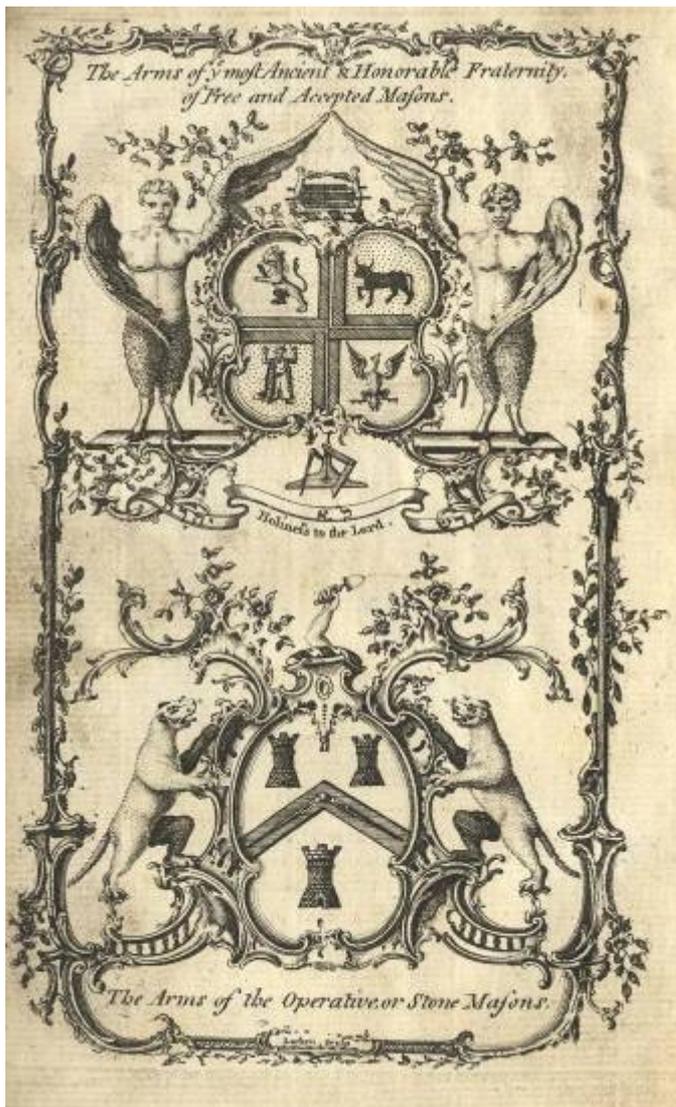


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THE ARMS OF THE UNITED GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND

The Grand Lodge of England founded in 1717 had, at some date in or before 1730, 'adopted' for use its own Arms, those of the London Company of Masons, together with the same Crest and Motto "In the Lord is all our Trust", but with minor difference, the tincture of the field being changed slightly and the chevron being shown plain instead of engrailed. The first know appearance of these Arms in use by the premier Grand Lodge is found in 1730. On a seal of 1723-3 the Arms are shown with beavers as Supporters, the bird as the Crest, and a different motto, namely (in Greek) "In the beginning was the Word".

The rival Grand Lodge of the 'Antients' founded in 1751 adopted Arms which bore in the four quarters the devices of a man, a lion, an ox and an eagle, and having the Ark of the Covenant as a Crest, Cherubim as supporters, and the Motto "Kodesh lo Adonai" ("Holiness to the Lord"; 'Adonai' being substituted in pronunciation, in accordance with Jewish usage, for the Tetragrammaton 'Yahweh'). Lawrence Dermott, in Ahiman Rezon, claimed that these Arms had been found among the papers of the 17th century Jewish scholar and antiquary, Rabbi Jacob Jehudah Leon (see also A.Q.C. vol.12, p.151 et seq.).



The tile page of the second edition of Ahiman Rezon (1764) showing; the Coat of Arms of the Antients Grand Lodge above the Coat of Arms of the London Company of Masons.

At the Union of the two Grand Lodges in 1813 the two Coats of Arms were combined and a new Motto “Audi, Vide, Tace”, meaning, “Hear, See, Be Silent”, was adopted. A note on the origin of this motto appeared in A.Q.C. vol.82, p.189, at footnote 1, together with (pp.239-242) illustrations of the above Coat of Arms as used on the several Grand Lodge seals.

The use of all three Coats described above was unofficial, but in 1918, arising out of the need to prepare a new Seal, the matter of armorial bearing came under investigation. It was then decided to petition the Crown that the Arms, Crest and Supporters so long in use might be regularised, with the addition of a ‘Bordure’ indicative of the Arms of England to mark the long association with the Institution of King Edward VII and many other members of the Royal House. The request was acceded to and Letters Patent, dated 9 July 1919, were granted. Under this Grant the use of the combined Arms of the two former Grand Lodges, with the addition of a ‘Bordure’ charged with eight lions ‘passant’, was authorised, together with Crest, Supporters and Motto as previously in use. The frontispiece to the current edition of the Book of Constitutions illustrates the Arms as exemplified in the Grant in which they are ‘blazoned’ (i.e. described in heraldic terms) as follows:

“Per pale Gules and Quarterly Azure and Or, dexter on a Chevron between three Castles Argent a pair of Compasses extended of the third, sinister a Cross quarterly of the fourth and Vert between in the first quarter a Lion rampant of the third, in the second an Ox passant Sable, in the third a Man with hands elevated proper vested of the fifth the Robe Crimson lined with Ermine, and in the fourth an Eagle displayed also of the third. And for the Crest, On a wreath of the colours: A representation of an Ark supported on either side by a Cherub proper with the Motto over in Hebrew characters ‘Holiness to the Lord’And the supporters: On either side A Cherub proper”.

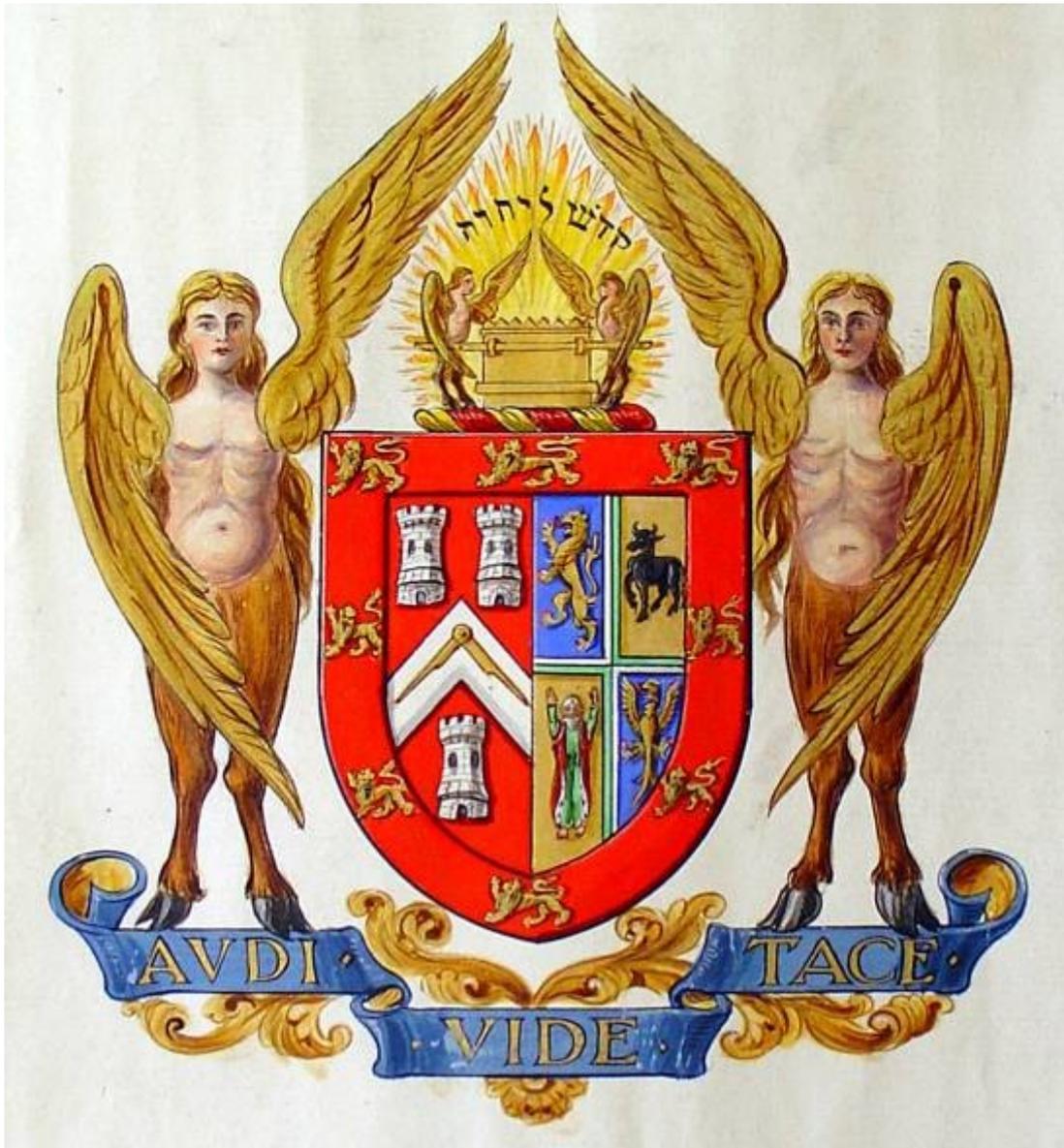
The Heraldic description may be rendered in ordinary language as follows: -

The Shield is divided vertically into two halves. That on the left has a red ground bearing a silver chevron on which is an open pair of gold compasses. Above the chevron are two silver castles with a third below. The right-hand side of the shield is divided into quarters by a cross which is itself ‘quartered’, i.e. each arm of the cross is equally divided along its length and coloured alternately silver and green. The first quarter (top left) of this side of the shield has a blue ground on which is a gold lion. The second quarter has a gold ground on which is a black ox. The third quarter (bottom left) also has a gold ground and on it a man shown with arms upraised; his main garment is green and over this is a crimson robe lined with ermine; his face, hands and feet are shown in natural colouring. The fourth quarter has a blue ground on which is a gold eagle with its wings outspread. Around the Shield is a red border on which are eight Lions depicted in a walking attitude with the right foreleg raised.

The Crest consists of a golden ark supported by two cherubs. These have the upper part of the body in natural flesh tints and the lower half covered in brown fur; their wings are in gold and above them, in Hebrew, is the Motto “Holiness to the Lord”. The background to the Crest has rays in gold radiating around it. The Crest stands on ‘a wreath of the colours’, i.e. on a twisted band of two pieces of material coloured alternately gold and red.

The Supporters are two cherubs coloured similarly to the pair in the Crest.

[The Motto “Audi, Vide, Tace” may be shown in gold lettering on a blue ribbon].



The Arms of the United Grand Lodge of England, as depicted in the Grant of Arms, 19 July 1919.

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