

SIR THOMAS MIDDLETON was equally victorious in his progresses through Pembroke-shire, Radnorshire, Cardiganshire, Flintshire, and Denbighshire, although Denbigh castle held out two months longer than any other fortress in the Principality. So important were his services deemed that upon the passing of the Self-denying Ordinance in 1645, Sir Thomas Middleton was one of the few members of Parliament in whose favour the Ordinance was relaxed, and he was ordered to continue in military command.

On the 5th December, 1644, Sir Thomas was under the necessity of besieging his own Castle of Chirk, then garrisoned for the King by Sir John Watts, the governor.

The following letter to Prince Rupert, which is preserved in Chirk Castle, refers to this siege, and to an occurrence during it which we are told caused Sir Thomas Middleton "extream melancholic."

"May it please your Highnesse :

"This Gentleman journeyinge towards Oxford I most humbly beseeche Leave to present to your Highnesse by him an account of a late action of the Rebels. They lately besieged mee for three daies ; their engineers attempted to work into the Castle with Iron Crowes and Pickers, under great plancks and tables, which they had erected against the Castle side for their shelter, but my stones beate them of ; they acknowledged in Oswestry they had 31 slaine, and 43 others hurt, their prime Engineer was slaine by the Castle side ; they are very sadd for him ; if your Highnesse please, this Gentleman will fully impart all the passages during the seige to your Highnesse, hee was in the Castle with mee, I shall not presume to be further tedious, I most humbly kisse your Highnesse sweete hands, and will ever bee

Your Highnesse most humble and assuredly  
faithful servant,

JOHN WATTS.

Chirk Castle,  
Dec. 25th, 1644

To His Highnesse  
Prince Rupert  
Humbly Present This."

(Quoted in *History of Chirk Castle.*)