

The Estaminet Times

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HALIFAX
MILITARY HISTORY
SOCIETY

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Frontpage: Bombardment of Algiers, 1816, by Chambers

The Magazine of the Halifax Military History Society

Editor's Notes

Welcome to the Summer edition of *The Estaminet Times*. It's good to be into brighter days, even if we haven't entirely left the wet weather behind us. In this issue there's quite a strong naval element and (coincidentally) two articles that feature Rishworth in the Ryburn Valley.

You will hopefully notice that two of the articles are from outside the committee (three if we include our patron, Peter Liddle) so the magazine is gradually becoming something for all contributors rather than just a platform for the committee. This is a trend which I hope will continue to grow. Please contact either myself or Alan via email if you have an idea for an article (or one already written). We are particularly keen to print any aspect of military history that is locally based.

Finally, we also welcome feedback, whether it be additional information, suggestions for future articles, or even something you want to take issue with! Let us know what you think.

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The Magazine of the Halifax Military History Society

The Royal Mail Ship Aquitania

The only vessel to serve as a Troopship in both World Wars

Alan Rhodes

I was drawn to this subject by the sale of the builder's model of the *R.M.S. Aquitania* by the Honourable Company of Master Mariners. The ship was built in 1914 by John Brown & Co. of Clydebank and scrapped at Faslane on the Clyde in 1950. In 1952, the Cunard Steamship Company presented the model to the Livery Company.

Described by the specialist maritime and scientific auctioneers, Charles Miller Ltd of London, the model has an "88in. laminated and carved hull replete with detailed painted and gilt fittings as appropriate and contained in original glazed case with presentation plate from Cunard, finished in Cunard service livery, overall measurements -- 33¼ x 103 x 23½in.; together with associated 36in. high table stand; and three card and paper models of *Aquitania* as a troop ship, hospital ship, and cruise liner".

I did think "that would make an interesting addition to the furnishings at The Old Mill"! Unfortunately, there was a lot of competition and the model sold for £44,000 (approaching £57,000 with fees).



Builder's model of *Aquitania*

The Magazine of the Halifax Military History Society

The Royal Mail Ship Aquitainia

Her sister ship, *R.M.S. Lusitania*, was built earlier at John Brown's and sailed on her maiden voyage in September 1907. The *Lusitania* was sunk on her 202nd trans-Atlantic crossing, on 7 May 1915 by a German U-boat 11 miles off the Old Head of Kinsale, Ireland, killing 1,197 passengers, crew and stowaways.



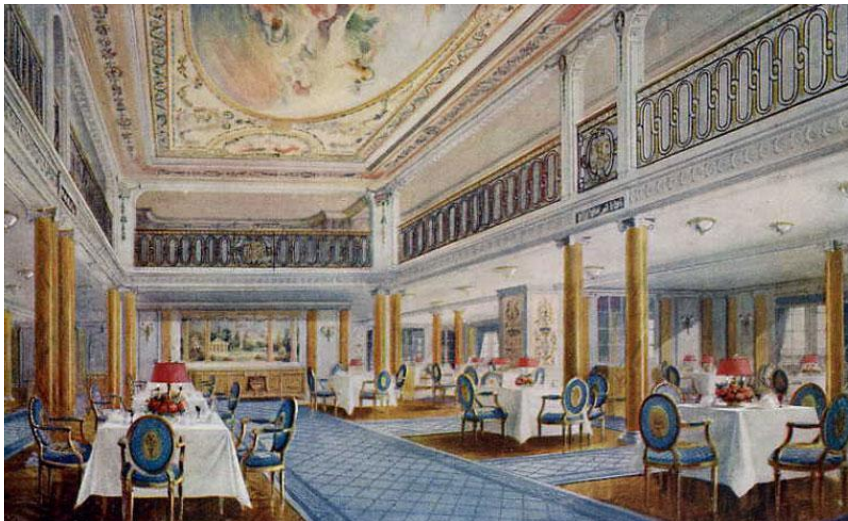
Detail of *Aquitainia* model

The second of the class, *R.M.S. Mauretania*, was built at the Swan Hunter Yard on the Tyne and had her maiden voyage in November 1907. She also served as a troop ship and hospital ship during the Great War. She was withdrawn from service and scrapped in the years 1935 to 1937. Incidentally, a much larger 1:64 scale 13ft long builder's model of the *Mauretania* was sold by the same auctioneer in 2015 for £135,000 plus fees.

The Royal Mail Ship Aquitania

The model illustrations are from the auction catalogue and, for the history of the *Aquitania*, I can do no better than repeat the wording in the Charles Miller description:

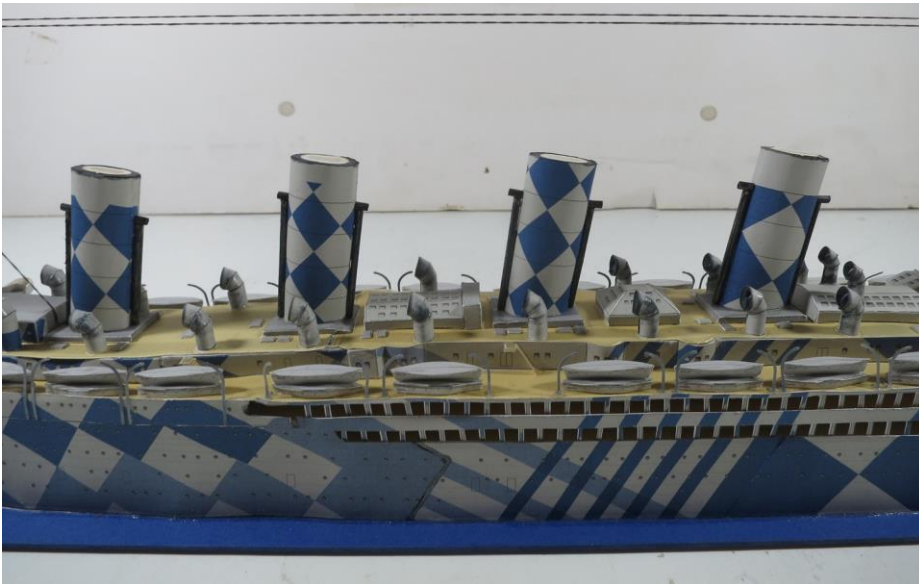
Arguably the most successful of the great pre-1914 North Atlantic liners, as well as being regarded by many as the most handsome of all the legendary 'four-stackers', *Aquitania* was undeniably the longest-lived of that glamorous breed of ocean greyhounds. Conceived as a consort to *Lusitania* and *Mauretania*, Cunard ordered her from John Brown's Clydebank yards in December 1910 where she was launched on 21st April 1913. Named for the ancient Roman province in south-west France, her design was broadly similar to her two sisters, although she was significantly larger in every respect. Registered upon completion at 45,647 tons gross, she measured 901 feet in length with a 97-foot beam, but was never intended to outstrip *Lusitania* and *Mauretania* in terms of speed. Powered by quadruple screws driven from Parsons-Brown 62,000shp. steam turbines, she was designed to cruise at 23 knots, in fact achieving an effortless 24 knots on her trials. Sumptuously fitted out and with accommodation for 618 First, 614 Second, and 1,998 Third class passengers, she carried a crew of 972 and entered service amidst high expectations thanks to the reputations of her two older sisters.



First Class
dining room

The Royal Mail Ship *Aquitainia*

Clearing Liverpool on 30th May 1914 for her maiden voyage to New York, she was only to complete three round trips before being requisitioned by the British Government in August 1914 upon the outbreak of the Great War. Designed and built under Admiralty supervision, it had always been expected that, in times of war, *Aquitainia* would assume the guise of an armed merchant cruiser, but in the event, as with others like her, she proved far too large for this role. Slightly damaged in a collision within a month of beginning her wartime career, she returned to Liverpool and was laid up until the spring of 1915 when she began work transporting troops for the offensive at Gallipoli. Soon converted into a hospital ship for the same campaign, she resumed trooping in 1916, was laid up for most of 1917 but was back in service in 1918 carrying troops from the U.S.A. to France. Between June and November 1919, she ran a brief 'austerity service' between Southampton and New York but was sent to Armstrong, Whitworth's yards at Newcastle that December for a major post-war refit including conversion to oil-firing.



Troopship camouflage

The Royal Mail Ship *Aquitainia*

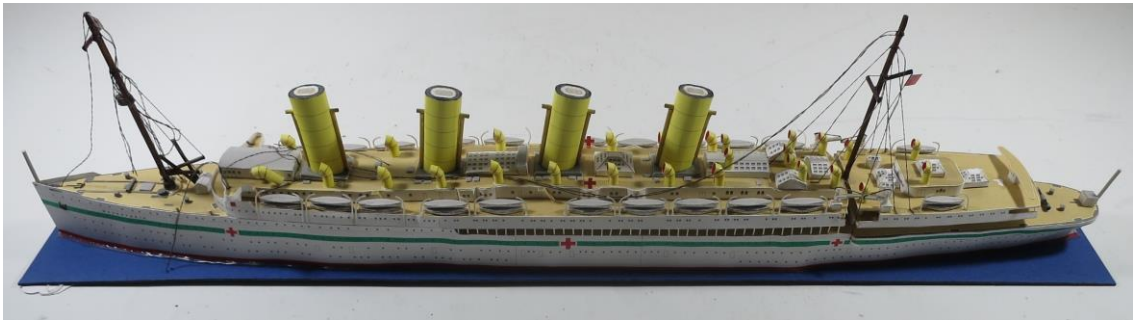
Returning to regular commercial sailings in July 1920, her splendid decor attracted passengers immediately and she soon settled down to become one of the most popular liners on the North Atlantic over the next two decades. Apart from the occasional Mediterranean cruise in the early years of the Depression, *Aquitainia* remained a stalwart on the Atlantic ferry and, after 1936, became the new Queen Mary's running mate whilst Queen Elizabeth was under construction. With the latter destined for completion in 1940, it was intended that *Aquitainia* would be scrapped when the second 'Queen' entered service, but this plan was abandoned when the Second World War began in September 1939.



Drawing of *Aquitainia*'s Smoke Room.

The Royal Mail Ship *Aquitainia*

Converted into a troop transport for the second time in her life, she spent the next eight years carrying 300,000 servicemen all over the world, the sole survivor of the Edwardian giants and the only one to serve in both World Wars. 1948 found her ferrying war brides to Canada prior to being returned to Cunard for yet another post-war 'austerity service'. Hastily refitted and repainted in traditional livery, although never restored to her former magnificence, she maintained a one-class Southampton to Halifax service for a further year and a half before being finally withdrawn in December 1949. After three million miles and thirty-five years at sea, her scrapping at Faslane in the spring of 1950 brought the era of the majestic 'four-stackers' to an end and thereby closed a notable chapter in the history of North Atlantic navigation.



Model of *Aquitainia* as a hospital ship

The Barbary Pirates – a forgotten story of Slavery

Rob Hamilton

On 27 August 1816 HMS Queen Charlotte, a 100 gun British ship of the line, opened fire on the port of Algiers. She was accompanied by four other ships of the line, four frigates, five bomb ships (ships fitted with mortars ideal for bombarding shore installations) and five sloops, all under the command of Admiral Edward Pellew. But this was not, as you might think, another attempt to expand the British Empire. On this occasion the Navy were there to rescue British citizens who had been enslaved by Barbary Pirates.

The Barbary Pirates operated between the 16th and 19th centuries from the North African coast in what is now Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya and at the time was known as the Barbary Coast. They were predominately Muslim although men of other religions were present in smaller numbers and they terrorized the Mediterranean, seizing the crews of ships and raiding coastal settlements to take the local Christian people as slaves.



Admiral Andrew Pellew

The Barbary Pirates – a forgotten story of Slavery

By the beginning of the 17th century, after the introduction of new, modern shipbuilding methods, the Pirates expanded their activities northwards and in the 1620s they occupied the island of Lundy off the Cornish coast. From this base they terrorised the West Country and Southern Ireland, taking the crews of fishing and cargo vessels and raiding coastal towns to take men, women and children to sell in the slave markets of North Africa. Britannia most certainly did not rule the waves during this period in history. There was of course the irony that slaving ships from the Port of Bristol were passing Lundy during this time. By the 1640s the situation was so bad that Parliament sent Edward Cason to Algiers to negotiate the ransom and release of the English captives. He managed to free 250 people before he ran out of money. Case then spent the remainder of his life trying to raise the money to release more slaves.

However, the depredations of the Pirates continued and England's fishing industry was threatened as fishermen were reluctant to put to sea for fear of capture. Oliver Cromwell decided to take action and Lundy Island was recaptured but the raids continued. In 1675 a British fleet under the command of Sir John Narborough successfully negotiated a peace with Tunis but it took a heavy naval bombardment to bring about a similar peace with Tripoli.



Barbary ship

The problem, however, continued but the 18th and 19th centuries saw the European powers preoccupied with various wars and it was not until the end of the Napoleonic Wars that England, following on from the abolition of slavery in 1807, decided to take more decisive action.

The Barbary Pirates – a forgotten story of Slavery

Sir Edward Pellew was sent with the fleet as described above to persuade the rulers of the Barbary Coast to end piracy. Tunis and Tripoli had by this time reneged on the previous agreement but were peacefully persuaded to stop the slave trade. Algiers however was a different proposition; they not only rejected the overtures of Pellew but deliberately massacred 200 Christian slaves in a show of defiance. This act could not go unanswered and conflict was inevitable. Pellew ordered his ships to sail past Algiers harbour in a show of strength whereupon they were fired upon. A fierce bombardment by both sides then ensued, an Algerian flotilla of 40 gun boats attempted to board HMS Queen Charlotte but they were driven off by broadsides. HMS Impregnable became isolated from the other ships and attracted great attention from the Algerian gunners, severely damaging her, but the British were getting the better of the gunnery duel and the Algerian batteries could not maintain fire.



Map of the Barbary Coast: Wiki

The Barbary Pirates – a forgotten story of Slavery

By 10:15 in the evening the British withdrew and weighed anchor out of range. Over 900 men had been killed or wounded, 50,000 round shot using 118 tons of gunpowder had been fired and the bomb vessels had fired 960 explosive mortar shells. More importantly the ships had expended almost all of their gunpowder and ammunition. The Algerians however has suffered over 5000 casualties and all of their vessels and shore batteries had been destroyed, so, when Pellew decided to bluff and demanded that the Dey (the leader of Algiers) should accept his terms or he would continue the action, they did so. Over 3000 slaves were released and the activities of the Barbary pirates were significantly reduced although not completely ended. It was not until the French occupied Algeria in 1840 that their menace finally came to an end.



Slaves taken by the barbary pirates

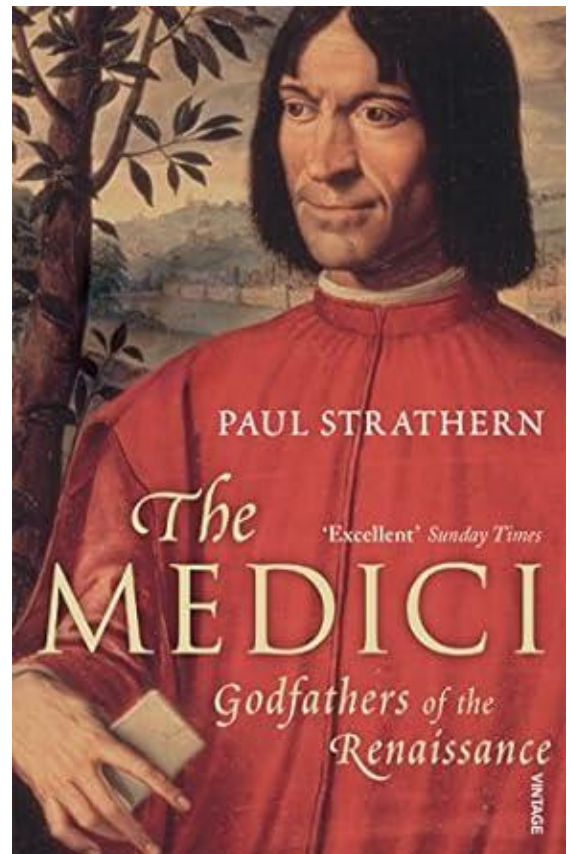
During the period the barbary pirates operated there are no records to indicate how many slaves they took. The only estimate that has been attempted puts it at over 1 million but this figure cannot be considered as completely reliable. As for Great Britain the numbers probably run in to the tens of thousands but once again there are no reliable records.

BOOKWORMING Part 3

RENAISSANCE and REFORMATION.

Peter Liddle

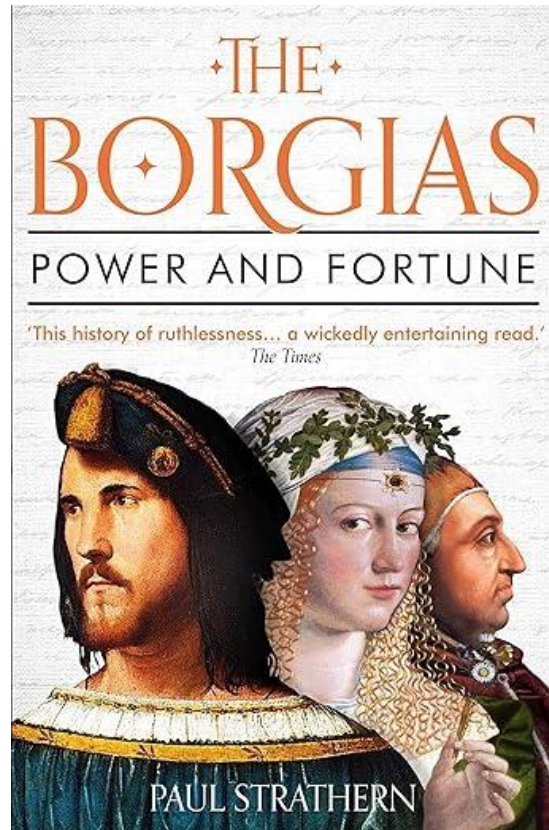
It was in 2017 that I came upon an author and a period of history which transfixed me, Paul Strathern and the Renaissance. His books on *The Medici: Godfathers of The Renaissance*, next, *The Artist, The Philosopher and The Warrior*, about Leonardo, Machiavelli and Cesare Borgia and then, *The Borgias*, as a family and in the Papacy. For sheer readability while imparting such knowledge, Strathern set standards of excellence I did not then expect to be matched. I was ready for new learning and had the basic groundwork fully to take in all that his books offered because he wrote so fluently, giving his characters convincing colour and closeness, telescoping the distance of centuries. Polymaths, as poets, sculptors, artists, architects, philosophers, Princes, Popes, emerged from Strathern's pages as if into the room where I was reading.



BOOKWORMING Part 3

RENAISSANCE and REFORMATION.

From this period of history which fascinates so many, it was natural to move on to The Reformation in religion where, just as I expected, my new reading reinforced conflicting intellectual and emotional reaction. A memory comes clearly to me of my optimism, or naivety, as a young schoolmaster in Liverpool, inviting to my class a Priest and an Anglican clergyman to explain some of the doctrinal differences at stake. The Vicar was scholarly and inexplicable to his audience, the Priest, less learned, but he soon had the children eating from his hand.

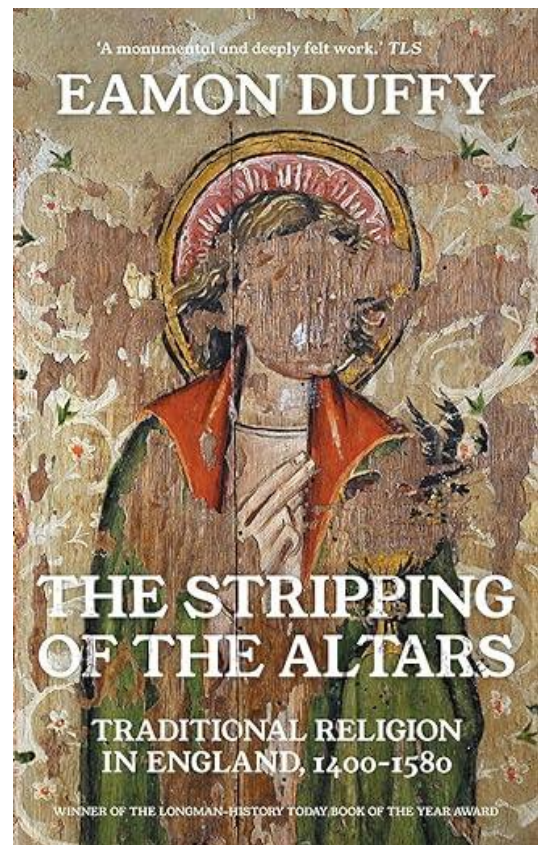
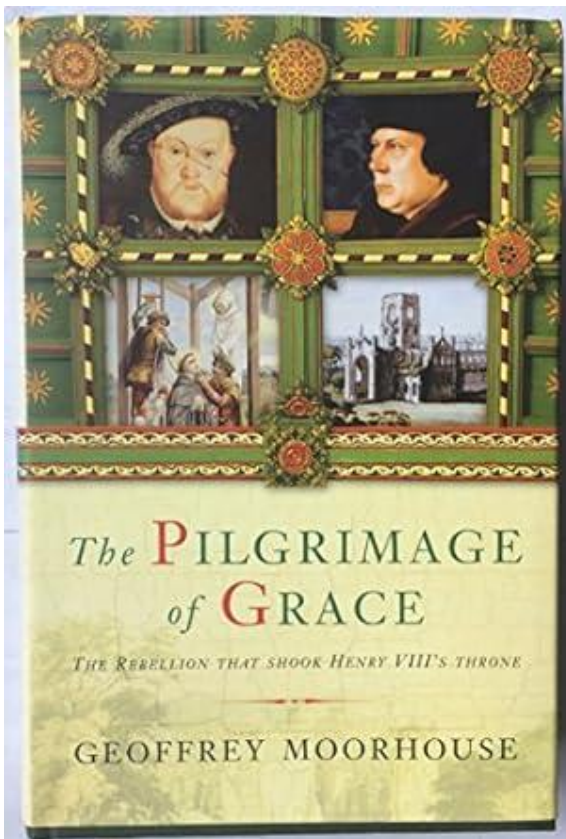


Except in a lesson to me as an inexperienced teacher, it had proved a fruitless experiment and to compound it I had trodden gaily in the mine-laid religious pastures of Liverpool, just as I did again there inviting someone from the German Consulate in about 1960 to speak to the History Society I had founded. I had made the invitation blissfully regardless that a Science teacher, a Jewess, might have good reason to think that it was not such a good idea.

BOOKWORMING Part 3

RENAISSANCE and REFORMATION.

First, the books in question: Eamon Duffy's, *The Stripping of the Altars*, *The Voices of Morebath*, and a third, *A People's Tragedy*. Then, *The Pilgrimage of Grace* by Geoffrey Moorhouse and Moorhouse's *The Last Divine Office*, concerning the dissolution of the Benedictine monastery at Durham. Now the well-informed reader will have noted an anti-Reformation bias in that list but by no means was it intentional. There was a little balance in my reading too, with *The Watchers* by Stephen Alford read so it needs adding to the list.



BOOKWORMING Part 3

RENAISSANCE and REFORMATION.

Trying to justify the confusion of my reaction to the consequences of Henry VIII's marital needs will certainly satisfy few. I will make an attempt. In the case **for** the Reformation and its consequences I can see the attractions of a more direct personal connection to God in the use of the English language, a closer, simpler pathway to God, a sweeping away of actual and perceived corruption and of a foreign power, that is the authority of the Pope, the further development of a growing sense of independent nationhood.



The burning of
Archbishop Cranmer
in Mary's reign

However, I am far from convinced that the upheaval was welcomed by people at the time and am just appalled by the horrific personal consequences to those State Officers, some Bishops, Abbots and some clergy who refused to accept the Oath of Henry's Supremacy. There will have been greater numbers still, persecuted under the 'fully' Protestant, Edward VI, the terrible retributory reaction under Catholic Queen Mary and then for those holding on to their old faith under Queen Elizabeth. Yes, of course, I am aware that under Elizabeth there was the imperative of securing the nation against the endeavours of Mary Queen of Scots and from the threat of Philip of Spain.

BOOKWORMING Part 3

RENAISSANCE and REFORMATION.

I have further 'reservations', to say the very least, about the consequences of Henry's bid for untrammelled power and the work of the reforming Protestants. The dissolution of monasteries and related establishments for their 'treasonable existence' and their wealth for Henry's gain, no matter that much of that wealth was used further to secure the realm with naval development and coastal defence fortification. The progressive purloining, destruction or defacement of objects of beauty and veneration in the abbeys, Cathedrals and churches to me makes such depressing reading. Yes, of course, very different times, fervent beliefs and ineradicable convictions, but today, being conscious of the smashing of statues of Saints, decorated tombs, stained glass, images, wall paintings, wooden or stone Rood screens unless somehow bravely hidden or undetected, is desperately dispiriting. How could one not regret this vandalism in the name of a new doctrine? Oh dear me, and things would get still worse later under the Puritans!



Henry's navy setting sail from Dover

BOOKWORMING Part 3

RENAISSANCE and REFORMATION.

Duffy's books are so deeply researched that one feels they must be definitive; Moorhead's, so personally engaging that we are left knowing everyone there.

Happily, but not deliberately, Thomas Cromwell has never magnetised my interest favourably and that has been the case with Oliver, his namesake. Hilary Mantel's fixation with Thomas Cromwell, for me a deeply unattractive figure, turned me away from her celebrated books. When her elevated literary status allowed her free vent to her views on contemporary affairs, I found my initial suspicion of her fixation, well based.



Thomas Cromwell

Rishworth School in the Great War

Lucy Ives

This is a new publication, of over 200 pages, detailing the backgrounds of the 26 former Rishworth School pupils killed in World War 1. Also included are notable stories of others that served, Gallantry Medal recipients and the history of their longest serving Headmaster, Richard Henry Elliott, known to them all, who also lost his son to the conflict.

The following are extracts from the book.



In 1914, on the eve of WW1, Rishworth School had been a long-established institute for education in the Halifax district. It was a boarding and day secondary school for boys and girls, initially set up 190 years previously by John Wheelwright for the children of his tenant workers.

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Rishworth School in the Great War



The headmaster at the time, Richard Henry Elliott, had begun his tenure at the school in 1878. He retired after 41 years in 1919, aged 87 years old. As such he steered the school through the difficult war years, losing his very own son, Geoffrey Edmund Elliott aged 27, at the Battle of the Somme in 1916. Twenty six other former pupils lost their lives in the conflict-they were aged between 18 and 43 years old. Richard Henry Elliott had known and taught each and every one of them thus suffering both a personal and professional tragedy.

Some of the names listed on the school's war memorial had war graves bearing the school motto, 'Res Non Verba' (Deeds not Words). Many were teachers, journalists and bankers by profession

Rishworth School in the Great War

Thomas Reginald Bottomley, born in 1887, who after leaving Rishworth, went to London University (St. Johns and Birkbeck). Thomas married in August 1914 but was killed in action less than a month later. His widow emigrated to the USA and never remarried.

Thomas' brother (another Old Rishworthian) however survived the war and had a highly decorated military career with the RAF - Sir Norman Bottomley was knighted in 1944 and retired with the rank of Air Chief Marshal. Following his retirement, Norman became Director General of the BBC at the time of the Suez Crisis and attended Queen Elizabeth II coronation in 1953. For all those former Rishworth pupils who made the ultimate sacrifice with lives half lived like Thomas Bottomley, Norman Bottomley's achievements highlight what they might have become had the war not intervened.

Rishworth School in the Great War

Norrie Warden Marshall, born in 1896. Having lost his mother to illness when he was 11 years old and his father to suicide a year later, Norrie enlisted as a Private with the 1/4th Bn Duke of Wellington's Regiment in 1914 whilst working for the Halifax Guardian. Just eight months after disembarking in France he was gassed in his sleep. This gas attack on the 19th of December 1915 took a devastating toll on the regiment and those that weren't killed immediately, died a short while later. Many of the former Rishworth pupils enlisted in Halifax and were posted to serve with the 1/4th Bn Duke of Wellington's regiment.

Harold George Lewis, born 1893, was married with children and worked in Liverpool as the manager of a boot shop. His application for military exemption was rejected and he was conscripted to the Welsh Fusiliers in 1917. Six months later Harold was killed at the 3rd Battle of Ypres and commemorated on the Menin Gate. Almost a year to the day after his death, Harold's father died suddenly in Storthes Hall Lunatic Asylum. Maybe the case of a broken heart, which highlights the devastating impact on those family members left to grieve their loss.

Rishworth School in the Great War

Of those former pupils that fought but survived the conflict, several had been awarded gallantry medals.

*One such individual was **William Henry Dinsdale**. He was the youngest of eleven children raised by his mother alone, after his father died a month before William was born. The situation was made harder for his mother as William's eldest brother suffered from epilepsy.*

Initially rejected for military service on medical grounds, William re-enlisted and was accepted, as a medically A1 candidate (!), to be posted with the Kings Royal Rifle Corps as a rifleman. For his bravery under fire, on more than three occasions, he was awarded the Military Medal, 'Bar' to the Military Medal, the Distinguished Conduct Medal and the Belgian Croix de Guerre.

*One of those that died, **Fred Wood**, was somehow omitted from the Rishworth School War Memorial. This year is the 300th year anniversary of the school and, as part of the celebrations, efforts are being made to ensure that he gets commemorated alongside his classmates.*

The book is available at £30.00 (+ P+P).

Any enquiries contact
lucyreardon@hotmail.com.

The Magazine of the Halifax Military History Society

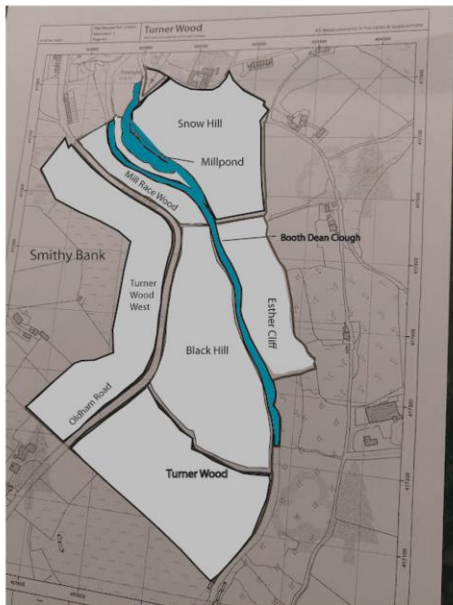
The Archaeology of an English Civil War Fortification at Snow Hill, Turner Woods, Rishworth.

Heather Ibbetson

This was a community archaeological dig, requested and authorised by Mr David Warland, owner of Turner Woods, to establish the origins of archaeological features within the woodlands.

Overview

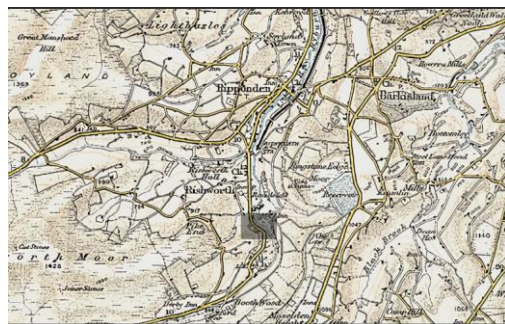
Turner Woods, near the small village of Rishworth, comprises approximately 50 acres of mixed deciduous woodland of oak and ash and is located in the Ryburn Valley. Like most Yorkshire valleys, it has a depth of history and industry. The main packhorse route from Halifax to Oldham passed through there.



Scale 1:2500

Fig. 2 Extent of and compartments of Turner Woods

The name of Turner given to the woodland would suggest that this was a specialised woodland for the making of everyday items, bowls, buckets, eating utensils as well as furniture. The existence of this woodland (fig. 2) is due to the activities of the Wheelwright family, who built and then extended two cotton spinning mills in the late 1700s



Location of Turner Woods south of Rishworth

The Archaeology of an English Civil War Fortification at Snow Hill, Turner Woods, Rishworth.

Landscape Archaeological Survey

The survey identified the presence of very large dressed stones, suggesting a stronghold of some description. These had rosehead nails with them which were identified as hand-made rather than manufactured, giving a rough date of early 17th century. Also present were the remains of several building foundations and a linear structure near the three 'caves'.



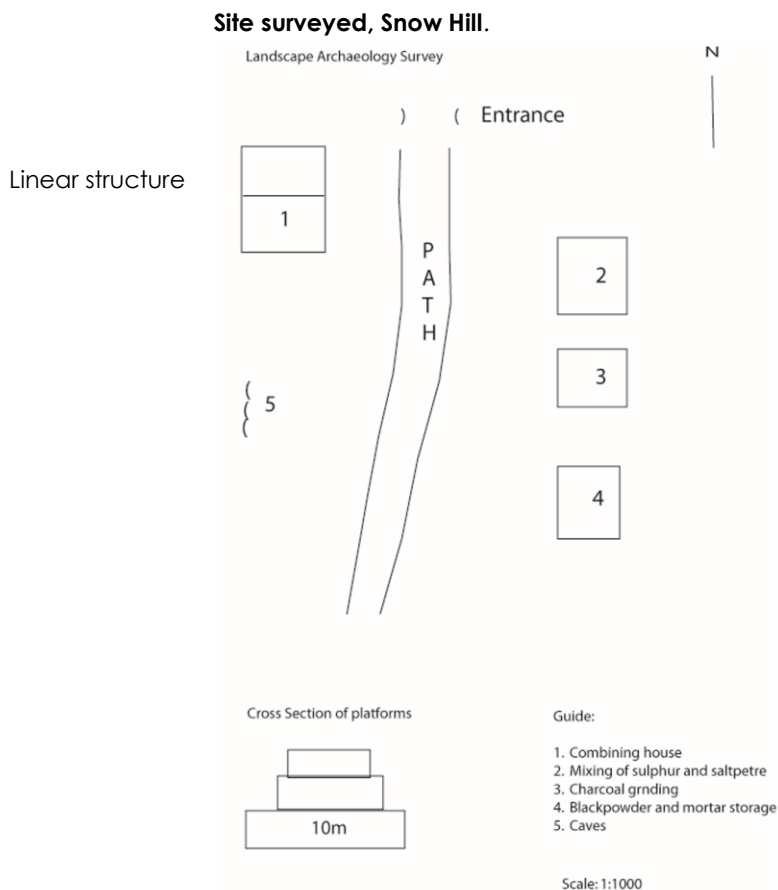
Linear structure
pre-evacuation



The "caves"

The Archaeology of an English Civil War Fortification at Snow Hill, Turner Woods, Rishworth.

An experienced metal detectorist was able to join us and scanned the immediate area of the linear structure. A number of items were excavated including a very rusty metal cauldron which had a deposit of lead inside it, two hoops of rusty metal (identified as a wooden barrel for storage) and a mix of used and unused small bore lead shot.



The Archaeology of an English Civil War Fortification at Snow Hill, Turner Woods, Rishworth.

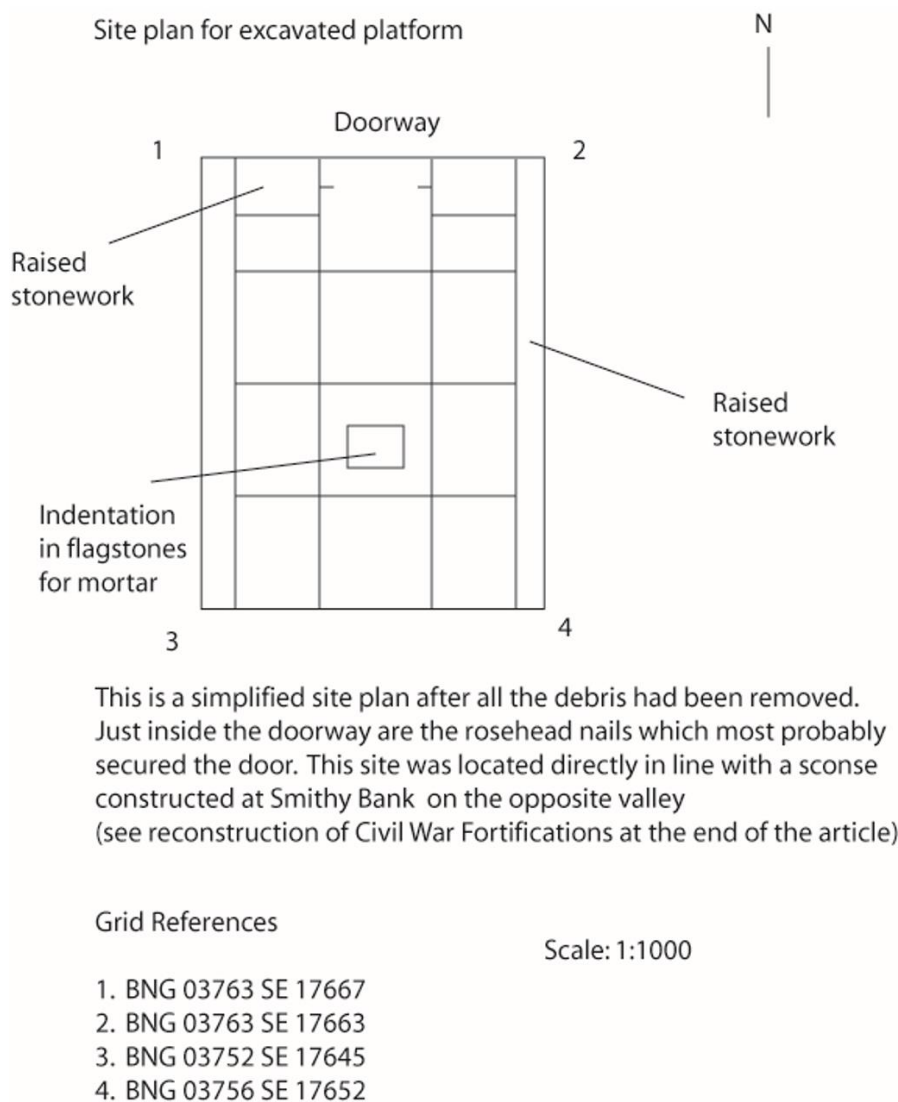


Fig. 7 Site plan of platform post-excavation

The Archaeology of an English Civil War Fortification at Snow Hill, Turner Woods, Rishworth.

The linear feature:

The linear structure measured 3.20m x 2.70m and consisted of a platform with two more underneath.

Initial assessment revealed that some kind of explosion had occurred as debris was scattered around the site, the source of which was traced to the top north western corner of the site

The soil presented three distinct layers with the base layer atop the platform black with the distinctive smell of gunpowder.

Pottery was recovered from all levels.

The floor of the platform consisted of flat sandstone blocks mortared together to form a very stable and durable base.

In the middle of the top platform there was a square indentation measuring 35 cm square (13" square). As the metal base of a mortar was also recovered, it was likely that this was where it was placed for action.

The Archaeology of an English Civil War Fortification at Snow Hill, Turner Woods, Rishworth.

The building foundations (rafts)

Raft 3 measured 6m x 4m suggesting a single storey building. Finds from the sediment within the frame of this building consisted of charcoal, stones reddened from exposure to heat, fused metal with small bore lead shot. Recovered charcoal was identified as willow, which is recorded as being the preferred charcoal for making black powder. This could be a place where the charcoal was ground.

Raft 2: The raft, further north than raft 1, also measured 4m x 3m but nothing was recovered from this one but stinking, sulphurous smelling damp soil. Again the size of the foundations suggested a single storey building. The last ingredient for making black powder was saltpetre, which could easily have been converted from manure commandeered from nearby farms.

Raft 1: This raft was completely different from the other two. It was placed 50m away on the other side of the path and measured 10m x 5 m and was divided into two separate chambers. No artefacts of any real purpose were recovered, other than reddened stones, ten unused small bore lead shot and the smell of black powder in the soil. It is possible that this might have been the 'combination building' where black powder was manufactured, as the other two rafts suggested the preparation of the necessary components there.

The Archaeology of an English Civil War Fortification at Snow Hill, Turner Woods, Rishworth.

The 'Caves':

This structure is known locally as Bunker Woods, Three Caves Wood and Beeboles.

A trial pit was dug from front to back, with very little recovered to indicate its use. However, the form of construction, which was certainly pre1820 would suggest that it was 'bombproof' and evidence in the ground and the cave structure itself showed that this had been much bigger in the past.



Evaluation of the evidence

The military artefacts, the small bore lead munition and the parts of the mortar were identified by the Curator of the Royal Armouries at Leeds as being of 17th century manufacture. Evidence from the recovered artefacts from the three rafts and the cauldron with lead still in situ, also pointed towards the production of black gunpowder and munitions here.

The Magazine of the Halifax Military History Society

The Archaeology of an English Civil War Fortification at Snow Hill, Turner Woods, Rishworth.

Might this site be connected to the English Civil War of 1639-1653? But how and why here? There weren't any archival records indicating a fortification in this area but, it's closeness to Lancashire was a tantalising clue as was a reference in the Sowerby Constables records (12th August 1642) for the purchase of a pound (weight) of gun powder costing 2 shillings, and 1 shilling for onward transport to Halifax. The Sowerby Constable also records 'paid wages to the 16 common soldiers on Mirfield Moor, 1s a man' (The King's shilling?) and paying Nathan Hoyle for carrying armour and John Horsful for carrying 8 pikes. The records for the Constable of Rishworth have long been lost, but as Sowerby is a neighbouring township, it is likely that similar events would have been carried out in Rishworth.

This part of the West Riding was very heavily involved in the English Civil War. Research on the fortifications for Manchester and Liverpool both mentioned a military engineer, Lt. Col John Rosworm, who had, on the orders of the Lords Lieutenants of the Commonwealth, used his expertise to defend these two towns. Research revealed that he had not been fully paid for his work and after the Civil War in 1649, he had written to Parliament for payment with a treatise setting out where and when he had erected fortifications.



Lt. Col. Rosworm
Leicester University Special Collections

The Archaeology of an English Civil War Fortification at Snow Hill, Turner Woods, Rishworth.

On page 16 he wrote:

About July 4 after, the Earl of Newcastle with no small Force made an angry approach towards Lancashire, our men were sent out to oppose his passage, nor was I thought fit to be present at this action: The issue was, our men were soundly beaten at Wicked-hill in York-shire, [Battle of Adwalton Moor] and pursued into Lancashire by the Enemy, who quickly also possessed himself of Hallifax, about 16 miles distant from us. When I had received this sad intelligence, I informed my self of the nature of the passes, by which the Enemy most easily could come in upon us; and finding them capable of a sudden Fortification, by the consent of the Deputy Lieutenants, I quickly helped Nature with Art, strengthening Blackestone Edge, and Blackegate, and manning them with Souldiers, to prevent the Earls dangerous approach, by which means being diverted, like an angry storme with a gust, he went to the siege of Hull.

How considerable this diversion of so powerfull an Enemy was, let reason judge; for certainly, whereas he never reached his end at Hull, if he had gotten in amongst us, we were not only in a manifest danger of being overrun by an enraged Enemy, but all parts within an ordinary distance, would have felt the smarting bitterness of his heavy hands.

The Archaeology of an English Civil War Fortification at Snow Hill, Turner Woods, Rishworth.

Blackegate, as mentioned in the text, was an overland route from this part of Yorkshire into Lancashire which passes through Snow Hill. This treatise confirmed that this was a Civil War fortification which had been constructed in 1643 by Rosworm and his team of engineers, and soldiers had been stationed here.

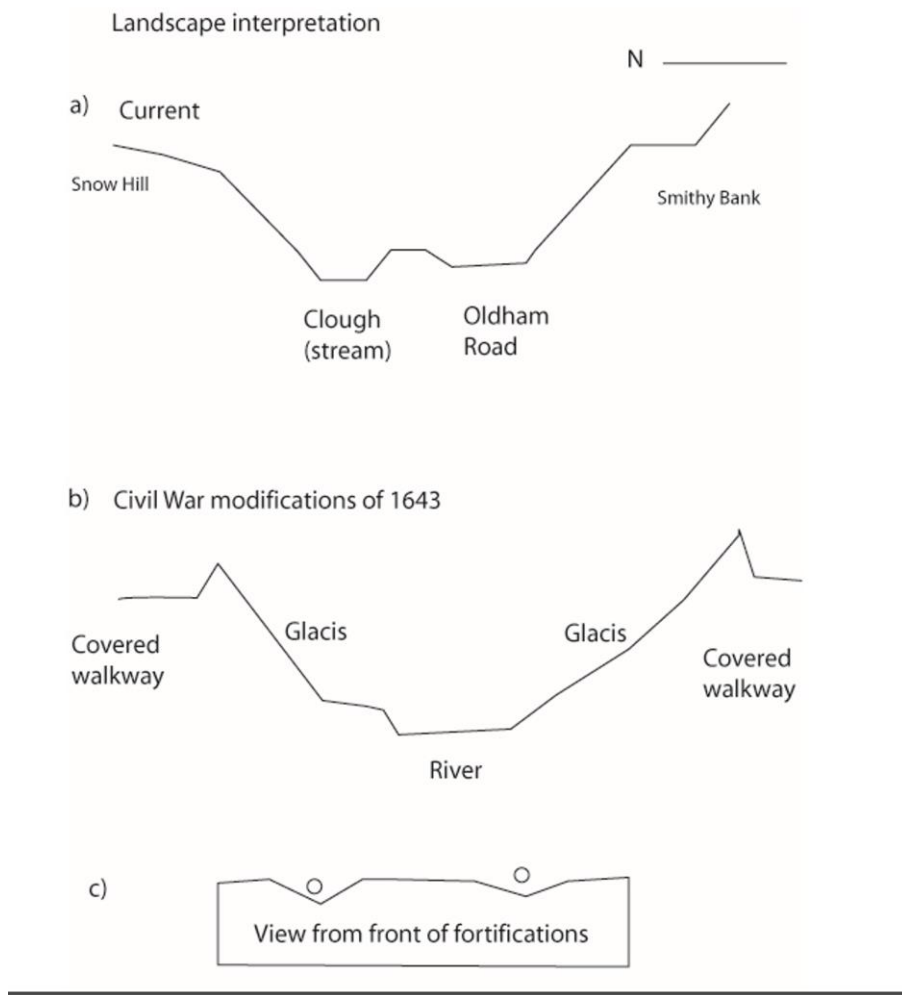
The story behind this pressing need for fortification at Rishworth is that after the Battle of Adwalton Moor (just outside of Halifax on the road to Leeds/Bradford) in 1643, the Royalists defeated the Parliamentarians and retook Halifax. The Royalists, led by the Earl of Newcastle, wanted to pursue fleeing troops into Lancashire. To prevent this, orders were given to fortify the only southern route into Lancashire. Rosworm chose well; this is the narrowest part of the valley and ideal for an ambush, but the fortifications were never utilised as the Earl of Newcastle was ordered to take his army to join with troops participating in the siege of Hull and never got his wish to plunder Lancashire for the King.



Battle of
Adwalton

The Archaeology of an English Civil War Fortification at Snow Hill, Turner Woods, Rishworth.

At Smithy Bank, directly opposite to the civil war fortification at Snow Hill, Lt. Col Rosworm constructed a sconce (a type of Dutch fortification) from which height mortar fire could have inflicted a lot of damage on troops passing through the narrow valley. This fortification can still be seen in the landscape.

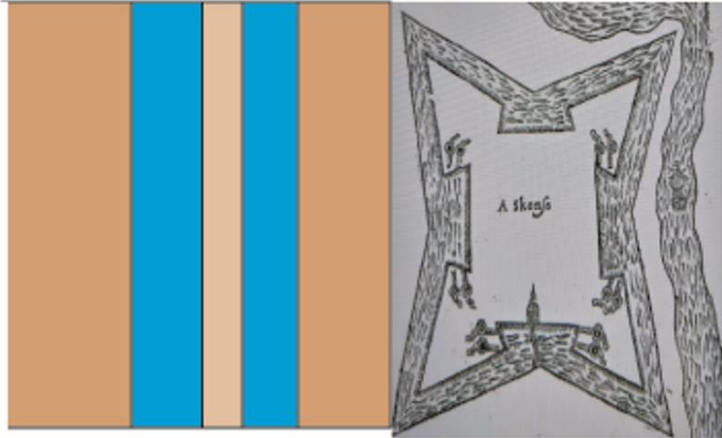


The Archaeology of an English Civil War Fortification at Snow Hill, Turner Woods, Rishworth.

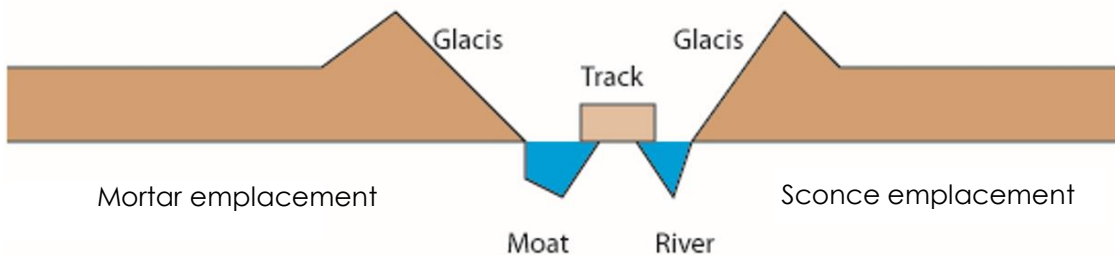
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Mortar



A scone (a type of Dutch fortification).



This is a reconstruction of the English Civil War fortifications made by Lt. Col. Rosworm and his team of military engineers, utilising the topography of Snow Hill and Smithy Bank.

Glacis is a bank sloping down from a fort which exposes attackers to the defenders' missiles.

The track shown here is Blackegate which was one of the routes into Lancashire

The mortar is easy to manoeuvre by one man. An explosive shell is fired high into the air and explodes on contact.