

References to Heleigh Castle in the *Madeley Village, Staffordshire, Timeline*

Heighley is Anglo-Saxon for High Lea, or high clearing, and in the Domesday Book, the Staffordshire castle was held by Alward and had land for one plough.

1216 - Henry de Aldithley (Audley), Lord of Heleigh, was presented by Henry III with twelve hinds from Cannock Forest to stock his deer park at Heighley.

1223 – Henry de Audley founded Hulton Abbey.

1226 – Building (or rebuilding) of Heleigh Castle began

1227 - A Royal Confirmation Charter showed that Henry de Audley received all the lands of Heleigh from William de Betteley, and all the land under Heleigh from Harvey de Stafford. (This is curious, since Adam de Aldithley, father of Henry, had been Lord of Heleigh before Henry).

1233 – Building of the castle was completed.

1246 - Henry de Audley died. Hugh de Frodsham, a Kings Serjeant, was appointed constable of Heighley Castle.

Late 13th Century - Adam, son of Lusi of Betley, was killed by a stag in Heighley Deer Park. Adam killed the stag before dying.

1313 – Nicholas de Audley was created 1st Baron Audley of Heleigh

1320 - Joan, wife of the late Nicholas de Audley complained that men broke into her park at Heleigh and assaulted her men. This is thought to be an early, local York/Lancaster affray.

1339 - William, son of John de Bromley, thrust a knife into, and killed, Thomas le Cook of Audley, after a dispute between them in the kitchen at Heighley Castle. John de Whetales, the coroner, ordered Sherrif Musard to arrest William after he had fled. Shortly after, William surrendered and produced The Kings Pardon for the murder, on account of his good service in the war in France

1382 - An indenture referred to a forge at Heighley, below the castle.

1390s - John Touchet, 4th Baron Audley, sued John, son of James de Thekenes for removing game from his park at Heighley, and fish from his fishery at Betley, to the value of £10 - a huge amount in those days. The Thekenes, or Thicknesse family, lived at Balterley Hall, adjacent.

1459 – John Touchet, 5th Baron Audley and 2400 Lancastrian supporters were killed at The Battle of Blore Heath by the Earl of Salisbury's Yorkists.

1469 - Two bloomeries (charcoal-fired iron smelters) were operating at Heleigh Castle. A bloomery could smelt 100lbs of iron per day.

1538 - Heleigh Castle's owner, the future Lord Audley, petitioned the king for the grant of Hulton Abbey as he had *no house but an old ruinous castle* but was refused. The Court of Star Chamber found that, though ruinous, parts are still inhabited.

1540 - John Leland, passing through Staffordshire, confirmed that Heleigh Castle had decayed.

1640s – Demolition of the castle ordered by Parliament.

1680 - The iron furnace at Heighley closed around this time. Coke fired furnaces caused the closure of charcoal fired furnaces.

1694 – Celia Fiennes noted that the castle still existed *with ruined walls*.