



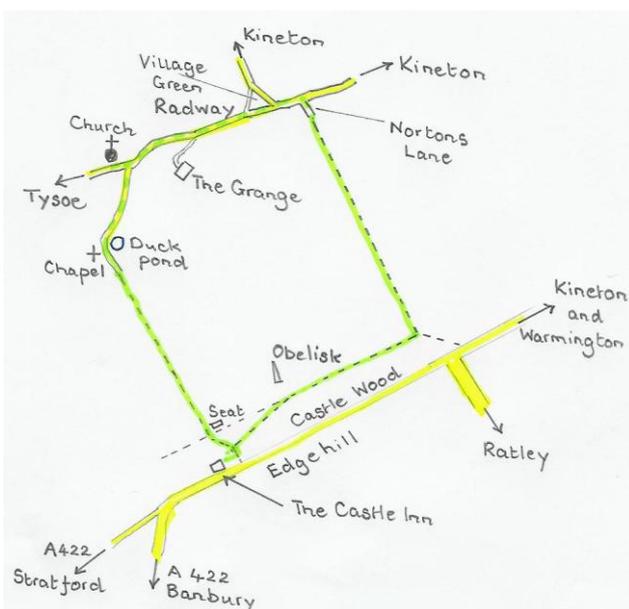
# Civil War Walk

Explore Map 206. Starting point: GR 374474. Distance: 1.75 miles. Allow: 1 hour

The first battle of the English civil war was fought here in Warwickshire on October 23rd, 1642. Continuing disagreements between Charles 1 and Parliament led to a declaration of war. The King had raised his standard in Nottingham and was marching with his army on London. The Roundheads under their commander, the Earl of Essex, had marched from Worcester to intercept the King who had established the high ground here at Edgehill. The Earl's army was encamped in the vale just outside Kineton. Each army numbered approximately 12,000 men. The King decided to forsake the high ground to engage the enemy with only 3 hours of sunlight left. At first the battle went well for the Kings forces as the impetuous Prince Rupert routed the Roundhead cavalry & gave chase but eventually the King had to give ground back towards the scarp slope. Dusk fell with 1,500 men slain, many more wounded & a stalemate ensued with the two armies facing each other and having to spend a cold autumnal night in the open without any food. This did nothing for the morale of either army & neither party was anxious to resume the battle at dawn. The King breakfasted at a nearby Ratley farmhouse before retiring to Edgecote (see Civil War walk No1) and resuming his march on London, while the Parliamentarians retired to Warwick.

Our walk starts at the Castle at Edgehill, built nearly a hundred years after the battle by the owner of Radway Grange, Sanderson Miller, as an impressive folly to entertain friends on the site where the King had raised his royal standard before the battle. After admiring the view across the valley encompassing the battlefield towards Kineton (now part of MoD land) and inspecting the information panel above the inn's garden, take the way out under the wooden bridge connecting the two towers and shortly after leaving the property turn left onto the Battlefield Trail which also forms part of the Macmillan Way here. This takes you steeply down the wooded scarp slope to a wooden kissing gate and a stone seat. From here you can admire one of the finest views in England with Radway Grange, the impressive house down in the vale in the right foreground. Continue down the field which gets progressively boggy towards the bottom; pass through another gate and further field taking time out to look back to the impressive tower which has, in its time before becoming an inn, been called both Radway and Miller's Tower. A further gate leads onto a farm track which shortly becomes a road passing between the Methodist chapel and duck pond.

You are now in Radway. Continue along the road with Radway Grange on your right to the road junction with the Tysoe Road; here you should take time to visit the Kingsmill effigy inside St Peter's Church. It was erected by a grief stricken mother in memory of her Royalist son, Captain Kingsmill, who was slain in the Battle of Edgehill. It was moved from the old church to its present site at the base of the tower in the 'new' church



Resume your way through the village passing first the entrance to The Grange on your right and then the village green surrounded by its charming cottages on your left. Just after the bus shelter and telephone box, turn right up Nortons Lane which quickly peters out into a footpath to emerge through a second kissing gate into fields again. Climb steadily straight ahead pausing every so often to admire the magnificent view behind again. Once through the kissing gate at the top of the field you turn right and after some distance and a damp patch or two at the first fork in paths bear left onto the Macmillan Way glancing down towards an obelisk to your right. This was erected in 1854 by another owner of Radway Grange to commemorate the Battle of Waterloo. It was no doubt more impressive before being dwarfed by trees planted at the same time. You can then climb back up to the Castle at Edgehill for rewarding and much deserved refreshment!