

Mystery Object 01



The Moor crest of Edward Conway, 2nd Viscount Conway (1594 -1655)

Edward Conway was the eldest son of Edward Conway, 1st Viscount, and Dorothy, daughter of Sir John Tracy, of Teddington in Gloucestershire. He was educated at Queen's College, Oxford, where he matriculated on 3rd May 1611. He was knighted at Whitehall on 25th March 1618, and elected Member of Parliament for Warwick in 1624 and 1625, and for Yarmouth, Isle of Wight in 1626. Summoned to Parliament in his father's Barony of Conway in 1628, he succeeded his father as 2nd Viscount in 1631. He was General of the Horse against the Scots, but was defeated by them at Newburn Ford.

A member of the Assembly of Divines, he was described as *"well versed in all parts of learning"* and *"of no mean powers as a scholar"*. He married, in October 1621, Frances daughter of Sir Francis Popham. Their eldest son and heir, Edward, 3rd Viscount, was created Earl Conway in 1679, and married twice, but his only son died in infancy. His library descended through his daughter to Sir John Rawdon Bart, and thence to the Marquess of Hastings, and was sold at auction by Mr Philips, Wheeler Gate, Nottingham on 29th December 1868. Over fifty books, including a manuscript catalogue of his library, are in the Robinson Library at the Armagh Anglican Cathedral of St Patrick, most of his books had this crest depicting *'a moor's head couped at the shoulders and wreathed about the temples.'*

The head of a moor, or black African, in profile is a common heraldic symbol. The use of the *'moor's head'* as a heraldic device dates from the 13th Century. The emblem has connections to the Crusades, reflecting associating individual families with victories over the moors. Heraldic devices and emblems were included on objects like the book featured here, to indicate ownership.

