

# The newsletter of the King's Lynn Under Siege English Civil War Archaeological Project

September 2018  
Issue 3

**Welcome** to the third issue of *Siegeworks*, the newsletter of KLUS – the King's Lynn Under Siege English Civil War Archaeological Project.

families in mind, it is designed to be hands-on. Here is a sneak-peak:

## The Strongest Fortress in East Anglia



As part of the activities for this year's King's Lynn Heritage Open Day, KLUS will be presenting *The Strongest Fortress in East Anglia: revolution and civil war in Kings Lynn, 1640-1660*, an illustrated talk which looks at King's Lynn during the English Civil Wars.

**Since the last issue** we have been busy mapping the southern fortifications: those running westwards from the South Gate to the River Ouse, then northwards to the point where the River Nar joins the Ouse. As a result, the project has identified three areas (marked A, B, and C on the plan below) for further investigation:

David Flintham, a specialist in 17th century fortress warfare will focus on the town's fortifications and how the latest European techniques transformed King's Lynn into the strongest fortress in East Anglia.

The talk will take place at 5.30pm on Saturday, 15 September at Marriott's Warehouse, a Grade II listed building on King's Lynn's historic South Quay.

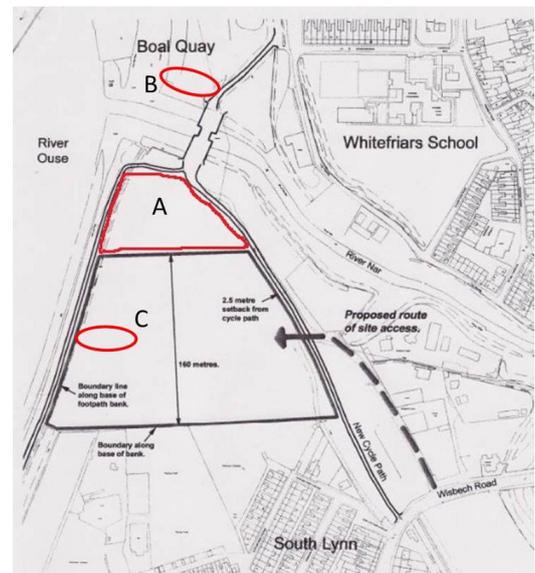
This talk is free, although donations to the Marriott's Warehouse Trust are welcomed.

For further details on this event please see <http://www.marriottswarehousetrust.co.uk/>.

## Heritage Open Day

In addition to *The Strongest Fortress in East Anglia*, KLUS is also delighted to be participating in this year's Heritage Open Day (16 September – see <http://www.kingslynncivicsociety.co.uk/heritage-open-day.asp> for further details).

We will be at the South Gate, and at Marriott's Warehouse where we will be unveiling Dan Morgan's model of King's Lynn's fortifications. Designed with

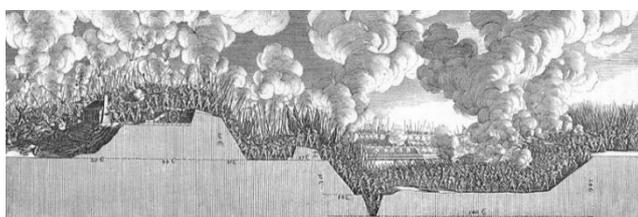


These proposed investigation areas were submitted to the Borough Council at the beginning of August.

## King's Lynn - A Continental Fortress in England?

When the English Civil War broke out in 1642, most of England had been more or less at peace for 150 years. Since the reign of Henry VIII, the greatest threat to the country came from overseas, thus any new fortifications that were built in England were to protect ports, harbours and anchorages.

So, come 1642, very few towns possessed any defences that could be described as 'modern' and very few people had any knowledge of how to design or build them. Thus both Parliamentarians and Royalists looked abroad, particularly to the Netherlands, for the skills to protect key towns.



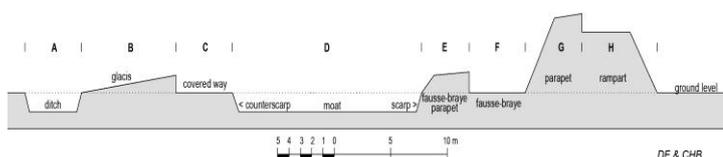
(Above) The storm of the Danish fortress of Frederiksodde in November 1657

Both sides brought in foreign engineers, although there were some Englishmen who had fought as mercenaries in the wars on the Continent who had some knowledge of fortifications and sieges. But Richard Clampe, the man behind King's Lynn's new fortifications which followed the siege of 1643, was neither Dutch nor a mercenary.

Instead, he was local to King's Lynn, a learned man, skilled in mathematics (this was not unique – there is an account of the Dutch turning to a renowned mathematician to design fortifications during the early 17th century, and, earlier, Leonardo Da Vinci and Michelangelo had both designed urban defences).

Clampe's designs were heavily influenced by Continental, chiefly Dutch, practice, possibly gained from the number of tracts and treatises which were written at the time. His designs have a degree of sophistication more typical of the Netherlands than England, and as a result, King's Lynn ended up with some of the most modern fortifications to be found anywhere in England.

**Clampe's design for King's Lynn's fortifications (below) demonstrating the Continental influences**



### What's in a name?

#### The 'English' Civil War

What is popularly called the 'English Civil War' was in fact several conflicts which started in 1639 and ended in 1652. Within this period there were three 'English' Civil Wars (1642-7, 1648-9 and 1649-52). The war engulfed the entire British Isles as England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales each witnessed bitter fighting. In acknowledgement of this, historians often refer to the conflict as the "British Civil Wars" or the "Wars of the three Kingdoms."

### In the News

Since the last issue, KLUS has appeared in the pages of *Military History Monthly*, *Arquebusier* (the journal of the Pike and Shot Society), and *Casemate* (the magazine of the Fortress Study Group).

### Useful websites

Harding's Pits Community Association  
(<http://hardings-pits.org.uk/>)

Lynn Museum

(<https://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/lynn-museum>)

KLUS (<https://www.militaryhistorylive.co.uk/mhl-kings-lynn-under-siege.html>)

Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project (<https://www.sharp.org.uk/>)

Stories of Lynn / Borough Archives  
(<https://www.kingslynntownhall.com/>)

True's Yard Fisherfolk Museum  
(<https://truesyard.co.uk/>)

West Norfolk and King's Lynn Archaeological Society (<http://wnklas.greghawk.org.uk>)

### Dates for your diary

- 16 September - King's Lynn Heritage Open Day (<http://www.kingslynncivicsociety.co.uk/heritage-open-day.asp>).
- 22 September - Century of the Soldier Conference, Royal Armouries, Leeds (<http://www.helion.co.uk/century-of-the-soldier-conference-2018-saturday-22nd-september-2018.html>)

*Siegeworks* is the newsletter of the King's Lynn Under Siege English Civil War Archaeological Project, and is published quarterly. To contact KLUS, e-mail [kingslynundersiege@outlook.com](mailto:kingslynundersiege@outlook.com) or visit <https://www.militaryhistorylive.co.uk/mhl-kings-lynn-under-siege.html>