

# The Inventory of Historic Battlefields

## The Battle of Sark

### 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.

### Contents

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date of Addition to Inventory</b>
<b>Alternative Name(s)</b>	<b>Date of Last Update</b>
<b>Date of Battle</b>	<b>Overview and Statement of</b>
<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Significance</b>
<b>NGR Centred</b>	<b>Inventory Boundary</b>

# Inventory of Historic Battlefields

## SARK

Alternative Names: Lochmaben Stone

23 October 1448

Local Authority: Dumfries and Galloway

NGR centred: NY 314 663

Date of Addition to Inventory: 03/08/2016

Date of last update: N/A

## Overview and Statement of Significance

The Battle of Sark is significant as the final pitched battle fought between Scotland and England during the period of the Hundred Years War, and the last battle of the Medieval period between the two countries. Sark is also significant because it clearly demonstrated the weakened authority of the kings of both Scotland and England in the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century. It was the first Scottish victory in battle over the English since the Battle of Otterburn over 60 years earlier. At this time, increasingly powerful members of the nobility were ignoring the authority of the monarchy and striving to control it for their own ends. Noble houses of the highest echelons in Scotland and England were engaged in dynastic manoeuvring, and political and sometimes physical conflict, and these internal struggles would overtake both countries for the remainder of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, leaving little capacity for major cross-border warfare.

In late 1448, the Earl of Northumberland led an army into Scotland, with the support of King Henry VI, breaking a truce between the two nations. Northumberland's army was met by a Scottish force under the Earl of Ormonde to the south-west of modern Gretna, on the north shore of the River Esk. The battle was a decisive victory for the Scots, with many of Northumberland's force captured or killed, and apparently very few Scottish casualties in return. The victory of the Douglases raised their profile in the Scottish power struggles at the time, while simultaneously damaging the Earl of Northumberland's in England.

## 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 position 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 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

## Inventory of Historic Battlefields

significant role in the battle, other physical remains, such as enclosures or built structures, and areas of known or potential archaeological sensitivity.

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

- The north bank of the River Esk, as the documentary sources are clear about the English being pushed back into the high tide, resulting in many of them being drowned.
- The flat, low-lying ground between the River Sark and the Kirtle Water, encompassing the Lochmaben Stone, where the English were encamped, the fields around Old Graitney where the Scots deployed into formation and advanced into the battle and the area between where the majority of the fighting occurred.
- The field to the west of the Kirtle Water, to include the former course of the river at the time of the battle, and its western bank, as the route by which some of the English force attempted to flee during the rout and where significant archaeological remains may be found.

# The Inventory of Historic Battlefields - Boundary

Sark 23 October 1448

Local Authority: Dumfries and Galloway



HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND

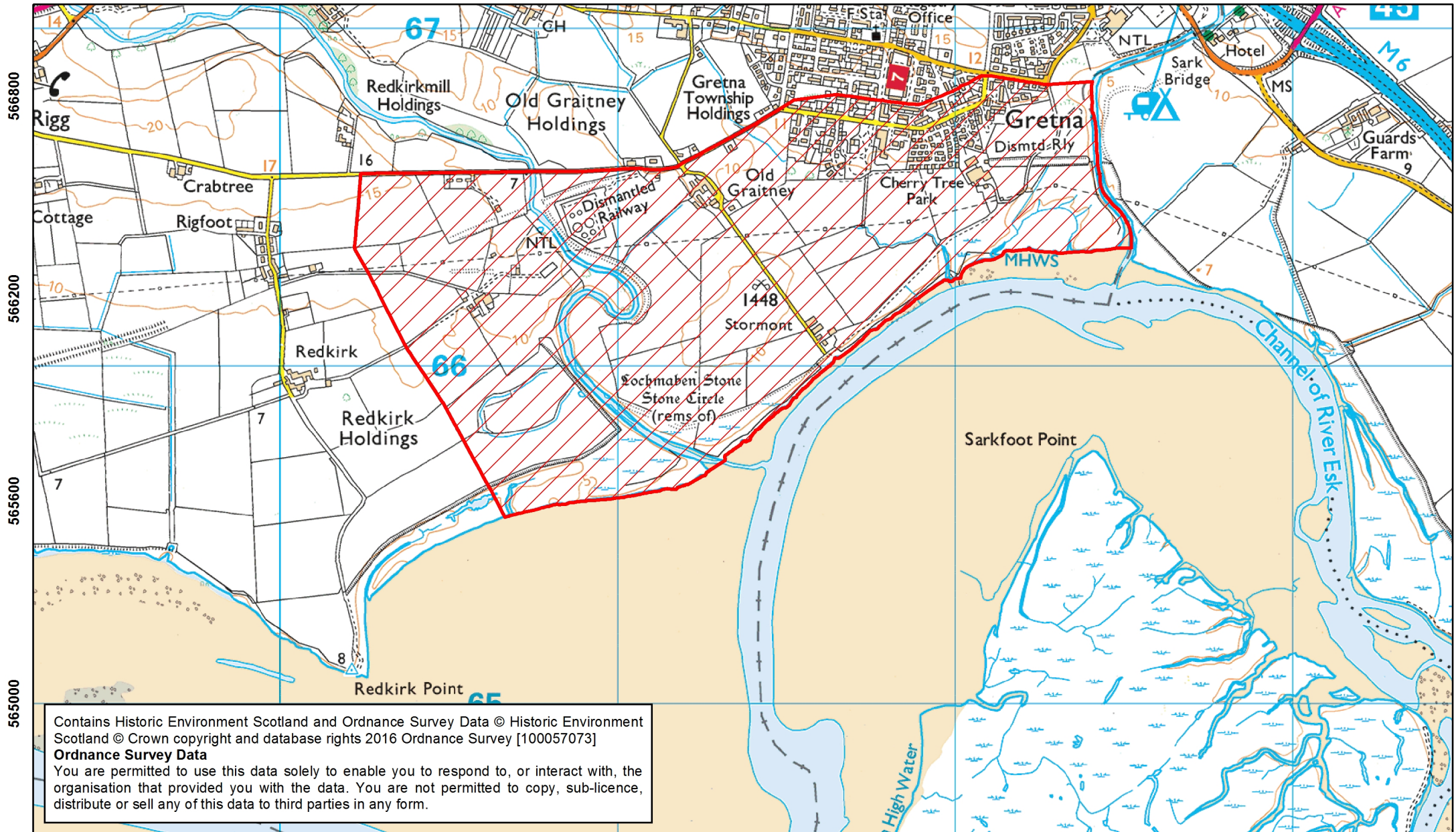
ÀRAINNEACHD EACHDRAIDHEIL ALBA

330000

331000

332000

333000



Contains Historic Environment Scotland and Ordnance Survey Data © Historic Environment Scotland © Crown copyright and database rights 2016 Ordnance Survey [100057073]  
**Ordnance Survey Data**  
You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

 Inventory of Historic Battlefields boundary

Scottish Charity No. SC045925

0 500 1,000  
Meters 