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The official newsletter of  
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This inaugural newsletter invites readers to have a look at the new format of the website [Simon de Montfort 2014](#). Gone is the overinflated picture of the Palace of Westminster in the header; it now enjoys a modest location in the sidebar. Also new is Montfort's coat-of-arms. The lion inside a red shield has been in circulation for years, based on the painting of a Simon de Montfort in Chartres cathedral. His father was meant there, for Matthew Paris drew the son's emblem as a red lion, which can be seen on the cover of John Maddicott's book. Many thanks to Katherine Ashe for clarifying this matter.

It is the hope of this newsletter to draw attention to other matters concerning Montfort in the run-up to the 750th anniversary of his groundbreaking parliaments. One recent item of interest is the discovery of Richard III's bones in Leicestershire and Yorkshire's insistence on having them back. You can read more about this rather mediocre 'bone of contention' and its relevance to Montfort [here](#).

As for me and what I'm doing in the middle of all this, I started this project after visits to Lewes and Evesham and the disbelief that these monumental events have been all but neglected. Go to a Civil War battlefield in America and the signs welcome you for miles. Good luck even trying to find the field in Evesham, that most medieval of battles, or Lewes, with its almost fable-like features: the letters of defiance, the coach, windmill and Edward's fury. Go to Parliament Square and stare in wonder at a statue of Jan Christian Smuts, whoever he's supposed to be, or that grossest of travesties, Richard I. But forget about any reminder of Montfort and the popular movement he led to reform the monarchy.

I came to Europe from New England, where I earned a degree in modern and classical languages, and have been living mostly in the Czech Republic since that time, working as a teacher and translator. I am still, as always, enthusiastic about English history and welcome your comments and support in bringing the story of this fascinating figure back to life.

Yours,  
[Darren Baker](#)

