

*The Scottish Rite Clarion*

# CLARION

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## *Heraldry*

## OF THE HOLY EMPIRE

*The art of blazoning armorial bearings, settling the rights persons to bear arms or to use certain bearings or tracing and recording genealogies, of recording honors, and of deciding questions of precedence.*



# Heraldry

## OF THE HOLY EMPIRE

By Grand Inspector General  
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**H**eraldry is defined in Webster's as:

- *the art of blazoning armorial bearings;*
- *settling the rights of persons to bear arms or user certain bearings;*
- *tracing and recording genealogies;*
- *recording honors and of deciding questions of precedence.*

Armoial bearings typically align with a family's bloodline or royal body and contain specific emblems that serve as unique identifiers. Ancient Rome utilized the eagle to symbolize the Roman Empire. Legions bore the eagle on armor and regalia to clearly identify themselves as aligned with the empire. In times of war, a herald would be regaled accordingly and sent to engage in formal communications with enemy and friendly forces alike to lay terms. During these times, heraldry allowed the messenger to be recognized in the dark by the enemy and in the light by allies.

Heraldic emblems are heavily utilized today within Freemasonry at many levels. The Square and Compass is widely known as a Masonic emblem. Masonic Rites of Freemasonry, however, use different armorial bearings to distinguish themselves from other Masonic houses.

The Heraldic emblems adopted by the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, in particular, are tied to a long history of

emblems with their own specific meanings. Some are holy emblems while others are terrestrial emblems. When combined, their linkage and meaning provide the background for their significance to the rite.

Two heralds of God are the sources of key heraldic emblems of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry. Melchizedek is chronicled in the Old Testament of the Holy Bible. Jesus is referenced in the Old Testament and chronicled in the New Testament of the Holy Bible. He is also represented in the Holy Qu'ran. Both were steadfast in their duties to God in Salem and Jerusalem respectively and are worthy of emulation.

Melchizedek, High Priest and King of Salem, was the keeper of God's tabernacle. Salem translates to "peace" and is referred to as the "City of Peace". By God's authority, Melchizedek, the Herald, was able to grant God's blessings on his people. In doing so, he blessed Abram (Abraham) after his victory in his war with the Kings. His faith made him victorious despite the odds which drove him to the City of Salem to seek the blessing of the High Priest on Salem's consecrated ground. Abram made the trek, received the blessing by Melchizedek and reciprocated with a tithe (Genesis 14:19-20). To many Biblical historians, this is the blessing that affirmed God's prior promise to Abram that he would be the father of nations (Genesis 12).

With regard to the promise, God fulfilled it according to the Holy Bible and Holy Qu’ran through Hagar and Sarai (Sarah). As Sarai had grown in age and believed herself to be barren, she gave her maid servant, Hagar, to Abram to have a child. From Hagar, Ishmael was born. After being touched by an angel, Sarai became pregnant by Abram shortly thereafter. Isaac was born from this union. Abram’s name was changed to Abraham. Abram translates to “exalted father”. Abraham is the plural representation denoting “exalted father of many”. Sarai’s name was likewise changed by God to Sarah. Sarai translates to “princess” whereas Sarah translates to “mother of nations”. To many Christians, Isaac is the object of God’s promise. To others, Ishmael is the object. A holistic view offers that both fulfilled God’s promise as the faiths of Judaism and Islam represent the multitude of nations from Abraham’s seed.

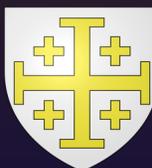
When reviewing the Christian path, Isaac’s bloodline eventually produces David. David is selected King of Jerusalem by Nathan, God’s prophet or herald. Jerusalem translates to “foundation of peace”. It is from this bloodline that Jesus is born. According to the Holy Bible, the death by crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus took place in Jerusalem while under Roman rule. His life, death and resurrection, is the foundation for everlasting peace as Jesus, now, serves as the eternal Melchizedek, the eternal High Priest for the faithful in the New Dispensation. The representation of Jesus’ sacrifice is the cross which became a key heraldic emblem for the Christian faith.

Portrayals of Jesus’ crucifixion drove variations of the cross in heraldic representations. The most common representation is a single-barred cross. The empty cross represents a resurrected Jesus to some. To others, it represents an implement of Jesus’ death. A two-barred cross was subsequently introduced to highlight the area

in which the feet of Jesus were nailed. A three-barred cross was also introduced to not only identify the locations where the hands and feet were pierced but also the location of the nameplate which stated “INRI” was affixed. “INRI” translates to Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews. Another representation, the Cross of Jerusalem, included a single-barred cross surrounded by four other crosses to represent the crucifixion of Jesus and his wounds to the hands, feet and side. These portrayals became heraldic symbols for the faithful and would, eventually, become emblems of heraldry for nations.

The triple-barred cross was adopted by the Holy Roman Catholic Church as a papal symbol to denote his three primary roles. The top-bar or nameplate identifies the pope as the worship leader of the faith. The middle-bar or nailed hands represents the teaching role of the pope for the faith. The bottom-bar or nailed feet represents the practical application of the faith with the pope as the community leader. All in all, the triple-barred cross is the heraldic emblem that identifies the leader of the faith.

The York Rite, a Christianity-based Rite, adopted the triple-barred cross to identify its leader, the Right Eminent Grand Commander. The slanted version of the emblem was adopted by the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, a philosophically-based Rite, to identify its leader, the Sovereign Grand Commander. The leaders of both Rites adopt the same roles as the pope in that they serve as sovereign leader, chief instructor and community representative for the respective rites. These heraldic emblems appear on the regalia of these leaders to clearly identify who they are.



The two-barred cross was adopted by the army of Godfrey de Bouillon during the Holy Wars in 1099AD. The cross was adopted as an emblem of fealty to the Holy Roman Catholic Church under the pope. The two bars represented redemption for Jews (top bar) and gentiles (lower bar) as they fought together from the region of Lorraine for the faith. Cardinals of the Holy Roman Catholic Church adopted the emblem to denote fealty to the church under the hierarchy of the pope to defend Jesus, the Christ and the church. This emblem was adopted by the Actives and Emeriti of the Scottish Rite to denote fealty to God and the Rite under the hierarchical authority of the Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council.



The Cross of Jerusalem was adorned by soldiers during the Crusades in red to symbolize their willingness to shed blood and give their lives on behalf of the church. Soldiers under the command of Godfrey de Bouillon were of the first to fight for the faith in this manner. This emblem is heraldry for Knights Templar who have directly adopted the Christian faith. However, as the Scottish Rite endeavors to understand all faiths philosophically, the cross was selected to represent a free church within a free state with respect to all faiths. It is also used as jewels for subordinate level leadership of the rite.



For the Roman Empire, the emblem of state has been the eagle since its inception. The single headed eagle affixed with the letters "SPQR" represented the "Senate and People of Rome" as early as 100BC. The double-headed eagle, which traces back to the Hittite Empire of Lagash, was adopted by Rome during the Middle Ages. As Rome extended its reach, the two-headed eagle came to signify Rome's dominance as far as the eagle could see to the West and to the East simultaneously. As the Empire shifted towards Christianity, the double-head eagle became the Heraldic emblem of the Holy Roman Empire. The double-headed eagle was crowned after Charlemagne was crowned Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire by Pope Leo II in 800 AD. It is this emblem that has been displayed prominently on the armorial bearings of Rome and her subordinate states.



The Crest of Lorraine (right) articulates that the region was under the religious authority of the Holy Roman Church. The papal crown above the head of the double headed eagle identifies that Lorraine is under the Holy Roman Empire. The Crown atop the shield which displays the Cross of Jerusalem in gold and white towards to the top-center of the shield indicates that the nation will bear arms on behalf of the Holy Roman Catholic Church. As such, this heraldic emblem indicates that Lorraine is a Duchy under the umbrella of the Holy Roman Empire.



The Coat of Arms for Poland (right) also identifies its religious allegiance to the Holy Roman Church by the papal crown atop the head of the eagle. The shield bears templars on horse top bearing the Cross of Lorraine on the shield identifies that the region will bear arms on behalf of the Holy Roman Church. As such, the emblem affirms Poland's fealty to the Holy Roman Empire.



Heraldic symbolism carried into the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry in a similar fashion and it remains intact today. There are multiple styles of eagles that are utilized to represent certain aspects of the Rite. In all instances, the eagle represents an empire. There are other key factors that help to provide a clear picture on the specific nature of the emblem:

- Wing position identifies the specific empire
  - *Wings up = Northern Jurisdiction*
  - *Wings down = Southern Jurisdiction*
- Number in the triangle identifies that degree
- The crown indicates Holy Empire membership
  - *Black = Honorary Membership*
  - *Purple = Active or Emeritus Membership*
  - *White = Elected Officers*
- Triangle position identifies level of representation

These visual, heraldic characteristics provide a clear and distinct picture of the house that is represented and serve as the basis for the regalia that is worn by

of the Supreme Council. The Heraldic emblems of the United Supreme Council, AASR, Northern Jurisdiction, PHA are:



### HONORARY MEMBERS

As the 33rd degree triangle is on the breast of the eagle and the double headed eagle is crowned, this heraldic emblem identifies the bearer as a honorary herald or **Grand Inspector General** of a Supreme Council.

Black crowns are worn with the triangle atop the eagle.

As the wings are pointed upward, the Supreme Council to which this herald holds allegiance is the Northern Jurisdiction.

### ACTIVE / EMERITI

As the 33rd degree triangle is atop the crown of the double headed eagle and pointed upward, this heraldic emblem identifies an active or emeritus herald or **Sovereign Grand Inspector General** of a Supreme Council.

White crowns are worn for the elected leadership and purple crowns for non-elected leaders.

As the wings are pointed upward, their fealty is to the Supreme Council of the Northern Jurisdiction.

### SUPREME COUNCIL

As the 33rd degree triangle is atop the crown of the double headed eagle and pointed downward, this heraldic emblem identifies a specific Supreme Council.

As the wings are pointed upward, this heraldic emblem represents the United Supreme Council, Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, PHA, Northern Jurisdiction.

The **Sovereign Grand Commander** is the Chief Executive Officer of the Supreme Council and wears a white crown with the affixed with the Cross of Salem. Other elected Actives wear white crowns.



The hierarchical structure of the Supreme Councils for the Northern and Southern Jurisdictions as well as their subordinate bodies is shown below:

- *Sovereign Grand Commander adorns the Cross of Salem as the leader of the Holy Empire and subordinate Orients*
- *Deputy for the Orient adorns the Red Cross of Jerusalem as the leader of the Jurisdictional Council of Deliberation and commander over subordinate Consistories*
- *Commander-In-Chief adorns the Cross of Jerusalem as the leader of the local Consistory*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SUPREME COUNCIL (HOLY EMPIRE)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Governing Body for the Holy Empire</i></li> <li>• <i>The Sovereign Grand Commander is the Chief Executive Officer</i></li> <li>• <i>Sovereign Grand Inspectors General are the primary membership</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>COUNCIL OF DELIBERATION (ORIENT)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Regional subordinate body of the Holy Empire</i></li> <li>• <i>Deputies appointed for each region (Orient) by the Sovereign Grand Commander are the Chief Executive Officers for the region</i></li> <li>• <i>Grand Inspectors General are the primary membership</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CONSISTORY (VALLEY)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Subordinate body of the Scottish Rite in a city (Valley) of an Orient</i></li> <li>• <i>Commanders-In-Chief are the Chief Executive Officers for the Valley</i></li> <li>• <i>Sublime Princes are the primary membership</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

All in all, these heraldic emblems represent the armorial bearings of the bodies of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry which serve as unique identifiers for all levels of the Rite.

