

Armour and Weapons of the British Civil Wars

Source-Based Activities

Activity 3: Pistols and Armour

Background

Richard Atkins, was a Captain in the Royalist army. On 13 July, 1643, he took part in the Royalist victory at Roundway Down. In this extract, Atkins describes trying to kill General Arthur Haselrig, the leader of the parliamentary army.

Source 3: An extract from *A Vindication of Richard Atkyns, Esquire* written by Atkins in 1669.

It was my fortune to charge Sir Arthur Hesilrige... He discharged his carbine first but at a distance not to hurt us... I then... discharged mine; I'm sure I hit him, for he staggered and wheeled off from his party and ran... I pursued him... and in six score yards I came up to him, and discharged the other pistol at him, and I am sure I hit his head... but he was too well armed all over for a pistol bullet to do him any hurt, having a coat of mail over his arms and a headpiece that was musket proof... I employed myself in killing his horse, and cut him in several places... the horse began to faint with bleeding, and Sir Arthur fell off. Then a group of troopers... charged and rescued him.

Glossary

Pistol - a small hand gun

Carbine - a musket used by cavalry

Discharged - fired

Read Source 3 and then answer the following questions:

- 1) What happened when Richard Atkins tried to kill Sir Arthur Hasilrige?
- 2) What saved Hasilrige's life?
- 3) What does this passage tell us about firearms? What does it tell us about armour?

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