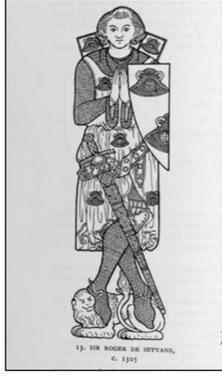


Painswick's Coats of Arms

Coats of arms date back to early mediaeval Europe and their distinct purpose was to establish identity in battle. The coat of arms of the bearer was displayed on his surcoat and on his banner and shield. It enabled men to distinguish between friend and foe and was particularly useful as a means of identifying dead bodies on the battlefield. Thus simplicity was of the essence for swift recognition.



A test of the antiquity of a coat of arms is, in general, its simplicity – a single, or at most two, simple forms constituting the most noble. Note the first two of Painswick's manorial lords' arms, Laci and Pain. Symbols were very specific and signified which combat the bearer had engaged in. There is a list from 1220 of those knights who served in the army of Henry III. It includes Sir Robert le Fitz Payne with the Pain coat of arms. This family held the Painswick manorship until 1137.



Laci



Pain

Coats of arms can be borne and used by all the descendants in the legitimate male line of the person to whom they were originally granted. They pass down through a female line only when there are no male heirs. This is a matter of civil law.

In the 15th and 16th centuries armour changed and the coat of arms ceased to be a means of identification in battle. Arms started to be more elaborate and decorative and unquestionably a desirable status symbol for men of property. Some of those Painswick inhabitants listed as arms bearers undoubtedly fall into this category though in general their coats of arms appear to be the result of some restraint compared to designs from other areas.

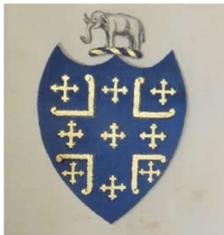
During the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries the artwork had become absurdly intricate and earned that period the label 'the Decadence'. The figures used fall into these categories: Divine and human beings; beasts, birds and other creatures; monsters; natural objects and inanimate objects. How many of Painswick's designs comply with such labels?



Webb



Ball



Knowles



Messenger



Roberts



Butler



Loveday



Viner

In fact, Painswick's coats of arms are surprisingly unpretentious considering they appear to date mainly from the 17th and 18th centuries. The list includes clothiers, yeomen, mercers, vicars, lawyers, merchants, MPs, gentlemen, property owners, free-masons, an apothecary and a surgeon. In Painswick this was of course a time of economic success for some.

Another form of this aspect of heraldry evident in St Mary's Church is the display of hatchments. This involved the painting of the coat of arms of an armigerous person on a piece of black-framed wood when he died. This was placed on the house front as a sign of mourning and was sometimes transferred to the church later. The hatchments of both the Hyett and Rogers families are present in St Mary's Church.



There is also the enormous royal hatchment above the south door inside the church. The requirement would have been to change the coat of arms inside the black frame each time the monarch died and replace it with the arms of the newly-dead monarch. It should therefore display the arms of King George VI at present but in fact still shows those of William IV.



Wick



Townsend



Bridges



Fletcher



Fletcher



Little



Adams



Lawrence



Packer



Knight

There are some interesting designs among the Painswick coats of arms. For example, the Bayliss design depicts sheep with a bale of cloth, very apt for a clothier, and two other clothiers, Wight and Seaman, also feature sheep.



Bayliss

Wight

Seaman

The Castleman arms show a castle with a man, obviously a direct reference to the name.



Castleman

Others used symbolism which had formerly been imbued with real battle significance, such as the fleur de lys, purely as decoration.



Rogers

Caruthers

Wood



Smith

Poole

And the coat of arms of Moseley, a vicar, is very elaborate.



Mosley

By contrast, Painswick's earlier Lords of the Manor clearly had aristocratic and even royal associations, their coats of arms thus distinguished by the presence of a crown or coronet.



Valance Earl of Pembroke



Talbot Earl of Shrewsbury



Cromwell Earl of Essex



Jerningham

Sir William Kingston's coat of arms is topped with a rose which had royal significance.



Kingston

Some of Painswick's later ordinary inhabitants also included crowns or coronets in their coats of arms. Newland's is particularly pretentious with crowned lions.



Newland

Wight

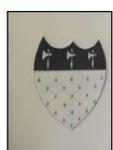
Bayliss



Downs

Holbrow

Not all of Painswick's coats of arms are listed here but certainly as early as 1811 (there were more added after this date) at least 7 manorial families and 42 others had bestowed this honour upon themselves.



Sheppard



Partridge



Cooke



Palling



Sadler



Trye



Hyett



Coxe



Pulton



Winston