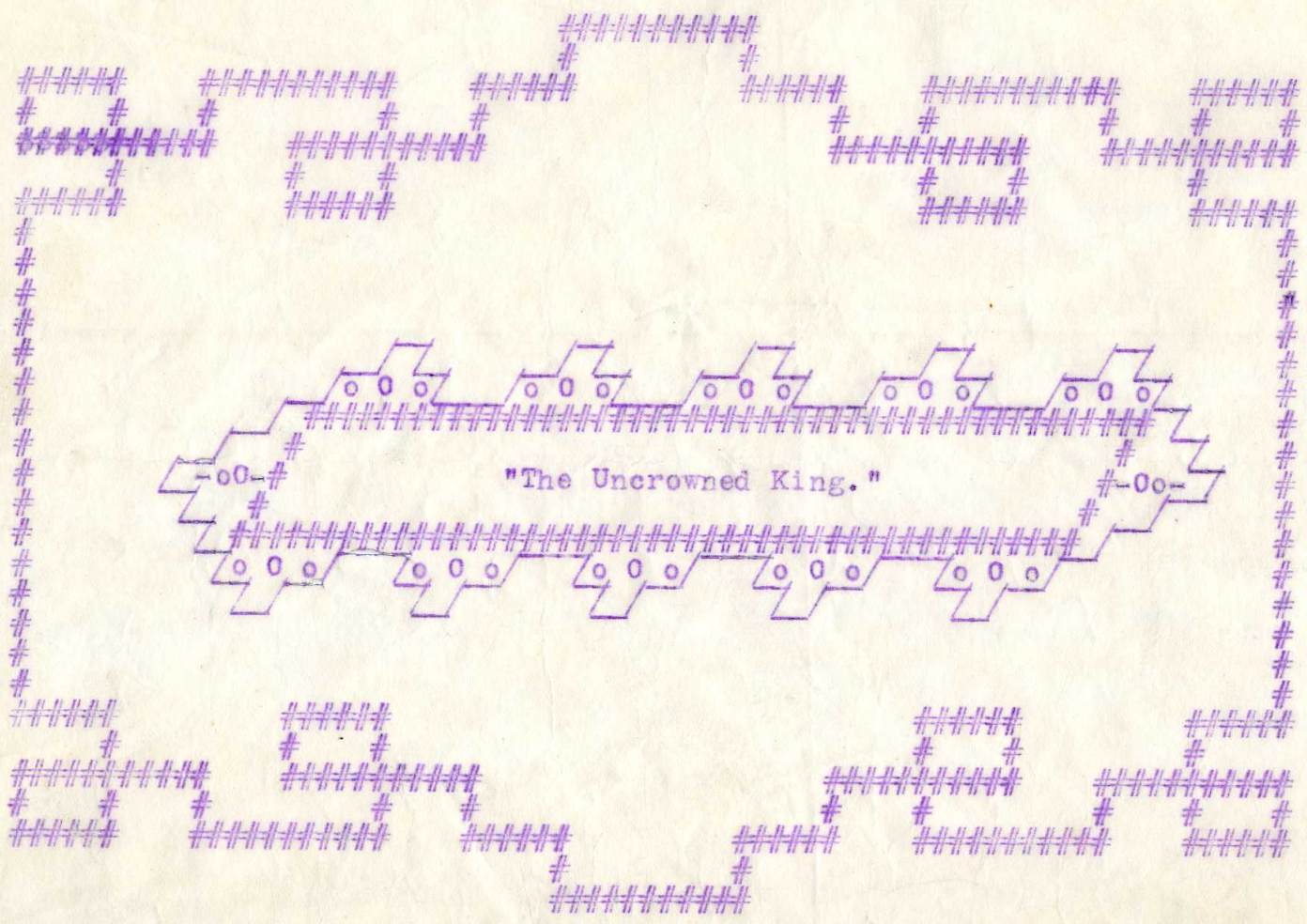


Jennie C. Hughes,
Medal Oration
Apr. 15th 98
University of Idaho.



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-----:"The Uncrowned King":-----
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The sailor standing on the deck of an ocean steamer watching the last faint speck of land melt away in the distance, as he lifts his gaze from the expanse of surging billows to the clear blue ether of the vaulted skies must receive as true and comprehensive a conception of the vastness of God's creation as is ever permitted to a soul hemmed in by human limitations.

And yet the sailor's span of vision, immeasurable as it seems, is but the veriest trifle of our universe and his degree of comprehension but a meagre estimate of the power and glory of the Omnipotent.

Like the boundless deep which the sailor views are the possibilities which human life may achieve and which have through all the ages stirred the soul of man and allured him onward to ever increasing attainments. This is found to be true in looking over the pages of ancient, mediaeval and modern history; in our perusal it is often observed, that in the lives of her great men, may be read the nation's history. Their deeds, like ether, pervading the inmost natures of their fellow-men, not only touch but tint them.

This is the result of their power of successfully grappling with the possibilities which are presented and of their consequent wide influence; yet every individual has his share in creating the conditions of his time, every individual wields his own sceptre "for weal or for woe" and cannot but leave his touch on the time in which he lives.

It was this great expanse of possibilities which led Oliver Cromwell, an obscure, industrious, common-place farmer, to assume the leadership of the Puritan Revolution and to become

finally the organizer and the energizer of the English Government.

Early in the seventeenth century there arose in England a great religious movement called Puritanism and England virtually became the people of a Book; a little later on, this great religious movement became a powerful factor in the House of Commons and religious strifes were prevalent throughout the realm.

Chas. I, then King, with no principle, and entirely lacking in all kingly attributes, was unable to avert the coming catastrophe.

The struggles of the Empire increased, every expedient for quelling the movement failed and the King was driven to accept the last resource.

He raised an army made up of the higher classes and the gay young men who disliked the Puritan strictness, and invested his nephew Rupert with almost kingly power, relying mainly on him for the protection of his kingdom.

For a time he was successful, everything went before the onslaught of the cavaliers, and now, flushed with his many triumphs, the King prepares for one more battle which is to end this strife forever. He stations his cavalry at the foot of a slight elevation and with his infantry on the right, awaits the Puritans. All is in readiness.

Hark! in the distance is heard the notes of a familiar hymn and sturdily marching onward is discerned a moving mass of humanity; they are the Ironsides - the plow-boys, apprentice lads and shop-keepers consolidated into the regiment of "Puritan Dragoons" under the indefatigable leadership of Oliver Cromwell. Nearer they come; the hymn has ceased; they fall into battle array, and now the fight begins.

Rupert charges uphill and the Puritan wing is utterly

routed, the center also slowly and stubbornly gives way, only the left flank remains intact. Who is the commander of this inexorable left flank, the man who has his troops so firmly under control? Both general and troops stand implacable. Will it too yield? No, a thousand times, No! These are the Ironsides, and they are fighting for "Liberty of Conscience", not for pay or princely favor. See! like the far-famed Macedonian Phalanx of old, these brave, honest, God-fearing men fall on the royalist infantry, drive Rupert's forces pell-mell from the field and win "Victory" for the Puritans.

The early life of the man who proved so great a general, is an example of determined effort; and the chief cause of his greatness in his latter life, was the long and laborious apprenticeship, covering the period of twelve years prior to his military career, spent on his farm in patient toil. During this time his great soul, limited by the narrow boundaries of a farmer's life, was given up to his strong religious convictions.

But, roused at last by the cry for English liberty, he offered himself, an avowed Puritan, as their champion, and with the Ironsides, men whose motto was "to praise God and keep their powder dry" was victorious everywhere.

Had Cromwell's history closed with the raising and disciplining of these men alone, it would have left a sufficient warrant of his greatness, but he led them on from victory to victory and showed himself to be such a strong, determined character, that at the end of his military career the people manifested their appreciation of his ability by bestowing upon him the highest position the English government afforded and in 1653 proclaimed him Lord Protector of the Commonwealth.

Under Cromwell's government England's dignity and glory were not only maintained, but were given an impulse that has had

much to do with her later development and progress. He worked for her welfare with all his heart, but having been offered the crown, like Julius Caesar, he refused it.

He corresponded to and matched his age more precisely and completely than any other man for he was responsive and equal to its emergencies, to its wants and requirements.

His self-development kept pace with the progress of events for as the exemplar of all nations is that one in which highest wisdom is united with complete self government, so the ideal man is he whose life is led to sovereign power by self knowledge resulting in self control.

The age in which Cromwell lived was great, great in opportunities and events and called for a great man; but among many who were ^{more than ordinary, who were} clear-sighted, true and patriotic, he was the one great man - great because he ^{was strong and wise - because he} had the mind to perceive and the will to do what necessity demanded. Filled with the revolutionary character of the age and its spirit working in him, his achievements became the marvels of its history, but when the extreme limit of revolution was reached and the inevitable reaction followed with characteristic promptness, he was more than ever the creature and creator of his age.

Two and a half centuries have passed since Cromwell's time, -- "And through the ages one increasing purpose runs, And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the Suns." Other men have risen to prominence since Cromwell's age, have contributed their share to the progress and development of the world and have passed away. The possibilities have widened with the scope of years, but has the world no further need of Cromwells and Ironsides? Ah Yes! had Cuba a Cromwell, the cruelties and the horrors of the regenerated Inquisition would not be employed by her oppressors in

torturing her patriotic citizens, her fertile plains would no longer be trampled under the heel of Spanish tyranny and her tiny children would not have to risk their young lives in warfare as they do now. Long ere this the Spaniards would have been forced to renounce their claim to the Queen of the Antilles, and the warm sea that laves her rocky shore would join her patriots in singing the anthem of the "Free".

Few of us may hope to become what the world calls great; our words and deeds may not direct the affairs of state, as did Cromwell's, but our influence may be felt.

To us, as to Cromwell, it is untiring labor that is presented to our ambitious eyes; "To do great things one must live as if one could never die." To be a Cromwell is to work as did Cromwell; to be a peer to those whose efforts have aided the onward march of truth and right means hard struggles, but well earned victories; the world has need of such.

Such was Cromwell, a veritable king though uncrowned, but his last words, "My work is done," impressively stamp upon our minds the fact that although a high degree of prominence may be attained in this life, "God alone is great."

Though Cromwell is dead, his achievements will live as long as English history endures. Future generations will not only think of him as the great man who contributed so much to the progress and development of England, but as the great general, in God's kingdom, who still leads the Ironsides on to new victories; not however for the Puritan alone but for the redemption of the world.