

Henry of Monmouth
Prince of Wales
Later King Henry 5th

Did King Henry 5th (when Prince of Wales) visit Burton Court?

Local traditions such as this tend to fall into one of two categories: those that are so fully documented as to be as near historical fact as anything can be when seen with six hundred years hindsight; and those that rely solely on word of mouth over the centuries.

Until I re-read *Price*, (1795)¹ my thoughts that this fell into the second category were substantiated in an earlier version of this Paper, viz:

“A Directory of 1876-7² tells us that *Near Burton Court...is the supposed site of a Roman encampment, probably the one in which Prince Henry stationed his army, to watch the motions of Owen Glendower...*

By 1890 this had evolved to *At Burton Court is a small camp, supposed to have been occupied by Henry Prince of Wales, afterwards Henry V, when he opposed Owen Glendower.*³

Since then the tradition has been reiterated by others, not all of whom have made it clear that the story has never been substantiated by historical evidence.

My own efforts in this respect led me to the published work of J.H.Wylie⁴ who was, and I believe still is, regarded as *the* authority on the reigns of Kings Henry IV and V. He published seven volumes between 1884 and 1929. A detailed reading by me of his work covering the Glendower period has revealed only two short periods of time when the young Prince Henry was either known to have been in Herefordshire, and so could have visited Burton Court, or was not specifically recorded as being elsewhere and so could perhaps have visited Burton Court, there being no record one way or the other.

These periods of time are:

May 1403 to a few days before July 21st 1403 [Battle of Shrewsbury].

and

June 1404... To early November 1404, at latest.

Even a re-appraisal of *Price*⁵ has produced only one slim chance of a way forward to, perhaps, new information.

Price does not actually mention Burton Court. The only wording of his that could conceivably be relevant to this Paper, and then only if follow-up research bears fruit, is his footnote to page 26:

Henry at that time [3 Hen 4 viz. 1401-1402] had great possessions in this part of the country, particularly Hampton Court etc

It is the *etc* which might just prove to be of interest; but most likely not.

Lastly from *Price* arise some thoughts which I jotted down a long time ago which

¹ *Price*, John. "An Historical & Topographical Account of Leominster and its Vicinity" Ludlow. 1795.

² "Littlebury's Directory and Gazetteer of Herefordshire, 1876-7." [In Hereford Library]. It had previously used the same wording in 1867.

³ WFC 1890-Reverend Barker, Vicar of Eardisland.

⁴ Wylie, J.H. "History of England under Henry the Fourth." London: Longman, Green and Co. 1884, et seq.

⁵ See footnote 1.

are, I think, worth some investigation.

Of Local Historians of Leominster and vicinity, next after Price came the Reverend Jonathan Williams. He wrote “The Leominster Guide:...” , published in 1808. To my surprise I found, on page 117, the now familiar wording [see page 1 of this] written fifty years earlier than my previously earliest reference. His wording in 1808 was: *At Burton-court, near Monkland, is a small camp, supposed to have been occupied by Henry, prince of Wales, afterwards Henry V. when he opposed Owen Glendour.*

When reading “Wylie”⁶ I noted only the few most promising items, although themselves long-shots, from his Bibliography. These too are on my list of research to be undertaken.

Whilst in pursuit of Prince Henry’s alleged visit to Burton Court, having recorded Prince Henry’s known movements in this area as described above, I attempted to do the same for Glendower by means of reading some of the many standard histories of his activities. However it became apparent to me that this was not going to prove anything because, even at the time it was all happening, it was known that to say “Glendower was...” did not necessarily mean that he himself was wherever it was. Glendower is thought to have put about stories to mislead his opponents and he may actually have been many miles away. Thus it was possible that whilst Prince Henry was undoubtedly in this area, it could never be proved that Glendower *himself* was at that stage involved in events in this vicinity. I therefore discontinued my Glendower reading.

..... *Finis*

⁶ See page 1 of this.