

Customs Collection

THOMAS NICKLESON JEFFERY, politician and colonial officer in Nova Scotia, was born in England in 1782. In 1803, he was appointed Collector of Customs and moved to Halifax, where he remained until his death in 1847. He married Martha Maria Uniacke in 1805, thus joining the family of Richard John Uniacke, an eminent lawyer and politician in Halifax.

Records of Jeffery held at the Nova Scotia Archives include many digitized accounts and correspondence pertaining to the settlement of Black refugees in Nova Scotia following the War of 1812. In 1815, Jeffrey became responsible for the refugees in addition to his customs duties. Jeffrey joined the Council of Nova Scotia in 1810, later acting as administrator of the province from 1832 to 1834. By all accounts, he was held in high regard by his colleagues and fellow citizens.

Jeffery's bookplate is armorial, and the escutcheon (shield) appears to be the impalement, or combining, of two distinct coats of arms into one shield—in this case, the arms of the Uniacke family.

Two themes are repeated across the crest and shield—nautical motifs and representations of courage. The anchor under the paw of the leopard on the crest as well as the fishlike creatures within the shield are nautical. The fish are *naiant*, or swimming, in an azure chevron, and may be representations of dolphins. In nautical heraldic depictions, dolphins are similar to lions—kingly and courageous. The dolphin and anchor are also part of the coat of arms of Poole, the town where Jeffery was born.

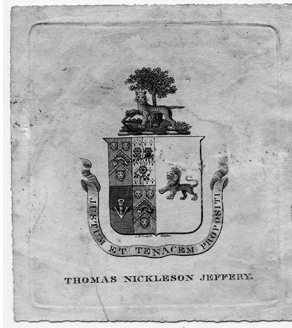
Courage is the dominant theme in the coat of arms: the crest's leopard *passant guardant* (leopard forward facing while walking to the left) and the shield's leopard faces, lion *passant* (lion depicted facing and walking to the left),

and pheon (barbed arrowhead) are all signs of courage.

Included in the shield are three roses, an important and ubiquitous flower in English heraldry, on a divided field of ermine (white with black tincture) and *erminois* (gold with black tincture).

The Latin motto under the crest, *Justum et tenacem propositi*, translates as “Just and firm of purpose.”

This is a signed bookplate, and the engraver is identified as C.W. Torbett of Halifax. Charles Torbett was a prominent engraver of early Canadian bookplates, but his work spanned many media. In addition to ephemera such as bookplates, he produced portraits, maps, views, and illustrations published in magazines, newspapers and books. He produced engravings of the human skeletal system for *Cheselden's Plates of the Human Bones*, printed in Edinburgh in 1816, and engraved



scenes of Nova Scotia for Thomas Chandler Haliburton's *Historical and Statistical Account of Nova-Scotia* (1829). He is also credited with producing the first engraving included in a Halifax newspaper, a facsimile of an engraving of the House of Lords for the trial of Queen Caroline, published in the *Acadian Reporter* in 1821. He can even be found in the National Currency Collection of the Bank of Canada Museum, as engraver of a \$1 note issued in Halifax in 1820.

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The Rare Books and Special Collections Bookplate Collection can be accessed from the UBC Library Digital Collections and Services site, <http://digitalcollections.library.ubc.ca>.