

In 1886 the Victorian Charter of Incorporation established a free election of twelve Councillors by ballot. The new Borough Council took over the running of the steam ferry in 1891 and in 1899 it sold to the Admiralty the long-held rights over the waters of the Hamoaze, the Sound and the River Tamar as far as Calstock.

The two world wars did not pass without leaving their mark and in April 1941 a raid of incendiary and high explosive bombs caused deaths and destruction in the town. In 1961 the completion of a road suspension bridge across the Tamar made the old ferry redundant. The road network was further enhanced by the completion of the A38 Saltash Road Tunnel linking the Tamar Road bridge with the newly-built A38 by-pass.

The Borough status of the town disappeared in 1974 as a result of the Local Government Act of 1972 and Saltash at Parish level is now part of the District Council known as Caradon. In recognition of its former status however, Saltash retains the office of Mayor who as chairman, presides over meetings of the Town Council.

The Guildhall

The Guildhall is a dignified listed building which stands in the middle of old Saltash, next door to the Parish Church of St Nicholas and St Faith. The Guildhall was built in 1775 as a Market House and Assembly Hall. On the Fore Street frontage the ground floor had a Tuscan colonnade, and was used as a pannier market until the end of the 19th century. The first floor hall was known as the Long Room; it became the Guildhall in 1841. The ground floor was enclosed in 1910, but the Tuscan columns can still be seen. The Guildhall was restored in 1998-99 and the public can now once again see the beautiful ceiling in the Long Room. The Guildhall is for hire, for details please telephone 01752 844846.



Borough Seals

Heralds from the College of Arms made official visits to Cornwall in 1573 and 1620. Their main purpose

was to register the armorial bearings of families in the county. The devices used by the Cornish Boroughs on their common seals were also recorded on each occasion. Unusually, at Saltash the Corporation registered two seals. One of these

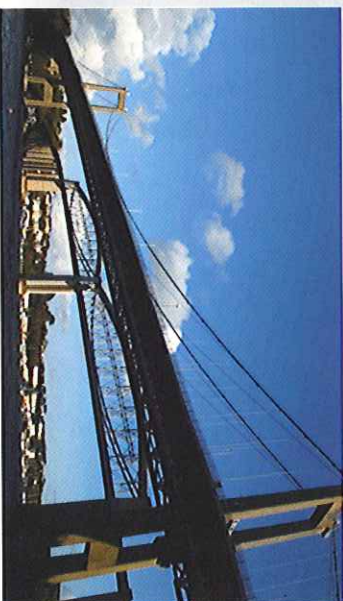


was the seal of the Borough of Saltash; the other was the seal of the Liberty of the Water Tamar.

The Borough seal has a number of significant elements in its design. The shield bears

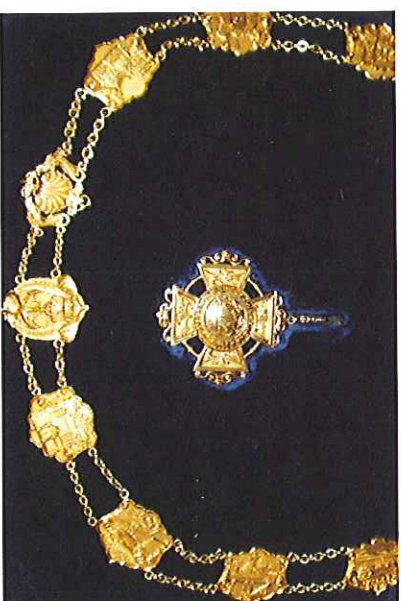


the arms of two Earls of Cornwall who were overlords of Saltash from 1270 to 1300 (Earl Richard, 1270-1272, and his son Earl Edmund, 1272-1300). The Prince's coronet may refer to the fact that Earl Richard was a son of King John. The supporting Ostrich feathers come from the badge used by Edward the Black Prince, first Duke of Cornwall (created 1337) and his successors, who were also overlords of Saltash. The water at the base denotes Saltash's position on an estuary. The seal of the Liberty of the Water Tamar depicts a three-masted ship at anchor. This was an appropriate emblem, as the collection of anchorage dues within the Liberty was one of the rights exercised by Saltash until the end of the 19th Century. Depictions of the two seals can be seen on a tablet at the west end of the Guildhall roof.



The Ceremonial Mayoral Chains

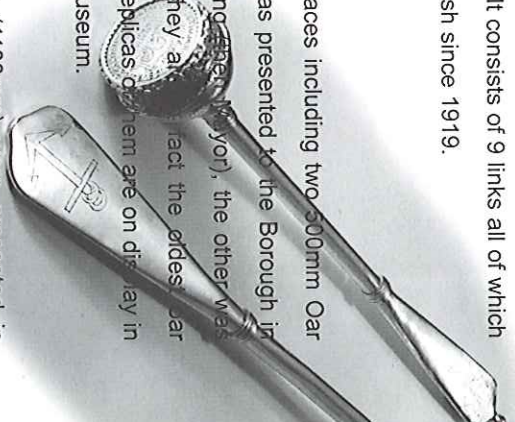
The chain worn by the Mayor of Saltash has 40 links and all but one of the shields is of 18 carat gold. The shields all record the names of various Mayors except one which records the name of a Town Clerk. The middle shield is a different shape and records the ancient Water Court. The seal on the medallion is based on the Common Seal of the town which was used in 1886; it is



the shape of the St John's Cross. The lid of the container shows the seal. Full regalia is worn on rare occasions but the chain is in constant use. Mayoress Chain - Saltash is one of the few towns to have a chain specifically for the Mayoress. It consists of 9 links all of which depict an event in Saltash since 1919.

Town Maces

There are five silver maces including two 300mm Oar Maces one of which was presented to the Borough in 1623 by Edmund Herring (later Mayor), the other was obtained soon after. They also include the oldest car maces in the country; replicas of them are on display in the Saltash Heritage Museum.



The two larger maces (1100mm) were presented in 1696 by Francis Buller, then one of the Borough's two MPs. They are unique in design, having crossed oars above the crown. The 190mm miniature oar mace was made in 1760 and is possibly the only mace of its type in existence. It was used by the collector of Port Dues who would carry it as proof of his authority.

St Nicholas and St Faith Church

St Nicholas and St Faith Church has an unusual history, its ownership having been claimed by the Corporation from the 17th century until 1924, although it became a Parish Church in 1881. It was built in the 12th century as a chapel of ease for the new borough, and much Norman work remains, including the tower and some rare buttresses. Additions were made in the 14th and 15th centuries. It contains much of interest including ancient carved roof bosses and a font that was originally a medieval domestic mortar. Outside, a section of inscribed stone which formerly surmounted a public well adjoins the town's only remaining section of cobblestone pavement.

The other main churches in and around the town include, Saltash Baptist Church, Culver Road; Saltash Wesley Methodist Church, Callington Road; Burraton Methodist Church, Liskeard Road; Saltash Roman Catholic Church, South Pill, and Saltash Gospel Hall, Liskeard Road.

Royal Albert Bridge

The bridge required 4000 tons of iron to complete its 680 metres long, 9 metres wide and 80 metres high structure. The project cost almost a quarter of a million pounds. The work was commenced in 1853; the Victorian genius I K Brunel having selected the narrowest point of the Tamar as the best site. This unique bridge took six years to build; it was opened by the Prince Consort on 2nd May 1859.

Tamar Road Bridge



Completed in October 1961 the bridge was formally opened by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, on the 26th April 1962. It was a joint venture by Cornwall County Council and the Plymouth City Council without a grant from the Government and is still a toll bridge. Its suspended length is 564 metres and the length of the main span is 335 metres. At the time of opening it was the longest span bridge in England.

Victoria Gardens

This very pleasant park lies at the top of Fore Street and contains the Penn Symons Monument which commemorates the death of Sir William Penn Symons of Hatt, near Saltash, who was the first British General to be killed in the Boer War, 1899. Also in the park is the Maurice Huggins Room, (named after a former Mayor). It makes a much appreciated stopping place for refreshment after a morning's shopping.



Trematon Castle



A mile from the town near the hamlet of Forder, across the valley from St Stephens, Trematon Castle stands proud. In 1068, two years after

the Norman Conquest, there was a rebellion in SW England. One of the countermeasures ordered by King William was the construction of this castle. The grounds and the Castle keep and gatehouse are only occasionally opened for charity events.

Ince Castle

Saltash has another castle at Ince, a few miles up the Lynher River. Its construction was commenced by Henry Killigrew



circa 1640, and completed by Edward Nosworthy circa 1655. Originally known as Ince House, it was designed as a dwelling in 'mock-castle' form. It is the oldest brick building in Cornwall. Again only the grounds are occasionally opened for charity events.

