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## THE INHERITED RIGHT TO BEAR COAT-ARMOR IN AMERICA

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At the time the English began the settlement of America, there were two classes of people in England, from one of which came eventually the Puritans; from the other the Cavaliers. The first made New England; the latter formed the Virginia aristocracy. Many of the settlers were gentlemen; both classes included descendants of the best families of their respective countries—men of high educational attainments representing the various learned professions. Some were graduates of Cambridge or Oxford; others, younger sons seeking a new home, either as bachelors or family men. Nearly all the early settlers were not only entitled to bear coat-armor, but were punctilious in its use. These are the families represented in the early history of heraldry in America.

The position assumed by this select few has stimulated research in genealogy and heraldry—the same right being continually established by other American families. Intercourse was, as we all know, maintained with the old home and old friends, as well as the slow means of communication would permit.

What is said in this regard to New England may be applied to the plantations of Rhode Island, Virginia, the city of New Amsterdam and its great outlying estates, ruled over by the Patroons, the Georgia and Carolina grants, and the Louisiana settlements, with the aristocratic French emigrées. Out from this varied lot of European names and families came the American nation.

One finds that the settlers bore the coat-armor pertaining to their families. Not one, probably, of all these early immigrants had the slightest intention or desire to alienate the new lands from the protection of the crown. They were loyal each to his fatherland—over a century must pass before the break would begin. Why should they? Their old homes held many and dear relatives. Alone in a wild land their thoughts would naturally dwell on old ways and home customs, many of which they reestablished in the new land. That the use of coat-armor was one of these imported