

THE T.A.S. CREST, SHIELD, AND MOTTO

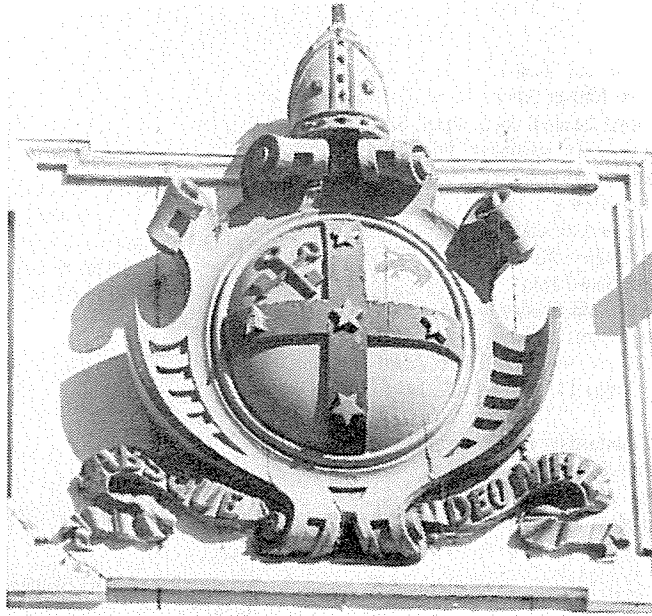


Figure 1. The T.A.S. Arms, c. 1892

A Brief History of the T.A.S. Achievement of Arms.

Together the crest, shield of arms and the motto are known as an achievement of arms. The oldest surviving T.A.S. achievement must surely be the one on the pediment over the main entrance of Big School (figure 1). This was carved out of a solid block of wood, probably sassafras. Although the pediment is a later addition, early photographs show the same arms and crest on the upper railings of the original structure, so it probably dates from about 1892. These arms are based on heraldic principles, but the choice of an oval shield seems to be an unfortunate one for a boys' school, since the oval is regarded as an acceptable variation of the lozenge, which is used to "display the arms of an unmarried woman or widow" (Brooke-Little, 1973, 20). There is a precedent for the granting of arms on a lozenge to an educational institution. The arms granted to Girton College, Cambridge, in 1928, were borne on a lozenge, and some would doubtless argue that this is acceptable for a women's college, but Brooke-Little (note 5, between pp. 148 and 149), notes that this is "an heraldic solecism", and goes on to say that:

... a corporation, whether or not its members are all women, is regarded in heraldry as being masculine, and should bear arms on a shield in the ordinary manner.

Shortly after the New England Proprietary School was opened in 1893, this problem seems to have been recognised, and the arms shown on a certificate of commendation granted to a student of the school in 1894 (figure 2), shows that there had been a complete redesign of the shield.

Comparing these two achievements (figure 1 with figure 2), there are several interesting differences. In the first there are five mullets (star-shaped charges) which are five pointed, whilst in the second the mullets are six-pointed. In the first the mitre is shown without infulae (ribbons), whereas these are prominent in the second. In the earlier of the two the motto is contained in two folds of the escroll (the scroll which appears below the shield) whereas in the later one it is in three parts. Neither of these early versions show the golden fleece (the sashed sheep), and if you look closely at the carved version of the arms of the New England Proprietary school which still survives over the main entrance of Big School, you will see that the golden fleece is a later addition. All other parts of the achievement are carved into a solid block of wood, but the golden fleece has been painted on at a later date. Next time you visit the school, look closely at the colours used on this

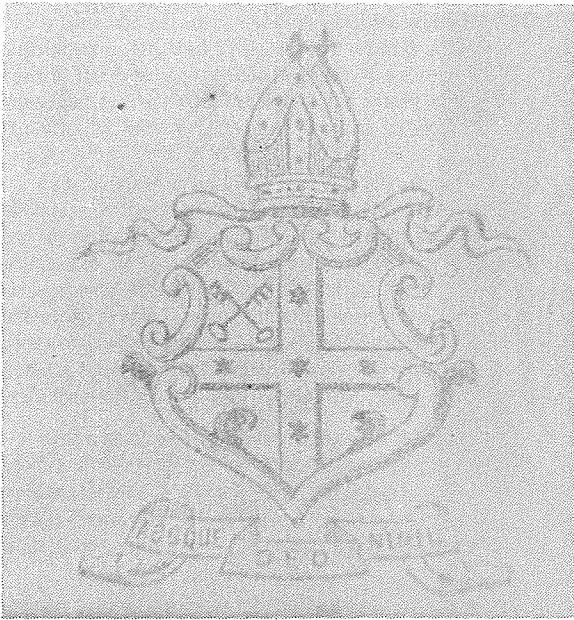


Figure 2. The achievement of the New England Proprietary School, 1894.



Figure 3. The Golden Fleece, after Fox-Davies (1978, 212).

earliest of the T.A.S. achievements. It seems that through generations of men who have maintained the school, the original pale blue and pale gold have been maintained.

I have been unable to determine when the golden fleece was introduced to the second quarter. The 1894 version was used on bookplates, and was stamped in gold on the leather covers of books given as prizes to pupils of the New England Proprietary School at least as late as 1895. The earliest record I have been able to find of the golden fleece is on a shooting medal awarded to a pupil in 1905, so it would appear that between 1895 and 1905 the use of the golden fleece was granted to the N.E.P.S. I take this opportunity to appeal to anyone who has any books, medals, or trophies from between 1895 and 1905 to let me know the date of the arms in their possession, and whether they include the golden fleece. If we can track down when the golden fleece was first used, it could simplify the task of finding out how and why it was granted to the school, and this could be important when we apply for registration of the T.A.S. achievement with the College of Heralds sometime in 1985. Note that the golden fleece used on the school arms between 1905 and 1984 differs considerably from the traditional version (see figure 3). The shield of 1894 was not designed to accommodate the fleece, and the designer of the 1905 version did not alter the shield, but instead tried to fit the fleece into the existing second quarter. Over the years this has given rise to some very strange creatures, most of which would be quickly culled out of the flock by any Australian grazier.

By 1905 the blazon, that is, the heraldic description of the achievement, was complete, and anyone familiar with heraldry would have been able to give an accurate written description of it. However from 1905 until quite recent times the interpretation of the blazon has given rise to many variations of the achievement. One important version is shown on the seal of The Armidale School Limited, dating from about 1926. At this time the law was changed to limit the number of members of a proprietary company, and it became necessary for the school to register as a limited liability company. The name of the school was changed, and a new achievement was engraved on a bronze seal approximately 7.5cm in diameter to become the official seal until 1947, when responsibility for the school was assumed by the Armidale Diocese. The Seal is engraved in mirror image, but I have had it reproduced in reverse to simplify comparison of this version of the arms with other versions. The engraver seems to have been provided with a design in which the first and second quarters are even smaller in relation to the overall size of the shield than in the 1905 version. Brilliant craftsman that he was, the engraver has produced a fleece that can, on close inspection, be identified with the genus *ovis*, although I doubt whether any grazier would want to breed from it. In this version the artistic merit of the infulae has been lost, and the motto has been contained in one section of the scroll. However, note that the mullets have been shown as five pointed and the keys are shown with wards downwards and outwards; in both these characteristics the achievement follows the 1892/93 version. In the mid

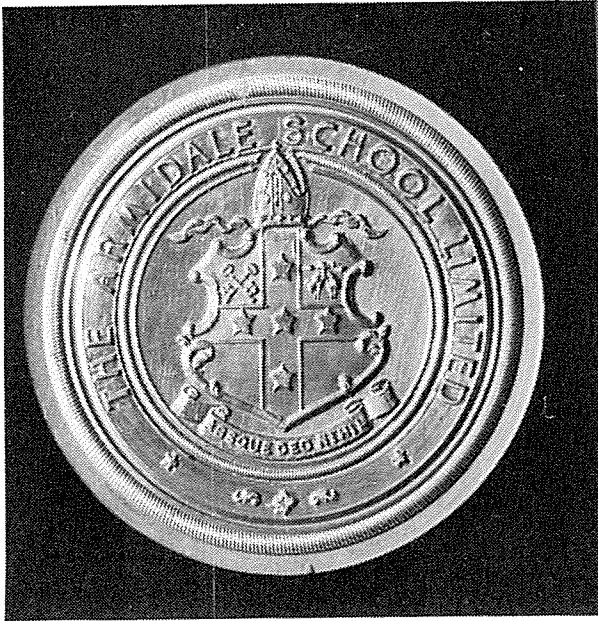


Figure 4. Seal of The Armidale School Limited, c. 1926

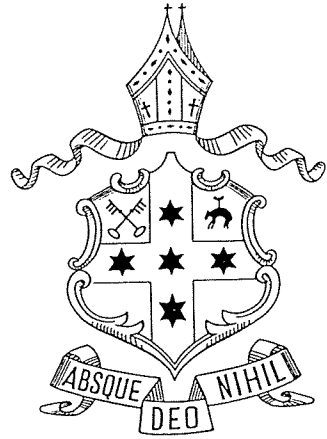


Figure 5. Pencil drawing, 1935, annotated "for use in making up blocks".

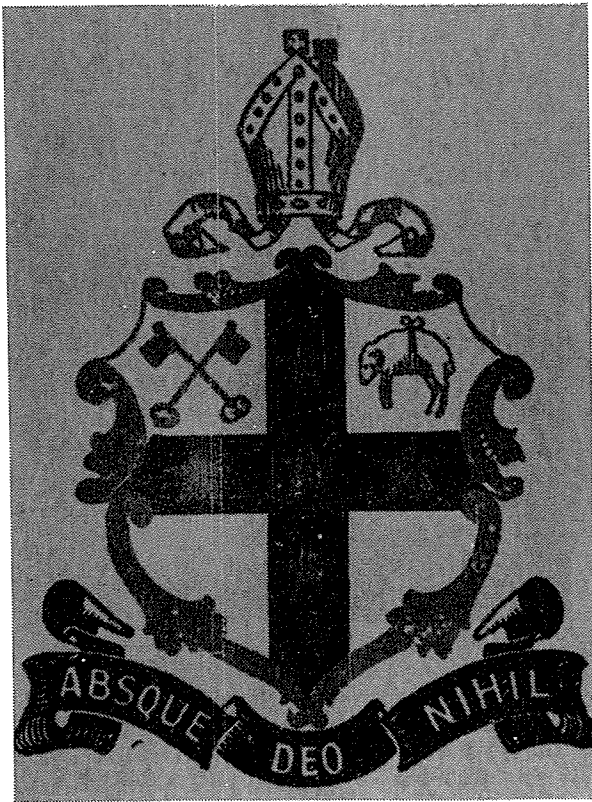


Figure 6. Achievement used on The Armidalian, 1936 edition.

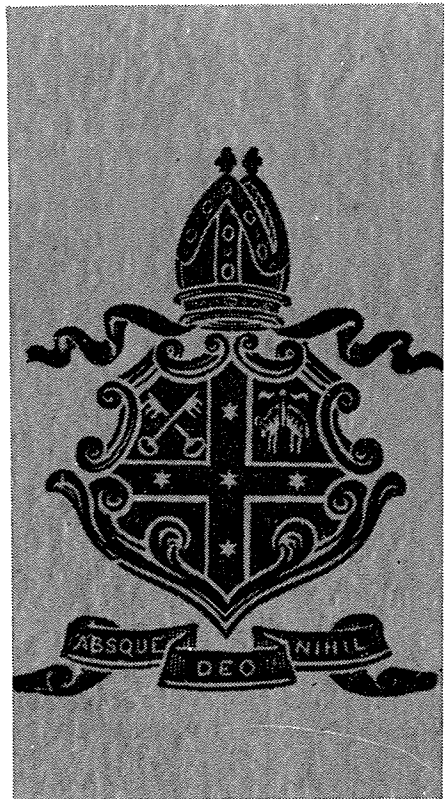


Figure 7. From the cover of The Armidalian, 1938 edition.

1930s there was a spate of new versions of the achievement. In 1935 a reasonably competent artist produced a pencil version (figure 5 retouched for publication) which is annotated "for use in making blocks". However it was not used on the cover of *The Armidalian* in 1936 (figure 6); this appears to be a complete redesign, and has been widened at the top leaving more room for the golden fleece, and was printed in gold and a very dark navy blue. By 1938 (figure 7) there had been a return to the 1905 version, but in negative, and printed in dark navy on an apricot ground.

The outstanding design in the years following World War II was executed by M. Napier Waller, and is seen to best advantage on the memorial windows of the assembly hall. This is a professional reconstruction by a competent designer, and seems to have drawn heavily on the versions which can still be seen in the dining room and over the Honour Roll in the entrance to Big School, but it appears to have been designed without knowledge of the existence of the 1894 and 1905 achievements. There is an adaptation of the Napier Waller design over the main entrance of the assembly hall, and it is interesting to note how rapidly the degradation of a good design can occur as the result of imperfect copying. The artwork used in published versions of the achievement on letterheads, brochures, and other publications seems to have been derived from the Napier Waller design, but the original artwork for blockmaking has not come to light during my searches. In recent years the achievements used in publications have been copies of copies, and over the years the quality has deteriorated.

There have been many other versions of the achievement produced over the years, and one of the most interesting sources of information is the various badges produced by the T.A.S.O.B.U. The lapel badge shown in figure 8 is slightly more than 20mm in diameter. The craftsmanship required to construct the die complete with scroll and motto on that scale is impressive. Unfortunately it is difficult to date some of these artefacts, and again I appeal to anyone who has artefacts for which a date can be established to let me know about them.

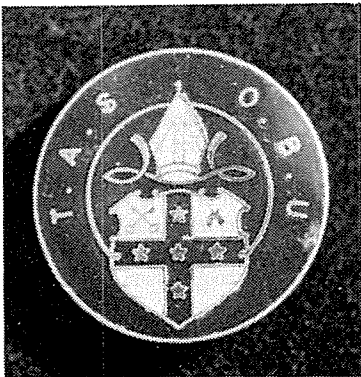


Figure 8. Lapel badge, blue and cream enamel on bronze, diameter 20.5mm.



Figure 9. Dress stud (left) in blue and yellow enamel, and lapel badge in blue and cream, diameter of each, 11mm.

The Meaning of the Charges.

The MULLET or MOLET derives from a spur-rowel, and unless otherwise specified has five straight rays. By contrast stars are known as ESTOILES, and are shown with six wavy rays unless otherwise specified. I suspect that six pointed mullets are often used because they are easier to draw, but there are many precedents for having other than five rays. The "stars" on the Australian flag are strictly seven pointed mullets, with a ray for each state and the Northern Territory, and the arms of the See of Sydney show four mullets, eight pointed, in the form of the Southern Cross.

The keys and the mitre are ecclesiastical. The keys represent the keys of Saint Peter, and although there is also a popular belief that they represent the keys of knowledge I can find no evidence to support this, but it would be nice to think that they could represent both.

The fleece dates back to 1429 when the Order of the Golden Fleece was founded by Philip Duke of Burgundy and the Netherlands, but Fox-Davies (1978, 212) records that in the latter part of the nineteenth century it was "frequently employed in grants of arms to towns or individuals connected with the woolen industry". In this context it is of interest that the fleece is a charge on the arms of New Zealand, the second quarter of which is GULES (red) charged with a fleece, OR (gold) — in simple terms, it shows a golden sheep on a red background.

The T.A.S. Colours

At least in recent times it has been widely believed that the T.A.S. Colours are straw and navy blue. Paul Johnstone tells me that when M. Napier Waller was designing the windows for the Memorial Hall, he insisted that the heraldic correctness of the arms be established. In a handwritten heraldic description, dating from this time, the colours are designated as a shield of staw colour and a cross azure, and mullets (stars) of straw. This is apparently a description of the arms then in use, and creates grounds for uncertainty about the authenticity of the arms which have been used for the last fifty or sixty years. "Straw" is not a heraldic colour, and although considerable variation is allowed in the use of heraldic colours, AZURE was originally a bright blue, the colour of LAPIS LAZULI, from which the pigment was once made. The modern equivalent is cerulean blue. It seems probable that the use of dark navy blue has developed as a result of copies of the arms being made from copies of copies. That this sort of copying has taken place for many years is evidenced by the many variations and distortions in the shape of the shield, the mitre, and the charges.

The use of the "colour straw" could well be a misunderstanding. In one explanation of the use of straw, given to Paul Johnstone, it was suggested that straw and azure could have been the livery colours of the Earl of Jersey, which he granted to the school rather than his heraldic colours. Whatever was originally intended, the use of the colour straw in the school arms would be questionable. One reason for saying this is that "mitres, when placed above shields, are always represented as gold" (Brooke-Little, 1973, 224). But also, if straw is a colour it would be questionable practice to place keys, and fleece azure on a straw ground, or mullets (stars) of straw on a cross azure, since the practice is to avoid putting a coloured object on a coloured field. There are exceptions to this rule but they do not apply to the T.A.S. arms. However it would be normal practice to put a fleece azure on a field of gold. The problem could have arisen because of the similarity, both phonetic and in appearance, of OR and STRAW.

Design for the T.A.S. Blazer, 1984.

In 1983 the headmaster decided to abolish the Norfolk jacket, to discontinue the use of colours on the school blazer, and to introduce a colours tie. When he asked me to design a tie I was aware that the task presented some difficulties and that the change was likely to be controversial. The historical record, and the blazon which dates from time of M. Napier Waller, gave a clear indication that navy-blue was not originally intended as a school colour. A dark blue stripe on a navy-blue tie would not be distinctive, and this dictated that a paler tint of azure be chosen. heraldic tradition indicated that the other colour must be OR rather than straw, but this made no difference to the emblazonment, since straw appears as pale gold. However these two colours must be treated with care, for the addition of a small amount of red to each of them changes them into complementary colours and results in a colour discord. Since the school colours were to be displayed on a navy-blue ground (the tie and blazer), this dictated a fairly pale version of azure, and that the same colours be used on tie and blazer, and although this makes a change from recent practice it has a sound basis both in school tradition and heraldic precedent. The final judgement must rest on the design for the new school blazer.

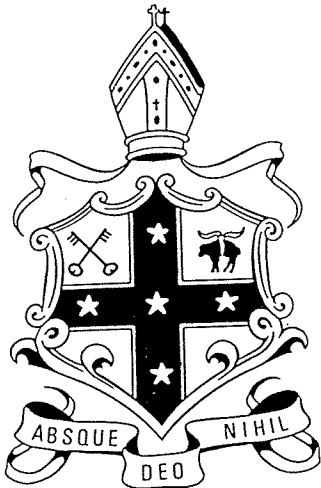


Figure 10. Achievement for printing in azure on a straw ground.

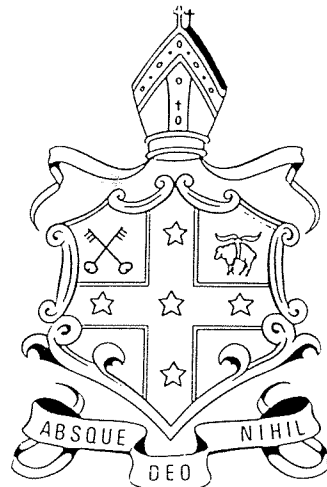


Figure 11. Achievement for use when printing in black or in negative.

In the draughting of the achievement I have retained the five pointed mullet which dates back to the 1892-3 version, and the mitre has been given a convex curve in keeping with all the early versions, rather using the concave curve used by Napier Waller. According to tradition, the infulae should be appended, and I have swept these out and downwards to balance the shield and the escroll. The shield had to be widened at the top to accommodate the re-drawn fleece, and I trust that I have achieved this without losing the aesthetic value of the 1894 arms. In short, although some changes have been made, I have tried to preserve the best elements of the earliest achievements.

G.B.M.

References: Brooke-Little, J.P., 1970. BOUTELL'S HERALDRY, Frederick Warne and Co., London.
Fox-Davies, A.C., 1978. A COMPLETE GUIDE TO HERALDRY, Bonanza Books, New York.

ANZAC DAY OBSERVANCE



Lt. Col. Marshall-Cormack takes the salute at the Anzac Day Ceremony.

In 1984, Easter was so late that we broke up for our end of Term 1 vacation before Easter and included that in a vacation some days longer than usual. This meant, of course, that we missed Anzac Day and the usual Cadet march on that day in town.

Nevertheless, Anzac Day did not go unobserved. Major McConville was called upon to make the Anzac Day address at the Armidale City gathering of veterans, and the Anzac Guard performed their customary duties at Dangarsleigh and in town.

The School's observance of Anzac Day took place on the 18th April with the Dawn Service, and the Cadet Parade later in the day. Lieutenant-Colonel Marshall-Cormack, Commander of Cadets in N.S.W., was present and gave the address at both functions.

In his Dawn Service address he said:

"It is nearly 70 years since young men from Australia and New Zealand joined together to form an Army Corps 30,000 strong. They were aptly named ANZAC. Their first battle of many immortalised into our culture the words 'Gallipoli' and 'Anzac'.

"Some of you will know, and others should read, about this battle which resulted in defeat. In hindsight, one has to question the wisdom of the Commanders' intentions to attack. Our troops landed on a beach several miles