

**Mortimer History Society, Simon de Montfort Society  
and Vale of Evesham Historical Society**

**Joint Conference 02<sup>nd</sup> October 2021**

**The Murder of Evesham, for battle it was none:  
Second Barons' War and the battle of Evesham (1258-65)**

**Venue: The Henrician, Prince Henry's High School, Evesham W11 4QH**

**Free parking on-site – five minutes from Evesham railway station**

**Programme**

9.15		Registration and Refreshments
10.00		Welcome & Introduction
10.05	Professor David Carpenter	<b>'Henry III: the captive king 1264-5'</b>
10.55	Dr Sophie Ambler	<b>'St Simon de Montfort and the battlefield cult at Evesham'</b>
11.45	Refreshments	
12.15	Professor Louise Wilkinson	<b>A Rebel Princess: Eleanor de Montfort, Countess of Leicester and Pembroke, and the Second Barons' War</b>
13.05	Lunch	
14.05	Dr Andrew Spencer	<b>The Leopard Prince: Lord Edward in the Second Barons' War</b>
14.55	Dr Andy King	<b>'And with his lance he struck him through the neck': Roger Mortimer and the Second Barons' War</b>
15.45	Questions and discussion	Panel of all five speakers
16.15	Close	Time to explore historic Evesham

## **Titles, Synopsis and Speaker Biographies**

**Professor David Carpenter**

### **'Henry III: the captive king 1264-5'**

This talk will consider Henry III's attitude to Simon de Montfort, his treatment when in virtual captivity, and his narrow escape from death at the battle of Evesham.

**Professor David Carpenter** is professor of medieval history at King's College London. His publications include: *Henry III: the Rise to Power and the Personal Rule 1207-1258* (2020, paperback 2021), a volume in the Yale English Monarchs Series. Volume 2, covering the years 1258 to the end of the reign in 1272, is forthcoming; *The Struggle for Mastery: Britain 1066-1284* (2004), a volume in the New Penguin History of Britain; *Magna Carta* (2015) in the Penguin Classics Series.

**Dr Sophie Ambler**

### **'St Simon de Montfort and the battlefield cult at Evesham'**

In the years that followed Simon de Montfort's death at Evesham, the battlefield site was transformed into a cult centre, with pilgrims journeying from across the kingdom to venerate Simon's remains and seek miraculous cures for their ailments. At the same time, devotees in Evesham and beyond celebrated his memory in writing and made the case for his sanctity. The cult burgeoned against the odds: this was a time when the papacy had strict control of saint making, while the pope had condemned Simons' cause, and in England Henry III sought to quash the cult. What was it about the manner of Simon's life and death that attracted such devotion? And how could the site of such trauma be transformed into a place of pilgrimage?

**Dr Sophie Thérèse Ambler** is Lecturer in Later Medieval History and Deputy Director for the Centre for War and Diplomacy at Lancaster University. She is the author of *The Song of Simon de Montfort: England's First Revolutionary and the Death of Chivalry* (Picador, 2019), and *Bishops in the Political Community of England, 1213-1272* (OUP, 2017).

**Professor Louise Wilkinson**

### **A Rebel Princess: Eleanor de Montfort, Countess of Leicester and Pembroke, and the Second Barons' War**

In her own time, Eleanor de Montfort (d. 1275), countess of Leicester and Pembroke, was one of the most famous women in England. She also presided over one of the most important domestic establishments in the kingdom for the duration of the Second Barons' War. As the sister of King Henry III, aunt of the Lord Edward, and wife of the rebel leader Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, Eleanor occupied a position at the very heart of political affairs up to, and after, her husband's death at the Battle of Evesham on 4 August 1265. Fortunately for us, a unique insight into Eleanor's activities is provided by her surviving household roll for 1265 (British Library Additional MS 8877). Drawing on the contents of this remarkable document, this talk will explore Eleanor's contribution to

supporting the Montfortian war effort from her bases at Wallingford, Odiham, Portchester, and Dover during this momentous year, examining her communications with her husband, sons, and Montfortian allies in the Marches (and elsewhere), the impact of warfare on her family and household, and her preparations to enter French exile in the autumn.

**Professor Louise Wilkinson** is Professor of Medieval Studies in the School of History and Heritage at the University of Lincoln. After completing her doctorate at King's College London in 1999, she worked at the National Archives and Canterbury Christ Church University, before joining Lincoln in 2020. She is a councillor of the Lincoln Record Society, joint general editor of the Pipe Roll Society, and was a co-investigator of the AHRC-funded 'Henry III Fine Rolls' and 'Magna Carta' projects. She has published widely on medieval women. Her books include *Eleanor de Montfort: A Rebel Countess in Medieval England* (2012) and *The Household Roll of Eleanor de Montfort, Countess of Leicester and Pembroke* (2020).

### **Dr Andrew Spencer**

#### **The Leopard Prince: Lord Edward in the Second Barons' War**

The Second Barons' War was the crucible in which the future King Edward I was formed. Edward's character and motivations were complex. He was attracted to the ideals of reform and dazzled by his uncle Simon de Montfort, but at the same time conscious that he would one day wear the Crown whose rights the reformers sought to curtail and control. The Song of Lewes famously described Edward as a leopard "*A lion by pride and fierceness, he is by inconstancy and changeableness a pard, changing his word and promise, cloaking himself by pleasant speech.*" How could the writer in the same breath liken Edward both to Alexander the Great and to King Saul? This talk will tell Edward's remarkable story in 1264-5, examine his character, his political philosophy and the lessons he learned from this period that he took forward to kingship.

**Dr Andrew M Spencer** is Senior Tutor at Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge, and an Affiliated Lecturer in History at the University of Cambridge. His monograph *Nobility and Kingship in Medieval England: the earls and Edward I, 1272-1307* (Cambridge University Press) examines the role that the nobility played in politics and governance under Edward I and he has published widely on politics, war and the constitution in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. He is one of the current co-editors of the *Thirteenth Century England* series.

### **Dr Andy King**

#### **'And with his lance he struck him through the neck': Roger Mortimer and the Second Barons' War**

The Marcher lord Roger Mortimer was an early supporter of the movement which aimed to reform Henry III's government in 1258; yet, according to one contemporary chronicle, it was Roger who struck the blow which killed Simon de Montfort, the leader of the reformers at the battle of Evesham seven years later. The talk will trace Roger's shifting allegiances between the reformers and the Crown, governed by his strained relations with Edward, the

king's son; his even-more strained relations with Simon de Montfort; and the need to defend his Welsh Marcher lordship from the incursions of the increasingly powerful Llywelyn ap Grudffudd.

**Dr Andy King** is a Lecturer in History at the University of Southampton. His interests include concepts of treason and rebellion; chivalry and the conduct of late medieval warfare; Anglo-Scottish relations in the late Middle Ages; chronicles and historical writing; and castles. Amongst other work, he has published *Edward I: A New King Arthur?* for the Penguin Monarchs series, as well as co-editing, with Andrew Spencer, a recent volume of essays: *Edward I: New Interpretations*.