

THE BLACK PEAR JOURNAL

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www.battleofworcestersociety.org.uk



Chairman: Benjamin Humphrey **Treasurer/Membership Secretary:** Howard Robinson
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A belated happy new year to all. This will be the third and by far our biggest issue of the *Black Pear Journal* and we are thrilled with how the journal is being received. Inside this issue you will find a wealth of information regarding upcoming events involving the society as well as articles and reports on Battle of Worcester related issues. If any members would like to contribute to the journal please do get in touch. We'd be thrilled to hear from you. As many of you know we are trying to raise substantial funds for society led initiatives and we are gaining financial and political momentum all the time. There are more details in this issue. Please take time to peruse the journal and as always, your comments are most welcome.

And do Englishmen so soon forget the ground where liberty was fought for?

John Adams
2nd US President
Worcester, April 1786

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An article written by historian and society member, Tony Spicer. The article appears in the journal with Tony's kind permission.

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Dates that members may want to take note of.

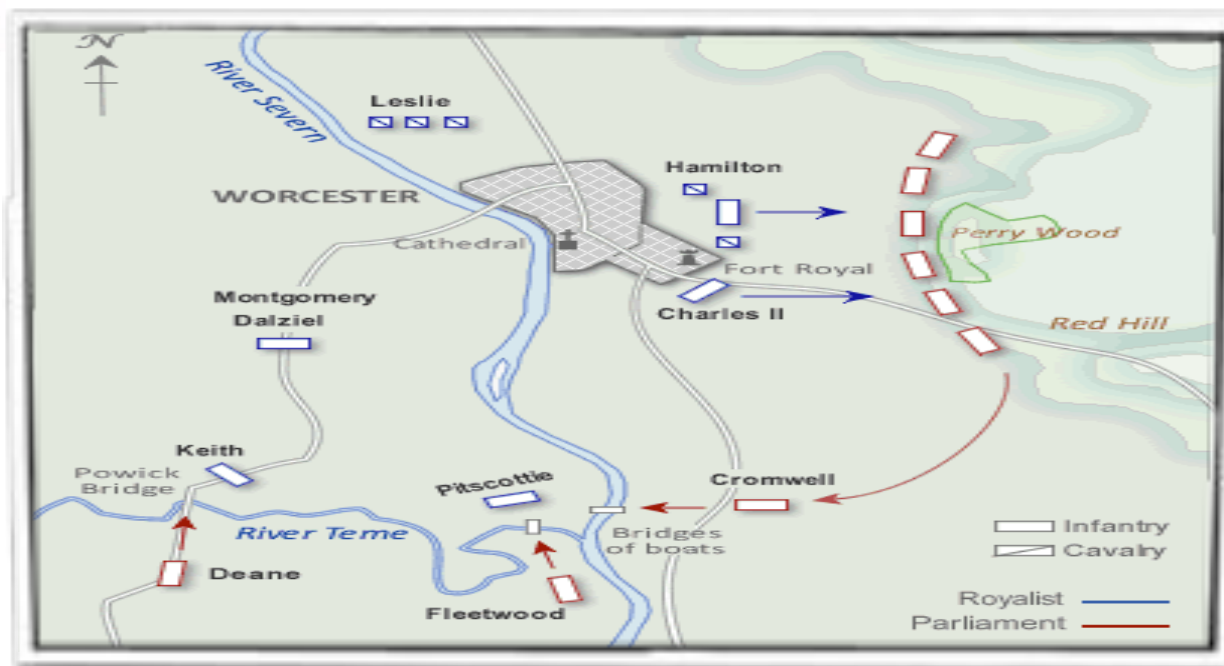
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A Map of Worcester. 1651



A fantastic picture of Ken Potts' Fort Royal Panel. Costings are being investigated to make this panel a reality.



A strategic picture of the Battle of Worcester

SOCIETY AGM - NOVEMBER 2010

A small but select group of members attended the society AGM in November 2010 at The Commandery. The AGM minutes have already been circulated to the membership and topics discussed included monument fundraising sub-committee, future dates of interest and the re-drafting of both the society's constitution and child protection policy. Issues were voted on by the 17 members present and with 7 members voting by proxy.

Attendance remained in similar numbers as the previous year but it would be fantastic if we could get numbers up for this year. One way in which we could do this is by inviting a guest speaker to address the assembled members. If anyone has any suggestions with regards to guest speakers please let a member of the committee know. We will also try to publish the date of the AGM earlier in the year so members can get it down in their diaries before something else crops up. All members of the public are entitled to attend the AGM and will be heartily welcome to come and observe the society's workings. Bring friends, family, pets and cuddly toys. All are welcome!

MONUMENT CAMPAIGN SUB-COMMITTEE

It has long been established that the feat of raising the necessary funds for the monument is, if you will forgive the pun, a monumental one! To this end it was decided that a dedicated sub-committee should be established to co-ordinate and investigate fundraising options. The terms of reference for the committee has now been drafted and agreed by the executive committee of the society. We are now looking for members willing to join the sub-committee and begin the daunting task of fundraising for the Battle of Worcester Monument. If any members of the society or indeed members of the public would like to put themselves forward for the sub-committee please let one of the committee members know. If you would like to see a

copy of the terms of reference for the Monument Sub-Committee please email the Chairman of the Society; benjamin.humphrey@ymail.com

Support the society and

ADVERTISE HERE!!!!

***The Black Pear Journal* is beginning to substantially increase its circulation and this issue will be stocked in the following;**

The Commandery

Worcester Tourist Information Centre

The Swan Theatre

Huntingdon Hall

Worcester Live Box Office

and many more places around Worcester. As well as being distributed via email and post to all members, patrons and various Worcester businesses.

If you have a business or service you would like people to know about then please contact the Chairman. Design services available as well as a choice of 1/4 page, 1/2 page and full page advertising.

Chairman: benjamin.humphrey@ymail.com

Worcester: City of Liberty

The HLF project continues to go from strength to strength with the first phases near completion. The TIE tour has been written, rehearsed and booking with schools has begun. If any members would like to attend a special preview performance please see below for details. The guided City Walks have been scheduled and are taking bookings through the Worcester Live Box Office. The walks last approximately one hour and are completely free to go on. They begin outside the Guildhall in the High Street and finish outside the entrance to The Commandery in Sidbury. Details on how to book a place on the walks can be found below.

For updates regarding the *Worcester: City of Liberty* project please check;
www.worcester-cityofliberty.org.uk

Reports, photographs, downloadable resources etc, will all be available from the website as the project progresses.

The project takes us a giant leap forwards to achieving two of our three aims and our name will be carried to every school that books the show. Along with our name and logo the school will be given information on how to join the society and information regarding the society's work.

Worcester: City of Liberty
A theatre-in-education production.
Preview Launch Performance
Monday 21st March 2011 at 6:00pm
Huntingdon Hall
Tickets: Free

Worcester
live



Inside the Huntingdon Hall



Point 'A' shows the location of the Huntingdon Hall. Parking is available in Copenhagen Street.

BATTLE OF WORCESTER CITY CENTRE TRAIL

The leaflet refers to 'Royalist' throughout. The Royalist army comprised of around 10,000 Scottish and 2,000 English troops.

OVERVIEW

The first and last battles of the English Civil Wars (the Battle of Powick Bridge on the outskirts of Worcester, 23 September 1642, and the Battle of Worcester, 3 September 1651) were fought here. Powick Bridge was a small skirmish, though it heralded greater battles to come. The Battle of Worcester in 1651 was one of the largest land battles ever fought in England; a conservative estimate of the numbers suggests the Parliamentarians outnumbered the Royalists by 28000 to 12000.

The action raged over the fields and hills to the south of Worcester and culminated with street fighting in the city centre. The armies were commanded by King Charles II and Oliver Cromwell. By the end of the day over 3000 Royalists were dead and much of the remaining Royalist army taken prisoner.

The Battle of Worcester City Centre Trail is concerned with the last part of the Battle. In the late afternoon, the part of the Royalist army under the command of Charles and the Duke of Hamilton, which had been attacking Red Hill and Perry Wood, was broken and in retreat. Cromwell's men advanced towards Fort Royal where this trail begins.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information on the Battle of Worcester, visit the Battle of Worcester Partnership webpage:

www.worcester.gov.uk/index.php?id=1911
or www.battleofworcestersociety.org.uk

From time to time The Battlefields Trust do walks of the wider battlefield. Website: www.battlefieldstrust.com

For a guided tour of the city on the Battle of Worcester, please contact Discover History. (Charges apply).
Email: discoverhistory@aol.com

Website: www.discover-history.co.uk
Or visit the Tourist Information Office located next to the Guildhall.



The whole walk takes about an hour. Allow extra time for visiting the attractions etc.

This trail has been produced by the Battle of Worcester Partnership
if you have any feedback on the trail then please email

visits@worcestercathedral.org.uk

BATTLE OF WORCESTER TIMELINE



BATTLE OF WORCESTER CITY CENTRE TRAIL

1. FORT ROYAL PARK

This is on a hill to the south-east of Wyld's Lane. When the Royalists arrived in Worcester on 22nd August 1651 they started work on reinforcing the city. The earthworks of the existing fort on Fort Royal Hill were reconstructed and cannon positioned to protect the city.

Although the fort was in a strong position, the works were probably unfinished, and the defenders were no match for Cromwell's superior numbers who swiftly overran it and turned the cannon onto the city. The fort was slighted after the battle and the earthworks are now hard to distinguish. However there are fine views of the Malvern Hills, of Worcester city centre and the Cathedral. It is also just possible to see Perry Wood from the east side.

Over 100 years after the battle, in April 1786, two of the founding fathers of the new American state (John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, the future 2nd and 3rd Presidents) visited Fort Royal and are quoted as saying that this is 'the ground where liberty was fought for'.



2. THE COMMANDERY AND SIDBURY

Go back down to Wyld's Lane, turn left and then right into Sidbury. The Commandery is on the right, just outside the city defences. This medieval building was the lodging place of the Duke of Hamilton (Royalist) and we therefore suppose that it served as the command post for the forces on the east side of the city during the battle. It was here that the badly wounded Duke of Hamilton was brought.

Nearby is the bridge over the canal (then the city ditch). The spot is marked by pikes on the parapet and an inscription to the right underneath. The old Sidbury Gate was a few paces beyond between the bridge and a blue plaque on the King's Head. The fighting outside Sidbury Gate was intense and the Royalist casualties severe. Charles was nearly captured but the remnant of the Royalist cavalry made a charge down through Sidbury and forced the Parliamentary infantry back long enough for Charles to get back into the city.



Opening Times

Monday-Saturday 10am-5pm, Sundays 1.30pm-5pm. Admission charges apply.

3. KING CHARLES HOUSE

Cross City Walls Road at the traffic lights and then fork right into Friar Street continuing into New Street. These picturesque streets give some idea of what 17th century Worcester must have been like

and you can imagine Charles pounding along them on a borrowed horse back to his lodgings (King Charles House). At the time the house occupied the whole of the corner of New Street and the Commar- ket just as the Parliamentary soldiers were banging on the front door in New Street, although this is probably an exaggeration as the area was still in Royalist hands.



5. THE GUILDHALL

Retrace your steps to the Cornmarket, go along Mealcheepen Street and Church Street and turn left into the High Street. The Guildhall is about 200 yards on the right. The present building is 18th century, but on the same site as the medieval timber-framed Guildhall. Here Royalists held out well into the evening. The Guildhall is graced by statues of Charles I and Charles II on each side of the door. On the arch over the door is another figure whose origin is debatable, but according to an old Worcester tradition which can be traced back to at least the 19th century, there, pinned by his ears by the angry citizens of Worcester, is the head of Cromwell.



Opening Times

Monday-Saturday 9am-5pm

Admission free

The Tourist Information Centre is located to the left of the Guildhall

6. WORCESTER CATHEDRAL

Continue to the end of the High Street and the Cathedral is facing you. The Cathedral tower could claim to be the battle headquarters where Charles watched the progress of the battle and planned tactics with his commanders from the top of the tower. After the battle the Cathedral received little mercy. Prisoners were kept in the Cathedral and further damage was done to the building compounding that which had taken place earlier in the Civil Wars. The Cathedral is the burial place of the Duke of Hamilton who died of his wounds.

Opening Times

7.30am to 6pm daily.

Admission free

Cathedral Tower

The tower offers great panoramic views of the battlefield sites. Open from Easter to the end of October on Saturdays, Bank Hols and during School Summer Hols. Admission charges apply. Website: www.worcestercathedral.co.uk



To return to Fort Royal Park, go down College Street, cross at the traffic lights into Sidbury and then left into Wyld's Lane. Fort Royal Park is on the right.



*The article below was written by historian and BoWS member, Tony Spicer.
It appears in The Black Pear Journal with Tony's kind permission.*

In 2009 the Battle of Worcester Society held a debate about the bridges of boats in the Battle of Worcester. This generated much interest and argument as to how the bridges were constructed and positioned.

Bridges of boats had been previously used outside a battle situation for transport and also for sieges. A siege bridge of boats might become involved in a battle if it was attacked by a relieving army as Rupert was to do at the Battle of Newark in March 1644. (Rupert's attack was of limited success but he had done enough to win the battle as the parliamentary besiegers surrendered the next day). But as A.H.Burne writes, in his chapter on Worcester in his classic book "The Battlefields of England", 'Worcester is unique among battles fought in England as being conditioned by a river crossing. The River Severn figures prominently in the battle; in fact it is its backbone so to speak. The throwing of a bridge across it in the face of the enemy at the outset of the battle made possible a remarkable and successful manoeuvre'. This is of course correct as far as England is concerned but there was another battle in Wales, nearly four centuries earlier where the central feature was a bridge of boats.

I do not claim to be an expert on this battle and my article is intended for those (like myself until recently) who had barely heard of it but are interested in how a bridge of boats might be constructed and used in battle.

In 1282, Edward 1 was endeavouring to subdue Wales and meeting fierce and capable resistance from Prince Llewellyn and his brother David. Edward's navy enabled him to occupy Anglesey. This gave him two advantages. Firstly, Anglesey was an agricultural region which could supply his army and secondly it gave him a platform to cross the Menai Straits to the mainland and attack Welsh positions along the coast. However a weakness of Edward's navy was that it was dependent upon ships provided by the powerful cinque port barons of Kent and Sussex, whose main interest was trade across the English Channel, and who did not want their ships floating idle in the Menai straits.

The commander in Anglesey, Luke de Tany, was ordered to construct a bridge of boats over the Menai Straits. He was to wait until Edward, who was at Rhuddlan, advanced to attack Penmaenmawr. Then Tany was to cross the Menai Straits via the bridge boats and attack Penmaenmawr from the southwest. From contemporary records, the work was begun around 23rd August and finished at the end of September. While the work was being done it was protected by the navy and by an outpost on the mainland. However, once the work was completed, the navy withdrew, leaving the bridge of boats more exposed.

The next few weeks were taken up by Edward consolidating his positions and also with some negotiations with Llewellyn. Running out of patience, Tany mounted an attack across the bridge of boats without waiting to combine it with Edward's attack and indeed disobeying orders. The chronicler says that this was "to acquire glory and reputation." The outcome was a disaster. Part of Tany's army, under the command of himself, crossed the bridge of boats at low tide and advanced into the lower slopes of the surrounding mountains where they were attacked and driven back by the Welsh. By this time, the

tide had risen and the English troops had difficulty in retreating back over the bridge of boats which started to break up under the stress of the tide and weight of men and horses upon it. Tany and some prominent commanders were killed or drowned and few managed to escape back to Anglesey.

For those wishing to explore the Battle of Moel-y-don a little further, some intriguing questions arise. Some books put this battle at Bangor. However this would be a wide crossing, with the bridge exposed to the Irish Sea. The Welsh Battlefields Society puts the most likely site as near Moel y don OS SH 525681. This is the narrowest part of the Menai Straits and the most logical for bridging purposes but further away from Penmaenmawr making Edward 1's strategy look over ambitious and elaborate. It may be that Tany, with no ships to protect his bridge of boats and Welsh forces increasing in strength on the mainland opposite, felt that he had no alternative other than to make a pre-emptive strike.

The bridge of boats disaster at Moel y don may have been the reason why this tactic of creating a bridge of boats in battle and sending across troops in the face of the enemy was not used in England until the Battle Worcester in 1651. There are obvious differences in how this tactic was employed. The bridge at Moel y don was constructed quite openly over a period of five weeks. It must have been obvious to the Welsh what was happening. The 1651 bridges of boats were constructed over one or two days, although no doubt planned and prepared as far as possible in advance. Unlike Moel y don the success of the operation depended on surprise. Another difference is that to construct a bridge of boats over the Menai Straits must have been a much more difficult business than one over the Severn. The Menai Straits are wider with open sea at both ends and more exposed to a weather and tidal variations.

The tide played a significant part in the Battle of Moel y don. There is no mention of this being a problem in the Battle of Worcester, yet it must have been a factor; the Severn was tidal then although one would not expect as strong a tide as in the Menai Straits. The actual construction of the bridges of boats over the Menai Straits and Severn seems to have been similar. Boats were linked together by wooden girders and then had planks nailed across the girders. Although a bridge of boats would no doubt have some sort of buoyancy, the degree of rigidity of the structure would detract from it.

It follows that the bridge of boats at Worcester must have been affected by the tide to some extent. Did Cromwell make his bridge of boats over the Severn at low tide, in which case as the tide rose there would be a danger of it being submerged or was it made at high tide in which case, as the tide receded, strain would be put on the girders locking the boats together. For if a bridge of boats was intended just to get a small number of men across a river, more buoyancy could be allowed, but here several hundreds if not thousands of troops including cavalry passed over it meaning that the bridge had to be of a more rigid construction and consequently more likely to be affected by tidal variations. This is another little factor in the puzzle of the bridges of boats operation in the Battle of Worcester. As A. H. Burne puts it "The whole affair is astonishing".



Below are a selection of dates that members may wish to put in their diaries. There are more events in the pipeline and members will be kept up-to-date via email and post.

The Three Battles Festival

26th - 27th March 2011

The Commandery

Brian Bullock (Committee Member) has been working hard with representatives from the Battle of Tewkesbury Society and the Simon de Montfort Society to put together a weekend of events that will include talks from all three societies as well as, display boards, re-enactors and drill displays. Please come along and show support.

Re-Enactment of the conferral of the Worcester City Mace to Charles Stewart.

23rd August 2011 time to be confirmed.

The Steps of the Guildhall

A re-enactment of the historic moment when the Mayor of Worcester officially recognised Charles Stewart as the Monarch.

The Commandery Events

30th August - 4th September

The Commandery

There will be various displays activities and events happening inside and outside The Commandery for the entire 'Battle of Worcester Week' Displays, drill demonstrations, civillian and soldier camps and activites from The Commandery and re-enactors. A great week to get everyone involved with Living History.

1651 - An Evening with Oliver Cromwell

2nd September 2011 7:00pm

The Commandery

On the eve of the Battle of Worcester join Oliver Cromwell and some of his intriguing comrades in the Great Hall of *The Commandery* for a 17th Century three course meal. Tickets are available with the booking form and priority will be given to society members first. There will be a reasonably priced bar as well as a fantastic night of theatre.

Commemorative Service

3rd September 2011 time to be confirmed

Worcester Cathedral

To commemorate the thousands of lives lost in the battle as well as the significance of the events that occurred we are holding a commemoration service in the Cathedral.

Battle of Worcester Re-Enactment

3rd September 2011 time to be confirmed.

Bennett's Land, Powick

Join the Sealed Knot Society as they provide a fantastic re-enactment based upon the battle that took place 360 years ago. The society are sponsoring the event and are expecting to raise a huge amount of awareness for our cause.

Drumhead Service

3rd September 2011 time to be confirmed.

Starting at The Commandery moving to Fort Royal Hill and then back to the Commandery

The society's annual drumhead service on Fort Royal Hill.

Battle of Worcester Re-Enactment

4th September 2011

Pre-battle display in the morning with a battle in the early afternoon. There will be traders selling to re-enactors as well as the public with food available as well as a beer tent.



Worcester News Support **Worcester News** Midlands Newspaper of the Year

The Worcester News articles and fascinating facts continue to be well received and we are thrilled with the partnership between Worcester News and ourselves. We currently have a fascinating fact published weekly on a Thursday along with a monthly article slot written by a member of the society. If any members would like to write an article for publication please submit 300 words and a picture of yourself to the Secretary, Rob Leetham. rob@leetham1.orangehome.co.uk The article can be anything to do with the Battle of Worcester. Its beginnings, its consequences or maybe what the heritage of the battle means to you.

A few of our fascinating facts!

The Battle of Worcester was the final battle in the third phase of the 'English' Civil War, so-called even though some of its battles took place in Wales, Scotland & Ireland. It was later described by Adams & Jefferson, the 2nd & 3rd Presidents of America, as **'Scenes where Freemen had fought for their Rights.'** John Adams said of his visit to Worcester in 1786: **"And do Englishmen so soon forget the Ground where Liberty was fought for?"**

By the time Charles occupied the 'Faithful City' of Worcester on 23rd August 1651, the total strength of his army was less than 14,000 troops. A force of Lancashire Royalists, raised by the Earl of Derby and Sir Thomas Tyldesley had earlier been defeated by Colonel Robert Lilburne at Wigan on 25 August; Tyldesley was killed in the action and the last fully **English** Royalist army routed. Charles' English support base had all but disappeared.

Much of the Royalist army was provisioned at the expense of the City of Worcester, not only with cloth for uniforms but also with flour, fruit, spices, wine, and other provender. The presence of the Royalist army and subsequent fighting in the battle disrupted trade and left Worcester impoverished, but the town soon recovered. At the time, it had a rich trade in wool for weaving and leather for making gloves.

A bombardment a few days and nights before the Battle of Worcester was ordered by Cromwell to unsettle the Royalists and keep them on edge and awake when they needed sleep, not knowing when the main attack was going to happen. As a result, they were tired and dispirited when the day of the battle dawned.

Keep up-to-date!

For those members who are of a more technological persuasion you can keep up-to-date with us by logging on to Twitter and Facebook. Just search for the Battle of Worcester Society on Facebook and @BoWSociety on Twitter.

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