

A WELSH PLOTTER IN 1688: BISHOP LLOYD OF ST ASAPH

William Gibson

Oxford Brookes University

Abstract: The role of Bishop William Lloyd of St Asaph in the Revolution of 1688-9 has generally been seen as that of a mainstream Anglican bishop who sought unanimity with other Churchmen in response to James II's policies. The argument presented here is that Lloyd's role needs thorough re-evaluation because he was, in fact, a committed conspirator who actively plotted to be rid of James in 1688. In this account, Lloyd emerges both as a determined and committed conspirator and as one of the plotters of the revolution of 1688. He also strongly promoted the revolution in his diocese.

The role played by individual conspirators in the Revolution of 1688-9 continues to attract scholarly attention. This is, in part, because the debate on the nature of the Revolution remains unresolved: was it a coup d'état, a popular revolt, a national moment or a European invasion? The most recent publications leave room for further debate.¹ The role of the aristocracy, the clergy and popular opinion in ending James II's reign remains a subject of controversy,² while the European context, which established motives for the invasion of William of Orange beyond the immediate

¹ T. Harris and S. Taylor (eds), *The Final Crisis of the Stuart Monarchy: The Revolutions of 1688-91 in their British, Atlantic and European Contexts* (Woodbridge, 2013); S. Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (London and New Haven, 2009); R. Beddard (ed.), *The Revolutions of 1688* (Oxford, 2011).

² D. Horsford, *Nottingham, Nobles and the North: Aspects of the Revolution of 1688* (Hamden CT, 1976); W. Gibson, *James II and the Trial of the Seven Bishops* (Basingstoke, 2009); for popular involvement see: Pincus, *1688*; and W. A. Speck, *Reluctant Revolutionaries: Englishmen and the Revolution of 1688* (Oxford, 1988).

confines of Britain, is also important.³ The contribution of individuals to the process has been explored in some biographies, but in a period of heightened danger the instinct of bishops, clergy and laity was to act together for reasons of safety.⁴ This led to the view that there were pockets of conspiracy, and Speck detected four of these.⁵ There were also attempts by contemporaries to identify those who supported or opposed the king.⁶ However, the strong impulse to act collectively applied to Dissenters and Anglicans as well as spiritual and temporal peers;⁷ for example, during the 'three questions' campaign of 1687, respondents replied repeatedly to the king's blandishments about repeal of the Test Act and the penal laws that they would need to consult others, and, in the case of MPs, would have to consider them with the Commons as a whole.⁸ Consequently, the decision by individuals to act openly was rare and took considerable fortitude.

The role of Bishop William Lloyd of St Asaph in the Revolution of 1688-9 has generally been seen as that of a mainstream Anglican bishop who sought unanimity

³ Jeremy Black, 'A parliamentary foreign policy? The "Glorious Revolution" and the conduct of British foreign policy', *Parliaments, Estates and Representation*, 11, 1 (1991), 69-80; for which, also see: E. Cruickshanks (ed.), *By Force or By Default? The Revolution of 1688-1689* (Edinburgh, 1989).

⁴ J. Ferguson, 'Dynastic politics, international protestantism and royal rebellion: Prince George of Denmark and the Glorious Revolution', *English Historical Review*, 131, 550 (2016), 54-69. J. P. Kenyon claimed that the aristocracy suffered from 'something very like a paralysis of will' in 1688 in its inability to take independent action against the king. J. P. Kenyon *The Nobility in the Revolution of 1688* (Hull, 1963), p. 19.

⁵ Speck claimed that, in addition to the army 'Treason Club', there was a naval conspiracy, including a spy among James's courtiers reporting back to William Bentinck, and the 'immortal seven', who had clearly conspired: W. Speck, 'The Orangist conspiracy against James II', *Historical Journal*, 30, 2 (1987), 433-62.

⁶ D. Horsford, 'The peerage and the Revolution of 1688', *Parliamentary History*, 27, 2 (2008), 202.

⁷ It is clear that Lord Halifax and Lord Nottingham, as Tory opponents of James, consulted and collaborated in their replies to the king in 1688. H. Horowitz, *Revolution Politics: The Career of Daniel Finch, Second Earl of Nottingham, 1647-1730* (Cambridge, 1968), p. 39-41.

⁸ P. Walker, *James II and the Three Questions: Religious Toleration and the Landed Classes, 1687-8* (Oxford, 2010); G. Duckett, *Penal laws and Test Act. Questions touching their repeal propounded in 1687-8 by James II., to the deputy lieutenants and magistrates of the counties of Cumberland, Westmorland, Durham [etc.] ... from the original returns in the Bodleian Library* (London, 1882-83).

with other Churchmen in response to James's policies. Hart, as will be seen, emphasized Lloyd's leading role, but on a number of occasions stopped short from claiming that he was a conspirator. Hart equivocated about the degree to which Lloyd was involved in active individual resistance to James. McKenzie goes as far as to suggest that Hart did not understand the complexity of Lloyd's position.⁹ Lloyd's role as one of the seven bishops who was charged with sedition by James II has not attracted more attention than the other bishops. Of the bishops in 1688, Henry Compton and Jonathan Trelawny are thought to have been the most committed to the overthrow of James II,¹⁰ both of whom were in secret communication with William of Orange, and Compton was one of the 'immortal seven' who signed the invitation to William to come and rescue the nation in 1688. Spurr claimed that 'the only churchman who conspired against James was Compton'.¹¹ Lloyd appears to scholars to have been one of a number of Latitudinarians, like Stillingfleet, Patrick and Tillotson, who welcomed the revolution but seemed equivocal about a regency in the English Convention of 1689, which Mullett emphasised Lloyd's ambivalence towards James right up to 1687, although he describes him as 'one of the bishops' who opposed the king in 1687. While Mullett later conceded that Lloyd was defiant, he sees him in this regard as typical of the episcopal response to James, rather than as an exception.¹²

⁹ A. T. Hart, *William Lloyd, 1627-1717: Bishop, Politician, Author and Prophet* (London, 1952); A. McKenzie, *Conspiracy Culture in Stuart England: The Mysterious Death of Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey* (Woodbridge, 2022), p. 160.

¹⁰ E. Carpenter *The Protestant Bishop* (London, 1956); M. G. Smith, *Fighting Joshua: Sir Jonathan Trelawny, 1650-1721* (Redruth, 1985). However, Compton's suspension from his diocese meant that he felt limited in the role he could play with other bishops.

¹¹ J. Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646-1689* (London and New Haven, 1991), p. 101.

¹² R. Paley, *History of Parliament: The House of Lords, 1660-1715* (Cambridge, 2015), pp. V, 264-279, and Michael Mullett, 'Lloyd, William (1627-1717)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, May 2006,

The argument presented here is that Lloyd's role needs thorough re-evaluation because he was, in fact, a committed conspirator who actively plotted to be rid of James in 1688. The evidence that supports this conclusion is various but it includes the fact that he was in contact with William in 1688, and had probably been so for some years. He deliberately provoked James at a number of points in 1688 to more extreme action, including imprisoning the seven bishops. Moreover, he was an originator and propagator of the claims that James's son was the 'bedpan baby' and, therefore, not a true heir to the throne, while he conspired with Dissenters to deter them from collaborating with James and to persuade them not to take his grant of religious toleration at face value. In doing so, he revealed his knowledge of the extent of William's objectives in invading and that they went well beyond the aim of restoring Protestantism. He also seems to have used his influence with the bench of bishops to avoid compromises with James, favouring a decisive end to his reign and he mobilised opinion in his diocese to oppose James in 1688. In this account, Lloyd emerges both as a determined and committed conspirator and as one of the plotters of the revolution of 1688.

Much of the evidence discussed here has been known previously, but a great deal of it has been seen merely in isolation and has not been assembled to give a complete picture of Lloyd in 1681-9. Some of it was not used by either Hart or Mullett, such as

<https://doi-org.oxfordbrookes.idm.oclc.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/16860> (accessed 15 January 2024). In the *ODNB*, Mullett had limited space and therefore omitted many of the issues considered here, such as Lloyd's role in the bedpan baby rumour and his involvement with Dissenters.

Roger Morrice's comments, and other items were known but not utilised to the full to explore Lloyd's objectives. One of the problems with forming a clear view of Lloyd's motives and actions is that his position was often equivocal and he repeatedly misled people about his views. For example, in the space of two days in February 1689 he told Archbishop Sancroft that he would not swear the oaths to William III and then told Lord Clarendon that he would do so and tried to persuade him to do the same.¹³ One historian has suggested that Lloyd was 'circumspect and subtle - not to say quirky' in his views, while McKenzie argued that Lloyd 'was a complex figure who defies simple characterisation'.¹⁴ This is because Lloyd needed to disguise his views for his own safety. In January 1689, Edward Stillingfleet noted that when Lloyd attended meetings of the bishops who were deciding how to respond to the revolution, he 'doth meete with them ..., but he does not concur with them in opinion' and that outside the meetings he 'professeth himselfe to dislike their designe ...'¹⁵ In other words, Lloyd had a politician's antennae and knew how to manipulate events to his advantage.

I

Lloyd came from an unimpeachably loyalist family. He was of Welsh descent, though raised in Berkshire, where his father was a parson. Lloyd's father was

¹³ *The State Letters of Henry, Earl of Clarendon Lord Lieutenant of Ireland during the reign of K. James the Second: and his lordship's diary for the years 1687, 1688, 1689, and 1690. From the originals in the possession of Richard Powney, Esq., with an appendix from Archbishop Sancroft's manuscripts in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford, 1765), 2, pp. 324-5. Equally, Lloyd told Clarendon that he would not take part in the coronation of William and Mary on 11 March 1689, while a month later he was an active participant in the ceremony. *Ibid.*, p. 329.

¹⁴ Pincus, 1688, p. 420, McKenzie, *Conspiracy Culture in Stuart England*, p. 160.

¹⁵ S. Taylor (ed.), *The Entring Book of Roger Morrice, 1677-1691*, IV, *The reign of James II* (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 475.

repeatedly imprisoned in the 1640s for his support for the king. Lloyd graduated from Jesus College, Oxford, in 1642, was ordained a deacon in 1648 and a priest ten years later; he spent the interregnum in a gentry family and twice visited the exiled Stuart court in France. There is some evidence that Lloyd received Presbyterian ordination, which might explain his later sympathy for Dissenters and the long gap between his graduation and ordination.¹⁶ In 1660, his royalism was rewarded by appointment as a chaplain to Charles II, as well as a prebend of Ripon, the rectory of Reading, and Welsh livings in Llanfawr, Merionethshire, and Llandudno in Caernarfonshire. In 1672, he was appointed dean of Bangor and later became canon of Salisbury and prebendary of St Paul's. In 1676, he was appointed as vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields by the king and in London he came to recognise that there was some value in cooperation with Dissenters, rather than persecuting them.¹⁷

Lloyd's time at St Martin's coincided with the Popish Plot, which placed him at the centre of national events regarding the plot and the accusations that were made at that time. One of his parishioners at St Martin-in-the-Fields was Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey, who was friendly with Lloyd, and whose murder in October 1678 fuelled fears that Titus Oates's wild claims about a Catholic plot were true. His body, which Lloyd viewed, was discovered on 17 October with evidence of both strangulation and a sword wound. Godfrey's funeral was a remarkable set-piece event that was attended by a procession of seventy-two clergy and a congregation of over a

¹⁶ Plumptre claimed that Lloyd 'accepted a living from the Presbyterians at Oxford in 1654, and had satisfied the triers'. E. H. Plumptre, *Life of Bishop Thomas Ken* (London, 1889), 1, p. 305; Spurr, *Restoration Church*, p. 8.

¹⁷ Pincus, 1688, p. 430.

thousand. It has been claimed that Lloyd's funeral sermon on this occasion 'whipped Londoners into a frenzy' with claims that Jesuits were responsible for the murder,¹⁸ and Samuel Parker argued that Lloyd's sermon made him the 'founder' of the plot and all the ensuing troubles.¹⁹ The sermon was widely publicised and, years later, it was recalled that 'it was [given] out by or for the Papists that he [Lloyd] should be shot in the pulpit'. Edward Fowler, a friend of Lloyd's and later bishop of Gloucester, 'stood up with him' to provide an alternative target.²⁰ It was also claimed that in the pulpit Lloyd was accompanied by two burly parsons who were, in reality, there for his protection.²¹

McKenzie has shown how deeply equivocal Lloyd's position was during the plot. On the one hand, he condemned individual Catholics, but stopped short of denouncing the Catholic church as a whole. Lloyd's sermon was inflammatory and painted Godfrey as a Protestant martyr, yet he also called for calm. Lloyd seems to have believed in the complicity of the court and the Duke of York in the plot, but he was in contact with the Secretary of State over Israel Tonge's wild claims of a conspiracy to kill Charles II and had other contact with the government. In his shorthand correspondence with Roger L'Estrange, Lloyd hinted that he knew more about the murder than he could say and one possible interpretation is that Godfrey, like Lloyd, was committed to religious toleration at a time when this was a

¹⁸ Pincus, *1688*, p. 413. Lloyd's sermon was *A Sermon at the Funeral of Sir Edmund-Berry Godfrey* (London, 1687). See also C. Jackson, *Devil-Land* (London, 2022), p. 434.

¹⁹ Bodleian Library, Tanner Ms 32, f 173.

²⁰ Cornwall Record Office, G/1970/1, letterbook of Francis Gregor, 7 March 1738. I owe this reference to Dr Daniel Reed.

²¹ J. Pollack, *The Popish Plot* (Cambridge, 1944), p. 104.

dangerous viewpoint.²² Lloyd was also in communication with Charles II and seems to have kept some information secret which would have further inflamed the public. It also seems that Lloyd was charged by the Council with reporting on subversive activities in Reading in 1680.²³ During the Plot, Lloyd seems to have become acclimatised to the world of secret intelligence and conspiracy.

During the Popish Plot, Lloyd published an anti-papist sermon entitled 'God Keep England from your Bloody Religion' and he also went to the trials of those condemned in the Plot to try to get them to confess before execution, all leading to him being called 'virtually chaplain to the Plot'.²⁴ However, during the later Exclusion crisis in 1679 Lloyd preached a sermon at court in which he conceded that the Roman Church was a 'true church'.²⁵ His ambivalence about loyalty to monarchism and his anxiety about Catholicism was because he saw a conflict between the Anglican principle of indefeasible monarchy and the possibility of achieving religious toleration. Catholicism was opposed to religious toleration and Lloyd feared the consequences of a Catholic monarch.

Despite Lloyd's reputation for anti-Catholicism and advocacy of the strict suppression of Catholics, he attracted the approval of James, Duke of York by proposing toleration for those Catholics who would abjure the pope's infallibility. It was thought by some to be an attempt to force a wedge between different Catholic

²² McKenzie, *Conspiracy Culture in Stuart England*, pp. 19, 47, 73, 161, 188-9, 227.

²³ Mullett, 'William Lloyd (1627-1717)', *ODNB*.

²⁴ V. Slater, *Hoax, The Popish Plot that Never Was* (New Haven, 2022), pp. 155, 258.

²⁵ Spurr, *Restoration Church*, p. 122.

groups. In 1677-8, Lloyd was sent as chaplain to Princess Mary in Holland, after her marriage to William of Orange, to 'settle her chapel' in The Hague,²⁶ and some complained that Lloyd permitted Mary too much latitude in worshipping with Dutch Protestants.²⁷ He retained links with Holland and thus had opportunities to correspond with William of Orange. On his return to England, Lloyd was rewarded with the living of Llanefydd, in Denbighshire, and a prebend of the diocese of Llandaff, while in October 1680 he was appointed bishop of St Asaph. Charles II's motives for doing this were varied: he admired Lloyd's sermons and was possibly grateful for his discretion during the death of Godfrey, and perhaps also he hoped to win Lloyd over to the court.²⁸ Lloyd remained in favour with Charles, who in May 1682 asked him to hasten the collections in his diocese for the redemption of enslaved Britons in Algiers.²⁹

One of Lloyd's first sermons preached before the House of Lords advocated limited toleration for some Catholics, and his tract *Considerations Touching the True way to Suppress Popery* (1680) was also understood as supporting limited toleration. This probably misled the court into assuming Lloyd was a supporter of latitude towards Catholics. However, Lloyd was watchful and he appreciated the political realities of the day, as shown by the fact that in November 1680 he advised Archbishop Sancroft and Bishop Compton that their letters to Holland were being intercepted. He also

²⁶ In this role, he was succeeded by Thomas Ken, later bishop of Bath and Wells, and it was a point of connection between the two before they were in opposition to the King.

²⁷ Plumtre, *Life of Bishop Thomas Ken*, 1, p. 140

²⁸ Hart, *William Lloyd, 1627-1717*, p. 40.

²⁹ Bodleian Library, Tanner MS 36, fol. 244.

corresponded with Gilbert Burnet, his old friend and chaplain to William of Orange, in the 1680s.³⁰

The direction of Lloyd's own scholarly interests were revealed in a letter to the Catholic antiquary Thomas Price of Llanfyllin, to whom he described reading Geoffrey of Monmouth's history, which gave him pause to think about the nature of kingship and the role of bishops. He noted that in Geoffrey's history, 'they of Beverley were oppressed by the King's exactions, and that, by an edict of the King the chief pillars of the Church were driven forth'.³¹ From this it seems likely that Lloyd was beginning to see that a king who was in opposition to the Church would present a dilemma that could not be easily resolved.

Lloyd was a reforming bishop in St Asaph, as shown by the fact that he confirmed in Welsh, required improvements in performance and regular attendance from the clergy, recovered some of the bishopric's alienated estates, conducted regular ordinations, and demanded high standards of education and behaviour from the clergy. Unlike Bishop Humphrey Lloyd of Bangor, Lloyd of St Asaph also entered into discussions with Quakers and Presbyterians in his diocese and made no bones about his hope that he could win them back to the Church. The Quaker Richard Davies commented of him:

³⁰ Thomas Comber referred to Lloyd as Burnet's 'particular friend' and noted that they had collaborated on replying to some of his publications in the 1670s. T. Comber *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Thomas Comber DD* (London, 1799), p. 165. In November 1681, Lloyd recommended that the dean of Bangor, Humphrey Humphreys, should read Burnet's *History of the Reformation*. Bangor University Special Collections, Penrhos Estate Archives, PEN/7/1075.

³¹ J. Gutch, *Collectanea Curiosa; or Miscellaneous Tracts Relating to the History and Antiquities of England and Ireland, the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge and a Variety of Other Subjects* (London, 1781), 1, p. 266. For the use of excommunication as an electoral tool, see W. Gibson, 'Electoral religion in the reign of Charles II and the limits of the confessional state?', *The Historical Journal*, 51/1 (2008), 27-47.

Persecution was very sharp and severe in several Places about this Time, upon Account of Excommunication, and the Statute of 20^l. a Month. But this new Bishop [Lloyd] thought to take a more mild Way to work, by summoning all Sorts of Dissenters to discourse with him, and to seek to perswade them to turn to the Church of England.³²

Lloyd met Quakers at Llanfyllin in September 1681 and other Dissenters at Welshpool during his first visitation of the diocese, and undertook lengthy discussions with them which he continued in 1682. In general, the meetings were cordial and Lloyd tried to avoid prosecutions if he could.³³ In 1682, Philip Henry wrote to Lloyd asking for his clemency towards imprisoned Dissenters, and it was clear that the bishop had extensive links with them.³⁴ He was also happy to continue with the translation of the Anglican liturgy into Welsh.³⁵

On his appointment to the diocese of St Asaph in 1680, Lloyd had dined with John Howe, the leading Dissenter who had been ejected in 1662, when he asked Howe 'what he thought would satisfy the Nonconformists, so that they might be taken into the Church'. Howe was diffident and evaded an answer, but 'the Bishop pressed him to give his judgement ... for, says he, I would have the terms so large as to

³² *An account of the Convincement, Exercises, Services, and Travels, of that Ancient Servant of the Lord, Richard Davies* (London, 1710), p. 176. Later, Lloyd relieved Davies of imprisonment. *Ibid*, p. 185.

³³ Hart, *William Lloyd, 1627-1717*, p. 41; D. R. Thomas, *A History of the Diocese of St Asaph* (London, 1874), pp. 115-7. Lloyd was not alone in having friendly relations with Dissenters, and in Derbyshire in 1687 the Dissenters' relations were similarly warm, Bodleian Library, Tanner MS 29, f. 64.

³⁴ Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Eng. letters e. 29 fols. 2, 3.

³⁵ Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 30 fol. 3

comprehend most of them'. After Howe had discussed the matter, Lloyd said that he was in favour of removing the power of diocesan chancellors to prosecute dissenters, 'being the great hindrance of Reformation'.³⁶

Lloyd was aware that the dominant political forces in North Wales were Judge Jeffreys and the Duke of Beaufort, both of whom were supporters of James, and it is possible that he saw talks with Protestant Dissenters as a means to bolster the position of the Church there. It was unfortunate that the unrestrained Toryism following the Exclusion Crisis of 1681 and the Rye House Plot of 1683 meant that Lloyd's talks were set against a background of more prosecutions.³⁷ Lloyd sent Archbishop Sancroft a list of clergy who were preaching without licences in neighbouring dioceses – and were therefore likely to be Protestant Dissenters – but he said that there were very few in St Asaph. He also told Sancroft that he prosecuted Dissenters, but he proceeded against 'those that come to me for information' in 'a more leisurely way'.³⁸ He also suppressed a conventicle in Wrexham, a town in which there was also a number of Catholics, and appointed Jeffreys's brother as vicar of the town to secure it for the Church. Nevertheless, Lloyd warned the Dissenter Matthew Henry early in James's reign not to be fooled by James if he made an offer of toleration, saying that the king 'hates you

³⁶ *Memoirs of the Life of the Late Revd Mr John Howe, Collected by Edmund Calamy DD* (London, 1724), p. 72.

³⁷ Hart referred to this as forcing Lloyd 'to sing a very different song'. Hart, *William Lloyd, 1627-1717*, p. 47; Lloyd emphasised publicly that his aim had been to destroy Dissent and bring the Dissenters back to the Church.

³⁸ Bodleian Library, Tanner MS 35, f. 162. Lloyd also told Sancroft that he treated excommunicated Quakers and Catholics severely. Tanner MS 35, f. 190.

Nonconformists in his heart', to which Henry replied that he believed the king thought the same of the Anglicans.³⁹

II

On James's accession, Lloyd was aware of the effectiveness of the king's military response to the Monmouth Rebellion, writing to Sir Robert Owen of Llanfrothen in June 1685 that he thought it would be suppressed even before Owen received his letter.⁴⁰ He wrote an eyewitness account of the execution of the Duke of Monmouth that showed little sympathy for him.⁴¹ Yet Lloyd was repeatedly refused promotion by James. He was aware that he was discountenanced by the King, and in September 1685 he recommended a clergyman for preferment through the circuitous route of getting the Duke of Beaufort to suggest him to James.⁴² Around the same time, Lloyd had a conversation with Henry Compton, bishop of London, in which they discussed 'the present posture of affairs'. They agreed that the bishops needed to act unanimously and that no new laws were needed, which was code for a refusal to contemplate any change in the Test Act. They advised Archbishop William Sancroft not to invite the bishops to Lambeth 'in a troop' but to talk with them individually, perhaps with the aim of building a coalition.⁴³ Lloyd, drawing on his time as vicar of St Martin's-in-the-Fields, was also involved in conversations with leading London

³⁹ M. Henry, *The Life of the Reverend Philip Henry* (London, 1839), p. 169.

⁴⁰ National Library of Wales [NLW], Brogyntyn Ms 842; in the same letter Lloyd called the rebellion 'This mad attempt of these infatuated rebels.'

⁴¹ Bodleian Library, Rawlinson Ms 316 f. 149.

⁴² Bodleian Library, MS Eng. letters c. 29 fol. 87

⁴³ Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 31 fol. 52. It was for this reason that Lloyd was so annoyed by the series of deaths of bishops which opened the way for the king to make appointments which would break the unanimity of the bench. *Ibid*, MS Tanner 30 fol. 3

clergy, and Samuel Parker (who was a supporter of James) referred to him as 'president of a Trimmer cabal of London divines'.⁴⁴ He may also have been aware that some Quakers, including those in his diocese, were approaching Lord Powis in the hope that he would persuade the king to lift the penalties for failure to attend church and pay tithes.⁴⁵

Lloyd offended James by welcoming Protestant refugees from France into his diocese, following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes and he raised funds for them by use of a Church brief to the clergy of St Asaph. His ordination lists were replete with the names of Huguenots.⁴⁶ Lloyd also made open attacks on James's supporters, calling Bishop Samuel Parker of Oxford an 'amphibious-ambidextrous bishop',⁴⁷ and he even tried to persuade Archbishop Sancroft not to consecrate Parker, giving the archbishop various allegations about him that were 'too scandalous to be repeated'. However, Sancroft could see that a refusal on his part would lead to a writ of *premunire* to force him to consecrate Parker.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Bodleian Library, Tanner Ms 31, f. 173.

⁴⁵ *An Account of the Convincement, Exercises, Services, and Travels, of that Ancient Servant of the Lord, Richard Davies*, pp. 153, 168, 201-2.

⁴⁶ Lloyd also made the point that he had ordained a significant number of non-graduates, but 'of those graduates he has ordained many are less learned and are shamefully outdone by men that never saw the university'. He also saw his diocese as thriving: 'I am well assured that in these 6 counties there are not 6 persons fewer in the communion of our church than there were in the beginning of His Majesty's reign. All seems to be very sensible of the great blessing we have in our Primate.' Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 30 fol. 124.

⁴⁷ W. J. Smith (ed.), *Herbert Correspondence, The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Letters of the Herberts of Chirbury, Powis Castle and Dolguog, formerly at Powis Castle in Montgomeryshire* (Cardiff, 1968), p. 328. The most recent examination of Parker rescues him from Lloyd's attack, J. Rose, 'The ecclesiastical polity of Samuel Parker', *The Seventeenth Century*, 25, 2 (2010), 350-75.

⁴⁸ G. Burnet, *Bishop Burnet's History of the Reign of King James the Second. Notes by the Earl of Dartmouth, Speaker Onslow and Dean Swift* (Oxford, 1852), p. 163.

Lloyd's state of mind can perhaps be seen in a comment he made to Bishop Fell of Oxford in 1686 that he had resolved 'to suffer martyrdom' for the Church of England, if necessary.⁴⁹ By the middle of James's reign, Lloyd was seen as a bishop who was active in London and in talks with other bishops. He was aware of spies in his congregations, which suggested he was under government surveillance.⁵⁰

Nevertheless, when in London, Lloyd met Dissenters to emphasise to them the importance of Protestants standing together in the face of James's policies, which was a powerful theme in Lloyd's dealings with Dissenters.

Lloyd was also in touch with some of the people directly resisting James's policies.

In November 1687, he received a letter from an old friend, Thomas Smith, one of the fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford who had been ejected by the king for refusal to accept his nominee of a Catholic president of the college. Lloyd reassured Smith that he did not accept the validity of the king's actions. By May 1688 he even supported Smith's plan to go to the chapel of Magdalen College and conduct an Anglican service there, although he also advised Smith to take legal advice on it.⁵¹

Lloyd seems to have gradually built up a network of allies.⁵² In November 1685 he mustered the clergy of his diocese to greet Lord Clarendon as he passed through St Asaph on his way to Ireland, which, given Clarendon's firm Anglicanism, was seen

⁴⁹ Cornwall Record Office, G/1970/1, Letterbook of Francis Gregor, 7 March 1738. I owe this reference to Dr Daniel Reed.

⁵⁰ Paley *The House of Lords 1660-1715*, v, p. 267.

⁵¹ J. R. Bloxam (ed.), *Magdalen College and King James II, 1686-8*, Oxford Historical Society, VI (1886), pp. 214, 218 and 244.

⁵² Horsford emphasises the importance of the 'necessary level of trust' in 1688, which was built by social connection, D. Horsford, 'The peerage and the revolution of 1688', *Parliamentary History*, 27, 2 (2008), 214.

as a strong statement of his allegiances. He certainly used the 'very convenient' position of his house at St Asaph to entertain leading clergy and gentry and those passing to Ireland.⁵³ He was also careful to maintain correspondence with noted opponents of the king including Lord Herbert of Chirbury,⁵⁴ and he was even in contact with Edward Randolph in New England, who informed him about the king's policies in the colonies and the concern with which they were viewed by the Church.⁵⁵ By April 1688, he told Henry Dodwell: 'Now is the time to strike. It would be fatal to give the people's affections time to cool.'⁵⁶

III

James's two Declarations of Indulgence in 1687 and 1688 were intolerable to Lloyd, so much so that by May 1688 he was in the forefront of the bishops called to Lambeth by Archbishop Sancroft to respond to the second Declaration, which required bishops to ensure it was read in all pulpits in their dioceses.⁵⁷ In London, he stayed with Lord Clarendon, with whom he discussed the issue, and, in meetings at Clarendon's house with other bishops stiffened their reaction to the king. Lloyd also canvassed opinion among the London Anglican and Dissenting clergy.⁵⁸ On 18 May 1688, seven bishops met at Lambeth and drew up the petition asking not to be forced

⁵³ Samuel Weller Singer (ed.), *The Correspondence of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon and of his Brother, Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester with the Diary of Lord Clarendon from 1687-1690* (London, 1828), I, p. 197.

⁵⁴ Smith, *Herbert Correspondence*, p. 328.

⁵⁵ Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Tanner, 31 fols. 7-8.

⁵⁶ Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Eng. letters c.29, fol. 102. **This is an important assertion omitted by Hart.**

⁵⁷ It is clear that Lloyd did not object to the principle of royal declarations being read in the pulpits of his diocese because in April 1681 he had been careful to order Charles II's declaration asking for support for the Church and crown to be read in all churches in St Asaph diocese. SAL, MS 243, letter, 7 16 April 1681.

⁵⁸ Bodleian Library, MS St Edmund Hall, 10 fol. 142

to ensure that the Declaration was read in the pulpits of their dioceses. Lloyd's name appeared second on the petition after Sancroft's, and in Sancroft's absence (the primate claimed illness prevented him from travelling to Whitehall), Lloyd took the lead in taking the petition to the king and was determined to present it to the king in person that night. Having crossed the Thames, he left the other bishops at Lord Dartmouth's house and went first to Lord Middleton, the king's secretary, who was ill. He then found the Earl of Sunderland, who he asked to arrange the audience.⁵⁹ Macintosh described Lloyd as 'the boldest of their number' in his determination to present the petition,⁶⁰ whereas, in contrast, Hart claimed that Lloyd in this case adopted the 'usual careful diplomacy where royalty was concerned.'⁶¹

Lloyd was intent on provoking a confrontation with James at the meeting on the evening of 18 May. Some of the bishops, notably Thomas Ken, were as emollient as possible, deferring to the king and not challenging him. Even Trelawny, who like Lloyd and Compton, was secretly in contact with William, denied that the petition was a rebellion against the king. Turner said that they would die rather than rebel,⁶² but Lloyd went out of his way to argue that the king had based the Declaration on his claim to have the power to dispense with laws, which had been judged illegal by parliament.⁶³ This inevitably inflamed the king. Hart indicated that Lloyd was bold

⁵⁹ Singer (ed.), *The Correspondence of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon*, II, 480.

60

History of the Revolution in England in 1688: To which is Prefixed, a Notice of the Life, Writings, and Speeches of James Mackintosh (London, 1834), p. 249

⁶¹ Hart, *William Lloyd, 1627-1717*, p. 98.

⁶² W. Gibson, *James II and the Trial of the Seven Bishops* (Basingtoke, 2009), pp. 88-9.

⁶³ The detailed accounts of the interview with the king are taken directly from Clarendon's diary, and his source was Lloyd. Clarendon recorded that day 'this the Bishop of St Asaph told me when he came home'. *The State Letters of Henry, Earl of Clarendon*, II, p. 43.

in challenging James but also that he replied to the King 'pacifically',⁶⁴ but the challenge to the legitimacy of the dispensing power cannot be regarded as 'pacific'.

It seems likely that, after the audience, either Lloyd or Henry Compton leaked the petition to a printer, who published it the following day to the king's fury.⁶⁵ The anticipation that the embarrassment of publication of the petition would further anger the king certainly fits with Lloyd's provocative behaviour at the meeting and he also seems to have been responsible for a letter advocating that Anglican clergy should refuse to read the Declaration in their parishes. Both of these actions made James focus on prosecution of the bishops.

Lloyd returned to St Asaph, only to be called back to London to appear before the Privy Council in June 1688. At that meeting, Lloyd again deliberately inflamed the king by insisting that the bishops had the right not to incriminate themselves by answering the Council's questions.⁶⁶ He said:

⁶⁴ Hart, *William Lloyd, 1627-1717*, pp. 99-100.

⁶⁵ A number of authors have discussed who might have deliberately leaked the petition. For example, Tindal Hart claimed that Lloyd probably did not have time to leak it (Hart, *William Lloyd 1627-1717*, p. 100), while Carpenter was convinced that it was Compton who leaked the petition to a printer, though he commented: 'the Bishop of St Asaph might have desired such publicity.' (Carpenter, *Protestant Bishop*, p. 117). Strickland commented: 'The circumstance of Lloyd's secret league with the Prince of Orange, and his own intimate acquaintance with all the business of the press, renders it extremely probable that he was the party who caused the petition, together with a circumstantial detail of what passed between the bishops and their sovereign in the privacy of the royal closet, to be printed and hawked through the streets of London and Westminster at midnight, which so highly incensed the king.' (Strickland, *The Lives of the Seven Bishops*, p. 348). Moreover, the number of copies of the petition in Lloyd's handwriting in the Tanner Mss in the Bodleian Library and the National Library of Wales is suggestive (Gibson, *James II and the Trial of the Seven Bishops*, pp. 90-1). Carswell also supports the idea that Lloyd leaked the petition, since Clavell, the printer of the leaked petition, was known to Lloyd and was used by him for printing (J. Carswell, *The Descent on England: A Study of the English Revolution of 1688 and its European Background* (London, 1969), p. 139). Sancroft claimed to have taken every precaution against publication of the petition, Plumpton, *Life of Ken*, 1, p. 309.

⁶⁶ Lloyd said: 'all divines of all Christian churches agree in this, and no man in our circumstances is obliged to answer any such questions'. Singer (ed.), *The Correspondence of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon*, II, p. 481.

such was the constitution and clemency of his Majesties lawes and Government that no Subject was bound to accuse himselfe, but if it might not be brought into Judgement against them, if his Majestie pleased to command them they would not only tell him whether those were their hands or no, but the whole Narrative, and the very seacrets of their hearts.⁶⁷

Lloyd was also determined to refuse the offer of bail, forcing James to gaol the bishops. James clearly did not want to imprison the bishops, in fact he said as much to them, while referring to bail he said: 'I would not have you refuse it'. But Lloyd replied that the King must

leave it to him [Lloyd] whether he will accept it or no; and you do not expect he should accept it to his own prejudice. We conceive that the entering into recognizance may be prejudicial to us; and therefore we hope your Majesty will not be offended at our declining it.⁶⁸

Lloyd's position forced James to imprison the bishops and it seems difficult to conclude other than that this was Lloyd's goal. According to Lord Clarendon, even Lord Chancellor Jeffreys said the King was resolved 'to let the business fall', but something changed his mind. Possibly it was Lloyd's intransigence.⁶⁹ Later, James

⁶⁷ *The Entering Book of Roger Morrice, 1677-1691, IV*, p. 276. This is not mentioned by Mullett.

⁶⁸ Quoted in Hart, *William Lloyd, 1627-1717*, p. 106.

⁶⁹ Singer (ed.), *The Correspondence of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon*, II, p. 177.

told Lord Huntington that if he had known how far the issue would go he would not have insisted on the reading of the Declaration in the churches.⁷⁰

By the time he was imprisoned, Lloyd was already aware of William of Orange's invasion plans and he was in contact with the prince's supporters.⁷¹ He had been 'long and secretly' in contact with William through the mediation of his brother in law, Jonathan Blagrove, who had been chaplain to Princess Mary for five years after Lloyd left The Hague.⁷² Lloyd was remarkably sanguine about imprisonment, saying that it would lead to the 'happiest results' and he urged Archbishop Sancroft to be cheerful.⁷³ The reason for Lloyd's buoyancy was revealed to Henry Wharton, Sancroft's chaplain, who made a note of a conversation before the trial on 25 June, in which Lloyd said:

that the Papists had by their injustice and tyranny so exasperated the minds of the people in general, that the latter would soon drive them out of England and banish, or perhaps destroy the King himself, since it was impossible for Popery to reign in England above a year, and that a wonderful change of things was

⁷⁰ A. Browning (ed.), *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby* (Glasgow, 1936), p. 499.

⁷¹ Burnet, *Bishop Burnet's History of the Reign of King James the Second*, p. 431.

⁷² Strickland, *The Lives of the Seven Bishops*, p. 331. Lloyd wrote to Sancroft of Blagrove: 'Both while he was there [Holland], and since his coming away, her Royal Highness has written several letters in his behalf to the Bishop of London, to my Lady Clarendon, and to the Earl of Rochester.' Bodleian Library, Oxford, Tanner MS, 30, f. 24.

⁷³ Hart, *William Lloyd 1627-1717*, p. 103. That Lloyd was in touch with William is also indicated in G. H. Jones, *Convergent Forces: Immediate Causes of the Revolution of 1688 in England* (Ames, Iowa, 1990), p. 145. Lloyd also told Dodwell in exultant terms of 'the welcome into the Tower church at this morning prayer was with the 44th Psalm ["Through you we push back our enemies; through your name we trample our foes. but you give us victory over our enemies, you put our adversaries to shame."], and our lesson out of the Gospel was that which I hope we shall never forget; "That God may make us able to practise it again and again I beg your prayers"'. Bodleian Library Oxford, MS St. Edmund Hall, 10 fol. 3, 9 June 1688.

approaching. He then said, that if himself and his brethren should escape the present rage of the Papists, they were resolved to use their utmost endeavours to purge the Church from all corruptions, to procure the admission of the sober and pious Dissenters into the church, a thing so much wish'd for; to relieve even those, who were obstinate, by abolishing the penal laws.⁷⁴

While Lloyd was in the Tower he was visited by Richard Davies, one of the Quakers with whom Lloyd had developed friendly relations, who had a meeting house at Cloddiau Cochion, Welshpool. In 1681, Davies, thinking about his own circumstances, had asked Lloyd 'what if another Prince should arise, that would impose something upon him that he could not do for conscience sake?' Now, in 1688, Davies asked Lloyd about the changed circumstances. Lloyd said that he recalled his earlier conversation with Davies, and that the king's Declaration was 'arbitrary, and not according to law and it was a matter of conscience to them [the bishops],' adding: 'others were to have liberty by it [the bishops' prosecution]', including Protestant Dissenters. Davies did not hold back in pointing out to Lloyd that just as Anglicans had persecuted Dissenters, so now Catholics were threatening to persecute the Church of England. Lloyd replied that the bishops 'did not consider or know it then, as they did now'. It seems as if James's reign had effected a further change in Lloyd's attitude to the Dissenters.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ T. Birch, *The Life of John Tillotson, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury* (London, 1753), pp. 155-6

⁷⁵ *An Account of the Convincement ... Richard Davies*, pp. 241-2. Roger Morrice said that Lloyd's comments that he had not persecuted Dissenters was false, 'for they had all countenanced it, and some of them had been actually engaged in it, as particularly the Bishop of St. Asaph, though he saith he did not prosecute dissenters, but only kept them under instruction, which by the Common law they might, but his instruction was very severe discipline'. *The Entering Book of Roger Morrice, 1677-1691*, IV, p. 292. Neither Hart nor Mullett consider this matter.

Lloyd was aware of the potency of the image of Anglican bishops being imprisoned in the Tower of London. On 9 June, he wrote to the scholar Henry Dodwell, emphasising how swiftly the king had acted against the bishops and asking him to pray for the Church, 'in whose cause we suffer imprisonment and are to expect much more'.⁷⁶ Lloyd was also one of the favourites of the London mob, which cheered especially loudly when he appeared in public, perhaps remembering his time as a London parson. On 15 June, Clarendon saw Lloyd at Westminster (having just been released before the trial) in what seems to have been a deliberate piece of popular promotion: 'I found the Bishop of St Asaph in the midst of a crowd, the people thinking it a blessing to kiss ... the bishop's hands or garments.' To get away from the pursuing crowds, Clarendon's coach had to drive through the park.⁷⁷ Lloyd prepared carefully for his trial. He sent his chaplain to safety to Lord Herbert of Chirbury, 'not knowing how the King may deal with him', and so that he could tell Herbert 'all he would know'.⁷⁸ Lloyd's prepared speech, which in the end was not delivered, was a remarkable defence of the bishops' position and emphasised how loyal they were to a king who had 'laden' them with accusations. He argued that the bishops had been loyal to Charles II and that the petition could not be seditious. Moreover, he shifted the blame for the petition onto the king, saying they did not petition the King 'until [they] were forced to it' by the requirement to read the Declaration in churches. The Declaration, he asserted, 'contain'd a toleration that

⁷⁶NLW Plas-yn-Cefn Papers, Ms 2939.

⁷⁷Singer (ed), *The Correspondence of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon*, ii, p. 177.

⁷⁸Smith, *Herbert Correspondence*, p. 340.

we could not approve; that actually took away all legal establishment of our Church', further claiming that 'they would have roared at it in any Church of the Roman communion'. At the end of the address he made a key point, saying that the trial was not solely about the seven bishops, but rather that 'the consequence of it extends to the whole Church and Kingdom ... The happiness of this and future ages depend upon it.'⁷⁹ It was a remarkable statement of the bishops' defence but also of the wider political issues; Lloyd seemed to be asking the jury to rule on James's political agenda and method of governing. Nevertheless, Lloyd was cautious in public. In the summer of 1688, Lord Nottingham, who had also been wrestling with the issue of whether to openly oppose James, posed a hypothetical question to Bishop Lloyd and Edward Stillingfleet: could he 'in conscience endeavour to oppose by force a manifest design of destroying our religious and civil rights and liberties ...'. They answered that he could not.⁸⁰ It might be that Lloyd did not know whether he could trust Nottingham (a very firm Tory loyalist), with his genuine views on resistance to James.

After the bishops' acquittal, Lloyd returned to Wales, where he conducted a diocesan visitation and ordered his clergy to undertake parish perambulations, which were very public expressions of the 'ownership' of each parish by the Church.⁸¹ He also made a point of emphasising the united front of Protestants

⁷⁹ Gutch, *Collectanea Curiosa*, I, pp. 369-374. This is not discussed in Mullett or Hart.

⁸⁰ Quoted in H. Horowitz, *Revolution Politicks: The Career of Daniel Finch, Second Earl of Nottingham, 1647-1730* (Cambridge, 1968), p. 53. Of course, it is possible that Lloyd was being circumspect, not being sure of Nottingham's loyalties.

⁸¹ Hart, *William Lloyd, 1627-1717*, p. 85.

against a Catholic threat, his aim also being to block the actions of Catholic missionaries and to discuss with the king's opponents the anticipated elections to parliament. Lloyd had meetings with gentry who were inclined to oppose the king and maintained secret communication with those who were actively moving against James. He also informed both the Quakers and Presbyterian leaders in north Wales that William of Orange was planning an invasion, his goal being to prevent them from being lured into supporting James by promises of religious toleration.⁸²

One of the strongest pieces of evidence of Lloyd's involvement in the plotting of the revolution comes from these conversations. Edmund Calamy reported that:

Dr Lloyd, Bishop of St Asaph, passing through Oswestry in Salop, sent for Mr James Owen the dissenting minister of that town, and entered into great freedom in conversing with him about the great danger of the Protestant Religion. He ventured to acquaint him with the secret ('till then unknown to him) of the invitation sent to the Prince of Orange, by many lords and gentlemen, of which he owned himself to be one. And he freely expressed his hope that the Protestant Dissenters would readily concur for promoting the common interest, adding these remarkable words: You and we are brethren: we have indeed been angry brethren, but we have seen our folly; and are

⁸² Hart, *William Lloyd, 1627-1717*, p. 52.

resolved if we ever have it in our power again to show that we treat you as brethren.⁸³

This was an extraordinary statement. Not only had Lloyd divulged the secret of the invitation to William of Orange, he had also indicated that he had joined it, and he seemed to suggest that a new regime would bring in the toleration of Protestants. This seems remarkably close to what Lloyd had said previously to Henry Wharton, but of course the removal of James required Dissenters to be complicit, and not misled, into accepting his offer of religious toleration.

It was not an isolated incident. When he visited Welshpool during the same visitation of his diocese, Lloyd met Richard Davies again. He pointedly said, in front of the assize judges, deputy lieutenant, magistrates and clergy, that he was more beholden to Davies 'than all the men in his diocese', because he had visited him in the Tower. After they had dined together, Lloyd and Edward Vaughan of Llangedwyn, the Tory MP and high sheriff of Montgomeryshire, took Davies aside and discussed the reports of William of Orange's planned invasion, which, wrote Davies, 'was [a] great satisfaction to the Bishop, for he said there were some that prosecuted him very close for his life', continuing that 'when the Prince of Orange was made King of England and Liberty of Conscience was established, he and others

⁸³ E. Calamy, *A Continuation of the Account of the Ministers, Lecturers, Masters and Fellows of Colleges, and Schoolmasters, who Were Ejected and Silenced After the Restoration in 1660, by Or Before the Act for Uniformity* (London, 1727), p. xxxi. Certainly, after the revolution Lloyd was a strong supporter of an expansive plan of both comprehension and toleration towards dissenters; Horowitz, *Revolution Politicks*, p. 100.

were well satisfied with it'.⁸⁴ This was an extraordinary and startling comment. Lloyd knew that William of Orange was coming to take the throne not to act as regent or to correct James's rule (or to restore the Church, as he publicly claimed), but to become king. Tindal Hart minimised this interaction as simply telling Davies of 'some reports of the coming of the Prince of Orange', but this was not the significance of Lloyd's comment.⁸⁵ Lloyd's statement was clearly intended to convince Davies that a new reign would bring relief, and to ensure that he and other Dissenters would not be misled into supporting James.

Further evidence of Lloyd's promotion of opposition to James is found in John Stevens's journal in 1688.⁸⁶ Stevens, a committed supporter of the king and a Catholic, regarded Lloyd as one of the 'seven champions of Satan'⁸⁷ and wrote of him as follows:

Dr Lloyd, Bishop of St. Asaph, took his progress through that part of the country where I was then employed, and it was most manifestly to be seen that every town he passed through received from him the infection he came to spread, and all sorts of people sucked in the poison so greedily, that the country which before laboured under but some small symptoms of sedition,

⁸⁴ *An Account of the Convincement ... Richard Davies*, pp. 242-3. Remarkably, Davies then showed how in the remainder of his visitation, Lloyd sought to restrain churchwardens from prosecuting Quakers and other Dissenters. His reputation for enjoying the bishop's friendship was such that he was not troubled again about tithe payments (*ibid.*, p. 245). Lloyd even wrote to other bishops on Davies's behalf to relieve other Quakers (*ibid.*, p. 247). It was an arrangement that Lloyd continued even at Worcester (*ibid.*, p. 256).

⁸⁵ Hart, *William Lloyd, 1627-1717*, p. 44.

⁸⁶ The observations of John Stevens are not mentioned in either Hart *William Lloyd, 1627-1717*, or Mullett.

⁸⁷ R. H. Murray (ed.), *The Journal of John Stevens, Containing a Brief Account of the War in Ireland, 1689-1691* (Oxford, 1912), p. 5.

and could easily have been recovered, was now grown drunk with rebellion, and swelled to that height with the venomous contagion, that no antidotes were of strength enough to restore it. It was, *immedicahile vuluus, ense reddendum*, [only to be cured by cutting off the infected parts],⁸⁸ to prevent the sound from partaking in the contagion.⁸⁹

Stevens was not alone in spotting what Lloyd was doing. Sir William Williams wrote to his old enemy Lord Jeffreys on 16 September regarding the prospects of any electoral success for the king in north Wales, which he dismissed as damaged by the ‘speeches, advices, consults and discourses’ that Bishop Lloyd had engaged in during his visitation of his diocese.⁹⁰

By 7 October, Lloyd returned to London, but he stayed away from meetings at which some bishops were seeking concessions from James. Clarendon found this odd, and he told Lloyd ‘what had passed between the King and the bishops’, which, Clarendon said, ‘I hoped would have a good effect.’ Lloyd’s response took Clarendon aback: ‘he said he was very pleased he was not here, for he had no mind to go to the King.’ Clearly, Lloyd saw no value in compromising with the king at this stage. His only collective involvement with the other bishops was in their petition to demand James to call a free parliament. Like his actions in June 1688, this act cannot be seen as other than provocative and antagonistic to James, who peremptorily

⁸⁸ A quotation from Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, I, 190–1.

⁸⁹ Murray, *The Journal of John Stevens*, p. 5.

⁹⁰ NLW, MS 11020E.

rejected it. John Dalrymple made clear that the bishops were genuinely attached to James as king, 'with the exception of Lloyd of St Asaph'.⁹¹

IV

By late October, James became exercised by the rumours that his son was supposititious, and that he was referred to as the 'bedpan baby'. He called the witnesses to the birth to Whitehall to swear what they had seen. Lloyd was already colluding with Gilbert Burnet in Holland to spread rumours that the baby was a fraud⁹² 'and had the most perfect collection in England of the numerous tracts written on the subject'. Moreover, it seems he may have contributed one or more of these himself under a pseudonym.⁹³ Lloyd was also keen to prevent Archbishop Sancroft from cooperating with James on establishing the authenticity of the birth and he reminded Sancroft that he could claim deafness as an excuse not to accept the evidence of the birth. Lloyd further stated:

It would seem by the calling of you thither that there is likely to be dispute concerning the birth of the child and whensoever the matter comes to be tried you are like to be the judge. But if the judges are called to set their hands to an examination of witnesses *ex parte* before the cause comes to be heard it is a

⁹¹ J. Dalrymple, *Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland from the Dissolution of the Last Parliament of Charles II, until the Sea-battle off La Hogue* (London, 1771), p. 261.

⁹² T. E. S. Clarke and H. C. Foxcroft *A Life of Gilbert Burnet ... with an Introduction by C.H. Firth* (Cambridge 1907), p. 254.

⁹³ 'Life of Bishop Lloyd', Society of Antiquaries of London, MS 243, 'Letters of a Welsh Bishop, 1680-1684'.

strange kind of preoccupation that would make all the world of the plaintiff's side and be rather a prejudice than an advantage to the cause.⁹⁴

This seemed to be an attempt to wreck the King's plan to endorse the legitimacy of his son.⁹⁵ McKenzie pointed out that Lloyd realised that the 'bed pan' claim could be most effectively directed at Tories, for whom the authenticity of a hereditary succession was an absolute principle.⁹⁶

Lloyd spread claims about the spurious nature of the Prince of Wales. Hart's position on Lloyd's role in the 'bedpan baby' claim was equivocal, suggesting that Lloyd was one of the 'wicked framers' of the story, but also writing that Lloyd showed 'credulity' about it.⁹⁷ Hart claimed that Lloyd said there were two changelings, and even that a number of children were held 'in readiness' for such a purpose.⁹⁸ In fact, Lloyd's case was based on a jumble of conflicting evidence.⁹⁹ First, Lloyd claimed that Lady Clarendon had found the queen at Easter 1688 having a miscarriage, but was hustled out of the room; the queen's physician had also reported the miscarriage. Her later continued pregnancy was said by one Catholic physician to be a miracle, but Princess Anne doubted the truth of it. When the queen

⁹⁴ Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 28, fol. 212, and J. Gutch, *Collectanea Curiosa*, II, pp. 363-4.

⁹⁵ Jones, *Convergent Forces*, p. 151.

⁹⁶ McKenzie, *Conspiracy Culture in Stuart England*, pp. 78-9.

⁹⁷ Hart, *William Lloyd, 1627-1717*, pp. 120-1. Mullett in *ODNB* does not discuss Lloyd's role in the matter.

⁹⁸ Hart, *William Lloyd, 1627-1717*, pp. 124-5. Hart also claims that Lloyd said that Queen Catherine of Braganza did not believe in the authenticity of the birth – which she clearly did.

⁹⁹ Lloyd's claims were identified notably in William Oldmixon's *History of England during the Reigns of the House of Stuart* (London, 1730), pp. 734-52 and *Bishop Burnet's and Bishop Lloyd's Accounts of the Birth of the Pretender, Shewing Strong Grounds to Suspect it to be a Shameful Imposture ...* (London, 1745). Lloyd's rumours were seen as the main slurs to oppose by Jacobites. George Hickes focused on them in his work: British Library, Add MS 33286.

went into labour in early June 1688, no midwife was called and Lady Sunderland managed the bedchamber. Some saw, 'on the dark side of the bed', Mrs Delabadie, a dry nurse, hand the queen a bundle of clothes, in which Lloyd suggested the supposititious child was hidden. The child was not seen being born and was first observed wearing loose clothes. Moreover, the queen's breasts did not show signs of milk, and Lloyd thought that it was odd that all the Queen's previous stillborn children were delivered on a birthing pallet, whereas this birth was in a bed.

The next day, the baby was said to have died, and Lady Clarendon was refused entry to the bedchamber, even though she was a lady of the bedchamber. The page who refused her said he had been ordered to do so by Lady Strickland, the wife of Sir Thomas Strickland, who was a Catholic confidant of the king. Further confirmation came from the apothecary, Mr Hemmings, who told Lloyd that he had heard the lamentations of Lord Montacute, another Catholic, that the baby had died,¹⁰⁰ and other physicians reported seeing the baby dead. Later, when the baby Prince of Wales was presented at court, he bore no resemblance to the child shown in the bedchamber, his hair and eyes were different colours and the poor sickly child was now strong and healthy. This is what Lloyd reported from a friend. According to Lloyd, Princess Anne's physician was also told of the death by the Duke of Beaufort. When she was queen, Anne confirmed to Lloyd that the child had died.

¹⁰⁰ In 1713, Gilbert Burnet's lawyer son, Thomas, reported that Hemmings had told this directly to Lloyd and not through a third person. This came in the ironically titled: *Some New Proofs by which it Appears that the Pretender is Truly James the Third* (London, 1713), pp. 19-20.

The accounts spread by Lloyd do not make clear whether the child was miscarried at Easter 1688, was swapped in the birth chamber or switched after the child died some time after the birth. It may be that Lloyd thought that at least one of these explanations would satisfy those who were keen to dismiss the truth of a Catholic heir, or would unsettle those whose ideal of hereditary monarchy was absolute.¹⁰¹ Given Lloyd's role in spreading the bedpan rumours, by October 1688 he did not want Sancroft to commit himself to James's declaration of legitimacy. Lloyd's absolute commitment to the story of the bedpan baby certainly seems to have convinced Bishop Francis Turner of the claim.¹⁰²

In November 1688, James tried to get the bishops to issue a declaration condemning William's invasion and a public statement of their innocence in the invitation to William. Perhaps wisely, although he was in London, Lloyd stayed away from the meeting at which the king asked the bishops to sign the declarations. Only Sancroft, Compton of London, Crewe of Durham, Cartwright of Chester and Watson of St David's – the last three all James's strong supporters – attended the meeting. The bishops denied having invited William,¹⁰³ but they also temporised on the issue of a statement which, they said, would have to be approved by all the bishops. After they

¹⁰¹ The accounts given in *Bishop Burnet's and Bishop Lloyd's Accounts of the Birth of the Pretender* make no attempt to explain which of the interpretations was true but, published in 1745, it was used as the basis to rule that the young Pretender's claim was as fraudulent as his father's. See, also, Burnet, *Bishop Burnet's History of the Reign of King James the Second*, pp. 292-3. Corrinne Head refers to the various accounts of the birth as 'farcical' and a 'dizzying narratological circus': Head, 'Misconceiving the heir: mind and matter in the warming pan propaganda', in H. Deutsch and M. Terrall (eds), *Vital Matters: Eighteenth-Century Views of Conception, Life and Death* (Toronto, 2012), p. 131. John Kenyon made the same point in 'The birth of the Old Pretender', *History Today*, 13, 4 (1963), 426.

¹⁰² Hart, *William Lloyd, 1627-1717*, p. 125.

¹⁰³ With the exception of Compton, who obfuscated and said he had given the king his word the day before, a careful move since he had signed the invitation to William.

left the king, the bishops seem to have reached the conclusion that they should not issue a declaration against the invasion unless they were to do so jointly with the temporal peers. This was effectively kicking the ball into the long grass, but the pressure that the bishops were under did not let up and at this point it has been suggested that Lloyd even 'went into hiding'.¹⁰⁴ Whether he did or not, it is certainly the case that he only sent letters to people 'by a secure hand'.¹⁰⁵ Lloyd also used ciphers and shorthand, some of which remains undeciphered.¹⁰⁶

V

In December 1688, after William's invasion, Lloyd signed the Guildhall Declaration asking William to 'rescue' the Church and assume the reins of government. Lloyd also arranged to meet William at Henley before his entry to London. When William entered London, Lloyd lodged with Gilbert Burnet, William's chaplain, who had been in the invading forces. Soon after, at dinner with Burnet and Clarendon, Lloyd said that the king's flight had caused a 'cessation' of his reign, a view that astonished Clarendon who wondered whether Lloyd had been 'poisoned' by Burnet. He wrote of Lloyd: 'I really thought by his discourse he was not the same man I left him at Henley'. But Clarendon had not previously understood the depths of Lloyd's

¹⁰⁴ Jones, *Convergent Forces*, p. 143. Steven Pincus claims that Richard Kidder concealed Lloyd during 1688. Pincus, *1688*, p. 408.

¹⁰⁵ Bloxam (ed.), *Magdalen College and King James II, 1686-8*, p. 218. It is clear that Lloyd was also in touch with, and advising, the restored fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford (*ibid*, p. 215).

¹⁰⁶ M. Crumm, 'The commonplace books of William Lloyd, 1627-1717', *Bodleian Library Record*, 9 (1977), p. 266. Much of Lloyd's shorthand correspondence with Roger L'Estrange was a standard system which has been examined by Andrea McKenzie: McKenzie, *Conspiracy Culture in Stuart England*, pp. 159-188.

opposition to the king, who was his brother-in-law.¹⁰⁷ Moreover, Clarendon did not know that Lloyd and Burnet had been close friends since 1677 and besides having a shared interest in patristics, they had consulted closely during the Popish Plot, and Lloyd had hoped that Burnet might succeed him at St Martins-in-the-Fields in 1680.¹⁰⁸

By 17 December, Lloyd was acting as intermediary between William and the bishops to arrange a meeting so that they could pay their respects to the prince. Roger Morrice was clear about the bishops that 'none of them well acquainted with men nor things ... except St Asaph'.¹⁰⁹ Symon Patrick claimed that Lloyd braved very bad weather to go to William and he also reported that Lloyd had put some pressure on Archbishop Sancroft to agree to the meeting.¹¹⁰ Lloyd was quite open in telling William of his fellow bishops' attitudes, reporting that Turner of Ely (who had been a chaplain to James before he was king) believed 'the King was now ready to make the concessions required by the Prince'. However, Lloyd had failed to convince Turner that it was too late and that the king's reign had now come to a 'cessation'.¹¹¹ He also warned the bishops of what might happen if James was restored to rule, commenting that the Jesuits 'were not done with him yet', and if the king was allowed to rule 'their power is like to be so much greater because he looks upon

¹⁰⁷ Singer (ed.), *The Correspondence of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon*, II, p. 228.

¹⁰⁸ Clarke and Foxcroft *A Life of Gilbert Burnet ...*, pp. 143, 153, 165.

¹⁰⁹ *Roger Morrice Entering Book*, IV, p. 450.

¹¹⁰ *The Works of Symon Patrick, Sometime Bishop of Ely including his Autobiography* (Oxford, 1858), vol. 9, pp. 514-5

¹¹¹ *State Papers (Domestic), James II*, III, 2099.

them as his sufferers'.¹¹² Some evidence suggests that Lloyd was secretly engaged by William to sound out the bishops on their attitudes to his acceptance of the crown. Macintosh noted that Lloyd wrote a private letter, 'found in King William's cabinet', describing a failed attempt to canvass Bishop Turner of Ely. Lloyd wrote the letter to William Bentinck, 'or some other person in the especial confidence of the Prince of Orange'.¹¹³

Lloyd's standing with the incoming regime was such that even elections to parliament were referred to him. John Arnold of Llanvihangel Crucorney, who had been active against the government during the Popish Plot and the Exclusion Crisis in Wales, went to Lloyd in December 1688 to ask him to speak in his favour in the hope that he might succeed in being elected for the borough of Southwark.¹¹⁴ Lloyd was also seen as a conduit to the king for Welsh magnates. In 1689, Sir Richard Bulkeley sent a petition regarding his Irish estates to Lloyd to present to William, since he knew how much the prince relied on his judgement.¹¹⁵

On 28 December, Lloyd, Bishop Turner of Ely and Clarendon read together James's reasons for his departure from the country, which had just been published in London. As they read them, Clarendon and Turner said that they were moved by the

¹¹² Quoted in R. Beddard, *A Kingdom Without a King: The Journal of the Provisional Government in the Revolution of 1688* (Oxford, 1988), p. 55. Lloyd's anxiety about Catholicism had been fuelled by the growing persecution in the Vaudois in Piedmont.

¹¹³ J. Mackintosh, *History of the Revolution in England in 1688, Comprising a View of the Reign of James II, from his Accession, to the Enterprise of the Prince of Orange by the late Right Hon. Sir James Mackintosh ...* (Paris, 1834), II, p. 560.

¹¹⁴ Roger Morrice *Entring Book*, IV, p. 373.

¹¹⁵ University of Nottingham Special Collections, Portland Mss, Pw A 2329, ff. 1-2.

king's account, and Lloyd, disturbed that the king's explanation elicited such a sympathetic response, said 'it was a Jesuitical masterpiece'. Once again, Clarendon was astonished, and he wrote: 'I think I never heard more malicious inferences than he [Lloyd] drew from the King's expressions in that paper.'¹¹⁶ When, later that month, Bishop Turner suggested that James might be permitted to return with limited powers, Lloyd would not consider the idea. On 30 December, Lloyd admitted William to Holy Communion, which signalled his complete commitment to the revolution. Lloyd was also very busy in attempting to redeem his promises to the Dissenters. On 14 January 1689, Symon Patrick said that Lloyd and Thomas Tenison were consulting with others 'about such concessions as might bring in Dissenters to our communion'.¹¹⁷ In November 1688, he had already opened talks with William Bates on the 'absolute necessity' of a coalition of Churchmen and Dissenters.¹¹⁸

By the time of the Convention, Lloyd was convinced that James had abdicated, although he stayed away from the vote, and at one point voted for a regency. This seems likely to have been a ploy to retain credit with other peers who were ambivalent and to persuade them to accept William. By February 1689 he recognised William as king by right of conquest and, after some public equivocation, took the oaths of allegiance to William and Mary. Privately, Lloyd said he would swear the oaths to William and Mary and was explicit with Clarendon, who was reluctant to take them, that his oaths to James 'no longer oblige me'. He told Clarendon 'he took

¹¹⁶ Singer (ed.), *The Correspondence of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon*, II, p. 237.

¹¹⁷ *The Works of Symon Patrick*, 9, p. 516.

¹¹⁸ D. Lacey, *Dissent and Parliamentary Politics in England, 1661-1689: A Study of the Perpetuation and Tempering of Parliamentaryism* (New Brunswick NJ, 1969), p. 193.

himself to be quite free from any obligation to King James', which once again astonished Clarendon.¹¹⁹ In May 1689, Clarendon described Lloyd as 'most strangely busy to persuade the clergy to take the new oath'.¹²⁰

Lloyd also played a role in making Gilbert Burnet bishop of Salisbury. According to Clarendon, William had already promised the vacant see of Salisbury to other clergymen, including Jonathan Trelawny of Bristol and it was Lloyd who persuaded him that Burnet should have it. The king said Lloyd 'was so pressing upon him that he could have no quiet from his importunity till he had given it to Burnet'. When Clarendon asked Lloyd if this was true, 'he did not deny it'.¹²¹ What is significant about this incident is that Lloyd thought he had some call on William's patronage and also that Burnet would be a good choice for the post, both of which might suggest that he had some contact with Holland during the preceding months. The king's choice of Lloyd to attend the coronation and carry the paten during the service also suggests some favour towards him.¹²² In Sancroft's absence, Lloyd was responsible for presenting Mary at her coronation for her acclamation.

Lloyd's key service to the new monarchs was his *A Discourse of God's Way of Disposing of Kingdoms*, which was published in 1691. It defended the revolution as a godly one in which providence had given the throne to William by right of conquest

¹¹⁹ Singer (ed.), *The Correspondence of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon*, II, p. 266. Lloyd's only concern was that he wanted the bishops to act together and wanted to try to persuade Sancroft not to reject the oaths.

¹²⁰ Singer (ed.), *The Correspondence of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon*, II, p. 277.

¹²¹ Singer (ed.), *The Correspondence of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon*, II, p. 269. Trelawny was furious that he was denied the appointment, having been promised it by the new king. *The State Letters of Henry, Earl of Clarendon*, 2, p. 328.

¹²² Carpenter, *Protestant Bishop*, p. 151.

over an unjust ruler. Lloyd made clear that while a subject could not abandon his oath to the king, the king could act in such a way that the obligation 'may be so loosened that it may be next to dissolution'. It seems certain that Lloyd saw the revolution as ending James's reign.¹²³ Lloyd's strong support for the new regime resulted in a breach with his old friend Henry Dodwell. In November 1689, Dodwell sent Lloyd a furious letter attacking him for accepting the ejection of the bishops who refused the oaths to William and Mary.¹²⁴ Lloyd replied that he had resolved not to accept any of the sees from which the non-jurors had been deprived, 'and I shall lament as much as any man living if I live to see the day when the Church must be deprived of so many excellent Churchmen.'¹²⁵ Nevertheless, after the discovery that Turner had been in contact with James, Lloyd urged William III to fill the vacant sees rather than allow them to remain empty,¹²⁶ and when the vacant sees were administered by Henry Compton, as dean of the province of Canterbury, Lloyd acted as his unofficial deputy in administering Norwich diocese.¹²⁷

VI

¹²³ Lloyd had already shocked Clarendon further by saying at dinner in January 1690 that 'acquisition of the throne begat a right'. Clarendon 'interrupted him in great heat' and told him not to preach such a doctrine to him, as it was not true Church teaching. Singer (ed.), *The Correspondence of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon*, II, p. 300.

¹²⁴ Bodleian Library, MS Cherry 23, fol. 163.

¹²⁵ Bodleian Library, MS Eng. letters c.29, fol. 104.

¹²⁶ Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 27, fol. 237. Some time later, Archbishop Sancroft was told of 'a great secret which the Bp. of St. Asaph has stopped in the press,' but it is not clear what this was (ibid, MS Tanner 26, fol. 89). Lloyd, of course, ignored his comment to Dodwell when he consecrated John Tillotson as archbishop in 1691. H. Horowitz, *Parliament, Policy and Politics in the Reign of William III* (Manchester, 1977), p. 67.

¹²⁷ Cornwall Record Office, PB/8/2, letter book of Humphrey Prideaux, ff 148, 153, 157, 160-1, 168-9. I owe this reference to Dr Daniel Reed.

When, in January 1689, Roger Morrice tried to work out who might have been the plotters who conspired to bring about the revolution (the '*Conspirationis Subversio*', as he called them), he listed some temporal lords and included the bishops of 'London and as some believe St Asaph'.¹²⁸ Morrice's informants were correct, as Lloyd had undoubtedly been one of those who did not just want to be rid of James but was prepared to act with ruthlessness to achieve the 'cessation' of his reign. Unlike Compton, who was under suspension from his diocese, Lloyd took a full and active part in the discussions with other bishops and also built remarkably candid links with leading Dissenters. Lloyd's role was subtle: publicly maintaining the principle of passive obedience, collectively trying to ensure that the bishops acted together, but also provoking James over both the petition and the allegations of the 'bedpan baby'.¹²⁹ He also strongly promoted the revolution in his diocese, ensuring that an otherwise loyalist region was – as Steven said – 'infected' with rebellion. His aim at the revolution was wider comprehension of Dissenters into the Church, on which he had limited success,¹³⁰ but his rewards came with his translation to the dioceses of Lichfield and Coventry in 1692, and Worcester in 1699. Lloyd can emerge from the shadows as not merely a bystander during the revolution, but as one of its architects.

¹²⁸ Roger Morrice *Entring Book*, IV, p. 486. The Duke of Beaufort included him in the list of lords who had 'used the King ill' in December 1688. *HMC 12th Report, Beaufort Ms* (1891), p. 94.

¹²⁹ Later, Lloyd covered his tracks, claiming to Clarendon that he had favoured a regency, but that once William was King he was obliged to support him. Clarendon was surprised at this account of Lloyd's views. Perhaps fearing that Clarendon might reveal how strongly he had supported William throughout, Lloyd later was 'very sour and severe' about Clarendon to his wife. Singer (ed.), *The Correspondence of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon*, II, pp. 300, 324.

¹³⁰ Thomas, *History of the Diocese of St Asaph*, p. 114.