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The Crest

Borne upon the helmet and above the wreath. The crest made from light wood or boiled leather was a rallying point when the shield or standard was down.

The Helmet

Normally shown in profile to the dexter of the shield (the right hand side as viewed from behind the shield). Stature of a person is shown by the number of bars on the helmet and whether or not the visor is opened or closed, a helmet facing forward with open visor is indicative of royalty. The most common is in profile to the dexter, visor closed with bars, this being the helmet of an esquire.

The Shield

Obviously for protection; in heraldry it is the main part of the arms, i.e. for identification.

The Motto

Sometimes a battle cry, nearly always a later addition, its meaning is often specific to a family, for example: "I saved the King." "Over for over" and in the example shown here "Frangas non flectes" which translates as thou mayst break, thou shalt not bend me." Mottos are chiefly found in Latin, french, English and Gaelic but also in Greek.

FORMAL LAYOUT OF ARMS

Two distinct roles can be identified, a functional role and a heraldic role. Heraldic aspects of arms - The Shield, Wreath, Helmet, Mantle and Motto.

The Wreath

A wreath of two, the major colours of the shield, above the helmet and below the crest.



The Mantle

Originally a mantle protected the knight against the strong sun and chafing of metal. The embellishments origination from supposed battle tears, indicative of bravery.

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