

YOUR STORY: Queen's Call to Arms!



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Just before his eldest daughter Catherine Middleton married His Royal Highness Prince William, the future Duke of Cambridge on 29 April 2011 in Westminster Abbey, Michael Middleton was granted a coat of arms by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II as a personal gift.

On 25 May 2018 Meghan Markle, now the Duchess of Sussex was granted a coat of arms in her own right by the Queen; but in Meghan's case - and partly because of her unruly clan - the privilege extended neither to her father, nor her family.

By Letters Patent issued under Crown authority, I GEORGE WILLIAM HELON Esquire of Toowoomba have just been granted a coat of arms, crest, badge and the exemplification of a standard by Her Majesty's College of Arms in London (College Reference: Grants 23/2019).

Her Majesty the Queen is the 'Fount of Honour' from whom all titles, grants of arms, orders of chivalry and honours are conferred; they are Our Sovereign's gift and prerogative.

Under English heraldic law, a coat of arms and armorial ensigns can be granted to persons of eminence or good standing in national or local life and for exceptional service to society at large.

A grant of arms confers upon a person and his or her legitimate descendants the exclusive right to bear a particular coat of arms or armorial bearings in perpetuity.

Contrary to what some may have read on the internet and believe, there is no such thing as a coat of arms for a particular surname; coats of arms belong to specific individuals, their families and descendants.

The Kings of Arms, Garter, Clarenceux, Norroy and Ulster were directed by Warrant of Her Majesty's Earl Marshal His Grace Edward Fitzalan-Howard, the 18th Duke of Norfolk to design my armorial bearings.

The Earl Marshal is the head of Her Majesty's College of Arms and no coat of arms or other armorial ensigns may be granted by the Crown without his Warrant.

In the creation of my coat of arms and heraldic ensigns I worked closely with York Herald (Michael 'Peter' Desmond O'Donoghue) over a period of months to create a design that would be bold and as simple as possible, yet personal and representative of me in a subtle and allusive way.

Notwithstanding I am the holder and recipient of a number of ancestral and foreign nobiliary titles of honour and dignity, knighthoods, medals and awards (most of which carry with them appellations and post-nominals), the foregoing can neither feature, nor be alluded to in a coat of arms from the Crown as they do not fall in the ambit of State honours and awards within the Commonwealth of Nations.

Additionally, 'foreign' and quartered arms, or those bearing registered or controlled 'charges' (the likes of lions, roses, or heraldic devices of nations and states) cannot be granted from the Crown, so for the purposes of all my future activities within the Commonwealth (and the fact that I was born in Bridgnorth, England) I will defer to my recent grant from Her Majesty's College of Arms.

Being elaborately illuminated on vellum with exceptionally executed hand-painted renditions of the

Arms of the Sovereign, the Arms of the Earl Marshal (His Grace Edward William Fitzalan-Howard, the 18th Duke of Norfolk, Hereditary Marshal and 'First Peer of the Realm', and Head of Her Majesty's College of Arms) and the Arms of Her Majesty's College of Arms, my Letters Patent also feature the crowned Arms of Office of the granting Kings of Arms: Thomas Woodcock, Garter Principal King of Arms; Patric Laurence Dickinson, Clarenceux King of Arms, and Timothy Hugh Stewart Duke, Norroy and Ulster King of Arms.

The Letters Patent are ornately embellished, finely accentuated and flawlessly scrivened in the finest tradition of medieval manuscript illumination with a decorative border of fauna and flora that honours my parents; they are signed by the granting Kings of Arms and sealed with their respective red Bee's Wax Seals of Office enclosed in skippets (gold screw-lid containers) properly suspended from the vellum with blue grosgrain ribbons.

I am extremely honoured to know my accomplishments and contributions to society are worthy of acknowledgement and that I have attained sufficient eminence and good standing locally, nationally and internationally to have even been considered for a grant of arms.

So in addition to being a Freeman of the City of London and a Kentucky Colonel I am now an Armiger too!

The Blazon, or formal description of my grant is thus:

ARMS: Gules an Eagle displayed Argent attached to each foot by a Manacle a broken Chain the Wings surmounting on either side a Scroll palewise Or.

CREST: Upon a Helm with a Wreath Argent and Gules Perched on the top of a Tower Gules a Rufous Owl affronty displayed proper supporting with the Wing Tips a Boomerang Or.

MANTLING: Gules doubled Argent.

BADGE: A Turtle palewise Azure charged on the Shell with a Sprig of Golden Wattle Or.

MOTTO: AVORUM HONORI ('For the Honour of Our Ancestors').

The meaning, history and symbolism of my granted armorial ensigns are explained fully at my website.