

## THE SOMERSET HERALDRY SOCIETY

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### THE SOMERSET DRAGON

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Contributions welcome

Objects

The aims of the society are to promote and encourage the study of heraldry especially in the historic county of Somerset.

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday 27th January	Committee Meeting
Saturday 14th February	AGM
Wednesday 18th March	Meeting: Ann Ballard - 'Heraldry and other clues - a Genealogist's journey'

Meetings take place at Monteclefe Cottage, Somerton. 12.30 pm for 1.00 pm lunch, followed by 2.00 pm talk. Finish by 3.30 pm.

## THE SOMERSET DRAGON

### THE JOURNAL OF THE SOMERSET HERALDRY SOCIETY

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### Editorial

This issue features another article in our *Heraldry to Write Home About* series. The subject is *Border Heraldry* and the location of the armorials in question is Bedrule Church in Roxburghshire. If any other readers have come across items of heraldic interest on their travels then how about submitting an article on your finds to *The Somerset Dragon*? We would love to hear from you. Our photograph below shows the nave of the church with six of the fifteen shields that decorate the interior.

The illustration of all fifteen shields that appears on page 3 is taken from the NAD-FAS report on the church and is published by kind permission of the minister.



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## THE BORDER ARMS AT BEDRULE CHURCH

By Stephen Tudsbury-Turner



Bedrule Church is perched high on a promontory overlooking Rule Water, a tributary of the River Teviot, in Roxburghshire. Bedrule Castle, once the home of the Turnbull family was located nearby but destroyed by the English in 1545.

Fatlips Castle, another Turnbull stronghold, is still situated on Minto crags on the opposite side of the Teviot. The whole area is redolent of the violent history of late medieval times and has been immortalised by Sir Walter Scott, who celebrated the Turnbells in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*.

*On Minto's crags the moonbeams glint  
Where Barnhill hewed his bed of flint,  
Who flung his outlawed limbs to rest  
Where falcons hang their giddy nest.*

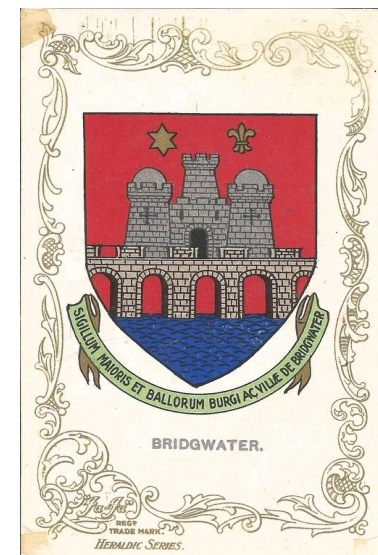
The shields that decorate the interior of the church contain the armorial bearings of some of the holders of the barony of Bedrule. The earliest is the shield of Sir John Cumyn (p) the holder in the late thirteenth century, while the latest is that of Usher of Norton and Wells (i), commemorating Sir Robert Usher, who lived at nearby Wells House, now sadly demolished. Image (a) from the display opposite commemorates William Turnbull Bishop of Glasgow, and shields that are of particular interest include (b) Douglas (o) the first Earl of Douglas, who adds a man's heart gules to the traditional Douglas shield and (n) the mullet argent on a sable field of the Earl of Traquair.

The arms of William Elliot of Wells (g), holder of the barony in the early eighteenth century, provide an excellent example of the use of the bordure in Scottish heraldry, to denote a cadet branch of the family. General Lord Heathfield (j), a prominent member of the Elliot family, has no bordure but rather a chief commemorating the events that gave him his title. Images (d) and (l) give us two variations of the Rutherford arms. Image (d) is Rutherford of that Ilk and (l) is Dr Thomas Rutherford who differences the arms by the addition of a crescent gules in base.

## THE HERALDRY OF EDWARDIAN SOMERSET

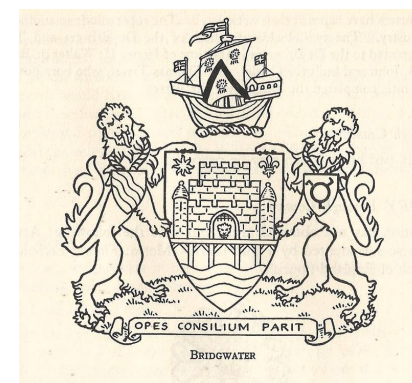
The arms granted to the Borough Council of Bridgwater in 1952 were blazoned *Gules, in base water barry wavy proper and rising therefrom the piers of a bridge of gold, and thereon a silver castle with the portcullis raised and in the portway a gold leopard's face; in chief a star of eight rays and a fleur-de-lis, both or* (Fig. 2).

Our main illustration (Fig. 1), which as usual comes from an Edwardian postcard, clearly shows that similar arms were in use half a century earlier. The most obvious alteration is that the 1952 grant includes a crest and supporters, both lacking on this card, but there are also significant differences when it comes to the charges on the shield.

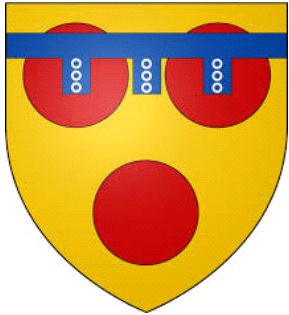


Above: Fig. 1  
Below: Fig. 2

The Edwardian water is simply azure and not barry wavy, there is no leopard's face in the portway, nor is there a raised portcullis—in 1952 introduced 'as an indication of the town's importance as a tourist centre'. (C. W. Scott-Giles, *Civic Heraldry*, 1953). Moreover the star, like the fleur-de-lys introduced as it was a royal emblem, has six rays rather than eight. A final point to note is that the 1952 bridge appears to be wooden whereas the Edwardian structure is certainly stone.



**It has been suggested that meetings could take place on a weekday rather than on a Saturday. If you have any views on the subject the committee would be delighted to hear them**



Above: Fig. 8  
Below: Fig. 9



The main Powderham branch bore *Gules three torteaux on a label azure nine annulets* (Fig. 8), and this variation was initially retained by the Courtenays of Powderham when they established their right to the Earldom of Devon in 1831. The arms can be seen on the splendid heraldic fireplace in the main hall at Powderham Castle (Fig. 9) and were credited to both the 11<sup>th</sup> earl, who created the fireplace, and the 10<sup>th</sup>, in whose honour it was made.

The present Earl of Devon has dispensed with the label altogether and bears the undifferenced *gules three torteaux*.

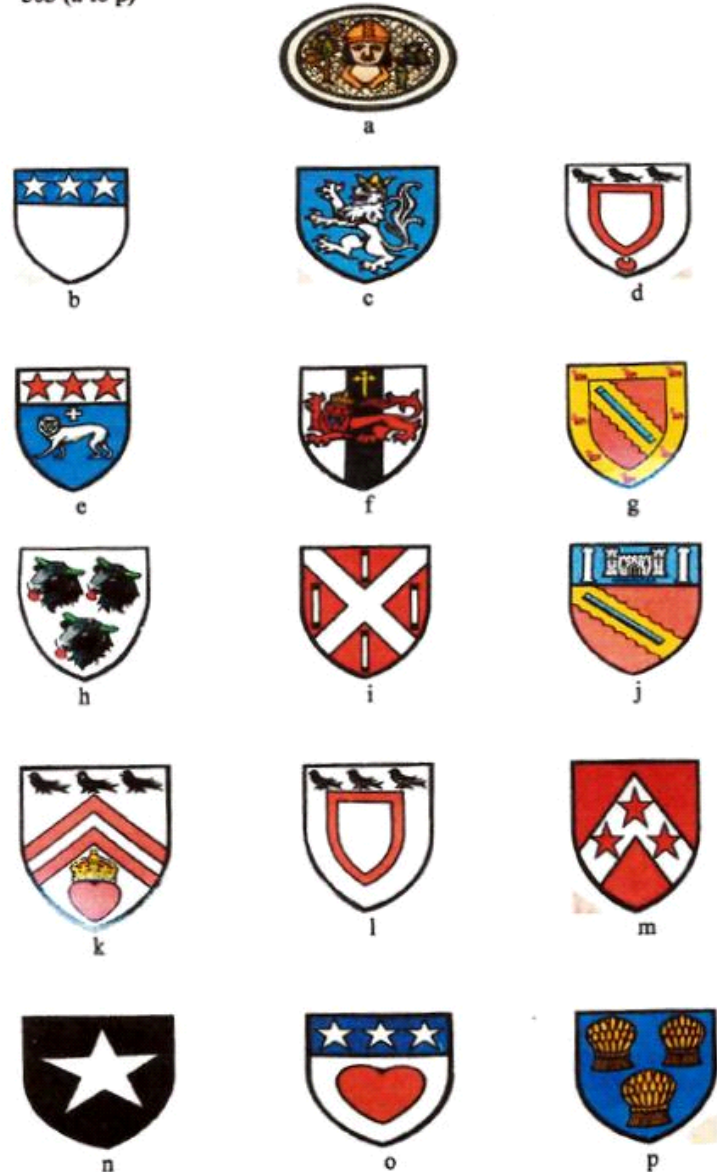
On the other hand the label can be seen on the arms of cadet branches of the family, namely the Courtenays of Powderham and the Courtenays of Molland. The Courtenays of Powderham were descended from Sir Peter Courtenay, a younger son of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Devon, and those of Molland were an off-shoot of that branch.

The first Courtenay to have been seated at Molland was Sir Philip Courtenay of Molland, Sheriff of Devon in 1470. He was the second son of Sir Philip Courtenay of Powderham, great-grandson of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Devon, by his wife Elizabeth Hungerford. and he was given the manor of Molland as his marriage portion. He established there his own branch of the family, which died out in 1732. These Molland Courtenays bore *Gules three torteaux on a label azure nine plates*, as can be seen on arms displayed in West Molland Church on the edge of Exmoor.

# RUBERSLAW PARISH CHURCH BEDRULE

## PAINTINGS ETC.

503 (a to p)

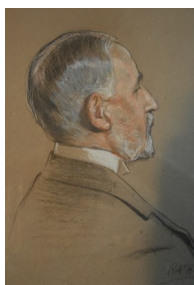




Particular pride of place should go to the Turnbull arms: *argent three bulls' heads erased sable langued gules horned vert*. As F. R. Banks wrote in 1951, 'they were a lawless clan who demanded tribute from all this part of the borders until crushed by James IV'. To quote another commentator, 'he hunted them until he compelled two hundred to meet him with halters around their necks. Then he hanged some of them to encourage the others to be good.'



The inspiration behind the heraldic decoration of the church was Thomas Greenshields-Leadbetter (1859-1931), a prominent Edinburgh architect, who was also a keen heraldist and a member of the King's Bodyguard for Scotland (Royal Company of Archers). He had married the sister of Sir Robert Usher of Wells House and between the years 1912 and 1914 built himself a substantial mansion in the vicinity of both the church and his brother-in-law's home. In 1902 by the authority of Lyon King of Arms, he had assumed the additional surname of Greenshields, a family from whom he was descended, and his own arms were *or a chevron gules between two inescutcheons vert in chief and in base a thistle proper*. Our illustrations below show Thomas Greenshields-Leadbetter himself and his crest together with that of the Greenshields family. The first, *issuing out of a mural coronet gules a demi-unicorn ermine, armed, crined and unguled or* is for Leadbetter and the second, *a greyhound's head ermine erased gules, collared and ringed vert* is for Greenshields. The crests flank his memorial tablet in the north transept.



The painting of the border shields was undertaken by Thomas Hope, Lord Lyon's heraldic painter from Edinburgh. The cost was probably born by Sir Robert Usher, who is credited in the church records as having enlarged and beautified the church in 1914, the year in which the work was completed.

The arms of Courtenay, *Gules three torteaux*, and the arms of Redvers, *Or a lion rampant azure*, are seen here as figs. 1 and 2. Judging by the evidence on the tomb of the second Earl of Devon in Exeter Cathedral, the arms born by his father were *Quarterly of four, 1 and 4, Courtenay with a label of three points azure, 2 and 3 Redvers, impaling St John*. (Fig. 3) The use of the label was presumably to establish the fact that he considered himself heir to the Courtenay lands in France for, as Alex Maxwell Findlater points out, 'This was often the original use of the label, heir rather than eldest son.' The second earl himself used the same arms impaling Bohun. (Fig. 4)



Above: Figs 3 & 4  
Opposite Figs 5 & 6

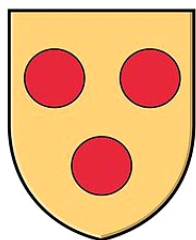
By the early sixteenth century it would appear that the Courtenay earls had given up its use. The heraldic evidence for this is provided by the Garter Stall Plate of the 1<sup>st</sup> earl of the 1485 creation (Fig 5) and by the arms of the 1st earl of the 1511 creation on the Speke Chantry in Exeter Cathedral (Fig. 6).



The arms of his son, advanced to the Marquessate of Exeter, as they appear on heraldic stained glass from Downe Ampney House in Gloucestershire and currently in the Philadelphia Museum of Art (Fig. 7), also fail to display the label.



Fig. 7



## NOTES & QUERIES

### THE ARMS OF THE EARLS OF DEVON

Fig. 1



Fig. 2

As was mentioned in our last issue, the Earldom of Devon was created on five, arguably six, occasions, and the arms born by the earls themselves also went through various changes.

The founder of the family in England was Renaud de Courtenay, anglicised to Reginald, a French nobleman of the House of Courtenay who came over to England in 1152. He fought in the Second Crusade with King Louis VII but he made the mistake of quarrelling with the king. The reason for the falling-out was probably the fact that he was an adherent of Louis' wife, Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine, and when their marriage was annulled in 1152, Reginald was involved in the ex-queen's betrothal to the future King Henry II of England.

Not only did Louis seize Reginald's French possessions but he also married off Renaud's daughter Elizabeth to his own youngest brother Peter, who thenceforth became known as Peter de Courtenay. Interestingly enough, Peter and Elizabeth are both buried in Exeter Cathedral, rather suggesting that Reginald and his son-in-law were by no means sworn enemies.

Reginald's first wife and Elizabeth's mother was heiress to the feudal barony of Okehampton and so he was a figure of significance in the West Country from the moment he arrived in England. He was created Lord of Sutton in 1161 and eleven years later accompanied King Henry on his Irish expedition.

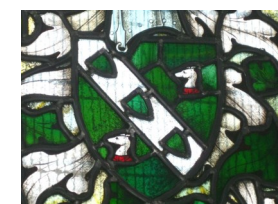
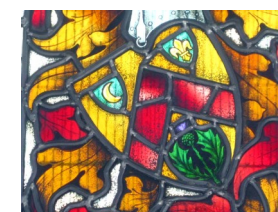
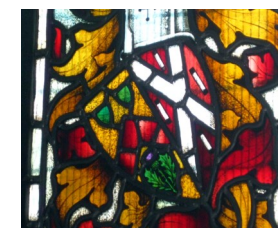
Reginald, who died in 1194, also had a son Robert, the great-grandfather of Hugh de Courtenay 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Devon. The Redvers earls had died out in 1293, and in 1335 Hugh Courtenay, their descendant through the female line, successfully claimed to be 9<sup>th</sup> Earl of Devon of that first creation, although purists have always considered that he was in fact the first earl of a new creation.



Beneath these are three shields of arms. The one on the left contains the arms of Greenshields-Leadbetter impaling those of Usher. The shield is blazoned or a chevron gules between two escutcheons vert in chief and in base a thistle proper (Greenshields-Leadbetter) impaling gules a saltire between four batons argent garnished sable (Usher). That in the centre bears the shield of Major Alan Greenshields-Leadbetter, which are differenced by the addition of a crescent to indicate service in the Middle East and a fleur-de-lys to indicate service in France. The shield on the right contains the arms of the Greenshields family. It was a fitting tribute to a brave soldier.

My thanks go to Alan Bailey, who provided the portrait of his grandfather, which appears opposite.

That same year saw the outbreak of the First World War and three years later Thomas Greenshields-Leadbetter's son Alan, a major in the Royal Artillery was killed near Ypres aged 20. His father commemorated him with a magnificent stained glass window in the south transept. It contains the badge of Ardvreck School, the arms of Rugby School and those of the Royal Military College at Woolwich together with the badge of the Royal Artillery.





This year's annual dinner was held at The Old Threshing Mill, Pylle, and was attended by thirteen members. For the benefit of those of a superstitious bent, the presence of the society's footman, Schroeder, brought the numbers up to fourteen, so all was well.

A feature of the dinner was the heraldic meringue, which took as its theme Tony Ryan's talk entitled *Burgundy: More than a Vintage*. The speaker lived to fight another day. The meringue, not surprisingly, did not.



Tony spoke of Burgundy in the days when it was an independent state wedged between the Holy Roman Empire to the east and the kingdom of France to the west. Our fourth picture is of one of the most famous of its dukes,

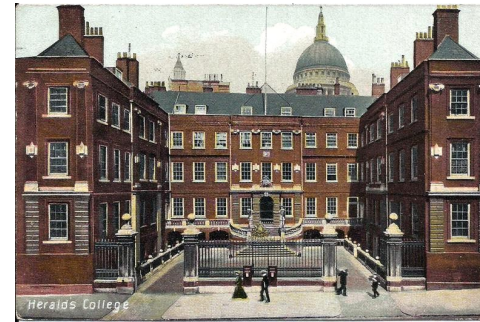
Charles the Bold (1467-77), whose early death at Nancy, at the hands of the Swiss fighting for the Duke of Lorraine, was of great consequence in European history: The Burgundian domains were divided, but as neither side was satisfied with the results, the disintegration of the Burgundian state, together with the question of the boundary between the French and German spheres of political influence, was a factor in most major wars in Western Europe for the following two centuries and beyond. Our thanks go to Tony for such a stimulating and thought-provoking presentation.



## ANNUAL DINNER 28TH OCTOBER



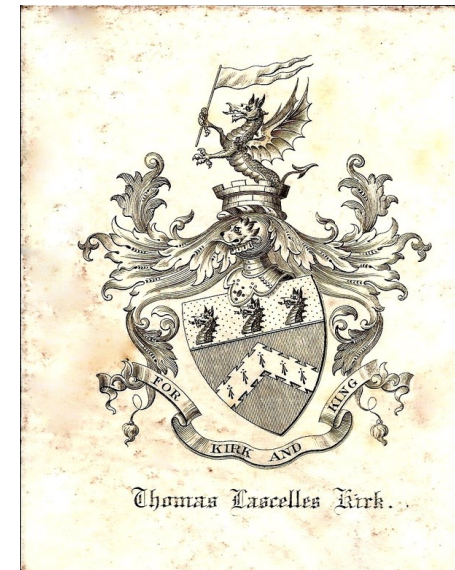
## A POSTCARD FROM THE PAST



This rather charming postcard showing the College of Arms was posted in London on the 16th January 1925. The writer was A.T. Butler, Windsor Herald and the recipient was a C.A.H. Franklin Esq., living in Switzerland.

'Many thanks for note as to Craufurd', wrote Butler. Exactly what the note was all about we may never know, but one must hope that C. A. H. Franklin, whoever he was, deserved the designation 'Esquire'! (See p.7) PS. Further research has shown that Franklin wrote a book *Bearing of Coat Armour by Ladies*, published in 1923. Clearly a heraldist so obviously OK!!

## EX LIBRIS



This issue's Ex Libris is another one for the Dracologists. Thomas Lascelles Kirk's arms are blazoned *Gules a chevron dovetailed ermine on a chief or three dragons' heads erased of the first*. The crest is *Upon a wreath of the colours, out of the battlements of a tower, a demi-dragon or charged on the shoulder with a trefoil slipped gules, holding in the claws a flag-staff in bend sinister, therefrom flowing a pennon also or*. The arms are not recorded in Burke, but are in Fox-Davis's *Armorial Families*, and probably date from c.1890.

The churchwardens are gallantly trying to raise money to pay for the restoration of the hatchments, two of which were last seen in a distressed state on the floor of the organ loft! This, however, would be of interest to the group as one seldom has the chance of seeing the back of a hatchment. Another one has been successfully restored and rehung.

**Lunch:** Pub in Tichborne. The village lies some half an hour to the west of Froyle, close to Alresford. It did a mean bangers and mash when visited early this autumn!



**Afternoon:** St. Andrew's, Tichborne. The village is the home of the Tichborne family. In the 19th century there was a disputed claim to the Baronetcy (The Tichborne Claimant), which was rejected after a long, expensive and contested case - the claimant was consequently charged with perjury and sentenced to 14 years imprisonment. The church is beautifully situated lying on the edge of open country.

For us undoubtedly the main interest will be the Tichborne Aisle - one of only three Roman Catholic chapels in a Church of England building. There are monuments to the Tichborne family from C17 onwards, including a small one set on the wall with a pre-prepared impaled coat above to Richard, d. 1619, aet. 18 months, formally clad and lying on his side. The sinister side of the shield remains blank. There is also a fine tomb of 1621, and a set of five Tichborne hatchments. The odd other parishioner gets a look-in in the main church by way of a ledge stone. Not to be overlooked is the Tichborne armorial bench end on one of the Jacobean box pews.



## DO WE NEED ESQUIRES?

This was the question posed by Ron Gadd, our speaker at the meeting on Saturday 22nd November at Montecleve Cottage. Ron pointed out that originally 'an esquire was one who attended a Knight, particularly at tournaments to assist the knight with his equipment and horses. As such the esquire had no status, but it was accepted that in due course he himself would become a knight.'

Over the course of centuries the term seems to have meant different things to different people and today there seems to be no hard and fast rule as to whether or not one places 'Esq.', after the name on the envelope on the rare occasions that one actually writes a letter rather than sending an email.

However, as our speaker made clear, 'it is certainly the case that becoming an esquire by custom and usage was a recognised method of becoming an esquire, usually by virtue of being named esquire in a warrant or grant appointing them to a particular office.' It is certain, Ron concluded, that a number of others have also claimed the right, some as a birthright, some by custom and some by their position in the table of precedence. These, he suggested, are purely courtesy and not lawful titles, even though accepted by long usage.

Of the ten members (and guests) present it appeared that only one (the speaker himself) and possibly the chairman (although the writer suspected that she was disbarred by virtue of her sex) was entitled to consider themselves a genuine esquire.

All in all a stimulating and absorbing meeting, which was greatly enjoyed by all present

### HERALDRY TO WRITE HOME ABOUT.

It is hoped that this regular feature in the journal will encourage members to submit articles on heraldic items they have seen absolutely anywhere. Do please give the editor a ring or send an email if you have any ideas for an article or short notice - or even a picture with an appropriate caption.



## Proposed Day Visits for 2015 by Gale Glynn

### VISIT I 20 or 21 May OR 3 or 4 June

Another foray is being considered to the beautiful and under-visited area of West Somerset. The area lies between Exmoor and the Quantock hills and the landscape is stunning.

#### **West Somerset Coast: St. Decuman's, Watchet, Cleeve Abbey, and Orchard Wyndham.**

This may be a re-visit for some members of the society. However, evidence of our Somerset Wyndhams are to be found in many parts of England, notably Felbrigg, co. Norfolk, but also throughout Wiltshire with a fine set of ledger stones in the north transept of Salisbury Cathedral. There is much of interest with which to refresh the memory.



St Decuman Church, Watchet. Exterior and Interior Views



**Morning:** A fascinating church, dedicated to St. Decuman, a Celtic saint who reputedly arrived on a raft with a cow. It is set on the south west side of the little Bristol Channel port of Watchet and has a very good wagon roof. The church with a C13 chancel, the remainder being built C15, has the Wyndham chapel. In it is series of memorials to the Wyndham family who originally lived at what is now called Kentisford Farm, a farmstead at the bottom of the hill which still retains a C16 or early C17 porch and other evidence of its early origins in a side wing. Memorials include that to Nicholas Wyndham and his wife Florence née Wadham, who was reputedly buried alive, as well as two funeral helms one at least with the Wyndham crest above. There are other armorial Wyndham memorials, in stone and a carved wooden version in a nice baroque design. There are mediaeval armorial tiles on the chancel floor, similar to those we will see at lunchtime in Cleeve Abbey, and C19 armorial glass in the west window.

**Lunch:** A bring your own/sharing picnic lunch along the lines of SHS meetings, at Cleeve Abbey, where there are mediaeval tiles (similar to those in Salisbury Chapter House and Clarendon Palace as well as those we will have seen in St. Decuman's), including the arms of England, of Richard Plantagenet and his wife (a de Clare), and what is thought to be one of the finest Cistercian Cloisters in England. There is shelter in the Education room for lunch should the weather be inclement.

**Afternoon:** Orchard Wyndham. A private guided visit, probably with tea. The construction and history of the house is complicated. Pevsner suggests the Hall range dates from c. 1500, although most is C17 and C18. The house has very little heraldic content, but with a member of the Wyndham family living there, there is much of interest in the contents etc. which ties in with our morning visit and sets in context the style of holdings for many successful armigerous families.



Above: The Gatehouse at Cleeve Abbey. Below: Orchard Wyndham, the west front



### VISIT II 17 OR 19 September

#### **East Hampshire. Froyle and Titchborne**



St Mary's Church, Froyle.  
Above - Exterior.  
Below - Interior with hatchments



These are two small village parish churches, lying close to the north western edge of South Downs National Park, with considerable interest for us. Access is good, in that they are not far from major roads, but the nearest railways stations, Alton or Winchester, do not readily feed into West Country routes.

**Morning:** The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Froyle is a lovely mediaeval country church east of Alton. It has a set of nine hatchments relating to past parishioners (not all from one family), as well as some good unworn ledger stones in the chancel. The west window has a very interesting group of mediaeval Royal coats of arms relating to Edward I.