NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN
FACULTY OF DESIGN
DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS

THE SCIENCE OF HERALDRY AS A FORM OF
IDENTIFICATION AND ITS IMPACT ON
FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CENTURY
BOOK PRINTING IN PARTICULAR THE IDENTIFYING
DEVICES OF ITS EARLY PRINTERS

By

Paula Quigley

Submitted to the Faculty of
History of Art and Design and
Complementary Studies in
candidacy for the Degree of
Bachelor of Design

1992

CONTENTS

Page

SECTION 2

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Illustration No

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Concurrent with the subjects under discussion in this thesis is the science of semiotics. This is a somewhat abstruse conception which has been defined as the science of the life of signs in society. The study and application of semiotics starts from the premise that everything in a culture (and the stress is very much on everything) can be seen as a form of communication(8, p.21).

It is only a short step from signs to heraldry, to uniforms and all the other trappings of visual identity. The search for identity is a pervasive theme in our society, and in the following dissertation I will endeavour to show this. I will also attempt to show that identity and the modern corporate question is not a recent invention, and that people and groups have always had identities, details of which from the past will be referred to throughout this discussion. The period covered is largely that of the Middle Ages in Europe, concentrating on the science of heraldry and its wider implications. Society at that time was more rigidly structured than it is today(1, p.28) and it was in that environment that the system we know as heraldry came to the fore, a system which laid particular emphasis on an individual's identity. Before analysing different methods of identification I felt it necessary to refer to the psychology of identity, so as to put the whole question into proper perspective. I will begin in the

1

preface by examining the basic human need to project an identity, and proceed to suggest how this need manifested itself through heraldry and a selection of the devices of printers.

Much is documented on these two subjects, and I found considerable background information. However, not a great deal was relevant as most of the material tended to be too descriptive for my particular argument. Interviewing and talking to people, principally Donal Begley, Chief Herald of Ireland, and Fergus Gillespie of the Heraldic Museum, provided invaluable comment and suggestions, especially in the case of the Dublin coat of arms, on which little is documented and which forms the basis of Section 1. The results of these interviews, together with my own analysis, formed a viable argument.

In most fields of graphic communication, the prime object is to convey a message with the minimum of ambiguity. The examples I discuss have been chosen to show this, but also show that many of the meanings may have become obscured over the centuries. Throughout the discussion it will be pointed out whether they are effective from a trademark or mark of identification point of view.

Section 1 of the Dublin coat of arms will show how heraldry moved away from being a personal ensign in warfare to a corporate emblem. Section 2 will attempt to portray the wider implications of heraldry

as its elements infiltrated into another type of visual identity, that of printers' marks. In this respect Muriel McCarthy, curator of Marsh's Library, proved to be an invaluable source for background information and general knowledge on the subject of printers' marks and for clarifying certain points, as did Charles Benson of the Old Library in Trinity College, who allowed me access to original examples of printers' devices as they appeared in early editions.

I took only two categories of identity, although there is obviously a rich and entertaining history of visual identity to choose from, to show how what was important and necessary in the Europe of four hundred years ago, still holds good today.

In conclusion, the central point of this dissertation on the design of trademarks is that a successful trademark or mark of identity may be generally defined as a distinctive sign or symbol which can be recognised visually without the addition of any words(16, p.32).

PREFACE

IDENTIFICATION AND COMMUNICATION

There has always been a desire, in the psychological makeup of mankind, to have a pride in his achievements, whether these involve physical prowess, the power of invention, the acquisition of property or, in modern terms, the production of a best selling product or the management and direction of a multi-national business. Closely interwoven with this desire is the equally pressing one of establishing and disseminating one's identity, to make all to whom it may concern aware of one's existence. What is at issue here is the use of the best possible means of communication, from the heraldic shield of the armorial knight, to the marks of the earliest printers, right up to the modern logo of the multinational corporation or semi-state body.

Marks of identification have another essential value in their use as a means of visual communication, and that is their ability in many cases to overcome language barriers. The particular hatching on a crusader knight's shield would identify its owner to another knight on the same campaign, even if they were speaking different languages. This means of identification can thus be assimilated more rapidly by a wider audience than can the same kind of message displayed in writing.

Marks of identification in all their varieties of application can be seen as a powerful means of communicating simple messages. In the context of this

discussion, the word 'trademark' can be a misleading term. The term 'mark of identity' would be a more appropriate description. The word 'trademark' can give the impression that it may only refer to a mark related to trade and industry. Trademarks were certainly used for this purpose in their earliest forms, as merchant marks, water marks and hallmarks. A mark of identification, first and foremost, identifies the manufacturer and sponsor, but it also derives from the age-old desire for recognition of work done, and the inherent craftsmanship involved in it. This desire has been manifest from the potters of ancient Greece and Rome, right through to the masons of the Middle Ages, from the invention of printing, through the Industrial Revolution, right up to the age of the computer.

Patterns and colour as identifying marks have often been employed to distinguish groups or tribes. Joseph the Israelite was distinguished by his 'coat of many colours'. Among the ancient Irish, differences in colour were employed in dress to distinguish one class from another.

> There was this distinction made between them –
> one colour in the clothes of slaves; two in the
> clothes of soldiers; three in the clothes of
> goodly heroes or young lords; six in the
> clothes of professors; seven in the clothes of
> kings or queens.
> (4, p.19)

It would almost seem that the biblical 'coat of many colours' as worn by Joseph, was an international standard.

5

The craving for some expression of identity is a recurring theme in human nature, and while the lapse of centuries has altered the form which this takes, it has not changed the spirit of this desire for self-expression. Novels and the cinema constantly portray individuals who struggle to fulfil themselves. It can thus be seen and will be discussed later in case histories, that the individual's desire for personal identity has manifested itself right through history. It is truly a pervasive theme.

It has been accepted in psychological terms that personal identity and the declaration of one's identity, is an extension of the self. Names and labels serve to convey a certain amount of information about the person, and thus help in his or her identification. Real and viable expressions of identity can only exist properly in societies which help to define and organise themselves into groups.

The problems which exist in modern times on the subject of identity were largely unknown in medieval Europe. The society of that time, a theme which will be touched upon again in Chapter 1, was structured much more rigidly than it is today. These structures, in fact, created the individual's identity, which was then passed down to succeeding generations.

K. J. Weintraub, in his work on the value of the individual, self and circumstances, sets out to define individuality.

> Individuality can be a combination of
> (1) placing value on the unique characteristics
> and particular experiences of each person and
> (2) believing that each person has a special,
> unique potentiality or destiny that may or may
> not be fulfilled.
>
> (1, p.31)

However, during the Middle Ages, people tried to conform to the ideals and beliefs of the society of the time. In conjunction with this belief, heraldry followed with rules and regulations and an ordered system of both corporate and personal identity.

Society during the Middle Ages adopted a firm network of culture and tradition, and medieval people did not seek any identity for themselves, except that which was given them by society under a system such as heraldry.

In his book, <u>Personal Identity</u>, Ray Baumeister speaks of 'medieval indifference to individuality' (1, p.30). This is not in agreement with evidence which I will put forward; this shows the importance which was given to coats of arms and printers' marks as a means of personal identification.

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

Decoration is the basic element in the science of armorial bearings, particularly in regard to the coat of arms and whatever is applied to it. The coat of arms provides scope for almost limitless variety within a strict, but at the same time flexible limitation. Heraldry has thus been able to adjust to different styles throughout its history, sacrificing little, if anything, of its individual character.

A social need for heraldry had always existed, but until it became part of military necessity, it never really flourished. The rules which were adopted to govern the science of heraldry were based on military exigency and these rules, that of instant recognition, still apply, even up to the present day. This is a question which will be discussed in Chapter 1, <u>Origins of Heraldry</u>. The section entitled <u>Form and Style</u> will discuss briefly the basic requirements of a heraldic design and the elements which constitute it, so that what follows in Chapter 2 will more easily be understood.

Heraldry as a science expanded as the result of a practical need, but it was soon realised that it had a much greater potential than that for which it was originally intended. From about the middle of the fourteenth century, shields began to be used by corporations and political and educational establishments to display their ownership of property. It seemed odd that an institution which had no

experience of war or of tournaments should be displaying arms. However, heraldry was now a recognised means of identification, and it was natural that corporations should adopt such symbols, which had as recommendation status, reliability and longevity. An example of such a corporate use of heraldry, relevant to our own country, will be discussed in Chapter 2, a case study of the Dublin City coat of arms, its origins, form and style, its relevance and suitability, will also be dealt with.

CHAPTER 1

ORIGINS OF HERALDRY

> Arms represent people as though they themselves
> were present. The presence of a coat of arms
> acts as a substitute for the person even after
> his death.
>
> (14, p.7)

Armies, navies, religious orders and modern
organisations have all made use of some form of design
to symbolise their various forms of activity to those
both inside and outside the fold, so to speak. Design
can be the medium through which the identity of these
specific organisations may be conveyed to the outside
world. Trademarks which come into the area of
heraldry are those in which a badge is used as a means
of personalised identity. Thus heraldry, far from
being a relic of medieval Europe, has come full circle
into the modern age and has earned for itself the
widest and most varied application possible.

Heraldry as a science has its origin in the
desire for personal identity and distinctiveness, a
natural tendency of human nature. One of the earliest
references to a desire such as this, and is chosen
because it is one with which we would be familiar, is
in the Book of Numbers, itself one of the earliest
books of the Old Testament. Chapter 1, Verse 52,
refers to the idea of each tribe of Israel having
distinguishing bearings as follows:

> And the children of Israel shall pitch their
> tents, and every one by his own standard,
> throughout their hosts.

The relevant reference here, of course, is to individual standards or banners.

It is to the Crusades, however, and to the Holy Land in the period covering the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and to the knights' jousting tournaments, that we owe the full development of heraldry as well as its continuance into modern times, with its consequent adoption by corporate institutions.

The Crusades resulted in an immense assemblage of warriors from all parts of Europe, who united to secure the holy places for Christendom. Their weapons and armour were each of a generally similar design, which made it an urgent necessity that some distinguishing marks be adopted to prevent possible confusion at the height of battle. This was of vital necessity in the case of the leaders, whose faces were hidden by visored helmets. Clearly distinguishable identifying marks had to be created for these leaders, so that they could be immediately identifiable by their immediate followers. Therefore, their own unique designs were depicted on their shields, on their surcoats and on banners, to increase the ease of recognition.

Every knight who had been on the Crusades was permitted to bear a coat of arms, and the consequent proliferation of these armorial bearings was such as to cause, in time, considerable confusion. The

designs became complicated and abstruse, to such a degree, indeed, as to defeat the whole purpose of the exercise; that is clear and immediate identification.

Coloured banners were some of the earliest and simplest of military emblems. Similarly to heraldry, as the number of tribes increased, there was proportionately a greater number of variations used, with flags eventually becoming parti-coloured by stripes and other divisions, as is now evident in the flags of modern nations.

William Ellis, in <u>The Antiquities of Heraldry</u>, gives us proof of this when he informs us that this distinction by colour goes back to Roman times, when the flag used by the infantry was red, that of the cavalry blue, while that of the consuls was white(4, p.15-16).

The insignia of the knight, his trappings and the unique markings on his shield and helmet pointed more to his position as an individual rather than as a member of a military organisation. This is in contrast to today's concept of a uniform which, rather than individualising a person, designates a group of people who perform specific functions, thus diminishing their individuality.

Heraldry, therefore, developed out of a military exigency, but it did not decline when gunpowder was invented in the second half of the fifteenth century, rendering obsolete the armoured knight and altering dramatically the conduct and nature of war.

FORM AND STYLE

A coat of arms comprises the shield and helmet with the crest and mantling and sometimes other additions, in order to diversify bearings (illus. 1). It also contains lines, shapes and colours. Heraldry exists as a system with its own language, rules and regulations, and the coat of arms is fundamentally a description and therefore can be understood in any country. From this basic starting point the artist can apply his own style and interpretation, and it is in the rendering of these that differences can occur. The shield is the most important and indeed indispensable part of a coat of arms. It can even be used by itself without any heraldic addition. It therefore should be made the centre of the design, but this may not always be possible because the helmet and crest tend to be strong competitors. Taking all of this into consideration, Carl Alexander Von Volborth in The Art of Heraldry says, the complicated heraldic design should exist as a compact unit, bringing together all the elements involved. He also states that the artist should be particularly conscious of counter-balancing and contrasting the respective items(20, p. 29). This balance, however, can be a double-edged sword. It could lead on the one hand to the design acquiring dignity, but it could just as easily tend to monotony.

13
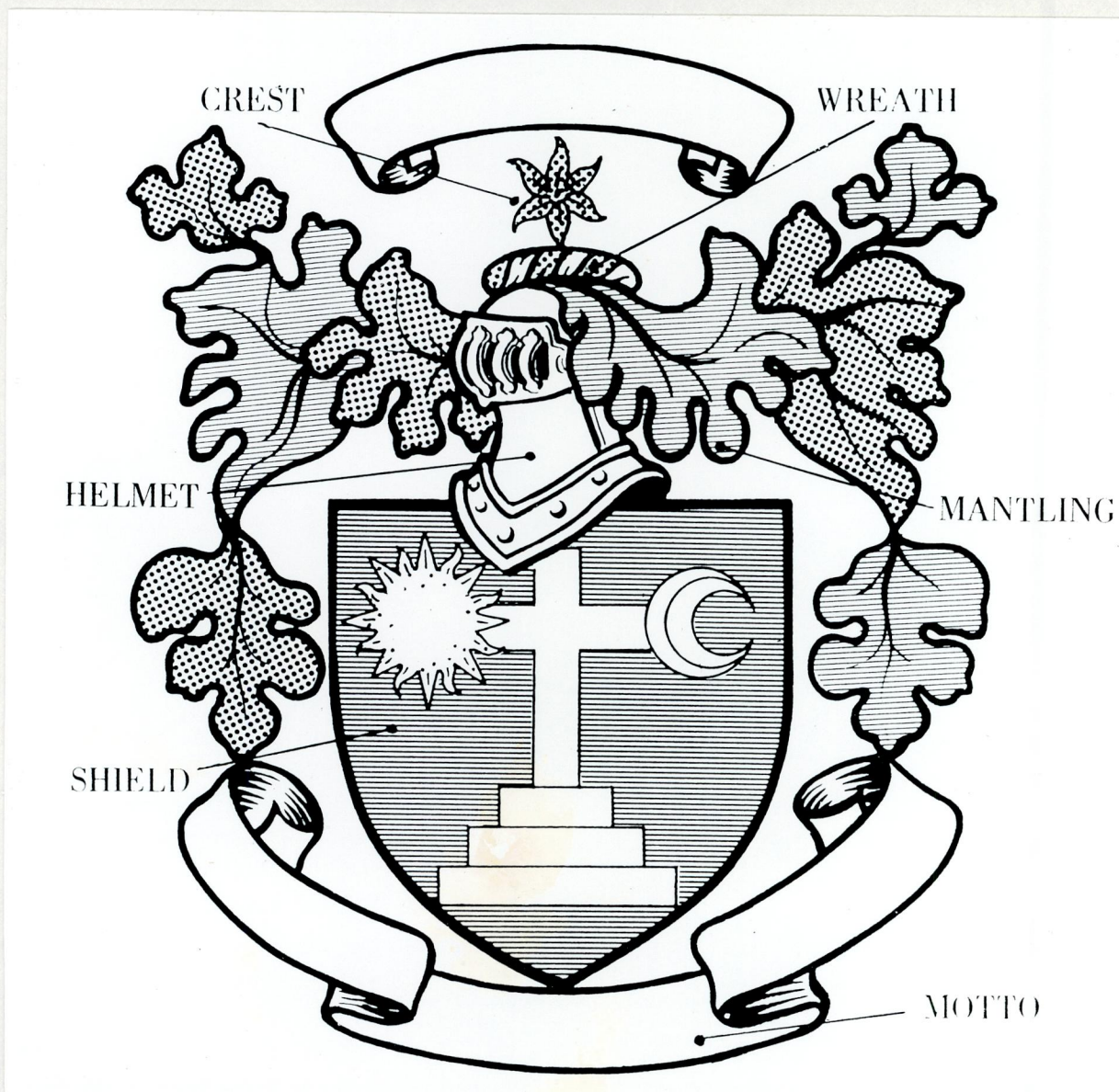
ILLUS. 1   The principal elements of a heraldic achievement.

The charges are painted on the shield so that they become, in effect, a painting within a painting. The treatment of the helmet, crest and mantling is different, because they are regarded as real objects, and are generally more dense in their pattern, and should be represented as three-dimensional. In the second half of the fifteenth century advancements in the implements of war rendered the knight obsolete, so that combat and heraldry became somewhat detached from each other. The shield, the helmet and the mantling were no longer regarded by the artist as real objects to be depicted as such, and were treated in a more imaginative or ornamental fashion(20, p.77).

The motto, an extra addition to the coat of arms, is usually written on a scroll placed below the shield, but relevant in regard to the example of Dublin City. Supporters, also relevant to the Dublin coat of arms, were first used as an adornment to fill the empty space on a seal between the inscription around the edge and the coat of arms in the middle. Heraldry is bound by ancient rules and customs with a language all its own. Contemporary approaches to design may influence the artist from time to time, but they must in effect retain an element of the heraldic spirit.

In order to facilitate instant recognition, the original purpose of heraldry, the charge represented on the knight's shield had to be simple, clear and

distinct. Surviving early medieval rolls of arms suggests that many of the oldest armorial shields were simply bi-coloured or tri-coloured and divided into several compartments by vertical, horizontal, diagonal or intersecting lines. Some of the resulting geometrical patterns came about because of these lines, which were known as ordinaries.

So long as shield markings consisted of two or more geometric plains, the mere use of colour was sufficient to produce a graphic effect. However, when animal figures began to be reproduced on the surface of the shield, it was thought necessary that such figures be painted in stylized form in order to achieve maximum visual impact. A lion and a wolf, for example, depicted upstanding in naturalistic form, would appear rather similar to viewers at a distance. In practice, heraldic stylization involved simplification of form and an exaggeration of those features of a charge which tended to identify it more clearly. Examples of these are the head and tail of the lion and the beak and talons of the eagle.

By keeping the charges on the shield simple and flat, avoiding perspective and realism, the contrast with the helmet, crest and mantling is rendered sharper. The heraldic design of the shield is limited in two ways in that it cannot tolerate shading or perspective, and its divisions are geometric. Therefore, in conclusion, simplicity and boldness of

design, wide contrast between colours, these painted flat and with no shading, led to a strong, easily identifiable design.

The subject of heraldry, dating as it does from an early period of European history, is a vast one. In this thesis, with its imposed limitations, it is not possible to discuss it in detail. I have endeavoured, however, to provide as accurate a description as I can of the historical background to the science, and the basic form it took, and to display this form through the following example of the Dublin coat of arms.

CHAPTER 2

CASE STUDY :

DUBLIN CITY COAT OF ARMS

1   __HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND INTERPRETATIONS__

Although many people may not be fully aware of it, there exists an Irish heraldic tradition. However, there is a notable lack of literature on the subject, and this is a surprising if not remarkable fact in a country which prides itself so much on its cultural heritage. There is interest in heraldic art in Ireland, principally because of its historical associations, while the graphic appeal of heraldic design also boasts its devotees. Irish heraldry is part of a wider European tradition reflecting the cultural unity which existed across the continent in medieval times.

Irish military techniques were not as advanced as those of its neighbours, and their weapons and tactics remained largely unchanged until almost the close of the sixteenth century. Therefore heraldry was hardly ever used for military purposes in Ireland, but it was employed for other reasons, such as the attestation of documents and the authentication and identification of property, in an age in which the majority of the European population was illiterate.

Because Irish heraldry had more practical uses, it did not have to be restricted by the necessity of instant recognition under difficult conditions of war. This did not mean, however, that the Irish symbols were not easily recognisable by their marks.

To illustrate a practical use of heraldry in Ireland, I have chosen to take an example which would be familiar to the majority of people, that of the coat of arms of the City of Dublin.

The Dublin arms were confirmed by the visitation of the Ulster King of Arms, Daniel Molynieux in 1607 (Illus. 2). The authoritative blazon or heraldic description is written on a certificate preserved in the muniment room in City Hall, from which follows the relevant extract:

> . . . do hereby Certify and Declare that the Armorial bearings above depicted, that is to say: Azure, three castles, argent, flammant proper, for supporters, on the Dexter, a female figure proper, representing 'Law' vested gules doubled or, holding in the dexter hand a Sword erect and in the Sinister an olive branch all proper, on the sinister, a female figure proper, representing 'Justice', vested gules doubled or, holding in the dexter hand an olive branch proper, and in the sinister a pair of Scales, or, and for Motto 'OBEDIENTIA CIVIUM URBIS FELICITAS' . . .

This heraldic description has remained unchanged since 1607, and therefore the artist cannot deviate from the rules as originally set down. Colours, charges, supporters, motto and additions are all specified. It is the style of portrayal which is at the discretion of the artist.

2   **THE THREE CASTLES**

When one looks at the shield of the coat of arms of the City of Dublin, which bears on its surface or field three flaming castles, the question which
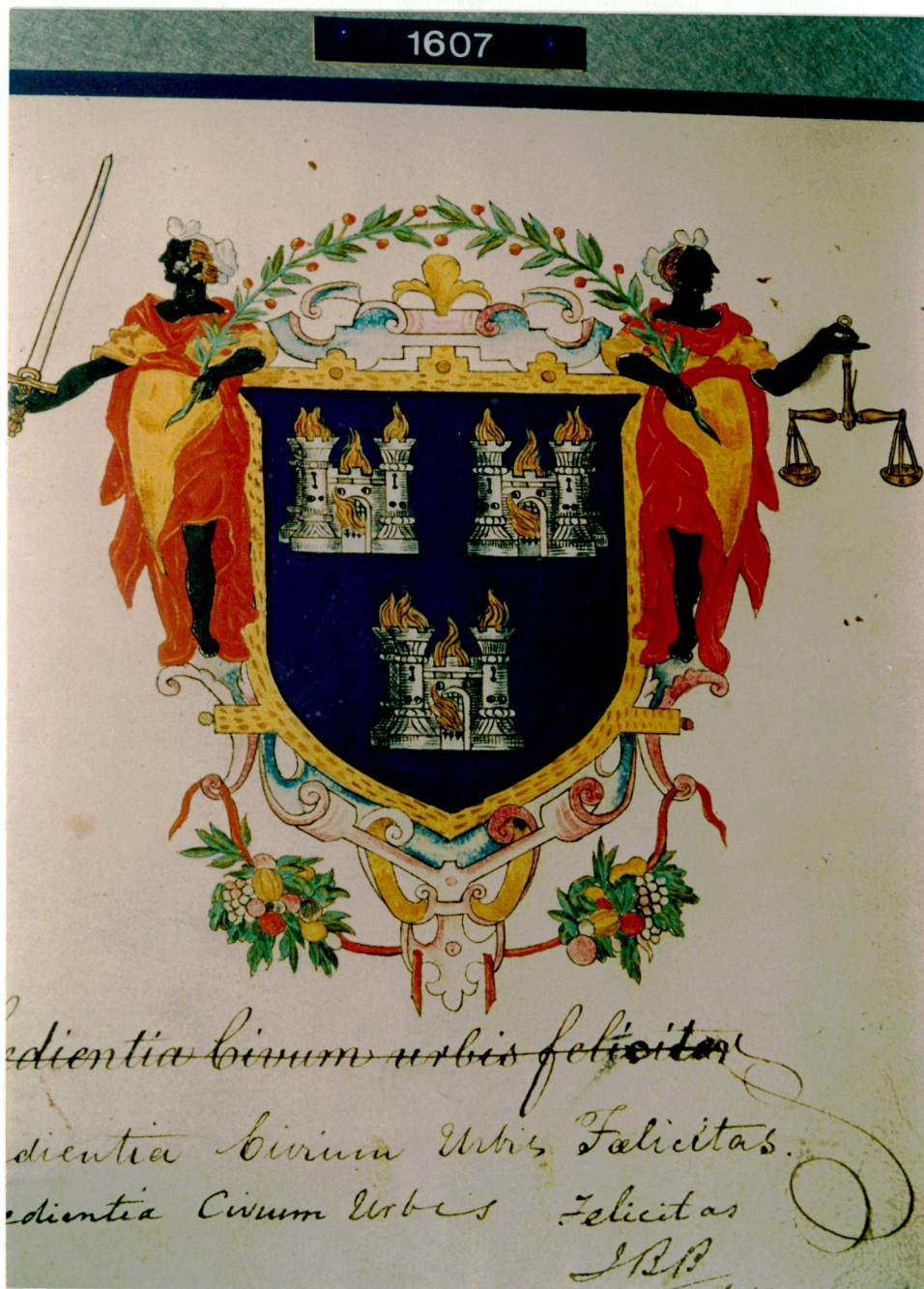
ILLUS. 2 The Dublin City Coat of Arms as granted by Daniel Molynieux, Ulster King of Arms in 1607.

Figure 2

springs instantly to mind concerns the symbolic significance of the castles. Why, for instance, are they aflame?(Illus. 3). Having perused some data on the subject, I have arrived at certain conclusions which not only throw light on some problems presented by the shield, but are inherently interesting. As in all such cases, there are the popular explanations, which are many and varied.

One theory about the gates (or castles), as given to me by Donal Begley, Chief Herald of Ireland, is that they represent the three gates of the city as it existed under the Danes, but this idea is challenged by Val Jackson in an article on <u>The Armorials of the City of Dublin</u>. He designates the gates as being of later, Norman origin(23, p.35). This latter theory seems to be the more tenable, since not a great deal has been left to us by the Danes, while the Normans were notable builders of castles and fortifications, and the remains of many of their structures can still be seen today. Donal Begley, however, has an alternative theory in that Dublin's three castles were outposts used, when the need arose, as watch towers with garrisons.

These ideas are interesting but speculative, and are based on historical data rather than on the usages of the science of heraldry. It is principally in the light of the latter that I propose to deal with the composition of the Dublin City coat of arms. Armorial
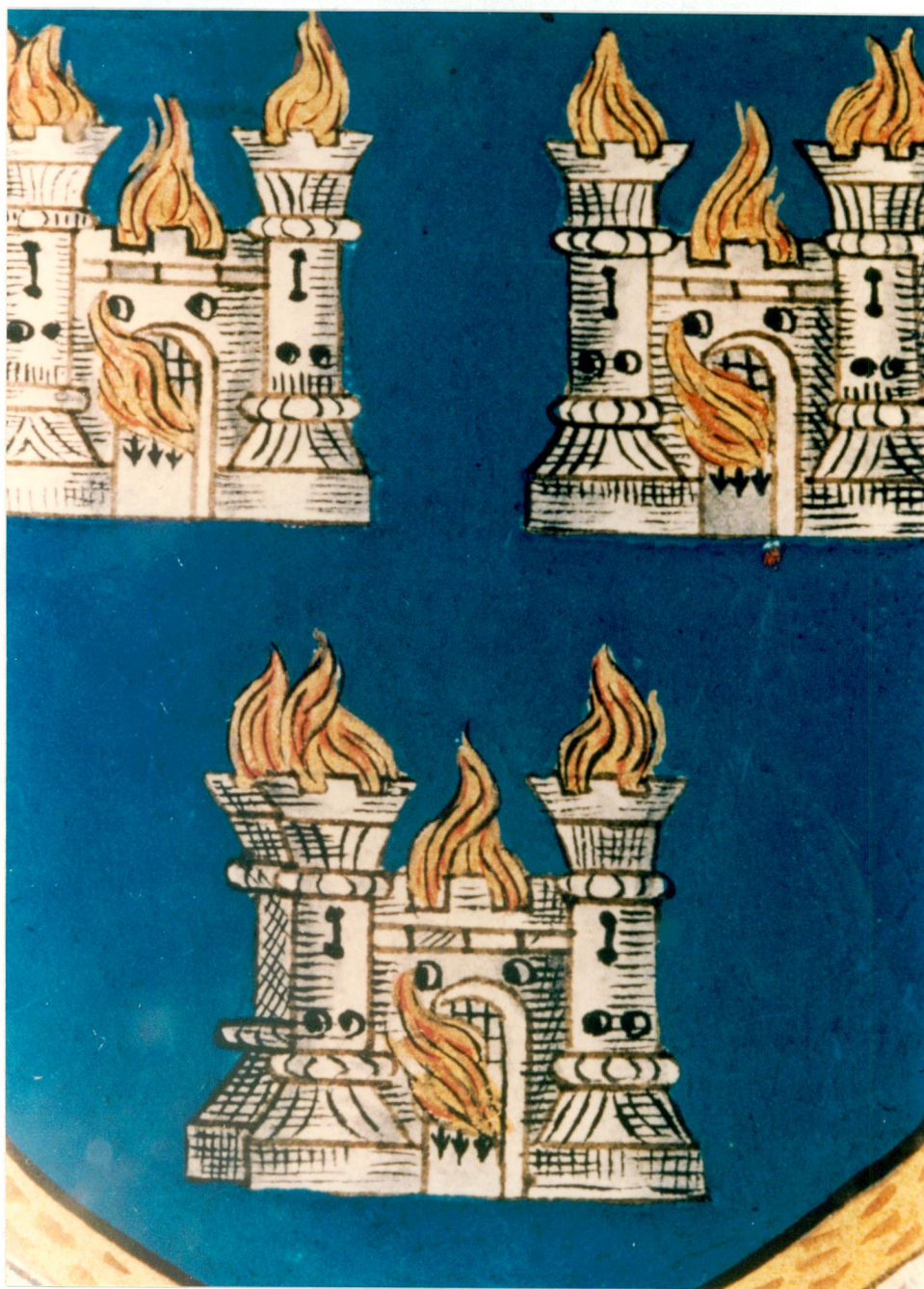
ILLUS. 3   Close-up of the 1607 shield containing the three castles

bearings were originally the privilege of royalty and of the ruling or landed classes. They were subsequently adopted by corporate bodies such as bishoprics, universities and towns. Such arms are known as arms of community, and it is with these that I am concerned.

The castle is a conventional heraldic device, and is usually depicted with at least two towers, having wing walls between and with post or entry windows. Its use is common on civic arms, and this is only to be expected when one realises that in medieval towns the castle was the chief architectural feature, the centre of military and civic rule. This was particularly so of Dublin, whose castle, bearing the name of the city itself, was the administrative centre of British rule in Ireland.

3   CIVIC SEAL VERSUS CIVIC ARMS

Mary Clark, archivist at City Hall, informed me that the arms of British medieval towns generally conformed with the design of their corporate seals, and the Dublin coat of arms is no exception. These corporate seals existed long before armorial bearings began to be used in a civic sense. It is noteworthy that the civic seal of Dublin, adopted following the election of the first Mayor in 1229, bore on one side a castle, and on the other a ship in full sail. At that time Bristol had a similar seal, of which I was

unfortunately unable to procure an example, indicative of the fact that both were maritime cities. The fact that the Bristol seal was of a more ancient vintage seems to imply that it inspired the Dublin seal. But this similarity applied only to the seals.

This choice of a castle as a heraldic device for the civic arms was almost certainly inspired by the thirteenth century seal matrix of the medieval seal of Dublin (Illus. 4). The obverse of this matrix, fashioned in bronze, shows an engraving of a triple towered fortified structure, in comparison with the three separately towered castle structure in the civic arms (Illus. 2), but the similarities are obvious. The structure portrayed on the seal is being vigorously defended under siege, showing three warriors with crossbows, while two figures on either side sound the alarm. Donal Begley is of the belief that this engraving may very well be a representation of the keep of the castle of Dublin.

Seals were one of the most widespread uses of heraldry in the Middle Ages, serving to authenticate the document to which they were attached. This is the true spirit of heraldry - identification of the individual by his shield device. Although, as stated previously, supporters were used as a space filler on seals, we note in the Dublin seal that the artist merely extended the wall on either side of the keep in preference to using supporters (Illus. 5).
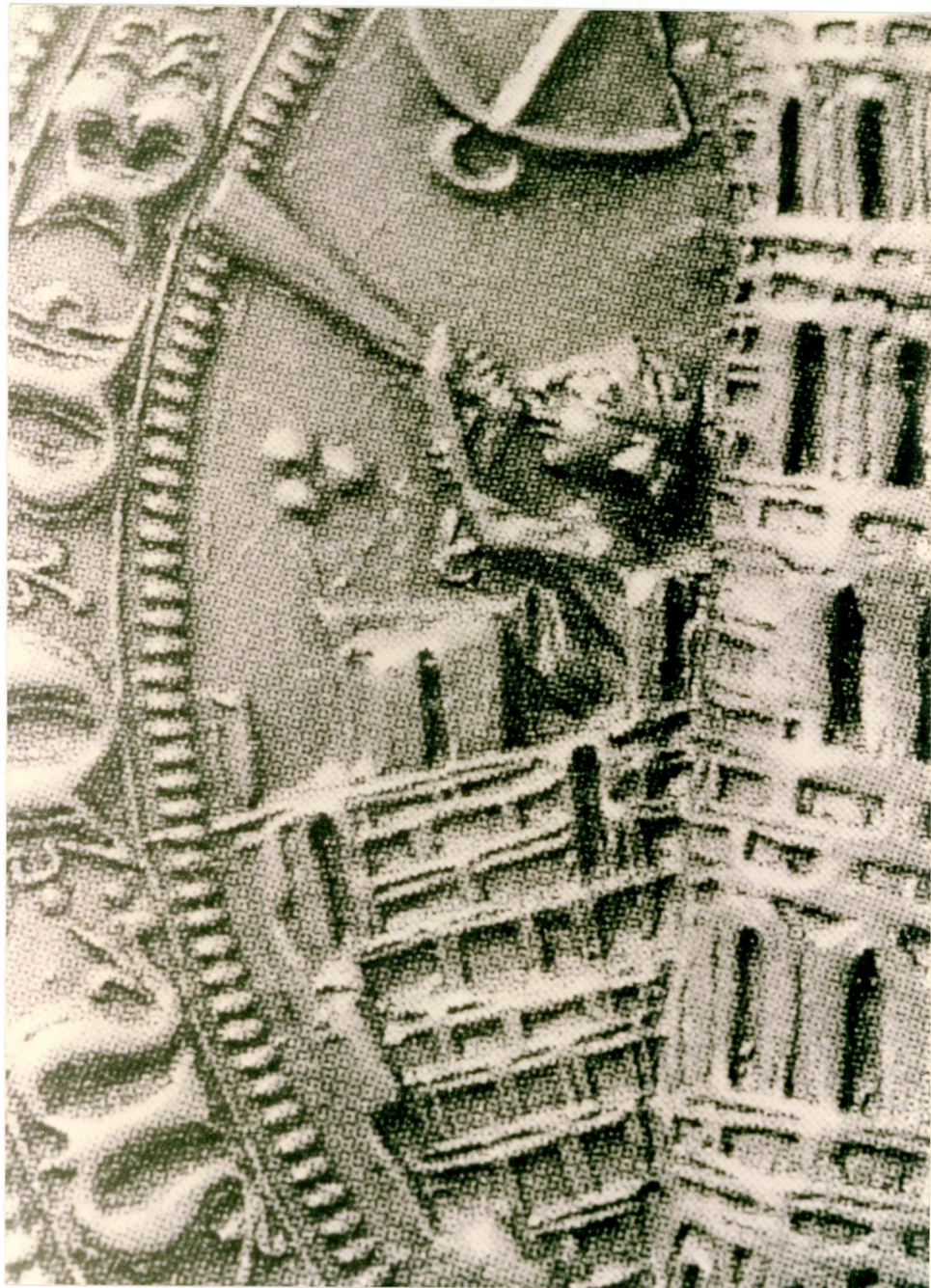
ILLUS. 4   Civic Seal of Dublin, obverse side 1229, contained in the Muniment Room in City Hall, Dublin 2.

FIGURE 4

ILLUS. 5   Section of Civic Seal 1229, featuring
outside wall and figure sounding alarm.

4   METHOD OF TRIPLICATION

If we revert, then, to the Dublin coat of arms, the first question which poses itself is: why three castles? Fergus Gillespie of the Heraldic Museum explained to me that heraldic draughtsmen had a particular penchant for the figure three. Donal Begley supported this opinion by reasoning that, when a draughtsman depicted a device on a shield, he felt it looked better in triplicate, and the consequence was that this triplicate treatment became common in heraldic design. In the early days of heraldry and in its use in warfare, emblems which were doubled and tripled greatly aided visibility and recognition both from the sides and the front. The principles of symmetry in heraldic art demanded that the triangular surface of the shield be full and balanced. A solitary device looks bare, and if drawn large displaces too much of the field colour. Well known examples of triple devices are the fleur-de-lis of the royal house of France, the three lions of England and, more familiar to use perhaps, the three crowns of Munster. On the Dublin shield, however, the lower castle could be drawn larger than the upper ones so as to impart balance and repose to the design.

My conclusion therefore is that the castle device on the Dublin shield was inspired by the city seal, the latter commemorating the construction of the Castle of Dublin.

The flames issuing from the tops of the towers present an intriguing problem. Here again there is theory based on historical events, but very little of a definite nature. However, the general belief, as related to me by Fergus Gillespie, is that the flames represent the defence of the city against raids by the O'Tooles and O'Byrnes. This theme is taken up on the seal where over the doorway are three circular openings containing three severed heads believed to be those of an O'Byrne, an O'Toole and an O'Connor (Illus. 6), possibly a warning as to the likely fate of any who attempt an attack on the castle walls. Accordingly, it may well be that the distinctive flaming castles were originally intended by a herald to symbolize the turbulent medieval beginnings of Ireland's modern capital city and the willingness of its people to defend it. This theme of defence is taken from the seal, as we see an armed knight (Illus. 6) in the doorway of the keep and its armed warriors in the towers above (Illus. 7).

Is the science of heraldry, which has its roots in medieval society, really relevant to today's world? Is it a functional system of identification adequate to the needs of our time? The answer lies in the fact that since it has been fulfilling a human need in society for the past eight hundred years, the likelihood is that it has something to offer to the modern world, especially in a country such as Ireland,
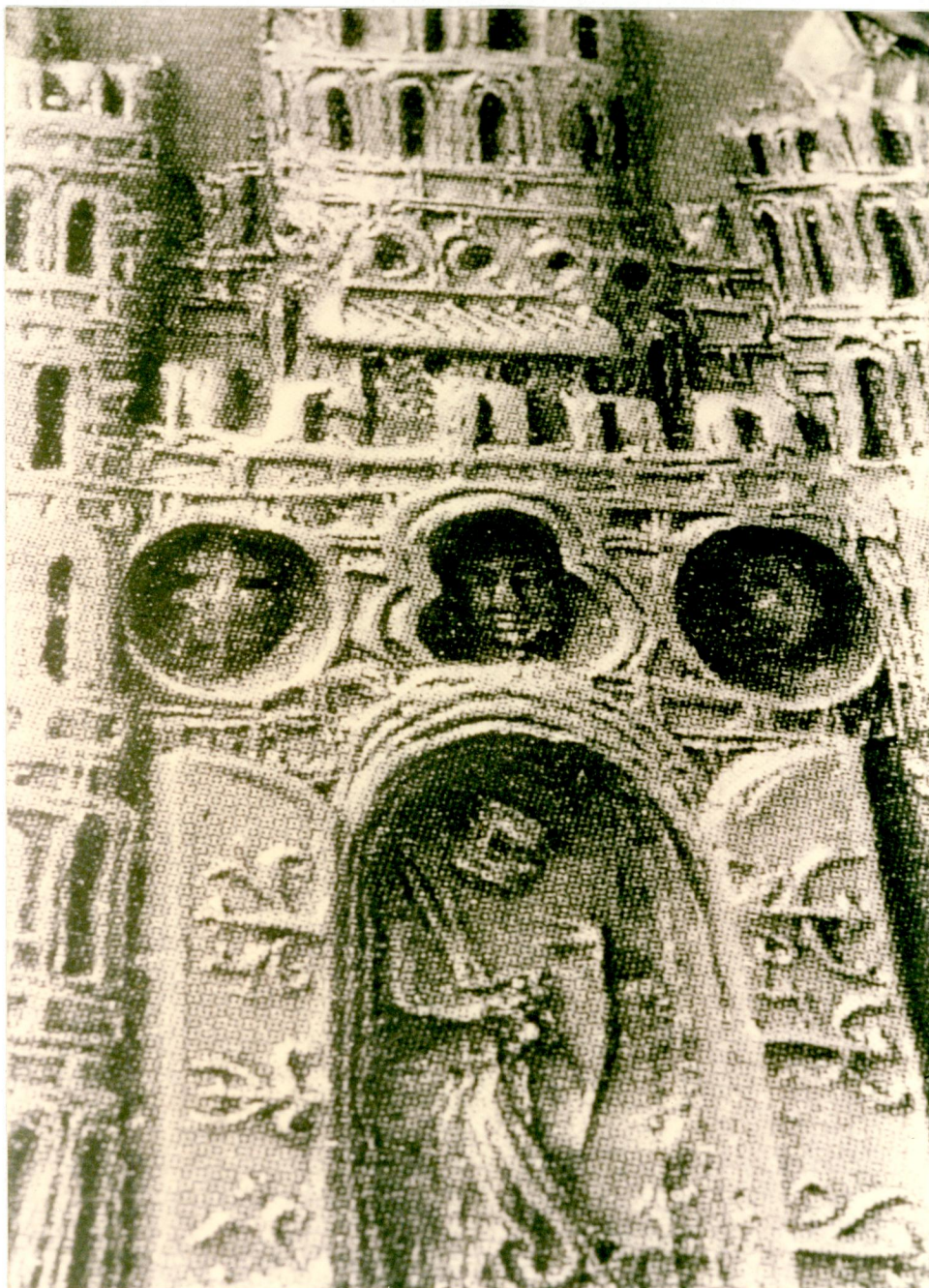
ILLUS. 6   Close-up of doorway on the Civic Seal, 1229, showing medieval defending knight.

ILLUS. 7   Section of Civic Seal, 1229, featuring armed defender on one of the three watchtowers.

which has always prided itself on its cultural heritage. In addition, the question of civic pride may also dictate its continued use. It is in this context, therefore, that Dublin corporation should retain its heraldic emblem, even in view of modern changes and outlook.

Taking into account its long life, and the sentiment and history associated with it, there is an equally sound reason why Dublin Corporation's emblem should be retained, and that is its usefulness as a compact and ornamental legend on civic buildings and on other corporation properties of one kind or another. The shields sculptured in relief on the entrance pillars to the City Hall (Illus. 8) are in perfect harmony with the building. One of the advantages of heraldry is that it lends itself to the three dimensional in that it can be carved in stone, in wood and in metal, and this gives heraldic coats of arms an added versatility. A notable feature of this relief, in the example of City Hall, is the manner in which the flames on the towers were so clearly sculptured.

The heraldic design has progressed from a form of identification into a mark of property, and all manifestations of the corporation bear this symbol in varying forms, usually in a modified version containing merely the shield; often supporters or motto are excluded (Illus. 9) in what is a much
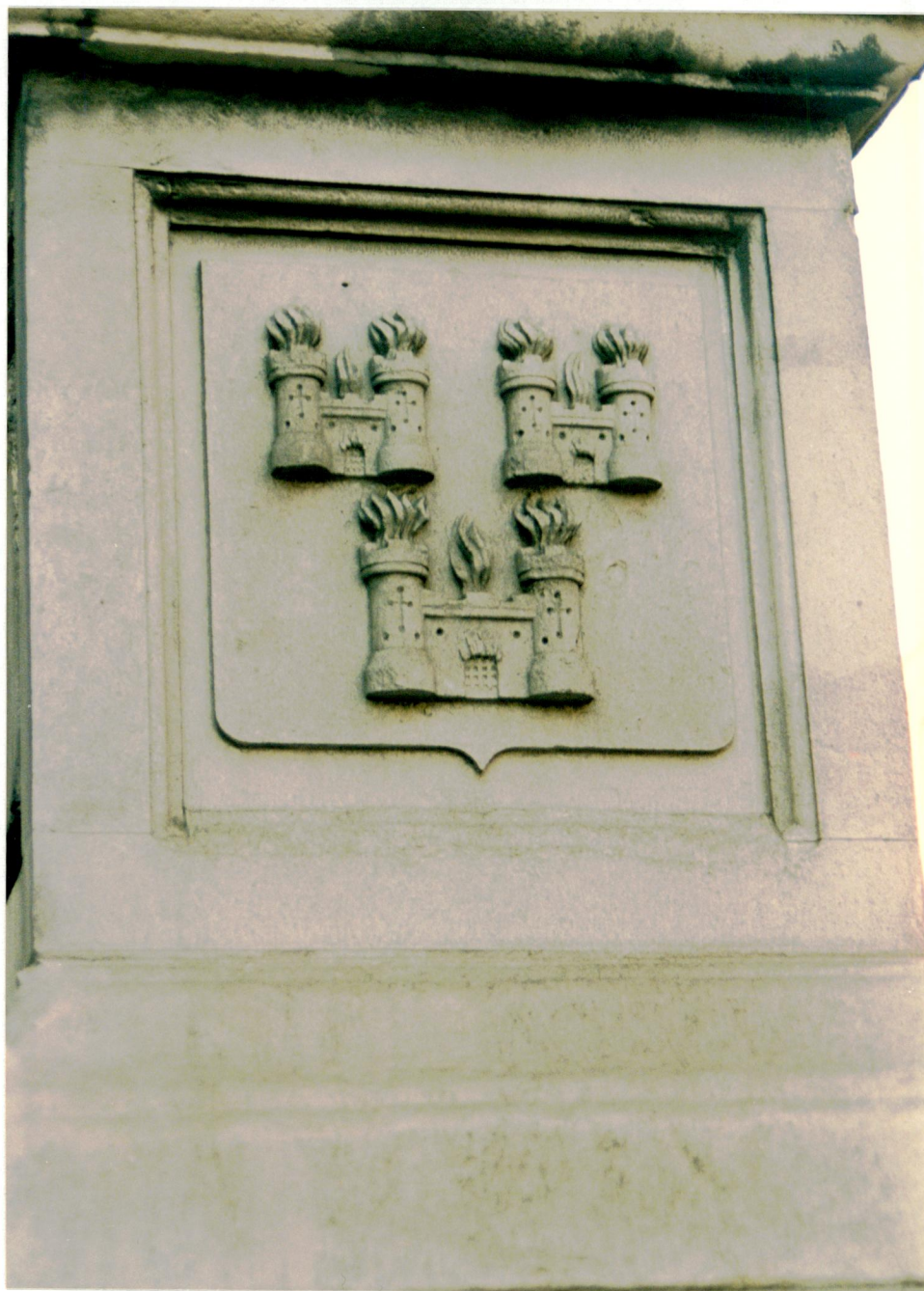
ILLUS. 8   Shield containing three castle sculpture
on the entrance pillars to City Hall,
Dame Street, Dublin 2.

ILLUS. 9   Dublin Coat of Arms as featured on a lamp
post in Thomas Street, Dublin 2.

33

ILLUS. 10 Modern version of the Dublin Coat of Arms as displayed on Corporation Street furniture.

simpler and more appealing graphic interpretation than the full modern coat of arms we see elsewhere around the city.

The shield is the only part of the heraldic achievement whose shape can be changed, and almost every example of the Dublin coat of arms has some alteration in the design of the shield, as can be seen in all the examples illustrated. The modern version of the shield (Illus. 11) has changed markedly from the original (Illus. 2) and would possibly be more suited to a quadrupling effect, as the shield is now more or less square-shaped in contrast to the original triangular shape. Perhaps there could be a representation of the lower castle in a larger form than the upper two, so as to impart balance to the rather top heavy form of the current design (Illus 11). Also, the supporters in the original version are less formal than those in the present day example. Thus, in conclusion, it can be seen that, although the style changes, the elements have remained constant over a period of three hundred years.

Certain areas of the city have a greater predominance of the coat of arms than others. The most notable is the area around City Hall and around the Dawson Street area in the vicinity of the Mansion House (Illus. 12, 12A), parts of the city which contain a great deal of corporation property. The corporation being the local authority, all areas of

ILLUS. 11   Example of present-day Dublin Coat of Arms with supporters and motto.

ILLUS. 12   Three castle shield of Dublin featured on the gates of the Mansion House, Dawson Street, Dublin 2.

ILLUS. 12A Three castle shield of Dublin featured on the fencing of the Mansion House.

ILLUS. 13   Lord Mayor's Coat of Arms featured on the front of the Mansion House

the city will be found to contain examples of the Dublin coat of arms.

Through the medium of the Dublin coat of arms, I have shown how heraldic use can spread into corporate institutions. Indeed, the Dublin arms was to have its effect on the universities in the city. An example of a prize bookplate from Trinity College portrays the Castle of Dublin though not flaming (Illus. 14) in comparison with its modern version (Illus. 15). The much newer arms of University College, Dublin (Illus. 16) granted to the College by the Genealogical Office in the early part of the present century, contains in its upper portion the flaming castles, thus demonstrating its affinity with the city. Vincent Kinnane, librarian in Trinity College, explained to me that although the college possessed a printing press, it did not make use of its coat of arms in the printing process. The device was printed separately and added afterwards on the front leaf or title page. It had thus no significance from a printing point of view, but still existed as a mark of identification.

5 CONCLUSION

According to Donal Begley, the Chief Herald of Ireland, a coat of arms should reflect two fundamental aspects of the person or corporation using it: these being identity and personality. The Dublin coat of

ILLUS. 14   Prize bookplate containing the Coat of
Arms of Trinity College, Dublin, 1795.

ILLUS. 15   Coat of Arms of University of Dublin.
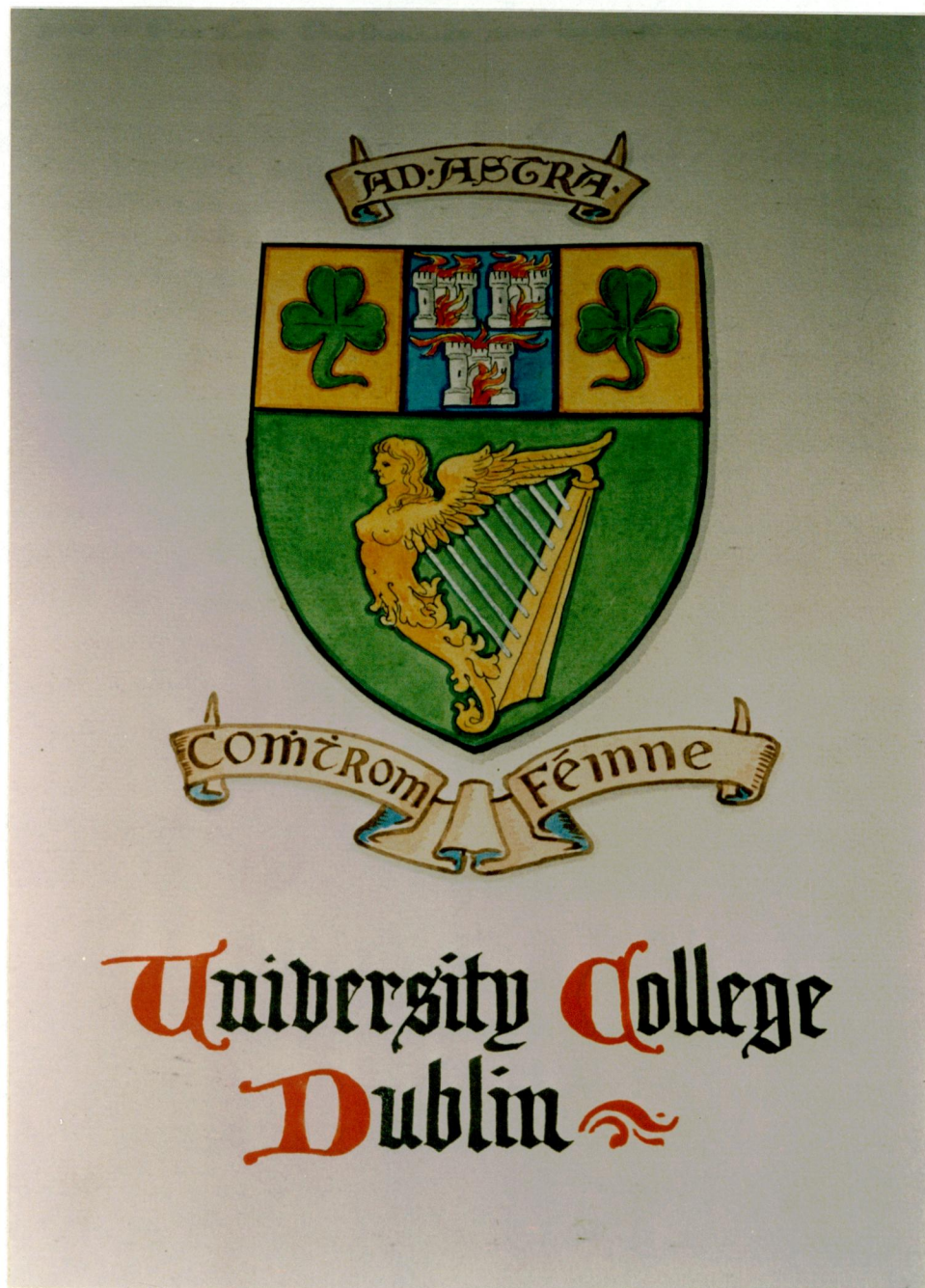
ILLUS. 16   Armorial shield of University College,
Dublin.

arms, at the time at which it was created, fulfilled both of these requirements. It proclaimed the city's identity through the distinctive use of the castles, and its personality emerged through these same castles being shown in flames. These latter give some notion of the city's early turbulence, and what life must have been like at the time, while equally showing the courage of the citizens and their willingness to defend it.

However, heraldry should not be thought of as merely representing medieval sieges, because it is equally important to use today in the sense that being one's own man or woman, so to speak, is a desirable characteristic, and heraldry, which embodies something of this attribute, may still have a great deal to offer in this day and age.

By the thirteenth century, there is evidence to show that persons from all strata of society, including craftsmen and traders, were sporting heraldic bearings, because by then it was an accepted form of identification. This brings us to Section 2 of the discussion, the heraldic influence on early printers' devices.

SECTION 2

INTRODUCTION

Rather than explore the technical virtuosity of the early printers, I have chosen in this section to examine the means by which they endeavoured to identify themselves. The printers wanted a graceful, simple mark to present itself to the reader at the end of the book.

The printing trade originated in Germany in the fifteenth century, and it is here, and during this period, that I will be concentrating my attention. The discussion will also incorporate the earliest use of printers' devices, as well as examples from England particularly those of William Caxton and his successor, Wynkyn de Worde. The reason for choosing these two is that their devices were largely influenced by what was happening on the continent, as it was there that they had learned their trade. Ireland, regrettably, cannot be included in this category. Charles Benson, the librarian in the Old Library in Trinity College, informed me that the first printing done in Ireland was of very poor quality. Moreover, he said, the early Irish printers were rather unimaginative in that they did not make use of a device, and limited the colophon to a mere statement included at the end of the book. Muriel McCarthy of Marsh's Library corroborated this view. So, although the discussion may seem broad, I have tried to limit it by concentrating on its obvious early heraldic influence. The sources for the images discussed in

Chapter 4 are mainly contained in Ronald McKerrow's _Printers' and Publishers' Devices in England and Scotland, 1485 - 1640_, and James Moran's _Devices of Early Printers_, while other invaluable references were catalogues of printers' devices, from which I chose examples which were relevant to my discussion on early heraldic influences.

The reasons underlying the origin of the art of heraldry were outlined in Chapter 1. For many hundreds of years in mainland Europe, armorial bearings and the nobility were synonymous. The first printers were quick to observe how much more attractive a book became when heraldically decorated, and they realised that their own marks would be enormously enhanced if some touch of heraldry were added to them.

Thus changes in the design and execution of printers' marks began to manifest themselves, and these developments will be discussed in Chapter 4. The evolution of the printers' mark was ordained by changing fashions, the abandonment of one set of rules for another. Fundamentally, the heraldic influence on the printers' mark was by means of the simple shield, which was used as an element to contain the printers' identifying mark, and this grew into an elaborate design with crest, supporters and motto.

In fact, the invention of printing marked a transition in the science of heraldry. From being something almost exclusively associated with the battlefield, it infiltrated into the domestic field. From identifying and representing knights, it was now also identifying the tradesman and the tools of his trade. Corporations and institutions began making use of the art of heraldry, and also popular was the use of heraldry for familial purposes, as crests were painted on stone walls, carved in wood, and embroidered onto garments and tapestries, serving the purpose of a mark of property.

CHAPTER 3

A DEFINITION AND UNDERSTANDING OF

PRINTERS' DEVICES

According to Ronald McKerrow in _Printers' and Publishers' Devices in England and Scotland, 1485 - 1640_, a printer's device is

> Any picture, design or ornament found on a title page or final leaf, and having an obvious reference to the sign at which the printer or publisher of the book carried on business, or to the name of either of them, is that printer's or publisher's device.
>
> (11, p. xii)

Devices or printers' marks have been used throughout Europe from the very beginning of printing, that is as early as 1457. The purpose of these devices was to serve as a hallmark of quality, and to safeguard what later became known as copyright. Heraldic associations, artistic design and striking inventiveness make many of the early printers' devices precious specimens of graphic art. The device eventually assumed a dual role, first as a mark of ownership and, in later times, as a form of advertisement. For the benefit of the public the device differentiated the work of one printer from that of others. These differentiating marks were employed not only by printers, but by a wide variety of tradesmen, craftsmen and artists.

The reference to a 'sign' in McKerrow's definition may require some clarification. For many centuries tradesmen have indicated the location of their shops by hanging signs outside often representing their craft, be it a book or a hat, for example. However, the earlier printers seem to have

48

favoured more general symbols, many of which had no direct association with their trade, such as the sun emblem of Wynkyn de Worde (Illus. 30, 31, 32), who practised his trade in Fleet Street, London. The sun featured strongly in his device from 1502 until 1520, and will be further referred to in Chapter 4.

The imprint or colophon is in a different category from that of the device. It does include the printer's device, with the addition of a written statement, all printed at the end of the book. The colophon became common from the time of the Fust and Schoeffer psalter of 1457 (Illus. 17), but was superseded by the arrival of the title page towards the year 1600. The printer's device of the fifteenth century was executed by both the publisher and the printer, and in the course of time it incorporated other information, such as the place and date of publication. A device, indeed, may not need a name, and may require merely that it be relatively simple and instantly recognisable among hundreds of others. Consideration was obviously given to the fact that the addition of an image would be more illuminating than mere verbal description.

At this point I feel it is appropriate to describe a specific example which illustrates a popular trend in the design of printers' devices, so that the material to be discussed in Chapter 4 will be more readily understood. The most interesting aspect

Ucnerabilis fratris Bartholomei
de Chaymis . de Mediolano/ ordinis
imnorū. Jnterrogatorū seu ofessiona-
le putile/alias post impssiones m com
pluribz locis emédatū. Anno dñi. M.
. cccclxx viij. Jpa die urbani/arte qua-
dā caracterisandi imprimédi ve /in no
bili urbe Magūtia/ eiusdē muétrice e-
limatriceqz prima/ p Petrū Schoiffer de
gernßheym feliater est consūmatū.

ILLUS. 17   The colophon of Johann Fust and Peter
Schoeffer, Mainz, 1457.

of early printers' devices is that some of them were characterised by a pun or puzzle around the owner's name or place of printing, or perhaps an allusion to the printer's previous occupation. Those printers whose names were evocative of animals or birds punned on these creatures, and a somewhat humorous note was sometimes struck, whether intentional or not, with the addition of a motto.

One example of this punning device is that of Thomas Fisher, an English bookseller from 1600 to 1602 (Illus. 18). According to Muriel McCarthy, curator of Marsh's Library in Dublin, this device puns on the name of the owner, in that it portrays a kingfisher catching a fish, thus doubling the emphasis on the name. The device is a combination of astronomy and nature, and is based on a legend. 'Alcione' (or halcyon), printed at the bottom of the device, refers to the fourteen days around the winter solstice, when traditionally calm weather allowed birds to nest on the still surface of the sea or lake. The Latin motto, 'Motos soleo componere fluctus', refers to the motion of the sun pacifying the flood. Therefore, even without printing his name, the device is recognisable as that of a person named Fisher.

Printers seemed to favour this type of device where a pun on the name was possible, however far-fetched it might be. Some may appear a little incongruous today due to the lapse of time and an alteration in meaning.
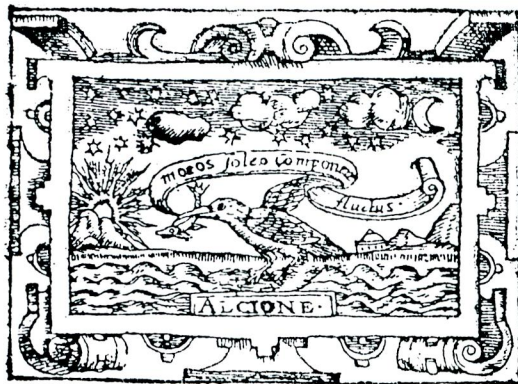
ILLUS. 18   Framed device of Thomas Fisher, London
                 bookseller, 1600-1602.
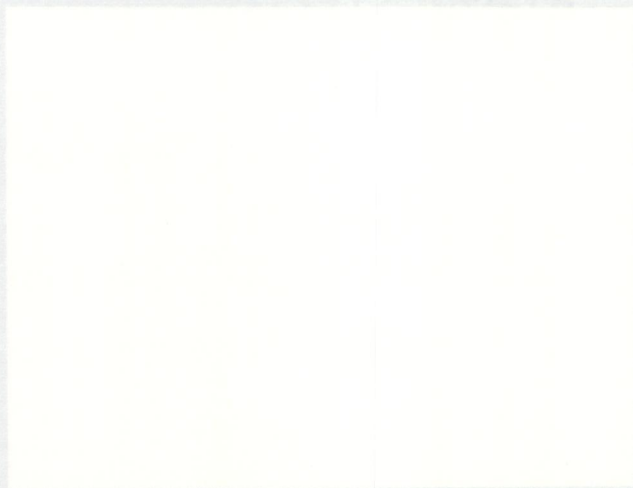
In conclusion, printers' devices were informative as well as decorative, since books of the fifteenth century had no title pages as we know them today, containing the title of the work, the names of the author and publisher, and the year of publication. The earliest colophons fulfilled this purpose, containing one or more of the items mentioned. The colophon continued and expanded on the habit of the scribes of medieval Europe, who liked to put their names, the date of completion of their work, or other brief notes, at the end of a classical or scriptural manuscript.

In the devices of the later years of printing, there appears to be evidence of the display of virtuosity on the part of printers as they became more ambitious, a fact noted by McKerrow(11, p. xiv). Many of these, alas, fail in the main purpose of a trademark, that of easy recognition at first glance.

Once, the printer and the publisher (and in some cases the author) were one and the same person. Now, of course, they are separate entities, and the result has been that the colophon and device are reduced to a succinct statement. These lines are often shifted to the bottom of the back of the title page proper.

CHAPTER 4

CASE STUDY : HERALDIC INFLUENCE ON

EARLY PRINTERS' DEVICES

1   <u>FIFTEENTH CENTURY MAINZ AND GUTENBERG</u>

Class distinction was very noticeable in Europe in the fifteenth century, not least in major German cities. At the top were a few aristocratic families, followed in turn by lesser nobility and followed again by the guildsmen. The rising middle class in Europe began to devise their own arms, which would not otherwise have been granted by the heraldic authority, often basing them on trading marks, which they used to assert their equality with the arms-bearing nobility. These were known as 'burgher arms'. We can therefore make the assumption that, because of the existence of such burgher marks, the earliest shield designs employed by printers were more than a mere decoration, and Muriel McCarthy confirms that printers' devices were trademarks, marks of identification.

This difference between the arms of the patrician nobility and burgher arms is best exemplified by a comparison between those of Johann Gutenberg and those of his fellow-printers, Johann Fust and Peter Schoeffer. Gutenberg is credited with the invention of adjustable type which, for the first time, made it possible to print continuous text. Gutenberg belonged to an aristocratic family which had responsibility for the mint in Mainz, and consequently was familiar with working in metals and moulds.

Because of his discovery, Gutenberg is credited with being the first printer, and because of his family's status, was the first permitted to bear arms.

Among the users of adopted or burgher arms were Johann Fust and Peter Schoeffer, at one time partners of Gutenberg. Perhaps to dissociate themselves from Gutenberg they initiated the idea of an imprint. Theirs is the earliest known colophon and is fuller than some of the later examples. It figures in the Mainz psalter of 1457, which the colophon tells us was printed by Johann Fust, a citizen of Mainz, and Peter Schoeffer of Gernsheim. Under the colophon is a mark consisting of two shields hanging from a branch (Illus. 17) representing the burgher arms of Fust and Schoeffer.

Fust and Schoeffer may have added their shields to the colophon of the psalter of 1457, possibly in a pretentious way, as a hint that they were as good as Gutenberg. They adopted this course rather than choose a representation of their printing press, which would have been of inestimable interest to historians. Be that as it may, Fust and Schoeffer had started a fashion that lasted well into the nineteenth century.

Many suggestions have been adduced as to the reason behind the charges depicted on the Fust and Schoeffer shields. S. H. Steinberg in 500 Years of Printing, gives it as a possibility that they symbolized printing activities, typecase holders,

compositors' rules and the like(19, pp.132-133). But
neither Fust nor Schoeffer was originally a printer,
and James Moran, in <u>Devices of Early Printers</u>,
considers it more likely that the charges were simply
abstract merchant marks(12, p.5). An alternative
theory of Moran's, probably the more plausible, is
that Schoeffer's mark alludes to an association with
his name (Schoeffer : Shepherd), as the charge
represents a wolf trap used by shepherds of that
period. Fust's arms may be two interlocking
instruments used in building to strengthen walls, a
possible reference to his connection with the building
trade(12, pp.27-28).

The device of Fust and Schoeffer was a prototype
of its kind, and would be copied by other printers.
In the next section I will explain how the simple
shield design developed into different varieties of
printers' marks, while still retaining, but
elaborating on, a basic heraldic principle.

2   THE HANGING SHIELDS OF FUST AND SCHOEFFER AND THEIR IMITATORS

In taking the form they did, Fust and
Schoeffer's shields may have been simulating the
practice of the knights, who hung their shields from
the branch of a tree during tournaments(14, pp.68-69).
Fust and Schoeffer could have chosen to combine their
two shields in this way to create a single printing

device (Illus. 17). Whatever the reason, they could not have foreseen that what had begun as a simple mark of identification based on a heraldic idea, would be copied by twenty or so printers before the close of the fifteenth century, and would become a source of inspiration for many printers who followed. German-speaking printers, no doubt acknowledging Fust and Schoeffer as the true founders of commercial printing, established the tradition of the dual-shield mark. Printing in fifteenth century Europe was for the most part a small specialised world, and the majority of printers would have known or been in close contact with Fust and Schoeffer, and even Gutenberg.

Yet, while these printers followed the fashion of Fust and Schoeffer, they still hankered after their own individualistic marks. They felt that they could not continue slavishly to copy the existing Fust and Schoeffer device. It was quite common for many printers during the fifteenth century to have had other occupations before entering the relatively new world of printing. Therefore, they were able to draw on existing merchant marks, or even simply their own initials, rather than make use of devices which reflected their new-found occupation. Merchant marks and printers' devices, in the same way as did coats of arms, became devalued if there were two of a kind. Consequently, as they grew in number, the printers' devices tended to become more elaborate and

ostentatious in an effort to avoid such duplication. In the following century in France, the ruling monarch, Francis I, issued an edict in 1539, which forbade printers and bookbinders from making use of any device which had been created by another printer. However, this may not have been merely a gesture to enable printers to protect their work, but rather to inform the authorities whom they ought to hold responsible for a particular edition.

No system of this kind existed in England, where devices tended to pass down from one printer to another; for example, that of William Caxton, which passed to his successor, Wynkyn de Worde in 1491. This will be referred to in the section Printers' Devices in England 1487 - 1516.

When Fust and Schoeffer united two shields, it provided a slight problem for the single printer if he wanted to emulate the masters by imitating their device. It was a difficulty commonly overcome by using one shield to carry the printer's mark or initials, while the other might depict the arms of the town where the printer worked. Variations on this theme occurred from time to time. Some printers of course copied the device exactly, but others made alterations, while still another group omitted the second shield. The branch holding the Fust and Schoeffer device developed into a whole tree, and with this development came the idea of supporters.

However, all this did not happen overnight; it was a gradual matter extending over a period of many years.

Wolfgang Muller (Illus. 19), printing in Leipzig from 1494 to 1530, used one shield with a merchant's mark and another bearing the arms of Leipzig. Johann Veldener, printing in Louvain in 1476 (Illus. 20), had had a further development which, though based on the Fust and Schoeffer shield, is more decorative. The branch of the tree is sprouting foliage to form a neat bordering pattern around the shields, reminiscent of the form which mantling took around a coat of arms. The two shields carry respectively Veldener's mark and the arms of Louvain. Between the two shields is Veldener's name. Many of these printers moved their trade to different towns, and this form of device became extremely convenient in that the new town's arms could be substituted in the device for the former town's arms.

The device of Godefroy Back, a bookbinder working in Antwerp from 1495 to 1500, marks an interesting move away from the traditional Fust and Schoeffer branch device. This device still retained the hanging shield motif of Fust and Schoeffer, and also incorporated a pun around the printer's circumstances, as mentioned in Chapter 3. Godefroy Back operated his business from a house known as 'Vogelhius', meaning aviary or bird cage. Almost as a natural consequence, he had such an enclosure

¶Opusculum Magistri Johannis de Sacro busto spericum per venerabilem virum Magistrum wenceslaum Fabri de Budwerß Medicine Doctorem bene correctum et desuper commentatum finit foeliciter.
¶ Impressuz Lipczk p̃ Baccalariũ wolfgangũ Monacensem. Anno nostre salutis, 1 4 9 9.

ILLUS. 19   Colophon with device of Wolfgang Muller, Leipzig, 1497.
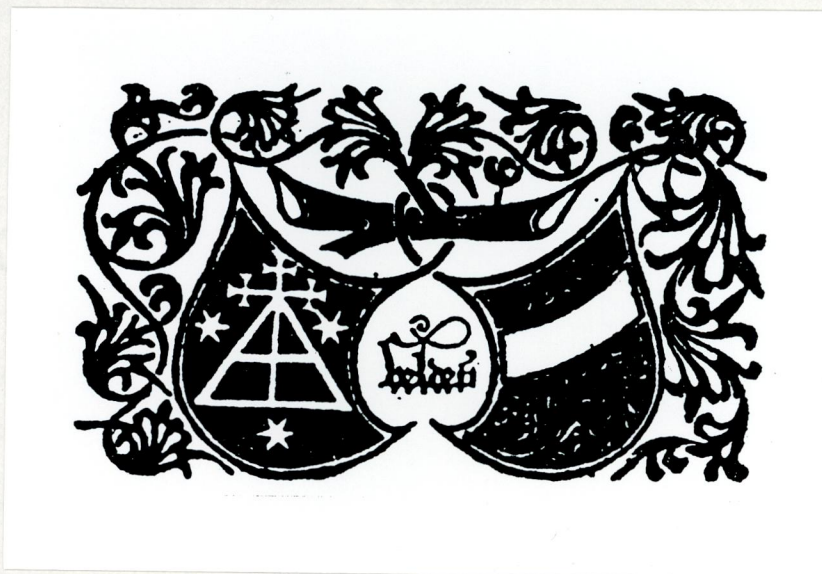
ILLUS. 20   Device of Johann Veldener, Louvain, 1476.
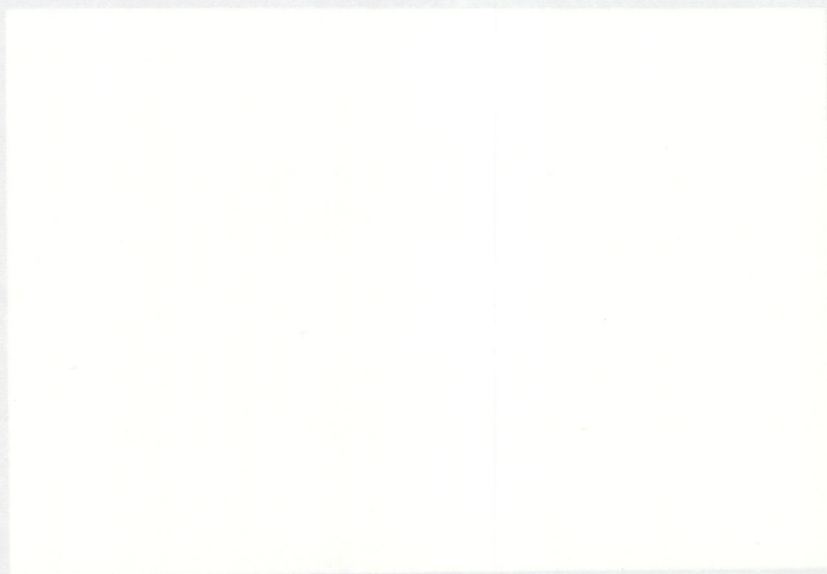
portrayed in his device (illus. 21). But Back may have felt that he did not want to break away from tradition altogether, and we can see how he amplified the device by hanging from the cage a shield bearing the arms of Antwerp. Above the cage is the idea of knotted tree work framing the device, similar to Veldener's example.

From the beginning of the sixteenth century the addition of supporters in heraldic devices became common, and I propose to consider the derivation of these and the purpose they served. It is generally thought that supporters stemmed from seal engraving, in which they were used to fill the space between the coat of arms and the outside of the seal. There exists, according to William Leveron in his work <u>On Heraldry and its Connection with Gothic Architecture</u>, an alternative theory, that the use of supporters derived from stone masons, who often depicted on churches the arms of founders and benefactors engraved on shields; these were commonly supported by angels(10, p.17).

The use of heraldic supporters developed slowly because they took time to infiltrate down the social scale. They figured largely on the coats of arms of royalty, who followed their own inclinations in the form they took. A wide variety of creatures has supported the royal arms of England over the centuries, but all have included a lion at some time
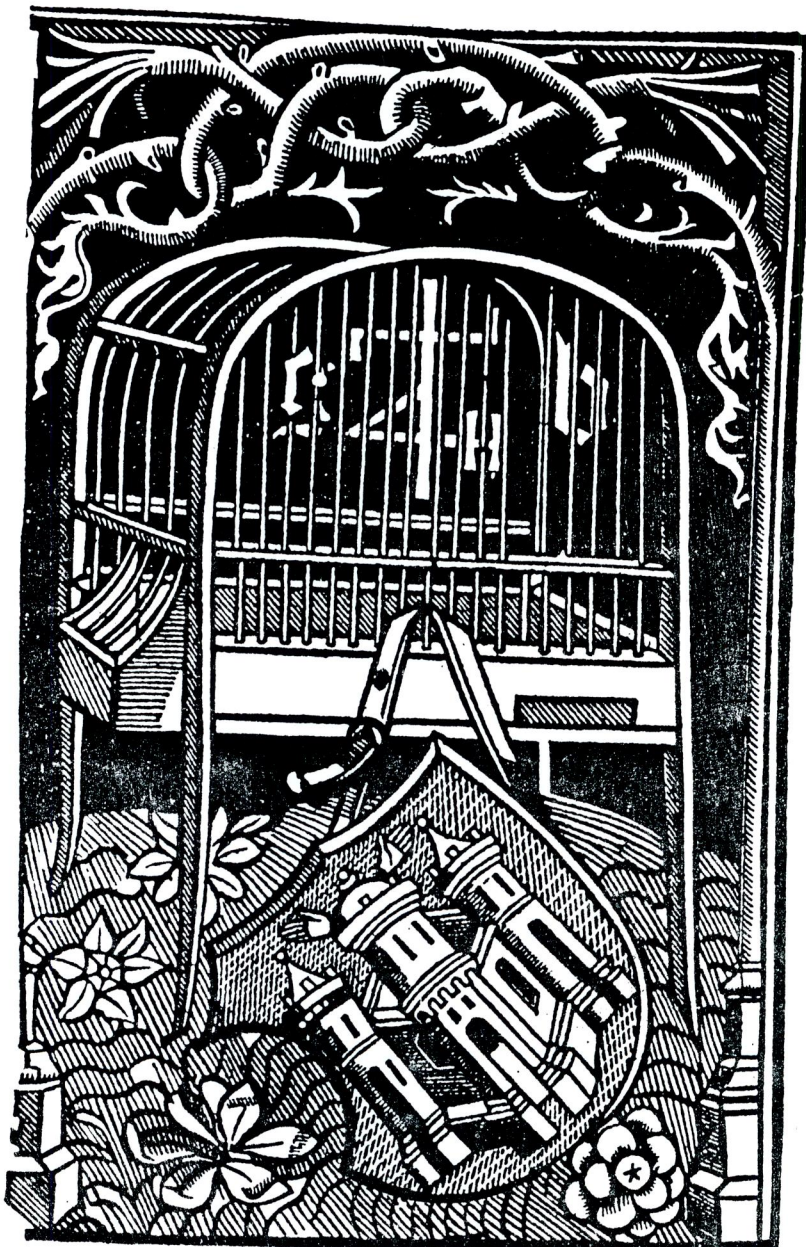
ILLUS. 21   Device of Godefroy Back, Antwerp, 1495-
1500.

Figure 21. Untitled. Gelatin silver print, 1980.

or another, except those of Richard II who, because of his religious inclinations, used two angels. It was when James IV of Scotland came to the throne of England, and made use of the lion for England and a unicorn for Scotland, that a regularity in the use of supporters was established. In France, the use of angels as supporters was limited to royalty, and it seems that printers in that country respected this tradition.

Still on the subject of angels in heraldry and on printers' devices, we can consider the mark of Hans Dorn (Illus. 22), who was printing in Brunswick in Germany from 1506 to 1522. It portrays an even further development of the Fust and Schoeffer shield in which the traditional tree branch is totally dispensed with. Dorn was one of those printers outside France who favoured the use of angels as supporters. In a well-balanced triangular form he combines his own arms (Dorn: thorn) on the sinister shield, with those of the city of Brunswick on the dexter.

A later example, in 1519, which depicts a decorative device without a branch, and which incidentally represents a considerable artistic advance, is that of Sigismund Grimm and Marcus Wirsung of Augsburg (Illus. 23). It represents an almost full heraldic achievement, although this example does not include supporters. The dexter shield shows a wild

ILLUS. 22   Device of Hans Dorn, Brunswick, 1506-1522.

Figure 53. Portraite of James Henry Hammond, 1848-1940.

ILLUS. 23   Device of Sigismund Grimm and Marcus Wirsung, Augsberg, 1519.
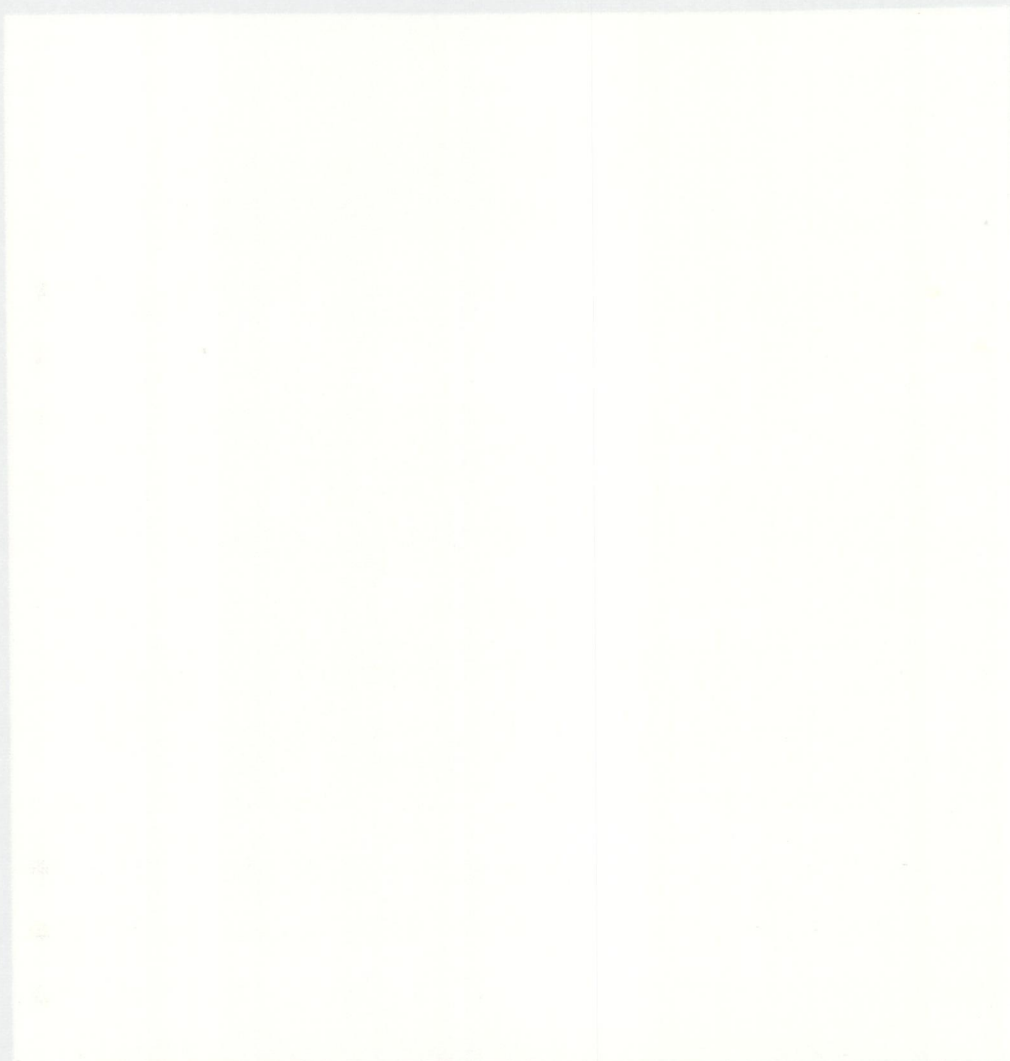
man, a play on the name Grimm, meaning fury or rage, while the sinister shield could be a stylised cabbage, a Wirsingkohl, referring to Wirsung's name. In contrast to previous examples mentioned, the shields represented in the device display both a helmet and a crest.

A final example I would like to add on the theme of the hanging shields, and a very innovative one for the time, was that of Henrik Eckert Van Homberch of Delft in 1498 (Illus. 24). In his device, Van Homberch employs a unicorn supporting a blank shield, and above the unicorn's head is another shield displaying the arms of Delft. The purpose of the blank shield is that it be filled in with the arms of the owner of the book. The idea of illustrating a book heraldically to indicate ownership, tended to give way to the separate book-plate or ex libris towards 1600, when copperplate printing developed. As printers became more ambitious, they elaborated on the basic shield design, observed especially in the last three examples. I feel, however, that the earlier examples are more attractive visually and also neater, and therefore are more clearly evident as identifying marks. The later examples tend to be mere decoration for decoration's sake. In the next section I will stay with the Fust and Schoeffer device and the hanging of the shields, and show the significance of the branch and its development into a fuller

ILLUS. 24   Device used by Henrik Eckert van Homberch,
                  Delft, 1498 - 1524.

decorative tree device. I will dwell particularly on its impact in France, referring to examples, as it was in France that the tree was adopted as a supporting device for the shield.

3   THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE

The featuring of the tree branch in Fust and Schoeffer's shield and its development into a whole tree is possibly due to the strong interplay between life and art which existed in fifteenth century Europe, but the use of the shield also had a close affinity with heraldry. The way in which knights' shields were hung at jousting tournaments formed the graphic inspiration for the representation of heraldic achievements. Similarly, the hanging of shields on branches was the source of inspiration for the earliest printers' devices, in that they represented exactly what the artist saw, or indeed, what was a common practice of the period.

The tree has always figured as an object of worship, and even of awe, in ancient folklore, and it has a fundamental place in biblical history in its association with the story of the creation. Once Fust and Schoeffer had set the pattern, artists began to elaborate and introduce the symbolism of the 'tree of knowledge' and the inference of book reading. The simple branch was developed not merely into an apple tree, but into exotic growth and fruits. This theme

was further developed with nesting birds and even hunters in the form of supporters holding the shield, as artistic licence was given full play.

A small move had been made in this direction by Veldener of Louvain in 1476 (Illus. 20) when he made the branch in his device slightly leafy. Johann Schoeffer, Peter's son, used a very attractive device (Illus. 25) in 1530, using shepherds (a further allusion to his name). He elaborated on this theme by adding sheep under a spreading tree, from which hung a shield bearing arms similar to those found on the original Fust and Schoeffer shield in 1457. Johann Schoeffer distinguished the shield as being his own by changing the lower star into a rose, but the device still maintained the connection with his father. He further emphasised his ownership, by inscribing the initials J. S. at the top of the device.

The close links between the members of the printing fraternity in mainland Europe in the earliest years of the craft inevitably led to a certain similarity in their devices. It was in France that the tree and shield device became popular. Printers in France were of course familiar with the concept of shields hanging from a tree because of knightly tournaments, and they adapted the device to their own fashion. This style soon crossed the channel to England and Scotland, because printers in these countries had learned their trade abroad. Burgher

ILLUS. 25   Arms of Johann Schoeffer, Mainz, 1530.

arms were unknown in France, largely because of the vigilance of that country's heralds. Thus, in the main, the British and French shields bear only initials or merchants' marks, or both. The style or form of device current in France consisted of a rectangular panel comprising a single shield hanging by a strap from a tree with two supporters. The French devices, moreover, are more artistically advanced than their German counterparts.

The tree in the French device almost always carries fruit and leaves, with the shield strap and the supporters clearly drawn in comparison with the rather cluttered device of Johann Schoeffer (Illus. 25). The printer's name can often appear on a scroll at the base of the tree, thereby using a clearer form of identification than that of Fust and Schoeffer (Illus. 17) or Godefroy Back (Illus 21).

An example of the French device illustrating this is the one by Berthold Rembolt from Strasburg, who moved to Paris in 1512, and took over a shop at the Sign of the Sun. Berthold's device also incorporates a shield carrying both a merchant's mark and the printer's initials, supported by a strap hanging from a tree well stocked with grapes (Illus. 26).

This was another variation on the basic theme of the tree set by Fust and Schoeffer, but gradually

72

ILLUS. 26   Mark of Berthold Rembolt, Paris, 1512.

Table 20. Mean and Standard Deviation, Scales, 1974.

printers began to turn to pure heraldry as a source for their marks of identification. But this in turn encountered the problem of class distinction and the standpoint of the nobility in their opposition to what they felt was an encroachment on their domain by those engaged in trade. Under the system of heraldry it was only the nobility who were granted arms by the heraldic authority. The heralds reserved the right as to who should be granted arms. It was simply a manifestation of class distinction and no legal issues appear to have been involved.

4   PRINTERS BEARING ARMS

Printers, more so than many other tradesmen, had the opportunity to make use of heraldic design in their devices. As already pointed out, they were able to draw inspiration from a wide range of sources.

In Germany, a printer could use his burgher arms without fear of punishment, but a stricter regulation in France and England disallowed such a practice. However, some printers were later able to achieve genuine grants of arms.

However, even when authentic arms were granted, printers' tools and other evidences of their trade did not appear as charges on the shield. It would have seemed the most obvious form of identification. One possible explanation for their absence could lie in the fact that at the beginning of the sixteenth

century there were differing attitudes towards the social standing of those involved in printing, or in any other form of trade for that matter. There was a general acceptance that the nobility were the only section of society worthy to bear arms, and for the same nobility it was considered beneath their dignity to practice a trade.

Corporate bodies connected with printing such as printers' guilds, differed in their attitude towards this issue, and these institutions began to include 'instruments' as charges on their shields from about 1486.

An interesting use of both arms and printers' tools is that employed by the German Printers' Guild (Illus. 27) in 1492. The shield itself carries an eagle which, in its sinister claw, grasps a copyholder, while in the dexter or right claw it holds a composing stick, both instruments used by the printer in the practice of his trade. This identification with the printers' trade is even extended to the crest, which portrays a griffin carrying two ink dabbers. It is almost certain that such a device would have encountered opposition from authority. The eagle portrayed is copied from the imperial eagle, which should be holding a sceptre and an orb rather than tools of the printer's trade; this must surely have been considered a desecration of the imperial eagle. However, one thing the representation of the

ILLUS. 27   Device used by German Printers' Guilds,
             1492.

eagle does confirm is that the device is of German origin, and not the product of some other neighbouring country.

The griffin, apart from being one of the most ancient of mythical representations, is considered a beneficent creature, a guardian of treasure. Its use in the context of a printer's device symbolises guardianship and vigilant protection of the printer's craft and, combined with the keen eye of the eagle, acts as a kind of protection of copyright.

The mainland of Europe was not the only place where printing began to flourish. The trade soon spread to England, where the name of William Caxton is synonymous with the first printed books. I would therefore like to go on and study him and his successors and how their devices were influenced by those in Germany and France. The main difference between the devices produced in England and those issued on the continent, was that the latter, as we shall see, were superior in quality.

5   **PRINTERS' DEVICES IN ENGLAND FROM WILLIAM CAXTON 1487 TO WYNKYN DE WORDE 1516**

In 1476 William Caxton introduced printing into England. He set up his trade at Westminster in London after having learned and practised his craft for a number of years at Bruges in Belgium. In his early working life as a printer, he did not concern himself with adopting a device.

Caxton finally decided to adopt a device in 1487 (Illus. 28), a device which could possibly have been influenced by what was happening on the continent. He seems to have been influenced by what was happening on the continent. He seems to have been swayed most of all by the device of his master Veldener (Illus. 20), which shows a merchant's mark and also Veldener's surname. Caxton's device, like that of so many fifteenth century printers, combines his personal initials and an adaptation of his existing mercer's mark into a numerological pun. The interlacing motif in the centre requires some further explanation. James Moran, in Devices of Early Printers, says that it is an allusion to Bruges(12, p.54)) while George Painter in A Quincentenary Biography of England's First Printer, puts forward an alternative theory. Painter surmises that any contemporary would have interpreted this motif to be Caxton's mark as a mercer, but he would also perceive that the lines here are drawn in such a way as to read alternately '47' or '74'. This could refer to two crucial years in Caxton's career; 1447 would refer presumably to his obtaining the freedom of the Mercer's Company, while 1474 is perhaps an allusion to the year in which Caxton is thought to have first printed at Bruges. Thus, it would seem that these two apparently incompatible explanations of Caxton's device, first as a typical merchant's mark, and secondly as a highly

ILLUS. 28 Device of William Caxton, Westminster, 1487.

personal pair of dates, could be equally pertinent(18, p.161).

Although heraldry did not influence Caxton's device, coincidentally there is evidence that there was a heraldic sign outside Caxton's workshop in Westminster, a sign known as "A Red Pale"(Illus. 29). A pale is a single, broad vertical band which runs the length of the centre of the shield, and occupies approximately a third of the total width of the shield. One of the rules of heraldry is that colour cannot be used on colour or metal upon metal. Therefore, we can be positive in assuming that the red pale existed on either a gold or silver background. So England's first printing shop had, at least in one of its manifestations, a heraldic sign hanging outside, to which potential patrons were directed.

Caxton's press at Westminster was carried on by his assistant and ultimate successor, Wynkyn de Worde, until 1534. Unlike the practice on the continent, devices in England were passed down to future generations of printers as were heraldic coats of arms from father to son. According to McKerrow in Printers' and Publishers' Devices in England and Scotland, 1485 - 1640, the earliest English and Scottish printers were very heraldically conscious (11, p. xii), and it is interesting to see how they approached the adoption of heraldic devices, and the way in which they were influenced by the continent.

ILLUS. 29   The Red Pale as used by William Caxton,
Westminster, 1487.

When de Worde took over as Caxton's successor, he made much greater use of the printer's device, developing at least fourteen in his lifetime. He used some which had passed to him from Caxton, and possibly in deference to his former master, incorporated his name in Caxton's device.

By 1502 he began to add not only the sun, the sign of his office (he had moved Caxton's press to Fleet Street in the City of London), but small heraldic creatures, a unicorn and a saggitary (Illus. 30), although not yet as supporters. Then in 1509, he adopted a more or less heraldic achievement, minus a shield (Illus. 31), of a saggitary and a greyhound holding up Caxton's device. By 1520, the initials W. C. and the mark are carried on a narrow shield with a rose supported by two boys and a winged cherub above (Illus. 32). This is the most ambitious and most clearly heraldic of de Worde's devices. We can perceive that over this period of twenty years, the English printers came to realise the value of the striking devices used by the continental printers, and showed no hesitation in purloining them if they thought it desirable.

It is probably more than a coincidence that the symbol of the sun should have been used as a mark by some of the early printers, as it was a period of startling discoveries in the field of astronomy, discoveries which completely overturned long held theories about the movements of the heavenly bodies.

ILLUS. 30 Device of Wynkyn de Worde, Fleet Street, London, 1502.

ILLUS. 31   Device of Wynkyn de Worde, 1509.

ILLUS. 32   Device of Wynkyn de Worde, 1520.

Fig. 40. Figure of unknown in chalk, 1940.
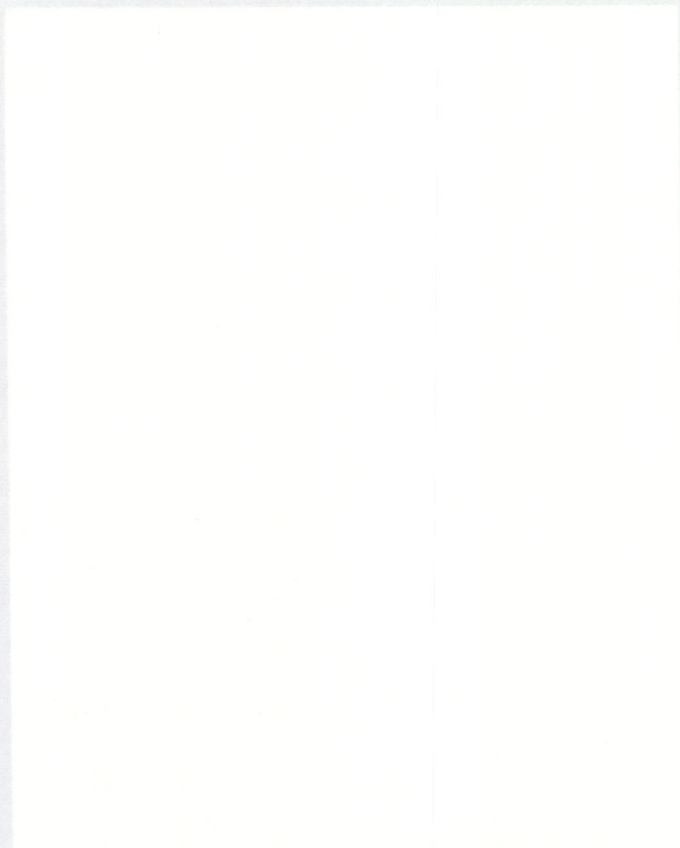
At the turn of the fifteenth century the great Polish mathematician and astronomer, Nicolaus Copernicus, was almost thirty years of age and in the process of formulating what, at the time, was a sensational theory. Up to this time it had been thought that the earth lay at the centre of the universe and that all heavenly bodies revolved around it. He totally discredited that idea and propounded, as we now know, that the sun is at the centre of the solar system. One can imagine the subject being discussed at length, and even books being written about it. Is it little wonder then, that printers should use the sun as a mark, like Wynkyn de Worde (Illus. 30, 31, 32) and Berthold Rembolt (Illus. 26), and retain this symbol as their shop trade sign? Thomas Fisher depicted graphically the winter solstice in his device, pun though it may have been. The sun in both de Worde's and Berthold's devices holds a central and prominent position.

James Moran suggests that it might be stretching coincidence too far, but in 1509, when de Worde used his pseudo-heraldic device, his near neighbour and occasional partner, Pynson, was made king's printer and therefore given the legal right to bear arms(12, p.59). In his use of heraldic elements, de Worde could have been compensating himself for having been overlooked.

86

De Worde was in the habit of trading with other printers, and his association with one of them, Ursyn Mylner, printing in York in 1516, resulted in the use of the heraldic method of impaling (Illus. 33). By this manner a shield is divided vertically, and the charges from the shields it is intended to unite are included in the separate halves, thus avoiding the use of two shields. This represented a development, but also a contraction of the dual shield device of Fust and Schoeffer. Mylner hung the impaled shield from a tree in the French manner. The dexter half carries a windmill, for Mylner, and the sinister de Worde's sun. The supporters are a bear, an allusion to the name Ursyn (Latin ursa : or bear) and an ass.

In observations of a general nature, the English examples appear rather crude when compared with their continental counterparts. Even the earliest example of Fust and Schoeffer is more attractive in its simple graphic interpretation.

The device of Ursyn Mylner (Illus. 33), when seen in opposition to that of Berthold Rembolt (Illus. 26), although assuming more or less the same form, is less refined in its execution. It is rather awkward, and insufficient attention appears to have been paid to detail. The supposedly identifying devices on the shield are scarcely recognisable, and the shield size is too small to achieve properly this method of impaling.

ILLUS. 33   Device of Ursyn Mylner, York, 1516.

Mylner's device does not possess the same fluidity as Rembolt's, and the shield strap is not as clearly defined. Here we can observe some of the results of copying the continental examples, unfortunately badly. Although Mylner's supporters are said to be an ass and a bear, it is difficult to determine which is which, and they suffer greatly when set against the beautifully rendered lions of the Rembolt device. If trademarks are meant to serve as a sign of quality, value and reliability, I feel that Rembolt's device is more impressive than that of Ursyn Mylner.

6   CONCLUSION

The use, as a device, of a printer's arms, whether genuine or imitated, died out towards the beginning of the seventeenth century. Although the practice of using a printer's arms ceased, it did not preclude the printing of other arms in a book, like the arms of towns and corporations, for instance. In choosing their own devices, printer and publisher sought inspiration elsewhere. Those printers' devices which incorporated the arms of a city and a design symbolic of a printer's name have been crucial, in that we can now determine the publisher of any of the prototypical volumes, even when the printer's name is not actually mentioned in the colophon. In these days

of easy reproduction of illustrations, it is perhaps difficult to imagine the situation faced by early printers. An elaborate and decorative compartment was an asset to a printer, to be used when he felt the occasion demanded, without reference to the content of the book. After 1600, with the invention of copperplate printing, the separate bookplate came into use as a means of indicating the ownership of a book.

I hope to have shown that the history of marks of identification goes back a long way, and they have an origin that is curious and intriguing. Visual identity is constituted of many things, of which heraldry and printers' marks are but two.

Marks of identification serving also the requirements of communication are a concept which has been very lucidly confirmed by Rudolph Arnheim in The Images of Pictures and Words:

> Communication is, in the broadest sense of the term, what human beings try to tell one another through the senses, mostly hearing, seeing and touch.
> (22, p. 306)

His conclusion is that the visual image is paramount because, as he points out,

> language is a biologically late acquisition and is not the most direct access to the other mind
> (22, p.307)

Thus, it is easy to see why images, colour and design have been such prominent features right through history.

GLOSSARY

Heraldry has its own language and I feel it useful to include definitions of those terms used in this dissertation which may not be generally understood. It must be emphasised that this is by no means a complete glossary.

ACHIEVEMENT : The sign upon the shield: the crest and the supporters if any, although it does not properly include the motto.

ARGENT : The metal silver, usually represented by the colour white.

ARMIGER : A person entitled to bear arms, hence 'armigerous'.

AZURE : The colour blue.

BASE : The bottom third of the shield.

BEAR ARMS : To display one's coat of arms on appropriate occasions.

BLAZON : The verbal description of a full coat of arms. The blazon must include all details required to enable the artist to draw an accurate representation.

CANTING ARMS : Arms which pun on the name name of the bearer.

CHARGE : Any figure borne upon the field of the shield.

CREST : The device modelled on the top of the helmet.

DEXTER : The right-hand side of the shield from the point of view of the bearer, but the left when observed from the front.

91

FIELD : The complete available surface of the shield, bearing the charge or charges. It is always the first thing mentioned in the blazon.

FLEUR-DE-LIS : Stylized representation of a lily; the emblem of the kings of France.

GULES : The colour red.

IMPALE : To place two coats of arms side by side on a single shield.

MANTLING : The decorative piece of material attached to the helmet.

OR : The metal gold, usually represented by the colour yellow.

ORDINARIES : The most basic geometric charges are known as Ordinaries.

PALE : An ordinary. A broad vertical band down the centre of the shield and occupying one-third of the shield (see Illus. 29).

PROPER : A charge blazoned as proper is shown in its natural colours.

SINISTER : The left-hand side of the shield from the point of view of the bearer, the right when observed from the front.

STANDARD : A narrow flag bearing arms, crest and badges, if any.

SUPPORTERS : Figure, human or animal, standing outside the shield and bearing it up.

TINCTURE : A colour or metal used in armoury.

VERT : The colour green.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1 Baumeister, Roy, <u>Identity, Cultural Change and Struggle for the Self</u>, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978.

2 Clifford, Brian, R, <u>Psychology of Personal Identification</u>, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978.

3 Davies, Hugh W, <u>Early Printers' Devices</u>, London, Grafton and Co, 1935.

4 Ellis, William S, <u>The Antiquities of Heraldry</u>, London, Taylor and Co., 1919.

5 Eve, George, W, <u>Decorative Heraldry</u>, London, Chiswick Press.

6 Forty, Adrian, <u>Objects of Desire (Design and Society 1750 - 1980)</u>, London, Thames and Hudson, 1986.

7 Heraldic Artists Ltd., <u>Symbols of Heraldry Explained</u>, Dublin, Mount Salus Press, 1980.

8 Hodge, Robert and Gunther Kress, <u>Social Semiotics</u>, Oxford, Polity Press, 1988.

9 Jacobsen, Egbert (edited by), <u>Trademark Design</u>, U.S.A. Paul Theobald, 1952.

10 Leveron, William, <u>On Heraldry and its Connection with Gothic Architecture</u>, London, J. R. Drury, 1836.

11 McKerrow, Ronald B, <u>Printers' and Publishers' Devices in England and Scotland 1485 - 1640</u>, London, Chiswick Press, 1913.

12 Moran, James, <u>Devices of Early Printers</u>, Leeds, Elmete Press, 1978.

13 Morris, Charles W, <u>Writings on the General Theory of Signs</u>, The Hague, Paris Mouton, 1971.

14 Neubecker, Ottfried, <u>Heraldry, Sources Symbols and Meanings</u>, London, MacDonald and Co., 1976.

15 O'Comain, Michael, <u>Poolbeg Book of Irish Heraldry</u>, Dublin, Poolbeg Press, 1991.

16 Olins, Wally,   The   Corporate   Personality, London,   Kynoch Press, 1978.

17 Olins, Wally,   Corporate   Identity,   London, Thames and Hudson, 1989.

18 Painter, George D, William Caxton; A Quincentenary Biography   of   England's   First Printer,   London,   Chatto   and Windus, 1978.

19 Steinberg, S. H, 500 Years of Printing, Suffolk, Chaucer Press, 1974.

20 Von Volborth, Carl Alexander, The Art of Heraldry, London,   Blandford Press, 1987.

21 Wildbur, Peter,   International Trademark Design, London,   Barrie   and   Jenkins, 1979.

ARTICLES

22 Arnheim, Rudolf,   "The   Images   of   Pictures   and Words",   Word and Image, Vol. 2, No. 4, Oct.-Dec. 1986, pp. 306-310.

23 Jackson, Val,   "Notes   and   Queries   -   The Armorials of The City of Dublin", Dublin Historical Record, Vol. 4, No. 1, Sept.-Nov. 1941, pp.33-38.

24 Muller, Marion,   "Heraldry", U & lc,   Vol. 12, No. 1, May 1985, pp. 20 - 23.

25 Tung, Mason,   "From Heraldry to Emblem", Word and Image, Vol. 3, No. 1, Jan.-Mar. 1987, pp. 86 - 94.

OTHER RESOURCES

26 General Registrar's   Joyce House,
   Office   8-11 Lombard Street East,
                        Dublin 2.

27 Mary Clark,   Archives Division,
   Archivist   City Hall,
                 Dublin 2.

28 National Archives   Four Courts,
                        Dublin 7.

29 Mary Pollard

Marsh's Library,
St. Patrick's Close,
Dublin 8.

30 Charles Benson
   Librarian

Old Library,
Trinity College,
Dublin 2.

31 Vincent Kinnane

Old Library,
Trinity College,
Dublin 2.

INTERVIEWS

32 Begley, Donal
   Chief Herald of Ireland,
   Heraldic Museum,
   Kildare Street,
   Dublin 2.

January 20, 1992.

33 Gillespie, Fergus

   Genealogical Officer,
   Heraldic Museum,
   Kildare Street,
   Dublin 2.

November 20, 1991
January 20, 1992

34 McCarthy, Muriel

   Curator,
   Marsh's Library,
   St. Patrick's Close,
   Dublin 8.

November 13, 1991
January 15, 1992