

Heraldry and Coats of Arms

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Today We Will Cover

- What is Heraldry?
- Types of Arms and Armigers
- A Brief History of Heraldry, or Why Some Arms are Rare and Others Common
- The Impact of Heraldic Authorities on the Rarity of Arms
- The Heraldic Achievement
- Example of a Blazon
- The Laws of Heraldry Control the Appearance of Arms
- The Laws of Heraldry control the Bearing of Arms
- Odds of finding you are an heir to Arms
- Proving a Right to Use Your Ancestor's Arms
- A Case Study in Proving Descent from an Armiger

What is Heraldry?

- Heraldry is a European **system of visual identification** of person, rank and pedigree which began with the great feudal barons in the 1100's.
- Visual identification is achieved through a device called the Heraldic Achievement in which **the Coat of Arms is the key**.
- Full Achievements and Coats of Arms also came to **serve as seals** to authenticate legal documents.

Types of Arms and Armigers

- There are two ways Arms are can be created.
 - Arms can be “**Assumed**”: these are Arms created privately for the bearer.
 - Arms can be “**Granted**”: these are Arms granted by a Heraldic Authority.
- There are two types of Armigers (people who bear Arms).
 - **Personal Arms**: Arms belonging to a person.
 - **Non-Personal Arms**: Arms of Cities, Businesses, Universities, Military units, etc.
- Today we will focus on Granted Personal Arms.

A Brief History of Heraldry

1100 1200 1300 1400 1500 Today



Feudal Lords created Arms for identification and as seals for legal documents.

The Laws of Heraldry begin to codify appearance and usage rights.

The use of Arms spread in the 1200's and 1300's to the lesser nobility, knights and landed gentry, and on to civic officials, clergy, merchants and other free men.

Monarchs in Europe grew concerned about the widespread use of Arms but only in the British Isles were strong Heraldic Authorities established.

Henry VIII implemented "Visitations" to:

- verify Arms were rightfully owned
- record the Arms and owner's pedigree
- suppress the use of all other Arms

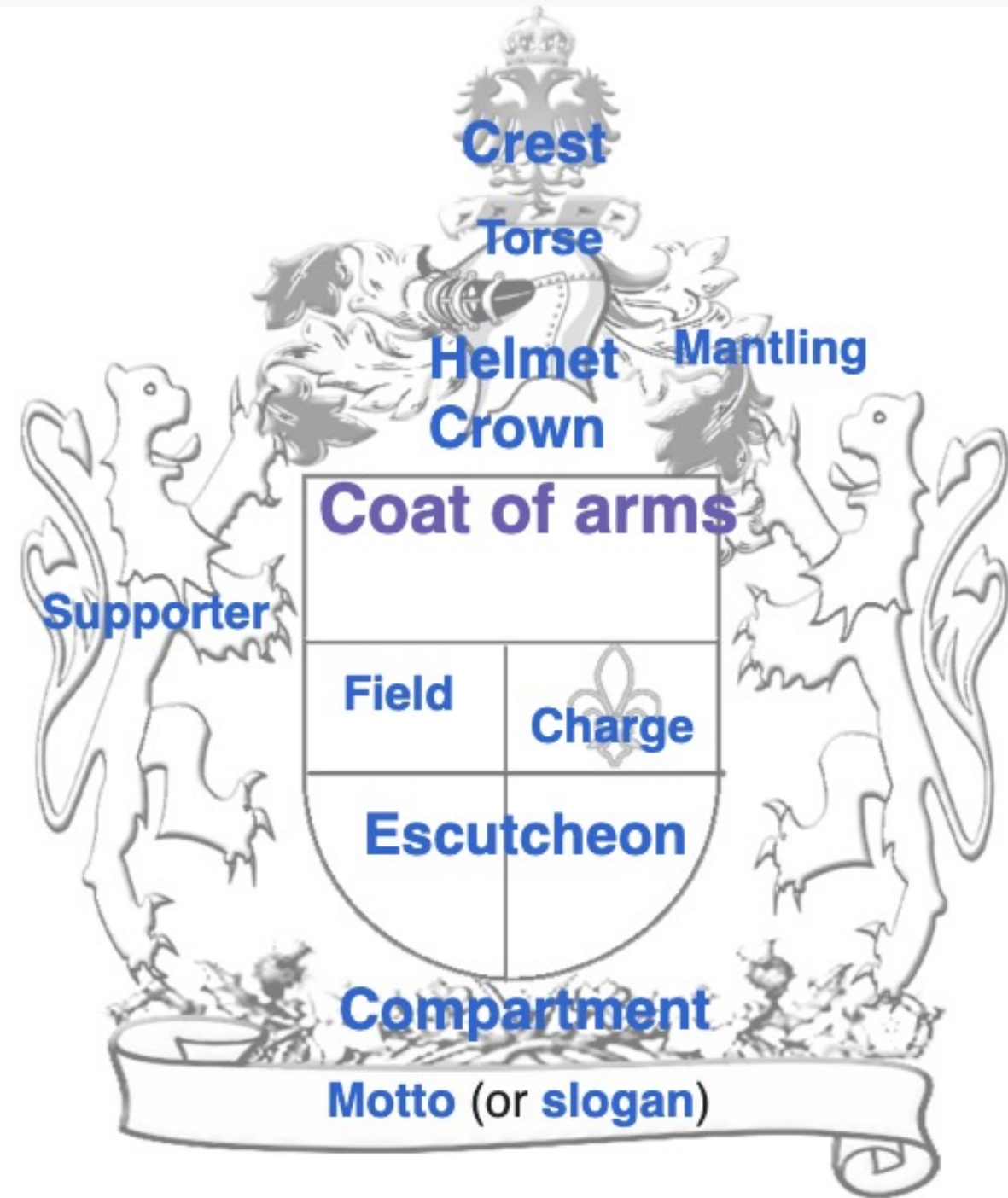
Outside the British Isles, Heraldic Authorities were not empowered to suppress the use of Arms by commoners.

The Impact of Heraldic Authorities on the Rarity of Arms

- Heraldic Authorities enforce The Laws of Heraldry and issue Grants of Arms on behalf of the Crown.
- After the empowerment of Heraldic Authorities **in the British Isles, Arms became rare** as the Arms of commoners were purged.
- **Outside the British Isles** there was no authority...
 - suppressing the usage of assumed Arms so **many Arms survived**.
 - enforcing hereditary rights so **many Arms became associated with a surname**.

The Heraldic Achievement

- Most people think of the Heraldic Achievement when they hear 'Coat of Arms'.
- A full heraldic achievement includes a coat of arms on a shield, a helmet and crest, and may include supporters, badges, heraldic banners and mottos.
- A Blazon is the written description of the Coat of Arms.



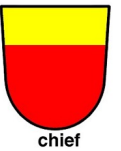
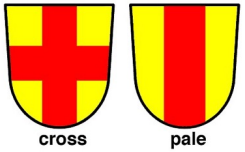
Example of a Blazon



Argent on a Cheveron engrailed sable
betwene the Trefles vert iii Lozenges
golde in chef asur two clowdes owt of
every clowde an Arme yssuante sleved
golde profled goules the sherte
apparaunte at the hande silver
supportyng a Rose goules traced and
porfled and in the myddest the bud golde
upon a helme on a wrethe silver goules
Two Woodhowse Armes goules and
verte in crosse holding in every hande a
fawchyon silver hilted and hafted golde
manteled goules dobled silver

The Laws of Heraldry Control the Appearance of Arms

- The Laws enforce proper usage of...
 - Tinctures, called colors and metals, to enhance visibility and contrast.
 - Charges, or shapes placed on the shield, to maintain meaning and align with any merits included in a grant of Arms.
 - Ornaments, or shapes used away from the shield, to ensure alignment with the rank of the bearer.
 - Cadency Marks, which differentiate Arms between generations and siblings.



Objects in Heraldry Have Meaning

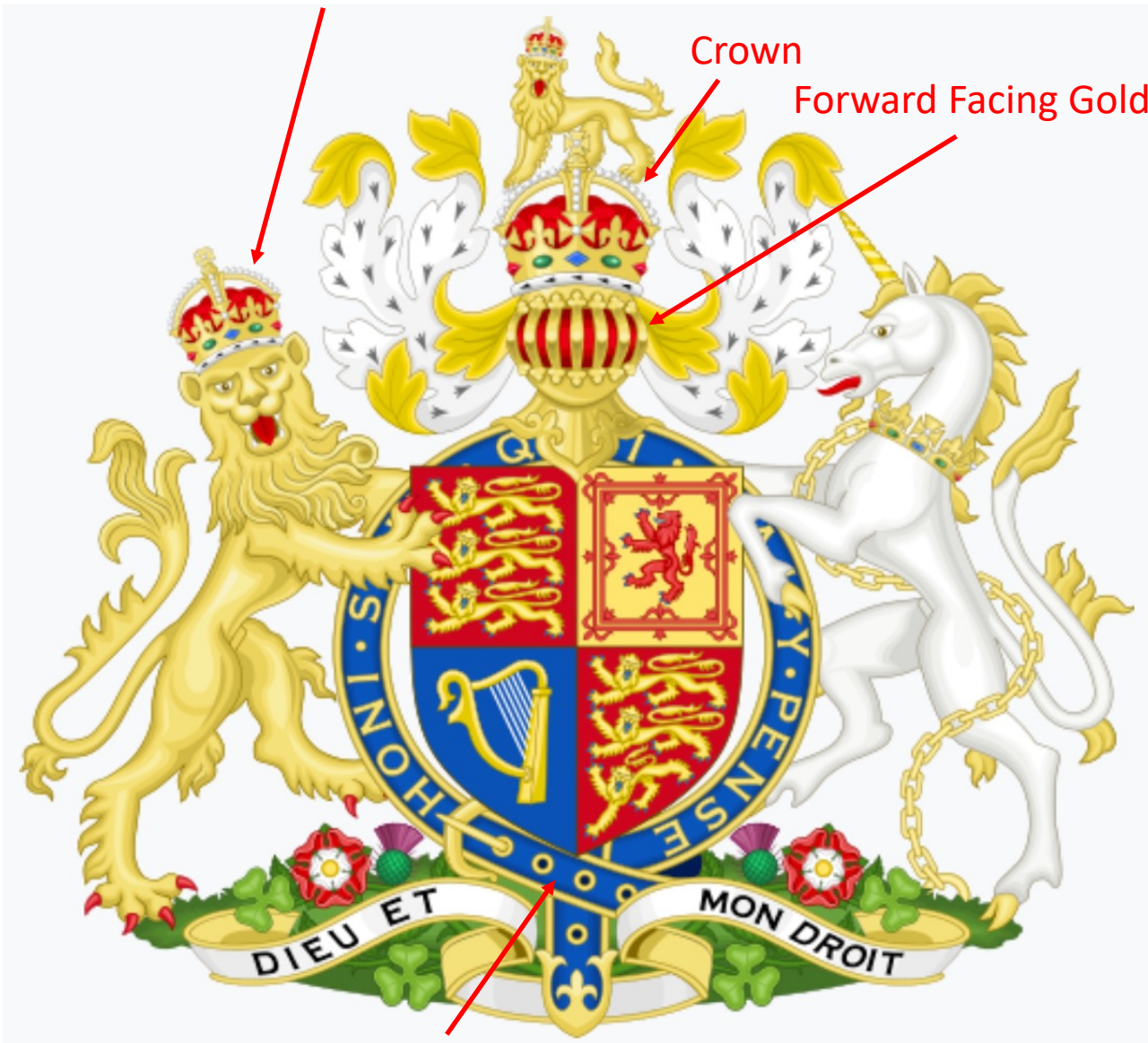


- The Falchions indicate the owner served in the household of the King where he protected his Royal Master.
- The Helmet (and lack of Supporters) indicate the owner was an esquire or gentleman. The Helmet's style is correct for the period.
- The chief (the azure band across the top of the escutcheon), is an 'Augmentation' to commemorate the rescue of the King, who is represented by the red Tudor rose.
- The trefoils slipped vert likely represent the saving of the king.
- The Chevron on the shield signifies protection and notable achievement.
- The gold Lozenges on the Chevron signify a connection to nobility, reflecting on the achievements or status of the bearer.
- The Mantling is typical. When 'shredded' like this it indicates the owner is a warrior (not in the clergy).
- College of Arms records included a motto.

THE REWARD OF VALOUR

The Arms of the King vs those of a (mere) Gentleman

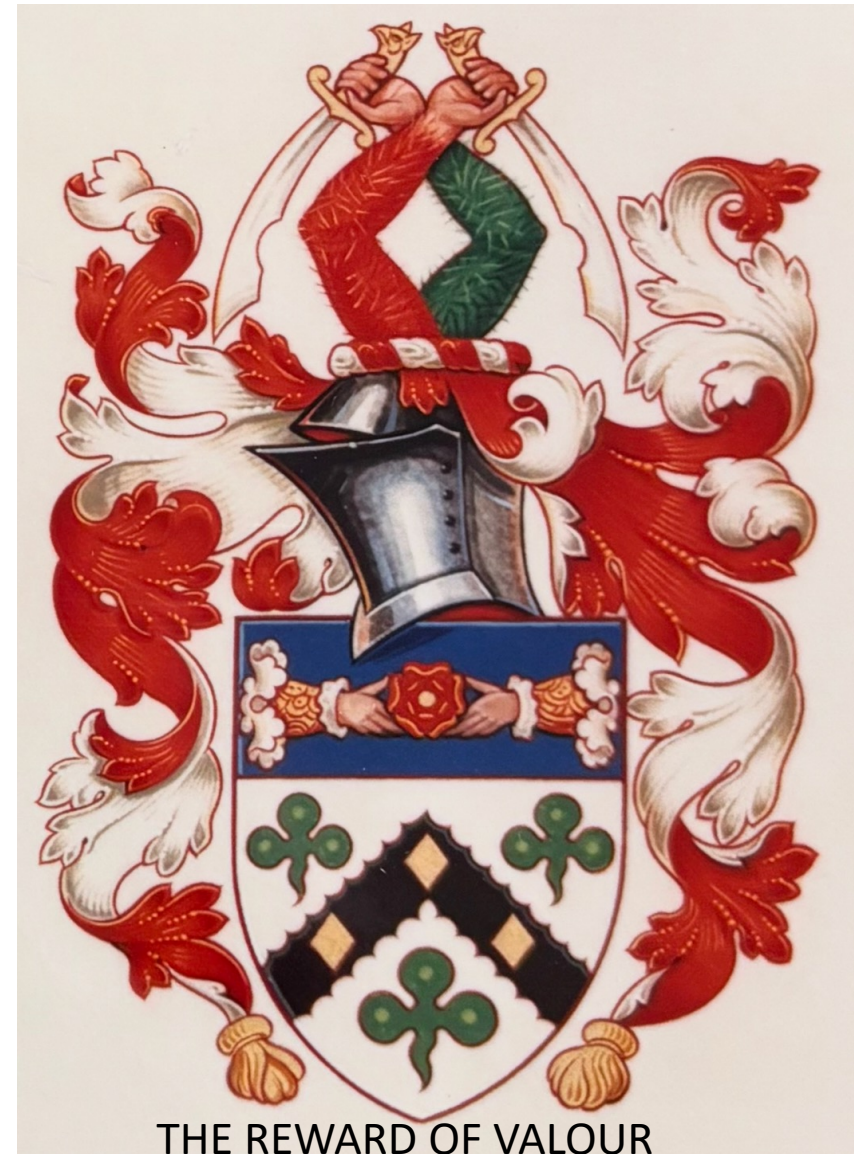
Supporters: Reserved for the Peerage



Belt

Crown

Forward Facing Gold Helm



THE REWARD OF VALOUR

The Laws of Heraldry control the Bearing of Arms

- The Laws protect owners of Arms from having their Arms usurped.
 - Male-line descendants may all bear the Arms granted to an ancestor.*
 - Arms assumed prior to grants and Heraldic Authorities are also protected.
- Today the ability of the Laws of Heraldry to protect Armigers is non-existent.
 - Outside Scotland, there is only a moral constraint on using the Arms of another.

* Inherited English arms no longer require cadency marks. Scottish arms do require differentiation.

What Are the Odds of Being an Heir to English Arms?

- “Anyone who can prove to the College of Arms his/her [male-line] descent from an Armiger [in a pedigree on file at the College] may use that person’s Armorial bearings.” Clive Cheesman, Rouge Dragon Pursuivant at the College of Arms
 - Note that daughters may bear the Arms of their fathers.
- For people with English surnames (including maiden names), the odds of being an heir to an English Armiger are very roughly 1 in 2,250. (source AI)

Data Assumptions from AI

- 10,000 – 15,000 grants of Arms were made between 1500 and 1900
- 25% of those male lineages have survived to today
- 10-40 living descendants per surviving lineage
- provides a best guess range of 50,000 to 80,000 heirs alive today worldwide
- vs an estimated 100 -200 million men of English paternal origin worldwide
- results in a odds at 1 in 2000 to 1 in 2500

Proving a Right to Use Your Ancestor's Arms

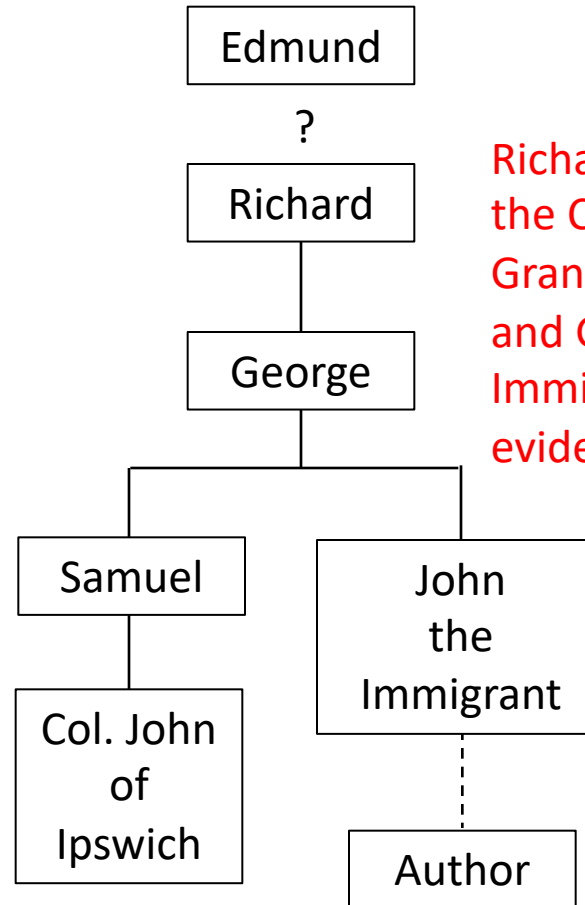
- Heraldry had international origins in mediaeval Europe. Because of this, heraldry and its Laws are not part of the ordinary common law of England, but are subjects of "civil law", that is governed by a system ultimately derived from the old Roman Law. A separate Court, the Court of Chivalry, described below, has sole jurisdiction in such matters, rather than the more familiar Courts in this country.
- Armorial bearings are hereditary. They can be borne and used by all the descendants in the legitimate male line of the person to whom they were originally granted or confirmed or, in certain circumstances, by descent from a heraldic heiress. **To establish a right to arms by inheritance it is necessary to prove a descent from an ancestor who is already recorded as entitled to arms in the registers of the College of Arms.**
- The first step in establishing whether there might be a possibility of having a right to arms by descent is to **approach the officer in waiting at the College of Arms with what details one has of one's paternal ancestry.**
- He will then be able to advise on the cost of having a search made in the official records for coats of arms recorded for families of one's name. The **search may show that no family of the name has possessed arms or that one or more have done so.**
- **If the latter**, and no known ancestor of the enquirer has been found on official record, **the next stage will be genealogical research in records outside the College.** This would be undertaken **to extend the enquirer's pedigree** to see if a connection with an armigerous family could be found.

Case Study: What the College of Arms Knew and Approved

Edmund's Arms, granted 1524, are on record at the College of Arms.

January 1987 the College of Arms agreed Edmund's Arms and John of Ipswich's Arms are the same arms based on their Blazons and certified the right of descendants of John the Immigrant to use Edmund's arms as their own.

John of Ipswich's Arms were described during the 1664-1668 Visitation of the County of Suffolk and are on record at the College of Arms.



Richard was already acknowledged by the College of Arms as the Great Grandfather of Colonel John of Ipswich and Grandfather of John the Immigrant (classic genealogical evidence).

Author's 9th Great Grandfather

Case Study: Two Blazons Separated by 125 Years



- Oct. 6, 1540:
Argent on a Cheveron engrailed sable betwene the Trefles vert iii Lozenges golde in chef asur two clowdes owt of every clowde an Arme yssuante sleved golde profled goules the sherte apparaunte at the hande silver supportyng a Rose goules traced and porfled and in the myddest the bud golde upon a helme on a wrethe silver goules Two Woodhowse Armes goules and verte in crosse holding in every hande a fawchyon silver hilted and hafted golde manteled goules dobled silver
- 1664-1668 Visitation of the County of Suffolk:
Argent on a Chevron engrailed Sable between three Trefoils slipped Vert as many Lozenges Gold and on a Chief Azure two Clouds Argent and out of each an Arm issuant sleeved Gold the hands proper supporting a Rose Gules - the Crest being Upon a Helm on a Wreath Argent and Gules Two Arms vested Gules and Vert embowed in saltire the hands proper each holding a Falchion Argent hilts and quillons Gold

- Upon payment of an undoubtedly obscene amount of colonial dollars, the College will create a proclamation of your right to bear the arms of your ancestor, complete with a hand-painted rendition of the Achievement based on expert understanding of blazon and the era.

ALL AND SINGULAR to whom these Presents shall come, Sir Alexander Colin Cole, Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, upon whom has been conferred the Territorial Decoration, Sir Arthur Pringle, King of Arms, Sir Anthony Richard Wagner, Knight Commander of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, Clarenceux King of Arms and John Hulke Brooke, Esquire, Little Esquire, Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, Norfolk and Ulster King of Arms, Gend. Greeting: Whereas it has been represented unto us by **DAVID LEONARD MOODY** of Skillman Lane, North Oaks St. Paul, Minnesota in the United States of America, Doctor of Medicine and formerly a Captain in the Army of the United States of America that according to a pedigree of his family which has been entered to be registered at Her Majesty's College of Arms in London he is proven to be great-grandson of Warren Lyman Moody born 23 October 1838, son of Edwin Moody of the Town of Northfield in the County of Franklin and Commonwealth of Massachusetts in the United States of America which Calvin Moody in a further pedigree of the family of Moody registered in Her Majesty's said College of Arms has been entered as sixth in descent from John Moody of Bury St. Edmunds in the County of Suffolk in England and of Harford, Connecticut, Massachusetts aforesaid, which John Moody was baptized at Moulton in the County of Suffolk aforesaid on the fifth day of April 1597, grandson of Richard Moody of Moulton aforesaid who died on the twenty-fifth day of April 1574, great-grandfather of John Moody of Ipswich, nephew of the said John Moody of Bury St. Edmunds and of Harford and whereas at the Visitation of the County of Suffolk conducted by Sir Edward Bysshe, Knight, Clarenceux King of Arms in the years 1664-1668 there was recorded for and in the names of the said John Moody of Ipswich and his forebears a certain Shield and a Crest the illustration or 'trick' of which may be described in terms of Blazon as follows: Argent on a Chevron engrailed Sable between three Trefoils slipped Vert as many Lozenges Gold and on a Chief Azure two Clouds Argent and out of each an Arm issuant sleeved Gold the hands proper supporting a Rose Gules - the Crest being Upon a Helm on a Wreath Argent and Gules Two Arms vested Gules and Vert embowed in saltire the hands proper each holding a Falcon Argent hilt and quillow Gold, and whereas these said Armorial Bearings of Moody resemble and appear to be those which were given and granted unto Edmund Moody otherwise Moody of Bury St. Edmunds by Letters Patent of Thomas Hawley, Clarenceux King of Arms bearing date the sixth day of October 1541 videlicet: Silver on a Chevron engrailed sable between the Trefoils vert iii lozenges golde in chief asur two cloudes ovot of every cloud an Arme issuante sleeved golde staffed golde the sheete appaunte at the hande silver supporting a Rose goulde traced and posled and in the myddest the bud golde upon a helme on a wrethe silver goulde Two Woodhows Armes goulde and vert in crasse holding in every hande a fawchyon silver hilted and hasted golde mantled goulde dabled silver: And whereas neither the destination and extent of the said gift and grant of Armorial Bearings is specified in the record testifying unto the same preserved in the College of Arms nor is the name of the said Edmund Moody of Bury St. Edmunds included in the pedigree of Moody recorded as aforesaid at the Visitation of Suffolk in 1664, not is he named in that headed by the said Richard Moody of Moulton, ancestor of the said John Moody of Bury St. Edmunds and of Harford as also of our Petitioner David Leonard Moody it having been established nevertheless that in respect of the said former pedigree of Moody that the Armorial Ensigns of Edmund Moody were entered and allowed by Clarenceux King of Arms in 1664 and in respect of the latter pedigree the said Arms and Crest were annexed thereto by the Kings of Arms in or about the year 1927 both pedigrees being genealogies of and comprising those descending from Richard Moody of Moulton aforesaid who died in 1574 it has been submitted by David Leonard Moody our Petitioner that the said Armorial Bearings have been conferred thereby as the entitlement of the said Richard Moody of Moulton and of his descendants and he has requested of us accordingly that as such descendant his own right and entitlement to the Arms and Crest of Moody as constituted in 1541 be acknowledged and confirmed by us and that We do so certify and declare that it is to say that the same do pertain and belong unto him and his descendants regard being had always to the Laws of Arms as the same in the United States of America do prevail and obtain Now knowye therefore that We the said Sir Arthur Pringle King of Arms and the said Clarenceux King of Arms and the said Norfolk and Ulster King of Arms having taken duly into account and duly considered all that which has been represented unto and requested of us by David Leonard Moody our Petitioner do now confirm declare and certify that the Arms and Crest of Moody as hereinbefore last described and blazoned and depicted in the margin hereof do by right of his ancestry pertain and belong to **DAVID LEONARD MOODY** and to his descendants and in the premises are appropriate to be borne and used by him and by them with their due and proper differences all being in accordance with the Laws and practice of Arms and in so far as the Laws of Arms which obtain in the United States of America do permit and allow In witness whereof We have hereunto set our hands this Eighth day of January in the year of Our Lord One thousand nine hundred & eighty-seven



A. Colin Cole
Parker

J.P. Brooke-Little
for Clarenceux

J.P. Brooke-Little
for Norfolk and Ulster

Today's Key Learnings

1. There are two types of Arms for individuals, Granted and Assumed.
2. Granted Arms belong to specific individuals and their male line descendants. These Arms must follow Laws that dictate appearance.
3. Assumed Arms are created privately for the bearer. These Arms can contain any colors and shapes.
4. You may bear an ancestor's arms having proven to the satisfaction of the College of Arms (or other Heraldic Authority) that you are a male line descendant.
5. The components of one's Arms provide information about rank and may contain references to achievements.