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PATENTS OF ARMS ONLINE THE DATABASE OF PATENTS OF ARMS OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF HUNGARY¹

Abstract:

Besides their decorative appearance, the patents of arms bear significant historical value, which provide important contribution to various areas of historical science. The aim of the National Archives of Hungary's project of several years was to create a versatile, illustrated, well-searchable and expandable online database, in which we could process the data of all the original patents of arms and related documents held in our institution. Our collections of patents of arms are being built since the foundation of our institution, and contain over 2000 original parchment charters granting mainly Hungarian and Transylvanian nobility along with heraldic achievements. At present, the National Archives of Hungary has completed the digitization and processing of all this material, except for the 131 medieval (pre-1526) charters, which is to be covered in the near future.

Keywords:

patents of arms, coats of arms, online database, mass digitization, National Archives of Hungary, open access.

I. Patents of Arms in the National Archives of Hungary

The patents of arms bear significant historical value besides their decorative appearance as archival source material. Therefore, they can contribute to various fields of science, heraldry, palaeography, diplomatics, sigillography and

¹ This work has been supported in part by Croatian Science Foundation under the project "Sources, Manuals and Studies for Croatian History from the Middle Ages to the End of the Long Nineteenth Century"(IP-2014-09-6547).

genealogy just to mention a few. In particular, the heraldic paintings displayed on the charters provide complex information and apply for art-historical, iconographical analysis but also history of costume, architecture, crafts and weaponry can be addressed by exploring them.

Granting coats of arms was a royal privilege in the Kingdom of Hungary (and the Principality of Transylvania), as in most European states. The first such grant preserved in Hungary was a grant of a crest in 1326, but it became a large-scale practice only in the first half of the 15th century. Altogether, approximately 100,000 patents of arms were issued over a period of 600 years, with the last ones issued in 1918. Unfortunately, only about 8–10% of them may have survived, in public collections and in private property.

The largest Hungarian collection of original patents of arms has been preserved in the National Archives of Hungary (NAH), in the holdings of the so-called section R (Post-1526 collections), fonds 64 (Homeland patents of arms and nobility records) 1. The predecessor of this collection was established as early as the end of the 19th century by the Archival Department of the Hungarian National Museum founded in 1802. In 1876, the records held by the department were rearranged into two major parts, namely the records possessed by the Museum (the “Main Collection”) and those being part of family collections. Later, between 1876 and 1904, in a second phase of rearrangement of the records of the Main Collection, new collections were created based on the subject of records and following the actual historical research trends, such as Records of the Ottoman Period, Records of Guilds or the Records of the Emigration of 1848/1849.

The increasing number of patents of arms and the increasing interest in genealogical and heraldic research (best proven by the founding of the Hungarian Heraldic and Genealogical Society and its periodical “Turul” in 1883) led to the creation of a separate collection of patents of arms in 1886. The newly created archival unit included the patents of arms and nobility records dated after the Battle of Mohács, i.e. of August 29th, 1526 (The pre-Mohács patents were included in the Medieval Charter Collection).²

² *Monumenta Hungariae Heraldica. Magyar czimeres emlékek* [Hungarian Heraldic Monuments]. I–III. Eds. L. Fejérpataky (I–II.), A. Áldásy (III.). Budapest 1901, 1902, 1926; Á l d á s y , Antal: *A Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum Könyvtárának czimereslevelei* [Patents of Arms in the Library of the Hungarian National Museum]. I–VIII. (A Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum Könyvtárának címjegyzéke II. Címereslevelek [Register of the Library of the Hungarian National Museum II. Patents of Arms]) MNM Kvt. (I–II.) – Áldásy József (III–VIII.), Budapest 1904–1942; S á n d o r , Imre: *Czimerlevelek* [Patents of Arms]. I–II. Kolozsvár 1910–1912.

In 1927 the collection of the patents of arms, along with the whole material of the Archival Department, was transferred to the NAH, which integrated it among its own collections in 1934 and finally merged it with its own existing collection of patents of arms.

Distribution of the original and copied patents of arms within the holdings of the NAH

Archival holding	Collections	Items
Archives of the Hungarian Chancellery	A 39, A 42	21
Archives of the Transylvanian Chancellery	B 2	48
Archives of the Locotenential Council	C 30, C 39, C 90	16
Archives of the Hungarian Treasury	E 148	230
	E 181	3
Archives of the Government Authorities of Transylvania	F 7	66
	F 3, 4, 5, 9	294
	F 21	341
	F 141	35
	F 146	18
	F 234	3
Archives of the Curia	O 23	1
Family Archives	Section P	342
Collection of Pre-1526 Records	Section Q	131
Collections of Post-1526 Records	R 64 – 1.	1090
	R 64 – 2.	715
	R 126	123
	R 336, R 314, R 375, R 378	4
Total:		3482

Distribution of original patents of arms within the holdings of the NAH per Hungarian ruler

Hungarian ruler	Reign	Items
John I	1526–1540	5
Ferdinand I	1526–1564	51
Isabella	1539–1559	3
Maximilian	1564–1576	29
Rudolph	1576–1608	123
Matthias II	1608–1619	84
Ferdinand II	1619–1637	180
Ferdinand III	1637–1657	166
Leopold I	1657–1705	311
Joseph I	1705–1711	9
Charles III	1711–1740	90

Hungarian ruler	Reign	Items
Maria Theresa	1740–1780	108
Joseph II	1780–1790	14
Leopold II	1790–1792	21
Francis	1792–1835	86
Ferdinand V	1835–1848	16
Francis Joseph	1848–1916	57
Charles IV	1916–1918	4
unknown	?	1
	Total:	1358

Distribution of original patents of arms within the holdings of the NAH per Prince of Transylvania

Prince of Transylvania	Reign	Items
John Sigismund Szapolyai	1551–1571	1
Stephen Báthori	1571–1586	10
Christopher Báthori (voivode)	1576–1581	1
Sigismund Báthori	1586–1602	24
Andrew Báthori	1599	7
Stephen Bocskai	1605–1606	26
Sigismund Rákóczi	1607–1608	14
Gabriel Báthori	1608–1613	42
Gabriel Bethlen	1613–1629	44
Catherine of Brandenburg	1629–1630	8
George I Rákóczi	1630–1648	63
George II Rákóczi	1648–1660	34
Ákos Barcsay	1658–1660	8
John Kemény	1661–1662	1
Michael I Apafi	1661–1690	158
Francis II Rákóczi	1704–1711	1
	Sum:	442

II. Starting the Project

II.A. Established Aims

The 2000s has brought an increasing interest towards patents of arms as historical sources in Hungary which resulted in new historical analyses, paper-based and off-line publications of selected documents.³ Also the

³ Nyulásziné Straub, Éva: *Öt évszázad címerei a Magyar Országos*

NAH adopted computer technologies quite early and launched projects of digital editions, among them a digital publication of selected patents of arms as well.⁴

At the preparatory phase of the current database project, the challenges set by digital era, such as rapidity, searchability and free online accessibility even from home and around the clock had to be taken into consideration. In contrast to the earlier Hungarian (paper-based) publications of patents of arms, we also aim to create a well-searchable database by digital processing of the patents of arms including all heraldic charges, the charges of the crests, the tinctures of the mantling, the secondary parts of the heraldic achievement (rank coronets, supporters, mottoes and order insignia) along with a description of the heraldic painting itself.⁵

Levéltár címereslevelein – Wappen aus fünf Jahrhunderten auf Wappenbriefen im Ungarischen Staatsarchiv. Szekszárd 1999²; *Családtörténet, heraldika, honismeret* [Genealogy, Heraldry, Local History]. DVD-ROM (Arcanum DVD-könyvtár [Arcanum DVD Library] IV.) Budapest 2002; *Armálisok – Nemesi címereslevelek a Zala Megyei Levéltár gyűjteményéből 1477–1898* [Armales – Patents of Arms and Nobility in the Collections of the Zala County Archives 1477–1898]. Ed. A. Molnár. Zalaegerszeg 2004; *Armales et diplomata. Mohács előtti oklevelek (1162–1360) és armálisok (1418–1833) a Soproni Levéltárból* [Pre-Mohács Charters (1162–1360) and Patents of Arms (1418–1833)]. CD-ROM. Budapest 2004; *Az erdélyi fejedelmek oklevelei (1560–1689) – Erdélyi Királyi Könyvek* [Charters of the Princes of Transylvania (1560–1689) – Transylvanian Royal Books]. Ed. É. Gyulai. DVD-ROM. Budapest 2005; Székely, Tamás: *Armales Transylvanorum. Válogatás az erdélyi fejedelmek címeradományaiból* [A Selection from the Grants of Arms of the Princes of Transylvania]. (Scriptores rerum Hungaricarum 3) Máriabesnyő – Gödöllő 2009; Szekeres, Attila István: *A sepsiszentgyörgyi állami levéltárban őrzött háromszéki armálisok címerei* [The Coats of Arms of the Patents of Háromszék Kept in the State Archives of Sfântu Gheorghe]. Acta Siculica, 2011, p. 375–384 (http://www.szm.ro/acta2011/373_384_szekeres.pdf, last accessed: 15 May 2015); *Középkori magyar címereslevelek I. (1439–1503)* [Mediaeval Hungarian Patents of Arms]. Ed. T. Körmendi. Budapest 2013 (http://honlap.eotvos.elte.hu/uploads/documents/kiadvanyok/Kozepkori_magyar_cimereslevelek.pdf, last accessed: 15 May 2015); Székely, Attila István: *Litterae armales. Címeres nemeslevelek Románia Országos Levéltárának Kovászna megyei fiókjában* [Patents of Arms and Nobility in the Covasna County Archives of the National Archives of Romania]. Sfântu Gheorghe 2013.

⁴ *A Magyar Országos Levéltár címereslevelei* [Patents of Arms of the National Archives of Hungary]. Ed. É. Nyulásziné Straub – I. Kollega Tarsoly. CD-ROM. Budapest 2001; *Libri Regii. Királyi Könyvek (1527–1918)* [Royal Books]. Ed. Z. Vissi et al. DVD-ROM. Budapest 2006; *Collectio Diplomatica Hungarica – A középkori Magyarország digitális levéltára – Digital Archives of Medieval Hungary*. Ed. G. Rácz. DVD-ROM. Budapest 2008.

⁵ Fundamental Hungarian literature on heraldry: Bárczay, Oszkár: *A heraldika kézikönyve* [A Handbook of Heraldry]. Budapest 1897. (<http://vmek.oszk>).

The patents of arms make up a particular group of archival sources bearing extremely expressive visual representation, which rendered the publication of the digitized images indispensable. Online publication of the records is suggestive also in providing a better research environment, because earlier, the accessibility to these records was limited in number due to archival preservation rules, which meant avoiding the risk of eventual loss or deterioration of these items caused by frequent handling.

Thus, the database can be understood as the first Hungarian good quality, coloured digitization and online publication project of a complete collection of patents of arms, although a somewhat similar project has been carried out for the collection of original and copied medieval records of the NAH. However, this latter collection was much larger and more heterogeneous, generally lacking visual depictions.⁶

The current project was funded by the NAH, the Hungarian National Cultural Fund and EnArc and was realized fully by the NAH as an open access database.

II.B. Digitization

II.B.1. Precedents of Mass Digitization in the National Archives of Hungary

The NAH realized two projects based on mass digitization from 2007 to the present. One of them comprised the digitization of 45,000 segments of cadastral maps whereas the other aimed at digitization and online publication of about 200,000 medieval documents along with their abstracts. The present project could be regarded a minor one when considering the number of digitized items, but the expressed goals of the project differ notably from the earlier projects, at which the main goal was the mass digitization and the subsequent linking of the digitized images to an already existing database. On the contrary, at this project the database building was

hu/06700/06701/pdf/heraldika1.pdf, last accessed: 15 May 2015); Áldásy, Antal: *Cimertan* [Heraldry]. (A magyar történettudomány kézikönyve [A Handbook of Hungarian Historical Science] II. 6.) Budapest 1923. Nyulásziné Straub, Éva: *Magyarország címerkönyve. A heraldika alapjai* [The Hungarian Book of Arms. The Basics of Heraldry]. Budapest 2001; Bertényi, Iván: *Magyar cimertan* [Hungarian Heraldry]. Budapest 2003.

⁶ Rác, György: *Collectio Diplomatica Hungarica*. Medieval Hungary online. Archiv für Diplomatik. Schriftgeschichte Siegel- und Wappenkunde 56, 2010, pp. 423–444.

of priority and the digitization was secondary (but still of great importance). The methodology of the digitization projects of the cadastral maps and the medieval charters is published on the homepage of the archives.⁷

II.B.2. Preparing the Documents for Digitization

During the preparing of the documents for digitization, the reference codes were first checked and corrected. In the R 64 collection, there were frequently related documents kept with the patents of arms, e.g. certificates of nobility, supplications, family trees, copies of the charters, quittances, etc. In these cases, the individual documents held at the same reference code (number) were separated by adding letters, e.g. No. 174/a, No. 174/b, etc. If the text of a document was transcribed within another one, the transcript was indicated by the number two, and the original document containing the latter got the number one, e.g. No. 1013/1. and No. 1013/2. The check and clarification of the reference codes was also crucial because we needed to be able to tell what exactly was depicted on it and where it belonged about every single digital image. After this, we measured the documents and in case of emergency submitted them for restoration.

II.B.3. Technical Possibilities and the Implementation

A major requirement of the digitization was to be able to display every single information source to be found on the documents. Thus, in case of charters in sheet format the recto side was scanned twice, with the *plica* upfolded and downfolded. In case of charters in book format the external covers and the pages were also scanned, possibly in double-page format. Additional digital photos were made of any elements and details not clearly visible in the scanned images, such as the heraldic miniatures and the seals. On average five images were made of the relatively intact (sealed) documents, whereas eight to twenty photos were taken of the charters in book format depending on the page number of the document.

The images were made exclusively in 300 DPI and in TIFF format, which is printing quality, thus they also serve the purposes of a security copy. The bulk of the digital images were made on a scanner of the type BookEye 3 (80 × 55 cm) particularly suitable for scanning parchment charters with *plica* being equipped with an integrated glass plate. For scanning larger documents, a Suprascan 6002 RGB (DigiBook) (86 × 60 cm) was used or

⁷ National Archives of Hungary homepage <http://mnl.gov.hu/publikaciok.html> (last accessed: 15 May 2015).

the document was digitized in segments. The printed archival reference code of each document along with a colour scale was positioned next to the document itself in all cases when the size of the document made it possible.

During the digitization process, we faced some problems, e.g. with parchment charters not yet restored when damages or the rigidity of the material did not allow complete unfolding of the document or downfolding of the plica. This inevitably led to loss of information (particularly in the case of the countersignatures hid under the plica were). In these cases, the problem was solved by taking partial photographs of the hidden area. Similarly, the double-page format scanning was not always possible, because sometimes (mainly in eighteenth-century documents) the writing was protected with sheets of silk paper inserted between the parchment sheets. In these cases, only page-by-page digitization was feasible. Another problem was caused by the names written in gold, which were often illegible in the scanned images due to technical characteristics of illumination.

II.B.4. File names

When creating the filenames, the objective was to indicate exactly the content of the actual digital image. Accordingly, the first part of all the filenames is made up by the reference code of the document itself, e.g. the reference code “R 64 – 1. – No. 463/b” was transformed into the filename “R_64_1_0463_b”. The remaining part of the filenames consists of different elements separated by underscores. These are the following:

<u>_arma_</u>	heraldic painting or picture of a coat of arms
<u>_ceteri_</u>	all documents besides the original letter of grant, the supplication or a copy of these
<u>_copia_</u>	a copy of the original document
<u>_extr_</u>	external cover of a charter in the form of a book
<u>_foto_</u>	a photograph of the document
<u>_orig_</u>	an original document
<u>_pars_</u>	a detail of the document digitized separately
<u>_r_</u>	the recto side of a charter
<u>_sigil_</u>	a seal
<u>_sigil_tok_</u>	a seal box
<u>_suppl_</u>	a supplication
<u>_v_</u>	the verso side of a charter

III. Creating the Database

III.A. Preceding Databases of the National Archives of Hungary

The NAH developed several databases since the end of the 90s. The ground-breaking projects of the databases of the *Royal Books*⁸ and the *Collectio Diplomatica*, i.e. the collection of medieval charters⁹ were followed by the *MapInfo*,¹⁰ the *Urbaria et Conscriptioes*¹¹ or the database of the missile letters of the Batthyány family.¹² All these projects adopted rather different methods, which motivated their integration into a single system. The result of this is a common platform, the so-called DatabasesOnline website¹³ of the NAH. The work is not yet done, but this aim was taken into account when the processing of the conscriptions¹⁴ and the missile letters of the NAH was planned. The latter eventually served as the starting point for the present database of patents of arms.

III.B. Data Recording

In the course of planning, we divided the data of the patents of arms into three groups according to the physical parts of them:

- the parchment sheet or book and the text on it (this group was divided into two further parts for the sake of clarity);
- the seal;
- the coat of arms (both the textual description and the painting).

These metadata have been recorded in four distinct groups: 1. Basic data, 2. Seal(s), 3. Coat(s) of arms, 4. Other data.

⁸ <http://mol.arcanum.hu/digidat> (last accessed: 15 May 2015).

⁹ http://mol.arcanum.hu/dldf_full (last accessed: 15 May 2015).

¹⁰ <http://mol.arcanum.hu/terkep> (last accessed: 15 May 2015).

¹¹ <http://mol.arcanum.hu/urbarium> (last accessed: 15 May 2015).

¹² <http://193.224.149.8/adatbazisokol/adatbazis/batthyany-missilisek> (last accessed: 15 May 2015).

¹³ <http://adatbazisokonline.hu/en/> (last accessed: 15 May 2015).

¹⁴ http://193.224.149.8/adatbazisokol/adatbazis/az-1715_-evi-orszagosszeiras and http://193.224.149.8/adatbazisokol/adatbazis/az-1720_-evi-orszagosszeiras (last accessed: 15 May 2015).

III.B.1. Basic Data

First of all, the most important distinctive feature for identification, the archival reference code was entered, in a slightly simplified form, i.e. the reference code “1. – No. 564/b” was entered as “1_0564_b”. Then the number and the type of the archival container (box, envelope, flat box, tube, etc.) were entered.

The physical condition of the document was described in a few words, such as “torn at the edges” or “slightly dirty at the folding lines”. The format of the charter was entered as “sheet (folded)”, “sheet (unfolded)” or “book”. In the case of non-charter documents, this field was left blank. Here, we entered the size (width x length) of the document as well. We have indicated if the document had been restored previously.

Usually only one language was assigned to a document, but in several cases more were added, e.g. when a Hungarian authentication clause was attached to a copy of a document in Latin.

Also the document type was identified and entered. That was, of course, “letter of grant” in most cases, but among the processed documents there are supplications, family trees, certificates of nobility, minutes of interrogation, missile letters, etc.

A very important part of the database was to precisely determine the subject of the grant. In one letter of grant, several things could be granted, e.g. “confirmation of Hungarian nobility”, “Bohemian nobility” “grant of land”, “predicate”, “tax exemption”, etc. All the subjects of the grant were entered separately. The granted predicate itself was entered in the Notes field at the end of the record.

After the details of the grant the survival form of the document was recorded. The majority, of course, was “original”, but there were different types of copies and transcripts, too, e.g. “simple copy”, “authenticated copy”, “extract”, even “simple copy of authenticated copy of translation”, etc.

An important matter was to interconnect somehow the related documents, e.g. those concerning the same family. This was solved by entering the exact reference code of the related document, and eventually, if the connected document had also been processed in the database, the reference code appeared as a link on the public interface. By clicking on the link, one can navigate to the data sheet of the linked document.

The types of the persons appearing in the patents of arms are recurring, thus a grantor, a grantee or grantees, countersignatories, even authenticators, issuers, addressees, plot neighbours, etc. can be mentioned in them. Therefore, all the main characters were described in the database, with the

exception of those mentioned in the *series dignitatum* and the publication clauses. Also, concerning persons appearing in the patents, the name, office, title, the relationship to the grantee (in the case of family members) and occasionally the diplomatic transcription of the name, when different from the modern version were entered into the database.

Place names – in their modern form, if possible – were also recorded, especially the places of issue, of authentication or of copying.

The dates of issue, copying, authentication, etc. were recorded in the format YYYY.MM.DD (e.g. 1685.05.24.). If some part of the date was missing, the hiatus was completed with the letters “é” (év/year), “h” (hónap/month) or “n” (nap/day), e.g. “16éé.05.n4”. In such cases we determined a time interval in which the event supposedly had happened.

III.B.2. Seal(s)

The seal was described not only if it was still in existence, but even if only the missing pendent seal’s string, the sealing holes were visible on the document. Firstly, the type of sealing was entered: this could be “pendent seal” or “applied seal”. The rubber stamp impressions were entered as applied seals as well. The concrete type of seal was determined according to the original description found in the *corroboratio* (corroborating clause) of the charter, e.g. “Hungarian royal privy seal” or “Transylvanian princely greater and aulic seal”, etc. The existence of a seal box – either wooden or metal – along with the physical condition of the seal was entered, too. The last data about the seal was its size, measured in centimetres.

III.B.3. Coat(s) of Arms

The textual descriptions of the coats of arms found in the patents were always fully transcribed. In the case of Latin texts normalized transcription was used (if necessary, “c” was substituted to “t”, “u” to “v” and vice versa, digraphs “ae” and “oe” were used instead of “e”, and “j” was always substituted to “i”), abbreviations were solved, punctuation and letter case was used according to Hungarian orthography. The doubtless misspellings, orthographical mistakes were automatically corrected, e.g. “conogale” was changed to “cono galeae”, “cerulei” or “coerulei” was changed to “caerulei”, and “exerto” was changed to “exserto”. When the description was in Hungarian or in German, diplomatic transcription was used; however, the aforementioned corrections concerning punctuation and solution of the abbreviations were applied equally. When some parts of the description were illegible because of physical damage or contamination, we tried to fill out

the missing parts using the analogues of the formulae, always indicating the reconstruction of the text by square brackets.¹⁵

After entering the fact of existence (or non-existence) and the physical condition of the heraldic painting on the charter, we recorded the necessary remarks about the painting, such as “not painted”, “subsequent painting”, “canting arms”, any deviations in the painting from the description, etc. If available, the name of the painter was entered, though before the end of the 19th century the heraldic paintings were seldom, if ever, signed.

As to the heraldic paintings, only the depicted coats of arms were described in detail in the database so far, yet the possibility of subsequent description the arms only described in the text is open. The whole structure of describing the coats of arms was designed based on the structure of a heraldic achievement itself. This means that firstly the escutcheon, then the charges and ordinaries, then the helm and finally the crest and the mantling was described, the one structural element being always linked to the other.

Firstly, the position of the escutcheon was entered, i.e. if it was a simple escutcheon or an inescutcheon placed over the base escutcheon. The database is capable of describing several separate heraldic paintings or several coats of arms on a single painting as well. The shape of the escutcheon was also entered as were the tinctures and the escutcheon divisions, too. Finally, the heraldic features, which sometimes are part of the heraldic achievement, were also described, such as the mottos, coronets of rank, supporters and order insignia.

In the course of entering the heraldic charges to the particular escutcheons, we aimed at simplifying the descriptions, thus the amount, the tinctures and the attitudes of the charges were omitted. The reason for this was the intent to simplify the searching in the database. For example, if the escutcheon bore “Gules a Griffin rampant Or between four Roses Argent”, that was described by entering the charges separately, as “griffin” and “rose”. Still, in rare cases some attributives were used if that was inevitable, e.g. Turkish head, double-headed eagle, etc. If the species of the animal or the plant was unidentifiable, “animal” or “plant” was entered. The ordinaries were entered separately, including those placed on other charges.

The helm (or helms) placed over the escutcheon were also entered (along with the crest coronet or the torse), defining the type of it, which could

¹⁵ On the methodology of the publication of written sources: O b o r n i , Teréz: *A kora újkori latin nyelvű forrásszövegek kiadásáról* [On the Publication of the Latin Sources of the Early Modern Period]. *Fons* 7, 2000, pp. 67–75; S o ó s , István: *Javaslatok az újkori magyarországi latin és német nyelvű források kiadására* [Proposal on the Publication of the Hungarian sources in Latin and German of the Modern Period]. *Fons* 7, 2000, pp. 81–89.

be primarily be either a “tilting helm” or a “barred helm”. Sometimes the depicted helm was not identifiable with any of these, so in lack of a better name, “closed helm”, “open helm” or even “hussar’s helm”. Here all the charges and ordinaries of the crest were described just as in the case of the escutcheon. Finally, the tinctures of the mantling were entered as well, e.g. “Azure and Or”, “Gules and Argent”.

The last part of the description of the arms was that of the painting’s background. Here everything that was painted but was not the part of the heraldic achievement itself was described. Such things were the frame of the painting, the background, the allegorical or real figures depicted, any inscriptions and other decorations. An important feature was the showing of the so-called accompanying arms, which were the arms of the main fiefs of the grantor painted in the corners or along the upper edge of the miniature. The most usual combination of these was: the small arms of the Habsburg monarch in the middle, and the arms of Hungary, Bohemia, Dalmatia and Croatia in the corners. Any order insignia were mentioned, e.g. “arms of Matthias II with the insignia of the Order of the Golden Fleece”.

III.B.4 Other Metadata

In this latter part of the database the *narratio*, the data of the publication clause, the information on any academic publications and finally the notes containing anything that could not fit into any of the preceding data fields of the database.

The full text of the *narratio* was not always transcribed, but the existence of a factual narration of the deeds of the grantee was always indicated by entering “non-formular *narratio*”. Another important feature of the Hungarian and Transylvanian patents of arms was the publication clause, in which the fact of the publication of the patent before the county nobility’s congregation (and thus its entering into force) was recorded. Among the other data the publicizing county or diet, the place and date of publication were entered. After this, the available data for any academic publications on the particular document were entered. We did not have enough time to do such a research in case of every processed document, but the publication of the patent in either Antal Áldásy’s classic eight-volume issue¹⁶ or the register of the patents of arms of the NAH by Dr. Éva Nyulásziné Straub¹⁷ was recorded by all means.

¹⁶ Áldásy, A.: *A Magyar*.

¹⁷ Nyulásziné Straub, Éva: *Magyar Országos Levéltár. Címereslevelek jegyzéke* [Hungarian National Archives. A Register of Patents of Arms]. (A Magyar

The last data field of the whole database was that of the “notes”. Here was entered every piece of necessary information, which was not suitable for any of the preceding fields, such as the granted predicates of nobility mentioned previously among the subjects of the grant, the location of the house or plot that was exempted from taxes, mentions of any attached documents which were not described in the database (such as copies, translations, etc.), descriptions of any pictorial decorations of the document excluding the heraldic painting, etc.

IV. Achievements of the Project

In the first phase of the project (2011–2012), we concentrated on the collection R 64, being the biggest amount of original patents of arms in one place. The material processed in the first phase was published on the website¹⁸ on 29 October 2012, being amplified by the images in December 2012. In the second phase (2013–2014), the work was extended to all known original patents of arms of the NAH with the exception of the 131 medieval ones. By June 2014, the bulk of the work was completed and the records were published. Finally, the images of the second phase were added in December 2014.

Our intent with the database was to enable both the scientific and general public to browse the data and pictures of our patents of arms easily and quickly even from home. Therefore, we provide three search methods on the public online interface of the database. Firstly, there is a hierarchical search, where one can look up the required document on the basis of the reference code. Then, the simple search engine enables the user to search the content of the database records typing in a personal name, place name, a heraldic charge, etc. The same applies to the advanced search, except that there a targeted search can be run in the particular fields of the descriptive data sheets of the patents of arms. A wide scope of data is available for targeted search, from reference codes to heraldic charges, from dates to the names of the grantors or the grantees, from the physical format or condition of the charters to the very text of the descriptions of the coats of arms or the *narrationes* found in the documents themselves, even by searching in several fields at once, thus narrowing the result list.

Országos Levéltár segédletei [Finding Aids of the National Archives of Hungary] 7.) Budapest 2000².

¹⁸ <http://adatbazisokonline.hu/adatbazis/cimereslevel-adatbazis> (last accessed: 15 May 2015).

Illustrating the increasing success of the database, the statistics of the database show that since the start in November 2012 until 13 May 2015, 17,611 searches were performed, out of which 5,267 occurred in 2012–2013, 8,942 in 2014 and already 3,402 in 2015 (before 13 May). These numbers indicate that the database of patents of arms, one of the newest among the numerous databases of the NAH is only outrun in number of visitors by the much older and extremely popular databases of church registers and of the medieval charters.

*The results of the project
Digitization*

	Phase I 2011–2012	Phase II 2013	Σ
Images (items)	7,754 (28%)	19,458 (72%)	27,212
Documents (items)	1,176 (33%)	2,402 (67%)	3,578

Processing

	Phase I 2011–2012	Phase II 2013–2014	Σ
Database records	1,196 (37%)	2,082 (63%)	3,278

The digitized and processed documents per collection

Collections	Images	Documents	Records
A 39	71	7	8
A 42	192	14	13
B 2	309	45	48
B 18	460	7	0
C 30	8	1	1
C 39	9	1	2
C 90	168	14	13
D 189	0	0	1
E 148	2 214	215	230
E 181	40	3	0
F 3	662	130	178
F 4	363	57	104
F 5	34	8	9
F 7	414	66	66
F 9	142	32	3
F 19	880	277	0
F 21	3 016	345	341

Collections	Images	Documents	Records
F 141	205	35	35
F 146	106	18	18
F 234	24	3	3
O 23	5	1	1
Section P	5,374	305	303
R 64 – 1.	7,754	1,176	1,212
R 64 – 2.	3,308	694	600
R 126	1,436	120	85
R 314	0	1	1
R 336	5	1	1
R 375	4	1	1
R 378	9	1	1
Sum:	27,212	3,578	3,278

V. The Future

The database, however, is far from being complete at present. Firstly, it lacks the aforementioned medieval patents of arms and a lesser part of our collection of copies of patents of arms.¹⁹ This, however, is to be resolved during the year 2015. Furthermore, as already mentioned, the collection of patents of arms of the NAH is continuously expanding, either by gift or by purchase, or even by recovering previously unknown patents from as yet unprocessed family archives. This means an average of 8–10 “new” patents of arms yearly, and consequently, it is necessary for us to be able to continuously maintain and amend the database with the data of the new gains. This was taken into consideration from the beginning, and thus the whole work was done in an online maintenance interface, at which necessary modifications and corrections can be entered.

To make search possible for a broader, international public, field names on the record sheet and the data content of heraldic charges, ordinaries, seal types, document types, forms of survival, etc. have been translated to English, German, French and Slovak.²⁰

¹⁹ All the known Hungarian mediaeval patents of arms are listed in Nyulászkiné Straub, Éva: *Mohács előtti címereslevelek* [Pre-Mohács Patents of Arms]. In: *Studia professoris – professor studiorum. Tanulmányok Érszegi Géza hatvanadik születésnapjára* [Papers for the Sixtieth Birthday of Géza Érszegi]. Eds. T. Almási – I. Draskóczy – É. Jancsó. Budapest 2005, pp. 245–260.

²⁰ English literature: Fox-Davies, Arthur Charles: *A Complete Guide to Heraldry*. London 1909; Woodcock, Thomas – Robinson, John Martin: *The Oxford Guide to Heraldry*. Oxford – New York – Melbourne – Toronto 1988;

The next reasonable step would be the expanding of the database with the material of other (county, municipal, ecclesiastical, etc.) archives of Hungary, about which some negotiations have already been made. If that could succeed, a significantly extended and integrated database of Hungarian patents of arms would come into existence, which could be understood as some kind of a Hungarian nobility cadastre.

We hope that in the future this new and very rich database will provide a great opportunity to address complex and interdisciplinary research questions for a hopefully international public including both researchers and all those interested in Central European social and cultural history.

ERBOVNÍ LISTINY ONLINE. DATABÁZE ERBOVNÍCH LISTIN MAĎARSKÉHO NÁRODNÍHO ARCHIVU

Erbovní listiny mají vedle svého dekorativního vzhledu především významnou historickou hodnotu a lze je využít v různých oblastech historických věd, jako je heraldika, paleografie, sfragistika, dějiny umění, vojenská historie, dějiny správy a další. Maďarský národní archiv buduje od svého založení sbírku erbovních listin, která se průběžně rozrůstá a nyní obsahuje více než 2.000 originálních pergamenových listin, v nichž uherští králové a sedmihradská knížata udělují erby především uherské a sedmihradské šlechtě. Cílem několikaletého projektu Maďarského národního archivu bylo vytvořit univerzální a názornou databázi s možností vyhledávání, kterou by bylo možno dále rozšiřovat. V ní by bylo možné zpracovat data všech originálních erbovních listin uchovávaných v této instituci a to včetně všech souvisejících dokumentů. Archiv v současnosti dokončil digitalizaci a zpracování všech souvisejících dokumentů s výjimkou 131 středověkých listin (před rokem 1526), což bude napraveno v brzké budoucnosti. Hlavní novinkou této databáze oproti dřívějším zpřístupněním (zejména tištěným edicím) je podrobný popis erbu s možností vyhledávání, který je spojen s digitálním obrazem dokumentu. Vše je volně přístupné internetovým uživatelům. V dalším kroku je plánováno rozšíření databáze o erbovní listiny uložené v ostatních maďarských archivech (městské, župní a církevní). Takto sjednocený virtuální archiv by mohl případně sloužit jako základ pro svého druhu katastr maďarské šlechty, v němž by mohlo být zachyceno širší spektrum listin vztahujících se ke šlechtě.

S l a t e r , Stephen: *The Illustrated Book of Heraldry*. An International History of Heraldry and Its Contemporary Uses. Wigston 2013; German literature: N e u - b e c k e r , Ottfried: *Heraldik*. Wappen – ihr Ursprung, Sinn und Wert. Frankfurt am Main 1977; F r a n z , Gall: *Österreichische Wappenkunde*. Handbuch der Wapenwissenschaft. Wien 1996³; French literature: P a s t o u r e a u , Michel: *Traité d'héraldique*. Paris 1979; Slovak literature: *Heraldika na Slovensku* [Heraldry in Slovakia]. Ed. M. Šišmiš. Martin 1997; V r t e l , Ladislav: *Heraldická terminológia* [Terminology of Heraldry]. Martin 2009.

