

Society for Creative Anachronism
College of Arms
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For the December 2013 meetings, printed February 4, 2014

To all the College of Arms and all others who may read this missive, from Gabriel Laurel, Juliana outgoing Pelican, Lillia incoming 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 December Laurel decisions were made at the Pelican meeting held on Sunday, December 8, 2013 and the Wreath meeting held on Saturday, December 14, 2013. These meetings considered the following letters of intent: Lochac (14 Aug, 2013) (pushed due to lack of no packet or scan) , Gleann Abhann (03 Sep, 2013), Trimaris (03 Sep, 2013), Artemisia (07 Sep, 2013), Atlantia (17 Sep, 2013), Laurel LoPaD (17 Sep, 2013), Middle (20 Sep, 2013), Northshield (20 Sep, 2013), Outlands (21 Sep, 2013), Æthelmearc (22 Sep, 2013), Middle (23 Sep, 2013), Drachenwald (24 Sep, 2013), Drachenwald (25 Sep, 2013), Atenveldt (26 Sep, 2013), Ealdormere (27 Sep, 2013), Calontir (28 Sep, 2013), East (28 Sep, 2013), Caid (29 Sep, 2013), An Tir (30 Sep, 2013), Ansteorra (30 Sep, 2013), Caid (30 Sep, 2013), Lochac (30 Sep, 2013), Meridies (30 Sep, 2013), West (30 Sep, 2013). **All commentary, responses, and rebuttals should have been entered into OSCAR by Saturday, November 30, 2013.**

The January Laurel decisions were made at the Pelican meeting held on Sunday, January 19, 2014 and the Wreath meeting held on Saturday, January 11, 2014. These meetings considered the following letters of intent: Laurel LoItP (10 Oct, 2013), Laurel LoPaD (13 Oct, 2013), Northshield (14 Oct, 2013), Atenveldt (15 Oct, 2013), Outlands (20 Oct, 2013), Middle (21 Oct, 2013), East (22 Oct, 2013), Drachenwald (23 Oct, 2013), Atlantia (26 Oct, 2013), Caid (29 Oct, 2013), Calontir (30 Oct, 2013), Æthelmearc (31 Oct, 2013), An Tir (31 Oct, 2013), Ansteorra (31 Oct, 2013), Ealdormere (31 Oct, 2013), Meridies (31 Oct, 2013), Trimaris (31 Oct, 2013). **All commentary, responses, and rebuttals should have been entered into OSCAR by Tuesday, December 31, 2013.**

The February Laurel decisions will be made at the Pelican meeting held on Sunday, February 23, 2014 and the Wreath meeting held on Saturday, February 22, 2014. These meetings will consider the following letters of intent: Laurel LoPaD (06 Nov, 2013), Atenveldt (10 Nov, 2013), Lochac (10 Nov, 2013), Caid (18 Nov, 2013), Calontir (18 Nov, 2013), Outlands (22 Nov, 2013), Ealdormere (25 Nov, 2013), Northshield (25 Nov, 2013), Drachenwald (27 Nov, 2013), Middle (27 Nov, 2013), Meridies (28 Nov, 2013), Gleann Abhann (29 Nov, 2013), West (29 Nov, 2013), Æthelmearc (30 Nov, 2013), An Tir (30 Nov, 2013), Atlantia (30 Nov, 2013), East (30 Nov, 2013). **All commentary, responses, and rebuttals should have been entered into OSCAR by Friday, January 31, 2014.**

The March Laurel decisions will be made at the Pelican and Wreath meetings held in March, 2014. These meetings will consider the following letters of intent: [Ansteorra (02 Dec, 2013)], Laurel LoPaD (05 Dec, 2013), Lochac (05 Dec, 2013), Caid (14 Dec, 2013), [East (19 Dec, 2013)], Outlands (20 Dec, 2013), Middle (21 Dec, 2013), Northshield (27 Dec, 2013), Meridies (28 Dec, 2013), Calontir (29 Dec, 2013), Drachenwald (29 Dec, 2013), Artemisia (30 Dec, 2013), Atenveldt (30 Dec, 2013), Ealdormere (30 Dec, 2013), [Æthelmearc (31 Dec, 2013)], Atlantia (31 Dec, 2013), [Trimaris (31 Dec, 2013)]. **All commentary, responses, and rebuttals should be entered into OSCAR by Friday, February 28, 2014.**

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 (packet uploaded to OSCAR by deadline, 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 Laurel: Pelican Handover

As is the usual practice, when we break in a new Sovereign of Arms, we try to do it gently, by splitting the meetings for a month or two. This month marks the first half-meeting for the transition from Juliana (outgoing) Pelican to Lillia (incoming) Pelican. Lillia decided Æthelmearc through Drachenwald, while Juliana decided Ealdormere through West.

From Laurel: Request to Submission Heralds

In recent months, we have seen a number of Letters of Intent that are missing information like authenticity requests, or where problems were raised early in commentary but never addressed. Ideally, such errors are noticed and fixed in kingdom, and at worst the information can be provided in a correction or comment to the Letter of Intent.

Kingdom submissions heralds are reminded to double check the Letters of Intent against the forms, and if information is missing or unclear, to please follow-up with the submitter. Further, it is highly suggested that submissions heralds follow the commentary for their respective kingdoms (for example, checking back early in month two, or using OSCAR's notification feature, which will send an automated message each time a comment is made) and respond to questions raised so that commenters have time to consider and respond to the replies, and the Sovereigns have all of the information at hand for the decision meetings.

From Laurel: KWHSS 2015 Bids Requested

For those considering bidding on the 2015 Known World Heraldic and Scribal Symposium, the deadline to have your bid entered into OSCAR is March 31, 2014. This will give the College of Arms time for consideration so that we can announce the bid's award at the 2014 KWHSS in the Barony of Starkhafn, Caid, on June 15 at the Road Show.

Please remember that bids posted to OSCAR are publicly readable. Because of this, any personal information, such as legal names, addresses, phone numbers, and email, should not be included in these bids without signed written permission. Such information as is necessary for the entire College of Arms to see should be posted as a comment after the bid is finalized; such information as is necessary for the Sovereigns only to see should be included as a Sovereign Note. Please send a copy of the full unredacted bid to Laurel at laurel@heraldry.sca.org.

As a reminder, there is a KWHSS domain and web hosting space available on the SCA's servers. Please do not register a new domain.

Please see <http://heraldry.sca.org/kwhss/> or contact Laurel if you have any questions.

From (outgoing) Pelican: A Resource for English Men's Names

This month, a new resource was brought to our attention. A database with tens of thousands of names of 14th and 15th century English soldiers can be found at <http://www.medievalsoldier.org/>. This collection was created as part of an academic study of late medieval soldiers. The names are lightly normalized, but also include a variety of period spellings of given names and bynames. We encourage submitters and heralds to explore this resource.

From (outgoing) Pelican: Some Name Resources (an ongoing series)

Last month we discussed languages in Germany: High German, focused in the south, and Low German, focused in the north. This month, we're going to talk about resources for German.

For family names, books remain important. It's relatively easy to find the Edda Gentry translation of Hans Bahlow's *German Names* (in German, *Deutsches Namenlexikon*). Many kingdoms have the German-only *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Familiennamen* by Josef Brechenmacher. Both of these books are highly recommended, though you need to remember that non-dated forms aren't likely to be period. These books have one large issue: they don't clearly distinguish High German forms from Low German ones. There are many other German-language books that are useful as well; I'm not going to spend time on them here.

For given names, the most useful resources that are readily available are online articles. Each deals with a single dialect of High or Low German. For High German, I tend to start with Talan Gwynek's "Medieval German Given Names from Silesia" (http://heraldry.sca.org/names/bahlow_v.htm). Silesia overlaps southeastern Germany, southwestern Poland, and the eastern Czech Republic. The caveat here is that some names are Slavic or at least show Slavic influence, so a few names are not typical for the rest of Germany. Also useful for High German are a group of articles by Aryanhwy merch Catmael. "German Names from Nürnberg, 1497" (<http://heraldry.sca.org/names/german/nurnberg1497.html>) records the names of thousands of people, including given names and family names. Again in High German, "German Names from Rottweil, Baden-Württemberg, 1441" (<http://www.ellipsis.cx/~liana/names/german/rottweil1441.html>) gives the names of 1350 men and women, again including given names and family names.

We have a shortage of Low German name resources. The only readily available source is Aryanhwy merch Catmael "15th Century Low German Men's Names from Mecklenburg" (<http://www.ellipsis.cx/~liana/names/german/mecklenburg.html>).

From Wreath: Dancing Dolphins

This month a ruling had us examining heraldic dolphins more closely. Precedent has long held that there is no DC for the difference in facing of a dolphin to dexter or sinister when it is haurient or urinant (in a vertical orientation). This precedent traces back to a ruling made in May 1992:

[a dolphin urinant contourny versus a dolphin urinant] There is...nothing for reversing the fish in this position... [Isabeau Bonheur, R-Caid, May 1992 LoAR]

The Glossary of Terms states that the default posture for a heraldic dolphin is naiant (in a horizontal orientation). It says nothing about whether or not the body is straight, embowed, or embowed-counterembowed, and we do not typically grant difference for these variations. A random examination of registrations both old and recent show that the typical depiction for heraldic dolphins is embowed-counterembowed, as expected, and so we are explicitly adding that to the default posture for heraldic dolphins, regardless of their orientation on the field.

An examination of the two devices in conflict in May 1992 shows that while the registered dolphin was embowed-counterembowed, the submitted one was nearly straight. It does seem reasonable to grant no difference for the facing to dexter or sinister for a straight fish haurient or urinant. However, as a well-drawn dolphin has a distinct head, even when the degree of embowing is small, we are able to tell in which direction it is facing; therefore we are explicitly overturning precedent with regards to dolphins, and will grant difference for facing. This is analogous to our ruling in July 2013, that granted a DC between haurient or urinant as "dolphins have a distinct enough head to distinguish whether the head is to chief, as in haurient, or to base, as in urinant." If the dolphin is drawn in such a manner that it is difficult to tell which way it is facing, as in the May 1992 submission, it will be returned for redraw.

From Wreath: Complexity Counts

We have seen increasing questions about how we count complexity. SENA A3E2 states:

Complexity Count: We require that any submission not exceed a certain "complexity count," measured by adding the number of types of charges to the number of tinctures. Items with a complexity count of eight or less receive no penalty for complexity from this rule. Furs, such as *ermine* and *vair*, count as a single tincture rather than their component tinctures. Charges that have different names in different tinctures or orientations (roundels, crescents, gouttes) are considered one type regardless of the term used for them. All charges, including maintained charges, are counted, though objects worn by an animal or person do not. All tinctures are counted except those used only for normally unblazoned artistic details like teeth, claws, and eyes. Proper is not a tincture, but a description of a group of tinctures, each of which is counted separately.

All of the examples given, naturally, count complexity from the blazon, not the emblazon, but then demands that elements *proper* be counted as their individual tinctures, giving an example of a *rose proper* being three tinctures, gules, vert, and Or. However, the rule also disregards normally unblazoned artistic details; thus a *rose azure* could have normally unblazoned vert barbing and Or seeding, but as it is not explicitly blazoned, is it counted for complexity or not? If not, why is a rose proper penalized? If so, how can you tell simply from the blazon? Likewise, a *thistle proper* according to the Glossary of Terms may have a purpure or gules flower, not specified in the blazon; if the submitted armory has gules elsewhere in the design, but the flower is emblazoned with purpure, does that add to the count or not? Likewise, plants and leaves sometimes have a brown stem, according to the Glossary of Terms. What tincture are the mirror and comb for a mermaid in her vanity? This brings into question: do we consider the blazon or the emblazon for purposes of counting complexity? If the emblazon, we must be more explicit in the rules.

We should also consider how we handle maintained charges. Currently we do not count articles of clothing, which may be larger and more substantial to the eye than a maintained charge; in SENA A5C3, when discussing charges that do not count for difference, we say "[t]hese sorts of charges were often understood as artistic variation or details which could be included or omitted in display of the armory. This includes maintained charges..." but then claim they must count for complexity as they add to visual complexity. While this is true, claiming that a maintained crown or collar or sword or such does not count for difference, but does for complexity, may encourage submitters to submit armory without maintained charges that would push them over the registerable complexity count, only to add them back in later display. This is not something that we particularly wish to encourage in any way.

Therefore, we are asking for input on the current state of our complexity rule, with suggestions for how to improve and make them clearer. Should we explicitly count complexity from the emblazon, not the blazon? Should we continue to count maintained charges, or not? How should we handle other artistic details? Should we raise or lower the complexity rule-of-thumb limit? We welcome your input in OSCAR or directly to Wreath and Palimpsest.

From Wreath: Gores and Gussets (and Tierces)

There are some so-called "abatements of honor" listed by several heraldic treatise authors. Gwillim, in the 1611 edition of his *Display of Heraldrie* (found at <http://books.google.com/books?id=LbxWXIFDr30C>) basically quotes Gerard Legh's earlier *Accedence of Armorie*, and lists among them the *point dexter*, a *point champaine* (rather concave), a *gore sinister* (but apparently not the dexter gore!), and the *gusset* and *gusset sinister*. They were, however, apparently entirely theoretical -- there is no record of such abatements ever being used in reality, in period or after it.

In September 1971, Laurel noted that "in the fanciful system of "rebatements" evolved by decadent heralds later than our period, a gore was a rebatement for cowardice. However, in this system, the rebatements were always of the stains, particularly tenné. Neither stains nor abatements have so far been allowed to intrude upon the purity of Society heraldry, so the gore sinister in this case is simply another pretty kind of partition of the field." However, we do not define charges by tincture in Society heraldry, and thus must continue to look askance at the gore and other charges mentioned only as abatements.

Regarding points, in April 1992, Laurel ruled that "[a]lthough all three "points" are mentioned in heraldic tracts, in practice only the base one appears to have been used..." and ceased registering dexter or sinister points at all. A plain base, also known as a point plain or a base point, is a widely used variant of a mount, and is certainly still registerable.

The issue of registerability was last looked at in 1991. The results of that discussion were posted on the November 1991 Cover Letter, in which Laurel banned the use of charged gores and gussets, matching the already-existing ban on charged tierces, but continued to allow the registration of uncharged gores, gussets, and tierces.

We already have a step from period practice for the use of a tierce with any other charge on the field, based on the lack of evidence of its actual use in period. Should we add a similar step from period practice to the use of gores or gussets with other charges? Should we disallow tierces, gores, and gussets entirely? Alternatively, would we be doing submitters a disservice by banning these charges? Look for a letter on OSCAR from Laurel on this topic soon.

From Morsulus: New or Missing Da'ud Codes

If you can't find the Da'ud code you need, contact me for help. Please do not just make something up. Morsulus has got to be in the loop, and the earlier the better. Istvan also needs to be able to update OSCAR in a timely manner.

There may already be a code for what you need, or one can be added, but any additions have to be done deliberately. I need to have an encoding, an ASCII form, a Unicode code point, and an HTML entity name (if one exists). A formal name for the character is also a Good Thing, preferably the Unicode name.

The Medieval Unicode Font Initiative (<http://www.mufi.info>) has gathered a large number of characters together, some of which are in the Unicode standard, and others which are in the Private Use Area. The TITUS project has also been working in this area (and the two try to coordinate code point assignments as best they can). MUFI is probably the first place to look for weird things.

http://oanda.sca.org/data_symbols.html shows all of the codes in the list which I maintain and which I consider authoritative for our purposes. The table was generated directly from the Daud module in my tool chain.

<https://github.com/herveus/Morsulus-tools> contains a lot of my tool chain. Feel free to nose about.

Now for an example. The need arose to define a code for LATIN LOWERCASE U WITH VERTICAL LINE ABOVE. The initial attempt used {u|}, but the vertical bar character is reserved; it's the field separator in the classic database. A Unicode code point was found in MUFI along with a formal name. Exclamation point was available as a marker character and seemed to be the most appropriate symbol to denote a vertical line, so we ended up with {u!}.

In another case, the draft cover letter discussed new codes for a couple of letters, but those were already defined, so it turned into an introduction of newly used codes instead of a definition.

Society Pages

On Saturday, December 21, at Midwinter in the Barony of al-Barran in the Kingdom of the Outlands, Randal Carrick, White Stag Principal Herald, elevated Master Juan Balthazar Tigerro to the rank of Herald Extraordinary and charged him to choose a personal title.

Also in the Outlands, on Saturday, January 4, at Caerthan 12th Night, the same Randal Carrick, White Stag Principal Herald, was offered admittance into the Order of the Pelican. His answer to the summons will be at a later date.

On Saturday, January 11, at 12th Night in the Kingdom of Æthelmearc, Myfanwy fetch Rhiannon was also invited to join the Order of the Pelican at an upcoming date.

Also on that same day, at Crown Tournament in the Kingdom of Ansteorra, Andrewe Bawldwyn, outgoing Star Principal Herald, elevated Sara Penrose and Modius von Mergentheim to the rank of Herald Extraordinary, charging them each to choose a personal title. Sara Penrose is the incoming Star Principal Herald.

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. All submission forms plus documentation, including petitions, must be posted to the OSCAR online system.

Cheques or money orders for submissions, payable to "SCA Inc.-College of Arms" are to be sent to John C. Sandstrom, New Mexico State University, PO Box 30006/MSC 3475, Las Cruces, NM 88003.

Send roster changes and corrections to Laurel. College of Arms members may also request a copy of the current roster from Laurel.

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