

garrisoned thereafter. This garrison was strong enough to repulse a force of 2,700 Parliamentary troopers sent to seize its river crossing in the following summer.⁸ There must have been more fighting there later as the chancel of the church subsequently needed complete rebuilding after the war.⁹

Aynho seems not to have been garrisoned continuously, although it was the base for three troops of the King's horsemen in the winter of 1643/4.¹⁰ It was also used as headquarters at times by both sides. The King stayed in John Cartwright's house after the Battles of Edgehill and Cropredy Bridge and Lord Essex, leading the Parliamentary Army to relieve Gloucester in September 1643, also made his headquarters there. In the summer of 1643, the Queen, along with a convoy of arms and munitions from the Continent, made her way south from York towards Oxford. Prince Rupert was charged with her protection and troops were quartered on all possible routes that the convoy might take. "Then Banbury, and the villages along its various axial routes, like Aynho, must have witnessed almost continuous movement, quarter and plunder..."¹¹

Further south, Wheatley also had its band of soldiers, being at this time a 'Court of Guard' on the road between Oxford and London.¹²

These, of course, are examples from military histories and what is needed is information on the impact of all this on the villagers, and their reactions to them. We need to know the local details of the constant grinding down, the 'taxation', the looting and pillaging. What is needed is an extension of Phillip Tennant's excellent work on the impact of the war on the people of the South Midlands down into the villages east and south of Banbury and Oxford. This is real *local* history, and more detailed work, ideally by local historians in the Oxfordshire villages, will be needed to build this up (any offers of help will be gratefully received!). This will hopefully confirm the presence of Prince Rupert and his troops in these border villages during the first two years of the Civil War.

The other two villages with a Duke of Cumberland character in their Mummings' plays are slightly different. Middle Barton, although close to the other Oxfordshire border villages, was always under Royalist control.

⁸ *Prince Rupert: Portrait of a Soldier*, Gen. Frank Kitson, Constable, 1998, ISBN 0-09-473700-2, p.126.

⁹ As footnote 5, *Edgehill...*, pp.82 and 230.

¹⁰ *Journal of Sir Samuel Luke*, Vol. 3, Oxfordshire Record Soc., Vol. 29, 1952-3.

¹¹ As footnote 5, *Edgehill...*, p.114. See also 'The 1996 Broughton Coin Hoard', N.J. Mayhew and E.M. Besley, *C&CH* 15.7 (Autumn/Winter 2002), p.237.

¹² As footnote 10, *Sir Samuel Luke*.