



January 2018

Encounter

The newsletter of the Mercia Region of the Battlefields Trust

Introduction

A Happy New Year to you all! I trust you all had a good Christmas and if some of you are looking for an opportunity to walk-off the extra calories and blow away the January blues you could do worse than join Harvey Watson's walk of Ashdown (AD781) on 14 January (see below). If the prospect of the Ridgeway in January is not that appealing, the regional team has been planning other walks at Stow, Ripple and Edgcote in the first few months of the year so perhaps you could resolve instead to join us on one of these. We are also keen to hear what other battlefield related events you would like us to plan, so please feel free to drop me a line or call using the details at the bottom of the page.

Recent Events

In the final months of last year the region managed to host a few walks for members. Adam Dolling led a walk at **Nibley Green (1470)** at the end of September examining this small but interesting battle which came about as a result of a private feud between the local gentry. At the end of October, Simon Marsh led the region's biennial walk of **Edgehill (1642)** attended by around 20 people, mostly Trust members. The walk explored the royalist left/parliamentarian right and generated some interesting discussion on tactics and the nature of the fighting on this southern side of the battlefield. In early November, Tony Spicer, assisted by Anthony Rich, led a walk around the **Powick** area of **Worcester** looking at the 1642 and 1651 battles in the area. Tony also examined events in the St John's area during the 1646 siege. The thirteen people who attended were well rewarded with a detailed view of the rich battlefield history of this part of the city's environs.

Mercia Region Grants

The regional committee decided earlier in the year to make grants to two battlefield projects in the region. The first was to the Worcester Battlefield Partnership for £850 to support the production and installation of an

information board at the confluence of the rivers Severn and Teme where the parliamentarian army constructed a bridge of boats across both rivers to press their attack against the Scots during the 1651 battle of Worcester. The Battlefield Partnership now has sufficient funds, following generous contributions from other organisations, including the Battle of Worcester Society and Cromwell Association, to complete the work, which is planned for 2018.



An existing information board at Worcester. The 'confluence' board is planned to be of a similar design

The second donation was to the Edgehill Battlefield Group for £250 to help it sustain the exhibition on the battle that has been installed in St Peter's church in Radway. The money will be used to make running repairs and print additional leaflets about the exhibition and battle. The region has been able to make these donations as a result of monies raised from non-members of the Trust during battlefield walks and by running battlefield talks at museums in Banbury, Northampton and Aylesbury in recent years on a receipts share basis.

Evesham (1265) Threat

In December 2017, along with the Simon de Montfort Society, the region argued against the proposed construction of a two storey

extension on a site close to Battle Well. Whilst the development would not significantly affect the battlefield, the National Planning Policy Framework requires the applicant to establish that the public benefit from its construction would outweigh the loss to the heritage asset caused. As there was no statement of public benefit with the application the Trust opposed the planning application. The outcome should be known in early in 2018.

Stow on the Wold Battlefield Survey

After a longer delay than expected, the region plans to revisit the Stow battlefield in April to see whether it can securely locate the area of fighting via a metal detecting survey. A previous attempt in 2015 failed to locate the battlefield at the traditional site in Donnington, on the ridge further south or on the Evesham Road which had all been suggested as alternative locations. The 2018 survey will focus efforts nearer the town and complete the work in the Donnington area to confirm initial survey activity there. Results will hopefully be known by May.

Edgehill-Edgcote Battlefield Trail

In October, regional Secretary Gregg Archer completed walking the Edgehill-Edgcote battlefield trail to establish its state and replace some of the route markers. One problem was identified at Warmington on the last field before the trail joins the road into the village. Here a kissing gate had been obscured with branches and way markers were missing. This was rectified by Gregg. Another more serious issue was identified on the route from Radway to Kineton in the Edgehill section of the trail to the west of the MOD ammunition depot. The Ordnance Survey marked route ended in a dead-end and the trail should instead follow a different route. Gregg has installed a way-marker to rectify this problem and the region has written to the Ordnance Survey, the MOD, on whose land this section of the trail passes, and the County Council to attempt to resolve the issue. If anyone is planning to walk this part of the route in the next few months and would like a corrected view, please contact me on the details below.

Mercia Region AGM

This will take place on Sunday 18 March 2018 as identified below. Any nominations for the regional committee or agenda items should reach me by 11 March using the contact details at the foot of this page.

Battlefield Trust Events

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

Sunday 14 January 2018, Ashdown

AD781. A joint walk with the South East region over the site of Alfred the Great's first victory over the Danes to blow away the New Year blues. Meet at 1.30 pm at the Bell Inn, Aldworth, Berkshire, RG8 9SE. For further details contact Harvey Watson on 07818 853385 or london.southeast@battlefieldstrust.com.

Battle of Tewkesbury 1471. Sundays 4 February, 4 March, 1 April, 29 April 2018. All the walks start at The Crescent, (GL20 5PD), next to the Abbey at 2:30pm apart from the 29 April walk which starts at 11:00 at Gupshill Manor car park, Gloucester Road (GL20 5SG). If flooding occurs the walk may be cancelled. For details contact Richard Goddard on 07884 106549 Goddard961@gmail.com

Sunday 18 March 2018, Battle of Stow on the Wold 1646. Join Simon Marsh for a walk across the last battle of the first Civil War. Meet at the public car park adjacent to Tesco at Stow (GL54 1BX) at 10:30am. For details contact Simon on 07742-958888 or merciam@battlefieldstrust.com.

Sunday 18 March 2018, Mercia Region AGM. The regional AGM will take place after the battle of Stow walk at 1:15pm at The Talbot pub in Stow (GL54 1BQ).

Saturday 14 April 2018, Battle of Ripple 1643. Tony Spicer will lead a walk across this small but significant encounter between Sir William Waller and Prince Maurice. Meet at the Railway Inn, Station Road, Ripple GL20 6EY at 2pm where lunch or light bites can be obtained beforehand. For details contact Tony on a.spicer@btinternet.com or 01684-572925

Sunday 13 May 2018, Battle of Edgcote 1469. a walk across a little known Wars of the Roses battlefield led by Harvey Watson. Meet outside Chipping Warden Church, (OX17 1JY) at 1.45pm. Contact Harvey on london.southeast@battlefieldstrust.com or 07818-853385 for details.

Simon Marsh