

Item 1. Letter from the Clerk to all Gentlemen Archers (Page 1)
Item 2. The Original Articles of 1673 (Pages 2/3)
Item 3. The Revision of 1823 (Page 4)
Item 4. The 2010 Proposals (Pages 5/8)
Item 5. Register any amendment or comments (Page 8)

1. From The Clerk to all Gentlemen Archers

The Council of Captains wish to propose the introduction of a newly drafted set of the Articles of the Society of Archers, which now includes the incorporation of the existing 'Guidance Notes for Competitors', all into a single document, a copy of which is enclosed with this letter.

The original Articles were agreed upon by the Society of Archers at Scorton on 14 May 1673, for regulating of the Annual Exercise of shooting at the Targets for a Silver Arrow. They were then transcribed in 1766, as the original document was almost illegible. These were subsequently updated and changed slightly in 1823.

Throughout the intervening years changes and agreements have been made at the after lunch meetings, but never brought together in one document. An attempt was made in 1970, with the introduction of the 'Guidance Notes for Competitors', but this did not encompass all of the Original Articles. The Guidance Notes themselves have been changed on a couple of occasions since their introduction. In fact, in recent years it would appear that even the recorded minutes do not always correspond with peoples' recollections! Even though the minutes are approved each year.

Once the new Articles and Agreements have been considered, it will become clear that the majority of the statements are almost identical to the existing Articles (1673 & 1823) and the 1970 Guidance Notes. The greater part of this new draft document has not had any change in meaning, other than some word changes and some significant re-ordering and formatting. The biggest change being the bringing together the Articles and Guidance Notes into the single document.

The original 1673 Articles, the 1823 updates and the 1970 Guidance Notes are available to view via the website, which shows the 1673 and 1823 documents as a direct copy from the Record Books.

Perhaps the most significant change (new Article 21) is the resurrection of Article 6 from 1823. This provided the opportunity to make "alterations or additions" to the Articles, but only after "Public Notice, by advertisement, of an intention to propose such alteration or repeal be given at the same time with the Notice for such Annual Meeting". Sadly, over the years this has not always been adhered to, with proposals being made from the floor, lengthy debates about the merit of the proposal taking place and votes being taken, all within the same meeting. The new Articles 21 & 22, re-introduce the concept of any new proposal being introduced to Gentlemen, prior the meeting along with their confirmation and joining instructions. This should allow debate to take place, before and outside the actual post-lunch meeting, such that key points for or against can be succinctly expressed, and the vote taken in full knowledge and understanding of the implications. In future it would then take at least 2 meetings before any changes to these Articles could be completed and introduced. It should also allow the discussions during the post lunch meeting to be clear, succinct and short.

Hence Notice of the proposal to "alter and make additions" to the Articles (at the earliest in 2011) is here being made.

The Council of Captains have agreed that, with the importance of the draft Articles, and as there is opportunity for Gentlemen to study and discuss them, before the meeting, that no discussion will be permitted during the 2010 post lunch meeting, and that a vote in principle will be taken as to their formal proposal to the 2011 meeting.

The Council of Captains ask you to give due consideration and thought to the new draft Articles, hopefully with a view to supporting the principle at the 2010 meeting and their subsequent vote for implementation at the 2011 meeting.

If the agreement in principle is reached at the 2010 meeting, this will enable discussions and reflection to take place between colleagues over subsequent months. The new Articles as presented to the 2010 meeting, will be voted on at the 2011 meeting. This will be a straight for/against vote. No amendments will be taken. If the vote is 'against', any changes or amendments proposed, would necessitate the document re-drafting and re-presenting at a future meeting, in line with the existing Article 6 (1823).

If you would like to register any amendment or comment, please contact the Clerk to the Council of Captains, preferably in writing, such that your comments can be accurately recorded and reflected upon.

Clerk to The Council of Captains

2. THE ARTICLES of 1673 agreed upon by the Society of Archers at Scorton 14 May 1673 for the regulating of the Annual Exercise of shooting at the Targets for a Silver Arrow.

1st Imprimis (meaning:- adv Archaic “in the first place”) That every person intending to shoot at this or other Yearly Game for the future shall deposit and pay into the hands of the Captain and Lieutenant of the Archers (or of some others deputed and appointed by them Stewards to the Company of Archers for that Year) the Sum of Five Shillings or what other sum shall from time to time be concluded and agreed upon by the major part of the Archers, the same to be done some convenient time before the General Day of Meeting to shoot at the said Targetts whereof Notice to be publicly given to the end plate and such other Prizes as are hereafter mentioned may be had and provided in due time.

2nd Item Upon the Day appointed for the said exercise all Persons concerned shall repair to the place for the said purpose to be appointed by the Captain of the Archers for that present Year (which place shall always be within Six Miles of Eriholme upon Tees in the County of York, unless otherwise resolved and agreed upon by the greater Number of the Society of Archers present att the shoots downe of the said Targetts) by eight of the clock in the morning when and where a Note in writing shall be taken of those intending to shoot(the Captain and Lieutenant excepted) and Lotts or Figures of their Numbers shall be drawn by some indifferent person according to which figures they are to observe their care? and courses? And orders in shooting for that time, and if any comes after the lotts are drawn they shall take their places and shoots ?????? last Figure and accordinge to their coming.

3rd Item Two Targetts shall then and there ready provided by the Captain and Lieutenant (who hereby are and shall be exempted and freed from depositing any Sume or Sumes of Money so long as either of them shall continue in their respective Offices) with four circles aptly distinguished with colours whereof the innermost Circle being gilded or Yellow shall be for the Captains prize, and the next to that shall be for the Lieutenants prize , and the Third and fourth or outermost Circumferences shall be for such Spoons or other prizes of a greater or lesser value according to the Moneys deposited, as they shall be ordered and proportioned by the Captain and Lieutenant and three of the Company of Archers then and there present.

4th Item The said targets shall be set in some open and plain field upon two Straw Basts or Matts breast high from the ground, each being distant from the other at least Eightscore Yards, at which Distance three rounds shall be shot by all the Company with what manner of Shaft(not exceeding two shafts) everyone pleaseth, the Captain and Lieutenant beginning first and then the rest two and two in order according to their several Lots and Numbers till the said rounds be shot out of the first stand , after which they shall remove in Ten Yards and there shoot three other rounds in manner aforesaid and then remove in ten Yards more and shoot three rounds there, and so forwards from Stand to Stand or one Removal to another till all the prizes be gotten or shot downe, provided that their said approache to the Targetts be never nearer than Sixty Yards at which Distance they must stand to shoot them out, if not down before.

5th Item Such person as in his due order shall first pierce or break the Captains prize or any part thereof with his Arrow (that is to say so as his Arrow or any part thereof shall be within the Circle dividing between the Gold & Redd) shall have the Silver Arrow from the rest and shall be esteemed and adjudged Captain of the Archers and shall have and enjoy all privileges due & belonging to that Office during the Yeare ensuing, and further shall have

Twenty Shillings of such Moneys as shall be deposited by the Company of Archers at their next Annual Meeting for shooting at the Targetts, when he shall & must bring in the said Silver Arrow to be shot for in manner and forme above said, the same to be done and performed Yearly about Whitsuntide to and by all the successive Captains. Alsoe he that in like manner pierceth the Lieutenants prize on Circle shall have such prize or piece of plate as shall be allotted and appointed by the Captain and Lieutenant for that time. Likewise he that first pierceth either of the other Circumferences shall have One Spooone (or such other prize as shall be appointed for the same Circle as above said) for every Arrow wherewith he shall pierce or break them, in case all the prizes belonging to them be not gotten before; Alsoe he that pierceth any of the inner Circles (in manner aforesaid) where out the prize or prizes were wonn before, shall have one of the best prizes remaining in the Circle next to that which he shall so hitt; provided that the spoons and such other prizes as shall be designed for the said two outermost Circles shall be of two severale Plates and Values and the better of them shall be allotted and appointed for the circle and Circumference next to the Lieutenants.

6th Item If any of the Company shall presume to shoot at the Targetts out of his due turne and order of standing, he shall loose his Shot for that round or (having shot before) in the next round following, and if any be absent from the stand to shoot in his turne according to his figure, then the next figure there present shall shoot on, that no time may be lost, and shall have such prize as he shall then win. Nevertheless such absent figure may at his coming to the place of standing have liberty to shoot during that round if the Captain so please and appoint either at the time of his coming or at the end of the same round, provided that he come before the beginning of the next round.

7th Item For as much as the Exercise of Archery is lawful, laudable, healthful and innocent, & to the end that Gods holy name may not be dishonoured by any of that Society, it is agreed and hereby declared, that if any one of them shall that Day curse or swear in the hearing of any of that Company and the same proved before the Captain and Lieutenant, He shall forthwith pay downe One Shilling & so proportionally for every Oath, to be distributed by the Captain to the use of the poore of that place or Township where they then shoot, and in case of refusal or neglect to pay the same, then such party to be excluded from shooting any more till payment is made as above said.

8th Lastly, All the Company of Archers shall on the day of Shooting at the Targetts as above said dine with the Captain and Lieutenant at some Ordinary appointed for them near the place of shooting, and if any of them shall refuse or neglect so to do in dining with them, shall pay One Shilling to the Captain or Lieutenant for his Ordinary, then the party so offending shall lose and forfeit the privilege of shooting in the Round next following after Dinner.

NB: The Original Articles of this Society being almost defaced and obliterated, the Gentlemen Archers present on the Eighteenth of June 1766 bought this Book for the same to be fairly transcribed herein (and also to enter any new Rules or Orders). We whose Names are hereunder written having carefully compared this Transcript and the following List of Captains and Lieutenants with the Original do herby certify the same to be a true Copy thereof. As witness our Hands.

3. REVISION OF THE ARTICLES MADE IN 1823

[Note for information. The changes came about primarily because of a dispute in 1822 when not enough targets were available]

“The practice of Archery having varied considerably since the time of making the Articles at Scorton the 14th of May 1673 for “regulating the Annual Exercise of shooting at the Targets for a Silver Arrow” – And it being highly desirable that it should always as much as is possible conform to the Articles:- therefore we the undersigned archers met and assembled at Scorton this 27th day of August 1823, pursuant to the foregoing advertisement, do, for the attainment of this desirable object, agree and resolve, that at this and every future Annual Shooting for the Silver Arrow, the following alterations and additions to the Articles be observed and kept, viz.

1. That the Sum or Sums of Money mentioned in Article 1st be paid into the Hands of the Stewards, or in default of their Election into the Hand of Captain for the time being.
2. That the distance of six Miles from Erryholme to which all persons concerned are on the day appointed for the said Annual Exercise directed to repair, shall be extended to twenty Miles, and the Hour of eight, to that of ten o'clock in the morning.
3. That the Captain and Lieutenant be not limited as in Art 3rd to the provision of Two Targets, but that they shall have them and there ready provided Two or more such Targets as are described in the said article according as they shall think necessary for the number of Archers intending to shoot.
4. That the said Targets shall be set upon Arrow Butts or Mats in such manner as is described in Art 4th but each distant from the other One Hundred and Two Yards, at which distance all the Company with what manner of Shaft everyone pleaseth (not exceeding two shafts) shall stand to shoot and shall shoot in such order and manner as is therein described till all the Prizes be gotten or shot down.
5. Provided always, in explanation of art 5th, that should there be two or more arrows in the Captains Prize from the same end, the archer who shot that nearest the centre shall have the Silver Arrow from the rest, and shall be esteemed and adjudged Captain of the Archers, and shall have and enjoy all the privileges due and belonging to that Office subject to such regulations as are contained in that Article. And that this explanation shall extend to, and be observed with respect to the Lieutenants or any inferior prize.
6. That further alterations or additions in conformity with the (foregoing above) may be from time to time made by the major part of the archers duly assembled at any Annual shooting for the Silver Arrow but that they shall not be altered in respect and unless public Notice, by advertisement, of an intention to propose such alteration or repeal be given at the same time with the Notice for such Annual Meeting.

Should any dispute arise during the shooting respecting the Prizes, the same to be determined by a Majority of the Archers present at the said shooting.

Signed by:

George Croft (Junior) - Captain

Wm Newby

Chris. Croft

Albert Maynell

Chris Fryer

Matthias Bell

Isaac Fisher

Wm Kirkby

Thos Bowman

William Sutry (?)

Simon Preston

4. THE NEW PROPOSALS OF 2010

THE SOCIETY OF ARCHERS

Articles and Agreements

Governing the Annual Exercise of the Shooting at the Targets for the Antient Scorton Silver Arrow, The Thirsk Bowmen Insignia & other Trophies.

Revised 2010

As established in 1673 and updated in 1823 & incorporating the 1970 'Notes for the Guidance of Competitors'

ARTICLES & AGREEMENTS

The original articles from 1673, the 1823 revision and the Guidance Notes for Competitors produced in 1970 are all available to view via the Scorton website.

1 Upon the Day appointed for the "Annual Exercise of Shooting at the Targets for the Antient Scorton Silver Arrow", all Persons concerned, shall repair to the place appointed by the Captain of the Archers for that present year, which place shall always be within the County of York (the boundaries of the Ridings of Yorkshire, as they existed before 1974 and as in 1673) by Ten of the clock in the morning, when and where the Lieutenant shall sound the Bugle to bring the assembled Gentlemen to order. A note in writing shall be taken of those intending to shoot and lots shall be drawn to identify the Target Number and Order of Shooting. Shooting will commence at Ten Thirty in the morning.

2 The total expenses of the Meeting shall be borne equally by all Gentlemen entered for the Meeting. Every Gentleman intending to shoot at this Meeting shall pay to the Captain for the Year, before the date of the Meeting, the sum of Twenty Pounds, or what other sum shall from time to time be concluded and agreed upon by the major part of the Archers.

3 The Meeting is open to Gentlemen Archers of not less than 21 years of age, shooting the longbow, recurve bow or other traditional bow. At the Captain's discretion non-residents of the British Isles may compete, but any Trophy won by them must remain in the hands of the Trustees until the next Meeting.

4 Adequate numbers of targets shall be provided by the Captain, according as they shall think necessary for the number of Gentlemen intending to shoot. Each target shall have five circles aptly distinguished with colours, Gold, Red, Blue, Black and White, and within the Gold shall be an inner circle of three inches diameter, coloured Black.

5 The said Targets shall be set, in pairs, in some open and plain field, upon stands, breast high from the ground, each being distant from the other One Hundred and Two to One Hundred and Five Yards, to permit shooting at a distance of One Hundred Yards, at which distance all the Gentlemen shall stand and shoot two shafts and shall shoot in such order and manner for a period of Two hours before Luncheon and Two hours after Luncheon.

6 The Captain and Lieutenant have the privilege of shooting first in order that they may be given the opportunity of retaining their titles.

7 Such Gentleman as shall first pierce or break the Inner Gold (Black Spot) or any part thereof with his Arrow shall have the Silver Arrow and shall be esteemed and adjudged Captain of the Archers and shall have and enjoy all privileges due & belonging to that Office during the Year ensuing.

Also he that in like manner pierceth the Red Circle on the target shall have the Lieutenants Bugle and shall be esteemed and adjudged Lieutenant. Provided always, in explanation of this Article, that should there be two or more arrows in the 'Black Spot' from the same end, the Gentleman who shot that nearest the centre shall have the Silver Arrow from the rest, and shall be esteemed and adjudged Captain of the Archers, and shall have and enjoy all the privileges due and belonging to that Office subject to such regulations as are contained in that Article. And that this explanation shall extend to, and be observed with respect to the Lieutenants Silver Bugle.

8 Should the Captaincy be won by a Gentleman who has already won the Lieutenancy, the Lieutenancy is then awarded to the Gentleman who obtained the Second Red.

9 At their next annual Meeting for shooting at the Targets, the Captain and all other trophy holders shall & must bring in the said Silver Arrow and all other Trophies to be shot for in manner and form above said. The same to be done and performed yearly about Whitsuntide to and by all successive Captains.

10 The Captain is entitled to receive 10/- from the Pool on returning the Arrow the following year, and the Lieutenant is entitled to receive 5/- for the returning of the Silver Bugle. Be it noted there is no record of any Captain having claimed this money since the inception of the Competition. At the Assembly, the Captain shall announce that the Silver Arrow is returned and ready to be competed for on the day.

11 On the winning of the Captaincy and the Lieutenancy, the present Captain and Lieutenant should proceed to the Winners Targets to witness, confirm, and congratulate the Captain Elect and Lieutenant Elect.

12 Captains and Lieutenants are allowed to provide themselves with Commemorative Badges at their own expense from the Clerk. The winner of the 'Lieutenants Silver Bugle' should add a silver link with his name and year engraved upon it

13 A Gentleman shooting with the Longbow, obtaining two 'golds' at one end shall receive one shilling from each Gentleman competitor, to be collected by the Judge. A Gentleman shooting any other type of bow, obtaining two inner golds 'Black Spots' at one end shall receive one shilling from each Gentleman competitor, to be collected by the Judge.

14 All the Company of Archers shall on the day of Shooting at the Targets as above said, dine with the Captain and Lieutenant during the interval, and if any of them shall refuse or neglect so to do in dining with them, shall be excluded from the Meeting and Prize List and Records. They shall pay their share of the expenses of the Meeting and shall lose and forfeit the privilege of shooting in the after luncheon session.

15 All Gentlemen taking Luncheon with the Captain and Lieutenant shall wear a Jacket or Blazer and Tie or Cravat.

16 The annual meeting is held after the Luncheon. Only those who have shot the bow with the Captain in the morning session may stay and attend the meeting. The Captain acts as Chairman and it is usual for the Lieutenant to read the Minutes of the last meeting which are signed by the Captain after agreement by those present. The Clerk shall make notes of the meeting to assist the Captain.

17 At the end of the Meeting the Captain-Elect becomes Captain for the ensuing year and is responsible for selecting the date and venue for the next Meeting, which must be within the County of York (the boundaries of the Ridings of Yorkshire, as they existed before 1974 and as in 1673), and, assisted by the Lieutenant, must make all arrangements.

18 The immediate past Captain, Captain, Captain Elect and Clerk are Trustees responsible for the safe custody of the Arrow and the Trophies.

19 A Council of Captains may be called upon to decide upon such matters of an important nature, which cannot be referred or left to the meeting in the following year, or any matter as referred to it by such a meeting. The Council of Captains shall be made up from the current Captain and such Past Captains who attended the meeting in the previous year, or who sent in written apologies for that said meeting. A Clerk, and a Deputy Clerk, to the Captains shall be appointed to support and assist the Captain and Council of Captains in matters related to the running of the Annual Meeting.

20 When a vacancy, for Clerk or Deputy Clerk, exists, the Council of Captains shall make recommendations to the meeting upon the appointment of a suitable candidate. The Gentlemen present at the meeting will consider the recommendation and confirm it or otherwise. Once appointed these two Gentlemen will remain in post until such time as they no longer wish to carry on in the role, whereby the Council of Captains will look to recommend a suitable replacement.

21 Alterations and Additions may be from time to time made by the major part of the Gentlemen duly assembled at any Annual shooting for the Silver Arrow but that they shall not be altered in respect and unless public Notice, by advertisement, of an intention to propose such alteration or repeal be given at the same time with the Notice for such Annual Meeting.

22 Any Gentleman wishing to propose any alteration or addition to these Articles or Agreements, must first submit their proposal in writing to the Clerk of the Captains, prior to the day of the Annual Meeting at which they wish to raise the proposal. The proposal will be heard at the meeting, introduced by the Proposer, but discussion on the merits or otherwise of the proposal will not be permitted. A vote will be taken on the Proposal in principle, and if agreed the Proposal will be circulated to all Gentlemen who enter the Annual shoot the following year. At the following years meeting, a formal vote will be taken to decide the outcome of the proposal. No amendments or changes will be permitted to the original proposal as notified.

23 For as much as the Exercise of Archery is lawful, laudable, healthful and innocent, & to the end that God's Holy name may not be dishonoured by any of the Gentlemen present, it is agreed and hereby declared, that if any one of them shall that Day curse or swear in the hearing of any of that Company and the same proved before the Captain and Lieutenant, He shall forthwith pay down One Shilling & so proportionally for every Oath, to be distributed by the Captain to the use of the poor of that place or Township where they then shoot, and in case of refusal or neglect to pay the same, then such party to be excluded from shooting any more till payment is made as above said.

24 Should any dispute arise during the shoot respecting the Prizes, the same to be determined by a Majority of the Gentlemen present at the said shoot. It shall be the duty of the Judge(s) to determine any such majority.

25 The conduct of the meeting should be such that shooting may commence for the 2 hours after luncheon as promptly as possible and without undue delay.

26 All of the Trophies, presented at the end of the Meeting are, and remain, the sole property of The Society of Archers, and are placed in the trust and safe keeping of the Trophy winner until the following Meeting at which they should be returned, to be competed for again.

27 The Scorton Trophies, to be presented, are:-

The Antient Scorton Silver Arrow (Captain) For the First arrow in the Black Spot.
The Scorton Silver Bugle (Lieutenant) For the First arrow in the Red.

The Horn Spoon For the Worst White at the last end.
The Ben Hird Sword For the Most Hits by a Longbowman.
The Wooden Ladle For the Highest Score by a Longbowman

28 Only Gentlemen born or resident in Yorkshire are eligible to compete for the 'Thirsk Insignia', as follows:-

The Silver Arrow and
Gold Embroidered Belt For the Highest Score
The Silver Bugle For the Greatest Number of Hits
The Silver Medal For the Best Gold

29 The following 'Subscription' Trophies are also for competition:-

'Premier' Gold Medal (Captain of Numbers) For Most Hits.
Gold Medal For Highest Score.
Phillips Silver Cup For Best Gold

30 All Trophies are transferable except the Phillips Silver Cup, which is transferable until won by the same Gentleman for three successive years.

31 No Gentlemen may be awarded more than one Trophy from each group of Trophies.

32 From within the costs of the Meeting, the Captain shall allocate 10/- for each Gentleman entered into a Pool, from which the Gentleman receives back or adds to on the following scale:-

First hit in the Inner Gold (Captain Elect).....10/-

First hit in the Red (Lieutenant Elect).....5/-

For each hit in the gold the archer receives 2/- and 1/- for each Red, Blue or Black, but pays 1/- forfeit to the Pool for each hit in the White.

33 If the Pool runs out, the Captain calls for another contribution from each Gentleman.

34 Any balance remaining in the Pool at the end of the Meeting is awarded to the Winner of the Horn Spoon.

35 From within the costs of the Meeting, the Captain shall allocate 10/- for each Gentleman entered, to a Sweepstake for "Best Gold" and 5/- to a Sweepstake for "Most Golds".

The Sweepstake prizes are as follows for both sweeps:-

First Prize 50% of Sweepstake

Second Prize 30% of Sweepstake

Third Prize 20% of Sweepstake

The Council of Captains have agreed that, with the importance of the draft Articles, and as there is opportunity for Gentlemen to study and discuss them, before the meeting, that no discussion will be permitted during the 2010 post lunch meeting, and that a vote in principle will be taken as to their formal proposal to the 2011 meeting.

The Council of Captains ask you to give due consideration and thought to the new draft Articles, hopefully with a view to supporting the principle at the 2010 meeting and their subsequent vote for implementation at the 2011 meeting.

If the agreement in principle is reached at the 2010 meeting, this will enable discussions and reflection to take place between colleagues over subsequent months. The new Articles as presented to the 2010 meeting, will be voted on at the 2011 meeting. This will be a straight for/against vote. No amendments will be taken. If the vote is 'against', any changes or amendments proposed, would necessitate the document re-drafting and re-presenting at a future meeting, in line with the existing Article 6 (1823).

If you would like to register any amendment or comment, please contact the Clerk to the Council of Captains, preferably in writing, such that your comments can be accurately recorded and reflected upon.

Clerk to The Council of Captains, Mr Andrew Neal, 43a Main Street, Riccall, York, YO19 6QD