

Society for Creative Anachronism  
College of Arms  
Lohkopellontie 18 A 2  
FI-00650 Helsinki  
Finland  
+358 400 812 354  
laurel@heraldry.sca.org

For the May 2024 meetings, printed July 7, 2024

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

### **From Laurel: New Pelican!**

As announced at the Known World Heraldic and Scribal Symposium on June 30, Sara al-Garnatiyya will, Board agreeing, take office as the next Pelican Queen of Arms. To ease the transition, she will gradually start taking over the name decisions from the July meeting onwards, and assume the office fully in October.

### **From Wreath: Rainbows and Complexity**

Two submissions this month caused us to consider how we treat rainbows for the purposes of complexity counts. Precedent, explicitly upheld on the May 2020 Cover Letter, says:

While the device has a complexity count of ten (argent, gules, orange, Or, azure, indigo, vert, purple, rainbow, tree), which is greater than our guideline of eight, natural rainbows proper by themselves already have a complexity count of eight or nine, depending on the inclusion of indigo (either six or seven colors for the arch, argent clouds, and the rainbow as a type). If some additional complexity was not acceptable, natural rainbows by themselves on a field would be entirely unregistrable. Since natural rainbows always have this large complexity count, a complexity count of two greater than that of the rainbow by itself will be considered acceptable. Higher complexity counts may be registrable on a case by case basis. [Phillida Parker, 08/2008, A-Ealdormere]

This precedent provides guidance for natural rainbows proper, but not heraldic ones, which also add more complexity than most other charges proper. On the June 2021 Cover Letter, evidence was presented showing what is effectively a natural rainbow (though with its tinctures reversed) being used interchangeably with a heraldic rainbow. As these styles of rainbow conflict with each other, and are period variants of each other, we feel that both forms should be treated the same. The guideline of "a complexity count of two greater than that of the rainbow by itself" does not work for heraldic rainbows, being lower than the maximum allowed complexity. Instead, we will consider all rainbows of both types to have three tinctures for the purposes of complexity: gules, Or, and either vert or azure (whichever results in the lowest total complexity), plus the tincture of the clouds (if present), and we will allow designs including rainbows to have a maximum complexity of nine. We direct Palimpsest to add this information to Table 4 of the Glossary of Terms.

### **From Wreath: On *New World***

There are a few charges that we have, in the past, blazoned with the modifier *New World* to distinguish them from European versions of the charges. As the scope of the SCA expands and we add more charges from the Americas and elsewhere, we wish to move away from this term, which has its roots in colonialism. To this end, we will be reblazoning these charges with more neutral names.

Affected charges are:

- *New World pineapple*. The earliest known use of the term *pineapple*, as applied to the bromeliadic fruit, dates to 1714. Prior to this, the word meant 'pinecone', a meaning it still carries in modern blazon. To avoid confusion with the period meaning we will blazon this fruit as *ananas* (in both the singular and plural), a word which appeared in English as early as 1613, and which is the most common name for the pineapple worldwide. Reblazons are included in this letter.

- *New World vulture*. This blazon has only been used once, and at this time we see no compelling reason to distinguish between European and North American species of vulture, so we have removed *New World* from the registered blazon.
- *New World dogwood blossom/flower*. To distinguish this variety with notched petals from the pointed petals of our default Eurasian common dogwood, we will blazon it using the common name *flowering dogwood*. These will be reblazoned as time and resources allow.

### **From Wreath: How Do You Dig Half a Hole?**

A submission this month caused us to consider how demi-charges should be handled under SENA A3D1b ("sword and dagger"). SENA says, "Thus, two charges or depictions of charges that are artistic variants of one another or that otherwise are considered to have less than a distinct change (DC) between them are not allowed in a single armorial design." By the letter of this rule, a demi-charge in the same design as a full charge could never be in violation, since there's at least a DC for type between them. However, the spirit of the rule, which is to prevent confusion between charges or charge groups, does not seem to be met in these cases by the rule as written. Consider, for example, a hypothetical *Gules, a chevron between two foxes and a demi-wolf issuant from base argent*. Such a design seems like it would be just as visually confusing about the type of canine as *Gules, a chevron between two foxes and a wolf argent*. We would like commentary on this issue, and will include this request on a forthcoming Letter of Pends and Discussion.

### **From Pelican: Abbreviations in Names**

Palimpsest's February 7th Rules Letter proposed changes to SENA that would allow the registration of some abbreviation in names. Commentary was unanimous that these changes would introduce too much uncertainty in conflict checking and that the disadvantages of the proposed changes far outweigh the advantages. Therefore, these proposed changes are rejected. We thank the commenters for their input on this Rules Letter.

### **From Wreath: Changing Blazons Which Must Be Considered**

Palimpsest's February 14th Rules Letter proposed changes to SENA A5C1 which discusses which alternate blazons must be considered when conflict checking. The proposal to exclude alternate blazons which result in quaternary charges is accepted. The updated wording will be available at <https://heraldry.sca.org/sena.html#A5C1> within a few days.

### **From Wreath: SENA Appendix I4 and Overall Charges**

Palimpsest's February 14th Rules Letter proposed changes to SENA Appendix I, Charge Group Theory, to better align our rules with period practice regarding overall charges. These changes are accepted and the revised wording will be available at <https://heraldry.sca.org/sena.html#AppendixI4> within a few days. In particular, requirements are changed so that either the overall charge or the charge it overlies must be either an ordinary or a long charge. This requirement will be enforced beginning with armory appearing on November 2024 Letters of Intent, which will be decided at the January 2025 Wreath meeting.

These changes do not impact charges on fretty, spiderwebs, or grillage, which are treated as overall charges for the purposes of contrast and other style rules.

### **From Wreath: Marshalling Revisited**

Some submissions this and upcoming months have caused us to consider our marshalling rules under SENA A6F. Issues have been identified that have been part of our rules from the beginning of SENA, as well as new issues that are unintended consequences of recent changes. We ask Palimpsest to create a rules letter with proposals to address these issues.

Until the rules can be updated, we are ruling that a primary charge group with at least one charge that crosses a line of division does not have the appearance of marshalling. Plain crosses throughout are an exception to this, as noted in A6F3b.

We wish to thank Jeanne Marie Palimpsest, Ollivier Le Floch, and Emma Silver Staple for their work on identifying these issues and assisting with solutions.

### **From Laurel: Badge and Regalia of the Order of Defense**

Earlier this year, I was contacted by several individual members of the Order of Defense, from different kingdoms, regarding the badge of the order. Their main concern was that specifying the blades on the badge as rapiers gives an impression of excluding those who use primarily other types of swords. A second issue was that some artisans depict the badge with blades crossing in the middle and not at the tips, as that is much more convenient to construct. This practice appears to be reasonably common, and in fact the medallion I was given when I was made a Companion of the Order falls in this category.

Both these issues were discussed at some length in 2015 when the name and insignia of the order were registered, and one of the conclusions back then was that once the order has established itself Laurel could consult it. This I did in March, writing to the contact persons of the order in the various kingdoms; less officially but in the name of more openness, I also copied the letter to the order's closed Facebook group. In the case of the blade type, the overwhelming majority of responses fell into two categories: either we should specify the blades as swords, or we shouldn't bother as members of the order will use whatever blades they wish anyway. Regarding the question of where the blades should cross, the response was mostly the same. There are, however, considerations that complicate both issues.

The badge of the order was not new when the order was set up. Rather, it had been registered in December 1994 by Seosamh an Crúca O'Maille as a fieldless badge with the blades *Or*. Moreover, as originally submitted the blades do not cross strictly at the tip: on the form they are blazoned as *interlaced in pall inverted* and in the emblazon they cross about one-third of blade length from the tip. The College was not happy with the submitted blazon and registered it as *tips crossed*, but if the badge hadn't been released when the order was set up it might be reblazoned today. However, as the order badge was a new registration it also included a new emblazon that is in line with the blazon.

We have also registered *Vert, two claymores in saltire surmounted by a third inverted proper*. This was originally submitted in 1974 as the device of Deaton Claymore; when he added a ducal coronet into the design in September 1994 he retained his old arms as a badge. When Master Seosamh registered his badge conflict didn't come into question, but as the order badge is registered as *tinctureless*, it does conflict with the badge of the late Duke Deaton unless there is a DC for crossing the blades in the center vs. at the tips. However, given the original submission of Master Seosamh I would consider this somewhat tenuous, and the way the order badge has been interpreted since registration suggests that the general public doesn't see a difference between the two. The problem was discussed in 2015 but at that time it was not deemed a bar for registration.

Additionally, we have registered two pieces of armory to Gunther Garr, a 1993 device of *Per chevron chevronelly Or and azure, and azure, two swords in saltire surmounted by a spear Or* and its accompanying badge, (*Fieldless*) *Two swords in saltire surmounted by a spear Or*, in 1994. There is a single DC for fieldless/tinctureless, but nothing for changing one type of charge in a sheaf of three items. When Master Seosamh's badge was registered, it did not conflict with these pieces of armory because our rules treated the overall spear in a different way than we do today. However, under the current Standards for Evaluation of Names and Armory, these pieces of armory would have similar conflict issues as Duke Deaton's badge.

Now, after the order has had almost a decade to establish itself, it appears that the concerns voiced in 2015 were valid. On the one hand, order members use, artisans produce, and the general public sees all manners of blades crossed variously at the tip or in the middle. On the other hand, the badge of the late Duke Deaton is still protected, and his heir very much wishes it to be. We as heralds have promised them this protection, and order members when accepting the Peerage have agreed to respect the Corpora, including the way we register armory. And on the third hand - if such a metaphor may be used - we should respect the gift of Master Seosamh, who registered the badge originally with rapiers, at a time when it was not certain that rapiers would have a future in the Society and no-one could see the development that has led to our cut and thrust rules that encompass all manner of steel blades, including claymores.

Trying to address all these concerns is not an easy task. The best we can accomplish at present is to

- keep the badge registration as it is,
- modify our lists of Reserved Regalia and Reserved Charges to include "Three swords in pall inverted tips crossed: Order of Defense", and
- ask Palimpsest to prepare a Rules Letter to propose adding "Three swords crossed in pall inverted: Order of Defense (Note: Proper or argent swords on a vert field should not be used in this context, that design having been registered decades before the establishment of the order.)" to these lists.

## **Society Pages**

On April 6, jorundr hinn rotinn, Silver Buccle Principal Herald of Æthelmearc, granted Edith of Winterton the rank of Herald Extraordinary.

Similarly, on May 25, at Steppes Warlord, Annais Eleanor de Montgomerie, Star Principal Herald of Ansteorra, granted the rank of Herald Extraordinary to Liam macShemus MacSweeney and Ekaterina Stepanova doch' Novgorodskaja.

On June 8, 2024, at Ansteorra's Crown Tourney, Their Majesties Sven and Antigone elevated Emma de Fetherstan, Temperance Herald Extraordinary and several-time Sovereign of Arms, to the Order of the Laurel.

We note with sadness the passing of Morgan of Aberystwyth on June 19, 2024. Morgan was an early influence on the College of Heraldry in An Tir, serving as one of the first branch heralds of the Barony of Lions Gate from 1975 to 1977, and after that, one of the first Black Lion Herald for the Principality of An Tir from 1977 to 1978. The Society is poorer for his loss and richer for having had him. May his memory be a blessing to all who knew him.

Please send information about happenings to major heralds and major happenings to all heralds to Laurel, so that it can be published here.

## **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 uploaded to the OSCAR packet for that letter. For armory, only colored forms are required.

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.

To subscribe to the mailings of the LoAR, please see the bottom of <https://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 <https://oscar.sca.org/index.php?action=137>.

The May Laurel decisions were made at the Pelican meeting held on Sunday, May 12, 2024 and the Wreath meeting held on Saturday, May 11, 2024. These meetings considered the following letters of intent: Middle (01 Feb, 2024), An Tir (05 Feb, 2024), Northshield (05 Feb, 2024), Calontir (06 Feb, 2024), Palimpsest Rules Letter (07 Feb, 2024), Meridies (08 Feb, 2024), Artemisia (11 Feb, 2024), Caid (11 Feb, 2024), Laurel LoPaD (13 Feb, 2024), Palimpsest Rules Letter (14 Feb, 2024), Gleann Abhann (20 Feb, 2024), Ansteorra (23 Feb, 2024), East (25 Feb, 2024), An Tir (26 Feb, 2024), Outlands (26 Feb, 2024), Ansteorra (27 Feb, 2024), Atenveldt (27 Feb, 2024), Ealdormere (27 Feb, 2024), Lochac (27 Feb, 2024), Avacal (29 Feb, 2024),

Drachenwald (29 Feb, 2024), Middle (29 Feb, 2024), Laurel LoPaD (16 Apr, 2024) (redraws). **All commentary, responses, and rebuttals should have been entered into OSCAR by Tuesday, April 30, 2024.**

The June Laurel decisions were made at the Pelican meeting held on Sunday, June 9, 2024 and the Wreath meeting held on Saturday, June 8, 2024. These meetings considered the following letters of intent: Æthelmearc (04 Mar, 2024), Calontir (04 Mar, 2024), An Tir (10 Mar, 2024), Laurel LoPaD (17 Mar, 2024), Palimpsest Rules Letter (17 Mar, 2024), Artemisia (20 Mar, 2024), An Tir (24 Mar, 2024), Palimpsest Rules Letter (24 Mar, 2024), East (25 Mar, 2024), Ansteorra (27 Mar, 2024), Ealdormere (27 Mar, 2024), Middle (28 Mar, 2024), Palimpsest Rules Letter (28 Mar, 2024), Trimaris (28 Mar, 2024), Æthelmearc (29 Mar, 2024), Outlands (29 Mar, 2024), West (29 Mar, 2024), Atenveldt (30 Mar, 2024), Lochac (30 Mar, 2024), Drachenwald (31 Mar, 2024), Northshield (31 Mar, 2024), Laurel LoPaD (11 May, 2024) (redraws), Laurel LoPaD (10 Jun, 2024). **All commentary, responses, and rebuttals should have been entered into OSCAR by Friday, May 31, 2024.**

The July Laurel decisions will be made at the Pelican meeting held on Sunday, July 14, 2024 and the Wreath meeting held on Saturday, July 13, 2024. These meetings will consider the following letters of intent: Atlantia (02 Apr, 2024), Calontir (04 Apr, 2024), Meridies (08 Apr, 2024), Ansteorra (13 Apr, 2024), Laurel LoPaD (15 Apr, 2024), Caid (16 Apr, 2024), Palimpsest Rules Letter (17 Apr, 2024), Avacal (20 Apr, 2024), Palimpsest Rules Letter (21 Apr, 2024), Ealdormere (24 Apr, 2024), An Tir (25 Apr, 2024), Ansteorra (26 Apr, 2024), East (26 Apr, 2024), Middle (26 Apr, 2024), Outlands (29 Apr, 2024), West (29 Apr, 2024), Æthelmearc (30 Apr, 2024), Ansteorra (30 Apr, 2024), Atenveldt (30 Apr, 2024), Drachenwald (30 Apr, 2024), Lochac (30 Apr, 2024), Palimpsest Rules Letter (30 Apr, 2024), Laurel LoPFR (11 Jun, 2024) (redraws), Laurel LoPaD (12 Jun, 2024). **All commentary, responses, and rebuttals should have been entered into OSCAR by Sunday, June 30, 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.

Be assured that I remain

In service

Birgitta Lulli  
Laurel Queen of Arms