



The Seaxe



Newsletter of the Middlesex Heraldry Society

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No.41

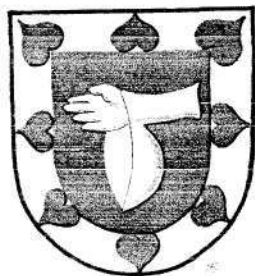
(Founded 1976)

July 2002

A German Maunch

by Arnold Rabbow

The maunch is a common charge in British heraldry, but virtually unknown in Germany. Therefore I was delighted to introduce or rather revive it in German civic heraldry when an opportunity arose.



Gross Biewende is a village in the **Landkreis** (county) of **Wolfenbützel** in **Lower Saxony**, not far from **Brunswick**. When I was commissioned to design a coat of arms for it, I found out that a heraldic *maunch*, even *three maunches*, had indeed existed

in this area 700 years ago. I found them in the seals of the lords of **Biewende** who flourished between 1118 and 1311. They managed to establish an independent albeit tiny territory within the **Holy Roman Empire**, of which **Gross Biewende** was the "capital".

Their small state, comprising but half a dozen villages, was almost completely surrounded by the **Guelph** lands, i.e. the **Duchy of Brunswick**. Of course the powerful dukes were eager to annex the small enclave to their lands, but the lords of **Biewende** sided with the **Hohenstaufen** emperors against the **Guelphs** and thus managed to keep the dukes at bay. When however, the **Hohenstaufen** dynasty collapsed in 1254, the lords of **Biewende** were left without their allies, and after several years of warring they were defeated, went into exile and became extinct in 1311.

Although the villagers of **Gross Biewende** were aware of the interesting history of their village, they had never seen the seals which are kept in the state archive at **Wolfenbützel** and of course they were at first not at all familiar with the *maunch*.

When, however, it was explained to them that this was a fashionable part of women's apparel in the middle ages, in fact a sleeve that served also as a kind of handbag, and would make a charming coat of arms unparalleled in German civic heraldry, they started to like the idea. Happily, it also coincided with present-day political correctness as it would advance the female aspect in public life by adding a little more female touch to the otherwise rather masculine art of heraldry. Of course, it would not have been appropriate to use all *three maunches*, but along the lines of "*pars pro toto*" a single *maunch* fitted into the shield even better.

The place name of **Biewende** is derived from the ancient

Germanic word "*biunda*" meaning a piece of land surrounded by a fence or a hedge. Therefore the main shield was set within a *bordure*, also denoting the "frontier" around the erstwhile territory of the lords of **Biewende**.

The *bordure* is charged with linden leaves. Linden-trees are very popular in German folklore, serving as romantic meeting-places for young lovers in the old days, but also marking locations where public meetings and open-air courts were held and where justice was administered. In **Gross Biewende** a couple of very old linden-trees, a real land-mark, have happily survived. In addition, another medieval local family, the **Spirings**, had used a young linden-tree as armorial device on their seals. Since the arms of the lords of **Biewende** as well as the **Spiring** arms have survived only on seals, their tinctures are not known. Therefore, the colours *green* and *gold*, representing pastures and cornfields, were chosen, because the village's economy is largely dominated by agriculture.

Germany, unlike Britain, lacks central institutions to oversee public heraldry. In some states the state archives exercise a certain degree of control; however **Lower Saxony**, like some other states, have through recent legislation abolished this function. On the one hand, this could be regarded as a step towards more democracy because civic bodies are now free to assume arms. On the other hand, it will probably lead to a deterioration of heraldic standards in civic heraldry, because town or village councils can now assume whatever arms they like, regardless of expert advice. In villages that have been integrated into larger civic entities and do not have councils any longer, the population at large can decide about a coat of arms.

That is what happened in **Gross Biewende**. On 10th May 2001 the inhabitants voted almost unanimously for *Vert a maunch with outstretched palm Or, surrounded by a bordure Or charged with linden-leaves Vert, their tips pointing outwards*. Not much later the villagers erected large signs with their arms at all roads entering **Gross Biewende** to demonstrate that their village, although technically not a civic entity any more, is still a village of its own and just as alive as it was seven centuries ago.

(Arnold sent us a copy of the arms described above and, when we asked about them, this article was the result. We note his continuing interest in **Seaxe** and are grateful to him for allowing us to publish the story of his involvement in designing the arms of **Gross Biewende** - Eds).

Militaria No.32 - The Sherwood Foresters (Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment)

by **Colonel Iain Swinnerton**

In Buckingham in 1741, **Colonel David Houghton** raised a regiment of Foot which was sent straight to Gibraltar. From there it went to America where it remained for many years, not returning home until 1766. It was numbered 45th in 1748. Ten years later it was back in America to fight in the War of Independence and when it finally returned twelve years later was down to just 100 men. In 1799, at the request of the local gentry who



promised funds, the regiment was given the name of the **Nottinghamshire Regiment** and ordered to recruit there. It performed very gallant service in the Peninsular Campaign fighting in all the famous battles and suffering heavy losses so that it was not able to go to Waterloo. In 1866 it

received its second - and probably much better known - title of the **Sherwood Foresters**.

Its second battalion was originally raised by **Colonel Sir**



Cohn Halkett in December 1823 and numbered the **95th (Derbyshire) Foot**, inheriting a famous number formerly borne by the **95th Rifles** who for their great gallantry were taken out of the Line in 1816 and formed into the **Rifle Brigade**. **Halkett**, a very experienced soldier and

later a General, had commanded Wellington's 5th Brigade at Waterloo. In the ranks were many officers from the old **95th Rifles** and the regiment adopted as its badge, the Maltese Cross of that regiment. Starting in Malta and the Ionian Islands, they served in Ceylon and China, in the Crimea and the Mutiny, finally returning home in 1870.

In 1881 the **Nottinghamshire Regiment (Sherwood Foresters)** merged with the **Derbyshire Regiment** to form the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the **Sherwood Foresters (Derbyshire Regiment)** which, in deference to the senior regiment's origins, was changed in 1902 to the **Sherwood Foresters (Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment)**. On 28th February 1970, the **Worcestershire Regiment** and the **Sherwood Foresters** amalgamated to form the **Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment**. Soldiers are quick to give names to new regiments and the new regiment has, somewhat unfortunately, acquired the nickname of The Woofers. The badge is a somewhat unhappy combination of the *Maltese Cross and Hart* of the old **Sherwood Foresters** superimposed on the elongated Garter Star of the **Worcesters*** and the regiment now has a ram as a mascot inherited from the old **95th**.

(Extract from "WHAT ARE THEY NOW - The Infantry Part Ten - April article in FTM)

*See Seaxe No 39 of February 2002

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The ram mascot is traditionally named **Derby** and was first acquired during the Indian Mutiny. The nicknames of the regiment were (45th) The Old Stubborns relating to the impressive performance of the regiment in the Peninsula War and The Hosiers because of the regiment's association with Nottingham, the centre of the British hosiery trade and (95th) - The Nails. The motto of the regiment was *Honi Soit qui Mal y Pense*. **The Sherwood Foresters** were the only regiment of the line whose officers were permitted to wear service dress uniforms made from Guards Baratheas - the cloth belt passed over the flat third button which was similar to those on blazers and not between the third and fourth uniform buttons as is the usual custom.

The regimental badge of the **Sherwood Foresters** is described as - *a Maltese Cross. Within an oak wreath a White Hart left and right the title SHERWOOD FORESTERS, all ensigned with the crown.*

The **45th** and **95th Regiments** have fought in all the major theatres of war and the first battle honour earned was Louisburg (1758). Among many others the Peninsular War added Pyrenees, Nivelles, Talavera, Vittoria, Badajoz and Toulouse. From the Crimean War came Alma, Inkerman, and Sevastopol. The Regiment, although involved in the Indian Mutiny, was awarded only one battle honour - that of Indian Mutiny (1857-58) and South Africa (1899-1902) for the Boer War.

From the Great War came Aisnes, Armentieres, Loos, Delville Wood, Neuve Chapelle, Ypres, Albert, Cambrai, Somme, Arras, Vimy, Messines, Menin Road, Passchendaele and Suvla. In WWII the regiment earned the battle honours Norway, Dunkirk, El Alamein, Tunis, Salerno, Anzio, Gothic Line, Monte Casino, Singapore Island, North West Europe, and Malaya.

The **Victoria Cross** has been won by fourteen members of the regiment - the first was awarded to **Private B. McQuirt** in the Indian Mutiny on 6th January 1858. One in the Tirah Campaign and two in the Boer War. Nine in the Great War and one in WWII. Probably the best known winner of the **VC** was **Captain Albert Ball DSO, MC** who was seconded to the **Royal Flying Corps** and during the



course of the Great War shot down 43 German aircraft - on one occasion, flying alone, he fought six hostile machines. He was shot down and killed in May 1917. The badge of the **RFC** is described as *the letters RFC within a wreath and ensigned with the Crown.*

The Regimental Headquarters are now at Norton Barracks, Worcester and the recruitment area is Worcestershire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire.

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More badges of the Regiment are described overleaf :-

95th Foot (Rifles) – a cross patée theron a circular plate bearing the numerals 95.

Cloth Helmet – Officers' Badge 1881-1914, – within the



*universal wreath a Maltese cross. On the cross an oak leaf wreath; within the wreath a stag lodged. On the left division of the cross the word **The**; on the right division **Regt** and on a scroll on the lower division **Derbyshire**. A scroll of special pattern on the bottom of the universal wreath*

*inscribed **Sherwood Foresters**. In 1904 the scroll on the lower division was altered to read **Notts and Derby***

*2nd Derbyshire Militia (The Chatsworth Rifles) - Shako-plate: 1864. In 1881 became 3rd Battalion, The Sherwood Foresters (Derbyshire Regiment) - a cross similar to that of the Order of the Bath surmounted by a Victorian crown. In the centre of the cross a circlet inscribed **Derby Militia** and within this a bugle with the numeral 2 in the strings.*



*Royal Sherwood Foresters or Nottinghamshire Regiment of Militia - Shako-plate: 1864 - In 1881 became 4th Battalion, The Sherwood Foresters (Nottinghamshire Regiment) – an eight pointed star, the topmost point displaced by by a Victorian crown. On the star the Garter with Saint George's Cross in the centre. Below the Garter a scroll inscribed **Nottingham**.*



*1st Nottinghamshire (Robin Hood) Rifle Volunteer Corps – became in 1909 7th (Robin Hood) Battalion, The Sherwood Foresters – a bugle-horn surmounted by a Victorian crown with sprays of oak joining the bugle to the crown. In the curl of the bugle the monogram **RH** entwined and reversed.*



7th Robin Hood Battalion, The Sherwood Foresters (Nottinghamshire Regiment) of The Territorial Army



*1914. – a laurel wreath surmounted by an Imperial crown. Within this a cross based on that of the Order of the Bath. On the arms of the cross: (left) **South** (right) **Africa**, (bottom) **1900-02**. In the centre of the cross a circlet inscribed **The Robin Hoods** and in its centre a bugle with strings surmounted by a crown..*

Elizabeth Woodville

- **An Uncommon Commoner** by Jonathan Holmes

When recounting the famous meeting between our second foundress **Elizabeth Woodville** and **King Edward IV** beneath the oak tree near the **Woodville** family manor that led to their clandestine wedding on 1 May 1464, the history books almost invariably concentrate on her status



as a commoner. She was indeed the daughter of a minor noble, **Sir Richard Woodville**, only recently created **Lord Rivers**, and she was the widow of a knight, **Sir John Grey**, heir to **Lord and Lady Ferrers de Groby**, who had been killed several years earlier at the Battle of

St Albans. She had two sons, the eldest already 14, so she was several years older than **Edward**, though all agree she was a very beautiful woman. The implication, certainly shared by many contemporaries, is that she was a wholly unsuitable bride for a Plantagenet prince, a parvenue and upstart, who somehow entrapped **Edward** through her feminine wiles. In fact, however, she had seriously blue blood flowing in her veins and had important dynastic links with the royal family itself. She was far from an ordinary knight's daughter, a most uncommon commoner.

Fully to appreciate **Elizabeth's** ancestry it is necessary to go back to 1422 and the death at the Chateau de Vincennes outside Paris of **King Henry V**, the victor of Agincourt. He left a son, now **Henry VI**, only 9 months old and a widow, **Katherine**, daughter of **Charles VI** of France. The Regency of France and protectorship passed to **Henry's** younger brother, **John, Duke of Bedford**. **Katherine** had responsibilities as the King's mother but she was cut off from her kin by the ongoing Hundred Years War. However, she was young (only 21 at her husband's death), independently wealthy, and as Queen powerful enough to choose for herself whether or not to remarry and if so to whom. And choose she did sometime between 1425 and 1428 – a young, handsome Welsh squire named **Owen Tudor**, a man of vastly inferior social status. Nowadays words such as "toyboy" and merry widow would be bandied about, certainly the scandal was very great. When in 1452 **Owen** and **Katherine's** eldest son **Edmund** was created **Earl of Richmond** by his half-brother, **Henry VI**, he was described in the Act of Parliament as born of the Queen in lawful marriage without any mention of his father or the **Tudor** name. **Edmund**, of course, married **Lady Margaret Beaufort** (later to found Christ's and St John's Colleges) and their son was **King Henry VII**.

Meanwhile **Henry VI's** Protector (and, of course, heir) the **Duke of Bedford** was unmarried. At the age of 33 he finally took a bride, **Anne of Burgundy**, but she died in

childbirth in 1432 leaving **John** without heirs. He needed another princess and his choice fell on the 17-year-old **Jacquetta de Luxembourg**, daughter of **Pierre I, Count of St Pol**. They were married at Therouenne in France only five months after his first wife's death. However, in September 1435 **John** hitnself died leaving **Jacquetta** a widow still in her teens. She found herself in the same position as **Katherine of France**. Still young, independently wealthy, a member of the royal family by marriage, hut in her case without even a child to look after, and she chose to follow the precedent set by her royal sister-in-law to marry, it would seem, for love. In emulation of **Katherine** she settled on a dashing, young knight far beneath her social status, **Sir Richard Woodville** (or **Wydevill**), the son of her late husband's chamberlain. They married only 18 months after the Duke's death. **Richard** was something of a national sporting hero: in a famous tournament in 1440 at Smithfield he represented England in the lists against the Spanish champion **Pedro de Vasquez**. The scandal over the marriage was almost as great as that of **Katherine of France** and **Owen Tudor**. The young couple had to pay the immense fine for the times of £1,000 for pardon for marrying without the King's licence — **Jacquetta** must have been truly a fabulously wealthy widow. The couple were soon accepted at Court, however. **Sir Richard** and **Lady Jacquetta** were members of the party sent to escort **Margaret of Anjou** to England to marry **Henry VI** in 1444, and in 1448 **Richard** was created **Baron Rivers**. He became a Privy Counsellor, a Knight of the Garter, Seneschal of Aquitaine and a leading support of the House of Lancaster in the Wars of the Roses.

Lord and **Lady Rivers** had at least 10 children; **Elizabeth Woodville** was their eldest daughter. So when **Edward IV** encountered **Elizabeth** on that fateful day in 1464, he met the daughter of his predecessor and cousin **King Henry VI's** erstwhile aunt and it is very probable that he already knew her- he would certainly have known of her — from Court.

And what of **Jacquetta's** and therefore **Elizabeth's** ancestry? **Jacquetta's** father, **Pierre of Luxembourg, Count of St Pol**, was the representative of a cadet line of the illustrious **House of Luxembourg**, important players in medieval Europe. The family first came to major prominence when **Henry of Luxembourg** was elected **Henry VII**, Holy Roman Emperor, in 1308. When **Jacquetta** and the **Duke of Bedford** married, **Henry's** great-grandson, **Sigismund of Luxembourg**, was not only the reigning Holy Roman Emperor (the last before the accession of the **House of Habsburg** to that office) but also King of Bohemia and King of Hungary. The marriage would thus have been seen as an alliance with the imperial house itself. **Pierre** had inherited the County of St Pol from the important French family of **de Chatillon** and through them could trace his descent from the Dukes of Brittany and **Louis VI of France** (1108-1137), from **Henry III of England** (1216-1272) from the great **Hohenstaufen Holy Roman Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa** (1152-1190) and even from **Isaac II Angelus, Emperor of Byzantium** (1185-1195 and 1203-1204).

Pierre de Luxembourg's wife, **Jacquetta's** mother, was an Italian princess, **Marguerite del Balzo**, (or **des Baux**) daughter of **Francesco, Duke of Andria** (in Apulia).

Marguerite's grandfather **Nicolo des Ursins** (or **Orsini**), **Count of Nola**, was himself the great-grandson of **Guy de Montfort, Count of Nola**, the only surviving son and heir of the great **Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester** (the founding father of the English Parliament) and his wife **Eleanor**, daughter of **King John of England**. After the battle of Evesham in which his father was killed **Guy** fled to Italy and was there granted the County of Nola. The **des Ursins** themselves were descended from **Gentile Orsini**, brother of **Pope Nicholas III** (1272-1280). **Marguerite** could also trace her ancestry to **Adenolfo d'Aquino**, the brother of the great philosopher and theologian **St Thomas Aquinas**, who lived 1225-74 and who had been canonised in 1323.

So through her mother, **Elizabeth Woodville** was very much of royal blood and, in the days when dynastic links were important, **Edward** would certainly have been well aware of this. **Elizabeth Woodville** was technically a commoner but of seriously illustrious ancestry and a close relative, by marriage at least, of the Lancastrian royal family.

Richard Woodville, Lord Rivers, and his wife **Jacquetta de Luxembourg** were very much still alive when **Edward** married their daughter **Elizabeth**, and they saw her crowned at Westminster Abbey on 26 May 1465. Sadly **Richard**, created **Earl Rivers** and Constable of England in 1466, was captured by **Warwick the King Maker**, and executed in 1469 during **Warwick's** briefly successful campaign to restore **Henry VI** to the throne. **Jacquetta** died in 1472 aged about 56. It is perhaps ironic that **Katharine of France** and her **Owen's** grandson, **Henry Tudor**, was to marry **Jacquetta of Luxembourg** and her **Richard's** granddaughter, **Elizabeth of York**. These two were the progenitors not only of the **Tudor** dynasty but also of all subsequent monarchs of England and Great Britain.

Incidentally the elder of **Elizabeth's** two sons by her first marriage, **Thomas Grey**, was created **Marquis Dorset** in 1475. His grandson **Henry Grey** became **Duke of Suffolk** and married the niece of **Henry VIII** (himself, of course, a grandson of **Elizabeth Woodville**) — their eldest daughter was the ill-fated nine day queen, **Lady Jane Grey**. A much later descendant of **Thomas Grey, George Grey, Earl of Stamford**, matriculated at Queens' in 1755. He presented the College with the portrait of his ancestor **Queen Elizabeth Woodville** that is the centrepiece of the 18th century panelling in Old Hall. His brothers **Booth** (1758) and **John** (1761) gave us the pictures of **Erasmus** and **Sir Thomas Smith** that flank it.

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Ron Brown has extracted for us the blazon of the arms of **Elizabeth Woodville** from **Pinches' Royal Heraldry of England** — *Quarterly of six: 1st quarter -Argent a lion rampant double queued Gules crowned Or (Luxembourg). 2nd quarter — 1 and 4 Gules a star of eight points Argent; 2 and 3 Azure semee of fleurs de lys Or (de Baux d'Andree). 3rd quarter - Barry of ten Argent and Azure overall a lion rampant Gules (Lusignan of Cyprus). 4th quarter - Gules three bendlets Argent on a chief of the first charged with a fillet in base Or a rose of the second (Ursins). 5th quarter - Gules three pallets Vairy on a*

chief Or a label of five points Azure (St. Pol) 6th quarter - Argent a fess and a canton conjoined Gules(Woodville).

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The article, written by the **Revd. Jonathan Michael Holmes M.A., Vet.M.B., Ph.D., M.R.C.V.S.** Dean of Chapel and Chaplain, Keeper of the Records; Assistant Director of Studies in Veterinary Sciences, was sent to us by our good friend **Dr. T. W. (Tom) Backhouse** and was included in his **Queens' College Record 2001**. He - and we are sure all members of the College - are very jealous of their right to place the apostrophe in the title after the letter 's' denoting more than one queen. Queens' College was originally founded in 1448 by **Margaret of Anjou**, wife of **Henry VI**, and re-founded in 1465 by **Elizabeth Woodville**.

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The Victoria Cross



An article in the **Daily Telegraph** voices concern that Britain's highest award for bravery, the **Victoria Cross**, will die out. There are now only 18 living holders and the last British servicemen to be awarded the decoration, **Lt. Col. H. Jones** and **Sgt. Ian McKay**, were both killed while winning the medal in the **Falklands**. Some of those who

wish to see the **Victoria Cross**, survive believe that the medal is becoming ever harder to win, and that to do so requires exposure to almost certain death. Although no such criterion is laid down it is generally believed that a winner must have undergone a ninety per cent risk of death. It is also generally held that the man - there are no women holders nor ever have been - must by his action have materially affected the outcome of the engagement.

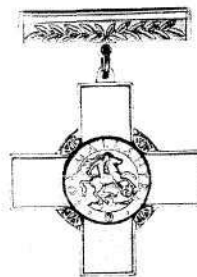
Statistics tend to support the view that the **Victoria Cross** has become harder to win over the years. It was first instituted in 1856 by **Queen Victoria**, to reward bravery shown in the Crimean War, but backdated to 1854, the year of the war's beginning. Between 1856 and 1913 the Cross was awarded 522 times. During the First World War it was awarded 633 times. Many of the recipients were Indians who, until 1911, had received the **Indian Order of Merit** instead. The sudden rise in the frequency of the award is explained, of course, by the vast expansion of the Royal Navy and army between 1914 and 1918, and the creation of the Royal Air Force in 1918.

There were six awards during the inter-war years, a remarkably peaceful period. During the Second World War there were only 182 awards, though an expansion of the size of the services comparable to that in the Great War took place.

The reduction in numbers may have had to do with the conscription of so many men into the navy and air force,

where the display of individual initiative, which brings the award, is more difficult than in fighting on land.

However, the number may have also been reduced by the institution of the **George Cross** by **King George VI**, to reward acts of supreme bravery not performed in the face of the enemy.



The **George Cross** ranks equally with, but in a list is always written after, the **Victoria Cross** and has frequently been awarded to women. Some, particularly agents such as **Violet Szabo** and **Noor Khan**, are widely thought to have deserved the **Victoria Cross**, having engaged in combat with the Germans.

Between 1945 and 1982 there were 11 awards, including two to Australians in Vietnam. The last **Victoria Cross** to be awarded to a surviving British serviceman was won by a Gurkha in Borneo, **Rambahadur Limbu**, 10th Gurkha Rifles, now retired as a captain.

Admiral Place, who won the **Victoria Cross** in an attack on the German battleship *Tirpitz* in a miniature submarine, and was later President of the **Victoria Cross** and **George Cross** Association, argued forcefully for relaxing the stringency of the conditions. His view was that too rigorous a system of evaluation would eventually deprive his association of membership.

That time is fast approaching. With the death last week of **Ted Chapman**, who won the **Victoria Cross** as a corporal in the Monmouthshire Regiment in 1945, the number of survivors is reduced to 18. It is a far cry from 1956, when 300 holders marched past the Queen in Hyde Park.

No awards are in the offing, despite rumours that members of the special forces are being considered for the **Victoria Cross** for their actions in Afghanistan during operations against the Taliban.

Yet it is unlikely that the conditions for winning the medal will be eased. Historically the trend has always run in the opposite direction.



However strong the feeling that the **Victoria Cross** has got too difficult to win, even stronger is the feeling, in and outside the services, that authority meddles at its peril with the gold standard of bravery.

There is no other medal quite like the **Victoria Cross**. The **Congressional Medal of Honour**, after a shaky start (a whole regiment was awarded the medal during the American Civil War), has nearly equivalent status, but not quite.

Authority itself recognises that the pre-eminence of a decoration cannot be established by law. It comes into being slowly, with the passage of time, and through the accretion of hundreds of acts of courage.

The various decorations illustrated are described as follows:-

Victoria Cross - a cross pattée with a lion statant guardant on the royal crown with the words **FOR VALOUR** on a semi circular scroll. The Cross is suspended by a ring from a serifed "V" attached to a suspension bar decorated with laurel leaves. The ribbon is crimson for all three services (until 1918 naval crosses used a blue ribbon). It is claimed that the crosses are made from bronze originally from Russian guns captured in the Crimea but modern research has shown that guns captured in other conflicts, e.g. China, have also been used at various times.

George Cross - a plain bordered cross with a circular medallion in the centre depicting the effigy of St. George and the Dragon after **Benedetto Pistucci**, surrounded by the words **FOR GALLANTRY**. In the angle of each limb is the Royal cypher **GVI**. The Cross hangs by a ring from a bar adorned with laurel leaves. The metal used is silver and the ribbon is dark blue. The **George Cross** superseded the **Empire Gallantry Medal** in 1940.

Indian Order of Merit - an eight-pointed star with a circular centre surrounded.

Indian Order of Merit - an eight pointed star with a circular centre surrounded by a laurel wreath and containing crossed sabres and the relevant inscription. The star is suspended by a curvilinear suspension bar.

Congressional Medal of Honour - a five pointed star with its upper point downwards: the centrepiece depicts **Minerva** repulsing the allegorical figure of **Discord**: all over a laurel wreath. The army pendant is attached to the ribbon by means of the **American Eagle** with below a tablet bearing the single word **VALOUR**.

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Saint Catherine of Alexandria

Saint Catherine, 4th century patroness of chastity and learning and of those who used wheels such as spinners, millers and wheelwrights. An attempt was made to execute her for her religious convictions on a wheel which was destroyed by angels hurling lightning bolts. The firework called a **Catherine wheel** was once a popular remembrance of her. Eighteenth-century women celebrated this date by consuming a special wine from a **Cathern bowl** and **catherining** into the small hours. A spiked silver wheel on a blue field.



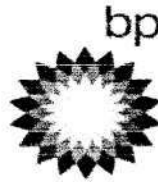
Thought for the Day

*The past always looks better than it was.
It's only pleasant because it isn't here.*

Finley Peter Dunne

Sunflower Power at BP

This is the current logo of BP Amoco, the oil giant which cost over four million pounds in cash and twelve months on design, research and patents. The image resembles a sunflower and is said to exemplify 'dynamic energy' combined with concern for the environment. But the logo has been criticised by **Greenpeace** which said a more appropriate symbol would be - a miserable polar bear on an ice cap shrinking because of global warming. Alongside is a selection of logos used in the past and one can only wonder was the latest change worth the expense?



bp



"BP"



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Letter from Cynthia

Cynthia Lydiard-Cannings has asked us to publish a copy of her letter which is self explanatory :- I have just received and devoured the May 2002 edition of **The Seaxe**, and found it, as ever, full of goodies. I was interested, too, to see that my offerings on **Cunninghame**, **Audley** and **Thuringia** had sparked replies - interested and a little worried.

Dr Rabbow's potted history of the **Thuringian** lion was fascinating, a far more scholarly follow-up than my idle musings deserved. But what really alarmed me was **Mr Burgess's** fretting as to whether the **Squires of Audley** that I named had even been at **Poitiers** at the time; and **Colonel Swinnerton's** taking me to task because I'd written "*the cruel usurper MacBeth*", just as if I believed that any more than I believed the rest of the old rubbish - er, the little tale!

Please may I remind anyone who enjoys my series of the overall title, and of what I wrote in the introduction to Number 1. I paraphrase:

While I have always been a serious armorist, deploring unsound heraldry, I have also, over the years, picked up an awful lot of picturesque heraldic dross, including the numerous 'explanations' associated with various armorial bearings. These I treasure, and beg to offer you some of my favourites. You may entertain no doubt that they all really happened - in the time of Queen Dick!

Yours sincerely,
Cynthia

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Next Meetings

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A joint Meeting with
The Chiltern Heraldry Group
At St Albans Abbey
on Saturday, 17th August

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Annual General Meeting
followed by
Ecclesiastical Heraldry
by Steve Kibbey
on Thursday, 26th September

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

Saint Brigid of Kildare

Saint Brigid, known in England as **Saint Bride**, patroness of chastity and learning and considered by some to be also a patroness of fugitives. Although legend has it that the nuns of the convent she founded kept a fire burning in her memory it is more likely that the lamp refers to her good works while the oak leaf represents Kildare. White was the



colour of her habit. A red lamp and a green wreath on a white field..

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Chiltern Heraldry Group

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Our first Meeting of the season will be a joint Meeting with **The Middlesex Heraldry Society** at *St Albans Abbey on Saturday, 17th August.*

Meet at the **Westminster Lodge Car Park at 10.30am** for a visit to **Verulamium**. (Personal arrangements for lunch).

Meet at the Abbey at 2.15pm for the afternoon session.

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The first regular 2002/2003 meeting of the Group will be held at a rather novel time and location.

Dr Nicholas Wheeler-Robinson has generously invited the **Chiltern Group** to meet on his estate at **Piggotts, North Dean, High Wycombe**, formerly the monastic home of the renowned and idiosyncratic English sculptor and designer **Eric Gill** who died in 1940.

We shall meet there on **Sunday, 8th September at 11.00am** when coffee and biscuits will be available until **11.30am** when **Timothy Noad** will speak on ***The Work of the Herald Painter.***

After the talk the buildings and beautiful beechwoods can be used by heraldists who bring a picnic lunch.

Local pubs are not cheap!

At 2.00pm **Dr Robinson** will show us the remains and reminders of **Eric Gill's** life and work. Afterwards we are invited to enjoy a concert performance of the opera **SALOME** by **Richard Strauss** staged by participants of the weekend music camp staying at **Piggotts**.

Piggotts may be difficult to find so we have included a map of the area.

