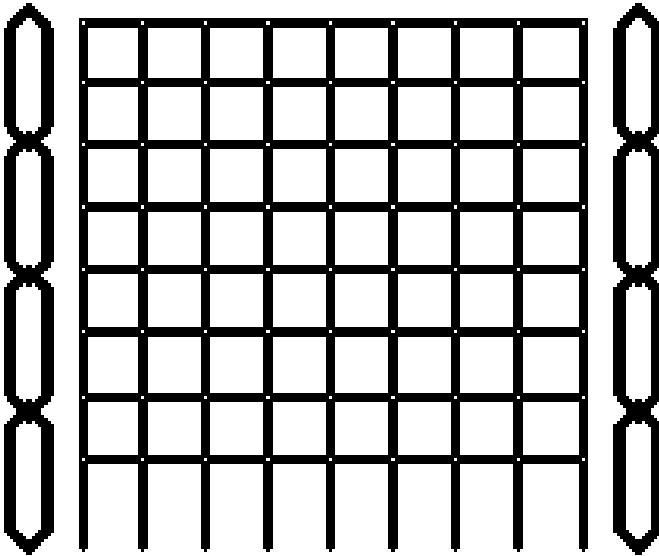


The Portcullis



Shire of Cold Keep
(Prince George, BC)
February 2004
Vol. III No. 1

**Their Royal Majesties of An Tir
Skapti Thorinson and Asa Starradottir**

Scott Zeller	Alison Avery
11221 80th Ave NE	900 SW Holden St
Kirkland, WA	#106 Seattle, WA
98034	98106
425-823-1783	206-766-9684
king@antir.sca.org	queen@antir.sca.org

Their Majesties maintain a **single** mailbox. Please send only one copy of your message to one address.

**Their Highnesses of Avacal
Steinn Vikingsson and Gemma Menne**

Darryl and Jennifer Rhodes
140 Berwick Drive N.W.
Calgary, AB T3K 1P3
(403) 730-6533 - No calls after 9 PM
avacal-prince@antir.sca.org avacal-princess@antir.sca.org

Their Highnesses maintain **separate** mailboxes. Please send two copies of your message as appropriate.

**Tanist and Tanista Avacal
Murchad macArtgal and Morrigan Clubfoot**

David Smith and Jude Harrison

avacal-tanist@antir.sca.org avacal-tanista@antir.sca.org

Officers of Cold Keep

Seneschal: Lady Brynn MacDonald
dnd@shaw.ca

Exchequer: Lord Eggbert the Ready
goldingspg@shaw.ca

Master of Stables: HL Vladimir Andreivich Aleksandrov
chornem@navcanada.ca

Herald: Lady Brigit ingen Meic Thíre Ruaidh
celticwolf@telus.net

Chatelaine: Lady Desirée de Colecestra
desireeofcoldkeep@hotmail.com

Mistress of Arts and Sciences: Lady Natal'ia Volkovicha
pickles@canada.com

Master of Blades: Lord Gowan MacDonald
draco@netbistro.com

Captain of the Bow: HL Vladimir Andreivich Aleksandrov
chornem@navcanada.ca

Chronicler: Lord Brynach ap Rhys
archer77@telus.net

Champions of Cold Keep

Heavy HL Vladimir Andreivich Aleksandrov	Rapier Pierce O'Briain of the Einars
Archery HL Vladimir Andreivich Aleksandrov	Arts and Sciences Lady Natal'ia Volkovicha

Regular Meetings

Council Meetings	Third Monday of each month at Lord Eggbert's house
Fighter Practice	Tuesday and Thursday at 7pm and Sunday at 1pm in the Research Laboratory Building Rotunda at UNBC
Socials	First Wednesday of each month at Lord Eggbert's house

Calendar

February		
Date	Name	Branch
27-29	Avacal Investiture	Myrgan Wood
March		
6-7	An Tir A&S Championship	Wastekeep
13	A Night in Byzantium	Rhuddglyn
20	Festival of Lights Feast	Cold Keep
20	Winter War	Vatnsdalr
27	Rapier Championship	Cold Keep
April		
3	Spring Faire	Vatnsdalr
9-11	Grand Ithra	Loch Dorr
17	An Tir Heraldic Symposium	Myrgan Wood

Natal'ia's Notions

By Lady Natal'ia Volkovicha

Greetings! I am excited to see the re-emergence of the Cold Keep Portcullis, under the direction of our new chronicler, Lord Brynach ap Rhys. It is my hope that I will be able to submit interesting and pertinent articles about the Arts and Sciences for your perusal each issue.

I would like to use this column in a variety of ways. If you have questions about areas of the Arts and Sciences, forward them to me via email and you may just see your question addressed in the next Portcullis. As well, I will explore other areas where I have my own expertise for your edification.

As an Arts & Sciences Champion, and an officer of the Arts & Sciences in both the Wolfpack and Cold Keep, I see my position as one of a facilitator in these gentle areas. I have a passion for knowledge, and enjoy both learning and teaching. We all have the potential to be artisans, and it is our own responsibility to discover what areas appeal to us. By learning and sharing our knowledge, we can all foster development and interest in the Middle Ages as

an historic period. However, as much as I would love to teach, I believe strongly in the adage 'you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink'. The onus is on the populace to use me as a mentor and facilitator (which I'm more than happy to do. I just refuse to chase you down with a stick).

So on with the facilitation!

I would like to take this first column to remind the populace of the challenge issued by Lady Brigit, our Herald. Early on in the fall of this year, (AS 38 Ð thank god the SCA runs by the same university calendar as I do) she voiced her opinion that we should begin to work towards personal registration of names and devices. To this end, she supported her challenge with a call for banners. I am seconding the cry! I spent the better part of one day working on a banner of my arms (unregistered). It was enjoyable, quick and not terribly difficult (and we're talking about the woman with a frigging tyger on her arms). I would like to encourage the local populace to take up this challenge, as it will add immeasurably to the pageantry of our game. Let the whirl of our sewing machines terrify our enemies! Let the air be thick with the stench of spray-on fusible interfacing! Let us have Arms!

In Service-
Natal'ia

Next Month:
Bardic!

The Heraldic Voice

Lady Brigit ingen Meic Thire Ruadh

Heraldic Display

Ever wandered around an event just to look at the display of banners, pennons and standards? Each one announces proudly "I am here!", "I belong to this person", "I am part of this kingdom". Battlefields would be less colourful and more confusing without the variety arms and devices on shields, surcotes or tabards.

Heraldic display was an important part of medieval society. Heraldic design was used to ornament clothing, stained glass windows, door panels, horse's barding, trunks, cutlery and plateware, books, furniture, jewelry, and a myriad other

household items. Pennons and banners flew from castle walls and rooftops, gonfalons hung from rafters and walls within the castle halls.

What we refer to as a “banner” in the SCA is based on the medieval “**gonfalon**”, a type of flag that was hung from a horizontal attached to a pole and borne upright. A medieval **banner** was a vertical flag, longer than it was wide, sometimes with a jagged outer edge. **Pennons** are flags that are attached to spears carried “at charge” (that is, in horizontal position) while a **standard** is a long flag, sometimes triangular in shape, sometimes square cut to form two triangular tails.

In the SCA, we display our devices on banners, to hang outside our tents or above our encampments; we decorate our shields with them to carry onto the battlefield; we adorn feasthalls with them to create a more period look. We fly standards around tourney erics and warfields, carry them in processions or drape them from ceiling rafters.

What is a banner?

In the SCA, we use the term “banner” to mean a large, rectangular flag that is hung vertically and usually displays our device or arms.

Banners are usually about 36 inches (about .9 metres) square, though they can be larger. You don’t want to make it too large or it will be unwieldy; too small and no-one will be able to identify the display. Do not put a shield shape on the banner, with the device on the shield!

The banner should be made of fabric tough enough to withstand the elements (wind, rain, sun), as well as a fair amount of mishandling, and heavy enough to hang properly. The design may be painted on, appliquéd or reverse appliquéd. Those with a masochistic streak and a lot of time may want to embroider the design. Painted designs should be treated with a fixative so the paint doesn’t crack or bleed; appliquéd or embroidery designs require a back to hide the stitching. A banner only needs to have the display on one side.

What is a standard?

In period, a standard was about 8 feet (approximately 2.5 metres) long, and hung from a long pole or spire. A standard displays the device of the kingdom, principality, or overall allegiance of the standard owner closest to the pole. The remainder of the standard displays the owner's badges on a background of his livery colours.

Tomyris's Quick and Dirty Guide to A&S Documentation (Part 1 of 2)

by HL Tomyris ek Arimaspi

What is this documentation stuff anyway?

Documentation is simply proof that you know enough about your subject to support the choices you made in the recreation, and that you made the best choices possible for your item based on historical evidence. Or, in simpler terms, proof that you cracked a book, know what you're talking about, and applied what you know to the end result. This is important because one must *research* before one can *recreate*, and in SCA Arts & Sciences, it's all about the re-creation, baby. And while documentation is "nice" in day-to-day SCA living, documentation in a competition scenario is **imperative**.

Getting Started: Tools of the Trade

- *Style Guide* (i.e.: Chicago Manual of Style, MLA,)—this is important. Judges look for notation and citation to be in a clear and easily recognizable format. These style guides follow similar methods of listing sources in a bibliography, citing references within text, formatting footnotes and endnotes, and are chock full of other information bits useful for good writing.
- *Dictionary*—good for making sure the word you want to use is spelled correctly, and that the word really means what you think it means.
- *Thesaurus*—good for finding a new or better word than the one you've already used five billion times. Benjamin Franklin (or Thomas Jefferson...I can never remember) said: "Never use two words when you can use one." When you're aiming

for concise, this is a good rule of thumb. A thesaurus can help you find that perfect word.

- *Grammar Guide*—this is important too. If you have any doubts about dangling participles, subject-verb agreement, or the function of a conjunction, there are several easy-to-read grammar guides out there. Understanding the language is the first step in manipulating it to achieve the desired result.
- *Word processor or word processing software*—handwritten documentation is not unacceptable, but typewritten or otherwise mechanically generated documentation is much, MUCH better. If you don't have the technology, you know someone bribable who does. Yes, you do. Trust me.
- *Computer Spell Check*—not infallible, but mighty handy to clean up typos and commonly misspelled words. It won't put the word in context, though, so it's also important to activate your...
- *Computer Grammar Check*—again, not infallible, but a good place to start cleaning up your syntax. But nothing is better than the human eye, so get yourself a...
- *Reliable proof-reader/editor*. Not only can they clean up the spelling and syntax that the computer may have missed, they can locate those points in your documentation that are funky or unclear. They will ask the questions that need to be answered within your documentation, and can tell you if you make any sense at all. An invaluable resource, editors. And I'm not just saying that because I am one.

Sources: The Good, The Bad and The Tertiary

Do the research first. Always do the research first. THEN document your findings.

Having said that, it is likely that the terms “primary source,” “secondary source,” and maybe even “tertiary source” have been bandied about in your presence. This is a rough guide to what those terms mean:

Primary Source: The original artifact, portraits or other artwork from the period, literature from the period discussing the subject or idea.

Acceptable alternatives to Primary Sources for SCA purposes: clear photographs/reproductions of the original item (that clearly describe the original), archaeological journals/articles about the

item, an English translation of a foreign language original. Sometimes access to the original is impossible, so concessions are made for scholarly references and pictures.

Secondary Source: A modern reproduction of the item from primary source material, an author referencing or quoting primary sources. Essentially, anything that is one step away from the primary source.

Tertiary Source: Anything that is two or more steps away from the primary source. Quoting someone that is quoting someone who is discussing the original, for example.

Obviously, getting as close as you can to the primary source and drawing your own conclusions is best. But for those times when you just can't get to Paris to get close enough to lick the rose window, a really good photograph of the window will do. Secondary sources are also pretty useful, especially if they are from a reputable author or institution. But, if you can, use their bibliography to follow up on their conclusions. Tertiary sources ought to be avoided if you can at all swing it. They can be a good jumping off point, especially if there is a bibliography, but they are not usually acceptable as good scholarship for research purposes.

Where to look:

Books, naturally, are a good place to look for information. Your friendly local librarian wants to help you find things in books—especially strange, arcane things. If you have access to a college or university library, exploit it and interlibrary loan. Remember to look for references to primary sources and bibliographies to dive into.

Academic Journals and articles in scholarly magazines are also a good place to look. Interesting theories that haven't been published in book form and the most recent scholarship on any given subject are more likely to be found in periodicals. They can be worth their weight in gold.

Using the internet is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it's convenient, and chances are that someone's published something about what you're looking for. On the other hand, there is no

quality control – anyone can publish anything on the web. There are no guarantees that what they choose to publish is in any way correct or reliable. Check for bibliographies and references. Internet research is a great place to start looking, but good research moves beyond that into books and journals.

Getting to the Point

Once you've done your research, it's time to corral your thoughts and get them on paper. The most important thing to keep in mind is giving your reconstruction context, and that means having a clear grasp on the period thing you're recreating. An easy way to do this is to follow the six tenets of journalism:

- What: what is the item? A 14th century shoe last? Mead? A horn spoon?
- When: define the era in which your item would most likely have been found. Be specific. Good: "1250-1300." Bad: "Medieval."
- Where: put the item in a location. Again, be as specific as you can. Good: Iberian Peninsula. Bad: Asia.
- Who: what sort of person would have used or enjoyed the item? Men? Women? Butchers? Bakers? Warriors? Kings? Nobility? Lower Classes?
- Why: why was the item used or constructed? Why was it constructed in the manner that it was?
- How: how was the item constructed? How was the item used?

Once you've established the period version of your item, you can now explain your recreation a little more easily. Explain the materials and methods you used to recreate the item, explaining and supporting any deviations or substitutions. For example:

"In 9th century Eastern Scandinavia, this mesh stitch was applied to the outside of the women's caftan using thread made of thinly hammered silver wrapped around a linen core. Real silver thread is prohibitively expensive, so a modern thread comprised of imitation silver around a polyester core was substituted, as it closely imitates the characteristics of the precious metal original."

If your method of construction deviates from the original, explain that (e.g.: machine stitched instead of hand done, kiln-fired instead of a fire pit, etc.). It's best to use as many period materials and methods of construction as possible in the recreation of your

item. However, demonstrating a clear understanding of how it was done in period, even if you weren't able to slavishly adhere to that in your recreation, can sometimes be just as good if your substitutions were reasonable and justified.

Disclaimer

This is the February 2004 issue of The Portcullis, a publication of the Shire of Cold Keep of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. (SCA, Inc.). The Portcullis is available from the chronicler at Council meetings or by request. It is not a corporate publication of SCA, Inc., and does not delineate SCA, Inc. policies. Any opinions expressed are not the opinions of the chronicler.

Copyright © 2004 Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. For information on reprinting photographs, articles, or artwork from this publication, please contact the chronicler. Please respect the legal rights of our contributors. Except where otherwise noted, all articles may not be reprinted without permission from the original contributor. Contributors must inform the chronicler whether or not their submission may be reprinted. Contributions must be received by the second Monday of each month.