

The Story of the Kidd Arms and Crest

As to Walter Kid's Scottish ancestors, something perhaps can be deduced beginning with the story of the "Arms". There seems to be evidence that they were used as in figure[#] (1) by the families stemming from James 1744-1815, and from Benjamin 1745-1823. Ada George Kidd had a signet ring given to her father on his 21st birthday, i.e., 1847 by a cousin of her grandfather's who lived to be over 80. This could only be Joseph Kidd (1800-1883), younger son of Benjamin Kidd of Armagh (1745-1823).

The Arms as confirmed in 1891 on the application of Lt. Col. William Archibald Kidd, grandson of Archibald Kidd 1754-1833, are shown in figure (2). It is recorded that the Colonel acted without consulting the two other branches of the family who were using the arms as shown in figure 1, and that a considerable rumpus ensued. Particular objection was taken to the replacement of a fleur de lys by a rose and it was suggested that the Colonel engineered this, because he had a 'thing' against anything French. I have myself often wondered whether the arms of figure (1) were in fact handed down the generations from Walter, or whether they were adopted for reasons of social prestige as the family got richer and further up the social scale, to be used on silver and on notepaper, etc.? It is noteworthy that figure (1)

#[note added by William Kidd] - the folder in Franklin Kidd's archive containing coloured figures of arms lacks one corresponding to the description of Figure 1; those of figures 2, 3 and 4 are reproduced at the end of this document.

approximates to the description of Kidd Arms in Burke's Encyclopaedia of Heraldry 1844. Against this somewhat derogatory suggestion, one can set the fact of the Dunluce Stone with its obvious shield and space for arms and crest, with the initials W. and K. (Walter Kid) on either side. Walter, as we know, came from Scotland. Two Kyd coats of arms were entered in Scotland in the Lyon Court Edinburgh between 1672-1677 during the rush to have Arms recorded (figures 3 & 4). Pre-1672 manuscripts held in the Lyon Court give the Kyd Arms as "Argent, a pine tree eradicate vert, a hunting horn pendant from a branch Or, stringed Gules". The senior (figure 3), according to the Lord Lyon, of those recorded 1672-1677 is that of Patrick Kyd of Craigie, which adds to the above "three martlets of the third. Above the shield one helmet befitting his degree mantled gules doubled argent". The motto is on an escroll QUEM NON TORRET HIENS". The junior is that of William Kyd of Woodhill (figure 4). The motto is changed to "DONEC IMPLEAT ORBEM" and the martlets are replaced by "three mollets of the third, a crescent for difference". One should explain here that a crescent signifies a second son, a mullet a third, a martlet a fourth, a fifth a fleur de lys a sixth and a rose a seventh. One can interpret these arms as follows:-

- (1) An original grantee of Arms.
- (2) His third son adds three mullets on a chief. This crest not entered.
- (3) His fourth son adds three martlets on a chief. Patrick Kidd of Craigie (figure 3).
- (4) The second son of (2) above charges a mullet with a crescent, William Kyd of Woodhill (figure 4).
- (5) A sixth son of (2) above swaps a mullet for a fleur de lys, and incidentally changes the pine to an oak.

The Scottish Archers

At this stage I must tell you of the tradition with regard to the original grantee which provides a basis for the design on the shield of a tree with a horn hanging in its branches. An early Kidd from Scotland was a member of the body guard of the King of France, The King had been thrown from his horse during a boar hunt, and was treed by an attacking boar and sounded his hunting horn to summon aid. The man who arrived, killed the boar and rescued him, Was this Kidd.

So much for the legend. Now for fact. There was a body known as the Scottish Archers which for many years constituted a royal body guard in France, and their records

have been carefully collected and published.^[1] The muster rolls of Archers were made annually and at more frequent intervals. A facsimile sample is reproduced[#]. Under each Archer's signature (often a scrawl impossible to spell out), a clerkly hand has written the name as he would spell it in French, e.g., for a 'K' a 'Qu'. Further, as many names appear in successive rolls one can infer that a variant of qu. was gu., for example Quetre, Guetre, Guêtre appear in successive rolls. I found a Guillaume Quid in the muster roll for guard at a Chateau in Milan 1507, and a Jehan Gued (variants Guet, Guête, Gued, Guede) in the 1568-76 rolls. Both these I believe are clearly Kidds. Their approximate dates of birth would be William born 1485, and John born 1550, and it seems not unlikely that they came from the same family.

Angus, Dundee and the linen trade

Now these places, Craigie and Woodhill, the seats of Patrick and William of the Arms quoted above, are in Angus, in which are the towns of Dundee. Arbroath and Forfar on the east coast of Scotland, north of the Firth of Tay. The town of Perth, ancient capital of Scotland, is just over the border of Angus in the south.

1. "Scots-men-at-Arms and Life Guards in France 1418-1820". Two volumes by W. Forbes Leith, published Edinburgh 1882.

#[note added by William Kidd] - this facsimile not found with the text

The arms designated Figure (1) and described on p. 20 of Franklin Kidd's document was not found in the file with the other coloured drawings.

Kidd of Armagh (Figure 2 of Franklin Kidd)

The armorial definition on the back (as carefully lettered as the motto and label on the front).

Arms:- Argent a tree eradicated vert, pendant from the branches a bugle-horn or, stringed gules, on a chief engrailed azure a rose between two mullets of the field.

Crest:- an increscent argent, charged with a rose gules.

the back of this also has a printed label stating (!): "This is an illustration only and must not be regarded as in any way conferring a heraldic right to use the armorial bearings depicted"

Franklin Kidd placed a handwritten note on the front with a line pointing to the scalloped lower border of the blue "chief", saying 'not engrailed inverted' (or invected?), and a sketch showing the scallops the other way up. This annotation and the line has been edited out of the image below.



Patrick Kyd of Craigie (Figure 3 of Franklin Kidd)

Argent, a pine tree eradicated proper, with a bugle horn pendant upon one of the branches or, stringed gules, on a chief azure three martlets of the third. Above the shield one helmet befitting his degree mantled gules doubled argent. The motto is on an Escroll "QUEM NON TORRET HIEMS".

Volume 1, folio 173



William Kyd of Woodhill (Figure 4 of Franklin Kidd)

Argent, a pine tree eradicated proper, with a bugle-horne pendant upon one of the branches or, stringed gules, on a chief azure three mollets of the third, a crescent for difference. Above the shield one helmet befitting his degree mantled gules doubled argent. The motto is in one Escroll "DONEY UMPSEAT ORBEM".

Volume 1, folio 343



An Interpretation of the Kidd Mottos

"Donec Impleat Orbem" (Figure 2). Several sources have suggested that this means "until it fills its orb" or "until it fill the world". The motto does not make sense and there does not seem to be any relationship between the motto and the Coat of Arms.

A similar phrase "Donec rursus impleat orbem" is the motto of Somerville College at Oxford University. Over the years scholars have tried and failed to find a meaning for this motto as well.



"In Fairbairn's crests of the families of Great Britain and Ireland" it is confirmed that the Kidd Coat of Arms is as shown on a previous pages but it also explains that the Kidd 'Crest' is the crescent shown above.

The crescent is often used to refer to the new moon. If this is accepted then the motto "Donec Impleat Orbem" "until it fills its orb" or "until it fill the world". takes on a new meaning which the reader can interpret for himself.

Note: These are the Arms as confirmed in 1891 on the application of Lt. Col. William Archibald Kidd, grandson of Archibald Kidd 1754-1833 and were only for the use of him and his direct descendants .

"Quem non terrat niems" (Figure 3) (whom winter does not wither) Fortunately the meaning for this motto is given on page 29 of the material on North Ireland. The problem with this motto is that the Latin word for winter is "hiems" not "neims" . It is assumed that at some point the misspelled word was transcribed into the logo.

Note: These are the arms as recorded in 1672-1677 of Patrick Kyd of Craigie for his use and that of his direct descendants.

"Donne Compleat Orbem" (Figure 4) One can only assume that this motto is "Donec Impleat Orbem" and has been altered by mistake.

Note: These are the arms as recorded in 1672-1677 of William Kyd of Woodhill for his use and that of his direct descendants.

Obviously much of the above is speculation. There may well have been other explanations since the translations were going through medieval French, Scottish, English and Latin.

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