

Parliamentarians and royalists confronted each other at Brentford and at Turnham Green over a cold and foggy weekend in November 1642.



This map was drawn by Moses Glover in 1635. Brentford Bridge in the centre of the map. Syon House lies near the Thames above to the left.

As a result of these battles early in the Civil War King Charles I was prevented from capturing London and ending the war. The struggle went on until 1646 but the royalists were never able to attack London again.

What happened here?

Brentford grew up where the road from London to the west crossed the River Brent. Parliamentary troops arrived here on Friday 11 November and barricaded the road at this bridge.

The royalists overcame part of Denzil Holles' red-coated regiment at Sir Richard Wynn's house in the late morning of

Saturday 12th. Here the overwhelming numbers of royalists dislodged the rest of Holles' men in under an hour.

This was made easier as the parliamentary commanders were absent in London and the horse troops in the town fled when they heard the firing at Wynn's house.

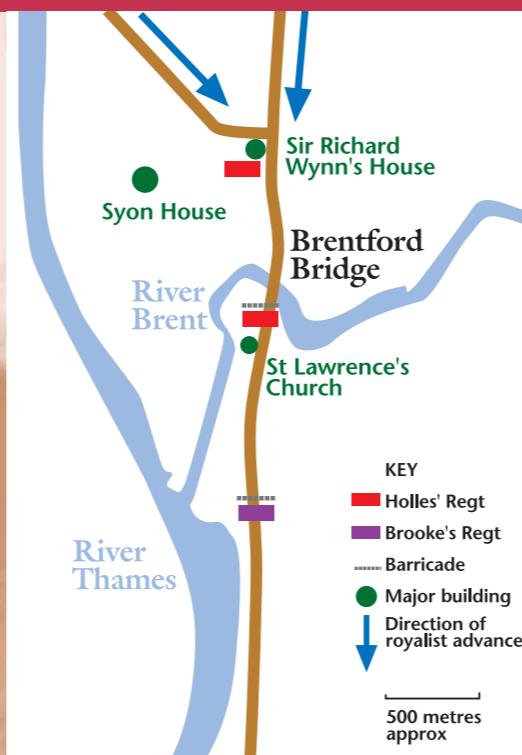


John Hassall painted this reconstruction of the scene in 1928

Lines of Battle on 12 November 1642

1642

The Battle of Brentford



What happened next?

Fighting continued that afternoon near Ferry Lane. About 20 royalists were killed in the battle. Perhaps 50 parliamentarians died in the fighting and more again drowned in the Thames fleeing the royalists.

That night royalist soldiers stole supplies in Brentford and slept in the open. The Battle of Turnham Green took place the next day.

Parliamentary barges from Kingston, laden with artillery and ammunition, sailed down river overnight and came under royalist fire from Syon House, injuring a few men on board.

Royalist cannon on the river bank downstream threatened the barges so their crews sank them deliberately to prevent the capture of their cargoes.

On 13 November Syon House was damaged by firing from parliamentary ships on the Thames; repairs listed in the Syon accounts cost £26.10s. Returning fire, the royalists sank one boat.

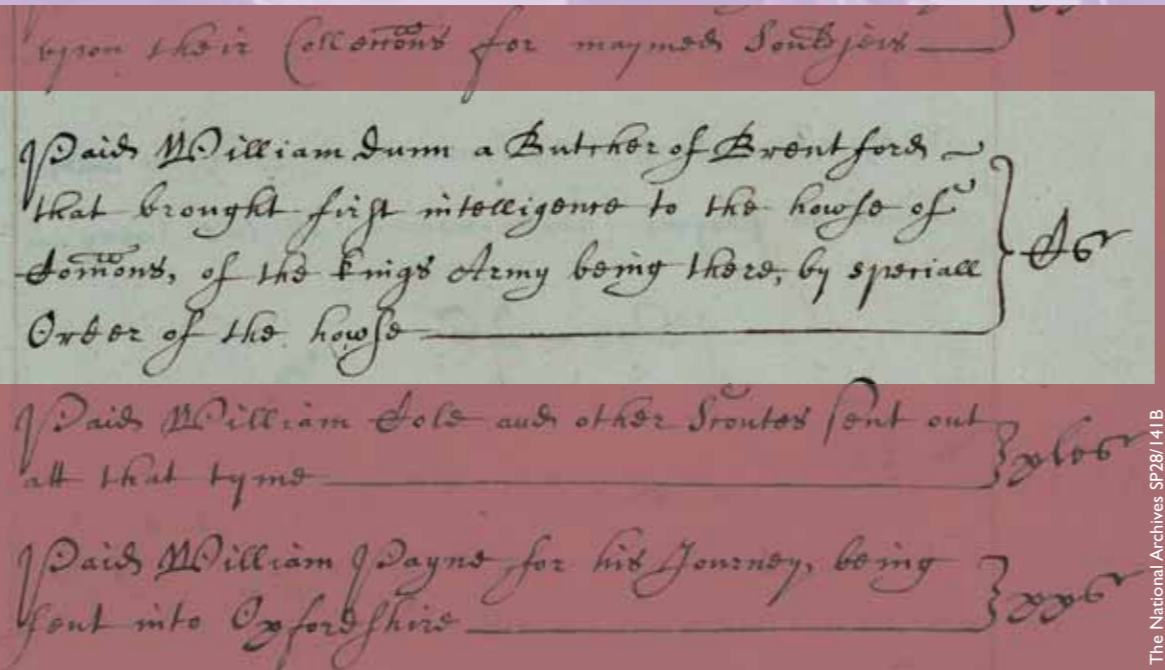


Foot soldiers used pikes or muskets

Why were they fighting?

Strained relations between the King and Parliament, over the constitution, taxation and control of the army, came to a head when the King tried to arrest five MPs.

Parliament began recruiting soldiers in July and by August the Civil War had begun. Everyone thought it would be over quickly but between 1642 and 1646, about a quarter of English men became soldiers and one in 25 of the population died.



Paid William Dunn a Butcher of Brentford that brought first intelligence to the house of Commons, of the Kings Army being there by special Order of the house 100 s(hillings)

MATTHEW SMALLWOOD, A ROYALIST SOLDIER, WROTE

Saturday very early WE MARCHED on again, and at Hounslow Heath all the King's foote met, EXPECTING A BATAILLE, but none affords one. Still we went to Hounslow towne, thence to Brainford, where unexpectedly we were encountered by 2 or 3 REGIMENTS of theirs, who had made some SMALL BARRICADOES at the end of the first towne called *New Brainford*.

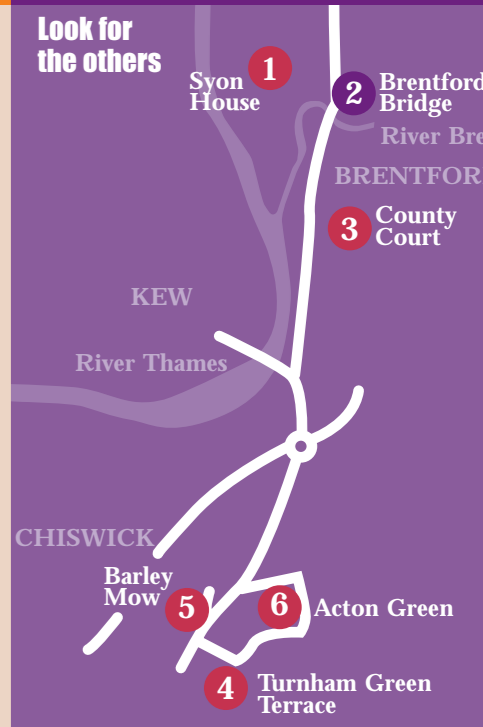


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Designed by Toni Marshall

This is one of six information panels in Brentford and Chiswick.



www.battlefieldstrust.com/brentfordandturnhamgreen