

*Extracts from the Chapter minutes from 1701 onwards and divers historical prospecting.*

*Editor - Mark Brandon: markandsuebrandon@outlook.com*



## FAKE DUKE

**O**ur perspicacious Chancellor, commented that the letter from the Duke of Wellington in J&T No.46 *doesn't sound to me like early 19th century prose, more like a parody of it from the 20th.* When we checked we found that Sir Arthur had not yet been made a duke at that time. Still the sentiment is one we can all go along with.

## STRONG STUFF

**F**urther reading of Roy Strong's *A Little History of The English Country Church* has resulted in yet more insights. I had not really appreciated the continual ups and downs caused by Thomas Cromwell, Mary Tudor, Edward VI, Elizabeth, The Stuarts, Oliver Cromwell, the birth of Methodism, the Evangelical Revival, the Camden Society, the Oxford Movement etc.etc. It makes decoding the architecture and fittings of a parish church even more interesting when you can see the effects of being tugged in one direction after another. An IDV (Diageo) colleague referred to the actions of the Board as *management by lurch* - perhaps this is just the way the British do things.

I came across a new word for me, **Ambo**, the early form of reading desk or pulpit (right, St.Peter's Rome). For those who know the Essex village of Wendens Ambo, this however comes from the uniting of two villages using the Latin *ambo* meaning both. Also an interesting 18<sup>th</sup> century factoid: Confirmation became popular as it was believed to cure rheumatism!!!!!!



## AFTER MAGNA CARTA

**A** new edition to my library is *King John* by Marc Morris (Windmill Books 2015) - I am always interested in another perspective. He states that *both the king and the barons remained at Runnymede for several days after the peace had been agreed, and during that time many castles, lands charters and hostages were restored.* John also ordered the Flemish mercenaries to be sent home. Finally, the foreign adviser, Peter des Roches, was replaced as Justicar by the English Hubert de Burgh.

The two sides agreed to meet again in three weeks' time but John headed to Devizes and started to amass money to continue the fight. He complied by ordering Geoffrey de Martigny to Surrender Northampton Castle but arranged for the garrison to join him in Wiltshire. The Barons, not trusting John, organised tournaments so that they could stay armed and concentrated. At Oxford in mid-July both sides still had grievances though John removed two more foreign castellans and the Welsh princes had their hostages returned (except those that John had already executed). As you know though the civil war continued. Archbishop Langton and the other Bishops tried to avert war by more negotiation but the attempt to get John to

come to Oxford and the barons to Brackley on 15<sup>th</sup> August came to nothing as John was intimidated by the armed barons and the barons were infuriated by the Pope's siding with John (his vassal) - he knew nothing about Magna Carta at this stage. By the time the bishops caught up with the king he was probably at Wareham about to embark.

The bishops (and some of John's advisers) met up with the barons at Runnymede and agreed to publish the Pope's excommunication but instead of mentioning the names of the barons and bishops (and the citizens of London) they used the phrase *disturbers of the king and the kingdom* which many thought referred to John. Meanwhile the king had been securing the south coast ports and landed at Sandwich before joining more foreign troops at Dover. The barons in turn requested help from Philip Augustus of France. In order to protect London, it was hoped to stall John at Rochester (which was controlled by the Archbishop), one of the most formidable castles in Europe although as it turned out, poorly supplied with food and weapons.

The King picked up more foreign troops centred on Canterbury and moved to Rochester where he burnt the bridge and easily carried the outer fortifications. He is supposed to have stabled his horses at the eastern end of Rochester Cathedral - shades of Cromwell. He was then joined by even more mercenaries causing a relief force to return to London. The starving defenders fought to the end but after seven weeks they capitulated. John had the hands and feet cut off the less warlike and would have hanged the rest but his own barons dissuaded him. The leader was imprisoned in Corfe Castle. Rochester Cathedral and Castle *courtesy of Clem Rutter Rochester Creative Commons.*



John, leaving half his army under the Earl of Salisbury, then moved to punish the Scots and northern barons, encouraging his Flemish mercenaries to imprison, loot, burn and torture on the way. His tentative moves against London were strongly repelled having been reinforced by French knights. He then

moved to Kent and commanded the southern ports to send ships so he could defeat the proposed invasion by Louis. However a great storm destroyed most of the vessels. Louis' fleet then appeared off Sandwich and John prepared to fight but, according to the chroniclers, he turned coward and retreated. Half his men followed him but the other half left in disgust.

Louis marched in triumph to London and then moved towards Winchester looking for John who had retired to Corfe. A third of his household knights had now changed sides, including our Earl of Salisbury. Louis went back towards London to take castles he had bypassed and then moved to Dover to lay siege to the mighty fortress there. The French troops were however harassed by *Willikin of the Weald* aka William of Cassingham, (left, English Bowman from Rutland Psalter c1260, *courtesy of British Library MS 62925*) and his band of bowmen (Robin Hood?). John seized



the opportunity to move to Bristol and use the Marcher Lords (including William the Marshall) as a basis for defence.

John then moved along the Thames valley hoping to relieve the siege of Windsor Castle which was going no better than that of Dover. But when the French besiegers turned towards his army, he scuttled off to Cambridge burning and pillaging as he went. The French followed and John retreated to Kings Lynn. It is here that we get the famous story of The Wash and the loss of John's baggage. I always feel that his retainers simply left the sick king, first plundering his portable wealth).

John then received the news that the Barons were making progress in Dover. He staggered on to Newark where he died during a great storm on 18<sup>th</sup> October.

### TOMB TALK

In the Herbert family vault under the altar steps lies **Mary Sidney Herbert** who died, aged 59, in 1621. She was an acclaimed poet, sister of the poet Sir Philip Sidney, and Countess of Pembroke married to the second earl. Correspondence with her uncle, Robert Dudley Earl of Leicester, survives. Nicholas Hilliard's portrait is shown below, *courtesy of National Portrait Gallery Public Domain*. She received an unusually good education that included Literature, Latin, French and Italian as well as lute-playing, singing and needlework. Her sons William and Philip became the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> earls of Pembroke and it is to these *Incomparable Pair of Brethren* that Shakespeare's First Folio was dedicated.

Mary, from her Baynards Castle, of elegies for her from Edmund began her own to stick to religious and dedication that woman. Perhaps her the metric translation started by her brother used 128 different wrote in praise of probably for her visit



London home at encouraged a stream brother including Spenser. She then writing being careful themes, translation were acceptable for a most famous work is of the Psalms 44-150 and in which she verse forms. She also Queen Elizabeth, to Wilton in 1599.

the Earl of Pembroke Mary vulnerable to Her son William did to marry one of the Honour whom he had made pregnant. As a result he was sent to the Fleet Prison but was released when his health failed. The sons eventually 'made good', William marrying the daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury and Philip the daughter of Lord Burghley. Mary retired to her home, Houghton House, in Bedfordshire and died of smallpox in London.

died in 1601 leaving the Court of Wards. not help by refusing Queen's Maids of