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coatofarms@theheraldrysociety.com

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BROTHERHOOD IN ARMS

PAUL A FOX AIH, FHS

Abstract

Sworn brotherhood evolved out of the pre Christian rite of blood brotherhood, to which the Church objected. It is possible that an armorial example of blood brotherhood survives in the paired arms of Saher de Quincy (d.1219) and Robert Fitzwalter (d.1235). From the 1380s onwards there are instances of the impalement of the arms of knights who were sworn brothers, possibly following the lead of King Richard II when he impaled his arms with those of St Edward. At much the same time in England bishops began to impale their personal arms with those of the diocese. In the fifteenth century there is a remarkable example of a knight impaling his arms with those of the ruling Pope. Following the Reformation the impalement of arms between two men appears to have fallen into abeyance until it was revived by the College of Arms in 2014.

The concept of sworn brotherhood is an ancient and familiar one to most world cultures, whereby two or more men pledge their loyalty to each other in some symbolic way. Like a marriage such a contract was customarily until death, and blood ceremonies have often been used to seal the bond, blood being regarded as the sacred carrier of the life force.[1]

The Christian church later anathematised the notion of making a pledge by mixing blood and consuming it. Only the blood of Christ, as manifested in the communion wine, was permitted to have any ritual significance, because the use of real blood in religious ceremonies smacked of paganism. In order to stamp out the practice, the Church took control of the ceremony of sworn brotherhood, so that in later medieval Europe the bond might be sealed by the eating of two parts of the same communion wafer, by swearing on holy relics, and with the kiss of peace. When monastic chroniclers described blood pacts still being made in the thirteenth century they did so with disdain. It was in this spirit that Matthew Paris wrote an account of a blood pact made in Ireland in 1236, in which participants mixed their blood in a bowl from which they all drank, as a symbol of an indissoluble alliance until death.[2] The increasing antipathy of the Catholic Church towards blood brotherhood seems to

[1] Harry Tegnaeus, *Blood brothers* (Stockholm 1952).

[2] Klaus Oschema, *Blood brothers in the Middle Ages*, J Med Hist 32 (2006) pp 275–301 (286).

coincide with the elaboration of the concept of transubstantiation, the conversion of wine into the blood of Christ during the mass, affirmed by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215.

There exists an intriguing heraldic example from the beginning of the thirteenth century which might be indicative of a blood brotherhood ceremony having taken place. If such an event did happen, the likely year was 1203, when Saher de Quincy (d.1219) and Robert Fitzwalter (d.1235) came together as castellans of the Norman fortress of Vaudreuil, and were placed under siege by the king of France.[3] Saher de Quincy inherited from his father, the crusader Robert de Quincy (d.1197), the arms *gules seven voided lozenges conjoined or*, but under the influence of Robert Fitzwalter he adopted new arms, *or a fess gules and a label (of multiple points) azure*. (**Figures 1+2**). Each man placed the arms of the other on his seal. Robert Fitzwalter based his arms on those of his kinsmen of Clare, *or three chevrons gules*, replacing the central chevron with a fess gules, so that they became *or a fess between two chevrons gules*. (**Figures 3+4**). Fitzwalter's seal, which was in use c 1215, showed these arms on his shield and horse trappings, with the masculy arms of Quincy in front of his horse. (**Figure 5**)[4] A small counter-seal was charged with his personal arms.

On Saher de Quincy's seal the shield and horse trappings were charged with his new arms, while behind his horse were the arms of Fitzwalter. (**Figure 6**). A small counter seal bore Quincy's new arms and the legend "secretum comitis Winton", which dates it after 1207 when he became earl of Winchester. It was used on a charter of 1212.[5] The evidence that Quincy continued to use his former arms comes from the seal of his wife Margaret de Beaumont (**Figure 7**), on which she was shown wearing a mantle of the masculy arms of Quincy.[6] To her right the Fitzwalter arms rested on a tree which reached up to a second shield charged with the mascles. The tinctures of the arms of Quincy are only recorded in later sources, but it would be very surprising if the fess was not gules, as on the arms of Fitzwalter.[7] The addition of the label was necessary because *or a fess gules* was in use from the early thirteenth century by the family of Lacy.[8] A blood red stripe might be an intentional allusion to

[3] Richard D. Oram, *Saer de Quincy, earl of Winchester (d. 1219)* and Matthew Strickland, *Robert Fitzwalter (d. 1235)*, both in New DNB.

[4] Robert Fitzwalter had an earlier seal which was non heraldic, see Lewis C Loyd and Doris Mary Stenton, *Sir Christopher Hatton's Book of Seals*, Northants Rec Soc vol 15 (Oxford 1950) no 317. His heraldic seal was appended to a charter which might date 1200–1230, but from the handwriting belongs to c 1215, see Hatton Seals no 296. BM Seals 6016 and 9769.

[5] This is the year proposed in Hugh Stanford London, *Aspilogia II, rolls of arms Henry III* (London 1967) p. 19. Saher was in Scotland in 1209, 1211 and 1212, but the Chancellor who witnessed the charter was William Comyn (d.1233), who did not hold this office in 1209 or 1211. For the charter see Holyrood MS no 37 pp.30–1. See also Henry Laing, *a descriptive catalogue of impressions from ancient Scottish seals* (Edinburgh 1850) no 679–80 and E.B.Fryde, D.E.Greenway, S Porter and I.Roy, *Royal Historical Society handbook of British chronology*, 3rd Ed (Cambridge 1986) p.180. Illustrated in Laing plate 11 no.1. Also BM Seals 6355.

[6] BM Seals 6700.

[7] Burke, GA; Papworth p.707.

[8] DBA vol 3 p.296.

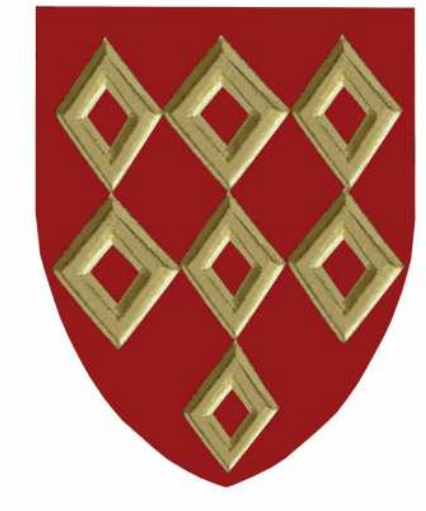

Figure 1: Quincy original.

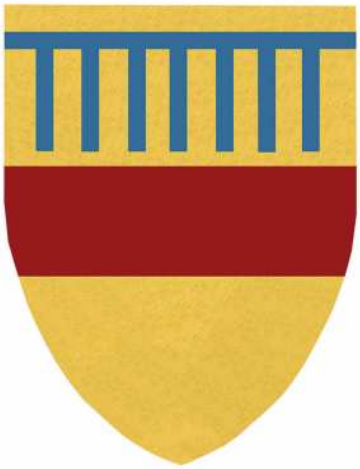

Figure 2: Quincy revised.

Figure 3: Clare.

Figure 4: Fitzwalter.

Figure 5: Seal of Robert Fitzwalter.

the cut made to seal a pledge of blood brotherhood. The special bond between the two men, so apparent from their seals and heraldry, resulted in them together leading the opposition to King John which in 1215 led to Magna Carta. They subsequently went to France together to offer the crown of England to the Dauphin Louis.

From this very same period comes the first certain example of the arms of two men who were political allies being impaled by dimidiation. Otto (d.1218), son of Henry the Lion, king of Saxony, grew up at the court of his grandfather King Henry II of England, and was greatly favoured by his uncle Richard the Lionheart. In 1198 Otto was elected king of Germany, and the arms which he then adopted were those very recently adopted by Richard, *gules three lions passant in pale or*, dimidiating the imperial eagle, with the eagle to the sinister. This remarkable heraldic development possibly indicates that the two monarchs and kinsmen were sworn brothers, and Otto IV maintained a similarly close alliance with his uncle King John

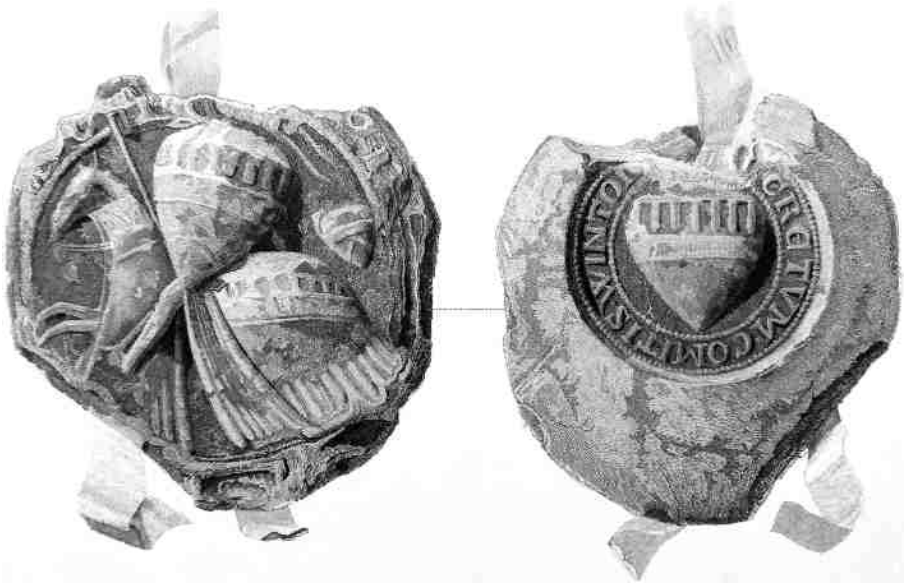

Figure 6: Seal of Saher de Quincy.

of England following the death of Richard in 1199. There is a literary reference to these dimidiated arms in 1216. They were recorded in the Mathew Paris shields, while Otto's widow Mary of Brabant continued to use them on her seal.[9]

There are many examples of ritual brotherhood from the next two centuries, including Simon de Montfort (d. 1265) and Charles of Anjou, King Edward II and Piers Gaveston (d.1312), Bertrand du Guesclin (d.1380) and Hugh Calveley (ended by mutual consent in 1367), Bertrand du Guesclin and Olivier de Clisson (d.1407), but there are no known heraldic consequences until the later fourteenth century.[10] In the intervening period impalement and dimidiation were, so far as can be determined, exclusively confined to husbands and wives, based on a study of the arms on the seals in the British Library. The earliest example of a knight dimidiating the arms of his wife from this source probably dates to c 1209 when Sir Robert de Pinkeny (d.1232) paid his entry fine to inherit his father's estates, and it must have been at around this time that his seal was made.[11] His arms *or five fusils in fess gules* were

[9] Stanford London, op cit, pp 15–16.

[10] Elizabeth A.R. Brown, *Ritual brotherhood in western medieval Europe*, Traditio 52 (1997) pp 357–81; Maurice Keen, *Brotherhood in arms*, History vol 47 (1962) pp.1–17. The Frenchman Clisson began his career as the protégé of Henry of Grosmont, duke of Lancaster, an exemplary knight and noted crusader, considered to have been possible model for Chaucer's knight.

[11] GEC vol 10 pp. 522–4. Pedigree in George Baker, *The history and antiquities of the county of Northampton*, 2 vols (London 1822–41). vol 2 pp 107–8.

Figure 7: Seal of Margaret de Beaumont.

Figure 8: Seal of Henry de Pinkeny.

dimidiated with *three bars wavy*.[12] These were not the arms of his mother Lettice de Lucy, and it is a reasonable assumption that they belonged to his wife Eglina, of unknown parentage, but an heiress. She was probably a member of the Basset family, who bore *three bars wavy* from an early period.[13] The shape of the shield is archaic and similar to examples from the late twelfth century (**Figure 8**). Robert's son Sir Henry de Pinkeny (d.1254) used the same arms, but in his case he was dimidiating his mother's arms, and in subsequent generations the practice was dropped.[14]

By the middle of the thirteenth century there are examples from Iberia of women using dimidiated arms on their seals with the arms of their husbands placed on the

[12] Birch 12,646, discussed briefly by C.H. Hunter Blair, *Armorials upon English seals from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries*, Archaeologia vol 89 (1943) pp 8,10 and plate 6f.

[13] DBA vol 1 p.64.

[14] BM Seals 12,644 is dated in Hatton's Seals, op cit, no 286 as 1254–6, but the editors are surely incorrect in ascribing the seal to Henry (d.1275) son of Henry de Pinkeny (d.1254), when BM seals explicitly states from the BL charter to which the seal is attached that the seal was that of Henry son of Robert. Sir Robert de Pinkeny (d.1295) sealed with five fusils in fess in 1282 (BM Seals 12,699) and his brother and heir Henry with the same in 1298 (Hatton's seals no 161).

dexter side, and a number of similar English examples can be discerned from the 1270s. In the Herald's Roll of c 1279 both Queen Eleanor of Provence (d. 1291) and Queen Eleanor of Castile (d. 1290) were assigned the three lions of England dimidiating their paternal arms, although this usage was not the custom when their seals were made in 1262 and 1281 respectively.[15] Alianor de Verdon had Verdon dimidiating her paternal arms of Bohun on her seal of 1275.[16] By 1300 dimidiation was beginning to be superseded by straightforward impalement of husbands impaling their wives and wives impaling their husbands, but examples of seals exhibiting dimidiation occur as late as 1355 in the case of a woman, and twice in 1368 in the case of men. [17] It should be noted in passing that there are three surviving womens' seal impressions with the impalements reversed from the perspective of later convention, placing the woman's paternal arms on the dexter side.[18] Of these, one is particularly interesting, that of Joan, countess of Pembroke (d.1307), and daughter of Warin de Munchensy, whose first seal was likely made during her husband's lifetime, and was charged with a shield of Munchesny to the dexter dimidiating her husband's arms of Valence. In her widowhood she had a second seal made on which the impalements were conventional. The logic here might have been that as a widow it was no longer necessary to reverse the impalements to distinguish the owner from her husband.[19]

From the later fourteenth century there are various examples of two men impaling their arms in the manner of husband and wife. Maurice Keen suggested that there might have been an earlier example from the Low Countries, in the guise of Sir Makaire de Flémalle, lord of Heys, born in the twelfth century, impaling his personal arms with those of his military leader the Count of Loos.[20] Keen's source was the writings of Jacques de Hemricourt (d1403) from the very end of the fourteenth century.[21] The example is intriguing, but impossible to verify, and it is problematic that the arms ascribed by Hemricourt to Flémalle, *sable three mascles or*, are not otherwise known, and are not the arms of Flémalle recorded in early armorials.[22] The

[15] BM Seals nos 792–7.

[16] BM Seals 14142.

[17] BM Seals 7137, 8964, 11559. No 7137 is perplexing, the three cinquefoils of William Bardolf being dimidiated with the distinctive arms of Peletot, *paly a chief indented*, dating 1368; DBA vol 3 p.20. This cannot be the seal of William lord Bardolf (d.1386), whose mother was Elizabeth Damory, and whose wife was Agnes Poynings. It is known that the heiress Katherine Peletot married Edmund Bardolf, and presumably the other William Bardolf was a product of this union, See VCH Herts vol 3 pp. 158–65.

[18] BM Seals 7940: the seal of Elizabeth de Burgh ,daughter of Gilbert de Clare dating 1353 with Clare on the dexter half; 9097: the seal of Matilda daughter of John Bernake and wife of Ralph Lord Cromwell with Bernake on the dexter half, dating 1370;

[19] The earlier seal BM Seals 14079–86 was used 1300–1302, and the later seal number 14087 has been ascribed a date of 1312, which is after her supposed date of death. Her husband William de Valence sealed with the plain arms of Valence.

[20] Siegrid Düll, Anthony Luttrell and Maurice Keen, *Faithful unto death: the tomb slab of Sir William Neville and Sir John Clanvowe, Constantinople 1391*, Antiquaries J vol 71 (1991) pp.174–90 (184).

[21] C de Borman (Ed), *Ouvres de Jacques de Hemricourt* vol 1 (Brussels 1910) p.258.

[22] Steen Clemmensen, Medieval Ordinary: Flemalle 1: *argent a saltire gules* in the Armorial Urfé which draws on fourteenth century sources: online at www.armorial.dk.

arms on the earliest known Flémalle seal, that of Thierry de Flémalle, dating 1263, were *five fusils in fess*.[23]

The resurrection of the impalement to represent types of union other than those of husband and wife is datable to the reign of Richard II, and given the king's personal adoption of an impalement of the royal arms with those of St Edward the Confessor, it is distinctly plausible that this acted as a trigger. The author would date this usage a decade earlier than has generally been supposed, because in 1386 Richard II granted to his favourite Robert de Vere, earl of Oxford, the right to impale his arms with those of St Edmund, *azure three crowns or*, *differenced with a border argent*.[24]At that time St Edward and St Edmund were the two principal patron saints of England and its royal family. A year earlier the king's personal standard was described as "the king's standard of St Edward".[25] This was distinct from the 38 royal standards which also went with Richard on his Scottish campaign.[26] By 1395 the king was using a signet of his arms impaling those of St Edward described in the same terms as "our own personal signet of St Edward".[27] The king had united himself with St Edward and was under the saint's direct personal protection. Visiting Westwell church in Kent in 1393, Richard II paid for the insertion into the windows of two shields. One had the royal arms impaling to the dexter St Edward and to the sinister Richard's then queen, Anne of Bohemia (d.1394). The second had St Edward impaling St Edmund.[28]

By 1395 Richard had extended the usage of the impalement of the Confessor's arms to others in his close inner circle who shared descent from Edward I.[29] Each of these other men was required to difference St Edward's arms in some unique way, placing secondary charges either on a label or a border.[30] (**Figures 9+10**). The true significance of this band of brothers has been obscured, possibly because Henry of Bolingbroke, who went on to depose Richard, was one of its initiates. The cadency marks on St Edward's shield might give a clue as to the intended meaning. They were unnecessary additions to shields which, being impaled, were already unique. A context in which the additional cadency marks might have acquired relevance was if the owners were permitted to carry the shield of the saint at a ceremony. This brotherhood was not confined to knights, as one of its members, Henry (later cardinal)

[23] J-Th Raadt, *Sceaux armoriés des Pays-Bas et des Pays Avoisinants* vol 1 (Bruxelles 1898) p.456.

[24] CPR 1385–89 p.78. How the arms of St Edmund were to be inserted was not specified, but given the king's own arms an impalement is highly probable. Neither of the other alternatives of quartering or as a shield of pretence in at all likely in the context of the times.

[25] CPR 1388–92 p.168.

[26] James L Gillespie, *The age of Richard II* (Stroud 1997) pp.121–2.

[27] T.F.Tout, *Chapters in the administrative history of medieval England* vol 5, *the Wardrobe, the Chamber and the small seals* (Manchester 1930) p.204 and plate IV.6.

[28] Archaeologia Cantiana 47 (1935) pp 170–6.

[29] Paul A Fox, *The English revolution of 1399 and its influence on heraldic practice*, in *Genealogica & Heraldica, Proceedings of the 31st International Congress of Genealogical and Heraldic Sciences 2014* (Oslo 2015) pp 140–3.

[30] The labels and borders carried additional marks of cadency. The label of Edward of York, for instance was charged on each point of the label with a lion rampant gules, while the border of Thomas Holand was ermine.

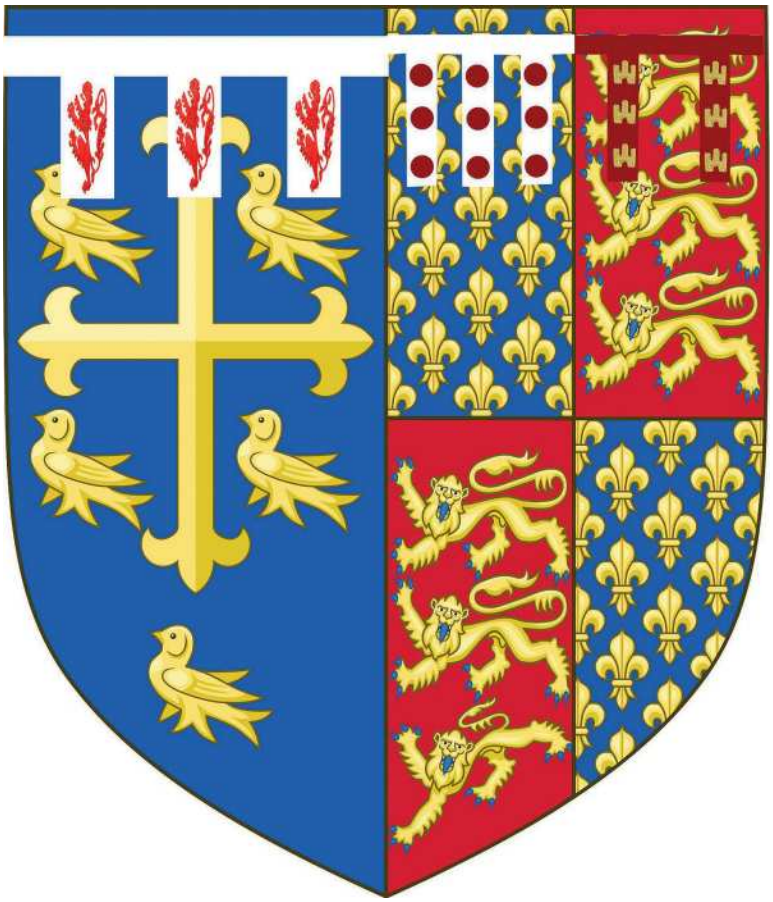

Figure 9: Edward of York, earl of Rutland and later duke of York.

Beaufort, was a priest. Richard II alone was permitted to carry the undifferenced arms of St Edward, from which it can only be concluded that he regarded them as arms of the sovereign. The noblemen with the differenced arms of St Edward were being united spiritually with the person of the king, who doubtless hoped for unswerving allegiance unto death in return for this great honour. But sworn brotherhood works both ways, an obligation which Richard failed to meet when he later betrayed two members of the band, Thomas Mowbray and Henry of Bolingbroke, when he sent both into exile in 1398.

That the powerful symbolism of the impaled arms in a different context from that of spouses struck a chord with others cannot be doubted. It can hardly be a coincidence that the archbishops of Canterbury and York began in the 1390s to impale the arms of their sees with their personal arms. Archbishop Thomas Courtenay, who acceded in 1381, did not entertain any such innovation until later in his episcopate,

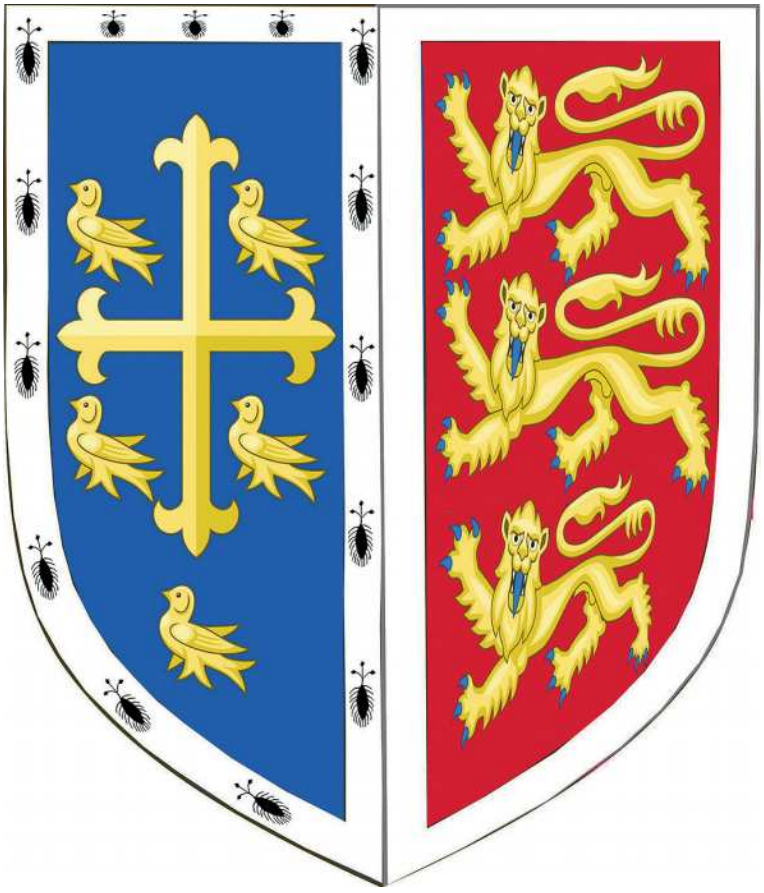

Figure 10: Thomas Holand, earl of Surrey.

and thus the impalement of Courtenay with the pallium of the see of Canterbury is not found on his seals, but on the monuments which he funded towards the end of his life. His successor Thomas Arundel was ready to place such an impalement on his seal when he acceded in 1396, and to give it additional emphasis he placed alongside the arms of Richard II impaling St Edward. (**Figure 11**) Arundel's contemporary Robert Waldby became the first archbishop of York to impale his personal arms with the pallium of his own see on his seal of 1397–8.[31]

From the 1380s onwards there are instances of the impalement of the arms of knights who were sworn brothers. The best known, and most remarkable example, is that of Sir William Neville and Sir John Clanvowe, who died together in 1391, and were buried underneath a tomb slab on which each bore the same arms of Neville

[31] BM Seals 2328.

Figure 11: Seal of Archbishop Thomas Arundel.

impaling Clanvowe.[32] (**Figure 12+13**) It is a moot point whether the two knights ever carried such arms during their lifetimes, but the symbolism of the tomb was something that contemporaries would have understood and admired. Born in the same year, Neville and Clanvowe were associated together even before 1381, when they became royal chamber knights. They chose to go on crusade together in 1390, and returned to the East with the king's blessing in 1391, where they are assumed to have died of the bubonic plague in Constantinople. These knights would have been thoroughly immersed in the chivalric ideals and ideas on heraldry which permeated Richard II's court.

The same year saw the death of Sir Robert Swillington, a friend and retainer of John of Gaunt (d.1399), duke of Lancaster. Incomplete records of now lost glass which he sponsored at Swillington church in Yorkshire show nine impalements of his arms with those of other knights, several of whom were other members of the Swillington family.[33] The label ermine which he added to the Swillington arms, *argent a chevron azure*, was taken from the arms of Gaunt, his feudal lord under whom he served on campaign in 1359, 1367, 1369, 1373 and 1380, being specifically retained from 1362. He went on to act as the duke's chamberlain between 1372 and 1377, and was still on his council in 1387.[34] Given that further impalements might well have been lost before they came to be recorded, the large number is remarkable, and Swillington must have concurrently been the sworn brother of many.[35] By exclusion two of them were probably his own brothers. Sir Robert's grandfather Sir Hugh de Swillington (d.1304) bore *argent a chevron azure and a label gules*, to which Robert's father Sir Adam I de Swillington (d.1328) added *a fleur de lis or* during his father's lifetime.[36] Robert's eldest brother Adam II (d. after 1348) converted the family label to one of five points gules, inherited by his son Sir Robert Swillington the younger (d.1380).[37] In Swillington church these latter arms impaling those of Robert the uncle are probably attributable to Robert the younger (**Figure 14**). Uncle and nephew served together under John of Gaunt in France in 1369 and 1373, and the nephew named the uncle as his executor.[38] The only other member of the family who was militarily active in the same period was William Swillington, the natural brother of Robert the younger, who accompanied John of Gaunt to Spain in 1386, and whose arms were recorded in William Jenyns' Ordinary. They were Swillington with *a label*

[32] Düll, op cit.

[33] The glass was recorded by Robert Glover in 1584–5 , published in Joseph Foster, *The Visitation of Yorkshire made in the years 1584–5 by Robert Glover, to which is added the subsequent Visitation made in 1612* (London 1875) pp 469–70. The editor unfortunately only recognised one of the impalements. A more useful record was made by Roger Dodsworth in 1620, of which there are two editions: H & G vol 4 (1867) pp 234–7, and *Roger Dodsworth, Yorkshire church notes 1619–1631*, ed by J.W.Clay, Yorks Record Soc vol 34 (1904) pp 23–27.

[34] Robert Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster* (London 1953) pp 112, 363.

[35] Glover noted that of the 95 original shields in the Swillington glass, 26 were lost.

[36] Sir Nicholas Harris Nicolas, *A roll of arms of the reign of Edward the second* (London 1829) p.63; Gerard J Brault, *Rolls of Arms Edward I, 1272–1307* (2 vols Woodbridge1997) vol 2 p.408.

[37] Hatton Seals, op cit no 458.

[38] TNA C76/52 m 9+15; C76/56 m 12+20; Test Ebor vol 1 p 107.

Figure 12: The joint tomb of Sir William Neville (left) and Sir John Clanvowe (right).

of three points gules and a crescent or for difference.[39] The other two Swillington sworn brothers each bore Swillington with *a label of three points gules*, one with the addition of a *mullet argent*, and the other with an *annelet argent*. (**Figures 15+16**) By exclusion these can only be the two other brothers of Robert the uncle, named

[39] DBA vol 2 p.446.

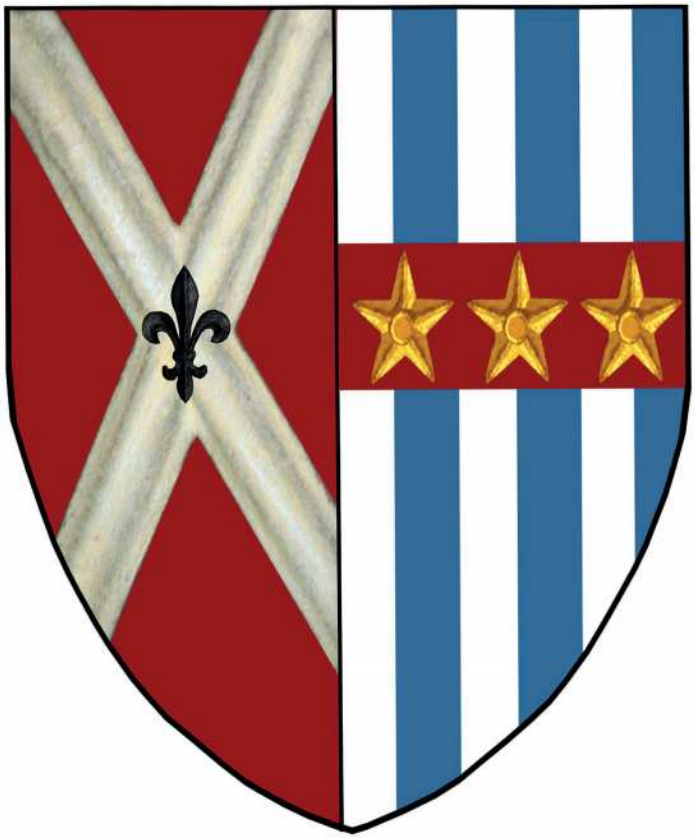

Figure 13: The Neville-Clanvowe shield.

as William and Reiner in an old pedigree.[40] William captained a contingent in the Scottish campaign of 1336.[41] Following the death of his nephew in 1380 Robert the uncle inherited the manor and advowson of Swillington, and the heraldic scheme cannot be earlier than this year.[42] His son Sir Roger Swillington was in possession of the living in 1411.[43] A more precise dating for the scheme will be attempted below.

The four other knights with whom Sir Robert impaled his arms and placed himself in the superior positions were as follows:

[40] BL Harley MS 4630 p 742.

[41] Rot Scot vol 1 p 453.

[42] He settled the manor and advowson on two priestly trustees, TNA CP25/1/278/141 no.17.

[43] Canon Beanlands, *The Swillingtons of Swillington*, Thoresby Soc vol 15 (1909) pp 185–211 (233).

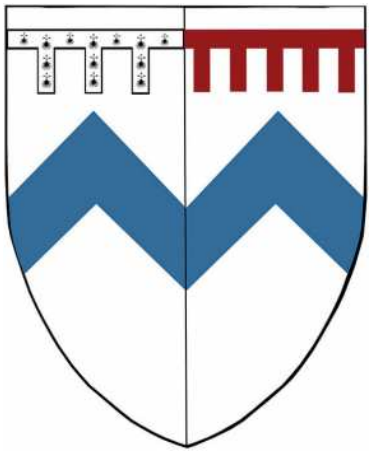

Figure 14: Swillington the uncle impaling Swillington the nephew.

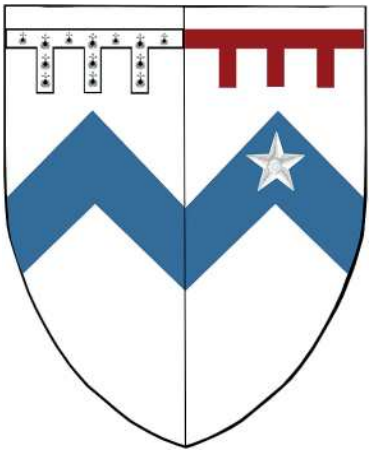

Figure 15: Swillington the uncle impaling his brother.

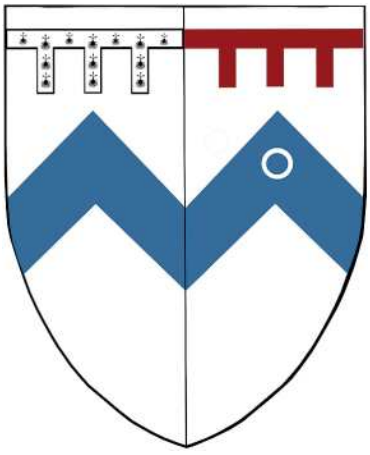

Figure 16: Swillington the uncle impaling his brother.

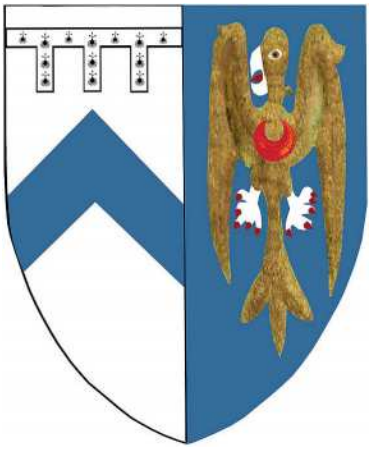

Figure 17: Swillington impaling Sarnesfield.

1. **Sir Nicholas Sarnesfield**; *azure an eagle displayed or differenced with a crescent*.[44] (**Figure 17**) He was standard bearer of Richard II from 1377 to 1394 and a knight of the chamber. Although the crescent is not otherwise attested, he was a younger son of the house which came from Sarnesfield in Herefs. The head of the family, Thomas de Sarnesfield, died in 1390 leaving a son Richard age 30.[45] Nicholas was a retainer of John of Gaunt from 1372, and was granted the duchy of Lancaster manor of Berwick St James in Wiltshire in 1382.[46] He was elected KG in 1386.[47]

2. **Sir William Bradshaw** (d.1415): *argent two bends sable.* (**Figure 18**) As an esquire in 1372 he was made constable of Liverpool castle for life by John of Gaunt, and served under Gaunt in France with Sir Robert Swillington in 1373.[48] He succeeded his father Sir Hugh Bradshaw as lord of Blackrod in Lancashire in around 1383, his father having served in France in 1380.[49] The undifferenced arms were ascribed to William as head of his family in Willement's Roll.[50] Sir Robert Swillington the uncle, succeeded Bradshaw's kinsman John Bradshaw as Master Forester of the Duffield Frith in 1372.[51]

3. **Sir Robert Herford/Hereford**: *gules an annulet between three eagles displayed argent*.[52] (**Figure 19**) As a landless younger son, he was retained by John of Gaunt in 1382 and served with him in Spain in 1386, which points to the Swillington scheme belonging to the 1380s.[53] The annulet would suit Robert as a younger son. The head of the family, based at Sufton Court in Mordiford, Herefs, was John Herford (d.1386) followed by his sons Thomas (d.1390) and Nicholas Herford (d.1418).[54] In 1383–4 Sir Robert married Elizabeth Darcy, the widow of James II, earl of Ormonde (d.1382), and thus became the step-father of the next earl, who was a key figure in the English administration of Ireland. In 1389 Herford was made chancellor of the green wax of the Irish Exchequer.[55]

[44] DBA vol 2 p.136. The field was seen as vert by both Glover and Dodsworth. This confusion of colour is presumably a consequence of a deterioration over time of the blue pigment. The colour of the crescent was not specified.

[45] IPM vol 16 no. 930.

[46] VCH Wilts vol 15 pp.168–77; Simon Walker, *The Lancastrian affinity 1361–1399* (Oxford 1990) p.280.

[47] Hugh E.L.Collins, *The Order of the Garter 1348–1461, chivalry and politics in late medieval England* (Oxford 2000) p 291; George F Belz, *Memorials of the Most Noble Order of the Garter from its foundation to the present time* (London 1841) p.308.

[48] Somerville op cit p.374; TNA C76/56 m.18; Chetham Society vol 95 pp 109–111 with pedigree.

[49] TNA C76/65 m.27.

[50] DBA vol 2 p.107.

[51] Somerville op cit p.382.

[52] DBA vol 2 p.167. The eagles were recorded as falcons volant, but no such arms are attested.

[53] Walker op cit p.271; TNA C76/70 m.28.

[54] Burke, LG 1952.

[55] CPR 1388–92 p.49; GEC vol 10 p.121.

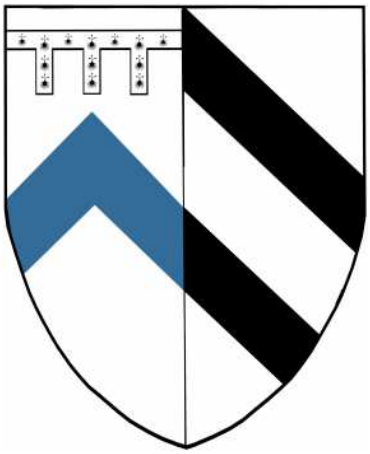

Figure 18: Swillington impaling Bradshaw.

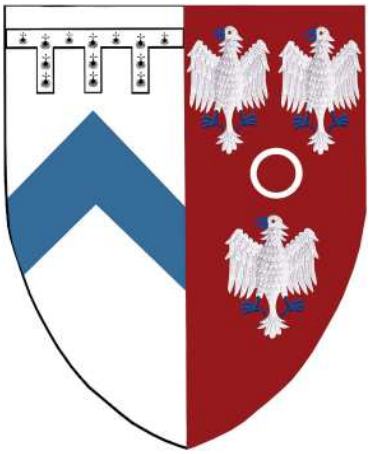

Figure 19: Swillington impaling Herford.

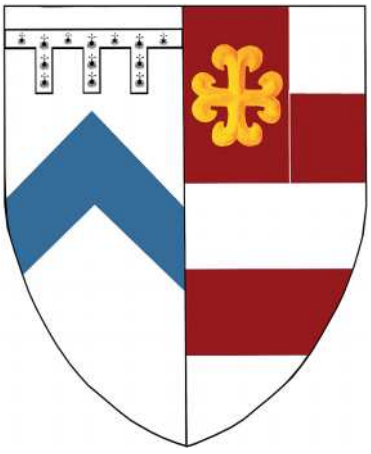

Figure 20: Swillington impaling Kirkby.

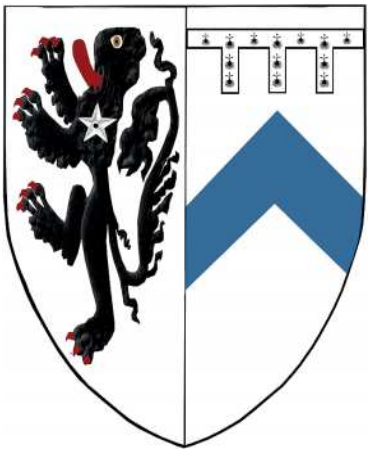

Figure 21: Stapleton KG impaling Swillington.

4. **Sir Richard de Kirkby** (d. c 1425): *argent two bars and a canton gules, on the canton a cross moline or*.[56] (**Figure 20**) He served initially as an esquire with Sir Robert Swillington under John of Gaunt in France in 1373 and was knighted, serving again in Ireland in 1374 and Scotland in 1375.[57] He inherited his family estates at Kirkby Ireleth in Lancashire in around 1382, and added a cross moline to the family arms, as be seen on Sir Richard's seal of 1418.[58]

In two cases Sir Robert decided to signal to his sworn brothers that he considered them to be socially superior, by placing their arms to the dexter side of his own. They were:

5. **Sir Brian Stapleton KG** (d.1394) *argent a lion rampant sable with a mullet argent for difference.* (**Figure 21**) He married Agnes, widow of Stephen le Waleys of Yorkshire in 1360, and thus became Swillington's father-in-law, although the two men were of similar age.[59] From his Scrope-Grosvenor deposition Sir Brian participated in all the great battles and expeditions of Edward III's reign, and he was in France with Swillington in 1359, 1369 and 1373.[60] He served as Sir Robert's executor, and was named in the will as Swillington's "dear brother", which gives strong support to the contention that they were sworn brothers. [61] Stapleton's arms at Swillington were differenced with *a mullet argent*, although Willement's Roll accorded him a *mullet gules*.[62] He might have changed the colour of the mullet during his lifetime to distinguish himself more clearly from his brother Sir Miles Stapleton (d.1364), a founder knight of the Garter, who bore the *mullet or*. Sir Brian's election as a Garter Knight late in 1381 is the likely reason why he was accorded the superior position in the impalement. It would have required great hubris to place oneself above a man whom the king had so honoured. This would support a date for the Swillington glass later than November 1381, but before October 1386, when Sir Nicholas Sarnesfield was elected to the Garter.

6. **Sir Adam de Rotherfield**: *gules three fleurs de lis ermine* recorded in Willement's Roll.[63] (**Figure 22**) His was an ancient family which held Wheldale, near Swillington, by 1226, and Sir Adam inherited his patrimony, held as two knights' fees from the Duchy of Lancaster, in 1363.[64] It has not been possible to elucidate on which campaigns Sir Adam served. His uncle Sir William de Finchenden granted part of the manor of Hickleton to Sir Robert Swillington

[56] DBA vol 1 p. 30. The tricking of the field ar for argent became az for azure, a common scribal error.

[57] TNA E101/32/26 m.2; C71/55 m.5.

[58] VCH Lancs vol 8 pp.392–400.

[59] Stephen Waleys was the father of Swillington's first wife.

[60] Caroline Rawcliffe, *Sir Brian Stapleton (c 1322–1394*), New DNB.

[61] Beanlands, op cit, p.206.

[62] DBA vol 1 p.156.

[63] DBA vol 4 p.31.

[64] M.L.Faull and S.A.Moorhouse,*West Yorkshire: an archaeological survey to AD 1500,* 3 vols (Leeds 1981) p.373; Yorks Arch J vol 13 p.122; Surtees Soc vol 49 p.4.

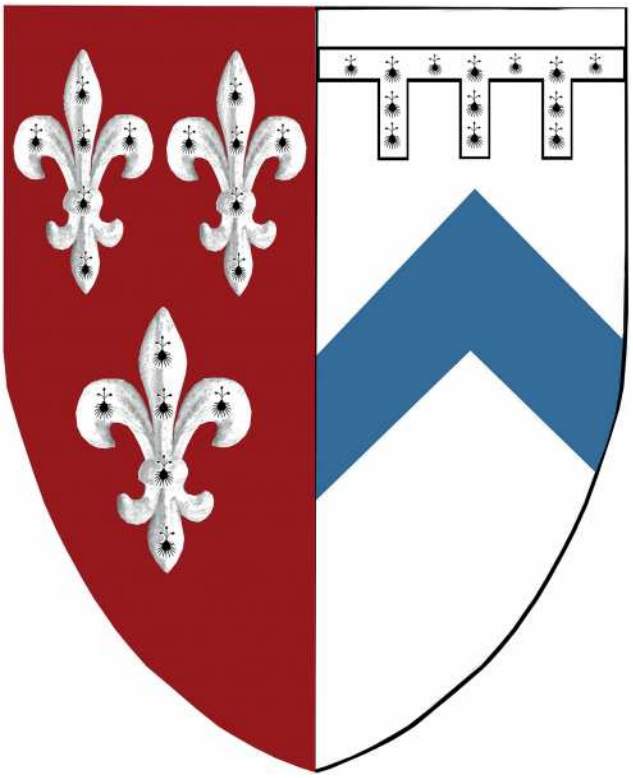

Figure 22: Rotherfield impaling Swillington.

the uncle in 1374, while in 1383 Swillington was granted rents in Sir Adam's manor of Sutton Rotherfield.[65] These transactions suggest that Rotherfield and Swillington might have been kinsmen. Sir Adam and his wife Meliora were childless, and although Swillington was very wealthy, he might have hoped to be named as Rotherfield's heir. This would explain his honouring Rotherfield with the dexter impalement. However, between October 1384 and October 1385 Sir Adam sold the manors of Wheldale and Sutton to William and John Gascoigne.[66] The Swillingtons were every bit as venerable as the Rotherfields, having been at Swillington since the twelfth century, and the superior position granted to Rotherfield cannot have been due to social precedence.[67] If, as seems more likely, the prospect of inheritance influenced the heraldry, then the scheme might be more narrowly dated 1382–85, since after 1385 Swillington had little to gain

[65] Joseph Hunter, *South Yorkshire, the history and topography of the Deanery of Doncaster,* 2 vols (London 1828–31) vol 2 p.134; Yorks Arch J vol 13 p.123.

[66] TNA CP25/1/278/143 no.48.

[67] GEC vol 12a pp. 577–82.

from flattering his neighbour. A date close to 1385 would lend further support to the contention that by this time Richard II was impaling his arms with those of St Edward.

Following the deposition and death of Richard II his heraldic innovations went very much out of vogue, although the idea of a bishop impaling his arms with those of his diocese was too good to consign to the rubbish bin of history. The next examples that have come to light of the impalements of the arms of two men are from fully a century later. Quite likely the concept persisted in the intervening period, and the expectation is that further examples will be found. From 1497 there is a seal of Giles Lord Daubeny (d.1503), on the dexter side, impaling the arms of Sir Reginald Bray (d.1503).[68] Maurice Keen has interpreted this as evidence of sworn brotherhood, but this seems more likely to be an unconventional seal of office. The legend names them as joint justices of the forests south of the Trent, an office which they held together from 1493.[69] The two men were given this lucrative position at different times as a reward for their service in the royal household. Other than in the holding of this office, there is no hint of any connection between the two men, and no sign in their personal dealings that they were actually friends.[70] They were buried separately, the one in Westminster Abbey, and the other in St George's Chapel, Windsor, and neither man placed the arms of the other in relationship with his tomb, despite the fact that each man oversaw the building works in his respective church. Nor can it be said that the impalement of their arms was a consequence of them being confreres in the Garter, since Bray was not elected as a knight of that order until 1501.

The second example appears to be quite unprecedented in that a knight impaled his arms with those of the ruling Pope. He was John Kendal (d.1501) Grand Prior of England of the knights of St John of Jerusalem. As the representative of the order at the Roman Curia from 1478, Kendal played a prominent role in the conclave which elected Innocent VIII (d. 1492) in 1484.[71]

One of Innocent's first acts as Pope was to command a new crusade against the Turks. The presence of the Turkish prince Djem Sultan on Rhodes at this time was a useful bargaining chip, and between 1485 and 1488 Kendal was negotiating a grand strategy across Europe involving the Holy See. When the Grand Prior of England died in 1489 Innocent appointed Kendal in his place. As further proof of the great friendship between the two men, on 1st March 1491, Kendal was formally adopted by Innocent as a member of his own family (whatever that means), and placed under his personal protection.[72] It is likely that a key factor in the strong personal bond between bishop and monk of war was a shared passion for the crusading movement, with the ultimate aim of restoring Jerusalem to Christianity. The shield on Kendal's new seal as Grand Prior showed his personal arms of *fretty, on a chief three escallops*

[68] BM Seals 6792.

[69] Keen 1962, op cit.

[70] S.J.Gunn, *Giles 1st baron Daubeny (1451/2–1503*), New DNB; M.M.Condon, *Sir Reginald Bray (c 1440–1503)*, New DNB.

[71] Gregory O'Malley, *The Knights Hospitaller of the English Langue 1460–1565* (Oxford 2005) pp 143–4.

[72] Jürgen Sarnowsky, *John Kendall (d.* 1501), New DNB.

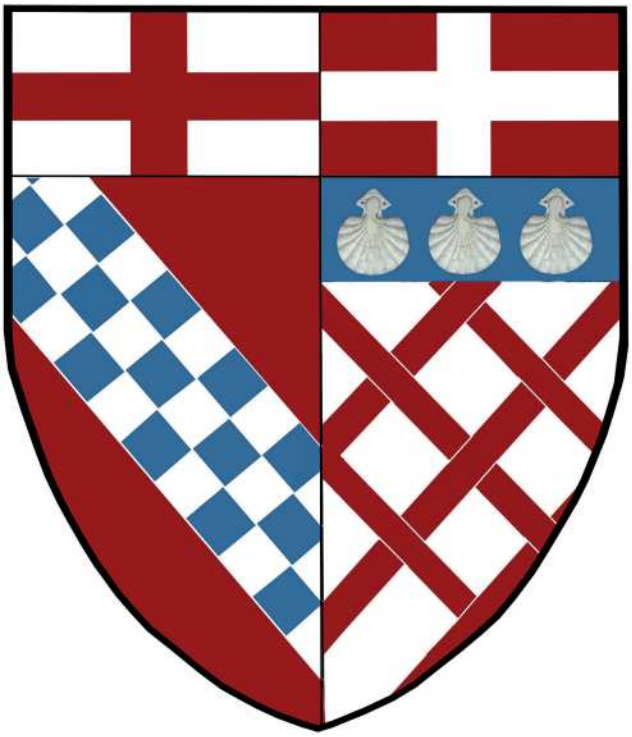

Figure 23: Pope Innocent VIII impaling Kendal.

impaling the papal arms of the Genoese family of Cibo (**Figure 23**).[73] Both arms had a chief charged with a cross, which in the case of Cibo was the Genoese cross of St George, and in the case of Kendal was the cross of his order, *gules a cross argent*, granted to him as an augmentation of honour following the siege of Rhodes by the Turks in 1480. The relationship was effectively a kind of sworn brotherhood, which resulted in Kendal being accorded great honour across the courts of Europe even after the death of Innocent VIII. The colours of Kendal's arms are not recorded, but it has been suggested that the Kendal arms might derive from the ancient family of Curwen, who resided at Kendal in Cumberland, and who bore *argent fretty gules a chief azure*.[74] The author has conjecturally illustrated the arms based on these colours. If this supposition is correct then the escallops probably derive from the three *escallops argent* borne by the baronial family of Dacre, who were pre-eminent in Cumberland. Kendal was a kinsman of Sir John Langstrother (from Crosthwaite near Kendal) an earlier Grand Prior of England, executed by Edward IV as a Lancastrian

[73] BM Seals 4540.

[74] J. Petre, *Richard III crown and people* (London 1985) p.227; DBA vol 3 p.7; F.J.Field, *An armorial for Cumberland*, Cumb & Westm Arch Soc extra series vol 18 (Kendal 1937) pp.122–3.

supporter following the battle of Tewkesbury in 1471.[75] The Langstrother family also had escallops on their arms: *argent a chevron gules between three escallops sable*.[76] The end of the Middle Ages brought to an end the knightly concept of sworn brotherhood, and the rarely observed practice of same sex impalement of arms. Five hundred years later, on 29th March 2014, the College of Arms officially resurrected it with its directive for the heraldic regulation of same sex marriages.

[75] Kendal's cousin John Clippesby was the grandson of Alice Langstrother and great nephew of Sir John Langstrother. Lt-Col G.R.Gayre of Gayre and Nigg, *The heraldry of the knights of St John*, (Allahabad 1956) p.28 ; Francis Blomfield, *An essay towards a topographical history of the county of Norfolk*, 2nd ed (11 vols London 1805–10) vol 11 p.160.

[76] DBA vol 2 p.335.