

# The Inventory of Historic Battlefields

## The Battle of Bannockburn

### Designation Record

**The Inventory of Historic Battlefields is a list of nationally important battlefields in Scotland.** A battlefield is of national importance if it makes a contribution to the understanding of the archaeology and history of the nation as a whole, or has the potential to do so, or holds a particularly significant place in the national consciousness. For a battlefield to be included in the Inventory, it must be considered to be of national importance either for its association with key historical events or figures; or for the physical remains and/or archaeological potential it contains; or for its landscape context. In addition, it must be possible to define the site on a modern map with a reasonable degree of accuracy.

**The aim of the Inventory is to raise awareness of the significance of these nationally important battlefield sites and to assist in their protection and management for the future.** Inventory battlefields are a material consideration in the planning process. The Inventory is also a major resource for enhancing the understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of historic battlefields, for promoting education and stimulating further research, and for developing their potential as attractions for visitors.

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# Inventory of Historic Battlefields

## BANNOCKBURN

Alternative Names: None

23 / 24 June 1314

Local Authority: Stirling

NGR centred: NS 808 913

Date of Addition to Inventory: 21 March 2011

Date of last update: 2 October 2023

## Overview and Statement of Significance

Bannockburn is significant as one of the most iconic battles of Scottish history and as a key battle in the Scottish Wars of Independence. It gives King Robert I (the Bruce) effective control of Scotland and essentially removes both English forces and his own internal enemies from within the country, and in the longer term helps secure papal recognition of the nation. It is also of incredible significance in the historical and cultural identity of Scotland even today.

The battle was a continuation of Robert the Bruce's campaign to take control of the Kingdom of Scotland that he claimed in 1306. Fought over two days, the battle was a resounding victory for Bruce over a larger English army led by Edward II. A large number of English were killed during the battle and significant nobles taken prisoner. Edward was forced to flee Scotland by boat, leaving behind the valuable English baggage train.

The victory helped establish Bruce as *de facto* King of Scotland and essentially ended any realistic claims of the Plantagenets to the Scottish throne. Bannockburn helped define Scotland's identity in Europe and, although it would be another 14 years until the war ended, Edward II never fully recovered from the defeat which undermined his authority to rule Scotland. In the longer term the victory signalled a new era of confidence in the Scottish nation and in Bruce as its leader.

## Inventory Boundary

**The Inventory boundary defines the area in which the main events of the battle are considered to have taken place (landscape context) and where associated physical remains and archaeological evidence occur or may be expected (specific qualities).** The landscape context is described under *battlefield landscape*: it encompasses areas of fighting, key movements of troops across the landscape and other important locations, such as the positions of camps or vantage points. Although the landscape has changed since the time of the battle, key characteristics of the terrain at the time of the battle can normally still be identified, enabling events to be more fully understood and interpreted in their landscape context. Specific qualities are described under *physical remains and potential*: these include landscape features that played a significant role in the battle, other physical remains,

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such as enclosures or built structures, and areas of known or potential archaeological evidence.

The Inventory boundary for the Battle of Bannockburn is defined on the accompanying map and includes the following areas:

- The St Ninian's ridgeline north of the Bannock Burn, including the areas of St Ninian's, Borestone, Whins of Milton and Coxet Hill. The line of the Roman Road runs through this area and within it was the location of the Scottish camp, the former New Park hunting park and the events of the first day of the battle.
- The eastern slopes of Gillies Hill and the lower-lying ground between it and the St Ninian's Ridge, including Milton Bog and Halbert Bog. The traditional location of the second day of the battle.
- The Carse of Stirling and the Dryfield incorporating the Pelstream and Bannock Burns, Bannockburn Moor, Broomridge, Bannockburn village and Balquhidderock Wood. The location of the English camp after the first day and within which current understanding (2023) suggests was the likely location of the second day of the battle.
- Cambuskenneth Abbey and grounds. The location of the Scottish baggage train which was sacked by the Earl of Atholl in the aftermath of the battle.
- Bannockburn Wood. An area known as Bloody Fould which was possibly the location of a massacre of the English and has potential to contain human remains associated with the aftermath of the battle.
- The well preserved landscape characteristics of the battlefield including the surviving open ground of New Park, the views from and the spatial relationship between the Carse, Stirling Castle and the hill terraces to the south-west.

# The Inventory of Historic Battlefields - Boundary

Bannockburn

23 / 24 June 1314

Local Authority: Stirling

