

# THE BLAZON

FALL 1997 VOL. 1, NO.1

*Newsletter of the Heraldry Society of Canada • BC/Yukon Branch*

## *President's Message*

Thanks to Robb Watt, I finally obtained a copy of the original, "The Blazon", and was impressed with the quality of that defunct publication.

Now, Rean Meyer and David Watson have produced a new Branch publication that has retained the title of the original. We are all grateful to them for what I consider the most significant event of the last operational year of the Branch.

However, future issues will only be possible if Branch members contribute items for publication and volunteers continue to be involved in editing and production.

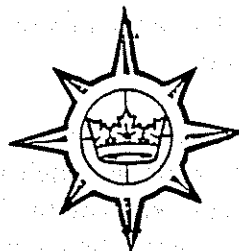
A heartfelt thanks to all those involved in the past and to those who will contribute in the future.



Don Rae, President  
BC/Yukon Branch

### Notice:

The views expressed by authors who contribute to The Blazon are not necessarily those expressed by those of the BC/Yukon Branch of The Heraldry Society of Canada, or of the Honorary Editor.



## **The Aims and Objectives of The Heraldry Society of Canada - British Columbia/Yukon Branch are:**

1. To support, foster, and promote the aims and objectives of The Heraldry society of Canadian within the BC/Yukon region;
2. To publish a newsletter.
3. To sponsor at least four events per calendar year of general interest to the members.
4. To promote awareness and use of proper heraldry among the public of the BC/Yukon region.

## **Newsletter**

Hon. Editor ..... Rean Meyer  
Publisher/Contributor .... David Watson

Literary and artistic contributions can be sent to:  
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In January 1993, a request was made that the office of the Secretary of State take action against a firm doing business in British Columbia under the name of Custom House Currency Exchange.

This firm was using a version of the Canadian coat of arms in which there were but two differences: the Union Flag on the lance held by the dexter lion supporter had been transposed to that held by the sinister unicorn supporter whilst a Maple Leaf flag had been substituted on the dexter lance and; the motto ribbon bore the inscription Custom House Exchange in lieu of *A mari usque ad mare*.

Otherwise, at first glance, what the casual observer, especially if it was a person of foreign nationality might assume, was that this place of business was an agency of the Government of Canada. The imitation arms left no doubt that this firm had adapted the Royal arms of the Sovereign of Canada for its own purposes, the changes on the shield, the Royal crest ensigned with St. Edward's crown, and the two supporters of a lion rampant and a unicorn argent armed, crined and unguled gorged with a coronet, being the very same devices.

An amusing aspect of this rash theft of the Queen's property was that the customs building is the property of the Crown and the local office of the Secretary of State together with Currency Exchange, was one of the tenants.

Some time passed during which, acknowledgement of the observation was received by the author. In February, 1994 it

was noted revisions to the Currency Exchange's logo had been made. These included new devices on the shield but the three maple leaves conjoined on one stem in the base still remained. The flags had been removed although the lances were retained together with the supporters. Most offensive of all was (and is) that the Royal crest of Canada, that of a lion passant guardant or, imperially crowned proper and holding in the dexter paw a maple leaf, was still in use by this firm.

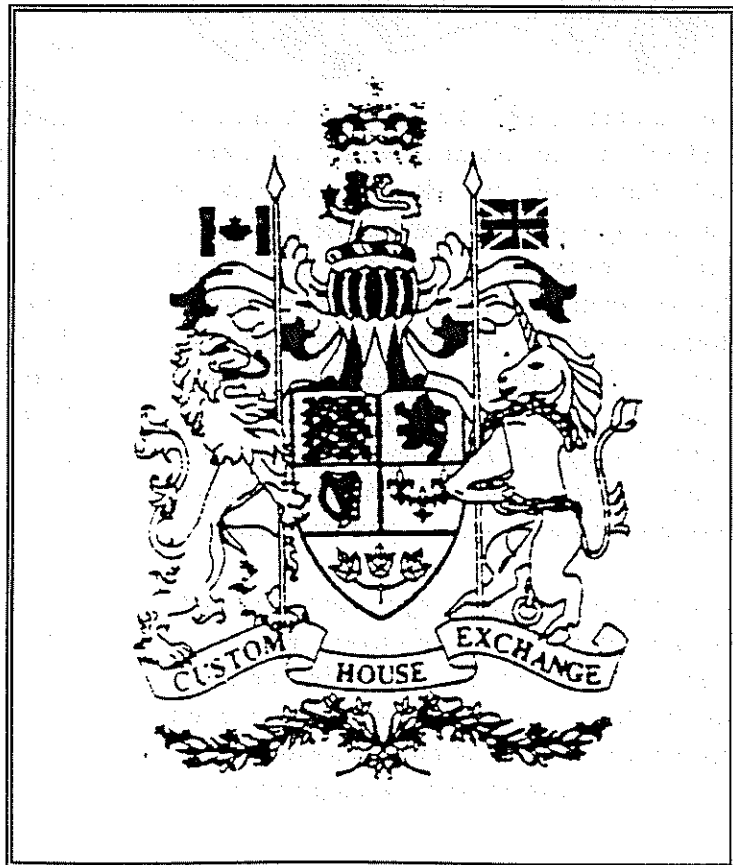
In the autumn and winter of 1989-90, Monarchy Canada published a two part series titled Symbols of Monarchy by Sheldon Burshtein, a Toronto barrister specialising in trade mark infringement. In his most interesting articles, Mr. Burshtein quoted chapter and verse, the possible penalties for unlawful use of Royal symbols. A copy was sent to the Secretary of State at the time my complaint was lodged.

Notwithstanding, the letter of the law was not upheld in its entirety in this instance. As recently as this past spring, during a visit to the Victoria International Airport, it was noted a kiosk operated by Custom House Currency Exchange on which prominently displayed were the revised bogus arms. Unfortunately, they still bear the Royal crest. Only in Canada, you say? Pity!

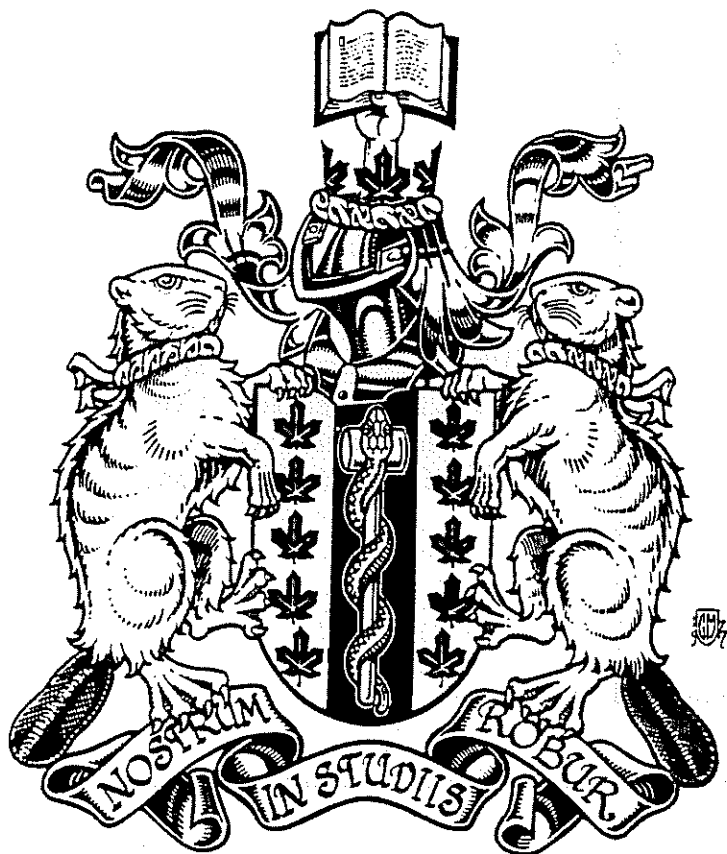


The Canadian Coat of Arms, as rendered by heraldic artist Gordon MacPherson.

"This firm was using a version of the Canadian coat of arms in which there were but two differences..."



# Arms of the College of Family Physicians of Canada - Don Rae



On October 6, 1976 her Honour Pauline M. McGibbon, Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario and Patron of the Heraldry Society of Canada, graciously presented the College of Family Physicians of Canada - Le College des Medecins de Famille du Canada, with a library painting of their newly acquired Arms. The College thus became the third Canadian medical organization (after the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and the Canadian Medical Association) to acquire legitimate Arms.

The purpose of this organization, initially designated the College of General Practice of Canada, is summarized in the first object of its charter - "To sustain and improve the professional qualifications of members of the medical profession who are engaged in

family practice in Canada." A gift, both unique and appropriate was generously presented to the College, at its founding meeting in 1954<sup>1</sup> by the late Dr. T. C. Routley then retiring General Secretary of the Canadian Medical Association. This consisted of a carved serpent-entwined gavel. Dr. Routley, in his capacity as Consultant General of the World Medical Association, had received this from the medical Association of Cos a short time before. The wood used for this came from a Plane tree growing in the Greek Island of Cos and under which Hippocrates, the father of modern medicine, is said to have taught.

This gavel is really a modification of the staff of Asclepius which is usually depicted as a serpent-entwined stick or cudgel. (Figure 1) Asclepius (Aesculapius in Roman mythology), son Apollo, was the Greek God of medicine. He became so proficient in healing the sick that Pluto, God of the Underworld, complained to Zeus about the resulting decrease in the number of dead and consequent increase in the number of living. To restore a balance, Zeus killed Asclepius with a thunderbolt.<sup>2</sup> It is noted with relief, at least by this health care professional, that no one has suggested that efforts be made to again contact Zeus as a method of combating our current population explosion!

The staff of Asclepius is sometimes erroneously described as the Caduceus. The latter was the wand of hermes (Mercury in roman mythology) which consisted of a winged staff symmetrically

continued...

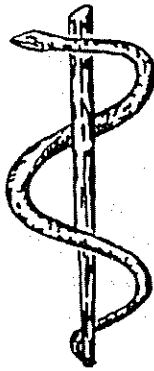


Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

### *Quality of Diligence*

The Arms of the College were designed under the supervision of Mr. R. G. M. Macpherson and were negotiated through the office of York Herald of Arms, Dr. Conrad Swan.

The blazon is:

Arms            Argent on a pale Azure between ten Maple Leaves five and five palewise Gules a Gavel Or entwined by a Serpent Vert.

Crest           Upon a Wreath Or and Azure rising from a circlet of Maple Leaves Gules a Cubit Arm the hand grasping an open Book Proper.

Supporters    On either side a Beaver proper gorged with a wreath Or and Azure.

Motto           Nostrum Studiis Robur.

entwined by two serpents. (Figure 2) With this Hermes was able to control the living, raise the dead, and even turn objects into gold.<sup>3</sup> Critics of the North American Medical Establishment might not regard this latter property as all that surprising. While increasingly used as a symbol of medicine since the 16th century, the Caduceus has also been used to signify commerce, postal service and ambassadorial status.<sup>4</sup>

A depiction of the Colleges' new gavel was incorporated into its original insignia as were two rows of five maple leaves to represent the then provincial chapters of the organization. (Figure 3) Or and azure were designated the official colours of the College.

Appropriately, a serpent-entwined gavel is the central charge on the shield. This is the second occasion that this unusual object has appeared in an Achievement of Arms. The Royal College of General Practitioners, British sister organization of the Canadian College was also presented with a serpent-entwined wooden gavel by the Ambassador of Greece. This is reproduced in the crest of their Arms - an owl stantant clutching a serpent-entwined gavel. (Figure 4) In a recent exchange in the Letters to the Editor column of the Journal of that society there was some light hearted speculation as to the variety of owl depicted.<sup>5</sup> It was pointed out that the feeding habits of certain owls were such as to render the serpents' "security of tenure on the gavel in some doubt". Fortunately, as dedicated Heraldists know, heraldic creatures do not have to comply with the classification or characteristics dictated by zoology.

The supporters, beavers proper differenced by being gorged with a wreath Or and azure, were chosen for several reasons. Both early Europeans<sup>6</sup> and North American Indians attributed medicinal properties to the beaver. Today, it is associated with the quality of diligence and has become an official symbol of the sovereignty of Canada.<sup>7</sup>

The crest, cubit Arm, the hand grasping an open book, reflects the motto "Nostrum in Studiis Robur" - "in study lies our strength."

In designing these Arms an attempt was made to incorporate portions of the original insignia as well as making allusions to the nationality and aspirations of the College of Family Physicians of Canada - Le College des Medecins de Famille du Canada.

#### Bibliography

<sup>1</sup>Association Notes, Canadian Med. A. J., Vol. 71, July 1954, pg. 81.

<sup>2</sup>DURANT, W. The Story of Civilization: Part 2 - The Life of Greece 1939, pg. 96.

<sup>3</sup>The Work Book Encyclopedia Vol. 13, 1972, pg. 341.

<sup>4</sup>The Columbia, Encyclopedia, 3rd. Edition 1963, pg. 312.

<sup>5</sup>Journal of the Royal College of General Practitioners, Jan. 1977, pg. 59, April 1977, pg. 251.

<sup>6</sup>Wild Animals of North America, National Geographic Society 1960, pg. 224.

<sup>7</sup>The House of Commons of Canada: Bill C-373 passed March 18, 1975.

May 31, 1997  
Olde England Inn

Present:	Mr. G. Anderson	Dr. & Mrs. Anderson	Mr. R. Bird
	Mr. C. Kingston	Mr. C. Laine	Mr. & Mrs. R. Meyer
	Mr. & Mrs. Petley-Jones	Mr. & Mrs. L. Patten	Dr. & Mrs. D. Rae
	Mr. & Mrs. D. Watson	Mr. R. Watt	Miss C. Watt

### MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- Chief Herald R. Watt discussed recent developments at the Canadian Heraldic Authority. Included, among these, was news of a new Herald, Miss C. Boudreau, and the fact that the Authority would now be responsible for military heraldry. This was previously an activity of D.N.D. Mr. Charles Meyer will be responsible for this, within the Authority.
- There are now 29 members in good standing of our Branch. The time lag for payments and correspondence with National was discussed. One proposal was that the BC/Yukon Branch should form an autonomous group. The pros and cons of this were debated. It was agreed that the subject be revisited at the next Branch meeting in the fall.
- A resurrected Branch Newsletter, "The Blazon", was discussed. It was planned to have an issue to be mailed out with the notice of the first fall meeting. This will also be the meeting when a new President will be elected. It is recommended that a Secretary/Treasurer and an Editor be chosen at that time, as well.
- The members were informed that the National AGM will be in Toronto in the fall.
- Graham Anderson then gave a well-received talk on: hatchments, hatching, tricking and badges. He also presented a possible design for a Branch badge.
- The meeting concluded at 2115h

Prints from the late 1700's to 1800's were printed from copper plate engravings and are excellent examples of durable quality craftsmanship. On average, it would take a minimum of several weeks for a skilled artisan to engrave each plate, which was done in reverse order to have a positive image on the printed work. An engraver would vary the amount of pressure and depth, angle and quality of each engraved line to give the end product dimension and detail. Regrettably, many of these plates were melted down for scrap during WWI.

cotton/linen rags which were turned into pulp, which was then turned into paper. The resulting paper was thick and durable with a shelf life of several hundred years. The tactile strength of such papers lends itself well to restoration. Even badly stained and discoloured prints can be revitalized.

The clean detailed lines, durability, restorability and shelf life of such prints makes them highly collectable. Frequently, the subject of these engraved works has historical significance, which, in turn, increases their monetary value.



QUEENSBERRY.

By the 1800's, the science of printing was advanced enough to create superlative prints. Generally, a few hundred prints could be hand pressed from each copper plate. The paper that was employed by most printers was made from old



STRATHMORE