

# The Seaxe



Rain

## 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

On Sunday, 29th September, twenty-six of us set out for Arundel on a visit to mark the **20th Anniversary** of the founding of the **Middlesex Heraldry Society**. We were a



Virtue alone is unconquerable.  
Arms of the Duke of Norfolk

mixed group of local and country members together with a smattering of members' friends. The occasion, was masterminded by **Chairman Nan**, who seemed to have lost her touch as far as the weather was concerned as it rained and blew steadily all day long. However the weather didn't spoil the pleasure of being together and seeing some wonderful

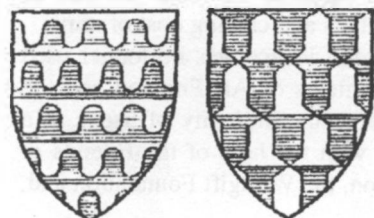
heraldry a good deal of which was recognisable by even the least erudite members of the party. There were also one or two shields that stumped the pundits! As we drove home thinking of what a happy day it had been despite the inclement weather we suddenly realised that **Nan's** luck hadn't deserted her - the visit should have taken place on the previous Sunday - a warm, dry and sunny day - but was changed to accommodate your editors who would otherwise have been on holiday. We are so sorry!

[A full report of the visit will appear in the next issue of *Seaxe*.]



### Vair by Kay Holmes

It is now generally accepted that Cinderella's "glass" slipper was actually made of squirrel fur, confusion arising between the French word *verre* meaning glass and the heraldic fur,



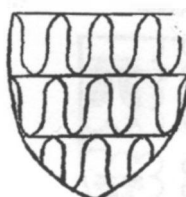
Early and modern versions of vair

*vair*. *Vair* is a stylised representation of the skins of squirrels, alternately blue-grey and white from the back and underbelly of the animal. The term comes from the Latin *varium opus*. In mediæval

times the fur trade imported vast quantities of squirrel skins, packed in "timbers" of forty, from the Baltic region into England. Imports of squirrel skins far exceeded the combined imports of all other skins: ermine, sable, beaver, etc. over a long period.

The squirrels of the Baltic region, and of other parts of Europe, are all of one species, *sciurus vulgaris*, as is our own native "red" squirrel. Variations in shades and colours seem largely to reflect differences of diet, of seasonal changes and of the severity of climate in particular habitats. It seems strange that the skins of the native red squirrel were, apparently, so little used. It could hardly have been the English love of animals or reluctance to kill, as squirrels were hunted, trapped and shot for the pot, and for sport. Perhaps only the thicker winter coats were considered worth using; this would parallel the use of ermine. The winter coat of the stoat was very highly regarded and reserved for royalty and nobility, whereas there seems to be no mention of the use of stoat fur *per se*.

An early example of the use of *vair* is shown in the lining of **Geoffrey of Anjou's** cloak, but this is not part of the arms. Possibly the earliest heraldic use was in the arms of **Ferrers**



Robert de Ferrers  
Earl of Derby  
1254-1265

- *Vairy Or and Gules*. This may have been a punning coat, and it is interesting that it is red rather than blue. **Thomas Baty**, in *Vital Heraldry*, states that from a rough check of the arms of about five hundred peerages, the use of red and blue was of almost equal frequency. While the puzzle remains, perhaps it is a good thing that the skins of red squirrels are not used;

Their very existence is under very great threat from the introduced American grey squirrels. Save our Red Squirrels!



### Christmas Edition of Seaxe

Please let us have your contributions as soon as possible - anything with a Christmas flavour would be most acceptable - but let us anyway have something heraldic. Where are all these "home town" efforts - surely we are not all ashamed of our antecedents?

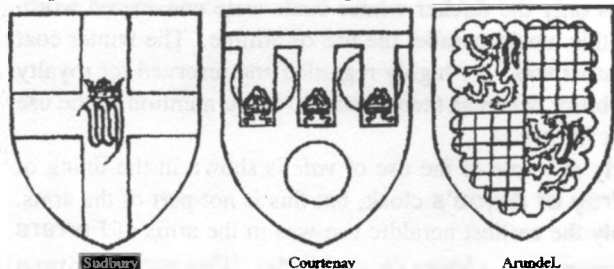


## Visit to Croydon Palace by Marjorie Kirby

Unfortunately the visit to Croydon Palace on 25th July coincided with the Tube strike so that out of the original fifteen members who had expressed their intention of being there only seven actually "made it". This was a pity because **Mrs Yvonne Walker**, (the author of the booklet *Lords of Croydon Palace*) was the tour organiser and our guide - not only had she planned an excellent tour but she laid much emphasis on the heraldry which she admitted she had "mugged up" for the occasion and in deference to our Society! **Mrs Walker** also showed us a puzzling coat of arms\* which she hoped one of us might be able to identify.

The Palace which was once a residence of the Archbishops of Canterbury - the last stopping off place on the route from Canterbury to Lambeth Palace - is now a girls' school with almost 800 pupils many of whose classrooms are still part of the old Palace. The Long Gallery, where Queen Elizabeth I walked, is now two classrooms and her bedroom is another.

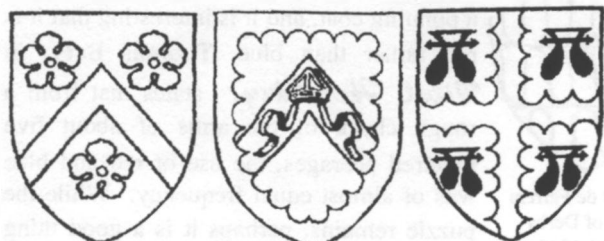
Records at Lambeth show that many archbishops visited Croydon Palace and some left their mark. In fact, after 1374, a vast programme of building took place - **Archbishop Sudbury** had the principal chamber built whilst for **Courtenay**, c.1390, it was a small private chapel and **Arundel** was responsible for the Hall and



Sudbury

Courtenay

Arundel



Chicheley

Stafford

Bourchier

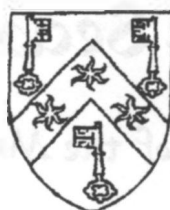
Guard Room. The latter still exists and in it can be seen his coat of arms. **Chicheley**, between 1414 and 1443, transformed the old church into a splendid structure in the Perpendicular style. **Stafford**, 1443-1452, built the Great Hall in the reign of **Henry VI** but there is doubt about the correctness of the royal arms\*\* therein. **Bourchier** had the present chapel constructed and his successor, **Morton**, enlarged it. **Morton** also built a private dining room adjacent to the Guard



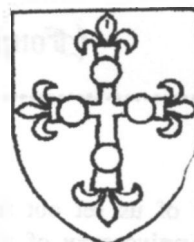
Morton

Room. In the chapel his punning rebus of a barrel or *tun* and the letters *MOR* can still be seen.

In Tudor times the Palace was much used, not only by the Archbishops, but also by all the Tudor sovereigns.



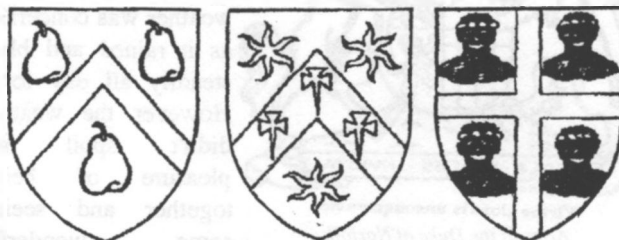
Parker



Whitgift

In 1567, during the tenure of **Archbishop Parker**, Queen Elizabeth held a council meeting at Croydon 'House'. **Parker**, the original 'Nosey' **Parker**, had the elevated pew in the chapel constructed. During the tenure of **John Whitgift**, the third Primate in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, **Sir Christopher Hatton** received the Great Seal from the Queen, in the Long Gallery. **Whitgift's** benefactions are still apparent in Croydon and Lambeth - in 1596 he founded the Hospital of the Holy Trinity for 30-40 poor, needy or impotent people living in the locality. The **Whitgift Foundation** celebrated its quatercentenary this year and, during its four hundred years of existence, has grown enormously; its influence can still be discerned in Trinity School, Whitgift House, Whitgift School, the Old Palace School for Girls and the Whitgift Centre - a large shopping and business precinct. **George Abbott**, Archbishop of Canterbury for twenty two years and more readily associated with the hospital at Guildford, was said to have been inspired by **Whitgift's** hospital at Croydon.

**Archbishop Laud** did much to beautify the chapel by railing off the altar and panelling the walls with oak. He



Abbott

Laud

Juxon

erected stalls carved with his arms impaled by the arms of the Sees representing the different stages of his career - St. Davids, Bath & Wells, London and Canterbury together with the arms of the Deanery of Gloucester and St. Johns College, Oxford. In addition he was responsible for the installation of stained glass windows and the organ.

After the Commonwealth **Archbishop Juxon** restored

the chapel where his arms are repeated several times on the central rafters. He spent around £15,000 at Lambeth and Croydon to repair the damage caused by **Cromwell's** troops. In the Hanoverian period **Archbishop Herring** refurbished the Palace and laid out the gardens. He strengthened the roof of the Great

Hall with tie beams of Spanish Chestnut on one of which can be seen his initials and canting coat of arms.

In the 19th century Croydon Palace was no longer used as a residence of the Primates of All England and the Palace, for a time, suffered the indignity of usage as a dyeing plant. But now with the help of the Friends of the Old Palace at Croydon, the Whitgift Foundation and,



Herring

I believe, English Heritage it has become, during the day at least, the home of the girls of the Old Palace School and the repairs with the sympathetic alterations and additions have enabled us to see it in fine shape today and to imagine what it must have been like when those early Archbishops journeyed between Lambeth and Canterbury.

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#### ARMS of the ARCHBISHOPS (As illustrated)

- Sudbury** - Argent on a cross Azure a letter ~~fit~~ crowned Or.  
**Courtenay** - Or three roundels Gules and a label Azure charged on each point with a mitre Or.  
**Arundel** - Quarterly within a bordure engrailed Argent 1&4 Gules a lion rampant Or 2&3 Chequy Or & Azure.  
**Chicheley** - Argent a chevron between three cinquefoils Gules.  
**Stafford** - Or a chevron Gules within a bordure engrailed Sable and on the chevron a mitre Or for difference  
**Bourchier** - Argent a cross engrailed Gules between four water-bougets Sable.  
**Morton** - Quarterly Gules and Ermine in the first and fourth quarters a goat's head erased Argent.  
**Parker** - Gules on a chevron between three keys Argent three estoiles Gules.  
**Whitgift** - Argent on a cross couped flory Azure four bezants.  
**Abbott** - Gules a chevron between three pears Or.  
**Laud** - Sable on a chevron between three estoiles Or three crosses formy fitchy Gules.  
**Juxon** - Or a cross Gules between four Moor's heads affronty couped at the shoulders wreathed Gules.  
**Herring** - Gules crusilly three herrings haurient Argent.

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#### CROYDON PALACE - Great Hall

##### \*Unidentified Arms

Quarterly (1) & (4) Gules a chief Or over all a bend of the second (2) & (3) Chequy Or and Azure a chief Or.

##### \*\*Royal Arms

- (a) Azure a cross patonce between five martlets Or [for St Edward the Confessor] impaling quarterly (1) and (4) France Modern (2) and (3) England.. (Actual arms in Hall).
- (b) Azure a cross patonce between five martlets Or [for St Edward the Confessor] impaling quarterly (1) and (4) France Ancient (2) and (3) England. (Arms used by Richard II - 1377-99).
- (c) Quarterly (1) and (4) France Ancient (2) and (3) England. (Arms used by Henry IV - 1399 - 1406/7).
- (d) Quarterly (1) and (4) France Modern (2) and (3) England. (Arms used by Henry IV - 1406/7 - 13).
- (e) As (d) Henry V (1413-22) and Henry VI (1422-61).
- (f) As (d) Edward IV (1461 - 83) but sometimes used Azure a cross patonce between five martlets Or [for Edward the Confessor] impaling quarterly (1) and (4) France Modern (2) and (3) England.

#### CONCLUSIONS

- (i) Richard II? - France Modern was not adopted until c.1406/7.  
(ii) Henry IV, V and VI? - never used the arms of Edward the Confessor.  
(iii) Edward IV? - most likely monarch who matches up with all dates, etc. except Archbishop Stafford (1443-52)  
(iv) The sculptor and/or the heraldic artist got it wrong!

If any of our readers are able to solve either or both of the problems or wish to make any comments or suggestions your Editors would be delighted to hear from them.

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#### Et Tu Cantabria

**Cambridge takes up selling arms** was the heading under which an article by Peterborough appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* recently:- Just when you thought that Cambridge University could not become any more commercial, a group of its ancient (and often enormously rich) colleges have dreamt up a new wheeze. They are going to have their coats of arms registered as trade marks, and sell commercial rights to their use.

The inspiration for this scheme, came from a splendidly high-brow dispute between Emmanuel College and a local bus company, which wanted to paint the college arms on one of their vehicles (on the grounds that its main 'passenger pick-up point' is just by Emmanuel). The college finally agreed, with one proviso from the Master, Lord St. John of Fawsley, that the lion in the arms should not look 'mangy'.

As a result of this exchange, Stephen Brooker, Emmanuel's bursar, has now assembled a pressure group of other Cambridge bursars with a view to having the college's crests [sic - a double whammy here!] registered. If it works it means we'll be able to charge a fee to people who wish to display the arms he says. If they want it for commercial purposes we shall charge accordingly.

According to the Patent and Trade Mark Office, the plan is perfectly practical. The College of Arms is less certain. 'There are the Laws of Arms, notes William Hunt, Portcullis Pursuivant. They might be able to register their arms as trademarks. Licensing them for commercial gain is another matter. Someone must warn Lord St. John, and quickly, lest he spend his retirement locked in the Tower of London!

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[Oxford are more dignified and although all the Oxford Tube coaches to London are named after the colleges no arms are depicted. Your Editors, on regular visits to London, earlier this year, played I Spy and "collected" more than a dozen titles but regrettably did not record them!

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## Militaria No. 11 - The Devonshire Regiment

Raised in June 1685 as **The Duke of Beaufort's Musketeers** but in October of that year restyled **The Marquess of Worcester's Regiment of Foot**



when **Beaufort** handed over command to his son. In common with other regiments at that time it changed its name with its Colonels until 1751 when it became **11th Regiment of Foot**. In 1782 it was redesignated **11th (or North Devonshire) Regiment of Foot**.

In 1881, its name was changed to **The Devonshire Regiment**. There was no further change until the Regiment amalgamated with the **Dorset Regiment** in May, 1958 to become **The Devonshire & Dorset Regiment**.

The regimental badge, adopted in March 1883 shows a representation of the Castle at Exeter which had



previously been the badge of the **Devon Militia**. The motto *Semper Fidelis* (Always faithful) was adopted at the same time. After the merger with the **Dorset Regiment** the Castle at Exeter and the motto were the only survivors.

The regiment served at Dettingen and in the Peninsular War and the Boer War. Among its many battle honours are *Marne*, *Armentières*, *Ypres*, *Hill 60*, *Somme*, *Delville Wood*, *Arras*, *Vimy Ridge*, *Passchendaele* and *Cambrai*, from the Great War and *Normandy Landing*, *Caen*, *Rhine*, *Sicily*, and *Imphal* and *Kohima* (Burma) from World War II.

Three members of the Regiment have won the **Victoria Cross** - one in the Boer War and two in the Great War.

Another award for bravery resulted from the epic stand of the 2nd Battalion at Bois de Buttes, during the German drive on Paris in 1918. Ordered to defend their important position to the last, they did so quite literally, until there were only seven men left, all of whom were wounded. For this heroic action the battalion itself was awarded the French *Croix de Guerre*.

The nickname associated with **The Devonshire Regiment** is "The Bloody 11th"- at the Battle of Salamanca on 22 July 1812 the Regiment lost 340 officers and men killed and wounded having gone into action with a strength of 412.

Colours are lodged in the Regimental Chapel in Exeter Cathedral which also contains a very striking bronze statue of a Great War soldier at bay.

The Regimental Headquarters of the **The Devonshire & Dorset Regiment** is Wyvern Barracks, Exeter and the recruiting area covers the counties of Devon and Dorset.

### A Rorke's Drift VC

The famous **Victoria Cross** won by **Lieutenant John Rouse Merriott Chard**, Royal Engineers, who



Stanley Baker as Lt Chard

commanded the garrison in the siege of **Rorke's Drift** by a Zulu impi in January 1879, and long thought lost, is believed to have



been rediscovered. **Rorke's Drift**, a mission station near Issandhlwana converted into a temporary hospital, was garrisoned by 131 men mainly from the **24th Foot**, later the **South Wales Borderers**. [\*See note on next page.] For twelve hours the three and a half thousand Zulus of **King Cetwayo's Ulundi Corps** made repeated assaults before suddenly retreating at four o'clock in the morning after saluting, from a distance, their gallant adversaries. When the garrison came out to survey the battleground they found the bodies of 350 Zulus strewn around the perimeter. Amazingly only fifteen of the garrison had been killed and twelve wounded. Eleven VCs were awarded, the largest number for a single action by the British Army. **Chard** together with **Lieutenant Gonville Bromhead** of the **24th Foot** became national heroes.

In 1964 the epic was turned into a film *Zulu* in which **Stanley Baker** played **Chard** and, when a group of his medals was auctioned, **Baker** made a successful bid of £2,700. He thereby acquired the campaign medal for Zululand and, what was advertised in the sale catalogue as a "cast copy" of the VC. Since **Baker's** death the medals have changed hands three times and their current owner, has lodged them with Spink & Son, the London medal dealers. They decided to have the VC X-ray tested and it was found to have an identical metallic character to all authentic **Victoria Crosses**, which are cast from what is believed to be metal cut from a Russian gun captured at Sevastopol in 1854 during the Crimean War. The Royal Armouries, who carried out the tests, and Spinks are therefore satisfied that **Baker** bought, not a copy, but **Chard's** real medal made from the mother block. What happened to the VC between its award to **Chard** and its purchase by **Baker** remains a mystery.

**Stanley Baker** died without knowing the value of his acquisition and **Chard**, himself, died - a colonel - in 1897 and is buried at Hatch Beauchamp in Somerset.



## \*Addendum to Rorke's Drift

A letter to the Daily Telegraph on 14th August reads - *In your excellent report on Rorke's Drift your correspondent made the usual mistake of naming the 24th Regiment the South Wales Borderers. This misnomer should really be set right once and for ever. The majority of the defenders at Rorke's Drift were in fact from the 24th Regiment (2nd Warwickshires). The South Wales Borderers did not come into existence until 1881, two years after Rorke's Drift, under the Cardwell Reforms.*

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## The Lost Lord or the Secret Sinha

*The Daily Telegraph* claims to have solved the mystery of who holds the only hereditary peerage bestowed on an Indian citizen according to the House of Lords records, **Who's Who** and **Debrett** the **4th Baron Sinha** was a tea broker living in Calcutta. The three authorities named



above were not aware that he had died in 1992. Who succeeded him nobody seemed to know until, after much research, the *Telegraph* discovered that the **5th Baron Sinha** is a retired sales manager, **Aninda Kumar Sinha** living in west London who knew that he had inherited a title but who wished it to remain secret.

It all began in 1919 when **Prime Minister Lloyd George** wishing to make the passage of Indian constitutional reforms a little easier, sent **Sir Satendra Prasanna Sinha**, an eminent Bengali barrister who had also served on the Viceroy's Council, to the Lords as under secretary for India. He died in 1928 but it took his son, **Aroon Kumar**, the next eleven years to establish his right to succeed as the **2nd Baron Sinha**. He died in 1967 to be succeeded as **3rd Baron** by his son, **Sudhindro Prosanno**, who died in 1989. The **4th Baron** was **Susanta Prassanna**, presumably the son of the **3rd Baron** who died three years after inheriting the title at the early age of 39. It was believed that the barony had died with him until the 4th baron's sister, **Anjana Lahiri**, telephoned the *Telegraph* and asked why they were so interested in a lot of cousins when she believed that her Uncle **Anindo Kumar** was the next in line. Again they referred to **Debrett** only to find that "A.K." was there all right but the entry read *Uncle Deceased - d before 1993, in India*. On being contacted once more **Anjana** said *But he's not dead. He is very much alive and living in England*. And so ended the search for the lost Lord - but whether or not he will take his seat in the House of

Lords or renounce the title remains to be seen.

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Despite the foregoing it would appear that the editor of *Whittaker's Almanack* was aware of the situation, in so far as the succession was concerned - the 1996 edition showed **Susanta Prasanna**, the **4th Baron**, still holding the title - they were unaware that he had died in 1992 but they nevertheless were showing "A. K. (b 1930)" as the heir to the title.

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The Arms of Baron Sinha are:- *Argent on a chevron Ermine between in chief two lotus flowers and in base an Adjutant bird three fountains all proper.*

Crest:- *A demi-tiger supporting a fasces erect proper.*

Supporters:- *On either side an Adjutant bird proper collared Or.*

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## AGM

At the AGM on 19th September the Officers and Committee were re-elected *en bloc* as follows:-

Chairman	- Nan Taylor
Vice-Chairman	- Ron Brown
Treasurer	- Stuart Whitefoot
Minutes Secretary	- Margaret Young
Committee	- Kay Holmes
	- Roger Matthews
	- Don & Marjorie Kirby

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The business meeting was followed by slides on *Altar Frontals and Copes at Westminster Abbey* described by **Mary Pocock** supported by Chairman **Nan Taylor** who showed some of her own slides on the same theme.

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## Next Meetings

On **Thursday, 21st November** another old friend, **John Titterton**, a member of the Council of the Heraldry Society, a joint organiser of the Chiltern Heraldry Group and the *force majeure* of the Oxford Heraldry Group will take time off from these responsibilities to speak to us on *What a Canton can tell*. If he can do it you can - so please let us have a full house for this meeting.

On **Thursday, 19th December** we shall have our *Christmas Festivities* - a night when serious heraldists let their hair down each year - for one night only!