

## English Leighs and Leigh Arms Additional Data

Data concerning the early Leighs was found in several internet sources including Stirnet (<http://www.stirnet.com>), The Peerage (<http://thepeerage.com>), and several pages authored by Alan Freer on Family Tree Maker.com

(<http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/f/r/e/Alan-G-Freer/index.html>).

These last data are also on Rootsweb in the Freer database..

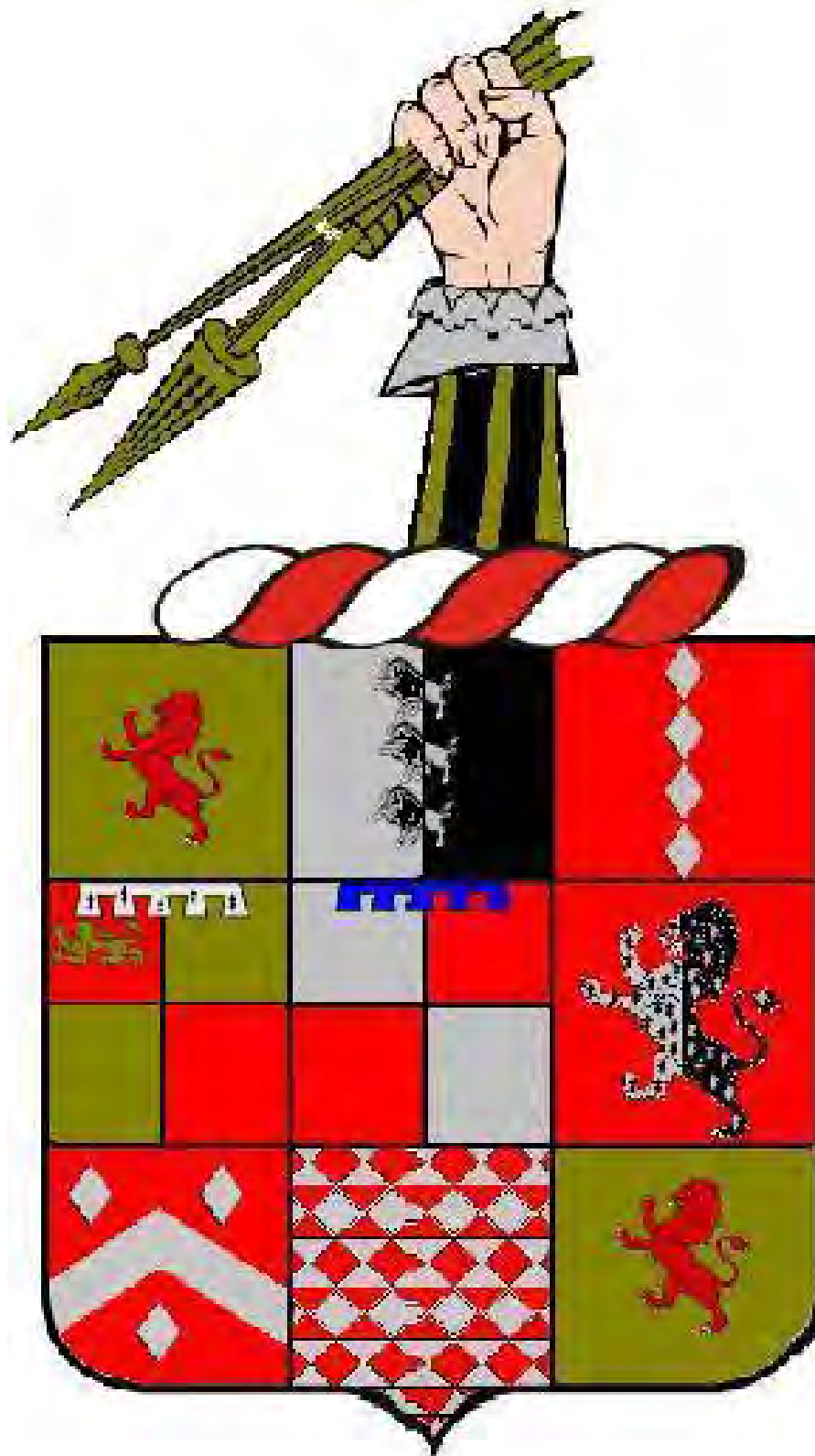
Information about armorial bearings is taken from *Burkes General Armory, Fairbairn's Book of Crests* and the website <http://cheshire-heraldry.org.uk> .

Many of the prominent English Leigh families are probably descended from Agnes de Legh, great granddaughter of Hamon de Legh who was a contemporary of Henry II in England. Agnes married three times: (1) Richard de Lymme who took the name Leigh after his marriage; (2) William de Hawardyn whose descendants apparently did not come down to the present; (3) William de Venables who also took the name Leigh and who was probably related to Agnes as both may have had a claim to the name Venables. The original Venables was Gilbert de Venables alive in 1086 who came over to England with the Conqueror

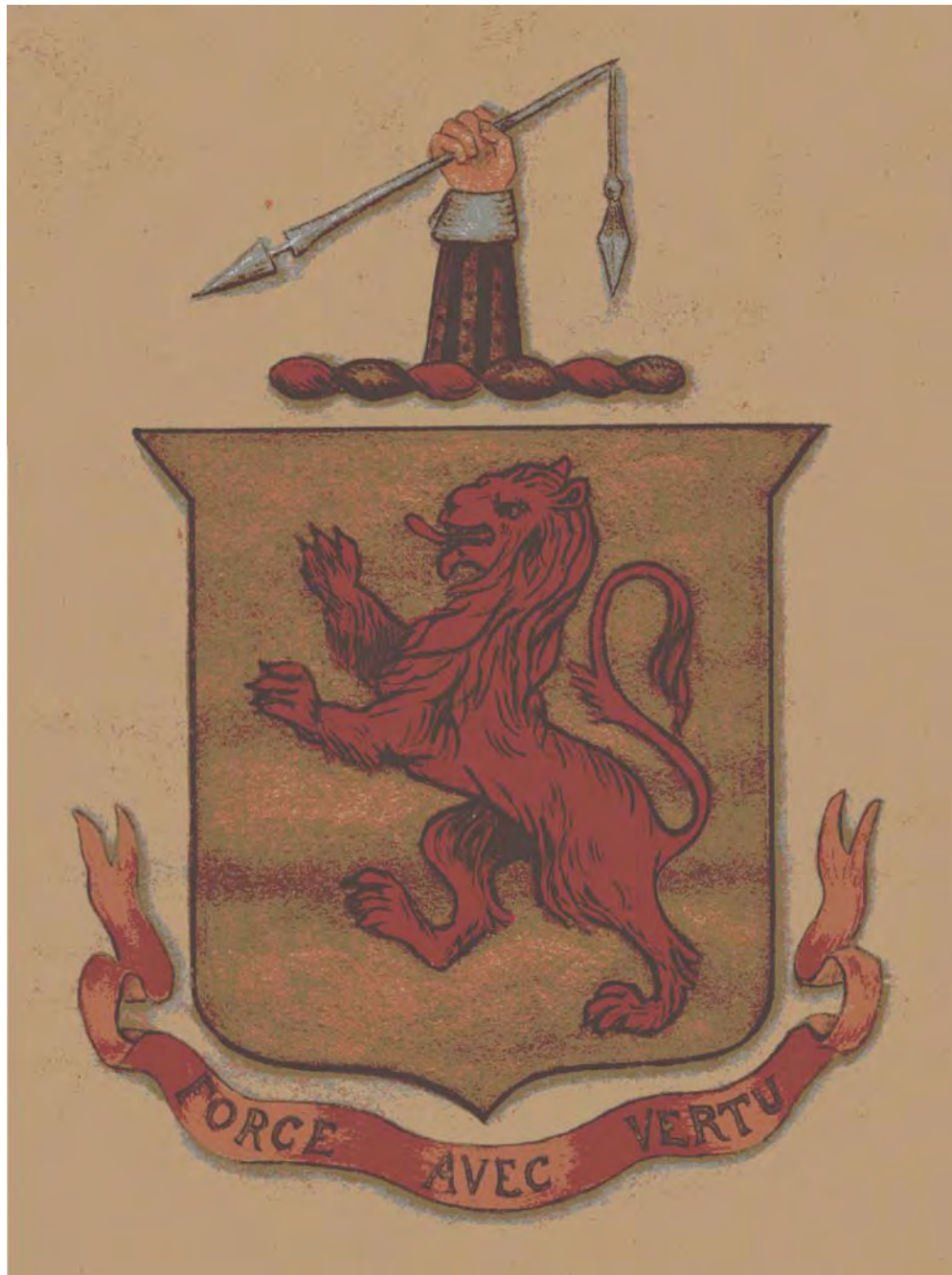
A new genealogy report for the English Leighs has been included on the webpage with the addition of this study. It is of interest in that it provides indications of living Leighs descending from two of Agnes de Legh's husbands, Richard de Lymme and William Venables. The Stoneleigh line springs from William Venables. Descendants of Egerton Leigh originated with Richard de Lymme. These two lines should have quite different Y-chromosome DNA.

Beginning with Thomas de Legh who died in 1314, the de Lymme line's armorial bearings are distinguished by a crest of a broken tilting spear. Their escutcheon is a red lion rampant on a field of gold. The essence of these arms are evident in the arms of the original Thomas de Legh, in the Leighs of Oughtrington, and in the Egerton Leigh family which was in South Carolina prior to the Revolution. They are part of the arms of the Leighs of West Hall in High Legh as recorded in the Visitation in 1580, though these latter arms reflect the accretions to the family of seven additional sets of armorial bearings, either by marriage or purchase.

On the next page I will reproduce the 1580 Arms of High Legh, West Hall and on the following page, the arms of Ferdinando Leigh who arrived in Virginia in the 1740's.



Arms Of High Legh, West Hall



**Figure 1. Arms of Ferdinando Leigh**

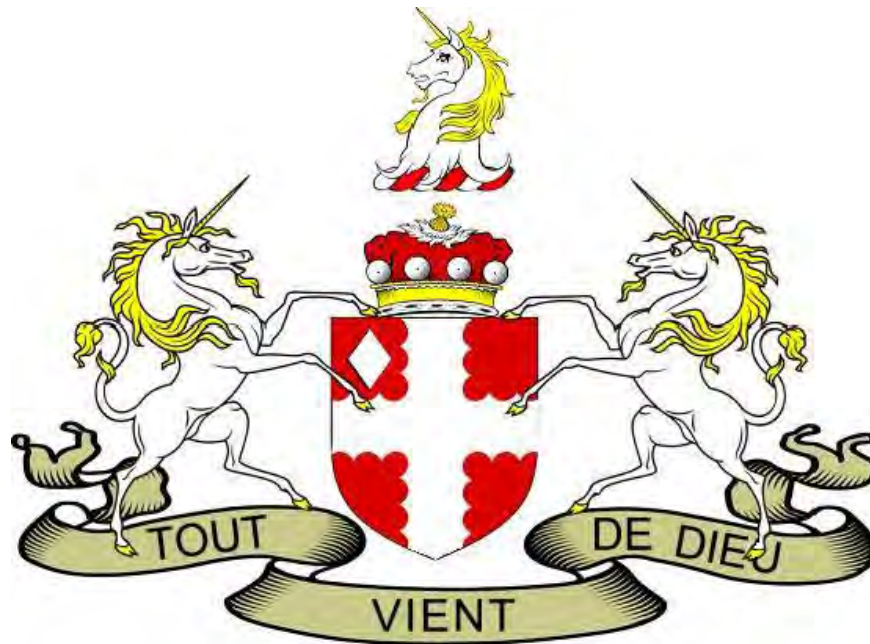
These arms were provided by Benjamin Watkins Leigh in 2005 through his son Jason. The image was produced in this country in the early 1800's but the membership in the family of armorial bearings proceeding from Thomas de Legh, son of Agnes and Richard de Lymme is unmistakable.

The other branch of Agnes de Legh's families which has present day descendants is the line from William Venables. The basic escutcheon for the Venables line is "gules a cross engrailed, argent" with the usual crest being a unicorn's head. In the Stoneleigh line, the cross engrailed has a lozenge in the upper left quarter and they have acquired a Baron's crown over the years along with several other sets of armorial bearings.



**Arms of Sir Thomas Leigh, Lord Mayor of London, 1558.**

On the next page I will show the arms of Baron Leigh of Stoneleigh, first creation, in 1643. The arms of the current Baron, descending from Chandos Leigh created Baron in 1839 are similar.



### **Arms of Lord Leigh of Stoneleigh, First Creation in 1643**

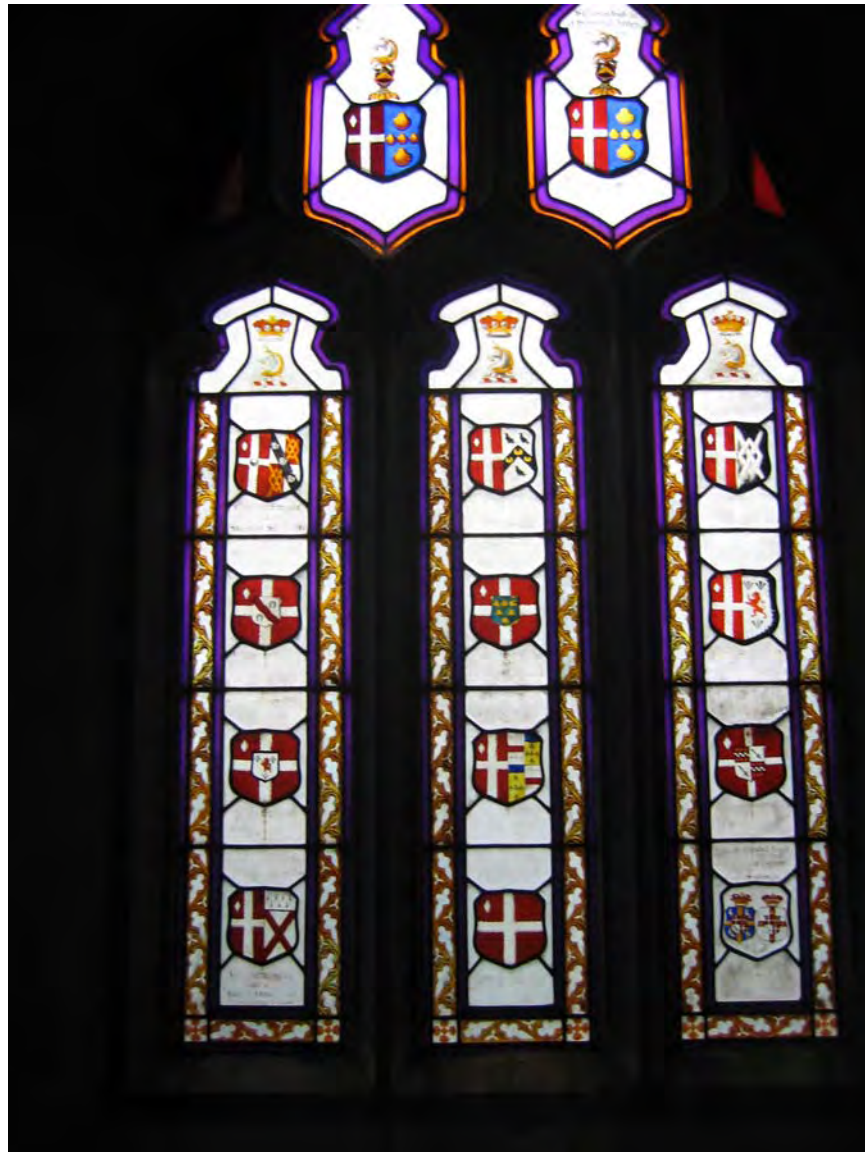
The rendering of these arms as well as the arms of Sir Thomas Leigh and of the West Hall of High Legh are due to Martin Goldstraw of Whitecairns.

On the next page I include a picture of a window taken in St. Mary's Chapel at Stoneleigh Abbey, the seat of Baron Stoneleigh since 1643. This was obtained by Gate Leigh and is also included in The Picture Gallery. The Abbey was initially purchased by Sir Thomas Leigh while he was Lord Mayor of London. The Abbey papers along with several centuries of records belonging to this branch of the Leigh family are presently available from The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust at Stratford-on-Avon.

The window shows various renditions of the Leigh arms including estates either received by virtue of a marriage or purchased. However, all the escutcheons are dominated by the cross engrailed belonging to Sit Thomas Leigh and inherited by him from William Venables.

The conclusion I reach based on these arms and upon the conclusive nature of the DNA evidence linking Ferdinando Leigh to the descendants of Col. William Leigh is that the Leighs of Virginia whom we are studying ultimately descend from Agnes de Legh's husband Richard de Lymme.

There are many present day descendants of William Venables. The last descendants of Richard de Lymme of whom I have a record are Egerton Leigh who died in 1928 and his brother Neville Egerton Leigh who died in 1929. A possibility, however, is Edward Julian Egerton Leigh, MP, who was born 20 July 1950. This family branch has had a pronounced tendency to include "Egerton" in descendants names, even daughters at times.



**A stained glass window in St. Mary's Chapel at Stoneleigh Abbey.**