Constructing Cromwell traces the complex and shifting popular images of Oliver Cromwell from his first appearance as a public figure in the mid-1640s through the period of his power to his death and eventual disinterment after the restoration of the monarchy. The meaning and impact of this enigmatic figure have long been debated in the context of mid-seventeenth-century crisis but contemporary representations of Cromwell have largely been neglected. Cromwellian print, Laura Knoppers argues, transformed the courtly forms of Caroline ceremony, portraiture, and panegyric and in turn complicated and altered the cultural forms available to Charles II. The book draws on extensive archival research, including manuscript sources, startling print ephemera, and visual artifacts. Placing canonical authors such as Milton, Marvell, Waller, and Dryden alongside such neglected writers as George Wither and Payne Fisher, Knoppers demonstrates how literary texts both respond and contribute to political and cultural change.

Laura Lunger Knoppers is Associate Professor of English at Pennsylvania State University. She is author of Historicizing Milton: Spectacle, Power, and Poetry in Restoration England (1994).
Constructing Cromwell
Ceremony, Portrait, and Print
1645–1661
Laura Lunger Knoppers
For Gary, Theresa, and David
Contents


Introduction [1]

1 "A Coffin for King Charles, A Crowne for Cromwell": royalist satire and the regicide [10]

2 Portraiture, print, and the republican heroic [31]

3 "Riding in Triumph": ceremony and print in the early Protectorate [69]

4 Contesting Cromwell in the late Protectorate [107]

5 "I saw him dead": Cromwell’s death and funeral [132]

6 Ceremony, print, and punishment in the early Restoration [167]

Afterword [194]

Illustrations

1 Romeyn de Hooghe, The Coronation of Oliver Cromwell (1649). ©The British Museum [21]
2 Robert Walker, Oliver Cromwell (1649). By courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery, London [33]
3 “The High and Mighty Monarch Charles,” from Military Orders, and Articles Established by his Majestie (1643). By permission of the British Library. Shelfmark 100b.16 [36]
4 “Charles par la grace de Dieu,” from The Divine Right of Government Naturall and Politique (1647). This item is reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California [37]
5 Charles I, from Eikon Basilike (1649). By permission of Rare Books and Special Collections, The Pennsylvania State University Libraries [38]
6 Engraving after Weesop, Execution of Charles I (1649). By permission of the British Library. Shelfmark 669 f.12 (87) [40]
8 Oliver Cromwell, attributed Robert Walker (n.d.). By permission of the Cromwell Museum, Huntingdon [44]
9 Samuel Cooper, Oliver Cromwell (c. 1650). By permission of His Grace, the Duke of Buccleuch [45]
10 Oliver Cromwell, A Perfect Table of One Hundred Forty and Five Victories (1650). By permission of the British Library. Shelfmark 669 f.15 [51]
11 Oliver Cromwell, Dunbar medal (1650). ©The British Museum [57]
12 Oliver Cromwell, from A Perfect List of all the Victories Obtained (1651). By permission of the British Library. Shelfmark 669 f.16 (27) [59]
List of illustrations

15 Peter Lely, Oliver Cromwell (1654). Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery [81]
16 Lord Protector medal (1654). ©The British Museum [82]
17 Anonymous equestrian painting of Cromwell (c. 1654). By permission of the Cromwell Museum, Huntingdon [83]
18 Engraving of Oliver Cromwell, half-length (n.d.). ©The British Museum [84]
19 Engraving of Oliver Cromwell, with heads (n.d.). ©The British Museum [86]
20 "Oliver Cromwel, Proteckteur Geeweest" (1654). ©The British Museum [87]
21 Etching of second protectoral installation, from A Further Narrative of the Passages of the Times (1657), p. 28. By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library [125]
22 Edward Mascall, Oliver Cromwell (1657). By permission of the Cromwell Museum, Huntingdon [131]
23 Effigy of Oliver Cromwell, lying-in-state, from Some Farther Intelligence of the Affairs of England (1658). By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library [141]
24 Upright effigy of Oliver Cromwell (1658). ©The British Museum [142]
25 Cromwell’s death mask (1658). By permission of the Cromwell Museum, Huntingdon [154]
26 Death medal of Cromwell (1658). ©The British Museum [155]
27 Posthumous engraving of a regal Cromwell (1658). ©The British Museum [156]
28 Title page with woodcut ghost of Cromwell, from The World in a Maize (1659). By permission of the British Library. Shelfmark e985(23) [160]
29 Ghosts of Charles I and Oliver Cromwell, woodcut and title page of A Dialogue Betwixt the Ghosts (1659). By permission of the British Library. Shelfmark e985(24) [162–63]
30 Charles I in heaven and Oliver Cromwell in hell, from The Court Career (1659). By permission of the British Library. Shelfmark e989(26) [165]
31 Charles II, reaching for crown (c. 1660). This item is reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California [171]
32 Charles II in armor, wearing crown, from William Walwyn, God Save the King (1660). By permission of the British Library. Shelfmark 81033(10) [172]
33 Woodcut heads of Oliver and Elizabeth Cromwell, from The Case is Altered (1660). By permission of the British Library. Shelfmark e1869(2) [177]
34 Cromwell’s council in hell, frontispiece to The Devils Cabinet Councell Discovered (1660). ©The British Museum [179]
35 Engraving of Cromwell stealing the crown, from John Gauden, Cromwell’s Bloody Slaughter-house (1660). By permission of the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford. Shelfmark Bliss A52 [180]
36 Cromwell as Jeroboam from Anthony Sadler, The Subjects Joy (1660). By permission of the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford. Shelfmark Mal. 194 (4) [183]
37 Woodcut of Cromwell and the gallows (c. 1661). Ashmolean Museum, Oxford [189]
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A note on texts

When quoting from early texts, I have retained the original spelling and punctuation but have modernized u and v, i and j. Dates are given as old style, although the year has been taken to begin on 1 January.