

## The Battle of Second St Albans

17<sup>th</sup> February 1461

Seven Founders of the Servite Order Day

Encouraged by the triumph at Wakefield a jubilant Margaret left Scotland and joined the Lancastrian forces at York. Margaret brought with her a force of Scots. These men were one of the conditions of the betrothed of James III of Scotland's daughter, Mary of Guelders, to the infant Edward Prince of Wales. Another was Berwick castle, which would revert to the Scottish control. These machinations by a French queen were not well received in England.

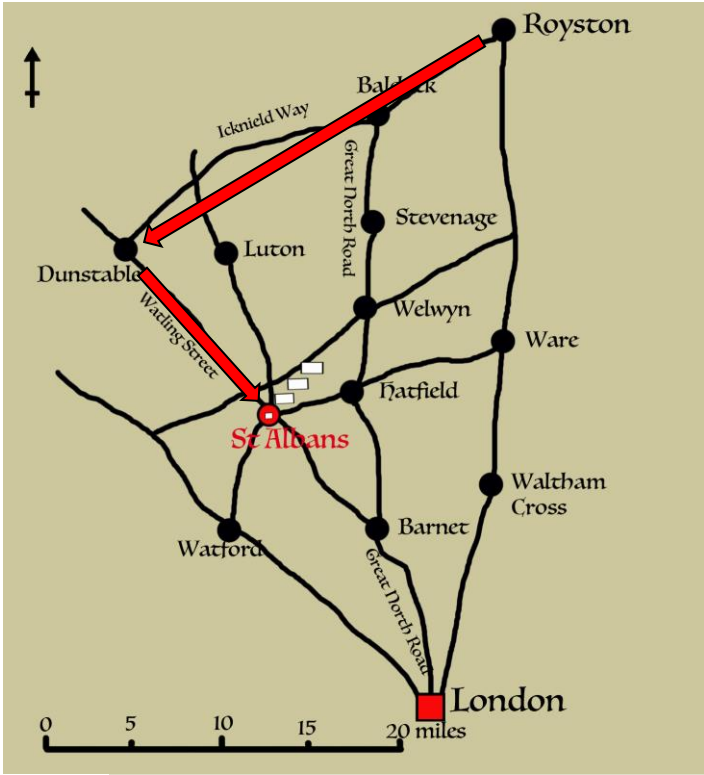
In York the Lancastrian nobles renewed their oaths of fealty and affirmed Edward's right to the throne of his father thereby repudiating the Act of Accord. Opting to strike while the iron was hot the army left York on 20<sup>th</sup> January bound for London and bent on recovering Henry. On the march the army spread out across a wide front to forage as it moved south. Consisting for the most part of unpaid and undisciplined troops the foraging was accompanied by widespread plundering, arson, and rape. Dire stories of the troops misbehavior preceded them as they approached London.

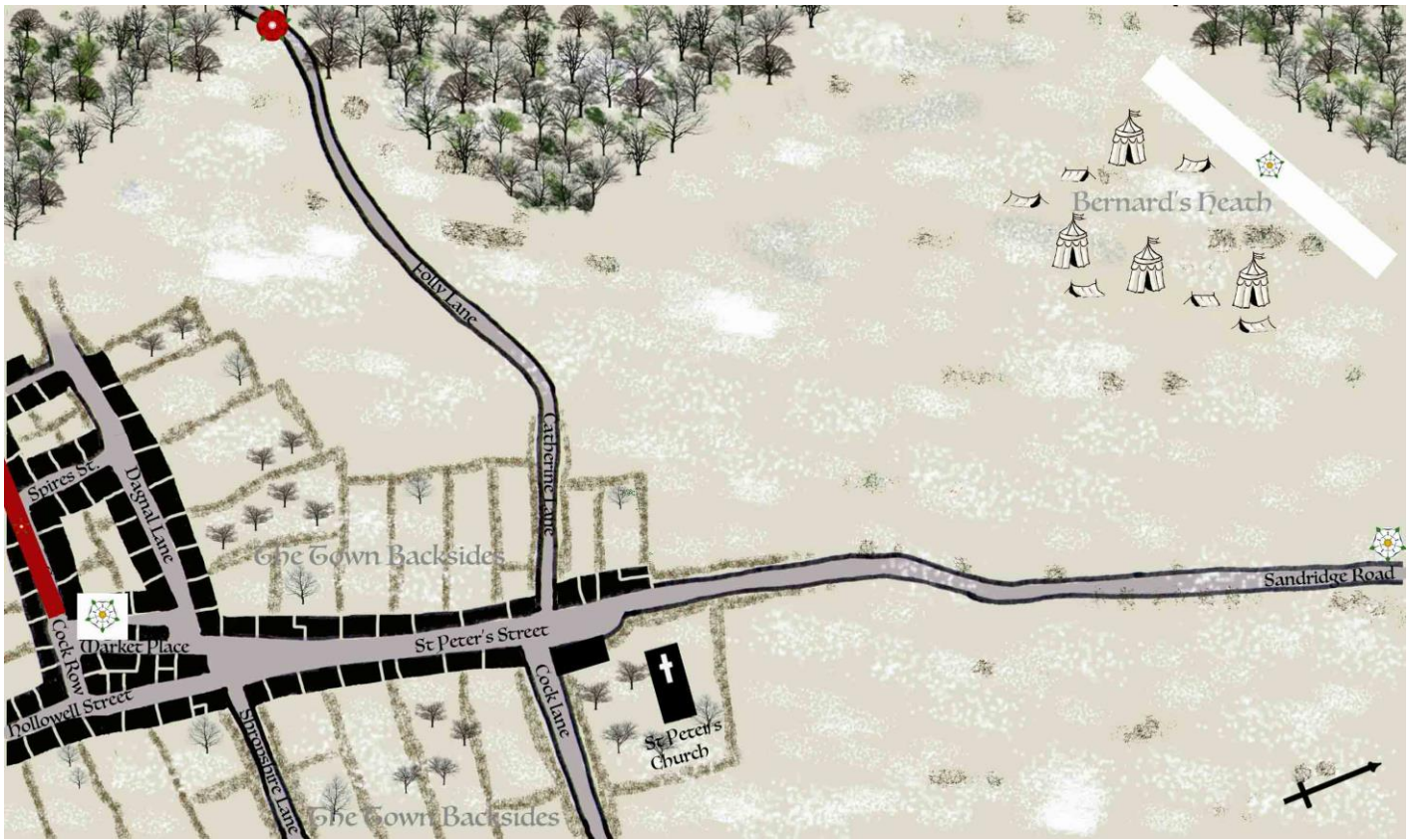
The defeat at Wakefield and the advance of the rampaging Lancastrian army produced perturbation in London. Prompted by the civic leaders of the town and the southern shires the remaining Yorkist lords under Warwick began amassing a force and on 12<sup>th</sup> February Warwick left London for St Albans.

He may have hoped to rendezvous with the Duke of York but this did not eventuate. In the west York's victory at Mortimer's Cross on 3<sup>rd</sup> February had not ensured peace in the region. Both the Earls of Pembroke and Wiltshire had escaped with substantial forces. The presence of this threat may explain York absence from the coming battle.

When Warwick reached St Albans he spread his army of 12,000 men across a front of three and a half miles from St Albans towards Welwyn. Over the next four days this line was heavily entrenched with field works, cannon, caltrops and fishing nets laced with metal spikes. Perhaps the most extensive works were on Bernard's Heath a piece of high ground three quarters of a mile northeast of St Albans. Beech Bottom, an Iron Age ditch in places some 30 feet deep, bound the heath on three sides. The troops and the works faced north and northeast, the direction Margaret's army was expected to appear from.

The 15,000 strong Lancastrian host reached Royston northeast of St Albans on the 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> of February. At this time they probably became aware of the Yorkists deployment and their defensive preparations. To continue marching south on London would have exposed the Lancastrian column to a flank attack while on the march and to move directly against the enemy would have involved frontally assaulting significant fortifications. Possibly under the guidance of Andrew Trollope the veteran soldier, they in stead adopted a radical strategy. The army performed a flank march from Royston to Dunstable on the 16<sup>th</sup>. After a short rest at Dunstable they undertook a night march to St Albans along Watling Street. This brought them to the outskirts of the town as the winter dawn was breaking.







# Lancastrians

## Vanward

Andrew Trollope

Courage 2

(Pro-Beaufort, Uncommitted, Old Soldier, [2 stratagem], Bushments, Artifices,)

(2ic John Grey, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lord Grey of Groby)

- 2 MAA
- 6 Retinue Bow
- 2 Levy Bow

Ralph Greystock, 5<sup>th</sup> Baron Greystoke

Courage 2

(Uncommitted, Practiced)

(2ic Henry Fitzhugh, 5<sup>th</sup> Baron Fitzhugh)

- 2 MAA
- 5 Retinue Bow
- 2 Levy Bow
- 1 Levy Bill

## Mainward

Henry Beaufort, 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Somerset

Courage 4

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

(Lionel Welles, 6<sup>th</sup> Baron Welles)

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

Henry Holland, 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Exeter

Courage 4

(Anti-York, Committed, Practiced, Bloodthirsty, Heir,)

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

Thomas Courtney, Earl of Devon

Courage 4

(Committed, Amateur,)

- 1 MAA
- 5 Retinue bow
- 2 Levy Bow
- 2 Levy Bill

## Rearward

John Clifford, 9<sup>th</sup> Lord Clifford

Courage 4

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

(Thomas de Roos, 9<sup>th</sup> Baron Roos)

- 3 MAA
- 6 Retinue bow
- 3 Levy Bow

Henry Percy, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Northumberland

Courage 4

(Anti-Neville and York, Committed, Practiced, Impetuous,)

(Thomas Grey, 1<sup>st</sup> Lord Grey of Rougemont)

- 2 MAA
- 6 Retinue Bow
- 4 Levy Spearmen



## Yorkists

### Vanward

William Neville, 6<sup>th</sup> Baron Fauconberg

(Committed, Old Soldier)

(2ic William Fiennes, 2<sup>nd</sup> Baron Say & Sele)

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

Courage 4

### Mainward

Richard Neville, 16<sup>th</sup> Earl of Warwick

(Anti-Percy, Committed, Practiced)

(2ic William Fitz Alan, 16<sup>th</sup> Earl of Arundel)

- 3 MAA
- 6 Retinue Bow
- 2 Levy Bow

Courage 4

John Scrope, 5<sup>th</sup> Baron Scrope

(Pro-Neveille, Committed, Practiced)

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

Courage 4

### Rearward

Henry Bouchier, 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Bouchier

(Committed, Old Soldier)

(2ic John de la Pole, 2<sup>nd</sup> Duke of Suffolk)

- 2 MAA
- 6 Retinue Bow
- 2 Levy Bow

Courage 4

John Bouchiers, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Berners

(Committed, Practiced)

(2ic William Bouchier, 2<sup>nd</sup> Viscount Bouchier)

- 2 MAA
- 3 Retinue Bow
- 4 Handgunners

Courage 4

### Reserve Ward

(Unnamed Captain, Uncommitted, Practiced)

- 1 MAA
- 4 Retinue Bow
- 1 Levy Bow

Courage 2

## Scenario specific rules

Second St Albans is by far the most atypical and fluid battle of the War of the Roses. The battle took place after a night approach march and opened with a dawn, flank attack by the Lancastrians against a Yorkist forces deployed over a front of nearly four miles. This extended front resulted in the Yorkish wards being engaged piecemeal as they maneuvered in response to the Lancastrian attack. Add to this a separate street fight and this battle becomes a real challenge to the scenario designer.

In such a fluid battle, balancing player's options against historical outcomes is difficult. We approached this problem in this manner.

1. All three Lancastrian ward must have Attack Orders and their ward commanders may take stratagems. All three Lancastrian wards commence the game under a March order.

The Yorkist Vanward, Mainward and Rearward commence the battle without orders of any sort and their ward commanders may not take stratagems. The Yorkist Reserve Ward has the "Defend Position" order.

2. The Lancastrians commence the game with the "Time hath worn us into slovenry" verse on their Chronicle due to the night march. The Yorkists have the "The odds be great" and the ""Uncurable discomfit reigns" verses added due to the disparity in numbers and surprise.
3. The battle opens with the troops deployed as shown on the map (a 4' x 7' table). The Yorkist Rearward is formed on Bernard's Heath facing north or dispersed as if in camp. The Yorkist Reserve Ward is either in the buildings around Market Place or barricaded in Market Place itself. The Yorkist Mainward and Vanward are off the northern end of the table. They may or may not enter depending on how the battle goes.

The Lancastrian Vanguard is place in column of twos (two bases wide) on Cook Row with the head of the column at Market Place. The Lancastrian Mainward and Rearward are off table and will enter on Folly Lane.

4. The game will commence with the Yorkist Reserve ward activated. At this point the only other chit in play is the Lancastrian Vanward chit. The other wards will activate as events unfold, see below.

Players may opt to ignore the street battle in St Albans and instead fight the battle north of the town. If they do then the Yorkist Rearward and the Lancastrian Vanward are removed from the game; ignore special rules 5-8; and commences the game at the start of turn three.

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5. The first action of the Yorkist Reserve ward must be to fire on the Lancastrian Vanward's lead company. This first fire will receive a bonus plus one to Intensity. Regardless of the result of this fire the Lancastrian Vanward must take a Faulter check for a Bushment. If the result is "Faulter" the ward recoils up Cook Row 6". If the result is "Miscarry" the company loses one

Courage and the ward recoils up Cook Row 6". The Yorkist Reserve ward do not get the plus one Intensity for defending works for their archers.

6. The Lancastrian Vanward may split its two companies and send one down an alternative road in the town but only if they are directed against the Yorkist Rearward.
7. When and if the Yorkist Reserve ward routs they will not flee but will instead surrender. On the turn following the surrender of the Yorkist Reserve ward two Lancastrian Lethargy chits are added to the cup. If a Lethargy chit is drawn the Lancastrian Vanward will do nothing (they are rounding up the prisoners). If the Lancastrian Vanward chit is drawn the ward will form in column on Hollowell Street or Market Place with the head of the column level with Shropshire Lane. They will be under a March order and will move off next turn. Remove the Lethargy chits when the ward activates.
8. Street Fighting rules:
  - I. The streets will be two bases wide.
  - II. Due to the narrowness of the streets, and the small frontage of the forces in them, no reduction for the change of direction while moving (turns or wheeling) is made.
  - III. When engaged in "handstrokes" only the first two ranks of each company will be considered when calculating the handstroke strength. Thus, when in contact along a street or at a barricade, only the front two bases of a force are classed as in "contact" and only the two second rank bases immediately behind them are included. Casualties may be taken from the whole company as required.
  - IV. The barricades and houses are considered obstacles and so the attacker halves his strength in handstrokes. Archery directed against a target behind a barricade or in houses suffers a -1 intensity. All attacks across a barricade are classed as "Tired Attacks", that is both the attacking force and the defending force use the Tired Attack value for their bands.
  - V. If the Yorkist Reserve ward receives a "Pushed back" result they will surrender.
  - VI. On the turn following a crossing of a barricade that barricade is dismantled and removed.
  - VII. To fire bowmen must have line of sight to a target. Line of sight may be traced through a band's own ward. Thus bowmen in a column may fire over the heads of bases in front of them provided they are firing down a straight street. The range is measured from the head of the ward. Buildings block line of sight. Yorkist archers in buildings have an arch of fire of 45<sup>0</sup> on each flank (90<sup>0</sup> arch in total).
  - VIII. "Flight" arrows used to target a company in a street incurs a reduction in "Intensity" of one.
  - IX. The fate of the Yorkist Reserve will have no impact on the Yorkist Host. If it is destroyed no verse will be added to the Yorkist Chronicle.

X. The fate of the Lancastrian Vanward will impact on the Lancastrian Host.

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9. At the start of turn 3 place the Lancastrian Mainward's chit and two Lethargy chits in the cup. If the ward chit is drawn the Mainward activates and may enter on the Folly Lane road executing a March move. Remove the Lethargy chits when the Mainward activates.

If a Lethargy chit is drawn first the Lancastrian Mainward does not activate and does not enter that turn.

10. At the start of the turn after the Lancastrian Mainward has fully moved onto the table, the Lancastrian Rearward's chit and one Lethargy chit are added to in the cup. If the Lethargy chit is drawn the Rearward is delayed. If the ward chit is drawn the Lancastrian Rearward activates and may enter on the Folly Lane road executing a March move. Remove the Lethargy chit when the Rearward activates.

11. At the start of the same turn (the turn following the arrival of the whole of the Lancastrian Mainward) place two Yorkist Lethargy chits and the Yorkist Rearward chit in the cup. If the Rearward chit is drawn then the ward is activated and will turn to face the approaching enemy. If a Lethargy chit is drawn they will remain inactive.

(Players should not think that the Yorkist Rearward is formed up and willfully blind to what is happening behind them. This unresponsiveness is to represent their disorder and confusion, or simply their ignorance of the presence of the enemy. The instant they activate is intended to be the moment they fully form after becoming aware of the Lancastrian threat. If players prefer the bands of the Yorkist Rearward could be placed randomly about in the area, perhaps with a few tents, to represent their unpreparedness. It is suggested that two bases be identified and placed to delineate the Alarm Post (forming place) of the ward.)

12. When the Yorkist Rearward first becomes activated it will be allocated one archery chit, Flight or Sheaf the player's choice. The ward currently will have no order in place and no other chits allocated to it. (This is intended to replicate the disorder and unpreparedness of the ward.)

The Yorkist Rearward player is free to engage the enemy in this state if he wishes on the next turn. Alternatively he can attempt to prepare his ward. If he chooses to prepare his ward then when his ward activates he will inform the umpire which order his ward will adopt and he will take one Tactic chit appropriate to that order. In each subsequent turn another Tactic chit may be selected concomitant with the selected order.

This process will continue until the quota of Tactic chits for that order is filled or it is stopped by the controlling player or by enemy action. Once this preparation is stopped it may not recommence and the ward must function with the Tactic chits it has amassed to that point. The player commanding this ward may stop this process any time the ward activates. The process will also stop the moment an enemy ward comes within 20 inches.

13. If, at the start of turn 20, the Yorkist Rearward is still on the table the Yorkist Mainward chit and two Lethargy chits are added to the cup. If the Mainward chit is drawn first the ward will



enter in road column on the Sandridge Road under a March order. If the entrance point is blocked or the Yorkist players wishes the entry of this ward can be delay. They will take three turns to form up off table at the end of which they may enter at any point along the northern edge deployed in line under a Piecemeal Approach. Remove the Lethargy chits when the Mainward activates. If a Lethargy chit is draw the Mainward is delayed.

14. At the start of the turn after the Yorkist Mainward has fully moved onto the table, the Yorkist Vanward's chit and one Lethargy chit are added to in the cup. If the Lethargy chit is draw the Vanward is delayed. If the ward chit is drawn the Yorkist Vanward activates and may enter under the same conditions as the Yorkist Mainward, i.e. immediately on the Sandridge Road in column under a "March" order or delayed for three turns and enter deployed. Remove the Lethargy chit when the Vanward activates.
15. When these Yorkist wards enter they do so with two archer chits, Flight or Sheaf the player's choice, and no other order chits save those permitted to any ward at any time – Piecemeal Approach, Tired Attack etc.
16. If the Yorkist Rearward is defended before the Yorkist Mainward enters the table the following occurs.
  - I. When the last company of the Yorkist Rearward routs the game will pause. Two things will then be determined. Firstly, each remaining Yorkist ward will make a Faulter check. If either fails then neither will enter the table; they will withdraw away from the fight and the game will end. If they both pass the check then the umpire will calculate the number of turns remaining till the start of turn 20. To this he will add the number of turns the Yorkists are delayed though Lethargy or time taken to deploy (see below).
  - II. The three Lancastrian wards will deploy north of St Peter's Church, facing north, at least 26" from the northern table edge.
  - III. For each 8 turns remaining (FRU) each Lancastrian ward will recover one courage up to a maximum of their starting courage minus one. For archer intensity purposes their original Courage will still count.
  - IV. Each Lancastrian ward will select a new order. For each 5 turns remaining (FRD) each Lancastrian ward will recover one order chit concomitant with the order they have selected.
  - V. Commencing on turn 20 the umpire, in conjunction with the Yorkist players, will calculate how long the Yorkist Mainward is delayed after this time due to Lethargy. To this is added three turn for form up off table. When this time is calculated then the same calculation is made for the Yorkist Rearward. This calculation will determine when the second phase of the game will commence and how prepared the Lancastrian wards will be. Place the Yorkist wards on the table 4" from the northern table edge.
  - VI. The Yorkist wards will have two arrow chits, Flight or Sheaf the player's choice.

17. If and whenever the Yorkist Main and Van wards enter the table the verse "Time hath worn us into slovenry" is NOT added to the Yorkist Chronicle. They have only marched a few miles and they have been penalized enough already via the Chronicle for the events of the day.

## Victory Conditions

The side that holds the field at the end of the game will be the victor.

## Historical Outcome

The Lancastrian vanguard reach St Albans just after dawn and proceeded to enter the town along Fishpool Street and Cook Row without encountering any resistance. When they reach Market Place they ran into the Yorkist force of archers garrisoning the town. This ambush caused the head of the column to recoil. While a second, more determined, attack was being organized and launched an alternative route through the town was sort. One was soon discovered and while the head of the column fought house to house with the Yorkist archers the balance of the host moved around the town along Folly Lane and Catherine Street to near St Peter's Church at the northern edge of St Albans.

What Bouchier, Warwick or Fauconberg knew of what was transpiring in the town is not known but they all appear to have reacted quit slowly to events. Bernard's Heath were Bouchier was encamped was three quarters of a mile from the center of St Albans; Sandridge where Warwick was two miles; while Fauconberg near Noman's Common was three and a half miles. It is doubtful if they could see or hear the fight in the town center and Bouchier would not have sighted the Lancastrian force till they came into view. This explains why the main Lancastrian host was able to deploy on the northern edges of the town and then attack northeastward against Bouchier before he could react.

The fight on Bernard's Heath was sharp but decisive. Bouchier was defeated, his ward was scattered and he himself was captured. During this fight King Henry was released from captivity and joyously reunited with his wife and son. The fight in the town center seems to have petered out by noon with the Yorkists fleeing or giving up.

Why Warwick found it difficult to march the mile or so from Sandridge to Bernard's Heath is unknown. Surprise, disorder or disunity due to suspected betrayal, seem the most likely explanations. The attack was unexpected and it was coming from an unanticipated direction. His army was unprepared for battle and many may have seen the cause as already lost, chosen discretion over valor and abandoned the field. Alternatively he may have delayed waiting for Fauconberg to join him. Some reports say that he did arrive on the heath but when it was clear that the fight was lost he withdrew northward. With the 4,000 men that remained with him Warwick moved north and then west in the hope of linking up the Duke of York.

The Lancastrians did not pursue the routed Yorkist force. For this they have been frequently criticized. By not following up the victory they allowed Warwick to escape and join up with York. Such comments are unfair and fail to account for the state of the Lancastrian force at the end of the day. This army had marched 27 miles from Royston to Dunstable; made a night march of 12

miles to St Albans; and then fought from dawn to late in the day, all this with only a short rest at Dunstable. That these men were still on their feet is remarkable. To expect them to pursue and catch Warwick's frightened yet fresh men, men who may well have not fought that day, is expecting far too much from even the most audacious troops.

Yorkist losses are placed at 4,000 while the Lancastrians suffered 2,000.