

Folio and Imperial 2o (54.5 x 34.5 cm), 1735

A massive manuscript armorial containing many thousands of coats of arms and flags from all parts of Europe and even Turkey (the Ottoman Empire), Africa, Japan, China and the West Indies, depicted in colour. Most leaves contain coats of arms on one or both sides, often with 99 coats of arms per page, so that the entire manuscript includes tens of thousands of arms. The texts are written in Dutch. Some of the arms come from the Saint Gudula church in Brussels and the manuscript has a Belgian provenance, but it includes engraved armorials published in both the Dutch Republic and the Spanish/ Austrian Southern Low Countries, and it begins with England: the arms of the Dutch Prince of Orange, King William III of England (1650–1702), are the largest in the manuscript, measuring 21 × 27.5 cm. The manuscript is arranged primarily by region, several regions beginning with marine flags before going on to the coats of arms themselves. Many of the seventeen inserted engraved armorials and related engraved works are extremely rare, most of their arms have been coloured by hand and many contain manuscript additions, either providing additional information about the owners of the existing arms or adding further arms.

The book bears no early owner's name but it was owned in the 1980s by Madeleine Houtart, Comtesse Gaston d'Oultremont (1914–2008) in Mons, wife of Gaston, Comte d'Oultremont (1910–1988). The manuscript is in good condition, with only rarely a coat of arms damaged or smudged. One of the engraved armorials is lacking some sheets and a few are a bit damaged. A remarkably extensive manuscript armorial with many rare engraved armorial sheets.

With many thousands of manuscript coats of arms and many flags, all depicted in colour, plus 16 rare separately published engraved armorials (1603–ca. 1730) inserted in the relevant parts of the manuscript, and further manuscript and engraved slips with arms pasted on the leaves or loosely inserted. Later calf, gold-tooled spine.