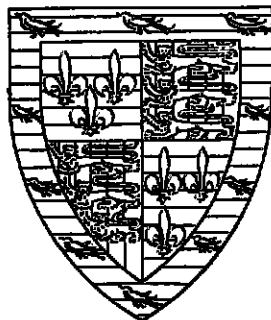
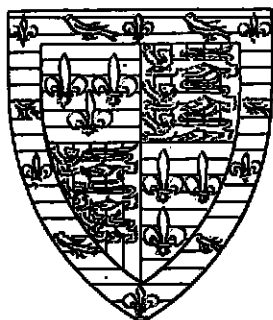
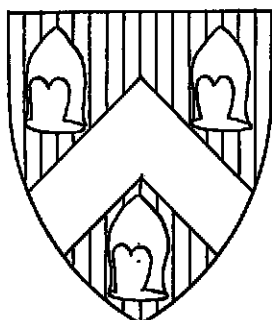


COATS-of-ARMS of some RICARDIAN CONTEMPORARIES

LAWRENCE T. GREENSMITH

THREE TUDORS: OWEN, EDMUND AND JASPER



The story of the marriage of Owen Tudor (d. 1461) to Catherine of Valois, Queen Dowager of England, is much too good to spoil with considerations of whether the marriage was legal or even took place: they do not matter.

He came of an old Welsh family (although not so old as Cadwallader), even if he had no better office than that of Clerk of Catherine's Wardrobe. He fathered her later sons, who included Edmund and Jasper: they were thus half-brothers of King Henry VI. It was not until her death in 1437 that King Henry's council decided that he had committed lese-majesty. He was consigned to Newgate, from which he escaped twice. Before the council again, he must have pleaded his cause to good effect, for the King granted him an annuity: at the same time the King gained a loyal adherent, for Owen long after was captured at Mortimer's Cross and beheaded. Henry also legitimated Edmund and Jasper, and in 1453 created them Earls respectively of Richmond and Pembroke.

Edmund (?1430-1456) had married Margaret Beaufort in 1455 and their son, later to be King Henry VII, was posthumous. Little is told about him and the reason for his early death was not clear.

Jasper (?1431-1495) fought at St. Albans (1455) and was in charge of Irish and Welsh at Mortimer's Cross when his father was taken. He survived much, including flight from Britain after Tewkesbury (1471) with the nephew he had brought up. He was back again at Bosworth (1485). Then, created Duke of Bedford, he held high offices and was active against the insurrectionist Lovell, Stafford and Simnel. He was commander in the French war of 1492. He survived until 1495, although at 64 he was hardly old.

The arms are interesting. The Tudors had borne a *red shield with a silver chevron and three helmets*. Owen's sons renounced that shield for *differenced royal arms*, presumably on the strength of being half-brothers of the King; but their claim to their new arms was very thin: they had no English royal blood. If Edmund's son Henry, who of course bore his father's arms, had a better claim it was on different grounds: his mother at least was a Beaufort and descended from John of Gaunt. The *differences* in the arms of the brothers were not dissimilar, both being *blue borders charged with (1) golden fleurs-de-llys and martlets and (2) martlets only*.

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