

Davis Genealogy Club and Yolo County Library, Davis Branch  
Family History Month at the Library  
“Armories and Ordinaries: Coats of Arms for Genealogists”

**Definitions** -- some taken from Friar, Stephen. *A Dictionary of Heraldry*. New York: Harmony Books, 1987.

- **Heraldry:** The hereditary and systematic use of symbols on a shield, or coat of arms, for the purpose of identification.
- **Blazon:** A verbal or written description of a coat of arms using generally acknowledged conventions and terminology.
- **Charge:** A single pictorial representation or geometrical shape depicted on a coat of arms.
- **Armory:** A dictionary of coats of arms listed alphabetically by surname.
- **Ordinary:** A reference book which lists the blazons of coats of arms alphabetically by the charges they contain. Proficiency in the use of blazon is essential if an ordinary is to be used to identify arms.

**Links**

- <http://www.heraldica.org/>
- **The Heraldry Society:** <http://www.theheraldrysociety.com/home.htm>
- **The Heraldry Society of Scotland:** <http://www.heraldry-scotland.co.uk/>
- **The American Heraldry Society:** <http://www.americanheraldry.org/>
- **The College of Arms:** <http://www.college-of-arms.gov.uk/>
- **Court of the Lord Lyon:** <http://www.lyon-court.com>
- **Chief Herald of Ireland:** <http://www.nli.ie/en/heraldry-introduction.aspx>
- **Canadian Heraldic Authority:** <http://www.gg.ca/document.aspx?id=81>

Sebastian Nelson  
sebnelson@gmail.com  
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Example of an entry from an heraldic armory

--Burke, Bernard. *The General Armory of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales; comprising a registry of armorial bearings from the earliest to the present time.* London: Harrison & Sons, 1884.

**Tytler** (Woodhouselee, co. Edinburgh, 1824). Quarterly, 1st and 4th, gu. a lion's head erased ar. betw. three crescents or, a bordure of the last; 2nd, erminois on a fess per fess embattled gu. and az. three crescents ar, for CRAIG, of Dalnair; 3rd, counter-quartered, 1st and 4th, az. a bend engr. betw. three frases ar., 2nd and 3rd, gu. three antique crowns or, for FRASER, of Balnain, the whole within a bordure erm. for diff. *Crest*—The rays of the sun issuing from behind a cloud ppr. *Motto*—Occultus non extinctus.

**Tytler** (Dr. HENRY WILLIAM TYTLER, Scotland, 1803). Gu. a dirk in pale ppr. hilt and pommel or, on the point thereof a wolf's head coupéd of the last, armed and langued ar. betw. two crescents of the third. *Crest*—Two laurel branches in orle vert, encircling an anchor and Esculapius rod, on the top of the anchor a plume of three feathers all ppr. *Mottos*—Over the crest: Spes firma; below the shield: Immortalia spero.

**Tyzack** (a refugee family from Lorraine. The original form of the name is DU THISAC. They came over with the HENZEYS (DE HENNEZEL), and TYTTERYS (DE THIETRY), and settled as glass manufacturers at Stourbridge, co. Worcester, and at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, co. Northumberland. Arms from the seal of PEREGRINE TYZACK, 1769). Gu. three acorns slipped ar. on a chief or, three billets sa.

- - notice how the verbal descriptions, or blazons, of the coats of arms are arranged alphabetically by the name of their owner - -



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Example of an entry from an ordinary of arms

--Paul, James Balfour. *An Ordinary of Arms Contained in the Public Register of All Arms and Bearings in Scotland*. Edinburgh: W. Green & Sons, 1893.

CUSHIONS—DAGGERS

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**Cushions (3)—continued.**

Or, three cushions within a double tressure flory counter-flory gu. (2nd and 3rd quarters), all within a bordure nebuly quarterly az. and gu. DUNBAR OF DURN.

Or, three cushions gu. within a double tressure flory counter-flory of the last (2nd and 3rd quarters), all within a bordure arg. charged with eight fraises gu. DUNBAR OF GRANGE.

Or, three cushions within a double tressure flory counter-flory gu. (2nd and 3rd quarters), all within a bordure varyy gu. and or. DUNBAR OF HEMP-RIGS.

Or, three cushions within a double tressure flory counter-flory gu. (2nd and 3rd quarters), all within a bordure gu. charged with eight annulets or. DUNBAR OF INCHBROK.

Or, three cushions within a double tressure flory counter-flory gu. (2nd and 3rd quarters), all within a bordure quarterly az. and gu., and in the centre a deer's head cabossed for difference. DUNBAR OF NEWTON.

Or, three cushions gu. within a double tressure flory counter-flory of the last (2nd and 3rd quarters).

**Outlass—see SCIMITAR.**

**Dagger (SKENE).**

Az. a dagger in fess arg. between three bears' heads coupéd of the second, muzzled sa. FORBES OF RUBISLAW.

Az. a dagger in pale ppr. with a wolf's head coupéd or on the point thereof between three bears' heads arg., muzzled gu. PATRICK FORBES.

Az. a dagger in pale arg. bearing on its point a wolf's head coupéd or between three bears' heads coupéd of the second, muzzled gu.; on a chief of the second issuing out of the base thereof a demi-otter sa. crowned with an antique crown of the fourth (2nd and 3rd quarters). FORBES LESLIE OF ROTHIE (1862).

Gu. a dagger in pale ppr., point upwards, between three bears' heads coupéd or. FORDYCE OF AYTON (1767).

Gu. a dagger in pale ppr., on its point a wolf's head coupéd of the last, armed and langued arg., between three crescents of the third, all within a bordure erm. HENRY WILLIAM TYTLER, M.D. (1803).

- - notice how the verbal descriptions, or blazons, of the coats of arms are arranged alphabetically by the name of their principal design feature, or charge - -



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