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East Midlands History and Heritage

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Special Civil War issue



WELCOME

Welcome to East Midlands History and Heritage, the magazine that uniquely caters for local history societies, schools and colleges, heritage practitioners and history professionals across the region, putting them in contact with you and you with them.

There are so many interesting stories to tell: about its people, its places and the things that happened to them. You might wonder what? Let's start with the English Civil War – *the central theme of this issue* – chosen to coincide with the opening of the new national Civil War Museum at Newark.

Charles I always recognised this strategic importance of the region; it was in Nottingham that he chose to raise his standard on 22 August 1642. Bloody sieges followed, particularly at Newark, but also at Bolingbroke and Ashby-de-la-Zouch. Nottingham, Lincoln, Gainsborough became 'frontier towns', decisive engagements were fought at Naseby, Winceby and Willoughby on the Wolds. The East Midlands became the gateway through which rival armies passed; to deny access became a chief objective for both sides. War brought disease, treachery and heroism. Its social costs were high; its legacy in terms of destruction, disruption and disability was far reaching. Read on to find out more....

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Nick Hayes (Editor)

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Holding the centre ground: the strategic importance of the North Midlands 1642-1646.

BY MARTYN BENNETT

The Strategic Overview

The strategic importance of the North Midland counties during the civil war should not be underestimated: this importance includes the full gamut of seventeenth century warfare, from location to logistics, which impacted hugely on the people who lived there. Charles I recognised this strategic location at the outset, well before the raising of the standard on 22 August 1642.

The midland counties provide both a defensive bulwark and a resource for the King's nascent army. The region was sufficiently far from London and parliament's equally embryonic army to prevent the development of the royalist force being interfered with, and it provided rich pastures for the horse and potential supplies of ammunition for the foot. Even though the King's strategy of seizing the county magazines ultimately failed, it does not detract from the importance of the strategic idea.

During the spring and summer of 1642 both sides sought, and largely failed, to seize or mobilise the Kingdom's armed forces and resources. Knowing the King could not be trusted to command the armed forces proposed to combat rebellion in Ireland, parliament had taken control of the process of nominating the militia commanders, the Lord Lieutenants, passing the Militia Bill as an ordinance, thus bypassing the need for the King's assent. The response was mixed. Only some of the county lieutenants surrendered their commissions and only some nominees took up new ones: it was a guessing game for parliament and the King when trying to divine the loyalties of society leaders. The King took advantage of the confusion over the Militia Bill and issued commissions of array, an obsolete method of raising the militia by creating committees of men drawn from county hierarchies. This was also only partially successful and in the end both King and parliament issued individual commissions directly to prospective colonels and captains. The real test which both sides faced was that of arms and ammunition.

There was a magazine in each county and the respective lord lieutenants and commissioners of array were supposed to take charge of them. However, the zeal at the centre was not matched at local level. Studious attempts were made to neutralise the weaponry by, as in Leicestershire, dispersing much of it around the county or, as in Nottinghamshire, placing it under lock and key and giving one of the three keys necessary to open the store to each party and the mayor of Nottingham. Thus the King's attempt to seize ammunition at Nottingham, Leicester and ultimately Coventry, all failed. The King next tried to force a decision by publicly declaring a state of war when he raised the standard. This only spurred the hotheads on both sides to raise their own forces and make excessive financial demands on towns and villages to sustain their growing companies, troops and regiments.

The first round of the war in the Midlands was over. The North Midland counties became strategically important again only after the battles of Edgehill, Brentford and Turnham Green failed to give the clear-cut result hoped



HENRY HASTINGS

for; and both sides poured soldiers into the regions to secure strongholds and resources. As Stuart Jennings shows, this is when the importance of the region began to have serious and lasting effects on its people and communities. The royalists sent Henry Hastings, second son to the Earl of Huntingdon, to command the region and Sir John Henderson, a professional soldier, to seize Newark, whilst parliament relied on Sir John Gell, a former high sheriff of Derbyshire and lead mine lessee, and John Hutchinson, son of Nottinghamshire stalwart Sir George Hutchinson. Together Gell and Hutchinson seized Nottingham and within months both sides had established a series of garrisons and command structures. So why was the region seen as so important? Essentially it was to do with two things: communications and resources.

Strategic Centre

The counties of Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Rutland and Staffordshire were not only at the heart of the kingdom, but they linked the royalist territories in the South Midlands where the King was with the Earl of Newcastle's command, in the north and east. There were two main routes north-south, through Staffordshire into Cheshire and Lancashire and, more importantly, the Great North Road. Both were used for major movements several times during the war by local and other forces, and by invading armies from Scotland. The route from North Wales and Cheshire inland and southwards via Staffordshire would be vital when moving troops arriving from Ireland and funnelling them southwards towards Oxford and into the Midlands as the King hoped. Moreover, the River Trent was a major communications link east-west to the continent. So clear was the strategic importance of the river that somewhat ironically it was effectively neutralised immediately by parliament's occupation of Nottingham Castle and Trent Bridge and the royalists' occupation of Newark.

Strategic Resource

The region had a rich mixture of pasture and arable suitable to provide fodder for the horse and food for the men. There was timber in the decaying Leicester forest, iron ore in south Staffordshire, coal in Cannock, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. Charcoal burners in Cannock provided the wherewithal for iron production and the bed-cords of the region provided the raw materials for gunpowder mills at Lichfield. And, of course, there was lead in north Derbyshire. There were important markets in Ashby de la Zouch, Derby,

Leicester, Lichfield, Newark and Nottingham. Cheese was produced in the east of the region and there were beans to supplement horse diets grown across the shires. Long before the concept of a national war, all of this was harnessed for the rival war efforts.

For the first time taxation collection was pushed consistently downwards through the social structure to ensure supply. Anyone with a beast or sheep on common pasture land was subjected to taxation levies to fund national level causes. Excise taxes not only penetrated the pockets of anyone buying firstly 'luxury' goods and later foodstuff at the markets but encroached too on women's roles, forcing them as well as male dealers to register at the local excise office and pay their dues. The full effects of parliament's excise legislation were delayed in this region because of the strong royalist hold on the region's markets until late in the war, which prevented the full operation of the excise offices in the parliamentary market towns. When trade took off again, in common with Smithfield market in London, there was anti-excise rioting led by female market traders.

Conflict

The strategic position of the North Midlands brought conflict to the region several times, even though a cursory glance suggests that there were no major battles in the five counties and even Naseby was on the doorstep rather than within the counties themselves. As Andrew Hopper suggests, this is a misplaced notion for it discounts sieges. Each of the major royalist garrisons, Ashby de la Zouch, Lichfield, Dudley and Tutbury, was besieged at least once: the second siege of Newark was strategically crucial and ended bloody, whilst

CHARLES I RAISING HIS STANDARD AT NOTTINGHAM
(©PALACE OF WESTMINSTER COLLECTION,
WOA 6463 WWW.PARLIAMENT.UK/ART)



the six-month long siege at the end of the war was an enormous undertaking second only (if only at all) to the siege of Oxford, and brought about the end of the war. Secondly the central position of the region meant that there were massive and crucial troop movements across it at certain points. On at least two occasions these formed part of the campaigns which ended in the major battles of Marston Moor and Naseby. Thirdly the fringes of the region witnessed that signal moment when Oliver Cromwell revealed himself to be a cavalry commander to watch; and it played a major part in his developing military career.

The centre ground was hotly contested in the spring and summer of 1643 as the garrisons established over the winter competed with each other and this was complemented by intrigue and conspiracy within and between the two sides, as Hopper outlines in his article. Parliament had been particularly successful in seizing what might have appeared the jewels in the county crowns. Leicester, Derby and Nottingham fell into their hands quickly and bloodlessly, whilst Stafford and Oakham (Burleigh House) were held only briefly by the royalists. This was quite a coup. Yet this advantage, strengthened as it was by the bagging of Oakham and Stafford by the summer of 1643, seems to be something of a chimera. An early attempt to capture the royalists' stronghold at Newark ended in acrimony, as Andrew explains in his article. Royalist domination of the region was so complete by the end of the year that parliamentarians in the region had to be funded by parliamentarian-controlled counties such as Kent. The county towns were ringed, and in some cases completely dominated, by the royalist strongholds at Ashby de la Zouch, Newark, Lichfield, Dudley and Tutbury along with their satellite garrisons. Moreover the first three strongholds were also major wartime administrative centres as well as lucrative market towns.

The communication route through the eastern side of the region, the Great North Road, was first put under pressure in earlier 1643. In late February Queen Henrietta Maria, who had been on a spending spree in on the continent buying arms for the cause, returned to England via Bridlington. A shipment of ammunition was sent from York down the road in May and a few weeks later the Queen followed with more ammunition and reinforcements for the King's army. Attempts were made to prevent both of these convoys. A coordinated approach was necessary to tackle the garrison at Newark and Lord Grey assembled his forces, those of Sir John Hotham at Hull and

Oliver Cromwell's regiment of horse. On 13 May Cromwell turned on a royalist force which had obliged him to abandon Grantham and defeated it. However the grander plan of intercepting the convoy of arms from York and capturing Newark came to nothing. The second attempt, aiming at stopping the Queen's own army passing through Newark, also failed. Cromwell's involvement in the region did not end. By July the Lincolnshire and East Anglian forces were driving through Lincolnshire disrupting the royalist hold on the shire and trying to control the Great North road as it passed through the county; to do this they sought to seize Gainsborough. After defeating a relief force under Sir Charles Cavendish, they captured the town. In their turn the parliamentarians were driven out of Gainsborough by the Earl of Newcastle and his imposing Northern Army which had marched rapidly down the Great North Road.

Over the following autumn and winter of 1643-1644, Newcastle strengthened the forces in the region, but this was undermined by the changing political situation. Parliament had enticed the covenanters into joining its side and Newcastle suddenly had a full-scale invasion on his hands. He called upon his far-flung regions for manpower. Newark remained a target for parliamentary forces and in the late winter of 1644 Sir John Meldrum again led a combined force in an attack on the town and launched a siege lasting about

a month. The reduced manpower in the region caused by Newcastle's call on his regional commander's resources meant that the local forces alone could not tackle Meldrum. That both sides saw Newark as crucial is demonstrated by the royalists committing no less a figure than Prince Rupert to combine with Henry Hastings, now ennobled as Lord Loughborough, to ensure its relief. The two royalist generals undertook a rapid march to the town, relieved it and forced Meldrum and his entire army to surrender.

The intimate link between the region and the north was brought home in two ways: when the Yorkshire royalists were under intense pressure from their local rivals, the North Midlands had to provide support in the form of the Newark horse regiments, and when these were not available to support their northern colleagues the latter were defeated and the northern royalist hegemony imploded. Nottinghamshire became the refuge for the Northern Horse, putting a strain on its resources. When Prince Rupert gathered a new army and marched north to relieve the siege of York he took not only the Northern

A true and exact Relation of the manner of his Maiesties setting up of His Standard at Nottingham, on Munday the 22. of August 1642.

First, The forme of the Standard, as it is here figured, and who were present at the advancing of it
 Secondly, The danger of setting up of former Standards, and the damage which ensued thereon.
 Thirdly, A relation of all the Standards that ever were set up by any King.
 Fourthly, the names of those Knights who are appointed to be the Kings Standard-bearers. With the forces that are appointed to guard it.
 Fifthly, The manner of the Kings coming first to Coventry.
 Sixthly, The Cavaliers resolution and dangerous threats which they have uttered, if the King concludes a peace without them, or hearkens unto his great Councell the Parliament: Moreover how they have shared and divided London amongst themselves already.



the North Midlands were of supreme importance to both sides in the civil war

horse but substantial numbers of Lord Loughborough's regiments with him. When Rupert was defeated at the Battle for Marston Moor on 2 July 1644, not only were these regiments largely (but not entirely) lost, but the North Midlands shires became the new front line. Despite the intense pressure put on the region during the late summer, autumn and winter of 1644 and 1645 the royalists hung on and by the spring of 1645 were undergoing something of a renaissance enhanced at the end of May when the King's field army marched into the region and captured Leicester.

It was a short-lived revival; for just a fortnight later on 14 June 1645 the royalist army was defeated comprehensively at the Battle of Naseby. The remaining eleven months of the war saw a steady decline in royalist fortunes in the North Midlands: but there were high spots including the recapture and reoccupation of several garrisons lost in the summer of 1644. That the region still had strategic importance is clearly evident. The King brought his army to Newark in both August and October 1645 intending or perhaps hoping to launch an attack on the North: it was during the latter visitation that Prince Rupert forced the King into staging a court martial to judge on his surrender of Bristol (see *Hopper's article*) and at the same time probably introduced bubonic plague into Newark (see *Jennings's article*).

More importantly, parliament decided to commit an important contingent of its forces to capturing Newark, committing the Northern Association army and the Scottish Army of the Solemn League and Covenant to a siege lasting over six months, which ultimately tied down a huge resource and yet still failed. Newark surrendered because of politics not war, when Charles used it as a bargaining counter when, as he surrendered to the Scots, he ordered the town to surrender as a cynical plan to continue the war by other (political) means.

Conclusion

It is hard to argue anything other than that the North Midlands were of supreme importance to both sides in the civil war at various times, for the counties ensured the continuity of military control from the south to the north. In the second (1648) and the third (1650-53) civil wars the North Midlands were not of strategic importance. The region became the place where the invasion of the Scottish and royalist force finally petered out at Uttoxeter and on Willoughby Field in Nottinghamshire. In the third it was a place which Cromwell passed through and collected supplies as he masterfully guided Charles Stuart's army towards its defeat at Worcester. 📄

Martyn Bennett
Nottingham Trent University

Suggested reading Atherton, I., 'Royalist Finances in the English Civil War: the case of Lichfield Garrison 1643-1645', *Midland History*, 33, 1, (2008). Bennett, M., *The Civil Wars in Britain and Ireland*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1997. Bennett, M., 'Contribution and Assessment: Financial Exactions in the First Civil War 1642-46', *War and Society* 5(1), (1986). Bennett, M., 'My Plundered Townes, My Houses Devastation': The Civil War and North Midlands' Life, 1642-1646. *Midland History* XXII, (1997). Jennings, S. B., These Uncertain tymes Newark and the Civilian Experience of the Civil Wars, 1640-1660. *Nottingham, Nottingham County Council* (2009). Richards, Jeff, *The Siege and Storming of Leicester, London, New Millennium*, (2001). Sherwood, R. E., *The Civil War in the Midlands*. (Stroud: Sutton, 1992). Wood, A. C., *Nottinghamshire in Civil War* (originally published 1937), (Wakefield: S. R. Reprint, 1971).

Newark 1646 reconstruction

This detailed reconstruction of how Newark looked in 1646 is the most accurate yet produced. It was commissioned by the National Civil War Centre and is the work of architect and visualisation expert Simon Fleming, of Fleming Woelfell Imaging. It took months of investigation and computer modelling to produce.

The sheer scale of the siege works surrounding the town compared to the built up area is astounding and underlines the huge strategic importance of the garrison to both sides. To research the image Simon pored over a period Royalist siege plan and a similar version produced by Parliament, together with accounts of the siege, 17th century military manuals, books on timber frame buildings, OS maps and the Royal Commission report on the Newark's earthworks published in the 1960s. He also explored the town's historic streets and talked with locals. A three metre wide version of the remarkable reconstruction features in the learning section of the National Civil War Centre and it also appears as an interactive graphic on the town trail app.



Introducing the National Civil War Centre, Newark

NATIONAL CIVIL WAR CENTRE
NEWARK MUSEUM

OPEN: 10:00 am - 5:00 pm daily.
ADMISSION: £7 adults
£3 children
£6 concessions

The UK's first National Civil War Centre – a flagship project by Newark & Sherwood District Council – opened in Newark in early May. The £5.4 million attraction, backed by £3.5 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund, is based in the magnificent Old Magnus Building, a former Tudor grammar school.

Newark, held by the Royalists, played a major role in the Civil Wars because it lay at the crossroads of the Great North Road and Fosse Way. It was also a crossing point over the River Trent. It faced three sieges, the last of which in 1645-46 caused terrible suffering.

The discovery of a treasure trove of previously unexamined papers in local archives has given historians a unique insight into the town's experience, with period invoices, petitions, accounts and records revealing how ordinary people coped with being caught in the cross-fire between Cavalier and Roundhead.

This newly-discovered material, together with state-of-the-art technology and hundreds of previously unseen relics, create a unique museum experience. Amongst the fabulous array of objects is a hoard of siege coins minted in Newark. With the town sealed off, the only way to keep the economy going and pay troops was to make currency locally. Coins were made from silver plate donated by local wealthy citizens, 'liberated' from the church or even plundered before the siege began. Cut into a diamond shape to reduce wastage, the coins bear the legend Newark OBS – an abbreviation from the Latin for 'under siege'.



NEWARK SIEGE COINS

Michael Constantine, Business Manager at the National Civil War Centre, said: "The British Civil Wars laid the foundations for our modern state. Yet for many it is an unknown episode. We want to change that. It was a cruel conflict, not a joust between gentlemen. The Civil Wars saw about 4% of the English population die. Brother took up arms against brother and the lives of ordinary people were shattered. No village, hamlet or town escaped the turmoil."

Newark's story has also inspired an ambitious augmented reality Civil War Trail. This £300,000 project will bring history to life, telling the story of plague, plot and glory using a specially designed app. Featuring costumed scenes filmed at locations across Newark and further afield, it will encourage visitors to explore key Civil War sites.

The National Civil War Centre is expected to attract over 60,000 visitors a year. Opening times are 10:00 am to 5:00 pm daily. Admission £7.00 adults, £3.00 children and £6.00 concessions.

For more information see: www.nationalcivilwarcentre.com
The Centre's app is available for free download from Google Play and itunes. 📱



MICHAEL CONSTANTINE
WITH STRIPPED
BACK ROOF AT OLD
MAGNUS BUILDING

A brief guide to the Civil Wars

FEBRUARY The first 'siege' of Newark sees the parliamentary forces under Thomas Ballard repulsed after one day's fighting.

APRIL Parliamentary forces routed by Royalists at Ancaster Heath, Lincolnshire.

MAY Royalist forces successfully repelled by Cromwell at Belton, near Grantham.

JULY Parliamentarians defeat troops under Cavendish at North Scarle, but are forced to withdraw to Lincoln. Royalists besiege and retake Gainsborough.

OCTOBER Battle of Winceby, near Bolingbroke, leads to collapse of Royalist control of Lincolnshire and ended threat of southward advance of the Earl of Newcastle's northern army.

FEBRUARY Royalist forces inflict severe losses on the Roundheads at Melton Mowbray.

MAY Sack of Leicester by the royalists.

JUNE Royalist army is destroyed by Fairfax's New Model Army at the Battle of Naseby, Northamptonshire.

NOVEMBER Royalist defenders of Shelford Manor, Nottinghamshire, are massacred by Parliamentary forces.

Third Siege of Newark begins.



KEY

The English Civil Wars in the East Midlands

1637 Charles's religious policies in Scotland provoke nationwide revolt.

1639 Charles goes to war against Scotland. It was a brief inconclusive war, but the Scots successfully defend themselves against the king.

1641 The king fails to enact successful coups to regain power in England and Scotland and in October rebellion breaks out in Ireland, when Catholics are refused access to power and reforms like those won by Calvinists in Scotland and England and Wales.

1643 The king's forces dominate large parts of England and Wales, but fail to inflict final defeat on Parliament which has negotiated a treaty with Scotland. A cessation of hostilities comes into effect in Ireland.

1645 Parliament restructures its war-effort and creates the New Model Army which defeats the main royalist field armies. The king's attempt to defeat the Scots on home soil ends in defeat.

1647 Radical political groups emerge in England, proposing democracy and the establishment of a republic. Parliamentary forces go on the offensive in Ireland.

1649 The king is executed in January and a Republic is established. Oliver Cromwell leads the New Model Army to Ireland.

1651 Scotland is defeated and Charles Stuart is driven into exile on the continent.

1653 Cromwell becomes head of state after the failure of, firstly, the 1640 parliament, and then a nominated assembly to create a new regime.

1655 The final major royalist plots are defeated in England and Scotland.

1658 Cromwell dies.

1660 The restoration of the monarchy is achieved, royalist exiles return to Britain and Ireland; a new group of exiles – the defeated republicans – head for the continent and the Americas.

The Scottish revolt continues and opposition is consolidated with the creation of a National Covenant which binds the nation in a contract with God to defend the church (Kirk). The Scottish parliament and the General Assembly of the Kirk begin a political and religious revolution.

The Estates continue to move towards setting up a government which functions without a king. A compliant Irish parliament votes money for the king's military plans, but the English/Welsh parliament refuses to do the same. War breaks out again in the summer. The Scots win and occupy the north of England. By the end of the year parliaments in all three kingdoms begin to dismantle monarchical government.

War breaks out in England and Wales after the king attempted to raise an army to oppose parliament. An alternative government is established in Ireland and it takes over the majority of the country.

With the assistance of a large army from Scotland, parliament takes the initiative: the first waves of defeated royalists head for the continent. The king launches an attempt to defeat the Scots by organising an invasion from Ireland.

War ends in England and Wales. The king surrenders to the Scots. Radical religious politics in Ireland prevents a peace treaty between the king's representatives and the Kilkenny government. More royalists flee to the European continent.

A second civil war breaks out in Wales and England; the royalists are defeated after a few weeks. In Ireland an alliance between the Kilkenny government and royalists is agreed. A further exodus of royalists makes its way to the continent and Ireland.

The Irish/royalist alliance is defeated. Cromwell returns to England and invades Scotland. Charles Stuart, son of Charles I, leaves the United Provinces for Scotland.

Ireland and Scotland is incorporated into the Republic. War breaks out between the Republic and the United Provinces.

Peace between the republic and the United Provinces.

Cromwell is offered the crown and the opportunity to create a dynasty: he refuses.

The Protectorate collapses.

1638

1640

1642

1644

1646

1648

1650

1652

1654

1656-1657

1659



AUGUST King Charles I raises his standard at Nottingham Castle.

MARCH Second siege of Newark starts. Prince Rupert relieves the town and scatters the besiegers.

JULY Wingfield Manor, Derbyshire, taken by Parliamentary forces led by Sir John Gell.

MAY King Charles I surrenders to the Scottish Army at Southwell. Royalist garrison at Newark surrenders and leaves the town two days later.

JULY Royalist forces defeated at the Battle of Willoughby Field, Nottinghamshire.



Hidden voices: Newark and the civilian experience of the British Civil Wars

BY STUART B. JENNINGS

12TH CENTURY GATEHOUSE
AT NEWARK CASTLE, A UNIQUE
SURVIVAL IN ENGLAND.

Situated as it was on the Great North Road at one of the lowest crossing points on the river Trent from the Humber estuary, Newark on Trent was always going to be of strategic importance once the civil war began in 1642.

Control of the town meant that a road route between the king's headquarters at Oxford and the important northern towns of York and Newcastle was maintained and river trade along the Trent between the parliamentary towns of Nottingham and Hull disrupted. The survival, even to this day, of extensive earthworks and fortifications, including the Queen's scone, is a testimony to the military activity that went in to defending and besieging it over a four-year period. It had been seized by the royalists in the autumn of 1642 and remained an undefeated garrison until ordered directly by the king to surrender in 1646.

One of the unforeseen and unintended consequences of this uninterrupted period of occupation by royalist forces was that significant samples of the ordinary records generated by everyday civic life have survived. These include receipts, some loose pages of Poor Relief accounts and the Corporation meeting minutes. Alongside these there also survived a complete set of parish records and a full set of Churchwarden's accounts. These are supplemented by a rare set of military accounts from 1644-1645 for the locally raised regiment of Colonel Staunton and also a number of military vouchers and warrants. What these together facilitate, in a way very difficult to obtain for many other military garrisoned towns, is a glimpse into what life would have been like for the ordinary citizen. They highlight many of the hardships they had to endure but also testify to the resilience and commitment of the community to maintain as far as possible its everyday life and activities in a time of upheaval and violence. These are just as important as the physical remains from the period and add to the importance of the collection and displays of the new National Civil War Museum that opened in the town in May 2015.

The abiding reality and memory for the citizens of Newark over the period of the civil war (1642-1646) would have been one of destruction and disease. The requirement to supplement and strengthen the old medieval walls with a circuit of additional earthen-work defences meant that houses in the way of these new works, or those situated beyond them, would have to have been dismantled, resulting in overcrowding and increasing squalor within the town, which had already doubled in population

“it pleased God of his infinite mercy wonderfully to p[re]serve me and my wife from a fearefull destruction by a terrible blowe of grenadoes”

pleased God of his infinite mercy wonderfully to p[re]serve me and my wife from a fearefull destruction by a terrible blowe of grenadoes.” As a consequence he later provided finances for the delivery of an annual sermon. An insight into what such destruction could mean for the poorer members of society is provided by the chance survival of a petition presented by Charles Piggot. Although undated, it was almost certainly written after this second siege because the reverse side of the parchment was used to record the will of Thomas Waite, which was made on 20 July 1644. The proving of this will ensured the survival of the petition. Piggot pleaded:

“Your poore petitioner hath in a verie large manner tasted of the miseries and affliccons of these tymes for at the last fight against Newarke he had his house blowne upp with a granado and all his goods burnt and broken to the utter undoeinge of your poore petitioner, his wife and seaven children.”

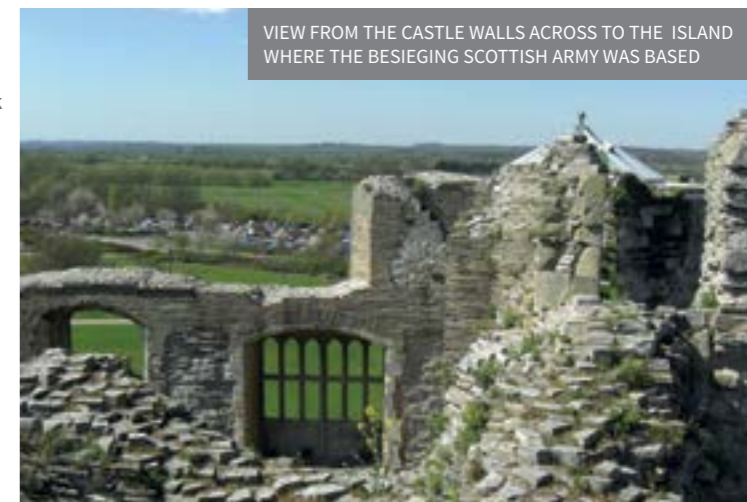
with the establishment of a garrison at the castle. Surviving in the Corporation Minutes Book is an order issued on the 23 September 1645 to the executor of the will of Thomas Waite instructing him to dismantle a tenement, which was in the way of the defensive works being constructed in anticipation of the final siege:

“Whereas there is a small tenement consisting of two bayes of building lately erected upon the townes land at Milngate and nere the river of Trent by Thomas Waite deceased, w[h]ich said tenem[en]t is by order of the Generall and Comissioners appointed to be taken downe for the strengthening and better fortifieing of the Bulworks there....and the same to reedifie upon some part of the ground belonging to the Corporacon, soe soone as the same may or can be done with conveniency.”

The less substantial dwellings of the town's poorer residents may well have been demolished with less care or thought and so often fail to appear in the surviving records.

The final two sieges would have added to the already deteriorating situation within the town defences. Amongst the buildings destroyed by mortar grenades in 1644 was the house of the Mayor of Newark, Hercules Clay, which stood in the Market Place. After a series of dreams, Clay had moved his family out of the house the day before it was hit and in thankfulness that “it

VIEW FROM THE CASTLE WALLS ACROSS TO THE ISLAND WHERE THE BESIEGING SCOTTISH ARMY WAS BASED



The outcome of this petition remains unknown but Thomas Piggot appears in the 1664 Hearth Tax returns where he is recorded as living in the 'meanest' part of the town and is so poor that he is exempt from any charge. It seems unlikely, therefore, that he received much, if any, help following his misfortune.

Surviving parish records provide a valuable insight into the demographic impact of the civil war upon the ordinary citizens of the town. A comprehensive burial, baptism and marriage register survives as does also a comprehensive set of churchwarden accounts. The former is not without its difficulties for it records only the burial of 28 officers and 4 soldiers from the garrison, raising the question of where the many soldiers who died in the fighting were actually buried and, if in the churchyard, why were their names not entered in the burial register. Even so there seems little reason to doubt, especially when comparing with figures from the pre-war period, that the majority of civilian burials in the churchyard were recorded in the register. This can also be supplemented in 1646 with entries from surviving neighbouring parishes where burials of Newark citizens seeking to flee the plague are also recorded. Extrapolating these details provides a demographic insight into periods of high mortality and the probable causes within the town.

The main epidemic disease which the registers suggest periodically afflicted the town over much of the civil war was typhus. This is an infection that is carried by human body lice and in the early modern period was an ailment that was directly associated with the movement of troops. Its classic symptoms included fever leading to a stupor with extraordinary headaches and red pustules resembling fleabites appearing over the body of the sufferer. Epidemics usually began at the start of the winter months when the cold discouraged bathing and the changing of clothes, and usually disappeared with the appearance of warm weather. Such conditions were ideal for body lice to prosper and typhus proved to be the scourge of field armies ▶

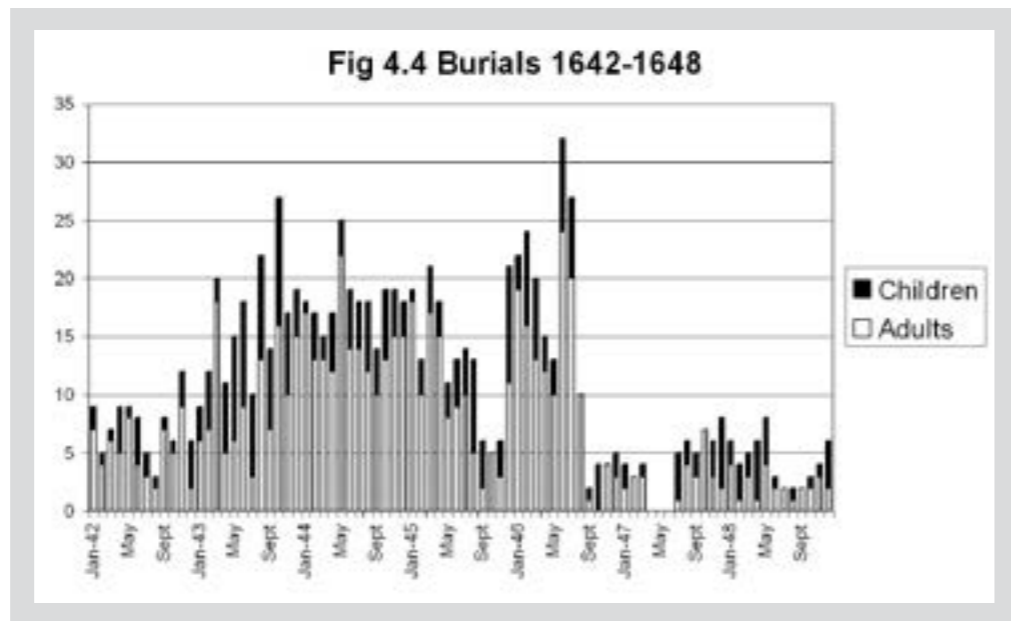
Further reading Stuart B. Jennings, 'These Uncertain Tymes': Newark and the Civilian Experience of the Civil Wars, 1640-1660 (Nottinghamshire County Council, 2009) Stuart B. Jennings, 'The Third and Final Siege of Newark (1645-1646) and the impact of the Scottish Army upon Nottinghamshire and the Adjacent Counties', *Midland History* Vol. 37(2) (2012), 142-62 A.C. Wood, *Nottinghamshire in the Civil War* (East Ardsley, 1971).

where good hygiene was extremely difficult. Whilst potentially lethal for adults, typhus rarely kills children; although they sickened from the disease, their mortality rate remained very low. In Newark's burial registers there are noticeable occasions where there is a preponderance of adult deaths over that of children during the winter months and often these coincide with or immediately follow the three sieges of the garrison town.

The decade prior to the start of the civil war (1632-1642) witnessed an average annual burial total of 90 persons in the churchyard. From 1643 to 1646 the total burials in the churchyard were 748, yielding an annual average of 187. This doubling of rates cannot be explained by soldier or stranger burials (which accounted for only 28 and 44 burials respectively) with the year of the plague (1646) yielding a total of 8 per cent of the 177 burials.

In November 1645, the terrifying presence of bubonic plague was identified within the town, probably carried by the soldiers of Prince Rupert's guard who rode directly to Newark after the surrender of the plague-infested city of Bristol so that the prince might defend his honour before his uncle the king. There survives in the minute book of the Corporation detailed plague instructions for controlling the outbreak amongst the civilian population and also vouchers for the payment for doctors to search the corpses for buboes, watchmen at the houses of those shut in because of their infection and payments for deliveries of bread, beer and oats to the shut in victims of the epidemic. An interesting voucher records the payment for an 'antidote' of the plague for a privileged few. It listed:

- An Ante dote 6s. 8d.
- Harthorne & Marygold flowers 2s. 0d.
- The Ante dote 6s. 8d.
- The same Agayne 6s. 8d.
- Frankincense 1s. 0d.
- A fumeing powder 4s. 6d.
- A Cataplasme 3s. 6d.
- Mithridate & syrup of maydenhare 1s. 0d.
- A perfumeing powder 4s. 6d.



The materials listed on the voucher reflected contemporary views on the transmission of the infection and how best it should be treated. Plague was believed to be spread by miasma, 'stinking vapours by which the air is putrefied'. By the burning of perfumes and the use of masking scents it was hoped to counteract the infectious smells of plague.

The three typhus epidemics over 1643-1646 probably killed between 12-15 per cent of the town's civilian population whilst the arrival of the plague in 1645-1646 accounted for a further 10 to 15 per cent, accounting together for a reduction of between 25 to 30 per cent of the town's population.

For the town, typhus was a persistent and ever-present consequence of the town being garrisoned whilst the short-lived plague outbreak, the terrifying climax of the war. Unlike the larger towns of Bristol and York, Newark's long term demographic recovery from the civil war was to take much longer.

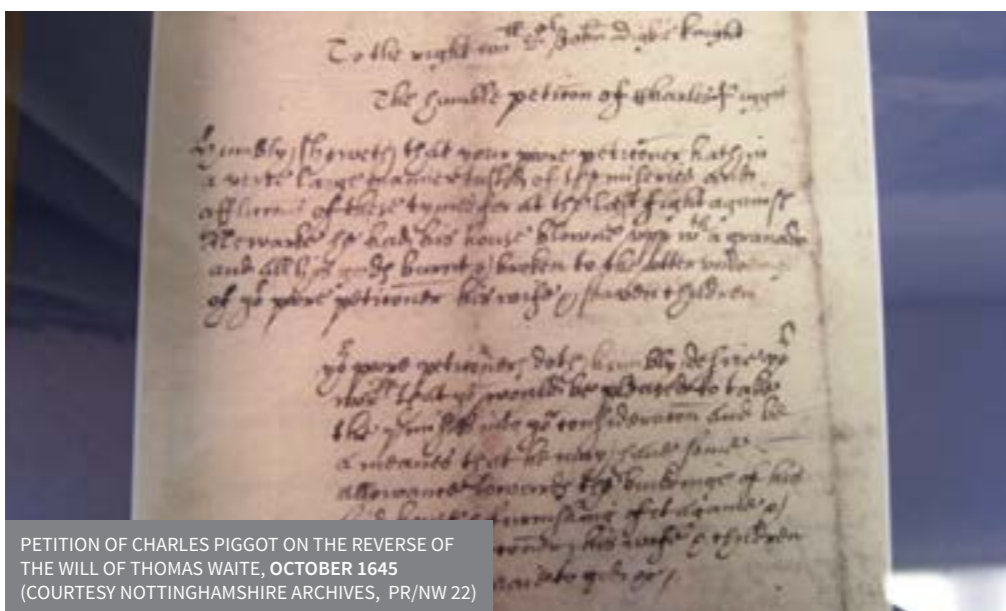
Amidst all this death and destruction of the unfolding war, the surviving records of the town corporation testify to a very different sort of story which is often missed in many of the national narratives of the civil war. This is the momentous struggle on the part of the civilian authorities in Newark to maintain the structures and form of everyday life. Civic life was indeed maintained.

The three typhus epidemics over 1643-1646 probably killed between 12-15 per cent of the town's civilian population

We can find the proof for this in unbound poor relief accounts for the year 1645-1646, the vouchers and bills surviving recording payments for the maintenance and running of the song school and paying of the master's stipend and payments for blue cloth to make new liveries for the appointed corporation officials. And in the churchwarden's accounts recording payment to poor widows for winding sheets and inkles to bury the soldiers who died in their homes as a result of injuries received in the fighting.

Newark is fortunate to possess some of the country's most impressive surviving civil war siege works, buildings, and a castle all of which came through the war. These help both to create a sense of the impact upon the locality and add to the national narrative of events. It is further enriched by the survival of the detailed records of everyday life. These provide a more intimate and personal encounter with the war which will figure in the museum experience.

Stuart B. Jennings
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PETITION OF CHARLES PIGGOT ON THE REVERSE OF THE WILL OF THOMAS WAITE, OCTOBER 1645 (COURTESY NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ARCHIVES, PR/NW 22)



Saints & malignants: Rothley and its neighbours in the 17th century's times of turmoil

BY SUSAN JOYCE

During the Civil War and Commonwealth the villages of Leicestershire experienced many of the upheavals taking place in everyday life, whether from the effects of skirmishes, quartering of troops, or the removal, sometimes forcibly, of the incumbent of their church. Religion played a vital part in the life of a community, providing the social cement essential to the maintenance of the established hierarchy in church and state.

For much of the early part of the first civil war, Leicestershire was dominated by the royalist forces led by Lord Loughborough, based at Ashby de la Zouch even though the county town was held for parliament. Rothley, both village and church, was firmly under the control of the Babingtons, lords of the manor since the latter part of the 16th century, and patrons of the living of the church. At the outbreak of war, the patron was Thomas Babington and the vicar, since 1625, was William Staveley M.A.. He was clearly a learned and well educated man, but was described in a survey of 1650 as "no preacher". Babington supported parliament and served on the county committee and, in fact, Captain Babington and his troopers from Lord Grey of Groby's regiment were involved in a skirmish with royalist forces at Rothley Lodge in 1644.

By contrast most country clergy clung to a comfortable Prayer Book Anglicanism, reflective of order, stability and respect for tradition and authority. Some were politically strident. For example, William Holdsworth, curate of Earl Shilton, "reviled parliament and refused to pray for them" and read out a royal proclamation in the middle of a sermon. Such men, in the eyes

of the local parliamentary committee, were highly dangerous. Some clergymen even joined the royalist army; two, Michael Hudson of Market Bosworth and Richard Benskin of Wanlip died fighting for the royalist cause.

Thomas Babington died in 1645, and was succeeded by his son, Matthew (1612-1669). William Staveley stayed in his post. Not so roughly one third of Leicestershire clergymen who were ejected from their livings once the royalist hold on the county went into decline, whether for open Royalist sympathies, being "too ceremonious" in their services, failing to set an example to their flock and sometimes through unpopularity with their parishioners, who sometimes maliciously informed against them.

Thus in the years following 1643, Robert Palmer of Wymeswold was said to be "so drunk he hath not known the water from the bridge", and, we are told, Joseph Smith of Swithland of Hathern and Sibley "kept scandalous curates at forty shillings a year and was more interested in 'fiscic' than divinity." Robert Bayley of Oadby, truly a victim of village gossip, let his children play on Sundays, persecuted "Godley men", fought and quarrelled in the alehouse and his wife was "seldom at church". Thomas Bird of Somerby – one of 23 Leicestershire clergy accused of "scandalous behaviour" (16 of them being "frequenter of alehouses") – was alleged to have had a piper play him home from the alehouse at midnight, "scaring the townsmen out of their sleep". His reply included a note of sadness – "having no company at home to recreate himself but three small children where the eldest is not above fourteen, hee indeed sometimes doth goe to the alehouse, hee having not wherewithal to entertain at home." ▶

In the days when there were no benefits for families or those out of work, the family of an ejected clergyman was hard hit. Thomas Rawson, with his pregnant wife, Lydia, and their nine children, was ejected from his Holby living by parliamentary troopers. He was forced to house them in the church porch and belfry for several days before seeking sanctuary at Rotherby where, using blankets as a screen between the family and the congregation, they existed on the charity of friends and neighbours until they were able to return to a cottage in Hoby, seven of the now ten children being farmed out as apprentices to avoid starvation.

Closer to home, Richard Benskin, rector of Wanlip and vicar of Humberstone, refused to accept parliament's orders, declaring he would "undergo any hardship, even death, rather than take the oath". His words were prophetic, for when Colonel Poyntz captured Shelford House in Nottinghamshire in October 1645, Benskin was refused quarter and "died at the foot of the stairs." His son stated that his parishioners had been forced "against their will to carry and drive all his cattle, corn and goods to Leicester", when his belongings were seized by the county committee.

William Staveley was fortunate for he kept his living during the war years. However, according to a story printed in Nichols' *History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester*, his church was disturbed in 1644 by a moment of high drama. Royalist troops from the Ashby garrison entered Rothley church during a service, and took away three men from the congregation to Ashby. One can imagine the consternation of the parishioners on hearing the clatter of hooves outside, the doors being flung open and armed men entering the church. Unless these men were chosen at random to frighten the villagers, it would seem that they were known to their abductors as troublemakers, or had been pointed out as such.

Royalist troops from the Ashby garrison entered Rothley church during a service, and took away three men from the congregation to Ashby.

In 1648, Mathew Babington, now lord of the manor after his father's demise, suffered his own personal tragedy, when his wife Anne, aged 33, died in childbirth. Her memorial in Rothley church, which incidentally shows Babington in armour, indicates that she was greatly loved.

"Her soul, without flattery, was adorned with a trinity of divine excellencies as rare companions. A sound knowledge, a prudent profession, a sincere and constant practise of ye best religion of ye Church of England in all her relations. Her body being for beauty a fit cabinet for such a jewel, in memory of whom her said husband erected this monument."

Anne was clearly no puritan: she is shown wearing a fashionable dress and necklace. The wording on the tablet indicates that she had "a sincere and constant practise of ye best religion of ye Church of England." Both she and her husband most likely leaned towards moderation, rather than the High Anglicanism practised by the King.

Whatever his personal opinions, during the generally tolerant commonwealth and protectorate there was little action Matthew could as a Justice of the Peace take against religious radicals, but having remained in post after the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, and subsequently of the hierarchy of the Church of England, Babington chose to actively pursue local nonconformists with great vigour. Babington must have had his eye particularly on Mountsorrel. The southern part of the village was included in Rothley Parish. During the later middle ages Mountsorrel had been a target for nonconformists when, in 1389, an itinerant preacher, John Edward, preached in taverns there. He was a Lollard, a follower of John Wyclif of Lutterworth, who



MATHEW AND ANNE BABINGTON (COURTESY ROY PRECIOUS)

was highly critical of the state of the church. This tradition was continued with the arrival of Richard Adams, a Baptist minister, who established a meeting house in his home when he moved to Mountsorrel. He remained there for a number of years, building up a congregation of eighty members by 1669.

During the 1640s Samuel Oates, a former weaver and father of Titus Oates (the man responsible for manufacturing the "Popish Plot" implicating Catholics in the reign of Charles II) was sent out from Bell Alley Baptist meeting house in London to evangelise in Leicestershire. His efforts may well have met with success considering the popularity of Richard Adams in the 1650s. In 1656 messengers were sent to "stir up" the enthusiasm of local Baptists, sometimes known as "Dippers" from their practice of adult baptism. There were similar congregations in Leicester, Loughborough and the Soar valley villages.

Babington was "very zealous" against the Dissenters according to Samuel Palmer. He took action against Adams once the official, political and religious climate had changed, fining him a shilling a day for preaching. On occasion, Babington also resorted to force. John Shuttlewood, a minister at Hose in the Vale of Belvoir, encountered a group of "30 or 40 horsemen with swords drawn and pistols cocked", led by Babington who fell upon him and his friends while singing psalms. Shuttlewood was described by Samuel Palmer as a "great sufferer for nonconformity not only by the loss of a very comfortable subsistence but by the seizure of his goods and the imprisonment of his person."

Far more dangerous to the established order were the Quakers. The movement was founded by George Fox born in Fenny Drayton, near Lutterworth, in 1624. It was regarded by the establishment as dangerously subversive. Fox was the son of a weaver, known to his neighbours as "righteous Christer." His wife Mary Lago was "an upright woman of the stock of the martyrs." Braithwaite, in *The Early History of Quakerism*, suggests this could have meant descent from one of the two Protestant martyrs, Robert Glover and Joyce Lewis, who resided in the next parish, Mancetter. Both had been burnt at the stake in the reign of Mary I (1552-1558). Lutterworth, the nearest town, had been the home of John Wyclif and his supporters, the Lollards.

Far removed from its peaceful image today, early Quakerism was marked by the refusal of its adherents to acknowledge the civil power, to doff their hats in church to those in authority, to swear oaths or to pay tithes to the established church. It was a movement in which women played a substantial part, preaching, teaching and even acting as missionaries overseas. Quakers often ended up in prison for their intransigence.

With the passing of the Blasphemy Act in 1650 Fox and his fellow evangelists faced the prospect of gaol. He was imprisoned in Leicester in 1651, having already suffered the same fate in Derby – six months imprisonment for refusing to join the army – "a lousy stinking low place without any bed among the thirty felons, there being several [Quaker] friends in prison with hardly any room to lie down." Swannington, in north-west Leicestershire, was to become a major Quaker centre, with visiting preachers from Bristol and London.

During the 1660s there were 40 Quakers in Mountsorrel, 60 in Sileby and small groups in Wymeswold and Syston, "of the mean [i.e. lowly] sort." The comment was made that "they were silent led by a woman whose name I know not." This could have been Elizabeth Hooton, who, with her son when living in Syston, was

singled out for attention by Babington. Elizabeth was a well-to-do farmer's wife from Scrooby, north Nottinghamshire. She was the mother of five children and leader of a local Baptist congregation. When she met George Fox, however, she became a Quaker. When widowed, she sold up and went as a missionary to America, Jamaica and Barbados. During the 1660s she was with her son Samuel in Syston. Babington's treatment of the family was described as "unjust usage – five mares and their furniture taken from a cart laden with corn at harvest time."

Babington took Samuel "from the plow... so they kept him in prison both at seed time and harvest" (presumably for refusing to pay tithes to the church). He may have been the "Mr Horton", who in 1667, was dragged by an officer and soldiers "and many rude people" from a Quaker meeting in Syston, put in the stocks, thrown in a wheelbarrow and then thrown in the mill pond, with some crying "stick a knife in him." The name is very similar and this was clearly an individual prominent among Syston Quakers. It illustrates the indignities many Quakers had to suffer for their faith.

Another group of which Babington must have heard was the Ranters, a disorganised but dangerous number of radicals whose founder, Abiezer Coppe, is afforded (perhaps apocryphally) the dubious distinction of taking a Ranter trait to new heights, swearing in a pulpit for an hour on end. His book, *The Fiery Flying Roll*, would have horrified gentry like Babington.

"Thou who hast bags of money behold I the Lord come as a thief in the night, deliver thy purse or I'll cut thy throat... have all things in common or else the plague of God will rot and consume all that you have."

In Leicester his followers, Jacob Bauthumley and Robert Wilkinson, made equally inflammatory statements, Wilkinson claiming he was both God and the Devil and there was no God but him. The Bible was a "pack of lyes", there was no heaven, no hell "but here". Their activities were an example of what dangers such sects could present to the established order. Incidentally, "Ranters Row" on Mountsorrel Lane in Rothley does not refer to Coppe and his cronies, but to the much later Primitive Methodist chapel which still stands today as a private house.

Thus there were twenty years of change and turmoil. Roughly one third of Leicestershire's parish clergy were ejected between 1642 and 1655, as they faced the consequences of living in a county which from 1644 onwards fell into the control of Parliament. As the Nonconformist sects emerged during the 1650s, villages like those along the Soar Valley with sizeable numbers of independent minded artisans became centres of religious radicalism. The village of Rothley, under the control of the Babingtons remained relatively quiet, with no removal of clergy, one minor skirmish outside the village and no real evidence of radicalism. Rothley was more fortunate than many other villages. 📄

Susan Joyce
Rothley History Society



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War widows and maimed soldiers in Northamptonshire after the English Civil Wars

Stewart Beale
University of Leicester

Further reading: David Appleby, 'Unnecessary persons? Maimed soldiers and war widows in Essex, 1642-1662', *Essex Archaeology and History* Vol. 32 (2001), pp. 209-221. Eric Gruber von Arni, *Justice to the Maimed Soldier: Nursing, Medical Care and Welfare for Sick and Wounded Soldiers and their Families during the English Civil Wars and Interregnum, 1642-1660* (Aldershot, 2001). Geoffrey Hudson, 'Negotiating for blood money: war widows and the courts in seventeenth-century England', in Jenny Kermode and Garthine Walker (eds.), *Women, Crime and the Courts in Early Modern England* (London, 1994), pp. 146-169. Geoffrey Hudson, 'Disabled veterans and the state in early modern England', in David Gerber (ed.), *Disabled Veterans in History* (Michigan, 2000), pp. 117-144. Roy Sherwood, *The Civil War in the Midlands 1642-1651* (Stroud, 1992).

Under the Elizabethan poor laws of 1593, soldiers and seamen injured in the services of the crown were awarded the right to receive state pensions. Whilst this legislation acknowledged the sacrifices made by servicemen fighting in the name of Queen and country, it failed to recognise the impact war placed on the families of those wounded or killed in battle. This was to change during the 1640s, with the outbreak of the English Civil War.

On 24 October 1642, Parliament confirmed that the widows of parliamentary soldiers would be entitled to receive pensions. The passing of this bill came just one day after the Battle of Edgehill, the first significant engagement of the war. In extending to war widows comparable rights to those granted to maimed soldiers, Parliament was not merely fulfilling a moral obligation, but seeking to induce men to fight through the promise of providing for their families.

By 1659 over 4,000 widows and orphans were receiving pensions from a central government fund. Yet this figure represents an unknown fraction of the total number of women receiving relief as a result of the English civil wars. As well as appealing to the Parliament's treasury, widows could alternatively petition for county welfare. With as many as 180,000 soldiers and civilians losing their lives in England and Wales, the total number of war widows across the country was likely to have been very great indeed.

One of the commonest ways in which war widows left a mark on the historical records was through their petitions to county Quarter Sessions. Geoffrey Hudson and David Appleby have explored the strategies adopted by widows and their sponsors in their attempts to secure relief in Cheshire and Essex respectively. Whilst some widows chose to be forthright in their demands for welfare, most women adopted a tone of deference; fashioning themselves as victims of war, impoverished and overburdened with children. Both conclude that the actions of war widows in obtaining relief demonstrate they were neither powerless nor excluded from politics during the civil wars, but possessed considerable agency. This article looks to build on the work of Hudson and Appleby by exploring the administration of war relief in Northamptonshire. The county witnessed a number of military engagements during the First Civil War, culminating in the Battle of Naseby in 1645. Northamptonshire men were also deployed to fight across the Midlands and beyond.

Before turning our attention to the historical records, we may appreciate a fuller understanding of the legislation which regulated the administration of relief. Between 1642 and 1660, pensions were distributed to war widows and maimed soldiers from a treasury controlled by Parliament in London. In addition, Parliament also passed an act in 1647 which provided widows and injured veterans with an alternate and more localised route to relief. Under the legislation, widows and maimed soldiers were entitled to petition county Justices at Quarter Sessions for pensions. Before they could do so, however, they were first required to obtain a certificate validated by a commanding officer confirming either their own or their husband's services. It should be noted that whilst Justices were empowered to administer relief, they were not obliged to do so. The act of 1647 stipulated that widows were only to receive



NORTHAMPTON SESSIONS HOUSE

With as many as 180,000 soldiers and civilians losing their lives in England and Wales, the total number of war widows across the country was likely to have been very great indeed.



JACQUES CALLOT,
THE HOSPITAL

pensions once welfare had first been granted to maimed soldiers, "out of the surplusage of such stock of maintenance as shall remain in the hands of the said Treasurers". As we shall see, the reluctance of some Justices to relieve widows and maimed soldiers could provoke confrontation. Following the restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660, the rights awarded to parliamentary widows and soldiers were rescinded, and replaced in 1662 by similar legislation entitling relief to their royalist counterparts. This act was to stay in effect until it lapsed in 1679.

The lack of surviving records means that we know very little about Northamptonshire's Parliamentary widows during the 1640s and 1650s. The earliest surviving order book dates to 1668, whilst the Quarter Sessions' rolls only cover the final two years of the Interregnum. These contain details of relief awarded to six maimed parliamentary soldiers, and a stipend of 40s granted to one Margaret Steerer, the grandmother of two orphans whose father was slain in the wars. The archives covering the Restoration period are more encouraging. As well as a complete set of sessions' rolls running from 1660 through until the end of the seventeenth century, a court minute book (1668-1678) and order book (1686-1692) also survive. These records contain details regarding 21 widows and 78 maimed soldiers who petitioned the Bench between 1660 and 1687.

The first surviving petition submitted to the Northamptonshire Bench was by Anne Britton of Wootten in 1661. Presented a year before the 1662 legislation for the relief of maimed soldiers and widows was enacted, her petition reveals an

expectancy amongst royalist widows regarding their rights to receive relief immediately following the Restoration. In her petition Anne claimed to have already been awarded a pension by the county Justices, suggesting that magistrates within Northamptonshire had already begun to administer welfare prior to the act of 1662. Any initial enthusiasm displayed by the Justices towards the provision of welfare, however, appears to have been short-lived. By 1661 Anne's pension had been revoked, prompting her to petition the Bench so that she "may have the said pension continued". A similar story can be found in the petition submitted on behalf of John Roberts, Arthur Brains and Joseph Waters – three maimed soldiers from the town of Towcester – at the Easter sessions in 1662. Whilst all three men claimed to have previously been awarded stipends, these had since gone unpaid. Being "worn out with misery", the men asked the Bench that their pensions might be reinstated, claiming they had "nothing left to look upon but our wounds wives & children". Having already issued each man with a further gratuity of 10s, the judges remained unmoved. It was an ominous sign of things to come.

In 1666 the Bench ordered the temporary ceasing of all pensions within the county. At the Epiphany sessions it was ordered that:

upon consideration of the multitude of pensioners in this county not qualified to receive such pensions and of the great charges of the taxes and other contributions which lie upon this county... That all Orders whatsoever made for payment of any pension to any person whatsoever should from thenceforth be void & null

The suspension of payments was presumably to allow for a review of all pensioners within the county. Although the order did not specify what was meant by persons "not qualified", it likely referred to pensioners capable of employment, a criterion which disqualified claimants from receiving relief. That said, the possibility of fraud should not be ruled out. The seventeenth-century ballad *The Cunning Northern Beggar* depicted an impoverished vagabond claiming to be a maimed soldier in an attempt to receive relief. The order also serves to highlight the financial strains which the cost of welfare imposed on the county. Having been subjected to heavy wartime assessments during the 1640s, the Justices appeared reluctant to continue taxing the county populace for the continued costs of the conflict.

Although the payment of pensions soon resumed, the stipends granted to a number of widows were permanently revoked. Unsurprisingly, this provoked feelings of confusion and despair. A petition submitted on behalf of Susanna Gilloway, Jane Watts and Elizabeth Aldridge in 1668, for example, complained that their pensions had "come to be stopped for reasons not known". The same year, Ellen Browne complained that she had "formerly a pension but being since taken away she is in so miserable and deplorable a condition that she and her poor children are very likely to be utterly ruined". In petitioning for the reinstatement of their pensions, some widows were more successful than others. Although Gilloway, Watts and Aldridge were each awarded a gratuity of £1 10s, they were forced to cede all future claims for relief. The same can be said for Alice Mercer, who was awarded a sum of ▶

52s “in full discharge of all arrears and all other pensions that she may pretend to for the future”. Alice Palmer was referred back to her parish of Wootton for relief, whilst Ellen Browne’s request was simply marked “Disallowed”.

The noncompliance of the county Bench towards a number of claimants provoked one dissatisfied veteran to seek alternate aid. On 5 August 1668 the Northamptonshire Justices received a letter from the Privy Council concerning one Thomas Rogers, a Northamptonshire inhabitant who had served as both a trooper and quartermaster under Sir Gervase Lucas. Rogers had earlier petitioned the Council following the suspension of his pension in 1666, which, he claimed, “was contrary to the Act & order of sessions”. The Council requested the Justices to “return their Answer to the Board with all convenient speed why the Pension of four pounds per annum settled on the Petitioner in consideration of his services & sufferings for his late Majesty... is not continued & paid unto him”. In justifying their action the Justices showed little sign of intimidation. They argued that for many years their county had been forced to expend great sums towards the maintenance of widows and maimed soldiers, which, they concluded, was a “burthen we find very grievously to the county”. Clearly there was an underlying tension between the central government who legislated the law, and the county authorities charged with both its implementation and, more importantly, its financing.

The apparent thriftiness of the county Bench towards war widows does not appear to have deterred female claimants during the early 1670s. By this time, however, most women were referred back to their parishes for relief. In 1670 the parish of Bulwick was ordered to pay a pension of 40s to Rachel Johnson, whilst in 1671, Jane Bearsly - whose husband John had served at Belvoir Castle - was referred to her parish of Aldwinckle. Ennis Lapworth’s husband had served at Banbury Castle during the war, but upon his death had left his widow with “four small children, two of which is very sorely afflicted with the Kings Evil”. In 1673 the Justices ordered the overseers of Wellingborough to provide her with relief. Meanwhile, at the Michaelmas sessions in 1674, Elizabeth Drew was awarded a parochial pension of 1s per week. By referring widows back to their parishes, Justices ensured that their welfare was paid for from parochial funds, rather than the county treasury. It should be noted, however, that the county had not stopped awarding stipends to widows entirely. In 1674, Elizabeth Ashby of King’s Cliffe was awarded a yearly pension of 40s which had formerly been paid to her husband. She was to be the last named widow to appear in the Quarter Session records.

Although no more widows appeared before the Bench after 1674, the county magistrates continued to receive petitions from maimed soldiers. Between 1685 and 1687, the Justices awarded pensions to eight royalist veterans, including a yearly sum of £5 to one William Smith. By the 1680s, however, the soldiers of the civil wars were not the only military veterans petitioning for relief. In 1669 Thomas Bates was awarded a yearly stipend of 30s having lost his leg during military service in the Caribbean. Over the next twenty years, the Northamptonshire Bench also provided relief to wounded veterans who had served in Holland, Bohemia and France. As the seventeenth century progressed, the widows and soldiers of the civil wars faced a growing competition for relief from the victims of later conflicts, who bore fresher wounds than the scars inflicted during the 1640s.


Geoffrey Hudson claims that the Restoration facilitated a dramatic shift in the treatment of war widows. Whilst the widows of parliamentary soldiers were regularly awarded pensions throughout the 1640s and Interregnum, their royalist counterparts were rarely granted stipends after 1660. The attitude of the government towards war widows after the Restoration was motivated in part, Hudson argues, by an unwillingness amongst royalists to grant women comparable rights to men. This conclusion is supported by Appleby’s analysis of Essex, where Justices failed to award a single pension to royalist widows after 1660. Although things were not quite so bleak in Northamptonshire, the treatment of royalist widows by the county authorities after 1660 appears to broadly agree with this argument. The majority of royalist widows were denied county stipends, particularly after 1666. Although the county authorities initially saw fit to award stipends to some women following the Restoration, the general suspension of all stipends in 1666 saw many widows struck off the pensions list. After this date, the majority of widows were either awarded gratuities or referred to their parishes for relief, whilst some claimants were dismissed altogether. Ongoing research hopes to reveal whether the experiences of war widows in Northamptonshire were common across the East Midlands as a whole. 



FIG ONE



FIG TWO

Treachery and conspiracy in Nottinghamshire during the English Civil War

BY ANDREW HOPPER

The story of the civil wars in Nottinghamshire usually begins with Charles I’s raising of the royal standard at Nottingham Castle on 22 August 1642. Thereafter a tale of attritional garrison warfare usually ensues, as both sides sought control over local resources, with the parliamentarians based at Nottingham and the royalists at Newark.

With an absence of any large set-piece battles occurring in the county, the focus has been more on siege warfare, with the famous three sieges of Newark between 1643 and 1646, and the many attempts made against Nottingham Castle. Within the narrative of this struggle for control, the role of treachery and conspiracy played no small part. Both sides feared that their military governors, allowed considerable autonomy in discharging their everyday responsibilities, might prove susceptible to cutting a deal with the enemy. Assaulting a well-fortified stronghold could entail heavy casualties as the royalists found to their cost at Bristol in July 1643, therefore subverting an enemy governor was perceived to be a more cost-effective strategy. Attempts to bring to fruition such defections were to have profound consequences for internecine conflict on both sides as coalitions were strained and loyalties were questioned.

The first Nottinghamshire commander to fall under suspicion was Major-General Thomas Ballard. He was a professional soldier who commanded the reserve brigade of parliamentary infantry at Edgehill in the army of the Earl of Essex. The Newark memoirist John Twentyman recalled that Ballard “had served in foreign wars and such were so renowned that they were thought able to do wonders among us in the beginning of our unhappy discords.” By December 1642 Ballard was among several of Essex’s senior officers whose names had to be cleared of allegations of treachery in Parliament. In January 1643, he was commissioned Major-General of Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. The following month he presided over a botched attack on Newark where he was blamed for delaying the assault, refusing to commit his cavalry, withholding reinforcements and ammunition, ordering a premature retreat, and abandoning his artillery. Lucy, wife of Colonel John Hutchinson, the parliamentary governor of Nottingham, later corroborated these charges, recalling that as Ballard was “decayed in his family” and “bred up in the wars abroad”, he was reluctant to attack Newark because of his friends there amongst the enemy. During April Ballard appears to have been exonerated by the Earl of Essex’s council of war and Parliament permitted him to pass into Holland. He may have subsequently returned to engage for the King as a Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Ballard was listed in a royalist martyrology as killed near Taunton.


The next parliamentary commander to be arrested in Nottinghamshire was Lieutenant-General John Hotham, son of Sir John Hotham, the governor of Hull. Both Hothams had played a decisive role in seizing control of the important arsenal of Hull for Parliament early in 1642. Their action had denied the King access to the second largest arms magazine in the kingdom, leading to his infantry at Edgehill being poorly equipped. But as the war lingered into 1643 the Hothams became disturbed as Parliament’s war aims grew more radical and they were passed over for the generalship of the Yorkshire forces. This was entrusted instead to Lord Fairfax, who had headed a dangerous anti-royalist insurgency among the populous and economically depressed cloth manufacturing towns in the West Riding. The Hothams soon saw this force as a threat to the established order and began corresponding with the commander of the northern royalists, William Cavendish, Earl of Newcastle, despite such contact being expressly forbidden by the Earl of Essex’s printed Laws and Ordinances of War. Fears that the younger Hotham would prove false to Parliament were deepened by his high-handed approach when dealing with his fellow commanders gathered at Nottingham Castle in late May 1643. When Colonel Hutchinson criticised the unruly behaviour of Hotham’s troopers, Lucy Hutchinson alleged that Hotham replied that “he fought for liberty and expected it in all things.” Even the royalists at Oxford knew of their disagreements, rejoicing that “Hotham and Cromwell are ready to cut each other’s throats.” Hotham was suspected of corresponding with the Newark garrison. 

Fig one: Special Collections of the University of Leicester, University of Leicester Library, Fairclough Collection of Portrait Prints, EP 10102, p.142 Colonel John Hutchinson

Colonel John Hutchinson of Owthorpe, Nottinghamshire (1615-1664), governor of Nottingham Castle, played an important part in the parliamentary war effort. Siding with the religious radicals, he signed the king’s death warrant in 1649 and appears to have been an enthusiastic regicide. However, with the return of Charles II in 1660 he expressed penitence and was left largely unpunished until his arrest in 1663 on charges of conspiracy. He was accused of being implicated in the failed Northern Risings and imprisoned in Sandown Castle in Kent where he died in September 1664.

Fig two: Special Collections of the University of Leicester, University of Leicester Library, Fairclough Collection of Portrait Prints, EP 41B0205 Lucy Hutchinson

Lucy Hutchinson (1620-1681) puritan intellectual, is one of the best known female writers of the seventeenth century because of the *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel John Hutchinson* which she completed in 1671. This has proved an extremely valuable source for local historians of the civil war. Having been printed in many editions, the original manuscript survives in the British Library and seems to have been intended to vindicate her husband’s memory and record his parliamentary service for posterity.

Consequently on 22 June 1643 Hotham was dragged from his bed and incarcerated in Nottingham Castle.

He had even been accused of threatening Cromwell with his artillery and offering battle to Lord Grey in a dispute over fodder for his cavalry.

Consequently on 22 June 1643 Hotham was dragged from his bed and incarcerated in Nottingham Castle. There he wrote to Queen Henrietta Maria, inviting her to arrange his rescue. En route under guard to Leicester, Hotham escaped, allegedly justifying himself to Captain Rossiter that “we had better be subject to one than 300 tyrants”, and “you shall see in a short time that there will be never a Gentleman but will be gone to the King.” He rode to Lincoln, where he talked with more sympathetic parliamentary commanders, allegedly maintaining that “now he had got out of the protection of the Parliament he would keep out.” The royalists eagerly anticipated his defection; the Queen informing Newcastle on 27 June of Hotham’s escape, remarking “I hope now, that he will be prudent: better late than never.” She informed the King that Hotham “hath sent to me that he would cast himself into my arms, and that Hull and Lincoln shall be rendered.” Once at Lincoln, Hotham prepared the ground for his defection by writing a letter of protest to Parliament, complaining that his arrest constituted an attack on his gentility that was doubly grievous because he had been the first man in arms for Parliament. It added that:

“Colonel Cromwell had employed an Anabaptist to accuse him, and that one Captain White had been employed against him who was lately but a yeoman. That so much injustice had not been exercised upon any gentleman, in any age or time when arbitrary power was at the height. That the valour of these men had only yet appeared in their defacing of churches.”

Hotham rejoined his father at Hull, maintaining that he had been so maltreated by Parliament that “no man can think my honour or honesty is further engaged to serve them.” Sir John Hotham procured the signatures of his council of war to a strikingly peremptory letter to Parliament, demanding that Cromwell and his “Anabaptist rogues”, “be delivered to justice” for causing his son’s wrongful imprisonment. The letter prepared the ground for their long-considered defection, stating explicitly that their sense of injury freed them from the obligations of their former allegiance. Yet on 29 June 1643 both Hothams were arrested before they could act by an uprising of sailors and townsmen. They were shipped down to London where they were incarcerated in the Tower for seventeen months prior to their eventual beheading in January 1645.

Royalist perceptions of parliamentarians as hypocritical upstarts who used religion merely as a cloak for private interests and rebellion,

may have led some of them to consider parliamentarians as particularly susceptible to offers of money and social advancement. Perhaps owing to this, no less than five attempts were made to subvert parliamentarian officers inside Nottingham’s garrison. From August to December 1643 the governor Colonel John Hutchinson, his brother, Lieutenant-Colonel George Hutchinson, and his cousin Captain Thomas Poulton, were all offered large sums to betray Nottingham Castle to the royalists in letters from the Earl of Newcastle through his emissary Colonel Richard Dacre, and the governor of Newark, Sir Richard Byron. As Byron was Hutchinson’s cousin, his approach could be fashioned as the kindly concern for the welfare of a misguided kinsman, but the letters warned that the King held keeping a castle against him as more treasonous than service in Essex’s army. No doubt mindful of the recent arrest of the Hothams, Hutchinson dared not conceal these letters from Parliament in case they aroused suspicions about his loyalty. He wrote to Gilbert Millington, the MP for Nottingham, sitting at Westminster. On 25 December this letter was read out in the House of Commons. It explained

“that he had been formerly tempted by Sir Richard Byron and Mr Sutton to betray and deliver up the said Towne and Castle to his Majesties forces which because he conceived to be of little moment he had privately rejected, but that having now a third offer made him by the Earl of Newcastle of £10,000 and to be made a Baron and to have the government of the said Castle to him and his heirs, he durst no longer conceal it from the Parliament least some suspicion might be had of his fidelity and that therefore he had sent a copy of his answer which he returned by the Earl of Newcastle’s agent, which was to this effect that though his fortune were small yet he would not violate his conscience to raise it by treachery & if he did he thought he should not be blessed in it and should leave thereby so great a stain to his posterity as no honour could expiate.”

By 30 December the important step had been taken of printing Hutchinson’s justificatory narrative in a pamphlet. Through print, sieges became media stories, where rumours of side-changing and conspiracy might impact upon the course of events. Allegations of treachery could undermine trust in garrison commanders, so the Hutchinsons sought to fashion themselves as beyond temptation in a very public manner. Resorting to print also raised their stock within Parliament’s coalition by showing that the royalists thought them important enough to try to subvert. In addition it enabled them to advance themselves as heroic, incorruptible, and constant, whilst traducing the royalists as devious, conniving, and treacherous. They would “starve and rot” before betraying their trusts, declaring that the royalists

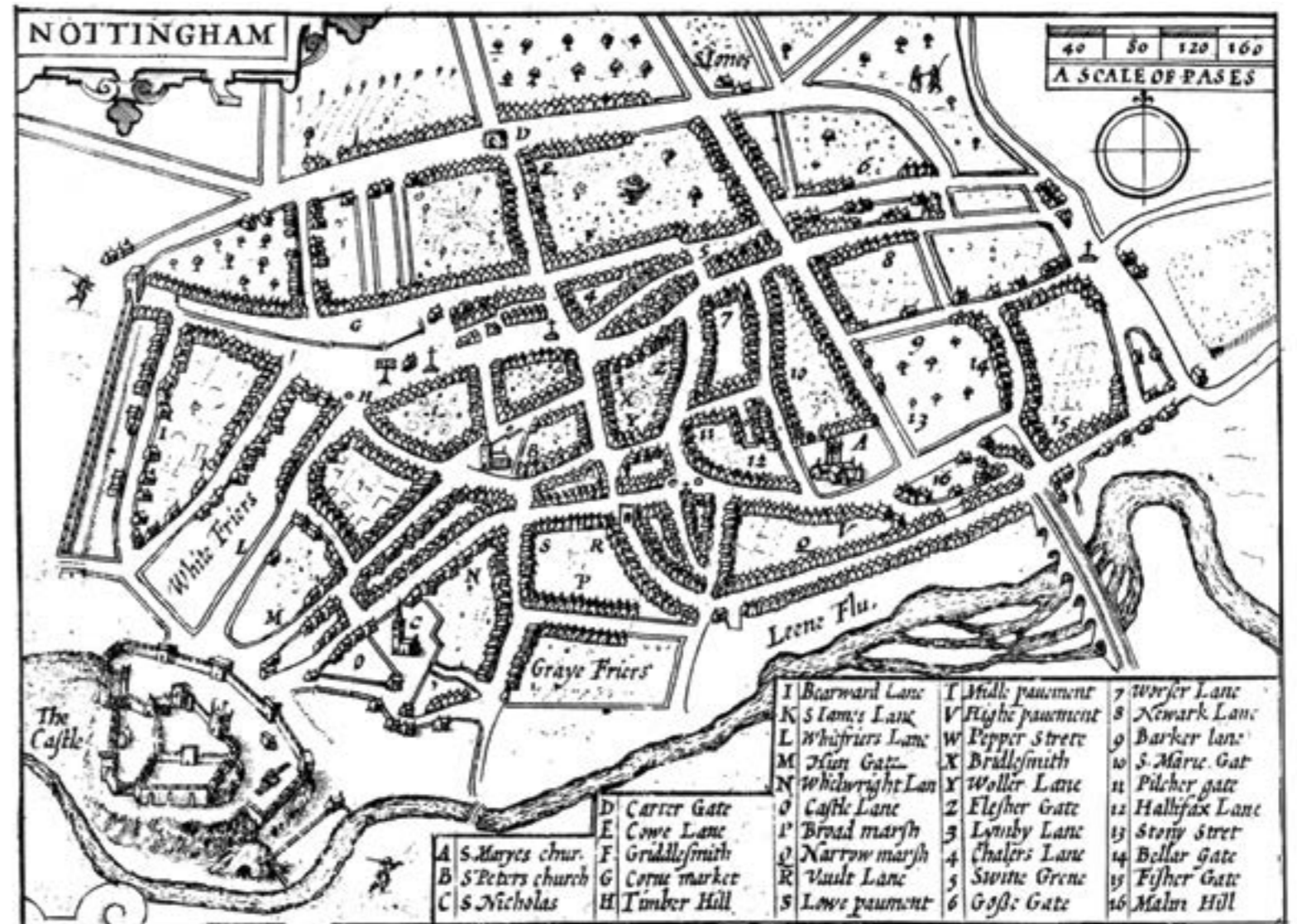
Through print, sieges became media stories, where rumours of side-changing and conspiracy might impact upon the course of events.

might better “keep their despised coin to tempt some frail waiting-woman” instead. The affair helped Hutchinson remind Parliament that despite his garrison’s pay being thirty weeks in arrears and the whole county being overrun by the enemy, he would remain loyal

“so long as I have one drop of blood left in me... I will rather choose to die ten thousand deaths with a clear conscience to God, and an honest heart to my country, than to sell my soul for the purchase of my life, and all the wealth and honours this world can bestow upon me.”

Print helped allay their fears that the royalists had spread falsehoods about them in order to undermine their reputations with their comrades. Strengthening their position within their coalition’s shifting factions was vital because Colonel Pierrepoint was attempting to secure the castle’s governorship for himself and suspicion of disloyalty would play into his hands. Lucy Hutchinson would later use the same means to discredit Pierrepoint, claiming he was in communication with the enemy through his mother the Countess of Kingston and intended to change sides.

Prevaricating and grooming contacts on both sides was not unusual, particularly for the aristocracy seeking to preserve their property. Robert Pierrepoint, Earl of Kingston, sought to protect his vast Nottinghamshire estates by delay, while his eldest son, Lord Newark, sided with the King, and his younger sons William and Francis supported Parliament. He declined to loan the King money by pleading poverty, and according to Lucy Hutchinson declared to




the local parliamentarian committee that if he took up arms for either side “let a cannon-ball divide me between them.” On 2 May 1643 he was commissioned a royalist lieutenant-general, but the depth of his royalist commitment remained unmeasured as with no small irony he was killed by artillery fire very soon after on 30 July.

Our final commander to suffer from aspersions cast upon his loyalty was Prince Rupert himself, the King’s nephew. By August 1645, the King feared for his loyalty after Rupert had advised him to negotiate peace and Rupert’s brother, the Prince Elector, was well received by Parliament in London. After Rupert’s delivering up of Bristol to Fairfax in September 1645, he made his way northwards to Newark to demand a trial from the King, having drafted his defence and a copy of the articles of surrender. Although Rupert was cleared by his uncle in a court martial held between 18 and 21 October of “the least want of courage or fidelity”, he considered the discharge of his friend Sir Richard Willis from the governorship of Newark an affront to his honour from the King’s favourite, Lord Digby. An armed confrontation ensued in Newark market place, with the King’s lifeguard drawn up to confront the Prince’s men with swords and pistols at the ready. Willis challenged

Lord Belaysse, the man who had replaced him as governor, to a duel, and the latter had to be placed under guard to prevent a confrontation. Subsequently, other royalist governors followed Rupert’s example, such as Viscount Ogle at Winchester in November and Sir Barnabas Scudamore at Hereford in December, both demanding tribunals that ultimately inflamed internal divisions as the royalist cause imploded. These cases demonstrate that whilst victories could customarily be ascribed to God’s providence, coming to terms with defeat was more problematic, often leading to recriminations and allegations of treachery or cowardice among the vanquished.

Nottinghamshire was very much at the crossroads of the First Civil War, with the garrisons of Nottingham and Newark assuming a national importance. Control of these strongpoints was contested not just by garrisons, siege-works and assaults but also by more underhand methods. A military manual penned by George Monck, himself no stranger to side-changing, postulated that among seven ways to win castles and towns, “by Treachery” was the first, but offered no advice on how to go about accomplishing it, despite expounding at length how to defend against treachery. This embodies the contradictory

impulses felt towards side-changing by protagonists on both sides; plotting to subvert enemy commanders was practical and worthwhile, but somehow remained unmanly and not something to brag about. 

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Colonel John Hutchinson (1615-1664) and Nottingham in the English Civil War, 1643 - 1646.

BY THOMAS PERT



PORTRAIT OF COLONEL JOHN HUTCHINSON, OIL ON CANVAS, ATTRIBUTED TO JOHN SOUCH OF CHESTER (1593 (C)-1645), 1643 (C). (COURTESY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM, LONDON)

On 13 September 1642, less than a month after raising his Royal Standard in the town, Charles I departed from Nottingham to Stafford and Shrewsbury in order to capitalise on the popularity of his cause in the Severn Valley. Shortly after the King's departure Nottingham was swiftly occupied and garrisoned by local Parliamentarians, with Colonel John Hutchinson, son of the M.P. and former High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire Sir Thomas Hutchinson of Owthorpe Hall, being appointed commander of the garrison at Nottingham Castle on 29 June 1643.

Five months later he was appointed Governor of the town itself. Although Hutchinson was ultimately successful in maintaining the Parliamentary cause in Nottingham, protecting the town from Royalist capture for three years, there has been no attempt to evaluate his performance as Governor, despite the diverse collection of contemporary evidence regarding the management of the garrison and the impact of the conflict on the town itself. Indeed, apart from Alfred Wood's authoritative work on Nottinghamshire during the Civil War, the coverage of the conflict in Nottingham is dominated by the governor's disputes with fellow members of the parliamentary committee in the town. Yet ultimately, as this article will demonstrate, Colonel Hutchinson was successful in his fulfilment of the civic and military necessities facing Nottingham as a garrison town during the First English Civil War in the only Midlands county where the King's supporters were in a majority.

Before Hutchinson's appointment in June 1643, the war in Nottinghamshire was dominated by Royalist successes and the failed parliamentary siege of Newark in February 1643 left Nottingham in a precarious military position. Indeed, the fact that the combined forces of Lord Grey, Sir John Gell and Colonels Hubbard and Cromwell, numbering between five and six thousand troops, were sent to defend Nottingham from an anticipated attack by the Earl of Newcastle's army, demonstrates this. However, by the end of June the majority of these troops must have been dispersed as Parliamentary newsbooks of early July reported that Sir John Meldrum was in command at Nottingham with 1,500 foot and seven troops of horse and dragoons. Following the Earl of Essex's order for Meldrum to lift the royalist siege of

Gainsborough in July 1643, Hutchinson was left in command at Nottingham with only 300 men to maintain the parliamentary cause in a county where he could not receive "any timely relief or assistance". It is understandable, therefore, that his wife, Lucy Hutchinson, described Nottingham as "unlikely to be able either to resist the enemy or support itself", particularly as the Royalist garrison at Newark alone contained between 1,500 and 1,800 troops and the size of the Royalist forces participating in assaults on the town between 1644-5 ranged from 1,600 to 3,000 men.

In his article on Neutralism in the Civil War, Roger Howell claimed that in June 1643 Hutchinson decided to restrict the defensive works of the town solely to the castle, resulting in a surge of public discontent. However, contemporary sources clearly detail an extensive series of defences erected beyond this early in the conflict, including earthwork ramparts constructed in April-May 1643, a system of road-blocks, two gates constructed at Chapel Bar and Cowlane Bar and a drawbridge over the River Leen. Although his decision to remove the town's fourteen guns to the Castle was unpopular, it was common practice to fortify a stronghold to serve as a secure headquarters and location for the magazine. Such a citadel could be defended if the town was captured by the enemy or if, as Hutchinson believed, the number of troops in the garrison was insufficient to adequately man the town fortifications. Indeed, throughout the conflict Nottingham continued to boast an impressive series of fortifications which were regularly maintained: the castle and outworks defended by Hutchinson's garrison; town defences erected and manned by the townspeople; and forts in meadows and at Trent Bridge held by part of the garrison to secure the important river crossing. Such defences were also informed by experiences of military attacks, such as the nearly-successful assault by 600 royalist troops in September 1643, after which the roads leading up to the castle were blocked and any hedges which could potentially afford cover for attackers were chopped down.

Although Nottingham never produced the 3,000 troops which Hutchinson reportedly stated were necessary to man these extensive defences effectively, it is evident that the size of the garrison increased under his direction. This is demonstrated in a letter to Gilbert Millington, M.P. for Nottingham, on 3rd January 1644 in which Hutchinson stated that under his command were "five full companies in pay" as well as four militia bands. As foot companies consisted of approximately 100 men and horse troops about 50

soldiers, this suggests that by early 1644 Hutchinson commanded roughly 500 permanent troops and was able to call on 400 militia soldiers when required. Yet such an increase in the size of the Nottingham garrison was still insufficient to allow Hutchinson to meet his national military obligations as well as defend the town. This was evident in June 1644 when Hutchinson was ordered to provide between 200-300 horse to join the Earl of Denbigh's forces en route to Manchester. Subsequent petitions by the Nottingham Committee resulted in all the foot soldiers and 100 horse being returned to the town immediately.

One of the primary obstacles facing Hutchinson was that of finance. As well as funding the defence of Nottingham from February 1643 the local Committee was also required to raise a contribution of £187. 10s. per week to help finance the national parliamentary army. Despite having the authority to assess and levy sums on lands, goods and rents, the Committee encountered considerable difficulties in raising sufficient funds to maintain the defence of town. The financial problems facing the Committee were exacerbated by the fact that they received no money from Westminster until September 1643 when Parliament granted

soldiers. For example, on 7 November 1645 Thomas Meldrum, a lieutenant in a Nottingham horse troop, received £106 9s 2d "of Col' Hutchinson in p[ar]te of my Arrears", more than a third of the total amount he received as a Cornet and Lieutenant throughout the war. The prospect of relatively high wages may also have served to attract many potential troops, particularly as many of the men who enlisted as soldiers for the garrison in Autumn 1643 "were for the most part destitute of the means of contributing to their subsistence."

Financial considerations were not the only issues facing the Committee of Nottingham. Paramount was the maintenance of civilian support in spite of the burdens placed on the town and the sacrifices made by its inhabitants, in particular the destruction of property. Suburban properties and buildings surrounding a citadel were often cleared to create space for the erection of defences; to supply defenders with clear lines of fire; and to deny the enemy cover. Churches also proved problematic for garrisons as they had useful vantage points, they could be fortified as strong points by an attacking force, and they were large enough to accommodate a considerable number of men.

“the bullets played so thick into the outward castle-yard” that Parliamentarian soldiers “could not pass from one gate to the other, nor relieve the guards, but with very great hazard.”

Hutchinson and the Committee "Liberty to keep a convenient Table at Nottingham" to be financed "out of the Monies raised out of their own County".

According to Lucy Hutchinson, this Parliamentary allowance of ten pounds per week did little to solve the monetary problems. She also suggests that her husband was forced by necessity to personally contribute a large sum for the maintenance of the garrison, causing him to run up a debt of several thousand pounds. Consequently, the authorities in Nottingham were consistently unable to pay the garrison troops, at one point owing the soldiers thirty weeks' wages in arrears, a large sum indeed considering that by 1645 there were approximately 1,000 troops in the town. These financial difficulties were certainly reported to Westminster, such as in Hutchinson's letter of 3 January 1644 in which he stated "I am now making the works, but if I cannot procure money to pay the garrison, poverty will make us unable to defend them."

As the tide of the Civil War turned in Parliament's favour after the victory at Marston Moor in July 1644, it is clear that the financial demands on local garrison towns eased. For example, Parliament granted the Committee at Nottingham "the monies coming from the Excise, arising within the Town of Nottingham, and the County of the same" and this sum, combined with those levied on other nearby settlements, not only helped to finance the defence of Nottingham but also greatly relieved the financial burden placed on the town by parliamentary assessments. One of the most practical benefits of this increase in funds was that it enabled Hutchinson to pay the wages owed to his

For example, during the attack on Nottingham in September 1643 Royalist troops occupied St. Nicholas' church from which "the bullets played so thick into the outward castle-yard" that Parliamentarian soldiers "could not pass from one gate to the other, nor relieve the guards, but with very great hazard." As a result when Hutchinson regained control of the town "he realized that he could not allow his castle guard to be exposed to this danger again" and ordered the church to be pulled down, preferring "the safety of the whole, which is of public interest, before the preservation of a part."

Yet contemporary evidence suggests that Nottingham's civilian population did not suffer too heavily throughout the war. The records of the parishes of St Mary and St Peter in the town show no steep increase in the number of burials throughout the conflict in comparison to those of 1641-42. Moreover, the attack on Nottingham in September 1643 resulted in few civilian deaths, whereas the sack of Bolton a year later resulted in the deaths of 700, nearly half the total peacetime population of the town. The fact that there were relatively few civilian casualties between 1643-46 is testimony to Hutchinson's success as Governor.

Even the severe outbreak of plague in southern Nottinghamshire from late-June 1645 led to no considerable increase in the number of deaths in Nottingham. This can be attributed to the effective measures taken by the authorities to prevent the disease entering the town from mid-1645 onwards: such as ordering all dogs, cats and swine "to be kept up, or they would be ▶

destroyed” and constructing cabins outside the town for infected persons. Such measures were clearly practised until late 1646 as the Borough Records show that in May 1646 town constables were “to be very careful whom they go to visit in sickness, and to be sparing therein... for fear of the sickness.” Likewise, it appears that the number of deaths of military personnel was surprisingly few. The parish records of St. Peter’s church specifically note when a soldier was buried and between June 1643 and September 1645 these records list only thirteen soldiers, including two officers, as having died. Hutchinson’s personal correspondence also suggests that his troops experienced very few losses in military action.

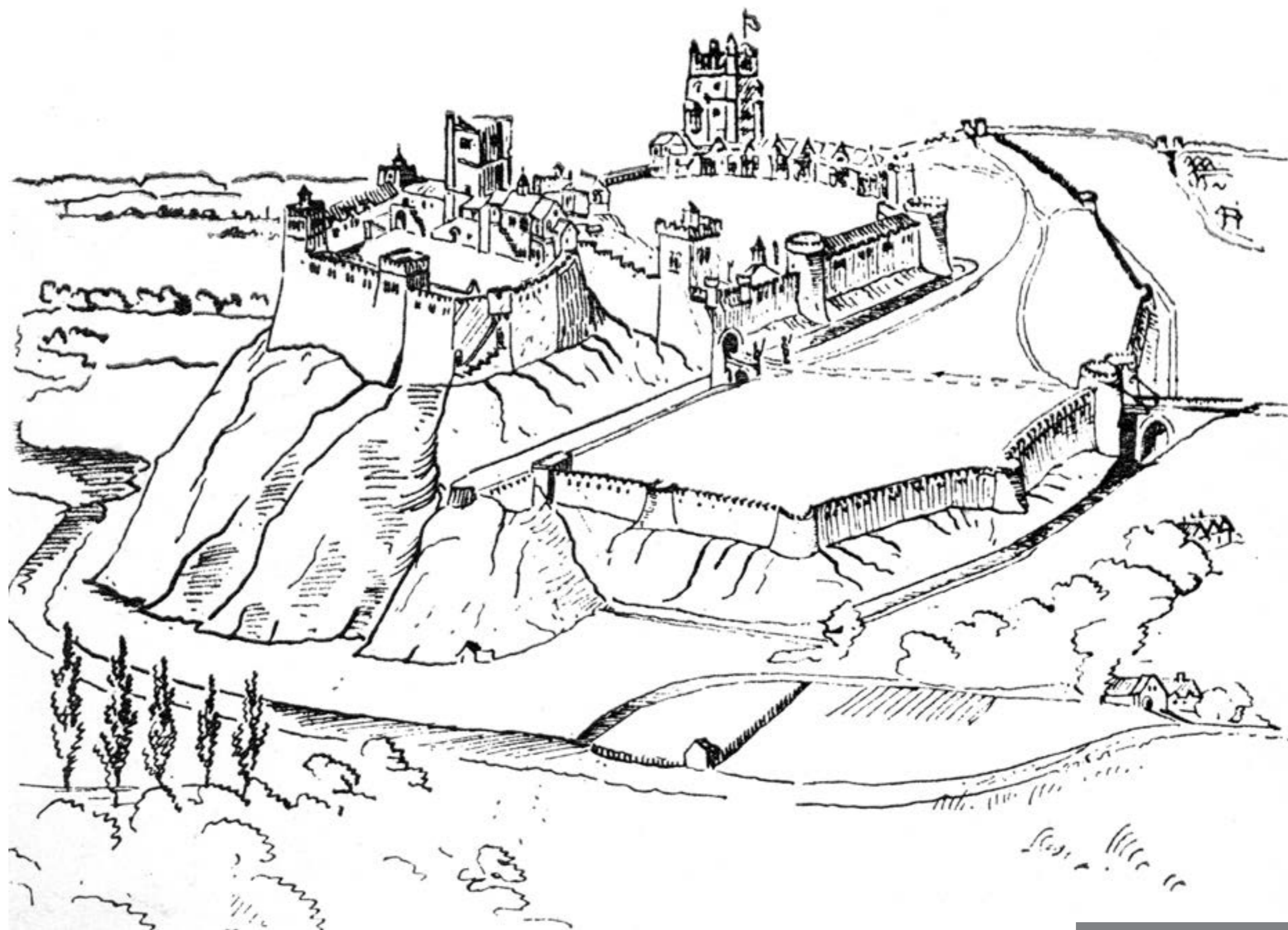
It would be misguided, therefore, to suggest that Nottingham experienced solely negative effects from the Parliamentary occupation. Although a permanent military presence made demands on the local population, it also offered protection from an unchecked threat of attack and plunder by enemy forces. Also, although ‘Free Quarter’ was practised during the war by the forces of the Eastern Association, there is no evidence to suggest that this occurred in Nottingham. Indeed, unlike in London, the Committee at Nottingham levied general assessments to meet the wages of those employed in crafts contributing to the defence of the garrison, such as gunsmiths and pike headers who earned 1s. 6d. and 1s. 2d. per day respectively. This suggests that a conscious effort was made by Hutchinson and his fellow committee men to maintain cordial relations between the military and civilian populations in Nottinghamshire.

Hutchinson’s personal correspondence also suggests that his troops experienced very few losses in military action.

On 23 November 1645, the committeemen who had denounced Colonel Hutchinson to Parliament less than a year previously voted him a Burgess of the town citing his “faithful and good service in his place to the State and garrison”. It is clear that Hutchinson was ultimately successful in overcoming the obstacles he faced in his dual responsibilities, maintaining the support of most of the townspeople and soldiers as well as ensuring that every attempt by the Royalists to seize the town failed. Indeed, despite the accusations of mismanagement by his fellow committeemen, it is highly unlikely that the parliamentary sub-committee regarding Nottingham would have confirmed Hutchinson’s singular authority in “the managing and carrying on of any design or service” in November 1644 had he not been adequately carrying out his duties. Although the Governor is best remembered for the disputes with his fellow Committeemen, Hutchinson’s ability to maintain a high degree of support whilst being required to implement unpopular policies to assist the local and national war efforts demonstrates his considerable success as governor of the castle and the town of Nottingham between 1643-46. ⁹²

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AN IMPRESSION OF NOTTINGHAM CASTLE
(COURTESY OF WWW.NOTTSHISTORY.ORG.UK)

News and notices

A parish history: Kirby Bellars

BY ALAN FOX




A history of the parish of Kirby Bellars is now available online at www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/counties/leicestershire; click on 'work in progress'; then click on 'Kirby Bellars'. It has been researched and written for Victoria County History (VCH) Leicestershire by Dr Alan Fox, an Honorary Visiting Fellow of the Centre for English Local History in the School of Historical Studies at the University of Leicester.

The online publication has been edited by Dr Pamela Fisher, the Leicestershire VCH coordinator, and at a national level by Dr Adam Chapman of the Institute of Historical Research at the University of London.

Kirby Bellars is a parish three miles west of Melton Mowbray. The village is small despite the building of houses for commuters and retired people in the 1960s and more recently. However in the medieval period it had one of the largest populations in the county and was the site of an Augustinian priory, the forerunner of which was founded by Sir Roger Beler in 1315. In this account the interpretation of the resulting earthworks contradicts some earlier versions. The dramatic loss of population occurred in the seventeenth century when the lord of the manor destroyed part of the village to create a park around his newly-built mansion.

The work on Kirby Bellars is the first of a revived VCH Leicestershire series. The VCH originated as a national project in 1899, with the aim of writing the history of all the counties of England, and was dedicated to Queen Victoria. In 2012 the VCH was rededicated to Queen Elizabeth II on the 60th anniversary of her accession, but it was decided to retain the original title. In Leicestershire progress on the original project went in fits and starts. Five volumes were produced, four of them between 1954 and 1964 under the leadership of W. G. Hoskins and R. A. McKinley. Copies are available in many of the Leicestershire county libraries. The first three books contain mainly general topics of the whole county, such as ecclesiastical history and transport. The fourth volume is entirely about the city of Leicester and the fifth volume is a parish by parish account of Gartree Hundred in the south-east of the county.

Since 1964 there had been no further research in Leicestershire until in 2008 it was decided to revive the project, with the aim of eventually writing a history of every parish in the county. The Leicestershire VCH Trust was established with Jennifer, Lady Gretton, Lord Lieutenant of the county, as president. Dr Pamela Fisher, at the University of Leicester, was appointed as the coordinator. She provided workshops for training volunteer researchers and writers. At present 38 volunteers are investigating 27 parishes and work in progress is on the website mentioned above. There is another major project researching the parishes of the Charnwood Forest area. 

Alan Fox
Honorary Visiting Fellow of the Centre for English Local History in the School of Historical Studies at the University of Leicester

Want to find out about who ran Nottingham?

BY NICK HAYES

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Sometimes it difficult – and time consuming – to track down details on local individuals and organisations. Now, if you're researching Nottingham in the first half of the twentieth century, things have just got easier.

The Nottingham Civil Society database tracks some 3,000 individuals: those who were involved in city politics, who were magistrates, Poor Law guardians or who ran many of the local institutions like the city's hospitals, orphanages, libraries, the mechanics' institute and other important voluntary organisations. Here you will find details of what they did, where they lived (frequently with a picture of their house), sometimes how much they left after they'd died, and the organisations to which they belonged. You'll be able, also, to search by institution, to see who ran these, and whether the types of people changed through time. You can also search by profession, or filter by class or gender (so for example, if you want to find out where the doctors or lawyers lived then the data base will show you).

Historians, and indeed politicians, have long argued that as cities got bigger – as people moved out into the suburbs or surrounding countryside – then their involvement with city affairs diminished. It's argued, too, that as the size of the state grew, people – particularly the more affluent – became increasingly reluctant to volunteer for charitable work or civic duty. They became more disengaged. If the story sounds a familiar one today, actually its origins can be traced back to the late nineteenth century. Using this database you can see whether this was true or not by constructing your own graphs that show change across time. Finally you can help contribute. If you have any information on any of the individuals listed in the database then let me know.

Visit www.nottingham-elites.org.uk 



DUCHESS OF PORTLAND LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONE NOTTINGHAM HOSPITAL FOR WOMEN 1928 (COURTESY NOTTINGHAM HISTORICAL FILM UNIT).



THURGARTON PRIORY 1921 (COURTESY C.E. COULTHARD)

Pictures supplied by Picture the Past (www.picturethepast.org.uk)

Nick Hayes
Nottingham Trent University

Loughborough History and Heritage Network



The Loughborough History and Heritage Network was launched in December 2014 as a collaboration between Loughborough University and Charnwood Museum.

Our aim is to:

- foster discussion about the history and heritage of Loughborough and Charnwood by bringing together interested individuals and groups
- provide a platform for sharing information about local history and heritage
- enhance collaboration between Loughborough University and community history organisations

Our features range from the Loughborough Workhouse Elections of 1893 to Indian Thought and the shadow of Lord Macaulay (a talk by Sir Christopher Bayly at Rothley Temple);

there is also an account of the career of Walter Freud (Sigmund's grandson), who was arrested during his chemistry exam at Loughborough College, then interned but ended the war in the Special Operation Executive, and much more. We welcome contributions.

We are holding a Community History Day at Burleigh Court (Loughborough University) on Sunday, 21st June, 10.00 am - 5.00 pm. Entry is free but please contact Karen Ette at K.M.Ette@lboro.ac.uk if you want to come.

www.lboro-history-heritage.org.uk 

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Charging against Napoleon – Wellington's campaign in the Peninsular Wars and at Waterloo

A bicentenary commemoration of the Battle of Waterloo (18 June 1815).



A series of lunchtime talks (1-2pm) will be held to accompany the exhibition. Places are limited so please book in advance with the Box Office on 0115 846 7777.

18 June 2015 From the ballroom to the battlefield: British women and Waterloo

On the bicentenary of the Battle of Waterloo, Catriona Kennedy, senior lecturer in history at the University of York, considers the role which women played in the Battle of Waterloo, from the Duchess of Richmond's famous ball on the eve of the battle, to the women who visited the battlefield in its aftermath.

8 July 2015 'Hard pounding gentlemen!' The tactics of Waterloo

According to popular legend, the Battle of Waterloo was won on 'the playing fields of Eton'. Professor Charles Esdaile, from the University of Liverpool and one of the country's leading specialists on the subject, re-considers Wellington's command of the Allied forces and the tactics which delivered his 'immortal victory'.

5 August 2015 Commemorating Waterloo 1815-2015

For years Britons commemorated the Battle of Waterloo in a myriad of ways. However, after Wellington's death in 1852, official acts of public commemoration declined as the legacy of Waterloo was both contested and politicised. In this talk, Dr Russ Foster, a specialist on Wellington, considers why this remains the case to this day.

25 July 2015 Living history day (Highfields Park)

Join the 5/60th Rifles re-enactment group at their Living History camp. Find out about line infantry, light infantry and rifle tactics used at Waterloo. There will be a Drill and firing display at 1pm. The Rifles will be giving informal talks throughout the day in the camp, and if you're ready to take the King's shilling, they will also be recruiting! 🇬🇧

WESTON GALLERY EXHIBITIONS, LAKESIDE ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM
Jointly curated by Manuscripts and Special Collections and Dr Richard Gaunt

FRIDAY 22 MAY – SUNDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2015
ADMISSION: FREE



5/60TH RIFLES



'ENGINEERING' AT THE MADE IN MANSFIELD EXHIBITION, MANSFIELD MUSEUM



INTERACTIVE FILM AT THE FRAMWORK KNITTERS MUSEUM, NOTTINGHAM

Other heritage news, events and exhibitions around the Midlands

Although Richard III and the Civil War are this year's big stories there are plenty of other interesting heritage developments across the East Midlands. For instance:

IN DERBYSHIRE: After major investments in the Joseph Wright Institute and galleries, Derby Museum & Art Gallery recently opened a new 'nature' gallery that was designed and produced in conjunction with local residents and visitors.

IN LEICESTERSHIRE: In addition to the recently-opened Richard III Visitor Centre there are new 'Medieval Leicester' galleries in the Guildhall (next to Leicester Cathedral) which encourage visitors to explore life in the middle ages.

IN LINCOLNSHIRE: £22 million has been spent on the 'Lincoln Castle Revealed' project to restore the Medieval Wall Walk, reinterpret the Victorian

Prison and create a Magna Carta vault in time to celebrate the document's 800th anniversary.

IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE: Northampton Museum is currently planning a £14 million extension that will double the exhibition space and create new galleries and teaching facilities, together with new retail and catering spaces.

IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: A £24 million project to 'raise the standard' at Nottingham Castle is a key feature in the city's recent Heritage Strategy; Mansfield Museum has recently opened a new exhibition about the town's industries; and the Framework Knitters' Museum has launched an interactive video that encourages young people to think about the consequences of crime.

IN RUTLAND: A major project is conserving and restoring the Great Hall and Castle Walls at Oakham Castle while improving access, learning opportunities and events, making the site a cultural centre for the county. 🇬🇧

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In the next issue of East Midlands History & Heritage we will take a look at the winners in the 2015 East Midlands Heritage Awards, to be presented at Nottingham Trent University on 9 June.



DERBYSHIRE • LEICESTERSHIRE • LINCOLNSHIRE

East Midlands History and Heritage

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE • NOTTINGHAMSHIRE • RUTLAND

www.eastmidlandshistory.org.uk



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