Part 1
Norman of Torn

And would therefore have been ten or eleven when he died. Bearing in mind that these dates are taken from the most authoritative sources, can we make any connection between this historical Prince Richard and the little Prince Richard who became the dreaded Outlaw of Torn? In the opening of ERB’s chronicle, the Prince is “about three” (which could mean he is just about three, or perhaps, aged three about to turn four) in 1243, apparently having been born seven years before the son of Henry III who is interred in the Abbey. There can be only two answers to this question:

#1 The young Richard in the Abbey tomb was born and died in the approximate years that have been recorded, and Richard the outlaw was an earlier son.

#2 The two Richards were one and the same person and the dates for the son in the Abbey are incorrectly recorded either by accident or design.

In favor of #1 is the clear statement in the last chapter of The Outlaw of Torn, after Richard is recognized and reconciled with his parents, that he is indeed the second born son. As Henry’s and Eleanor’s first three children are officially recorded as having been:

- Edward (born 1239)
- Margaret (born 1240)
- Edmund (born 1245)

We may conclude then that Richard/ Norman must have been born just before Margaret (or, as has been suggested by John F. Roy, he may have been Margaret’s twin brother.) Rob Hughes proposes yet another intriguing theory; that perhaps Richard was Edward’s younger identical twin brother. This idea is supported by the fact that throughout ERB’s story, Richard/ Norman is repeatedly and mistakenly identified as Prince Edward by friend and foe alike. Burroughs writes that when looking upon Richard at the age of 15, a royal knight named Paul of Merely is astonished, claiming, “Were he set down in court I wager our gracious Queen (Eleanor) would be hard put to it to tell him from the young Prince Edward.” However, the events of the story took place over 700 years ago and after such a period of time the true facts could have been distorted. More importantly, it is stated by Burroughs that the record of the entire affair had been suppressed by a later Plantagenet king so answer #2 could equally apply. To quote one historian: “Whose bones are in the tomb must still remain shrouded in a thick night of uncertainty.”

Westminster Abbey: The most magnificent and famous abbey in the world sits in the very heart of London and has served as the traditional venue for the coronation of kings and queens for more than a millennia as well as their final resting place.

King Henry III (1207-1272) greatly expanded upon the abbey from 1245-1272 by having his architect, Henry de Reims, rebuild it in the Anglo-French Gothic style as a shrine to honor his favorite saint, Edward the Confessor (1003-1066). By 1272, the sanctuary, choir and the first bay of the nave had been completed. That year, Henry died and the work temporarily halted until 1376, when the foundation stone was laid for the new nave, which was finally completed 140 years later.

Another puzzle we are faced with is the character of Bertrude de Montfort, the beautiful daughter of Simon de Montfort—the great Earl of Leicester—with whom Norman of Torn eventually took up arms against the king at the Battle of Lewes in 1264. Simon de Montfort was married to the King’s sister, Eleanor Plantagenet and thus the Outlaw of Torn unwittingly fell in love with his cousin as well as making war upon his own father Henry III. The history books tell us that de Montfort and his wife Eleanor had six children, five sons and one daughter also named Eleanor. The latter was born in approximately 1252 and in 1278 was married to William, the last native Prince of Wales, when she was about 26 years old. Clearly she was for too young to have been confused with Bertrude who would have been about the same age as Norman of Torn. It was indeed a powerful monarch who could also remove all trace of this daughter of de Montfort from historical records. As a footnote, there is the interesting fact that there had been a Bertrude in the family; Simon de Montfort’s father’s sister was similarly named.

If we are unable to identify Richard from established royal history, can we possibly trace him in his persona of Norman of Torn or the “Devil of Torn”, the terrible surname by which he became infamous throughout medieval England? In those times an outlaw was legally defined as a person who, having committed a crime and refusing to submit to trial, was declared to be, “outside the law”. It was everyone’s duty to attempt to capture him, the reward being the price of a “wolf’s head”, a term which came to be used as a general description for this type of individual. Medieval England was beset with lawlessness, the main reason being the inadequate resources of local officials of the crown who were responsible for administering the King’s justice. In many cases corrupt officers allowed outlaw leaders to operate in certain areas in return for a cut of the “takings”, and if anyone with a bit of influence was put on trial there could be intimidation or bribery of witnesses and juries. When there was widespread civil unrest as in the conflict between De Montfort’s barons and Henry III, the depredations of outlaw bands increased because officials of the law were too busy looking to their own safety.

The splendid gilt bronze effigy of King Henry III on his tomb in Westminster Abbey. This famous representation of the medieval monarch was cast by goldsmith Master William Torel.

Derbyshire, and the hilly area (now known as the Peak District) which Norman of Torre was based, suffered particularly from outlay—the rugged nature of this northern landscape of England being ideal for such operations. In the 14th century, James Coterel led a gang calling itself, “the society of savage men”, which specialized in the medieval version of a protection racket. In 1439, Piers Venables of Derbyshire was described as leading a band after the fashion of “Robyn Hode and his men.” According to ERB, those who served under Norman of Torre and his cruel foster father Jules de Va, numbered 1000 professional and extremely fierce fighting men, a figure which exceeded that of William Beckwith's gang that operated in the forest of Knaresborough, Yorkshire, said to be at the level of 500 men.

Not all outlaws sprang from the lower class of the social order; many gang leaders were of the gentry, their life of crime having commenced when they were dispossessed of their land after a local feud or by order of the Crown. The most celebrated of these was Sir Adam de Gurdun, one of the baronial supporters of the Earl of Leicester, who had fled to the forests after the massacre of De Montfort and his army at Evesham on August 4, 1265, in which the Earl's body was savagely mutilated by the royalist knights under the command of Prince Edward. This bloody and decisive defeat would go down in the annals of history as, “the death of chivalry” as John Sadler put it in his exponent book, "The Second Barons' War". This work stands near the entrance of Nottingham Castle Gardens in the city of Nottingham, England.

bested in single combat by Prince Edward, King Henry's eldest son and heir. Surprisingly, Edward plays but a small role in the history of the Outlaw of Torre until the Battle of Losee (May 14, 1264) when the two brothers found themselves on opposing sides.

The mention of the famed Robin Hood leads us to another aspect of this story and the possibility that the exploits of the lost Prince Richard, his robbing only of the rich and his chivalrous treatment of women, could have given rise in some way to the legend of the hero of Sherwood Forest. Several authorities maintain that the real Robin Hood was a fellow of Simon de Montfort who remained in arms after the death of the Earl, and was perhaps a man named Roger Godberd, who fled to Sherwood after the battle of Evesham and terrorized the Nottingham neighborhood for four years before being captured.

The Outlaw of Torre also used another name when he raised his visor during his very first meeting with the beautiful and quite willful Bertrad de Montfort (the daughter of Simon), introducing himself as Roger de Conde of Normandy. Could this alias of de Conde somehow have become confused with Roger Godberd, and together with fantastic tales of Norman of Torre merged to bring about in some small part the legend of Robin Hood? Sherwood Forest in Nottinghamshire and Barnesdale (in Yorkshire), the two places most famously associated with Robin and his Merry Men, are located only just across the eastern and northern borders respectively, from Derbyshire.

We do not however appear to have come across anyone answering to the description of our prince turned outlaw being large in the 13th century, so let us finally look at the source for ERB’s reconstruction of the events of this tale. According to the author the story was pieced together from “a quantity of medlewed and musty manuscripts” that he came across in an ancient European monastery, which the Father Superior, a distant relation to Burroughs’s wife, let him examine. “European” in this case can refer only to either England or France. The chronicles of the medieval age were the monks; all the religious orders kept a communal diary of both local news and what they understood of national events derived from travelers who accepted the hospitality of the abbeys and monasteries. Probably the most famous of these historians was the Benedictine Monk Matthew Paris of St. Albans (c. 1200-1259), who died after a lifetime of commenting on the daily happenings at his abbey, a popular meeting place often visited by King Henry III. No mention of Norman of Torre is to be found in his works and the same can be said of the other famous chroniclers of the time such as William of Rishanger and Thomas Wyke.

In Henry's reign there was such a close connection between France and England that some recording of Prince Richard's remarkable life could undoubtedly have been made by an earnest scribe across the English Channel. The manuscript would then have been lost and forgotten when Henry failed to recover his French possessions and it was not until ERB was allowed to "spy about" that the full story, at last, came to light. We must conclude this short but intriguing investigation with two profound questions; do these manuscripts with their remarkable revelation still rest in some remote French monastery, and equally thought-provoking, whenever was Burroughs in Europe to collect this information?

In 1946 Columbia Pictures released a 15 chapter serial entitled Son of the Guardsman starring Robert Shaw and Robert "Buzz" Henry with Dan Kennedy and Charles King, which was loosely based on the tales of Robin Hood. This was one of the studio’s least memorable productions, having the having the appearance of a Western transplant to Medieval England complete with Californian scenery. There are however several intriguing aspects to this film up; the hero’s name was David Trent (the river Trent has many tributaries in Derbyshire), the villain was a certain Sir Edgar Belard and Henry’s character turns out to be Prince Richard himself, ruler of the throne. Do I detect a subtle ERB influence on this screenplay? Son of ERB? Abbeys in Westminister Abbey. Which Prince Richard truly lies buried within? The Cosmull Mosaic Tomb. Robert Shaw and Robert "Buzz" Henry as of the Guardsman.
Part II

The Castle of Torn

"The frowning walls towered high against the morn's keen sky, and where a portion of the roof had fallen in, the old man, shining through the narrow unplugged windows, gave to the mighty pile the likeness of a huge, many-eyed ogre crunching upon the flanks of a deserted world, for nowhere was there other sign of habitation."

In part one we tried, albeit without much success, to ascertain if the personage of Richard, the lost prince turned outlaw, could have had a basis in historical fact. The purpose of this section is to seek whether we can track down the stronghold from which the Outlaw spread his reign of terror throughout Derbyshire and the surrounding lands, the stronghold known as the Castle of Torn. Are there any clues remaining that could pinpoint the location of this mysterious and remote castle or did these also disappear when the whole episode was suppressed by a later Plantagenet king?

The first step is to peruse the gazetteer to see if there is any past or present place with the name of Torn (or Torne) in the region of Derbyshire, where Burroughs describes the castle actually being located. Torn as a "name" place does not seem to appear on any modern map of the area, but there is an ancient record of a Torn in Holderness, that part of Yorkshire that stretches from the Wolds to the mouth of the river Humber and Spurn Head. It was so named in the Domesday Book, but towards the end of the 13th century it was renamed Thoren Gumbald, from the old French family name, and today it is known as Thornby. However, its situation on the banks of the Humber barely rules it out as the castle site as recorded in the story.

To the east of Doncaster in South Yorkshire is to be found Tore Bridge, named for its situation on the River Tore, a tributary of the River Trent, which rises south of Doncaster. But again, the surrounding countryside in no way matches the description by ERB of the vicinity of the Outlaw's castle, and thus, we must dismiss this from the possibilities.

Moving from the gazetteer to the dictionary we find that the word Torn has several meanings.

#1 Spelled Torn; an old English word for a tower. However, no particular reference is made to any prominent tower in the castle of Torn.

#2 Torn is an obsolete form of Towe or Tum, which was a Sheriff's Court. Although Norman of Torn dispensed his own brand of justice, this would hardly qualify the stronghold with this description.

#3 Torn is an ancient heraldic word for a spinning wheel. This does not appear to be relevant otherwise the Outlaw would surely have incorporated the device in his coat-of-arms. What he did use was a Black Falcon's Wing, a symbol that does not appear in any book of heraldry although eagles and black ravens, rocks and crows (known as corbies) were used as heraldic devices.

Before returning once again to possible geographic locations, we should look at the information given in chapter 5 of the story regarding the previous ownership of the Castle of Torn. Jules de Vic purchased the property from an elderly Jew who remarks that it came into his possession when he had called in a debt from "that young spendthrift, de Macy." Was there such a person, and did he own a castle in the area?

Haddon Hall, known as "the English castle par excellence." A fortified manor overlooking the Derwent and Wye rivers.

Sadly, there does not appear to be a record of any family of that name residing in Derbyshire in the 13th century, but of course, this could be a little alteration of the facts by ERB.

Is there either a castle or castle site to be found in Derbyshire that matches the description given in chapter 7 of The Outlaw of Torn? Burroughs describes the castle as having huge buttressed Saxon towers, which implies that it was constructed sometime before the Norman conquest of 1066. Although the buildings had a high aspect, there was also a moat, which naturally would have been fed from above, so the castle most likely, would not have rested upon the summit of the mountain. The southern walled enclosure overlooked a high precipice and we are also told that the main gateway faced towards the west where a tributary of the Trent wound its way through meadow-land.

We may begin by looking just over the southern Derbyshire border at Ashby Castle, which lies close to the center of Ashby-de-la-Zouch in Leicestershire. At the end of the 12th century the Zouch family, who had inherited the manor of Ashby in A.D. 1160, had constructed a stone hall and private quarter, but it was not until 1314 that the castle was expanded and improved by the first Baron Zouch of Ashby.

In the southernmost part of Derbyshire are the sites of Bretby Castle and Castle Gresley. Bretby was built in 1209, but not properly fortified until 1291. It was subsequently demolished by the First Earl of Chesterfield, who built a great mansion on a nearby site. At Castle Gresley, a stone structure was raised on the site of a simple timber fortress after the Norman conquest. Nothing now remains, but the castle was of sufficient importance to be noted in the name of the township.

Tutbury Castle stands on the Staffordshire side of the River Dove, where it marks the border with Derbyshire, and is probably best known as one of the prisons of Mary Queen of Scots, who was incarcerated there in 1569. A town grew up around the castle after its construction in about 1170 when the powerful Ferrers family, Earls of Derby, came into residence. It remained in their hands until 1268, when it was seized by Henry III following the rebellion of Robert Ferrers. The castle was to suffer the same fate as that at Duffield, which will be mentioned later.

Also to be found in this southern area is the stately home of Calke Abbey, not relevant to our search, but mentioned since the house had belonged to a private and eccentric family who collected everything and threw away nothing. When it was acquired by the National Trust and first opened to the public over 20 years ago, it was publicized as "The House that Time Forgot," a description undoubtedly borrowed from the film adopted from the novel by Burroughs, entitled The Land that Time Forgot, which had been released in 1975. This was probably the first occasion that the phrase came into common use.

Two miles to the west of Derby is to be found all that remains of Mackworth Castle, namely the castellated gatehouse. In the 14th century Lord Audley, acting in the service of The Black Prince at Poitiers, was so indebted to one of his squires that he rewarded him with a gift of land at Mackworth. The fortunate recipient styled himself "de Mackworth", and had the castle built in the village.

After a brief consideration of the previous mentioned castle and sites, they may all be dismissed as candidates for the Castle of Torn since their histories are far too documented and none of them are on a sufficient elevation of land to match up to Burrough's description. We must move further north to the more mountainous region of the county to discover more promising locations.

The crumbling but still impressive remains of Horeston Castle stand in the middle of a wooded spur overlooking the valley of Bottle Brook, four miles to the north of Derby. Built toward the end of the 11th century, the castle passed into the hands of King John in 1200, who in turn, granted it to William de Ferrers in 1215. Although records up to 1266 regarding custody of the castle are scarce, it is improbable that it could have lapsed into the dereliction in which the Castle of Tom was first discovered. In 1275, Horeston was one of a number of towns and castles that King Edward I granted to his Queen Eleanor, and small amounts are recorded as having being expended on repairs. This due to the fact that Norman of Tom is described as having sacked the castle in retaliation for the owner, John de Grey, having caught and hanged two of the Outlaw's men (chapter 10). Codnor was the headquarters of the De Greys for three centuries, a family that gave distinguished service to the monarchs of England over this period of time. The present day remains of the castle consist of the ruined keep, circular towers and curtain walls, the former now in a precarious state, although some restoration is now underway. Haddon Hall has been described as “the English castle par excellence”, although it has never been more than a fortified manor house. The simple fortress overlooking the Derwent and Wye rivers was built under William I (the Conqueror) and passed into the Vernon family at the end of the 12th century, in whose hands it remained for four hundred years. Today it stands as the most perfectly preserved example of a medieval manor house in all of England and has proved a popular location for historical film and television productions. Bolsover Castle rests in the north-east of Derbyshire, atop a wooded hilltop and dominates the surrounding picturesque landscape of the Vale of Scarsdale (with an absolutely extraordinary view). Although built on the site of a genuine Norman castle, the keep that stands today was constructed in the 17th century. In the 12th century the castle passed to the Crown and its history can be traced through contemporary records, but by 1400, it was no longer of strategic value and it continued to change hands for the next two hundred years until it came into the hands of the Cavendish family.
Thorngumbald was once known as Torn, but with no hills, no castle and in Yorkshire!

A little juggling with the above place names can easily come up with the name Castle of Torn, but unfortunately the description by ERB does not seem to fit Peveril Castle. There was never a water-filled moat and, once again, the castle’s history is too well documented.

In conclusion, it would appear either that the base of operations of the Outlaw was completely destroyed not long after Norman of Torn reverted back to his true identity of Prince Richard, second born son of King Henry III, or that the remains of the lost castle now slumber undiscovered, buried and all but forgotten on some Derbyshire mountain overlooking a dried-up stream that once fed into the mighty Trent. Perhaps the true location is recorded in the manuscripts that Burroughs perused in the unnamed European monastery, but if not, then we may never know where the grim and mysterious stronghold once stood.

Moving westward to the opposite side of the county, we find on the Derbyshire bank of the Dove River, a mound which was once the site of Pilsbury Castle, built in all probability to guard the river crossings into Staffordshire. Little is known of this site, only that a castle belonging to Edmund, Earl of Lancaster was in existence during the reign of King Edward I.

Finally, we must shift our search to the area that is now known as The Peak District of Derbyshire; to the most northerly candidate for the Castle of Torn, namely, Peveril Castle. Originally called Castle of the Peak, this citadel was built in 1080 as a wooden stockade by William Peveril, the illegitimate son of William the Conqueror. It was later rebuilt in stone and the keep was added by King Henry II in 1170. The settlement that sprung up around the base of the hill under the protection of the castle grew to eventually become the modern town of Castleton. Just to the north-west of Castleton is Mam Tor, referred to locally as “the Shivering Mountain”, on account of an immense cliff face near the summit that is constantly shifting and quite unstable due to water seepage, whilst two miles east of the town is the tiny village of Thornhill.

A Literary Landscape
At least two authors have used the County of Derbyshire as settings for tales set in the medieval period. Early in the 19th century, Sir Walter Scott was visiting a friend at Smisby in the south of Derbyshire. His host took him to the top of the village church tower and the wonderful view over the nearby tournament field of Ashby Castle inspired Scott to write the literary classic, Ivanhoe. In 1969, Peveril Castle was used for location shooting by the BBC for their serialization of Ivanhoe. The Sheffield papers reported, “Ankle deep in mud, buffeted by a bitter wind, 950 feet above sea level and hugging hot water bottles, Saxon maidens and Norman soldiers wandered around the battlemorts of Peveril Castle.” Scott also wrote the novel Peveril of the Peak, set in this area, but the events of this tale took place during the Civil War of the 17th century.

American author and artist Howard Pyle wrote Men of Iron, a novel set during the reign of King Henry IV, which followed the adventures of Miles Falworth at a certain Machworth Castle in Derbyshire. This book was filmed in 1954 under the title, The Black Shield of Falworth. Pyle of course also wrote and illustrated his own account of the Robin Hood legend.

Returning to ERB and the subject of inspiration, there is an intriguing place to be found across the eastern border of the county in Staffordshire. An prominent outcrop of limestone, under the care of the National Trust, is known as Apes Tor. Could Burroughs have noticed this when researching The Outlaw of Torn? A large scale map of the area also reveals a Clayton House Farm just to the south of Apes Tor. Pure coincidence surely?
Part III

The Battle of Lewes

"Thus was the flower of English chivalry pitted against the King and his party, which included many nobles whose kinsmen were with De Montfort; so that brother faced brother, and father fought against son, on that bloody Wednesday, before the old town of Lewes."

The Spring of 1264 saw the forces of King Henry III and those of his bold brother-in-law Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, marching toward the settlement of their longstanding dispute in a decisive battle on the South Downs in East Sussex, England. The King, with his eldest son and heir Prince Edward, having taken the rebel castle at Tonbridge in Kent and received the surrender of the south coastal towns of Winchester, from De Montfort’s garrison, marched west to Lewes. Here the King took up residence in the Priory of St. Pancras, while his son occupied the double moat and bailey Lewes Castle. Discipline among the royalist forces was lax at best, while they swayed with indifference and arrogance the next move of De Montfort and his baronial army, by the Weald to arrive atop the wide flat summit of Offham Hill, north-west and about 400 feet above Lewes, just as the sun was creeping over the eastern horizon. Here they quickly drew in formation along the high ground, keeping them out of sight of the guards atop the towers of Lewes Castle. The royalists had posted sentries on various approaches to the town, but there was such composure on their part that only one man was at his post, fast asleep, when the Earl arrived at daybreak. The Baron’s army may very well have taken the Royalists completely by surprise in their beds had not a small number of soldiers from the town out foraging for food blundered into the left wing of De Montfort’s forces under the command of Sir Nicholas de Seagrave. When the alarm was sounded, Prince Edward led a mounted force out from the castle to directly engage De Seagrave’s battle wing, which consisted mainly of the raw, unrained London volunteers.

Facing the direct and formidable charge of heavy cavalry, the Londoners immediately broke rank and turned to flee into the nearby woods with a vengeful Edward and his knights in hot pursuit. The prince was particularly vindictive toward these men because of the rude way they had treated his mother, Queen Eleanor of Provence, when a unruly mob had pelleted her while sailing down the River Thames as she attempted to join him at Windsor Castle the previous year.

De Montfort, from his lofty position with a reserve of men on the right wing of his army, could hardly have believed his luck as he watched Edward and his knights ride directly off the field of battle to chase down the lowly Londoners who had scattered to the village of Offham and out of sight in the thick woods. His immediately ordered his central battle formations, one under the command of his son Henry de Montfort and the other under Gilbert de Clare, to charge down the slope and attack the King and his brother, Richard of Cornwall, whose hastily assembled forces had just begun to advance up the hill. When the two armies met, the main engagement was of a short and bloody duration. Simon then smashed his reserves full force into the hard-pressed wing of Richard of Cornwall and the royalists soon found themselves retreating back towards the town. The King, who was not regarded as much of a soldier, fought bravely and with great zeal, having two horses killed beneath him before he was hustled to the safety of the Priory. The unfortunate Richard found himself cut off from his guard and was forced to take refuge in a nearby windmill, from which he was dragged with abuse and ridicule by baronial soldiers.

On the night of Tuesday, May 13th, King Henry and his army spent the evening in notorious drunken revelry throughout the town. In stark contrast, the Barional forces in the woodland were preparing for an early march, encouraged by the stirring exhortations of their charismatic general. Before the crack of dawn, De Montfort marched his men southward, through the dark and peaceful solitude of the Weald to arrive atop the wide flat summit of Offham Hill, north-west and about 400 feet above Lewes, just as the sun was creeping over the eastern horizon. Here he quickly drew them in formation along the high ground, keeping them out of sight of the guards atop the towers of Lewes Castle. The royalists had posted sentries on various approaches to the town, but there was such composure on their part that only one man was at his post, fast asleep, when the Earl arrived at daybreak. The Baron’s army may very well have taken the Royalists completely by surprise in their beds had not a small number of soldiers from the town out foraging for food blundered into the left wing of De Montfort’s forces under the command of Sir Nicholas de Seagrave. When the alarm was sounded, Prince Edward led a mounted force out from the castle to directly engage De Seagrave’s battle wing, which consisted mainly of the raw, unrained London volunteers.
When Edward and his vengeful mounted force returned to Lewes, after having slaughtered in cold blood all the fleeing Londoners he had caught up with, it was with the expectation of rejoicing his fathers victorious army. He therefore wasted some more time by attacking de Montfort’s baggage cart, which the Earl had purposefully left in a prominent position where he had initially drawn up his reserve force. De Montfort had suffered a broken leg a few months earlier and Edward believed that his most hated opponent was still lying incapacitated in the vehicle. The cart was seized and its occupants murdered; unfortunately they were royalist Londoners who were being held as hostages. After being attacked by baronial troops as he approached the town, Edward finally realized the complete disaster that had befallen his father and the royal army and soon thereafter, the two sides began negotiations. King Henry and his son were threatened that if they did not surrender, then Richard of Cornwall and other prominent royalist captives must immediately be beheaded on the spot. The King had no choice but to comply with de Montfort’s ultimatum, and thus the victorious Earl found himself the virtual ruler of England.

The foregoing is a brief account of what is generally accepted as the correct events that unfolded at the Battle of Lewes on May 14, 1264. However, if you read chapter 16 of The Outlaw of Tom, you will find that Burroughs furnishes us with a slightly different version. According to ERB, it was Richard of Cornwall, not Prince Edward, who was duped into attacking the baggage cart in the belief that de Montfort was still an injured party, thus depriving his side of valuable manpower for a crucial period during the battle. More importantly, ERB reveals that the King’s forces had resisted the Earl’s furious charge and were pushing the rebels back up the slope of Offham Hill, when the sudden and dramatic appearance of 1,000 fighting men arrayed atop the crest of the hill with Norman of Tom at their head changed the course of the conflict. The great Outlaw’s force thundered down the slope at full speed crying, “For De Montfort!” and, “Down with Henry!” and crashed full force into the fray to ensure the final victory for a stunned De Montfort. Burroughs also states that subsequently, it was Norman himself who, oblivious of the fact he was manhandling his own uncle, dragged Richard of Cornwall from the windmill and would have put him to death had not De Montfort forbidden it. These “facts” were presumably taken from the manuscripts that ERB perused in the unnamed monastery and would certainly be of great interest to scholars of this period of England’s turbulent Middle Ages.
As mentioned before in Part 1, the Earl was killed while standing alone against his attackers and his body horribly mutilated, a grim testament to the uncontrolled hatred and utter savageness of the royalist knights under Edward. This dark event marked what would become known as “The Death of Chivalry.” King Henry was barely pulled to safety from the battle by Roger de Laybourne, a knight who had fought on the side of De Montfort at Lewes, with the king being restored to his throne soon thereafter.

The narrative of The Outlaw of Torn ends shortly after the Battle of Lewes, and we can only speculate on the actions of Norman the Outlaw after he is revealed as being the long lost Prince Richard and restored back into the royal family. With whom did he side in the following year’s tense situation; his father King Henry or his intended father-in-law Simon de Montfort? His thousand strong band of professional and highly disciplined warriors would, most certainly, have been a great asset to either side. Perhaps the newly recognized Prince withdrew back to the Castle of Torn with his love Bertrade de Montfort and his men and kept clear of the approaching conflict, which culminated in the decisive Battle of Evesham. ERB gives no indication of future events and he did not produce a sequel to this wonderful and exciting saga and so, we may never know what happened to the Outlaw hero of what the author described as, “…a bit of hitherto unrecorded history.”

The Tourist Information Center of Lewes at 187 High Street, Lewes, BN7 2DE (Tel. 01273-483448), provides a small leaflet on the Battle of Lewes and an excellent Town Guide and Map, free of charge. Lewes Castle is open daily and the remains of the Priory of St. Pancras are open to the public.