

The United States Army Institute of Heraldry, its Background, and its Predecessors

A Study of Pro-heraldic Activities and Institutions in the United States, c.1861-2010

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1. Introduction

Armorial practices in the United States of America are largely unregulated.¹ There is no American institution analogous to the College of Arms in London, the Court of the Lord Lyon in Edinburgh, or the Bureau of Heraldry in Pretoria. The citizens of the United States employ several different private registration options such as the Committee on Heraldry of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, the American College of Heraldry, or the United States Heraldic Registry. There is, however, one aspect of American armorial practice that is regulated and controlled by an official government agency and that is the practice of the armed forces. The coats of arms of military units and some government agencies are devised and registered by the United States Army's Institute of Heraldry. This unique institution was formally established in 1954 by the country's military authorities in order to bring together several bodies that were performing similar functions. Because this organization is unique within the United States it is useful to understand its history and its function.

This article will first discuss the history of the Institute of Heraldry. It will then look closely at its organization, functions, and regulations. The

¹ The author would like to thank Prof. D'Arcy Boulton, the Editor of this journal, for serving as advisor for this article in its original form as an LRHSC thesis. His invaluable critiques and encouragement have made it far better than it would have been otherwise.

final portion of the article will represent a detailed analysis and assessment of its output in the form of coats of arms.² Its antecedents are found during some of the earliest conflicts in which Americans fought. The United States Civil War is one example of an American conflict in which officers and soldiers began to use some sort of distinguishing badge or symbol to help them see who was friend and who was foe. Over the course of several other clashes and two world wars, the form and structure of the Institute of Heraldry began to take shape.

After the initial presentation of the facts surrounding its history, the article will present the current position of the Institute of Heraldry. The Institute is, indeed, a unique establishment within the United States, but it is also quite different in its mission, staffing, and internal organization from other heraldic authorities of governments around the world. Unlike the British models, it does not concern itself at all with personal, civic, ecclesiastical, institutional, official, or corporate armorial bearings, but only with those of military units. These entities are never granted such emblems either by the two British authorities or any of their recent offshoots, but make use of para-armorial badges and hybrid-heraldic flags. The Institute is made up of a small civilian staff that has no formal training in any aspect of heraldry. Great latitude is given to heraldic designers, and though an attempt is made to follow the standard conventions of English armory, there are cases where the perceived needs of a unit seem to preclude that. Unlike the College of Arms or the Court of the Lord Lyon, there is no expert executive that has final say in the designs to be registered for army units. Instead, the director of the Institute deals mainly with administrative duties.

The concluding section of this article will present an analysis of the effects of this distinctive structure on the designs that are turned out by the Institute of Heraldry. Without a firm guiding force of heraldic control, the work produced for American military units varies greatly. Some of the arms contain simple, clean designs that beautifully represent the function of a unit. Others have been cluttered with far too many charges showing every achievement of a unit to the point where they are barely even useful as identification marks. It is possible that the quality of the arms produced by the Institute could be improved, but, as discussed later, it would take a significant number of changes to its administrative structure to achieve this.

It should also be noted that the United States Army and its Institute of Heraldry use the term 'heraldry' exclusively in the tertiary senses represented by 'armory,' 'armories,' and 'armigery.' They also use both 'arms' and 'coat of arms' in the sense traditionally represented by the phrase 'armorial achievement.' In addition, the words 'symbol' and 'symbolism' are principally used in documents produced by the Institute to

² The Institute does a great deal of design work for the United States government in a number of areas, but the focus of this article will be those distinctive unit insignia (DUI) that take the form of armorial bearings.

designate elements of emblematic designs representing other characteristics of the armigerous units, especially their nature and their principal achievements: uses identical to those of the same words in the *Alta Studia Heraldica* terminology. This article will employ the terminology of *Alta Studia Heraldica* except in quotations.

2. Pro-heraldic Practices and Jurisdiction in the United States

2.1. The Unauthorized Adoption of Unit Emblems, 1861-1918

Though it was officially established in 1954, the origins of the United States Army's Institute of Heraldry can be found almost one hundred years before that time. During the United States Civil War, there was a movement among Union forces to adopt standard uniforms across the army. This standardization of uniforms caused a great deal of confusion for soldiers, as there were no standard unit-specific insignia available to differentiate men from different subdivisions in the force. Some officers, such as General Phil Kearney, improvised methods for identification by having those officers under his command wear a scarlet patch on their caps.³ The enlisted men in Kearney's 3rd Division quickly followed suit, and other officers undoubtedly used similar informal methods to tell their soldiers apart from others. It is clear, though, that there was no standard form of unit designation in the army, and that each department and group was responsible for its own choice of emblem.⁴

The involvement of United States troops in World War I brought the same problem. Thanks to the mass production capabilities of American industry, it was possible to produce uniforms that were standard for all of the soldiers in the army. Before he took command of the 81st Division, General Charles Bailey had been to France and seen the insignia used by European forces to differentiate themselves in battle. Bailey was impressed by this practice and soon polled his own men to see what sort of symbol might be adopted by the 81st Division. The men voted and decided on a wildcat for use on a distinctive shoulder patch.⁵ General Bailey then had a supply of these wildcat patches made in New York and ordered his men to sew them to their uniforms while on route to Europe in August of 1918.⁶

³ Ezra WARNER, *Generals in Blue: Lives of the Union Commanders* (New Orleans: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), 238. For more on United States military insignia, see Guido Rosignoli, *Army Badges and Insignia of World War 2* (London, 1972), Pl. 64-73, and pp. 191-206.

⁴ Arthur DUBOIS, 'Heraldic Branch OQMG', *The Quartermaster Review*, (September/October 1954).

⁵ *The Army Almanac: A Book of Facts Concerning the Army of the United States* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1950), 554.

⁶ Oscar STROH, *Heraldry in the U.S. Army* (Harrisburg, PA: Oscar Stroh, 1980), p. 6.

This practice was frowned upon by the officials in the United States Army.⁷ An order was issued the next month to remove the unauthorized adornment from the uniforms of the 81st Division. Bailey appealed this order to General Jack Pershing, who decided to allow the soldiers to retain their identifying marks. The only requirement in his telegram on 19 October of that year was that the men of the division live up to their new emblem. The 81st is now a reserve unit and continues to use the wildcat emblem with the motto 'WILDCATS NEVER QUIT,' so it would seem that they served Bailey and Pershing well.⁸ By the end of the war in Europe, fully 34 Army and National Guard units in Europe had adopted shoulder patches similar to that of the 81st division.⁹ Just as before, there was no regulation of these emblems, and there was no basic framework in which to develop designs.

2.2. The First Pro-heraldic Office and its Activities (Autonomous 1919-24, Under the Quartermaster General 1924-54)

When the war was over, there was pressure from above to reform the haphazard system of insignia-adoption that had developed in Europe. Both in Europe and back in the United States, officials at the Army's headquarters issued orders demanding that the unauthorized insignia be removed. These all seem to have been ignored by both the enlisted soldiers and their officers. In an effort to save face, the Army decided to allow units to wear their shoulder patches until they were demobilized. Once these forces left the Army, they would remove their insignia and the Regular Army forces would follow suit shortly thereafter. In spite of this compromise, it was still very difficult for the general staff to enforce this order. During this entire period, it became clear to many army officers that some regulation of the insignia of units would be desirable and the idea of coats of arms for the units of the United States Army was discussed.¹⁰

In 1919, based on this discussion and study, the responsibility to coordinate and approve military emblems, insignia and other official items for the United States Army was assigned to a new **office**.¹¹ The responsibility of organizing this new office was given to Colonel **Robert Wyllie**, who was British-born, and a fifth-generation military officer.¹² Wyllie's operation was begun on a very small scale, but as the army grew, so did the work of this new office, and its functions became more heraldic, with coats of arms comprising much of the emblematic design work. In

⁷ Harry D. TEMPLE, 'The Institute of Heraldry, United States Army', *The Coat of Arms*, VIII, no. 59 (July 1964).

⁸ *The Army Almanac: A Book of Facts Concerning the Army of the United States* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1950), p. 554.

⁹ STROH, *Heraldry in the U.S. Army*, p. 7.

¹⁰ *Loc. cit.*

¹¹ UNITED STATES ARMY, THE INSTITUTE OF HERALDRY, *An Historical Experience in Military Heraldry*. Informational Leaflet.

¹² TEMPLE, 'Institute of Heraldry, United States Army'.

1924, oversight of the office was handed over to the department of the Quartermaster General within the Army.¹³ The office was also charged with designing new awards and decorations for the U.S. Armed Forces. One such design was for the **Distinguished Flying Cross**, the first of which was awarded to Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh in 1928.¹⁴

When the United States entered World War II, there was a great acceleration of the activities for which the office was responsible. It was also during this war, that the work of the heraldic office came to be recognized outside of the army. The United States Navy and other government departments began to use the office's services.¹⁵ When more units began using coats of arms and other emblems, more units became interested in such emblems, and the men became more attached to their particular emblem. The end of World War II left the United States Army with most of the American army units bearing some sort of official emblem. There was no confusion as there was after the First World War.

Perhaps the most interesting examples of distinctive unit insignia (DUI) used by the United States during World War Two were for units that did not actually exist. When the United States entered the war, they began using deception techniques to confuse and misinform the enemy. The United Kingdom focused most of its effort in this area on the European theater, while the United States focused on the Pacific. Using inflatable tanks and soldiers allowed the 1,100 troops of the US 23rd Headquarters Special Troops to represent themselves as upwards of 30,000 troops.¹⁶ According to Thaddeus Holt, 'It soon became desirable to provide shoulder patch insignia for these units.' One of the officers from the ghost units 'went down personally to the Heraldic Section of the Office of the Quartermaster-General ... and discussed with 'the fine old gentleman whose job was creating insignias [sic] the designing of emblems for notional units ... Over time, shoulder patches for nearly every notional unit from division up were designed, on exactly the same basis as for real units, including official explanations of the symbolism involved in each patch.'¹⁷ The 'fine old gentleman' was Arthur DuBois, who was the chief of Heraldic Section at the time. The National Geographic Society published a catalogue of all army units' emblems in 1943.¹⁸ Unfortunately for the leaders of the ghost units, their insignia were left out of this comprehensive booklet. 'The deceivers were appalled to see that none of their fictitious units were

¹³ Barry Jason STEIN and Peter Joseph CAPELOTTI, *U.S. Army Heraldic Crests: A Complete Illustrated History of Authorized Distinctive Unit Insignia* (Columbia, SC: 1993), p. 4.

¹⁴ Arthur DUBOIS, 'Heraldry, Flag, and Insignia Work of the Office of the Quartermaster General' *The Quartermaster Review*, (May / June 1928).

¹⁵ TEMPLE, 'Institute of Heraldry'.

¹⁶ Thaddeus HOLT. *The Deceivers: Allied Military Deception in the Second World War* (New York: Scribner, 2004), pp. 81-4.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 437.

¹⁸ *Insignia and decorations of the U.S. armed forces: 1701 colour reproductions.* (Washington, DC: National Geographic Society, 1943).

included.¹⁹ The problem was rectified in the next edition of the National Geographic booklet published two years later, and the army made sure that copies were left where the Axis powers would pick them up.²⁰

Following the end of the war, the heraldic office continued to increase the scope of its work. In 1945, President Harry Truman commissioned the office to redesign the 'seal' (or more accurately the *sigilloid emblem*²¹) and flag of the President of the United States,²² after they had been 'incorrectly' designed by Rutherford Hayes some 85 years earlier.²³ In 1949 the **Munitions Board**, acting on behalf of the army, the navy, and the air force, directed the army to provide emblematic design services to all military departments.²⁴ The powers of the Quartermaster General's heraldic office were increased in 1957 with the enactment of Public Law 85-263. Through this law, as implemented by the Secretary of the Army, the **Quartermaster's Corps** was given the authority to provide emblematic services—involving both heraldic and non-heraldic emblems—to all government offices and departments upon request.²⁵

2.3. The Army Institute of Heraldry (Semi-Autonomous 1954-73, Under the Adjutant General 1973-present)

The period following World War II preserved the office's place as the only part of the United States Government that was concerned solely with the heraldic semiotic and representational arts: that is, the arts of designing and emblazoning heraldic emblems. To make this position more secure, the **Institute of Heraldry, United States Army** was officially established in 1954.²⁶ This was a consolidation of the pro-heraldic activities formerly performed by the heraldic office of the Quartermaster General and several

¹⁹ HOLT, *The Deceivers*, p. 437.

²⁰ Gilbert H. GROSVENOR, *Insignia and Decorations of the U.S. Armed Forces*. (Washington, DC: National Geographic Society, 1945).

²¹ On the nature of a seal, and the development of the seal-like or 'sigilloid' emblem in the United States, see D'A. J. D. BOULTON, 'The Origins of a *Damnosa Haereditas*: The Degeneration of Heraldic Emblematics in the future and current United States and the Origins of the Sigilloid Display-emblem, 1608-1798', in *Genealogica & Heraldica: Proceedings of the XXVI International Congress for Genealogical and Heraldic Sciences*, ed. André Vandewalle, Lieve Viaene Awouters, and Luc Duerloo. (Brussels: Vlaamse Overheid, 2006), 121-147.

²² Executive Order 9646, 25 October 1945. Though the urban legend is completely unfounded, this change in the presidential seal led to the often-cited story that the eagle's head in the Great Seal of the United States faces the arrow-bearing claw to the sinister during times of war and the dexter claw, bearing an olive branch in times of peace.

²³ Erik ECKHOLM, 'A Federal Office Where Heraldry of Yore is Only Yesterday' *New York Times*, 13 June 2006.

²⁴ STEIN and CAPELOTTI, *U.S. Army Heraldic Crests*, p. 4.

²⁵ Authorization for the Army to Provide Heraldic Services to the Other Military Services and Federal Agencies, Title 10, United States Code, Section 4594.

²⁶ TEMPLE, 'Institute of Heraldry'

other field offices. The Institute was founded as a distinct and semi-autonomous establishment at **Cameron Station** in Alexandria, Virginia (formerly part of Fairfax County) and responsible directly to the **Adjutant General of the Army**.²⁷ In May 1964, due to the inconsistency of the designs of dies by various manufacturers, the Institute had dies produced for all U.S. Army units entitled to their own DUI. These dies are loaned to certified manufacturers to produce insignia for the various units.²⁸ In 1973, the Institute of Heraldry became a **Directorate** of the Adjutant General Center.

The Institute relocated in 1994 to **Fort Belvoir**, in nearby Fairfax County, Virginia: originally Belvoir Plantation, a manor of the Fairfaxes after whom the surrounding county is named, and like Alexandria, a western suburb of Washington, D.C. It is currently attached to the United States Total Army Personnel Command,²⁹ and its current assignment is to

support the Armed Forces and other United States government organizations, including the Executive Office of the President. The activities of the Institute encompass standardization, quality assurance, and other services relating to official symbolic items, such as seals, decorations, medals, insignia, flags, and other items awarded to or authorized for official use by government personnel and agencies.³⁰

As of early 2008, this mission was being carried out by a staff of 24 civilians, including four heraldic designers, several research analysts, illustrators, industrial specialists, an IT specialist and an administrative assistant,³¹ and a budget of \$2.3 million.³² Both before its official establishment in 1954 and since that time, the Institute of Heraldry has been adapting its services to the needs of the US military and many other government departments. In addition, the office has been able to export its ideas to other countries. In July 2007, representatives from the armed forces of Afghanistan visited Fort Belvoir to get tips from officials at the Institute. These visitors were designing medals and awards for the Afghani army.³³

²⁷ TEMPLE, 'Institute of Heraldry'

²⁸ STEIN and CAPELOTTI, *U.S. Army Heraldic Crests*, p. 4.

²⁹ UNITED STATES ARMY, THE INSTITUTE OF HERALDRY. 'TIOH Fact Sheet No. 10' March 2000. In fact, Fort Belvoir is home to the United States Army Materiel Command and elements of ten other major Army commands, as well as numerous other military agencies and institutions.

³⁰ INSTITUTE OF HERALDRY, *An Historical Experience in Military Heraldry*

³¹ Correspondence with Petra Casipit, the Chief of the Heraldic Services and Support Division at the United States Army Institute of Heraldry on 28 January 2008.

³² ECKHOLM, 'A Federal Office'

³³ Quentin MELSON, 'Afghan Soldiers Learn to Mold History' *Belvoir Eagle*, 20 July 2007.

2.4. The Armorial Achievement of the Institute of Heraldry

The United States Army Institute of Heraldry naturally makes use of its own achievement, and its design aptly illustrates some of the shortcomings of the designs it has produced for others. The arms (or 'shield' in Institute usage) is blazoned *Or a Chevron Gules on a Chief Sable a Label Or*.



Fig. 1. The Achievement of the Institute

The official symbolism of this design is explained by the Institute in one of its informational leaflets, which declares that the red chevron is meant to represent the military forces of the United States. What connection either the chevron or its tincture has to those forces, however, is obscure, and it is equally unclear why the field tincture

should be gold: neither red nor gold being typical colours of the uniforms, insignia, or flags of the U. S. Army, in which shades of blue have always been dominant. It is therefore unlikely that anyone could have guessed the symbolism intended, and more likely that anyone with a knowledge of armory would have associated it with the Staffords, Earls of Stafford and Dukes of Buckingham — whose arms were *Or a chevron Gules*.

In any case, this intentionally martial design is set below a black chief bearing a gold label of three points. This last charge is said to represent the government of the United States, with its three branches, and its position of authority over the armed forces. The idea of such a chief was perhaps taken from the arms of the United States, in which the *blue* chief originally represented the Continental Congress, and after 1789 the new federal government. Why the chief of the Institute arms should be *sable* rather than *azure* is unclear, however, as black is certainly not a colour associated with the federal government, and its use completely undermines the presumably intended allusion to the arms of the Republic. Furthermore, the allusion to the three branches (insofar as it is appropriate at all, given the dependence of the Army on the Executive Branch) could easily have been made in a more transparent fashion than through the use of a sign normally used as a brisure.³⁴

Curiously, the Institute also sees the label as a brisure alluding to its place as the direct descendant and *heir* of the original heraldry office established in 1919: the label being the mark of an *heir apparent*. In fact, however, the Institute is the *actual* heir, not the *heir apparent* of that body, and on succeeding ought to have removed the label, if it had existed at the

³⁴ In fact, the dominant tinctures of gold and black suggest, on the basis of the colours associated with the different arms of the Army, that the Institute is a unit of tank-destroyers.

time. As a result, the sign is quite inappropriate to its true status as a *successor* to the earlier body.³⁵

The crest of the Institute is set on a gold and red wreath, and blazoned *a Griffin rampant Or*.³⁶ The Institute asserts that the griffin is traditionally associated with treasure that needs guarding,³⁷ and rightly sees itself as the guardian of the art of heraldry for the United States federal government. Once again, this symbolism is less than obvious. It is true that the gryphons of Ancient Greek mythology were seen as guardians of the treasures of the Hyperboreans, but in the medieval bestiary from which heraldic symbolism of this sort was normally drawn, it was the *dragon* that was associated with the guardianship of treasures. Interestingly, the griffin — a hybrid of eagle and lion — was also chosen to symbolize the dual heritage of the United States. The griffin represents the United States through the eagle, and Great Britain through the lion. In this way, the Institute's arms reflect the influence of Great Britain (or more precisely, England) on American laws, language, and heraldic tradition.³⁸ This, at least, is an allusion both apt and reasonably transparent.

Unfortunately, neither in its own achievement, nor in those of the units for which it provides designs and official representations, does the Institute make use of the *helms* that, in the usage of both British realms (England and Scotland), should *always* be set below crests when they are included in a formal rendering of an armorial achievement, as distinct from a representation made for the purposes of a record. In omitting this standard element of a basic achievement, it not only violates a fundamental rule, but deprives itself of the possibility of employing the *form* of the helm as an insigne of the nature and status of the unit represented: the principal semeiotic function of the helm in achievements since the late sixteenth century.

The armorial achievement of the United States Army Institute of Heraldry does include a motto-scroll and motto, set below the shield in keeping with English convention. The motto is *ÆGIS FORTISSIMA HONOS*, which translates to '*Honour is the strongest shield*': a truly elegant choice. Like the achievements it grants to other units, the achievement of the Institute does not include supporters — or at least figures which it conceives of as such — because for some reason its founders decided that they were inappropriate. The external ornaments of its own shield, however, are rounded out by a pair of banners, one on each side, which look awfully like supporters. To the dexter of the shield is a golden banner bearing a mullet azure, voided argent. This alludes to the white stars (strictly mullets) on the blue free-quarter of the flag of the United States. The sinister banner is also gold, and bears a red and white Tudor rose,

³⁵ INSTITUTE OF HERALDRY, 'An Historical Experience in Military Heraldry'.

³⁶ This is blazoned incorrectly, though, as the correct term for use with griffins is *segreant*. And both rampant and segreant are awkward postures for crest-beasts.

³⁷ Stephen FRIAR. *A Dictionary of Heraldry* (New York: Harmony Books, 1987).

³⁸ INSTITUTE OF HERALDRY, 'An Historical Experience in Military Heraldry'.

barbed and seeded vert. This is an obvious further allusion to the English influence on the United States, and more specifically to the beginning of English settlement of the country under the Tudor Queen Elizabeth I of England.

Both these allusions and the form they take are perfectly appropriate, but as the banners are clearly distinctive *emblems* rather than generic *insignia*, and do not appear to be intended to function as independent *badges*, they can only be considered as constituting a type of supporter, of the inanimate kind called 'flankers' by D'Arcy Boulton in an article on proposed conventions for the armorial use of corporate bodies in the United States.³⁹ Their nature as such ought to be acknowledged by the Institute, and similar flankers assigned to other units according to some standard scheme. Indeed, it would be preferable to treat these rather than the crest as a standard form of augmentation, as that is one of their traditional functions.

3. The Organization and Functions of the Institute of Heraldry

3.1. Organization: The Divisions of Design, Regulation, and Production

The United States Army Institute of Heraldry is organized into three divisions, each with specific duties and functions. The chiefs of these divisions report to the Director of the Institute. Until 1990, this position was always held by a commissioned officer with the rank of Colonel.⁴⁰ The largest of the divisions is that of 'heraldic' design which is responsible for much of the Institute's work. This division does design work on heraldic items, logos, insignia, and other non-heraldic items for all of the various government agencies that contract their services. They also produce emblazonments of armorial bearings and illustrations of other items to aid in manufacturing and for display. In addition to the artwork provided, the design division also includes the blazons, descriptions in non-technical language, and explanations of the symbolic elements, to go along with their heraldic artwork. These are brought together in a document that the

³⁹ D'A. J. D. BOULTON, 'New Heraldry for Notre Dame. Part II. A New General System of Conventions for the External Elements of Armorial Achievements in the United States', *Heraldry in Canada*, 31.3 (Sept. 1997), pp. 13-32.

⁴⁰ One exception was a Lieutenant Colonel that served for three years in the 1960s and 1970s. A chronological list of the Institute's directors since 1960 is found in Appendix I. The switch from commissioned officers to retired officers seems to have come as a result of a larger campaign within the United States armed forces to reduce the officer corps. The Directorship of the Institute of Heraldry was specifically mentioned as a post which did not require a commissioned officer in James Bennet, 'So Many Officers, So Little to Do', *Washington Monthly* (1 February 1990).

Institute refers to as a 'grant of arms'.⁴¹ As the lynchpin for all of this work, the division does a great deal of research on existing symbols and emblems in order to create new heraldic items. In the past, this division was divided into two—one for the creative design of heraldic and non-heraldic emblems, and one for illustration and painting.⁴²

The second largest division at the institute is the 'heraldic' services and support division. This division determines various military units' entitlements to heraldic and other emblems, researches policy, and provides advice to federal agencies concerning heraldic and comparable emblems and associated traditions. Thus they act not only as a support to the Institute's designers, but also to various government agencies that wish to use emblems. The division also manages the budget of the Institute, the library and records, the information technology, and human resources. The library, maintained by the heraldic services and support division, contains a rich and valuable collection of 28,000 volumes that has been built up over many years. It includes books and manuscripts dating from the 1700s up to the present day. The library covers subjects ranging from heraldry, military art and science, history, arms and armor, uniforms and other matters. In addition, the Institute maintains approximately 30,000 permanent files for designs that it has created.⁴³ Generally speaking, the extensive library is not open to the public.⁴⁴ For the enthusiast, though, the Institute of Heraldry today has information on unit insignia and coats of arms available on its website for many active and reserve military units.⁴⁵

The smallest of the three divisions is the technical and production division. It provides advice on the production and acquisition of heraldic items, and writes the specifications for manufacturing items. The technical and production division also runs the certified manufacturer and quality assurance programs for the institute. This allows private contractors to produce items for the Institute, and for the government at large, to the exact specifications set down by the designers. This division also includes a sculpture and display branch that is responsible for making three dimensional models and casts for the development of medal, badge, and plaque designs.⁴⁶

⁴¹ The 'grant of arms' of the 18th Infantry Regiment can be seen in Plate 1.

⁴² United States Army, The Institute of Heraldry. 'Heraldic Services Handbook' January 1998, 3.

⁴³ Correspondence with Petra Casipit, 28 January 2008.

⁴⁴ INSTITUTE OF HERALDRY, 'An Historical Experience in Military Heraldry'.

⁴⁵ This information can be accessed at http://www.tioh.hqda.pentagon.mil/DUI_SSI_COA_page.htm.

⁴⁶ The organizational structure of the Institute was provided by Petra Casipit, the Chief of the Heraldic Services and Support Division at the United States Army Institute of Heraldry on 14 May 2007.

3.2. Functions: Research, Documentation, Design, Production, and Standardization

The mission of the United States Army Institute of Heraldry has already been summarized in this article, but it is important to understand the functions of the Institute more fully. Naturally, the duties of the Army's pro-heraldic office have adapted to different situations and evolved over the last 85 years. Over time new responsibilities have been added to the accepted tasks of the Institute of Heraldry. Broadly speaking, the functions of the Institute can be divided into four categories—documentation and research, heraldic and vexillological design, sculpture, and quality assurance.⁴⁷

The first function of the Institute of Heraldry involves documentation and research. In much the same way that the officers of arms in the United Kingdom research and document pedigrees, the employees of the Institute must research the histories of military units. The structures of the coats of arms granted by the Institute are created on the basis of the designated unit's purpose, combat history, and achievements.⁴⁸ The Institute maintains archives of every US military medal, unit emblem, and coat of arms. Though these records are primarily for use in-house, the office does allow outside students limited research and informational access.⁴⁹ The Institute does receive a large number of inquiries from people looking for information on old units. These requests, and questions about proper ways to display flags and insignia, are handled by the staff.⁵⁰

In addition to this research and documentation, the Institute is deeply involved in the design of coats of arms and flags for the military forces, as well as other agencies and departments of the United States federal government. The employees at the Institute of Heraldry design coats of arms and unit emblems for all the units of the United States armed forces. They also design flags and seals for other agencies and departments when they are requested. Civilian agencies in the government are not required to seek the services of the Institute, though many of them do so.⁵¹ In all of its work, the designers stay close to traditional heraldic standards and conventions. The Institute employs experts and even a stubborn unit commander will usually bow to the wisdom of the experienced heraldists in Virginia. When writing out the blazons that have been decided upon, the Institute of Heraldry attempts to follow the standard conventions of the College of Arms in London.⁵²

The final two functions of the United States Army Institute of Heraldry are closely related. The first is the artistic duty of sculpting

⁴⁷ INSTITUTE OF HERALDRY, 'An Historical Experience in Military Heraldry'.

⁴⁸ STROH, *Heraldry in the U.S. Army*, p. 9.

⁴⁹ INSTITUTE OF HERALDRY, 'An Historical Experience in Military Heraldry'.

⁵⁰ Rodney CONATSER, 'Institute of Heraldry: Cameron Station Unit Keeps Military Heritage Alive' *The Pentagon*, 17 September 1987, p. 14.

⁵¹ ECKHOLM, 'A Federal Office'.

⁵² INSTITUTE OF HERALDRY, 'An Historical Experience in Military Heraldry'.

various items for the military forces and the government, and the second is guaranteeing the quality of the insignia that are designed. Whenever the president of the United States appears in front of a plaque bearing his 'seal', it can be assumed that this was hand-sculpted and painted at the Institute of Heraldry. The artists at the Institute also sculpt the master forms for all medals awarded by the United States military forces, as well as such civilian awards as the Presidential Medal of Freedom.⁵³ The heraldic office of the United States Army has long had skilled artisans at its disposal able to produce a wide variety of items.⁵⁴ After these medals are designed and sculptures are made, the Institute works to guarantee that they are mass-produced in proper ways. United States law makes it a criminal offense to produce any official insignia from the Institute of Heraldry that are not to its specifications. Any manufacturer that wishes to produce these insignia must apply to the Institute and sign an agreement making it clear that it will follow Institute directives. Any medals must be struck using government-owned dies, and embroidered items must follow government-owned stitch drawings.⁵⁵

4. Regulations and Processes of the Institute of Heraldry

The United States Army Institute of Heraldry is the only pro-heraldic office in the United States either established or recognized by the government of that country. Over the course of its history, it has established its own standard of heraldic design and processes for registrations and grants of insignia and emblems, including coats and achievements of arms. The regulations are strictly laid out and the elements which may be added to an armorial achievement are dependant on the history and makeup of a unit. The Army's heraldic program is very structured and allows only a small opportunity for the unit representatives to provide input.⁵⁶ In England and Scotland, the nature, rank, and honours of an armiger may be determined by studying the armorial insignia around the shield. In the United States there are no comparable insignia, but the combat history and branch may be determined by studying the achievements of armigerous military units. Through this entire process, the designers at the Institute work together with the unit, agency, or department requesting an armorial emblem to produce one that conforms to the basic conventions of armory.

The design process begins with contact made by the unit requesting an emblem—most commonly arms, but in some cases a crest or badge. Depending on the size of the unit, the Institute is normally contacted by the commander, the executive officer, or the senior non-commissioned officer. The officer in question first provides the Institute's

⁵³ ECKHOLM, 'A Federal Office'.

⁵⁴ Arthur DUBOIS, 'Heraldic Branch OQMG', *The Quartermaster Review*, (September/October 1954).

⁵⁵ TEMPLE, 'Institute of Heraldry',

⁵⁶ Correspondence with Petra Casipit, 28 January 2008.

army project officer with copies of its permanent orders.⁵⁷ The project officer then reviews the orders, to determine what heraldic emblems the unit is eligible to receive.⁵⁸ It must be made clear that heraldic supporters are not generally used for the coats of arms of American military units. The basic grant of arms made by the Institute of Heraldry to military units consists only of a coat of arms, almost invariably displayed exclusively on a shield, and therefore officially described as a 'shield' rather than 'arms.' All newly-created units without combat experience are assigned a shield without a crest, on the assumption that future deeds will be symbolized by a granted crest (which thus serves as a kind of augmentation of honour).⁵⁹

There is a standard house style that is followed on all new grants. Arms are depicted on a uniform shield, and are almost always displayed in this context — never on a banner of arms or comparable flag.⁶⁰ The designers at the institute also try to follow traditional armorial design-standards by keeping the arms simple, bold, and uncluttered. There are also specific rules laid down as to which charges and field divisions can be used on newly-granted arms. Embattled lines are to be used only by units with combat experience, and maps and words are to be avoided. Generally, the main field-colour of granted arms is taken from that of the military arm to which the unit belongs—infantry, artillery, cavalry, and so on.⁶¹ One other point followed in the design of new arms is to include only the greatest achievement of the unit. The goal is to make a symbolic design that is representative of the unit, and not to create a pictorial *curriculum vitae* of the unit. In addition to these considerations, the Institute has adopted certain symbols to use as charges representing specific conflicts and events. These include a fleur-de-lis for service in France, a cactus for service in Mexico, and an arrowhead for action in battles with Native Americans.⁶² If a unit is entitled to a coat of arms, it is also asked to supply a motto. This is preferably expressed in English, but can be accepted in any

⁵⁷ The Institute has not been explicit as to whether the units in question are regarded as being in principle *permanent*, and thus worthy of what is in principle an emblem of perpetual validity. Over the course of years, units are reorganized and merged, so in practice they are not. The normal rule in the British and Commonwealth systems is that only a corporate body, with a legal personality and a common seal, can be granted armories of any kind, and that other types must be content with a para-armorial badge or device.

⁵⁸ Correspondence with Petra Casipit, 28 January 2008.

⁵⁹ STROH, *Heraldry in the U.S. Army*, p. 10.

⁶⁰ For some reason this is the modern French type of rectangular shield with a flattened ogee base: a particularly ugly form now wholly rejected by heraldic artists in most countries, including all of those in the British tradition.

⁶¹ STROH, *Heraldry in the U.S. Army*, p. 9. For example, yellow, blue, and red are the colours used to represent the major combat arms: yellow for armor and cavalry, blue for infantry, and red for artillery. A full list of the primary branch colours is included in Appendix II adapted from Stein and Capelotti, *U.S. Army Heraldic Crests*, p. 6.

⁶² STROH, *Heraldry in the U.S. Army*, p. 10.

language, providing proper grammar is used, and a translation is included. The motto must also be limited to 26 characters to accommodate manufacturing limitations. Some units will elect to have no motto.⁶³

A standard policy was established at an early date governing which military units are eligible for DUI of any type. Most major units can be assigned a coat of arms, to which a crest may eventually be added. This includes battalions, regiments, brigades, groups, commands, divisions, corps, and army hospitals. Units that do not fall into these categories, but that have at least 500 military personnel assigned to them, are eligible as well. There are also some concessions made for smaller units,⁶⁴ which may acquire a coat of arms and other distinctive emblems if they satisfy certain other requirements.⁶⁵

All of the aforementioned groups in United States Army are authorized to receive a coat of arms that can be displayed on the organizational flag of the unit. On this type of flag, the coat of arms is always displayed on a shield supported on the breast of a bald eagle, as in the national achievement of the United States. Unfortunately, this makes the eagle the supporter of the arms, and violates the rule that supporters are distinctive emblems that belong exclusively to a single armiger: in this case the Republic.⁶⁶ If the unit is on active duty and has seen service in a war or campaign, then it is also authorized to use a crest above the arms.⁶⁷ If reserve units are authorized to use a crest, it is always a Revolutionary War minute man—a violation of the rule that crests, as emblems belonging to a single lineage or entity, may only be used in association with the arms of that lineage or entity, and should not be treated as generic insignia. Likewise, all National Guard units are given the ‘crests’ of their respective states — a dubious practice if when such a crest exists.⁶⁸ When crests are shown with the arms on the organizational flag, they are placed above the head of the eagle supporter.⁶⁹

⁶³ Correspondence with Petra Casipit, 28 January 2008.

⁶⁴ UNITED STATES ARMY, THE INSTITUTE OF HERALDRY, *Heraldic Services Handbook* January 1998, p. 8.

⁶⁵ Army Regulation 670-1, *Descriptions, Illustrations, Authorization, and Wear Policy for All Items Worn on the Uniforms*, Paragraphs 27-21.

⁶⁶ Army Regulation 840-10, *Flags, Guidons, Streamers, Tabards, and Automobile and Aircraft Plates*, Chapter 5. The eagle in question, when distinguished by the arrows and olive branch, is an armorial emblem representing the Republic. While capable of independent display, it should never be used as the supporter of any arms other than those of the Republic itself. In practice, of course, it is very commonly used, with or without differences of various minor types, to support a wide variety of arms other than those of the Republic.

⁶⁷ STROH, *Heraldry in the U.S. Army*, p. 9.

⁶⁸ In fact very few states possess true crests, and the practice in question also violates the rule governing crests cited above.

⁶⁹ INSTITUTE OF HERALDRY, ‘Heraldic Services Handbook’, January 1998, p. 10.

5. An Assessment of the Institute's Designs since its Foundation

In this final section, this article will consider the design principles developed by the Institute since its foundation. To assess the principles used at the Institute one can look closely at what principles of design have developed, how they have been employed, what is distinctive about them, and how they conform to traditional armorial design principles.

A discussion of the principles of design that have developed at the Institute of Heraldry must begin with the people that do the work of designing arms at the Institute. The artistic staff of the Institute comes from varied educational backgrounds, including art school, design schools, and university degrees in fine arts. The pro-heraldic staff members are mostly given on-the-job training in their field. They are asked to read and work independently studying armory, military history, and symbolism. This Institute is a unique organization doing unique work within the government. This generally gives the organization a very low turnover rate, allowing distinct styles and ideas time to grow and flourish.⁷⁰ Interestingly, the Institute has developed some unique practices that have not been satisfactorily explained by its leadership. For example, the institute's designers systematically omit the helm to which a crest should always be attached in a formal representation. They also assign crests as supplementary emblems rather than normal elements of unit achievements.

Naturally, any assessment of the heraldic style employed by the Institute of Heraldry is going to be subjective. There are conventions that are an established part of armory, but much of the design that goes into a coat of arms or crest simply reflects that tastes of the designer. In analyzing the principles used by the Institute of Heraldry, great care has been taken in studying as large a sample of the emblems created by it as possible, concentrating on the arms, as they are more susceptible to poor design than crests. The most complete record of the DUI designed by the Institute and its predecessors is found in the book *U.S. Army Heraldic Crests [sic]: A Complete Illustrated History of Authorized Distinctive Unit Insignia* by Barry Jason Stein and Peter Joseph Capelotti. One of the authors was, at the time, the owner of Ira Green, Incorporated — a firm that was responsible for producing many of the emblems used by the army. The book contains a complete record of all unit emblems approved for use by army units before its publication in 1993.⁷¹ There are more than 3,000 emblems cataloged in

⁷⁰ Information about the formal and informal training of Institute of Heraldry staff comes from correspondence with Petra Casipit, 28 January 2008.

⁷¹ The authors of the book make this claim, but it was substantiated in correspondence with Petra Casipit, on 28 January 2008. Including medals, decorations, ribbons, seals, plaques, distinctive unit insignia, shoulder sleeve insignia, band regalia, and other items, the Institute maintains an archive of over 30,000 designs that it has produced.

the book, of which more than 1,400 are coats of arms, or contain heraldic emblems. Of course, this number has been added to over the course of the last 17 years. Newly-designed emblems are displayed on the website maintained by the Institute of Heraldry as they are devised. For the purposes of this study, nearly 4,000 emblems designed by both the Institute of Heraldry and the organizations that preceded it have been evaluated.

To make the evaluation of the Institute's style more manageable, all of the DUI have been divided into four broad categories. The first category includes those emblems that are not coats of arms at all. These make up about 55% of all the emblems and many are simple designs that consist of an animal or other symbolic motif. They can, however, become very complicated when several different devices are included in the design. The emblems in this category function very much like heraldic badges of the middle ages. In fact, many of these emblems include distinctly heraldic symbols and pseudo-heraldic designs. For example, the emblems of the **78th Division (Training)** features an alerion taken from the arms of Lorraine and signifying service in that area during World War II. Other units employ proper heraldic crests as their DUI—thus violating the convention that a crest cannot exist independently of a coat of arms. Among these is the **204th Support Battalion**.⁷² There are several units that make use of emblems that are not technically on a shield, but whose designs are self-contained in one field. For the purposes of this study, and in keeping with the general principles that shields can be of many shapes, and that arms may be set on objects of any shape, these are considered to be coats of arms on round or hexagonal shields, and are not included in this category.⁷³

The army units that make use of coats of arms have further been divided into three subjective categories, based upon the quality of their designs. The first category is made up of arms that are well designed by any standard:⁷⁴ that is, they are simple and uncluttered, and violate no major conventions of traditional armory. The designs in question are clear and aesthetically pleasing, well-balanced visually, and represent the best design efforts of the Institute of Heraldry and its antecedents. Among these is the design for the **71st Infantry Regiment**, which is blazoned *Azure a Fasces between two Crescents Or*. Several of the coats of arms in this category

⁷² The battalion's distinctive unit insignia is simply a crest of a charged lozenge on a red and white torse. There is no information given in STEIN and CAPELOTTI or from the Institute in regards to the coat of arms to which this crest belongs.

⁷³ With the exception of the lozenge-shaped shield, which is often used to indicate the gender of a female armiger, the shape of the shield has no significance whatever. In this case, the arms become similar to the type of badges assigned in the British and Commonwealth systems to the units of the Navy and the Air Force, which are marked by special frames indicative of the nature of the unit represented.

⁷⁴ As stated earlier, this is necessarily a subjective exercise. Though the decisions regarding the category in which to place armorial distinctive unit insignia are based on fairly universal design principles, there will be some aesthetic biases apparent.

contain only one charge—among them those of the **106th Medical Battalion**: *Per saltire Argent and Gules a Cross coupé counterchanged*. Extreme simplicity of this type, though, can lead to instances in which the arms are identical to previously-granted or registered arms or comparable emblems. This is the case for the **65th Infantry**, which uses the attractive but overly simple *Sable a Maltese Cross Argent*: a design that has already been taken as the para-armorial emblem of several branches of the international Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem.

The second category of armorial unit emblems is composed of arms that still maintain the standard conventions of British armory, but are either overcrowded with charges or visually unclear for some other reason. When people first become interested in heraldry, they often have a tendency to try designing arms that act like a résumé of their life's achievements. These armigers attempt to represent everything that they have done and every place that they have lived in their armorial achievement. The same holds true for some of the army units in this category. An attempt is made to represent every military campaign in which it has participated and every unit citation that has been awarded. The arms of the **194th Cavalry** are blazoned *Per fess wavy Or and Gules in chief a Sealion Gules holding in its dexter paw a Sword Argent in base a representation of the Flavian Amphitheater in Rome Argent*. In this case the sealion represents service in the Philippines during World War II, while the famous Coliseum of Rome is obviously representative of service in Italy.



There are cases where the résumé represents the work that the unit does rather than the things it has accomplished. An example of this would be the **714th Transportation Battalion**, whose arms are *Per bend Or and Gules the outline of a Railway Signal Post and a Steam Engine counterchanged*. In this case, the arms contain only two charges, but the fact that they are outlined and counterchanged makes them very difficult to see when emblazoned.

Fig. 2. Arms of the 714th Transportation Battalion

The final category into which emblems have been divided is the worst of heraldic designs. Many of these shields are so crowded as to be completely impractical as a means of identification and some of them completely contravene the conventions of armory. The army's **Aviation Logistics School** uses a coat of arms that is blazoned *Azure below a Chevron chequy Gules and Argent a Mullet of eight points Argent overall two Wings in lure Gules*. This coat of arms, while technically not violating any of heraldry's conventions, is very crowded, and it is difficult to make out the charges. Such a problem may be rectified by a particularly good artist's interpretation, but it does represent poor design.

The same is true for the arms of the **18th Infantry Regiment**. The arms were designed in 1922, but were formally assigned to the unit with a 'grant of arms' in 1990. The blazon included in the grant is *Azure, a Saltire Argent, between in chief two Arrows in saltire of the second armed and flighted Or, in fess the insignia of the 8th Army Corps (2d Division, 2d Brigade [solid white]) in the Spanish War proper and a Bolo paleways of the second hilted of the third, on a Chief indented of the second a Bend Gules between two Fleurs-de-lis of the field*. There are also some units that make use of arms that are unacceptable in almost all heraldic traditions by defying one of the most



inviolable conventions of modern heraldic design. The **27th Transportation Battalion** places metal on metal in its arms blazoned *Argent a Barrulet in Chief a Gear Argent*. In the same way, the **118th Support Battalion** uses *Argent on a Bend Or a Key ward to base and a Sword Azure* as its distinctive unit insignia.

Fig. 3. The 'Arms' of the 27th Transportation Battalion. Its 'argent' field is actually represented in an unheraldic beige, and its 'barrulet' is clearly a drive-shaft of some sort.

When the armorial designs of the United States Army's unit emblems are examined methodically in this way it shows very clearly the quality of the designs that have been produced by the Institute of Heraldry and its forerunners. Overall, less than half of the emblems cataloged in Stein and Capelotti and listed on the Institute's website are heraldic. Of the more than 4,000 arms analyzed, 47% either constitute a full coat of arms, or contain uniquely armorial elements. Considering only the complete coats of arms, the quality of the designs could be much worse. The first category, which contains simple, elegant designs that are clear and pleasing, contains 38% of the arms. The second grouping of arms, which includes those that are a bit more crowded, or very nearly break some standard heraldic



convention, contains 43% of the arms. The final category is the smallest of the three. Those coats of arms that are either so crowded as to be useless as aides to identification, or that flout the conventions of modern heraldry, make up only 19% of the total output of the Institute of Heraldry.

Fig. 4. The Achievement of the Army War College

There are some other interesting coats of arms that have been designed for United States Army units. In some cases,

these long predate the foundation of the Institute of Heraldry, or even the mandate given to the department of the Quartermaster General in the early days of regulation. The **Army War College** uses arms that include as their principal charge the achievement of the United States: a violation of a very general convention that achievements should never be used as charges. These arms—first registered as those of the college on 6 December 1910⁷⁵—were blazoned *Argent, a Bald Eagle displayed, holding in the dexter talon an Olive branch, in the sinister a Bundle of thirteen arrows, on its breast the Escutcheon [sic] of the United States all proper [not a tincture-description possible for a coat of arms], on a Chief Azure three Mullets of the first.*

Equally interesting are some coats of arms that show relationships between units as in arms of related families. In March of 1935 the 37th Engineer Battalion was assigned *Gules a rock Argent within a Garland of oak Leaves and Acorns proper*. In March of 1951, the 27th **Engineer Battalion** was allowed to use *Gules a rock Argent within a Garland of oak Leaves and Acorns Proper within a bordure of the second*. The bordure in this case has been added to show descent from the 209th Engineer Battalion of the former 37th



Engineer Regiment. There are countless examples like these among the arms used in the American armed forces, but there are certainly much broader questions that must be answered regarding the level of work produced by the Institute of Heraldry and the organizations from which it descends.

Fig. 5. The Arms of the 46th Aviation Battalion

In examining these armorial emblems it is a valuable exercise to try finding patterns in the results of the research. The quality of armorial designs does vary a great deal at the Institute. Initially, one might think that these extreme variations correlate to the time at which the coat of arms was registered. It would be understandable if each director of the Institute of Heraldry were to leave his mark on the style and quality of arms designed during his tenure. However, an examination of the pattern shows that this was not the case with the various directors who have led the Institute. For example, the 46th **Aviation Battalion** uses the arms *Barry nebuly Or and Azure on a Pallet Gules a Propeller in pale Or* which were assigned to them on 1 July 1966. Only three years earlier, the Institute allocated *Per chevron Argent and Azure a Chevron wavy on the base edge and in chief a Lion passant guardant Argent* to the 306th **Quartermaster Battalion** on 5 July 1963. The first coat is simple and representative of the unit and its mission. The second is not terribly cluttered, but does render its main charge practically invisible by placing it

⁷⁵ In spite of enquiries sent to the Institute of Heraldry, no indication was given as to the right of an educational establishment of the armed forces to make use of the national coat of arms.

on a field of the same tincture—a violation of one of the oldest conventions of armorial design. Interestingly, both of these coats were registered during the term of office of Colonel **Harry Temple**, who is generally regarded as an expert heraldist.⁷⁶

The quality of designs varies equally in the terms of office of other directors of the Institute. While **Robert Baker** was director, for example, the **296th Support Battalion** was assigned *Per chevron Argent and Gules a Pale and an Annulet counterchanged*. Later in the same year the **536th Support Battalion** had its arms registered as *Per pall reversed Gules a Fleur-de-lis Or, Azure a Mullet Argent, and Or a Lion rampant Gules between two Pheons Argent*. Again, two units were assigned arms of vastly different quality only a few months apart.

This last example illustrates another point. There is no identifiable correlation between the quality of the Institute's armorial designs and the type of unit that is represented. There are cases in which most units of a particular sort do not employ armorial unit emblems. When a coat of arms is used, however, there is a general spread in the quality of designs whether the unit is focused on artillery, military intelligence, or signaling. As an example, **844th Engineering Battalion** uses the extremely cluttered *Ermine two Piles and a Pile Reversed Gules masoned Sable overall an Airplane Propeller Argent*. **The 937th Engineering Group** uses *Gules a Saltire Or between four Ermine Spots Argent*, a much simpler design, using some of the same elements.

The wide range of quality in coats of arms designed by the United States Army Institute of Heraldry does not seem to be caused by any institutional differences in the registrants or by any inherent differences in the ranks of the leadership. Based on correspondence with the Institute, it would seem that such differences in quality arise simply from the diversity of styles among individual artists and designers within the organization. Each artist and designer at the Institute is allowed a good deal of freedom in the armorial emblems that he or she produces.⁷⁷ Likewise, the training of heraldic designers at the Institute is not done in any structured way. These pro-heralds are selected in part because of their 'self discipline to read and work independently studying coats of arms' and other necessary skills.⁷⁸ In the course of correspondence with the representatives of the Institute it was also made clear that there is not a great deal of care given to making sure that designs are not duplicates of existing arms.

⁷⁶ Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. 'Virginia Tech Magazine Alumni Shorts.' 2004. <http://www.vtmagazine.vt.edu/spring04/shorts.html> (accessed October 1, 2009). Among other accomplishments, Temple designed the award-winning coat of arms of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets. This was the first coat of arms registered by the Institute to a unit outside of the army, National Guard, or army reserve. He also served as the heraldic advisor to the Federal Commission of Fine Arts, and published several articles on the subject.

⁷⁷ Correspondence with Petra Casipit, 28 January 2008.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

It would seem that a great improvement could be made in the quality of arms created by the United States Army Institute of Heraldry if more oversight were given to the education and functioning of individual designers and artists. As the sole heraldic authority in the United States, it should be expected that the Institute produce heraldically correct designs that do not infringe on the rights of others. Admittedly, the Institute's record on armorial design could be much worse. But with almost 20% of its heraldic designs either being too cluttered to be identifiable or actually breaking some of the most important conventions in modern heraldry, it is sometimes difficult to take America's home-grown heraldic authority seriously in comparison to institutions such as the College of Arms, the Lyon Court, or the Canadian Heraldic Authority.

Obviously, the Institute of Heraldry is a much different institution from these other national authorities and it serves different functions. It might be beneficial, however, to incorporate something of the structure of these institutions into the structure of this American one. Taking the College of Arms in London, there is a clear head of the corporate group of officers of arms. For all grants made by the College, Garter King of Arms must be included in the process of approval as his signature and seal appear on all letters patent. The Institute of Heraldry could benefit from a similar system in which a well-qualified director with a solid understanding of heraldry and its customs was charged with approving every design. The Institute's staff of 24 completes approximately 800 projects every year, so it would not be expecting too much for one person to take on such a task.⁷⁹ In the past, even under the directorship of renowned armorist Harry Temple, several designs of poor quality were produced by the Institute. If freedom were taken away from the self-taught heraldic designers to produce what they pleased, it would be possible to mentor them and help them to improve their skills collegially rather than independently.

Naturally, such an overhaul of the administrative system at the Institute of Heraldry would not succeed in improving the quality of armorial designs overnight, but it could certainly improve the Institute's prospects over the long term. To improve the situation significantly, all of the currently-used distinctive unit insignia would need to be re-evaluated by an expert heraldist, and redesigned with input from the appropriate units if necessary. It would seem that, overall, the output of the Institute has been good, considering the piecemeal training of its employees. To become a truly outstanding international heraldic institution, much more oversight would need to be given to highly-trained heraldic administrators. The United States Army currently has a great deal on its plate, and it seems unlikely that such a change would be made to an organization such as the Institute of Heraldry.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

Appendix I – Commanding Officers/ Directors of the Institute of Heraldry

Officer	Period in Office
Colonel John D. Martz, Jr.....	October 1960-April 1962
Colonel Harry D. Temple	May 1962-August 1966
Colonel Ed V. Hendern, Jr	September 1966-February 1968
Lieutenant Colonel Gerald W. Dundas	March 1968-August 1970
Colonel Eugene F. Ganley	September 1970-October 1972
Colonel Charles R. Spittler	November 1972-October 1976
Colonel Dryle K. Baxter.....	November 1976-October 1980
Colonel Richard H. Allen.....	November 1980-February 1983
Colonel Gerald T. Luchino	March 1983-February 1988
Colonel Robert F. Baker	March 1988-July 1990
Gerald T. Luchino (Acting Director)	August 1990-May 1991
Thomas B. Proffit (Acting Director).....	February 1997-June 1997
Thomas B. Proffit	June 1997-July 1999
Stanley W. Haas.....	July 1999-November 1999
Fred N. Eichorn.....	November 1999-June 2005
Fritz W. Kirklighter (Acting Director).....	July 2005-October 2005
Charles V. Mugno.....	October 2005-Present

Appendix II – Colours Associated with Armed Forces Branches

Branch	Colour(s)
Adjutant General's Corps	Dark blue and scarlet
Armor	Yellow (gold) and green
Air Defense Artillery	Scarlet and yellow (gold)
Artillery	Scarlet and yellow (gold)
Aviation	Golden orange and ultramarine blue (formerly teal blue)
Cavalry.....	Yellow
Chemical Corps.....	Golden yellow and cobalt blue
Civil Affairs.....	Purple and white
Engineers	Scarlet & white (formerly black & white)
Infantry	Blue and white
Maintenance	Crimson
Medical and Dental Corps.....	Maroon and white isilver
Military Intelligence	Oriental blue
Military Police	Green and yellow
Ordnance	Crimson and yellow (gold)
Personnel.....	Dark blue and scarlet
Psychological.....	Operations Green
Quartermaster	Buff and light blue
Signal Corps.....	Orange and white (silver)
Support	Buff (gold) and scarlet
Tank Destroyer Forces.....	Gold and black
Transportation.....	Brick red and golden yellow
Unassigned Units	Teal blue and white

Grant of Arms

By authority of the Secretary of the Army, The Institute of Heraldry, United States Army, gives, grants and assigns unto the 18th Infantry the arms following:



Blazon

Shield: Azure, a saltire argent, between in chief two arrows in saltire of the second armed and flighted or, in fess the badge of the VIII Corps (2d Division, 2d Brigade [solid white]) in the War with Spain proper and a bolo palewise of the second hilted of the third, on a chief indented of the second a bend gules between two fleurs-de-lis of the field.

Crest: On a wreath of the colors, argent and azure, an acorn gules.

Motto: *In Omnia Paratus* (In All Things Prepared).

Symbolism

Civil War service is shown by the saltire cross from the Confederate flag. The crossed arrows represent the regiment's Indian campaigns; the VIII Corps badge recalls service in the 2d Brigade, 2d Division of that corps in the War with Spain; and the bolo stands for operations in the Visayas during the Philippine Insurrection. In World War I the regiment was awarded two French Croix de Guerre with Palm and the French Pourragere for its part in the Soissons offensive on 18 July 1918 and the operations of early October 1918 around Exermont and Hill 240 in the old province of Lorraine. The chief bears the bend of the arms of the arms of Lorraine between the fleurs-de-lis of the arms of Soissons.

The crest is the badge of the 1st Division of the XIV Corps of the Army of the Cumberland, with which the regiment served during most of its operations in the Civil War.

Under the provisions of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 701 and 704, the arms here given, having been registered and recorded in The Institute of Heraldry, United States Army, are reaffirmed from this date and hereafter may be borne, shown and advanced by the 18th Infantry as sole proprietor of said arms.

In testimony whereof these letters are given under my hand at the city of Alexandria in the Commonwealth of Virginia this thirty-first day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and ninety and in the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fourteenth.

Robert F. Baker
Robert F. Baker, Colonel, GS
Director



Appendix III. A Sample Grant of Armorial Bearings

Presented here is typical document issued by the Army Institute of Heraldry to confer armorial bearings in one of the units of the army (though it is perhaps unusual in including a mantled helm under the crest). Notice its use of the term 'shield' to designate the arms; the misuse of the term 'in fess' for 'dexter' and 'sinister'; its designation of a very particular emblem that is not only inadequately described as to its form but described as 'solid white' rather than 'argent'; and the representation of 'indented' with far too many teeth. Notice also the lengthy explanation of the symbolism, not normally included in a document of this sort.

Sommaire français.

David Boven, l'un des fondateurs et le premier président de la Société héraldique de l'Amérique états-unisienne, présente ici une étude sur l'histoire, l'organisation, et les pratiques de la seule autorité héraldique de ce pays: l'Institut d'Héraldique de l'Armée (de terre). Malgré son nom, cet Institut (ou plus précisément, cette agence ou bureau) se concerne des besoins emblématiques généraux de toutes sortes, de toutes les agences du gouvernement fédéral de la république. Néanmoins, il souffre d'un manque général d'expertise vraiment héraldique, et par conséquent les armoiries et les autres emblèmes qu'il crée sont d'une qualité très variable, et trop fréquemment mal-conçus.