

For the February 2012 meetings, printed Sunday, April 8, 2012

To all the College of Arms and all others who may read this missive, from Gabriel Laurel, Juliana Pelican, and Emma Wreath, greetings.

Items listed below in square brackets have not been scheduled yet. For information about future scheduling, please review the status table located on the Web at <http://oscar.sca.org/index.php?action=137>.

The February Laurel decisions were made at the Pelican meeting held on Sunday, February 5, 2012 and at the Wreath meeting held on Saturday, February 18, 2012. These meetings considered the following letters of intent: Æthelmearc (01 Nov, 2011), Laurel LoPaD (06 Nov, 2011), Atlantia (11 Nov, 2011), Caid (13 Nov, 2011), Ansteorra (15 Nov, 2011), Atenveldt (15 Nov, 2011), West (20 Nov, 2011), Drachenwald (22 Nov, 2011), Lochac (24 Nov, 2011), An Tir (27 Nov, 2011), Outlands (28 Nov, 2011), Artemisia (30 Nov, 2011), Ealdormere (30 Nov, 2011), Gleann Abhann (30 Nov, 2011), and Northshield (30 Nov, 2011). **All commentary, responses, and rebuttals should have been entered into OSCAR by Tuesday, January 31, 2012.**

The March Laurel decisions were made at the Pelican meeting held on Sunday, March 4, 2012 and at the Wreath meeting held on Saturday, March 24, 2012. These meetings considered the following letters of intent: East (04 Dec, 2011), Laurel LoPaD (05 Dec, 2011), Caid (11 Dec, 2011), Æthelmearc (16 Dec, 2011), Æthelmearc (17 Dec, 2011), Meridies (17 Dec, 2011), Ansteorra (18 Dec, 2011), Atenveldt (20 Dec, 2011), Atlantia (21 Dec, 2011), Lochac (21 Dec, 2011), Drachenwald (28 Dec, 2011), An Tir (29 Dec, 2011), Calontir (29 Dec, 2011), Gleann Abhann (30 Dec, 2011), Outlands (31 Dec, 2011), and Trimaris (31 Dec, 2011). **All commentary, responses, and rebuttals should have been entered into OSCAR by Wednesday, February 29, 2012.**

The April Laurel decisions will be made at the Wreath meeting held on Saturday, April 7, 2012 and the Pelican meeting held on Sunday, April 8, 2012. These meetings will consider the following letters of intent: Æthelmearc (01 Jan, 2012), Laurel LoPaD (07 Jan, 2012), Gleann Abhann (14 Jan, 2012), Atenveldt (15 Jan, 2012), Caid (15 Jan, 2012), Lochac (16 Jan, 2012), East (19 Jan, 2012), Northshield (20 Jan, 2012), Atlantia (22 Jan, 2012), Middle (22 Jan, 2012), Calontir (23 Jan, 2012), Lochac (26 Jan, 2012), Ealdormere (30 Jan, 2012), West (30 Jan, 2012), An Tir (31 Jan, 2012), Ansteorra (31 Jan, 2012), Artemisia (31 Jan, 2012), Drachenwald (31 Jan, 2012), Laurel LoPaD (31 Jan, 2012), Lochac (31 Jan, 2012), Meridies (31 Jan, 2012), Outlands (31 Jan, 2012), and Trimaris (31 Jan, 2012). **All commentary, responses, and rebuttals should be entered into OSCAR by Saturday, March 31, 2012.**

The May Laurel decisions will be made at the Pelican and Wreath meetings held in May 2012. These meetings will consider the following letters of intent: Middle (21 Dec, 2011) (pushed due to lack of packet and scans), West (06 Feb, 2012), Atlantia (08 Feb, 2012), Æthelmearc (09 Feb, 2012), Caid (12 Feb, 2012), Atenveldt (20 Feb, 2012), East (26 Feb, 2012), Lochac (26 Feb, 2012), An Tir (28 Feb, 2012), Trimaris (28 Feb, 2012), Ansteorra (29 Feb, 2012), Drachenwald (29 Feb, 2012), Meridies (29 Feb, 2012), and Outlands (29 Feb, 2012). **All commentary, responses, and rebuttals should be entered into OSCAR by Monday, April 30, 2012.**

The June Laurel decisions will be made at the Pelican and Wreath meetings held in June 2012. These meetings will consider the following letters of intent: Laurel LoPaD (29 Feb, 2012) (issued in March), Æthelmearc (02 Mar, 2012), Northshield (02 Mar, 2012), Caid (11 Mar, 2012), Ansteorra Other Letter (15 Mar, 2012), [Atenveldt (20 Mar, 2012)], West (24 Mar, 2012), [East (26 Mar, 2012)], [Ansteorra (28 Mar, 2012)], [Atlantia (29 Mar, 2012)], [Lochac (29 Mar, 2012)], [Drachenwald (30 Mar, 2012)], [Meridies (30 Mar, 2012)], [Northshield Other Letter (30 Mar, 2012)], [Artemisia (31 Mar, 2012)], [Ealdormere (31 Mar, 2012)], [Outlands (31 Mar, 2012)], and [Caid (01 Apr, 2012)]. **All commentary, responses, and rebuttals should be entered into OSCAR by Thursday, May 31, 2012.**

Not all letters of intent may be considered when they are originally scheduled on this cover letter. The date of posting of the LoI, date of receipt of the Laurel packet, or other factors may delay consideration of certain letters of intent. Additionally, some letters of intent received may not have been scheduled because the administrative requirements (receipt of the forms packet, receipt of the necessary fees, et cetera) have not yet been met.

REMINDER: Until all administrative requirements are met, the letter may not be scheduled.

From Pelican: Byname Presumption

In the September 2011 Letter of Acceptances and Returns, we asked for commentary on a proposal to clarify what bynames would be considered presumptuous. The Rules explicitly allow the registration of given names that are identical to titles when those names are found in period and they are used in a context that is not a claim to rank.

Effective immediately, a byname that is potentially a claim to rank is likewise allowed when it meets the following criteria. First, it must be attested as a period byname or constructed from an attested given name element. Bynames that are constructed following patterns of types of bynames are likely to be considered inappropriate claims. For example, you could not use the pattern of "family names based on titles" to construct the unattested Italian family name *Viscontessi*. Second, it must have been used by people who had no particular claim to rank. Bynames that were only used by people holding a rank we protect will generally be considered to make that claim. So, *Fitzroy* became a surname and did not imply any close relationship with a king. Likewise, *Visconti* became a regular family name and does not imply that you are close kin to a viscount. Finally, the byname itself must not a direct claim to a rank that we protect. So *Visconte* would not be allowed, but *Visconti* would, and *Master* would not be allowed, but *Masters* would.

We note that under the proposed rules, submitters may make claims to ranks that they have permanently attained; if this proposal is adopted, this ruling should be understood to mean that no submitter could register a byname that is a direct claim to rank that they have not permanently attained.

A byname that meets all three of these criteria (is not a direct claim to rank, is used by people who have no particular rank, and is attested to period) would be registerable, while a byname that does not would generally be considered to create the appearance of a presumption of rank.

The combination of bynames would be considered in the same way: adding a locative element after a byname like *Visconti* would not necessarily be presumptuous, as *Visconti da Firenze* or *Visconti di Firenze* is not a claim to be the viscount of Florence (that'd be *Visconte di Firenze*).

From Pelican: Some Name Resources (a Series): Making Sense out of Languages

The idea of a language as a single entity that is more or less the same across an entire country is a post-period idea. Instead, in the Middle Ages, the dialect spoken in an area gradually changed as one moved from north to south or east to west, so that the kind of French spoken in Paris slowly faded until it became the kind of Occitan spoken in Marseilles. Even within what today we call French, a variety of dialects were spoken. Getting everyone to speak the language of the capital was a project that continued until well after the end of our period.

For purposes of registration, we have to define lines between languages, even if it wasn't always that clear-cut in period. Thus, we don't distinguish between the kind of Castilian (Spanish) spoken in Leon from that spoken in Aragon, even though linguists treat them as different during the Middle Ages. However, we do distinguish between Catalan and Occitan, two different languages spoken in eastern Spain and southern France. Likewise, we don't distinguish between the kind of Italian spoken in Tuscany from the kind of Italian spoken in Venice or in southern Italy. Thus, a registerable name may combine elements from Venice, from Tuscany, and from southern Italy without penalty.

For authenticity requests, on the other hand, we pay attention to those differences between regional forms. An authentic name should include elements from relatively close locations, because regional differences in name usage are often quite different. A name submission that requests authenticity for Venice should not depend on documentation from southern Italy (or at least the submitter should anticipate that the form of the name will be changed from the documented form).

From Wreath: Redefining Sustained Charges

Da'ud ibn Auda, in September 1994, re-stated a precedent from Bruce Draconarius of Mistholme set in July 1992 in the following manner:

Regarding the "significance" of the halberd, as Green Crown noted, a charge consisting mostly of a long skinny handle will always have difficulty matching the visual weight of other charges, but here the sizes of the charges are about the same as would be expected if they were in fess a bear and a halberd. That seems to be a reasonable rule of thumb for determining sustained (and qualifying for a CD), as opposed to maintained (and not qualifying for a CD), charges.

On the September 2011 Cover Letter, the College of Arms was asked to discuss our current standards governing *sustained* and *maintained* charges. The original ruling that gave rise to our use of *sustained* states:

Either sustaining or supporting will be used when a "held" charge is of comparable size to the beast holding it; maintaining will continue to be used when the held charge is of negligible heraldic difference. [Brayden Avenel Durrant, A-Calontir, July 1992 LoAR]

However, current practice has expanded the definition of "comparable size" to where we are now comparing the longest dimension of each charge, and if they are equal, declare the two charges to be co-primary. As a similar discussion started on the September 2008 Cover Letter stated, "Current practice has reached the point of *reducto ad absurdum*: extremely skinny charges, such as a spear, are being granted equivalent weight to a large creature such as a dragon segreant, merely because the long dimension of the two is equivalent. Were the same charges not touching, the spear would unmistakably be a secondary."

The terms *sustained* and *maintained* were largely co-opted by the Society for use in our blazon. In period blazons, the majority of held charges use some variant of the term *holding*; while most of the held items do not appear to have been considered significant enough for use as cadency steps, it is possible that some were.

As the current distinction between sustained and maintained has become unwieldy, we are hereby returning to focusing on visual weight. This standard does not rely upon rulers or other precise measurements: just as with secondary and primary charges, when the visual weight difference makes the appropriate charge group unclear, the item will be returned for redraw.

Most charges held by animate charges are maintained, and therefore will continue to not contribute to difference. Only rarely will a held charge have sufficient visual weight to be considered significant.

There are three possible cases:

- Touching charges with the same visual weight will be considered equal charges and part of the same charge group (co-primaries, co-secondaries, etc). Such arrangements will be blazoned with their placement first. For example, *in fess an X sustained by a Y*.
- Touching charges where the held charge is obviously less than half of the visual weight of the holding charge will be considered maintained charges, and not count for difference. Such arrangements will be blazoned as in recent practice, with the holding charge first and using the term *maintaining*. For example, *a X maintaining a Y*.
- Touching charges where the held charge is more than half of the visual weight of the holding charge, yet clearly not equal, may be considered either maintained charges or, rarely, sustained secondary charges. If the holding charge is a primary charge, and the held charge would easily be considered a secondary charge if it were not held by the primary charge, then the held charge will be considered a sustained secondary charge. Such arrangements will be blazoned with the primary charge first. For example, *an X sustaining a Y*. However, if the holding charge is not a primary charge, the held charge will be considered a maintained charge and not count for difference.

Held charges that blur the distinction between a secondary charge and a primary charge will be registered as a secondary charge until the September 2012 Laurel meetings. After that date, any charges that blur the distinction between a secondary charge and a primary charge, or between a maintained charge and a secondary charge, will be returned for redraw.

Since we still desire to distinguish between maintained charges, which do not count for difference, and those charges which do count as either secondary or equal charges, we will continue to use the term *maintained* for maintained charges, but will allow more variation in blazon terms such as *holding* instead of *sustaining* for co-primary charges as long as the blazon remains clear.

Send What to Whom

Letters of Intent, Comment, Response, Correction, et cetera are to be posted to the OSCAR online system. No paper copies need be sent.

Submission packets (one copy of each name form plus documentation, including petitions; two colored copies of each armory form plus two copies of any associated documentation, including petitions) to the SCA College of Arms, PO Box 31755, Billings, MT 59107-1755.

Cheques or money orders for submissions, payable to "SCA Inc.-College of Arms" are to be sent to David Duggar, Attn: Laurel Chancellor of Exchequer, 1705 Holiday Pl, Bossier City, LA 71112-3706.

Roster changes and corrections to contact information must be performed by the rostered individual on OSCAR. Changes and corrections to heraldic roles and titles must be performed by the kingdom's principal herald on OSCAR. The current roster is always available on OSCAR for all College of Arms members with an account.

For a paper copy of a LoAR, please contact Laurel, at the address above. The cost for one LoAR is \$3. Please make all checks or money orders payable to "SCA Inc.-College of Arms". The electronic copy of the LoAR is available free of charge. To subscribe to the mailings of the electronic copy, please see the bottom of <http://heraldry.sca.org/heraldry/lists.html#lists> for more instructions.

For all administrative matters, please contact Laurel.

Pray know that I remain,

In service,

Gabriel Kjotvason
Laurel Principal King of Arms