

# NORTH YORK MOORS NATIONAL PARK NMP

## The White Horse of Kilburn



The White Horse of Kilburn, a prominent landmark located in the North York Moors National Park.  
NMR 17416/26 13-JAN-2000 © English Heritage

Cut into the south face of an Iron Age promontory fort at Roulston Scar, the White Horse of Kilburn is the largest hill figure in Britain, visible from over 30 km away.

The monument has been mapped as part of the North York Moors National Park National Mapping Programme (NMP) by Archaeological Research Services Ltd. The historic aerial photography reveals a story of conservation and camouflage.

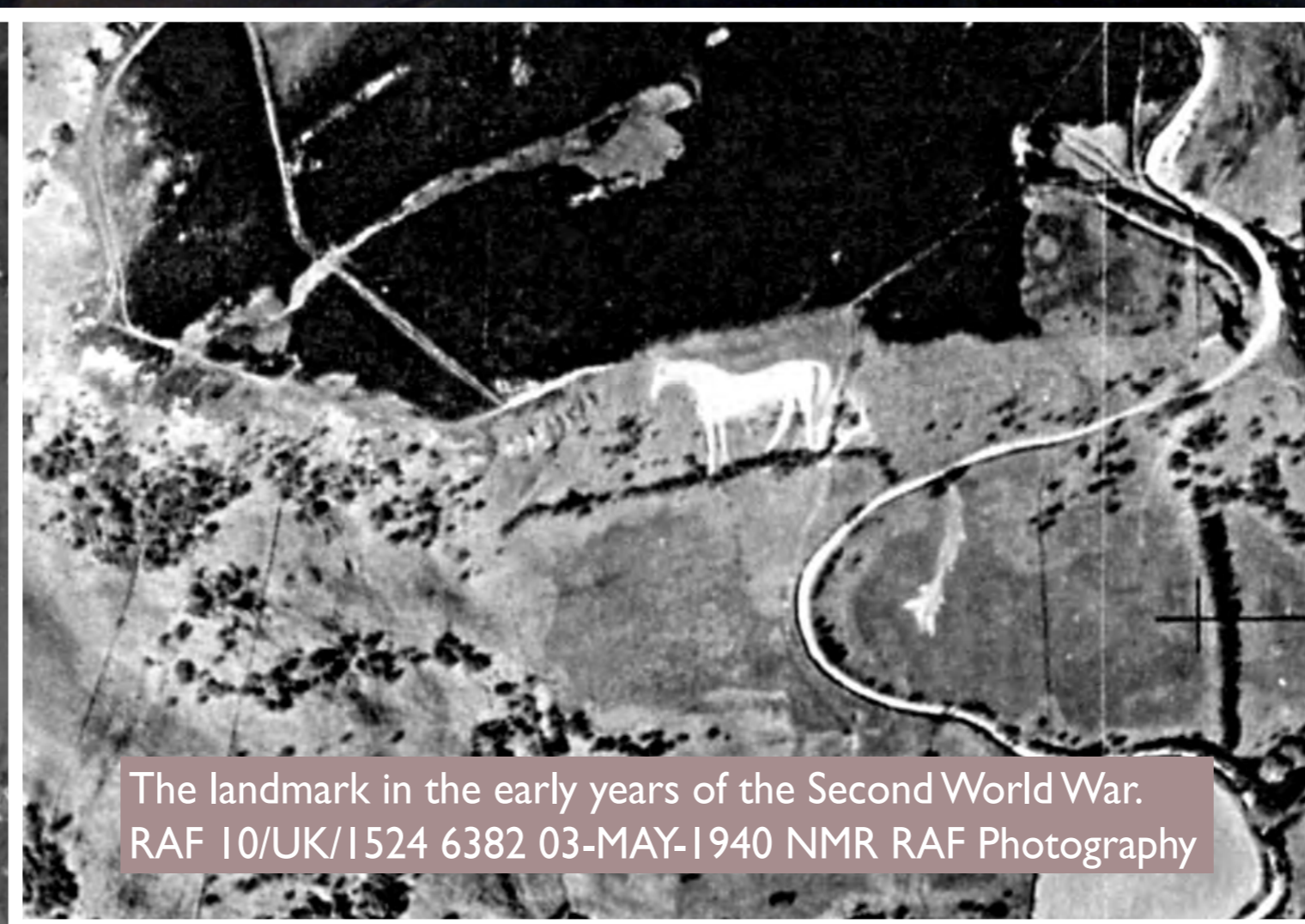
Created as a folly in 1857 by a local businessman to emulate a prehistoric hill figure, the horse is cut into unstable grey limestone that requires regular maintenance. In the early twentieth century the monument fell into disrepair. It was restored in 1925 through a public subscription fund initiated by the Yorkshire Evening Post. Regular restoration is now funded by bodies such as English Heritage.

Roulston Scar is also the home of the Yorkshire Gliding Club, founded in 1933. The club was used for training in the inter-war years by the British and Germans alike, hence during the Second World War the monument had to be camouflaged to impede navigation using this well known landmark.

Historic aerial photography reveals that repair over the years has gradually modified the shape: seen in the enlargement of the head and shortening of the tail and legs.



The gracile features of the figure restored after storm damage.  
RAF 541/565 4097 04-JUN-1950 NMR RAF Photography



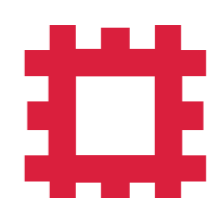
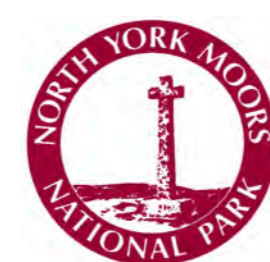
The landmark in the early years of the Second World War.  
RAF 10/UK/1524 6382 03-MAY-1940 NMR RAF Photography



Camouflage underway at the height of the Battle of Britain.  
RAF MSO 31067/O-R27 24-AUG-1940 NMR RAF Photography



The monument today resembling more a grey mare than white horse was last restored in 2005.  
Next Perspectives PGA Imagery SE5181 24-MAY-2009



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