

Ó Lochlainn

Emblems - Heraldry - Symbols
(1159 AD - 2011 AD)



Coat of Arms - 2011

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Heraldry and its Development

Heraldry describes the creation, display, the permitted use of and wearing of official devices and symbols, such as coats of arms, badges, crests, decorations, flags, medals, personal honours, both civil and military. Heraldry developed through the Middle Ages into a sophisticated form of personal identification, with the adoption of symbols, based on attributes or qualities linked to the person who received the distinction or Achievement.

Ó Lochlainn Gaelic Symbols before the Anglo-Norman Invasion of 1170 AD

Gaelic clans had adopted badges, emblems and flags ("satin sheets") prior to the Norman invasion, which facilitated identification on the battlefield. The Ó Lochlainn emblems used at the Battle of Caislinn (1159), Terryglass, County Tipperary, were recorded within *The Book of Leinster*, written between 1152 and 1161:

"In OLoughlin's camp was visible a fair satin sheet, to be defended at each battle-field; An ancient fruit-bearing oak, defended by the chieftain justly (the ancient symbol of the OLoughlin, Buirenn [Burren])."

Keating's 17th century 'History of Ireland' "To guard in the fray, was an Oak old and fruitful (A Chief its Meet Ward) and eke, a Blue Anchor - with Gold Cable bound" refers to a much earlier period, since Keating's history was adapted from previous histories.

Heraldic language is linked to Middle English e.g. 'A Chief its Meet Ward' - which refers to appropriate Guardianship, while 'The Anchor of Oak' represents a time, when anchors were fashioned from hardened oak.

Irish Heraldry following the Anglo-Norman Invasion

The Anglo-Normans brought their Heralds (Officers of Arms) to Ireland and they began to function here during the 14th century. From 1552 until Independence (1921), the Chief Herald, known as The Ulster King of Arms, was appointed to oversee the use of Arms. The Office of Arms and its records were re-established at Dublin in 1943. (Susan Hood, 2002)

Description of Seal, Adopted by Sir Michael O'Loughlen (1789-1842)

TL. Cooke 1842/43, describes the seal used by Sir Michael in his private correspondence: "It presents, on the Dexter side of the Shield, an oak tree erased; and on the Sinister side, an anchor and cable. The Shield is surmounted with the open, six-barred, and full-faced Helmet, which is limited to those with royal status. Crest: On a wreath, a hand and dagger. Motto: "My hope and safety is to hold by the Anchor of Oak."

see No. (6) - *Visit to Kilmorona Cathedral* - Page (1) within TL. Cooke, *Autumnal Rambles About New Quay* - 1842/43.

The 1838 Grant of Arms to Sir Michael O'Loughlen (1789-1842)

The only Ó Lochlainn Grant of Arms was registered in 1838 on behalf of Sir Michael by William Betham, The Ulster King of Arms (Chief Herald of Ireland, 1820-1853).

William Betham's 1838 text indicates that it was granted to Sir Michael and that of his direct descendants, and this exclusivity is protected by Irish Heraldic Law. His 1838 Coat of Arms consists of a Shield, depicting the "Chieftain Defending"; Crest showing an Anchor Erect with a coil of rope round the stock, within a Ducal Coronet.

Ack: Chief Herald - National Library of Ireland - 1838 Image



Developing an Ó Lochlainn Coat of Arms (2006 - 2011)

During 2006 Robert O'Loughlin, Queensland, Australia, submitted his extensive research into Ó Lochlainn emblems and flags, and asked whether the 1838 Coat of Arms also represents the Ó Lochlainn Clan.

Fergus Gillespie, Chief Herald, Dublin responded: 'that usage of the 1838 Coat of Arms by Clan members was illegal'. This new information permitted the designing of a new Coat of Arms, drawing on our ancient heritage, and also representing our worldwide clan - Muintir Uí Lochlainn.

During 2009, an international clan advisory committee developed designs, which were later discussed during the October 2010 Clan reunion. Tom O'Loughlin (Nottingham) proposed that the Ó Lochlainn clan adopt its ancient symbol, the 1159 AD fruit-bearing oak, rooted in Burren karst limestone, as Shield, and with the blue and gold anchor as Crest - [see front page image \(2011\)](#).

During 2010-11, Katharine Lochnan created and executed this design in consultation with Tom O'Loughlin, and their combined efforts represent the 2010 adopted proposal of Muintir Uí Lochlainn (extended family of Ó Lochlainns).

Listing the Various Sections within A Coat of Arms:

A Coat of Arms contains the following component parts, moving from top to bottom:

Crest, Torque, Mantling, Helmet, Shield, while the Motto - *De Petra Melle*, appears below the Shield, within a Scroll.

Blazon - Describes the various sections within a Coat of Arms in the standardised language of heraldry. The 2011 Blazon was proposed by Tom O'Loughlin; Shield: *argent* (silver, depicted using white in heraldry), on a 'karst' mount proper, an oak tree in fruit *vert* (green). Crest: An anchor *azure* (blue) entwined with a cable *Or* (gold, depicted using yellow in heraldry).

The torque and mantling follow the conventions of Irish heraldry and show the shield's main colour, *green*, on the outside and *argent* on the inside. Burren gentians have been added as decoration, while the torque intertwines these colours.

Ó Lochlainn Heraldic Symbols Explained

The Crest:

The Burren is situated on the southern shores of Galway Bay, widening to join the Atlantic Ocean. The anchor illustrates the long association of the Ó Lochlainn clan with the sea, including many Clan emigration journeys, while the colours azure (blue) and gold (yellow) display a spiritual connection. Clan tombstones at Corcomroe Abbey display the inverted anchor - '*Anchora Salutis*' (The Anchor of Salvation - [see 1838 image](#)).

The Torque or Wreath:

The Torque or Wreath is a twist of cloth on top of the Helmet, and extends to become the flowing "Mantling". It employs the two main colours of the Shield: *vert* (green) and *argent* (silver-white).

Mantling:

This depicts the protective drapery worn by knights which was "slashed" by swords in battle. Artistic License is permitted when designing Mantling. Katharine Lochnan has adopted the Burren blue gentian flowers that are part of the unique ecosystem, which is the Burren landscape, in place of the more regular tassels.

The Helmet:

The helmet is indicative of status or rank. Tom O'Loughlin supplied the model for this so-called "tilting helm", the standard helmet used in Irish heraldry. It has a closed visor and is seen in three-quarter view, looking towards its Dexter (to the right from the standpoint of the wearer).

The Shield:

The Shield depicts the fruitful oak tree laden with acorns, growing out of Burren karst limestone. The Ó Lochlainns, originally part of the Corca Modruad (Corcomroe) tribe, which divided into the sister clans of Ó Lochlainn and O Connor in the late 10th century. The O Connors ruled within west Corcomroe, while the Ó Lochlainns looked after east Corcomroe (Burren). In tribal times, an oak tree, sacred to the Druids, was planted outside the chieftain's household, while the acorns refer to those Ó Lochlainns within the Clan Diaspora. The O Connors also adopted the oak tree, while the inclusion of 'karst' refers to the ancient Clan Barony of Burren. Colours vert (green) and argent (silver-white).

Motto - *De Petra Melle*:

Mottoes may change over time and do not form an integral part of the armorial Achievement.

Tom OLoughlin proposed *De Petra Melle* as our Motto, and it is located on the Scroll beneath the Shield.

De Petra Melle is taken from Psalm 81:16: 'I will satisfy you with honey from the rock' ("*Et de petra melle saturavit eos*"), which evokes life within the Burren landscape. This verse, inspired the Cistercian monks who established Corcomroe Abbey, Bellharbour, North Clare during the 13th century.

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Acknowledge - Chief Herald - NLI Dublin

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