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A Message from the President

Our Society now opens with an eclectic Italo-Irish Presidency by way of my protégé Ambrogio Caiani and closes the two-year long Anglo-American Presidency. Let me begin by saying that it is with deep gratitude and honour to have spent my time in Cambridge for nearly four years and it has been a pleasure relating my experience at Cambridge in tandem with CUH&GS. Over the past few years, with the support of the officers, committee, and members of the Society, I thank you.

However, I must lean toward my American side and close with something rather disconcerting and controversial, and that is the seemingly mutual cooling of the Anglo-American spirit socially and culturally. Perusing the newspaper in Investor's Business Daily (April 7, 2008, US) a recent survey revealed "Why U.S. View Of Britain Is Tanking".

I have no intention of denying the declining popularity of Americans either. As a fully-fledged Yankee this is something quite familiar to me. When an American friend of mine, from the South, who has lived in Europe for a few decades was told at a dinner party in Belgium, "Yankee go home!" she simply declared with her charming deep Southern accent, "I've been telling them that for a long time!"

This is a concern not only among the Americans but among the British too. Such trepidation was even voiced by a few CUH&GS members, "What is happening to our relationship with the Americans?" To my regret, the British perception of Americans is as mutually moribund as the American perception of the British. Without elaborating on the details, since in any case we know fairly well what they are, the drift occurring between the US and the UK are: political, religious and cultural. The irony I find in all of this is that over the past century this is precisely what has woven the fabric of our societies together so successfully in the first place. Risking political incorrectness, my observation is that the effectiveness of democratic nations is in fact reflected by the quality of the elites that run them, and with the passing of the great World War II generation there is no longer the common bonds forged by the trials of war existent. The elites of today are pocket-sized when compared to the giants of the past.

On a more positive note, I would like to point out that if one were to just observe the activities and events of CUH&GS, one would not have noticed a fracturing of the Anglo-American spirit. This is because our members have a common interest in preserving heraldry, family history and a culture of distinction – something which strongly binds our countries together.

As my dear friend Alexander Macmillan, the Earl of Stockton, and grandson of Harold Macmillan, said about the American heiresses who came to England in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, "They came and saved England." But this would have to be a genealogical and geopolitical story for another time.

So although for now I say farewell I very much look forward to crossing the Atlantic in due course to visit you another time. I thank you once more for the magnificent opportunity to serve as your president and I am honoured to say that the flickering flame of my love for the British will forever remain luminous.

Monica Lee Morrill

HONOUR FOR CECIL HUMPHERY-SMITH

On 9th May, 2008, C.U.H.A.G.S. Vice President, Cecil Humphery-Smith, O.B.E., was awarded an Honorary Fellowship by the Canterbury Christ Church University at a graduation Ceremony in Canterbury Cathedral



The Vice Chancellor, Professor Michael Wright, stated that the Award was a formal recognition of his exceptional service and achievement in the fields of education and public life.

There is little doubt that this was richly deserved by an outstanding figure in the world of Heraldry and Genealogy. He was a lecturer in Extra-Mural Studies at the University of London, from 1951 to 1991, founder of the Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies in 1961. He was involved with the University of Oxford Delegacy: 1960-65; University of Kent: 1964-96; Visiting Professor at University of Minho: 1970-72 and the University of Bologna: 1996.

He has been an active participant in several national and international organisations devoted to the study of Heraldry and Genealogy. He is a Fellow of the Heraldry Society, a Fellow of the Society of Genealogists, a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, a co-founder of the Federation of Family History Societies in 1974, a Vice President of the Manorial Society, a Vice President of the Association of Genealogists and Researchers in Archives, Secretary General of the 13th International Congress of Genealogy and Heraldry in 1976, Freeman of the City of London and Liveryman of the Worshipful Companies of Broderers and Scriveners.

He has written and contributed to a significant number of publications including *The Colour of Heraldry*, *General Armory Two*, *Heraldry in Canterbury Cathedral*,

Chronicles of Thomas Chough, Anglo-Norman Armory, The Atlas and Index of Parish Registers, A Genealogists's Bibliography, Our Family History, Introducing Family History, Sonnets of Life, Hugh Revel Master of the Hospital 1258-1277, Visitation Records, Armigerous Ancestors, The Book of Irish Arms, Dark Blood, A History of the Worshipful Company of Scriveners of London together with numerous articles in learned journals and magazines.

Cecil has always supported the activities of CUHAGS ever since its beginnings in the fifties when he contributed a great deal of sound advice to our very earliest members: he has addressed the Society not only at many of its speaker meetings but also at several of its formal banquets which he and his wife have attended on a consistently regular basis. With other senior members of the Society he co-edited *The Cambridge Armorial*, our flagship publication which appeared in 1985.

The Society is profoundly grateful for the time, energy and effort he has shared with us over the last half-century or so. We congratulate him on his recently awarded Fellowship at Christ Church University, Canterbury and on his outstanding lifetime achievements in family history, heraldry and related subjects. He has been a tireless advocate of the need to promote the importance of academic studies in these fields. It has been a privilege for us to have been on the receiving end of so much of his encouragement and enthusiasm.

<p style="text-align: center;">A ROYAL FLUSH Lester Hillman</p>

At 54 the place settings for CUHAGS Accession Banquet were as a deck of cards (complete with two jokers). The Accession Banquet, played out in the Main Court, in the Senior Common Room and in the Great Hall of Clare College Saturday 7th June 2008 dealt everyone the finest of hands.

Such being the golden anniversaries of the Society CUHAGS members assembled could scarcely recall an occasion that had not commenced with an opening bid of 50, but there was determination to advance to 'diamonds' and the anniversaries stretching before us to 2017.

Monica Morrill the Queen of Clubs, concealing the infant, Gratian IV, surely the Jack of Hearts, came up trumps. Before we went to the tables her mastery of suit was plain as we watched the six of clubs dealt around her in four hands. Our thanks go to the two jugglers who provided this entertainment.

Monica presided over half the deck at one table whilst Mr Caiani alongside with the lightest of bidding presented splendid face cards. This included a straight flush of Court Musicians played with magnificent timing.



The Clare College Grace was read by Miss Claire Pike of Clare and this was her inaugural reading. Sadly our Senior Treasurer, Honorary Vice President and arguably our King of Clubs was unable to join the gathering but had communicated his good wishes.

As the clock struck 9 we were treated to a Mid Prandial Recital. Works by Domenico Zipoli, Antonio Vivaldi and George Frederick Handel were performed magnificently and we are all in the debt of Justina Kim Gandolphi (Soprano) Ryan Mark (Violin) and Francis Knights (Harpsicord). The works by Handel were from 1748/1749 and in introducing the performances CUHAGS declared a bold pre-emptive bid for the 250th Anniversary of Handel 1685 – 1759. His works will undoubtedly ‘feature in spades’ in the year to come.

It being the birthday of Beau Brummell (1778) we were all suitably attired and this along with the excitement, the music and heat is known to have caused the swooning of at least one Queen of Hearts. Not so Monica, so close to term and it being decidedly Bumps week she presided magnificently and earned the admiration of all. Thanks were extended to a number of CUHAGS aces, including Derek Palgrave. Especial thanks went to David Broomfield who skilfully played multiple hands as Committee Member, Membership Secretary and at the table of the Heraldic Survey Committee. All the while he still found time to be CUHAGS very own answer phone or ‘118 Service’.

At 9.45pm with Gratian IV still not delivered the Society rules decreed that right of succession to the Presidency by birth be trumped by the Patience of Mr A Caiani. He duly emerged to acclaim as President. Mr Patrick Morrow had earlier been revealed as CUHAGS Card with his entertaining and pithy wisdom and our new President in a speech playing the joker to perfection offered an under bid for Presidency. Too long he declared has CUHAGS suffered under Presidents with bold leadership and vision. That would end, his cartomancy offered us an Anti-Monica future with a welcoming return to pettiness. This was long overdue and in him he assured us we had the incarnation of that virtue. With that we wagered we were onto a winning streak and we toasted the King of Cups

ELIAS ASHMOLE AND THE COURT OF CHIVALRY IN STUART HERALDRY

Vittoria Feola

The historian who wishes to study this English court will necessarily come across Elias Ashmole's huge collections of manuscripts about it. Elias Ashmole (1617-92) was Windsor herald, a Baconian-inclined antiquary and the founder of the eponymous museum in Oxford, to which he left, among objects of various kinds, his fine library. While, contrary to his will, a substantial part of his books never made it to the museum, Ashmole's seven hundred volumes of manuscripts did. They are now kept in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Among them, about half contain Ashmole's collections relating to English legal history and heraldry. He used many of them to write his masterpiece, *The Institution, Laws and Ceremonies of the Most Noble Order of the Garter* (London, 1672).

There is much evidence of the proceedings of the Court of Chivalry since the reign of Edward III, that is, since the time of the Hundred Years War, and most of it can be found in Ashmole's manuscript collection.¹ They are transcripts and original copies which Ashmole obtained from the College of Arms, the Tower, and the archives of the Order of the Garter in Windsor Castle. It is logical that he should have collected such material, for he researched everything relating to Edward III, founder of the Order. In other words, material about the Court of Chivalry illuminates the history of the Order of the Garter; and from the history of the Order one can learn the role of the Court of Chivalry in English law from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century.

¹ Ashmole's collections about the Court of Chivalry are contained in MSS.Ashm.832, 835, 836, 840, 846, 856, 857, 860, 862, 1137, 1133, 1135, 1137. For a detailed description of their content, see Black, W. H., *A descriptive, analytical, and critical catalogue of the manuscripts bequeathed unto the University of Oxford by Elias Ashmole: also of some additional MSS. Contributed by Kingsley, Lhuys, Borlase and others* (Oxford, 1845-1866).

It might reasonably be expected, therefore, that Ashmole should have mentioned the Court of Chivalry in his seven hundred-page folio volume about the Order of the Garter. But he did not. First he gathered the finest collection of manuscripts about the Court of Chivalry, then, he ignored it. To solve this mystery we will need to consider Ashmole's main arguments in the *Institution*. Next, we shall recall the origin and employments of the Court of Chivalry. Lastly, we shall attempt an analysis of the reasons behind Ashmole's omission of the Court of Chivalry from his book on the Order of the Garter.

On the 8 May 1672 Ashmole presented Charles II with the first copy of the *Institution*.² It is best seen in the context of the Renaissance genre known as 'mirror for the prince'. This was based on the notion that history teaches by example. The historian was the prince's best adviser, because he could provide him with biographies of eminent men from antiquity whose exemplary conduct the prince was invited to imitate. Ashmole chose King Edward III, founder of the Order of the Garter, as exemplary sovereign whom Charles II should imitate. In the *Institution*, Ashmole explained that Edward III was worthy of imitation because his kingdom was a turning point in the evolution of the English constitution.

Ashmole believed that the English constitution could be chronologically dated - from the time of the Saxons. This, together with the evidence about the evolution of the institution of new knighthoods, such as the Order of the Garter, proved that the sovereignty of English Kings had also evolved. The English constitution had evolved following the evolution of the powers of the King, who now held absolute and exclusive right to create new nobility.

The power of Parliament had evolved, too, however. Ashmole used evidence from the reign of Edward III to demonstrate that its exemplary value lay in the fact that Edward was respectful of the rights of Parliament which won him the nobility's approval for his enlarged, absolute sovereignty: 'it is worthy of note that such like Grants [those that Edward gave his newly created knights] have been made by the consent of Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament'.³ Besides, Parliament could also withhold the pension which the King had previously allowed a newly-created knight, thus limiting the royal prerogative.⁴

² *Josten*, III, p. 1250.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

These remarks of Ashmole's cannot be overemphasised. We need to bear in mind that whatever Ashmole wrote about the past was meant as political advice for the present. Charles II knew it. The underlying issue at stake was Charles' late disrespect for the right of Parliament to vote his financial supply. He was dangerously acting like his predecessors who had tried to impose absolute-style government. One, Charles' father, had lost his head for that. If Ashmole's argument was that all Edward III did was to be taken as an example, then why did he not mention the Court of Chivalry? Let us take a closer look at this medieval court.

The Court of Chivalry, originating in the reign of Edward III, during the Hundred Years War was initially intended to enforce military discipline; later, it also had jurisdiction over the trial of peers and claims to peerages and baronetcies.⁵ Knowledge of genealogy, heraldry and the law of arms, therefore, was becoming increasingly essential to lawyers, as being the only means of providing thereby evidence related to landholding. It was important, first, because heraldic evidence could ascertain an individual's right to shire administration; and secondly, it could be the decisive evidence in litigation over landholding. The Court of Chivalry was conducted with civil law procedures in civil law courts both in England and in France during the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries.

However, this caused reactions from common law lawyers, who found in the Commons their ally. There is evidence of the encroachment of civilians on common lawyer's domains from before 1384. For example, complaints of the non-payment of a debt, which was determinable by common law, were often dealt with in the Court of Chivalry, with civil law procedures. One practical difference in such cases was the number of witnesses required: the common law needed two, the civil law, only one. The Commons and the Common lawyers managed to 'eclipse' the civilians until the reign of James I.⁶ In the early seventeenth century a fashion for duels spread across the country. James I revived the Court of Chivalry, which he empowered with new means. 'Scandalum magnatum' could now be brought before the Court, as in the past, with the additional option of having an appeal in the form of trial by single combat, which thus became the only legal form of duelling. Moreover, the Court could now award substantial damages according to Roman law principles. I wish to stress that this was not a novelty, witness the fact that other common law courts, as well as Star Chamber, had been awarding damages (which are of Roman law origin) within the common law procedures, ever since the fifteenth century.

⁵ Squibb, G. D., *The High Court of Chivalry*, p. 12.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-19, quotation from pp. 18-19.

The House of Commons represented the gentry and many MPs were trained in common law. Charles I went even further than his father in displeasing them: he expanded the application of martial law to current crimes. Martial law was the domain of the Earl Marshal; the Court of Chivalry thus gained another area of intervention in the everyday life of citizens, who were used to being judged for crimes in common law courts – where two witnesses were required and where precedents had to be cited in support of the sentence, unlike in civil procedure.⁷ Furthermore, damages were now being awarded, and a portion of them was going directly into the King's coffers. In other words, the Court could become a source of revenue for the King without Parliament could have any say in it.

In 1628 Parliament issued the Petition of Right. Two leading common lawyers, Sir Edward Coke and John Selden (both members of the gentry) were involved in its drafting. The VII article did not mention explicitly the Court of Chivalry but the reference to the application of martial law leaves no doubt that all special commissions for the enforcement of martial law were considered as being against the customs of the realm and the statutes of Parliament.⁸ The petition does not explicitly say that the enforcement of

⁷ Ibid., p. 52.

⁸ VII. And whereas also by authority of parliament, in the five-and-twentieth year of the reign of King Edward III, it is declared and enacted, that no man shall be forejudged of life or limb against the form of the Great Charter and the law of the land; and by the said Great Charter and other the laws and statutes of this your realm, no man ought to be adjudged to death but by the laws established in this your realm, either by the customs of the same realm, or by acts of parliament: and whereas no offender of what kind so ever is exempted from the proceedings to be used, and punishments to be inflicted by the laws and statutes of this your realm; nevertheless of late time divers commissions under your Majesty's great seal have issued forth, by which certain persons have been assigned and appointed commissioners with power and authority to proceed within the land, according to the justice of martial law, against such soldiers or mariners, or other dissolute persons joining with them, as should commit any murder, robbery, felony, mutiny, or other outrage or misdemeanor whatsoever, and by such summary course and order as is agreeable to martial law, and is used in armies in time of war, to proceed to the trial and condemnation of such offenders, and them to cause to be executed and put to death according to the law martial. *The Petition of Rights, exhibited to His Majestie, by*

martial law was a grievance because of its civil law procedure, yet it seems plausible to suggest that this was another way to read between the lines of the passage. Moreover, this article emphasised the “customs” of the realm and statute laws voted by Parliament as the limits to a decision taken by the King in its use of the royal prerogative. The King ignored the issue.

In 1640, an ambitious barrister of the Middle Temple, Edward Hyde (later Lord Chancellor Clarendon, the author of *The history of the great rebellion*) entered Parliament. One of his near relations had his arms disclaimed by the heralds’ visitation of 1623, which also resulted in the loss of landholding rights. There being no register of title to land property, an appeal could only be made to the Court of Chivalry. Hyde’s relative does not seem to have appealed. There is no evidence to suggest that this was the reason for Hyde’s vehement attack on the civilian Court, but even as an anecdote, it illustrates a typical instance of a gentleman with a common law education and MP feeling that the monarch’s policies were impinging on his rights, even if he did not favour the radical removal of the monarchy. On 19 April 1640, Hyde spoke of the grievances that afflicted his native Wiltshire. He argued that John Pym, who had spoken for two hours the previous day, had omitted one, much heavier grievance: ‘a court newly erected, without colour or shadow of law, which took upon it to fine and imprison the King’s subjects, and to give great damages for matters which the law gave no damages for.’⁹ Hyde added that he knew that the Court was an ancient court of war, but he wished to see its end. He proceeded to give numerous examples of ‘unjust’ imprisonments, such of a citizen who had been prosecuted for calling a swan ‘a goose’, because the coat of arms of the gentleman who brought him before the Court of Chivalry depicted a swan, so that ‘goose’ was an offence to his honour.¹⁰

Parliament was soon dissolved, only to be summoned again in November. Hyde renewed his motion against the Court. Parliament appointed a committee to receive all petitions against the Court of Chivalry. Its thirty-two members included Hyde and John Selden. The committee decided that the civilian court should be abolished. Parliament instructed the committee to draft a charge, to be given to the Lords, against those who had usurped this jurisdiction, that is, a charge against the King’s servants who had restored a ‘civilian nuisance’. Finally, on 1 December 1641, when the

the Lords Spirituall, & Commons in Parliament assembled, concerning divers Rights and Liberties of the Subjects: with the Kings Majesties severall Answers thereunto (London, 1642), sig. A3r and v.

⁹ Squibb, G. D., *The High Court of Chivalry*, p. 63.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

Commons presented their 'Remonstrance of the States of the Kingdom' to Charles I, one of their points stated that 'the pretended Court of the Earl Marshal was arbitrary, and illegal, in its being and proceedings'.¹¹

A central argument of the common lawyers' opposition to James I and above all to Charles I was the nature of the English ancient constitution. People such as Sir Edward Coke and John Selden, but also Hyde, opposed James' interpretation of the origin of the English constitution as stemming from the Norman Conquest. They argued that the origins of both the English constitution and of the nature of the sovereignty of English Kings could be dated from the time of the Saxons, but that its more ancient origins were lost in the mists of time. Not only had the English ancient constitution existed since time immemorial, it also comprised the same set of unchanged, unwritten customs. Thus, the common lawyers, opponents of Stuart attempts to rule England in an 'absolute' way, came to identify the English ancient constitution as a whole with the unwritten customs of the English people, the 'common law' since time immemorial. According to common law, Parliament had certain rights, such as the right to vote financial supply an important point because it related to the right of Parliament to limit the royal prerogative. By selling knighthoods, both James I and Charles I tried to enlarge the spectrum of the royal prerogative and avoid Parliamentary controls. Tensions between Parliament's claims that, according to the common law, it could limit the royal prerogative, and the King's claim that his sovereignty was absolute due to the origin of the English constitution in the Conquest, resulted, together with several other complex factors, in the eventual outbreak of the English Revolution. The rhetoric of the ancient constitution identified with the customary law of England rested on a century-long aversion of common lawyers to civilians. Far from arguing that this was a major cause of the English revolution, this article aims to point to the fact that aversion to civil law may have been what united both Royalists and more radical opponents of the Stuarts. Hyde's is a case in point but it is in Ashmole's *Institution* that it can best be seen.

In the *Institution*, Ashmole devoted a lengthy section to the office of Constable of Windsor Castle.¹² He also wrote at length of his common law

¹¹ Ibid., p. 67.

¹² A Court of Record is one that meets the following criteria: 1. keeps a record of proceedings; 2. the tribunal [that is, either the king or a fully empowered jury not paid by the government] is independent of the magistrate [that is, the judge]; 3. proceedings are according to common law; 4. power to fine or imprison for contempt; 5. generally has a seal. Black's *Law Dictionary* (London, 1996 edn.), pp. 425-426.

Court of Record there. ¹³His cannot be a description of the Court of Chivalry, nor is the ‘Constable’ the Lord High Constable who presided over it with the Earl Marshal, because Ashmole referred to different competences than those attributed to their chivalric counterparts. Besides, this was a court of common law.

The absence of any remarks about the Court of Chivalry and the space dedicated to a Windsor common law court tell us more than any essay that Ashmole could have written about the civilian Court. First he collected as much as he was able to find about it, and then he ignored it: clearly, he did not want posterity to remember that the law of arms in England had been traditionally administered in a civil law court.

Ashmole shared Selden’s patriotic view of the common law as having necessarily to be presented as the original law of the English people. In the *Institution* he often mentioned common law records; indeed, all his English legal sources about chivalric matters were common law records. Following Selden’s example in *Titles of Honor*, he produced another commentary on the English law of arms based exclusively on common law records. In 1671, Ashmole’s father-in-law, the legal antiquary and herald William Dugdale, published his *Origines Juridicales*. In the preface, he explained his sources: none was civilian. ¹⁴ He put the common law at head of the

¹³ The use of the word *Constabularius* (...) is shewed by the learned Spelman, and particularly applied to the Governour of a Castle, the French call him a *Chastelain*, whom we call *Constable of a Castle*, but in the Rolls of King John’s time (...) the Governour of this Castle is called *Constable*, and under that title hath the Office ever since passed. His Office is mixt, partly Military and partly Civil; as a Military Officer, pertains to him the sole Command of the place...and for all that is in the Castle to the King, under whom he is Captain or Governour there. As a Civil Officer, the Constable is Judge of a Court of Record, held there by Prescription, for the determination of Pleas between party and party, arising within the Precints of the Forest of Windesor, and Liberties thereof...by way of Action at the Common Law...He hath a Deputy learned in the Law, who is called Steward of the Court of Record...This Officer supplies the Constables place as Judge of that Court of Pleas, from whose Judgement the appeal is by Writ of Error returnable in the King’s Bench, or Common-Pleas at Westminster IOG, pp. 130-135.

¹⁴ Dugdale, W., *Origines Juridicales, or Historical Memorials of the English Laws, Courts of Justice, Forms of Tryal, Punishment in Cases Criminal, Law-Writers, Law-Books, Grants and Settlements of Estates,*

third chapter on ‘The Antiquity of our Laws in England’.¹⁵ In the section on ‘The Jurisdiction of the Lord Chancellor for hearing of Civil Causes, how antient’, Dugdale dismissed the importance of civil causes thus: ‘there doth not appear in the reports of the common law’ that many civil law causes have happened since the reign of Henry VII.¹⁶ In the section on the ‘Courts of Justice’, he fails to mention the Court of Chivalry and, although he mentions in passing the ‘law of chivalry’, he then hurries to say that in English matters of honour, traditionally the common law rules.¹⁷ It was a conscious avoid of the use of a certain part of his collections.

Ashmole's line of argument was that the *Institution* was a mirror for the prince, and that Edward III was worthy of imitations. Accordingly, Ashmole could not mention Edward III's foundation of the Court of Chivalry, because the subject was still too hot; after all, Charles II had been restored within living memory. Ashmole's omission was a tactical one. Anyway, the Court of Chivalry played a role in Stuart heraldry, be it for its inclusion or omission from political debates.

Vittoria Feola,
Université libre de Bruxelles,

Degree of Sejeant, Innes of Court and Chancery. Also a Chronologie of the Lords Chancellors and Keepers of the Great Seal, Lord Treasurers, Justices Itinerant, Justices of the King's Bench and Common Pleas, Barons of the Exchequer, Masters of the Rolls, King's Attorneys and Sollicitors, and Serjeants of the Law (London, 1671 edn.), p. sig. A3r-A4v. Dugdale just speaks of ‘the Laws’ in the Preface.

¹⁵ Dugdale, W., *Origines Juridicales*, p. 3.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-40.

DONALD J STEEL 1935-2008

A tribute by Professor Peter Spufford

In Don Steel we have lost a giant among twentieth century family historians.

Don and I were undergraduates reading History together in Cambridge between 1953 and 1956. I was a scholar at Jesus, he was a scholar at Peterhouse. He too was already hooked on genealogy. He had joined the Society of Genealogists, even earlier than I, in 1948. He was born in September 1935, and, unusually for a non-mathematician, came up straight from Mitcham Grammar School without doing National Service first. We both found ourselves not entirely satisfied with the already existing university society for heraldry, which we though ought to interest itself in genealogy as well as heraldry, so, with Malcolm Pinhorn (Fitzwilliam), we founded a university society for genealogy. He and I both obtained good Firsts in the Historical Tripos and I expected him to return to Cambridge, after his National Service, to join me as a research student in medieval history. It was already arranged for him to work on medieval ecclesiastical history with Dom David Knowles, then the Regius Professor of History. Whilst doing his National Service, he changed his mind, and chose to be a schoolmaster. It proved to be a good alternative, although at the end of his life he sometimes wondered if it had been the right decision. He proved to be an inspiring and successful teacher. After teaching history in both Grammar and Secondary Modern schools, he progressed to teach others how to teach history at the Berkshire College of Education.

Meanwhile, in the 1960s, both he and I and Malcolm Pinhorn had moved on to help run the Society of Genealogists itself. Malcolm became Chairman, and I became Editor of the *Magazine*. Both these positions proved ephemeral, but Don made a permanent impact. He initiated the great series of volumes of the *National Index of Parish Registers*. New editions of the county sections are still being published by the Society of Genealogists, continuously revised and updated. Twenty four county fascicules are currently available from the Society. Volumes I, II and III were devoted to a very extensive general study of all the possible sources for births, marriages and deaths in England from the middle ages up to 1837, including nonconformists and Roman Catholics. Apart from a twenty-page complementary note by Edgar Samuel on Jewish Sources, the remainder of the 1058 pages were entirely written by Don himself. In a review at the time, I was delighted to be able to describe the enterprise as “a landmark in the field of British Genealogy”. Forty years on his volumes are still the most authoritative survey of the sources available. Our means of accessing our sources may have changed, but the sources remain the same. With Don’s encouragement a revised edition of these three magisterial volumes is currently being prepared, and should appear in 2009 and will be a very suitable memorial to him and his enormous contribution to genealogy. Not content with these three general English volumes, he wrote a twelfth volume at the end of the county series, another 320 pages, on *Sources for Scottish Genealogy and Family History*.

Don's evident early distinction was recognised by his election as one of the select group of Fellows of the Society in 1962. I know of no other Fellow elected before the age of thirty.

In 1968 he and I were among the speakers at the World Conference on Records in Salt Lake City, and in 1976 he and I were again involved together, in organizing the Thirteenth International Congress of Genealogical and Heraldic Sciences, which was held in London. In between he had made another major contribution to family history. In 1974 he had helped found the Federation of Family History Societies, of which he became the Vice Chairman, for as well as being active in the national Society of Genealogists, he was also active in local family history societies, as later in the Guild of One Name Studies. Don's sense of family history on a national level meant that in 1975 he was also active in promoting the earliest English Genealogical Congress organised by Stella Colwell in Cambridge.

While teaching future teachers at the Berkshire College of Education, he produced, with a colleague there, Lawrence Taylor, a booklet for local teachers: *Family History in Schools; An Interdisciplinary Experiment* (1968), suggesting for the first time how useful family history could be as a means for exciting children about the past in general. This was tried out successfully in a number of Berkshire and Hampshire schools, both primary and secondary. They then produced a fuller, definitive, book *Family History in Schools* (1973), for a national audience, giving very specific instruction to teachers on how to use family history as a gateway to the past. They were particularly aiming at those who were teaching the 9-14 age group, but they already knew from experience, that their methods would also work for older children and indeed for adults. Don was already involved in adult education as a London University Extra-mural lecturer.

Shortly afterwards, in 1975, it was not surprising that the BBC recruited him to be their Education Officer for South West England, based in Bristol, which involved a huge amount of travel. His most spectacular contribution to the BBC was the precursor of "Who do you think you are?". In 1979 the BBC2 ran his five part television series "Family History" focussed on the ancestry of Gordon Honeycombe. Don naturally wrote the accompanying book: *Discovering your Family History*. Penguin invited him to follow this up with a book on family history for them. What he wrote was unfortunately far too long to be publishable, so we lack his genealogical masterpiece.

After he took early retirement from the BBC in 1990, he was able to devote himself entirely to genealogy. He ran 'Don Steel Family History Enterprises' from his home in Somerset, which was intended as a genealogical research network, but evolved into a family-history-bookselling business. Despite a stroke, soon after retirement, he continued to be a familiar figure at family history fairs and conferences, with his books overflowing into every conceivable space. Being self employed, he was free to travel extensively to lecture on family history in England and the United States.

In his last years, although he had become a humanist, his interest in ecclesiastical history revived, although by now it was focussed not on the medieval, but on the early church.

After a long and painful illness, he died rather suddenly on 7 April 2008 in Taunton. He leaves a widow, Monica, nee Jenner, whom he married in 1962, three children, Marion, Alison and Delwyn, and a grandson.

In 1961 in his prophetic Jubilee Lecture to the Society of Genealogists "Genealogy and the Common Man", Sir Anthony Wagner pointed out that genealogy was no longer only being concentrated on distinguished ancestries (the *Complete Peerage* had then just been completed), and suggested that, with the right input, family history would become "wholesale". Don Steel, with his genius for innovation was one of the key figures in ensuring that his prophecy was fulfilled in the following decades.

A Selection of Don Steel's Publications

The Descent of Christian Names: *Genealogists' Mag* 1962, **14**, 34-43

National Index of Parish Registers Volume 5 - South Midlands & Welsh Border (with A.E.F Steel and C.W. Field): Society of Genealogists, 1966

National Index of Parish Registers Volume 1 – Sources of Births, Marriages & Deaths before 1837(1): *Phillimore*, 1968

Family History in Schools: an interdisciplinary experiment: 1968

Genealogy and Demography: *Genealogists' Mag* 1970, **16**, 203-211

National Index of Parish Registers Volume 12 – Sources for Scottish genealogy and family history: *Phillimore*, 1970

Family history in Schools (with Lawrence Taylor): *Phillimore*, 1973

National Index of Parish Registers Volume 2 – Sources for Nonconformist Genealogy and Family History: *Phillimore*, 1973

National Index of Parish Registers Volume 3 – Sources for Roman Catholic and Jewish Genealogy and Family History (with E.R. Samuel): *Phillimore*, 1974

The Steels (with Lawrence Taylor): *Nelson*, 1976

One Hundred Years On: the use of a private census to compare with the mid-nineteenth century enumerators: *Local Historian*, 1976, **12**, 93-101

Discovering Your Family History: *B.B.C.*, 1980

Family History in Focus (with Lawrence Taylor): *Lutterworth*, 1984

Discovering Your Family History (Second Edition): *B.B.C.*, 1986

Walls and Bridges: the case for co-operation between demographers and family historians. *Genealogists' Mag* 1997, **25**, 504-508

CURRENT AND FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- 15 June 2008 **HOME COUNTIES FAMILY HISTORY
SHOW**
Bletchley, Milton Keynes
- 21 June 2008 **WILTSHIRE F.H.S OPEN DAY**
Trowbridge
- 28 June 2008 **YORKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY FAIR**
York
- 29-31 August 2008 **THE WAY WE WERE**
University of Essex - Colchester
Essex SFH & Suffolk FHS Residential Conference
- 5-7 September 2008 **HERALDIC WEEKEND**
Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge
Organised by the Heraldry Society
- 13 September 2008 **NATIONAL FAMILY HISTORY FAIR**
Gateshead
- 16-20 January 2009 **12TH AUSTRALASIAN CONGRESS**
Auckland, New Zealand
- 1 March 2009 **FAMILY HISTORY FAIR**
Kidlington
Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire Societies

For full details of these events please visit <http://geneva.weald.org.uk>

family history research. They pointed out that because so many of the early photographs were taken in studios by professionals whose names were on the prints, a knowledge of the latter was often helpful for locating and dating purposes. Don Steel actually made a strong plea for every family historian to catalogue his or her prints and so create a personal photographic archive, whilst Lawrence Taylor emphasised the value of photographs as social documents, advocating the need to embrace a broader range of images in order to place a given family in a more general context.

Another believer in their philosophy was Robert Pols who, about 16 years ago, initiated a whole series of popular booklets for family historians covering many different aspects of “Old Photographs”. Until the appearance of Jayne Shrimpton’s booklet, his contributions in this field had been the standard works of reference in this field. Although many of them are still available, I have no doubt that *Family Photographs & How to Date Them*, will enjoy a very substantial readership.

Derek A Palgrave

NOTICES AND GENERAL NEWS

Officers elected at AGM for the next Academic Year:

President	Ambrogio Caiani (Sidney Sussex College)
Senior Treasurer	Dr Gordon Wright (Clare College)
Secretary	Richard Fellows (Magdalene College)
Junior Treasurer	Jacob Davis (Trinity College)
Committee	Kelcey Lee Paul Marsden (St Catharine’s College) Claire Pike (Clare College)
Scrutineer	D.C. d’Arcy Orders (Trinity Hall)

Society Accounts 2006-2007

Although the full set of accounts has been submitted to the Junior Proctor by the Senior Treasurer in accordance with the University Regulations, it was pointed out at the Society's A.G.M. that this was not mentioned in the Society's Constitution. Nevertheless there was a requirement for the A.G.M. to present (Clause 6.1) and approve (Clause 6.3) the Society's Accounts.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY HERALDIC & GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Income & Expenditure Account for the year ended 30th September 2007

	2006/7		2005/6	
	£	£	£	£
Income				
Subscriptions	1,045		905	
Donations	120		110	
Surplus on Sales	13		25	
Surplus on Social Events	349		277	
Premium Bond Prize	100			
Total Income		1,627		1,317
Expenditure				
Freshers' Fair	50		45	
Deficit on speaker meetings	272		655	
FFHS insurance & annual subscription	89		89	
Printing "Escutcheon"	220		180	
Photocopying, stationery & postage	132		290	
Publicity	-		40	
Sundry expenses			50	
Total Expenditure		£763		£1,389
Surplus for the year		£864		
Deficit for the year				£72

Members are reminded that although the balance sheet had been circulated, in the previous issue of the Escutcheon, the Income and Expenditure Account shown above had been omitted so it could not be presented and approved at the A.G.M. Consequently a motion to hold an E.G.M. for this purpose, after this data had been circulated to the membership, was carried at the A.G.M. A calling notice will be issued in due course arranging an E.G.M. to comply with this decision.