



# The Heraldry Society

*Educational Charity No: 241456*

## **HERALDRY** *Beasts, Banners & Badges* **FOR BEGINNERS**

Heraldry is a noble science and a fascinating hobby –  
but essentially it is FUN!

*J. P. Brooke-Little, Richmond Herald, 1970*

**[www.theheraldrysociety.com](http://www.theheraldrysociety.com)**

The Chairman and Council of the Heraldry Society  
are indebted to all those who have made this publication possible

*October 2016*



The  
Heraldry Society



John Brooke-Little



The  
College of Arms

The Heraldry Society was founded in 1947 by John P. Brooke-Little, CVO, KStJ, FSA, FSH, the then Bluemantle Pursuivant of Arms and ultimately, in 1995, Clarenceux King of Arms.

In 1956 the Society was incorporated under the Companies Act (1948).

By Letters Patent dated 10th August 1957 the Society was granted Armorial Bearings.

The Society is both a registered non-profit making company and an educational charity.

### Our aims

*To promote and encourage the study and knowledge of, and to foster and extend interest in, the science of heraldry, armory, chivalry, precedence, ceremonial, genealogy, family history and all kindred subjects and disciplines.*

### Our activities include

*Seasonal monthly meetings and lectures*

*Organising a bookstall at all our meetings*

*Publishing a popular newsletter, The Heraldry Gazette, and a more scholarly journal, The Coat of Arms*

*In alternate years, offering a residential Congress with speakers and conducted visits*

*Building and maintaining a heraldry archive*

*Hosting an informative website*

*Supporting regional Societies' initiatives*

### Our Membership

*Is inclusive and open to all*

*A prior knowledge of heraldry is not a prerequisite to membership, nor is it necessary for members to possess their own arms.*

*The Chairman and Council  
of the Heraldry Society*

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### Please note

The Society does not offer an arms research service and has no direct  
connection with the College of Arms, to whom enquiries concerning  
particular English coats of arms should be addressed.

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**[www.theheraldrysociety.com](http://www.theheraldrysociety.com)**



*For those who can decipher it, heraldry is an algebra – a language*  
Victor Hugo

From earliest times people have wanted – and often needed – to identify themselves by a personal sign or device. Their first efforts – seen as impressions in the seals on early documents – grew with the addition of further graphical representations of their owner or his family. Eventually the symbols migrated to battlefield shields and from there to the surcoats of men in armour, from which we may derive the term ‘coat of arms’.

It is thought that troubadours (strolling minstrels) formed the first body of messengers for the monarch. They couriered small items, relayed orders and ‘heralded’ the king’s arrival. Landowners too had a use for them. Land acquired by marriage or by grant of the monarch could be scattered about the country and the services of these travelling messengers – soon to be called ‘heralds’ – was essential.



Geoffrey Plantagenet  
Count of Anjou

As they became known to one another, the heralds amassed an encyclopaedic knowledge of their masters’ signs and devices. With duplication almost inevitable, it would prove useful. It was in everyone’s interest to achieve unique identification and, initially at an informal local level, the heralds’ persuasion brought about changes and an attempt at regulation. Their knowledge of the craft was respected, sought after – and eventually termed ‘heraldry’.

The first formal appearance of heraldry as we know it was in 1127 when Henry I gave a shield to his son-in-law, Geoffrey Plantagenet, Count of Anjou, as a wedding present. Upon the death of their owner, an eldest son would frequently continue to use the device of his father, thus associating it over the generations with a particular family line. In this instance, Geoffrey’s shield would descend to his grandson, the unfortunately named William Longespée, and then in turn to his great grand-daughter, Adela, Countess of Warwick.

Impetus was given to the development of heraldry by the 12th century Crusades, particularly the Third Crusade in 1189, by which time heraldry had ‘broken out all over Europe’. The earliest shields had been simple affairs in one or two colours and, later, sported geometric shapes in a contrasting colour. With the arrival of the graphical image – animate and inanimate objects in all their potential varieties – the Herald must have struggled to maintain even a semblance of order.

Their reward came in 1484 when Richard III founded the College of Arms and they were incorporated by royal charter. In the following century, with a set of groundrules formulated and disputes to be settled, they began the Visitations: a series of tours in which they visited families to record their arms or grant new ones. The latter task has been the prerogative of the Heralds ever since, now ably represented by Her Majesty’s College of Arms in London, the Court of Lord Lyon in Edinburgh, and the Office of the Chief Herald of Ireland in Dublin.

Associated at the outset with people, arms were soon to be granted to places (towns, cities) and corporate bodies (colleges, societies, the armed forces). Sometimes they have become intertwined; regularly they have called across the centuries to tell of the people who forged our society, the places they lived and the institutions they created: the very history of our islands. For the researcher and genealogist they are truly “the shorthand of history”.

But heraldry isn’t merely a thing of the past, a hangover from a bygone age. It changes with the times, readily incorporating graphical images previously unimaginable, and flourishes still because it “absorbs the new, links with the past and provides continuity with the present”.

Whether we are aware of it or not, heraldry has woven itself into the tapestry of our lives. It is all around us, if we but look – and constantly growing: grants of arms are issued on an almost daily basis. Families, civic authorities, the law, the services, the church: all have seized upon – and continue to grasp – this powerful tool of identity. It features in their letterheads and in their pageantry.

To this day people, places and corporate bodies still seek to identify themselves uniquely – whether by the display of a registered heraldic shield and motto, or a simple trademarked logo and catchphrase. History demonstrates that it has been heraldry which endures.



William Longespée





### Kings of Arms



#### Garter King of Arms

The principal herald whose title is derived from his duties to the Order of the Garter.



#### Clarenceux

A title probably originating with the herald of the Duke of Clarence, third son of Edward III. Responsible for matters south of the River Trent.



#### Norroy and Ulster

'Northern King' responsible for matters north of the River Trent. His office was combined with Ulster in 1943.



#### The Sovereign



#### His Grace The Duke of Norfolk Earl Marshal (Head of the College of Arms)



#### Her Majesty's College of Arms (The Monarch's Kings of Arms & Heralds) **GRANTS ARMS TO**

New Royals  
and  
Dignitaries  
(where  
appropriate)

#### PEOPLE

Barons

Knights

Individuals

Arms attributed to  
historical figures

#### PLACES

Counties

Cities

Boroughs

Towns

#### CORPORATIONS & INSTITUTIONS

Armed Forces

National Services

Companies

Ecclesiastical Arms





Corporation of the City of London



British Broadcasting Corporation



Tesco

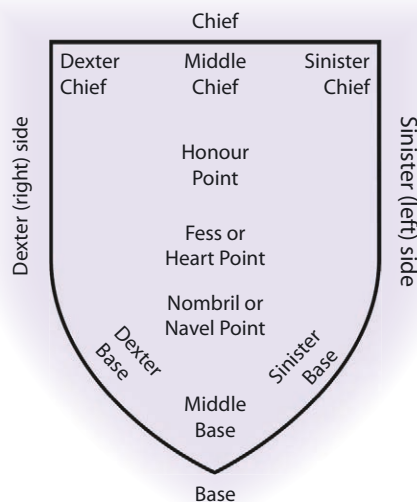


Football Association

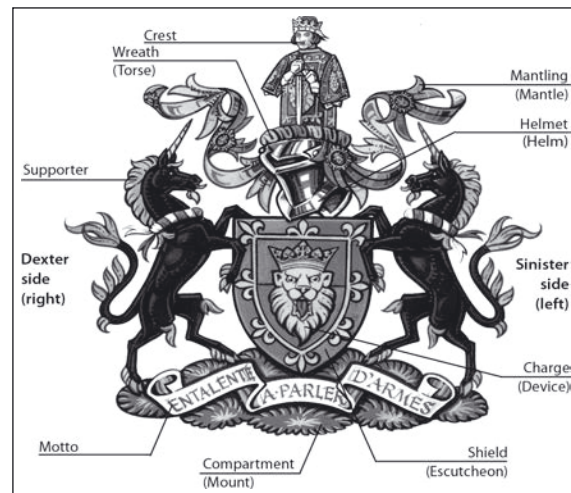


Arms of the former Catherine Middleton, now H.R.H. the Duchess of Cambridge

Although the essential and most important element, the shield is but one part of a coat of arms. A full Achievement of Arms can (but not always will) consist of supporters, mantling, a compartment, a motto, a helmet, a wreath, a crest, a badge, a banner, a flag – and more. Designed and painted on vellum by the College of Arms, it can be reproduced in all manner of materials and today the art and craft of heraldry is still a thriving discipline in its own right.



The shield's sides (dexter and sinister) are described from the viewpoint of the bearer standing behind the shield.



*“Quarterly Azure and Gules a lion’s face crowned with an Ancient Crown Or within a tressure flory on the outer edge of the same And for the crest on a wreath Or Azure and Gules A demi figure of a knight in armour habited in a tabard of the arms his hands gauntleted proper the dexter holding the hilt and the sinister resting on the quillions of a sword point downwards also proper hilt and pommel Or on his head a Chapeau Gules turned up Ermine encircled by an Ancient Crown Gold Mantled Azure and Gules doubled Or On either side an Unicorn Sable armed unguled crined and tufted Or wreathed about the neck with a torse Argent and Gules.”*

‘Armed’ - beasts’ teeth, talons, horns or claws    ‘Unguled’ - beasts’ hooves  
‘Crined’ - human or beasts’ hair, bristles or mane

### BLAZON

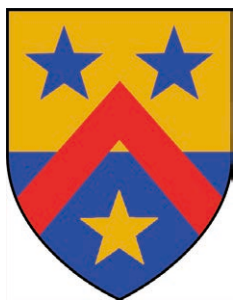
The blazon – the written description of the arms – can use a combination of English, Norman French and Latin, often with poor punctuation and abbreviations. The description begins at top left, proceeds to the right and then, moving downwards, passes from left to right. Originally the passport or DNA record of its time, there was no room for ambiguity, since it was used not only to pinpoint identity but also for faithful reproduction. Over the centuries its precision has benefited both historical research and artists and craftsmen demonstrating their skills in accurately reproducing the arms it described.



### An Augmentation

An addition to arms granted to honour and recognise service.

In 1651 the Lane family bore a simple coat of arms –



After Charles II's defeated attempt to regain his throne, 25-year-old Jane Lane pretended he was her groom and rode with him to smuggle him out of the country.

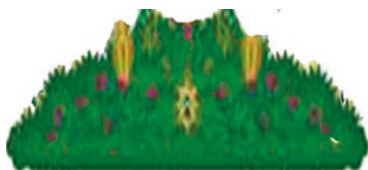
On his successful return in 1660, Charles remembered the risks she took and granted her family a canton of the Lions of England.



A year later he also granted a crest: a strawberry roan, an image of Jane's horse, holding a royal crown.



### COMPARTMENT



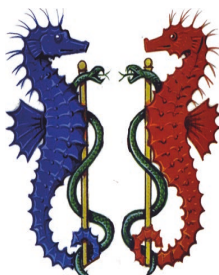
A mound on which the Supporters of the shield can stand, it is usually consistent with the arms' design – frequently a grassy knoll, but also a pebbly beach, sea waves or brickwork.

### MOTTO



Mottoes, probably deriving from war cries, express pious hopes or sentiments and usually appear on a scroll beneath both the shield and any decorations, orders and medals hanging from it. They can use any language (often Latin) and, since they are not included in the descriptive blazon, can be (but rarely are) changed by the arms' owner. Their tinctures can be independent of the arms.

### SUPPORTERS



Unknown prior to the time of Henry VI, the Supporters are a pair of real or mythological creatures standing erect on the compartment and holding or guarding the shield.

### MANTLING



Originally attached to the helm, a mantle or small cloak hung down the back probably as protection from the sun. It is now a decorative accessory displayed each side of the crest and shield and, like the torse, reflects the tinctures of the arms: the principal colour on the outside and the principal metal on the lining.

### TORSE



Covering the join between the crest and the helm, the torse or wreath is a twisted strand of six folds, possibly originating as a lady's favour (love token). It alternates the two principal tinctures (metal and colour) in the arms, the first fold on the dexter side (the viewer's left) being of the arms' metal tincture.





## Women's Arms

The first grant of arms to a woman was made in 1558, emblazoned upon a shield. Three years later, following concerns over a shield's connotations with the battlefield, the College of Arms settled on a lozenge shape for the display of arms by single or widowed women.



Lady Catherine Bingham  
The left and right counter-changed flaunches echo the 'C' in her first name.



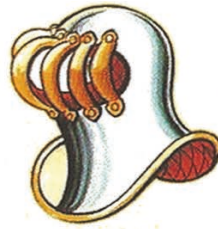
Countess of Buckingham

Today, a married woman is permitted to display her arms on a shield. She may also use her husband's arms, but with a lozenge shape added for difference.

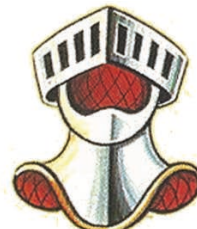
## HELM



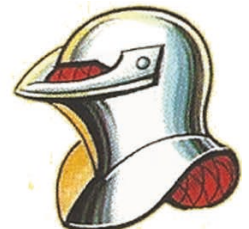
Sovereign



Duke



Knight



Esquire

Helmet ('helm') designs varied with the period. The rank of the arms' owner governs both the type of helm and the direction it faces.

## CREST



In the 12th/13th centuries a flat plate on edge was fitted to the top of the helm, possibly to resist the downward blow of a sword. Bearing a graphical device, the plate was cut to follow the outline of the device. Eventually it became the present three-dimensional model.

## CROWN/CORONET



Ancient Crown



Earl's Coronet



Mural Crown



Duke's Coronet



Astral Crown

A form of – or in place of – the crest. Peers' coronets reflect their position: Duke, Marquess, Earl, Viscount and Baron. Similarly, crowns can reflect the arms' owner's work: Mural (soldiers), Naval (sailors), Astral (airmen). The first Ancient crown (formerly ancient diadem) was granted to The Heraldry Society in 1956.

## THE SHIELD

12th C

Early 13th C

Mid 13th C

14th C

Mid 15th C

c. 1500

1490 - 1540

16th C

18th C

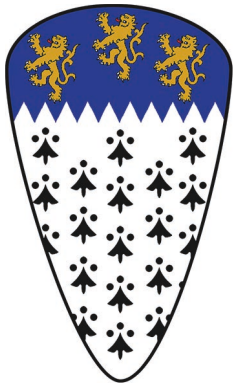
1750 - 1850

1750 - 1850

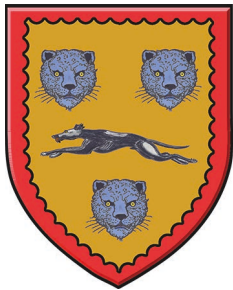
20th C

The shield, or escutcheon, has changed shape over the centuries but its surface ('field') has always been the area on which armorial bearings are usually displayed. Any decorations, orders or medals (except campaign medals) are displayed below the shield, suspended by their ribbons. The shape used is of personal choice.

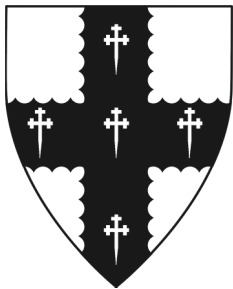




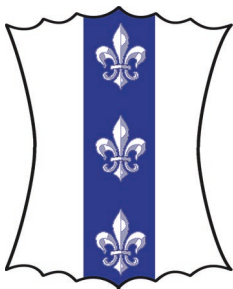
Fitz Aucher



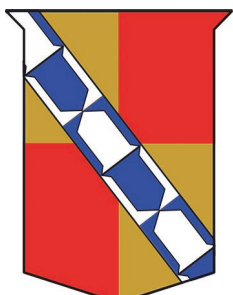
Sir Thomas Heneage



Waltham Abbey



Lionel Cranfield



Sir Charles Sackville

In an age when literacy was rare, identifying knights in the joust and on the battlefield was difficult, especially with the introduction of their closed helmets. To overcome this, the face ('field') of their shields was divided into different blocks of colour.

These blocks of colour were echoed in the development of a variety of shapes which, when arranged on a knight's shield in a particular and hopefully unique design, were said to be their owner's 'arms'. As this peculiar science-cum-art developed and became regulated by the heralds, the shapes were named, described and categorised as the Ordinaries and the less popular Sub-Ordinaries.

### Divisions of the Field



Per Pale



Per Fess

A shield divided vertically up its centre is described as *per pale*.  
Shown far left it is *per pale Argent and Sable*.  
A shield divided horizontally across its centre is described as *per fess*.  
Shown near left it is *per fess Azure and Purpure*.  
Only a small selection of the available divisions is shown here.



Per Bend



Per Bend  
Sinister



Bendy



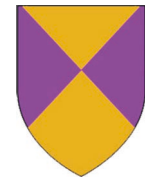
Gyronny



Per Chevron



Per Cross or  
Quarterly



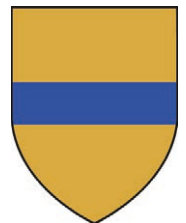
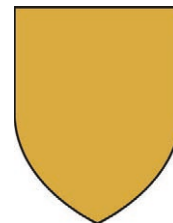
Per Saltire

### Ordinaries (selection)

The field of the shield is first painted in a single heraldic colour ('tincture'). Shown near right it is *Or*.

This is overlaid by a bold geometric shape ('device') painted in a contrasting tincture. Shown far right it is a *Fess* in *Azure*.

The blazon uses the names of the device and the tinctures in its description of the shield's contents.



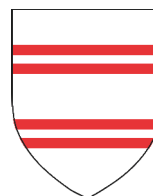
Chief



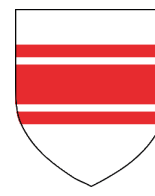
Fess



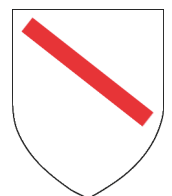
Bars



Bars Gemelles



Fess Cotised



Baton



Pale



Pallets



Bend



Bend Sinister



Bendlets



Bend Cotised



Chevron



Pile



Pall



Saltire



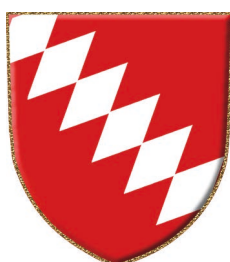
Cross



Shakefork



Elizabeth I



Sir Walter Raleigh



William Shakespeare



Sir Francis Drake

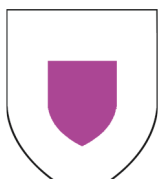


Doctor John Dee

## Sub-Ordinaries (selection)



*Bordure*



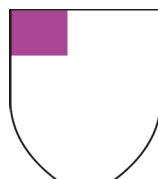
*Escutcheon*



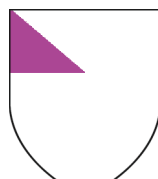
*Orle*



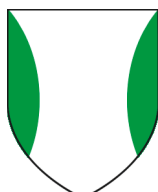
*Tressure*



*Canton*



*Gyron*



*Flaunches*



*Lozenge*



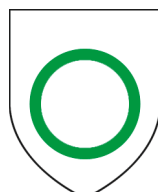
*Fusil*



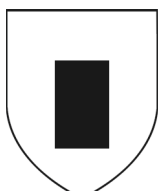
*Mascle*



*Rustre*



*Annulet*



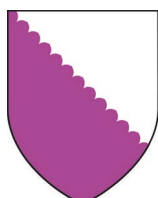
*Billet*



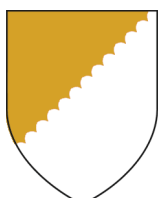
*Fret*

## Lines of Division (selection)

The Divisions of the Field, the Ordinaries and the Sub-Ordinaries can have their edges described by a simple straight line or a repetitive ornamental pattern.



*Invected*



*Engrailed*



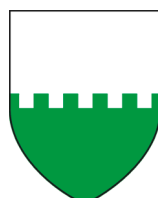
*Raguly*



*Indented*



*Wavy*

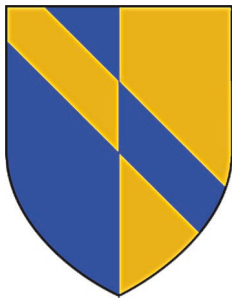


*Embattled*



### Counter-Changing

Two tinctures reversing positions in a design



Arms of Trafford include a capital T held by the counter-changed griffin

Geometric division of the field increased the possibilities of variation; the application of different tinctures brought an almost endless combination. But it was not without its problems. Pigments for dyes and paints were both difficult to produce (making them expensive) and few in colour – the more so if deep, strong tints were required. At the outset this limited the palette to ten choices – five colours (red, green, blue, black, and purple), two metals (silver and gold, represented by white and yellow) and three rarely used stains. More would be added over time.

### Five Colours

Gules  
(Gu)

Vert  
(Vt)

Azure  
(Az)

Sable  
(Sa)

Purple  
(Purp)

### Two Metals

Argent  
(Ar)

Or  
(Or)

### Three Stains

Tenné  
(Ten)

Sanguine  
(Sang)

Murrey  
(Mur)

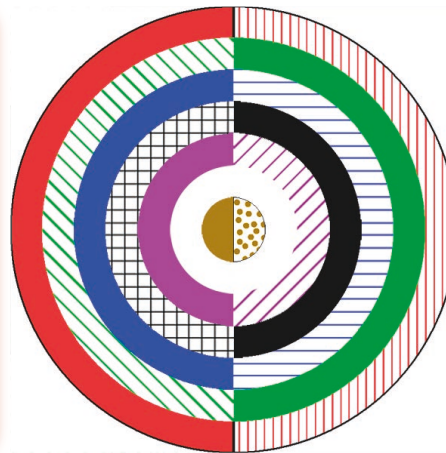
### Rules of Tincture

To ensure the clarity of contrast, heraldry created two rules –  
A colour object should not be placed upon a colour field.  
A metal object should not be placed upon a metal field.  
The rules do not apply to Furs or graphical charges coloured proper.

### The Colour Code

On materials where it was impossible or too expensive to use pigments, a colour code of dots, lines and squares was devised to indicate the tinctures on the shield.

On parchment the code could be drawn in ink. On stone it could be hatched (chiselled) into the surface.



### The Tinctures' Colour Code

Red	Gules	Vertical lines
Green	Vert	Diagonal left lines
Blue	Azure	Horizontal lines
Black	Sable	Squares
Purple	Purple	Diagonal right lines
Silver	Argent	Blank
Gold	Or	Dots

### The Furs

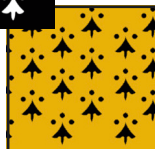
Areas of the shield could be also filled with patterns called *Furs*: Ermine (stoats) and Vair (grey squirrels), with variations of both also available.



Ermine



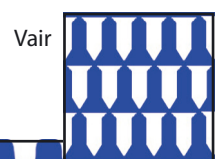
Ermines



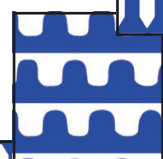
Erminois

Stoats change their coats to white during the winter, except for the tips of their black tails. Known as 'spots', the tails are represented by Ermine.

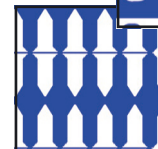
Skins of grey squirrels, sewn alternately belly to back produce a blue impression, represented by the curved or angular forms of Vair.



Vair



Vair Ancient



Counter-Vair



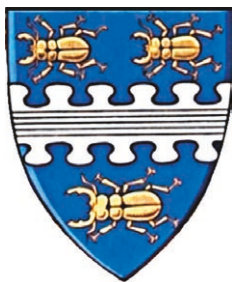


### Cantering Arms

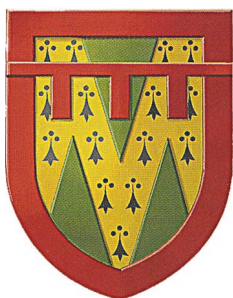
Make a rebus  
– a visual pun –  
in connection with  
their owner



Arms of the former Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, Her Majesty the Late Queen Mother, included both bows and lions



Sir George Martin, Producer to The Beatles



Arms of Messer feature a large capital M



Arms of Eberbach 'Boar - Brook'

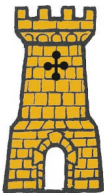
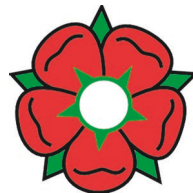
The numerous combinations of shapes, patterns, sculpted edges, and tinctures were impressive, but they fell far short of a truly personal statement. By 1200 the impact of the melting pot of knightly pan-European culture only intensified the need for something which would more personally identify the bearer of arms.

The solution – graphical charges – opened a vast, less geometric, array of images. Anything seen or imagined could be represented either in its natural colours or in a fanciful, stylised version. In the animate category, animals, birds, fish, reptiles, insects and monsters were all possibilities, as were divine or human beings. As for inanimate objects, everything appeared from an anchor and an axe to a wheel and a woolpack by way of trees, plants, flowers and celestial objects.

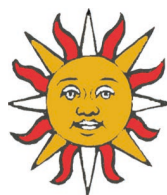
Placed over tinctured Ordinaries and Sub-Ordinaries, graphical charges can use Counter-Changing (reversed colouring) and play visual puns on the bearer's name, a style which came to be known as Cantering Arms.

As the graphical charge established itself as one of the key elements of identification, heraldry began to reflect a sense of the period and society in which it was created. Further, its development over time clearly demonstrates heraldry's infinite possibilities and power to adapt.

A graphical charge can appear either in heraldic tinctures or in its natural ('proper' – abbreviated 'ppr') colour.



The examples of charges shown here are a very limited selection. The list of possibilities is endless.



A graphical charge can throw a line of shadow, the source of the light appearing to be in the dexter chief corner.

### Drawing a Shield

Draw two abutting rectangles. They need not be squares, but their corners must be 90°.

Using any point on the line AB (inclusive) as its centre, draw the lower right arc.

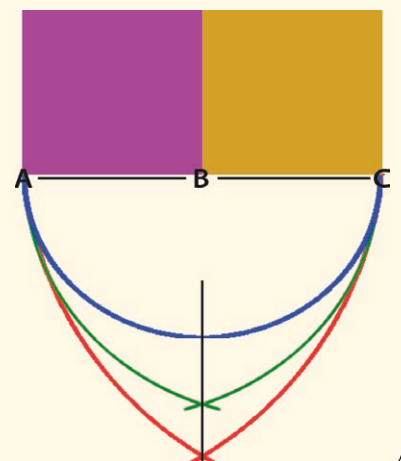
Repeat on the line BC (the point being the mirror image of that used on the line AB) to draw the lower left arc.

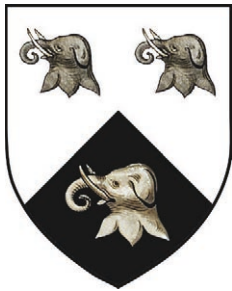
As examples –

The lower right arc in red used point A as its centre. The lower left arc in red used point C as its centre.

The lower two blue arcs, forming a semicircle, both used point B as their centre.

The lower right arc in green used a point halfway between A and B as its centre. The lower left arc in green used a point halfway between B and C as its centre.





Erased elephants' heads in the arms of Saunders



Lion - passant guardant



Winged demi-Bull



Heraldic beast – spotted Ermine – as a supporter



Demi-Unicorn



A pike consuming a fish

Of all the graphical charges in heraldry, animals have always played a large and significant role. And since heraldry is an art form it has never limited itself to actual creatures but let its imagination run riot into the truly fantastical. A 'winged sea horse', for instance, is made up of the front half of a horse with wings stuck on plus the back half of a large fish. Consider also an heraldic sealion: half rampant lion, half fish. In their design of arms over the centuries, heralds have mixed and matched whenever they felt like it – and they still do!

Animals killed for sport and whose various qualities and strengths made them worthy opponents of their hunters soon appeared as graphical charges. All types of deer – stags, hinds, bucks, harts – were popular and were duly followed by bears, boars and wolves. Only later did creatures regarded as vermin – such as foxes, squirrels and rats – make their appearance.

Although they drew him as a true lion, in a prowling lion the early heralds recognised the behaviour of a leopard and called him *lion-leopardé*.

Perhaps this explains early references to the 'leopards of England', now known as *lions passant guardant*, in the Royal Arms.

During the fifteenth century supporters of the shield began to appear in the designs of coats of arms and larger animals were ideally suited to the job.

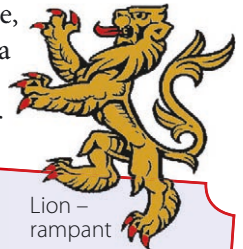
In the Royal Arms a lion and a unicorn support the shield and in the City of London's arms it is a pair of dragons.



The rarely used charge of an heraldic tiger looking in a mirror

### Lions

Lion – rampant



Heraldry has always been about image and propaganda. To this end, an obvious choice – and the only animal to be used in very early heraldry that was not indigenous to Western Europe – was the king of beasts: the lion, symbolising strength and courage. Originally displayed in only one attitude (later known as lion rampant), it was soon represented by further imposing postures which could adequately fill a shield.

Heraldry's love of classification ensured every posture was categorised, described and given the names known today. For instance, a lion rampant is erect, with one hind paw on the ground and the other three paws raised, while its head looks forward in profile and its tail is erect. It is usually shown with red claws and tongue ('armed and langued Gules') but when the background of the charge is red they are more likely to be Azure (blue).

Animals' forepaws are normally on the dexter side of the shield, with the head also facing the dexter. When the head faces the viewer the beast is said to be 'guardant', and 'reguardant' when looking back over its shoulder. A lion is passant when it is walking, three paws on the ground, the dexter one being raised, while the head looks to the dexter and the tail curves over its back.

In the Royal Arms, those of Scotland present a lion rampant, while the arms of England present 'three lions passant guardant in pale Or'. They appear similarly, but in Azure (blue), in the arms of the Football Association.

### The Queen's Beasts

For Queen Elizabeth II's coronation in 1953, James Woodford RA sculpted ten heraldic beasts (Lion, Griffin, Falcon, Red Dragon, etc), each supporting a badge or arms of a family in Her Majesty's ancestry. The originals are now in Canada while full-size replicas stand before the Palm House in Kew Gardens.

At Hampton Court Palace, another ten heraldic beasts, designed by Grinling Gibbons and representing the ancestry of Henry VIII and his third wife, Jane Seymour, stand on the bridge to the great gatehouse.

Seventy-six similar beasts adorn pinnacles on the roof of St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle.







The arms of Speke feature a crocodile and a hippopotamus as supporters



Lion Head - erased



Dragon Head - couped



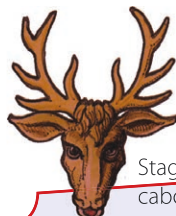
Wolverine



Wyvern - proper



City of London  
Dragon



Stag -  
caboshed

### Deer

Deer are well represented in heraldry and here too their postures and parts are named. Like the lion, a stag can be shown *rampant* but is more frequently seen *salient*: hind hoofs on the ground, forelegs raised and bent at the knee. When a stag is walking it is *trippant*, when running it is *courant*, and when at rest on its belly, its legs bent under it, it is described as *couchant* or *lodged*.

A stag or hart - one and the same in heraldry - is normally shown with a full head of antlers, known as *attires*, each prong of which is a *tyne*. When the *attires*' tincture is different from that of the stag's body they are termed *attired of XXX tincture*.

Animal heads often appear in profile - with the neck cut off straight (*couped*) or ragged (*erased*) - but when shown full-face with no neck they are said to be *caboshed*.

Many animals have only their heads depicted on shields. A whole animal can, of course, be drawn large enough to fill the width of the field but that often leaves space below.

The repetition of two *couped* or *erased* heads (one above the other) or three (two at the top and one centrally below) fits the shield shape far better. For instance, shields displaying a whole boar do exist but those with three boars' heads are more common.

In creating a shield, heraldic art mixes the rigid formality of geometric Ordinaries with the freedom of graphical charges.

There is nothing in the living world that cannot be used in heraldry, from cows to grasshoppers and from eagles to bees.



The griffin is a more popular heraldic device than the male griffin.



### Monsters

A monster can always be relied upon to give an opponent the heebie-jeebies. At least, knights in tournaments may have thought so when they began to decorate their shields with dragons, griffins, wyverns and other unnerving nasties.

The description of a dragon is hardly endearing: forked tongue, horny head, four legs with talons as feet, bat-like wings, a pointed tail, and rolls of scales on its chest. There's no mention of bad breath but when termed *vulned* it is wounded and dripping blood - and that's quite enough. A red dragon appears in the royal badge of Wales and dragons' heads feature in a number of families' arms in that Principality.

The wyvern is a close relation of the dragon, except it has only two legs. When its belly, chest and the inside of its wings are red and its legs, back and head are green it is said to be *coloured proper* (its natural colours) but since it doesn't really exist nobody can know for sure.

The griffin (or 'gryphon') has the wings, head, claws and breast of an eagle, but its tail and hindquarters are those of a lion and it also has ears. The 'male' griffin (a later invention) has no wings but has horns and often sports spikes on its tail.



Graphical charges can also be used as three-dimensional badges. The bear and ragged staff - a badge of the Earls of Warwick - is unusual in that it is a combination of two individual devices.





Knights embarking for the Crusades.  
(14th century manuscript)

Flags consist of two areas: the hoist, or chief, which is immediately adjacent to the staff (flagstaff, not 'flagpole') and the remainder known as the fly or tail. They are drawn with the staff to the left of the flag.

### Standards

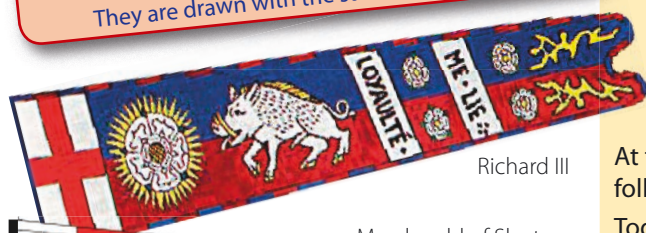
Narrow, tapering, sometimes swallow-tailed and often fringed, their length reflected the rank of the owner – from four yards for a Knight to nine yards for the Sovereign.

Divided lengthwise into two tinctures, they displayed the owner's badge, heraldic devices, and occasionally his motto on a bend (but not his coat of arms) and appear to have been used solely for pageantry.

No rules seem to have governed their display other than for English standards in the Tudor period when they were particularly popular.

At that time standards always bore the cross of St George in the chief, followed by the device, badge or crest of the owner and then his motto.

Today, like the badge, a standard can still be granted to an owner of arms but its layout follows a regular format. The arms occupy the chief and the badge – sometimes with the crest – is placed on the fly which is crossed diagonally by the motto. The background of the fly can be either of a single tincture or of two set out in a shape echoing that of an Ordinary.



Richard III



Macdonald of Sleat

Square or vertically oblong, a banner was borne by Barons, Knights Bannerets, Princes and the Sovereign. It bore his arms and was his ensign and that of his followers as well as any military division in his command.

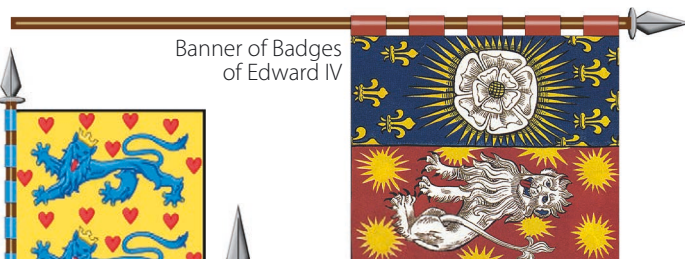
A Knight Banneret, who ranked above other Knights, was created on the battlefield by the Sovereign personally following an act of extreme gallantry. In the ceremony a pennon had its points torn off, thus becoming a small banner or banneret. But banners of arms were not always confined to Knights Banneret and in the Middle Ages they appeared as sails on ships.

The Royal Banner (*not* 'Royal Standard') belongs to the Sovereign, the earliest known being that of Edward I at the siege of Caerlaverock in 1300. It flies wherever the Sovereign is in residence and appears on whatever mode of transport the Sovereign occupies (car, train, boat, plane).

Today, any armigerous person may have a banner and, although personal banners are rarely seen, local authorities and companies regularly fly their banners above their premises.

Quarterings, cadency marks, and differences (as they appear on the bearer's shield) are allowed on banners but crests, badges, supporters, etc and impalements (two arms brought together on a single shield) are not.

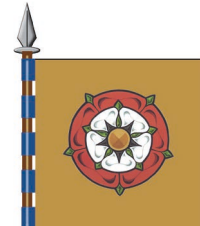
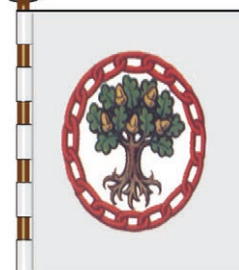
### Banners



Banner of Badges of Edward IV



14th Century Royal Banner of Denmark



**Armigerous**  
A person, place or corporate body possessing Letters Patent granting a Coat of Arms

### Pennons

A smaller version of a banner, this too was narrow, tapering, and often swallow-tailed and fringed. Borne by a Knight immediately below the head of his lance, it was arranged to be viewed correctly when the lance was horizontal.

It displayed the Knight's badge, or his heraldic device and could repeat the main item on his shield.



Badger of Richard II



Badger of Portcullis  
Pursuivant of Arms



Badger of the  
Prince of Wales  
*Ich Dien – I Serve*



The Tudor Rose  
slipped and crowned

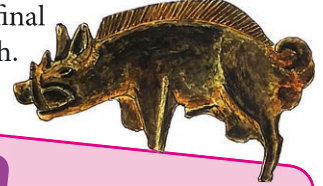


A Blue Boar



2016 Team GB badge  
combining a lion's head  
and the Union Jack flag

In September 2009 a small silver-gilt object was unearthed in a field in Leicestershire. Unseen for over 500 years, it was the image of a boar, the badge of King Richard III. On 22 August 1485 it must have fallen – perhaps from a knight in the final charge – in the Battle of Bosworth Field where Richard met his death. It is now in the Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre at Sutton Cheney.



In a pre-literate age a badge expressed the allegiance of many men to a powerful individual, perhaps a feudal lord.

He would display it on his personal standard (next to the cross of St George in chief), on the shields of his knights in tournaments, and on the livery of his horses.

In effect, it was the forerunner of a company's logo.

### Original copies

Badges were often reproduced in quantity, Richard himself ordering 13,000 copies of his boar badge in 'fustian' (heavy cotton) to be worn at the investiture of his son as Prince of Wales.

Earlier, Richard II had been just as liberal with his white hart (stag) badge. In 1393, when he completed the rebuilding of Westminster Hall, he subtly tucked 83 copies of it into its architecture. And on his portable altar piece, the Wilton Diptych, even the angels wear it! With so many copies of badges being made at the time, it is hardly surprising that a number of museums are able to display examples of those original copies.

### Echoes

Unlike arms, badges are not hereditary, yet many have passed down the generations, coming to represent a family rather than an individual.

Some of them resonate still, for the lands held by feudal lords eventually sprouted pubs and inns with the names of local badges on their signboards.

*The Feathers* often refers to the badge of the Prince of Wales, *The White Hart* to that of Richard II and *The Blue Boar* to the de Veres family (an heraldic pun: 'verres' is Latin for 'boar').

*The Rose and Crown* has particular significance. A rose was used as a badge by both the House of York (in white) and the House of Lancaster (in gold or red) during the 'Wars of the Roses' that culminated at Bosworth.

The victorious Henry VII, in overlaying one with the other, created the Tudor Rose, a royal badge used by English monarchs ever since. Subsequently, the two roses became emblems of their respective counties.

### Knots

Knots are a particular type of badge.



The Stafford knot originated as a badge of the Earls of Stafford and is still widely seen throughout Staffordshire. It is a charge in the arms of the County Council, appears on their flag and is used as a county badge by Girlguiding Staffordshire.

Although not part of a coat of arms, an heraldic badge – sometimes more than one – is granted only to those who possess arms. And while arms are exclusive to one individual (and his heirs), a badge can be borne by any number of his followers. Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, seems to have made a distinction between his bear badge worn by his knights and his ragged staff badge worn by his lesser retainers.

Today, badges can indicate 'belonging' or 'location' and many sports, clubs, societies, and schools use them. They can also denote 'achievement'.



Guides and Scouts will be familiar with both their own County badges and the Challenge badges that recognise their abilities, skills and knowledge.







### Cadency Marks



Label  
First (Eldest) Son



Crescent  
Second Son



Mole  
Third Son



Martlet  
Fourth Son



Annulet  
Fifth Son



Fleur-de-Lis  
Sixth Son



Rose  
Seventh Son



Cross Moline  
Eighth Son



Octofoil  
Ninth Son



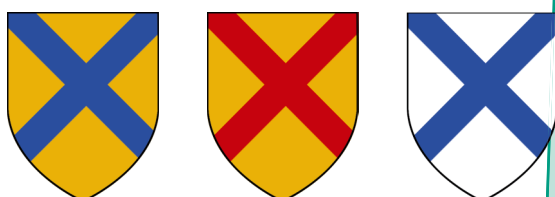
Impaling



Inescutcheon  
of Pretence

Originally, for the purposes of the tournament and the battlefield, heraldry was about the unique identification of those men who bore a coat of arms. Consequently, it has been heraldry's abiding principal that no two coats are the same.

With the guidance of the College of Arms and the impressive array of charges now available to heraldry plus the natural assertion of individuality, there is little need today for the imposition of differencing.



Not surprisingly, the heralds' demand for differencing occasionally led to arguments. These were usually settled amicably at a local level and only exceptional cases resorted to law for a pronouncement by the Court of Chivalry (still in existence today, although rarely used). If that failed to settle the matter, an appeal could be made to the monarch.

### Cadency

Arms descend through the male line of a family and sons ('cadets') of an armigerous head of a family can use and display his arms. This immediately brings about duplication so here too heraldry demands a distinction – not only between the sons' arms and their father's but also between each of the son's arms.

Very early heraldry used a number of methods to achieve this until the 16th century saw the present system of differencing for cadency allocate a special mark to each son in order of seniority.

Small and of any colour, cadency marks are normally added in the chief of the shield (the rules of tincture usually being upheld). An exception to this location is a quartered shield which combines two or more coats of arms. Here the mark is displayed centrally to overlap all four quarters – unless the mark relates solely to one of the coats in which case it is placed in that quarter.

An eldest son's arms bear his cadency mark until his father's death whereupon it is discarded and he reverts to his father's 'plain arms' since he himself has become head of the family. Cadency marks for all other sons are permanent and descend as part of the arms to their own sons who duly add their own differencing for cadency.

### Differencing

In heraldry's early days the duplication of arms was not uncommon. In some cases it came about accidentally simply because the number of divisions of the field, ordinaries, tinctures and charges available to decorate a shield was limited. Over time, as these items (particularly charges) were augmented, this situation eased.

There were, however, instances of people being deliberate "copy-cats". A man might live on land owned by a feudal lord and feel duty-bound to copy his arms. Or he had a great friend or ally and in copying his arms expressed his loyalty or admiration.

No matter how well-meaning the reasons for such duplication, heraldry demanded that a distinction be made. Also, since arms are the personal property of their bearer, duplication could be regarded as theft. 'Differencing' was essential.

Sometimes it was a simple matter of changing the tinctures: a blue cross on a gold field could become a red cross on a gold field, or remain a blue cross but on a silver field. More notable differences included changing a charge, adding a less significant charge, or (in shields parted with a division of the field) changing the division.

From this it will be seen that, with successive generations adding cadency marks to cadency marks, the system can easily get out of hand, causing more confusion than it resolves. Consequently, nowadays brothers rarely difference their arms during the life of their father, but often take up the mark when they become heads of families in their own right.

Daughters are allowed to use their father's arms but are omitted from the cadency system. Single women display their arms on a lozenge shape. Married women can now use a shield (with a lozenge for difference) which must include any cadency mark borne permanently by their father.

The mark must also be included when a daughter marries and transmits her arms to her husband. Her arms are then 'impaled' in the right-hand (*sinister*) half of her husband's shield, alongside his own arms on the left (*dexter*).

If, when their father dies, one or more daughters have no brothers, they become heraldic heiresses. On marriage, their own family arms are placed in the centre of their husband's shield *inescutcheon of pretence*.





Westcott House  
Cambridge  
Arms of the See of  
Durham (dexter)  
impale those of its  
founder, Brooke Foss  
Westcott (sinister)



Arms of Griffey  
Mr Griffey's arms with  
those of his wife in  
pretence



Tonbridge School  
Founder Sir Andrew  
Judd's shield of two  
coats of arms are  
quartered between a  
fillet (thin) cross

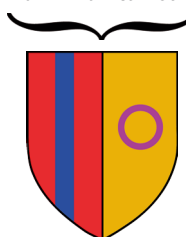
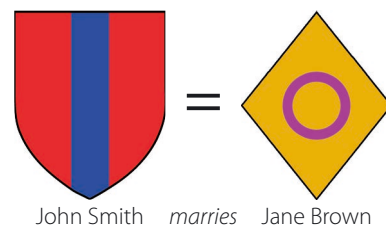


Stowe School  
The quartered arms of  
its founders are divided  
by indented lines

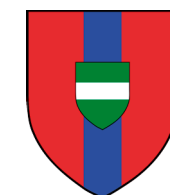
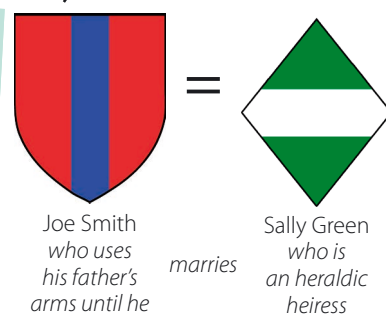
From identifying a single person, heraldry moved to speak of his relationship with another party: an armigerous family (by marriage), or a notable official position (by appointment), or two or more lordships (by inheritance). In each instance his own arms would be 'marshalled' with those of the other party to produce a new design for his shield.

A daughter, when single, is entitled to display her father's arms on a lozenge but on marriage they are impaled with those of her husband on a shield. This is the simplest form of marshalling, the new shield being halved vertically to place his squashed arms into the dexter half and her squashed arms into the sinister. Their children would display only their father's arms.

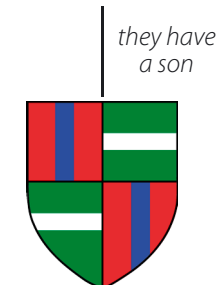
Arms descend through a family's male line. Consequently, upon the death of her father, a daughter does not inherit his arms unless she has no brothers in which case she becomes an 'heraldic heiress'. Here, upon marriage, her arms are marshalled with those of her husband *in escutcheon of pretence*: a small version of her shield placed in the centre of her husband's shield. This arrangement is designed to show that, although the lady is armigerous in her own right, her husband pretends to the representation of her family. Upon her death, their children are entitled to display another form of marshalling: 'quartering' her arms with those of their father.



Mr and Mrs Smith's  
new arms  
they have  
a son



The second  
Mr and Mrs Smith's  
new arms



Fred Smith,  
who, after his mother's death,  
quarters his father's  
and mother's arms

Early heraldry impaled two coats of arms by dimidiation. Instead of each being squashed to occupy half of the new shield, they were cut vertically through their centres, one half of each being brought together to form the new, rather odd design.



Mr and Mrs Smith

Of recent date it has become fashionable for non-armigerous couples to combine lastnames upon marriage: Miss Fox and Mr Brown marry and become Mr and Mrs Brown Fox. This has nothing to do with heraldry but does echo a 200-year-old 'name and arms' eccentricity of English law. Under this, the will of an armigerous father can dictate that, upon marriage, not only shall his daughter's and her husband's arms be impaled but also their names shall be joined, thus producing a hyphenated double (or even triple!) barrelled lastname.

### England's Ancient Royal Arms

King Edward III's mother was the daughter and heiress of Philip IV of France. When Philip died in 1340 Edward believed he was entitled to be recognised as King of France and promptly quartered his shield of England's lions with France's lilies (fleur-de-lis), their royal emblem. He did not, however, put the lions in the dominant top left quarter. Instead, acknowledging the seniority of France as a kingdom, he placed the lilies there. Although no such recognition ever took place (which never prevented Elizabeth I from styling herself *Queen of England, France and Ireland*), the Royal Arms remained quarterly France and England until 1801.



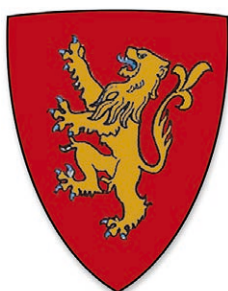


### Magna Carta

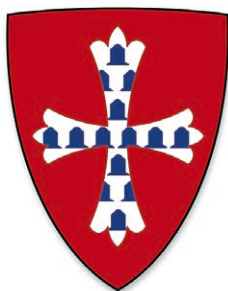
In 1215 King John sealed the Great Charter in front of 25 Barons. All of them would have displayed their arms.



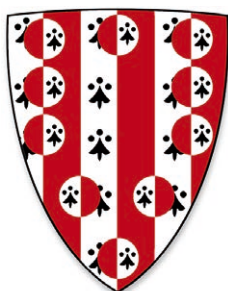
Henry de Bohun



William d'Augbiny



William de Fortibus



Roger de Montbegon

Identifying and recording arms is detective work and, as an 'Heraldic Incident' can occur anywhere at any time, you should be prepared for a case to appear quite unexpectedly. If nearby information identifies the arms, you may want to confirm that it is correct and note how the heraldic blazon describes it. But when no such information is present – a 'cold case', as it were – it will be necessary to start from scratch and, like all good detectives, you'll need a system and a plan.



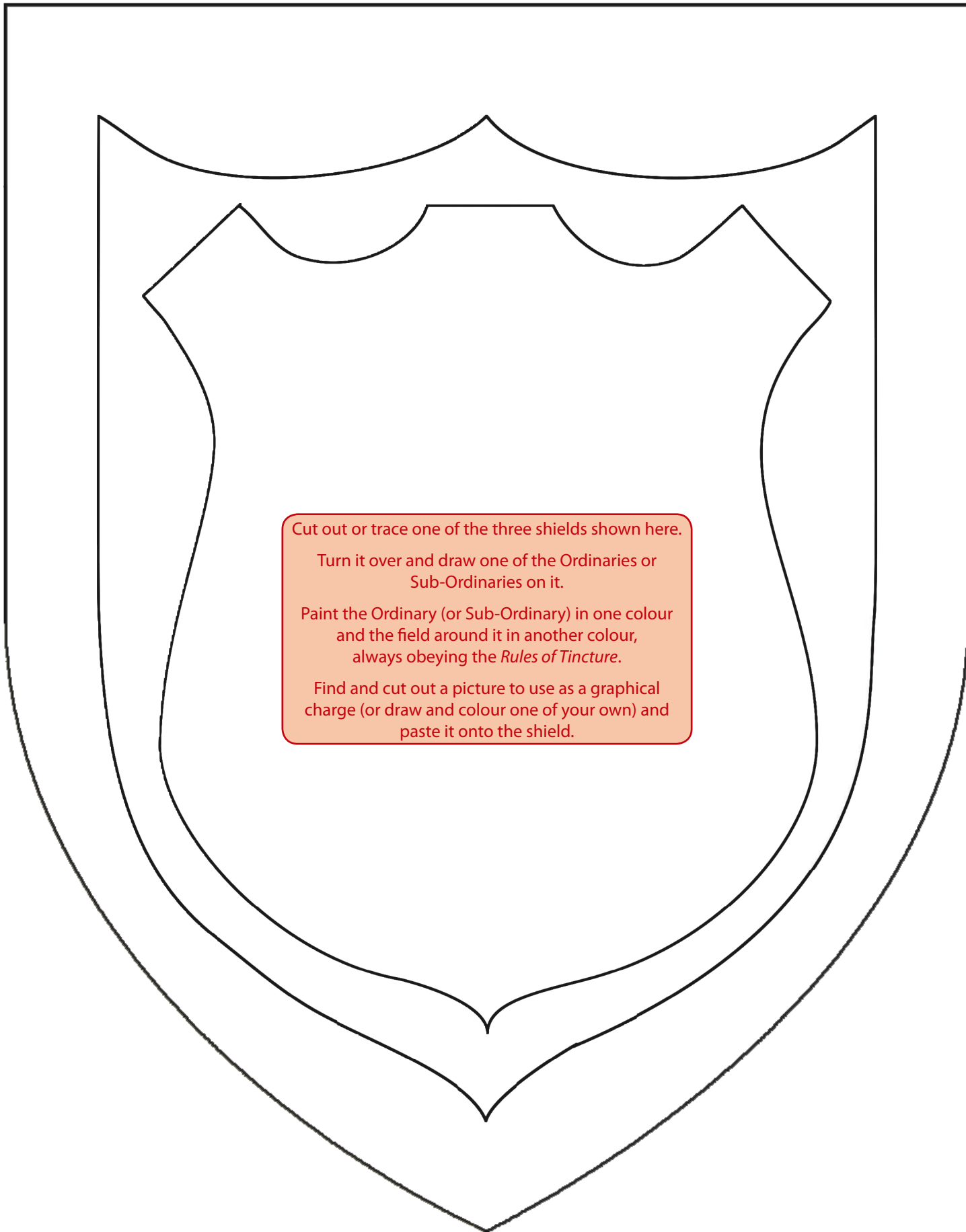
### The system –

- ▶ To record the evidence, you'll need a notebook, or clipboard with paper, and a pencil
- ▶ Also a map to pinpoint the incident's location, a camera for shots of the heraldry and its surroundings, and a magnifying glass for close-up examination of the evidence
- ▶ A scrapbook or ring binder is useful as a case file to hold all the statements and background information about the case
- ▶ From time to time you'll want access to the Internet and/or the reference department of a local library in order to gather background intelligence about the evidence (such as whether or not any previous incidents are to be taken into consideration).

### The plan –

- ▶ First of all, record the location of the incident together with the date and time
- ▶ Next, sketch or photograph the evidence. Pay particular attention to designs, shapes, colours and charges
- ▶ Examine the evidence for any small pieces of information (such as an artist's name). Be sure not to touch it. Evidence must not be damaged or contaminated in any way
- ▶ Check around for other outbreaks of heraldry. Frequently, the 'Heraldic Incident' does not occur in isolation. Then leave the scene exactly as you found it
- ▶ Later, establish to which group of suspects the evidence belongs: is it the arms of a person, a place, or a corporate body (such as a organisation or institution)?
- ▶ Are the arms a pun on their owner's name (known as Canting Arms)?
- ▶ Examine and identify the charges on the arms. What particular relevance, if any, do those charges have to the owner of the arms? These clues will go a long way towards framing the owner.
- ▶ Do the charges relate to any other arms (e.g. in the owner's family)?
- ▶ Use the Internet's many heraldry and history websites, and the library's local and national history books, to draw up a list of suspects. Printouts and photocopies of your findings can be useful
- ▶ When were the arms first obtained?
- ▶ Try to find the blazon for the arms. Or write the blazon yourself
- ▶ How many versions of the arms can be found? (Artists' depictions of arms can vary while still remaining true to the blazon).
- ▶ Write or e-mail people for information but avoid pestering them: cover all points in your first letter. If they are local to your area, you might be able to meet them for informal 'questioning' when they could accidentally reveal something important
- ▶ Remember to record the results of all your research in your case file. If you are working on two incidents at once, make sure they are kept separate
- ▶ In reviewing a case, avoid contaminating the facts by imposing assumptions onto them. Hopefully, you will be led towards a conclusion backed up by proof.





Cut out or trace one of the three shields shown here.

Turn it over and draw one of the Ordinaries or Sub-Ordinaries on it.

Paint the Ordinary (or Sub-Ordinary) in one colour and the field around it in another colour, always obeying the *Rules of Tincture*.

Find and cut out a picture to use as a graphical charge (or draw and colour one of your own) and paste it onto the shield.



## The Lions of England



Royal Banner of Arms

Three lions *passant guardant* appear in the 1st and 4th quarters of the Royal Banner. It is not entirely clear where they came from.

Henry I (1068 – 1135) is thought to have used a single lion as a device, but his arms have not survived.

The first Great Seal of Richard I (1157 – 1199) shows an upright (*rampant*) lion.

When Richard's favourite cousin, Otto, became King of the Romans in Germany in 1198 two versions of his arms included lions *passant guardant*.

By that date Richard's second Great Seal also bore three lions *passant guardant*.

This may have been oneupmanship over his brother John (1167 – 1216) who bore two lions, although his Great Seal carried three.

It is from this time that three lions *passant guardant* were used by succeeding English sovereigns.



In medieval times, why did people want a personal sign or symbol?

Where were these signs and symbols first used?

Invent your own personal sign. It doesn't have to be a shield.

Why were the signs and symbols painted on shields?

Why are the shapes on shields so large, and their colours so strong?

Look at the heraldic shapes called *Ordinaries* and *Sub-Ordinaries*. Draw a shield showing the one you like most. Then add two graphical charges which you think say something about you.

Why was the introduction of the graphical charge so useful?

A shield is painted *Argent* and *Vert*. What do we call those colours today?

You are a knight in a joust on the tournament field. You are facing your opponent who is holding his shield by its sinister chief corner. From your viewpoint, which corner is he holding?

What is the heraldic term for the surface of a shield?

What is the heraldic term for the written description of a coat of arms?

*Canting Arms* display a visual pun on their owner's name. Draw a shield for someone whose lastname is Oakfield-Littlemouse.

Where would you go to see your town's coat of arms?

Why does the shield in your town's coat of arms display the items that it does?

Two crossed keys appear in chief on a Purpure field of a shield. One is Azure, the other is Gules. The keys also appear in base on the shield, but with their colours counter-changed. Draw and colour the shield, its field and the keys.

### Where can I find out about heraldry?

[www.theheraldrysociety.com](http://www.theheraldrysociety.com)  
[www.college-of-arms.gov.uk](http://www.college-of-arms.gov.uk)  
[www.civicheraldry.co.uk](http://www.civicheraldry.co.uk)  
[www.heraldic-arts.com](http://www.heraldic-arts.com)  
[www.whitelionsociety.org.uk](http://www.whitelionsociety.org.uk)  
[www.heraldry-scotland.co.uk](http://www.heraldry-scotland.co.uk)  
[www.europeanheraldry.org](http://www.europeanheraldry.org)  
[www.gg.ca/pdf/Heraldry-Kit-EN.pdf](http://www.gg.ca/pdf/Heraldry-Kit-EN.pdf)  
[www.ngiv.nl](http://www.ngiv.nl)

### Where can I see heraldry in real life?

Cathedrals and old churches  
 Local and national government offices  
 (town halls, libraries, registry offices)  
 Local history museums  
 Stately homes and castles  
 (including those in the care of  
 preservation bodies, such as the  
 National Trust and English Heritage)  
 Shire Hall, Lancaster Castle  
 Royal Armouries, Leeds