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PINEAPPLES, PELICANS AND PURSUIVANTS: HERALDRY IN JAMAICA, 1660 TO 2010

DUNCAN SUTHERLAND MA, PHD

Abstract

Jamaica has one of the oldest heraldic traditions in the Commonwealth, with two of the earliest grants of arms to a British colony and to a colonial city. Less well-known is its long tradition of personal heraldry, which saw over eighty grants made during the Georgian era when prosperous sugar planters sought to legitimise their family's use of arms or applied for new ones. From the beginning many arms granted to Jamaicans featured distinctive local charges otherwise only rarely found in British heraldry, making this a rewarding area for study. Personal heraldry has continued to a smaller extent in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

This project arose from the realisation that while heraldry in Canada, Australia and New Zealand have all received scholarly attention, the heraldic traditions of Jamaica – the fourth-largest Commonwealth realm – had not been researched in depth. There have been surveys of Jamaican church monuments which total about two hundred memorials featuring armorial bearings, but it is unclear how many were legitimately granted or inherited.¹ Analysis of the records of the College of Arms and of Lyon Court has uncovered over one hundred grants to Jamaican residents (or with a close Jamaican connection, such as a parent) between 1660 and 2010. This paper will explore a selection of arms from the Georgian era, when over eighty men of Jamaican residence, birth or descent were granted arms, and from the second half of the twentieth century, when about a dozen prominent Jamaicans received arms. A few corporate arms will also be examined.

Jamaican historical background

Jamaica is the third-largest island in the West Indies, and was originally inhabited by Indians called the Tainos. The Spanish under Columbus landed there in 1494 and settled in the early 1500s. In 1655 the island was invaded by an English expedition which had failed in its mission to capture another nearby Spanish colony. By then the Taino population had suffered a massive decline, but their language contributed a

¹ For example, see Philip Wright, *Monumental Inscriptions of Jamaica*, (London 1966), p. viii.

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Figure 1: The parishes of Jamaica.

number of words to English, including hurricane, barbeque, tobacco and even Jamaica, which comes from ‘Hamaika’ meaning ‘land of wood and water’.² From the 1670s onward Jamaica’s population became overwhelmingly African as a consequence of slaves being imported to serve the extremely lucrative sugar industry. Most plantation owners were absentee. There were a number of rebellions, and an uprising in 1831–32 hastened the abolition of slavery throughout the Empire in 1838. In the 1940s Jamaicans obtained universal franchise and developed a two-party system, before independence was achieved on 6 August 1962. Jamaica is the Caribbean’s largest Anglophone country, divided into twelve parishes (**Figure 1**), and there are large Jamaican diasporas in Britain, Canada and the United States.

The arms of Jamaica

Granted by royal warrant on 3 February 1661, the arms of Jamaica are shown here as carved on the ceiling of the University of the West Indies chapel (**Figure 2**). It was only the third coat of arms granted for a British colony, after Nova Scotia (c.1625) and Newfoundland (1638), and the last for over two hundred years.³ The original royal warrant is lost, but the arms and great seal are recorded in Garter Sir Edward Walker’s book. While Nova Scotia received the first coat of arms showing an indigenous person from a colony, and Newfoundland had two indigenous supporters and an elk for a crest, the Jamaican arms made even greater use of local symbols. The shield is argent with five pineapples on a cross gules, the crest is a crocodile on a log and the supporters are female and male Tainos. The bow is inaccurate as Tainos did not use them.⁴

² Olive Senior, *Encyclopedia of Jamaican Heritage* (St Andrew, Jamaica 2003), p. 473.

³ Conrad Swan, *Canada: Symbols of Sovereignty* (Toronto 1977), pp. 6,86,122. Malta and Gibraltar received arms before becoming British colonies.

⁴ The original blazon described the crest as an alligator. Jamaica actually has crocodiles, and this description was corrected in 1957.

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*Figure 2: Arms of Jamaica from the chapel ceiling, University of the West Indies.
(photo by DS)*

Of special note are the royal helmet and mantling, a reminder that these were the arms of the Sovereign in right of Jamaica. The newly-restored Charles II wished to take the island, captured by Cromwell's forces, under his special patronage, and the attributed designer was royal chaplain William Sancroft, future Archbishop of Canterbury. Charles also sent Jamaica a parliamentary mace and assumed the title 'Lord of Jamaica' which had no equivalent in any other colony.⁵ In the twentieth century some Commonwealth countries' arms included the royal helm, but no others

⁵ Frank Cundall to Sir Leslie Probyn (copy), 30 January 1906, Letter-Book of Institute of Jamaica, MS 23 Vol. 9 (August 1904–February 1906), Jamaica National Library; Sir Leslie Probyn to Viscount Milner, 5 June 1919, TNA CO 137/732.

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received the royal mantling.⁶ However, for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the helmet and mantling disappeared from use, and there was confusion about the tincture of the cross. A window in Spanish Town cathedral depicted the arms with a cross azure, and for thirty-seven years Jamaican coins showed the cross tricked azure with horizontal lines.⁷ Jamaica's right to the helmet and mantling was re-established in the 1930s and 1950s respectively, and confirmed by a new royal warrant in 1957, which also clarified the correct colours.⁸ On independence the government decided to retain the arms, but replaced the motto *Indus Uterque Serviet Uni* with the nation-building sentiment *Out of Many, One People*.⁹ In 1983 the government announced a competition to design new arms more representative of modern Jamaica, but was dissuaded from proceeding further by strong public opposition.¹⁰

The arms of 1661 influenced later Jamaican heraldic design and iconography. The crocodile became associated with the military as early as 1780, and remains on the Jamaica Regiment's badge.¹¹ A pineapple featured on the arms of the Anglican diocese (granted in 1824) and the fruit became the most popular charge in Jamaican personal heraldry, with about twenty examples dating as far back as 1770. Europeans of this era celebrated pineapples for their flavour, rarity and appearance and used them in art and decoration. In 1757 Sir Thomas Parkyns of Nottinghamshire replaced his crest of a pine cone with a pineapple, presumably as the latter was more prestigious.¹² It is unsurprising that men connected with a pineapple-producing island would choose it as a personal emblem.

In contrast, early Australian and New Zealand armigers avoided those countries' distinctive local flora and fauna, wanting their arms to resemble those of Englishmen.¹³ The early embrace of distinctive local charges is a pleasing characteristic of Jamaican heraldry. About half of all known Jamaican personal grants of arms have such

⁶ Canada, the senior dominion in the Empire, received the royal helm when it was finally granted arms in 1921, 260 years after Jamaica.

⁷ After the window was damaged the replacement had a cross gules but still has a peer's mantling. Astley Clerk, 'Notes on Jamaican heraldry' (c.1918), 7/17/151, Jamaica Archives, Spanish Town; Leslie Alexander, 'The Arms of Jamaica', *Genealogical Mag* (Oct 1899) p. 242.

⁸ A.W. Saunders, 'The Jamaican Coat of Arms', *Daily Gleaner*, 10 May 1955; 'Jamaica gets new Arms' *Daily Gleaner*, 26 July 1957. The pineapples were also established as Or rather than proper.

⁹ Jamaica's motto will be 'Out of Many One People', *Daily Gleaner*, 4 April 1962. The original motto, meaning 'Each Indian shall serve one [lord]', referred to the East and West Indies serving Britain. It adapted a quote from Horace referring to Carthaginians in Africa and Spain serving Rome. (John M. Bridgham (letter), 'Horace on a postage stamp', *The Classical Journal* vol 22 pt 5 (1927), p. 382.

¹⁰ 'Coat of Arms – no Change', *Daily Gleaner*, 25 November 1983. An opinion poll found six percent of respondents supported replacing the arms, half were opposed and 44 percent were undecided ('Opinion poll 12', *Daily Gleaner*, 30 November 1983).

¹¹ 'The Alligator in Jamaica', *West India Committee Circular* (16 November 1939) vol 54 no.1073, p. 451.

¹² CA Ms Grants 10/124–6.

¹³ David V. White, 'Early New Zealand grants of arms', *Perth 2000: Let records speak: Proceedings of the ninth Australasian Congress on Genealogy and Heraldry* (Perth 2000), vol. 2, p. 286.

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charges. They are either ornamental, allusions to the source of the owner's wealth, or a patriotic use of the independent country's national symbols.

Personal heraldry – the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

Many settlers who arrived from 1655 onward brought with them coats of arms to which they were not necessarily legitimately entitled; these were often the rightful arms of unrelated armigers with the same surname. From the 1760s onward the descendants of settlers applied to the College for genuine grants, and received new arms incorporating features of the arms their ancestors had assumed. Between 1760 and 1830 over eighty men, many of them sugar planters, are known to have received arms, far more than in any other period. This 'golden age' of heraldry in Jamaica roughly overlapped with the sugar industry's late eighteenth-century zenith and its early nineteenth-century decline.

Grants of arms were expensive and the average white Jamaican was very wealthy, but few came from lofty backgrounds. In 1722 the rector of Kingston, William May, told the Bishop of London that there were 'not six families who are well descended as gentlemen on the whole island', but with newfound prosperity came a desire to acquire marks of status.¹⁴ Despite their wealth, Caribbean-born whites had difficulty gaining social acceptance from their counterparts in Britain, more so than gentlemen from French Atlantic colonies had in France.¹⁵ Claiming relation to gentle families with a shared surname, and acquiring arms, was a way for these men to establish a status befitting their fortunes.

Most Jamaican personal arms were granted after 1760, but there were two as early as 1722. One was from Lord Lyon to James Campbell of Grandvale, Westmoreland, Jamaica; he may have been the same James Campbell who represented Westmoreland in the House of Assembly in the 1700s and 1710s.¹⁶ The other was from the College of Arms to John Gardner of Southwark (d. 1734), son of the late John Gardner of St Catherine parish. This was possibly the same John Gardner of St Catherine (d. 1722) who sat in the Assembly.¹⁷ The younger Gardner applied for arms based on those of his relatives the Gardners of Dorset, but replaced the three escallops sable on the chevron with *Orange branches fructed proper* and added an orange branch to the crest in the beak of the griffin (**Figure 3**).¹⁸ According to Fox-Davies, oranges are rare in British heraldry. The Spanish introduced them to Jamaica, and it is possible that Gardner chose the fruit as an allusion to the island.¹⁹

¹⁴ 'History of Rose Hall, St Thomas in the Vale', *Daily Gleaner*, 15 September 1932.

¹⁵ Francois-Joseph Ruggiu, 'Extraction, wealth and industry: The ideas of noblesse and gentility in the English and French Atlantics (17th-18th Centuries)', *History of European Ideas* vol 34 pt 4 (2008), p. 444.

¹⁶ Lyon Office, PRAB Scot vol 1, p. 279; W.A. Feurtado, *Official and other personages of Jamaica from 1655 to 1790* (Kingston 1896), p. 17.

¹⁷ Noel Brooks Livingstone, *Sketch Pedigrees of some of the early settlers in Jamaica* (Kingston 1909), p. 34.

¹⁸ CA record Ms Grants 7/176; Feurtado, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

¹⁹ A.C. Fox-Davies, *Complete Guide to Heraldry* (New York 1978), p. 208; Senior, *op. cit.*, p.361.

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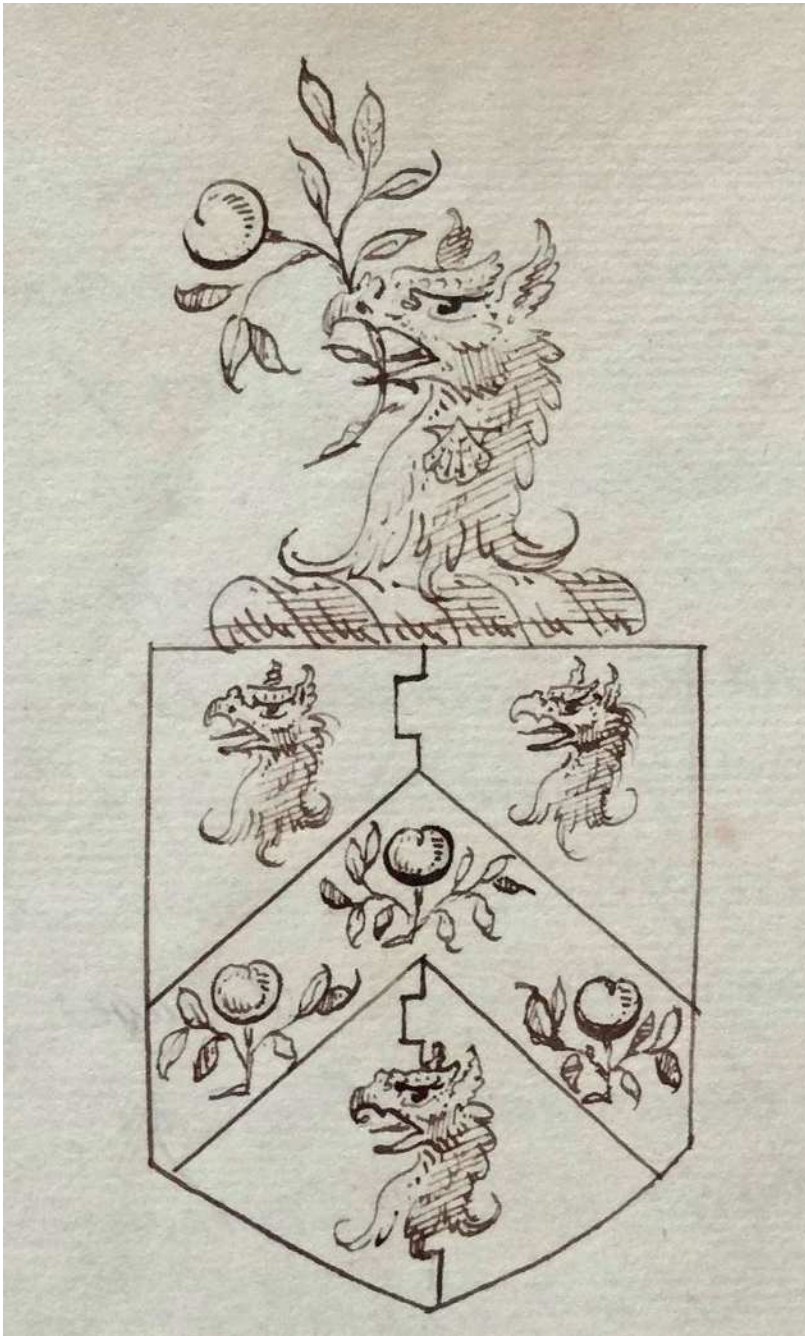


Figure 3: John Gardner, 1722 College of Arms MS Grants 7 p 176. This and subsequent images from CA MS Grants reproduced by gracious permission of the Kings, Herald and Pursuivants of Arms.

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The first Jamaican-born Englishman was Richard James, born in Port Royal in late 1655. He became Custos of three parishes and a colonel in the Hanover militia, lived to 103, and had fourteen children by two successive wives.²⁰ His father came from Glamorganshire and used arms which were confirmed in 1772 by a grant to Richard's son Brigadier-General Montague James (1713–81), Custos of Hanover. These were *azure on a chevron between three lions erminois as many escallops gules*. The crest *a demi lion erminois holding an escallop gules*. The grant included the descendants of Montague's father and uncle.²¹ A great-great-great-grandson of the uncle was Montague Rhodes James (1862–1936), provost of Eton College and the famed ghost story writer, whose grandfather had come from Jamaica. In his memory these arms appear on a stained glass window in the chapel of Eton College, where Brigadier-General James had also studied (**Figure 4**).²²

Gothic novelist William Thomas Beckford, (1760–1844) was the son of Jamaican-born William Beckford (d.1770), Lord Mayor of London, and heir to one of the world's largest fortunes. The writer's great-grandfather Peter Beckford was an early English settler who established Jamaica's wealthiest sugar dynasty and became lieutenant governor. Peter's ancestry was described as 'shadowy and humble' but his grave in Spanish Town cathedral bears arms featuring three martlets and a chevron charged with an eagle.²³ In 1791 William Thomas Beckford received arms resembling Peter's but added *a bordure or charged with a tressure flory gules*, with *a collar flory gules* added to the heron crest (**Figure 5**). This acknowledged his mother Maria's descent from King James II of Scotland through the Earl of Abercorn.²⁴ His mother's lineage, as it was then incorrectly understood, allowed him to receive thirty quarterings in 1808 (ten of which were posthumously disallowed) and he 'upgraded' to a double tressure flory in 1810.²⁵ He expressed his heraldic enthusiasm at Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire, where he decorated the vault bosses, windows, fabrics and furniture with his arms and quarterings, and armorial representations of seventy-seven Knights of the Garter to whom he and his wife, a daughter of the Earl of Aboyne, claimed relation.²⁶ Spiralling construction costs combined with collapsing sugar revenues left him financially ruined, and Fonthill Abbey was demolished after a partial collapse.²⁷ Beckford remains a common surname in Jamaica.

²⁰ The Custos is the principal magistrate for each parish. Today the role is largely ceremonial but historically he was a more important figure. (Senior, op. cit., p. 143).

²¹ CA Ms Grants 12/201.

²² Hugh Paget, 'The early history of the James family of Jamaica', *Jamaica Historical Review* (December 1948) vol 1 pt 3 pp. 260–73. I am grateful to David Broomfield for making me aware of this window.

²³ Richard.B. Sheridan, 'Peter Beckford (d.1770)', *New DNB*; Senior, op. cit., p.53.

²⁴ CA Ms Grants 17/415; J.H. Lawrence-Archer, *Monumental Inscriptions of the British West Indies* (London 1875), pp. 26–8.

²⁵ Thomas Woodcock and John Martin Robinson, *The Oxford Guide to Heraldry* (Oxford 1988), p. 134; 'Fonthill Abbey', *Gent's Mag.* (Sept 1822) p.201, (Nov 1822), p. 409.

²⁶ Matthew Parker, *The Sugar Barons* (London 2011), pp. 339, 353; 'Fonthill Abbey', *Gent's Mag.* (November 1822), p. 409.

²⁷ Anita McConnell, 'William Thomas Beckford, (1760–1844)' *New DNB*.



Figure 4: Window for Montague Rhodes James in Eton College Chapel. (photo by DS)
Taken by permission of Lord Waldegrave, Provost of Eton.

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Figure 5: William Beckford 1791, CA MS Grants 17 p 414.

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A noteworthy grant of arms was made to John Palmer (d. 1797), privy councillor, Custos of St James parish, and builder in the 1770s of Rose Hall great house near Montego Bay.²⁸ Today Rose Hall is one of Jamaica's most popular heritage sites, its fame due partly to the legend of Palmer's great-nephew's murderous wife. Palmer received arms in 1791, the year before his departure from Rose Hall due to financial problems (**Figure 6**).²⁹ The crest is a griffin, and the shield has a *greyhound courant on a chief azure*, a symbol used by other English Palmers.³⁰ The most notable feature is the three banana birds proper, also known as Jamaican orioles.³¹ This common bird has a loud call and attractive plumage, and is the only known usage of Jamaican fauna in personal arms prior to the 1960s.

While Jamaican fauna was heraldically rare, European or mythical animals were more common, and sometimes found in canting arms. A good example are the bears on the arms granted in 1792 to Edward Barrett (1734–98) of Cinnamon Hill, Montego Bay. He was one of Jamaica's largest landowners and the great-grandson of a veteran of the conquest. His arms are based on those of Barrett as first recorded in the 1575 Cambridgeshire visitation: *argent a chevron between three bears sable*.³² The Jamaican Barretts reversed the colours, added three pineapples to the chevron, and charged the griffin on the crest with a pineapple (**Figure 7**).³³

By 1798 Edward's three sons were dead, leaving two young grandsons as his heirs. His son-in-law Charles Moulton changed the boys' names to Moulton Barrett, and applied for them to receive these arms.³⁴ Samuel Moulton Barrett (1787–1837) became a member of the Jamaican Assembly, and MP for Richmond in Yorkshire. His brother Edward (1786–1857) spent little time in Jamaica, and is remembered as the father of poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning.³⁵ In 1815 Charles Moulton, Custos of St Ann, received his own arms and the Barrett and Moulton arms were quartered by later generations.³⁶ Today visitors to another former Barrett residence, Greenwood great house near Montego Bay, can see the crest and arms on historic uniform buttons, china, furniture and bookplates.

In 1794 arms were granted to Charles Gordon (c.1746–1829) of Braco, Trelawny parish. Like other Jamaicans of Scottish ancestry he used established clan symbols on his arms (**Figure 8**).³⁷ The traditional Gordon arms featured a crest of a buck's head erased proper in a coronet, and three boars' heads on the shield (as an early

²⁸ Feurtado, op. cit., p. 74; *Jamaica Almanac* (Kingston 1788), p. 85.

²⁹ Joseph Shore and John Stewart, *In Old St James Jamaica* (London 1952), pp. 60–2; Geoffrey Yates, 'Death of a Legend', *Daily Gleaner*, 21 November 1965.

³⁰ Papworth, vol. 1, p. 35.

³¹ CA Ms Grants 17/408.

³² John W. Clay (Ed.), *The Visitation of Cambridgeshire Made in ao 1575* (London 1897), p. 92.

³³ CA Ms Grants 18/121.

³⁴ R.A. Barrett, *The Barretts of Jamaica* (London 2000), pp. 21, 27, 30; CA Ms Grants 20/110.

³⁵ Marjorie Stone, 'Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806–1861)', *New DNB*.

³⁶ CA Ms Grants 29/25.

³⁷ There are eighteen known grants from Lord Lyon in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but English grants to Scottish-Jamaicans, who were quite prominent in colonial society, also used traditional clan charges.

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Figure 6: John Palmer 1791, CA MS Grants 17 p 408.

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Figure 7: Edward and Samuel Moulton-Barrett 1798, CA MS Grants 20 p 110.

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Figure 8: Charles Gordon 1794, CA MS Grants 18 p 308.

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Gordon reputedly saved the Scottish king from a boar). Charles Gordon used the clan motto meaning ‘*By spirit not by craft*’, added two spears and an Eastern Crown to his shield, and placed a sugar cane in the stag’s mouth. He produced sugar and rum at Braco.³⁸ Gordon died in Great Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire in 1829 and bequeathed to his son silver plate with these arms and crest.³⁹ This is one of several Jamaican personal arms featuring sugar being held by an animal. Other examples occur of sugar cane as a freestanding charge, and in two eighteenth century examples, being cut by a slave. Sugar production peaked in 1805, in a decade which saw Jamaica becoming the world’s largest coffee producer, after growers fleeing unrest in Saint-Domingue (present-day Haiti) settled in Jamaica.⁴⁰

During the 1800s coffee appeared on three known coats of arms, including one granted in 1810 to merchant Samuel Virgin (c.1738–1815) of St Marylebone and Hope Penn, Clarendon parish.⁴¹ His arms (**Figure 9**) include lilies, a pineapple, and the astrological symbol for Virgo. The Virgo sign is a pun on his name, to which the lilies also allude as symbols of the Blessed Virgin.⁴² His crest was an allegorical figure of Hope leaning on an anchor (an heraldic symbol of hope) and holding a coffee plant sprig, alluding to his estate at Hope Penn which produced coffee from the 1790s until the 1810s.⁴³ The long-leaved sprig depicted bears little resemblance to an actual coffee plant, but these arms are an interesting product of the period before the coffee industry’s decline during the Napoleonic wars.⁴⁴ *Papworth’s Ordinary* has no listings for coffee.

The arms of Michael Benignus Clare (1777–1832) charged with three chevrons gules (**Figure 10**), and granted in 1821, are based on the twelfth-century de Clare arms, which also appear on the arms of Clare College, Cambridge. Clare was a medical doctor who emigrated to Jamaica in 1798 and became inspector general of hospitals, surgeon general to the workhouse, poorhouse and gaol in Spanish Town, physician general to the militia, and a privy counsellor.⁴⁵ He received the French Legion of Honour for his care for French refugees and prisoners of war, a knighthood in 1822 and was a provincial Grand Master of the Freemasons. He was also despatched by Jamaica’s governor to treat the ailing Simon Bolivar, but did not arrive in time.⁴⁶

³⁸ Crop Accounts 23 (1796), 1B/11/4/23, Jamaica Archives, Spanish Town.

³⁹ For his obituary, *Gent’s Mag* vol.99, part 1 (1829), p. 651; Will of Charles Gordon (1829), TNA, PROB 11/1758.

⁴⁰ Senior, op. cit., p. 468.

⁴¹ *The Monthly Magazine*, vol. 39 (1815), p. 273; *Survey of London* (London 1949) Vol.22, pp. 125–6.

⁴² CA Ms Grants 26/15.

⁴³ *Crop Accounts*, Volume 35 (1805), 1B/11/4/35, p. 43, Jamaica Archives, Spanish Town. A woman with an anchor also appeared on the former arms of Cape Colony and Cape Town, alluding to the Cape of Good Hope.

⁴⁴ Verene Shepherd and Kathleen Monteith, ‘Pen keepers and coffee planters in a Sugar Plantation Society’, in V.A. Shepherd (Ed.), *Slavery without Sugar* (Gainesville 2002), pp. 85, 88–9.

⁴⁵ For his obituary, *Gent’s Mag*, vol. 102, part 2 (1832) p. 390; Feurtado Manuscript, vol. CHA-COA, National Library of Jamaica.

⁴⁶ H.P. Jacobs, ‘The French Influence on Jamaica’, *Jamaican Historical Review* (1978), vol. 11, p. 26; ‘A Bird of Passage’, *Daily Gleaner*, 2 January 1918.; Lawrence-Archer, op. cit., p.54.

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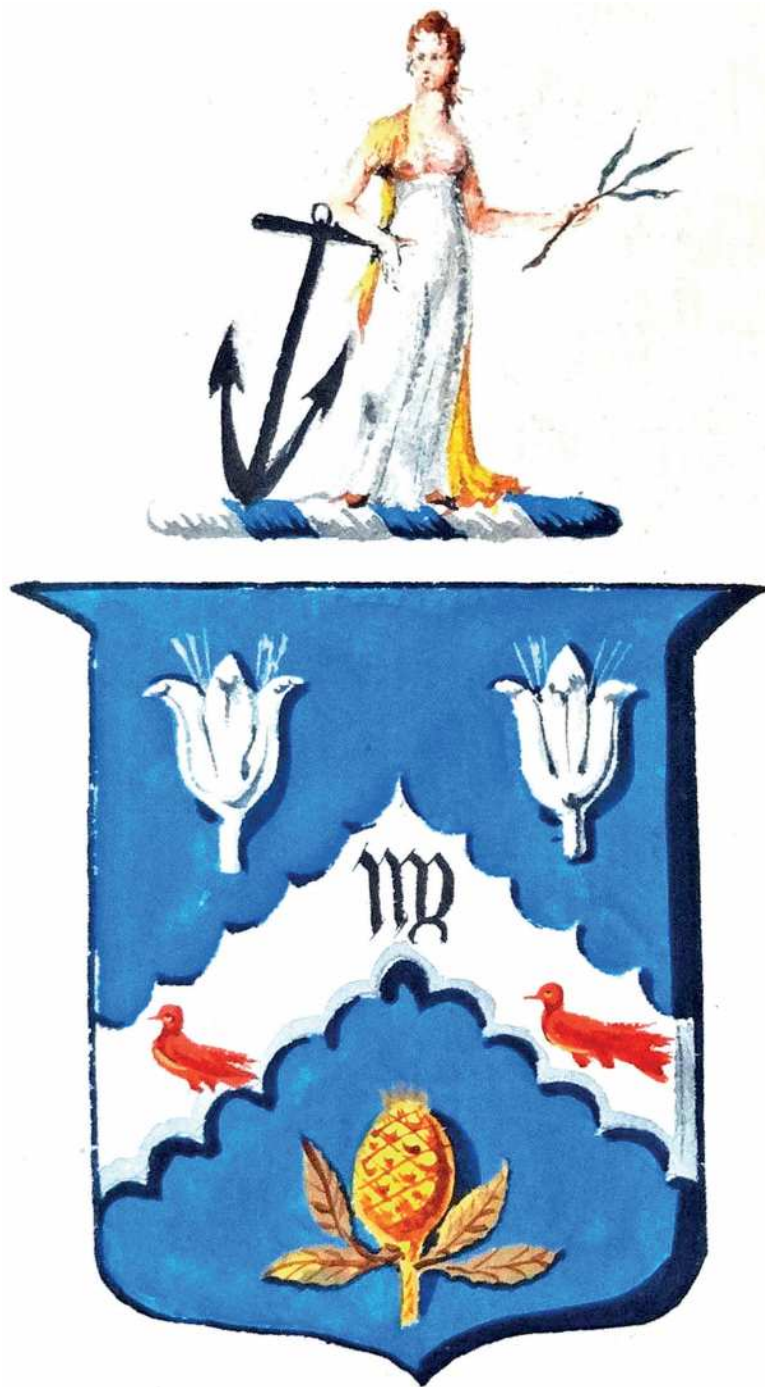


Figure 9: Samuel Virgin 1810, CA MS Grants 26 p 15.

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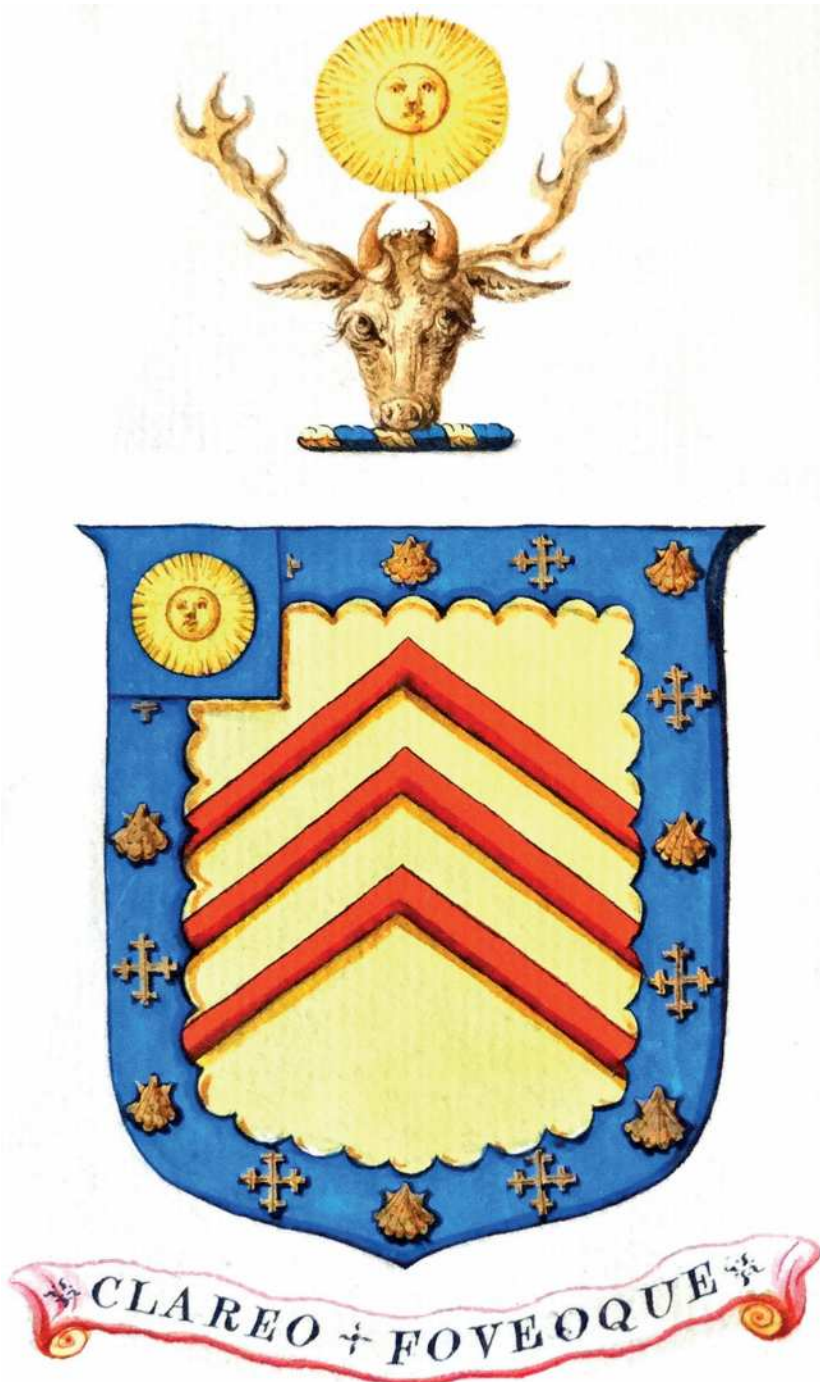


Figure 10: Michael Clare 1821, CA MS Grants 32 p 221.

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Sir Michael added a bordure engrailed azure with escallops and cross-crosslets or to the Clare arms. A sun in its splendour appears in a canton and on the crest. This may allude to the motto 'I am bright and I cherish' which in Latin cants on his name – 'Clareo Foveoque'. A blot on his career was his defence of slavery as a witness before a British parliamentary committee, not long before he died in 1832.⁴⁷

The abolition of slavery in 1838 hastened the decline of the sugar industry which had begun in the 1810s.⁴⁸ There is likely a connection between sugar's decline and the reduction in Jamaican applications for arms from this time. A search of the College of Arms records found just twelve grants of arms to Jamaicans between 1830 and 1950. These include a rare combined grant to three women – Ithamar, Letitia-Ann and Susana May of Bath. They were the elderly daughters of Rose Hering May (1736/7–1791), sugar planter from Clarendon, and granddaughters of the Rev. William May after whom Clarendon's capital May Pen was named.⁴⁹ Rose died in 1791, but his daughters only applied for arms in 1838. The arms *gules a fess between eight billets or* was used by other English Mays, but Rose and his daughters added to the fess a tree between two roses, possibly a pun on his name.⁵⁰

Personal heraldry – the twentieth century

Not surprisingly the twentieth century saw few arms granted to Jamaicans, of which most followed independence. There was a correlation with honours – seven of the twelve known Jamaicans who received arms between 1958 and 1995 were knights, though many other twentieth century Jamaicans were knighted and did not seek arms, despite being eligible. As well as personal arms there were at least seven corporate arms granted in Jamaica between 1949 and 2000 – about twice as many as in the previous three hundred years. It is possible that these corporate grants, and the restoration of the proper appearance of the national arms in the 1950s, raised public awareness, and encouraged the return of personal heraldry.

Compared to the Georgian era, an even higher proportion of modern Jamaican arms include at least one distinctively local emblem. This was perhaps influenced by the promotion of national symbols after independence. There were multiple appearances on personal and corporate arms by the country's national flower the *Lignum vitae*, and national bird, the Streamertail Hummingbird. The green, black and gold of the post-independence Jamaican flag (the only national flag featuring neither red, white nor blue) were used as a subtle expression of national pride. Two elements from the Jamaican arms, the pineapple and the crocodile, have been used on new grants. The pineapple, although no longer as prestigious as in Georgian times, has remained the most popular charge, while the crocodile made its appearance on new grants for the first time in three hundred years.

⁴⁷ Jackie Ranston, *Masonic Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, Vol. 1* (Jamaica 2017), pp. 145–6, 156.

⁴⁸ Full emancipation was achieved in 1838 after four years of a compulsory 'apprenticeship'.

⁴⁹ Feurtado, op. cit., p. 60; *Jamaica Almanac* (1783), p. 89; Notes on Parish of Clarendon, *Daily Gleaner*, 7 June 1927; History of Rose Hall, St Thomas in the Vale, *Daily Gleaner*, 15 September 1932.

⁵⁰ CA Ms Grants 43/187; Papworth p. 727.

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When Jamaica gained independence in 1962 one of the architects of its constitution was non-elected cabinet member Neville Ashenheim (1900–84), a businessman and lawyer. He was knighted for this work, became Jamaica's first Ambassador to the United States (1962–67) and received arms in 1966 (**Figure 11**).⁵¹ The *Mountain Ash tree fructed proper* on the shield is a pun on his surname, which means 'House of Ash'. The *two mullets argent fimbriated azure* evoke the flag of the United States, and *the goat's head caboshed or* is a symbol of Spanish general Gonzalvo de Cordoba, who fought in the reconquest of Granada and was nicknamed 'the Old Goat'. Although Ashenheim's relation to Cordoba himself is unproven, three generations of Ashenheims married women surnamed Cordova. The crest of *a demi lion azure* is taken from the grave of his great-grandfather Lewis Ashenheim in Falmouth. Lewis' lion holds a sceptre and Neville's holds a parliamentary mace, acknowledging his role in drafting the constitution. Lewis Ashenheim was Scotland's first Scottish-born Jewish medical graduate and emigrated to Jamaica in 1841, where he became a pioneer in anaesthetics.⁵² The crest's three pineapples and two thistles slipped reflect this heritage. The motto 'Vigilans Honoris' (Vigilant of Honour) appeared on their family silver, but the College of Arms changed this to 'Firm of Honour'.⁵³

Two years later, in 1968, arms were granted to Sir Alexander Bustamante (1884–1977), Jamaica's first Prime Minister, from 1962 until 1967. A former trade union leader, and founder of one of Jamaica's two political parties, he became a Knight Grand Cross of the British Empire upon retirement. On the shield (**Figure 12**), the per chevron grady partition line represents the steps of his career reaching the peak of freedom. The charges are a civic wreath, (an emblem of excellence in civic endeavour), a ceremonial mace (for parliamentary rule), and two Crowns Vallery, (a Roman military honour made from the stakes of a palisade). He was born William Alexander Clarke to a father of Irish ancestry, so his dexter supporter was a wolfhound. However, during an extended period living in Latin America he assumed the surname Bustamante and a Latin manner and style of dress. The sinister supporter is a fighting bull, representing his adopted Spanish identity.⁵⁴ His crest is a Streamertail Hummingbird (or 'Doctor Bird'), possibly making its heraldic debut, above two machetes in saltire. Machetes are widely used in Jamaican agriculture although Somerset Herald Walter Verco noted that they might also represent a weapon.⁵⁵ Bustamante requested as a motto 'I mean what I say and say what I mean' but Somerset struggled to translate this into Latin. The motto instead means 'A mind

⁵¹ CA Ms Grants 129/267.

⁵² Marilyn Delevante and Anthony Alberga, *The Island of One People: An Account of the Jews of Jamaica* (Kingston 2006), p. 132; H.P. Jacobs, *Falmouth 1791–1970* (Jamaica 1970), p. 15.

⁵³ Correspondence with Michael Ashenheim, 2015.

⁵⁴ George E. Eaton, *Alexander Bustamante and Modern Jamaica* (Kingston 1995), pp. 2, 15, 28; Senior, op. cit., p. 82.

⁵⁵ Theories for the origin of the name 'Doctor Bird' include its long tail resembling a stethoscope or doctors' traditional black tail coats (Senior, op. cit., p. 238). A Doctor Bird appeared on the arms of Lord Rosenheim, President of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons in 1971.

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Figure 11: Neville Ashenheim 1966, CA MS Grants 129 p 267.

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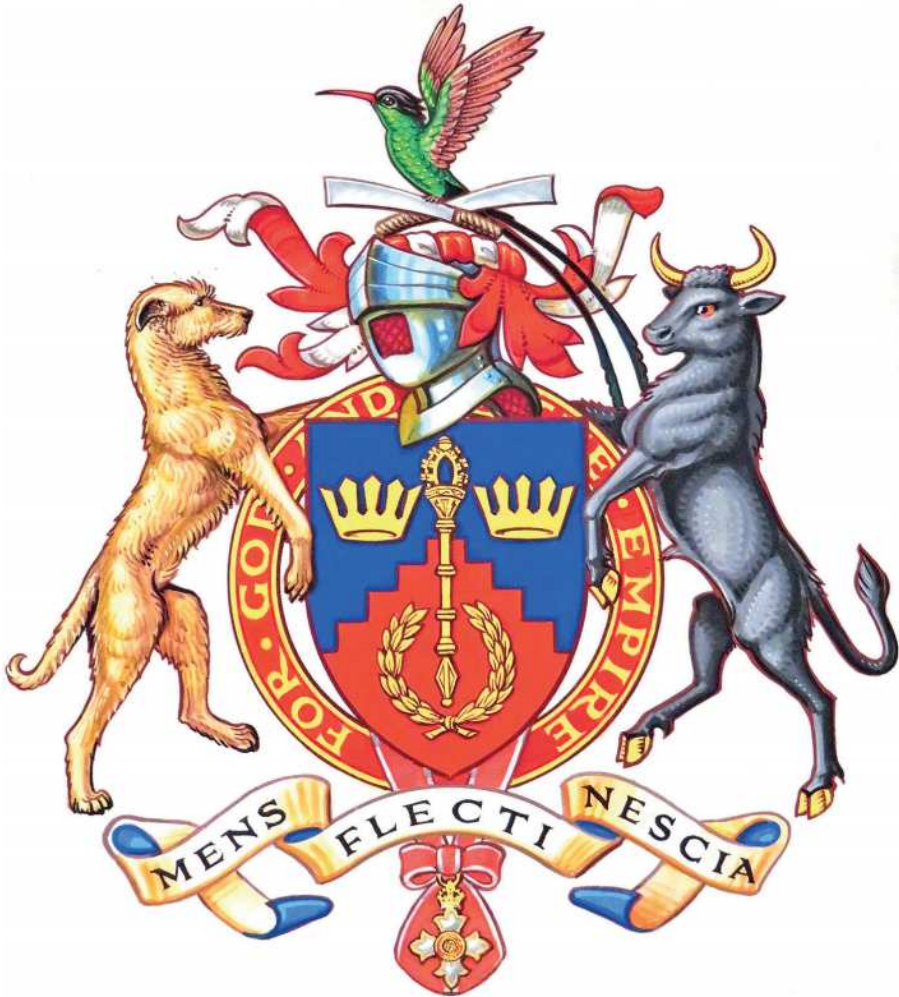


Figure 12: Sir Alexander Bustamante, courtesy of the Jamaica National Heritage Trust.

that cannot be bent'.⁵⁶ Having got used to official flags as prime minister, Bustamante had heraldic flags made for his car and his flagpole.

Another public servant of the post-independence era was Sir Laurence Lindo (1900–80), Jamaica's first high commissioner to Britain (1962–74) and the first Commonwealth representative to become dean of the London diplomatic corps.⁵⁷ He declined to apply for arms after becoming a Knight Grand Cross of the Royal

⁵⁶ CA Ms Grants 132/239; Walter Verco, *Somerset Herald*, to Herbert MacDonald, 7 May 1968, Bustamante House, Kingston.

⁵⁷ *The Times*, 9 May 1980.

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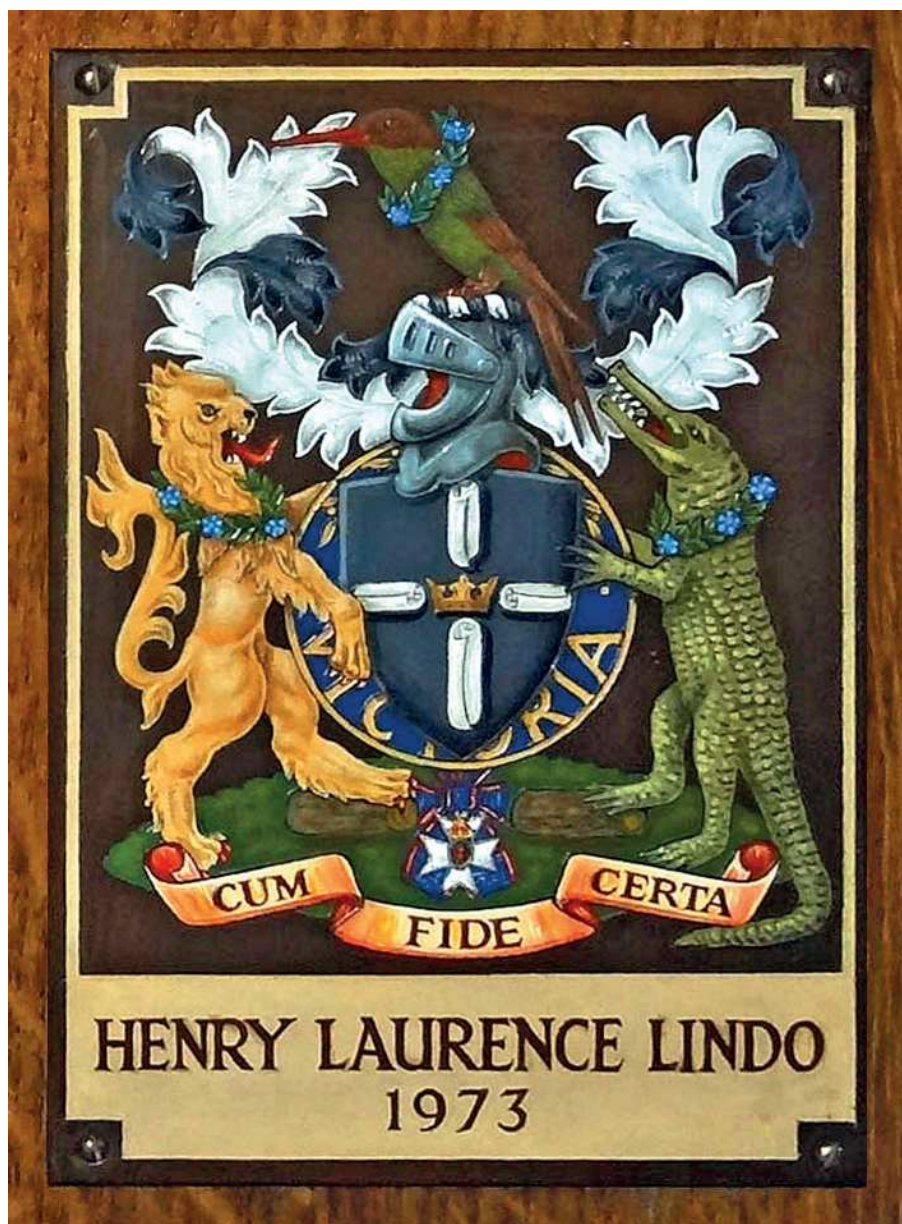


Figure 13: Sir Laurence Lindo, Savoy Chapel. (photo by DS)

HERALDRY IN JAMAICA

Victorian Order, but his family had them devised as a tribute after his death as part of a grant to his son-in-law in 1987 (**Figure 13**). The Ancient Crown in the centre of the shield indicates service to the crown and is surrounded by four rolls of parchment to represent his various duties as High Commissioner, and his four roles as a school master, civil servant, Administrator of Dominica (he was the first West Indian to hold the position) and acting Governor of the Windward Islands (which he did twice).⁵⁸ The crest has two national symbols, the Doctor Bird and Lignum vitae flowers, which are also worn as chaplets by the supporters, a British lion and Jamaican crocodile standing on logs of the Lignum vitae tree.⁵⁹ The shield and supporters display patriotic colours of or, sable and vert evoking the Jamaican flag. The motto 'Cum Fide Certa' was chosen as the Latin equivalent of 'indubitably', a word he used when politely disagreeing with someone. These arms appear on a stall plate commemorating Sir Laurence at London's Savoy Chapel, alongside those of other Knights Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order.⁶⁰

The most recent arms granted to a Jamaican resident were those of Maurice Facey (1925–2013), a major figure in finance, tourism, agriculture, property development and the arts. His father was Cecil Boswell Facey, and the arms, granted in 1995 (**Figure 14**), were modelled on those of an unrelated Boswell found in the College of Arms' archives. These were quartered with lions rampant and cinquefoils. Facey's arms replaced the cinquefoils with pineapples. The demi lion crest holds a sword and an anchor, as Facey enjoyed sailing, and was an anchor of the community. At the suggestion of then Richmond Herald Patric Dickinson, the arms include the ribbon and medal of the Order of Jamaica. These are the only known arms to feature a Jamaican national honour.

The motto dates back to the *cause célèbre* of Mr Facey's 1952 wedding. His eighteen-year old bride's parents opposed the marriage so the couple required a special dispensation from the governor. Soon after the wedding his wife Valerie, an artist, drew a coat of arms with the motto 'Toujours Ensemble' ('Together forever') expressing her hope for their future. Forty-three years later the motto was incorporated into his arms, and in the end the marriage lasted sixty-one years. Facey also received a badge featuring a crocodile or holding an anchor in its mouth, modelled on the Bank of Jamaica's logo of a crocodile with a key (**Figure 15**). This in turn was based on the Bank of England's symbol of a lion with a key.⁶¹

In the twenty-first century there have been no known personal grants of arms to Jamaican residents, but there have been a few grants from the Canadian Heraldic Authority and from Lord Lyon to Jamaican emigrants or people of Jamaican origin in Canada, Australia and the United States. The best known Jamaican-American armiger is former US Secretary of State Colin Powell, the son of Jamaican immigrants, who

⁵⁸ CA Ms Grants 150/206–08; Correspondence with David and Judy Starling, 2015.

⁵⁹ The Lignum vitae tree has medicinal properties and the world's densest wood. Its small purple flowers attract flocks of butterflies.

⁶⁰ The Savoy Chapel also features the arms of the Jamaican-born Sir Solomon Hochoy, Governor General of Trinidad and Tobago.

⁶¹ Interview with Mrs Valerie Facey, 2015.

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Figure 14: Maurice Facey. (photograph by DS)

received arms in 2004 representing his military career. Another Jamaican-American granted arms by Lord Lyon is Pearl Duncan, a New York journalist who was born in St Andrew parish, Jamaica. She is descended from John Smellie, a Jacobite who fled to Jamaica in 1715, and is proud that he and his grand nephew William owned no slaves and, unusually, kept records of their mixed-race children; William even bequeathed his children a house in 1800. A surveyor, he angered white Jamaicans by including the homes of slaves and free blacks in his plantation surveys and defending from infringement the property rights of Maroons, a community of free blacks.⁶² On her arms, granted in 2006, the lion argent is a symbol of Clan Smellie (**Figure 16**). Several previous Duncans bore arms with two cinquefoils above a chevron, and she replaced the cinquefoils with *Lignum vitae* flowers, and changed the traditional

⁶² The original Maroons were escaped slaves whom the British could not defeat after a long guerrilla war. They signed treaties guaranteeing their freedom in 1738–39, almost a century before slavery was abolished.

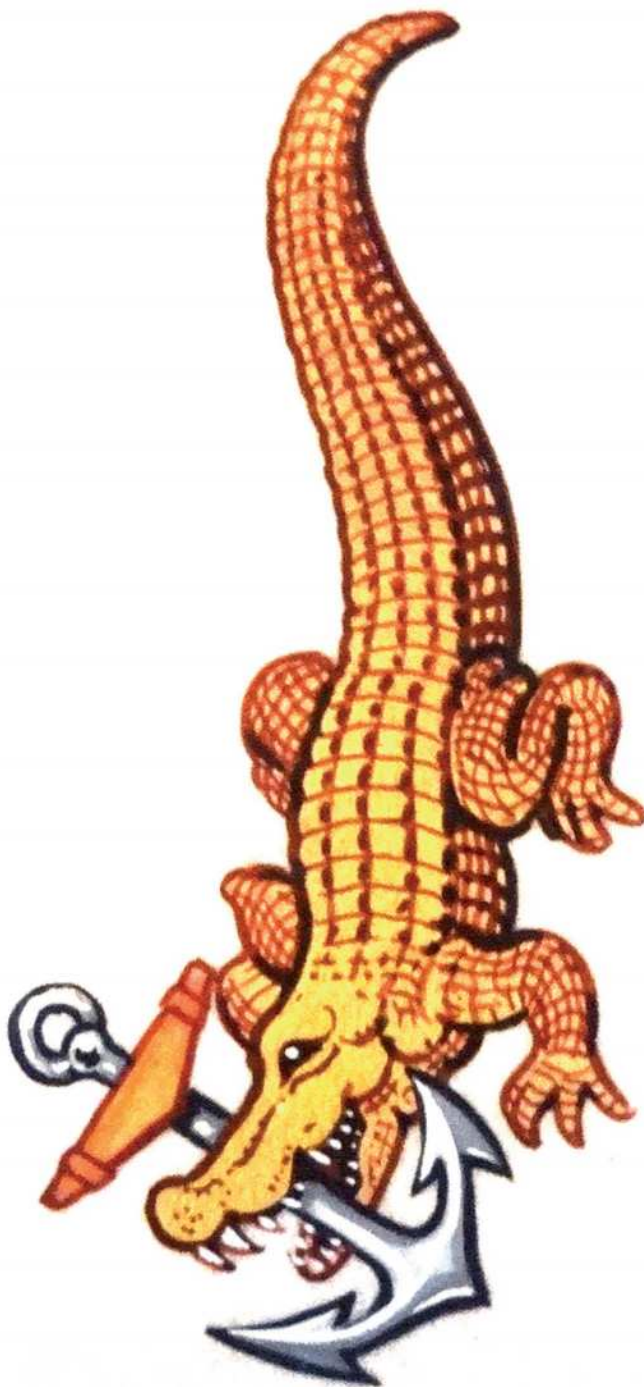


Figure 15: Badge of Maurice Facey.

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Figure 16: Pearl Duncan, courtesy of the Court of the Lord Lyon and Pearl Duncan.

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Duncan gules shield to gules and vert for the flag of Ghana, from where her ancestors originally came (as established by DNA studies). The inkpots symbolise her journalism career.⁶³

Jamaican corporate heraldry

There have also been a number of corporate arms granted in Jamaica, some now forgotten and others still widely used. The city of Kingston, established in 1693 after an earthquake devastated nearby Port Royal, was incorporated by charter in 1802.⁶⁴ In 1803 it became one of the first colonial towns to receive British arms and a great seal (**Figure 17**).⁶⁵ The shield incorporates two pineapples, and a coffee tree in the base. The crest is a South American Indian, probably intended to be a Taino, holding a cornucopia and bundle of sugar canes.⁶⁶ The supporters are the sea god Neptune (Kingston has the world's seventh largest natural harbour) and a murally-crowned lion, both charged with conch shells. It had two mottoes. The one above the achievement means 'The King's work', and is a quote from Horace; the one below translates as 'Nature shows the way, but industry perfects it'.⁶⁷ These arms survive on the plinth of nineteenth-century mayor Edward Jordon's statue in downtown Kingston.⁶⁸

In 1923 Kingston merged with St Andrew parish and a town clerk collaborated with a London printing firm to design new arms. The old arms were squeezed into the first quarter, a cross of St Andrew into the second. A scene of mountains, trees and a river, for the 'Land of wood and water', was added below. A Taino replaced Neptune as the sinister supporter and to the designer's credit, he correctly held a spear rather than a bow.⁶⁹ In 1957 Reverend Arthur Saunders (1906–86), a British heraldry enthusiast and Methodist minister posted to Jamaica, convinced councillors to replace these bogus arms with a more heraldically correct alternative of his own design. This was confirmed by a grant from the College of Arms in 1962 (**Figure 18**).⁷⁰ The saltire on the shield represents St Andrew parish, while the bee recalls Sir William Beeston, governor of Jamaica on whose land the city was established. The tower symbolizes the historic Port Royal naval fort, and the books are for Kingston's

⁶³ Lyon Office, PRAB Scot vol 87, p. 72; Correspondence with Pearl Duncan, 2015. For other Duncan arms, see www.clan-duncan.co.uk/duncan-armorial-arms.html.

⁶⁴ Kingston was not Jamaica's capital until 1872; until then it was Spanish Town.

⁶⁵ Kingston's are the oldest colonial civic arms listed in Fox-Davies *Book of Public Arms*, but Raleigh, Virginia received arms in 1586. The next after Kingston was Bombay in 1877.

⁶⁶ CA Ms Grants 22/339–42.

⁶⁷ 'New coat of arms for city', *Daily Gleaner*, 15 August 1961.

⁶⁸ Fox-Davies, op. cit., p. 325.

⁶⁹ Kingston and St Andrew Corporation coat of arms, *Daily Gleaner*, 23 February 1957; *Sesquicentennial anniversary of the granting of a Charter to the City of Kingston Jamaica 1802–1952* (Kingston 1952), p. 13.

⁷⁰ MSS Notes (date unknown), Kingston & St Andrew Corporation, by Rev. Arthur Saunders, pp. 75–80, Heraldry Society Library; Kingston and St Andrew Corporation, Minutes of the proceedings of Mayor and Council, Finance committee minutes and report for 18 February 1957, 2/6/552, Jamaica Archives, Spanish Town.

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Figure 17: City of Kingston 1803, CA MS Grants 24 p 342.

seats of learning. The dexter supporter remains the murally-crowned lion, all that survives from the original arms, but now holding the key to the country; and the sinister supporter is a West Indian native. Both stand on a compartment evoking the hills of St Andrew north of Kingston. The crest of a *wheel's hub with twelve spokes* or symbolises the capital as the hub of the parishes. The motto 'A city which hath foundations' is from Hebrews 11:10; Reverend Saunders also drew upon

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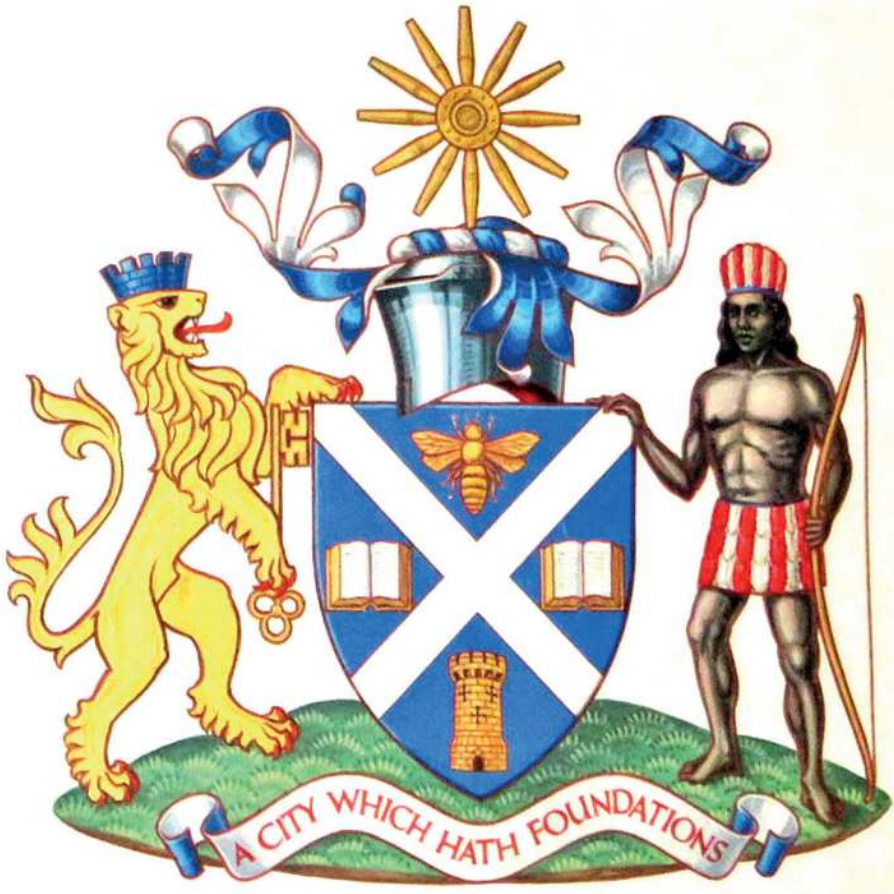


Figure 18: Kingston and St Andrew Corporation. (photo by DS)

Scripture for the mottoes of the short-lived West Indian Federation (1958–62) and the Cayman Islands.⁷¹ Kingston's arms are widely seen, appearing on street signs around the city.

There have been a few armorial grants to Jamaican educational institutions: the former Jamaica School of Agriculture, Prospect College in Ocho Rios, and most recently, Kingston's University of Technology (in 2000). Jamaica's best-known educational arms are those of the University of the West Indies (**Figure 19**). Founded in 1948 as the University College of the West Indies, it granted University of London degrees before gaining independence in 1962. Today it serves seventeen countries

⁷¹ MSS Notes (date unknown), 'The West Indies', and 'Cayman Islands', by Rev. Arthur Saunders, pp. 69, 72, Heraldry Society Library. During his time in Jamaica Saunders initiated the restoration of the royal mantling and designed or contributed to three other impersonal coats of arms granted by the College.

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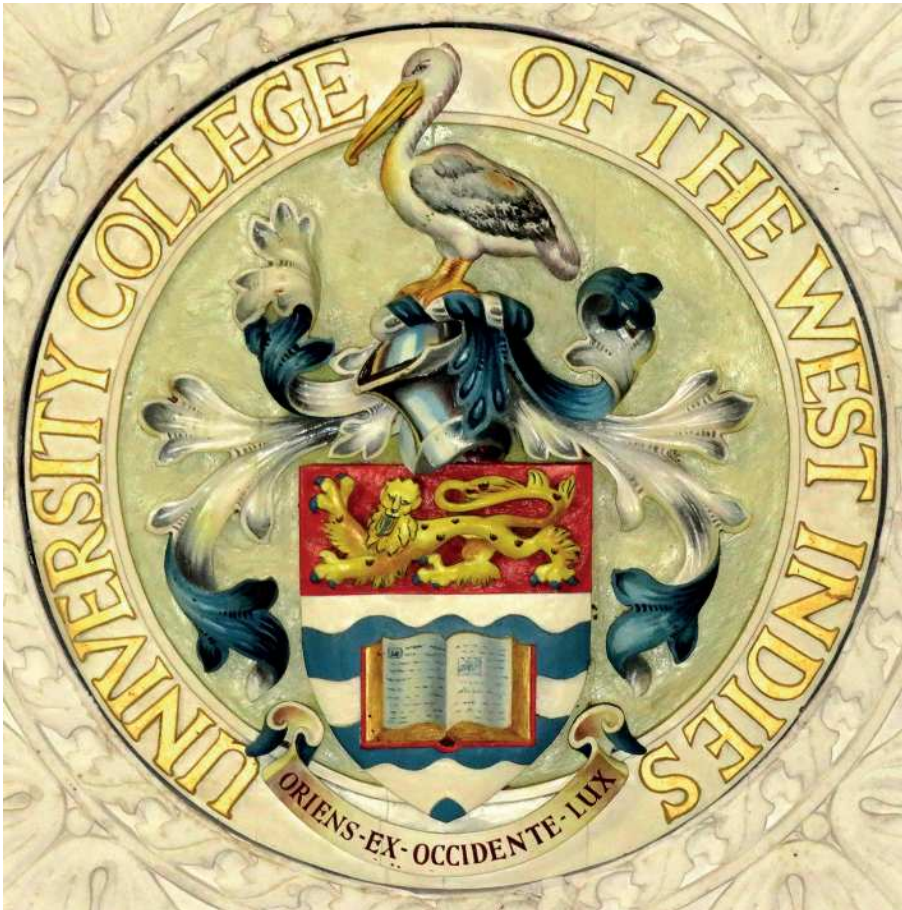


Figure 19: University of the West Indies with the non native white pelican, ceiling of the University chapel. (photo by DS)

and territories with campuses in Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad. Contributing to the design was H. Ellis Tomlinson (1915–96), a Fellow of the Heraldry Society who designed a number of British and Commonwealth civic and educational arms.⁷² The field barry wavy argent and azure evokes the Caribbean Sea, and the open book symbolises education. The *lion ermine* on a *chief gules* acknowledges the Sovereign, who is Visitor of the university, although they have long been incorrectly described as a tribute to the university's first chancellor Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone. She simply used the Royal Arms with a label, which did not feature a lion ermine.⁷³ The

⁷² See *HG* New series LXXVII (Spring 2000), p. 2.

⁷³ 'Coat of arms of West Indies University College', *Daily Gleaner*, 27 September 1949. Princess Alice was the world's first female university chancellor and her arms are still displayed in the university chapel.

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motto means ‘A Light Rising in the West’ and the crest is a pelican proper. Fittingly, pelicans often represent care for the young but these are usually pelicans in their piety.⁷⁴ In 1949 the letters patent were transported to Jamaica by sea, as the aircraft carrying the university’s royal charter had vanished in the Bermuda Triangle.⁷⁵

These letters patent showed a European white pelican, although the original intention was to have a brown pelican, which lives in all the former Caribbean colonies participating in the college scheme.⁷⁶ In 1952 university officials paid the College of Arms £13 for a certified painting featuring a brown pelican (**Figure 18b**) and this version is used throughout the university today, although the version with the white pelican survives in the university chapel.⁷⁷ Accepting that this is a brown pelican then these are possibly the first arms of a Commonwealth university featuring local fauna.⁷⁸ A pelican appears on the university mace and the university chapel’s finely-carved lectern.

Finally, an interesting corporate coat of arms relevant to Jamaica – although not used there – is that of Kettering Borough Council, first granted after it attained borough status in 1938 (**Figure 20**). That year was also the centenary of the abolition of slavery. While British and Jamaican authorities downplayed the anniversary to avoid exacerbating serious labour unrest, Kettering celebrated its status as the birthplace of abolitionist William Knibb (1803–1845). Knibb was a Baptist missionary who ministered to slaves from 1825, angering Jamaican planters and authorities with his preaching and campaigning against slavery in Jamaica and Britain.⁷⁹ To honour his contribution to the struggle, the council adopted as its sinister supporter a freed slave. The crest’s two fountains represent the Baptist Missionary Society, which was founded in Kettering in 1792 and campaigned for emancipation. In 1939 a Northamptonshire newspaper proprietor presented a copy of these arms to Knibb Memorial Church in Falmouth, Jamaica, where Knibb lived.⁸⁰ In 1976 new arms were granted following local government reforms, but the allusions to emancipation were retained.⁸¹

While these arms celebrate freedom, the topic of Jamaican heraldry is dominated by the early period of slave-owning sugar planters. More recent grants have expressed patriotic pride and celebrated Jamaica’s extraordinary natural beauty. It must be hoped that the final chapter in the interesting story of Jamaican heraldry has not yet been written.

⁷⁴ Fox-Davies, op. cit., pp. 242–3.

⁷⁵ Principal T.W.J. Taylor to Anthony Wagner, 6 September 1949 (copy), UC-GA-77, General Administration file series, University of the West Indies Archives, Kingston.

⁷⁶ Brown pelicans also symbolised Caribbean unity on the arms of the West Indian Federation.

⁷⁷ H.W. Springer, UCWI registrar, to Anthony Wagner, 27 March 1952 (copy), UC-GA-78, General Administration file series, University of the West Indies Archives, Kingston.

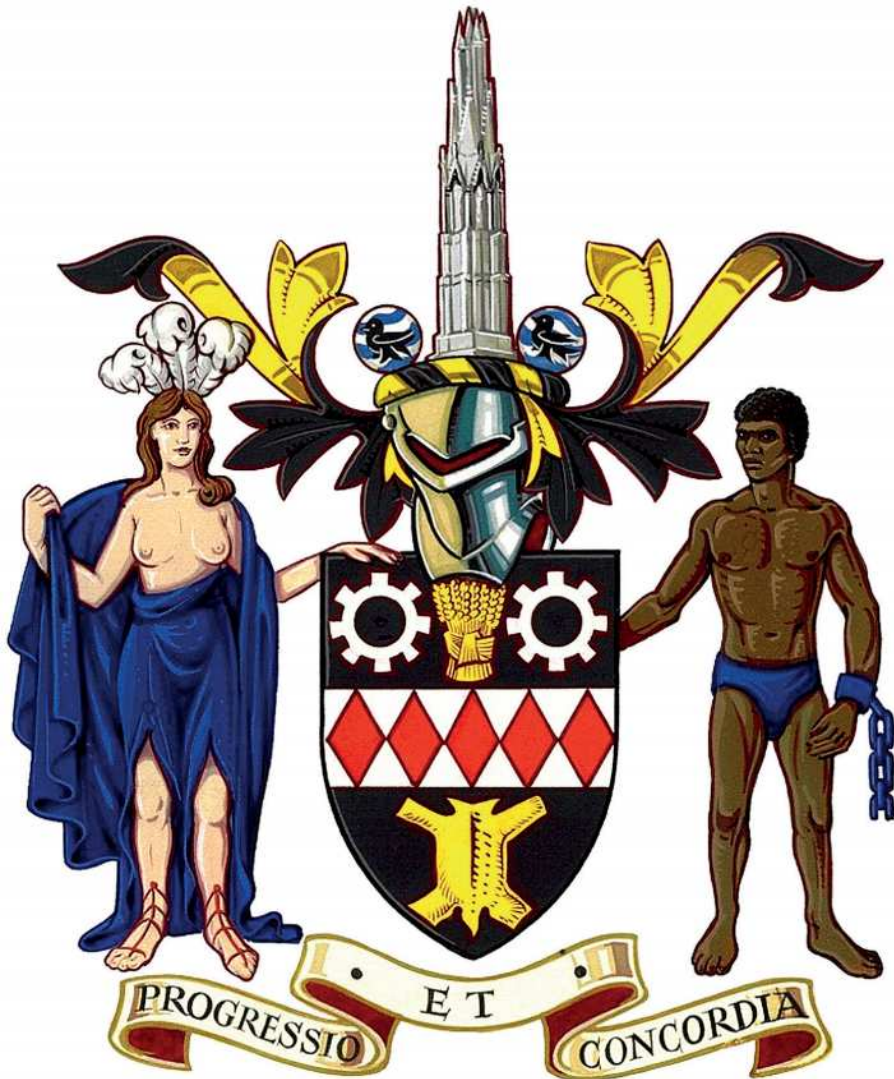
⁷⁸ Bruce Patterson, Trends in University Heraldry: The British Empire and Beyond, in *Genealogica and Heraldica: Proceedings of the 22nd International Genealogical and Heraldic Sciences in Ottawa* (Ottawa 1996), p. 422.

⁷⁹ Senior, op. cit., p. 269.

⁸⁰ ‘Approval of charter scheme’, *Northampton Mercury and Herald*, 29 July 1938; Kettering coat of arms in Jamaica, *Northamptonshire Evening Telegraph*, 21 March 1939.

⁸¹ CA Ms Grants 139/33.

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*Figure 20: Later arms of Kettering Borough Council granted 1976.
Courtesy of Kettering Borough Council.*