

THE ORDNANCE SURVEY COMPLETE GUIDE TO THE BATTLEFIELDS OF BRITAIN.

David Smurthwaite. 1984. Webb and Bower, Exeter. £12.95. American title: BATTLEFIELDS OF BRITAIN. Congdon & Weed, New York, \$24.95.

As David Smurthwaite, a librarian at the National Army Museum, explains in the Introduction, the current state of battlefields in Britain ranges from excellent (Bosworth Field) to requiring a lot of imagination (Sedgemoor). In his well illustrated book Smurthwaite makes the most of all the areas, from Roman times to the Battle of Britain.

The section entitled 'The Age of the Wars of the Roses 1450-1550,' like the other sections, includes a general introduction to the period, with pictures of the armour of the period, a map of England showing the locations of the battles and contemporary illustrations. The Wars of the Roses section has a useful genealogical table and short notes on Wales, heraldry and Warwick the Kingmaker. Each of the individual battlefield chapters includes directions to the site and the background and description of the battle. Most chapters have Ordnance Survey maps and battle plans superimposed over the modern map of the site. The battlefields of Towton and Mortimer's Cross are still fairly free of interference from buildings and the maps enable one to trace the two battles of St Albans in the modern city. Ricardians will enjoy the Bosworth Field chapter which includes colour photographs of Richard's portrait and Bosworth Field as well as a drawing showing the positions of the armies and a photograph of a cross found on the field. The account of the battle is concise and informative. Smurthwaite suggests that Richard was killed trying to take revenge on Sir William Stanley for his treachery, rather than killed trying to kill Henry Tudor.

As a whole, the book is probably the best guide to British battlefields available today. Ricardians planning a trip to Ricardian battlefields could buy the book at home as a good guide to their travels (a short bibliography provides additional advance reading) or as a fitting souvenir of their expedition.

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