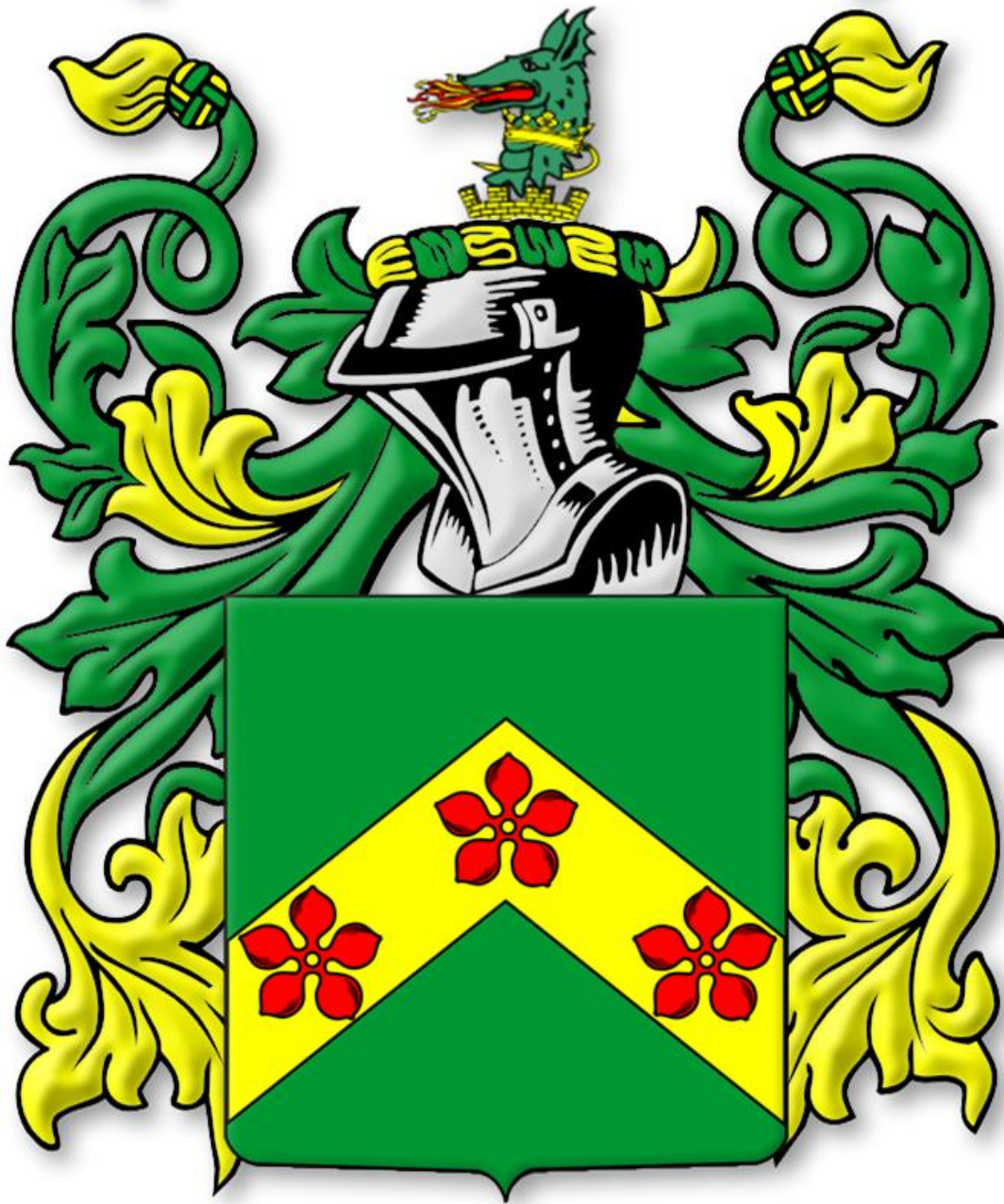


The Ancient Arms of

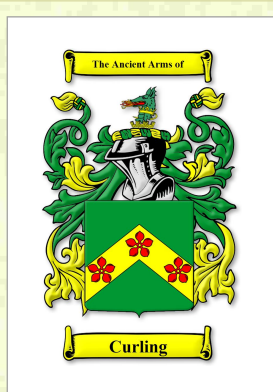


Curling

# SYMBOLISM

## INTRODUCTION

Heraldry, in its early form, was probably introduced to Ireland by the Anglo-Normans around 1172, but by then the practice of using symbols to identify important individuals would not have been unknown to the Irish. It was not until much later that heraldry was regulated by the English Crown, and Irish symbols were then included in the armory.



ACHIEVEMENT OF ARMS OF  
CURLING



MANTLE OF CURLING

An Achievement of Arms such as the Curling arms depicted on the left typically consists of these parts: the Escrolls, displaying the family motto and name, the family crest (if any) seen above the helmet, the actual Coat of arms (also known as 'arms,' or 'the shield'), the Helmet depicted below the crest, the Torse on top of the helmet, and the Mantle draped from the helmet. Each of these elements will be described below. Supporters were a later addition to the Achievement; they are somewhat rare, and are usually personal to the grantee.

The mantle was spread over and draped from the helmet and served as a protection, 'to repel the extremities of wet, cold, and heat, and to preserve the armour from rust.' The numerous cuts and slits suggest that it had been torn and hacked on the field of battle. The style or design of the mantling is up to the individual heraldic artist, and it is usually depicted in the main color and metal from the shield. The helmet (or Helm) varied in shape in different ages and countries, often depicting rank. The Esquire's Helm, as depicted here, is generally shown silver, with a closed visor and facing to the dexter (its right). On top of the helmet is a Torse or wreath which was formed by two pieces of silk twisted together. Its purpose was to hold the crest and mantle on the Helm.

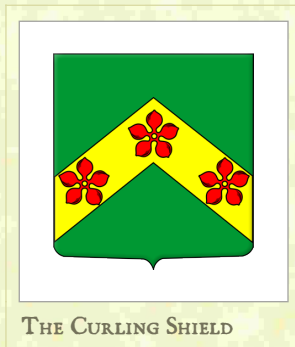
## MOTTO

The motto was originally a war cry or slogan. Mottoes first began to be shown with arms in the 14th and 15th centuries, but were not in general use until the 17th century. Thus the oldest coats of arms generally do not include a motto. Mottoes seldom form part of the grant of arms: Under most heraldic authorities, a motto is an optional component of the coat of arms, and can be added to or changed at will; many families have chosen not to display a motto.

The coat of arms displayed here for the surname Curling did not include a motto.

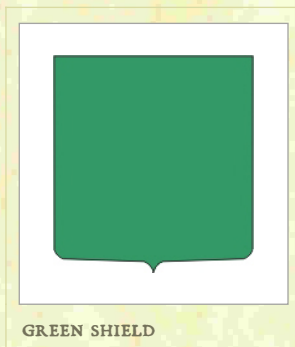
## SHIELD

Shields (or Escutcheons) at first were painted simply with one or more bands of color or 'ordinaries'. Later, the ordinaries were used in conjunction with other figures or symbols. The Coat of Arms for the surname Curling can be described as follows:



### CURLING ARMS

A green shield with three red cinquefoils on a gold chevron.



### GREEN SHIELD

"Vert" (from the French word for green) signifies felicity and pleasure. It was symbolic of joy, youth and beauty. Green was also associated with the spring. The bearer of the green is obliged to defend the peasant and all who work on the land. It is expressed in engravings by lines in bend, or slanting to the right.

**Symbolic Virtues:** Green denotes the virtues of charity and hope, as well as the qualities of honor, courtesy and abundance.

**Precious Stone:** Emerald

**Planet:** Venus

**Obligations:** To defend the peasant and all who work on the land

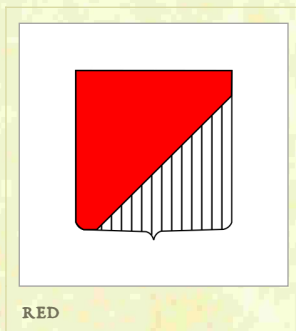
## THREE

"Three" devices, beasts or ordinaries of the same have a special significance in heraldry.

First of all, there is the obvious reference to the Trinity in the design that would signify observance of the Christian doctrine.

Secondly, with many Arms it brings balance that is steeped in tradition. To better understand this latter scenario, we must look at the evolution of shield in personal armory. Kite shields that were the most popular from the the 10th-14th century evolved into Heater shields that had flat tops c. 1250. This was the time of heraldry's beginnings and when "three" objects were used for balance in each corner of the shield.

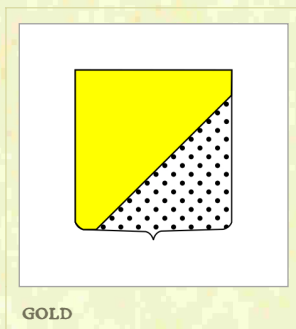
Later, with the advent of the "chief," "chevron" and "bend" three devices brought balance to these ordinaries too.



RED

## RED

Gules, derived from an Old French word *goules* or *gueules* meaning "throats" translates into modern English as "red" and is the military color for excellence and fortitude. It is symbolic of nobility, boldness and ferocity, and can also represent fire and summer. Some ancient laws restricted its use to princes and their families. Red corresponds to the metal copper and is denoted in engravings by numerous perpendicular lines.



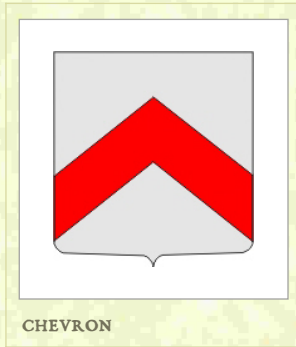
GOLD

## GOLD

"Or" (from the French word for gold) is the tincture of Gold, or in heraldic terms "or," was considered the noblest color.

One of only two metals used in heraldry, it exceeds all others in value, purity and finesse. It represents the light of the sun, and was once borne only by princes. Gold is said to gladden the heart and destroy all works of magic. It is also associated with excellence and achievement, and the bearer surpasses all others in valor.

It is represented on coats of arms by the color yellow, and in engravings by a dotted pattern.



## CHEVRON

The Chevron occurs frequently in British and French heraldry, while it is comparatively rare in German heraldry. Traditionally the Chevron represents the roof of a house, derived from the French word "chevron" meaning rafter. It signifies protection. (Wade)

There is much disagreement about whether this Ordinary or the "bend" was the first design to appear on coats of arms.

The Chevron was granted to those who had participated in some notable enterprise, had built churches or fortresses, or had accomplished some work requiring faithful service.

Originally heralds drew the Chevron almost reaching the top of the shield, nearly covering shield surface. More recently, the Chevron is drawn lower and with a less acute inner angle to allow more devices to be represented more attractively, and the artist may draw the chevron at the height and angle that will best suit the accompanying charges. The chevronel, is the diminutive of the chevron and is much narrower. Chevronels may be stacked on top of each other or side-by-side at the same height, which is termed interlaced, or braced. A field composed entirely of an even number of chevrons is called "chevronny."

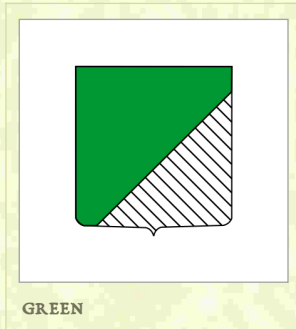
## THE CREST

The Crest was worn on top of the helmet, and was usually made of wood, metal, or boiled leather. It provided the double advantage of easy identification and the addition of height to the wearer. The Crest for the surname Curling is described as follows:



A GREEN DRAGON'S HEAD ERASING BREATHING FIRE, DUCALLY GORGED AND LINED IN GOLD, ON A GOLD MURAL CORONET.

THE CURLING CREST



## GREEN

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## HEAD

The Human Head stands for honor. After all, the Head is the center of knowledge, thinking and learning for the body.

"The heads of 'blackamoors' or negroes generally refer to deeds of prowess in the Crusades." (Wade)

## ERASED

Erased, in heraldic terms, means that the object described has been violently torn off, leaving a jagged edge. It is a term applied to the heads and limbs of creatures; however, it really just indicates that there are wisps of fur or feathers preventing the edge from being a clean one.

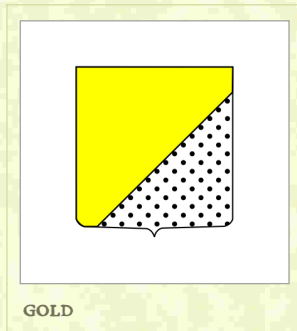


## FIRE

Flames or fire signify zeal; one may be consumed by zeal as with fire. It is also a symbol of passion, spiritual energy, rebirth and purification. Fire was an ancient symbol of a ruler, perhaps related to sun worship. As fire has been used as a torture, it can also signify one who has undergone severe trials. The symbolism of flames on a coat of arms can also be specific to a particular person or incident. As in the crest of Sir William Gull, where the flaming torch is probably an allusion to the skill with which he kept the flame of life burning in the Prince of Wales when he was very seriously ill in 1871.

## GORGED

When a creature is gorged it is collared, either with a plain collar or a coronet. Symbolically, a beast that has been gorged has been trained to be subservient to the bearer of the arms thus harnessing all the powers and strengths of that beast.



## GOLD

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## CORONET

The coronet, such as the ducal coronet, is used for decoration only and does not denote rank, although it is often mistakenly assumed that the bearer of the coronet was of royal lineage. The coronet is a sign of victory, empire, and sovereignty. Now the word coronet is generally synonymous with crown.