

Oxfordshire

PHYLLIS COURT IN THE CIVIL WAR 1644-6

The following extracts from Bulstrode Whitelocke's diaries are based on Ruth Spalding (ed.), The Diaries of Bulstrode Whitelocke 1605-1675 (British Academy Records of Social and Economic History, New Series 13, OUP 1990), pp. 150, 166, 178, 181, 184, 187-9.

Spalding's scholarly edition retains the 17th-century spellings, capitalization and punctuation of the original manuscript. In the extracts given below, spellings and some of the punctuation have been modernized.

1644: Major General Skippon directed Phyllis Court to be made a strong garrison, and it was regularly fortified and strong, and well manned, because Greenland hard by it was a garrison for the king, and betwixt these two garrisons stood W's [Whitelocke's] house at Fawley Court, miserably torn and plundered by each of them.

18 March 1644/5: An order for the supply of the town of Henley upon Thames and the garrison of Phyllis Court there with 1,000 bandoliers, powder, match etc; and Whitelocke was appointed governor there, which he the rather undertook, because Phyllis Court was his own house and he had there in garrison about 300 foot and a troop of horse, all quartered within the works, which were strong and regular, and the Thames brought round the fort, in a large graft [*ditch or moat*]. The great guns about it were very good and useful, and the officers and men were stout men, and well armed, and W[hitelocke] took care for their due pay and encouragement.

13 August 1645: The garrison at Phyllis Court, W[hitelocke]'s house, mutinied against their governor D'Oiley, and had like to have killed him; W. got Major General Brown to go thither to pacify that business.

16 October 1645: Henley town complained of their losses by the soldiers, and I promised to move the House [*of Commons*] for them.

19 January 1645/6: He [Whitelocke] gave way to procure martial law for the garrison of Phyllis Court, the soldiers being very unruly.

28 July 1646: Sergeant Welde was sent down as judge of oyer and terminer into Worcestershire, and lying at Henley he came to visit Wh[itelocke] in his garrison at Phyllis Court, who caused all the guards to be doubled and a strong guard at the drawbridge, where Wh[itelocke] met the judge and conducted him and caroused him in the house...

15 August 1646: [Whitelocke] sent an acceptable warrant to the country about Henley to send in workmen with pickaxes and shovels for the dismantling of the garrison of Henley and Phyllis Court, and carts to be employed about that grateful work.

18 August 1646: A great many of the country came to Wh[itelocke] with mattocks, shovels and some with teams to help in slighting of Phyllis Court garrison, and Wh. set his soldiers to work in it and allowed them 6d a day for it besides their wages. The countrymen paid their own men. He threw down the breastworks and made handsome walks of them on two sides, digged down the bulwarks, sent away the great guns and ammunition, and got pay for his soldiers, whom he pleased, but the country more, to see his readiness to slight garrisons.

3 September 1646: Wh[itelocke] enjoyed much content in often visiting his wife and children at Phyllis Court from London, and got a light chariot with two horses which easily went in half a day betwixt the two places...

*For an 18th-century view of the **Civil War fortifications** at Phyllis Court, said to have been copied from a 17th-century original when the house was demolished, see Figure 57 of the forthcoming EPE paperback Henley-on-Thames: Town, Trade and River (Phillimore 2009). The original drawing is in Gloucestershire Record Office (reference D1245/FF76).*

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