

THE SCHOOL BADGE

Our officially registered Coat of Arms

Badge



The original school badge was simple, the school's name surrounding a 'tower' motif. The full colours are recorded as being blue and orange.

The 1931 edition of the school magazine, *The Tower*, announced a replacement. The Former Pupils' Club had secured the services of John R. Sutherland, Official Adviser in

Heraldry to the Lyon Office to come up with a new design.

The headmaster Dr Birrell petitioned the Lord Lyon King of Arms to record the new badge as a Coat of Arms, a request duly granted when the arms were matriculated on 21st January 1933.

Their official description in the language of heraldry is:

Azure, on a rock proper in the waves of the sea in base undy Argent and Vert, a tower Or masoned Sable, windows and port Gules, between a Fountain in each flank proper, the whole within a bordure of the second. In an Escrol under the shield this Motto, Ope et Consilio.

Azure, Argent, Vert, Or, Sable and Gules refer to the tinctures, or colours, used (blue, silver, green, gold, black and red respectively). So "*a tower Or masoned Sable, windows and port Gules*" means "a gold tower whose masonry is indicated with black lines; windows and the door are in red".

Base means the lower part of the shield and *Undy* means 'wavy': "*waves of the sea in base undy Argent and Vert*" translates as "sea waves at the bottom as silver and green wavy lines".

The Tower element is 'borrowed' from the burgh Coat of Arms (see right). The two roundels represent local springs.



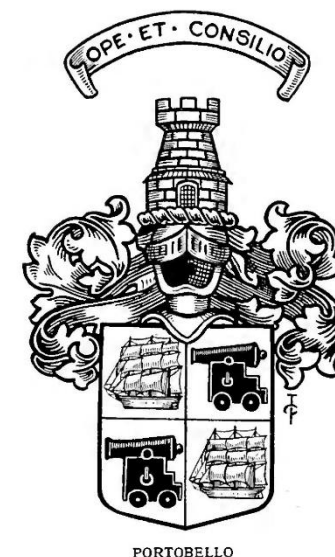
Burgh Coat of Arms

The burgh coat of arms was matriculated in 1886. The elements – sailing ships, canons, the tower and a helmet (beneath the tower) - represent the origin of the town's name.

The *Battle of Porto Bello* - sometimes *Portobelo*, or *Puerto Bello* - was a 1739 battle involving a Royal Navy squadron commanded by vice-admiral Edward Vernon which captured the Panamanian settlement of that name from its Spanish defenders.

The tower represents the three *Castillos* (forts) destroyed in the battle.

The story goes that one George Hamilton was a sailor in that battle and that he later occupied what was the first house in the lands of Figgate (the name for the area before the town was established). It stood in the region of where the Baptist Church is now on the High Street.



There is evidence that contrary to some claims, Hamilton did not construct this house. Rather it was built by Peter Scott, a local farmer. However there was certainly a person of that name at the property – adverts in 1753 pertaining to a horse race state that details can be "*seen at GEORGE HAMILTON'S at PORTO-BELLO*" – and it is claimed that Hamilton named it after the battle in which he fought.



Map by John Laurie, 1766 showing the Figgate Burn and 'Portobello' as a solitary property on the road to Berwick
Reproduced with the permission of National Libraries of Scotland