

**THE PORTRAITS OF NOTED PERSONALITIES OF THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION
IN THE ALUPKA COLLECTION OF THE VORONTSOV**

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The collection of the Alupka Palace of the Vorontsovs, a family that belonged to the educated and patriotically minded elite of Russia, retains a large number of items of cultural and historical value such as paintings, sculptural portraits, and graphic sheets executed by the best artists of the 19th century.

Many representatives of this count clan had been marked with a hallmark of Anglophilia: Alexander R. Vorontsov and Semion R. Vorontsov served as Russian ambassadors to England; the educated Catherine R. Vorontsova-Dashkova provided her only son's education in Edinburgh, Scotland; Semion R. Vorontsov's children were brought up in London.

It was important for the Russian ambassador not only to keep up numerous acquaintances but also to have the profound knowledge of the history and culture of Great Britain, a powerful country that became his second home (he lived there for 46 years). While Semion R. Vorontsov was at the diplomatic service in Italy he developed a distinctive flair for the fine arts and his contemporaries often as had for his advice about this field.

It was at that time that English art flourished immensely. The graphic sheets carried out in mezzotint, a method in which English artists were the best in Europe were in the high value. Mezzotint was widely used for the reproduction of paintings because of the great variety of tones that could be achieved through it from chalky white to saturated deep black.

The peculiarity of English art was the prevalence of portraiture. It is quite understandable that the nation, being separated from the Continent and girded by seas, became famous and occupied a leading position thanks to the strong and selfless personalities: kings, commanders, admirals, politicians, poets, etc.

Albion was ahead of many other European countries in terms of readiness for the revolution. Of course such tragic and pathetic pages of history were of special interest to Semion R. Vorontsov: there is a letter in the voluminous family archives, in the brothers' correspondence, which contains a comparative analysis of the English Revolution and the French Revolution as well as mentioning of Oliver Cromwell who was virtually the Robespierre and the Napoleon of the English Revolution.

Up to now Cromwell has remained an enigma to us: a modest esquire until 40 years of age, a smattering student, a Parliamentarian, a cavalry captain, an unbeaten military commander armed with the Holy Scripture and sword, a merciless subduer of Ireland,

the chief "regicide" who sent Charles I to the scaffold, and, at the same time, Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England with royal authority, residing in the luxury of the former royal castles, wearing the ermine mantle, and being the one who nearly founded a new branch of monarchs – the Olivers.

With the restoration of the Stuarts in 1660, Cromwell's remains were exhumed, and the 13 army officers – his closest associates – were executed at Charing Cross.

However, the researchers distinguish many achievements in his course of actions: he took steps in the uniting of England, Scotland, and Ireland; he gave rise to the colonial policy; and above all he "made a republican form of government suitable for the country where monarchy had been invariably preferred by the majority of people." (1) In 1999 Britain marks the 400th jubilee of Cromwell.

The scholars also point to the fact that during the Civil War in 1647 he "closely cooperated with the political allies in Westminster," (2) where the Earl of Pembroke is mentioned among "the group of powerful peers." (2) This statement is valuable to us because Semion R. Vorontsov gave his daughter Catherine in marriage to George Herbert, 11th Earl of Pembroke. Taking pride in his own genealogy, S. R. Vorontsov also looked up to the family history of his English relative.

We still have to ascertain why the Vorontsovs' collection of the English graphic arts had also been made up of a series of portraits of the revolutionaries (who were the dictator's supporters) and those of his Dutch foes. At the moment such Cromwell-related portraits are 12 in number.

In the 16th century Western and Central Europe was swept up in the vortex of the Reformation which in England resulted in Puritanism, divided into the two camps: the radical Independents and the moderate Presbyterians, the last being backed by Oliver Cromwell.

Various religious sects, resting upon the Holy Writ, were fanatically striving for their truthfulness. Of course, Cromwell and his contemporaries were agitated by the doctrine of predestination, divine light, divine providence, exploits in the name of God, crusades against the countries held in the chains of Antichrist, and also the waiting for Christ's coming to earth.

The millenarians were among the most fanatical sects, and major general Harrison belonged them. The

portrait of this armour-clad commander was done by an unknown artist. The researchers of English art point out that in the 17th century copperplate engraving performed a definite public function – being something between a photograph and a propaganda leaflet. Many artists were merely afraid of signing their works for fear of being persecuted.

Cromwell's seal and the inscription "regicide (Harrison took part in the trial and condemnation of the King), executed at Charing Cross in 1660" are imprinted on the small sheet with the general's portrait. The reverse also captures our attention by showing the map of a section of East Africa, Lake Victoria, and the riverbeds of the Victoria Nile and the Zaire (the Congo). We have still to find out the connection between the both sides of the sheet.

John Barkstead, another regicide (the King's death warrant was signed by 59 people and all of them were regarded as regicides), outlived Harrison for two years. This man's portrait (also made by an anonymous artist) had been carefully kept by the Vorontsovs.

Life favoured George Joyce, a hero of the Revolution, a great deal more. Hadn't received Cromwell's sanction but with his sheer connivance, he seized the arsenal at Oxford and arrested Charles I in June, 1647, having reported it in a brief military manner: "...with authority from the soldiers." (3) This action put an end to Cromwell's doubts as to the way of retaining the monarchy and made it impossible to save the King's life. George Joyce, Parliamentarian and member of the Army Council, met his death as late as 1670.

The Long Parliament sat in London from 1640 to 1653. One of its Parliamentarians was Oliver Cromwell – he was elected there to represent Cambridge. On April 20, 1653, Cromwell, having accumulated political power, disbanded the Rump Parliament (the Long Parliament after Pride's Purge of 1648). Next month on the advice of his officers – including that of Harrison's – he convened the Barebone's Parliament, or the Little Parliament called so because of the short period of its being in session – from July 4, 1653 to December 12, 1653.

At the end of 1651 Cromwell conferred with his officers in the London house of William Lenthall, a man who was appointed Speaker of the House. (4) His picture is among the above-mentioned graphic sheets as well – the portrait is carried out in the manner of the medallist's art by the engraver Eliza B. Gulston.

The Little Parliament consisted of 140 Parliamentarians, and its another name stems from the nickname of one of its members – Praise God Barbon (Barebone or Barebones). He was a rich London leather merchant who was also a Baptist preacher. The portrait from the Vorontsovs' collection shows what this man was like.

The Barebone's Parliament was eventually dismissed by Cromwell who had been preliminarily installed there as Lord Protector.

Indeed, a human fate may take a most unexpected turn!.. Thus, Cromwell, having had before nothing to do with the science of warfare, became famous as the commander of the Ironsides, a highly disciplined army composed of the various strata of society. The

monolithic strength of this army enabled Alexander Leslie (a Scottish general, hero of the Thirty Years' War) to say of those people: "Europe had no better soldiers»" (5)

Cromwell's cavalry was the core of the army, and he himself – with a red face, rasping voice, and fanatical glitter in the eyes – punished cruelly the enemies of the republic in the name of God. He certainly had the talent to find comrades in arms.

Until a certain time, Cromwell had had no fighting experience and, having acquired it, he suffered no defeats. Robert Blake (who had never sailed the seas before), after his assignment to the Navy, furthered the growth of the English fleet very much.

England achieved superiority on land and sea owing to the brilliant victories over the squadron of Prince Rupert (nephew of the executed King), the Spanish fleet, and the prominent Dutch admirals – Michiel Adriaanszoon de Ruyter and Maarten Harpertszoon Tromp.

It were the victories of Blake, former army officer, that caused Albion's firm dominance at sea. This made it possible for Semion R. Vorontsov to relish thoughts of Russia's guarding the land boundaries of Europe in the future and Britain's taking care of the European marine borders.

For rendering meritorious services to the motherland, admiral Blake had the honour of being interred in Westminster Abbey, the burial place of English kings and many eminent Englishmen. Robert Blake's portrait was printed in London in 1814 by the order of the Admiralty.

Nominally, the Scottish general Thomas Fairfax (who was born into the family of an army officer) commanded, in 1645-50, the parliamentary army (the New Model Army). He did not sign the King's death sentence and, also, he didn't draw the sword against his native Scotland also. After Cromwell's demise, Lord Fairfax headed the deputation to the son of the executed King and thus helped to restore the monarchy. Fairfax's fame did not spring from his heroic deeds on the battlefield alone; he was also a well-known man of letters – having a liking for poetry and literature, he had written interesting memoirs which were published posthumously. The general's portrait was made and published by John Scott in 1803.

General George Monk (Monck) has remained a national hero of England also. By Cromwell's order, he subjugated Scotland while in command of a detached corps. This annexation was carried out without the instances of vandalism and perfidy, whereas in Ireland the troops under the command of Cromwell did not spare those who surrendered at discretion.

Monk commanded the fleet as well and distinguished himself during the war with Holland. He, together with Fairfax, was responsible for the return of Charles II to the throne in 1660. The new King loaded the hero with favours, including the conferment upon him of the title of the first Duke of Albemarle. Monk's portrait is marked with the year 1797 and belongs to the noted copperplate burinist John Chapman. This engraver was well-known in Russia – he executed a series of portraits of the Russian tsars and took part in

putting out "The History of Russia" which was published in 1800.

The Vorontsov's collection contains the engravings (also carried out by John Chapman) showing the adversaries of Britain – the Dutch admirals de Ruyter and Tromp.

De Ruyter, an ardent combatant against pirates, renowned for his victories without shedding much blood, was at the height of his fame in 1652-67 when the English fleet was thrice defeated and the Londoners, at one time, were simply in a panic over his leading the Dutch fleet up the Thames. Naturally, he fell in action and, for his valour, was honoured with a number of monuments in Amsterdam and other Dutch cities.

Admiral Tromp was acting along with de Ruyter who rattled his sabre on the Thames. His younger years had been marked with several triumphs over the Spaniards, however, after achieving a few victories over the Englishmen in 1653, he witnessed the rise of the British fleet and passed away in the same year, so tragic for his homeland.

Time and again Cromwell had to take into account the feelings of the Levellers, members of an extreme republican faction advocating religious and social equality. However, in 1649 he suppressed this party. Their leader, John Lilburne, had spent much time in the dungeons of the Tower of London. Once a close friend of Cromwell's, he now brought out pamphlets that exposed the usurper and enjoyed immense popularity.

John Lilburne's portrait was engraved from the original (made by Bullfinch) taken from the collection of Earl Spencer. The sheet was executed by the burinist Richard Cooper in 1810.

Yet the most interesting print in the Vorontsov's collection is by far the portrait of Cromwell's Latin Secretary and outstanding English poet John Milton. The writer's friend of the same age, Samuel Cooper (who made Cromwell's portrait when the dictator was alive), carried out the portrait of the author of the immortal poems "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained."

In 1786 the noted artist Caroline Watson, according to Act of Parliament, mezzotinted this portrait and published it.

The facsimile of Sir Joshua Reynolds, founder and first president of the Royal Academy of Arts, gives his enthusiastic praise both to the artist S. Cooper and to the engraver C. Watson who acquired consummate skill,

While studying the portraits of England's famous people of the 17th century and those of their enemies, one can start to think whether they were meant to be used as illustrations (selected thoroughly by the Russian diplomat Semion R. Vorontsov) for the growing heir to the glorious family, future statesman Michael S. Vorontsov.

At any rate, this series of engravings from the Alupka Palace is a unique textbook for us as well, for it shows, through the various people, the grandiose breaking of the feudal state and the beginning of the flourishing of one of the mightiest Western European monarchies. The scholarly politician Henry St. John 1st viscount Bolingbroke calls on us to study the experience of Great Britain and draw conclusions. (6)

Despite the large amount of written and studied material on the English Revolution and its leader Oliver Cromwell, until now this period can be considered mysterious and insufficiently studied. Since then many generations have brought up the question as to what had really happened in England in the 1640s: a great rebellion, a revolution, an interclass conflict, or just a casual event? Or maybe there took place the combination of a rebellion and a revolution?

Notes

- (1) Coward, Barry. "Oliver Cromwell." Rostov-on-Don, 1997, p. 281.
- (2) Ibid., p. 92.
- (3) Barg, M.A. "The English Revolution of the 17th Century through Portraits of Its Leading Figures," Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1990, p. 148.
- (4) Coward, Barry. "Oliver Cromwell..." p. 145.
- (5) Barg, H.A. "The English Revolution..." p. 141.
- (6) Lord Bolingbroke. "Letters of the Study and Use of History." Moscow, 1978, p. 21.