

# The Local Armouries?



Most rich gentlemen had their own supply of arms and armour, but not all of it would have been very new or in prime condition.

## *In the Hall*

*'Seaven Case of Pistols with Holsters, one paire of holsters, one paire of Holsters without pistoll, Tenn Musquets, one sword, two holbords, two batteringe axe, fower drums, five suites of armour and the horse colers.'*

## *In the Store*

*'Eight Swords and one carbine'*  
Inventory of Sir Thomas Wentworth of  
Bretton, near Wakefield, in 1675

The Littlecote Wall display in the Royal Armouries at Leeds is a reconstruction of part of the Great Hall at Littlecote House near Hungerford, Berkshire, owned by **Colonel Alexander Popham**.

Popham raised men from his estate and the surrounding country, and equipped a troop of cavalymen to fight for *Parliament* in the English Civil Wars.

In total there are 37 buff coats in the Littlecote collection, 34 are of the same type, with flared skirts, and double sleeves. There are also 33 pieces of harquebusier armour. Most of the collection represents *munition armour* of the Commonwealth period, which was 'mass produced' and of a poorer quality than the 'tailor-made' armour of the rich.

*Look carefully at the picture of the Littlecote Armoury.*

*What sorts of soldiers would this set of armour equip?*

Little evidence remains from the time, but at the end of the Civil Wars, the arms and armour used in the wars were displayed in the halls of great houses. This was partly as a memorial to the men who had fought in the regiments raised by their landlords, and partly as a fashionable style of decoration.

Look at the sheets on arming soldiers.

1. *What sorts of soldier would Sir Thomas Wentworth be able to arm?*

2. *How many soldiers could he equip?*



*The Great Hall of Littlecote House, Berkshire, originally belonging to the Popham family.*