

STEP-BY-STEP

Welcome to Falkland Cricket Club (FCC). The Club was formed in 1884 and stands on the site of the 1643 Civil War, Battle of Newbury. The line of engagement of the two armies was drawn up between the rivers Enborne, to the south of the cricket club and the Kennet to the north, and ran across what is now the cricket ground. The walk is approx. 1 mile and takes you from Falkland Cricket Club to the National Trust Falkland Memorial.

A BATTLEFIELD WALK LEAFLET WHICH DESCRIBES THE ROUTE IS AVAILABLE IN FALKLAND CC'S PAVILION OR CAN BE DOWNLOADED FREE AT WWW.FALKLANDCC.CO.UK

- 1
- LEAVING the Club at the rear of the pavilion, cross Enborne Street with care, turn left and walk north.
- 2
- AFTER 200 metres cross Enborne Street at a sharp bend to Cope Hall Lane.
- 3
- DOWN Cope Hall Lane and in the first field entrance on your left is Round Hill. This is roughly where the parliamentary cannon would have been positioned.
- 4
- IN THE distance, you can see Enborne Church, where the parliamentary baggage train were left before the battle.
- 5
- MAKE your way back to the junction of Cope Hall Lane where we turn left on to Essex Street.
- 6
- WALKING east along Essex Street we are moving across the battle lines where 30,000 men in the armies of King Charles and Parliament met on 20th September 1643.
- 7
- ON ESSEX Street turn left and enter a wide grass area between the hedge and the road.
- 8
- FURTHER on Essex Street cross to where a gate leads to a track between the fields just beyond woods on the right side of the road.
- 9
- FOR THOSE who want to stand near the spot where Lord Falkland fell, walk forward beyond the gate and follow the raised grass track straight ahead of you for 200 metres.
- 10
- THE PARLIAMENTARIANS had exploited the King's mistake in not capturing this ground and as dawn broke on the day of the battle, Essex commanded that cannon be brought up from Skinners Green onto Round Hill, which can be seen on your left. Once these were in position they fired at the royalists. Despite every attempt made by the King's troops, they could not dislodge Essex's soldiers and this area around Round Hill became the centre of the bloodiest fighting of the day.
- 11
- LOOKING north over the fields towards the tower of St. Nicholas Church, we have a good idea of the landscape the battle was fought over. In the 1600s, all the fields in front of you were much smaller and divided by high thorny hedges. The land behind you was open common with scrub, gorse bushes and thickets of trees.
- 12
- MOVING along Essex Street, we are now in the contested area of 'no man's land between the two armies.
- 13
- ON THE left is Falkland Garth and Falkland Farm house, this was the main farm on the north facing slopes of Wash Common, and Lord Falkland's body is reputed to have been brought here after the battle.
- 14
- WE END at 'Monument Parade' – crossing Essex Street to the Falkland Memorial. Take a moment to orientate yourself at the National Trust information panel.



BATTLEFIELD WALK

BATTLE OF NEWBURY 1643

The First Battle of Newbury was fought on 20th September 1643 between a Royalist army, commanded by Charles 1st, and a Parliamentary force led by the Earl of Essex. Following a year of Royalist successes the Parliamentarians were left without an effective army. When Charles laid siege to Gloucester, Parliament was forced to muster a force under Essex to beat off Charles' forces. After a long march, Essex forced the Royalists away from Gloucester and began a retreat to London. Charles pursued Essex, overtaking the Parliamentary army at Newbury forcing them to pass the Royalist to continue their retreat.

Essex made an attack on the Royalist at dawn, capturing high ground. The Royalist counter attacked and forced Essex to retreat from the central hill and almost encircled. Essex rallied his infantry and counter-attacked, but it was slowed by Royalist cavalry and Essex sent for reinforcements, who themselves were forced to retreat. This left a hole in the Parliamentary line, dividing the army through which the Royalists hoped to pass, splitting the Parliamentarians and allowing Charles's troops to encircle and defeat the enemy. The Royalists moved forward, but were halted by the London Apprentices. With night falling, the battle ended, and both exhausted armies disengaged. The next morning, low on ammunition, the Royalists were forced to allow Essex to pass and continue his retreat to London.

The Royalist defeat was caused by shortage of ammunition, lack of professionalism of the soldiers and Essex tactics, countering Rupert's cavalry with mass infantry formations. Although the numbers of casualties were relatively small, historians consider it to be the most crucial of the English Civil War, marking the high point of the Royalist advance and leading to the signing of the Solemn League and Covenant, which brought the Scottish Covenanters into the war on the side of Parliament.

Falkland CC has two grounds just to the 100 metres west of the main battle area at Round Hill and the line of conflict ran from the Rivers Enborne to the Kennet across these grounds.

The Heritage Lottery fund has supported a partnership project lead by Falkland Cricket Club to identify record and share information on the Battle of Newbury in 1643 in association with our junior volunteer members, West Berkshire Museum and Park House School pupils as part of their Enrichment programme.



WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO DAVE STUBBS CONTRIBUTOR TO WALK GUIDE