

Letter of Registration and Return

July 2000

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

Fellow Heralds:

Heraldic Visitation Announcement

Sir Nigel the Byzantine, Fleur-de-Lis Principal King of Arms, unto the good Populace of the Empire: Greetings!

Be it known to all to whom these presents shall come that the College of Arms of the Imperial Court will be hosting an Heraldic Visitation in the Kingdom of Esperance on the first Weekend of Septembre of this year. All gentles who have laid claim to the Bearing of Arms are hereforth directed to present themselves to the Kings of Arms at this time, with their Arms, be they assumed or granted, and such proof as is acceptable to the College.

OK, now that the fancy heraldspeak language is over, here it is in plain English:

As an experiment for the entertainment and education of the Populace, the Imperial College of Arms (that would be me) is hosting a Heraldic Visitation at the Imperial War West. This is mainly intended to show people how Heraldry worked in our Period, as well as an experiment in Living History for me to see how this thing could have worked.

In our Period, Heralds (at the direction of the King) would send word throughout the land that on such-and-such a date at such-and-such a location the Kings of Arms and Heralds would host Visitation. All those who bore arms were required to present them to the Heralds and prove their right to bear them. Since this is mainly for entertainment, nothing official will happen (in other words, I'm not going to strike your arms for reals!). :)

Here's how it works:

You bring me something with your Arms on it, like a banner, shield, or scroll. You also need to bring PROOF that you have the right to bear the arms (not just have them registered, but to actually *display* them), such as a scroll, a blue belt, or a coronet. Bringing along the Crown who gave you the right would be helpful! :)

I will look through my Book to see if the arms are indeed registered, and that you have the right to bear them. Simple, huh?

Now, here's the fun part:

There will be a few shills who will have arms they CANNOT bear. We get to do all sorts of nasty things to them (like turn the shield upside down, mock them, etc). We may even have a (mock) Heraldic Court à la Scrope vs Grosvenor, if there's enough interest.

Anyone who is interested in being a shill is requested to please contact me so that we can work out the details of your "crime". :)

On a more serious note, if anyone has been bearing arms that they (a) don't particularly care for anymore, or (b) have gotten sick of, you are welcome to come for consultation to "upgrade" your arms for free!

I will be accepting direct submissions at the War, provided that I am given enough copies to give to your local Herald.

I am basing this Heraldic Visitation partly on an article on the Law of Arms in Medieval England, written by Craig Levin.

In addition to this Visitation, the College of Arms will be on hand to consult with armigers and others on designing armory. The College will gladly design arms for people who have none.

Any members of the College of Arms or other interested parties who would like to help me in this experiment are gratefully requested to contact me.

In service to the Dream,
Sir Nigel the Byzantine
Fleur-de-Lis King of Arms

Habit Change

I am making some changes to this Letter in the interest of brevity. I will no longer be stating "No conflicts found". If it's registered, then assume that I found no conflicts. I will also not be listing any conflicts checked against; anyone who wishes to see how conflicts are counted can find them in previous LoRRs.

Schedule Change

Beginning with September's presentations (those received between 16 August and 15 September), there will be a lag-time for the publication of the LoRR. Volume of presentations has increased dramatically in recent months, and two weeks is simply not enough time for me to process everything properly. The cut-off date will still remain the 15th of each month (which is when reports are due); everything received by the 15th of September will be published at the end of October, received by the 15th of October gets end-of-November publication, and so forth.

I apologize for this delay, but I have to do this in order to spread out the workload.

August LoRR

Please get your reports and packets in to me as soon as possible; I would like to get an LoRR out before the War if at all possible.

Miscellany

Found in the Laurel archives:

From "The Heraldry Gazette", December 1991, p. 4

An armigerous noble called West,
Had his Arms tattooed on his chest.
His wife named Betty,
Said, "Your 'fess dancetty'
Can clearly be seen through your vest."

As always, please feel free to contact either Nigel, Maud, or Aerindane with any comments, questions, or concerns you may have.

In service to the Empire and the Art of Heraldry,
Sir Nigel the Byzantine, Baronet
Fleur-de-Lis King of Arms

Registrations and Returns

If you have any questions about anything on the LoRR, please feel free to ask. Also, if you disagree with any of my rulings, please feel free to comment. I am not infallible.

Aragon, Kingdom of

- **Aragon, Kingdom of** (Badge) Sable, a Turk's Head knot argent. (for the Ropemakers' Guild)
Fleur-de-Lis has been presented with good documentation on the existence of this particular knot as an heraldic charge, as a four-bight three-lead version of the Carrick knot. This documentation can be found at the Ropemaker's Guild's website: <http://www.ropemaker.com/heraldicknots.html>. It is acceptable for Adrian use.
- **Betka Doch'Viktor** (Device Resub) Gules, a bear rampant or.
This is completely different from her previous presentation. There are several pieces of armory with the pattern Gules, a <charge> or. Each of them is clear under XI.B. for substantial difference of type of primary charge. Even a lion and a bear are substantially different, because they were considered so in our Period.
- **Brandon von Albrecht** (Device) Sable, on a fess between three towers or, a lion couchant sable.
- **Celtic Circle, House** (Estate) Or, a Turk's Head knot vert within a bordure sable.
- **Hrothgar Ragnarsson** (Badge) (Fieldless) A wolf's head caboshed argent.

Dragon's Mist, Duchy of

- **Amythyst Starr** (Device) Per pale sable and argent, a mullet of eight points counterchanged argent and purpure.
- **Erelenstar, HMS (House)** (Estate) Argent, a lymphad sable sailed or upon a base wavy azure and in chief three mullets vert.
- **Hill Home, Barony of** (Estate) Purpure, a castle argent and in chief a hammer argent hafted or.
Please remind the registrant to draw the castle larger so it is of greater visual weight.
- **John Blackhawke of Long** (Device) Argent, a chevron gules between three hawks displayed sable armed gules.
Please remind the registrant to draw the chevron a bit wider so it is not overpowered by the secondaries.
- **Phoenix Rising, HMS (House)** (Estate) Sable, on a bezant a phoenix enflamed gules.

Esperance, Kingdom of

- **Avernus, Canton of** (Estate) Argent, a bend sinister sable.
Who says you can't register simple armory? :)
- **Battaglia dell'arte, House** (Estate) Per chevron sable and azure, an arrow fesswise reversed argent.
- **Jasmine Drakonja** (Device Resub) Purpure, a cat couchant regardant or within a bordure wavy argent.
Her previous submission, which had an Or bordure, was returned for conflict. This fixes that problem.
- **Terrin Greyphis** (Badge) Vert, a tower argent.
- **Vilhelm von Seiken Uladrachen** (Device) Per pale or and argent, a dragon displayed regardant tail nowed between three Latin crosses pointed azure.
The registrant wishes to keep his previously registered arms as a badge.

TerreNeuve, Kingdom of

- **Guillaume de Lacy** (Device) Sable, two foxes addorsed argent and on a chief embattled or four hearts gules.
- **Palentines, Barony of the** (Estate) Azure, three suns or.
- **Rose de Coucy-Vasalle** (Device reblazon) Gules, on a chevron sable between three roses or, three hearts argent.
This was registered in March 1999 as Gules, on a chevron sable between three roses or, three hearts gules, even though the form clearly had the hearts blazoned as Argent. This fixes the problem.

Sangrael, Duchy of

- **Sangrael, Duchy of** (Badge) Per bend sinister or and vert, a drawn bow proper stringed and arrowed argent. (For the Archery Award)
Their previous presentation was returned for violation of the Rule of Tincture. This fixes that problem.
- **Daniel Owens** (Device) Per fess azure and vert, a tower argent within a bordure gyronny gules and argent.
- **Kathleen Carruthers** (Device) Argent, a tortoise statant within a bordure vert.

The following are being returned for further work:

Aragon, Kingdom of

- **Angelique Roberta Constance de la Fouché** (Device) Argent, a chevronel between two garden roses and a natural dolphin naiant bendwise sinister azure.

This is being returned for redraw under III.A. There are several problems with this device, all of which must be fixed before it is registerable.

*First, the chevron is way too narrow (which is why it is blazoned as a "chevronel", even though those are always used in multiple numbers). Ordinaries should be between 1/5 to 1/3 of the total **width** of the shield (measured across the top edge). If there are charges around the ordinary, it will of necessity be drawn closer to 1/5, if the ordinary is itself charged, it will be drawn closer to 1/3. If it is both surrounded by charges and charged, a balance between the two must be struck.*

Second, the roses are drawn to resemble modern-day hybrid roses. This kind of rose was first introduced in 1864, and Fleur-de-Lis has by previous precedent (Mar 1999) disallowed any but heraldic depictions. They need to be drawn as heraldic roses in order to be identifiable.

Third, there is no evidence that the natural dolphin (the creature found in nature as opposed to the heraldic Dolphin, which is a monstrous-looking beast) was used in Period armory. Fleur-de-Lis will not register this charge unless sufficient documentation as required under XIX.B. In addition, this creature is not entirely bendwise nor fesswise; it must be at a true diagonal or else truly horizontal in order to be registered.

- **Caomhe O'Raghallaigh** (Device) Per bend checky gules and argent and sable, in base a pair of smith's tongs between two mallets argent.

It's usually a good rule-of-thumb that if a given piece of armory is difficult for an experienced herald to blazon, it's probably not Period style. This is being returned under III, for lack of Period style. This took me a while to blazon correctly so that it was reproducible.

There is no good way to blazon the three charges in the dexter base portion of the shield. Secondly, having one charge between two other charges in this matter is reminiscent of "slot machine" heraldry and is not good style. This is also an example of "life story" heraldry - this person is telling the world she's a smith (and apparently a very good one, from what Fleur-de-Lis hears). "Life story" heraldry is a concept unknown in our Period. Fleur-de-Lis has been informed that these arms are registered in the SCA (in February of 1992).

Let me be perfectly clear: While it is indeed a good rule-of-thumb that registration in the SCA means that there's a good chance that registration in Adria will follow, this is not always the case. The SCA is tough in some areas, such as the Rule of Tincture, and light in others, such as allowing non-European charges and styles. This particular device was registered by the SCA before the new SCA rules were compiled; I know - I was there when the rules change went into effect. In fact, I was a member of the SCA College of Arms at the time that this device was submitted, and I remember that their standards were not quite as tight as they are now.

*To tighten this rule-of-thumb: Registration by the SCA **within the past two years** means that there is a good chance that, barring conflict, it will be registerable in Adria. Our rules are different from the SCA's rules, even if some of our rules are based on the SCA's. We are gradually moving away from the SCA's style and working towards building our own, hopefully based on Period principles and not on 30-plus years of Tradition. As we get further and further away from SCA-style heraldry, the less likely it is that a given piece of SCA-registered armory will be acceptable in Adria.*

- **Serina Isabella de Torsiello** (Badge) (Fieldless) On a rose sable barbed a dove displayed argent.

This is being returned for identifiability under III.F. From a distance, the rose looks voided and becomes hard to see. Only upon close inspection is the dove visible.

Dragon's Mist, Duchy of

- **Dreams, House of** (Estate) Per fess invected azure and argent, a castle argent and in chief a bezant.

This is being returned for style. It is evident that the House is trying to create a picture rather than a stylized piece of heraldry. There is also poor contrast between the castle and the argent part of the field.

*Best fix for this would be to move the line of division down so that instead of a per fess division, it becomes a base of about 1/5 the **width** (not the height) of the field. Make the castle about twice as large so it fills the space but does not rest upon the base, and leave the bezant where it is. This not only fixes the problems with contrast, but makes for a much neater design. The House may wish to consider, for the sake of imagery, a line of division **nebuly** rather than **invected**, although this use of the invected line of division is rather innovative. The nebuly line of division is not unknown in our Period, being used to in the depiction of heraldic clouds ("nebula" means "cloud"). See examples below.*



- **Duncan of Lang** (Device) Vert, in fess a lion or between two swords or hilted sable.

This is being returned for style, as well as for violation of the Rule of Tincture. The placement of three charges of equal weight in fess is what is referred to as "slot machine" heraldry, and is disallowed in Adria as being poor style. If the hilt of a sword is to be of a different tincture than the blade, it should have good contrast with the field.

Best fix would be to reduce the size of the swords (about 75%) and increase the size of the lion (about 125%), and make the hilts either Argent or Or.

- **Sapphire Jade** (Device) Per saltire vert and azure, a lion sejant or.

*Conflict with the **Order of the Lion of Adria** (Badge: Adria, Feb 1992) Gules, a lion sejant or. Only 1 CD for changing the tincture of the field. Best fix would be to either change the tincture of the primary or add a secondary(ies) or peripheral.*

Esperance, Kingdom of

- **Horatio Davidgnon Edward Richard Merriweather** (Device) Gules, on a chevron between three anchors within a double tressure flory counter-flory or, three fleurs-de-lis gules.

*This is being returned for violation of presumption. The double tressure flory counter-flory is a distinctive feature limited to the Crown of Scotland. It was used in personal armory as an augmentation of favour by said Crown. There do exist a few aberrant examples of this charge in Flemish armory, but all are Scottish-style cadences from a single source, which itself may indeed be a Scottish grantee. Its use in Adria is restricted to armory of the Kingdom of Umbria, since it registered this charge before we had rules against it. Also, this use violates the restriction on gold fleurs-de-lis; Lord Horatio does not have the right to bear one, so it is being returned on **these** grounds as well.*

Fleur-de-Lis would like to note that despite the restricted charge, the arms are drawn correctly, with the chevron inside the double tressure.

Best fix would be to either lose the flory counter-flory and use plain tressures, or else to use a different line of division, such as trefoily.

- **Rosellen of Bastone** (Device) Gules, a unicornate horse's head coupéd argent gorged of a wreath of cinquefoils gules within a bordure argent semy of roses and fleurs-de-lis alternating gules.

This is being returned for style. Unicornate horses (horses with Unicorn's horns stuck on them) are not a Period motif; please use an actual Unicorn's head instead. This appears to be a depiction of the modern chess piece of "knight" with a small Unicorn's horn attached to it. Period "knight" chess pieces are double-headed horses, not single-headed unicornate horses. It is Fleur-de-Lis' opinion that the unicornate horse's head with the addition of the wreath of cinquefoils borders on being too "cutsey" (it does appear to be a drawing of a "My Pretty Pony").

Best fix would be to use an actual Unicorn's head (complete with beard and fierce gaze) rather than something out of a child's coloring book. Lose the wreath of cinquefoils. The bordure should be drawn about twice as thick to accommodate the charges on it.

The following are being pended to the next LoRR:

Aragon, Kingdom of

- **Darkened Skies, HMS** (Estate) Per fess azure and sable, a mullet of four greater and four lesser points argent.

Dragon's Mist, Duchy of

- **Dragon's Mist, Duchy of** (Estate) Vert, a dragon or.

Esperance, Kingdom of

- **Julianna Elizabeth Veronica Joanna Messina** (Device) Quarterly gules and argent, a lozenge quarterly argent and azure, overall five roses in cross counterchanged.

Umbria, Kingdom of

- **Dragon Star, County of** (Estate) Azure, a mullet of four points argent.