

THE ARMS OF THE COMPANY

Arms: Azure within a double tressure flory counterflory Or a Swan rousant Argent, on a chief Gules a Pale between two Lions passant guardant of the second thereon a Rose of the fourth barbed vert and seeded gold.

Crest: On a wreath of the colours An Ancient Lyre.

Preface to First Edition

I SHOULD not have been so bold as to undertake the work of revising the Company's *Handbook* had I not been greatly encouraged to do so by Pastmaster Sir Victor Schuster, Bart., during his notable Mastership. I had thought of such a venture from time to time after the 1915 *Handbook* became exhausted, rather over ten years ago, as I was so often asked by new Liverymen for an account of the Company's history, which I could no longer supply. Once or twice I had started on a few notes intended for a brief pamphlet but I was never able to find the leisure to make the researches necessary for their completion.

The delivery at my office in the summer of 1939 of a black tin box containing a great mine of information collected by the then lately deceased Pastmaster Arthur F. Hill, F.S.A., F.R.C.M., might have stimulated me to more sustained effort, had not other things claimed my attention that autumn and for the next six years. As it was, the enterprise had to suffer another long delay.

My original plan extended no further than to bring the various lists and other matters in the 1915 book up to date, using the historical notes in that book compiled by the late Pastmaster C. B. Edgar. It was not long, however, before I realised that a large part of the history would have to be re-written.

Two things in particular made this unavoidable. In the first place, the papers collected by Pastmaster Hill contained a quantity of new and interesting matter. Secondly, the earlier editions of the *Handbook* gave undue prominence to the Charter of James I, which (as will be seen) was revoked after about thirty years; while they failed altogether to stress the long and close intimacy which the Company enjoyed with the Corporation of the City of London, a connection which was far more