

The question of the origin of the name “Dracut” had intrigued the author Donat Paquet for years. As he reached the writing stage of The Photographic History of Dracut, he decided not to mention the dilemma because no positive clue could be found as to where that name came from.

Coincidentally, about this time Mrs. Lois Carrington, Edna Cutter’s sister, gave Mr. Paquet clippings, one of which dealt specifically with this question. It stated that the British town Draycott Foliat was situated outside Marlborough. Now, John Evered, alias Webb, who acquired 3,000 acres of land in very early Dracut, came from that area in England and “must have had his boyhood town in mind when he called his holdings Draycott – on Merrimack.”

When Mr. Donat Paquet told Mr. Peter Bell, photographer for the book, the latest findings, Mr. Bell contacted a heraldry ex-pert, Barry S. Dupree, who proceeded with the required research to come up with the authentic wording of the coat-of-arms of Britain’s Draycott Foliat. Then Mr. Bell asked Christopher M. DiGrazia to paint the initial-colored sketch of this coat-of-arms.

Jim Czerlonka, the printer of the book, had this sketch re-done by Commercial Art Studio for printing purposes. The result was so stunning that Mr. Paquet decided to position the finished product in a very prominent section of The Photographic History of Dracut.

In February of 1983 Donat Paquet gave Jim Czerlonka’s original to Mr. Barry Gougeon with the expressed desire that this coat-of-arms become the new seal of Dracut.

The very next day Barry Gougeon showed the coat-of-arms in question, as it appeared in the book, to the Chairman of the Board of Selectman, Mr. Warren Shaw, on the premises of Shaw Farm. Mr. Shaw was awed at the British town’s coat-of-arms. When Mr. Gougeon then suggested that the coat-of-arms could be advantageously altered to accentuate the present Town of Dracut, the Chairman readily agreed to bring this matter to the full Board of Selectman for discussion and possible approval.

That same day, Mr. Gougeon showed the coat-of-arms to the Town Clerk and Keeper of the Town Seal, Mr. Gray McCarthy, who heavily supported the concept.

At the official Dedication Ceremony of The Photographic History of Dracut on February 27, 1983, the original copy of the coat-of-arms was unveiled to those present by Barry Gougeon and Warren Shaw. It was at this moment that the coat-of-arms was approved by the Chairman in the name of the Board of Selectman.

Realizing that said coat-of-arms did not adequately reflect the background of the Town of Dracut, Barry Gougeon convinced the idea of adding to the original. First, the names of the Town and State were to be affixed to the bottom of the original showing as well as the date of the incorporation of Dracut as a town: February 26, 1701. Then Mr. Gougeon suggested three significant additions:

Subsequently, Barry Gougeon approached a member of the Dracut Historical Society, Mrs. Priscilla Daigle, to do artwork and the script.

When this was finished, the “new” coat-of-arms was shown to Donat P, author, then Gary McCarthy, Town Clerk and Keeper of the Town Seal and finally to the membership of the Dracut Historical Society.

At the Town Meeting on October 3, 1983, the Town of Dracut voted overwhelmingly to adopt the altered British town’s coat-of-arms as the NEW and OFFICIAL SEAL of the Town of Dracut, Massachusetts.