



Title: The arms of the city of Cork

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*Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, 2008, Vol. 113, page(s) 101-113

Published by the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society

Digital file created: March 13, 2019

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# The arms of the city of Cork

Tracing the development of Cork through the artefact of the arms by examining some examples from the 17th century to the present day

By MARY LANTRY

At a meeting held in the Council Chamber of the City Hall, Cork, on Tuesday 9th August 1949 with the Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor (Councillor Sean Furlong) in the chair, letters were read from the Chief Herald of the Genealogical Office, Dublin Castle, dated 30th June 1949 and from the Curator of the Cork Public Museum dated July 12th 1949 suggesting that as the arms of the City of Cork had never been officially registered at the Genealogical Office this might now be effected. On the proposition of Councillor McGrath, seconded by Councillor Brennan, it was agreed to have the necessary registration made.<sup>1</sup> The arms were therefore officially registered on the August 2nd 1949.

This registration did not, of course, bring the arms into existence, it merely formalised this existence preventing the un-authorized use of the arms in any way that would bring the city or its citizens into disrepute. The arms were described in the registration as follows: 'Ordha ar thontrach mara long tricass fá lántseol dualdaithe idir dhá thur dhearg ar charraiglacha dualdaite ar gach tur bratach maisithe le sailtir dheirg leis an rocs *Statio Bene Fida Carinis*' which translates into English as 'A three-masted ship in full sail on the waves of the sea between two red towers flying saltires with the motto *Statio Bene Fida Carinis*'.

Arms date from an era in which the majority of the population were illiterate. A simple pictorial method of differentiating one group from another was necessary in an illiterate society. In the Old Testament the Children of Israel are

urged to camp by their troops, ensigns and standards.<sup>2</sup> In more modern times the six-pointed Star of David or the fleur-de-lis of France are recognisable symbols of distinguishable groups. In the course of time a particular pictorial motif came to be precisely identified with the head of a family, and the herald came to importance for his expertise in distinguishing the various designs.

Modern heraldry dates from the 12th century having developed from the first truly heraldic shield of Geoffrey of Anjou in 1127 so that by the end of that century it was the accepted system already formulating the rules and terms still in use to-day.<sup>3</sup> The colours or 'tinctures' used in heraldry still bear their original Norman French names. Arms were originally granted to an individual and, as the expression 'coat of arms' implies, were worn on the person. In battle or in the stylised combat of a tournament, arms were carried on a shield rather than being worn on a coat. The leader of a group was thereby clearly identifiable to his followers by the unique design on his shield and the arms also acted as a system for the recognition of the dead and wounded. Heraldry therefore formed a precise method of identification of an individual.

When the Normans arrived in Ireland in 1169 they brought the science of heraldry with them and the arms of our Norman families such as the Fitzgeralds is typical of early military heraldry: simple in design to facilitate recognition on the battlefield.<sup>4</sup> Clarity, simplicity and ease of recognition were therefore the hallmarks of early personal arms.

Civic arms were found in towns and cities from the 14th century<sup>5</sup> and were associated with a location rather than with an individual ruler and thus intended as a mark of territorial ownership and as the original necessity for speedy and accurate identification became secondary, designs became more complex and colourful. In many cases the motifs displayed on civic arms derived from the common seal of the corporation which may have displayed attributes regarded as important or unique to the locality. While the shield shape is still commonly used for the display of arms, a city may also have wished to display its arms on a flag or banner resulting from a move from the earlier shield shape to a rectangular shape. A still later development was the inclusion of a motto, sometimes, as in the case of Cork, in Latin, and the inclusion of a motto marks the move to a more literate society. The very early examples of the Cork arms do not therefore include the motto. In addition, the lack of the constraints (for instance, registration) enabled variations to be carried out on the detail of the motif and it is the ease with which we can recognise the design coupled with recognition of changes in the detail which accurately places older examples in their time. The basic motif and the individual components of the Cork arms are familiar to the citizens and examples of the use of this motif are extant from the 17th century.

### 1. The Registered Arms

As described in the registered arms, we see the ship in full sail between two red towers, which stand on rocky bases. From each tower a saltire is flying, that is, the red X-shaped cross popularly known as St. Patrick's Cross;<sup>6</sup> the ship is shown in profile. The arms are popularly described as a ship between two castles and are sometimes said to picture the original harbour of Cork, in the area of present-day Castle Street, flanked by the towers of the Kings and Queens Castles. While the harbour must have indeed looked somewhat like this it must be

remembered that the message conveyed by a coat of arms is essentially a symbolic rather than a representational one. Castles and ships, described on arms as 'charges' are symbolic representations, for example, the tower of a city and the ship of a harbour. Nevertheless, in the case of Cork there is an interesting parallel between the arms with their symbolic message and the pictorial reality of the actual vista.

The Cork arms show towers rather than castles, as in heraldic terms the charge of a castle would show some element of an attached wall. The background colour or 'field' of the shield is gold. In heraldic terms, gold and silver are called 'metals' as opposed to the coloured 'tinctures'. A general rule in heraldry is that a metal cannot be placed on a metal or a tincture on a tincture.<sup>7</sup>

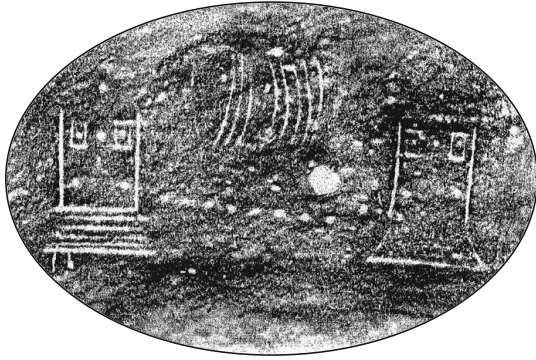
The motto *Statio Bene Fida Carinis* described by Sean Ó Faoláin as "The first Latin I loved to mouth . . ."<sup>8</sup> is an adaptation of Virgil's comment on the island of Tenedos, *statio male fida carinis*. Virgil<sup>9</sup> in the epic story of Aeneas the Trojan prince who escapes with his companions after the sack of Troy by the Greeks, laments the decline of Tenedos from its high point under Priam's rule to the situation where nothing remains of it but an unsafe harbour.<sup>10</sup> History does not record the name of the classical scholar who adapted the Virgilian phrase to Cork. The motto lends itself to various free translations from the pragmatic 'A safe harbour for ships' to the more poetic

*A faithful friendly cove where ships can safely ride  
When tempests loosed by Jove spread havoc far  
and wide.*<sup>11</sup>

Requiring as it does a literate population, the inclusion of a motto is at variance with the basic assumptions underlying the use of arms and in the case of Cork the motto did not become widely used until the 18th century.

### 2. The Nail

This early example of the arms<sup>12</sup> shows a rudimentary and very worn example of the arms



incised into a bronze plate. 'The Nail' originally stood in the Exchange at the junction of the Main Street and the harbour of Cork. Smith describes the Exchange as 'an (sic) regular structure of hewn stone' and gives a date of 1708 for the laying of the foundation stone in the mayoralty of Joseph Franklin.<sup>13</sup> This building was the commercial nerve centre of the city until the late eighteenth century where the formal business of the Corporation and the daily settlement of prices and contracts among the wholesale merchants took place.<sup>14</sup> Debts were settled on the plate and this is thought to be the origin of the expression 'to pay on the nail'. The plate is surrounded by a damaged and incomplete inscription dating it to sometime in the 17th century.

### 3. Harley MS 1441<sup>15</sup>

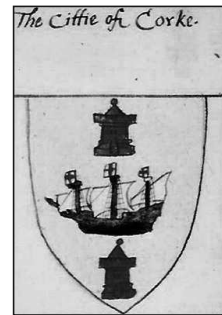


This early depiction of the arms (from the manuscript collection of Robert Harley, the first Earl of Oxford who died in 1724), shows both personal and city arms. The layout of the motifs for civic arms shows an attempt to contain the components in the shield shape of the personal arms. In this example of the Cork arms, the motifs are laid on the vertical plane rather than on the horizontal as is familiar today, and the three towers are probably an attempt to balance the design by triplication of the charges. The number of towers is not significant as the use of a tower merely signified a fortified city. This instance underlines the symbolic nature of the

charges. The ship in this example is not under sail, the sails are furled and oars can be seen protruding through openings in the hull. It has been described as '... a three masted galley sails furled, oars in the water Betw. Three towers'.<sup>16</sup>

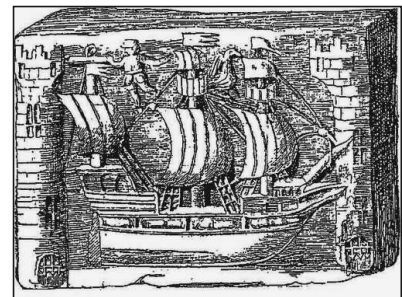
### 4. Harley MS 6096<sup>17</sup>

Labelled 'The Cittie of Corke', this different interpretation of the arms is again from the Harley manuscript collection. This shows another approach to containing the charges in the shield shape. As in the registered arms of the present day, the towers are red and the ship is under sail. The ship is flying the flag of St. George, a red cross on a white ground. This is one of the crosses that subsequently combined with St. Andrew's cross to make up the earliest union flag. The crosses were used separately before the 1606 proclamation of James VI and I who acceded to the throne of England in 1603.<sup>18</sup>



### 5. Daniel Maclise drawing

This drawing is in the Cork Public Museum in Fitzgerald's Park, Cork. It is of a stone that was apparently removed from a building in the North Main street in 1825 which is thought to have been the old Custom House of Cork.<sup>19</sup> Attached to the back of the drawing is a letter from Richard Sainthill<sup>20</sup> to Crofton Croker<sup>21</sup> describing the carving. The dimensions of the stone are given on the Maclise drawing: 2' 3½" high, 2' 11½" broad, 2' 11¾" thick. The stone was then relocated to the Mansion House (now the Mercy Hospital), and subsequently when the Corporation left that



building, to the Police Court near Kyril's Quay (now the Bridewell on Cornmarket Street). Despite the fact that it was a fairly substantial size it has since been lost. Many unanswered questions remain about this stone, its precise age, the exact location of the building in which it was found, and the significance, if any, of the inclusion of a sailor and a bird in the ship's rigging. Smith refers to a house formerly used as a Custom House 'in the Main Street, S. of the Exchange' which would place the house in South Main Street,<sup>22</sup> Richard Sainthill suggested a date in the reign of James VI and I (1603-1625)<sup>23</sup> for the stone, based on the style of the sailor's clothing. The bird is variously described as 'an eagle', 'a cock'<sup>24</sup> and 'an osprey'.<sup>25</sup> The osprey, also known as the sea-eagle appears in the crest of the Roche family, a family with considerable connections with Cork whose 'golden castle of the Roches' (Paradise Castle), was situated at the site subsequently occupied by the Exchange in what is still called Paradise Place, and this may have influenced the original carver. It is also suggested in connection with this stone that the sailor refers to a Spanish and Portuguese custom prevalent in seaports of hanging an effigy of Judas from the rigging of a ship on Good Friday.<sup>26</sup> The sailor and bird make only two further appearances on the arms, both clearly related to this stone, that is, on the Mansion House ware, designed by George Pain, a contemporary and friend of Richard Sainthill, and the mosaic flooring in the hallway of the present City Hall.

The rectangular shape of the 'Maclise' stone shows a more pictorial and less strictly heraldic representation of the arms. The position of the viewer is outside the harbour with the ship under sail leaving. The towers are standing in the water and not on rocky bases as in the registered arms. The motto does not appear on this stone.

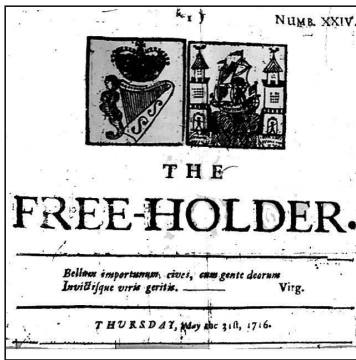
## 6. The Silver Oar

This detailed pictorial representation of the arms is the property of the Port of Cork

Company and is in the Cork Public Museum. The silver oar is the symbol of authority over the waters of the harbour. Henry VII's Charter of 1500 confirmed the mayor's rights over the harbour, the chief purpose of the harbour at that time would have been as an area of protection for the city rather than as an entity in its own right. The 1729 Act of Parliament was the first on the statute books to acknowledge the port as separate from the city and requiring separate legislation for its management.<sup>27</sup> As with the stone in the Maclise drawing confusion exists as to the dating of the oar. Caulfield gives a date of 1686 and a price of £1 15 shillings for 'making and engraving a Water Baliff's Oar'.<sup>28</sup> However, the royal arms on the reverse of the oar are those of William and Mary who came to the throne in 1689.<sup>29</sup> The making of the object is generally attributed to Robert Goble. A popular view that the Goble family fled France after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 is not correct. Robert and his father Edward were active in Cork as brass founders and silversmiths prior to this date and when the goldsmiths were incorporated in 1656 they were appointed trustees.<sup>30</sup> Undoubtedly there was an influx of Huguenots into Cork in 1685 and it may be that the Gobles' status in Cork made it an attractive destination for their co-religionists fleeing religious persecution in France.

The oar includes the motto, and any of the possible datings would be earlier than one would expect to find this. Areas of uneven wear may point to the possibility of some re-carving and it is possible that the motto may have been included at a later date. It is likely that the motto, relating as it does to the harbour rather than to the city, may have made a particular appeal to those dealing with the harbour. As in the Maclise drawing the towers are in the water and the viewpoint is clearly outside the harbour as the stern of the ship is visible. The heavily fortified towers have cannons pointing outwards and archers guarding the entrances to the towers.

7. The Freeholder 1716



This woodcut from the masthead of this early 18th century newspaper<sup>31</sup> is in interesting contrast with the representation of the arms on the silver oar.

Despite the crudeness of execution of this work, the similarity in detail of the view of the ship and the archers guarding the towers is clear.

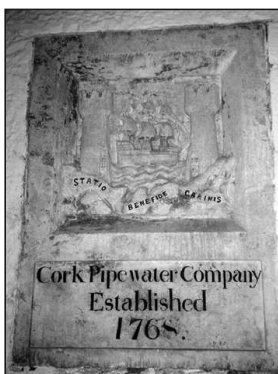
8. The Mayor's (now the Lord Mayor's) Medallion



A 'collar of SS. and Gold Chains' was commissioned for the Mayor and Sheriffs of the city in 1755 'to be worn by them in their several offices for the honour and dignity of the city'<sup>32</sup> and

a medallion showing the Cork arms, with motto, dated 1787 is now worn suspended from this chain. The gold medallion displays the stern of the ship entering between the two towers.

9. The Cork Pipewater Company



This company was set up by Act of Parliament in 1762. Although the practical effect of the measure was limited, relying as it did on gravity flow of the water through wooden pipes,<sup>33</sup> it marked an innovative attempt to come to terms with the

realities of living in an expanding city. The limestone foundation stone of the original waterworks incorporating the arms with motto was subsequently incorporated into the wall of the 19th century turbine house.

10. Commercial Buildings

The arms in mosaic are incorporated in the floor of the entrance hallway of the present-day Imperial Hotel on South Mall. The arms are surrounded by a circular band incorporating the legend 'Commercial Buildings Cork'. In 1811 the 17 year-old Thomas Deane



won a competition for the design of the Commercial Buildings on South Mall.<sup>34</sup> This building was commissioned by the Cork Committee of Merchants and opened in 1813. The architect, described as 'youthful', 'hospitable' and 'polished' gave an entertainment for four hundred gentlemen which continued 'until the broad day obliged them most reluctantly to depart'.<sup>35</sup> In 1816 the company decided to expand their facilities and erect a 'hotel and tavern' at the rear of the building to be known as the Imperial Clarence Hotel.<sup>36</sup> The 1814 Commercial Buildings Act introduced the 'Cocket Tax' effectively a levy on goods entering the port, the proceeds after a deduction of 10% to be divided between the Commercial Buildings Company and the Harbour Commissioners<sup>37</sup> thereby establishing the financial position of the Commercial Buildings Company. In the event this proved to be a double-edged sword as it made imports into Cork more expensive and proved to be a discouragement to trade. This statute remained in force until 1947. As befitting the image of merchants involved in the trade of the port, it can be seen that the ship in this example of the arms has been brought up to date.

### 11. Slab from Corn Exchange

This very handsome limestone carving of the arms is from the 1833 Corn Exchange<sup>38</sup> built



when the Corn Market moved from Cornmarket Street to the site of the present City Hall. This new building was designed by Henry Hill (1806-87) and built by Sir Thomas Deane. The building fronted on to the south channel of the river at its junction with Anglesea Street.<sup>39</sup> In addition to the usual motifs, this slab shows a cannon and a pile of cannonballs under one tower (on the viewer's left) and an anchor under the other thus indicating that the city was secure both on land and on sea. In 1883, following the close of the Cork Exhibition for which additional buildings had been erected on the Albert Quay site by the city architect Sir John Benson,<sup>40</sup> the Corn Market Trustees offered the premises described as 'handsome and commodious',<sup>41</sup> the site and markets to the Corporation for £10,000 and following the passing of the Cork Corn Markets Act of 1889 this property became vested in the Corporation. A brass tablet commemorating the opening of the building to the public in about 1903 can be seen in the Cork Public Museum. This was, of course, the building destroyed in the burning of Cork on the night of December 11/12 1920. This slab which was high up on the building was among the items rescued from the fire and is now in the Cork Public Museum.

### 12. Limestone slabs on the Corporation Markets

The Corporation Markets on Cornmarket Street are reputed to contain the pillars from the old Exchange.<sup>42</sup> Twin limestone slabs carved with the Cork arms were placed in the new upper storeys of the Corporation Markets in 1843 and are there still today. An interesting detail can be seen in the stern of the ship. Although the stone is rather worn the flag over the head of the helmsman seems to be the modern Union Jack<sup>43</sup> incorporating the cross of St George and the saltires of St. Andrew and St. Patrick. In writing about this market, the Cork sculptor Seamus Murphy writes that 'The Old Coal Quay Market has a very pleasant cut-stone front with a central bay. Underneath are four half columns and a well proportioned cornice running the whole length. There are two beautifully carved coats of arms at each end and above the cornice'.<sup>44</sup>



### 13. Stucco arms on Grand Parade Market

The city architect Sir John Benson was approached in 1870 in regard to the design for a new entrance to the Grand Parade Market.<sup>45</sup> It was hoped to incorporate shops in the entrance to generate revenue for the Corporation but problems in the acquisition of adjoining premises led to prolonged delays. Benson's death in 1862 led to further postponement. The new entrance was eventually opened in July 1881, and a clock by the local firm of William Egan & Sons with the city arms over it was



placed in the pediment.<sup>46</sup> At the time this entrance was apparently considered to be rather grandiose leading to the tongue-in-cheek suggestion that the motto be changed from *Statio Bene Fida Carinis* ('A safe place for ships'), to *Statio Bene Fida Carnis* ('A safe place for meat')!<sup>47</sup> The restoration work carried out on the Princes Street Market following the fire of June 1980 which won the 1983 Europa Nostra Gold Medal<sup>48</sup> left the Grand Parade Market entrance somewhat overshadowed. It is appropriate that the city arms should be on the Grand Parade entrance at the original 1788 site.

#### 14. The Banqueting Ware

Banqueting ware from the former Mansion House showing the Cork arms quite often comes up for auction. The Mansion House, built between 1764 and 1773 on reclaimed marshland to the west of the walled city, was intended to reflect the power and dignity of the expanding city<sup>49</sup>. Considerable contemporary detail exists regarding its furnishings.<sup>50</sup> However, no mention of the ware is made despite the fact that banquets were a frequent occurrence, the purpose of them being described in the mayoralty of Sir David Perrier as 'serving the trading part of the community and uphold (sic) what every citizen must wish to see upheld, the due grandeur and dignity of the Chief Magistracy of our City'.<sup>51</sup> The ware was designed by G. R. Pain between 1825 and 1828,<sup>52</sup> and examples of it can be seen at the Cork Public Museum. The Pain brothers, James and George, came to Ireland around 1811 to supervise John Nash's design for Lough Cutra Castle in Galway. The Pains won a competition for the design of a new male prison in Cork in 1818, the Greek revival portico of



which can still stand at the Gaol Walk. James subsequently settled in Limerick while George remained in Cork. A date of 1825 being the same date of the Maclise drawing is generally given for this ware. A more elaborate plate with a gilt edge also exists and is inscribed on the rear 'Richard Sainthill Junr, Common Speaker of Cork, 1828'.<sup>53</sup> Whether this plate was made solely for Richard Sainthill or was one of a series made for presentation purposes is not known. The colour scheme of this gilt-edged plate differs from that of the banqueting ware. The name 'G.R. Pain' is clearly visible on the rock under the right-hand tower. The design shows the towers with the ship under sail, in profile over the motto. Other symbols of the city, the mayoral chain<sup>54</sup>, the cap of maintenance (presumably that described in Henry VIII Charter of March 11 1536 as a 'remarkable' cap<sup>55</sup>) and a sword crossed with the dart and mace are also shown. The design of the arms includes the man and the bird in the rigging as in the Maclise drawing of 1825.

#### 15. Arms of Queen's College Cork, incorporating the Cork arms

The first buildings of Queen's College Cork<sup>56</sup> were designed and built by the firm of Deane and Woodward. A traditional working of the arms in limestone can be seen on







the tower facing into the main quadrangle. In contrast, the College arms granted some years later on March 20 1889 by the Ulster King of Arms<sup>57</sup> show in the top division or 'chief' a different working of the motif. As in Harley MS 1441, the ship has its sails furled and oars are protruding from the hull.

### 16. The Custom House

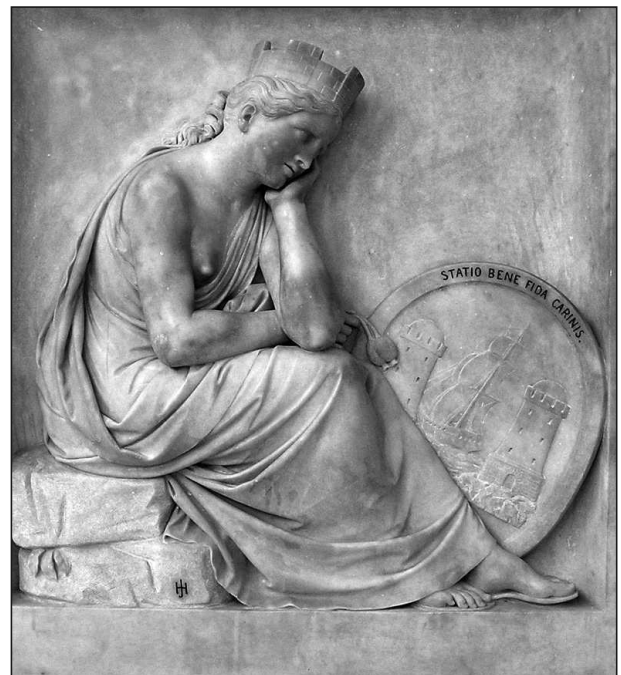
In 1818 the Custom House moved down river from its position at Nelson (present day Emmet) Place<sup>58</sup> to the new building built by William Hargrave, situated at the point where the north and south channels of the river Lee unite. The pediment over the main entrance in original entablature showed the royal arms of England with the lion and unicorn.<sup>59</sup> This was replaced in 1957 with a carving by the Cork artist, Marshall Hutson, of the city arms in dark Kilkenny limestone. The motto is included and this was translated by Mr. J.J. Horgan, Chairman of the Harbour Commissioners, at its unveiling as, 'a safe and satisfactory anchorage



for ships'.<sup>60</sup> Inside the building, the 1906 extension to the boardroom designed by William Price, the harbour engineer, has a stucco tablet of the arms over the fireplace. This is one of the few examples of the Cork arms showing castles rather than towers. Both examples of the arms in this building incorporate dolphins; in the ribbon carrying the motto in the limestone example, and in the frame of the tablet in the other. The dolphins are still shown on promotional items for the Port of Cork Company which is the successor to the Cork Harbour Commissioners.

### 17. Arms from plinth of Hogan's statue of William Crawford the younger

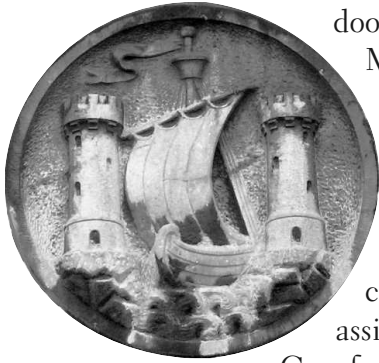
The Crawford family of the Beamish & Crawford brewery were one of Cork's most philanthropic families. A large marble statue of William Crawford the younger now stands in the Crawford Art Gallery. Formerly in Kearns Deane's Savings Bank which was opened in 1840, the year in which William Crawford died, it was transferred to the then Crawford Municipal Art Gallery in 1956.<sup>61</sup> Sculpted by the Cork artist, John Hogan, in 1844, it stands on a plinth which shows Hibernia wearing her crown and mourning her lost son. She is gazing sadly at the Cork coat of arms and holds in her hand a poppy



head indicative of eternal sleep.<sup>62</sup> John Hogan, whose father was Thomas Deane's foreman, was apprenticed to Thomas Deane at age 15 and eventually took over from Thomas Kirk as Deane's decorative carver.

### 18. Arms at the present Crawford College of Art and Design (1912)

Many excellent limestone examples of the arms are to be seen around the city of Cork. Unique in its circular shape, it can be seen over the main



door of the former Municipal Technical Institute. and shows a single-sailed sloop<sup>63</sup> between two towers. This building was constructed with assistance from the Crawford family who donated the site (the former Arnott's, earlier Abbots, brewery).

19. Arms in the vestibule of the Munster and Leinster Bank

Trading in the Munster Bank was suspended in 1885. At the time of its failure it had two major offices, one in Dame Street, Dublin, and one in South Mall, Cork. The bank also had a considerable branch network, possibly a contributory factor in its failure. The manager at Dame Street, Robert Farquharson, absconded following the discovery of anomalies in the accounts of the Dame Street branch, while in Cork it was found that many directors had substantial unsecured overdrafts. Considerable bad feeling existed between Cork and Dublin and it was with relief that an agreement was negotiated that the new Munster and Leinster Bank take over the assets and liabilities of the Munster Bank.<sup>64</sup> The new bank started cautiously with offices at South Mall in Cork and Thomas Deane's 'Venetian Gothic'<sup>65</sup> building in Dame Street, Dublin. Given that all directors of the new bank were from Munster it was decided that the head office should be in Cork. Arthur Hill (1846-1921) won a competition for the design of the new headquarters at 63-66 South Mall.<sup>66</sup> Opened in 1918 it cleverly coped with the flooding problem that then as now is prevalent in periods of high tide and east wind in the low-lying city centre, by placing short flights of three steps in the entrance vestibules. The iron balustrade on the steps in the main entrance hall incorporates the Cork arms in brass within an oval.

20. Arms over the doorway of the School of Commerce and Domestic Science.

This building was designed by Henry Houghton Hill (1882-1951) in the Bauhaus style and opened in 1935. The arms in low relief are shown over the main doorway.



21. Arms from buildings rebuilt after the burning of Cork

Considerable rebuilding took place in Cork following the destruction of a large portion of the city centre on the night of the 11/12 December 1920. William Egan & Sons, Gold and Silversmiths, 32-33 Patrick Street, was one of the earliest premises after the fire to be re-built, in 1924.<sup>67</sup> There is a fine representation of the arms on the exterior front of the building still



visible at this site. This firm used the Cork arms on their letterheads and in the Civil War period when it was considered too risky to send manufactured pieces to the Assay Office in Dublin three specially cut dies: a ship facing left, a castellated tower (struck twice) and the maker's mark of incuse letters WE within an incuse oblong, were applied as an interim method of hallmarking (thus creating what is now called Republican silver).<sup>68</sup>

The Central Library, that replaced the Carnegie Library (located behind the Municipal Buildings on Anglesea Street before being destroyed in 1920), had some temporary homes before settling in the specially constructed



building on Grand Parade in 1930.

The City Hall was not re-built until 1936. No motif of the city arms appears on the exterior of the limestone building. The arms are, however, displayed in several sites within the building: on the mosaic floor of the entrance hall and on the



tympanum over the stage in the concert hall.

These are contemporaneous with the building. Other examples have been added over the years, for instance, a limestone reserved to mark Cork 800 was erected in 1985 outside the Anglesea Street entrance and, again on Anglesea Street, there is a mosaic over the door of the 1985 building which is a true representation of the arms as registered.



### 22. The arms in the *Journal*

The arms have featured in the pages of this *Journal*, to give two examples, on the cover of the first issue in 1892 and also in 1938. However, the views are quite different. The 1892 version is similar to the limestone



the Custom House.

circular depiction on the Crawford College of Art and Design and that of 1938 has some similarities with that on the exterior of

### 23. More recent examples of the arms

On the eastern approach to the city on the Dunkettle/Tivoli dual carriageway there is a large sculpture of the Cork arms executed in stainless steel. This was erected in 1997 and is an unusual three-dimensional representation of the arms.



To mark the turn of the century and a new millennium a programme of refurbishment was carried out on the City Hall. Part of this programme was the provision of new curtains for the concert hall designed by the late Pat Murray which were seen for the first time at the New Year's Eve concert in 1999.<sup>69</sup> The colour scheme of the motif departs from the colours as registered in the Genealogical Office<sup>70</sup> but reflects the colours of the curtains as originally designed for the building in 1936.



The Port of Cork harbour authority made their own contribution to mark the turn of the century by improving an area of land fronting on to the river at Tivoli in conjunction with the



garden designer Brian Cross. These gardens are accessed from the Lower Glanmire Road by two

pairs of iron gates at either end designed by the artist John Lehane which display mirror images of the arms.



### 24. The present day place of the arms as an expression of popular identity

Considering its pictorial possibilities it is surprising that the arms have not been more

frequently used on licensed premises. The Bristol arms, known popularly as the Ship and Castle, has led to many public houses in the Bristol area having this name.<sup>71</sup> There appears to be only one public house using the name ‘The Cork Arms’, which is located on MacCurtain Street and this has no motif. Although more recently public houses have opened in a portion of the Corporation Market on Cornmarket Street, the arms carved over their doors long predate the licensed premises (as discussed above). There is an example of the arms on what used to be a vehicular entrance at the left side of the ‘The Crow’s Nest’ at Victoria Cross. Again as far as can be established this predates the public house going back to a time when it was a halt for the outward-bound Muskerry railway. The only example traced so far of the use of the arms on a licensed premises built as such is the pleasing example on the ‘The Port Bar’ on Victoria Road.



Possibly in view of the stricter interpretation brought about since registration, popular identity seems to find expression in incorporating a motif of the registered arms as part of a wider picture rather than the arms alone, for example, Ballinure Hurling and Football Club and Greenmount National School grounds.

Many more examples of the arms can be found around the city and in the archives ranging from the National Monument on Grand Parade to the City of Cork Steam Packet emblem<sup>72</sup>.



Its use not only in official contexts but also in social and commercial settings reflects the affection and sense of identification felt by the citizens of Cork to the arms.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to the British Library for permission to reproduce images from Harley MSS 1441 and 6096; to Cllr. Colm Burke, then Lord Mayor, for permission to photograph the Medallion; to Cork City Library for *The Free-Holder*; to George Stacpoole for the photographs of the Sainthill plate.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

- 1 Minute Book Cork Corporation, Cork City and County Archives.
- 2 Numbers 11:2: ‘All the Children of Israel shall camp by their troops, ensigns and standards, and the houses of their kindred, round about the tabernacle of the covenant’.
- 3 Fearn, Jacqueline *Discovering Heraldry* (Risborough: Shire Publications, 2000), 8.
- 4 See examples at the Office of the Chief Herald of Ireland. [www.nli.ie. en/services-heraldry.aspx](http://www.nli.ie/en/services-heraldry.aspx).
- 5 Fearn (2000), 70.
- 6 Strictly speaking, however, St. Patrick not being a martyr is not entitled to a cross.
- 7 Michel Pastoureau *Heraldry: its origins and meaning* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1997; repr. 2004), 46.
- 8 Seán Ó Faoláin and Paul Henry *An Irish Journey* (London: Readers Union, 1941), 85.
- 9 Publius Vergilius Maro, the Roman poet, 70-19 BC.

- 10 H. Rushton Fairclough *Virgil – The Aeneid Book 2* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 294. ‘Est in conspectus Tenedos, notissima fama insula, dives opum, Priama dum regna manebant, nunc tantum sinus et statio male fida carinis’.
- 11 Seán Beecher *The Story of Cork* (Cork: Mercier Press, 1999), 98.
- 12 In the collection of the Cork Public Museum, Fitzgerald’s Park.
- 13 Charles Smith *The ancient and present state of the county and city of Cork* (Cork: John Connor, 1815; repr. Cork: Tower Books, 1973), 395.
- 14 David Dickson *Old World Colony: Cork and South Munster 1630-1830* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2005).
- 15 *Grants of Arms and Heraldic Collections* Harley MS 1441 London, British Library, 40v.
- 16 John W. Papworth *An Alphabetical Dictionary of Coats of Arms* (London: T. Richards, 1874).
- 17 *Arms of the Nobility and Gentry of Ireland 1603* London, British Library, 9.
- 18 URL: [www.flaginstitute.org](http://www.flaginstitute.org), see British flags.
- 19 *The Gentleman’s Magazine and Historical Chronicle* (London 1827).
- 20 Richard Sainthill (1787-1870), antiquarian and numismatist lived in the 18th century house still standing at Emmet (formerly Nelson) Place.
- 21 Thomas Crofton Croker (1798-1854), author of *Fairy Legends and Traditions in the South of Ireland* (1825).
- 22 Smith (1815), 394.
- 23 Michael Holland ‘Sketch of the Cork City Arms by Daniel Maclise’ *JCHAS* (1916) X, 85.
- 24 Very Rev. Dean of Ross ‘The Cork Arms’ *JCHAS* (1926) XXXI, 60.
- 25 J. B. Brooke-Little (Richmond Herald of Arms) *A Complete Guide to Heraldry* (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1909; repr. 1949).
- 26 Very Rev. Dean of Ross (1926), 60.
- 27 Mary Leland *That endless adventure: a history of the Cork Harbour Commissioners* (Cork: Port of Cork Company, 2001), 21.
- 28 Richard Caulfield, ed. *The Council Book of the Corporation of Cork from 1609 to 1643, and from 1690 to 1800* (Guildford: printed by J. Billing, 1876), xxv.
- 29 C. Cremen ‘The Silver Oar’ *JCHAS* XXIV (1918), 7. See also photograph of the oar facing page 6.
- 30 Douglas Bennett *Collecting Irish Silver 1637-1900* (London: Souvenir Press London, 1984), 185. For further information about the Gobles, see John R. Bowen and Conor O’Brien *Cork silver and gold: four centuries of craftsmanship* (Cork: Collins Press, 2005).
- 31 *The Free-Holder*, May 31st 1716 Number XXIV, printed and sold by George Bennett (courtesy Cork Public Library).
- 32 Caulfield (1876), 690. The date is recorded as 31 October 1755.
- 33 Colin Rynne *The Archaeology of Cork City and Harbour* (Cork: The Collins Press, 1993), 99.
- 34 Fredrick O’Dwyer *The Architecture of Deane and Woodward* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1997), 3.
- 35 *The Freeholder* March 17, No. 10. Price 6d. Published by the Proprietors 3, French Church Street (Cork Public Library).
- 36 William O’Sullivan ‘Civic Institutions in Cork’ *JCHAS* XLVIII (1943), 85.
- 37 Leland (2001), 41.
- 38 Dickson (2005), 382.
- 39 Fredrick O’Dwyer *The Architecture of Deane and Woodward* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1997), 128.
- 40 CN ‘The First Cork Exhibition’ *JCHAS* VI (1900), 224-233.
- 41 Sylvester O’Sullivan ‘Old Cork and its Corporations’ *Evening Echo* 29/3/1976.
- 42 John Fitzgerald ‘Round about the Walls of Cork’ *JCHAS* II (1896), 171.
- 43 This flag was introduced on 1st January 1801 when the kingdom of Ireland was united with the kingdoms of England and Scotland.
- 44 Dr. Seamus Murphy R.H.A. ‘The Stones of Cork’ *Cork Holly Bough* (1969) (no pg. number).
- 45 Diarmuid Ó Drisceoil and Donal Ó Drisceoil *Serving a City* (Cork: The Collins Press, 2005), 102.
- 46 Ó Drisceoil and Ó Drisceoil (2005), 103.

- 47 Bryan A. Cody *The River Lee, Cork and the Corkonians* (1859; repr. Cork: Tower Books, 1974).
- 48 Ó Drisceoil and Ó Drisceoil (2005), 186.
- 49 The original house now forms part of the buildings of the Mercy Hospital, Henry Street.
- 50 Caulfield (1876), look in index under ‘Mayoralty House’.
- 51 *The Freeholder* Cork Thurs. 2 December 1813 (Cork City Library).
- 52 See photograph of the ‘Sketch of the Cork Arms designed for service of China for the Corporation by G. R. Pain’ in *JCHAS* (1926), XXXI, facing page 59. The sketch, a copy of the original, is by Justin McCarthy and is dated 1846.
- 53 With thanks to George Stacpoole, Adare, Co. Limerick, for drawing my attention to this plate and for these photographs.
- 54 The chain on this plate includes a crown, now missing from the present chain, and a portcullis (not the present medallion).
- 55 URL: [www.corkcity.ie/citycouncil/charters](http://www.corkcity.ie/citycouncil/charters).
- 56 Founded in 1845, opened to students in 1849.
- 57 John A. Murphy *The College: a history of Queen’s/University College Cork, 1845-1995* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1995), Appendix B ‘Crest and Motto’, 386-87. The arms were reaffirmed on July 2 1894.
- 58 The old Custom House still exists as part of the Crawford Art Gallery building.
- 59 Leland (2001), 44 (photograph).
- 60 Leland (2001), 211. A photograph of the unveiling ceremony in April 1957 is on page 207.
- 61 Peter Murray *The Crawford Municipal Art Gallery Catalogue* (Cork: City of Cork Vocational Education Committee, 1991), 213.
- 62 The species name of the opium poppy (*Papaver*) is *somniferum*, Latin *somnus* ‘sleep’ and *ferre* ‘to bring’.
- 63 A sloop (from Dutch *sloep*) is a single-masted sailboat with a fore-and-aft rig and a single mast farther forward than the mast of a cutter.
- 64 Cormac Ó Gráda *Should the Munster Bank have been saved?* Working paper series, July 2001 (Dublin: Centre for Economic Research Department of Economics University College Dublin, 2001), 25.
- 65 Emmet O’Brien *The Irish Times* December 10 1992.
- 66 The building built by John Sisk & Sons in 1911-14.
- 67 Indeed, not long after the fire, Egans set up business in a hut onsite – see the photograph in Tim Cadoogan *Cork in Old Photographs* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2003), 63, and photograph of the new building on the following page.
- 68 Bowen and O’Brien (2005), 16. This exhibition catalogue contains many illustrations of gold and silver pieces bearing the Cork arms. See also Aodh Ó Tuama ‘Cork Republican Silver’ *Irish Arts Review* 1 no. 1 (1984), 52.
- 69 Thanks to Mr. Gerard O’Shea of the City Architect’s office who provided me with details of the materials.
- 70 The heraldic colours or ‘tinctures’ are red ‘gules’, white or silver ‘argent’, natural or realistic colour ‘proper’. ‘Saltire’ is a diagonal or St. Andrew’s cross.
- 71 URL: [www.about-bristol.co.uk/hom-01.asp](http://www.about-bristol.co.uk/hom-01.asp).
- 72 This motif on the company’s notepaper shows a steam ship instead of the usual ship under sail, but the company can be forgiven for this licence given the business it was in!