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GARTERS AT WAR: THE EXILED SIR EDWARD WALKER AND THE RENEGADE EDWARD BYSSHE, THEIR WORK AND ITS FATE UNDER THE RESTORED KING CHARLES II

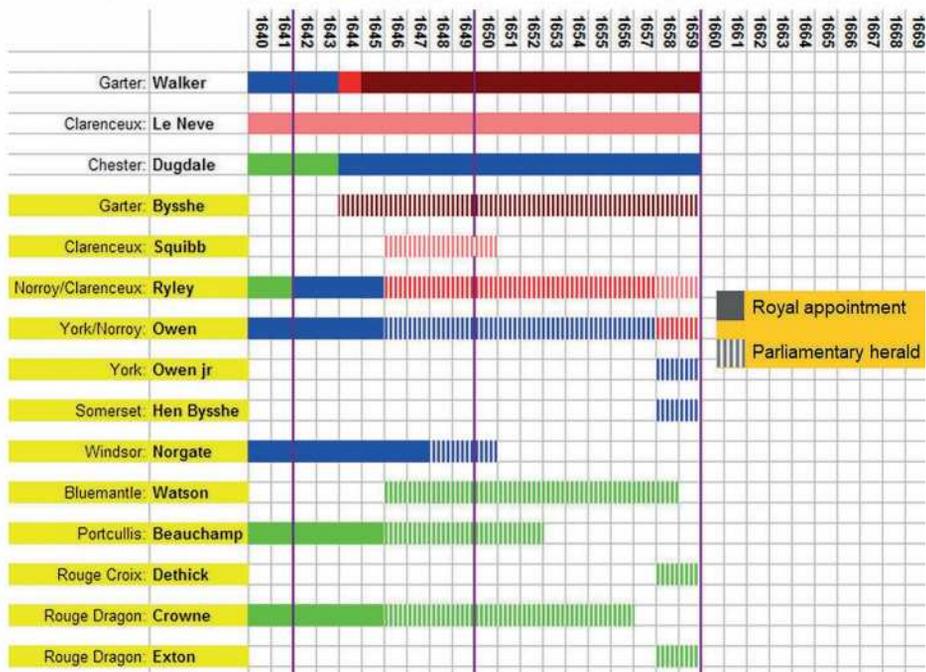
Dr. ANDREW GRAY, F.H.S., a.i.h.

The triumph of the Parliamentary army and the subsequent execution of King Charles I in 1649 might have been a catastrophe for English heraldry, and the College of Arms in particular; but Parliament had taken the precaution of filling the vacant office of Garter Principal King of Arms with one of its own members, Edward Bysshe, who was able to safeguard the priceless collections of the College, and maintain it as a fully staffed, fully functional office of state. Meanwhile, the royal appointee Edward Walker accompanied King Charles on campaign. He subsequently joined the king's successor Charles II in exile. Both Garters issued grants of arms in significant numbers, but when the monarchy was restored in 1660 the acts of the London-based Kings of Arms were annulled. However, Bysshe was allowed to continue as Clarenceux King of Arms under Garter Walker. This offered opportunities for reinstating grants of the Commonwealth heralds, and this talk will trace how far this succeeded.

The English Heralds were probably never busier than in the seventeenth century, when there were visitations in progress, the High Court of Chivalry was in frequent session, there was a constant demand for grants, certificates and pedigrees to validate the new elite, and they enjoyed the steady business afforded by their participation in heraldic funerals and in the creation of monuments.

In 1642 King Charles I's differences with his parliament became insoluble, and the First English Civil War of 1642–46 ensued, later followed, in 1648, by the Second Civil War. Following the King's execution in January 1649 the Rump Parliament ruled as a republican 'Commonwealth' until Oliver Cromwell overthrew his own Parliament in 1653, and soon afterwards began to rule as Lord Protector. Essentially this was a military dictatorship. These were certainly troublesome times; not least for the practice and administration of heraldry, as Wagner stresses in his *Heralds of England*.¹ The English have a talent for muddling through such calamities, and nothing shows this more clearly than the career of Edward Bysshe.

At the outset of the war in early 1642 the College of Arms had a full complement of heralds under Sir John Borough as Garter, with Sir William le Neve and Sir Henry St George as Clarenceux and Norroy. The heralds were Walker, Thompson, Manwaring, Philipot, Norgate and Owen, and the pursuivants were Ryley, Beauchamp, Dugdale and Crowne.² The timeline in **Figure 1** shows the official, or royal, perspective of the succession of heralds through this period. In these timelines I am using shades of reds for kings of arms, blue for heralds, and green for pursuivants. Borough was succeeded as Garter first by St George, and then in 1645 by Edward Walker. A number of heralds remained in office, some of them promoted. Note particularly William Ryley to Lancaster, and William Dugdale to Chester.



Top: *Figure 1*: Succession of royal heralds through the Interregnum; bottom: *Figure 2*: Succession of parliamentary heralds. All figures in this paper by the author unless otherwise stated.

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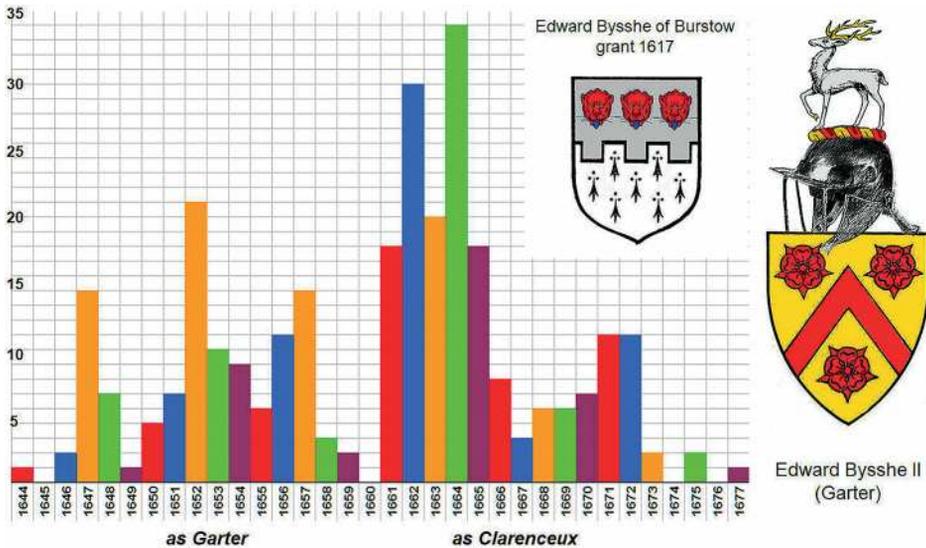


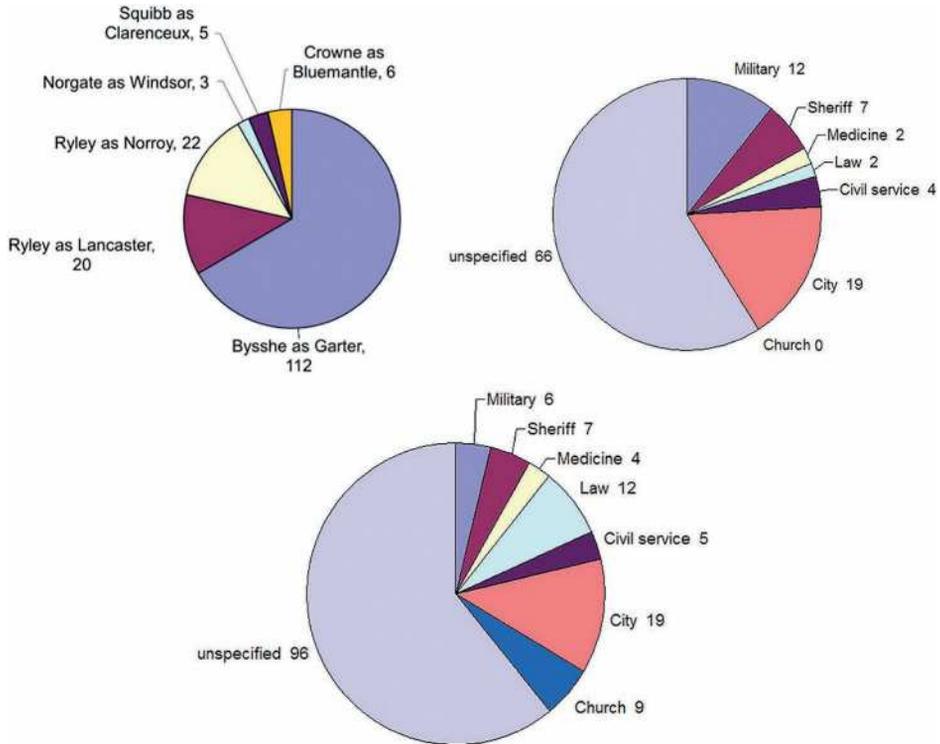
Figure 3: grants by Edward Bysshe as Garter and Clarenceux, with his arms, and those of his father.

By 1645 King Charles had moved his headquarters to Oxford, where the newly-appointed Walker remained with him, and went on to share the exile of young Charles II (which began in 1651) as a key member of his roving court. Le Neve and Dugdale remained loyal to the King; the former vanished into exile and probable dementia, while Dugdale retired to his estates to work on his *Monasticon Anglicanum* and his *Antiquities of Warwickshire*.³ Other heralds went back to work in London. The College's job was still considered to be important, with or without a king. Parliament took steps to ensure that the work was ongoing, while safeguarding the heralds' records; in 1646 it appointed half a dozen officers of arms, some new, some to their existing titles (**Figure 2**). Among them was Edward Bysshe, not then a herald, but an M.P. and antiquary.⁴ It is evident that he was personally concerned about the future of the College, because he had already been occupying the vacated office of Garter for two years.⁵ Beside him was Arthur Squibb as Clarenceux and William Ryley, as Norroy and later Clarenceux. Bysshe's father Edward – also a member of the House of Commons⁶ – had been granted arms in 1617⁷, but later took a different coat, which his son used (**Figure 3**).⁸ I shall be using the 'lobster' helm of parliament's 'New Model Army' as a visual clue to Bysshe's work. Bysshe always identified himself as Garter Principal King of Arms of Englishmen, then the standard formula, as previously used by Borough. Significantly, as late as 1647 Bysshe would put a regnal date in one of his grants, which hints at the pragmatist rather than the servant of the rebellion.⁹

Bysshe's output of grants was not huge, and was higher in the 1650s than it had been in the 1640s (**Figure 3**). Systematic enrolling of grants began with the Restoration, and we are therefore largely reliant on the work of Joseph Foster for information on the grants during Bysshe's Gartership. Foster scoured documents in various repositories including the British Museum and the College of Arms; his researches were published

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by the Harleian Society about a century ago.¹⁰ This forms the core of the figures utilised here, but with a few data added, primarily from College of Arms sources. There is some documentation on the grants made by other Commonwealth heralds, particularly Ryley, but in general the others are less well documented (**Figure 4**).¹¹



Top left: *Figure 4*: Grants by the Parliamentary heralds; top right: *Figure 5*: Bysshe grants as Garter by occupation; bottom: *Figure 6*: Bysshe grants as Clarenceux by occupation.

As to the grantees of arms in this period, where information is available, the majority were to serving military officers and to liverymen, aldermen, and mayors of London (**Figure 5**). Compared with Bysshe's grants from after Restoration of 1660, when he was kept on as Clarenceux, the only real difference is an increase in grants to churchmen and the rise of the Law versus the Army (**Figure 6**). Some examples of arms granted by him to the different occupations is provided to present a flavour of Bysshe's designs: liverymen and mayors, Civil servants and lawyers (**Figure 7**), and a staple of his trade, the sheriff, who to this day has to hang his shield on taking office (**Figure 8**). The dates are dates of grant, where known.¹²

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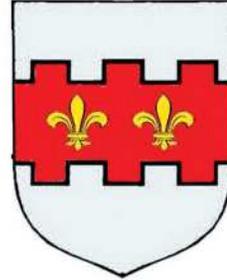
Bysse: military grants



Capt John Francke
of the Lord General's
regiment 1652



Major John Bramston
1653



Lt-Col William Dysney
1651

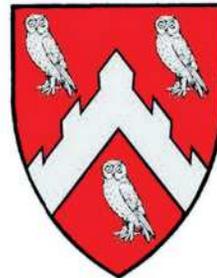
Bysse: civic and livery grants



John Gorst Merchant
of London 1652

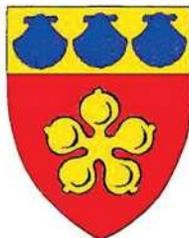


Alderman Richard
Scottow of Norwich 1647

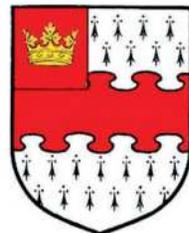


Alderman Edmund Sley
of London 1657

Bysse: civil service and legal grants



William Rowe
Secretary to Parliamentary
Commissioners for Treaties
Scout-master General
1651



Walter Norborne
Reader Inner Temple
1651

Figure 7: Examples of Bysse grants as Garter by occupation.

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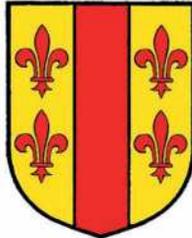
Henry Croucher
Sheriff of Hants
1659



Thomas Turvey
Sheriff of Warwicks
1657



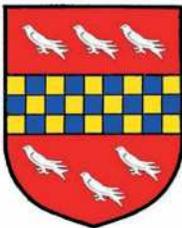
William Gilley
Sheriff of London
1650



Thomas Walker
Sheriff of Surrey
1657



Luke Whittington
Royalist Captain



Henry Kearsley
HM Registrar of Contraband
1656

William Cann
Royalist Mayor of Bristol
1652



Top: *Figure 8*: Bysshe Garter grants to Sheriffs; bottom: *Figure 9*: his grants to Royalists.

We should not assume that all his grantees were supporters of the new regime. In the 1650s a sensible man would accept the status quo. Thus, a captain in the late King's army, a sacked royal excise officer, the mayor who had defended Bristol against Parliament, all came to Bysshe (**Figure 9**). There was nowhere else to go. Bysshe's grants have been gathered from many sources, in the College of Arms and elsewhere.

The other Garter, Edward Walker (**Figure 10**), whose portrait is in the College of Arms, filled important civil service roles for the King, being one of the key personnel in the royal camp even after the capture of the monarch by the forces of parliament in 1646. Since he stayed loyal, he became a nomad, first with the elder then with the younger Charles, and this is reflected in the places of origin of his various grants (**Figure 11**).¹³

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1635 Blanch Lyon
 1637 Rouge Dragon
 1638 Chester
 1643 Norroy
 1645 Garter
 1642 King's Secretary
 1644 Sec^y Privy Council



Figure 10: Sir Edward Walker by William Dobson c. 1645 (Wikimedia Commons), with his arms, and details of his career.

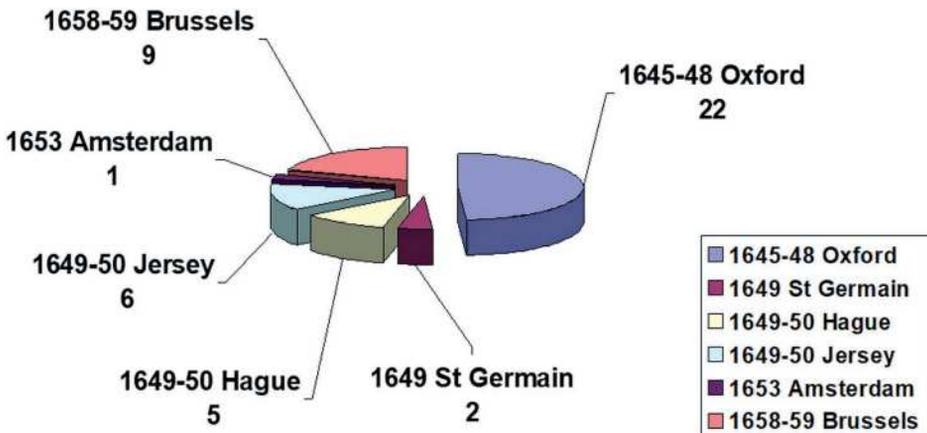


Figure 11: Garter Walker's peripatetic grants

Much of his work has the character of reward to royal supporters, either by explicit or implicit augmentation. Common charges used by him include the lion passant and the rose, sometimes Tudor. Under Charles II in exile, his augmentations diversified. Crowns often appear, and lions passant guardant. His recipients included French, Dutch, and German members of the entourage. All these reward grants were specifically logged as "Gratis" (Figure 12).¹⁴

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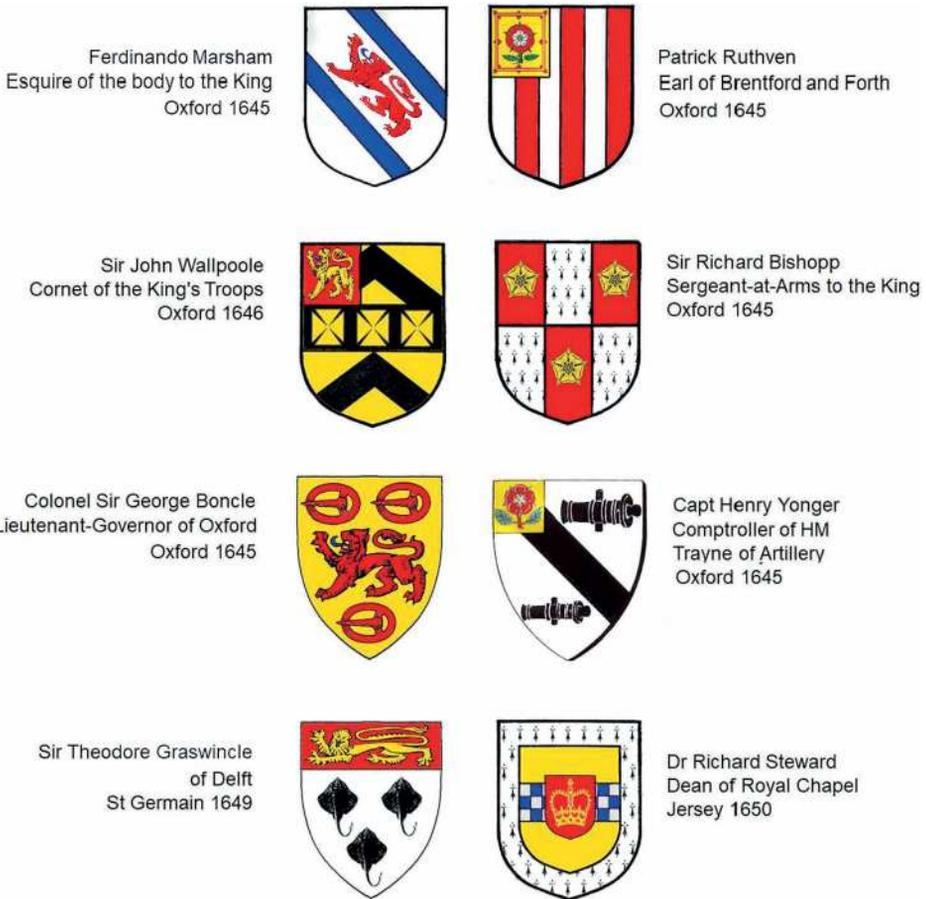


Figure 12: Examples of Walker's pre-Restoration grants.

After Oliver Cromwell's death, his son and heir Richard Cromwell wanted only to return to the life of a country farmer. The restored Parliament begged the King to come back. With him came Garter Walker, and Dugdale, so that by 1661 the College was back to strength – and legal (**Figure 13**). Several were new appointments; some had served Parliament, but were permitted to resume their roles of nearly twenty years before. Two of them, Dethick and Bysshe, had never received a royal warrant. Walker objected to the renegade Bysshe, but he had run the College competently and preserved its archives, and was permitted to stay on as Clarenceux.¹⁵

Walker's output surged, as the crown sought to recognise everyone who had assisted it during the *Troublesome Times*. Many famous augmentations date from this period (**Figure 14**).¹⁶ There was the matter of the grants which had been made without royal authority by 'disloyal' heralds. This was all struck out by Royal Warrant.¹⁷

Bysshe's output also surged following the Restoration of the monarchy. This included rewards for royalists, but some (as Walker had feared) comprised regrants or confirmations of his former grants. No less than a third of his grants were reissued by

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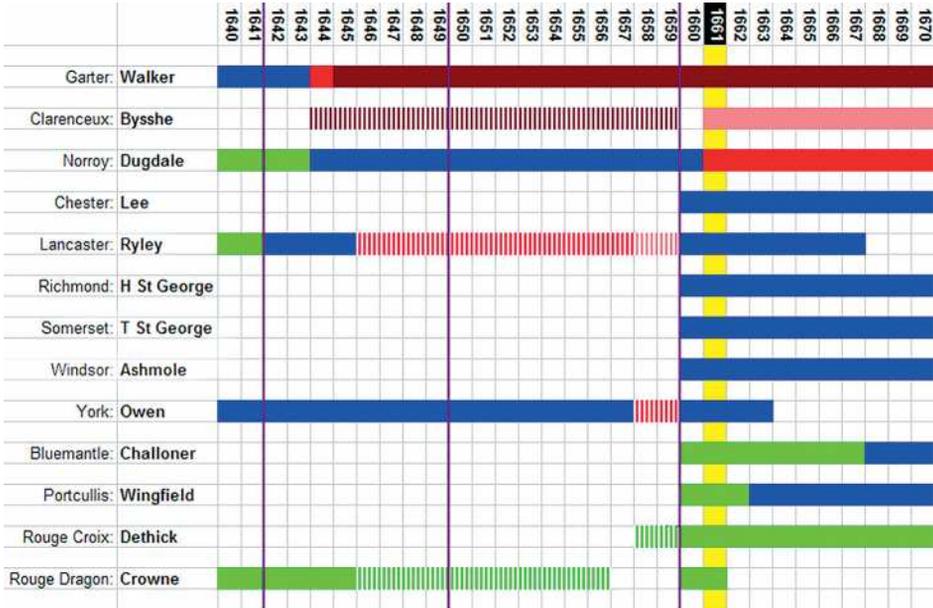
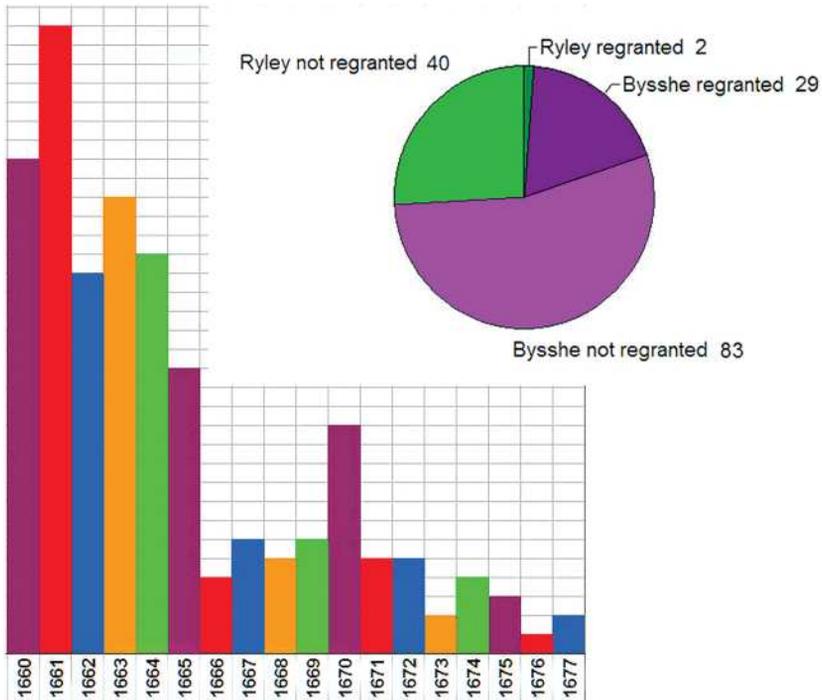


Figure 13: Succession of the heralds at the Restoration.



Left: Figure 14: Walker's post-Restoration grants per year; right: Figure 15: Regrants of Bysshe's and Ryley's Parliamentary grants.

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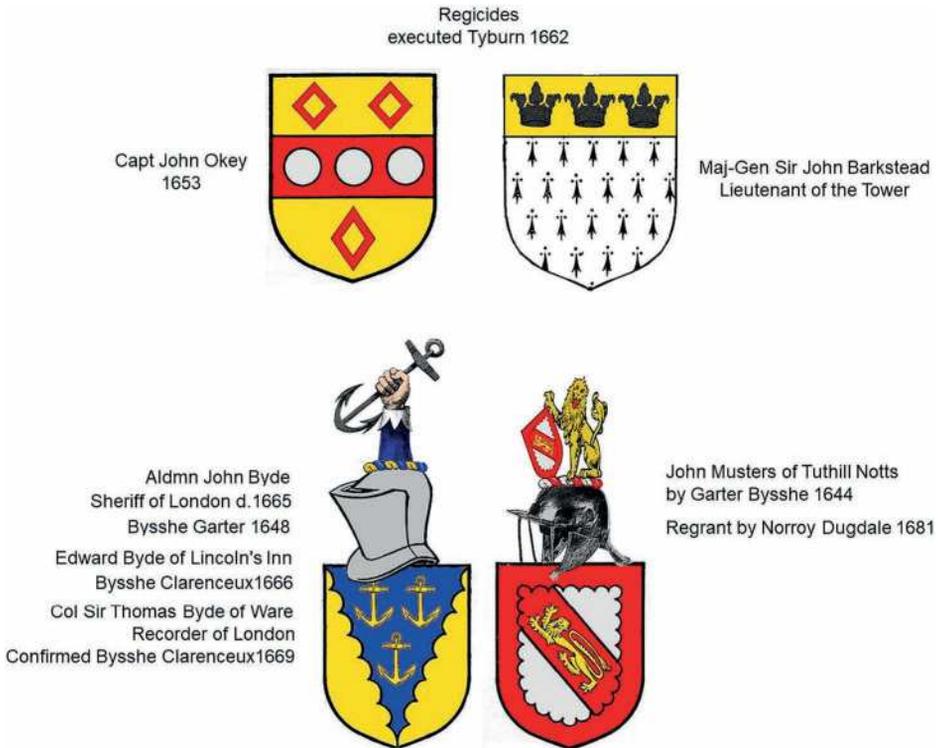


Figure 16: Regicides and regrants.

him, or sometimes by Walker or Dugdale (**Figure 15** and **16**). Ryley's grants following the execution of Charles I appear to have stood, perhaps because at least some of them were under the office of Lancaster – his legitimate title.¹⁸ Some republican grantees were in no position to re-apply. These included John Okey and John Barkstead (the latter a recipient of one of the Lord Protector's knighthoods) who had both signed the execution warrant for Charles I. As regicides they became fugitives and outlaws, and were hanged drawn and quartered at Tyburn in 1662 (**Figure 16**).

One of Bysshe's first grants, made to John Musters in 1644 when he was strictly speaking only the "caretaker Garter", was not regranted until 1681. Some, such as the grant to John Byde of London in 1648, were regranted or confirmed to heirs of grantees (**Figure 16**). Some of his grants to royalists actually received augmentations: William Cann's son Robert, also a Mayor of Bristol, was embellished with leopard's heads by Walker. Robert Foley, supplier of shot to the Navy, was given a crown, also by Walker (**Figure 17**).¹⁹ Some families with grants that were technically invalid continued to use their arms. For instance, the Norfolk family of Long, whose Bysshe-granted arms were illustrated in a contemporary manuscript²⁰, were still using them in the late eighteenth century.²¹

The Bysshe grant to Paul Nicoll of Hendon was featured in the *Heraldry Gazette* nearly fifty years ago.²² It was in the hands of a descendant who kept a pub in Northamptonshire, as a newspaper cutting from the *Morning Advertiser* shows.²³ The arms feature magpies,

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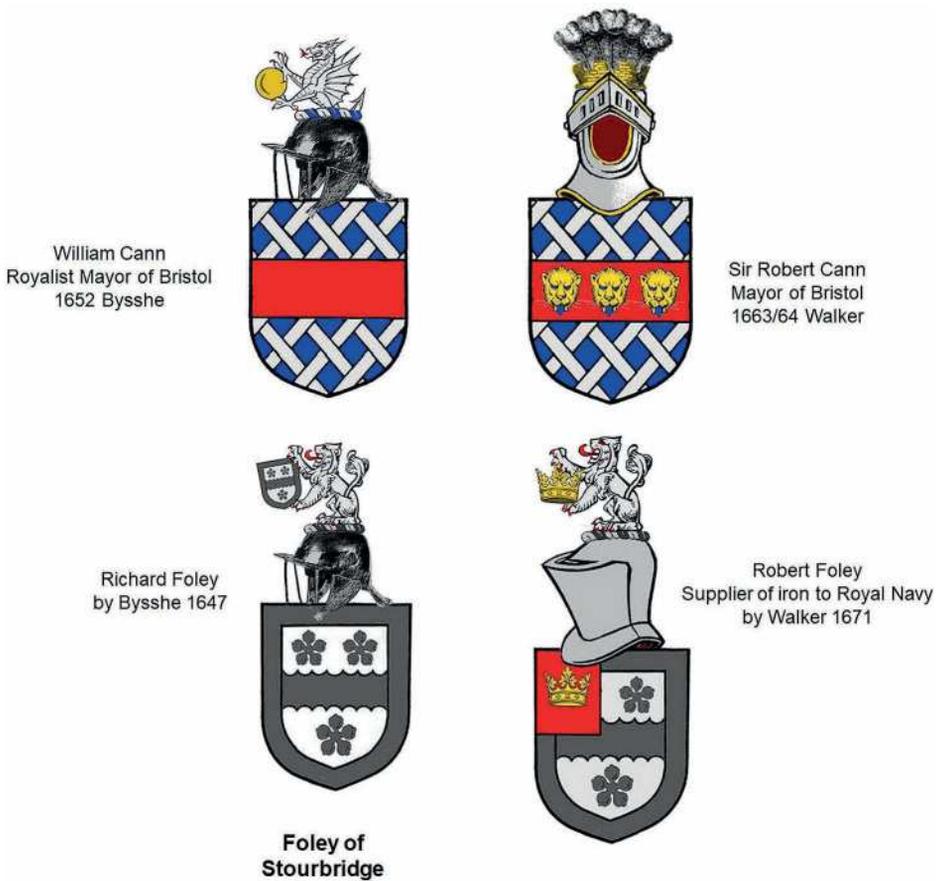


Figure 17: Regrants with augmentation.

appropriate to the recipient as one of a family of hereditary moneyers at the Tower Mint. The family flourished into the nineteenth century, using these arms on monuments and on hatchments in Middlesex.²⁴ Another example is provided by the well-known contemporary Deedes family of Hythe in Kent. The original recipient was Julius Deedes, in 1653.²⁵ No regrant was obtained, but the Deedes family used these arms consistently for the next three and a half centuries. They appear on monuments in Hythe church, and on the gateway to the townhouse of Brigadier General Sir Wyndham Deedes (d.1956) at Bethnal Green. The irregularity of the grant came to a head when the General's nephew, William Deedes, long-serving editor of *The Daily Telegraph*, was elevated to the House of Lords and Garter Colin Cole suggested granting him supporters. When shown the Bysshe grant Cole pronounced it null and void and offered a new one, a proposal which Lord Deedes dismissed contemptuously, but with humour in his column.²⁶ A petition to the Queen to annul the annulment was considered, but came to nought.

There is no known portrait of Bysshe, but we may know what sort of tabard he wore; in Hugh Stanford London's opinion, the Commonwealth heralds wore the Commonwealth arms of England and Ireland.²⁷ At the Restoration there was a frantic

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hunt for royal tabards for the heralds.²⁸ Two of them were included in a set of sketches by Peter Lely of a Garter procession in the 1660s, and it has been suggested that they are William Ryley (Lancaster) and Elias Ashmole (Windsor). Unfortunately the sketch does not include any of the kings of arms.²⁹

In summary, the 1640s and 1650s were a disruptive yet productive period for English heraldry. A generation when authority was disputed left a rich source for research, but also left issues which may never be properly resolved.

¹ Sir Anthony Wagner, *Heralds of England* (London, 1967), chapter 8.

² Biographical information on the seventeenth-century heralds and their armorial bearings are for the most part based on the information gathered by Hugh Stanford London in *The College of Arms* (London, 1963).

³ Sir William Dugdale, *The antiquities of Warwickshire*, (London, 1656); *Monasticon Anglicanum*, 3 vols (London, 1661–82).

⁴ J. S. Crossette, 'Edward Bysshe (c. 1615–79)', in B.D. Henning (ed.), *The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1660–1690* (1983). Online at www.historyofparliamentonline.org.

⁵ Wagner, op. cit., and London, *College of Arms*, op. cit.

⁶ Alan Davidson and Ben Coates, 'Edward Bysshe (d. 1655)', in *History of Parliament*, op. cit.

⁷ B.L. Harleian MS. 1507, f. 388.

⁸ Willoughby A. Littledale (ed.), *A collection of Miscellaneous Grants, etc* part I p. 29 (Harl. Soc. vol. 76, 1925), p. 29.

⁹ College of Arms MS R.22, Grants of Arms by Byshe, Squibb Ryley &c.

¹⁰ Joseph Foster, W. Harry Rylands (ed.), *Grantees of Arms named in Docquets and Patents to the end of the Seventeenth Century* (Harl. Soc. vol. 66, 1915).

¹¹ College of Arms, Miscellaneous Papers per Anstis & Hunter Blair.

¹² Foster, *Grantees*, op. cit.

¹³ College of Arms MSS R.19 and R.23, *Walker's Grants*.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Wagner *Heralds*, op. cit.

¹⁶ *Walker's Grants*, op. cit.

¹⁷ College of Arms MS I.25 f.82v, Royal Warrant 6 Sep 1660.

¹⁸ College of Arms MS R.22, op. cit.

¹⁹ College of Arms MSS R.19 and R.23, op. cit.

²⁰ BL Harleian MS.1105 f.15.

²¹ Hatchments and Armorial Panels (Heraldry Archive, the Heraldry Society)

²² *Heraldry Gazette* Old Series, vol.2, no.29, Jan 1964.

²³ *Morning Advertiser*, 1 March 1964 (Society of Licensed Victuallers).

²⁴ Hatchments and Armorial Panels (Heraldry Archive, the Heraldry Society)

²⁵ BL Additional MS. 8932, f. 225.

²⁶ *The Daily Telegraph*, 21 November 1994.

²⁷ H. Stanford London, 'The Herald's Tabards under the Commonwealth', in *Notes and Queries*, vol. 198 (1953), pp. 276–8.

²⁸ Wagner *Heralds*, p. 262.

²⁹ Edward Croft-Murray, and Paul Hulton, *Catalogue of British Drawings* vol. 1, p. 409 (British Museum, 1960).