

LACY (DE), of Halton, constables of Chester

These De Lacys were descendants of Ilbert, a companion of the Conqueror and a close kinsman of **Walter** (died 1085) of Ewyas. The family became prominent in Welsh affairs in the time of ROGER (died 1212). He was known as Roger of Hell because of the ferocity of his raids into Wales; it is said that on one occasion he rescued Ranulf, earl of Chester, from Rhuddlan Castle when the earl was besieged there by the Welsh. His son JOHN (died 1240) became first De Lacy earl of Lincoln by right of marriage.

The latter's grandson, HENRY DE LACY, third earl of Lincoln (died 1311), who added the earldom of Salisbury to the family titles by his first marriage with Margaret Longespée, was the most powerful and influential member of this family in the affairs both of England and of Wales. One of the closest counsellors of Edward I, he played a leading part in the Welsh campaigns of 1277, 1282, and 1294, and in 1282 he received a grant of Rhos, Rhufoniog, and Dinmael, these territories henceforth constituting the marcher lordship of Denbigh. He founded the garrison borough of that name and was responsible for the building of its castle and town walls. One of his sons, EDMUND, was drowned in a well within the Red Tower of the castle. His other son, JOHN, having also predeceased him, he was succeeded by his daughter, ALICE, wife of Thomas, earl of Lancaster, though dower was assigned to his second wife, a Welsh lady, Joan, sister of William, sixth baron Martin of Cemais. Alice was involved in her husband's downfall, and following his execution, in March 1322, she surrendered to the king all her territorial rights in Wales.

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