



January 2016

Encounter

The newsletter of the Mercia Region of the Battlefields Trust

Introduction

A Happy New Year to you all! At this time of year it is traditional to reflect on the past and look forward to the future and this edition of the Mercia Region newsletter is no different. 2015 saw Mercia run battlefield walks at most of the registered battlefields in the region as well as a series of battlefield talks at the museums in Banbury and Northampton. On-going threats to battlefields at Worcester and Northampton involved the region and in the last days of the year we needed to respond to applications to build on parts of the **Ripple (1643) and Second Newbury (1644)** battlefields. Finally, in October, a survey was run at Stow to try and locate the battlefield. 2016 will see some of these issues progressed. A planning decision at Northampton is expected shortly and the survey team at Stow are looking to extend the work. Some new walks are also planned for the coming year.

I am sometimes asked what members can do to support the work of the Battlefields Trust and I summarise this as *Tell, Talk and Try* - Tell others about the work of the Trust and why battlefields matter; Talk to the regional committee and other officers of the Trust about any local threats to battlefields you are aware of and don't assume we are already aware or someone else will pass on the information. Talk to us as well about what interests you and what you would like to see the Trust doing. Finally give the Trust's events and projects a Try - join us on a walk or volunteer to help.

Stow Battlefield Survey

In early October 2015, the Mercia Region ran a six day metal detecting survey at Stow to try and locate the battlefield where the last action of the first Civil War took place in March 1646. The survey examined the traditional site around the battle monument on the ridge by Donnington village, areas where the Trust's Resource Centre website locates the battle and the ridge to the south

of the traditional site, closer to Stow. No battle related artefacts were found by the experienced survey team. Whilst further work is necessary at the traditional site to rule it out, the absence in any location of lead shot from the battle or during the royalist rout suggests that the battle might have been fought much closer to Stow than has hitherto been considered. It is hoped that further work to locate the battlefield at Stow can be undertaken in 2016.



Survey work at Stow underway.

Edgehill Information Hub

On 17 October 2015, the new Heritage Lottery funded information hub about the battle of Edgehill was opened at St Peter's Church, Radway. The was run by members of the Kineton History Group and of the Radway community with input from the Battlefields Trust. The hub consists of touch screen displays telling the story of the battle and its impact on the local population, artefacts found during the Battlefields Trust run archaeological survey 2004-2006, items lent by collectors and reproduction weapons. Three mannequins also show period costume. The hub was opened by project lead Brian Douthwaite with speeches from Brian, Radway Parish priest Barry Jackson, Alan Taylor from the Heritage Lottery Fund and former Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire Sir Martin Dunne. A lively re-enactment display was performed by the Sealed Knot in

Radway's streets following the ceremony and Simon Marsh, Mercia Region Chair also led a battlefield walk.

Northampton (1460)

In late January 2016, Northampton Borough Council is due to consider a retrospective planning application to build a car park for the Golf Club that operates on part of the registered battlefield. The Golf Club were ordered by the Council to stop work at the site in January 2015 after it had stripped soil in preparation for construction. The Battlefields Trust has objected to the planning application. In another Northampton development our local representative, Mike Ingram has written a book on the battle. For details see <http://amzn.to/1JQKyAk>.

Ripple (1643)

The unregistered battlefield at Ripple in Worcestershire saw the defeat of a small army under Sir William Waller by the King's nephew, Prince Maurice, in April 1643. In December 2015 the Trust was alerted to an application to build houses on the edge of the village at the foot of the hill from where Waller's men conducted a fighting retreat from through the village. The Trust objected to the planning application as it seemed likely the development site would contain battlefield archaeology and the application was rejected.

Mercia Region AGM

The Mercia region AGM was held following the successful walk at Edgehill on 17 October. Simon Marsh was returned as Chair, Gregg Archer as Treasurer and Harvey Watson as Events Coordinator. Due to commitments elsewhere in the Trust, Anthony Rich stepped down as Secretary to become a committee member and Joyce Norris took on that role. In 2014/15, the region spent £2,489, primarily on the Stow battlefield survey, and had income of £1,357. Just over £3,500 remains in the regional account.

Tewkesbury (1471)

The Tewkesbury Battlefield Society report that it appears the land it was seeking to buy on the battlefield at The Gastons will now go ahead after the current owners, a school, finalised Charity Commission permission. This is good news for the battlefield and will give the Society greater opportunity to promote Tewkesbury's battlefield heritage.

Battlefield Trust Events

Forthcoming Mercia events for your diary as follows. More details at <http://bit.ly/faZwkI>. Events are correct at the time of going to press. You are advised to check with the point of contact for any last minute changes.

Sundays of 7 February, 6 March and 3 April 2016 Battle of Tewkesbury 1471.

Walks run by the Tewkesbury Battlefield Society. Meet at 2:30pm from The Crescent (GL20 5PD) next to the Abbey. If flooding occurs the walk may be cancelled. For details contact Steve Goodchild on 01684 294939.

Saturday 19 March 2016, Oxford in the Civil War.

Banbury Museum 2:30pm. Tickets £8 from Banbury Museum (Tel: 01295-753752) Stephen Barker explains Oxford's pivotal role as the royalist capital during the War. For more information see <http://bit.ly/1VToarG>

Sunday 20 March 2016, The Battle of Stow on the Wold (1646).

Join Simon Marsh to learn more about the battle and the recent archaeological work there. Meet 1:30pm at the public car park adjacent to the Tesco Store in Stow at GL54 1BX. Contact Simon Marsh on 01844-274112 or mercia@battlefieldstrust.com for details

Saturday 16 April 2016, The Battle of Mortimer's Cross (1461).

A full day event. Details from Anthony Rich on 0121-2499292 or anthonyrich@virginmedia.com.

Saturday 23 April 2016, The Battle of Ripple Field (1643).

Tony Spicer will lead a walk over the site of this little known but hard fought Civil War battle which resulted in a dramatic victory by Prince Maurice over Sir William Waller. Meet at 1.45pm at the Railway Inn, Station Road, Ripple GL20 6EY where lunch/refreshments can be obtained beforehand. Contact Tony Spicer on 01684 572925 or a.spicer@btinternet.com for details.

Sunday 8 May 2016, the Battle of Edgcote (1469).

Harvey Watson will lead a walk across the most recently registered battlefield in England where a royalist army loyal to Edward IV was defeated by a rebel force aligned with the Earl of Warwick. Meet at Chipping Warden Church (OX17 1JU) at 11:00 with lunch afterwards in a Chipping Warden pub. Contact Harvey on 07818 853385.

Simon Marsh