

# Symbolism in Heraldry

## CHAPTER I - THE LIVING

**ALERION:** An eagle displayed (wings spread) but without beak or claws; denoted one who was injured in a war and thus was prevented from fully asserting his power.

**ANGEL:** According to Dionysius the Areopagite, angels were divided into nine orders: Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones, in the first circle; Dominions, Virtues, and Powers, in the second circle; Principalities, Archangels, and Angels, in the third circle. They denote dignity, glory, virtue and honour; missionary; bearer of joyful intelligence.

**ANT:** Denotes great labour, wisdom, and providence in one's affairs; diligence and industriousness.

**ANTELOPE (heraldic):** A mythical beast with the body of a stag, the tail of a unicorn, a tusk at the tip of the nose, tufts down the back of the neck, chest, and thighs. ; one of the most ferocious of beasts, wild and untameable. Beware to all beholders.

**ANTELOPE:** The word comes from Medieval Latin anthalopus and from Late Greek antholops. It was only the Egyptian elite who was allowed to hunt various species of Antelope and Ibex and considered them magical, and even had amulets made in their shapes. In Heraldry, Antelopes seem to appear more often in the arms of royalty but not exclusively so. The symbol represents action, agility and sacrifice and a very worthy guardian that is not easily provoked, but can be fierce when challenged. In Sumerian mythology, the antelope was both a lunar and solar animal. As a solar creature it was sacred to the God Ea who was sometimes called Ea-Onnes ("the antelope of Apsu and of creation") and the God Marduk. In its lunar form the antelope or gazelle was sacred to the Goddess Astarte. In Egyptian Lore, this animal represented Osiris and Horus, but was also sacred to the Goddess Isis, and it was sacrificed to the desert God Set. In most of Asia Minor the antelope was considered to be a lunar animal and associated with the Great Mother. In India it was an emblem of Shive, the chariots of Chandra.

**ARM (bare):** Signifies a labourious and industrious person.

**ASS:** The ass has enjoyed a marked favour above all other beasts of burden in many ancient countries. In Heraldry times it was the symbol of patience, peace and humility.

**BAT:** Has strong associations with darkness and obscurity, as a creature of the night. In Christian terms, the bat is viewed as "the bird of the devil" an incarnation of the Prince of Darkness. The bat is a symbol of the challenge to release the old and create the new - death and rebirth. They symbolize the facing of fears - entering the dark on the way to the light.

**BEAR:** A creature of enormous strength yet it survives on fruit and fish. Their habit of hibernation during winter months has held the Bear as a symbol of resurrection for hundreds of years. It was the royal emblem for the kingdoms of Persia and Russia, and the Celts considered the Bear the symbol of the great warrior; it is associated with Arctic of Muri, the Celtic Goddess of the bear cult who was usually depicted in the form of a Bear. It is said to be betoken on one who possessed policy equal to its great strength and it is also the emblem of ferocity in the protection of kindred. In Heraldry, the Bear is most often depicted muzzled. In Scandinavia, there was a firm belief in the ability of some people to change into or assume the characteristics of bears. Our English word "berserk" comes from this legend. It was thought that if a warrior was to don a bearskin shirt (called a bear-sark) which had been treated with oils and herbs, that the warrior would gain the strength, stamina, and power of the animal.

**BEAVER:** Once treasured for its fur, the Beaver is known for it's engineering feats. The first bearer was likely one of industry, of acute adeptness and unrelenting perseverance. Beavers are known to keep busy year round building, repairing, and modifying dams and canals. These master builders have long been emblems of industry, cooperation, and community. The Beaver's work ethics helps to keep the entrances of his home under water making it more difficult for an invading predator. Since Beaver lodges have two entrances, they are reminders that when a door (an opportunity) is blocked, another usually presents itself. In Christian symbolism the Beaver represents chastity and the willingness to sacrifice anything that hinders one's walk with God. This icon is also a symbol of vigilance and self-sacrifice, and was often used in Heraldry as a symbol of protection and dedication.

**BEE:** In Christian tradition, the Bee was the emblem of Christ, of his forgiveness (the sweetness of his honey), with his justice (through its sting), and Christian virtues, because of the exemplary way worker bees behave towards their queen. It is an ancient Minoan symbol of the soul; Melissa the bee is the symbol of the Goddess of Regeneration. It is also an ancient belief that bees were begotten of bulls. An emblem of Regal power (the Egyptians) the Bee denotes a well-governed industry, resurrection, steadfastness and obedience.

**BEE EATER:** Immune to the regular ravages (sting) of the Bee, the Bee Eater has been used as a talisman for Healing.

**BIRD CLAW (or leg):** Symbolizes that the 'preyer' upon others, has been preyed upon.

**BITTERN:** If threatened, a Bittern may 'freeze' in an upright position with its beak pointing upwards, and will remain so posed until danger has passed. In ancient times it was a symbol of bad luck and is said to have been so proclaimed by a prophet pronouncing the doom of Babylon. The Bittern has also been used as a symbol of stratagem; no doubt because of its affinity to "freeze" itself when in danger.

**BLACK BIRD:** The blackbird is usually considered a bad omen, although it is said that two blackbirds together symbolize peace and good fortune. Many cultures considered the blackbird a representation of the soul and as such used it to indicate everlasting life.

**BLACK CAP:** The Black Cap is known to mimics the sounds of other birds and as such may represent one who is versatile, and can adjust to life's challenges as needed.

**BLACK HEADED BUNTING:** Buntings are symbols of a bountiful harvest.

**BLOODHOUND:** Similar to a Talbot and was representative of the hunt, the Bloodhound was introduced into Europe long before the Crusades, and was associated with the aristocracy and clergy. It is said that the clergy were responsible for the dog's careful breeding and purity of strain, and is why this hound was called "blooded hound." The hound of noble ancestry denotes pertinaciousness or one who perseveres in hunting the enemy and always being mindful of his foes.

**BOAR (WILD):** Artemis, the goddess of hunting, is the most closely linked with the Wild Boar. Artemis was the virgin goddess of the moon and the twin sister of Apollo. The Wild Boar's strength, courage, and ferocity made it a worthy adversary for the hunter. To the Celts, the Boar was an emblem of war and represented a fierce combatant when at bay, and it is said the Boar ceases fighting only with its life. In the ancient Celtic system the Boar is associated with the South and the element of Fire. It is connected with the life giving power of the sun. The Boar (and its not so wild cousin the pig), are probably the most important totem animals of the Gaelic Celts, particularly in terms of their connections with the Underworld (the mythological place of departed souls), as providers of spiritual nourishment. The Wild Boar symbol was often used as an armorial bearing of a warrior. When just the Boar's Head is used it signifies a token of hospitality; it was often the fee mentioned as due to the King as the condition of feudal tenure.

**BUCK (STAG):** The Stag is the male deer; the male of the hind. As an emblem it is indicative of life (fabled to live over 1000 years), symbol of wisdom, regeneration and growth, and virility. Because its antlers resemble branches, the Stag has been associated with the 'Tree of Life' and because of the way it renews its antlers, it is used as a symbol of regeneration. During the Middle Ages, the Stag was often shown with a crucifix between its horns where, in Christianity, it represented purity and solitude and was the enemy of Satan, the serpent. The Celts believed the Stag guided souls through the darkness (the world for departed souls). The stag also was associated with warriors and hunting in Celtic culture and in Greco-Roman mythology where it was an animal sacred to Artemis. In Buddhism, the golden stag represents knowledge and the Chinese regard it as a symbol of virility and happiness. Heraldic writers say of the Stag: "One who will not fight unless provoked, a lover of music and harmony who well foresees his times and opportunities". The Vikings used the stag as a symbol of royal status and the Romans used it as an icon of masculine values.

**BUFFALO (WATER):** Buffalo is the name commonly applied to the American Bison but restricted to certain related African and Asian mammals of the cattle family, the Water Buffalo, or Indian Buffalo. It is a large, extremely strong, dark grey animal, standing nearly 6 ft at the shoulder and weighing up to 2,000 lbs. Its widely spread horns curve out and back in a semicircle and may reach a length of 6 ft. For many centuries it has been domesticated as a draft animal. Wild Water Buffalo are extremely fierce and have been known to kill fully-grown tigers. The water buffalo is a symbol of power, wealth, and comfort. Farmers have found them indispensable, and in many parts, water buffalo make human survival possible.

**BULL:** This ancient symbol of valour and magnanimity represents male fertility, a fiery temperament, and a role as the dedicated father. The Bull was a sun-god in many cultures and was often used in Heraldry to denote kingly power. The Bull is equated with the god Thor (God of thunder, war, strength, and fertility of Norse mythology). Sin (the moon and vegetation-god of Mesopotamia mythology) is regarded as lord of the calendar and was depicted as riding on a winged Bull (his sacred animal). To the Celts, the Bull represented divine power and strength; to the Druids it was a symbol for the sun and the pro-creativity associated with its forces. The Bull played an important part in the symbolism of the Minoans; according to legend, King Minos had a son who was called the Minotaur because he was half Bull and half human.

**BULL'S HORNS:** Denotes strength, power and fortitude; horns were used also as divine power. The bull's horns represented fertility of the earth, growth, and generation, analogous to spring, when the earth is fertile and everything is growing abundantly. Bulls were revered as the masculine counterpart to goddesses in the ancient Mediterranean.

**BUSTARD:** A type of wild turkey aggressively hunted for its meat with the aid of greyhounds. The great or bearded bustard is the largest game bird in Europe weighing upwards of 25 lbs. and a metre tall. It inhabits the temperate regions of Europe and Asia, and was formerly common in Great Britain. An ancient emblem of Hungary and is symbolic of the hunt, and said to be betoken on one of noble prominence and grace.

**BUTTERFLY:** The Greek emblem of Psyche or the Soul. The Soul, considered collectively, has the care of all that which is soulless, and it traverses the whole heaven, appearing sometimes in one form and sometimes in another. Butterflies represent frivolity, the soul's ascent to immortality, and freedom.

**BUZZARDS:** Representative of a rapacious person, intimidating and persistent.

**CAMEL:** Highly valued in Middle Eastern cultures and represents stamina, obedience, and temperance. It is a classical symbol of Arabia where it is regarded as ennobled by God. Prized by the Bedouin desert nomads, it was used as a beast of burden, for riding, and as a draught animal. "Kaswa, Al" was the name of Muhammad's favourite Camel. It fell on its knees when the prophet delivered the last clause of the Koran to the assembled multitude at Mecca. In ancient Persian texts and in the Zohar, the serpent in the Garden of Eden is said to have been a flying a dragon-camel; such Camels are also thought to be Eden's guards. A Camel was a sign of wealth in the ancient world; their rich trappings, even during the Renaissance, were used to indicate royalty and prosperity. The three wise men are usually shown riding Camels to Bethlehem where the beasts knelt to worship the Christ Child; according to legend, the wise men's Camels journeyed to Bethlehem without food, water, or rest in order to reach the Child in only twelve or thirteen days.

**CANNET:** A duck without beak or legs. Signifies one who has to subsist by virtue and merit. The symbolism is suggested to be the same or similar to that of a 'martlet'.

**CAPON:** A cockerel, castrated to improve the flesh for use as food. The Capon looks like a rooster but without wattles. It's been called a Capon since the times of the ancient Romans. Capon was the preferred course of ecclesiastic people and princes and is a symbol of hospitality and virtue.

**CAT (CAT-A-MOUNT):** Represents a mountain or wild cat and signify liberty, vigilance, forecast, and courage. The Roman goddess of Liberty was represented as holding a cup in one hand, a broken sceptre in the other, and with a cat lying at her feet. No animal is so great an enemy to all constraint as a cat. Held in veneration by the Egyptians under the name of Ælurus. This deity is represented with a human body and a cat's head. Diodorus tells us that whoever killed a cat, even by accident, was by the Egyptians punished by death.

**CHATTERER:** Said to be obnoxious and a loquacious talker.

**CHERUB:** In Jewish, Christian, and Islamic literature, a celestial winged boy's head that functions as a throne bearer of the deity; derived from ancient Middle Eastern mythology. Denotes dignity, glory, and honour; symbol of a missionary; bearer of joyful news.

**CHOUGH (Cornish):** A species of crow with red legs, called "the king of crows" and was betoken on one manifesting military stratagems to the great disadvantage of his enemies. It is also said the Cornish Chough indicates one who is watchful for friends and kindred.

**COCK:** A symbol of vigilance, and also an emblem of St. Peter. It denotes great courage, and as the herald of the dawn, it is often used as an emblem of watchfulness. It signifies a hero in the field or an able man in the senate. It is said the Cock, crows three times before the death of a person. As the Cock was always connected in symbolism with the sun gods of Death and Resurrection, it has found its appropriate place in the four Gospels in the prophecy about Peter repudiating his Master before the Cock crowed thrice. The Cock is the most magnetic and sensitive of all birds; hence it's Greek name "alectruon". In the Zoroastrian Avesta, the Cock is called Parodarsh "he who foresees" the coming dawn, and is also termed the drum of the worlds, for he crows in the dawn that dazzles away the fiends of the Avesta: thus he shares with the dawn the honour of the victory.

**COCKATRICE:** A heraldic monster with the head, beak, comb, wattles and legs of a cock, a barbed tongue and the wings, tail and body of a wyvern. It is said the Cockatrice is hatched from a cock's egg by a serpent. Since it had the "Medusa-like" gift of killing anything that looked upon it, the Cockatrice was often depicted as an emblem of protection and used by many who bore it to instil deadly fear on the enemy. It is mentioned in several passages of the bible and is the emblem of terror to all beholders.

**CONEY:** Also known as the pika or mouse hare or rock rabbit, the Coney is an Old World rabbit. 'Coney' is from the Hebrew 'shaphan' meaning "the hider", and is an animal that inhabits the mountain gorges and the rocky districts of Arabia and the Holy Land. It is about the size and colour of a rabbit, though appearing clumsier in structure has no tail and is not to be confused with a Rabbit or Hare. Its feet are not formed for digging, and therefore it has its home not in burrows but in the clefts of the rocks. It is quite likely that a scriptural reference to conies was intended. An often-quoted proverb says: "The Conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks" (Proverb. 30:26; Ps. 104:18). The proverb refers to the Coney's gregariousness and wisdom for he who realizes his weaknesses can better prepare to thwart his enemies; this strategy results in the

weakness becoming the reason for his strength; one should never underestimate a Coney.

**COOT:** Conspicuous and noisy birds, Coots appear to aggressively defend their territories as they splatter across the water with flapping wings to confront intruders, uttering a vocal barrage of croaks, squawks, and cackles in an attempt to intimidate. The bearer of this device will use strategy rather than confrontation to achieve success.

**CORBIE (THE RAVEN):** The Raven was considered a symbol of virility or wisdom by many medieval cultures. An ancient Norse saga describes the use of Ravens by ocean navigators as guides to land, and Norse mythology describes Ravens as scouts for Odin. The Gaelic name for the raven is 'Bran,' also the name of a Celtic God; Bran offers initiation, protection, and the gift of prophecy. To the ancient Germanic tribes, Ravens were a symbol of sacrifice, for they were known for "receiving and rejoicing over sacrificial victims." The Raven was associated to thought and memory, and thus was a source of wisdom and prophetic knowledge, most particularly where such knowledge concerned omens of war. Like their relatives the crows, Ravens were known throughout Europe as death birds and otherworld messengers especially if you were doomed to die in battle. It is said that dead warriors on the battlefield were called 'feeders of ravens' in Skaldic verse. The all-powerful Viking leaders however, were known to bear the sign of the Raven upon their banners as a token of victory. Esteemed by the Romans and an ensign of the Danes, the Raven denotes prophetic counsel and is the sentinel of successful endeavours. A bearer using this device may have done so to commemorate a great battle or noted experience where a family member was killed. To the Christians, the Raven was a symbol of the Jews, of confession and of penance.

**CORMORANT:** At sea, or on the inland lakes, they make a terrible havoc. From the greatest height they drop down upon the object of pursuit, dive after it with the rapidity of a dart, and with an almost unerring certainty, seize the victim. Then emerging, with the fish across the bill, with a kind of twirl, throw it up into the air and dextrously catching it head foremost, swallow it whole. Among the Chinese, it is said, they have frequently been trained to fish, and that some fishermen keep many of them for that purpose, by which they gain a livelihood. "A ring, placed round the neck, hinders the bird from swallowing; its natural appetite joins with the will of its master, and it instantly dives at the word of command; when unable to gorge down the fish it has taken, it returns to the keeper, who secures it for himself. Sometimes, if the fish be too big for one to manage, two will act in concert, one taking it by the head and the other by the tail." In England, according to Willoughby, they were hoodwinked in the manner of the "Falcons", 'til they were let off to fish, and a leather thong was tied round the lower part of their necks, preventing them from swallowing the fish. Whitlock tells us "that he had a cast of them manned like Hawks, which would come to hand." He took much pleasure in them, and relates that the best he had was one

presented to him by Mr Wood, Master of the Cormorants to Charles I. (Thomas Bewick's British Birds-1826). The Cormorants have been used as symbols of nobility, indulgence, and in more modern times a totem for fishermen and a bountiful catch.

**COW:** The Egyptian goddess Hathor was the goddess of fertility and agriculture and she was also known as the cow-goddess. In Norse mythology, the Cow was also a symbol of fertility and a symbol of the goodness that nourishes. It is also a symbol of the harvest.

**CRAB:** Symbolizes force and energy expressed through emotions and imagination, and a desire to store memories and possessions. An ancient Zodiac symbol.

**CRANE:** The word literally means long-shanks; it comes from the Welsh, gar, "the shanks" Garan is the long-shanked bird, contracted into g'ran, which eventually became 'crane'. Although sometimes confused with herons, cranes are more closely related to rails and limpkins. Cranes are known for their loud trumpeting call that can be heard for miles and for the rhythmic dances they perform during mating season, when both males and females can be seen jumping high into the air. The Crane symbol is said to be representative of long life, fidelity, grace, prosperity and peace. The ancient Greeks revered the Crane as a guide to Hades, the immortal kingdom of the dead. Legend has it that when the Greek poet Ibycus was murdered by unknown robbers, Cranes pointed to the killers by mysteriously circling over the head of one of the guilty. This old proverb has been referred to as 'The Cranes of Ibycus'. In mythology, they are often messengers for the gods, and are thought to have great intelligence and vigilance. The Crane is associated with the Greek Goddess Demeter (the Roman Ceres), goddess of the harvest, and also the Celtic god Pwyll, king of the underworld (the mythological place of departed souls).

**CRAVAT GOOSE:** See "Goose"; to the Chinese the Goose symbolizes a blissful marriage, and to many cultures (Indian) it represents knowledge. The Goose was the sacred bird in the temple of Juno who was the Queen of the Olympian gods, and goddess of Marriage, Women and the Home.

**CREEPER:** Creeps up and down trees in a way a mountain climber scales mountains. When feeding, Creepers have a characteristic habit of starting at the base of a tree and working upward, always going around and around as though ascending a spiral staircase. Creepers are methodical in their hunt for food and bearers of this bird as an emblem reflect this trait.

**CROSS-BILL:** This interesting Finch-like bird, in which the hooked tips of the upper and lower bill cross one another, is often used as a religious; this specific beak characteristic is unique to the Cross-bill.

**CROW (ROOK):** The emblem of long life; a settled habitation and a quiet life.

**CUCKOO:** It is said that in ancient Tibet the Cuckoo was considered the king of birds and that it possessed many magical powers; it is a symbol of a competitive soul and also represents lovers of music.

**DESTRIER:** The Knight's warhorse. This most valuable of the Knight's horses was bred exclusively for fighting, were almost twice the weight of a normal horse, very strong and extremely fierce; it is said they often used their hooves or teeth in battle. They were trained to walk rather than trot and would charge at a canter rather than at a gallop. A knight would only mount his Destrier for battle or tournament. For more casual use, the knight would ride his 'courser' for wayfaring journeys, and his 'palfrey' when leisure was the undertaking; preparedness for martial encounter; a valiant defender of the sovereign.

**DOLPHIN:** In the times of heraldry the Dolphin was known as the king of fish. It is said that those who used it as a symbol had a fondness for music and that the emblem was one of charity and affection towards children and kindred. Often referred to as "The Sailor's Friend", Dolphins were judged from ancient times to be intelligent, skilful and devoted to saving lives. Romans used the Dolphin to signify the soul's journey across the sea of death to the Blessed Isles. The Christians began to use the image of the Dolphin as a specific symbol of Christ, the 'guide' of souls across the waters of death. The Dolphin was associated with many mythological gods including Eros (shown riding a Dolphin), Aphrodite (as well, riding a Dolphin), and Taras of Tarentum (shown on a Dolphin). Greek mythology abounds with tales revolving around the Dolphin, man's guiding light of the sea. The Dauphin of France used the Dolphin as his icon to represent protection for his fleet and salvation for his country.

**DOVE:** A symbol of innocence, gentleness, and affection and in art and in the Scriptures, the symbol of the Holy Ghost. Ever since the Dove returned to Noah's ark carrying the olive branch, it has been considered the messenger of peace and a harbinger of good tidings. In church windows the seven rays proceeding from the Dove signify the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. It also symbolises the human soul, and as such is represented coming out of the mouth of saints at death. The Slavs and Greeks pictured the human soul as a Dove, which helps to explain why Doves are found on some pagan monuments. Doves with human heads are also found on Greek tombs. Since the Dove was believed to be incapable of malice towards any creature, it is said that Jesus sent His disciples into the world after instructing them to "Be as wise as serpents and harmless as Doves". Over the centuries, the Dove has been used to represent many things. It is the emblem of temperance, the symbol of innocence, the token of inspiration, and the ensign of peace. The Dove also represents fidelity in marriage, chastity and patience in suffering.

**DUCK (the drake, sheldrake, wild duck, teal, mallard):** Denotes a person of many resources.

**DRAGON:** Its head is that of a serpent, with a forked tongue and ears. The body is that of a lion, but it is represented scaled, and the large wings are webbed and pointed, and resemble those of a bat. The legs are also scaled, and the feet are represented with webbed talons. The dragon is the most valiant of all living creatures because of his sharpness of sight and therefore it symbolizes the defender of treasure and worldliness. The Anglo-Saxon word "dragon" is derived from the Greek, "to see clearly", hinting at the Dragon's gift of prophecy. Although Dragons were often born out of destruction and chaos, the dragon to some cultures was an emblem of good fortune & perfection. Found in many cultures it became a symbol for volatility, the search for secret knowledge, finding your way through all things, Alchemy, the elements, eternal change, discovery of hidden treasures and the protector of all you possess.

**EAGLE:** A noble device signifying a person of action, ever more occupied in high and weighty affairs, and one of lofty spirit, ingenious, speedy in apprehension, and judicious in matters of ambiguity; true magnanimity and fortitude of mind; a symbol of power and sovereignty. The Eagle also symbolizes courage, freedom, and immortality. It proudly served as an emblem of the might and unity of empire for Babylon, the Caesars, Charlemagne and many Holy Roman and Byzantine emperors as well as for Russian czars, Aztecs and Napoleon. The heraldic Eagle appeared in Persian and Egyptian battle ensigns and on the flags of the Roman legions. The Romans called the Eagle the "bird of Jove, and carried it on their standards, into battle. If a legion lost its Eagle, it was in disgrace until the Eagle could be recovered. It was the Roman custom to let an Eagle fly from the funeral pyre of a deceased emperor, bearing the god's soul to heaven after a period of earthly incarnation as the emperor. Early Christians honoured the Eagle as a symbol of hope, of strength and of Resurrection. The latter is based on the early belief that the Eagle, unlike other birds, periodically renewed its plumage and its youth by flying near the sun then plunging into the water. The majestic Eagle was central to many mythologies and sacred writings of humanity. The ancient Greeks revered the eagle as a symbol of the god of lightning, and it is said they nailed Eagles to the peaks of temples to serve as magic lightning rods; Scandinavian myths also associate the Eagle with lightning and storm. The Hittites (an ancient people living in Anatolia and northern Syria about 2000-1200 B.C) used the double Eagle as an emblem of sovereignty.

**EEL:** (grigs) The symbol of fertility; elusiveness.

**ELEPHANT:** This heraldic symbol denotes great strength, greater wit and greatest ambition. The Elephant was the ensign of Cyneus, king of Scythia, and Idomenes, king of Thessaly. Elephants are the bearers of kings and queens and so a symbol of royalty, prosperity, temperance, dignity, and power. In 250 BC, Pyrrhus, the king of Epirus (now North Albania), with an army of 25,000 men and

20 Elephants won a hard-fought victory over the Romans at Heraclea. At a crucial phase of the battle, Pyrrhus ordered his Elephants to charge and it was too much for the Roman legions. The Romans had never seen Elephants before and called them 'Lucanian Cows'. The Elephant was the totem animal of the god Shiva, the Destroyer, who seeks to banish illusion and to encourage a clearer perception of reality.

**ENFIELD:** Mythical beast which has the head of a fox, the chest of a hound, the talons of an eagle, the body of a lion and the hindquarters and tail of a wolf; said to have protected fallen chieftains' bodies for proper burial.

**ERMINE:** The fur most frequently used in heraldry. It derives its name from the Ermine or 'mus Armenicus' (so called from being found in the woods of Armenia), a small white animal whose fur it is. The black spots are supposed to represent the tails of ermines, sewed to the white fur for its enrichment; a symbol of dignity.

**EYE:** It is generally a symbol of the watchful and protective power of the Supreme Being; also providence in government.

**FALCON:** Is derived from the Latin "falx", meaning sickle, a reference to the Falcon's wing shape in flight. Egyptians associated the Falcon with the 'Eye of Horus'. The god Horus was believed to appear in the form of Pharaoh's Falcon or as a Falcon-headed god. The mythology states he could see everything at once because one eye was the sun and the other was the moon. It is written that Falcons were permitted to ride on Pharaoh's nape as his protector and divine spirit. Falcons were used in a royal sport known as falconry. Is the art of training Falcons (or hawks) to pursue and attack wild fowl or game; falconry started in ancient China and Persia and soon became prevalent with the royals of ancient Egypt; the Falcon was associated with the Egyptian sun god 'RA' and later the Christians adopted it as an emblem of the saviour. A venerable symbol of majesty and power, heraldic writers add that the Falcon denotes someone eager, or hot in the pursuit of an object much desired; if seated on its 'rest' or perch it may signify a bearer who is ready and serviceable for high affairs.

**FLAMING HEART:** The Heart is a symbol of charity and a flaming heart (heart flammant) denotes ardent affection.

**FLY:** Beelzebub, the God of Flies was considered the patron deity of medicine and was supposed to ward off flies from his votaries; he was one of the gods of the Philistines. The Greeks had a similar deity, Zeus Apomyios; symbol of adventurousness.

**FOX:** In pre-Christian times the Fox was seen as a symbol of the gods of the forests and mountains. This changed in Christian times, to where the Fox was seen as a demonic creature. The Fox appears extensively in myth and fable; it is one of the great tricksters. It was associated with Enki, the Sumerian god (lord of

abundance), and Bacchus, god of wine as he considered the Fox the protector of the vines. In Japan, it is a "Spirit of Rain" and an attribute of the rice deity Indari. Synonymous with the terms: tod, reynard or a genet, the Fox is the most famous of tricksters and signifies one who will use all that he may possess of wisdom and wit in his own defence, and denotes one of strategic talents and fertility of resources.

**FROG (toads, tadpoles, and powets):** In ancient Egypt, frogs were regarded as a symbol of fertility. The frog became the symbol of Hefnu. Soon Heket, the water goddess, had the head of a frog. The grateful Egyptians wore frogs as talismans to attract her favours of fruitfulness and fertility. A symbol of resurrection; one easily stirred up to anger whereunto he is naturally prone of himself.

**GAD-FLY (gad-bee, horse fly):** A fly that so stings the cattle as to make them gad or run madly about; it makes a humming noise when flying and has a sting both great and stiff. May denote one who should never be underestimated because of the size of his army or his physical stature.

**GAMB (Jambe):** The fore-leg of a lion, bear or other beast, from the knee joint; if couped or erased near the middle joint, it is called paw. Ancient symbolism signified that the bearer needed only a show a glimpse of his strength to the enemy, for this enemy to surmise the wholeness of his ferocity.

**GANNET:** See "Goose"; known as the Solan Goose the Gannet is one of the largest sea birds, and is known for its dives into the sea from great heights. The Gannet is well equipped by nature for these spectacular plunges; unlike most birds, it has binocular vision - that is, its eyes are positioned such that it can see forward with both. The Gannet is a symbol of the Prophet.

**GOAT:** The Goat-Gods Pan and Dionysius in Greek Mythology represent the forest and unbridled nature; lust in the case of Pan, and drinking and fertility in the case of Dionysius. The Goat is said to signify one who wins through politics and wit rather than war and confrontation. The Goat was a popular symbol in Christian art for the damned. This symbolism was based upon Christ's depiction of Himself at the Last Judgment as a shepherd dividing his sheep from the Goats. The constellation known as Capricornus is one of the oldest of the astrological interpretations. Saturn rules it and its symbol is the Goat. Deities associated with Goats include Aphrodite (Greek goddess of love, beauty and fertility, and the protectress of sailors) who rode Goats, Artemis (the virgin goddess of the hunt) to whom Goats were sacrificed, and Agni the Vedic (Hindu) fire-god who rides a Goat. The baby Zeus was hidden in a cave and suckled by a female Goat named Amalthea. The Goat is said to be the emblem of the martial man and is an icon representing perseverance and vitality.

**GOLDFINCH:** The brightly coloured canary-like bird is used as a civic emblem by several countries. It is said that the Goldfinch, in medieval times, was the symbol of protection against the plague. It has been used a talisman to ward off evil.

**GOOSE (greylag, wild goose, gander):** A symbol of resourcefulness; an Egyptian symbol of vanity; an ancient military symbol of imminent victory.

**GRACKLE:** Is usually looked down on by birders because it doesn't sing and its color is uninteresting; the Crackles are very aggressive and noisy birds who, because they colonize in such large numbers, tend to take over most situations. They are symbols of control and dominations.

**GRASSHOPPER (locust):** Denotes nobility and wisdom; paintings of the Christ child holding a grasshopper are symbolic of the conversion of the Gentiles; the locust, on the other hand, was the symbol of a destroyer or great warrior.

**GREAT AUK:** Its extermination began with a slaughter for food and bait by local inhabitants, and continued for the bird's fat and feathers. As the flightless sea birds became scarce, they were collected for a well-paid trade in skins and eggs. The last known living pair and one egg were taken in Iceland in 1844. The Great Auk is a symbol of destruction and of man's arrogance, and has been used as an emblem of conservation, and in fact, it is used by many wildlife organizations.

**GREBE:** Known for its spectacular courtship dance, the Grebe has been symbols of Dance, the Arts and Poetry.

**GREYHOUNDS:** Are one of the oldest breeds of dogs, and appear in art and literature throughout history. The breed was developed nearly 5,000 years ago in Egypt. Known in England before the 9th century, the Greyhound was bred and raised by the aristocracy. For 700 years it was illegal under English law for a commoner to own a Greyhound. It was used to hunt small game, especially hares. In ancient Egypt the Greyhound were not only companions, but they were revered and almost worshipped; they were cherished so much that a birth of one was second in importance only to the birth of a human boy. When a pet Greyhound died the entire family mourned by shaving their heads, fasting and crying. When Greyhounds died, they were buried, mummified, and placed in the tomb of their owner. Often the tombs were decorated with figures of favourite Greyhounds. Greek mythological figures were often portrayed with Greyhounds and Hecate, goddess of wealth, is often shown with a Greyhound. The same is true for Pollux, protector of the hunt. The ancient Romans also had an appreciation of the Greyhound; their Gods and Goddesses, were shown with Greyhounds. The Middle Ages were a time of famine, and the Greyhound almost became extinct. The clergymen saved them from starvation and bred them for noblemen. The Greyhound is said to denote majesty, courage, vigilance, swiftness and loyalty, and they were emblematic of nobility.

**GRIFFIN:** This chimerical creature has the head, wings, and talons of an eagle with the body of a lion, and is said expressed the ideal combination of swiftness, strength and intelligence. Historically the Griffin has been emblematic of valour, vigilance and death defying bravery. Guillim, an often-quoted heraldic writer says this about the Griffin, "sets forth the property of a valorous soldier whose magnanimity is such that he will dare all dangers, and even death itself, rather than become captive." This creature is as old as the time of the Phoenicians, was sacred to the sun, and kept guard over hidden treasures. It is symbolic of watchfulness, courage, perseverance, and rapidity of execution. In legend, the creature was a symbol of superbia (arrogant pride), because Alexander the Great was said to have tried to fly on the backs of Griffins to the edge of the sky. During the Middle Ages, Christian nobles searched for Griffin's eggs or "grypeseye" which they mounted and used for cups, believing they brought health to any beverage.

**GROSBEAK:** Said to be a healer of the family, a peacekeeper.

**GUILLEMOT:** A diving sea bird allied to the auks and puffins, sometimes known as the sea-pigeon; it comes ashore only to breed. It was a symbol of hope to the ancient mariner.

**HADDOCK:** In Scotland the haddock is considered to be a very lucky fish. It is thought that the faith in the attributes of the haddock, are as a result of the belief that this is the very fish that was chosen to feed many people. Black spots can be seen around the gills, which were said to indicate the places where Christ held the fish as He distributed them to the people as told in the parable of the 'Feeding of the Five Thousand'; signifies good fortune and bountifulness.

**HARPY:** A mythical beast with the face and breasts of a virgin, the body, wings and talons of a vulture. In this mythology they are known as 'snatchers' and although found mostly in German heraldry, it will also be found used in other countries. The German name for it is 'Jungfraunadler' and the symbol is notoriously present in the shield of the Rietbergs, Princes of Ost-Friesland. In heraldry it is said they signify one ferocious when provoked. In Greek mythology the Harpy was an implement of vengeance and also symbolized justice. Originally created to signify the horror and fury of the storm, the Harpy has been delivered to us always as a symbol of sudden death and is to some, a symbol of the feminine principle. According to Greek legend there was actually three Harpies, Aello, Ocypete, and Celaeno. They were the children of the sea god Thaumas and the gods used them as their tools of justice to keep their faithful obedient. Should one go against the will of the gods, the Harpies would be dispatched, fly over the offender, attack and violate them, tear them apart and then eat them.

**HAWK:** See Falcon.

**HEAD:** (Saxons, Saracens, Turks, Moors, Blackamoors, Savages, Maidens, Infants etc.). A human head stands for honour, there are many variations; a Saracen's head represents a Bedouin tribe from Sinai, the term was more generally applied to Arabs and Muslims during the Crusades and may denote one who fought in the Crusades against this tribe. A Saxon on the other hand was a member of a West Germanic tribal group that inhabited northern Germany and invaded Britain in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. with the Angles and Jutes, and the head may symbolize some great battle against them. In the Middle Ages, the Europeans called all Mahometans (Muslims) Moors, in the same manner as the eastern nations called all inhabitants of Europe Franks.

**HEN HARRIERS:** Also known as Marsh Hawks, these raptors fly low to the ground and have often been used to represent one who is inconspicuous yet methodical in his purpose.

**HIGHLANDERS:** Were from a mountainous region in Northern Scotland. Famous for its rugged beauty, it consists roughly of that part of Scotland north of the imaginary line from Dumbarton to Stonehaven, excluding the Orkneys, the Shetlands, and lower coastal areas. The Scottish Highlanders were regiments of the British army, originally recruited in the Highlands of Scotland; among them are the First Battalion Royal Highlanders, founded in 1729, commonly called the Black Watch, and the Gordon Highlanders, founded in 1787 by George Gordon, 5th duke of Gordon (1770-1836). The Highlanders (as a people) are of Celtic descent, and a small number of them still speak Gaelic, an ancient Celtic language. In early days, the ruggedness of the land led to the separation of the Highlanders into small groups called clans. A chief rules each clan, and the members of a clan claimed descent from a common ancestor. The traditional garment of the Highland clansmen is the kilt, which is suitable for climbing the rough hills. The Highland soldier is representative of an unbreakable spirit, is an emblem of bravery and an icon of courage.

**HEDGEHOG:** It collects its stores for the winter with its prickles and is symbolic of a provident provider.

**HERON:** A symbol of contemplation, vigilance, divine wisdom, and inner quietness. Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom, employed a Heron as one of her divine messengers; symbol of righteousness; Herons are images of the eternal struggle of good against evil.

**HERRING:** Seems to be found borne principally on shields of families with phonetically similar names. An ancient fable does though state that if the first herring picked out were female the nets would be full for the rest of the year, with good health and financial security ensured for the families of the fishermen; hospitality and abundance. Eating a herring in three mouthfuls including the bones with salt was once believed to induce visions of the future.

**HIND:** A female stag; symbol of peace and harmony. See Buck.

**HOOPUES:** Has long been a symbol of inspiration. It is said that in ancient Egypt, in the days of the Pharaohs, the Hoopoe appeared in hieroglyphs as a symbol for gratitude.

**HORSE:** The Mitanni and the Hittites used Warhorses and chariots in Anatolia, in Syria by about 1600 BC. The Greeks viewed the horse as a heroic symbol, a wonder beast ridden by great warriors and by the gods. The belief in the magical power of the Horse is common to all peoples of Indo-European descent whose ancestors in the Palaeolithic had belonged to Horse totem clans and later, in the Neolithic, were the first to tame Horses, breed and ride them. In the Medieval period a well-equipped knight needed at least four different types of Horses: (1) a charger, (2) a palfrey, (3) a courser, and (4) a battle horse. To many, the Horse was a symbol of war and a black horse would mean calamitous war. Horses were a potent symbol from almost every world religion and mythology; many of its myths express the Horse's innate clairvoyance and ability to perceive the magic within humans. Some view the Horse as the symbol of strength, virility and lust. It is a symbol for loyalty and devotion, such as the faith it has with its master, and it also represents the warrior spirit, bravery and courage. Heraldic writers say that Horses (and those who used it as an emblem) represented the readiness for all employments for king and country.

**HYDRA:** A venomous monster of the Lernean marshes, in Argolis. It had seven heads (some say nine), and Hercules was sent to kill it. As soon as he struck off one of its heads, two shot up in its place. The stench from the Hydra's breath was enough to kill man or beast. Borne by those said to have fought the greatest of battles.

**IBEX:** Also called a Steinbok, the Ibex is a wild goat that is said to be the stock of the tame goat. The Ibex is a creature that dwells in the mountains, has large knotty horns reclining on its back, is of a yellowish brown colour, and has a black beard. It is mentioned in the Bible as one of the clean animals that the children of Israel were allowed to eat. The Arabs know the Ibex as the Beden; they live in small herds of eight or ten and are still found in Palestine. The extremely strong and often fabled horns of the Ibex were generally acknowledged, as a symbol of renewal and rejuvenation and the Ibex itself is a harbinger of spring and a unifier of nature. Because of the Ibex's healing influence it soon faced extinction as unerring powers were attributed to its antlers, blood and parts of his heart. Medieval pharmacies used the dried and pulverized blood as an ingredient in many medicines. In the late Middle Ages the number of Ibexes continued to decrease, calling for Emperor Maximilian to put them under protection to prevent possible extinction. Known as the 'great stag' to the Sumerians, the Ibex became known as not only symbol of healing but also of nobility as it was they (only) who were permitted to hunt them.

**JACKDAW:** Old English lore states that one Jackdaw perched on a building is an omen of bad fortune but that a flock perching on the roof indicates financial gains. He is a symbol of luck (good and bad), sagacity through education, and loyal friendship.

**JESSANT DE LIS:** A fleur-de-lis shooting out from the mouth of a leopard or a lion; conferred by Edward III during his wars in France, as a reward to some of the leaders who served under him in his victorious campaigns. The lion of the English arms is swallowing the lily of the French coat.

**KESTREL:** Also known as the Sparrow Hawk, the Kestrel takes its name from the Latin “crepitare” meaning to crackle (like the sound the Kestrel makes). *Winhover* is an ancient term for the Kestrel, aptly named from its habit of hovering in the air with its head to the wind. The Kestrel is often used as a symbol that the bearer recognizes life’s opportunities and acts upon them at the most precise and correct moment (like the Kestrel does in hunting its prey).

**KINGFISHER:** Also known as the Halycon, the Kingfisher is a long-time symbol of peace and prosperity. It has many legends and superstitions surrounding it with many originating in ancient Greece; the body of the Kingfisher, if dried, could ward off thunderbolts and storms. It is said the Kingfisher is the promise of abundance, of new warmth, prosperity and love that is about to unfold within your life. In Greek mythology Alcyone, daughter of Aeolus (king of the winds), found her husband drowned and cast herself into the sea. The gods rewarded her devotion by turning her into a kingfisher, and Aeolus forbade the winds to blow during the "Halcyon Days" (the seven days before and the seven after the winter solstice, when legend has it that the kingfisher lays its eggs). Kingfishers are associated with Pallas (one of the Titans, a race of godlike giants who were considered to be the personifications of the forces of nature), Hera (the queen of the Olympian deities, the eldest daughter of Cronus and Rhea, and wife and sister of Zeus), and Thetis, one of the Nereids, the fifty daughters of Nereus and Doris who dwell in the Mediterranean Sea. These beautiful women were always friendly and helpful towards sailors fighting perilous storms. The Kingfishers are beloved by sea-nymphs (in Greek mythology, nymphs are spirits of nature, and they are minor female deities and the protectors of springs, mountains, and rivers).

**KITE:** As we read in the book of Etymologies of Isidore: The kite (with its distinctive forked tail), *milvus*, derives its name from *mollis volatu*, weak in flight (it glides through the air). The kite signifies those who are tempted by effete pleasures; also acuity of vision; the Egyptians held the kite in high honour and the symbol may signify that the first bearer was one who accomplished a great deal with little effort.

**KNIGHT:** Those who served the feudal kings bore arms, and persons admitted to

this privilege were the king's Knights; as this distinction was limited to men of family, the word became a title of honour next to the nobility. It symbolized prowess in the field of battle; dependability beyond doubt or question; never fleeing from the face of his foes; generous to all, and always and everywhere a champion of the right and the good. The Knight or chevalier was the professional soldier of the middle ages. No Knight was thought to be properly equipped without at least three horses: the battle horse, or dexterarius, which was led by hand, and used only for the onset, the palfrey or courser, for the route, and the pack-horse for the luggage and belongings. The Knight also required several attendants: one to conduct the horses, another to bear the heaviest weapons, particularly the shield or escutcheon, one to aid his master to mount his battle horse or to raise him if dismounted, and a fourth to guard prisoners who were sought for high ransom.

**LAMB:** An emblem of the Redeemer; symbolizes gentleness, innocence, and purity; sacrifice.

**LAPWINGS (pewit, plover, tyrwhitt, sea-pye):** An ancient bird said that to protect its young, by luring the enemy from its nest by flying away and crying loudest when furthest from its nest. An Old World wading bird of the family Charadriidae, characterized by a markedly slow beat of the wings, dark, glossy plumage, and distinctive white markings. Denotes one who protects the young with cunning and ruse rather than force or confrontation.

**LARK (skylark):** An Old World bird characterized by an unusually long, straight hind claw. It was symbolic merriment as the lark sang hymns at the gates of heaven; the lark was the bird that announced the coming of the day. Because of the bird's boundless energy, it is said the lark is also the symbol of hope, happiness, and of good fortune; creativity.

**LEG (usually in armour):** Is emblematical of strength, stability, and expedition.

**LEOPARD:** In heraldry, represents those brave and generous warriors who have performed some bold enterprise with force, courage, promptitude, and activity.

**LING (cod, hake, whiting):** These fish all belong to the family Gadidæ. The Hake is more slender, and sports a larger head than the cod but otherwise the drawing does not usually distinguish the many varieties. The symbolism for cod is generally accepted to be the same for the Ling.

**LION:** An emblem of majesty, strength, and justice, military might and deathless courage, the Lion was indeed a foe to fear. The French heralds call the lion passant a leopard; accordingly Napoleon said to his soldiers, "Let us drive these leopards (the English) into the sea." In heraldry any Lion not rampant is often called a lion leopardé. The Lion is also an emblem of the resurrection; according to tradition, the lion's whelp is born dead, and remains so for three days, when

the father breathes on it and it receives life. Another tradition is that the Lion is the only animal of the cat tribe born with its eyes open, and it is said that it sleeps with its eyes open; although not completely true the Lion does sleep watchfully and lightly. The Lion in the arms of Scotland is derived from the arms of the ancient Earls of Northumberland and Huntingdon, from whom some of the Scottish monarchs were descended. The Lions in the arms of England: They are three Lions passant guardant, i.e. walking and showing the full face. The first Lion was that of Rollo, Duke of Normandy, and the second represented the country of Maine, which was added to Normandy. These were the two Lions borne by William the Conqueror and his descendants. Henry II added a third Lion to represent the Duchy of Aquitaine, which came to him through his wife Eleanor. Commonly referred to as "the king of the beasts," it is a symbol of kingly power and might, but as the lioness it is commonly related to the Great Mother and to protection.

The following is the symbolism associated with the more popular lion positions typically blazoned:

**Rampant Guardant:** Erect on his hind legs; full face; emblematic of prudence.

**Rampant Reguardant:** Erect on his hind legs; side face looking behind; emblematic of circumspection.

**Saliant:** The act of springing forward on its prey; emblematic of valour.

**Sejant:** Sitting, head in profile. Justice

**Sejant Erect:** Sitting, rising to prepare for action; face in profile, tail erect; emblematic of counsel.

**Sejant Affronté:** (as in the crest of Scotland): majesty.

**Statant:** Standing with four legs on the ground; able for battle. With tail erect, ready for battle.

**Couchant:** Lying down; head erect, and tail beneath him; emblematic of sovereignty.

**Coward or Coué:** With tail hanging between his legs. Represents cowardice.

**Dormant:** Asleep, with head resting on his forepaws.

**Passant:** Walking, three feet on the ground; in profile; emblematic of resolution.

**Passant Guardant:** Three feet on the ground; full face. The "Lion of England" - resolution and prudence.

**Passant Reguardant:** Three feet on the ground; side face turned backwards.

**Rampant:** Erect on his hind legs; in profile; emblematic of magnanimity.

**LIZARD:** Lizards are seekers of the sun and may symbolize the human soul seeking the light; also borne to ward off evil; may symbolize death followed by resurrection. It also symbolizes safety and welfare because it can lose its tail and regenerate it.

**LOBSTER (crayfish):** The Crayfish and Lobster were often used to symbolize the Zodiacal sign of Cancer the Crab; water symbol. Denotes tenaciousness; one that moves quickly; also regeneration, steadfastness, resoluteness.

**LUCE (hake, pike):** Now commonly called the pike. Luce comes from the Latin Luci-us which is from the Greek lukos (a wolf) meaning the wolf of fishes. Bestowed on one not to be set at naught or underestimated.

**LYNX:** Stealthiness and cunning; vigilance, alertness; the lynx is a predator that was once believed to have incredible powers of vision. During the Middle Ages, people thought it could see through walls. In representations of the five senses, the lynx is used to symbolize the sense of sight. One of the Argonauts who sailed with Jason in search of the Golden Fleece was named Lynceus because of his exceptional powers of vision. To be "lyncean" or "lynx-eyed" is to be sharp-sighted.

**MACKEREL:** From the Latin " macula", for spot, the Mackerel, known as the Holy fish, denotes abundance and was an ancient Christian totem. Originally a pagan symbol of fertility and continuity, the Mackerel are also superb, swift swimmers. Its symbol may be representative of the bearer's name or his profession, or may involve a memorable or significant experience. The Mackerel was one of the most abundant food fishes in the North seas and several species are found throughout the world today. They are emblematic of affluence, profusion and were often used as symbols in groups of three to represent the Holy Trinity. The Emblem was often one used by royalty. The ancient expression "a mackerel sea", tells of a sea in stormy ripples believed to be caused by a very large school of Mackerel just under the surface. This was a sign that the Mackerel had arrived (and usually the herring along with it), and it indicated that better times were indeed ahead. "Have faith young man, the Mackerel are here...there is little now, to fear" (E. Vance Hale).

**MAGPIE (jay):** In Celtic lore, the magpie was a bird associated with fairy revels; in Scandinavia, magpies were said to be sorcerers flying to unholy gatherings, and yet the nesting magpie was once considered a sign of luck in those countries. In Old Norse myth, Skadi (the daughter of a giant) was priestess of the magpie clan. In England, the sighting of magpies is still considered a good omen.

**MAIDEN:** Word comes from the Middle English, from Old English mægden, m[AE]den, diminutive of mægeth; akin to Old High German magad meaning maiden and also the Old Irish word mug which meant serf. It usually signifies an unmarried woman, a young unmarried woman or a virgin as in, 'Maiden innocence'. The Greek and Roman Maiden Goddesses of Diana/Artemis were goddesses of fertility, and probably the best-known association with deities the Maidens enjoy. Maidens in heraldry denote purity and redemption and virtuousness. It is said that only a young maiden could capture the Unicorn as it was attracted to chastity and purity, so the noble huntsmen would take a maiden with them when hunting this shy and wild creature. The ancient Celts and many other cultures tell of folk and mythological tales involving the Maiden; the folkloric maidens, in many Indo-European and Asian fables and legends were said to be

capable of being transformed into swans.

**MARTEN (Weasel, Kuna):** Martens are larger, heavier-bodied animals than weasels, with thick fur and bushy tails and were valued for their fur. In heraldry, however, there is usually no differentiation between it and the weasel. An ancient emblem of Slavonia, the kuna, is similar to a ferret or mink, and was traded as a pelt in Roman times. They are known for their boldness and their tendency to attack and defeat animals much larger than themselves. Therefore they have become symbols of spiritual warriors who, in spite of their physical weakness, are able to defeat the Devil. It is said that they denote fickleness and inconstancy, but also parental love, vigilance, and watchfulness; a symbol of the hunt; a worthy adversary of distinction, and the symbol borne by those affirming that duty hath no place for fear; sometimes called the marten-cat.

**MARTLET (Martlet, Merlette, Martin):** A bird resembling a swallow, with thighs but no visible legs representing the martin. It is a mark of Cadency and was used as the symbol of the fourth son, because its footlessness symbolized his inability to inherit, and walk on, his ancestral lands. May signify one who had to subsist by virtue and merit, not inheritance; also denotes promptness. It is said that the use of a martlet indicates that the first bearer of the arms had acquired nobility through his own exertions or by patronage, with the absence of feet on the heraldic martlet signifying the lack of ancestral foundations for his nobility. There is some dispute as to what kind of bird it really is. In English heraldry, it is a swallow; in German heraldry, it is said to be a lark. It was apparently, in its original purpose, a small blackbird and the species of the bird was interpreted in various ways depending on the country. The word 'martlet' does exist in English as the name of a swift or martin and appears to have been confused with the French 'merlette' (merle) because of its similarities to the word 'martlet'. However, it is also said that the charge first appeared as a small blackbird in 1185 in the arms of Mello in Normandy and subsequently in canting arms of 'merlot', indicating that the intention was to represent the French blackbird called 'merlette'. The legend of the martlet is most appealing but readers should determine their own interpretation, as history seems to be confused about the dubious origins and myths of this marvellous bird.

**MERLE (merlette, blackbird, thrush):** The blackbird in ancient times was called Medula, because it sang rhythmically. Others say that it was called Merula, because it flew on its own. It represents those tainted by the blackness of sin; a symbol of temptation. However, the sight of two blackbirds sitting together is a symbol of peace and a good omen.

**MERLIN:** Falcons were used in a sport called Falconry. It is said the sport started in ancient China and Persia but soon became popular in ancient Egypt. Throughout the Middle-ages Counts and Earls used Peregrine Falcons and Ladyships would use Merlins. The Merlin became the symbol of a "Lady", tame of appearance but fierce when provoked.

**MERMAID (siren):** The Syrians and the Philistines were known to have worshipped a Semitic mermaid moon-goddess. The Syrians called her Atargatis while the Philistines knew her as Derceto. The symbol of the mermaid with her comb and mirror in hand seems to first be depicted during the middle ages. This came to represent vanity and female beauty that could cause the destruction of men. A symbol of eloquence and to some it represented a safe-voyage.

**MEW (sea gull):** The sounds of the sea mew represented a guide to the lost sailor and an indication that land was near; symbol of hope.

**MINERVA:** The Roman goddess of wisdom, medicine, the arts, science and trade, and also of war. As Minerva Medica she is the patroness of physicians. The Roman Minerva was especially the protectress of commerce and industry and of schools. It was only later that she assumed the character of a warrior-goddess. The Roman goddess first appeared in Etruria and was perhaps a goddess of the thunderbolt. She was then introduced into the Capitoline Triad, with Jupiter and Juno. According to Roman tradition the cult of Minerva originated in Falerii in 241 BC. One of her earliest temples was built on Mons Caelius and bore the name Minerva Capta. There was, however, a temple already consecrated to Minerva in Rome on the Aventine. According to one tradition Minerva was one of the gods brought to Rome by Numa. Minerva is commonly represented with helmet.

**MOGUL (carp):** The Mogul allied to the Carp, is used as a badge of dignity called the MAHI MARATIB, which dignity is said to have originated with the Mogul dynasty founded in 1206. It is said to signify youth, bravery, perseverance and strength.

**MONKEY (baboon):** The amusing antics of monkeys make them a symbol of mimicry, agility, buffoonery, cunning, satire, and the unconscious. It is said that they conceal their sage-like wisdom and magical powers with their humorous antics. Ancient Egyptians also esteemed the monkey, particularly the baboon whose morning screeches were believed to be prayers to the sun god rising in the sky. Thoth, the Egyptian god of wisdom and scribe of the gods was depicted as a dog-faced baboon and was thought to be as quarrelsome and lecherous as he was wise.

**MOOR-COCK (red grouse):** The male of the moorfowl or red grouse of Europe is borne by several families in allusion to their names. Birds in general are almost universally exalted and accepted as symbolically beings associated with the soul, as messengers of the gods, carriers of souls, as oracles or seen to possess the spirit of loved ones. They are also symbols of good or evil and a universal emblem of freedom.

**NIGHTINGALE:** An emblem of love, righteousness, poetry and education.

Throughout the ages, people have sought the meaning of the nightingale's song. In medieval times, it was thought that this bird sang all night long with its breast pressed against a thorn to keep itself awake because of its fear of snakes.

**NUTCRACKER:** Known as the Social bird, the Nutcracker is a planner and represents one who never goes without, thanks to that planning.

**NUTHATCH:** One who looks at the world from a different perspective, (it travels headfirst down the tree again, raising its head to look around); a good provider and an emblem of family values.

**OPINICUS:** A beast with the body and fore legs of a lion, the head, neck and wings of an eagle, with the tail of a camel; a medieval monster, emblematic of a valiant protector that could defy all dangers, and embolden the weak.

**OSPREY:** Also known as the fish hawk, the Osprey is the only bird of prey that feeds solely on live fish. Known for its acuity of sight, the Osprey has been used to represent those of vision; it is also a symbol of abundance and long used as a totem of the Fisherman.

**OSTRICH:** First domesticated by the ancient Egyptians and Romans who used them to pull their triumphal chariots. The parent does not sit and hatch its eggs, but lets the sun do its work while it guards them vigilantly. Denotes willing obedience and serenity and is also a symbol of meditation.

**OTTER:** Related to the minks and weasels and having webbed feet and dense, dark brown fur. Otter hunting was once a favourite pastime and the fur was quite prized by those of noble blood. The otter is a symbol of grace and empathy. It is said the otter is also emblematic of a man who lives life to the fullest measure; it may also represent a person of great dexterity and adroitness.

**OUNCE:** A fierce animal granted to a warrior who had proven an ability to devise and execute stratagems and cunning to the great disadvantage of the enemy. Usually borne as a snow leopard, which is smaller than a leopard, with a tawny white top, grey bottom and strewn with spots.

**OWL:** Usually shown full-faced or guardant, a hawk-like creature, the owl is the bird of Athena (Minerva), Greek goddess of wisdom and favourite daughter of Zeus. Athena is best known for her embodiment of reason, strength and wisdom and for assisting others on their heroic journey for self-mastery and understanding; since this century's old connection with Athena/Minerva the owl has been used to denote one who is vigilant, prudent and of acute wit.

**OYSTER CATCHER:** You are shy, yet vigilant, and you are always on the alert.

**PANTHER:** The heraldic Panther is often depicted spitting fire from its mouth

(and sometimes from its nostrils and its ears), bearing hind legs similar to a lion and front legs similar to an eagle. It is said that a Panther symbolizes that a beautiful woman, though fierce and intense, is very tender and loving to her brood, and will defend them with the hazard of her life and soul. The Panther has been associated with Jesus; in the 'Abodazara' (early Jewish commentaries on the scriptures), it is listed as a surname for the family of Joseph. It tells how a man was healed "in the name of Jesus ben Panther". The Panther was also associated with the Greek God of wine, Dionysus; one story tells how Dionysus was nursed by panthers, and he is sometimes depicted riding a chariot drawn Panthers. The Early Egyptians were known to sacrifice Panthers to various gods and its skin was a symbol of strength and resurrection in their funerary rites. Throughout the ancient world mythological characters wore Panther skins; Astarte, the Phoenician goddess of procreation and birth, rode on a panther. Some people believed that the panther once sacrificed himself so that he could give humankind the gift of spiritual awakening in the form of his skin. In Indian culture the Panther is feared and respected, and historically regarded by many cultures as the protector of the universe.

**PARROT (popinjay, perroquet, papagay, papingay):** In olden times called the popinjay, it was early bird in English and French heraldry. It was an Egyptian symbol of wisdom and of good counsel and in wealthy Roman households; it was the function of one slave to care for the family bird, which was often a parrot. In Medieval and renaissance Europe, it was only royalty or the very wealthy that kept parrots.

**PARTRIDGE:** An old game bird related to the pheasant and the grouse. A symbol of the Sacred King, as it is said that the partridge gathers its own under its wing and even permits it to be injured in order to decoy predators from its helpless nestlings. Said to denote cunning and guile.

**PASCHAL LAMB:** Or Holy lamb is depicted passant, carrying a flag charged with the cross of St. George, and a circle of glory over its head. It is a symbol of faith, innocence, bravery, gentleness, purity, and resolute spirit.

**PEACOCK (peafowl):** Sacred to Hera (Juno), daughter of Titans Cronus and Rhea, wife and sister of Zeus. A medieval symbol of the soul, signifying beauty, power, and knowledge and is also a religious symbol of resurrection.

**PEGASUS:** The flying horse of Greek mythology. Pegasus was born of the blood of the decapitated Medusa, and mounting the Medusa's head upon Pegasus enabled Bellerophon to slay the Chimera. It is said that one day Pegasus pranced around so frivolously that his hooves created a spring called Hippocrene, which was alleged to have magic power in its waters. If one were to drink water from this spring, one would be gifted with the art of poetry. The Pegasus is symbolic of poetic genius and inspiration, vision and refinement.

**PELICAN:** A Christian symbol of charity and sacrifice. It owes its stature as an emblem of sacrifice to its long beak and sack where it stores small fish to feed its young. In the process of feeding, the bird appears to open its own breast with its bill. The reddish tinge of its plumage and the redness of its beak prompted the legend that it drew its own blood to feed its young; if shown feeding her young ("in her piety"), it symbolizes filial love.

**PEREGRINE FALCON:** Said to fly higher than any other living creature, the Peregrine is a symbol of strength and power, and those who bear its symbol are said to always strive for excellence; a perfectionist.

**PHEASANT:** This ancient game bird was named from Phasis, a stream of the Black Sea. Because of its evasiveness and dexterity, the Pheasant became a favourite game bird of the ancient Romans. Denotes an alert person of many resources.

**PHOENIX:** The mythical bird that lives for 500 years, builds its own funeral pyre, is consumed by the flames, and rises anew from the ashes. This bearing symbolizes the rising and setting of the sun, as well as immortality, resurrection, and life after death.

**PIGEON:** Were used as messenger carriers by the early Persians, Egyptians, Phoenicians and later the Romans. Betoken on one who is virtuous and also denotes peace and wisdom.

**PORCUPINE:** Symbol of invincibility. The badge of King Louis XII of France (1498-1515) who used as is motto: "Cominus et eminus" (from near and afar), an allusion to the myth of Porcupines throwing their spines at their enemies.

**PRAWNS (shrimp):** It is said that Shrimp were called one of the old men of the sea. Shrimp got this name from their long antennae and curved spines, which made them, resemble old men. For this reason shrimp have come to symbolize long life, and the prayer that one could live long enough for one's spine to curve like that of a Shrimp.

**PROBOSCIDES (probisces):** Elephant trunks; usually represented in pairs; the elephant symbolizes longevity, strength, royalty, dignity, patience, wisdom, happiness, and good fortune.

**PUFFIN:** Known as the "Sea-Parrot", the Puffin is a symbol of family and its bearer is the consummate provider. He is the emblem of Norway, and is used by several countries as a civic amulet.

**PYTON-PITHON:** A monstrous serpent in Greek mythology, and the Child of Gaia, the goddess earth. It was produced from the slime and mud that was left on the earth by the great flood of Deucalion. It lived in a cave and guarded the

oracle of Delphi on mount Parnassus. No man dared to approach the beast and the people asked Apollo for help. He came down from Mount Olympus with his silver bow and golden arrows. With using only one arrow he killed the serpent and claimed the oracle for himself. After that, he was known as Pythian Apollo. In memory of this victory, Apollo started the Pythian games, which were held every four years. The old name of Delphi, Pytho, refers to the serpent. Note: In Heraldry use Pithon for winged serpents and Python for non-venomous constrictor snakes of the boa family. The Pithon or Pyton signifies guardianship.

**QUAIL (bobwhite):** In mythology and legend the Quail is widespread and appears in many different cultures. It was a fighting bird and so depicted courage and victory in battle for the Romans. The term 'quail' was one of endearment; the bird was sometimes given as a gift from one lover to another. In Greek legend the jealous Hera turned Leto into a Quail; she was the mother of Apollo and Artemis, so the bird was associated with them also. Asteria changed into a Quail to escape Zeus. The bird is connected with Heracles/Hercules. The Phoenicians sacrificed the Quail to Melkarth when he defeated Typhon (Sephon), as darkness. It was also sacrificed to the Tyrian Baal. The Quail was also a game bird and was symbolic of the hunt. The Quail was the protector to Germanic farmers who captured them and penned them inside houses as protection against lightning strikes.

**RAM:** A male sheep. In Celtic symbolism, the Ram is believed to be a symbol of fecundity and rebirth. The Ram was revered by the Persians and sacred to the Egyptians as a symbol of life, dominion and stability. It is also said to represent leadership and authority. The symbolism of the Ram has great antiquity. The cult of the Ram flourished in the Middle East beginning about 2000 BC. For example, the chief god of Upper Egypt was Amon, a highly spiritual deity whose name means "occult" or "hidden." He was originally represented as having the head of a Ram and was worshipped in Roman times as Jupiter Ammon. Isaiah prophesied that the Rams returning to Israel with God's scattered children would joyfully offer themselves upon the altars of the Millennial Temple. The most famous Ram in the Old Testament is the one Abraham found trapped by its horns in a thicket on Mount Moriah where he had gone to sacrifice his only son Isaac. [Gen 22:1-14] An angel stopped the hand of Abraham just as he was about to kill his boy and the Ram was sacrificed instead. This story is known as the akedah (binding) and is a reminder of the obedience of the patriarchs. Aries, the Ram, is the first sign of the zodiac and is related to dawn, the spring, and the beginning of life. The Ram has played an important role in the religion and mythology of many different cultures.

**RAVEN:** See Corbie.

**RAT:** A fierce and voracious animal. In Hinduism the Rat is the most powerful of the demons and represents foresight and prudence and as such is the vehicle of Ganesha, the elephant-headed god (of wisdom, prosperity and successful

endeavour), and is an object of veneration. It is also regarded as the symbol of industry and prosperity on account of its ability for locating, acquiring, and hoarding abundant supplies of food.

**RATCH-HOUND (small hound, beagle):** Once widely used either singly or in packs, to hunt hares; symbol of the hunt, loyalty, courage, and vigilance.

**REINDEER:** A stag with double attires; one erect and one pendent; extremely strong and has great powers of endurance; hunted by the ancients, for both meat and hide; symbolic of persistence, and resoluteness.

**RHINO:** The word Rhinoceros comes from two ancient Greek words - "rhino" meaning horn and "ceros" meaning head. They are descendants of ancient times and bring with them the energy of comfort in one's own solitude. The Rhino is unpredictable, and can turn and charge with great agility and ferociousness especially when aroused or agitated. Rhinoceroses have poor eyesight but acute senses of hearing and smell. Most prefer to avoid man, but males, particularly bad-tempered during the breeding season, and females with calves may charge with little provocation. Some historians believe that the horn of the Rhinoceros, former uniceros, is in fact the horn of the legendary unicorn, symbol of chastity. The horn of the Rhino is not made of bone but of skin and hair tissue called keratin and was used by many cultures as an aphrodisiac. The skin of the Rhino could not be pierced by sword or lance and this lead to many legends written about the Rhino. "Thou shalt not conquer my army, as it likens to the skin of the mighty Rhinoceros and cannot be pierced with lance or sabre." A symbol of tenacity, vigour and concord, and may symbolize jurisdiction.

**ROBIN:** An Old World bird resembling the thrush and originally called Ruddock' or 'Redbreast'; symbol of domestic peace and tranquillity; also the mariner's bird of hope.

**ROLLER:** So called because this bird does backward summersaults in the air. Using the Roller as an emblem would suit one whom is unconventional in nature.

**RUFF:** As soon as a single female arrives and emits even a faint sound, the male Ruffs begin to fight violently amongst each other, and do so until there remains one victor, who claims the female as his prize. The Ruff is a warrior symbol and one that signifies that the bearer will fight to get what they want.

**SALAMANDER:** Fabled to live in fire. Francois I. of France adopted it as his badge and his motto is roughly translated to mean 'I nourish the good and extinguish the bad'; a symbol of bravery, purification, protection, immortality and survival. It is said that the word comes from the Persian for lizard.

**SALMON:** From the Latin, salmo, to leap; the leaping fish. The sacred Salmon represents the ancient sanctity of water, its power to destroy and create. At

another level it may stand for the troubled human soul, in its perpetual struggle to reconcile itself to itself; a symbol of perseverance. Legend states that the magic Salmon gained the power of wisdom by consuming the hazelnuts that dropped into sacred springs. Betoken on one of wisdom, knowledge and constancy.

**SARACEN:** A Bedouin tribe from Sinai, the term was more generally applied to Arabs and Muslims during the Crusades and the device is generally in commemoration of the wars undertaken by European Christians between the 11th and 14th centuries to recover the Holy Land from the Muslims. Pope Urban II received Alexius' call for assistance, but decided to use that call to advance a more ambitious plan. Jerusalem, on the East coast of the Mediterranean Sea in the modern nation of Israel, is considered holy land to Christians, Jews and Muslims, but in 1095, the city was controlled by Muslims. The message from Alexius presented Urban with an opportunity to retake the holy lands from the Muslims. The pope called for a "War of the Cross," or Crusade, to retake the holy lands from the unbelievers. The Crusaders were ultimately unable to reclaim their holy lands, but the wars had another effect. Western Europeans had left their homes to fight in a distant war. The stories of the returning Crusaders encouraged their countrymen to look beyond their own villages for the first time. Saracen is from the Arabic sharakyoun or sharkeyn (the eastern people), as opposed to Magharibë (the western people- i.e. of Morocco). Any un-baptized person was called a Saracen in medieval romance; in the Greek language, they are called Surakenos, and in Spain they are referred to as 'moors'.

**SAVAGE:** Indifferently termed, the Wild-man, or Woodman, the Savage is a large man wreathed about the head and loins with leaves, and generally carrying a club. The Savage, in heraldry, represented the forest and the wild, remote from human residence and improvements; the Savage, although uncultivated, was nonetheless feared and as such, was often used to denote protection. He is the icon of the untamed and the unpolished but he is fierce, ferocious and of savage spirit. The emblem is also a reminder that Christianity can tame the savage. The Savage represented one uncorrupted by the vices of civilized men and signified truth, fidelity and gratitude to their friends. The bearer was attempting to allude that even the feared Savage was at his disposal and would fight to defend his honour. The Savage was usually depicted as a very large almost Herculean man and the club was his defence. It is also important to note that the bearer also may have used the Savage as an emblem to allude to his family name.

**SCORPION:** The Scorpion is the symbol of both wisdom and self-destruction. The Scorpion's sting could also be directed at enemies and so amulets in the form of Scorpions were worn in many cultures as a protection against evil. It was thought that the Scorpion produced both venom and anti-venom. In some areas this made it an emblem of resurrection and constancy. Selket, the Egyptian goddess and protectress of the dead had the head of a scorpion.

**SEAL:** Usually only the paw or the head of the Seal is found borne. This sea animal was known throughout antiquity. The Seal was a regular inhabitant of the Greek coast at that time and regarded as a good omen and harbinger of promise. Seal-calf milk was prized as a remedy for the 'falling sickness'.

**SECRETARY BIRD:** The Secretary bird is a bird of prey, but unlike other raptors it has long legs, wings and a tail. The single species of its family, the bird gets its name from its crest of long feathers that look like the quill pens 19th century office workers used to tuck behind their ears....so it is said. As a premier snake (the devil) hunter, the Secretary bird, as a symbol, was used to ward off evil.

**SERAPH (seraphim):** An order of angels distinguished for fervent zeal, unconquerable will, and religious ardour and vivacity. It is said the word Seraph comes from the Hebrew verb saraph ('to burn'). They are depicted with three pairs of wings. One pair of wings is for flying, one for covering their eyes (for even they may not look directly at God), and one for covering its feet.

**SERPENT (snake, asp):** A popular symbol in heraldry the Serpent has always been a symbolical Deity, because it feeds upon its own body. It's been used since antiquity as a symbol of healing because when old, it has the power of growing young again, by shedding its skin. It was sacred to Aesculapius, and was supposed to have the power of discovering healing herbs. The ancient Greeks and Romans revered the symbol as a guardian spirit; a noted symbol of wisdom, cunning and sagacity.

**SHAG:** See Cormorant.

**SHARK:** In some cultures the Shark is a demon, both worshipped and feared as the ruler of the seas. It is symbolic of persistence and perseverance because Sharks have no swim bladder and must swim perpetually to keep from sinking to the bottom.

**SHELDRAKE:** A waterfowl somewhat larger than the ordinary duck. A Canting arms as it is said that this bird was introduced into English heraldry to accommodate Sheldon, Lord Mayor of London in 1676. He bore three Sheldrakes on his shield.

**SHRIKES:** They are avid hunters and generally get what is sought. They are symbols of determination and successful endeavours. The Woodchat or European Shrike falls in to this category.

**SKULL:** Privateers used the symbol to intimidate the enemy and their flag was designed to conjure up fear and dread. The ancients used the skull on burial sites to indicate that the debt to nature had been paid; a symbol of mortality and dissolution; fear and intimidation.

**SNAIL:** Snails were eaten by primitive man and raised for food by the Romans. In heraldry, it is a rare device signifying deliberation and steadfastness. The Snail shell was the Egyptian symbol of infinity.

**SNIFE (sandpiper, curlew):** An Old World bird of the sandpiper family with a distinctive 'piping' call. It was emblematic of a beacon announcing imminent danger or representative of an experience or expedition of a perilous nature. The Snipe and others in the species 'pipe' when rising to flight and are generally silent when at rest.

**SOLE (flatfish):** Seen occasionally in heraldry, the sole may be a symbol of plenitude, liberality and charity. The fish symbol has been used for millennia worldwide as a religious symbol associated with the Pagan Great Mother Goddess, and was also a noted symbol of early Christians.

**SPARROW:** Was a symbol of Aphrodite (Venus), the goddess of Beauty, Love and Pleasure who is fabled to have sprung from the froth raised by the genitals of Saturn, when cut off by his son Jupiter, and thrown into the ocean.

**SPARROW HAWK:** In ancient Egypt the keen-sighted Sparrow Hawk, was the symbol of the Sun and it is said that if one killed a Sparrow Hawk, you would be put to death. The Sparrow Hawk was revered by many cultures as a token and ensign of power and glory.

**SPHINX:** A mythical beast of ancient Egypt with the head of a man and the body of a lion, frequently symbolizing the pharaoh as an incarnation of the sun god Ra. The Sphinx was not peculiar to Egypt, as it was also a deity throughout the Middle East and Greece. The name 'Sphinx' (in fact) is derived from the Greek sphingo, which means, "to strangle". The legend states that if a man could not answer the riddle of the Sphinx, the Sphinx would then strangle him. In Greek mythology the Sphinx was a winged monster with the head and breasts of a woman and the body of a lion. In ancient Assyrian myths, the Sphinx usually appears as a guardian of temple entrances. The Sphinx is shrouded with mystery and secrecy and when the symbol is used in heraldry it usually denotes guardianship, divinity, and providence.

**SPIDER:** To Ancient Egyptians and Greeks, the Spider was symbolic of the fates that constantly wove at the web of each person's destiny. To the Christian, the Spider's web was representative of human frailty and the temporary nature of earthly existence and riches. In Greek mythology Arachne, challenged Athene, Zeus' daughter, to a weaving contest, and hanged herself when the goddess destroyed her web. Athene then changed her into a Spider, condemned for eternity to hang at the end of her thread. In heraldry the spider symbolizes tenacity of purpose, heedfulness, and cunning.

**SPOONBILL:** This striking wading bird fishes for its food by swinging its open bill from side to side in the water. Historically, this endangered bird has represented grace, freedom and humility.

**SQUIRREL:** The squirrel's common name can be traced back to the ancient Greeks, where Aristotle used the word "skiouros," skia meaning shade, while "oura" meaning tail. Thus the meaning "he who sits in the shadow of his tail" was recorded. It is said, centuries later, the French created a noun "esquirel" to describe this animal. From this the word "squirrel" was derived. It was a symbol of the 'soul' in Nordic myth and in medieval times it denoted one who was provident toward the future. It is also said that the first bearer was a lover of woodland, trustworthy and with a strong sense of duty. The squirrel's nest is called a 'holt' and the squirrel emblem may be an allusion to the family name of 'holt' as it appears in some of their arms.

**SPANIEL:** A Spanish dog, from the Old French Espagneul. The Spaniel is thought to have originated in Spain and was perhaps introduced to ancient Britons by the Roman legions. They were outstanding hunters that were both submissive and servile to their masters but fierce adversaries if challenged; a symbol of the hunt signifying loyalty, integrity and trustworthiness.

**STAG:** See Buck.

**STAR FISH:** In Christianity it represents Mary guiding the faithful through the storms of love. Seen in Europe as a symbol of the undying power of love.

**STARLING:** The word means small star. This common bird resembles a blackbird, but has triangular wings. Branwen was a Welsh Princess, mistreated by her Irish husband. She trained a Starling to take a message to her brother Bran in Wales. There followed a great war between Wales and Ireland in which Bran and all but seven of his men were killed. The Starling is associated with warriors due to its aggressive manner with other birds.

**STORK:** To many cultures a sacred bird and one lavished with symbolism. Storks are the sworn foes of snakes, hence the veneration in which they are held. Storks are also ancient fertility symbols and are typically associated with springtime and birth. In Germanic states, storks found human infants called "stork-children" dwelling in caves hidden in rocky steeps called "Adeborsteine" or "stork-stones," and carried them to their expectant parents. They are said to feed their elderly parents, therefore storks have long been symbolic of filial piety or gratitude. They are emblems of immortality and longevity, vigilance, contemplation, prudence, piety, meditation, and chastity. Aristotle taught that the jealous male bird would put an unfaithful mate to death for her transgressions. Christians regarded the stork as a symbol for Christ and His disciples because it was the terror of snakes that represented Satan and his demons.

**STURGEON:** In ancient times, they were both feared and worshipped; a symbol of the Greek goddess Aphrodite who was the goddess of love, beauty and fertility. The Romans considered Sturgeon the best tasting fish in the world and always served it on a bed of roses. The Sturgeon also known as the 'royal fish', was a favourite dish in medieval times. All catches were the property of the King, unless the rights had been granted to a local Lord and all catches should have been reported to the Coroner who would send the actual fish, or certainly the value of it, to the King. Denotes longevity, permanence and stability, and bestowed on one of Royal favour.

**SWAN:** The male Swan is called a cob, the female a pen, a young Swan a cygnet. Like the peacock and pheasant, the Swan was an emblem of chivalry; every knight chose one of these birds, which was associated in his oath with God, the Virgin, or his lady-love. In Greek mythology, Zeus took the form of a Swan to seduce Leda. The Swan has erotic associations as an emblem of Aphrodite/Venus. Swans drew the Chariot of Venus. The most famous belief about the Swan is that it only sings when it is about to die. The legendary Swan's song has caused this bird to represent music and poetry, especially that which is divinely inspired, passionate or tragic. The beauty and roundness of the Swan's body caused Nordic people to allude to it as the height of female grace and beauty. A Swan with a fish in its mouth represents the Devil snatching up and consuming the unwary Christian, and two Swans with their necks entwined stand for two lovers or friends united in a companionship.

**SWAN GOOSE:** See both Swan and Goose.

**SWALLOW:** It is said that the Scandinavians believed the Swallow hovered over the cross of our Lord, crying "Svala! svala!" (Console! console!)...and was thereafter called svalow (the bird of consolation). The Swallow was sacred to the Penates (Roman deities of the household), and therefore to injure one would be to bring wrath upon your own house. The Swallow has always been regarded as a harbinger of spring, a symbol of abundant harvest and happiness.

**TAILS:** The tail of a deer is called a 'single', that of a boar is called a wreath, that of a fox is called the 'brush' and that of the hare is called the 'scut'. In Heraldry you find the tail of a lion or of a beaver most prevalent, and to show the tail only was representative of an amulet of good fortune, believed to endow the bearer with the traits and characteristics of the animal.

**TALBOT:** Said to be an ancestor of the Bloodhound, the ancient Talbot (a name of Norman origin) is depicted white or sometimes golden brown. It is a hound that existed in medieval Europe, having long pendent ears and noted for his quick scent and his eager pursuit of game. It is said that the Talbot thrived on the hunt rather than the kill. By the 1600's, this strain of hound had died out as a breed. A forerunner of the modern fox and staghounds, they apparently had most remarkable powers of scent and were betoken on one of courage and

forecast, vigilance and loyal fidelity. Used primarily for tracking and hunting, it is said however, the British had Talbots run alongside coaches on the ancient highways; this might explain why so many pubs bore its name. In Medieval times, 'Talbot' appeared to be common name for any hound; in a quotation from about 1449, the king referred to John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury as 'Talbot, our good dogge', perhaps as a play on his name, or perhaps an allusion to the family coat of arms.

**TEAL:** A small dabbling duck, the ancient Teal were known for their swiftness and were popular as game birds. Representative of the hunt, the Teal fowl also signified earnestness and quickness of action.

**TERN:** Also known as the graceful gull, the Tern are harbingers of Spring and the hopes of a bountiful harvest, and have been used to represent one who is always optimistic.

**THROSTLE (Thrush):** Known as the concert singer because it has a wide range of songs. Lovers of music have been known to use the Thrustle as a representative symbol.

**TIGER:** The Tiger often took the place of the lion as King of Beasts in Eastern mythology. It's symbolic of royalty, power, and fearlessness, and was known to be dangerous if aroused. In China the Tiger is Lord of the 'land animals' and is an emblem of authority and power. The Chinese have long held the Tiger in high esteem and regard; in folklore, they called it "Hu-Fu" or 'tiger seal' and is considered undisputedly the king of all animals and one of the few important celestial beings after the dragon and phoenix. It is the emblem of some military officers, typifying war, might and courage. Evidence dating from the Warring States of China shows that the token used by emperors and generals for military manoeuvres was structured in the form of a Tiger. In Japan, although it is a mythical animal only, it is said to live a thousand years and was adopted as an emblem of the warrior class. In India, Durga rides a tiger, and Siva is often shown wearing a tiger skin. Bacchus (Roman god of wine) had his cart drawn by tigers, and tigers drawn by artists crouching at the feet of Bacchus, are documented well. Since antiquity, the fearless tiger has played a significant role in royalty and the military, and for centuries was the emblem of authority and power.

**TENCH:** A food and sport fish of the carp family, the Tench is a stout, small-scaled fish with a barbell at each corner of its mouth and a thick, slimy skin. The ancients believed that the Tench was able to cure injured fishes and was often applied to human wounds; a symbol of forgiveness, regimen and sovereign remedy.

**THRUSH:** A songbird symbolic of solitude and poetry. The poet identified with the Thrush by the semantic double meaning of the verb 'to sing', which literally

means to utter sounds and to write poems as well; a symbol of concord.

**TORTOISE (turtle):** Once prized as a major source of meat for sailors in the 17th and 18th centuries, the Tortoise is a symbol of longevity, patience and practicality; strength and time. It is also one of independence because it takes its home with it and is well protected. The name Tortoise (Lat. testuoo) is given to the ancient Roman protective shelter formed by soldiers with shields overlapping above their heads when attacking a fort. As the feminine power of the waters the Tortoise was an emblem of Aphrodite/Venus; also of Hermes/Mercury in Greco-Roman myth; sacred to 'pan' among the Arcadians and killing it was prohibited. Also, because of its hard shell, it was representative of one who was invulnerable to attack.

**TOUCAN:** This beautiful and colorful rainforest bird has been associated with evil spirits, and said to be the incarnation of a demon; the father of a new child must not eat Toucan flesh as it might bewitch the new-born child and cause it to fade away...so the myth goes. The Spanish weren't too sure what to think of the bird, but they did give it its name. Sacred to the Incas and revered by the Maya, the Toucan was a mystic symbol and a tribal totem; the medicine men considered it an incarnation to fly to the spirit world.

**TURKEY:** See Turkey-Cock.

**TURKEYCOCK:** The Turkey was tamed by the American Indian cultures in Mexico and taken from Mexico to Europe by Spanish conquistadors early in the 16th century. By 1524, the Turkey is known to have reached England and, by 1558, it was becoming popular at banquets in England and throughout Europe. It is a symbol of festivity, hospitality and resourcefulness. If only the feathers are borne, it is a symbol of pride and of distinction.

**UNICORN:** In Japan it is called Kirin, and in China Ki-lin. The name is based on the Hebrew word re'em, in early versions of the Old Testament translated as "monokeros", meaning "one horn", which became "unicorn" in English; a fabulous and mythological, and magical beast. Ctesias (Greek historian, B.C. 400) describes the Unicorn as a beast with the legs of a buck, the tail of a lion, the head and body of a horse, and a single horn in the middle of its forehead. Fable has it the horn is white at the base, black in the middle, and red at the tip. The body of the Unicorn is white, the head red, and eyes blue. Unicorns were elusive and mysterious creatures, said to be the personifications of innocence and purity, and as such were often identified with virgins. According to the legends of the middle Ages, placing a virgin in his haunts was the only way to catch a Unicorn; upon seeing the virgin, the creature would lose its fierceness and lie quiet at her feet. This is said to be an allegory of Jesus Christ, who willingly became man and entered the Virgin's womb, when He was taken by the hunters of blood. The one horn symbolises the great Gospel doctrine-that Christ is one with God. Aristotle called it the Wild Ass; Pliny, the Indian Ass; Lobo also describes it in his

History of Abyssinia. According to a belief once popular, the Unicorn by dipping its horn into a liquid could detect whether or not it contained poison. Amongst royalty and with the nobility in the Middle Ages, it became quite fashionable to own a drinking cup made of the horn of a Unicorn.

**VULTURE:** This unique bird derives its name from the Latin vultur, and although it does not kill its own prey, it is considered a raptor and a predator. It has a magnificent wingspan and an ability to soar effortlessly for great lengths of time. It is one of the most misunderstood birds, and yet it was one of the most powerful and mystical in many cultures. Tutankhamun, the famous Egyptian pharaoh, displayed the Vulture's head and the risen snake (cobra) as the symbols of his ruler-ship. The first letter of the Egyptian alphabet is represented by the Vulture symbol and is pronounced "ah". The Vulture is a very powerful emblem and is a promise that all hardship was temporary and necessary for a higher purpose. In Greek mythology, the Vulture is the descendant of the Griffin, and was the symbol of heaven and earth, spirit and matter, good and evil, a guardian and an avenger. The Greek god Ares, son of Zeus and Hera and the god of war used the Vulture as his bird symbol. The Vulture is the avenger of nature spirits. Ancient Assyrians believed the Vulture or griffin was the Angel of Death, and the union between the day and night. The Egyptian Goddess Maat is usually depicted carrying a Vulture and was considered the personification of the order of the world.

**WEASEL:** A ferocious fighter considered by some to be poisonous and unlucky. Ancient peoples believed that Weasels would attack by the thousands to avenge the death of a single Weasel. To counter this and instead of setting traps for the Weasel which threatened their livestock, they held Weasel festivals on St. Matthew's or St. Catherine's Day to honour these fierce creatures. They are symbolic of boldness and resoluteness due largely to their reputation of battling much larger enemies. The Weasels have long been considered spiritual warriors.

**WHALE:** This marine giant is strongly linked to the biblical story of Jonah and is an emblem of righteousness, repentance and majesty.

**WINGS:** Usually borne in pairs on either side of another charge and denote protection.

**WOLF:** Webster's (1828) describes the Wolf as "a beast of prey that kills sheep and other small domestic animals." Sometimes called the wild dog, the Wolf is crafty, greedy and ravenous. From mythology and story telling from all parts of the world, the Wolf has carried a sense of contradiction: a wild and fearful animal that can represent death and Satan; but at the same time a companion to the goddess Artemis and Scandinavian god, Odin. Throughout ancient history the Wolf was admired and respected as a symbol of strength, intelligence and courage. Neolithic artists duplicated its image on cave walls. Shamans sought

its power. Even Romulus and Remus, founders of Rome, were reportedly nurtured and raised by Wolves. Eventually, this noble legend became the "bloodthirsty savage" of European lore. Many cultures included the crafty Wolf in their legends. Vereticus, king of Wales, was converted by St. Patrick into a Wolf; it was an emblem of the tribe of Benjamin; the Chinese saw the Wolf as a guardian of the heavenly palace; in Japan the Wolf was admired for its ferocity, tenacity and swift attack, and was also considered to be from heaven and to be venerated.

**WOODCHAT (Shrike):** See Shrikes.

**WOODCOCK:** From the Middle English woodcock, of origin in the Old English words "wudu" for wood, and "cocc" for cock or bird. Highly esteemed as game birds and said to be a bird easily caught. Usually borne as a pun on the family name.

**WOODPECKER:** The Woodpecker is the guardian of the forest and heralds the rain and storms. Since Picas the Roman god of agriculture was famous for his divination skills and was associated with the Woodpecker, this bird became a symbol of prophecy.

**WREN:** The Druids considered the Wren 'supreme among all birds.' It was the sacred bird of the Isle of Man, formerly a shrine of the dead and the dwelling-place of the Moon Goddess who cared for pagan souls. In Scotland it was the Lady of Heaven's Hen and killing a Wren was considered extremely unlucky; however in England and in France the Wren was hunted on St Stephen's Day, where an ancient Christian ceremony took place. It is said that hunters dressed in ritual garb, hunted and killed a Wren, then hung it on a pole, taking it on a procession through the village demanding money and fortune. The Wren is generally accepted as a totem of good fortune and affluence.

**WRYNECK:** Name derived from the habit of twisting its neck around like a snake, when disturbed. Anciently used in the practice of divination and magic where the practitioner used a live Wryneck to cast a spell or jinx on an enemy. Those who bear it, enjoy protection, those who view it should beware.

**WYVERN:** The word Wyvern is an alteration of Middle English "wyvere" for viper, it is also from Old North French wivre, and a modification of Latin vipera. A mythical beast usually represented as a 2-legged winged creature similar to a dragon (much like a cockatrice but with the head of a dragon) and with wings and a barbed serpent tail. Considered a sign of strength to those who bore the symbol the Wyvern is an ancient token associated with Mercia and the old kings of Wessex. Mercia was one of the kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon England, consisting generally of the region of the Midlands. It was settled by Angles c.500, probably first along the Trent valley. Its history emerges from obscurity with the reign of Penda, who extended his power over Wessex (645) and East Anglia (650) to

gain over-lordship of England, South of the Humber River. Later, the Wyvern symbol was adopted by other societies including the Slavs and the people in the South-West Baltic. The Wyvern is symbolic of valour, strength, protection, warden-ship and dominion.

## CHAPTER II - INANIMATE

The following are some of the more common heraldic symbols and their meanings as suggested by some historians and heralds. Heralds have been known not to agree with meanings and interpretations. There are literally thousands of charges and devices. Here are some of the most often mentioned in blazoning.

**ACACIA BRANCH OR LEAVES:** It is said that the gods were born underneath the goddess Saosis' Acacia tree, north of Heliopolis. Horus (Egyptian God) was supposed to have emerged from an Acacia tree and as such this symbol was betoken on one to signify eternal and affectionate remembrance both for the living and the dead.

**ACORN:** Denotes antiquity and strength. Acorns hold high significance as a Scandinavian and a Celtic symbol for life, fertility, and immortality.

**AGRICULTURAL TOOLS:** Implements of husbandry representing one whom laboured in the earth and was dependent upon providence; see also Scythe and Sickle, Plough.

**ANCHOR:** The Christian emblem of hope and refuge; awarded to sea warriors for special feats performed; the Greeks and Romans referred to the anchor as sacred as it was always dedicated to some god. The anchor was given to Clement of Rome and Nicolas of Bari. Nicolas of Bari is the patron saint of sailors. Also signifies steadfastness and stability. In seafaring nations, the anchor is a symbol of good luck, of safety, and of security, and thus of trust and confidence.

**ANNULET:** The emblem of fidelity; a ring worn as a sign of Knighthood (Roman)...it stood as the symbol of nobility and jurisdiction, and was the gage of royal favour and protection; also a mark of Cadency of the fifth son. See Cadency.

**ANTLERS:** Strength and fortitude; once used as a symbol of divine power in Assyria, Mesopotamia and Egypt.

**ANVIL:** Denotes honour and strength; chief emblem of the smith's trade.

**APPLE:** Denotes liberality, felicity, and peace; temptation, fertility. In Greek mythology, Hera received an apple as a symbol of fertility upon her engagement to Zeus.

**ARROW:** An ancient and honourable symbol sometimes referred to as the emblem of affliction; martial readiness; if with a cross it denotes affliction; a bow and arrow signifies a man resolved to abide the uttermost hazard of battle.

**AXE:** See Battleaxe and Hatchet.

**BAGUE (ring):** 'Bague' is the French term for finger ring and is an emblem of fidelity (see annulet).

**BANNERS:** Signifies a special action or service in which the bearer was captured, or a reward for gallant service.

**BALLS (Cannon):** Bestowed upon those who have dared their terrors in sieges and battles.

**BAR, BARRY, OR BARRULET:** One who sets the bar of conscience, religion, and honour against angry passions and evil temptations.

**BARRY WAVY:** It is said that troubles keep us in continuous exercise and reminders of providence, as waves in a storm at sea.

**BATON:** The baton was a token of authority and used as a badge of office; symbol of title or rank.

**BATTERING RAM:** A heavy beam of wood with a head of ram at its point (others were iron tipped) used in ancient warfare to batter down the walls and gates of a place under siege. The battering ram was frequently in a wagon covered with drapery or hides, ornamented with fringes and even with devices. Awarded to the first bearer for gallant service to the sovereign or for a military victory; also assertiveness in conquest.

**BATTLE AXE:** A fighting axe signifying execution of military duty. It is said that the Celts first introduced the first metal axe-heads of a distinctive shape with a hole for mounting the handle. This is no doubt why archaeologists refer to them as 'the battle-axe people'.

**BAY LEAVES:** A wreath of bay was conferred on the Poet; it is also the victor's laurel.

**BEACON:** From the Saxon 'becnian' meaning 'beckon' or come together; the Mariners' symbol of hope. Betoken on one who is watchful, or who gave the signal in time of danger.

**BELLS:** Bells were believed to disperse storms and pestilence, drive away devils, and extinguish fires; hawk's bells denote one who was not afraid of signalling his approach in peace or war.

**BEND:** Representative of a scarf or shield suspender of a knight or commander; signifies defence or protection. See Ordinaries.

**BERRIES:** A symbol of liberality, felicity, and peace; (applies to most other fruit as well).

**BEZANT:** A gold roundle representing a Byzantine coin. Denoted one who had been found worthy of trust and treasure. See Roundles.

**BILLET:** Represents letters folded for transmission; denotes a man who obtained credence, knowledge and faith in his words and deeds and was secret in his affairs.

**BISHOP'S MITRE:** Denotes Episcopal jurisdictions and authority. If tinctured in black the Mitre is that of a Bishop (or Abbey), in red, that of a Cardinal, green, that of an Archbishop.

**BOATS (Ships, Lymphads, and Galleys):** They symbolize notable expeditions by sea, by which the first bearers had become famous.

**BOMB (Mortar):** One who has dared the terror of such a weapon in battle

**BOOK:** If open, symbolizes manifestation; if closed, counsel; usually represents the bible.

**BORDER (bordure):** A sub-ordinary. This bearing is of great antiquity and is often adopted as a difference between relatives bearing the same arms; or an augmentation of an honour.

**BOUGET (water-bouget):** A charge representing an ancient leather vessel used for carrying water to an army or to a besieged place. It consisted of a yoke with two leather pouches appended.

**BOURDON:** Also known as pilgrim or shepherd's staff. Usually borne in reference to early pilgrimages to Jerusalem.

**BOW:** A warrior ready for battle; always prepared for any challenge.

**BOW AND ARROW:** Denotes a man resolved to abide the uttermost hazard of battle, which to that end has furnished himself to the full.

**BRIDGE:** Signifies the cares and patient stability of magistrates or governors, who must endure the assaults, taunts, and envy of the discontented and vulgar.

**BROOM PLANT:** A sprig of this Anglo-Saxon medicinal shrub was chosen, as the badge of the royal house of Plantagenet, who are said to have derived their surname from the circumstance of one of their ancestors having worn a branch of broom in his helmet. Denotes humility.

**BUCKLE:** Ancient and honourable bearing signifying victorious fidelity in authority.

**BURGANET (Burgonet):** A steel cap or helmet anciently worn by infantry. So named after the Burgundians, (French Bourguignons) who were first to use it.

**BUSH (brush):** A term used for the tail of a fox. A Good luck amulet attached to personal possessions. In ancient times it was believed that it endowed the bearer with the cunning of the animal.

**CADENCY:** As the original object of armorial bearings was to distinguish one iron-encased warrior from another, it was also necessary to provide distinctive bearings for different members of a family all entitled to bear the paternal arms. This gave rise to the use of Marks of Cadency, or differences (called by the French 'brisure').

**Label:** A bearing closely resembling the strap with pendants which form the saddle crossed the horse's chest. It is the oldest mark of difference, but sometimes borne as a charge. As a difference, the princes of the royal house used it. The number of points did not necessarily mean anything, although the label of three points was supposed to represent the heir during the lifetime of his father; five points, during the lifetime of his grandfather; seven points, while the great-grandfather still lived, etc. According to the modern system, the elder son of an elder son places a label upon a label.

**Crescent:** A bearing resembling the half moon with the points turned up. When used as a mark of cadency it denotes the second son.

**Mullet:** A bearing resembling a five-pointed star. It is sometimes called a spur rowel, but it was in use long before the rowel spur. When used as a difference it denotes the third son.

**Martlet:** A fanciful bird somewhat resembling a swallow, but having short tufts of feathers in the place of legs. When used as a difference it denotes the fourth son.

**Annulet:** A ring borne on an escutcheon. Originally it stood as the symbol of nobility and jurisdiction, being the gage of royal favour and protection. In

describing the arms the colour of the annulet should always be expressed. When used as a difference, the annulet represents the fifth son.

**Fleur-de-lis:** Heraldically this is a flower, and stands at the head of the flowers of heraldry. Its origin is unknown; one "authority" claiming that it was brought down from heaven by an angel for the arms of France. It is also said to mean the flower of Louis (Fleur de Louis), and was certainly used by Louis VII. It is undoubtedly the "flower of the Lilly." Originally the royal banner of France was semee-of-lis (completely covered with fleurs-de-lis); but from the time of Charles VI it has consisted of three golden fleurs-de-lis on a blue field. The fleurs-de-lis did not at first meet with much favour in England, and did not become popular, in fact, until its assumption by Edward III. George VI, on his accession, abolished French quartering, in the English royal arms. When used as a difference the fleur-de-lis represents the sixth son.

**Rose:** The Rose, which is popular in English heraldry, is generally borne singly and full-faced, with five petals, barbs and seeds. When used as a difference it denotes the seventh son.

**Cross Moline:** So called because its shape resembles a millrind (the iron clamp of the upper millstone). It is borne both inverted and rebated, and sometimes saltire-wise or in saltire. When used as a mark of cadency it represents the eighth son.

**Octofoil:** A double quatrefoil: a leaf of eight points. When used as a difference it denotes the ninth son.

Inanimate continued....

**CADUCEUS:** The mace of Mercury, with wings attached, and entwined with two snakes; denotes balance and the union of opposing forces. It is a symbol of peace and healing.

**CALTRAP:** French heralds called it Chausse-trap. It is an abbreviated form of Cheval-trap: an instrument thrown upon the ground to injure feet of horses. One who demonstrates ingenuity and resourcefulness when faced with a stronger foe.

**CANNON (and Cannon Balls):** Said of one who has dared their terror in sieges and in battles.

**CANTING ARMS:** Canting, or punning arms, are derived from the literal meaning or from the sound of a name. They are bearings in the nature of a similarity alluding to the name of the bearer. Thus, the Castletons bear three castles, and Pope Adrian IV. (Nicholas Breakspeare) bore a broken spear, the Keyes bore keys, Wells used a water well, Archer bore arrows etc...the list is extensive. Although individually these charges may have specific historical symbolism, it

may be that the first bearer had in mind a pun on the name, and nothing more. There are however some instances where apparent 'canting arms' were not only an allusion to the name but had true symbolic meaning to the bearer. In most cases it is indeed impossible to know which of these gleanings apply.

**CANTON:** A Subordinary-Bearing of honour; when borne charged, it often contains some very special symbol granted by the sovereign in reward for the performance of eminent service.

**CAP OF MAINTENANCE:** Granted to British peers and Scottish feudal barons (see "Chapeau").

**CARNATION:** Symbol of admiration; hope and joy.

**CARPENTER'S SQUARE:** Given to those that in all their works there shall nothing be found done either rashly or by adventure.

**CASTLE (tower, chateau):** The emblem of grandeur and society, and has been granted sometimes to one who has faithfully held one for his king, or who has captured one by force or strategy. The castle of Western Europe was a Norman creation, stemming from the 10th and 11th-century 'Norman Mound' castles. A castle that became the model for many English and Norman castles was the formidable castle built at Arques in Normandy by Henry I of England. In the Middle East the Crusaders developed great castles with double circuits of curving outer walls and towers or turrets to overlook all sections of the wall. Early in the 13th century the medieval castle, a mixture of Norman, English, and Byzantine elements was born.

**CATHERINE WHEEL:** Said to have been used in the martyrdom of St. Catherine, and therefore it is the emblem of one who is prepared to undergo great trials for the Christian faith.

**CHAINS:** Reward for acceptable and weighty service; with crowns and collars, this suggests the bearer bore the chain of obligation or obliged others because of services done.

**CHALICE:** The receptacle of spiritual forces. It is associated with the element of water. Shown upright, the cup is ready to receive; shown inverted, it symbolizes birth and realization; a symbol of faith.

**CHAPEL:** When St. Martin divided his military cloak (cappa) and gave half to the beggar at the gate of Amiens, he wrapped the other half round his shoulders, thus making of it a cape (capella). This cape, or its representative, was afterwards preserved as a relic and accompanied the Frankish kings in their wars, and the tent which sheltered it became known also as cappella or capella. In this tent Mass was celebrated by the military chaplains (capellani). When at

rest in the palace the relic likewise gave its name to the oratory where it was kept, and subsequently any oratory where Mass and Divine service were celebrated was called capella, chapelle, chapel. Often awarded for special services to the church or as a revelation of faith.

**CHAPEAU:** Granted to British peers and Scottish feudal barons. It is a cap generally of red velvet turned up with ermine, formerly peculiar to dukes (whence it is sometimes called a duciper), but now often used to place crests upon instead of a wreath.

**CHAPLET:** A circular garland, usually woven of 4 flowers (equally spaced), leaves, and foliage, that traditionally indicated honour or celebration. The wreath in ancient Egypt was most popular in the form of a chaplet made by sewing flowers to linen bands and tying them around the head. In ancient Greece, wreaths, usually made of olive, pine, laurel, celery, or palm, were awarded to athletes victorious in the Olympic games and as prizes to poets and orators. In Rome, laurel crowns were bestowed as a mark of honour, especially on civil officials and returning warriors. The heraldic chaplet is a crown of joy and admiration, honour and celebration.

**CHESS-ROOK:** Heraldic symbol of a fortress signifying protection and strength; a representation of the chess piece resembling the coronal of a lance. It may have been granted to one who successfully shielded a leader in an engagement of war or notorious enterprise.

**CHEVRON:** See Ordinaries.

**CHEVRONELS:** Diminutive of the Chevron-Represents military stripes of merit worn by gallant soldiers.

**CHIEF:** See Ordinaries.

**CINQUEFOILS:** A five-leafed flower signifying hope and joy. In French civic heraldry, the cinquefoil is sometimes used to represent the plant, narcissus, commonly called the cinquefoil. In Scottish heraldry this symbol is called a fraise. Cinquefoils were held by the ancient heralds to represent various flowers according to the colours in which they were borne.

**CIVIC WREATH:** One who saved a fellow citizen's life or shown patriotism in defence of one's native land.

**CLAYMORE (Glaymore):** The word is derived from the Gaelic claidheamh (a sword), and mór (great); large two-handed sword popular in Scotland during the 15th, 16th and even the 17th centuries. These swords were popular also in Germany and in the Swiss states during the 15th and 16th centuries, although the term Claymore seems to have been restricted to Scotland. Said to denote

one who was of high military honour, equity and justice.

**CLARION:** Represents the ancient clarion. An emblem well becoming one who has bravely followed its sound in war; ready for the fray.

**CLUB:** A heavy stick, usually thicker at one end than at the other; also known as a cudgel; usually borne as a weapon of defence by savages. If shown as a separate charge or device it may have represented some special enterprise or experience to the first bearer; symbol of guardianship and propugnation.

## COATS OF ARMS (TERMS)

**Wreath (Fr: tortil, also bourrelet):** The wreath, technically speaking, is the twisted band composed of two strips of lace and silk by which the crest is joined to the helmet; the colors are usually the two principal colors of the shield. It is sometimes referred to as a 'torse'. It was, perhaps, copied by the crusaders from the wreathed turbans of the Saracens.

**Helmet:** Sometimes called a Helm, in French, a Casque. There were many different types and styles over the centuries. Note: the Helmet is not officially or traditionally part of a coat of arms.

**Supporters:** It is generally accepted that Supporters had their origin from tilts and tournaments, wherein the knights caused their shields to be carried by servants or pages, under the disguise of Lions, Bears, Griffins etc, who also held and guarded the escutcheons, which the knights were obliged to expose to public view some time before the lists were opened. The French refer to supporters as "supports" and "tenants", the former applied to animals, the latter to human beings.

**Shield (Anglo-Saxon: Scyld):** borne on the arm to protect the bearer in battle and to be recognized by his compatriots in the midst of the fight.

**Compartment:** A compartment is a carved panel, sometimes stone or earth and grass, or a period scroll; it's placed below the shield and it is where supporters stand.

**Crest (Fr: cimier):** A figure anciently affixed to the helmet of every commander, for his distinction in the confusion of battle. It's the portion above the wreath.

**Mantle (Mantling, or Cappeline):** In French it's called a Lambrequin. It represents the lambrequin, or covering of the helmet, to protect it from the sun or rain. Typically, the colors are the primary colors of the shield. Note: the Mantle is not officially or traditionally part of a coat of arms.

**Escroll (Scroll):** A long strip of parchment bearing the motto. When no motto is

available, the name is often found here. The motto can be below or above the shield. Note: the scroll is not officially or traditionally part of a coat of arms.

**Charge (Device):** Anything borne on a coat of arms, whether upon the field, as was more usually the case in ancient arms, or upon an ordinary, or indeed upon another charge. In french its called 'Meuble'.

## **COLOURS, TINCTURES, METALS**

**1--OR, GOLD, YELLOW:** Known as 'jaune'; symbolizes generosity and elevation of the mind; one of the two metals of Heraldry. 'Or' is from Latin aurum: the chief of the tinctures; it is called Sol by those who blazon by the sun and planets.

**2--ARGENT, SILVER OR WHITE:** Sometimes fancifully called Luna in the arms of princes, as also pearl in those of peers; peace and sincerity.

**3--RED OR GULES (Fr. gueules):** The term is probably derived from the Arabic gule, a red rose; introduced by the Crusaders. Some historians feel the word is derived from the Latin gula, which in Old French is found as gueule, i.e. the "red throat of an animal." Others, again, have tried to find the origin in the Hebrew word gulade, which signifies red cloth. Symbolizes a warrior or martyr; military strength and magnanimity.

**4--BLUE OR AZURE:** Bright blue, the colour of an eastern sky, derived from the Arabic 'lazura'; denotes truth and loyalty.

**5---GREEN OR VERT (Fr. sinople):** The French are said to have called it Sinople, from a town in Asia Minor (Sinope) from which were brought the best materials for dyeing green, or silks and stuffs of a brilliant green colour; signifies hope, joy, and loyalty in love.

**6--BLACK OR SABLE:** Derived from animals with black feet called Sable; signifies constancy or sometimes grief; mysteriousness.

**7--PURPLE OR PURPURE:** Royal majesty, sovereignty, and justice. It is the most majestic of colours. It has also been referred to as 'plumby' and 'porprin'.

**8--ORANGE, TAWNY OR TENNE:** Occasionally called 'brusque'; denotes worthy ambition. It is very rarely found mentioned, but was one of the colours forming the livery of the royal House of Stuart.

**9--MAROON SANGUINE OR MURRAY:** Blood colour, called by heraldic writers in the arms of princes Dragon's tail, and in those of lords Sardonyx; symbolizes patient in battle, and yet victorious.

**COLUMBINE:** Called the dove plant, columbine was also thought to be the

favourite plant of lions and thus was known also as Herba leonis. It was highly regarded for its medicinal values. In religious symbolism, the columbine signified the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit; the five petals of the flower formed little doves. Denotes courage and love.

**COLUMN (or pillar):** Signifies fortitude and constancy. A serpent coiled around a pillar would signify wisdom and fortitude.

**COMET:** Were seen as harbingers of devastating invasion, war, and conquest; also may signify the remembrance of a great battle.

**CONE, PINE:** The emblem of life amongst the ancient Semitic races, much like the Crux Ansata or key-cross among the Egyptians. See Pine.

**CORNUCOPIA (or horn of plenty):** The ancient symbol of the bounty of Nature's gifts.

**COUPEAUX:** Usually described as a mountain of three coupeaux or hills; can also be 6 or 10 hills. The reference to the first bearer was representative of locale and not to any other symbolism. Many communes had arms where coupeaux were blazoned, referring to the geographical nature and site of the commune, castle or domicile. It is doubtful the coupeaux had any other significance. Whether it was a mount of 3 coupeaux or 10 simply meant that there were more hills or hillocks involved. One herald impressed that the hills represented challenges accomplished.

**CRESCENT (or crescent):** Said to signify one who has been enlightened and honoured by the gracious aspect of his sovereign; symbol of 'hope and greater glory'.

**CROSIER / Shepherd's Crook:** The shepherd's watchfulness; Christian faith; pastoral authority; also Episcopal jurisdiction; service in the Crusades.

**CROSSBOW (properly called an Arbalest):** (Fr: arbalète, Ger. Armbrust, Crossbow). First introduced early in the 14th century, the crossbow consisted of a bow mounted on a stock that could be cranked or pulled into place using more leverage than could be used on a conventional longbow. The result was a very high-powered, lower trajectory weapon of great destructive potential. It fired a bolt, a shorter version of an arrow; an emblem of war and of great power.

## **CROSSES**

**Cross-Baptismal:** This Greek cross is superimposed on a Greek "chi", the first letter of the Greek word for "Christ." It forms a cross with eight arms. Since the number eight is symbolic of rebirth or regeneration.

**Cross-Calvary:** Was originally rejected by Christians because it was a pagan symbol. Some earlier uses of this symbol were as a sceptre of Apollo; with the phrase "Ptolemy the Saviour" and a sign of life to come in the Egyptian religion of Sarapis.

**Cross Celtic:** One of the most ancient of cruciforms; this cross was used by the Celtic Christians in Great Britain and Ireland. Symbolizes the unity of heaven and earth.

**Cross Constantine's:** (Labarum) Good omen; Christianity.

**Cross Crosslet:** Signifies the fourfold mystery of the cross.

**Cross Eastern:** Used primarily in the Russian Orthodox Church. The upper bar represents the inscription, abbreviated "INRI" that Pilate had placed above Jesus' head. The meaning of the slanted bar is lost in legend. One story holds that Jesus' legs were of unequal length, another that the earthquake that came at His death caused the cross to tilt. Another explanation (probably the correct one) is that the slanted bar forms St. Andrew's cross. St. Andrew is believed to have introduced Christianity to Russia.

**Cross Embattled:** This heraldic cross calls to mind the battlements of a fortress or castle, and thus may have been used as a symbol of the "church militant" (the church at war, as opposed to the church triumphant).

**Cross Fitchee:** (cross pointed at base) A combination of cross and sword; symbolizing unshakeable faith.

**Cross Fleurette:** Much like the cross fleurie/fleury, this cross is a reminder of the Trinity and of the Resurrection.

**Cross Flory (Patoncee):** Represents one who has conquered.

**Cross Fourchee:** This design reflects Christian piety and was popular as a decorative cross in medieval heraldry. The design ties to the age-old trust in the pagan magic of the forked stick.

**Cross Formee (see Pattee):** Denotes military honour.

**Cross-Greek:** One of the original forms used by Christians. (The Latin cross was not in popular usage until the eighth and ninth centuries.) Before Christianity, the Greek cross was an emblem of Hecate as the Goddess of Crossroads. The vertical was male; the horizontal was female - making it a plus sign of one-plus-the-other.

**Cross Jerusalem:** This complex form is composed of a central cross made of

four tau crosses representing the Old Testament law. The four smaller Greek crosses represent the fulfilment of the law in the gospel of Christ. This cross appeared on the coat-of-arms Godfrey of Bouillon, the first ruler of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. It was embodied in the heraldry of the Crusaders.

**Cross Maltese:** The badge of Knights; from the island of Malta, home of one of the world's oldest Goddess temples. This design directs attention to the centre, possibly to indicate earth's geographical centre, Omphalos, and site of the Goddess's chief temple.

**Cross Moline:** The mutual converse of human society; said to represent a millstone.

**Cross Pattee:** Was popular in medieval heraldry. It was a combination of the Christian (Greek) cross and Wotan's. This cross, also known as Cross Formee, was often shown as the insignia of the god Frey.

**Cross Patriarchal:** This is an ecclesiastical cross that is often seen carried by the patriarchs in works of art. The upper bar represents the inscription placed on the cross by Pilate; adopted by cardinals and archbishops as a hierarchical distinction.

**Cross Pommee:** This cross represents the Assyrian god Asshur, who ruled time and seasons. He was pictured with the faces of a man, lion, eagle, and bull, his four totems. The cross with circles was later used on Jewish amulets.

**Cross Potent:** Was a symbol of ancient Mesopotamia. The cross- potent, with a circle was the sign of the Assyrian heaven-god Anu. This cross is also called the Windlass, a term linked with it in the Middle Ages.

**Cross Raguly:** Denotes difficulties encountered.

**Cross-of St. Andrews:** According to tradition, St. Andrew felt unworthy to be crucified like his Lord, so he begged that his cross be made differently. It is a symbol of humility and suffering.

**Cross Tau:** Made from the Greek letter "T", is the simplest of all crosses. It is often used as the cross of Prophecy, or Old Testament cross, because it is the traditional sign that Israelites made with lamb's blood on their doorposts in Egypt on the night of Passover. A tau cross is often pictured as the pole on which Moses lifted up the brazen serpent in the wilderness.

Inanimate continued....

**CROWNS:** Are symbols of monarchy, state and power and denotes dignity and

accomplishment. The etymology is as follows Middle English coroune, crowne, from Old French corone, from Latin corona wreath, crown, from Greek korone/ culmination, something curved like a crow's beak, literally, crow; akin to Latin cornix crow, Greek korax raven. The use of the crown as a symbol of monarchy is of ancient tradition in Egypt and the Middle East. In ancient Greece and Rome, however, crowns sometimes made of leaves, were simply wreaths, awarded to victors in athletic tournaments or bestowed on citizens in recognition of an extraordinary deed. In medieval and modern times, the crown is generally made of metal, often gold or silver and inlaid with precious gems.

## **SOME CROWN TYPES**

**Antique or Ancient:** The ancient crown is often used to represent the days of the Saxons and at times the feudalistic period. It is usually depicted in Gold.

**The Eastern Crown:** Represents the crown anciently worn by Oriental princes. Baron's Coronet: is a plain circle of gold having six large pearls upon it, four which are seen in a drawing. Sometimes referred to an antique crown (as well).

**Charlemagne:** This crown having been borne by five kings of England as Arch-treasurers of the Holy Roman Empire.

**Duke's Crown:** Is a circle of gold richly chased, and having upon its upper edge eight strawberry-leaves; only five are shown in the drawing, two of them being in profile. The cap is of crimson velvet lined with white taffeta and turned up with ermine. At the top is a gold tassel. A coronet without the cap, and showing but three leaves, is called a Ducal (or Crest) coronet, and frequently a Ducal crown. Rarely a ducal coronet is shown with cap.

**Earl's Coronet:** Is a rim of gold richly chased, on the upper edge of which are eight strawberry-leaves, and the same number of pearls (5 showing on a drawing) set upon high points, so that it is readily distinguished from the coronet of the marquis.

**Hanover Crown:** The electorate of Hanover having been constituted a kingdom, the bonnet which had hitherto been placed over the insignia of that state was exchanged for a crown, in pursuance of a royal proclamation dated June 8, 1816.

**Imperial Crown of England:** The Royal Crown of England is adorned with gold crosses pattée and fleur-de-lis, cap is of crimson velvet, turned up with ermine, and surmounted by a cross pattée.

**Imperial Crown of Germany:** Is properly the crown peculiar to the German emperor.

**Mural Crown:** Formed of battlements masoned. Said to have been given by the Romans to the soldier who first ascended the walls of a besieged fortress. Symbolizes a defender of a fortress; a token of civic honour; one who first mounted the breach in the walls of a fortress.

**Marquis Coronet:** This coronet features a rim of gold richly chased, supporting four strawberry leaves and as many large pearls (or rather balls of silver (2 showing in a drawing) upon short points.

**Naval Crown:** A circle, having upon its upper edge four masts of galleys, each with a topsail, and as many sterns placed alternately. Some heralds say it was invented by the Emperor Claudius as a reward for sea service. Denotes one who first boarded an enemy's ship; distinguished naval commander.

**Crown Palisado (Vallary):** A name given to a form of crown with, as it were, palisades upon it, and hence said to have been given by the Roman generals to him who first entered the enemies' camp by breaking through their outworks. It is also called vallary, from the Latin vallus, which generally means the palisade surmounting the vallum.

**Viscount's Coronet:** A chased circle of gold supporting twelve, fourteen, or, as some say, sixteen pearls, but usually only seven visible.

Inanimate continued....

**CUIRASS:** The armour defence for the body. First Introduced during the third quarter of the 14th century and it became the premier defence of the 15th century. Consisting of a breast and back-plate, hoops of steel to defend the hips known as faulds, and tassets to defend the upper or front surface of the thigh. During the 14th century, the breastplate was often made from a single piece of steel and the back-plate from a brigandine, but during the 15th the breastplate was generally made in two or more pieces and the back in many pieces. It represented one who was unassailable, one of strength and might.

**CUSHION (pillow):** Marks of authority.

**CYPRESS (pine, yew):** Evergreen tree emblematic of death; the Egyptians considered this evergreen symbolic of hope in an eternal life beyond the tomb.

**DAGGER (dirk, rapier, and skean, or skene):** Justice and military honour.

**DANCETTÉ (or Dancetty):** A zigzag line of partition, differing from indented only in the indentations, being larger in size. Denotes water and may signify an important sea voyage.

**DANISH HATCHET:** Symbol of the execution of military duty. See Axe.

**DECRESCENT:** One who has been honoured by the sovereign; hope of greater glory (a crescent with horns to the sinister).

**DELFT (SQUARE):** Popular in German heraldry. To some ancients, the square was the earth, as opposed to the heavens. Because of its geometric perfection it denoted honesty and straightforwardness, equity, morality and integrity.

**DICE (cubes, gads):** Falls right however they be cast; emblems of constancy and equity.

**DROPS (Guttees):** One who has endured torrents of liquids in battle depending upon the colour of the liquid; sometimes used for the purpose of differencing.

**Or/Yellow:** gold--may indicate a generous deed or spiritual richness if borne on a cross.

**Azure/Blue:** tears--shed in a great battle over a lost compatriot or family member or the bearer shows some great work unaccomplished and deplored his unavailing efforts; also grief, loss.

**Vert/Green:** oil--symbolizes olive oil; peace and concord as in the olive branch.

**Argent/White:** water--usually denoting that while engaged in battle it rained down upon the bearer.

**Sable/Black:** pitch or tar--boiling pitch or tar was often poured down upon the assailants of castles.

**Gules/Red:** blood--referring to some bloody conflict in which the first bearer was engaged.

**DRUM:** Readiness for war.

**EEL FORK:** Used by ancient fisherman to catch eel in the mud where a net would not do. Signifies such action of merit, wherein both strength and policy are conjoined.

**ELM TREE:** Represents the power and mystery of nature; demands respect and reverence; the home of the gods; tree of sleep and denotes wisdom.

**ESCALLOP (shell):** This is the badge of a pilgrim, also a symbol of the Apostle St. James the Great. Denotes one who has made long journeys or voyages to far places; a naval commander.

**ESCARBUNCLE:** May owe its origin to the ornamental metalwork on the shield that was added to strengthen it. Denotes supremacy.

**ESTOILE:** Celestial goodness, a man of noble personage. See Star.

**FALCON'S (HAWK'S) LURE:** Denotes one who was fond of the highest pursuits. Hunting and Falconry were such pursuits in the days of Heraldry. The bell signifies a signal to recall the absent from afar.

**FASCES:** The Roman fasces, consisting of a bundle of rods (elm or ash) bound round the helve of a hatchet. The bundle of rods bound together symbolizes strength that is lacking in the single rod. The axe symbolizes authority and leadership.

**FEATHERS (Plume):** Ostrich feathers. When three or more occur, they are termed a plume or in French, a panache. When more than three heights (rows) occur, the term pyramid of feathers is used. Denotes willing obedience and serenity.

**FER DE MOLINE (Millrind, inkmoline, mill-ink, millrine):** Represents the iron which supports the upper millstone of a corn-mill, and carries the eye which rests upon the end of the mill spindle. Denotes divination, luck, and protection.

**FETTERLOCK (shacklebolt, shackbolt, or manacle):** A 'handcuff,' or prisoners' bolt. Signifies victory; one that has taken prisoners or rescued prisoners of war.

**Fire:** Ancient symbol of a ruler; also symbolizes the transforming energy of the Holy Spirit's actions; denotes zeal; was anciently connected with the universal worship of the sun.

**FLAG (standard, banner):** See Banner.

**FLASQUES OR FLANCHES:** A sub-ordinary given by a king for virtue and learning, and especially for service in embassy (the message or commission entrusted to an ambassador).

**FLEAM:** Representing an ancient lancet or bloodletting instrument; the fleam of St. Luke, denoting that the bearer may have been a physician. (A fleam is a sharp lancet, which was used to open veins).

**FLEECE:** Owes its celebrity to the classical fable of Jason's expedition to Colchis in the ship Argo to obtain it; ancient honour from the Knightly Order of the Golden Fleece.

**FLEUR DE LIZ:** Originally the white Lily and applied in early heraldic treatises to

the white flowers attributed to the Virgin Mary. Later the term was used also for the flower of the French royal arms, and subsequently to any conventionalized flower of this form and of any tincture. Denotes purity; light; represents sixth son as mark of difference or distinction. See Cadency.

**FLOWERS (lily, poppy, daisy, tulip, sunflower, lily-flower, etc):** The flower and the blossom are both symbols of young life. Flowers are associated with the sun, because the arrangement of its petals is reminiscent of the shape of a star. The flower is generally representative of beauty, hope and joy.

**FORK (pitch, hay):** Denotes laboriousness. Express image of a trade very vital to man, and their exquisite skill issued out of the plentiful fountain of God's abundant spirit; may denote an estate owner whose lands included agricultural farms; always willing and able to lend a helping hand.

**FOUNTAIN:** Represents a well or spring of water. Occasionally borne as an illusion to the first bearer's name, i.e.: Wells, Sykes, Weller etc.

**FRAMED SAW (saw):** The frame-saw was the instrument used by tree-cutters to fell trees in the days of heraldry. It may have special significance to the bearer as it relates to a great experience encountered; may also signify determination and the dependence on providence for the event.

**FRASIER-FRAISES (strawberry):** Usually represented by the cinquefoil (Scotch term for a Cinquefoil is a 'strawberry') but occasionally represented by strawberry leaves fructed (bearing fruit). An Anglo-Saxon symbol for a wanderer. The French word for strawberry is 'fraise' and growers are called fraisiers.

**FRUIT (apple, pear, pineapple, fig, pomegranate, hazel, walnuts etc.):** Signifies liberality, felicity and peace. Refer to individual fruits.

**FUSIL:** In its natural form and sense, is a spindle belonging to a distaff (the staff from which the flax was drawn in spinning) but in its conventional form it is an elongated lozenge. Denotes laboriousness; always with work in hand.

**FYLFOT (Gammadion):** An ancient figure to which different mystic meanings have been applied; said to have been known in India and China long before the Christian era. Signifies power, energy, and migration.

**GALLEY (Lymphad):** An ancient ship with one mast; a feudal ensign; notable expedition by sea, by which, perhaps, the first bearers had become famous. See Ship.

**GALTRAP:** See Caltrap.

**GARB:** A sheaf of wheat, or corn. It represented that the harvest of one's hopes

had been secured.

**GILLY-FLOWER (July-flower):** The Gilly-Flower was originally a lily and was bright crimson in colour; an emblem of chastity, innocence, and purity.

**GAUNTLET:** A glove of mail (iron). The custom in the Middle Ages, when one knight challenged another, was for the challenger to throw his gauntlet on the ground, and if the challenge was accepted the person to whom it was thrown picked it up. Signifies one who is armed for the performance of martial enterprise.

**GLOVE:** Falconer's or Hawking-glove. When the quarry is bolted the hawk flies fast in pursuit and seizes its prey with its talons, overpowering it through sheer strength of grip. If it misses, it is trained to return to the falconer's glove for a piece of meat. Usually borne on a shield by a bearer who was indeed a Falconer or one who successfully completed an enterprise involving a Falcon.

**GOLDEN-FLEECE:** A ram stuffed and suspended by a collar round his middle. See Fleece.

**GOLPES:** A purple roundel. Signifies a wound in battle. See Roundles.

**GORGED:** Collared around the neck; symbolic of high dignity.

**GRAPES:** An ancient symbol of hospitality and youthfulness; vineyard.

**GUTTÉE:** Drops, varying in colour, according to what is intended to be represented. See Drops.

**GYRON:** Two straight lines from the dexter fess and chief points, meeting in an acute angle in the fess point; a symbol of unity; the joining of forces to defeat an otherwise stronger enemy or cause. Gyron - from the Spanish 'Gyron', a triangular piece of cloth sewed into a garment. The usual number of pieces is eight, but there may be six, ten, or twelve or sixteen. Denotes Unity.

**HALBERT (pole-axe):** A weapon of the 15th and 16th centuries having an axe-like blade and a steel spike mounted on the end of a long shaft. See Axe for symbolism.

**HAMMER (marteau):** The hammer signifies that the gate will not yield without opposing resistance, as if it needed the repeated metal stroke, equal to the insistent in order to force the Gates of Justice and Charity. It is a symbol of honour and is also a symbol of the smith's trade.

**HARP:** Henry VIII was the first to assume the harp as the Irish device, and James I. to place it in the third quarter of the royal achievement of Great Britain.

Denotes a well-composed person of tempered judgment; contemplation; mystical bridge between heaven and earth.

**HARROW (Herse):** Used in husbandry (agriculture, farming). A farm implement consisting of a heavy frame with sharp teeth or upright disks used to break up and even off ploughed ground; to inflict great distress or torment on.

**HATCHET:** See Axe.

**HAZEL (tree):** In Celtic tradition, the Salmon of Knowledge is said to eat the 9 nuts of poetic wisdom dropped into its sacred pool from the hazel tree growing beside it. Each nut eaten by the salmon becomes a spot on its skin. The Hazel tree provided shade, protection and baskets; may signify knowledge, wisdom and poetic inspiration.

**HAWK'S LURE:** A decoy used in falconry, consisting of two wings joined with a line, to the end of which is attached the ring. Usually denotes one who is fond of the highest pursuits, such as hunting and falconry. See Falcon.

**HELMET (helm):** Resting on the chief of the shield, and bearing the crest; indicates rank: Gold, with six bars, or with the visor raised (in full face) for royalty. Steel, with gold bars, varying in number (in profile) for a nobleman; Steel, without bars, and with visor open for a knight or baronet; Steel, with visor closed (in profile), for a squire or gentleman.

**HILT:** The handle of a sword. See Sword.

**HOOK (fish):** The symbolism is typically that of "fishes" however the fishhook may also symbolizes the agency whereby one investigates the unseen; one who despite not knowing his enemy's strength will venture forth with confidence.

**HOLLY:** Holly is associated with the death and rebirth symbolism in both Pagan and Christian lore. In Arthurian legend, Gawain (representing the Oak King of summer) fought the Green Knight, who was armed with a holly club to represent winter. It is one of the three timbers used in the construction of chariot wheel shafts. It was used in spear shafts also. The qualities of a spear shaft are balance and directness, as the spear must be raised to be thrown, the holly indicates directed balance and vigour to fight if the cause is just; symbol of truth.

**HORSESHOE:** Signifies good fortune and was used as a safeguard against evil spirits.

**HOURLASS:** A symbol of time and time expiring; an ancient pirate symbol; death, mortality.

**HUNTING-HORN:** A signal horn used in the chase. Denotes one who is fond of

high pursuits.

**HURT (heurt, hueurt, hurtle-berry, huckleberry):** A blue roundle; some claim that it represents a wound or hurt, while others say it is a representation of the hurtleberry also known as the wortleberry. See Roundle.

**INCRESCENT:** A special honour received by the sovereign; hope of greater glory. See Crescent.

**INKHORN (penner, pen):** An ink-well. Signifies the liberal art of writing and of learned employment.

**INESCUTCHEON:** A coat of arms borne as a shield (escutcheon) of Pretence; superimposed upon a shield of arms in testimony of the claim of a prince to the sovereignty of the country so represented, or if by a private person, then as a sign that he had married the heiress of the family indicated.

**INK-MOLINE:** See Fer-de-Moline.

**IRISH BROGUE (Dutch boot, boot, antique boot, shoe etc.):** An Irish boot of un-tanned leather; the shoe being a sign of dignity and the shoeless foot a mark of servitude. The brogue is an Irish symbol of respect.

**IVY LEAVES:** Protection and healing; strong and lasting friendship; the ivy and vine were by the Romans consecrated to Bacchus, as the Myrtle to Venus, the poplar to Hercules, wheat-ears to Ceres, and Reeds to the river gods.

**JAVELIN (spear, tilting spear, lance, dart,):** If a stranger kept the point of his spear forward when he entered a strange land, it was a declaration of war; if he carried the spear on his shoulder with the point behind him, it was a token of friendship. Bestowed only on the valiant and well-deserving soldier. It is the emblem of knightly service and signifies devotion to honour.

**JESSAMINE (Jasmine):** Is the white quatrefoil and signifies hope, joy and a demonstration of attachment.

**JESSANT DE LIS:** A fleur-de-lis shooting out from the mouth of a leopard or a lion; conferred by Edward III during his wars in France, as a reward to some of leaders who served under him in his victorious campaigns. The lion of the English arms is swallowing the lily of the French coat.

**JUNIPER:** Protection against thieves, witches and evil; healer.

**KEYS:** Borne as emblems of guardianship and dominion. Denotes liberation, knowledge, mystery, and initiation. Silver (Argent) keys usually refer to temporal power, while Gold (Or) ones refer to spiritual power. In Christianity, it is the

emblem of St. Peter as the guardian of the gate of Heaven, and the key may either confine or release.

**LABEL:** See Cadency.

**LADDER (scaling ladder):** A military ladder with curved top. Denotes one who was fearless in attacking; used in warfare only by extremely brave soldiers; when born up against a tower, it symbolizes awareness to stand carefully on guard as the castle is continually assailed by our spiritual and corporal enemies.

**LADY'S SLEEVE (maunch, manche):** Used in heraldry from the custom of knights who attended tournaments wearing their ladies' sleeves as a pledge of love.

**LAMP (Tin workers, Roman, Ancient):** If not used for the purposes of profession (tin worker), lamps of this sort were used as vessels of light, and as beacons to ward off evil.

**LANCE:** See Javelin.

**LANTERN (falot):** Ship's Lantern; watchful; cautious; a great navigator of tormented seas.

**LATHS:** A bundle of laths is borne by the 'bricklayers' company', and also by the 'woodmongers' company, but not by any family that I know of.

**LAUREL LEAVES (branch):** In ancient times these leaves were used as remedies against poison and were used as tokens of peace and quietness. The branches were held in honour in the temples of ancient Greece.

**LEAVES (Bay, Ivy, Oak, Olive):** Oak leaves; antiquity and strength. Olive leaves; peace and concord. Ivy leaves; strong and lasting friendship. Bay leaves; the victor's laurel.

**LIGHTNING:** The classical preservatives against lightning were the eagle, the sea-calf, and the laurel. Jupiter chose the first, Augustus Caesar the second, and Tiberius the third. Bodies scathed and a man struck dead by lightning were said to be incorruptible; and anyone so distinguished was held by the ancients in great honour. The bolt of lightning is a traditional symbol of sudden illumination and the destruction of ignorance; it also represents a punishment of humans by the gods from the skies.

**LILY:** Emblem of chastity, innocence, and purity. See Cinquefoil.

**LIME TREE (linden tree):** The Crusaders brought the lime tree to France and Italy in the 13th Century. It is a symbol of life, vitality and energy; resurrection.

**LINES OF PARTITION:** There are many lines of partition between the fields. Some have documented symbolism others were merely added for artistic purposes or for purposes of distinguishing one shield from another. Nebuly or Nebulee; signifies clouds or air. Wavy or Undee; sea or water. Engrailed; earth or land. Invested; earth or land. Indented; fire. Dancettee; water. Raguly or Ragulee; difficulties that have been encountered. Embattled; fire or walls of a fortress or town. Dovetail; strength. Rayonnee; sun, radiant. Potent; determined through adversity.

**LOCK (padlock):** Symbolizes guardianship and dominion. See Keys.

**LOTUS FLOWER:** The lotus flower appeared in legends originating both from India and from ancient Egypt. The lotus is a flower that opens and closes each day. In ancient Egypt the lotus also known as the sacred water lily was frequently represented; it was associated with the life-giving power of the Nile River and with Osiris, lord of the dead. It is a symbol of purity, virtue and honesty.

**LOZENGE:** Denotes honesty and constancy. Held to be a token of noble birth. A Lozenge that is shown voided is called a mascle.

**LYMPHAD (Lymphiad):** See Galley or Ship.

**LYRE (Harp):** The lyre was the attribute of the Greek god Apollo. Hermes, who later became the messenger of the Greek gods and, as Mercury, became the god of merchants and thieves in Rome, stole some oxen from Apollo. The dispute was settled when Hermes gave Apollo his own musical instrument, the lyre; symbolic of one who was well-composed and tempered judgement; contemplation.

**MACE:** Originally a short mass weapon of battle not unlike a heavy club. A mace is an ensign of dignity and a symbol of authority and power. After the third quarter of the 14th century the club end was often made of metal and enhanced with metal flanges or spikes.

**MACE OF AUTHORITY:** During medieval times, the Royal Serjeants-at-Arms were distinguished by their power of arrest without a warrant. To an increasing extent, their Maces - originally ordinary weapons of war, similar to a club became their emblems of authority. They were stamped with the Royal Arms; and in an age in which few could read or write, the Serjeants effected their arrests by showing their Maces and not by producing any form of written warrant. Maces have since evolved to larger and more ornate Royal Arms and an arched crown surmounted by an orb and cross.

**MAIL (aventail, ventail, hauberk, haubergeon):** Defensive armour: Interwoven

links of iron wire riveted together to form a kind of defensive metal cloth, highly resistant to slashing but less effective against piercing or crushing wounds. During the latter 14th and 15th centuries sometimes the riveted links were interposed with solid links that had been stamped to halve the production time. Specialized armourers made Mail, and because it was easy to make, it was manufactured all over Europe. First introduced by the Romans during the latter days of their empire; symbol of protection; a great warrior ready for battle or symbolic of a great battle won.

**MANACLES:** See Fetterlock.

**MANDRAKE:** In ancient times human figures were often cut out of the root, and wonderful virtues ascribed to them. It was used to produce fecundity in women. Another superstition is that when the mandrake is uprooted it utters a scream, in explanation of which Thomas Newton, in his *Herball to the Bible*, says, "It is supposed to be a creature having life, engendered under the earth of the seed of some dead person put to death for murder." Mandrake are also called 'love apples', from the old notion that they excited amorous inclinations; hence Venus is called *Mandragoritis*, and the Emperor Julian, in his epistles, tells Calixenes that he drank its juice nightly as a love-potion; symbol of love, fecundity, gallantry and benevolence.

**MANTLING (or Cappeline, in French called Lambrequin):** This device of the painter/designer was created to give prominence to the coat of arms and crest and is considered in theoretical heraldry to represent the lambrequin, or covering of the helmet, to protect it from the weather. Typically, the colors of the mantling are the principal color(s) and metal of the Coat of Arms. See coat of arms section.

**MASCLE:** A lozenge that is perforated or voided. Mascles represent the links that composed chain armour and may also represent the mesh of a net. If shown to represent a mesh of net it denotes persuasion; if shown to represent the links in chain armour it denotes protection.

**MILLSTONE (mill-pick, millrind):** Signifies the mutual converse of human society, since the stones are never used singly, but in couples, each standing in need of the other's aid for the performance of its work.

**MIRROR:** Represented oval and with a handle: The mirror is a reflection of the soul; it does not lie, it is absolute truth. It is "man's knowledge of himself, the clear shining surface of divine truth, the gateway to the realm of inversion" (Cooper, 106). Taoists regard the mirror as the mechanism of self-realization, and Christians view a spotless mirror as an image of the Virgin Mary. For the Chinese, it is sincerity, and for the Buddhists it is the soul in a state of purity.

**MITRE:** See Bishop's Mitre.

**MOON:** See Crescent.

**MORION:** Antique helmet, originating in Spain in the 15th century and worn by infantry. When depicted on the shield, it denotes strength and protection; an ensign of a great battle won; also wisdom; security and safety in defence.

**MORTAR & PESTLE:** A vessel in which substances are crushed or ground with a pestle. The bearers were Knights of the Pestle and Mortar; Apothecaries or druggists, whose chief instrument is the pestle and mortar, used in compounding medicines.

**MOUND (orb):** A globe surmounted by a cross, used as a symbol of monarchical power and justice; part of the regalia of sovereigns.

**MOUND (rising or hillock):** On which crests are often under set, and usually for artistic purposes. Although occasionally, they were used to represent burial mounds and symbolized either remembrance or protection by the device or charge resting on the mound. Sometimes referred to as a Compartment.

**MOUNT (mountain):** Symbolizes constancy, permanence and enlightenment; an ancient symbol of the communication between heaven and earth.

**MULBERRY:** From the Greek moros (a fool). So called, we are told in the Hortus Anglicus, because "it is reputed the wisest of all flowers, as it never buds till the cold weather is past and gone." Denotes wisdom and the sagacity of good judgement.

**MULLET (star):** Usually 5 pointed however, in French heraldry the mullet is a six-pointed star. It usually represents the rowel of a spur. The mullet is also the mark of distinction of the third son. See Cadency. Is also said to denote some Divine quality bestowed from above. See Star.

**MUSHROOM:** An ancient symbol of good fortune; immortality.

**MUSKET (pot-gun):** The musket was the largest matchlock requiring the use of a rest to support its weight of 20 pounds. It is believed the Duke of Alba introduced the matchlock musket into Spanish service in the mid-16th century. By the 17th century, the English matchlock musket weighed 16 pounds and was 10 gauge. (Gauge is the diameter of a gun barrel as determined by the number of lead balls in a pound that exactly fit the barrel). Denotes readiness for battle, warden-ship; a rampart of honour.

**MUSICAL PIPES (tabors):** Emblems of festivity and rejoicing. A tabor is a small drum worn suspended from the waist. Often played with one hand while the other fingers play a hole-whistle, which is called pipe-and-tabor playing.

**MYRTLE:** Usually borne as an oval garland representative of the victors at the Julian Games; a cipher symbolic of victory. Also a symbol of conviction and faith as the ancient Jews believed that the eating of myrtle leaves conferred the power of detecting witches; and it was said that if the leaves crackled in the hands, the person beloved, would prove faithful.

**NAILS (passion, spike):** Borne in token of poignant suffering undergone by the first bearer.

**NARCISSUS:** Flower with six petals. Narcissus was the son of the Greek river god Kephissos; symbol of vanity, arrogance; also a symbol of confidence and self-reliance.

**NESTS:** A symbol of security and safety. The Pelican feeding her young in a nest is frequently found on European shields and crests.

**NETS:** It is said that the term fret, or rather fretty, should be used to represent the nets; an Honourable bearing, symbolizing persuasion, and often granted to commanders for valiant service to their sovereign in a Great War, or battle.

**NIMBUS (aureole, circle of glory):** A halo - a circle of radiant light around the heads of God, Christ, the Virgin Mary, or a saint. Type of aureole, gloriole, or glory. It indicates divinity or holiness, though originally it was placed around the heads of kings and gods as a mark of distinction characterizing authority and power.

**NOAH'S ARK:** In Christian ideology, this bearing was a way of saving believers from the "engulfing sea of godlessness" (Biederman, 17). In Heraldry, the Ark symbolizes hope and survival, prospects and aspirations.

**NUT:** See Hazel.

**OAK TREE:** An oak was often the guardian tree of a family. It is the emblem of virtue and strength and resiliency. Long associated with thunder gods such as Thor in Norse mythology; denotes steadfastness, endurance. Known as the holy oak by ancient Christians, denoting worship.

**OAR:** Signifies power, skill, and knowledge; a sign of respect and salutation. Often granted for successful enterprises at sea.

**OCTOFOIL:** An eight leaved flower; also called a double quatrefoil. A mark of cadency of the eighth son. See Cadency.

**OGRESS (same as a pellet):** See Roundles.

**OLIVE TREE:** This popular bearing has much symbolism. Chastity: In ancient Greece the newly married bride wore an olive-garland. Fecundity: The fruit of the olive is produced in vast profusion; so that olive-trees are valuable to their owners. Merit: In ancient Greece a crown of olive-twigs was the highest distinction of a citizen who had deserved well of his country. Peace: An olive branch was anciently a symbol of peace. The vanquished that sued for peace carried olive branches in their hands. An olive-twig in the hands of a king (on medals), as in the case of Numa, indicated a reign of peace. Victory: The highest prize in the Olympic games was a crown of olive-leaves. It is said that Athene (Minerva) and Poseidon (Neptune) disputed the honour of giving a name of a certain city of Greece, and agreed to settle the question by a trial of which could produce the best gift for the new city. Athena commanded the earth to bring forth the olive-tree. Poseidon commanded the sea to bring forth the war-horse. Athena's gift was judged the better, and the city was called Athens, hence the origin of the Olive Tree.

**ORDINARIES:** Are certain charges in common use in arms, and in their simple forms are bounded by straight lines. Their number has never been precisely agreed upon, but most heralds recognize nine principal ones, which they call honourable, namely, the cross, the chief, the pale, the bend, the bend sinister, the fesse, the bar, the saltire, and the chevron.

### **ORDINARIES-Symbolism**

**Chief:** Honourable ordinary occupying the whole of the top and one-third of the total surface of the shield, and it has often been granted as a special reward for prudence and wisdom, as well as for successful command in war. The chief betoken a senator or honourable personage borrowed from the Greeks, and is a word signifying a 'head', in which sense we call capitaneous (so named for caput, the head), a chieftain. As the head is the chief part of a man, so the chief in the escutcheon should be a reward of such only, whose high merits have procured them chief place, esteem, or love amongst men.

**Cross:** Faith; service in the Crusades. See Crosses.

**Saltire Cross or St. Andrews Cross:** Symbol of resolution; reward of such as has scaled the walls of towns.

**Chevron:** Protection; granted as a reward to one who has achieved some notable enterprise. Said to represent the roof-tree of a house, and has sometimes been given to those who have built churches or fortresses or who have accomplished some work of faithful service.

**Fesse:** Represents a military belt or girdle of honour. The word Fesse is a French word; and signifies the loins of a man. The girdle of honour may seem to have been in ancient time given by Emperors, and Kings, and their Generals of

the field unto soldiers, for reward of some special service performed by them. This Ordinary has been anciently taken for the same that we call Baltheum militare or a belt of honour. The bestowing of this military girdle was reputed very honourable because none were to receive it but men of merit. If a knight was disarmed of his Military girdle by his demerits and offence, he is there-with-all deprived of all Military privileges.

**Bar:** For one who sets the bar of conscience, religion and honour against angry passions and evil temptations; denotes some high excellence in its first bearer.

**Pale:** Military strength and fortitude; bestowed upon those who have impaled or otherwise defended cities, or who have supported the government of their sovereigns, and for standing uprightly for their prince and country.

**Bend:** Bearing of high honour; represents the scarf or shield suspender of a knight commander signifying defence or protection; granted to those who have distinguished themselves as commanders. The symbolism also applies to the Bends diminutives the Bendlet and the Cotise.

Inanimate continued....

**PALE:** One of the nine honourable ordinaries. It is a vertical line, set upright in the middle of the shield and occupying one-third of the field. It seldom contains more than three charges. Said to denote military strength and the governor of a powerful legion.

**PALET:** Diminutive of the Pale. See Ordinaries.

**PALL:** A figure having the form of the letter Y. It consists of half a pale issuing from the base, and conjoined in the fesse point with half a saltier from the dexter chief and sinister chief. It is said to represent a liturgical vestment worn over the chasuble by the pope, archbishops, and some bishops in the Roman Catholic Church. It is betoken by the pope on archbishops and bishops having metropolitan jurisdiction as a symbol of their participation in papal authority; secular tradition of emperors and other high officials wearing a special scarf usually of velvet as a badge of office.

**PALM BRANCH:** In pre-Christian times the palm was regarded as a symbol of victory, justice, and high honour. It is the symbol of Saint Anastasia. The palm branch became an insignia for all those who, martyr or saint, deserved victory over evil.

**PALM TREE:** Betoken on one as a reward for justice, as justice is long in coming to the virtuous. It is a symbolic tree of paradise. Denote righteousness and resurrection.

**PANACHE:** See Feather.

**PALMERS STAFF:** A palmer is a pilgrim privileged to carry a palm-staff; originally a branch of a palm tree carried by a palmer in token of his having been to the Holy Land. Palmers differed from pilgrims in that a pilgrim made his pilgrimage and returned to public or private life, but the wandering palmer spent his life visiting holy shrines, and lived on the benevolence of God. Betoken on one of faith.

**PANSY:** A colourful flowering plant. Pansy divination was said to be a method of fortune telling supposedly used by the Knights of the Round Table. It involved randomly picking a petal off a pansy and looking at its markings. Denotes love, freedom of thought and reflection, and also of good fortune.

**PARTI PER:** Arms divided by lines of partition (raguly, embattled, rayonnee etc) are referred to as 'Parted (or Parti) per'. Most contemporary Armorists drop the word parted (or Parti) and use "per" only. It is said these types of partitioned shields took their origin from the parti-coloured coats, which were actually worn as garments when Heraldry first arose. The symbolism lies in their tinctures, furs or patterns, and charges (if any are so blazoned) and not in the partition type or style; partitioning a shield in such a way was also a means of 2 or more branches of the same family being represented on one coat of arms or a reference to kinfolk such as the house of the father and the house of the mother etc. The primary aim of Heraldry was to produce the most striking effect at a glance, and the shield attitude (partitions) being adopted merely as a means of distinction between one coat and another.

**PHEON (broad arrow):** Barded head of a dart, javelin or arrow, pointing down, with long barbs that are engrailed on the inner edge. The order of the golden pheon was a kingdom level award given to those Outlands archers who the crown felt exhibited great skill in target archery, or who greatly enriched the kingdom through service in the practice of archery. Denotes dexterity and nimble wit; readiness for battle.

**PIGEON:** Were used as messenger carriers by the early Persians, Egyptians, Phoenicians and later the Romans. Betoken on one who is virtuous and also denotes peace and wisdom.

**PIKE:** A long spear usually of ash, with a small piercing head. The point was made first of flint, later of bronze, and ultimately of steel; the spear has been in use since prehistoric times, originally as a missile or lance type weapon. Up to 20 feet in length, they were popular with the Scots, Swiss and Flemings during the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries. Although the symbolism is the same as the lance; it is also said of the pike to be symbolic of the swift and straight current which carries away the foolhardy.

**PILE:** A Sub-ordinary, fitted for an engineer or for one who has shown great ability in any kind of construction; represents the large pieces of wood used by engineers in the construction of (military) bridges or of buildings on insecure or marshy ground. When only one pile is found borne on a shield it very much resembles a pennon or small pointed flag, and it may be that this was intended when only one is represented.

**PILLAR:** See Column.

**PINEAPPLE:** Originally called pineapple because of its shape and external appearance to that of the cone of the pine tree. As early as 1492 Christopher Columbus found pineapple growing at Guadeloupe and carried it back to Spain to Queen Isabella. Ancient sea captains would place a pineapple on their gatepost when returning from a long journey, to let their neighbours know they were home. It became the symbol of elite social standing and hospitality.

**PINCERS:** Honourable emblem of the smiths trade.

**PINE CONE (pine-apple):** The ancient Greeks and Assyrians viewed the pinecone as a symbol of masculinity because of its phallic shape. It formed the apex of the thyrsus staff, which represented both fertility and immortality. As the emblem of Artemis, it represented feminine purity. It was also the emblem of the Roman goddess Venus (Aphrodite). In Christianity, the pinecone forms the crown of the Tree of Life. Symbolizes immortality and fertility.

**PINE TREE (Fir):** The tree of life and humanity. A pine tree in the forest symbolizes long-suffering, steadfast friendships, and enduring fame. According to Virgil, early Romans decorated pine trees with little masks of Bacchus (a fertility god). As the wind blew the masks around, Bacchus was believed to grant fertility to every part of the tree the masks faced. It is said to symbolize immortality, resiliency, longevity, and rebirth.

**PIPES (music):** Festivity and rejoicing. See Musical Pipes.

**PLATE:** See Roundles.

**PLOUGH:** An implement of husbandry. Betoken on one who laboured in the earth and depended upon providence for the event.

**PLUME:** See Feathers.

**PLUMMET:** The weight used on a level. It symbolizes equity and upright action; denotes a virtuous person.

**POLEARM:** Any of a number of weapons with a cutting or slashing blade at one

end attached to a long pole for a handle. The halberd, guisarm, bill, bec-de-corbin, and poleaxe are all specific kinds of polearms, rising in popularity during the 15th century and into the 16th amongst the infantry. As charges they are generally symbols of power, guardianship and authority.

**POLEAXE (pollaxe, polaxe):** A staff weapon used by Knights. The blade was an axe-head, usually balanced by a hammer-type head, and surmounted by a steel spike. Used from the fifteenth century for foot combats. The shaft was of ash or other hardwood, mounted by an axe blade that had a forward point for thrusting and a thin projection on the back for piercing armour or pulling a horseman off balance. The poleaxe and halberd were specialized weapons for fighting armoured men-at-arms and penetrating knightly armour. It is said that pole in the name refers not to the staff, but to the Old English word *poll* which meant head. Betoken on one of dignity and repute; readiness for the ordeal of battle and the defence of purpose through allegiance to the sovereign; loyalty, conviction, unconquerable will.

**POMEIS:** See Roundles.

**POMEGRANATE:** From the Old English *Pomgarnet*, the garnet no doubt for the crimson coloured seeds of the pomegranate; sacred to Hera (Greek mythology), the daughter of Cronos and Rhea, and queen of the Olympian gods. She was worshipped as the goddess of marriage, women, and childbirth; her sacred emblems were the apple, pomegranate and peacock. The biblical name for the pomegranate was the *rimmon*, which is derived from the word *rim*, meaning to bear children. An ancient symbol of fertility and also of fecundity.

**POMEL:** See Hilt.

**POPPY:** Is represented in heraldry as a sanguine (blood) quatrefoil. The poppy has been the symbol of the dead and of sleep since antiquity. The poppy was a flower dedicated to the Egyptian Goddess Nix, who was the Goddess of the Night. They were also dedicated to Thanos, God of Death and his twin brother Hypnos, God of Sleep, as well as his Son, Morpheus, the God of Dreams. The seeds were offered to the gods during death ceremonies. Over time, the poppy became a symbol of sacrifice and of remembrance; also signifies hope and joy.

**PORTCULLIS (castle gate):** The frame of wood, pointed at the bottom, used to guard a castle gate, always emblazoned with chains on either side. It was one of the royal badges of the Tudors. Portcullises were generally controlled from an interior room on the gatehouse, raising and lowering it as required; symbol of security and protection.

**POT (vessel, pottery):** The function of most of these vases was to hold water, wine, and oil. Said to be a symbol of liberality and of charity.

**POTENT:** Similar to Vair. Composed of figures shaped like the ends of a crutch, arranged in rows, and of alternate colours. Mark of dignity.

**PRIMROSE (Quatrefoil):** The bearer of good tidings.

**PYRAMID:** It is said that the pyramid represented the primal hill upon which Ra (God of the sun, and one of the major gods in Egyptian mythology) climbed out from the waters of Nun (the primeval water that encircles the entire world, and from which everything was created, personified as a god). It is also said to represent the rays of the Sun falling upon the earth, providing sustenance for the Ba (the soul) of the king within. It is a rare device in heraldry but some writers say it is borne as a symbol of duration and longevity.

**QUARTER:** A Sub-ordinary; Bearing of honour for brilliant military service.

**QUIVER:** In ancient times, arrows were usually made of reed and fitted with metal heads. They were carried in leather quivers, and sometimes horse-drawn chariots were also fitted with quivers. A quiver is depicted in ancient Egyptian and Assyrian reliefs as holding approximately 30 arrows, or approximately 50 arrows when attached to a chariot; ensign of Diana, Roman goddess of the hunt and protector of children (Artemis is her Greek counterpart). It is both a symbol of the hunt and one of a valiant defender.

**RAINBOW:** A symbol of transfiguration; in Norse mythology the rainbow is Bifrost, the bridge between Midgaard, the world of men and Asgaard, home of the gods; a symbol of peace and concord and a sign of promise.

**RAPIER:** A small sword used for thrusting. See Swords.

**REED (slay, slea):** Instrument used by weavers and may indicate the trade of the first bearer.

**REEDS:** A long hollow knotted grass sacred to the mythological river gods. Syrinx was an Arcadian river-nymph who was pursued by Pan. To escape him she fled into the waters of her river where she pleaded the gods for help, and they changed her into a reed. Disappointed, Pan cut the reed into pieces of gradually decreasing lengths, fastened them together with wax and thus produced the shepherds flute, or "pipes of Pan", upon which he plays; lover of music and with a methodical disposition.

**RING:** See Bague.

**RIZOM:** Is the fruit of the oat and is a symbol of harvest, hope, and were used as emblems of the faithful.

**ROCKS:** Safety and protection; refuge.

**ROSE:** The early Greeks and the Romans inexorably linked the rose to love, beauty, purity and passion. The Christians adopted the Rose as a symbol of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and hence became a symbol of motherhood and purity. When shown stalked and leaved it has the added symbolism of protection because of the thorns. The Rose is the emblem of England and still the two counties (Yorkshire and Lancashire) replay the Wars of the Roses on the cricket field each English summer. In heraldry, the Rose is used as a mark of distinction for the seventh son. The Red Rose is one of the badges used for the House of Lancaster and is mentioned severally in the early days of heraldry in the reigns of Henry IV and Henry V. The White Rose was used as a badge by Richard Duke of York by his son Edward IV and was adopted by his descendants. The Jacobites also adopted it as an emblem. The Rose can be shown as a heraldic rose or as a natural rose; symbol of providence, divination, love, beauty, purity and passion.

**ROUNDLES (roundels):** The old heralds have attached various names and significations to these round figures. When of gold they were called Bezants, and represented ancient Byzantine coins. This bearing has been said to denote one who had been found worthy of trust and treasure. The white rundle is called a Plate, and denoted "generosity." The green was called a Pomme or pomeis, and had the same signification as the apple, when purple it was called a Golpe, and denoted a wound; when blue it was a Hurt or wortleberry, known in ancient times as a hurtleberry; when black it was a Pellet, Ogress, or Gunstone, and represented a cannon ball; when red it was called Torteau, and signified the communion wafer or Manchet-cake; when Tawney it was called an Orange, and signified a tennis-ball. A Guze is sanguine in colour and represents an eyeball.

**ROSEMARY:** This shrub has long been said to aid in the inclination to love. When Venus, the love goddess, was sprung from the foam of the sea, rosemary (or sea dew) would thereafter have amatory qualities. Rosemary is also an emblem of remembrance. In Hamlet, Ophelia says, "There's rosemary, that's for remembrance." In the language of the flowers it means fidelity in love.

**ROWEL:** A small wheel with radiating points, forming the extremity of a spur. A mullet, pierced, is said by some to represent the rowel. The spur was one of the essential tools a knight possessed as an equestrian, and they became one of the dominant symbols of knighthood. Prior to the late 13th century simple "prick" type spurs were in wide use, but during the last two decades of the 13th century and into the 14th the "rowel" spur gained wide popularity.

**SABATONS (Solleret):** Armour for the foot, usually consisting of articulated plates ending in a toecap. Plate Sabatons seem to have made their appearance in the middle of the 14th century, remaining in common use throughout the 15th and 16th centuries. In the early 14th century, the foot was defended by chain mail.

**SADDLE:** A symbol of the martial men that serve on horseback in the field for that by the means, and of the stirrups affixed, they may be able to sustain the shock of their adversary, as also the more forcibly to encounter him.

**SALADE (Sallet, Salet):** A helmet that rested entirely upon, and generally covered only the top half of, the head, and the rear of which tapered to a point and projected behind the head; a common helmet of the 15th century. Denotes wisdom and security in defence.

**SAVIN TREE:** Refers to the ancient juniper tree. In Lothian, in medieval times, giving birth under the savin tree was a euphemism for miscarriage or juniper-induced abortion; symbol of female virtue and a religious symbol of protection and of life.

**SCALES:** The scales of justice, order and balance have been symbols of righteousness since early times. Justitia, the Roman goddess of justice (Greek Themis), Rashnu, the Persian angel of justice and Nemesis the goddess of divine justice and vengeance, are all associated with the scales.

**SCEPTRE:** A staff used by the ancient Pharaohs as a symbol of kingship and is also a religious symbol of temporal power; throughout the ages borne to represent sovereignty and dominion.

**SCIMITAR:** A Curved Turkish sword. The Scimitar was Mohameds ensign and then it was changed to a crescent which has been the symbol of Islam ever since. When borne in heraldry, it usually represents an expedition and possibly a battle or conquest of an enemy whose principal weapon was a scimitar; emblem of battle and conquest.

**SCRIP:** Refers to a Palmers purse used to carry one ration of food for one day's pilgrimage. The first bearer was likely a palmer and the symbolism of the scrip suggests that God will always provide, and his that faithful servants will never go hungry.

**SCYTHER (sickle):** A hand tool traditionally used for cutting grasses and grains, consisting of a long, curved blade sharpened on one edge. The sickle is virtually the same but with a short handle. As with all farm implements and other instruments of husbandry these signify the hope of a fruitful harvest. It is said that the sickle, (and later the scythe), was a symbol of the cruel, unrelenting flow of Time, which in the end cuts down all things.

**SEAX:** A Saxon sword much like the Turkish Scimitar but with a circular notch on the back of the blade. There is much dispute as to the purpose of this notch. It is said by some that the notch lightened the blade without losing strength, while others are of the opinion that the notch made for a more devastating weapon.

Still others maintain that since the seax is both weapon and tool, the notch aided the bearer to accomplish some non-military task. Regardless of these mixed opinions Heralds are united in their view that the seax, as with all swords, are representative of justice and military honour. See Sword.

**SEMY or SEMEE:** Refers to a regular pattern of charges in staggered rows. They should look as if the shield was cut from a piece of patterned cloth with partial charges at the edges of the shield. The Number of the charges on the shield in this fashion is not relevant. As far as symbolism is concerned, the "semy" has no particular symbolism but the individual charge does. For example, A SEMY DE LIZ, would have the symbolism associated with the "fleur de lis". Semee's were generally adopted and used to emphasize the particular charge, and of course for artistic impression and distinctiveness.

**SEXTANT:** An Instrument used primarily for measuring the altitude of the sun and which enabled ancient mariners to determine their geographical position. The mariner's most prized possession was often his sextant. This measuring instrument was indispensable to all navigators, and long symbolized adventure and the discovery of new horizons; an emblem of direction, watchfulness, guidance and protection. The sextant is also closely associated with progress, because it expands the boundaries of knowledge and extends the limits of understanding.

**SHACKLEBOLT (manacle, fetterlock):** See Fetterlock.

**SHEARS:** Weavers shears; used in the process of dressing cloth and may be emblematic of the bearer's trade. The Greek goddess Clotho, the Spinner, spun the thread of life; Lachesis, the Dispenser of Lots, decided its span and assigned to each person his or her destiny; and Atropos, the Inexorable, carried the dread shears that cut the thread of life at the proper time.

**SHOT (chain shot):** A chain-shot was two cannon balls joined by a chain which when fired from a cannon revolved upon the shorter axis and were hence effective for mowing down masts and rigging. There were also other forms of shots including the bar shot which was a bar attached to two mortars and also the mysterious chain-shot shown in the margin, sometimes called the star-shot because of its shape.

**SHAMROCK (trefoil):** The word shamrock comes from the Gaelic seamrag for three-leafed. The trefoil pattern has been discovered in Mesopotamia and also on the royal couch of Tutankhamen (of the ancient Pharaohs). It was a symbol of three sun-disks fused together to represent the unity of the gods of the sun, water and earth. The trefoil is also the national symbol of Ireland. According to legend, Saint Patrick planted shamrock in Ireland because the three small leaflets represented the Holy Trinity. The trefoil in Arabia is called shamrakh and in Iran it was a sacred emblem of the Persian triads. Denotes omnipotence,

providence and perpetuity.

**SHAKEFORK:** See Pall.

**SHEAF:** May refer to a sheaf of arrows called a quiver or a sheaf of wheat or corn also called a garb.

## SHIELDS

**The Chief:** An honourable ordinary occupying the whole of the top and one-third of the total surface of the shield, and it has often been granted as a special reward for prudence and wisdom, as well as for successful command in war. The Chief betoken a senator or honourable personage borrowed from the Greeks, and is a word signifying a 'head', in which sense we call capitaneous (so named for caput, the head), a chieftain. As the head is the chief part of a man, so the Chief in the escutcheon should be a reward of such only, whose high merits have procured them chief place, esteem, or love amongst men.

**The Pile:** Fitted for an engineer or for one who has shown great ability in any kind of construction; represents the large pieces of wood used by engineers in the construction of (military) bridges or of buildings on insecure or marshy ground. When only one pile is found borne on a shield it very much resembles a pennon or small pointed flag, and it may be that this was intended when only one is represented.

**The Pale:** The term is from Middle English, from Middle French pal meaning stake, and from Latin palus for one of the stakes of a palisade or fort. It typically represented Military strength and fortitude and was bestowed upon those who have impaled or otherwise defended cities, or who have supported the government of their sovereigns, and for standing uprightly for their prince and country.

**The Gyron:** From the Spanish 'Gyron' and of Germanic origin, a triangular piece of cloth sewed into a garment. The usual number of pieces is eight, but there may be two, four six, ten, twelve or sixteen. It is said to denote Unity and an inseverable bond, as in many souls with but a single thought, or several hearts that beat as one. The Gyron, of course, limited in Scotland to the Campbells only, is rare in all countries other than the lands influenced by early Flanders that is to say Spain, Austria, Belgium etc. The Gyron has also been referred to as an Esquire. An Esquire was a candidate for knighthood, the term is from esquier, akin to French ecuyer and Italian scudiero, and some armorists believe that the Gyron was originally bestowed upon them (an esquire) as a sign of nobility and rank.

**The Fesse:** Represents a military belt or girdle of honor. The word Fesse is a French word; and signifies the loins of a man. The girdle of honour may seem to

have been in ancient time given by Emperors, and Kings, and their Generals of the field unto soldiers, for reward of some special service performed by them. This Ordinary has been anciently taken for the same that we call Baltheum militare or a belt of honour. The bestowing of this military girdle was reputed very honourable because none were to receive it but men of merit. If a knight was disarmed of his Military girdle by his demerits and offence, he is there-with-all deprived of all Military privileges.

**The Bar (barre):** The Bar is one fifth of the field as compared to one third for the Fesse. This charge is of more estimation than is well considered of many that bear the same. There are differing opinions as to the symbolism of this charge; said by some to represent a gatehouse of a castle or fortified town and therefore a symbol of protection and defence. It is also said that the Bar is for one who sets the bar of conscience, religion and honour against angry passions and evil temptations, and that it denotes some high excellence in its first bearer.

**The Chevron:** The term is from 14th century Middle English, from Middle French, rafter, chevron. It generally denotes Protection and was granted as a reward to one who has achieved some notable enterprise; said to represent the roof-tree of a house or the zigzag moulding, or group of mouldings, common in Norman architecture. It has sometimes been given to those who have built churches or fortresses or who have accomplished some work of faithful service; worn by gallant soldiers.

**The Bend:** The Bend seems to have his denomination from the French word Bender, which signifies to stretch forth, because it is extended between those opposite points of the shield. Yet in ancient Rolls we find the Bend drawn somewhat arch-wise, or after the resemblance of the bent of a bow. Notwithstanding this, according to some armorists, it does represent a Ladder set aslope on this manner, to scale the walls of any castle or City, and was bestowed on one of the first that mounted upon the enemy's walls. The bend is a bearing of high honour and to some it represents the scarf or shield suspender of a knight commander signifying defence or protection, granted to those who have distinguished themselves as commanders. The symbolism also applies to the Bend's diminutives.

**The Cross:** Referred by some as the crux a cruciando, because of the unspeakable torture and torment which they do suffer, who undergo this kind of death, the Cross was first adopted in general heraldic use by those who had actually served in the Crusades. The hundreds of smaller crosses borne in coats of arms are not considered ordinaries but simple charges. The Cross shown in the margin is taken to be the true Cross, which is taken to be the true shape of the Cross, whereupon our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ suffered; whose godly observation and use was in great esteem in the Primitive Church. This bearing was first bestowed on such as has performed, or at least undertaken, some service for Christ and Christian procession. The Cross is the express badge of a

Christian that he bears the same according to the prescript rule and will of his Lord and Master. Although Crosses may signify tribulations and afflictions there is comfort to be found in them to those that make a right use of them, and do undergo the burden of them cheerfully.

**The Saltire:** The term is from Middle English sautire, which is from Middle French sautoir or saulter to jump, or from Latin saltare. In the days of old the Saltire was made of the height of man and was driven full of pinnes (metal pegs), the use whereof was to scale the low walls of towns. From this interpretation, the Saltire was bestowed upon one who was successful in accomplishing such a military mission. The Saltire is also known as St. Andrew's cross as according to legend is that shape because the apostle Andrew petitioned the Roman authorities who had sentenced him to death not to crucify him on the same shape of cross as Christ, and this was granted. St. Andrew is Scotland's patron saint and the Saltire is today its flag and national symbol; from this interpretation the Saltire is in recognition of Scotland, its patron saint, faith and resolution.

**The Bordure (border):** Frequently adopted as a "difference" between relatives bearing the same arms and also used as an augmentation of honour. It is said that Moses commanded the Israelites to wear about the skirts of the garments, to put in mind of their duties touching their observation of his precepts in respect that the people were yet rude, and unexercised in obedience, therefore was the ordinary prescribed to them. This practice of differencing was adopted in Heraldry, for distinguishing not only of one nation or tribe from another, but also to diversify between particular persons also, descended out of one Family, and from the same parents. As previously noted, the Bordure may also signify an augmentation of honor bestowed on a person often in Royal favour by their Sovereign.

**Orle and Tressure:** The Orle and the Tressure are considered diminutives of the Bordure and bring with them similar symbolisms. The tressure 'fleury counter-fleury' (shown in the margin) however, was adopted by a Scottish King to commemorate that close alliance which existed between France and Scotland for so many ages. It is said that this tressure was anciently given to Achaius, King of Scots, by Charlemagne, in order to signify that the French lilies should defend the Scottish lion; as such the tressure has historically long been a symbol of preservation or protection.

**Flasques:** Said to be given by a King for virtue and learning, and especially for service in embassy (the message or commission entrusted to an ambassador); for therein may a Gentleman deserve as well of his Sovereign, as the Knight that serveth him in the field. The shape is called an Arch line of the Latin word arcus, which signifies a bow. The word Flasque is derived from the Latin flectus, which signifies to bend or bow.

**Flanches:** This is said to be one degree under the Flasque yet it is

commendable armoury. The word Flanch is derived from the French flans, which signifies the flank of a man or beast. It is said by some that both the Flanch and the Voider are diminutives of the Flasques. Although all are ancient degrees of honor few modern day armorists differentiate between them.

**Voiders:** This is the reward of given a Gentlewoman for service by her, done to the Prince; but when the Voider should be of one of the many furs or doublings, such reward might the Duchess have given to her Gentlewomen, who served her most diligently. It is said that these are called Voiders after the French word voire, which signifies a looking glass or mirror, which in Ancient times were commonly made in that bulging form.

**The Canton:** Termed a Canton because it occupies but a corner or cantle of the escutcheon. It is said that the Canton is a reward given to Gentleman, Esquires and Knights, for service done by them, and not to a baron. Other armorists maintain that the Canton may well beseem an Earl or a Baron receiving the same at his Sovereign's hand. Nevertheless, the Canton is bearing of honour and when borne charged, it often contains some very special symbol granted by the sovereign in reward for the performance of eminent service. A canton may be borne on the sinister side but is rare and the symbolism remains unchanged.

**The Quarter:** The Quarter is said for the most part given by Emperors and Kings to a Baron (at least) for some special or acceptable service done by him. Unlike the Canton (taking only a small corner of the shield), the Quarter comprehends the full  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the shield as shown in the margin. As with the Canton, the Quarter may be borne on the sinister side but is indeed rare.

Inanimate continued....

**SHIP:** Bearings of ships are often met with in Heraldry. They symbolize some notable expedition by sea, by which the first bearer had become famous. The single-mast Galley and the Lymphad or Lymphiad seem to be the most prevalent. There are also full sailing ships, pirate ships, Viking ships and much more. If a ship is borne without a mast it is said to denote tragedy at sea. The ship was also an early symbol of the church as a place where the voyagers of faith could gather and sail over the rough areas of life to the good destination God had for them. Other cultures believed the ship was like a planet or star revolving around its centre, it is the earth and the image of life. Man is navigating the ship as a symbol of life, determining both its centre and its course.

**SHUTTLE:** The shuttle is a simple stick on which the crosswise or weft yarn is wound. Associated with the Egyptian goddess Neith who was the patroness of weaving. The deceased received her divine power by means of the mummy's wrappings, for the bandages and shrouds were considered gifts of Neith. The bearer or an ancestor was likely a weaver; the shuttle has come to signify swiftness of action and destiny.

**SPADE:** A tool of agriculture and construction denoting subsistence, production and creation; symbol of honest labour.

**SNAFFLE-BIT:** That part of a horses bridle usually jointed in the middle, with a ring at each end to which a rein and cheek strap are attached; symbol of horsemanship denoting control, influence and jurisdiction.

**SPANCEL:** A noosed rope or wooden leg harness with which to hobble a horse and control its gait; used in Chivalry by knights to train horses for tournaments and other tasks. It has no specific symbolism other than its definition and is not borne as a separate device.

**SPEAR:** See Pike and Lance.

**SPEAR-HEADS:** See Pheons.

**SPERVER:** See Pavilion.

**SPHERE (globe):** May refer to the extent of a persons knowledge, interests, or social position; ones geographical domain or area of power, control, or influence; symbol of a fertile earth. The ancients attributed perfection to the spherical shape and considered the sphere as the symbol of perfection.

**SPINDLES:** An instrument of the weaver trade used to wind fibres in a continuous thread or yarn. In Europe from the 14th to the 16th centuries the distaff and spindle were gradually followed by the spinning wheel. It is said that the term Wife is from the verb to weave, the Saxon wefan, or German weben, and denotes one who works at the distaff or spindle. When a girl was spinning her wedding clothes she was simply a spinster; but when this task was completed and she was indeed married, she became a wife.

**SPUR:** Attached to the heel by straps, the spur was one of the prominent tools a knight possessed as an equestrian, and they became one of the ascendant symbols of knighthood. Prior to the late 13th century "prick" type spurs were in wide use, but during the last two decades of the 13th century and into the 14th the "rowel" spur gained wide popularity. It is said that the mullet device represents the rowel but I must say that the mullet existed long before the spur. Said also to signify preparedness for military engagement or readiness for an encounter of consequence; impulsiveness. If shown with wings as in the margin it has the added symbolism of covertures or protection and wings are hieroglyphics of celerity.

**STANDARD:** A flag or ensign. The ancient military standard consisted of a symbol carried on a pole. In medieval times the standard was not square like the banner but rather elongated, much larger, and featured a narrow, rounded and

slit end (unless the standard belonged to a prince of the blood royal). The Royal standard, which ranged in size from eleven yards for an emperor to four yards for a baron, was usually divided into three portions. One containing the arms of the knight, another for his cognizance or badge and the other for his crest - these being divided by bands, on which was inscribed his war cry or motto, the whole being fringed with his livery or family colours.

**STAPLE:** It is said that the staple usually refers to a door staple and although this charge is borne frequently for the sake of the play upon the family name, such as Staples, Stapleton and the like... it is however borne in other instances. When this is the case, the staple signifies reunion, communication and coherence.

**STAR:** As a light shining in the darkness, the star is often considered a symbol of truth, the spirit and of hope; its meaning depends upon the number and sometimes the orientation of its points. It is the ensign of knightly rank; a star of some form constitutes part of the insignia of every order of knighthood. The star is the "presence of the divinity". It is a symbol of constancy, celestial goodness and a noble ensign. Many cultures throughout antiquity have used the star as a talisman or national insignia. In heraldry it's also known as a mullet star. See Mullet.

**STAVE (pilgrims stave):** See Palmers Stave.

**STEEPLE (spire):** From Old English 'stepel', tower; or German word 'staup' (high tower) representing the heights of human aspiration and sublimation, of the path towards God.

**STUMP (stock of tree):** It is said that if the top or boughs of a tree be cut off, but the root is standing then there is hope of a new growth, a new beginning. When the root is plucked up there remains no hope of reviving and this was symbolic of fearful warning. A limb or bough of a tree was often used offensively to scale walls and also defensively to impede the besiegers.

**STIRRUP:** The adoption of the stirrup is commonly held to have caused a revolution in the use of the horse for war; a revolution which led to the feudal age and the dominance of the armoured knight mounted on a great warhorse. Noble symbol of the knight signifying gallantry, preparedness, horsemanship and conquest.

**STOOL:** Also known as a Trevet or Trestle in reference to its three tripod style legs. Amongst the heathens, Apollos priest was said to give answers from the oracle sitting on such a stool. Denotes wisdom, knowledge; hospitality.

**SURCOAT (surcote):** A garment worn over the armour to protect it from sun and rain, and usually blazoned heraldically. During the 14th century they were

gradually shortened from their 13th century lines. They started during the first quarter of the century ending at the knee, and ended the century ending at the edge of the hip. During the 15th century they were shortened further, and eventually abandoned in favour of a large tunic worn over the cuirass. The surcoat bears no particular symbolism that this writer could find other than the obvious symbolism associated with the arms or crests that may be embroidered on the surcoat.

**SUN:** Is usually borne in its glory, or splendour; associated with Helios, the young Greek god of the sun; revered by many cultures as a token and ensign of power, glory, illumination, vitality, and the source of life on earth.

**SUN RAY:** As with other symbols of the sun, a single ray also denotes power, glory, illumination, vitality, and the source of life on earth.

**SWEEP (swepe, balista):** The engine anciently used for casting stones into fortresses. It was the more formidable engine of warfare, similar to the catapult or mangonel. As a heraldic device it was used to commemorate a siege that the first bearer was famous for and to warn enemies that they should be heedful; this most powerful of weapons also denoted military strength, resoluteness and courage.

**SWORD:** The sword symbolizes power, protection, authority, strength, and courage. It is a symbol of knighthood and chivalry. European Knights during the period of Crusades, used swords that were less bulky and blades tapering for thrusting as well as hacking. Swords of the Teutonic Knights featured downward quillons that first appeared around the 11th century. To them, swords were the symbols of truth and honour and were bestowed on one of stature. In heraldry, differentiation of the type of sword is rare; however, you will find reference to the scimitar, the seax, the sabre, the claymore, the rapier, Irish sword etc. The usual form in Heraldry is a long straight blade, with a cross handle. Quillons can be pointing downwards, upwards, 'S' shaped, with cruciforms (cross shaped), fleur-de-lis tipped and more. Pommels can be round, square, ring-shaped (like the Irish sword) or other shapes. A sword can also be blazoned wavy, which may be symbolic of the Christian flamed sword. The changes in warfare associated with the introduction of firearms did not eliminate the sword but rather proliferated its types. The discarding of body armour made it necessary for the swordsman to be able to parry with his weapon, and the thrust-and-parry rapier came into use. The advantage of a curved blade for cutting was early appreciated in Asia, where it was long used by the Indians, Persians, and others before its introduction to Europe by the Turks. The Turkish scimitar was modified in the West to the cavalry sabre. At the other extreme of Asia, the Japanese developed a long-bladed, slightly curved version with a two-handed grip, with which an elaborate duelling cult, as well as ancestor worship, became associated.

**TABOUR:** A small drum formerly used to accompany oneself on a pipe or fife.

See Musical pipes.

**TAILS:** The tail of a deer is called a single; that of a boar is called a wreath; that of a fox is called the brush and that of the hare is called the scut. In Heraldry, you find the tail of a lion or of a beaver most prevalent, and to show the tail only was representative of an amulet of good fortune, believed to endow the bearer with the traits, and characteristics of the animal.

**TASSEL:** It was a tassel that was commanded by God to be worn on the borders of all Jewish garments. It became not only an emblem of Christianity but, one of authority, repute and majesty.

**TAPER-CANDLESTICK:** Has a spike, or, as it is technically termed, a picket, upon which the taper is placed; a symbol of the Church, which should be a light in the world. A symbol of any light-giving agency. The light which "symbolizes the knowledge of God is not the sun or any natural light, but an artificial light supplied with a specially prepared oil; for the knowledge of God is in truth not natural nor common to all men, but furnished over and above nature."

**TARGET (targe):** The Scottish Targe was a small circular shield, used by highlanders as a defence against both arrows and hand weapons. It was light and manoeuvrable, often concealing a left-hand held dirk (dagger). It was leather-covered wood with metal mounts, a central spike and leather arm straps symbol of a defender and the martial man; a Scottish emblem.

**TEA PLANT (or leaves):** Tea was considered to have an aura of the gods and was used as a combination of medicine and elixir. In China, in the eighth century, it entered the realm of poetry as one of the polite amusements. It is said that earliest samples of tea reached England somewhere between 1652 and 1654 when King Charles II ended his exile in Holland, and re-established the English Monarchy. When used as emblems the tea plant or leaf, denote wisdom, resolution and strength.

**TEAZEL:** The head or seed-vessel of a species of thistle; bearing a large flower head covered with stiff, prickly, hooked bracts. This flower head, when dried, is used for raising a nap on woollen cloth and is a symbol of the weaver trade. To the faithful they were known in some regions as 'Our Lady's Little Brushes', calling to mind Mary's motherly care for the Infant Saviour.

**TENT ROYAL:** This is the Royal war tent, which is more ornamental than a sperver and should have a split pennon flowing towards the sinister. The device was bestowed upon one as a laurel and achievement of war; a noble insignia. See also Pavilion.

**THATCH-RAKE:** An instrument used in thatching. In Europe thatched homes evolved during medieval times. Thatching is the use of straw or grasses as a

roofing material. In 1300 the great Norman castle at Pevensey (Sussex) bought up 6 acres of rushes to roof the hall and chambers; the marquee of a thatcher.

**THISTLE:** The Order of the Thistle represents the highest honour in Scotland, and it is second only in precedence to the Order of the Garter. It was to reward Scottish peers who supported the king's political and religious aims. The date of the foundation of the Order is not known, although legend has it that it was founded in 809 when King Achaius made an alliance with the Emperor Charlemagne. It is possible that the Order may have been founded by James III (1488-1513), who was responsible for changes in royal symbolism in Scotland, including the adoption of the thistle as the royal plant badge; symbol of independence, strength, protection and healing.

**THORN TREE:** Believed to be the plant from which Christ's crown of thorns was made from. See Thorn.

**THORN (crown of):** The origin and character of the thorns, both tradition and existing remains suggest that they must have come from the bush botanically known as *Zizyphus spina Christi*, more popularly, the jujube-tree. This reaches the height of fifteen or twenty feet and is found growing in abundance by the wayside around Jerusalem. The crooked branches of this shrub are armed with thorns growing in pairs, a straight spine and a curved one commonly occurring together at each point. The thorn tree and the crown of thorns are symbolic of Christ and of martyrdom.

**THRESTLE (perch):** Usually signifies a hawk's perch, consisting of two cylindrical pieces of wood joined in the form of the letter T. It was the symbol of a falconer or hawk.

**THUNDERBOLT:** Twisted bar, normally with rays of lightning behind it. If shown winged as in the margin it is the symbol of Zeus, supreme god of Greek mythology. In ancient mythologies, (Norse, Roman, Greek, Egyptian, etc.) the lightning bolt would be hurled by male sky gods to punish, water, or fertilize the earth or its creatures. It is a symbol of power, defiance of danger, and fortitude.

**THYRSUS:** A pole carried by Bacchus/Dionysus (the twice-born, the god of the vine), and by Satyrs, Maenades, and others who engaged in Bacchic festivities and rites, and was sometimes terminated by the apple of the pine, or fir-cone.

**TIARA:** The triple crown of the popes, known as a tiara, dates from the 14th century and is surmounted by a globe and a cross (an orb). It is a symbol of sovereign power, also honour, and especially the reward of martyrdom.

**TILTING SPEAR:** See Lance.

**TINES (tynes):** A prong or point of an antler. The symbolism is that, that relates

to the animal bearing the antlers. It is however said that the more tynes, the more power, strength and wisdom.

**TOBACCO PLANT (and leaf):** So named from Tabaco, a province of Yucatan, in Spanish America, where it was first found by the Spaniards. To the early Europeans, tobacco was first seen as a "cure-all" medicine and used to treat all kinds of disease. It was (ironically) a symbol of healing and purification.

**TOMB-STONE:** Derived from the Greek tymbos [burial ground]. Denotes constancy, inspiration, bereavement; mortality.

**TON (or tun):** Large cask for holding liquids, especially wine, ale, or beer. See Barrel.

**TORCE (torse, wreath):** A wreath of twisted skeins of silks of two alternating tinctures, usually a metal and a colour, depicted supporting a crest, often upon a helmet but occasionally borne separately. The wreath is also an ancient head ornament of the Saracens and Turks and may represent a notable expedition involving these tribes.

**TORCH (flambeau, fire-brand):** A light to be carried in the hand, consisting usually of twisted flax or the like soaked with tallow, ignited at the upper end. It is a symbol of the source of illumination, enlightenment, and guidance; often referred to as the torch of learning.

**TORN:** An ancient name for a spinning wheel. It is said the spinning wheel was probably invented in India, though its origins are obscure. It reached Europe via the Middle East in the European Middle Ages. The Saxon, or Saxony wheel, introduced in Europe at the beginning of the 16th century, incorporated a bobbin on which the yarn was wound continuously; the distaff on which the raw fibre was held became a stationary vertical rod, and the wheel was actuated by a foot treadle, thus freeing both of the operator's hands. Another of the many weavers symbols often found in heraldry. Other than being an emblem representative of the trade, the spinning wheel has no heraldic symbolism that the author could find.

**TORTEAU:** A red roundel. See Roundles.

**TOWER:** A castle tower. See Castle.

**TREFOIL:** A three-leaved figure usually slipped at the base and symbolic of perpetuity.

**TRESSURE, TRESSURE FLORY COUNTER-FLORY:** Preservation or protection. The tressure fleury counter-fleury was adopted by a Scottish King to commemorate that close alliance which existed between France and Scotland for

so many ages.

**TRESTLE:** A stool of three legs. Can be shown in different ways. See Stool.

**TRIANGLE:** The triangle was a symbol for God. In Christian symbolism it stands for the Holy Trinity. It is also a symbol for power and, as such, related to danger. However, according to the law of the polarity of meanings of the elementary graphs, it also means success, prosperity, and safety. The Hittites used it to mean well, good, or healthy.

**TRIDENT:** The staff of Poseidon (in Greece) and the staff of Neptune (in the Roman Empire) are referred to as tridents. Poseidon was the younger brother of Zeus and master of the seas, rivers, and earthquakes in Greek mythology. The symbol was representative of seniority and supremacy by sea. In the Euphrates-Tigris region and along the eastern Mediterranean coast the trident has since time immemorial been a symbol of thunder and lightning. In Christian art the trident is an attribute of lesser devils and the Evil One, the staff of the Devil.

**TRIMOUNT:** A stylized hillock of three mounds in base; was probably rendered in the earliest coats of arms as a natural mountain having three summits; popular in Italian Heraldry. See Mount and Mound.

**TROWEL:** A tool used to work mortar and symbolic of the stone masons trade. This emblem serves as a reminder that we should always endeavour to build and improve ourselves; it is also a symbol of unity and peace; an ancient symbol, of the Freemasons and also of the church.

**TRUMPET:** Throughout Europe trumpeters had become a powerful, organized body of musicians employed directly by the king as a symbol of his own importance and also to entertain the court. The tradition of an elite trumpet corps stretches back to the middle Ages. The trumpet was used also.

**TURNIP:** The ancient Celts made candle lanterns out of hollowed out turnips, in the days when few households did not have enough glass-sided metal lamps to provide one for each of the family members to carry. Older children and young adults carried these lanterns (fastened to wooden staves) out into the night to light the path from the local graveyards to the dwellings, so that the departed souls did not lose their way in the darkness; symbol of remembrance.

**VAIR:** Blue and white bell-shaped objects; said to be the skin of an animal of the weasel kind called Varus which was once used for the lining of military coats (fr. vairé); generally written vairy when definite tinctures are named; when no tinctures mentioned one assumes argent and azure. As with all heraldic furs the Vair is a mark of dignity.

**VANE:** A plate placed on a spindle, at the top of a spire, for the purpose of

showing by its turning and direction, which way the wind blows; symbol of promise, guidance and safety.

**VASE (urn):** The Vase or Urn is a symbol for the receptacle of the spirit (ashes of the dead), and since a vase may also contain living elements such as flowers, it may symbolize nature's bounty awaiting fulfillment. The vessel generally denotes openness, and validity. Historically, ceremonial urns containing consecrated elements such as oils, wine, etc were an intrinsic feature in religious rituals of consecration as well as divination to the gods.

**VINE:** Usually depicted as a grape vine, this charge symbolizes promise, frolic and bounty.

**VIOLIN:** In Europe, the violin can be traced back to the 9th century, with its origin possibly in Asia. The violin emerged in its definitive form between 1520 and 1550 in northern Italy. It symbolizes harmony and stability in life, music, contentment and joy. Believed by some to be one of the most perfect instruments ever invented and hence a symbol of perfection.

**WAGON (war-cart):** A symbol of sovereignty, territory.

**WALLET:** See Scrip.

**WALNUT:** Different nuts had their own specific symbolic qualities, for example the walnut was considered good for the brain because of its sympathetic shape. It was to some, an evil talisman but to other a symbol of intellect; stratagem.

**WATER-BOUQUET:** See Bouquet.

**WEEL (fish-weel, fish basket):** A device used to catch fish; fertility, abundance, resurrection.

**WELL:** The well was viewed as a shrine dedicated to the miraculous emergence of living water, and in most cultures was a symbol of generation, purification, and the matrix of life itself.

**WHEEL:** The wagon wheel is symbolic of transportation, successful journeys and expeditions, and also perpetuity.

**WILLOW:** Known as the tree of enchantment to some and a totem of grief and mourning to others. Eastern cultures revered the willow as a symbol of beauty, grace, endurance and strength.

**WREATH:** Generally a symbol of victory and to some, immortality, although a laurel wreath is a symbol of triumph, an oak laurel signified strength, rosemary, remembrance, etc.

**YEW:** Known as the sacred yew, it can signify both death and longevity. Bulls sacrificed to Hecate in Rome were wreathed in yew. In Ireland, as wine barrels are made from yew staves, it is considered the coffin of the vine. Its prime use, however, was in bow making and dagger handles. Old British legends suggest that yew trees were planted in churchyard burial grounds to help resurrect the dead. It is known that the yew is the latest to reach full maturity, lives longer than the oak and has extended powers of endurance and resistance to decay and corruption. As a symbolic tree of faith and resurrection, it is said that Old England referred to it as the witches' tree.

**YOKE:** A symbol of agriculture, servitude and obedience. Throughout the Old Testament, the yoke is a symbol of oppression. We find it as early as the story of Jacob and Esau, with a prophecy that at some time in the future Esau will gain the dominion and "break the yoke" from off his neck. (Genesis 27:40).