

# The 2004 Christmas Quiz

composed (without authority) for the erudite members of the Heraldry Society of Scotland



The Baronage Press

# Instructions

As all the candidates passed last year at the Elementary Level, the Christmas 2004 Quiz is set at the Intermediate Level. In accordance with guidelines issued by the Secretary of State for Education and endorsed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, all candidates will be awarded an A grade except those who are both educated in the state sector and can spell their names correctly or nearly correctly — these will be awarded A\* and will pass immediately into the university of their choice.

Candidates who remember last year's Quiz will doubtless recall that few of the questions were as flippant or as superficial as first appeared.

## Question 1

The by-name of Hugh Richard Arthur Grosvenor, 2nd Duke of Westminster, was Bendor. You are asked to comment sensibly on what might have influenced this choice.

HINT — Here is a picture of his grandfather's horse who, after winning the Derby and several other important races, retired to stud where he sired many champion colts, plus a few fillies whose names included *Saltire* and *Cross Patty*.



## Question 2

“I have honestly ..... I don't really don't ..... I mean, you know ....."

Was this eloquent response allegedly made to a query about the ownership of this crest engraved on a famous (perhaps infamous) signet ring?

If it was in reply to some other query, take 10 marks and move to Question 3.



## Question 3

Is Drake's Drum to be heard in Queen Victoria Street, London?

HINT — Impecunious Englishmen may now seek to follow the Californian example, if what is described on various Internet messageboards is held to be valid.

ANOTHER HINT — Think of their King the English prefer to forget.



## Question 4

- (a) Does a chief always outrank an esquire? (4 marks)
- (b) What, if anything, can an esquire reinforce? (6 marks)

HINT — This is nothing special, just an ordinary question.



## Question 5

Who is acclaimed the most laid-back heraldist-poet of all time?

HINT — Think of four small four-legged animals. No? Well, his family came from Collingbourne in Wiltshire, and his arms featured a saltire chequy. No? Well, think of Luther. Or, if it is not too much of a bore, think of a hunchback (or reputed hunchback).

MORE HINTS — Still no? Well, his name was not Wallace, and perhaps he was tilted only half-back. You've got it now, haven't you?

## Question 6

A prolific writer of historical novels, more famous perhaps for stories of military adventures two hundred or so years ago than for his tales of mediaeval mayhem, has received well-earned plaudits for the quality of his research into weaponry and battle tactics. “Unfortunately, with his heraldry his mistakes are risible,” wrote a reviewer.

To whom, in the light of this critical comment, do you suspect he may have allocated these arms (in which the black tip of the charge’s tail disappears into the field)?



## Question 7

Prince William, elder son of the Great Steward of Scotland, bears on the centre point of his royal label an escallop which, the College of Arms has explained, serves to commemorate his mother.

Is there not a case for this escallop being a seamew’s head (of which there are six to be seen here)?



## Question 8

Two fingers missing from the Red Hand of Ulster! Two generations gone, perhaps? No, that would not make heraldic sense, would it?

Would it?



## Question 9

Sharp-eyed candidates will note immediately that this gryphon-like creature has the front legs of a lion and the tail of a camel — so, very obviously, it is not a gryphon.



- (a) What, in your opinion, is it? (2 marks)
- (b) Is it male or female? (3 marks)
- (c) Why are so few seen around today? (5 marks)

## Question 10



What links this sinister supporter (*per fess Purpure and Sable*) with the dexter convenience?

HINT — The light blue arrowhead points to the answer, as, of course, less obviously, did a famous wedding gown.

ANOTHER HINT — A vague knowledge of elementary Latin may help. (And, yes, it is indeed Sarah Duchess of York.)



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# The Answers

The Christmas Quiz is not an examination: it is a quiz, which means that the questions are not intended to be difficult, but to tease. Great heraldic knowledge is not necessary — a fair grasp of the basics plus the ability to use the Internet should ensure that most readers score more than the pass mark. Of course, those who have read the pages on the Baronage website will find some questions very easy.

Visitors to the Baronage website should be aware that its pages have accumulated over a nine year period, and that most were designed for older versions of the browsers now in use. Accordingly, much of the text will appear in modern browsers two sizes too large, and readers should reduce their text settings (usually with CTRL-minus or, with a Mac, with CMD-minus). This allows the text to align neatly with the graphics. In 2006 the new pages will be formatted for the newer versions of the browsers.



## Answer 1

The horse accompanying the question is the famous Bendor, and as the given hint mentions two of his progeny with heraldic names the reader is expected to convert Bendor to *Bend Or*. He was so named by the 1st Duke in memory of the arms borne by the Grosvenor family until they were challenged in August 1385 by Sir Henry Le Scrope, Lord Scrope, one of the most powerful men in the realm. The case dragged on until finally settled in October 1390 with Sir Robert Grosvenor, a mere provincial knight, having to replace his ancient *Azure a bend Or* with *Azure a garb Or*.

The 1st Duke's pleasure at the lost *Bend Or* being the inspiration for the name of his Derby winner (in 1888) led to his grandson and eventual heir receiving the by-name of Bendor.



## Answer 2

No! When Major James Hewitt allegedly uttered this memorable answer, “I have honestly ..... I don't really don't ..... I mean, you know .....”, he was reportedly replying to a totally different question.

However, he was similarly baffled when asked about the crest engraved on the famous signet ring he gave to Diana Princess of Wales as a keepsake, for it appears that he is not armigerous and that the owl and tree-stump crest is that borne by the Hewitts of Viscount Lifford's family.

## Answer 3

Recent discussions in various Internet groups have considered the advantages of obtaining a grant of arms from heralds in countries other than Great Britain. But what has Drake's drum to do with this?

"Take my drum to England, hang it by the shore,  
Strike it when your powder's runnin' low;  
If the Dons sight Devon, I'll quit the port o' Heaven,  
An' drum them up the Channel as we drummed them long ago."



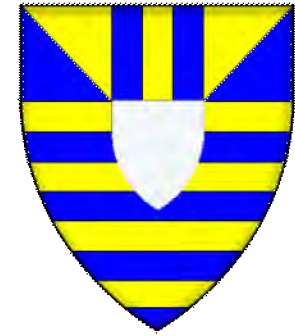
So the threat in Queen Victoria Street, home of the College of Arms, is deemed in the question to come from Spain where, it is understood, residents from any country once ruled by Spain may petition for a grant of arms. Some significantly large parts of the United States of America, such as California, qualify for this privilege — but surely not England?

The given hint mentions the King the English prefer to forget, which can only be Philip of Spain who married Queen Mary I in 1554 and thereby, in the view of Spain, added England, France and Ireland to the Habsburg Empire. (The Royal couple were styled "King and Queen of England and France, Naples, Jerusalem and Ireland ..... " and English coins bore the images of both.)

Mary was forty and not in good health. Philip was eleven years younger and reportedly a lusty, vigorous soldier. Mary, it is said, was much in love with him, but they spent little time together. For Philip the marriage was an affair of state intended to bring England firmly over to the Habsburg side in the wars against the French. Its only long-term legacy appears to be the right for the English and Irish, and even the French perhaps, to petition Madrid for arms at a fraction of the price paid to the College of Arms.

## Answer 4

The picture of the chief demonstrating his social superiority over his shieldbearer-écuyer-esquire is *maskirovka*. As the hint states, this is an ordinary question — a question about ordinaries (*i.e.* heraldry). A chief is an honourable ordinary. An esquire is ranked at best as a sub-ordinary, and is thus always outranked by a chief.



What does it reinforce? Well, the *esquire* is classed as a variety of *gyron*, and a *gyron* is supposedly based on the tailor's or armourer's gusset (but not the heraldic *gusset* which is another name for a *gore*) used to reinforce material at stress points.

The term *gyron* is used to blazon a triangular shape that has its origin in the centre of the shield or, rarely, in the centre of an ordinary, while the term *esquire* is used for triangles whose origin is elsewhere. In the arms of Mortimer two blue *esquires* appear in *dexter* and *sinister chief*. The blazon is *Barry of six Or and Azure an inescutcheon Argent, on a chief of the first two pallets between as many esquires of the second*.

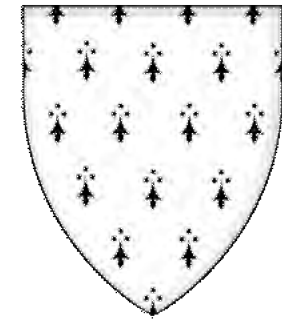
## Answer 5 (perhaps there were too many clues and hints with this question)

“The Cat, the Rat, and Lovel our Dog Rule all England under a Hog!” Too much of a **bore**? The **boar**, of course, the Hog, was the White Boar of Richard III, the hunchback or reputed hunchback King. And the laid back poet who came from Collingbourne in Wiltshire? He was William Collingbourne.

Laid back? As Luther at Wittenburg, he skewered his poem to the door of Westminster Hall, and, as was Wallace, he was sentenced to death. After being hanged he was cut down only half-dead and laid back on the scaffolding for the next phase. As the knife sliced him open prior to the disemboweling he won his immortality with this whispered comment— “**Oh Lord Jesus, yet more trouble!**” Laid back, indeed!

## Answer 6

This question was about the very popular and highly successful English author Bernard Cornwell whose nineteen Sharpe novels are justly famous. Heraldry is his weak point and in his books on mediaeval warfare he gives one historical character the arms illustrated with the question. The sole charge is a white animal with a black-tipped tail — obviously a stoat in its winter coat, and thus an ermine. It seems that the author checked on the arms of his character, the Duke of Brittany, read the blazon correctly as “*Ermine*” and assumed this meant the actual animal, not the fur as illustrated here.



## Answer 7

The description of the Prince of Wales as the Great Steward of Scotland was only to tease readers away from the answer — which is to be found in the original arms of William’s mother’s family, not in any Scottish link. The escallop placed on the centre point of his label is taken from the arms assigned to the early Spencers by a dishonest herald who squeezed large sums of money from them by falsely linking their ancestry to the mediaeval Despencers. The arms featured with the question to illustrate the seamew, and repeated here, are the original arms granted in 1504 to Sir John Spencer, an upwardly mobile yeoman. The arms confirmed in 1595 by Richard Lee, Clarenceux King of Arms, and still in use today, were the Despencer arms differenced by three escallops on the bend. History was then falsified with the addition of these new arms to the family tombs. The correct arms vanished.



## Answer 8

The severed hand appears many times in heraldry and tradition, most notably in the Western Isles of Scotland and in Ulster. The legend that accompanies each tale is usually of a boat race towards an island which is to become the property of the first chief to touch it, and of the chief in the losing boat cutting off a hand and throwing it onto the beach just as his rival is about to jump ashore. Here is another story that must have enlivened a few breakfasts as it was read from the morning newspapers, and it is this one that is the basis of the question.



Two hundred years ago Sir Thomas Holt murdered his cook in a cellar, and for generations his descendants were compelled to represent a murderer's hand in their armorial coat. The red hand is said to be still seen clearly in a painted window in Aston Church, near Birmingham, but it disappeared from the coat of the Holts before the title became extinct. One by one the Holt baronets secured leave to take away a finger from the hand, and slowly, in this way, the mark of murder passed.



When this tale was published a hundred years ago, Oswald Barron commented:

Surely a legend with the very peach-bloom of misapprehension upon it. Five fingers to the hand if we reckon the thumb, five generations before the hand becomes fingerless. Add a generation to efface the maimed palm and wrist and six generations pass. At three generations to a century we have arrived at our own days, and it must be but yesterday that a contemporary Holt has "secured leave" to wipe from his shield the last remembrance of the murdered cook.



To genealogists the fact that the line of Holt baronets became extinct in 1782 would add a new difficulty, and that this family should be singled out for reprobation seems harsh when all baronets of Ulster and of the United Kingdom bear the bloody hand in their shields, the same stain of blood and gravy blotting, as we may imagine, a page in each family history.

## Answer 9



- (a) What in your **opinion** is it? It is an **Opinicus**.
- (b) Is it male or female? Although without long furry ears, it is a type of gryphon, and thus, because it has wings, a female.
- (c) Why are so few seen around today? We do not know, but the following letter published by an ancient Scottish time-warped scholar as his reply to a report he had read on the Internet may offer some clues.

In the report a correspondent had described a handgun, a Glock, being used by his friend Paul to protect its owner against attacks by gryphons.

Dear Sir,

When I was a small child we were occasionally troubled by what modern minstrels would doubtless describe as plagues of gryphons, but to be truthful I seldom saw more than a dozen or so at any one time, and it is on the basis of this comparatively limited experience that I write to tell you that your confidence in Paul's Glock may have been misplaced. You wrote ~

“The creature was clearly a Gryphon, a thoroughly different manner of beast, and quite dangerous, but I don't doubt he would have met his match in Paul's Glock.”

It was commonly known among us that a hungry female gryphon could fly with a man in armour and his horse in her claws, and it was often reported that a pair of oxen yoked for the plough had been

taken. In 1561, Gerard Legh, a noted scribbler somewhat younger than I, claimed that he possessed “a clawe which should shew them as bigge as two lyons.” (*vide* The Accedence of Armorie, *fo.* 60)

Sir John Mandeville, a traveller of great distinction, wrote to me some two hundred years earlier that ~

“Sum men seyn that thei had the body upward as an egle, and benethe as a lyoun; and treuly thei seyn sothe that thei ben of that schapp. But a Griffoun hathe the body more gret and more strong than eight lyouns of such lyouns as ben o’ this half of oure worlde, and more gret and stronger than an 100 egles such as we han amonges us.”

Your lack of precision is as remarkable as Paul’s misplaced confidence in a weapon designed to stop a man being in any way a match for a gryphon. You should have noted that this was a female gryphon, for the male of the species (a possibly erroneous word in this case as will become apparent hereunder) has no wings and his body is covered in spikes. We had no male gryphons in Scotland, which is why some opine that we see no gryphons at all today.

Some scribes wrote optimistically that all gryphons would be eliminated if we prevented lions and eagles from cohabiting (which some foolish political pedants in England have interpreted in these modern times as ending the Atlantic Alliance between this Royal Kingdom and the former American Colonies), for these same scribes enjoin us to believe that the gryphons are not a species, which is to say that they do not form a group of mutually fertile individuals. They foolishly ignore that, for example, *item 78 in the inventory of royal treasures of Edward III of England is a gryphon’s egg valued at one mark (which is to say 13 shillings and 4 pence old money, or two-thirds of an English pound)*. But in England, as I have writ, they do have male gryphons, and it is reputed that there are some very odd couplings there, especially in their Parliament buildings in the Palace of Westminster.

I should not end these casual observations without noting that a related gryphon has the upper parts of an eagle and the lower parts of a mermaid. I believe this might be of help to your minstrel colleague who recently appealed for assistance with his tale of a submarine whose crew needed some sex to

increase the number of his audience. This gryphon has been seen with wings, and so it is possible that Paul's unfortunate experience may have been with one of these.

You will doubtless have deduced from all the evidence available that Paul's assailant, whether tailed as a lion or as a mermaid, was female. No male gryphon has wings. This suggests that the attack was owed more to an excess of jealousy than of hunger, and may have been prompted by watching soap on television, which is all that is left for most deprived gryphons these days. (I have often commented elsewhere on the responsibility of minstrels in this matter, the promotion of aggressive instincts, and if my words there remain unheeded there may well be more experiences such as that you relate of poor Paul.)

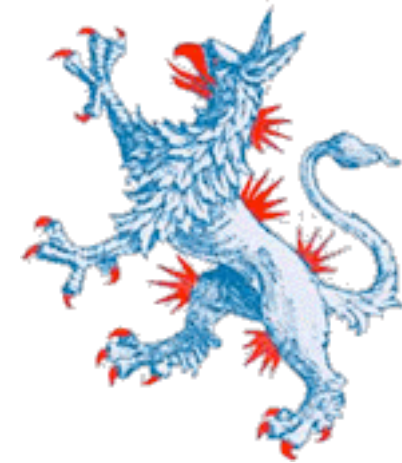
Correspondents in Brussels have reported to me that the gryphon is to be designated in the category of wildlife to be protected by the European Union, so Paul should lock his Glock away and avoid temptation when travelling within Western Europe.

My correspondents in the former American Colonies have reported that a famous vagabond player recently before a judge on a charge of murder had intended accusing a gryphon of the crime and that this made the jury so fearful that the vagabond player was acquitted. This gryphon must have been the bald-headed variety, which would make the outcome of this case peculiar to the American Colonies. Where your forebears lived in Scotland such a case would have "Jeddart justice" and the accused first hanged and then tried, thus removing any chance of a gryphon creating problems for the judge. I cannot recollect any instance of any type of gryphon being brought to court during the last seven hundred years (although some dishonest scribblers will say anything they fancy about gryphons, hoping not to be discovered).

In conclusion I should add that many careless commentators have loosely described gryphons as with the head of an eagle and then omitted the vital detail of the gryphon's ears. These are furry, pointed and very large, enabling the gryphon to hear everything critical said against it. *Verbum sat sapienti.*



It may thus be surmised from this ancient scholar's experiences that the apparent scarcity of gryphons today, in Scotland at least, is owed to a very serious lack of male gryphons. How much this may be owed to the intervention of Brussels we must leave future historians to discover. Naturally, it is possible, of course, that the modern female gryphons find the surviving males unattractive, their fashionable body-piercing spikes interfering with the natural process of procreation, but doubtless it would be indelicate to speculate on this, and gryphons are entitled to their privacy (and we might disturb the animal rights activists).



## Answer 10



The arms granted to Sarah Duchess of York at the time of her marriage included a thistle to commemorate her Scottish Ferguson descent and a bee to intrigue the gossip columnists and prompt much ribald speculation unsuitable for public print. Her wedding gown had thistles and bees embroidered into it together with naval crowns and anchors for Prince Andrew. It is the bee that is the link for which the question asks.



Surprised? Designers of modern urinals have adopted the tactic of printing some sort of insect on the porcelain, intending that the user will take this as an aiming point and thus reduce unwanted splashing. Usually the insect is a fly. However, for this question we acknowledged the classic wit of the manufacturer who uses instead of a fly — a bee — not to commemorate Sarah Ferguson, of course, but because for a *pissoir* a bee (in Latin *APIS*), is thought more appropriate.