

THE ARMS OF VISCOUNT BOLINGBROKE AND ST JOHN

Noel Cox

The Right Honourable Sir Kenneth Oliver Musgrave St John, seventh Viscount Bolingbroke and Baron St John of Lydiard Tregoze (Great Britain 1712), eighth Viscount St John and Baron St John of Battersea (Great Britain 1712), and 11th Baronet (England 1611), succeeded to his titles on the death of a cousin in 1974.

His lordship, owner of various travel companies, lives at 15 Tonbridge Mews, Shrewsbury Street, PO Box 25 069, Christchurch.

Oliver St John, second son of Sir Oliver St John, of Bletso, and younger brother of Sir John St John, of Bletso, ancestor of Lord St John of Bletso (created 1559), held the Lordship of Lydiard Tregoze. Oliver died in 1497. His son, Sir John, was Chamberlain to Margaret Countess of Richmond, the mother of King Henry VII, and one of the executors of her Will.

Henry St John, first Viscount Bolingbroke, was a famous early eighteenth century statesman and writer. He was Secretary for War 1704-1708, and Secretary of State 1710-14. Although rewarded with a viscounty in 1712, he began to intrigue for the succession of James Edward Stuart, the Old Pretender. He fled to France on the sudden death of Queen Anne and the accession of King George I, and was impeached. Although whilst in France he had acted as Secretary of State to the Old Pretender, he returned to England in 1723, and was restored to his property two years later.

Viscount Bolingbroke's father, who was the fourth baronet, was in 1716 created Viscount St John. The two titles came together with the death of the father.

The armorial bearings of Viscount Bolingbroke are the ancient arms of the St John family, *Argent on a chief Gules, two mullets Or*. These arms were borne at the battle of Falkirk in 1298, and at the siege of Carlawerock in 1300, by Sir John de St John. John de St John, at the time of King Edward I, bore a similar shield, except that the mullets were pierced

The supporters are *a falcon wings displayed Or, charged on the breast with the Hames*. The Hames is the badge of the family of Tregoze, and is, *on an antique shield, rimmed gold, party per pale, Argent and Gules, a crescent Sable, thereon a label of three points Or*. Hames, or heames, are in their origin horse-collars, though as is common in heraldry they are now somewhat removed from their original appearance.

The crest is *a mount Vert thereon a falcon, rising, belled Or, ducally gorged Gules*. The mount is sometimes blazoned Proper. Belled is where a hawk or falcon has bells attached to its legs.

The motto is *Nec quaerere nec spernere honorem*. This may be translated as "neither to seek nor despise honour". It is also used by the Boughey family, and as well as that of Lord St John of Bletso.

Kenneth, Viscount Bolingbroke and St John

Arms: *Argent on a chief Gules, two mullets Or.*

Supporters: *A falcon wings displayed Or, charged on the breast with the Hames (on an antique shield, rimmed gold, party per pale, Argent and Gules, a crescent Sable, thereon a label of three points Or).*

Crest: *A mount Vert thereon a falcon, rising, belled Or, ducally gorged Gules.*

Motto: *Nec quærere nec spernere honorem.*