

# The Seaxe



Robin

## Newsletter of the Middlesex Heraldry Society

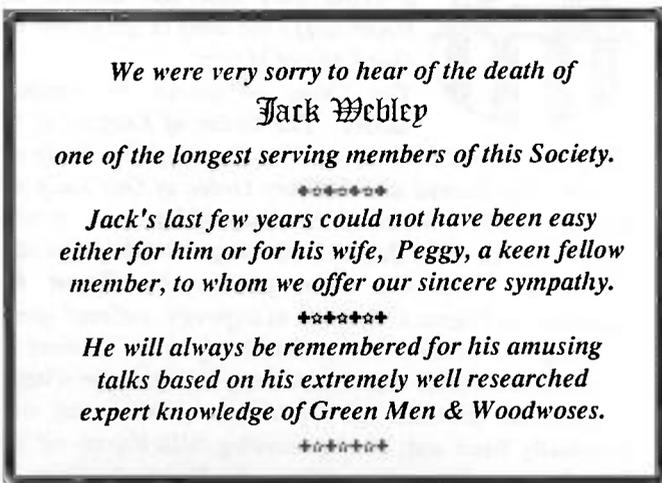
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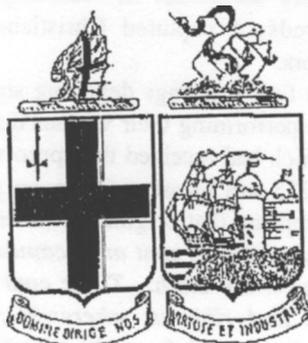
**Obituary** - we have received the following tribute from Chairman, Kay Holmes :-



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### The Swindon Hooter - by Marjorie Kirby

As promised and following the visit to Lydiard Tregose here is the almost unbelievable story of the Swindon Hooter.



It was a whistle similar to those borne by steamships and was mounted on the roof of the fitting and machine shop of the Great Western Railway Works at Swindon. It had a range of 12-15 miles and every morning, except Sunday, it whistled at 5.15, 5.45 and 6.00 am and could be heard in Swindon and the

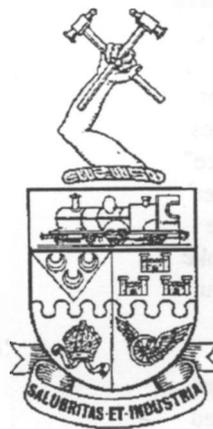
surrounding villages. Its purpose was to ensure that factory workers did not oversleep.

However, in 1868, Henry St. John, 5th Viscount Bolingbroke, felt compelled to complain to the GWR in that he could not get a good night's sleep when staying at his home - Lydiard Tregose. The railway company, anxious to appease the local landowner, erected a screen round the hooter which reduced the noise west of Swindon where Lydiard Tregose lay. The lower volume of sound was not sufficient to waken some of the workers



but even so Lord Henry was not satisfied and reported that it was detrimental to his health - bad for his heart his doctor said! So, in 1873, the *Swindon Advertiser* printed his application for the abolition of the hooter.

This caused a furore and set the "working" population against the "leisured" lord. Letters and poems poured into the newspaper offices - many, including some from his lordship's own staff and tenants, stating that they relied on this early morning call. A petition signed by 4,339 people and 43 yards long begged that the hooter licence should not be withdrawn. The Swindon Town Hall was packed for the Inquiry and tempers ran high but because of the medical evidence the licence was revoked.



SWINDON

Swindon's workers did not take this lying down and held a protest meeting at the Mechanics Institute early in 1875. As a result the case was reassessed and, as Lord Bolingbroke had been the sole objector and as he only resided within earshot during the shooting season (two months a year) a new hooter was designed but which operated on a different principle. So

the workmen's boon was back in place and his lordship lived to see his 80th year, despite the hooter's "roaring and distracted noise"! Hooters in various forms continued to sound from the GWR factory until its closure in 1986.

The arms of **St. John** were illustrated and blazoned in *Staxe* No.28 - the crest surmounted by a Viscount's coronet is:- *On a mount Vert a falcon rising Or belled of the last ducally gorged Gules.*

Other arms -

**Great Western Railway:- Arms of the City of London** surmounted by a crest:- *On a wreath Argent and Gules the sinister wing of a dragon Argent charged on the underside with a cross Gules.* The motto *Domine Dirige Nos* translates as **Lord direct us.** Alongside are the **Arms of the City of Bristol:- Gules on the sinister side a Silver castle with two domed towers, on each a banner charged with the cross of St. George, standing on a cliff proper, and in dexter base barry wavy Argent and Azure, and issuing therefrom a Gold ship sailing from a port in the tower of the castle, masts and rigging Sable and on each mast a Gold round-top, a sail spread on the foremast and a sail furled on the mainmast, both Argent.** The crest is:- *On a wreath Argent and Gules, two bent arms rising from the clouds, the forearms crossed, the dexter hand grasping a snake and the*

other holding a pair of scales; the arms and snake proper and the scales Gold. The supporters are:- two sitting unicorns and the motto is:- *Virtute et Industria* which translates as **By virtue and industry.**

**Swindon** - Arms:- *Quarterly per fess nebuly Azure and Gules; 1st quarter - a pile Argent thereon three crescents Gules; 2nd quarter - three castles one and two Argent; 3rd quarter - a mitre Or; 4th quarter - a winged wheel Or; on a chief Argent a locomotive engine proper.* The crest is:- *On a wreath Argent and Azure, a right arm proper, the hand grasping two hammers in saltire Or.* The motto is:- *Salubritas et Industria* which translates as **Health and Industry.**

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The silent hooter was synonymous with the end of an era and this final tribute in verse from **Warwick Forrester** of South Marston says it all:-

They say the hooter's silent  
And there's no more work inside  
With all the ghosts departing  
The railway works has died  
No hammer blow or scrape of file  
Or rivets resonant ring  
No oily toil worn skilful hands  
To service "Tank or King".

They say the hooter's silent  
No cabs or wheels or frames  
No "motion" on "the balance"  
Or cast and gleaming names  
No showing of impatience  
The blast of steam and smoke  
Just a whistle down the distance  
Beloved of Swindon folk.

They say the hooter's silent  
As the Adver' has remarked  
The siding rails are rusting  
The workshops still and dark  
Like a heart that's finished beating  
A way of life now gone  
No matter what the future brings  
The hooter - echoes on!

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## The Sacred and Military Order of Our Lady of Mercy or The Order of Our Lady of Ransom

by **Steve Kibbey**

Just off the **Calle de Alphonso XII**, north-west of the cathedral in Seville, is a richly decorated pink building - on either side of the entrance rise two columns beautifully and decoratively carved. Approximately six feet from ground level on each column is a coat of arms:- *four pales and in chief a cross paty*. The columns terminate just above the arch of the large entrance door and, above the doorway, set in a recessed window, is a statue of **Our**

**Lady** between two kneeling figures. High above **Our Lady** is a larger coat of arms exactly the same as on the columns at street level. This is the **Museo de Bellas Artes** formerly the **Convento de la Merced** which was built in the 17th century by **Juan de Oviedo** but the baroque doorway, just described, was added in the 18th century.

Today there are no monks but the beautiful church and courtyards of their convent remain. Here, hung on the walls of the nave, apse and transept of the church and in the refectory are the works of two of Spain's finest artists - **Murillo** and **Zurburan**. In the church the ceilings are baroque adorned with figures, presumably from the Scriptures and surrounded by gold decoration. At strategic points are the arms we saw on entering the

*S' Mary de Merced*



building but, this time, in glorious colour:- *Or four pales Gules* (for Aragon) *and in chief also Gules a cross paty* (for the Church of Barcelona) - the arms of the **Order of Our Lady of Mercy**.

The Order is known by various names - *The Order of Knights of St Mary de Merced in Aragon,*<sup>1</sup> *The Order of Our Lady of Mercy,*<sup>2</sup> *The Sacred and Military Order of Our Lady of Mercy,*<sup>3</sup> and *The Order of Our Lady of Ransom.*<sup>4</sup> It was founded in 1218 by **James I** of Aragon (nicknamed *the invincible*). He was taken prisoner by **Simon de Montfort** in France and, while in captivity, suffered great hardship. He made a vow to **Our Lady** that if he were to gain his freedom he would endeavour to obtain the release of Christian prisoners of the Moors. **James** was eventually freed and, after consulting with **Raymond de Penafort**, (a Dominican friar) and **Pedro Nolasco** (a noble cavalier), he founded an order of knights in Barcelona called *La Nueva Merced*,<sup>5</sup> so named by the **Virgin Mary** who appeared at the same time to all three men. **Pedro Nolasco** was the first General of the Order.<sup>6</sup> By all accounts the Order never had a large membership, perhaps no more than a hundred knights at any one time but nevertheless they were successful in obtaining the freedom of many hundreds of captured Christians by paying ransom to the Moors.

There are in the Museum four paintings depicting scenes of the knights and monks performing their various duties. The arms of the Order which had received the approval of **Pope Gregory IX** in 1235 are clearly visible on their cloaks and mantles.<sup>7</sup> It appears that original membership comprised knights only who wore *a coat and scapular of a common sort of coarse white cloth. Their coat was garnished with cordons and ribbons, wherewith they fastened it about their necks, and from the upper end thereof issued a cap that covered half their head.* Later monks were admitted to the Order and they wore their coats and scapulars reaching down to their feet - those of the knights were much shorter.<sup>8</sup>

On 15th July 1251, at Zaragoza, at the request of the second General, **Gulielmo de Bas**, **King James** granted arms to the **Order of Our Lady of Mercy**. He decreed that the members of the Order should wear upon their scapulars\* an escutcheon of arms:- *Or four pales Gules and in chief also Gules a cross paty.*<sup>9</sup> The knights wore their escutcheon of arms on their scapulars but the monks

wore them on their mantles. In 1232 **Pope Gregory XI** prescribed to the **Master** and the fraternity the **Rule of St. Augustine**. The knights professed conjugal chastity obedience to their superiors.<sup>10</sup> In 1261 the Order was extended by **Mary Du Secours** of **Barcelona**<sup>11</sup> to include both sexes. In 1317, on the death of the seventh General, **Arnoldo Rosiniol**, an argument broke out among the knights and the monks and priests as to who should succeed **Rosiniol**. The knights wanted **Berengario Hostales** - the monks and priests wanted **Raimundo Alberto** - so the dispute was referred to the Pope, **John XXII**. On 17th November 1317 **Pope John** declared that *he thought it convenient for them to have a Master General who was a priest and that, for the future, no layman should be elected General*. The judgement did not please the knights - in fact they were so unhappy that virtually to a man (about sixty at the time) they quit



the Order and joined the **Order of Montessa**<sup>12</sup> which had been founded in 1312 by **King James II** of **Aragon**. The principle aim of the **Order** was to defend **Aragon** against the **Moors**. Its membership was restricted to the Catholic nobility.

The **Order of Our Lady of Mercy** carried on until at least the 18th century before it became extinct. As an interesting postscript **Alice, Duchess of Dudley** was created into that dignity by **King Charles I** by Letters Patent under the Great Seal of England bearing the date at Oxford of 23rd May in the 22nd year of his reign. She died on 22nd January 1668, aged 90. In her will she bequeathed **£100 per annum and for ever to be employed for redemption of captives of the English nation**. According to **Ashmole** a copy of the Patent is entered in the Earl Marshal's book at the College of Arms.

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If you ever visit Seville I recommend a visit to the **Museo de Bellas Artes** where entrance is free to all members of the European Union on production of your passport. However, a word of warning - there is no refreshment area or shop so you will be unable to buy any postcards of the pictures and sculptures you are going to see. Inside you will find tranquility in three courtyards each with a fountain in the middle giving blessed relief from the heat of the day. Walk through the museum's fourteen rooms giving thought to times past when monks walked the same floors praying all the while for, raising money for and eventually paying for the release of men being held captive in indescribable conditions. The knights and monks have long since gone but their coats of arms are still there to be seen. They are reminders of the days of chivalry and noble ideas. How many visitors to the museum who look at the ceiling and see these arms have any idea of the joy experienced by a prisoner who has spent many years in a hot, stinking cell on seeing these arms on the scapular or mantle of the knight or monk who has been sent to take him home.

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#### References:-

1. A Display of Heraldry - **John Guillum** (1724)
2. A Complete Body of Heraldry (Vol.I) **Joseph Edmondson**
- 3, 4 & 12 Orders of Knighthood and Merit - **Peter Bander van Duren** (1995)
- 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 & 13 The Institution, Laws, and Ceremonies of the Most Noble Order of the Garter - **Elias Ashmole** (1672)
7. The four paintings are:-
  - i. *San Pedro Nolasco redimiendo Cautivos*
  - ii. *San Pedro despidiendosa de Jaime I el conquistador*
  - iii. *Aparicion de la Virgen a San Ramon Nonnatau.*
  - iv. *San Pedro Nolasco embarca para redimir Cautivos*
 The above are by **Francisco Pacheco** (1554-1644)
11. Encyclopædia Heraldica (Vol.I) - **William Berry**

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[\*Scapular = short cloak - from the Latin *scapula* [plural] = shoulder blades. According to the OED it was prescribed by the Rule of St. Benedict to be worn by monks when engaged in manual labour and adopted by certain religious orders as a part of their ordinary costume.]

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[Your Editors are deeply indebted to **Ron Brown** for his research work and also for the loan of all the books - notated - to which **Steve Kibbey** refers.]

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## The King's Arms at Amersham

- by **Leslie Pierson**

**Nikolaus Pevsner** in his *The Buildings of England - Buckinghamshire* comments that *there is much fakery at the King's Arms*. All west of the carriage arch is an original 16th century hall-and-cross-wing house, glamorised in 1936 when **E.B. Musman** made the east part (also timber framed but later) look Tudor with timbering, an east gable, dormer and new chimney stack. The same comment can be made about the present inn sign for although above the coat of arms, which purports to be the royal arms of **Henry VIII**, are the initials **HR** (*Henricus Rex*), some unauthorised alterations have been made.



Shown here is the full heraldic achievement of **Henry VIII** with the shield guarded and upheld by

supporters - on the dexter side a golden lion ensigned with a Royal Crown and on the sinister a red dragon. Below is a legend scroll bearing the Royal Motto DIEU ET MON DROICT (Sic). The shield is surmounted by a steel tilting helmet and ensigned with the Royal Crown bearing the crest of a golden lion. Issuing from beneath the crown is the Royal Mantling of red doubled ermine. Note in particular that the fleur-de-lis are gold and that the dragon has four legs.

The inn sign of the **King's Arms** at Amersham was replaced by a new sign in May 1997, the previous sign having become weather-worn and difficult to decipher.



The artist, **David Woolacott** of Berkhamsted, was instructed to copy exactly from the old sign and produced the new sign as shown. (The helmet, crest and mantling had always been omitted from the inn sign). It will be noted that the sinister supporter has lost his rear legs!

The red monster on the inn sign is, in fact, a **wyvern** which resembles a dragon in every respect except that it has no hindquarters, its rear being like that of a serpent with barbed tail. The dragon was a symbol of sovereignty among the Celts. **Dragon** was the name for a chief and he who slew a chief slew a **dragon** and so the title became confused with the fabulous monster. This is a link with the **Arthurian** legend and **Arthur's** father, **Uther Pendragon** (*Or two dragons back to back Vert each crowned Gules*) and also with the **Welsh** dragon of armory. **Sir Owen Tudor** had adopted a dragon as his device in token of his supposed descent from **Cadwaladr** and his son, **Henry VII**, the first **Tudor** king, introduced the red dragon supporter to the royal arms. All subsequent **Tudor** monarchs bore a four legged dragon as a supporter.



Uther Pendragon

So why has the **wyvern** been substituted for the **dragon** on the inn sign? Two explanations spring to mind - the first is that it was intended as a compliment to the **Drakes of**

**Shardeloes**, Lords of the Manor since 1637, whose coat of arms bears a red wyvern. Or it could have been that when the first armorial board was commissioned the sign-writer, not being sure what a dragon looked like, asked for



local opinion and was shown the **Drakes'** arms on the almshouses or, perhaps, the Market Hall and, believing that the monster in the **Drake** coat of arms was a dragon, copied it.

The other curiosity lies with the fleur-de-lis in the first and fourth quarters of the shield which should be all gold but have been painted half gold and half black on the new board. When viewed from a distance the black part disappears into the blue background and we are left with what looks like the business part of a

boat hook. The sign-writer can give no valid reason why he emblazoned the fleur-de-lis in this way.

The old **Amersham Rural District Council** were granted a coat of arms in 1953 which also had a red wyvern as a main charge taken from the arms of the **Drake** family.

The arms are:- *On a mount Vert a wyvern wings expanded Gules; on a chief per pale of the last and Sable, three plates.*

Crest:- *Issuant from a Saxon crown Or a demi lion Gules holding in the paws a sprig of beech proper.*

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[Your Editors apologise for the poor quality of the illustrations and can only say that "red on a blue background" does not translate well from colour to black and white]

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## The Mercers Company & School (II)

by **Ron Edwards**

### The Civic Guild of Old Mercers

There was a lunch meeting in 1947 of a group of **Liverymen of City of London Companies** who had in common that they had all attended **Mercers School**. The luncheon was held in the **Tallow Chandlers Hall** by courtesy of **Major Stanley W. Wells**, who was **Master of the Company** and who had also attended the school. They were joined



by the **Master** and **Wardens of the Mercers' Company** and by the **Headmaster of the School**. From the meeting came the idea to form an association called **Old Mercers City Liverymen**. In October 1949 **The Old Mercers' Civic Guild** emerged which meant that any past scholars who had taken up the **Freedom of the City** could be proposed for membership. The new initiative was successful and membership increased. In June 1950, while **Stanley Wells** was **Sheriff for the City of London**, the **Annual Luncheon** was honoured by the presence of the **Lord Mayor** and other **Sheriffs**. Later, in June, a dinner was held attended by some of the **Masters of City Companies** which governed schools, their headmasters and three **Old Boys** who were also **Liverymen**. During the speeches the object of the dinner was explained - to encourage the formation of similar **Civic Guilds** amongst **Old Boys** of the other **City Schools**. This objective never materialised - the **Old Mercers' Guild** remaining unique. - but the **Civic Guild of Old Mercers** (the later constitutional title) did develop the idea themselves by welcoming into their ranks **Old Boys** from other **Mercers' Company Schools** who fulfilled the membership criteria.

The **Guild** was constituted on the lines of a **Livery Company**. The Offices included a **Guild Master**, **Guild Renter Warden** and **Guild Junior Warden**. The **Court** who supported the **Master** and **Wardens** were **Guild Assistants** who had been **Guild Masters** and **Guildmen** who were progressing through the **Guild** in order of precedence. The records were kept by an **Honorary Clerk** who also looked after the day to day accounts

although the **Renter Warden** was nominally in charge of the moneys of the **Guild**. It was agreed that the **Court** should meet four times a year within 21 days of each **Quarter Day - Lady Day, Midsummer Day, Michaelmas Day and Christmas Day**.

1959 saw the closure of **Mercers' School** but the **Guild** continued to increase in membership through **Old Scholars** from the School. However, the **Court** saw the dangers which would inevitably arise from the decrease in numbers from this source. Further amendments were made to the constitution - first to permit relatives of **Guildmen** and then past pupils of other schools and colleges connected with the **Mercers' Company** to apply for membership. The latter included **Collyer's, Dauntsey's, Abingdon and St. Paul's Schools** and by opening the doors to this wider range of sources the **Court** was partially carrying out the hopes put forward at the dinner held in 1949 which suggested that other **City** schools should encourage the idea of forming **Civic Guilds** for their past pupils.

In order to foster the ancient traditions of the **City** in so far as they embody ideals of hospitality and fraternity, an **Annual Dinner** was held to celebrate the **Installation** of the **Guild Master**. The **Court** also maintained the privilege of asking a variety of dignitaries and representatives to this **Dinner** as their guests. These have included the **Chief Commoner** of the **City Corporation**, **Masters and Clerks of Livery Companies** and, more recently, representatives of **Foundation Schools** or their **Associations**. In 1954 the **Mercers' Company** generously presented the **Guild** with a **Master's Badge\*** which is worn at all times by the **Guild Master** when



sitting in **Court**, at the **Installation Dinner** or when representing the **Guild** at an outside function. The **Badge** in silver gilt and enamel is designed to reflect the arms of **Whittington, Colet, Gresham and St. Thomas Acon** - the names of the four houses into which the **Mercers' School** was at that time divided. The arms of **Gresham's School** are, of course, based on the arms of the

**Gresham** family and are blazoned:- *Argent a chevron Ermines between three pierced molets Sable; on a chief Gules a dolphin naiant also Argent ducally crowned Or between two keys in saltire wards upwards and outwards Gold. Crest:- on a wreath Argent and Sable a grasshopper proper supporting a key erect Or, wards to the sinister.*

At the **Guild Annual General Meeting** in 1981 the question was raised as to whether **Guildmen** could invite lady guests to the **Dinner**. After discussion it was agreed to defer a decision until such time as there were lady **Guildmen** eligible to attend in their own right. The original constitution of the **Civic Guild** had not envisaged lady members but when **Collyer's School** at Horsham became a **Sixth Form College** the constitution was re-examined. It was agreed that the wording did not exclude

lady members and as there was already a female **Apprentice** from **Collyer's** it was decided that lady guests should be invited to the 1986 **Installation Dinner** and nineteen actually attended. The **Court** decision which permitted **Guildmen** to bring lady guests to the **Installation Dinners** inevitably led to the consideration of electing lady **Guildmen**. As it had been agreed that the **Guild** constitution did not prohibit the election of lady **Guildmen**, as **Associated Schools** were no longer confined and as the **Guild** had already registered a lady **Apprentice** from **Collyer's** it was agreed that ladies could apply for entrance to the **Guild** in their own right provided they satisfied the normal criteria laid down by the **Court**. Since then there have been examples of husband and wife both being **Guildmen**.

The **Guild** had always recognised that an **Apprenticeship** scheme was a valid form of entry to the **Guild** and an **Apprentice Warden** is appointed annually whose duties are to encourage membership of the **Guild**, to guide and educate **Apprentices** into the traditions of the **City of London** and all matters concerning the **Guild**. The numbers of **Apprentices** has fluctuated over the years and as there could not be any intake from **Mercers' School**, **Apprentices** had been drawn from sons and then daughters of existing **Guildmen**. This has not always proved successful as the second or third generation do not always have career interests similar to their forebears. Since 1991 a revised scheme has been developed which has been aimed specifically at students at the **Associated Schools**. The **Apprentice Warden** has endeavoured, through regular contact, to instil the concept of citizenship and relationship with foundation bodies and to act as a liaison between **Guild** and the **Schools**. When **Apprentices** take up the **Freedom** of the **City** at the age of twenty-one they automatically become **Guildmen** provided they satisfy the required criteria.

The first fifty years saw an advancement and consolidation of the principles, aims and objectives visualised by the founders at the **Lunch Meeting** in 1947. However among many changes of circumstance there was one of great significance when the **Mercers' School** closed completely altering by broadening the basis of future election to the **Civic Guild**. This can only serve to extend its influence and also consolidate the objectives defined in the **Constitution**, namely:-

*To encourage former pupils of Mercers' Foundation and Associated Schools and others to become Freemen and Liverymen: and to select, if possible, a Livery Company appropriate to their own trade or profession.*

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*To uphold the ancient customs, ceremonies and traditions of the City of London.*

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*To foster a sense of good citizenship, by service to the Guild, to one's own Livery Company and to the Corporation of the City of London.*

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*To support in every way the ideals of good craftsmanship.*

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*To do such things as shall be conducive to the weal of the Guild.*

[\*The badge appeared in **SEaxe** No.28 and we apologise to **Ron Edwards** and to our readers for this error.]

## The South Wales Borderers

Raised in 1689 as **Sir Edward Dering's Regiment of Foot** thereafter changing its name with its colonels and, in 1747 was ranked the **24th Foot**. In 1751 its title changed to the **24th Regiment of Foot**



A further change took place in 1782 when the Regiment became the **24th (or 2nd Warwickshire) Regiment of Foot**. The Welsh association followed in 1881 when it became the **South Wales Borderers**. The badge of the regiment is described as - *Within a wreath of*

*immortelles* (granted by Queen Victoria to commemorate the Battle of Isandhlwana in 1879) *the sphinx upon a tablet EGYPT and, below, the initials SWB*. The Regiment had no motto. The **South Wales Borderers** merged with **The Welch Regiment** in June 1969 to become the **Royal Regiment of Wales (24th/41st Foot)**. The badge of the new regiment is described as - *The plume, coronet and motto of the Prince of Wales* who is, of course, the Colonel-in-Chief. Its mascot is a goat first adopted by **The Welch Regiment** at about the time of the Crimean War.



The **South Wales Borderers** fought at Blenheim, Malplaquet, Oudenarde & Ramillies in the War of the Spanish Succession. The Peninsular War added Busaco, Fuentes D'Onor, Nivelle, Orthes, Pyrenees, Salamanca, Talavera, & Vittoria to the Regiment's Battle Honours. Chillianwallah and Goojerat were awarded after the 2nd Sikh War of 1849 and the Regiment were involved in the Third Burmese War of 1885/7 and also in the Zulu War and the Boer War. Among its many other battle honours are Mons, Marne, Ypres, Somme, Arras, Menin Road, Passchendale, Cambrai, Bapaume, Gallipoli (Suvla), and Kut al Amara (Mesopotamia) in the Great War. In WWII the regiment earned the battle honours Norway, Normandy Landing, Caen, Falaise, Arnheim, Gazala (North Africa) and North Arakan (Burma).

The **Victoria Cross** has been won by the incredible number of twenty-two members of the regiment - five in the Andaman Islands (1867), one in the Ashanti War (1873-4), ten in the Zulu and Basuto Wars (1877-9) and six in the Great War.

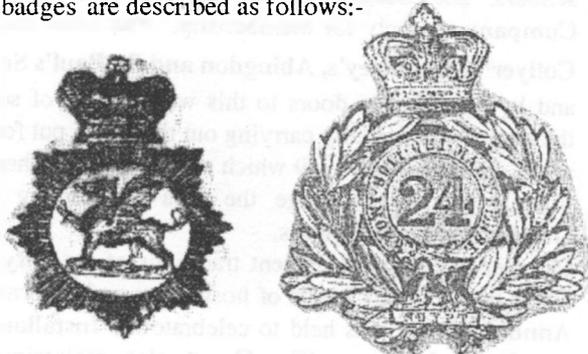
One of the first awards was to **Private W. Griffiths** on Little Andaman Island, Indian Ocean on 7th May 1867. He was killed at the Battle of Isandhlwana in 1879 during which the 1st Battalion lost 416 men killed whilst the 2nd Battalion lost 183. But the best remembered battle of the Zulu War was Rorke's Drift which was fought soon afterwards and where the garrison at the commissariat store heroically resisted the repeated valiant onslaughts of King Cetuyayo's Zulu impi. That garrison of 139 men included twenty two men sick and supposedly unfit for duty - but on that day they stood alongside their comrades in this epic defence. After their last unsuccessful attack the Zulu impi withdrew but, before leaving the area,

stayed to salute brave adversaries on their war drums. British casualties were fifteen killed and ten wounded. In his report the GOC, **General Lord Chelmsford** wrote:- *The cool determined courage displayed by the gallant garrison was beyond praise*. The reckless bravery of the Zulu impi, armed chiefly with spears, was recognised in 1990 when a special scroll as a bond of friendship, endorsed by Brecon town council, was presented to the Zulu nation.

The Regimental Headquarters is now Maindy Barracks, Cardiff, Wales but the Regimental Museum is housed in the Barracks, Brecon, Powys, Wales.

The recruitment area covers the whole of South Wales.

The badges are described as follows:-



**The Last Shako - 1869-78** - *In the centre the numerals "24" and on the bottom join of the wreath the Sphinx superscribed Egypt. All in gilt.*

**The Militia - Royal South Wales Borderers (Royal Radnor and Brecknock Rifles) - Shako Plate c 1861** - *An eight pointed star the topmost point displaced by a Victorian crown. In the centre the Welsh Dragon in white metal, remainder in brass.*



**The Glengarry Badge - 1876-81** - *A wreath of palm surmounted by a Victorian crown. Within this an oval inscribed Royal South Wales Borderer Militia. In the centre the Prince of Wales's plumes, coronet and motto with a bugle with strings below. In gilding metal with voided centre.*

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## Sophie's Coat of Arms

Your Editors are ashamed to admit that they failed to notice the *orle* in the arms of the **Countess of Wessex**, the former **Sophie Rhys-Jones**! The error was pointed out to them by **Nan** and **Pete Taylor** and the blazon in **Staxt No.28** should, of course, have read:- *Quarterly Gules and Azure a lion rampant regardant Argent an orle Gold*. [We thought that heraldic licence would allow us to blazon the arms this way rather than by using the unpleasant sounding *orle Or*.]

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## In the Time of Queen Bick

by Cynthia Lydiard Cannings

### No.7 - The Red Badge of Ulster

In May, 1611, two hundred gentlemen of good birth, possessed of at least £1,000 a year, gave **King James** the money to set in train the settlement of northern Ireland and, in return, were created the first baronets. So delighted was the monarch with this easy way of raising cash that he created more baronets in September, the letters patent stating that they should add the Red Badge of Ulster to their arms to show their new rank. And so they do to this very day and a baronet may be recognised by his bearing on an escutcheon or canton: *Argent a sinister hand erect and appaumé coupé at the wrist Gules.* [See Basic Heraldry p.119]

But what has this to do with Ulster?

Long, long ago **Milesius**, King of Iberia, had two proud sons. The elder would inherit the kingdom at his father's death but **Milesius** feared that the rash and headstrong younger son would never accept his brother's authority and that civil war would ensue. In an attempt to avert this the king, when he felt age upon him, summoned his younger son and proposed to him an adventure. He would give him ships and all else necessary to seek his own future in a distant land; and he need not go alone but might invite any younger sons who, like himself, could not regard a brother's rule with equanimity and would willingly exchange it for the same fortunate chance. It was not long before all arrangements were made and the prince and six companions set sail in seven tall ships, trusting their fortune to wind and tide; and wind and tide brought them to the green shores of **Ulster**, many centuries before **King James**.

The ships had managed to stay in convoy and when a dense mist engulfed them they shouted back and forth, saying that the mist must mean that land was near and determinedly reminding each other of their oath. For **Milesius** had not overlooked the fact that seven wild young men, all authority far behind, might as easily turn to warfare as to settlement. And so, before he let them sail, he had caused them all to swear a dreadful and binding oath that they would never carry their swords against their companions but take for chief him whose hand be the first to touch the soil of their new land and that they would all serve him with faith and truth and loyalty. This they all unfeignedly swore; but each, as he swore, resolved that his hand should be that first. And none more resolutely than the son of **Milesius**.

When the mist began to lift the coast of Ireland appeared, so near they could almost hear the beating of the surf. Orders came thick and fast as each commanded his crew to man the heavy oars and make for the shore. It was a close race. Currents and eddies gave first this, then that ship the advantage. One companion was already letting loose a shout of victory when a sunken rock caught the sweeps of his vessel and he broached to, hopes dashed. Another locked oars with the disabled craft and watched helpless as the rest raced on.

The son of **Milesius**, in their homeland a prince among these men, knew that he must best them now or live with a

shame no other would recognize, perhaps, but which would be there for him all his life long. He *must* be first! Only he was not going to be. Beside himself with fury, frustration and reckless determination, he drew his sword and brought it whistling down upon his own wrist where it lay across the bulwark. Then he dropped his sword and, oblivious of pain or shock, seized his hand as it fell to the deck. He threw it as far as he could up the gently sloping beach upon which even now three of ships were grounding while the captain of the remaining vessel, having dived overboard, was swimming through the shallows. But they were all too late.

*Mine is the first hand to touch land* he cried *and I claim your loyalty!* Then he swooned upon the deck. Pain brought him round. The sailors knew, if the companions did not, how to treat such a wound and a fire, hot enough to melt pitch, was lit on the beach. Boiling pitch cauterizes, cleansing, sealing and protecting, all three. But it is not pleasant. The son of **Milesius** opened his eyes to see his companions gathered round him. He was weak from pain and loss of blood and knew himself helpless. *Well?* he challenged them.

*We don't think it was precisely what your father had in mind* they said. *It certainly wasn't what we had in mind. We don't think we'd be forsworn if we refused to let you get away with it. But we can't match it, any of us, so we've decided to leave it to you. All you have to do is survive.*

*I'll survive* he said. And he did.

And his six companions commemorated the deed (which they never quite decided whetherto attribute to courage or stupidity, whether to admire or decry but which, at all events, had won their loyalty) by adopting the red hand as their badge. It can still be seen in the arms of **Northern Ireland** and of **Eire**; and the **O'Neales** of **Tyrone**, who trace their ancestry in a direct line from **Milesius** through his son, the first **King of Ulster**, bear *Argent a sinister hand erect and appaumé coupé at the wrist Gules* to this day.

(First published in the Norfolk Standard of January 1999 and reprinted with permission.)



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### Subscriptions

Subscriptions for 1999/2000 are now due and are unchanged at :-

**£6.00 for full membership and  
£4.00 for country membership.**

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The Hon. Treasurer or any member of the Committee will be pleased to accept payment in cash or by cheque

## The Story of the Swan Knight

by **Margaret Young**

Once there was a King who had three sons and a daughter whose mother died when they were still children. The King married again but his wife was jealous of the children and told her servants to take them into the forest and kill them. The men felt sorry for the children and merely took them into the forest and left them there - to die. Some years later the Queen discovered that they were still alive and, by this time, the boys had grown into sturdy young men and the girl had married the son of the people who had given them shelter. The Queen, who of course was a witch, cast a spell to turn the lads into swans but one of them was away at the time and when he returned he was so grieved that he wouldn't let his swan brothers go off without him. He built a boat and from then on he always sailed with his brothers with one of them pulling the boat along by a



golden chain round his neck.

One day the Swan Knight was sailing on a river which ran by the grounds of a castle and he saw a lady and her daughter walking along by the river. He alighted from the boat and went over to speak to them and he and the girl fell in love. They married but the Knight told his wife that she must never ask questions about his previous life. She managed to keep her curiosity in check until she had a baby and then she felt that the child had a right to know about its father's lineage. She asked her husband but he turned away sadly and went back to the river where his brothers met him with the boat and they sailed away for ever.

The young man became a rich and powerful nobleman and a number of families in early mediæval times truly believed that they could trace their ancestry back to the Swan Knight, through his son, and consequently the swan was widely used in heraldry. One of the families was the de Bohuns and the swan with its gold chain appeared on their badges while both brother swans appeared on their seals. It appears on the Standard of Henry V whose wife was a de Bohun - her co-heiress married into the Stafford family, Earls and later Dukes of Buckingham and the swan is used extensively in that county's heraldry.



## Things to Come

The next **Staxt** is the **December** number and we shall be delighted to receive any articles, cuttings or comments with a **Christmas** theme. In the **Mercers Guild Part III** are the thoughts of **Ron Edwards** on the place of customs, traditions and ceremonies in this modern age whilst **Margaret Young** has sent us a re-run of the recording of the **Bedford Chapel at Chenies** - arguably "*our finest hour*"! Also we have an erudite, wonderfully well researched and illustrated treatise on "*the ducally gorged and chained swan*" from **C. J. (Sedge) Smith**.



## The Arms of Pollock

We have received a letter from **Tony Jones** enclosing his first class, as always, drawings of the arms of **Sir Frederick Pollock** and of his brother **Field Marshal Sir George Pollock Bt. of the Khyber Pass**.



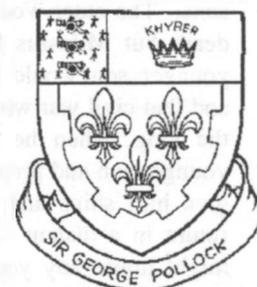
**Sir Frederick** was the man who told **Cartier** what he could do and where he could go! [**Staxt** No.26] He was the son of **David Pollock**, saddler of **Charing Cross**, but a descendant of **David Pollock of Balgray** who was directly descended from **Fulbert**, a French seigneur who settled in

Scotland circa 1100 and founded the **Pollock** family.

Arms:- *Azure three fleurs-de-lys within a border engrailed Or on a canton Ermine a portcullis of the second.*

His younger brother, **Sir George** bore:- *Azure three fleurs-de-lys within a border embattled Or on a chief Or an eastern crown Gules superinscribed KHYBER and on a canton Ermine three cannons fesswise in pale Sable.*

**Sir George** was granted the *bordure embattled* together with the eastern crown and the cannons to mark his distinguished service in the **Afghan War** but interestingly **Tony** points out that the *bordure* was the Scottish method of differencing which he prefers to the English crescents, martlets, etc.



## Clarenceux Kings of Arms

Another spectacular postcard has been produced by **Roland Symons**, Chairman of the **Bath Heraldic Society** and **Honorary Secretary** of the **White Lion Society** - it shows the arms of all the **Clarenceux Kings of Arms** and has a matt finish which most people [including the artist!] think is an improvement on the **Garters** card.

The cards can be obtained at 30p each from :- **The College of Arms** or from **R. G. Symons, 5, Weatherly Avenue, Odd Down, Bath. Tel. 01225 837308**. All profits are for the benefit of the **White Lion Society**.



## Did You Know?

A divorced woman may use her maiden arms charged with a *mascle* which is a voided lozenge.



## Staines and the London Stone

The **London Stone** once marked the western upstream limit of jurisdiction of the **River Thames** by the **Corporation of the City of London** who acquired these rights from **King Richard I** in 1197 and held them for



660 years until the formation of the **Thames Conservancy Board** in 1857. **Staines** was chosen because it was the only important settlement, upstream of **London**, with a bridge. It may also be that the Stone marked the old tidal limit of the **River**

**Thames** then unobstructed by locks and weirs.

The **Stone** itself has been moved many times and a **Brindley** map of 1770 clearly shows the **Stone** at the **Lammas**. As early as 1619 the City ordered *the marke stone at Staynes shalbe removed from the waterside below Staynes Bridge being much decayed and shalbe sett further upon the land and Mr Waterbaylie in his discretion to place it higher.*

In regular visits to the **Stone** successive **Lord Mayors** travelled upriver in an ornate barge accompanied by liveried watermen. On each occasion they would affirm the City's jurisdiction over the river with a ceremony at the **Stone**. The **Lord Mayor** then proposed the toast *God preserve the City of London* and having ordered his name and the date of his visit to be inscribed on the **Stone** the **Lord Mayor distributed wine and money to the attendant populace and re-embarked.**

In order to preserve it from the deprivations of the weather and vandals the **Stone** was moved to a new home in the **Old Town Hall Arts Centre** with a replica at the **Lammas**. However, as the **Old Town Hall** is now up for sale it seems that the **Stone** will soon be looking for a new home!

The **Stone** features prominently in a number of local badges including schools and, of course in the arms of the old **Staines Urban District Council** which are blazoned:- *Gules a fess Barry wavy of four pieces Argent and Azure and thereon a representation of Staines Bridge in Gold; in chief two swans proper facing one another and in base a representation of London Stone also in Gold between two seaxes erect their blade silver and their hilts and pommels Gold. Crest:- on a wreath Argent and Gold a greyhound Gules seated on the battlements of a tower Or.* The motto translates as *We look to the bridges.*

Most of this information has been taken from a booklet published by the **Staines Town Society** and the arms and the blazon from **Scott-Giles' Civic Heraldry of England and Wales.**



## Next Meetings



### *Slater's Tours*

*(the Real Part II)*

**Budapest and Beyond**

by **Stephen Slater**

on **Thursday, 21st October, 1999**



### *Eighteenth Century Contrasts*

**John Warburton and Joseph Edmondson**

by **David Lee**

on **Thursday, 18th November, 1999**



### *Christmas Games and Quizzes*

on **Thursday, 16th December, 1999**

*Can you suggest, or better still, organise and run a game or a Quiz?*



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

## The Chiltern Heraldry Group



### *What a Canton Can Tell*

by **John Titterton.**

on **Saturday, 25th September, 1999**  
in the **Fulmer Village Hall.**



### *A topic to be announced*

by **Anne and Peter Esslemont**

on **Saturday, 23rd October, 1999**  
in the **White Waltham Parish Hall.**



### *Slater's Travels No.1*

by **Stephen Slater**

on **Saturday, 27th November, 1999**  
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.*