

# The Battle of Edgecote Moor

26<sup>th</sup> July 1469

St Anne, Mother of Mary's, Day

A fortuitous marriage, a substantial inheritance from his father, and grants of land from a grateful king that were previously Lancastrian had made Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, the greatest landowner in England. With great wealth came great responsibility and high office. It was through his administration of one of these high posts that first brought him into conflict with the king.

As the Lancastrian rising in the north petered out Edward took steps to make peace with both Scotland and France. During the negotiation with France Warwick got the impression that Edward was interested in a French marriage. Warwick therefore began negotiations with France for Edward to marry King Louis XI of France's daughter. In so doing he hoped to disrupt Margaret of Anjou's plans towards the same ends. When it was revealed that Edward had married Elizabeth Woodville in secret in 1464 Warwick's initiative was revealed as folly and he was humiliated. This blow was compounded when Edward made moves to ally with Burgundy and not France. Warwick's embarrassment was compounded when the King rejected his proposal that the King's two brothers, George, Duke of Clarence and Richard, Duke of Gloucester, should marry Warwick's own daughters, Isabel and Anne.

When Edward's marriage to Elizabeth Woodville became official it further widened Warwick's split with and the king. Elizabeth was a commoner and, even worse, came from a family of Lancastrian supporters. When she began exploiting her position as Queen to advance her own family's interests by marrying brothers and sisters to nobles of rank she was seen as threatening the established order and promoting the Lancastrian cause.

As the Woodville family's influence at court increased so Warwick's declined. Furthermore Warwick saw the Yorkist cause under threat and he began a plot to overthrow the King. He enlisted the support of the King's brother, George, Duke of Clarence, the next in line to the throne. He also got the backing of Thomas Neville, Fauconberg's bastard son, Sir John Conyers of Hornby, the husband of Alice Fauconberg's daughter, Lord Fitzhugh, the Archbishop of York and a number of other prominent Yorkist diehards.

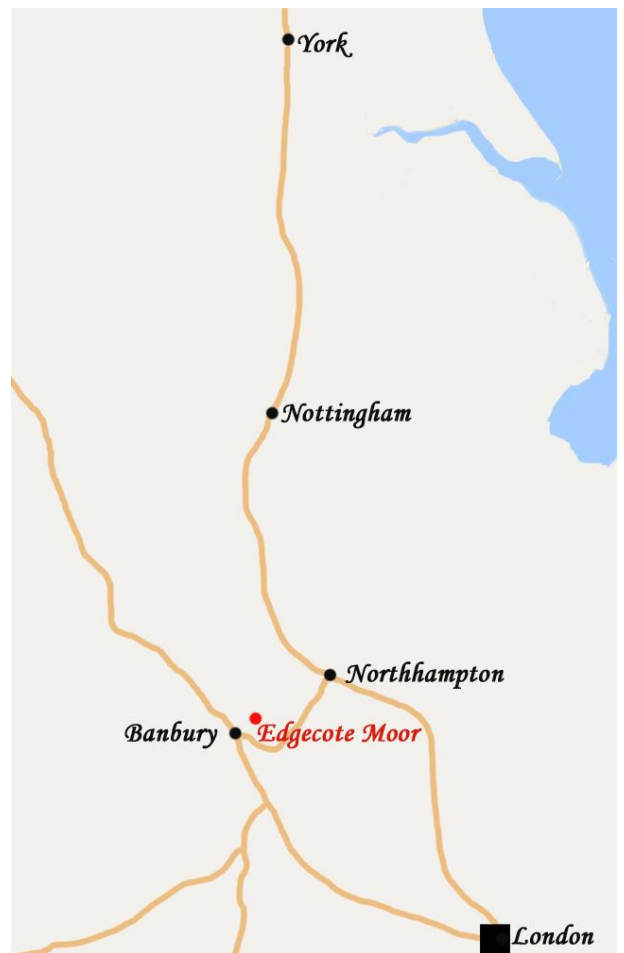
At the time Warwick was still the Captain of Calais. So when he retired there with his family it did not raise any suspicions. Shortly after this relocation the Duke of Clarence joined him and proceeded to marry Warwick's daughter Isabel in defiance of the King's wishes.

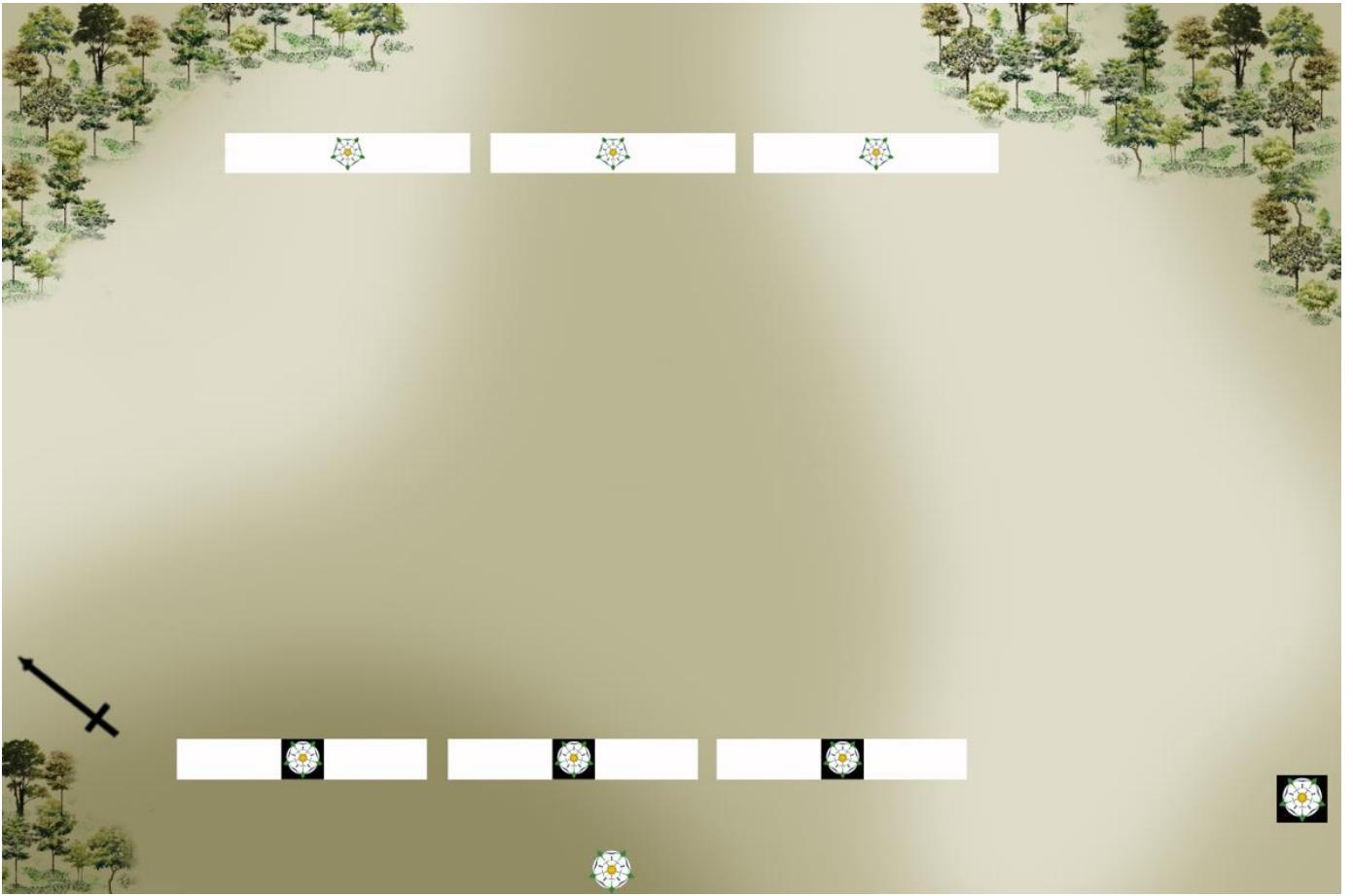
Back in England Warwick's agent went to work undermining the King by spreading rumours and fermenting unrest. Around York, one of Warwick's captains, Sir William Conyers, who went by the nom de guerre of Robin of Redesdale, started a rebellion. When the king went north to deal with this rising rumours were started that the childless Edwards was illegitimate and that therefore Clarence was the rightful king.

On his way to York Edward became aware that the rebellion was larger than he expected and so he withdrew to Nottingham. There he attempted to gather support but his rising unpopularity caused few to respond to his calls. When he received word that his supporters the Earls of Pembroke and Devon were mustering men he decided to wait in Nottingham for them to arrive.

Meanwhile Warwick and Clarence returned to London with the Calais garrison and marched on London gathering men as they went. They declared their support for the Yorkshire rebels and moved north. The rebels, under John and William Conyers, moved south to rendezvous with them. When Edward heard of the threat posed by Warwick and Clarence he left Nottingham and moved south to Northampton hoping to join forces with Pembroke and Devon. The Conyers' force out paced Edward and he interposed his men between the king in Northampton and Pembroke and Devon at Banbury. In Banbury, Pembroke and Devon fell out. Devon withdrew ten miles south to Deddington while Pembroke moved to join the king.

During the 25<sup>th</sup> Pembroke moved east and made camp on a ridge on Edgecote Moor. The Yorkshire rebels were camped a few miles southeast of them near Thorpe Mandeville. On the 26<sup>th</sup> the rebels broke camp, moved west by road about a mile and a half. They then left the road and moved northeast up a ridge that overlooked Pembroke's camp. Once they reached the top of the ridge they sighted Pembroke's men drawn up below them and they attacked.





# Yorkists Rebels



## Vanward

William Conyers of Marske

(Pro-Neville 2, Well Wisher, Amateur [1 da])

- 2 MAA
- 6 Retinue bow
- 2 Levy bow
- 5 Levy spear

Courage 2

## Mainward

John Conyers of Hornby

(Pro-Neville 2, Well Wisher, Old Soldier [2 stm])

- 2 MAA
- 8 Retinue Bow
- 2 Levy bow
- 4 Levy spear

Courage 2

## Rearward

Henry Neville of Hevesham

(Pro-Neville 2, Well Wisher, Practiced [1 stm], Impetuous)

- 1 MAA
- 9 Retinue bow
- 3 levy bow

Courage 2

## Reserve Ward

John Clapham of Skipton

(Committed, Practiced [1 stm])

- 3 MAA
- 10 Retinue bow

Courage 3

# Yorkists Loyalists



## Vanward

John Dwnn of Kidwelly

(Committed, Practiced [1 stratagem])

- 1 MAA
- 3 Retinue bow
- 2 Levy bow
- 3 Levy spear

Courage 3

## Mainward

William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke

(Anti-Tudor, Committed, Impetuous, Practiced [1 stm])

- 2 MAA
- 7 Retinue bow
- 2 Levy bow
- 5 Levy spear

Courage 3

## Rearward

Thomas Vaughan of Hergest

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

- 1 MAA
- 6 Retinue bow
- 2 Levy bow
- 4 Levy spear

Courage 3

## Reserve Ward

Humphrey Stafford, Earl of Devon

(Peer, Committed, Amateur [1 da])

- 1 MAA
- 6 Retinue bow
- 4 Levy bow
- 2 Levy spear

Courage 3

## Scenario Special Rules

1. At the start of turn 3, and in each subsequent turn, the Yorkist Rebels Reserve Ward chit and two Lethargy chits will be placed in the draw bag. If the Yorkist Rebels Reserve Ward chit is draw before a Lethargy chit then the Yorkist Rebels Reserve Ward is placed on the table at the location on the map marked with the Yorkist Rebels marker. Their placement on table is their action for that turn. If a Lethargy chit is draw before the Ward chit then the Reserve Ward does not arrive that turn.
2. At the start of turn 6, and in each subsequent turn, the Yorkist Loyalist Reserve Ward chit and two Lethargy chits will be placed in the draw bag. If the Yorkist Loyalist Reserve Ward chit is draw before a Lethargy chit then the Yorkist Loyalist Reserve Ward is placed on the table at the location on the map marked with the Yorkist Loyalist marker. Their placement on table is their action for that turn. If a Lethargy chit is draw before the Ward chit then the Reserve Ward does not arrive that turn.
3. If an enemy reserve ward arrives on the table the opposition will have the verse "Spur to the rescue . . ." added to their chronicle.

## Victory Conditions

The Host that holds the table at the end of the game wins.

## Historical Outcome

The rebels attacked and drove Pembroke's men back a short distance. Pembroke had few archers, his men being most Welsh spearmen, and so could make little reply to the rebel's arrows. But his men held on in the hope that Devon would march to their aid. Fresh troops did arrive but they were not the men Pembroke had looked for. Warwick's Vanguard under the command of John Clapham turned up. This force contained Warwick's retinue and the Calais garrison. Their sudden appearance shattered Pembroke men and the slaughter commenced. Pembroke and his brother Sir Richard Herbert were taken and executed next day. On the field 168 knights, squires and gentlemen were killed along with 2,000 men. The rebels also lost heavily. Henry Neville, heir of Latimer, Sir Conyer's son James, Sir Oliver Dudley and many others were killed.

The Earl of Devon did reach the field but upon sighting the slaughter his force dissolved and he fled south. He was taken sometime later and beheaded.

Following the defeat of his followers Edward moved south from Northampton with a few faithful retainers but he was surrounded and taken at Olney. He was not executed but Warwick extracted from him a pardon for himself, Clarence and his followers. With the king now effectively his prisoner Warwick was free to redress the social order. In the next few months he seized and executed a number of Elizabeth's family, including her father Richard Woodville, Lord Rivers, and her brother John Woodville. Her other brother Anthony Woodville, Lord Scales, was able to escape.