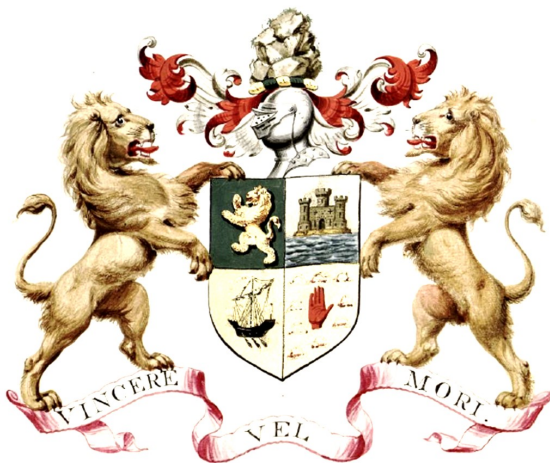


Practical Heraldry for the Self-Isolator

Week 7b— Heraldic Supporters 2

Yesterday we looked at a few sets of supporters which were human figures (or they could have been angels) - the French would call them *tenants*. Today we will look at supporters which are beasts—real or mythical. Again we just call these supporters but the French would call them *supports*.

These *supports* or beast supporters are the lovely "two squirrels sejant Proper" of the Burgh of Kilmarnock, recorded in 1929 so presumably from the exuberant brushes of Alfred George Samson.



These supporters are the amiable Lions of the Clan Chief, Roderick MacNeil of Barra - "two lions Proper standing on a scroll". This painting, which dates from 1824, gives the lie to the lack of skill often unfairly levelled at the early 19th century herald painters. The Herald Painter given for the period 1823-1832 is Robert McInnes. The two usual criticisms are firstly that supporters are often shown on "gasbrackets", but here they just stand rather elegantly on the motto scroll, and secondly that there is too much landscape

Here are the *gryphons* (or *griffins*) Proper of Fletcher of Saltoun which date from the year after the MacNeil lions, having been granted in 1825, and once again are poised elegantly on the motto scroll.



These **supports** or beast supporters are the Two swans Proper beaked and langued Gules of the Marquess of Ailsa, recorded in 1899 and doubtless the sumptuous work of the Herald Painter, Graham Johnston.



A more modern example of supports or beast supporters is found in the arms of The British Aerospace Authority matriculated at the Lyon Office in 1979 which use the *winged lions* derived from the arms themselves.

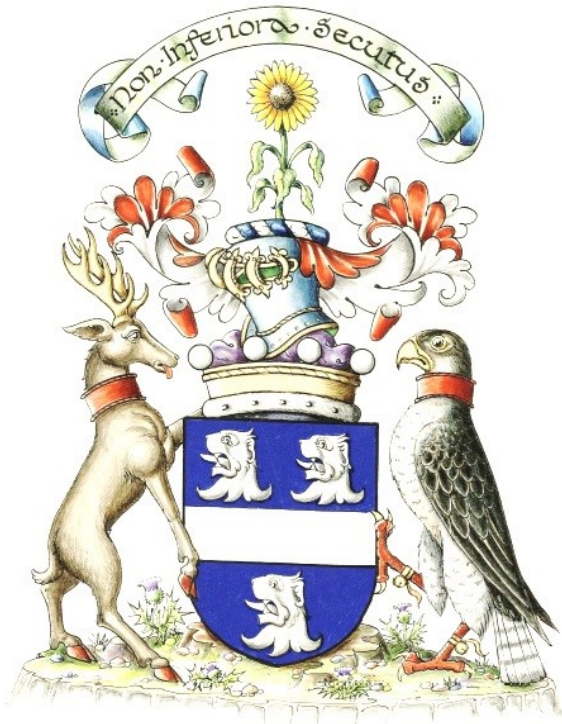


Here are the splendid sea-griffins matriculated as supporters to Vickers Limited, in 1980. The Herald Painter of the Day was Jennifer Mitchell



Another fine set of bestial supporters or **supports** is the jawdropping dragons, again the work of Graham Johnston, granted to the Earl of Eglinton and Winton in 1904.

The arms themselves are among the most elaborate in the Lyon Register and the supporting dragons add to the effect of luxury and sumptuousness.



John Buchan, Baron Tweedsmuir 1935

Dexter: A stag proper attired Or collared Gules,

Sinister: A falcon proper jessed, belled and beaked Or, collared Gules.

Like many heraldic beasts the falcon has some of its own technical vocabulary. *Jessed* means that the little leather strip holding the bell to the claw has a loose end.

Author of "The Thirty-Nine Steps", "Prester John" etc, John Buchan was Governor General of Canada 1935-1940

Count and Countess de Salis 1979

Supporters: a leopard guardant and a gryphon regardant, both proper.



City of Glasgow 1866

Two salmon Proper each holding in its mouth a signet ring Or.

The salmon, like the charges on the shield, come from the life of St Mungo, patron saint of the city.

The Bishops and later Archbishops of Glasgow use a salmon as an unusual single supporter.

