

The Seaxe



Robin

Newsletter of the Middlesex Heraldry Society

Joint Editors - Don & Marjorie Kirby, 2 Jamnagar Close, Staines, Middlesex TW18 2JT (01784 456049)

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Editorial

In the June Newsletter (Seaxe No.5) we asked for it and we got it! There is an objection to the prominence given to militaria particularly when it appears on the front page and the objector cannot imagine *"anyone in the Middlesex Heraldry Society waiting agog for the particularly difficult histories of British regiments"*. We are reminded that we are a heraldry society not a military society. We, in turn, feel that heraldry is, or should be, a very wide subject - we are a small society and very few of us are erudite purists - we are concerned not only with heraldry itself but also in applied genealogy, history and connected items of general and current interest. In addition to the service we try to give to our existing members we feel it is part of our duty to attract new members and we certainly would not have been attracted had we been confronted by some of the learned discourse one reads in other publications. After all, if you want a more learned treatise all you need do is join the The Heraldry Society and read the Heraldry Gazette. As we were told when we took on the Seaxe editorship - it is something to be enjoyed not to be treated as a chore.

The "typography" has also been criticised - the italic type is hard to read - the "Old English" is also *"difficult to read, is ugly, has no place in modern typography and is seldom used"*. Again, we can much more easily produce a plain News-sheet but we felt our readers deserved more than that. The *Brushscrip* is used to indicate that extracts from an actual letter have been quoted, *italic* and **bold** type are used to highlight names of people and places and one of your editors thinks that "Old English" headings are appropriate to the subjects we are discussing.

Illustrations have not escaped and we are told that *"not all illustrations lend themselves to reduction"* and that *"it is better to leave them out if they become indistinct or fuzzy"*. The Tradescant hatchment is cited as an example. One favourable comment is that the double column format has saved a critic from using his finger!

Obviously we must now ask for the views, opinions and suggestions from our membership and we should therefore be grateful if you would take a few minutes to complete the attached questionnaire. It should be returned as soon as possible to the Joint Editors or to any member of the Committee.



Saint David

Mark Arnold, is currently reading History at St. David's University College, Lampeter, Dyfed and has entered into correspondence with the *Heraldry Gazette* through another member, its Editor, **Pete Taylor**. The interesting information he imparts is that St. David's College was founded in 1822 by **Bishop Thomas Burgess** of the See of St. Davids and later Salisbury - originally as a theological college - the first students being admitted in 1827. It received its first Royal Charter permitting the conferment of its own degrees in 1828. After Oxford and Cambridge, St. Davids is the oldest degree awarding college in both England and Wales. Until 1961 it survived without formal government assistance but in 1971



St. Davids College
University of Wales

it was linked to the University of Wales. The degrees awarded are those of the University of Wales. The arms of the College are; - *Sable between four cinquefoils in cross Or a figure representing St. David standing in Archiepiscopal robes in a niche under a canopy holding in his dexter hand a crosier and in his sinister hand a book all gold (Or)*. The motto is:- *Cair Duw Goreu Dysg* (God's Word is the best Learning). The predominant tinctures Or and Sable are taken from the arms of both St. David and the Welsh See where the arms are:- *Sable on a cross Or five cinquefoils of the first.* (cont'd)



See of St. Davids

Saint David (cont'd)

In a further letter Mark discusses in detail the arms of St. David, borne by the bishops and diocese of St. Davids and blazoned overleaf. In his letter he says that *The cinquefoil is said to represent the rose once known in Pembrokeshire, as St. David's rose - it is the white-petalled, sweet-scented Burnet rose which flowers between May and July, along the coast paths and among the sand dunes of the county.*

According to Mark the origins of the coat of arms are obscure; it may have been that of Bishop Bernard in the early 12th century. The colours were those of Rhys ap Tewdr, king of South Wales when Rhygfarch wrote his "Life of St. David". Rhys gave the Cantref Pebidiog, the area latterly known as Dewisland, to the Church; he was killed in a skirmish in the Brecon area in 1091. A poem by the mediæval Welsh poet, Gwynfarrd Brycheiniog (c 1170), listed all the important Dewi churches of the time. Eventually, some 53 churches were dedicated to St. David in south Wales and the border, but none in north Wales.

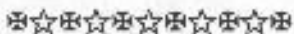


Steady The Buffs



Pete Taylor writes that in Seaxe No.5 (June) we say that the origin of the dragon badge of The Buffs was unknown and quotes from Simkin's *Uniforms of the British Army* which

states *The green dragon was officially recognised as the ancient badge of the regiment although the origins are not known for certain* goes on to say - and this is of heraldic interest, albeit supposition - *The first Queen Elizabeth had a dragon supporter to her grant of arms. The historian, Cannon suggests that when The Buffs were in Bruges c1707, they adopted the dragon which the city had captured in the Crusades. I [Simkin] suggest that the griffin from the arms of General Wills, once their Colonel, might also be a source.*



Women's Arms

In a recent letter from Pete Taylor and with reference to Seaxe No.6 Page 3 he writes that he knows *the National Press is to blame for saying the College of Arms has embraced the cause of feminism - but the fact is the College of Arms is an inanimate object, a building, unable to embrace anything or anybody. It would surely have been more correct to say the English Kings of Arms have considered and issued an edict to embrace the cause of feminism.*

Your Editors have consulted their Complete Oxford Dictionary and find the following under the heading *College:-*

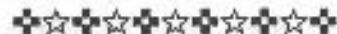
From the Latin *collegium* = colleagueship, partnership, hence a body of colleagues, a fraternity.

(1) *An organized society of persons performing certain common functions and possessing certain rights and privileges: a body of colleagues, a guild, fellowship, association.*

(a) Religious - among the examples are *college of cardinals* = the 70 cardinals of the Roman Church who constitute the Pope's council and elect to the papacy from their own number.

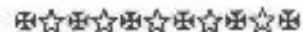
(b) Secular - among the examples here are *Heralds' College* or *College of Arms* = the corporation of Heralds which records proved pedigrees and grants armorial bearings. Similar chartered bodies in England are the *College of Physicians*, *College of Surgeons*, etc.

The meaning - *The building or set of buildings occupied by such society or institution* gets only fifth place - so, for once, the National Press did get it right!



Corrigendum - Brown Becomes Baron

No this is not an extract from an honours list nor does it mean that one of our illustrious members has been ennobled - but it does mean that Ron Brown has caught us out and has reminded us that David Lee, in his talk on *The Victorian World of Heraldry* mentioned, among others Oswald **Baron** not Brown as published. Sorry Ron but glad to know you read it!



Militaria No.5 - The Royal Northumberland Fusiliers

The regiment was raised in 1674 by Colonel Daniel O'Brien, Viscount Clare, for service in Holland as part of the forces of the Prince of Orange. It was known as Lord O'Brien's Regiment (or The Irish Regiment) and though recalled to Britain by James II in 1685, it returned to Holland the following year and only came on to the



5th Regt. of Foot

British permanent establishment with the accession of William of Orange in 1688. The regiment was then ranked 5th Foot and was known as Colonel Tollemache's Regiment of Foot. Up to 1751 the regiment changed its name with its colonels but in that year became the 5th

(or the Northumberland) Regiment of Foot. In 1836 it became the

5th Regiment of Foot (Northumberland Fusiliers) but there were more changes to come. In 1881 it became known as

The Northumberland Fusiliers and in 1935, George V granted the prefix Royal to the regimental title. Sadly, on St. George's Day in 1968, the regiment lost its identity by its amalgamation with the The Royal

Warwickshire Fusiliers, The Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment) and The Lancashire Fusiliers to form The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers.



Royal Regiment of Fusiliers

The original regiment took part in the War of American Independence, the Peninsular War, the Indian Mutiny and the Boer War and, among its many battle honours, are Mons, Marne, Ypres, Somme and Suvla from World War I - Dunkirk,

Caen, Sidi Barrani, Tobruk, El Alemein, Salerno and Cassino from World War II and Imjin from the Korean War. Ten members of the regiment have been awarded the Victoria Cross.

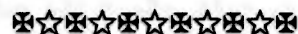
Wherever they have been and in however close contact with the enemy The Fifth always wore roses in their caps on St. George's Day - 23rd April. They wore the roses in the Imjin River battle in Korea fought on 23 April 1951 and two filthy and emaciated prisoners of the Japanese were observed to be wearing them in what was left of their hats whilst working on the Burma-Siam Railway. The regiment had one claim to fame which was almost unique in the British Army - serving in their ranks in the Peninsular War was a woman soldier, Phoebe Hessel; she was eventually awarded a pension by George IV and a stone stands to her memory in Hove churchyard.

Nicknames were - *The Fighting Fifth* - from a description of the regiment by the Duke of Wellington during a critical period of the Peninsular War - "*The ever fighting, often tried, but never failing Fifth*". As a result The Iron Duke selected them as his personal bodyguard whereupon they collected the futher sobriquet of *The Duke of Wellington's* or *Wellington's* or

Wellesley's Bodyguard. At this time they became known also as *The Old & Bold* or *The Old Bold Fifth*. The regiment always placed great store by the phylacteries of the parade ground - better known as "bull" and, in Ireland in 1769, the regiment became known as *The Shiners* because of its exceptionally smart 'turn out'.

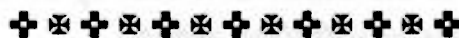
The regimental motto was - *Quo Fata Vocant* variously translated as "Whither the Fates summon" and "Wherever fate calls".

The Regimental HQ is that of The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers. - The Tower of London although *The Old Bold Fifth* have their own Regimental Museum at Alnwick Castle, the seat of the Dukes of Northumberland. The recruitment area now covers Northumberland, Lancashire, Warwickshire, Midlands and Greater London.



Postscript

During proof reading one of your editors remarked on the very interesting nature of the nutshell history of The Royal Northumberland Fusiliers but asked where was the connection with Northumberland as there was nothing to indicate this in the previous narrative. After more research we discovered by courtesy of David Ascoli the following explanation. In the summer of 1782 the Adjutant-General sent a letter to the regiments of foot suggesting that they may care to be associated with a particular county as opposed to being "Colonel Bloggs Regiment" with a new name every time the Colonel changed. Most Colonels objected to the idea but Earl Percy was enchanted and replied *I have This Instant received your letter of 27th July, and cannot hesitate One Moment in wishing that the 5th Regt. of foot may bear the name of the County of Northumberland, with which I have the Pleasure to be so nearly connected.*



The Tradescant Garden

We wonder how many members who visited the Tradescant Garden and Lambeth Palace recently read the splendid article about the two people who were mainly responsible for its transformation from wasteland to "a thing of beauty". They are, of course, the Nicholsons, John and Rosemary - and it was the latter who quietly welcomed most of us on our visit - giving us no indication of how important to the project she is. The phoenix like story appeared in the magazine section of *The Daily Telegraph* on 22nd July and we have retained our copy should any member wish to read it. Incidentally did anyone notice that the article was written by Robert Chesshyre?

Up in Arms

Pete Taylor in the Heraldry Gazette of March 1995 says that in a letter to The Times of 6th December 1994*, Mr Hubert Chesshyre, then Chester Herald but now Norroy and Ulster King of arms wrote:- *Sir/ Mrs Hart (letter, November 24) gives a succinct definition of the word crest, but I wonder how many people will absorb it. The pedantic priesthood in the College of Arms (your leader of November 19) is surely justified in deploring the misuse of the word, as the error is such a basic one. Most arms consist of a shield and a crest, and to talk about the whole coat of arms as a crest is like calling a house a chimney. Many early coats of arms (eg. those of most Oxford and Cambridge colleges) consist of a shield only, and when this is depicted on ties or stationery it is a common error to call such items crested. I believe the misuse originated in in the 18th century practice of engraving only the crest on small items such as spoons and forks, while reserving the full coat of arms for larger items like salvers. Collections of crests alone were published at least as early as 1778 (W. Sharp) and continued right up until the last edition of Fairbairns's Book of Crests in 1905. It is therefore understandable that many people think a crest is the same as a coat of arms, but they are nevertheless wrong.*

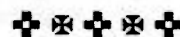
[*We think Chester Herald would have been too young to write to The Times in 1944 - the date actually printed! Eds]



And About Time Too

This was followed in the Heraldry Gazette of June 1995, by another editorial from Pete Taylor in which he says *The Times published a letter at the beginning of this year from Chester Herald, complaining and rightly so, that*

the newspaper had referred to Lady Thatcher's arms as her 'crest', something which she does not have. This is probably the oldest chestnut in the book of journalistic solecisms, but we have long ago given up our fight against invincible ignorance. Shortly after Chester's letter was published, the 'crest' of the Barings, the discredited bankers, was published in The Times and so described. What was in fact depicted was the marital achievement of Edward (Baring), 1st Baron Revelstoke (died 1897) and his wife, Louisa, daughter of John Bulteel. Norroy and Ulster wrote a further letter about this, but, although it was not published the message seems to have been received as the Chief Reviser Editor of The Times is going to mention the abuse of the word 'crest' in the new updated manual for use by The Times staff. Let us hope that this is no Pyrrhic Victory.



Et Tu Harrow

Quite coincidentally Peggy Foster sent us the front page of *The Harrow & Northwood Informer* - Issue No.21 dated 26th May 1995 which states that the borough is planning to ditch its six-year-old logo and revert to the



traditional council *crest* which dates back nearly sixty years. The aim is to end misuse of the modern motto, 'a responsible London borough', which is located under the logo depicting Harrow's sky-line, and was introduced by the previous

Conservative administration. The 1938 *crest* boasts a Latin motto *Salus populi suprema lex* which translates as

- 'The well-being of the people is the highest law'. The move to ditch the logo has been approved by the council's communications panel. The plan also needs the agreement of the policy and resources committee and full council. The *crest* is due to be phased in over



the next year at a cost of at least £25,000. A council report says stocks of headed notepaper, using the old logo, will be used up and it warns that most residents do not know about the traditional *crest*. *The lack of recognition of the crest by the majority of residents is an issue that should be taken seriously* it says. Labour group leader, Councillor Keith Toms, said *the motto a 'responsible borough' had been a liability. It was being used against us. It sounded as if we were presumptuous. I do not like it. Perhaps, originally, we should have said we were trying to be a responsible borough. Anyway* [here it comes again - Eds] *I like the crest it looks better.*

[The word *crest* in bold italics is our responsibility and not that of The Informer. Probably the worst attempt at humour is the caption under the borough coat of arms which reads - '**CREST WE FORGET**' - Eds]



Shortly afterwards we received a note from Elizabeth Lee with the same *Informer* front page plus letters she had written to the newspaper on 2nd June and 16th June respectively. The first letter is self explanatory and is reproduced here - it was actually printed, believe it or not, under the bold heading -

Welcome return of the old crest!

<p>Under the heading An incorrect achievement Elizabeth wrote - "I hope that you can correct the misinformation printed on the coat of arms (Informer week ending June 2). In printing my</p>	<p>I HAVE always disliked the meaningless logo which replaced the Achievement of Arms which belongs to Harrow (<i>Informer</i>, week ending May 26). I shall be happy to see it re-installed, as long as it is correctly described. The crest is the part which surmounts the helm. I do not know if there is a pennant or</p>	<p>badge which would be useful and decorative if correctly used. I would hope copies of the achievement would be available for all to buy and study.</p>
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ELIZABETH LEE

Devonshire Road, Hatch End.

letter under an incorrect heading it looks as if I am condoning your original error. Please try to make it clear that the whole debate revolves around the whole achievement of arms; the crest is the part above the helm, being in this particular case a crown and a lion".

But then comes the most unkindest cut of all - immediately beneath Elizabeth's letter is another, from Helen Watkins of Church Drive, North Harrow, printed under the heading **Plan Approval**

I APPROVE of the plan to revert to the traditional council crest, which dates back nearly 60 years.

- perhaps Pete is right when he speaks of "giving up the battle against invincible ignorance".

The Chester Mystery Plays

Pete Taylor is still not satisfied and writes that he is "quite sure that Roger Mathew's technical answer to *Ammunition Caps* is correct (speaking as an ex-armourer) but it still does not answer the question - how do you depict them heraldically? You could hardly reproduce Roger's sketches as a *semee charge*". In a further letter he goes on to say that in a new book recently published by the *Worshipful Company of Glaziers and Painters of Glass* entitled '*The Outwith London Guilds of Great Britain*' by R. F. Lane at £5 he states that the trade of Capper or Capmaker (hats and caps) existed in Chester from the late 15th century. He makes no mention of ammunition cap makers. By 1603 the *Linen Drapers* had amalgamated with the *Cappers, Pinner and Wierdrawers*. All these guilds were more or less engaged in the same broad category of trade, so it seems to make sense. Incidentally, could the *Wierdrawers*, (makers of wire by pulling iron rods through holes in metal from which the *Pinner* made pins), be the origin of Angela's *Waterleaders and Drawers*?

[The book is very good value at £5 but, disappointingly, has no illustrations - Eds]



In the meantime Angela has given us some diary dates - Monday, 4th to Friday, 8th December, 1995 - *The Wakefield Mystery Plays* - twice nightly, 6.30pm and 8.30pm, at Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Square. Admission free but a collection on the way out! More details nearer the date.

Change of Address

Fay Robson has asked us to inform her fellow members that her address is now
20, Sheephouse Green, WOTTON
Dorking, Surrey RH5 6QW
☎ 01306 883039

Next Meetings

Our Autumn/Winter programme begins on Thursday, **12th October** when Roger Matthews speaks to us on *The Heraldic Armoury*

Please note that the Eastcote Library is not available on our usual meeting night

On Thursday 16th November we have a return visit from our old friend Adrian Ailes who will speak to us on *Medieval Heraldry*.