
SUMMARY: The document below is an account by John Fisher in the Black Book of Warwick of a mock battle staged for the Queen's entertainment at Warwick Castle on 18 August 1572 in which Oxford played a leading role.

On Monday, 12 August 1572, the Queen, having dined at the house of Edward Fisher in Long Itchington, arrived at Warwick accompanied by a great train including the Earls of Warwick, Leicester, Oxford, Sussex, Rutland and Huntingdon, Lord Burghley and Lord Howard of Effingham.

John Fisher served as town clerk of Warwick between 1563 and 1590. See the *ODNB* entry for his elder brother, Thomas Fisher (d. 12 January 1577). Edward Fisher (1546/7–1601) was the only child of Thomas Fisher.

For the mock battle see also the extract from the Black Book of Warwick in *Antiquities in Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Derbyshire, Northamptonshire, Staffordshire, and Warwickshire, Being the Fourth Volume of the Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica*, (London: J. Nichols, 1790), Vol. IV, pp. 25-7 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/bibliothecatopog04nich#page/n755/mode/2up>

See also the extract in Nichols, John, *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*, (New York: Franklin, 1823), Vol. I, pp. 319-20 at:

<https://archive.org/details/progressespublic01nich/page/308/mode/2up>

See also Ward, B.M., *The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford 1550-1604 From Contemporary Documents*, (London: John Murray, 1928), pp. 70-1.

See also 'The Elizabethan Court Day By Day' for the year 1572, p. 45 at:

https://folgerpedia.folger.edu/The_Elizabethan_Court_Day_by_Day

The transcript below is taken from Kemp, Thomas, ed., *The Black Book of Warwick*, (Warwick: Henry T. Cooke and Son, 1898), pp. 95-7 at:

<https://archive.org/details/blackbookofwarwi00warw/page/94/mode/2up>

. . . supper done, a show of fireworks prepared for that purpose in the Temple Fields was set abroad, the manner whereof this writer cannot so truly set forth as if he had been at the[m], being sick in his bed, but the report was that there was devised on the Temple ditch a fort made of slender timber covered with canvas. In this fort were appointed divers persons to serve as soldiers, and therefore so many harnesses as might be gotten within the town were had, wherewith men were armed & appointed to show themselves,

some others appointed to cast out fireworks, as squibs & balls of fire. Against that fort was another castlewise prepared of like strength, whereof was governor the Earl of Oxford, a lusty gentleman, with a lusty band of gentlemen. Between these forts, or against them, were placed certain battering-pieces to the number of 12 or 13 brought from London, and 12 score chambers or mortys [sic for 'mortar'] pieces brought also from the town at the charge of th' Earl of Warwick. These pieces & chambers were by trains fired, & so made a great noise as though it had been a sore assault, having some intermission, in which time th' Earl of Oxford & his soldiers to the number of 200 with calivers & arquebuses likewise gave divers assaults. Then the fort shooting again & casting out divers fires, terrible to those that have not been in like experience, valiant to such as delighted therein, and indeed strange to them that understood it not, for the wild-fire falling into the River of Avon would for a time lie still, and then again rise & fly abroad, casting forth many flashes and flames, whereat the Queen's Majesty took great pleasure, till after by mischance a poor man or two were much troubled. For at the last, when it was appointed that the overthrowing of the fort should be, a dragon flying casting out huge flames & squibs lighted upon the fort, and so set fire thereon, to the subversion thereof. But whether by negligence or otherwise, it happed that a ball of fire fell on a house at the end of the bridge wherein one Henry Cowy [sic for 'Cowper'], otherwise called Miller, dwelled, and set fire on the same house, the man & wife being both in bed & on sleep, which burned so as before any rescue could be, the house & all things in it utterly perished, with much ado to save the man & woman, & besides that house, another house or two near adjoining were also fired, but rescued by the diligent & careful help as well of th' Earl of Oxford, Mr Fulke Greville & other gentlemen & townsmen which repaired thither in greater number than could be ordered. And no marvel it was that so little harm was done, for the fireballs & squibs cast up did fly quite over the castle and into the midst of the town, falling down some on houses, some in courts & backsides, and some in the streets as far as almost of Saint Mary Church, to the great peril or else great fear of the inhabitants of this borough. And so as by what means is not yet known four houses in the town & suburbs were on fire at once, whereof one had a ball came though both sides, & made a hole as big as a man's head, & did no more harm. This fire appeased, it was time to go to rest.

And in the next morning it pleased her Majesty to have the poor old man & woman that had their house burnt brought unto her, whom so brought, her Majesty recomforted very much. And by her great bounty & other courtiers there was given towards their losses that had taken hurt £25 12s 8d or thereabouts, which was dispensed to them accordingly.

On Monday, her Majesty taking great pleasure in the sport she had at Kenilworth, would thither again, where she rested till the Saturday after, and then from thence by Charlecote she went to the Lord Compton's, & so forwards.