

THE HISTORY OF PARLIAMENT SCHOOLS COMPETITION 2008

OLIVER CROMWELL

This is the fourth History of Parliament competition for schools and colleges, which this year is being run in conjunction with the History's publishers, Cambridge University Press. The competition is open to 11-14 year-olds (Key Stage 3). The winner will visit Parliament, to be presented with the prize, which is a £75 book token. The winner's school will receive £150 worth of Cambridge University Press books.

This year is the 350th anniversary of the death of Oliver Cromwell, seventeenth century politician, Civil War general, and Lord Protector from 1653 to 1658. Cromwell was one of Parliament's most determined and successful generals in its wars against Charles I; he was among the judges at the trial of King Charles I in 1649, which resulted in the King's execution, and some believe bore much of the responsibility for it; he led the armies which defeated Scottish forces supporting the attempts of Charles II to regain the throne in 1650 and 1651; and in a military coup in 1653 he dismissed the republican government and took power himself. Assessments of his character and aims have divided historians ever since: his military activities in Ireland have been particularly controversial.

The competition details:

During seventeenth century many people used diaries to record not only what they did but also great national events, and these are among the most vivid and important records we have of the time. The most famous is of course Samuel Pepys's diary, but there are many others written by both famous people closely involved in the events, and by people who were quite humble and had no control over them. Here are some examples of contemporary diaries which are online or should be easily available:

- Samuel Pepys: <http://www.pepysdiary.com/>
- Ralph Josselin: <http://linux02.lib.cam.ac.uk/earlscolne/diary/index.htm>
- John Evelyn

Imagine you are a spectator or participant in, or merely someone who was affected by, **one** of the following events:

- The battle of Naseby, 1645
- The siege and massacre of Drogheda, 1649
- The trial and execution of King Charles I, 1649
- The battle of Worcester, 1651
- The dismissal of the Rump Parliament in 1653
- Cromwell's death in 1658.

Write your diary entry covering the event, or else its consequences as you saw them. You might like to cover the period before or after as well; or to cover just one very particular aspect of the event. You might like to write your account from a particular point of view – pro-royalist, pro-Parliament, or maybe just pro-Cromwell.

Competition details:

1. The competition is open to students of the appropriate ages from within the United Kingdom.
2. All entries must have securely attached to them a sheet of paper stating:
 - a. Your name
 - b. Your school and its address, with a telephone or email contact for the school
 - c. Your age at 1 January 2008
 - d. A declaration, signed by your teacher, saying that the work is all your own.
3. We regret that entries cannot be individually acknowledged, and will not be returned after the competition.
4. Some entries may be used on web exhibitions put on by Parliament or the History of Parliament to mark the 350th anniversary of the Cromwell's death: those whose entries are used in this way will be contacted.
5. Entries should be sent to:

**History of Parliament competition
18 Bloomsbury Square
LONDON WC1A 2NS**

6. Entries **must be received by 1 June 2008**.
7. Judging will be by a panel appointed by the History of Parliament. Their decision will be final, and no correspondence can be entered into.
8. For each competition there will be one winner, although the judges may make special commendations if they think fit.
9. The prize will be a £75 book token. The winner's school will receive up to £150 worth of Cambridge University Press books. The winner will be invited to visit the Palace of Westminster with up to two other members of their family, and a member of the school staff, for the presentation of the prizes (the History will pay reasonable travel/accommodation expenses for the student and accompanying members of his/her family).
10. For any queries, please contact Sophie Allen [sallen@histparl.ac.uk].