



The possible battlefield area



The church at Warkworth



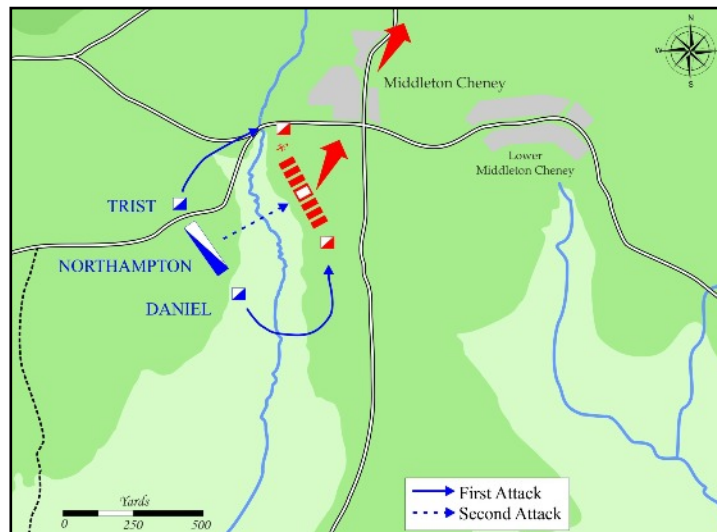
All Saints' Church Middleton Cheney

The Battle of Middleton Cheney 1643

The battle at Middleton Cheney was fought during the Civil War that broke out between King Charles I and Parliament in 1642 over money, power and religion.

Around 700 soldiers from Parliament's Northampton garrison tried to attack Banbury on 6 May 1643 after a fire there, but were intercepted trying to ford the river Cherwell to the south of the town by 600 royalist cavalry. The parliamentarians retreated, with the royalists following, until they turned and faced their pursuers near Middleton Cheney. The royalist horse attacked across a valley under fire from parliamentarian artillery. They swept away the enemy cavalry causing the foot soldiers from Northampton to run away. The Royalists were victorious.

Forty-six of those killed in the battle were buried in the church-yard of All Saints' in Middleton Cheney.



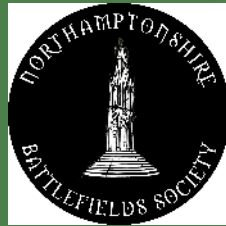
Possible deployments for the battle. Royalists in blue

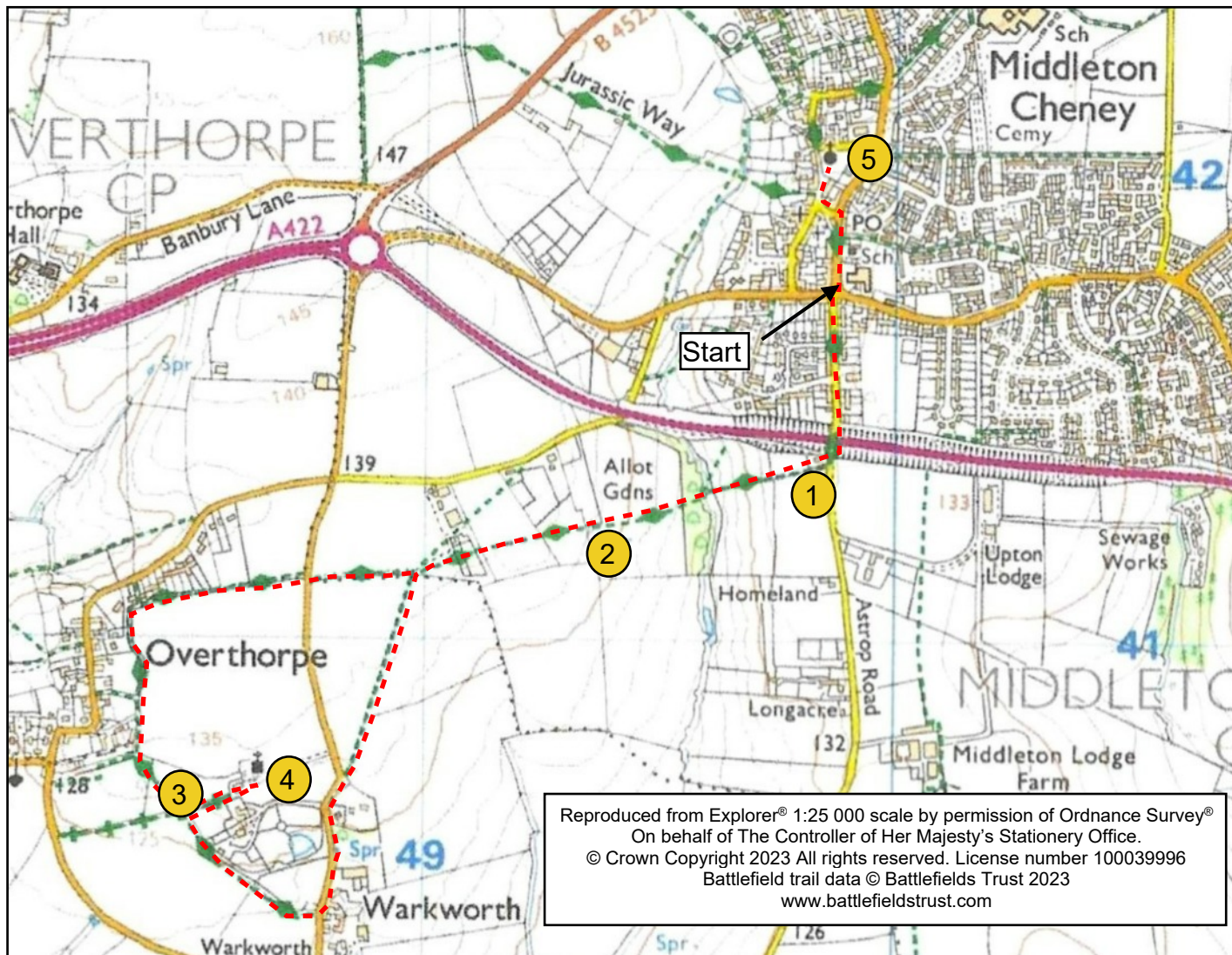
The Battle of Middleton Cheney 6th May 1643

Battlefield Trail Leaflet



Explore the battle and battlefield at Middleton Cheney with this trail leaflet





Battlefield Trail (3 miles, 1hr 30 minutes)

A walk over the battlefield taking in the main sites which finishes at the commemorative plaque in the churchyard.

⑤ Start at the Dolphin Inn in the centre of the village. Head south down the Astrop Road crossing The bridge over the A422. Immediately over the bridge take the second footpath on the right signposted 'Jurassic Way'.

① You are now standing on or close by the site of the 1643 battle of Middleton Cheney. The information board, installed in June 2023, provides details about the battle. Cross a stile into the next field and walk down the slope crossing another stile and footbridge over the stream. Continue uphill through a field and stop just before you enter the next field. Turn around for a view of the battlefield.

② You are now standing on the possible position of the royalist cavalry at the start of the battle. You can clearly see the possible parliamentarian position on the spur opposite. The royalists would have advanced from this point to engage their enemy.

Follow the path through the trees and across three fields to the south of the farm. At a hedge take the path to your left through two further fields to emerge onto a minor road to Warkworth. Continue south along the road for a short distance and opposite the houses take a footpath on your right. Follow this around the edge of the fields and across a track to the swing gate. Go through the gate and stop in the field halfway up.

③ Looking to your left you will be able to make out the ridge of high ground in the distance. This is Bodicote, where the royalist cavalry formed up awaiting the parliamentarians. Just below the ridge, but out of sight, is the ford which the parliamentarians attempted to use to cross the Cherwell to attack Banbury. Failing in their attempt they retreated as the royalist cavalry crossed the ford and moved through Warkworth towards Middleton Cheney. Behind you is Warkworth Church. Cross the field and enter the churchyard through the gate then follow the path to enter the church.

④ Warkworth Church was built in the 14th Century, but remodelled in the 1840s. The church contains monuments and brasses of the de Lyons, Chetwode and Holman families who were Lords of the Manor. Warkworth Castle, a manor house, occupied the fields north of the church. In front of the chancel is the grave slab of Sir Philip Holman who sat on the parliamentarian committee at Northampton in 1643. Leaving the churchyard follow the hedge to the corner of the field. Go through the gate and follow the enclosed path at the back of the houses until you reach a minor road. Cross over and take the straight path along the hedge. At the junction of paths continue straight on, retracing your route along the Jurassic Way back towards the start point at the Dolphin Inn. Once you have reached there continue through the village towards the church. Turn left into Church Lane and follow the road to enter the churchyard where you will see the war memorial on your right. A commemorative plaque is next to the memorial.

⑤ This commemorative plaque was unveiled in June 2023. It commemorates the 46 soldiers who were killed during the battle and who are recorded in the parish register as being buried in the churchyard. The walk ends here.