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For completion by the student:		
Katharine Ewins		
Module code: HPHI7009 Module title: History and Historians	1811277	Educational support needs: Yes/No
Module tutor: Harriett Webster		
Assignment due date: 8 Jan 2012		
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Date:

Editing Exercise

Researching a section of Ralph of Coggeshall's *Chronicon Anglicanum*

My research has been limited by the access to reference books and the time available. There are several names that still do require further research and investigation in the section I have looked. For dates of birth and death I have had to rely mainly on online websites that cover genealogy and historical events and to locate specific dates I have used the Handbook of British Chronology.

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Concerning the capture of Arthur and others at Mirebeau.¹

Then Arthur, count of Brittany,² having been invested with knightly arms by King Philip,³ whose little daughter⁴ he had betrothed, being now sixteen years old himself, rebelled against his uncle King John⁵ and at the improper urging of certain people, adopting treacherous and very hasty advice, he set out with Hugh Le Brun⁶ and Geoffrey de Lusignan,⁷ and two hundred and fifty knights, and treacherously besieged the castle of Mirebeau,⁸ in which Queen Eleanor,⁹ Arthur's grandmother, was staying. Then the queen, afraid of being captured, sent word to her son, the king [John], to bring help as quickly as possible to the besieged. So the king marched there with part of his army to the castle. The enemy then entered the castle and had all of the gates blocked up, except a single one, and so protected awaited the arrival of the king, confident in the great numbers of first class knights and sergeants. Then the king arrived and after a difficult engagement entered the town, and, by God's will, immediately captured all his enemies who had assembled there. He took his nephew Arthur, and Count Hugh and Geoffrey of Lusignan,

¹ Part of the 'Battle of Mirebeau' 1202 between the House of Lusignan-Breton alliance, the Kingdom of France and King John of England.

² Arthur I Duke of Brittany, b. 23 March 1187, Nantes Brittany, died probably 3 April 1203 in Rouen or Cherbourg. Posthumous son of Geoffrey Plantagenet. Grandson Henry II of England, contender for the throne of England.

³ Philip II, b. 21 August 1165 Paris France, died 14 July 1223, Mantes (reigned 1180-1223) known as Philip Augustus. Major figure in the third Crusade in 1191, Capetian dynasty.

⁴ Marie of France b.1198, d. 15 August 1224, daughter of Phillip II of France and Agnes of Merania d. 1201.

⁵ John, King of England from 27 May 1199, b. 24 Dec 1166 , d. 19 Oct 1216, youngest son of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine.

⁶ Hugh IX 'le Brun' of Lusignan, b. 1163/1168, d. 5 Nov 1219. Hugh 'Le Brun' married Isabella of Angoulême in 1220 after the death of King John of England. Hugh was betrothed to Isabella before King John audacity took her as his wife and annulled his first marriage. After taking Isabella King John continued a vendetta against the Lusignan family to humiliate them.

⁷ Geoffrey de Lusignan, born before 1150, d. May 1224, uncle of Hugh IX.

⁸ see map below.

⁹ Eleanor of Aquitaine, b. 1122, d. 1 April 1204, born in Poitiers, married to Louis VII of France in 1137, marriage annulled in 1152, then married Henry II of England the same year.

and two hundred and fifty-two stalwart knights, not including other reputable sergeants-at-arms; and thus he freed his mother and her supporters from the besiegers. He made it his business to make this triumph of military talent known to the barons of England by letters, of which this is the format:

‘John by the grace of God King of England, Lord of Ireland . . . etc . . . , to all his barons, greeting. Know that by the grace of God we are safe and sound, and that God’s grace has worked wonderfully on our behalf. For on Tuesday before St Peter in Chains, [July 30] [1202], when we were outside Le Mans¹⁰ we heard that our lady mother was besieged at Mirebeau, and so we hurried there as fast as we could, so that we arrived there on the feast of the blessed Peter in Chains, and there captured Arthur, our nephew, whom William de Braose¹¹ handed over to us, and Geoffrey de Lusignan, and Hugh Le Brun, Andrew de Chauvigny, the vicomte of Chatelleraut,¹² Raymond of Thouars,¹³ Savary de Mauleon¹⁴ and Hugh Bauge¹⁵ and all our other Poitevin enemies who were there, around two hundred or more, so that not even a solitary foot soldier escaped. Therefore give thanks to God and rejoice in our successes.’

Meanwhile King Philip had been besieging the castle of Arques¹⁶ for a long time; although at first he hoped he would capture the castle, the disastrous of the capture of Arthur and the rest of those who were with him reaching him he quickly abandoned the siege, and returned to France, very perturbed by the misfortune which had happened to his men.

¹⁰ see map below.

¹¹ William of Braose, 4th Lord Bramber, b.1144/1153, d. 9 Aug 1211.

¹² Andrew / André de Chauvigny b. 1159 d. 1202.

¹³ Raymond I vicomte de Thouars, b. 1135/1183, d. 1234.

¹⁴ Savari de Meulón, died 1236, possibly related to Raymond I.

¹⁵ Hugh Bauge,

¹⁶ See map below.

Then afterwards King John took violent possession of Tours¹⁷ and King Philip's castle which was in the town, and burnt almost all this famous town, for which reason he was much hated by the people of Tours and the princes of that region. He also burnt the city of Le Mans because it had received his enemies. He transferred all the opponents he had taken at Mirebeau to prison custody, sending them to different places. Afterwards, to his own downfall, he released Hugh Le Brun and Geoffrey de Lusignan from prison at the request of certain nobles, having taken hostages from them and their castles, and he also freed some others whom he had captured at Mirebeau, having first taken the precaution of extracting an oath that they would not rebel against him again: but they did not keep this oath for very long at all, and soon began to harass the king very bitterly, in alliance with many enemy troops.¹⁸

William des Roches,¹⁹ a certain powerful man from the Angevin nobility, in association with other nobles from all over Brittany earnestly requested the lord king to hand over Arthur to them, whom he was carefully keeping in his own custody. When he refused they soon conspired together against the king and began a rebellion, collecting around themselves a great army from various provinces which ought to have been obedient to the king's command, devastating his land with rapine and fire, and attacking many castles. As a result of this it happened that many powerful men left the king and joined their league; amongst these was Robert, count of Alencon,²⁰ the Vicomte of Beaumont,²¹

¹⁷ East of Le Mans.

¹⁸ The oath was extracted from the prisoners to subordinate them and for them to give allegiance to the one to whom it was given, but for the french men the oath, in French law, would not hold them to the English king.

¹⁹ William des Roches, born about 1160, d. 1222, in 1202 changes his allegiance from from Phillip to John. See Graham E Sell, *King John The underrated King*, (London: Anthem Press, 2012) p.47. also W. L. Warren, *King John* (California: University of California Press, 1961) p.79.

²⁰ Robert I, count of Alencon died 1217, House of Bellême.

²¹ Vicomte of Beaumont

William of Fougères,²² and other Bretons. They also had the castle of Angers²³ together with the whole of the city, and in a short time they acquired other fortified places.

Then the king's advisers, perceiving that the Bretons made much disturbance and unrest everywhere in the interests of their Lord Arthur and that no reliable peace treaty would be made, with Arthur surviving, recommended to the king that he should command that the noble youth should have his eyes put out and be castrated, and then when he had in this way been made unfit to govern, then his enemies would relax the folly of unrelenting warfare and submit to the king.²⁴ And so, provoked by the indefatigable attack of his enemies and exasperated by their threats and improprieties, at length in anger and rage he ordered three of his servants to proceed to Falaise²⁵ and carry out this hateful task. Two of the servants hating having to do such an appalling thing to so noble a youth, fled from the king's court; but the third came to the castle in which the royal boy was being carefully guarded by Lord Hubert de Burgh,²⁶ the king's chamberlain, having three rings around his feet.²⁷ And when the lord king's order was reported to Hubert, great weeping and lamenting began amongst the knights who were guarding him, because they were moved to great sympathy for the noble youth. Then Arthur learning of the severe sentence imposed on him by his uncle, and fearing in every way for his personal safety, broke down completely into tears and pitiful moaning. And when that man who had been sent by the

²² William of Fougères

²³ 65 miles east of Le Mans.

²⁴ The use of blinding and castrating was used as a substitute for the death penalty for treason. Both actions remove masculinity which are symbols of noble honour and the ability to rule. The death penalty was abolished in the so-called 'Laws of William the Conqueror' and replaced by the ability of the king to order the punishment of blinding and castration.

²⁵ Normandy, see map.

²⁶ Lord [Hubert] Hugh de Burgh, 1st Earl of Kent c. 1170 - before 5 May 1243, Justiciar of England, Constable of Dover Castle, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, buried at Blackfriars, Holborn, London.

²⁷ Fetters were put around his legs.

king to perform the deed was standing around waiting, and when he had become known to that trembling and weeping boy, he was suddenly aroused in the middle of his lamentations and jumped up and violently laid hands avenging his downfall on that man's person, and cried out in a tearful voice to the knights standing around: 'Oh, my dearest lords, for the love of God allow me for a little while to take vengeance on this criminal before he puts out my eyes; for he is the last of all whom I shall see in this life.' Then to calm down this uproar as soon as possible the knights sprang forward and restrained the hands of both of them, and at the order of Lord Hubert, the young man who had come was thrown out of that room; as a result of his ejection and the sympathetic words of those assisting Arthur received a little comfort, his sadness of heart being soothed. Then Hubert, the king's chamberlain, wishing to give consideration to the king's good name and reputation, looking forward to the king's pardon, kept the royal youth unharmed, considering that the lord king would immediately repent such an order and afterwards regard as odious the man who had dared to carry out such a brutal edict, because he believed that it sprang more from the sudden anger than from the uprightness of equity and justice. And so wishing both to temper the king's anger for the time being and to restrain the savageness of the Bretons, he had it put about in the castle and in the province generally that the order that the king had delivered had been carried out and that the order that the Lord Arthur had died from misery of heart and the frightful pain of his wounds: this rumour was flying around continuously in both kingdoms for fifteen days. Finally a trumpet call was blown in every neighbourhood and castle, as if for his soul; his clothes were given to a house of lepers. It was even given out that his body had been taken to the abbey of St Andrew, of the Cistercian Order,²⁸ and buried there. But the Bretons were not calmed down by such rumours but were more and more worked up, and raged more fiercely than before, where they could; swearing that they would never

²⁸ Savigny Abbey, Savigny-le-Vieux, Manche, Normandy. Saint referred to is St Aymon/Aimo d. 1173 who is reported to have cared for two lepers.

abandon fighting the king of England, who had dared to commit such a horrible crime against their lord and his own nephew. And so it turned out that it was necessary once again to proclaim that Arthur, whose death they had reported everywhere, was still alive and unharmed, so that in this way the savage ferocity of the Bretons might be lessened a little. When the king was informed, he was not in anyway angry at that time that his order had not been carried out. Certain of the lord king's knights even said that he would never again find any knight at all who would take custody of his castles, if he had dared to put into effect such an unfortunate sentence on the Lord Arthur his nephew; because if then it happened that any knights were captured by the king of France, or by his [John's] enemies, immediately they would receive the same vengeance, without mercy.

The same year a certain miraculous vision occurred to some monk of Strata Florida in Wales, on Whitsunday [2 June] [1202], of three angels who censed the altar while matins were being sung; and how one of them taking the lighted charcoal from the censer, suddenly threw it into the mouth of a watching monk, who in amazement was carried off by the angel.²⁹ And he was borne up into the air, as it seemed to him, between his wings, and was carried off by the angel towards the east thus enduring various revelations for a day and a night, meanwhile his body was carried to the infirmary by the monks.

This year there was a great earthquake in the land of Jerusalem, such as had not happened from Our Lord's Passion up to that time; for almost the whole of the famous city of Tyre³⁰ was destroyed by the earthquake³¹ with many of the inhabitants, and a third of Ptolemais, that is Acre,³² with the castle and

²⁹ Strata Florida Abbey, Ceredigion, Wales. Cistercian monastery founded in 1164 by Anglo-Norman lord Robert fitz Stephen, mother-house Whitland Abbey, see J Burton and J Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011).

³⁰ Lebanon.

³¹ 20 May 1202 Syria earthquake.

³² Israel.

towers and other castles were destroyed both Christian and Saracen. A partial earthquake took place in many areas of England even. There was frequent thunder, lightning and hail in the month of August, and a strong wind.

1203. In the month of April the water level rose suddenly above the norm, and much damage was done in various parts of England, which was remarkable because only a little rain had fallen before this great flood.

Map from

Graham E Sell, *King John The underrated King*, (London: Anthem Press, 2012) p. 46.

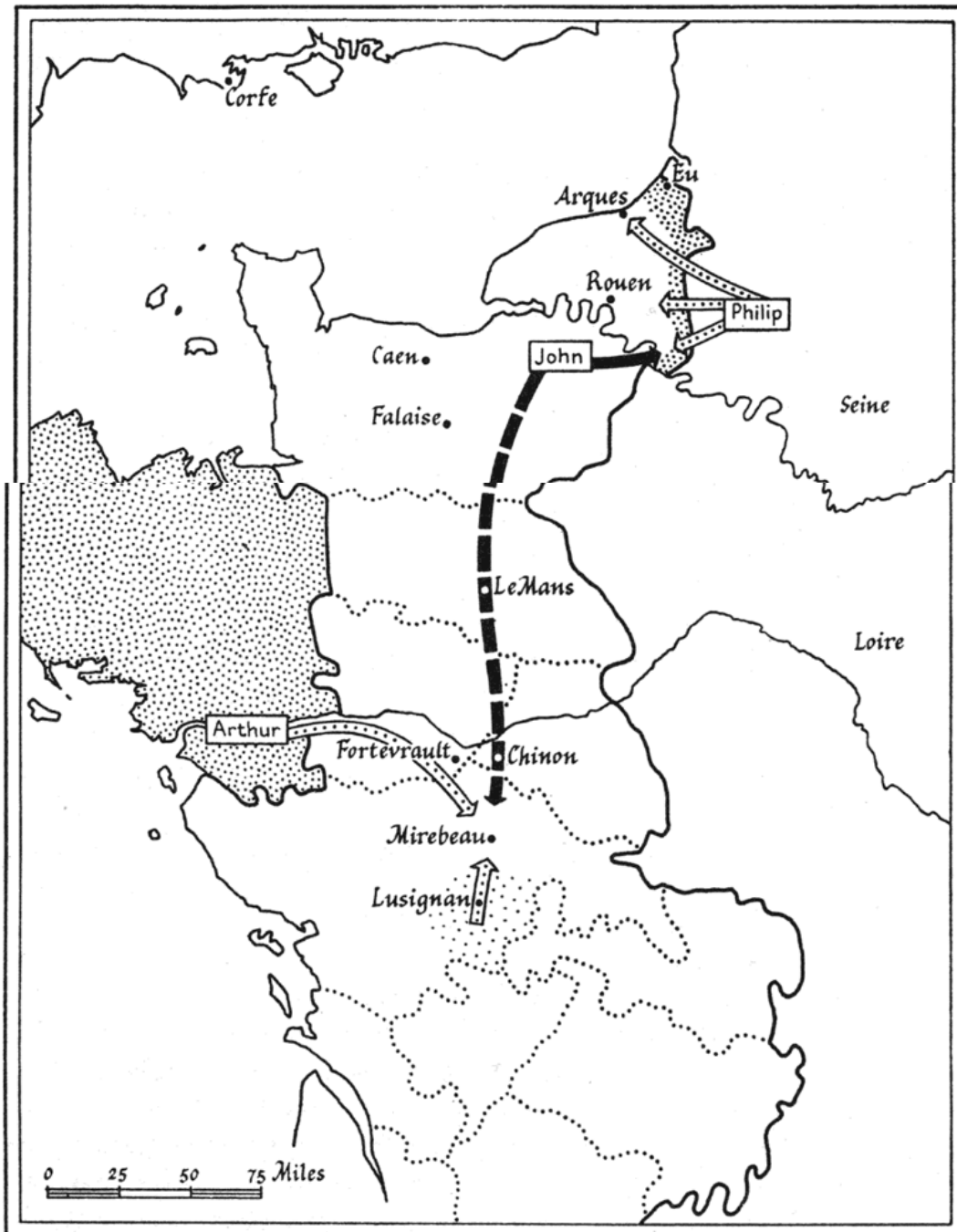


Figure 6. War with France phase 1, spring to autumn 1202 (courtesy of Yale University Press)