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Dublin Core

Title

Isabel de Clare - Countess of Pembroke and Striguil | Isabel de Clare – Iarlles Penfro a Striguil

Subject

Welsh Medieval History

Irish Medieval History

Isabel de Clare

Strongbow

Creator

Linda Asman

Publisher

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Date

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Relation

<https://perma.cc/4FHS-NURC>

Format

Curatescape story

Language

English

Welsh

Coverage

51.697120131878066, -2.6767503390178913

Curatescape Story Item Type Metadata

Lede

Linda Asman tells the story of Isabel de Clare, 4th Countess of Pembroke and Striguil, a powerful woman with great political influence for her time.

Lede (Welsh)

Mae Linda Asman yn adrodd stori Isabel de Clare, 4ydd iarllles Penfro a Striguil, menyw bwerus yr oedd ganddi ddylanwad gwleidyddol mawr am yr oes.

Story

Isabel de Clare was born in Leinster in 1172 to Aoife Mac Murrough and Richard de Clare ('Strongbow'), Earl of Pembroke and Striguil. Following her brother Gilbert's death in 1184, Isabel became sole heir and one of the wealthiest heiresses in the kingdom. She was made a royal ward and, in order to maintain control over whom she married, Henry II had her installed in The Tower of London.

In 1189, Isabel was married to William Marshal. The marriage was a political one. It was granted by Richard the Lionheart in fulfilment of the promise made by his father, Henry II, to William for his unswerving loyalty and service to the crown. Isabel's inheritance transformed William from a landless knight to a great landowner with lands in Ireland, Wales, England and Normandy, and he was eventually made Lord of Leinster and Earl of Pembroke (1199). Despite a thirty-five year age gap, the marriage was a very happy one, resulting in 10 children. *The History of William Marshal* informs us that 'William depended heavily upon the advice and council of his wife, whom he both loved and respected'.

William and King John, Richard the Lionheart's successor, had a falling out in the aftermath of the loss of Normandy, when William was sent to negotiate a truce with King Philip II of France in 1204. With John's prior permission William paid homage to King Philip in order to keep his own lands, but John later took offence, and their relationship became hostile. William, on requesting that he retire to his lands in Ireland, was granted permission only on condition that two of his sons be handed into the King's custody as hostages for his good behaviour.

The period 1207-8 was a difficult time when parts of Leinster were in rebellion against William, encouraged by King John's justiciar Meiler Fitzhenry. When John ordered William back to England, he left Isabel behind to manage their affairs. William respected the fact that she was the source of his power and that, as granddaughter of Dermot, the last Irish king of Leinster, she could command loyalty from the Irish lords which he could not. With William gone to England, Meiler besieged Kilkenny Castle. Far from surrendering, Isabel defeated Meiler and made him submit to her personally, taking his son hostage for future good behaviour. She also took hostages from the other rebellious lords, and was not pleased when William, on his return to Ireland, forgave the rebels, with the exception of Meiler.

For the next few years, Isabel and William spent most of their time in Leinster, developing the City of Kilkenny as their power base. Isabel was a driving force behind the foundation

and development of the Norman town of New Ross – a town for which she had a particular love and where some claim her heart is buried. The couple did not neglect their other lands, including extensive additions to Chepstow Castle and Pembroke. Amongst a number of religious foundations, they established the Cistercian Abbey of Tintern Parva, County Wexford as a daughter house of Tintern Abbey, following a vow taken during a storm on the Irish Sea in 1201.

Isabel and William's lives were to take another turn when John, in his struggle with his barons, reached out to William, summoning him to return to England in 1213. In a bid for peace, William was central to the negotiations which led to the signing of Magna Carta in 1215 and was one of the few English earls to remain loyal through the Baron's War. Following King John's death in 1216, William became Regent of England for the young king Henry III and, at the age of 70, led the royal army to Lincoln to dispel the French invading forces, saving England and establishing the peace.

Isabel and William were married for thirty years and, when William lay dying in 1219, Isabel and their children were at his bedside. Isabel was grief stricken at his death. Despite her grief, she was determined to preserve and protect all that she and William had built. To assert her rights in England, Wales and Ireland, she petitioned the justiciar of England and the papal legate and travelled to France to do homage to Philip II for her Norman lands. Sadly, Isabel died only ten months after her beloved husband. So close in life, they were buried apart: he in the Temple Church and she Tintern Abbey where she lay next to her mother, Aoife of Leinster.

Story (Welsh)

Ganwyd Isabel de Clare yn Leinster yn 1172 i Aoife Mac Murrough a Richard de Clare ('Bwa Cadarn'), Iarll Penfro a Striguil. Yn dilyn marwolaeth ei brawd, Gilbert, yn 1184, daeth Isabel yn unig etifedd ac yn un o'r etifeddesau cyfoethocaf yn y deyrnas. Fe'i gwnaethpwyd yn ward brenhinol ac er mwyn cadw rheolaeth dros y sawl y byddai hi'n priodi, fe'i gosodwyd yn Nhŵr Llundain gan Henry II.

Yn 1189, priodwyd Isabel a William Marshal. Priodas wleidyddol oedd hon. Fe'i dyfarnwyd gan Rhisiart Lewgalon er mwyn cyflawni'r addewid a wnaethpwyd gan ei dad, Henry II, i Williams am ei deyrngarwch diwyro a'i wasanaeth i'r goron. Trawsnewidiwyd William o fod yn farchog heb dir i fod yn dirfeddiannwr mawr gyda thiroedd yng Nghymru, Iwerddon, Lloegr a Normandi gan etifeddiaeth Isabel, ac yn y pen draw, fe'i wnaethpwyd yn Arglwydd Leinster ac yn Iarll Penfro (1199). Er gwaethaf y ffaith bod bwlch o dri deg pump o flynyddoedd rhyngddynt, bu'n briodas hapus iawn, a chawsant ddeg o blant. Mae *The History of William Marshal* yn ein hysbysu bod 'William wedi dibynnu'n fawr ar gyngor ei wraig, yr oedd yn ei charu ac yn ei pharchu'.

Ar ôl colli Normandi, roedd William a Brenin John, olynydd Rhisiart Lewgalon, wedi cweyrla, pan anfonwyd William i drafod cadoediad gyda Brenin Philip II o Ffrainc yn 1204. Heb sicrhau caniatâd John ymlaen llaw, talodd William wrogaeth i Brenin Philip er mwyn cadw ei diroedd ef, ond roedd hyn wedi digio John yn ddiweddarach, ac aeth eu perthynas yn un elyniaethus. Ar ôl gofyn am gael ymddeol i'w dir yn Iwerddon, rhoddwyd caniatâd i William ar yr amod y byddai dau o'u feibion yn cael eu trosglwyddo fel gwyystlon i'r Brenin am ei ymddygiad da.

Bu 1207-8 yn gyfnod anodd, pan welwyd rhannau o Leinster yn gwrthryfela yn erbyn William, wedi'u hannog gan brifustus Brenin John, Meiler Fitzhenry. Pan orchmynnwyd William i ddychwelyd i Loegr gan John, gadawodd Isobel ar ôl i reoli eu busnes. Roedd William yn parchu'r ffaith mai hi oedd ffynhonnell ei rym ac fel wyres Dermot, brenin Gwyddelig olaf Leinster, y gallai sicrhau teyrngarwch yr arglwyddi Gwyddelig, nad oedd

modd iddo ef. Ar ôl i William deithio i Loegr, rhoddodd Meiler Gastell Kilkenny dan warchae. Yn hytrach nag ildio, llwyddodd Isabel i drechu Meiler a pheri iddo blygu iddi yn bersonol, gan gymryd ei fab fel gwystl am ymddygiad da yn y dyfodol. Cymrodd wystlon gan yr arglwyddi gwrthryfelgar eraill hefyd, ac nid oedd yn falch pan benderfynodd William faddau i'r gwrthryfelwyr ar ôl iddo ddychwelyd i Iwerddon, ac eithrio Meiler.

Dros y blynyddoedd nesaf, treuliodd Isabel a William ran fwyaf eu hamser yn Leinster, gan ddatblygu Dinas Kilkenny fel canolbwynt eu grym. Cyflawnodd Isabel rôl hanfodol yn y gwaith o sefydlu a datblygu tref Normanaidd New Ross – tref yr oedd hi'n ei charu a lle y mae rhai yn honni y claddwyd ei chalon. Nid oedd y pâr wedi esgeuluso eu tiroedd eraill, gan gynnwys ychwanegiadau helaeth i Gastell Cas-gwent a Phenfro. Ymhlith nifer o sefydliadau crefyddol, sefydlont Abaty Sistersaidd Tintern Parva, Sir Wexford fel tŷ merch Abaty Tyndyrn, yn dilyn llw a wnaethpwyd yn ystod storm ar Fôr Iwerddon yn 1201.

Byddai tro arall yn dod ar fyd Isabel a William pan benderfynodd John, wrth iddo ymgodymu â'i farwniaid, estyn allan i William a galw arno i ddychwelyd i Loegr yn 1213. Gan geisio sicrhau heddwch, bu William yn rhan ganolog o'r trafodaethau a arweiniodd at lofnodi'r Magna Carta yn 1215 ac ef oedd un o blith yr ychydig ieirll Seisnig i barhau i fod yn ffyddlon trwy gydol Rhyfel y Barwniaid. Yn dilyn marwolaeth Brenin John yn 1216, daeth William yn Rhaglyw Lloegr ar gyfer brenin ifanc Henry III, a phan oedd yn 70 oed, arweiniodd y fyddin frenhinol i Lincoln i wasgaru'r lluoedd Ffrengig a oedd yn ymosod, gan arbed Lloegr a chreu heddwch.

Bu Isabel a William yn briod am ddeg mlynedd ar hugain, a phan oedd William ar ei wely angau yn 1219, roedd Isabel a'u plant wrth ei ymyl. Bu Isabel yn galaru ar ôl ei farwolaeth. Er gwaethaf ei galar, roedd hi'n benderfynol o ddiogelu a gwarchod popeth yr oedd William a hi wedi ei greu. Er mwyn datgan ei hawliau yng Nghymru, Lloegr ac Iwerddon, deisyfodd brifustus Lloegr a llysgennad y Pab a theithiodd i Ffrainc i dalu gwrogaeth i Philip II am ei thiroedd yn Normandi. Trist nodi y bu farw Isabel ddeg mis yn unig ar ôl marwolaeth ei hannwyl wr. Er y buont mor agos yn ystod eu bywyd, fe'u claddwyd ar wahân: claddwyd ef yn Eglwys Temple a chladdwyd hithau yn Abaty Tyndyrn, lle y'i rhoddwyd i orwedd wrth ymyl ei mam, Aoife o Leinster.

Factoid

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