

A HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL IN 100 OBJECTS

REPRESENTATIONS OF THE SCHOOL EMBLEM

Size: Various

Description: This is an overview. Some of these depictions may themselves become Objects. Representations of the emblem whether by the rampant lion alone, the lion in a shield or the full crest including the motto scroll, have had considerable variation.

Discussion: Of the 1922 publications:



The Calendar and List and *The Albertian* both had a lion rampant without a shield. The first appearance of a shield was the end-of-year *School List* (with the motto left and right).

The choice of the motto was a close-run thing. On March 1922 the Auckland Grammar School Board met and the motto for the new grammar school at Mount Albert was discussed. Both *The New Zealand Herald* (page 6) and *The Auckland Star* (page 8) reported on the meeting the next day.

The *Herald* mentioned that:

“... The Chairman stated that memorials had been forwarded to the board signed by 531 Grammar School old boys in all parts of New Zealand asking that the present motto, ‘Per Angusta ad Augusta’ be retained.”

and

“... Mr G.W. Murray steadfastly opposed the retention of the old motto, advancing the English one, ‘For Truth, Duty and Loyalty.’ He could not see why the old boys of the school should seek to impose their opinions and preferences on a new school ... he would have felt far more satisfied if the board had had an expression of opinion from the thinking men, the established citizens of the community, instead of from young men – ‘and 90 percent of them lawyers at that!’ added Mr Murray amid laughter.”

Dr Robertson thought that new grammar schools would want mottos of their own and Professor H.W. Seger supported Mr Murray.

The *Star* added:

“Professor Thomas contended that the Latin was more pithy, terse and more condensed in expression ...“

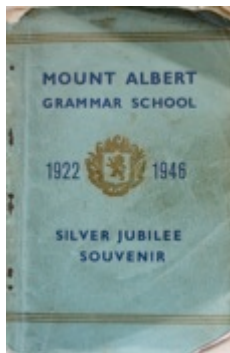
When it came to the vote for the Latin motto:

“Three members voted for and three against and the chairman exercised his casting vote in its favour.”

Truth Duty and Loyalty are eternal verities and such a motto would have been ours alone, and easily understood, yet it has a whiff of Empire about it and the Latin, *Per Angusta ad Augusta*, is timeless.

The representations of the lion on Jubilee publications are:

The *Silver Jubilee* cover (a gold image) has the shield like that of 1930s *The Albertians*, with three upper points and surrounded by ladder ferns (*Necrolepsis* sp.). Second, the *Golden Jubilee* has a silver image on the book and a black image on the jacket. This heraldic lion, (langed and clawed), has had a number of outings. It occurs also on the cover of the third jubilee publication, *School House: Golden Jubilee*.



In the Hall, under the balcony is a wooden roundel with a raised image of a lion. The previous lectern, now at School House, had the same roundel. The present lectern has a raised composite image at the front.



There have been many embroidered versions of the lion, one of the earliest was a lion which was awarded to a member of a senior sports team who had played

three games. The lion was sewn or domed onto the playing jersey. The image depicted is the earlier version. A later version was wider.



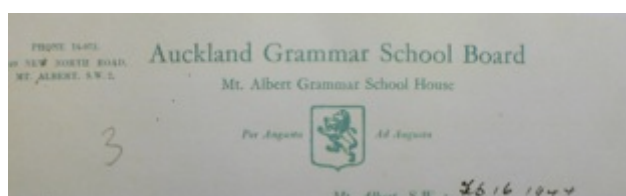
Nowadays a full crest is incorporated into all playing tops. The gold embroidered lion in the elongated shield is shown, for example, in the jersey that was presented to a nominal First XV team of the 1980s. The blue and silver colourway is here represented on the corner of a tablecloth that covers a table on which awards are placed during assemblies. Both the gold and the blue/silver colourways are found on playing tops.



Representative blazers also had versions of the lion, an earlier one was different from one from the late 1940s.



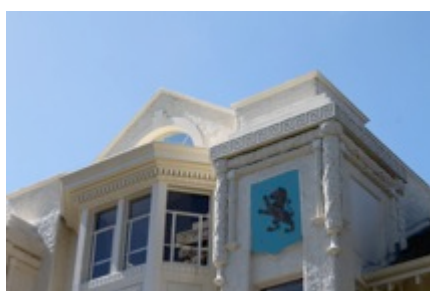
The white crest with a shield of traditional dimensions is found on the players' shelter that is placed on the half way line at First XI soccer games. This image of the lion, usually with three ribs, has become common in the last two decades. Although one of the earlier representations of this version can be seen in a 1944 School House letter, on the letterhead the Auckland Grammar School Board gets the top billing.



More recent large images of the three-ribbed lion can be seen in the inlaid crest at the entrance to the foyer. This was covered up in 2008 when the vinyl floor was covered with carpet. The brass crest was raised to be flush with the carpet.



Two shields with lions are incorporated on pillars at the front of the original building. Each has a painted gold lion on Cambridge blue ground. A large image in fibrous cement was placed on a pediment on the revamped E-block in 2011. An unusual lion is that of the bronze lion on the war memorial plaque attached to the War Memorial Pavilion (grandstand).





Back to paper. A very odd version of the lion was drawn by art teacher Peter Taylor who redesigned the cover of the School exercise book (this cover was also used, in A5 form, as a report cover).

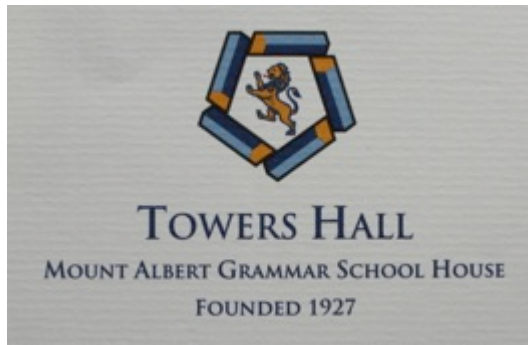
A version that appeared in a very early version of the letterhead persisted at the School House for many years. This dinner place card for Ron Hemus shows this lion, as does the notepaper. More recent uses of this lion did not show the six dots under the lion. This lion was also used by the Old Boys' Association for several decades.



The Old Boys' Association was renamed the Albertians Association in 2002. There have been two styles of letterhead since this time, both in the modern style though in different colourways (the first was the blue one.)



During the decade that School House was called Towers Hall the image used was the gold lion surrounded by a pentagon, representing the five dormitories. The Hall of Distinction Charter shows the crest surrounded by a double roundel enclosing the School's name.



To finish, a clever adaptation of the lion and motto was developed by the Robotics Team of 2009.



The attitude of the lion rampant goes back to biblical times – the Lion of Judah is represented in rampant form on the arms of Jerusalem. It was widely used in Medieval times, including the shields of fighting knights. It is represented in many royal, national, regional, municipal, corporate and institutional emblems. When Auckland Grammar School opened in 1869 the Board of Governors chose a lion in a shield with the motto scroll reading *Per Angusta Ad Augusta*. Other Grammar Schools opened by the Board adopted the rampant lion (except for Mount Roskill Grammar School)

Our emblem has a long history (as, indeed, does our motto). Yet despite its many manifestations and ancient lineage it is an emblematic device that continues to represent Mount Albert Grammar School in an unambiguous way.

Brian Murphy