Shields

Scotland – The Lion Rampant

“The Lion Rampant,” seems to have first been used as the royal arms of Scotland by King William the Lion 1142-1214 and remains the royal arms of Scotland to this day. Queen Elizabeth who is Queen of the United Kingdom has these quartered on her royal coat of arms. In the 1950s the campaigner for Scottish independence Wendy Wood had a long running argument with Scotland’s chief herald the Lord Lyon about who could use the coat of arms. Wendy Wood proudly hung the Lion Rampant outside her house. Her house happened to be on the tram line that the Lord Lyon took into work every morning. He always made sure he sat on the side of the tram that didn’t give him a view of Wendy Wood’s house! Less controversially it is used as the symbol on many Scottish sporting teams, particularly its football team.

England – The Three Lions

“The Three Lions” were first used by King Richard I (The Lion Heart) 11891199, More often than not the English Arms have been quartered with those of other countries, most notably France, then later Scotland and Ireland. The three lions is used as the symbol on many English sporting teams, particularly its cricket and football teams, the latter use giving rise to the famous footballing song “Three Lions”.

Ireland – The Harp

The golden harp with silver strings on a blue background has been the symbol of kings in Ireland from at least as far back 1280 where it is referred to as being the arms of the King or Ireland. The harp has been used as a symbol of Ireland ever since. In 1862 Guinness first used the harp as a trademark on their bottled beer. To distinguish it from the Irish Arms, they had to turn the harp around so that the harp; s straight soundbox is on the left. However if you look on their website today, they claim it was the Irish Government that had to turn their harp round the other way when the Irish Free State was declared in 1922 because of the Guinness trademark, which is a great bit of spin doctoring by Guinness!

The Dauphin

In the UK we have the Prince of Wales as the title given to the heir to the throne. In France they have the Dauphin, or “Dolphin”? Why? Apparently there was a son of the Count of Albon, Vienne (just south of Lyon in France) called Guigues[[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guigues_IV_of_Albon#cite_note-1)who was nicknamed the dolphin. He was called this in his father’s records in 1110. He later became Count Guigues IV and the nickname stuck and was given to all his successors. A later Count Humbert II, who had no heir, sold his county to the French King Philip VI for the latter’s son on condition that he was known by the title Dauphin as did every heir to the French thrown afterwards. Hence the shield has the fleur de lys of France quartered with a dolphin.

Holy Roman Emperor Charles V

Charles V’s coat of arms are silly. He inherited half of Europe and so had to fit snippets of all the lands he inherited on to his coat of arms

