

Armorial Bearings

Azure a swan with wings expanded argent within a double tressure flory counter-flory or, on a chief gules a pale between two lions passant gardant or, thereon a rose gules barbed and seeded vert. Crest: On a wreath of the colours a lyre or. Mantling: Azure doubled or.

Granted by William Camden, Clarenceux.
15th October 1604.

THE ORIGINAL PATENT of arms has not survived and the above blazon is derived from records in the College of Arms.

Evidence that the Musicians were using arms before this grant is to be found in a manuscript of about 1590 in the British Museum. This compilation includes the "armes of several companies within the City of London" and gives a trick of the "Minstrels" showing: Azure a swan argent within a double tressure flory counter-flory also argent; a chief with a pale thereon is also given but without tinctures, and the compiler has added a note "No arms".

A Fellowship of Minstrels of London had been formed in the year 1500, with the consent of the Court of Common Council. Its members had formerly been under governance of the King's Minstrels, a body incorporated by Edward IV in 1469, and this early association no doubt explains the presence in the arms of the royal emblems of the lion and the rose. In 1604, the year of the grant of arms, the London Minstrels achieved incorporation by royal charter under the name of the Master, Wardens and Commonality of the Art or Science of the Musicians of London. The powers assigned to them included control over Musicians in the City of London and within three miles of the City. Since this territory which had been the province of the King's Minstrels, the new Company felt itself to be the lineal descendants of the chartered body of 1469, and the royal emblems set the seal on this assumption.

Another royal allusion may be the tressure flory counter-flory. This, tinctured gules, is a feature of the ancient royal arms of Scotland which were marshalled with those of England and Ireland on the accession of James IV of Scotland to the English throne in 1604. If its introduction into the arms of the Musicians' Company were out of compliment to King James who gave the Company its first charter, then the date 1590 accepted for the manuscript referred to above must be an error. This date is based upon the inclusion in the manuscript of the arms of Sir Christopher Hatton, "Lorde Chanselur", with the date of 1589 added. Hatton died in 1591, but it is by no means impossible that further additions were made to the volume after his death, and that the sketch of the Musicians' arms may well be a suggested design prepared in the year 1604. The association of this notable royal device with the Musicians' Company in the very year of James' accession seems to be beyond mere coincidence. On the other hand it must be noted that the double tressure flory counter-flory is known in English arms of an earlier date.

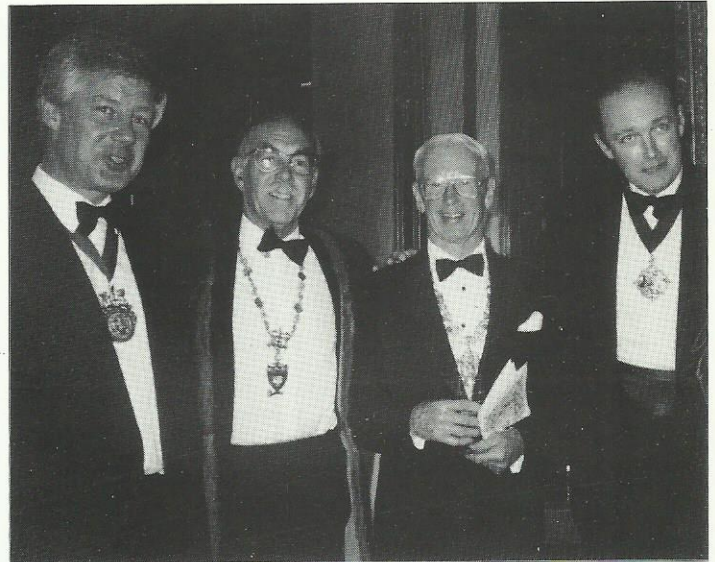
The swan and, in the crest, the lyre probably allude to the legend which has many variations but commonly tells how the soul of Apollo, the god of music, passed at death into a swan; swans are therefore said to sing at the approach of death because they are inspired by Apollo. The arms now usually appear without motto, but an early motto was: "A Deo et caelo symphonia" with a later substitute of the word "Harmony".

Extracted from the Armorial Bearings
of the Guilds of London.

BURGEES

A Liveryman has recently acquired a yacht and has made enquiries as to the rules concerning the flying of Company Burgees. It would seem that none exist nor would there be any restriction as to their use by Members of the Company subject to confirmation by the Court. Suggested designs would be appreciated for consideration and should be sent to the Clerk's Office.

MASTERS FOUR



Four Masters at our Midsummer Banquet. From the left, Messrs. Vincent Emms, the Glass Sellers' Company; Henry Willis 4, the Musicians Company; Bill Young, the Stationers' and Newspaper Makers Company; and Michael Chesterton, the Curriers' Company.

THE COMPANY DIARY to 31st March 1993

ITEMS IN BLUE ITALICS DENOTE LIVERY CLUB EVENTS

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|----------------|---|
| 16 Sept | <i>Livery Club AGM; Livery Luncheon; Master & Wardens Committee</i> |
| 30 Sept | Common Hall |
| 7 Oct | Court and Dinner |
| 11 Nov | Installation Court and Livery Dinner |
| 19 Nov | St Cecilia Festival Evensong, St Paul's Cathedral |
| 25 Nov | Festival of St Cecilia and Royal Concert |
| 26 Nov | Maisie Lewis Recital, Purcell Room |
| 1 Dec | <i>Livery Club visit to Clonter Opera for All at the Royal College of Music</i> |
| 1993 | |
| 4 Jan | Master and Wardens Committee
Special Awards Committee |
| 13 Jan | Court |
| 21 Jan | <i>Livery Club President's Evening</i> |
| 31 Jan | Closing date for copy for Preserve Harmony |
| 15 Feb | Joint Musical Evening with Stationers' Company |
| 10 Mar | Maisie Lewis Recital, Purcell Room
<i>Livery Club Event, preceded by Supper, National Theatre Restaurant</i> |