

# *The Battle of Northampton*

10<sup>th</sup> July 1460

*St Theodosius Pechersky's Day*

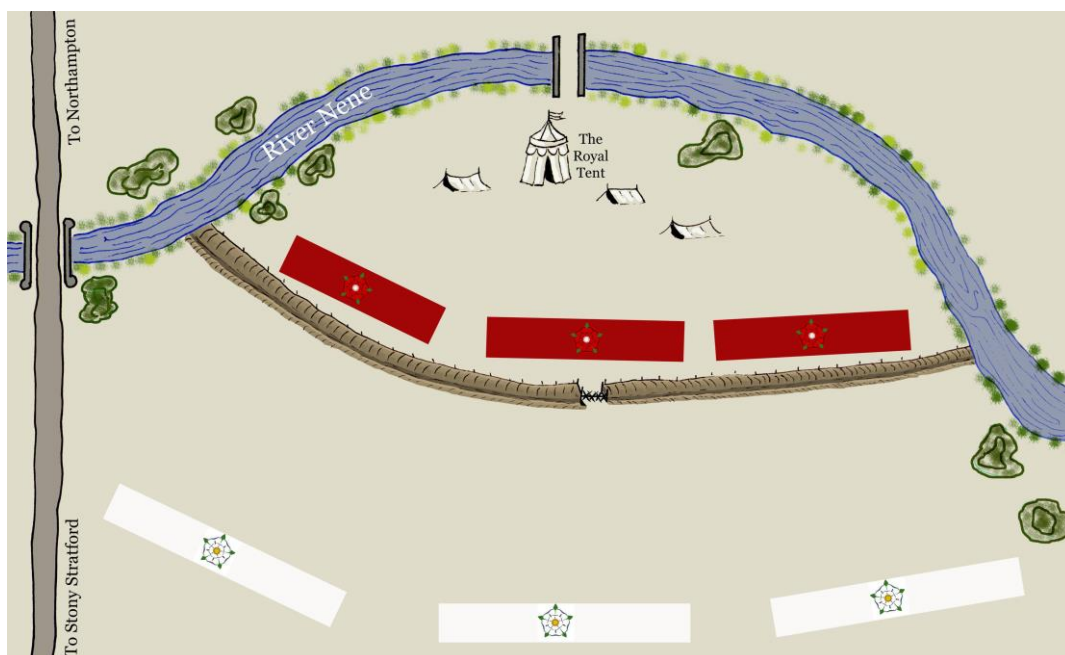
## Background

After his victory at Blore Heath Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, joined Richard, Duke of York, and Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick at Ludlow. In early October the King's army moved against them. York's army was outnumbered two to one and so adopted a defensive posture on the north side of the River Teme at Ludford Bridge just south of Ludlow. They reinforced their defenses by digging ditches and erecting barricades.

During the night of the 12<sup>th</sup> October Andrew Trollope, the captain of the 600 Calais troops Warwick had brought with him from France, defected and the army fell apart. York and his second son Edmund the Earl of Rutland, fled to Wales and then Ireland. Salisbury, Warwick and York's eldest son Edward, Earl of March, went to the West Country and then to Calais.

Henry returned to Coventry but within six months the country was again riven with dissent and division. Those around the king had exploited their position to enrich themselves at both the king's and his country's expense. Hoping to ride this tide of discontent the Yorkist leaders returned.

On 26<sup>th</sup> June Warwick, Salisbury and Edward landed at Sandwich with 2,000 men. By the time they entered London 2<sup>nd</sup> July their force numbered 10,000 and some say 20,000. A small force of Lancastrians, who had retreated to the Tower, refused to surrender. Warwick left a force to mask the Tower garrison and moved against the king's 5,000 strong army at Northampton.



## The Rules

1. The ground is wet and consequently ALL movement will be by “piecemeal approach” and ALL attacks will be “tired”.
2. Due to the rain maximum bow ranges will be reduced to 16” for flight and 6” for sheaf.
3. The Lancastrians start with “The odds be great...” verse on their Chronicle.  
The Yorkists start with “The coldness of the king...” verse on their Chronicle.
- 4 Lord Grey’s duplicity  
At the start of each turn, after a Yorkist company has come within 4” of Lord Grey’s ward, he will make a Courage Check. If he fails, his ward will lose one courage. When his ward’s courage reaches zero – for whatever reason save the death of Lord Grey - his ward will lay down their arms and all his bands will retreat from the field (immediately remove figures from the table).  
  
If Lord Grey’s ward is pushed back as a result of combat his ward will similarly lay down their arms and retreat from the field.  
  
The player commanding Grey’s ward may not employ the “I’ll not Skrink Back” handstrokes card till Grey is killed.  
  
When Grey defects the two verses “Uncurable discomfort reigns” and “The Murdering knife” are added to the Lancastrian Chronicle.  
  
If Grey is killed before his treachery is revealed Sir William Catesby will take command of the ward; they will remain loyal and no further courage tests for treachery will be made.
5. As per the standard rules, If a ward is attacking across a defended barrier their “handstrokes” value is halved. Troops firing arrows from within defensive works will gain +1 intensity. The works do not protect against incoming fire (i.e. no reduction in intensity).
6. The optional retire move can be used (requires a falter check and loss of attack tactic).





## *Lancastrians*



### **Vanward**

Edmund Grey, 4<sup>th</sup> Baron of Ruthyn

(Uncommitted, Practiced [1 stratagem], Trimmer)

Courage 2

- 1 MAA
- 5 Retinue bow
- 6 Levy bow

Sir William Catesby of Ashby St Legers

(Uncommitted, Practiced [1 stratagem], Pu 3, Fd 3)

### **Mainward**

Humphrey Stafford, Duck of Buckingham

(Peer, Committed, Old Soldier [2 stratagems], Conciliatory, Merciful)

Courage 4

- 2 MAA
- 4 Retinue bow
- 3 Levy bow
- 2 Levy bill

John Beaufort, 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Beaumont

(Peer, Committed, Practiced [1 stratagem\*])

Courage 4

- 2 MAA
- 3 Retinue Bow
- 3 Levy Bow
- 3 Levy Bill

### **Rearward**

John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury

(Committed, Practiced [1 stratagem])

Courage 4

- 1 MAA
- 5 Retinue Bow
- 6 Levy bow

Thomas Percy, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Egremont

(Anti-Neville, Committed, Amateur [Danger \*], Adept at Bushments, Bloodthirsty)

Stafford is the host commander. Grey and Talbot are the ward commanders. Beaufort is a company commander. Catesby and Percy will assume command of their wards on the death of their ward commanders.

\* These leader gain their stratagem or dangers if they become ward commanders.



# Yorkists



## Vanward

William Neville, 6<sup>th</sup> Baron Fauconberg  
(Committed, Old Soldier [2 stratagems])

Courage 4

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

Thomas Stanley, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lord Stanley  
(Uncommitted, Amateur [Danger \*], Trimmer)

## Mainward

Richard Neville, 16<sup>th</sup> Earl of Warwick  
(Peer, Anti-Percy, Committed, Practiced [1 stratagem] Artifices)

Courage 4

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

Edward Neville of Birling, 8<sup>th</sup> Baron of Abergavenny  
(Peer, Committed, Practiced [1 stratagem \*])

Courage 4

- 1 MAA
- 7 Retinue bow
- 6 Levy bow
- 2 Levy bill

## Rearward

Edward Plantagenet, Earl of March  
(Heir, Committed, Audacious [3 stratagem], Merciful)

Courage 4

- 2 MAA
- 5 Retinue bow
- 8 Levy bow
- 1 Levy bill

Sir Henry Bouchier 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Bouchier  
(Peer, Committed, Old Soldier [2 stratagem\*])

Courage 4

- 2 MAA
- 5 RA
- 8 Levy bow
- 1 Levy bill

Warwick is the host commander. Fauconberg, and March are ward commanders. Abergavenny and Bouchier are company commanders. If Stanley replaces Fauconberg, -2 to wards courage as he is uncommitted. (\* Stratagems/Dangers received when promoted to ward commander).

## Victory Conditions

Given the historical events that shaped the outcome of this battle it is difficult to envisage a Lancastrian victory without distorting those events. That said, this scenario does provide a window whereby such a victory is possible, that being the unexpected death of Edmund Grey before he turns his livery. Since this is not likely the following time limit is imposed on a Yorkist victory.

Warwick can claim a Yorkist victory if within ten turns his host has routed all Lancastrian wards.

If the Yorkist cannot do this within the allotted time then the laurels go to Humphrey Stafford.

## Historical Outcome

Humphrey Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, entrenched his army in a bend of the River Nene south of Northampton. The defenses are reported to have been an earthen wall with stakes fronted by a wet ditch. The Lancastrians also had artillery. Lord Grey of Ruthin had the Vanward, Buckingham the Mainward and John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, the Rearward.

Prior to the battle Warwick attempted to speak with the king but he was refused an audience and at two o'clock the Yorkist attacked. They advanced in three columns, William Neville, Lord Fauconberg, on the right, Warwick in the centre and Edward, Earl of March, on the left.

Heavy rain preceded the action and continued throughout. It made the approach to the works difficult but it also silenced the Lancastrian artillery. The rain made climbing the works a struggle and the Yorkists made no progress till Lord Grey's men treacherously lay down their arms and allowed Edward's men entry to the works. Grey had previously arranged with Warwick to have his men not resist in return for the title of Lord Fanhope.

With the works effectively breached the outcome was inevitable and the struggle was resolved quickly. The Lancastrian defense dissolved and the army attempted to flee across the river. 300 to 400 of them were killed. Buckingham, Shrewsbury, Lord Egremont and Lord Beaumont all died on the approaches to the king's tent. Henry Mountfort, a lowly archer, was credited with the actual capture of the king.

Following the battle Warwick, with the king in tow, returned to London.

