

# THE SOMERSET DRAGON

## THE JOURNAL OF THE SOMERSET HERALDRY SOCIETY

No. 48  
April 2021



We thought of organising a zoom AGM but decided against it for technical reasons. Perhaps a 'state of the society' note will appear in No. 49. Who knows! As for our picture below, see page 14.

Reminder. Subs for 2021 would be gratefully received by our treasurer- address on page 20. £10 single and £15 double.



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**VARIATIONS ON A THEME  
THE ARMORIAL BEARINGS OF RICHARD NEVILL,  
EARL OF WARWICK  
- By Stephen Tudsbury-Turner**



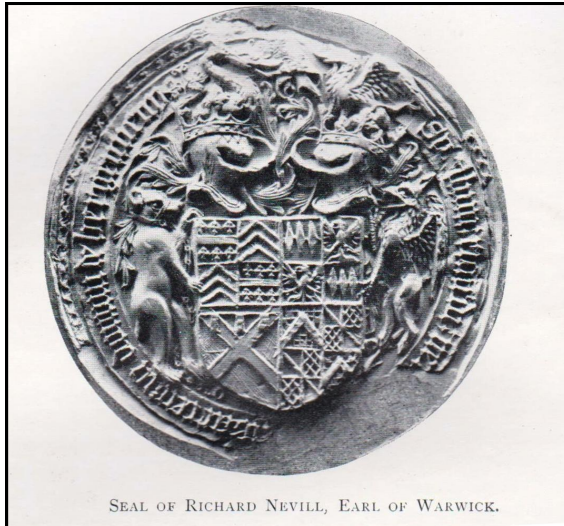
In January 1903 J. Horace Round wrote an article entitled *The Arms of the Kingmaker* for issue Number IV of *The Ancestor*, Oswald Barron's quarterly review of family history, heraldry and antiquities. It dealt with the armorial bearings of Richard Nevill Earl of Warwick, the King-Maker; the last of the barons as Lytton put it, who was killed at the Battle of Barnet in 1471. Warwick was the eldest son of Richard Nevill, Earl of Salisbury, himself the son of Ralph Nevill, Earl of Westmorland and his second wife, Joan Beaufort, daughter of John of Gaunt, the second son of King Edward III

Salisbury had gained his earldom through his marriage to Alice Montagu, daughter and heiress of Thomas Montagu, Earl of Salisbury, who was himself the grandson of the Monthermer heiress.

The King-Maker's wife was Ann Beauchamp, daughter of Richard Beauchamp Earl of Warwick, another heiress. Anne's mother was a Despenser and co-heiress of the Clares, Earls of Gloucester. Her father himself traditionally quartered his Beauchamp arms with those of Newburgh, the family from whom his earldom derived.

From his father then, the King-Maker inherited the arms of Nevill, suitably differenced with a label *gobony argent and azure*, tinctures derived from the arms of Beaufort. The Earl of Westmorland of course represented the senior branch of the family and bore the undifferenced Nevill arms. Through his mother came the all-important arms of Montagu and Monthermer. From his wife came the arms of Beauchamp, Newburgh, Despenser and Clare, not to mention the earldom of Warwick, which he acquired in 1449 on his marriage and ten years after the death of his father-in-law. He gained his own father's earldom of Salisbury on the latter's death at the Battle of Wakefield in 1460.

The arms referred to in Round's article were displayed on a seal dating from 1465 and discovered by him in a loft over the stables of Birch Hall, a house owned by a relative of his in Essex. The obverse side of the seal (opposite) contains an image of Warwick in equestrian mode with a shield bearing the arms of Nevill but the horse-trappers are decorated with the arms of Montagu and Monthermer, and on this occasion Monthermer occupies the first and fourth quarters while Montagu has the second and third. The reverse (overleaf) displays the shield bearing the earl's arms.

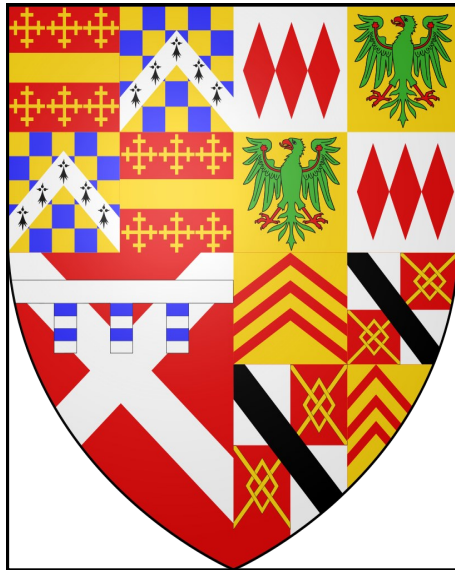


'The special interest of this fine shield,' wrote Round, 'consists in its combination, in marshalling, crests, and supporters, of the King-Maker's paternal earldom of Salisbury with his wife's earldom of Warwick. The muzzled bear of Warwick forms the dexter supporter, the griffin of Salisbury the sinister . . . so also with the crests . . . on the dexter side the swan's head, the crest of the Earl of Warwick, on the sinister the sitting griffin of the Earl of Salisbury.'

Warwick's purpose in displaying his arms was presumably to illustrate the number of lordships in his hands and his connection with these seven great families in Plantaganet England. The particular arrangement of arms on the seal is unusual as the first and fourth quarters, usually reserved for the male house, are here occupied by the female. Thus, the first quarter displays the arms of Beauchamp quartering Clare, the second Monthermer quartering Montagu, the third Nevill with a label for difference, and the fourth Newburgh quartering Despenser.

Interestingly enough, and what jars to modern eyes, is the way in which in the female quarters (1 and 4) Beauchamp is linked to Clare and Newburgh is attached to Despenser. Logically of course Beauchamp and Newburgh belong together as do Clare and Despenser.

A more satisfactory arrangement could once be seen in a window of the Old Hall, Wrotesley, home of Sir Walter Wrotesley, one of the King-Maker's staunchest supporters. (right) Here Beauchamp and Newburgh are quartered in the first grand quarter while Clare and Despenser are united in the fourth.



#### BLAZONS

Nevill

*Gules a saltire argent with a label gobony argent and azure for difference*

Montagu

*Argent three fusils in fess gules*

Monthermer

*Or an eagle displayed vert*

Beauchamp

*Gules a fess between six cross crosslets or*

Newburgh

*Chequy or and azure a chevron ermine*

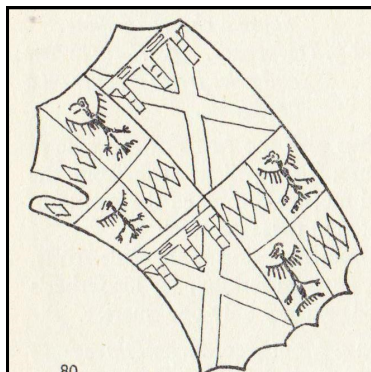
Despenser

*Quarterly argent and gules fretty or over all a bend sable*

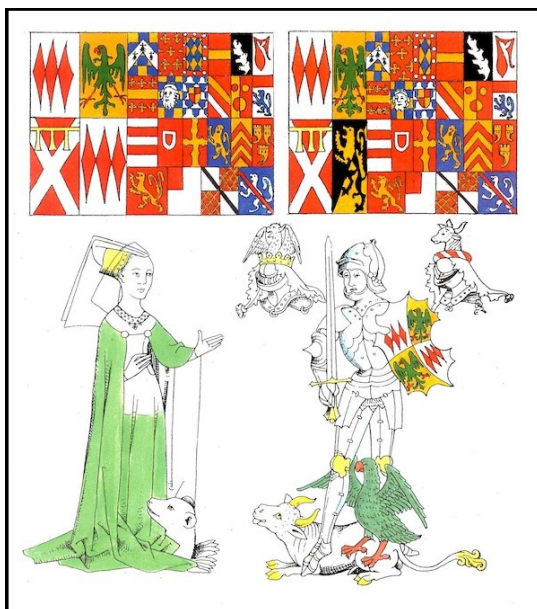
Clare

*Or three chevrons gules*

The earls' Garter stall plate (right) which would not contain a wife's arms anyway in accordance with Garter rules, displays the usual arrangement. In the first and fourth of the grand quarters Montagu occupies the first and fourth and Monthermer the second and third quarters. Nevill suitably differentiated occupies the second and third of the grand quarters.



This happens again on the famous depiction of the King-Maker in the Rous Roll, (below) which dates from the reign of King Richard III.



Warwick carries a shield displaying Montagu and Monthermer while above the earl and his wife banners show Montagu and Monthermer impaling what Round described as 'a welter of coats' several mythical showing 'a lamentable falling off from the armory of the seals'

Round was of the opinion that his seal was unique but in this he was wrong and in the next issue of *The Ancestor* he was able to inform his readers that a similar seal existed in Burford whilst one with significant differences was to be found in Cardiff, once the centre of the earls Welsh possessions. As a result of this Welsh connection, the shield on the reverse of the Cardiff seal (below) , which dates from 1450-2, displayed the quartered arms of Clare and Despenser in the first grand quarter, with Clare, the original source of the Welsh territories, in the place of honour. It was a clear indication of the link between heraldry and land holding.

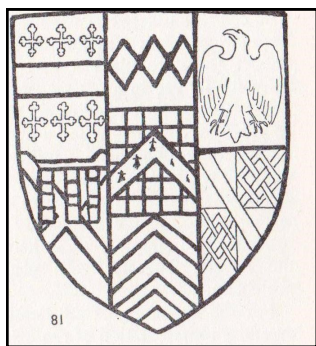




Our final example of the arms of the King-Maker is to be found in the hall of John Halle's house in Salisbury. John Halle was a wealthy merchant who served both as mayor of Salisbury and as its member of parliament.

He had his differences with King Edward IV and was a supporter of the Earl of Warwick, whose cause he espoused when the earl attempted to restore the Lancastrian King Henry VI.

Following the failure of the rebellion and the King-Maker's death at the Battle of Barnet in 1471, Halle very wisely kept a low profile and little more is heard of him until his death in 1479. He built his house in 1470 and the stained glass that decorated its hall included various shields of arms, amongst them those of the King-Maker. (below)



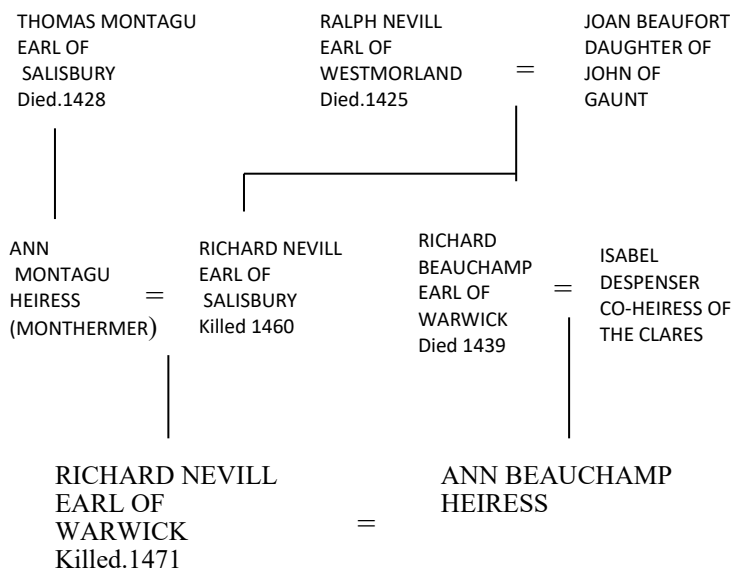
The glass in question is nine inches by seven and a half and it contains all seven of the coats that we have been discussing. What is most curious is the manner in which they are displayed, for they are arranged not horizontally with four coats above three but in three columns.

The first contains the arms of Beauchamp above Nevill, the second has Montagu, Newburgh and Clare, and the third Monthermer above Despenser. It was a method 'highly original if hardly satisfactory' as one commentator put it, particularly as there seems to be no rhyme or reason as to the order in which the arms have been presented.



It would be fair to say that our seven examples illustrate the transition of heraldry as a practical means of identification in battle, as on the obverse side of our seals, to heraldry as an attempt to record family connections and land holdings. This last was done reasonably accurately on the Birch Hall and Cardiff seals as well as on the Wrotesley glass, but less so on the Rous Roll and the Halle glass. The Garter stall plate unlike the last two deals with the man and not his connections and merely underlines the fact that the Montagu, Monthermer connection was more important to him than the Nevill.

## THE DESCENT OF RICHARD NEVILL EARL OF WARWICK



## MORE THOUGHTS ON THE STAFFORD TOMB

It has been pointed out that when it comes to shields that are not on the tomb (see final paragraph in the article in No. 47) there are two more ladies who need to be mentioned. Joan Stafford, the first Earl of Stafford's younger daughter by his first wife, married Sir Nicholas Beke, one of her father's retainers, who had served with him in the Crecy campaign and at the siege of Calais. He died in 1369 but had no son to succeed him - thus no shield.



1. Wallace 2. Dudley 3. Smith 4. Lea 5. Ward 6. Sutton

Joan's half-sister Katherine, the earl's youngest daughter by his second wife, married Sir John Sutton second Baron Sutton in 1357 and although she died in 1361 she had presented him with a son and in doing so secured the succession. Katherine's great-grandson succeeded his father in 1406 at the age of six. He was consequently available to be considered for an appearance on the bishop's tomb both in 1408 or thereabouts when the monument was being planned and in 1419 when the bishop died. His absence remains a mystery but we will commemorate him by the magnificent achievement he bore as a Knight of the Garter (1459) and first Baron Dudley (1440). He enjoyed a successful career which included carrying the standard at the funeral of King Henry V, fighting for King Henry VI at the first Battle of St Albans in 1455 but turning Yorkist in time to act as Joint Chamberlain to Queen Elizabeth Wydville.

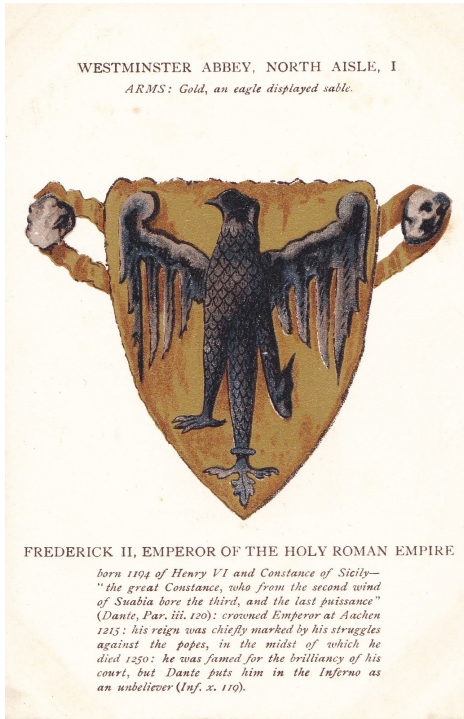
### **CATHIE CONSTANT**

Our society has suffered another loss with the death of Cathie Constant, one of our staunchest members. Cathie was a lovely lady whose knowledge of heraldry put many of us to shame. She was always keen to come on our outings, invariably carrying a capacious handbag, and was a sparkling presence at our annual dinners and lunches. It was a pleasure and a privilege to have known her and she will be sadly missed.

### **RON GADD**

We have just this moment learnt of the death of Ron Gadd, the first chairman of our society. Our sympathy goes out to his partner, Sue. An appreciation of Ron will appear in our August issue.

## ANCIENT SHIELDS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY



We now move to the north side of the nave for this issue's pictures of the thirteenth century sculptured and painted shields that adorn the spandrels of the wall arcade.

These Edwardian postcards have been coloured, but as will be seen the stonework has suffered over the years and in many cases the colours have disappeared.

The first is blazoned *Or an eagle displayed sable* for the Emperor Frederick II (1194-1250), who became brother-in-law to King Henry III when he married as his third wife Isabella, the king's sister, in 1235.

No colours remain on the shield and the eagle's head is damaged, although enough remains to show that there was only the one head. The double headed eagle was later to become the norm for the imperial eagle. The left claw has broken away. Of the heads supporting the guige (shield-strap), one is damaged and the other missing.

The arms on shield number two are blazoned *Azure semee-de-llys or* and are for King Louis IX of France (1214-70), who succeeded to the throne in 1226. He married Margaret of Provence, whose sister Eleanor married King Henry. Louis took part on the first crusade, died on the second and was canonised in 1297. Once again the shield has lost its colours but is otherwise in excellent condition, although one of the heads that supported the guige is missing.



## THE ARMORIAL BEARINGS OF HEBER MARDON 1840-1925



This rather splendid armorial turned up about ten years ago in an antique shop in Frome. The blazon reads *Gules on a bend cotised argent between two unicorns' heads erased of the second a pellet between two Cornish choughs proper. The crest is On a wreath of the colours issuant out of a wreath of roses gules , leaved proper, a unicorn's head as in the arms, charged with a pellet.*

Heber Mardon was a former head of the well-known firm of Mardon, Son & Hall. He was born on the 28th April, 1840 and was the son of Mr James Mardon who, in 1846, moved to Bristol to join his cousin, Mr John Harris, in the printing trade at 39 Broad Street. Heber and his brother John were trained in the business, which developed considerably in the course of years, absorbing others and demanding ever larger premises.

In 1860, together with his father he founded the firm of Mardon & Son. That same year he married a daughter of Mr Joseph Hall, of Clifton, whose son George became a partner in the printing business. In 1863, the name then becoming Mardon, Son & Hall. The firm became known far and wide for cardboard box making and artistic colour printing, including cigarette picture cards.

In 1881 the family was living at Southfield House, Westbury on Trym, Bristol with three servants, a cook, housemaid and nurse. Heber was also a Justice of the Peace for the County of Somerset.

James Mardon died in 1896, having retired many years earlier, leaving Heber Mardon sole proprietor. Extensive factories at Temple Gate were erected in the 1880s and in 1897 a limited company was formed with Heber Mardon as chairman. The firm catered largely for Messrs W.D. and H.O. Wills and other leading tobacco manufacturers, and became associated with the Imperial Tobacco Company on its formation.

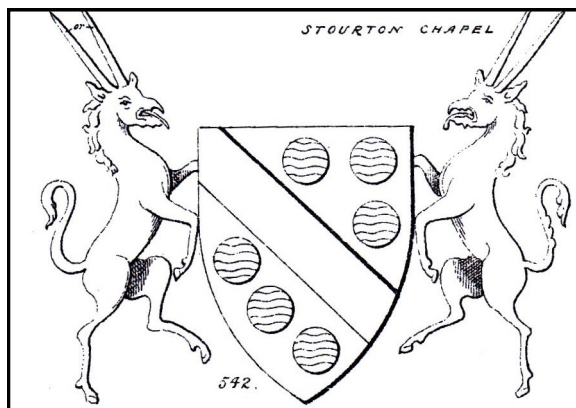
The family seat was Ashwick, Dulverton on Exmoor, but after retirement Heber Mardon moved to Teignmouth in Devon, where he donated land to Teignmouth Golf Club. A collector of Napoleana, he donated his collection to the Devon County Library in 1924.. Heber Mardon died in 1925



**Murder Most Foul**  
**(With a bit of heraldry thrown in!).**  
**By Stephen Slater**

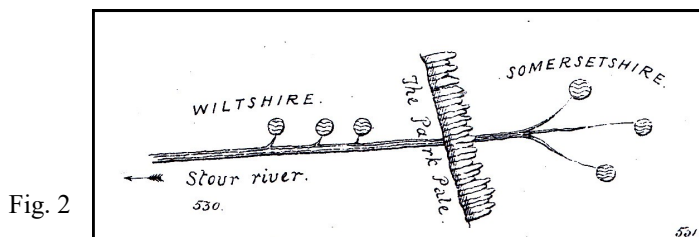
On 12th January 1557 something very nasty was indeed behind the woodpile, or rather under the woodpile in the dungeon of the great mansion at Stourton on the Somerset/Wiltshire border, between Mere and Wincanton.

Stourton House was the ancient abode of one of the West Country's oldest and most noble families- the Stourtons of Stourton, so long had they been seated there (possibly from before the Conquest), they had taken their surname from the estate. Furthermore, the head of the family held one of England's most ancient titles, Baron Stourton (later they also inherited the baronies of Mowbray and Segrave). Not long before the events which I am about to tell, Henry VIII had brought England into the Protestant fold, yet the Stourtons stayed faithful to the old religion, something Charles, 8th Baron Stourton hoped would help him to get away with murder- after all, was not the new monarch, Henry's daughter, Mary I a staunch Catholic too?

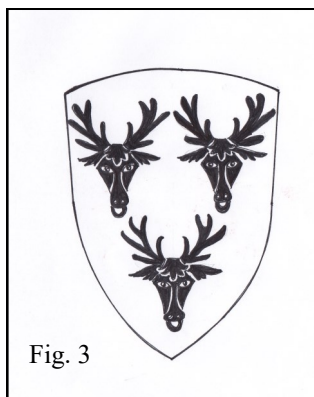


Figs 1,

The Stourton arms (Fig.1) have long fascinated me, they are the only instance I know of, of an 'heraldic map', for they would appear to show an armorial precis of the Stourton estate itself. The arms: Sable a bend Or between 6 fountains 3-3 suggest the 6 springs which rise at Stourton (today we know it better as Stourhead) and which later join beyond '6 Wells bottom', to form the River Stour. 3 springs supposedly rise on the Wiltshire side of the border (the gold bend) and 3 in Somerset (Fig.2).



Lying just a mile or 2 north of Stourton lies the village of Kilming-ton. In 1557 Kilming-ton Manor was in the hands of an ancient gen-try family, the Hartgills.



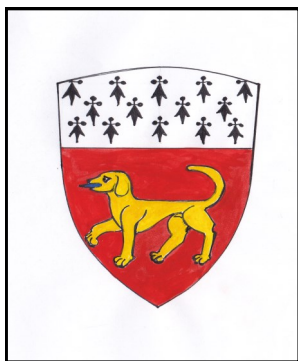
There was definitely bad blood between the Hartgills and Lord Stourton, this despite the fact that William Hartgill, then head of the family, had at one time or other been steward to the Stourtons. Also living at Kilming-ton was Wil-liam's son, John.

The Hartgill arms were of a simple punning nature: Argent 3 bucks (harts) heads cabossed Sable

They were to be seen a plenty in the family chapel in Kilming-ton Church, hard by the manor house. Sadly the chapel and its memori-als were torn down in the 19th century by a Victorian vicar who 'modernised' much of the church.

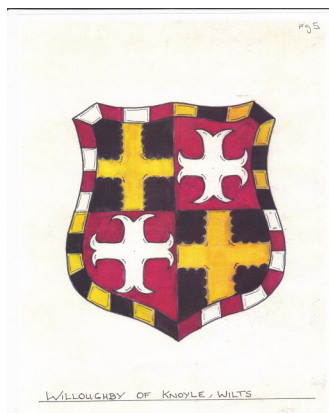
Both Stourton and William Hartgill seemed equally unpleasant in temperament. One contemporary account said of the Hartgills "they were quarrelsome men of evil reputation"; While of Lord Stourton, he was thought responsible for a number of "routs, ryottes, robberies and murders"!

Among those said acts was the burning down of the barn of a local gentryman and near neighbour of Stourton, Thomas Chaffyn of Mere (Arms: Fig 4). And was it not Stourton's retainers who had stolen a whole team of oxen from another noble neighbour, Christopher Willoughby of Knoyle ( Arms: Fig.5) This Christopher was the illegitimate nephew of Robert, 1st Lord Willoughby de Broke of Broke House- just a few miles north of Stourton. In Christopher's case the Willoughby arms were placed within a bordure company for illegitimacy.



Moreover the Hartgills had sided with the baron's mother and even the mistress of the baron's father, both women at times staying at Kilmington to get away from the 8th baron.

It would seem that the events leading up to the dastardly deeds at Stourton in 1557 were the culmination in a series of disputes, mainly relating to money. William Hartgill saying he was owed various amounts by His Lordship.



Figs 4 & 5

As early as 1549 the feuding between Stourton and the Hartgills became decidedly unpleasant. Stourton and his men arrived to do mischief to William, but he managed to barricade himself in the tower of Kilmington Church (Fig.6) and was so accurate with his crossbow that from the tower windows had managed to drive his foes off. On this occasion John Hartgill managed to ride up to London and tell the Privy Council of Stourton's affrays. This actually lead to a short stay 'at His Majesty's pleasure', in the Fleet Prison.

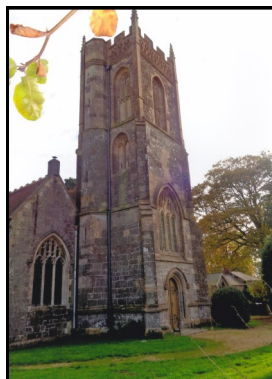


Fig. 6



However, in January 1557 it seemed Lord Stourton was ready to put the silly feuding behind him and agreed to come to Kilmington and pay off his debts to the Hartgills. Just to make sure all was fair the baron was accompanied by two local JPs, Thomas Chaffyn and Sir James Fitzjames of Redlynch (10 miles west of Stourton). (Arms: Fig.7)

But as soon as William Hartgill went to pick up the purse of money Stourton offered him, William and son John were seized by the baron's retainers, Stourton saying he was arresting them for felony. Just what the crime was no one knew exactly, and what the two JPs thought about it is unclear, but they seemed assured Stourton meant the two men no great harm, so assured were Chaffyn and Fitzjames, they promptly rode off.

What happened next, dear readers, will be in Part 2 of 'Murder Most Foul'!

## THE SOMERSET HERALDRY SOCIETY

### OFFICERS

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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

No dates yet, I am afraid but an apology. In our last issue we managed to print a mirror image of the arms of the Earl of Ross under *Ancient Shields in Westminster Abbey* on page 13. No one complained, thank goodness. Now for a question:- Name three English families who jettisoned their family arms and adopted the royal arms differenced. Answer and pictures in No. 49.