



OUR ARMORIAL
BEARINGS



INTRODUCTION

Heraldry has been variously described as “the shorthand of history” and “the floral border in the garden of history.” This link provides a brief overview of the practice of designing, displaying, describing and recording coats of arms and badges. Also included is a description of the Heineman coat of arms registered with the [American College of Heraldry](#) and a collection of ancestral arms.



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Heraldry

Heraldry, in its broadest sense, covers everything connected to the roles and responsibilities of officers of arms. More commonly, however, it refers to the design, display, description, and recording of coats of arms and badges. Heraldry originated from a practical need: to identify individuals in combat when their faces were obscured by metal helmets.

Origins and History

At the time of the Norman Conquest of England, heraldry as we know it had not yet fully developed. Early elements of heraldic structure were beginning to appear, but they did not become standardized until the mid-twelfth century. By the early thirteenth century, coats of arms were being passed down to the children of armigers. In Britain, systems of cadency marks were introduced to distinguish between sons within the same family. This practice was later formalized and standardized by John Writhe in the fifteenth century.

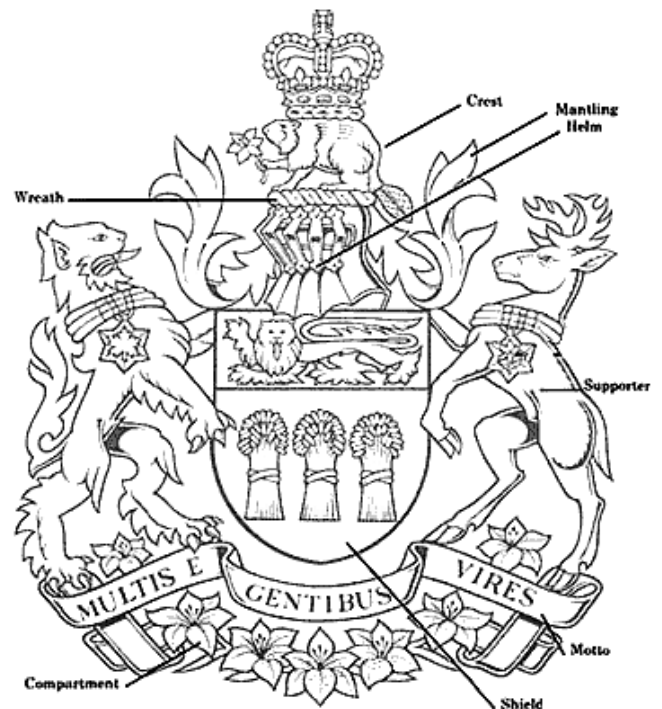
During the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, heraldry evolved into a highly organized field governed by professional officers of arms. Although its original use in tournaments declined, coats of arms remained widely used for identification in other contexts—such as seals on documents, carvings on tombs, and banners displayed on country homes.

From its earliest days, heraldry has been expressed in many forms, including paper, painted wood, embroidery, enamel, stonework, stained glass, and, more recently, digital media. To ensure clear recognition across these formats, heraldry relies on just seven basic colors and avoids precise rules about the size or placement of elements (known as charges) on a shield. Coats of arms are formally described using a specialized, concise language called blazon. This description provides a standard that remains consistent regardless of artistic interpretation.

The common belief that every element in a coat of arms carries a specific meaning is largely incorrect. While an original armiger might have chosen symbols with personal significance, such meanings are not reliably preserved over generations. Unless a design clearly puns on the bearer's name, its meaning is often uncertain.

With the advent of firearms, plate armor—and the battlefield role of heraldry—became obsolete. Heraldry then shifted toward a more symbolic and decorative function, sometimes existing only in artistic

representations, often called “paper heraldry.” Over time, designs grew more intricate, sometimes sacrificing clarity. In the twentieth century, however, a renewed appreciation for bold, simple, and iconic designs brought the clean style of early heraldry back into favor.



The Rules of Heraldry

Shield and Lozenge

The central focus of modern heraldry is the *armorial achievement*, or coat of arms, with the shield as its core element. The specific shape of the shield is usually unimportant, and styles have changed over time according to artistic fashion. Occasionally, however, a particular shape may be specified in the formal description (blazon).

Traditionally, because women did not participate in warfare, they did not use shields. Instead, their arms were displayed on a *lozenge*—a diamond-shaped figure set on a point. This convention still applies in many places, though some authorities now allow exceptions. In Canada, for example, women may bear arms on shields without restriction. Noncombatant clergy have also used the lozenge, as well as the *cartouche*, an oval form for displaying arms.

Tinctures (Colors)

Heraldry uses a defined set of colors called *tinctures*.

Because heraldry functions as a system of identification, clarity and contrast are essential. This is governed by the *rule of tincture*: light colors (metals) should not be placed on other light colors, and dark colors should not be placed on dark colors. While there are occasional exceptions—such as when a design overlays a divided field—the rule is generally observed. One famous exception is the coat of arms of Godfrey of Bouillon, King of Jerusalem.

The standard tinctures in English blazon, mostly derived from French, are:

- Or (gold)
- Argent (white/silver)
- Azure (blue)
- Gules (red)
- Sable (black)
- Vert (green)
- Purpure (purple)

Other colors exist but are used less frequently and usually for special purposes.

In addition to colors, heraldry includes patterned designs known as *furs*. The most common are:

- *Ermine*: white with black tail spots, representing the winter coat of the stoat
- *Vair*: a repeating blue-and-white pattern derived from squirrel fur

Some charges (figures) may appear in their natural colors, described as *proper*. This is common for animals and plants, especially in crests and supporters. However, using “proper” simply to avoid the rule of tincture is considered poor practice.

Division of the Field

The background of a shield, called the *field*, may be divided into multiple sections with different tinctures. Many coats of arms consist solely of such divisions. Because these are considered structural divisions rather than overlays, the rule of tincture does not apply. For example, a shield split between blue (azure) and red (gules) is acceptable.

Dividing lines, known as lines of partition, may be straight or decorative—wavy, indented, embattled, engrailed, and many other variations.

Ordinaries and Sub-Ordinaries

Early heraldry favored bold, simple geometric shapes that were easy to recognize at a distance. These became known as *ordinaries* and remain a fundamental part of heraldic design. They are typically listed first in a blazon and extend to the edges of the shield unless stated otherwise. Common ordinaries

include: the cross, fess, pale, bend, chevron, saltire, and pall.

A related group, *sub-ordinaries*, consists of smaller or secondary geometric elements. These include the inescutcheon, orle, tressure, double tressure, bordure, chief, canton, label, and flanches. Their distinction often depends on their order in the blazon.

Ordinaries can also appear in repeated, narrower forms, known in English as pallets, bars, bendlets, and chevronels. Unlike English terminology, French blazon does not distinguish these diminutives when they appear singly. By default, ordinaries are drawn with straight edges, though they can also feature the same decorative line variations used in field divisions.

Charges

A *charge* is any figure or object placed on a shield or within a heraldic composition. These can include animals, objects, or abstract shapes—essentially anything found in nature or human creation.

Common charges include the cross (in many variations), as well as animals like lions and eagles. Other frequently seen creatures include fish, martlets (stylized birds), griffins, boars, and stags. Mythical beings such as dragons and unicorns may appear as charges or as supporters.

Animals are depicted in standardized poses, known as *attitudes*. For example:

- *Rampant*: standing upright on one hind leg
- *Passant*: walking with one foreleg raised (as in the lions of the English royal arms)
- Eagles are typically shown *displayed*, with wings spread

Certain small symbols—such as crescents, mullets (stars), martlets, annulets (rings), fleurs-de-lis, and roses—are sometimes used as *cadency marks* in English heraldry to distinguish branches of a family. However, their presence does not always indicate cadency, as they are also common in unrelated designs.

Marshalling

Marshalling is the practice of combining multiple coats of arms into one design to represent inheritance, alliances, or office. The main methods include:

- *Impalement*: placing two coats side by side on a single shield
- *Dimidiation*: combining halves of two coats
- *Quartering*: dividing the shield into four (or more) sections

When more than four coats are combined, quartering may be extended into multiple rows. Some lineages accumulate many such quarters, though large numbers are usually reserved for formal or documentary use. In

some traditions, there is resistance to excessive quartering, leading instead to further subdivision within quarters.

Helm and Crest

In everyday language, “crest” is often used to mean an entire coat of arms, but in heraldry it refers specifically to the figure placed above the helmet (*helm*). The helm sits above the shield, and the crest rests on top of it, usually on a twisted cloth called a wreath and sometimes within a coronet.

Crests originated as three-dimensional figures mounted on knights’ helmets for identification. Traditionally, women did not display crests, though this restriction is loosening in some regions.

The helm and crest are often accompanied by *mantling*, a stylized cloth draped from the helmet. Originally protective, it is now decorative and typically shown in the main color and metal of the shield. It is often depicted with torn edges, suggesting wear in battle.

Clergy often omit the helm and crest. In Roman Catholic heraldry, rank is instead indicated by a *galero* (a wide-brimmed hat) with colored tassels. In Anglican practice, clergy may inherit crests but seldom display them.

Mottoes

A motto is a phrase expressing the ideals or intentions of the armiger (the person or entity bearing the arms). Some are wordplay on family names, such as the Neville motto “*Ne vile velis.*” Mottoes are not fixed and may be changed at will. They usually appear on a scroll beneath the shield, though in Scottish heraldry they are often placed above the crest. A motto may be in any language.

Supporters and Other Insignia

Supporters are figures—human or animal—placed on either side of a shield as if holding it up. Their use is often restricted by rank or status. In Britain, they are typically granted only to peers, certain knights, and corporate bodies, while continental traditions are often less strict.

Those of certain ranks (such as barons or knights) may display a *coronet* above the shield. Its placement varies: below the helmet in British heraldry, but often above the crest in continental practice.

Another addition may be the insignia of an order of knighthood, shown as a collar or band surrounding the shield. When a married couple’s arms are displayed together, the insignia typically surrounds only the husband’s arms, while the wife’s may be framed with decorative foliage.

Modern Heraldry

Heraldry remains active today. Governments and heraldic authorities still grant official coats of arms to individuals, institutions, and corporations. However, many modern users create and use arms without formal registration, and some designers ignore traditional rules altogether.

In Scotland, heraldry is strictly regulated by law. The Lord Lyon King of Arms has significant authority, including the power to fine, imprison, or destroy unauthorized arms. No equivalent authority exists in England; the Scottish system is more comparable in power to high-ranking ceremonial offices such as the Earl Marshal.



The Heineman Arms

The Heineman Armorial Bearings are registered to Wilhelm August Heineman, late of Keokuk, Lee County, Iowa; the son of John Henry Heineman and Bertha Ann Heineman, nee Burger; recognized 16 January 1999 and entered in the Heraldic Register (American College of Heraldry) under Number 1778.

The blazon for the Heineman Armorial Bearings is as follows:

Per fess Gules and Azure a barrulet Argent, over-all an eagle displayed wings inverted Or, charged on the breast with a fleur-de-lis Azure. Above the Shield is placed a Helmet with a Mantling Gules doubled Or, and on a Wreath Or and Gules is set for Crest, a castle with two towers Argent the port occupied by a cross throughout Gules, and issuing there above three trees in Autumn tinctures Proper, and in an Escrol below the Shield this Motto: Leadership Through Service.

The Shield

A "fess" is associated with the military girdle and belt of the ancients and their nobility. The red, white, and blue shield colors were chosen to signify American service. The eagle has a number of meanings. The surname Jensen is a variant of the "son of Jens" or the "son of John." Usually this has an ancient allusion to respect for St. John, who is represented by the eagle in ancient and modern religious iconography. The eagle with turned-down wings alludes to Germanic ancestry. The fleur-de-lis on a golden background (a reversal of the ancient French flag colors) alludes to Wilhelm's military service for the United States in France as part of the Allied Forces during WWI. The fleur-de-lis is representative of the Crum family origins. The fleur-de-lis is an adaptation of the lily, generally recognized as one of the most highly regarded charges with those of royalty and nobility. The three leaves of the fleur-de-lis represent courage, faith, and wisdom.

The Crest

A wreath or *torse* is common in early arms. The castle in the crest alludes to the Burger (meaning dweller in a castle or town). Growing from the castle is a grove of trees, alluding to the Heineman name meaning a man who lives in or protects a grove or forest. The trees are in Autumn colors to keep from clashing with the other tinctures. The cross on the castle port is of Germanic design referring to the Christian faith.

The Motto

The motto "Leadership Through Service" represents the family's dedication to service organizations and their leadership roles

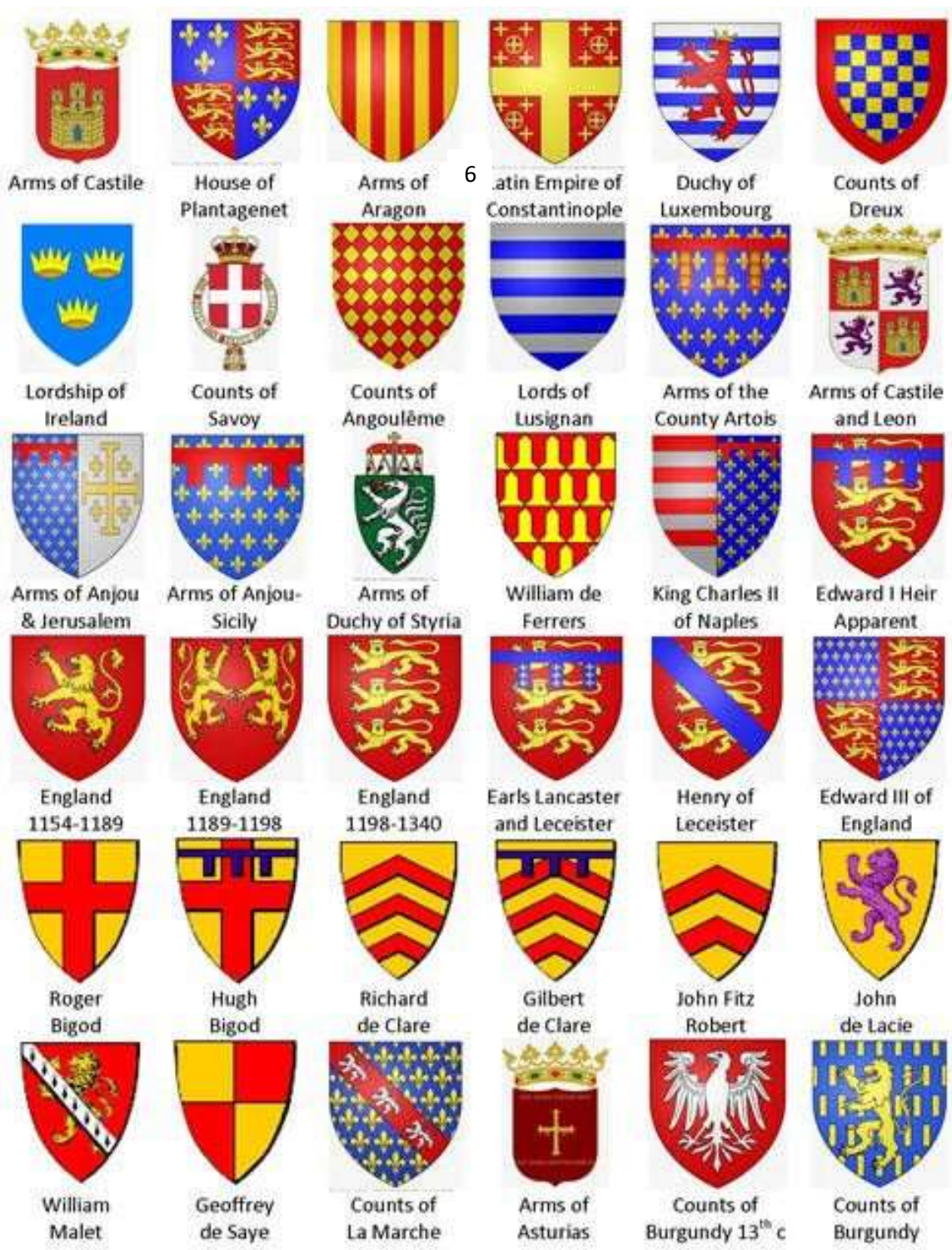
Rightful Bearers of the Arms

The bearer of a coat of arms is called the Arminger (Wilhelm August Heineman) and the arms are passed to the male heirs in direct lineage. The following individuals have rightful use of these arms: Lucille Ann Dodson, Peter Edward Heineman, Sharen Lee Heineman, Bim August Heineman, Peter Lea Heineman, Chad August Heineman.

Ancestral Arms

The following are representative of some of the coat of arms used by ancestors of the Heineman family.









House of Welf



Arms of Cordoba



Arms of Galicia



Arms of Chartres



Arms of Tours



Arms of Pottenstein



Arms of Arnstein



House of Hohenberg



Arms of Bavaria



Palatinate Arms



Arms of Saxony



Arms of Orleans



Arms of More



Arms of Lucca



Arms of Thurgau



Arms of Treves

... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ...



... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ...



... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ...



... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ...



... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ...



... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ...



... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ...



... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ... der ...

