

MCCLXV Evesham

A Resource for Roleplaying
Game Adventures During the
Second Barons' War
1263 - 1267

EARLY DRAFT SAMPLE

PAST ADVENTURES

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Writing and Design: Bruce Wightman

Editing: Benjamin Wightman

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WHAT IS THIS?

MCCLXV: *Evesham* is a sourcebook for traditional tabletop roleplaying games, focused on England of the 1260's—a time of political upheaval and military conflict during the Second Barons' War. The history of this period is a tragic narrative of competing egos, family conflict, betrayal, an unsuccessful experiment in representative government, and a stormy climax worthy of the finale of any great opera. The plots of MCCLXV: *Evesham* focus on action-adventure, with a substantial emphasis on military strategy, hard-fought battles, castle sieges, and the associated politics.

Mid-13th century England is a time when what is often thought of as “medieval” has come into its own (save for plate armor, which came much later). As such, the source material provided here may be generally adapted for use in many medieval settings. The emphasis of MCCLXV: *Evesham* is on the real-life history of medieval English life. The events and adventures presented are centered around the historical medieval world, rather than “magic and monsters.” With a little work, the game referee could adapt this to a fantasy-oriented campaign with a supernatural element.

Like most roleplaying games, MCCLXV: *Evesham* presumes the presence of a referee, who is familiar with the setting and plots described herein, and one or more players who take on the roles of dramatic heroes who have an adventure. To fully take advantage of this resource all you need is to roll one or two six-sided dice (1d6 or 2d6) to generate specific events

or cultural details for the setting. This resource presumes that the players are using a game system such as *Dungeons and Dragons*, *Pathfinder*, *FUDGE*, *GURPS*, *HERO*, or any of a host of other adaptable roleplaying game systems that are set in a nominally medieval world to resolve combat and other skill-based activities. Some of the text makes reference to generic characteristics, such as “Endurance” or “Intelligence,” or specific skills, such as “Riding,” which have correlates in any of the roleplaying systems that are in common use. Given the “any system” assumption, there are no “levels” or “class descriptions” or “stat blocks.” The material presented is more about setting and plot, than game mechanics. Nonetheless, adapting this resource to any game system should be fairly seamless.

MCCLXV: *Evesham* includes material previously published for generic medieval fantasy gaming as *Medieval Manager*. The work published here differs in its focus on the particular historical setting, associated adventure plots, and substantial detail on the nature of late 13th-century rural and town life in England. In fact, there is more detail than some will really want in the background sections. Accordingly, many sections start with a “Sir Robert’s Notes” box that presents a few essential facts on the topic. Sir Robert is the fictional archetype landed knight for this resource. Among other things, he has an uncanny sense of what a modern reader might need to know. He’ll also share a little bit of his own perspective—that of a landed knight with his own manor west of Gloucester in early 1265.

Historical Accuracy

MCCLXV: *Evesham* is based on my research on the scholarly history of the time period and the Second Barons' War conflict. The contemporary sources are limited, however, and all of them were written with a specific bias in mind. Gleaning what really happened and what people were really like is the scholarly challenge of the historian. Not all the experts agree. And in some cases, new evidence has trumped “facts” that previous generations of historians thought were true. While I’ve tried to resolve these complications and create a resource that reflects the best history that we have, there are still unresolved disagreements among sources. I’ve made choices, either for narrative effect or simply to arrive at a definitive option. Furthermore, I’ve drawn some inferences about people and events from historical fiction—particularly Sharon Kay Penman’s *Falls the Shadow*. Again, the purpose is fleshing out a narrative backbone—not necessarily to make decisive choices about what actually happened. Views on Simon de Montfort, in particular, tend to reflect the writer’s orientation toward the person. For example, some modern writers, like Penman, have tried to revise and explain his antisemitism, deflecting it to others in his faction. But the record we have based on his actions is pretty clear on this question. Likewise, Edward is often viewed through his actions as king (as in the movie *Braveheart*), which do not necessarily tell us exactly what his actions and motivations were as a young man. As much as possible, I’ve tried to view the historical characters as flawed human beings, avoiding presumptions that the rebels were heroic or that the crown was simply despotic. Overall, you won’t want to use MCCLXV: *Evesham* for your college history paper, but I do hope it allows you to immerse yourself in a great and tragic adventure from England’s medieval past.

ENGLAND IN THE 13TH CENTURY

The year 1265 was a time of political upheaval in England as barons chose sides between the upstart Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, and the monarchy of the aging King Henry III and his heir, Edward (who will soon reign as King Edward I). It was a time of international political maneuverings, as Llewelyn ap Gruffydd, Prince of Wales, allied with the rebellious barons, and the influence of French factions and the Papacy were a feature of Henry’s court. It was also a period that saw steps toward representative government. The basic medieval feudal system was still very much in operation, and the ruling class consisted of intertwined European noble families—particularly those of France and England. As such, it was a time of both domestic and international intrigue.

The century began under the reign of Henry’s father, King John, brother of the absentee crusader-king Richard the Lionheart. This line of English kings is referred to as the “Plantagenet Dynasty” by historians, but that appellation was not used at the time. England in 1200 was a major world power, holding a fair portion of eastern Ireland and most of northern and western France. Wales, Scotland, and the western Irish states remained independent. But John proved incapable of holding onto these possessions, losing to the French in 1214, allowing most continental holdings to come under French dominion. His continued difficulties with his barons (collectively used to refer to all major landed nobility) led to John being forced to submit to the power-sharing compromise of the Magna Carta in 1215. The agreement was largely ignored by both sides and annulled by the Pope, precipitating the First Barons’ War of 1215-1217, which pitted the rebellious forces of Lord Robert Fitzwalter of Little Dumow and his allies, including Prince Louis VIII, heir to the French throne, and Welsh and Scottish forces against royalist forces. King John died of dysentery in the middle of the conflict, with his heir Henry still a young child. For the next few years, the Plantagenet dynasty was tenuously defended by a regency government of loyal knights, supported by the Bishop of Winchester. With the object of the barons’ resentment gone, the rebellion fizzled, Louis returned to France and the Scottish and Welsh troops demobilized. But the internal English issues remained unresolved.

In 1227, Henry III finally became the formal King of England at the tender age of 21. Henry favored his French relatives in key advisory positions, especially the Poitevins of western France, who were relatives of

Sir Robert’s Notes:

It is my good fortune to live in interesting times—assuming, of course, that I survive. The rebellion of my time, the 1260’s, is really the continuation of a long conflict between the higher ranks of the nobility (earls and barons) and the king. It started before I was born, with King John, who was really a dreadful king, having lost our French possessions and treated the nobility with contempt. The Magna Carta of 1215 was supposed to bring him to heel, but all it did was spawn a bloody civil war. Things were better for a while under his son, Henry III, but he too proved imperious and ineffective. Now, nobles have again rebelled, this time with Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, as their improbable leader.



his mother Isabella of Angoulême, via her second marriage. In 1236, Henry married the young teen, Eleanor of Provence. With her came the influence of the “Savoyards” of southern France, particularly Eleanor’s uncle William of Savoy. These additional French advisors supplanted many of the roles that the English baronage expected to perform, increasing tensions between the king and his barons. Furthermore, growing personal tension between King Henry and his French brother-in-law, Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, began in 1238 when Henry’s sister Eleanor, widowed at the age of 16, married de Montfort. The following year, King Henry leveled a charge that de Montfort had seduced and defiled Eleanor during courtship and stated that he had only blessed their marriage to avoid scandal.

Henry managed to work fairly well with his brother-in-law, King Alexander II of Scotland, leading eventually to the Treaty of York in 1237, which brought the northern counties under English sovereignty, creating the approximate borders between England and Scotland of modern times. His attempts to deal with the French were another matter. In 1241, King Louis IX declared that the French County of Poitou, currently held by Henry’s mother, Isabella of Angoulême, would go to his brother Alphonse instead of Isabella’s heir, Henry, thus shutting out a potential gain for the English crown in France. In response, Henry declared the Saintonge War on France in 1242, invading in hopes of recapturing English interests on the continent. The venture proved a disastrous waste of life and

treasure, with the French scoring resounding victories and Henry retreating to England in defeat. Simon de Montfort fought a rearguard action that allowed Henry to escape the final battle and avoid capture—bolstering claims of the king’s military incompetence. The debacle further eroded Henry’s prestige with the baronage in England, which had been asked to pay much of the cost. Henry’s foreign entanglements became more fodder for the opposition in 1250, when he agreed to an expensive, and ultimately unsuccessful, deal with Pope Alexander IV to secure the Kingdom of Sicily for his younger son, Edmund.

Opposition to Henry’s reign finally triggered open rebellion in 1258. The kingdom was short on cash and a major crop failure led to widespread suffering. While most barons in feudal settings remained loyal to the crown, if unenthusiastically so, the larger towns and cities were very hostile to the incessant financial demands of Henry’s reign. Initially, an alliance of de Montfort and Savoyard barons conspired to remove the Poitevin contingent in court. At the end of April, conspirators marched on Westminster, effectively attempting a coup d’état. The situation was resolved, however, when Henry agreed to renounce individual rule in favor of a council of 24, which led to the Provisions of Oxford—a further attempt to limit royal power. This also led to the removal of the Poitevin faction from power, but pressure continued to grow for reform. In 1259, Henry’s own heir, Edward, joined de Montfort’s faction and helped pass the more sweeping Provisions of Westminster, which limited not only the monarchy, but also the power of the greater nobility and local royal officials. But the following year, Henry again tried to reassert more absolute power for the monarch. For the next few years, power moved back and forth as the barons and king jockeyed for control. Edward returned to the royalist cause, supporting his father.

The major events of the Second Barons’ War, from 1263 through 1267, are recounted in the Second Barons’ War Campaign chapter (pp. 00-00). The rebel leadership consisted of Simon de Montfort, his three young adult sons, and rebellious nobles, in particular the Earls of Gloucester, Oxford, and Derby, as well as many bishops and their ally, the Welsh Prince Llewellyn. The royalist faction was led by King Henry and Prince Edward, Richard of Cornwall, the Earls of Hereford and Surrey, and various marcher lords (who held occupied Welsh lands for the English crown), in particular Roger Mortimer, Baron of Wigmore. The rebels were supported by most people in larger towns—in particular London, while the royalists could

count on the support of much of the feudal countryside—as well as the foreign interests of France and the papacy. The conflict began in early 1263 with the ascendant rebels successfully capturing royal castles throughout England. But the royalist army finally began to get the upper hand after they organized in early 1264 and captured Northampton. However, after a series of maneuvers and minor engagements, the two armies met face-to-face at Lewes on May 14, 1264. The rebels had a superior tactical position, but the royalists had vastly superior numbers. At the beginning, the battle appeared to be headed for a royalist victory. But after Prince Edward’s cavalry left the field to pursue fleeing Londoners, a downhill charge by de Montfort turned the battle into an overwhelming rebel victory. Henry, Edward, and other royalist leaders were taken prisoner. Henry was maintained as a puppet King, while de Montfort sought to govern through a more collaborative parliament.

Even though the Earl of Leicester had distinguished himself several times on the battlefield, leading a government proved another matter. The marcher lords continued to harass de Montfort’s interests in the west, as the rebel coalition began to disassemble.



Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester (left), confronts King Henry III during the early years of the conflict.

In early 1265, Gilbert de Clare and other rebel leaders defected from the rebel government. The royalists managed to organize an escape of Prince Edward from his captivity in Hereford. He quickly assembled a new royalist alliance with de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, and Mortimer, Baron of Wigmore. After a series of maneuvers to keep de Montfort west of the River Severn and therefore separated from the remainder of his troops trying to come to his aid from London, Edward led a surprise attack on Simon the Younger at Kenilworth, destroying the eastern rebel army. Days later, the royalist army trapped de Montfort and his Welsh allies as they attempted to march east at a bend in the Avon River at the market town of Evesham. The ensuing battle, during a tremendous August 4 thunderstorm, was the whole-scale slaughter of the rebel troops, with Simon and his son Henry among the thousands of dead. Following the battle, the corpse of Simon de Montfort was infamously dismembered and his head set out on pike. King Henry, a rebel captive during the battle, survived with minor injuries. With this victory, Edward effectively secured the throne for himself and became the de facto ruler of England, even though he would not be formally crowned until Henry’s death in 1274. Even though the Second Barons’ War was essentially decided at Evesham, several leaders and factions held out through 1267. The Siege of Kenilworth, in 1266, would prove to be the longest active siege of an English castle in history.

The reign of Henry III saw not only political reform, unrest, and civil war, but also the beginning of economic changes that would ultimately challenge the assumptions of feudal life. The increasing prosperity of the baronage over the early 13th century increased their political strength, helping to propel the ongoing conflict between the barons and king. The population swelled with the greater productivity, possibly reaching 6 million by 1250—a figure that would not be hit again during the entire 14th century. But as the century moved into its middle and later years, it was the cloth merchants and early industrialists of the towns and cities who emerged as the real economic power. England was increasingly becoming a country of trade and production and less the agricultural feudal ideal of the Norman period. Though historians describe the 14th century as the “late Middle Ages” the feudal way of life was already beginning to disappear by 1300.

TIMELINE OF 13TH CENTURY ENGLISH HISTORY TO 1265

1199	King John accedes to the English throne upon the death of his brother Richard I “Lionheart”
1214	Battle of Bouvines: French army defeats English forces, forcing England out of its northern French possessions
1215	The Magna Carta agreed to by King John at Runnymede but subsequently rejected by him, triggering the First Barons’ War
1216	Prince Louis of France leads an invading force in support of the rebels; Death of King John; Henry III accedes to the throne of England
1217	Battle of Lincoln: Defeat of rebellious nobles and Prince Louis of France ends the First Barons’ War
1226	Death of King Louis VIII of France; his son Louis IX (Saint Louis) accedes to the throne
1237	Treaty of York establishes border between Scotland and England
1241	Louis IX delivers the County of Poitiers to his brother Alphonse instead of the English royal family
1242	Saintonge War: France defeats invading English forces under Henry III
1246	Llewelyn ap Gruffydd accedes to the throne of Gwynedd (Prince of Wales in 1258)
1249	Alexander III accedes to the throne of Scotland
1256	Welsh rebellion to the arbitrary rule of Prince Edward leads to warfare in the Welsh Marches
1258	Famine and sheep murrain decimate the English economy
1258	Henry III agrees to the Provisions of Oxford limiting royal power
1259	Henry III agrees to further reforms in the Provisions of Westminster
1261	Encouraged by a Papal bull, Henry III repudiates the Provisions of Westminster
1263	Open military conflict begins in the Welsh Marches; rebellion in London
1264	Simon de Montfort leads rebel English barons to victory over royalist forces at the Battle of Lewes
1265	Prince Edward defeats de Montfort, who dies at the Battle of Evesham, effectively restoring the monarchy





England in the 13th Century
shire boundaries and coastlines are approximate
crosses mark the seats of dioceses



TOWN LIFE

The only place with a substantial urban population was London, which had a population somewhere between 25,000 and 50,000. York and Bristol were very large towns, with a population over 10,000. Most large English towns boasted populations of only about 2000 people. The smaller market towns found every few miles across the countryside had only a few hundred people. Nonetheless, these towns provided important sources of skilled labor and industrial production, as well as centers for trade and other economic activity.

The demographic structure of towns was a bit different than the countryside. Towns tended to attract more single men looking for work, thus the population had fewer women and children. Larger towns also had a Jewish quarter, typically numbering a few hundred—Northampton's was particularly large. They served as moneylenders, pawnbrokers, grain and wool merchants, and performed services for their own community. A small synagogue served religious life. A few smaller towns also had a Jewish population—one certainly thrived in Guildford, Surrey.

Sir Robert's Notes

Every manor needs a nearby market town in which to sell grain and obtain goods and services not produced by residents on the manor. A town is usually within 5 miles—no more than two or three hours by cart and ox. At Claxby, our nearest market is actually in the big town of Gloucester—even though it lies across the River Severn. In Gloucester, we can sell grain, meat, and livestock, and buy whatever we can afford. It's also where Jews live, should one ever need a loan—although mine is held by Esther of Worcester, with whom Cecelia negotiated better terms. London is another matter entirely! You can find most anything in the world there. I've enjoyed my visits, but I prefer the open pastures and woodlands of Claxby.



A typical town had multiple churches, all competing with each other for funding and attendance. There were also abbeys and priories for monastic and mendicant orders, most often Benedictine, Dominican, and Franciscan. As in rural areas, religious life was an important cultural feature in medieval towns, with the multiple bells marking the time of day—important for everyone, whether they actually attended vespers or not. Towns that served as a bishop’s seat had an awe-inspiring Gothic cathedral and typically an associated cloister and hospital. Most major cathedrals in England were built between the 11th and early 13th century. It was an incredible undertaking, requiring decades to complete and over £1000 per year in construction costs.

Buildings tended to be narrow on the street front and long extending away from the street. An expensive residential property might be 60 feet wide and 200 feet deep, with its own internal courtyard. Buildings were primarily of brick, stone, or wood, with slate or wood tiled roofs—thatch was prohibited as a fire hazard. Depending on size and location, renting a town residence would cost between 8d and 4s per year. Major streets were 30 to 35 feet wide, lanes just 6 to 9 feet wide. Larger towns generally had a wall to provide some basic protection in the event of war, with several accompanying gatehouses required to regulate access.

The marketplace was the center of commercial life. In larger towns the market operated three days a week, and in smaller towns one day a week. Here farmers from the countryside would sell grain, flour, produce and livestock, and local and traveling merchants would sell cloth, pots, utensils and other goods.



TOWN PROFESSIONS	
Alderman	municipal leader, unpaid but with significant power
Architect	designer of larger buildings, probably not more than one per town
Baker	bakes bread and pastries
Barber	cuts hair, trims beards, performs minor surgeries
Beadle	executor and assistant for carrying out government tasks
Belt maker	makes belts and similar leather goods
Blacksmith	works iron, makes horseshoes, tools and wheel rims
Brewer	brews ale (beer requires hops and is very rare in England)
Butcher	cuts and sells meat
Carpenter	builds and maintains wooden structures and items
Carter	hauls goods
Chandler	produces and sells candles and other wax products
Cobbler	makes shoes
Common pleader	a legal advocate, precursor of the barrister
Cook	cooks stews, meats, and other foods for retail sale
Dyer	dyes fabric
Fishmonger	prepares and sells fish
Grocer	wholesaler of preserved meat, fruits, vegetables, and spices
Jeweler	often a goldsmith the sells and repairs fine jewelry
Laborer	basic physical workers for construction, digging, agricultural work
Locksmith	makes and repairs keys and locks
Mason	builds with brick and stone
Messenger	transports a written message
Miller	operates a grain mill
Moneylender	makes loans and manages repayment
Physician	attends sick people
Piemaker	makes meat pies and fruit pies
Plasterer	applies plaster, primarily to interior walls
Potter	makes pots and other clay-based receptacles
Poulters	prepares and sells chicken, ducks, geese, and pigeon
Prostitute	female sex worker, generally tolerated by church and society as a necessary evil
Recorder	creates and keeps written legal and business documents
Roofer	builds and maintains roofs
Roper	makes rope, primarily from hemp
Saddler	makes saddles and related leather gear
Servant	performs routine domestic chores for the wealthy
Stonecutter	cuts stones to shapes to allow for their use in masonry
Tailor	sews clothing from cloth and sizes it to individuals
Tanner	makes leather from animal skins—primarily cattle, sheep, and pig
Weaver	creates cloth fabric on a loom
Wheelwright	builds wheels for carts
Winemaker	makes wine from grapes

TOWNS OF 13 TH -CENTURY ENGLAND		
London†	Ipswich	Nottingham
Bristol	Hereford†	Plymouth
York†	Canterbury†	Northampton
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	Beverley	Leicester†
Great Yarmouth	Gloucester†	Colchester
Lincoln†	Winchester†	Bridgwater
Norwich†	Southampton	Cirencester
Shrewsbury	Coventry†	Bridgnorth
Oxford	Cambridge	Bury St. Edmunds
Salisbury	Stamford	Ely†
Boston	Spalding	
Lynn	Exeter†	

Towns are listed in their approximate order of population. Only London had a population approaching something that would seem like a modern city (between 25,000 and 50,000). Bristol and York were essentially very large market towns with a population on the order of between 9000 and 12,000. The other English settlements were large towns ranging in population from about 1500 to 4000 souls—the majority at the lower end of that range. Significance was added to a place by the presence of a Cathedral—the seat of a diocese (indicated by †). See p. 00 for a list of bishops and their loyalty during the Second Barons’ War.

Larger towns, such as Gloucester or Oxford, had over 200 permanent shops, mostly situated on the main streets or the central marketplace. A typical shop had a large front window facing onto the street with a pair of large horizontal shutters. When the shop was open, the lower shutter served as a table for the presentation of goods. Renting a storefront cost 3-15s per year, depending on size and location. Some larger English towns had a “seld,” which was a large building with many market stalls inside—a sort of precursor to the modern indoor shopping mall. Tanneries and butcheries tended to be located on the outskirts or poorer sections of towns, due to their obnoxious odors.

Guilds served to organize the interests of particular workers and professionals. In England this might include butchers, cordwainers (leather shoes), drapers (clothing), fishmongers, goldsmiths, grocers, ironmongers, mercers (merchants), saddlers, skinner (animal hides and furs), spicers, tailors, and woolmongers.

Towns of any size had at least one grain mill, often owned by the church. Larger towns had two or three.

Many English towns also had a fulling mill for the production of wool cloth. Taverns and inns were generally present in any larger town. London had over 300 taverns; most larger towns on major trade routes would have several inns for visiting merchants. Traveling nobles were unlikely to stay at these places—finding more comfortable accommodations at a monastic house or at the castle.

Towns were generally chartered by the crown and governed by a mayor and a council of aldermen. The council usually consisted of 12 aldermen from the merchant and landed elite, each elected by leaders from a particular ward. In turn, the council voted to elect one member to serve as the mayor. The local monastic leaders and bishop, if there was one, held significant power as well. If a noble resided at the castle, instead of as absentee, they would also be a significant power. Minor criminal offenses might be adjudicated locally, but serious crimes were tried at the hundred courts (see p. 00). Local security was provided by a lightly-armed watch. The castle likely had a small garrison to provide a modicum of military security.

Food

The diet of the wealthy medieval English was quite rich and varied. Not surprisingly, the diet of the poorest people was monotonous. Nonetheless, most rural people, even the lowly cottagers, ate a fairly healthy diet, particularly when fresh vegetables were available, and had sufficient calories except for times of ecological and agricultural disaster.

There are a number of familiar foods and practices of today, including some associated with the people of England, that were NOT a feature of medieval England. Most notably, there were no potatoes, tomatoes, maize (corn), peppers, peanuts, cocoa/chocolate, squash, sweet potatoes, bananas, turkey, and vanilla—and no knowledge of these commodities from the New World. Likewise, Tolkien notwithstanding, tobacco was unknown and no one smoked anything. Medieval English people also did not drink tea or coffee (although these foreign beverages were known).

Bread was the main staple of most villagers. The bread consumed was a wholegrain loaf made of wheat, barley, and/or rye, sometimes with dried peas or broad beans mixed in. A typical meal for a poor cottager would be coarse brown bread with onions and beans. Villagers also ate porridge with turnips, a pottage (stew) of beans, peas, and oats, or simply oatmeal cakes with cheese curds. In the fields, villagers sometimes ate a dried paste of peas, beans, and bread to which they added ale. Eel pasties were a prized luxury for the common folk. They might be able to add a couple eggs, some slices of bacon, a chunk of pork or mutton, coney (rabbit), songbirds, or eel to their pottage. Villagers who lived on the seacoast might also be able to supplement their diets regularly with fish.

In contrast, the wealthier farmers and lord's family ate white bread, always supplemented with meat, fish, poultry or eggs, as well as cheese and butter, and fruit (in season). Meats included beef, mutton, pork, veal, poultry, pigeon, and venison. Poultry came in the form of swans, geese, capons, starlings, quail, duck, pheasant, partridge, vultures, gulls, herons, storks, cranes, doves, pigeons, and of course, chicken. Partridge was a rare treat. The lord ate beef, mutton, lamb, or pork on almost every non-fast day. Onions were considered "peasant fare", and eaten less frequently by the upper classes.

Wealthier people ate a lot of meat during the single main meal of the day. Domestic meats were salted for

Sir Robert's Notes

A meal just isn't a meal to me without a big slab of meat or saucy joint to gnaw on. Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, as well as the entirety of Lent are always something to get past. Eating flesh on these days is prohibited by the Church, and so we must fast on fish, eggs, and cheese—perhaps a little coney if I'm lucky. At Claxby we almost always have chicken, lamb, mutton, or wild game for our meat meals, and plenty of trout, eel, eggs and cheese for fast days. Our meat is either roasted or boiled. On most days, I start with a slice of bread and butter with a flagon of ale after Matins. Dinner is served before sext and involves several courses, with plenty of bread and wine, even on a normal day. On a festival, we might have dinner a bit later, but it would then be a feast stretching out many hours. When the cook is in a good mood, he might make his signature saffron-spiced entrayale, my favorite. He knows that doing so persuades me to secure better cloth for his Yuletide gift. The last meal of a typical day is supper, served just after vespers. For me, it is bread, cheese or eggs, and sometimes a salt herring—with a couple flagons of ale, of course. We don't know anything about tomatoes, potatoes, squash, or corn, and we don't smoke tobacco or drink milk, tea, or coffee.



storage or from animals slaughtered that day. Game meat was usually more tender and might be roasted on a spit over an open fire, but most domestic meat was boiled. The entirety of Lent, and every Wednesday, Friday and Saturday were all "fast" days (meaning that no flesh could be consumed). Consumption of eggs was also prohibited during Lent. The Church did permit consumption of fish or rabbit on fast days, so the wealthier people ate a lot of fish. Salting allowed marine fish to be transported inland, but the lord might also be able to rely on their own fish pond or millpond for freshwater eel, trout, or pike. Seafood consumed included herring, mackerel, cod, whale, sturgeon, porpoise, oysters, lamprey, salmon, crayfish, crabs, sole, whelks, and mullet. Fish was often cooked in ale or wine.

Fruits and vegetables were also on the menu—at least when they were in season. Common vegetables were broad (fava) beans, peas, turnips, and cabbage. Pears were the most common fruit, but cherries, strawberries, plums, peaches were also consumed when they were available. Even wealthier households did not purchase fruits and vegetables for the most part, and they were not shipped from warmer climes since they would certainly spoil over the long journey. Nuts, especially almonds and chestnuts, were often included in dishes. Dried fruits, such as dates, raisins and figs were also found in the pantries of the wealthy.

Milk was rarely drunk in England, but eggs and cheese were frequently consumed. Cheese and cheese tarts were often featured for the light supper eaten near sundown. Most cheese was goat or cow milk hard cheese; soft cheese like brie was an unusual luxury.

Common herbs used for cooking included sage, parsley, fennel, dittany, hyssop, borage, leek, garlic, mustard and mint. Sugar cane was grown in Syria, Egypt, Spain, and Sicily, and was an expensive import for wealthier tables. Rice was also an imported delicacy that was expensive and often combined with almonds.

Wealthier people prized their expensive spice collection. Almost all meat dishes were served heavily-seasoned. Obtaining most spices depended on the spice trade from the Middle East and Asia, making these ingredients very expensive. A noble's spice pantry almost certainly included salt, black and white pepper, ginger, and cinnamon. In addition, they might have cloves, galingale (similar to ginger), mace, saffron, cumin (grown locally), anise, fennel, coriander, and nutmeg.

Most wine was imported from English-held Bordeaux, France, or Germany, even though there were still a few functioning English wineries. For the most part, it was only drunk by the wealthy. On a regular day in the manor house, wine would be served to the lord's household and guests, but the household staff would get ale. Medieval wine had a short shelf-life, lasting only about a year.

Ale, made from barley with wheat or oats, was the staple beverage for everyone, including children. The alcohol content was lower than modern ales, so people were not necessarily intoxicated unless they consumed a lot. Beer, which requires hops, was rarely made in England. If apple trees were present, apple cider might also be on the menu. Mead, made from fermented honey, was a luxury that might be consumed in the lord's household, but rarely elsewhere.

Cooking used both earthenware and metal pots, along with metal or wooden utensils. The kitchen would have large iron hooks for hanging meat and a large mortar and pestle for grinding ingredients. Much of the cooking was accomplished in a large metal cauldron hung over the fire by a hook and chain or in a three-footed pot with handles.

Most people ate two meals a day: dinner in the late morning, typically around 10-11AM, and a light supper before sundown, typically 4-6PM. If a villager ate breakfast at all, it would simply be a little ale and perhaps a slice of bread. A simple breakfast was more common in the lord's household, primarily bread, ale, and perhaps a slice of cheese or butter, served immediately after morning Mass.

Dinner in the lord's great hall was an elaborate affair with formalized seating and entertainment. The lady of the house would almost always be present and the primary organizer. The meal began with all guests being formally called to the table, either by a trumpeter or crier. Everyone washed their hands. The lord and lady were formally seated first on the dais at a large table set perpendicular to the length of the chamber. Guests and children were seated next, most likely at makeshift tables in the hall set parallel to the length of the chamber. Any household servants dining in the main hall would be seated last, at the furthest table. Before the meal began, the chaplain or lord would say grace. The table was set with spoons, cups, and salt. Most people carried their own knife. Food was brought to the table on platters (silver for the lord and guests, wood for everyone else), but there

were no plates. Instead, every pair of diners received a large trencher—a large, thin, dried-out slice of bread—to serve as their plate. Diners would first slice their trencher in half, so that each of them would have their own. Bowls were used only for soups. Pairs also shared a cup. Table manners were strict and emphasized cleanliness and propriety. A first course of bread, ale and wine, and some lighter food would be served. This might be accompanied or followed by music from a harpist or lutist, if they were present. Next the main course was served, with more wine for the lord and guests, and several different meat selections. Finally, the third course of fruit and spices or cheese was served. At the end, everyone washes their hands again and a prayer of thanks was offered. The household staff then began cleaning up, often donating the used trenchers to the poor. Fast days were a bit more restrained, but major feasts were even more elaborate, often with five or six courses.

MEDIEVAL DISHES	
Blancmanger	chicken, with rice, almonds and sugar
Brewet	thin spicy sauce of ginger and cinnamon served over beef or mutton
Bukkenade	beef or mutton stew with egg yolks, saffron, sage, and ginger
Eels in bruet	sliced eel soup made with bread, wine, parsley, and ginger
Entrayale	sheep's stomach stuffed with eggs, vegetables, bread, cheese, pork
Frumenty pudding	wheat and milk pudding
Hodge-Podge	stew made from beef, veal, lentils, carrots, dates, apricots and currants.
Humble pie	boiled deer organs, spiced, and baked into a pie
Lampreys in galytyn	spiced lamprey
Mortrews	meat with eggs and bread crumbs
Stuffed pigling	pigling stuffed with nuts, cheese, eggs, spices, bread
Venison and frumenty	venison and whole wheat boiled in milk and spices

A feast menu, such as might be served at the lord's table for a festival or a wedding celebration could include bread with honey and butter, grilled quail, roast leg of lamb, broad beans with saffron, carrots, venison and frumenty, roast boar with mustard sauce, followed by pears and cheese.

In the lord's household, supper was still a lighter meal with one main dish, a side dish and cheese. After supper, there might be entertainment by minstrels, acrobats, or a storyteller, or games played.

In most manor houses, bread, cold meat, meat pies, cheese and drink were kept in a cupboard near the great hall in case a guest arrived at a non-mealtime or the lord or guest required a snack.

The diet in Wales was considerably different than England. Lacking the substantial grain fields of England, the Welsh did not base their cuisine on bread. Instead, the Welsh consumed mostly meat and dairy—primarily mutton, cheese, butter, and milk. Vegetables consisted mostly of cabbage. The primary grain was oats, and foods were very lightly seasoned with thyme, savory or mint. Invading English troops often found the available food unwelcome to their palates.



A COMMONER'S DINNER

Roll 2d6	Main Course	Add fresh fruit (Jul-Oct)	Meat for Festival or Guest	Non-meat for Festival or Guest
2	meat* pie		songbird	trout
3	pottage of beans and peas	pears (Oct)	beef	salted cod
4			eel pasties	salted herring
5		plums (Sep)	coney	eel pasties
6	boiled onions and beans	pears (Oct)	mutton or lamb	cheese
7		fresh peas (Sep)	bacon	
8	oatmeal cakes and cheese curds	strawberries (Jul)	pork	eggs
9	boiled cabbage and onions	apples (Oct)	chicken	
10	boiled turnips and beans	peaches (Jul-Aug)	mutton or lamb	coney
11	boiled meat*	cherries (Jul)	beef	eel
12	roasted meat*		exotic	trout

Bread and ale were served at all meals. Eggs might also be served if available on the property. Butter might be included for festivals and guests.

*Make a second roll on the meat column anytime meat is indicated, for a festive occasion, or when a guest is present. Use the non-meat column for any special meal or guest on a "fast" day, ignoring the eggs result during lent.

DINNER AT THE MANOR HOUSE

Roll 2d6	Meat Course	Fish Course	Side Dish	Add fresh fruit (Jul-Oct)
2	entrayale	crayfish or crabs	mortrews	pears (Sep-Oct)
3	bukkenade	lamprey	hodge-podge	
4	veal	coney or hare	eels in bruet	
5	venison, hare, or boar	cod	boiled parsnips	plums (Sep)
6	pork	trout	blancmanger	strawberries (Jul)
7	beef	herring	rice and almonds	
8	mutton or lamb	pike	frumenty pudding	apples (Oct)
9	duck	mackerel	boiled cabbage	
10	goose	eel	lampreys in galytyn	peaches (Jul-Aug)
11	swan or pigeon	salmon	spiced asparagus	cherries (Jul)
12	partridge	whale or porpoise	boiled carrots	

Bread and wine were served at all meals; ale for servants. On a normal day, roll once for meat or fish, depending on whether it is a fast day. Roll once for a side dish, which will also be accompanied by beans or peas. The last course consists of cheese and fruit, if in season—roll or simply select whatever fruit is in season that month. At other times the last course might include dried dates, raisins, figs and honey. For special occasions, roll twice on the meat or fish course. For feasts, roll three times on the meat course and twice on the side dishes.

Meat may be boiled or roasted, and served with brewet or another spicy sauce. Fresh meat worthy of roasting was most likely in late spring, early summer, and November, or after a major hunt. Fish was likely boiled in wine or ale and spiced.



THE SECOND BARONS' WAR ADVENTURES

Each specific plot in this section includes particular information to help fit it into the historical narrative. The descriptions all list a recommended time, adventure location, and the appropriate factional alignments. In actual play, the referee will want to choose among them instead of trying to squeeze in every possible plot element. It might be fun to throw in a tangential adventure using the short incidental adventure plots on pp. 00-00 or the adventure generator on pp. 00.

A Place at the Table

Various times 1264-1265

Faction: Rebel or royalist

The adventurers participate in a key strategic discussion.

As the adventurers distinguish themselves and earn the trust of a leading patron, they should have at least one opportunity to be invited to some high-level strategic conversation. They presumably aren't part of de Montfort's or Henry's regular counsel, but a good adventure that is a break from the more physical action of a military campaign brings the story to a more complex and interesting level. They may be invited to participate in a meeting by a less prominent historical figure, such as Robert de Vere or Humphrey de Bohun. But in general, events should dictate who "gets them in the door." Were they helpful to de Clare or Mortimer? If so, that might motivate them to invite them to participate. Here are some possible "roundtable" discussions:

Rebels:

1. August 1263, in London: de Montfort and allies consider pursuing an alliance with Welsh Prince Llewellyn. Marcher lords de Clare, Mortimer, and de Leybourne and Henry of Almain argue vigorously against the move, but de Montfort needs the troops. The debate sows the seeds of major defections from the rebel fold over the next months.
2. Late January 1264, at Kenilworth: de Montfort and allies debate the next steps after learning that King Louis IX's arbitration has found entirely in favor of the king and royalists.
3. Apr 10, 1264, in London: de Montfort and allies digest the implications of the defeat at Northampton and the capture of Simon the Younger. The earl

ultimately decides not to confront Henry's larger force and decides to march to Rochester instead.

4. May 4, 1264 in London: Simon de Montfort arrives in London from Rochester, debates with rebel lords and bishops of Winchester and London, about possible agreement with Henry; he decides to head to the south to confront the king before he can raise more reinforcements.

5. May 28, 1264 in London: entire de Montfort family reassembles with Simon the Younger now free and fresh from victory. The earl lays plans for the council of nine and allows de Mortimer and de Clifford to return to the Welsh Marches.

Royalists:

1. June 29, 1263 in London: Richard of Cornwall meets advisors at Isleworth and tries to negotiate a settlement between Henry at The Tower in London and de Montfort at Ely, which he has recently taken. The negotiations are unsuccessful.

2. April 1265 in the Forest of Dean, Herefordshire: Representatives for Edward meet with Gilbert de Clare at a remote manor in the Forest of Dean to persuade him to join the royalist alliance.

3. Late May- early June, 1265 at Wigmore and Ludlow: Newly-freed Prince Edward meets with de Mortimer at Wigmore and de Clare at Ludlow to shore up alliances and coordinate strategy. The combined forces eventually move on to retake Gloucester, trapping de Montfort west of the Severn.

Both Factions:

1. Late July 1263 in London: After de Montfort's triumphant arrival in London, the rebels broker an agreement with Henry allowing parliament to meet under terms favorable to the rebels.

2. Sep 9-11, 1263 at St. Paul's Cathedral in London: Parliament meets and reconfirms the Provisions of Oxford.

3. March 1264 at Gloucester: Henry de Montfort and rebel lords meet with Edward after Henry's unexpected recapture of Gloucester town through subterfuge, thereby trapping Edward in the castle. They meet at the Benedictine St. Peter's Abbey. Henry is attended by his brother Simon, the Earl of Derby and Bishop of Worcester. Edward is accompanied by Henry of Almain, leaving de Valence and de Warenne at the castle. Edward deftly offers a truce deal to avoid open warfare, which Henry accepts over the strenuous objections of Simon, Derby, and the bishop.

4. Early January 1265 at Montgomery, Welsh Marches: After de Montfort and Llewelyn defeat Mortimer and his marcher allies, the two sides meet to work out a peace agreement, which results in Mortimer and others agreeing to quit the country for a year (a commitment that was subsequently ignored).

5. Jan 20- Mar 14, 1265 at Westminster Palace: Parliament meets with the first non-nobles ever included. Simon de Montfort is at the height of his power, but fails to address the demands of the Earl of Gloucester and others.

If the heroes have achieved sufficient stature with the greater powers in the conflict, they may be able to influence events. If they manage to convince de Montfort to strike at Windsor in April 1264 instead of Rochester, let that happen. Your revisionist Second Barons' War history might follow a different path. The referee will then have to ad-lib the outcome, which could lead to a variant of the Battle of Lewes happening at a different location. This isn't a huge problem—the general overarching plot of the campaign needn't be dramatically altered.

Battles

Various times and locations

Faction: Any

Military engagements are all too common during this period. Martial characters will have lots of opportunities to battle with the enemy or perhaps simply fight to survive.

The larger engagements of Northampton, Lewes, and Evesham each receive some substantial detail as specific adventure plots below. But there are numerous other skirmishes and smaller-scale engagements, particularly in the west, near north, and southeast. Some will be small enough that they can be managed using traditional battle rules from any roleplaying game system. For larger engagements, the adventurers may be assigned a melee engagement that roughly reflects the overall odds. Presume that the historical victor probably had 2:1 odds in an open battle. Alternatively, or in addition, they may be given specific missions within the overall combat: defend a lord, defend the baggage train, survey the flanks, cut off a group of cavalry, search for a dry escape through the wetlands, and so on.

Sieges

Various times and locations

Faction: Any

There are many sieges of castles and other strongholds during and after the Second Barons' War.

A real siege is usually not a terribly dramatic moment. The most common outcomes are capitulation within 24 hours—typically when a small garrison faces an overwhelming attacker—or a protracted waiting game where a defiant defender remains within their walls and the attacker simply waits for them to run out of food or water. Adventurers may be assigned tasks of assassination, smuggling supplies over walls or through tunnels, or sniping at defenders who dare show themselves. Occasionally, a commander might order an aggressive attempt to break the siege using towers, battering rams, artillery and other devices. Such events can lead to exciting scaling of walls, Errol Flynn-inspired stunts at the gate tower, attacks through secret water-gates or underground tunnels, or just straight-out melee.

Raid on Hereford Cathedral

May 1263

Location: Herefordshire

Faction: Rebel or royalist

Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester strikes the first blow for the rebels by marching a small band of soldiers to Hereford to take prisoner Peter d'Aigueblanche, the Savoyard Bishop of Hereford.

Players who are rebels should be part of the group assigned. They will need to approach the cathedral using some stealth to avoid a quick mobilization of the guard serving Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford. The Earl of Hereford might or might not be present himself, since he held several fiefs, including the Earldom of Essex. The adventurers will have to hunt down the bishop in the cathedral itself—even if they expect to find him at home in the middle of the night (use the floorplan on p. 00 and map of Hereford on p. 00). They will have to do this without actually committing any acts of overt violence—such would blaspheme the sacred space.

Royalist players might find themselves in Hereford on business—and get summoned to execute an overnight pursuit after the kidnapping. The bishop

will be held in the countryside near Hereford, and transferred to marcher lord Roger de Clifford, who will imprison the bishop at Eardisley Castle. A small band of de Clare's men will detach to confront the pursuers, allowing the players the pleasure of pressed small-scale skirmish. But even if they are victorious, the engagement will be enough to allow the captors to reach Eardisley with the bishop.

After the bishop is secured, de Clifford and Sir Roger de Leybourne begin raiding the bishop's fiefdoms in the area, one of many "scorched earth" depredations visited on the largely neutral rural populations. Rebel characters will have the opportunity to participate in or temper the destruction; royalists to resist. Participation in this event may allow the players to meet important marcher lords, who could serve as patrons for subsequent events. By early 1265, all will be back in the royalist fold.

Towers for Bridgnorth

June 1263

Location: Shropshire

Faction: Rebel

Simon de Montfort, Gilbert de Clare and Llewelyn of Wales converge on Bridgnorth to besiege and capture the royal castle there.

Supplies must be brought up from Gloucester, but William de Valence is set on stopping them. The rebel heroes are dispatched by de Clare to guard sections of siege towers that are being shipped up the Severn by boat from the town of Gloucester to the new siege site. De Clare's army is already in the field, having taken the town of Bridgnorth and surrounded the castle (map on pp. 00). Their hope is to get the royal garrison to surrender, once they see the extent of the siege preparations, but so far Lord Roger Lestrangle has been resistant. The heroes will have to deal with the excruciatingly slow trip upstream trip—about three hours per one-league hex (three miles). Thus, it will take two full days to reach Bridgnorth (western England campaign map on pp. 00-00). The tower components are loaded onto two barges with pointed bows and sterns and a crew of 8 rowers/polers each. The adventurers will serve as their guards, presumably distributing themselves between the two boats during the day. The boatsman will work for about 16 hours each day before camping at a safe location, since navigating the river at

night is dangerous. As they near Tewksbury, they will come under assault from Pembroke's archers on the shore. As they near Stourport, one of the barges will founder on sandy shoals, requiring a difficult extraction. On the last afternoon, a dozen horsemen begin to shadow the barge from the western shore. They are more of de Valence's men and they are biding their time waiting for an opportunity to attack. Given the odds, the adventurers may have to try negotiation or trickery to win the day.

Escape from Bridgnorth

June 1263

Location: Shropshire

Faction: Royalist

With the royal castle besieged, a noble woman—imminent to deliver a child—needs a rescue and transport to the relative safety of Lichfield.

Lord Roger Lestrangle (p. 120), a Marcher lord is serving as castellan of Bridgnorth Castle when de Montfort and de Clare come calling. A stubborn royalist, he refuses to flee the castle and remains with his family and small garrison to resist the rebels. But his wife, Siwan ferch Gwenwynwyn (p. 120), the daughter of a minor Welsh lord, is in her ninth month of pregnancy and doesn't share his enthusiasm for resistance. De Montfort and de Clare are not feeling chivalrous, refusing her safe passage, and use her state to put additional pressure on Lord Lestrangle to surrender. A servant manages to hail a sympathetic townsman from the wall one night and request help. If the heroes are in the area, they might hear about the situation directly. If not, they might be summoned by Edward to stage a rescue of Siwan. The adventurers will certainly have to use secrecy and subterfuge to execute a daring raid on the castle, since the town is held by rebel troops and the castle itself encircled. They might have to resort to disguise or a Trojan horse approach to gain entry. Or perhaps there is a tunnel that might be discovered? Once they penetrate the castle and locate Siwan, they will have to safely get her out. She moves slowly. And complains often and loudly. It will be an unpleasant and dangerous trip through the woods to Lichfield, where Siwan can get safe housing and access to a midwife in the holdings of the royalist Bishop of Lichfield, Roger de Meuland. See p. 00 for a map of Bridgnorth, p. 00 for a keep floorplan, and the western England map on pp. 00-00.