The Battle of Edgehill, 1642 – Warwickshire, England

A country history walk exploring points of interest associated with the Civil War Battle and the rich history of Radway village.

WALK: 2.5km - one steep climb - and one pub with dining and garden. (On return to the village there is an optional additional 1km). There is a free and interactive **battlefield visitor exhibition** adjacent to the Battle of Edgehill battlefield permanently installed in Saint Peters Church at Radway: Saint Peters Church, Tysoe Road, Radway, Warwickshire, CV35 0BS.

Information boards, artefacts in display cases, specially commissioned films, and interactive displays explain the events of the momentous battle and relate the impact it had upon the people of Radway village and the surrounding area. The exhibition is free - *but donations are gratefully accepted via the donations box* - and is open during daylight hours virtually every day of the year. Anyone interested in the battle is very welcome to visit the exhibition - it is suitable for all ages, families, organised groups, and school parties. Modern toilet facilities are available in a separate building behind the church. (*Follow the path*). From the exhibition you can walk the battlefield, explore the historic village and enjoy the public footpaths up and across the Edgehill escarpment. Two duplicate 'wind-up' audio visitor's guides are also installed within the village to enhance your visit. *(The church remains a fully functioning place of worship and traditional ceremonies and religious services continue).*

Further exhibition details: http://www.battleofedgehillexhibitionradway.org.uk/

A digital interactive version of this walk – featuring more points of interest and images – is available online (but can be temperamental when used onsite with a mobile device).

The Battle

Here on Sunday 23rd October 1642 the royalist army of King Charles I engaged the parliamentarian army in the first pitched battle of the English Civil War.

Approximately 25,000 men clashed that day, and the news would reach all corners of the country. Mass grave pits were dug, and legends were born, but archaeology from the battlefield would not reveal many of the battle's secrets until only recently, in the 21st century.

The Edgehill battlefield remains the largest in Britain and the battle was technically the longest of the entire conflict as military manoeuvres lasted a further two days.

(Further details are available on the final page of this document).

Visiting the battlefield

Much of the central battlefield has long been occupied by the MOD and is inaccessible to the public. Surviving and new public rights of way skirt the perimeter of where the epicenter of the action took place, but paths to the west and north provide views of some key areas and cross the broad area where the Parliamentarian leftwing cavalry were swept away by the Royalist rightwing horse, and it's possible to view where the Parliamentarian baggage train had setup camp (seen from Red Road immediately adjacent to Little Kineton). But that's a walk for another time… This short walk focuses upon what can be seen from the eastern end of the battlefield and takes in an excursion up and along the escarpment while also focusing upon much of the history surrounding the historic village itself.

START

Start the walk at the Edgehill battle exhibition at:

Saint Peters Church, Tysoe Road, Radway, Warwickshire, CV35 0BS.

DIRECTIONS	HISTORY
1). After visiting the exhibition (in the Church), **exit straight ahead to the road**, but first (just after the two trees) try to spot the small gravestone on your left for Willianmina. *(Toilets available to the rear of the Church).*	The gravestone commemorates Willianmina killed aged 50 in a motor car on Edgehill in 1899; thought to be the first woman in England killed in a car accident. She was housekeeper to Colonel Haig who was renting the Grange.
2). On the road, turn left.	Radway is divided into two distinct portions, once known as "Uptown" and "Downtown". This middle area was informally known as "the City". As recently as the early 20th century, this section of road was still sometimes referred to as "City Street".
3). Head towards the Junction (where the 'West End' road joins). 	The building on your left (next to the church), was the purpose-built village school and at one time, during the 19th century, was managed by Georgiana Miller (a descendant of the Miller family of Radway Grange). By 1894 she had agreed to allow government inspectors to regularly visit, and Board of Education regulations were followed. Thirteen years after her death, in 1912, the school was leased to the County Council Education Authorities of Warwickshire and became a full Council School with the adjacent church having no powers over it "during school hours".
At the junction with 'West End' you'll find the old cart wash and a wind-up free-standing information guide. *Perhaps listen to items number 1 and then 3 before you head up the hill. (You could try item number 2, on your return at the end of the walk).*	The Cart Wash - next to the audio guide - was once a shallow pool allowing wooden wheeled carts to soak up moisture, helping them expand and keep the metal band - around the outside rim - tightly in place.

4). Turn onto the West End (or Westend) road and continue all the way to the end (with the Grange and hill on your left), where the road soon opens out into a green.

Below: a very early 20th century photograph of Radway pool. Below right: Edwardian scene on the green.

While Radway village is traditionally associated with Royalist troops from the battle – because they arrived from the east - it was one of many villages to the northwest of the Edgehill escarpment being billeted by *Parliamentarian* forces the night before the battle.

4.1). Take a small detour: In the corner of this open space on the right – with the pool on your left – and **tucked in tightly to the right of the run of cottages is a public right of way.** (It's hard to see until you're practically at the corner). **Take a few steps along this path** to find the site of the previous Church. *(In 2022 the site was opened-up and an excellent interpretation panel installed).*

The earlier Radway church - which was contemporary to the neighbouring Battle of Edgehill (1642) - was replaced in 1866 by the current church of St Peter nearby, but its plot and graveyard footprint remain. It's speculated that the church may have served as a field hospital during the battle but no evidence of this can be found. The grounds were also the original location of the famed effigy of Captain Kingsmill - killed in the battle - which now sits within the present Radway church. One of the tombstones bordering the graveyard records that Elizabeth Heritage died in 1645; who must have witnessed the momentous event of 1642. The last resident to be buried here was Fiennes Sanderson Miller in 1862, aged 79. He was the grandson of gentleman architect and landscape designer Sanderson Miller (of Radway Grange). An obelisk commemorating F.Miller's gallant conduct commanding Dragoons at the Battle of Waterloo stands on the hillside. This churchyard contains his Miller family vault, and their resting place is still clearly visible in the center of this old graveyard.

5). Return to the pool (or pond) on West End lane; bare to the right of the pool (passing it on your left) to **take the track which leads straight**

As you do, note the former Primitive Methodist Chapel (1866), on your right. Part of the Kineton circuit, it cost £150 to build and had an organ. It remained in service throughout much of the 20th century.

to the open hillside of the escarpment.

Towards the end of the track/lane, a gate provides access to the hillside: this is the general location – on the right – where the cottage was located. →

An enterprising inhabitant of a small cottage, hereabouts, during the late 1800s claimed that Charles I ate his breakfast here before (or the day after) the main Battle of Edgehill and even sold a table as a relic! (Primary documents contradict this version of events). The cottage was demolished in 1882.

6). From here, **head straight up the hill in a straight line** (aiming for the Radway Tower). Initially the fence line is on your right.

a). On the left, towards the village, is Radway Grange: In the dining-room the novelist Henry Fielding read 'Tom Jones' in manuscript to Earl Chatham (William Pitt), Sir George Lyttleton and Sanderson Miller (the Grange owner) for their approval before it was printed. (Famous guests during this era also included Lord North and Horace Walpole). Radway Grange was also once owned by Walter Light, whose daughter married Robert Washington in 1564. They were the great-great-great grandparents of George Washington, the first President of the USA. More recently, Earl Haig, Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces during World War One, had lived at the grange.

b). In the open parkland (on the left) towards the Grange three trees were planted in 1754 by William Pitt - later Lord Chatham. [William Pitt the Elder]. (The two Scotch firs and one Mountain Ash, which stood together, reportedly died in around the 1890s).

c). The escarpment and wider vicinity feature examples of ancient medieval Ridge and Furrow strip farming preserved within the landscape (created by traditional ploughing). On Jenny's Hill – the round hill immediately to your right - broad-rig examples survive. Twelve teams of oxen for a year were used for the arable land within the parish around the time of the Norman Conquest (in 1066). In 1087, 153 people lived in Radway.

6.1). Halfway up the escarpment, **pass through a small swing gate**, which now puts a hedgerow on your left. (Keep heading uphill!).

Part of a surviving example of a Lot Ground is seen on the escarpment hillside across to your right: Three old 'Lot' Grounds, long predating the 18th century hillside woodland, once sat above the village. Traditionally a lottery was drawn to allow villagers to harvest and burn the wild woody Gorse bushes every one or two years. Here, Gorse (or Furze) still grows in an area which was once part of one

Gorse brakes (seen on your right). Often with yellow flowers.

of these Lot Grounds. (Although in recent years, saplings are increasingly dominant here). The other two were further north-eastwards along the steep sections of the escarpment.

6.2). Soon an open fence line on your left allows for uninterrupted views across the Radway Grange parkland.

Sanderson Miller (of Radway Grange).

From the 1730s, as a young man, the then owner of Radway Grange - Sanderson Miller - began landscaping the land on his estate. Today, little of the ornate detail survives of his pleasure grounds in this parkland but aerial photography reveals some preserved features. Miller's designs were radical when compared to his peers with a distinct and original move away from formality. He created the continuous Edgehill escarpment woodland that you see today and built the hilltop Radway Tower. Tradition reports that his friend, Henry Fielding - author of 'The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling' - and visitor to Radway, used this parkland as the model for the landscape he described in his novel around Mr Allworthy's house. Published in 1749 he describes a Gothic house which stands below a hill with a fine lawn sloping down towards it and trees which rise above it in a gradual ascent while near the summit a spring gushes out over rock and stone all topped with a tower of "an old, ruined abbey". [...] "the view of a very fine park, composed of very unequal ground, and agreeably varied with all the diversity that hills, lawns, wood, and water, laid out with admiral taste, but owing less to art than to nature, could give". Miller often employed a team of labourers but is also recorded to have often enjoyed partaking in the physical management of the estate.

The sizable grouping of trees in the parkland standing halfway up the escarpment (below you, towards your left as you view from the fence): Now obscured, overgrown and much diminished, this is the site of the original fishpond used by monks who, in the Middle Ages, maintained a small convalescent cell nearby on the hillside. After 1756, landowner and famed landscape designer Sanderson Miller enlarged it, when it became known as Long Pool and seemingly added an additional pool below it, dividing the two with a dam and potentially also fitting a small bridge. The stream that then continued down the hill no longer travels far and is now usually dry (largely due to a later culvert diverting waters under the Grange).

To the north of Long Pool is 'Saint Thomas's Well', which supplied the monks with spring water. Sanderson Miller proudly showed it to his friend and compared it to a gold mine as it was with its waters that he could create his aesthetic parkland water features and streams. His ancestor, George Miller, wrote in 1896 that "The water of this well is particularly good, cool and refreshing".

Virtually nothing now remains of the elaborate water garden features (straight ahead when viewed from the fence) - completed in 1739 - which once cascaded downhill from the area below the obelisk. Miller broke from his own informal style and installed semi-formal water features here - incorporating a jetteau - which would continue as tumbling streams down towards the Grange. Sanderson's fountain and water cascades were described by a friend as "fountains roaring and cascading before him [...]", while another visitor was more critical: "[the water features] I think inconsistent with his genius of his land in general. At the top [...] is a reservoir which [may] spurt forth [...] and be dry [the rest of] the year. It falls over 3 rustic arches, runs down, through broken stonework [...] on each side [of] little mounds of earth artificially cast up. But this is [...] only retained because [it] has cost him money".

The obelisk [with better views later on the walk] also broadly indicates where the monks of Stoneleigh, had a cell (in the Middle Ages) at Radway as a sanatorium or convalescent home for their brethren who needed the bracing air of the hills. The local Reverend, George Miller, wrote in 1896: "It stood a little below the present obelisk. Adjoining it was a chapel and graveyard, where a body was exhumed some years back, when sinking a hole. The cell seems to have been between the two Granges [one below at Radway and a second in the hamlet on the hilltop]. The Reverend, when a boy, was placed on the site of the graveyard by his father and was told that he was standing on consecrated ground".

6.3). At the open fence line, and visible continuing up the hill, the shape of a wide sunken path can still be made out. It can be traced running directly up the hill.

Earthworks (along the fence line, on the left) still preserve the route of a path used and fashioned by Sanderson Miller in the mid-1700s. The section below - which is still traced by a single row of foliage/hedge along the fence line - was once planted with double hedges to line both sides of the path, which provided shade and privacy and framed views of his hilltop tower. The final upper section was left un-hedged, probably because it crossed an open area of

This image (above) shows the final section of the sunken path (clear of vegetation).

pasture, and it digs into the hillside to lessen the gradient. Towards the woodland border it turned left providing access to a small stable, allowing for horse drawn supplies to be brought uphill from the grange for use at his hillside summerhouse. The path was also typically used for Miller and guests to descend back down to the lower estate, having first ascended via a similar path on the north side of the park. It's quite possible that the £3 he spent in May 1743 for ten loads of "thorn", were the very same used to line this route.

6.4). At the woodland edge is a stone bench.

The beer garden at Radway Tower (continue up the hill) provides views from a greater elevation, but the installed information panel – at time of writing – uses a now superseded battlefield interpretation from 2005.

Here, at the top of 'Hill Ground', is a good spot to survey the Civil War battlefield of Sunday 23rd October 1642.

Shown in the deployment plan (p17): These are the modern revised deployment positions largely based upon archeological research. Battle archeologist Glenn Foard wrote in 2012: "[...] historic terrain reconstruction; re-analysis of the documentary accounts of the battle, [...] and large-scale survey of the battle archaeology, [led] to a revision of the overall interpretation. [...] It also appears to locate securely various elements of the action in relation to the terrain."

Refer to the final page of this document for a description of the battle and further details.

7). Continue through the gate into the woodland.

Here you can make a detour to the Radway Tower by taking the path ahead leading upwards to the tower (with the handrail). *The building is now a public house/restaurant/hotel (The Castle at Edgehill) and has a large beer garden.*

Return to this point when ready.

The Tower, gatehouse and complex were designed by Sanderson Miller of Radway as a folly, in the 18th century.

Unfortunately, the forever popular and modern tradition of the tower being sited here to mark the position where King Charles planted or raised his Standard (before the battle) does not withstand factual research. (This relentlessly, and lovingly, repeated "tradition" is the invention of one man from the late 1800s).

Contrary to some claims, the building was begun in 1745 and completed - with the addition of the freestanding Gatehouse - in 1750. The sham castle is modeled upon

Warwick Castle's Guys Tower and was designed to appear as a romantic ruin. The ancient route leading through the complex, from the main road and down towards Radway Grange (now passing under the tower's bridge) remains intact.

Miller purchased the land in 1743 and demolished a 16th century cottage which once stood here as it was the only suitable spot upon which to build his dramatic entrance to accompany the pre-existing route entering his estate via the hilltop.

After the building became a public house in 1817 the lawns would eventually be used as tea gardens for several decades.

8). *Return to the gate at the woodland edge if you have visited the Tower.* Where you first enter the woodland **bare left and take the narrow path** (with Radway down on your left).

Along this section of the footpath, the site of a mid-18th century summerhouse can still be found (although the buildings no longer exist). Created by the Radway Grange owner - Sanderson Miller - primarily for entertaining his many guests, a partly circular bastion, about five yards in diameter and edged by five ancient Limes, can still be seen. The summerhouse was described by one visitor: "[...] you pass by a winding ascent until you have a view of the a hanging lawn enclosed on all sides with wood-work. It has a wild and forest like appearance and is terminated at [one] end by [a] stable [finished in ornamental] plaster work. I liked this scene the best of any [...]". It's reported that the summerhouse was used for the "flow of conversation" and tea, but it "does not inebriate".

Five Limes mark the bastion.

Along this hillside section, but particularly around this vicinity, mature Laurels - with their ever-green rubber-like

	smooth leaves - still grow and are the remnants of Laurels planted in the 18th century to line the path which once led to the summerhouse. None other than William Pitt the Elder - member of the British cabinet and its informal leader - contributed money for the Laurels to his friend Sanderson Miller - the Radway "squire" and garden landscaper - to use for decorating this upper section of his estate.
9). Continue along this narrow path, where views of the open parkland can be made.	Around this section of the walk, you can find views of the open parkland below (particularly from an access gate) and its surviving earthworks which record where a medieval trackway curved across the hillside and was later used to journey between the Grange and the hilltop Gatehouse (tower). You'll be able to see the final straight and steep section - behind you as you look towards the open park which is now a public right of way - where it runs straight up to the tower (accompanied by a low retaining wall). Hereabouts you will also find views of the obelisk and 'top pool' (and the mount). a). The obelisk was erected by Charles Chambers in 1854 to commemorate the Battle of Waterloo and Lieut. Col. Fiennes Miller's command of the VIth. Inniskilling Dragoons. Charles Chambers died in 1854 making this his last tribute to his friend, neighbour, and cousin. It stands upon the level ground made by Sanderson Miller - his grandfather - in the previous century. b). The eighteenth-century mount (raised plateau) and water feature by Sanderson Miller, which acted as a reservoir and once formed part of, and fed, more elaborate designs within his landscaped gardens. Today a handful of his Lime trees to the south and north of the pool survive, but the water level has now diminished. From his diary we know that on the 26 June 1750 he and his niece, Nanny, walked to the mount to cut some roses.
10). The path soon opens out to a wider path within the woodland with a clear and wide route continuing straight ahead. **Continue straight ahead** along the obvious footpath.	Along this section of the woodland path the modern public footpath travels over and along a little-known 18th century engineered terrace; completed by 1739. Landscape designer Sanderson Miller created this plateau to run parallel to the escarpment where he would also enrich the slopes with extra tree planting in the 1750s. An adjoining informal path had once led directly uphill from Radway Grange to then allow Miller and his visitors to enjoy the fine views across the battlefield from this raised and level

platform (and forming part of a full circular walk). Three mature Horse Chestnuts (very probably planted by Miller) survive neatly spaced along part of the outer edge and now help define the built-up terrace. A 1756 map shows a line of ornamental hedging planted along and below its lower edge - which would have been kept in order to maintain the views - and along its hillside border, lining the route leading directly to the mount and water gardens, to the south. The grassed land below the terrace was also leveled - partly with sand - to remove the ridge and furrow undulations of earlier ploughing.

11). Continue along this path passing through the woods…

a). The woods which now cover much of the Edgehill scarp were largely planted by Sanderson Miller in the mid-1700s. Miller became a renowned landscape gardener in his lifetime and remains a celebrated early influence of national importance. He planted Limes, Sweet Chestnuts and Horse Chestnuts, but notably, it is recorded that his friend Sir Edward Turner of Oxfordshire provided 103 Beeches in 1756, which Miller used to line the crest of the escarpment. Around this time, he would eventually acquire the full hillside above the village and his diary captures the exhaustive list of trees he planted throughout his estate during the late 1750s. They included: Larches and Pinasters (both from seed), Pines, Spruce, Yews, Ashes, Birches, more Beeches, 100 Alders, 400 Elms and several hundred Oaks. (In modern times, during the summer months, Wood Warbler had been recorded here).

b). The escarpment stands at a height of 700 feet (215 metres) above sea level and forms the northern tip of the same Cotswold escarpment which runs all the way southwestwards to Cheltenham from where it overlooks the famous racecourse. The area around Edge Hill village (where the Radway Tower stands) has been quarried extensively for Jurassic ironstone since the 11th century. In the 1920s iron ore was quarried and transported on the Edge Hill Light Railway to the Stratford-upon-Avon and Midland Junction Railway near Burton Dassett. The ironstone stratum sits about 4 ft below the Edgehill red soil throughout parts of this region of the escarpment.

c). At this central section above the village – where the gradient is steepest above the path - was once the middle Lot of three 'Lot Grounds' above the village. When the hillside was still open grassland and heath. Villagers would have cast lots each year or two for the right to gather Furze

12). Eventually the woodland path arrives at a junction of paths (with one leading diagonally uphill). **Take the obvious swing gate on the left, which leads out into a long field**, descending down to the village. This gate also features a stone bench (matching the entrance previously made when entering the woodland).

Go through the gate, into the field, and walk directly downhill - straight down the center to the far end. (Keep the modern fence, which fences off half of the field towards the bottom, close on your right).

Harvey and the two princes observing the battle from the hillside.

13). Towards the bottom of the field, the public footpath then leads

[Gorse bush] from this area. It was a cheap and valuable fuel when wood was in short supply.

Unfortunately, where the woodland continues northwards, many Ash trees were felled in the summer of 2023 due to Ash dieback disease.

a). From this northern end of Edgehill John Speed viewed the vista and meadows which covered the region of the open field beyond the village (towards the right): "the meadowing pastures with the green mantles [are] so embroidered with flowers that from Edgehill we might behold another Eden". John Speed (Cartographer), 1611.

b). Referring to the aerial battlefield plan (p17), the area marked as ‘2’ highlights what was once a broad open meadow area. This is where the Royalist army first assembled within a broad area of meadow, after having first descended the hill via the road and prior to formally deploying further west.

c.). A map from 1756 tells us that this "field", which you are currently descending through, was called 'Little Furze'. This describes how much of this hillside once appeared, with Furze, or Gorse, bushes growing in abundance.

d). Towards the bottom you’ll see (to your right), in profile, the broad plateau of land, which forms part of Bullet Hill (which sits below the higher escarpment section of Knowle End). The aerial battlefield plan marks this hill as ‘1’. A cannon was fired at this hill from the plain below - spreading case shot (bullets) – on the day after the main Sunday battle (of the 1642 Battle of Edgehill).

e). Looking back uphill towards the tree line across to your right (above Bullet Hill) also points towards the region where local tradition once located the folklore about the Princes and W. Harvey. Hereabouts, it was claimed was where the King's two sons - then 12 and 10 years of age - watched much of the battle. Modern research convincingly dismisses this tale, but the image of how William Harvey (who first discovered the circulation of blood) supposedly took charge of the boys during the battle was popular during the Victorian era.

directly to a road in the village, bordered by enclosures and gardens on the right and left. **Turn left at the road**.

As you enter the open area – known as the green – at the junction of Langdon Lane, you can see the small Village Hall: Built and endowed as a library and reading room for the village in 1852 by brothers Charles and John Chambers. (Charles was the son of Sanderson Miller's second daughter, Mary). The village Flower Show was held here during the celebrations of Radway Wake Week, until the 1870s, when the celebrations were ended. A rifle range once adjoined the building prior to the Great War (WW1).

At the bus shelter stands the second wind-up free-standing information guide. Perhaps listen to item numbers 6 and 5?

14). Here you can choose to…

a). Continue along the road which will lead you directly back to Saint Peters Church (and finish the walk),

OR

b). Append an extension to the walk – with a different return route – by turning right and heading along Langdon Lane.

On Friday 14th November 1902 - along the section of road which leads directly back to the Church, starting from the bus shelter - a local resident, Ida Carey began to organise its decoration with flags and bunting. By 12:10pm at Kineton Station, Colonel Douglas Haig had arrived by steam train and was soon arriving at Radway for another reception laid on by the village and representatives of neighbouring communities. A salute was fired, and the bells of Saint Peters rang, while horses were removed from the Colonel's carriage, which was then drawn in triumph to the Grange. Haig had served with distinction in the Boer War from 1899 to 1902 and was appointed ADC to the King. Four years later he became Field Marshall and Earl Haig. He was later Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces during World War One.

15). If you have chosen to extend the walk and continue along Langdon Lane…

Passing the buildings on your right, try to spot the building named 'Gunby Hall': In 1890, George Miller wrote: "*A house at Radway, called Gunby Hall, was in those days a baker's shop. The day after the battle* [23 Oct 1642] *the baker stood at the bake-house door, with sword in hand, to guard his bread from the hungry soldiers.*" Illustrated Naval & Military Magazine. (George Miller). 1890.

16). Continue along the lane, into the open countryside.

As the lane begins to broadly curve right, refer back to the aerial battlefield plan (p17) to see how you are beginning to move through the area where the Royalist left cavalry was positioned. This is truly part of the active battlefield as archaeology has been recovered here from both sides of the lane representing action from the battle where Royals will have been pursued by Parliamentarian horse following the initial opening actions.

After the lane curves right, you will find several opportunities to spot the isolated and large overgrown mound in the center of a field to your right. This is the site of, and the tumbled down remains of, 'King's Leys Barn' and marks a significant battlefield location while also being a rare example of a building which featured within the events of an early modern British battle. *(Marked as '3' on the aerial battlefield plan, p17).*

Excavated in 2002, the barn's location was confirmed and bullets from the battle were also found around its vicinity. The small barn - found to be a three-sided structure - was used as a field hospital during the battle and at the time was encompassed by a hedge.

In addition, King James II would also later describe how he and his brother were being escorted away from any danger as young boys (being the King's two sons) during the battle when they were spotted by a small group of Parliamentarian cavalry. After the royal entourage took cover behind the barn the horsemen turned and headed back to the main action.

(The barn is also often featured within whimsical folklore concerning where King Charles is supposed to have slept after the battle).

17). You will soon reach a permanently installed bench, on your right, situated on the roadside verge.

This spot provides good views back towards Bullet Hill.

With the bench behind you – looking towards the central battlefield (west) - the tree line at the opposite end of the field marks the vicinity where Wentworth's Brigade of Foot – estimated to have consisted of eighteen hundred men - are calculated to have taken up their initial position. *(If the hedge is high, retrace your steps a few yards to find a gate on the right with uninterrupted views).*

The Royalists deployed 5 such brigades at the battle. Wentworth's men are thought to have performed badly at Edgehill after absorbing initial pressure during the fight they failed to press home any attack and are thought to have withdrawn from the battle - no doubt in considerable disarray - amidst the confusion of cavalry attacks upon the left side of the Royalist's battle line.

Continue a short distance along the lane to view the next adjacent field on the left: The vicinity within the far end of this modern field boundary is where the Brigade of Sir Nicholas Byron stood before they marched towards their enemy, and it was within this brigade that carried the Banner Royal (or 'King's Standard', floating high above their heads). The brigade reached their enemy to within around 100 metres (or within musket shot) when they were charged by Parliamentarian cavalry. But Byron managed to withstand these attacking manoeuvres, with his musketeers taking defensive cover tightly packed below the protection of their pike-men's long pikes, frustrating the Parliamentary Horse which was unable to break them.

Under pressure from all directions the regiment was eventually routed and then eventually collapsed and ran for Edgehill, but not before also losing their army's Banner Royal. Sir Edmund Verney was killed but had fought gallantly carrying the banner - managing to kill two assailants while also using its pole as if it were a pike during 'push of pike' clashes - before he was cut down.

"It was observed that the greatest slaughter on our side [Parliament's] was of such as ran away, and on the enemy's side of those that stood; of whom I saw about threescore [60] lie within the compass of threescore [60] yards upon the ground whereon that brigade fought in which the King's standard was."
Ludlow.

As an established track providing a shortcut for carriages and wagons from the newer end of Radway to the Banbury Road in the direction of Kineton, Langdon Lane is clearly established by the mid-18th century, but it remains only probable that a rough route existed during the battle.

The length of the lane traverses *across* the routes three broken brigades of Royalist infantry would have taken as they ran back towards Edgehill. Archaeological evidence also suggests where some had been pursued by horse-mounted Parliamentarians and a musketeer's powder box cap was also found towards the centre of this modern field - possibly next to an ancient hedge.

18). Turn back and return south along the lane. As you near the edge of the village, take the public footpath – on the right – found next to a prominent road speed sign. (This leads you back to the Church).

The route runs straight across a water station – keep the fence on your right - and then continues in a straight line – across the corner of an ancient enclosure - towards the hedgerow on the righthand side.

Pass through the hedge, via the metal swing gate, and continue in the same direction with the hedgerow now on your left.

The path leads to the right of the Church (and adjacent buildings) where a small metal swing gate leads you straight onto a bend in the road. Turn left and return to the Church.

a). There were two more routes leading directly from the village to Kineton (across the battlefield); one of which cut through this vicinity. Before motorcars and even preempting bicycles, every weekday a postman would walk the route to bring mail from Kineton and return with outgoing mail from Radway. People could way lay him to buy stamps. Prior to this arrangement a postman arrived on foot from Banbury and from a cottage in the "up-town" area - back towards the bus shelter - he would blow a bugle to inform the village of his arrival. An elderly resident in 1937 could just about remember this event from when she was a girl. (*An actual Post Office and shop eventually opened in one of the thatched roof cottages in the terrace of cottages on The Green*).

b). The Lychgate (at the Churchyard entrance to the east) was erected in 1923 as Radway's war memorial and lists the names of those who died and the those who returned. Field Marshall The Earl Haig - who lived at the Grange - died in 1928 and is included on the Great War memorial.

END

If you have time and transport…

You may wish to also visit the Battle memorial monument on the A4086. (This is the main road linking Edgehill to Kineton – turn left at the top of Langdon Lane).

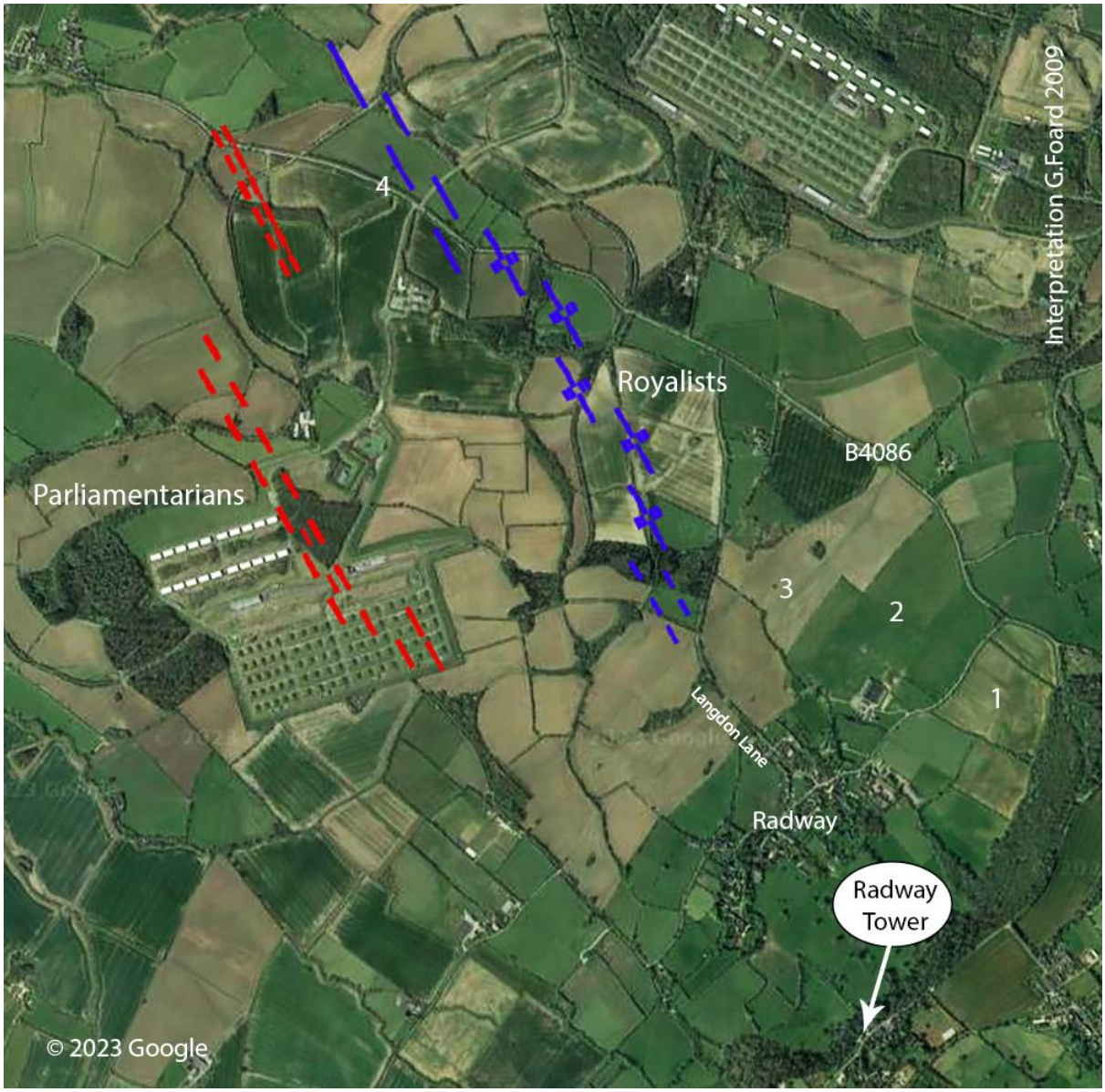
Heading west towards Kineton – *very* shortly after the main crossroads for entering the MOD camps to the left and right - the monument stands at the roadside on the left. There is a purpose-made layby for parking opposite (on the right).

The monument is marked as '4' on the aerial battlefield plan (p17).

a). Erected by Warwickshire County Council in 1949 - replicating the earlier version which stands within the central battlefield - it reads: The battle of Edgehill was fought on this ground October 23rd, 1642. Several hundred of those who fell in the fighting both cavalier and roundhead lie buried near this stone.

b). On the opposite side of the road – to the right - a wide gate offers views down into an ancient field enclosure. Towards the far side, a shallow line of land which formed part of the boundary for the original Radway field – a huge area of uninterrupted common land – can be seen. Here, Prince Rupert's Cavalry Regiment took up their positions (where the single tree now stands). His celebrated charge towards the Parliamentarian cavalry is well-known as is his status within the Civil War. Primary accounts describe how the Royalists' right-wing cavalry were initially required to charge uphill. Standing at the gate, you can see the gradient, which begins in the field and continues from the opposite side of the road towards the battlefield.

Aerial battlefield plan for the Battle of Edgehill, 1642: this is the modern 21st century revision of where the Royalist and Parliamentarian armies deployed; based upon extensive archeological evidence and historic terrain research. (*Interpretation by Dr G. Foard 2009*).



This aerial view of the battlefield shows the Parliamentarian (red) and Royalist (blue) positions before the battle (and are shown overlayed upon the modern-day landscape). The centers of the two battalias initially stood approximately 1km apart. At the time much of the central battlefield would have been unenclosed forming one large open 'field'.

From the hillside (near the Radway Tower) you can see the munitions depot of the modern MOD camp - straight ahead - occupying a small rise in the landscape; this is where the Parliamentarian right-wing took up their positions. Archaeological evidence convincingly pinpoints where the Parliamentarian lines were drawn.

The Royalists advanced westwards to engage the stationary Parliamentarians.

The Battle of Edgehill: 23rd October 1642

- **Significance**: The Battle of Edgehill was the first pitched battle of the English Civil War. It confirmed that it would be war in earnest and Civil War was no longer avoidable

- **Who**: The battle was between Parliament's army and the Royalist army of King Charles I

- **Why**: The Parliamentarian Army was attempting to beat the Royalist Army to London — or block their route — when both armies accidentally converged in this corner of Warwickshire. This presented an opportunity for a battle and to potentially end the conflict with a decisive clash

- **Where**: The combined open common fields of Little Kineton, Kineton and Radway; between the small town of Kineton and the village of Radway

- **When**: The main battle took place on Sunday 23rd October 1642. [November 2nd allowing for the shift between Julian and Gregorian calendar]. The battle commenced at around three o'clock in the afternoon, but military events continued for a further two days, culminating with a Royalist attack on part of the Parliamentarian baggage train in Kineton on the Tuesday

- **Numbers**: Royalist numbers achieved approximately 13,500 men. The Parliamentarians didn't have their entire army on the battlefield, but their number still amounted to around 12,500. (Around 3500 additional Parliamentarian soldiers were still making their way towards the battlefield)

- **Casualties**: It is usually estimated between 1,000 and 1,500 men died on the battlefield and a further 2 to 3,000 were injured. (However, it is also suggested that around 3000 dead would represent an average estimate when considering all estimates from varied contemporary and secondary sources)

- **Result**: Typically described as a draw or stalemate, but many commentators consider the Royalists 'not to have lost' as the Parliamentarians had failed to block their route to London

The choice of battlefield was due to chance with the Royalists having only just slipped past the Parliamentarian army - to the south and closer to London - by the narrowest of margins. Both armies mutually consented to the battle and drew up in parallel lines opposite each other. It was a clear bright afternoon full of autumnal sunshine … The armies deployed with infantry in the center, cavalry on both wings and dragoons on the two flanks. To begin, there was an uneventful cannonade.

Initially the entire Royalist cavalry enjoyed considerable success in charging and scattering the opposing cavalry on either wing from the battlefield, but in their enthusiasm pursued them, leaving their infantry unsupported.

Two Parliamentary cavalry units, however, did remain unmolested and unopposed, and were able to inflict much damage amidst the exposed Royalist Foot regiments, all of which had marched across the open field to engage their stationary counterparts.

Parliament's reserve infantry was able to join the front battle line and help force the Royalist Foot back close to where they had started, with some of the king's left-hand brigades having been routed.

Some of the king's cavalry returned to the battlefield - from Kineton and beyond - to avert potential disaster late in the day, but as night fell, further military manoeuvres were abandoned.

The King and much of his army returned up Edgehill and to the slopes of the Warmington hills beyond when it was dark.