

SECTION VIII -- NAMES AND ARMORY -- PROCEDURAL

4) The Consultation Table
(April, XXV; Summer AS XXXVII (2002))

Author: Frederick of Holland
Iulstan Sigewealding

Number of Pages: 1

Policy Level: Informational

Intended Audience: The Populace at large

Abstract: Originally Page copy, expanded a bit, to explain the purpose of the West Kingdom Heraldic Consultation Table.

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

THE CONSULTATION TABLE

History and Purpose

Iulstan Sigewealding & Frederick of Holland (April, XXV)

There seems to be confusion in some peoples' minds about the purpose of the Heraldic Consultation Table, which is set up at Crown Tournaments and other events.

History

The Table was begun in the reign of William the Lucky and Andrea, as a response to their suggestion that the College take a more active role in assisting the populace in the registration of suitable names and devices. Its usefulness became immediately apparent, and it has continued since that time. The Table has evolved during this period, and its resources have grown. It is currently the responsibility of the Latimer Herald, the deputy Kingdom Herald in charge of consultation.

Purpose

The purpose of the Table is to provide services to the populace in the area of "book heraldry," the specialized field of heraldry dealing with names, devices, and badges. The services provided fall into three inter-related categories: education, research, and consultation. There is no charge for these services.

- 1) **EDUCATION:** The consultation table brings together an accumulation of heraldic knowledge in the form of books, other publications, and the experience of the consulting heralds. This knowledge includes:
 - a) Historical heraldry -- how names and armory were used in the Middle Ages. The consulting heralds utilize collections of medieval names and naming practices, as well as information on practices in contemporary cultures, other than Europe.
 - b) SCA heraldry -- including the rules governing submissions to the College of Arms, recent decisions and precedents affecting submissions, and the reasons behind them. Information on all names and armory registered by the SCA and the status of recent submissions is also available. Finally, there is information on titles and awards granted in the West, its sumptuary laws and its customs.

Furthermore, this knowledge is made available to aid and to instruct any who wish to take advantage of it. This information is freely shared with all who make inquiries at the table. The table does not usually hold group classes or lend books, but rather features personalized interaction with experienced heralds, who provide interpretation and suitable guidance to the client.

- 2) **RESEARCH:** The consultation table offers an opportunity for any member of the populace to have a name, device, or badge checked for possible problems. Name problems could include the lack of a documentable given (first) name or a name that does not reflect our understanding of period practice. Device problems could be related to the principles of heraldry or the SCA's Rules for Submissions. Research could uncover a conflict -- a lack of sufficient difference between the proposed device and something which exists in the mundane world or which has already been registered with the SCA College of Arms.

Problems discovered at the Table can be dealt with quickly by the submitter, with the guidance of expert heralds. Problems discovered later, in the formal submission process, require far more time and paperwork to correct.

- 3) **CONSULTATION:** Building on the aforementioned services, the Table provides advice to members of the populace on the selection of names, devices, and badges, whether or not items in question are being submitted for registration. The consultation process involves learning the client's needs and preferences, educating him or her as necessary about relevant period practice and SCA policy, synthesizing a suitable name, device, or badge, and researching it.

The Table and the Submission Process

Use of the services of the consultation table is entirely voluntary. Submissions are NOT required to pass through the consultation table before being submitted to the College of Heraldry of the Kingdom of the West. All advice provided by the consultation table is advisory in nature and non-binding: you are free to ignore it.

The staff of the Table are fallible human beings, and the correctness and completeness of the information provided is not guaranteed. In particular, conflict research performed at the table (under "field conditions") occasionally fails to uncover conflicts that may result in the return of a design recommended by the Table.

The consultation table is not a replacement for consultation with your local herald. Instead, it is a supplementary resource for education, research, and consultation.

This Page Intentionally Left Blank