

NORTON'S HORSE: THE HISTORY OF A HAMPSHIRE REGIMENT DURING THE FIRST CIVIL WAR 1642-1646

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ABSTRACT

This paper traces the activities of a Hampshire regiment during the First Civil War, 1642-1646. Sources from local and national collections have been brought together to reconstruct the achievements of Richard Norton's Parliamentarian regiment. Study of this previously neglected regiment provides new insights into military activities in the south and west in the early years of the Civil War, as a counter-balance to the well known events at the Royalist defence of Basing House.

INTRODUCTION

Recent research has revealed a great deal of information about the composition of the Parliamentary and Royalist armies of the First Civil War (Young 1967, 1970; Hutton 1982). In a few cases it has been possible to reconstruct a detailed campaign history of an individual regiment for the entire period from 1642 to 1646. Perhaps the best of these is that describing the exploits of the King's Lifeguard of foot (Toynbee and Young 1973, 36-45). Many regiments still remain obscure, commemorated only by the name of their colonel and those of a few officers upon yellowed and fading pay warrants. This is particularly the case for some of the regiments of foot and horse raised by local county communities and which frequently remained independent of the main armies. Many such regiments which fought in the name of Parliament became a source of contention between the central government in London, the county authorities and the local army commander as to how best they might be employed. Very often the tactics of the regiment's colonel were decided by his own personal loyalties and the source of the money with which he paid and provisioned his troops; a well documented example is that of Colonel

Edmund Ludlow of Wiltshire (Ludlow 95, 97, 105).

One regiment of horse which has received surprisingly little attention from local and military historians is that led by Colonel Richard Norton of Southwick, near Portsmouth. The regiment was raised in Hampshire and paid for partly by local taxes and partly by Norton himself. From time to time the House of Commons authorised payments from central funds gathered as taxes, such as the Excise Revenue and the Court of Wards (*CJ* iii, 492; *iv*, 20). These payments were inevitably in considerable arrears. The regiment campaigned actively and continuously for over two years, taking part in several of the major battles in the south of England as well as a number of minor local actions. It served briefly with the Parliamentary Southern Association army commanded by Sir William Waller. That army lacked a biographer until relatively recently, when Adair's pioneering research focussed attention upon the importance of the campaigns in the southern counties and, in particular, the battle of Cheriton in 1644 (Adair 1969, 1973). Of the Parliamentary regiments of horse which took part in that engagement, Colonel Norton's remains one of the most poorly documented. Such accounts as exist are either incomplete or erroneous (*eg* Godwin 1904) and since the regiment performed valuable service for Parliament which was not, despite popular prevailing notions, confined solely to Hampshire, its activities deserve to be better known.

RICHARD NORTON

The reasons for Norton's unswerving allegiance to Parliament are not immediately self-

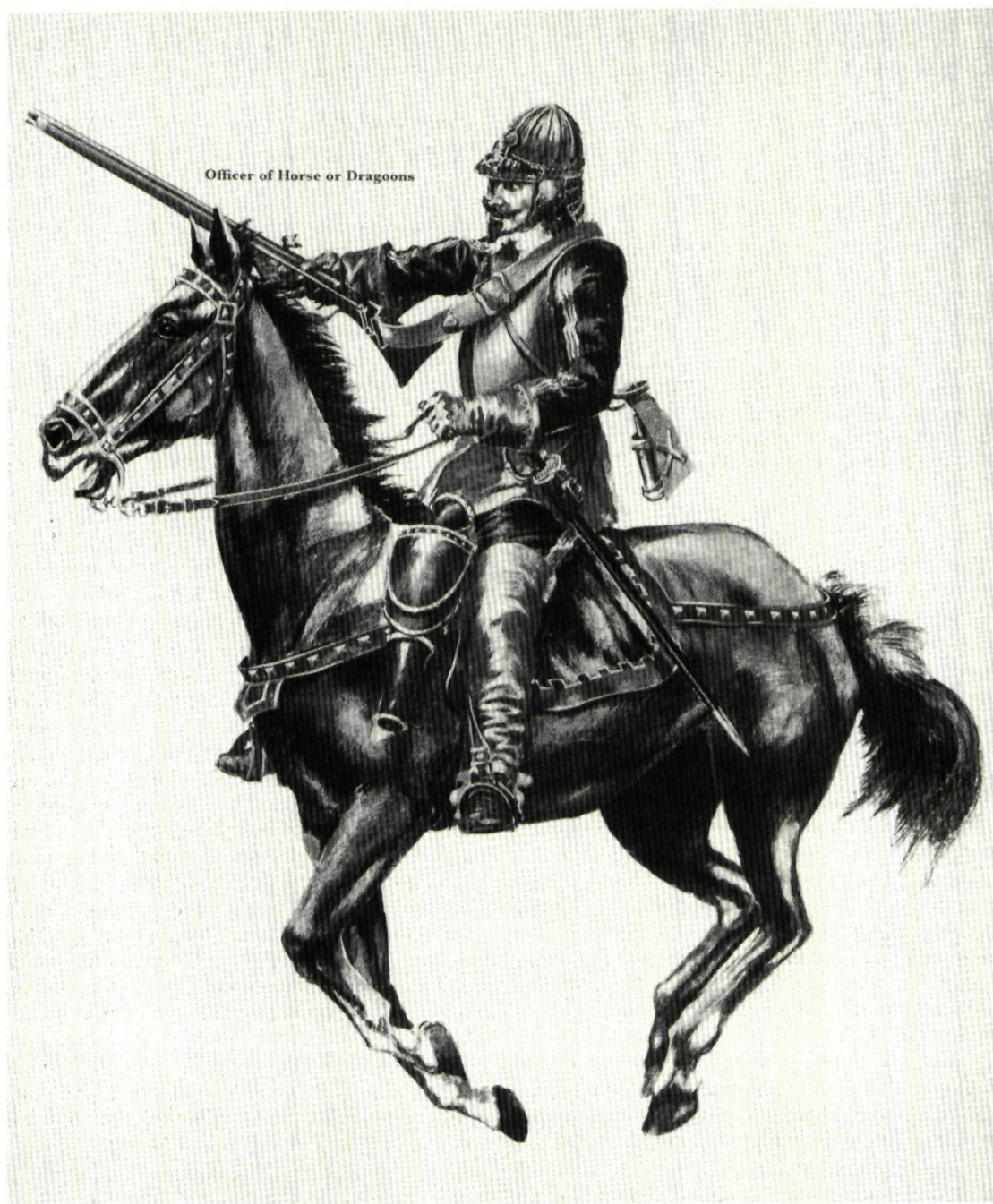


Fig 1. No portrait of Colonel Richard Norton has been found, but he would have been attired in a fashion not dissimilar to the Parliamentary officer shown. Reproduced from *The English Civil War Armies* by courtesy of Osprey Publishing Limited.

evident although not unexpected in view of the strong Puritan connections of his family (Hall and Barber 1984). Not every gentleman of Puritan persuasion fought against the King however (eg Sir Ralph Hopton, senior Royalist commander in the western counties during 1643; Edgar 1968, 201) and the Norton family was no exception, for Edward, one of Richard Norton's younger brothers, held a commission in a troop of Royalist horse. A modern and detailed study of Hampshire politics at this time remains to be written and the only available account (Godwin 1904) is highly uncritical, unbalanced and, in places, misleading. The evidence suggests a county very much divided. Many of the King's overt supporters fled the county to Oxford where Charles established his court and his own parliament after the inconclusive battle at Edgehill in October 1642. The Marquis of Winchester turned his great house at Basing into a garrison from where he proclaimed his steadfast loyalty to the King. Many more gentry whose sympathies lay clearly with Parliament were nominated by the Commons to the various committees whose task it was to raise and maintain bodies of troops and to implement the many directives of the House for the regulation of the nation's affairs. A number of important studies of local administration by the committees of other counties has shown that these bodies were often far from effective, riddled with internal dissent and dependent often on the initiative and personality of individual members for success (Pennington and Roots 1957; Everitt 1960, 1973; Morrill 1974; Fletcher 1975).

As one of the principal and wealthiest land-owners in Hampshire, Richard Norton was clearly in a position to command considerable influence had he elected to play an active role as a member of the many committees to which he was nominated (Firth and Rait 1911 I 87, 116, 140, 225, 333, 541, 694). He declined to do so, raising companies of foot for the garrisons of Southampton and Portsmouth, where he was military governor from time to time. It was as

colonel of his own regiment of horse that he distinguished himself and made consistently rousing news for the Parliamentary pamphleteers and newspapers. Even his opponents acknowledged his courage and gallantry, according him the accolade of 'a gentleman of the best rank and estate in the county and a stout diligent officer who had a body of foot and horse equal to the service' (*Clarendon* 3 408, note 1).

Norton had one certain ally among the active committee members of Hampshire. This was Richard Maijor of Hursley, a close acquaintance and a 'much respected friend'. Maijor was Treasurer for the Division of Fawley, one of the seven areas into which the county was divided for administrative purposes (Barber 1979). He handled various sums of Norton's own money as well as apportioning taxes raised for the payment of troops. The regularity with which Norton's regiment of horse was paid owed much to the efforts of Richard Maijor.

In essence, Charles the First's opponents in Parliament wanted Church reforms and a limit to the constitutional powers of the monarchy with regard to tax revenues. The King, proclaiming himself defender of the Established Church and attempting to rule without Parliamentary sanction, had resorted to many devices to raise taxes which were unpopular. When the split between King and Parliament finally came in June of 1642 Charles despatched Commissions of Array to all the Lords Lieutenant of the kingdom, empowering them to secure the magazines and armouries and raise troops. This gave the authority for the then governor of Portsmouth and Southsea Castle to declare this important fortress, port and dockyard as a prize for the supply of the King's army. Richard Norton's first taste of warfare came with the resulting short siege in August 1642 by a composite brigade of foot and horse commanded for Parliament by Sir William Waller; it is likely that the contingent of mounted troops supplied and led by Norton formed the basis of the later regiment (Webb 1969).

ORGANISATION FOR WAR

Contrary to expectations the first major battle at Edgehill on 23 October 1642 did not bring the war to a speedy conclusion. Sporadic fighting continued during the winter months and both sides began recruiting in earnest. In November 1642 Richard Maijor supplied '... fower horses completely armed with great saddles, pistolls, carabines and buff coates vallewed with their furniture at twenty pounds apeece' for the troop of Captain Francis St Barbe of Broadlands, Romsey. Maijor also gave a sum of twenty pounds in cash for the purchase of a fifth horse and arms (BL Add Mss 24, 860, f 9). By the summer of 1643 the regiment appears to have reached its full strength of six troops. Normally each troop would have mustered four commissioned and seven non-commissioned officers, besides sixty or so gentleman and common troopers (Peacock 1874, 47 ff). With regimental officers such as the commissary, officers' personal servants and with no active service to deplete their ranks by casualty, sickness or desertion, it is likely that Norton's regiment of horse would have mustered over four hundred officers and men when it took the field in June 1643. That this paper strength was achieved is confirmed by a Royalist report that Colonel Richard Norton had 'betwixt 400 and 500 good men and horse well accommodated at Winchester and Southampton' in August of 1643 (BL Add Mss 27, 402, f 86).

No regimental list appears to have survived but the troop commanders in 1643 were probably the following (BL Add Mss 24,860, f 48; PRO E 134):

Colonel Richard Norton (of Southwick)

Major (? Robert) Stewart

Captain Francis St Barbe (of Broadlands, Romsey)

Captain Thomas Bettsworth (of Winchester)

Captain (? Francis) Thistlethwayte

Captain (? John) Pitman (of ? Mapledurwell)

All survived the war with the exception of Francis St Barbe who was mortally wounded at the First Battle of Newbury on 20 September

1643 (HRO 10M58/PR2). His troop seems to have been taken over by his brother John (BL Add Mss 24,860, f 125). Other officers are difficult to identify but included William Vincent of Hounslow, Middlesex, 'lieutenant of horse under Col Norton' (*CCCComp* iv, 2537). The regimental commissary was John Woodman, a lawyer, and, in 1646, a sequestration official for the Hampshire Committee (*CCCComp* ii, 848; PRO E 134), whilst the commissioned quartermaster for Norton's own troop was Charles Terry, a Hampshire man (PRO E 134; BL Add Mss 24, 860, ff 102, 152). Captain Bettsworth's junior officers in June 1645 were Lieutenant Turgis and Cornet Barnes (BL Add Mss 24,860, f 131). Norton's personal steward, Robert Phillips, and a servant named Hurst regularly acted as couriers for messages and money (BL Add Mss 24,860, ff 147-150, 157; 24,861, ff 1,2, 41). Two further troops commanded by Captains Matthew Draper and Samuel Potts, regarded by some authorities (Adair 1973, 178-79; Toynbee and Young 1970, 81) as belonging to Norton's regiment, appear in fact to have been independent troops raised under the Southern Association ordinance by the Hampshire Committee for Sir William Waller's army in 1644. They served briefly under Norton's command as part of the composite brigade of horse at Basing House before joining Waller (BL Add Mss 24,860, ff 52, 53; *CSPD* 1644, 218, 221, 238-9, 243, 255, 272).

Norton's regiment seems to have been paid with greater regularity than some of the other troops of horse raised in Hampshire (BL Add Mss 24,860, f 152). Richard Maijor's efforts to raise cash for this purpose were not always successful however and he was obliged to borrow money on one occasion in November 1644 to pay Captain Pitman's troopers who at that time were '...in greate wante...' (BL Add Mss 24,860, f 93). The regiment does not seem to have been plagued with the threat of wholesale desertion over the issue of pay, or rather the lack of it, as was the case with the troop of another Hampshire gentleman, Captain Thomas Jervoise of Herriard, in

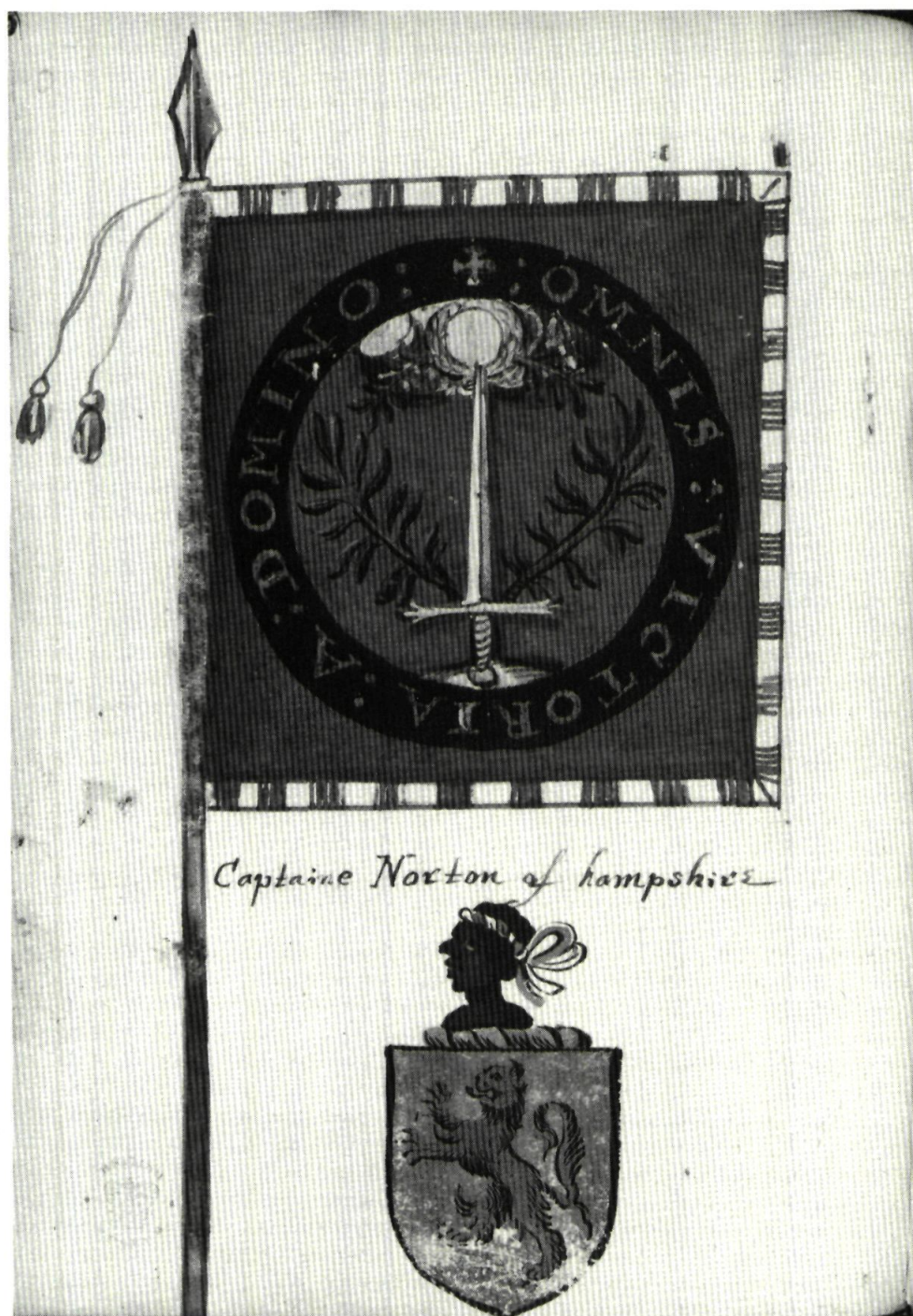


Fig 2. The troop standard of Colonel Richard Norton (see Appendix 2). From Add Mss 5247 by permission of the British Library.

common with others in the Southern Association horse during the autumn of 1644 (CSPD 1644, 504, 532; BL Add Mss 24, 860, ff 99, 100).

The horses needed attention certainly more often than the records show. It cost ten pounds for 'shoeing and drenching horses of Colonell Norton's regiment' in April 1645 (BL Add Mss 24,860, f 102). A common problem was infestation with intestinal worms for which a typical remedy was 'two spoonfull of honey in a good quantity of milke, given in a horne. This is sweet, and drawes the wormes out of the mawe' (*ie* stomach). After a while this was to be followed with a 'like quantity of sweet ale or beere and in it a handfull of salt, and that will kill them all' (*Symonds Diary* 225). Above all else, fodder was a constant problem in view of the prodigious amounts of hay and oats consumed by several hundred horses. When the town of Romsey supplied 25 horses for Norton's own troop in November 1643 it cost the townisfolk twenty-nine shillings to provide one ton of hay with which to feed them. Richard Maijor kept lists of the names of those who could be relied upon to stable horses or provide fodder, and also of those 'whoe will doe nothing' (BL Add Mss 24,860, ff 48, 58). The common troopers had 1s 4d per day deducted from their pay when quartered in civilian billets with their horses (BL Add Mss 24, 860, f 152). Richard Maijor also settled an account for the grazing of Colonel Norton's grey mare for ten weeks at a weekly rental of 2s 6d (BL Add Mss 24, 861, f 41).

The most informative document which has survived to provide considerable detail about the movements of Norton's regiment is a pay account of one John Sparrey who 'served trowper in Coll Norton's own trowpe from the 15 of June 1643 to the 19 of July 1645' (BL Add Mss 24,860, f 152). He did so for the grand total of £95 5s, of which he received in cash less than £24, the balance being deducted for 'free quarter'. The importance of Sparrey's account is that it serves as an itinerary for the movements of Norton's own troop as well as confirming the general location of the regiment although not all the six troops may

necessarily have been present. To piece together the complete picture of the regiment's campaign history has required the searching of many other sources and this is given in Appendix 1.

The regiment's final muster before taking the field seems to have been in the city of Southampton in June 1643 (BL Add Mss 24,860, f 48). Their presence in the Andover/Salisbury area of the Hampshire/Wiltshire border later that month and during early July (Appendix 1) was most probably a consequence of the county committee's need to enforce the writ of Parliament to collect money, plate, arms and supplies, in response to a stream of ordinances authorising the collection of weekly taxes, the sequestration of the goods of known Royalist supporters and the raising of bodies of troops (Firth and Rait 1911, *passim*). The means to do this lay in the employment of soldiers loyal to the county committee.

The regiment was quartered at Shrewton near Salisbury on July 14 when Sir William Waller's Western Association army was defeated at the battle of Roundway Down, near Devizes, on July 13, just twelve miles to the north. There is no evidence to suggest that Norton's horse was involved in this engagement, which marked a successful culmination of Sir Ralph Hopton's strategy against Waller in the western counties earlier in the year (Prest 1950, Young 1953, Edgar 1968).

The Salisbury area was no longer a safe place to be and the regiment beat a prudent retreat southwards to the protection of the Parliamentary garrison of Portsmouth. The Norton family owned considerable land on Portsea Island (HRO 5M50, *passim*; 4M53, *passim*) and this would have provided ample summer grazing for the horses. To the north, emboldened by the Royalist successes in the west country, the Marquis of Winchester was busily fortifying his house with arms and men and sending foraging parties into the surrounding countryside, no doubt much to the annoyance of the Hampshire Committee. Norton's regiment sallied out of the

Portsmouth garrison in what was to be a raid more of propaganda value than military. It quartered at Greywell, near Odiham, on Saturday, 29 July and, eschewing the Sabbath day, appeared before Basing House on the following Monday. After some inconsequential skirmishing the regiment was driven off by the arrival of a strong reinforcement sent by the King from Oxford in response to an earlier request by the Marquis. They retired to the strongly fortified Parliamentary garrison at nearby Farnham overnight and then returned to Portsmouth (BL TT E27/5, 2) where they remained until late August, as yet untried in a major battle. The opportunity was not long in coming.

In the west country a number of Parliamentary garrisons were still holding out against the victorious Royalists. The most important was that of the city of Gloucester, then under siege by the King's Oxford army. Parliament ordered its senior army commander, the Earl of Essex, to march an expedition to relieve the city. The army included a strong brigade of foot from the City of London and was joined by many independent regiments of horse, including Norton's, at the general rendezvous at Brackley Heath, ten miles east of Banbury, on 1 September 1643. After raising the siege seven days later, Essex turned his army home from Gloucester in appalling weather, incessant rain turning the roads to quagmires. The troops on both sides were tired, wet and hungry, while losses from desertion and disease were high. The King's army reached Newbury to block Essex's line of march and the Parliamentary commander realised that he would have to fight a pitched battle in order to break through (BL TT E69/2, E69/12, E69/14; Washbourne 1825, i, 239; Money 1881, *passim*).

WASH COMMON AND AFTER

Essex dispersed his horse into two roughly equal divisions. Norton's regiment was in the brigade commanded by Colonel Sir Philip Stapleton, on the right wing of the Parliamentary positions. This was on Wash

Common, to the south of a prominence known as Round Hill, on which Essex had located his cannon. The battle commenced at about seven o'clock in the morning and Wash Common quickly became the scene of a heavy cavalry engagement. Three successive charges by the bulk of the Royalist horse led by the King's nephew, Prince Rupert, finally forced Stapleton's brigade off the common '... and was so encompassed that the enemy and ours, with both our whole bodies were all mixed together and in this confusion many were slain...' (BL TT E69/2). It was probably in this action that Captain Francis St Barbe received his mortal wound and the regiment almost certainly sustained other losses for, like the rest of Stapleton's brigade, the men and horses were so spent that they took no further part in the fighting. Both sides disengaged when dusk fell and each retired from the battlefield. The Earl of Essex continued towards London via Aldermaston and Reading; Norton's own troop quartered at nearby Twyford on 23 September (BL Add Mss 24, 860, f 152) probably with the rest of the regiment but with the exception of St Barbe's troop. They appear to have hastened home with the body of their captain without much pause for rest, for he was buried at Romsey on 22 September, two days after the battle (HRO 10M58/PR2).

The regiment returned to the Portsmouth garrison by 2 October and later quartered in the city of Southampton (BL Add Mss 24, 860, f 152). To the Parliamentary Hampshire Committee the security of the city no longer seemed certain in Norton's absence. In mid-September six Royalist regiments of horse had hovered ominously close (HMC *Portland Mss* 1 130). One of these was the very strong regiment led by the Hampshire sheriff, Colonel Sir Humphrey Bennet, whose own troop was commanded by Captain-lieutenant Edward Norton, one of Richard's younger brothers (Hall and Barber 1984). News of the Royalist victories in the west perhaps encouraged those townsmen disenchanted with the activities of Parliament to think of openly declaring the city for the King and it is probable that the

Hampshire Committee had this in mind when they directed Norton to quarter in Southampton after his return from Newbury. For his part Norton was successful in obtaining the signatures of most of the leading townsmen to endorse a vow and protestation of loyalty to Parliament, although as he put it 'some devilish spirits there are that have refused it, but I shall pare their nails' (HMC *Portland Mss* 1 164; *CJ* iii, 347).

Meanwhile, Sir Ralph Hopton had been given a new commission to raise an army to clear Wiltshire, Hampshire and Surrey and so open the way to London (Edgar 1968, 140). This finally forced the counties of Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex and Kent to agree, albeit reluctantly, to form a Southern Association for mutual defence (Firth and Rait 1911 i 333). The county committees were charged with the raising of a new army to be commanded by Sir William Waller. Hampshire was to contribute 312 horse initially (BL Add Mss 32, 477, f3) and their committee seem to have regarded their obligation fulfilled by ordering Norton's regiment to join Waller's army. At the general muster of the new army in Farnham Park under the lee of the castle on 1 November 1643, eighteen troops of horse were present (Adair 1969, 113; Adair 1973, 24, 34, 35). None were from Norton's regiment, which was still in Southampton five days later (BL Add Mss 24, 860, f 48).

WINTER 1643-4

Waller's army marched into Hampshire on 3 November 1643 in a blizzard; from November 5 to 15 he invested Basing House to no avail in a fortnight of rain, sleet, snow and freezing nights. Norton's horse finally joined the army at Odiham (BL Add Mss 24, 860, f 152) but remained, in common with the rest of Waller's cavalry, virtually impotent in the face of such appalling weather in siege conditions. When Waller retired his wet, hungry and exhausted army to Farnham, Norton's horse returned to Southampton, reaching the city by November 18 (BL Add Mss 24, 860, f 48). Hopton moved his army forward from its rendezvous at

Winchester to occupy a broad swathe of country between Odiham and Petersfield but failed to bring Waller to battle near Farnham. Faced with the prospect of over-wintering in an area already depleted in fodder and provisions he dispersed his army into several brigades divided between Alton, Alresford, Petersfield and Winchester; a small force was also sent to occupy Arundel on the Sussex coast and another was quartered in Romsey with the intent of harassing foragers from the Parliamentary garrison of Southampton. The regiment of horse detailed for this latter task was that of Sir Humphrey Bennet (*Bellum Civile* 69-70).

Richard Norton sent his own troop to his home at Southwick for its protection and sallied out of Southampton in a night attack upon the Royalist brigade at Romsey on December 11 with some of his horse and several foot companies from the garrison. The Royalists were driven out of the town, losing many dead, wounded and prisoner, the latter including Captain-lieutenant Edward Norton. It was not until August 1645 that Colonel Richard Norton was able successfully to petition Parliament for his brother's release from captivity (BL Add Mss 24, 860, f 152; *Bellum Civile* 70; BL Egerton Mss 868, 1643-44; HMC *Portland Mss*, iii, 242; *CCComp* i 42. 108).

Meanwhile, Waller had attacked and broken up the Royalist brigade at Alton and, taking advantage of an iron-hard frost, marched south to invest Arundel on December 19. Norton, again exercising his independence, retired his regiment to Southampton and then to Southwick, for Christmas (BL Add Mss 24, 860, f 152). The beleaguered garrison of Arundel soon succumbed to the extreme privation induced by cold, thirst, starvation and disease and sent word of their plight to Hopton. He mustered a force of about 3,000 men and marched through the bleak countryside from Winchester. False intelligence about Waller's strength persuaded Hopton to look first for quarters to refresh his troops until reinforcements arrived and he turned towards Westbourne, just outside Havant, on 1 January 1644. An advance party of two regiments of

dragoons were within two miles of Havant when their scouts reported the presence of a large body of Parliamentary horse. This was Colonel Richard Norton who, with 130 of his men (roughly three troops) had ridden to join Waller but found his way blocked by another body of Royalist horse and which they were obliged to fight off near Chichester (BL TT E 81/7).

Although the Royalist dragoons were no more than mounted foot, mostly on inferior horses, they nevertheless nearly separated Norton's own troop, who were acting as rear-guard, from the rest of their comrades. Norton's troop routed the dragoons in a spirited charge but were themselves attacked in the rear by a small contingent from the pursuing Royalist horse. Fortunately for Norton the main body of horse giving chase became lost in the unfamiliar country and the Parliamentary horse extricated themselves with the loss of only twenty-four men. The whole action was conducted, in Norton's own words, '...in extremely fowle weather....'

On the morning of 6 January 1644, the Royalist garrison of Arundel surrendered to Waller. Hopton withdrew all his forces back to Winchester and the high winds and rain of the past week turned to blizzards and deep snow, immobilising the armies of both sides. A personal tragedy overshadowed all else for Richard Norton. His youngest daughter, Honor, died and was buried at Southwick on 15 January, aged a little over three years old (Hall and Barber 1984).

CHERITON AND AFTER

For over a month nothing stirred in the white fastnesses of the snow-blanketed countryside but with a thaw early in March, both Waller and Hopton began gathering their scattered armies from the villages and hamlets of West Sussex and East Hampshire. Waller appointed a rendezvous at East Meon and it was there on 26 March 1644, that the Parliamentary horse assembled, some four thousand strong. Among them were four troops of Norton's regiment, led by their colo-

nel (HMC *Portland Mss* iii, 106–110). The two armies manouevered for position in the fields about Hinton Ampner, near the village of Cheriton, where, on 29 March 1644 they finally clashed in a great battle which was distinctive for the length of the cavalry engagement. Colonel Richard Norton was one of several senior officers in the Parliamentary ranks who personally led charges of composite bodies of horse against their Royalist counterparts, displaying great courage in an action which lasted over four hours (HMC *Portland Mss* iii, 106–110).

The battle of Cheriton ended in a decisive defeat for Hopton; the Royalist army was however able to make a disciplined withdrawal towards Basing under cover of darkness, leaving many houses and other buildings in the nearby town of Alresford in flames. During the next few weeks brigades of Parliamentary horse scoured Hampshire rounding up stragglers and reducing a number of Royalist garrisons on the borders with neighbouring counties. Waller's army eventually returned to Farnham on 17 April; Norton's regiment may have briefly quartered there before returning to the Portsmouth garrison for among the officers presiding at a court-martial in Farnham on 22 April was a Major Stewart (Brabourne *Mss*). After a year's campaigning the regiment needed to make good their arms and equipment, and saddles and 'horse furniture' were being collected on their behalf from places in the county as far apart as Basingstoke and Lymington (BL Add *Mss* 24, 860, f 64). Norton had not been able to pay his troopers since the preceding Christmas and he wrote to the Commons repeatedly asking for money and complaining about the lack of effort of 'the Gentlemen of the county' in providing for his regiment (*CJ* iii, 492, 538).

Waller's army left Farnham on 17 May at the start of a campaign to bring the King's Oxford army to battle. During the weeks that followed, a battle of words also developed, between Waller, the Hampshire Committee and Parliament's Council of War at Derby House in London, over the employment of Norton's regiment (*CSPD* 1644, 149, 185, 186,

213, 218, 238, 239 *etc.*) The Hampshire Committee's main concern was over the activities of the Basing House garrison since the departure of Waller's army. Their fears seem to have been justified for the Royalists launched a punitive raid on the night of 1 June 1644, their intention being to destroy the Parliamentary quarters at Odiham by putting the town to the torch (BL TT E 50/13). Alerted to the possibility of such a raid Colonel Norton prepared an ambush at the ford crossing of the River Whitewater at North Warnborough. At two o'clock in the morning of 2 June a gentleman trooper on picquet duty at the ford gave the alarm as the Royalist raiding party approached. A spirited action then followed in which over a hundred Royalist officers and men were taken prisoner, the survivors being chased back to Basing. Many on both sides were wounded and Norton's men also captured a large number of horses, providing them with much needed replacement mounts. With the Basing garrison now reduced to half its original strength Norton summoned the Marquis of Winchester to surrender. The latter's predictable refusal to do so was the signal for the associated counties of Surrey, Sussex and Hampshire to muster a considerable force under Norton's overall command to mount what was to become a twenty-four week long siege.

Meanwhile, Sir William Waller, now in Oxfordshire and with the imminent prospect of a pitched battle with the King's army, entreated the Derby House committee for reinforcements of both horse and foot. In particular he wanted Norton's regiment which was still a very effective fighting unit with a notable reputation, despite having been reduced to roughly half its original strength after a year's campaigning. However, it was not until 28 June that Norton finally obeyed Parliament's order and marched north, relinquishing temporarily the command of the forces besieging Basing House and taking with him two of the several troops of horse mustered for the siege but which were regarded by Waller as part of his Southern Association cavalry (CSPD 1644, 286, 288, 296, 297). These

were the troops of Captain Matthew Draper and Captain Samuel Potts (CSPD 1644, 243, 244, 255, 269, 272) and with three troops from Norton's regiment it was a force some 300 strong which rode north to rendezvous with a brigade of foot also on its way to reinforce Waller. In the event Norton's brigade missed both the rendezvous and the eventual battle at Cropredy Bridge on the banks of the River Cherwell on 29 June 1644 where Waller was defeated by the King.

By 1 July Norton was still 17 miles from Leighton Buzzard in Bedfordshire and he reached Waller three days later at Northampton (CSPD 1644, 286, 288, 296, 297). In his absence, the siege of Basing House continued but the problems of the Hampshire Committee were being added to by an increase in the number of raiding forays from the Royalist garrison still holding Winchester Castle, especially in the Andover area (CSPD 1644, 307-308). Waller eventually conceded the need for Norton's three troops to return home but they did not depart until 13 July; Richard Norton's last duty for Waller was to serve on a court-martial at Daventry (Brabourne Mss) on 12 July. Four days later Norton had arrived in the Winchester area and by the 20th had returned to Basing. The two independent troops of Captains Draper and Potts remained with Waller in Northamptonshire to be incorporated into other regiments (CSPD 1644, 306, 307, 325, 328, 329; Ludlow 94-99).

The King's army now turned its attention from the Midlands to the Earl of Essex's army in Cornwall and, after defeating the latter at Lostwithiel on 1 September, the victorious Royalists began the long march back to Oxford. The King intended to bring relief to his beleaguered garrisons at Basing House, Donnington Castle near Newbury, and at Banbury. Basing in particular was in desperate straits, short of food, ammunition and with smallpox rife among soldiers and civilians alike (BL TT E 27/5 f 8). A relieving column was sent with all dispatch from Oxford under the command of Colonel Henry Gage. It reached the area of Chineham Down on 11

A
G R E A T
VICTORY
OBTAINED

By Colonel NORTON and his horse, and
Colonell *Jones* and his foote, against Colonel
Rayden, from Basing house, neere Walebo-
rough Mill, within halfe a mile of Odi-
um; where were taken prisoners

Ssrjeant Major *Langley*, a Mercer in Pater-noster-row, that
went to Basing, also his escape.

Captain *Rawlet* that was a Scrivener at Holbern bridge.

Lieutenant *Rawlet* at Holborne Cunduit.

Lieutenant *Ivorie* a Citizen of London.

Ensigne *Lucas* a filke dier in the Old baly.

Ensigne *Coram*, a Papist of Winchester.

Robinson a Chyrurgeon to the Marques of Winchester, a
Papist.

Taken besides,

3 Gentlemen of Armes	75 Common men,
3 Serjeants,	100 Armes,
3 Drummers,	some horse,
5 Drums,	4 were slain.

10 of our men which were prisoners in Basing house escaped.

Certified by Gentlemen that were engaged in the service.

Published according to Order.

June 5th L O N D O N

Printed by *Andrew Coe*, Anno Domini, 1644.

Fig 3. Title page of a Parliamentary news-sheet announcing Colonel Norton's success at the ambush of the Basing House garrison near Odiham. By permission of the British Library.

September and, aided by a heavy fog, fought it's way through Norton's horse to reach Basing with few losses to themselves but with many casualties among Norton's men (BL TT E 27/5 ff 13-14; *CSPD* 1644, 496; *Clarendon* 3 413-415). Gage was later knighted for this exploit.

Norton found himself the unexpected host for the Earl of Essex when that nobleman found sanctuary at Southwick on 17 October 1644 after a nightmare journey along the south coast from Cornwall with the remnants of his force (HMC *Portland Mss* i, 188; *CSPD* 1644-45, 45, 60; *CSPVen* 1643-47, 163). It was a ragged, hungry and disease-ridden multitude which crammed into the Portsmouth garrison; Waller's army was in no better condition as the survivors of the defeat at Cropredy Bridge made their way back to Farnham. Both armies lacked even the basic necessities of food, clothing and pay, and could be restrained only with difficulty from indiscriminate plundering (*CSPD* 1644, 429, 468, 505; *CSPD* 1644-45, 45, 60). Waller's horse had been detached to aid the Earl of Essex but had been turned back in Dorset, and the Hampshire troops deserted through lack of pay (*CSPD* 1644, 453, 504, 532; BL Add Mss 24, 860, ff 99-100).

WINTER 1644-5

In a last desperate attempt to again bring the King to a decisive battle before the onset of winter prevented any further campaigning, Parliament directed that the armies of Essex, Waller and that of the Eastern Association under the Earl of Manchester, should combine under the latter's overall command. The battleground was again near Newbury on 27 October 1644 where the combined armies caught the King's forces as they retired to Oxford by way of Donnington Castle. Although outnumbered two to one, the King managed to avoid defeat and continue the withdrawal to Oxford, as a result of discord between the senior Parliamentary commanders and the consequent mismanagement of the battle. Colonel Richard Norton indulged in a rather curious venture

when he rode to Newbury from Basingstoke to witness, in his own words, the impending battle '... as a spectator ...' (BL Add Mss 24, 860, f 86) He seems to have taken only Captain Bettesworth's troop as an escort (*CSPD* 1644-45, 159) leaving the remainder of the regiment at the leaguer at Basing. 'Meddling where he had noe charge...' Norton was wounded in one of his legs by a musket ball when he took over leadership of Colonel Edmund Ludlow's Wiltshire regiment, that officer having temporarily lost his mount through a broken bridle. Under the protection of Bettesworth's troop, Norton returned to the Basing siege where he was subsequently joined by Ludlow's horse. The wound appears to have been trivial for Norton remained in action.

On 2 November 1644 the Derby House Committee requested him to investigate the presence of 'enemy stragglers' about Salisbury (*CSPD* 1644-45, 90-92). Norton's interpretation of this order was to send Ludlow with his regiment while he (Norton) got on with the business of Basing whose garrison were making almost daily sorties in search of provisions and fodder (BL TT E 27/5 ff 18-19). Reluctantly he complied when Ludlow was himself, with 200 of his regiment, ordered by Waller to join a composite brigade of horse intended for the relief of another Parliamentary garrison at Taunton, in Somerset. Informed that another relieving force was heading towards Basing House, Norton raised the siege on 19 November and with his own regiment and the remaining Wiltshire horse, proceeded to the Salisbury area. This foray culminated in a spectacular night action in the city of Salisbury itself on December 1st, where two regiments of Royalist horse were quartered. They were surprised and routed by Norton's small brigade, losing most of their arms and ammunition and, perhaps most important, 'eight score horses' (Ludlow 464). Once again a success in the field provided Norton's troopers with badly needed replacement mounts although at this stage in the war some of them might have been in no better condition than their existing ones.

During December 1644 and early January

1645 the local commanders fought a series of skirmishes across Wiltshire. A Royalist brigade under Colonel George Goring cut a swathe of looting, burning and murder across the county into Hampshire and up to the Surrey border (*Clarendon* 4 11). Ludlow's regiment was badly cut up in Salisbury on 31 December 1644 but Norton's horse appear to have avoided any further major engagement. They were still in Wiltshire on 12 January 1645, at Coldharbour near Warminster, but seem to have returned to the Portsmouth garrison shortly thereafter (BL *Add Mss* 24, 860, f 152).

The weather at the end of January 1645 was exceptionally severe; a heavy snowfall was followed by some weeks of freezing rain and sleet. Norton's regiment remained within the confines of the Portsmouth garrison. One of his captains took an escort to London to convey several high-ranking Royalist prisoners to the Tower (*CSPD* 1644-45, 290, 300). Meanwhile the Commons, viewing with concern the damage being done by Goring's brigade hastily ordered Waller, then at Farnham, to assemble a brigade of horse and dragoons from the many scattered regiments and loose troops quartered along the Surrey/Hampshire borders from Farnham to Portsmouth and mount an expedition into the west to check the Royalist marauders (*CSPD* 1644-45, 282-303). The brigade included Lieutenant-general Oliver Cromwell's Eastern Association regiment seven troops of which were then in the Petersfield area (*HMC Portland Mss* i, 208-9). The expedition degenerated into a series of desultory skirmishes in Wiltshire and Dorset; Cromwell's horse quartered at Ringwood on the edge of the New Forest where it was joined by Norton's regiment, much reduced in strength, stopping briefly at Titchfield (BL *Add Mss* 24, 860, f 152; BL *TT E* 260/5). Waller's contingent reached Ringwood on 27 March to find that Cromwell and Norton had departed but the three bodies of horse eventually joined forces at Cerne Abbas in Dorset. With morale at a low ebb the campaign rapidly petered out and Waller withdrew most of the

brigade to Salisbury, Norton returning to Southampton with his regiment. Richard Maijor later referred to this expedition as '... your (*ie* Norton's) late unhappy western march...' (BL *Add Mss* 24, 860, f 116).

REORGANISATION: THE NEW MODEL ARMY

The disarray of the Parliamentary armies, beset as they were by internal conflict between their commanders and the local county committees, prompted a re-examination at Westminster of the causes of their disorder. Among the reforms which emanated from these debates were the denial of all military commands to serving Members of the Lords and Commons and a scheme for recruiting and financing a New Model Army (Kishlansky 1979, ch 1 and 2). While the administrative details were being thrashed out and recruiting begun for the new army, it fell to the remnants of regiments like Norton's and Ludlow's to remain in Hampshire and on its borders to check the forays of the surviving Royalist garrisons, at Basing and Winchester in particular (*CSPD* 1644-45, 345, 346, 354, 355, 361).

On April 14 three troops of Norton's regiment beat up the Royalist quarters at Romsey, driving the small garrison out of the town, whilst the other three troops, led by Major Stewart, challenged the Winchester Royalists to an open fight. The latter, led by the governor, Sir William Ogle, outnumbered Stewart's force by two to one but the Parliamentary horse gave a good account of themselves in a spirited running battle as they retired towards Romsey. Stewart was wounded in the thigh, although not dangerously, and when Colonel Norton came up with the remaining three troops the action surged back across the country between Hursley and Winchester, to the walls of the city (BL *Add Mss* 27, 402; *Eyres* 1645). Taking into account Norton's losses in this engagement the regimental strength of his horse numbered not more than 150 officers and men, one third of the probable muster when the regiment took the field two years

previously. Such a reduction in numbers was typical of many regiments of horse on both sides which had campaigned continuously throughout the years of 1643 and 1644, having taken part in several major battles during that time.

On 9 May 1645 Colonel Norton was re-appointed governor of the Portsmouth garrison (*CJ* iv, 136) and took up quarters in the city shortly after. The Hampshire Committee, in common with many others in the western counties were becoming increasingly concerned with a disturbing turn of events. An organised resistance to the foraging soldiers of both sides was emerging from the non-combatant country population, known as the 'Club'. Led frequently by local gentry or clergy, the 'Clubmen', as they became known, formed large groups for mutual self-protection and many held meetings in towns and villages to protest against the activities of the marauding troops. Clubmen in the Hampshire/West Sussex border area were to become a particular nuisance.

Meanwhile, the New Model Army marched from Windsor to Reading on April 30th; the three principal Parliamentary armies no longer formally existed but many supernumerary companies of foot or troops of horse were still in the field, most of them county forces and still determined to fight the Royalists on their own territory. When a brigade of foot and horse from the New Model was detached to march to the relief of Taunton, the county committees in the south-west were instructed to raise a composite body of horse in support (*CJ* iv, 197; *CSPD* 1644-45, 580, 584-587). Hampshire was to provide 100 horse and Norton was requested by the Hampshire Committee to raise them (BL Add Mss 24, 860, ff 127, 129). Wrangling over rates of pay delayed the muster, Norton arguing that the county troops should receive the same rate as officers and men of the New Model, and it was not until 19 June 1645 that the matter was satisfactorily resolved (BL Add Mss 24, 860, ff 128, 131, 144). Captain Thomas Bettesworth was to lead an augmented troop including his lieutenant, cornet and quar-

termaster, eight corporals-of-horse, two trumpeters, nine gentleman troopers and ninety one common troopers; this probably represented most of the surviving members of the regiment. The brigade mustered at Romsey under the former governor of Gloucester, Colonel Edward Massey, without the Hampshire contingent, who finally caught them up at Shaftesbury on 29 June. They campaigned in support of the New Model in the west country during July and August of 1645 and took part in some of the fiercest fighting in the entire war, returning home when Cromwell's brigade forced the surrender of Winchester Castle on October 6th.

During the summer those of Norton's regiment not in the west were paid off, among them Trooper John Sparrey, whose last muster was at Romsey on 19 July (BL Add Mss 24, 860, f 152). Four days later Colonel Norton attended a meeting in London of the Commissioners appointed to deal with the activities of the Clubmen (BL Add Mss 24, 860, f 133). They had become a particular nuisance in the Sussex border area and, later in the year Norton was directed to raise the remainder of his regiment then at Bishop's Waltham and assist the governor of Chichester in dispersing a meeting of the Sussex Clubmen to be held at Petersfield (*CJ* iv, 279; *CSPD* 1645-47, 148, 151-153). From time to time during the summer, in his capacity as governor of Portsmouth, he provided escorts of horse for the convoys of money from London to Portsmouth which were destined for the New Model paymasters in the west country (*CSPD* 1645-47, 19, 28-33, 40, 229). Parliament eventually passed an ordinance returning the responsibility for defence of the county of Hampshire to the militia and, with the appointment of Thomas Bettesworth as colonel of the county horse, Richard Norton's role as military leader came to an end (*CJ* iv, 101, 153, 166, 170, 314; *LJ* vii, 420; *CSPD* 1645-47, 366, 373).

CONCLUSION

It remains to assess the effectiveness of

Colonel Richard Norton's regiment of horse in the general context of the war. No hint of unrest or mutiny can be detected among its ranks, unlike other county regiments of horse (for example, the notorious conduct of the Kentish horse under Sir Michael Livesey – see *CSPD* 1644, 171, 172, 370, 372–377, 384–386, 427; *CJ* iii, 259, 508). In part this must have been due to the relatively regular payments of money to the troopers. An important influence must undoubtedly have been the almost charismatic leadership of their colonel. Freely acknowledged on both sides as a man of known courage (*Clarendon* 3 413) and a 'religious worthy', Richard Norton also maintained the traditional generosity of the Southwick Norton family towards their tenants and family retainers, so typical of the charitable nonconformist gentry and despite their lofty status in Hampshire society (*HRO* 5M50/ 371, 372, 379; Wood 1815 iii, 252–3; Cliffe 1984, *passim*). Taking John Sparrey as an example, when the risks and hardships endured by the officers and men of the regiment are considered, something more than the negligible financial reward provided the basis for the loyalty that Norton inspired. Twenty years later, in the full flood of the Restoration, even men of humble station were privileged to announce that they had served in Colonel Norton's regiment 'in the late Rebellion' (*CSPD* 1664–65, 539).

In military terms what did Norton's exploits achieve? They certainly made him 'famous' (*HMC Duke of Atholl's Mss* 29). They also contributed to the problems Waller encountered in his attempts to create a workable army. Norton saw, like so many of his landed contemporaries, country in terms of county, and this determined his independent tactics. His continued, active presence in Hampshire and along its borders did much to ensure that the county never really became a safe place for Royalist sympathisers despite the much over-emphasised presence of the Marquis of Winchester at Basing House. At a time when cavalry on both sides were degenerating into mutinous bands of armed looters (*CSPD* 1644–45, 403, 428, 437) Norton's

regiment of horse remained one of the best led and well disciplined units in the southern counties.

APPENDIX 1: The campaign itinerary of Colonel Richard Norton's regiment of horse.

The principal source for the movements of Norton's horse is the pay account of John Sparrey (*BL Add Mss* 24, 860, f 152). This has been supplemented by references cited in the text and these are indicated by an asterisk. Where the number of troops is known, this has been indicated, otherwise it is assumed that all six troops may have been present.

1643	June 7–20	Southampton*
	June 22	Andover
	July 6	Andover
	July 14	Shrewton (near Salisbury)
	July 21	Kingston (Portsea Island)
	July 29	Greywell (near Odiham)
	July 31	Basing*
	July 31 (night)	Farnham*
	August 13	Portsmouth
	August 23	Southampton
	August ?	Winchester*
	August 29	Henley (Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire)
	September 2	Kingston (one of several villages in Oxfordshire by that name)
	September 20	First Battle of Newbury*
1643	September 23	Twyford-by-Reading (five troops; St Barbe's to Romsey)
	October 2	Portsmouth
	October 16	Southampton
	October 22	Southampton*
	November 6	Southampton*
	November 11	Odiham
	November 18	Southampton*
	December 10	Southwick (colonel's troop only)
	December 11	Action at Romsey (five troops)
	December 18	Southampton*
	December 23	Southwick
	December 28	Chichester area* (three troops)
1644	January 1	Action at Westbourne, near Havant (three troops)

January 2	Portsmouth* (? three troops)
March 26	East Meon* (four troops)
March 29	Battle of Cheriton* (four troops)
April 22	Farnham*
May 29	Warneford
June 1/2	North Warnborough, near Odiham*
June 4	Basing*
June 28	Windsor* (three troops ? remainder at Basing)
July 1	Leighton Buzzard (Bedfordshire)* (three troops)
July 12	Daventry (Northamptonshire)* (three troops)
July 20	Basing*
September 2 to	Basingstoke*
September 24	Basingstoke*
October 27/28	Second Battle of Newbury* (one troop)
November 11	Basingstoke
December 1	Action at Salisbury*
1645 January 12	Coldharbour (near Warminster)*
February 6-12	Portsmouth*
March 11	Titchfield
March 19	Ringwood*
April 14	Action at Romsey (three troops) and Winchester (three troops)*
April 16	Southampton*
May 14	Southampton*
June 29	Shaftesbury (Bettesworth's troop)*
July 19	Romsey

After this date the regiment ceased to have any separate identity.

APPENDIX 2: The personal troop standard of Colonel Richard Norton.

Although the picture in Add Ms 5247 bears the inscription 'Captaine Norton of Hampshire' (Fig 2) there is a reasonable certainty that this is Richard Norton's own personal troop standard. The arms are those of the Norton family of Southwick (VERT A LION RAMPANT OR with crest of a negro or saracen head) and field officers were not infrequently also referred to as 'captains' of their troop or company. The banner is red, fringed in alternating red and white, bearing a sword (white blade, yellow hilt) framed with (?) laurel leaves (green) on a green mound and beneath a white cloud with a yellow sun at the centre, all within a black roundel inscribed in yellow with the motto OMNIS VICTORIA A DOMINO. The lack of any recognisable element of the family arms in the banner design would have been quite customary, as demonstrated by the many examples of Parliamentary standards illustrated both in Add Ms 5427 and in two other manuscript sources which have survived (Ms 6208/1 in the National Army Museum and Ms Modern folio 7 in Dr Williams Library, a photographic copy of which is also in the National Army Museum, Ms N/PH 7373; on page 58 of the latter Ms there is an entry for Norton but the figure is blank).

None of the troop standards of Norton's officers appear in any of the three sources cited above but that of Captain Thomas Jervoise, second son of Sir Thomas Jervoise of Herriard, captain of a troop of horse in Waller's army is shown, indicating that it had been raised as early as October 1642, in the Williams Ms (p 42).

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