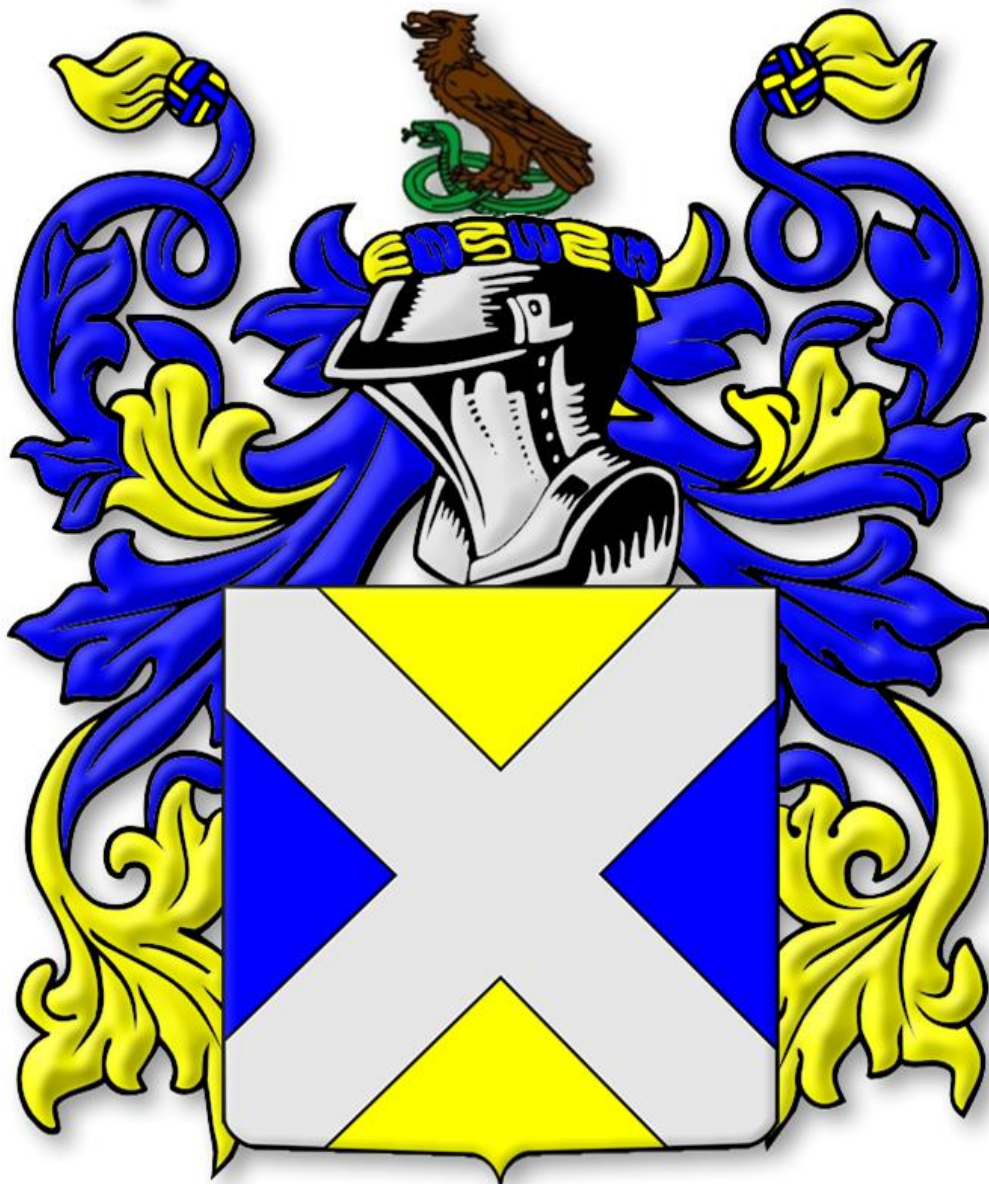




THE ANCIENT
ARMS FOR THE
DISTINGUISHED
SURNAME
BACKHOUSE

Confido in Deo



Backhouse

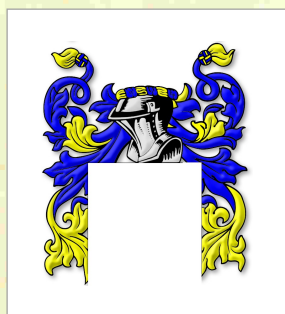
INTRODUCTION

The practice of representing people with symbols is ancient, and in England this habit evolved with feudal society into a system of distinctive devices on shields. The heralds developed an extensive armory that had the important function of distinguishing members of the upper class from each other, whether at court or on the battlefield. Since then, heraldry has grown into a complex field with many rules and a terminology that requires some knowledge to interpret.



ACHIEVEMENT OF ARMS OF
BACKHOUSE

An Achievement of Arms such as the Backhouse arms depicted on the left typically consists of these parts: the Escrolls, displaying the family motto and name, the family crest (if any) seen above the helmet, the actual Coat of arms (also known as 'arms,' or 'the shield'), the Helmet depicted below the crest, the Torse on top of the helmet, and the Mantle draped from the helmet. Each of these elements will be described below. Supporters were a later addition to the Achievement; they are somewhat rare, and are usually personal to the grantee.



MANTLE OF BACKHOUSE

The mantle was spread over and draped from the helmet and served as a protection, 'to repel the extremities of wet, cold, and heat, and to preserve the armour from rust.' The numerous cuts and slits suggest that it had been torn and hacked on the field of battle. The style or design of the mantling is up to the individual heraldic artist, and it is usually depicted in the main color and metal from the shield. The helmet (or Helm) varied in shape in different ages and countries, often depicting rank. The Esquire's Helm, as depicted here, is generally shown silver, with a closed visor and facing to the dexter (its right). On top of the helmet is a Torse or wreath which was formed by two pieces of silk twisted together. Its purpose was to hold the crest and mantle on the Helm.

MOTTO

The motto was originally a war cry or slogan. Mottoes first began to be shown with arms in the 14th and 15th centuries, but were not in general use until the 17th century. Thus the oldest coats of arms generally do not include a motto. Mottoes seldom form part of the grant of arms: Under most heraldic authorities, a motto is an optional component of the coat of arms, and can be added to or changed at will; many families have chosen not to display a motto.

The motto for the Backhouse coat of arms displayed here is:

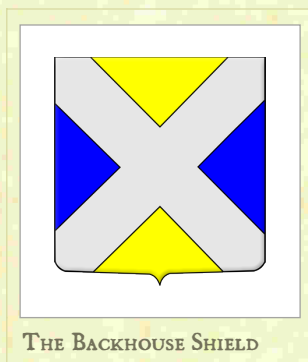
CONFIDO IN DEO

This translates as:

I TRUST IN GOD.

SHIELD

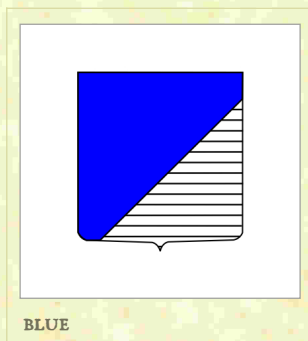
Shields (or Escutcheons) at first were painted simply with one or more bands of color or 'ordinaries'. Later, the ordinaries were used in conjunction with other figures or symbols. The Coat of Arms for the surname Backhouse can be described as follows:



THE BACKHOUSE SHIELD

BACKHOUSE ARMS

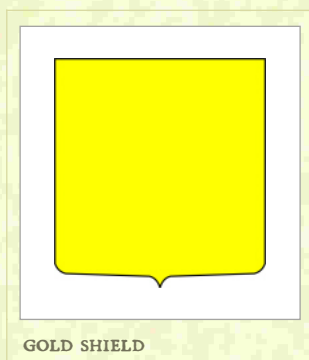
A blue and gold shield with an silver saltire.



BLUE

BLUE

Azure (derived from the French word for "blue") represents the color of an eastern sky on a clear day. It also corresponds to the metal tin. The word, "azure" was introduced from the east during the Crusades. It signifies piety and sincerity, and is equated with autumn. In engravings it is represented by horizontal lines.



GOLD SHIELD

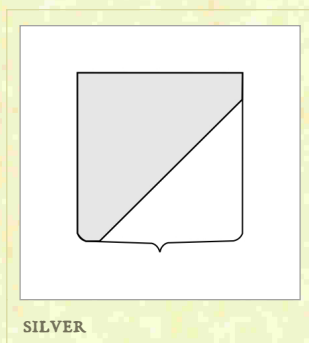
"Or" (from the French word for gold) is the tincture of gold and was considered the noblest color. One of only two metals used in heraldry, it exceeds all others in value, purity and finesse. It represents the light of the sun, and was once borne only by princes. Gold is said to gladden the heart and destroy all works of magic. It is also associated with excellence and achievement, and the bearer surpasses all others in valor. It is represented on coats of arms by the color yellow, and in engravings by an indefinite number of small points.

Symbolic Virtues: Or, the heraldic name for gold, symbolizes the virtues of faith, justice and mercy. Gold is the metal for excellence, as it is the purest and most unalloyed. It offers joy, success, prosperity and longevity.

Precious Stone: Carbuncle; Topaz

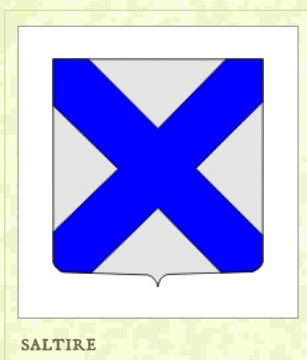
Planet: Sun

Obligations: To defend good and honor, and to fight to the death for one's country, surpasses all others in valor.



SILVER

Argent (from the French for silver), or silver is one of the two metals used in heraldry. It is usually represented on a shield by the colors gray or white. This metal represents nobility, peace and serenity. It is associated with the qualities of purity and chastity, because the metal withstands the test of fire.



SALTIRE

The saltire is frequently found in Scottish arms because it is the well-known cross of St. Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland. In this case, it is most frequently found displayed under a chief.

Irish heraldry has occurrences to the saltire too. In this latter case, it usually shows the hereditary relationship to the Anglo-Norman "Fitz" surnames. This usage derives from the Norman (cognate with French fils - Latin filius), meaning "son of", which was coupled with the name of the father (e.g. Fitz Gilbert, meaning "son of Gilbert").

It is a cross running from corner to corner rather than vertically and horizontally like a crucifix. The saltire symbolizes suffering for faith and the endurance of hardships.

THE CREST

The Crest was worn on top of the helmet, and was usually made of wood, metal, or boiled leather. It provided the double advantage of easy identification and the addition of height to the wearer. The Crest for the surname Backhouse is described as follows:



AN EAGLE PREYING ON A SNAKE.



EAGLE

EAGLE

The eagle was a symbol born by men of action, occupied with high and weighty affairs. It was given to those of lofty spirit, ingenuity, speed in comprehension, and discrimination in matters of ambiguity. The wings signify protection, and the gripping talons symbolize ruin to evildoers. The eagle is held to represent a noble nature from its strength and aristocratic appearance, as well as its association with the ancient kings of Persia, Babylon and the Roman legions, having been the official ensign of those empires. Since then, other empires and nations have also adopted the eagle as their symbol, such as the German third Reich and the empire conquered by Napoleon. The eagle is also associated with the sun. As a Christian symbol, the eagle represents salvation, redemption and resurrection. The eagle has been represented over the centuries in a variety of different ways: wing tips pointed up or down, wings closed or rising or the eagle displayed from above with one or two heads. Parts of the eagle such as the head, wings, legs or talons, are also often symbols in heraldry. The claw of a bird and leg of a bird are always taken to be that of an eagle unless specified otherwise, and the eagle leg borne on a shield or coat of arms is said to signify that the "preyer upon others has been preyed upon," though this is highly uncertain. An interesting form of the eagle is the alerion, which is drawn without the beak or the legs. It is thought to represent a formerly great warrior who was seriously injured in combat and is no longer able to fight. The osprey may also be classed with the eagle. It is always represented as a white eagle and is referred to in heraldry as a sea-eagle.

PREYING

Trussing and preying refer to birds, especially falcons, rising with a catch in their talons.



SNAKE

SNAKE

The serpent is an emblem of wisdom and defiance. Due to the shedding of its skin, it can also be a symbol of rebirth and fertility. In Ireland, the serpent may be used as an emblem of St. Patrick, an association derived from the legend of St. Patrick clearing Ireland of snakes. Serpents also represent knowledge. The serpent, or snake may be found in a variety of positions such as erect, gliding or fessways, nowed (tied in a know) or involved (in a curly-queue). An amphiptère is a winged serpent and an amphisboena is a winged serpent with two legs and a head at both ends of its body. These are both fairly uncommon charges in heraldry.