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# THE "KING" FAMILY HERALDRY.

## WITH A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ORIGIN OF THE FAMILIES OF THIS NAME IN OLD AND NEW ENGLAND ENTITLED TO BEAR COAT-ARMOR.

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It has long been a popular fallacy that families of like name, bearing approximately the same coats-of-arms, slightly differenced, must necessarily be closely related, and that no matter how wide apart their county localities they are all descended from the same ancestor. It is well established, however, that similarity of surname invariably influenced the adoption of similar arms, and the early heraldic grants in many cases allotted arms containing the general family symbols to families of a common name, but without the slightest bond of relationship. An excellent example of this system is found among the various "King" families, which almost all bear arms with the heraldic symbols of the escallop shell, the cross-crosslet, the lion rampant, and the ducal coronet, and crests of the heads of the lion, the talbot, the ostrich, and the dragon or griffin, and of a cubit arm or hand, grasping a dagger, a broken spear or a baton.

An attempt will be made to locate the earliest armor-bearing King families in England, place them into heraldic groups of similar heraldic symbols and designs, trace out briefly the pedigrees of the original ancestors, and indicate authoritatively those families in New England whose English ancestry can be traced and which have an undisputed right to use coat-armor.

The earliest known seal used by one of the King name is that of "Alice Kynge, wife of John Kynge, of Whitton 23d. Edward," *i. e.*, 1350. This seal is found in a collection of ancient Suffolk Seals, preserved in the Ipswich Museum, Ipswich, Suffolk, England.

The next use of a seal is traced into Devonshire, where in 1389, one Rogerus Kynge, of Dodebroke, a small village about eight miles from the Parish Church of Ugborough, Co. Devon, conveyed to John Sormound a building and lands situated "at Redpitte, near the font of St. Thomas the Martyr in the burg of Dedebroke." The parchment deed is sealed with a seal of red wax about one inch in breadth bearing an impression of what appears to be a tree, with separate branches on each side rising up from the ground. Neither of these seals, however, indicate any heraldic design or source.

The first authentic coat-of-arms to be borne by any of the King name was that attributed to Oliver King, Bishop of Bath