

THE COAT OF ARMS

The journal of the Heraldry Society



Fourth Series

Volume II

2019

Number 236 in the original series started in 1952

The Heraldry Society is an educational charity. Its purpose is to promote greater understanding and appreciation of heraldry and its related subjects. The society organises lectures, study days, congresses, dinners and other social activities. It offers a course in heraldry leading to examination for a diploma. It publishes a range of source material at modest cost. Members receive the *Coat of Arms* and the quarterly *Heraldry Gazette*.

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The Society was registered in England in 1956 as registered charity no. 241456.

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Printed in Bristol by 4Word Ltd.

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ISSN 0010-003X

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BOOK REVIEWS

Anglian contingent effectively heads the list, comprising 100 out of the first 150 knights. The county of Norfolk is over represented, but the other East Anglian counties are under represented. Clemmensen is inclined to support Denholm-Young's contention that the roll was made for Robert Ufford, whose arms as a baron occur in a prominent position towards the head of the roll, with two subsidiary Ufford shields placed at the top of the first full page of knights (**Figure 1**). The barons whose arms are in closest proximity to those of the earl of Suffolk are mostly those who would have been his comrades in arms in the Crecy-Calais campaigns of 1346–7.

Clemmensen commented 'It is impractical, rather than impossible, to research and write extensive biographies on so many persons in relation to an armorial'. The difficulty is compounded by the absence of christian names for most of the knights. Yet the only possible approach to unlocking the remaining mysteries of Powell's Roll would be to know a good deal more about the ordinary knights on it, and in particular their military careers. Could it be that the roll was prepared in celebration of recent military victories? Robert Ufford was marshal of the army in this period. Such an investigation would indeed be very time consuming, but the groundwork and lower courses have now been laid.

Paul A Fox

Laura J. Whatley (ed), *A Companion to Seals in the Middle Ages* (Reading medieval sources, volume 2) Leiden and Boston: Brill 2019. ISBN 978-90-04-38064-6 (hardback) ISBN 978-04-39144-4 (e-book), both EUR 165.

The journey, to which this book is a Companion, is described as 'Seals in the Middle Ages from 500 to 1500 AD'. The chronological journey starts towards the end of the book with surveys of coins as seals in Lombard Italy (mainly on rings) and the re-use of ancient coins and gems in seals. It then moves to Byzantium where the 'Seals of the judges of the Hippodrome' and the 'Social and personal elements in Byzantine sigillography' are considered, but most insights along the journey are reserved for Europe, particularly England, and to the period between 1200 and 1500. All provide valuable information. That by Philippa Hoskin on 'Administration and identity: Episcopal seals in England from the 11th to the 13th century' is a very clear introduction to the development of episcopal seals in England, and to the role of the seal in diocesan administration. It places such seals in a far more comprehensible historical context than the survey by Sir William St. John Hope. The authors of all the articles give much information to the reader or traveller into their chosen fields, but the choice of windows or views for the traveller is dependent of the individual author's field on interest and research, and, only exceptionally, is the reader given an overview of their whole subject. To those journeying between 500 and 1500 it is not so much a Companion to the whole journey, but to a series of excursions down fascinating by ways.

There are no insights into French, Spanish, Scandinavian, Italian or German seals, except for Andreas Lehnertz's article on the seal matrices and seals of Muskinus the Jew (died 1336). Often the analysis demands previous knowledge. Many companionable facts and leadings are to be found tucked away in the depths of the articles or in the

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footnotes. The bibliography would have been more helpful if it had been divided into relevant chapters rather than arranged alphabetically.

The 'Analysis of the materiality of royal and governmental seals of England 1100 to 1300' gives an excellent report on how a team in the National Archives (TNA), both historical and scientific, came together to describe and analyse the material of royal seals. The article on 'Material analysis of seals attached to the Barons' Letter to the Pope' by the same team is a fascinating scientific analysis of the material of the seals (many heraldic) and the way in which they were arranged on this document, and complements the earlier study of the heraldry by Oswald Barron. The final chapter chronologically is that devoted to the fine double-sided Great seal of Turtko Kotromanić as King of both Serbia and Bosnia in the fifteenth century, which refers to his use of heraldry in emphasising his dual kingship.

Heraldry played a large part in the study of seals in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. Oliver D. Harris's most interesting article 'Fragments of the past: the early antiquarian perception and study of seals in England' pays tribute to the work of the heralds, Robert Glover, and Robert Cooke, in recording seals as evidence of genealogy in their visitations. Readers interested in heraldry will turn to Adrian Ailes on 'Medieval armorial seals in the National Archives', which contains an excellent survey of the four authors, J.H. Round, C. H. Hunter Blair, R. C. Fowler, and Sir Hilary Jenkinson, who have written on the collection of the 100,000 seals in TNA, described as one of the largest in the world. Each description of their work can be read with great profit, and, indeed, Hunter Blair's article 'Armorial on English seals' remains the best survey of how seals can illustrate the development of heraldry. R. C. Fowler selected some interesting religious seals of monastic houses in which TNA is so rich. Sir Hilary Jenkinson studied Great Seals and deputed Great Seals of England and here we are brought up to date with recent research and discoveries on the Exchequer seals and their use of the royal arms. However it is not clear how many of the 100,000 seals are heraldic, and since there is no digital publication of all the seals in TNA, this is presumably not easy to establish. Towards the end, Ailes devotes two paragraphs to the searching aids available, notably the card index of seals (now available on line), and the catalogue of moulds for casts (also available online).

One would have welcomed in a companion volume a wider survey that encompassed more of the archive sources for heraldic seals in Britain. Although there are 100,000 seals from TNA on the website, there are references to 147,000 seals in other archives and these turn out to be from only 10 archives in England. So finding the location of heraldic seals is perhaps the major problem facing the researcher. A wider article would have alerted the reader to the extensive coverage of heraldic seal matrices in the British Museum in online collections, and to the large number of heraldic seals in Durham Seals, also available online. Ailes does mention the large number of heraldic seals included in the *Dictionary of British Arms* published by the Society of Antiquaries in four volumes. But, while this is useful as a Dictionary, as a source for the study of heraldic seals it is very uneven. For instance some TNA seals are only given name and date, while others have the full documentary reference.

Elizabeth New in 'Reconsidering the silent majority: non heraldic personal seals in Medieval Britain' approaches the question of personal seals from a different direction.

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She quotes the estimate by Harvey and McGuinness that non-heraldic personal seals are 80% of the total of all personal seals, while the rest are heraldic. She compares the attention given to heraldic seals, with that given to the seals of the non-armigerous – men and women, including gentry, merchants and yeomen – from all levels of society including unfree peasants, who could and did use seals. It is a very timely and necessary call to scholars to work on this type of material, and New provides ways of tackling this problem by examining agency and choice, and then four case studies on seal-matrices, the early thirteenth-century document of the men of Frieston and Butterwick (Lincolnshire), religious imagery, and, finally, pseudo-heraldic devices. This section shows there is a need for further work here – both on merchants' marks and on the interlinking of names and heraldic devices. There are other neglected types of personal seals to which she could have called attention. The use of the seal with non-personal inscription, which Stuart Rigold, perhaps unhelpfully, defined as 'banal' is one, and those seals with amatory inscriptions, perhaps used for love letters, is another. Both Adrian Ailes and Elizabeth New stress the need for further work on personal seals, both heraldic and non-heraldic, and it is to the credit of this companion that our attention has been drawn to this, and to a wide variety of other problems with seals.

John Cherry