

GERRARD
WINSTANLEY & THE
DIGGERS



VARIOUS TEXTS



**PRINCIPLES, PROPOSITIONS &
DISCUSSIONS
FOR LAND & FREEDOM**

AN INTRODUCTORY WORD TO THE 'ANARCHIVE'
"Anarchy is Order!"

*I must Create a System or be enslav'd by
another Man's.
I will not Reason & Compare: my business
is to Create'*
(William Blake)

During the 19th century, anarchism has developed as a result of a social current which aims for freedom and happiness. A number of factors since World War I have made this movement, and its ideas, disappear little by little under the dust of history.

After the classical anarchism – of which the Spanish Revolution was one of the last representatives—a 'new' kind of resistance was founded in the sixties which claimed to be based (at least partly) on this anarchism. However this resistance is often limited to a few (and even then partly misunderstood) slogans such as 'Anarchy is order', 'Property is theft',...

Information about anarchism is often hard to come by, monopolised and intellectual; and therefore visibly disappearing. The 'anarchival' or 'anarchist archive' Anarchy is Order (in short **A.O**) is an attempt to make the '**principles, propositions and discussions**' of this tradition available again for anyone it concerns. We believe that these texts are part of our own heritage. They don't belong to publishers, institutes or specialists.

These texts thus have to be available for all anarchists and other people interested. That is one of the conditions to give anarchism a new impulse, to let the 'new anarchism' outgrow the slogans. This is what makes this project relevant for us: we must find our roots to be able to renew ourselves. We have to learn from the mistakes of our socialist past. History has shown that a large number of the anarchist ideas remain

standing, even during the most recent social-economic developments.

‘Anarchy Is Order’ does not make profits, everything is spread at the price of printing- and papercosts. This of course creates some limitations for these archives.

Everyone is invited to spread along the information we give . This can be done by copying our leaflets, printing texts from the CD (collecting all available texts at a given moment) that is available or copying it, e-mailing the texts to friends and new ones to us,... Become your own anarchivist!!!

(Be aware though of copyright restrictions. We also want to make sure that the anarchist or non-commercial printers, publishers and authors are not being harmed. Our priority on the other hand remains to spread the ideas, not the ownership of them.)

The anarchivist offers these texts hoping that values like **freedom, solidarity and direct action** get a new meaning and will be lived again; so that the struggle continues against the

*“...demons of flesh and blood, that sway scepters down here;
and the dirty microbes that send us dark diseases and wish to
squash us like horseflies;
and the will- ‘o-the-wisp of the saddest ignorance.”*

(L-P. Boon)

The rest depends as much on you as it depends on us. Don't mourn, Organise!

Comments, questions, criticism, cooperation can be sent to A.O@advalvas.be.

A complete list and updates are available on this address, new texts are always

WELCOME!!

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LAND AND FREEDOM
THE DIGGERS' VISION TO RECLAIM
THE LAND - APRIL 1649

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<http://www.tlio.demon.co.uk/tonyhon.htm> |

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[Threats against the 1999 Diggers from ?? the rich and powerful ??](#)

[The True Levellers' Standard Advanced - The Diggers' Manifesto in full](#)

[The Land Is Ours \(offsite\)](#) have been facilitating celebrations and events in the UK around the Diggers anniversary - 1st April 1999

[1968 - San Francisco digs Gerrard Winstanley \(offsite\)](#)

More on this page by, about and from The Diggers:

[August 1998 - Why celebrate the Diggers?](#)

[The 1990's Diggers song: 'The World Turned Upside Down'](#)

[Declaration from the Diggers of Wellingborough - from the poor inhabitants of the town](#)

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AN ACCOUNT FROM ST. GEORGE'S HILL APRIL 1999

A commemorative account of Digger's day.. a forwarded story from Ali in Oxford.

"...making the Earth a Common Treasury for All, both Rich and Poor.

As midnight drew near on Thursday 1st April 1999, 350 years to the day Gerrard Winstanley and his followers thrust their spades into the fertile earth of St. George's Hill near Weybridge, a party of two set off from the Diggers' commemorative celebrations to retrace those first pioneering footsteps, making their way once round the public roads encircling the hill.

In 1649 when St. George's Hill remained Common Land, still unfettered by the enclosures of private dominion, Winstanley set off to cultivate this land to feed the starving landless; the dispossessed peasants of the republic. Within a year Cromwell's troops had cleared these dangerous revolutionaries off the land once more.

Today with seemingly deliberate spite, the propertied have developed a rabbit warren of private roads and exclusive mansions, guarded by gated-access and a private security force to protect its fearful inhabitants and their exclusive golf courses from the dangerous rabble beyond. St. Georges Hill is today the supreme English epitome of Private Enclosure, Wealth and Privilege so starkly challenged by those Diggers 350 years ago; as clear a statement as any from the powers-that-be against the social aspirations of the many.

Negotiating the supposedly well guarded roads the two defiantly ignored the signs of theft all around. At the highest point where once lay the ancient fort that staked the summit of the Mother's body - a site where St. George slew her Python, and acquisitioned her Oracle - there now stands a new 'castle', a monument of glass, erected as if to reinforce the Apollonian slaying of the Earth to the god of Private Dominion, rudely stating its message that Common is enemy where Privilege and Property reign supreme.

With the light of a full moon illuminating their way in the profoundly still and unusually warm night air, the two walked around the remaining crescent of public land that skirts the ramparts of the older monument, and the second circuit was completed.

It was the first full moon after the equinox on which the Celtic 'Pelagian' Church celebrated the Resurrection of the Earth and the Spirit of the Christ. In springs where serpentine waters channel the lifeblood of the earth, on hill tops exposed to the serpentine air breathing life into the land, our forbears celebrated nature's fluids and rising solar forces as they quickened the return of life within the Mother's womb.

Where the moon shone high and silently through a clearing in the wood the two climbed the forted

embankment, passing through a portalled hedge as they made their way out onto the summit. Ahead, nearly complete, lay the forms of three imposing post-modernist buildings hewn of vast wooden beams, stainless steel joins and solid float-glass walls. So around this glass temple they walked - and thrice round the summit they made.

Where the bulldozers had skinned the earth to make way for the foundations of these Temples of Dominion a new mound of loosened earth stood waiting to be rebedded into quaint ornamental gardens. So to the summit of this was climbed and using bare hands the soil dug once again, this time for common aspiration, in spite of its present private acquisition.

Withdrawing to the gladed bank, through the portal hedge the party came upon a fallen branch formed in mimicry of an antler of the majestic red deer. So with antlered heads, as shamans of old they each turned and gave their respect to the moon. Sitting down in the glade they broke the bread of the land and drank from the waters of the earth. A small supper to focus the nights events and quietly reflect upon under the silvery moonlight.

There was one final task to be settled. Three days later on the official day of Easter, a bag of Diggers' soil was scattered over a public allotment and dug-in - releasing its fertility to bring new life at the end of an old, fading millennium.

"And now I must wait to see the Spirit do his own work in the hearts of others...." - Gerrard Winstanley, 1650.

The Digging continues...

**The True
Levellers Standard
ADVANCED:**

OR,
The State of Community opened, and Presented to the
Sons of Man.

By

<p>William L'Orange, John Palmer, John Smith, John Gutteridge, Mr. James Taylor, Christopher Child, John Worsley.</p>	<p>Gerrard Winstanley, Richard Goodwin, Thomas Storrer, William Hogarth, Robert Turner, Thomas Fildes, Henry Bickerstaff, John Taylor, &c.</p>
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Beginning to Break and Murther the Waste Land upon
George Hill, in the Parish of *Walton*, in the
County of *Surrey*.



April 26

LONDON,
Printed in the Year. MDCCLIX.

DIGGER QUOTES

Being summe of ye most interesting and poignant quotes from Gerrard Winstanley and the seventeenth century Diggers including 'Then and Now'

"..yet my mind was not at rest, because nothing was acted, and thoughts ran into me, that words and writings were all nothing, and must die, for action is the life of all, and if thou dost not act, thou dost nothing,"

Gerrard Winstanley, A Watch-Word to the City of London and the Armie.

" And thus you Powers of England, and of the whole World, we have declared our reasons why we have begun to dig upon *George hill* in *Surrey*. One thing I must tell you more.....

"Break in pieces quickly the Band of particular Propriety [property], disown this oppressing Murder, Oppression and Thievery of Buying and Selling of Land, owning of landlords and paying of Rents and give thy Free Consent to make the Earth a Common Treasury without grumbling.....that all may enjoy the benefit of their Creation.

And hereby thou wilt *honour thy Father and thy Mother* : Thy Father, which is the spirit of community, that made all and that dwels in all. Thy Mother, which is the Earth, that brought us all forth: That as a true Mother, loves all her children. Therefore do not hinder the Mother Earth from giving all her children suck, by thy Inclosing into

particular hands, and holding up that cursed Bondage of Inclosure by thy Power."

"Propriety and single interest divides the people of a land and the whole world into parties and is the cause of all wars and bloodshed and contention everywhere"

Gerrard Winstanley & 14 others *The True Levellers Standard Advanced* - April, 1649

"Was the earth made to preserve a few covetous, proud men to live at ease, and for them to bag and barn up the treasures of the Earth from others, that these may beg or starve in a fruitful land; or was it made to preserve all her children?"

Gerrard Winstanley *The New Law of Righteousness*, 1649

"True religion and undefiled is this, To make restitution of the earth which hath been taken and held from the common people by the power of Conquests formerly and so set the oppressed free."

Gerrard Winstanley *A New Yeers Gift for the Parliament and the Army*, 1650

"Money must not any longer....be the great god that hedges in some and hedges out others, for money is but part of the Earth; and after our work of the Earthly Community is advanced, we must make use of gold or silver as we do of other metals but not to buy or sell."

Gerrard Winstanley and 44 others *A Declaration from the Poor Oppressed People of England Directed to all that Call Themselves or are Called Lords of Manors*, 1649

". . . a studying imagination comes into man, which is the devil for it is the cause of all evil, and sorrows in the World; that is he who puts out the eyes of mans Knowledge and tells him he must beleeve what others have writ or spoke, and not trust his own experience."

Gerrard Winstanley [so don't believe what he wrote either if it isn't true to your own experience!] *The Law of Freedom in a Platform*. 1652

"And the Reason is this, Every single man, Male and Female, is a perfect creature unto himself.....so that the flesh of man being subject to Reason, his Maker, hath him to be his Teacher and Ruler within himself, therefore needs not run abroad after any Teacher and Ruler without him, for he needs not that any man should teach him..."

"Oh thou Powers of *England* , though thou hast promised to make this People a Free People, yet thou hast so handled the matter, through thy self-seeking humour, That thou hast warped us up more in bondage, and oppression lies heavier upon us;.....confounding all sorts of people by they Government of doing and undoing."

"We are made to hold forth this Declaration to you that are the Great Council and to you the Great Army of the Land of *England* , that you may know what we would have, and what you are bound to give us by your Covenants and Promises; and that you may jyn us in this Work, and so find Peace. Or else, if you do oppose us us, we have peace in our Work, and in declaring this Report: And you shall be left without excuse.

The Work we are going about is this, To dig up *George-Hill* and trhe waste Ground thereabouts, and to Sow

Corn, and to eat our bread together by the sweat of our brows."

"Those that Buy and Sell Land, and are landlords, have got it either by Oppression, or Murther, or Theft."

"Take notice, That *England* is not a a Free People, till the Poor that have no Land, have a free allowance to dig and labour the Commons, and so live as Comfortably as the Landlords that live in their Inclosures

".....then certainly none shall say, This is my Land, work for me and I'll give you Wages. For, the Earth is the Lords, that is, Mans, who is the Lord of Creation.....

"This delares likewise to all Labourers, or such as are called Poor people, that they shall not dare to work for Hire, for any Landlord, or any that is lifted up above others; for by their labours, they have lifted up Tyrants and Tyranny; and by denying to labor for Hire, they shall pull them down again. He that works for another, either for Wages or to pay him Rent, works unrighteously, and still lifts up the Curse; but they that are resolved to work and eat together, making the Earth a Common Treasury, doth joyn hands with Christ, to lift up the Creation from Bondage, and restores all things from the Curse."

Gerrard Winstanley & 14 others *The True Levellers Standard Advanced* - April, 1649

"Therefore we are resolved to be cheated no longer, nor to be held under the slavish fear of you no longer, see the Earth was made for us, as well as for you: And if the Common Land belongs to us who are the poor oppressed, surely the woods that grow upon the Commons belong to us likewise...."

Gerrard Winstanley and 44 others *A Declaration from the Poor Oppressed People of England Directed to all that Call Themselves or are Called Lords of Manors*, 1649

"And London, nay England, look to thy freedom, I'll assure thee, thou art very neere to be cheated of it, and if thou lose it now after all thy boasting, truly thy posterity will curse thee, for thy unfaithfulness to them: everyone talks of freedom, but there are but few that act for freedom, and the actors for freedom are oppressed by the talkers and verball professors of freedom; if thou wouldst what true freedom is, read over this and my other writings [O.K., Gerrard, that's enough plugging your pamphlets] and thou shalt see it lies in the community in spirit and community in the earthly treasury...."

Gerrard Winstanley *A Watch-Word To The City of London and the Armie* 1649

"Search all your Laws, and Ile adventure my life, for I have little else to lose, That all Lords of Mannors hold Title to the Commons by no stronger hold than the Kings Will, whose Head is cut off; and the King held title as he was a Conqueror; now if you cast off the King who was Head of that power, surely the power of Lords of Mannors is the same; therefore performe your own Act of Parliament, and cast out that part of the Kinglie power likewise....."

"....the government we have gives freedom and livelihood to the Gentry, to have abundance, and to lock up Treasures of the Earth from the poor, so that rich men may have chests full of Gold and Silver, and houses full of Corn and Goods to look upon; and the poor that works to get it, can hardly live, and if they cannot work like Slaves, then they must starve.....and yet you say this is a righteous government, but surely it is no other than self-ishness, which is the great Red Dragon, the Murtherer.

"England is a Prison; the variety of subtilties in the Laws preserved by the Sword, are bolts, bars, and doors of the prison; the Lawyers are Jaylors, and poor men are the prisoners; for let a man fall into the hands of any from the Bailiffe to the Judge, and he is either undone, or wearie of his life."

"Buying and Selling is an Art, whereby people endeavour to cheat one another of the Land.....and true Religion is, To let every one enjoy it."

Gerrard Winstanley *A New-years Gift for the Parliament and Armie* 1650

"So long as the earth is intagled and appropriated into particular hands and kept there by the power of the sword.....so long the creation lies under bondage."

Gerrard Winstanley *Fire in the Bush* 1650

"And here I end, having put my arm as far as my strength will go to advance Righteousness; I have Writ, I have Acted, I have Peace: now I must wait to see the Spirit do his work in the hearts of others, and whether *England* shall be the first Land, or some others, wherein Truth shall sit down in triumph.

Anon. -but almost certainly Gerrard Winstanley *A Bill of Account of the most Remarkable Sufferings that the Diggers have met with from the great red Dragons power since April 1, 1649 / 1650?*

"The spirit Reason doth not preserve the creature and destroy another.....but it hath a regard to the whole creation; and knits every creature together into a onenesse; making every creature to be an upholder of his fellow; and so every one is an assistant to preserve the whole.

"The clouds send down raine, and there is great undeniable reason in it, for otherwise the earth could not bring forth grasse and fruit. The earth sends forth grasse, or else cattel could not be preserved. The sunne gives his light and heate or else the Creation could not subsist. So that the mighty power Reason hath made these to give life and preservation one to another.

Gerrard Winstanley *Truth Lifting Up Its Head Above Scandals* 1649

"I am assured that if it be rightly searched into, the inward bondages of the minde, as covetousness, pride, hypocrisie, envy, sorrow, fears, desperation, and madness are all occasioned by the outward bondage that one sort of people lay upon another."

Gerrard Winstanley *The New Law of Righteousness*, 1649

THEN AND NOW
SOUNDS FAMILIAR?

LUNCH OUTS & KETTLE-WATCHERS

"Some hearing of this Common Freedom think there must be a community of all the fruits of the earth whether they work or no, therefore strive to live idle on other men's labours."

Gerrard Winstanley *The Law of Freedom in a Platform*. 1652

RIP OFFS & BLAGGERS

"And because there were some treacherous persons drew up a note and subscribed our names to it, and by that moved some friends to give mony to this work of ours,

when as we know of no such note, nor subscribed our hands to any, nor ever received any money from such Collection.

Therefore to prevent such a Cheat, I have mentioned a word or two at the end of a printed book against that treachery, that neither we nor our Friends may be cheated: And I desire, if any be willing to communicate of their substance unto our worke, that they would make a Collection among themselves, and send the money to *Cobham* to the Diggers owne hands, by some trusty friend of your owne, and so neither you nor we shall be cheated."

Gerrard Winstanley and others in a "Letter Taken at Wellingborough" -1650

BULLSHITTERS, MYSTICS & GURUS

"Everyone who speaks of any Herb, Plant, Art or Nature of Mankind is required to speak nothing by imagination, but what he hath found out by his own industry and observation in tryal."

Gerrard Winstanley *The Law of Freedom in a Platform*. 1652

COPS, BAILIFFS, "SECURITY" & TRASHINGS

"The first time, divers of the Diggers were carried Prisoners into *Walton* Church, where some of them were struck in the Church by the bitter Professors....

"Some of the Diggers were beaten by the Gentlemen, the Sheriff looking on, and afterwards five of them were carried to *White Lion* Prison, and kept there about five week and then let out.....

"They Arrested some of us and some they cast into Prison; and from others they went about to take away their Goods....

"One of the Diggers had his head sore wounded, and a Boy beaten, and his cloathes taken from him....

"Divers of the Diggers were beaten upon the *Hill* by *William Star* and *John Taylor*, and by men in womens apparel [Oh, alright then, Brays private detective agency never actually thought of that one on the road protests (so far!)], and so sore wounded, that some of them were fetched home in a Cart.

"The Dragonly enemy pulled down a House which the Diggers had built upon *George Hill* and cut their Spades and Howes to pieces.

"We had another House pulled down....

"Another Cart and Wheels was cut to pieces and some of our Tooles taken by force from us which we never had again.

"...we had all our Corn spoyled....

"...two soldiers sent by Parson *Platt* pulled down another house, and turned a poor old man and his wife out of doors to lie in the field on a cold night.

Anon. -but almost certainly Gerrard Winstanley *A Bill of Account of the most Remarkable Sufferings that the Diggers have met with from the great red Dragons power since April 1, 1649 / 1650?*

Credit , respect and thanks to Jim Paton at the Advisory Service for Squatters in Islington North London for these quotations - put together in January 1999

THREATENING MESSAGE RECIEVED BY TODAY'S DIGGERS

Parson Platt and other embittered people attacked the simple honesty of the seventeenth century Diggers. Unfortunately the same mean spirit is alive and well in 1999.

This anonymous email was sent by someone calling themselves "Trustnowun" on the Diggers350 email list in April 1999. It seems to be from an American (due to the use of the very un-English 'pissed').

Our lives are described as 'worthless'. Sounds like some serious bad ideas in the author's head.

The note seems to have been inspired by one or more individuals involved in organised crime resident on St. George's Hill and be a warning to us never to return to the home of the Diggers.

Any further information on whoever might have written it - for example gleaned from the message header appreciated - please post to the Diggers350 list -

Post to the list: diggers350@egroups.com

Subscribe to the list: diggers350-subscribe@egroups.com

Diggers350 archive is at: <http://www.egroups.com/list/diggers350/>

Here is the message in full:

Received: 8 Apr 1999 08:19:15 -0000 from web806.mail.yahoo.com (128.11.23.66) by vault.egroups.com with SMTP; 8 Apr 1999 08:19:15 -0000

Message-ID:

<19990408082227.10646.rocketmail@web806.mail.yahoo.com>

Received: from [194.73.231.251] by web806.mail.yahoo.com; Thu, 08 Apr 1999 01:22:27 PDT

Date: Thu, 8 Apr 1999 01:22:27 -0700 (PDT)

From: trustnowun n <trustnowun@yahoo.com>

Subject: [diggers350] St. George's Hill

For a lazy bunch of academic (well some of you at least) left-wing radicals - you are really quite stupid or naive (or maybe both). One would have thought that if you had

read your history and UNDERSTOOD it - what happened 350 years ago stands as a warning to you. Now 350 years after a mad Jew led another band of morons (and yes, William Everard was the person solely responsible for the original occupation), your leaders have decided that this would be a "good" thing to re-enact.

What they have done is to lead you into encroaching upon the enclave of a very small minority of powerful individuals (and the word "powerful" - is used in the sense that most of you are clearly incapable of even imagining). These people have only got where they have in life and society by NEVER doing anything within the law. Aren't you wondering yet about the residents who APPEAR to have NO INTEREST in you whatsoever ??? - you should be. Some of these people do things for a living (and sometimes just for the sheer hell of it) that you only see on a Hollywood movie, or occasionally read about in the newspapers.

These people are neither worried or intimidated by your kind - but they ARE pissed!

For the first time in your stupid worthless lives you may of bitten off here a little more than you can chew. They know who ALL of you are - Tony, Annie, Jon, Eric, Steve and even you Dave (who clearly ate one too many big-macs when he worked there !) - and you all should NOT be sleeping very soundly at the moment. The only hole you "diggers" are digging at the moment is the one that you are digging yourselves into.

This note to you all is not a joke - you REALLY do need to be seriously concerned - especially those of you with families on site. Never mind about your "negotiations" with Mr. Newberry - once you leave here, you will NEVER be allowed to assemble en-mass on this estate again. Those of you who are "in charge" of affairs in this

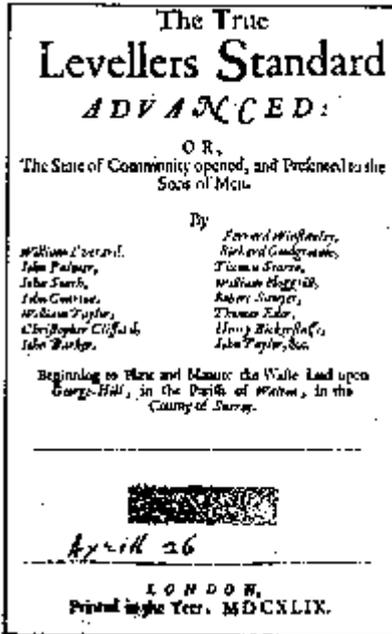
"camp" need to have a long hard think about your responsibility to those you have led into this act of insurgence. This is your ONLY warning.

THE TRUE LEVELLERS' STANDARD ADVANCED

Gerrard Winstanley - the Digger - was one of the first individuals to clearly identify the extension of private property rights to land as mankind's fundamental flaw.

His clear understanding of The Earth as a gift bequeathed to all mankind 'without respect of persons' is articulated in a visionary flow of spirited prose.

The Levellers and the Diggers were inextricably connected, not just in time or in their social and political vision. When they first moved on to St George's Hill in Surrey on April 1st 1649 the Diggers called themselves The True Levellers. They saw themselves as a more visionary and less compromising movement. Gerrard Winstanley and his friend's words speak for themselves.



THE TRUE

LEVELLERS STANDARD ADVANCED:

OR,

The State of Community Opened, and Presented to the
Sons of Men.

By

*Jerrard Winstanley, William Everard, Richard
Goodgroome, John Palmer, Thomas Starre, John South,
William Hoggrill, John Courton, Robert Sawyer, William
Taylor, Thomas Eder, Christopher Clifford, Henry
Bickerstaffe, John Barker. John Taylor, &c.*

Beginning to Plant and Manure the Waste land upon
George-Hill, in the parish of *Walton*, in the
County of *Surrey*.

L O N D O N

Printed in the Yeer, MDCXLIX.

A Declaration to the Powers of England, and to all the Powers of the World, shewing the Cause why the Common People of England have begun, and gives Consent to Digge up, Manure, and Sow Corn upon George-Hill in Surrey; by those that have Subscribed, and thousands more that gives Consent.

**GERARD WINSTADLEY
THE DIGGER**



In the beginning of Time, the great Creator Reason, made the Earth to be a Common Treasury, to preserve Beasts, Birds, Fishes, and Man, the lord that was to govern this Creation; for Man had Domination given to him, over the Beasts, Birds, and Fishes; but not one word

was spoken in the beginning, That one branch of mankind should rule over another.

And the Reason is this, Every single man, Male and Female, is a perfect Creature of himself; and the same Spirit that made the Globe, dwels in man to govern the Globe; so that the flesh of man being subject to Reason, his Maker, hath him to be his Teacher and Ruler within himself, therefore needs not run abroad after any Teacher and Ruler without him, for he needs not that any man should teach him, for the same Anoynting that ruled in the Son of man, teacheth him all things.

But since humane flesh (that king of Beasts) began to delight himself in the objects of the Creation, more then in the Spirit Reason and Righteousness, who manifests himself to be the indweller in the Five Sences, of Hearing, Seeing, Tasting, Smelling, Feeling; then he fell into blindness of mind and weakness of heart, and runs abroad for a Teacher and Ruler: And so selfish imaginations taking possession of the Five Sences, and ruling as King in the room of Reason therein, and working with Covetousnesse, did set up one man to teach and rule over another; and thereby the Spirit was killed, and man was brought into bondage, and became a greater Slave to such of his own kind, then the Beasts of the field were to him.

And hereupon, The Earth (which was made to be a Common Treasury of relief for all, both Beasts and Men) was hedged in to In-closures by the teachers and rulers, and the others were made Servants and Slaves: And that Earth that is within this Creation made a Common Storehouse for all, is bought and sold, and kept in the hands of a few, whereby the great Creator is mightily dishonoured, as if he were a respecter of persons, delighting int he comfortable Livelihoods of some, and

rejoycing in the miserable povertie and straits of others. From the beginning it was not so.

But this coming in of Bondage, is called *A-dam*, because this ruling and teaching power without, doth *dam* up the Spirit of Peace and Liberty; First within the heart, by filling it with slavish fears of others. Secondly without, by giving the bodies of one to be imprisoned, punished and oppressed by the outward power of another. And this evil was brought upon us through his own Covetousnesse, whereby he is blinded and made weak, and sees not the Law of Righteousnesse in his heart, which is the pure light of Reason, but looks abroad for it, and thereby the Creation is cast under bondage and curse, and the creator is sleighted; First by the Teachers and Rulers that sets themselves down in the Spirits room, to teach and rule, where he himself is only King. Secondly by the other, that refuses the Spirit, to be taught and governed by fellow Creatures, and this was called Israels Sin, in casting off the Lord and chusing *Saul*, one like themselves to be their King, when as they had the same Spirit of Reason and government in themselves, as he had, if they were but subject. And Israels rejecting of outward teachers and rulers to embrace the Lord, and to be all taught and ruled by that righteous King, that *Jeremiah* Prophetised shall rule in the new Heavens and new Earth in the latter dayes, will be their Restauration from bondage, *Jer.* 23.5, 6.

But for the present state of the old World that is running up like parchment in the fire, and wearing away, we see proud Imaginary flesh, which is the wise Serpent, rises up in flesh and gets dominion in some to rule over others, and so forces one part of the Creation man, to be a slave to another; and thereby the Spirit is killed in both. The one looks upon himself as a teacher and ruler, and so is lifted up in pride over his fellow Creature: The

other looks upon himself as imperfect, and so is dejected in his spirit, and looks upon his fellow Creature of his own Image, as a Lord above him.

And thus *Esau*, the man of flesh, which is Covetousness and Pride, hath killed *Jacob*, the Spirit of meeknesse, and righteous government in the light of Reason, and rules over him: And so the Earth that was made a common Treasury for all to live comfortably upon, is become through mans unrighteous actions one over another, to be a place, wherein one torments another.

Now the great Creator, who is the Spirit Reason, suffered himself thus to be rejected, and troden underfoot by the covetous proud flesh, for a certain time limited; therefore saith he, *The Seed out of whom the Creation did proceed, which is my Self, shall bruise this Serpents head, and restore my Creation again from this curse and bondage; and when I the King of Righteousnesse reigns in every man, I will be the blessing of the Earth and the joy of all Nations.*

And since the coming in of the stoppage, or the *A-dam* the Earth hath been inclosed and given to the Elder brother *Esau*, or man of flesh, and hath been bought and sold from one to another; and *Jacob*, or the younger brother, that is to succeed or come forth next, who is the universal spreading power of righteousnesse that gives liberty to the whole Creation, is made a servant.

And this Elder Son, or man of bondage, hath held the Earth in bondage to himself, not by a meek Law of Righteousnesse, But by subtle selfish Councils, and by open and violent force; for wherefore is it that there is such Wars and rumours of Wars in the Nations of the Earth? and wherefore are men so mad to destroy one another? But only to uphold Civil propriety of Honor, Dominion and Riches one over another, which is the curse the Creation groans under, waiting for deliverance.

But when once the Earth becomes a Common Treasury again, as it must, for all the Prophecies of Scriptures and Reason are Circled here in this Community, and mankind must have the Law of Righteousness once more writ in his heart, and all must be made of one heart, and one mind.

Then this Enmity in all Lands will cease, for none shall dare to seek a Dominion over others, neither shall any dare to kill another, nor desire more of the Earth than another; for he that will rule over, imprison, oppresse, and kill his fellow Creatures, under what pretence soever, is a destroyer of the Creation, and an actor of the Curse, and walks contrary to the rule of righteousness: (*Do, as you would have others do to you; and love your Enemies, not in words, but in actions*).

Therefore you powers of the Earth, or Lord Esau, the Elder brother, because you have appeared to rule the Creation, first take notice, That the powere that sets you to work, is selvish Covetousness, and an aspiring Pride, to live in glory and ease over *Jacob*, the meek Spirit; that is, the Seed that lies hid, in & among the poor Common People, or younger Brother, out of whom the blessing of Deliverance is to rise and spring up to all Nations.

And Reason, the living king of righteousness, doth only look on, and lets thee alone, That whereas thou counts thy self an Angel of Light, thou shalt appear in the light of the Sun, to be a Devil, *A-dam*, and the Curse that the Creation groans under; and the time is now come for thy downfal, and *Jacob* must rise, who is the universal Spirit of love and righteousness, that fills, and will fill all the Earth.

Thou teaching and ruling power of flesh, thou hast had three periods of time, to vaunt thy self over thy Brother; the first was from the time of thy coming in, called *A-dam*, or a stoppage, till *Moses* came; and there thou that

wast a self-lover in *Cain*, killed thy brother *Abel*, a plain-hearted man that loved righteousness: And thou by thy wisdom and beastly government, made the whole Earth to stinck, till *Noah* came, which was a time of the world, like the coming in of the watery Seed into the womb, towards the bringing forth of the man child.

And from *Noah* till *Moses* came, thou still hast ruled in vaunting, pride, and cruel oppression; *Ishmael* against *Isaac*, *Esau* against *Jacob*; for thou hast still been the man of flesh that hath ever persecuted the man of righteousness, the Spirit Reason.

And Secondly, from *Moses* till the *Son of Man* came, which was time of the world, that the man child could not speak like a man, but lispings, making signs to shew his meaning; as we see many Creatures that cannot speak do. For *Moses* Law was a Language lapped up in Types, Sacrifices, Forms, and Customs, which was weak time. And in this time likewise, O thou teaching and ruling power, thou wast an oppressor; for look into Scriptures and see if *Aaron* and the Priests were not the first that deceived the people; and the Rulers, as Kings and Governors, were continually the Ocean-head, out of whose power, Burdens, Oppressions, and Poverty did flow out upon the Earth: and these two Powers still hath been the Curse, that hath led the Earth, mankind, into confusion and death by their imaginary and selvisish teaching and ruling, and it could be no otherwise; for while man looks upon himself, as an imperfect Creation, and seeks and runs abroad for a teacher and a rule, he is all this time a stranger to the Spirit that is within himself. But though the Earth hath been generally thus in darknesse, since the *A-dam* rise up, and hath owned a Light, and a Law without them to walk by, yet some have been found as watchmen, in this night time of the world, that have been taught by the Spirit within them,

and not by any flesh without them, as *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob*, and the Prophets: And these, and such as these, have still been the Butt, at whom, the powers of the Earth in all ages of the world, by their selvish Laws, have shot their fury.

And then Thirdly, from the time of the *Son of man*, which was time that the man-child began to speak like a child growing upward to manhood, till now, that the Spirit is rising up in strength. O thou teaching and ruling power of the earthly man, thou has been an oppressor, by imprisonment, impoverishing, and martyrdom; and all thy power and wit, hath been to make Laws, and execute thm against such as stand for universal Liberty, which is the rising up of *Jacob*: as by those ancient enslaving Laws not yet blotted out, but held up as weapons against the man-child.

“England is not a free people, till the poor that have no land,
have a free allowance to dig and labour the commons...”

Gerrard Winstanley, 1649



O thou Powers of *England*, though thou hast promised to make this People a Free People, yet thou hast so handled the matter, through thy self-seeking humour, That thou has wrapped us up more in bondage, and oppression lies heavier upon us; not only bringing thy fellow Creatures, the Commoners, to a morsel of Bread, but by confounding all sorts of people by thy Government, of doing and undoing.

First, Thou hast made the people to take a Covenant and Oaths to endeavour a Reformation, and to bring in Liberty every man in his place; and yet while a man is in pursuing of that Covenant, he is imprisoned and oppressed by thy Officers, Courts, and Justices, so called.

Thou hast made Ordinances to cast down Oppressing, Popish, Episcopal, Self-willed and Prerogative Laws; yet we see, That Self-wil and Prerogative power, is the great standing Law, that rules all in action, and others in words.

Thou hast made many promises and protestations to make the Land a Free Nation: And yet at this very day, the same people, to whom thou hast made such Protestatins of Liberty, are oppressed by thy Courts, Sizes, Sessions, by thy Justices and Clarks of the Peace, so called, Bayliffs, Committees, are imprisoned, and forced to spend that bread, that should save their lives from Famine.

And all this, Because they stand to maintain an universal Liberty and Freedom, which not only is our Birthright, which our Maker gave us, but which thou hast promised to restore unto us, from under the former oppressing Powers that are gone before, and which likewise we have bought with our Money, in Taxes, Free-quarter, and Blood-shed; all which Sums thou hast received at our hands, and yet thou hast not given us our bargain.

O thou *A-dam*, thou *Esau*, thou *Cain*, thou Hypocritical man of flesh, when wilt thou cease to kill thy younger Brother? Surely thou must not do this great work of advancing the Creation out of Bondage; for thou art lost extremely, and drowned in the Sea of Covetousnesse, Pride, and hardness of heart. *The blessing shall rise out of the dust which thou treadest under foot, Even the poor despised People, and they shall hold up Salvation to this Land, and to all Lands, and thou shalt be ashamed.*

Our bodies as yet are in thy hand, our Spirit waits in quiet and peace, upon our Father for Deliverance; and if he give our Blood into thy hand, for thee to spill, know this, That he is our Almighty Captain: And if some of you will not dare to shed your blood, to maintain

Tyranny and Oppression upon the Creation, know this, That our Bloud and Life shall not be unwilling to be delivered up in meekness to maintain universal Liberty, that so the Curse on our part may be taken off the Creation.

And we shall not do this by force of Arms, we abhorre it, For that is the work of the *Midianites*, to kill one another; But by obeying the Lord of Hosts, who hath Revealed himself in us, and to us, by labouring the Earth in righteousness together, to eate our bread with the sweat of our brows, neither giving hire, nor taking hire, but working together, and eating together, as one man, or as one house of Israel restored from Bondage; and so by the power of Reason, the Law of righteousness in us, we endeavour to lift up the Creation from that bondage of Civil Propriety, which it groans under.

We are made to hold forth this Declaration to you that are the Great Council, and to you the Great Army of the Land of *England*, that you may know what we would have, and what you are bound to give us by your Covenants and Promises; and that you may joyn with us in this Work, and so find Peace. Or else, if you do oppose us, we have peace in our Work, and in declaring this Report: And you shall be left without excuse.

The Work we are going about is this, To dig up *Georges-Hill* and the waste Ground thereabouts, and to Sow Corn, and to eat our bread together by the sweat of our brows.

And the First Reason is this, That we may work in righteousness, and lay the Foundation of making the Earth a Common Treasury for All, both Rich and Poor, That every one that is born in the land, may be fed by the Earth his Mother that brought him forth, according to the Reason that rules in the Creation. Not Inclosing any part into any particular hand, but all as one man, working together, and feeding together as Sons of one Father,

members of one Family; not one Lording over another, but all looking upon each other, as equals in the Creation; so that our Maker may be glorified in the work of his own hands, and that every one may see, he is no respecter of Persons, but equally loves his whole Creation, and hates nothing but the Serpent, which is Covetousness, branching forth into selvish Imagination, Pride, Envie, Hypocrisie, Uncleaness; all seeking the ease and honor of flesh, and fighting against the Spirit Reason that made the Creation; for that is the Corruption, the Curse, the Devil, the Father of Lies; Death and Bondage that Serpent and Dragon that the Creation is to be delivered from.

And we have moved hereunto for that Reason, and other which hath been shewed us, both by Vision, Voyce, and Revelation.

For it is shewed us, That so long as we, That so long as we, or any other, doth own the Earth to be the peculier Interest of Lords and Landlords, and not common to others as well as them, we own the Curse, and holds the Creation under bondage; and so long as we or any other doth own Landlords and Tennants, for one to call the Land his, or another to hire it of him, or for one to give hire, and for another to work for hire; this is to dishonour the work of Creation; as if the righteous Creator should have respect to persons, and therefore made the Earth for some, and not for all: And so long as we, or any other maintain this Civil Propriety, we consent still to hold the Creation down under that bondage it groans under, and so we should hinder the work of Restoration, and sin against Light that is given into us, and so through fear of the flesh man, lose our peace.

And that this Civil Propriety is the Curse, is manifest thus, Those that Buy and Sell Land, and are landlords, have got it either by Oppression, or Murther, or Theft;

and all landlords lives in the breach of the Seventh and Eighth Commandements, *Thou shalt not steal, nor kill.*

First by their Oppression. They have by their subtle imaginary and covetous wit, got the plain-hearted poor, or yonger Brethren to work for them, for small wages, and by their work have got a great increase; for the poor by their labour lifts up Tyrants to rule over them; or else by their covetous wit, they have out-reached the plain-hearted in Buying and Selling, and thereby enriched themselves, but impoverished others: or else by their subtile wit, having been a lifter up into places of Trust, have inforced people to pay Money for a Publick use, but have divided much of it into their private purses; and so have got it by Oppression.

Then Secondly for Murther; They have by subtile wit and power, pretended to preserve a people in safety by the power of the Sword; and what by large Pay, much Free-quarter, and other Booties, which they call their own, they get much Monies, and with this they buy Land, and become landlords; and if once Landlords, then they rise to be Justices, Rulers, and State Governours, as experience shewes: But all this is but a bloody and subtile Theevery, countenanced by a Law that Covetousness made; and is a breach of the Seventh Commandement, *Thou shalt not kill.*

And likewise Thirdly a breach of the Eighth Commandement, *Thou shalt not steal;* but these landlords have thus stoln the Earth from their fellow Creatures, that have an equal share with them, by the Law of Reason and Creation, as well as they.

And such as these rise up to be rich in the objects of the Earth; then by their plausible words of flattery to the plain-hearted people, whom they deceive, and that lies under confusion and blindness: They are lifted up to be Teachers, Rulers, and Law makers over them that lifted

them up; as if the Earth were made peculiarly for them, and not for other weal: If you cast your eye a little backward, you shall see, That this outward Teaching and Ruling power, is the Babylonish yoke laid upon Israel of old, under *Nebuchadnezzar*; and so Successively from that time, the Conquering Enemy, have still laid these yokes upon Israel to keep *Jacob* down: And the last enslaving Conquest which the Enemy got over Israel, was the *Norman* over *England*; and from that time, Kings, Lords, Judges, Justices, Bayliffs, and the violent bitter people that are Free-holders, are and have been Successively. The *Norman* Bastard *William* himself, his Colonels, Captains, inferiour Officers, and Common souldiers, who still are from that time to this day in pursuite of that victory, Imprisoning, Robbing, and killing the poor enslaved *English* Israelites.

And this appears cleer, For when any Trustee or State Officer is to be Chosen, The Free-holders or Landlords must be the Chusers, who are the *Norman* Common Souldiers, spread abroad in the Land; And who must be Chosen: but some very rich man, who is the Successor of the *Norman* Colonels or high Officers. And to what end have they been thus Chosen? but to Establish that *Norman* power the more forcibly over the enslaved *English*, and to beat them down again, when as they gather heart to seek for Liberty.

For what are all those Binding and Restraining Laws that have been made from one Age to another since that Conquest, and are still upheld by Furie over the People? I say, What are they? but the Cords, Bands, Manacles, and Yokes that the enslaved *English*, like *Newgate* Prisoners, wears upn their hands and legs as they walk the streets; by which those *Norman* Oppressors, and these their Successors from Age to Age have enslaved



the poor People by, killed their younger Brother, and would not suffer *Jacob* to arise.

O what mighty Delusion, do you, who are the powers of *England* live in! That while you pretend to throw down that *Norman* yoke, and *Babylonish* power, and have promised to make the groaning people of *England* a Free People; yet you still lift up that *Norman* yoke, and slavish Tyranny, and holds the People as much in bondage, as the Bastard Conquerour himself, and his Council of War.

Take notice, That *England* is not a Free People, till the Poor that have no Land, have a free allowance to dig and labour the Commons, and so live as Comfortably as the Landlords that live in their Inclosures. For the People have not laid out their Monies, and shed their Bloud, that their Landlords, the *Norman* power, should still have its liberty and freedom to rule in Tyranny in his Lords, landlords, Judges, Justices, Bayliffs, and State Servants; but that the Oppressed might be set Free, Prison doors opened, and the Poor peoples hearts comforted by an universal Consent of making the Earth a Common Treasury, that they may live together as one House of Israel, united in brotherly love into one Spirit; and having a comfortable livelihood in the Community of one Earth their Mother.

If you look through the Earth, you shall see, That the landlords, Teachers and Rulers, are Oppressors, Murtherers, and Theeves in this manner; But it was not thus from the Beginning. And this is one Reason of our digging and labouring the Earth one with another; That we might work in righteousness, and lift up the Creation

from bondage: For so long as we own Landlords in this Corrupt Settlement, we cannot work in righteousness; for we should still lift up the Curse, and tread down the Creation, dishonour the Spirit of universal Liberty, and hinder the work of Restauration.

Secondly, In that we begin to Digge upon *George-Hill*, to eat our Bread together by righteous labour, and sweat of our browes, It was shewed us by Vision in Dreams, and out of Dreams, That that should be the Place we should begin upon; And though that Earth in view of Flesh, be very barren, yet we should trust the Spirit for a blessing. And that not only this Common, or Heath should be taken in and Manured by the People, but all the Commons and waste Ground in *England*, and in the whole World, shall be taken in by the People in righteousness, not owning any Propriety; but taking the Earth to be a Common Treasury, as it was first made for all.

Thirdly, It is shewed us, That all the Prophecies, Visions, and Revelations of Scriptures, of Prophets, and Apostles, concerning the calling of the Jews, the Restauration of Israel; and making of that People, the Inheritors of the whole Earth; doth all seat themselves in this Work of making the Earth a Common Treasury; as you may read, *Ezek.* 24.26, 27, &c. *Jer.* 33.7 to 12. *Esay.* 49.17, 18, &c. *Zach.* 8. from 4, to 12, *Dan.* 2.44, 45, *Dan.* 7.27. *Hos.* 14.5, 6,7. *Joel* 2.26, 27. *Amos* 9. from 8 to the end, *Obad.* 17.18.21. *Mic.* 5. from 7 to the end, *Hab.* 2.6, 7, 8, 13, 14. *Gen.* 18.18. *Rom.* 11.15. *Zeph.* 3. &c. *Zech.* 14.9. And when the Son of man, was gone from the Apostles, his Spirit descended upon the Apostles and Brethren, as they were waiting at *Jerusalem*; and Rich men sold their Possessions, and gave part to the Poor; and no man said, That ought that he possessed was his own, for they had all things Common, *Act.* 4.32.

Now this Community was suppressed by covetous proud flesh, which was the powers that ruled the world; and the righteous Father suffered himself thus to be suppressed for a time, times and dividing of time, or for 42 months, or for three days and half, which are all but one and the same term of time: And the world is now come to the half day; and the Spirit of Christ, which is the Spirit of universal Community and Freedom is risen, and is rising, and will rise higher and higher, till those pure waters of *Shiloe*, the Well Springs of Life and Liberty to the whole Creation, do over-run *A-dam*, and drown those banks of Bondage, Curse and Slavery.

Fourthly, This work to make the Earth a Common Treasury, was shewed us by Voice in Trance, and out of Trance, which which words were these,

Work together, Eate Bread together, Declare this all abroad.

Which Voice was heard Three times: And in Obedience to the Spirit, We have Declared this by Word of mouth, as occasion was offered. Secondly, We have declared it by writing, which others may read. Thirdly, We have now begun to declare it by Action, in Digging up the Common Land, and casting in Seed that we may eat our Bread together in righteousness. And every one that comes to work, shall eat the Fruit of their own labours, one having as much Freedom in the Fruit of the Earth as another. Another Voice that was heard was this,

Israel shall neither take Hire, nor give Hire.

And if so, then certainly none shall say, This is my Land, work for me, and I'll give you Wages. For, The Earth is the Lords, that is, Mans, who is Lord of the Creation, in every branch of mankind; perfect; so every particular man is but a member or branch of mankind; and mankind living in the light and obedience to Reason, the King of righteousness, is thereby made a fit and

compleat Lord of the Creation. And the whole Earth is this Lords Man, subject to the Spirit. And not the Inheritance of covetous proud Flesh, that is selvish, and enmity to the Spirit.

And if the Earth be not peculiar to any one branch, or branches of manking, but the Inheritance of all; Then is it Free and Common for all, to work together, and eate together.

And truly, you Counsellors and Powers of the Earth, know this, That wheresoever there is a People, thus united by Common Community of livelihood into Oneness, it will become the strongest Land in the World, for then they will be as one man to defend their Inheritance; and Salvation (which is Liberty and Peace) is the Walls and Bulwarks of that Land or City.

Whereas on the otherside, pleading for Propriety and single Interst, divides the People of a land, and the whole world into Parties, and is the cause of all Wars and Bloud-shed, and Contention every where.

Another Voice that was heard in a Trance, was this,

Whosoever labours the Earth for any Person or Persons, that are lifted up to rule over others, and doth not look upon themselves, as Equal to others in the Creation: The hand of the Lord shall be upon that Laborer: I the Lord have spoke it, and I will do it.

This Declares likewise to all Laborers, or such as are called Poor people, that they shall not dare to work for Hire, for any Landlord, or for any that is lifted up above others; for by their labours, they have lifted up Tyrants and Tyranny; and by denying to labor for Hire, they shall pull them down again. He that works for another, either for Wages, or to pay him Rent, works unrighteously, and still lifts up the Curse; but they that are resolved to work and eat together, making the Earth a Common Treasury,

doth joyn hands with Christ, to lift up the Creation from Bondage, and restores all things from the Curse.

Fiftly, That which does encourage us to go on in this work, is this; we find the streaming out of Love in our hearts towards all; to enemies as well as friends; we would have none live in Beggery, Poverty, or Sorrow, but that everyone might enjoy the benefit of his creation: we have peace in our hearts, and quiet rejoicing in our work, and filled with sweet content, though we have but a dish of roots and bread for our food.

And we are assured, that in the strength of this Spirit that hath manifested himself to us, we shall not be startled, neither at Prison nor Death, while we are about his work; and we have bin made to sit down and count what it may cost us in undertaking such a work, and we know the full sum, and are resolved to give all that we have to buy this Pearl which we see in the Field.

For by this work we are assured, and Reason makes it appear to others, that Bondage shall be removed, Tears wiped away, and all poor People by their righteous Labours shall be relieved, and freed from Poverty and Straits; For is this work of Restoration there will be no begger in Israel: For surely, if there was no Begger in literal Israel, there shall be no Begger in Spiritual Israel the Anti-type, much more.

Sixtly, We have another encouragement that this work shall prosper, Because we see it to be the fulness of Time: For whereas The Son of Man, the *Lamb*, came in the Fulness of Time, that is, when the Powers of the World made the Earth stink every where, by oppressing others, under pretense of worshipping the Spirit rightly, by the Types and Sacrifices of *Moses* law; the Priests were grown so abominably Covetous and Proud, that they made the People to loathe the Sacrifices and to groan under the Burden of their Oppressing Pride.

Even so now in this Age of the World, that the Spirit is upon his Resurrection, it is likewise the Fulness of Time in a higher measure. For whereas the People generally in former times did rest upon the very observation of the Sacrifices and Types, but persecuted the very name of the Spirit; Even so now, Professors do rest upon the bare observatin of Forms and Customs, and pretend to the Spirit, and yet persecutes, grudges, and hates the power of the Spirit; and as it was then, so it is now: All places stink with the abomination of Self-seeking Teachers and Rulers. For do not I see that everyone Preacheth for money, Counsels for money, and fights for money to maintain particular Interests? And none of these three, that pretend to give liberty to the Creation, do give liberty to the Creation; neither can they, for they are enemies to universal liberty; So that the earth stinks with their Hypocrisie, Covetousness, Envie, sottish Ignorance, and Pride.

The common People are filled with good words from Pulpits and Councel Tables, but no good Deeds; For they wait and wait for good, and for deliverances, but none comes; While they wait for liberty, behold greater bondage comes instead of it, and burdens, oppressions, taskmasters, from Sessions, Lawyers, Bayliffs of Hundreds, Committees, Impropriators, Clerks of Peace, and Courts of Justice, so called, does whip the People by old Popish weather-beaten Laws, that were excommunicate long age by Covenants, Oaths, and Ordinances; but as yet are not cast out, but rather taken in again, to be standing pricks in our eys, and thorns in our side; Beside Free-quartering, Plundering by some rude Souldiers, and the abounding of Taxes; which if they were equally divided among the Souldiery, and not too much bagd up in the hands of particulars Officers and Trustees, there would be less complaining: Besides



the horrible cheating that is in Buying and Selling, and the cruel Oppression of Landlords, and Lords of Mannours, and quarter Sessions; Many that have bin good Souldiers, and so to fight to uphold the Curse, or else live in great straits and beggery: O you *Adams* of the Earth, you have right

Clothing, full Bellies, have your Honors and Ease, and you puffe at this; But know thou stout-hearted *Pharoah*, that the day of Judgement is begun, and it will reach to thee ere long; *Jacob* hath bin very low, but he is rising, and will rise, do the worst thou canst; and the poor people whom thou oppresses, shall be the Saviours of the land; For the blessing is rising up in them, and thou shalt be ashamed.

And thus, you Powers of England, and of the whole World, we have declared our Reasons, why we have begun to dug upon *George* hill in Surrey. One thing I must tell you more, in the close, which I received *in voce* likewise at another time; and when I received it, my ey was set towards you. The words were these:

Let Israel go free.

Surely, as Israel lay 430. years under *Pharoahs* bondage, before *Moses* was sent to fetch them out: even so Israel (the Elect Spirit spread in Sons and Daughters) hath lain

three times so long already, which is the Anti-type, under your Bondage, and cruel Taskmasters: But now the time of Deliverance is come, and thou proud Esau, and stout-hearted Covetousness, thou must come down, and be lord of the Creation no longer. For *now the King of Righteousness is rising to Rule In, and Over the Earth.* Therefore, if thou wilt find Mercy, *Let Israel go Free;* break in pieces quickly the Band of particular Propriety, dis-own this oppressing Murder, Oppressin and Thievery of Buying and Selling of Land, owning of landlords, and paying of Rents, and give thy Free Consent to make the Earth a Common Treasury, without grumbling; That the younger Brethren may live comfortably upon Earth, as well as the Elder: That all may enjoy the benefit of their Creation.

And hereby thou wilt *Honour thy Father, and thy Mother:* Thy Father, which is the Spirit of Community, that made all, and that dwels in all. Thy Mother, which is the Earth, that brought us all forth: That as a true Mother, loves all her Children. Therefore do not thou hinder the Mother Earth, from giving all her Children such, by thy Inclosing it into particular hands, and holding up that cursed Bondage of Inclosure by thy Power.

And then thou wilt repent of thy *Theft,* in maintaining the breach of the eight Commandment, by *Stealing* the Land as I say from thy fellow-creatures, or younger Brothers: which thou and all thy landlords have, and do live in the breach of that Commandment.

Then thou wilt *Own no other God,* or Ruling Power, *but One,* which is the King of Righteousness, ruling and dwelling in every one, and in the whole; whereas now thou hast many gods: For Covetousness is thy God, Pride, and an Envious murdering Humor (to kill one by Prison or Gallows, that crosses thee, though their cause be pure, sound, and good reason) is thy God, Self-love,

and slavish Fear (lest others serve thee as thou hast served them) is thy god, Hypocrisie, Fleshly Imagination, that keeps no Promise, Covenant, nor Protestation, is thy God: love of Money, Honor, and Ease, is thy God: And all these, and the like Ruling Powers, makes thee Blind, and hard-hearted, that thou does not, nor cannot lay to heart the affliction of others, though they dy for want of bread, in that rich City, undone under your eys.

Therefore once more, *Let Israel go Free*, that the poor may labour the Waste land, and such the Brests of their mother *Earth*, that they starve not: And in so doing, thou wilt keep the *Sabbath day*, which is a day of *Rest*; sweetly enjoying the Peace of the Spirit of Righteousness; and find Peace, by living among a people that live in peace; this will be a day of *Rest* which thou never knew yet.

But I do not entreat thee, for thous art not to be intreated, but in the *Name of the Lord*, that hath drawn me forth to speak to thee; I, yea I say, I Command thee, to *let Israel go Free*, and quietly to *gather together into the place where I shall appoint; and hold them no longer in bondage*.

And thou *A-dam* that holds the Earth in slavery under the Curse: If thou wilt not *let Israel go Free*; for thou being the Antitype, will be more stout and lusty then the *Egyptian Paroah* of old, who was thy Type; Then know, That whereas I brought *Ten* Plagues upon him, I will *Multiply* may Plagues upon thee, till *I make thee weary, and miserably ashamed: And I will bring out my People with a strong hand, and stretched out arme*.

Thus we have discharged our Souls in declaring the Cause of our Digging upon *George-Hill* in *Surrey*, that the Great Council and Army of the Land may take notice of it, That there is no intent of Tumult or Fighting,

but only to get Bread to eat, with the sweat of our brows; working together in righteousness, and eating the blessings of the Earth in peace.

And if any of you that are the great Ones of the Earth, that have been bred tenderly, and cannot word, do bring in your Stock into this Commond Treasury as an Offering to the work of Righteousness; we will work for you, and you shall receive as we receive. But if you will not, but *Paroah* like cry, *Who is the Lord that we should obey him?* and endeavour to Oppose, then know, That he that delivered Israel from *Pharoah* of old, is the same Power still, in whom we trust, and whom we serve; for this Conquest over thee shall be got, *not by Sword or Weapon, but by my Spirit saith the Lord of Hosts.*

Jerrard Winstanley, William Everard, Richard Goodgroome, John Palmer, Thomas Starre, John South, William Hoggrill, John Courton, Robert Sawyer, William Taylor, Thomas Eder, Christopher Clifford, Henry Bickerstaffe, John Barker. John Taylor, &c.

FINIS

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Gerrard Winstanley, *Selected Writings*, Aporia Press, available from [The Land Is Ours](#)

Why celebrate The Diggers?

Aug98 - by Tony Gosling and Jim Paton

The English Civil War was a pivotal point in world history. Political power was seized by the burgeoning English merchant class, which went on to create the industrial Revolution and build one of the biggest exploitative empires the world has ever seen. In the late 1640s, Cromwell was constructing the police state on which his middle class revolution would be based.

The British education system leaves us with an image of Roundheads and Cavaliers, Parliament fighting the King. Parliament, teachers explain, was more representative than the King and so Cromwell's victory was a victory for the people. But history is not always as it seems, particularly when 'written by the winners'.

The parliament of the day was anything but representative. Elections had been suspended and soldiers, on several occasions, were in the Houses of Parliament, arresting MP's who would not toe the line. It was a schizophrenic war, with roundhead soldiers frequently having more to fear from their own commanders than the so called enemy. This gives ironic credence to the view that the most distinguishing difference between the warring parties was in the style of their officers' hats.

Research since the 1940s by historians Christopher Hill, H.N. Brailsford, Brian Manning and others has begun to bring recognition to long-neglected popular civil war movements and events. The Levellers were a vast popular movement which took its name from the anti-enclosure activists earlier in the century. The Levellers are only now being acknowledged as the first political faction on either side of the Atlantic to organise itself on a pattern of democratic self-government.

When Leveller pamphleteer John Lilburne was arrested and tried for treason events in the courtroom were relayed out to thousands jamming the streets around Guildhall. When he died, tens of thousands of ordinary Londoners turned out to pay their respects at what is now thought to have been the largest funeral of the century.

Most textbooks still skim over the people's war. One present-day history teacher even testifies to having been reprimanded by her headmistress for giving a lesson on

the Levellers. In some schools they are still considered 'too political'.

The Leveller women, Elizabeth Lilburne and Katherine Chidley amongst others, were centuries ahead of their time. Tens of thousands of women signed their equal rights petitions but when thousands of women delivered one of them to parliament they received short shrift. They were told by Cromwell's Parliamentarians to 'go home and wash the dishes'.

The war was a time of great popular ferment. It was by no means clear what form of government would replace the monarchy and the Leveller party pulled together many visions of a better country and a better world. There was a great deal of discussion, especially within the parliamentary army, about what had been wrong with the old system and how best to replace it.

Printing had been strictly controlled by the Stationers Guild before the war. But sympathetic Leveller soldiers liberated presses and publisher Giles Calvert (the name resurrected by Calverts Press in Shoreditch today) helped ensure that Leveller ideas were available to counter Royalist and Parliamentary propaganda. Lilburne's 'Agreement of the People' captured ordinary people's vision of a fairer more representative government of which England could be proud. A definite improvement on the monarchy. Many of the liberties enshrined in the 'Agreement' was an inspiration subsequently acknowledged by radical reformers right across the world.

So worried were the Parliamentarians by Leveller literature that they had the pamphleteers imprisoned and lying propaganda was issued to discredit them. As a final body-blow Cromwell's 'mercenary damme crew' treacherously decimated the final regiments of faithful Leveller soldiers.

The Diggers appeared in a nation wracked by the fallout of war just as this end-game was being played out. On 1st April 1649 calling themselves the 'True Levellers' they occupied a small area of common land at St. George's Hill near Weybridge in Surrey. Winstanley believed in a radical form of Christianity spelt out in confessional pamphlets like 'The Saint's paradise':

"To my beloved friends, whose souls hunger after sincere milk.

Dear friends, It hath been the universall condition of the earth (mankind) to be over-spread with a black cloud of darkness ; and the knowledge of the King of righteousness hath been manifested but in some few scattered ones... ..I spoke the name of God, and Lord, and Christ, but I knew not this Lord, God and Christ; I prayed to a God but I knew not where he was, nor what he was, and so walking by imagination, I worshipped that devill, and called him God; by reason wherof my comforts were often shaken to pieces, and at last it was shewed to me, That while I builded upon any words or writings of other men, or while I looked after a God without me, I did but build upon the sand, and as yet I knew not the rock."

To Winstanley mankind is the Lord of the Creation, but he was always careful to explain that using the term "mankind" included women as fully as men. Sovereignty is given to each soul to use for good or ill as they choose. The thought of some sovereign force outside the sphere of the individual he saw as an insult to "the great creator, Reason".

Declaring the earth a 'common treasury for all' Gerrard Winstanley went further than the Levellers had dared. With his 40 or so supporters he issued a peaceful challenge to all the nation to come and join him, to help cast off the 'Norman yoke' and liberate the land of

England forever. To set an example the world could follow.

Winstanley called this practical manifesto 'The True Levellers' Standard Advanced'. He was expanding on Leveller ideas to tackle issues even more fundamental to the plight of common people.

For all their popular support most Levellers believed it would only be necessary to revise the parliament. The Diggers went further, tackling social questions that Levellers had only touched on. Questions like whether the state has any jurisdiction over those not willingly consenting to it. In Winstanley's vision there was no place for the familiar institutions the Levellers wanted to reform.

Central in his analysis was addressing the hard fact of land poverty and dispossession, leaving those who had been masters of their own destiny in the clutches of 'Lords of Manors and Lords of the Land.' When Winstanley addressed England's landowners in 'a declaration of the poor oppressed people of England' he struck at the very root of class divisions:

"...the earth was not made purposely for you, to be Lords of it, and we to be your Slaves, Servants, and Beggars; but it was made to be a common Livelihood to all, without respect of persons: And that your buying and selling of Land, and the Fruits of it, one to another, is The Cursed thing, and was brought in by War; which hath, and still does establish murder, and theft, in the branches of some parts of Mankind over others,..."

Winstanley straightforwardly exposed what he saw as the fraud of the civil war as Lilburne had done before him. It was a popular point of view in 1649 which is only recently being acknowledged:

"O thou powers of England, though thou hast promised to make this People a Free People, yet thou hast so

*handled the matter, through thy self-seeking humour,
That thou hast wrapped us up more in bondage, and
oppression lies heavier upon us; not only bringing thy
fellow creatures, the Commoners, to a morsel of Bread,
but by confounding all sorts of people by thy
Government..."*

He was determined to strike at the root causes of social conflict. In spirited prose, he explained why the Diggers had chosen to act and spelt out his vision for an equitable future.

*And the First Reason is this, That we may work in
righteousness, and lay the Foundation of making the
Earth a Common Treasury for All, both Rich and Poor,
That every one that is born in the Land, may be fed by
the Earth his Mother that brought him forth, according
to the Reason that rules in the Creation. Not Inclosing
any part into any particular hand, but all as one man,
working together and feeding together as Sons of one
Father, members of one Family; not one Lording over
another, but all looking upon each other as equals in the
Creation;*

As the Diggers built their makeshift settlement their pamphlets and their ideas were spreading. The common at St. George's Hill was planted with parsnips, carrots and beans. Several more Digger colonies sprang up around the country, especially in Buckinghamshire and Kent, with a major settlement at Wllingborough in Northamptonshire.

The local clergyman-landowner, Parson Platt, dismissed Winstanley's Christian creed and that of his squatters. Means legal and illegal were used to confiscate livestock and destroy the encampment and crops, leaving the Digger community without food. But the Diggers didn't give up. The colony at St. George's Hill lasted only a few months, but they moved to another site near Cobham,

where they were able to stay longer and raise crops. As the year wore on and winter came, however, conditions were increasingly cold and grim. Eventually they were defeated by constant attacks and oppression after a year, as malnutrition and general ill-health took their toll. Other Digger settlements lasted longer and the colony at Wellingborough gave money to support the Surrey Diggers as their venture came to an end.

Though the experiment had ended the vision refused to go away.

In the same way that Leveller ideas were taken up by.... Thomas Paine and others so the Digger philosophy has stuck. It can be traced in the Monmouth Rebellion, in the French Revolution and amongst its supporters in other countries, in the Paris Commune and in British land struggles throughout the last two centuries. In the tradition of social equity there are few that have stripped social assumptions back so far as Winstanley. His critiques transcend concepts of left or right. Winstanley's demanded no less than direct personal access to natural resources.

His convictions on common ownership reflected those of the Christian apostles:

"Now the company of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had everything in common." Acts 4.32

Winstanley equated the extension of private property rights with evil and the concept of participative common rights with good. He particularly highlighted land as the key resource being privatised or inclosed in his day, directly against the interests and wishes of dispossessed commoners.

By the early 1900's almost all land in Britain had been inclosed. Leaving the vast majority of the population landless, taking their livelihood through others.

The capitalist champions of private ownership have had to make new inroads, both deregulating and defiling remaining commons such as the seas and the air and bringing even the natural monopolies such as public utilities into private ownership.

Rights once thought inalienable have been recently stripped away in legislation such as the Criminal Justice Act 1995 and Police Act 1997. Meanwhile private property rights are being extended even into the building blocks of life itself.

The Landlords are being surpassed. Indian writer Vandana Shiva recently coined the expression 'Lifelords' for companies such as Monsanto new owners of copyrighted strains of living material. The extension of private property rights is now reaching unheard of proportions

What unnerving foresight Winstanley showed in his warnings and how can we not take up his challenge to those who followed him to continue his work.

“And here I end, having put my Arm as far as my strength will go to advance Righteousness: I have Writ, I have Acted, I have Peace: and now I must wait to see the Spirit do his own work in the hearts of others, and whether England shall be the first Land, or some others, wherin Truth shall sit down in triumph.”

A Bill of Account of the most Remarkable Sufferings that the Diggers have met with... Gerrard Winstanley 1649/50

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THE DIGGERS' SONG

The World Turned Upside Down

In 1649, to Saint George's Hill

A ragged band they called The Diggers came to show the
people's will

They defied the landlords, they defied the law

They were the dispossessed reclaiming what was theirs

'We come in peace' they said, 'to dig and sow

We come to work the land in common and to make the
waste-land grow

This earth divided, we will make whole

So it can be a common treasury for all'

'The sin of property, we do disdain

No man has any right to buy and sell the earth for private
gain

By theft and murder, they took the land

Now everywhere the walls spring up at their command'

'They make the laws, to chain us well

The clergy dazzle us with heaven or they damn us into
hell

We will not worship the god they serve

The god of greed who feeds the rich while poor men
starve

We work, we eat together, we need no swords

We will not bow to the masters nor pay rent to the lords

We are free men, though we are poor

You diggers all stand up for glory, stand up now

From the men of property
The orders came
They sent the hired men and troopers
To wipe out the Diggers claim
Tear down their cottages
Destroy their corn
They were dispersed –
But still the vision lingers on

'You poor take courage
You rich take care
The earth was made a common treasury
For everyone to share
All things in common
All people one
We come in peace' –
The order came to cut them down

'We come in peace' –
The order came to cut them down

[The Diggers Song copyright Leon Rosselson](#)

A DECLARATION BY THE DIGGERS OF
WELLINGBOROUGH - 1650

A Declaration of the Grounds and Reasons why
we the
Poor Inhabitants of the Town of *Wellingborrow*, in the
County
of *Northampton*, have begun and give consent to dig up,
manure and sow Corn upon the Common, and waste
ground, called *Bareshanke* belonging to the Inhabitants
of
Wellinborrow, by those that have Subscribed and
hundreds



more that give Consent.

EE find in the Word of God, that God made the Earth for the use and comfort of all Mankind, and set him in to till and dresse it, and said, That in the sweat of his brows he should

eat his bread; and also we find, that God never gave it to any sort of people, that they should have it all to themselves, and shut out all the rest. but he saith, The Earth hath he given to the children of men, which is every man.

2. We find, that no creature that ever God made was ever deprived of the benefit of the Earth, but Mankind; and that it is nothing but covetousnesse, pride, and hardnesse of heart, that hath caused man so far to degenerate.

3. We find in the Scriptures, that the Prophets and Apostles have left it upon Record, That in the last days the oppressor and proud man shall cease, and God will restore the waste places of the Earth to the use and comfort of Man, and that none shall hurt nor destroy in all his holy Mountain.

4. We have great Encouragement from these two righteous Acts, which the Parliament of England have set forth, the one against Kingly Power, the other to make England a Free Common-wealth.

5. We are necessitated from our present necessity to do this, and we hope that our Actions will justifie us in the gate when all men shall know the truth of our necessity: we are in Wellinborrow in one Parish 1169 persons that receive Alms, as the Officers have made it appear at the

Quarter Sessions last: we have made our Case known to the Justices, the Justices have given Order that the Town should raise a Stock to set us on work, and that the Hundred should be enjoyned to assist them; but as yet we see nothing is done, nor any man that goeth about it; we have spent all we have, our trading is decayed, our wives and children cry for bread, our lives are a burden to us, divers of us having 5.6.7.8.9. in Family, and we cannot get bread for one of them by our labor, rich mens hearts are hardened, they will not give us if we beg at their doors; if we steal, the Law will end our lives, divers of the poor are starved to death already and it were better for us that are living to dye by the Sword then by Famine. And now we consider that the Earth is our Mother, and that God hath given it to the children of men, and that the common and waste Grounds belong to the poor, and that we have a right to the common ground both from the Law of the Land, Reason and Scriptures; and therefore we have begun to bestow our righteous labor upon it, and we shall trust the Spirit for a blessing upon our labor, resolving not to dig up any mans property, until they freely give us it; and truly we find great comfort already, through the goodnesse of our God, that some of those rich men amongst us, that have had the greatest profit upon the Common, have freely given us their share in it, as one Mr John Freeman, Thomas Nottingham and John Clendon, and divers others; and the Country Farmers have proffered divers of them to give us Seed to sow it, and so we find that God is perswading Japeth to dwell in the tents of Shem: and truly those that we find most against us are such as have been constant enemies to the Parliaments Cause from first to last.

Now at last our desire is, That some that approve of this work of Righteousnesse, would but spread this our Declaration before the great Councel of the Land, that so they may be pleased to give us more encouragement to go on, that so they may be found amongst the small number of those that considers the poor and needy, that so the Lord may deliver them in the time of their troubles, and then they will not be found amongst those that Solomon speaks of, which withhold the Corn (or the Land) from the Poor, which the people shall curse, but blessing shall be upon the heads of those Rulers that sell Corn, and that will let the poor labor upon the Earth to get them Corn, and our lines shall blesse them, so shall good men stand by them, and evil men shall be afraid of them, and they shall be counted the Repairers of our Breaches, and the Restorers of our Paths to dwell in. And thus we have declared the truth of our necessity; and whosoever will come in to us to labor with us, shall have part with us, and we with them, and we shall all of us endeavor to walk righteously and peaceably in the Land of our Nativity.

Richard Smith. John Avery. Thomas Fardin. Richard Pendred. James Pitman. Roger Tuis. Joseph Hichcock. John Pye. Edward Turner.

LONDON, Printed for Giles Calvert. 1650.

Digg-linx

[An excellent film about the Diggers by Roy Hanney](http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~royhan/film/)

<http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~royhan/film/>

[The Law of Freedom - Gerrard Winstanley's utopian but workable system of common ownership which he devised after the Diggers. Probably what Winstanley would have thought of as his best writings - nice one Tash!](#)

http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/tash_lodge/winst1.htm

[Gerrard Winstanley and the Diggers](#)

<http://www.bucknell.edu/~rennhoff/>

[A page on The Diggers](#)

<http://www.lglobal.com/TAO/Freedom/winst.html>

[To The Levellers' Page](#)

[The Leveller soldiers make a stand for the People](#)

[Cornet William Thompson's message from the Leveller soldiers](#)

[To Tony's index](#)

[To the good page](#)



**A DECLARATION FROM THE POOR
OPPRESSED PEOPLE OF ENGLAND.**

A DECLARATION FROM THE Poor oppressed People
OF ENGLAND, DIRECTED To all that call themselves,
or are called

Lords of Manors,

through this NATION; That have begun to cut, or that
through fear and covetousness, do intend to cut down the
Woods and Trees that grow upon the Commons and
Waste Land.

Printed in the Year, 1649.

Homepage

(<http://www.tlio.demon.co.uk/tonyhom.htm>)

Land and Freedom

Digger pamphlet by Gerrard Winstanley

[To the site index](http://www.tlio.demon.co.uk/index.htm) <http://www.tlio.demon.co.uk/index.htm>

[To the Land and Freedom index](http://www.tlio.demon.co.uk/good.htm)

<http://www.tlio.demon.co.uk/good.htm>" \l "Land

A DECLARATION FROM THE Poor oppressed People
of *England*.

We whose names are subscribed, do in the name of all the poor oppressed people in *England*, declare unto you, that call your selves lords of Manors, and Lords of the Land, That in regard the King of Righteousness, our Maker, hath inlightened our hearts so far, as to see, That the earth was not made purposely for you, to be Lords of it, and we to be your Slaves, Servants, and Beggars; but it was made to be a common Livelihood to all, without respect of persons: And that your buying and selling of Land, and the Fruits of it, one to another, is *The cursed thing*, and was brought in by War; which hath, and still does establish murder, and theft, In the hands of some branches of Mankind over others, which is the greatest outward burden, and unrighteous power, that the Creation groans under: For the power of inclosing Land, and owning Propriety, was brought into the Creation by your Ancestors by the Sword; which first did murder their fellow Creatures, Men, and after plunder or steal away their Land, and left this Land successively to you,

their Children. And therefore, though you did not kill or theeve, yet you hold that cursed thing in your hand, by the power of the Sword; and so you justifie the wicked deeds of your Fathers; and that sin of your Fathers, shall be visited upon the Head of you, and your Children, to the third and fourth Generation, and longer too, till your bloody and theeving power be rooted out of the Land.

And further, in regard the King of Righteousness hath made us sensible of our burthens, and the cryes and groanings of our hearts are come before him: We take it as a testimony of love from him, That our hearts begin to be freed from slavish fear of men, such as you are; and that we find Resolutions in us, grounded upon the inward law of Love, one towards another, To Dig and Plough up the Commons, and waste Lands through *England*; and that our conversation shall be so unblameable, That your Laws shall not reach to oppress us any longer, unless you by your Laws will shed the innocent blood that runs in our veins.

For though you and your Ancestors got your Propriety by murther and theft, and you keep it by the same power from us, that have an equal right to the Land with you, by the righteous Law of Creation, yet we shall have no occasion of quarrelling (as you do) about that disturbing devil, called *Particular propriety*: For the Earth, with all her Fruits of Corn, Cattle, and such like, was made to be a common Store-house of Livelihood to all Mankinde, friend, and foe, without exception.

And to prevent your scrupulous Objections, know this, That we Must neither buy nor sell; Money must not any longer (after our work of the Earths community is advanced) be the great god, that hedges in some, and hedges out others; for Money is but part of the Earth: And surely, the Righteous Creator, who id King, did never ordain, That unless some of Mankinde, do bring

that Mineral (Silver and Gold) in their hands, to others of their own kinde, that they should neither be fed, nor be clothed; no surely, For this was the project of Tyrant-flesh (which Land-lords are branches of) to set his Image upon Money. And they make this unrighteous Law, That none should buy or sell, eat, or be clothed, or have any comfortable Livelihood among men, unless they did bring his Image stamped upon Gold or Silver in their hands.

And whereas the Scriptures speak, That the mark of the Beast is 666, the number of a man; and that those that do not bring that mark in their hands, or in their foreheads, they should neither buy nor sell, *Revel.* 13.16. And seeing the numbering Letters round about the English money make 666, which is the number of that Kingly Power and Glory, (called a *Man*) And seeing the age of the Creation is now come to the Image of the Beast, or Half day. And seeing 666 is his mark, we expect this to be the last Tyrannical power that shall raigin; and that people shall live freely in the enjoyment of the Earth, without bringing the mark of the Beast in their hands, or in their promise; and that they shall buy Wine and Milk, without Money, or without price, as *Isiah* speaks.

For after our work of the Earthly community is advanced, we must make use of Gold and Silver, as we do of other metals, but not to buy and sell withal; for buying and selling is the great cheat, that robs and steals the Earth one from another: It is that which makes some Lords, others Beggars, some Rulers, others to be ruled; and makes great Murderers and Theeves to be prisoners, and hangers of little ones, or of sincere-hearted men.

And while we are made to labor the Earth together, with one consent and willing minde; and while we are made free, that every one, friend and foe, shall enjoy the

benefit of their Creation, that is, To have food and rayment from the Earth, their Mother; and every one subject to give accompt of his thoughts, words, and actions to none, but to the one onely righteous Judg, and Prince of Peace; the Spirit of Righteousness that dwells, and that is now rising up to rule in every Creature, and in the whole Globe. We say, while we are made to hinder no man of his Priviledges given him in his Creation, equal to one, as to another; what Law then can you make, to take hold upon us, but Laws of Oppression and Tyranny, that shall enslave or spill the blood of the Innocent? And so your Selves, your Judges, Lawyers, and Justices, shall be found to be the greatest Transgressors, in, and over Mankinde.

But to draw neerer to declare our meaning, what we would have, and what we shall endeavor to the uttermost to obtain, as moderate and righteous Reason directs us; seeing we are made to see our Priviledges, given us in our Creation, which have hitherto been denied to us, and our Fathers, since the power of the Sword began to rule, And the secrets of the Creation have been locked up under the traditional, Parrat-like speaking, from the Universities, and Colledges for Scholars, And since the power of the murdering, and theeving Sword, formerly, as well as now of late yeers, hath set up a Govenment, and maintains that Government; for what are prisons, and putting others to death, but the power of the Sword to enforce people to that Government which was got by Conquest and Sword, and cannot stand of it self, but by the same murdering power? That Government that is got over people by the Sword and kept by the Sword, is not set up by the King of Righteousness to be his Law, but by Covetousness, the great god of the world; who hath been permitted to raign for a time, times, and dividing of time and his government draws to the period of the last

term of his allotted time; and then the Nations shall see the glory of that Government that shall rule in Righteousness, without either Sword or Spear,

And seeing further, the power of Righteousness in our hearts, seeking the livelihood of others as well as our selves, hath drawn forth our bodies to begin to dig, and plough, in the Commons and waste Land, for the reasons already declared,

And seeing and finding ourselves poor, wanting Food to feed upon, while we labor the Earth to cast in seed, and to wait till the first crop comes up; and wanting Ploughs, Carts, Corn, and such materials to plant the Commons withal, we are willing to declare our condition to you, and to all, that have the Treasury of the Earth, locked up in your Bags, Chests, and Barns, and will offer up nothing to this publike Treasury; but will rather see your fellow Creatures starve for want of Bread, that have an equal right to it with your selves, by the Law of Creation: But this by the way we onely declare to you, and to all that follow the subtle art of buying and selling the Earth with her Fruits, meerly to get the Treasury thereof into their hands, to lock it up from them, to whom it belongs; that so, such covetous, proud, unrighteous, selfish flesh, may be left without excuse in the day of Judgment.

And therefore, the main thing we aym at, and for which we declare our Resolutions to go forth, and act, is this, To lay hold upon, and as we stand in need, to cut and fell, and make the best advantage we can of the Woods and Trees, that grow upon the Commons, To be a stock for our selves, and our poor Brethren, through the land of *England*, to plant the Commons withal; and to provide us bread to eat, till the Fruit of our labors in the Earth bring forth increase; and we shall meddle with none of your Proprieties (but what is called Commonage) till the Spirit

in you, make you cast up your Lands and Goods, which were got, and still is kept in your hands by murder, and theft; and then we shall take it from the Spirit, that hath conquered you, and not from our Swords, which is an abominable, and unrighteous power, and a destroyer of the Creation: But the Son of man comes not to destroy, but to save.

And we are moved to send forth this Declaration abroad, to give notice to every one whom it concerns, in regard we hear and see, that some of you, that have been Lords of Manors, do cause the Trees and Woods that grow upon the Commons, which you pretend a Royalty unto, to be cut down and sold, for your own private use, Thereby the Common Land, which your own mouths doe say belongs to the poor, is impoverished, and the poor oppressed people robbed of their Rights, while you give them cheating words, by telling some of our poor oppressed Brethren, That those of us that have begun to Dig and Plough up the Commons, will hinder the poor; and so blinde their eyes, that they see not their Priviledge, while you, and the rich Free-holders make the most profit of the Commons, by your over-stocking of them with Sheep and Cattle; and the poor that have the name to own the Commons, have the least share therein; nay, they are checked by you, if they cut Wood, Heath, Turf, or Furseys, in places about the Common, where you disallow.

Therefore we are resolved to be cheated no longer, nor be held under the slavish fear of you no longer, seing the Earth was made for us, as well as for you. And if the Common Land belongs to us who are the poor oppressed, surely the woods that grow upon the Commons belong to us likewise: therefore we are resolved to try the uttermost in the light of reason, to know whether we shall be free men, or slaves. If we lie

still, and let you steale away our Birthrights, we perish; and if we Petition we perish also, though we have paid taxes, given free quarter, and ventured our lives to preserve the Nations freedom as much as you, and therefore by the law of contract with you, freedom in the land is our portion as well as yours, equal with you: And if we strive for freedom, and your murdering, governing Laws destroy us, we can but perish.

Therefore we require, and we resolve to take both Common Land, and Common woods to be a livelihood for us, and look upon you as equal with us, not above us, knowing very well, that *England* the land of our Nativity, is to be a common Treasury of livelihood to all, without respect of persons.

So then, we declare unto you, that do intend to cut our Common Woods and Trees, that you shall not do it; unlesse it be for a stock for us, as aforesaid, and we to know of it, by a publick declaration abroad, that the poor oppressed, that live thereabouts, may take it, and employ it, for their publike use, therefore take notice we have demanded it in the name of the Commons of *England*, and of all the Nations of the world, it being the righteous freedom of the Creation.

Likewise we declare to you that have begun to cut down our Common Woods and Trees, and to fell and carry away the same for your private use, that you shall forbear, and go no farther, hoping, that none that are friends to the Commonwealth of England, will endeavour to buy any of those Common Trees and Woods of any of those Lords of Mannors, so called, who have, by the murdering and cheating law of the sword, stoln the Land from younger brothers, who have by the law of Creation, a standing portion in the Land, as well, and equall with others. Therefore we hope all Wood-mongers will disown all such private merchandise, as

being a robbing of the poor oppressed, and take notice, that they have been told our resolution: But if any of you that are Wood-mongers, will buy it of the poor, and for their use, to stock the Commons, from such as may be appointed by us to sell it, you shall have it quietly, without diminution; but if you will slight us in this thing, blame us not, if we make stop of the Carts you send and convert the Woods to our own use, as need requires, it being our own, equal with him that calls himself the Lord of the Mannor, and not his peculiar right, shutting us out, but he shall share with us as a fellow-creature.

For we say our purpose is, to take those Common Woods to sell them, now at first, to be a stock for our selves, and our children after us, to plant and manure the Common land withall; for we shall endeavour by our righteous acting not to leave the earth any longer intangled unto our children, by self-seeking proprietors; But to leave it a free store-house, and common treasury to all, without respect of persons; And this we count is our dutie, to endeavour to the uttermost, every man in his place (according to the nationall Covenant which the Parliament set forth) a Reformation to preserve the peoples liberties, one as well as another: As well those as have paid taxes, and given free quarter, as those that have either born the sword, or taken our moneys to dispose of them for publike use: for if the Reformation must be according to the word of God, then every one is to have the benefit and freedom of his creation, without respect of persons; we count this our duty, we say, to endeavour to the uttermost, and so shall leave those that rise up to oppose us without excuse, in their day of Judgment; and our precious blood, we hope, shall not be dear to us, to be willingly laid down at the door of a prison, or foot of a gallows, to justifie this righteous cause; if those that have taken our money from us, and

promised to give us freedom for it, should turn Tyrants against us: for we must not fight, but suffer.

And further we intend, that not one, two, or a few men of us shall sell or exchange the said woods, but it shall be known publikly in Print or writing to all, how much every such, and such parcell of wood is sold for, and how it is laid out, either in victualls, corn, ploughs, or other materials necessary.

And we hope we may not doubt (at least we expect) that they that are called the great Council and powers of *England*, who so often have declared themselves, by promises and Covenants, and confirmed them by multitude of fasting daies, and devout Protestations, to make *England* a free people, upon condition they would pay moneys, and adventure their lives against the successor of the *Norman* Conqueror; under whose oppressing power *England* was enslaved; And we look upon that freedom promised to be the inheritance of all, without respect of persons; And this cannot be, unless the Land of *England* be freely set at liberty from proprietors, and become a common Treasury to all her children, as every portion of the Land of *Canaan* was the Common livelihood of such and such a Tribe, and of every member in that Tribe, without exception, neither hedging in any, nor hedging out.

We say we hope we need not doubt of their sincerity to us herein, and that they will not gainsay our determinate course; howsoever, their actions will prove to the view of all, either their sinceritie, or hypocrisie: We know what we speak is our priviledge, and our cause is righteous, and if they doubt of it, let them but send a childe for us to come before them, and we shall make it manifest four ways.

First, by the National Covenant, which yet stands in force to bind Parliament and people to be faithful and

sincere, before the Lord God Almighty, wherein every one in his several place hath covenanted to preserve and seek the liberty each of other, without respect of persons. Secondly, by the late Victory over King *Charls*, we do claime this our priviledge, to be quietly given us, out of the hands of Tyrant-Government, as our bargain and contract with them; for the Parliament promised, if we would pay taxes, and give free quarter, and adventure our lives against *Charls* and his party, whom they called the Common enemy, they would make us a free people; These three being all done by us, as well as by themselves, we claim this our bargain, by the law of contract from them, to be a free people with them, and to have an equall priviledge of Common livelihood with them, they being chosen by us, but for a peculiar worke, and for an appointed time, from among us, not to be our oppressing Lords, but servants to succour us. But these two are our weakest proofs. And yet by them (in the light of reason and equity that dwells in mens hearts) we shall with ease cast down, all those former enslaving *Norman* reiterated laws, in every Kings raigne since the Conquest, which are as thornes in our eyes, and pricks in our sides, and which are called the Ancient Government of *England*.

Thirdly we shall prove that we have a free right to the land of *England*, being born therein as well as elder brothers, and that it is our equal right with them, and they with us, to have a comfortable livelihood in the earth, without owning any of our own kinde, to be either Lords, or Land-Lords over us: And this we shall prove by plain Text of Scripture, without exposition upon them, which the Scholars and great ones generally say, is their rule to walk by.

Fourthly, we shall prove it by the Righteous Law of our Creation, That mankinde in all his branches, is the Lord

of the Earth and ought not to be in subjection to any of his own kinde without him, but to live in the light of the law of righteousness, and peace established in his heart. And thus in love we have declared the purpose of our hearts plainly, without flatterie, expecting love, and the same sincerity from you, without grumbling or quarreling, being Creatures of your own Image and mould, intending no other matter herein, but to observe the Law of righteous action, endeavouring to shut out of the Creation, the cursed thing, called *Particular Propriety*, which is the cause of all wars, bloud-shed, theft, and enslaving Laws, that hold the people under miserie.

Signed for and in behalf of all the poor oppressed people of *England*, and the whole world.

Gerrard Winstanley

John Coulton

John Palmer

Thomas Star

Samuel Webb

John Hayman

Thomas Edcer

William Hogrill

Daniel Weeden

Richard Wheeler

Nathaniel Yates

William Clifford

John Harrison

Thomas Hayden

James Hall

James Manley

Thomas Barnard

John South

Robert Sayer

Christopher Clifford

John Beechee
William Coomes
Christopher Boncher
Richard Taylor
Urian Worthington
Nathaniel Holcombe
Giles Childe, senior
John Webb
Thomas Yarwel
William Bonnington
John Ash
Ralph Ayer
John Pra
John Wilkinson
Anthony Spire
Thomas East
Allen Brown
Edward Parret
Richard Gray
John Mordy
John Bachilor
William Childe
William Hatham
Edward Wicher
William Tench.
FINIS.

Digger pamphlet by Gerrard Winstanley

A LETTER TO THE LORD FAIRFAX, AND
His Councill of War, WITH *Divers Questions to the
Lawyers, and Ministers*: Proving it an undeniable Equity,
That the common People ought to dig, plow, plant and
dwell upon the Commons, with- out hiring them, or
paying Rent to any.
*Delivered to the Generall and the chief Officers on
Saturday June 9.*

By *Jerrard Winstanly*, in the behalf of those who have
begun to dig upon *George-Hill* in Surrey.

London: Printed for *Giles Calvert*, at the black Spread-
Eagle at the West end of P A U L S. 1 6 4 9.

*To the Lord Fairfax, Generall of the English Forces, and
his Councill of War.*

SIR,

Our digging and ploughing upon *George-hill* in Surrey is
not unknown to you, since you have seen some of our
persons, and heard us speak in defence thereof: and we
did receive mildnesse and moderation from you and your
Councill of Warre, both when some of us were at White-
hall before you, and when you came in person to
George-hill to view our works; we indeavour to lay open
the bottome and intent of our businesse, as much as can
be, that none may be troubled with doubtfull
imaginations about us, but may be satisfied in the
sincerity and universall righteousnesse of the work.

We understand, that our digging upon that Common, is
the talk of the whole Land; some approving, some

disowning, some are friends, filled with love, and sees the worke intends good to the Nation, the peace whereof is that which we seeke after; others are enemies filled with fury, and falsely report of us, that we have intent to fortifie our selves, and afterwards to fight against others, and take away their goods from them, which is a thing we abhor: and many other slanders we rejoyce over, because we know ourselves cleare, our endeavour being not otherwise, but to improve the Commons, and to cast off that oppression and outward bondage which the Creation groans under, as much as in us lies, and to lift up and preserve the purity thereof.

And the truth is, experience shews us, that in this work of Community in the earth, and in the fruits of the earth, is seen plainly a pitched battaile between the Lamb and the Dragon, between the Spirit of love, humility and righteousnesse, which is the Lamb appearing in flesh; and the power of envy, pride, and unrighteousnesse, which is the Dragon appearing in flesh, the latter power striving to hold the Creation under slavery, and to lock and hide the glory thereof from man: the former power labouring to deliver the Creation from slavery, to unfold the secrets of it to the Sons of Men, and so to manifest himselfe to be the great restorer of all things.

And these two powers strive in the heart of every single man, & make single men to strive in opposition one against the other, and these strivings will be till the Dragon be cast out, and his judgement and downfall hastens apace, therefore let the righteous hearts wait with patience upon the Lord, to see what end he makes of all the confused hurley burleys of the world.

When you were at our Works upon the Hill, we told you, many of the Countrey-people that were offended at first, begin now to be moderate, and to see righteousnesse in our work, and to own it, excepting one or two covetous

Free-holders, that would have all the Commons to themselves, and that would uphold the Norman Tyranny over us, which by the victorie that you have got over the Norman Successor, is plucked up by the roots, therefore ought to be cast away. And we expect, that these our angry neighbours, whom we never wronged, nor will not wrong, will in time see their furious rashnesse to be their folly, and become moderate, to speak and carry themselves like men rationally, and leave off pushing with their hornes like beasts: they shall have no cause to say we wrong them, unlesse they count us wrongers of them for seeking a livelihood out of the common Land of England by our righteous labour, which is our freedome, as we are Englishmen equall with them, and rather our freedome then theirs, because they are elder brothers and Free-holders, and call the Inclosures their own land, and we are younger brothers, and the poore oppressed, and the Common Lands are called ours, by their owne confession.

We told you (upon a question you put to us) that we were not against any that would have Magistrates and Laws to govern, as the Nations of the world are governed, but as for our parts we shall need neither the one nor the other in that nature of Government; for as our Land is common, so our Cattell is to be common, and our corn and fruits of the earth common, and are not to be bought and sold among us, but to remaine a standing portion of livelihood to us and our children, without that cheating intanglement of buying and selling, and we shall not arrest one another.

And then, what need have we of imprisoning, whipping, or hanging Laws, to bring one another into bondage? and we know that none of those that are subject to this righteous law dares arrest or inslave his brother for, or about the objects of the earth, because the earth is made

by our Creator to be a common Treasury of livelihood to one equall with another, without resect of persons.

But now if you that are elder brothers, and that call the Inclosures your own land, hedging out others, if you will have Magistrates and Laws in this outward manner of the Nations, we are not against it, but freely without disturbance shall let you alone; and if any of we Commoners, or younger Brothers, shall steal your corne, or cattell, or pull down your hedges, let your laws take hold upon any of us that so offends.

But while we keep within the bounds of our Commons, and none of us shall be found guilty of meddling with your goods, or inclosed proprieties, unlesse the Spirit in you freely give it up, your laws then shall not reach to us, unlesse you will oppresse or shed the blood of the innocent: and yet our corn and cattell shall not be locked up, as though we would be proprietors in the middle of the Nation: no, no, we freely declare, that our corn and cattell, or what we have, shall be freely laid open, for the safety and preservation of the Nation, and we as younger brothers, living in love with you our elder brothers, for we shall endeavour to do, as we would be done unto; that is, to let every one injoy the benefit of his Creation, to have food and rayment free by the labour of his hands from the earth.

And as for spirituall teachings, we leave every man to stand and fall to his own Master: if the power of covetousnesse be his Master or King that rules in his heart, let him stand and fall to him; if the power of love and righteousnesse be his Master or King that rules in his heart, let him stand and fall to him; let the bodies of men act love, humility, and righteousnesse one towards another, and let the Spirit of righteousnesse be the Teacher, Ruler and Judge both in us and over us; and by thus doing, we shall honor our Father, the Spirit that

gave us our being. And we shall honor our Mother the earth, by labouring her in righteousness, and leaving her free from oppression and bondage.

We shall then honour the higher powers of the left hand man, which is our hearing, seeing, tasting, smelling, feeling, and walk in the light of reason and righteousness, that is, the King and Judge that sits upon this five cornered Throne, and we shall be strengthened by those five well springs of life, of the right hand man, which is, understanding, will, affections, joy and peace, and so live like men, in the light and power of the Son of righteousness within our selves feelingly. What need then have we of any outward, selfish, confused Laws made, to uphold the power of covetousnesse, when as we have the righteous Law written in our hearts, teaching us to walk purely in the Creation.

Sir, The intent of our writing to you, is not to request your protection, though we have received an unchristian-like abuse from some of your souldiers; for truly we dare not cast off the Lord, and make choice of a man or men to rule us. For the Creation hath smarted deeply for such a thing, since Israel chose Saul to be their King; therefore we acknowledge before you in plain English, That we have chosen the Lord God Almighty to be our King and Protector.

Yet in regard you are our brethren (as an English Tribe) and for the present are owned to be the outward Governors, Protectors and Saviours of this Land, and whose hearts we question not, but that you endeavour to advance the same King of righteousness with us, therefore we are free to write to you, and to open the sincerity of our hearts freely to you, and to all the world.

And if after this report of ours, either you, or your Forces called souldiers, or any that owns your Laws of propriety, called freeholders, do abuse or kill our

persons, we declare to you that we die, doing our duty to our Creator, by endeavouring from that power he hath put into our hearts to lift up his Creation out of bondage, and you and they shall be left without excuse in the day of Judgement, because you have been spoken to sufficiently.

And therefore our reason of writing to you is this, in regard some of your foot souldiers of the Ceneralls Regiment, under Captain Stravie that were quartered in our Town, we bearing part therein as well as our neighbours, giving them sufficient quarter, so that there was no complaining, did notwithstanding, go up to George-hill, where was onely one man and one boy of our company of the diggers. And at their first coming, divers of your souldiers, before any word of provocation was spoken to them, fell upon those two, beating the boy, and took away his coat off his back, and some linnen and victualls that they had, beating and wounding the man very dangerously, and fired our house.

Which we count a strange and Heathenish practise, that the souldierie should meddle with naked men, peaceable men, Countrymen, that meddled not with the souldiers businesse, nor offered any wrong to them in word or deed, uniesse, because we improve that victory which you have gotten in the name of the Commons over King Charles, do offend the souldierie. In doing whereof, we rather expect protection from you then destruction. But for your own particular, we are assured of your moderation and friendship to us, who have ever been your friends in times of straits; and that you would not give Commission to strike us, or fire and pull down our houses, but you would prove us an enemy first.

Yet we do not write this, that you should lay any punishment upon them, for that we leave to your discretion, only we desire (in the request of brethren)

that you would send forth admonition to your souldiers, not to abuse us hereafter; unlesse they have a Commission from you; and truly if our offences should prove so great, you shall not need to send souldiers for us, or to beat us, for we shall freely come to you upon a bare letter.

Therefore that the ignorant, covetous, free-holders, and such of your ignorant souldiers, that know not what freedom is, may not abuse those that are true friends to Englands freedom, and faithfull servants to the Creation, we desire, that our businesse may be taken notice of by you, and the highest Councell the Parliament, and if our work appear righteous to you, as it does to us, and wherein our souls have sweet peace, in the midst of scandalls and abuses;

Then in the request of brethren, we desire we may enjoy our freedom, according to the Law of contract between you and us, That we that are younger brothers, may live comfortably in the Land of our Nativity, with you the elder brothers, enjoying the benefit of our Creation, which is food and rayment freely by our labours; and that we may receive love, and the protection of brethren from you, seeing we have adventured estate and persons with you, to settle the Land in peace, and that we may not be abused by your Laws, nor by your souldiers, unlesse we break over into your inclosures as aforesaid, and take away your proprieties, before you are willing to deliver it up. And if this you do, we shall live in quietnesse, and the Nation will be brought into peace, while you that are the souldierie, are a wall of fire round about the Nation to keep a forraign enemy, and are succourers of your brethren that live within the Land, who indeavour to hold forth the Sun of righteousnesse in their actions, to the glory of our Creator.

And you and the Parliament hereby, will be faithfull in your Covenants, Oaths and promises to us, as we have been faithfull to you and them, in paying taxes, giving free-quarter, and affording other assistance in the publike work, whereby we that are the Common People, are brought almost to a morsell of bread, therefore we demand our bargain, which is freedome, with you in this Land of our Nativity.

But if you do sleight us and our cause, then know we shall not strive with sword and speare, but with spade and plow and such like instruments to make the barren and common Lands fruitful, and we have, and still shall, commit our selves and our cause unto our righteous King, whom we obey, even the Prince of peace to be our Protector; and unto whom you likewise professe much love, by your preaching, praying, fastings, and in whose name you have made all your Covenants, Oaths, and promises to us: I say unto him we appeal, who is and will be our righteous Judge, who never yet failed those that waited upon him, but ever did judge the cause of the oppressed righteously.

We desire that your Lawyers may consider these questions (which we affirm to be truths) and which gives good assurance by the Law of the Land, that we that are the younger brothers or common people, have a true right to dig, plow up and dwell upon the Commons, as we have declared.

1. Whether William the Conqueror became not to be King of England by conquest, turned the English out of their birth-rights, burned divers townes, whereof thirty towns were bumed by him in Windsore Forrest; by reason whereof all sorts of people suffered, and compelled the conquered English for necessity of livelihood to be servants to him and his Norman souldiers?

2. Whether King Charles was not successor to the Crown of England from William the Conqueror, and whether all Laws that have been made in every Kings Reign, did not confirm and strengthen the power of the Norman Conquest, and so did, and does still hold the Commons of England under slavery to the Kingly power, his Gentry and Clergie?

3. Whether Lords of Mannours were not the successors of the Colonells and chief Officers of William the Conqueror, and held their Royalty to the Commons by Lease, Grant and Patentee from the King, and the power of the sword was and is the seale to their Title?

4. Whether Lords of Mannours have not lost their Royalty to the common land, since the common People of England, as well as some of the Gentry, have conquered King Charles, and recovered themselves from under the Norman Conquest?

5. Whether the Norman Conqueror took the land of England to himself, out of the hands of a few men, called a Parliament, or from the whole body of the English People? Surely he took freedom from every one, and became the disposer both of inclosures and commons; therefore every one, upon the recovery of the conquest, ought to return into freedom again without respecting persons, or els what benefit shall the common people have (that have suffered most in these wars) by the victory that is got over the King? It had been better for the common people there had been no such conquest; for they are impoverish'd in their estates by Free-quarter and Taxes, and made worse to live then they were before. But seeing they have paid Taxes, and given Free-quarter according to their estates, as much as the Gentry to theirs, it is both reason and equity that they should have the freedom of the land for their livelihood, which

is the benefit of the commons, as the Gentry hath the benefit of their inclosures.

6. Whether the freedom which the common people have got, by casting out the Kingly power, lie not herein principally, to have the land of their nativity for their livelihood, freed from intanglement of Lords, Lords of Mannours, and Landlords, which are our task-masters. As when the enemy conquered England, he took the land for his own, and called that his freedom; even so, seeing all sorts of people have given assistance to recover England from under the Norman yoke, surely all sorts, both Gentry in their inclosures, Commonalty in their Commons, ought to have their freedom, not compelling one to work for wages for another.

7. Whether any Lawes since the coming in of Kings, have been made in the light of the righteous law of our creation, respecting all alike, or have not been grounded upon selfish principles, in feare or flattery of their King, to uphold freedom in the Gentry and Clergie, and to hold the common people under bondage still, and so respecting persons?

8. Whether all Lawes that are not grounded upon equity and reason, not giving a universal freedom to all, but respecting persons, ought not to be cut off with the Kings head? we affirm they ought. If all lawes be grounded upon equity and reason, then the whole land of England is to be a cornmon treasury to every one that is born in the land: But if they be grounded upon selfish principles, giving freedom to some, laying burdens upon others, such lawes are to be cut off with the Kings head; or els the negiecters are Covenant, Oaths and Promise-breakers, and open hypocrites to the whole world.

9. Whether every one without exception, by the law of contract, ought not to have liberty to enjoy the earth for his livelihood, and to settle his dwelling in any part of

the Commons of England, without buying or renting Land of any; seeing every one by Agreement and Covenant among themselves, have paid taxes, given free-quarter, and adventured their lives to recover England out of bondage? we affirm, they ought.

10. Whether the Laws that were made in the daies of the Kings, does give freedom to any other people, but to the gentry and Clergy, all the rest are left servants and bondmen to those task-masters; none have freedom by the Laws, but those two sorts of people, all the common people have been, and still are burdened under them.

And surely if the common people have no more freedom in England, but only to live among their elder brothers, and work for them for hire; what freedom then have they in England, more then we can have in Turkie or France? For there, if any man will work for wages, he may live among them, otherwise no: therefore consider, whether this be righteous, and for the peace of the Nation, that Laws shall be made to give freedom to impropiators and Free-holders, when as the poor that have no land, are left still in the straits of beggery, and are shut out of all livelihood, but what they shall pick out of sore bondage, by working for others, as Masters over them, and if this be not the burthen of the Norman yoke, let rationally men judge: therefore take not away men, but take away the power of tyranny and bad government, the price is in your hand, and let no part of the Nation be wronged for want of a Representative.

And here now we desire your publike Preachers, that say they preach the righteous law, to consider these questions, which confirms us in the peace of our hearts, that we that are the common people born in England, ought to improve the Commons, as we have declared, for a publike Treasury and livelihood, and that those that

hinder us are rebelis to their Maker, and enemies to the Creation.

First, we demand I or No, whether the earth with her fruits, was made to be bought and sold from one to another? and whether one part of mankind was made a Lord of the land, and another part a servant, by the law of Creation before the fall?

I affirme, (and I challenge you to disprove) that the earth was made to be a common Treasury of livelihood for all, without respect of persons, and was not made to be bought and sold: And that mankind in all his branches, is the lord over the Beasts, Birds, Fishes, and the Earth, and was not made to acknowledge any of his owne kind to be his teacher and ruler, but the spirit of righteousnesse only his Maker, and to walk in his light, and so to live in peace, and this being a truth, as it is, then none ought to be Lords or Landlords over another, but the earth is free for every son and daughter of mankind, to live free upon. This question is not to be answered by any text of Scripture, or example since the fall, but the answer is to be given in the light of it self, which is the law of righteousnesse, or that Word of God that was in the beginning, which dwells in mans heart, and by which he was made, even the pure law of creation, unto which the creation is to be restored.

Before the fall, Adam, or the Man did dresse the garden, or the earth, in love, freedom, and righteousnesse, which was his rest and peace: But when covetousnesse began to rise up in him, to kill the power of love and freedom in him, and so made him (mankind) to set himself one man above another, as Cain lifted up himself above Abel, which was but the outward declaration of the two powers that strive in the man Adattis heart; and when he consented to that serpent covetousnesse, then he fell from righteousnesse, was cursed, and was sent into the

earth to eat his bread in sorrow: And from that time began particular propriety to grow in one man over another; and the sword brought in propriety, and holds it up, which is no other but the power of angry covetousnesse: For, Cain killed Abel, because Abels principles, or religion, was contrary to his. And the power of the sword is still Cain killing Abel, lifting up one man still above another. But Abel shall not alwaies be slain, nor alwaies lie under the bondage of Cains cursed propriety, for he must rise: And that Abel of old was but a type of Christ, that is now rising up to restore all things from bondage.

2. I demand, whether all wars, blood-shed, and misery came not upon the Creation, when one man indeavoured to be a lord over another, and to claime propriety in the earth one above another? your Scripture will prove this sufficiently to be true. And whether this misery shall not remove (and not till then) when all the branches of mankind shall look upon themselves as one man, and upon the earth as a common Treasury to all, without respecting persons, every one acknowledging the law of righteousnesse in them and over them, and walking in his light purely? then cast away your buying and selling the earth, with her fruits, it is unrighteous, it lifts up one above another, it makes one man oppresse another, and is the burthen of the Creation.

3. Whether the work of restoration lies not in removing covetousnesse, casting that Serpent out of heaven, (mankind) and making man to live in the fight of righteousnesse, not in words only, as Preachers do, but in action, whereby the Creation shines in glory? I affirm it.

4. Whether is the King of righteousnesse a respecter of persons yea, or no? If you say no, then who makes this difference, that the elder brother shall be lord of the land, and the younger brother a slave and beggar? I affirm, it

was and is covetousnesse, since the fall, not the King of righteousness before the fall, that made that difference; therefore if you will be Preachers, hold forth the law of righteousness purely, and not the confused law of covetousnesse, which is the murdherer: the law of righteousness would have every one to enjoy the benefit of his creation, that is, to have food and rayment by his labour freely in the land of his nativity, but covetousnesse will have none to live free, but he that hath the strongest arme of flesh; all others must be servants.

5. Whether a man can have true peace by walking in the Law of covetousnesse and self, as generally all do, or by walking in the Law of universall righteousness; doing as he would be done by? I affirm there is no true peace, till men talk lesse, and live more actually in the power of universall righteousness. Then you Preachers, lay aside your multitude of words, and your selfish doctrines, for you confound and delude the people.

6. Whether does the King of righteousness bid you love or hate your enemies, if you say love them, then I demand of you, why do some of you in your Pulpits, and elsewhere, stir up the people to beat, to imprison, put to death or banish, or not to buy and sell with those that endeavour to restore the earth to a common treasury again? surely at the worst, you can make them but your enemies; therefore love them, win them by love, do not hate them, they do not hate you.

7. Whether it be not a great breach of the Nationall Covenant, to give two sorts of people their freedom, that is, Gentry and Clergy, and deny it to the rest? I affirm it is a high breach, for mans Laws makes these two sorts of people, the Antichristian task-masters over the common people. The one forcing the people to give them rent for the earth, and to work for hire for them. The other which

is the Clergy, that force a maintenance of tithes from the people; a practise which Christ, the Apostles and Prophets never walked in; therefore surely you are the false Christs, and false Prophets, that are risen up in these latter daies.

Thus I have declared to you, and to all in the whole world, what that power of life is, that is in me. And knowing that the Spirit of righteousnesse does appear in many in this Land, I desire all of you seriously in love and humility, to consider of this businesse of publike community, which I am carried forth in the power of love, and clear light of universall righteousnesse, to advance as much as I can; and I can do no other, the Law of love in my heart does so constrain me, by reason whereof I am called fool, mad man, and have many slanderous reports cast upon me, and meet with much fury from some covetous people, under all which my spirit is made patient, & is guarded with joy and peace: I hate none, I love all, I delight to see every one live comfortably. I would have none live in poverty, straits or sorrows; therefore if you find any selfishnesse in this work, or discover any thing that is destructive to the whole Creation, that you would open your hearts as freely to me in declaring my weaknesse to me, as I have been open-hearted in declaring that which I find and feel much life and strength in. But if you see righteousnesse in it, and that it holds forth the strength of universall love to all without respect to persons, so that our Creator is honored in the work of his hand, then own it, and justifie it, and let the power of love have his freedom and glory.

Jerrard Winstanly.

The Reformation that England now is to endeavour, is not to remove the Norman Yoke only, and to bring us back to be governed by those Laws that were before William the Conqueror came in, as if that were the rule

or mark we aime at: No, that is not it; but the Reformation is according to the Word of God, and that is the pure Law of righteousnesse before the fall, which made all things, unto which all things are to be restored: and he that endeavours not that, is a Covenant-breaker. This Letter with the Questions were delivered by the Authors own hand to the Generall, and the chief Officers, and they very mildly promised they would read it, and consider of it.

FINIS.

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By *Jerrard Winstanley* a lover of *Englands* freedom
andPeace.

*Die Pride and Envie; Flesh, take the poor's advice.
Covetousnesse be gon: Come, Truth and Love arise.
Patience take the Crown; throw Anger out of dores:
Cast out Hypocrisie and Lust, which follows whores:
Then England sit in rest; Thy sorrows will have end;
Thy Sons will live in peace, and each will be a friend.*

London, Printed for Giles Calvert, 1650.

A

New yeers Gift SENT TO THE PARLIAMENT
AND ARMIE.

Gentlemen of the Parliament and Armie; you and the
Common people have assisted each other, to cast out the
Head of oppression which was Kingly power, seated in
one mans hand, and that work is now done, and till that
work was done you called upon the people to assist you
to deliver this distressed bleeding dying nation out of
bondage; And the people came and failed you not,
counting neither purse nor blood too dear to part with to
effect this work.

The Parliament after this have made an Act to cast out
Kingly power, and to make *England* a free Common-
wealth. These Acts the People are much rejoyced with,
as being words forerunning their freedome, and they wait
for their accomplishment that their joy may be full; for
as words without action are a cheat, and kills the comfort
of a righteous spirit, so words performed in action does
comfort and nourish the life thereof.

Now Sirs, wheresoever we spie out Kingly power, no man I hope shall be troubled to declare it, nor afraid to cast it out, having both Act of Parliament, the Souldiers Oath, and the common peoples consent on his side; for Kingly power is like a great spread tree, if you lop the head or top-bow, and let the other Branches and root stand, it will grow again and recover fresher strength.

If any ask me, What Kingly power is? I Answer, there is a twofold Kingly power. The one is, the Kingly power of righteousnesse, and this is the power of Almighty God, ruling the whole creation in peace, and keeping it together. And this is the power of universal love, leading people into all truth, teaching every one to doe as he would be done unto. Now once more striving with flesh and blood, shaking down every thing that cannot stand, and bringing every one into the Unitie of himself, the one Spirit of love and righteousnesse, and so will work a through restauration. But this Kingly power is above all, and will tread-all covetousness, pride, envy, and self-love, and all other enemies whatsoever, under his feet and take the kingdom and government of the Creation out of the hand of self-seeking and self-honouring Flesh, and rule the alone King of Righteousness in the earth; and this indeed is Christ himself, who will cast out the curse; But this is not that Kingly power intended by that Act of Parliament to be cast out, but pretended to be set up, though this Kingly power be much fought against both by Parliament, Armie, Clergy, and people; but when they are made to see him, then they shall mourn, because they have persecuted him.

But the other Kingly power, is the power of unrighteousness, which indeed is the Devil; And O that there were such a heart in Parliament and Army, as to perform your own Act; then People would never complain of you for breach of Covenant, for your

Covetousness, Pride, and too much Self-seeking that is in you. And you on the other-side would never have cause to complain of the Peoples murmurings against you. Truly this jarring that is between you and the People is, The Kingly power; yea that very Kingly power which you have made an Act to cast out; therefore see it be fulfilled on your part; for the Kingly power of Righteousness expects it, or else he will cast you out for Hypocrites and unsavory Salt; for he looks upon all your Actions, and truly there is abundance of Rust about your Actings, which makes them that they do not shine bright. This Kingly power, is covetousness in his branches, or the power of self-love, ruling in one or in many men over others, and enslaving those who in the Creation are their equals; nay, who are in the strictness of equity rather their Masters: And this Kingly power is usually set in the Chair of Government, under the name of Prerogative, when he rules in one, over other: And under the name of State Priviledge of Parliament, when he rules in many over others: and this Kingly power, is alwayes raised up, and established by the Sword, and therefore he is called the Murderer, or the great red Dragon, which fights against *Michael*, for he enslaves the weakness of the People under him, denying an equal freedom in the Earth to every one, which the Law of Righteousness gave every man in his creation. This I say is Kingly power under darkness, and as he rules in men, so he makes men jar one against another, and is the cause of all Wars and Complainings; he is known by his outward actions, and his action at this very day fills all places; for this power of darkness rules, and would rule, and is that only Enemy that fights against Creation and National Freedom: And this Kingly power is he, which you have made an Act of Parliament to cast out. And now you Rulers of *England*, play the men, and be valiant

for the Truth, which is Christ: for assure your selves God will not be mocked, nor the Devil will not be mocked; for First you say and profess you own the Scriptures of Prophets and Apostles, and God looks that you should perform that Word in action: Secondly you have Declared against the Devil, and if you do not now go through with your work, but slack your hand by hypocritical self-love, and so suffer this dark Kingly power to rise higher and Rule, you shall find, he will maule both you, and yours to purpose.

The life of this dark Kingly power, which you have made an Act of Parliament and Oath to cast out, if you search it to the bottom, you shall see it lies within the iron chest of cursed Covetousness, Who gives the Earth to some part of mankind, and denies it to another part of mankind: and that part that hath the Earth, hath no right from the Law of creation to take it to himself, and shut out others; but he took it away violently by Theft and Murder in Conquest: As when our Norman *William* came into *England* and conquered, he turned the English out, and gave the Land unto his Norman Souldiers every man his parcel to inclose, and hence rose up Propriety; for this is the fruit if War from the beginning, for it removes Propriety out of a weaker into a stronger hand, but still upholds the curse of Bondage; and hereby the Kingly power which you have made an Act, and Sworn to cast out, does remove himself from one chair to another; and so long as the Sword rules over brethren, (mind what I say) so long the Kingly power of darkness Rules, and so large as yet is his Kingdom; which spreads from Sea to Sea, and fills she Earth; but Christ is rising who will take the Dominion and Kingdom out of his hand, and his power of Righteousness, shall rise and spred from East to West, from North to South, and fill the Earth with himself, and cast the other cursed power

out, when Covetousness sheaths his Sword, and ceases to rage in the field; he first makes sharp Laws of Bondage, That those that are conquered, and that by him are appointed not to enjoy the Earth, but are turned out, shall be Servants, Slaves, and Vassals to the Conquerers party: so those Laws that upholds Whips, Prisons, Gallows is but the same power of the Sword that raged, and that was drunk with Blood in the field.

King *Charles*, it is true, was the Head of this Kingly power in *England*, and he Reigned as he was a Successor of the last Norman Conquerer: and whosoever you be, that hath Propriety of Land, hath your Titles and Evidences made to you in his or his Ancestors Name, and from his and their Will and Kingly Power; I am sure, he was not our Creator, and therefore parcelled out the Earth to some, and denied it to others, therefore he must needs stand as a Conquerer, and was the Head of this Kingly power, that burden and oppresses the People, and that is the cause of all our Wars and Divisions; for if this Kingly power of Covetousness, which is the unrighteous Divider, did not yet Rule: both Parliament, Army, and rich People ', would cheerfully give consent that those we call Poor should Dig and freely plant the Waste and Common Land for a livelihood, seeing there is Land enough, and more by half then is made use of, and not be suffered to perish for want. And yet O ye Rulers of *England*, you make a blazing profession, That you know, and that you own God, Christ, and the Scriptures: but did Christ ever declare such hardness of heart? did not he bid the rich man go and sell all that he hath and give to the Poor? and does not the Scripture say, If thou makest a Covenant, keep it, though it be to thy loss: But truly it will not be to your loss, to let your fellow Creatures, your equals in the Creation, nay those that have been faithful in your Cause, and so your Friends; I say it will

not be to your loss to let them quietly improve the Waste and Common Land, that they may live in peace, freed from the heavie burdens of Poverty; for hereby our own Land will be increased with all sorts of Commodities, and the People will be knit together in love, to keep out a forreign Enemy that endeavours, and that will endeavour as yet, to come like an Army of cursed Ratts and Mice to destroy our inheritance; so that if this Freedom be quietly granted to us, you grant it but to your selves, to Englishmen, to your own flesh and blood: and you do but give us our own neither, which Covetousness, in the Kingly power hath, and yet does hold from us; for the Earth in the first Creation of it, was freely given to whole mankind, without respect of Persons; therefore you Lords of Mannors, and you Rulers of *England*, if you own God, Christ and Scripture, now make Restitution, and deliver us quiet possession of our Land, which the Kingly power as yet holds from us.

While this Kingly power rained in one man called *Charls*, all sort of people complained of oppression, both Gentry and Common people, because their lands, inclosures, and Copie-holds were intangled, and because their Trades were destroyed by Monopolizing Patentees, and your troubles were that you could not live free from oppression in the earth: Thereupon you that were the Gentry when you were assembled in Parliament, you called upon the poor Common People to come and help you, and cast out oppression and you that complained are helped and freed, and that top-bow is lopped off the tree of Tyrannie, and Kingly power in that one particular is cast out; but alas oppression is a great tree still, and keeps off the son of freedome from the poor Commons still, he hath many branches and great roots which must be grub'd up, before every one can sing Sions songs in peace.

As we spie out Kingly power we must declare it, and cast it out, or else we shall deny the Parliament of *England* and their Acts, and so prove Traitors to the Land, by denying obedience thereunto. Now there are Three Branches more of Kinglie power greater then the former that oppresses this Land wonderfully; and these are the power of the Tithing Priests over the Tenthhs of our labours; and the power of Lords of Mannors, holding the free use of the Commons, and wast Land from the poor, and the intolerable oppression either of bad Laws, or of bad Judges corrupting good Laws; these are branches of the Norman conquest and Kingly power still, and wants a Reformation.

For as the first, *William* the Conqueror promised, That if the Clergie would preach him up, so that the people might be bewitched, so as to receive him to be Gods Anointed over them, he would give them the Tenthhs of the Lands increase yeerly; and they did it, and he made good his Promise; and do we not yet see, That if the Clergie can get tithes or Money, they will turn as the Ruling power turns, any way; to Popery, to Protestantisme; for a King, against a King, for Monarchy, for State-Government; they cry who bids most wages, they will be on the strongest side, for an Earthly maintenance; yea, and when they are lifted up, they woud Rule too, because they are called Spiritual men: It is true indeed, they are spiritual; but it is of the spiritual power of Covetousness and Pride; for the spiritual power of Love and Righteousness they know not; for if they knew it, they would not persecute and raile against him as they do.

The Clergie will serve on any side, like our ancient Laws, that will serve any master: They will serve the Papists, they will serve the Protestants, they will serve the King, they will serve the States; they are one and the

same Tools for Lawyers to work with under any Government. O you Parliament-men of *England*, cast those whorish Laws out of doors, that are so Common, that pretend love to every one, and is faithful to none; for truly, he that goes to Law, as the Proverb is, shall die a Beggar: so that old Whores, and old Laws, picks mens pockets, and undoes them: If the fault lie in the Laws, and much does, burn all your old Law-Books in *Cheapside*, & set up a Government upon your own Foundation: do not put new Wine into old Bottles; but as your Government must be new, so let the Laws be new, or else you will run farther into the Mud, where you stick already, as though you were fast in an *Irish* Bogge; for you are so far sunke, that he must have good eyes that can see where you are: but yet all are not blind, there are eyes that sees you: but if the fault lies in the Judges of the Law, surely such men deserve no power in a Reforming Common-wealth, that burdens all sorts of People.

And truly Ile tell you plain, your Two Acts of Parliament are excellent and Righteous: The One to cast out Kingly power; The Other to make *England* a Free Common-wealth: build upon these Two, it is a firm Foundation, and your House will be the glory of the World; and I am confident, the righteous Spirit will love you: do not stick in the Bogge of Covetousness; Let not self-love so be-muddy your brain, that you should lose your selves in the thicket of bramble bush-words, and set never a strong Oak of some stable Action for the Freedome of the poor Oppressed that helped you when you complained of Oppression. Let not Pride blind your eyes, that you should forget you are the Nations Servants, and so prove *Solomons* words good in your selves, That Servants ride on Horse-back and Coaches, when as Princes, such as Chose you, and set you there, go on foot: and many of

them, through their love to the Nation, have so wasted themselves, that now they can hardly get Bread, but with great difficulty. I tell you this is a sore Evil, and this is truth; therefore think upon it, it is a poor mans Advice, and you shall finde weight in it, if you Do as well as Say. Then Secondly for Lords of Mannors, They were *William* the Conquerors Colonels and Favourites, and he gave a large circuit of Land to every one, called A Lordship, that they might have a watchful eye, that if any of the conquered English should begin to Plant themselves upon any Common or waste Land, to live out of sight or out of slavery, that then some Lord of Mannour or other might see and know of it, and drive them off, as these Lords of Mannors now a dayes, endeavours to drive off the Diggers from Digging upon the Commons; but we expect the Rulers of the Land will grant unto us their Friends, the benefit of their own Acts against Kingly power, and not suffer that Norman power to crush the poor Oppressed, who helped them in their straits, nor suffer that Norman power to bud fresher out, & so in time may come to over-top our deer bought Freedom more then ever.

Search all your Laws, and Ile adventure my life, for I have little else to lose, That all Lords of Mannors hold Title to the Commons by no stronger hold then the Kings Will, whose Head is cut off; and the King held Title as he was a Conqueror; now if you cast off the King who was the Head of that power, surely the power of Lords of Mannors is the same; therefore performe your own Act of Parliament, and cast out that part of the Kinglie power likewise, that the People may see you understand what you Say and Do, and that you are faithfull.

For truly the Kinglie power reigns strongly in the Lords of Mannors over the Poor; for my own particular, I have in other Writings as well as in this, Declared my

Reasons, That the common Land is the poor Peoples Proprietie; and I have Digged upon the Commons, and I hope in time to obtain the Freedom, to get Food and Raiment therefrom by righteous labour, which is all I desire; and for so doing, the supposed Lord of that Mannor hath Arrested me twice; First, in an Action of £20. Trespass for Plowing upon the Commons, which I never did; and because they would not suffer me to Plead my own Cause, they made shift to pass a Sentence of Execution against some Cows I kept, supposing they had been mine, and took them away; but the right owner reprieved them, & fetched the Cowes back; so greedy are these Theeves and Murderers after my life for speaking the truth, and for maintaining the Life and Marrow of the Parliaments cause in my Actions.

And now they have Arrested me again in an Action of £4. trespas for digging upon the Comons, which I did, & own the work to be righteous & no trespas to any: This was the Attorney of *Kingstone's* Advice, either to get Money on both sides, for they love Mony as deerly as a poor mans dog do his breakfast in a cold morning (but regard not justice) or else, That I should not remove it to a higher Court, but that the cause might be tryed there, and then they know how to please the Lords of Mannors, that have resolved to spend hundreds of pounds but they will hinder the poor from enjoying the Commons; for they will not suffer me to plead my own Cause, but I must not Fee an enemie, or else be condemned and executed without mercy or Justice as I was before, and so to put me in Prison till I pay their unrighteous Sentence; for truly Attourneys are such neat workmen, that they can turn a Cause which way those that have the biggest purse will have them: and the Countrie knows very well, That *Kingstone* court is so full of the Kinglie power; that some will rather lose their Rights, then have

their causes tryed there: one of the Officers of that court, told a friend of mine, That if the Diggers cause was good, he would pick out such a jurie as should overthrow him: And upon my former Arrest, they picked out such a jurie as Sentenced me to pay £10. damages for Plowing upon the commons, which I did not do, neither did any witness prove it before them: So that from *Kingstone* Juries, Lords of Mannors, and Kinglie power, *Good Lord deliver us.*

Do these men obey the Parliaments Acts, to throw down Kinglie power? O no: The same unrighteous doing that was complained of in King *Charls* dayes, the same doings is among them still: Monies will buy and sell Justice still: and is our 8 years Wars come round about to lay us down again in the kennel of injustice as much or more then before? are we no farther learned yet? O ye Rulers of *England*, when must we turn over a new leaf? Will you alwayes hold us in one Lesson? surely you will make Dunces of us; then all the Boyes in other Lands will laugh at us: come, I pray let us take forth, and go forward in our learning.

You blame us who are the Common people as though we would have no government; truly Gentlemen, We desire a righteous government with all our hearts, but the government we have gives freedom and livelihood to the Gentry, to have abundance, and to lock up Treasures of the Earth from the poor, so that rich men may have chests full of Gold and Silver, and houses full of Corn and Goods to look upon; and the poor that works to get it, can hardly live, and if they cannot work like Slaves, then they must starve. And thus the Law gives all the Land to some part of mankind whose Predecessors got it by conquest, and denies it to others, who by the righteous Law of Creation may claim an equall portion; and yet you say this is a righteous government, but

surely it is no other but self-ishness, which is the great Red Dragon the Murtherer.

England is a Prison; the variety of subtilties in the Laws preserved by the Sword, are bolts, bars, and doors of the prison; the Lawyers are the Jaylors, and poor men are the prisoners; for let a man fall into the hands of any from the Bailiffe to the Judge, and he is either undone, or wearie of his life.

Surely this power the Laws, which is the great Idoll that people dote upon, is the burden of the Creation, a Nurserie of Idleness, luxurie, and cheating, the only enemy of Christ the King of righteousness; for though it pretend justice, yet the Judges and Law-Officers, buy and sell Justice for money, and wipes their mouths like *Solomons* whore, and says it is my calling, and never are troubled at it.

Two things must cast out this Idoll: First, Let not people send their children to those Nurseries of Covetousness, *The Innes of Court*. Secondly, let not people live in contention, but fulfill Christs last commandment, *Love*; and endeavour to practice that full point of the Law and the Prophets, *Doe as you would be done by*, and so cast out envie and discontent. Woe to you Lawyers, for your trade is the bane and miserie of the world; your power is the only power that hinders Christ from rising; the destruction of your power will be the life of the World; it is full of confusion, it is Babylon, and surely its fall is neer, in regard the light of truth is rising, who will continue your power, but save your persons by the words of his mouth, and brightnesse of his coming.

The Lawyers trade is one of the false Prophets, that says, Lo here is Christ, Ile save you in this Court, and lo there is Christ, Ile save you in that Court: but when we have tried all, we are lost, and not saved, for we are either utterly made Beggars by this Saviour, the Law, or else

we are nursed up in hardnesse of heart and cruelty against our fellow creature whom we ought to love and preserve, and not destroy: This Saviour jeeres righteousness, and bids every man save himself, and never regard what becomes of another, and so is a plain destroyer of the Creation; Surely that Wo pronounced against Lawyers by the Man Christ must be fulfilled, delay is no payment: Therefore you Parliament and Army that have power in your hands, reform the Law; and suffer none to be called to practice Law but reformed ones; nay suffer every man to plead his own cause, and choose his own Lawyer, where he finds the most ingenuous man: Wel, every mans burthen in this Age fills their mouths with words of Lamentation against Law and Lawyers sufficiently; therefore you that have an opportunitie to ease the cry of the oppressed, shut not your eies and eares, but cast out this covetous corruption whereby corrupt Lawyers doe oppress the People; it is another Branch of the Kingly power.

You Gentlemen of *Surrey*, and Lords of Mannors, and you Mr Parson *Platt* especially, that lay almost a fortnight waiting and tempting the Lord *Fairfax* to send Souldiers to drive off the Diggers, when he granted your Desire, it was but to secure the Shereiff, for he did not give them commission to beat us, which we thank him for; and we thank the Souldiers for their moderation, that they would not strike poor wormes, *Englands* and the creations faithfull friends, though you would have moved them thereunto. My Advice to you Gentlemen is this, Hereafter to lie still and cherish the Diggers, for they love you, and would not have your finger ake if they could help it; and why should you be so bitter against them? Oh let them live by you, some of them have been Souldiers, and some countrie-men that were alwayes friends to the Parliaments cause, by whose

hardship and meanes you enjoy the creatures about you in peace; and will you now destroy part of them that have preserved your lives? O do not do so; be not so besotted with the Kinglie power; hereafter let not the Attourneyes or Lawyers neatly counsell your Money out of your purses, and stir you up to beat and abuse the Diggers, to make all rational men laugh at your folly, and condemn you for your bitterness: If you have yet so much Money give it not away to destroy men, but give it to some poor or other to be a Stock, and bid them go and Plant the common; this will be your honour, and your comfort; assure your selves you never must have true comfort tell you be friends with the poor; therefore come, come, love the Diggers, and make restitution of their Land you from them; for what would you do if you had not such labouring men to work for you?

And you great Officers of the Army and Parliament, love your common Souldiers, (I plead for Equity and Reason) and do not force them by long delay of Payment to sell you their deer bought Debenters for a thing of naught, and then to go and buy our common Land, and crown Land, and other Land that is the spoil one of another, therewith: Remember you are Servants to the commons of *England*, and you were Volunteers in the Wars, and the common people have paid you for your pains so largely, that some of us have not left our selves hardly bread to eat; and therefore if there be a spoil to be gathered of crown Lands, Deans, Bishops, Forrests Lands and commons, that is to come to the poor commons freely; and you ought to be content with your wages, unless you will denie Christ and the Scriptures; and you ought not to go and buy one of another that which is common to all the Nation; for you ought neither to buy nor sell other mens Proprietie by the Law of creation; for Christ gives you no such Warrant. As soon

as you have freed the Earth from one intanglement of Kinglie power, will you intangle it more, and worse by another degree of Kinglie power? I pray consider what you do, and do righteously: We that are the poor commons, that paid our Money, and gave you free Quarter, have as much Right in those crown Lands and Lands of the spoil as you; therefore we give no consent That you should buy and sell our crown Lands and waste Lands, for it is our purchased inheritance from under Oppression, it is our own, even the poor common peoples of *England*: It was taken from us, and hath been held from us by former conquests, whereof the Norman conquest was the last, which is cast out by yours and our joynt Assistance; therefore you cannot in Equity take it from us, nor we cannot in Equity take it from you, for it is our joynt purchased inheritance; we paid you your wages to help us to recover it, but not to take it to your selves, and turn us out, and buy and sell it among your selves; for this is a cheat of the Kinglie swordlie power which you hold up; and we profess to all the world, in so doing you denie God, Christ, and the Scriptures whom ye professed you own: for God, Christ, and Scriptures owne no such practice: Likewise we profess to all the Creation, That in so doing you rob us of our Rights; & you kill us, by denying to give us our livelihood in our own inheritance freely, which is the crown Land and Comon Land and waste Lands, Bishops & Deans, which some of you begin to say you are not satisfied in your conscience to let us have; I, well spoke tender hearted Covetousness; if you do so you will uphold the Kinglie power, and so disobey both Acts of Parliament, and break your Oath, and you will live in the breach of those Two Commandments, *Thou shalt not kill: Thou shalt not steal*; by denying us the Earth which is our Livelyhood, and thereby killing us by a lingring death.

Well, the end of all my Speech is to point out the Kingly power, where I spie it out, and you see it remains strongly in the hands of Lords of Mannors, who have delt discourteously with some who are sincere in heart, though there have some come among the Diggers that have caused scandall, but we dis-own their wayes.

The Lords of Mannors have sent to beat us, to pull down our houses, spoil our labours; yet we are patient, and never offered any violence to them again, this 40 weeks past, but wait upon God with love till their hearts thereby be softened; and all that we desire is, but to live quietly in the land of our nativity, by our righteous labour, upon the common Land which is our own, but as yet the Lords of the Mannor so formerly called, will not suffer us, but abuse us. Is not that part of the Kingly power? In that which follows I shall cleerly prove it is, for it appears so cleer that the understanding of a child does say, It is Tyranny, it is the Kingly power of darkness, therefore we expect that you will grant us the benefit of your Act of Parliament that we may say, Truly *England* is a Common-wealth, and a free people indeed.

Sire, Though your Tithing Priests and others tell you, That we Diggers do deny God, Christ, and the Scripture, to make us odious, and themselves better thought of; yet you will see in time when the King of Righteousness whom we serve does cleer our innocencie, That our actions and conversation is the very life of the Scripture, and holds forth the true power of God and Christ. For is not the end of all preaching, praying, and profession wrapped up in this action, (namely, *Love your enemies, and doe to all men, as you would they should do to you, (or this is the very Law and the Prophets.* This is the New Commandement that Christ left behind him. Now if any seem to say this, and does not do this, but acts

contrary, for my part I owne not their wayes, they are members that uphold the curse.

Bare talking of righteousnesse, and not acting, hath ruled, and yet does rule king of darkness in the creation; and it is the cause of all this immoderate confusion and ignorance that is in men.

But the actings of righteousnesse from the inward power of love, shall rule King of righteousnesse to the creation now in these later dayes, and cast the other Serpent and fiery Scorpion out; for this is Christ the restoring power: and as he rises up, so multitude of words without action (which is hypocrisie) is to die, his judgment hastens apace.

If any sort of people hold the earth to themselves by the dark Kingly power, and shut out others from that freedom, they deny God, Christ, and Scriptures, and they overthrow all their preaching praying, and profession; for the Scriptures declare them to be Hypocrites, Scribes and Pharisees, *that say, and do not*; they have words, and no deeds: Like Parson *Platt* the Preacher at *Horsley* in *Surrey*, a Lord of Mannor (by marriage) of the place where we digg, who caused a poor old mans house that stood upon the Common, to be pulled down in the evening of a cold day, and turned the old man, and his wife, and daughter to lie in the open field, because he was a Digger: and he, and other Lords of Mannors, and Gentlemen sent their servants up and down the Town, to bid their Tenants and neighbours, neither to give the Diggers lodging nor victuals., on pain of their displeasure. Though this Parson *Platt* preach the Scriptures, yet I'll affirm, he denyes God, Christ, and Scriptures, and knowes nothing of them; for covetousness, pride, and envie hath blinded his eyes. A man knowes no more of righteousness than he hath

power to act; and surely, this cruelty of preaching *Platt* is an unrighteous act.

If the Diggers were enemies, (oh you Lords of Mannors) as are not, you ought to love them: I am sure, they love you; a you doubt it, put them to the tryall; you shall find them more faithfull than many of those pick-thank slaves, and belly-god servants to whom your ears are open, when they bring tales full of envie to you against us.

We are told likewise, That to make us who are called Diggers odious, and to incense you against us, there came to the Generall and Councell of State, divers Justices, and others, and told you, that we Diggers were Cavaliers, and that we waited an opportunity, and gathered together to stand up for the Prince.

But all that know us can prove that to be a false report, to the dishonour of those justices; for we have been friends to the Parliaments cause, and so do continue, and will continue; for this work of digging, to make *England* a free Common-wealth, is the life and marrow of the Parliaments cause. And the two Acts of Parliament, the One, to cast out Kingly power, the Other, to make *England* a free Common-wealth, declares it: and we do obey those Acts, and will obey them, for they hold forth righteousness.

But for our rising in arms for the Prince, or any other, let any come and see our strength and work, and they will say, It is a meer envious slander cast upon us, to incense you against us.

Besides, You shall see by and by, That our principles are wholly against Kingly power in every one, as well as in one. Likewise we hear that they told you, that the Diggers do steal and rob from others, This likewise is a slander: we have things stollen from us; but if any can prove that any of us do steal any mans proper goods, as

Sheep, Geese, Pigs, as they say, let such be made a spectacle to all the world: For my part, I own no such doing, neither do I know any such thing by any of the Diggers. Likewise they report, that we Diggers hold women to be common, and live in that bestialnesse: For my part, I declare against it; I own this to be a truth, That the earth ought to be a common Treasury to all; but as for women, *Let every man have his own wife, and every woman her own husband;* and I know none of the Diggers that act in such an unrationall excesse of female communitie: If any should, I professe to have nothing to do with such people, but leave them to their own Master, who will pay them with torment of minde, and diseases in their bodies.

These and such-like tales, we hear, are brought to you, to incense you against us: but we desire you to mark them that bring them for we partly know who they be, and we can tell them to their faces, they were Cavaliers, and had hands in the Kentish Rising, and in stirring up that offensive *Surrey* Petition, which was the occasion of bloodshed in *Westminster-yard*, and they would rejoyce to see the Prince come in with an Armie to over-top you: for we know, they love you not but from the teeth outwards, for their own ends: And these are the proud *Hamans*, that would incense you against the *Mordecaies* of the Land, even our true-hearted friends, the Diggers. Well, in the midst of our slanders we rejoyce in the uprightness of our hearts, and we do *commit our cause to him that judgeth righteously.*

Upon these lying reports, and importunitie to the General, it seems the General granted the Lords of Mannor to have some souldiers to go along with the Sheriff, to pull down the Diggers houses; and so the souldiers did come: but they were very moderate and rationall men, and as they were sent to secure the Sheriff,

so they did: but there was no cause; for, though the Gentlemen possess'd the General, that they feared opposition from the Diggers, yet the souldiers saw they lifted not up a finger in discontent, but fought against those dragons, the Lords of Manors, with the spirit of love and patience: for when the two Lords of Manor sat among the souldiers on horsback and coach, and commanded their fearfull tenants to pull down one of the Diggers houses before their faces, and rejoyced with shouting at the fall; yet some of the Diggers stood by, and were very chearfull, and preached the Gospel to those Turkish *Bashaws*, which are words of life, and in time will prove words of terrour, to torment their awakened consciences.

And the poor tenants that pulled down the house, durst do no other, becuse their Land-lords and Lords looked on, for fear they should be turned out of service, or their livings; as a poor honest man, because he looked with a cheerfull countenance upon the Diggers (though he was affraid to come neer, or affraid to speak openly, lest his Landlords setting-dogs should smell the sound of his words, and carry a pick-thank tale, which his Lords ears are much open to) a Baily was sent presently to him, to warn him out of his house.

Can the Turkish Bashaws hold their slaves in more bondage than these Gospel-professing Lords of Manors do their poor tenants? and is not this the Kingly power? O you rulers of *England*, I pay see that your acts be obeyed, and let the oppressed go free.

And when the poor enforced slaves had pulled down the house, then their Lords gave them ten shillings to drink, and there they smiled one upon another; being fearfull, like a dog that is kept in awe, when his Master gives him a bone, and stands over him with a whip; he will eat, and look up, and twinch his tail; for they durst not laugh out,

lest their Lords should hear they jeer'd them openly; for in their hearts they are Diggers. Therefore, you Lords of Manors, if you have none to stand for you but whom you force by threatning, then leave off striving against the spirit, and say you are fallen, and come in and embrace righteousnesse, that you may finde mercy betimes.

The next day after this, there came two souldiers and three Country-men to another house which the Diggers had set up, (which the Sheriff the day before had let alone, for, as some say, he was grieved to see what was done,) one of these souldiers was very civill, and walked lovingly with the Diggers round their corn which they had planted, and commended the work, and would do no harm (as divers others were of the same minde) and when he went his way, gave the Diggers 12 d. to drink: but the other souldier was so rude, that he forced those three Country-men to help him to pull down the house, and railed bitterly: the men were unwilling to pull it down; but for fear of their Landlords, and the threatning souldier, they did put their hands to pull it down.

And seeing Parson *Platt* (the Lord of that Manor) will not suffer the Diggers to have a house, (wherein he forgets his Master Christ, that is persecuted in naked, hungry, and houselesse members) yet the Diggers were mighty cheerfull, and their spirits resolve to wait upon God, to see what he will do, and they have built them some few little hutches like calf-cribs, and there they lie anights, and follow their work adayes still with wonderfull joy of heart, taking the spoyling of their goods cheerfully, counting it a great happinesse to be persecuted for righteousnesse sake, by the Priests and Professors, that are the successors of *Judas*, and the bitter-spirited Pharisees that put the man Christ *Jesus* to death. And they have planted divers Acres of Wheat and Rye, which is come up, and promises a very hopefull

crop, committing their cause to God, and wait upon him, saying, O thou King of righteousness, do thine own work.

O that you would search and try our wayes narrowly, and see whether we deny God, Christ, Scriptures, as the Priests slander us we do; and you shall finde, that the Scriptures warrant our action, and God in Christ is the life of our souls, and the support of our spirits in the midst of this our sharp persecution from the hands of unreasonable men, who have not faith in Christ, but uphold the Kingly power, which you have Voted down.

Likewise, you shall see, that we live in the performance of that work which is the very life and marrow of the Parliaments Cause, whereby we honour the Parliament and their Cause: as you shall see by this following Declaration, unfolding the foundation whereupon *Englands* Laws are, or the Freedom of a Commonwealth ought to be built, which is Equity and Reason.

In the time of the Kings, who came in as Conquerors, and ruled by the power of the Sword, not only the Common land, but the Inclosures also were captivated under the will of those Kings, till now of late that our later Kings granted more freedom to the Gentry than they had presently after the conquest; yet under bondage still: for what are prisons, whips and gallows in the times of peace, but the laws and power of the sword, forcing and compelling obedience, and so enslaving, as if the sword raged in the open field?

England was in such a slavery under the Kingly power, that both Gentry and Commonaltie groaned under bondage; and to ease themselves, they endeavoured to call a Parliament, that by their counsels and decrees they might find some freedom.

But *Charles* the then King perceiving that the Freedom they strove for, would derogate from his Prerogative-tyranny, therupon he goes into the North, to raise a War against the Parliament, and took WILLIAM *the Conqueror's* Sword into his hand again, thereby to keep under the former conquered English, and to uphold his Kingly power of self-will and Prerogative, which was the power got by former Conquests; that is, to rule over the lives and estates of all men at his will, and so to make us pure slaves and vassals.

Well, This Parliament, that did consist of the chief Lords, Lord of Manors, and Gentry, and they seeing that the King, by raising an Army, did thereby declare his intent to enslave all sorts to him by the sword; and being in distresse, and in a low ebb, they call upon the common people to bring in their Plate, Moneys, Taxes Free-quarter, Excise, and to adventure their lives with them, and they would endeavour to recover *England* from that *Norman* yolk, and make us a free people: and the common people assent hereunto, and call this the Parliaments Cause, and own it, and adventure person and purse to preserve it; and by the joynt assistance of Parliament and People, the King was beaten in the field, his head taken off, and his Kingly power voted down; and we the Commons thereby virtually have recovered our selves from the Norman Conquest, we want nothing but possession of the spoyl, which is a free use of the Land for our livelyhood.

And from hence we the common people, or younger brothers plead our propriety in the Common land, as truly our own by vertue of this victory over the King; as our elder brothers can plead propriety in their Inclosures; and that for three reasons in *Englands* law.

First, By a lawfull purchase or contract between Parliament and us; for they were our Landlords and

Lords of Mannors that held the freedom of the Commons from us, while the King was in his power; for they held title thereunto from him, he being the head, and they branches of the Kingly power, that enslaved the people by that ancient Conquerors Sword, that was the ruling power: For they said, Come and help us against the King that enslaves us, that we may be delivered from his Tyranny, and we will make you a free People.

Now they cannot make us free, unlesse they deliver us from the bondage which they themselves held us under; and that is, they held the freedom of the Earth from us: for we in part with them have delivered our selves from the King: now we claim freedom from that bondage you have, and yet do hold us under, by the bargain and contract between Parliament and us, who (I say) did consist of Lords of Manors, and Landlords, whereof Mr. *Drake*, who hath arrested me for digging upon the Common, was one at that time: Therefore by the law of Bargain and Sale, we claim of them our freedom, to live comfortably with them in this Land of our Nativity; and this we cannot do, so long as we lie under poverty, and must not be suffered to plant the commons and waste land for our livelihood: for, take away the land from any people, and those people are in a way of continuall death and misery; and better not to have had a body, than not to have food and rayment for it. But (I say) they have sold us our freedom in the common, and have been largely paid for it; for by means of our bloods and money, they sit in peace: for if the King had prevailed, they had lost all, and been in slavery to the meanest Cavalier, if the King would. Therefore we the Commons say, Give us our bargain: if you deny us our bargain, you deny God, Christ, and Scriptures; and all your profession then is and hath been hypocrisie.

Secondly, The Commons and Crown land is our propriety by equall conquest over the Kingly power: for the Parl. did never stir up the people by promises and covenant to assist them to cast out the King, and to establish them in the Kings place and prerogative power; No, but all their Declarations were for the safety and peace of the whole Nation.

Therefore the common-people being part of the Nation, and especially they that bore the greatest heat of the day in casting out the oppressor: and the Nation cannot be in peace, so long as the Poor oppressed are in wants, and the land is intangled and held from them by bondage.

But the Victory being obtained over the King, the spoyle which is properly in the Land, ought in equity to be divided now between the two Parties, that is, Parliament and Common-people. The Parliament, consisting of Lords of Manors, and Gentry, ought to have their inclosure Lands free to them without molestation, as they are freed from the Court of Wards.

And the Common-people, consisting of Souldiers, and such as paid Taxes and Free-quarter, ought to have the freedom of all waste and common land, and Crown-land equally among them; the Souldiery ought not in equity to have all, nor the other people paid them to have all; but the spoyle ought to be divided between them that stay'd at home, and them that went to Warr; for the Victory is for the whole Nation.

And as the Parliament declared, they did all for the Nation, and not for themselves onely; so we plead with the Armie, they did not fight for themselves, but for the freedom of the Nation: and I say, we have bought our Freedom of them likewise by Taxes and Free-quarter: therefore we claim an equall Freedom with them in this Conquest over the King.

Thirdly We claim an equall portion in the Victory over the King, by vertue of the two Acts of Parliament, the One to make *England* a Free-Common-wealth; the Other to take away Kingly power. Now the Kingly power (you have heard) is a power that rules by the Sword in covetousnesse and self, giving the earth to some, and denying it to others: and this Kingly power was not in the hand of the King alone; but Lords, and Lords of Manors, and corrupt Judges, and Lawyers especially, held it up likewise; for he was the head, and they, with the Tything-priests are the branches of that Tyrannical Kingly power; and all the several limbs and members must be cast out; before Kingly power can be pulled up root and branch. Mistake me not, I do not say, Cast out the persons of men: No, I do not desire their fingers to ake: but I say, Cast out their power, whereby they hold the people in bondage, as the King held them in bondage. And I say, it is our own Freedom we claim, both by bargain, and by equality in the Conquest; as well as by the Law of righteous Creation, which gives the Earth to all equally.

And the power of Lords of Mannors lies in this: They deny the Common people the use and free benefit of the Earth, unless they give them leave, and pay them for it, either in Rent, in Fines, in Homages, or Heriots. Surely the Earth was never made by God, that the Younger brother should not live in the Earth, unless he would work for, and pay his Elder brother Rent for the Earth: No; this Slavery came in by Conquest, and it is part of the Kingly power; and *England* cannot be a Free Common-wealth, till this Bondage be taken away. You have taken away the King; you have taken away the House of Lords: Now step two steps further, and take away the power of Lords of Mannors, and of Tything Priests, and the intolerable oppressions of Judges, by

whom Laws are corrupted; and your work will be honourable.

Fourthly, if this Freedom be denied the Common people, To enjoy the Common Land; then Parliament, Army and Judges will deny Equity and Reason, whereupon the Laws of a well-governed Common-wealth ought to be built: And if this Equity be denied then there can be no Law, but Club-Law, among the people: and if the Sword must reign, then every Party will be striving to bear the Sword; and then farewell Peace; nay, farewell Religion and Gospel, unless it be made use of to intrap one another, as we plainly see some Priests and others make if a Cloke for their Knavery. If I adventure my life, and fruit of my labour, equal with you, and obtain what we strive for; it is both Equity and Reason, that I should equall divide the Spoil with you, and not you to have all, and I none: And if you deny us this, you take away our Propriety from us, our Moneys and Blood, and give us nothing for it.

Therefore, I say, the Common Land is my own Land, equal with my fellow-Commoners; and our true Propriety, by the Law of Creation: it is every ones, but not one single ones: Yea, the Commons are as truly ours by the last excellent two Acts of Parliament, the Foundation of *Englands* new righteous Government aimed at, as the Elder brothers can say the Inclosures are theirs: for they adventured their Lives, and covenanted with us to help them to preserve their Freedom: And we adventured our lives, and they covenanted with us, to purchase and to give us our Freedom, that hath been hundreds of yeers kept from us.

Daemona non Armis, sed Morte subegit Jesus.

By patient Sufferings, not by Death,

Christ did the Devil kill;

And by the same, still to this day,

his Foes he conquers still.

True Religion, and undefiled, is this, To make restitution of the Earth, which hath been taken and held from the Common people, by the power of Conquests formerly, and so *set the oppressed free*. Do not All strive to enjoy the Land? The Gentry strive for Land. the Clergie strive for Land, the Common people strive for Land; and Buying and Selling is an Art, whereby people endeavour to cheat one another of the Land. Now if any can prove, from the Law of Righteousness, that the Land was made peculiar to him and his successively, shutting others out, he shall enjoy it freely, for my part: But I affirm, It was made for all; and true- Religion is, To let every one enjoy it. Therefore, you Rulers of *England*, make restitution of the Lands which the Kingly power holds from us: *Set the oppressed free*; and come in, and honour Christ, who is the Restoring Power, and you shall finde rest.

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