The Coat of Arms

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UNRAVELLING THE LEMSFORD MEMORIAL CHAPEL'S ARMORIAL CEILING

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Abstract

Lemsford's chapel has a claim both to be the last privately funded non-royal memorial chapel in England and, in its monument to Lady Florence, to be the last such erected in an English parish church. The chapel's attraction could easily rest upon these two claims alone, but this would be to ignore the heraldic scheme to be found in the ceiling. All the ceiling shields of this scheme are described; the majority are straightforwardly representative, but two aberrant shields raise important questions about the whole pattern as depicted.

Figure 1: The Lemsford Memorial Chapel.
Source: hertfordshirechurches.files.wordpress.com.

Introduction

In considering heraldic ceiling schemes it is hard not to admire the scholarship that went into Fox's monumental account of the heraldic ceiling bosses to be found in Canterbury cathedral's great cloister.[1] Impressively, Fox dealt with approaching 900 shields, badges,

[1] Paul A. Fox *Great Cloister: a lost Canterbury tale* (Oxford, 2020) Various podcasts are also available at: www.drpaulfoxfsa.com/canterbury-cloister.]

and other heraldic devices, many of which had suffered tincture degradation over the centuries or had been subject to misleading prior scholarship. He then had to research the biographies of the hundreds of individuals represented. None of those challenges confronted the present author, and indeed the following account of a scheme of heraldic ceiling bosses which may be found in a Hertfordshire church is very different in both scale and purpose from that discussed by Fox. The Hertfordshire church scheme discussed here comprises just two dozen shields whose recency of placement (less than a century ago) ensures no loss of colour; its purpose was not to honour any donors, and only one family is really at its focus. At first sight it might seem a simple scheme of limited interest, but soon it acquires more significance as it offers an unusual - possibly unique - instance of marshalled arms.

The heraldic shields displayed in the Brocket chapel in the church of St John the Evangelist, Lemsford, Hertfordshire (Figures 1 and 2a), catalogue the owners of neighbouring Brocket Hall over the centuries, but they do not do this neutrally. Rather, the display was intended to convey an established social position for the Nall-Cain family – soon afterwards the Barons Brocket of Brocket Hall – who had commissioned the display.

For the Nall-Cain family to be seen as traditional members of the upper classes rather than upstart *nouveau riche* was an important objective of the family at the time, and if all the previous owners of the Hall had their own coats of arms, certainly the ceiling display could be arranged to show that the Nall-Cains were no exceptions in this. However, in choosing to display one or two shields of doubtful design the family appear to have unwittingly drawn attention to their strategy. The deployment of more venerable heraldry than a family was really entitled to is hardly unheard-of, but the Lemsford case is not exactly typical of these.

Although the family's confused genealogy has been much discussed, the heraldic project at Lemsford has not previously been interpreted in a context of the family's objective of wishing "to assert an aristocratic lineage."[2] Seen in this light, the shields referring to the Nall-Cain ancestry are attractive to those heraldists whose enjoyment derives from the detective work inspired by architectural coats of arms. Interest is particularly aroused by two shields whose design stimulates a desire to investigate further. Thus, whilst for the majority of visitors the display serves to evoke a sense of historical continuity associated with the locality, for the more heraldically curious other perspectives emerge.

Discussion of the ambiguous shields follows the identification of all the shields in the chapel's ceiling (elsewhere the church is essentially heraldically sterile), but firstly it is appropriate to describe pertinent aspects of the chapel and its builder.

In Memoriam

The chapel was added to Lemsford's church in 1930 and has the appearance, and many of the attributes, of a chantry chapel. Such chapels can be characterised as privately funded dedicated spaces, built within a church, and intended for priestly performances of 'chantry duties'; those duties typically included the regular saying of prayers for those memorialised in the chapel, and otherwise maintaining the space for the family's use. Chantry chapels were suppressed by virtue of the Dissolution of Colleges Acts of 1545 and 1547.

[2] C. Routledge, *Cain's: the story of Liverpool in a pint* (Liverpool, 2008) p. 131

Figure 2, left, 2a: the heraldic ceiling within the Brocket chapel at Lemsford; right, 2b: the tomb of Lady Florence Nall-Cain.
Source: hertfordshirechurches.files.wordpress.com.

But the Reformation was a long time ago, and if the legislation was seen by some as dissuasive of further constructions, Sir Charles Nall-Cain of the Node in Hertfordshire had other views. He commissioned and privately funded the addition of a chapel and accompanying family vault to his local parish church in memory of his first wife after her death in 1927. And if the romantic vision of medieval chantry chapels includes a good display of heraldry, the memorial chapel at Lemsford, Hertfordshire was not to disappoint. The chapel, which was dedicated in 1930, is believed to be the last private non-royal chapel to have been built within a church in England.[3] The stone-canopied monument to Florence Nall-Cain (**Figures 2b** and **3**) inside the chapel is also believed to be the last such monument to have been built within an English parish church.

In 1930 Sir Charles Alexander Nall-Cain, Bart (1866-1934) was chairman of the brewing firm Robert Cain & Sons which had been founded by his father in Liverpool. For his liberality to the hospitals of Liverpool Charles was made a baronet in 1921, his elder brother William Cain (1864-1924) having received the same honour the previous year. He married Florence Nall, the mother of his children, in 1888. She was the daughter and only surviving child of William Nall, gentleman (1816-1883) of Kegworth in Derbyshire (according to *Burke*). A will, proved in Liverpool in 1883, described William Nall as a

[3] Elizabeth II added the King George VI memorial chapel to St George's Chapel, Windsor, in 1969.

Figure 3: the tomb of Lady Florence Nall-Cain at Lemsford
Source: hertfordshirechurches.files.wordpress.com.

"gentleman of Southport in Lancashire."[4] From the census he was a farmer in Kegworth who on his retirement moved to Lancashire. Sir Charles and Lady Cain changed their surname by deed poll to Nall-Cain on 14 July 1921, a fortnight after Charles Cain had been created a baronet on 1 July 1921. In 1923 the couple departed the Node, Codicote, and relocated a few miles away, taking up residence in Brocket Hall, Lemsford, which had been on the market since the death of Lord Mount Stephen in 1921.

During Lady Florence's final illness the King's physician was called to attend upon her. She died on 21 October 1927, just over a week before the originally intended marriage date of her only son, Arthur Ronald Nall Nall-Cain (1904-1967), to Miss Angela Beatrix Pennyman, daughter of the Rev. W. G. Pennyman, vicar of St. Mark's North Audley Street. Her son's intended best man was the Hon. David Bowes-Lyons, the youngest brother of the then Duchess of York.[5] In her will Florence made very generous bequests to her many servants, including £500 to her maid, £200 to her housekeeper, and £100 each to her butler, gardener, coachman and chauffeur.[6] At her funeral, which was well attended by the nobility, some of these servants acted as pallbearers.

A year later Sir Charles took as his second wife Miss Anne Page Croft, daughter of the late Mr Richard Benyon Croft, of Fanhams Hall, Ware, and sister of Sir Henry Page Croft, M.P. for Bournemouth. The marriage took place at St. James's Church, Piccadilly, on 27 October 1928, with the Rev. W. W. Clarke (vicar of Lemsford) officiating. In 1933 Sir Charles was ennobled in the New Year's honours list as Baron Brocket of Brocket Hall. He survived only one more year, and died on 21 November 1934.

The chapel and its heraldic decoration strongly suggest that Sir Charles had developed an interest in heraldry and medievalism. This interest manifested itself as

[4] National Probate Register. His estate was valued at £16,567. His appointed executors were his widow and his brother Joseph Nall, gentleman of Papplewick in Nottinghamshire. The father of the brothers was Joseph Nall, born at Duffield in Derbyshire in 1789, who later moved to Nottinghamshire.

[5] From her obituary in the *Hertfordshire Express* 29 October 1927, p. 2.

[6] *Liverpool Echo* 10 January 1928.

soon as he became aware of his forthcoming baronetcy, as he received his first grant of the arms of Cain quartering Nall from the College of Arms on 10 August 1921, only five weeks after his baronetcy.[7] These are not the same arms as those which occur in the chapel, of which more will be said presently. Sir Charles went on to champion, and to involve himself in, the granting of a coat of arms to Hertfordshire County Council,[8] the county where he had taken up residence and was politically active. He is understood to have been the author of the county's motto, 'Trust & Fear Not', and the actual patent of arms was presented to Sir Charles in his capacity as High Sheriff of Hertfordshire by Sir Henry Farnham Burke, Garter, at a well-attended banquet held at Brocket Hall on the evening of 8 July 1925.[9]

Inspiration for the idea of creating a family chapel was locally available to the baronet in Brocket Hall's neighbouring churches of St Helen's in Wheathampstead, and St Etheldreda's at Hatfield, both of which boast Brocket chapels containing monuments to that earlier family which had given its name to Brocket Hall. It was in memory of the deceased Florence that Sir Charles set about arranging for the restructuring of St John's, Lemsford. The church had been erected by the Dowager Countess Cowper as a memorial church to her late husband, the 6th Earl Cowper, in 1859, some 70 years previously. In addition to his remodelling of the church to incorporate the memorial chapel, Sir Charles also lengthened the chancel, installed electric lighting, added communion rails, altar-hangings, new choir and priest stalls, and a family vault.[10]

The Bishop of St. Albans dedicated the new chapel on Sunday, 13 July 1930. At the close of the service the vicar presented each member of the choir with a prayer and hymn book, the gift of Sir Charles Nall-Cain, to commemorate the occasion. In the following year Sir Charles succeeded in obtaining the advowson for Lemsford church, which remains with his descendants.[11] The chapel boasts an alabaster tomb in the medieval style, on which lies an effigy of Lady Florence Nall-Cain, and the chapel's east window was also given in her memory. Florence's tomb has Nall-Cain heraldry around its base and her feet rest upon the crests of Nall and Cain. In the chapel ceiling are a number of coats of arms which reference the Nall-Cains and their family alliances in the early half of the twentieth century, and also commemorate other families associated with Brocket Hall in the past. The arms thus tell the history of Brocket Hall and its owners. That the shield designs are all well-executed and contain a good degree of detail suggests that the commissioners of the ceiling display had a fair level of heraldic understanding.

[7] CA *Grants* 89/32.

[8] Grant of 3 June 1925.

[9] Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies: DE/L/214.

[10] The architect for the remodelling was the ecclesiastical specialist F.E. Howard who later donated his design sketches for the Brocket chapel to Heritage England (ref MD93/09021-09141).

[11] Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies: D/EP/E74/1-20.

		3	4			11	12			19	20		
W	2			5	10			13	18			21	**E**
E													**A**
S	1			6	9			14	17			22	**S**
T		8	7			16	15			24	23		**T**

Figure 4: scheme of layout of the armorial shields in the Brocket chapel.

The twenty-four ceiling shields are arranged in three bays of eight. All are identifiable as custodians of Brocket Hall, as follows:

Western bay: the early custodians of Brocket Hall

Figure 5, left: shield 1, FitzSimon; centre: shield 2, Asshe; right: shield 3, Brocket.

1. Gules three escutcheons argent (**FitzSimon**) Although in his autobiography the current (3rd) Lord Brocket states "The first house on the site, called Watershypps, was built in 1239 for the Brocket family"[12] it has been suggested that the property was first in the possession of a Simon Fitz Ade whose family became known as Fitz Simon. John FitzSimon represented Hertfordshire in the Parliament of 1290 as did Nicholas FitzSimon in 1377.

2. *Argent a fess sable and overall a saltire gules* (**Asshe**) bearing an escutcheon of pretence for **FitzSimon** [the fess is normally given as Azure]. Nicholas FitzSimon's daughter Elizabeth married William Asshe, and their daughter and sole heir, Elizabeth, married (before 1432) Thomas Brocket, son of Sir Thomas Brocket and his wife Dionice Sampson. The couple had no children and her estate went to his brother's family.

[12] Brocket, 2004, p. 4

3. Or a cross flory sable (**Brocket**). The estate was now in the Brocket family, whose origins may be traced to Yorkshire.

Figure 6, left: shield 4, Reade; centre: shield 5: Winnington; right: shield 6: Lamb.

4. *Gules a saltire between four garbs or* (**Reade**). The last Brocket to have the house was Mary, wife of Sir John Reade (d.1694). Her husband was created a baronet in 1642, but the title was annulled by Parliament after the Civil War. Oliver Cromwell however intervened and created another baronetcy for him in 1652, and the original baronetcy was restored when Charles II regained the throne in 1660.

5. *Sable a border argent charged with eight martlets of the field* (**Winnington**) bearing an escutcheon of pretence for **Reade.** Love Reade, daughter of Sir James Reade, 2nd Baronet of Brocket Hall, married Thomas Winnington (1696 – 1746), in 1719. The couple had no issue and the estate was sold to Sir Matthew Lamb in 1746.

6. *Sable on a fess erminois between three cinquefoils or two mullets vert* (**Lamb**).The shield bears a baronet's badge for Sir Matthew and Sir Peniston Lamb, 1st & 2nd Baronets. The tinctures used for the cinquefoils and the mullets in shields 6 to 8, are more usually given as argent and sable respectively. Sir Peniston Lamb became Viscount Melbourne.

Figure 7, left: shield 7: Lamb; centre: shield 8, Lamb; right, shield 9, Earl Cowper.

7. *Sable on a fess between three cinquefoils erminois two mullets vert* (**Lamb**). Surmounted by a viscount's coronet for the 1st and 2nd Viscounts Melbourne. The important reference here is to William Lamb, 2nd Lord Melbourne (1779-1848) who was Queen Victoria's first Prime Minister from 1835-1841, and who entertained his monarch frequently at Brocket Hall. His wife Lady Caroline Lamb had an affair with the poet Lord Byron.

8. Tierced arms **1** *Quarterly, 1: Argent three martlets and on a chief engrailed gules three annulets or* (**Cowper**); *2: Quarterly or and gules a bend sable* (**Clavering**); *3: Quarterly (i) Azure billety and a lion rampant or (ii) Or a lion rampant gules crowned azure (iii) Gules a fess argent (iv) Gules two lions passant in pale or and overall on an escutcheon argent a lion rampant sable* (the **Prince of Nassau d'Auverquerque**); *4th: Gules a fess between three crosses crosslet or* (**Gore**, for 5th Earl of Cowper); **2**: **Lamb**; **3**: *Quarterly i & iv, Or an eagle displayed sable; ii & iii, Argent on two bars sable six martlets or* (**Temple**, Viscount Palmerston). Surmounted by a viscount's coronet, for the 3rd Viscount Melbourne. On the death of the 2nd Viscount Melbourne in 1848 the property was inherited by his sister, Emily Lamb, the widow of Peter Leopold Louis Francis Nassau Clavering-Cowper, 5th Earl Cowper (1778–1837). She remarried, this time to Henry John Temple, 3rd Viscount Palmerston, who was Queen Victoria's third Prime Minister, in office 1855-58 and from 1859 until his death in 1865. His widow died in 1869 when her son, George Cowper, 6th Earl Cowper, inherited the property.

Central bay: the custodians are joined by the Irish

9. *Quarterly, 1: Argent three martlets and on a chief engrailed gules three annulets or* (**Cowper**); *2: Quarterly or and gules, a bend sable* (**Clavering**); *3: Quarterly (i) Azure billety and a lion rampant or (ii) Or a lion rampant gules crowned azure (iii) Gules a fess argent (iv) Gules two lions passant in pale or; overall On an inescutcheon argent a lion rampant sable* (the **Prince of Nassau d'Auverquerque**); *4: Gules a fess between three crosses crosslet fitchy or* (**Gore**). Surmounted by an earl's coronet for the Earls Cowper.

10. *Gules on a chevron argent three mullets gules, in chief a mullet argent for difference* (**Kerr**); an escutcheon of pretence: *Argent three martlets and on a chief engrailed gules three annulets or* (**Cowper**). Admiral of the Fleet Lord Walter Talbot Kerr, G.C.B. married in 1873 Lady Anabel Cowper (d. 1906). She was the youngest daughter of the 6th Earl Cowper, and inherited Brocket Hall after the death of the 7th Earl in 1905. The mullet indicates that Lord Kerr was a third son.

11. As last, (**Kerr**) without the escutcheon of pretence. The Kerrs did not live at Brocket Hall, which was rented out from 1873. After the last tenant - Lord Mount Stephens - died in 1921, the property was put on the market and purchased by Sir Charles Nall-Cain.

Figure 8, left: shield 10, Kerr; centre, shield 11, Kerr; right: shield 12, Nall-Cain.

12. *Quarterly, 1 and 4: Argent three salmon haurient gules and in chief an oak tree proper* (**Cain**)*; 2 and 3: Per chevron barry of six gules and or in chief two stag's heads caboshed proper; in base gules a lion rampant guardant or* (**Nall**); *at the centre point a baronet's badge*. The Nall-Cains have arrived. The baron's coronet must have been added above the shield several years after the chapel was dedicated as the barony was only created in 1933. The marshalling of this coat would normally suggest it referenced a line from the son of the union of Cain-Nall, and thus, here, Arthur Ronald Nall Nall-Cain.

Figure 9, left: shield 13, O'Cahan; centre, shield 14 , O'Cahane; right, shield 15, Cain.

13. *Azure a fess per pale gules and argent between, in chief, out of the horns of a crescent a dexter hand couped at the wrist and apaumee surmounted by an estoile, between, on the dexter, a horse counter-salient, and on the sinister, a lion rampant, each also surmounted by an estoile; in base a salmon naiant argent between in dexter three lizards passant in bend sinister gules and in sinister an oak tree eradicated proper; overall on an escutcheon argent a cross Calvary on three grices silver* (**O'Cahan**, Prince of Limavady, co. Londonderry).

These somewhat involved attributed arms represent an individual who pre-dated heraldry by several hundred years. The shield in the chapel does not quite adopt the customary O'Cahan blazon. The descent of Sir Charles from this individual is entirely speculative.

14. *Gules three fishes hauriant two and one or* (**O'Cahane**). Whilst these are the traditional arms associated with the O'Cahane's, the genealogical connection with Cain of the Node appears to be conjectural.

15. *Argent three salmon haurient gules and in chief an oak tree proper* (**Cain**). These arms were granted by the Ulster Office on 13 May 1916 to Thomas Cain of Ballasalla on the Isle of Man, gentleman, and to the descendants of his grandfather Robert Cain the elder, of Ballasalla, with due and proper difference.[13] Sir Charles Nall-Cain was not entitled to these arms as he was not descended from the grandfather of Thomas Cain of Ballasalla.

Figure 10, left: shield 16, Nall; centre: shield 18, Nall-Cain with an escutcheon of Nall; right: shield 19, Nall-Cain quartering Nall.

16. *Per chevron barry of six gules and or in chief two stag's heads caboshed proper; in base gules a lion rampant guardant or* (**Nall**). The shield supporting a baron's coronet must be regarded as incorrect as the Nall family have never been ennobled.

Eastern bay: the Nall-Cain and Pennyman connection

17. As 12 (Cain quartering Nall) surmounted by a baron's coronet.

18. *Quarterly, 1 and 4: Argent three salmon haurient gules and in chief an oak tree proper* (**Cain**)*; 2 and 3: Per chevron barry of six gules and or in chief two stag's heads caboshed proper; in base gules a lion rampant guardant or* (**Nall**); in pretence: *Per chevron barry of six gules and or in chief two stag's heads caboshed proper; in base gules a lion rampant guardant or* (**Nall**). Surmounted with a baron's coronet. The presence here of Nall in pretence over Nall-Cain can only mean that the 1st Lord Brocket

[13] National Library of Ireland: Genealogical Office of Ireland MS 111c p. 25.

is indicated here, and the only reason for this strange usage would be if he had received a grant of quartered arms, to which he might then add his wife's arms on an escutcheon of pretence, which was indeed the case. This would, however, only apply if she was an heraldic heiress. To add a wife's arms twice to one's shield is a sufficiently rare heraldic usage to immediately arouse the curiosity of a heraldist.

Figure 11, left: shield 20, Pennyman; centre: shield 21, Nall-Cain quartering Nall with an escutcheon of Pennyman; right: shield 22, Pennyman.

19. *Quarterly, 1 and 4: quarterly (i+iv) Argent three salmon haurient gules and in chief an oak tree proper* (**Cain**); (ii+iii) *Per chevron barry of six gules and or in chief two stag's heads caboshed proper; in base gules a lion rampant guardant or* (**Nall**); *2 and 3:* **Nall.** The son of an heraldic heiress would be justified in adding his mother's arms again to his paternal arms. This shield therefore represents the future 2nd Baron Brocket who acceded on 21 November 1934. This usage would require a formal grant from the College of Arms which was never obtained, and thus the arms do not appear in any of the Peerages. Shields 18 and 19 are discussed further below.

20. *Quarterly of twelve, 1: Gules a chevron ermine between three half-spears staves broken or headed argent* (**Pennyman**); *2: Argent a chief gules* (**Worsley**); *3: Or on a chief dancetty azure three plates* (Latham?); *4: Quarterly argent and gules on the first a mullet sable* (Breton?); *5: Argent on a bend sable three covered cups argent* (not identified); *6: Argent a fess gules between three parrots vert* (?Lumley/ Marmaduke/ Cullingwike); *7: Argent a squirrel gules* (?Hartford, Nutshall, Squire); *8: Argent a fess sable* (Kighley?); *9:* as 1 (Pennyman); *10: Azure five mascles voided in cross or a chief ermine* (**Norcliffe**); *11: Or on a chevron azure a martlet between two pheons or* (**Warton**); *12: Argent on a bend gules three garbs or* (**Maltby**). This shield introduces a family which the Nall-Cains were now allied with by marriage: the Pennyman family.

21. As 19 (**Cain-Nall** quartering **Nall)** and on an escutcheon of pretence: *Quarterly, 1 and 4: Gules a chevron ermine between three half spears, broken staves or headed argent* (**Pennyman**); *2 and 3: Argent a chief gules* (**Worsley**). In 1927, Arthur Nall-Cain married Angela Beatrix Pennyman, younger daughter of the Revd. William Geoffrey Pennyman of Ormesby Hall in Yorkshire.

22. *Gules a chevron ermine between three half spears, broken staves or headed argent* (**Pennyman**).

Figure 12, left: shield 23, Worsley; centre: shield 24, Nall-Cain impaling Page Croft; right, 12c: Nall lozenge from the tomb of Florence Nall-Cain.

23. *Argent a chief gules* (**Worsley**). After the death in 1852 of Sir William Pennyman of Ormesby Hall, the 7th baronet, his cousin James White Worsley (1792 -1870) assumed the additional surname of Pennyman.

24. Per pale dexter: *Quarterly 1 and 4: Argent three salmon haurient gules and in chief an oak tree proper* (**Cain**); *2 and 3: Per chevron barry of six gules and or in chief two stag's heads caboshed proper; in base gules a lion rampant guardant or* (**Nall**); impaling, sinister: *Quarterly 1 and 4: per fess dancetty azure and argent, in the first quarter a lion passant guardant or* (**Croft**); *2 and 3: Argent two martlets in pale gules between as many flaunches erminois and overall a fess sable* (**Page**). Sir Charles Nall-Cain took Anne Page Croft as his second wife on 27 October 1928. The baron's coronet could have been added no earlier than 1933.

Armorial and Genealogical irregularities

Shield 18 stands out in its peculiarity. It reads as a *granted* (rather than a marshalled) quarterly coat of arms to recognise 'Nall-Cain' and the marriage of the head of that family to a heraldic heiress of the Nall family, but there are irregularities with the arms of both Cain and of Nall. In 1921 Sir Charles had received different arms to these from the College of Arms with new quarterings for both Nall and Cain: Quarterly 1 and 4: *Azure a griffin segreant between three garbs or* (for Cain); 2 and 3: *Argent a bee proper between three roses gules* (for Nall). There were two crests, that for Cain being *A griffin segreant resting upon a coronet of five Tudor roses or*; while that for Nall was *A bee proper between two roses gules stemmed vert.*

In 1928 Sir Charles changed the Cain crest, quartering and motto (**Figure 13b**) in a grant from the Ulster Office, taking the arms which had been granted by the Ulster Office in 1916 to Thomas Cain of Ballasalla on the Isle of Man (**Figure 13a**). In order to use the arms of this gentry family of Cain, Sir Charles claimed descent from John Cain of Ballabeg (not Ballasalla) in the Isle of Man, who in turn was said to be descended

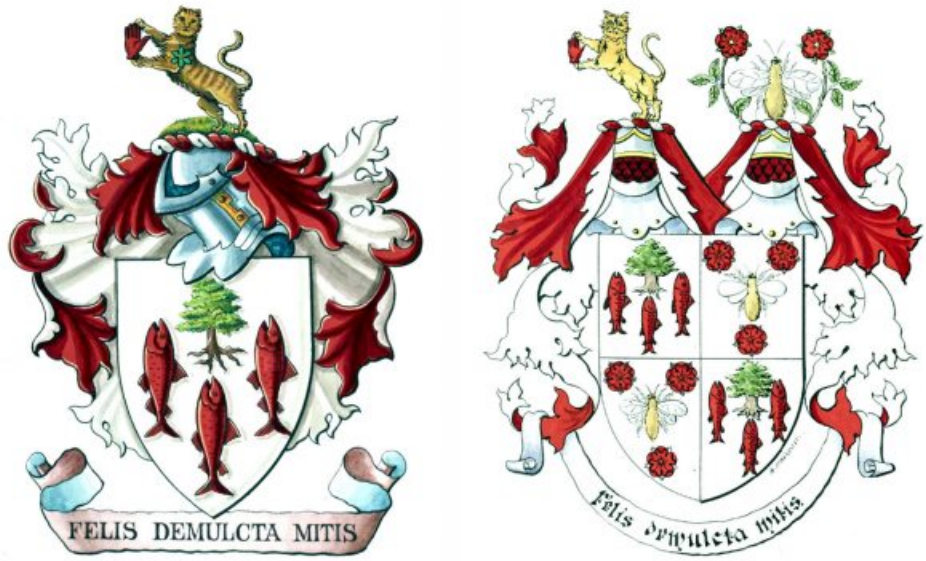

Figure 13, left, 13a: arms of Thomas Cain of the Isle of Man granted by the Ulster Office in 1916; right, 13b, arms granted to Sir Charles Nall-Cain, Bart by the Ulster Office in 1928. ©National Library of Ireland.

from Manus Cain who received a grant of land on the island in 1631.[14] In the 1916 grant the *suitably differenced* arms were permitted to all descendants of Thomas Cain's grandfather, Robert Cain the elder of Ballasalla, but Sir Charles was not so descended.[15] The pedigree given in *Burke* for Sir Thomas's elder brother Sir William Cain, Bart makes their grandfather James Cain, born in Galway in 1787.[16] The pedigree of the barons Brocket from recent editions of *Debrett* takes the Galway descent back to around 1600[17]; it is entirely at variance with the Isle of Man descent which was used to secure the Cain arms in 1928. The justification for granting Sir Charles the Manx Cain arms was presumably that the families shared a remote common ancestry, and that the arms were suitably differenced by quartering with those of Nall. The Cain crest was adopted with difference. The crest granted to Thomas Cain was: *On a mount vert a cat salient guardant or holding between the paws a dexter hand couped gules and charged on the shoulder with a narcissus vert.* Sir Charles's crest was simpler: *A cat salient guardant erminois holding between the paws a dexter hand couped gules*. He retained the Manx Cain motto of *Felis demulcta mitis* (the cat stroked is meek).

[14] This is the descent given in the 1928 Ulster Office confirmation of the grant: National Library of Ireland, Genealogical Office of Ireland MS 111c, p. 108.
[15] Thomas Cain was only son of Robert Cain of Ballasalla son of Robert Cain the elder of Ballasalla son of Patrick Cain of Limavardy in Ulster.
[16] *Burke* 1956.
[17] *Debrett* 2009.

THE COAT OF ARMS

The Nall family were not armigerous until Sir Thomas' grant of arms in 1921. After the changing of the Cain arms in 1928 the resulting combination of the arms of Cain and Nall was not entirely satisfactory, both shields having the field argent. This would not work at all well if an inescutcheon of Nall was to be placed over Cain. Following his wife's death Sir Charles evidently decided that he wanted something better, and more visually striking, for her tomb, and he therefore obtained a new design from the College of Arms which was granted on 31 Oct 1929.[18] As a consequence of this both the 1921 and 1928 grants became superfluous, and the 1929 grant supplies the version of the arms which is found at Lemsford. As well as the shield of Nall being completely changed, the bee crest of Nall was also modified to become *Within a leathern garter buckled gules a bee or*.

Given that these Nall arms were granted posthumously it is highly questionable for Florence Nall-Cain to have been given the status of a heraldic heiress on shields 18 and 19 at Lemsford. As to the idea that the Nall-Cains were not as heraldically knowledgeable as they might have been, a clue to their level of heraldic comprehension may be evidenced in the heraldry surrounding the sides of Lady Florence's tomb, where lozenge-shaped shields of Nall are to be found (with a little difficulty, such is the closeness of pillars and other structures) at both the head and foot panels. A lozenge-shaped shield ought to indicate a spinster or widow, but not the deceased wife here memorialised. On the main aspect of the tomb are three arms on shields, firstly of Cain quartering Nall, secondly of Cain quartering Nall with an escutcheon of Nall, and thirdly, of Nall. The two lozenges of Nall appear to be signalling that these were Florence Nall's arms during her spinsterhood, but this was never the case. The implication of this heraldic solecism in combination with the escutcheon placed on shield 18 and the quartering on shield 19 is that there has taken place a transgression of the norms of heraldry in order to elevate the status of Lady Florence's ancestors. Her family, with its gentry status, was more venerable than that of Cain, and it was important to emphasize this, even if they did not have their gentility confirmed with a grant of arms. Florence's great-grandson the 3rd Baron Brocket has stated, "Charles's first wife, Florence Nall, came from a smart Nottinghamshire family, who were a cut above the Cains. She told Charles that she would only marry him if she could keep her name. So Charles Cain and Florence Nall became Charles and Florence Nall-Cain."[19]

Ultimately though, perhaps it is apposite that the family's armorial achievements should be as confusing as the family's origins. We read in one account of those origins, that:

> "the 1920s into the 1930s seems to have been the time period in which the story of Robert Cain's Irish ancestry became clouded, perhaps because the newly created peer [i.e. Charles, 1st Lord Brocket] wanted to assert an aristocratic lineage.…*Burke's Peerage* changed its entry on the Cain family in the 1930s. Early editions list Robert Cain's father as James Cain of Dublin, who married Mary Dean in 1824. Later editions give his birthplace as Galway, his marriage to Mary Deane of Cork in 1824, and his social background as belonging to the gentry. Neither version of the story appears to be true."[20]

[18] *CA* Grants 97/75.

[19] Lord Charles Brocket, *Call Me Charlie* (London, 2004) p. 2

[20] Routledge, op. cit., p.131.

Conclusion

The creation of the Lemsford chapel in 1930 was a highly romantic tribute to a much-loved wife and mother, providing her with a grand place of burial, and surrounding her with heraldry which placed her on a pedestal. She was given an exalted heraldic status which was not hers by right, one which fulfilled her bereaved husband's need to reinvent the past in order to enhance his family's prestige.

Afterward

The year after the chapel was built the bearer of shield 19, Lord Brocket's son and heir Arthur, 2nd Lord Brocket, was elected as M.P. for the Wavertree division of Liverpool, having been educated at Eton and Magdalene College Oxford, then at the Inner Temple, where he was called to the Bar. His tenure in the House of Commons was terminated by his father's death in 1934, whereafter he became active in the House of Lords. He was a well-connected and popular figure, but in recent decades some journalistic commentators have wrongly stated that he was interned during the Second World War as a Nazi sympathiser, and that Brocket Hall was sequestrated.[21] While it is true that, like many other members of the aristocracy at the time, he made the wrong call in allowing himself to become enamoured with the glamourous aspects of Nazi Germany in the 1930s, he must be judged by the values of his own time, as his sympathies were shared by many prominent members of the aristocracy. It was reported in the press that he attended Adolf Hitler's 50th birthday celebrations in Germany in April 1939, having been at a Nuremberg rally in the previous year.[22] However, after the continuance of war became inevitable his sense of duty to his country came to the fore. The tragic consequences of his own previous convictions caused him to suffer a nervous breakdown in January 1940. Whether his various country estates were requisitioned or voluntarily given to the government is unclear, although the press reports suggest a voluntary transfer, and the estates were certainly not sequestrated.[23] Brocket Hall became a maternity hospital for the duration of the war, while his Scottish estate at Knoydart in Lochaber became a training centre for Commandoes and the S.O.E., and Bramshill Park in Oxfordshire was given over to the Red Cross.[24] Lord Brocket played an active role in the House of Lords throughout the conflict. His tarnished posthumous reputation is largely undeserved.[25]

[21] One example of the genre is Paul Callan, 'Hitler's aristocratic admirers', *The Daily Express*, 12 September 2009, who stated that Lord Brocket had been accused of lighting fires at Brocket Hall to guide German bombers on their way to London, an accusation which was without foundation. For a clear statement that Lord Brocket was never interned see Nicholas Julian Crowson, *Facing the Fuhrer: The Conservative Party's Attitudes and Responses to Germany, 1937 to 1940, with Particular Reference to Backbench and Constituency Opinion*, University of Southampton Ph.D. thesis (1994), p. 175.

[22] *The Daily Telegraph* 20 April 1939, pp. 13-14.

[23] *The Daily Telegraph* 10 January 1940, p.7.

[24] *The Daily Telegraph*, 4 September 1940, p.4.

[25] The author would like to thank the following: Mr Frank Puranik of St. John's church, Lemsford for his photographs of the individual Lemsbury shields and for his permission to reproduce them; Mr Nigel Johnson, churchwarden of Lemsbury, for assisting the author with access; and finally, Mr Thomas Johnston, Rouge Croix Pursuivant, for providing information on the College of Arms grants to Sir Charles Nall-Cain.