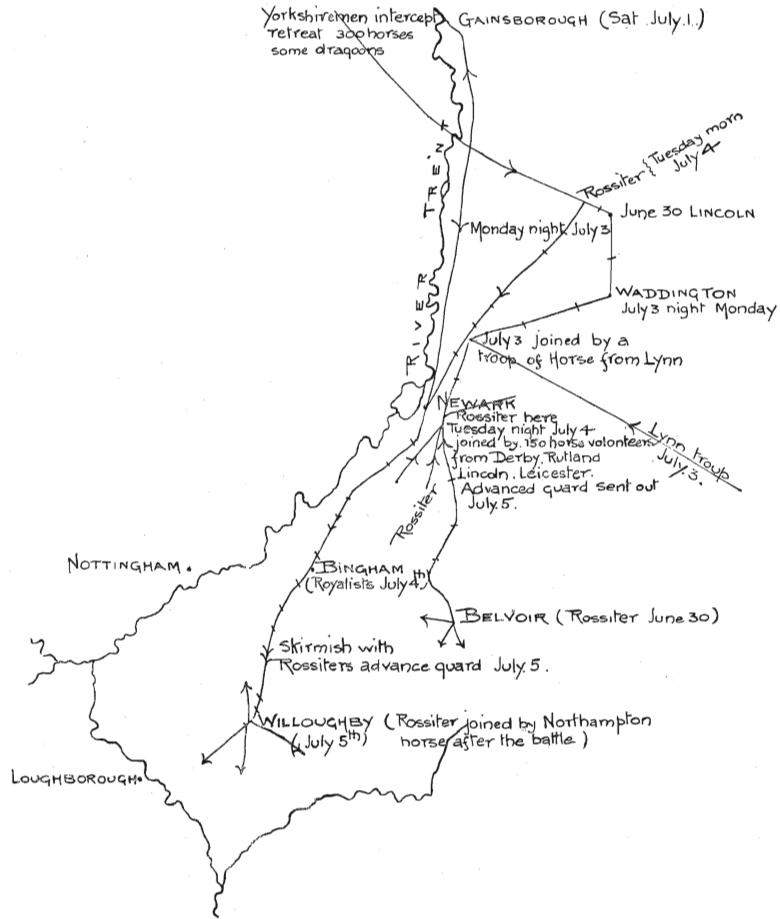


ROUGH SKETCH MAP
of Royalists and ROSSITER'S MARCH.



(To face page 79)

AN ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE OF WILLOUGHBY
FIELD, IN THE COUNTY OF NOTTINGHAM.

BY W. F. BEARDSLEY.

A Paper read at the Meeting held on the 27th January 1908.

ALTHOUGH the site of this engagement is not strictly within the area of the district of our Society—the village of Willoughby-on-the-Wolds, close to which the battle was fought, being situate in the county of Nottingham—still it lies within a mile of the boundary of Leicestershire, seven miles North-east of Loughborough, and offers to the antiquarian some objects of interest. The site of the Roman town of Verometum lies to the South-east of the village near to the intersection of the Fosse Way. *Potter*, in his “Rambles Round Loughborough,” says: “On the Western side of the Fosse is a large grass field inclining to the South and with a Brook for its Southern boundary. We were convinced that we stood on part of the site of Verometum. Fancy tried to realise the scene when Roman villas stood on that pleasant slope, when Roman legions encamped around and where a Roman Emperor, Hadrian, spent the winter of 137—8.” [119—122 ?]

The Church, which at the present time is sadly in need of restoration (a fund for which object is now being raised), contains an ancient Chantry, now a Mortuary Chapel, with very fine monuments to the Willoughby Family dating back to 1320. It also contains a Brass to the memory of Colonel Stanhope, with the following inscription:

“Here lyes the body of Collonell Michaell Stanhope, who was slayne in Willoughby Field in the month of July 1648 in the 24th yeare of his age, being a souldier for King Charles the First.”

A reference to this battle is contained in “The Antiquary” for August 1893, in relation to the siege of Gainsborough, concluding as follows: “In the summer of 1648 a wild attack was made on Lincoln by Sir Phillip Monckton, Robert Portington and other dashing spirits among the Cavaliers who were yet holding the great Lacy stronghold at Pontefract for the King. For a time they were successful, taking the Bishop’s Palace, then used as a gaol, liberating the prisoners, and plundering right and left with a high hand. In the contemporary accounts of these transactions they are said to have retreated to Gainsburgh. If

“ this were so they stayed but a very short time at that Town, as
 “ they were very shortly afterwards utterly routed by Colonel
 “ Rosseter at Willoughby. The Parliamentarian account of this
 “ wild adventure and its tragic termination in a ‘ beane field
 “ belonging to Willoughby, 7 miles from Nottingham,’ with a long
 “ list of the Royalist Prisoners taken on the occasion was issued
 “ by authority of Parliament on July 11, 1648. It is a tract of
 “ extreme rarity. A reprint of it was issued in 1884 as an
 “ appendix to the *Monckton Papers* privately printed for the
 “ Philobiblon Society.” Having recently acquired a copy of the
 tract referred to, I am able to give a full account of this battle,
 and, by the kind permission of an antiquarian friend, to append a
 rough sketch of the Royalists’ and Colonel Rosseter’s suggested
 Marches.

APPENDIX TO THE MONCKTON PAPERS.

AN IMPARTIAL and true relation of the Great Victory
 obtained through the blessing of God, after a very sharpe dispute,
 by the conjoyned Forces of Lincolne, Nottingham, Lecester,
 Derby, and Rutland under the command of Col. Edw. Rosseter,
 with a List of the names and number of Prisoners, Colours,
 Armes, and Carriages taken on Tuesday July 5, 1648.

Die Sabbathi, July 8, 1648.

Ordered by the Commons assembled in Parliament that this
 Narrative of the fight in Willoughby fields in the County
 of Nottingham between the Parliament Forces under the
 command of Col. Edward Rosseter and the Forces under the
 command of Sir Philip Mounkton on Wednesday July 5,
 1648 be forthwith printed and published

H. Elsinge

Cler. Parl. D. Com.

London Printed by Edw. Griffin July 11 1648.

On Fryday the 30 of June about 400 horse from Pomfret Castle,
 most of them gentlemen of severall Countyes and Reformado
 officers and 200 Foot ferryed over Trent and made incursion
 into Lincolne-shire, marching forthwith to the City of Linc.;
 whereafter they had by warrant under the hand of Sir Philip
 Monkton their Generall, released all the prisoners in the Castle
 for Debt, Murther, Felony, and other crimes (who took up Armes
 presently with them). They went to the Bishops Pallace, wherein
 lay severall Armes, and some monyes of the Countreyes: which

place Capt. Bee, a wollen Draper of that City with 30 men had taken possession of and defended for 3 houres untill the Cavaliers had fired one part of the house. In which Capt. Bee resolved, and so told them, he would be consumed, unlesse he might surrender upon conditions propounded by him, amongst which the protection of his person and estate, the which they agreed too; no sooner was the Pallace delivered but all conditions broke, the Capt. seized and carryed away prisoner, untill released in the field at the following fight. All his wares and goods put in Carts with which and the Armes and mony found in the Pallace, together with the plunder, and persons of other honest men of the Towne they marched on Saturday night to Gainsborough 12 miles off.

This Alarum coming that Friday night to Bevoyer Castle to Col. Rossiter (who was there upon some occasions of the country) he forthwith gave the alarm to Northampton, Leicester, Nottingham, Darby and Rutland and desired them to spare what horse they could, to join with a Troop of horse lately raised by him by authority of Parliament for the Security of that county, and he would therewith endeavour to drive the enemy out of the Countrey againe. The which forces being conjoined on Sabbath Evening, to the number of 550 (all of them newly raised men) and then understanding by a Letter received from Sir Henry Cholmely that 600 Yorkshire horse with some Dragoones were on the North side of Trent about Gainsborow, who would interrupt their retreating over Trent to Pomfret againe, or fight with them if they came over; Col. Rossiter marched on Munday morning towards Gainsborow: In the midway thither, there met and joyned with him a Troop of horse from Lyn, which the Generall had put under the command of Capt. Taylor, who together refreshed that night in and about Waddington fields 3 miles South of Lincolne. On Tuesday morning by three a Clock, they marched through Lincolne towards Gainsborow, and understanding by a Lincolne man (who had been taken away prisoner by the Cavaliers, and had escaped them that night) that the Enemy were all drawn of from Gainsborow at 10 of the clock on Munday Evening and were marched towards Newark; Col. Rossiter forthwith pursued 18 miles that night, refreshed his horse 4 or 5 hours in the night in a meadow, a mile from Newark, where he received intelligence that the enemy quartered about Bingham, 6 miles before him; to this place came in to Rossiters further assistance about 150 horse, the one halfe from Derby and Rutland, the other halfe were Gentlemen and Freeholders of Lincolne, and Leicestershire, who voluntarily would adventure their lives for their Conntryes freedome. On Wednesday morning Rossiter commanded out a forlorne hope 150 of the ablest horse, under the command of Capt. Champion of Nottinghamshire to pursue at a fast Rate, and so by falling on the enemies Reere to enforce them to a stand on halt, till he with the body of horse could come up to them. They after 7 miles advance overtook the

Reere of them, whom skirmishing with, made their body of horse and foot consisting of 7 or 800 at least, to draw up in a large Beane field belonging to Willoughby 7 miles from Nottingham, on which Rossiter being informed from the commander of the forlorn, by marching at a full Trot (having no Dragoones or foot with him) within a short time brought his horse into the field himselfe commanding the right wing wherein he resolved to charge. But observing that the enemies strength was placed in their body, consisting of a party of foot winged with horse, and those horse flanked with Musketeers, and that with them the men of the best quallity (as appeared by their outward Garbes) seemed to be mounted; he resolved to Charge the Battaile, assigning his right wing to be commanded by Col. White, and the left wing by Col. Hacker, placing 2 reserves of horse in the Reere, being suddainely thus ordered, the enemies word (Jesus) and Rossiters (Fairefax) he advanced to the charge, who was received with much resolution. The bodies and reserves through eagernesse close together; whereby the encounter proved very sharpe, both sides falling presently to Swords point, and so continued in close fight neither party giving ground for some Space, till by the fiercenesse of each party both were put into disorder, being so intermixt doing execution each on other, the dispute continued a while doubtfull, at last it pleased God to give a full and absolute victory to Rossiters forces, as may appear by the quallity and number of prisoners taken; all their Colours, Armes, and Carriages. About 200 that were best horsed (whereof diverse Papists) got off in small parties, severall of them wounded, but at least a hundred of them, were that night and next morning taken in their flight by Leicester, Belvoier, Burly and other honest country-men amongst whom was Sir Philip Mounkton their Generall disarmed and brought into Nottingham by Mr. Boyer a high Constable of that County, who deservedly now wears his sword.

In the first charge Col. Rossiter lost his head-piece, received a shot through the right thigh, and some other painfull wounds with a musket Bullet, notwithstanding which he kept the field fighting, till he saw the battaill wholly wonne, not discovering his wounding to any person, for feare it might prove a discouragement to the Souldiers: after which ready to fall through losse of blood, he rode to Nottingham where he lieth capable of recovery, through the blessing of God upon the meanes used to that end. In this service, Col. Hacker (commander of the Leicester horse) who is wounded, and Col. White (commander of the Nottingham horse, having only his nose cut) merited much honour for their expressed valour. And no lesse is deserved by all the Captaines, Officers and Souldiers, who being all newly raised men, and mounted upon new bought horses (saving Capt. Taylor's Troope and 40 of Belvoier horse commanded by Lievt Deane, who likewise is slightly wounded) yet not one of them, nor the country men, who were strangers to such hard

service, was observed to turne his backe, during the whole brunt. And as it is confessed by the prisoners taken, That the advantage they apprehended they had against Rossiters men by reason of their new listing, gave them as great encouragement to encounter them (had they been double the number) as confidence to have beaten and ruined them, so the victory is solely to be ascribed to the power and goodnesse of God: who therein hath fulfilled in part, that which is foretold by the prophet concerning the great things which his people shall performe in the destruction of his and their enemies That the feeble shall become as an Angel of God in Heroick Actions.^a

Not above 30 of Rossiters men slaine upon the place the Cornet to his own Troop being the highest Officer, at whose fall his colours were lost and for a while in the enemies hands, until Cornet Ridgeley, a reformado in the Same Troop recovered them; Captain Greenwood who commanded (the) Derby Troop dangerously wounded, and so are many other common Souldiers.

About an houre after the fight there came in two gallant troopes of horse from Northampton who had been in sooner but the crosse marching of the enemy, impeaded their finding us sooner, who presently advanced in pursuit of them.

Sir Henry Cholmely also with 600 Yorke-shire horse came then up to us over Nottingham Bridge by whose lying on the North side Trent, and preventing the enemies Retreat that way, was this opportunity gained of fighting them; those Yorke-shire horse, the next day advanced to assist other Yorke-shire forces already there, to block up Pomfret Castle: the enemy having in the Castle and Towne about 60 horse and 600 foot.

By severall Letters taken in their Generall Officers Pockets, it appears that men of high and low degree in Severall Countyes (before unsuspected) are deeply engaged in the promoting and contributing toward a general rising in many parts, some of the Prisoners affirme That their Army resolved to have marched Southward through Leicester-shire and Northampton-shire, in whose march they doubted not but to have encreased to many thousands, and to have joyned with others, rising about London, and to have raised Colchester Siege.

A List of the Names of the Officers and Gentlemen taken Prisoners.

Sir Philip Mounkton, Generall
Col. Robert Portington, Lievt Generall ^b

^a The passage referred to is Zechariah xii. 8.

^b Some account of this brave officer is to be found in Hunter's "South York-shire," i., 213. He lies buried in Arksey Church. The inscription on his tombstone is, "Hic sepultus fuit Robertus Portington Strategus; Miles infignis, principique fidelis. Obiit 23 die Decembris, 1660."

Gilbert Byron (who attempted to betray Nottingham Castle)

Major General, wounded.

Col. Edward Pocklington

Col. Chomley

Lievt Col. Ralph Ashton

Lievt Col. Stamp, slaine (Stanhope).

Majors.

Walter Sulterstone

Thomas Scot

Fitch Randol

Thomas Scot

George Roberts

Sir Roger Coopers two Sons of Nottingham-shire the one a

Lievt Col. the other a Captaine.

Captaines.

John Elvidge

Jo. Rich

Tho. Money

Will. Bates

Rich. Bradshaw

Clifton Roades

Anthony Wright

Capt. Pinckett

Capt. Dayle

Thomas Bird who released the prisoners in Lincoln Caslte.

Edmund Muncton

Arthur Lee

Cap. Downes

Will. Saltmarsh

Lieutenants.

Robert White

Joh. Gridditch

Edward Blundivill

Henry Hessells

Leivt Bradwell

Marmaduke Dilman ^a

Foure Cornets

Two Ensignes besides several other Officers amongst the common Soldiers who will not yet discover their qualities.

44 Gentlemen of quality whose names are inserted afterwards, severall of whom have been Officers formerly.

^a A misprint for Marmaduke Dolman. He lived at Bottesford near Brigg, Lincolnshire, and was buried there 20 December 1654. His estate was confiscated by Act of Parliament in 1652. See Mabel Peacock's Index of Royalists whose estates were confiscated during the Commonwealth, p. 45.

500 Common Souldiers taken, many of them wounded.
 10 Colours of horse and foot where of the greatest part in
 Clokebagges not delivered out.
 1 Waggon and 7 other Carriages with Armes Ammunition and
 other Baggage.
 About 400 horse taken 100 slaine upon the place.
 The names of several Gentlemen taken Prisoners, whose habi-
 tations are in severall Counties.

Gentlemen.

George Metam, Esq.
 Peter Constable
 Joseph Constable
 Robert Riddull
 Will. Skellin
 Simon Morfen
 John Hickman
 Gervase Hewett
 William Furdey
 John Roads
 Henry Hopkins
 Thoms Dunkin
 Marke Johnson
 Julian Wombwell
 Rob. Stevens
 Edw. Downing
 Robert Lanckton
 Anthony Savell
 Will. Marston
 Christopher Cole
 Thomas Mourley
 Ralph Roston
 Brookes
 John Harfull
 Wood
 Peter Jackson
 Siffill Leek
 Fitchrandall
 James Barlow
 James Hopkinson
 John Gamble
 Rob. French
 Rob. Garrison
 Francis Waters
 Edmund Crathorn
 Will. Laffals

Edward Booth
 Gabriel Armstrong
 Thomas Thornton
 Richard Shellin
 Thomas Brigan
 John Miller
 Two Loves of Derby-shire bretheren, one taken the other slaine.

Their Generals order to release the prisoners in Lincoln castle.

To Mrs. Smith Keeper of the Castle at Lincoln and to
 the prisoners there or her deputy or Deputies.

These are to will and require you and every of you, that forthwith upon sight here of you release the bodies of Such and every of Such as you have in your custody who are there committed upon malice, and for their loyalty to his Majesty, rather than any other Sufficent ground. And at the request of the bearer hereof Tho Bird, Captain, who hath been these two yeers here unjustly imprisoned for his Majesties cause, who will intimate to you such persones as he upou oath knows worthy of their liberty, you are to deliver such men to him for their enlargement of the which faile not as you will answer the contrary at your perill. Given under my hand this first day of July 1648.

PHILIP MONKTON.

Col. Portington and Cap. Thomas Bird see this warrant executed.

According to this Warrant, I Thomas Bird do set at liberty (contrary to law) all the men within the castle and goale of Lincolne and also the bodies of Hellen Cooke, Mary Saule, Anne Penneston, Anne Readmell and Avis Ostler (*a*) witnessse my hand this first of July 1648

THO. BIRD.

It is required that Thomas Goodwin Gent. be released according to the command of

PHILIP MONKTON.

(*a*) Some of the women were committed for killing their bastard children.

FINIS.

EXTRACTS FROM THE Historical Collection of JOHN
RUSHWORTH Part iv., vol. ii., 1701.

The Post Letters from the North were this Week intercepted. From Belvoir Castle June 30 came as followeth, "The Enemy at Pontefract Castle still go on at pleasure, taking and plundering whom they please, and yet please to deal so with none but those who have been most active for Parliament. Having quitted the Isle of Axholme, they came towards Lincoln and (July 3) yesterday Entred the City, plundered the House of Captain Pert, who is now in arms in Northumberland for the Parliament, and may do as much for them and many others, to the great Damage if not Ruine of them. They have Prisoners Captain Bees, Captain Fines and others ; Colonel Rossiter was at a distance. They went further on and took Prisoner Mr. Ellis, they brag they have 3000 listed in Lincolnshire ; but there are divers Thousands in Leicester, Derby, Rutland and Lincolnshire who are ready to join against these."

They killed one Mr. Smith in Lincoln, belonging to the Sequestration. (p. 1174)

Letters this day (July 8) to the House from Col. Rossiter from Nottingham July 6. That he had met with the Pontefract Forces upon their return after their plundering Voyage, and engaged them at a Place called Willoughby Field, routed their whole Party, consisting of about 1000, took 500 Horse and their Riders, the Commander in Chief, and all his officers, all their Bag and Baggage, the rest routed but not many slain ; Colonel Rossiter unhappily wounded in the Thigh. Captain Harwood who brought the letters had £100 given him by Order of the House. (p. 1182)

Whitelock (Memorials, p. 314) says that "The House gave a " hundred pound to Captain Norwood who brought the letters " from Colonel Rossiter " relating to the Willoughby fight. The following are the full extracts from *Whitelock* :—

" July 1648, p. 312.

" Letters from the North. That the King's party from Pontefract came to Lincoln, where, and in their march they plundered the Parliaments Friends, took Captain Bret, Captain Fines and Mr. Ellis Prisoners and Killed Mr. Smith an Officer of the sequestrations.

" Letters from Colonel Rossiter that he met with the Pontefract forces, upon their return after their plundering voyage and engaged

them at a place called Willoughby Field, routed their whole party consisting of about a thousand horse, took both Horse and their Riders, the Commander in Chief and all his Officers, all their bag and baggage the rest routed but not many slain, Colonel Rossiter wounded in the thigh.

“The house gave a hundred pound to Captain Norwood who brought the Letters from Colonel Rossiter.

“Letters of the Victory gained by Colonel Rossiter before mentioned, a List of the Prisoners, Officers and gentlemen of quality, about five hundred Prisoners taken, eight Carriages with Arms and Ammunition, Colonel Pocklington and Colonel Cholmley slain with many Officers and souldiers to the number of about two hundred, all their bag and baggage taken.”
