

Society for Creative Anachronism
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For the December 2023 meetings, printed February 12, 2024

To all the College of Arms and all others who may read this missive, from Emma Outgoing Laurel, Birgitta Incoming Laurel, Elisabetta Pelican, and Iago Wreath, greetings.

From Outgoing Laurel: So Long Once Again! (Reprise)

Time flies when you're having fun, the saying goes, and as I said the last time I wrote this: I have certainly enjoyed my run working with the Laurel office staff and with all of the Principal Heralds and the entire College of Arms. I welcome Baroness Birgitta as my oh-so-capable successor, and thank you all again for your service to the College.

I could not have done this job, of course, without the support of my staff and fellow heralds: my predecessor Juliana who naturally gave good advice; my invaluable sovereigns Oddr and Iago and Elisabetta, without whom I definitely couldn't have done this work; the machines that are Þorkell and Jeanne Marie and Lilie and Shauna and now Ollivier and Helena; the more behind-the-scenes folks like Herveus and Istvan and Reis, without whom none of this would be online; Cormac and Ragna for all the artwork; everyone (and there are many!) who has helped to run any of the VHPs and vKWHSSs and KWHSS; all of our previous sovereigns and senior heralds and new heralds alike who are engaged and researching and advising and hopefully having fun while still learning. I know I have left out names, but names have never really been my thing so I hope you'll forgive me. Heraldry is a team sport, and y'all are my team.

I have to give special thanks to Reis, my husband, who has shouldered the work of not only Codex Herald (web minister), but also Silver Staple Herald (post-meeting clerk), a job that is its own brand of cat-herding. That's a lot right there, but he was also an ever-present sounding board for all my ideas and rants and raves. All my love and affection.

From Incoming Laurel: Here We Go Again!

Two dozen years ago, almost to the day, I took office as Pelican. Back then, I was naive enough to think I'd return to the same role of commenting herald I'd had previously; however, other things happened, even if I've been on the roster through all these years. But a change of plans is not always bad, and the time I've spent wandering in the wilderness of mundania has also provided experience that will hopefully be useful in this new office, as well as an acute awareness that modern heraldic authorities and the academic onomastic community could learn a few things from us.

The College too has changed a lot since my previous term as a writer of these letters, and I am greatly indebted to the people who have helped develop it to its present state: as the saying goes, standing on the shoulders of giants allows one to see much farther. There are quite a few of those, most recently my predecessor Emma, whom I'd like to thank for a successful term. However, trying to stand on lofty shoulders also makes it easy to fall on one's face in a spectacular way. It's a balancing act, but considering the people I get to work with, one I'm looking forward to.

What I wrote for the January 2000 Cover Letter is still valid: "Meanwhile I'll try to do my best with this new job. Expect me to be unfair and to make stupid mistakes, though, especially in the beginning. Feel free to call me about these or any other issues, but please note that there is a seven-hour time difference between Finland and the eastern coast of North America. Also, for all of you except Edelweiss [and in 2024, Schwarzdrachen and Aurochs] it'll be an international call. E-mail is your friend."

From Pelican: More on Japanese Naming Patterns

Since the registration of our first Japanese name, the SCA has consistently used the terms *nanori* and *yobina* to describe the two types of names that Western cultures would call a 'first' name or a 'given' name. We have used the term *nanori* to describe a formal name, or true name, and the term *yobina* to describe a casual name, use name or nickname. In the last 30 years, the academic community has made considerable progress in Japanese onomastics, and our usages of these terms need to be updated and clarified.

The term *nanori* refers to a non-traditional reading of a kanji that only occurs when describing people or places (<https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/nanori>, <https://www.fluentu.com/blog/japanese/nanori/>). These readings can only be used for what the SCA considers to be name elements, and they primarily can be found for what we would consider given names. Current scholars use the terms *jitsumei* and *imina* to describe an individual's true name instead. Going forward, we will be using the term *jitsumei* for a Japanese formal/true name to reflect current scholarship and we will no longer use the term *nanori* to refer to a given name element.

Names that we consider as *yobina*, or use/casual/ordinary names, are also called *kemy{o-}* and *ts{u-}sh{o-}* in some scholarly texts. For SCA purposes, all three of these terms are interchangeable.

The third type of name element that we see is called a *houmyou*. This is a special type of name taken by a monk, much like a name taken by a nun on joining a convent. These names are always formed from *on-yomi* (Sino-Japanese) readings of kanji; in NCMJ these readings are found in all uppercase letters.

Name elements that are found as *kemy{o-}* or *ts{u-}sh{o-}* may be used in the same way as *yobina*. Name elements that are found as *imina* or *houmyou* may be used in the same way as *jitsumei*.

Palimpsest is directed to update SENA Appendix A to reflect the change in terminology from *nanori* to *jitsumei* and to add the types of name elements that can be used the same way as *jitsumei* and *yobina*.

We referenced "Japanese Given Names: A Window Into Contemporary Japanese Society" by Ivona Bare{sv}ová

(https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317527958_Japanese_Given_Names_A_Window_Into_Contemporary_Japanese) and "The Japanese Naming System – Morphology and Semantics of Individual Names" by Anja Maria Collazo (<https://repository.kulib.kyoto-u.ac.jp/dspace/bitstream/2433/215635/2/dnink00780.pdf>) when researching this item. We would encourage anyone else interested in Japanese naming practices to do the same.

From Pelican: The Use of Grey in Non-Personal Names

This month we registered the order name *Order of the Grey Owl*, which uses the word *grey* as a color word. The May 2021 Cover Letter approved the use of *grey* as a heraldic tincture for SCA purposes based on its appearance in German armory. The examples provided in that Cover Letter are sufficient for its use in non-personal names as an acceptable color word. Palimpsest is direct to add the following color words to the table in SENA Appendix E5:

- Heraldic Tincture - Grey
- English - Grey [D], Gray [D]
- French - Gris [D]
- Dutch - Gris [D], Grijs [D]
- Spanish - Gris [D]
- Italian - Grigio [D]

As the table notes, these are not the only spellings possible; submitters are encouraged to seek out period spellings that suit their desired time period and/or dialect.

From Pelican: Errata to *The Old Norse Name* by Geirr Bassi

The Old Norse Name by Geirr Bassi has been a gold standard for understanding of Norse names for much of the Society's existence. In the past several years, we have begun to increase our understanding of Geirr Bassi's source material, and we are able to update this source with new data. We wish to thank Gunnvor Orle for her research, which has allowed us to issue this errata as follows:

- Evja, p.9: We will no longer register this feminine given name. It is a typographical error for the name *Eyja*.
- Spana, p.14: We will no longer register this feminine given name. It is a typographical error for the name *Svava*.
- festagarmr, p.21: We will no longer register this descriptive byname; it is not constructed correctly. The correct construction is *festargarmr*.

Palimpsest is directed to add these names to the Standard Source "Errata" article (https://heraldry.sca.org/names/source_errata.html).

From Pelican: Call For Commentary

At the end of January, Palimpsest released a Rules Letter with a proposal to relax the super-protections that we currently provide in SENA. This proposal is complementary to the proposal to protect all of the Society-wide and important non-SCA orders in all languages, being the only time that we would consider conflict by translation. We encourage lively commentary and discussion on both of these letters, and we encourage you to solicit opinions on these proposals from those in your local area. Bring those viewpoints to commentary. It is vitally important that when we consider making major changes to the rules, we understand what the impact of those rule changes might be. Do not assume that your commentary does not matter; all commentary is read and considered before a final decision on any proposal is made.

These letters can be found at <https://oscar.sca.org/index.php?action=100&loi=8508> (proposal to protect by translation) and <https://oscar.sca.org/index.php?action=100&loi=8548> (proposal to relax super-protections). We look forward to reading your commentary on them.

From Wreath: On Pelicans

A few recent submissions have led us to consider how we treat the badges of the Order of the Pelican, (*Tinctureless*) *A pelican in its piety* and (*Tinctureless*) *A pelican vulning itself*, for the purposes of conflict.

There is no one consistent depiction of the pelican in period armory, and no one protected depiction in the SCA. Period pelicans sometimes looked like swans, sometimes like eagles, and sometimes a hybrid of the two. Their postures similarly varied: pelicans in their piety or vulning themselves are seen close, wings addorsed, wings displayed, and fully displayed. They were sometimes found on their own, sometimes with chicks, and sometimes with chicks and a nest. Period examples show the various body shapes, postures, and the presence or absence of chicks and nest, were used interchangeably.

Given the variety of postures and body shapes of pelicans in period armory, if we were to consider those features the determining factor of what is or is not a pelican for the purposes of conflict and presumption we would effectively block from registration all regular- and swan-shaped birds in the most common period postures.

Instead, we choose to focus on the one truly important symbolic detail: the vulning. Despite vulning typically not being worth difference, in the pelican's case it is the one consistent detail across all depictions, and is what makes a pelican a pelican. So going forward:

- Any bird, in any posture or tincture, vulned, vulning itself, or in its piety will be considered as a pelican for conflict and presumption purposes.
- A bird not vulned, vulning itself, or in its piety will, in general, be considered to have an SC for type versus a pelican vulning itself so will not presume upon the badge of the Order of the Pelican, nor be considered equivalent to the charge reserved to the Order.

- Pelicans which are emblazoned as the bird is found in nature, and which are not vulning themselves, will be blazoned as "natural pelicans", and will be considered a swan-shaped bird for the purposes of conflict. They will have a DC for type versus their heraldic counterparts and will not presume upon the badge of the Order of the Pelican, nor be considered equivalent to the charge reserved to the Order. Existing registrations of these birds are reblazoned on this letter.

We direct Palimpsest to update Appendix M of SENA and Table 2 in the Glossary of Terms with this information.

From Wreath: On *Using*

This month we registered a blazon containing the word *using* for the first time. This term is to tools as the more common *playing* is to musical instruments, implying a maintained or sustained charge being operated in a naturalistic way, leaving leeway for the artist to portray that in any reasonable fashion. Period armory, particularly in later period, includes multiple examples of humans and beasts working with tools in ways that are difficult to blazon with words like 'maintaining', such as the canting crest of the arms of Buttrer, which show a woman churning butter with the butter churn resting at foot level, or the arms of Oberndorffer, which show a seated woman winding yarn on a swift.

If the used charge is large enough to be considered co-primary with the one using it, this will be indicated by an arrangement term like 'in fess'. If the used charge is considered a secondary, no arrangement term will be used.

From Wreath: On Registerability of Plants and Animals.

As proposed on Palimpsest's September 2nd Rules Letters, SENA A2B4a (which discussed when plants and animals were registerable with a step from core practice) is deleted and SENA A2B2b is modified to generally allow plants and animals that existed in the same time and place as period humans to be registered without a step from core practice. The wording will be available at <https://heraldry.sca.org/sena.html#A2B2> within a few days.

From Wreath: On Overall Charges

On the April Cover Letter we put out a call for research on how overall charges were used in period armory. As noted on the September Cover Letter there was an overwhelming amount of research provided by commenters, and it has finally been analyzed. The research covered over 17,000 pieces of armory, including armorials from across Europe. From the outset, it was clear that overall bends made up a majority of the results, comprising up to 2/3 of the examples of overall charges in some sources. It was also clear that bends were used quite differently from other overall charges, frequently being used as a cadency mark similar to the label, and following rules that were clearly distinct from other overall charges. Due to this, the data below does not include bends or labels. It also doesn't include augmenting elements like cantons and escutcheons of pretense.

Most of the data supported our general practices and restrictions on overall charges. For example:

- Of the arms with an overall charge, in 74% of the cases the overall charge had good contrast with the field.
- Only one example was found of multiple overall charge groups.
- No examples were found of voided or fimbriated overall charges.
- Only one example was found of an ordinary counterchanged over a complex charge.

The areas where SCA practice and period practice came into conflict were:

- Overall charges were incredibly rare in period armory. Only 120 (0.7%) of the over 17,000 arms analyzed included an overall charge. Even if bends had been included, this number wouldn't have been higher than 2-3% of the total.
- Of the arms with an overall charge, in 92% of the cases either the primary charge or the overall charge was either an ordinary or a long charge (such as trees, arrows, croziers, halberds, etc.). If bends had

been included, this would have been even higher.

We believe this last point is one where we can better align our rules with period practice, and we will be issuing a Rules Letter shortly to discuss how it may be implemented.

We wish to again express our gratitude to commenters for all the data they provided us.

From Wreath: On Fimbriation

Two submissions this month caused us to consider how we treat charged, fimbriated charges for the purposes of conflict. SENA A5C1 states "Blazons that are unregistrable under our core style rules (such as blazons that would produce quaternary charges or contrast issues) or that require unlikely understandings of an armorial design do not need to be considered for conflict purposes, unless that blazon is due to the use of an Individually Attested Pattern, is due to voiding or fimbriation, or is the existing blazon of a piece of registered armory." Based on this rule, we must consider a charged fimbriated charge to be equivalent to a charge on an identical charge, charged with quaternary charges, despite this interpretation being both unlikely and unregistrable. We ask Palimpsest to open a Rules Letter for discussion on potential changes to this rule.

From Wreath: Conflict Checks in Commentary

A useful thing armory conflict checkers can do is to include the type of armory (device or badge) when noting potential conflicts. As this information is part of my standard wording when noting conflicts and when explaining why something isn't a conflict, including it saves me having to look the item up. Thank you for all your hard work!

From Wreath: A6C - Claims through Arms of Pretense and Unearned Augmentations

As noted on the September 2023 Cover Letter, when SENA A3A3c was updated based on period evidence, quartered augmentations may be in the second and third quarters as well as the first and fourth quarters. We are updating SENA A6C to reflect this. The updated text will be available at <https://heraldry.sca.org/sena.html#A6C> within a few days.

Society Pages

On January 6, 2024, at the West Kingdom's 12th Night, Their Majesties Miles and Jitka made Eilis O'Bourne a member of the Order of the Boar of the West. This is the West Kingdom's once-a-reign award for long-term contributions to the realm, and it also carries an augmentation of arms.

Completely unrelated, at that same event Antonio Giordano da Sicilia resigned as Vesper Principal Herald, and Eilis O'Bourne stepped up as Interim Vesper. My thanks to both for their service!

On January 13th, at the East Kingdom's Twelfth Night celebration, Their Majesties Matthias and Æsa feilinn inducted Lillia de Vaux, Crampette Herald Extraordinary, formerly Pelican Queen of Arms, to the Order of the Laurel for her heraldic research.

In that same court, Their Majesties Matthias and Æsa feilinn endowed Tanczos Istvan, Non Scripta Herald Extraordinary, with an Augmentation of Arms for his longstanding work maintaining and supporting OSCAR for the heraldic community.

Also on January 13, at An Tir's 12th Night Coronation, their outgoing majesties Morgan and Livia made Lissette de la Rose, Æstel Herald (consultations deputy), a Baroness of the Court.

On January 27 at Northkeep Interkingdom in Ansteorra, Her Majesty Nicolett elevated Estrill Swet, Zodiacus (Precedence) Herald, to the Order of the Pelican.

In non-SCA news, we are pleased to report that David Appleton has been elected a Fellow of the American Heraldry Society for his distinguished record of scholarship and education, marked by significant contributions to the advancement of heraldry. You may be more familiar with his SCA name, Da'ud ibn Auda, under which he served twice as Laurel King of Arms among many other heraldic offices. Congratulations!

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 Trent Le Clair, 928 Frazier Dr, Walla Walla WA 99362

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.

Scheduling

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 17, 2023 and the Wreath meeting held on Saturday, December 9, 2023. These meetings considered the following letters of intent: Palimpsest Rules Letter (02 Sep, 2023), Calontir (05 Sep, 2023), An Tir (08 Sep, 2023), Gleann Abhann (09 Sep, 2023), Meridies (10 Sep, 2023), Artemisia (14 Sep, 2023), Laurel LoPaD (18 Sep, 2023), An Tir (23 Sep, 2023), Ealdormere (23 Sep, 2023), Ealdormere (24 Sep, 2023), Ansteorra (25 Sep, 2023), East (26 Sep, 2023), Outlands (26 Sep, 2023), Middle (27 Sep, 2023), Lochac (28 Sep, 2023), Æthelmearc (29 Sep, 2023), Atenveldt (30 Sep, 2023), Atlantia (30 Sep, 2023), Drachenwald (30 Sep, 2023), Northshield (30 Sep, 2023), West (30 Sep, 2023). **All commentary, responses, and rebuttals should have been entered into OSCAR by Thursday, November 30, 2023.**

The January Laurel decisions were made at the Pelican meeting held on Sunday, January 7, 2024 and the Wreath meeting held on Saturday, January 20, 2024. These meetings considered the following letters of intent: Trimaris (30 Sep, 2023) (packet not completed), Meridies (02 Oct, 2023), Gleann Abhann (07 Oct, 2023), Calontir (09 Oct, 2023), Laurel LoPaD (11 Oct, 2023), Artemisia (15 Oct, 2023), An Tir (21 Oct, 2023), Caid (22 Oct, 2023), Æthelmearc (23 Oct, 2023), Middle (23 Oct, 2023), Ealdormere (24 Oct, 2023), Outlands (25 Oct, 2023), Ansteorra (26 Oct, 2023), Lochac (26 Oct, 2023), Avacal (27 Oct, 2023), Atlantia (29 Oct, 2023), Drachenwald (29 Oct, 2023), Ansteorra (30 Oct, 2023), Atenveldt (30 Oct, 2023), East (31 Oct, 2023), Laurel LoPaD (21 Nov, 2023) (redraws). **All commentary, responses, and rebuttals should have been entered into OSCAR by Sunday, December 31, 2023.**

The February Laurel decisions were made at the Pelican meeting held on Sunday, February 11, 2024 and the Wreath meeting held on Saturday, February 17, 2024. These meetings considered the following letters of intent: Calontir (07 Nov, 2023), Gleann Abhann (08 Nov, 2023), Middle (08 Nov, 2023), Meridies (09 Nov, 2023), An Tir (12 Nov, 2023), Artemisia (15 Nov, 2023), Ansteorra (16 Nov, 2023), Middle (20 Nov, 2023), An Tir (22 Nov, 2023), Ealdormere (24 Nov, 2023), Ansteorra (25 Nov, 2023), Atlantia (28 Nov, 2023), Lochac (29 Nov, 2023), Æthelmearc (30 Nov, 2023), Atenveldt (30 Nov, 2023), Avacal (30 Nov, 2023), Caid (30 Nov, 2023), Drachenwald (30 Nov, 2023), East (30 Nov, 2023), West (30 Nov, 2023), Laurel LoPaD (11 Dec, 2023) (redraws), Laurel LoPaD (06 Jan, 2024) (redraws). **All commentary, responses, and rebuttals should have been entered into OSCAR by Wednesday, January 31, 2024.**

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.

Pray know that I remain,

In service,

Emma de Fetherstan
Laurel Queen of Arms