

- **Heraldic Exhibition Opens**
- **"Royal Roots – Republican Inheritance"**
- **News & Views from the World of Genealogy & Heraldry**

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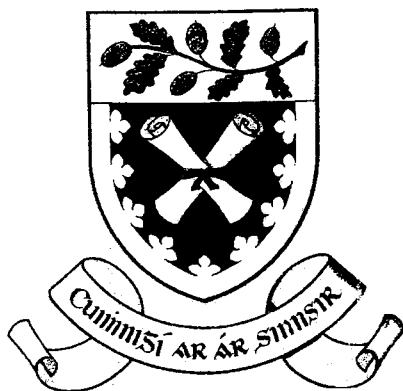
The Gene Gazette

*The Newsletter of
the Genealogical
Society of Ireland
Volume 7 • Issue 8
August 2002*

"Cuimhnigí ar
Ár Sinnstr
Remember
Our Ancestors"

IN SHIELD OR BANNER

Celebrating the 450th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Irish Heraldic Authority



As the only genealogical organisation in Ireland, so far, to have obtained a Grant of Arms from the Chief Herald of Ireland, this Society is honoured to have its Arms (above) on display at the Heraldic Exhibition in the National Library of Ireland. The following is the full text of the remarks by **Brendan O Donoghue**, Chief Herald of Ireland, at the opening of the exhibition "In Shield or Banner" at the National Library of Ireland on Thursday July 11th 2002.

I welcome you to the opening of this exhibition, not as Director of the National Library but in my capacity as Chief Herald of Ireland, the fifth person to hold office under that title, and the 27th in an unbroken line of chief or principal heralds of Ireland extending back to the first appointment in 1552. Before inviting you to view the exhibition, a few words may be appropriate to put the exhibition in context and to explain our purpose in mounting it.

Ulster King of Arms

On 2nd February 1552, the young Edward VI of England noted in his journal: "There was a King of Arms made for Ireland whose name was Ulster and his province was all Ireland; and he was the fourth king of arms and the first herald of Ireland". The first Ulster King of Arms, appointed in June 1552, was a Scotsman, Bartholomew Butler, and his son Philip was his deputy with the title Athlone Pursuivant. In the centuries which followed, nepotism was to be a recurring feature of the staffing of the Office and there were officeholders too who regarded the position as a mere sinecure, leaving it to their subordinate staff to carry on the daily business. But in spite of that, the Office of Ulster King of Arms continued to flourish into the twentieth century, regulating and recording the use of arms and taking on a substantial volume of ceremonial activity as well. Ulster's Office continued in being at Dublin Castle even after 1922, when the rest of the system of public administration in Ireland passed into the control of an Irish government. It was only in 1940, on the death of the last Ulster King of Arms, Sir Neville Wilkinson, who had continued to hold office from the Crown, that change was decided on.

Chief Herald of Ireland

An attempt to absorb the Office into the College of Arms in London was resisted by the Irish government and particularly by the Taoiseach of the time, Eamon de Valera, who recognised the value of the records of the Office and was insistent that an Irish office serving Irish people should not be allowed to leave the country. Thus, in 1943, the Genealogical Office was established to take over much of the business of Ulster's Office. The new head of the office, Dr Edward McLysaght, was at first given the title of Chief Genealogical Officer, but that was subsequently changed to Chief Herald of Ireland. Eamon de Valera had offered to retain Thomas Ulick Sadleir, who had been acting as

Ulster King of Arms from 1940 to 1943, as head of the new Genealogical Office at a salary double his previous rate of pay. But for Sadleir, loyalty to the Crown, and the strongly held view that "only a sovereign could grant arms" made it impossible to accept this offer.

Heraldry in a Republic

Unlike Sadleir, however, his successor, Edward MacLysaght, had no doubts about the place of heraldry in democracies and republics: in 1947, he wrote: "it is quite natural that in spite of our amphibious constitutional status we should continue to administer heraldic affairs as part of the functions of the State. Republican institutions, when they are the result of normal development rather than of class warfare, are not necessarily hostile to the practice of heraldry." And so, following the precedents established by MacLysaght, the Genealogical Office has now been providing a heraldic service in Ireland for almost sixty years.

Fantasies, Foolish Claims & Vanities

We are conscious of the view, advanced by the Lynch-Robinson brothers, in their book *Intelligible Heraldry* (Macdonald, London, 1948) that "more snobbery, more nonsense and more bare-faced lying has attached itself to heraldry than to any other human activity". That may well have been the case in times past. In addition, there have undoubtedly been cases since 1943 in which applications for grants or confirmations or registration of arms were made to the Office by persons whose motives were questionable, to say the least of it – persons, for example, who claimed to have purchased feudal or Gaelic lordships or titles for large sums of money or to have been granted arms or to have been ennobled by a pretender to the throne of some deposed royal house. Such persons, I can assure you, are disappointed nowadays when they try to obtain an Irish grant of arms to support their fantasies, gratify their vanities, or underwrite spurious and foolish claims to aristocratic status or nobility.

GSI Website <http://www.gensocireland.org>

Ireland One of a Few

Ireland is now one of a small minority of countries which still maintain an official office of arms and a formal State system for the granting of arms. Systems similar to ours are operated only in England, Scotland, Canada, Spain and South Africa. And arising from that fact, there are some who say that the system should be discontinued here and that the practice of granting arms, particularly to individuals, is not in keeping with our status as a republic. I would refute that. We make it absolutely clear nowadays that any citizen is entitled to apply for a grant of arms and that a grant does not confer any status, title, rank or entitlement that the individual did not already have. Besides, we see no reason why our heritage of tradition and practice, built up over the centuries, should not be preserved, in suitably modified form, in today's world, allowing us to maintain what has been described as "an interesting and ingenious method of identification and record by an artistic and often beautiful symbolism".

Origins of Heraldry

Heraldry itself has a history even longer than that of the Office of Arms. The use of personal emblems on shields and banners originated as a means of recognition on the battlefield in the 12th century. It was adopted throughout Christian Europe with remarkable enthusiasm and soon became the most visible sign of membership of the ruling military caste. The ability to recall from memory to whom different armorial ensigns pertained was obviously a specialist occupation and the herald, previously a messenger, had to acquire this knowledge in order to recognise both his master's allies and enemies. He had the mournful duty of identifying those slain on the battlefield and the more positive one of supervising the exchange of prisoners.

Knights & Coat Armour

Because great pride was taken in the fact that certain arms had been borne at famous battles, it was not surprising that sons wished to follow fathers as the bearers of these arms. And so, the use of particular arms became heritable within families and the matter of who was entitled to bear particular arms became the concern of the heralds. When shields and banners came to be used on the tournament field, the opportunities to display elaborate personal emblems were far greater than on the battlefield. The practicality of military heraldry then gave way to the use of largely decorative items, such as huge helmet decorations, called crests, and armorial clothing for both the knight and his horse that would have been entirely out of place in battle. At this stage, the herald, as well as having to recognise the contestants by their coat-armour, and cry out their names and accomplishments, became responsible also for ordering the ceremonial aspects of the occasion. Later still, when gunpowder had driven the armoured knight from the battlefield and his heraldry with him, the herald's functions continued, in modified form, even though the original purpose of

heraldry had ceased to have any relevance. In the centuries that followed, possession of a coat of arms still implied a certain social status and was the prerogative of a particular class, but that is no longer the case. Nowadays, heraldry and the study of heraldry continues to have an extraordinary appeal for many people in countries around the world, the latest manifestation of this being the number of websites devoted to the provision of information on heraldry, and to the discussion of the most detailed aspects of it.

In Shield or Banner

In 1586, an English expert wrote, in answer to the question what sort of man ought to be a herald: ... "he ought to be a Gentleman and an old man.. not admitting into that sacred office everie glasier, painter, and tricker, or a mere blazoner of Armes: for to the office of a herald is requisite the skill of many faculties and professions of literature, and likewise the knowledge of Warres" I am not sure how those of us who serve in the Office of Arms nowadays measure up to those requirements but we are doing our best to maintain the traditions of the Office and to promote interest in heraldry generally. We have no ceremonial functions like those still exercised by our counterparts in England and Scotland, but the granting of arms by means of the traditional Letters Patent continues to the present. Indeed, we take the title of our exhibition: *In shield or banner* from the wording of the Letters Patent granting arms which provides for their use 'in shield or banner or otherwise according to the Laws of Arms'

Four and a Half Centuries

The records displayed in this exhibition span the four and half centuries of the existence of an office of arms. They include records of the simple military heraldry of the descendants of the 12th century Norman invaders such as the Burkes, Butlers and Berminghams; the more complicated post-medieval armoury of several waves of Anglo-Irish settlers, and the distinctive armoury of the Gaelic Irish which, despite its late adoption and evolution, bears little resemblance to any other heraldry in Europe. The majority of these records have never before been published or displayed. They have been generated as a result of the work of the Office over 450 years and their survival is quite remarkable, given that the Office was housed during those years in a large number of different premises around the city of Dublin and occasionally had to function from the home of the King of Arms or of one of his staff. It was only at the beginning of the 20th century that the office came to be housed in the Bedford Tower at Dublin Castle, the building with which it is most closely identified and where it continued to function until its transfer to Kildare Street in the 1980s.

Rare Documents Exhibited

Among the types of documents which are included in the exhibition are the several means by which records of arms were kept up to date: the heralds' visitation books, the funeral entries

and the volumes of grants and confirmations of arms. These are interesting, not only for the information they contain, but also for the different styles of heraldic art which have been employed over the centuries. There are sometimes outstanding examples of the art of the times as well as minimal sketches that were never intended for viewing by any but the officers of arms. There are highly detailed paintings of the 17th century which contrast strongly with the florid style of the 18th. There are paintings in a Victorian Gothic idiom as well as more recent work returning to medieval simplicity. Each is an expression of the continuing tradition of our heraldry, which in turn is an integral part of this pan-European art and science.

Gender Equality in Irish Heraldry

Heraldry has been described as the shorthand of history but, as A C Fox-Davies put it, heraldry is not indissolubly linked with parchments and writings already musty with age. Irish heraldry, as a living discipline, continues to evolve. We have, for example, taken a lead amongst the world's heraldic authorities in regard to gender equality in the granting and transmission of arms. And we have encouraged experiment and innovation in armorial art and can fairly be said to produce heraldic artwork which is as good as - if not better than - anything done elsewhere.

Heraldry in Today's Ireland

I hope that you will enjoy the exhibition and that it will help to promote interest in Irish heraldry and to encourage people to look around them in cities and towns here and abroad for examples of heraldry - on public buildings and on bank buildings, on gravestones and monuments of various kinds and in churches, to mention but a few of the locations where heraldic emblems may be found. And, of course, heraldry is not a dead language or a dead science, as shown, for example by the continued use of coats of arms on the shirts and shorts of football teams; or the display by local authorities of county, city and town arms on their property, on vehicles, and in media advertising; and its use by universities and professional bodies on their stationery and formal documents of various kinds. And while the traditionalists and the purists might not altogether approve of some of these present day uses of arms, I prefer to take the view that examples like these demonstrate that, after 800 years, heraldry continues to have a practical value as well as an historical dimension.

Brendan O'Donoghue

Editor: The Society is grateful to the Chief Herald of Ireland, Mr. Brendan O' Donoghue, for permission to publish the above. The exhibition runs until November 2002 and is free to enter and certainly well worth a visit. A new publication "*Royal Roots - Republican Inheritance*" by Susan Hood to be published later this month will greatly improve our understanding of the survival of heraldry in the Republic of Ireland.

DIARY DATESTuesday August 13th 2002

Evening Open Meeting, 20.00hrs

Dún Laoghaire College of Further Education

Cumberland St., Dún Laoghaire

Bus: 7, 7A, 46A, and 75.

DART Monkstown/Salthill Station.

Speaker: Charles Callan

Topic: "Archives of the Labour History Society & the Genealogist"

Tuesday September 10th 2002

Venue as above

"Civil Registration in Ireland"

Weds. Aug. 28th & Sep. 25th 2002

Morning Open Meeting 10.30hrs

The Port View Hotel

Marine Road, Dún Laoghaire

Discussion Group on Family History

YOUR AUGUST GENIE UPDATES

CONGRESS The XXVth International Congress of Genealogical and Heraldic Sciences will take place from 16th - 21st Sept., 2002 at Dublin Castle. The theme will be *Genealogy and heraldry: their place and practice in changing times*. The subjects range from medieval systems of heraldic differencing to the application of electronic technology and the most recent genetic research results. Herald-painters will operate an open studio at Dublin Castle. Participants will be actively encouraged to take part in several artistic projects. Register for the Congress on the Website of National Library www.nli.ie or by writing to Congress Secretary, Office of the Chief Herald, 2 Kildare Street, Dublin 2, Ireland. E-mail: Hergen2002@nli.ie

MARTELLO TOWER The Society's plans for the restoration and refurbishment of the Martello Tower are Seapoint, Co. Dublin have been put on hold by an appeal against the Planning Permission granted to us in January of this year. On the 9th August 2002 a final decision on this appeal is due to be delivered by An Bord Pleanála (Planning Board). The outcome of this appeal will be announced in the September issue of this newsletter.

SEPTEMBER GRAVEYARD PROJECT Volunteers are now sought to transcribe for publication the memorial inscriptions of Carrickbrennan Cemetery, Monkstown, Co. Dublin. This cemetery was surveyed twice before, however, a comprehensive record suitable for genealogical research has not been published. Barry O'Connor, FGSI, Co-ordinator, will allocate each person a section of the cemetery to record in workbooks provided by the Society. Contact Barry at telephone (+353.1) 285 4386 E-mail: btoc@esatclear.ie The team will undertake the work together on an agreed day taking a pack lunch etc. as Barry organised for the Jewish Cemetery.

PRESIDENT The planned meeting of the College of Fellows to elect the President of the Society due to have taken place in July has been put back until this month due to holidays

and illness. The Fellows are due to have a luncheon meeting sometime before the end of August and their decision will be known in time for the September issue of this newsletter.

EDITORIAL PANEL The Board of the Society is seeking volunteers to establish a new Editorial Panel or Group which will, from December 2002, take over the production of the Society's Quarterly Journal and the Irish Genealogical Sources series. If you feel that you would like to participate in the publications programme of your Society, please contact **Rory Stanley**, FGSI, Cathaoirleach GSI, 94, Cherrywood, Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin, Ireland. E-mail: rorstan@eircom.net

ARMS OF THE SOCIETY

The Arms of the Genealogical Society of Ireland depicted on the front cover were formally presented to the Society at a Civic Reception held on July 23rd 2001 in the County Hall, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. At that handing over of the Letters Patent, the Chief Herald of Ireland, **Brendan O Donoghue** outlined the significance of the Arms as follows. As much of the genealogist's work involves the examination of documents of various kinds, *two scrolls in saltire* were selected as the principal charge, or element, in the GSI shield. The scrolls are *banded vert*, as green is the colour peculiarly associated with Ireland. The tinctures (or colours) *azure and or*, or in today's language, blue and gold - the colours of the State - are used on the shield and there is also what the heralds describe as a *bordure treffly* which is reminiscent of shamrocks, another patently Irish symbol. Because the use of a tree as an emblem by genealogical societies is so common, an effort was made in this case to devise an appropriate variation. In the event, taking account of the fact that the late O Conor Don was closely associated with the Society, it was decided to include a sprig of oak on the shield as a reference to the O Conor arms. And beneath the shield, is the motto: *Cuimhnigí ar ár Sinnsir*, which of course speaks for itself. (*Remember Our Ancestors*) In addition to the shield, the Society requested and has been granted a badge to be used by its members. The design here is a rope formed into a trefoil which, in heraldry, is known as a *Hungerford knot*. In this case, the rope terminates in two acorns. Finally, the letters patent include a banner, repeating the main elements of the shield. This is very much in keeping with the formula traditionally used in the grant of arms which states that the arms may be used on shield or banner. The work of devising the GSI arms was carried out by **Micheál Ó Comáin**, consultant herald at the Genealogical Office, and the painting by hand of the arms and letters patent on vellum was done by **Philip Mackey**, one of our herald-painters. When you have had an opportunity of viewing the document for yourselves, I am sure you will agree that Micheál and Philip deserve great credit for their work. *Editor: The Letters Patent are on*

display at the National Library. The grant of the Heraldic Badge described above was made possible by the kind generosity of Barbara Mungovan Koch, MGSi in memory of her late father Joseph Mungovan, MGSi. This badge is now referred to as the "Mungovan Badge" and is carried on our Membership Cards.

QUERIES RECEIVED

PETER KENT, 51, Sandylands Park, Witaston, Crewe, CW2 8HF, England. E-mail: peter_kent@hotmail.com Wrote: Looking for info. on **Bridget Duffy**, born Balla, Co. Mayo circa 1857/8 - 20yrs. In 1881 Census in Bolton, Lancashire. Her father, **Thomas Duffey**, was a collier in Bolton in 1879. He was 45yrs. in the Census of 1881. **Bridget Duffy** married **Patrick Murphy** in 1879 in Bolton. Patrick was born in Bolton of John and Mary Murphy. Any info. on these families much appreciated.

LORRAINE ANDERTON, Milners Road, North Taieri, RD2, Mosgiel, New Zealand. E-mail: lorrane@xtra.co.nz Wrote: Looking for info. on **Mary McGann**, born c. 1845 in Co. Clare. Parents, John and Mary McGann. Mary came to New Zealand c. 1867 and married **Daniel Lynch** in 1867 who was born 1831, Ballydally, Co. Cork. Parents: **Jeremiah Lynch & Ellen Mullane**. Also, seeking info. on **Martin Collins**, b. c. 1839 and his wife **Catherine Duggan** b. c. 1844 from Co. Galway. Any info. much appreciated.

JUDY BEGGS, 50, Sampson Crescent, Bomaderry, NSW 2541, Australia - E-mail judyabeggs@aol.com Wrote: Seeking info. on my g-g-g-grandfather **Edward Horner**, an apothecary of 21, Clare Street, Dublin. Married **Esther Clark**, date unknown, born in Dublin. Had a son **Edward Horner** b. c. 1834 Dublin. Family to Australia c. 1834/39. He was at the Old Sydney Hospital in March 1839 & died in 1853 aged 43yrs. so b. 1810. Found **Edward Horner**, an apothecary in Dublin in a Dublin Directory for 1820 could this be his father?

JEANETTE GRAHAM FRENCH, P O Box 781, Kemah, TX 77565, USA. E-mail: jfrench1@prodigy.net Wrote:- My **Best, Dickson, Graham** and **Bushfield** families clustered and intermarried during the 1800's in USA. Beers in "Commemorative Biographical Record of Washington County, Pennsylvania" states John A. BEST came from Benburb, Co. Armagh. Passenger arrival list shows BEST family arrived, port of Philadelphia, 9 July 1811, on the "Rising States" from Newry, Ireland. Benburb is on the border of Co. Armagh and Co. Tyrone in the civil parish of Clonfeacle, Co. Tyrone. In the "American Source Records in England, 1600's-1800's" Two probate listings: BEST, Eliza, of Washington, Pennsylvania, spinster. Admin. to **George COX**, attorney for father **John BEST** the elder at Washington. (July 1840) and BEST, Isabella, of Washington, Pennsylvania. Admin. to same. Records in the US state John BEST was a Mason, having entered that order in Ireland, Lodge No. 722. Lodge organised in 1788, his own father having procured its charter from the Grand Lodge of Ireland. Are there lodge records available that will help me identify his father? My John BEST married Isabella (Ellen Jane) DICKSON before emigrating to US. Family records indicate the DICKSON children came to the US and later received an inheritance from Ireland of approx. \$16,000. Any help appreciated.

COLIN RAY, 1405-109 Hespeler, Cambridge, Ontario, NIR 8B8, Canada. E-mail: colray@rogers.com Wrote:- I would like to find the birth date of **Margaret Mary Hall** b 1884. Parents:

John and Frances. Who can I get in touch with to get this information or find connections to this family in Ireland?

VICKI PERRY, Flat 5, 54 Grosvenor Road, Rathmines, Dublin 6, Ireland. E-mail vperry@nli.ie
Wrote:- Trying to locate any records relating to the St Vincent de Paul Orphanage, run by the Christian Brothers in Glasnevin (Prospect Terrace). My great grandfather and one or two of his brothers ended up there c.1899, when both of his parents died in quick succession. Any info regarding the orphanage or location of records would be much appreciated.

GEORGE MCKNIGHT, 500, Third Ave, Bellmawr, N.J. 08031, USA E-mail: george@themcknights.net
Wrote: Seeking info. on my great great grandfather Samuel McKnight. To USA in 1851. Married Jane, maiden name unknown. Samuel poss. born in Ireland c. 1827/31. Any info. on the McKnight family appreciated.

ADRIANA VAZQUEZ DANDLEN DE CARDUS, 1129, 14 de Mayo, Asunción, Paraguay. E-mail: joyce@conexion.com.py or gcardus@pla.net.py
Wrote:- Looking for any info. on the surname Dandlen. My great grandfather came to Argentina in 1890's, with his wife Catherine White, his brother Thomas and his son (my grandfather Peter), and daughter Mary from County Clare. Surname possibly written as it sounds and not in the Irish spelling. Grandfather had 6 children, who multiplied, we're a big Dandlen family in Argentina, but only ones with this surname. Any info please.

WICKLOW COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

The Society is grateful to Maeve Flannery, MGSJ for the donation of a beautifully bound collection of the Journals of the Wicklow County Genealogical Society - "Wicklow Roots" vols. 1-6 published between 1996 and 2001. Edited by Declan Byrne, MGSJ, 22, Wesley Lawns, Sandyford, Dublin 16, Ireland.

NORTH DUBLIN CENSUS PUBLICATIONS

The Society has received a copy of a new publication by the Raheny Heritage Society "1901 Census Returns of Clontarf" compiled by Liam Archer and Members of that Society. This follows their earlier publication in 1999 of the "1901 & 1911 Census of Raheny & Environs" providing excellent source material for genealogists, local and social historians. Copies may be obtained from:- Mary Dunne, 98, Foxfield Park, Dublin 5, Ireland - Price: €5.00 plus p+p. The above publications complement "Irish Genealogical Sources No. 28 - Howth, Sutton, Kilbarrack & Baldoyle, Co. Dublin 1901 Census Index" ISBN 1 898471 07 X. Price €6.00 plus p+p. Compiled by Marie Keogh, MGSJ and published in June by the Genealogical Society of Ireland. This publication contains the names, addresses, ages and places of birth of each head of household, relative of different surname, visitor, servant and lodger. If you are researching ancestors in these areas of Dublin north of the River Liffey these are certainly publications you must have. These indices will save the researcher a lot of time in the locating of data in the 1901 Census of Ireland available in the National Archives of Ireland or on microfilm in the LDS Centres.

YOUR AUGUST GENIE REVIEWS

"Royal Roots - Republican Inheritance - The survival of the Office of Arms" by Susan Hood. Published by The Woodfield Press, 17, Jamestown Square, Inchicore, Dublin 8, Ireland. ISBN 0-9534293-3-4 Price €25.00. Website www.woodfield-press.com It is the fascinating story of Ireland's heraldic authority from the middle of the eighteenth century through the turbulent years of rebellion, eventual independence to the declaration of the Republic. Much has been written about the Office of the Chief Herald of Ireland, especially, during the protracted debate in the Seanad (Irish Senate) on the National Cultural Institutions Act, 1997. Senators, genealogists, historians all had their say, some for retention of the Office, others for its abolition. Susan Hood's scholarly work would have been a godsend to all involved on both sides of what was at times an acrimonious debate. This publication goes further than just a history of the Office of Arms as it examines the personalities associated with the Office during the period. Whilst, many of those concerned offered little to posterity, others such as Betham, Burke and Vicars clearly preserved a national treasure from bureaucratic indifference and sometimes blatant hostility to the Office. It is an intriguing account of the survival of the Office, more by accident than design, through the conflict between two fundamentally different constitutional positions i.e. whether power ultimately derives from the Crown or from the People. Drawn into this conflict were people like Churchill, De Valera, Craigavon and ministers and officials from London and Dublin. The book reveals the underbelly of this the last Office of the old regime. Outwardly a bastion of tradition and stuffy formality, for most of the two centuries before its transfer to Irish control, it had survived in an ad hoc and sometimes itinerant state with Herald's paying their staff out of their own pockets. The book details the unfortunate end to the career of Sir Arthur Vicars and the famous theft of the Irish "crown jewels" from a safe in the Office of Arms allegedly by associates of Vicars himself. Susan Hood examines the facts of the case and outlines the rumours and innuendo abounding with each theory proffered. Her account of the lives and personalities of successive Heralds and their staff reveals a mixture of dedication and the apathy of sinecures until the transfer of the Office in 1943. The MacCarthy Mór hoax and the "bogus chiefs" affair are treated very briefly, however, this is possibly due to ongoing legal restraints. The issue of a state heraldic authority in a republic is examined clearly. The need for an improved legislative basis for Irish heraldry and a return to the title "Office of Arms" is well argued. As the Office of the Chief Herald is little understood by the public or officialdom in Ireland, this new and timely publication on the survival Ireland's oldest Office of State is very welcome indeed.

ASSOCIATION OF AMATEUR HERALDS

Some things only exist in cyberspace, though they are none the less real. An example is the Association of Amateur Heralds, which was the brain-child of Steven Madewell, who lives in the United States. Steven had strong feelings about the dubious activities of heraldic bucket-shops and bogus Order and Title mongers. There is a rich undergrowth of such enterprises which are always ready to mislead the innocent and unwary. Steven set up his own Website to warn about this, and to offer help in tracing arms in the proper reference books. This grew into assistance in properly describing (blazoning) existing images of arms and making artistic representations of blazons (emblazoning). Steven's Website attracted great interest and evidently met a general need. He joined with several other like-minded folk to set up the Association of Amateur Heralds. The Association has developed over the following two years or so and earlier this year elections were held for a Board to manage its affairs. Steven will now concentrate on the artistic side of the work (emblazoning) and our Website - <http://www.amateurheralds.org/> The new Board consists of a President in Lithuania, three Vice Presidents in Mexico, Australia and New Zealand, and myself in the UK as Secretary. We have 17 other Associate Members most of whom are expert in their particular field. There is also a category of novice membership for those not quite so experienced. Our names and e-mail addresses will be found on the AAH Website. We stick very firmly to the founding principle that all the assistance we offer is voluntary and free of charge, each of us bearing our own costs. There are professionals of a high standard in the world of heraldry and we will put people in touch if they need professional attention. We advise on what heraldic authority (*see note below*) might be appropriate for the grant, registration, certification and matriculation of arms, depending on the armiger's origin, nationality and place of residence. Requests for our help in designing arms can be made on-line via our Website. Other enquiries come to us direct by e-mail or via the heraldry message board at Rootsweb <http://boards.ancestry.com> Leave a message - one of us will respond to it. Heraldry is our passion and together we have a great pool of knowledge and resources though we're always learning more. Visit our Website. We're here to help you with your heraldry question. Melvyn Jeremiah, AAH Secretary.
Editor's Note: The Heraldic Authority for Ireland is the Chief Herald of Ireland c/o National Library of Ireland, Kildare Street, Dublin 2, Ireland. Details on obtaining a Grant of Arms are available by mail or on the Website www.nli.ie The Society would urge all organisations, corporations, sports clubs, Religious Orders and professional associations in Ireland to consider applying for a Grant of Arms from the Chief Herald of Ireland.