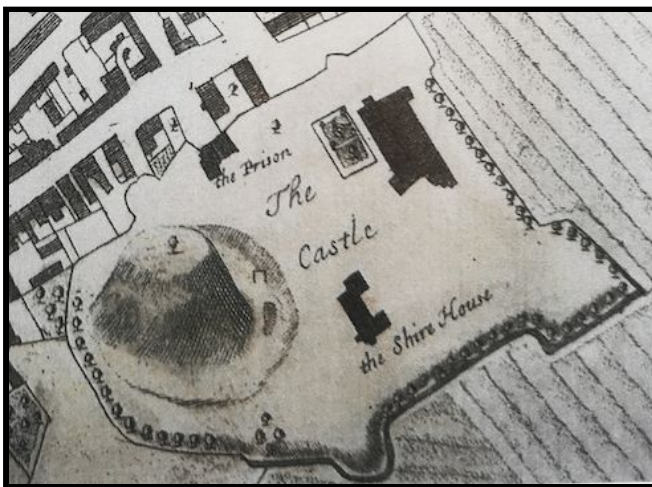


Parliament's Army in Cambridgeshire

The army that supported Parliament and fought against the King's army, was not very well organised at first except in the east of England (where Cambridgeshire is). This section of the army was called the Eastern Association and was made up of groups of soldiers from across Cambridgeshire, Essex, Norfolk, Hertfordshire, and Suffolk.

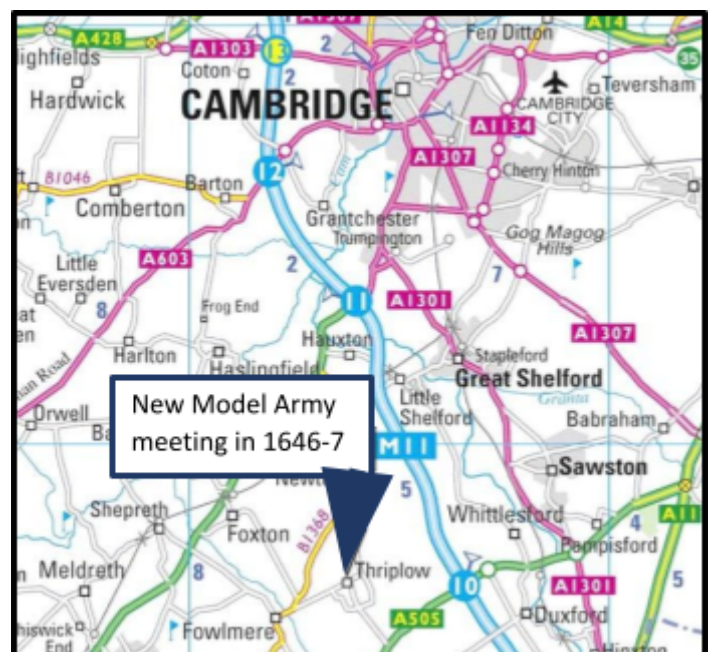
As the Eastern Association was very well organised, Oliver Cromwell decided to copy the idea for the whole of England and created Parliament's New Model Army in 1644.



The Eastern Association was based at Cambridge Castle where they also kept all their weapons ready to fight. The castle was in ruins from not being looked after and colleges had taken stone to use for their new buildings. Therefore, the army built temporary brick barracks inside the ruins to hold soldiers and weapons.

The Civil War started in 1642 but, in 1646, Parliament had won the first round of fighting and had arrested the King. However, the soldiers in Parliament's New Model Army were not happy – they had not been paid since the war began! The soldiers fought for Parliament because they wanted more freedoms, such as being able to vote for MPs and being able to worship whatever religion they wanted. The soldiers were also unhappy because Parliament didn't seem to be changing the laws to make the changes that the soldiers wanted.

Therefore, the soldiers wrote a document called: *A Solemne Engagement of the Army* which set out their demands to parliament. 21,000 soldiers met at Thriplow Heath near Cambridge so their leaders could discuss the demands of the soldiers and write the document.



Tasks:

1. What do you think the army camp at Cambridge Castle would have looked like?
What facilities would they have needed to build to make sure a whole army could live there?
 - Think about housing (barracks), storage and any extra places you need to live
 - Draw a plan of the camp on top of the 17th century map (see other page) and label each element

2. If you were to ask Parliament today for them to make changes, like the soldiers did in 1647, what would you ask to be changed ?
 - You could write this as a persuasive letter to your MP
 - Or, you could write it as a list, explaining each point in detail

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