



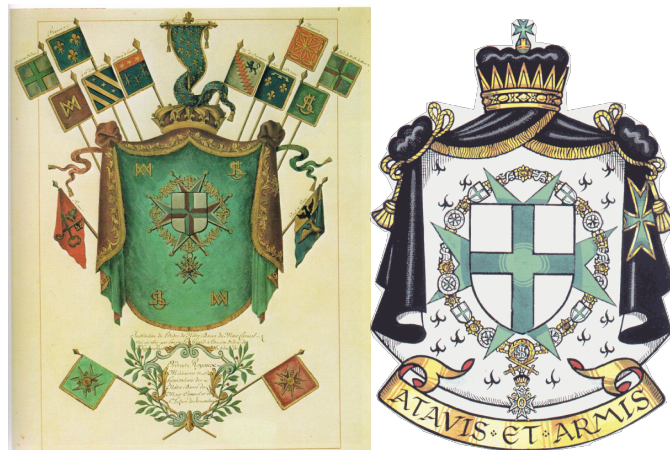
## The revised coats of arms of the Great Bailwick of the Netherlands and its two Commanderies.

### Heraldry of the Order

At the time of the crusades the knights of the well-known spiritual Orders of Knighthood could be recognised by the crosses on their coats of arms: white for the Knights of Malta, red for the Knights Templar and black for the Knights of the Teutonic Order. For the later emerging Knights of the Order of Saint Lazarus only a few options remained: blue or green. Their choice was probably a pragmatic one and the symbolic interpretation of their choice of later date.

Coat of arms and shield are identical, *Argent a Cross Vert* – a green cross on a white (*silver*) shield – became the arms of the Order and still is today.

But however, it didn't stay this simple. More and more, shields, which were supposed to be durable, were embellished with external finery. At the time the hereditary grandmastership got connected to the French Crown, the French kings placed the shield on an eight-pointed green cross, hung the grandcollar around it and finally placed the whole lot on a royal robe of dignity with crown. Flags and banners could also not be missed.



When French royalty and the grandmastership were separated it was hard for the knights to part with the royal paraphernalia. What's worse, during a time of heraldic decay even the national jurisdictions started to appropriate them. Within the Order there was no authority that could prevent this. It is true that the French royal crown was replaced by a so-called Eastern crown: a crown that doesn't represent a noble title. But the royal robe of dignity, now called a knight's mantle, still is a royal robe, lined with ermine and not vert.

In 1995 things were put right and the Statutes of the Order were established anew. However, some excesses could not be reverted. In 2012 and again in 2016 heraldic matters were reviewed in the *Revised regulations for the recording and use of Heraldry*

*within the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem, or the Regulations.* There also now is a heraldic authority, the Grand Officer of Arms, after a lapse of a decade.

“As an international and independent Canonical Order under the Spiritual Protection of the Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, of Jerusalem and of Alexandria, of the *sui juris* Greek Melkite Church, and governed by the Sovereign Head, the Grand Master and Grand Magistral Council according to its Statutes, the Order of St. Lazarus has the ability to regulate the use of heraldry within its own jurisdiction. However, the Order has due regard for the fact that its members are citizens of many states world-wide having varying attitudes to heraldry, asserting various degrees of legal control over its use, or indeed having no official stance on the subject whatsoever. The Order also takes note of varying heraldic customs world-wide, irrespective of actual legal control or lack thereof.” (Art. 1 of the *Regulations* 2016)

The *Regulations* are the framework within which the coats of arms of the Grand Bailiwick and the Commanderies are developed. I have maximally exploited the Dutch customs, rules and styles by permission and with kind cooperation of the Chevalier Michael W. Ross, Grand Officer of Arms.

### **Coat of arms of the Great Bailiwick**

#### *Tulip or Lion?*

In accordance with article 11 of the aforementioned *Regulations*, the Great Bailiwick of the Netherlands bears, as an independent jurisdiction, a national emblem in the dexter chief canton of its coat of arms. It isn't known when or by whom the tulip was selected for this purpose. Flowering tulip fields may be an extremely popular tourist attraction, but that doesn't necessarily make the tulip a suitable *historical* heraldic emblem. The tulip isn't native to the Netherlands, but originated from Asia Minor. The first tulip bulb arrived, via Belgium, in our country in 1593, in the *Hortus Botanicus* in Leiden. Around the subsequent turn of the century there was so much speculative trade in tulip bulbs that approximately 20 years later one single bulb was sold for a price comparable to that of a canal house in Haarlem. The economic bubble burst in 1637, plunging many traders and speculators into bankruptcy. In short, not a particularly uplifting image to choose as a national device.

Since the middle ages the Lion has been the favorite charge in the coats of arms of the Low Countries. Nowadays ten of the twelve Dutch provinces are bearing lions in their coats of arms; the province of Limburg even has four. So the choice of a Lion as a charge is obvious. But this poses the question, which Lion and which tinctures?

Several options were researched.

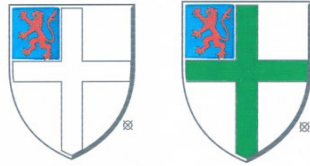
The use of the State Coat of Arms is not allowed – see article 435b.1 Criminal Code.

The Dutch Lion – *a Lion crowned Or, with Sword and Sheaf of Arrows Argent* or possibly in other tinctures – is also not an option. The website of the State Information Service emphatically poses that use of this lion is also covered by the article 453b.1. Therefore, the lion has to be stripped of its sword and sheaf of arrows, although the crown may be preserved.

This leads us to the question of which tinctures to use.

The Dutch national colour that commonly adorn the fields at international games of any kind is orange, with 'Nassau bleu' being the livery colour of the Royal House. Orange, or 'Tenné' in the heraldic jargon, is a mix of red and yellow. It is a *stain* in heraldic terms.

These colours are less strictly subjected to the rules of tincture, as long as they are providing a good contrast. *Azure, a Lion crowned, Tenné*, seemed to be a good and clear combination.

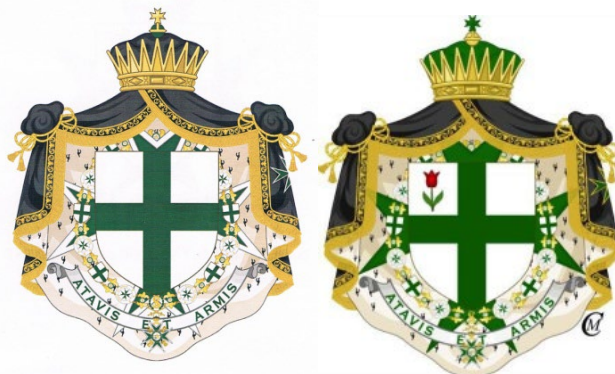


On second thought this combination also doesn't satisfy, because the blue field enclosed by the green Cross provides too much colour. The *Regulations* argues for the use of the metals gold or silver as background for the national emblem. Gold (yellow) is too similar to orange, but silver (white) gives a better contrast. To keep the colour blue, the Lion was crowned, langued and armed Azure. The old Dutch flag, the so called *Princen-vlag* is *oranje-blanje-bleu* (orange blank and azure). So the coat of arms unintentionally got an extra Dutch quality.

*Full achievement and small arms*

"Each national jurisdiction may adopt a version of the arms of the Order, differenced with an appropriate device in the dexter chief canton. The arms of the Order" being "a shield – the most identifying mark – surmounting a cross of eight points vert, encircled by the Grand Collar, the whole displayed on a mantle sabel, lined ermine ... bearing on the sinister side a cross of eight points vert fimbriated or, all ensigned with the Eastern crown of the Order." The mantle is often interpreted as a knight's mantle, but it is lined ermine and not vert, so it is a royal robe. This robe and crown are the prerogative of the Grandmaster, which via him also radiates onto the Order as such, although in my opinion not on the national jurisdictions. Compare with the Royal Dutch Coat of Arms, as King William I laid down in 1815 for him and the kingdom. It is remarkable that the state doesn't use the mantle.

The cap in the crown was originally vert, which is shown on all the old grants from the Order dating from 1936 on, but this was changed to sable in a mis-translation of the statutes in the 1980s. A cap first appeared in the late 1920s. The original (and definitive) matriculation of arms, granted by the Lord Lyon in 1967 also shows the cap vert. The translation error has been corrected and the cap is now green again.



In full achievement of arms with mantle and crown, the national device – here a tulip – doesn't attract attention. That's why "for smaller representations the *smaller arms* [are advised], with just shield and motto displayed on an eight-pointed cross of St. Lazarus, vert." (*Regulations*)



### Arms of the commanderies

In accordance with the *Regulations*, “for sub-jurisdictions” – *in casu* the commanderies of the Great Bailiwick of the Netherlands – “a heraldic charge may appear in the second (sinister chief) canton of the national arms. It should appear on a shield on the eight-pointed cross of St. Lazarus, but never on the full achievement of arms ...” So the arms of the two commanderies had to be adapted. The motto *ATAVIS ET ARMIS* is reserved for the Great Bailiwick.

In Dutch heraldry it's usual for owners of a lordship or a commandery of one of the old spiritual orders of chivalry to place the arms of those lordships and commanderies on an inescutcheon in the arms of their families. The Order respects national heraldic customs, rules and styles. Therefore I asked Chevalier Michael W. Ross, Grand Officer of Arms, dispensation from the rule that sub-jurisdictions have to bear their heraldic charge in the second canton of the national arms. He kindly agreed, - based on the regulation “For France, as the historical seat of the Order (or areas formerly or currently under French rule in part or in whole), the jurisdictional and sub-jurisdictional arms may be displayed on an escutcheon on the centre of the cross – for which we are very grateful.

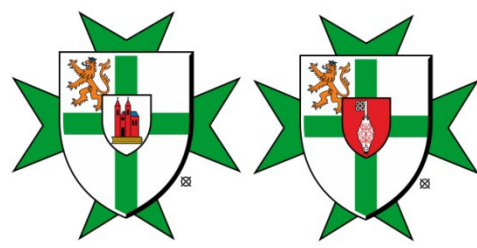


For the commandery of Saint Servaas it was simple to adapt its coat of arms. The attribute of this Saint is a very specific key which is kept in the treasury of his basilica in Maastricht. The key changed place from the second canton to the escutcheon and the tinctures I chose were those of the arms of Maastricht: Gules a Key Argent.

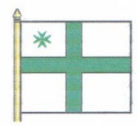
The coat of arms of the commandery of Saint Willibrord was more difficult to adapt. It bore an effigy of the Saint, but it's unusual to use effigies in arms. I had the choice of two attributes, based on his legends. Saint Willibrord – apostle to the Frisians – is usually depicted with a wine barrel with crosier and/or a church propped up by a book. According to legend, the Saint stayed the night in a tavern during one of his missions. The wine barrel was empty, but when the Saint tapped it with his crosier the barrel magically refilled. Saint Willibrord also built the Saint Salvator-church in Utrecht. A wine barrel seems less suitable to be used as an attribute. It could lead to all kinds of hilarious speculations: ‘Lazarus zijn’ means being blind drunk in the Dutch language.



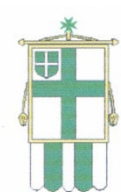
The tinctures are those of the town of Utrecht *Per Bend Sinister Argent and Gules*, the place where the church was built. I made the book gilt-edged, to contrast with the field of the shield. The members of the commandery opted for the church. As pointed out before, both shields appear on the eight-pointed cross of St. Lazarus, without the motto, which is reserved for the bailiwick.



### Bearing flags in the Bailiwick

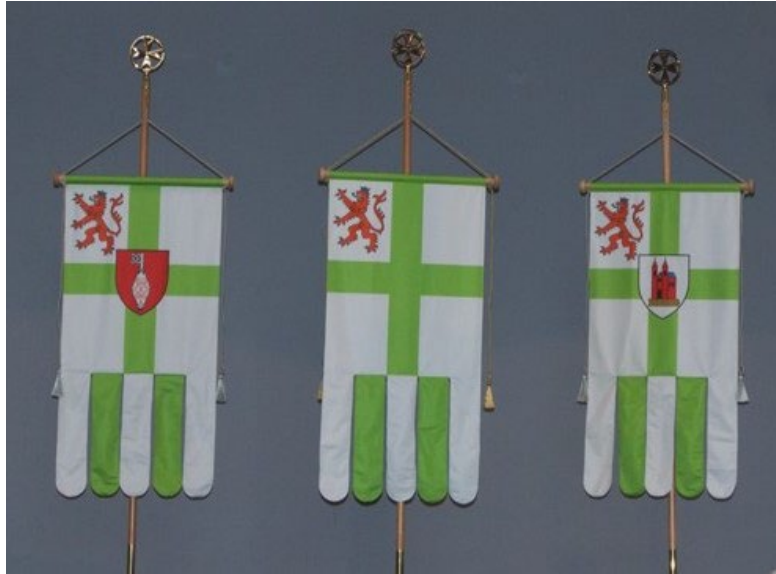


Arms of a Jurisdiction as a Banner  
(Grand Priory of the Maltese Islands)  
Bannière de la juridiction  
(ratio 4:5)



Arms of a Jurisdiction as a Gonfalon  
(Commandery of Avalon)  
Gonfalon de la juridiction  
(ratio as for banner, pendants an additional 3/4)

There are two types of flag for jurisdictions as well as sub-jurisdictions: the *banner* and the *gonfalon* – *gonfanoen* in Middle Dutch. In the past the bailiwick and the commanderies bore banners. A banner is not fit for use inside as it can't unfurl without help. Furthermore, the image is stretched across the width of the banner. Therefore I chose a gonfalon, which is a processional flag that hangs from a horizontal spike on a pike. The shape is more suitable for a coat of arms. I did however adapt the dimensions somewhat, to width : height = 5 : (6+4)



*The gonfanons as they hung at the investiture 1 October 2016  
They were made by Semaphore Signs in Schiedam.*

Hans de Boo AIH MLJ  
Herold of Arms of the  
Great Bailwick of  
The Netherlands