

# Complexity in late period English heraldry

---

A statistical analysis of Insignia Anglica



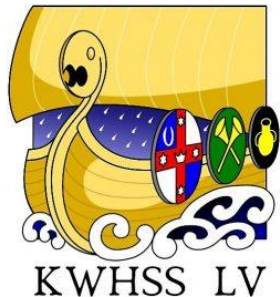
# Insignia Anglica

- Roll of arms created circa 1550
  - Exact date unclear
  - It gives the arms of King Henry VIII and all six wives which would suggest between 1543 and 1547
  - However, also includes the title of *Marquyss de Wynchester* awarded to William Paulet in 1551 (although this was added underneath his original title of *Conte de Wiltshire* so may be a later addendum)
- Available online in the collection of Bayerische Staatsbibliothek  
<https://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/~db/bsb00001647/images/>



# Tudor Heraldry

- Well-known for a significant increase in complexity of arms
- Often ascribed to the development of “paper heraldry” since improvements to military technology meant heraldry was no longer required to be clearly comprehensible on the battlefield
- Registered SCA arms in Tudor style:
  - Winifride Barnes (April 2018, Northshield)
  - Juliana de Luna (July 2010, An Tir)



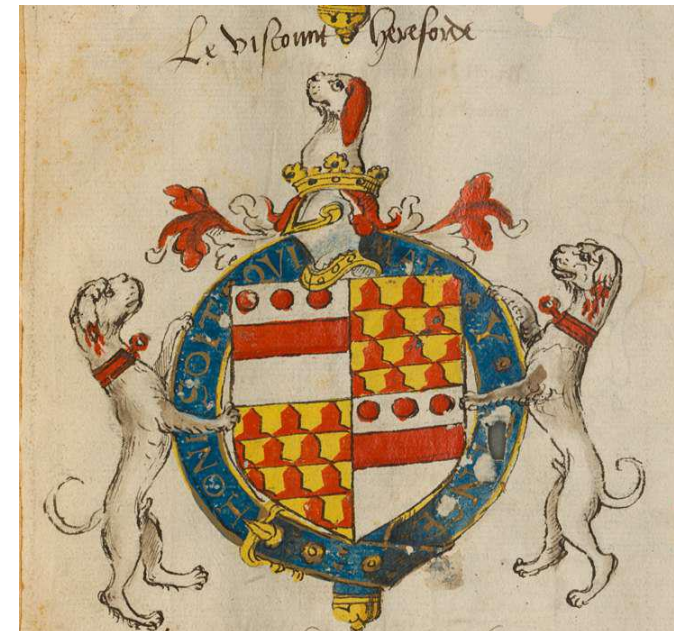
# Aims of Analysis

- To assist SCA heralds to design devices, both simple and complex, in an authentic late period English style
- Assist with Individually Attested Pattern (IAP) documentation for complex designs that are consistent with Tudor heraldic style
- To determine where late period English heraldic style is inconsistent with SCA Core Style rules and may provide opportunities for other IAP documentation.



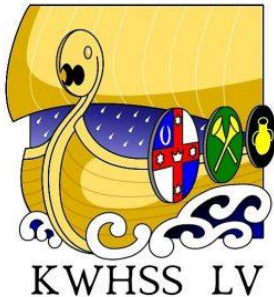
# Data Collection

- Insignia Anglica contains 1,027 achievements of arms
  - Many marshalled with up to 13 “quarters”
- Analysis focuses on design of individual unmarshalled devices
- Data collection treats each quarter as an individual device
  - Repeated quarters in the same device ignored
  - e.g. from the arms of Viscount Hereford, *Quarters 1 & 4 Argent, a fess and in chief three roundels gules, and Quarters 2 & 3 Vairy Or and gules*, I recorded quarters 1 and 2 and ignore 3 and 4



# Data used for analysis

- Original database of 1,687 devices
  - Blazoned by me in SCA style
- For the analysis, I removed:
  - 348 duplicate devices, mostly devices marshalled by multiple families
  - 15 arms of foreign monarchs
- Final database of 1,324 devices



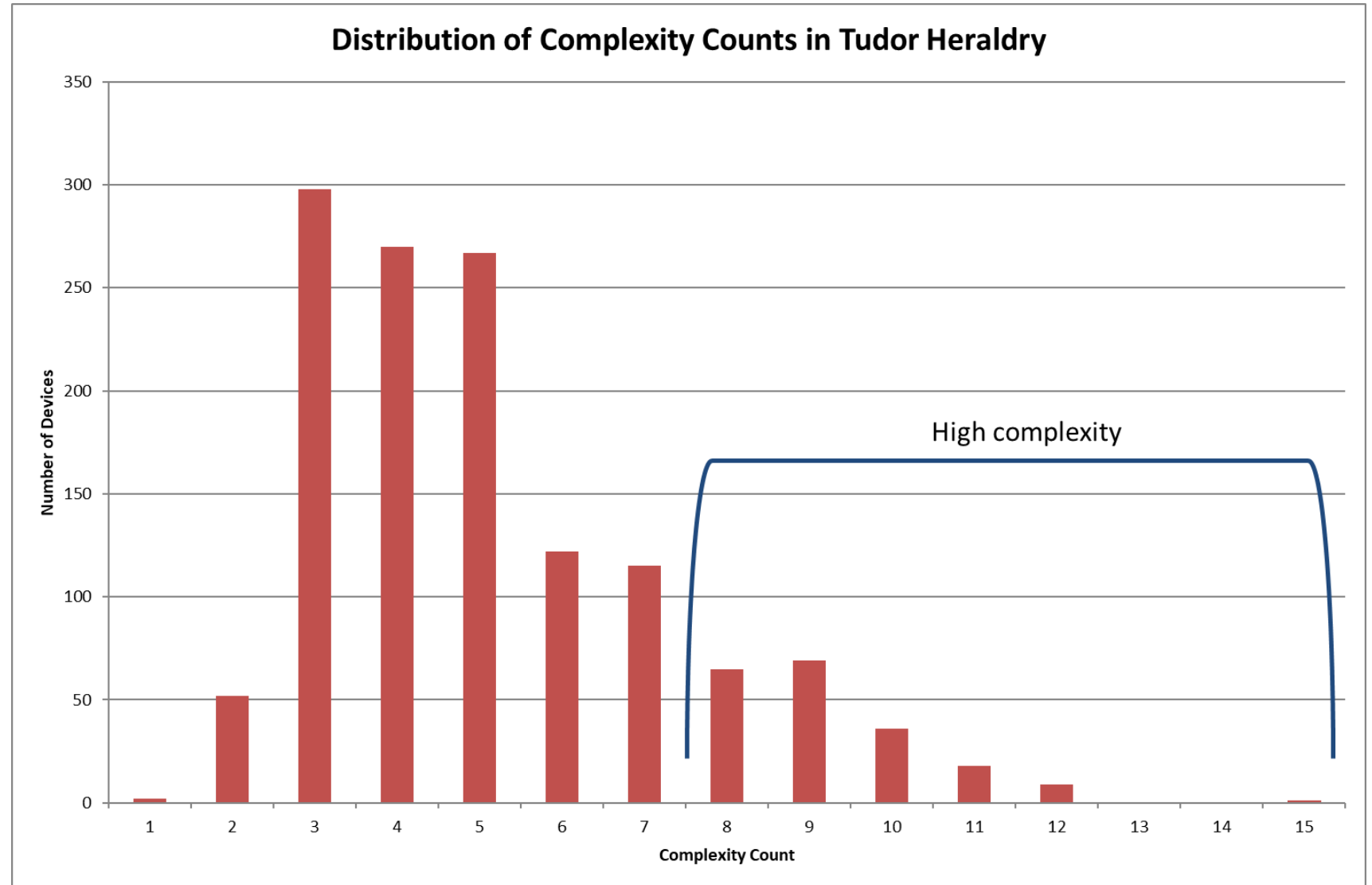
# Topics of interest

- Defining high complexity
- Examples of super complex heraldry
- Key points of data analysis
- “Do more” and “Do less” for authentic complex Tudor heraldry



# High Complexity

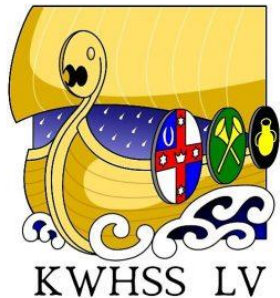
- 198 devices with complexity 8 or more assigned to the “High Complexity” category





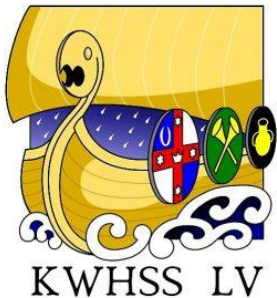
# Examples of super complex heraldry

- Argent, a chevron wavy azure between three Moors' heads coupé at the breast proper vested Or, on a chief compony argent and gules a crescent Or between two roundels sable each charged with a talbot courant Or
- Or, a cross counterermine between four popinjays regardant proper, on a chief azure a serpent erect argent crowned swallowing a naked baby between two roses Or



# Examples of super complex heraldry (2)

- Gules, a saltire countercompony ermine and Or between a key, a lion's jambe, a martlet and a dolphin naiant embowed argent, on a chief Or a roundel sable charged with a talbot statant argent
- Argent, a cross countercompony Or and gules between a water bouget, an eagle, a swan and an escallop sable, and on a chief azure a lion passant guardant Or



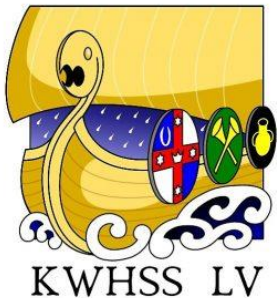
# Examples of super complex heraldry (3)

- Argent, on a saltire between four martlets sable, a cinquefoil between four spear heads argent and on a chief gules a roundel Or charged with a rose gules between two roundels each charged with a fleur-de-lys gules
- Sable, on a fess argent three popinjays proper and on a chief argent, three roundels sable charged with a martlet, a rose slipped and leaved and a fret Or



# Examples of super complex heraldry (4)

- Gules, a chevron countercompony argent and sable between three roundels argent each charged with a cinquefoil purpure and on a chief argent a bird between two columbines slipped and leaved proper
- Argent, on a saltire sable between four lion's heads erased gules, a martlet between four roundels Or and on a chief azure an anchor Or between two pallets argent

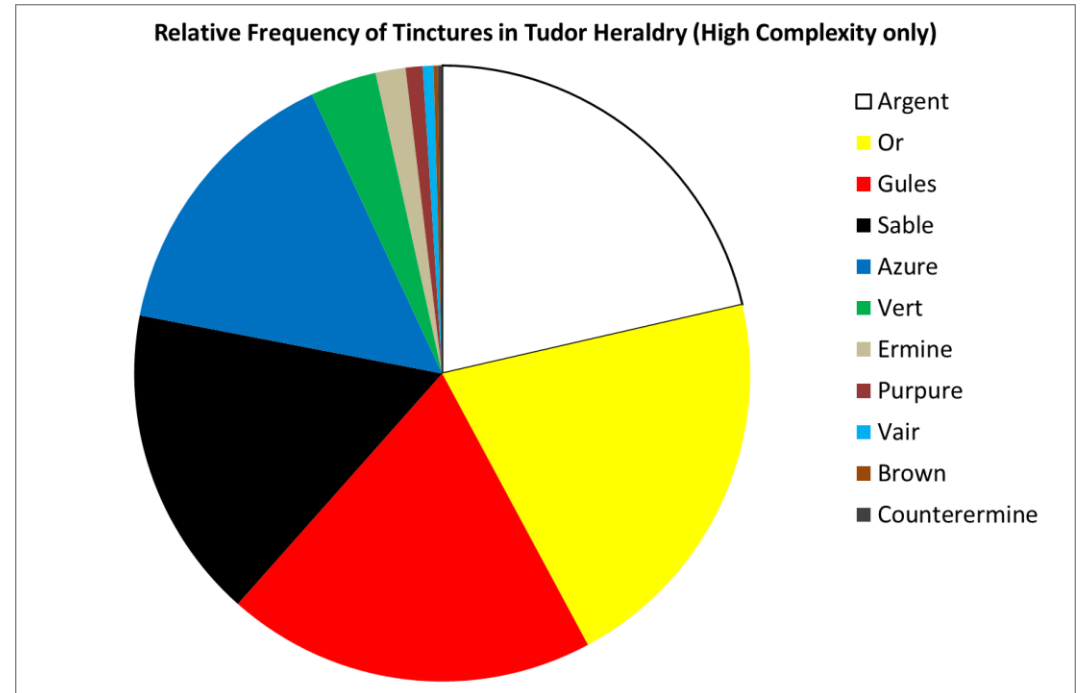
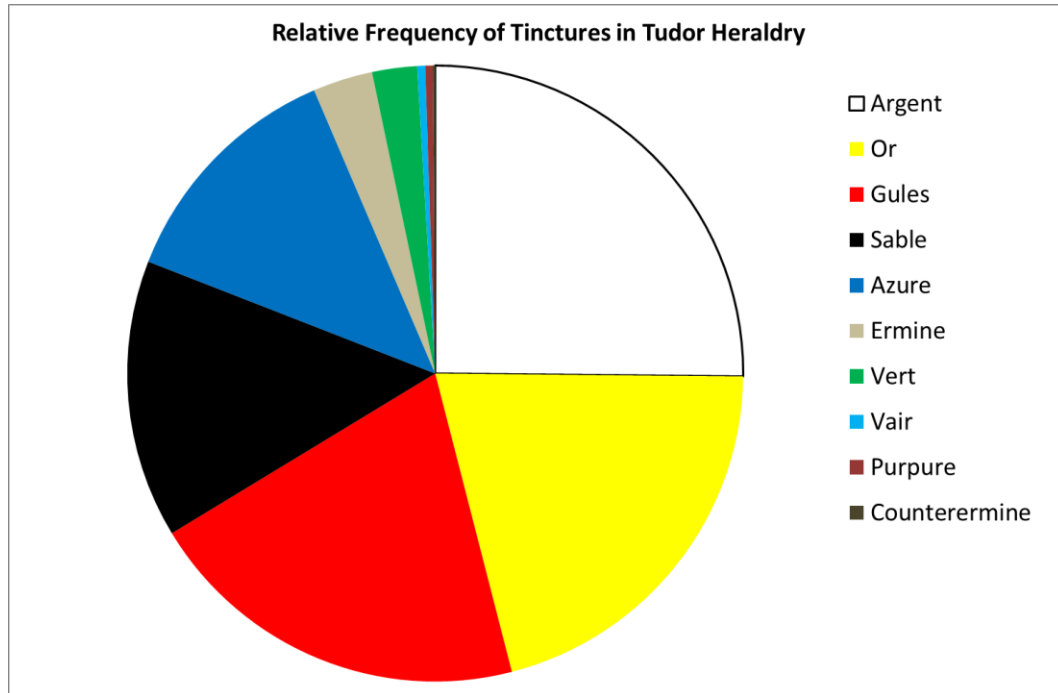


# Examples of super complex heraldry (5)

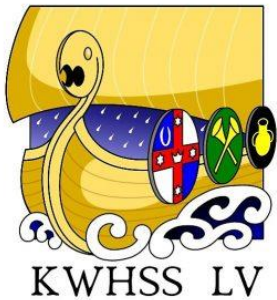
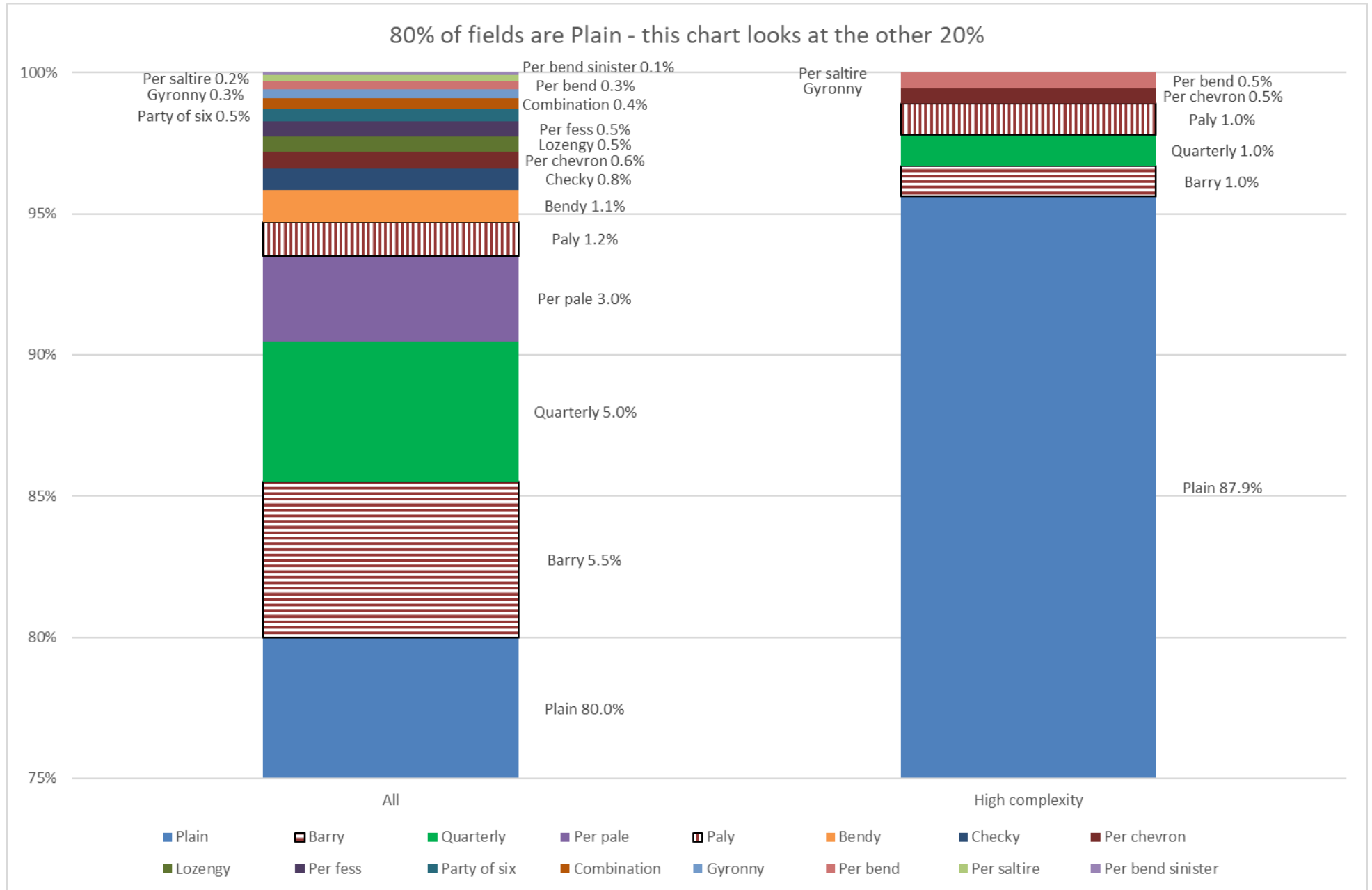
- Paly gules and vert, on a chevron argent a hound's head erased between two cinquefoils sable and on a chief Or a roundel sable charged with a demi-lion argent between two crescents sable platy



# Tinctures



# Fields



# Charge structure

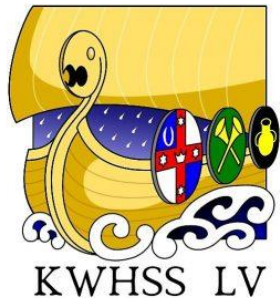
Across all devices		High complexity only	
Uncharged ordinary and secondary	14.6%	Sole charged ordinary, u/c secondary & charged p'ph'l	15.2%
Group uncharged primary alone	12.0%	Sole u/c ordinary, u/c secondary and charged p'ph'l	13.6%
Sole charged primary and secondary	8.6%	Sole charged ordinary and u/c secondary	10.6%
Sole uncharged primary alone	7.7%	Sole charged ordinary and charged peripheral	5.1%
Sole uncharged ordinary alone	5.8%	Sole charged ordinary, u/c secondary and u/c p'ph'l	5.1%
Sole charged ordinary alone	4.5%	Sole charged ordinary and charged secondary	4.5%
Field primary, charged peripheral	4.5%	Group uncharged primary and charged peripheral	3.5%





# Popular primary charges

Across all devices		High complexity only	
Chevron	23%	Chevron	41%
Fess	16%	Fess	21%
Bend	12%	Bend	15%
Lion	10%	Cross	6%
Cross	7%	Lion	4%
Saltire	3%	Saltire	3%
Fret	2%	Roundel	2%
<b>Ordinaries</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>Ordinaries</b>	<b>85%</b>



# Popular secondary charges

Across all devices		High complexity only	
Chief	22%	Chief	34%
Bordure	12%	Bordure	11%
Heads - various	10%	Heads - various	11%
Birds - various	8%	Birds - various	10%
Cross	7%	Roundel	7%
<b>Peripherals</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>Peripherals</b>	<b>45%</b>

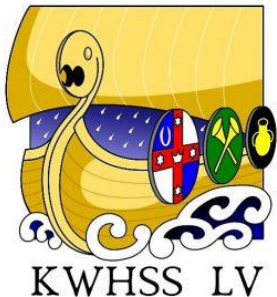
- Peripherals percentage higher than it appears here because most high complexity devices have a peripheral and a secondary charge group
- Birds includes martlets, eagles, birds, cocks, swans, owls, popinjays, ravens, pheasants, storks, choughs, peacocks, shovellers, and ducks
- Heads includes lions, griffins, boar, spear, goat, stag, dog, eagle, wolf, bull, unicorn, raven, dragon, swan, fish, wyvern, humans and deer



# Popular tertiary charges

Across all devices		High complexity only	
Roundel	14%	Roundel	14%
Birds - various	10%	Birds - various	13%
Foils and flowers	10%	Foils and flowers	10%
Heads - various	8%	Heads - various	9%
Lion	6%	Lion	6%
Escallop	5%	Cross	5%
Cross	5%	Escallop	3%

- High complexity devices account for ~40% of devices with tertiary charge groups
- Mixed tertiaries have been included once for each charge type
- Bird tertiaries also include pelicans, moorcocks and robins
- Head tertiaries also include peacocks and rams
- Foils and flowers includes cinquefoils, roses, trefoils, columbines, lilies, marigolds, pansies and pinks



# Quaternary Charges

- Found on 20 devices (obviously high complexity ones)
- 40% are on roundels on chiefs
- 25% are on roundels on ordinaries
- 20% are quaternary roundels on crosses/saltires on ordinaries/chiefs
- Remaining 15% have a simple shape as quaternary or as charged tertiary (mullet/lozenge/roundel)
- Recognisability still important



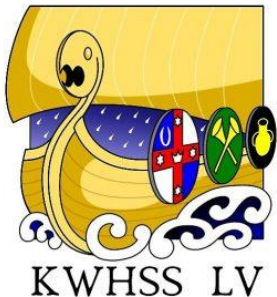
# High Complexity Tudor Heraldry - More

- Use of the five primary tinctures
- Plain fields
- Build up complexity with an ordinary, secondaries and a peripheral (usually a chief)
- Secondaries and tertiaries can be mixed or consistent
- Quaternaries on roundels on chiefs



# High Complexity Tudor Heraldry – Less

- Divided fields
- Complex lines on ordinaries and fields
- Use of vert outside flowers or popinjays
- Small charges with indistinct shapes
- Maintained charges – only 2 in the data
  - Secondary swans maintaining crosses fitchy
  - Tertiary cloud-arms sustaining a horseshoe between them



# At the end

- Questions?
- Suggestions?

