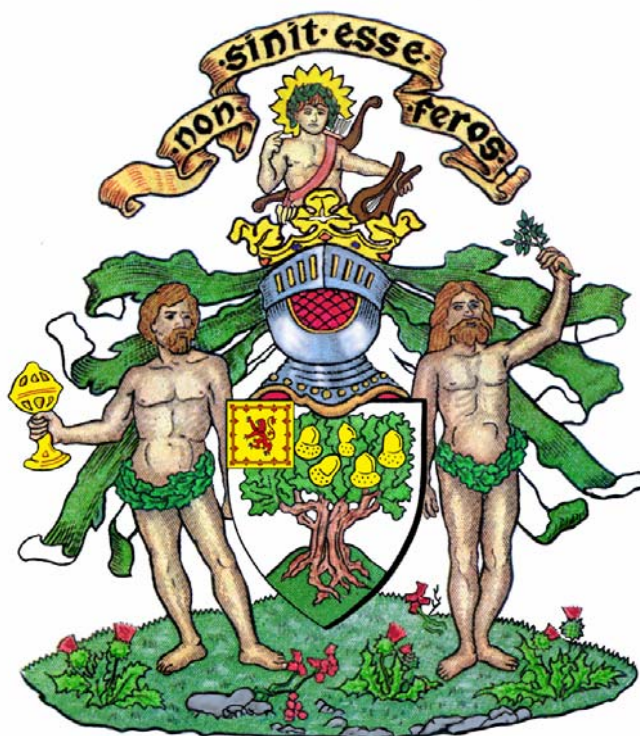


An Eighteenth Century Scots Heraldic Negotiation



Dr Donald Emslie-Smith

THE ARMS OF the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, granted by Lord Lyon Sir James Balfour Paul in 1900, are almost identical with those assumed by the College on its Common Seal of 1682 but never registered at the Lyon Office, despite



the fact that in that year Lyon was instructed by King Charles II, through Secretary of State the Earl of Moray, to add to the College's Arms an honourable augmentation in the form of "our Coat of Scotland in the Dexter Canton"¹. The blazon in the Lyon Register reads:

Argent, issuing from a mount in base an oak tree proper fructed Or, on a canton of the last a lion rampant within a double tressure flory counter flory Gules being the Royal Coat of Scotland the right to bear which in dexter canton was granted to the College of Physicians at Edinburgh by Royal Warrant under the sign manual of King Charles II of date 25 February 1682 (1681 old style in England) directed to Lyon. Above the shield is placed a helmet befitting their Degree with a Mantling Vert

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doubled Argent above which is set for Crest — *issuing out of a ducal coronet the figure of Apollo couped at the waist with bow and quiver on his back and holding a lyre in his hands wreathed about the temples with a garland of bay all proper* and in an Escrol over the same this Motto: NON SINIT ESSE FEROS. And upon a compartment below the Shield are placed for Supporters *two savages wreathed about the middle with oak proper the one on the dexter holding in his exterior hand a covered cup Or and that on the sinister a sprig of rue Vert.* ²

In his article on Edinburgh's Academic Heraldry, Patrick Barden ³ states that a whole article would be required to tell the full story of how these Arms developed. In his massive History of the Royal College of Physicians, Craig ⁴ gives an account that, perhaps because of the structure of his book, is rather disjointed, and a fuller article on the whole subject has been prepared for the Proceedings of the Royal College ⁵. Here I should like to describe and put on record what Barden describes as "a curious document which appears at first to be a Grant of Arms from John Campbell Hooke of Bangeston (Lyon 1759 to 1796). It is undated and unsigned, which suggests that it is only a draft". The collection of papers referred to by Barden consists, in fact, of three documents ⁶.

1. A page of slightly ragged paper folded in four and headed on the outside "A Diploma for arms 1783". The handwriting is unlike those on documents 2 or 3. Beside that heading, in smudged mirror-image, is marked: "the God Apo". This "blotting-paper" writing does not correspond to anything else on the other side of this page or to other pages of document 2. This page seems to be the cover for document 2 and the "blotting-paper" writing corresponds with writing on document 3 (see below);
2. A document in two pages written in two handwritings:
 - (a) a more or less formal description of the rough draft of arms (though not a proper blazon) in a careful 'copybook' hand;
 - (b) notes in a completely different hand, rather spiky and casual, including explanations, expansions and changes to the text (a). These are in the form of footnotes, though the notes are written on the margins of the paper and continued on a separate sheet. They are all indicated on the text 2(a) by the annotator using the same dagger mark, but I have numbered them sequentially with small Roman numerals for convenience.
3. A single-page, fair-copy version of an altered draft 2(a) in the same handwriting as the first. The words "the God Apollo" correspond exactly with the mirror-image "the God Apo" on paper 1, suggesting that document 3 was written after document 1 and touched document 1 while the ink was wet.

The texts of documents 2(a) and (b) and 3 are as follows.

2(a) "To All and Sundry, &c. - The Ensigns Armorial pertaining and belonging to the Royal College of Physicians at Edinburgh are - Blazoned - thus Viz. Or an Imperial Crown in base supporting an Esculapean Club in Pale wreathed about with the Pythian Serpent his Tail in Chief distilling from his head drops of Blood between

three Garlands of Laurel one in chief and two in the flanks all proper within the Royal Tressure Gules. Behind the Shield is placed an Oak Tree growing out of a Mount proper fructuated Or from the branches of which it is Suspended Above is placed instead of Helmet a Physicians Cape (*sic*) plumed with Laurel On each side thereof instead of Mantling a Physicians Robe ⁱ all Proper Above the Cape of black Velvet ⁱⁱ is placed a Wreath of their Liveries whereon is set for Crest a Game Cock trampling on a Serpent which raises its head aiming a Stroke at his breast both proper In an Escroll above the Crest this Motto, Eia! et magnas diriget Urbes (*sic*). In another below the Shield “Pro Sceptra tuemur” ⁱⁱⁱ and for Supporters are placed on a Compartment &c on the dexter the God Apollo Pythicus with his Bow in his hand a Quiver of Arrows at his back a Radiation round his head and a Grayhound sitting at his feet ^{iv} looking behind him and on the sinister Minerva Medica Viz ^v a Woman in azure Vestments a Gilded Helmet on her head a Serpent twisted round her right Arm looking into an Oval Speculum which she holds in her left hand all proper. Which Armorial Ensigns above blazoned We do hereby Ratify Confirm and assign to the said Royal Colledge and their Successors as the proper Arms and Bearing in all time coming In Testimony, &c”.

2(b) The following notes are written starting in the left hand margin and then on the bottom of the first page of 2(a), continuing on most of the second sheet.

- i. (Physicians robe) “scarlet lined w^l purple & purple sleeves & neck & cape or what lyes behind like the Cape of a Capuchine”.
- ii. (The cape) “of black velvet”, (inserted with a caret, perhaps in the same handwriting as in the original draft).
- iii. (The motto) “Pro Sceptro tuemur” is deleted and the note substitutes “Pro Populi Salute”.
- iv. (Grayhound) “rather on the attentive & watchfull or looking out”.
- v. (Minerva) “Minerva Medica or altogether such a figure as Minerva the goddess of Wisdom w^l this Differens holding in her left hand a Balance pointing at equal or just weight in the right Hand the usual Hasta &, on her Helmet* by way of Crest a Serpent — as here represented in the figure, trampling another, under her feet, exactlie as in the Figure. The Dr hopes the Royal Oak wi[†] may be inserted w^lout any loss to the Crest or Motto by making the Branches of the Oak (as all the body lyes hid) project only to the sides & ly between the right shoulders of the Supporters — as the fruit of the Oak are Acorns we have a prettie shape they will prove an additional ornament as this fruit is offten made choice of by Carvers &c for ornamenting. The Dr is loath to give Mr Cummys more trouble else he could have wished to have seen the present figure finish’d of, agreeable to the Observations now made, before it be Drawn out formallie — the Flowers at the bottom or Herbs viz. the Thistle & the Poppies must be painted proper, viz. the Thistle the Herb green and the Flower purple & Pricles proper. The Poppie Herb green and Fruit black or white - begs also that when it is painted on vellum, that

* Here there is a word in minute handwriting above the rest of the text and without a caret: it looks like ‘crested’, and probably was jotted in as an alternative to ‘by way of crest’, which could apply to the crest of the whole achievement rather than simply to an ornament on a supporter’s helmet.

† ‘will’ started, but crossed out.

it be on a larger Square of Vellum than usuall, & that the Coat of arms be sett att the Head & in the middle of the Square & not as usual on the Side and let the Writing be below, as this will answer the purpose better of hanging it up as a Picture — begs so soon as the present figure is finish'd of it may be sent Him. & will show it Dr Gregory for his Concurrence

Propos'd also under the feet of the Supporters, viz. Apollo — the implements of Pharmac. Galen, and Chemic. & under Minerva, these of Surgery, a group of Thistles & Poppies to continue as att present. “

3. “To all and Sundry, whom these Presents do or may concern, We John Campbell Hooke of Bangeston Esquire, Lyon King of Arms, do hereby Certify and Declare, that the Ensigns Armorial pertaining and belonging to the Royal Colledge of Physicians of Edinburgh, are Matriculated in the Publick Registers of the Lyon Office and blazoned as on the Margin, thus, Viz. Or, an Esculapean Club in pale, wreathed about with a dead Serpent distilling drops of Blood, his head in base, supported by an Imperial Crown, between three Laurel Garlands, one in chief, and two in the flank all proper; within the Royal Tressure Gules. Above the Shield instead of an Helmet is placed a Physicians Cape, with a Plume of Laurel; and on each side thereof instead of a Mantling, a Physicians Robe, all proper; and on a wreath of their Liveries is set for Crest, a Game Cock in a Crowing posture, trampling on a Serpent which raises itself, aiming a Stroke at his breast, both proper. And in an Escroll above, this Motto, Eia! et magnos dirigit urbes [sic] and below Pro Sceptro tuemur. On a Compartment under the Shield, out of which spring Thistles and Poppies surrounding the same, are placed for Supporters, On the Dexter, the God Apollo Pythicus, with his Bow in his hand, a Quiver of Arrows at his back, a Radiation round his head, and a dog sitting and looking up to him at his feet; And on the Sinister the Goddess Hugieia, in purple Rayment, fringed with gold, bruising a Serpent below her feet all proper. Which Armorial Ensigns above blazoned, We do hereby Ratify, Confirm and Assign, to the said Royal Colledge as the proper Coat of Arms and Bearing, in all time coming. In Testimony whereof these presents are subscribed, and Our Seal of Office is appended hereunto, At Edinburgh the... day of... One thousand and Seven hundred and... years”.

There are important differences between the two drafts from the Lyon Office (2a and 3). Document 2a designates the serpent as ‘Pythian’ and distilling ‘blood from its head’; in 3 it is ‘dead’. The oak tree in 2a is absent from 3. Document 3 corrects ‘diriget’ in 2a but introduces ‘magnos’ in error. The ‘grayhound’ in 2a is ‘dog’ in 3 and ‘looking behind him’ in 2a is ‘looking up at him’ in 3. The sinister supporter in 2a, Minerva Medica and her serpent, speculum and helmet, are replaced by Hugieia, bruising a serpent beneath her feet. In document 2b the annotator refers to a ‘figure’ which is missing.

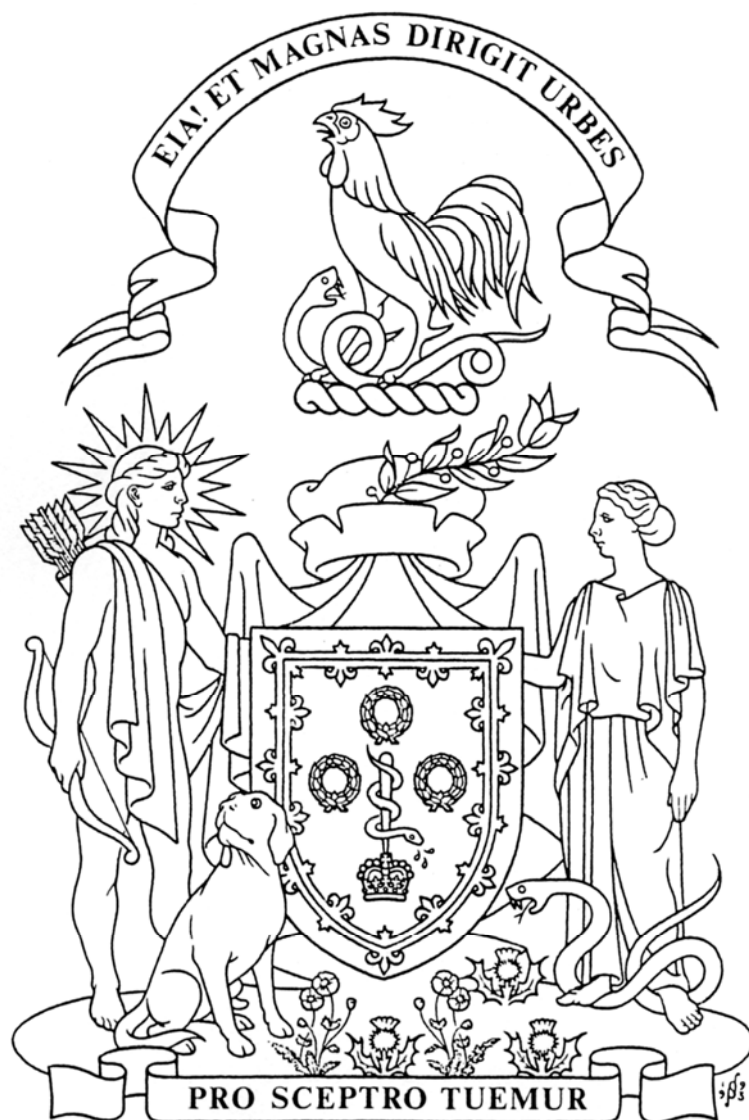
There are many interesting aspects of the Arms blazoned in documents 2 and 3 in the name of Lord Lyon Campbell Hooke of Bangeston. The most striking feature is the

very un-Scottish and rather “continental” form of the Arms — reminiscent, perhaps, of the later Arms of the French Empire under Napoleon. In place of a Helm, there is a ‘Physician’s Cap’ and instead of Mantling there is a ‘Physician’s Robe’, one supposes like the feudo-baronial Mantle. There are other oddities in the arrangement. In the first draft (document 2) the shield is suspended from an Oak Tree growing out of a Mount in the manner of a *soutien*⁷, but that is really a single supporter (as the lymphad in some Campbell arms) and both the drafts provide paired supporters of the usual kind. In both drafts the placing of a wreath of the liveries above the Physician’s Cap of black velvet, which itself is plumed with laurel, looks very clumsy.

There are many references to Greek medical mythology, so customary in medical armory. Apollo, the Patron of Medicine, born in Delos, was sent to Delphi, where he overcame a serpent, or dragon, called Python. In the first draft the serpent is described as Pythian and in both drafts Apollo is named ‘Pythicus’. Apollo has his usual attributes of a bow with arrows in a quiver; he is accompanied by a dog: in one version of the Apollo myth he was guarded by a dog when an infant. Three laurel wreaths of Apollo are charges on the shield and are echoed in both drafts by a plume of laurel in the cap. Apollo’s son, Asklepios (Aesculapius in Latin) the Greek god of healing, generally carries a rod or club up which is coiled a live harmless snake associated with his cult of healing. In these proposed Arms the ‘Esculapean club’ is wreathed about with a dead *Pythian* serpent, head downward and “distilling drops of blood”. This suggests Apollo’s victory over the Python. As well as the Pythian serpent in the shield, there is in the crest a serpent about to strike and, in the first draft, the sinister supporter has one on her helmet and another on her right arm. She is “Minerva Medica”, a *Roman* goddess. I do not know the significance of the oval speculum (or mirror) she holds in her left hand and I feel that the College man who annotated and commented on the draft did not understand it either, because he suggested a balance instead. In the second draft the Roman interloper has been changed to the Greek goddess Hugiaia (properly spelt, as in the Greek, but more commonly known as Hygieia, or Hygeia, one of the daughters of Asklepios). In the second draft she bruises yet another serpent beneath her feet. She is usually depicted as feeding milk to a healing serpent, so she is a rather more aggressive goddess than usual – referring again, perhaps, to her grandfather Apollo’s defeat of Python.

Although, as Barden pointed out³, there is no mention of the Royal Arms of Scotland in a canton, there are other references to the royal foundation of the College by Charles II. There is an Imperial Crown in base. The charges on the shield are surrounded by the Royal Tressure and, in the first draft, the shield is suspended from a Caroline Royal Oak (the Boscobel Oak, in which Charles hid after the battle of Worcester).

There are many references to physicians. In the first draft the Physician’s Cap is described as ‘of black Velvet’. Although the words are inserted with a caret, the handwriting seems to be the same as in the original draft, rather than the hand of the College man. However, it is the College man who describes the “Physicians Robe all Proper” as scarlet with a purple lining and sleeves. In the second draft (document 3) there are poppies in the compartment: these, of course, will be opium poppies. The cock in the crest is an attribute of Asklepios. The sacrifice of a cock



An interpretation of the blazon in the draft Letters Patent for the
Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, about 1783^a
made by Romilly Squire

^a *The date of the documents containing the proposed blazon cannot be established precisely but they are certainly from the later eighteenth century. The date 1783 appears on the folder containing the papers in the College Muniments.*

to Asklepios is mentioned by Socrates in his dying words to Crito.⁸ The College man, who seems keen on complications, suggested as an afterthought that implements of pharmacy and chemistry should be strewn under Apollo's feet, and of surgery under those of Minerva. Such surgical instruments would have been inappropriate to a College of Physicians and they are extremely unaesthetic, as a glance at the Arms of the Edinburgh College of Surgeons shows¹⁸.

In both drafts the words 'Physician's Cape' are clearly written. The scarlet and purple 'Physicians' Robe' strongly suggests academical dress. The shoulder-cape was in fact sometimes part of mediaeval academical dress, especially on the continent¹⁰ and was introduced in the Laudian Statutes as late as 1636 for divines at Oxford.¹¹ Oddly, it was re-introduced for the first Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sussex, where the academical dress was designed by an historian.¹⁰ However, it seems certain that the word 'Cape' refers to a cap (Cape = Caip = Kep = cap⁹) because it is a substitute for a helm. I have searched without success for a description of a Scots 'Physician's Cap'. Portraits of 18th century Scots physicians show them either bareheaded or bewigged. And yet the composer of the draft, and the College man, must have had something definite in mind.

"Academical head-dress has, perhaps, caused more controversy than any other article of academical dress"¹², but an illustration by Grignon (1770) of an Oxford Doctor of Medicine in Festal Dress shows what looks like a soft, round, black bonnet with a narrow thick brim,¹¹ and doctors in the 'lay faculties', including Medicine, wore the Round Cap, known as the 'doctor's bonnet', or 'velvet cap for doctors' — essentially the Tudor bonnet.¹² In Scotland, after the Reformation, academical dress was much neglected¹¹ and, although one authority identifies the headgear in the memorial brass to Dr Duncan Liddel (1562—1613) in Aberdeen as academical,¹³ another contradicts this opinion, stating that it is merely "the head dress of a man of dignity of the day".¹¹ A caricature by Kay¹⁴ in 1786 shows Aberdeen professors wearing square-topped hats, but they resemble the 'trencher' hats or mortar boards more than the square, soft, brimless bonnet of modern Scots doctors (sometimes called the "John Knox cap") which most authorities believe was only introduced in the 19th century. However, at special graduations in the University of St Andrews an ancient round bonnet, known as a "Doctor's Bonnet" is used¹⁵ and it is interesting that the sinister supporter in the Arms of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh is Hippocrates, wearing a "mantle Gules" and "a bonnet Sable"¹⁸!

The mottoes suggested seem to refer to Apollo and the Royal College. The one above the crest, EIA! ET MAGNAS DIRIGIT URBES, can be loosely translated 'Ho! He keeps great cities in order'. This seems to be a reference to Apollo, as Founder of Cities. It reads like the end of a hexameter, but an extensive search for its origin has as yet proved fruitless. The second motto below the shield, PRO SCEPTRO TUEMUR, means 'We keep watch on behalf of the kingdom'. It may be original or it, too, may have some classical source that is hard to trace.

Who drafted these Arms? The second draft suggests that it was John Hooke Campbell of Bangeston (see opposite). This Lord Lyon was a Campbell of Cawdor, a nephew of Lord Cawdor. He probably inherited his Welsh estates through his mother's family and recorded arms in the Lyon Register with the name Campbell



Courtesy of Scottish National Portrait Gallery

John Hooke Campbell of Bangeston
Lord Lyon King of Arms, 1754 to 1795

Hooke ¹⁶. He was Lyon from 1754 to 1795, when he met a sudden death. He was seldom in Edinburgh, especially in the later part of his tenure of Office. From 1770 the Lyon Clerk and Lyon Depute was Robert Boswell, a cousin of James Boswell, Johnson's biographer; as Lyon Depute, Robert Boswell signed the Grant of Arms to the University of Edinburgh in 1789 ³. After the death of John Hooke Campbell, Boswell was Lyon *ad interim* until the appointment of Lord Kinnoul. The present Lyon Clerk, on being shown the drafts, considered that the handwriting was that of Robert Boswell¹⁷. It is interesting that Robert Boswell was also Clerk to the Royal College of Physicians from 1771 to 1800, when he was succeeded by his son. It is therefore possible, if not probable, that Boswell, in his double capacity as Lyon Clerk (or Lyon Depute) and Clerk to the College, was the author of the drafts. Certainly he would have been ideally placed to combine a knowledge of classical medical mythology with unorthodox, perhaps even innovative, heraldic concepts.

We can have no idea who the College man was, but he refers to "Mr Cummys" and "Dr Gregory". James Cummyng was a Herald Painter in 1770 who became Lyon Clerk Depute between 1770 and 1773. He did not die for about 20 years more and could have returned to being a Herald Painter ¹⁶. Two Dr Gregoryses, father and son, were distinguished in the College's history. Dr John Gregory was Honorary Librarian from 1765 to 1772 and Secretary in 1765. His son, Dr James Gregory, was a more distinguished man, though difficult and quarrelsome. He became Secretary of the College in 1790 and President in 1798. It is likely that it is Dr James Gregory to whom the College man felt he must defer. One can only assume that Dr Gregory did not approve of the Arms drafted in the name of the Lord Lyon, or that Hooke Campbell himself did not approve of the novel heraldry, for these Arms were never registered or used. The drafts have lain safely but obscurely in the muniments of the College as a record of a late eighteenth century Scots heraldic negotiation. They illustrate not only the customary spirit of compromise between petitioner and Lyon (or his Depute) but also some very novel heraldic ideas.

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Printers' errors in the original paper corrected by the author, 2005