



NEWSLETTER 24

December 2015

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MHS AGM AND VISIT TO CLEOBURY MORTIMER AND KINLET

Saturday 12th March 2016

Venue - Cleobury Country Centre, Love Lane, Cleobury Mortimer DY14 8PE (Tel: 01299 272300)

10.00 Arrival - tea/coffee

10.30 Business Meeting

11.30 Talk by Robert Hodge, Chairman of Cleobury Mortimer & District History Society

www.cleoburymortimerhistory.co.uk followed by a guided tour of Cleobury Mortimer.

13.00 Lunch near Kinlet followed by a visit to Kinlet church - more details later.

OTHER FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday 12th April 2016 - The Medieval Wood Carvings in St Laurence's, Ludlow

A half-day conference in St Laurence's church, organised by the Ludlow Palmers. The misericords include a carving of the 'falcon and fetterlock' badge of Richard, Duke of York (d1460) who was the heir of Edmund Mortimer 5th earl of March (d1425). The beautifully carved ceiling includes the white lion of March, the badge of the Mortimers perpetuated in the arms of Ludlow. Starts at 10.00. Tickets £5. Pay on the door. For more details on the talks and speakers [click here](#)

Thursday 14th to Sunday 17th April 2016 - The Castles of the Hereford and South Shropshire Marches

The annual conference of the Castles Studies Group. For more details [click here](#)

Saturday 25th June 2016 - The Stained Glass of St Laurence's, Ludlow

A whole-day conference organised by the Ludlow Palmers with help from York Glaziers Trust. Tickets are £50 but members of MHS can book for the reduced price of £45. For online booking go to ludlowglass.eventbrite.co.uk and choose the 'Mortimer History Society' option. Or you can book by sending a cheque made out to 'CTSLL' to The Ludlow Palmers, 2 College Street, Ludlow SY8 1AN giving your contact details and mentioning MHS. For more details [click here](#)

THE MORTIMER HISTORY TRAIL PROJECT - AN UPDATE

The Mortimer History Trail is a loop which takes in a number of interesting towns, villages and other sites, mainly in North Herefordshire, but also including Wales and south Shropshire, that have strong connections with the medieval Mortimer family and that provide a connection to their lives. The booklet interweaves the history of the Mortimers

with the locations. MHS Committee member Philip Hume has been working tremendously hard on this project over recent months. The final draft of the text will go to the publishers, Logaston Press, before the end of the year and we are hoping that the booklet itself will be on sale before Easter. Arrangements have still to be made for an official launch of the trail booklet, but we are hoping that they will be available for members to order and collect possibly at the AGM and certainly for the annual conference. In parallel with this, Philip has been working closely with an enthusiastic group of eight local primary schools to devise units on the Mortimers and medieval life in the area that will fit directly into the local history requirements of the National Curriculum. The schools will be delivering the units over eight sessions during the summer term, including a living history day for all the schools, with re-enactors organised by Jason O'Keefe, and possibly held at Ludlow Castle (nearer the time we may ask for volunteers to help steward the event). [return](#)

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members

Barbara Davis, Buckinghamshire UK

Jill Fieldhouse, Herefordshire UK

Lynne Hutton, Idaho USA

Tony Mahalski, Shropshire

Vikki Tranter, Shropshire [return](#)

16th CENTURY HERALDIC ROLL OF LUDLOW CASTLE

We have recently come across a medieval roll of arms showing the coats of arms of many of the owners of Ludlow castle including Mortimers and also the arms of various officials of the Council of the Marches that was based there.

About 4 inches wide and over 6 feet long it is currently owned by a lady who keeps a shop in London. It is quite faded in places and though parts have been eaten away by rats, it is nevertheless of great interest. Probably produced as part of the Heralds' Visitation of Shropshire in 1584 it starts with Sir Walter Lacy, the builder of the castle around 1090 and finishes with the arms of the members of the Council of the Marches in 1570 including Sir Henry Sidney KG who was Lord President of the Council from 1560 to 1586. It is for sale for a very reasonable sum and efforts are being made to secure it for the town of Ludlow.



The present owner displaying part of the roll



The arms of Richard, earl of Cambridge (d1415) and Anne Mortimer (d1411) the sister of the last earl of March



The (royal) arms of Henry VII and his wife Elizabeth of York, daughter of king Edward IV, showing the Mortimer quartering in her arms

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PRESTEIGNE AND THE MORTIMERS

The source for most of these notes is the entry for Presteigne in the new Mortimer History Trail book to be published in Spring 2016.

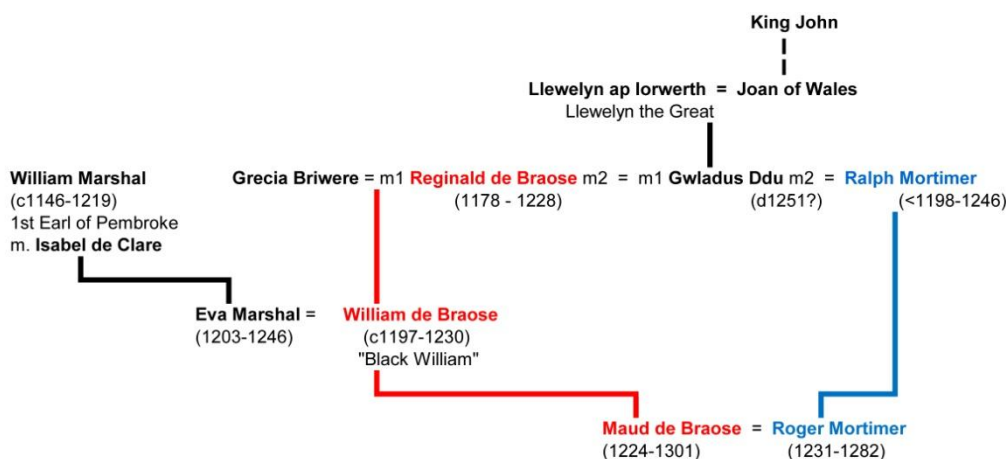
Presteigne is an attractive small town of under 3000 people. It sits on the River Lugg, a tributary of the River Wye which flows into the Severn estuary. It is a border town, just in Powys, Wales but very close to the border with Herefordshire. It is the only Welsh town that is east of Offa's Dyke. The parish of Presteigne is partly in England and anachronistically it is part of the diocese of Hereford.

Following the Norman Conquest, Presteigne belonged to the lords of Richard's Castle who built a castle on raised ground on the west side of the town. In 1144, during the 'Anarchy' when Stephen and Matilda were fighting for control of the country, the town was seized and subsequently passed into the hands of the de Braose family. The infamous 'Black' William de Braose had no male heir, but he had four daughters. On his execution in 1230 they were aged between about 3 and 8 years of age. The second daughter, Maud, inherited Presteigne but, during her minority, control passed to her stepmother Gwladus Ddu, daughter of Llywelyn the Great, and granddaughter of King John. As her second husband, Gwladus married Ralph Mortimer of Wigmore (d1246) so Presteigne passed into Mortimer hands shortly after 1230. Control by the Mortimers was cemented in 1247 when Roger Mortimer (d1282), the eldest son of Ralph and Gwladus, married the heiress Maud de Braose.



The remains of the motte of Presteigne castle at the Warden, on the west side of the town

Always vulnerable to attack by the Welsh, the castle was sacked in 1262 by the forces of Llywelyn ap Gruffydd and not rebuilt. The town was overrun again in 1402, this time by Owain Glyndwr.



An outline genealogy containing some very famous names. Joan of Wales was an illegitimate daughter of King John



The impressive remains of Stapleton castle on a hillside in England opposite the Welsh town of Presteigne

Back in 1144, when the lords of Richard's Castle lost control of Presteigne castle, they built another castle about a mile away on the English side of the river at Stapleton. When Robert Mortimer of Essex (d1219) married Margaret de Say, he acquired the barony of Richard's Castle in the right of his wife. So, while the Mortimers of Wigmore held Presteigne, the Mortimers of Richard's Castle held Stapleton, just across the river. In the 17th century, a large house was built in the middle of the ruins of the medieval castle at Stapleton. Like the castle, this house is now also in ruins. Stapleton castle is owned by MHS member Trefor Griffiths and it is not generally open to the public. For more information about Stapleton castle see the report of the MHS field trip to the castle in 2014 on the website. It is located on the 'Articles' tab in the 'castles' section. You'll need to log in to access it.

St Andrew's Church, Presteigne

There are links to the Mortimers in St Andrew's church in Presteigne. There was a Saxon church on this site and then a Norman one and there are remains from both periods but the sequence of later architectural development is not certain. From the 13th century, the patronage of the church was vested in the canons of Wigmore Abbey and it is believed that they were involved to some extent in the development of the church.

In the early 19th century, Williams described a stone plaque set into the outside wall above the east window bearing the inscription 'MPL 1244'. Though much weathered, this can still be seen. It has been suggested that MPL means *Mortimerus Posuit Libeus* or "this part of the church Mortimer had the pleasure to erect". The age of this plaque is unsure, however, and no other evidence has been found to support the claim that the Mortimers built the present chancel.



The coat of arms of Mortimer of Wigmore is carved on one of the external buttresses on the south side but, again, there is no indication of the date when this was put there.

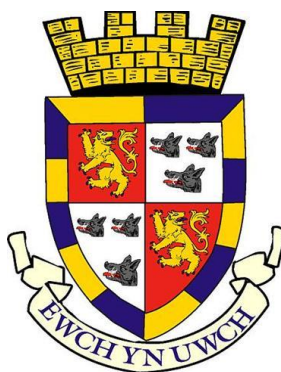
The 1st Radnorshire Rifle Volunteers were formed in 1860 and they were part of the Herefordshire Light Infantry. The colours of the corps are on display in St Andrew's church and at the centre is a representation of the arms of Radnorshire. For a time, Presteigne was the county town of Radnorshire. Because of the long-term association of this area with the Mortimers, Radnorshire based its coat of arms on that of the Mortimers, though they left out the inescutcheon. Radnorshire was granted new arms in 1954 but the blue and gold of the Mortimers was retained in the border.



The Mortimer arms on a buttress at St Andrew's church in Presteigne



The arms of Radnorshire until 1954 - just the Mortimer arms without the inescutcheon



The Radnorshire arms after 1954 retaining the Mortimer blue and gold in the border



Part of the colour of the 1st Radnorshire Rifle Volunteers in St Andrew's, Presteigne

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JOAN DE GENEVILLE (1286-1356)

This article has been written by MHS member Anne Blandford using secondary sources.

Joan was born in 1286 at Ludlow castle in Shropshire, daughter of Sir Piers de Geneville of Trim castle in Ireland and Ludlow. Her grandfather Sir Geoffrey was Justiciar of Ireland and on the early death of her father in 1292, Joan became one of the wealthiest heiresses in the Welsh Marches. Her sisters Matilda and Beatrice were sent to be nuns at Aconbury Priory near Hereford, a Lacy foundation, leaving Joan as the sole heiress when she married Roger Mortimer in 1301. In 1308 her grandfather conveyed most of his Irish estates that had belonged to her grandmother, Maud de Lacy, to Joan and her husband.

On many occasions Joan accompanied Roger to Ireland and in 17 years she gave birth to 12 live children. When her grandfather died in 1314, Joan became 2nd baroness de Geneville and she and Roger inherited estates in Ireland, Herefordshire and Shropshire as well as considerable influence and wealth. In his book *The Greatest Traitor* Ian Mortimer suggests that they had a close beneficial medieval relationship. Their children made very advantageous and influential marriages with the Berkeley, Beauchamp, Audley, de Braose and de Grandison families among others.

Roger Mortimer was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in 1316 returning to England in 1318 when he then occupied himself with baronial disputes on the Welsh border as well as

fighting the Scots. But in 1321 he became strongly disaffected with King Edward II when lands rightly belonging to him were given to Hugh de Spencer, the king's favourite.



Ludlow Castle - Joan's birthplace

Roger led a rebellion against the king but was captured and put into the tower of London, alongside his uncle Roger of Chirk. They were kept in damp and unhealthy conditions. Roger managed to escape in 1323 and went to France and it was there that he is supposed to have become the lover of Isabella, the estranged wife of Edward II.



Skipton Castle where Joan was imprisoned from 1324-6

King Edward imprisoned Joan, firstly at a lodging house in Hampshire and later at Skipton castle in Yorkshire in 1324. Ian Mortimer says that Joan suffered severe hardship as did her imprisoned sons and daughters. Other well-born women and children taken following the rebellion against the king also received harsh treatment and imprisonment.

When her husband and the Queen invaded England in 1326, Joan was released. She spent most of her time at Ludlow Castle, where her husband visited her on a few occasions, once in the company of the Queen. Joan gave up her apartments for her Royal visitor, but Roger solved the problem by building new apartments for his wife. Whether Joan ever went to the court of the new regime is not known.

In 1328 two of Joan's daughters were married and two sons died. Joan and Roger became grandparents when their eldest son Edmund's wife Elizabeth Badlesmere gave birth to a son, Roger (1328-1360). It was in 1328 that her husband was created Earl of March on the order of the Queen. As guardian of the young King Edward III and leader of the Council, he was in a very powerful position. In 1329 two more daughters were married at Wigmore Castle and Roger held a great round table tournament there and dressed as King Arthur, causing much gossip and bad feeling, even within his own family.

Roger Mortimer, Earl of March was executed in November 1330 after a coup by the young King Edward III. Joan's lands were again confiscated by the King as she was the wife of a traitor and she and some of her children were taken into custody. Although Joan was cleared of involvement in Roger's traitorous activities, most of her lands were not returned to her until 1336, and the Liberty of Trim only in 1347.

In 1332 Joan petitioned the King to have Roger's body removed from Greyfriars church, Shrewsbury. This must have been unsuccessful because she made a second request later. If this was successful then presumably Roger is buried with Joan at the ruined Abbey at Wigmore in Herefordshire.

In 1354 Edward III removed all charges against Roger, so Joan died as dowager countess of March with her 28 year old grandson Roger high in the king's favour installed as the 2nd Earl of March. Joan never remarried or entered a convent. At the time of her death she was a great grandmother several times over and was survived by only four of her twelve children. She was seventy on her death in 1356.



The Geneville coat of arms.

The yellow serrated things are horse 'barnacles' or 'brays' which were applied to the outside of a horse's mouth to make it more docile.

The image on the right is of a tile in the church at Bredon in Worcestershire.

The full blazon of the arms is:

'azure three horse brays in pale or, on a chief ermine a demi-lion rampant gules'.

Sources

Ian Mortimer - The Greatest Traitor 2003

Oxford National Dictionary of Biography - Joan de Geneville

Complete peerage of England, Scotland Ireland and Great Britain vol. 1 and 3 [return](#)

IMPORTANT NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Although we email this newsletter to all the membership who are online, we have no idea how many people actually read it. Some research suggests that hardcopy newsletters are much more likely to be studied than those that are emailed. We'd like to know whether this is an effective way of communicating with our membership. **To confirm you have read this, please send a quick email to me at newsletter@mortimerhistorysociety.org.uk** Thank you. [return](#)

EARLY PAPAL BULLA FOUND IN WIGMORE

We are all familiar with the term 'papal bull' as referring to a charter or 'letters patent' issued by the Pope. The term 'bull' derives from the lead seal or 'bulla' that was attached to the document. These bullae are interesting for a number of reasons. Firstly, the design of them did not change from the 12th to the 19th centuries. Also, being made of lead, they have often survived even when the document they were attached to has gone.

A resident of Wigmore has unearthed one of these bullae in a field close to Wigmore Abbey using a metal detector. Wigmore Abbey was founded by Hugh de Mortimer of Wigmore in 1179. The truly amazing thing about this bulla is that it was issued by Lucius III who was pope from 1181 to 1185.

Here is an example of a very well-preserved bulla that was found at Hartpury in Gloucestershire. This one dates from the time of Gregory X who was pope from 1271 to 1286.



On one side are the heads of St Paul (notice the SPA above) and St Peter (SPE) with a cross between them. On the other side is the name of the pope (Gregorius X) and the letters PP with an omega(?) symbol above them. Opinions differ about the meaning of the PP. One view is that it is a contraction of the word PAPA (ie pope) and that the symbol above indicates that it is an abbreviation. Others think that PP stands for *pastor pastorum* meaning 'shepherd of the shepherds'.



A bulla of Alexander IV - pope from 1254 to 1261



A bulla of Nicholas V - pope from 1447 to 1455

The Wigmore Bulla

Here is the bulla of pope Lucius III (1181-1185) found near the ruins of Wigmore Abbey which was founded in 1179. Was it attached to a document connected with the foundation of the abbey?



ROLLO'S BOOKS

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We're very grateful to MHS member Rollo Crookshank for keeping his eyes open for new books that may be of interest to our members.



Lordship in Four Realms - The Lacy Family 1166-1241

Colin Veach

Manchester University Press - October 2015 - £18.99 paperback

ISBN 978-1-7849-9117-3

This book examines the rise and fall of the aristocratic Lacy family in England, Ireland, Wales and Normandy. This involves a unique analysis of medieval lordship in action, as well as a re-imagining of the role of English kingship in the western British Isles and a rewriting of seventy-five years of Anglo-Irish history. By viewing the political landscape of Britain and Ireland from the perspective of one aristocratic family, this book produces one of the first truly transnational studies of individual medieval aristocrats. This results in an in-depth investigation of aristocratic and English royal power over five reigns, including during the tumultuous period of King John and Magna Carta. By investigating how the Lacys sought to rule their lands in four distinct realms, this book also makes a major contribution to current debates on lordship and the foundations of medieval European society.

The Battle of Crécy

Editors: Michael Livingstone & Kelly de Vries

Liverpool University Press - November 2015 - £25 paperback

ISBN 9781781382707

The Battle of Crécy

A Casebook



edited by

MICHAEL LIVINGSTON
and
KELLY DEVRIES

This casebook is the most extensive collection of documents ever assembled for the study of one of the famous battles in history. Here we see the Battle of Crécy across the cultural landscape of Europe — through chronicles and letters, through poems and prophecies, through sermons and laments — enabling us to understand the events of 26 August 1346 like never before. Together with other experts, the editors have gathered, edited, and translated over 80 fourteenth-century sources concerning this fascinating and important conflict — sources from Bohemia to France, from Italy to Wales — many here printed or translated for the first time. Original essays provide historical context and literary

background to help interpret the battle in light of this new material. Among the discoveries: despite its fame, the location of the battle has been misidentified for centuries, and the actions of the men on both sides of the bloodied field have been completely misunderstood. This unparalleled accumulation of material means that the Battle of Crécy will never be seen the same again.

WILLIAM MARSHAL AND IRELAND



EDITORS: John Bradley & C il n O'Drisc il

William Marshall and Ireland

Editors: John Bradley and C il n  'Drisceoil

Four Courts Press, Dublin - coming summer 2016 -  49.50 hardback

ISBN 978-1-84628-218-6

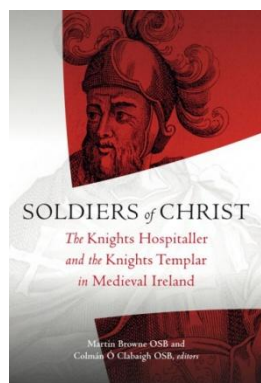
This book presents the proceedings of a conference held in Kilkenny to mark the 800th anniversary of William Marshal's charter to the town. William Marshal (c.1146–1219), earl of Pembroke and lord of Leinster, has been described as 'the flower of chivalry' and 'the greatest knight that ever lived'. From 1207 to 1213 Kilkenny was at the centre of his extensive Leinster lordship. From there he and his wife Isabel de Clare embarked on a massive campaign of town development and administrative re-organization that transformed the south-east of Ireland. It was to have a long-term impact because in the process he formalized the counties of Carlow, Kildare, Kilkenny and Wexford, and established the county towns of Carlow, Kilkenny and Wexford. This publication brings together leading historians and archaeologists to examine his life and legacy for the first time in an Irish context.

Soldiers of Christ - The Knights Hospitaller and Knights Templar in Ireland

Editors: Martin Browne & Colm n   Clabaigh

Four Courts Press - coming November 2016 -  45 hardback

ISBN 978-1-84682-572-9



The Military and Hospitaller Orders emerged in the twelfth century as Christendom engaged with the threats and the opportunities offered by its Muslim and non-Christian neighbours. In an Irish context, the Knights Hospitaller and the Knights Templar were the most significant expressions of this unusual vocation that sought to combine military service with monastic observance. Arriving with the first Anglo-Norman settlers, the orders were granted vast landholdings and numerous privileges in Ireland to support their activities in Palestine and the Middle East. From the outset, the knights were closely associated with the administration of the Anglo-Irish colony, with the superior of the Hospitallers, the Prior of Kilmainham, consistently playing a key role in crown affairs. This volume, the proceedings of the Third Glenstal History Conference, explores the history of the Military and Hospitaller Orders in Ireland from their arrival in the late twelfth century to their dissolution and attempted revival in the mid-sixteenth century. Other contributions explore the orders' agricultural, artistic, economic, pastoral and religious activities as well as examining the archaeology of many of their sites.

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