

Mortimer History Society



Newsletter No.11 March 2013

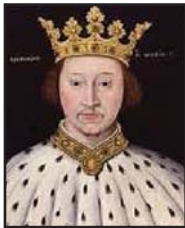
PRESIDENTS: Carol & John Challis, Dr Paul Dryburgh, Dr Ian Mortimer CHAIRMAN: John Grove
DEPUTY CHAIRMEN: Dr Martin Toms (also membership secretary) and Paul Remfry
SECRETARY: John Atkinson PUBLICITY: Jason O'Keefe NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Margot Miller
MHS JOURNAL EDITORS: Dr Paul Dryburgh and Helen Watt ; WEBMASTER: Hugh Wood
COMMITTEE 2013: John Fleming, Yve James, Stella Mason

MHS 2013 PROGRAMME

20 APRIL

Visit to Usk Castle

Meet at Castle car park
11 am, led by John Grove
Members £3
Non-members £5
No booking needed -
just turn up
Optional pub lunch



Speakers:

11 MAY CONFERENCE

all day Saturday at
Earl Mortimer College
Leominster Theme -
'Changing Society
in the time of Richard II'

Dr Ian Mortimer, Juliet Barker
and Dr. Benjamin Thompson

plus

Launch of Paul Remfry's translation
of the *Wigmore Chronicle*, & display
of the new Blanche Mortimer dress

12 OCTOBER

Study Day on Heraldry

Bishop Mascall Centre
Ludlow 10 am - 3 pm
Introduction to Mortimer
and related heraldry by
Hugh Wood and Peter Crocker

MEDIEVAL GARDEN PARTY

Wilton Castle Ross-on-Wye HR9 6HD
Sunday afternoon 2 June 3.15 - 5.30 pm
in aid of Friends of St Bartholomew's Church, Much Marcle



Display of Blanche's dress; guided castle
tour; *Fleurs de Lys* performance of medieval
music - theme: Chivalry, jealousy & desire:
love & manners in the medieval world"
Refreshments; medieval dress optional.
Tickets: £13.50 each, or £23 for two or for
family with children of 15 years & under.

Details: margotmiller@live.co.uk

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

More Mortimer Shields spotted! Medieval roof
boss above Catherine's tomb in St. Mary's
Warwick, and 4 Victorian Mortimer shields in
the Chancel windows. Do please send news of
any more discoveries of Mortimer artefacts to
our website editor.

By the time you read this, the new website
should be up and running. It is an exciting
development, and should increase our
membership as well as enlivening interest in
the Mortimers. Rev Mike Catling, the vicar
of St James, Wigmore by the Castle, sends
thanks for our donation to the church
emergency repairs fund. He hopes that this
may be the beginning of greater contact
between MHS and the local community. Our
contribution was supplemented by a donation
by a member, so more donations would be
welcome.

Hugh Wood and I had a good discussion with
Sonia Belchere, the new Curator of Ludlow
Castle about future co-operation. Besides
website links we suggested some history
seminars and our offer of help with a display
board text was well received. Sonia offered us
shop space for a MHS display board. We now
need members to volunteer to maintain such a
board.

We are all looking forward to the Spring
Conference (11 May in Leominster) with good
speakers and the launch of Paul Remfry's first
translation of the *Wigmore Chronicle*.

John Grove

REPORT OF THE MORTIMER HISTORY SOCIETY AGM

Earl Mortimer College, Leominster 16 February 2013

John Grove's MHS Chairman's Report

Communications

Positive communications had increased over the year with: attractive Newsletters - thanks to Margot Miller; extension of the current website with regular newsflashes - thanks to Paul Remfry; work on the new website - thanks to Hugh Wood; journal *Mortimer Chronicle* - thanks to Paul Dryburgh and Helen Watt; an active Facebook page with enthusiastic discussions on many topics including Mortimer shields.



Events

The 2012 events programme had been well-supported starting with an energetic field visit to Tedstone Wafre led by Martin Toms and Tim Hoverd, Herefordshire archaeologist; then the Spring Conference on the achievements of Edward I led by Marc Morris. Finally, in October, there was a successful visit to Wigmore Abbey, courtesy of our Hon. Presidents Carol and John Challis. We have been delighted with the growth and activities of our Heraldry and Dress & Textiles groups, and look forward to two Study Days this year - on Blanche Mortimer Tomb in March at Much Marcle, and an introduction to Heraldry at Ludlow in October.

Finances

The committee approved a grant of £250 to support the Blanche Mortimer Dress project and £100 towards the St James Church, Wigmore urgent maintenance fund; this donation was matched by a member's private donation. The chairman said that it was important to build links with the local community around Wigmore, and we have had a favourable response from the vicar of Wigmore, the Rev. Mike Catling. The reproduction of Blanche Mortimer's dress may go on display in Wigmore church at a fund-raising event.

Membership

MHS membership has risen from 100 to 115, including more Australian connections. It is proposed to offer a rolling subscription so that members will be able to join or renew at any time during the year when the new website went live. This change would require a new constitution and an EGM may be held towards the end of this year. He thanked the committee and all who had given support during 2012.

Website

A report on important developments in the website from Hugh Wood was read out, which indicated the principles behind its construction. The newly-designed website should be up and running before the Spring Conference. The chairman expressed sincere thanks to the pioneering work of Paul Remfry and the new innovative work of Hugh Wood and his team.

Conclusion

The chairman commended highly, the exciting programme and the speakers for the May conference, thanked Stella Mason and her team for work on the future programme, alerted members to the Mortimer article about to be published in *Herefordshire Life*, and concluded that Richard III (*'The king in the carpark'*) was a Mortimer through his grandmother, Anne.

LAUNCH OF THE NEW TRANSLATION OF THE MORTIMER CHRONICLE



At the Spring Conference on 11 May at Earl Mortimer College, Leominster, Paul Remfry will launch his new translation of the Mortimer Abbey Chronicles: This book of Chronicles has been sponsored by the Mortimer History Society; it contains the first ever translation of the Wigmore chronicle together with the original Latin supported by a voluminous introduction and appendices.

There was probably one chronicle kept at Wigmore Abbey which ran from 1066 to 1377. Unfortunately this precious record has not survived. Instead two independent copies of parts of this manuscript have so far been found. The first, now kept in the John Rylands Library, Manchester, runs from 1095 to 1306 and was written in May 1382. The second part of the chronicle that has survived, now kept in Trinity College Dublin, was probably copied in the early 15th century and covers various years between 1349 and 1377. It appears that the chronicle was compiled and then written up in late 1295 and entries continued intermittently until at least December 1377. The text contains several stories showing the interests and amusements of the medieval religious mind, as well as intimate details of the lives and deaths of some of the Mortimers of Wigmore.

The 'new' Wigmore Chronicle available at the Spring Conference on 11 May at Leominster
Price: £30 (p&p £3.50) or via PayPal on www.mortimerhistorysociety.org.uk

BOOKS AND WEBSITES

IAN MORTIMER'S

Time Travellers Guide to Elizabethan England is now published in paperback, and there is now a dedicated website to the series www.timetravellersguides.com and latest news on the film being made on the book on Ian Mortimer's own website.

MARC MORRIS'

The Norman Conquest is now published in paperback too and go to his website to find out more and also about a 50-second film available on the book www.marcmorris.org.uk



Marc Morris

FRAN NORTON'S

Throne of Shame was reviewed in the Shropshire Star:

Set within the framework of actual historical events, the story follows Alice & Matty, her faithful lady-in-waiting through a difficult married life and the strife of civil wars on one of history's most turbulent periods. I enjoyed every word and applaud the author for this stylish and very readable offering which is a must for all fans of Shropshire history. - by Sally Bunn. The Alice referred to here is Alice de Lacy, premier Countess of England in the reigns of Edwards I and II, and wife of Thomas of Lancaster and then to Eubolo LeStrange.

More details and purchase from: Fran Norton on mail@frannorton.plus.com

REPORT OF THE BLANCHE MORTIMER DRESS PROJECT STUDY DAY ON 9 MARCH AT MUCH MARCLE VILLAGE HALL

This report is the 3rd page of the MHS March newsletter - but unfortunately many members' computers will not accept a file bigger than 5MB and Margot Miller (editor) has found it impossible to include the report and pictures of the new Blanche Mortimer Dress within this space.

Therefore if you would like to receive the 3rd page of this newsletter and the report of 9 March event, please email margotmiller@live.co.uk and the report and pictures will be emailed to you. Or you may prefer to receive a 'hard' copy by snailmail?



STAPLETON CASTLE COURT GARDEN

Stapleton, nr Presteigne, LD8 2LS

Margaret & Trefor Griffiths 01544.267327

OPEN DAYS 2013 National Gardens Scheme

Sunday 9 June, Monday 10 June 2-6 pm

Sunday 25 August, Monday 26 August 2-6 pm

Entrance £4 each, children free

Guided walk of the gardens and castle each open day at 3 pm

Visitors and groups also welcome by appointment May to September



MHS SPRING CONFERENCE SATURDAY 11 MAY 2013

Earl Mortimer College, Leominster HR6 8JJ 9.30 am - 4 pm

CHANGING SOCIETY IN THE TIME OF RICHARD II

SPEAKERS:



Dr. Ben Thompson, Sommerville College, Oxford, a Mortimer descendant, on **“English Medieval Society in Crisis”**. Dr Thompson supervises Oxford students studying 11th to 16th century history across a wide range of medieval topics - politics, society and culture. His particular interest is the changing attitudes to church land-owning and power - culminating in the Dissolution of the Monasteries, but as you can see from the title of his talk on 11 May, his research and knowledge covers all aspects of medieval history from Conquest to Reformation.



Juliet Barker is well-known and respected for her biographical and historical books. On 11 May she will talk on **“The Peasants’ Revolt”**.

Barker Biographies: The Brontes and William Wordsworth
1989 *Tournaments, jousts, chivalry and pageants in the Middle Ages*
2006 *Agincourt - the King, the Campaign, the Battle*
2010 *Conquest - the English Kingdom of France 1417-1455*



Dr Ian Mortimer, MHS president, eminent historian, Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, author of best-selling historical non-fiction *The Time Traveller’s Guide to Medieval England*, and *Time Traveller’s Guide to Elizabethan England*.

Ian Mortimer will talk on **“The Mortimers in the time of Richard II”** (see Briefing below)

First translation of the Mortimer Manuscripts of Wigmore Abbey

Paul Remfry will launch his new translation and publication of the *Wigmore Chronicle* 1066-1306, 1355-1377 Mortimer manuscripts written by a monk at Wigmore Abbey in the last years of the 13th century, and then continued by others until towards the end of the 14th century. The first manuscript was probably copied from an original Wigmore Abbey chronicle 1066-1306, and finishes with an entry on 21st May 1382 recording an earthquake - perhaps the reason for no further entries?

Times and Tickets

9.30 Arrival and welcome coffee/tea; displays including the newly re-created 14th century dress as depicted on the Blanche Mortimer tomb at Much Marcle; bookshop and raffle.

10.00 Conference talks begin; sandwich lunch.

Tickets: £20 MHS members, £25 non-members. Cheques payable to Mortimer History society, send cheques and stamped addressed envelope for tickets to:

MHS, c/o Hammerhill Farm, Boraston, Tenbury Wells, Salop WR15 8LJ

or via PayPal on MHS website: www.mortimerhistorysociety.org.uk

Conference Briefing: Mortimers in the reign of Richard II 1377 (aged 10) to 1399 (aged 33)

- 1. Edmund - 3rd Earl of March, 1352-1381 aged 29:** 1368 married aged 16 to Philippa; 1369 Marshall of England; sponsored Adam of Usk at Oxford; 1377 aged 25 at coronation of Richard aged 10; 1379 Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; 1381 died of plague Cork, buried Wigmore. Four children: Roger, Edmund, Elizabeth, Philippa.
- 2. Roger - 4th Earl of March, 1374-1398 born at Usk:** 1388 married Eleanor; 1390 made knight; 1393-4 control of estates, 1397 Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; Shrewsbury incident; 1398 killed at Kells. Four children: Edmund, Roger, Anne, Eleanor.
- 3. Edmund - 5th Earl of March 1392-1425 No children.** 1398 made a royal ward of Richard and Henry IV; 1425 died ‘the Last of the Mortimers’.

Mortimer Officials:

1. Sir Peter de la Mare - Mortimer steward; 1376 1st Speaker of the House of Commons;
2. Walter Brugge Chief Mortimer steward;
3. Philip ap Morgan - Mortimer steward;
4. Sir John St.John; and Adam of Usk - Oxford-educated cleric and lawyer, sponsored by Edmund, the author of *The Chronicle of Adam of Usk*.

- John Grove

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Mortimer History Society www.mortimerhistorysociety.org.uk**