

# Laurel Letter of Pends and Discussion (LoPaD): July 28, 2006

Society for Creative Anachronism  
College of Arms  
16308 SE 165th St  
Renton, WA 98058-8221  
+1-425-277-0763  
herald@sca.org

For the May 2006 meetings, printed July 28, 2006

To all the College of Arms and all others who may read this missive, from Elisabeth Laurel, Jeanne Marie Wreath, and Margaret Pelican, greetings.

This letter contains the issues raised in the May 2006 LoAR for CoA discussion. The text in this letter is copied verbatim from that LoAR; it is provided here for convenience. As with a July 2006 LoI, these matters are currently scheduled for the Pelican and Wreath meetings in November 2006. **Original commentary must be in the College's hands no later than September 30, 2006. Responses and rebuttals to commentary must be in the College's hands no later than October 31, 2006.**

## 1. From Pelican: Call for Discussion on changes to temporal disparity allowances.

One of the basic principles of onomastics is that languages, names, naming pools, and naming patterns change over time. Over the years, there have been various precedents set in an attempt to describe what sort of temporal disparity is registerable in a name and what is not. Currently, precedent holds that a name where the individual elements are documented more than 300 years apart is a step from period practice. In March 2003, Laurel ruled:

in a number of my recent rulings, I've ruled that excessive temporal mismatching can be considered a "weirdness", costing the submitter the benefit of the doubt. With this LoAR, I hereby make the new policy official: If the elements of a submitted name are dated too far apart, then any other anomaly in the name may combine to force it to be returned. The greater the temporal divide, the greater the anomaly: a given name and byname whose spellings are documented within, say, a century of each other will probably be all right, but a three-century divide is pushing it.

In general, precedent holds that names whose parts are documented 1000 years apart are not registerable because the elements are dated too far apart. Occasionally, a smaller gap than 1000 years is used, although usually there is also a lingual or pattern disparity combined with the temporal problems in such cases.

There is one further related precedent that, although it is stated in terms of language, is also about temporal compatibility:

This name mixes an Early Welsh given name (which is pre 9th C) with Middle English (which doesn't exist until at least the 11th C), two languages that did not exist either simultaneously or concurrently. If two languages have no temporal point of contact, it is logically impossible that names could exist that combine elements from each language... [Taliesin of Lysonesse, June 2005]

Corpora states that "Laurel shall define standards suitable to the type of item to be registered, and apply them uniformly to all such submissions. These standards shall be designed to support the historical re-creations of the Society..." The question I have is "does allowing names documented 1000 years apart serve that goal?" I believe it does not; 1000 years always means there are significant enough changes in language, names, naming pools and patterns that in most cases, the two elements will be parts of languages that have no temporal point of contact. However, we are only now just starting to move into codifying what this means for most languages used for name registration. We believe this time period should be shortened; the question is "by how much." It would be easy to pick 600 years, after all, twice as long as the period that is one step from period practice can be said to be two steps from period practice. However, easy as this would be to do, pulling a number out of a hat is not good practice and does not further the goals of historical re-creation within the Society. We would like to hear the Colleges opinion of this matter, along with documentation to back these opinions.

This item was on the Cover Letter for the May 2006 LoAR

## 2. From Wreath: Steps from Period Practice or Weirdnesses.

A number of recent registrations have been "one step from period practice", what used to be called "one weirdness". Similarly there have been returns for armory being "two steps from period practice". I would like the College's opinion on what should be considered a step from period practice. I don't mean what precedent has previously ruled a weirdness or step from period practice, but what you believe should be a class as a step from period practice (and why).

Principal and submission heralds: I would appreciate it if you would forward any comments from your local heralds that may not be on the roster of the College of Arms.

This item was on the Cover Letter for the May 2006 LoAR

## 3. Marcaster, Shire of. Device. Azure, a castle within a laurel wreath Or, a tierce wavy paly wavy azure and argent.

The shire is scheduled to be elevated to baronial status in December. This requires that they have registered arms. Normally this device would have been returned as the shire registered four badges in February 2006, the limit for a shire. However, all that would accomplish is to delay the shire's advancement to barony. After consultation with the Society Seneschal, this device is pending to allow the Board of Directors to make their decision regarding the shire's elevation, or for the shire to release a badge.

This was item 3 on the Trimaric letter of January 31, 2006.

Pray know that I remain,

In service,

Elisabeth de Rossignol  
Laurel Principal Queen of Arms