

# THE FIRST GREAT CIVIL WAR IN THE TEES VALLEY

1642-1646



River Tees  
**Rediscovered** →



# The First Great Civil War in the Tees Valley 1642-1646

A Guide by  
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## FOREWORD

Groundwork NE & Cumbria work on hundreds of projects every year, helping communities find practical solutions to the challenges they face. The River Tees Rediscovered Landscape Partnership, with funding raised by National Lottery players and awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, is an exciting initiative involving a wide range of partners, stretching from Piercebridge to the mouth of the Tees.

Our vision is for the Tees Valley to be renowned for its rich landscape, heritage and culture. We aim to connect people and communities to the built and natural heritage within Tees Valley, bringing our heritage to life, by offering new ways for people to see, hear, touch and enjoy it. This is one of a series of guides which helps to increase learning about our landscape and its heritage.

We hope you enjoy it!

**Lucy Chapman**

River Tees Rediscovered Partnership Manager  
Groundwork NE & Cumbria



## The Bishops' Wars 1639-40 & Road to Civil War

The mid-17th century was a time of turmoil in Scotland, England, Wales and Ireland. Violence and warfare typified the period as Catholic and Protestant, Church of England and Presbyterian; King and Parliament all sought control over the institutions of the state.

Open warfare started with the attempt by King Charles I to impose the structure and teachings of the Church of England on Scotland. The Scots created a 'Covenant' to fight this and a Covenanter Army confronted Charles I's Army in 1639. This First Bishops' War was inconclusive but in 1640 the situation deteriorated again and in the Second Bishops' War the Covenanter army swept into the North East of England, defeating the Royalist Army at the Battle of Newburn Ford on the River Tyne (28th August 1640). The Scottish army then occupied the counties of Durham and Northumberland and the River Tees became a military frontier.

King Charles' response was to recall Parliament to seek funds, at first to fight the Scots but ultimately, following defeat, to pay the massive £850 per day agreed, at the Treaty of Ripon (October 1640) to support the occupying Scots army. Parliament had many grievances against the King and as a result of these the first of three Great Civil Wars broke out. The first Great Civil War lasted from 1642 to 1646 and ended with the capture of Charles I by the Parliament. The second Great Civil War from 1648 led to the capture and execution of King Charles I on 30th January 1649. The third Great Civil War lasted from 1649 to 1651 when Charles II made an agreement with the Scots and tried unsuccessfully to take the throne.

The Tees Valley was no different to the rest of the country, with different loyalties in towns and villages and even within families. Many people in the Tees Valley tried to remain neutral and to keep out of direct participation in the actual fighting. But like the rest of the North East, many of those who were active supported the King.

The North East of England did not witness many of the major engagements of the war. The nearest large battles took place at Adwalton Moor, near Leeds, (30th June 1643) and Marston Moor, near York, (2nd July 1644), there were however many smaller battles and skirmishes and sieges of towns and castles.



The main features of the military activity in the area were:

- the movement of many large armies through the region, both English and Scots. These brought hardships and problems for the civilian population.
- occupation of large areas of the North East, especially County Durham and Northumberland, by campaigning armies and the economic distress of billeting of troops, supply of food and drink and military indiscipline. This occurred during the Bishops' Wars, and with the entry of the Scots into the Civil War in January 1644 and the fall of the Royalist North East following the Battle of Marston Moor.
- the use of the River Tees as a military frontier following the Second Bishops' War, with Scottish garrisons being established in places like Hartlepool.
- the recruitment of soldiers, particularly for the Royalist armies, both the King's main 'Oxford Army' and the Earl of Newcastle's northern army.
- the River Tees as a barrier to be crossed. Royalist armies and supplies from Europe were landed in Newcastle and sent south into Yorkshire in great convoys with military escorts. Attempts were made to stop these convoys at the crossing points of the Tees and fighting happened at Yarm and Piercebridge and further inland at Guisborough.
- the War at Sea was very important. London was dependent on ships bringing North Eastern coal for heating and the King was dependent on arms and supplies being shipped across from the continent to the North East coast. As a result privateers were constantly in action along the coast.

Year	Date	Event National/ Regional
1639		1st Bishops' War
1640	28th Aug 26 <sup>th</sup> Oct	2nd Bishops' War  <b>Newburn (Tyne)</b> Treaty of Ripon ends Bishops' Wars
1641		
1642	23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct  1st Dec	1st English Civil War  Edgehill <b>Parliament threatens York and Wm Cavendish (Newcastle) moves his army to York</b>  <b>Piercebridge</b>
1643	16th Jan 1st Feb 30th Jun	 <b>Guisborough</b>  <b>Yarm Bridge</b>  Adwalton Moor <b>Defeat of northern Parliamentary army</b>
1644	Jan 3rd Feb to 19th Oct 2nd Jul	<b>Scots Army invades England</b> <b>Siege of Newcastle</b>  Marston Moor <b>Defeat of Royalist northern army</b>
1645	14th Jun	 Naseby <b>Surrender of Royalist forces in the Northeast</b>
1646	April	Charles I captured 1st English Civil War finishes
1647		
1648		2nd English Civil War
1649	30th Jan	Execution of Charles I 2nd English Civil War finishes 3rd English Civil War
1650	3rd Sep	 Dunbar
1651	3rd Sep 16th Oct	 Worcester Charles II to France 3rd English Civil War finishes

## Soldiers of the Mid 17<sup>th</sup> Century

With no standing professional army at this period, the King relied on his loyal nobility and gentry to raise forces from their tenants and supporters and to maintain the local county-based trained bands, or militias, for use in times of trouble. Many men gained military experience and knowledge by serving in the continental armies during the Thirty Years War (1618-48) and brought this expertise back to Britain when they joined either the King or Parliament.

When the King left York in August 1642 he took with him the nucleus of a personal lifeguard and a main field army. This was composed of regiments of horse (cavalry), foot (infantry), dragoons (mounted infantry) and ordnance (artillery). These were formed from the existing trained bands or recruited specially by a regimental colonel, who usually undertook the cost of equipping and paying his troops in the first instance.

Both Royalist and Parliamentarian units were clothed and equipped in similar ways, with no standardised uniforms, making identification on a gunsmoke filled battlefield very difficult. Uniforms were more formalised with the creation of Parliament's New Model Army later in the war.

Civil War Cavalry by Tim Shearman-Smith Creative Common Licence



Horse were the 'senior arm' of the army, often providing the decisive 'shock' attack in battle. They were expensive to equip, train and upkeep, and often consisted of better off recruits who went some way to providing their own mounts and equipment. With improvements in firearms the wearing of full or three quarter armour was becoming less effective, and most cavalry were equipped with a metal helmet, breast- and backplate, or simply a thick leather buff coat, a sword, pair of holster pistols and a harquebus, or short musket.

At the start of the war the Royalists were considered to have the advantage of more and better equipped horse but eventually the 'Ironsides' of the New Model Army became one of the most feared forces. Horse regiments were organised in theory into up to ten troops, each of about 60 men, but on campaign regiments rarely kept up to full strength.

Foot regiments, of between about 500 and 1200 men, were organised into up to ten companies. Within each company were pikemen and musketeers, roughly in a ratio of 1:2. Pikemen were often armoured with helmet, breast- and backplate and tassets, or thigh defenders. They carried a sword and their main weapon, a steel tipped ash pike, often up to 18 feet (5-6m) long. This was used to protect the musketeers from enemy infantry and cavalry whilst they slowly loaded their muskets.



Civil War Officer of foot

The musketeers were more lightly protected and carried a heavy matchlock, later flintlock or 'firelock', musket with a rest to support its weight when 'aiming'. They also had a bandoleer of powder flasks and bag of lead musket balls. Firearms at this time could take up to a minute to reload after firing, were unreliable, could not be used in wet weather and were only accurate up to about 150 yards (150 metres). Often units followed up their volleys with a charge into gruesome hand-to-hand combat, using swords and their firearms as clubs.

Dragoons, mounted on smaller and poorer quality horses than the horse, were equipped with muskets and rode to battle but usually dismounted to fight. They were often sent forward as skirmishers, scouts or advance guards because of their mobility.

The ordnance of an army was usually made up of a mixture of guns, varying in size from large siege to lighter more easily transported guns used on the battlefield.

Battles and skirmishes could be fought between forces varying from a few hundred troops either side, as with the Battle of Guisborough, to tens of thousands of men, at the largest battle of the war at Marston Moor, near York.

## The Battle of Piercebridge: 1<sup>st</sup> December 1642

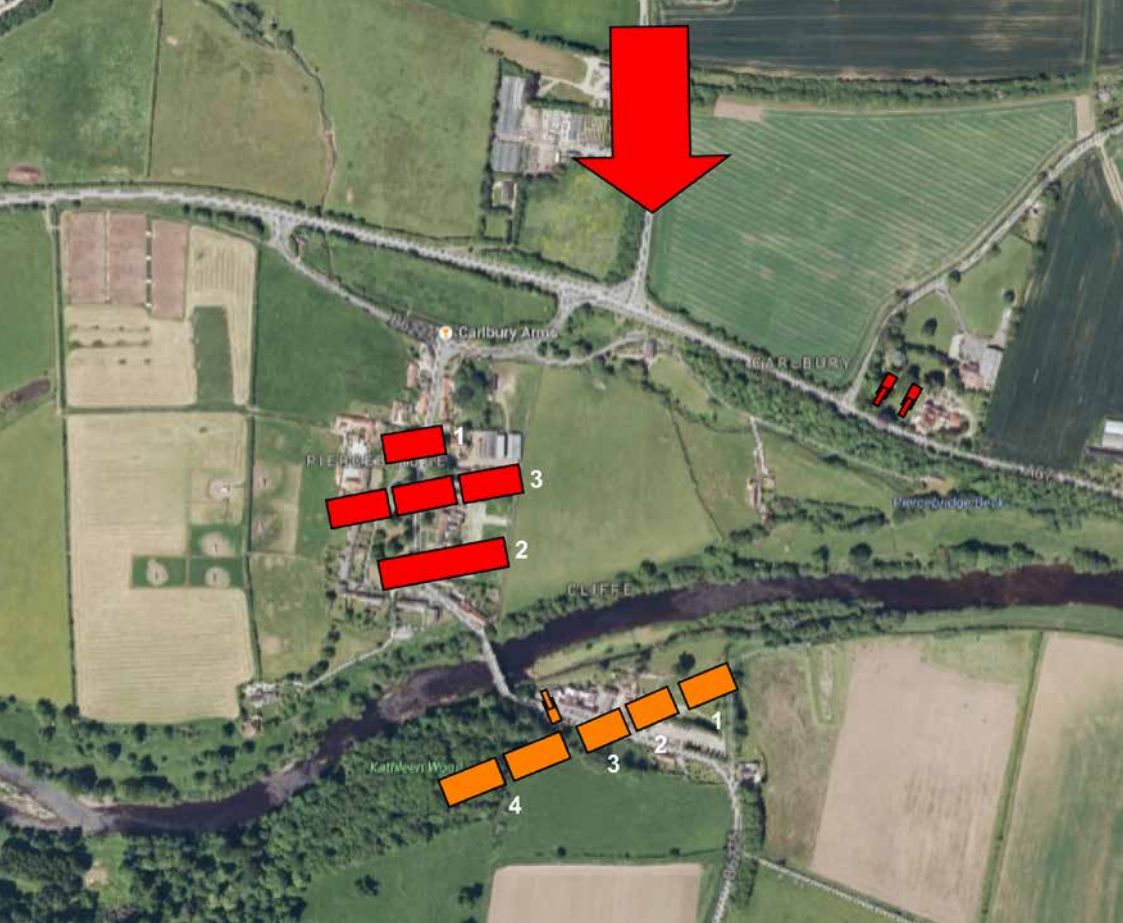
When war broke out the Royal Navy, many English ports and the two main arsenals, London and Kingston upon Hull, declared for the Parliament. Early in 1642 Queen Henrietta Maria went to Holland to raise funds and supplies for the King and started to send these across the North Sea. The Royalists held Newcastle and Tynemouth, in contrast to the Parliamentarian Sunderland, and as a result Royalist supplies of arms, armour and munitions were shipped from the Continent to the River Tyne and then convoyed overland to the Royalist forces in Yorkshire.

The Royalist commander in the North East of England, William Cavendish, Earl of Newcastle, was responsible for assembling the convoys and escorting them safely into Yorkshire. In addition, in the Autumn of 1642, he moved his main northern field army to York at the request of the city. At this time York was threatened by Parliamentarian forces in West Yorkshire and from the Yorkshire coast led by the Fairfaxes and the Hothams and Sir Hugh Cholmley respectively.

These Parliamentary forces constantly attempted to intercept the convoys and the River Tees was the most northerly point where Parliamentarian forces could be deployed in sufficient strength to attempt to destroy these vital supplies.




In late November 1642 Newcastle's army of about 2,000 horse & dragoons, 4,000 foot and ten pieces of ordnance, set off from Newcastle for York. On 1st December their crossing of the narrow medieval stone bridge over the River Tees at Piercebridge was opposed by a small parliamentary force of about 500 horse, foot and two small cannon under Captain John Hotham. The royalists are reported to have placed a battery of guns on Carlbury Hill with the Parliamentary forces placing theirs on the opposite side of the river in the Cliffe area.



There was fierce fighting for a few hours, during which the advance guard of Colonel Sir Thomas Howard's dragoons and Sir William Lambton's foot overcame Hotham's forces, causing him to retreat towards Knaresborough.







## The Battle of Piercebridge: 1<sup>st</sup> December 1642


**Parliamentarian:** about 580 total

-  **1. Horse:** Hotham's (1 troop) 60
-  **2. Horse:** Wray's (1 troop) 60
-  **3. Horse:** Hatcher's (1 troop) 60

-  **4. Foot:** Boynton's Foot (4 coys?) 400
-  **Ordnance:** 2 'small pieces'

**Royalist:** about 6000 total  
Advance Guard: Colonel Thos Howard

-  **1. Horse:** Howard's
-  **2. Dragoons:** Howard's
-  **3. Foot:** Howard's
-  **Ordnance:** c.10 pieces?  
on Carlbury Hill

 **Main Army:** Wm Cavendish, Earl of Newcastle  
Advance from Newcastle/Durham to York

### Possible units:

- Horse:** Langdale's; Eure's; Heron's; Widdrington's
- Foot:** Newcastle's; Brandling's; Langdale's; Slingsby's; Conyer's; Eure's; Mackworth's; Widdrington's
- Dragoons:** Widdrington's

The Parliamentarians claimed, "...not one lost, nor above three wounded..." but losses on the Royalist side making a direct assault on a defended position were probably high. One of those killed was advance guard commander Colonel Sir Thomas Howard (youngest son of Lord William Howard). He was buried in the churchyard at High Coniscliffe and this is recorded in the parish register:

*Sir Thomas Howard collenoll buried at 36 the 2nd of December 1642*

There is also monument to him in Wetheral churchyard, Cumberland, with the inscription:

*Sacred to the memory of Colonel Thomas Howard, son of Lord William Howard, who died valiantly fighting in the cause of his king and country at Piercebridge, December 2nd, 1642*

The Earl of Newcastle continued his march towards York, entering the city on 3 December. Three days later at the Battle of Tadcaster he cleared away the threat of Fairfax's forces from the south. He was rewarded for his actions by being given command of all the Royalist forces in Yorkshire as well as in the North; a massive area stretching from Berwick to Newark and the Midlands.



## The Battle of Guisborough: 16<sup>th</sup> January 1643

In late 1642 and early 1643, several boatloads of arms were landed by the Royalists in the North East, one of them arriving directly in the River Tees. In December 1642, Guilford Slingsby returned to his estates in Hemlington, Cleveland, from Europe where he had been Secretary to the Prince of Wales (later Charles II). He began to raise forces to support the Royalist cause and, in particular, to escort arms convoys crossing the River Tees en route to York, as well as to threaten Parliamentary garrisons at Whitby and Scarborough.

Letters from the Earl of Newcastle to Slingsby, captured at the Battle of Guisborough, suggest that his soldiers numbered 400 foot and a troop of horse. Newcastle ordered Slingsby to join forces with those of Sir Robert Strickland to protect the convoys as it was feared that Parliamentary forces intended to launch a surprise attack.

The Parliamentary commander of Scarborough, Sir Hugh Cholmley heard about Slingsby's activity in Cleveland, which included a notification to Whitby that it was to receive a Royalist garrison. Cholmley was joined at Malton by two dragoon troops of Sir Matthew Boynton and he added another troop of his own dragoons, one hundred and thirty foot and his own troop of horse. With these forces Cholmley marched across the North York Moors to engage the Royalists.


The route that Cholmley's force took from Malton to Guisborough was probably the most direct route north across the Moors. A march of almost 40 miles. It is not known how long it took them to make the crossing of the Moors, but in January and across this terrain it would have been hard work. Cholmley's force approached Guisborough on 16th January 1643.


There has been speculation as to the site of the battle, with suggestions that it took place in 'War's Fields' in the area between Church Lane and the site of Prior Pursglove College to the north east of the town centre, or that it was in the area of 'Stump Cross' to the south-west of the town centre.




## The Battle of Guisborough: 16<sup>th</sup> January 1643


**Royalist:** 500 total


 **1. Horse:** Slingsby's (2 troops?) 100


 **2. Foot:** Slingsby's Foot (4 coys): 400


**Parliamentarian:** 380 total

 possible approach from Malton c. 35 miles

 **3. Horse:** Cholmley's (1 troop) 80

 **4. Foot:** Cholmley's Foot (2 coys) 130

 **5. Dragoons:** Cholmley's (1 coy) 60

 **6. Dragoons:** Boynton's (2 coys) 110

A. Approx. site of War's Field

B. Approx. site of Stumps's Cross

Given the likely approach of the Parliamentary forces from the North York Moors, either down Birk Brow to the east or Ruthergate to the west, it is more probable that the battle started in open fields either to the south east or south west of the town centre in the Belmangate area or Hutton village.

The Royalist force was largely raw recruits, despite this Cholmley later reported that he was faced,

*'with four hundred foot and a hundred horse, they were so confident of their strength as they advanced a mile out of the town to encounter us, and placed their musketeers under hedges in places of advantage'.*

The Royalists held their positions for about two hours but were gradually forced back.

*'At his first charge Mr. Slingsby (having seasoned old Soldiers in his Troop, which he brought out of Holland) worsted their Horse, and had some pursuit and execution, but being alarmed behind, by the noise of an engagement, betwixt the Bodys of Foot, found his Regiment totally dissipated, beyond all hopes of rallying; whereupon he employed his Courage upon the Enemies Foot, in which Charge his Horse fell, and himself wounded with many Case-shot, and became prisoner.'*

Slingsby's men probably fell back along Westgate, past the ruins of the Priory and the parish church, and out of the town, to make a last stand possibly in that area to the north east of the town known as 'Wars Fields'.

Slingsby was badly wounded and taken prisoner and, despite the amputation of both his legs above the knee, he died three days later at the age of 32. On 26th January 1643 he was buried in York Minster. In contrast, according to Parliamentary accounts, only two of Cholmley's men received slight head wounds and his force withdrew to Malton.

After the battle Cholmley despatched Captain Medley with 400 foot, three troops of horse and two pieces of ordnance to Yarm to defend the bridge and to stop movement of Royalist forces between Newcastle and York.

## The Battle of Yarm: 1<sup>st</sup> February 1643

The defeat of the Royalist forces at Guisborough prevented a Royalist move on Whitby and caused delay in sending an arms convoy from Newcastle as there was no longer a suitable escort, following the refusal of Durham's militia to go beyond the county boundary.

Parliament was aware that the Earl of Newcastle was preparing to join up with a large arms convoy being escorted from Newcastle to York. In order to prevent this, Sir Hugh Cholmley despatched Captain Richard Medley, with 400 foot, about 150 horse and two pieces of ordnance to Yarm. The guns were probably those hauled over the North York Moors from Malton and used a few days previously at Guisborough. Medley was to defend the bridge between Yarm and Egglecliffe.

Yarm and its important medieval stone bridge crossing of the River Tees,

*"... in this year (1643) was for a short time garrisoned by 400 of the parliament forces, but recovered by the earl of Newcastle, who reduced all the northern counties to the king; Hull being the only garrison in the hands of the parliament."*

Captain Medley's task was a difficult one, despite the advantage of the narrow bridge spanning the broad River Tees. It is possible that the 'greater work' referred to in 1640 during the Bishops' Wars, overlooking the bridge, was maintained and manned by Medley. He could have also placed artillery behind barricades actually on the bridge itself to deter an attempted crossing.




In late January 1643, Goring and King, had recently arrived from the continent with a large supply of arms and equipment for the Royalist armies. They set out from Newcastle heading for York with 4,000 horse arms; 20 pieces of ordnance; 200 officers; and £20,000 cash in 120 wagons and 140 packhorses.

As the Royalist convoy approached the bridge the first obstacle to their progress was probably a screen of Parliamentary horse or musketeers which would have quickly had to fall back, at first perhaps to the artillery emplacement at Egglecliffe, and then to the defended bridge itself.



## The Battle of Yarm: 1<sup>st</sup> February 1643

**Parliamentarian:** 520? total

-  **1. Horse:** Medley's/Cholmley's (3 troops) 120?
-  **2. Foot:** Medley's/Cholmley's (4 coys) 400
-  **3. Ordnance:** light pieces 2

**Royalist:** 2000? total



**4.** possible approach from Newcastle

Horse (a brigade?) and foot numbers unknown protecting supply convoy carrying: 4000 horse arms; 16-20 pieces of artillery; 200 officers; £20,000 in cash; 120 wagons carrying ammunitions; 140 horses laden with muskets.

**A.** Approx. site of artillery works

**B.** Approx. site of drawbridge on Yarm Bridge



The Tees Valley during the First Great Civil War  
1642 - 1646



- ✠ Battlefield site
- ✦ River Tees crossing
- Settlement

There might have been a softening up barrage from Royalist ordnance and possibly flanking attacks across the two fords over the River Tees to the east and west of Yarm in support of and as a diversion to the main assault. Next would have come the direct assault over the narrow bridge, probably defended by foot, pikemen and musketeers, with ordnance behind barricades. The Royalists,

*'fell upon them, slew many, took the rest of the foot and most of the horses prisoners with their ordnance and baggage.'*

Even if the Royalist force numbering some 4,000 troops was an exaggeration, (it was probably nearer 2000) the sheer weight of numbers would have been enough to brush aside Medley's small force. It was probably over in a few minutes, with few fatalities on either side.

Some of Medley's horse might have got away, with running fights taking place along the High Street, but most of the Parliamentary troops, including Captain Medley, were taken prisoner.

Yarm was again in Royalist hands after its brief occupation by the Parliamentarians. Casualties on either side are unknown, but according to the parish register, a soldier,

*'slain here at the Yarm skirmish,'*

was buried on 1st February 1643 at Egglecliffe. Medley's Parliamentary soldiers were put in Durham castle, and badly treated there. King and Goring arrived in York with all their wagons and weapons intact.



## The Road to Marston Moor and Beyond

These were obviously anxious times for the local people, and the age old spectre of the Scots raised its head again, for a few days after the battle of Yarm Bridge. On 4th February 1643, fears of further Scottish incursions and memories of the threat posed by them during the Bishops' Wars of 1639-40, provoked cries in the parish of Whorlton, Co. Durham,

*'...that all men were warned to go against the Scots and that day was the Beacons set on fire to warn all the country.'*

In addition to the perceived threat from the North there was also the possibility that Parliamentary units from Fairfax's forces would attempt to bar future crossings of the River Tees at Yarm by Royalist arms and military convoys.

To guard against this, a small force of Royalist soldiers, possibly Colonel Hylton's Regiment of Foot, including some engineers, was left at Yarm for a few days. This force broke down the northern arch of the bridge and a wooden drawbridge put in place.

A few weeks later, on 22nd February 1643, Queen Henrietta Maria landed at Bridlington with arms and supplies. Parliamentary commander Sir Hugh Cholmley held negotiations with her and changed sides to the Royalists, leading a very successful though eventually ill-fated fight against his previous employers. Having joined up with the Earl of Newcastle in York, Queen Henrietta Maria set off with a large force to reinforce the King at Oxford.

The North was almost completely in Royalist hands. A few months later in June 1643, near Leeds at the Battle of Adwalton Moor, the Earl of Newcastle soundly defeated Fairfax's army but failed to follow up the advantage which might have allowed him to move south, join up with the King's main field army in the Midlands and affect the outcome of the war in the King's favour.

Instead, his hesitancy and the siding of the Scottish Covenanter army with Parliament in January 1644 led to Newcastle having to split his forces. The Scots pushed Newcastle back south over the River Tees and his armies were decisively defeated at the Battles of Selby, April 1644, and Marston Moor near York, in July 1644.

The early engagements at Piercebridge and Yarm had shown the strength of the Royalists in the North and their ability to arm and supply their field armies from continental imports through Tynemouth and Newcastle.

The entry of the huge Scots army decisively swung the balance in favour of Parliament and saw the fall of important Royalist strongholds in the North, including: York, Knaresborough Castle, Mulgrave Castle, Helmsley Castle, Stockton Castle, Hartlepool, Newcastle (1644); Scarborough Castle, Pontefract Castle, Bolton Castle, Skipton Castle (1645). Yet again, people in the North were subjected to the occupation of their area by Scots and English armies, with complaints of ill-treatment, theft and economic burden.

The final defeat and eventual execution of King Charles I in 1649 after the second Great Civil War and a third civil war, mainly against the Scots, led to great hardships in the North East.

## Sites To Visit: North Side Of The River Tees

These locations are set out from East to West (see map for locations).

### Hartlepool



Hartlepool medieval Sandwell Gate & town wall

This is the location of the medieval town and port of Hartlepool. The Parish Church of St. Hilda survives from the medieval town, as do elements of the Town Wall. The Town Wall cut off the headland from the land side and fortified it on the seaward side. The landward defences are all now under houses but the medieval seaward defences survive.

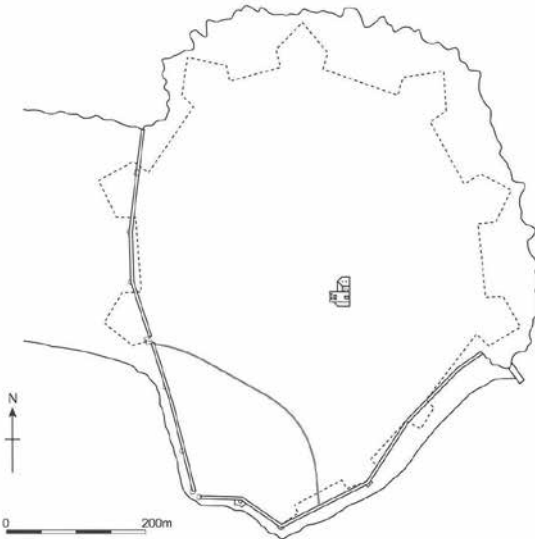
Hartlepool was an important port and both it and Stockton were garrisoned by both sides in the Civil War. At the outbreak of the War it was garrisoned for the king, but was surrendered to a large Scottish force on 24th July 1644 and the Royalist garrison was allowed to march out. The Scottish garrison, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas, remained in Hartlepool until 1647 when Scottish forces in the North of England were paid to return home. Once the Scots had departed a Parliamentary garrison was put in place and references to a garrison continue until 1658.

Following the departure of the Scottish garrison the House of Commons ordered that the new works at Hartlepool should be slighted. Sir Cuthbert Sharp a local historian writing in 1816 commented that,

*'During the civil wars, it [Hartlepool] was placed in a defensible state, the remains of which are still visible on the moor, and in the Far-well Field; but which consisted apparently of little more than ditches, and entrenchments, supported perhaps with cannon at various points, particularly at the mound near St Helen's Well, and at the eastern extremity of the breast works on the moor.'*

Sharp refers to defences on the Town Moor and these survived until about 1969 and are depicted on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1857 where they are described as 'Old Breast Work'. In 1994 a geophysical survey of the Town Moor revealed the line of these defences, including what appears to be an access trench approaching the main defence from the rear. The Town Moor defences were sited

on a high point and probably acted as a second line of defence behind the town wall.



Hartlepool proposed defensive scheme, 1638

In addition to creating new earthwork defences the Scots carried out repair work to the medieval town walls. In 1644 a warrant was issued by Lt Col Douglas to the constables of the nearby parish of Sedgfield requiring them to send four draught teams with two men to every team to help the Scots repair the walls.

The area was plagued by 'pirates' at this time and it is recorded that on 11 February 1650,

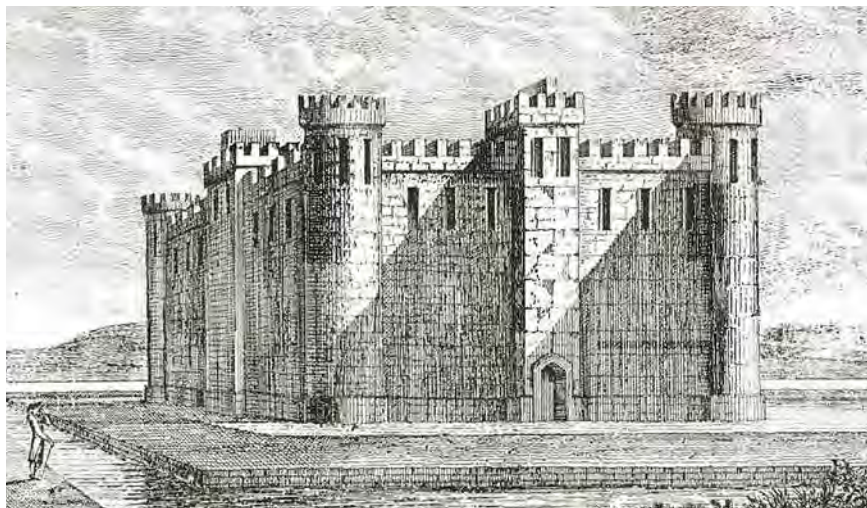
*'an Irish frigate boarded a Newcastle ship near Hartlepool, which the governor, Lieutenant Colonel Douglas, seeing caused some of the guns to be so planted that they shot the Irish frigate through and through and caused him to hasten away and leave the prize behind, which came safe to Hertlepool.'*

## Stockton

Stockton Town, Castle & Port

Stockton is another medieval town and port with its distinctive plan of two rows of properties either side of the High Street. The area to the south of Dovecot Street was the medieval town and this was also the core of the seventeenth century settlement.

Stockton Castle was built by the Bishop of Durham and by the 17th century it seems to have been a square structure with towers at each corner, very similar to Danby Castle in the North York Moors and the larger and grander Bolton Castle in Wensleydale.



Stockton Castle as it might have looked before its demolition in the early 1650s. Artist's impression of the eighteenth century

There is no trace of the castle today, its site is occupied by a hotel block and multi-storey car park, nevertheless the 'Castlegate' shopping centre and nearby Tower Street indicate its former location at the south eastern end of the High Street against the river.

Following the Battle of Newburn, when the Scots crossed the Tyne and marched on Durham, the Bishop of Durham took refuge at Stockton Castle before fleeing south.

In the subsequent Treaty of Ripon, King Charles I retained Stockton and Egglecliffe while allowing the Scots to occupy the rest of the area north of the River Tees. A poorly paid, supplied and disciplined royal garrison of four companies led by Captains Paton, Ferries, Latimer & Heron then occupied the castle. This is reflected in complaints from the locals and the deaths of twelve soldiers between 20th December 1640 and 6th May 1641.



Location of Stockton Castle (red) from Jeffrey's Map of Yorkshire, 1771. The castle seems to have virtually disappeared by the end of the 17th century.

When a Scottish army arrived in the area on 24th July 1644 the castle was surrendered without a fight, and the Scots only left in 1647 after they had been paid a substantial sum of money to leave northern England. During their stay in Stockton the Scottish governor, James Livingstone, was regarded as very severe, his garrison again caused many complaints, including a petition from Thornaby which stated that,

*... they take and kill (our) goods at their pleasure without satisfaction, have broken a windmill nigh the towne & doe assault & draw their swords upon your (petitioners).'*

Following the departure of the Scots, Parliament decided that,

*'...the works about Stockton Castle made sithence these troubles be slighted and dismantled and the garrison disgarrisoned.'*

## Eaglescliffe

Spence Collection (Preston Park Museum, Yarm Road, Stockton-on- Tees, TS18 3RH)

The Museum contains the Spence Collection, which consists of many fine pieces of decorative art and arms and armour, including: helmets; breast- and backplates; swords; pole arms; firearms; powder flasks and accessories, many of them dating from the 17th century.

## Egglescliffe

Egglescliffe is a pleasant village with a small green, medieval church and some fine late 17th century brick cottages and a ruined Old Hall of 16th century date. In the mid 17th century it was also the home of the Rev. Isaac Basire, at one time private chaplain to King Charles I.

It was significant during the Civil Wars due to its ability to control access from the north to the bridge at Yarm. During the Bishops' War Captain Nicholas was stationed with a troop of horse to the west of Butts Lane (three of his troop were buried in the graveyard).

On 24th September 1640 Colonel Colepepyr wrote to Viscount Conway,

*I find here a hill of great advantage close before the bridge where Sir Wm Pennyman has begun a small work. I have begun a greater work, where I intend to make two batteries and dispose two pieces. The other two pieces I have planted on the bridge, whence I can take them to answer any alarm on the river.'*

He wrote again on 4th October,

*'I have manned the Tees at the fords at Worsale, Higher Worsale and Fardingdean Mill upwards'.*

St. John the Baptist  
Parish Church,  
Egglescliffe



On 1st February 1643 there was an engagement at Yarm (see above) and one of the slain is recorded as having been buried in the graveyard at Egglescliffe.

Following this on 16th February 1643 Colonel Hylton wrote to Dr Basire,

*'I am by means of certain especial affairs with my regiment for a season at Hartingpoole, therefore I desire that you will be pleased to take the pains so as to see the bridge drawn every night on Edgeclyffe side, which will conduce very much to the country's and your safety. And there shall scouts wait continually to certify me of all proceedings.'*

The northern arch of Yarm bridge was destroyed and its later replacement can be clearly seen on the upstream part of the medieval bridge. We do not know exactly when the northern arch was broken down, whether before or after the battle.

When the Scots occupied the area Rev Basire fled and became chaplain to Charles I and subsequently moved to France, returning to Egglescliffe following the Restoration of Charles II in 1666.



## High Coniscliffe

High Coniscliffe lies along the road between Darlington and Piercebridge and sits on a high cliff with a fine view over the river (particularly from the churchyard). The church is medieval and is the resting place of Colonel Sir Thomas Howard, killed at the Battle of Piercebridge (see above).

## Piercebridge

Piercebridge is most famous as the site of a Roman Fort, settlement and bridge and remains of the fort can be seen behind the eastern side of the village. The Roman bridge remains are on the south side of the Tees. The village with its broad green occupies the interior of the Roman fort and while the buildings are mainly 18th century the layout is as it would have been in the 17th century.

St. Edwin's Parish Church, High Coniscliffe





Medieval bridge over the River Tees, Piercebridge

The significance of village lies in its position at a crossing point of the River Tees. As with Yarm, the bridge is essentially that which was fought over in 1642 (see above) and has also been widened on the downstream side. The upstream side of the bridge dates to the 16th century and the downstream to the 18th century.



The underside of the arch and the join (left, upstream) of the single carriageway medieval bridge and the later, widened 18th century bridge, Piercebridge

## Sites To Visit: South Side Of The River Tees

These locations will be set out from East to West (see map for locations).

### Marske



Marske Hall from John Walker Ord *The History & Antiquities of Cleveland*, 1846

Marske Hall (Redcar Road, Marske-by-the-Sea TS11 6AA)

Impressive stone mansion house built in 1625 by Sir William Pennyman, Royalist Colonel who raised one of the earliest regiments for King Charles I. Pennyman's Regiment of Foot fought in the Bishops' Wars (1639-40) and in the important campaigns of the Oxford Army until 1645. It was at the battles of: Edgehill (1642); Marlborough (1642); Cropredy Bridge (1644); Lostwithiel (1644); Marston Moor (1644); the siege of Leicester and battle of Naseby (1645).

Pennyman lived here until he marched off with his regiment early in the First Civil War in 1642 and briefly became governor of the Royalist capital of Oxford for a few months in 1643 where he died and is buried. Marske was probably also the village of origin for many of the regiment's infantrymen, including George Symons or Symms, first Major and later Lieutenant Colonel of the regiment.



Winkies Castle, Marske

Winkies Castle Grade 2 listed historic building & museum: 162 High Street, Marske-by-the-Sea, Redcar TS11 7NB

Historic half-cruck timber-framed 17th century cottage, typical of the type of dwelling house once found in many villages of the area. Marske forces repulsed an attempted landing on Marske beach, a few hundred yards down the road, from the Parliamentary warship Rainbow in the summer of 1643.

## Kirkleatham

Kirkleatham Parish Armoury (Kirkleatham Old Hall Museum, Kirkleatham, Redcar TS10 5NW)

Collection of mid-17th century arms and armour, mainly of the type issued to harquebusiers, or cavalymen, originally from the parish armoury used by the local militia, or trained bands, in times of trouble, and kept in the local parish church at Kirkleatham. Pikeman's armour (next page) once part of the collection and now in a private collection, USA.

## Guisborough

The site of a battle on 16th January 1643 (see above). While precise locations are uncertain the area around Belmangate/Hutton village gives an idea of the open landscape that the battle was fought over.





Pennyman coat of arms, from above the doorcase of the original Ormesby Hall, early 17th century

## Ormesby

Ormesby Hall Ladgate Lane, Ormesby TS3 0SR

Home of the Pennyman family for nearly 400 years, this eighteenth century mansion incorporates the remains of the earlier building that was the home of Sir James Pennyman, cousin of Sir William Pennyman of Marske Hall. James Pennyman was Lieutenant Colonel of Pennyman's Troop of Horse, or cavalry, joining the King in Nottingham at the time of the raising of his standard to start the war, on 22 August 1642. Pennyman's troop became part of the dashing Royalist cavalry commander Prince Rupert's regiment of horse, seeing action in the early battles of Powick Bridge and Edgehill.

## Thornaby

Thornaby Green

Today the green is surrounded by modern buildings but in the 17th century there would have been farmsteads around the green. Following the end of the civil wars Scottish troops were based in Stockton and are recorded as burning down a windmill at Thornaby. There is the distinct circular earthwork of a windmill on the green just to the north of the medieval church.

Lidar map of Thornaby Green showing the circular earthwork of a windmill



## Yarm

### Yarm & Yarm Bridge

Yarm is a pleasant 18th century town, which retains the layout it would have had in the 17th century. The Bridge is medieval in date but was widened on the downstream side in the 19th century. The medieval arches can be clearly seen on the upstream side as can the replacement arch on the north bank where the medieval bridge was broken down and a drawbridge installed by the Royalists during the English Civil War (see Eggescliffe for further background information). This was the site of a battle on 1 February 1643 (see above).

The west end of the church and a number of buildings in Yarm would have been present in the 17th century and the font from the church was reputedly thrown in the river to avoid being broken up by Parliamentarian soldiers and later rescued.



View of Yarm Bridge from the West, from John Graves  
*The History of Cleveland*, 1808



Wooden drawbridge, Clifford's Tower, York,  
late 17th century.



## Further Information

If you have enjoyed this booklet the following sources of information are also available.

**Barratt, John 2008** The Battle of Marston Moor 1644

**Binns, Jack 2004** Yorkshire in the Civil Wars: Origins, Impact and Outcome

**Binns, Jack 2007** Yorkshire in the 17th Century: Religion, Rebellion and Revolution, Yorkshire 1603-1702

**Binns, Jack 2008** Sir Hugh Cholmley of Whitby 1600-1657

**Dingle, T 1973** Egglecliffe: A Short History of the Village

**Johnson, David 2003** Adwalton Moor 1643: The Battle that changed a war

**Manganiello, S C 2004** The Concise Encyclopedia of the Revolutions and Wars of England, Scotland, and Ireland, 1639-1660

**McRae, Alisdair 2011** How the Scots won the English Civil War: The Triumph of Fraser's Dragoons

**Reid, Stuart 1998** All the King's Armies: A Military History of the English Civil War 1642-1651

**Sharp, C 1816** History of Hartlepool

**Sowler, T 1972** A History of the Town and Borough of Stockton on Tees

**VCH 1928** Victoria County History of England: County Durham Vol. II

**Wedgwood, C.V. 1958** The King's War 1641-1647

**Wenham, Peter 1970** The Great and Close Siege of York 1644

**Wooler, E 1905** Ancient Piercebridge. Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle Upon Tyne

### Tees Archaeology Archaeological Booklets:

No 1. Anglo-Saxon Teesside.

No 2. Iron Age Teesside

No 3. Roman Teesside

No 4. Vikings on Teesside

Site Guide 1. Archaeological Excavations at Catcote, Hartlepool

These booklets are available to borrow from local libraries or can be purchased or downloaded free of charge from our website

**[www.teesarchaeology.com](http://www.teesarchaeology.com)**

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Robin Daniels & Phil Philo, January 2018



