

The Seaxe



Robin

Newsletter of the Middlesex Heraldry Society

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A Tricycle Made for Two by Josh Froggatt

We first met at Whitstable, under Kentish skies,
She was standing by her easel, with lovely big blue eyes,
We talked of paint and painting, of pigments red and blue,
I said "We have some new ones, I'll fetch some home to you."
She was painting an old Public House, made all of wood,
And when I saw what she had done, it was very, very good.
Delivering the samples - clever move you see -
And very shortly after that I went around to tea.
Her father was a character full of wit and fun,
Her mother eyed me up and down - wasn't sure about her mum!
Many times did we meet in that summer weather,
We were always very happy when we were both together.
We went down to Bournemouth on honeymoon to stay,
I was in the dog house having slept the whole long way.
Did field research for Dussek, must travel near and far,
I was very fortunate, she took me in her car.
England, Wales and Scotland, she took it in her stride,
I was extremely lucky to have her at my side.
As my eyes began to weaken to Harley Street we'd go
To see an eyesight specialist, one I used to know.
To operate was one idea. The surgeon said "No, no,
Now if he had two eyes - we could maybe have a go."
Peach then asked the question what action he would choose?
"Wait for complete blindness - then nothing he will lose."
So I just carried on 'til I could hardly see,
Reports and other documents she had to read to me.
Forced to retire at sixty was a mortal blow,
I loved my work at Dusseks and friends I'd got to know.
We bought a tandem tricycle - we were very pleased with it.
Why did we buy it? Well, of course, to keep us both quite fit.
To see Peach guiding in the front - some people thought it queer,
I could not drive it with bad sight so I was in the rear.
Rude people on the pavement - and there were quite a few -
Shouted "He ain't pushing, missus" - of course it wasn't true!
Then we took up Heraldry - Peach learned it quick you see,
When she had learned it thoroughly, then she could teach me!
We travelled through the countryside, a church we'd never pass,
Looking for Heraldic Tombs - that's if they'd cut the grass.
We'd knock up all the Vicars and ask them for the key,
Tell them what want it for, Heraldic things to see.
Photograph all Heraldry stained glass and any more,
Put money in collection box just inside the door,
Ah! Here's a box with Church Guide - put 20p in slot -
Any Heraldry in it? A little, not a lot.
Then back again to Vicarage to return the key -
And if we're very lucky, get biscuits, cups of tea!
Now, the slides developed, project them on big screen,
'Tis only then that I can see where it is we've been.

Peach examines closely and has a careful look,
Records all the Heraldry and puts it in her book.

Now I'm over eighty - I must be getting old -
My love for her is very warm. It never did grow cold.



[This poem by Josh sent to us by Josh and Peach appeared recently in **Connections** - a publication of the **Burmah/Crystal Pension Fund Organisation** and its poignancy will not have escaped those members who knew them when they attended, at great inconvenience, so many of our meetings.

Nowhere does Josh mention that in their peregrinations Peach and he recorded all the hatchments in the Surrey section of Volume 5 of the **Hatchments in Britain** series edited by the late **Peter Summers** and **John Titterton** nor that she was accorded the credit for the section. In her introduction Peach wrote that she wished *to thank my husband, Joss, for escorting me on our many journeys through Surrey and supplying the power for the back of our tandem tricycle.* Theirs is truly a story of great courage, many achievements and lifelong devotion - Eds.]

The White Boar of Richard III



Silver Boar badge worn by retainers of the Duke of Gloucester, later King Richard III

Richard III met his death on Bosworth Field, the last King of the House of York. It was **Richard** who granted a charter of incorporation to the Royal Heralds. Both before and after his succession **Richard** used a white boar (with golden tusks, hooves and bristles) as a badge and as a supporter. **Richard's** own pursuivant, **Blanch Sanglier**, was named after this beast. The boar may be a play on the name **Ebor**, the abbreviation of **Eboracum** - the Latin name for York. It may also derive from the boar said to have been used as a badge by **Edward III**. The *rose-en-soleil* is a combination of two Yorkist emblems - the white rose and the golden sun [A letter from D. R. Barnes, New Zealand, in the *Heraldry Gazette* - March 1998]

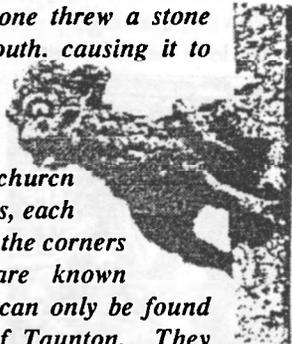
There Be Dragons! by Judith Lawlor

[Some time ago **Peggy Foster** sent us a note asking if we knew what *hunky punks* were - probably, like most of our



readers, we had no idea - so we wrote to the Editor of **The Lady** who very kindly gave us permission to copy the article by **Judith Lawlor** which appeared in the 24 to 30 March 1998 issue.]

The village of Kingston St Mary, situated amongst rolling farmland in the foothills of the Quantocks a few miles north of Taunton in Somerset, is a quiet sort of place. If local legend is to be believed, though, life wasn't always so peaceful. For once a fearsome dragon terrorised the population until one day someone threw a stone into the dragon's ferocious mouth, causing it to choke to death. The identity of the hero or heroine is unknown. But the deed has been recorded in the local church where four carved stone dragons, each with a stone in its mouth, adorn the corners of the tower. Such carvings are known locally as "hunky punks" and can only be found within about fourteen miles of Taunton. They appear in various forms on many of the church towers built between the years 1450 and 1550 as a mark of the prosperity created by the wool industry.



Wealthy local families would show their gratitude for their good fortune by demolishing the nave and chancel of the old church and building a new tower in its place. The windows of many of these towers were decorated with intricate and ornate stonework known as "Somerset tracery" and the outside of the towers were adorned with the hunky punk figures. The origin of the name "hunky punk" is unclear. It may be derived from two Old English words, "hunkers" meaning squatting on the haunches and "punchy", meaning short or squat. It is an apt description for these strange carved creatures. Unlike the fearsomely ugly and sometimes sinister-looking gargoyles, which carry away rainwater, hunky punks appear to serve no practical purpose. Designed to be seen from the ground, they gaze benignly down on the viewer below. They may even have been the medieval stonemason's idea of a joke. More likely, they were designed to break up long straight sections of masonry and make the church tower more pleasing to the eye. Whatever their purpose, hunky punk characters were carved by the stonemason in his workshop over the winter when no outside construction work was possible.

The stonemason used locally quarried stone and a simple chisel and apple-wood mallet to carve the figures. These were put in place as the tower was built during the summer. Sadly, erosion has taken its toll on the carvings and it is difficult to distinguish what some of them represent. Nevertheless, their design and quality shows the medieval sculptor was a skilled and imaginative craftsman. What is more, the stonemason's status in medieval society was equal to that of a theologian or academic, and he would therefore have had access to

both contemporary design and ideas.

Many of the hunky punk characters display a mixture of Christian and pagan characteristics as well as showing the influences of heraldic design and folklore, as seen in the dragons at Kingston St Mary. It is easy to imagine how, in the privacy of his workshop without any supervision, the mason used his skill, imagination and knowledge to deviate from purely religious themes. Animal characters such as goats, dogs and pigs were popular design. Dogs can be seen on the churches at Curry Mallet and Hatch Beauchamp. They may be associated with nearby Neroche Forest, where hunting with dogs was an important activity. Mythical beasts also frequently appear. At Lyng there is a cockatrice with the head and front legs of a cockerel and rear of a lion. At Isle Abbots there is a griffon with a lion's head and eagle's wings.

Heraldic influence can be seen at places with royal or influential family connections. The village of Staple Fitzpaine has links with the Poynings, Percy, Fitzpaine and de Bryan families. Staple Fitzpaine manor became crown property in about 1462 and all the carvings on the parish church are too. They include the Yale, a design adopted by John, Duke of Bedford, son of Henry IV, the boar of Richard III and the Griffon of Edward III. However, very few hunky punk characters appear in human form. Perhaps the best is a figure playing a double-barrelled wind instrument at Isle Abbots. At Kingston St Mary there is a woman squatting in childbirth. North Pemberton and Curry Mallet churches have hunky punks with human heads attached to four-footed bodies. These unique carvings show both that medieval life was still deeply permeated by superstition and folklore and how the church was prepared to absorb pagan symbolism into its structures.



[Editorial Notes - According to Boutell a Wyvern is a species of dragon with only two legs and a Cockatrice is a Wyvern with a cock's head comb and wattles whilst, according to Margaret Young writing in Stephen Friar's Dictionary of Heraldry, it has a

cock's crested head, dangling wattles, glittering death dealing eye, barbed tongue and a serpent's tail.

Same sources say that the Griffin or Gryphon has the head, breast, foreclaws and wings of an eagle and the hindquarters and tail of a lion.

Margaret Young says of the Griffin - the lion is the king of the beasts and the eagle the king of the birds but in the Griffin the majesty of the two creatures is joined together. Its head, wings and talons are those of an eagle to which are added a pair of sharp ears, as it has very acute hearing. Its body, hindquarters and tail are like a lion and thus it combined the strength and vigilance of both animals in one.



In the Time of Queen Bick

by Cynthia Lydiard Cannings

No.5 - Hamilton of Scotland

Two men stood looking down at the body of John Despenser.

You're a fool, maister, said his factotum to William, son of the third Earl of Leicester. First you praise the Bruce when, brave man or not, he is England's enemy. When Sir John chides you you stand on your pride and accept his challenge and, not content with that, you've managed to kill him. Everyone will say you value the Scottish cause above the lives of your own countrymen. They will cry traitor on you and King Edward is besotted by his kinsman, Hugh Despenser; you'll get no justice at court. What will you do?

There's only one thing I can do, John. I'm a younger son, I leave little behind and I dare say I can make my fortune as well in Scotland as in England. Better, perhaps, in these troubled times. And if King Robert, too, believes I value the Scottish cause above my own countrymen, he will welcome me, fool though I may be. You'd serve the Bruce?

It's not what I'd choose but as you've been at pains to point out, I have no choice. I will leave you at Leicester where I will make my farewells to my father and find clothes more suitable to a fugitive.

You'll leave me nowhere. I'd not mind seeing foreign parts.

The Scottish border was but a few miles distant when they heard sounds of pursuit. Quickly they hid their horses in a brake and made their way deeper into the forest where woodcutters were at work. Sir William gestured to two of them to stand aside and he and John took hold of the frame-saw being used to fell an oak. Somewhat clumsily they continued the work.

Act naturally! hissed Sir William to their mystified hosts as Despenser's men rode into the clearing.

The woodcutters, seeing a troop of armed men in pursuit of two alone, pulled themselves together.

There's nane here, maister, but as you see, said one in answer to a rough question. *Two horsemen? Nay, nane such as that. Try the other side o' the hill, maister, maybe they've seen them at the farm.*

Sir William getting the hang of the saw, began to relax until he caught sight of John's face. The man couldn't help throwing such anxious glances at the riders that immediate suspicion would be aroused were any to notice. Impossible to say anything; it would be too likely to be overheard. In desperation *Through!* he called. *Through* as though encouraging his fellow to keep the rhythm of the stroke going; and John took the hint.

Sir William did make his fortune in Scotland, welcomed by the Bruce. And in memory of the closest shave of his career he took for his crest *an oak-tree fructed, penetrated in the main stem by a frame-saw proper* and for his motto the single word *Through!* which crest and motto are borne by his descendants, the **Dukes of Hamilton**, to this very day. (First published in the Norfolk Standard of May 1998 and reprinted with permission.)



Do You Know?

In a recent letter to your editors Cynthia Lydiard Cannings expresses a wish to become a member of our Society and makes a nice point in the form of a question - she writes *besides, I used to enjoy reading the Seaxes (as the word is Old English do you consider the plural to be Seaxen?) in the Norfolk Heraldry Society library, of which I used to be librarian, and it often occurred to me then that joining you might not be such a bad idea; especially as I used to live in Middlesex.*



Now then all you Middle Saxons which (or what) is the correct plural of the charges on our arms? Scott-Giles expresses his opinion in **Civic Heraldry of England and Wales** when he blazons the arms as *Gules three seaxes proper hilts to the dexter and above them a gold Saxon crown.*

[Incidentally the Saxon crown distinguishes the arms from those of the county of Essex.]

Corrigendum



We regret that in the report on our visit to Norwich in *Seaxe* No.23 we omitted the splendid drawing by Margaret Young of the *pelican in her piety* and hope that, with its inclusion now, Margaret and our readers will forgive us.

Bearing Up

Under the heading above Peterborough writes in the **Daily Telegraph** - *The hordes of new peers created by Tony Blair have caused a steady hum of activity at the College of Arms in Blackfriars where all new coats of arms are designed. The terribly grand Garter King of Arms is working around the clock. Scarcely less frantic is the delightful Henrietta Webb, who paints new coats of arms on to the Letters Patent, made of stretched calf's skin, in 22 carat gold and gouache*. "I'm actually painting Ruth Rendell's at the moment, now Lady Rendell," a softly spoken Henrietta tells me. "There are polar bears on each side. I had to look them up in a natural history book to get them right." And the most unusual request for a coat of arms? "A bandicoot playing bagpipes!" she says.*

**Gouache* = a method of painting with opaque colours ground in water and mixed with gum and honey so as to form a sort of paste also a painting executed in this way and the pigment itself - OED

Medals - Part III from Marjorie Kirby

Martin Cutler paid us a second visit and this time concentrated mainly on decorations and awards from WWII onwards although one or two mountings ranged from WWI to Korea. Gallantry decorations now are very scarce and have become so expensive that they are out of **Martin's** price range - so he has decided to concentrate on **Long Service & Good Conduct** medals which he finds equally interesting - particularly those with bars



indicating service in a variety of garrisons and theatres of operation.

The policy in the RAF, as far as air crews were concerned, was to promote by commissioning as captured officers, under the Geneva Convention, were not allowed to be made to work. Consequently there were many more **Distinguished Flying Crosses** awarded than **Distinguished Flying Medals**. It was not uncommon for a Flight Lieutenant or sometimes a Squadron Leader air gunner or navigator to be flown in a plane captained by an officer of junior rank or even by a Flight Sergeant.



Distinguished Flying Medal

Late in WWII women actually flew in Lancasters and, acting as flight controllers, helped to confuse German pilots patrolling fixed sectors in occupied France. This service was never officially acknowledged nor even admitted and no women, including ferry pilots some of whom lost their lives carrying out these duties, ever received campaign medals related to flying. The WWII war medals were done on "the cheap" - they had to be - we were still paying for WWI - and not only were the materials inferior but so was the method of delivery to recipients. My father's "Pip, Squeak and Wilfred" from WWI had his name and rank inscribed on the rim of each medal whereas Don's from WWII could have been awarded to anybody and only his Territorial medal had his name and rank inscribed.

I had been informed that the medals with (a) the purple ribbon and a central green band and those with (b) a deep



purple ribbon edged with green were the **General Service** medals but **Martin** made it quite clear to me when he explained that for some campaigns a special medal was struck - e.g. Korea, the Falklands and the Gulf - the **General Service** medal with a clasp denoting the theatre of operation was awarded for service in Malaya, Cyprus and Northern Ireland. (The ribbon was changed

from (a) to (b) in 1962.) I understand that a new medal has recently been struck for service men and women after

they have completed a third tour of duty in **Northern Ireland**.

Wherever possible **Martin** avoids actual contact with the recipients of the medals and decorations and with their families - although he has a close relationship with at least one distinguished flyer - but he nevertheless comes over, not as a collector but as a "friend" of the men whose medals and memorabilia (particularly aircrew log books) he has acquired. His detailed knowledge of aircraft from the **Gloster Gladiator** to the **Hawker Harrier** was most impressive and it was a great pity that so few members were able to share it with him.

VC's Right

Under the heading above a letter from **Mr Roy Walker** appeared recently in **The Daily Telegraph** and whilst talking of medals and military matters your editors thought it may be of interest to our readers. *Sir - Mr Hopkins is incorrect in saying that "a soldier can be stripped of his VC for a minor misdemeanour (letter, Aug.1). There was provision for forfeiture in the original Warrant, but in a letter written in 1920, Lord Stamfordham, Private Secretary to King George V, wrote: "The King feels so strongly that, no matter the crime committed by anyone on whom the VC has been conferred, the decoration should not be forfeited. Even were a VC to be sentenced to be hanged for murder, he should be allowed to wear his VC on the scaffold."*

English Heraldry from Wales!

Tony Jones of the **Bath Heraldic Society** has recently produced two A4 sheets in full colour depicting respectively, the coats of arms of **The Magna Carta Barons** and **Those persons connected with the Gunpowder Plot**. They are, as is to be expected with **Tony's** work, beautifully produced and will grace any heraldist's collection - [they are, of course, the subjects of talks given to the Society by your editors!]. Tony is quite happy for us to have the sheets copied so, if anyone is interested please let us know and we will obtain a price locally.

A Note from Norwich

Your editors have received a short but very pleasant letter expressing thanks and good wishes from **Clifford J. Offer**, Archdeacon of Norwich who identified for us, the arms on the splendid stole worn by the Dean on a photograph in the **Daily Telegraph** in June this year. He writes; *Thank you so much for sending me a copy of SEAXE. I was most interested to read it, and especially to see what you said about Norwich. You have certainly given us a very extensive and fair covering, but then we would consider that Norwich heraldry deserves such spacious treatment!*

The Lancashire Fusiliers

The Lancashire Fusiliers began life in 1688 as Colonel Sir Robert Peyton's Companies of Foot



raised from a number of independent companies for service with William III. In 1689 it was expanded to regimental size as Colonel Sir Robert Peyton's Regiment of Foot. Thereafter it changed its name with its colonels until 1751 when it was styled the 20th Regiment of Foot (or XXth Foot) until 1782* when it

became the 20th (or the East Devonshire) Regiment of Foot.

In 1881 the regiment was redesignated The Lancashire Fusiliers, a title it retained until its amalgamation as the 4th Battalion the Royal Fusiliers in 1968. Sadly, and despite its magnificent fighting record, the 4th Battalion was disbanded in 1969 and The Lancashire Fusiliers ceased to exist. Its commander from 1749 to 1758 was General Wolfe the conqueror of Quebec.



The badge is described as - a grenade with, on the base, the Sphinx upon a tablet EGYPT within a laurel wreath.



*When, in 1782, the Colonels of the Regiments of Foot were invited to nominate a county to which they would become affiliated and bear its name, not all were enthusiastic. However the Colonel of the 20th Foot, long associated with Devon and formerly known as The Exeter Regiment, picked Lancashire. Allotted the title East Devonshire instead, his nose for a strong recruiting area was rewarded 99 years later when the regiment was renamed The Lancashire Fusiliers!

The Lancashire Fusiliers is one of only six regiments awarded the battle honour Minden during the Seven Years War of 1756-63. It took part in the Peninsular War (Corunna), the Crimean War (Alma, Inkerman and Sevastopol) and the Indian Mutiny (Lucknow). The regiment was present at the Relief of Ladysmith in the Boer War and among its many other battle honours are Retreat from Mons, Aisne, Ypres, Somme, Arras, Menin Road, Passchendaele, Cambrai (where tanks were first used in battle) and the Landing at Suvla [Gallipoli] in the Great War. In WWII the regiment served in North-West Europe 1940 and 1944 [Caen], North Africa 1942-43, Sicily 1943, Italy 1943-45 [Sangro & Monte Cassino], Burma 1943-45 [Kohima and Chindits -1944]

The Victoria Cross has been won by an incredible nineteen members of the regiment - eighteen in the Great War and one in WWII. The first award was to Private J. Lynn DCM at Ypres in 1915 during a German gas attack;

although almost overcome by fumes he continued to fire his machine-gun with great effect and halted the enemy advance. Private Lynn died soon afterwards from the effects of the gas. No less than six DCS were won on 25th April 1915 - three companies and the HQ of the 1st Battalion in effecting a landing on the Gallipoli peninsula were met by very deadly fire from hidden machine-guns which inflicted heavy casualties on the landing party. Survivors, disregarding the terrific fire from the enemy, continued the attack and, cutting the barbed wire entanglement, occupied the position. Among many gallant officers and men Captain R. A. Willis, Sergeant A. Richards and Private W. Keneally were selected by their comrades as having performed the most signal acts of bravery. In the same action Major C. Bromley, Sergeant F. E. Stubbs and Corporal J. Grimshaw were also selected by their comrades for the award of the DC!

The regiment always used roman numerals and so became known as "The Double Xs" or "Two Tens" - but nicknames earned were "The Minden Boys" which was explained in Saxe No.15 of December 1996 (with reference to The Suffolk Regiment) and "Kingsley's Stand" - from an incident when its commander replying to an order given, because of heavy losses in the fighting - "Kingsley's Regiment of the British Line will cease to do duty". The commander would have none of this and responded with "Kingsley's Regiment, at its own request, will resume its portion of duty in the line".

The motto of the regiment is - Omnia Audax (Daring in all things).

The Regimental Headquarters is the Tower of London and the recruitment area is obviously fragmented covering the wide range of Northumberland, Lancashire, Warwickshire, the Midlands and Greater London.



Scottish Link with the Tsar

On Friday, 17th July 1998 the last Tsar of Russia was re-interred and a letter in the Daily Telegraph on Monday 20th July from Major General Jonathan Hall - Colonel of the Scots Dragoon Guards under the heading above is illuminating - Your readers may wonder why the pipe major of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards played the last lament at the funeral of Tsar Nicholas II in St. Petersburg on Friday. From 1894 until 1916 he was Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Scots Greys (now the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards after the amalgamation in 1971 with the 3rd Carabiniers), having been appointed by Queen Victoria, his aunt.

To this day, at regimental dinner nights, the band plays the Imperial Russian anthem, in addition to the national anthem. It is also of note that the kettle drummer's famous white bearskin, now unique in



the British Army, is popularly supposed to have been presented to the regiment by the Tsar while he was colonel-in-chief - an appointment now held by the Queen, who succeeded her father George VI.

It is therefore appropriate that the guard of honour at St. Petersburg included a small contingent from the regiment led by the commanding officer. We are proud to have played a small part in this historic "coming home" - the name of the lament played by the pipe-major.

[The badge of the **Royal Scots Greys** is described as: On a tablet WATERLOO the Eagle of the French 45th Infantry Regiment - and that of the **Royal Scots Dragoon Guards** as: On crossed carbines a tablet WATERLOO the Eagle of the French 45th Infantry Regiment upon a tablet WATERLOO.

One regimental nickname is **The Birdcatchers** in reference to the capture, by Sergeant Ewart, of the Eagle of the French 45th Infantry Regiment at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815.]

December Seaxe

We are fortunate to have in hand another delightful tale from **Cynthia Lydiard Cannings** and a short article from **John Dent** published in the **Norfolk Standard** sometime in 1987 but of which he was reminded when he was guiding us round **Norwich Cathedral** in May. We are also hoping for a contribution from **Bill Burgess** on some of the arms in his local church.

Next Meetings

Heraldry at Downside Abbey

by Michael Messer

on Thursday, 15th October 1998

Heraldry at Huddersfield

by Stuart Whitefoot

on Thursday, 19th November 1998

Christmas Games and Quizzes

on Thursday, 17th December 1998

All meetings are held in the Library,
Ruislip Manor at 8.00pm

The Chiltern Heraldry Group

A Ramble through the Flowers and Thorns of a Herald's Fields

by John Brooke-Little

CVO, MA, FSA, FHS

Formerly Clarenceaux King of Arms

on Saturday, 12th September, 1998

in the Village Hall, Fulmer.

Heraldry of Roman Catholic Bishops since the Reformation

by Lez Hough

on Saturday, 24th October, 1998

in the Parish Hall, White Waltham.

Choice Slides from Cedric's Cornucopia

by Marian Miles MBE, RD, Hon.FHS.

on Saturday, 21st November, 1998

in the Long Room

at the Wallingford Community Centre.

Meetings begin at 2.30pm and
are followed by a light tea
provided by members.

Visitors welcome.

Christmas Seaxe

And now for the annual
request for contributions to

SEAXE

with a Christmassy theme
or any theme for that matter!
All our readers are invited to
burst into print on any subject -
as long as it is heraldic (with
apologies to Henry Ford)!