

SECTION X -- ARMORY -- TECHNICAL

4) Books on Armory
(August XXI, April XXV)

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Policy Level: Informational

Intended Audience: All heralds and their clients

Abstract: List of books on armory with opinionated advice as to their usefulness and applicability to the SCA.

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BOOKS ON ARMORY

Eilis O'Boirne and Alison von Markheim (August, XXI; April, XXV)

The listing of books that follows was compiled for the Collegium Nebulorum in October XX. Many of these books are no longer in print, but can be obtained at secondhand bookstores or through your library.

(Alfgar the Sententious), Linden, William, "Fabulous Heraldry", Societa Illuminata, 1976. An ordinary of heraldry found in myth and fiction, compiled by an SCA herald. Incomplete, but accurate as far as what it does cover. Used as a reference to check for conflicts.

(Bruce Draconarius of Mistholme and Akagawa Yoshio), Miller, Bruce and Munday, Kevin, a Pictorial Dictionary of Heraldry as used in the Society for Creative Anachronism, privately published, 1988. This is one of the most valuable books ever published in the SCA. It is just what it says, an illustrated dictionary of the charges used in SCA heraldry. Armed with only this, a copy of the Rules for Submission, a good book on basic blazon and an SCA Ordinary (see below) any novice herald has a fair chance of designing something that will pass. Everybody depends on this one.

(Iathus of Scara, Alison von Markheim), Goolsby, Robert and Douglas, Alison, editors. The Armorial and Ordinary of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc., Updates to the A&O, Free Trumpet Press West, 1990 and following. The single most valuable reference for the SCA working herald.

(Migel Gneule de Normandie), Newell, Michael, "Analecta Aspilogia, Vol. I - An Ordinary to Woodward's Treatise on Heraldry", Free Trumpet Press, 1985. An SCA-compiled Ordinary to Woodward (see below), it allows us to easily check for conflicts in a previously difficult-to-check reference.

(Vuong Manh), Eney, Richard H., "An Ordinary of Military Armorial Devices used by United States and Commonwealth Forces during Recent Times (1862-1972)", published privately 1983. Title describes book. Compiled by an SCA herald. Used as a reference for conflict research. Amusing footnotes.

The above five references are available through various SCA sources.

Alcock, Hubert, "Heraldic Design, its Origins, Ancient Forms and Modern Usage", Tudor, 1962. Large paperback - a good beginning text. It is unfortunately minimally illustrated and includes a lot of extraneous material. If you find the hardcover edition, you get lots of lovely pictures along with the extraneous material.

Brooke-Little, J. P., "Boutell's Heraldry", Warne, London, 1973. Probably the best introductory book on the subject. Treats armory in a consistent and logical manner, although it does not treat charges comprehensively. Only the first third is of actual use to SCA heralds, although it is all informative and well-written.

Brooke-Little, J. P., "An Heraldic Alphabet", Arco, NY, 1975. An excellent glossary of heraldic terms, less comprehensive than Parker (see below), but more detailed. An excellent book for the novice.

Dennys, Rodney, "The Heraldic Imagination", Potter, Crown, 1975. The best source of monsters, beasts and humans used as charges. A good history section on heralds and heraldry. The drawing style is much more complex than is needful.

Dennys, Rodney, "Heraldry and the Heralds", Jonathan Cape, London, 1982. Almost nothing on armory, but a good source on the history of heraldry and the British College of Arms.

Elvin, Charles Norton, "A Dictionary of Heraldry", Heraldry Today, 1977. Reprint of class of 1889. Consists of plates of illustrations with descriptions and an extensive glossary. Some odd stuff and some very non-standard stuff but generally useful. The drawing style is very ornate. This book should be used by experienced heralds only.

Fearn, Jacqueline, "Discovering Heraldry", Shire Pub. Ltd., 1980. Small but adequate, not well illustrated and only the first part is applicable to the SCA.

Fox-Davies, Arthur C., "The Art of Heraldry, an Encyclopedia of Armory", Arno Press, 1976. The big Fox-Davies. Is just what it claims -- huge, complex, and poorly indexed. A book for the serious herald.

Fox-Davies, Arthur C., "A Complete Guide to Heraldry", Bonanza Books/Crown, 1978. The medium-sized Fox-Davies. A good beginning reference if you can deal with his Victorian writing style. Comprehensive and well, if naturalistically, illustrated.

Fox-Davies, Arthur C., "Heraldry Explained", Tuttle, 1971. The little Fox-Davies. Most of the book covers how to apply for and use a "real" coat-of-arms. Charges, etc. are covered in the last three chapters. Buy it only if you're a completist.

Franklyn, Julian, "Heraldry", A.S. Barnes, 1968. Full of lovely drawings and a smaller-than-usual proportion of totally inapplicable text.

Franklyn, Julian, "Shield and Crest", Sterling, 1960. A basic heraldic text of intermediate level. Excellent drawings, color and black and white.

Gosswirth, Marvin, "The Heraldry Book", Doubleday, 1981. The Mensa puzzle man turns his hand to heraldry and we wish he hadn't. This covers in some detail how to check to see if you have Arms. Not much use to the neo-medieval herald. Well written, amusing and highly inaccurate.

Hope, W. H. St. John, "A Grammar of English Heraldry", Cambridge University Press, 1913. Very good basic manual, but it has a tendency to use "silver" and "gold" rather than the usual metal names. It covers a period heraldry and the general history of heraldry quite well.

Louda, Jiri and Maclagan, Michael, "Heraldry of the Royal Families of Europe", Potter/Crown, 1981. Interesting and specialized with arms and genealogical tables of all the major tables of all the major European dynasties from early times to the present.

Lynch-Robinson, Sir Christopher & Adrian, "Intelligible Heraldry", MacDonald, London, 1948. Good introduction to blazonry. Does not catalogue charges.

MacKinnon of Dunakin, Charles, "The Observers Book of Heraldry", Warne & Co., 1966. Small but useful. A beginning herald will find it comprehensible and for the most part correct. Novices should be warned away from certain sections.

Moncreiffe, Ian and Pottinger, Don "Simple Heraldry, Cheerfully Illustrated", Mayflower Books, 1973. This is just what it says it is, a very brief and delightful introduction to heraldry and blazonry. Its early sections are good for those who want to get just a little glimpse of the subject to see if they will like it. Especially suitable for children and fighters.

Neubecker, Ottfried, "A Guide to Heraldry", McGraw-Hill, 1979. The "small Neubecker". Pocket sized reprint of "Heraldry; Sources...." (see below), highly edited and still not a beginner's book. Often misleading with respect to SCA heraldic practice. Beautifully illustrated.

Neubecker, Ottfried, "Heraldry; Sources, Symbols & Meaning", McGraw-Hill, 1976. The "large Neubecker". Lavishly illustrated, nice history section, very Continental in aspect. Not a beginner's book!

Papworth, John W., "Papworth's Ordinary of British Armorial", Five Barrows, Bath, 1977. The standard reference for checking conflicts with British arms. A must for any large heraldic office.

Parker, James, "A Glossary of Terms Used in Heraldry", Tuttle, 1971. One of the standard references, useful to the novice (when combined with a good book on basic blazon), and indispensable for the experienced herald. It is set up as a dictionary with good cross-referencing and an extensive list of obsolete, obscure, and foreign terms.

Pine, L. G., "Heraldry, Ancestry & Titles: Questions and Answers", Gramercy, 1965. Very odd little book, a collection of his favorite questions, perhaps. Less inaccurate than his usual books.

Reynolds, J. A., "Heraldry and You: Modern Heraldic Usage in America", Nelson, 1961. The sub-title says it all. Basically useless, and the metallic inks used in the pictures hurt the eye.

von Volborth, Carl-Alexander, "Heraldry: Customs, Rules & Styles", Blandford Press, 1981. Beautifully illustrated, very Continental and very confusing. Not a beginner's book.

Woodcock, Thomas & Robinson, John Martin, The Oxford Guide to Heraldry, Oxford University Press, 1988. An interesting book, but not one for the novice herald. While it does include basic heraldic terms, it concentrates on heraldic history and applicable laws. Good illustrations of some period seals, scrolls and rolls of arms.

Woodward, John & Burnett, George, "A Treatise on Heraldry, British & Foreign", Tuttle, 1969. The ultimate authority on Continental Heraldry. Lots of color plates and lots of material extraneous to the SCA herald. Not for the novice.

Zieber, Eugene, "Heraldry in America", Greenwich House, Crown Publishers, 1984. Reprint of an 1895 edition. Specialized in that it covers what it says it does. Good section on seals of the states but otherwise the armory is bad and it is of little use to the SCA herald.

ARTICLES ON ARMORY IN THE SCA HERALDIC SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

Several of these Proceedings are still in print through Free Trumpet Press West, or ask the Senior Staff for information about obtaining copies of these articles.

Official Proceedings: First Ysgithrian Symposium on Heraldry, ed. Hans von Bremen, 1973 -- includes of note:

"The Ordinary for the Society for Creative Anachronism", as of Sept 1973, - the first publication of the major research tool for conflicts.

"Heraldic Conventions", by Sarkanyi Gero - a quick look at default details of blazoning.

The Second Biennial Ysgithrian Heraldic Symposium, ed. Rhiannon ab Llyr, Barony of Tir Tygithr, Tuscon, 1987 -- includes of note:

"Papelonne" by Dawyd Aspara Suominen - The work that pioneered the use of non-standard furs in the SCA.

"A Bibliography for Heraldry" by Dawyd Aspara Suominen - An extensive critique of most of the books on heraldry available in 1976.

Caerthan Heraldic Symposium, ed. Alison von Markheim, Aten College of Heraldry, 1981 -- includes of note:

"An Ordinary of Hateful Heraldry" by Vuong Manh - The predecessor to his "Military Ordinary."

"An Introduction to Terms in French Blazon" by Louis-Phillipe Mitouard - a quick look at French blazon and its differences from our usual Anglo-Norman terms.

"The Boke of St. Albans" trans. by Telbyrne Morningstar - A translation of one of the really odd period works on blazonry.

The Meridian Heraldic Symposium, ed. by Regin Bran Haradson, Barony of South Downs, 1982 -- includes of note:

"The Cross in Heraldry" by Oerta Heinemann - 105 Crosses!

"May I Use a Collie in My Arms?" by Ammalynne Starchild Haraldsdottir - On what breeds of dogs are period.

"Cats and SCA Heraldry" by Eoin Caimbeul - Ditto for cats.

Analecta Aspilogica, Vol. II: Essays on Heraldry and Nomenclature, ed. by Alisoun MacCoul of Elphane, Free Trumpet Press, 1985 -- includes of note:

"An Essay on Seme" by Eowyn Amberdrake - An incomplete statistical analysis on how seme was used in the 14th century.

"Das Nesselblatt" by Marten Jeros Bröker - How a rare Germanic charge was actually used.

Proceedings of the West Kingdom Known World Heraldic Symposium, ed. Alison von Markheim, Free Trumpet Press West, 1986 -- includes of note:

Heraldic Defaults by Bruce Draconarius of Mistholme - a much more in-depth look at what the default positions, numbers, postures and even colors are for common charges.

Some Crosses and Their Forms by Erasimierz Waspanieski - an exhausting look at available forms of cross.

Proceedings of the Kingdom of Calontir Known World Heraldic Symposium, editor unknown, Free Trumpet Press West, 1988 -- includes of note:

Order in the Medieval Universe as Exemplified by Attributed Heraldry (God and the Devil) by Sherry Foxwell - a look at how the attributed arms of religious figures reflected the medieval world view.

A Grammar of Blazonry, or Master Bruce's Guide to Excruciatingly Correct Blazon by Bruce Draconarius of Mistholme - a not-so-quick look at proper blazon, SCA style. It includes commentary on the history of blazon, as well as various styles of historical blazon and notes on how SCA blazon differs from mundane heraldry.

Muslim Heraldry: An Introduction by Da'ud ibn Auda - an overview of the history, charges and display of Muslim heraldry in our period.

Herald's Proceedings: Caidan Heraldic Symposium and Scribe's Conclave, ed. Bruce Draconarius of Mistholme, Free Trumpet Press West, 1989 -- includes of note:

Blazoning Birds by Æowyn Amberdrake - an examination of real world and SCA blazons for bird positions, including illustrations.

Jewish Heraldry by Eleazarha-Levi - an exhaustive look at Jewish heraldry, attributed, actual, period and SCA. Includes a discussion of charges, blazons of period bearings and an extensive bibliography.

Ksit Polskiego Heraldika: The Chronicle of Polish Heraldry by Stefan Laskowski - a short survey of the use of heraldry in Poland in the Middle Ages, including origins of clan names, cypher devices, blazon, totemic devices and achievements.