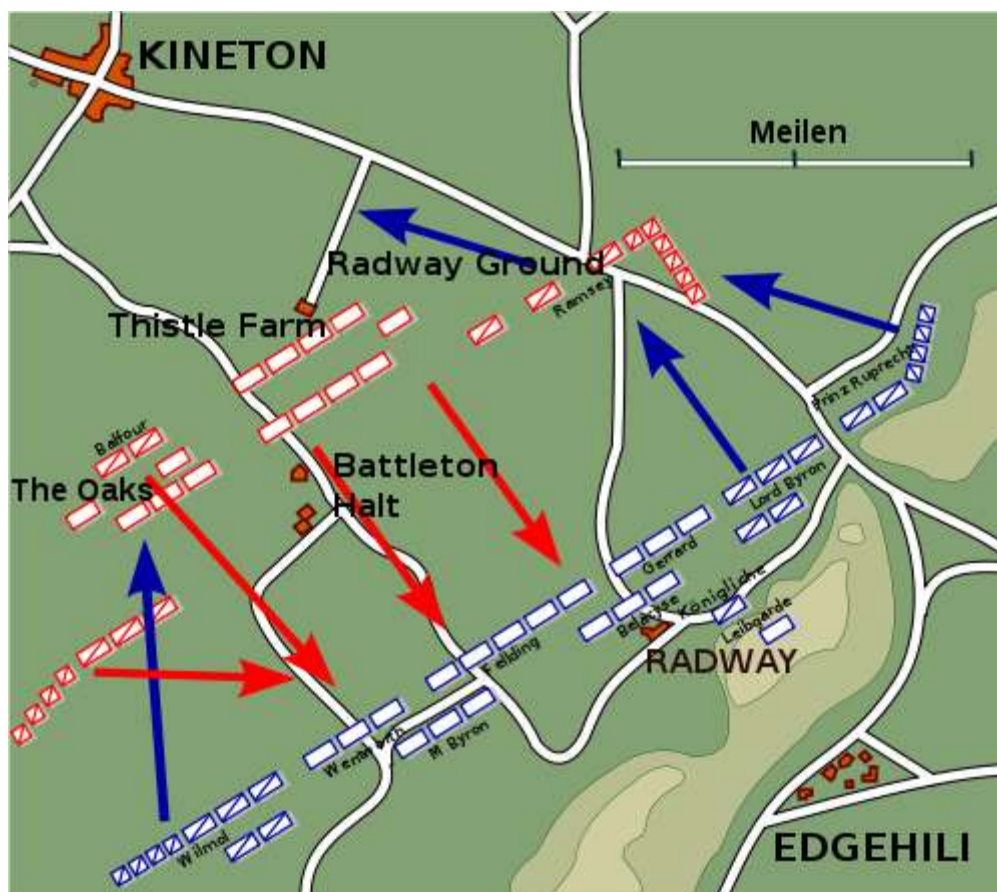


# The Kingsmill Memorial and the English Civil War

On Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1642, the first formal battle of the English Civil War took place on Radway ground between Edgehill and Kineton. The battle was unplanned. The Royalist and Parliamentarian armies were both on their way to London when they found themselves in close proximity to each other and Charles I decided to force a confrontation.



The quiet villages around Avon Dassett were suddenly and bloodily confronted with the full horrors of a war which pitched neighbours and families against one another. The Parliamentarians were based in Kineton, whilst the Royal family were billeted in Wormleighton Manor. Thus Avon Dassett was en route to the battle site and was probably used to billet soldiers and horses. Cannon balls and lead shot are still being discovered in the village.

For one Hampshire family, the Battle of Edgehill brought tragedy. Henry, the second son of Sir Henry and Lady Bridget Kingsmill was killed by a cannon ball on the field of battle. Bridget had been widowed 18 years before Edgehill and had thus assumed control of the family's land and wealth.



*The tomb of Sir Henry and Lady Bridget Kingsmill in Kingsclere Church (erected in the same year as the Kingsmill Memorial at Radway)*

Bridget Kingsmill was determined that Henry's death should be remembered. In 1670, ten years after the Restoration of Charles II and two years before her own death she erected a memorial in Radway Church to commemorate her son's sacrifice.







*HERE LYETH  
EXPECTING THE  
SECOND COMING OF  
OUR LORD AND  
SAVIOR HENRY  
KINGSMILL ESQ.  
SECOND SON OF HENRY  
KINGSMILL OF  
SIMONTON IN YE  
COUNTY OF SOUTHERN  
KENT WHO SERVING AS  
A CAPTAIN OF FOOT  
UNDER HIS  
MAJESTY CHARLES 1<sup>st</sup>  
OF BLESSED MEMORY  
WAS AT YE BATTLE OF  
EDGEHILL IN YE YEARE  
OF OUR LORD 1642 AS  
HE WAS MANFULLY  
FIGHTING ON BEHALF  
OF HIS KING AND  
COUNTRY UNHAPPILY  
SLAIN BY CANNON  
BULLET IN MEMORY OF  
WHOM HIS MOTHER  
THE LADY BRIDGET  
KINGSMILL DID IN THE  
46TH YEARE OF HER  
WIDOWHOOD IN THE  
YEARE OF OUR LORD  
1670 ERECTED THIS  
MONUMENT.  
I HAVE FOUGHT THE  
GOOD FIGHT I HAVE  
FINISHED MY COURSE  
HENCEFORTH IS LAYD  
UP FOR ME THE CROWN  
OF RIGHTEOUSNESS*

Henry Kingsmill was one of c. 1,000 casualties at the Battle of Edgehill, most of whom were buried on the battlefield. His memorial at St. Peter's, Radway serves as a monument for all those who lost their lives in the Civil War, as well as the enduring love of a mother for her son.