



NEWSLETTER 15

MARCH 26th 2014

Diary of Events

Thursday 27th March - *The Secret Life of Blanche Mortimer*

Our Founder, John Grove, will be giving a short talk at the AGM of the Herefordshire Churches Tourist Group at 1.30pm in St Bartholomew's church, Much Marcle. Although little is known for certain about Blanche's life, John will be painting a fascinating picture based on the people and events happening around her. This is a closed meeting but MHS members may attend free - donations for refreshments.

Saturday 17th May - *Britain and Ireland: Conquest and Colonisation*

The MHS Spring Conference will be held at Earl Mortimer College, Leominster [full details](#)

Sunday 18th May - *Informal Visit to Wigmore Castle (after the conference but all welcome)*

Meet at 11.30 at Wigmore church. Wigmore is on the A4110, 10 miles north-west of Leominster.

Saturday 21st June - *Writers' Workshop - Using History for Fact and Fiction*

A practical day for published authors and complete beginners [full details](#)

Website Issues

Login Problems

We're still trying to get the login process to work properly. At present, after entering your username and password correctly, it takes you to the home page, but sometimes you haven't been logged in so you need to check. Go back to the login page again. If it's still asking for username and password, enter them again. It should work this second time. We're sorry for the frustration and thank you for your patience and understanding.

Renew Button

It is now possible to renew your membership online. Full details are on the Membership page on the Society tab.

Amend Button

If you change your email address or other contact details, please remember to let us know. You can do this directly on the Membership page.

Members' Contributions

The membership of the Mortimer History Society clearly includes many knowledgeable and erudite people. Since John Grove encouraged members to write articles for the website, we've received a wealth of contributions ranging from short interesting snippets right through to extended articles. These will be gradually appearing on the website over the coming months and we'll alert you to new ones through the newsletter.

If you are interested in an aspect of medieval history, particularly if it's connected to the Mortimers or the Marches, please consider writing something about it for the website. You don't need to be an expert to do this, though we'd like you to keep a record of where you find the information you are quoting, so others can follow it too. If this interests you, please contact John Grove by emailing contributions@mortimerhistorysociety.org.uk

Articles already received

Here are some of the articles waiting to be put on the website and there are others in course of preparation.

Roger de Mortemer (d1074)
Ralph Mortimer (d<1137)
Roger Mortimer of Chirk (d1326)
Sir Edmund Mortimer (d1409)
Joan de Geneville (d1356)
Simon de Montfort (d1265)
The Tomb of Sir John de Cressy
Love & Marriage in the March of Wales - the Braose family
Maud de Braose (d1301) and the Marshall Connection
The World of the Mortimers and the *Mappa Mundi*
The House of Mortimer and the Royal Succession
The Mortimers of Scotland
Pre-Conquest Ireland
Wigmore Abbey
Wigmore Castle
Modern Mortimers



Tomb of Sir John de Cressy (d1445) at Dodford, Northants. The Mortimer quartering was inherited from Joan, the heiress of Sir Hugh Mortimer of Chelmarsh (d1372) via Maud Ayot. The inescutcheon shows the arms of Keynes 'in pretence'. The Cressys claimed descent from the Keynes family, again via Maud Ayot.

Other Societies' Meetings or Courses

Many of our members are also members of other societies concerned with medieval history. We are planning to devote a section of the website to advertising meetings and short courses that might be of interest to our members.

If you'd like us to advertise anything, please choose 'Website' on the 'Contact Us' page and send all the information including location details and cost.

Report on Duncan James's talk at the AGM on 8th March 2014 at Pembridge

The AGM was attended by about 50 members. Chairman Jason O'Keefe reported that the Society is very active in a number of areas and is financially sound. Duncan James gave a fascinating talk. He focused first on the development of hall houses, many of which are to be found in Pembridge. He went on to make connections between four properties, ranging across a broad area, that displayed some identical features, and suggested that three of them were built as residences for Richard, Duke of York's receivers. [full report here](#)

Mortimer Heraldry on a Sword of State

MHS member Stefan Zachary has drawn our attention to a sword of state in the British Museum.



This sword is dated c1460-70 and it is said to be a ceremonial sword of the Prince of Wales. On one side of the hilt is the English Royal coat of arms and also those of Wales, Cornwall and St George. On the other side are the arms of Mortimer quartered with de Burgh. This quartering was first used by Roger Mortimer 4th Earl of March (d1398) as his mother was Philippa de Burgh, Countess of Ulster.



The first time a Prince of Wales would use the Mortimer arms was when Edward IV gave the title to his son Edward (later Edward V) in 1470, so this sword of state may have been made for him. In 1472 King Edward IV set up a council to advise and assist his young son in performing his duties and this council blossomed into the Council of Wales and the Marches, based in Ludlow, that survived until 1689.

The other possibility is that the sword was made for Edward, son of Richard III, created Prince of Wales in 1483.

The Funeral Procession of Queen Elizabeth I in 1603 - with Mortimer heraldry

On 27th February 2014 Channel 5 showed a documentary on royal funerals which included this image.



Queen Elizabeth I was nearly 70 when she died on 24th March 1603. Her funeral on 28th April was marked by a huge procession of over 1000 mourners. The coffin was drawn by four horses dressed in black and on top of the coffin was a remarkably life-like effigy of the queen. On each side of the the coffin walked six men carrying heraldic bannerols. If you look closely you'll find the Mortimer arms on two of the bannerols.

The coats of arms being carried here represent twelve ancestors of Queen Elizabeth. They are arranged in date order, the top row being numbers 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11 with the even numbers 2, 4 etc underneath.

The represent

1. King Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine
2. King John and Isabel of Angoulême
3. King Henry III and Eleanor of Provence
4. King Edward I and Eleanor of Castile
5. King Edward II and Isabella of France
6. King Edward III and Philippa of Hainault
7. Edmund of Langley, Duke of York and Isabel of Castile
8. Richard, Earl of Cambridge and Anne Mortimer
9. Richard, Duke of York and Cecily Neville
10. King Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville
11. King Henry VII and Elizabeth of York
12. King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn

It can be quite difficult to follow the family relationships leading to the Wars of the Roses. On the website there is an outline family tree and you might find it helpful to refer to it when considering the notes below [click here](#)

No.8 - Richard of Cambridge (d1415) and Anne Mortimer (d1411)



A detail from a drawing of Elizabeth I's funeral procession

The same arms in St Laurence's, Ludlow

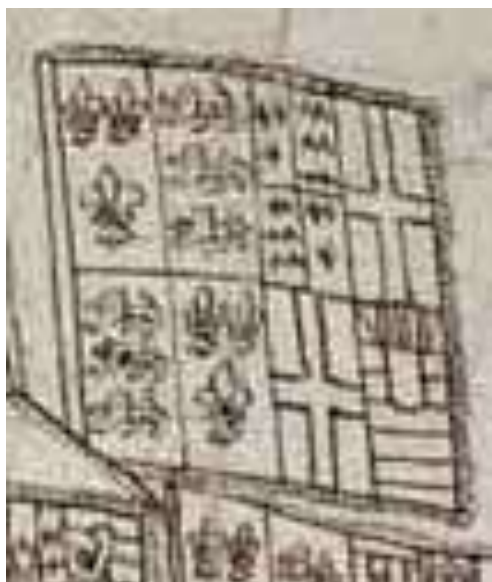
Richard of Conisburgh, Earl of Cambridge was a son of Edward III's 4th son, Edmund of Langley. He was executed in 1415 for complicity in the Southampton Plot aimed at replacing the Lancastrian king Henry V with Edmund Mortimer 5th Earl of March. The Earl of March had no such ambitions, however, and it is believed that it was he who 'shopped' his brother-in-law, Richard.

Richard's interesting coat of arms is on the dexter side of the shield (or left as we look at it). It is basically the arms of Edward III, namely *Quarterly France and England* but with two 'differences'. Across the top of the shield is a white label, each point being charged with three red roundels. This difference was used to distinguish his father from the three other sons of Edward III, namely Edward the Black Prince, Lionel of Antwerp, and John of Gaunt, so he inherited it from his father. The white border round the outside is charged with a pattern of little purple lions. The arms of the Spanish kingdom of Castile & Leon include a castle (for Castile) and a purple lion (for Leon) so these lions are a reference to his mother, Isabel of Castile.

Anne Mortimer was the sister of Edmund Mortimer, 5th and last Mortimer Earl of March. She too was a direct descendant of Edward III, as her grandfather the 3rd Earl of March had married Philippa de Burgh, Countess of Ulster, who was the daughter of Lionel of Antwerp, Edward III's second son. Her coat of arms is *Quarterly Mortimer and de Burgh*.

Being descended from Edward III through both his father and his mother gave their son Richard, Duke of York, a strong claim to the crown, in his eyes at least. The stage was set for the Wars of the Roses.

No.11 - King Henry VII and Elizabeth of York



Following the Battle of Bosworth in 1485, and his accession to the throne, Henry Tudor married Elizabeth of York, daughter of the Yorkist king Edward IV. The left half of this drawing shows Henry VII's arms - he assumed the traditional royal arms - *quarterly France and England*. The right half showing the arms of his wife is particularly interesting in the way it has been composed, namely

1st quarter- the royal arms - from her father Edward IV

2nd & 3rd quarters - de Burgh

4th quarter - Mortimer

Full details of Elizabeth I's funeral procession can be found in *The progresses and public processions of Queen Elizabeth* (pages 621-627) by John Nicholls (1823) which is available to read online [click here](#)