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## Networking the March: A History of Hereford and its Region from the Eleventh through Thirteenth Centuries

In his highly influential 1994 *The Making of Europe*, as well as in later works, Robert Bartlett drew on the social science model of the core-periphery in order to describe European political geography as based on the core centres of Paris and Rome.<sup>1</sup> According to Bartlett in the conclusion to a 2007 essay, ‘normative, metropolitan, and central’ identity in the Middle Ages was Roman and Parisian,<sup>2</sup> while ‘peripheral’ peoples (his examples include the Welsh, Basques, and Bretons) are only ever absorbed by their more powerful neighbours.<sup>3</sup> According to such a model, the Welsh March, on the margins both of the English polity (itself a periphery of Paris), as well as of anything that might be said to constitute Welsh power centres, is perhaps the periphery *par excellence*, with all that Bartlett suggests that status entails – less urbanization, less productivity, less power.<sup>4</sup>

Scholars in several fields are, however, increasingly beginning to rethink the core-periphery logic that has so dominated historical and literary historical scholarship.<sup>5</sup> Eljas Oksanen, for example, concludes his 2013 monograph by describing the relationship between Flanders and the Anglo-Norman realm as a ‘microcosm of a broader European network of

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Abbreviations: *ASC* (Anglo-Saxon Chronicle): For printed editions of the Chronicle manuscripts used here, see: *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition, Volume 5, MS C*, ed. Katherine O’Brien O’Keeffe (Cambridge: Brewer, 2001); *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition, Volume 6, MS D*, ed. G. P. Cubbin (Cambridge: Brewer, 1996); *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition, Volume 7, MS E*, ed. Susan Irvine (Cambridge: Brewer, 2004). For an online version, see: <<http://asc.jebbo.co.uk/intro.html>> [accessed 09 Nov 16]. *BYT* (Brut y Tywysogion): *Brut y Tywysogion, or The Chronicle of the Princes: Red Book of Hergest Version*, ed. and trans Thomas Jones (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1955). *HA* (Historia Anglorum): Henry, Archdeacon of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. and trans. Diana Greenway (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996). All translations are my own.

<sup>1</sup> Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change, 950–1350* (London: Penguin, 1994); ‘Heartland and Border: The Mental and Physical Geography of Medieval Europe’, in *Power and Identity in the Middle Ages: Essays in Memory of Rees Davies*, eds. Huw Pryce and John Watts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 23–36 (pp. 33–6).

<sup>2</sup> Bartlett, ‘Heartland and Border’, p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 28–9.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 24.

<sup>5</sup> One of the major precursors to this move is, undoubtedly, R. R. Davies. See especially; *The Age of Conquest: Wales, 1063–1415*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000; first publ. 1987); *Domination and Conquest: The Experience of Ireland, Scotland and Wales 1100–1300* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); *The First English Empire: Power and Identities in the British Isles 1093–1343* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

international and interregional transfer'.<sup>6</sup> This more networked approach to the Middle Ages marks a radical rethinking of political geography, with scholars no longer thinking in terms of a single core of power, usually located in London or Paris, but of a series of variously interconnected centres. Of course, power is not evenly distributed across this polycentric network; it would be hard to deny the economic and cultural weight of, say, Paris. But thinking in terms of networks allows us to glimpse the many ways in which locations, once dismissed as peripheral and provincial, did in fact occupy important positions in various networks of individuals, families, and communities. In this way, modern scholarship might avoid merely replicating the core-periphery logic of dominant medieval powers themselves; of course Paris looms large in a history written by Parisians, but it is clear that many other regions certainly did not think it the centre of the world.

Given scholarship's move from the peripheral towards the networked, it is time for Herefordshire's peripheral status to be radically rethought. Hereford and its Marcher region undoubtedly formed a vibrant, cross-cultural medieval centre that has heretofore gone largely unappreciated, except by those historians whose work focuses on Marcher history. Their kind of specialist enquiry, however, is yet to be shaped into a sustained, coherent narrative. The primary aim of this article, therefore, is not to reassess or to offer particularly new insights into primary material; rather, my aim is to synthesise current research in order to formulate an alternative account of the Herefordian region from the eleventh through thirteenth centuries not as a rural periphery, but as a cosmopolitan, cross-cultural, networked space, connected in various ways to locations across Britain and Europe.

Unsurprisingly, 1066 saw Herefordshire come into contact with French-speakers on an unprecedented scale. However, European, including Norman, connections had been known in the county well before this date. One of the first examples of a European connection is to Denmark, since Danish incomers after the 1016 conquest seem to have favoured settlement in

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<sup>6</sup> Eljas Oksanen, *Flanders and the Anglo-Norman Realm, 1066–1216* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 255.

the southern Midlands of Herefordshire, Worcestershire, and Gloucestershire.<sup>7</sup> This Danish influx undoubtedly brought with it a wave of cultural and ethnic intermixture. Upper-class intermarriages were, admittedly, rare: apart from the royal marriage of Cnut and Emma in 1017, Elizabeth van Houts numbers only eight other cases of high profile intermarriage between Danish incomers and wealthy Englishwomen.<sup>8</sup> Significantly, however, one of these occurred in Herefordshire, where Thurkil the White married Leofflaed, a wealthy Anglo-Saxon landowner of twenty-five manors in the county.

Similarly, French-speakers had been active in Herefordshire since 1051, when Edward the Confessor appointed his nephew Ralph of Mantes (d. 1057) as earl of Hereford, and invited Norman immigrants to settle in the shire. A Norman castle was soon built in the city itself and in the western reaches of the region, with one at Ewyas Harold (belonging to Osbern Pentecost) and another at Richard's Castle, named after Richard Scrob, who had come to Herefordshire in 1052. There is also possibly a fourth unidentified castle, belonging to Hugh, associate of Osbern.<sup>9</sup> Aside from the Herefordshire castles, there is only one other pre-1066 castle in the British Isles (in Clavering, Essex).

Despite its retrospective, exaggerated testimony, the E Manuscript of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle relates that this Norman fortification was perceived as a clear act of aggression by the native population.<sup>10</sup> However, the Normans also served local populations as valuable allies and as 'a bulwark against the Welsh'.<sup>11</sup> The D Manuscript of the Chronicle, for example, relates how in 1052 the 'Frenisce men of ðam castele' ('Frenchmen of the castle') helped the local landsmen to push back Gruffudd ap Llywelyn in a raid that reached up to Leominster.<sup>12</sup> A similar, though less successful, example of this Norman-Saxon interaction is

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<sup>7</sup> Simon Keynes, 'Diocese and Cathedral Before 1056', in *Hereford Cathedral: A History*, eds. Gerald Aylmer and John Tiller (London: Hambledon Press, 2000), 3–20 (p. 16).

<sup>8</sup> Elisabeth van Houts, 'Intermarriage in Eleventh-Century England', in *Normandy and its Neighbours, 900–1250: Essays for David Bates*, eds. David Crouch and Kathleen Thompson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 237–70 (p. 244).

<sup>9</sup> R. Allen Brown, *The Normans and the Norman Conquest*, 2nd edn (Woodbridge: the Boydell Press, 1985; first published 1969), 100.

<sup>10</sup> *ASC* (E) 1048.

<sup>11</sup> H. C. Darby, 'The Marches of Wales in 1086', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 11:3 (1986), 259–78 (p. 259)

<sup>12</sup> *ASC* (D) 1052.

provided by the subsequent attack on Hereford in 1055, where it was, according to R. Allen Brown's reading of the C Manuscript, Ralph's imposition of Norman military conventions, forcing the defenders to fight on horseback, that resulted in a mass slaughter and the sacking of the city by Gruffudd's forces.<sup>13</sup> Events in Hereford continued to decline: Bishop Leofgar's 1056 counterattack ended in defeat and his own death at Gruffudd's hands,<sup>14</sup> and the tentative peace established thereafter was broken in 1058, when Ælfgar and Gruffudd again ravaged England, this time accompanied by the joint king of Norway Magnus Haraldsson and his Scandinavian forces.<sup>15</sup>

For over a decade before 1066, then, Norman architecture, military organisation, administration, and, inevitably, language had all been well established in Herefordshire. Indeed, by 1066, Herefordians had already come into contact with troops, lords, and leaders from Wales, Normandy, Denmark, and Norway.

Despite this early footing on the Welsh border, however, Herefordshire for the Normans arriving in 1066 was still an unstable, movable region, difficult to secure from external attack,<sup>16</sup> as well as from internal resistance, given its culturally complex populations of Anglo-Danish, Anglo-Saxon, and especially Anglo-Welsh identities. On his appointment as earl of Hereford after 1066, William fitz Osbern did little to reduce this ethnic and political heterogeneity, distributing lands in his new shire not only to fellow Normans, but also to Flemings (Downton was given to Thurstan the Fleming), Anglo-Saxons (Alfred of Marlborough retained several of his estates), Bretons (Street and King's Pyon to Ewen the Breton), even to the Welsh themselves (in 1070 a Kenchester estate was given to Maredudd ab Owain ab Edwin [d. 1072], a prince of Deheubarth, afterwards held by his son, Gruffudd).<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Brown, p. 84; *ASC* (C) 1055; *BYT* 1055, p. 24.

<sup>14</sup> *ASC* (C) 1056; *ASC* (D) 1056.

<sup>15</sup> *ASC* (D) 1058.

<sup>16</sup> David Walker, 'William fitz Osbern and the Norman Settlement in Herefordshire', *Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club*, 39:3 (1969), 402–12 (p. 406).

<sup>17</sup> Walker, 'William fitz Osbern', p. 408; Kari Maund, *Ireland, Wales, and England in the Eleventh Century* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1991), 29; 149.

As such, the Conquest of 1066 inevitably accelerated and modified Herefordshire's networks of contact and interaction, in particular by the more definitive introduction of the French language. French was soon to become widely read, written, and spoken in the shire. Over the coming centuries a number of texts were to be composed in Herefordshire, all representing the wide range of genres and uses of French in the Welsh border county, including hagiography (Simon de Freine's *Vie de Saint Georges*, c. 1195–1200), apocryphal literature (Adam de Ros' *Vision de Saint Paul*, composed in the late twelfth century), ecclesiastical chronicle (the *Wigmore Chronicles*, a selection of texts from the eleventh to fifteenth centuries),<sup>18</sup> romance (Hue de Rotelande's *Ipomedon* and *Protheselaus*, both composed in the 1180s), and even adaptive translations of Latin philosophy (Simon's *Roman de Fortune*, c. 1190–1200). These occur, of course, alongside a host of Latin letters and texts, whether philosophical, literary, religious, or scientific, composed by or circulating among multilingual French-speakers like Gilbert Foliot (d. 1187), Gerald of Wales (d. c. 1223), and Walter Map (d. c. 1210). Indeed, regarding the latter, the misattribution of the Prose Lancelot to Walter Map meant that Herefordshire was associated with one of the most prolific French-language literary traditions of the period. By the twelfth century, French was clearly being used for a variety of purposes and in a variety of contexts, both secular and religious, in the Herefordshire border.

Norman rule in Hereford also made itself known on the architectural level of town planning. William soon established a New Town to be 'peopled by Frenchmen' in Anglo-Saxon Hereford, carving a wedge-shaped market lined by burgage plots, as modelled on his holding of Breteuil, another frontier town on the Norman-French border.<sup>19</sup> To attract Norman settlers to the more dangerous Welsh border, they were granted the privileges of the burgesses of Breteuil, initially intended for new Norman settlers only, but eventually established for all

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<sup>18</sup> See: Chris Given-Wilson, 'The Chronicles of the Mortimer Family, c. 1250–1450', in *Family and Dynasty in Late Medieval England: Harlaxton Medieval Studies Volume IX*, eds. Richard Eales and Shaun Tyas (Donington: Paul Watkins, 2003), pp. 67–86.

<sup>19</sup> Joe Hillaby, 'The Norman New Town of Hereford: Its Street Pattern and its European Context', *Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club*, 44:2 (1983), 181–195 (pp. 190–1).

burgesses.<sup>20</sup> These privileges meant that all the burgesses had all their forfeitures discharged, except for breach of the peace, house breaking, and highway robbery.<sup>21</sup> To put this in perspective, the cost of such a privilege in London was 100s. and was 40s. in Bristol.<sup>22</sup> In Hereford, the cost was a mere 12d. These strategies worked, bringing droves of French-speakers to the border town, and more than trebling its render to the king by 1086 from £18 to £60. Indeed, the customs of Hereford and Breteuil were widely imitated by some 60 other new towns established in Wales, the March, England, and Ireland, who were known to turn to Hereford for advice regarding their inherited institutions.<sup>23</sup>

The Herefordian region provided key points of contact between these Norman incomers and the Welsh. On a topographical level, it provided a way into Wales: Bernard de Neufmarché's conquest of Brycheiniog, for example, proceeded from western Herefordshire up the River Wye, building castles in Hay and Glasbury.<sup>24</sup> Meanwhile, the upland areas of western regions provided pockets of Welsh-controlled land, eventually known as Welshries.<sup>25</sup> Of course, Hereford itself was never a Marcher lordship itself, but the westernmost regions of the county intertwined with emerging Marcher lordships in a complicated tangle of cross-border holdings and intermarriages. Several lands lying in western Herefordshire belonged to the honours of Marcher lordships. Kingstone,<sup>26</sup> Brinsop, Burghill, Bredwardine,<sup>27</sup> and Alfred of Marlborough's former lands of Ewyas and Ewyas Harold were held of the honour of Brecon.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, Pembridge was held of the honour of Radnor,<sup>29</sup> while Hope Mansell, Mainstone, Wolsopthorne, and Ashperton were manors of Monmouth.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> David Walker, 'Hereford and the Laws of Breteuil', *Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club*, 40:1 (1970), 55–65 (p. 63).

<sup>21</sup> Hillaby, 'The Norman New Town', p. 191.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* p. 193.

<sup>24</sup> Brock Holden, *Lords of the Central Marches: English Aristocracy and Frontier Society, 1087-1265* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 6.

<sup>25</sup> Davies, *Age of Conquest*, p. 158; Holden, pp. 5–6.

<sup>26</sup> Holden, p. 63.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* p. 28.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* p. 14.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* p. 41.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* p. 42; for Mortimer and other Shropshire family marriages, see Max Lieberman, *The Medieval March of Wales: The Creation and Perception of a Frontier, 1066–1283* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 84–6; 95–7.

Knightly and aristocratic marriages served to complicate further the web of Herefordian connections. Brock Holden notes that Braose marriages brought ties to Hertfordshire and to the Marshals; Mortimer marriages to Gloucestershire, Yorkshire, and the Braoses of Radnor; Clifford marriages to Lincolnshire, Kent, and the Lacys; Lacy marriages to Anglo-Irish baronial families; and Monmouth marriages to the Clares ruling in Glamorgan and Wiltshire.<sup>31</sup> All of these high profile Marcher families, moreover, also married into powerful Welsh ones. Osbern fitz Richard (d. 1137), the son of the Norman Richard Scrob present in pre-1066 Hereford, married the Welsh-Saxon princess Nesta, daughter of Gruffydd ap Llywelyn and Edith of Mercia. Sometime before 1099, Bernard de Neufmarché married their daughter, another Nest. Sometime after 1214 Reginald de Braose married the daughter of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, Gwladys, who remarried after Reginald's death in 1228 to Ralph de Mortimer. Walter III de Clifford married another of Llywelyn's daughters, Margaret. The knightly class also intermarried: Ralph II de Baskerville (d. 1190/1) married a Welshwoman called Nesta, while one Matilda de Baskerville became the wife of Gruffydd ap Meurig.<sup>32</sup>

Military and political allegiances between the Normans and the Welsh were also a frequent occurrence, especially as Normans interfered in the rivalries of Welsh princes. For example, in order to defeat Maredudd ab Owain, Caradog ap Gruffudd allied in 1072 with Norman forces, assumed to be those of Roger of Breteuil, who had succeeded to the earldom of Hereford in 1071.<sup>33</sup> Kari Maund also speculates that Bernard de Neufmarché may have sponsored Gruffudd ap Maredudd in his bid for the kingdom of Deheubarth against Rhys ap Tewdwr in 1091.<sup>34</sup> Of course, these Norman-Welsh alliances also have pre-1066 Anglo-Welsh precedents, such as the alliances between Gruffudd ap Llywelyn and Ælfgar in 1055 and 1058, or between the same Gruffudd and Swegn Godwinsson in 1047, or earlier still between Edwin ab Einion and 'Edylfi' in 992.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid. p. 84.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. p. 123.

<sup>33</sup> Maund, p. 146.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. p. 149.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. p. 147.



Notably, several anti-monarchic rebellions in Herefordshire were facilitated by Marcher lords' networks of contacts in Wales, as well as in other regions of England. In 1067, the attack against Hereford Castle led by the dispossessed Herefordshire thegn Eadric the Wild was executed in cooperation with Bleddyn ap Cynfyn, king of Gwynedd, and his brother Rhiwallon, king of Powys. This conflict flared up again in 1069 when the three leaders besieged Shrewsbury.<sup>36</sup> The 1075 Revolt of the Earls saw Herefordshire rely on contacts to the far north and east, with Roger fitz William joining forces with the Anglo-Saxon Waltheof, earl of Northumberland, and Ralph de Guader, earl of East Anglia, who wished to marry Roger's daughter against the wishes of King William. Another uprising followed in 1086 in favour of William Rufus, then again in 1095 against Rufus, in favour of Stephen, when Earl Hugh of Shrewsbury and Roger de Lacy joined forces with Robert de Mowbray, earl of Northumbria. Both of these rebellions (1086 and 1095) saw the deployment by Marcher lords of Welsh troops, demonstrating their continued connections to Welsh powers centres, and Wales' important role in Anglo-Norman politics at this time.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, during the revolt of 1102, it was to Cadwgan ap Bleddyn that Robert de Bellême, earl of Shrewsbury, turned for assistance.<sup>38</sup>

Given these complex networks of aristocratic marriages and military alliances, it is little wonder that those inhabitants of the English heartlands had great difficulty in disentangling border from March from Wales. In exchequer records composed in London, Hereford is systematically referred to as Hereford *in Wallia*,<sup>39</sup> and chroniclers like Henry of Huntingdon also often refer to Hereford as in Wales.<sup>40</sup> The political map of Hereford and its region was a particularly complex one. The city's land mingled to the west with nascent Marcher lordships at the feet of upland Welshries, while aristocratic, political, and tenorial networks connected Welsh and Norman communities in ever more complicated ways. Yet, the political connections between Welsh-, English-, Flemish-, and French-speaking

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<sup>36</sup> Darby, p. 267.

<sup>37</sup> Holden, p. 139.

<sup>38</sup> Maund, p. 149.

<sup>39</sup> Davies, *Age of Conquest*, p. 7.

<sup>40</sup> *HA*; 1138, p. 711.

communities in the Marches were by no means the only kind of networks in which Hereford was active. Over the course of the twelfth century, Hereford became an increasingly vibrant city, home to many communities, connected to ever further-flung places via inter-realm, economic, architectural, familial, ecclesiastical, intellectual, Jewish, and crusading networks.

The first example of these pan-European networks into which Herefordshire was linked is largely due to the Norman diaspora, which contributed to the formation of an expansive network of pan-European contacts. The work of David Bates has underlined the cross-channel nature of the Norman 'Empire', arguing that Norman presence in Britain cannot be envisioned in isolation from Norman lords' holdings and activities in Normandy.<sup>41</sup> Indeed, by the time of the Angevins, royal activity on the Continent becomes a considerable factor, with Richard Lionheart, for example, famously spending only six months in England during his ten-year reign. Yet, the Normans were active elsewhere in Europe too. Contemporaries of William the Conqueror, the Hauteville brothers Roger Bosso and Robert Guiscard led the eleventh-century Norman expansion into Sicily and southern Italy, respectively. Of course, the Norman power that extended from Britain to Sicily and Apulia was never a coherent political entity: the Anglo-Norman, Siculo-Norman, and Italo-Norman realms were discrete spaces where Norman power asserted itself, but also integrated itself, with the cultures and environments with which it came into contact.

Inter-realm connections were, however, common, and Hereford participated in them. One example is provided by the case of Thomas Brown, a confidant of Henri II's. Thomas spent twenty-one years as a civil servant of considerable administrative importance to King Roger II of Sicily, before returning in c. 1158 to the British Isles, where he possessed four houses in and around Hereford, as well as a farm that appears to be a family possession, possibly suggesting he had always been a Herefordshire native.<sup>42</sup> If Thomas had come from a melting pot of Norman, English, and Welsh cultures, then in Sicily he would have found a

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<sup>41</sup> David Bates, *The Normans and Empire: The Ford Lectures delivered in the University of Oxford during Hilary Term 2010* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013)

<sup>42</sup> Ed. A. J. Holden, *Ipomedon: poème de Hue de Rotelande* (Paris: Editions Klincksieck, 1979), pp. 44–45; George B. Parks, *The English Traveller to Italy: The Middle Ages (To 1525)* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1954), 144.

similarly multicultural space, where Norman, Greek, and Muslim cultures and languages coexisted.<sup>43</sup> If Saracen culture was a distinctive characteristic of Roger's Sicily, then Byzantine culture was what marked Robert's Calabria and Apulia,<sup>44</sup> a place that had also become the destination of large numbers of Anglo-Saxons who had fled Anglo-Norman dominion and taken service in Byzantium.<sup>45</sup> In his Mediterranean years, then, the Herefordian Thomas would have met with a world populated by Greeks, Lombards, Muslims, Normans, and Anglo-Saxons, his life-story a poignant reminder of Herefordian participation in the mobile networks of medieval Europe.

Trade routes also provided obvious channels for linking Herefordshire with sites across Europe in complex commercial networks. As a borderland centre, Hereford was particularly well placed to benefit from the more productive Welsh lowlands in the south and east. Timber, fur, leather, meat, cattle, and sheep were the main items of Welsh exportation passing through border centres, in exchange for corn, iron, cloth, and salt imported from further into England.<sup>46</sup> From at least the turn of the thirteenth century onwards, highly desirable Welsh wool was fulfilling demand in England, Flanders, and Italy.<sup>47</sup> Indeed, the Marcher towns were 'renowned for their wool' and so in Hereford the trade in wools and fleeces flourished for merchants like Ailmund the Rich.<sup>48</sup> Despite the growing involvement of southern Welsh port-towns (especially Cardiff, Carmarthen, and Haverford) in direct trade with ports in England, Ireland, Brittany, even Gascony,<sup>49</sup> it is hardly outlandish to imagine that a significant portion of Welsh production also passed through Hereford. Hereford's trade networks expanded further via its fairs: in 1121 Henry I confirmed Hereford's right to hold a three-day fair on the feast of St Æthelberht (20–23 May); and in 1226, Henry III granted Hereford the right to a second three-day fair on the feast of St Denis (9–11 October).

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<sup>43</sup> John Julius Norwich, *The Normans in the South, 1016–1130* (London: Faber and Faber, 2010; first printed 1967), 284

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* p. 221

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.* p. 231.

<sup>46</sup> Davies, *Age of Conquest*, p. 169.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.* p. 170.

<sup>48</sup> Walker, 'Hereford and the Laws of Breteuil', p. 59.

<sup>49</sup> Davies, *Age of Conquest*, p. 170.

Economic centres were also established in the city: Hereford had had an ecclesiastical mint since the days of the Confessor, while under Richard I the city had the right to a Merchant Guild, and eventually did so also under King John. This wide range of factors meant that, by the beginning of the thirteenth century, Hereford was already 'thriving and prosperous',<sup>50</sup> a status clearly reflected in, for example, the second branch of the Mabinogi, where Hereford is the first town in which Manawydan and Pryderi establish their saddlery business.<sup>51</sup>

Until the mid-thirteenth century at least, the rest of the shire also participated in this growing economic activity: Leominster and Bromyard had most likely been small trade centres before Domesday, while Ledbury and Ross-on-Wye were also prosperous manors by 1086.<sup>52</sup> By the early to mid-thirteenth century, market licenses were proliferating across the western reaches of the shire: Eardisley was granted one in 1223, Pembridge in 1240,<sup>53</sup> Lyonshall in 1227.<sup>54</sup> Indeed, Pembridge and the de Lacy honour of Weobley were the only west Herefordian locales whose economic prosperity managed to continue flourishing throughout the thirteenth century, as the most western centres to which the English traders could travel without, as F. Noble words it, 'losing the protection of the laws of England by crossing into the hazardous jurisdictions of the Marcher Lordships'.<sup>55</sup>

Hereford was implicated in further economic networks by its Jewish population. The work of Joe Hillaby has done much to uncover the history of Jews in Hereford. The first mention of Jews in the city is to be located in the Pipe Rolls of 1178–9, and the community rose to great prominence. Hereford's early thirteenth-century Jewish golden age was undoubtedly dominated by Hamo (d. 1232), who was a major moneylender to the great baronial families and Marcher lords of the region, lending sums as large as £400 to the de

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<sup>50</sup> Walker, 'Hereford and the Laws of Breteuil', p. 59.

<sup>51</sup> *Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi: Allan o Lyfr Gwyn Rhydderch*, ed. Ifor Williams, 2nd edn (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1951; first pr. 1930); for an English translation, see: *The Mabinogion*, ed. and trans. Sioned Davies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007)

<sup>52</sup> F. Noble, 'Medieval Boroughs of West Herefordshire', *Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club*, 38:1 (1964), 62–70 (p. 67).

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* p. 68.

<sup>54</sup> Holden, p. 100.

<sup>55</sup> Noble, p. 69.

Cliffords and £666 to Walter II de Lacy, who still owed the debt when he died in 1241.<sup>56</sup> With the so-called 'English Inflation of 1180–1220', alongside the expenses of offensive warfare and defensive 'murage', it was surely a combination of economic and military pressures that forced members of the knightly and baronial classes to turn to Jewish moneylenders.<sup>57</sup> In any case, the tallage return of 1221 for Hereford (again with the epithet *in Wallia*) documents Hamo's worth as ranking 6th among Jews in England, and he is the first in the rankings not to be based in York. Most likely due to the affluence of Hamo's family, Hereford as a city ranked 8th in the 1221 return, is estimated at 5th in 1223, and again estimated 4th or 5th in 1226.<sup>58</sup> In the period between 1221–1244, the total amount of monetary debt due to Hamo and his sons was £2957-13-0, along with ten charters enfeoffing land to Hamo and Ursell. This figure does not, however, include repayments made in kind, and does not represent the total transactions for the period, merely the sum outstanding by 1244.<sup>59</sup>

The flourishing of Hereford's Jewish community suggests that the city constituted an unusually tolerant space. From the late eleventh century onwards, several Jewish lenders and their families made their way to Hereford. By 1221, Moses of Aylesbury, Deulecresse of Oxford, and Benjamin of Oxford had all transferred their base of operations from Oxford(shire) to Hereford.<sup>60</sup> This may have been in order to profit from the favourable business environment of Hereford under Walter de lacy. However, these Jews may, Hillaby conjectures, have left Oxford due to Dominican-driven anti-Semitism in the city,<sup>61</sup> which suggests, therefore, that Hereford offered a better alternative base, in terms both of commercial climate and religious tolerance. In 1275, after the Jewish community was shut down in Worcester, the city's Jews came to Hereford, where they rose again to pre-

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<sup>56</sup> Joe Hillaby, 'Hereford Gold: Irish, Welsh and English Land. The Jewish Community at Hereford and its Clients, 1179–1253. Part I', *Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club*, 44:3 (1964), 358–419 (p. 403).

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.* p. 413; Holden, p. 60.

<sup>58</sup> Hillaby, 'Hereford Gold', p. 378.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.* p. 381.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.* p. 376.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

eminence.<sup>62</sup> Meanwhile, David Carpenter notes that in 1286 large numbers of Christians in Hereford were to be found scandalising their bishop by joining in the celebrations of a Jewish wedding.<sup>63</sup>

Moreover, Hillaby's work stresses, albeit not in such terms, the networked nature of the Jewish community. The medieval Jewry was, he writes, 'composed of interlocking urban communities',<sup>64</sup> between whom there was a 'high degree of mobility'.<sup>65</sup> This is evident from as early as the Northampton *Donum* of 1194 (the ransom of Richard Lionheart), where the heads of two families listed under the Hereford contribution include toponyms from elsewhere. Hillaby stats that there is evidence that Isaac of Bungay had gone from Bungay to Norwich before making his way to Hereford, while Abraham of Colchester and Leo of Warwick probably retained bases in those locations. Even Jacob of Hereford was likely based in Bristol.<sup>66</sup> Before his move, Moses of Aylesbury had already been conducting business in Hereford for over a decade from his Oxford base. Equally, from his base in Hereford, Hamo worked with many Jews based further afield. In the year 1230 alone, he co-operated with the redoubtable Aaron of York and Copin of Oxford in June, with Isaac of Norwich in July, and with Jocepin of Bristol in September. Similarly, in 1236, his son Ursell was working with David of Oxford and Samar of Winchester.<sup>67</sup> Finally, marriage was another way of expanding and renewing the Jewish network, and Hereford was no exception in this. Hamo's son, Leo, had married into the illustrious family of Abraham of Berkhamstead, a favourite of the Angevin court.<sup>68</sup> One of Hamo's granddaughters, by his son Moses, was married into the family of Isaac, the wealthy head of the Worcester community.<sup>69</sup>

Even before the 1290 Expulsion, the English Crown was eventually to cripple many of these Jewish families. Aaron of York, for example, fell from the status of richest Jew in

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<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.* p. 381.

<sup>63</sup> David Carpenter, *The Struggle for Mastery: Britain, 1066–1284* (London: Allen Lane, 2003), 490.

<sup>64</sup> Hillaby, 'Hereford Gold', p. 358.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.* p. 363.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.* p. 392.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.* p. 393.

England into outright bankruptcy. Hamo's family did not fall quite so low, but after a charge of £4000 inheritance tax on Hamo's death, the family never fully recovered, and their status in Hereford eventually transferred to Aaron le Blund, a Londoner by origin.<sup>70</sup> From the late twelfth to early thirteenth century, however, there is clear evidence of a vibrant Jewish community in Hereford, practising their own religion and customs, as well as speaking and reading Hebrew. It is a community, moreover, that linked Hereford into a 'virtually nationwide network'<sup>71</sup> that spread as far north as York and as far south as London, a network kept alive and constantly renewed by collaborations, business deals, and familial ties.

Religious houses also played a crucial role in the linking of often remarkably disparate sites in ecclesiastical, architectural, and scholarly networks. For one thing, the canons of Hereford Cathedral were an ethnically heterogeneous group. Julia Barrow notes the presence at the only surviving charter of Robert the Lotharingian of four clerics with continental Germanic names, while, in the early twelfth century, there is record of one canon with a Danish name and three with continental Germanic ones.<sup>72</sup>

Indeed, the very stone of the cathedral, completed and consecrated c. 1142–8 under Bishop Robert of Bethune, bodies forth a network of architectural influences that are ultimately thought to originate in western France. Hereford Cathedral, whether as an original, parallel, or derivative is variously linked to other insular, usually western, buildings, as well as to a wide range of continental structures. One of the many examples that Malcolm Thurlby explores is that of the east arch of the choir, which, because of its height, has been related to St John's at Chester and the cathedral in Llandaff, though could also reflect connections to the Low Countries, or to Belgian analogues at Saint-Séverin-en-Condroz and Nivelles.<sup>73</sup> Julia Barrow also suggests that as bishop Robert the Lotharingian made architectural alterations

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid. pp. 389–91.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. p. 392.

<sup>72</sup> Julia Barrow, 'Athelstan to Aigueblanche, 1056-1268', in *Hereford Cathedral: A History*, eds. Gerald Aylmer and John Tiller (London: Hambledon Press, 2000), 21–47 (p. 37).

<sup>73</sup> Malcolm Thurlby, 'Hereford Cathedral: The Romanesque Fabric', in *Hereford: Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology*, ed. David Whitehead (Leeds: Maney, 1995), 15–28 (p. 19).

reminiscent of those in his homeland, such as Aachen Cathedral and St. Jean in Liège.<sup>74</sup> Robert was also one of the first in England to encourage the cults of St Katherine and Mary Magdalene to whom he dedicated his new continentally styled episcopal chapel.<sup>75</sup> In its turn also, however, Hereford Cathedral exerted a powerful influence on local churches, with masons replicating structural similarities at religious structures in Leominster, Dymock, Kilpeck, Peterchurch, Bridstow, Moccas, Thornbury, Bromyard, Hampton Bishop, Tarrington, Pauntley, Kempsey, Middleton-on-the-Hill, even Monmouth and Ludlow.<sup>76</sup> Rees Davies suggests that the church of Llanbadarn Fawr (Maelienydd) also shows evidence of the Hereford School's influence.<sup>77</sup> The so-called Herefordshire School of Sculpture represents, then, a network of influences from western France, Wallonia, and the Netherlands, converging on Hereford, and disseminated across the wider Marcher region.

The cathedral also provided a site for scholarly activity. Historians since 1932 have shown that Hereford was an important centre of learning, boasting its own cathedral school, possibly from as early as 1132.<sup>78</sup> Hereford was home or origin to several key figures in the transmission of Arabic science in the late twelfth century. These include the Arabists Roger of Hereford,<sup>79</sup> Alfred of Sareshel, and, later, Daniel of Merlai,<sup>80</sup> as well as the *theologi* Simon of Melun (active c. 1190–1202), Peter of Abergavenny (c. 1201–19), and a Magister Albinus (c. 1200–17).<sup>81</sup> Several high-profile literary figures were also connected to the Cathedral: Gerald of Wales held a prebend of William de Vere, while Walter Map held one of Gilbert

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<sup>74</sup> Julia Barrow, 'A Lotharingian in Hereford: Bishop Robert's Reorganisation of the Church of Hereford 1079–1095', in *Hereford: Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology*, ed. David Whitehead (Leeds: Maney, 1995), 29–49 (p. 33).

<sup>75</sup> Barrow, 'Atheistan to Aigueblanche', p. 24.

<sup>76</sup> Thurlby, 'Hereford Cathedral', p. 23.

<sup>77</sup> Davies, *Age of Conquest*, p. 9.

<sup>78</sup> Josiah C. Russell, 'Hereford and Arabic Science in England about 1175–1200', *Isis*, 18:1 (1932), 14–25; Nicholas Orme, 'The Cathedral School before the Reformation', in *Hereford Cathedral: A History*, eds. Gerald Aylmer and John Tiller (London: Hambledon Press, 2000), 565–78 (p. 565).

<sup>79</sup> Orme, p. 566.

<sup>80</sup> Russell, pp. 19–20.

<sup>81</sup> Orme, p. 567.



Foliot.<sup>82</sup> Even the famous Robert Grosseteste is conjectured to have received his education in the liberal arts in Hereford, while Roger of Hereford was still active there.<sup>83</sup>

The writings of its canons certainly confirm Hereford as an important intellectual centre. In the preface to his 1176 *Computus*, dedicated to former bishop Gilbert Foliot, Roger describes his teaching in a vibrant, multidisciplinary centre of learning that he sadly does not name, but is generally taken to mean Hereford.<sup>84</sup> Similarly, in their correspondences of c. 1203, Simon de Freine tries to persuade Gerald of Wales to settle at Hereford, describing the city as a hub of learning, where the arts and sciences flourish.<sup>85</sup> Of course, the presence of Robert the Lotharingian from 1079 to 1095 would have undoubtedly paved the way for the city's academic climate, for he had been an important figure in inspiring 'new interest in mathematics' and 'brought the chronicle of Marianus Scotus to Worcester'.<sup>86</sup> Indeed, only a few decades after Robert the Lotharingian's death in 1095, another Bishop Robert of Hereford, Robert of Bethune, and his successor Gilbert Foliot both attracted remarkable praise from later Welsh chroniclers.<sup>87</sup> Robert of Bethune had also been a teacher, and had studied under William of Champeaux and Anselm of Laon, who undoubtedly did much to encourage the learning begun by his namesake. Indeed, it is under his pontificate that canons at Hereford begin to appear bearing the title of *magister*.<sup>88</sup> If Hereford was indeed a cathedral school, it would by this time have been producing its own *magistri* to educate the local aristocracy's children, or to work in other institutions, thereby further extending Hereford's intellectual networks.

Indeed, a series of far-reaching networks also proliferate in the process of transmission by which such texts arrived at the Welsh border. Charles Burnett has traced the

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<sup>82</sup> Barrow, 'Athelstan to Aigueblanche', p. 43.

<sup>83</sup> Julia Barrow: *ODNB*: Online Version: <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23955>> [accessed 02.03.2016].

<sup>84</sup> Russell, p. 16; pp. 20–21.

<sup>85</sup> *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera Vol. 1*, ed. J. S. Brewer (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1861), p. 383; Simon de Freine, *Les Œuvres de Simund de Freine*, ed. John E. Matzke (Paris: Librairie de Firmin-Didot, 1909), p. VII.

<sup>86</sup> Barrow, 'A Lotharingian in Hereford', p. 42.

<sup>87</sup> *BYT* [1146–] 1148, p. 128.

<sup>88</sup> Barrow, 'Athelstan to Aigueblanche', p. 38.

travels of one textual corpus worked on by intellectuals, mainly Arabists, based in the March, including the contemporaries of Robert of Bethune, Robert of Chester, Adelard of Bath (d. 1152), and another Lorrainian scholar, Walcher, prior of neighbouring Malvern Priory from 1120 until his death in 1135. All three scholars drew on the works of Persian astronomer Muḥammad ibn Mūsā al-Khwārizmī. One of these formed the basis for Walcher's *De Dracone*, a treatise for predicting eclipses, which was first revised for the meridian of Cordoba by Maslama al-Majrītī in the 10th century, before being brought to England by Aragonese Jew Petrus Alfonso in the early twelfth century, to be reworked by Walcher.<sup>89</sup> Slightly different versions of al-Khwārizmī's astronomical tables were taken up by Adelard of Bath and Roger of Chester, who both worked on them, the latter producing a translation in 1145.<sup>90</sup> Indeed, Burnett even conjectures that scholars such as Adelard, Petrus, and Walcher might have conversed with Arabic scholars face to face.<sup>91</sup> The tables of al-Khwārizmī were, however, gradually replaced during the twelfth century by those of the Andalusian astronomer Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm al-Zarqālī. Originally composed in Toledo in 1080, they were revised and translated into Latin by Raimond of Marseilles in 1141, and brought to Britain shortly afterwards, possibly by Raimond himself. It is from Raimond's version that, in 1178, Roger of Hereford adapted his set of astronomical tables for the meridian of Hereford.<sup>92</sup> Roger also drew on Raimond in other works, 'as well as on translations of Arabic astrological texts made by John of Seville and Hermann of Carinthia'.<sup>93</sup>

This scholarly environment was also to be found beyond the city of Hereford in its western border regions. For example, the first abbot Adam of the Cistercian Dore Abbey, a founded in 1147 by Robert fitz Harold of Ewyas, engaged in a fierce poetic debate with none

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<sup>89</sup> Charles Burnett, 'Mathematics and Astronomy in Hereford and its Region in the Twelfth Century', in *Hereford: Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology*, ed. David Whitehead (Leeds: Maney, 1995), 50–59 (pp. 50–51).

<sup>90</sup> This translation, the Latin *Liber algebrae et almucabola*, was based on al-Khwārizmī's mathematic treatise *Al-kitāb al-mukhtaṣar fī ḥisāb al-ğabr wa'l-muqābala*, known in English as *The Compendious Book on Calculation by Completion and Balancing*.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.* p. 53.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.* p. 55.

<sup>93</sup> Charles Burnett, 'Roger of Hereford', in *Biographical Encyclopedia of Astronomers*, eds. Thomas Hockey et al. (New York: Springer, 2007), 982. Online Version: <[http://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007%2F978-0-387-30400-7\\_1183](http://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007%2F978-0-387-30400-7_1183)> [accessed 12.03.2016].

other than Gerald of Wales and other Hereford canons in 1216.<sup>94</sup> Further east of Abbey Dore, in Ross-on-Wye, Adam de Ros composed his *Vision de Saint Paul*, a vernacular translation of the apocryphal *Visio Pauli*. Meanwhile, to Hereford's northwest, a similar ecclesiastically-based learning centre may be found in Wigmore, from which the so-called *Anglo-Norman Chronicle(s) of Wigmore Abbey* recounting the founding of the Augustinian Abbey of St James at Wigmore in the twelfth century, and the Abbey's history until the Chronicle ends in the mid-thirteenth century.<sup>95</sup>

Since its foundation, Wigmore Abbey was involved in an important continental French connection: its motherhouse was the Abbey of Saint Victor in Paris, which provided Wigmore with its first abbot, Andrew of St Victor, in 1148. The Parisian motherhouse was, in the twelfth century, a considerable centre of monastic learning under theologian Hugh of St Victor.<sup>96</sup> Although little is known of Andrew's own role at St Victor, he is referred to by the Wigmore Chronicle as 'mestre de divinité', and may have come to St James' as a *magister scholae*, or in some other kind of educational function.<sup>97</sup> In any case, it is difficult to imagine that his presence at Wigmore existed in isolation from the intellectual activities of his peers at Hereford.

The region of Wigmore also became an important site for anchorite culture: Eric Dobson famously argued in 1976 that the author of the early thirteenth-century anchorite rule *Ancrene Wisse* was a Victorine canon of Wigmore, Brian of Lingen.<sup>98</sup> Although this hypothesis has since been widely criticised, notably by Bella Millet,<sup>99</sup> several points remain

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<sup>94</sup> In his now lost poem *Contra Speculum Giraldi*, Adam rebuked Gerald's *Speculum Ecclesiae* of c. 1216, prompting Simon de Freine to defend Gerald in his own poem *Pro Giraldo adversus Adamum cisterciensis ordinis monachum et abbatem Dorensensem*.

<sup>95</sup> 'The Anglo-Norman Chronicle of Wigmore Abbey', eds. J.C. Dickinson and P.T. Ricketts, *Transactions of The Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club*, 39 (1967–9), 413–45; for an explanation of the textual tradition, see Ian Mortimer, 'The Wigmore Chronicle', Online Version: <<http://www.ianmortimer.com/essays/WigmoreChronicle.pdf>> [accessed 08 Nov 16].

<sup>96</sup> F. A. van Liere, 'Andrew of St Victor (d. 1175): Scholar Between Cloister and School', in *Centres of Learning: Learning and Location in Pre-Modern Europe and the Near East*, eds. Jan Willem Drijvers and A. A. MacDonald (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 187–196 (p. 189).

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.* p. 190; 'The Anglo-Norman Chronicle', p. 430.

<sup>98</sup> E. J. Dobson, *The Origins of 'Ancrene Wisse'*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 218–22.

<sup>99</sup> Bella Millet, 'The Origins of *Ancrene Wisse*: New Answers, New Questions', *Medium Ævum*, 61 (1992), 206–28: Millet argues that *Ancrene Wisse* is a Dominican, rather than Victorine, text, and so suggests that, while the author may have been a native of the north Herefordshire March, or at least

clear: namely, that the so-called AB language of the text (a term coined in 1929 by Tolkien after the sigla for the Corpus MS of *Ancrene Wisse*, and the Bodley MS of the ‘Katherine Group’ texts)<sup>100</sup> is local to northwest Herefordshire or southern Shropshire;<sup>101</sup> that from an *ex libris* inscription at the foot of its first folio, the base MS A (Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 402) was, at the end of the thirteenth century, given to St. James’ in Wigmore; and that anchoritism was intimately linked to the culture and psychogeography of the Welsh March.<sup>102</sup> It is, therefore, fair to say that *Ancrene Wisse* marks out the Welsh March, and perhaps the Wigmore region in particular, as an important region for anchorite culture, and thus a important centre in a network of religious institutions across Britain and Europe involved in the spread of anchoritism.

From the second half of the eleventh through twelfth centuries, it is clear that Hereford was an important centre for learning, a focal point of intellectual activity to which other scholars in similarly western locations like Malvern, Bath, Shrewsbury, Wigmore, and Chester were closely linked. As a scholastic city, Hereford was intimately connected in this complex, ethnically diverse network of travelling scholars.

The final kinds of networks to be analysed in this article are those motivated by the Crusades. Since Gerald of Wales and Archbishop Baldwin’s famous recruitment tour of Wales had encompassed Herefordshire locations such as Hereford city and Leominster,<sup>103</sup> Herefordian participation in the Third Crusade was particularly high. Walter de Hereford, High Sheriff, had already died on the Second Crusade,<sup>104</sup> but notable Herefordshire participants in the following crusade ranged from small landowners such as Gilbert Talbot

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educated there, he was composing elsewhere (possibly Shrewsbury or Chester) and at a later date (post-1232 for Shrewsbury, post-1236 for Chester) (see pp. 215–18).

<sup>100</sup> J. R. R. Tolkien, ‘*Ancrene Wisse* and *Hali Meïðhad*’, *Essays and Studies*, XIV (1929), 104–26.

<sup>101</sup> In unpublished work by Jeremy Smith; see Millet, pp. 223–24, fn. 15.

<sup>102</sup> Christopher Cannon, *The Grounds of English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 139–71; Liz Herbert McAvoy, *Medieval Anchoritisms: Gender, Space, and the Solitary Life* (Woodbridge: Brewer, 2011), 147–77.

<sup>103</sup> See: *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera Vol. VI: Itinerarium Kambriae et Descriptio Kambriae*, ed. James F. Dimock (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1868); for an English translation see: *The Journey Through Wales and The Description of Wales*, ed. and trans. Lewis Thorpe (London: Penguin, 1978).

<sup>104</sup> Kathryn Hurlock, *Wales and the Crusades, c. 1095–1291* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), 98.

(possibly a native of Linton) and Aeddan ab Aeddan, who held Grosmont (a Herefordshire holding at the time), to high-profile notables such as Ralph of Arden (sheriff from 1185–89) and Roger de Lacy. By the time of the Fifth Crusade, Henry de Bohun, earl of Hereford, was also taking the cross along with Ranulf, earl of Chester, 'taking a substantial number of followers with them'.<sup>105</sup>

Herefordshire was also home to the most important centres in Wales and the March of the orders both of Saint John of Jerusalem (the Hospitallers) and of the Knights Templar. Dinmore in Herefordshire was the centre that controlled all Hospitaller lands in eastern Wales and along the border, and was the only site run by the Hospitallers themselves (the other lands being rented out).<sup>106</sup> These lands stretched along a roughly vertical axis from Neath and Porthkerry Church in South Wales to Rorrington manor near Montgomery. Within Herefordshire itself was also a cluster of the most important Hospitaller lands in Sutton, Callow, Wormsbridge, and Hereford itself. Of course, this major centre cannot be envisioned in isolation from other Hospitaller preceptories in Ysbyty Ifan for North Wales and Slebech in southwest Wales.

The Knights Templar were also well represented in Herefordshire, the county that boasted the main Templar base for Wales and the Marches, located in Garway, with a second preceptory established later in Upleadon. By any standards, however, Garway was a major Templar establishment that received impressive royal support. At its foundation, Henry II endowed it with 2000 acres, a church, and a castlery, compared with the 40 granted in Shropshire, 10 in Oxfordshire, 7 in Northamptonshire and Huntingdonshire, and 100 in Bedfordshire. The Garway preceptory benefitted from lands as far way as Pembroke and Lundy Island.<sup>107</sup>

These institutions well supported by local Marcher families. Robert de Clare, earl of Hereford, gave the Hospitallers 1000 acres of land within a year,<sup>108</sup> while the Lacys donated

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid. p. 107.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid. p. 142.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid. p. 144.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid. p. 146.

significantly to the Templars over several generations, with Gilbert de Lacy even joining the order in the late 1150s.<sup>109</sup> Similarly, William de Wigmore of Lucton and Gilbert, lord of Trefyn Payn are also conjectured to have left on the Second Crusade as Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, along with another Roger fitz Harold, lord of Ewyas. Although evidence is slim, the last Knight of the Holy Sepulchre from the March was supposedly another Herefordian, Hugh de Kynnardsleye of Newland, who was on Crusade from 1270–72.<sup>110</sup>

Of course, the experience of the crusaders also inevitably affected the communities they had left behind and to which they (with any luck) returned with new experiences and material acquisitions. Simon de Freine's *Vie de Saint Georges*, for example, is thought to have been commissioned after William de Vere had returned from the Holy Land, and was intended as propaganda for the Third Crusade.<sup>111</sup> Similarly, it was possibly Robert fitz Harold's participation in the Second Crusade that lay behind the 1147 founding of the Cistercian Dore Abbey as a daughter house of Morimond in the Haute-Marne, after Robert had met its abbot on his travels.<sup>112</sup> As such, recruitment and participation in the Crusades, along with the establishment of military order bases, constitute unprecedented points of interaction between the Welsh border and the rest of Europe, connecting Herefordshire not only to the Holy Land, but also to all the crusader ports and routes in between.

This diverse history may seem unlikely of a region that, in the modern world, appears so rural and secluded. However, from this network perspective, Herefordshire emerges as a vibrant centre of military, ecclesiastical, artistic, academic, and economic activity, connected in various ways to sites from the Holy Land to Ireland, from Norway to Spain. As a historiographical model, the network provides a useful way of narrativising these interlocking histories transversally, without merely replicating the core-periphery hierarchy of

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid. pp. 160–62.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid. p. 130.

<sup>111</sup> Barrow, 'Athelstan to Aigueblanche', p. 40.

<sup>112</sup> Hurlock, p. 130; pp. 152–53.

Anglocentric histories enshrining a sociocultural and political power base in London or southeast England.

Of course, my own deployment of the network as a model for rewriting Herefordshire's history is also, undoubtedly, a political move. It is not coincidental that my documenting of Herefordshire's medieval position in networks that span great expanses of Europe emerges at our post-Brexit moment, where Britain's European contacts and networks are being criticised, destabilised, and shut down. Ultimately, in the present climate of increasingly regressive insularism, a new, networked approach to history writing might help us better to remember the intercultural, transnational, and cosmopolitan pasts of even the seemingly remotest corners of our islands.