

Impact case study (REF3b)

Institution: Canterbury Christ Church University
Unit of Assessment: History (30)
Title of case study: Henry III Fine Rolls Project 1216-1272
<p>1. Summary of the impact The Henry III Fine Rolls Project has reshaped understanding of the period between Magna Carta and the birth of the parliamentary state by preserving, conserving and presenting cultural heritage, and influencing the ideas of the profession. The Project has created a free, online English translation of the medieval Latin fine rolls of Henry III, housed in the National Archives (http://www.finerollshenry3.org.uk/index.html), bringing a vast body of previously unpublished primary material into the public domain that is now used extensively by archivists, genealogists, local historians, heritage organisations, teachers and researchers worldwide, who are interested in the history of thirteenth-century England. Thousands of new users for this resource have been engaged via the website.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (NB: Numbers in brackets cross-refer to details of impact in section 4) Dr Louise Wilkinson of Canterbury Christ Church University was the originator of the project and she is credited with this at the Fine Rolls website (http://www.finerollshenry3.org.uk/content/information/project_info.html#d464568e5354). It was developed by researchers at King's College London, Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) and the National Archives (TNA) between 01 April 2005 and 31 December 2011. The aim of the Project was to democratize the contents of one of the National Archives' chief treasures, the Henry III fine rolls (c. 60 in total), by making them freely available in English translation to everyone via the website. The fine rolls are the great series of parchment rolls, unique in medieval Europe, on which the English royal chancery recorded its business. Fines were offers of money to the king for a wide variety of concessions. The fine rolls for Henry III's reign (1216-72) provide incomparable insights into the operation of royal patronage and the crown's changing relationship with its subjects. The wealth of information made available by the Project is transforming academic and popular understanding of the economic, legal, political, religious and social importance of Henry III's reign (1, 2). The Project was led by Professor David Carpenter (principal investigator, King's College, London), Dr Louise Wilkinson (co-investigator and originator, lecturer 2004-6, senior lecturer 2006-12, Reader 2012-13, Canterbury Christ Church University), Dr David Crook (co-investigator, TNA), and Professor Harold Short (co-investigator, Centre for Computing in the Humanities, King's College, London). The Project employed two research fellows, Dr Paul Dryburgh and Dr Beth Hartland, alongside a technical research team, based at King's. The 2 million Latin words of the fine rolls were translated into English by Dryburgh and Hartland. Translation checking and editorial work was carried out by the Project's academic directors (Carpenter, Crook and Wilkinson), and the rolls published on the Project's website (www.finerollshenry3.org.uk). Dr Wilkinson checked the translations for ten rolls, covering nine regnal years (1237-40, 1242-3, 1248-9 and 1261-5) and totalling more than 5,300 entries. The key research findings of the Project reveal the impact of Magna Carta on English monarchy and society, and the resulting shift to a tax-based parliamentary state. Under King John (1199-1216) the average value of fines was £25,000 a year. Under his son, Henry III (1216-72), it was below £5,000, thanks to Magna Carta, which restricted the king's ability to raise money through extortionate fines. To rectify the shortfall, the king needed taxation but (as the Project has shown) it was universally accepted that this required parliament's consent. To secure consent, the king had to offer positive benefits to his subjects and the fine rolls show how Henry III did so. The king's justice was immensely popular, with thousands of fines being made for writs to conduct common law legal actions, as were the charters he granted to establish new markets and fairs, for which there are more than 270 fines (2). Findings have also revealed a widening political community (30,000 places and 35,000 people feature in the rolls), embracing peasants, townsfolk and knights (2, 4), and have highlighted the status and political engagement of women (16% of those mentioned in the rolls) and other minority groups, including the Jews (3).</p>
<p>3. References to the research</p> <p>1. Key output - Henry III Fine Rolls Project: 2005-2013. Website and Printed Volumes</p>

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Authors: The Project was conceived by Dr Louise Wilkinson (CCCU). The Principal Investigator was Professor David Carpenter (KCL). The co-investigators were Dr Louise Wilkinson (CCCU), Dr David Crook (TNA), and Professor Harold Short (KCL), retired, who headed the team doing the technical research. The research fellows were Dr Paul Dryburgh and Dr Beth Hartland. The technical team included Dr Paul Caton, Paul Spence and José Miguel Vieira. The website includes the following material:

- Translations, Indexes And Images.** Images of the original documents and full English translations of all the fine rolls for the reign of Henry III (1216-72), amounting to 2 million words, have been published online (<http://www.finerollshenry3.org.uk/index.html>). Dr Wilkinson checked the translations for 1237-40, 1242-3, 1248-9 and 1261-5. The electronic edition of the rolls is fully searchable, thus providing not only a gigantic saving in research time, but also the means to ask a range of entirely new questions. Three print volumes containing English translations of the fine rolls and indexes produced by the Project have also been published as (i) *Calendar of the Fine Rolls of the Reign of Henry III. Volume I: 1216–1224*, eds. Paul Dryburgh & Beth Hartland, technical eds. Arianna Ciula & José Miguel Vieira (Boydell and Brewer, 2007); (ii) *Calendar of the Fine Rolls of the Reign of Henry III. Volume II: 1224–1234*, eds. Paul Dryburgh & Beth Hartland, technical eds. Arianna Ciula & José Miguel Vieira (Boydell and Brewer, 2008); and (iii) *Calendar of the Fine Rolls of the Reign of Henry III. Volume III: 1234–1242*, eds. Paul Dryburgh & Beth Hartland, technical eds. Arianna Ciula & José Miguel Vieira (Boydell and Brewer, 2009). Dr Wilkinson's role on the management team is acknowledged in the introduction to the first printed volume.

ii. Related Papers And Fines of The Month. Related papers on Henry III's reign, drawing on material in the fine rolls, are also published on the website (http://www.finerollshenry3.org.uk/content/related_papers/related_papers.html). These include Dr Wilkinson's paper on 'Women, Politics and Local Government in the Thirteenth Century', *Henry III Fine Rolls Project, Related Papers* (2013), pp. 1-20. There is also a 'Fine of the Month' feature in which, since December 2005, there has been monthly comment on material of interest in the rolls (totalling more than 350,000 words). Dr Wilkinson wrote those on 'The Dower of Isabella of Angoulême' (May 2006, <http://www.finerollshenry3.org.uk/content/month/fm-05-2006.html>) and 'Oliver, sixth baron Deyncourt: A former rebel enters his inheritance' (September 2007, <http://www.finerollshenry3.org.uk/content/month/fm-09-2007.html>).

iii. Podcasts of Lectures. Podcasts of lectures delivered at the end of Project conference, held at King's College London in June 2011, have also been made online (see Dr Wilkinson's on 'Women in the Fine Rolls', at <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/ikings/index.php?id=602>).

Evidence about the quality of the research:

1) Key research grant

Grant awarded to: Professor David Carpenter (principal investigator), Dr Louise Wilkinson (co-investigator), Dr David Crook (co-investigator) and Professor Harold Short (co-investigator)

Grant title: Between Magna Carta and the Parliamentary State: The Fine Rolls of King Henry III 1248-1272 (<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funded-Research/Pages/Between-Magna-Carta-and-the-Parliamentary-State-the-Fine-Rolls-of-King-Henry-III-1248-1272.aspx>)

Sponsor: The Arts and Humanities Research Council (Research Grants, Standard)

Period of the grant: 01 April 2008 to 31 December 2011 (including a nine-month extension for maternity leave)

Value of the grant: £624,735.81.

2) The AHRC policy document – AHRC, *Leading the world: the economic impact of UK Arts and Humanities research* (2009), p. 10 – cites the Project as an 'excellent' example of 'Arts and Humanities research as a driver of the culture ecosystem', which is 'indispensable for the study of British political, governmental, legal, social and economic history' <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/News-and-Events/Publications/Documents/Leading-the-World.pdf>.

3) Review of website

Dr Hugh Doherty, 'Review of Henry III Fine Rolls Project', *Reviews in History*, review no. 1064, 2009 <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/1064>, describes the Project as 'a serious and substantial contribution to the study and knowledge of the reign of King Henry III and his kingdom as well as a valuable resource for the delineation of the broader, powerful forces – economic, legal, military, religious, and social – that shaped that king's fortunes and those of his subjects'.

4) The output as a reference point for further research

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i) C. Alexander, A. R. Bell, C. Brooks and T. K. Moore, 'The evolutionary dynamics of the credit relationship between Henry III and Flemish merchants, 1247-1270', ICMA Centre Discussion Papers in Finance DP2011-25, <http://www.icmacentre.ac.uk/files/discussion-papers/DP2011-25.pdf>.

ii) Department of History, Lancaster University, Victoria County History: Cumbria Project, Briefing Note No. 3, Checklists of Sources: Manors and Estates, <http://www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/sites/default/files/Briefing%20Note%203%20-%20Checklist%20for%20Manors%20%20Estates.pdf>.

4. Details of the impact

From its inception, the Project has been guided by the philosophy of making the fine rolls accessible to and usable by as many beneficiaries as possible, reaching out to engage everyone with an interest in this period of English history. Information about the Project has been disseminated through the website, email correspondence and numerous talks by members of the Project team (listed at <http://www.finerollshenry3.org.uk/content/news/events.html>). From 24 to 25 June 2011, the Project hosted an international conference on the fine rolls at KCL, attended by approximately 60 delegates, including students, archivists, local historians and established scholars from the UK and US. Articles about the Project have appeared in *History Today* (Issue 5, 2007), *BBC History Magazine* (March 2011), the local Kent press (*The Kentish Gazette*, Dec. 2010) and the newsletter *Supporting Research at the National Archives* (Winter 2009, Spring 2011, Summer 2011). The Project website has been linked to The National Archives' palaeography practice page, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/latinpalaeography/practice-documents.htm>, its user guide 'Looking for records of medieval political history', <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/looking-for-subject/medieval-political-history.htm>, and its catalogue, <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/SearchUI/Details?uri=C3620>.

The Project's reach and significance can be measured in the following ways:

1. The Project has an international reach and has created new audiences and users for this medieval resource: between 02 June 2012 and 02 June 2013, alone, according to 'Google Analytics', 22,931 visits were made to its website by external users and its webpages were viewed 102,191 times. 8,992 visits were made by returning users. Users accessed the site from the UK (11,699), US (5,796), Australia (1,092), Canada (844), France (431), Germany (360), New Zealand (205), Ireland (155), Spain (145) and unknown countries (146).

2. The 'Fines of the Month', totalling more than 350,000 words on the Project website, provide monthly comment on material in the rolls. They represent a direct interface with the general public as contributions are invited from people outside the Project team. 85 'Fines of the Month' were published between December 2005 and December 2012 (57 after 01 April 2008). Evidence of the Project's impact can be found in more than 40 'Fines of the Month' written by people outside the research team http://www.finerollshenry3.org.uk/content/month/fine_of_the_month.html. These show how material from the rolls has: i. allowed local communities to re-connect with their thirteenth-century past. The villagers of Nunney in Dorset used the rolls to date their market charter to 1260 (Ken Lloyd, Project Director, Friends of Nunney Church, Fine of the Month, August 2010); ii. helped secondary school teachers to research their local communities. Huw Ridgeway, former head of history at Sherborne School, used the fine rolls to examine 'Sherborne and Corfe castles in 1260-1' (Fine of the Month, December 2010); iii. assisted local archivists in extending their knowledge by complementing material in their own repositories. In the Fine of the Month for October 2008, Dr John Alban, the county archivist for Norfolk, explains how the fine rolls provide evidence of the high prices paid by the men of Norwich and Lynn for the confirmation of charters under Henry III; iv. provided heritage organisations with new evidence for the architectural history of their properties (Jeremy Ashbee, Head Properties Curator at English Heritage, "Gloriette" in Corfe Castle', Fine of the Month July 2011); v. been used by postgraduate students at UK Universities. The Fine of the Month for October 2010, which considered the fine rolls as a source for the Fifth Crusade, was written by Josey Cullen, who completed an MA in Crusader Studies at Royal Holloway and Queen Mary, University of London. The Project website has also been used as a teaching resource for the 'Perspectives in Medieval History II' module for the MA in Medieval History at the University of York.

3. The Project has 586 followers on Twitter, and the website has a blog

(<http://blogs.cch.kcl.ac.uk/frh3/>), managed by Dr Wilkinson (August 2010 to December 2012). The blog's impact can be evidenced by its use in the field of Jewish studies. In a blog entry of 31

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January 2012, Marcus Roberts, founder of the Anglo-Jewish heritage organisation J. Trails, commented on the 'Apple of Eve', referred to in a writ copied onto the fine rolls in January 1252, shedding light on rituals in medieval synagogues (<http://blog.frh3.org.uk/?m=201201>).

4. The Project website has been used as a resource by local schools and societies. In March 2013, Pete Morgan, a teacher at Beverley Grammar School, contacted the Project (see <http://blog.frh3.org.uk/?p=1033#comments>), describing how he had set a task for Year 7 students, whereby students used the Henry III Fine Rolls website to research the history of Beverley. Members of the Ilkeston and District Local History Society (Derbyshire) have also used the website to research their 'lords of the manor' (<http://www.ilkestonhistory.org.uk/history/briefhistories/lordsofthemano...>).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact [those relating to specific forms of impact are cross-referenced back to section 4]

1. [relates to impacts 1,2,3] The end of Project report for the AHRC written by Carpenter (KCL), Wilkinson (CCCU) Crook (TNA) and Spence (KCL) entered on the Research Outcomes System (www.rcuk.ac.uk/researchoutcomes). **2. [relates to impact 2]** The Fine of the Month section of the Henry III Fine Rolls Project website lists all 85 'Fines of the Month'

(http://www.finerollshenry3.org.uk/content/month/fine_of_the_month.html), including all those written by people from outside the Project. **3. [relates to impacts 3, 4]** The Project Twitter account (<https://twitter.com/Henry3FineRolls>) and blog (<http://blog.frh3.org.uk>). **4. [relates to impact 4]** The Ilkeston and District Local History Society website cites material from the Project in its section on 'Lords of the Manor', <http://www.ilkestonhistory.org.uk/history/briefhistories/lordsofthemano...>.

5. The Project website's events section, detailing talks and outreach activities by the Project Team (<http://www.finerollshenry3.org.uk/content/news/events.html>). **6.** The podcasts of the talks given at the end of Project conference in June 2011 (<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/ikings/index.php?id=590>).

7. Independent citations to the Project in the popular history media: (a) Medieval studies group blog (12 March 2010), <http://www.inthemedievalmiddle.com/2010/03/henry-iii-fine-rolls-project.html>; (b) 'Among new online publications is the fabulous Henry III Fine Rolls Project, scrutinising documents from the 13th century, where hugely detailed social history shows that the English peasantry, often literate, were well aware of their circumstances and in constant confrontation and negotiation with their lords', Review of S. Jenkins, *A Short History of England* (26 Sept 2011), <http://www.newstatesman.com/non-fiction/2011/09/england-history-english>.

8. Individual users/beneficiaries: (i) Media Historian and Chief Executive Officer of Sticks Research Agency – claims relating to the Project's value to the popular history media and to genealogists (**Contact I.D.1**); (ii) Curator (Collections) Tower of London and Banqueting House, Historic Royal Palaces – claims relating to the Project's impact on beneficiaries in the heritage industry (**Contact I.D.2**); (iii) Secondary School Teacher and Author, Westminster School – claims relating to the Project's value to schools (**Contact I.D.3**); (iv) Senior Archivist, East Sussex Records Office – claims relating to the Project's value to the general public, especially to archive users, genealogists and local communities (**Contact I.D.4**); (v) Head of Publications, Institute of Historical Research, University of London – claims relating to the Project's value to the general public and the wider historical community (**Contact I.D.5**).