

Letter of Registration and Return

December 1998

Unto the members of the Imperial College of Arms does Lord Nigel the Byzantine, Fleur-de-Lis King of Arms, send Greetings and Salutations!

Fellow Heralds:

For this, the first Letter of Registration and Return, I wanted to take the time to present a few things to you, so this letter will be a bit longer than the others you will be receiving in the future. There is much business to discuss, and many ideas to put forth, so please bear with me. If you are the head of a Shire, Duchy, or Kingdom, please be so kind as to forward this letter to your Sovereign of Arms.

Because the College is still in the process of preparing the Armorial and Ordinary (see below), there are no items registered this month. We will begin registering arms in January.

Manual for the College of Arms

Included with this Letter is the copy of the Manual for the College of Arms which is being put forth as Imperial Writ by Their Imperial Majesties, Stefan and Katayana. This Manual will be presented to the Imperial Estates at the next meeting for final approval. We would like to request that all Sovereigns of Arms discuss the Manual with their Crowns and present to me any comments, concerns, questions, or changes they have. Everything will be taken seriously; The Imperial College of Arms is here to serve the populace of the Adrian Empire, not the other way around.

Structure of the College

The Imperial Crown is the titular head of the Imperial College of Arms (ICoA), even though They have delegated that responsibility to the Imperial Sovereign of Arms (ISoA). Likewise, the Crown of each Geographic Chartered Subdivision (GCS) is the head of the local College of Arms (CoA) and delegates that responsibility to their local Sovereign of Arms (SoA).

The local SoA is responsible not only to their local Crown, but also to the ISoA. Local SoA's are responsible for two things: processing heraldic presentations and running Court. If the local Crown wishes to appoint a separate person to handle Court, that person is called the Court Herald and is considered a deputy to the local SoA. Local SoA's may also choose to appoint a deputy to handle these duties, with the permission of the Crown. Note: collectively, we are all known as "heralds" (lower case "h") no matter what our titles or job descriptions.

A local SoA's primary responsibility is for processing heraldic presentations. Notice we're not saying "submissions" any more. In keeping with this administration's attitude of serving the populace and not the other way around, people will no longer "submit" to the heralds, they will "present" to us.

Their Imperial Majesties have a policy of giving the people of the East a greater voice in the Imperial government. In keeping with this policy, there is a deputy in both the West and East regions for each Imperial Ministry. The office of the Imperial Sovereign of Arms is no exception. The line between East and West is drawn along the dividing line between Central and Mountain time; Umbria, TerreNeuve, and Esperance are all in the West; York, Annelynrose, and Dragon's Mist are all in the East.

Even though you will send your monthly packets of presentations directly to the Imperial Sovereign of Arms, you must also send a copy of your report to the Deputy responsible for your geographic area. Griffin is responsible for the West, as Dragon is responsible for the East.

Local SoA's report administratively to their regional Deputy; if you have a problem, bring it to them first, before you bring it to Nigel or the Imperial Crown. Griffin and Dragon each speak with the authority of the Imperial Sovereign of Arms (Fleur-de-Lis); if one of them says something in an official capacity, it's as if it came from Fleur-de-Lis himself.

Help Wanted

Unfortunately, Sir Killian Oaksblood, who was slated to become Dragon King of Arms (Eastern Deputy SoA), will be King of York by the time you read this, and will not have the time to fulfill this position. If you or someone you know is interested in Heraldry, please have them contact me. Candidates **must** live in the East and **must** have ready access to email and the Web. It would help if you had knowledge of Heraldry, but it's not absolutely necessary.

Note: as the position of Dragon Sovereign of Arms is currently vacant, Eastern SoA's do not need to send a separate copy of their report to me (since I'm acting as Dragon until a replacement for Sir Killian can be found).

Responsibilities of Local Sovereigns of Arms

Local SoA's are responsible for reporting to their Crown and to the ISoA on at least a quarterly basis, whether or not they have any presentations. If you have presentations, you **MUST** send them in as soon as possible. This report should include the following information: (a) any Court Reports for the month (copies of which should be in the Minister of Rolls' hands), (b) a list of any presentations being forwarded to the ICoA that month, and (c) a report on heraldic activity that month, such as a class you taught or took, or any other thing of interest to the CoA. If you didn't have anything that month, just send a short letter saying so. Remember, we're a 501(c)3 organization now, and we have to prove to the IRS that we're doing our job as an educational organization.

By the 15th of each month, the packet should be either emailed or posted. If there are any presentations, it **MUST** be sent by post. Don't forget to send or email a copy of your report (without the presentations) to the Regional Deputy for your area. Two months later, the ISoA will send out a Letter of Registration and Return (LoRR). This will have the final blazon of each registered item, plus a reduced photocopy of the line drawing, for everything from around the Empire that was registered that month. If something is being returned, the LoRR will include suggestions for fixing the problem. The local SoA will not receive copies of the forms back. It is the responsibility of the local SoA to maintain files at the local level and to write down on each form when it was registered at the Imperial level. They are also responsible for notifying each presenter in a timely manner when their presentation has been registered or returned.

Forms

Also included with this Letter are the revised Forms for Devices and Badges. You'll notice that the Badge form now has a square instead of a circle. This is to make design easier, and to make clear one point: the shapes on the forms are for the convenience of the College of Arms, the shape of the final display is not regulated to just a circle. Please look over the forms and make sure they are filled out completely, including the presenter's **MUNDANE** signature.

The Device form has a new feature: there are tick marks around the edge of the escutcheon which are guidelines for drawing things like bends, fesses, and pales.

Presentations should have the following copies of each form: two colored-in copies and one line-drawing. Good news: **NO MORE HATCHINGS!** Just fill out the form and draw the outline on it, and then make photocopies and color two of them in. It's OK if the presenter signs their mundane name on the original and you send photocopies to the ISoA. **PLEASE** do not print them out on a color printer or make color copies; the inks either fade with time or, in the confines of a file folder, smear off and make an indelible mess. Use Crayola washable markers or some such; the colors should be bright, primary, and clear (get the fat ones; they're easier to color large areas in with). They're about 5 bucks a package.

O&A and RoA Update

The first Armorial, Ordinary, and Roll of Arms is well under way. The Armorial is a listing of all of the registered devices and badges in the Empire, listed by the name of the registrant. The Ordinary is a listing of everything in the Armorial by the design elements. The Roll of Arms is a book of all of the designs themselves. We expect to have the Ordinary and Armorial (O&A) online in a few months, with links to the online Roll of Arms (RoA). This way, you can just type in "lion" and see every device that has a lion on it, and then click on the link to get a picture of what that device looks like. Nifty, huh? J Gregor, Griffin King of Arms, is working on the initial digitization of the Armorial, Dame Rose is preparing the digitized images for the Roll of Arms, and Sir Mordred is preparing the initial programming of the database for the Website.

Plugged-in Heraldry

The Manual is being digitized, to be completely interactive. Once it's online, if there's a word you don't understand, just click on it and a definition will pop up.

Part of the reason for the digitizing of everything is for cost-cutting purposes. You have all heard of the budget crisis the Empire is in. In an effort to keep costs down, we will be utilizing email and electronic media as much as possible. Putting all of our essential stuff online is a major step towards that goal. If you don't have email access, we would strongly suggest that you see if your local public library will let you set up an account. There are free web-based email services out there that let you access email from any computer in the world; Nigel uses one called Yahoo! for all emailing. Ask us if you need help.

As far as electronic media is concerned, if you had access to Word97 and Access97, it would be very helpful. All of our digitizing is being done with Microsoft products, and having access to these would help the cost-cutting measures. If you don't have access to this (or even access to a computer), please let us know so that we can make sure to get you things by regular mail.

These Letters will also be put online, so that in the future, people will be able to access them, no matter where or when they are.

Adria_Heraldry Mailing List

There's a mailing list available those of you online. It's an easy way to ask questions of the College, and to get information.

Go to <http://www.onelist.com> and follow the link called "Find a List". At the prompt, type in Adria, and you'll see a bunch of sites dedicated to that guy from Highlander. You'll also see the Adria_Heraldry list. Click on it, and then click on "Subscribe". Follow the instructions for setting up a Onelist account (they won't hurt, honest), and then you're set! Archives are also available.

References

In the next couple of months, you will also be receiving a list of suggested references and where to get them. In order to do your job as Sovereign of Arms, you need to have some basic reference materials so your presenters can do research without having to hunt the books down all over town. You do not need to get the books right away, but the sooner you have them, the easier your job will be. For the time being, you can ask any other member of the Imperial College of Arms for help, including Nigel or Gregor. We're here to help you. In that list will be places to download really nifty heraldry software that will also make your job much easier, as well as a list of Web sites that are very helpful.

Educational Opportunities

Sir Hanzel, Umbrian Sovereign of Arms, is writing a Heraldry 101 class. This will be a basic how-to class on the nuts and bolts of heraldry that anyone will be able to understand. It's being written with the inexperienced herald in mind, so that you can teach the class at events and learn as you go. Once you have it in your hands, you'll be able to teach others about heraldry, even if you didn't know anything about heraldry when you started.

Nigel is working on a book tentatively titled "Heraldry for Dummies". This will be a comprehensive guide to Adrian heraldry in the style of the popular "For Dummies" books. As each chapter is completed, you'll receive it along with the LoRR. This will go into more advanced topics, such as correct blazoning procedure, running a Court without losing your head, and the finer points of sumptuary laws. Expect the first chapter to arrive in a couple of months.

Regalia

You'll notice that the section on Regalia and Sumptuaries present in the previous Manual has been excised. This is because the Regalia is going to be under review this year. Their Imperial Majesties have decided to look into the current system of sumptuaries and check it against not only Period practice, but also the Bylaws. Watch this space for more information.

Mission Statement

Included in this packet is the Mission Statement we have drawn up to enumerate our goals and our attitudes for the coming year. Please read it over and take it to heart.

Roster

The last thing included in this packet is the Roster of the Imperial College of Arms. If your information is incorrect, please include it in your monthly report. In the future, if your contact information changes or your office changes hands, please also include that information. When the LoRR is put online, the Roster will not be included, for reasons of personal security.

A form is included for you to fill out and send back with your monthly report for next month.

Please feel free to contact either Nigel or Gregor with any comments, questions, or concerns you may have. Our contact information is included in the Roster. We'd like to know anything you think we could be doing better. We can't serve you unless you tell us what your needs are.

Yours in service to the Empire and the Dream,

Nigel the Byzantine
Fleur-de-Lis King of Arms