

The Heroic Origins of Scotland End

When I moved to Hook Norton our friends were surprised to find that we were living at Scotland End. As a Scot they thought that I had made it up; they knew that I wouldn't have paid for our address to have Scotland End as part of it! However, as all residents of Hooky know, it is indeed part of the village and no doubt has been for a very long time. East End, Down End and Southrop are all self-explanatory names, but where do the origins of Scotland End lie?

The name was certainly in use by the mid-nineteenth century. Margaret Dickins in her *History of Hook Norton* refers to Mr "Bourton" the butcher, who was one of the village Petty Constables, an unpaid position. John Lee Borton was born in 1832 and was listed as a butcher in the censuses from 1851 until 1901. At some point he was sent for in his capacity as a constable, but being in Scotland End with a friend he refused to come. This dereliction of duty was brought before a magistrate who asked where he was at that time. He replied "in Scotland" and the magistrate said that, of course, if Mr Borton was in Scotland he could not have expected to have been present when required!

However, the origin of the name Scotland End can be traced much further back in time to the aftermath of the Battle of Worcester.

Taking place on 3 September 1651 it was the last battle of the Civil War. The Royalist army had roughly half the strength of the Parliamentarians and suffered a heavy defeat. Out of a total of just under 16,000 men, some 3,000 Royalists were killed and a further 10,000 taken prisoner. Some of the prisoners were conscripted into Parliament's New Model Army and sent to Ireland. About 8,000 prisoners were deported to New England, Bermuda and the West Indies.

Charles II fled to France and his flight has been well documented. The King was accompanied by Lord Wilmot and Lord Derby and about 200 others. On 11 September they passed through Chipping Campden en route to Cirencester. Word had reached them that they were being shadowed by Parliamentary forces, so the King ordered some of his troops to head east in a bid to allow him to make good his escape.

Lord Wilmot led the diversionary troops, both cavalry and infantry. Lt-General

Henry Wilmot, first Earl of Rochester, was chosen to lead this small force as he knew the country to the east of the King's intended route to France. Wilmot's family was descended from Edward Wilmot of Witney and in 1643 Henry Wilmot had been created Baron Wilmot of Adderbury in north Oxfordshire, where the family had a fine house. The infantry comprised the surviving elements of Lord Spynie's Foot.

Leaving the King in Chipping Campden, they reached the village of Hook Norton by nightfall on September 11th. They were headed for Adderbury but made the decision to camp for the night in Hook Norton to enable the infantry to catch them up. The plan was to travel at first light the following day.

Whilst Wilmot was English, the members of Spynie's Foot were all Scottish, hailing from the Dundee area. Led by their charismatic leader, George Lindsay, the third Lord Spynie, they were typical of the Scots soldier of the day, ruthless in battle but compassionate in peaceful circumstances. So as not to disturb the villagers they made their camp on ground about 400 yards to the west of the church. At that time all the houses in the village were close to the church.

Wilmot's and Spynie's men caused no trouble in Hook Norton. As the weather worsened overnight, they made the decision to wait another day before setting off for Adderbury. They had been on the move continually since the battle and felt safe in Hook Norton which was not thought to be on an obvious direct route. The villagers offered food and the soldiers were able to draw water from springs close to their camp. It is these springs that supply water to the brewery today.

The next morning as they readied themselves to continue their journey to Adderbury, a small band of Parliamentarians appeared unseen from the north. These were members of the Essex Militia on their way home from Worcester. The Scots put up some resistance but, having suffered losses against a superior force, they had no option but to surrender.

Lord Spynie was committed to the Tower of London a few days later. As a punishment for siding with the King his estate was forfeited under Cromwell's Act of Grace in 1654. However, following the Restoration of 1660 his estate was reinstated. He died without issue around 1671 and as a result the title became extinct.

Naturally the villagers of Hook Norton were distraught at what had happened on the edge of their village. The soldiers had caused them no harm during their brief stay. Since that fateful day that western part of the village has been known as

Scotland End, as it was the place where some of the Scots had met their end. So as not to offend the Parliamentarians the site of the skirmish was from then on known as Round Close Road, the Parliamentarians' nickname being "roundhead". To this day the site of the encounter has never been built on and thus it serves as an unofficial memorial.

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An Editorial Note

David's entertaining article is so persuasive that the editors must strive to prevent the gullible from taking it too seriously. Besides the complete lack of evidence, four details should give the reader pause:

1. *It would be surprising if the villagers were so sympathetic to these Scots. For a decade most Hook Norton folk had been firmly Parliamentarian and, although opinion had divided since the end of the First Civil War in 1646, there is no evidence that the majority became Royalist. Moreover, Charles II's invading army of 1651 was seen as Scottish rather than Royalist, which is why so few Royalists rallied to Charles after he entered England, even in the old Royalist heartlands in the West and in Wales.*

2. *According to the authoritative Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB), Wilmot remained "Charles's companion on his famous escape through England to France in the aftermath of the battle" of Worcester and did not break away. He stayed with Charles on the Continent and never returned to Adderbury, not even on his brief return to mastermind a Royalist uprising in 1655 – which failed disastrously and forced Wilmot into "another hair-raising escape from England." He died in Flanders in 1658.¹*

3. *George Lindsay, 3rd Lord Spynie, according to the ODNB, was "captured at the battle of Worcester" and thirteen days later imprisoned in the Tower of London.²*

4. *What is the earliest recorded use of "Scotland End"? Margaret Dickins, who had read all the parish accounts and official papers, does not mention the name before the Borton incident, which David dates in the late nineteenth century. Why silence for two hundred years?*

Despite David's imaginative efforts, the origins of "Scotland End" remain in doubt.

¹ Ronald Hutton, 'Wilmot, Henry, first earl of Rochester (bap. 1613, d. 1658)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29621> (using Oxfordshire public library card number).

² T. F. Henderson, 'Lindsay, George, third Lord Spynie (d. 1671)', *ibid*, [view/article/16699](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/16699).