

**MEMORIALS OF
FAMILIES OF THE
SURNAME OF ARCHER**

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Memorials of Families of the Surname of Archer by J. H. Lawrence-Archer

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J. H. LAWRENCE-ARCHER

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GEORGE, EARL BROOKE AND EARL OF WARWICK, K.T.,

ETC.

The Surname Archer.

INTRODUCTION.

THE notices of any particular surname, scattered throughout the records of past centuries, although unassociated with any prominent historical events, and seldom occurring, save in the pages of the County historian, may yet acquire, by their union in a collective form, a certain amount of interest, as illustrating the fortunes of a member of the common family.

The Anglo-Norman Surname Archer, was not uncommon in the seventeenth century. Several families of local distinction, bore it in various parts of England, and amongst them, the principal was that of Umberslade, in Warwickshire, a family much more widely spread, than might be supposed, and the only one, of any note, which, unlike those of Coopersale, Lizard, Stoke-Archer, and Dover, is certainly, not extinct, although in the person of Andrew, second and last Lord Archer, the senior male line expired, in the year 1778.¹

The following are "arms" assigned to various families of the name:—

1. Archer, Cornwall—sable, a chevron between 3 broad arrows argent (the Lizard).
2. Archer, Trelaske, Cornwall—sab. a chev. engr. betw. 3 pheons or.
3. Archer, Essex—azure, a garb erect or betw. 2 laurel branches, tied by a ribbon in base on a chief emb. arg. 3 arrows, points down, betw. 8 ermine spots, two and two, in pale sable. Granted to T. Archer, of Chelmsford, in 1828.
4. Archer, Essex—ermine, on a chief azure, 3 lions rampant or. (Spelt also "Aucher.")
5. Archer, Essex—ermine, a cross sable.
6. Archer, Essex—erm. on a cross sable, a cresc^t. argent.

¹ Burke—Jacob, &c.

7. Archer, Lincoln—per pale gules and azure, 3 arrows or, barbed and feathered arg.
Granted 24 March, 1684—crest, a dragon's head per pale, gules and azure, wings expanded, out of a mural crown, per pale, of last and third—to Robert Archer of Wainfleet.
8. Archer, Salop—sable, a lion rampant or.
9. Archer of Umberslade, Warwickshire—azure, 3 broad arrows or. Confirmed in 1597.
Arms of *Achard*—1. Or, a bend engr. sable.
2. Gyronny of 6 argent and gules, a label of 5 points azure.
3. Barry wavy of 6 argent and gules, a label of 5 points azure.
10. Archer—gules, 3 arches single or. This name appears rather to be Arches; the arms are quartered by Carew, and other old Devonshire families.
11. Archer—or, five fusils in bend sable.
12. Archer—azure, 3 arrows in pale argent.
13. Archer—argent, 3 pheons gules.
14. Archer—sable, 3 pheons argent.
15. Archer of Neithorp¹ (Herald's Visitation,—Brit. Museum), variation of Umberslade, quartering "Hulehale," "Sawcoey," "Clebury," "Canke," and "Delamere," the whole charged in the noubriil point with a cresc. for diff., the same difference being charged on the neck of the wyvern in the crest. No motto.
16. Archer (Lawrence-Archer), Scotland—per fesse, azure and argent, in chief 3 arrows or, in base a cross, raguly gules thereon a saltire of the third.
17. Archard, Yorkshire—or, 5 fusils in bend, sable.
18. Archard—argent 5 fusils in cross sable.
19. Awger or Ager, (or Aucher?) Kent and Glo'ster—ermine on a chief azure a lion rampt. arg.

¹ *Neithorp, Neithropp, or Netherthorpe*, Oxfordshire.

N.B.—Although there is a sketch of Archer of Neithorp's arms, representing the paternal quarter, the same as that of Archer of Umberslade, the MS. itself has in writing, these words:—

Arms.—Three arrows reversed on a field argent.

Crest.—A griffin's head, from a castellated coronet.

Archer of Amberlade.

LIKE the origin of most of the patronymics of the earlier period of Anglo-Norman history, that of Archer appears to be involved in some obscurity; and it is doubtful whether the armorial bearings of the family were derived from the name, and that again from an occupation or profession, or were assumed either in fanciful reference to the name, or in allusion to the tenure by which John Archer, Champion to Thomas Earl of Warwick, held his estates of that noble—namely, by the annual payment of twelve broad arrows.

Robert L'Archer is sometimes styled, in the old charters of his time, Robertus Sagittarius,¹ which seems to give weight to the supposition that the name was derived from the warlike profession of its founder; and even so late as the reign of Louis XV., the French families of Archet² and L'Archer bore for their arms bows and arrows in variation.³

¹ Dugdale.

² A heraldic work, printed at Lyons. Temp. Louis XV.

There was a castle in Poitou called "Châtel l'Archer," which (circa 1378, vide Froissart) was held by the Lady Plainmartin, wife of Sir Guiscard d'Angle, afterwards Earl of Huntingdon (Froissart).

"The Archers of Lyons were Marshal's men, called 'Gens de Marchausée.' William the Conqueror had a number of them at the battle of Hastings. It is supposed that the Norman Archers shot with an Arbalist."—Ency. Brit. 1797.

Sir John Fortescue, and Philip de Comines, mention the excellence of the English archers, as, indeed, do most writers.

³ With reference to "Robertus Sagittarius," "Richard Achard," or "Robert L'Archer," to whom K. Hen. I. made a grant of seven manors in Berkshire, including "Spersholt" and "Aldermanston," the following extracts from Clarke's "Parochial Topography of the Hundred of Wanting," &c. (Oxf. 1824), may serve to elucidate the subject:—

1. "The manor of Spersholt formed part of the royal demesne, till Henry I. (Madox, Hist. Excheq.) gave it with divers others to Richard Achard. His son William Achard held three knights' fees in Berkshire of the king *in capite* in 1166. Peter Achard died seized of it (Spershol) in 1278, Robert Achard in 1299, and another Robert Achard in 1353."—(Liber Niger Saccarii).

We find the following with reference to one of the earlier founders of this family while yet in Normandy:—"In 1092, the friends of Henry the son of King William, obtained possession of the castle of Domfront. Its inhabitants pitying the misfortunes of the illustrious exile, sent one *Harecher* to invite him out of France," i.e. into Normandy. "This person," says M. le Prevost, "was not called 'Harchier,' but 'Archard.'" Mr. Stapleton thinks our author was correct in writing it "*Harecherius*," and considers that word synonymous with *Archarius*, which frequently appears in the Rolls of the Exchequer. We find there a Richard *Archarius* and a Richard de Domfront, whom he considers the same person. This inhabitant of Domfront received, from the gratitude of Henry I., seven manors in Berkshire. This grant is made to him under the name of Robert the Archer, and Henry calls him "*Magister Meus*." Wace, who calls him "*Haschier*,"² adds that it was to Paris he went to give the invitation of his friends at Domfront to the young prince. He was descended from another Achard, who appears as witness to the charter of the foundation of Soulois, in 1026, with this description, "*Achardus, dives miles de Donnifronte*."

In the Roll of Battle Abbey this name is written *Archere*.

Such are the conflicting opinions as to the origin of a name, yet much of the difficulty may safely be attributed to the incorrect and variable orthoepy of that comparatively remote period, when the simplest names were strangely metamorphosed by the barbarous Latinity then used, and which, after the lapse of centuries, cannot always be restored with precision, even by the tedious and analogical process of the antiquarian.

2. "In 1292 *Robert Achard* had a grant of free warren for the manors of *Spersholt*, *Estmanton*, and *Westcote*, which was confirmed by patent in 1402."

3. "In 1221 *Robert Achard* was rated at 80^s. for fifteen carucates of land in *Spersholt*, and 6s. and viii^d. for two carucates and three quarters in *Westcote*."—Rot. Chart. 20 Edw. I.

4. "In the Church of the Holy Cross at *Spersholt* occur blazoned on the windows the arms of *Achard*—viz., or, a bend lozengy, sable."

5. "*Tymp*. Edw. I. Sir Robt. Achard, Kt. of the shire. Arms—or, une bende sable, engraillé."

From the above it might be supposed that *Robertus Sagittarius*, *Richard Achard*, and *Robert L'Archer*, were not, as held by most antiquaries, one and the same person, and that, consequently, *L'Archer* and *Achard* are not merely variations of the same name. Moreover, it is not improbable that *Robertus Sagittarius* had no armorial bearings, but that his descendants at *Spersholt* and at *Ombertlade* subsequently assumed or were granted theirs.

¹ History of the Normans: notes—Ordericus Vitalis.

² In the Anglo-Saxon poem of *Beowulf* occurs the name of *Eckere*, Prime Minister of *Frothgar*, King of Denmark.

Guillim and other heraldic authorities have maintained as more honourable, those armorial achievements derived from warlike pursuits, and especially offensive arms, such as the three broad arrows of "Archer."¹

In a royal summons to the defence of the Isle of Ely, so early as the reign of Henry V., Richard Archer of Umberslade is styled "One that did bear ancient arms from his ancestors."²

The motto assumed, at a later period, by this family, "Sola bona quæ honesta," was that of the Emperor Ludovick IV. of Germany.³

Having thus briefly sketched the origin of the family of Archer of Umberslade, we shall now proceed to give some account of its possessions, in England, with other details, from more modern and authentic sources.

¹ Guillim's Heraldry.

² A very old Peerage, without title-page; also Burke, &c.

³ Notes and Queries.
