

Trades House of Glasgow

INSIGNIA OF OFFICE



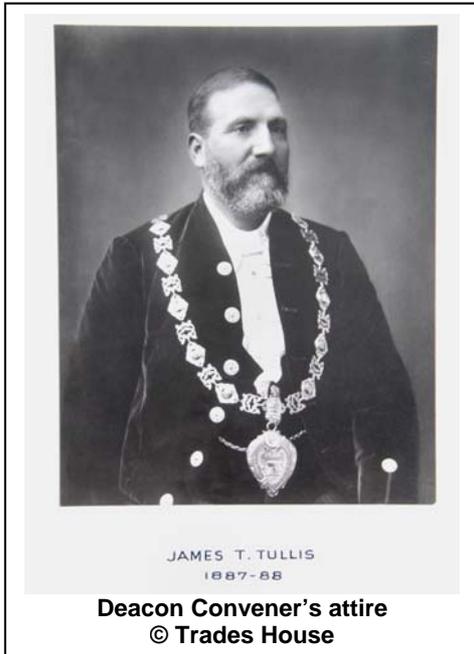
By

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Trades House of Glasgow Insignia of Office

The following information has been extracted from the Trades House of Glasgow Handbook (1973 Edition) with photographs from George Mahoney (House Photographer)



Before the year 1766 the only badge of distinction worn by the Deacon Convener was the velvet coat, the provision for wearing the coat dates from 1751 but on 31st December 1766, "the House being well informed that the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Dean of Guild had resolved to wear gold chains and medals as badges of their several offices," resolved that the Deacon Convener and his successors should also wear a gold chain and medal. The Arms of the several Incorporations were to be engraved on one side and some other device wrought on the other. The chain and medal were manufactured by Messrs. Napier and Bayne, who had also fashioned somewhat similar badges of honour for the Magistrates of the City. The cost was £40 10s 0½d., and at the "beveridge" of the Convener's chain £3 1s was spent.

The Collector had no badge of office, and it was not until 14th December 1860, that the House resolved to procure a new badge for the Deacon Convener at a cost of £54, the badge being 22 carat and the chain 18 carat, and that the old chain and badge should be preserved for the Collector. These two badges were in use until 1887, when new medals and chains were thought necessary. These were made after competitive designs and offers had been obtained, by Messrs. E & W Sorley and



Messrs. Alexander & Sons at prices of £208 and £83 10s. The chain attached to the Collector's medal, having been found too short, those of the two former medals were melted down and used for lengthening the chain. The two older medals are still in existence and, as the older was considered of beautiful design, Late Convener Sir John Reid had an appropriate chain designed and made, so that both medal and chain could be

used by the Late Conveners of the House. The chain was modelled from Sir John's own suggestions, the links being varied with the fifteen shields, the centre one of the House and seven on each side for the fourteen Incorporations. These have engraved on one side the unregistered Coats of Arms of the House and Incorporations as in use in 1767, and on the other side the Coats of Arms as granted and registered by the Lord Lyon, King-at-Arms. The new chain and medal were formally presented on 29th May 1925.



**Deacon Convener
Robert Davidson's
Replica Medal 1920
© Trades House**

On retirement, the Late Deacon Conveners had no memento to take with them as a souvenir of office, and in 1893 Late Deacon Convener Copland presented to the House a die on a reduced scale of the Deacon Convener's medal, from which a small gold replica might be struck for each Convener on his retirement from the Chair.

The Deacon Convener's chain and medal is of gold and extremely heavy to wear. It was therefore thought by some members of the House that on public formal occasions the Deacon Convener might, instead of wearing the heavy chain and medal, be supplied with a lighter jewel to be worn round the neck. The Incorporation of Tailors on 12th July 1926, presented to the House a very handsome insignia to be worn by the Deacon Convener when

representing the House at social or other gatherings. It is in the form of a platinum medal with gold back, containing seven large diamonds on the platinum border, the centre consisting of the Trades House Coat of Arms highly enamelled, with the House Crest, the whole being done in thirty small diamonds and thirty four sapphires. The inscription on the back is: "Gifted by the Incorporation of Tailors in Glasgow to the Trades House of Glasgow, 12 July, 1926".



**Deacon Convener's Social Medal
© Trades House**



**Deacon Convener's
Replica Medal
© Trades House**

The gold replica presented to the Deacon Conveners on their retirement being now to some extent out of date, the Incorporation of Maltmen on 29th February 1928, presented to the House a new die so that replicas similar to one which had been presented by them to Late Convener Dallas might be given to future Deacon Conveners. This die, with some slight alterations is now used for the replicas presented to the retiring Deacon Conveners, and it is almost, but not quite, the same, as the jewelled insignia worn by the Deacon Convener himself. The cost is not borne by the House Funds but by subscription from the members.

On 25th January 1952, the Late Convener, Deacons and Visitor agreed that a Gold and Enamelled Badge

one of the articles bequeathed to the House by the Late Ex-Convener, John Dallas) should be made suitable for the wife or other relative of a Deacon Convener to wear at House and Craft Functions.

At the same time, the Platform instructed that another badge (part of the same gift) should be altered to be worn by the Late Collector of the House.

On 17th May 1956, the Finance Committee instructed that the value of the insignia be written down to a nominal figure of £1.



On 15th October 1953, a letter was submitted to the House from Ex-Convener J. Percival Agnew suggesting that the wife or hostess of a retiring Convener should receive a replica of the badge worn by her during the Deacon Convener's term of office and offering to provide the die for the badge. It was subsequently agreed to accept Mr. Agnew's offer and a design was chosen by the Deacons and Visitor of the year 1953-4 from amongst several. The first two badges were presented to Mrs. Dixon and Mrs. Sloan Smith.

The Late Collector's badge referred to above having been lost by theft, the Glasgow School of Art were commissioned to design a replacement. The Platform Committee selected one from a number of designs submitted and commissioned its manufacture.