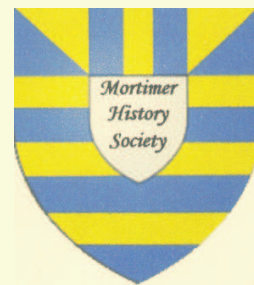


Mortimer History Society



Newsletter No.6 June 2011



May Newtown History Day: Chairman John Grove at the MHS table, and Gary - medieval soldier in Montgomery/Mortimer colours

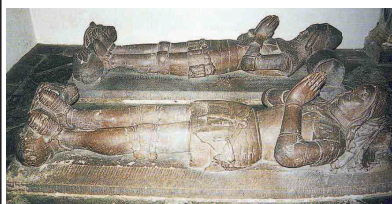


Living History Fair in Leicestershire - February
Armour and weapons, clothes and patterns, fabrics and threads, hats, musical instruments and more - plus the MHS stall . Next Fair in October

Chairman's Diary - John Grove

There are many new revelations to be made about the Mortimers and several mysteries for members to solve. What are we to make of the story or legend that the effigy in Montgomery Church represents Sir Edmund Mortimer, beaten by Glyndwr at the Battle of Bryn Glas 1402. Edmund married Glyndwr's daughter, joined him, and died in the siege of Harlech Castle 1408.

None other than JDK Lloyd says "There are reasons for believing that the figure is none other than that of Sir Edmund Mortimer...son in law of Owain Glyndwr... one-time Constable of Montgomery Castle"



Paul Remfry says that much of the effigy is a Victorian restoration, that the shield is not Mortimer and the armour is of a much later date - in any

case would Henry IV or V have allowed a Montgomery burial? Friends are invited to try and solve such mysteries and we also need your contributions to filling out our Gazetteer on the website.

www.mortimerhistorysociety.org.uk

This newsletter rightly records a successful spring conference, an excellent first edition of the MHS journal, [The Mortimer Chronicle](#), and the promise of good things to come. Congratulations to Earl Mortimer College, Leominster on their official opening. May every success be yours!

May Field Visit to Wigmore Church and Castle with the Kington History Society



Paul Remfry guiding MHS members around the church on their May visit to Wigmore Church and Castle.

Field Visit to New Radnor - Saturday 16th July

Meet at New Radnor church 10.30 am - guided by Paul Remfry; then visit to the remains of the castle ramparts, a few steps away above the town - the site of the Battle of Radnor 1196. Members £2 and friends £3 on the day; bring sandwiches, or buy lunch at *The Eagle*.



New Radnor from the Castle ramparts

MHS AUTUMN CONFERENCE

8th October Ewyas Harold Memorial Hall

Just off the Hereford-Abergavenny road A485 10am-3.30pm

am Dr Paul Dryburgh Mortimer Ladies - a new study
Steven Blake The Herefordshire School of Sculptors
pm at Kilpeck Church Steven Blake the Herefordshire School of Sculptors in action

Tickets: £15 to include buffet lunch: cheques (to Mortimer History Society) with sae to Stella Mason, Hammermill Farm, Boraston, Tenbury Wells WR5 8LI or PayPal on MHS website - www.mortimerhistorysociety.org.uk



New MHS Group - Costumes & Textiles



Several MHS members are coming together to form a new group to follow up their own interests in medieval dress, hats, fabrics - felt, wool, leather and processes such as spinning, weaving, dyeing and perhaps trading. The starting point is Nila Monckton's research into Blanche Mortimer's dress depicted in the Much Marcle church carving. Nila has listed some of the group's possible aims and activities, but all will depend on the group members' own suggestions and preferences:

Research	e.g. into costumes that Mortimers would have worn
Textiles	What materials would they have used?
Trade	The wool trade relating to the Mortimers
Designing, sewing	Do we want to reproduce costumes?
Embroidery	Make dresses, tunics, hats, etc?
Arrange and/or attend demonstrations, courses and workshops	

If you are interested, email Nila on monckton621@btinternet.com or write to Margot Miller, 25 Nover Wood Dr. Fownhope, Herefordshire HR1 4PN

The Battle of Mortimer's Cross September 17th & 18th 2011

550th anniversary

The Wharf Field, main A49 1 mile north of Leominster



medieval battle re-enactment each day
medieval music, dancing & mummers plays
barber surgeon, *Living History* encampment
medieval traders, beer tent, food stalls
Dragons of Wye Ten (puppet show)
jason.okeefe@btopenworld.com



Brampton Bryan Scarecrow Day

Sunday 31 July 11 am - 5 pm
Visits to Brampton Bryan Castle
at 12 noon and 3 pm
Entrance to castle £3

YOUR MORTIMER HISTORY SOCIETY NEEDS YOU

**HELP!
WANTED
URGENTLY
A VOLUNTEER
to enhance, freshen-up
and up-date the MHS website.
Please offer to help with your pc skills.
www.mortimerhistorysociety.org.uk**

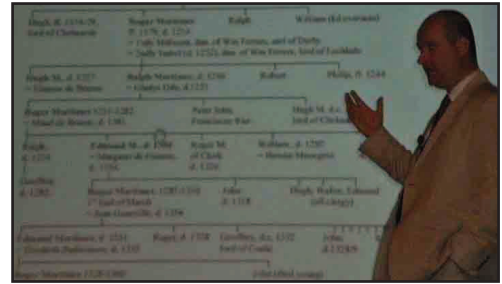


The Battle of Tewkesbury

Karen Sarkar has painted this picture of the Battle of Tewkesbury. The original is hanging in Tewkesbury museum, and prints are available. The artist hopes to paint a picture for The Battle of Mortimer's Cross next year-parhelion. www.karensarkarart.com/index.htm

THE MORTIMERS AND THE ROYAL FAMILY

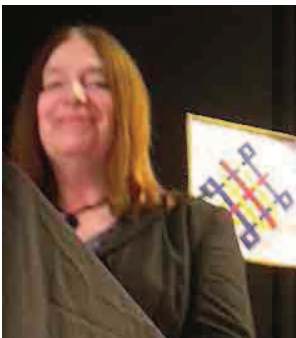
Talk by Dr Ian Mortimer at the May Mortimer History Society Conference in Ludlow



In the first part of this absorbing talk, Ian emphasised just how close the Mortimers were to the throne, a closeness that existed in Normandy before the Conquest and which was renewed and strengthened by successive strategic marriage alliances in the centuries that followed. Generally they were strong supporters of the monarch. Even though Edward III ordered the execution and attainder of Roger Mortimer, 1st Earl of March, Roger's grandson served the same king faithfully and was so well-regarded that the king restored his lands and title and made him a founder member of the Order of the Garter.

Much of Ian's talk was devoted to the matter of the royal succession after the reign of Richard II, which led eventually to the Wars of the Roses. He presented a fascinating though rather bewildering wealth of evidence, for and against the various claims to the throne, which is too complex to summarise here. Read his new book *Medieval Intrigue* (Continuum 2010) for a full presentation of the arguments. One thing did emerge quite clearly, though – the Mortimers themselves had no legal claim to the throne!

Hugh Wood, Ludlow



QUEEN ISABELLA SHE-WOLF OF FRANCE?

At the MHS May Conference, author Alison Weir sets out to clear Queen Isabella's name; called the She-Wolf of France

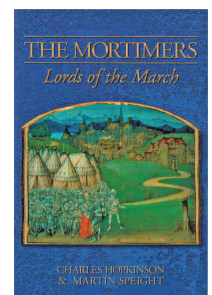
Alison Weir began by telling how legends, authors through the centuries from Marlowe to Brecht, as well as historical characters and historians, have portrayed Queen Isabella - daughter of French royalty, wife of Edward II and lover of Roger Mortimer - as 'an unnatural queen', a harridan, a jezebel and even a she-wolf with vicious, pointed lupine teeth. Victorian historians called her 'Isabella the Mad' and accused her of treason, murder and regicide. Point by point, Alison questioned these descriptions - and gave many reasons why Isabella has been hard done by. From her marriage to Edward II when she was 12 years old, she suffered years of humiliation and disrespect as a princess and queen from her husband and his favourites, especially Gaveston & Despenser. After the fall and execution of Roger Mortimer in 1331, Isabella lived for 28 more years at her Castle Rising estate in Norfolk. Edward III restored all her dower lands to his mother, and 12 years later, returned the Mortimer Marcher estates to Roger's grandson. This does not sound like the proper treatment for a queen guilty of adultery, treason, betrayal and regicide.

Launched at the May MHS Conference in Ludlow - the first issue of the Mortimer History Society's & journal - **The Mortimer Chronicle**

Reprint of Hopkinson & Speight's **The Mortimers - Lords of the March**

The first issue of the MHS journal *The Mortimer Chronicle*, edited by Helen Watt and Paul Dryburgh (left) launched at the conference, is full of interesting articles, both long and short. John Grove writes about Joan, wife of Roger - Roger, the subject of Alison Weir's talk. Ian Mortimer discusses a long-standing mystery - where was Roger buried after his execution in 1331? A present-day Roger Mortimer writes about new discoveries in Mortimer genealogy. Paul Remfry describes the violent background to three Mortimer castles in mid-Wales.

The Mortimers - Lords of the March was relaunched by Andy Johnson of Logaston Press, and copies signed by both authors were on sale at the conference. *The Mortimers* was first published in 2002. This book not only deals with the Wigmore Mortimers, but also with Welsh and Marcher background, Mortimer estates, castles, and also the branches of the dynasty. Logaston Press £12.95 ISBN 978-1-873827-53-6



The Border Waites

*At the May MHS Conference,
'Border Waites' played 14th century
music which would have been heard
in the courts, churches and castle halls of Europe*

David Hatcher:	viol, vielle, shawm, bass racket, crumhorn, pipe & tabor, recorder, cittern
Sharon Lindo:	renaissance violin, rebec, shawm, recorder, crumhorn
Jonathan Morgan:	sackbut, renaissance flute, crumhorn, recorder, cittern
Alan Crumpler:	percussion, shawm, crumhorn, rauschpfeiffe, recorder, harpsichord
Frances Eustace:	curtal, viol, recorder, crumhorn, bagpipe, pipe & tabor, symphony ⁺

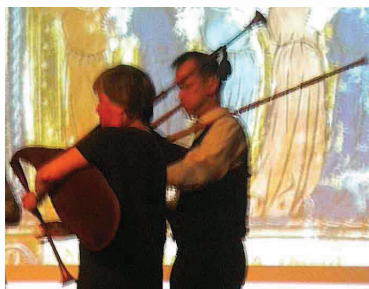
At the May MHS Conference in Ludlow, the *Border Waites* gave a wonderful explanation, concert and demonstration of the sort of medieval music which would have been played, heard, sung and danced to in the royal courts, the halls of castles from the 14th and 15th centuries.

The *Waites* had prepared and researched new pieces for their presentation at the MHS conference. They were joined for the first time by soprano Jenny Cassidy; and Alan Crumpler had made a special *symphony*⁺ for the occasion. Alan told how he had made the new instrument, and played it together with Ian Mortimer (*see below*). Band members described how they had researched the early written music that has survived from 1350-1450, mainly in French. Simple monophonic, like folk music and plainsong, developed over the 14th century becoming more subtle and polyphonic - with several interwoven parts.

Musicians travelled around Europe, working everywhere from the papal court in Avignon to Scottish castles, playing for the great and good accompanying ceremonies, church services, singing and dancing. The highlight of all this music-making was at the Council of Constance 1414-1418 where the musicians gathered to play at numerous ceremonies, thought to have been attended by 60,000 visitors.

During that time, an English musician John Dunstable was in Paris serving John, Duke of Bedford whom Henry V had appointed governor of Normandy. The *Border Waites'* programme included Jenny Cassidy singing one of Dunstable's songs - a rondeau called *Puisque m'amour* -

*Since my love has taken a dislike to me
And seen fit to choose another,
Entertainment, singing, dancing and laughter
Will give no more pleasure as long as I live.*



*David Hatcher
on rebec;
David and
Frances Eustace
on bagpipes;
Ian Mortimer
winding the
new symphony⁺
played by
Alan Crumpler*

