



Sir William Dawney

When the fall of Jerusalem was brought to Pope Gregory VIII, he issued a Crusade Bull to gall Christendom. Richard I, the Lionheart, King of England responded and led an army to recapture the holy city. Sir William Dawney was a member of that royal army and could be recognised in battle by his shield bearing the Three Gold Flowers on a blue band, The king marked that Sir William was courageous and intrepid, he advanced Sir William to be a general in his army. A proof of his courage included slaying a lion unaided and presenting a paw to the king.

Arms – Arg on a bend, cotised, sa, three amulets, of the fields
Crest – A demi Saracen, in armour, coupled at the thighs and wreathed about the temples, ppr holding in the dexter hand a ring stoned and in the sinister a lion's gamb, gold armoured.



In 1192 at Acon, Sir William Dawnay, general of the Kings army, led a victory over the Saracens and made prisoner their general – a prince. As a sign of his pleasure, the king took from his hand a jewel mounted in a ring and gave it to his general.

Further more he ordered;

“In perpetuam Rei Memorium that his crest should be a demi-Saracen with his ring in his hand, the paw of the lion in his hand, which shall be the family cognizance, the arms to be argent on a cottise sable three annulets of the field.”

From that time onward the centre of the arms of the Dawnay's (being the family name of Lord Downe) became the amulet or ring which contained the King's Jewel. It is to this day held in a vault, a most precious honour to this family.