

= Order of St Patrick =

The Most Illustrious Order of Saint Patrick is a dormant British order of chivalry associated with Ireland . The Order was created in 1783 by George III at the request of the then Lord @-@ Lieutenant , Lord Buckingham . The regular creation of knights of Saint Patrick lasted until 1922 , when most of Ireland became independent as the Irish Free State . While the Order technically still exists , no knight of St Patrick has been created since 1936 , and the last surviving knight , Prince Henry , Duke of Gloucester , died in 1974 . The Queen , however , remains the Sovereign of the Order , and one officer , the Ulster King of Arms (now combined with Norroy King of Arms) , also survives . St Patrick is patron of the order ; its motto is *Quis separabit ?* , Latin for " Who will separate [us] ? " : an allusion to the Vulgate translation of Romans 8 : 35 , " Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ? "

Most British orders of chivalry cover the entire kingdom , but the three most exalted ones each pertain to one constituent nation only . The Order of St Patrick , which pertains to Ireland , is the most junior of these three in precedence and age . Its equivalent in England , The Most Noble Order of the Garter , is the oldest order of chivalry in the United Kingdom , dating to the middle fourteenth century . The Scottish equivalent is The Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle , dating in its modern form to 1687 .

= = History = =

= = = Early history = = =

The order was founded in 1783 , a year after the grant of substantial autonomy to Ireland , as a means of rewarding (or obtaining) political support in the Irish Parliament . The Order of the Bath , founded in 1725 , was instituted for similar reasons . The statutes of the Order restricted membership to men who were both knights and gentlemen , the latter being defined as having three generations of " noblesse " (i.e. ancestors bearing coats of arms) on both their father 's and mother 's side . In practice , however , only Irish Peers (and occasional foreign princes with tenuous or no Irish connections) were ever appointed to the Order . The cross of St Patrick (a red saltire on a white background) was chosen as one of the symbols of the Order . A flag of this design was later incorporated into the Union Flag . Its association with St. Patrick or with Ireland prior to the foundation of the Order is unclear , however . One of the first knights was The 2nd Duke of Leinster , whose arms carry the same cross .

The Order of St Patrick earned international coverage when , in 1907 , its insignia , known generally as the Irish Crown Jewels , were stolen from the Bedford Tower in Dublin Castle shortly before a visit by the Order 's Sovereign , King Edward VII . Their whereabouts remain a mystery .

= = = Post @-@ 1922 = = =

The last non @-@ royal appointed to the order was James Hamilton , 3rd Duke of Abercorn in 1922 , who served as the first Governor of Northern Ireland . When the Irish Free State left the United Kingdom that same year , the Irish Executive Council under W. T. Cosgrave chose to make no further appointments to the Order . The British government continued to entertain hopes for the order 's revival as a pan @-@ Irish institution . Therefore , while there was no legal or constitutional bar to the British government continuing to make appointments from among British subjects resident in Northern Ireland , it chose not to do so .

Since then , only three people have been appointed to the Order , all members of the British Royal Family . The then @-@ Prince of Wales (the future King Edward VIII and later Duke of Windsor) was appointed in 1927 and his younger brothers , Prince Henry , Duke of Gloucester , in 1934 and Prince Albert , Duke of York (later King George VI) , in 1936 .

It is likely that these appointments were considered possible because the Irish Free State continued

to recognise the British monarch as its official head of state . In 1937 , however , the Irish Free State adopted a new constitution , rendering the Crown 's position in Irish affairs ambiguous . The ambiguity was resolved 12 years later when the Irish Free State formally declared itself a republic and left the British Commonwealth . The basis for such appointments thus ceased and no further ones have been made .

The Duke of Gloucester at his death in 1974 was the last surviving member of the Order . The last living non @-@ royal member of the Order , the 9th Earl of Shaftesbury , died in 1961 . The Order has , however , never actually been abolished and its resurrection has been discussed in Irish Government circles on a number of occasions and never pursued .

= = = Possible revival = = =

Prime Minister Winston Churchill suggested reviving the Order in 1943 to recognise the services of General The Hon. Sir Harold Alexander in Tunisia , but the opinion of the other ministers and civil servants was that it would upset the diplomatic balance between London and Dublin . Taoiseach Seán Lemass considered reviving the Order during the 1960s , but did not take a decision .

The Constitution of Ireland provides , " Titles of nobility shall not be conferred by the State " (Article 40 @.@ 2 @.@ 1 °) and " No title of nobility or of honour may be accepted by any citizen except with the prior approval of the Government " (Article 40 @.@ 2 @.@ 2 °) . Legal experts are divided on whether this clause prohibits the awarding of membership of the Order of St Patrick to Irish citizens , but some suggest that the phrase " titles of nobility " implies hereditary peerages and other noble titles , not lifetime honours such as knighthoods . In any case , an Irish citizen would require the approval of the Government of Ireland to receive an award from a reigning monarch of the United Kingdom in this manner .

= = Composition = =

= = = Members = = =

The British monarch is Sovereign of the Order of St Patrick . The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland , the monarch 's representative in Ireland , served as the Grand Master . The office of Lord Lieutenant was abolished in 1922 ; the last Lord Lieutenant and Grand Master was The 1st Viscount FitzAlan of Derwent . Rather oddly , the statutes of the Order did not provide that the Grand Master be admitted to the Order as a matter of right . While some Lords Lieutenant were in fact appointed to the Order , this seems to have been the exception rather than the rule .

The Order originally consisted of fifteen knights in addition to the Sovereign . In 1821 , however , George IV appointed six additional knights ; he did not issue a Royal Warrant authorising the change until 1830 . William IV formally changed the statutes in 1833 , increasing the limit to twenty @-@ two knights .

The original statutes , based heavily on those of the Order of the Garter , prescribed that any vacancy should be filled by the Sovereign upon the nomination of the members . Each Knight was to propose nine candidates , of whom three had to have the rank of Earl or higher , three the rank of Baron or higher , and three the rank of Knight or higher , and a vote taken . In practice this system was never used ; the Grand Master would nominate a Peer , the Sovereign would usually assent , and a chapter meeting held at which the knights " elected " the new member . The Order of St Patrick differed from its English and Scottish counterparts , the Orders of the Garter and the Thistle , in only ever appointing peers and princes . Women were never admitted to the Order of St Patrick ; they were not eligible to become members of the other two orders until 1987 . The only woman to be part of the Order was Queen Victoria , in her capacity as Sovereign of the Order . Although it was associated with the established Church of Ireland until 1871 , several Roman Catholics were appointed to the order throughout its history .

= = = Officers = = =

The Order of St Patrick initially had thirteen officers : the Prelate , the Chancellor , the Registrar , the Usher , the Secretary , the Genealogist , the King of Arms , two heralds and four pursuivants . Many of these offices were held by clergymen of the Church of Ireland , the then @-@ established church . After the disestablishment of the Church in 1871 , the ecclesiastics were allowed to remain in office until their deaths , when the offices were either abolished or reassigned to lay officials . All offices except that of Registrar and King of Arms are now vacant .

The office of Prelate was held by the Lord Archbishop of Armagh , the most senior clergyman in the Church of Ireland . The Prelate was not mentioned in the original statutes , but created by a warrant shortly afterwards , apparently because the Archbishop at the time had asked to be appointed to the post . Since the death of the last holder in 1885 , the office of Prelate has remained vacant .

The Church of Ireland 's second highest cleric , the Lord Archbishop of Dublin , originally served as the Chancellor of the Order . From 1886 onwards , the office was held instead by the Chief Secretary for Ireland . Since the abolition of the position of Chief Secretary in 1922 , the office of Chancellor has remained vacant . The Dean of St Patrick 's Cathedral was originally the Registrar of the Order . In 1890 , on the death of the Dean who had held the post in at the time of disestablishment , the office was attached to that of the King of Arms of the Order . This position was held by Ulster King of Arms , Ireland 's chief heraldic official , a post which had been created in 1552 . In 1943 , this post was in effect divided in two , reflecting the partition of Ireland in the Government of Ireland Act , 1920 . The position , insofar as it related to Northern Ireland , was combined with that of Norroy King of Arms (who had heraldic jurisdiction in the north of England) . The post of Norroy and Ulster King of Arms still exists , and thus continues to hold the offices of Registrar and King of Arms of the Order of St Patrick . The office of Ulster King of Arms , insofar as it related to the Irish Free State (now officially called Ireland) , became the position of Chief Herald of Ireland .

The Order of St Patrick had six other heraldic officers , many more than any other British order . The two heralds were known as Cork Herald and Dublin Herald . Three of the four pursuivancies were untitled , the fourth was held by Athlone Pursuivant , an office founded in 1552 .

The Usher of the Order was " the Usher at Arms named the Black Rod " . The Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod in Ireland was distinct from the English officer of the same name , though like his counterpart he had some duties in the Irish House of Lords . (The latter continues to serve as Usher to the Order of the Garter and as Serjeant @-@ at @-@ Arms of the House of Lords .) The Irish post has been vacant since 1933 .

The offices of Secretary and Genealogist were originally held by members of the Irish House of Commons . The office of Secretary has been vacant since 1926 . The position of Genealogist was left vacant in 1885 , restored in 1889 , but left vacant again in 1930 .

= = = Current officers and members = = =

Sovereign : Elizabeth II

Officers : Registrar and King of Arms : Timothy Duke (Norroy and Ulster King of Arms)

Members : None

= = Vestments and accoutrements = =

For important occasions , such as Coronations and investitures of new members of the Order , Knights of St Patrick wore elaborate vestments :

The mantle was a celestial blue robe lined with white silk . The star of the Order (see below) was depicted on the left of the mantle . A blue hood was attached to the mantle .

The hat of the Order was originally of white satin , lined with blue , but was changed to black velvet by George IV . It was plumed with three falls of feathers , one red , one white and one blue .

The collar was made of gold , consisting of Tudor roses and harps attached with knots . The two

roses which comprise the Tudor rose were alternately enamelled white within red , and red within white . The central harp , from which the badge of the Order was suspended , was surmounted by a crown .

On certain " collar days " designated by the Sovereign , members attending formal events wore the Order 's collar over their military uniform , formal day dress , or evening wear . When collars were worn (either on collar days or on formal occasions such as coronations) , the badge was suspended from the collar .

Aside from these special occasions , however , much simpler accoutrements were used :

The star of the Order was an eight @-@ pointed figure , with the four cardinal points longer than the intermediate points . Each point was shown as a cluster of rays . In the centre was the same motto , year and design that appeared on the badge . The star was worn pinned to the left breast .

The broad riband was a celestial blue sash worn across the body , from the right shoulder to the left hip .

The badge was pinned to the riband at the left hip . Made of gold , it depicted a shamrock bearing three crowns , on top of a cross of St Patrick and surrounded by a blue circle bearing the motto in majuscules , as well as the date of the Order 's foundation in Roman numerals (" MDCCLXXXIII ") .

The Grand Master 's insignia were of the same form and design as those of the Knights . In 1831 , however , William IV presented the Grand Master with a star and badge , each composed of rubies , emeralds and Brazilian diamonds . These two insignia were designated " Crown Jewels " in the Order 's 1905 Statutes , and the designation " Irish Crown Jewels " was emphasised by newspapers when they were stolen in 1907 , along with the collars of five Knights ; they have not since been recovered .

A number of items pertaining to the Order of St Patrick are held in museums in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland . The robes of The 4th Baron Clonbrock , the 122nd Knight of the Order , are on display in the National Museum of Ireland , Dublin ; the robe belonging to The 3rd Earl of Kilmorey is held by the Newry Museum ; the National Gallery and Genealogical Museum in Dublin both have Stars of the Order ; and the Ulster Museum (part of the National Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland) in Stranmillis has a large collection on display and two mantles in storage . The Irish Guards take their capstar and motto from the Order .

= = Chapel and Chancery = =

The Chapel of the Order was originally in St Patrick 's Cathedral in central Dublin . Each member of the Order , including the Sovereign , was allotted a stall in the choir of the Chapel , above which his (or her , in the case of Queen Victoria) heraldic devices were displayed . Perched on the pinnacle of a knight 's stall was a helm , decorated with mantling and topped by his crest . Above the crest , the knight 's heraldic banner was hung , emblazoned with his coat of arms . At a considerably smaller scale , to the back of the stall was affixed a piece of brass (a " stall plate ") displaying its occupant 's name , arms and date of admission into the Order . Upon the death of a Knight , the banner and crest were taken down and replaced with those of his successor . After the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1871 , the Chapel ceased to be used ; the heraldic devices of the knights at the time were left in place at the request of Queen Victoria .

The Order was without a ceremonial home until 1881 when arrangements were made to display banners , helms and hatchment plates (the equivalent of stall plates , in the absence of stalls) in the Great Hall , officially called St. Patrick 's Hall , in Dublin Castle . On the establishment of the Irish Free State the banners of the living knights were removed . When the Hall was redecorated in 1962 it was decided that it should be hung with the banners of the members of the Order in 1922 . The existing banners were repaired or new ones made ; it is these banners which can be seen today . The Hall , which was renamed St Patrick 's Hall from its association with the Order , also served as the Chancery of the Order . Installation ceremonies , and later investitures , were held here , often on St Patrick 's Day , until they were discontinued . A banquet for the Knights was often held in the Hall on the occasion of an installation . St Patrick 's Hall now serves as the location for the

inauguration of the President of Ireland .

Unlike many of the other British Orders , the stall plates (or hatchment plates) do not form a continuous record of the Knights of the Order . There are only 34 stall plates for the 80 or so knights appointed before 1871 , (although others were destroyed in a fire in 1940) , and 40 hatchments plates for the 60 knights appointed subsequently . In the case of the stall plates this was perhaps due to their size , 30x36 cm (12x14 in) .

= = Precedence and privileges = =

Since the members of the Order were required to be knights , and in practice had higher rank , many of the privileges of membership were rendered moot . As knights they could prefix " Sir " to their forenames , but the form was never used in speech , as they were referred to by their peerage dignities . They were assigned positions in the order of precedence , but had higher positions by virtue of their peerage dignities .

Knights used the post @-@ nominal letters " KP " . When an individual was entitled to use multiple post @-@ nominal letters , KP appeared before all others , except " Bt " and " Btss " (Baronet and Baronetess) , " VC " (Victoria Cross) , " GC " (George Cross) , " KG " (Knight of the Garter) and " KT " (Knight of the Thistle) .

Knights could encircle their arms with a depiction of the circlet (a blue circle bearing the motto) and the collar ; the former is shown either outside or on top of the latter . The badge is depicted suspended from the collar . They were also entitled to receive heraldic supporters . This high privilege was , and is , only shared by members of the Royal Family , peers , Knights and Ladies of the Garter , Knights and Ladies of the Thistle , and Knights and Dames Grand Cross of the junior orders . (Of course , Knights of St Patrick , normally all being members of the British Royal Family or peers , were mostly entitled to supporters in any event .)