

From the *Transactions* of the
Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society

**Arms and Badges of Edward Stafford, third Duke of
Buckingham**

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1932, Vol. 54, 133-136

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THE ARMS AND BADGES OF EDWARD
STAFFORD, THIRD DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM

by the REV. R. JEFFCOAT, M.A.

ROUND the font in the church of Littleton-on-Severn are set a number of heraldic tiles, brought from the ruins of Thornbury Castle, the magnificent residence which Edward Stafford, 3rd Duke of Buckingham, left unfinished when his tragic fate overtook him in 1521.

Some years ago when I was Rector, I carefully compared these with others preserved in the castle, and by means of tracings was able to supply defects and make complete drawings. The font at Littleton is under the tower, so that the tiles are at the mercy of the bellringers' hobnailed boots; and those in the castle are also placed where they are well trodden. It is therefore desirable that a permanent record of them should be preserved in the *Transactions*, and I hope that these notes and illustrations may provide this.

ARMS OF THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM (plate 1)

(1) A set of four tiles. 'England' (*i.e.* France and England quarterly) in a silver border. Two antelopes or white harts as supporters. Surrounded by the Garter (St. George and the dragon on the end of the strap).

In 1474 the heralds decided that Henry Stafford, 2nd Duke of Buckingham (d. 1483, father of Duke Edward), as heir to Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, youngest son of Edward III, might 'beire his cootte alone'; *viz.* England within a bordure argent.¹

¹ *The Complete Peerage* (new ed.), II, 389 note f.

In the angles of the design are the duke's badges :

1. The Stafford knot.
2. The flaming axle for Woodstock, sometimes called a thunderbolt.
3. The mantle of Brecknock (azure with gold cord) as Lord of Brecon by descent from Bernard of Neufmarché.
4. The white swan ducally gorged and chained or of de Bohun.

The roses, if not merely decorative, may be the red roses of Lancaster.

(2) A tile, one of a set of four, showing a quarter of a circular band inscribed with *Deo Gratias* (thanks be to God), which was one of the duke's 'words' or mottoes, and appears as such on the great gateway of Thornbury Castle, like his other 'word' *Doresnavent* (henceforth). Within this is a smaller circular band, the lettering on which is difficult to decipher, but I think it reads: *In no(mine) Christi*, the last word being represented as usual by *xpi*, as in the Early Christian Chi Rho monogram. At the centre of the set is a rose.

(3) A single tile with the fleur-de-lis, one of a set of four. Whether this is a royal badge, or merely decorative, I cannot say.

TILES (plate II)

(1) The white hart (or antelope ar:) horned and chained ducally gorged or.

(2) The flaming axle of Woodstock, between two Stafford knots.

(3) The swan of de Bohun.

(4) Arms of de Bohun as Earl of Northampton.

(5) Arms and quarterings of the Duke of Buckingham :

1. England with a bordure argent. (As there was not room for France and England quarterly, the first quarter, *viz.* France, stands for the whole).

2. De Bohun as Earl of Hereford and Essex.
3. De Bohun as Earl of Northampton, azure a bend silver cotised gold between six gold lions differenced from 2 by three mullets.
4. Stafford, gold a chevron gules.

The helmet is supported by two white heraldic antelopes ; the crest probably represents the white swan out of a red crown of the Bohuns as earls of Stafford. Though he also had as a crest : on a cap of estate, a leopard gold crowned gules, which was the crest inherited from Sir William de Bohun, Earl of Northampton, who died in 1360. The earldoms of Hereford and Essex were inherited from the brother, Sir Humphrey, who died in 1361.

(6) The only example of this tile is in Littleton church. The late Sir W. St. John Hope helped me by identifying the shield as that of Edward, 3rd Duke of Buckingham, impaling the arms of his wife Alianor, daughter of Henry Percy, 3rd Duke of Northumberland. The blazon is as follows :

France and England quarterly in a bordure argent (as before for the Duke of Buckingham), impaling Percy, viz.

1. Quarterly, or a lion rampant azure (Lovaine) and gules 3 lucies or (de Lucy), Percy ancient.
2. Barry or and vert a bend gules, Poynings.
3. Azure 5 fusils conjoined in fess or, Percy modern.
4. Gules 3 lions passant argent a bend azure, Fitz-Payne. On an escutcheon of pretence, or 3 piles in point azure, de Bryan.

Alianor's brother, the 4th Duke of Northumberland, quartered the arms of de Bryan. It seems therefore that at the time this tile was made her father was not entitled to quarter it.

In explanation of the Poynings and de Bryan arms among the Percy quarterings we may quote *The Complete*

Peerage (new ed., II, 362), which states that the Earls of Northumberland styled themselves Barons Bryan from a marriage with Eleanor, grand-daughter and heiress of Robert Lord Poynings, whose father Richard is said to have married Isabel, daughter and heiress of Robert Baron Fitz-Payne by Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of Sir Guy de Bryan. The claim was erroneous, but the Elizabeth through whom the Earls of Northumberland claimed the barony might have been the daughter of Sir Guy de Bryan (who received a writ of summons from 1350 onwards), and sister of the sons above mentioned.

Sir Guy de Bryan, Lord Bryan, is of course well known by his tomb in Tewkesbury Abbey, where he was buried in virtue of his marriage with Elizabeth, widow of Hugh Lord Despenser, whom he survived for nearly thirty years (d. 1390).



ARMS OF THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM ON FLOOR-TILE,
LITTLETON-ON-SEVERN

ph. Rev. R. Jeffcoat



HERALDIC TILES FROM THORNBURY CASTLE NOW IN LITTLETON-ON-SEVERN CHURCH

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