

Chichester Heritage Trails



Civil War comes to Chichester in June 1642

Many wealthy royalists lived in Chichester, or at least had homes in the city, including Sir John Morley, Sir Thomas Boyer and Christopher Lewknor. Opposing them were Henry Chitty, the captain of the local militia, known as the trained band, and the MP for Midhurst, William Cawley. In June 1642, the mayor, Robert Exon, read out the king's proclamation calling on all loyal men to take up arms for the king. On 19th August, George Goring, the governor of Portsmouth, declared for the king. This was a massive blow to the parliamentary cause and a great boost to the morale of the Chichester royalists. However, Goring proved to be a fair-weather ally to the king and quickly surrendered when subject to a naval blockade by forces loyal to parliament. With Portsmouth back in parliamentary hands, Chitty and Cawley successfully requested cannon and gunpowder be sent from there to Chichester for the further defence of the city.

In an attempt to win around opinion in Sussex to his cause, the king issued a further proclamation on 7th November granting full pardon to any inhabitant of Sussex who had rebelled against the Crown. However, the pardon specifically exempted Henry Chitty and Herbert Morley (no relation to Sir John Morley) who was Colonel of the trained bands of Lewes and de facto head of military operations in eastern Sussex.



17th century sword with ornate pierced steel hilt (Courtesy of V&A Museum)

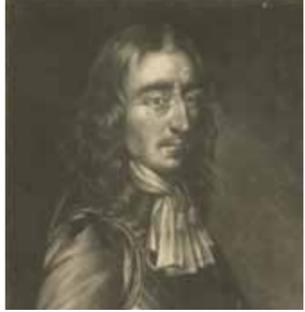
Personalities



William Cawley



Sir Arthur Haselrig



Algernon Sidney



General Sir William Waller



The City of Chichester from John Speed's *Map of Sussex*, published in 1610

The Parliamentarians

William Cawley Cawley was one of the signatories to the death warrant for King Charles I following the king's trial in January 1649. After the Restoration he fled to Switzerland, where he died at Vevey in 1667. It was rumoured that his corpse was secretly smuggled back into England and buried in the grounds of Cawley's almshouses.

Sir Arthur Haselrig The fanatical MP was sentenced to death after the Restoration as one of the regicides of 1649. The sentence was commuted to life imprisonment, but he died in the Tower of London soon after.

Algernon Sidney Sidney became military governor of Chichester in 1645 when he was only 23 years of age. After the Restoration, Sidney continued to harbour republican sympathies. In 1683 he was implicated in the Rye House plot to assassinate King Charles II and his brother, the Duke of York. He was hanged, drawn and quartered.

General Sir William Waller Waller fell out with Cromwell and was imprisoned for several years. He helped negotiate the restoration of King Charles II to his throne in 1660, and eventually died in peaceful retirement in 1668.

The Royalists

Sir Edward Ford After taking up the royalist cause, Ford became something of an inventor during the Commonwealth. In 1658 he constructed a piped water supply from the Thames to the higher parts of London. He died in 1670.

Christopher Lewknor The royalist MP for Chichester was deeply loathed by the parliamentary faction in the city. His manor house at West Dean was seized and later demolished. He died, his health having broken down, in 1653.

Oliver Whitby Curate to Bishop Henry King of Chichester, Whitby was actually shot at by a parishioner while giving a sermon. He went on the run, at one point being sheltered by an old woman in her cottage, and at another spending several days hiding in a hollowed oak tree. He later became Archdeacon of Chichester and his son, also Oliver, founded and endowed the 'bluecoat' school for twelve poor boys that bore his name.



Heavy leather coat worn beneath a breastplate was made from European buffalo hide which gave added protection in battle (Courtesy of V&A Museum)

Civil War in England

The outbreak of civil war in England during the summer of 1642 was the culmination of decades of simmering resentment that took many forms. Politically, the nation was divided between those who supported the right of King Charles I to rule on his own without recourse to parliament, known as the 'Divine Right of Kings'; and those who believed that laws, and particularly taxation, should not be imposed without the consent of parliament. In religious terms, the King sought, through his archbishop, William Laud, to 'uphold the dignity of the clergy', and to reintroduce practices that seemed reminiscent of the ritual and liturgy of Roman Catholicism.

Amongst those who resisted these changes were people who wished to see a more thorough reformation of the Church of England. These 'puritans' rejected ritual in favour of sermons and biblical study.

The rising merchant class tended to support parliament, while the 'older' money of the country, the aristocracy and gentry, tended to support the king. The poorer people, who made up the mass of the population, were far less eager to take up the cause of either side.

Civil war became inevitable when King Charles entered the House of Commons with armed soldiers, determined to arrest five of his leading critics, including Sir Arthur Haselrig, who would play an important role in the siege of Chichester in December 1642. The Civil War began when the king raised the Royal Standard at Nottingham on 22nd August 1642.

The decisive victory by parliamentary forces at the Battle of Naseby on 14th June 1645 crushed Royalist hopes of victory in the war. The execution of King Charles I on 30th January 1649 marked the moment that Oliver Cromwell and other hardliners took power in the state. For the next eleven years, England would be a Commonwealth, without king, bishops, or a House of Lords. The Book of Common Prayer was outlawed and the traditional twelve days of feasting at Christmas were banned. England was a very different country until the Restoration of the monarchy in May 1660.



Roundhead soldiers, Cassel's *History of England*, 1898

Did you know?

Chichester has 518 listed buildings, 18 of which are Grade 1. Find out more about them on the Heritage Trails and discover a lot of hidden architectural gems and stories about Chichester's amazing history that will surprise you.

Chichester Heritage Trails

- Received a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £53,200 in 2016 with contributions of £1,000 each from Chichester City Council and The Chichester Society.

- Was conceived by the Chichester Society, managed by Chris Hare of History People UK and delivered with the support and active contribution of many organisations and individuals, some of whom received training in heritage skills through the project.



Special thanks to

- Project partners:** Bishop Luffa School, Chichester BID, Chichester City Council, Chichester Local History Society, Chichester Society, Chichester Walls Trust, University of Chichester, West Sussex Library Service, West Sussex Record Office.
- Project volunteers:** in particular Andrew Berriman, Richard Childs and Alan Green whose knowledge of Chichester's local history has been of immense value. Also Anthony Quail, Bob Wiggins, John Wichers, Richard Beeny, Paula Chatfield, Ellen Cheshire, Mabs Evans, Mary Hand, Madeleine Keene, Geoff King, Sue Millard, Paula Nicholson, Sue Parslow, Geoffrey Redman, Pat Saunders, Lela Tredwell, Wendy Walker, Ross Wilson; and students at Bishop Luffa School and the University of Chichester.

For further information

www.chichesterheritagetrails.org.uk
www.chichestersociety.org.uk

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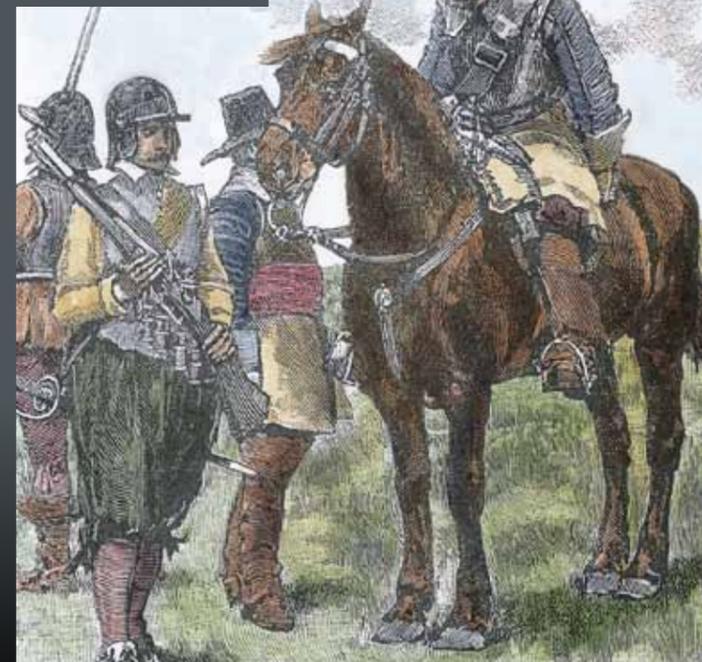
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Chichester Heritage Trails



Chichester during the Civil War 1642-1646



A CHICHESTER SOCIETY PROJECT

The Civil War trail

Starting at the Northgate car park walk north on Broyle Road at the top of the car park Cawley's almshouses are on your right.

1 Cawley's almshouses, Broyle Road William Cawley, variously 1 MP for Midhurst and Chichester, had these almshouses built for 'decayed tradesmen' in 1625. Officially known as the 'Hospital of St Bartholomew', they offered shelter to aged tradesmen of Chichester who had fallen on hard times. Walk back down Broyle Road to the pedestrian tunnel emerging on North Street, continue down North St then turn left into Guildhall St and then straight into Priory Park.



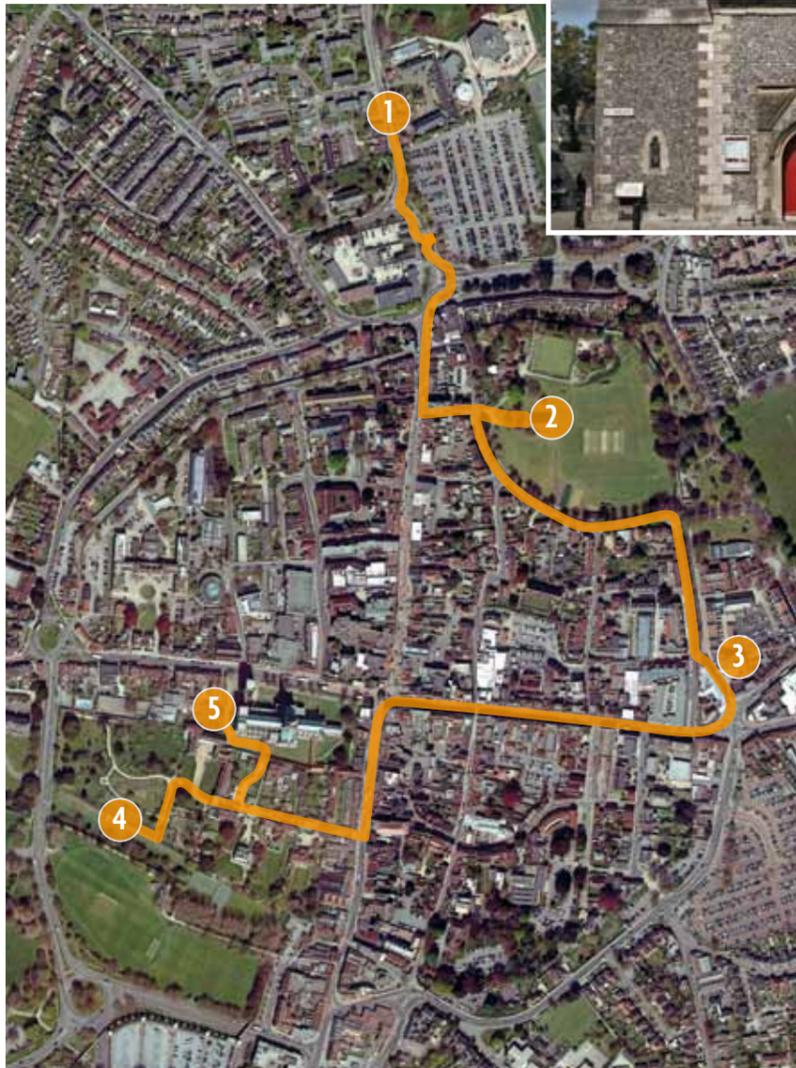
Cawley's almshouses

2 The Guildhall, Priory Park On the night of November 15th 1642 a meeting was held here to try and reconcile the opposing factions in the city. The meeting turned out to be a ruse, allowing Sir John Morley's men to seize the city guns while Chitty and his men were attending the meeting. Turn left on leaving Priory Park gates



The Guildhall, the administrative centre of the city during the Civil War

and follow Priory Road to the left (East) until the City Walls are reached. Turn right before the Walls into East Walls and pass through the archway in the Walls then turn right; continue south on the footpath keeping the Walls on your right until reaching Eastgate Square with several cafés and restaurants. St Pancras Church is on the left.



© Getmapping

St Pancras Church, Eastgate, badly damaged during the Civil War and rebuilt in 1750



3 St Pancras Church, Eastgate Square The current church was rebuilt in 1750. The previous church was severely damaged during the siege of 1642. Cannon were fired from the tower into the city. Turn right into East St and proceed West to the Market Cross, and turn left into South St. Continue to the arch on the right, into Canon Lane. At the end, pass through the Gatehouse and immediate left into Bishop's Palace Garden. Walk through the walled courtyard, through an arched doorway and immediate turn left up steps onto the Walls. From the Wall parapet there is a fine view of the City's southern approaches with the Deanery on your left.

4 City wall behind the Deanery Had the siege continued, Waller intended to breach the city wall at this point with an explosive charge (a 'petard'), part of the wall here was said to be only one brick thick where a doorway had been blocked in. To reach the Cathedral, retrace steps to Canon Lane and turn left opposite the Deanery into St Richard's Walk, a narrow lane leading to the Cloisters at which point turn left to reach the Cathedral's West door.

The city wall from Westgate Fields and, right, looking north towards the Deanery and Cathedral



5 The Cathedral Evidence can still be found in the cathedral of the rampage of parliamentary soldiers, for example, some of the paintings of kings and bishops still show signs of the damage inflicted in 1642. It will be noticed that the eyes of the portrait of King Edward VI are missing – having been picked out with a sword.

Chichester during the Civil War 1642–1646

Royalists seize the city – November 1642

On the night of 15th November a group of royalists in Chichester led by Sir John Morley overwhelmed Chitty's men on the city walls and seized the armoury. In a letter to William Lenthall, Speaker of the House of Commons, William Cawley described what happened –

'When we came into the street we perceived some swords drawn at the north gate of the city – where one of the guns we had from Portsmouth was placed – which swords were drawn against the gunner. We endeavoured to pacify the rage of the people, but we could not, but they then overthrew the gun from his (sic) carriage and possessed themselves of him (sic), and from thence they went to other parts of the city where the other guns were placed and possessed themselves of them also.'

Next morning, the royalist, Sir Edward Ford, High Sheriff of Sussex, arrived outside the city walls with some 1000 men, including at least 100 dragoons. The gates of the city were opened to Ford. It was clear that Chitty and Cawley and their parliamentary friends in Chichester had fallen victim to a carefully executed royalist coup. The parliamentary leaders fled the city, seeking refuge in Portsmouth.

Sir Edward then sought to gain an advantage by heading eastwards in the hope of taking Lewes for the king. A small royalist garrison was established at Arundel, while the bulk of Ford's army continued eastwards. However they met resistance from the trained bands of Lewes at Haywards Heath. The Lewes men were outnumbered at least four to one, but they fought with 'great fierceness', inflicting up to 200 casualties on the royalists. As the battle turned into a rout for the royalists, Sir Edward Ford, it was alleged, 'conveyed himself away and left his men in the lurch to shift for themselves.'

Herbert Morley gathered a growing army of volunteers and pursued Ford back into western Sussex. Arundel fell easily to the parliamentarians when 'thirty six daring spirits' blew in the gate of the castle with gunpowder and, with drawn swords, forced the surrender of the garrison. At the same time as Morley was heading west, the parliamentary general, Sir William Waller, with an army of 6,000 men was marching eastwards from Hampshire. The two forces converged on Chichester on 21st December 1642 and laid siege to the city.

The siege of Chichester

At first the royalist garrison refused to surrender and haughtily rejected terms offered by Waller. There was a rumour that Prince Rupert, King Charles' dashing nephew was heading for Sussex with a large army. This news caused general consternation, as Rupert's men were believed to plunder and pillage wherever they went. Despite it being winter, the weather was fair and dry, and the parliamentary forces were able to camp outside the city walls without too much discomfort. Waller placed his cannon on 'The Broils' (the Broyle) but the artillery

overshot the city. The following day he brought his cannon to Cawley's Almshouses 'within half a musket-shot of the north gate, and played through the gate into the market-place' nearer the town.

Over the next few days, skirmishes took place in the two small suburbs that, in those days, lay just outside the city walls – St Bartholomew's by the west gate, and St Pancras, by the east gate. Fearing that the parliamentarians would enter the city from these quarters, the royalists set fire to the mainly humble cottages in these districts, forcing the parliamentarians to retreat. As Christmas came and went, it was clear that the Chichester royalists could not expect to be relieved by Prince Rupert or any other royalist army. As one puritan commentator with Waller's army put it: 'the papists and malignants there are now all at their wits end... they have now no way to escape unless they leap into the sea, which would prove but a mad Christmase gambole.'

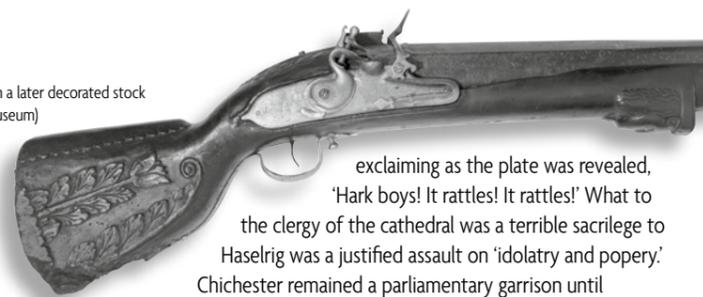
On the evening of the 27th December, a trumpeter was sent out from the city, requesting a 'parley' with General Waller. Terms for the surrender were agreed and at 7am the next morning, the gates of the city were opened to the parliamentary forces. Those who had been taken prisoner by the royalists were released and the leading royalists themselves now became Waller's captives. The great majority of the royalist soldiers were released, some even joined Waller and Morley's forces. Sir Edward Ford and other prominent royalists were sent to London. It happened that Ford's brother-in-law was Henry Ireton, who was not only a leading parliamentary general, he was also Oliver Cromwell's son-in-law. Family ties counted for a lot, even in a time of civil war, and Ford was soon released. A year later he was again leading a royalist insurgency in Sussex, but that campaign did not affect Chichester.

As Waller and Morley's men entered the city it began to rain – having been mild and dry for the entire siege – proof, said the puritan soldiers that the Almighty had been on their side in the conflict. A plot to blow up Waller with gunpowder in his lodgings in the city was discovered, again, by 'God's Providence'. Everywhere, the pious soldiery beheld the hand of a deity who was very much on the side of their 'Good Old Cause'.

After the siege – sacrilege in the Cathedral

Sir Arthur Haselrig, Member of Parliament and a devout puritan, was present at the siege and afterwards led his men on a rampage through the cathedral. Statues and paintings were defaced and the cathedral plate plundered. On discovering some of the most precious treasures of the cathedral, hidden behind wooden panelling, Sir Arthur allowed himself a little dance of joy,

Wall gun, c.1640, with a later decorated stock (Courtesy of V&A Museum)



exclaiming as the plate was revealed, 'Hark boys! It rattles! It rattles! What to the clergy of the cathedral was a terrible sacrilege to Haselrig was a justified assault on 'idolatry and popery.'

Chichester remained a parliamentary garrison until 1646, by which time the war in England was effectively at an end and the king defeated. There were many complaints in the city and the surrounding countryside about the burden of having so many soldiers in the vicinity and the cost of billeting and feeding them. Worse still, there was much resentment about local men being forcibly impressed to serve in the parliamentary army. In May 1645, Algernon Sidney was appointed governor of the city and tasked with maintaining order. Later that year about 1,000 rural labourers gathered in protest on The Trundle. They were part of the Clubmen movement that wished to see all armies removed from their neighbourhoods and an end to impressment. It was said that army recruiters were ambushed and attacked and left 'with blood running about their ears'.

The Clubmen were forcibly dispersed from their headquarters at Walberton and their leader shot. However the parliamentary committee in Sussex wished to pacify the county and Sussex was largely demilitarised by the end of 1646.

Henry King, the Bishop of Chichester was forced from his palace and deprived of his lucrative living at Petworth. Many of the ejected canons of the cathedral fell on hard times, one dying, destitute in a local alehouse. However one canon, William Oughtred, lived to see the Restoration of Charles II in 1660. It is said that the 85 year-old 'died in a sudden extasy [sic] of joy' on hearing the news. Two hundred years later, Canon Ashwell, Principal of Chichester Theological College, kept a cannon ball in pride of place on his mantelpiece, with the ironical note, 'Presented by Sir W. Waller to the Dean and Chapter of Chichester 1642'.

Religious and political feeling stirred up by the Civil War remained part of life in Chichester for many decades to come.

In 1679, a mob attacked the Bishop's Palace, after the bishop, Guy Carleton, refused to meet with the Duke of Monmouth when he visited the city. Carleton was derided as 'an old popish rogue'. The Corporation of St Pancras – a mock corporation and dining club – was instituted in 1688 in commemoration of the landing of William of Orange and the overthrow of the Roman Catholic, James II. The Corporation still exists today, but as a charitable rather than sectarian organisation.



Lobster pot helmet (Courtesy of V&A Museum)



Pikeman's armour mid-17C (Courtesy of V&A Museum)