

Laurel Letter of Intent - October 31, 2003

Society for Creative Anachronism
College of Arms
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To all the College of Arms and all others who may read this missive, from François Laurel greetings.

It is my intent to correct, accept, and release (respectively) the following items. The item numbers were chosen to differ from the LoPaD's item numbers to avoid confusion.

3. Alberta. Correction to important non-SCA armory. A landscape (in pale sky azure, snow-capped mountains argent, hills vert, prairie proper, and a wheat field proper) and on a chief argent a cross gules.

The Middle Kingdom LoI of August 29, 1997 (redated to September 2 due to postmark), proposed protection of the arms of the Canadian provinces and other items as important non-SCA armory. However, the arms of the province of Alberta were incorrectly listed as being identical to the arms of the province of Saskatchewan. The January 1998 LoAR protected the arms of Alberta (incorrectly) and Saskatchewan (correctly) as *Vert, three garbs in fess and on a chief Or a lion passant guardant gules*. (These items were listed under the "Society for Creative Anachronism" sections on the LoAR.)

According to the Web page of the province of Alberta, <http://www.gov.ab.ca/home/Index.cfm?Page=9>, these arms are officially described as "Topped by a red St. George's Cross on a white background, the Armorial Ensigns feature azure (blue) in back of a range of snow-capped mountains with green hills, prairie and a wheat field in front. (May 30, 1907 by Royal Warrant)." This emblazon is from that Web site.

In this emblazon, the wheat field is emblazoned with yellow wheat on a slightly more orange yellow background, the prairie is white with tufts of green (the same argent used for the snowy mountains and the chief), the hills are vert, the mountains are white and grey, and the sky is blue.

The "prairie proper" is depicted in other tinctures in other official sources. There is also some variation of the tinctures of the mountains.

<http://www.mad-alchemy.com/heraldry/alberta.htm> is "scanned from a booklet published by the provincial government as part of the 1980 'Alberta 75' celebrations of the anniversary of the formation of the province". The mountains are entirely snow-covered and the prairie is tan with green hillocks.

<http://www.lieutenantgovernor.ab.ca/aoe/investiture.cfm> shows the medal of the Alberta Order of Excellence. The center of the medal depicts the arms of Alberta with everything from the hills downward being golden brown.

<http://www.lieutenantgovernor.ab.ca/> has the prairie basically as the same color as the unsnowed mountains: a pale yellow/tan.

Given such variations even in official depictions, retaining the relatively unspecific "snow-capped mountains argent" and "prairie proper" in the blazon may be for the best.

The Web site for the Canadian Heraldic Authority does not shed any additional light on the arms of Alberta.

Beddoe's Canadian Heraldry gives the following blazon, which omits the snowy mountains and uses terms like "surmounted" in a way that is not compatible with SCA blazon: *Azure, in front of a Range of Hills Vert, in base, a Wheat-field surmounted by a Prairie both also proper, on a Chief Argent, a St. George's Cross [gules].*

We encourage the College to discuss how we might best blazon this armory. The blazon above is one attempt to do so, which clearly indicates that the landscape is a landscape.

4. Society for Creative Anachronism. Acceptance of transfer of badge for boffers and youth combat from Bridget Lucia Mackenzie. Per pale purple and argent, two swords in saltire and in chief two roundels counterchanged.

The badge was registered April 2002 to Bridget Lucia Mackenzie. The transfer is on Caid's LoI of October 6, 2003.

5. Society for Creative Anachronism. Release of badge for Privy Clerk to Morsulus Herald. (Tinctureless) A secretary-bird sejant regardant. [Sagittarius sepentarius].

This badge has not been used for many years. In addition, the badge does not depict a bird used in period heraldry (or known well in Western Europe, as it is an African bird). Since this is not a good example of period heraldry, it is not likely to be a piece of armory that the SCA might wish to use for some other purpose.

We also note that because this is a tinctureless badge, it raises issues of possible conflict rather frequently. We suspect that, because it is "some unknown type of bird", it may at times be cited inappropriately by consulting heralds as a reason for return. As noted elsewhere in this LoAR, a secretary bird is a thin African raptor, with a shaggy crest, long tail, and long legs. It is unique among hawks for killing its prey by stamping with its powerful legs and taloned feet. Its outline does not resemble most birds, although it might have a passing resemblance to a pheasant or a roadrunner (either the New World or Warner Brothers variety).

From the President's Report of the October 18, 2003, SCA Board of Directors meeting:

Laurel requested that the Board approve the release of a badge designated for a College of Arms deputy, Privy Clerk to Morsulus Herald. The Board determined that that Laurel has the authority to release badges registered to his deputies.

Pray know that I remain
In service,

François la Flamme,
Laurel Principal King of Arms.