
The study of civic heraldry, according to Jiri Louda, has remained a stepchild, which if treated at all, is an appendix to family heraldry.

The hundreds of brightly colored shields in the book represent pride in town history, in such past achievements as victories, beliefs, ancestry, and occupations. The book includes towns and cities in both the British Isles and continental Europe.

Louda bemoans shields that are crowded and cluttered. He especially likes Norwegian designs, for instance, the whale and Viking ship of Sandelfjord and the reindeer of Tronso. He liked the custom of canting, of shields bearing appropriate symbols alluding to their names: three silver towers, Tours, and nine silver churches, Neunkirchen, Austria. Another civic coat of arms that he admires is that of Sainte-Mère-Eglise, Normandy, with its up-dated shield that adds to the Norman lion a silver church with two parachutes dangling stars floating down towards the church. It was at Sainte-Mère-Eglise that United States parachute troops landed in the 1944 invasion.

The reader will like the beautifully printed and illustrated book.


Since heraldry is used more extensively and is more popular today than in medieval times, Parker's glossary of terms fills a need for a quick and authentic reference work for this "science of recording genealogies and blazoning arms or ensigns armorial." This work is a thorough rewriting of a book first published by James Parker's father about fifty years ago.

This scholarly book relies on ancient and established terms, and decries exercises in ingenuity of some writers. It is largely based on early manuscripts, brasses, stained glass, sepulchral monuments, used in their "illustrative rather than in their archaeological and historical aspects," and on research among the Rolls and Visitation in the British Museum.

A complete synoptical table groups the chief terms under logical
headings and in systematic order; following this are completely alphabetized terms with one thousand illustrations, and words such as charge, bearing, ordinary, tincture field, fess, and many others take on a new meaning. Religious history, battles, brave deeds, even occupations are interpreted in the book.

F. C. McL.