

Castle, within two days they became masters of the stronghold, into which they had no sooner entered, but the King's forces besieged them there." Yet after a fierce and doubtful struggle Sir Thomas came off victorious. For this on the 12th August the House ordered a letter of thanks to be sent from Mr. Speaker to Sir Thomas Middleton "in acknowledgment of his good services." Sir Thomas next attempted Powys, or as then called Red Castle, and "to the astonishment of the garrison within, and contrary to all expectation, entered the castle without the loss of one man in October 1644." (*Whitelock's Memorials* quoted in *History of Chirk Castle.*)

This last transaction is thus referred to in the *Commons Journals*.

Oct. 10, 1644. Letter read from Sir Thomas Middleton of Oct. 3 from Red Castle stating that he had by storm taken the said Castle, and Lord Powes and many other prisoners.

*Resolved.* That a Letter of thanks be forwarded to Sir Thomas Middleton for his good services."

From another document of the period we learn that Powys Castle was a place of very great consequence, and one of the Royalist strongest holds in North Wales. Besides the Lord Powis, his brother and his two sons, there were taken "a seminary priest, 3 captains, 1 lieutenant, and 80 officers and common soldiers, 40 horse and 200 arms. The place is of much concernment, for before taking it, it did much mischief to the country, and had almost blocked up the passages from Oswestry to Montgomery Castle, so that now, the strongest posts in all North Wales are in the possession of the Parliament, this castle being considered of sufficient strength to hold out a year's siege, and been able to keep out at least 10,000 men for a whole twelvemonth, it having at that present sufficient provision in it of all sorts for such a continuance of time. Besides, by this means the noble Sir Thomas Middleton hath now the command of all North Wales, and can raise men there at his own pleasure" (quoted in the *History of Chirk Castle*).