

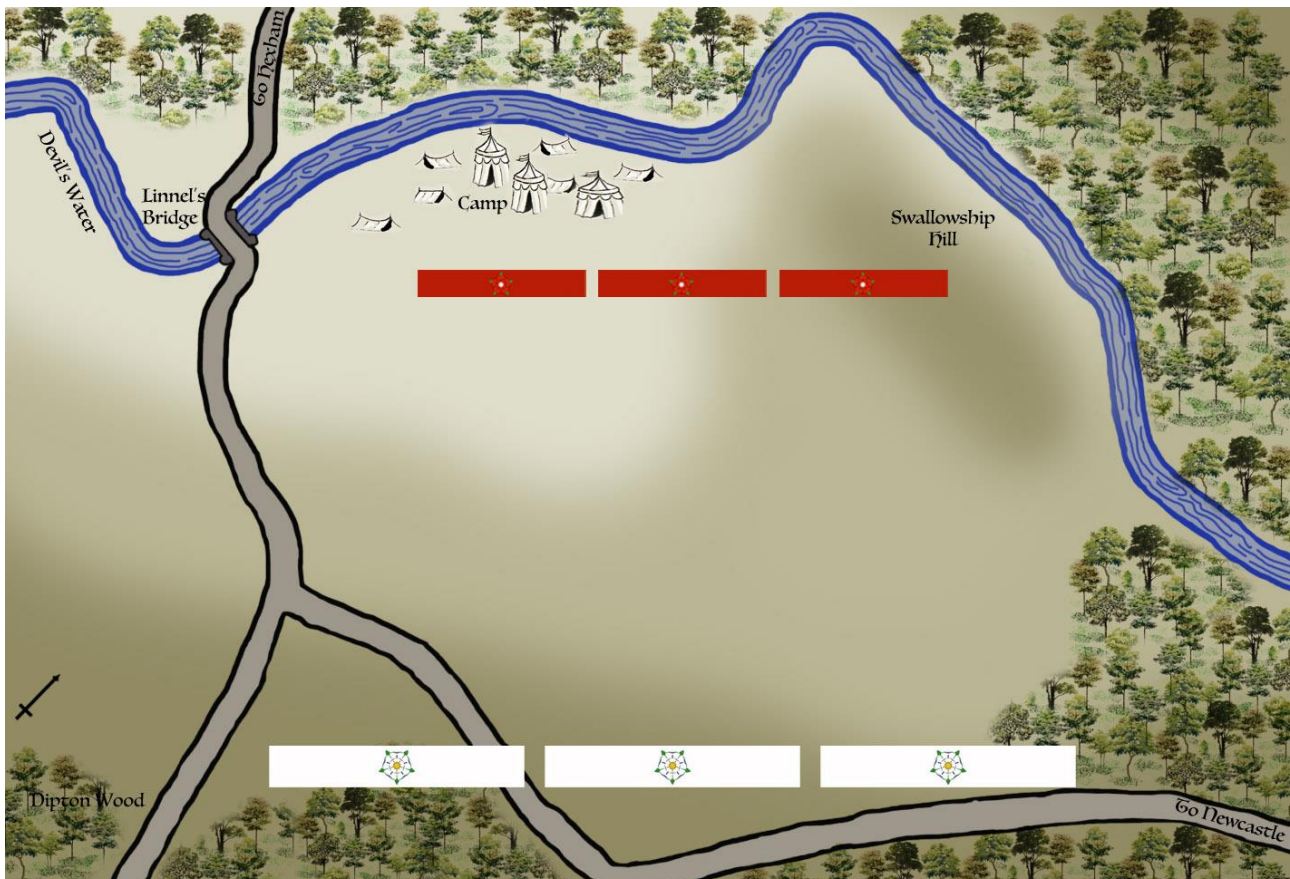
The Battle of Hexham

15th May 1464

St Isidore the Farmer's Day

Following his victory at Hedgeley Moor John Neville, Lord Montagu, continued north, rendezvoused with the Scottish peace emissaries, and then returned with them to Newcastle. Meanwhile the defeated Lancastrian forces regrouped at Alnwick Castle. There they became aware that Edward IV was moving north with a large army to attend the peace conference in Newcastle and then move against the Lancastrian uprising in Northumberland. To forestall this eventuality Henry Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, led the Lancastrian host southwest into the Tyne valley. He was possibly hoping to by-pass the Yorkist forces in Newcastle and move back into Yorkshire closer to the Lancastrian heartland. Sometime around May 11th he reached the Hexham area and made camp on the Hexham Levels, south of the Devil's Water near Linnel's Bridge, a tributary of the Tyne. He had with him about 2,000 men though some sources put it as low as 500.

Montagu was made aware of Somerset's location twenty miles to the west of Newcastle and decide to move against him with a force of 4-5,000 men. After a night march he arrived on the high ground overlooking the Lancastrian camp and immediately attacked.



Lancastrians



Vanward

Thomas de Roos, 9th Baron Roos

(Committed, Practiced [1 stratagem])

- 2 MAA
- 5 Retinue Bow

Courage 4

Mainward

Henry Beaufort, 3rd Duke of Somerset

(Anti-York, Committed, Audacious [3 stm], Peer,)

- 2 MAA
- 5 Retinue Bow

Courage 4

Rearward

Robert Hungerford

(Committed, Practiced [1 stm], Impetuous)

- 2 MAA
- 4 Retinue Bow

Courage 4

Yorkists



Vanward

John Scrope, 5th Baron Scrope

(Pro-Neville, Committed, Practiced [1 stratagem])

- 3 MAA
- 7 Retinue Bow
- 1 Levy Bow
- 2 Levy Spear

Courage 4

Mainward

John Neville, Lord Montagu

(Anti-Percy, Committed, Old Soldier [2 stm])

- 4 MAA
- 9 Retinue Bow
- 1 Levy Bow
- 2 Levy Spear

Courage 4

Rearward

Ralph Greystoke 5th Baron Greystoke

(Uncommitted, Practiced [1 stm])

- 2 MAA
- 6 Retinue Bow
- 1 Levy Bow
- 2 Levy Spear

Courage 3

Scenario Special Rules

1. Due to being surprised the Lancastrians will not receive the minus one intensity when fired on due to having 3 courage or more.
2. The Lancastrian host has the “The odds be great . . .” verse on the Chronicle due to the discrepancy in numbers.
2. The Yorkist host has “Time hath worn us into slovenry” verse on the Chronicle due to the night march they have just completed.

Victory Conditions

If the Lancastrians have a ward unbroken at the end of turn eight they can claim a victory of sorts.

Historical Outcome

The state of readiness of the Lancastrian host varies depending on the source consulted but a degree of surprise was achieved by Montegu’s night march. The battle was short, fierce and catastrophic for the Lancastrian cause. Heavily outnumbered and with a steep banked river to their rear they nevertheless stood and fought. For a time they held their own but Montegu “crying on his men to do valliantly, entered by plain force, the battaill of his enemies, and brake their array”. Their line broken the Lancastrians “fled hether and thether, desperate of all succor.”*

In the rout Somerset, Roos and Hungerford were taken and executed along with 30 other Lancastrian lords and knights. The survivors fled to Alnwick but their salvation was short lived. Montegu’s brother, Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, arrived in the north and led a Yorkist host into Northumberland. Alnwick and Dunstanburgh Castles surrendered on 23rd and 24th June when the defenders were offered a pardon. Bamburgh Castle, holding Sir Ralph Grey and Sir Humphrey Neville, who had been refused pardon, held out till July. After a formal siege the garrison surrendered. Grey was executed but Neville escaped. King Henry, who had escaped the battle, remained at large for another year before he was captured.

Hexham and the death of so many lords and knight brought an end to this Lancastrian bid for power. England would be at peace for four years.

* Edward Hall in his *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustrious Families of Lancaster and York* (1548)

https://www.lostplays.org/lpd/Battle_of_Hexham