

## The Arms of Ragget

Gerard Crotty

WHILE KILKENNY abounds with carvings of the arms of the better-known old civic families such as the Rothes, Shees and Archers, the arms of the Raggets occur on only one stone known to the present writer. This is a very worn slab in the floor of the monument room at St. Mary's.

Canon Carrigan<sup>1</sup> describes it as "a slab with coat of arms showing on a fleur-de-lis ground a ragged staff and on top of the staff a lizard; crest an eagle spread out. Over the shield is the text : RENOVABITVR VT AQVILAE JUVENTVS TVA;<sup>2</sup> and around its sides and base the motto : SAPIENTIA VINCIT MALITIAM."<sup>3</sup>

Most of the finer detail is now worn, but enough shows up on rubbing with a wet rag to reveal some inaccuracies in Carrigan's description. There are only three fleurs de lys, and so these do not form a "ground" as they would if a large number were strewn around the shield. What is more interesting is that the "lizard" turns out to be another ragged staff<sup>4</sup> lying fessways, the two staves forming a "ragged T" — clearly a pun on the family name.

Although no colour now remains on the stone, the shield would in all probability have been blue with the ragged staves and fleurs gold. There is a record<sup>5</sup> in the Genealogical Office in Dublin Castle which ascribes the arms "azure two ragged staffs between four fleurs de lys or" to Ragget. I am indebted to Mr. O. Begley of the Genealogical Office for this information. The different number of fleurs could indicate a different branch of the family, but it is more likely that the stone represents the same coat of arms, the carver having omitted one fleur de lys to make the design easier to execute.

Underneath the arms is the inscription :

RICHARDVS RAGET CIVIS KILKENIAE QVI  
SVPERIORIS MAGISTRAT' MVNERE BIS FVNCT'

<sup>1</sup> "The History and Antiquities of the Diocese of Ossory." Vol. III, p.94.

<sup>2</sup> "Your youth shall be renewed as that of the eagle." This motto is used at the present time by St. Patrick's College, Thurles.

<sup>3</sup> "Wisdom conquers malice."

<sup>4</sup> A heraldic device representing a staff with all its branches lopped off.

<sup>5</sup> Ms. 161 fol. 60.

EST HIC DEFVNC'. OBIIT 2 DIE MARTII ANNO  
DNI 1614 ET VXOR EIVS CATHERINA GARVEY  
OBIIT 10 OCTOBRIS 1593.

(Richard Raget, citizen of Kilkenny who twice performed  
the duties of higher office is here dead. He died on  
the 2nd day of March in the year of Our Lord 1614.  
And his wife, Catherine Garvey died 10th October 1593).



ARMS AND MOTTO OF RAGGET

As a decorative embellishment, there is a vase of  
flowers in very low relief on either side of the shield.  
The style in which these are carved suggests the influence  
of Walter O'Kerin (or Kerins). Although some part of a  
crest remains, it is difficult to be sure it was an eagle.  
The stone appears to have been cut along the top at  
some time, with the result that part of the crest is now  
missing.

