

COATS OF ARMS IN ST GILES' CHURCH

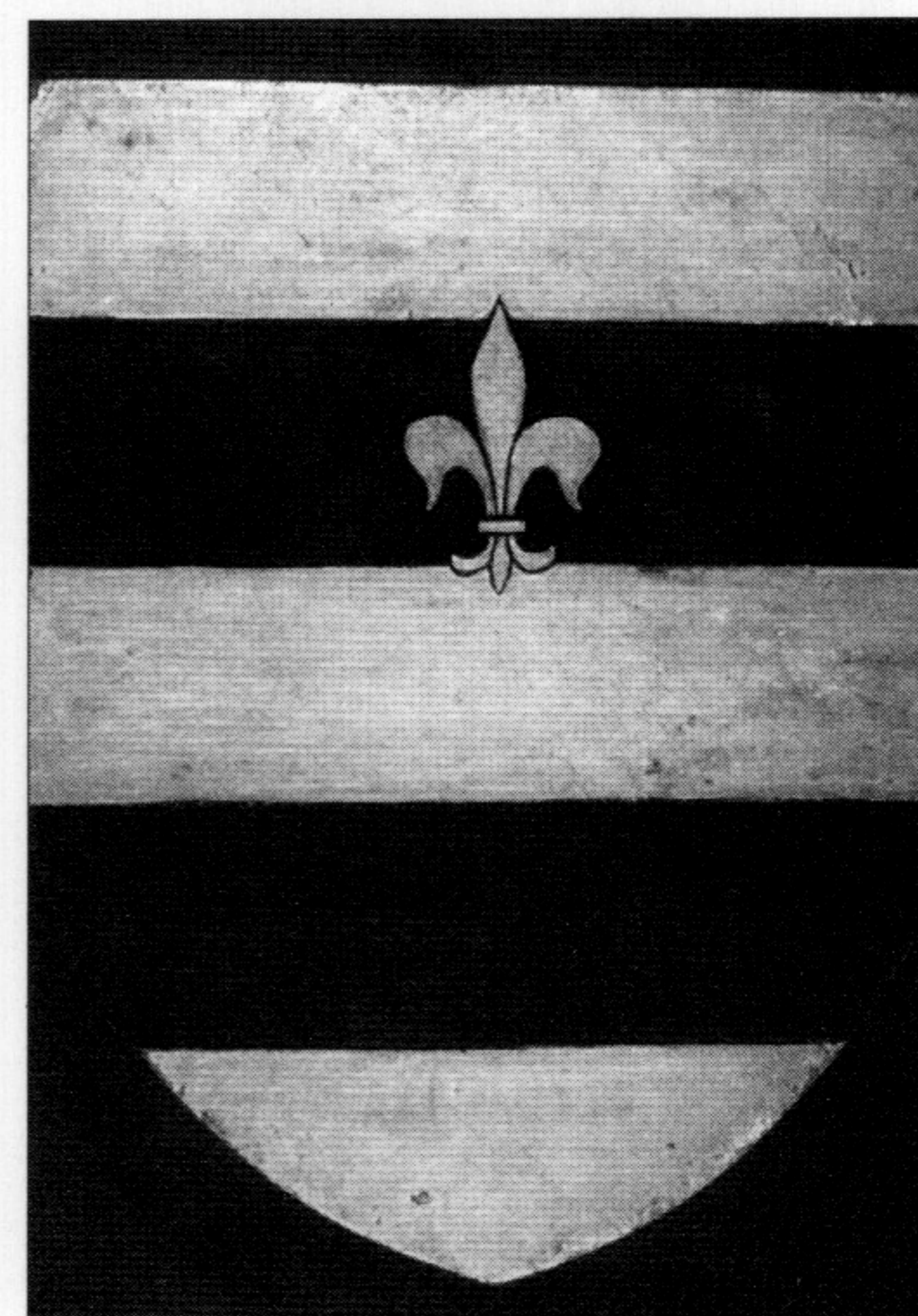
by David Mellor

A FEW MONTHS AGO, I was in St Giles' Church looking for the heraldic shields described in Geoffrey Oldfield's book *West Bridgford Past* as being on the roof beams. Look as hard as I could, I was unable to find them. I mentioned this to the Rector who managed to find them in a dusty box on top of a cupboard in the tower. There are six of them and they look as if they were made about 50 years ago. Each is made of wood of an identical size and shape and has the design painted on in colour.

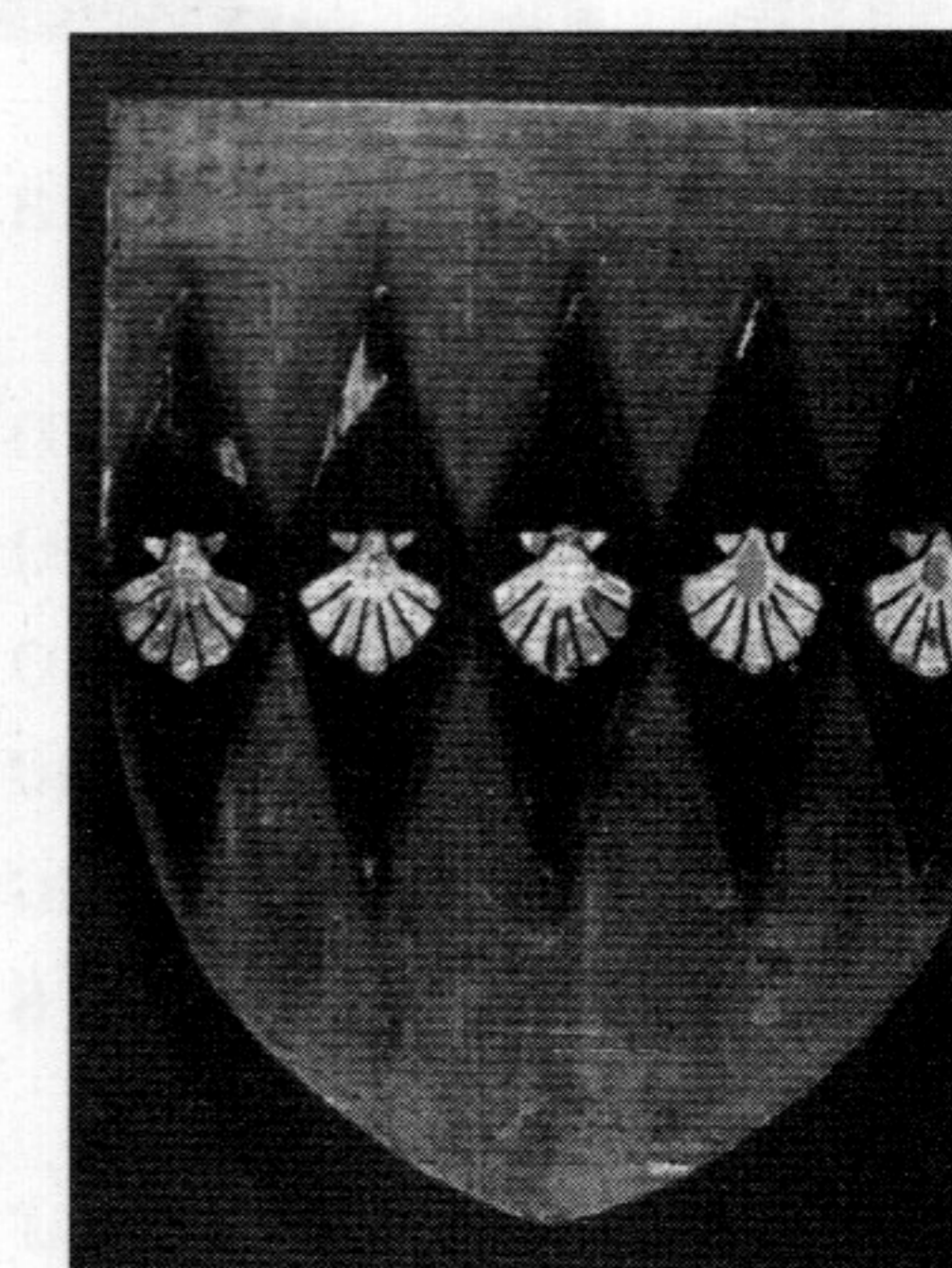
The Hilton shield (ar, two bars az, fleur de lis superior ar; ie a silver background with two horizontal blue bars, the upper bearing a silver fleur de lis)

The last of the Luterell family, Hawise Luterell, married Sir Godfrey Hilton in about 1418. Sir Godfrey and his son, also called Godfrey, were the patrons of two rectors of West Bridgford.

into the possession of the Musters family, legend having it that the Marquess staked the estate playing cards with Millicent Musters and lost. Thereafter eight generations of Musters appointed eleven rectors to West Bridgford, the last one, William Waters, being introduced by John Chaworth Musters in 1862.



Hilton shield



Aslockton shield

The Aslockton shield (ar, five fusils gu, each charged with an escallop of the field ar; i.e. a silver background with five elongated red diamonds each bearing a silver scallop shell)

During the restoration of St Giles' Church in

1871, a large coat of arms of the Aslockton family was discovered on the wall of the chancel, but was then scraped off. It is probably significant that John de Aslockton was appointed rector of West Bridgford by Sir Andrew Luterell in 1349.

In addition there is a framed picture with drawings of five shields giving their names as Luterell, Hilton, Thimelby, Pierrepont and Musters. These correspond with the wooden shields with the exception that the one for Musters is missing and that there are two extra shields. On the back of one of the extra shields is written in pencil 'Aslockton' and on the other 'Alfreton/Chaworth'.



Luterell shield

The Luterell shield (or, a bend between six martlets sa; ie a gold background with a diagonal between six martins in black)

This shield seems to have been painted in the reverse colours i.e. gold charges on a black background rather than black charges on a gold background.



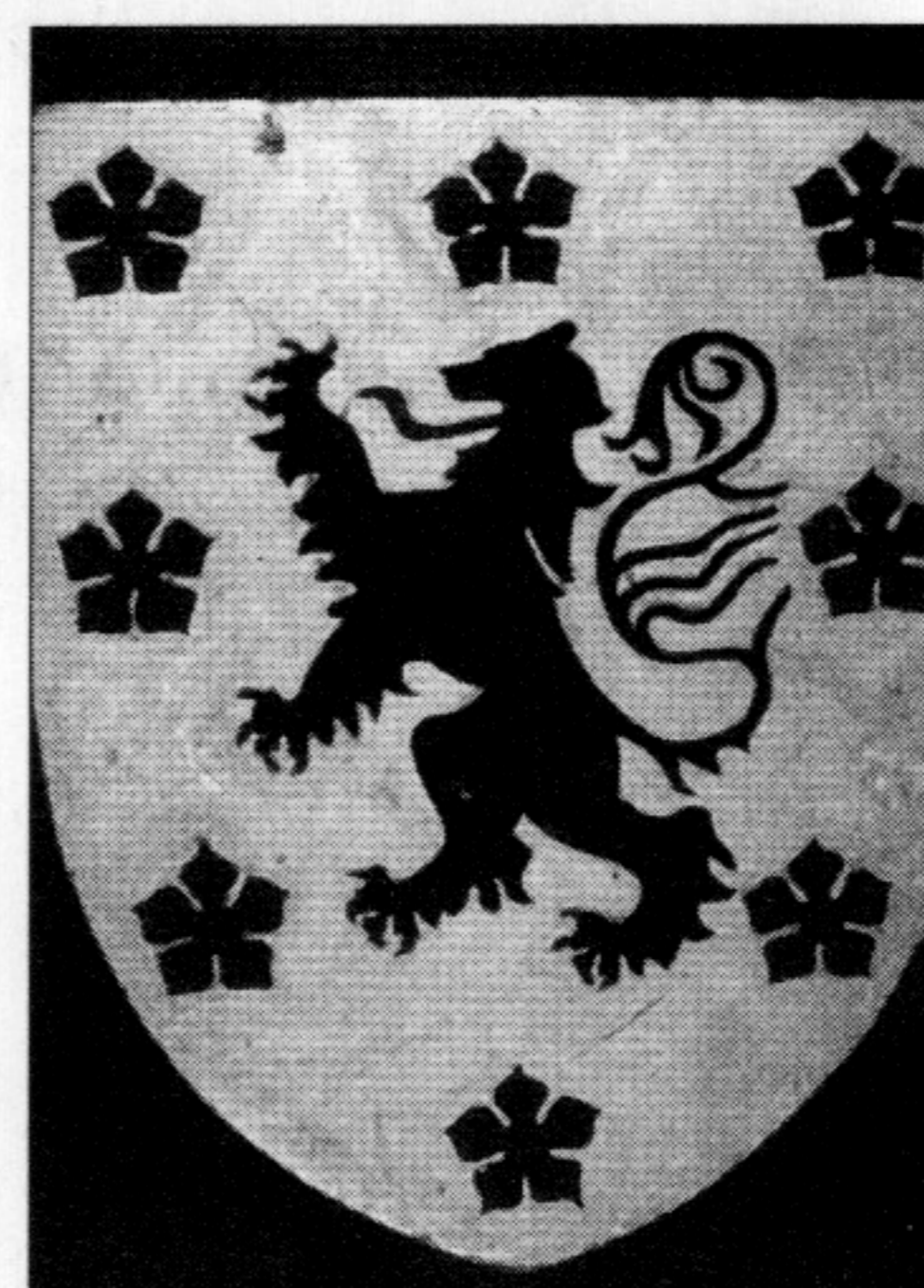
Thimelby shield

The Thimelby shield (ar, three palets sa, in bend four mullets of the last; ie a silver background with three vertical black bars and four diagonal black stars)

The last of the Hilton family, Elizabeth Hilton, married Sir Richard Thimelby in about 1478. Four generations of Thimelbys were Lords of the Manor of West Bridgford and appointed six rectors to St Giles' Church between them. Then John Thimelby sold the West Bridgford Estate to Sir Henry Pierrepont in about 1600.

The Pierrepont shield (ar, semée of cinquefoils gu, a lion ramp sa; ie a silver background covered all over with red five-petalled flowers with a black lion rearing up)

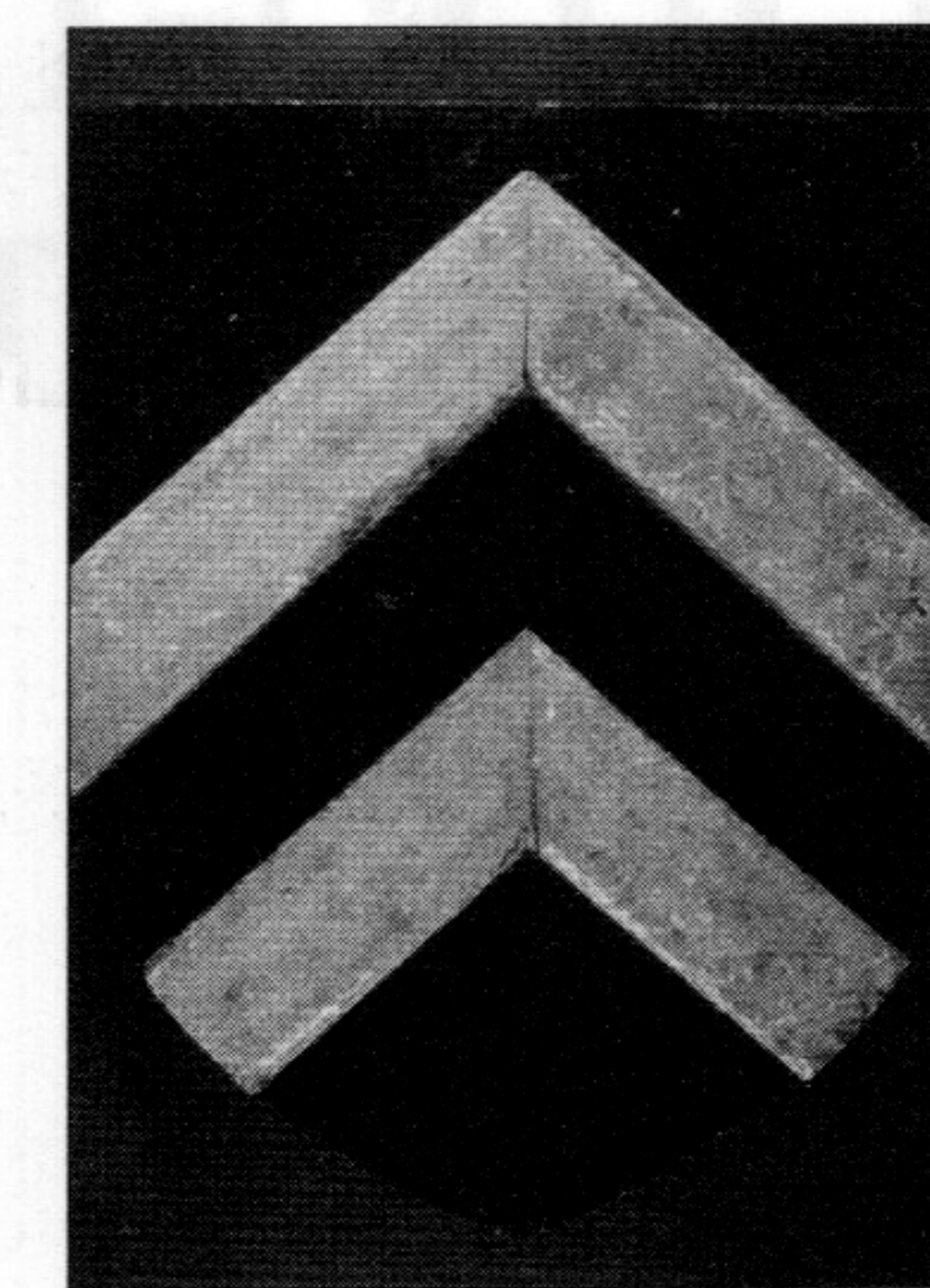
Sir Henry Pierrepont, his son Robert, the Earl of Kingston and his grandson Henry, the Marquess of Dorchester, were patrons to four rectors in West Bridgford. In about 1679 the West Bridgford estate came



Pierrepont shield

The Alfreton/Chaworth shield (az, two chevrons or; i.e. a blue background with two gold chevrons)

The shield of the de Alfretons, borne by the Chaworth family, is known to have featured in one of the stained glass windows that was destroyed during the 1871 restoration. The heraldic devices of local families were a common decorative feature in churches during the middle ages and it is unfortunate that these two examples were not preserved by our Victorian predecessors.



Alfreton/Chaworth shield

I would be very interested to hear from anyone who knows how these heraldic shields came to be made, when they were put up and taken down from the roof beams and the whereabouts of the missing Musters shield.