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*A Mortimer Knight from Sir Thomas Holmes' Book of
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Forthcoming MHS Events

Saturday 16th March 2019 - *The Medieval Castle and Borough of Richards Castle*

AGM at 10.00; talk by Philip Hume at 11.00 - Richards Castle Village Hall - for further details [click here](#)

16th/17th March and 27th/28th April - *Members' Workshops on Research Methods* [fully booked]

Saturday 18th May 2019 - *The Mortimers to 1330: from Wigmore to ruler of England*

Our Spring Conference at Leominster Priory - see details following

Saturday 29th June 2019 - *The Mortimer Inheritance: Key to the Yorkist Crown*

Joint conference with Richard III Society at St Laurence's Church - see details following

Wednesday 4th September 2019 - *Members' Visit to Wigmore Abbey* [more later]

Saturday 5th October 2019 - *The Ludlow Castle Heraldic Roll: A Window into Tudor Times*

Saturday 30th November 2019 - *Lordship and Enduring Influence: the Mortimers in Medieval Ireland*



10TH ANNIVERSARY SPRING CONFERENCE 2019

THE MORTIMERS TO 1330: FROM WIGMORE TO RULER OF ENGLAND

LEOMINSTER PRIORY - 18TH MAY 2019

Members £17.50 Non-Members £22.50 Lunch (Optional) £12.00

Programme:

- 09.15 Registration & Refreshments
- 10.00 Welcome by Jason O'Keefe, Chairman of the Mortimer History Society
- 10.10 **The Genealogy of the Mortimer Family, 1054 - 1300**
Dr Ian Mortimer - Historian & Vice-President of the Mortimer History Society
- 10.50 **A Single Battle to Win a Country; Nearly 200 Years to Conquer a Welsh District: the Mortimers' Struggle to Control Maelienydd**
Philip Hume - Secretary of the Mortimer History Society
- 11.30 Refreshments
- 12.00 **The National Stage: Roger Mortimer (d. 1282) and his Sons**
Dr Andrew Spencer - Murray Edwards College, Cambridge
- 12.40 **Mortimer Women of the 12th & 13th Centuries**
Dr Emma Cavell - Swansea University
- 13.20 Question Panel on the Morning Speakers
- 13.40 Lunch



- 14.40 **The Flickering Flame: Roger Mortimer and the Troubled Kingship of Edward II**
Dr Paul Dryburgh - The National Archives & President of the Mortimer History Society
- 15.10 **Hugh Despenser the Younger: Rise & Fall of a Royal Favourite**
Kathryn Warner - Historian and Author
- 15.50 **Uneasy is the Head that Wears the Crown: Roger Mortimer, Ruler and (Possible) Regicide, 1327-1330**
Dr Paul Dryburgh
- 16.15 Question Panel on the Afternoon Speakers
- 16.45 Close

For synopses of talks, biographies of speakers, booking information and advice on parking [CLICK HERE](#)

AN EXTRA CONFERENCE FOR OUR 10th ANNIVERSARY YEAR



**MORTIMER HISTORY SOCIETY
&
RICHARD III SOCIETY
JOINT CONFERENCE**

**“THE MORTIMER INHERITANCE: THE
KEY TO THE YORKIST CROWN”**

SATURDAY 29TH JUNE 2019

**VENUES: ST. LAURENCE’S CHURCH, LUDLOW
AND LUDLOW CASTLE**

A full day conference 10.00am - 4.45pm

**Members of MHS or Richard III Society: £20.00
Non-Members: £25.00**

**Optional Lunch at St Laurence’s Church: £12.00
Optional Visit to Ludlow Castle: £5.40
Optional (Senior) Visit to Castle: £4.50**

Programme:

- 9.15am Registration & Refreshments at St. Laurence's church
- 10.00am **Welcome & Introduction to the Mortimers 1050s to 1330**
Philip Hume - Historian & Secretary of the MHS
- 10.10am **'The Fairytale of the Garter Knight and the Grandmother: The Fall & Rise of the Mortimer Earls of March, 1330-1360'**
Dr Paul Dryburgh - The National Archives & President of MHS
- 10.40am **'Mortimer & Lancaster: The Origins of a Dynastic Feud'**
Sara Hanna-Black - Trustee of the Mortimer History Society
- 11.10am Questions - Chair, Philip Hume
- 11.20am Refreshments
- 11.45am **'The Mortimer Claim to the Throne 1374-1415'**
Dr Ian Mortimer - Historian & Vice-President of the MHS
- 12.20pm **'Don't Mention the Mortimers: How a Putative King Became an Impotent Pawn'**
Professor Chris Given-Wilson - Emeritus Professor at St. Andrews University
- 1.10pm Questions - Chair, Philip Hume
- 1.20pm End of the morning session
- 1.30pm Optional Lunch at St Laurence's & a self-guided tour to view the Mortimer & Yorkist symbolism in the church
- 2.30pm Beginning of the afternoon session
- 2.40pm **'Richard, Duke of York: Marcher Lord'**
Matthew Lewis - Historian & Writer
- 3.20pm **'The Lion & the Hart: the Mortimer Inheritance in the Hands of Edward IV & Cecily, Duchess of York'**
Dr Joanna Laynesmith - University of Reading & the Research Officer for the Richard III Society
- 4.00pm **'Richard III: From Ludlow to Bosworth'**
Matthew Lewis
- 4.30pm Questions - Chair, Dr. Phil Stone, Chairman of the Richard III Society
- 4.45pm Close
- 4.50pm Optional Tour of Ludlow Castle (3 mins walk on level ground to castle entrance)



Annual General Meeting and Lecture at Richards Castle

An extra reminder to members living close to the Marches, that our next event is at Richards Castle on the morning of Saturday 16th March. Philip Hume will be speaking about the medieval history of Richards Castle, one of the very few Norman-style castles that were built before the Conquest. Despite the fact that Richards Castle is only 5 miles away from Wigmore, the Mortimers of Richards Castle were not closely related to the Mortimers of Wigmore and their coat of arms is quite different.

Our 10th Anniversary Conferences on May 18th and June 29th

1. Tickets are selling briskly for both our Mortimer conferences. We will be publicising them to non-members before long, so don't leave your booking too late. We've had to turn late-booking members away recently as we've reached the capacity of the venue.
2. We had planned to hold our joint conference with the Richard III Society at Ludlow Assembly Rooms, with lunch at St Laurence's church. Unfortunately the work being done on the Assembly Rooms will not be complete by 29th June, so we have transferred the whole conference to St Laurence's. The church has recently removed all the pews, making it much more flexible and comfortable for events like ours, but the move will reduce the number of places available so, again, book early.
3. When booking for our events, please use the online facility if you can. Booking online through Ticketsource costs you no more and greatly reduces our administrative load.

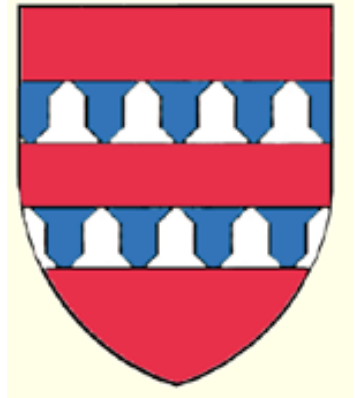
Did you receive your 2018 Journal?

We are aware that some members did not receive their 2018 journal. Most of these should have arrived around the Christmas/New Year period with a few a little later. If you are sure you haven't received yours, and you haven't already informed us, please let Hugh know. His contact details are at the head of this publication.

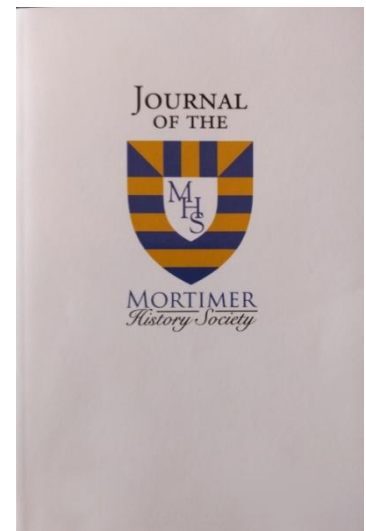


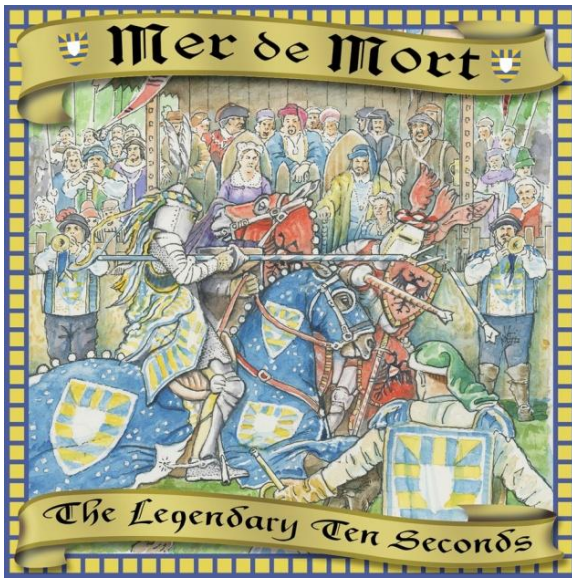
Stella moves on

Living in the central Marches, Stella Mason joined the Society in 2010 and soon became a key figure at the heart of the committee. Following the early death of her husband in 2016, and her own subsequent health problems, Stella has decided to seek pastures new. She is now established in Hexham, on the river Tyne. Stella's background is as a museum curator and she is seen here outside the Museum of the Order of St John in London, where she had worked previously, introducing the museum to an enthusiast group of MHS members last year. We wish her every happiness 'up north'.



Mortimer of Richards Castle





The New Online Shop

We are happy to announce that many of the items that are available at our events can now be bought online. Currently it is possible to order copies of volumes of the MHS Journal and also available are an MHS fridge magnet and an MHS bookmark.

Also available is 'Mer de Mort' a brand-new CD produced for us by the Legendary Ten Seconds. It contains a collection of newly-composed songs covering several aspects of the Mortimer story. The CD includes a narrative read by our patron, John Challis.

For more about the two volumes of the Journal [click here](#)

To visit the shop and order [click here](#)

New Members

We warmly welcome the new members who have joined since the last edition of *Mortimer Matters* in November.

Graham Baker	Herefordshire UK	Judith Jackson	North Yorkshire UK
Norma Benathan	Lancashire UK	John Lake	Washington, USA
Ann Black	Shropshire UK	Judith Macarthur	Somerset UK
Mark Brooks	West Midlands UK	Satu Mannonen	London UK
Frank Bruce	Birmingham UK	Cedric Mortimer	London UK
Christine Bunn	Shropshire UK	Jennifer & Will. Mortimer	California, USA
Simon Child	Shropshire UK	Joyce Moss	Gloucestershire UK
Jean Clare-Tighe	Kent UK	Denise & Bob North	Herefordshire UK
Jane Clarke	Wrexham, Wales UK	Rosalind & Guy Parneix	Florida USA
Linda Clitheroe	Surrey UK	Lynda Pidgeon	Wiltshire UK
Lynne Danby	Powys, Wales UK	Ruth Richardson	Herefordshire UK
Ann Davies	Herefordshire UK	Sara Elin Roberts	Anglesey, Wales UK
Hugh Eveleigh	Worcestershire UK	Pam & Geoffrey Sargent	Herefordshire UK
John & Gwen Fraser	Herefordshire UK	Enid Thresher	Somerset UK
Susan & Godfrey Hack	Herefordshire UK	Sally Watkins	Worcestershire UK
Sandi Harriss	Herefordshire UK	Marvin Loyd Welborn	Virginia USA
Debbie Hindhaugh	Warwickshire UK	Lindsay Whitehurst	Staffordshire UK
Neil & Joanna Iddison	Sheffield UK	Peter Wild	Manchester UK

Ludlow Medieval Christmas Fayre

2018 was the first year we have had a stall at this major event. There was tremendous interest in the Society and a number of visitors to the fayre joined straight away or soon afterwards.



Winner of the 2018 MHS Essay Prize - Sara Elin Roberts

We're delighted to award the 2018 Essay Prize to Sara. The title of her important paper is

What's Yours is Mine: Cyfraith Hywel and the Law of the March

Taking as its starting point R. R. Davies' seminal study of the 'Law of the March', this essay looks in a different direction. It examines the law of medieval Wales and looks at evidence of Marcher society and the law of the March within the Welsh legal texts. Welsh lawtexts produced in the March, and sections of texts showing Marcher influence are examined. This shows that the later, post-conquest development of medieval Welsh law happened in the March of Wales, and the importance of the law of the March to our knowledge of medieval Welsh law is critical and a hitherto understudied aspect of both the Welsh laws and of the Law of the March.

Sara Elin Roberts is a historian specialising in the law, literature and culture of Wales and the March from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries. Her main area of expertise is the law of medieval Wales, and she has a particular interest in the manuscript culture that lay behind the extraordinary dissemination of medieval Welsh legal texts between the thirteenth and the fifteenth centuries. Her work has also examined questions of gender, governance, power and identity in post-Conquest Wales and the March. Dr Roberts is an acknowledged editor of medieval Welsh law texts, but she has worked extensively on the poetry of the fourteenth-century Welsh poet, Dafydd ap Gwilym and is one of the editors of the new edition of the poet's work.

A couple of Sara's publications:

- * *Jasper: The Tudor Kingmaker* (Fonhill, October 2015)
- * *The Legal Triads of Medieval Wales* (University of Wales Press, July 2007; 2nd ed January 2011).



Sara's essay will be published in the 2019 edition of the MHS Journal.

Introducing the Mortimers 8: Edmund Mortimer, 3rd Earl of March

by Hugh Wood. *The story of the Mortimers spans the whole of the later medieval period from the 11th to the 15th centuries. With 15 generations of Mortimers it is difficult to get one's head around which Roger, Edmund, Hugh or Ralph we are talking about and how they relate to each other. In successive editions of Mortimer Matters we are publishing a simple introduction to the Mortimers of Wigmore in short chunks, to help new members build a picture of this colourful and important family.*

In this series of articles we have already met several larger-than-life Mortimers. Four Roger Mortimers immediately spring to mind: Roger (d.1282) who killed Simon de Montfort at the Battle of Evesham; his son Roger of Chirk, another great warrior who ended his days in the Tower; Roger, 1st earl of March, executed for treason in 1330 and his grandson Roger (d.1360) who managed, in his short life, to completely rebuild the family fortunes. It can reasonably be argued, however, that it was Edmund Mortimer, 3rd earl of March who was to leave the greatest legacy, though he can take little credit for it. His father, the 2nd earl of March, achieved much in his short life, but there can be no greater evidence of the rehabilitation of the Mortimers than the betrothal of his 6-year-old son, Edmund, to a royal princess. Just 28 years after he had executed the 1st earl of March, king Edward III agreed to the marriage of his own granddaughter into that same family. Consequently all the future earls of March had royal blood, and it is this marriage which was to form the basis of the House of York's claim to the throne during the Wars of the Roses over 100 years later.

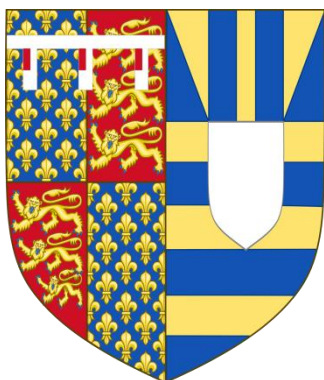
In 1368, at the age of 17, Edmund married Philippa, the only child of Lionel, 2nd surviving son of king Edward III. By this time Philippa had inherited from her mother the title of Countess of Ulster. His father having died when he was just eight, Edmund was now styled 'earl of March and earl of Ulster'. Despite his youth he was made Marshal of England and was employed on various diplomatic missions. Having already been on campaign in France in 1369, he took part in another expedition in 1372, leading a force of 19 knights, 60 esquires and 120 archers. This proved a humiliating failure. Things did not improve for him when, in 1375, he was involved in an expedition to support the duke of



Carrickfergus - the birthplace of Philippa's mother, Elizabeth de Burgh, 4th Countess of Ulster

Brittany against the French king. Shortly after the arrival of the English, a truce was agreed between the two sides and the English had to set off home again. These campaigns proved very costly for Edmund and reimbursement from the king was slow in coming.

In post-conquest England, the monarch consulted with a Great Council consisting of earls, barons and senior clergy, the main pillars of the feudal system. But increasingly over the 13th and 14th centuries, knights of the shires were also commanded to attend these parliaments, and these "commoners" came to exercise a growing influence. The "Commons" met separately from the "Lords" for the first time in 1341 and it was established that no law could be passed or tax levied without the consent of both houses of parliament and the sovereign.



The royal arms of Philippa impaled with those of her husband, Edmund Mortimer. The small red rectangles (cantons) on the white label tell us that she is descended from Lionel, 2nd surviving son of the king.

After a long, energetic and largely-successful reign, Edward III was now aging. Disaffection had spread through the country, the court party around the king being recognised as corrupt and inefficient. The main power behind the throne was John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, the king's 3rd surviving son - not a man it was easy to stand up to. Aware of the general atmosphere of criticism in the country, the king and his advisors had not called a parliament for several years. But the royal treasury desperately needed filling and, as taxes could only be levied with the agreement of parliament, they now had no choice but to call one. The parliament of 1376 has been called the Good Parliament. Although its main purpose was to agree a new round of taxation, it was seized upon by disgruntled lords and commoners as a golden opportunity to introduce much-needed reforms.



The arms of John of Gaunt's wife, Constance of Castile impaled with the royal arms. Note that John of Gaunt's arms, on the right, are differenced from those of his brothers by having an ermine label.

Opposition to the Lancastrian dominance at court was led by Edward, Prince of Wales, the Black Prince. Edmund Mortimer was firmly in the reform camp, allying himself with the prince and other disaffected peers, and with the Commons. This set him on a collision course with John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. So began an antagonism between the Mortimers and the Lancastrians that was to resound through English history for over a hundred years. Edmund was no minor figure who could be easily ignored or manipulated: though only 24 he was probably the greatest landowner in the country after the king and John of Gaunt. His Mortimer inheritance included estates in Wales and the Welsh borders (in Monmouth, Brecon, Radnor, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Montgomery & Denbigh) but also estates in East Anglia and Ireland. Through his wife, he had also acquired the extensive earldom of Ulster making him one of the greatest landholders in Ireland.



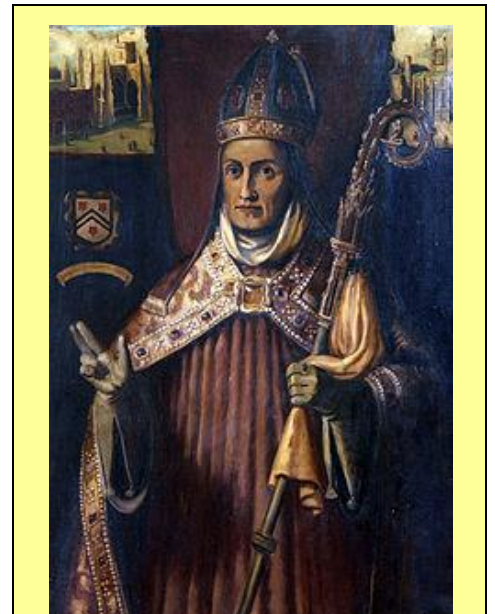
The tomb of the Black Prince at Canterbury

That Edmund was recognised as a prominent member of the opposition is made clear by the fact that the Commons elected Edmund's steward, Peter de la Mere, as Speaker. In his opening speech de la Mere criticised recent military failures and directly accused members of the king's inner circle of corruption. He demanded that the royal accounts should be made available for scrutiny and summoned Richard Lyons and Lord Latimer, key members of the ruling elite, to appear before the Commons; both were subsequently imprisoned. Early in the parliament, Edmund was one of a group of peers selected to liaise between the Lords and Commons and later was one of the council set up to control the court.

For all its reforming zeal, the Good Parliament proved remarkably ineffective. Though most of their demands were acceded to by the government, they still refused to authorise any fundraising and this lost them the support of the Lords. When the parliament broke up after more than three months, things quickly returned to normal. The Black Prince died in June 1376 and, with the king's final illness now upon him, Lancaster wielded more power than ever. Lyons and Latimer were pardoned while the Commons Speaker, Peter de la Mere, was imprisoned. Without support from the Lords, the Commons were powerless to resist, as the decisions taken by the Good Parliament were reversed. When he forced through England's first ever poll tax, public antagonism towards Lancaster increased to fever pitch. There was rioting in London and he feared for his life. Presumably to get him out of the way, Edmund, as Marshal of England, was ordered to inspect Calais and other remote royal castles. Rather than do this, however, he resigned the position.

The king's death in 1377 completely undermined the power of the court party. The new king, Richard II, was only ten but, rather than appoint the distrusted Lancaster as regent, the lords established a succession of regency councils. Despite his wife's family closeness to the crown, Edmund avoided seeking any special status and appears to have been content to play his part as just a member of the council. In the next couple of years he was much occupied with Anglo-Scottish affairs, inspecting border castles and negotiating with the Scots.

As well as the ongoing war with France, the council had to do something about the deteriorating situation in Ireland. Originally granted their Irish lands by the English crown, over the years the Normans who had settled in Ireland increasingly resented being expected to put English interests first. Many of them adopted the Irish language and identified as Irish themselves becoming 'more Irish than the Irish'. As well as the disruption caused by warfare among themselves, these Hiberno-Normans suffered much from the effects of the Black Death and successive famines. Edmund's father-in-law Lionel, duke of Clarence, had been Edward III's Lord Lieutenant in Ireland in the 1360s. Sir William Windsor had signally failed to achieve much in his time as Lieutenant and in 1379 Edmund, 3rd earl of March, was appointed to the role. It is not clear to what extent this move was engineered by the unpopular Lancaster to get him out of the way. Certainly, Edmund was well-qualified: adding together the Mortimer estates, acquired through various marriages, and his position as *jure uxoris* Earl of Ulster he was the major landowner in Ireland; indeed other English settlers had requested that he be appointed, as early as 1373.



William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester and Chancellor of England. His friendship with Edmund, Earl of March and support for the reformers brought him into direct conflict with Lancaster. After the end of the Good Parliament, he was charged with financial irregularities and banished from court, but was rapidly pardoned by Richard II on his accession. He founded Winchester College and New College Oxford.

He arrived in Ireland in May 1380 and apparently made a very successful start. But we'll never know how effective he might have been: after only 18 months in the role, he was taken ill and died in Cork in December 1381, at the age of just 29. His eldest son, Roger, was just 7 at the time - another minor to add to the growing list.

Roger of Chirk (d1326): a surprising reminder in the Tower of London - *Hugh Wood*

Roger Mortimer, 1st Baron Mortimer had five sons: Ralph, Edmund, Roger, Geoffrey and William. The third brother, Roger was a soldier who has been described by Alison Weir as 'a lecherous and violent man'. Having been granted the area around Chirk, he set about creating a new Marcher lordship and commenced the building of Chirk Castle adding to Edward I's string of castles in North Wales. For most of his life Roger was greatly in favour at court. He was given high office in Wales and he wielded so much power that he can almost be described as the 'Prince of Wales'. He was with Edward I in Scotland, taking part in the Battle of Falkirk in 1298 when William Wallace was finally defeated. A strong supporter of Edward II he went to the Continent to negotiate the royal marriage to Isabella. His loyalty to the crown was not to last however and, when the king continually favoured the Despensers, he moved into open opposition, in association with his nephew Roger Mortimer, the so-called *Greatest Traitor*. They were captured by the king at Shrewsbury in 1322 and committed to the Tower. The younger Roger eventually escaped to France but Roger of Chirk remained there until his death in 1326 aged around 70.

Visiting the Tower of London in 2018, with hoards of other tourists, it was difficult to gain any feeling of where exactly Roger might have lived or what his life might have been like during the last four years of his life. The White Tower is a huge space which has been decked out with modern floors crammed with exhibits, and little sign of anything like living quarters. Perhaps Roger was accommodated in one of the surrounding towers. The really stunning part of the White Tower is the Norman chapel on the second floor, built between 1077 and 1097. This probably looks much like it did when it was built, and Roger of Chirk must certainly have visited it many times.



St John's Chapel in the White Tower of the Tower of London

Quite unrecognised and unappreciated, there is still a direct link to Roger in the chapel. In a window directly behind the altar is a coat of arms, and one of the quarterings is Mortimer of Chirk. During his lifetime Roger differenced his arms from those of his father, changing the tincture of the central



Arms of Ambrose or Robert Dudley

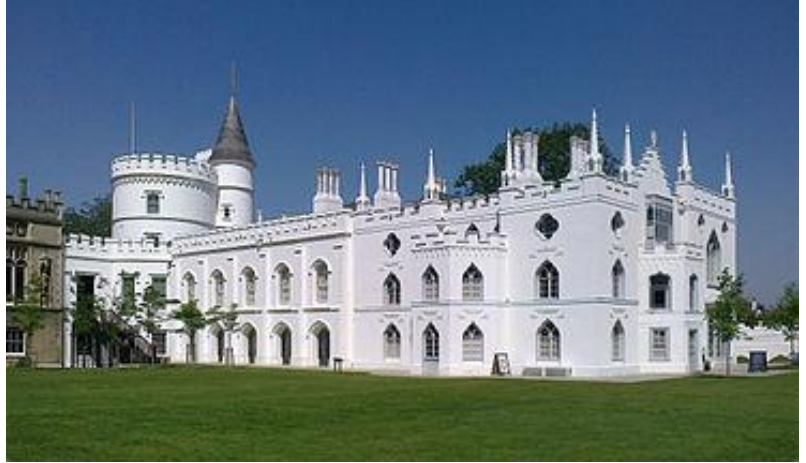


The final quarter contains the arms of Mortimer of Chirk

escutcheon from *argent* to *ermine* and thereby introducing a pattern of black 'tails' to the otherwise white inner shield. The main undifferenced arms of Mortimer descended through the Earls of March to the Tudor monarchs, but are rarely seen. By contrast the arms of Mortimer of Chirk were passed down through the female line, appearing as a quarterings in the arms of both the Barons de la Warr and subsequently the Dudleys. Indeed the window contains the coat of arms of

either Ambrose Dudley, Earl of Warwick (d1590) or his younger brother Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester (d1588), both of whom were Knights of the Garter. They were great (7 times)-grandsons of Roger of Chirk.

So why was a Dudley coat of arms in a window in St John's chapel in the White Tower? I'm afraid that this poignant memory of Roger of Chirk is there by pure chance. Over the centuries the chapel has been used for many things. The arches were blocked off and it was used for some time as a storeroom for weapons and ammunition. Then, according to a guide in the chapel, Queen Victoria showed an interest in it when she was looking for a place where military uniforms could be made and stored. It was ultimately saved by Prince Albert. Suspecting its architectural and historical importance, he persuaded Victoria not to use it. After more research he managed to have it restored to its former glory. The original glass had long gone so they looked around for something interesting to replace it. In the 18th century the art historian, antiquarian and collector Horace Walpole had built Strawberry Hill in the Gothic style. Having exhausted their finances, his successors held a great sale of the contents of the house in 1842. All the windows in the chapel in the White Tower actually came from that sale.



Strawberry Hill House

So it was just serendipity, but it made my day to find evidence of Roger at the heart of the place where he met his end.

Clothes in 14thC Pembridge and the People who wore them: a project to reconstruct the look of what might have been - *Robert Anderson*

An extract from The Wigmore Chronicles referring to 1301

Also the same year on the vigil of St Matthew the Apostle (20th September), Roger, the sone of Edmund Mortimer, was betrothed at Pembridge to Joan, the daughter of Peter Geneville; and then on the night after that feast a comet appeared, lasting for the seven following nights

The marriage of Roger Mortimer and Joan de Geneville in Pembridge Church must have been an important occasion; Joan was the heiress to the extensive Geneville estates including Ludlow Castle and properties in Ireland including Trim Castle; Roger was the son of Edmund Mortimer and heir to Wigmore Castle. Despite this, there is not much evidence as to what took place that day; however, there are a few assumptions which can be made. They may have married for love - boy marries girl from the castle next door, or it may have had something to do with Roger's father mortgaging eight of his castles to Joan's grandfather - we may never know.

That they were married in Pembridge is documented. The church is very likely to have been at the same location as the one standing in Pembridge today, although not the same building. There is no record of a church in Pembridge in Domesday but, in the 13th century Wigmore Chronicle, it is mentioned as the centre of a deanery. The Mortimers owned the castle which stood behind the church. It was used as a dower house and, with the last known occupant, Maude, having died in February 1301, it was possibly still empty when the wedding took place on the 20th September. It's pure conjecture, but did the happy couple spend the first years of married life here, before moving to Ireland in 1308?

The current church has been stylistically dated to the late 1320's with the tracery of the South window of the chancel dating back to 1240. So it is possible that Roger and Joan could have taken communion under the light of this window following their wedding ceremony, which, as was the custom at the time, would have been performed on the porch steps. The events of the day are mostly speculation; but then, as now,

one of the first questions to be asked about a wedding would have been "What was worn?". So when the wedding came up in research about Pembridge church, it seemed natural to consider what they would have worn on the day.

A small group of individuals had already recreated costumes from the four stone effigies in the chancel. These date from the late 14th Century and have a strong Mortimer connection. One effigy is that of John Gour, a steward in the service of the Mortimers during the 1350's. He witnessed a number of documents, was appointed Keeper of the Mortimer Estates during the minority of 1360 and was appointed Keeper of the Temporalities of Hereford Cathedral following the death of Bishop Trilleck also in 1360. The other effigy is of Nicholas's father, John, who was a Sergeant-at-Law, appointed in 1355. Both men are accompanied by what are assumed to be their wives but, at present, there is no information about them, except what can be seen in the stonework. Both the costumes and the stone effigies can be seen in Pembridge Church.



The Gour costumes

While preparing a brochure about the costumes, Ann Butcher, who had been with the project from the start, commented that she was "missing the sewing", so it was decided to recreate the clothes that Roger and Joan might have worn on the occasion of their marriage. As there is no documentary evidence of what they actually wore it quickly became an exercise in "what they might have worn." Assumptions, based on research, had to be made. At the time of their marriage, Joan was 15 and Roger was 14 years old so the clothes would need to fit teenagers. It was decided that they would be made to fit mannequins for display showing the type of clothing of the period, in cut, colour and cloth, in order to bring this historic event to life.

A number of sources were used to help identify the sort of clothing of the period. Firstly, stone effigies of a similar period were studied. Although only carved stone, past experience had shown that these give an excellent indication of the style, the cut of the cloth and even the pattern of the material. Roger and Joan's eldest daughter, Margaret, married Thomas de Berkeley, 3rd baron Berkeley. His effigy is in Berkeley Church, with that of his second wife, and his clothing incorporates a leaf pattern; there are similar examples on statues in The Louvre, the Musee de Cluny and Les Invalides, in Paris. This was similar to a gold brocade fabric which was found in Hereford and subsequently used in both Roger and Joan's outfits. Other research looked at paintings and manuscripts and indicated that it was common for couples to wear some matching clothes at weddings and important state occasions.

Experience was also drawn from the creation of the previous sets of costumes. These had highlighted how quickly fashions in costume could change. The earlier two effigies are father and mother and the later two

are son and daughter-in-law, but the fashion had dramatically changed from one generation to the next. This meant that care had to be taken with sources, to ensure that they were from as close as possible to the event. Tapestries and photographs of period items in museums from the time period, revealed colours and cuts of costumes that might have been worn. Two examples were the deep neckline of the dress and the large arm holes in the women's sleeveless outer gown, which gave access to the purse held on a belt underneath.

A different source of information was found in an inventory made in 1322. When Roger was arrested in that year, both his and Joan's belongings were confiscated, including their clothes. As part of this process an inventory was made, listing their possessions and, although this was made a number of years after the marriage it showed the type and colour of clothing that they both wore. This included, for Joan, two tunics of 'cloth of Thars', one of which was green and the other brown, and for Roger, tunics, super tunics, tabards and hoods in various colours including green, scarlet red and indigo velvet. Cloth of Thars is a rich silk from Turkistan, often highly patterned with Islamic designs. Although the inventory may not have included the clothes that they wore 20 years previously at their wedding, it gives an indication as to the rich nature of both material and variation in colour in the clothes that they wore, and the distance that the fabrics could have travelled. In recreating them, the choice of fabric was not limited to just what would have been made in Pembridge at the time, but we included the extensive range of fabrics that could have been brought into the country from around the world through trade.

From the start of the first project Sarah Thursfield's book "The Medieval Tailor's Assistant" had proved invaluable and this, plus the experience gained on the previous project, meant that the undergarments were completed quickly – a simple white linen shift for Joan and the same material for Roger's undershirt. The next layer for both was the main gowns which were made of matching gold-coloured brocade with the leaf pattern. Apart from the cut, the main difference between the two is that Joan's gown has lace-on sleeves. This was to reflect one wedding tradition that was discovered - that the bride would often give a sleeve to the prospective groom prior to the wedding.

For the tunic and dress we chose a hand-printed batik wedding cloth from Java with a paisley design, as the closest imitation that could be found to "Cloth of Thars". Paisley is an ancient Persian motif believed to have been created in around 650 AD. It is entirely possible that such a fabric might have reached Pembridge and the use of a fabric like this would have provided colour, radiance and brightness and would have glowed in candlelight - entirely appropriate for such an occasion. Accessories include belts for both, a leather purse for Joan and a dagger/short sword for Roger. This was based on early 13th century designs seen in Paris with the dagger sheath and purse both being made by the team.

The costumes we created serve to show what could have been, and help give an insight into the lives of Roger and Joan. The first set of costumes are on display in St Mary's Church, Pembridge, Herefordshire HR6 9EA and a brochure is available giving information about both sets of costumes. If you wish to learn more about them please visit mediaeval-pembridge.com.



Could Roger and Joan's wedding costumes have been something like this?