



September 2013

Encounter

The newsletter of the Mercia Region of the Battlefields Trust

Introduction

It has been a busy and exciting few months since the last newsletter. English Heritage has, for the first time since 1995, registered two further battlefields at Lostwithiel (1644) following an application by the Trust last summer. Registration details can be found at <http://bit.ly/15T14Lk> and <http://bit.ly/14bKW0W>. Over the spring and summer the region has, with partner organisations, run a series of walks and events covering battles from the 13th to the 17th century, including some new excursions. An event at Northampton in July unveiled a new painting of the battle based on an interpretation developed by Trust member Mike Ingram. Inevitably there has been a number of threats to battlefields over the period, though thankfully none in Mercia region. In Yorkshire, Leeds City Council has identified the battlefield at Bramham Moor (1408) as a possible development site in its draft local plan whilst in Scotland South Lanarkshire Council has received an application to build on the Bothwell Bridge (1679) battlefield. The Battlefields Trust has objected to both proposals and such developments show how important it is to have a national organisation with a strong membership which can fight such developments.

Events

The walking season started in mid-May with a new walk covering the Civil War **siege of Farringdon (1645/46)** and the battle at **Radcot Bridge (1387)**. In the morning Trust member Tim Norris led the walkers around Farringdon pointing out the remnants of the siege. After a pub lunch and a short drive he then explained about the battle at Radcot which saw the defeat of Richard II's troops under Robert De Vere by Henry Bolingbrooke, the future Henry IV. On 8 June a group of just over twenty, including Friends of the Banbury Museum, explored the **Edgehill (1642)** battlefield with Simon Marsh. Simon led the walk down the southern side of the field and used the walkers to form battalions and troops

to demonstrate how 17th century armies deployed. At the end of June, Stephen Barker provided an excellent account of another civil war battlefield at **Cropredy Bridge (1644)**. A large turn-out of walkers enjoyed Stephen's explanation of the battle with the walk covering the section of the battle from the bridge toward Wardington. A new walk for Mercia was run at **Nibley Green (1470)** on 7 July by Adam Dolling. Described as the last private battle in England, Adam led a group of around ten around the battlefield and described the feud between Viscount Lisle and Baron Berkley over the inheritance of Berkley Castle and Lisle's defeat and death in the battle. On 3 August, following the traditional wreath laying ceremony to commemorate the death of Simon de Montfort organised by the Simon de Montfort Society, Tony Spicer guided a group around the **Evesham (1265)** battlefield. He described the prelude to the action and the circumstances of de Montford's death. Tony followed this with a walk at **Worcester (1651)** on 24 August.



The mayor of Northampton unveils the new painting of the battle by Matthew Ryan

Northampton (1460)

The Friends of Delapre Abbey, The Medieval Siege Society and Trust representative Mike Ingram organised an event on 6 July to commemorate the battle of Northampton and unveil a new painting of the battle.

Matthew Ryan's artwork was donated to Delapre Abbey for display once the Abbey is redeveloped with support from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The day involved arms and armour displays by the Siege Society, a battlefield talk and walk, children's events and the unveiling ceremony. The event was well attended and demonstrated how effective a battle representative can be in working with other organisations to raise the profile of a battlefield locally.

Edgcote (1469)

The region's efforts to locate grave-pits from the battle at Edgcote are planned to commence again in September and will be led by Peter Masters from Cranfield University. There is still no word from English Heritage on registering the battlefield following the Trust's application in 2010. However The Trust was asked to comment on a public consultation document in June and experience at Lostwithiel suggests there is a four to five month period between consultation and an English Heritage decision. Edgcote may therefore be added to the Battlefields Register by the year's end. The maps released by HS2 as part of a further consultation on the proposed high speed rail line, which has the potential to impact on the battlefield, suggest that the line now skirts the edge of the proposed registered battlefield area and may have less impact than first envisaged. This appears to be a result of the January 2012 realignment of the line which HS2 said was aimed at avoiding heritage assets, including the battlefield, in the Chipping Warden area. This followed a strong Trust campaign for the line proposal to be changed.

Banbury Battlefields & Mercia Region AGM

The Mercia Region and Banbury Museum have teamed-up to present some Banbury battlefield talks over the coming autumn and winter. Edgehill is on 16 November, Cropredy Bridge on 18 January 2014 and Edgcote on 22 February 2014. Please note these events for your diary and come and support them. The Mercia region AGM will take place at 1:15pm at the Banbury Museum Quayside Cafe before the first of these events on 16 November. If anyone has issues to raise at the AGM or is interested in standing for any of the branch officer positions, they should contact Simon Marsh (see foot of page for contact details).

Battlefield Trust Events

Forthcoming Mercia events for your diary as follows. More details at <http://bit.ly/faZwkI>.

Thursday (7:30pm) 5 September, Sundays (all 2:30pm) 6 October, 3 November 2013, 5 January 2014, Tewkesbury (1471). Tewkesbury Battlefield Society walk. Meet at times shown at the Abbey gate in the Crescent, (Junction of Church Street and Gander Lane, GL20 5PD). Contact Steve Goodchild on 01684-294939.

Saturday 14 September 2013, Worcester (1651). A two part walk, with the morning looking at the western part of the Worcester battlefield and the afternoon the centre part. Departs 10:30am, Manor Farm Pub, Malvern Road Worcester WR2 4BS (refreshments and lunch available there). Afternoon 2pm at the Ketch Viewpoint at junction of A38 and A4440. Contact Tony Spicer on a.spicer@btinternet.com or 01684-572925

Sunday 13 October 2013, Second battle of Newbury (1644). Simon Marsh will lead a walk of one of the decisive battles of the Civil War to help raise funds for an interpretation panel there. Simon will discuss the western part of the battlefield in the morning and the eastern side in the afternoon. A charge of £10 will be made for all those joining the walk, including Battlefields Trust members, which will cover both walks. Meet 10:30am at the entrance to Speen Recreation ground on Station Road, Speen (RG14 1UD) for the morning walk and 2:30pm outside Shaw House, Church Road, Shaw, (RG14 2DR) for the afternoon. Contact Simon on 01844-274112 or email: merciam@battlefieldstrust.com for further details and to book a place.

Saturday 16 November, Banbury Battlefields - Edgehill (1642). Simon Marsh will talk about the battle of Edgehill in the first in a series of lectures about battlefields around Banbury. 2:30pm Banbury Museum, Banbury, OX16 2PQ. Tickets £7.50 available from Banbury Museum. Tel: 01295-753752.

Saturday 16 November, Mercia Region AGM. No charge. Meet 1:15pm at Banbury Museum Quayside Cafe, Banbury, OX16 2PQ

Simon Marsh