

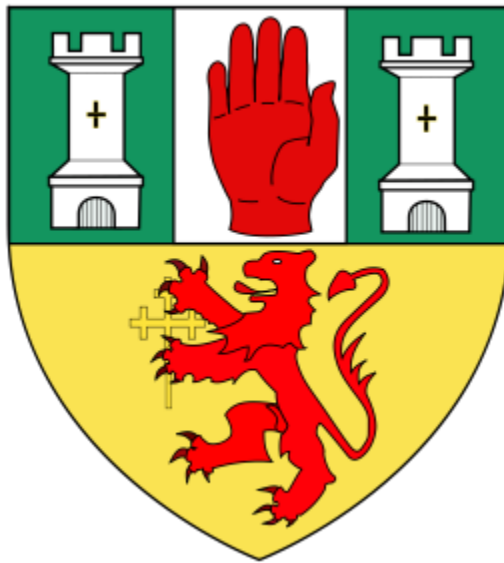
Irish County's Coat of Arms

The following is a list of **Irish counties' coats of arms**. In most cases these arms are assigned to county councils created by the Local Government (Ireland) Act 1898. Others were created by later legislation, either by the Chief Herald of Ireland or the College of Arms in Northern Ireland. All but two county councils in the Republic has a coat of arms. In Northern Ireland county councils were abolished in 1973, but the traditional arms are still occasionally used. Most of the older ones are somewhat attractive and historical but a number of the newer ones are downright shabby.

In unofficial symbolisation of a county, the arms of its county town have sometimes been used instead of those of its county council, or when the council had no arms. There are no official county flags. Flags with the GAA county colours serve as de facto county flags. County flags flown in Dublin Castle incorporate the county council arms, while those sold by the GAA county board include the county GAA crest. Coats of arms granted in recent decades often incorporate the GAA colours in the field.

Anontroim ANTRIM

Motto: "Through Hard Times Prosperity"



Antrim's arms were officially granted on March 28, 1952. The shield is divided into green and alternate waves of white and blue, symbolizing the rural areas and Lough Neagh and Six-Mile-Water. On the base stands a castle gateway like that leading to the Castle at Antrim, and behind it rises the Round Tower. Two gold sheaves of barley, each behind a gold shuttle, flank each side of the castle referencing the ancient linen-making and more modern textile industries. The crest - the red eagle with gold beak - is from the arms of the Pakenham family, the Norman family of de Courcy and is connected with the priory at Muckamore's history. The gold "cross moline" is that of the Viscount Templetown of Templepatrick.

The supporters represent the two great families of the area, the Massereenes and the O'Neills. The black stags, with gold hooves and antlers, have a ribbon of nylon about their necks alluding to the local importance of British Enkalon and from each hangs a chaplet of gold roses. The stags are a variation of the supporters of the Viscounts Massereene and Ferrard, and are derived from the crest of their ancestors and Clotworthys, so important in the early days of Antrim. Each stag holds in the mouth the sword from the O'Neills of Shane's Castle's crest. The motto is that of the Massereene family, PER ANGUSTA AD AUGUSTA: "Through hard times to prosperity."

It is unknown when Antrim became a county, but it appears that a certain district bore that name early in the 14th century. When the 'shiring' of Ulster was undertaken by Sir John Perrot in the 16th century Antrim and Down were already recognized divisions.

Árd Mhacha ARMAGH

Motto: "In Council is Wisdom"

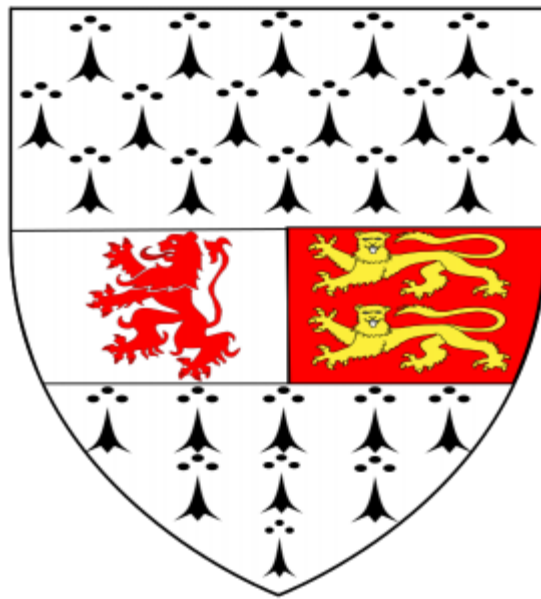


Both the colour and harp featured in Armagh's coat of arms are based on both coats of arms used to represent Ireland. Sometimes Armagh's arms have been depicted as green, identical to the arms of the Province of Leinster. These arms have appeared on Northern Ireland bank notes representing the county.

The county was made shire ground, under its present name, in **1586**, by the lord deputy, Sir John Perrott. Not relying on the vigilance and care of Henry O'Nial and Sir Henry Bagnell, to whom the government of Ulster had been entrusted, Perrott projected the division of the greater part of that province into seven counties, of which Armagh was one taking its name from its chief town.

Ceatharlach CARLOW

Motto: Carlow is the only Irish county without an official motto.



The arms have strong associations with the Butler family. The two English lions signify that the Butlers held their land from the English crown.

Carlow town was founded by the Normans in **1207** and the county was ‘shired’ shortly afterwards, making it one of the oldest counties in Ireland. During the 14th century, the county was the seat of the Kingdom of Leinster, as well as the capital of the Lordship of Ireland from 1361 to 1374.

Éabhán CAVAN

Motto: "Manliness and Truth"



The themes represented in the arms of are the local lordships in Gaelic times of the O'Reilly's and the O'Rourke's. The rampant lions are from the arms of O'Reilly and the lion passant from the arms of O'Rourke. Physical feature of the county, that is its many lakes, is represented by the inclusion of two heraldic roundels indicating water.

During the sixteenth century in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I the county of Cavan was formed and transferred to Ulster from **1584**, following the composition of Breifne. In the south, the Lough Sheelin area was part of Leinster until the late 14th century.

Clár CLARE

Motto: "True to our Heritage"



The coat is specifically designed to convey the effect of both the flat and craggy landscape of the county. The six compartments into which the shield is divided are intended to represent the six ancient areas - Dal gCais, Clann Cuilean, Ui Caisin, Corcumrua, Corca Baiscinn and Ui Breacain. The wavy effect at the base of the shield suggests the River Shannon that is a boundary feature for so much of the county.

In 1543, during the **Tudor Plantations of Ireland**, **Murrough O'Brien** by surrender and regrant to Henry VIII became **Earl of Thomond**, which heralded the first of the **Desmond Rebellions** during the Plantations. During this time the **Kingdom of Thomond** was transferred from Munster to Connaught, which **Henry Sidney** then shired thus making the Kingdom of Thomond the County Clare.

Corcaigh CORK

Motto: "Safe Harbour for Ships"

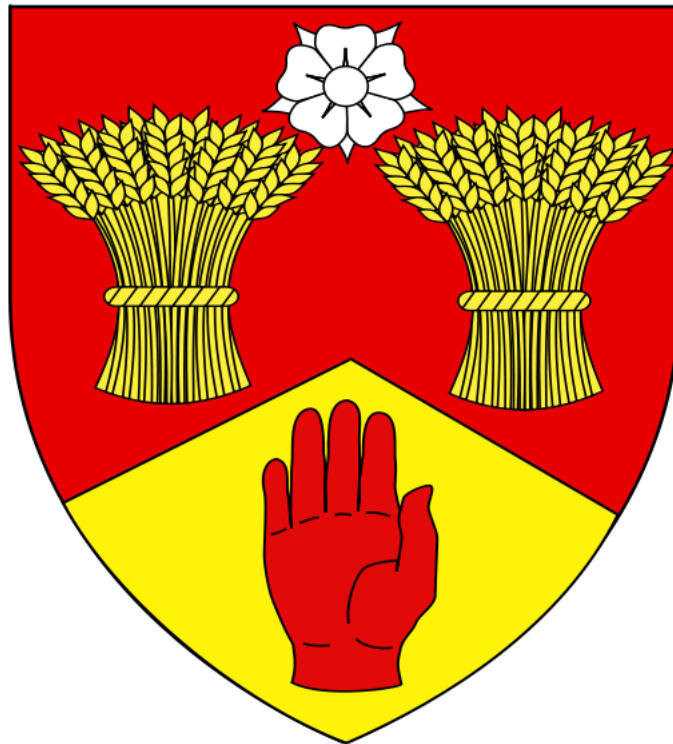


On waves of the sea a ship of three masts in full sail represents the county's maritime heritage. The two red tower gules symbolise Cork City itself and its reputation as a metropolitan centre and harbour.

Cork was first shired by 1207-8 with the county boundaries being further adapted in the Tudor period. Long before this Cork was familiar with conflict. One such example involving local Kings occurred in 125 A.D. when 'a memorable battle was fought at Ard-Neimheidh, i.e. the Great Island, between Niadh Nugent and Aengus, Monarch of Ireland which resulted in the former regained the Crown of Munster from the latter.

Doire DERRY

Motto: "Help Comes from the Lord"

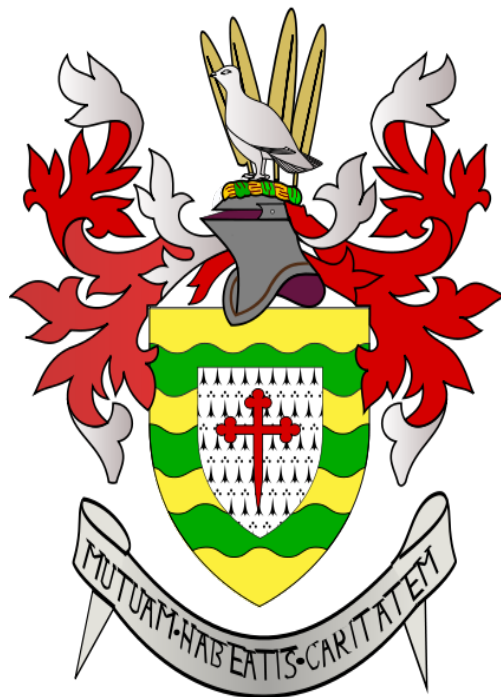


The coat wears the red hand of Ulster, indicating that the county is part of Ulster and Northern Ireland. The white flax flower is representative of the many flax fields found throughout the county. The wheat is representative of the plentifulness of Derry's land.

The City of Derry was part of the relatively new County Donegal up until 1610. In that year, the west bank of the future city was transferred by the English Crown to The Honourable The Irish Society and was combined with County Coleraine, part of County Antrim and a large portion of County Tyrone to form County Londonderry. Planters organised by London livery companies through The Honourable The Irish Society arrived in the 17th century as part of the Plantation of Ulster, and rebuilt the town with high walls to defend it from Irish. It was then renamed "Londonderry". What a mess.

Dún na nGall DONEGAL

Motto: "Up Here it's Different"



The arms are symbolical of both the nature of the county and its history. The wavy bars represent the green hills and golden strands, while the small shield in the centre stands for the ancient Kingdom of Aileach. The crest above the shield displays a dove for St. Colmcille. Four quills represent the Four Masters. The modern *County Arms of Donegal* dating from the early 1970's was influenced by the design of the old O'Donnell royal arms. The *County Arms* is the official coat of arms of both County Donegal and Donegal County Council.

The chieftain of the O'Donnell clan had the titles *An Ó Domhnaill* and *Rí Thír Chonaill*. Based at Donegal Castle in *Dún na nGall* (Donegal). O'Donnell power was finally ended in what was then the newly created County Donegal in September 1607, following the Flight of the Earls.

Dún DOWN

Motto: "Nothing Without Labour"



County Down's arms feature a number of symbols. The stags symbolise peace and harmony between the county's Catholic and Protestant communities. The fish, waves and ship represent the county's rich maritime heritage, especially the cities of Downpatrick and Belfast.

Baile Átha Cliath DUBLIN

Motto: "Action according to our word"



The arms feature the Viking raven. This signifies that Dublin was founded by the Vikings. The raven stands on a hurdle, signifying the origin of Dublin's Irish name "Baile Átha Cliath" or "Town of the Hurdle Ford". The name Dublin comes from An Dubh Linn, or black pool. Dublin is the oldest county in Ireland, and was the first shired following the Norman invasion in the late 1100's. While it is no longer used as an administrative division for local government, it retains a strong identity in popular culture, and Dublin continues to be referred to as both a region and county interchangeably, including at government body level.

Sir Manach **FERMANAGH**

Motto: "Country of the Lakes"



The arms show the Watergate at Enniskillen and Enniskillen Castle. The coat wears the red hand of Ulster, indicating that the county is part of Ulster and Northern Ireland. The knight in the crest is from the coat of arms granted to the Maguire family in 1586. In 1585 Donegal, Coleraine, Tyrone, Armagh, Fermanagh, Monaghan, and Cavan were shired or made counties but this shiring was not made effective until the early seventeenth century.

Gaillimh GALWAY

Motto: "Righteousness and Justice"



The arms depict the Galway Hooker, the reddish sailed boat traditionally associated with the county. Galway is a maritime county, and that fact is represented by the ship and waves.

Ćiarraĩ KERRY

Motto: "Co-operation, Help, Friendship"



The arms are in the familiar green and gold sporting colours of the Kingdom. The blue and white dancetty bar symbolises the county's mountains, the highest in Ireland. The crown stands for the Ciarraige, the pre-Gaelic population who gave their name to the county. The two crosses are for the monasteries of Ardfert and Aghadoe. The design is completed by a representation of the boat of St. Brendan the Navigator. In this boat legend has it that he discovered America. On August 27th 1329, by Letters Patent, Maurice FitzGerald, 1st Earl of Desmond was confirmed in the feudal seniority of the entire county palatine of Kerry, to him and his heirs male, to hold of the Crown by the service of one knight's fee. In the 15th century, the majority of the area now known as County Kerry was still part of the County Desmond, the west Munster seat of the Earl of Desmond, a branch of the Hiberno-Norman FitzGerald dynasty, known as the Geraldines.

Cill Dara KILDARE

Motto: "Spirit and Courage"

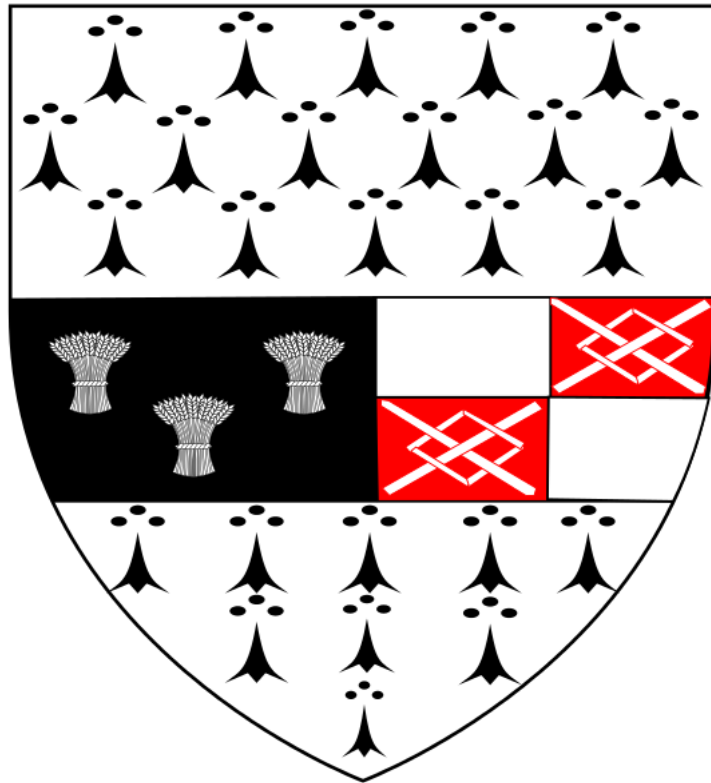


The red diagonal cross symbolises the ancient aristocratic family of the Kildare area, the Fitzgeralds, who used a red diagonal cross on a white background as their coat-of-arms. The harp is the symbol for the fianna, a legendary group of warriors from Celtic mythology who supposedly had their headquarters in Kildare. The cross is the saint Bridget's cross; Saint Brigid lived in a monastery in Co. Kildare. The horse's head symbolises the horse-breeding tradition of Kildare while the acorns are taken from the Irish for Kildare (cill dara) which means the church of the oak tree.

Kildare was shired in **1297** and assumed its present borders in 1832, following amendments to remove a number of enclaves and exclaves. The county was the home of the powerful Fitzgerald family. Parts of the county were also part of the Pale area around Dublin.

Cill Chainnigh KILKENNY

Motto: "As I Find"



The arms represent the family of Butler, out of whose estates the present day Co. Kilkenny was carved. The fess or broad band across the centre of the shield contains the arms of two families, one Gaelic, the other Norman, thereby signifying the historic and harmonious fusion of these two great Irish traditions within the county. The silver garbs or sheaves on a black field heraldically represent Dermot MacMorrough, King of Leinster, while the gold fret on red is associated with the family of Den or de la Denn.

Kilkenny became one of the counties of Leinster in 1210, but it had been a place of importance for centuries before. The county was based on the historic Gaelic kingdom of Ossory (Osraighe), which was co-terminus with the Diocese of Ossory.

Laois

LAOIS

Motto: "Together with the People"



The inverted V's rising towards the top of the shield represent the Slieve Bloom Mountains and the Rock of Dunamaise. Seven spots represent the seven leading families or 'tribes' of Laois. White and blue represents the rivers Nore and Barrow. The lion rampant in base is that of Ó Mordha, Kings of Laois. The background is gold, the colour of the Ó Mordha lion and the stars. Laois was shired in **1556** by Queen Mary as Queen's County, covering the countries of Leix, Slewmarge, Irry, and that part of Glimnaliry on the southwest side of the River Barrow. Laois received its present Irish language name following the Irish War of Independence. Laois was also sometimes spelt "Leix".

Leitrim

LEITRIM

Motto: "Be You Faithful"



The shield has been divided to recall the gentle hills characteristic of much of the county. The lion represents the O'Rourke family and in the lower part are placed three fountains, representing the lakes of the county.

In ancient times Leitrim formed the western half of the Kingdom of Breifne. This region was long influenced by the O'Rourke family of Dromahair, whose heraldic lion occupies the official county shield to this day. Close ties initially existed with the O'Reilly clan in the eastern half of the kingdom, however a split occurred in the 13th century and the kingdom was divided into East Breifne, now County Cavan, and West Breifne, now County Leitrim. The Normans invaded south Leitrim in the 13th century but were defeated at the Battle of Áth an Chip in 1270. Much of the county was confiscated from its owners in 1620 and given to Villiers and Hamilton. Their initial objective was to plant the county with English settlers. However, this proved unsuccessful. English Deputy Sir John Perrot had ordered the legal establishment of "Leitrim County" a half-century prior, in 1565. Perrott also demarcated the current county borders around 1583.

Luimneach LIMERICK

Motto: "Remember Limerick"



The principal colours of the arms are green and white, the sporting colours of the county. The Celtic cross is for the many churches of the county and can be seen as the city surrounded by the countryside. The crest depicts Patrick Sarsfield Irish commander at the Siege of Limerick. In 1210, the County of Limerick was formally established as Ui Fidgenti lands were granted to the Fitzgerald dynasty. Over time, the Normans became "more Irish than the Irish themselves" as the saying goes. The Tudors in England wanted to curb the power of these Gaelicised Normans so they established colonies of English in the county. Distrust by England of the leading Fitzgerald families, and the execution of several of the Fitzgeralds of Kildare, precipitated a revolt against English Rule in 1569. The resultant savage war in Munster, known as the Desmond Rebellions, laid waste to the province and ended with confiscation of the vast estates of the Geraldines and other Irish families that had participated in the ten years of war.

Longfort LONGFORD

Motto: "Strong and Loyal"



The two towers featured in Co. Longford's coat of arms represent the two traits of its motto, strength and loyalty. The greyhound is often used in Irish folklore and particularly in Gaelic poetry and mythology, and represents courage, vigilance, and loyal fidelity.

The county was officially shired in 1586 but English control was not fully established until the aftermath of the Nine Years' War. County Longford was added to Leinster by James I in 1608. It had previously been considered part of Connacht. The county was planted by English and Scottish landowners in 1620, with much of the O'Farrell lands being confiscated and granted to new owners. The change in control was completed during the Cromwellian plantations of the 1650's.

Lú LOUTH

Motto: "Master of all Arts"



The lower section of the shield is intended to represent the rural areas of the county. For this reason it is coloured green. The hand indicates the right hand of God. The chief stands for the urban areas of the county, namely the two towns of Drogheda and Dundalk. The black colouring of the chief commemorates the Muirtheimne or darkness of the sea - the Old Irish name for the sea off the Co. Louth coast. The ships are two in number for the two towns of Drogheda and Dundalk. The crest features a sword as symbol of law and order between two ears of barley, because of the importance of agriculture to the county.

Louth and the forfeited earldom of Ulster were jointly administered by royal officials until Hugh de Lacy was restored to his title in 1227, after which Louth was shired or became a county.

Mhaigh Eo MAYO

Motto: "God and Mary be with Us"



The word Mhaigh Eo means "the plain of the Yew Trees" and the nine yew trees express that fact with one for each barony of the county. The Patriarchal Cross (a cross with two bars) symbolises the Catholic Archdiocese of Tuam, and the three Passion Crosses represent the other three Catholic dioceses in Mayo, i.e. Achonry, Killala and Galway-Kilmacduagh-Kilfenora. Mayo is a maritime county, and that fact is represented by the ship and waves. The apparition at Knock is represented by the rose surmounted by a crown at the top of the crest. The boundaries of the county, which was formed in 1585, reflect the Mac William Íochtar lordship at that time.

MEATH

Motto: "Together Strong"



The colours of the shield, green-edged with gold represent the sporting colours of the county while the blue symbolises the Boyne River. The antique Irish crown placed in the centre of the shield symbolises 'Tara of the Kings' New Grange, regarded as the finest achievement of the Boyne Valley civilisation. The salmon in the base represents the bradan feasa or "Salmon of Knowledge" legend.

The Lordship was formally shired in **1297** into the **County of Meath**. Following this, Meath developed into the largest and wealthiest shire in Ireland. As a part of the better administration of the newly established Kingdom of Ireland, the Parliament of Ireland passed the Counties of Meath and Westmeath Act 1543, the eastern portion retaining the name Meath and the western portion called Westmeath.

Muineacháin MONAGHAN

Motto: "Diligence and Best Endeavour"



The arms are based on an ancient history of Monaghan from the 11th century "Book of Rights". The fourfold division of the shield is for the four petty kingdoms of that time – ÚD Meith, Dartraige, Mugdorn and Fermag.

The county has existed since 1585, when the Mac Mathghamhna rulers of Airgíalla agreed to join the Kingdom of Ireland.

In 1585, the English lord deputy of Ireland, Sir John Perrot, visited the area and met the chieftains. They 'requested' that **Ulster** be divided into counties and land in the kingdom of Airgíalla be apportioned that included Monaghan.

Ua Fáilghe OFFALY

Motto: "Be You Faithful"



The green, white and gold are the sporting colours of the county. The gold lion symbolises the Ui Failbhe, the Laiginian people after whom the county is named.

Following the rebellion of Brian O'Connor, it was annexed to the English crown during the reign of Edward VI. Offaly was shired as King's county in 1556. A plan for colonizing Laoighis and Offaly was adopted by the government under Mary I, but the inhabitants resisted for the rest of the century, being subdued only at the beginning of the reign of James I (1603).

Ros Comán ROSCOMMON

Motto: "Steadfast Irish Heart"



On the green area is placed a cross, as a recollection in general of Saint Coman, and the Abbeys of Roscommon and in particular of the association of the cross of Cong with the county. The antique crown below recalls Rathcroghan, where, according to Mac Fírbís, "most of the kings of the race of Hereman were buried". The ram's head represents the County's importance as a centre of sheep-rearing.

County Roscommon as an administrative division has its roots in the Middle Ages. With the conquest and division of the Kingdom of Connacht, those districts in the east retained by King John as "The King's Cantreds" covered County Roscommon, and parts of East Galway. These districts were leased to the native kings of Connacht and eventually became the county. In 1585 during the Tudor re-establishment of counties under the Composition of Connacht, Roscommon was established with the South-west boundary now alongside the River Suck.

Sligeach SLIGO

Motto: "Land of Heart's Desire" (Yeats)



The design represents the literary and cultural history of the county - the cross referring to such early material as the Book of Ballymote and Lecan, and the rose to the poetry of W.B. Yeats, in whose work the red rose was a significant theme. In the lower part of the shield is placed a boar's head, in recollection of the episode of Diarmuid and Gráinne.

The county was officially formed in 1585 by Sir Henry Sidney, Lord Deputy of Ireland, but did not come into effect until the chaos of the Nine Years' War ended, in 1603. Its boundaries reflect the Ó Conchobhair Sligigh confederation of Lower Connacht (Irish: *Íochtar Connacht*) as it was at the time of the Elizabethan conquest.

Tiobraid Árann TIPPERARY

Motto: "The Golden Vale of the Suir"



The arms show the arms of the Butler family, Earls of Ormonde. Elements such as the golden cups and the blue and gold colours (also the county's GAA colours) are taken from the Butler coat of arms.

County Tipperary (Irish: Contae Thiobraid Árann) is a county in **Ireland**. It is in the province of Munster and the Southern Region. Munster was subdivided into Limerick and Tipperary between 1251 and 1254. The county is named after the town of Tipperary, and was established in the early 13th century, shortly after the Norman invasion of Ireland.

Tír Eoghain **TYRONE**

Motto: "By Wisdom and Prudence"



The coat wears the red hand of Ulster, indicating that the county is part of Ulster and Northern Ireland. The 'fleur-de-lis' at the top of the crest is indicative of the county's connection to the British royal family.

Port Láirge WATERFORD

Motto: "May the Déise remain with Decian forever"



The round tower symbolises Saint Declan and recalls the celebrated monastic foundation at Ardmore. The ancient Déise people are represented by the eagle's head with three ears of wheat in his mouth, being the ancient crest of a Faolain, principal family of the Déise. The stag's head with the cross of Saint Hubertis taken from rest of the great Hiberno-Norman family of Power. The word lymphad actually comes from the Irish long fhada, and is a common charge in Gaelic heraldry.

During his period as lord of Ireland (1185–1216), Prince (later King) John started the process of shiring or creating counties. **Waterford and Cork functioned as a single county until the end of the thirteenth century.** Munster was subdivided into Limerick and Tipperary between 1251 and 1254.

Ḵarmhí WESTMEATH

Motto: "Noble Above Nobility"

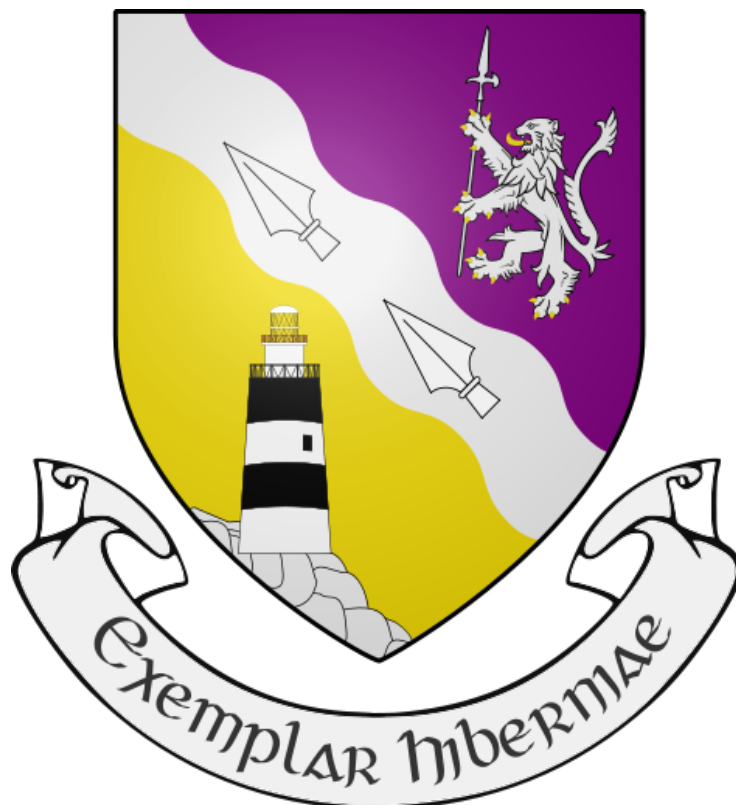


The swan represents the legend of the Children of Lir, a classic fairytale of children turned into swans. The swan-shaped Lough Derravaragh, the supposed site of the transformation, is located in the north of the county. The charge in the lower azure field is a Norseman's helmet. The lions representsome of the old ruling families in the county such as the Maelechlainns, the MacGeoghegans and the MacCauleys. The gold collar or ring is a symbol of union and fidelity, the ring also represents the central geographic location of the county in Ireland. The azure upper and lower quarters represent the water of the more than ten lakes that give Westmeath its reputation as the Lakeland County of Ireland.

As a part of the administration of the newly established Kingdom of Ireland, the Parliament of Ireland passed the Counties of Meath and Westmeath Act 1543, the eastern portion retaining the name Meath and the western portion called Westmeath

Loch Garman WEXFORD

Motto: "An Example to Ireland"



The arms are in the county's sporting colours of purple and gold. The lion with an axe reminds us that the Norman invaders of Ireland first set foot here, and that Wexford town itself is a Viking foundation. The spear heads recall the pikemen of the 1798 revolution which reached its height in the county. The lighthouse reminds us of the county's maritime connections in particular the major port at Rosslare.

Cill Mhantáin WICKLOW

Motto: "Free Spirits"



The arms depict the Round Tower at one of Ireland's early monastic settlements, Glendalough, the Wicklow Mountains and the area's forests. The dragon is a typical heraldic symbol denoting power and prestige.

Wicklow was the last of the counties in Ireland to be 'shired', in 1606.