

Maud De Chaworth

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Born: 2 Feb 1282 Kidwelly, Carmarthen, England, Wales

Married: Henry Plantagenet, Earl of Lancaster

Died: 3 Dec 1322 Priory, Hampshire, , England

Parents: Patrick de Chaworth & Isable De Beauchamp

Maud de Chaworth, also known as Matilda Chaworth, was born February 2, 1282. Although the exact date of her death is unknown, it is estimated that she must have died sometime before December 3, 1322.

Parents

Maud was the daughter and only child of Sir Patrick de Chaworth (Lord of Kidwelly, in Carmarthenshire, South Wales) and Isabella de Beauchamp, and granddaughter of William de Beauchamp, 9th Earl of Warwick. Her father, Patrick de Chaworth died on July 7th, 1283. He was estimated to live until he was approximately three decades old. Approximately, three years later in 1286, Isabel Beauchamp remarried to Hugh Despenser the Elder and had two sons and four daughters by him. Thus, this made Maud the half-sister of Hugh the younger Despenser. Her mother, Isabel Beauchamp, died in 1306, which is more than two decades after her first husband.

Childhood

When her father died, Maud was only a year old and left as a rich heiress. However, because she was a mere infant, she became a ward of Queen Eleanor of Castile who was married to King Edward I. (Together, this couple had sixteen children. Only nine out of sixteen survived, however.) Queen Eleanor passed away at Harby in Lincoln-Shire. Once Queen Eleanor past away of malaria in 1290 at approximately fifty years of age, her husband, King Edward I, granted Maud's marriage to his brother Edmund Plantagenet, Earl of Lancaster on December 30, 1292.

Edmund Crouchback, 1st Earl of Lancaster, Earl of Leicester^[1] was the son of Eleanor of Provence and Henry III of England. He first married Aveline de Forz, Countess of Albemarle, in 1269. Later, in Paris on February 3, 1276, he married Blanche of Artois who is niece of Louis IX, and Queen of Navarre by association with her first marriage. Blanche and Edmund had four children together, one of whom was Henry Plantagenet, who would later become 3rd Earl of Leicester and Maud Chaworth's husband.

Marriage and Children

Although sources say that Edmund was married to Maud, it has been suggested that Maud was betrothed to Edmund and his son Henry Plantagenet, 3rd Earl of Leicester^[2] together, to ensure that she married into the family even if Edmund were to die. Therefore, when Edmund did pass away, Henry and Maud were bonded in holy matrimony sometime before March 2, 1297. Henry was supposedly born between the years 1280 and 1281, making him somewhat older than Maud, but not by much since they were either fourteen or fifteen-years-old.

Since Maud inherited her father's property, Henry also acquired this property through the rights of marriage. Some of that property was of the following: Hampshire, Glamorgan, Wiltshire, and Carmarthenshire. Henry was the nephew to the King of England, as well as being closely associated with the French royal family line. Henry's half-sister Jeanne (or Juana) was given the title Queen of

Navarre in her own right, and married Philip IV of France. Not only that, but Henry was the uncle of King Edward II's Queen Isabella and of three Kings of France. He was also the younger brother of Thomas (Earl of Lancaster) and first cousin of Edward II.

Maud is very often described as the "Countess of Leicester" or "Countess of Lancaster" but she really was not. Henry was only named "Earl of Leicester" in 1324 and "Earl of Lancaster" in 1327, which was after her death. Henry never remarried, and died on September 22, 1345 when he would have been in his mid sixties. All but one of his seven children with Maud outlived him.

Maud and Henry had seven children:

- Henry of Grosmont, 1st Duke of Lancaster, (about 1310–1361); Maud's only son Henry was usually called Henry of Grosmont to distinguish him from his father. He was one of the great, well known and respected men of the fourteenth century. He took after his father and was well educated, literate, pious, a soldier and a diplomat. Henry produced his own memoir "Le Livre de Seyntz Medicines" which was completed in 1354. At one point, Henry of Grosmont was considered to be the richest man in England aside from the Prince of Wales. He was emerging as a political figure in his own right within England: he was knighted and represented his father in parliament. It was in the same year that he married his wife, Isabella, daughter of Henry, Lord Beaumont. His daughter Blanche was betrothed and eventually married to the son of Edward III, John of Gaunt. In 1361, Henry was killed by a new outbreak of the Black Death, leaving John of Gaunt his inheritance and eventually his title through his daughter Blanche.^[3]
- Blanche of Lancaster, (about 1302/05–1380); Maud's eldest daughter was probably born between 1302 and 1305, and was named after her father's mother Blanche of Artois. Around October 9, 1316, she married Thomas Wake, the second baron of Liddell. Blanche was about forty-five when Thomas died and lived as a widow for more than thirty years. She was one of the executors of her brother Henry's will when he died in 1361. Blanche outlived all her siblings, dying shortly before July 12, 1380 in her mid to late seventies. Born in the reign of Edward I, she survived all the way into the reign of his great grandson Richard II.
- Maud of Lancaster, (about 1310–1345) There is some discrepancy as to when Maud died. Another possible date of her death is 1377^[4] married William de Burgh, 3rd Earl of Ulster in 1327. They bore one child, Elizabeth de Burgh who was born July 6, 1332. Eleven months after the birth of their child, Earl William was murdered at "Le Ford" in Belfast, apparently by some of his own men. The countess Maud fled to England with her baby and stayed with the royal family. In 1337, Maud of Lancaster managed to ensure that the Justiciar of Ireland was forbidden to pardon her husband's killers. She fought for her dower rights and exerted some influence there. She remarried in 1344 to Ralph Ufford and returned to Ireland where she had another daughter, Maud. After her second husband fell ill in 1346, she again returned to England. Maud of Lancaster died on May 5, 1345/77.
- Joan of Lancaster, (about 1312–1345); married between February 28 and June 4, 1327 to John, Lord Mowbray. John's father was horribly executed for reasons unknown and young John was imprisoned in the Tower of London along with his mother Alice de Braose, until late 1326. A large part of his inheritance was granted to Hugh Despenser the Younger, who was his future wife's uncle; however he was set free in 1327 before the marriage. Joan of Lancaster probably died in her early thirties, sometime before August 1344.
- Isabel of Lancaster, Prioress of Ambresbury, (about 1317–after 1347); often said to be born in 1317 as one of the youngest daughters of Maud and Henry. Her life is somewhat obscure, going on pilgrimages and spending a lot of time alone. She spent a great deal of time outside the cloister on non-spiritual matters. Her father had given her quite a bit of property which she administered herself. She owned hunting dogs and had personal servants. She used her family connections to secure privileges and concessions.^[5]
- **Eleanor of Lancaster**, (1318- Sept. 1372); married John Beaumont between September and November 1330. Eleanor bore John a son, Henry, who married Margaret de Vere, a sister of Elizabeth and Thomas de Vere, Earl of Oxford. John Beaumont was killed in a jousting tournament in Northampton on April 14, 1342. Eleanor then became mistress of the **Richard FitzAlan**, 10th Earl of Arundel, who happened to be married to her first cousin Isabel, daughter of Hugh Despenser

the Younger. Richard obtained a divorce from the Pope and married Eleanor on February 5, 1345 in the presence of Edward III. They had five children together, three sons and two daughters. Eleanor died on January 11, 1372.

- Mary of Lancaster, (about 1320–1362); married Henry, Lord Percy before September 4, 1334 who fought at the battle of Crecy in 1346, and served in Gascony under the command of his brother in law Henry of Grosmont. Their son was Henry Percy, 1st Earl of Northumberland. Mary of Lancaster died on September 1, 1362, the year after her brother Henry.