



Autumn 2013

The Reiver

The newsletter of the North East & Borders Region of the Battlefields Trust

Introduction

Where to start? This has been a busy year and next year looks like it will be busier still for the Trust in the North East & Borders. We have a number of projects under way and some new ones at the planning stage. As always, we are looking for members willing to help. If you see anything below that interests you in taking an active role please let me know.

Geoffrey Carter

Activities

The Battlefields Trust AGM and Conference 2013

In April members of the Trust gathered at Durham University for a weekend devoted to the battlefields of the North East. It was good to see so many local members present. On the Friday afternoon Julian Humphrys hosted a 'Reivers and Raiders' car tour for the early arrivals to look at some of the castles, pele towers and bastle houses in Northumberland which was followed by an informal evening in the bar. Saturday was devoted to battlefield visits. First, Clive Hallam-Baker led a walk over the ground at Flodden and this was followed by a visit to Homildon Hill where Geoffrey Carter described the action.

On Saturday evening we held a formal dinner and were privileged to have Professor Michael Prestwich as our speaker. Michael gave us some

interesting thoughts on the year 1346 and the battles at Crecy and Neville's Cross. Afterwards our national Chairman, Frank Baldwin, presented a number of annual awards to recognise service to the Trust. This year's President's Award went to Martin Marix Evans in recognition of his many years' work. Martin has written extensively on military history over many years and is particularly associated with The Naseby Battlefield Project. His work in battlefield investigation, interpretation and preservation has been an inspiration to the Trust.



From L to R : Michael Prestwich, Frank Baldwin & Martin Marix Evans

On Sunday we conducted the formal business of the conference. We heard three papers in the morning. Geoffrey Carter spoke on the battle of Homildon Hill and the Death of Chivalric Warfare. Joe Foster recounted the history of The Heugh Battery at Hartlepool and Julian Humphrys talked to us about siege warfare in the North East during the Middle Ages. The papers were followed after lunch by the 2013 AGM and a members' workshop led by Frank

Baldwin. Several interesting ideas emerged for things we could do in the future and these are being pursued by the Board.

For those members who stayed over until the Monday, Frank Baldwin led a driving tour to Hexham, Newburn Ford and the Heugh Battery in Hartlepool. The feedback from members was very positive. Durham University gave us first class service and, for the first time in a while, we made a small profit on the event which has gone into the Trust's general funds.

Flodden

The year has been dominated by the 500th anniversary of the Battle of Flodden on 9th September.

Throughout the year the Trust has supported activities at Flodden. Clive Hallam-Baker (who runs the 'Remembering Flodden' charity in addition to being regional Treasurer for the Trust) has led more tours over the battlefield than he can remember. In total the number of visitors to the site in 2013 has exceeded 40,000. In July Clive and Geoffrey Carter hosted a walk by members of the Richard III Society for the Trust. The Society made a generous donation to the Trust's funds. The culmination of all of these efforts came on 9th September with a battlefield walk '500 Years to the Hour'.



Some of the visitors to Flodden on 9th September 2013 make their way to the starting point.

Starting at 16:00, the time that the battle began, Clive and Geoffrey guided some 500 people around the site in what must have been one of the largest battlefield walks in the Trust's history. Visitors had come from all over the country and from abroad to mark this special occasion. Reports of the day were featured on both local and national TV and radio and subsequently in the local and national press.

In addition to learning about the battle a number of visitors expressed an interest in the Trust's work and we have gained several new members as a result.

This event was a commemoration to recall a significant event in the history of two nations and many Scots joined the gathering. A number of wreaths were laid at the Flodden monument to honour the dead on both sides.



Amongst the Scottish contingent we found a few stragglers from 1513 who had come equipped with their traditional refreshment!



Tyne and Wear Archives & Museums

During 2013 the Trust has developed a close relationship with TWAM. In August Geoffrey Carter gave a series of four talks at Segedunum, Wallsend under the title of 'From Carham to Flodden : 500 Years of Border Conflict'. These talks explored the history of national conflicts between England and Scotland from the formation of the two nations following the departure of the Romans through to Flodden. The lectures were well-attended and a number of new members were recruited. In addition both TWAM and the Trust earned a contribution to their funds. These talks will be repeated in 2014. In the meantime, Geoffrey will be giving a new series of talks covering 'The English Civil War in the North East' at South Shields Museum in March 2014. Beyond that there are plans for a summer series covering 'The Wars of the Roses in the North East'.

Discussions are also being held with the University of the Third Age and local history societies with a view to repeating some or all of these talks to new audiences. In this way we hope to recruit further members and to raise funds for local projects.

Homildon Hill Project

On 14 September we took part in a special day of activities at Glendale Community Middle School in Wooler as a part of the Homildon Hill Community Battlefield Project which the Trust launched a while ago in partnership with the Northumberland National Park Authority and the Glendale Local History Society.



A new generation of archers training to repel invaders

The day was arranged as a part of the national Heritage Open Day scheme which, by coincidence, matched the anniversary of the battle which took place on 14th September 1402. The events of the day included archery practice, a fancy dress competition, some hands-on archaeological fun and the unveiling of a painted 'tapestry' by the children depicting the battle. The children showed tremendous enthusiasm for the various projects and were clearly thrilled to know that an important battle had taken place right on their doorstep.



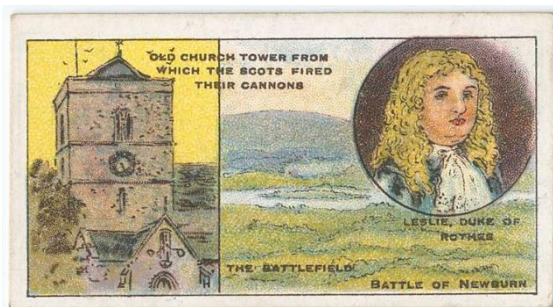
A section of the 'tapestry' showing the English archers at work

Many thanks are due to Gemma Stewart of the Northumberland National Park Authority and Jenny Hall of Glendale Community Middle School for arranging the whole thing and for providing the inspirational leadership which had fired the children's imaginations. The day was well-attended by parents and other members of the local community and did much to build on earlier work in raising the local profile of the battle.

The next part of the project is the production of a new leaflet about the battle for visitors to Wooler and the installation of an interpretation panel on the hill itself. The leaflet is in draft at the moment and will be ready for next Spring.

Newburn Ford

English Heritage recently published its 2013 Heritage At Risk list. The battlefield at Newburn Ford was featured on the basis of a report by Glenn Foard. This was a part of a wider exercise undertaken by the Trust for EH. The report itself was completed a while ago but the wheels turn slowly sometimes. In the light of this new list the Trust approached EH to suggest the creation of a new project at Newburn to implement Glenn's recommendations and to rekindle local interest in the battle which had been the subject of a successful community project some 10 years ago.



Newburn Ford as imagined on an early 20th century cigarette card

An initial meeting has been held and a steering group has been established under the auspices of EH. Geoffrey Carter and Gill Brown are the Trust's representatives. Gill, who is also an active member of The Sealed Knot, led the earlier project and her expertise and local contacts will be invaluable. Thomas Gledhill, Heritage At Risk officer in EH's Newcastle office and Jennifer Morrison, Tyne & Wear Archaeology Officer are the other initial members of the group which

will be expanded to include representatives of other partners in due course.

Carham

After Flodden 500 comes Carham 1000! The battle of Carham is little known but of great significance. Fought between Uhtred, Earl of Northumbria and Malcolm II, King of Scots, many historians consider this to be the battle that settled the Tweed as the border between England and Scotland. The battle is not without problems. First, the date is not certain. It is either 1016 or 1018 as the sources appear contradictory and second, the exact location has never been found. Nonetheless this is an important anniversary and we are planning a project to commemorate it. In January 2014 Geoffrey Carter and Clive Hallam-Baker will be meeting with Dr Chris Bowles, Scottish Border Council's Archaeology Officer and Dr Alex Woolf, Senior Lecturer in History at St Andrews University to consider how this project should be approached.

For those interested you can find an informative BBC video about Carham featuring Dr Woolf at :

http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/history/scotland_united/the_battle_of_carham/

National Projects

The Trust has a number of national projects currently in preparation. These include projects to mark the 800th anniversary of the signing of Magna Carta and the 100th anniversary of The Great War. In addition we are working on a major project to extend the work done at Bosworth to a number of other battlefields of the Wars of the Roses. In each case there will be an element that involves our region. These projects will require a large degree of participation by local members. Further details will follow.

Regional AGM

Last year's meeting was a bit of a disaster! Problems with the Trust's email system caused many members to receive no notice of the meeting. We decided to abandon the meeting for 2011 / 2012 and the existing officers have continued to exercise their functions. We now need to convene this year's meeting. Unfortunately, changes at Newcastle City Council mean that we can no longer meet at Newburn and we are currently looking for an alternative low-cost or free venue. We will be in touch about this as soon as we have found a suitable solution. One possibility is to leave the meeting until Spring 2014 and to combine it with a battlefield walk. Otterburn comes to mind as a possible location. Other suggestions would be most welcome!

Contact Details

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And don't forget our main web site :

<http://www.battlefieldstrust.com/>

The Battlefields Trust and Tyne and Wear Archives & Museums

The English Civil War in the North East

A series of three talks on the English Civil War and the involvement of the north east in the struggle between King and Parliament.

Outline

Talk One – A New Dynasty

In this talk we will look at the coming of the Stuarts in 1603 and consider the origins of the struggle between the monarchy and parliament. We will conclude with a detailed look at the Battle of Newburn Ford (1640) on the western fringes of Newcastle. It was this battle that forced Charles I to abandon his long period of direct rule without Parliament.

Talk Two – A Nation At War With Itself

This talk will cover the descent into civil war. The north east was peripheral to the early phase of the First Civil War. We will look at this period in summary and consider the events leading to the invasion of the Scots on the side of Parliament in 1644 and the fighting in Northumberland.

Talk Three – Newcastle At Bay

This talk will look at the events of the second half of 1644 culminating in the Siege of Newcastle. This will include a look at the lesser known Siege of South Shields which was a part of this campaign and the fighting between Newcastle and Sunderland which, as always, were on opposite sides. We will conclude with details of the aftermath of these actions and briefly summarise the events leading to the execution of Charles I and the abolition of the monarchy.

Field Trip

We will conclude the series with a visit to the battlefield of Newburn Ford to the west of Newcastle. Standing on the ground is the best way to understand how battles were fought.

The talks will be held at South Shields Museum on 6th, 13th & 20th March 2014 from 14:00 to 15:30

The field trip will take place on 27th March.

Booking details will be circulated in the New Year. There will be a small charge for the talks.