

# The Hatchments of St. Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

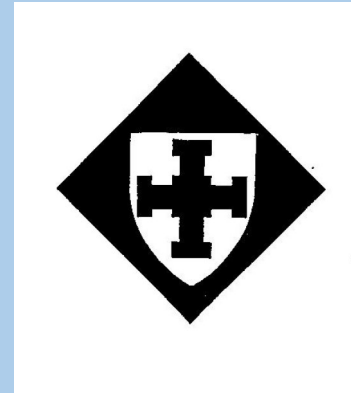
## and their origins in Heraldry.

St Chad's Church is fortunate in possessing one of the finest collections of armorial bearings in the country, 21 in all, and it is hoped that this page will enable visitors to understand them better.

You are welcome to walk around and view them. A plan giving locations and a Who's Who is further down. They are dated between 1801 and 1862. There is also a brief introduction to heraldry at the end.

But what is a hatchment and what is its purpose? The name 'hatchment' is a corruption of the French 'achèvement' meaning a display of Arms. In the middle ages, when Arms were actually carried in battle, it became the custom on the death of a knight for his Arms and weapons to be carried in the funeral procession and then hung above his tomb, as may be seen, for example over the Black Prince's tomb at Canterbury. By the 17<sup>th</sup> century such accoutrements were no longer in use; instead the Arms were painted on a wooden panel, the Hatchment, to be carried in a procession and later affixed above the entrance to the family home for a year's period of mourning.

Finally many found their way on to the walls of the Parish Church, presumably as a memorial.

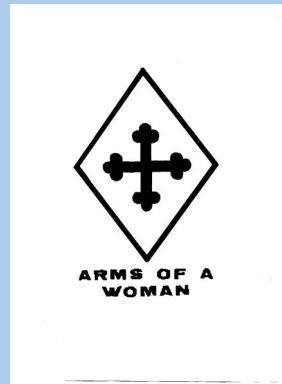


The cross of St Chad,  
displayed on flags  
and other fabric items.

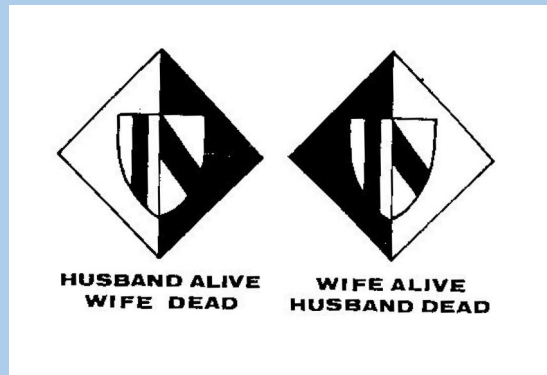
We can learn a lot about the deceased's family from the hatchment. Where the shield is divided vertically, the Arms to the left side are those of the husband, to the right of his wife; this is known as 'impaling'. If there is a small central shield it tells us that his wife was an heiress, and this is known as 'in pretence'.



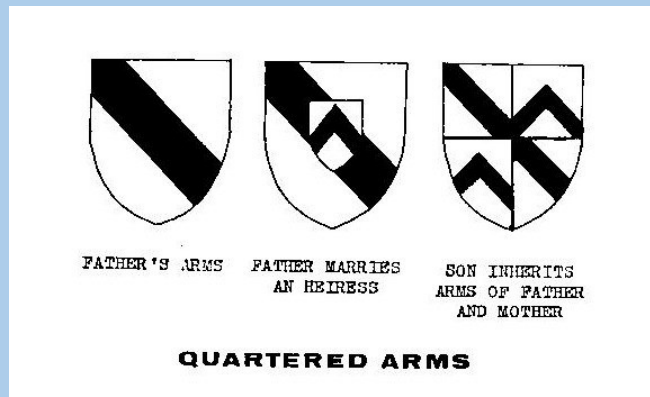
Arms shown on a lozenge (diamond shape) are those of a woman; for, not being engaged in warfare, she had no need of a shield.



The background colouring is important: if the left side is white and the right side is black, then the husband is alive and his wife has died; if it the reverse, it is the husband who has died. If the whole background is black the survivor has died.



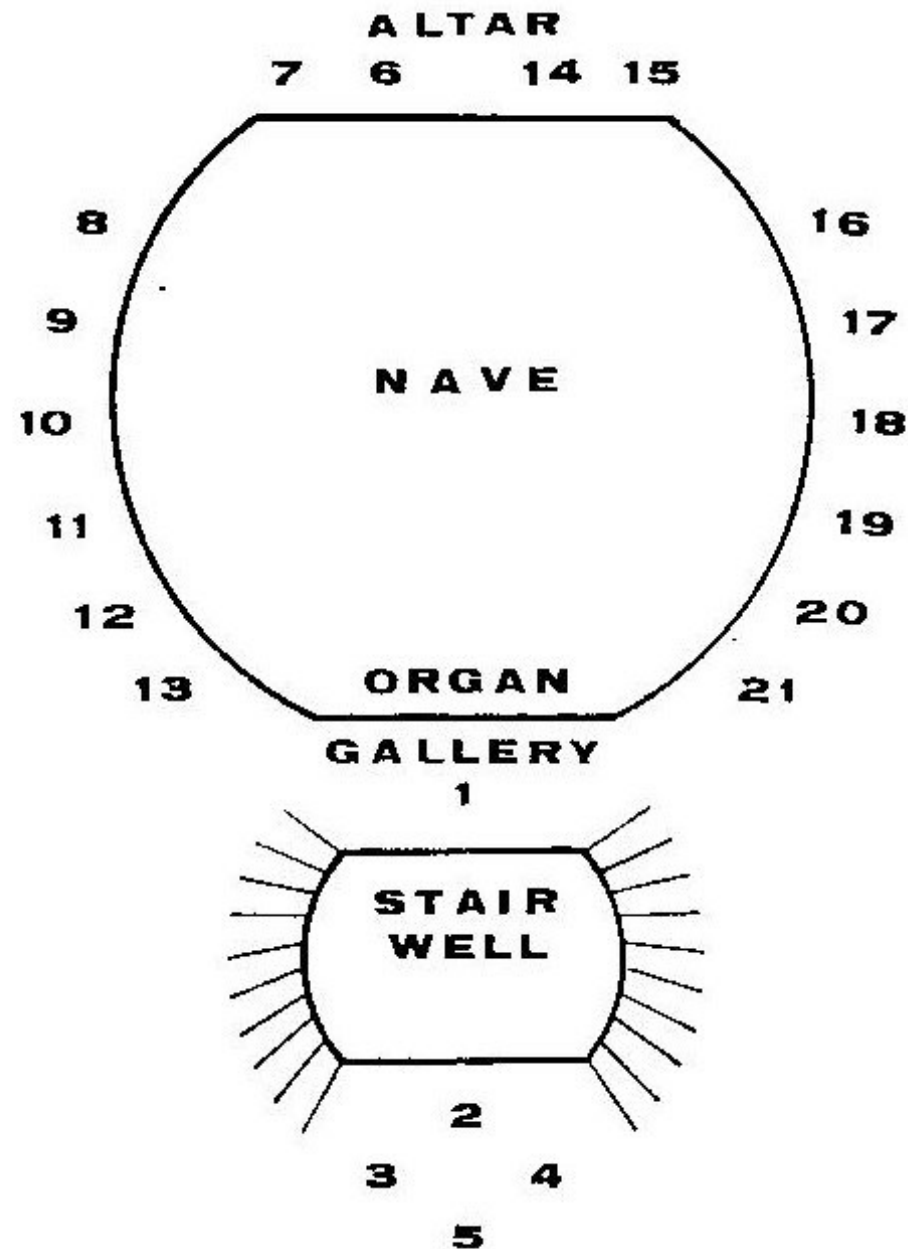
Quartering is a method of joining several different coats of arms on one shield by dividing the shield into equal parts and then placing different Arms in each division.



# Identification of the Hatchments

1. SALT impaling MOULTRIE. Unidentified
2. SWINBURNE with SPEARMAN in pretence.  
Thomas Swinburne d.1825
3. MUCKLESTONE impaling JEFFRIES.  
Edward Mucklestone d. 1851
4. EDWARDS quartering SMITHEMAN.  
John Edwards d.1851
5. SWINBURNE quartering SPEARMAN.  
Charlotte Swinburne d.?
6. SCOTT quartering COCKBURN.  
Richard Scott d.1848
7. SCOTT with COCKBURN in pretence.  
Lucretia Scott d.1832
8. ?? impaling PIGGOTT. Unidentified
9. EDWARDS quartering TUDOR TREVOR & BASKERVILLE: in pretence SMITHEMAN quartering BROOKE et al. Benjamin Edwards d. ?
10. ROCKE impaling OWEN. John Rocke d. 1824
11. ROCKE impaling KINCHANT. Richard Rocke d. ?

more on next page



12.WINGFIELD impaling ROCKE.

John Wingfield d. 1862

13.WINGFIELD impaling BAGOT.

Roland Wingfield d. 1818

14.Eardley impaling ???. Unidentified

15.SCOTT. Richard Scott d.1821

16.Unidentified

17.SCOTT impaling MORSE.

George Scott d. 1811

18.LEIGHTON quartering BURGH, ADAM & ST LEGER.

Louisa Ann St. Leger d. 1834

19.LEIGHTON with ADAMS in pretence impaling LEIGHTON.

Francis Leighton d. 1813

20.LEIGHTON with ADAMS in pretence.

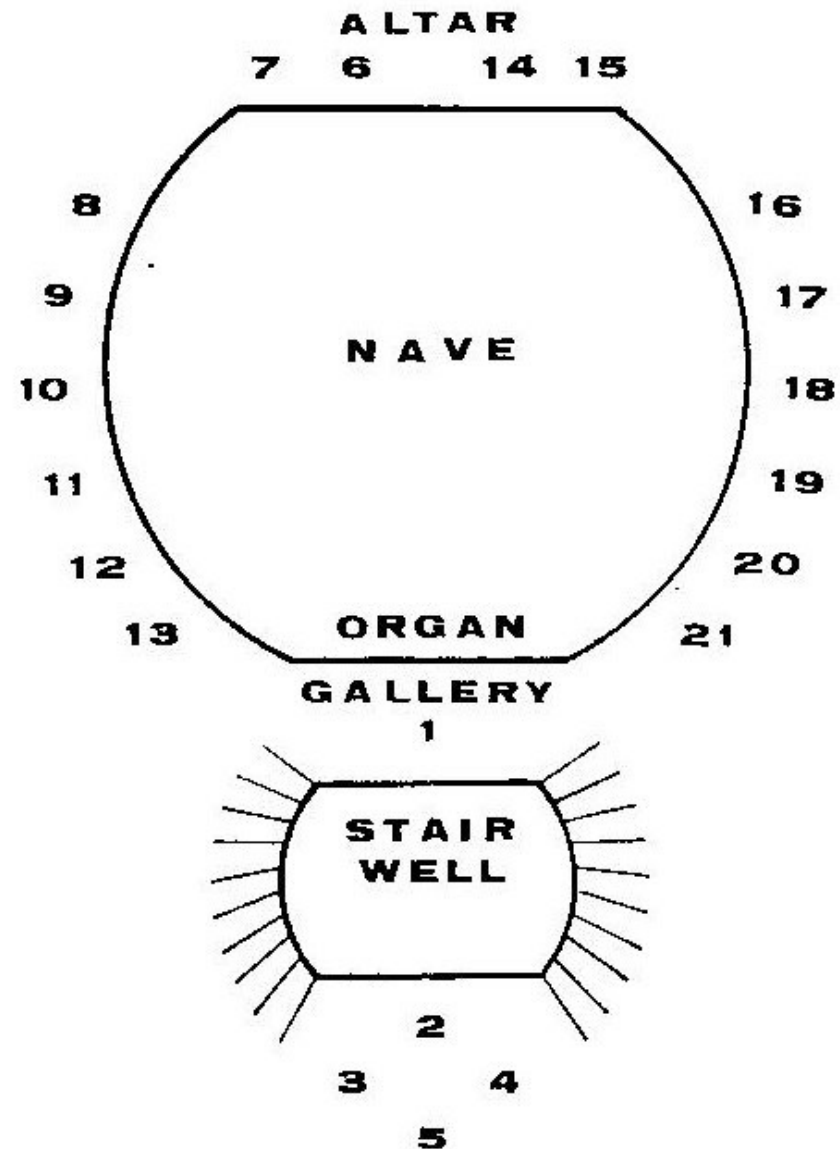
Clare Leighton d. 1801

21.LEIGHTON quartering BURGH & ADAMS and impaling ST LEGER.

Francis Leighton d. 1832

Full details of these hatchments together with those in the other Shrewsbury Churches may be found in "Hatchments in Britain" volume 9, ISBN 0 85033 912 X

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Hatchments are also displayed in Old St. Chad's (17), the Abbey (4), St Georges Church (1), St Julian's now the Craft Centre (2).

## A brief Introduction to Heraldry

Heraldry developed from artistic devices on seals, used on wax, as a means of personal identification; it emerged in the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century as a form of military display on shields, helmets and other accoutrements of war but later, and more generally, in the tournament.

However, the right to bear Arms does not come from the sharing of the same name; Arms are a personal possession which is handed down in direct succession through the main line of the family. Grants of Arms in England are made through the College of Arms. The romantic movement and Gothic revival beginning in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century led to a rapid increase in grants so that today the majority of families legitimately bearing Arms have had them granted in this or the last century.

Shropshire has many old-established families who can trace their Arms back to the early mediaeval period and several of these can be seen in St Chad's, notably Rocke, Leighton, Scott and Wingfield.

Information on other parts of the church is [here](#).

