

**ACHIEVEMENT UNLOCKED:
the accoutrements of your arms
Baron Bruce Draconarius, Batonvert**

1) What is a full achievement?

- shield
 - term includes heater, lozenge, cartouche, horsehead, à bouche, &c
- helm, torse, and mantling
 - helm is *always* covered by mantling
- crest
- supporters
- motto
- compartment
- tokens of Orders or rank

2) Why is it important?

- The full achievement developed at a time of increased social mobility
- Other indicators of status (e.g., coronets for specific ranks) were developing at the same time
- Titles, ranks, forms of address, sumptuary, &c became socially more important then
- The heraldic achievement was part of that status awareness

3) Shield

- dates from earliest heraldic records, c.1200
- the only *mandatory* part of achievement
- shield proportions vary by nation and era
- sometimes drawn tilted

4) Helm, Torse, and Mantling

- helm and mantling began very early, c.1300 – Crusades were likely origin
- in early heraldry, helm was usually the form in use at that period
 - barrel helm, tourney helm, barred helm were by far most common
- in later heraldry, helm denoted rank (by type in England, by color in Germany)
- mantling started as plain sheet of cloth – later, the artists went wild! (Mostly acanthus)
- torse might be replaced by coronet or cap of maintenance
 - in early (and later German) heraldry, no torse – crest flowed seamlessly into mantling

5) Crest

- crests started very soon after helm/mantling – tournaments were likely origin
- majority (~95%) of period arms with helm also have crest
- crest should face same direction as helm
- ideally, crest should be a charge that could actually be fastened atop a helm
 - wings (showing copy of the arms) or horns (a.k.a. elephant trunks) were common in Germany
 - heads and demi-creatures popular everywhere
 - inanimate charges not uncommon

6) Supporters

- supporters first appear mid-1400's – artistic decorations on seals were likely origin
- two supporters most common number by far
 - sometimes one supporter; very rare instances of three
- animate charges (beasts, birds, monsters, humans)
 - very frequently not the same creature
- beasts, birds, &c, face shield; humans are more affronty

7) Motto and Compartment

- mottos as part of achievement appear around 1500; compartments around same time
- motto likely originated as war-cry, later became aphorism or pious sentiment
 - the war-cry or slogan (Gaelic *sluagh-ghairm*) is separate from motto in Scots heraldry
- compartment was "to give supporters something to stand on"
 - rarely used – more frequently they stood on the motto scroll!
 - compartment most often a grassy knoll – could be used to display plant badges, if any
- mottos in period were most often a local language (French or English in England); rarely Latin

8) Tokens of Orders or rank

- most frequently seen encircling the shield
- if multiple Orders in the achievement, the most important (i.e., prestigious) circled the shield

9) Variations on a theme

- no helm or mantling: headgear (e.g., coronet) resting atop the shield
 - by end of period, combined with helm format!
- lozenge was not used with helm – therefore no mantling or crest possible
 - mantling was replaced by entwined ribbons on either side
 - supporters could be used with lozenge

FURTHER RESOURCES

Many of the online rolls of arms give examples of the forms of shield, helm, mantling, and crest. A good list of such rolls can be found at:

http://www.vikinganswerlady.com/Stars/Rolls_of_Arms.html

A good comparison of interkingdom achievement practices can be found at:

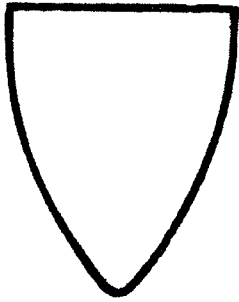
<https://palybendy.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/achievements-of-arms-a-historical-and-sca-perspective.pdf>

Some digitizations of period achievements can be found at:

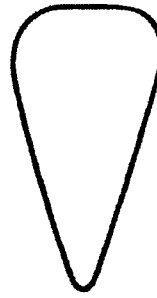
<http://coblaith.net/Heraldry/Printables/default.html>

For more comprehensive collections of heraldic art and achievements, these books are useful:

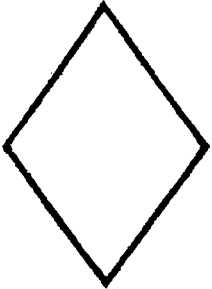
- Eve, G.W. *Heraldry as Art*. London, 1907.
- Neubecker, O. *Heraldry: Sources, Symbols, and Meaning*. New York, 1976.
- St. John-Hope, W.H. *Heraldry for Craftsmen and Designers*. London, 1929. (Reprinted by Dover Books as *Heraldry for Designers and Craftspeople*.)
- von Vollborth, C.A. *The Art of Heraldry*. Poole, 1987.



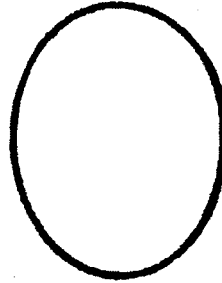
"Classic" heater shield, dating from 13th C.



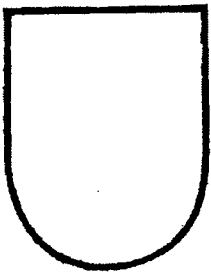
12th C. Flanders, Holland



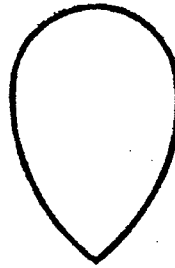
Lozenge dates from 13th C., originally for both genders, but by 16th C. almost exclusively for women



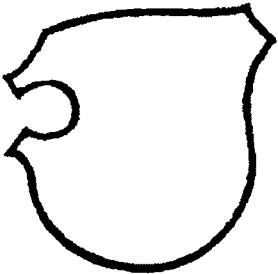
Cartouche rarely used (mostly by ecclesiastics) until 16th C.



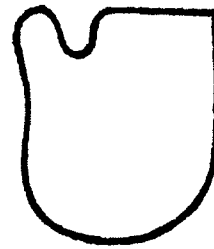
Round-bottomed heater began in 13th C. Spain, eventually widespread across Europe



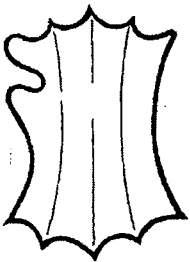
Teardrop shield began in 12th C. Netherlands, became popular in Italy by 16th C.



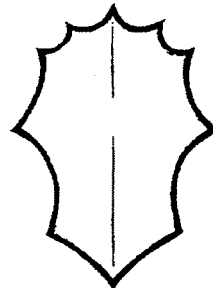
Shield à bouche (15th C. Germany)



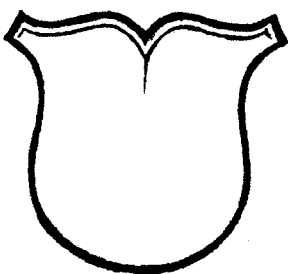
Shield à bouche (14th C. Burgundy)



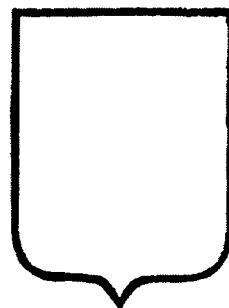
Ridged shield à bouche, 15th C. England



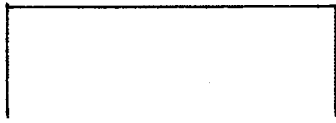
Horsehead, late 15th C. Italy



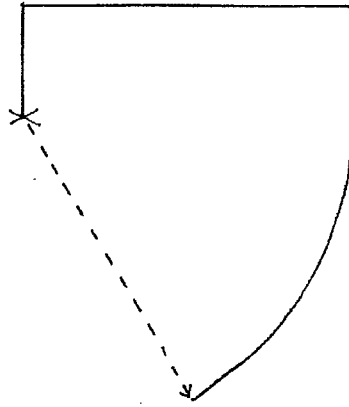
16th C. (beginning to be Baroque now)



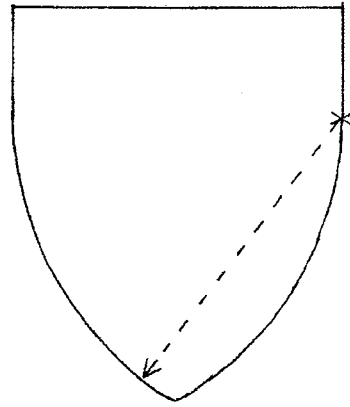
15th C. Spain



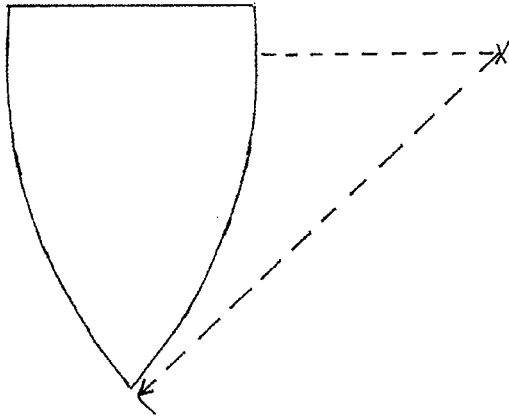
DRAW THE TOP EDGE
OF THE SHIELD.
DROP A PERPENDICULAR
FROM EACH END,
 $\sim \frac{1}{3}$ THE LENGTH OF
THE TOP.



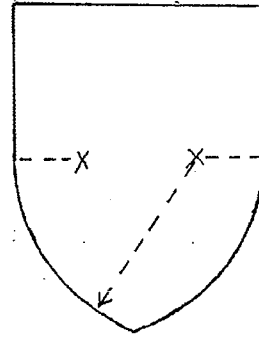
WITH A COMPASS SET
TO THE WIDTH OF THE
SHIELD, PUT THE POINT
AT ONE BOTTOM LINE.
DRAW ONE ARC...



.... THEN THE
OTHER.
THE HEIGHT HERE
IS ~ 1.53 TIMES
THE WIDTH OF THE SHIELD.

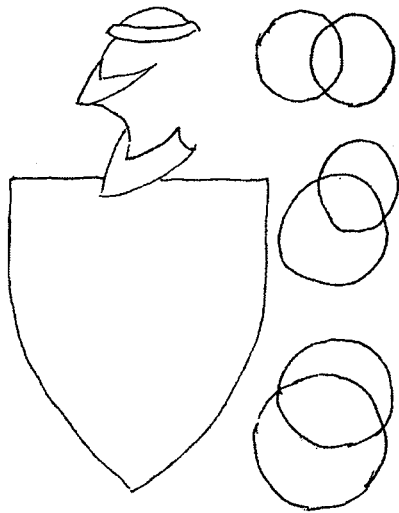


OFFSET THE CENTER OF THE ARC
AND INCREASE THE RADIUS,
FOR AN EARLIER PERIOD SHAPE.

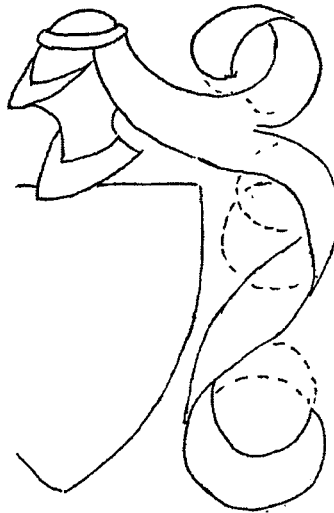


INCREASE THE PERPENDICULARS,
MAKE THE RADIUS LESS
THAN THE SHIELD WIDTH,
AND YOU GET A LATER
PERIOD SHAPE.

(MAKE THE BOTTOM A FULL
SEMI-CIRCLE FOR A
SPANISH SHIELD.)



WITH THE SHIELD AND THE PART OF THE HELM UNCOVERED IN PLACE, DRAW THREE OR MORE DOUBLED CIRCLES (LIKE VENN DIAGRAM) BESIDE THE SHIELD



USE THE CIRCLES AS GUIDELINES FOR DRAPING THE MANTLING



THEN ADD ACANTHUS DAGS - FEEL FREE TO DAG THE DAGS! SHOW ABOUT THE SAME AREAS OF COLOR AND DOUBLING.

