

A KNOTTY PROBLEM

By our embroidery correspondent

By now, many of you will have seen the picture of the sample embroidered knot in gold that Master Howes has sourced for the group. Others may have been lucky enough to see it. In case you haven't, it is reproduced here. I'm sure you will agree that it is excellent, and Andy is to be congratulated for getting us this far.

Readers of the forum¹ will know, however, that a debate has sprung up over the actual colour that the knot should be. Opinion is divided between gold (represented by yellow) and silver (represented by white, as on most of our present liveries). Initial research suggested that the knot colour should be gold/yellow.

Historically, the Stafford household² liveries used white knots. At some point someone did a little research and decided on yellow, and some time after that, a little more research suggested white actually was correct.

The problem lies in a confusion between the different badges adopted by the two Dukes of Buckingham, both of whom used the red and black colours, but with different badges. Not to mention confusion with other members of the Stafford family scattered around the country,³ such as John Stafford, Earl of Wiltshire.

In addition, there is the problem that which duke's retinue we portray often changes from event to event: Humphrey, the 1st duke, died at Northampton in 1460;

while Henry, the 2nd duke, was born in 1455, and his minority only ended in 1473, so he is unlikely to have played a major role until after Tewkesbury.

You would have thought it would be an easy task to search the literature for the livery of one duke and go with that. Unfortunately, the sources don't agree.



The sample embroidered knot. The small embroidered version is pictured; the larger version will be a mixture of appliqué and embroidery. The original image can be found at www.bucks-retinue.org.uk/images/livery_knot.jpg

For instance, one source⁴ in my possession states that Humphrey used both the swan and a gold cartwheel in flames; while the Earl of Wiltshire⁵ used silver knots, charged with a red crescent; and Henry "bore the same standard without the differencing marks", i.e. silver (white) knots. The Lance and Longbow Society largely agree with this.⁶

Neither of these sources provide evidence that the gold knot was used by the Dukes of Buckingham in the 15th century.⁷

So, what knot colour do we choose? (Do we always have to have a knot?)

Before we answer these two questions we may need to decide which duke's retinue we actually portray (or do we not specify and portray both, plus other family members as the event requires?) It would be a shame to spend a lot of money on these knots and find out we had chosen wrongly.

To this end, a good deal of research is being carried out by several people; I hope to have more in the next issue.

Check your bookshelves now!

Footnotes appear on back page.

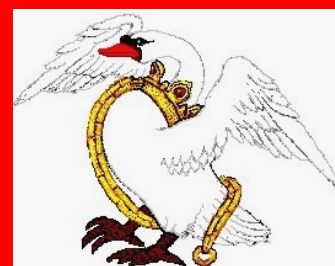
WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE?

In this month's inaction-packed episode, I bring you the Old Sarum event report (page 2 ad infinitum), and photos and comment from Lincoln (page 5) and Blore Heath (page 6).

For those of you who like the intellectual challenge of competitions I have the world's first *Spot the Bill* (and who knows, the last). If you want to see the winning entry for last issue's caption competition, it's somewhere on the back page (page 8). I make no apologies for the innuendo.

Many of you will have heard rumours about the feast, and I can confirm that they are all untrue – we are not going to the West Indies courtesy of the National Lottery, and neither is it going to be in a big tent at Tutbury. Mistress Ribbins has done some sterling work in tracking down a new venue for us in Wales, at Llangollen Youth Hostel, in, um, Llangollen. Feast details on the back page.

For those interested in the knot, you may also be interested that Andy is also sourcing embroidered swans. The original artwork is pictured below; a picture of the sample will be reproduced when it is available.



Have a happy appropriated pagan festival, and a very Buckingham new year!

DUKE HARRY'S DIARY

Who have we been beating up so far this season?

OLD SARUM 24-26 AUGUST 2002 BATTLE SPECTACULAR

The end of the summer draws near, so my retinue were drawn south again to the sunny climes of Wiltshire, to camp in the outer bailey of an early castle. My troops were joined by many people in strange attire. Some referred to themselves as 'Romano-British' and others 'Civil War' and even some 'Squaddies' who my ladies kept trying to get silk stockings and 'chocolate' off.

The majority of camp was set up for once in glorious sunlight, which meant that tent pegs could be easily found, and slopes could if necessary, be avoided. However the majority of tents did not escape the presence of some very patriotic bugs – red and black in colour.



'EGGS - THE NEWE BACON'

Jo, after the queues around the cooking pans in the morn

The first night of this campaign was spent awaiting those with delicacies known as 'fish and chips' and much drunken cavorting was had as my soldiers and camp followers caught up on gossip and engaged in their favourite activity of all time – flirting! The morning saw many hangovers, or in the cases of certain members who remained drunk until way beyond lunchtime the next day!

The aim of this campaign was to demonstrate our military skills in comparison with people of different times and attire. Our dis-

play (the only one of the day) consisted of a parade onto the field, a batch of light sparring between the billmen, a noisy interlude from Gwynifer (when she could be persuaded to say something!), and a display of the efficiency of the archers when pitched against the billblock. The first day, the archers managed to take down half the billblock,

'CAN YOU STAND STILL?'

Holly

'WHY?'

Cleggy

'I CAN'T FOCUS!'

Holly

but on the second day when joined by a couple more archers, the entirety of the billblock was eliminated, admittedly some members did require the use of the sidearms which some archers carry!

The rest of the day was spent exploring the site, watching the displays of arms from

The Wrecking Crew At Large

Autumn/Winter

Old Sarum
Lincoln Bishop's Palace
Blore Heath '02
Harley Watch
Spot the Bill
Petz Corner
(Whitby)



these other 'periods' and general relaxing. The end of the displays was finished in true 'Kirby' Style, by a grand parade, from which as per normal, the Romano-British were missing from. And again, in true 'Kirby' style, no one could stop my camp-followers (Mistresses Wetton and Gilmore) from gaining a 'jeep' ride.

Early evening saw the introduction of possibly a new tradition from the young 'Guy Cuthbert' lookalike, young Master Simon, to whit the multi-period Krypton Factor Test. Owing to some unruly game that this young gentleman had been playing with Master Connor his

Quote from Kirby:

'THERE ARE DISTINCT ADVANTAGES TO BEING A KIT JUNKIE'

Tee – after managing a complete change of kit after entering a wet dress competition during the Saturday parade

Duke Harry's Diary – Old Sarum



'AN OLD SCHOOL FRIEND RECOGNISED ME AFTER 20 YEARS IN SALFORD, I HADN'T A CLUE WHO HE WAS'

Allan

'I GUESS IT'S THE HAGGARD, WORN, DESTINED-FOR-PRISON LOOK – DOESN'T CHANGE'

Anon

(SwanSong will respect the confidentiality of the suppliers of all, um, controversial quotes. Unless Allan turns up on my doorstep with a large axe, of course.)



hat had ended down a 16ft latrine pit (out of use now luckily for the owner of said hat). The retrieval of this hat required the kind assistance of some 'WW1' soldiers and a flick-knife and a long length of cord.

Despite their ingenuity, however, Master Hadfield and Mistress Emma turned up from camp armed with another long length of cord with two hooks fastened on and the dog chains (think they were going to use them to tie the children up?). Male pride was now duly tested as one of the WW1 soldiers and Master Hadfield engaged in a race to retrieve the hat. However this race just resulted in the hat being flipped over and less easy to hook.

Now, running out of options, the English Civil War guys were enlisted with their 18ft pikes to use as chopsticks. In the end, Mistress



Duke Harry's Diary – Old Sarum

Emma's idea won as the hat was eventually retrieved using a hook lashed onto the end of one of the pikes. The end result being that Masters Simon and Connor have duly been nominated for the St Dimpner award at the feast.

'POP'

Anti-aircraft gun

**'BA-BA-BA-BA-BA-
BOOOOOOM!'**

50 Caliber

While Mistress Holly, still recovering from her July hangover (I think), cooked dinner, some necessary practice was done by the archers practising for the next day. A plastic chair was duly despatched by the sharp aims of Master Howes, Master Hewitt, Master Brown and Master Leach.

Sunday night was spent by the majority of my retinue clustered around the beer tent, socialising with the rest of the people encamped around Old Sarum castle. It was decided that the Medieval Lot as per normal were fairly depraved, and noisier than the majority of other periods. However my camp followers did manage to 'persuade' a fair number of Squaddies to climb the Sunshine Mountain with them.

However those members of the retinue who remained around the camp fire did not miss out. They got taken on a cultural ex-



Lesson No1: Never, ever, let children get their hands on weapons unless you have tied their feet together, and flown them to another country first.

other jeep ride from flirting with 'squaddies' the night before. As an observant, morning drill practice among the different periods involved a lot of pride as each period tried to demonstrate that they were better, but I'm sure I must be biased in my final decision that Red and Black liveries are the order of the day and that our drill display, despite smaller numbers was definitely the best. Old friends Master Roe and Mistress Alison gave a flying visit around lunchtime to say Hello and remind us that they still existed.

change by the Romano-British where bare-bottom smacking in time to music was performed to them. Bracken, as ever a critic, made a pointed statement by turning his back to the performance.

The second day of display continued along similar lines as mentioned earlier, apart from two of the camp followers, Mistresses Holly and Gilmore gaining yet an-

The final parade demonstrated the almost famous skill of EH of minimal organisation. My

**'I THOUGHT I'D
HALLUCINATED
MARCUS – HE WAS
THERE WHILE I
WAS DRUNK, BUT
NOT THE NEXT
DAY'**

Holly (don't worry, we often feel like that, Holly)



Duke Harry's Diary – Old Sarum/Lincoln

men were the first onto the field, followed by the rest of these people in strange kit, and then we were left standing there while an impromptu 'Captain's meeting' was held on the field while the participants in the parade decided who was going to leave the field first. In the end it was decided by a race between my men and the English Civil War. Need I really mention that Red and Black won the day?

'LAST NIGHT I DISTINCTLY REMEMBER FINISHING A BOTTLE OF JACK, YET WHEN I WOKE UP THIS MORNING I FOUND AN EMPTY BOTTLE OF TEQUILA BY MY BED'

Chris



**LINCOLN, BISHOP'S PALACE
17-18 AUGUST**



'NOW FOR MY DISGUISE'

Chris, donning moustache

'THAT'S NOT A HORSE, IT'S A CROCODILE'

Paul Hadfield



Duke Harry's Diary – Blore Heath

BLORE HEATH 21–22 SEPTEMBER

All I can say here is: those who would boast about their prowess and ridicule my retinue – BEWARE!

I think they got the point.

Several times in fact.

Preparing the new troops.

Well, you have to make the practice more difficult than any fight they'll actually encounter.



'COME ON!! YOU THINK YOU'RE SO GOOD? FIGHT ME!!!!'

Paul Hadfield

HARLEY WATCH



Oh, what's this about Allan's new career as a mail (sic) model?

Ah well, any excuse to get photos published ... happy to oblige.

If any of you had got up at 5 a.m. on Sunday to, um, walk the dogs, you would have seen the camp like this.

Damn cold though!



SPOT THE BILL

Following in the spirit of many newspapers and their tedious spot-the-ball competitions, *SwanSong*, offers its own version: *Spot The Bill*.

In the accompanying picture, taken at Blore Heath, the gun crew are quite obviously trying to take out a massed charge by an entire company. However, just for fun, we have removed *all* the other soldiers.

Can you use your powers of deduction and tell us where they are?



Duke Harry's Diary

PETZ CORNER



Further to the revelations in *SwanSong 9*, regarding our own Master Marcus Petz's night job in London modelling Xena-style leather armour, comes evidence of other activities in Whitby.



And finally, members of my retinue made their annual pilgrimage to the Whitby Goth Weekend, paying homage to the great god of all that is black and crimped. They were doubly surprised to see the sign above, on a department store, and King Richard III, on his day off (left).

The two are not linked, as far as I know. (*Duke Harry*)

PIN-UP OF THE MONTH

NICHOLAS OF CUSA

1401–1464

Born: 1401, Kues, Trier (now Germany).
Died: 11 August 1464, Todi, Papal States (now Italy).

Somewhat a man ahead of his time, Nicholas was interested in geometry and logic. He contributed to the study of infinity and relativity theory, and used the circle in his teachings to show how one can strive for truth but never reach it completely.

As a philosopher, he argued the incomplete nature of man's knowledge of the universe, and that the search for truth was equal to the task of squaring the circle.

He was also interested in astronomy, and, before the time of Copernicus and Newton, claimed (correctly) that the Earth moved round the sun, that the stars were other suns and that space was infinite. He claimed that the stars had other inhabited worlds orbiting them – a claim that may yet prove to be true ...

He also published improvements to the Alfonsine Tables (which gave a practical method to find the position of the Sun, Moon and planets).

He described the Gergorian calendar reform in detail, before it occurred.

Born plain Nicholas in Kues in 1401, he first came to public attention in 1421 at the Council of Basle, when defending



Count Ulrich of Manderscheid. He lost.

Undaunted, he next tried to unite all Christendom, politically and theologically. Hmm.

He was sent on a papal mission to Constantinople in 1437, and made papal legate supporting the cause of Pope Eugene IV. He was ordained in 1440, and nominated cardinal, an honour which took a direct command of the next pope, Nicholas V, in 1448 or 1449, to make him accept.

In 1450 he was appointed Cardinal of

Brixen (Italy, but close to Innsbruck) but was unable to take possession of the see until 1452 owing to opposition from Sigmund, Duke of Austria. In the meantime he went as papal legate to northern Germany and the Netherlands to promote the crusade against the Turks, and to try and reunite the Hussites with the Church, among many other things.

During this time he also spoke to the Duke of Burgundy regarding peace between England and France. Apparently he was seen, according to one abbot, as "an angel of light and peace".

Finally taking possession of his see, he tried his hand at local reformation, only to be met by opposition from his old enemy, Duke Sigmund, finally fleeing to safety where he pronounced a papal interdict (from Pius II, it seems that the popes were dropping like flies) on the Duke.

In 1460, Duke Sigmund imprisoned him and extorted a treaty from him. (Nicholas never fully recovered from his ill-treatment, and died a few years later.)

Nicholas next fled to Pius II, who promptly excommunicated the duke. This did not deter the duke, who tried to defy the pope, only being forced to accept the papal will in 1464 on command of the emperor, Frederik III. By then, Nicholas was already dead. Never mind, eh?

GROUP FEAST

This year's feast will take place at Llangollen Youth Hostel (Tyndwr Hall) on 17–18 January 2003, with an option to stay on the Sunday night. Full details of the weekend are available on the separate warning orders so I will not repeat them here.

The good news about Llangollen is that, despite being in Wales, there are a number of good pubs, three of which are listed in the *Good Beer Guide* (which guarantees that, even if you get a beating from a local gang, at least the beer numbing your pain receptors will have been good).

There is the *Corn Mill*, Dee Lane, on the banks of the River Dee (which runs through, and sometimes over, Llangollen), whose entry claims five cask ales and an outside terrace overlooking the river. Perfect for nursing a hang-over on Sunday lunchtime. (Also does food).

There is the *Sun*, Regent Street (the A5), the local CAMRA pub of the year in 2001, which claims up to six *local* real ales, music (including folk and jazz), slate floors and REAL CIDER!

Last but not least, there is the *Wynn-stay Arms*, Bridge Street, dating from the 16th century, with a "largely unaltered interior" (doesn't say unaltered since when). It does, however, do food, and has an open fire (useful to know on Sunday night when our supply of firewood has gone perhaps?).



Stalag Luft Tyndwr.

Entertainment

As stated in the warning orders, I shall be coordinating the Saturday evening's entertainment.

I am informed by mumsy that we are having six courses so this means a maximum of six "entertainments" can be accommodated during the meal, although any brave souls can volunteer to provide entertainment after the meal. It's anybody's guess as to how many people will be listening at that point.

Spots are available on a first-come-first-abused basis, and I already have a pantomime, and suggestions of music, another puppet show, and at least one mummer's play. Darren has threatened to give a solo rendition of his "History of the World", so you only have yourselves to blame if you can't come up with something ...

My address is at the bottom of this page.

NEW YEAR PARTY

You are cordially invited to celebrate New Year's Eve chez Kathryn. Food provided. Guests must either dance, drink, join in the party games or any combination thereof.

If you would like further info/directions please either phone Kathryn on 01773 528804 or e-mail katrib@armitages.co.uk

CAPTION COMPETITION

The winning answer for the competition posed in the last issue comes courtesy of Scandal ...

From: <andrew.horsfield@>
To: "David Hemsley" <david@purpleaardvark.freese.rve.co.uk>
Subject: Re: October 19th
Date: 09 October 2002 12:26

p.s. for your caption competition ...
Marcus: forget the sliced bread i want to get my hands on a couple of soft, white baps ...

A KNOTTY PROBLEM

Continued from front page.

Notes

1. The retinue's web forum, maintained by Simon Lane, can be found at cgi.www.1485.org/cgi-bin/www.1485.org/cutecast/cutecast.pl
2. I am talking about the re-enactment group here. I am indebted to Simon for his "historical" observations! Other helpful comments from Amanda, Ghost and Andy Howes.
3. Listing these can wait for a future issue, however!
4. *Heraldic Standards of the Wars of the Roses*, by Patrick McGill.
5. Confusingly, the Earl of Wiltshire is named as Henry Stafford. Most sources for the 15th C. give the Earl of Wiltshire as John Stafford, and his son as Edward.
6. The Lance and Longbow Society give different badges for the 1st Earl of Wiltshire (*gold knot*) and the 2nd (silver knot with red crescent). Thanks Amanda. Is the 1st earl John?
7. There are a number of sources to be investigated, however, before we can be sure.

And that's it for December. I plan to have the next issue ready for the feast, but how many times have I promised a particular date ...?

Any contributions are most welcome and should be sent to me, Dave Hemsley, at:

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See you over Christmas or in the New Year!

