



NEWSLETTER 20

February 2015

IN THIS EDITION

Forthcoming Events: AGM, talk and tour at Leintwardine, Herefordshire
Spring Conference on *Law & Order in Medieval England*
Visit to see Hereford Cathedral's copy of Magna Carta
Dr Ian Mortimer's talk at Evesham about the Mortimer dynasty

New Members

A new introduction to the Wigmore Chronicle

Katherine Ashe and Hugh Wood on 'What is the correct coat of arms for Simon de Montfort?'

Ian Mortimer's new genealogy of the Mortimers

Rollo's Books

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Saturday 14th March 2015 - AGM followed by a presentation on Leintwardine and a tour of the church

There is no charge for this event. Non-members are welcome but cannot vote.

Venue: Leintwardine Village Hall, SY7 0LB

09.30 Registration, tea/coffee and biscuits

10.00 Welcome

10.15 AGM

11.00 History of Leintwardine - Jonathan Hopkinson

11.30 Walking tour of the village and church

13.00 Finish



The 18th century bridge over the Teme at Leintwardine

SPRING CONFERENCE- "LAW AND ORDER IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND"

Saturday 16th May 2015 - Day Conference at Hereford Academy

Sunday 17th May 2015 - Visit to the 1217 copy of Magna Carta in Hereford Cathedral

CONFERENCE - Saturday 16th May 2015

Venue: The Hereford Academy, Marlbrook Road, Hereford HR2 7NG

Timings: All day - details to be announced

Cost: £30 (MHS members £25)

Programme

The Anglo-Norman Aristocracy 1066-1215

Daniel Power

Professor in Medieval History, Swansea University

Professor Power has written articles on a range of interesting subjects including cross-channel communication and the end of the 'Anglo-Norman realm', the use of seals in Norman Britain and also the Albigensian crusade. He is an Associate Director of Swansea University's Centre for Medieval and Early Modern Research.



The Magna Carta Project

David Carpenter

Professor of Medieval History, King's College, London

Professor Carpenter is a leading authority on the history of Britain in the Middle Ages. He is on the committee of the Pipe Roll Society and was Principal Investigator on the recent 'Henry III Pipe Rolls Project'. Currently a Co-Investigator on the Magna Carta Project, he is also Co-Investigator on the 'Breaking of Britain' project about Scottish political culture before the Wars of Independence. He is a patron of the Simon de Montfort Society.



King John and William Marshal

Elizabeth Chadwick

Award winning author of historical fiction

Elizabeth has written many successful books. Following the publication of 'The Summer Queen' and 'The Winter Crown' she is currently working on the third part of her trilogy on Eleanor of Aquitaine - 'The Autumn Throne'. Elizabeth has written extensively about William Marshal including her 2005 book 'The Greatest Knight'.



Women and the Law in the age of Magna Carta

Matthew Stevens

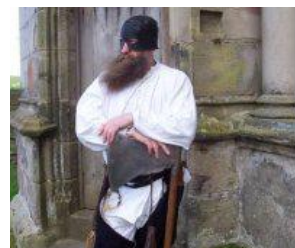
'Coverture' was a legal doctrine whereby a woman's rights and obligations became subsumed within those of her husband. Dr Stevens has written extensively on the influence of coverture on the lives of medieval women.



The Royal Executioner - crime, punishment, torture and execution from thumb screws to the Spanish boot and hanging to the noble death of beheading and what you needed to do to receive these ...

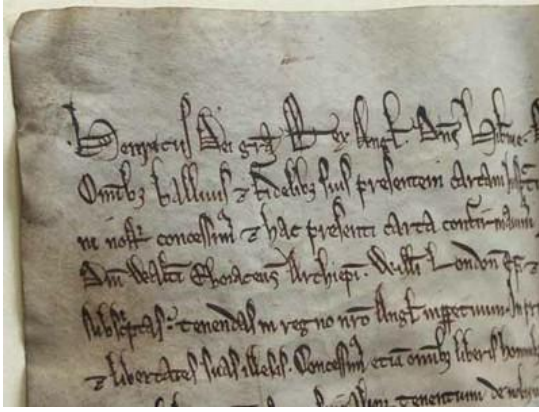
Derwin "Ben" Bennett

An enthusiastic re-enactor, Ben has portrayed the Royal Executioner for many years and is in great demand, both for large-scale re-enactor events and for smaller bespoke events at 'gaols' across England



VISIT TO MAGNA CARTA - Sunday 17th May 2015

Venue: Hereford Cathedral
Timings: 13.00 - 15.00
Cost: £4



A guided tour of the Magna Carta exhibition at Hereford Cathedral including the opportunity to see one of only four copies of the 1217 revision of Magna Carta issued by king Henry III. Pre-booking for this special tour is essential and places will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

For more details [click here](#)



Rosalind Caird, cathedral archivist in the chained library with the cathedral's copy of Magna Carta

ADVANCE BOOKING

To book your place(s) at the conference and the guided tour of the Magna Carta exhibition follow the link and then scroll to the bottom of the page [Click Here](#)

Friday 12th June 2015 - An Evening with Dr Ian Mortimer

Our President, Ian Mortimer will be speaking on *The Mortimers of Wigmore: twelve generations of violent rebellion and even more violent loyalty; 1075-1425*

Venue: Church House, Market Place, Evesham, Worcestershire

Time: 7.00pm

Ian's talk is part of the Aspara Writing Festival for aspiring writers.

For more details [click here](#)

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome several new members

- Lindsay Anderson (Herefordshire UK) who is interested in the Mortimer connection to her village of Pembridge
- John Angell (Herefordshire UK) of the Friends of St Bartholomew's, Much Marcle
- Maggie Bucknall (Solihull, West Midlands UK) who has a wide, general interest
- Alan Hobbs (Herefordshire UK) who needs to give a U3A talk about the Mortimers!
- Philip Hume (Herefordshire UK) who is keen on the Marches and on medieval castles and abbeys

- Keith Mortimer (East Yorkshire UK) who is interested in knowing more about his famous namesakes
- Elena Shifflette (New York State USA) who is a descendant of Roger Mortimer (d1282)

A NEW INTRODUCTION TO THE WIGMORE CHRONICLE BY DR IAN MORTIMER



Part of the Wigmore Chronicle in Chicago University

In 1179 Hugh Mortimer founded an abbey of Augustinian Canons Regular just a mile or so to the north of his home at Wigmore Castle. The annals and historical records created by these canons are of fundamental importance in helping to piece together the history and genealogy of the Mortimers of Wigmore. Rather than being a single coherent document, however, what we now call the Wigmore Chronicle is a collection of quite independent manuscripts, at least one of them being merely a copy of a copy of an original document. One of the manuscripts describes the foundation of the abbey and appears to have been written as early as 1200. Other parts have clearly been compiled in the second half of the 14th century. Component parts of the 'Wigmore Chronicle' are currently housed in the John Rylands Museum in Manchester, in Trinity College library in Dublin and in the library of Chicago University.

In response to a plea from members of the Society our President, Ian Mortimer, has produced a lucid paper in which he describes the various component parts of the Wigmore Chronicle and sets out their origins, their interrelationships and the history of their publication. He also refers to the chronicle of Adam Usk and the Ludlow Annals. To access his paper [click here](#)

THE COAT OF ARMS OF SIMON DE MONTFORT (d1265)

Search Google Images for 'Heraldry Simon Montfort' and your screen will be covered with images of a white lion with two tails on a red ground - *gules a lion rampant double queued argent*. From quite early times, this has been the generally accepted coat of arms of Simon de Montfort, 6th Earl of Leicester who died at the Battle of Evesham in 1265, possibly cut down by Roger Mortimer (d1282) himself.

But American MHS member Katherine Ashe believes that this is not Simon's correct coat of arms and that an error occurred that has been perpetuated over the years. As the author of a four-volume fictionalised biography of Simon, Katherine has clearly immersed herself in her subject, so her opinions must be taken very seriously. The situation is confused somewhat by the fact that Simon's father, the Simon de Montfort of the Albigensian Crusade against the Cathars, clearly used this coat of arms.

Here Katherine sets out her argument and Hugh Wood ventures a tentative response.



The early 14th century window at Fladbury in Worcestershire that commemorates some of the participants in the Battle of Evesham 1265

SIMON DE MONTFORT AND THE RED LION RAMPANT - BY KATHERINE ASHE

There has been controversy over just what the colors of Simon de Montfort the Earl of Leicester were. His father, Simon de Montfort known as the Crusader, was famed as a leader of the Fourth Crusade who refused to take part in the sacking of Constantinople and instead led his forces on to Palestine. Highly honored for his integrity, it was he who took command of the French forces after the shameful burning of six-thousand heretics in the church at Beziers, and who then became the leader of the Albigensian Crusade. He is honored by a window of his own at Chartres, which depicts him mounted and in full armor, bearing on his shield the device of a white rampant fork-tailed lion on a red ground.



Simon de Montfort Senior at Chartres

Because of the ease of access to this image it has become well known – and it has been assumed that this is a depiction of the arms of Simon de Montfort the Earl of Leicester, the champion of modern democracy. It is inconceivable that the Earl Montfort, excommunicated for his support of the democratic movement, and not his father, should be honored by a window at Chartres. The Earl of Leicester surely is not depicted there, and the shield of the white lion may not be his arms.

We aren't lacking evidence of what his arms actually were. It was common practice for the arms of a son, especially a younger son, to be *differenced* from those of his father. And indeed Simon's were. Matthew Paris, the most highly regarded of thirteenth century chroniclers, knew the Earl well and included in his great tome, the *Chronica Majora*, a personal letter sent to Simon by his nephew in Germany. At his monastery at Saint Albans, Brother Paris was one day's ride north of London on Simon's route to Kenilworth or Leicester; it is a fair assumption the Earl stopped there regularly. Paris records private information that probably only Simon could have told him. Certainly Paris knew very well what the Earl's arms were, his flag flying from the inn or the monastery's guest quarters being a familiar sight.

In his illustration in the *Chronica Majora* Paris depicts the arms of most of England's principal lords. The arms he shows for Simon de Montfort clearly represent a *red* fork-tailed lion rampant on a white ground. Again, the chroniclers of Saint Albans, in the *Flores Historiarum*, depict the arms of Simon de Montfort in the illustration of the aftermath of the Battle of Evesham. Simon's remains appear, dismembered, in the center foreground with his shield beside him. The shield clearly displays the red lion on a white ground.



Nevertheless, since the fourteenth century the Earl Montfort's arms have been described as a white lion on a red ground, and numerous 19th and 20th century art works show these erroneous arms. One 13th century source, the Glover Roll, describes Montfort's lion as white on red, but there has long been no surviving original example of this roll and it was heavily "edited" in the 19th century.

An error repeated, even when it is repeated for centuries, remains an error. It's unfortunate that the clear evidence is being laid aside in Simon de Montfort's Jubilee Year, and even now he is not being honored by the use of the arms that, throughout his life, were his identity.

Katherine is speaking at the Battle of Evesham 750th anniversary celebrations in the Evesham Hotel on Monday 10th August 2015. For more information [Click here](#)

A RESPONSE BY HUGH WOOD

It is a brave, or perhaps foolhardy, person who crosses swords with someone as erudite as Katherine Ashe. Over recent months we've been playing an almost daily game sending missiles each way across the Atlantic and she doesn't give in easily! Nevertheless, I'll explain why I think that both Matthew Paris and the English heralds are correct.

In France and England the same coat of arms is passed down the main male line from father to eldest son so, for instance, Roger Mortimer 1st Earl of March (d1330) had exactly the same coat of arms as his father Edmund Mortimer of Wigmore (d1304). As Katherine mentions, other members of a family needed to difference their arms in some way to distinguish them from those of the head of the family. These differences may be temporary or permanent. The most obvious Mortimer example of a permanent difference is that exhibited by Roger Mortimer of Chirk (d1326) who changed the escutcheon on his shield from *argent* to *ermine*. This change survived and it was still cropping up in heraldic quarterings centuries later. Both Roger of Chirk and his brother Edmund of Wigmore signed the Barons' letter to the Pope in 1301 and their seals have been preserved.



Seal of Edmund Mortimer (d1304) the head of the family with the Mortimer coat undifferenced



Seal of his younger brother Roger Mortimer of Chirk differenced with ermine on the central escutcheon

But there was also differencing that was temporary. A man's eldest son cannot wear the same arms as his father while his father is still alive. When his father dies and he becomes the head of the household he will then wear his father's arms undifferenced.

It is clear from the window in Chartres, showing the older Simon de Montfort, that the main hereditary arms was a white lion on a red background. Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester was a younger son and would have differenced his arms from those of his father as was usual. Matthew Paris recorded his arms in about 1244 as a red lion on a white background and, as Katherine points out, he knew Simon well and would not have made a mistake in this.

Simon had an elder brother Amaury who became head of the family when their father died in 1218. There was also another brother, Guy who died in 1220. When Amaury died in 1241, the next in line was his son John. When John died in 1249, however, Simon himself became head of the family and was now entitled to assume the arms of his father, as shown in the window at Chartres. So it seems entirely correct that the coat of arms used for the last 16 years of his life should have been the one that has been handed down to us. Matthew Paris didn't make a mistake in his description of Simon's arms as Simon did not become the head of the family until after Matthew recorded his arms.

It seems likely, however, that Matthew Paris did make some mistakes. Writing 26 years after the death of the older Simon, he records his arms as identical to those he has for his son - a red lion on a white ground - which we know they were not, from the convincing evidence at Chartres. He seems to have been working backwards from the differenced arms of his son and making false assumptions. Finally, although the illustration of the death of Simon at Evesham, shown above, shows a red lion on a white background, there are other early illustrations of the battle showing Simon wearing the normally-accepted family coat of arms to which he was now entitled, namely a white lion on a red ground



From the *Chronique de France ou de St Denis* c1340

THE GENEALOGY OF THE MORTIMERS OF WIGMORE - NEWLY REVISED BY DR IAN MORTIMER

Dr Mortimer has been very active over recent months on behalf of the Society. As well as responding generously to every request for help on all manner of Mortimer-related issues and preparing his paper on the Wigmore Chronicle (above), he has found time to revise his 'Outline Lineage of the Mortimer Family of Wigmore'. This is an astoundingly detailed family tree starting with Roger de Mortemer (d1078) in Normandy and concluding with Edmund Mortimer (d1425) the 5th and last of the Mortimer Earls of March. Within the genealogy there is extensive coverage of the descendants of Roger Mortimer of Chirk (d1326) whose coat of arms descended though the female line to the Dudleys and beyond. Also given extensive treatment are the offspring of Geoffrey Mortimer (d1372x76) a younger son of Roger Mortimer, 1st Earl of March (d1330) who became lord of Couhé, south of Poitiers in Western France.

To access this genealogy, members should log in and then find it under 'The Mortimers'.

Readers familiar with Ian's books on Edward III, Henry IV and 'The Greatest Traitor' will not be surprised to learn that some of the most fascinating and useful information in this genealogy is to be found in the 'Introduction' and in the copious 'Notes' that accompany it. Ian has avoided including anything at all speculative in the main text. If there isn't firm evidence for including something, it is omitted. But in adopting this approach, Ian realises that he is probably leaving out many real family links and people. There is plenty of circumstantial evidence for a strong family link with the Mortimers of Attleborough, for instance, but discussion of this is left to an extended note after the main genealogy.

As an appetizer for a study of this important lineage, we've included here Ian's full introduction in which he sets out his approach.

Dr Mortimer's Introduction to the Genealogy

The purpose of this piece is to lay out the basic genealogy of the family in a way that is useful for both the specialist and the amateur. It is not an attempt to provide a comprehensive list of all the descendants of the early progenitors of the family, although several of the male-lines have been expanded. Similarly it is not an attempt to link all the early Mortimer families to the Wigmore one. Some individuals known or suspected to have been descended from the main line cannot easily be associated with a particular parent. For instance, it is not possible to show how the established family of Mortimer of Eakley, Northamptonshire (13th-15th centuries) connects with the Wigmore family, if it connects at all. It is possible to be a little more confident of a link between the Wigmore family and the families of Mortimer of Attleborough, Mortimer of Aberdour, and Mortimer of Coedmore: there are several bits of circumstantial evidence that all of these families were connected. However, such suspicions



Dr Ian Mortimer

tend to be less than helpful in a multi-purpose genealogical reference tool when they do not amount to certainty. Therefore the possible connections do not appear in the main lineage but only in the endnotes.

Those familiar with the family will notice that the descent from the Domesday lord of Wigmore, Ralph Mortimer, to his successor at the accession of Henry II, Hugh Mortimer, varies significantly from that given in the *The Complete Peerage* and the *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. This is not a speculative leap or an unthinking use of an outdated source but the result of a recent reappraisal of the evidence. It turns out that the above-mentioned reference works followed each other in developing a literature about an entire generation of the family in the 12th century that did not exist. That generation was invented as a result of scepticism about Ralph's and Hugh's longevity; it was not based on any direct evidence. Furthermore, the two critical pieces of circumstantial evidence cited by the *Complete Peerage* editors have now been shown to have been incorrectly dated in one case and a forgery in the other. The research on which I base this assertion should appear in the scholarly press before long.

The provision of notes in this lineage is to aid understanding of such problematic details; it is not an attempt to reference the lives of each generation: such a task would consume many thousands of hours work and create an unwieldy document. Most of the basic information has been drawn from *The Complete Peerage* and *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* with supplementary matter on non-contentious issues being added from the *Fundatorum Historia*, the Mortimer family chronicle, which was originally written at Wigmore Abbey in 1262, extended in the early fifteenth century, and now is in Chicago University Library (edited by Dugdale in his *Monasticon*). Other sources necessary to understand the chronology proposed are alluded to in the notes (unless directly mentioned in the text).



The coat of arms of **Mortimer of Attleborough.**

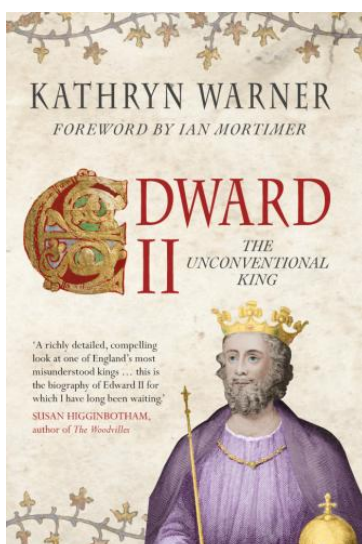
The fact that these arms bear no relationship to those of Mortimer of Wigmore does not necessarily mean that there is no family connection. The use of hereditary coats of arms only became common in England around the middle of the 12th century by which time the two branches were probably already separate.



The coat of arms of **Mortimer of Richard's Castle**

ROLLO'S BOOKS

MHS member Rollo Crookshank works in the publishing industry and he keeps a beady eye open for any new books that may be of interest to other members. Here is a first selection in what may become a regular feature of this newsletter.

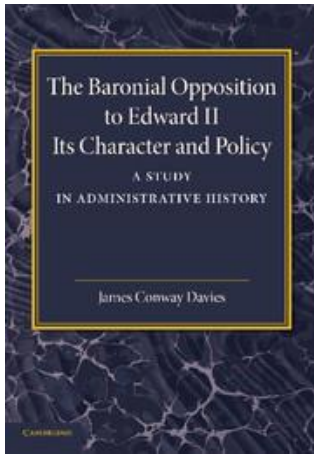


Edward II - The Unconventional King by Mary Warner

Amberley Publications 2014 - £16

In this book, the focus is on Edward's relationships with his male 'favourites' and his disaffected wife, on his unorthodox lifestyle and hobbies, and on the mystery surrounding his death. Using almost exclusively fourteenth-century sources and Edward's own letters and speeches wherever possible, Kathryn Warner strips away the myths which have been created about him over the centuries, and provides a far more accurate and vivid picture of him than has previously been seen.

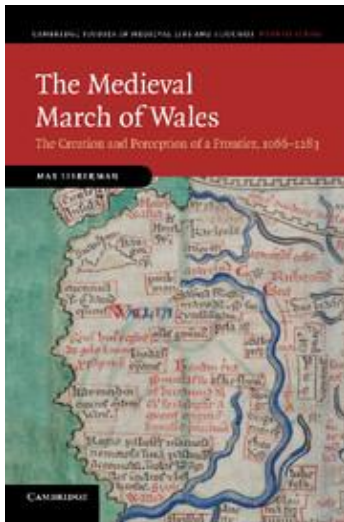
Kathryn Warner is considered a foremost expert on Edward II and an article from her on the subject was published in the *English Historical Review*. She has run a website about him since 2005 and a Facebook page about him since 2010 and has carved out a strong online presence as an expert on Edward II and the fourteenth century in general.



The Baronial Opposition to Edward II - Its Character and Policy
by James Conway Davies CUP 2014 - £27

Originally published in 1918, this book analyses the baronial opposition to Edward II, whose reign is considered to have been one of the most disastrous for England. James Conway Davies examines the features of the administrative system against which the barons eventually rebelled, and details the various attacks by the barons against the royal position. This book will be of value to anyone with an interest in Plantagenet history.

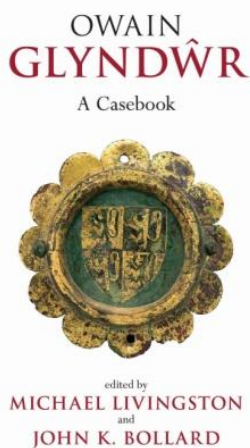
This book can be read online at
<https://archive.org/details/baronialoppositi00daviiala>



The Medieval March of Wales - The Creation and Perception of a Frontier 1066-1283
by Max Lieberman CUP 2014 - £21

This book examines the making of the March of Wales and the crucial role its lords played in the politics of medieval Britain between the Norman conquest of England of 1066 and the English conquest of Wales in 1283. Max Lieberman argues that the Welsh borders of Shropshire, which were first, from c.1165, referred to as Marchia Wallie, provide a paradigm for the creation of the March. He reassesses the role of William the Conqueror's tenurial settlement in the making of the March and sheds new light on the ways in which seigneurial administrations worked in a cross-cultural context. Finally, he explains why, from c.1300, the March of Wales included the conquest territories in south Wales as well as the highly autonomous border lordships. This book makes a significant and original contribution to frontier studies, investigating both the creation and the changing perception of a medieval borderland.

Owain Glyndwr - A Casebook
by Michael Livingstone and John K Bollard Liverpool UP 2013 - £25



This book presents the original text and English translations of the medieval and post-medieval records, documents, poems and chronicles relating to Owain Glyndwr (1357?-1415, revolutionary and the last native Welshman to hold the title Prince of Wales), his career and his legacy. In addition, textual notes and essays on the historical, social and literary context of these documents will provide up-to-date perspectives and commentary on the man and his times. For the first time, historians, literary scholars, students and the general reader will be able to view a wide range of materials collected in a single volume and will be able to assess for themselves the significance of Glyndwr in Welsh, English and European history from the late Middle Ages into the Renaissance – and to redress the imbalance of historical accounts past and present.

POSTSCRIPT - DID YOU KNOW?

Historians tend to put English monarchs into groups: Normans, Angevins, Plantagenets, Lancastrians, Yorkists, Tudors and so on. The so-called Plantagenet kings reigned from 1216 to 1399, namely Henry III, the first three Edwards and Richard II. They take their name from their badge of the broom plant or *planta genista*. Did you know that the first person to actually give himself the surname of Plantagenet, however, was Richard, Duke of York who wasn't born till 1411?