

# THE ARMS OF LORD PLUNKET

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The Right Honourable Sir William Lee Plunket, KCMG KCVO KBE, 5<sup>th</sup> Baron Plunket, of Newton, County Cork (Peerage of the United Kingdom 1827), was born in 1864, the son of the Archbishop of Dublin and Primate of Ireland. After brief service as an honorary attaché to the British Embassies in Rome 1889-92 and Constantinople 1892-94, Lord Plunket served as Private Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland from 1894 to 1904.

He was then to serve as Governor of New Zealand 1904-10. Lord Plunket, though then retired, carried the heraldic Banner of New Zealand at the Coronation of King Edward VII in 1911. Lord Plunket died in 1920.

As Governor, Plunket was content to emphasise his constitutional role as personal representative of the King. He made many vice-regal tours of the country.

Lord Plunket's grandson, the Right Honourable Sir Patrick Plunket, KCVO, 7<sup>th</sup> Lord Plunket from 1938, was a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Irish Guards. He served as Equerry to King George VI and Queen Elizabeth II 1948-75 and was Deputy Master of the Household 1954-75. A trustee of the Wallace Collection and of the National Art-Collection Fund, he was also a noted art critic.

The current baron (the 8<sup>th</sup>) is Patrick's younger brother, who lives in Zimbabwe and London.

The Plunket family descend from the Rev'd Patrick Plunket, born 1684, and educated at the University of Edinburgh. His son Thomas, was also a Presbyterian clergyman, serving in Ireland. Thomas's fourth son, William, was created the 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Plunket in 1827. He was an Irish lawyer, orator and statesman. William Plunket was an admirer of the English constitutional settlement of 1688, and a fervent Irish patriot. After establishing himself as a leading member of the equity bar, he was a member of the Irish Parliament (one of those serving until the abolition of that body in 1800), and the Parliament of the United Kingdom, until 1827. Lord Plunket was Solicitor-General and Attorney-General of Ireland, and was then appointed to the Bench. Lord Plunket was Master of the Rolls for a few days in 1827, and then became Lord Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas of Ireland 1827-30, Lord Chancellor of Ireland 1830-41, with an interval of a few months. He died in 1854.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> baron returned to the family clerical tradition, and was Bishop of Tuam, Killala and Achonry 1839-66. His elder daughter, Katherine, died unmarried in her 112<sup>th</sup> year, in 1932. Several other members of the family were ordained, including the father of the Governor-General of New Zealand, who was Archbishop of Dublin until 1897.

The arms of the baron are of mediæval simplicity: “*Sable a bend between a tower in sinister chief and a portcullis in dexter base, all Or*”.



**William, Lord Plunket, KCMG KCVO KBE**

Arms: *Sable a bend between a tower in sinister chief and a portcullis in dexter base, all Or.*

Supporters: *Dexter, an antelope Or; Sinister, a horse Argent, each gorged with a plain collar Sable, pendant therefrom by a chain a portcullis, also Sable.*

Crest: *A horse passant Argent, charged on the side with a portcullis Sable.*

Motto: *Festina lente* ('Be quick without impetuosity').

[illustration: *Burke's Peerage and Baronetage* 106<sup>th</sup> ed, reproduced with permission]