

Heraldry for Scribes

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Heraldry for Scribes

Mistress Alheydis von Körckhingen

An introduction to heraldry and heraldic resources for the scribes of Æthelmearc

The College of Arms of the SCA is responsible for registering for protection the persona names and armory of society participants. One of the primary purposes of this endeavor is to ensure that each participant use a unique and identifiable name, and armory which is sufficiently different from the armory of others. As scribes, we hold a duty to uphold that individuality by ensuring that the award scrolls we create accurately present the names and armory of the award recipient. Fortunately, there are a variety of tools available to you to make this job a lot easier.

In this class we will explore:

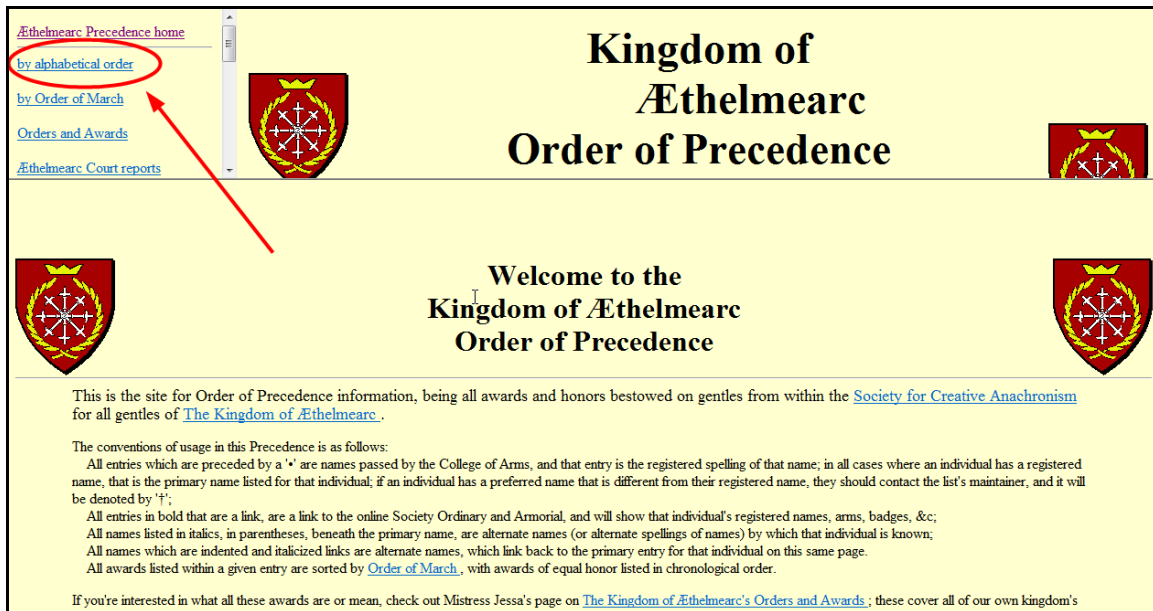
- How to verify names and spellings
 - The Æthelmearc Kingdom Order of Precedence
 - The Æthelmearc College of Herald's Submission Index
 - The SCA Armorial
- How to verify armory and blazons
 - The Æthelmearc Roll of Arms
 - The Æthelmearc College of Herald's Submission Index
- How to verify award holdings and rank
 - The Æthelmearc Kingdom Order of Precedence
 - The Æthelmearc College of Herald's Court Report Archive
- Heraldry Basics
 - The Tinctures
 - Devices vs Badges
 - Blazonry
 - Authentic Heraldic Style

Verifying Names – The Æthelmearc Kingdom Order of Precedence

<http://www.aeheralds.net/precedence/aethel-op.html>

An Order of Precedence is a listing of persons in order of rank. Each entry may include the person's armory and any awards they have received. An Order of Precedence ("OP" for short) may also be arranged alphabetically. Most OP sites allow you to view the list both by rank or alphabetically.

A kingdom or local group OP will often list persons who have not yet registered their names with the College of Arms. If a person has a registered name, but uses a different spelling from that which is registered, the OP may list either the registered version, the commonly used version, or both.



The Æthelmearc kingdom OP gives the option to list persons alphabetically. Simply click on "by alphabetical order" in the upper left navigation pane. Once you are within the listings, using your browser's *find* function is very helpful (CTRL + F in many browsers). You will notice that names appear in a variety of formats. Quoting from the Æthelmearc OP site's main page:

The conventions of usage in this Precedence are as follows:

All entries which are preceded by a '•' are names passed by the College of Arms, and that entry is the registered spelling of that name; in all cases where an individual has a registered name, that is the primary name listed for that individual; if an individual has a preferred name that is different from their registered name, they should contact the list's maintainer, and it will be denoted by '†';

All entries in bold that are a link, are a link to the online Society Ordinary and Armorial, and will show that individual's registered names, arms, badges, &c;

All names listed in italics, in parentheses, beneath the primary name, are alternate names (or alternate spellings of names) by which that individual is known;

All names which are indented and italicized links are alternate names, which link back to the primary entry for that individual on this same page.¹

Maeldara O'Donn	Award of Arms
• Maeve Aislynn Ronan	Companion of the Sycamore Companion of the Keystone Companion of the Troubadour (East) Sigil of Æthelmearc Sigil of Æthelmearc
• Maeve ni Siurtain	Companion of the Keystone Award of Arms (East) Venerable Order of the Ice Dragon (R. Hael [Srv.])
• Maeve of Cavan	Award of Arms
• Magariki Katsuichi († <i>Magariki Katsuichi no Koredono</i> , <i>Kardon Mageru Katsuichi</i>)	Knight Companion of the Gage Companion of the Millrind Companion of the Golden Alce Companion of the Sycamore Companion of the Keystone Companion of the Silver Crescent (East) Companion of the Maunch (East) Companion of the Tygers Combatant (East)

In this screen capture, Maeldara O'Donn's name is not registered with the SCA College of Arms. Magariki Katsuichi's name is registered with the CoA, but he is also known to have used two other names: Magariki Katsuichi no Koredono and Kardon Mageru Katsuichi. Of these three names, Magariki Katsuichi no Koredono is the form he prefers.

¹ Æthelmearc College of Heraldry Website, "Kingdom of Æthelmearc Order of Precedence"
[<http://www.aeheralds.net/precedence/aethel-op.html>]

Verifying Names – The  thelmearc College of Herald's Submission Index

<http://www.aehearlds.net> (home page)

<http://www.aeheralds.net/Submissions.html> (direct link to index)

The website of the  thelmearc College of Herald's includes an index of all submissions processed since November 1999, regardless of whether they were eventually registered. This can be especially helpful in clarifying the status of a name submission, and can help explain discrepancies in the information you may be given for an assignment. At present, the index is usually kept up to date to within 30 days. The list is arranged alphabetically.

Individuals are listed as follows:

- If an individual has a currently registered name, they are listed by that name. If an individual has submitted a change of name, they will be listed under the old name until the new name is registered.
- If an individual does not have a currently registered name but has made at least one name submission to the College of Herald's, they are listed under the first name they submitted to the College. For example, if a person submitted the name *Moon Unit of Mars*, which was deemed undocumentable and then later submitted the name, *Elizabeth the First*, which was deemed presumptuous, and has a current submission in progress for the name *Jayne Fletcher of Lincoln*, that individual will remain listed under *Moon Unit of Mars* until the name *Jayne Fletcher of Lincoln* is registered. If that name is also returned, the individual will remain listed under *Moon Unit of Mars*.
- If an individual has multiple name submissions in their history, the various names will appear in the index and will link to the person's primary entry.

Aminah bint al-Megal'id

Name: Aminah bint Mujelid Kitab

Submitted to Kingdom on [ILoI AE051](#) dated May 01, 2001 as *Aminah bint Mujelid Kitab*

Changed at kingdom on [LoR AE051](#)

Forwarded to Laurel on [XLoI AE051](#) dated November 17, 2001 as *Aminah bint Mujallid al-Kutub*

Returned by Laurel on the LoAR of [March 2002](#)

Device

Submitted to Kingdom on [ILoI AE051](#) dated May 01, 2001 as *Or, a camel proper, saddled and bridalled vert.*

Accepted with revised blazon on [LoR AE051](#)

Forwarded to Laurel on [XLoI AE051](#) dated November 17, 2001 as *Or, a camel statant proper, saddled and bridled vert.*

Registered by Laurel on the LoAR of [March 2002](#) as *Or, a brown camel statant proper on its back a blanket vert.*

Holding name: Aminah of Nithgaard

Registered by Laurel on the LoAR of [March 2002](#) as *Aminah of Nithgaard*

Released on the LoAR of [November 2003](#)

Name Change: Aminah bint al-Megal'id

Submitted to Kingdom on [ILoI AE069](#) dated June 01, 2003 as *Aminah bint al-Megal'id*

Accepted on [LoR AE069](#)

Forwarded to Laurel on [XLoI AE069](#) dated July 24, 2003 as *Aminah bint al-Megal'id*

Registered by Laurel on the LoAR of [November 2003](#) as *Aminah bint al-Megal'id*

Aminah bint Mujallid al-Kutub

See: [Aminah bint al-Megal'id](#)

Aminah of Nithgaard

See: [Aminah bint al-Megal'id](#)

Verifying Names – The SCA Armorial

<http://oanda.sca.org/>

In real world heraldry, an armorial is a listing of persons who have coats of arms. The persons are listed alphabetically. The SCA armorial lists all persons who have items registered with the Society College of Arms, including people who have registered name, but not armory. The main web address (above) takes you to a selection of search forms. The most helpful for verifying name spellings is the “name pattern” search form. (http://oanda/cgi-bin/oanda_np.cgi)

With the name pattern search form, you can search for small spelling patterns within a name. Let’s take my name as an example: **Alheydis von Körckhingen**

Any of the following entries will return numerous results, including my name. Note that by default, the search is *not* case sensitive.

Alhey heydis dis von ingen rckh körck

NONE of these will return my name.

heidis alhei Korck vonK Körckingen

To find the name you are looking for, enter a piece of the name that you fell confident you can spell correctly, and browse through the alphabetized results. There are several special characters you can use to limit your results:

Carat (^) [SHIFT + 6]:	^alh	Yields only names that start with “alh”
Dollar (\$) [SHIFT + 4]	ingen\$	Yields only names that end with “ingen”
Period	alhe.dis	Returns names that include “alhe” + any <i>one</i> letter + “dis”
Periods	al...dis	Returns names that include “al” + any <i>three</i> letters + “dis”
Period+	al.+dis	Returns names that include “al” + <i>any number</i> of letters + “dis”

These specialty characters may be used in combination. For example, you can search for my name as follows:

^Al.+dis+ingen\$

This looks for a name that starts with “Al”, has “dis” somewhere in the middle, and ends with “ingen”

Search Forms for the SCA Armorial

You can find currently-registered armory starting at the [index for the on-line SCA Ordinary](#). If you are trying to look armory here.

There are also six search forms available:

1. A [Name Search Form](#) which allows you to search the SCA Armorial database for items associated with a particular name. A search will fail if you don't type the name exactly right.
2. An [Armory Description Search Form](#) which allows you to search for registered items that appear under a particular heading. This difficulty will be corrected eventually, but for now the [SCA Ordinary](#) headings are coded in the database.
3. A [Name Pattern Search Form](#) which allows you to search for items associated with a name, even if you don't know the exact name.
4. A [Blazon Pattern Search Form](#) which allows you to search for blazons containing particular words or text patterns.
5. A [Date/Kingdom Search Form](#) which allows you to search for registrations during a particular time-period or via a particular kingdom. Watch for this message to go away.
6. A [Complex Search Form](#) which allows you to do sophisticated searches on the database by combining the results of several searches and configuring the results.

Name Pattern Search Form

There are [other search forms](#) available. For help using this form, please refer to the [hints page](#).

Enter the name pattern for which you are searching ->:

Select type of search ->:

Maximum number of items to display ->:

Display Options:

- Sort items by
- Display dates in style.
- Glossary links
- Armory descriptions

Actions:

Results:

6 items matched **narrow case-insensitive** name pattern="^AL+dis.+ingen\$".

- [Alheydis von Körckhingen](#)
 - This name was registered in August of 2002 (via [Aethelmearc](#)).
 - The following device associated with this name was registered in August of 2002 (via [Aethelmearc](#)) and changed/retained in November of 2004 (via [Aethelmearc](#)):
Or, a goblet azure within a bordure azure semy of decrescents argent.
 - The following device associated with this name was registered in November of 2004 (via [Aethelmearc](#)):

Verifying Registered Armory – The  thelmearc Roll of Arms

<http://www.aeheralds.net/rolls/index.php>

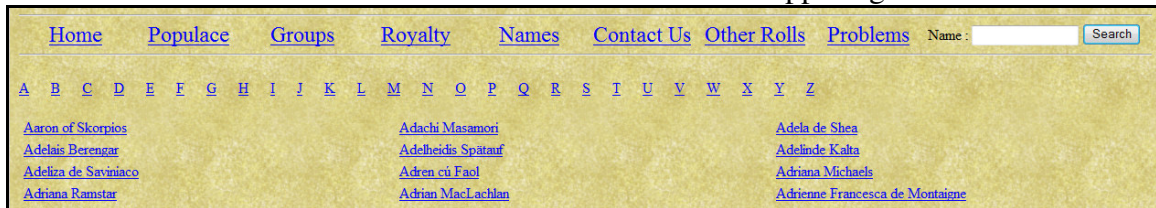
A Roll of Arms is a visual inventory of the armory of a group of people. Period rolls of arms were created for specific territories and also for specific events, especially famous battles and tournaments. William Castille of Lochac has undertaken to create a Roll of Arms for the entire SCA Known World. The  thelmearc portion of the project is maintained within the kingdom on the  thelmearc College of Heraldry website.

This is a wonderful resource, because you can see what a device looks like without having to translate the blazon. Be warned, however, that the images have been put together using a set of clip art images. The results vary in quality, and the project is not immune to errors. Lastly, even though an image in the Roll of Arms may be a correct rendering of the registered blazon, it may not look identical to the version submitted by the owner of the armory. Some people are very attached to the way they draw a particular heraldic charge. (“Well, yes, that IS a hedgehog, I supposed, but it’s not MY hedgehog!”)

Click on “Populace” to see a visual index.



Click on “Names” to see an alphabetical listing. This is easier if you want to use your browser’s “find” function. There is also a search box in the upper right corner.



Verifying Registered Armory – The Æthelmearc College of Heraldry Submission Index

<http://www.aeheralds.net> (home page)

<http://www.aeheralds.net/Submissions.html> (direct link to index)

Please see the section on verifying names using the index (above) for instructions on finding people by name in the index.

The entries pertaining to a device submission can be a bit confusing if you don't know blazonry, but thankfully, the entries include hyperlinks to documents that include images. These documents are the various letters and reports that carried the submitted armory toward registration:

- The “ILoI” (Internal Letter of Intent) is the first step. If you click on this, you will see a letter that contains the image of the device as it was submitted to the kingdom College of Arms. This may not necessarily be the final drawing that was sent to the Society College of Arms.
- The “XLoI” (External Letter of Intent) is the second step. If you click on this, you will see a letter that contains the image of the device that was sent to the Society College of Arms. If the Laurel Sovereign of Arms registered the armory, this is the official version that was registered.
- The month and year of registration refer to the Laurel Letter on which the registration was made official. If you click on it, you will be taken to a webbed version of the letter. The Laurel letter does not contain images, but armory registrations sometimes include commentary on how the device should be drawn more correctly.

In many entries, you will notice that the blazon was changed slightly from one stage to the next. This happens often, and is usually an improvement on spelling and grammar. It is the visual drawing that is registered, not the phrase that describes it (“blazon”). When necessary, the blazon will be revised to better reflect the drawing submitted.

Usually, the last line on a complete entry will read either “Registered by Laurel” or “Returned” (either at kingdom or by Laurel). If this verbiage is not present, the submission is still in progress. Never paint armory on a scroll unless and until it has been registered!

In the listing for Eleanor of Pembroke, we see that her device was sent to the College of Arms on Æthelmearc External Letter of Intent #AE146. We can click on that link to see the drawing that was actually sent in for registration. You can click on the thumbnail images for a higher resolution image.

Eleanor of Pembroke

Name: Eleanor of Pembroke

Submitted to Kingdom on [ILoI AE146](#) dated May 06, 2012 as *Eleanor of Pembroke*

Accepted on [LoR AE146](#)

Forwarded to Laurel on [XLoI AE146](#) dated June 30, 2012 as *Eleanor of Pembroke*

Registered by Laurel on the LoAR of [September 2012](#) as *Eleanor of Pembroke*

Device

Submitted to Kingdom on [ILoI AE146](#) dated May 06, 2012 as *Argent, on a bend azure three lozenges ermine.*

Accepted on [LoR AE146](#)

Forwarded to Laurel on [XLoI AE146](#) dated June 30, 2012 as *Argent, on a bend azure three lozenges ermine.*

Registered by Laurel on the LoAR of [September 2012](#) as *Argent, on a bend azure three lozenges ermine.*

5: Eleanor of Pembroke - New Name & New Device

Argent, on a bend azure three lozenges ermine

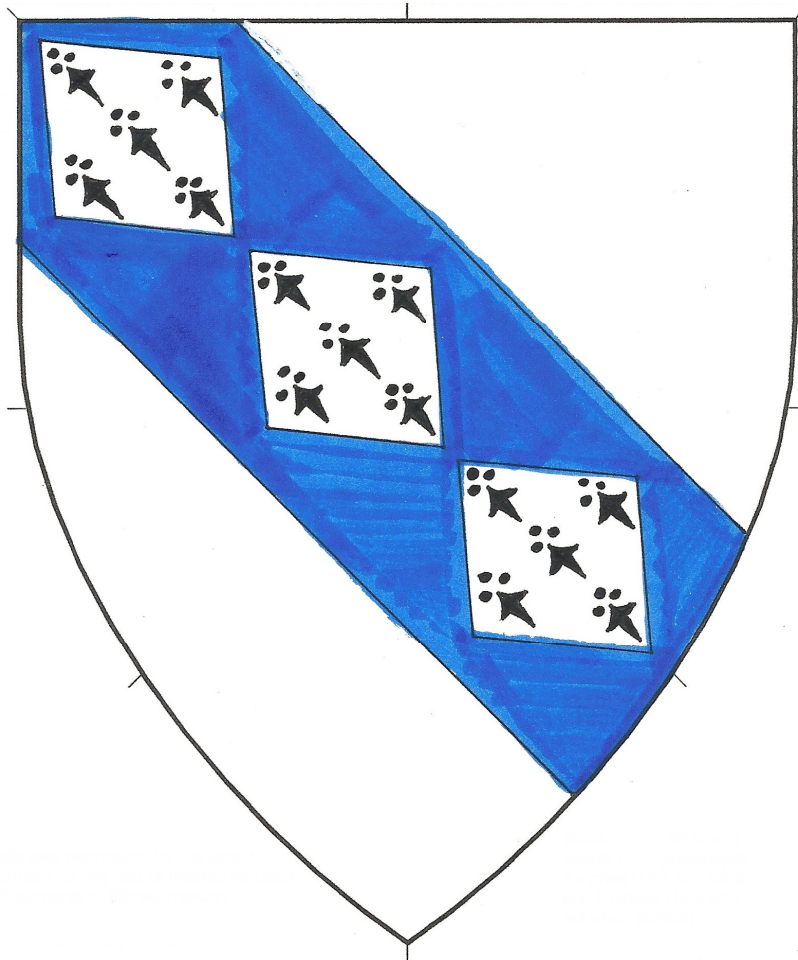
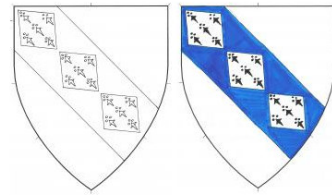
Submitter desires a feminine name.

Eleanor - "A Simple Guide to Constructing 16th Century Welsh Names (in English Contexts)" (<http://heraldry.sca.org/laurel/welsh16.html>)

of Pembroke - Morgan and Morgan, s.n. Penfro, list *Pembroke* in the header, but it is unclear if there are any dates.

Lillia de Vaux found the submitted spelling of the place name multiple times in the MED:

- (1447-8) in Willis & C. Cambridge 1 hüll: Two noble and deuote Contesses of Pembroke and of Clare founded two collages in the same Vniuersite called Pembroke halle and Clare halle.
- c1450(c1425) Brut-1419 (Cmb Kk.1.12) 345/1: Dis worthi Erle of Pembroke was slayn with þat oþer knightes spere, as he cast hit fro hym whanne he had cowped.



Verifying Awards – The Æthelmearc Kingdom Order of Precedence

Our kingdom OP lists awards, along with the date that the award was given. This can be a great help verifying backlog awards. It is also valuable in verifying the correct form of address for the individual (Master vs THLord vs Don vs Lord, etc.)

You will notice that the awards within a given entry are sorted by “Order of March” with the highest awards listed at the top. Awards of equal honor listed in chronological order.

Khalek Shurrag Od (<i>Kilek Feng Bao Xing Xing</i>)	13th Count of Æthelmearc	09/20/08
	Knight	08/19/05
	Companion of the Gage	10/20/01
	Companion of the Millrind	08/07/07
	Companion of the Golden Alce	03/22/97
	Companion of the Golden Stirrup	01/09/10
	Companion of the Keystone	07/09/11
	Award of Arms	08/16/96
	Companion of the Cornelian	10/16/99
	Companion of the Raven's Feather (Thescore [Srv.])	05/15/99
	Companion of the Black Talon (Thescore [Mart.])	08/16/04

Verifying Awards – The Æthelmearc College of Heraldry Court Report archive

Following each kingdom court, Silver Buccle Herald publishes a written report. This report is posted to the kingdom announcement e-list and is published in the Æstel. In addition, the kingdom College of Heraldry website maintains an archive of past court reports.

home

staff roster

submitted items

archived letters

forms

roll of arms

tools & links

court reports

precedence

web minstress

SEARCH THE REPORTS:

By relevancy
All words

NOTE: The monthly newsletter of the Kingdom of Æthelmearc, the Æstel, is the only official publication of the Royal Court Reports of the Kingdom of Æthelmearc. Should any discrepancy exist between the text versions presented here and those in the Æstel, the version as published in the Æstel shall be considered correct unless explicitly noted herein.

Court reports of the Kingdom of Æthelmearc

Khalek and Branwyn - King and Queen of Æthelmearc

March 30, AS 47 (2013)	Festival of the Passing of the Ice Dragon	<i>Barony of the Rhydderich Hael</i>
March 13, AS 47 (2013)	Gulf Wars XXII	<i>Kingdom of Gleam Abham</i>
March 2, AS 47 (2013)	Tournament of the White Hart	<i>Shire of Port Oasis</i>
February 16, AS 47 (2013)	College of Three Ravens	<i>Barony of Thescore</i>
February 2, AS 47 (2013)	Feast of the Seven Deadly Sins	<i>Barony of Delftwood</i>
January 5, AS 47 (2013)	Kingdom Twelfth Night	<i>Shire of Sylvan Glen</i>
December 8, AS 47 (2012)	Masked Ball	<i>Barony of the Rhydderich Hael</i>
December 1, AS 47 (2012)	Yule Event	<i>Barony of Delftwood</i>

Heraldry Basics – Tinctures

Period illustrations of armory were created using period pigments, offering a fairly small set of shades in which heraldic tinctures could be depicted. The SCA College of Arms prefers that heraldic tinctures conform to a narrow range of shades that don't always correspond to period pigments. The standard shades are those found in a box of standard Crayola Markers.

Heraldic Tincture	English Term	Common Period Pigment	Pigment Color Match	Crayola Swatches	Crayola Color Match
Argent	White	Lead white	Zinc white; Permanent white	(white)	Zinc white; Permanent white
	Silver	Shell silver	Imitation Silver	(n/a)	
		Silver leaf	Silver Leaf		
Or	Yellow	Orpiment	Cadmium Yellow Pale	(yellow)	Primary Yellow; Cadmium Primrose
		Lead-Tin Yellow	Cadmium Primrose		
	Gold	Shell gold	Imitation Gold	(n/a)	
		Gold leaf	Gold leaf		
Gules	Red	Minium	Orange Lake Light	(red)	Spectrum Red
		Vermillion	Spectrum Red		
Azure	Blue	Azurite (light)	Peacock Blue	(blue)	Peacock Blue
		Azurite (dark)	Azure Blue		
		Ultramarine	Ultramarine		
Vert	Green	Malachite	Veridian	(green)	Permenent Green Middle; Mistletoe Green
		Verdigris	Veridian Lake		
		Sap Green	Sap Green		
Purple	Purple	Folium (wide range of hues)	?	(purple)	Light Purple
Sable	Black	Bone black	Ivory Black	(black)	Ivory Black; Lamp Black
		Lamp black	Lamp Black		

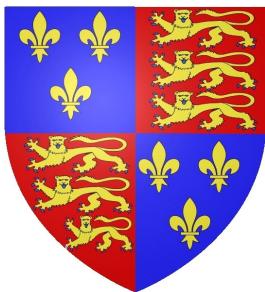
Heraldry Basics – Devices versus Badges

In the SCA, there are two kinds of armory: devices and badges. An individual may have only one device, but may have a limited number of multiple badges. The device is analogous to a real world coat of arms. In our period, coats of arms were generally hereditary and identified one's family. Badges are more personalized emblems that were adopted for use by an individual, although some badges eventually became hereditary as well.

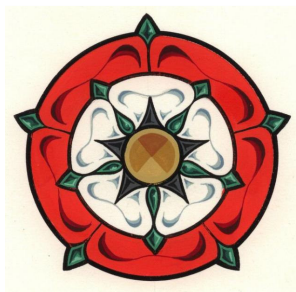
For example, the sovereigns of the kingdom of England have borne very similar arms for centuries, changing only at times of major political change, like the union with Scotland and Ireland, and the relinquishing of claims to territories in France. These kingdom arms in no way depicted the individuality of a particular king or queen. Instead, individual sovereign often adopted an emblem that was used to mark their possessions, appearing in livery, tapestries, manuscripts, etc. Henry VIII adopted a double rose as a personal badge, while the Plantagenet dynasty may have taken their name from the emblem of its founder, that being the seed pod of the common broom plant (*planta genista* in medieval Latin).² The personal jousting badge of Edward, the Black Prince evolved into the badge of the Prince of Wales and remains in use today.³

In the SCA, we are afforded the luxury of designing our own coats of arms, and so they already give us a sense of individuality. Some people do adopt (and may register) badges as well. It is entirely appropriate to incorporate these additional badges into the design of an award scroll. However, it is only the right to bear a device that is awarded, granted or bestowed by letters patent as part of award.

Bear in mind that some people register badges as quasi-devices for alternate personas and may not wish to have multiple personas integrated into the same scroll. Some people also register badges for use by a household or company. The College of Heraldry Submissions Index does indicate when a badge is known to be intended for an alternate persona, or for a group, but not all individuals declare an intended use when registering such badges.



The Arms of Henry VIII



The rose badge of Henry VIII⁴



Compound badge of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon⁵

² Wikipedia, "House of Plantagenet" [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/House_of_Plantagenet]

³ Wikipedia, "Prince of Wales's Feathers" [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prince_of_Wales%27s_feathers]

⁴ "Henry VIII Badge" [http://www.heraldikasrbija.com/galerija/main.php?g2_itemId=7974]

⁵ Wikisource, "A Complete Guide to Heraldry", Chapter 29
[http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/A_Complete_Guide_to_Heraldry/Chapter_29]

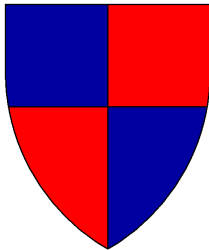
Heraldry Basics – Blazonry

A blazon is a verbal description of a multi-layered picture. Every device has a field that forms the background. Most devices have charges that rest upon the field, although it is permissible to register armory that is “field-only. A badge may or may not have a field, but we will concern ourselves only with devices for now.

SCA blazonry is very methodical and follows fairly strict rules. Armory is built up in layers, with no more than three layers allowed. The description begins with the field, and works upward and from the center out. The elements will be listed in this order, although blazons for older armory may not adhere to current practice.

Layer 1: The field

The field may be all one tincture, may be divided into halves, thirds, quarters, stripes or wedges (cut like a pizza).

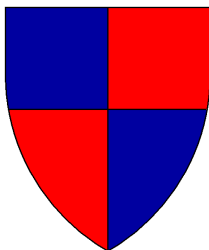


Layer 1: field

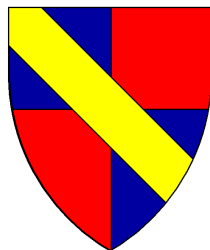
Layer 2: Primary charges

Primary charges lie on the field and they either cover, or are arranged around, the center of the field. A single lion in the center of the field is a single “primary charge”. A group of three lions, two above and one below, arranged around the center-point of the field is a “primary charge group”.

In early historical armory, primary charges were often geometric shapes rather than pictures of beasts, birds and such. These geometric charges are called “ordinaries” and are referred to with Anglo-Norman terms. For example, a “bend” is a diagonal stripe across the field and would constitute a single primary charge. A pair of “bendlets” across the center-point of the field would constitute a primary charge group.



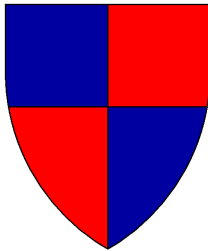
Layer 1: field



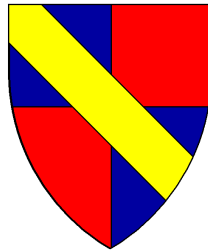
Layer 2: Primary charge

Layer 2: Secondary charges

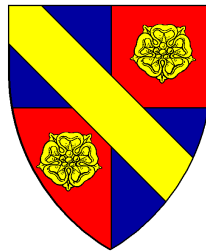
Secondary charges also lie on the field, but they are arranged around a primary charge or primary charge group. A set of stars, arranged around a central lion would constitute a “secondary charge group”. Some of the ordinaries are secondary by nature, even if there is no primary charge at all. These are “peripheral” charges, and include the bordure (border) and the “chief” (wide stripe along the top of the shield).



Layer 1: field



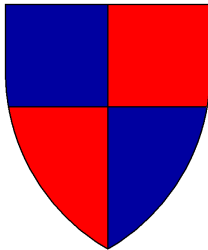
Layer 2: Primary charge



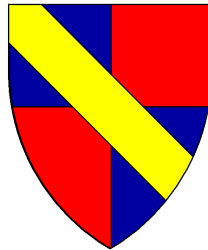
Layer 2:
Secondary charges

Layer 3: Tertiary charges

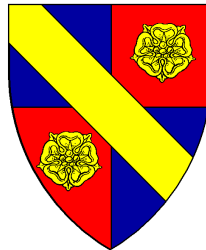
Tertiary charges rest atop primary and secondary charges. A star placed upon the breast of an eagle would constitute a single “tertiary charge”. A set of stars placed along a bend would constitute a “tertiary charge group”.



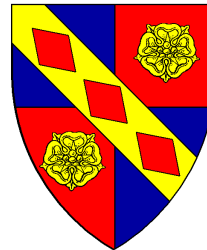
Layer 1: field



Layer 2: Primary charge



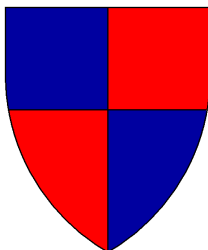
Layer 2:
Secondary charges



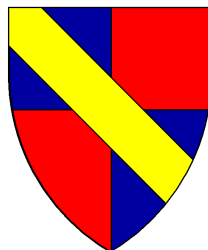
Layer 3:
Tertiary charges

Layer 3: Overall charges

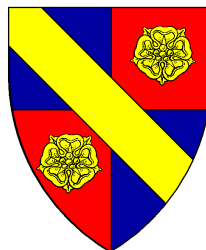
Overall charges lie across a primary or secondary charge and lie partly on the field. A sword lying across an apple, would constitute an “overall charge”.



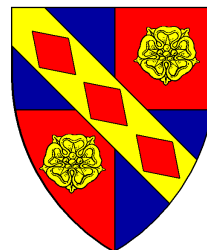
Layer 1: field



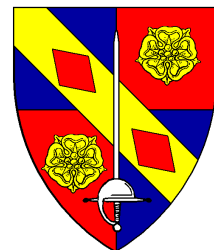
Layer 2: Primary charge



Layer 2:
Secondary charges



Layer 3:
Tertiary charges



Layer 3:
Overall charge

Heraldry Basics – Authentic Heraldic Style

High Contrast





When depicting armory, the design will already have been worked out to maximize contrast between elements. Since the purpose of heraldry was to clearly identify people and groups at a distance, such high contrast is an important element of heraldic style. If you find yourself in a situation where an artistic decision is required, always err on the side of higher contrast. For example, you are painting a yellow mouse on a background that is striped white and black. You have the option of allowing the mouse's tail to trail across either a white stripe or a black stripe. It would be far better to place the yellow tail entirely within a black stripe for maximum visibility.

Big, Bold and Butch

Although the field (the background) is an identifying element in heraldry, the “charges” (pictures and geometric shapes) that are placed on the field generally play a greater role in identifying armory. It is good heraldic style to allow the charges to fill available space as much as possible, as long as the required relative arrangement is preserved.

Heraldic Style Across the Centuries

Although heraldry, in general, has used many of the same design elements across the centuries, how those elements have been drawn and painted has changed. A particular coat of arms painted in 1200 will have a different look from a 16th century depiction of that same armory. To give you a sense of heraldic style across the years, see how these core heraldic charges have appeared in various rolls of arms, and in modern heraldry.

	Eagle	Lion	Stag	Rose
Zurich Roll, c. 1340				
	German Empire	Bohemia	Hirschberg	Güttingen

Manesse Codex, early 14 th c.				
	Kaiser Heinrich	König Wenzel von Böhmen	Von Singenberg, Truchseß zu St. Gallen (note the stag is tarnished silver leaf)	Der Burggraf von Lienz
Book of Golden Fleece, c.1590				
Siebmacher, 1605				
Fox-Davies, 1909				
Modern heraldic design				

Resources to explore:

A Glossary of Terms Used in Heraldry, James Parker (first published in 1894)
<http://www.heraldsnet.org/saitou/parker/Jpframe.htm>

The SCA Heraldic Picture Dictionary, Free Trumpet Press
<https://secure.sca.org/cgi-bin/stockclerk/ftpw.html>
This is the standard pictorial reference for SCA heraldry, and includes over 800 illustrations

The Academy of Saint Gabriel: <http://www.s-gabriel.org/heraldry/>
(not all links on this site are currently active)

Free Heraldry Clipart: <http://www.heraldicclipart.com/catalog/index1.html>
This site includes many of the images from Fox-Davies.
HINT: Use the “site:” function in a Google search box to search for terms.
For example, to search for images of lions: “site:www.heraldicclipart.com lion”

A Heraldic Primer <http://www.sca.org/heraldry/primer>
A good solid introduction to the basic terms used in SCA blazonry

The Zürich Roll images were sourced from “Die Wappenrolle von Zürich at
<http://www.silverdragon.org/HERALDRY/ZurichRolls/zroaen0.htm>

Manesse Codex images were sourced from Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg, Cod. Pal. germ. 848, Große Heidelberger Liederhandschrift (Codex Manesse)
<http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/cpg848/>

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(more images viewable by changing the page number in the URL)