

Heraldry For Beginners

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Clan Strachan Scottish Heritage Society, Inc.

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Please make reference to this document and its revision number.

Scottish Heraldic Law falls exclusively under the jurisdiction of the Court of the Lord Lyon. All official inquiries should be directed to:

Lord Lyon King of Arms

The Court of the Lord Lyon

HM New Register House Edinburgh EH1 3YT

<https://www.courtofthelordlyon.scot/>

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INTRODUCTION

This publication aims to provide a basic foundation and an introductory education into Scottish heraldry. In doing so, the author hopes to dispel many myths and false assumptions many have about the topic.

In Scotland, heraldry falls under the legal system, and the ultimate legal authority in Scotland for heraldry is the Lord Lyon, King of Arms. Information provided herein is subordinate to any decisions, or opinions made by the Lord Lyon. This document is not intended to be a source of legal advice.

Much of the information presented herein is taken from materials that sometimes date into the 1800's. The relevance here is that women are equally entitled as men to petition for a new grant or matriculation of Arms. From a social perspective, society has matured over the past two hundred years. However, many of the source documents refer to men or use the pronouns he/him. Indeed, almost all the Arms granted during this period were for men. Regardless, for the purpose of this document, I pray the reader gives the author a generous and broad interpretation, and given modern sensitivities to pronouns, that no one takes offense.

All legal disclosures aside, the topic of Scottish heraldry is a complex legal system employing a number of principles, many of which are discussed herein. This publication is not intended to provide a full discourse on the topic of heraldry. Rather, it will discuss some of the finer introductory points. Petitioners are also encouraged to write the Lyon Court to confirm any information presented hereunder.

It has been the Clan Strachan Society's experience that only a few unique individuals are interested enough in their Scottish ancestry or heritage to become members of their clan society or association. These individuals generally have a strong sense and personal value towards family and kinship, honour, and character.

Of these, only a very few are interested in taking the next step. That is, filing a petition for Scottish Arms.

Those who have been granted Arms or who have the right to bear them (aka "Armigers") are generally well educated. In modern times, many are civil servants, politicians, or those who have served in the military. Others are doctors, lawyers, professors, entrepreneurs and various professionals who are leaders in their chosen field. And, yet others simply have a passion for celebrating their Scottish heritage.

As the Lord Lyon states, "*Those granted Arms are virtuous and well deserving persons.*"¹ According to the Heraldry Society of Scotland, "*It is not considered pretentious to receive a*

¹ Court of the Lord Lyon. *Coat of Arms*. Accessed February 10, 2024. Available Online: <https://courtofthelordlyon.scot/coats%20of%20arms.htm>

grant of Arms or display one's heraldic achievement. Only if an individual were to use a coat of arms to which he was not entitled could the use of heraldic display be seen to be pretentious."² Indeed, according to Debrett's *an Armiger is considered nothing more than a Gentleman in the Precedence of Scotland*, which is a social dignity.

Prior to about March 2008, Scottish Arms had a nobility clause in the Preamble of the Letters Patent, which is the parchment conferring one's arms. The Lord Lyon David Seller eliminated this clause, likely as it caused much confusion. Today, it is generally agreed that a grant of Scottish arms does not confer any special "noble" status, and never did. Barring ranks of peerage, an Armiger merely confirms that the grantee is a worthy and respected individual deserving of recognition by a grant of arms in Scotland.

Scottish Armigers do their family (or clan) a great service, as it is generally recognised that they have a duty to assist the chief in managing the clan in our times. Many Scottish clans have a clan council, and Armigers frequently receive seats on the council. Also, it is not uncommon for Armigers to be given honorary seats on their clan society or association board of directors.

Moreover, Scottish Arms are hereditary property and a beautiful gift to future generations. The original grantee is also immortalised in their letters patent, which is kept on file in perpetuity in the Public Register of All Arms and Bearings in Scotland. Because of this distinction's perpetuity, the author estimates that approximately 30% of all Armigers conversely have no children. Therefore, children should not be considered a requisite for Arms.

The Lord Lyon's "Public Register of All Arms and Bearings in Scotland" originated by passage of the "*Lyon King of Arms Act 1672, cap 47*", legally required all Scottish Arms to be registered at the Court of the Lord Lyon. These Scottish Arms would have been documented by "Letters Patent" so recognised by the Sovereign of Scotland (the *Ard Righ*), the Fountain of Honour, through his Officer of Honour, the Lord Lyon King of Arms. Examples of the Letters Patent are included in this paper.

Prior to 1672, Scottish Arms were unregistered and loosely differentiated among the various cadet lines of the family. These older arms, generally shields alone, have been found on various grants and charters, mounted on stone buildings, recorded in private rolls, and can be found on other sources.

Even after 1672, it was common practice in certain parts of the commonwealth, Canada for example, to use unregistered Arms.

The Clan Strachan Society provides free consulting services to its Members (in good standing); and will help advise with regards to the Petition, document review, or general instruction. The petitioner pays all lodging and filing fees directly to the Court of the Lord Lyon, who will provide payment details in due course.

² Squire, Romilly. *The Modern Use of Heraldry*. The Heraldry Society of Scotland. Accessed 10 February 2024. Available Online: <https://www.heraldry-scotland.co.uk/modernuse.html>

ARMORY VS. HERALDRY

Arthur Charles Fox-Davies (1871-1928), English heraldic author and writer, and English lawyer, is one of the most prominent heraldic authors and an expert on English heraldry wrote:³

“**Armory** is that science of which the rules and the laws govern the use, display, meaning, and knowledge of the pictured signs and emblems appertaining to shield, helmet, or banner.

Heraldry has a wider meaning, for it comprises everything within the duties of a herald. And whilst Armory undoubtedly is Heraldry, the regulation of ceremonials and matters of pedigree, which are really also within the scope of Heraldry, most decidedly is not Armory.”

Fox-Davies also states that originally, every powerful leader had his own **Herald** whose duties were dual – minstrel and messenger. As a minstrel, the Herald was responsible for recounting the deeds of his master as well as his master’s ancestors. A Herald could also be considered a genealogist. As a messenger, the Herald was a noncombatant who carried documents between leaders and was granted free passage to do so. When tournaments came into vogue, it was natural that someone should examine the arms of those taking part, and this duty fell to the Herald, who thus required a knowledge of coats of arms.⁴

Sir James Balfour Paul (1846 - 1931, Lord Lyon King of Arms 1890 to 1927) stated that “most writers are now of the opinion that Heraldry, as we at present have it, is a product of European civilisation, and cannot be traced back further than the 11th century, if so far.”⁵ Paul goes on to state that “it was not till the period of the third crusade (1189) that arms as hereditary distinction of a family came into notice.”⁶ Furthermore, Fox-Davies states, “There is little doubt that the Crusades exercised a vast influence both in forming the rules of armory and in stimulating the birth of the science.”⁷

Heraldry reflects the custom of knights in armor, when fighting on horseback, to wear a distinctive ‘coat’ on top of their armor to enable their followers to identify them on the field of battle. Hence the term “coat of arms”, with shield of arms.

³ Fox-Davies, Arthur Charles, *A Complete Guide to Heraldry*, New York: Bonanza Books, 1978 (Reprint of the 1909 ed. published by Dodge Pub. Co., New York), page 1.

⁴ Fox-Davies, Arthur Charles, *A Complete Guide to Heraldry*, New York: Bonanza Books, 1978 (Reprint of the 1909 ed. published by Dodge Pub. Co., New York), page 27.

⁵ Paul, Sir James Balfour, *Heraldry in relation to Scottish History and Art being the Rhind Lectures on Archaeology for 1898*, Edinburgh: David Douglas, MDCCCC (1900), page 4.

⁶ Paul, Sir James Balfour, *Heraldry in relation to Scottish History and Art being the Rhind Lectures on Archaeology for 1898*, Edinburgh: David Douglas, MDCCCC (1900), page 7.

⁷ “X” of the ‘Saturday Review’ (Fox-Davies, Arthur Charles), *The Right to Bear Arms*, London: Elliot Stock, 1899, page 4.

The application of the art and science of Armory and Heraldry varies from country to country. Scotland has a more codified (not in all respects – much looser on marshaling, *e.g.* but more regulated) system of armory and heraldry than other countries. The senior Herald, or High *Seannachie* of Scotland, is the Lord Lyon King of Arms.⁸

List of Acts Regarding Scottish Heraldry

The Officers of Arms Act of 1587 – “Act for reformation of the extraordinar nowmer and monyfauld abuses of officiaris of Armes” [1587 cap. 46].

The Lyon King of Arms Act of 1592 – “Act Concerning the Office of Lyoun Kingof-Armes and his brether Herauldis” [1592 cap. 125; fol. edit cap. 29 (Jac. VI)].

This Act was passed to deal with a particular abuse, which was stated in the preamble of the Act – “... *the great abuse that has been among the lieges of this realm in their bearing of arms usurping to themselves such arms as belong not unto them so that it cannot be distinguished by their arms who are gentleman by blood by their ancestors. Nor yet may it be discerned what gentlemen are descended of noble stock and lineage*” (Quoted in modern English).

The Lyon King of Arms Act of 1662 – “Act in favours of the Lord Lyon King-at-Arms” [1662 cap. 53 (Car. II.)]. This Act was also passed to remedy an abuse, reaffirm the *Act of 1592* and add some more specific measures, amongst them an explicit authorization to Lyon to “give arms to virtuous and well deserving persons”.

The Lyon King of Arms Act of 1663 – “Act rescinding a former Act past in the last Session of Parliament, anent some fees acclaimed as due to the Lord Lyon’s Office” [1663 cap. 15 (Car. II.)].

The Lyon King of Arms Act of 1672 – “Act concerning the Privileges of the Office of Lyon King-at-Arms” [1672 cap. 21; fol. edit., cap. 47 (Car. II.)].

The Act of the British Parliament of 1867 – “An Act to regulate the Court and Office of the Lyon King of Arms in Scotland, and Emoluments of Officers of the same” [1867, cap. 17 (Victoria)]. This Act mainly reorganized the Court and set the salaries of the Scottish officers of arms.

⁸ Innes of Learney, Sir Thomas, *Scots Heraldry*, Edinburgh: 9 Oliver and Boyd, 1956 (2nd edition), page 10.

LETTERS PATENT & EXTRACTS OF MATRICULATION



Figure 1: Letters Patent for William Stanley Strachan

Letters Patent is a title deed issued by the Crown or his majesty's appointee. As it pertains to heraldry, the Lord Lyon King of Arms issues Letters Patent illustrating the grantee's arms, and if applicable, their genealogy. The Lord Lyon exercises royal prerogative, which means he speaks on behalf of the Crown. This title deed to the Arms, or letters patent, is written in a formal script on vellum in full colour, and sealed with the Seal of the Lord Lyon King of Arms.



Figure 2: Lord Lyon, King of Arms. Dr Joseph Morrow (2023)

“Apart from the requirement that the petitioner should be, in terms of the Lyon King of Arms Act 1672, a “*virtuous and well- deserving person*”, in general, the governing factor in the case of an original Grant of Arms is the domicile of the petitioner or the ownership of property in

Scotland. Does the petitioner have a Scottish domicile of origin? If not, has he acquired a Scottish domicile of choice? In cases where the petitioner's claim to fall within the jurisdiction of the Lord Lyon rests on the ownership of property the key question is whether the petitioner is able to reside on the land. A dwelling house of whatever size presents no problem, but the ownership of forestry land or "amenity" land on which there is no house and for which planning permission for a house would not be obtainable would not necessarily be sufficient to bring the owner into the Lord Lyon's jurisdiction.

The ownership of "souvenir" plots of land of a few square feet or thereby such as are marketed from time to time, is insufficient to bring anyone within the jurisdiction of the Lord Lyon King of Arms.

Where the petitioner is seeking to matriculate off a previous Grant of Arms he or she will have to prove his relationship to the original grantee and show that s/he comes within the destination of the original Grant of Arms. It does not matter where she or he is domiciled.

Those domiciled in England, Wales or Northern Ireland should approach the College of Arms in London, while those domiciled in the Republic of Ireland should approach the Chief Herald of Ireland in Dublin. Commonwealth citizens, in particular those of Scottish descent - save for Canada and South Africa which have their own heraldic authorities - can apply to the Lord Lyon King of Arms."⁹

Petitioners from foreign countries

It is not generally possible for non-British citizens to be granted Scottish Arms. However, there are work arounds and exceptions. It is sometimes possible for a cousin who is domiciled in Scotland to seek a Grant of Arms with a destination which includes the other descendants of a common ancestor, provided that ancestor had also been domiciled in Scotland.

The Court of the Lord Lyon is a court of law, and applications for Arms are made by a formal "Petition". This is done on the initiative of the person wishing to obtain Arms, who submits a Petition to the Lord Lyon stating who s/he is and asking for Arms to be granted to her/him. The process is not complicated. There are four main varieties of Petition:

- Petition for a new Grant of Arms
- Petition for a Grant of Arms to an Ancestor
- Petition for a Matriculation of Arms
- Petition for a Grant of Arms to a Company.

⁹ Court of the Lord Lyon website. Coat of Arms. Accessed 11 February 2024. Available Online: <https://courtofthelordlyon.scot/coats%20of%20arms.htm>



Figure 3: Arms of John Strachan, an ancestor of James Andrew Strachan

American Colonial Descendants

If you are a male descendant of an American Colonial, you *may be* eligible to apply for arms in Scotland at the Court of the Lord Lyon, as America was under the jurisdiction of the British Crown prior to September 1783.

You must meet the same criteria for eligibility as subjects of the Crown and record a pedigree showing their descent from a subject of the British Crown in the official Lyon Register.

- You must be a descendant of a colonial ancestor living in the colonies before the recognition of American independence in 1783.
- You must bear *the same surname of this ancestor – spelling broadly defined*. This is almost always a male ancestor, as surnames historically pass through the male line.
- You must provide a genealogical report supporting your claims. It is highly recommended that this report be provided by a certified genealogist.
- The genealogical evidence provided in the report must be satisfactory to the Lord Lyon King of Arms.

Once you have the above documents you can petition the Lord Lyon for a grant of arms in memory of that ancestor and next matriculate those arms, suitably differenced for yourself.



The recognition of colonial ancestor is subject to change at any time, and at the prerogative of the Lord Lyon King of Arms. *It is wise to obtain a written confirmation of acceptability from the Court of the Lord Lyon prior to submitting a petition, paying a Lodging Fee, or conducting expensive research.*

Residents and Citizens of the Commonwealth of Nations

The **Commonwealth of Nations**, normally referred to as **the Commonwealth** and formerly known as the **British Commonwealth**. All but two of these countries (Mozambique and Rwanda) were formerly part of the British Empire, out of which it developed. There are 54 Member States in the Commonwealth Secretariat including: Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, The Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Canada, Cyprus, Dominica, Fiji Islands, The Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Kiribati, Lesotho, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, *Mozambique*, Namibia, Nauru, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua new Guinea, *Rwanda*, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Vanuatu, and Zambia.¹⁰

Generally speaking, those born in or legal residents of a country in the Commonwealth (e.g., subjects of the British Crown) would be eligible to petition the Court of the Lord Lyon for a New Grant of Arms *without having to prove descent from a Scottish Ancestor*.

As a result, many **Australians** today prefer to petition for Scottish Arms rather than English Arms. The only real restriction might be in the instance of an individual residing in a Country that already has a Heraldic Authority authorised by the British Crown. For example,

- ✓ **England, Wales and Northern Ireland** – College of Arms in London.¹¹
- ✓ **Canada** - In the late 1980s, the Queen issued Letters Patent creating the Canadian Heraldic Authority.¹²
- ✓ **South Africa** – Bureau of Heraldry established in 1962/63.

Residents and citizens of the above-referenced nations wishing to obtain Scottish Arms rather than Arms in their native country should draft a letter to the Court of the Lord Lyon asking for a preliminary determination that their petition would be accepted. In most cases, it would be unlikely that the Petition would be accepted.

¹⁰ Following the decisions taken by the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group on 31 July 2009, Fiji Islands was suspended from membership of the Commonwealth on 1 September 2009.

¹¹ <http://www.internationalheraldry.com/national.htm#england>

¹² <http://www.internationalheraldry.com/national.htm#canada>

Sample Forms of Petition

Sample forms of petition can be found on the Court of the Lord Lyon's leaflet No. 4.¹³

All statements made in Petitions must be accompanied by legal proof, usually Certificates of Birth and Marriage for statements of parentage and ancestry. It is the Petitioner's responsibility to provide this proof. Petitioners may employ their own genealogists to provide the proof. Petitioners requiring assistance in preparing the Petition may write to the Lyon Clerk at the Court of the Lord Lyon stating their requirements and objectives.

Advice on any special difficulties or matters not covered can be obtained by writing to the Lyon Clerk:

Court of the Lord Lyon,
HM New Register House,
Edinburgh, EH1 3YT

All completed Petitions should be sent to the above address, including original or certified copies of all supporting genealogical or other documents. All such correspondence is
CONFIDENTIAL.

Petitions are considered in the order in which they are lodged with the Lyon Clerk, who checks the papers to ensure all is in order. The Petition is laid before the Lord Lyon, who, if willing to grant the Petition, discusses the design of the Arms with the Petitioner or Agent.

Petitioners are welcome to submit a suggested design along with the Petition, or to suggest ideas that they would like the Lord Lyon to consider within the design. However, there is absolutely no need to do this and a great many Petitioners do not do so. The Lord Lyon designs the Arms which are to be granted. In doing so, he considers the many rules and traditions of Scottish heraldry and ensures that each design is unique. So far as possible, he tries to meet the wishes of the Petitioner, but it should be understood that there is no certainty that the Lord Lyon will be able to adopt all or even parts of any design that is submitted. In arriving at a design, the Lord Lyon endeavours to ensure that the Petitioner is happy with the final result.

Once the design has been agreed, the Lord Lyon composes the verbal description of the Arms known as the 'blazon' and grants a warrant authorising Letters Patent to be prepared. The Petition then goes to the Lyon Clerk, who drafts the text of the Letters Patent or Extract of Matriculation and sends this to the Petitioner for approval. The Petitioner will also be asked if additional decoration or artwork is desired, for example the coats of arms of all the Heralds and Pursuivants in Ordinary, is requested, for which an additional charge will be made.

Payment is then made. The Lyon Clerk places the work before the herald painters who prepare the Letters Patent or Extract of Matriculation on vellum and also enter the arms into the Public

¹³ https://courtofthelordlyon.scot/index.htm_files/formsofpetition042011.pdf

Register of All Arms and Bearings in Scotland. When the document is complete, it is sealed, and Letters Patent are signed by the Lord Lyon whilst Extracts are signed by the Lyon Clerk. A similar process is followed in the case of a Petition for a Matriculation from an existing grant of Arms.

Procurator Fiscal

Once Arms have been granted and recorded in the Public Register of All Arms and Bearings in Scotland, they are protected under the law of Scotland. Any infringement of a person's armorial rights in Scotland may be drawn to the attention of the Procurator Fiscal to the Court of the Lord Lyon, who may mount any necessary prosecution of the offender.

In return for this permanent legal protection and for the maintenance of the permanent registration of Arms in the Court of the Lord Lyon a fee is charged to the Petitioner. The fee is made up of Government dues, Herald Painter's fees, and costs of materials in preparing the Petitioner's Letters Patent.

Probably one of the most covered in the Scottish media is a November 2007 incident where Donald Trump's £1 billion golf resort in Aberdeenshire had failed to register a shield displaying the Trump name along with a spear-wielding fist above a knight's helmet on a shield of lions and chevrons. It is understood to have been designed by 'The Donald' himself. Unfortunately, the display violated the 1672 statute passed by an Act of Parliament requiring him to register the Arms with the Lyon Court. Although the court did not fine, then, "Mr. Trump," he was forced to remove all stationery, flags, and other collateral materials displaying the shield until he duly registered the Arms, which were eventually granted.

Schedule of Fees

For a petition to be considered, the petitioner must submit a **Lodging Fee**, which is non-refundable. If the petition is granted by the Lord Lyon, the Lodging Fee will be deducted from the final charges owed (i.e., the Exchequer Dues).

The Exchequer Dues (or fees) to obtain your Arms are fixed by Statute and increase from time to time. The fees are posted on the Court of the Lord Lyon's website.

As of February 2024, for a new grant of Arms, the lodging fee is £450. The Exchequer Dues for a private individual (Shield, Crest, Motto, and without Supporters) totals £3,075. Subtracted from this amount would be the Lodging Fee.

Territorial Designations

A Territorial Designation is used to distinguish landholders living in the same geographic area and bearing the same surname from each other. Each landholder is known by his/her "property"

name, i.e., a ‘personal’ territorial designation as opposed to a ‘hereditary’ territorial designation. This practice eventually was recognised in Scots law in the Act of 1672.¹⁴

It is also necessary to understand the important legal difference between the words ‘of’, ‘in’ and ‘at’ when associating Scottish surnames and place names. These are significant in relation to land tenure or residency. ‘Of’, meant the person named owned a heritable interest in the land, ‘In’ signified a tenant, and ‘At’ signified temporary residence in a place.¹⁵

It should also be noted, that “Though one may call themselves anything they wish in Scotland, the ‘of’ in a name would indicate a noble title and therefore to be recognised by the Crown must be approved by Lyon Court”.¹⁶

A person granted a territorial designation by the Lord Lyon would be known, for example, as Roddy Strachan of Benholm. Alternatively, you may refer to the grantee as ‘Benholm.’

On 5 January 2010, David Sellar, Lord Lyon King of Arms issued the following guidance regarding Territorial Designations:

*A territorial designation proclaims a relationship with a particular area of land. The classic case where a territorial designation is appropriate, where recognition is sought from the Lord Lyon in connection with a Petition for Arms or for change of name, is where there is ownership of a substantial area of **land to which a well-attested name attaches**, that is to say, ownership of an “estate”, or farm or, at the very least, a house with policies **extending to five acres** or thereby, outwith a burgh. In such a case recognition of a territorial designation should not present a problem. Nor should there be a difficulty when a new owner obtains possession of the named property.*

Difficulty may arise, however, when a new owner has bought property to which no generally recognised name attaches. In such a case some years of ownership under a suitable name would seem appropriate before a territorial designation can be recognised. In this last case there will usually be a residence on the property, or the possibility of obtaining planning permission for such a residence.

If you sell the property, you and your heirs may lose the right to use your ‘personal’ territorial designation. It appears that for the territorial designation to become a permanent (heritable) part

¹⁴ Seton, George, *The Law and Practice of Heraldry in Scotland*, Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1863, Appendix IV, page 499.

¹⁵ Peter A. MacRae, “The Macraes of Strathglass”, www.yacc-uk.freemove.co.uk/macrae/strath3.htm, London 1998.

¹⁶ (a) Frank Adam’s *The Clans, Septs, and Regiments of the Scottish Highlands*, revised by Sir Thomas Innes of Learney, Edinburgh: Johnston and Bacon, 1970 (8th Edition), page 403.

(b) Sir Thomas Innes of Learney’s *The Tartans of the Clans and Families of Scotland*, Edinburgh: Johnston and Bacon, 1971 (8th Edition), page 33.

of the surname after the property has been sold, the property must have been held by the family for at least three generations or about 81 to 100 years.¹⁷

For more information, please refer to the Society of Scottish Armigers, Leaflet No. 20, written by Donald Draper Campbell.¹⁸

Rank of an Armiger

According to the Court of Session (15 July 2009) in a case between (FIRST) THE MUCH HONOURED STEPHEN PENDARIES KERR OF ARDGOWAN; (SECOND) EUR ING DAVID AYRE OF KILMARNOCK, BARON OF KILMARNOCK; and (THIRD) MARTIN STEPHEN JAMES GOLDSTRAW OF WHITECAIRNS vs. ROBIN BLAIR ESQ., THE LORD LYON KING OF ARMS – in a decision delivered by Lord Marnoch cites in section [9] the 2nd edition of *Scots Heraldry* at p.198, Innes of Learney, Lord Lyon writes:

“The name in which a person is granted arms is, however, a ‘name of dignity’ (i.e., of the dignity of Gentleman) and in the nature of a “title” if it comprehends a feudal designation.”

Therefore, a **Scottish Armiger is recognised under Scottish heraldic law as within the non-Peerage rank of Gentleman or Gentlewoman** in the Precedence of Scotland¹⁹, which is so recognised under Scots law as a social dignity unless the Armiger holds a higher rank.

¹⁷ Skene, William Forbes, *Celtic Scotland: A History of Ancient Alban*, (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1890), Volume III (Land and People), page 175. “Nine times nine years.”

¹⁸ www.scotarmigers.net/pdfs/information-leaflet-20-Territorial-Designations.pdf

¹⁹ <http://www.debretts.com/forms-of-address/hierarchies/precedence-gentlemen-scotland.aspx>

THE FULL ACHIEVEMENT & PARTS THEREOF

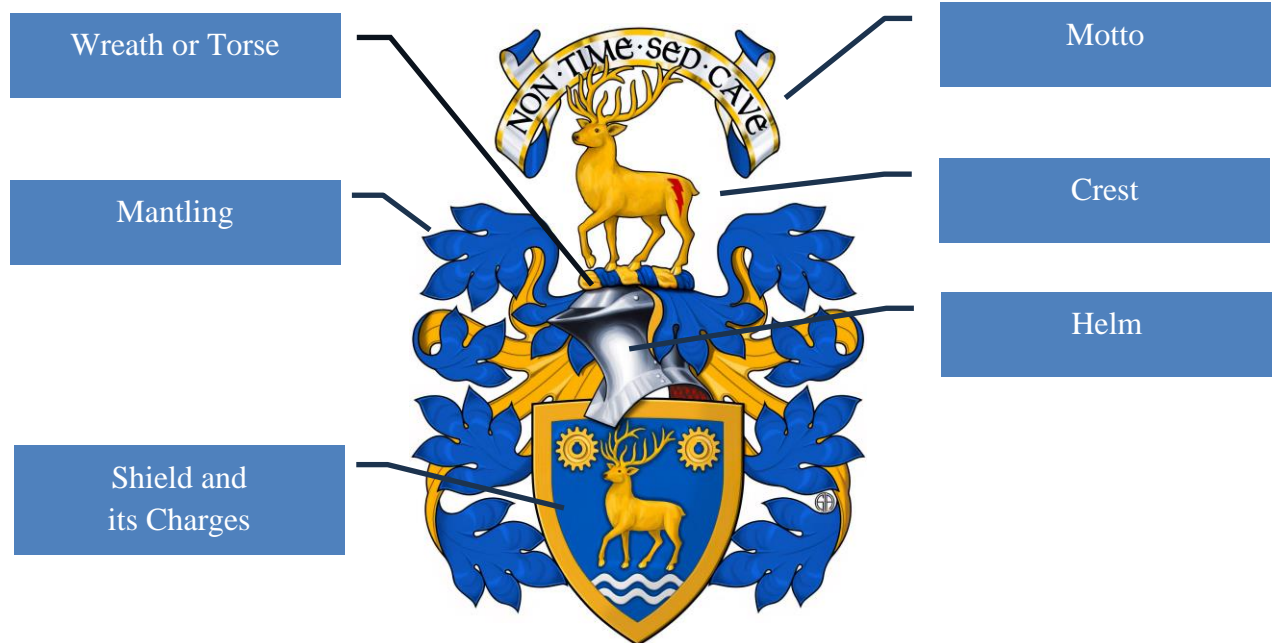


Figure 4: Arms of James Andrew Strachan

The first point that should be made about heraldry is that there is no such thing as a “*Family Coat of Arms*,” a “*clan motto*”, or a “*clan crest badge*.” This is a form of marketing used by the “Heraldry for Sale” bucket shops and websites that are becoming a common sight, both on the internet and at highland games all over the world.






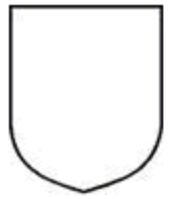














Armorial bearings, which is a more formal description of a coat of arms, are, at least in Scotland, the personal property of one person only. Displaying arms that are not registered to you, or which you do not have a right to, can lead to prosecution in countries such as Scotland, where heraldry is carefully regulated. In other countries you could just look foolish.

A basic “coat of arms,” technically called an “Achievement,” consists of, at a minimum, an armorial design borne on a shield or a flag. Along with the shield, the armiger’s armorial bearings may also contain one or more of the following elements: motto, crest, wreath and helmet. Additionally, in some circumstances, an armiger may also be entitled to one or more of the following: crest coronet, coronet of rank, chapeau, supporters, compartment, family or personal badges, and insignia of orders of chivalry or office.

Tinctures (Metals), Colours, Stains, and Furs

As a general rule, if the ground or field of a shield is in metal, the charges on it are in colour, and vice versa. Simply, it is generally not permitted to put a metal on a metal, or a colour on a colour.

Common Strachan tinctures are Azure (blue), Or (gold), and Gules (red).

Colors				
				
Gules (Red)	Azure (Blue)	Vert (Green)	Sable (Black)	Purple (Purple)
Metals		Stains		
				
Argent (Silver)	Or (Gold)	Tenné(Orange)	Sanguine (Blood)	Murrey (Mulberry)
Furs				
				
Ermine	Ermines	Erminois	Pean	Papellone
				
Vair	Countervair	Potent	Counterpotent	Plumeté

The Shield

The Shield is the foundation of all arms; without it, nothing else can exist. The shield can have many shapes. They vary from a plain circle to a rectangular cartouch or a flag of many proportions. When heraldry became “paper” heraldry, when warriors no longer used shields to protect themselves, the artist added new forms of shields. Today, the shield used by most males is the “Heater Shield,” so named after the base of a flat iron, while women, who can be armigers in their own right, use either an oval escutcheon or the more traditional lozenge.²⁰

For convenience, the shield is divided into eleven parts, which are called as follows:

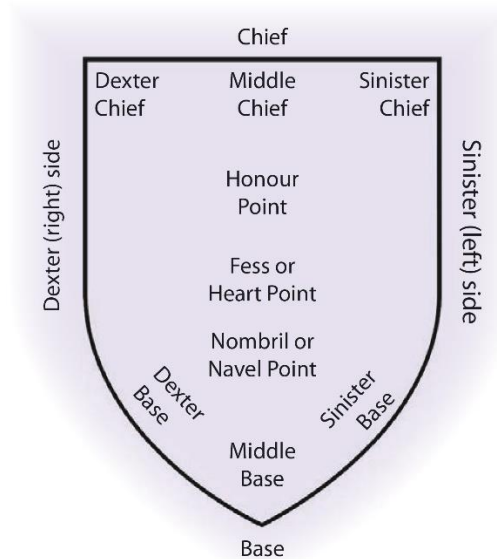


Figure 5: Parts of the Shield

It is illegal for the clansman to misappropriate the chief’s shield. Instead, clansfolk are encouraged to display the chief’s crest badge, discussed below.

The Motto

The Motto consists of a word or phrase placed upon a ribbon or scroll and is generally considered a part of every normal heraldic achievement. It is an aphorism,²¹ the interpretation of which is often obscure and known only to the armiger who adopted it. The motto may be in any language. In the past, Latin has been favoured, but today, we find mottos in several languages – Latin, English, Gaelic as well as others. In Scots heraldry, the motto is normally placed above the shield and crest, but may also be found below the shield. The most common example of this is on

²⁰ In general, the shape of the shield used is of no significance. In the past the arms of women were generally displayed on oval cartouches or lozenges, but even here, the arms of males can be found on these shapes in the medieval artwork. Today we find that women’s arms are being displayed on heater shields.

²¹ **Aphorism** – a terse saying embodying a general truth.

the achievement of a Clan Chief who may have one motto above the crest, and a second motto across the bottom of the compartment on which his supporters are standing.

To confirm, there is no such thing as a *Clan Motto*. The motto belongs to the armiger, and the armiger has significant discretion in this area. This has been confused over time, whereas the only statement held by the entire clan is the ‘War Cry.’ Equally, it is the opinion of the author that it would be inappropriate for a new grantee to usurp the Clan War Cry as their Motto.

The first recorded motto for Strachan family is in about 1596. Sir Alexander Strachan of Thornton, 1st Baronet of Nova Scotia, has his Arms inscribed on the tower at Thornton Castle. The motto being, “*Constant ♦et ♦Fidel*” or “*Constant and Faithful.*”



Figure 6: Thornton Castle, Tower, Arms of Sir Alexander Strachan, 1st Baronet (1596)

Other mottos used by Strachans over time include:

- (a) ***Non Timeo Sed Caveo***, first recorded by Strachan of Glenkindie in 1675. Later the motto was adopted by Sir John STRACHAN of Inchtuthill, whose family inherited (debatably usurped) the barony of Thornton and Baronetcy of Nova Scotia through a very remote collateral succession. About 24 years after acquiring the barony, the family sold Thornton and appears to have relocated to London, England.
- (b) ***Juvat Deus Impigros***, Alexander Strachan of Tarrie (1739)
- (c) ***Forward***, by William Strachan, Councillor-at-law, Baronet of Nova Scotia (1756)
- (d) ***Respice Finem***, Michael Francis Strachan, CBE, FRSE (1964)
- (e) ***Non Time Sed Cave***, James Andrew Strachan, MBA, FSAScot (2009); and later the Clan Strachan Scottish Heritage Society, Inc.

- (f) *Aye Haud Gaunn*, The Much Honoured Roderick, Baron of Benholm (2013)
(g) *Sic Itur Ad Astra*, James Andrew (Drew) Strachan (2013)

The Crest and Crest Badge

Crests developed from the fan-shaped ridge along the top of some helmets, which was designed to temper a blow. This ridge came to be painted with the wearer's arms. This form of embellishment was superseded by sculptured devices in the form of animals or other objects which were usually made from light wood or moulded leather. The crest is generally considered a part of every normal heraldic achievement and, according to Stevenson²², with the exception of the Queens Regnant, no *ladies* were entitled to bear a crest. Today, however, in Scotland, a woman will be granted a crest along with her arms if she petitions for one. She can also inherit a crest. When a grant is made "*For and In Memory of an ancestor*", the Lord Lyon, Robin Orr Blair, did not grant a crest to the ancestor. In the past, Lyons Sir Thomas Innes of Learney, James Montieth Grant and Sir Malcolm Rognvald Innes of Edingight did grant crest to the ancestor. This seems to be an area of discretion reserved by the Lord Lyon.

"When a person has recorded Arms and Crest in the Lyon Register, it is strictly NOT open to anyone else of the same surname to use his Crest. This is an infringement of the owner's legal rights, for which he may ask the Procurator Fiscal of the Court of the Lord Lyon to prosecute the offender. Ownership of Arms and Crest is PERSONAL, and is NOT extended to others of the same surname."²³ The only exception is for clansfolk to wear their Chief's Crest Badge. Please, refer to the chapter "*The Use of Feathers & Badges*" below.

*"Although the Crest Badge is purchased by and is therefore owned by the clansman, the heraldic Crest and Motto on it belong to the Chief [or Armiger] and NOT to the clansman. They are the Chief's [or Armiger's] exclusive heraldic property, which the clansman is only thus permitted to wear. It is illegal for the clansman to misappropriate the Chief's Crest and Motto for any other use of his own, such as decorating his own silver, dinner plates, coffee cups, writing paper or signet ring, which anyway would mean that these articles belonged to the Chief who is the owner of the Crest and Motto on them. Clan Societies, Officials, and clansmen who have reason to use the Crest Badge on stationery should add beneath it the words "**Crest Badge of a member of the Clan,**" to make it clear that the Crest Badge is not being misappropriated by the Clan Society or official involved. It is the Crest Badge of ALL clansmen, whether members of Clan*

²² Stevenson, John Horne, *Heraldry in Scotland, including a recension of 'The law and practice of heraldry in Scotland,' by the late George Seton, advocate*. Glasgow: J. Maclehose and sons, 1914. (2 volumes), page 181.

²³ Court of the Lord Lyon, Leaflet No. 2. Crest Badges. The Society of Scottish Armigers.
www.scotarmigers.net/pdfs/info-leaflet-2.pdf

Societies or not, and non-members of the clan society or association may not be excluded if they are clansmen.”²⁴

As indicated above, clansfolk may choose to wear the Crest Badge of their chief as an outward demonstration of affection and loyalty. The Crest Badge is always made of silver and set within a circular belt and buckle, with the motto of the armiger inscribed upon the belt. It is not proper that the Crest Badge be coloured, or have inscribed below it the associated surname.



Figure 7: Strachan of Thornton Crest Badge

The Wreath or Torse



Between the crest and the helmet usually appears a wreath of twisted cloth, showing alternate twists of the owner's Livery Colours. The wreath is derived from strips of cloth that were twisted together then attached to cover the joint between the helm and the crest. Fox-Davies in *The Art of Heraldry*, states that “As always officially painted [in Scot's Grants] it must consist of six links alternately of metal and colour (the “livery colours of the arms), of which the metal must be the first to be shown to the dexter side”.²⁵ There are cases in the past where there are more or less than six links and only one colour or more than two. Today, it is regarded as absolute that the wreath consisted of six twists in the Livery colours.

Crests normally issue from *wreaths*, but there are exceptions. For example, some Scots clan chiefs and old English families use *crest-coronets* (or a crown).²⁶ In the case of the Clan Strachan Society, it is blazoned, “*Crest issuant from a celestial crown Purpure.*” This is meant to represent the Royal Deeside.



²⁴ Court of the Lord Lyon, Leaflet No. 2. Crest Badges. The Society of Scottish Armigers. www.scotarmigers.net/pdfs/info-leaflet-2.pdf

²⁵ Fox-Davies, Arthur Charles, *A Complete Guide to Heraldry*, New York: Bonanza Books, 1978 (Reprint of the 1909 ed. published by Dodge Pub. Co., New York), page 406, line 24.

²⁶ <https://archive.org/details/simpleheraldrych0000donp/page/58/mode/1up>

The Chapeau:

A velvet cap lined with fur, indicative of feudo-baronial rank. The owner of a barony will be given a chapeau or cap of maintenance as part of his armorial achievement *if requested*. This is described as “gules (red) doubled ermine” for most barons in possession of the *caput* (the “head” of the barony, the estate, or land) of the barony. An azure (blue) chapeau is awarded to the heirs of ancient baronial families who are no longer in possession of the fief (estate).



The Mantling:

The mantling is the cloth cape, suspended from the top of the helmet and hanging down the wearer’s back to shield him from the heat of the sun. Specific forms of colouring have been assigned. Peers and certain of the Officers of State: outside - crimson, lining - ermine; and all others since 9 July 1891 (primarily Gules doubled Argent): outside – principal “colour” of arms; lining – principal metal [the Livery Colours].²⁷

The Helmet

Specific forms have been assigned to the following ranks: Royal, Peers, Knights and Baronets, Feudal Barons, Esquires and Gentlemen.²⁸ Today, the distinction between the helmet of an Esquire and a Gentleman has been dropped. At one time, the direction the helmet faced was restricted by rank as well, but this restriction was abolished during the 20th century.

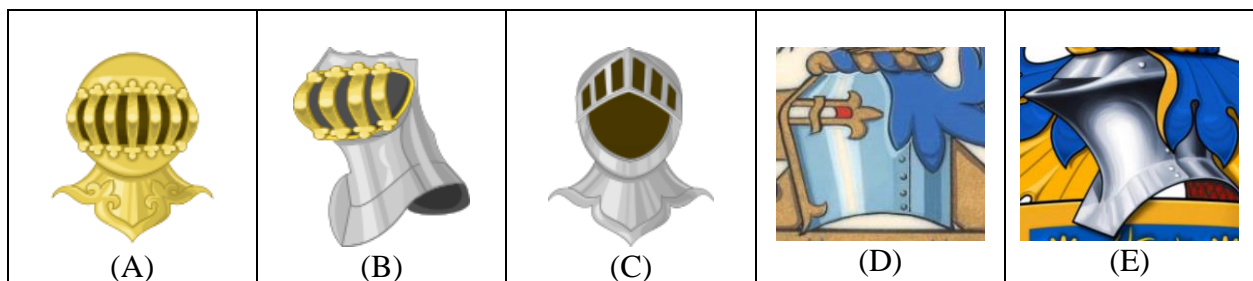


Figure 8: Types of Helms

²⁷ Innes of Learney, Sir Thomas, *Scots Heraldry*, 2nd edition, Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1956, page 30.

²⁸ Innes of Learney, Sir Thomas, *Scots Heraldry*, 2nd edition, Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1956, page 29.

<p><i>The King and Royal Princes (A)</i></p> <p>Gold, always shown <i>affronte</i>, full face, the facial opening guarded by grills or bars</p>
<p><i>Peers (i.e., nobility) (B)</i></p> <p>Silver, with gold grill (usually four grills) and gold-garnished.</p>
<p><i>Knights and Baronets (C)</i></p> <p>Steel, open visor, no grill, <i>or</i> great tilting-helm (they are being of “tournament rank”), steel garnished with gold, where the normal open-visored helmet is incongruous.</p>
<p><i>Feudal Barons (D)</i></p> <p>The great tilting-helm garnished with gold (they being of “tournament rank”), <i>or</i> steel helmet with grill of one or three grills, garnished with gold, but the tilting-helm is most used.</p>
<p><i>Esquires and Gentlemen (E)</i></p> <p><i>Esquires</i> – Steel “pot” helm, or helmet with closed visor garnished with gold. <i>Gentlemen</i> – Steel, pot, closed visor, ungarnished</p>

According to Iain Moncrieffe; Don Pottinger (1953), *Simple Heraldry Cheerfully Illustrated*, Scottish clan chiefs are entitled to a *steel tournament helm*, so illustrated below: ²⁹

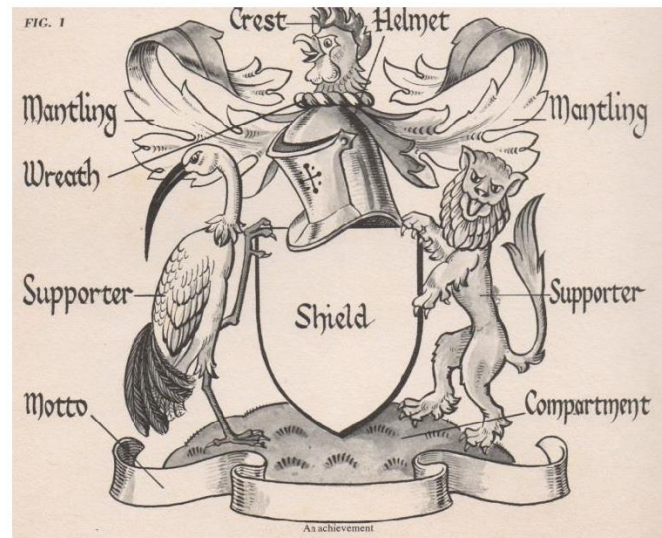


Figure 9: Steel Tournament Helm

²⁹ <https://archive.org/details/simpleheraldrych0000donp/page/58/mode/1up>

Supporters

Additaments, usually human or animal figures placed on either side of a shield as though holding it. The Lord Lyon does not have the privilege of making discretionary grants of supporters. He does have the right to determine if a claimant of supporters has the right to bear them. There are two flavours of Supporters – hereditary and life.



The hereditary community consists of:

- *Royals and hereditary Peers*;
- *Ancient usage*: Those private gentlemen and the lawful heirs of their bodies who can prove immemorial usage of carrying supporters long before the *Act of 1672*.
- *Barons* – Barons owning baronies erected after 1587 or acquiring baronies by purchase are not entitled to supporters.
- *Chiefs of the Name and Arms* – Clan chiefs whose lineage predates the *Act of 1587* are entitled to the use of supporters, as many were either lairds or Barons. Today, the Lord Lyon is recognising the chiefs of those post-1587 clans, and has granted many, but not all, of those chiefs the right to hereditary supporters.
- *Others* - Lord Lyon has retained the right to grant hereditary supporters to appropriate persons and their heirs.³⁰

Baronets, although holding a hereditary title, do not have a right to use of supporters.

The life community consists of:

- *Life Peers and Peeresses*

³⁰ Seton, George, *The Law and Practice of Heraldry in Scotland*, Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1863, page 284.

- *Crown recognised Orders of Chivalry, Senior level Knights.*

Note: ***Knight Bachelor*** is a part of the British honours system. It refers to a man who has been knighted by the monarch but not as a member of one of the organised Orders of Chivalry (not entitled to supporters). Knights Bachelor are styled “Sir”, and are not entitled to use post-nominal letters after their name.

Any questions regarding eligibility for Supporters should be forwarded to the Court of the Lord Lyon.

Differencing and Marks of Cadency

In Scotland Arms are heritable property, and on their original owner’s death they descend to his heir, normally his eldest son, and in turn to his eldest son, and so on forever. A younger brother may inherit his father’s Arms if the elder brother dies first and leaves no heirs of his own.

Otherwise, younger sons and their descendants inherit only the right to apply for a Matriculation of their ancestral Arms with a “MARK OF DIFFERENCE” or “A DIFFERENCE” added to them.

An important distinction here, is that a blood family member of the chief will have one mark of difference. Whereas, an armiger unrelated by blood will be required to have at least two marks of differencing.

There are many methods by which the order of seniority of a family line can be shown in the differences allotted. Two of the most usual methods are set out in the diagram below, the BORDURE most usual in Scottish heraldry, and CADENCY MARKS more usual in England and elsewhere. These two methods, and others, can be and often are combined.

For example, let’s review the following difference systems of cadency:

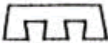


























English System	 First Son Label	 Second Son Crescent	 Third Son Mullet	 Fourth Son Martlet	 Fifth Son Annulet	 Sixth Son Fleur-de-lis	 Seventh Son Rose	 Eighth Son Cross Moline	 Ninth Son Double Quatrefoil
Canadian System	 First Daughter Heart	 Second Daughter Ermine Spot	 Third Daughter Snowflake	 Fourth Daughter Fir Twig	 Fifth Daughter Chess Rook	 Sixth Daughter Escallop	 Seventh Daughter Harp	 Eighth Daughter Buckle	 Ninth Daughter Clarichord
Scottish System	 Illegitimacy Compyony Bordure Azure and Argent	 Second Branch Or (or Chequy) Bordure	 Third Branch Argent (or Chequy) Bordure	 Fourth Branch Gules Bordure	 Fifth Branch Azure Bordure	 Sixth Branch Sable Bordure	 Seventh Branch Vert Bordure	 Eighth Branch Purpure Bordure	 Ninth Branch Tenné Bordure

Figure 10: Systems of Cadency

If we look at Gilbert Strachan of Claypotts, Canon of Aberdeen, his arms (below) include the traditional three cinquefoils in chief, which is popular among the early Strachan seals, particularly the Strachans of Carmyllie, and thought to demonstrate early ancestral links to the Malherbe family who were the Lords of Morham in East Lothian, and also held lands in Angus.³¹



Figure 11: Gilbert Strachan of Claypotts, Canon of Aberdeen

In this particular case, Gilbert is using the English system, a Crescent that distinguishes himself as the second son. He was the younger brother of John Strachan, builder of Claypotts.³²

³¹ Strachan, J.A. House and Barony of Strachan, Second Edition (2022). Pgs 29-31

³² Ross, Susan. Castles of Scotland. Page 57 (1973). Avialable Online:
<https://archive.org/details/castlesofscotland0000ross/page/57/mode/1up?q=Claypotts>

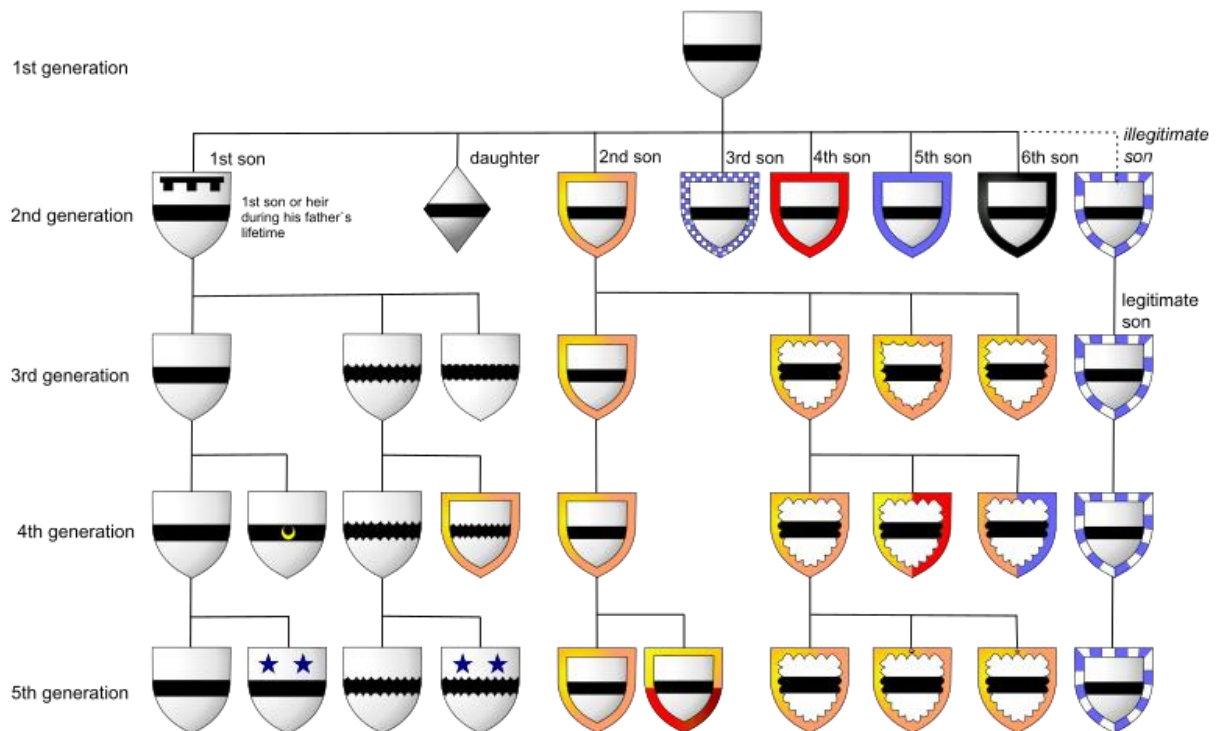


Figure 12: Scottish System of Cadency

The Heir or Confirmee

The next member of an armiger's family with a right to bear their father's arms is the heir (or **Confirmee**); this is the person who will inherit the arms on the death of the armiger, usually the eldest son, unless specified otherwise in the Letters Patent.

The heir has the right to use and display the arms but must display them differenced by a **label of three points**. This label stays on the heir's arms during the lifetime of the holder. This shows that he is the heir and that the holder is still living; the label is simply removed when the heir inherits. The label can be of any design or colour as long as it is clearly visible upon the arms.³³ The label usually sits atop the main achievement on the shield.



Figure 13: Arms of the Heir or Confirmee

³³ Harden of Cowdenknowes, 'Beginners Heraldry', The Heraldry Society of Scotland, <http://www.heraldry-scotland.co.uk/beginners.html>

COMMON STRACHAN CHARGES

In heraldry, a **charge** is any emblem or device occupying the field of an *escutcheon* (shield). Most of the Strachan family today associates the male deer, stag, or buck (heraldic: *hart*) with the Strachan coat of arms. However, foils were equally and arguably more prevalent during the early medieval period.

Between 1672 and 1913, the Lyon Register contained the following STRACHAN entries. All other STRACHAN Arms listed in the “The General Armory of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland” were likely granted or matriculated by the College of Arms in England.

Strachan Armorial Roll	Full Name	Date	Vol.	Page
No. 25	JOHN STRACHAN, Bailzie of Leven	1673	1	421
No. 29	ALEXANDER STRACHAN OF TARRIE	1739	1	215
No. 30	JOHN STRACHAN WHO NOW DESIGNS HIMSELF SIR JOHN STRACHAN, BT.	1740	1	427
No. 31	SIR WILLIAM STRACHAN, BT.	1756	1	217
No. 33	Sir John Strachan	1765	1	
No. 33	Sir John Strachan, Bt.	1766	1	429

The next ‘Strachan’ grant made by the Court of the Lord Lyon after 1766 was until 1964, nearly 200 years later, when Michael Francis Strachan CBE, FRSE filed a petition and was awarded a new Grant of Arms. Upon Michael’s passing, these Arms were inherited by Professor Sir Hew Strachan, laird of Glenhighton.

Regarding Sir John Strachan (no. 33), the second grant in 1766, recognises his entitlement to the Baronetcy of Nova Scotia, which the Inchtuthill cadet line had lost to Sir William Strachan, Bt. some 10 years earlier in 1756.

Traditionally, the Strachan shield is Azure (blue), and the stag or buck is Or (gold).

Stags (Harts)

A common trait to most Strachan arms dating back to the beginning of feudal times is the stag or hart. Beast of game such as stags, bucks, harts (male deer), hares, etc. are carried in arms, not only upon the account of their natural good qualities, but as signs of the bearer's jurisdiction and liberty of hunting in forests and parks; their postures in arms are either *passant*, *tripping*, *standing at gaze*, *courant*, *springing*, and *couchant*.

- ***Passant* or *tripping*** is, when they have their right fore-foot lifted up, and the other three, as it were, on the ground.
- ***Standing at gaze*** is said when these creatures have all four feet on the ground.
- When dears, bucks, harts, etc. are running, they are said to be ***courant***, or ***in full course***.
- When these beasts of game are erect on their hinder feet, they are said to be ***springing*** or ***salient***.
- When they are said to be ***couchant*** or ***lodged***, they are represented lying down.

Then the horns of those creatures are of a different tincture, or colour from their bodies, they are then said to be ***attired***, and the branches of their horns called ***tynes***; and when the hooves are of a different tincture, they are said to be ***unglued***.

As mentioned above, a stag would signify the bearer's jurisdiction and liberty of hunting in forests and parks. Ironically enough, the lands of Strachan were, at one time, held in forest as a Baronial Hunting ground. From Fox-Davies, A Complete Guide to Heraldry, please refer to the following examples below.



FIG. 379.—Stag lodged.



FIG. 380.—Stag trippant.



FIG. 381.—Stag courant.



FIG. 382.—Stag springing.



FIG. 383.—Stag at gaze.



FIG. 384.—Stag statant.



FIG. 385.—Stag's head caboshed.



FIG. 386.—Stag's head erased.



FIG. 387.—Buck's head coupé.



FIG. 388.—Hind.



FIG. 389.—Reindeer.



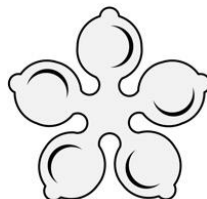
FIG. 390.—Winged stag rampant.

When the stag is facing to the reader's right, it is said, for example, to be, "*to sinister*."³⁴

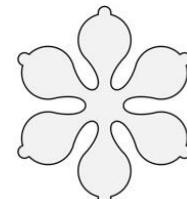
Flowers (Foils)



Quatrefoil
Flower with four petals



Cinquefoil
flower with five petals

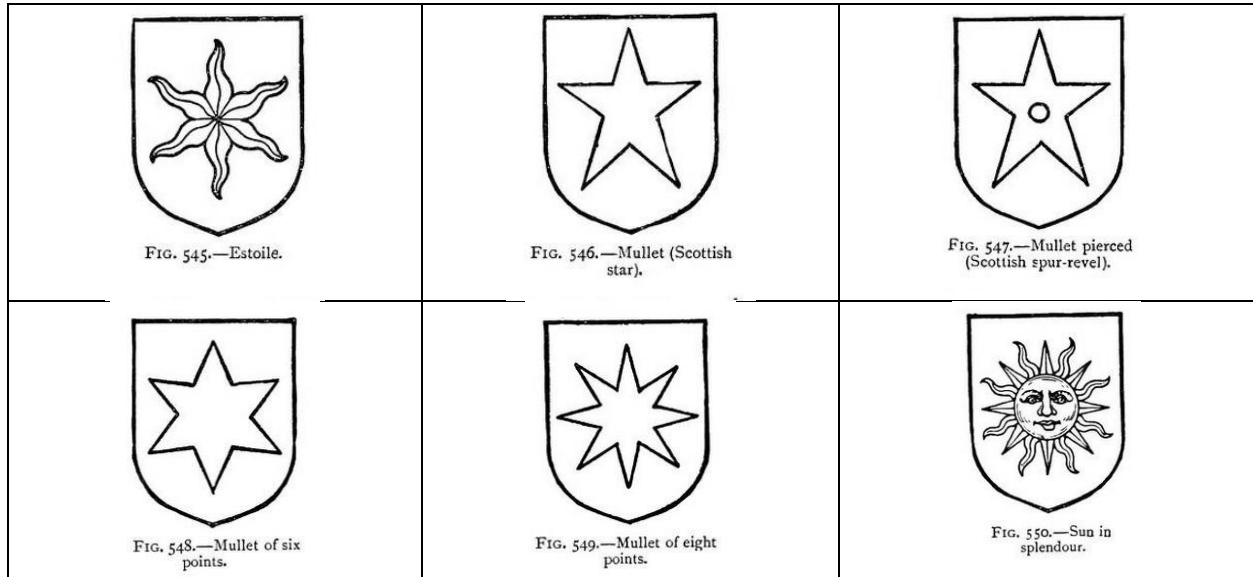


Sexfoil
flower with six petals

³⁴ Fox-Davies, A.C. *A Complete Guide To Heraldry*. Pg 208-9 (1909)
<https://archive.org/details/cu31924029796608/page/208/mode/1up?q=flower>


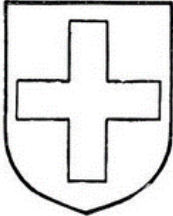
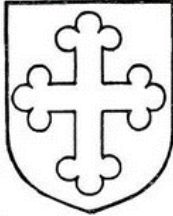
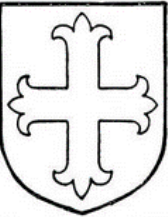



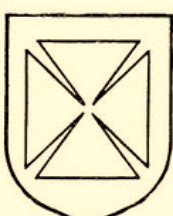

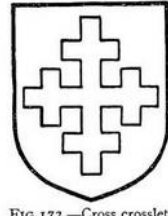
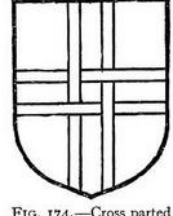

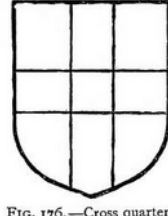


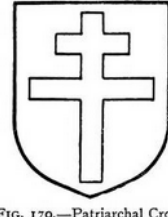
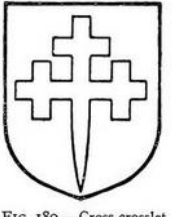

Stars

Stars may be instanced as borne under that name by the Scottish shield of Alston. There has, owing to their similarity, been much confusion between stars, estoiles, and mullets. The difficulty is increased by the fact that no very definite lines have ever been followed officially. When the rays are wavy the charge is termed an **estoile**, but when they are straight the term **mullet** is used. That being so, these rules follow: that the estoile is never pierced (and from the accepted method of depicting the estoile this would hardly seem very feasible), and that unless the number of points is specified there will be six.



The *Sun in Splendour* always so blazoned— is never represented without the surrounding rays, but the human face is not essential though usual to its heraldic use. The rays are alternately straight and wavy, indicative of the light and heat we derive therefrom, a typical piece of genuine symbolism

Crosses

		
FIG. 164.—Crucifix.	FIG. 165.—Cross coupé.	FIG. 166.—Cross bottonny.
		
FIG. 167.—Cross flory.	FIG. 168.—Cross fleuretté.	FIG. 169.—Cross moline.
		
FIG. 170.—Cross potent.	FIG. 171.—Cross patée (or formée).	FIG. 172.—Cross patonce.
		
FIG. 173.—Cross crosslet.	FIG. 174.—Cross parted and fretty.	FIG. 175.—Cross patée quadrate.
		
FIG. 176.—Cross quarter-pierced.	FIG. 177.—Cross Tau.	FIG. 178.—Maltese Cross.
		
FIG. 179.—Patriarchal Cross.	FIG. 180.—Cross crosslet fitché.	FIG. 181.—Cross patée fitché.

The highlighted cross above was used by Hew of Strachan in the Ragmall Roll (1296).

Heraldic Lines

The above lines and ordinaries have often been used to signify a particular career that pertains to one's external environment. For example, the Wavy Line symbol has been used in heraldic art to signify naval service, or a career at sea. It has also been used to denote certain features of one's property. It may also have another special meaning to the armiger.









Heraldic Lines and Ordinaries:	
Nebuly Line 	Clouds or air
Wavy Line 	Sea or water A Barrulet is a thin wavy line
Engrailed Line 	Earth or land
Invected Line 	Earth or land
Indented Line 	Fire
Dancette Line 	Water
Raguly Line 	Difficulties that have been encountered
Embattled Line 	Walls of a fortress or town (also, fire)

Figure 14: Heraldic Lines and Ordinaries

Heraldic Ordinaries

In Heraldry, the way the shield-field is divided would be called an "Ordinary". There are many more ways to section a field than shown here. Below are some of those more commonly used that we consider basic.



Figure 15

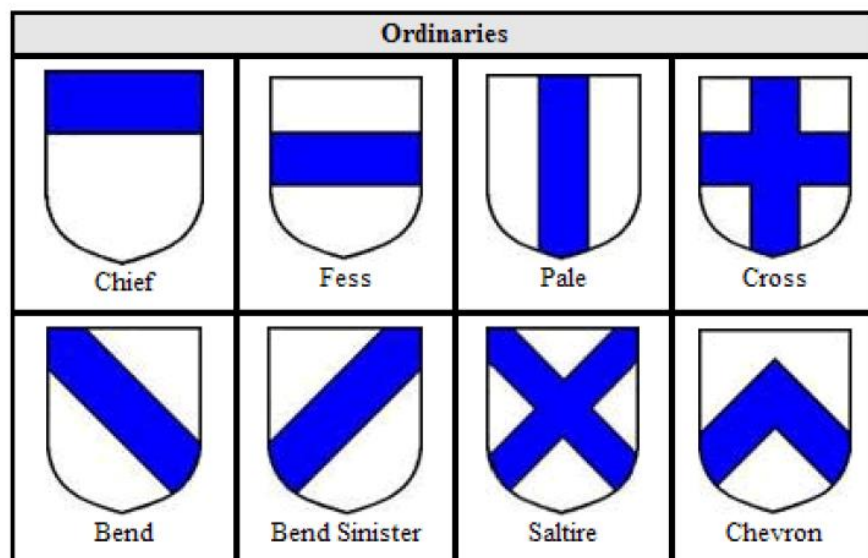


Figure 16

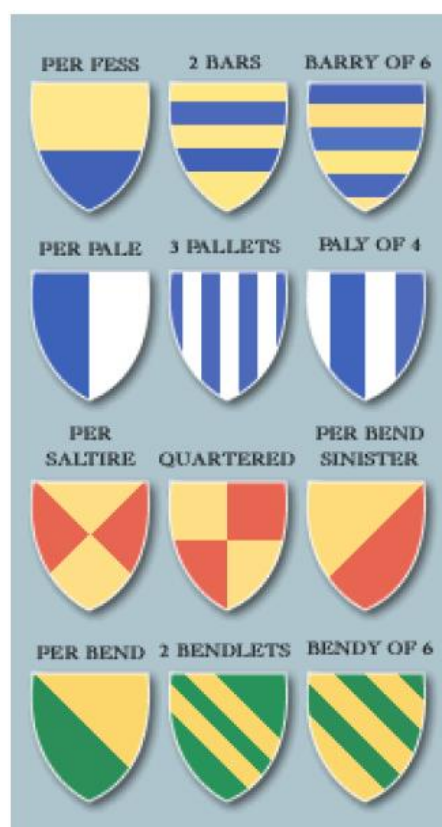


Figure 17

Here is a selection of Ordinaries that are considered complex.

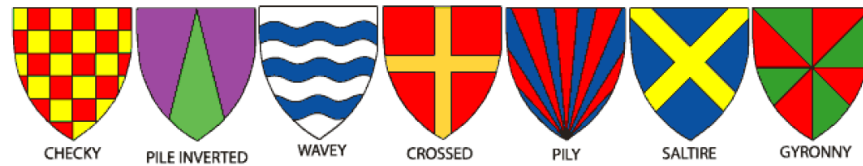


Figure 18

It is not recommended that STRACHAN clansfolk employ a heraldic ordinary if they incorporate a stag on their shield. Heraldic ordinaries require a reduction in the size of the stag and add complexity to the achievement.

THE USE OF FEATHERS & BADGES

The following is an excerpt from the Court of the Lord Lyon, Leaflet No. 2³⁵

Clan Chiefs or Chief of the Name and Arms

Chiefs have the right to wear their Crests as badges either simpliciter, without the accompaniment of circlet, motto or feathers behind the badge. Alternatively, as is more usual, surrounded with a plain circlet inscribed with his Motto or Slogan, NOT a strap-and-buckle which is for clansmen; and, if they choose, with THREE eagle's feathers in silver behind the circlet.



A Chief or Chieftain

Heads of large branches of a Clan, who have been Officially Recognised as Chiefs by the Lord Lyon King of Arms, may wear:

- (a) Either their own personal Crest within a plain circlet inscribed with the Motto, as for a Chief, but with two small eagles' feathers instead of the Chief's three. If the Chieftain is also a Peer, he may add the appropriate coronet of rank on top of the circlet, or
- (b) they may wear their Chief's Crest badge without feather like any other clansman, as described for clansmen, below



Armigers

A person who has registered his or her own coat of Arms and Crest, or inherited these according to the Laws of Arms in Scotland from an ancestor who had recorded them in the Lyon Register, may wear their own Crest as a badge:

- either on its Wreath, Crest Coronet or Chapeau,
- or, as is more usual, within a plain circlet inscribed with his Motto.



An armiger may also choose to wear instead the Crest badge of his Chief if the armiger is a clansman. An armiger is entitled to one silver eagle's feather behind the plain circlet, and if he is also a Peer he may add his appropriate coronet of rank on top of the circlet.

Clansmen and clanswomen

These are the Chiefs relatives, including his own immediate family and even his eldest son, and all members of the extended family called the "Clan", whether bearing the Clan surname or that of one of its septs; that is all those who profess allegiance to that Chief and wish to demonstrate their association with the Clan.



³⁵ www.scotarmigers.net/pdfs/info-leaflet-2.pdf

It is correct for these people to wear their Chief's Crest encircled with a strap and buckle bearing their Chief's Motto or Slogan. The strap and buckle are the sign of the clansman, and he demonstrates his membership of his Chief's Clan by wearing his Chief's Crest within it.

OTHER HELPFUL SOURCES

The following are several links to you might find useful. Additionally, the Clan Strachan Scottish Heritage Society has in its library Nisbet's "System of Heraldry," which offers much more information regarding armorial bearings.

Sources:

- Court of the Lord Lyon
<https://courtofthelordlyon.scot/>
- The Heraldry Society of Scotland
<https://www.heraldry-scotland.co.uk/>
- The Society of Scottish Armigers (Information Leaflets)
<http://www.scotarmigers.net/docs.htm>
- Fox-Davies, A Complete Guide to Heraldry
<https://archive.org/details/completeguidetoh00foxdrich/page/n5/mode/2up>
- "System of Heraldry," Alexander Nisbet. pg 326-327 (stags)
<https://archive.org/details/systemofheraldry01nisbuoft/page/n9/mode/2up>
- Simple Heraldry: Cheerfully Illustrated
<https://archive.org/details/simpleheraldrych0000donp/page/58/mode/2up>
- <http://www.clan-duncan.co.uk/beginners.html>