

K&D U3A “Exploring Heraldry” Group

VISIT TO ST AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY CHURCH, FLINTHAM

The Heraldry Group visited this delightful church on a fairly cold morning in March. The Disney window with its 9 “quarterings” showed coats of arms belonging to the ‘D’Isney’ family [*i.e.*, “from Isigny”, Normandy] and of those who had married into the line.



The Disney “Achievement” (*see below*) in the South Chancel Window

(Motto: “He who waits, wins”)

Vic had set us homework to trace the lineage through a Disney pedigree, and then we could see for ourselves where the heraldry came from.

There are 5 **hatchments** in the church, including a new one [*see Appendix* to this article]! What is a hatchment? It is a funeral demonstration of the lifetime “*achievement*” of the arms [*the term for the combination of shield, helmet, mantling, crest, supporters, etc.*] and any other honours displayed on a black

lozenge-shaped frame, which used to be suspended against the wall of a deceased person's house. It stayed there between 6 and 12 months, after which it was removed to the parish church.



The original four hatchments in Flintham Church, showing heraldic marriages, back through history, into the family of the deceased commemorated in the display-board
(The white half to your right side of the inner “diamonds” shows that the wives of the males were still alive when their husbands died)

The new one (*below*) was painted during the lifetime of Miles Thoroton Hildyard, who lived at Flintham Hall next door, by his partner, who, over 15 years, kept adding a bit to the *hatchment* [an abbreviated form of the word ‘achievement’, but used in heraldry just for these funeral memorials], which had been propped up in the kitchen. A constant reminder of one’s mortality. However, if you think of it literally as an achievement, then Miles would have been delighted with the result.



The New Hatchment to Miles Thoroton: there is no “splitting” of the inner diamond into black & white, as Miles was unmarried [see [Appendix](#) below for a cropped, larger version & a possible “key”]

How many plants can you spot?

In the centre is a shield containing 16 quarterings, which has all the coats of arms brought into his line of the Thoroton Hildyard family by marriages down the centuries, and swathes of blue cloth edged with gold for the mantling; and, when you look carefully, you become aware of many beautifully painted fruits and flowers. There is an example for every letter of Miles's name. So we see **M**agnolia, **I**ris, **L**ilies, **E**lderflower and **S**trawberries; then **T**ulips, **H**ydrangea, **O**rchid, **R**ose, **O**range, **T**histle, **O**ak and **N**arcissus; finally **H**oneysuckle, **I**vy, **L**ily of the Valley, **D**andelion, **Y**ew, **A**pples, **R**aspberries and **D**affodils: all plants which grow on the estate. Miles died in 2005 and the estate has passed to his nephew.

Miles wrote a book called "It's Bliss Here. Letters home 1939-1945", published by Bloomsbury in 2006 about his war career under the name of Myles Hildyard.

There are 4 older hatchments in Flintham Church, but, nearer home, you might see 5 (or possibly 6, it now seems) hatchments in St Peter's Church, Tollerton: this link will take you to www.stpeters-tollerton.org.uk – click on "History" on left, which takes you to the pictures but not much information.

Clare Franklin, with contributions from other members slotted in, March 2012

Appendix : The NEW Flintham Hatchment: POSSIBLE Owners of the Quarters

Hatchments are a way of showing the heraldic ancestors of a deceased person, on show at the time of the funeral and then, like this one, often ending up on the walls of an associated church.



This Hatchment had been created and painted by David Rowbotham for Miles Thoroton Hildyard, the

recently deceased owner of Flintham Hall (died 2005). As Miles was unmarried, the whole background of the inner *lozenge* or ‘diamond’ is *sable* (i.e., black) - if he had married & the widow were alive, the half of the inner *lozenge* on the reader’s right would be *argent* (i.e., painted silver/white). The sub-coats (known as “*quarters*”) initially represent marriages into the Thoroton & Hildyard families, starting back in history & coming forward to more recent times; but some of the sub-coats also represent (or “bring in”) marriages, again starting back in time, into the heraldic families with whom some Thoroton/Hildyard unions were made.

Summary of *Quarters* in Rows left to right (relevant marriages in brackets):

(1) (Miles) Thoroton-Hildyard (2) Thoroton (1830) (3) Lovetot (Medieval) (4) Morin (1265/6);
(5) Bowes (1784) (6) Whyte (1815) (7) Willoughby (late 16th C) (8) Grey (14th C);
(9) Swyne (15th C) (10) Lascelles (15th C) (11) Delahaye (1434) (12) De La See (1482);
(13) Welby (17th C) (14) Dobson (c. 1680) (15) Darcy (17th C) (16) Hoare-Hamilton[-Arran] (1911)

*[Information about the attributions of names for one or two of these coats
is still awaiting confirmation by Hildyard family members- VT]*

MOTTO (*courtesy of Sue Manley, & obtained via Chris Lilley’s Latin Group*):

from Hesiod*: “They know not how much more the **half** is than the **whole**, nor what great advantage there is in mallow and asphodel” [*cf flowers on new hatchment*] >>> proverb: “The **half** is better than the **whole**” – a proverb advising economy or restraint.

*cf *Hesiod Works & Days* 40 - ρλέον
ἥμισυ παντός [*see this Greek motto also on “old” Flintham Hatchment no.3*]