

HUGH STANFORD LONDON (1884–1959) AND HIS ARMORIAL DES HÉRALDISTES

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One of the many treasures in the archive of the College of Arms is a four volume armorial created between 1928 and 1936 as a form of recreation by H.Stanford London (HSL), for the most part while on overseas service. He dedicated the work to Donald Lindsay Galbreath (d.1949), an American dentist and heraldic scholar who resided in Switzerland, and is perhaps best known today as the author of *Manuel du blason* (Lausanne, 1942). The two men were of near identical age, and had met in Geneva. HSL had himself already been collecting information on the officers of arms of England, Scotland and Ireland, and to this was added details of European heraldic authors and artists collected by Galbreath. The contributions by Galbreath were supplied in French. HSL's information on the heralds was mainly derived from published works, although Anthony Wagner, then Portcullis Pursuivant, and Alfred Trego Butler, then Windsor Herald, were in active correspondence with him. HSL was a proficient artist, and there are some 478 pages of colour illustrations across the four volumes, a few of them comprising multiple arms. The greater portion of the individuals included – some 307 – are heralds, and a similar number are English, with the 71 Scottish heraldists being the next largest group.¹ With the gracious permission of the Kings, Heralds and Pursuivants of arms a small selection of these is presented in this issue of *The Coat of Arms*. HSL was seemingly not fond of the word armorist, and preferred hérauldiste. He was not sure about the acceptability of the English equivalent of this word, but heraldist has been used in our language since at least 1814, and was officially recognised by the OED in 1898.

It seemed fitting to preface this selection with a brief appreciation of Stanford London's life and works. A fuller, and affectionate, tribute was written by Sir Anthony Wagner as the foreward to HSL's life of William Bruges, the first Garter King of Arms which was written in 1949, but not published until 1970.² He was born in north Wales in the summer of 1884 as the eldest son of Edgar Stanford London (d.1943) and his wife Marion Fanny Pinnell Luff.³ The Londons were descended from an old Kentish yeoman family, although HSL's father came from Gloucester.⁴ Sir Stanford London C.B.E., as the father was later styled, joined the Inland Revenue in 1881, and was called to the bar at Gray's Inn in 1893. He was a humorous man, and something of a linguist, and rose to

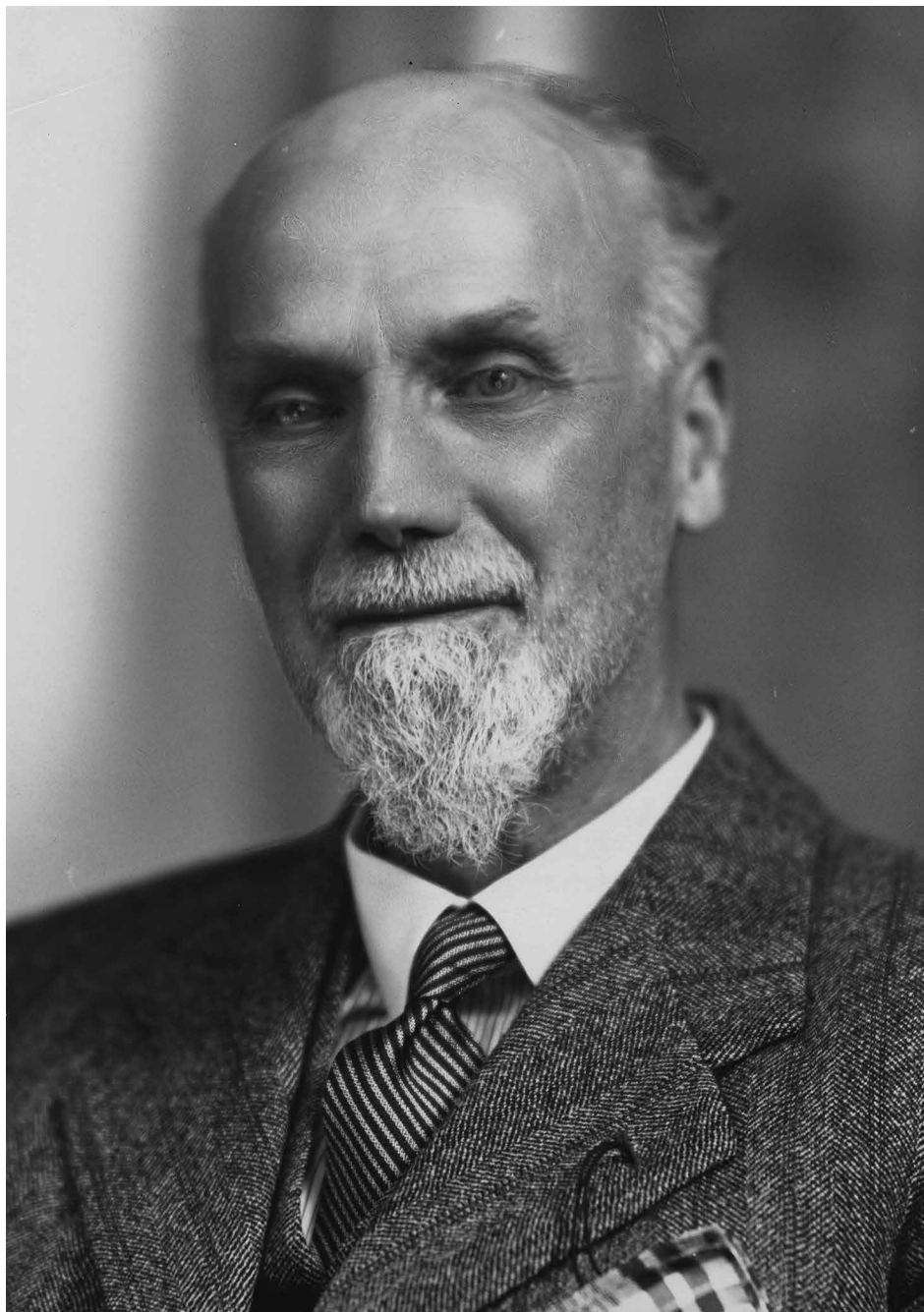
¹ There are 25 Frenchmen, 24 Irish, 23 Swiss, 14 German, not including those who were linked to more than one country.

² Harl. Soc. vol. 111–12 (London, 1970).

³ In the census for 1891 HSL was staying with his grandfather Septimus Luff in Parkstone, Dorset.

⁴ Obituary in the *Gloucester Citizen* 22nd April 1943, p.7.

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Hugh Stanford London on 18 August 1953
bromide print by Elliott & Fry
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become Chief Inspector of Taxes in 1920–22. The family were Londoners and resided in Briar Walk, Putney, in a house called Craigdarragh.⁵ It was likely as a consequence of his Kentish roots that Stanford sent his ten year old son to the King's School, Canterbury in 1894. It was here that HSL acquired his love of heraldry, as he later told Anthony Wagner, because the medieval shields of the Canterbury cloister had fired his imagination.⁶ He spent only two years in Canterbury before making the surprising move to Glasgow High School, being present in the Lanarkshire census for 1901. He then returned home to attend the sixth form at Dulwich College, received a scholarship to attend Clare College, Cambridge, then followed his father's footsteps in passing the Civil Service exam, and joined the consular service in 1908. The London family had a love of foreign places, with both of HSL's paternal uncles having emigrated, the one to India and the other to Australia.⁷ The next several decades saw him working in Zanzibar, Algiers, Geneva and Marseilles. He was Vice Consul in Algiers at the time of his marriage on 20th June 1913 to Edith Madeleine Wilkins, of Edgbaston, which was celebrated in St John's church Putney. He spent the First World War in Algiers, moving on to Paris in 1919 and Geneva in 1920. Here, in 1925, he made a record of the shields of saints from the Holy Trinity church.⁸ Having forged his friendship with Galbreath, in January 1928 he was sent to Managua as chargé d'affaires in Nicaragua. He did not arrive until April 1928, when he immediately began work on his armorial (ADH). After three years he returned to Marseilles where he completed his first volume and started a second, containing a higher proportion of foreign heraldists. In March 1934 he was posted to Quito in Ecuador, where the following year he was promoted to be minister resident. His work on the armorial ended with his departure from Quito in 1937. His final postings were as consul general in New Orleans in 1937–8 and in Paris in 1938–40. Meanwhile back in England his father Sir Stanford London was enjoying his retirement, and in 1930 he became master of the Glaziers' Company of London. One of his grandsons had been sent to the King's School in Canterbury that same year, and Sir Stanford became very friendly with the then headmaster. When the school tuck shop was converted into a chapel in 1938 he took the artist and designer Kruger Gray to visit, with the intention that he himself would endow the chapel with a pair of heraldic windows. The windows were dedicated by Archbishop Cosmo Lang on 17th June 1939. The end of his son's consular career was a dramatic one. He remained in Paris until the fall of France and was one of the last Englishmen to leave the city. He drove with his wife to Bordeaux where they found an overcrowded boat to take them to Falmouth.

HSL was now 55 years of age. He must have been employed on doing something for the war effort in London, where he was quickly co-opted onto the Croft-Lyons committee of the Society of Antiquaries, to which he had been elected as a fellow in 1935. The main challenge of the committee was to publish a 'new Papworth'. Who then could have imagined that it would take almost 80 more years before this was completed

⁵ Obituary, *The Times* 21st April 1943 p.7.

⁶ Anthony Wagner, *Antiquaries J* (1959) pp.354–5.

⁷ Obituary of Mr Ernest H. London, *The Advocate* 28th Nov 1932 p.2.

⁸ Soc Ant MS 811/1.



The arms granted to Hugh Stanford London's father in April 1918, *Azure five lozenges conjoined in bend between two crosses patty fitchy or.* The crest, *On a wreath of the colours a lozenge checky argent and sable between two wings or.* ADH vol 2, frontis.

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as the four volume *Dictionary of British Arms*.⁹ The end of the war at long last provided HSL with the opportunity to immerse himself in heraldic research, and he became a familiar figure in the British Library, the College of Arms and in the library of the Society of Antiquaries, where he transcribed more than a hundred rolls of arms, producing more than ten thousand record cards for the new ordinary, and setting out how the ordinary would be structured. He retired to Buxted in Sussex, where he came into contact with, and inspired the young Cecil Humphery-Smith, who ever since has regarded the retired consul-general as his great mentor.

After he finished working on his armorial in 1936 he shifted his attention to the writing of heraldic papers, no less than five of which were published in 1938. Having thus found his voice from this point onwards he produced a steady stream of papers and booklets. His favourite vehicle in his first decade of authorship was that of the short communication submitted to *Notes and Queries*. There are 21 such epistles. He was elected as a founder fellow of the Heraldry Society in 1950, and the majority of his short papers thereafter appeared in the *Coat of Arms*. A list of his 27 publications in this journal along with his many other works, was compiled by Cecil Humphery-Smith and can be found in London's *Life of William Bruges*.

His great moment in life came in 1953 when he was created Norfolk Herald Extraordinary to assist with the Coronation, and played a major role in the concept and design of the ten 'Queen's beasts' which stood outside the entrance to Westminster Abbey. He published a popular booklet on the beasts the following year, and in 1956 the Heraldry Society published another, entitled *Royal beasts*. His educational pamphlet *The right road to the study of heraldry* had earlier been published by the Society in 1950, and was twice reprinted.

His most significant contributions on the study of the lives of the heralds and on rolls of arms were mostly published posthumously following his death in 1959 from heart disease. He did publish during his lifetime a variety of papers on the lives of individual heralds, and with Anthony Wagner he published an appendix to the *Complete Peerage* on the topic of 'The heralds of the nobility' in 1949.¹⁰ It was left to Wagner to publish the main corpus of his work on the English heralds in *The College of Arms* (1963) and his work on Glover's and Walford's Roll in *Rolls of arms of Henry III* (1967). Now that his contributions for the 'new Papworth' have been published in the Dictionary of British arms, it is time to reveal to the world something of his last great unpublished piece, and the first thing that he wrote, not least because of the quality of his illustrations. Although his account of the heraldists was neither revised nor updated to reflect his own subsequent research, it remains a highly significant work, and where any discrepancies have been detected these are highlighted in the footnotes.¹¹

⁹ *DBA*.

¹⁰ G.E.C. vol. 11 (1949) appendix C.

¹¹ The editor is indebted to Mark Scott, Bluemantle Pursuivant, for bringing these volumes to his attention.

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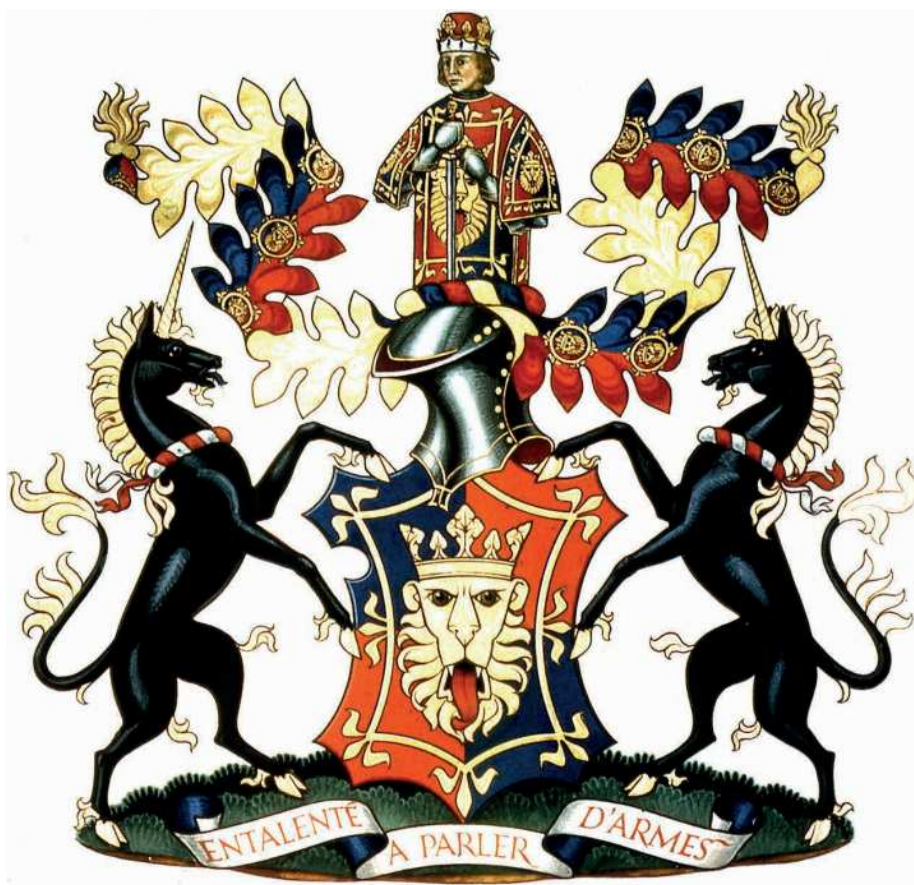
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