



Licoricia of Winchester

A case study on
Migrants in Britain,
c800–present

By Sarah Herrity



Migrants in Britain, c800–present is a thematic study on Pearson Edexcel GCSE History Paper 1, in which students explore how Britain has been shaped by its migrant communities over 1200 years. There is no requirement to develop a local example (beyond the case studies), but teachers are very welcome to explore engaging histories relevant to local contexts.

*In this article, **Sarah Herrity** explores the life of Licoricia of Winchester through the context of the Migrants in Britain thematic study. The article begins by considering the history of Jews in medieval England more widely, employing the broader factors in the process of change alongside the two strands in the thematic study, before examining Licoricia's life in detail. This is followed by a section on preparing for the thematic study assessment. The article concludes with ideas on how teachers can research their own local history of Jews in medieval England, and resources to support teaching.*

***Sarah Herrity** is the History Teaching and Learning Adviser for Hampshire Inspection and Advisory Service, Hampshire County Council.*

Here in the centre of Winchester, a new medieval Jewish figure stands proudly looking towards the possible site of her house near where the synagogue once stood on Jewry Street. This striking statue depicts Licoricia of Winchester from the thirteenth century who lived at a time of worsening relations between the Jewish minority and the Christian majority. She is depicted holding the hand of her youngest son, Asher, who, after his mother's murder in 1277 would later face expulsion from England along with the rest of his Jewish community in 1290.

Her extraordinary story and what it reveals about the medieval history of Jewish migrants makes an ideal case study for exploring the two strands of the Migrants in Britain thematic study during the period c800–c1500. This medieval case study, which can complement the case study on the city of York under the Vikings, will allow students the opportunity to understand how factors worked together to bring about the particular developments at this time and enable them to make detailed comparisons over time. In addition to exemplifying the impact of Jewish migrants on culture and buildings, Licoricia's life exemplifies some of the broader factors involved in the process of change during this period, including:



- the role of government in voluntary and forced migration, social position, and experience of the Jewish migrants through the changing policies of the kings towards the Jewish community,
- the role of the Church and Christian religion in influencing the experience and impact of Jewish migrants and the attitudes of society towards this medieval minority,
- the economic influences on the opportunities for, and restrictions on, the Jewish economic contribution, life experience and eventual expulsion,
- the diverse attitudes in society towards the Jews and their impact on the experience, treatment and safety of the Jews.

Strand 1: The context for migration

Although Licoricia was born over 150 years after William I brought Jewish Normans over to England for their commercial expertise as part of the Norman conquest, studying Licoricia's career as a highly successful financier can reveal the unique position of Jewish people in medieval England and the economic and government factors that led to their migration to Britain.

Economic factor

The relative peace and stability brought by the Normans increased immigration and economic growth during the medieval period. Historian Robert Winder claims that the Norman imposition of national administration and firm defence 'fostered ... almost for the first time since the Romans, trade and commerce on an international scale'. This meant that the reason most people migrated to Britain during the Norman period was 'neither to conquer nor to plunder, but simply to work, live, eat and worship in peace'. He explains that it was 'easy for newcomers to obtain royal permits to engage in trade',¹ as the Normans wanted to encourage Frenchmen and other immigrants with commercial rather than political interest to settle in towns to prevent Saxon revolts and increase trade. He lists, for example, increasing numbers of Gascon, Flemish, Dutch Italian and German merchants in the biggest business at the time, wool. However, the most significant community of immigrants was the Jews. During Norman rule, between three and five thousand Jews settled in England. It is likely that around 200 of the Jewish community lived in Winchester during the thirteenth century, when Licoricia worked as a financier as part of the financial industry which the Jewish community had helped to establish.

Government factor

It is within this economic climate that the government, in this case the king, was the enabling factor that encouraged what seems to be voluntary Jewish migration. The first records of Jewish settlers show they were living in London, having moved from France after the Norman conquest. A twelfth-century historian claimed that William I had brought Jews from Rouen to London.² Later historians suggested Jews may have provided coin to pay William's soldiers and finance for his extensive castle and cathedral building programme across England. English kings continued to give permission for Jews to live and trade in England in order to benefit from the finance they could provide.

Jews had a unique position in society as servants of the king. This meant that they were dependent on the king for permission to live and trade in England with royal permits or charters. They were also entitled to royal protection. This was because the Jewish community was valuable to the king in

¹ R. Winder, *Bloody Foreigners* (Abacus, 2008), p.42.

² William Malmesbury, referenced in Patricia Skinner (ed.), *Jews in Medieval Britain* (Boydell Press, 2003) p16.



providing personal finance through loans and later the payment of substantial tallages (arbitrary taxes required from the Jewish community).

The role of government was a factor in the later forced migration of Jewish people during the second half of the thirteenth century. Firstly, sheriffs were instructed to move all Jews into 27 approved towns, including Winchester. These *archa* towns had a chest containing records of Jewish debts to facilitate the Jewish exchequer in managing royal income from Jews. Gradually, Jewish people across England and Wales started to be expelled from other towns. Some Jews paid for licences to move to towns without an *archa* chest, for example, one of Licoricia's son's, Lombard, paid to move to Basingstoke in 1273.

Secondly, it was King Edward I ordered the forced expulsion of the entire Jewish community from England in 1290. This likely included Licoricia's son, Asser, who as an adult migrated to Devizes after the Jewish community were expelled from Marlborough by the king's mother, Eleanor, in 1275. Only Jews that had converted to Christianity were allowed to remain.

Religious factor

The role of the Church in Christian Europe also created the economic need for Jewish commerce in England due to the fact that the Pope banned usury across Christian Europe. The Church believed it was a sin for Christians to lend money to other Christians and charge interest. There were still many Christian moneylenders charging interest on credit, but it did nonetheless create a gap in the English financial market for Jewish financiers, and they were in competition with Christian French financiers and Italian bankers approved by the Pope as papal bankers.

Religion also played a role in the expulsion of the Jews from England in 1290 by Edward I. The Jewish community were less useful to the king as a new law banning Jews from lending money for interest in 1275 had impoverished most Jews. This meant they were unable to produce the tallage demands the king expected from them. Parliament had made King Edward aware that if he evicted the Jews, they would grant him the previously denied finance he needed for his extensive castle-building and wars in France. In addition, Edward was a crusader who also wished to rid his realm of non-Christians. He enthusiastically followed Pope Honorius IV's demands in 1286 to increase restrictions that separated Christians and Jews, including enforcing the 1275 restrictions of wearing of a badge to make Jewish people more easily identifiable in order to avoid inter-marriage or sexual relations between Christians and Jews. Finally, the Church was against the Jewish religion and contained influential religious communities who argued for Jewish expulsion over converting the Jews to Christianity. The Franciscans were one example with influence at the king's court. The queen had Franciscan spiritual and political advisors. The king was therefore persuaded to expel the Jews for financial and religious reasons.

Strand 2: The experience and impact of migrants

The experience of Jewish medieval migrants

The Jews that migrated to Britain had experiences that ranged from friendship with their Christian neighbours and appreciation of the benefits to trade and finance they could provide, to resentment over financial debt owed to the Jewish community or hatred based on being othered for religious or xenophobic reasons. Jewish immigrants lived across all parts of England during the twelfth century and many flourished. However, their position in society as the king's servants in providing royal



revenue and under his protection caused resentment as did the debts that individuals owed to Jewish financiers.

Many Jews migrating to England from countries across Europe will have experienced persecution and been the victims of violence because of their religion. Violence against Jews intensified across Europe during the time of the Crusades. In England, this occurred especially from the Third Crusade (1189–92) onwards, when Jews were seen as the enemy at home. Many were attacked and killed by the crusaders passing through York, London and East Anglia on their way to the Third Crusade led by Richard I. The massacres that followed the coronation of Richard I in 1189 saw the destruction of the bonds kept by Jewish creditors (to destroy evidence of loans), as well as attacks on Jewish homes. From 1144, Jews increasingly faced being demonised as child killers in antisemitic ‘blood libels’ – false accusations about so-called ‘ritual murders’ that often led to mass executions. Jews could also face the often-false accusation of being a coin clipper, punishable by death. In addition, by the end of the twelfth century, kings had turned from borrowing Jewish finance to taking it through enormous and arbitrary tallages imposed on the whole community. By the time of the expulsion in the thirteenth century, the Jewish community had been impoverished through Edward I’s Statue of the Jewry in 1275, their final assets liquidated for the king’s profit prior to the expulsion.

However, Jews and Christians are known to have got on well, living alongside one another, drinking in the same pubs and attending cross-religious banquets, and dealing with each other as merchants. Some Christian families and bishops were known to have protected Jewish families when they were under attack. Even as late as 1286, there are examples of neighbourly friendships, such as when Christians in Hereford attended an elaborate wedding party for the daughter of a Jewish financier despite the Bishop of Hereford threatening the excommunication of any Christian that attended.

It is within this context that Licoricia’s life exemplifies some of the experiences that Jews faced as relations between the Christian and Jewish communities worsened during the thirteenth century.

The experience of Licoricia of Winchester

Licoricia’s remarkable story portrays a woman, twice widowed, persevering through adversity, including imprisonment in the Tower of London, to survive and even thrive before her murder in 1277. Little is known about the beginning of Licoricia’s life, including when or where she was born, but her unusual name, meaning ‘sweet meat’, has allowed historians to trace her name in medieval financial and legal documents to reveal some of the notable events in her life.

Licoricia first appears in the Close Rolls in 1234, from which we learn that she was a financier and widow of Abraham of Kent who, records show, had business in Kent and Winchester. She was left with three sons, Isaac, Lumbard and Benedict. She later had a fourth son, Asser, in her second marriage to David of Oxford; we hear of her daughter Belia only in the records of Licoricia’s death, as the daughter of Licoricia who found the body of her mother lying stabbed on the floor along with their Christian maid.

The members of Licoricia’s family were no strangers to adversity. Her first husband Abraham of Kent was accused of child murder in 1225 along with several others. There are conflicting records, about whether or not he was found guilty. Either way, Abraham no longer appears in the records after this time, beyond the reference above to Licoricia as his widow in 1234. Many Jewish wives were partners in their husbands’ businesses, maintaining them after their husbands’ deaths. Her first loan showed that she was a wealthy woman, as the £10 involved was the equivalent of the estimated cost of a newly fitted ship. Her clients seemed to be local minor gentry and landowners at this time, but



by 1244 Licoricia had become the wealthiest Jewish woman in the country. By the late 1240s Licoricia had developed a close working relationship with King Henry III, involved with his personal finances. However, the route to this success had come after further tragedy.

In 1242 the king himself had intervened to ensure that the Jewish court of religious law allowed David of Oxford to divorce his wife in order to marry Licoricia. This intervention came after David appealed to the king. This is one example of the influence the wealthiest Jewish financiers could have over the royal household. Records show that David gave the king regular gifts including cash and an expensive horse. David was a highly successful businessman and one of the six wealthiest Jews in England. We cannot know for sure why David and Licoricia married. They may have married for business reasons or it may simply have been for love. Historian Simon Schama believes it is likely he fell for Licoricia whilst she was travelling on business, probably wearing spectacular clothes such as 'bluet silk' and 'Blood red gown trimmed in rabbit fur', suggested by records of Jewish clothing at the time.³ Once married, Licoricia moved from Winchester to Oxford. David is known to have owned a stone house with stone vaults for safekeeping of his goods and wealth in the town centre, and to have secured an additional property for use as a synagogue. Life would have been very comfortable for Licoricia at this time. However, David died after just two years' marriage. Licoricia was therefore immediately locked up in the Tower of London to prevent her or her family interfering with the king's evaluation of David's wealth. It was practice for the king to take a third or sometimes all of the late Jewish person's estate, including their property and money owed to them, known as chattels and bonds. Unusually, Licoricia was able to keep all of David's chattels and bonds for a fine of 25 marks per annum and a further 5000 marks in the settlement of death duties (around £2.5 million today).⁴

Having been held in the Tower by the king, Licoricia was now able to take David's place as the king's financier, pursuing her business interests at court in Winchester's Great Hall and in the royal courts in London, dealing with people at the highest levels of society. In terms of her influence in the Jewish community, historian Suzanne Bartlet writes that 'the Jewish community saw Licoricia as its representative and turned to her with its various concerns sometimes asking her to intercede on their behalf with the king'. She also refers to Licoricia conducting her own cases in law courts, where she 'presented as a great figure and a litigant'.⁵ Her son Benedict had economic influence in terms of trade. Guilds were closed to Jews, but there is some evidence that Benedict, successfully trading wine, wool, salt and wheat, achieved the impossible and was accepted into the city guild in Winchester by the mayor of Winchester, although this was amended to an honorary position after a public outcry.

Little is known about Licoricia's home; Bartlet suggests, based on her knowledge of the medieval Jewish properties in Winchester, that as a wealthy widow Licoricia's house is likely to have covered an acre of land, possibly including the synagogue in her own courtyard if she owned the property previously owned by prominent Jew, Abraham Pinche. Her house would have been a large stone house with a secure cellar in which to protect her money and valuables at a time when there were no banks. It is likely that the house contained a private Jewish ritual bath called a *mikvah*, like that of wealthy London Jew Benedict Crispin. Her house may well have been served by a spring from the

³ S. Schama, *The Story of the Jews* (Vintage, 2014), p.319. Records of Jewish clothing lists, frequently from disputes, are detailed more fully in S. Bartlet, *Licoricia of Winchester: Marriage, Motherhood and Murder in the Medieval Anglo-Jewish Community* (Vallentine Mitchell, 2009), p71.

⁴ 5000 marks was the medieval sum of £3,333 and the equivalent of over £2,500,000 today. 1 mark was worth two-thirds of a pound at the time (13s 4d) and over £500 today. From R. Brown and S. McCartney, *Jewish Historical Studies* 39 (2004), quoted in R. Abrams, *Licoricia of Winchester: Power and Prejudice in Medieval England* (Licoricia of Winchester Appeal, 2022).

⁵ Bartlet, *Licoricia of Winchester*, p.68.



chalky western hill of Winchester. The property may have had a garden and orchard, or a courtyard with domestic animals. She would have had several servants. We know that she had a Christian servant, despite the fact that Jews were not supposed to employ Christians.

Jews could expect to be imprisoned several times in their life. In 1259 Licoricia was arrested and taken to the Tower of London to investigate the theft of a ring, before she was released on finding that her neighbour who had accused Licoricia had taken the ring herself. Licoricia was taken again to the Tower in 1260 which may have been the result of an overdue payment of a tallage or fine. Bartlet suggested that this may have been what prompted the king to instruct his treasurer to 'allow Jews to pay taxes in sums convenient to them', recorded in the Close Rolls at the time.⁶

Her difficulties didn't end there. Many Jews were massacred, and evidence of Jewish financial records held in the royal *archa* chests were destroyed in the Baron's War when Simon de Montfort took over Winchester and the government of England briefly in 1264. This affected Licoricia's business, as the king granted Licoricia the right to search other chests across England for evidence of her business deals.

The death of Henry III and the succession of Edward I, a crusader with prejudice against the Jews, was to bring further hardship for Jews. It was under Edward I that Jews lost many of their civil rights. The Statute of the Jewry in 1275 banned the money lending that supported the Jewish community in paying the large Jewish tallage demands from the king and plunged many into poverty. Licoricia may have retired from business around this time and was murdered either by a creditor or in what was assumed to be a robbery at the time. The fact that Licoricia's death was reported as far away as Germany in a Jewish chronicle is evidence of her prominent position in Medieval England.

Sadly, one year later her son Benedict was hanged, a victim of what Schama describes as 'a campaign of crushing terror and violence launched in 1278–9 in which the Jews of England, *en masse* were accused of coin clipping'.⁷ Although even more Christians were arrested for this offence, it had a disproportionate effect on the small Jewish community. Schama notes that it had led to 'the incarceration of virtually all the Jews'⁸ and far more Jews than Christians were executed. By 1278 there was an explosion of accusations and executions that lasted up until the expulsion, with the planting of false evidence being rife. The crown benefited by an estimated £10,000 from the confiscated property of Jewish victims. This was perhaps a deliberate attempt to compensate the king when the Jews could not afford the extortionate 20,000-mark tallage demand in 1287. This was an impossible amount to raise for the impoverished Jewish community who had been imprisoned pending payment.

The experience of Jews living in England significantly worsened towards the end of the thirteenth century. By 1282 all Jews were forced to attend weekly conversion sermons and the Jewish religion was banned, even in the home. In 1290 Edward I expelled the Jewish community, who were no longer financially useful to him, and it is likely that Licoricia's son Asser was one of those that was expelled.

Economic impact

Licoricia was part of a very small proportion of Jewish people who were major money lenders: they equated to just 1% of Jewish society, according to Bartlet. However, Bartlet suggests that Jewish financiers had a positive impact on the financial industry, including allowing people to pay less

⁶ Quoted in *ibid.*, p.76.

⁷ Schama, *The Story of the Jews*, p.324.

⁸ *Ibid.*



interest on loans that were repaid within a shorter time period, or arranging easier payments to those struggling to repay. Bartlet notes, for example, that Jewish financiers, ‘developed new practices such as the use of mortgages’, and even ‘developed dealing in “futures” when they were not allowed to lend money’, following the statute for the Jews in 1275.⁹ Their loans made the growth of other trades and businesses possible.

Jews were encouraged into finance to support the king’s funding as opportunities for other vocations were limited. They were banned from owning land for more than ten years, which meant farming would not be profitable, and the guild membership required for many trades required a Christian oath and was closed to Jews. However, Jews contributed to the economy in many different ways, as scribes, clerks, agents, scholars and rabbis. Jewish women also worked as midwives and wetnurses: Bartlet claims that they were ‘particularly sought after being regarded as better nourished and more informed as to the best medical practices’, and notes that some Jewish women also ‘worked as scribes in their family businesses, while others were servants’.¹⁰ Jewish doctors and lawyers were consulted by Jews and Christians. There were merchants in wine, wheat, salt and wool, cheesemakers and fishmongers, as well as soldiers. There were also those that worked in trades associated with finance, such as goldsmiths, silversmiths and second-hand dealers.

Impact on buildings

Jewish finance and taxation are known to have contributed significantly to the construction of many of medieval England’s important buildings. William I encouraged the growth of Jewish finance to help fund his extensive building programme of castles and cathedrals. Two notable examples of buildings financed with Jewish money by Henry III are the Great Hall at Winchester and Westminster Abbey. Licoricia provides exemplification of this impact: in 1244 Henry III took 5000 marks (the equivalent of over £2,500,000 today) from Licoricia after the death of her second husband David and spent 4000 marks of it on his pet project, building a new chapel in Westminster Abbey. The shrine to Edward the Confessor and the tombs of Edward I and his wife Eleanor of Castile, close to where our kings and queens are crowned, are paid for by money from Licoricia and David’s estate. This included a further forced payment of £2500 from Licoricia, a sizeable sum which would pay to build and equip 250 war ships.

Cultural impact

Jews had a cultural impact on England. Not only did Jews live amongst their Christian neighbours and engage in debate, conversation and hospitality, they had an impact on the royal bureaucracy, scholarship and poetry. Due to the more universal education of Jewish men and women in terms of literacy, numeracy and the reading of legal texts, Jews were seen as culturally superior to Christian clerks. This led to more Jews being employed in direct government service as officials and legal counsellors until around 1215, when attitudes towards Jews began to harden. In the later twelfth century, Jewish scholarly connections with the continent and England were strong and led to some notable Jewish scholars like Abraham ibn Ezra and Rabbi Yom Tov of Joigny living in England. Hebrew literary work from this period in England is also of high quality, such as the poems of Meir of Norwich which historian Robert Stacey describes as ‘among the finest such works produced

⁹ Bartlet, *Licoricia of Winchester*, p.11.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.14.



anywhere in thirteenth-century Europe'.¹¹ However, many Jewish manuscripts were looted to sell abroad in the massacres of 1190 and others may have been lost during the time of expulsion, and these may have revealed a greater cultural impact. Most of our sources on Jewish medieval English history today are fiscal sources which reveal little on cultural impact.

Preparing for Paper 1 Section B

Thematic studies require students to understand change and continuity across a long sweep of history, revealing wider changes in aspects of society over the centuries and allowing comparisons to be made between different periods of history.

This case study has been arranged to reflect the specification content: first the broader factors involved in the process of change (institutions, religion, economic influences, and attitudes in society), and then the two strands (the context for migration, and the experience and impact of migrants). This section explores teaching approaches that connect knowledge about Jewish migrants in medieval England with the thematic study assessment model.

For more detailed information on the assessment model, please refer to the [Getting started guide](#) and [Paper 1 guide](#); the latter also offers teaching suggestions.

3. Explain one way in which... in the years (1st period) was similar/different to... in the years (2nd period). (4 marks)

This question assesses the ability of students to analyse either similarity or difference over two different periods of time. In the classroom, you could explore ways in which the context for migration or the experience and impact of Jewish migrants in medieval England were similar to or different from migrant groups in other time periods, for example, seventeenth-century Huguenot or twentieth-century Asian migrants (the two migrant groups compared in the SAMs). Use the factors in the process of change, such as the role of government, economic influences, or attitudes in society to find points of similarity or difference.

4. Explain why... (12 marks)

This question targets causation and the process of change. Answers will explain the reasons for a specified event or development. It will always cover at least 100 years. Two stimulus points are provided to help students recognise the context of the question, but answers should go beyond these aspects. Six marks are available for knowledge and understanding (AO1), and six marks for analysis (AO2).

As a teaching approach, explore ways in which the context for migration or the experience and impact of Jewish migrants changed over time in medieval England, and consider how these may exemplify the wider picture of migration before c1500. Are there any commonalities between Jewish migration to medieval England and that of other groups? Select factors that affected migration to draw out these changes, and bring in examples to support these, for example, William I's need for royal finance or persecution by Edward I.

¹¹ R. Stacey, in P. Skinner (ed.), *Jews in Medieval Britain: Historical, Literary and Archaeological Perspectives* (Boydell Press, 2003), p.48.



5/6. ‘Statement.’ How far do you agree? Explain your answer.

(16 marks)

Students have a choice of two questions. They are asked to address how far they agree with a statement, by considering a range of information as evidence and reaching a judgement based on valid criteria. It will always cover at least 200 years, often much longer. Two stimulus points are provided to help students recognise the context of the question, but answers should go beyond these aspects. Six marks are available for knowledge and understanding (AO1), and ten marks for analysis, including judgement (AO2).

This question can target any second-order historical concept (change/continuity, consequence, similarity/difference, significance, causation).

One of the two questions in the Sample Assessment Materials is:

5. ‘The impact on culture was the most significant consequence of migration to Britain during the Middle Ages.’ How far do you agree? Explain your answer.

You may use the following in your answer:

- language
- trade

You **must** also use information of your own.

In preparing for this type of question, students can consider examples from the impact of Jewish migrants to Britain, alongside examples from other migrant groups, that either support or counter statements like the one in the question. Using the factors in change, what do we know about the impact of Jewish migrants in, for example, the fields of culture, trade and the built environment? Can you find local examples (see below) that shine a light on the bigger picture? Are there limitations in what we know? What criteria can we use to determine which of the various ways in which migrants had an impact on Britain produced the most significant consequence?

Using a local example for Jewish migrants in medieval England

Edexcel achieves a balance between breadth and depth in its specification through a broad coverage of migration through time that includes a focus on individual groups of migrants named in the specification. Therefore, it is important to note Pearson welcomes bespoke approaches that make this study more relevant to schools’ individual contexts. They will accept any valid examples and therefore I would encourage you to make the study of Jewish medieval history relevant to your local area.

In his article, ‘Curating the imagined past’ (*Teaching History* 180), Michael Hill reflected that the past is by its very nature a very strange, remote and unfamiliar place. Dan Smith recognised in his article, ‘Period, place and mental space’ (*Teaching History* 154) that helping students develop a sense of place, becoming ‘familiar with its geography and inhabitants’, will help overcome the strangeness. Studying local history can bring that sense of familiarity and relevance to studying an otherwise remote history.

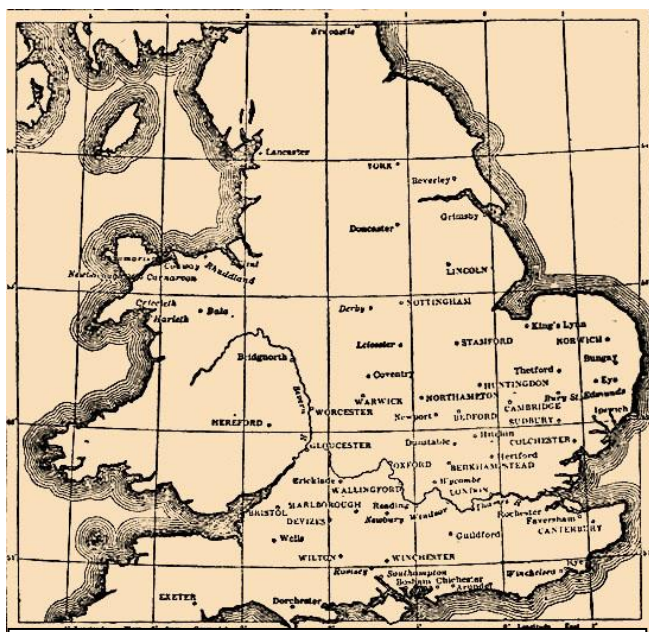


Illustration from Brockhaus and Efron Jewish Encyclopedia (1906—1913) Unknown author, Public domain, via [Wikimedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_England_showing_the_locations_of_27_towns_where_Jews_were_permitted_to_settle.jpg)

London saw the earliest recorded Jewish settlement, and from 1130 areas outside the capital, including Canterbury, Cambridge, York, Oxford, Norwich and Bristol, had their own Jewry. By the end of the twelfth century, Jews could be found in around 200 locations, so you are likely to find records of a Jewish community near to your school. From 1194, royal chests or *archae* were used to securely store records of Jewish debts. After the appointment of an Exchequer of the Jews by 1198 to oversee the royal income from Jews, Jewish money lenders and their communities were increasingly restricted to the 27 towns that possessed an *archa* therefore you are likely to find more information on these places: Bedford, Berkhamsted, Bristol, Cambridge, Canterbury, Colchester, Devizes, Exeter, Gloucester, Hereford, Huntingdon, Ipswich, London, Lincoln, Marlborough, Norwich, Nottingham,

Oxford, Stamford, Sudley, Wallingford, Warwick, Wilton, Winchester, Worcester, and York. In the thirteenth century, under Henry III, there were reports of forced expulsions from other towns such as Leicester, Warwick, Southampton, Romsey and Newbury.

Sources of information

Licoricia has been described by historian Robert Stacey as ‘the most important Jewish woman in medieval England’,¹² yet her story has only recently been told, probably because she was a woman and part of a Jewish community that was expelled shortly after her death. First referenced by medieval historians towards the end of the twentieth century, her story was researched and told as a narrative by Suzanne Bartlet in her 2009 book, mentioned above.

Her story has recently been picked up by historians such as Simon Schama in *The Story of the Jews* (Vintage, 2014).

Jews in Medieval England, edited by Patricia Skinner, and *Bloody Foreigners*, by Robert Winder, provide valuable context.

The website www.licoricia.org, created by the Licoricia of Winchester charity, contains useful information on Licoricia, the statue in Winchester, links to and videos of speeches and interviews on Licoricia, and news of Rebecca Abrams’ new book on Licoricia.¹³ The site has photos of the recent visit to the statue of Licoricia by Prince Charles, whom I was privileged to meet to talk about the teaching materials Hampshire has written. It contains a link to an interesting article recently written in *The Spectator* on the impact of Licoricia’s statue.

¹² Endorsement quote on the back cover of Bartlet, *Licoricia of Winchester*.

¹³ R. Abrams, *Licoricia of Winchester: Power and Prejudice in Medieval England* (Licoricia of Winchester Appeal, 2022).



The Wikipedia page for Licoricia of Winchester contains further references and links: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Licoricia_of_Winchester.

Most of the evidence of the medieval Jewish community in Britain comes from fiscal sources produced by the government administration that was charged with recording Jewish residence, property ownership, loans and payment of taxes in the form of tallages.

There are financial records held by the National Archives which evidence the dealings of Jewish financiers, including Licoricia and her family. These were originally held by the Exchequer of the Jews in large lockable *archa* chests and made out in duplicate or triplicate. There is evidence of a loan from Licoricia's son Cokerel in a chirograph, for example, that reads, 'Cokerel fil Licorice'. Licorice is the French for Licoricia, who had a son called Cokerel. The photograph of the chirograph can be seen in the lesson resources available from the Hampshire History Centre via the HIAS History Moodle.

Cultural impact: evidence concerning the social life of the Jewish community is limited, however the recent historical scholarship presented in *Jews in Medieval Britain*, edited by Patricia Skinner, references evidence that Anglo-Jewish scholars were internationally respected for their interpretations of religious law. Hebrew literary work was also seen as high quality, including the poems of Meir of Norwich. Meir ben Elijah's poem from the late thirteenth century, 'Put a Curse on My Enemy', reflects the weight of the discrimination and persecution suffered by many English Jews, leading to financial ruin, and can be found on the Our Migration Story website: [Poems of protest: Meir ben Elijah and the Jewish people of early Britain / Our Migration Story](#).

In terms of local history, look out for names of local places and people in the indexes of books. I contacted the local excavations committee to discover findings of the excavation of the Jewish cemetery, and the local record office to pursue the possibility of any records of Jewish presence in the town. This meant that I was able to find a map of Jewish settlement in the medieval city. This can be seen along with an artist's reconstruction of David of Oxford's stone house and an artist's reconstruction of Licoricia in the Great Hall in Winchester, in the Hampshire teaching resources on Licoricia of Winchester, available from the Hampshire History Centre (see the details below).

Resources to support your teaching

I have written a fully resourced sequence of three enquires over five lessons on Licoricia of Winchester. They are sufficiently rich in knowledge that they can be used either to build the foundations of knowledge on the context for migration and the medieval Jewish experience and impact at KS3, or as the basis to teach the case study of Jewish migration at KS4, before drawing out the role of factors using this case study resource.

You can purchase the Licoricia resources from the Hampshire History Centre resources page of the HIAS Moodle using this link to the order form: <https://tinyurl.com/history-order-form>.*

These secondary school history resources will support enquiries focused around questions of historical significance, change and continuity, similarity and difference and historical interpretations.

**You don't have to purchase any resources to deliver our qualifications.*

Glimpse inside some of the resources on the following pages:



Example resources from Enquiry 1 on what Licoricia's life reveals about the changing treatment of medieval Jews

Example resources from Lesson 3 enquiry on the significance of Licoricia



Example resources from Enquiry 2 on what Winchester's medieval past can reveal about Jewish history.

Exploring diversity through a sense of place and time

What does the history of Winchester reveal about how Jews were treated in medieval England?

KS3 local history enquiry 2 on the experience of the Jewish medieval minority built around questions of historical significance
Written by Sarah Hentley, HIAS Secondary History Advisor

Think: How do you think medieval Jews would want to be treated in Winchester?

This checklist might help you

Checklist
Medieval Jews were treated if they were

1. treated with the same respect and equality as Christians?

What happened to Jews that moved there during the 13th century? How were they treated?

Timeline

Step 3: What does this recent historical scholarship reveal about where Jews lived and why?

Listen as the teacher reads this extract from Suzanne Bartlett's book, *Licoricia of Winchester* (2015) Chapter 2.
Underline what information helps you to understand:

1. where Jews lived 2. the dangers they faced 3. where they might receive protection.

The first Jews are recorded as living in Shoemakers Street. This was the main street from the North gate towards the city centre and the three settled there but it came to be called a Jewry. The Jews tended to live there under an archway. Wind supposed to offer protection. The West gate, which it would have been so were in greater danger.

Step 1: Map of Medieval Winchester in c1300

You are here at Licoricia's statue

Create a walking tour of Winchester for visitors who visit the statue of Licoricia. Explain how each site reveals how medieval Jews were treated. Start the tour at my statue where it will be outside the Winchester Discovery Centre on Jewry Street.