

WHEATLEY AND THE RING OF STEEL'

Cuddesdon Registers 1640 44

1640 26 buried, including Bp Bancroft from his new Palace

1641 15 buried,

1642 22 buried.

1643 53 buried, including "soldier from The Bell, Wheatley"

"Tristram Patient, a soldier,"

"two strangers"

"a soldier buried from Ardingtons, Wheatley"

"Bridget Skinner, daughter of Ld Bishop of Oxford"

"Richard Price, son of Bartholomew, [late Rector of Holton]

1644 69 buried, including "a soldier was buried at Wheatley".

The deaths are probably due to 'camp fever', typhus spread in overcrowded garrisons.

Oxford Civil War Timescale

1642 Aug. King declares war at Nottingham. October Edgehill royal victory. Oxford made fall-back capital when Charles fails to take London in November.

1643 King plans to take London with 3 armies - from Oxford, from Cornwall and from Newcastle. Cromwell blocked the Newcastle army. Rupert brought many prisoners in from Gloucs. Parliament took Reading and Thame. Battle of Chalgrove successfully routed Parliamentary advance on Oxford. Typhoid outbreak. Rupert takes Bristol & port. Queen arrives with troops and money in Oxford. Battle of Newbury forced Charles back on Oxford.

1644 Scots side with Parliament. King facing several fronts. Oxford Parliament. Oxford attacked by Parliament army - Abingdon, Islip fell - but Charles sneaks out of city via Port Meadow to Witney and defeats Parliament army at Cropredy near Banbury. Rupert defeated in Yorkshire by Cromwell and Fairfax (Marston Moor). New (reformed) Model Army under Fairfax & Cromwell. Fire in Oxford City.

1645 Fairfax ordered by Parliament to take Oxford. Meadows flooded, villages fired. King attacked Leicester and siege of Oxford called off. King defeated at Naseby. Rupert lost Bristol. King returns to Oxford very low.

1646 Charles hopes for help from France, Pope or Scotland. Royal army dispersed by desertions. Left Oxford in disguise. Fairfax moves in through Wheatley, Holton, Headington and Oxford surrendered in June. Rupert and the royal troops left marched out with full honours over Shotover and dispersed.

Sir Samuel Luke's (Parliamentary) Intelligence Diary

1643 Feb. [Major Gawdy's and Col Digby' troop of University student soldiers at Wheatley]

"very negligent in their traps and may easily be surprised... Digby himself goes there three times a week but his wife and family live in one of the Colleges."

[a traveller reported]" at Tetsworth saw no guards from there to Wheatley where lay in good Lord Digby's regiment, but as he returned there was no guard at all, it was gone along with prince Rupert" [towards Gloucs].

Mar. "There are great numbers of horse and foot in Oxford Abingdon, Wheatley and Brill, that no man may pass to any place safely"... "A great gate on Wheatley Bridge and none suffered to pass without a ticket"... "Prince Maurice drew out 2000 horse and marched between Wheatley and Thame, showed themselves only and retreated to Oxford"... "Sir Jacob Astley to Wheatley Bridge with 60 horse and 1 ordnance piece on an alarm."

April. "Troop of horse at Wheatley under Capt. Morgan with fortifications and works."

May. [3 saboteurs] "including Mr Bulmer took away half the gate and threw it into the river "...[Bulmer, a highwayman and Parliamentary freebooter, then] "slain by a gentleman with a pocket pistol and left by the roadside at a Shepherd's house to be buried" [body in fact displayed in triumph in Wheatley High Street.] ..."gate set up again".

"[There are two troops of horse in Wheatley and they drive all the sheep and cattle, thereabouts into Wheatley where their soldiers lie quartered.]..."[horse troops retire to Culham] 19th "The King was yesterday on Shotover Hill and in Wheatley road and there they make new works." [Forces from Milton and Wheatley return again.]

June "Guard of 50-60 continually kept at Wheatley Bridge to give the alarm to Oxford. "

July. "No forces at Wheatley"

August. "King's forces came yesterday within two miles of Aylesbury and took divers men's horses and pillaged the country and returned to Wheatley."... " 9 troops of horse and dragoons to Wheatley yesterday where they keep sentry"

October. "Heard all the foot are withdrawn from Wheatley to Abingdon"..."1500 very speedily to come from Brill to Wheatley, from there to march to Reading."

November "There is but one regiment of foot soldiers in the City and they sent up and down daily to Wheatley and thereabout"

December "5000 horse and foot of the Queen's force [Yorkshire Guards] lie about Wheatley and Thame "...there are 200 foot which keep garrison at Wheatley"..."Only the Queen's own horse troops to be stationed at Wheatley."

1644 Jan "60 of the Queen's Life Guard at Wheatley to examine all passengers"..."One Henry Hopkins taken prisoner and held at Wheatley for five days"

Feb " 100 horse and foot at Lady Denham's house at Boarstall"

Mar "very strong guard on Wheatley bridge"