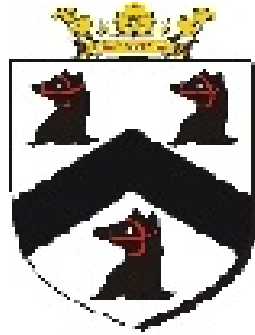


“LUDLOW”

Origins & Meaning of the LUDLOW Name, Family and History

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April, 2013



Ludlow



Introduction – Hello Ludlows!

Welcome to some chronicles of an ancestral British family – the LUDLOW family. This family history begins with a common ancestor, probably of Celtic lineage, who lived in or near the town of Ludlow near the Welsh border of the British midlands shortly after the Norman conquest of 1066 CE.¹ The Normans had built a great stone castle in the ancient Celtic town of *Llystwydoc* ('Palace of Princes'). The local Anglo-Saxons also called the town *Hludhlaw* ('Loud Hill').² The new Norman rulers named the town 'Ludelowe', later spelled Ludlow. Their Norman style 'stone keep' castle of Ludlow became the dominant fortification in a region of valuable wool production in the border lands of historic conflict between Celtic, Roman, Anglo-Saxon, Welsh and Norman groups.³ One of the male residents in the town, perhaps one of the public or private servants employed at the castle, became known with a nickname or surname of 'de Ludelowe', meaning "from Ludlow."⁴ It is unknown how many children and grandchildren he had. However, his immediate descendants settled in southern and central Salopshire, especially in the region between Ludlow and Shrewsbury. According to the earliest known records dated from around 1150 CE, the primary livelihood of these early 'de Ludeloves' was connected with raising sheep and merchandising wool.

¹ As can best be determined by Ludlow family historians, almost all individuals throughout the world with the Ludlow surname are one extended family descending from this common progenitor. Also, the dating notation of CE stands for 'Common Era' – a term now used worldwide by historians of different cultures. The years of the Common Era are the same as A.D. years in Christian calendaring.

² These ancient linguistic roots of the Ludlow name will be explained later in this article.

³ These central European, Germanic and Scandinavian peoples had migrated to the British Isles from Europe over centuries of time, as will be discussed later.

⁴ One Ludlow family tradition suggests that this person was a convert to Christianity and, upon baptism, took a requested surname of 'de Ludelowe' as his name was entered into the church records.

The earliest ‘de Ludelowe’ of fame was Nicholas de Ludlowe from Shrewsbury, a wool merchant to Prince Edward (who later became Edward I ⁵; see also endnote ¹), the son of Henry III. Nicholas is mentioned frequently and was acknowledged at the time (during 1250-1270 CE) as the richest wool merchant in England. His son, Laurence de Ludlow, was the ‘King’s wool merchant’ and the builder of Stokesay Castle, a few miles from the town and castle of Ludlow. Laurence was declared even wealthier than his father. Stokesay Castle became the Ludlow ‘manor house’ for these upper class Ludlows, many of whom were made ‘Knights of the Shire’ or appointed as ‘Sheriffs of Shropshire’.⁶

But in typical feudal culture, not all Ludlow sons were able to inherit land in the Ludlow-Stokesay-Shrewsbury area or to retain the nobility titles of their noted ancestors. Some Ludlows who did not acquire landed titles went into the church or the army, pursued trades in cities such as Bristol or London, or sought positions in the great households or universities. For example, a William de Ludlow was Chancellor of Oxford University in 1255. And in the early part of the 14th century ‘Ludlow Hall’ was established at Oxford.⁷ Many Ludlows lived in the country and pursued various agricultural and pastoral trades.

Other Ludlows moved southeast to Gloucestershire and Wiltshire in order to continue familiar occupations. For example, Nicholas de Ludlow’s second son, John, was also a wool merchant and he set up a subsidiary of the family business in Chipping Campden, Gloucester. Like his brother, Laurence, John was also involved in the wool trade as far away as Europe. A couple of centuries later, a William Ludlow (1410-1478) founded the influential Hill Deverill branch of the Ludlow family when he acquired the manor of Hill Deverill, Wilts in 1438. Before his move to Wiltshire William was very involved in the wool and cloth industry in London and Middlesex.

Also, a Stephen Ludlow (the fourth son of an unknown Ludlow) settled in Shipton Moyne, Glos, circa 1500. This family flourished and expanded into Somerset, Wiltshire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Staffordshire, Yorkshire and the cities of London, Birmingham and Bristol. Later descendants migrated to the United States, Australia, and Canada. To start with, the family remained closely associated with agriculture but as time moved on various trades were learned and several became professionals: professors, doctors, surgeons, barristers, soldiers, sailors, brewers and businessmen. This branch of the family continues to flourish and provides the drive behind the current research into each branch of the family at every level. DNA test results have confirmed that the Ludlows of the Hill Deverill, Wilts, branch and the Ludlows of the Shipton Moyne, Glos, branch are related.

Among the descendants of William of Hill Deverill, we find the two most influential Ludlow political leaders in the early modern era of western civilization.

⁵ Edward's first Parliament also enacted legislation on wool, England's most important export at the time. At the request of the merchants, Edward was given a customs grant on wool and hides which amounted to nearly £10,000 a year. Nicholas and Laurence Ludlow also benefitted from these royal wool transactions.

⁶ See the helpful “Potted History” article by Robin Ludlow at the Ludlow Family Research website: <http://ludlowfamilyresearch.org.uk/web/> His article provides much background material for this document.

⁷ This lecture hall or building and any associated facilities and academic programs was probably financed by the Ludlow family wool trade. Two centuries later it was amalgamated with University College.

Two famous, influential Ludlow leaders: Roger (1590) & Edmund (1617)



Roger Ludlow in Connecticut



Edmund Ludlow

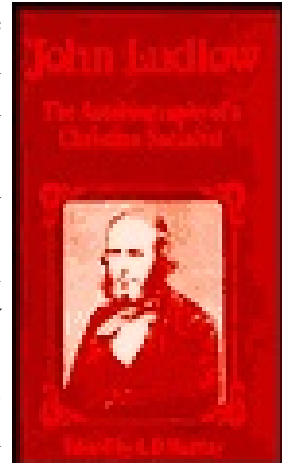
William Ludlow had two famous descendants who helped mold new forms of modern government in the 1600s – one in the British colonies in America and one in the homeland – each being activists during critical times of political upheaval. Roger Ludlow migrated to America in 1630 where he presided over the first court held in Connecticut and is credited with the final drafting of the *Fundamental Orders of Connecticut* adopted by the colony in 1639. These *Fundamental Orders* are considered to be the first constitution in America. In 1650, he also completed the first codification of Connecticut laws, known as Ludlow's Code, which began with a bill of rights. These documents became the foundation of Connecticut's written law and later served as models for James Madison and his drafting of the U.S. Constitution.⁸ (See also endnote ².)

The other famous descendant of William was Sir Edmund Ludlow, English parliamentarian and regicide. General Ludlow commanded a regiment of cavalry in the English civil war and served on the court that condemned King Charles I, signing the king's death warrant in 1649. He served as the Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in Ireland and he sympathized with the republican Puritans and opposed the authoritarian Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell and likewise the restoration of the monarchy under Charles II.⁹ Thus, in the quest for civil government and citizen rights, the Ludlow name (through Roger and Edmund) became known on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean for bold political developments during the Puritan era of the 1600s.

⁸ Roger served for many years as the deputy governor of Connecticut. He was called the "Father of Connecticut Jurisprudence". He was determined to establish a separate and independent colony. He began to establish a form of government that constituted a public state or commonwealth. [This was the first example in history of a written constitution -- a distinct organic law, constituting a government and defining its powers. The constitution was that of an independent state.] He often represented the colony in the New England Confederation. In 1654, he returned to England and then settled in Ireland, where he died in Dublin in 1666.

⁹ Edmund's memoirs state that he met his second cousin Roger in Ireland in 1659 while Edmund was the Commander-in-Chief in Ireland. They undoubtedly discussed their Puritan sympathies and their novel political philosophies. After the restoration of Charles II in 1660, Edmund fled to Switzerland, where he died in 1692.

In the nineteenth century, another famous person with the Ludlow surname came upon the European scene. John Malcolm Forbes Ludlow (1821-1911) was an Indian-born lawyer who became a significant social reformer in England. John M. F. Ludlow was a founding member of the Christian socialist movement. Christian socialism spread from its beginnings in England to France and Germany, where major ‘Christian Socialist’ political parties would be established. John and two co-founders (Charles Kingsley and Frederick Denison Maurice) supported moderate social democracy. They emphasized what they considered as the central message of Christianity in social ethics, notably the values of cooperation, brotherhood, simplicity of tastes, and the spirit of self-sacrifice. Their ideas proved fertile in both the short and the long runs, although in actual political terms Christian socialist philosophy hardly succeeded in altering the predominantly secular orientation of most socialist movements.



*John Ludlow:
The Autobiography of a
Christian Scientist*

A few centuries before these famous Ludlow political and social reformers lived, another important, but less famous, Ludlow came on the English scene. Around 1500, as the renaissance age swept through England, one of the younger sons of a Ludlow family, a Stephen Ludlow, established his family in Shipton Moyne in Gloucestershire (just inside the county border with Wiltshire). Stephen and Joan Ludlow founded what would be known as the Shipton-Moyne branch of the Ludlow family in England. His descendants, often employed as agricultural labourers and shepherds, settled throughout the southern Cotswold Hills of Gloucester. In the 16/1700s, two major sub-branches of the family developed: the John and Edith Ludlow clan and the Walter and Bridget Ludlow clan. The expanding family flourished and later extended throughout England. To start with, the Shipton-Moyne Ludlow family remained closely associated with agriculture but as time moved on various trades were learned and several became professionals: doctors, surgeons, professors, teachers, barristers, soldiers, sailors, brewers and businessmen. Eventually, later descendants migrated into Australia, the United States,¹⁰ Canada and Mexico. This Shipton-Moyne branch of the Ludlow family continues to flourish and provides the drive behind the current genealogical research into all of the branches of the Ludlow family, in England and abroad. For some unknown reason, the descendants of Stephen Ludlow seem to have a special interest in family history and they have established the <http://ludlowfamilyresearch.org.uk/web/> and www.ludlowfamilies.org websites in order to share and expand available information about the Ludlow family and any individual with the Ludlow surname.¹¹

¹⁰ Including the ancestors of this article’s author, Victor L. Ludlow.

¹¹ As best as can be determined, almost all individuals carrying the Ludlow surname are of one single extended family. However, a few people have assumed the Ludlow surname by adoption, by transformation (as a different surname, usually of non-English derivation, started to be spelled as ‘Ludlow’), or by legally changing one’s surname to Ludlow. These websites hope to help any of the tens-of-thousands of the descendants of any Ludlow ancestors to better connect with and appreciate their Ludlow heritage.

More about some of the modern Ludlows and how you might connect and correspond with them will be presented later in this article. First, we need to learn more about the ancient historical and ancestral roots of the Ludlow family and the origins and possible meanings of the Ludlow name. We will do this by reviewing five major topics:

- a **People** (the Celts who had migrated from central Europe) -
- a **Place** (a strategic site on the River Teme near the Welsh border) -
- a **Castle & a Town** (that established the Ludlow name in British history) -
- a **Name** (having something to do with a princely ‘Lud’ or ‘loud’ hill) -
- a **Family** (the extended worldwide descendants of a common Ludlow ancestor).

Let us begin with the historical setting for the earliest Ludlow ancestors in the British Isles.

LUDLOW family roots are deep in ancient British and Celtic history.

Ludlow ancestry among the Caucasian/Celtic descendants of Japeth

In the eons of time after the last ice age and long before written history was first recorded on the isles off the northwest coast of Europe, adventurous fishermen or hunters discovered the islands now known as the British Isles and ventured there. Others followed until clans of hunters-gatherers were roaming the countryside. Gradually, the tilling of fields, the tending of herds and other domestic pursuits were practiced. As noted in the common name for this historical period (the ‘Stone Age’), the major communal advancements were with stone -- small, medium and large. Small stones, often of chipped flint, were developed for hand and agricultural tools. Medium stones were collected from fields and laid in rough walls, apparently to clear land for better crop growth and to establish boundaries for families and barriers against grazing animals. Large stones were moved to communal sacred sites and placed in large circles, such as at Stonehenge. Archeological excavations from some stone age sites also indicate that rocks were laid in rough paths to facilitate travel across wetlands and to provide foundations and ‘furniture’ for paleolithic homes. Undoubtedly a lot of wood was used in all these ancient endeavors, but it rarely lasted long enough for modern archeologists and anthropologists to study. It is hard to fully answer the question, 'Who were these early stone-age peoples of Britain and how did they live?' because these first hunters, farmers and settlers left no written accounts of themselves. We know much more about contemporary peoples living in other lands where history was being written on clay tablets, papyrus sheets, tomb walls and other materials in the cradles of civilization in Mesopotamia and Egypt.

Although some of the Ludlow family ancestry may derive from these ancient stone-age inhabitants, it appears that the family’s primary ancestral roots were established in the British Isles during the Bronze and Iron ages of world history as later peoples migrated from Europe to Britain. It began around 2000 BCE, as Abraham was journeying between Mesopotamia and Egypt and as Stonehenge’s inner ring of bluestones was being erected, that various segments of the Caucasoid population were spreading from the Caucasus mountains between the Black and Caspian Seas throughout Europe and into the Asian sub-continent of India. One of these Caucasian communities in Europe would later be

known as the Celts. According to their tradition and to linguistic evidence, the Celts originated in the steppes north of the Black and Caspian Seas. Their Celtic or Gallic language was one branch of the Indo-European languages.¹² The Celtic peoples and their language apparently moved westward towards the Black Sea and then into central Europe. Eventually, Celtic speaking peoples migrated westward through the lands north of the Alps, into the Iberian peninsula and throughout the lands west of the Rhein River, including the region later named after their Gaelic culture, Gaul.¹³ Finally, they moved onto the islands near the European coast. Coming from the European mainland, they crossed the straits of Dover (that were narrower then) or traveled from the lowlands near the mouth of the Rhein across the North Sea in their wooden boats in order to reach the British Isles. Basically they were migrating groups of colonists – not invading bands of warriors.

These people who spoke Celtic languages were the earliest Britons of whom we have limited information from ancient written records. Scholars generally recognize two waves of Celts that migrated to the British Isles. The first Celtic colonists arrived during the Bronze Age, before 1000 BCE. These earlier ‘Goidelic’ Celts ended up in Ireland and the highlands and islands of Scotland. Scholars are not sure if these early Celts (Scots and Picts) migrated directly there from the continent or if they were pushed into these regions by later groups of Celts (Britons and Gauls). These later ‘Brythonic’ Celts, whose language in continental Gaul had undergone certain sound-changes, spread throughout the main island of Great Britain and their culture continued centuries later in Wales and Cornwall on the island and in Brittany on the mainland of Europe.¹⁴ As the latest Celts arrived after 500 BCE, they helped introduce more refined bronze metallurgy techniques along with an artistic style known as La Tene¹⁵. They also brought improved techniques of iron metallurgy with them as the Iron Age spread in Britain. NOTE: Based on multiple DNA tests of living Ludlow males, we can safely assume that the major component of Ludlow ancestry is found among these waves of Celtic settlers.

Nomadic Celtic families were settling throughout the British Isles during the centuries of the great Egyptian, Hittite, Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian and Greek empires of recorded history. However, the ancient Celts and our British ancestors maintained a tradition of oral, not written, history. Fortunately, later Greek, Roman and other historians and writers have recorded bits and pieces of Celtic oral traditions. The main body of records dealing with the history of the early Britons is contained especially in two ancient books. The first is *Historia Britonum* or "The History of the Britons" compiled by Nennius in the ninth century of the Common Era; the second, *Historia Regum Brittoniae*, or "History of the Kings of Britain" was compiled by Geoffrey of Monmouth and published by him in the twelfth century CE. Both accounts deal with the arrival in the British isles of the earliest settlers after an ancient flood.

¹² English derives from the Germanic branch.

¹³ Today, this region is known as France and Belgium.

¹⁴ See pages 19-20 in *Celtic Britain* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1963) by Nora Chadwick.

¹⁵ An Iron Age civilization named after a site near Lake Neuchatel in Switzerland.

Two record keepers of ancient British history: Nennius & Geoffrey

Nennius, a Welsh monk, gathered together many different sources that were extant in his own day to compile his history, which is dated shortly after 820 CE. Among the sources were various surviving oral traditions and some written resources, including Irish records, a Roman chronicle and other written histories. Most of these traditions and records were already of great age and had passed through an unknown variety of transmissions by the time Nennius wrote out portions of them in Latin. The text itself is a collection of excerpts, chronological calculations, glosses, and summaries based on these earlier records. It was a complex achievement that in one recension (or later version) of the manuscript the author called his work a “heap of all he could find”. Nennius simply copied from these various records with no apparent attempt to editorialize, change or ‘correct’ them. It was a valuable work for understanding ancient and early-medieval traditions of early British history. One insightful perspective is recorded in sections 17 and 18 of his book in which are recounted the origins of various European peoples: “The first man that dwelt in Europe was Alanus, with his three sons, Hisicion, Armenon, and Neugio. Hisicion had four sons, Francus, Romanus, Alamanus, and Bruttus. ... From Hisicion arose four nations -- the Franks, the Latins, the Germans, and the Britons”¹⁶ Nennius also traces the Britons back to their very beginnings, to Noah through his son, Japheth, thus supplementing the brief account contained in the tenth and eleventh chapters of Genesis. There was a time-span of many centuries between the birth of the European nations, as recounted by Nennius, and the invasion of Britain by the Romans in 55 BCE but little information is provided. A few more details of this ancient historic period are described in the afore-mentioned work of Geoffrey.

It was Geoffrey of Monmouth, a Catholic clergyman from Wales, who, in his *Historia Regum Britanniae* (completed in 1136 CE), recorded the legendary past and traced the origin of Britain to its founder Brut¹⁷, the great-grandson of Aeneas, who left Troy when it fell and later settled in Italy. Geoffrey records that a certain tribal chieftain known as Brutus (or Brut) became a powerful ruler in the land that later would be named after him and be called Britain. According to Geoffrey’s history of the early Britons, Brutus became the first legendary king of England¹⁸, ruling around 1100 BCE, and his personal name became the eponym¹⁹ of Britain. Subsequent chapters of his work tell of legendary and actual events in British history through the Roman era down to early medieval times, including the story of Lear and his daughters, the offer of tribute from Rome to Belinus and Brennius, Julius

¹⁶ The full text is available at <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/nennius-full.html>

¹⁷ Because of this purported origin, early histories of Britain were known as "Bruts."

¹⁸ The term ‘King of the Britons’ refers to kings of Celtic Great Britain as recorded by much later authors, including Nennius, Gildas, and predominantly Geoffrey of Monmouth. Various lists of the kings survive, although none of the original records are known to exist.

¹⁹ A person’s name for whom something or someplace is named. In a similar pattern going the opposite direction, a ‘toponym’ is a name derived from a place; such as the surname of ‘Ludlow’ that derives from a place name.

Caesar's unsuccessful attempt at conquest, and one explanation for the sudden, strong Saxon military presence in Britain (at the invitation of certain Celtic chieftains).

Geoffrey also states that one of the last Celtic kings of Britain before the Roman era was King Llud (or Lud), who was named after the Celtic warrior god of healing. King Llud reigned as King of Wales and the King of the Britons around 73-58 BCE, shortly before Julius Caesar invaded England in 55 BCE²⁰.

Llud's name derives from the Welsh hero Lludd Llaw Eraint (Llud the silver handed)²¹ who, according to early legends, was wounded in battle and one of his hands was replaced with a silver metal one. During his reign, King Llud became famous for building and repairing towns and for improving peasant housing throughout the kingdom. Most important of his building projects was New Troy, or Trinovantum as it was then known, where he built massive towers all around the city. He arranged massive feasts for the people and celebrated the improved city of Trinovantum. Because of this, the city was later renamed Kaerlud, 'City of Lud' in Welsh. That name became corrupted into Kaerlundein, or City of Lundein, until the Romans called it Londinium, which formed the basis for its current name, London. When he died, King Llud was buried in London by the city wall where Ludgate is named after him²². As will be seen later in this article, King Llud's name may also have become a part of the name of the town of "Ludlow" in the west of England.

Although few written records remain to help us understand the period of early Briton-Celtic history, later writers, archeologists and other social scientists have helped us gain important insights into the life and history of peoples on the British Isles during the thousand years before the Common Era and the extension of the Roman Empire onto these lands. Most students of European and British history remember that after Celtic invaders sacked Rome in 279 BCE, Roman legions responded with greater effectiveness against the Celts. By 200 BCE, many of the continental Celts had submitted to Roman rule and shortly thereafter most of western Europe, including Gaul, was governed by Roman rule. In both 55 and 54 BCE, Julius Caesar moved Roman legions from Gaul and attempted two unsuccessful invasions of Britain. Rebellions in Gaul and problems in Rome and other parts of the empire prevented further Roman encroachment into Britain for almost a century until 43 CE, when Claudius and the Roman legions brought much of England into the Roman Empire. Much more is known about British history after this time. In fact, most modern histories of Britain begin with the Roman era and very little, if any, historical material is provided about the earlier time periods.

²⁰ Caesar's description of his invasion of Britain in the second book of Gallic War marked the first time that the name of Britain was mentioned in the written histories of antiquity.

²¹ A similarly named Celtic god was *Lleu Llaw Gyffes* (the 'youngster' or 'bright light' of the 'sure, long hand'). In Ireland and Wales he was known as 'the Shining One', a sun god and god of war. He was also the 'many-skilled one', the 'fair-haired one', a hero god. His feast is Lughnassadh, a harvest festival. He was associated with ravens and his symbol was a white stag in Wales. He was also a multi-talented carpenter, mason, smith, goldsmith, harper, poet, historian, physician and Druid prophet or priest.

²² Ludgate Hill is where St. Paul's Cathedral is located in London.

In the millennium between the Roman era and the medieval age, the Celtic Ludlow ancestors in Britain experienced two major periods of ‘foreign’ government rule that sandwiched a short period of Celtic independence: Roman (43 - c. 400 CE) and Anglo-Saxon/Viking (c. 500-1066 CE). During the Roman period, the Britons often allied with Roman rulers, especially in the northern and western regions under Roman military rule, in order to better control pressure from the Scots in Ireland and the Picts in Scotland. Perhaps the most noted event of the Roman period for the Ludlow ancestors was the introduction of Christianity to the British Isles. Of course we have no way of knowing exactly when and where these ancestors of the later Ludlow family became Christians or how many of them maintained either their ancient Celtic druid or their newer Roman pagan religious beliefs or traditions. After Roman civil and military government left Britain in the early fifth century, the Britons had to build up their own independence from within and to resist conquest from without. In the century of Celtic rule over Britain (c. 400 - 500 CE), the independent kingdoms of Scotland and Wales grew even stronger; often at the expense of the power and stability of the Britons. A resurgence of Celtic culture and religion also occurred during this period. At the same time, Anglo-Saxon settlers and other Germanic peoples had moved westward into Britain, partially under pressure from the Huns and other Asiatic tribes who were moving into central Europe. Although the details are uncertain, it appears that some British rulers invited Anglo-Saxon forces into the country as mercenaries.

‘LUDLOW’ as the place name of an ancient Celtic town in west-central England near the Welsh border.

Linguistic origins of the LUDLOW name

After the Anglo-Saxons forced many Celts out of eastern and central England toward Wales during the 5th and 6th centuries, various individual Welsh kings had, at various times, allied themselves to, or paid homage to, various rulers in England. Some Celtic nobility may have resided in what would later be known as the town of Ludlow because the ancient Welsh name for Ludlow was *Llystwysoc* - meaning ‘Palace of Princes’ (*llys* = ‘court’ and *twysoc* = ‘prince’). It is, however, not known if the Briton King Llyud ever resided in the town, although he probably visited it.

If the town of Ludlow today was located in eastern Wales instead of western England, the modern name in Welsh (or *Cymraeg* or *Galesez*) would be Llywydlo. The Welsh name is a combination of *Llywydd*, and *Llaw*. Note also that *Llud*, in modern Welsh, signifies whatever connects or keeps together. This meaning perhaps derives from King *Llud* (or *Llywydd*) of the Britons, a famous commander who built-up towns (especially London) and united his people.²³ *Llaw* in classical Celtic

²³ For example, *llywydd* in Welsh means ‘president’, *llywyddo* means ‘presidential’ and *llywydd* means prosperity and success while *llywyddo* means to prosper or succeed. Another interesting way to translate *Llywydlo* would be: *llywyd* = grey and *llo* = calf; so the name could be translated as ‘grey calf’. See <http://www.websters-online-dictionary.org/definition/Welsh-english/ll/llwyd.html> and <http://www.websters-online-dictionary.org/translation/Welsh/llo>

mythology and in modern Welsh means ‘hand’. Thus *LludLlaw* or Ludlow could mean “Llud’s hand”, “a royal hand”, “a building hand”, or “a helping hand”.

‘Ludlow’ appears to be a place name that derives from either a god (Llud) in Druid mythology or an Anglo-Saxon description of the area. How the town name transformed into the early English name of Ludlow is uncertain, but it seems to be a carry-over from the Anglo-Saxon name for the community *Hludhlaw*, which was transformed by the Normans into *Ludelowe*, later spelled as ‘Ludlow’.

The Old English (or Anglo-Saxon) roots for ‘Ludlow’ are thought to come from *hlude*, meaning ‘loud’, and *hlaw*, usually translated as ‘hill’ or mound.²⁴ At the time, the nearby section of the Teme river contained rapids and so the *hlud* of Ludlow came from ‘the loud water’, while *hlaw* meant ‘hill’²⁵. Thus, according to Anglo-Saxon meaning, Ludlow was a ‘*hill by a loud river*’²⁶. Or, if the Ludlow name was a transfer from a contemporary Welsh name carried over into Old English, it could mean “Llud’s hill”, alluding to a royal residence of King Llud.

So, what does the name ‘Ludlow’ really mean? According to the linguistic information presented, you can choose any one (or a combination) of likely meanings. If you favor nature and the out-of-doors, you may prefer the Anglo-Saxon meaning ‘loud hill by the rapids’ and think of a rural setting along a bend of the River Teme. If you are into connecting your ancestry to historical figures, you might choose ‘Llud’s hill’ or ‘princely palace’, alluding to the ancient Welsh names of the town and the Celtic King Llud. If you are a social reformer, like some famous Ludlow leaders in past centuries, you would prefer the ‘helping hand’ or a ‘hand of building’ meanings of *Lludllaw*. If you are into politics or business, then the roots from the modern Welsh name suggesting ‘presidential’ or ‘prosperity’ would be your favorite meaning. Finally, if you love animals, you would favor the simple ‘grey calf’ rendition from the Welsh name *Llwydlo*. Whatever your choice, hopefully it will remain a positive one as you associate with any members of the extended Ludlow family!²⁷

²⁴ ‘Hill’ may refer to the ‘hill within a valley’ on which Ludlow stands. Or, it could refer to a ‘tumulus’ (an ancient artificial mound) that had been used by earlier inhabitants as a hilltop fortress or a burial ground.

²⁵ Since in British English an initial ‘h’ is often silent, ‘hlud-hlaw’ could be pronounced ‘ludlaw’.

²⁶ A simplified meaning would be ‘loud hill’. It is easy to see and hear how ‘loud’ would be contracted to ‘lud’. But how does the ‘low’ in Ludlow come to mean ‘hill’ in English. Think of ‘**low**lands’ compared to ‘highlands’ in the British Isles – that is, **hilly** country compared to mountains. Thus a ‘lud-low’ could be a ‘loud hill’.

See also the following resources: www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ludlow; *An Etymological Dictionary of ... Names With an Essay on their Derivation and Import*, William Arthur, NY, NY: Sheldon, Blake, Bleeker & Co., 1857; www.bbc.co.uk/shropshire/features/places/ludlow

²⁷ Check towards the end of this article for some additional, modern meanings of ‘Ludlow’ as gathered from various ‘names-for-your-baby’ resources.

Although the place name of Ludlow was of ancient origins, it is not found in written documents dated before the twelfth century. After the Norman conquest, it first appears in a written document in 1138 CE as ‘Ludelaue’. In other early written records of medieval England it could be listed as ‘Ludelawe’, ‘Ludelowe’, ‘Lodelowe’, or ‘Ludelawa’.²⁸ Early chronicles show that “Ludelowe” was often the preferred spelling for the family (and town) of Ludlow during the Norman medieval period. It then later evolved into ‘Ludelow’ or ‘Ludlowe’ and then became standardized as ‘Ludlow’.

Ludlow town was located in the frontier regions between the Romans and Celts (1st - 6th centuries CE) and later between the Celts and the Anglo-Saxons (6th - 11th centuries CE). Although no ancient fortifications or archeological ruins have been identified from classical or early medieval times, Ludlow might have had some limited hilltop fortifications during the Celtic and Anglo-Saxon periods. However, in spite of numerous English raids around Ludlow and into Wales, there is little archeological evidence of permanent Anglo-Saxon settlement within the region. It seems to have remained under Celtic control or influence for most of the early medieval period.

The fortunes of the Welsh kingdoms waxed and waned as they each strove for supremacy over the centuries, and there was actually a brief period of eight years between 1055 and 1063 when Gruffudd ap Llywelyn of Gwynedd brought most of Wales under his control. Indeed, Gruffudd felt confident enough to invade England, with Irish Viking assistance, and succeeded in burning the town of Hereford, near Ludlow, before being repulsed by Earl (later King) Harold in a campaign that did much to establish the latter’s reputation.

As a reward for loyal service, William the Conqueror had granted various lands and titles to his officers. One of the Norman nobles, Walter de Lacy, was an under-tenant of one of the earls appointed by William the Conqueror to expand Norman dominion into Wales. The de Lacy estate of Stanton included the town later known as Ludlow. It was around 1085 CE when the De Lacys, especially Roger, fortified Ludlow in the west of England while William the Conqueror strengthened the town



of London in the east.²⁹ Although London later became the much larger and populous city, the town of Ludlow achieved some fame of its own after a major castle was built there. Search Google images online for hundreds of impressive pictures of Ludlow Castle!

²⁸ Later spellings would include ‘de Ludelowe’, ‘Ludlowe’ or ‘de Ludlowe’, ‘Ludloe’, ‘Ludlam’, ‘Lidelow’, and ‘Ludley’. Note: some of the early Norman nobility arriving in England during the Norman Conquest differentiated themselves by affixing ‘de’ (of) in front of the name of either their village in France or their new English holdings. This is what is known as a territorial surname, a consequence of feudal landownership or association through earlier or customary residence.

²⁹ As seen in this article, the names of both towns, Ludlow and London, derive from King Llud, the Celtic chieftain who governed much of England just before Julius Caesar invaded the British Isles in 55 BCE (‘Before the Common Era’).

Ludlow Castle brought the LUDLOW name into prominence

LUDLOW Castle in the Welsh Marches

The Ludlow name first became famous in British history because of a castle built by a Norman retainer of William the Conqueror. In the years following the Norman conquest of England in 1066, not everyone in England was happy with the new Norman king or barons and several revolts broke out. William was able to deal with each revolt in turn and soon began the construction of many castles to help subdue the rebels. Stone or ‘square keep’ castles were first built in medieval England by William the Conqueror. Stone keep castles were the ultimate sign of his power over the English. This was a policy which the Normans had pursued with great success throughout England, such as in London. Indeed, the most famous stone keep castle was the White Tower (the Tower of London). At 91 feet, it was the highest building in London during medieval times.³⁰ It is near the Tower Bridge over the Thames River, about one mile east of Ludgate Hill (named after King Llud).³¹

Various retainers of William the Conqueror responded in western England to challenge the power of Gwynedd by invading Wales. Initially, the Norman barons had considerable success, driving through to Anglesey and building castles in North Wales to overawe the locals. One of a line of Norman castles built along the borderlands with Wales, Ludlow Castle commanded a good defensive position, with steep slopes to the north and west. It was situated on an excellent defensive site overlooking a bend of the River Teme just south of where it is joined by the River Corve.³² Ludlow Castle, as an erect structure, was first referred to by chroniclers in 1138, but its actual building date is not certain. The architecture suggests that the curtain wall of the inner bailey, its flanking towers and parts of the gatehouse-keep date from the late 11th century. Most historians believe the central elements of this stone keep castle were built by the de Lacy family, probably between 1085 and 1094. It occupied a much smaller area until various later additions were constructed in the following two centuries.

Ludlow Castle was noted for its unique “barbican” -- a wall, or special defensive structure, built to protect the outside of the main entrance. Also called a ‘hornwork’, a barbican sometimes also refers to a special kind of towered gatehouse, built in two parts, such as at Ludlow³³. This great fortress was

³⁰ For more information, see www.historylearningsite.co.uk/stone_keep_castles.htm

³¹ Today the Tower houses the Crown Jewels and the Royal Armouries. Forty Yeoman Warders in Tudor regalia guard the Tower and one of these, the Ravenmaster, looks after the famous ravens.

³² The River Teme flows southeast from Ludlow into the Severn River just below Worcester. The Severn River originates at Lake Llanidloes in the highlands of central Wales. It flows northeast and through Shrewsbury, the commercial center for early Ludlow wool merchants, before turning south. The Severn is a major waterway connecting the western midlands of England with the Bristol Channel and the Celtic Sea.

³³ Stokesay Castle, eight miles northwest of Ludlow Castle, is also a remarkable survival from medieval times. It was the fortified Ludlow manor house which has hardly been altered since the late

built in the then northwest section of the large DeLacy family estate. It joined the line of fortresses along the Welsh border, including Shrewsbury to the north and Hereford to the south.³⁴

The Normans' success in Wales was limited, however, and by 1075 they had withdrawn from North Wales and contented themselves by holding on to advances they had made in mid-Wales and by fortifying strong points such as Ludlow, Chester, Shrewsbury and Chepstow. Thus were born the Welsh 'Marches' -- border lands between England and Wales.³⁵ It is widely accepted that during the time period between the dispossession of Roger of Breteuil (1075) and the reign of Henry II (1154 - 89), no masonry castle in the Marches was constructed and strengthened more than the one at Ludlow, Shropshire.

In 1100 CE, another period of Norman expansion began with a drive from Shropshire south-west across the hills to Cardigan. The Anglo-Normans who entered Wales during these invasions settled mainly in the lowlands and the valleys. The Marches were controlled by fiercely independent families such as Broase, Clare, DeLacy (the builders of Ludlow Castle), and Mortimer (the later owners of Ludlow Castle, whose daughters married into the royal Tudor line). It must be emphasized that those parts of the Marches which now lie within Wales were not regarded as part of England and the King of England's normal laws did not apply there. At times, it also appeared that the King's laws barely applied in the English areas of the Marches.

LUDLOW town in medieval and modern England

As happened in many places in those troubled medieval days, a bustling settlement soon grew up in the shelter of the castle. In Ludlow's case it was carefully planned and the rectangular street plan can still be seen in the ancient heart of the town. Additional town walls were built between 1233 and 1304. The town was incorporated as a borough in 1461. In the later Middle Ages, the town prospered from the sale of wool and the manufacture of cloth. (The sheep industry would provide important employment for many generations of Ludlows as they moved from Shropshire south to Wiltshire, the Cotswold Hills of Gloucestershire and the city of Shipton Moyne that straddled the two shires.)

By the 16th century the town of Ludlow had become the administrative headquarters of the Council of the Marches of Wales. Edward IV had founded the Council in the late 15th century. The Council administered all of Wales and five adjacent English counties (Shropshire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Monmouthshire, and Gloucestershire). During this period, some of England's princes (including Edward V and Prince Arthur, the son of Henry VII) and princesses (such as Mary Tudor, who became Queen in 1553) stayed in Ludlow and the famous Feathers Hotel and other historic buildings were constructed. Ludlow castle was also a temporary home to several holders of the title,

13th century. The house was originally built by Lawrence Ludlow. Robin Ludlow had done extensive research and documentation of Stokesay Castle. See also: www.castles.org

³⁴ It became an English Royal castle in 1461 and, except for a short period of time during the English civil war, it was to remain so for the next 350 years.

³⁵ The term "March" is derived from the Anglo-Saxon "mearc," which means "boundary."

‘Prince of Wales’, notably Arthur Tudor, who died there in 1502. The Ludlow castle and town were thus home to royalty, servants, clergy, administrators and bureaucrats.

When the Council of the Marches was dissolved in 1689, the castle became derelict but the town continued to prosper with glove-making³⁶ and leather tanning of particular importance. It became a fashionable centre for the local gentry and many of Ludlow's finest buildings date from the early 1700s. The American novelist, Henry James, visited Ludlow in the 1870s. He described it as the “centre of a large, provincial society” with a rural setting and also a metropolitan atmosphere with balls, plays and other cultural attractions. The poetry of A. E. Housman, especially *A Shropshire Lad* (published in 1896)³⁷, made Ludlow known throughout the British world.

Today, Ludlow (with a population of about 7,500) continues its traditional roles as a market town and service centre for the surrounding countryside. Since 1961, the annual Ludlow Festival has become famous for its summer Shakespeare play staged in the inner bailey of the castle. Ludlow town is also noted for its identity as the “perfect English historic town”, its ‘yuppie’ environment, and for having more four-star Michelin-rated restaurants than any English city outside of London³⁸.

LUDLOW becomes the surname of an extended world family.

As mentioned at the beginning of this article, the LUDLOW family surname started some 900 years ago by someone who was known as “de Ludelowe” (of Ludlow). As the Ludlow family spread out from its Salopshire roots, the main branches of the family developed further south in Gloucestershire and Wiltshire. With their rural background and occupations, most Ludlow were concentrated in the west of England rather than in the more heavily populated areas in the east. In the later medieval period, the Ludlow surname appears most often in the records of Salopshire and then in a band southeastward through Herefordshire and Gloucestershire into Wiltshire with the cities of Bristol and London also attracting a number of Ludlows. During the Industrial Revolution, many Ludlow migrated to the larger cities. But as living and working conditions worsened in the industrial areas, some Ludlow families migrated to the British colonies and the former colonies, such as the United States.

Today, Ludlows are scattered throughout the countries of England, United States of America, Ireland, Australia, Canada, Mexico and New Zealand. A recent survey of mailing addresses in England with a ‘Ludlow’ as the head of the household showed 581 listings. A similar search of people with the

³⁶ In the early 1800s, about 7,000 pairs of gloves were produced weekly in Ludlow, many of which were exported to the United States.

³⁷ The lad is invited to return to Shropshire: “*Oh, come you home on Sunday - When Ludlow streets are still - And Ludlow bells are calling - To farm and lane and mill. Or come you home on Monday - When Ludlow market hums - And Ludlow chimes are playing - ‘The Conquering Hero Comes’.*”

³⁸ See www.ludlow.org.uk/arch.html; www.scit.wlv.ac.uk/~jphb/shropshire/Ludlow

Ludlow surname in the United States 1940 Census showed 2080 individuals. The two Ludlow websites mentioned earlier provide much more information about the main Ludlow branches and their extended families.

The most important famous Ludlow is the one you know best. Be it a friend, neighbor or family member, if this Ludlow is a good, decent person – you have connected with the Ludlow family we have been talking about. Build that association and share it with others.

Meanwhile, those of you who carry the name Ludlow have a responsibility to represent the name with integrity.

Modern uses and meanings of the name ‘LUDLOW’

A recent Google search for the name ‘Ludlow’ listed almost 4 million entries – indicating that the ‘Ludlow’ name has circulated widely since its humble origin. Beginning as a place name for a small British town, ‘Ludlow’ now identifies towns, cities, streets and an assortment of geographic places, even a pre-historic paleozoic geological time noted for its reef limestone strata.³ Associated with a famous English castle, ‘Ludlow’ is now attached to schools, famous law codes, political movements, battles, and other historical events. Connected at first with medieval wool merchants, ‘Ludlow’ now labels a host of businesses and a multitude of professions carried on by Ludlow family members, including raising sheep, printing with Ludlow font and presses, making carpets, performing on stage and in concerts, writing books and editing encyclopedias. Started with perhaps one individual in Salops around 1100 CE, the ‘Ludlow’ name is now carried by tens of thousands of individuals throughout the world, especially the old British empire countries of England, Ireland, United States, Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

In addition, the Ludlow name is no longer used exclusively as a surname. Some descendants of female Ludlows carry the Ludlow name as their given or middle name. Ludlow has also become a somewhat popular modern male name, occasionally being listed among the top-100 most popular boy names. Modern baby-names books usually identify the language root of ‘Ludlow’ as being English, although they almost always equate ‘Ludlow’ closely to the meaning of the ancient Welsh (‘court of the prince’) with the idea of royalty being implied. However, they also often include the concept of a hill from the Old English meaning. Note the following examples for ‘Ludlow’:

- Old English; “Ruler’s hill”; or Ludlowe (From www.thinkbabynames.com/name/1/Ludlow)
- English “from the prince’s hill” (From www.parenthood.com/babynames)
- English, “Mountain of the chief” (From www.baby.bigall.com/boysnames)
- English, “Noble” (From www.baby-names-meaning.com/firstnames/boys)

It appears that the Ludlow name is well established in the contemporary English-speaking world. It remains to be seen who the great Ludlows of the future will be. What great advances in business, science, scholarship, the arts, and other endeavors will be provided by Ludlow family members? We will see them unfold as Ludlow family members remain connected and informed. Indeed, if you know some outstanding Ludlow family member or if you have information about a Ludlow historic figure

– please share it with us. Indeed, the Ludlow family member does not have to be famous, he or she could be one who has made a strong, positive impact in your life, in public service or in simple acts of noble behavior. Please let us know about these people so we can include their stories in a future ‘hall of fame and influence’ that we would like to develop on this website.

Medieval examples of the ‘LUDLOW’ shields, crests, and mottos

One way to connect with extended family members is through shared family symbols, banners, crests, patches and other memorabilia. If someone in the extended Ludlow family has creative and artistic talents, we need it to develop some of these visual family memorabilia.

[We also need someone to develop some more material about the Ludlow nobility family lines and titles. This information should show and explain examples of the Ludlow crest and explain the various family symbols and mottos.]

Postscript

If we do not record our personal history then a knowledge of our families, their lives and struggles and successes will NOT be known to future generations. We need to write our family histories so that people centuries into the future will better appreciate what life was like in the archaic times of laptop computers, hand-held primitive phones, and carbon-fuel consuming modes of transportation. Connecting with our ancestral roots helps us face the challenges of contemporary society as we appreciate the significant struggles that our ancestors have overcome. Also, as we look back into the past, we can better prepare for the future as we build upon our family heritage.

For any readers who might be Ludlow family descendants –

we invite you to view the Ludlow family websites <http://ludlowfamilyresearch.org.uk/web/> and www.ludlowfamilies.org to see how you connect to the Ludlow family. Since both of these websites are relatively new and far from complete, we request your input to provide improved quality and quantity of information. Both of the websites contain email addresses of people you can contact with further questions and information. Please get in touch. We especially need your help to research and share more data about numerous family lines. Eventually, we hope these websites will provide accessible archives of detailed genealogical data, ancestral charts, family group sheets, personal biographies, family histories, and much other accurate and interesting material.

Our hope is not only to provide a valuable resource for people throughout the world, but also to connect ‘distant cousins’ as we better appreciate and enrich our relationships to many others of the human family on this planet earth.

Endnotes

1. Edward I (reigned 1272-1307), nicknamed "Longshanks" due to his great height and stature, was perhaps the most successful of the medieval monarchs. Aged 35, he was a veteran warrior of the Crusades ('the best lance in all the world', according to contemporaries) and a leader with energy, vision and a formidable temper. The first twenty years of his reign marked a high point of cooperation between crown and community. In these years, Edward made great strides in reforming government, consolidating territory, and defining foreign policy. To raise money, Edward often summoned Parliament. (The word 'Parliament' came from the 'parley' or talks which the King had with larger groups of advisers.) In 1295, when money was needed to wage war against Philip of France, Edward summoned the most comprehensive assembly ever summoned in England. This became known as the Model Parliament, for it represented various estates: barons, clergy, and knights and townspeople. Edward used his royal authority to establish the rights of the Crown at the expense of traditional feudal privileges, to promote the uniform administration of justice, to raise income to meet the costs of war and government, and to codify the legal system. In doing so, his methods emphasized the role of Parliament and the common law.

2. Another of William Ludlow's descendants and Roger's nephew, Gabriel Ludlow (b. 1663), later went to America and founded the New York branch of the Ludlow family. This branch is among the ancestors of President William H. Harrison, the 9th president of the U.S.A., and President Benjamin Harrison, the 23rd president of the U.S.A.
Roger's younger brother, George, founded the Virginia branch of the Ludlow family.

3. See <http://www.palaeos.com/Paleozoic/Silurian/Silurian.htm> = The famous Ludlow Bonebed, a lime reef formation deposited some 410 million years ago, contains shelly material and a relatively high abundance of terrestrial arthropod fragments recording the earliest body evidence of a terrestrial ecosystem on earth. This site contains rarely and exquisitely preserved remains of the terrestrial arthropods and some of the flora that they would have lived amongst.

This is a second draft of this article. The author alone assumes responsibility for the material presented here. Any suggestions, improvements, corrections and other information that you can provide concerning this article should be sent to Professor Victor L. Ludlow at: vludlow@msn.com Any help would be appreciated! ThanX.