John Giffard

John Corwell

Anthony Gifford

William Selvyn

Thomas Hylwey

Arthur Foulter

William Leigh

William Mewe

Thomas Estcourt

Citizens of *Gloucester*

Henry Cugley Maior

William Singleton

John Hanbury

Thomas Hill

Edward Nourse

Laurence Singleton

De : Wise

John Madocke

Ias. Clutterbooke

James Stephens

John Dorney

William Clarke

Richard Tayler

Richard Harware

Nathaniell Hodges

Edward Collett

John Wood

Robert Tyther

Robert Pewin

Thomas Peirce

Iam. Commelin

Thomas Cooke.

Burgesses of *Tukesbury*.

<i>John Man</i>	} <i>Baylifes.</i>
<i>Chr : Atkinson</i>	
<i>William Wilson</i>	
<i>Richard Mince</i>	
<i>Thomas Hale</i>	
<i>Edward Ienings</i>	
<i>Thomas Hales, Senior</i>	
<i>William Whittedge</i>	
<i>John Orrell</i>	
<i>John Schiter</i>	
<i>John Millington</i>	
<i>Phillip Hilly</i>	
<i>John Carver</i>	
<i>Henry Robins</i>	
<i>William Fowler</i>	
<i>John Browne</i>	
<i>William Scudamore</i>	

Burgesses of *Cirencester*

Andrew Solace
Giles Handcox
Amos Dansey
John Broade
Thomas Roberts
John Woodhall
Thomas Deacon
Edmond Freeman
John Kenible
Thomas Gibbs
Richard Massinger
John Shingleton
Thomas Witcombe
Thomas Trippett
John Maddockes
John Screven
William Starr
John Tomes
William Russell
Ieffery Beale

Windsor and some other Gentlemen of *Bark-shire* have written to the same effect, but because they writ some thing in commendation, &c. therefore they are not published.

In regard of my age beeing neere 70, and a great infirmity, I cannot sollicite my own businesse, but do desire that what favour shall be showed me, may be ascribed under Gods mercy and providence, to your owne goodnesse and compassion, and not to my importunity.