

<b>Institution:</b> University of Leicester		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 28 History		
<b>Title of case study:</b> From Local Museum to the National Civil War Centre: Achieving National Museum Accreditation and Transforming the Public History of the British and Irish Civil Wars (1638 – 1652)		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2006 - 2020		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b> Andrew Hopper	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b> Professor in English Local History	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b> 2006 to present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> December 2014 to 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> N		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b>  <p>Professor Andrew Hopper's extensive British and Irish Civil Wars research and collaboration with Newark Millgate Museum helped transform it into the National Civil War Centre (NCWC, 2015) and achieve national museum accreditation (2017). Hopper's research facilitated procurement of rare artefacts, the establishment of a new research centre and library, and a 600% increase in learning resource funds. He embedded academic rigour to improve professional practice, exhibitions and engagement, increasing Centre users by 25.6% between 2015 and 2016, and reaching 96,795 users in total by 2019. Hopper's research also influenced the production of <i>The Hypocrite</i>, the Royal Shakespeare Company's most popular play of 2017.</p>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b>  <p>Hopper's research and publications since 2006 have focused on popular experiences of the British and Irish Civil Wars (1638-1652). His monograph <i>Black Tom</i> [R1] revealed the significance of the frequently overlooked parliamentarian commander-in-chief, Sir Thomas Fairfax, establishing him as a popular war leader and important political figure. The book demonstrated the importance of Fairfax's experience for analysing themes such as mobilisation, reputation, memory, honour, printed polemic, gender and Godly piety. Hopper organised a 2012 conference on Fairfax, co-editing a collection of essays entitled <i>England's Fortress</i> which included his own contribution analysing how Fairfax is remembered today [R4].</p> <p>Since 2014, Hopper's research leadership into military welfare has placed the human costs of the Civil Wars firmly at the centre of a recent shift in the historiography from the conflict's causes to its consequences [R5]. This research agenda gained momentum from Hopper's organisation of NCWC's inaugural conference in August 2015 on the theme 'Mortality, Care and Military Welfare during the British and Irish Civil Wars'. This international event was attended by 80 academics, teachers and museum professionals, and drew speakers from the UK, Ireland and Canada. The proceedings, co-edited by Hopper, are now published as <i>Battle-Scarred</i> [R5]. The conference's success inspired NCWC to invite Hopper to be guest curator of the 'Battle-Scarred' exhibition that followed, on medicine, surgery, hospitals and pensions (2016-2019). University of Leicester research from chapters on herbal remedies and wound management by Jones and Pells [R5] also featured in the exhibition.</p> <p>Hopper's research into how Civil-War-maimed soldiers, war widows and orphans petitioned for financial relief was awarded an AHRC standard grant for a major project on pension records: 'Welfare, Conflict and Memory during and after the English Civil Wars, 1642-1710'</p>		

[R6, G1]. With NCWC as impact partner, the project examines how everyday individuals remembered the conflict and articulated their suffering. This project's website is a major research output [R6]. Its thousands of individual stories demonstrate how a national pension scheme made the British and Irish Civil Wars a watershed moment in the history of European military welfare.

Hopper's research on Civil War allegiance and side-changing [R2, R3] has demonstrated how the strategy and internal politics of both sides was dominated by considerations of side-changing, constituting an ongoing and tortuous dilemma, amid rapidly changing political circumstances. In 2015, the Royal Shakespeare Company commissioned playwright, Richard Bean, approached Hopper to be historical advisor for his forthcoming comedy, *The Hypocrite*, about Sir John Hotham's allegiance dilemma and Hull's role in the outbreak of Civil War. A collaboration followed in which Bean used [R2] to inform the play's dialogue, also using [R3], which sets out a cultural history of honour and treachery that became the main theme of the play.

### 3. References to the research

[R1]. A. Hopper. *'Black Tom': Sir Thomas Fairfax and the English Revolution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007).

[R2]. A. Hopper (ed.), *The Papers of the Hothams, Governors of Hull during the Civil War* (Camden Society, 5<sup>th</sup> Series, 39, 2011).

[R3]. A. Hopper, *Turncoats and Renegades: Changing Sides in the English Civil Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).  
[doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199575855.001.0001](https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199575855.001.0001)

[R4]. A. Hopper. 'Images of Fairfax in modern literature and film', in A. Hopper and P. Major (eds.), *England's Fortress: New Perspectives on Thomas, 3<sup>rd</sup> Lord Fairfax* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 121-41.

[R5]. D. J. Appleby and A. Hopper (eds.), *Battle-Scarred: Mortality, Medical Care and Military Welfare in the British Civil Wars* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018).

[R6]. A. Hopper, D.J. Appleby, L. Bowen, M. Stoye and I Pells (eds.) 'Conflict, Welfare and Memory during and after the English Civil Wars, 1642-1710' (2018--). AHRC-funded research website: [www.civilwarpetitions.ac.uk](http://www.civilwarpetitions.ac.uk)

### Exhibitions

[X1]. A. Hopper and E. Gruber von Arni, *Battle-Scarred: Surgery, Medicine and Military Welfare during the British Civil Wars*. The National Civil War Centre, Newark (2016-2019).  
[www.civilwarpetitions.ac.uk/battle-scarred/](http://www.civilwarpetitions.ac.uk/battle-scarred/)

[X2]. A. Hopper and D. Strange, *The World Turned Upside Down*. The National Civil War Centre, Newark (2019-2023). [www.civilwarpetitions.ac.uk/the-world-turned-upside-down/](http://www.civilwarpetitions.ac.uk/the-world-turned-upside-down/)

### Grants

[G1]. A. Hopper, PI. "Welfare, Conflict and Memory during and after the English Civil Wars, 1642-1710". 1 June 2017 to 31 December 2021. AHRC. GBP845,669 (GBP575,082 University of Leicester). Co-Is: Universities of Cardiff, Nottingham and Southampton.  
[AH/N010140/1](https://ahrc.ukri.org/award/AH/N010140/1)

### 4. Details of the impact

### Transforming a local museum into an accredited National Centre

Hopper's British and Irish Civil War research [R1 – R6] helped transform the locally focused Newark Millgate Museum into The National Civil War Centre. In summary, this University of Leicester research: 1) established resources; 2) improved professional practice; and 3) facilitated NCWC's accreditation as a National Centre [E1], reaching 96,795 users in total by 2019 [E1a].

#### 1. Establishing Civil War resources

Following the Heritage Lottery Fund award (GBP3.5M, 2012), NCWC Curator Glyn Hughes and Hopper (H&H) incorporated Hopper's research findings [R1 – R4] into subsequent grants [E1a – E1d] that launched NCWC's training facilities, exhibitions, and collections [E1a, E1d]. Hopper initiated and co-wrote with NCWC colleagues an application to the Wolfson Foundation for GBP64K (December 2014 [E1c, E1d]), to co-establish the NCWC Research Centre of Civil-War Medical History and Wolfson Library in 2015 for the public and students [E1c, E1d, E2a], which directly increased NCWC's book funds by 600% by 2019 [E1b]. Hopper's research [R1– R4] underpinned NCWC's *Battle Scarred* exhibition (BatS, 2016) [X1] funded with GBP10K from Newark Sherwood District Council (NSDC) [E2a]. Hughes commented that *"Andy's research was pivotal"* in NSDC's decision to invest a further GBP140K to create two permanent galleries which incorporated elements of BatS [E2a], also enabling the current 4-year long exhibition, *The World Turned Upside Down* (TWTUD) [X2], to open in September 2019, drawing on Hopper's ongoing AHRC-funded research [G1]. Hughes stated: *"NSDC were...heavily influenced by the success of Hopper's research. It gave them the confidence to invest in the [NCWC] and thus increased investment to GBP750K [in total]"* [E2a].

#### 2. Transforming NCWC professional practice

Hughes confirms that Hopper's research-led co-curations; professional development programmes for NCWC staff; and public education workshops (2015–2020) substantially changed NCWC's working practices, which helped increase staff and volunteer numbers by 280% (2012: 12 staff + 9 volunteers; 2019: 30 staff + 50 volunteers) [E2a, E2b].

Hopper's research transformed NCWC's curation and audience engagement practices. Hopper founded and embedded NCWC's Academic Exhibition Committee (2015), ensuring research underpins all NCWC exhibitions [X1, X2], and NCWC incorporated [R1, R3–R6] into their visitor information [E1d]. Hughes stated: *"BatS [X1] changed the museum's thinking and showed [how] Civil War topics have present-day resonance, leading to increased institutional confidence in future exhibitions"* [E2a]. Intended for seven months, *BatS [X1]* ran for 37 months [E2a]. Its 2016 launch contributed to a 25.6% increase in the Centre's mean annual users (including visitors, learning and participation, talks, and enquiries) since the reopening in 2015 (24,681, 2015; 31,000, 2016) [E1a] and by 456% compared to the Museum's mean annual users prior to closure in 2012 (5,576) [E1d].

NCWC Learning Officer Denise Greany explained how Hopper's research on side-changing [R2–R3], medical history [R5] and petitions [R6] enabled NCWC to communicate complex narratives accessibly to *"school audiences... adults with special educational needs [and] teenagers"* [E1a]. NCWC used [R2, R3, R6, X1] to devise experiences, in which visitors re-enacted people and events from the [X1] exhibition. Using findings from [R5], visitors 'surgically' removed a bullet from a dummy, using Civil War-style equipment; and from [R6] visitors wore replicas of battlefield wounds. Greany stated: *"Exhibitions [can be] overwhelming and difficult, particularly if you're a younger person or not used to going to museums. [The] research...helped us to focus on the experiences of ordinary people"* [E1a]. Visitors stated that [X1] *"made the Civil War easy to understand [with] lots of relevant exhibits"*; *"The gory medical exhibition is first class, we learned so much"*; *"Didn't know how much the medicines actually worked"*; and, *"I want to be a doctor"* [E1b, E2c]. The recently launched TWTUD [X2] has generated new audiences, drawing a base of 75%-first time

visitors to NCWC (November 2019) [E1g]. NCWC's learning programmes reached c.3,000 UK schoolchildren (2018-2019) — exceeding the Council's target by 150% [E1c].

Hopper incorporated [R5, R6] into seven NCWC staff training workshops (2016–2019), which were “*vital in adding staff confidence*” (Hughes) [E1a]. Greany stated: “*they changed the conversations with our volunteers [and] the language that we used to describe the war*”, and empowered the team with archival skills. “*I now have the skills to find primary source material*” to work with students, which is “*personally empowering*” [E1a].

Hopper's research helped significantly improve visitor reach by 285% (20,000, 2008-2012; 77,000, 2015-2019) [E4, E6]. Prior to its closure in 2012, the museum had attracted only 24,027 users since 2010 [E2b]. Despite low or declining visitor numbers across many British museum and galleries 2012–2018 [E6], since reopening in 2015, Hopper's research helped NCWC to generate 96,795 total users by 2019 [E1a]. For [X1], Hopper's expertise on New Model Army commander 'Black Tom' Fairfax [R1, R4] enabled him to procure loans of Fairfax's priceless personal items (wheelchair, boots, medals, sword) from descendants [E3], who pledged annual NCWC patronage, ensuring perpetual loans of Civil War artefacts to NCWC [E2a]. Hopper's co-establishment of The Wolfson Library led to historical societies donating >500 books [E1b] and established NCWC as a research centre for staff, visitors, learners – and for other museums, including Nantwich, which now use the [X1] materials to “*shape their own exhibitions*” [E1a].

3. Arts Council England awarded NCWC National Accreditation status on 29 November 2017 [E1d, E4], which Hughes stated would have been “*incredibly difficult*” without Hopper's research [E1a]. The acquisition of “*a plethora of resources*” [E1a] through Hopper's research networks “*enabled the museum to show academic rigour and satisfy criteria for national accreditation*” [E2a], and allowed NCWC “*to show we are leading debate, which [Hopper] facilitated*” [E1a]. NSDC reported: “*Without accreditation NCWC would not have access to external funding*” and “[museum] loans from the Royal Armouries, Museum of London [etc.]” [E1d].

4. For his Civil-War comedy *The Hypocrite*, RSC playwright Richard Bean stated that without Hopper's research [R1–R3] “*it would not have been possible for me to write the play*” [E5a]. *The Hypocrite* reached 28,759 people, selling out at Hull Truck Theatre (March 2017, 12,624) and the Royal Shakespeare Company Swan Theatre (April 2017, 16,135) [E5b, E5c]. It also won the Edgerton Foundation New Plays Award [E5c]. The play inspired audiences: of those surveyed 70% stated it introduced them to Sir John Hotham for the first time; and 92% stated *The Hypocrite* made them feel more connected with Hull and its people [E5d].

## 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

### E1. Visitor Experience and Impact Evaluation Reports.

[E1a]. Dr P. Lester Impact Report, October 2020, NCWC compiled user and visitor statistics; and interviews with NCWC staff: G. Hughes, Team Leader Collections and Exhibitions; S. Clarke, Team Leader Learning and Participation; and D. Greany, Learning and Participation Officer, NCWC, July and September 2020.

[E1b]. Dr K. Bridger Impact Evaluation Report and interview with NCWC curators and G. Hughes, Team Leader Collections and Exhibitions, 11 February 2019.

[E1c]. Newark and Sherwood District Council Economic Development Committee Appendices from Minutes, 27 March 2019 - Appendix A.

[E1d]. Newark and Sherwood District Council Economic Development Committee Appendices from Minutes, 27 March 2019 - Appendix B.

[E1e]. Newark and Sherwood District Council Economic Development Committee NCWC Agenda, 17 January 2018.

[E1f]. Newark and Sherwood District Council Economic Development Committee NCWC Minutes, 17 January 2018.

[E1g]. WTUD Visitor Evaluations Report, November 2019.

## **E2. Testimonials.**

[E2a]. Letter: Team Leader, Exhibitions and Collections, NCWC, 25 July 2016.

[E2b]. Letter: Team Leader, Exhibitions and Collections, NCWC, 18 November 2019.

[E2c]. Letter: Team Leader, Exhibitions and Collections, NCWC, 24 September 2020.

[E2d]. Email from NCWC Operations Manager, Staff Numbers, 13 March 2019.

[E2e]. Email from NCWC Operations Manager, Visitor Numbers, 13 March 2019.

[E2f]. Handwritten visitor feedback for Battle Scarred (blackboard), 2016.

[E3]. Lord Thomas Fairfax's wheelchair acquisition, featured in *Culture24*, 23 March 2016.

## **E4. Collated Arts Council England accreditation materials and related media.**

[E4a]. Accreditation - Forward Plan 2016 - 2020 Final – Approved.

[E4b]. Accreditation - Lincolnshire News.

[E4c]. Accreditation - NCWC News.

[E4d]. Accredited Museums UK list, August 2020.

[E4e]. Nationally Styled Accreditation application Oct 2017.

## **E5. Collated materials: *The Hypocrite***

[E5a]. Email from Hull Truck Theatre 25 September 2020.

[E5b]. Hull Truck Annual Report 2017.

[E5c]. Visit Hull news - Hypocrite sells out Hull Truck.

[E5d]. RSC 35 Performances - The Hypocrite, website [www.rsc.org.uk/the-hypocrite/](http://www.rsc.org.uk/the-hypocrite/)

[E5e]. RSC swan-theatre-seat-plan-461 capacity.

[E5f]. RSC The Hypocrite and awards.

[E5g]. Visit Hull news - Hypocrite sells out RSC.

[E5h]. Hull City Report 2017.

[E6]. Newark and Sherwood District Council Statement of Accounts, Report and Annual Governance Statement, 2018–2019.