

PRITT

COAT OF ARMS

A RED SHIELD WITH A LION PASSANT BETWEEN THREE GOLD STARS.

CREST

TWO LIONS PAWS ERASED, GOLD, HOLDING A STAR.

The practice of representing people with symbols is ancient, and in England this habit evolved with feudal society into a system of distinctive devices on shields. The heralds developed an extensive armory that had the important function of distinguishing members of the upper class from each other, whether at court or on the battlefield. Since then, heraldry has grown into a complex field with many rules and a terminology that requires some knowledge to interpret.

RED SHIELD Gules, derived from an Old French word goules or gueules meaning "throats" translates into modern English as "red" and is the military color for excellence and fortitude. It is symbolic of nobility, boldness and ferocity, and can also represent fire and summer. Some ancient laws restricted its use to princes and their families. Red corresponds to the metal copper and is denoted in engravings by numerous perpendicular lines.

Symbolic Virtues: Red denotes the virtues of charity and courage, and indicates the qualities of valor, patriotism, and creative power. Those who bear a red insignia are obliged to right wrongs and win fame in arms.

Precious Stone: Carnelian, Ruby

Planet: Mars

Obligations: To right wrongs and win fame in arms

LION PASSANT A lion passant is one that is walking to the dexter (its right), with the dexter (right) fore-paw raised. The lions of England are passant guardant.

The lion has always held a high place in heraldry as the emblem of deathless courage, and, hence, that of a valiant warrior. It is said to be a lively image of a good soldier, who must be "valiant in courage, strong of body, politic in council and a foe to fear." Through the

somewhat dubious legend of their compassion, lions also came to symbolize Christ. As one medieval author asserted, "they prey on men rather than women, and they do not kill children except when they are very hungry." The lion, with such repute of its noble nature and having the position and title of king of the beasts, is naturally one of the most common heraldic symbols on the continent of Europe. The winged lion is the emblem of St. Mark.

THREE "Three" devices, beasts or ordinaries of the same have a special significance in heraldry.

First of all, there is the obvious reference to the Trinity in the design that would signify observance of the Christian doctrine.

Secondly, with many Arms it brings balance that is steeped in tradition. To better understand this latter scenario, we must look at the evolution of shield in personal armory. Kite shields that were the most popular from the the 10th-14th century evolved into Heater shields that had flat tops c. 1250. This was the time of heraldry's beginnings and when "three" objects were used for balance in each corner of the shield.

Later, with the advent of the "chief," "chevron" and "bend" three devices brought balance to these ordinaries too.

GOLD "Or" (from the French word for gold) is the tincture of Gold, or in heraldic terms "or," was considered the noblest color.

One of only two metals used in heraldry, it exceeds all others in value, purity and finesse. It represents the light of the sun, and was once borne only by princes. Gold is said to gladden the heart and destroy all works of magic. It is also associated with excellence and achievement, and the bearer surpasses all others in valor.

It is represented on coats of arms by the color yellow, and in engravings by a dotted pattern.

STAR In heraldry, the Star, or Mullet, is often considered a symbol of truth, the spirit and of hope.

"Guillim holds that this is a falling or fallen star, not supposed to be fallen from its high estate, but to denote some Divine quality bestowed from above, whereby men shine in virtue, learning, and works of piety like bright stars on the earth."(Wade)

The Star can denote a divine quality and is a symbol of constancy, and celestial goodness. Its meaning can also depend upon the number and sometimes the orientation of its points. A star of some form constitutes part of the insignia of every order of knighthood.

"A gold spur becomes the dignity of knighthood, and a silver spur for that of an esquire." (Guillim)

"From the French word molette, the rowel of a spur." (Grant)

Many cultures throughout antiquity have used the star as a talisman or national insignia. In England, a Mullet has five points unless another number is specified, while an Estoile (a wavy star) will have six.

"There was an ancient English order entitled 'Esquires of the Silver Spur,' which has been slightly revived in the present reign, and such a creation affords a ready means of constituting one as a legal esquire should he hold no office to which such a title is affixed by usage." (Wade)

In Scotland, a Mullet is always pierced (has a hole in the center), while a Star is not. In France, the definition of a Mullet is different yet again, where it has no less than six points.

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"The earliest example to be found is on the seal of Philip I., Duke of Flanders, in 1164. "
(Grant)

ERASED Erased, in heraldic terms, means that the object described has been violently torn off, leaving a jagged edge. It is a term applied to the heads and limbs of creatures; however, it really just indicates that there are wisps of fur or feathers preventing the edge from being a clean one.