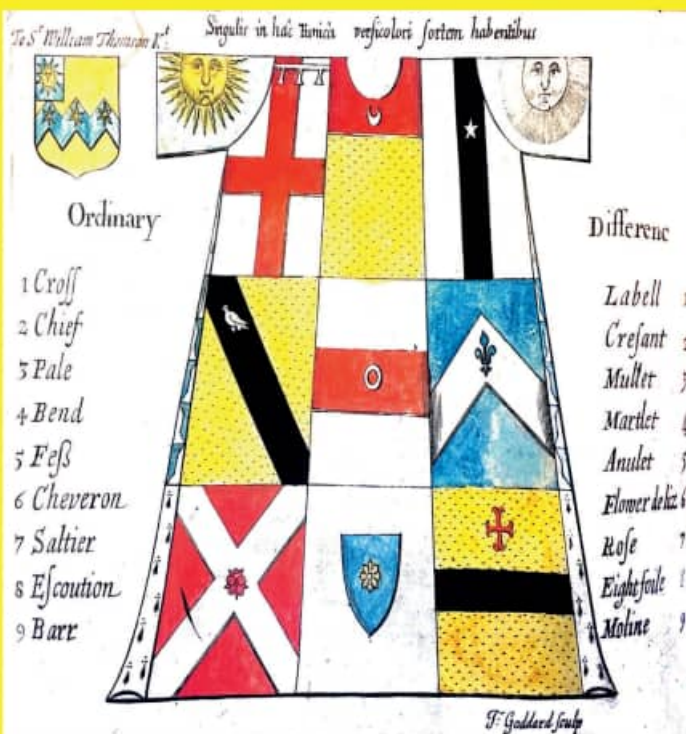


The Coat of Arms

Annual Journal of the Heraldry Society



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THE MULLET WITHIN THE ANNULET

ROBERT COLLEY, Ph.D., F.S.A.
& LOUIS de GOÛYON MATIGNON, Ph.D.

Abstract

This article discusses the relationship between a coat of arms that was allowed at the Visitation of London in 1634, for which no proof is recorded on the face of the record, and the existence of a pedigree with a blazon and trick of the arms drawn up by Sir Richard St. George, Clarenceux King of Arms, prior to that Visitation, but which was, apart from the then most recent generations, omitted from the Visitation books. It will provide an example of the kind of evidence required by the visiting heralds as proof of the right to bear the arms claimed.

Introduction

Between 1634 and 1635, Sir Henry St. George, then Richmond Herald, undertook, on behalf of his father, Sir Richard St. George, Clarenceux King of Arms, the Visitation of London to monitor and regulate the lawful bearing of coats of arms in that City. The instructions given to the heralds provided that “in the taking of discent[s] [they were] not to exceed 4 or 5 degrees; or as many as may probably be wthin the memorie of men or cognisaunce of the Country.”¹ Indeed, most pedigrees entered at the Visitation show only three or four generations. In addition, they were to “make nor admitt of no Pedigrees but testified authentically under the hands of two or three Officers of Arms wherof Garter to be one “...& yf you meet with any otherwise made or testified to admonish the parties to procure fuller testimonie”.² Accordingly, many of the entries, in a brief *memorandum*, cite the authority for the pedigrees and arms, such as earlier Visitation Books, patents of arms, pedigrees under the hands of heralds, “bookes of certificates”, and seals. Equally, many do not, and the authority for the arms allowed is conspicuously absent. Fees were payable to the heralds by those who were entered. In a note by Sir Henry St. George of circa 1624, a gentleman was required to pay £1.³ The Waiting Books from 1618 also show that the fee for a search for arms cost 2s 6d, and it is probable that an entry of three descents with a trick of the arms cost 5s 0d,⁴ of five descents 10s 0d, and of nine descents, £1.

John Powell in the Context of the 1634–1635 London Visitation

The entry for John Powell, a Merchant of Broad Street Ward, is a short pedigree of only three descents, a trick of the coat of arms, and a crest.⁵ He was a member of the Merchant Adventurers Company, who, in the 1620s, was trading in Hamburg, where

1 Peter O'Donoghue, ‘Visitation Instructions 1634’, *CoA*, no. 219 (2010), p. 22, citing *CA Ms I.B.5*, f. 32v, no. 7.

2 *Ibid.*, no. 8.

3 Sir Anthony Wagner, *Heralds of England* (London, 1967), p. 121.

4 *Ibid.*

5 Joseph Jackson Howard and Joseph Lemuel Chester (eds.), *The Visitation of London 1633, 1634 and 1635*, Harleian Society, vol. 17 (1883), p. 174.

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his elder son, Samuel, was born in 1623, and his first wife was buried. By 1629, he was resident back in London in the parish of St. Peter le Poer and St. Benet Fink. The brevity of this pedigree is a mark of this Visitation. The blazon of the arms is *Quarterly 1 and 4 Gules a lion rampant within a bordure engrailed or, in dexter chief a mark of difference of a mullet within an annulet argent; 2 and 3 Gules a bend between three lion's heads erased argent, two in sinister chief, one in dexter base*. The paternal coat is that of Rhys ap Tewdwr, the eleventh century Prince of Deheubarth, an area which corresponds roughly to parts of south west Wales.⁶ The second coat is a variant of Skull of Much Cowarne, in Herefordshire.⁷ The pedigree is headed by Walter Powell, who is shown as having married one of the daughters and coheirs of Skull of that place; although she is unnamed, she is shown as Margery, relict of Walter Powell, in the administration of his estate on 28 October 1567.⁸

Whilst the authority for quartering the coat of Skull is explicit in the pedigree, it is evident that although the paternal coat was allowed at the Visitation, there is no indication of a descent from Rhys ap Tewdwr. Nevertheless, the coat attributed to him is clearly differenced by a dual cadency mark, denoting descent from third and fifth sons of earlier ancestors. This suggests that there was some sort of evidence beyond the pedigree recorded in the Visitation books which permitted the heralds to allow both the arms and the difference. In the light of the strict instructions to visiting heralds that were described earlier, it would seem perverse to allow such an illustrious coat without at least some degree of proof. It is necessary, therefore, to examine the background to this pedigree, and to ascertain what kind of document could have been produced to suggest this claim to arms.

The Origins of the Powell Family

The pedigree shows that John Powell's father and grandfather, Thomas Powell and Walter Powell respectively, were "of Bucknell in Com. Salop", but it is clear from Thomas Powell's will of 31 July 1611,⁹ that he had connections with several nearby places—Brampton Brian and Leintwardine in Herefordshire, Knighton in Radnorshire, and Clun and Stowe in Shropshire, to the relief of the poor of which parishes he made bequests. All these lie within a few miles of each other, Bucknell lying at a particular point where the county borders of Shropshire and Herefordshire in England, and Radnorshire in Wales, conjoin. The most likely area in which descents from Rhys ap Tewdwr are recorded, lies close to the south west of Bucknell, in the neighbourhood of Old Radnor—particularly in Trewern, Evenjobb, Kinnerton, and Harpton.

It is therefore to the county of Radnorshire that we turn our attention. On 3 February 1585/6, Lewys Dwinn of Bettws, in Montgomeryshire, was appointed Deputy Herald for Wales, and was instructed to make a Visitation of Welsh counties, to "record, register, and make entrances of all the discentes, mariages, funeralles and obites of the Knights, Esquires, and Gentlemen inhabitinge within the said principalitie"... "omittinge all highe lynes deduced from farre aboue all memorie, which for the great part ar found to be coniecturall, vnlesse evidences, histories, or matter of good credict be shewed for

6 Siddons *DWH*, vol. 2, p. 497.

7 *Ibid.*, pp. 525–526.

8 Reginald Morshead Glencross (ed.), *Administrations in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury 1559–1571* (1912), p. 81.

9 PCC Will, 31 July 1611, TNA, PROB 11/119/150.

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RHYS AP TEWDWR, Prince of Deheubarth (1078), married Gwladys ferch Rhiwallon ap Cynfyn, King of Powys, who had:

GRUFFUDD AP RHYS, Prince of Deheubarth, who came to Wales from exile in Ireland in 1105, married Gwenllian ferch Gruffudd ap Cynan, Prince of Gwynedd, who had:

RHYS AP GRUFFUDD, a younger son, Lord of Deheubarth, known to history as *Yr Arglwydd Rhys*, died of the plague in 1197, married Gwenllian ferch Madog ap Maredudd, Prince of Powys, who had:

RHYS GRYG, fourth son, Lord of Ystrad Tywi, wounded mortally at Carmarthen Castle in 1234, married either Gwenllian ferch Elidir ap Owain, or Ellyw ferch Trahaearn ap Gwgan, Lord of Brecknock, who had:

LLYWELYN DDIRIAID, married Gwladys ferch Meurig Goch, Lord of Caer, who had:

IDNERTH AP LLYWELYN DDIRIAID, second son, of Blaen Gwaeddel, married Morfudd ferch Cadwallon ap Madog, of the House of Elystan Glodrydd, who had:

CADWGAN ENWOG, of Blaen Gwaeddel, married Dyddy Gethin ferch Maelgwyn ap Cadwallon, of the House of Elystan Glodrydd, who had:

MAREDUDD GETHIN, of Presteigne, said to have married Angharad ferch Maredudd ap Jenkin ap Moilwyn (of Buellt) ap Grono ap Aylan ap Greddyf, who had:

MEURIG DDU, said to have married Gwenllian ferch Ifor Hen ap Iorwerth ap Llywarch ap Bran ap Dinawal, who had:

PHILIP AP MEURIG DDU, of Trewern, married Elizabeth ferch Llywelyn ap Dafydd ap Rhys ap Einion Llwyd, of Cemaes, who had:

1. LLYWELYN CRUGERYR
2. **GRUFFUDD AP PHILIP**, of Trewern, who had a son:
 - a. **HOWELL AP GRUFFUDD**, of Trewern, who had:
 - i. **HOWELL AP GRUFFUDD VAUGHAN**, of Trewern
 - ii. **RICHARD POWELL**, of Kinard
 - iii. **JOHN POWELL**, who had:
 1. **JOHN POWELL**, of Evenjobb, who married Ales, one of the daughters and coheirs of Richard Powell, of Kinard, who had:
 - a. **WALTER POWELL**, of Bucknell
3. **HOWELL AP PHILIP**

Figure 1: The Descent from Rhys ap Tewdwr

approbacion therof.”¹⁰ Dwnn possessed a remarkable bardic pedigree—his teachers were Hywel ap Syr Mathew (bard of Llanfair Waterdine, a few miles north of Knighton), and William Llyn (bard of Oswestry in Shropshire), who was himself a pupil of Gruffudd Hiraethog (bard and Deputy Herald for Wales).¹¹ His already extensive knowledge of Welsh genealogy, heraldry, and the Welsh language, meant that he was admirably suited to the task. He ended his formal Visitation in 1597, when it is thought many of the Radnorshire pedigrees and arms were entered.

The Descent from Rhys ap Tewdwr

One of the ancestors from whom many families in the area around Old Radnor claimed descent was Philip ap Meurig of Trewern, which is a township about three miles south west of New Radnor, in the parish of Llanfihangel Nant Melan.¹² He was himself a direct male descendant of Rhys ap Tewdwr, whose arms he bore. He had at least three sons, of whom Hywel, Gruffudd, and Llewelyn, are recorded by Dwnn.¹³ Here it may be helpful to have a brief diversion regarding Welsh surnames at this time. These were still in a state of flux, and many were in a period of transition from the patronymic ap form (son of) to a fixed surname. The word *mab* (son), shortened to *ab*, formed the patronymic surname, but the consonant ‘b’ followed by the aspirate ‘h’ undergoes a hard mutation and changes to ‘p’.¹⁴ This is called *provection* and brings about surnames such as Powell—ap Howell. In the sixteenth century, the ap form was also generally adopted in place of the more derivatively more accurate ab, as can be seen in ap Gruffudd and ap Meurig, and sometimes was dropped altogether with the father’s forename becoming the surname, such as Howell.

Llewelyn dispensed with the patronymic form and took the name of Crugeryr from the place where he lived, near New Radnor. His descent from Rhys ap Tewdwr is set out in **Figure 1**. Of the other sons of Philip ap Meurig, one is recorded by Dwnn¹⁵—Gruffudd, whom he shows in a very brief pedigree as having a son, Hywel (the Welsh for Howell) ap Gruffudd.¹⁶ While his lineage is thus established, Dwnn enters the descendants of only one of his sons—Thomas ap Howel (sic).¹⁷ In 1597, the key men at the Visitation in Radnor Town were Peter Powel and John Howel.¹⁸ There is no mention of Walter Powell among any of these descendants.

The Pedigree of John Powell

Some twenty or more years ago, when compiling a record of coats of arms for volume IV of *The Development of Welsh Heraldry*, Dr. Michael Siddons, formerly Wales Herald Extraordinary, noted the existence of a pedigree which appeared to connect John Powell of Broad Street Ward with a family of Powell of Bucknell, who bore the arms of Rhys ap Tewdwr. That pedigree, he commented, purported to show a link to Philip ap Meurig,

10 Samuel Rush Meyrick, *Heraldic Visitations of Wales* (Llandovery, 1846), vol. I, pp. xxii–xxiv.

11 Siddons *DWH*, vol. 1, p. 315.

12 Meyrick, op. cit., pp. 253, 263.

13 Anthony Dymoke Powell, ‘The Powell Descent from Llewelyn Crugeryr and the Prince of Deheubarth’, *Radnorshire Society Transactions*, vol. 31 (1961), pp. 3–17.

14 Thomas John and Prys Morgan, *Welsh Surnames* (Cardiff, 1985), p. 8.

15 Powell, op. cit.

16 Samuel Rush Meyrick, op. cit., p. 265.

17 Ibid., p. 263.

18 Ibid., pp. 264–265.



Figure 2: the arms of Philip ap Meurig by courtesy of Powys Archives, from Ms M/D/BOM/3/35 and as drawn by the authors.

though he seemed hesitant because he could find “no trace in the genealogies”¹⁹, presumably meaning the *Welsh Genealogies* by Dr. Peter Bartrum. But he does not appear to have inspected the document itself, and it means simply that Dr. Bartrum had not at that time seen it. There the matter rested until this present year, when one of the authors of this article visited Powys Archives to examine the pedigree.

It is a manuscript in ink on paper, in an early seventeenth century hand, measuring approximately 290 x 220 mm.²⁰ In places, it is badly damaged and there are significant losses, but fortunately, the pedigree itself is largely intact, with only the occasional minor loss. The main area of loss is to the title, and in the following transcription, certain words which can be deduced from the remaining identifiable letters are extended in square brackets. It is regrettable that the middle portion is lost, because it appears to refer to books and records in the custody of the herald bards. The title reads: “The Genealogie of John Powell now of London Marchant [whose] paternall line is extra[cted out of] the records ancient [bookes and co]llections of the in ye custody of yt Country: The[de]scent is proued by visita[tion and ot]her bookes in the office of Armes with other collections which are in private libraries of some of ye officers of Armes.” Despite the losses, there is sufficient to provide a working reconstruction of the title.

19 Siddons *DWH*, vol. 4, p. 206.

20 Powys Archives, Ms M/D/BOM/3/35.

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The pedigree begins with “Phillip ap Miricke of Trewerne on the County of Radnor”, who, in a side note, is stated to have been “a yonger brother descended from Rees ap Eynon yt was descended from the lord Rees ye sonn of Griffith the sonne of Rees ap Tewdwr.” Alongside his name is a trick of the coat of arms of Rhys ap Tewdwr, differenced with an *annulet argent*, the cadency mark of the fifth son (see **Figure 2**). Descender lines show his son Griffith ap Phillip and grandson Howell ap Griffith, both of Trewern. This descent is corroborated by Lewys Dwnn in the brief pedigree of Powell of Radnor Town which was mentioned earlier (see figure 1, where the pedigree is continued with the sons of Howell ap Griffith).²¹ It is interesting to note that while the younger sons adopted the anglicized Powell, the eldest son neither adhered to the strict patronymic form, nor the Powell surname, but took instead the name Howell ap Griffith Vaughan (Vaughan being the anglicized *Fychan*, meaning the younger, to distinguish him from his father of the same name). A side note on the pedigree alongside the second son, Richard Powell of Kinard (the old form of Kinnerton, which lies about two miles north east of New Radnor) states “This Richard Powell of Kinard had noe sonne but nine daughters & coheirs all of them married to gentlemen of good qualitie.” The third son, John Powell, the elder, had a son also John Powell of Evenjobb (which is about one mile east of Kinard), who married one of the coheirs of Richard Powell, [Al]es, and had Walter Powell of Bucknell, who heads the Visitation of London pedigree. Alongside his name is written “ye same coate this difference” and the drawing of a mullet within an annulet (untinctured), as has been drawn in **Figure 3** (see **Figure 4**, for the descent from Walter Powell).



Figure 3: the arms of Walter Powell of Bucknell, as drawn by the authors.

²¹ Meyrick, op. cit., pp. 263–264.

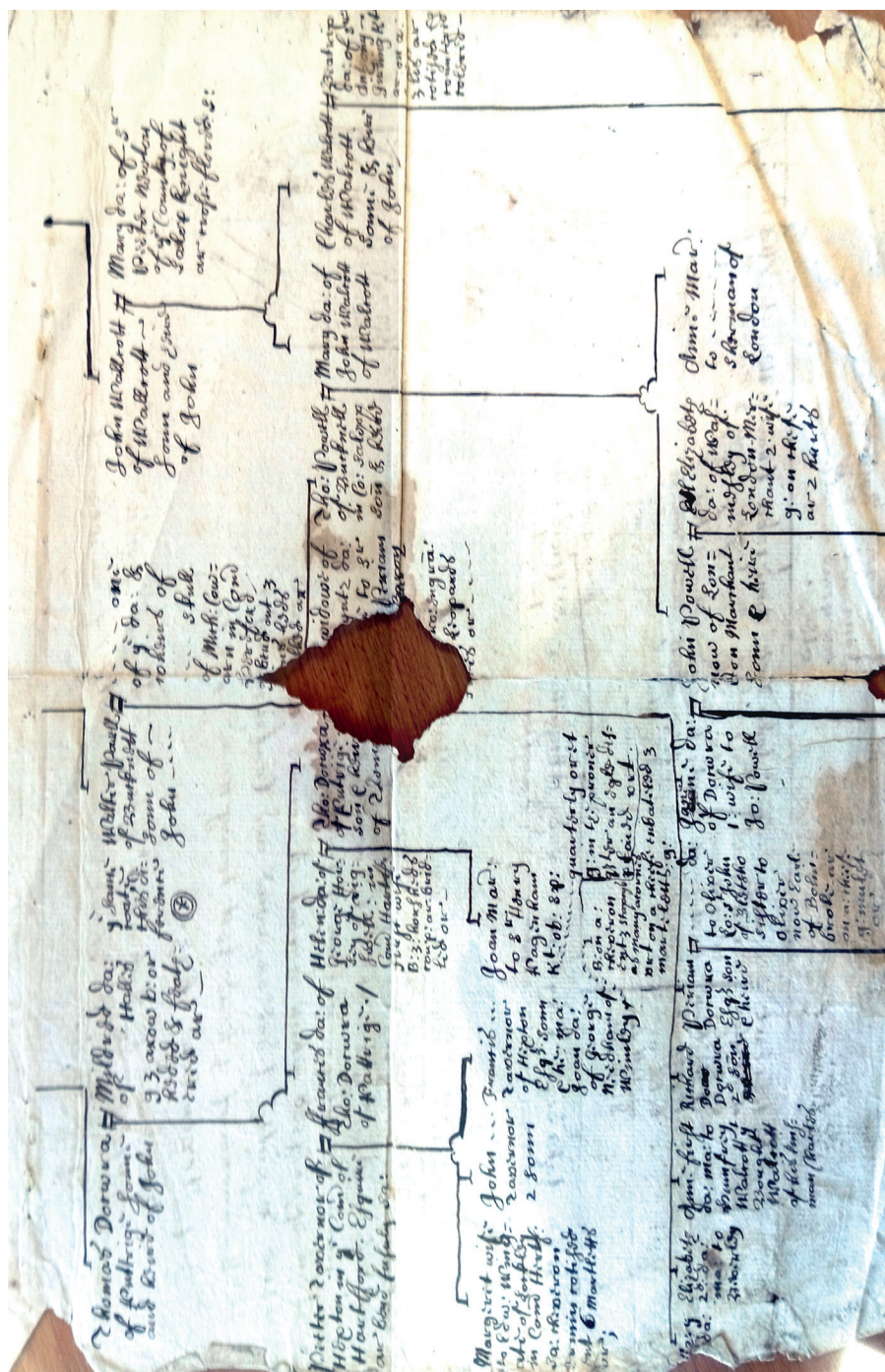


Figure 4: the descent from Walter Powell by courtesy of Powys Archives, Ms M/D/BOM/3/35.

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This clearly establishes the link with Philip ap Meurig, and thence, to the latter's descent from Rhys ap Tewdwr. It also provides a visual note of how the dual cadency mark used as a permanent mark of difference came about—a recognition that John Powell, the elder shown in the pedigree as “3 sonne of Howel Griffith”, bore the mullet, and that Philip Meurig, as a fifth son of Meurig ap Maredudd Gethin, was assigned the annulet. The mullet within the annulet may have been based on two personal cadency marks but combined, they became not personal but a hereditary mark of difference,²² of which Walter Powell seems to have been the first recorded recipient, and which distinguished this branch of the family.

The Arms of Skull

We now return to the arms of Skull of Much Cowarne. In the pedigree beneath the wife of Walter Powell is written “g bend ent 3 [lio]ns hed[e]s [cabo]shed ar.” By extension, this reads “Gules a bend between three lion's heads caboshed argent.” The first letters of the modification of the heads are lost but the remaining last letters are distinctly “shed”. It is possible that the blazon of the heads as caboshed (in modern heraldry *cabossed*, meaning full faced or facing forward), was an attempt to difference this coat further; but the trick of the arms shows the heads as erased and in profile. The Skull coat usually has six lion's heads rather than three. In one manuscript, a blazon in Welsh shows five heads and describes them not as lion's heads but as hairy heads—“*Gowls a bend o sabl v benn blewoc aur ynn arw*”—*Gules a bend sable five hairy heads Or askew*.²³ Early coats like this one show colour on colour, but the bend was changed to a metal afterwards, and it is likely that blazons showing colour on colour may have been taken from a pictorial source where argent on a colour had been tarnished to black by oxidization.

The trick of the achievement includes a crest of a *Lion's head erased argent collared flory counter flory gules*, which appears to be derived more from the Skull crest of a lion's head erased, itself adopted from the seal of Miles Skull (dated 1458), the ancestor of the Skulls of Much Cowarne.²⁴

The Pedigree as Evidence

The pedigree was drawn up and testified under the hand of Sir Richard St. George, Clarenceux King of Arms, in 1633. The statement at the end (**Figure 5**) reads: “I haue preused this pedegree and find it agreeab[le in tr]uth being myself a kinsman to this familie ye [said Jane] Docwra being descended from one of m[y].....[s] vizt from Anne ye daughter of Thomas St. [George of] Hattley in ye Com of Cambridge [as a]re aboue expressed which decent & armes as [th]ey are here depicted I doe approue and confirme. In Wittnes whereof I haue sett my hand this tenth day of November 1633.”

The letters missing have been supplied in square brackets. This predates the Order for the Visitation by only six weeks or so, the Commission to the Heralds being dated 25 December 1633.²⁵ As such, it seems highly likely that the pedigree was created as proof of the descent and arms at the forthcoming Visitation. To reinforce the authority of this confirmation, Sir Richard St. George set out within the Powell pedigree, the descent

22 John Gough Nichols (ed.), *The Herald and Genealogist*, vol. 5 (1870), p. 251.

23 Siddons *DWH*, vol. 2, pp. 525–526; National Library of Wales, Ms 3032B, f. 59; Harl. Ms 1935, f. 86.

24 Ibid., citing Hereford Archives, Ms 9132/136.

25 Peter O'Donoghue, op. cit.

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Figure 5: statement by Sir Richard St. George, Clarenceux, by courtesy of Powys Archives, from Ms M/D/BOM/3/35.

of Jane Docwra, the wife of John Powell. This is shown in **Figure 6** and explains the kinship.²⁶ It must be acknowledged, however, that the manuscript is a copy of the original made by Sir Richard St. George, by an unnamed scribe. After the testimony is written this statement: “There was Sr Richard St. George his name & owne hand to this pedigree in another booke from whence I copied this.” From the handwriting, it would appear to be a near contemporaneous copy, and there is no reason to believe that the pedigree is in any way different from the original.

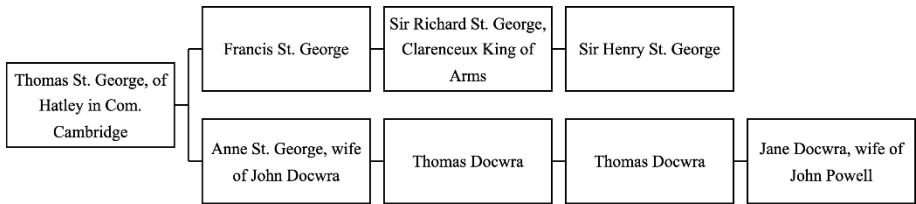


Figure 6: kinship table.

26 Pedigree of the St. George family in Joseph Jackson Howard (ed.), *Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica*, new ser., vol. 3 (1880), p. 78.

Conclusion

The pedigree drawn up by Sir Richard St. George provides an example of the kind of proof presented to the visiting heralds at the time of a visitation. It appears to rely heavily on the records kept by the herald bards—*beirdd archifau*—for who else would have known that Philip ap Meurig was a fifth son, and John Powell, the elder, a third? Without this rare survival, the reasons for the dual mark of difference would have been lost. St. George's testimony, being a kinsman of the subject, adds weight to the evidentiary status of the manuscript.

It is regrettable that the Visitation of London of 1633–1635, published by the Harleian Society, included, as George Marshall put it, “no preface worthy so valuable a volume”²⁷ which might have discussed the sources from which the contents were drawn in more detail, but this may probably have been due to the untimely death of its co-editor, Col. J. L. Chester.²⁸

27 George William Marshall, “Notes on the Heralds’ Visitations,” *Genealogist*, new ser., vol. 2 (1885), pp. 263–264.

28 The authors wish to thank Powys Archives for their help in accessing and photographing the pedigree and in particular to Charlotte McCarthy and Prys Eckley.