

FITZ WARIN lords of Whittington and Alderbury (Salop) and Alveston Gloucestershire

The lands in Shropshire were an area of dispute between the English and the Welsh until the conquest of Wales by Edward I. In the latter part of the 12th century, 'English' Maelor was in the hands of Roger de Powis and his brother Jonas but the area around Whittington was held by FULK FITZWARIN I (died 1156) and FULK II (died 1197). FULK III (died 1256?) regained possession of Whittington in 1204 after having been outlawed. Fulk aided **Llywelyn the Great** against the English in 1217, but made peace with the government of Henry III by February 1218. Whittington was captured by **Llywelyn** at the start of 1223 and in 1226 Henry III met the lord of Gwynedd at Shrewsbury to discuss the trouble caused by Fulk Fitz Warin and other border barons. The enmity between **Llywelyn** and Fulk Fitz Warin resulted in plans, c. 1227, for the marriage of Angharad, daughter of **Madog ap Gruffydd**, to the son of Fulk, but the wedding did not take place - it is unknown if **Llywelyn's** opposition caused the scheme to fail.

[At the battle of Lewes, 14 May 1264, FULK IV was drowned while escaping from the field; afterwards] Simon de Montfort sought the aid of **Llywelyn ap Gruffydd** and one of the means of doing this was to grant to **Llywelyn**, on 22 June 1265, the service of the lord of Whittington; by the terms of the treaty of Montgomery, 29 September 1267, this land passed to the Welsh. FULK V (1251 - 1315), active in the wars against the Welsh at the end of the 13th century, was ordered to aid Bere castle, near Towyn, Meirionnydd, in 1294, and numerous demands were made upon him to find men from Shropshire for the king's service. He was in conflict with **Llywelyn ap Gruffydd** in 1277 about lands in Bauseley, Montgomeryshire, and before 25 February in this year he married Margaret, daughter of **Gruffydd ap Wenwynwyn** by Hawise, daughter of **John Lestrangle** (see the article on that family); Fulk died 1315; his widow died on 11 May 1336. [The direct male line came to an end in 1420, when the last of eleven successive Fulk s died.] A WILLIAM FITZ WARIN, who may have been related to the lords of Whittington, was active in Welsh affairs in 1277 when he witnessed an agreement between Pain de Chaworth and **Rhys ap Maredudd**, and was present at the surrender of Gruffydd and Cynan, sons of Maredudd ab Owain, Llywelyn their nephew, and Rhys ap Rhys Fychan. In the 15th cent, another WILLIAM FITZ WARIN, levied men in Wales to attack and capture Whittington castle; [he was Sir William Bourchier (1423 - 1469) lord Fitz Warin in right of his wife Thomasine, daughter and heiress of Elizabeth (Hankerford), who was sister and heiress of the FULK XI who died 1420; a grant (1450) of lands in Whittington by William and his wife appears in **Edward Owen**, *Catalogue of MSS. relating to Wales in the B.M.*, iii, 37618.]

[The 'Romance of Foulques Fitz Warin,' extant in prose in a single French manuscript of c. 1320 which reflects a lost metrical romance of the late 13th century, is described in the *D.N.B.* article cited above. Much of it is pure story-telling, of marvellous adventures in France, Brittany, Ireland, the Orkneys, Scandinavia, and North Africa. But large parts of it have a historical basis, however obscured by conflating Fulk II and Fulk III into a single personage ('Fouke le Brun'), with consequent anachronisms such as describing king John's daughter **Joan** (wife of **Llywelyn the Great**) as Henry II's daughter. The romancer's acquaintance with the history and topography of North Wales and the March, and with Welsh personages like **Owain Gwynedd**, **Iorwerth Drwyndwn** and his son **Llywelyn**, **Owain Cyfeiliog**, **Gwenwynwyn**, is quite detailed, and his statement that **Llywelyn the Great** and Fulk (this would be Fulk III) and prince John were lads together at the English court is by no means incredible - the scuffle between Fulk and young John over a game of chess, e.g., is quite in John's character.

No Welsh version of the romance has as yet come to light, but Welsh familiarity, if not with the romance itself then at least with the oral tradition which underlay it, is attested by the fairly frequent references to 'Syr Ffwg' or 'Ffwg ap Gwarin' in the poets, e.g. **Gruffudd ap Maredudd** (in his awdl to **Owain Lawgoch**, *Poetry of the Red Book of Hergest*, p. 107, lines 24-5), **Iolo Goch**, **Guto'r Glyn**, **Dafydd Nanmor**, **Tudur Aled** (consult the indexes to the modern editions of their poetry), and **William Llyn** (ed. **Morrice**, p. 53, line 73). It must however be added that these poets never refer to the content of the romance; 'Syr Ffwg' is to them merely a type among others, of knightly prowess, and probably the exigencies of cynghanedd alone account for clichés like 'Ffwg a'i ffon' - 'Fulk and his staff,' i.e. probably his spear-shaft, or possibly his cudgel (referring in that case to the incident on p. 339 of the Rolls Series edition of the romance.)

A curious variant of the story - indeed, a matter which occurs not at all in the 'Romance' itself - appears in a 'moral parable' printed by **Isaac Foulkes** in his *Cymru Fu*, p. 84. Here, the hero is called 'Fulk of Glamorgan,' is sheriff of Cardiff, and lives in Cardiff castle. If we deleted the comma between 'Ffwg' and 'Morgannwg' on p. 17 of **T. Parry's** edition of the **Dafydd ap Gwilym** corpus (in a set of englynion to **Ifor Hael**), we might see in the words a reference to this 'Fulk of Glamorgan.' That 'Fulk of Glamorgan' was Fulk Fitz Warin is clear from the fact that the *Cymru Fu* anecdote speaks of his combats with Saracens.

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