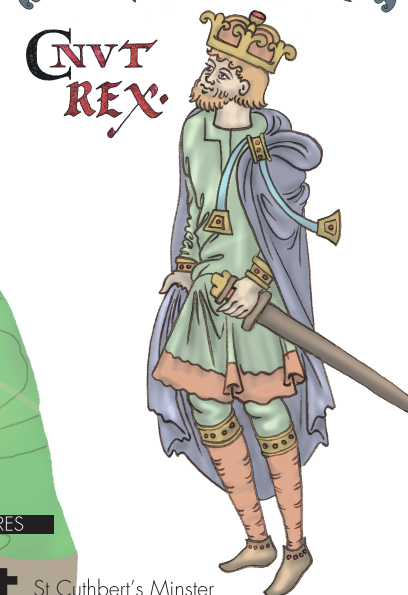


Carham Battlefield 1018

Prior to the battle ...

In 1016 the Danish Prince, Cnut, gained the throne of England putting an end to the Wessex dynasty. Much of the nobility was eliminated and replaced with Cnut's Danish supporters. Uhtred, Earl of Northumbria was one of the victims and Northumbria was divided, the northern earldom being given to Uhtred's brother Edwulf.

The precise date of the Battle of Carham is not known. However early sources state that a comet appeared in the night sky in August of 1018 and the battle was fought some thirty days afterwards. The disastrous Northumbrian losses led the then Bishop of Durham to die of a broken heart and his death is recorded in late 1018. We can therefore date the battle to sometime in September 1018.



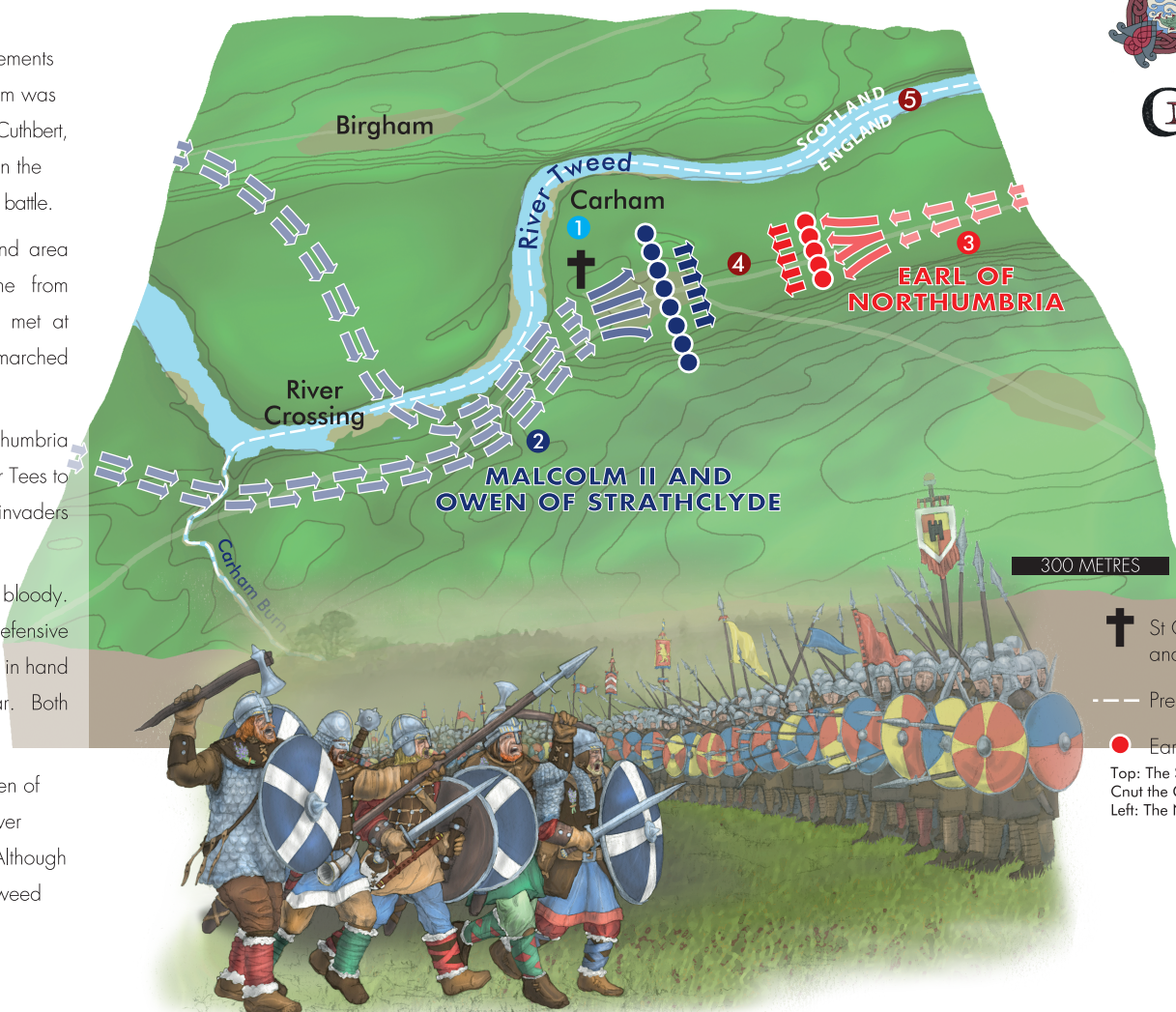
1 Both Carham and Birham are ancient settlements which long predate the battle of 1018. Carham was the site of a Minster which was founded by Saint Cuthbert, it is close to an ancient river crossing and lies on the route of a Roman road. It was an ideal place for battle.

2 Two Scottish armies, one from the Highland area commanded by King Malcolm II, and one from Strathclyde commanded by Owen the Bald, met at Caddonlee near Galashiels and then marched eastwards and into Northumbrian territory.

3 To counter this force the Earl of Northumbria conscripted an army from an area from the River Tees to the River Tweed and moved hastily to halt the invaders at Carham.

4 The battle was short, vicious and bloody. Outnumbered, the Northumbrians formed a defensive shield wall against their foe, but were overcome in hand to hand fighting with sword, axe, seax and spear. Both sides suffered heavy losses.

5 Aftermath - Victory for Malcolm II and Owen of Strathclyde ensured that the land north of the River Tweed would become permanently Scottish. Although the following years saw incursions across the Tweed by both sides the Border, with the exception of Berwick-upon-Tweed, has remained virtually unchanged for a thousand years.



- ✚ St Cuthbert's Minster and present day Parish Church
 - Present day England Scotland Border
 - Earl of Northumbria's Shield wall
- Top: The Scottish - English border area | Above :
Cnut the Great, King of England 1016 - 1035 |
Left: The Northumbrian Army form a Shield Wall

Carham
1018
2018

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