

NARTE Links with History

By Brian Lawrence, Executive Director

Situated about 200 miles north of London and halfway between London and Edinburgh lies the historic city of York. With its ancient walled city centre dominated by the imposing York Minster, its turbulent past has for centuries been entwined with English history and the struggle for the crown.

The occupying Roman Ninth Legion marched on Yorkshire in the third century AD to extend the Empire's northern frontier. They built a new fort on a rocky spur above the River Ouse, which attracted traders and followers. Thus they established the settlement of Eboracum, from which the modern city of York has developed.

The first to govern the country from York were the Emperor Septimus Severus, who succumbed to the English weather and died of pneumonia in 211AD, to

be succeeded later by the Emperor Constantine who finally came to York in 306AD. Constantine's statue stands today outside the Minster.

When the Romans left Britain, the kingdom became fragmented and Eboracum became the capital of Northumbria, at which time it dropped its Roman name and became known as Eoferwic, "Place of the Wild Boar".

When King Edwin converted to Christianity in 625AD, he was baptized in a simple wooden structure built beside a local holy spring. This was the foundation of York Minster.

The Vikings invaded the land in the ninth century and captured the capital city of Eoferwic, changing its name to Jorvik. Much of the Viking influences remain today in the local language. Many of York's streets carry the Norse name of "gates". One of the must-do things for visitors to York is a tour of the renowned Jorvik Viking Centre in Coppergate.

A hundred years after the Viking invasions, Eadred, then King of Wessex, formed an allegiance with the deposed King of Northumbria and reclaimed Jorvik from the Viking ruler Eric Bloodaxe.

When King Edward the Confessor died in 1066, Harold Godwinson assumed the throne. The Norwegian ruler, also Harold, used this time to attempt to recapture York, but was driven back after losing almost his entire force. Later that same year the Duke William's army invaded from Normandy in the well documented "Battle of Hastings" at which Harold was defeated and died with an arrow in his eye. William, known thereafter as William the Conqueror, assumed the English throne in 1066 and immediately dispatched his nobles to govern the different regions of the land as his lieutenants.

However, the Yorkshire people remained loyal to their memory of King Harold and all William's nobles sent to govern York died mysteriously. This situation was resolved in no uncertain manner when William's forces sacked the city of York and in 1069 lay waste to all the land between York and Durham, leaving the people to starve. William built two castles to control the city, one of which, known as Clifford's Tower, remains in good condition today.





William relaxed his stranglehold on the region in 1079 and appointed the Norman Archbishop, Thomas of Bayeaux, to be Archbishop of York. Thomas built his great Cathedral in York over the period from 1080 to 1110. Remains of this early structure are still to be found in the undercroft of the present day Minster.

The present building was begun in 1220 when Archbishop Walter Gray decided to rebuild the Cathedral on a scale to exceed Canterbury. The Minster is a work in progress as repair and renovation has continued through the centuries, with the incorporation each time of more modern materials and designs. Today over a million people visit York Minster each year. It is still one of the largest and most magnificent testaments to faith in Europe.

The medieval walls that still surround the old city today were built from taxes levied by King Henry III, nephew of Richard the Lionheart. Henry was extravagant and demanded high taxes from his subjects. However, he left many examples of his charitable works and building programs, such as the York walls and the rebuilding of Westminster Abbey, that we can still enjoy today.

The Wars of the Roses were a series of [civil wars](#) fought in medieval England from [1455 to 1487](#) between the House of [Lancaster](#) and the House of [York](#), (not the 1989 Danny DeVito movie, starring Michael Douglas and Kathleen Turner). The name Wars of the Roses is based on the badges used by the two sides, the red rose for the Lancastrians and the white rose for the Yorkists.

Major causes of this conflict include the fact that both houses were direct descendants of king Edward III and that the ruling Lancastrian king, Henry VI, had surrounded himself with a group of unpopular nobles. There was considerable civil unrest among much of the population and there were many powerful lords with their own private armies willing to back whichever side seemed to have the upper hand. This unstable situation was made worse by the untimely episodes of mental illness on the part of Henry VI.

The city of York was determined to be on the winning side through these turbulent times and Edward IV hated them for their constantly changing allegiance. As a result the citizens had the habit of



Royal Timeline



closing the gates to the city whenever Edward came to visit.

Richard III may be the best known kings from the House of York. He was probably not the villain that he was depicted to be by William Shakespeare. In fact, Richard had very strong links with the city and adopted the white boar as his personal badge, honoring York's ancient city name. Richard was the last English king to die in battle at the hands of Henry Tudor, who by marriage to Elizabeth of York effectively ended the Wars of the Roses. But his good work of unification was undone when 50 years later, Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries and plundered St Mary's Abbey, a favorite of the citizens of York since the early 12th century.

In spite of the populist revolt against Henry VIII's actions, he visited the city with his wife Katherine Howard, staying at the King's Manor in the heart of the city. King's Manor has been renovated and extended through the centuries and some parts were built in the 16th century using recovered stones from St Mary's Abbey.

Today the King's Manor on Exhibition Square is part of the York University, which brings us neatly to the relationship recently established between York and NARTE.

As you may infer from this encapsulated history of York, it has not always been the most hospitable city to outsiders from the south, so it was with some trepidation that my wife and I boarded the train from London to York on September 22nd. But our fears were unfounded, we had a great time visiting the city's attractions and as luck would have it, we just happened to be there during the York Food Festival,

so there were wonderful samples to be had in the various city markets and festival centers.

The real purpose of our visit was to meet with Chris Marshman, managing director, and David Heaton, marketing manager, of York EMC Services, a commercial test and training organization, owned and operated by the York University Electronics Department. York EMC Services is a full service EMC test house, but they also run a series of excellent courses of Continuing Professional Development, CPDs, covering various subjects within the EMC field. Full information about this organization is available at www.yorkemc.co.uk.

It was clear that a partnership between York EMC Services and NARTE would be of major benefit to both parties. The attendees at the CPD classes would welcome an opportunity to demonstrate their expertise by obtaining an internationally recognized certification of their achievement and experience. NARTE can provide this very specific certification of excellence and our organization will benefit from an increased European membership.

The first step in building the relationship has now been completed. York University, York EMC Services is now the U.K.'s first NARTE authorized test center, able to offer and invigilate the NARTE certification examination in EMC and ESD. The NARTE question pool is being seeded with questions related to European commercial and military standards to enable York to hold the first examination sessions by the end of the first quarter of 2007. We can only hope that this relationship with NARTE will continue to grow, develop and prosper, just as the city of York has done.

York **EMC** Services Ltd