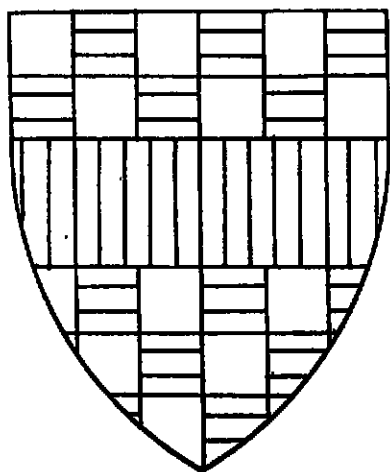
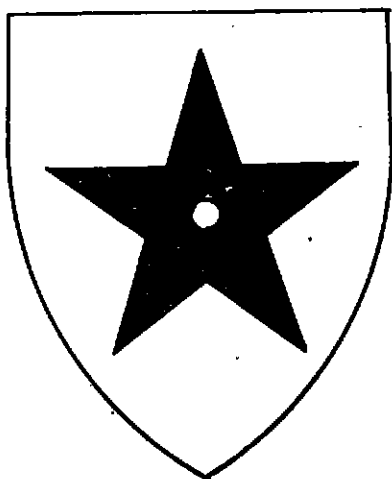


COATS-OF-ARMS OF SOME RICARDIAN CONTEMPORARIES

LAWRENCE T. GREENSMITH



CLIFFORD



ASSHETON

The CLIFFORDS: From 1414 to 1523

Prior to 1138, a Walter Fitzpounce acquired Clifford Castle (near Hereford) by marriage and assumed the name. He was the father of 'Fair Rosamund.' In direct descent there followed ten more Clifford barons and Thomas, 12th Baron was born in 1414. A Lancastrian, and at the age of 40, he was killed at the 1455 Battle of St. Albans together with Edmund, Earl of Somerset and others well-known. Our Richard was aged only 3.

His son, John, 13th Baron (1435?-1461) was nick-named 'The Butcher' but some doubt that the title was deserved. To him is attached the story of the stabbing of the young Earl of Rutland at Wakefield in 1460 (where Richard, Duke of York, fell fighting) and the Battle at Sandal Castle. Within three months at Towton, Clifford was killed in his 26th year.

Henry, son of John and 14th Baron (?1455-1523), was known as the 'Shepherd Lord' and for little else. He evidently liked a quiet life and had it—until he was near 70: by Henry VII he was restored to his title and estates after Bosworth.

The shield is *checky, gold and blue, with a red fess*. The first barons had used a bendlet but a second son somewhere differenced with a fess and the line of barons must have continued with him. There have been many variations

among the collateral descendants: change of bendlet into a bend with charges, the addition of a border to the fess, charges on the fess, the substitution of a chief, the use of both fess and bend, not to mention other quarterings.

The present Baron Clifford of Chudleigh still uses the arms as shown here.

Sir RALPH ASSHETON: fl. 1460-1483

There is more to say about his arms than Sir Ralph himself. He evidently rendered useful (and much rewarded) service to Richard both when he was Lord of the North and King. Buckingham had been Constable of England when Sir Ralph, as Vice-Constable for the occasion, was in charge of the court which tried and sentenced him; and he was to become Vice-Constable again. The records seem very scanty about dates of both birth and death (it is the D.N.B. which contents itself with the above). They also vary about the manner of death and whether or not it was by his own hand. Kendall asserts that he was at Bosworth and was indeed one of Richard's Knights of the body: seemingly the D.N.B. does not agree and other confirmation is hard to find.

The arms *silver with a black mullet, pierced* give opportunity to say something about the mullet: it may puzzle some. The word looks English enough but is derived from the French *molette*, which still means a spur-rowel. Logically, Scots heraldry calls it just that: it is what it looks like. When it draws it without the hole it—again logically—calls it a star. In English heraldry (which is not the same thing as popular usage) it is never called a star but a *mullet* or, as it may be, a *mullet pierced*: either way, it normally has five straight-sided points (other numbers must be specified). If English heraldry has a star at all it is one with (usually six) *wavy* rays and the French name *estoile*: more rays—even 12 or 16—are often alternatively straight and wavy.

The arms of the present Baron Ashton, although with other charges also, are still entirely tinctured black and silver and the pierced mullet is the most conspicuous feature.

BOOK REVIEWS

RICHARD, THIRD DUKE OF YORK, by Ian Postlethwaite. Published by the Yorkshire Branch of the Richard III Society, 1974, 40 pages, 55p.

This booklet was written by a member of the Society, and published by the Yorkshire Branch. It appears to be the first publication devoted solely to the third Duke of York, father of Richard III. The Duke at his birth was a most unimportant person, the son of the Earl of Cambridge, younger brother of Edward Second Duke of York. He was orphaned at the age of four by the attainder and execution of his father, his mother having died at his birth, but he eventually became the most important magnate in the kingdom after the King, and heir to the throne itself. A change such as this, which took place over the course of some 50 years is covered by a vast mass of documentation, and the present booklet cannot thus be more than a summary of events in the