

The Magazine of the Battlefields Trust and the Scottish Battlefields Trust

BATTLEFIELD

PROMOTING OUR BATTLEFIELD HERITAGE

£5.00

VOLUME 26 / ISSUE 2 **AUTUMN 2021**



CEMA Centre for Experimental Military Archaeology



The Battle of
Mauchline Moor



Death of a King
Oswald at Maserfelth



The Battle of
Hedgeley Moor



The Battle of **Barnet**



The Siege of **York**

LETTERS • NEWS • WALKS • TALKS • EVENTS • BOOK REVIEWS





Specialist history days and short breaks that explore Britain's fascinating past



Dr. Samantha Harper
MEDIEVAL HISTORIAN



Harriet Still
THOMAS HARDY
EXPERT AND CURATOR



Dr. Emma Wells
ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORIAN



Barry Hilton
SCOTTISH MILITARY
EXPERT

"The organisation and the guide were excellent, and I loved the small group size and intimacy of the group"

Join our expert-led, small-group, short breaks and specialist days to visit the history-rich locations you have always wanted to see.

Travel with acclaimed, charismatic historians and authors who will breath new life into battlefields, castles, churches and

museums for you and a group of like-minded people who share your fascination for this nation's past.

Visit www.promenadestravel.com to see our wide range of expert-led, small-group tours, with dates across 2022.



Our COVID guarantee means you'll get a full refund if your tour cannot go ahead

Battlefields Trust members save 15% with code **BATR15** www.promenadestravel.com

Trust AGM & Conference 2022

National Civil War Centre - Newark Museum

Weekend 27-29 May 2022

Accommodation at Millgate House Hotel



More information and how to book a place will be in the next issue of Battlefield. Details will also be available on the Trust website in due course at:

www.battlefieldstrust.com



Battlefields Trust

Protecting, interpreting and presenting battlefields as historical and educational resources

Autumn 2021

Editorial

Harvey Watson 07818 853 385

Chris May 07963 445 506

Production

Robert Bealby

Art and Design 01777 872 426

Battlefields Trust,

c/o 7 Little Park, Princes Risborough,
Bucks, HP27 0HS

www.battlefieldstrust.com

President and Patron

Professor Michael Wood, OBE

Patrons

The Lord Dannatt, GCB, CBE, MC, DL

Lord Boswell of Aynho

The Earl of Ulster

Sir Robert Worcester, KBE, DL

Honorary Vice President

Kelvin van Hasselt

Chair

Howard Simmons

chairman@battlefieldstrust.com

Research and Threat Coordinator

Simon Marsh

research@battlefieldstrust.com

Tel: 01844 274 112

Director of Operations

David Austin

operations@battlefieldstrust.com

Membership

David Austin

daustin.bt@btinternet.com

16 Friary Meadow, Bury St Edmunds,
Suffolk, IP32 6EJ

Board of Trustees

Sophie Anderton, Andrea Hill, Julian
Humphrys, Chris May, Phil Philo, Howard
Simmons (Chair), Robert Simmons, Phil
Steele, Russell Walters (Treasurer),
Harvey Watson, Louise Whittaker, Sam
Wilson

www.battlefieldstrust.com

Registered Charity 1017387

Company number 2786730



The Jacobite army moves onto the battlefield at Prestonpans.

Editors' Letter

Welcome to the autumn issue of *Battlefield*.

In this issue John Sadler describes the events that led to the Yorkist victory at Hedgeley Moor, and caused another 'Percy Cross' to be erected to mark the death of yet another member of that illustrious family. Staying with the Wars of the Roses we have news from Hilary Harrison of an exhibition at Barnet Museum, which now has on show some previously unknown artefacts from the battle in 1471. Well worth a visit.

We have a fascinating article from Andrew Breeze who argues that the battle of Maserfelth in 642, which saw the death of King Oswald of Northumbria, was fought near Forden in the Welsh borders and not at Oswestry. Chris Rock recounts the siege of York in 1644 and the failed assault on St Mary's Tower and King's Manor. We have a feature from David Flinham on the Centre for Experimental Military Archaeology (CEMA) and their first project – building a British Great War trench. Our Scottish Battlefields Trust article is from Warwick Louth who tells the story of the confrontation at Mauchline Moor that led to a battle between the Kirk Party and the Engagers in 1648.

We have details of some walks and events taking place before the end of this year as well as some to look forward to next year, along with our series of online lectures. As ever we have our usual news section and a selection of book reviews that may give you some ideas for Christmas presents.

We always like to hear your thoughts, questions or comments about the magazine, so please email us at editor@battlefieldstrust.com if you would like to get in touch.

Harvey Watson and Chris May

Contents

4 - 7	Trust News
8	Scottish Battlefields Trust Report
9 - 11	The Battle of Mauchline Moor
12 - 15	The Battle of Hedgeley Moor
16 - 17	The Battle of Barnet
18 - 22	Death of a King – Oswald at Maserfelth
23 - 27	The Siege of York
28 - 30	CEMA
31 - 34	Book Reviews
35	Walks, Talks and Special Events



Whilst every care will be taken of submitted material and/or photographs, the publishers cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage that may occur.

The material in this magazine is copyright of the Battlefields Trust 2021 and may not be reproduced in part or whole without permission of the publishers. Any individual providing material for publication must ensure that they have obtained the correct permissions before submission to us. Every effort has been made to trace copyright holders. The editors, publishers and the Trust apologise for any unwitting cases of copyright transgression.

The opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Battlefields Trust. No political affiliation is implied or intended.

Article Submissions

Ideas for articles are welcomed.

To ensure that articles are not duplicated please contact us to discuss your ideas before putting pen to paper.

If you are sending in news items and details of events please note the following copy deadline:

Volume 26, Issue 3, Winter 2022

Copy deadline 1 December 2021

www.battlefieldstrust.com

Battlefields Trust 2022 AGM and Conference

The Battlefields Trust is pleased to announce that the 2022 Annual General Meeting and Conference will take place at the National Civil War Centre – Newark Museum, 14 Appletongate, Newark, Nottinghamshire, NG24 1JY, over the weekend of 27–29 May 2022. The programme will include battlefield visits to Bosworth 1485, along with the new sculpture trail, and Gainsborough 1643.

Accommodation for the conference has been arranged at the Millgate House Hotel, 53 Millgate, Newark, Nottinghamshire, NG24 4TU.

Further information on the weekend will be available in due course. More details and how to book a place will appear in the next issue of *Battlefield*. Details will also be posted on the Trust website. Please make a note in your diaries and 'save the date'.

Director of Operations

The events of the last two years have forced the Trust into different ways of working. Some of this has been positive, in particular the online lectures and the use of Zoom to hold meetings. However, there have also been negative aspects, in particular the impact on our physical events, which has meant that the Trust has been unable to hold its usual study days, walks and conferences. Since August, the Events Team has been at four historical events, Evesham, Bosworth, Barnet and Hastings. These were all well-attended by the public and it was really good to get out and about to see people – if you joined at one of them, hello! Next year we are hoping to get back to normal.

We intend to carry on with the online lectures as these have proved so popular. I'm sure like most of you, two years ago I'd never heard of Zoom, but now it's an integral part of my life. The great advantage of online lectures is that all Trust members can attend, no matter where they are on the planet. Where possible, we'll also hold our physical events with access via Zoom, so that all of our members can access them. If you're not receiving the lecture notifications it's therefore even more important that we have your up-to-date email, please contact me so that you can be included on the list.

Our annual conference next year will be at

the National Civil War Centre at Newark; it was a really good visit when the conference was held there a few years ago. Also, we expect all the historical reenactments will be back as well. The Trust's own events will be starting with the East Anglia region's study day in February which will be looking at Sutton Hoo, the battle of Maldon and the battle of Fornham. All very East Anglian topics this time, but Sutton Hoo has been in the news with the massive success of the film *The Dig*, which I'm sure many of you will have seen. If not, I urge you to have a look as while some things have been changed for dramatic reasons it is a really interesting film about how the site was discovered and excavated.

It looks to be a very exciting year coming up in 2022 for the Battlefields Trust and I look forward to meeting you.

David Austin
Director of Operations
daustin.bt@btinternet.com

Otterburn (1388) walk

On 26 August, Geoffrey Carter, John Sadler and Bev Palin, of the Trust's North-east & Borders (North) region, led a walk across the battlefield at Otterburn. But this was no ordinary walk!



John Sadler, the duke of Buccleuch, Bev Palin, the duke of Northumberland and Geoffrey Carter in front of the Percy Cross at Otterburn.

Amongst the party were the duke of Northumberland and the duke of Buccleuch. This may be the first time that senior members of the Percy and Douglas families have met on the battlefield since Henry 'Hotspur' Percy faced James, Earl Douglas in August 1388. On that occasion Hotspur was captured and held for ransom while James Douglas died in the battle. Fortunately, the walk was entirely peaceful, notwithstanding the swords held by the two dukes in our picture.

NCWC now fully open World Turned Upside Down Exhibition

The National Civil War Centre – Newark Museum is now fully open again post-Covid restrictions, although booking your visit in advance is still recommended, as the number of visitors during any hour slot is limited to prevent galleries becoming crowded.

The *World Turned Upside Down* exhibition opened in September 2019, only a few months before the UK entered lockdown. During restricted opening the Fake News temporary exhibition was closed to visitors and a one-way system was implemented, with a number of interactive displays removed. All the galleries have now re-opened.

The *World Turned Upside Down* exhibition consists of three distinct themes: Conflict, Chaos and Creativity.

Conflict explores the manner in which the Civil Wars were fought, through items connected to key figures, such as Thomas Fairfax's sword and bridle gauntlet, Lord Delamere's pistol, commemorative medals and manuals on how to fight seventeenth-century wars. It includes the 1646 Newark siege map, which shows both the defensive earthworks and those of the Scots and parliamentarians who besieged the town for nearly six months.

Chaos explores the effects of a world turned upside down, following years of war across the countryside and the upsetting of the normal order of things by the execution of the king. Items on display include a fragment of the sash Charles I was wearing on the day of his execution, a scold's bridle, used to brutally suppress unruly women, and a mantrap, which would have been used to deter those driven to poaching to survive the chaos of civil war.



The Chaos and Conflict themes from the NCWC World Turned Upside Down exhibition.



Appledore Civil War fort site, viewed from the east.



The Creativity theme from the NCWC World Turned Upside Down exhibition.

Out of the chaos of the Civil War there came a flowering of creativity. The years after the wars and those following the Restoration, saw an explosion of print culture, through newsprint that reflected a certain point of view, such as *Eikon Basilike*, supposedly written by Charles I and published within days of his execution. The copy on display was once in Charles II's library and has his signature inside. To counter this John Milton wrote *Eikonoklastes*, a copy of which is also on display. There were also huge advances in science, by Isaac Newton, Robert Hooke and Robert Boyle, who were all members of the Royal Society, which was formed in 1660. The central explosion of ideas tries to reflect the way that society changed so rapidly through the creativity of that period.



The communication timeline from the NCWC Fake News exhibition.

The temporary galleries host the Fake News exhibitions. You can follow the trail of animals from the *World Turned Upside Down* woodcut up the stairs to explore objects that might be genuine or might be fake. Fake news is not a new phenomenon; it was being peddled in the seventeenth century just as much as in the twenty-first, although the speed of communication is much faster! Come and see the handkerchief soaked in Charles I's blood and the paw print of Prince Rupert's dog Boye, and decide for yourself whether they are real or fake.

For more information and details on the exhibitions please visit the NCWC website at www.nationalcivilwarcentre.com.

Appledore Fort (1644) site saved

Appledore fort stands on a hill overlooking the Taw/Torridge estuary in Devon. The remaining earthworks show that the fort was a four-sided redoubt with a single demi-bastion at the northeast corner. The earth rampart was surrounded by a ditch and counterscarp bank.

Appledore fort was sited and designed to control river access to the port towns of Bideford and Barnstaple during the English Civil War. In 1644 a parliamentary force besieged the fort. At least 100 of the besiegers were reportedly killed or injured. On 20 August a royalist force reached the fort and the parliamentarians fled. This was remarkable. Small earthwork forts were intended to control communications or annoy an enemy, but they rarely withstood sieges.

This year there was an application to turn the fort site into a house and garden using permitted development rules that would have allowed a shed on the site to be converted into a dwelling. The Battlefields Trust, the Fortress Study Group and numerous local residents objected to the application.

Last month Torridge District Council refused the application purely on the grounds of the fort's significance as an undesignated heritage asset. It is highly unusual for planning applications to be turned down solely on heritage grounds. The council's decision reflects the strong case made by the Trust and others.

The fort site remains extremely vulnerable to development applications and an application has been made to Historic England to schedule the site as an ancient monument. It is hoped that in the future this gallant little fort will gain the protection it deserves.

Archaeological digs at Culloden

Archaeologists hope to unearth new insights into the battle of Culloden by digging in an area of the battlefield not previously excavated. The location is near to where the left wing of a second line of British government troops lined up on 16

April 1746. Archaeologists hope to find personal items dropped or discarded by the government soldiers.



The memorial on Culloden battlefield – soon to be a 3D model.

As well as buttons, buckles and ammunition, the team said they might also find lead shot fired by the Jacobites into the lines of government troops during the 40-minute battle. A series of pits will be dug in the area close to the access road to the battlefield's visitor centre.

The work, being undertaken for the National Trust for Scotland (NTS), will also include using digital and drone photography to make 3D models of the Culloden monument, the gravestones of clansmen killed fighting for the prince and other battlefield markers. A 3D model is also to be created of an enormous boulder known as the Cumberland Stone, where, legend has it, the duke of Cumberland is said to have had breakfast, or his lunch, on the table-flat top of the rock on the day of the battle. It has also been said that he stood on the stone to better survey the course of the fighting; although the stone is not particularly close to the scene of the battle.

Archaeologists have examined the moorland battle-site on the outskirts of Inverness before. In recent years, detailed investigations with metal detecting and geophysical survey work have taken place in an area known as the Field of the English, with trial trenching around Old Leanach Cottage, both close to the position of the government first line.

NTS manages the battlefield and their operations manager, Raoul Curtis Machin

said: 'The team are really excited about the dig. They are passionate about the history of Culloden battlefield and are always learning new things about this amazing site, which we can then share with the public who care so deeply about this important place.'

KLUS on TV



The King's Lynn under Siege (KLUS) project [Eds: See the article in the previous issue of *Battlefield*, Summer 2021, Volume 26, Issue 1], formed to investigate the English Civil War siege-site of King's Lynn will be appearing on television early next year.

Since January 2020, the project has been investigating the site of the north-east bastion, and whilst progress was severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, work has recently re-commenced on-site. In September 2021, the first excavation of the north-east bastion-site took place as part of Channel 4's *Great British Dig* series. The programme is presented by Hugh Dennis with a team of expert archaeologists who excavate back gardens around Britain, in an attempt to uncover the lost history buried beneath our lawns and flower beds. The *Dig* was very successful and vindicated the project's research to date. The programme is expected to be broadcast in early 2022.

KLUS is a long-term community-based archaeological research project involving professionals, academics, students, volunteers and local communities that will deploy a full range of techniques and approaches to the understanding of the lived human experience of the English Civil Wars and its impact upon the people and fabric of King's Lynn.

To find out more about the King's Lynn under Siege project visit the website at www.militaryhistorylive.co.uk/mhl-kings-lynn-under-siege.html or email the team at kingslynnundersiege@outlook.com.

Stoke Spitfire

Stoke-on-Trent's iconic Spitfire was unveiled in its stunning new museum gallery on 15 September – the day which marks the RAF's victory in the Battle of Britain. A VIP launch event was held at the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery's new striking glass-fronted extension before the restored aircraft, and its new home, opened to the public for the first time on Saturday, 18 September.

As well as getting up close to one of Britain's most famous aircraft, the new free-to-visit gallery will offer visitors a chance to 'pilot' a Spitfire and will reveal more about the story of the plane and its designer, Reginald Mitchell, who has close connections to the city. Among those who attended the private launch was his great-nephew Julian Mitchell, who spoke about the history of the aircraft and the amazing efforts to preserve and

restore Spitfire RW388. Other guests included Armed Forces dignitaries, veterans, air cadets, local historians, faith leaders and Operation Spitfire members.

For the last three years, the Spitfire – based on Mitchell's famous design – has been in a workshop 200 miles away in Kent, where aircraft preservation specialists have painstakingly restored the plane to its former glory. Aircraft RW388 was then transported back to Stoke-on-Trent in June, with a huge crane finally lifting the precious cargo into its new home.



The Stoke-on-Trent Spitfire in its new home.

Since then work has continued on the Spitfire Gallery, which has been designed and built by Morgan Sindall Construction and funded by Stoke City Council. The new 3,800 sq ft gallery features glass walls at the front and back, so the public can see the plane lit up at night. As well as its striking glass walls, the new gallery also features a simulator, allowing visitors to experience what it would have been like to pilot the aircraft. Part of the gallery will be used to project video, animations and images about the plane and its designer, Reginald Mitchell, who lived in Normacot and was educated in Stoke-on-Trent before becoming one of the greatest aeronautical engineers of his generation.

The exhibition has been funded through a successful bid for £210,000 from a joint funding pot run by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in partnership with the Wolfson Foundation. Further funding totalling £47,000 was also raised with help from Operation Spitfire, The Friends of the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, and through visitors' donations.

For further information please visit www.stokemuseums.org.uk/pmag.





LCT 7074 at the D-Day Story Museum.



The Sherman and Churchill tanks in the loading bay of LCT 7074.



LCT 7074 and The D-Day Story

This summer, the last landing craft of its kind, LCT 7074, a Landing Craft Tank, opened as a new visitor attraction on Southsea Seafront, Portsmouth. LCT 7074 is now part of The D-Day Story Museum. Visitors can now step on board – via the ramp at the bow – where they'll once again be able to see the two tanks – a Sherman and Churchill – that used to stand outside the old D-Day Museum. There are short films showing the history of LCT and the work it undertook during D-Day, plus a touch-screen display of archive material. Visitors can also head into the wheel house, where sailors would steer the huge vessel, before moving up to the bridge – for views across Southsea Common and out to sea.

More than 800 LCTs were built for the D-Day landings, to transport vehicles and troops across the English Channel to Normandy. They were enormous vessels – around 57 metres long and weighing around 300 tonnes – enabling them to transport up to ten tanks and their crews at any one time. Though hundreds were built, only one remains – LCT 7074. Now, thanks to a huge effort and great deal of financial support, LCT 7074 has been restored, preserved, and turned into a fascinating attraction now forming part of The D-Day Story.

One of the later landing craft to arrive in Normandy for D-Day; LCT 7074 dropped its initial cache of Cromwell, Stuart and Sherman tanks onto Gold Beach. It then set off on more cross-channel trips in the months that followed, carrying vehicles, troops, munitions and supplies between the UK and France.

A year later, LCT 7074 was converted for service in the Far East, but the conclusion of the war meant it was never deployed. By 1948 it had been decommissioned.

Following various roles – including a nightclub – and a failed restoration, LCT 7074 was sunk in the Liverpool docks. In 2014 the National Museum of the Royal Navy (NMRN) got involved to save LCT 7074 and complete the restoration. Over 100 dives were undertaken to survey the wreck, before it was lifted back out of the water in a two-day operation in October 2014. It was then moved to Portsmouth for the NMRN to begin restoration work.

The restoration job was huge, and the NMRN secured a £4.7 million grant from

the National Lottery Heritage Fund to undertake the work, before LCT 7074 was installed at its new home on Southsea Seafront to become part of The D-Day Story.

The D-Day Story is the only museum in the UK dedicated to the Allied Invasion in June 1944. It tells the unique personal stories behind this epic event. For more information on the museum and visiting LCT 7074 please see the museum website at www.theddaystory.com.

Evidence of Roman reprisals to Boudican revolt

The destruction of a 'clearly high status' Iron Age village 'may represent reprisals after the Boudican revolt', an archaeologist has said. More than seventeen roundhouses were discovered in a defensive enclosure at Cressing, near Braintree in Essex. A number of the larger roundhouses had been burned down and the defensive enclosure cleared and abandoned during the late first century AD. The excavation by Oxford Archaeology East, ahead of a housing development by Countryside Properties, began during the first lockdown and lasted eight months.

'The local Trinovantes tribe joined the AD 61 rebellion and after Boudica's defeat we know the Romans punished everyone involved,' said Andy Greef. The four-hectare (ten-acre) site had been little disturbed in the centuries since the Iron Age settlement was abandoned. The enclosure was 'clearly an important place' with an 'avenue-like entrance' and continued to expand after the Roman invasion in AD 43, so archaeologists were surprised it was not resettled after its destruction.

Further evidence of the settlement's abandonment was the complete lack of Roman burials in subsequent centuries, Mr Greef added.

Despite this, the site remained a centre of 'votive offerings' – possibly linked to the cult of the Roman god Mercury – until the end of the Roman occupation in the fourth century AD. Mr Greef said: 'More than 100 brooches, ten Iron Age coins, dozens of Roman coins, hairpins, beads, finger rings and a lovely copper alloy cockerel figurine were discovered. It could be there was a shrine on the site that continued to attract people and, as it's very close to the Roman road Stane Street, it was easy to access.'

The dig also revealed 'one of the most significant assemblages of late Iron Age pottery from Essex in recent years'.

Many months of analysis lie ahead, but once completed, it is hoped that some of the finds will find homes in Essex museums.

First World War submarine wreck given protection

The wreck of a British submarine used in the First World War has been given protection. The submarine was deliberately sunk in 1918 off the coast of Dartmouth, Devon. The protected status of the wreck means that it can be dived, but its contents are protected by law and must not be moved.



British D-class submarine HMS/m D1. (Imperial War Museum).

At the start of the First World War, HMS/m D1 was used to protect the coast of Dover and monitor German shipping movements before it was delegated to training duties. In October 1918 it was deliberately sunk and used as a training target for Royal Navy training exercises detecting enemy submarines. It is upright and remains largely intact on the seabed.

A team of specialist divers found the submarine during an investigation and reported the find to Historic England. Lead diver Steve Mortimer, who was part of the team searching for the remains of German U-boats when they came across the wreck, said: 'Every diver dreams of identifying a historically important wreck.' He went on to say that they were 'thrilled to discover a ground-breaking British submarine instead. It's tremendous that D1 is now protected but divers can still visit.'

Historic England's chief executive Duncan Wilson said: 'This is a fascinating survival which deserves protection as an important part of our seafaring history.' The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport granted protection to the wreck, on advice from Historic England.

Scottish Battlefields Trust

Autumn Report 2021

by Arran Johnston, Director

An aerial view of the living-history camps at the Prestonpans 1745 event.



As always, the late summer has seen a busy period of activity for the Scottish Battlefields Trust. This included a live-streamed wreath-laying commemoration at Dunbar 1650, and a live-streaming of the annual Pinkie 1547 memorial ceremony hosted by the Old Musselburgh Club.

By far the biggest moment of our year was however the Prestonpans 1745 re-enactments on 18–19 September, for which we teamed up with the *Battle of Prestonpans (1745) Heritage Trust*. The event saw over 1,500 visitors attend a packed programme of living history activities and arena displays. Both days began and closed with an act of remembrance for those who fought in 1745, and the weekend was followed by a battlefield commemoration on the actual anniversary a few days later. The Trust at Prestonpans is making great progress with its refurbishment of the local town hall, which will open as a Jacobite museum and heritage centre early next year.

We reported in the last edition that SBT had registered an objection to proposals for a service station development at Sheriffmuir 1715. We are pleased to say that this application has been denied permission by the local authority. Although the potential impacts on the battlefield were clearly not considered to be critical, the overall scheme was judged to be unjustifiably detrimental to the local landscape generally and contrary to the local development plan (LDP). This serves as a reminder of how

important it is that we work with local authorities to embed battlefields' considerations into LDPs whenever possible.

Some readers will have heard that the Scottish Government's petitions committee recently rejected a call from campaigners at Culloden 1746 to strengthen battlefield protection legislation. The process exposed some concerning misconceptions amongst some politicians as to the current state of play. The SBT has since written to a number of MSPs on this matter, and has also held renewed and positive conversations with the National Trust for Scotland on how best to progress the strengthening of protections.

We have also produced a short booklet aimed at anyone who might fancy becoming a 'battlefield champion', giving tips and ideas on how you could begin raising the profile of a battle or skirmish site in your community or area of interest. We are further inviting current and would-be champions to gather for the 7th Biennial Scottish Battlefields Symposium, on 17 November 2021 at the Scottish Storytelling Centre in Edinburgh. If you are interested in attending or presenting, please get in touch with us at info@scottishbattlefields.org.

As always, we are eager to hear from any who wish to get involved with our work in Scotland, including in helping us with talks, tours and commemorations. Please also get in touch if you have any concerns about a particular site, or think there is an opportunity we have been missing.



Remembering those who fought and fell in 1745.



The Jacobites charge the redcoat line at Prestonpans.



The Jacobites turn back the British dragons.



The redcoats unleash a volley at Prestonpans.

The Battle of Mauchline Moor

A Case of History Repeating

by Warwick Louth

Scotland's role in the major conflicts now known as the British Civil Wars was critical, with Scottish armies fighting in England and Ireland as well as in Scotland itself. The intervention of the Covenanters' military forces in northern England from 1644 was perhaps decisive, despite the distraction of a dangerous and increasingly bitter civil war within Scotland beginning later that same year. But although the Scottish Covenanters had done more than their share to bring Charles I to heel, his eventual surrender destabilised the relative political harmony which had helped make them so effective. Ironically, this critical period of Scotland's history is often overlooked in the popular discourse, leaving many sites of both skirmishes and set-piece battles vulnerable to loss for their lack of profile. These places are also crucial to understanding the long legacy which influenced later rebellions and protest movements, from the later Covenanters of the Restoration period to the Radicals of the nineteenth century and beyond. The skirmish at Mauchline Moor is one such incident, with a legacy far greater than its immediate military significance.

Background

Following Charles I's surrender to the Covenanter army in England, the Covenanters handed the king to their parliamentary allies. The problem of what then should be done with the king soon caused problems for his vanquishers. From the Scottish perspective, there were those who felt the English Parliament was failing to hold to the agreements of the Solemn League and Covenant, and the king seemed willing to exploit this. Many Covenanters felt that to engage with the king, on any level, undermined the purpose of their eight-year struggle against the Crown and its conformist religious policies.

The Covenanters began to divide into factions: those willing to engage with the king – and therefore support future royalist resistance in England – known as the Engagers; and the more hard-line group known as the Kirk Party. Far from securing peace, the re-arrangement of



King Charles I

the political landscape in 1646–7 seemed to herald a spiral backwards into further civil war. In December 1647, the Engagers made a deal with King Charles and, in return for their aid, he agreed to a limited trial of Presbyterianism in England. Charles refused, however, to sign the Covenant himself, which raised doubts over his true intentions.

Support for the Engagement at home was generally weak, but by the spring of 1648 the Engager party had the majority in the Scottish Parliament. Most of the Covenanter regiments had been disbanded following success in England. Communities which had sent soldiers to fight against the king were now levied again, but to rescue him and fight against their former allies.

To raise the necessary troops in support of a planned royalist uprising in Lancashire, the duke of Hamilton issued a general call-to-arms throughout Scotland in May 1648. Hamilton was Scotland's premier peer, and had once been the king's most trusted Scottish advisor. He had, however, failed to curtail the political rise of the Covenanters, and in 1639 had failed to prosecute his part in the king's military plans against them. Hamilton had previously served on the continent and so was not without military experience or prestige. In 1648, he planned to bolster his ranks with George Monro's veterans from the Ulster theatre, and hoped for a levy of 30,000 men.

The population, however, remained unconvinced. Some preferred to flee into the Highlands or Ulster rather than fight. Even Hamilton's own tenants at



James Hamilton, 1st duke of Hamilton, by John Hinde.



Sir James Turner, by Robert White (1683).

Lesmahagow and Avondale refused to turn out, fleeing over the county boundary into Ayrshire instead. Hamilton called on the Glasgow burgh magistrates to coerce the local population, but even they refused to cooperate.

Strapped for men, Hamilton turned to Covenanter enforcer Sir James 'Bloody Bite-the-Sheep' Turner. Here was a veteran not only of campaigns in the Low Countries, but also of suppressing the dreaded Irish royalist Alasdair MacColla. Using a tried and tested approach, Turner



A later depiction of the Covenanter Captain John Paton.



John Middleton, 1st earl of Middleton, painted later in his life by Jacob Huysman.



Loudoun Hill, site of Robert the Bruce's victory in 1307 and the initial gathering point for the Kirk Party's armed congregation.

resorted to using free quarter to overawe the populace. This involved the imposition of up to 8–10 soldiers on a rural household at the rate of 8–10d a day per soldier, in lieu of the expected recruits from the district. Turner said of such means:

I found my worke not very difficill; for I shortlie learned to know, that the quartering tuo of three troopers and halfe a dozen musketeers was ane argument strong enough, in two or three nights time, to make the hardest headed Covenanter in the tounne to forsake the Kirk and side with parliament.

Such heavy-handed treatment was, however, unlikely to win hearts and minds, or to yield a well-motivated levy. Despite his service under David Leslie against MacColla, Turner himself was no enthusiastic Covenanter.

Mauchline Moor

In protest against such outrages, fugitive Kirk Party Covenanters called a mass conventicle at Loudoun Hill for 11 June 1648. They had powerful backing from the likes of the earl of Eglinton and the renowned soldier David Leslie, famous for defeating the royalists under Montrose at Philiphaugh. But with the news that

Hamilton was moving to suppress the gathering, the armed congregation moved from Loudoun to Mauchline Moor, 9 miles outside Kilmarnock.

Sir Robert Baillie had warned Hamilton of the emerging unrest in Ayrshire and the West:

There is indeed in our people a great animositie put in them, both by our preaching and discourse; also by the extream great oppression of the sojourns; so that it fears me, if Lambert be come to Carlisle with fresh men . . . so soon as our army shall be intangled with the English, many of our people will rise on their backs.

Receiving news from Turner of open rebellion, Hamilton knew he needed to act quickly in order to prevent the possibility of a fifth column emerging at home whilst he committed the Engager army to a campaign in England. Hamilton dispatched Lieutenant-General John Middleton, an experienced officer, to directly approach the Kirk Party at Mauchline. Meanwhile, the earl of Callendar would link up with the earl of Lanark (Hamilton's younger brother) at Stewarton, billeting on Kilmarnock in the hopes of trapping the Kirk Party in place.

Orders of Battle

Kirk Party

Commanders

William Nevay

Msr William Guthrie

Infantry

The 'congregation' (2,000–3,000)

Fenwick Company (76)

Cavalry

South Lanarkshire Horse (60) – Capt John Paton

Engagers

Commanders

Lt-Gen John Middleton

James Livingston, earl of Callendar

Infantry

Earl of Callendar (2,000)

Cavalry

Lt-Gen John Middleton (600) in 6–10 troops: including Middleton's Regiment of Horse (75)

Earl of Callendar (1,600): including Colonel William Urry's Troop of Horse (80)

James Livingston,
earl of Callendar.



Mauchline parish church. Although a much later building, the church is home to a flag reputed to have been carried at the battle.

The traditional site of the coming confrontation is an expanse of open land south of the small village of Mauchline, which extends to the river Ayr below and is largely flat and at the time probably presented few obstacles for the movement of large bodies of men.

On first reaching Mauchline with a force of cavalry, Middleton was stunned to find the Kirk Party present in far greater numbers than expected, outnumbering him 2:1. After sending a message on to the earl of Callendar asking for reinforcements, Middleton parlayed with the rebels. Seven ministers were sent forward by the Kirk Party, obtaining an assurance from the Engagers that if their congregation surrendered now, as a group, all would be granted amnesty. This suggestion was soundly rejected by the congregation, especially as no leniency had been offered to the 200 deserters amongst their number.

Having now reached an impasse, for the Engagers the only solution was to force their opponents to disperse. Although outnumbered, they had the advantage of

being mounted and so tried to kettle and contain the congregation, serving only to enrage them. Their sheer numbers pushed Middleton back, and he could only really respond by meeting them with a full cavalry charge. This was in turn repulsed, with Middleton himself being wounded. The situation was now pretty dangerous for Middleton, who was at risk of being overrun and therefore giving the Kirk Party the type of victory which could ignite the whole populace. But he was saved by the timely arrival of Callendar's main army. This turned the tide decisively, and the Kirk Party's force broke.

Between thirty and forty men had been killed during the confrontation, eighteen of whom were from the small village of Fenwick. As well as Middleton, the veteran Sir John Urry was amongst the Engagers' wounded – he had served on virtually all sides in the Civil War. They had, however, dispersed the enemy and captured sixty-five men and all seven of the ministers. They were all later freed, and the Engagers made no effort to pursue their enemy off the field.

Aftermath

While not necessarily having much strategic value beyond temporarily securing Engager Scotland whilst Hamilton prepared to march into England, the battle of Mauchline Moor is too important to dismiss as merely a popular protest turned sour. By delaying Hamilton's march, the disturbance had inadvertently bought critical time for the Army of Parliament and its Lancashire supporters to prepare their resistance. Hamilton's poorly motivated and slow-moving army would be broken apart at the battle of Preston and its aftermath in August 1648.

Mauchline Moor, although technically a defeat for the Kirk Party, reaffirmed popular disapproval of Engagement with the king. The Engagers' victory at Mauchline did not end that resistance, and the need to march into England distracted Hamilton from being able to secure his base any further. The dissenters secured the support of such luminaries as the earl of Loudoun, the marquess of Argyll, David Leslie, and Scotland's premier commander, the earl of Leven. In Hamilton's absence, the opposition regrouped and moved against the Engagers [See *Battlefield Volume 24 Issue 1, Summer 2019*, for a previous article on the battle of Stirling 1648].

With Hamilton defeated in England and Scotland on the brink of full civil war again, the Engagers conceded. The Kirk Party immediately took steps to block the Engagers from holding political or military office, citing in the Parliamentary Register for 16 January 1649 'their base, cruel and unnatural proceedings against the honest and conscientious people that met at Mauchline Moor for their own defence.' Soon after, Hamilton was executed in London under his English title, the earl of Cambridge. So too was King Charles I, and the political re-alignment began once more. Thus when Oliver Cromwell invaded Scotland in 1650, the Covenanters were still denying themselves the services of veterans who had fought for the Engagement.

Legacy

History is not necessarily written by the victors. Within Covenanter communities, memories are long. Although not apparently significant in the greater scheme of the British Civil Wars, Mauchline, in fact, proved to be the first of a new kind of conflict in Scotland. The arming of conventicles, turning church meetings into battlefields, would become a familiar pattern in parts of Scotland during the 1660s and 70s, when the Restoration government sanctioned the prosecution of radical Presbyterianism. These later Covenanters saw themselves as successor to those who had stood in defiance at Mauchline.

Nor does the 'battle' of Mauchline Moor really get treated as a failure by those who were defeated. Some traditions even attributed victory to the Kirk Party. Covenanter sympathisers to this day treat it as hallowed ground, where Presbyterian martyrs shed their blood and provided an example in faith. A Covenanter flag is preserved in Mauchline parish church, and not only was it carried in 1648 but also at the battles of Drumclog and Bothwell Brig in 1679.

And yet, despite continuing interest from Covenanter groups, the site of the confrontation remains unmarked. Despite the size of the forces engaged, Mauchline Moor is not designated as a battlefield under Scotland's Inventory of Historic Battlefields.

The Battle of Hedgeley Moor

by John Sadler

Just to the right of the A697 in Northumberland, as you're heading north, stands a memorial to the battle of Hedgeley Moor fought on 25 April 1464, and just after on your left there's a lay-by with some interpretation panels at the enigmatically labelled Percy's Leap.

Henry Beaufort, 3rd duke of Somerset, losing general at the battle of Towton in 1461, escaped with very lenient terms when, in December 1462, he surrendered the Lancastrians' few remaining Northumbrian castles to Edward IV. Why then did he later defect and resume his former allegiance? He could, presumably, have accepted a safe conduct and withdrawn north of the border as other members of the Dunstanburgh garrison had chosen, though whether the earl of Warwick would have allowed the former commander-in-chief this option is uncertain. There is a suggestion that he'd already approached the earl some months beforehand to explore terms.

On 10 March 1463, his attainder was reversed and yet, by December he and Sir Ralph Percy had both reverted their allegiance. Dr Michael Hicks has asserted, probably correctly, in *Edward IV, the Duke of Somerset and Lancastrian Loyalty in the North*, that this was not due to hubris or an unwillingness to accept reality, Somerset was neither fool nor dreamer – he must have known the odds were long and that no second chances would be forthcoming.

What occurred was, therefore, a crisis of conscience, the pull of his affinity, the oath given to Henry VI was too compelling and triumphed over expediency. The cause might be hopeless but honour outweighed the odds, as Michael Hicks asserts. Possibly both Percy and Somerset regarded their earlier compromise as nothing more than a necessary ruse to gain time whilst matters turned more favourably, having said that there were scant grounds in December 1463 for imagining the prospects for Henry VI were improving. The duke and Sir Ralph were not alone, both Sir Henry Bellingham and Sir Humphrey Neville subsequently defected. Some commentators, particularly Charles Ross in *Edward IV*, regard Edward's policy of 'hearts and minds' as naïve and culpable, a political blunder.



Information panel at Hedgeley Moor.



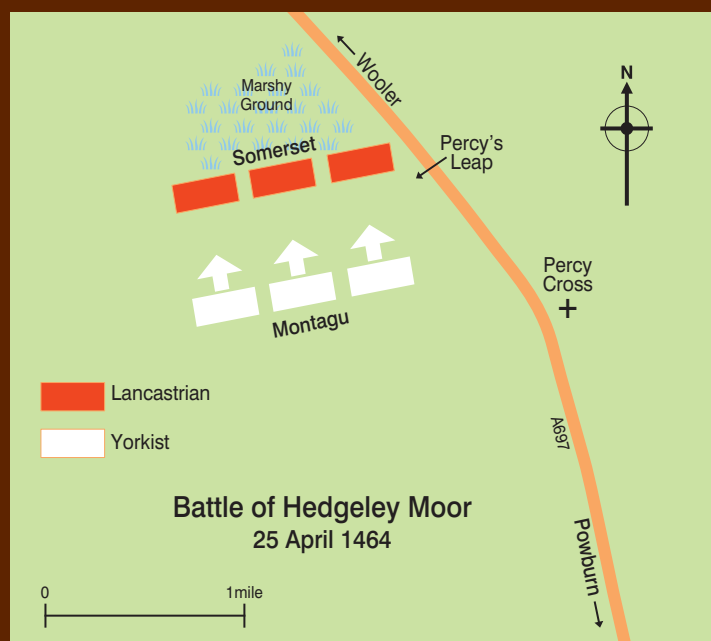
The roadside commemoration at Percy's Leap.



The Percy Cross from Scott's Border Antiquities.



The Percy Cross at Hedgeley Moor.



This may be too censorious. Edward had won the crown by the sword; his affinity amongst the magnates was narrow. To survive and establish a stable regime he needed, urgently, to broaden his platform of support. To achieve this it was clearly necessary to win over former opponents. Simply killing them was not, as recent history showed, an effective policy. The blood spilled on the streets of St Albans in 1455 had pooled into a legacy of hate and resentment that had led to the carnage of Towton. The effects of this titanic fight should not be underestimated, the Yorkists had won, but only by a whisker, it was a field that could have gone either way. No prince would consider having to repeat such an epic campaign, the drain on blood and treasure was simply too great, the stakes too high. Edward had judged that suborning his former enemies not only brought new friends but demoralised the remaining diehards and, by the close of 1462, Hicks' opinion is that Edward could have been justified in thinking that the flames of resistance had guttered out.

Edward's contemporaries certainly took the harsher view. Gregory, no friend to Somerset observed in his *Chronicle* that; 'the savynge of hys lyffe at that tyme cuasyd many mannys dethys son aftyr, as ye shalle heyre'. Hicks views Percy's defection as the more serious because of the power of his name in Northumberland, notwithstanding the fact that the king still held both Somerset's brother and Percy's nephew as hostages. Edward's policy of conciliation was at best a gamble and one which, in these leading instances, clearly failed. At the time it seemed a risk worth taking if the prize was a lasting peace, this was not achieved and the Lancastrian cause in the north was to enjoy a final, brief revival in the spring of 1464.

Early in the year sporadic unrest erupted throughout the realm. In fifteen counties, from Kent to Cornwall and as far north as Leicestershire, the disruption was sufficiently serious for the king to delay the state opening of Parliament. There is evidence from the contemporary record that Somerset might have, mistakenly, perceived that King Henry had received some fresh impetus and supply; 'herynge y King Henry was comynge into the lande with a newe strength' as *Fabyan's Chronicle* states. It is uncertain where these fresh troops were coming from and how they were to be paid, perhaps there was a hope that the French might intervene or even the Scots.

Somerset began his reversion by attempting to seize Newcastle, a considerable prize, being the Yorkists' forward supply base. A number of his affinity formed an element of the garrison but the attempt did not succeed, Lord Scrope with some of the king's household knights frustrated the scheme. The rebel duke was very nearly taken at Durham where he was obliged to flee from his lodgings in no more than his nightshirt. *Gregory's Chronicle* reported that a number of his retainers were captured, together with their master's 'caskette and hys harneys [helmet and armour]'. Others attempted to slip through the net and escape Newcastle; any who were caught suffered summary execution.

There is also some further doubt as to fugitive King Henry's whereabouts. The *Year Book of Edward IV* claims he was at Alnwick, though this may be incorrect for the same source claims Margaret of Anjou and Pierre de Breze were with him, when we can, in fact, be certain both were in Flanders at this time. Northumberland County History Committee in *A History of Northumberland* still places Henry's diminished court at lordly Bamburgh and this seems more credible. As John Gillingham points out in his *Wars of the Roses*, Alnwick was nearer the Yorkists at Newcastle whilst Bamburgh had access to the sea. Somerset may have proceeded directly to Henry or, equally



The Battle of Hedgeley Moor by Graham Turner ©. The painting shows Sir Ralph Percy launching himself at Montagu's soldiers as his allies, Lords Hungerford and Roos, can be seen in the background leaving the battlefield. For more details on Graham's paintings, visit his website at www.studio88.co.uk.

possible, he may have made for Tynedale, where a crop of castles, Prudhoe, Hexham, Bywell and Langley remained staunchly Lancastrian. At some point, either in February or March he was joined by his former comrades, Sir Ralph Percy and Sir Humphrey Neville of Brancepeth, with their retainers. With the duke's defection a new sense of urgency infused the faltering cause of the house of Lancaster.

And urgency there was, for the Scots were showing willingness to treat with Warwick who had detailed his brother Montagu to march north and provide safe passage through the uncertain reaches of the frontier for a team of Scottish negotiators. These talks were initially scheduled to take place at Newcastle on 6 March 1464, but the increasing tempo of alarms caused the start to be delayed until 20 April and the venue shifted southward to calmer pastures. According to *Gregory's Chronicle*, Edward, on 27 March, announced his intention to travel north and organise a suitable escort for the delegation waiting at Norham. The success of any such mission would be

fatal to Lancastrian hopes, so Somerset was placed in a position where he was bound to take the field, with such forces as he could muster and stake everything. Consequently, he dispatched a commanded body of foot, 'four score spears and bows too', under Neville, as Gregory recounts, to lay an ambush 'a little from Newcastle in a wood', to stop Montagu from reaching Newcastle. Forewarned by scouts or spies, Montagu easily avoided the trap and chose a safer route into the city where he was reinforced by 'a great fellowship'. He then set out to march northwards to the border and Norham to meet the Scottish delegation.

Somerset's best chance now lay in forcing a decisive encounter; causing a defeat in the field that would leave the Scots immured and serve to show that the Lancastrians still had teeth. By mustering every spear he could find and stripping his handful of garrisons the duke might, as Gregory suggests, have been able to muster 5,000. This seems a very generous estimate notwithstanding he could count upon his own affinity with

those of Percy, Neville, Bellingham, the turncoat Grey, Lords Hungerford and Roos. We have no note of the force Montagu was leading north but it would certainly have been the equal of anything his enemies could deploy. As the Yorkists marched north from Morpeth, the Lancastrians sallied from Alnwick, both sides probing with a screen of light horse or 'prickers'. Nine miles west of Alnwick Somerset drew up in battle order blocking the way northwards to Norham.

Though the chronicles provide only scanty details of the battle which ensued a careful perambulation of the ground which, save for the spread of cultivation, remains largely undisturbed, indicates the fight took place on the shelf of rising ground just north of where Percy's Cross now stands. This is the area between, to the south, the stand of timber known as Percy's Strip Wood and the monument at Percy's Leap. Here, the ground is roughly level, slightly undulating rising toward the northern flank. In the spring of 1464 the land was not under the plough but an expanse of open moor, largely devoid of trees. With the Lancastrians facing south,



in front of Percy's Leap, the Yorkists most probably carried out their initial deployment on the line of the present woodland.

As they approached from the south the main body of the Yorkists would have had no opportunity to view the strength of their enemy until they ascended the slight rise, which swells from the lower ground.



A nineteenth-century lithograph of the Battle of Hedgeley Moor.

The Lancastrians would not have wished to deploy to the south of the position suggested as this would be to lose the advantages the field conferred. Philip Haigh, in *Military Campaigns of the Wars of the Roses*, shows the Yorkists drawn up somewhat to the south of this position and indicates the Lancastrians advanced to contact over open ground. I think this unlikely. Yorkist morale was most probably higher and Montagu may have enjoyed greater strength, he was, by nature, a confident and aggressive commander. This is, however, conjectural as the chronicles remain frustratingly silent as to these initial dispositions and the numbers certainly cannot be assessed with any degree of confidence. Somerset may, like Warwick, have been prone to indecision at key moments – his failure to reinforce Clifford at Dintingdale, as recounted by Andrew Boardman in *The Battle of Towton 1461*, stands as a clear example.

It could be assumed that the fight commenced with the customary duel of arrows (though there is no evidence) and Yorkist supremacy was swiftly asserted.

Before ever striking a blow, the whole of the Lancastrian left or rearward division, commanded by the Lords Hungerford and Roos, dissolved in total rout, leaving the centre under Somerset, Bellingham and Grey, together with the right or vanward, under Percy, horribly exposed. Montagu ordered the advance to contact, as stated by Haigh. Most probably the melee occurred in the vicinity of Percy's

Leap, a short, savage and largely one-sided encounter. The Lancastrian centre soon joined their fellows on the left in flight, Somerset and his officers swept along, unable to stem the rot. Percy by now was virtually surrounded; fighting bravely, he sustained mortal wounds seeking to break the ring. An enigmatic legend, recounted by Gerald Brenan in *The House of Percy*, lingers over his last moments: 'I have saved the bird in my bosom,' Sir Ralph is said to have uttered as his mount stumbled the dozen yards between two low outcrops. What was meant by this remark remains uncertain; perhaps he referred to his true loyalty to Lancaster, ironic then, from a man who had changed sides with such facility.

Montagu's victory was complete and, though the chronicles give no hint of losses, probably cheaply bought. Aside from Percy and those retainers around him who held their ground, most of the defeated escaped unscathed. Morale was clearly a major factor in the Lancastrian defeat. Despite his humiliation on the field Somerset was able to rally many of the Lancastrians and retreat, in reasonably

good order into Tynedale whilst Montagu was fully occupied with the diplomatic game; King Henry's kingdom had shrunk further but was not yet extinguished, as stated by Gillingham.

With the Scots now in negotiations, and the French in talks at St Omer, which had begun the previous autumn, the Lancastrians' diplomatic isolation was all but complete. As Northumberland was no longer viable as a bridgehead, then there was little incentive for Somerset to disperse his forces in isolated garrisons, simply holding ground was pointless. As Ross points out, with the Scots set to change horses, bargaining chips, like Berwick and Norham, had no further currency; Margaret of Anjou had already ceded the former, but Norham, 'the Queen of Border Fortresses' would have been another significant card for her to play.

Henry's prospects appeared to be brighter in the west. In March there had been some fresh disturbances in Lancashire and Cheshire and resistance flared briefly in Skipton in Craven, seat of the Cliffords, who, with their local affinity, had bled so liberally for Lancaster. But none of these alarms developed into a serious threat. However, King Edward continued to feel insecure in the north and west; according to the *Paston Letters*, commissions of array were sent out to the midlands and Yorkshire; no writs were issued in Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmorland, Lancashire or Cheshire.

Somerset wasn't quite done yet; he'd fight again at Hexham a few weeks later; this time he'd lose his head as well as the battle.

Further reading:

Michael Hicks, *Edward IV, the Duke of Somerset and Lancastrian Loyalty in the North*, in *Northern History*, Volume XX

John Gillingham, *Wars of the Roses* (London; Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2001)

Charles Ross, *Edward IV* (London; Yale Press, 1997)

Philip Haigh, *Military Campaigns of the Wars of the Roses* (Gloucester; Sutton Publishing, 1997)

Gerald Brenan, *The House of Percy* (England; 1898)

The Battle of **Barnet** and a Serendipity Moment

by Hilary Harrison



Nearing the end of a Battle of Barnet Project meeting in early 2018, Howard Simmons dropped a serendipitous bombshell. He had just returned from Canada where he had visited the National History Museum in Ottawa and he had interesting news.

A British Museum travelling exhibition, 'Medieval Europe: Power and Legacy' was showing and, coincidentally, the battle of Barnet had been chosen to illustrate the medieval warfare section. Amazingly, the stars of the show were a seal of the earl of Warwick and six arrowheads from the battle. The existence of these objects was a complete revelation to everyone around the table. They had not been recorded by the historians and archaeologists who had been researching and investigating the battle for decades. It had taken a chance visit by Howard to a country thousands of miles away to reveal their existence. The task was to see if they could now come back to Barnet.

Negotiations with the British Museum began. It transpired that the arrowheads had been given to the museum in 1851 by an unknown donor and had only been taken out of store for exhibition in Canada – the seal had been donated earlier. By now, the objects had been returned to the museum store, so Naomi Speakman, the Curator of Medieval Collections in the Department of Britain, Europe and Prehistory, was contacted, and she was very encouraging.

We booked to view the objects, becoming very excited about the possibility of a loan. After that, many emails and letters whizzed back and forth; we waited patiently while various committees met and made decisions. This was a rigorous process to satisfy the British Museum that Barnet Museum could display the objects securely and maintain the correct environment. Meanwhile, in anticipation, the museum purchased a new temperature and humidity-controlled cabinet together with a dehumidifier. Then, the pandemic hit and deadlines came and went. Even so, humidity levels were assiduously recorded. Light levels were checked. Insurance details were verified. All kinds of forms were completed. After nearly three years, the

email finally arrived. The British Museum had granted the long-term loan of the artefacts to Barnet Museum – their arrival date was set for Tuesday 29 June 2021.

Early that morning, Richard Wakeman, the British Museum's Assistant Collection Manager: Care and Access, arrived with a huge box. The curatorial team stood

around in awe as he decanted the objects and, with Helen Downes, Barnet Museum Advisor, looking on with equal concentration, carefully examined them to confirm and record their condition. The arrowheads appeared quite fragile, but close to it was possible to see the marks of the smith, as well as fragments of wood from the shafts still embedded in them. Amazing and very atmospheric! These arrowheads had been shot 550 years ago very near to where they were now on display – whether from the Lancastrian or the Yorkist side will never be known.

However, it doesn't take much imagination to conjure up a mind-picture of the barbarous action as the battle was waged that foggy morning 'in a field of battle near Barnet' (Shakespeare, *Henry VI*, part 3).

While the arrowheads represent the role of the 'common man', at the opposite end of the social hierarchy the seal of Richard Neville, earl of Warwick, is hugely significant. The machinations of this most over-mighty of warring nobles from the Wars of the Roses were arguably the chief reason for the battle – and his death the most significant outcome. Warwick's demise enabled Edward IV to 'mop-up' the remaining Lancastrian forces, led by Margaret of Anjou and the duke of Somerset, at the battle of Tewkesbury on 4 May 1471. The seal reflects the power of Warwick the Kingmaker. His influence underpinned by his incredible wealth, rivalled the kings he 'made' – Edward IV and Henry VI – and he wanted his power to be recognised. Something to ponder as we regarded this beautiful object. It might have been used to seal the famous letter from Warwick – with a postscript in his own hand – to Henry Vernon in April 1471, exhorting him to fight for the House of Lancaster in the forthcoming struggle against the Yorkists.

Richard Wakeman installed the seal and the arrowheads alongside our other precious objects from the battle – three golf ball-sized lead cannonballs damaged from impact, a purse-bar, a coin of King Edward IV, dated 1468, and a strap end, inscribed with the wheel of St Catherine. The display looked splendid and finally the cabinet was locked – not to be opened again unless a British Museum official was present. Barnet Museum is truly honoured to be entrusted with these unique objects from this significant battle.



The fifteenth-century depiction by Loyset Liédet of the Battle of Poitiers (1356) in Froissart's Chronicles – Please note the arrowheads.



The heraldic banner of Sir Roger Kynaston, painted by volunteers at Barnet Museum.



Richard Wakeman, of the British Museum, meticulously places the objects and closes the cabinet.



Notes about the arrowheads

The main reference work on arrowhead typology is the *London Museum Medieval Catalogue* (LMMC), based on medieval finds from London, by John Bryan Ward-Perkins, published in 1940. Subsequently, in 1996, Oliver Jessop published a research paper; *A new artefact typology for the study of Medieval arrowheads*. The paper suggests a new typology for arrowheads and takes advantage of excavations undertaken subsequent to 1940.

The new typology suggests four categories, Tanged, Multi-purpose, Military and Hunting, which are ascribed a likely function and date. For more details on the typology the paper by Jessop can be downloaded at www.doi.org/10.5284/1071852.

On each arrowhead, painted in neat white letters – the cataloguing system of 1851 – are the date and the order of receiving objects donated to the museum that day.

The Royal Armouries have made an informal report on four of the arrowheads, which are included in the captions and are a combination of the *London Museum Medieval Catalogue* typology and the new typology by Jessop.

The seal of the earl of Warwick

The British Museum catalogue revealed another dimension to the backstory of the brass seal. It was donated to the British Library in 1774, then to the British Museum in the 1830s. The donor was Mrs Victoria Kynaston. Her husband's ancestor was the Yorkist knight, Sir Roger Kynaston (1430–95) of Hordley, Shropshire. His heraldic banner was displayed in Barnet High Street as part of the commemoration of the 550th anniversary of the battle of Barnet. Apparently, it was he who took the seal from the body of the earl of Warwick as he lay dead in the closing stages of the battle. It remained in the possession of his family until 1774. Sir Roger went on from Barnet to fight at the battle of Tewkesbury on 4 May.

The author would like to thank the following for their help: Howard Simmons; Naomi Speakman; Richard Wakeman; Pierre Fragoso and The British Museum Loans Committee. Thanks for permission to use the photographs go to the British Museum (© Trustees of the British Museum).



Arrowhead (1851,0602.2) – A military arrowhead, despite being barbed, of a type used in the fourteenth and fifteenth century. It fits into Jessop's typology 'M' or 'Military' group in having narrow barbs. Suitable for warfare but it may have been used for hunting as well. This example is closely comparable to one from Chester (Poulton), which was found within the body cavity of a human skeleton.



Arrowhead (1851,0602.5) – This arrowhead also has close-set short barbs and is also an 'M' category (Jessop). Type 15s/16s (LMMC) vary considerably due to the different craftsmen fashioning them. This example is most closely comparable to the one from Westminster Abbey. As they needed less metal these smaller arrowheads were cheaper to produce in the huge quantities needed.



Arrowhead (1851,0602.3) – Although barbed, this is almost certainly a military arrowhead on the basis that it contains little metal. It belongs to the 'M' Military group – classed as a Type 16 (LMMC) despite having outward flaring barbs. Similar to the example from Chester, it can be compared to the arrows of English archers shown in the fifteenth-century painting of the Battle of Poitiers (1356) in Froissart's *Chronicles* from the Bibliothèque Nationale. It is sometimes known as a 'Poitier arrowhead'.



Arrowhead (1851,0602.1) – This more expensive arrowhead with very large broad barbs is categorised by Jessop as 'H3' or broadhead. It was more commonly used by foresters and huntsmen, but was sometimes used in warfare. The large cutting surface provided by the barbs made them ideally suited to hunting game such as deer; they caused significant tissue damage and blood loss whilst remaining in the body as the animal attempted to flee. It is chilling to imagine the effect on a human body.



The seal of the earl of Warwick 'the Kingmaker'.

Death of a King Oswald at Maserfelth

by Andrew Breeze

Introduction

A king is slaughtered in combat; his body is hacked to pieces. His enemies nail up his head and arms for all to jeer at. Then the parts are rescued, given proper burial, miracles start to happen. All these are events from the life and death of Oswald, king of Northumbria 634–42. To them can be added another, because Maserfelth, where he died in battle, can now be located definitively. It was not at Oswestry, Shropshire (as many imagine), but at Forden, Powys, some twenty miles from Oswestry. There, in a gap between the hills south of Welshpool and east of Forden, a Northumbrian army was wiped out in the August of 642. Readers of *Battlefield* thus have a new location to visit and think about. After seeing where Oswald died – close to the later Offa's Dyke – they can also venture further afield and visit parts of Oswald himself, the royal saint's head having its final resting-place in the tomb of St Cuthbert at Durham.

So the discovery of Maserfelth's whereabouts tells us much on Oswald's life and afterlife. Our dossier on it is set out in four parts. First is what we know of the battle from Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* and the like. Second is the reasoning which puts Maserfelth at Forden, and not Oswestry. Third is Oswald himself, with stories of his courage and warm-hearted generosity. Fourth is the light which this sheds on modern scholars, some of whom solemnly affirm that Maserfelth was Oswestry, when there is not an atom of real evidence for the case.

Bede and Maserfelth

The main informant for the conflict of Maserfelth is Bede (died 735). Although he understood its importance, he otherwise knew little about it, particularly on where it was. Fortunately, what he says of the place allows us to go to modern maps and locate it. In book three

of his *Ecclesiastical History*, he speaks of how Oswald, 'most Christian king', was killed on 5 August 642 by Mercian troops under Penda, their heathen ruler. Bede is silent on the actual conflict and the reasons why a Northumbrian army was campaigning in Mercia. His concern was, instead, to make Oswald out as a saint and martyr. To do this he narrated strange events that followed the battle, in all of which Oswald showed himself more powerful in death than he had been even when he lived.

Bede's stories are so odd that they must be true. They are all about the place where Oswald fell and would be buried – head and arms excepted. Bede reports



King Oswald – a thirteenth-century illustration from Matthew Paris's *Epitome of Chronicles*.



Oswald at Maserfelth – illustration from the Queen Mary Psalter (British Library).

that soil was taken from the spot to be mixed with water, which was given to sick people or animals with miraculous effect. The custom was so popular that it eventually left a hole nearly six feet deep, equivalent 'to a man's height' as Bede puts it. Three miracles he describes in detail. One was about a rider whose horse became ill. He dismounted, the steed thrashed about in 'agonizing pain'. But, when it came to where Oswald was killed, the frenzy stopped immediately. After a while the horse got up and 'began to crop the grass' greedily. In this bizarre

anecdote is a historical clue. The battle evidently took place on a highway, which – the early English not being known for road-building – was surely an old Roman one. That counts against Oswestry, far from any Roman road.

Another marvel followed. The same rider went on stay at an inn where the landlord's daughter suffered from paralysis. He told the family what he had seen; the girl was brought to the place in a cart. After a short sleep, she woke up cured, 'returning home on foot in perfect

The view back into England and Mercia – Corndon Hill is on the left. Did Penda's army advance from this direction? Photo James Parker.



Oswald crowned as a king from a thirteenth-century manuscript.



A stained-glass window in St Cuthbert's Chapel, Inner Farne, showing St Cuthbert with the head of King St Oswald.

health, with those who had brought her'. A final miracle involved a Welshman who, as he went along this road, noticed turf of unusual greenness. He decided to put soil from the place into a cloth and take it with him. Later, as he was staying the night in a thatched house, fire broke out. Everything was destroyed except 'the post on which the soil hung, enclosed in its bag'.

Now, readers may think these are some of the silliest stories they have ever come across and, in any case, of little interest to historians. But this is not so. They prove

that Maserfelth was on a Roman highway, its importance suggested by its many wayfarers and the inns where they stayed. As one of the travellers was a Welshman, Maserfelth would be near Wales. Like the unremarkable items – dust, hairs – which forensic scientists peer at through microscopes, these prosy details guide us to a solution; as does evidence from Wales, including a poem of the later twelfth century by Cynddelw the 'great poet', who described Cogwy – the Welsh name for Maserfelth – as within walking distance of Meifod, a village six miles north-west of Welshpool, Powys.

Oswestry discredited

At this point we turn to Oswestry, Shropshire. Anyone who looks up entries on the town or what happened in 642 will be informed that the name means 'Oswald's tree' – which is correct – and that it is called after both St Oswald – which is most unlikely – and a cross (the tree) raised by him before attack – which is quite untrue.

Fortunately, some have rejected the oft-repeated link between Oswestry and the battle, above all the late Margaret Gelling, tireless place-name scholar and life-long communist. Her devotion to Karl Marx notwithstanding, Margaret Gelling in her *Signposts to the Past* (1978) was sound as a bell as regards Maserfelth and Oswestry. She made these points. The Shropshire name parallels those of Coventry and Daventry in the West Midlands or Braintree in Essex. All four contain an Old English personal name plus 'tree'. But she stressed that there was not the slightest reason to take those trees as crosses. Her conclusion was incisive. That nothing connects King Oswald with Oswestry will be 'a shocking heresy to the people of that town, and they will doubtless continue to believe that Oswestry is the place where St Oswald, the Christian King of Northumbria, was killed by Penda, the heathen King of Mercia.' How right she was. She here knew that $0 + 0 + 0 + 0 + 0 = 0$. We have already learned from Bede that Maserfelth was on a strategic highway. Oswestry, in contrast, is far from any old roads. In short, the facts available on Maserfelth do not fit Oswestry at all.

What the facts do fit is a site near Forden, where the Roman highway from Wroxeter enters Wales and reaches the valley of the Severn. Decisive proof here was given in 1934 by two German scholars. In his dictionary of Old English, Ferdinand Holthausen cited Max Förster of Munich for Maserfelth as 'field or open land of "Maser"', together with his suggestion that 'Maser' is a Welsh toponym. Now, *Meisyr* is the old name for the remote wooded area west of Welshpool, as shown (for example) by Bryn-cae Meisyr 'hill of the field of Meisyr' (National Grid reference SJ 1100), a farm four miles south of Llanfair Caereinion – terminus of the Welshpool and Llanfair Railway. Work on these forms by German and Welsh philologists provides an answer on the location of Maserfelth.

Bryn-cae Meisyr and other toponyms in

Looking north along the route of the old Roman road as it runs through Forden parish – Nantcribba is to the right. Photo James Parker.



Looking south along the route of the old Roman road as it runs through Forden parish – Nantcribba is to the left. Photo James Parker.



Anglo-Saxon Warriors – circa seventh-century

The warrior on the right is an Anglo-Saxon king; he is based on the Sutton Hoo treasures, which probably belonged to King Rædwald of East Anglia. The kings of Northumbria had contact with East Anglia, Oswald's predecessor, Edwin, had sought sanctuary at Rædwald's court. It is quite likely that at Maserfelth, Oswald, as a king, would have been armoured in a similar fashion. On the left is a common Mercian warrior. Apart from his helmet – which is modelled on the 'Benty

Grange' type – he is unarmoured and has only a shield for his protection. His weapon is a short-sword or seax.

In the background are two warriors armed with a javelin and spear. Their helmets are imported from Vendel Sweden.

Illustration by Angus McBride taken from *Men-at-Arms 154: Arthur and the Anglo-Saxon Wars* by David Nicolle, published by Osprey Publishing.

the locality show that *Meisyr* was known to the English as *Maser*. Maserfelth will hence be in east Meisyr – closer to England – on the Roman road mentioned by Bede, and within walking distance of Meifod, near Welshpool. There is a last point. The exact site is revealed by another Welsh place-name, because native bards and chroniclers knew the encounter as *Cogwy*. Welsh *cog*- can be understood as 'knob, boss, cone'; and it leads to what the Victorian topographer Samuel Lewis described as 'a vast conoidal rock' – surmounted by a ruined fortress – two hundred yards from the mansion of Nantcribba, in Forden parish. Modern battle-fanciers will find the summit (National Grid reference SJ 2301) east of Offa's Dyke and a mile from Forden parish church. It was below this rock on a summer's day in 642 that Oswald died; it was there that he was beheaded and otherwise dismembered, his body (it seems) being buried on the spot, with its head and arms left fastened up for Mercian execration and mockery. With that, the flimsy claims of Oswestry to be Maserfelth can be dismissed for ever.

Who was St Oswald?

If the real location of Maserfelth has been forgotten for over 800 years – although the bard Cynddelw knew its whereabouts as late as the twelfth century – Oswald has never been forgotten. His career was unusual. In his youth he had been an exile at Iona, where he learnt Gaelic. After that, when Cadwallon of Gwynedd invaded Northumbria and ravaged it for a year, it was Oswald who, in the winter of 633–4, led his men to victory over him in a moorland valley south of Hexham, Northumberland at the so-called battle of Heavenfield, correctly located at *Denisesburn* – now Rowley Burn.



The heavily wooded mound of Nantcribba. The site is privately owned and access is restricted. The rocky outcrop was largely quarried away in the nineteenth century. The remains of ditches and earthworks of a motte-and-bailey castle are on the mound. Photo James Parker.



Looking towards the north and the southern aspect of Nantcribba. Photo James Parker.

The view of the west side of Nantcribba from the old Roman road.
Photo James Parker.



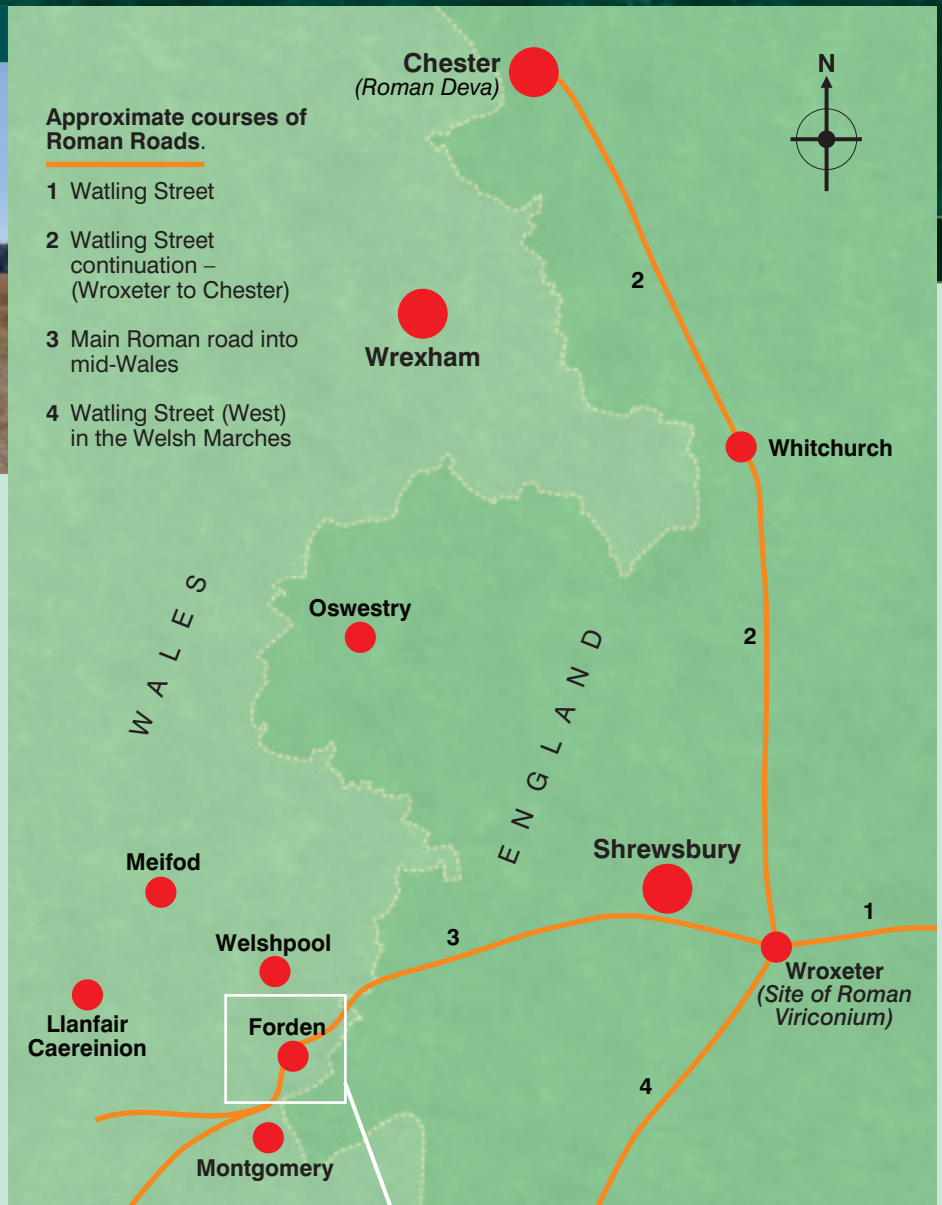
Oswald also invited St Aidan from Iona to help convert his people to Christianity, giving him Lindisfarne as his base. Aidan's Old English was, at first, not very good, and Bede has a description of how, when Aidan came to address Northumbrian lords and ladies, one saw 'the king acting as interpreter', because he knew Gaelic or (Old) Irish perfectly, thanks to his years at Iona.

There are other stories. One of them is about a silver dish put before Oswald and Aidan at a banquet. It was 'full of rich foods'; but, when the king heard of poor people outside who were seeking alms, he ordered 'the dish to be broken up' and the pieces of silver given to them, together with the delicacies. Aidan was so impressed that he took Oswald by the right hand (which had been raised to seek the bishop's blessing on the feast) and declared in front of everybody, 'May this hand never decay!' Bede thought the prophecy vindicated by the way that Oswald's head and arms (after recovery from Maserfelth) had survived, in his time being 'preserved in a silver shrine' at Bamburgh, near Lindisfarne. Previously they had been at Bardney, a monastery a few miles east of Lincoln; and Bede has another uncanny story of what happened when they arrived, as follows.

Despite acknowledging Oswald as a saint, the monks of Bardney hated him. He was from another kingdom and had acquired the Lincoln area by conquest. When Oswald's niece, Queen Osthryth of Mercia, sent the bones of Oswald to Bardney for fitting burial, the monks would not allow them to be brought in, and they were left outside all night, 'with only a large tent erected over the carriage' that bore them. Then came a wonder. Until dawn 'a column of light stretched from the carriage right up to heaven'. It could be seen all over north Lincolnshire. In the morning,



The course of the Roman road as it branches off towards the east of Long Mountain. Photo James Parker.





The view south down the old Roman road – Nantcribba can be seen in the middle distance. Did Oswald have the same view? Photo James Parker.



The later Offa's Dyke as it runs south from Nantcribba – all that remains of the dyke at this point is the ditch along the inside of the hedge to the left. Photo James Parker.



The view west into Wales. Photo James Parker.

the monks changed their mind, and 'began to pray earnestly that the relics might be lodged with them.' The bones were washed and placed inside a shrine made for the purpose. In order that the 'royal saint' should be remembered, Oswald's 'banner of gold and purple' was fixed above the tomb. Even the water used to wash the relics had power. It was poured away, as waste water is, apparently in a corner of the nearby cemetery; but, ever after, soil from this spot had the special quality of 'driving devils from the bodies of people possessed'.

It is good to learn something of Oswald's banner, no doubt a splendid item. We otherwise hear too little of him as a soldier, despite his triumph over Cadwallon in 633–4 and his death as a fighting man at Maserfelth in 642. He has been remembered as a saint, rather than a potent ruler and, until his last battle, an able general. Bede's wonder-tales have encrusted his fame. For all that, the results have been dramatic in England and beyond. Many churches are dedicated to Oswald, especially in Yorkshire. Across the Channel, one finds other churches under his patronage in Bavaria and Austria and Switzerland, together with German-speaking men called Oswald – for his cult is strong on the Continent. To be found as well are pictures or images of Oswald, either as a young king with a raven and ampulla, or merely of his head, crowned and carried by St Cuthbert.

Maserfelth the way ahead

Now back to Maserfelth. If it was fought in August 642 on the old road running through the later parish of Forden, Powys, with wondrous powers attributed to the spot where Oswald fell and was buried – minus head and arms – then a completely

new British battlefield is on record. The place can be included with Sutton Hoo, Jarrow, Glastonbury and Maldon as a part of England's early history. Researchers may consider the aims of Oswald on his final ill-fated campaign. Battle archaeologists may expect to make discoveries from 642 at Forden – but not, of course, at Oswestry or the hillfort of Old Oswestry.

There is a last point. If all the above – and the longer account in the writer's *British Battles 493–937: Mount Badon to Brunanburh* – leaves readers unconvinced, it will have failed. If, on the other hand, they are persuaded, then they may read with a curious eye a statement in Rory Naismith's recent *Early Medieval Britain* (Cambridge, 2021), where on page 172 he states that Maserfelth 'was fought most likely at Oswestry (Shropshire)'. Readers of *Battlefield* are now aware of a more likely site for the battle of Maserfelth.

Dr Andrew Breeze is a professor of philology at the University of Navarra, Spain. He has published numerous papers and books on the philology of Celtic languages. His latest book, British Battles 493–937: Mount Badon to Brunanburh was published in 2020 by Anthem Press. In the book the author provides new locations for various early conflicts and aims to provide a blueprint for locating battles fought during this early period of British history. He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

Further Reading

Andrew Breeze, *British Battles 493–937: Mount Badon to Brunanburh* (London: Anthem Press, 2020)



The view to the north and Long Mountain – the course of the Roman road goes to the right of the mountain. Did Oswald and his army come from this direction? Photo James Parker.

The Siege of York

by Chris Rock

Background to the siege

By June 1644 the ancient city of York, the 'capital of the north', was a city under siege. Desperate, and surrounded on all sides by parliamentary and Scottish armies, it awaited its fate, and its fate rested on the faint hope of a royalist relief army marching to its aid.

York's part in the English Civil War, or War of the Three Kingdoms as it is sometimes called, was crucial. Just prior to the outbreak of civil war in 1642, King Charles I had established a royal court in York, and York wholeheartedly supported the king and his cause thereafter. York as a strong, walled city therefore was key to holding power in the north, and whoever occupied it could control the land, towns and fortresses in the region. York remained loyal to the king until mid-July 1644 when events dramatically forced a change of allegiance.

Traditionally, most of the north and south-west of England were supporters of the royalist cause, whilst in the south-east and midlands, the majority were parliamentary supporters. However, from 1642 until 1644, the ebb and flow of the war meant fortified towns and castles changed hands many times. The Wars were a national event that filtered down into every house and home, be it a castle or a farmstead, and its effect on the nations' politics, monarchy, well-being and stability would cast a dark shadow for decades.

After the king eventually moved south to continue his war, he appointed the marquess of Newcastle as overall



King Charles I by Sir Anthony Van Dyck.

commander of his northern forces, whilst the parliamentary armies came under the control of the father and son partnership of Ferdinando and Thomas Fairfax. Little by little the Fairfaxes chipped away at the northern royalist bases, and the parliamentary-held port of Hull, on the Yorkshire coast, was a useful resupply depot which greatly helped their aims. By April 1644 it seemed the time was ripe to finally take control of York from the royalists, but King Charles had already foreseen this eventuality and issued orders for York to be garrisoned, re-fortified and well-stocked to withstand a long siege. The marquess of Newcastle withdrew to York

with his 4,000-strong army; he took command of the forces in and around the city, and waited for the parliamentary besiegers to arrive.

The king stated in a letter – written in June 1644 while York was under siege – to his nephew, Prince Rupert, on how much he valued York's strategic position:

If York be lost, I shall esteem my crown little less, unless supported by your sudden march to me, and a miraculous conquest in the south before the effects of the Northern power can be found here.

*But if York be relieved, and you beat the rebel armies of both Kingdoms which were before it-then, **but otherwise not**, I may possibly make a shift upon the defensive to spin out time until you come to assist me; wherefore I command and conjure you . . . that, all new enterprises laid aside, you immediately march according to your first intention, with all your force, to the relief of York.*

Charles' confusing order implies that he could hold on in the south until Rupert had relieved York and won a great victory. He befuddled the issue with the three words 'but otherwise not,' which suggest that if Rupert could not relieve York and 'beat the rebel armies,' then Charles could not 'spin out time' in the south. Charles meant, in effect, that if York was lost, there would still be hope for him if Rupert could join him and write-off the roundhead forces in the south before the 'Northern power' – the Scots and others – could come to their aid.



William Cavendish, marquess of Newcastle.



Sir Thomas Fairfax.



Prince Rupert of the Rhine.



Lord Ferdinando Fairfax.



Alexander Leslie, earl of Leven.



Edward Montagu, earl of Manchester
by Sir Peter Lely.

The siege begins

The siege officially started in April 1644, when the armies of Fairfax and the army of the Scottish Covenanters, commanded by the earl of Leven, moved into positions on the east and west of the city respectively. The Scots had recently allied themselves with Parliament to fight against the king, and sent an army to northern England in January 1644 in support. However, these two armies, which may have numbered up to 30,000, were not enough to completely surround the city of York, and a large open swathe of land between the rivers Foss and Ouse, north of the city remained unoccupied. Standing cavalry patrols were established, but it was five weeks before Parliament sent the Army of the Eastern Association, commanded by the earl of Manchester, to plug the gap. By 4 June the city of York had finally been fully encircled by the besieging allied armies.

To help defend the city the marquess of Newcastle's men and the garrison had been busy stockpiling food supplies, weapons and ammunition, they also dug new defences, barricaded posterns and gates and built some small forts, called sconces, in strategic positions on the main thoroughfares into York. They also placed gunnery platforms on the high points of the city, Clifford's Tower, Baillie Hill, the main Bars of the city and some church towers. Thus they waited and prayed that the relief force sent by the king, commanded by Prince Rupert, would arrive before the parliamentarians could break down the walls and take York by force, or worse, starve them into submission.

The parliamentary siege plan was to take the outlying defensive positions one by one and tighten the noose around the city, until only the medieval walls themselves were left to breach. The Scottish army and Manchester's army were well-stocked with cannon and ammunition, but Fairfax had to borrow some cannon from the Scots to set up batteries facing Walmgate Bar. The

besiegers also hatched a plan to dig under the walls in order to set mines, allowing their armies to storm in to the city itself once they had been breached.

However, to bide time and give Prince Rupert's army a chance to make up ground, the marquess of Newcastle entered in to a truce and began negotiations with the parliamentarians. After a week of stalling talks and pointless meetings, the parliamentary negotiators realised the ruse and ended the ceasefire. Now more determined to take the city by force, the besiegers moved up a gear and readied themselves for an all-out attack. The signal to begin was to be the double explosion of the two mines, one under Walmgate Bar, and the other located under the round tower of St Marys in Marygate, near Bootham Bar.

This surprise attack in two separate locations, was designed to split the defenders and cause confusion and delay, unfortunately the armies of Fairfax and Manchester had either not finalised the timings, or had not communicated the plan correctly to those officers in charge of the mining operations. Whatever the plan was the mine underneath St Mary's Tower exploded prematurely on the morning of Sunday, 16 June.

The battle of the King's Manor

The old round tower standing at the junction of Bootham and Marygate was a late addition to the protecting medieval walls of St Mary's Abbey. But by 1644, with the abbey in ruins after the dissolution of the monasteries by King Henry VIII, the walls themselves had to be strengthened and reinforced. The tower itself was being utilised as a handy storage space for many old Yorkshire monastic records, deeds and scrolls.

The walls and projecting towers all along St Mary's and Bootham were lightly defended by musket, grenades, and some light cannon positioned on the Bar itself and on the top of the church tower

of St Olave. Any buildings along those streets facing the walls or built directly onto the walls had already been burned or demolished to deny access to Manchester's forces using them as cover. The northern-facing Abbey walls took a lot of heavy fire from Manchester's cannon and muskets since they were camped in the Clifton Green area.

There is some evidence to suggest that Major General Lawrence Crawford, who commanded Manchester's men in this sector, had already made some smaller breaches in the wall along St Mary's, but these had quickly been plugged with earthen sods, rubble and wood, and were not viable entry points. St Olave's Church particularly attracted the attention of Crawford's guns due to the royalist observation and gun platform on top of its tower. The defenders along the walls also built temporary scaffolding supporting wooden walkways by which they could pour fire down on to any attacking forces and dislodge any climbing equipment or ladders being used to scale the walls. The attack on the King's Manor constituted the most dramatic event of the whole 1644 siege of York; however, Crawford's plan had a fatal strategic flaw.

The King's Manor was actually situated outside of York's defensive perimeter wall, and lay in the grounds of the old abbey of St Mary's, once one of the most powerful and rich monasteries in the kingdom. If Crawford's men managed to successfully storm the breach and take the King's Manor, they would still need to scale the particularly large and imposing walls of the Bootham section of the defensive wall, something they had not achieved in the weeks previously. To achieve success the mine should have been set under the entrance at Bootham Bar, just as the mine dug under Walmgate Bar had been sited.

Why Major General Crawford gave the order to ignite the mine early we may never know for sure, one reason could have been the rising water levels in the mine due to the heavy rainfall a few days previously – the Walmgate mine was eventually abandoned due to counter-

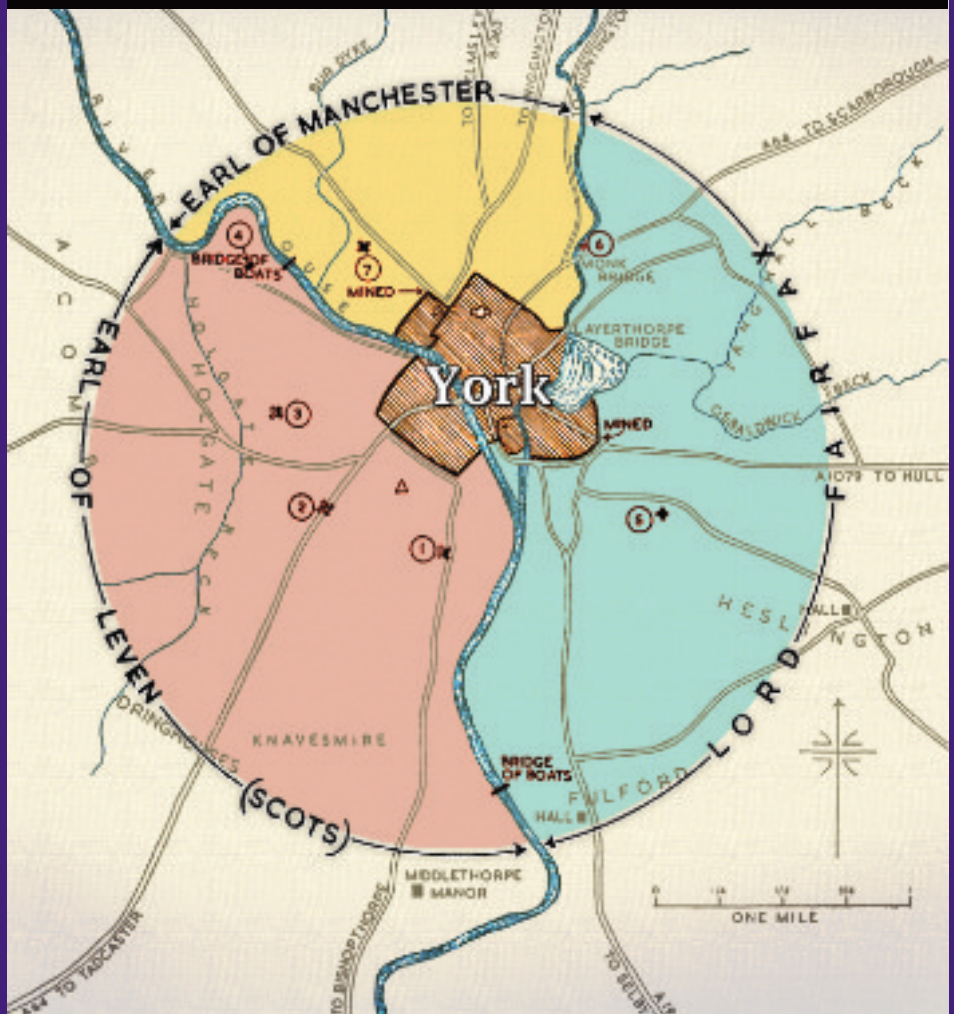


flooding. Some contemporary accounts lay the blame on Crawford and his desire to take the glory; either way it seems he did not inform his superior or the other army commanders of his intention to spring the mine and start the attack.

It was just as much a shock to Fairfax, the earl of Leven, and the earl of Manchester, as it was to the royalist defenders, when at noon St Mary's Tower disappeared in a massive explosion of wood, stone, flame and smoke. The outer wall of the tower completely collapsed and a large section of the weakened wall went with it, Crawford ordered his men to storm the breach through the settling dust and flying debris, and 600 parliamentarian troops surged forward.

The defenders were taken completely by surprise, of that there is no doubt, some were attending church as it was Trinity Sunday, but the deafening roar could be heard as far away as the Minster, and soon royalist troops were gathering up their weapons and speeding their way to the sound of the explosion. As Crawford's men charged into the complex and across the bowling green and orchard towards the buildings of the King's Manor, they came up against a stiff counter-attack by Newcastle's men who by now were pouring into the grounds. High garden walls hampered Crawford's troops as they tried to advance, and bitter fighting took place in the grounds, they reached the King's Manor building itself where the defenders, using height and cover, poured musket fire down onto them.

Crawford's scattered and vulnerable soldiers began to take more casualties and the momentum of the attack began to wane. Gradually the royalists took control of the battle, with upwards of 2,000 men pouring into the counter-attack, some even coming from Lendal Postern down near the river Ouse to help seal the breach from the outside and surround the remnants of Crawford's men.





The two sections of the tower almost meet, the original medieval and the post-Civil War rebuild using reclaimed stones and added windows and doors from King's Manor. Photo Chris Rock.



St Mary's Tower today, still bearing the scars of the explosion and poor restoration. Photo Chris Rock.



The Attack Goes In – the collapsed tower and breach in the walls. Painting Chris Rock ©.



Lead projectile strikes on the limestone walls are numerous, both on the tower and the King's Manor walls. Photo Chris Rock.



A mid-nineteenth-century water colour of the corner of Marygate and Bootham – both the tower and abbey walls are heavily built onto with tall, shanty housing.

◀ The view from the King's Manor, although now landscaped, it shows the short but main battleground of the fight. In 1644 there would have been more and higher walls. Photo Chris Rock.



Perhaps Crawford had been over-confident, as it seems his attacking force was not reinforced by any follow-up troops. His men, tired, low on ammunition, and trapped by the much larger royalist force had no choice but to lay down their arms and surrender.

Most accounts give a similar number of losses for Crawford's failed attack. Of the 600 soldiers that attacked, around thirty-five were killed, 100 wounded, and about 200 were captured; we can only assume the remainder either fled or escaped before the breach was sealed. Royalist losses amounted to around twenty killed in the initial explosion, and 100 captured in the assault, but who were subsequently freed.

With no coordinated diversion by the Leven and Fairfax armies, the attack was bound to fail, and the last real chance of taking the city before Prince Rupert's relief force could arrive had been squandered. Both royalist and parliamentary armies stepped back, drew breath and waited to see what would happen next. The day after the explosion soldiers reported faint voices coming from the rubble around the collapsed tower, weak cries of 'help' and 'water' could be heard, but the royalists gave no quarter for rescue, thinking it was another enemy ruse. It wasn't until three days after the attack that a mutual arrangement came in to force to allow the men of both sides some time to go and investigate the cries of any buried wounded and remove the dead.

The siege continued without any real gain for two more weeks until the news of Prince Rupert's army entering Knaresborough reached the parliamentary commanders. Immediately they struck camp and marched west to Marston Moor in the hope of intercepting the royalist army to stop them from reaching York; however, Rupert had out-manoeuvred them and had speedily continued north to Boroughbridge and onto Poppleton, north of York. On 1 July he sent an advance party into York to announce his arrival and his successful relief of the city.

And so, after nearly three months of siege, York could breathe a sigh of relief, it had done its duty to King Charles and held its own. However, the always over-confident Prince Rupert defied the king's orders as well as the sound advice of the marquess of Newcastle, and immediately set off with his men for a confrontation with the parliamentary forces at Marston

Moor. For support he unfairly demanded that the city garrison, and Newcastle's army, the 'Whitecoats', follow him also on to the Moor. All that had been gained in York was lost in one savage day on 2 July 1644, when the royalist troops were soundly beaten by the allied army.

The beaten and demoralised royalists streamed back in disorder to York where immediately the siege was resumed, but by 15 July it was all over and York surrendered to Parliament on generous terms. York was in a sorry state and much rebuilding needed to be done, Lord Fairfax was given care of the city, whilst the armies of Leven and Manchester moved off to confront other royalist garrisons. After the defeat at Marston Moor, and the loss of York, King Charles had no major royalist army in the north and because of this he suffered a mortal blow to his cause, it was the beginning of the end for him.

The tower today

As for the old tower at St Mary's, it was eventually rebuilt after the Civil War; however, it was not the best of restorations, it was given a new conical tiled roof, and the new section of outer wall was rebuilt using reclaimed stone and damaged windows and door fittings from some of the battered buildings of the King's Manor. The stonemasons miscalculated the spherical shape of the walls and did not manage to match the original circumference, and thus it is crudely obvious to see the mismatched walls today. By the early nineteenth century the old Abbey walls had been fully built-up against, with rough shanty housing and tall thin tenements. Much damage was caused to the original medieval walls by these additions, with new brickwork and chimneys inserted, and holes for support beams chiselled out of the old stonework.

By the early twentieth century many of these buildings had been cleared away from the walls to reveal the limestone again. There is still many a scar from the Civil War to be found on the ancient and longstanding walls of the King's Manor and the defensive walls around the city – if only they could speak what tales they could tell.

A recent excavation of the site of St Joseph's Convent in York revealed a number of lead artefacts, including slag and lead shot that could relate directly to the siege of York or at least show evidence of conflict during the Civil War.

These were probably from an ammunition manufacturing site that provided lead shot for carbines and middle-bore firelocks, there would have been many such sites located in places close to the city walls and scattered between the three besieging armies. The York Castle Museum holds some relics of the siege, including lead shot and cannon balls, along with period arms and armour, but when the author last visited the museum the whole 1644 Civil War exhibition had been dismantled and confined to storage.

York's ancient city walls have survived war, fire, flood, plague, revolution and even man's determination to modernise and demolish. They are intricately linked to the city's image and its rich and proud history, they continue to hold many secrets and are still a source of wonder and demand further interpretation.

York City walls are normally open to the public and are free to explore, check before visiting. Some of the City Wall Bars are open, but the former Bar museums to Richard III and Henry VII are now closed. St Mary's Tower is not accessible, but the gardens and grounds around St Mary's Abbey are free to explore, and a visit to both the Castle Museum and the Yorkshire Museum is highly recommended.

Further Reading

Kevin Claxton, *The Archaeology of the Siege of York*, (York Historian, 2018)

Leslie Peter Wenham, *York*. (London; Longman, 1971)

Leslie Peter Wenham, *The Great and Close Siege of York, 1644* (Sessions Book Trust, 1970)

David Cooke, *Yorkshire Sieges of the Civil Wars* (Barnsley; Pen and Sword Military, 2011)

Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME), *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the City of York Volume II – The Defences*, (London; HMSO, 1972)

CEMA

Centre for Experimental Military Archaeology

by David Flinham; Photographs by Tommy Pengilley



Experimental military archaeology

At one time or another, I'm sure we have all visited the site of a battle or siege and wondered just how things would have actually looked at the time? How were the various features, now no more than a series of lumps and bumps in the landscape, constructed? In the absence of a time machine, it is only through reconstruction that this question can be answered. Of course, a level of reconstruction is possible through the skills of an artist or through the application of digital technology, but this provides few clues as to how something was actually built, and what it took to actually build it.

The missing piece of this jigsaw is provided by experimental archaeology, demonstrating the practical application of something that might otherwise remain as just a theory. However, reconstruction on this scale is no small undertaking. Yet this is just what the Centre for Experimental

Military Archaeology (CEMA) has been created to do.

CEMA's vision is to be the home for pan-historical experimentation concerning methods of military attack and defence, and also of the day-to-day lives of soldiers through 2,000 years of history: from Roman times to the Second World War. In so doing, becoming a location where military engineering from across the centuries can be investigated, interpreted, constructed and tested.



Andy Robertshaw

Led by Andy Robertshaw – who's impressive CV includes extensive investigative work on the Western Front, as well as being the historical advisor to film directors Steven Spielberg, Sam Mendes, and Peter Jackson – CEMA is a multi-period site for learning and filming. It was established in early 2021 at the Kent Event Centre in Detling.






A military heritage

The site itself has an impressive military heritage, with more than twenty centuries of history having passed close by. Nearby is the likely location of a Roman watchtower, built on a site that would be occupied for the next 1,000 years (there are indications of both Saxon and Norman activity), whilst to the north-east, there is a well-preserved site of a motte-and-bailey castle. Just three miles away is Maidstone, which was the location of a royalist defeat in June 1648 during the second English Civil War.

More recently, a defensive line, known as the Chatham Land Front, was built in 1914–15 to protect Chatham and its docks from attack from the Channel coast. This impressive piece of military engineering crossed the Detling site, and its trenches, pillboxes and gun-positions were subsequently used to train troops destined for the Western Front. In 1916, the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) established a base at Detling, and later RNAS Detling was taken over by the Royal Air Force, becoming RAF Detling. During the Second World War, RAF Detling was home to single engine fighters, and twin-engine light bombers and coastal patrol aircraft. It was a Detling-based Avro Anson of 500 Squadron that famously shot down two Messerschmitt BF109E fighters and damaged a third whilst on patrol over



Dunkirk on 1 June 1940. On 13 August, during the Battle of Britain, the airfield was attacked by Junkers JU87 Stuka dive-bombers which resulted in the deaths of sixty-seven personnel (including the station commander), with a further ninety-four injured. Probable fragments of enemy bombs were uncovered during initial work on the site in March 2021. Also in 1940, various anti-invasion defences were constructed, including pillboxes and anti-glider measures, remains of which are still visible today.

CEMA's first six months

Working in collaboration with Wessex Archaeology and the University of Kent, CEMA aims to provide research and education using cutting-edge technology, and more traditional methods.

The initial project for CEMA was to construct a length of British First World War 'A-framed' trench, complete with a dugout and other features common to British trenches along the Western Front during the second half of the Great War. This has been followed by the construction of a *Moir* machine gun pillbox – this 1918 design was constructed from interlocking precast concrete blocks, the blocks being cast at Richborough in Kent. The blocks for CEMA's example having been donated, and then moved from a site close to





where they were originally produced. In the future, it is intended to construct lengths of both French and German trenches.

Later in 2021, work will commence on the first non-Great War project, some English Civil War fieldworks: this will initially be the construction of gabions – both the ‘permanent’ 6ft type, and the more ‘moveable’ 3ft type – and fascines, with actual earthworks to follow.

In a time where more and more history is being presented in digital formats such as *YouTube*, podcasts, and virtual reality, as well as the more traditional film and television, historically accurate locations where filming can take place is becoming increasingly important. So less than six months after its initial creation, several film crews have already visited CEMA.

Hosting educational visits is another vital purpose for CEMA, and several schools and colleges – that are currently unable to visit the Western Front itself – are already booked in for visits in the autumn. On 2 July 2021, the centre welcomed its first-ever school visit. Following this visit, the school’s head of history wrote:

CEMA did an excellent job in putting on a range of activities and presentations for 100 of our Year 9 pupils. All the presenters were excellent, had a very good rapport with the pupils, and covered a wide range of Great War topics including food and medicine. The reconstructed trench was a real highlight, and more authentic looking in fact, than anything you’ll see in

Flanders. Having taken pupils on various history trips for over 30 years, this was right up there amongst the best of them. If you can’t get to France or Belgium and/or want a UK-based alternative, then this is very much the best thing.

In addition to film-makers, schools, and universities, CEMA is open to visits by other tour groups as well. For instance, soldiers from Pirbright and Winchester Army Training Regiments will be visiting the site as part of their ‘Realities of War’ day – some 1,300 have booked between now and Easter.

Ultimately, it is envisaged that not all of CEMA’s activities will take place at its Detling HQ, and it is intended that CEMA’s role as a centre of learning will enable the knowledge and skills gained by participants to be transferred to sites elsewhere in the country.

CEMA has already welcomed volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and interests including re-enactors, archaeologists, and academic and non-academic military historians, each bringing particular talents that are so vital to an initiative such as this; but new volunteers are always welcome. To find out more, including how to participate, visit www.cemahistory.org.

We look forward to welcoming you to CEMA soon.



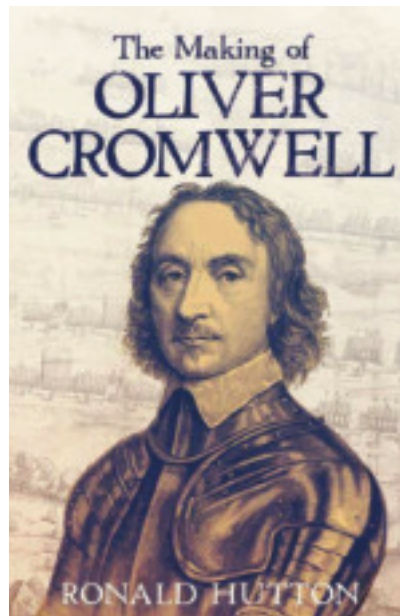


The Making of Oliver Cromwell

By Ronald Hutton

Published by Yale University Press, 2021
400 pages, including Notes & Index, HB
£25.00

ISBN: 978-0-300-25745-8



This is definitely not just another book on the only English commoner to become the overall head of state, but brilliantly seeks a new perspective and fresh assessment of his character. It covers the first forty-eight years of his life from relative obscurity, with changing fortunes, to becoming a low-profile MP, followed by his rise to power, to the end of the First British Civil War when he became nationally prominent.

This critical review of the future Protector's life by Professor Ronald Hutton should be welcomed by historians as well as the general reader. He uses his findings to analyse the enigma of Cromwell in a non-partisan, even-handed way, but does not simply take Cromwell at his word from documents. This is a new perspective of Cromwell, assessing his actions and words through the eyes of his contemporaries, whose views ranged from admiration and warmth to outright hostility and loathing.

Cromwell's early years reveal little about his character, although Hutton refers to his violent streak and ruthlessness, leading to a bloodthirsty determination to annihilate his enemies. Hutton considers him both 'godly and wily'; pursuing his Godly devotion believing the Creator had employed both deviousness and ruthlessness to achieve victory over evil: for Cromwell, the hard-line evangelist, justification enough to do the same.

In the chapters on 'The Primitive Cromwell' I enjoyed the rich description of the East Anglian landscape and way of life. This is where young Cromwell would have remained obscure, had he not been financed by his very rich uncle. When his uncle went bust,

Oliver's life as a tenant farmer reached its lowest ebb. At nearly thirty he moved to a small village, where he developed a passionate, Puritan religiosity. There he developed a hard-line view on paring down man's personal relationship with God.

Another family inheritance raised his fortunes, after which he became friends with a group of highly ambitious politicians. Cromwell became a reliable, hardworking MP and committee member, only later coming into conflict with the king through his party's religious views.

The book covers his early life as an MP and military career, detailing his becoming a dependable, inspirational commander, influencing strategy in campaigns throughout the war.

The author seeks to disentangle the man from his own carefully fashioned and honed image of his religious and political self, by separating the myth from the polarised views of contemporaries, who often found him untrustworthy. He argues that Cromwell was capable of deviousness and pragmatism. Many found him to be ruthless, manipulative, self-promoting and vindictive, perhaps to many a hypocrite. For example, he successfully ensured he got the credit for every parliamentary victory whether or not justified, through misinformation.

His military and political aspirations culminate in 'The Glorious Year', when, in late 1646, he and his family moved to the capital, and it could be said that he was, by then, truly made and poised to take power.

Review by Don Smith

Yale University Press is delighted to offer Trust members a **30% discount** off *The Making of Oliver Cromwell* by Ronald Hutton, by entering the code **YCROM** when prompted at the checkout at www.yalebooks.co.uk. The code is valid until 31 March 2022.

Offer available for customers in the UK, subject to availability. If you are based in the US or Canada, email james.williams@yaleup.co.uk to order books at the discounted price.

C H Firth's *The Battle of Dunbar*

By Stuart Reid

Published by Partizan Press, 2019

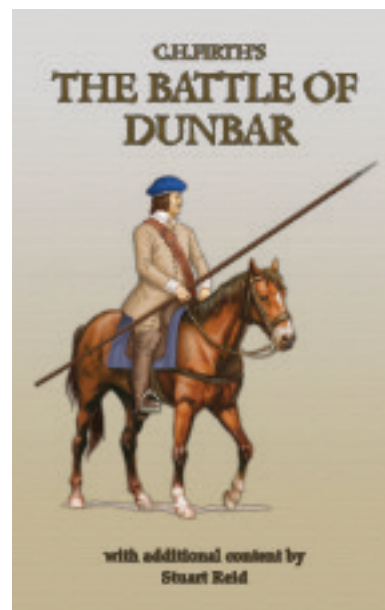
131 pages, HB £22.50

ISBN: 978-1-85818-759-4

Eighty-five years after his death, Charles Firth remains one of the most important historians of the 'English' Civil Wars, and his lecture on the battle of Dunbar – delivered in 1899 and published by the Royal Historical Society the following year – is regarded as a forgotten classic of Civil War literature. In reprinting this now, Partizan Press should be commended.

Firth limited himself to describing the battle

itself, and didn't consider the campaign as a whole, a campaign which very nearly ended in an English disaster. So here, Stuart Reid steps in, and he provides a supporting commentary on the preceding campaign. A central element of Firth's paper, and thus this book, is Fitz-Payne Fisher's spectacular plan/picture of the battle itself. This book reproduces this plan in its entirety, as well as supporting the text with extracts, although curiously, not all are captioned.



Such is the quality of Firth's account that Stuart Reid has no need to add anything to it, although he does point out that Firth's figures for the Scottish army are inflated, due at least in part to taking Oliver Cromwell's own account, in which he exaggerated the size of the opposition, at face value.

The book is well-illustrated with some very nice colour plates, the Scottish soldiers based on the 'Jockie' figure in the well-known satirical print of 1651. These also include some of the colours from the battle and there are others, included as an appendix, which are not in colour. All-in-all this is a very nice book, a welcome re-printing of Firth's account, and a useful companion to the recent studies, including those about the fate of the Scottish prisoners of war following the battle.

Review by David Flintham

Hunger How food shaped the course of the First World War

By Rick Blom

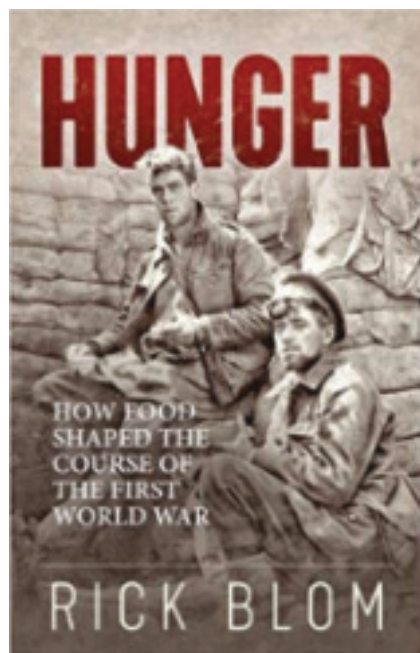
Published by Unicorn Publishing Group, 2019

236 pages, SB £17.99

ISBN: 978-1-912690-19-0

Originally published in the Netherlands, this translated book examines the impact of food on the First World War – or, more accurately given the title, the lack of food! The 1914–1918 conflict had particularly novel features which earned it the title of the 'First'

World War. On the battlefield, this was the first time such huge armed forces had engaged in trench warfare of unprecedented scale and duration. In 1914 and again in 1918 there were episodes of a more mobile form of warfare, in which food was a significant factor. On the home front, this was the first time that mass civilian populations had experienced the direct impact of total warfare, and food supply was at the forefront of this. The book deals comprehensively with both these aspects.



The meagre and irregular supply of rations to the trenches on all sides, the composition of such food as did reach the front line, the iron survival rations and the organisation of field kitchens are all examined in detail. Arguably, food had its greatest influence during Operation *Michael*, the Germans' last desperate attempt in 1918 to break the Anglo-French line. The assault achieved instant success and Allied forces were driven back several miles. But after fifteen days the German advance ground to a halt. Ludendorff was in no doubt that a major factor in the loss of momentum was German troops stopping to plunder the plentiful stockpiles of food and drink captured in their rapid advance.

On the home front, both Britain and Germany experienced food shortages because of blockades at sea, farm labour joining the military and so leading to low production levels, and harvest failures. Occupied areas of France also suffered badly. For the first time, civilians were faced with both rationing and hugely inflated food prices, leading to civil unrest and industrial action. This was most acute in Germany in 1918, where starvation was becoming common. These poor home conditions inevitably had a bad effect on the morale of troops in the front line, and thus the lack of food connected both areas in a vicious circle of discontent.

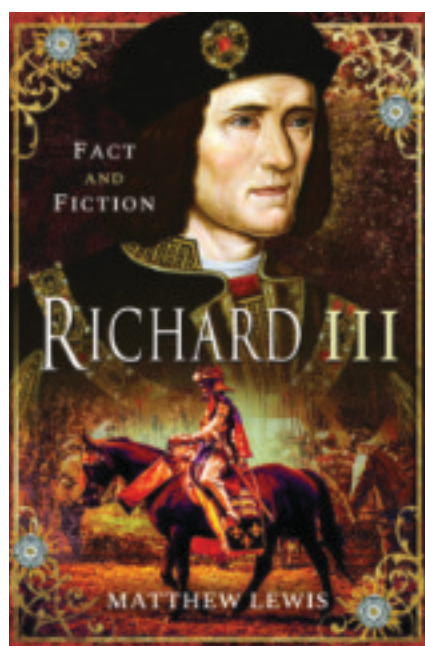
An interesting and comprehensive treatment

of its subject, the book is well-illustrated with photographs of the period. The author has used much primary source material including interviews with Privates Henry Allingham and Harry Patch to get their first-hand experience. Each chapter ends with a few pages of recipes, mostly with basic ingredients thrown into a pot and stewed. 'Camel Stomach Stew' is perhaps one to avoid! An enjoyable read.

Review by Bill Griffin

Richard III Fact and Fiction

By Matthew Lewis
Published by Pen & Sword, 2019
127 pages, SB £12.99
ISBN: 978-1-52672-797-8



This is a comprehensive collection of information about Richard III together with 'little known facts' about him and the times he lived in. It runs chronologically from his family background through to his treatment after death and then on to the rediscovery and reburial of his body. It is 'fact and fiction' because he assesses all the widely known myths about Richard.

Matthew Lewis is a lawyer and this reads like the material for cases by the prosecution and the defence for Richard's reputation. It is engaging rather than scholarly. Some of it comes across as fairly lightweight, but the reader is recommended to persevere to find real nuggets of new interpretation and perspective.

I found the section on the Princes in the Tower disappointing. The author falls back on his leitmotif of Richard being a man of, and in, his time who can only be judged by it.

By contrast the section on the executions that paved the way for the 'usurpation' (a term Lewis disputes) is thought-provoking. Lewis demonstrates a strong case for Richard acting through the Court of Chivalry and its

procedures to make his actions follow due legal process. He was ruthless rather than tyrannical. Using similar arguments, Richard was not personally guilty of wrong-doing in the deaths of Clarence and Henry VI.

The best section by far is when he puts Shakespeare under the microscope. Not to give too much away, Lewis speculates very plausibly that the character on stage was never meant to be taken as the historical Richard at all.

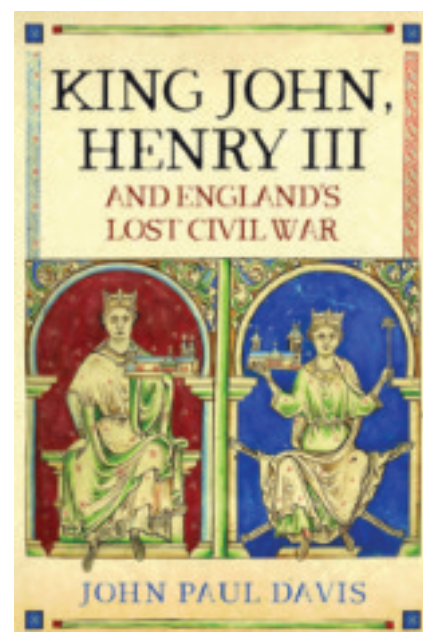
He covers all aspects of Richard's life and career including an excellent commentary on what actually happened on the battlefield at Bosworth. He makes the point that there are as many laudatory contemporary stories about Richard as there are condemnatory. The contemporary records are deeply flawed and contradictory. In addition, Richard's reign was too short, and too dominated by personal tragedy, for him to have proved himself and hit his stride. Fully informed and balanced judgements may never be an option.

Review by Peter Burley

King John Henry III

and England's Lost Civil War

By John Paul Davis
Published by Pen & Sword Books, 2021
258 pages, including Notes & Index, HB £25.00
ISBN: 978-1-52675-007-5



I was looking forward to reading this book, but I ended up being somewhat disappointed. The *Lost Civil War* referred to in the title is the Marshal War of 1233-4 when Richard Marshal, the second son of the great William Marshal, rebelled against Henry III.

Disappointingly, the details of the war are brief and only cover the twelve pages in chapter nineteen – the last chapter – I had been hoping for a lot more detail on it.



Instead the book covers the reigns of John and the early period of Henry's and the machinations between Peter des Roches and Hubert de Burgh over who had influence over the young king. All useful background, but information that can be found elsewhere.

There are inconsistencies and errors; chapter three, titled '1214–1215 From Runnymede to the Wash' actually ends with John's death in Newark in October 1216. At one point the 'defeat at Bouvines' (page 45) is moved to September – and not in July. One begins to wonder how much reliance can be placed on facts in the rest of the text.

The author places heavy reliance on the works of others as referenced in the Notes – mainly Carpenter, Vincent and Asbridge – and the thought arises that it may be better to read their works. In places the book reads like a novel – the author is a thriller writer – and depending on how one likes reading one's history it can be annoying. The book does not include any maps – it could have been much improved with the inclusion of some maps so that locations could be placed in context with each other.

The book is mainly about the two kings, John and Henry and regrettably brief about the 'Lost Civil War'. There are much better books than this if you want to discover more about this period.

Review by Chris May

Taranto and Naval Air Warfare in the Mediterranean, 1940–1945

By David Hobbs

Published by Seaforth Publishing, 2020
440 pages, including Notes & Index, HB £35.00

ISBN: 978-1-5267-9383-6



David Hobbs spent thirty years in the Royal Navy, flying a variety of aircraft and retiring in the rank of Commander. He became curator

at the Fleet Air Arm museum. So he is highly qualified for this task.

Hobbs establishes the importance of the serious harm done to the Italian fleet by aerial attack at Taranto in 1940. Then he takes his readers through the subsequent RN air operations in the Mediterranean.

Some of these are infrequently recalled now. They are remembered here with coverage, for example, of Operation *Outing* in 1944, designed to clear enemy strongholds in the islands of the Aegean. As in the rest of the book, interesting and vivid photographs are presented with informative captions.

The defence of the Malta convoys properly receives much attention, with the crucial *Pedestal* operation in August 1942 having a chapter of its own. The battle of Matapan and Operation *Torch*, the invasion of French North Africa, enjoy their due coverage.

One of the author's verdicts concerns the aircraft deployed. He writes: 'The Swordfish, Albacore, Skua and Fulmar were all markedly inferior to the aircraft operated by the German and Italian air forces and this makes the achievements of the men who flew them shine all the more brightly. The Martlet/Wildcat, Sea Hurricane and Seafire were all better fighters but still had their drawbacks. The Hellcat was outstanding.'

Another reviewer likes to point out minor errors in a good book, 'to prove I have read it'. In that spirit, I mention the reference on P264 to 'Lieutenant (A) R J Cork, DFC, RN' flying in defence of *Pedestal*. 'Dickie' Cork was indeed awarded the DFC in 1940, marking achievements during attachment to RAF Fighter Command, but it was almost immediately exchanged for the DSC at the wish of the Admiralty.

Review by Geoff Simpson

'Cannon Played from the Great Fort'

Sieges in the Severn Valley during the English Civil War 1642–1646

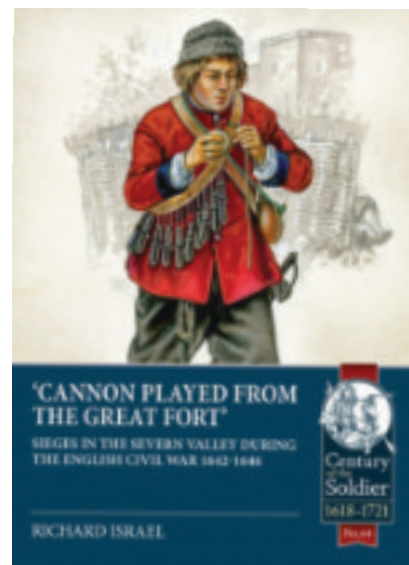
Helion Century of the Soldier 1618–1721 Series No. 64

By Richard Israel

Published by Helion & Company, 2021
166 pages, including Appendices & Index, SB £25.00
ISBN: 978-1-913336-50-9

The need to maintain corridors connecting garrisons, logistical centres, and other key locations dictated the strategies of both royalists and parliamentarians during the First English Civil War (1642–47). Arguably, none was more important than the Severn Valley, an important artery separating largely parliamentary midlands from (mostly) royalist Wales. Thus, Bristol, Gloucester, Worcester, Bridgnorth, and Shrewsbury, were of major significance. How these places resisted, or succumbed to attack is the subject of this book.

Author Richard Israel considers the various contemporary and historical influences on ECW siege techniques, applying this analysis to his description of the sieges themselves, although seldom did the conduct ever match the 'ideal' as expressed in contemporary military manuals. Each account is accompanied by an excellent plan – the inclusion of the heights of various geographical locations is a useful addition – although a map showing the Severn Valley as a whole is unfortunately absent. Each account is accompanied by the author's photographs; the sepia effect applied to these makes them particularly attractive.



Describing the sieges in chronological order enables the author to trace how siege techniques evolved during the war. This results in a fascinating final chapter which provides a good analysis of the comparative siege tactics of both sides, comparing and contrasting the differing approaches, considering why some sieges were successful and others were not.

Those who are already familiar with these sieges will know many of the books referred to. But with his experience as a landscape archaeologist and his eye for the local geography, the author brings a valuable new perspective to the study of these sieges. His local knowledge extends the book's appeal to those who are looking for a guide to the fortifications in their home towns. There are some oversights, but these do not detract from what is overall a good book and a useful contribution to the study of siege warfare during the First English Civil War.

Review by David Flinham

Julius Caesar

Rome's Greatest Warlord

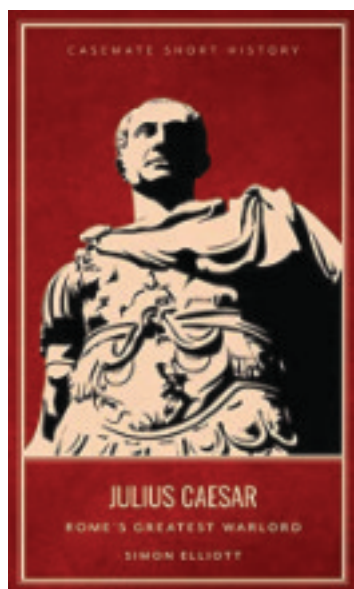
By Simon Elliott

Published by Casemate Publishers, 2019
159 pages, including Index, HB £9.99
ISBN: 978-1-61200-709-0

This pocket-sized book is on quality paper in a clear easy-to-read font. The contents cover

an introduction with a timeline of events and five chapters covering the life and times of the great man himself. Simon is an avid Roman military historian and wargamer and includes illustrations, photos and some pictures of wargaming figures to add flavour to the text. He also includes some sources, further reading and a detailed index in this compact little touch of history.

For a small package this book packs a surprising punch, with a very nice easy-to-read flow and style as the author takes you through all the key elements of Caesar's life including his campaigns, both at home and abroad, including his sieges and clever use of tactics, touching on the numbers of occasions he put himself in harm's way to turn the tide of his battles. It also details his political challenges and his manipulation and manoeuvring in the senate to succeed with his political aims. Adding some balance the author also demonstrates Caesar's later political and personal mistakes leading to his assassination.



Each chapter provides lots of useful information although as stated this is a short history and for the academic or historian they would need to look elsewhere.

I personally enjoyed reading this book and would recommend it wholeheartedly.

Review by James Hunwicke

The Last Viking

The True Story of King Harald Hardrada

By Don Holloway

Published by Osprey Publishing, 2021
224 pages, including Notes & Index, HB
£20.00

ISBN: 978-1-4728-4652-5

As the author says in his introduction this book is a 'retelling of the legend of the last and greatest of the Viking kings'. 'Last', he acknowledges, may be debatable. The 'greatest'? Probably; certainly the most notorious. What is undeniable is that Harald

Hardrada made his mark on history across Northern Europe and the Byzantine Empire.

The sagas provide much of the source material for the book. Don Holloway writes that these tales were 'recited orally' across generations, inducing errors. Eventually these sagas were committed to paper 'as if original and factual'. Necessarily his reconstruction of Harald's life 'requires a certain amount of conjecture and supposition'. Nevertheless, the book provides a great synopsis of the politics, military campaigns and territorial acquisitiveness of the Rus, Byzantines, and Vikings during the years ~1030–66, highlighting the battles and encounters where Harald learned his trade, made his mark and furthered his ambitions.



Woven around the sparse facts about Harald himself are detailed passages describing battles, weaponry, and tactics. A particular joy for this reader, are the ephemeral descriptions, for example of the food of the time 'a kind of salty blue cheese . . . with the unfortunate appearance of horse dung'; or of the different meters in skaldic verse – hrynghendra measure versus drottкваet measure. Little nuggets like this pop up throughout enriching the narrative and keeping the reader educated and entertained.

Through recounting the history of territorial acquisition in this era, and juxtaposing with it the life story of Harald, the author builds a colourful picture of the man as described by a more contemporaneous source; 'eager to war, protective of what was his, and desirous of everyone else's.'

Review by Jill Roden

Trust members can receive a **20% discount** on the above book by ordering direct from Osprey Publishing at www.ospreypublishing.com and entering code **Vikings20** at the checkout. The discount code is valid until 31 December 2021.

Nieuwpoort 1600 The First Modern Battle

Osprey Campaign Series 334

By Bouko de Groot; Illustrated by Peter Dennis

Published by Osprey Publishing, 2019
96 pages, including Index, SB £14.99
ISBN: 978-1-4728-3081-4



Described as the 'first modern battle', Nieuwpoort saw the fledgling Dutch Republic taking their fight for independence into the territory of the Spanish Netherlands. The Dutch new-modelled army, created by Maurice of Nassau, took on the famous Spanish *tercios* that had proved 'unbeatable' in the past. The battle was fought in the dunes on the coast of Flanders and saw the Dutch victorious due to the organisation and drill of their troops, although poor generalship of the Spanish also contributed to their defeat.

There are plenty of clear maps to assist the reader in understanding the elements of the campaign along with the usual double-page colour artworks, this time excellently provided in intricate detail by Peter Dennis. The descriptions of the battle by Bouko de Groot are clear and in a very readable style and a good analysis and comparison of the tactics used by both sides.

The battle of Nieuwpoort marked the transformation of European warfare at the start of the seventeenth century, if you have an interest in this period and want to understand how that change came about, I recommend this book as a good opener on the subject.

Review by Chris May

Walks, Talks & Special Events

Adwalton Moor



Although coronavirus restrictions have now mainly been lifted, there still remains some continuing uncertainty, so please check with the organiser before attending any physical events. For the most up-to-date information on events please either contact the organiser or check on the Trust website at www.battlefieldstrust.com/battlefields-events or look out for the MailChimp emails. Events are generally free to Trust members, non-members may be asked for a donation.

Wednesday 17 November 2021

7th Scottish Battlefields Symposium

The 7th Scottish Battlefields Symposium will take place from 10.00 a.m.–4.00 p.m. at the Scottish Storytelling Centre, 43–45 High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1SR. A day of presentations and discussion, exploring both ongoing and upcoming battlefield projects and how the Scottish Battlefields Trust can help both stimulate and support such initiatives. The event is free to attend. For more information please contact info@scottishbattlefields.org.

Sunday 21 November 2021

Walk – Battle of Adwalton Moor 1643

Join historian and author David Cooke for a guided walk on the battle of Adwalton Moor. Meet at 11.00 a.m. by the car park next to Drighlington Community Sports Club, Moorland Road, Drighlington, BD11 1JZ. There is also roadside parking on Moorland Road. The walk will be approximately 2 miles and will last around 90 minutes. It is partly on footpaths and partly across grass/moorland, so please wear suitable footwear. Further Information, and to reserve a place contact either Chris Rock at chrisrock62@hotmail.com or telephone 07377 130956, or Louise Whittaker at louise.whittaker83@ntlworld.com or telephone 07784 725258.

Monday 22 November 2021

Talk – Henry V and the battle of Agincourt

Henry V is often seen as one of England's greatest medieval kings and his victory at Agincourt is often seen as his greatest triumph. AW History's webinar will cover Henry's campaigns in France including Harfleur and Agincourt, and will consider both the legends and the facts including the role of the archers. It will be presented by Adrian Waite and will last about an hour. There will be opportunities to ask questions and make comments. The webinar is free. To register to attend, please visit AW History website at www.aw-history.co.uk/events and click on

the link there to register for the talk.

Thursday 2 December 2021

Walk – Battle of Sedgemoor 1685

A free guided tour of the Battle of Sedgemoor Visitors Centre and battlefield walk is now available on the first Thursday of every month. Meet at Westonzoyland Church, Main Road, Westonzoyland, TA7 0EP at 10.30 a.m. To book a place please telephone 01278 691492.

Thursday 2 December 2021

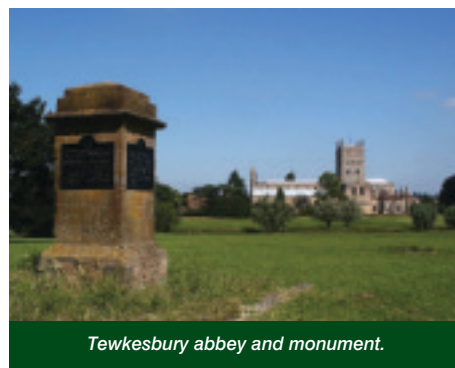
Zoom Talk – Bletchley Park and D-Day 1944

Dr David Kenyon will be speaking about Bletchley Park and D-Day 1944. The lecture will start at 8.00 p.m. To book a place, look out for the MailChimp invitation email that will be sent approximately a week in advance of the talk. Please note that you will need to download the Zoom software to be able to participate.

Sunday 5 December 2021

Walk – Battle of Tewkesbury 1471

Join the Tewkesbury Battlefield Society for a two-hour guided tour of the battlefield. Meet at 2.00 p.m. at Abbey Lawn car park, Gander Lane, GL20 5PG. For more information contact Richard Goddard at goddard961@gmail.com or telephone 07884 106549.



Tewkesbury abbey and monument.

Wednesday 15 December 2021

Zoom Talk – The Boudican Rebellion: Fact, Fiction and Archaeology

Prof Will Bowden will be speaking about the Boudican Rebellion: fact, fiction and archaeology. The lecture will start at 8.00 p.m. To book a place, look out for the MailChimp invitation email that will be sent approximately a week in advance of the talk. Please note that you will need to download the Zoom software to be able to participate.

Wednesday 12 January 2022

Zoom Talk – The History of the British Army's Uniforms

Sophie Anderton will be speaking about

the history of the British Army's uniforms. The lecture will start at 8.00 p.m. To book a place, look out for the MailChimp invitation email that will be sent approximately a week in advance of the talk. Please note that you will need to download the Zoom software to be able to participate.

Thursday 27 January 2022

Zoom Talk – The Strongest Fortress in East Anglia: Kings Lynn in the Civil Wars

David Flintham will be speaking about the strongest fortress in East Anglia: Kings Lynn in the Civil Wars. The lecture will start at 8.00 p.m. To book a place, look out for the MailChimp invitation email that will be sent approximately a week in advance of the talk. Please note that you will need to download the Zoom software to be able to participate.

Wednesday 9 February 2022

Zoom Talk – Boroughbridge 1322 and the men behind the conflict

Kathryn Warner will be speaking about the battle of Boroughbridge in 1322 and the men behind the conflict. The lecture will start at 8.00 p.m. To book a place, look out for the MailChimp invitation email that will be sent approximately a week in advance of the talk. Please note that you will need to download the Zoom software to be able to participate.

Saturday 12 February 2022

East Anglia Study Day

The study day will be held at The All Saints Hotel, Fornham St Genevieve, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP28 6JQ. Price £25.00 and includes refreshments. (Life members £20.00; non-members £30.00). A buffet lunch is available for an extra £20.00. We will also have access to the day via Zoom at a cost of £10.00. Speakers include Dr Emily Winkler on contemporary interpretations of the battle of Fornham 1173, Laura Howarth on the role that Sutton Hoo has played in our knowledge and understanding of Anglo-Saxon culture, and Dr James Barnaby on the twelfth-century Flemish mercenaries and their role in the battle of Fornham. Booking will be by Eventbrite and more details will be sent out by MailChimp. For further information please contact David Austin at daustin.bt@btinternet.com.

Various Sundays

Walk – Battle of Towton 1461

Towton Battlefield Society have resumed their programme of fortnightly walks, with dates up to 12 December 2021. Bookings are via Eventbrite. For further information please visit www.towton.org.uk.

"A masterful pulse-pounding narrative that transports the reader into the middle of the action."

CARL GNAM

Military Heritage

THE LAST VIKING

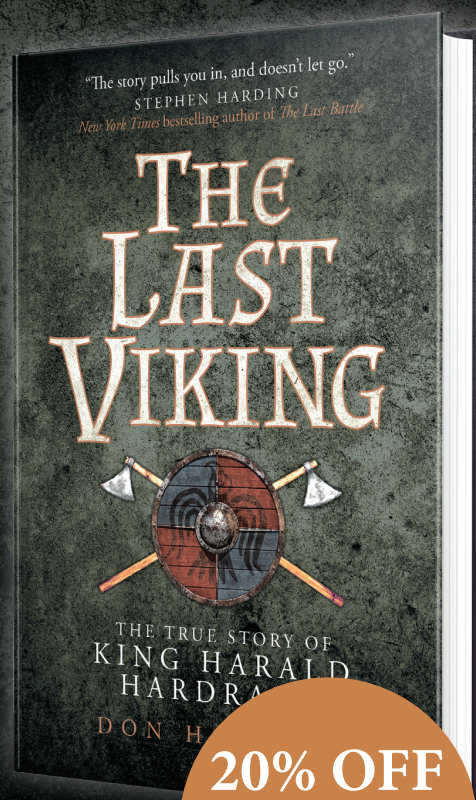
THE TRUE STORY OF KING HARALD HARDRADA

The king of the East
Has been drawn westward
Toward a glorious death.
That is my destiny.
There the ravens
Will pick their fill
From the sovereign's warriors.
I'll be there to feed them.

KING HARALD'S SAGA



Combining Norse sagas, Byzantine accounts, Anglo-Saxon chronicles, and King Harald's own verse and prose into a single, compelling story, Don Hollway brings the true tale of this Viking hero to life.



20% OFF

Order on our website
and enter discount code

Vikings20
at checkout!

Offer valid until December 31st 2021.

AVAILABLE FROM ALL GOOD BOOKSHOPS
AND ONLINE AT WWW.OSPREYPUBLISHING.COM

OSPREY
PUBLISHING