

The King's Garb



The "Is it Period?" Issue - February ASXXXCVI (2003 A.D.)

"God in his wisdom has provided man with natural forks - his fingers. Therefore it is an insult to Him to substitute artificial metallic forks for them when eating."

– an 11th Century Venetian

In everyone's foray into the SCA they have at some point asked the question, "Is this period?" Sometimes the answer is obvious but other times sometimes it is not. I started to make a list of the various odds and ends which I thought were common things that I thought it would be interesting to pin down in terms of when they came into use. Most of the items covered would probably be assumed by most people as period, but they usually date back before one would think.

I think the cover is particularly appropriate because the fork is a focal point of the "is this period?" debates. And, of course, they just happened to be Byzantine forks to boot.

Your chronicler,
ARMATUS
Armatus



More Byzantine Forks.
Were we civilized or what?

From the Baron & Baroness

Greetings unto the people of the Barony of Myrgan Wood!! As the reign of Their Highnesses, Prince Ivar and Princess Asney, comes to a close, we would like to offer our thanks to these fine people for the time, effort, and energy that They have put into Their reign. We have truly enjoyed it.

We look forward to the reign of Their Excellencies Einar and Svetlana, Tanist and Tanista of Avacal and to the choosing of the new Avacalian Champions of Rapier and A&S. We encourage all those who can, to make the trek to the Canton of Vinjar to witness this and take part in these

competitions as they determine the best of the best in Avacal and we are confident that we have many in our Barony that belong with the best.

As well, we are looking forward to witnessing Their Majesties, Davin and Groa choose their A&S Champion in early March! We hope to witness the works of the artisans of our Barony there as well.

We would like to welcome Line, Rebecca, and Ferghail to the Baronial Curia as Exchequer, Herald, and Master of Stables respectively. The next business meeting will be Sunday March 9th. We look forward to your input in the issues.

We remain in service to Barony, Principality, Kingdom, and the dream,
Raoul and Roxanne
Baron and Baroness of Myrgan Wood

The Cover shows a Byzantine fork and spoon of the style illustrated in scenes of Job's Banquet and the Last Supper in cave churches of Cappadocia with details supplied from examples held in the Louvre, Paris

All you ever wanted to know about forking but were afraid to ask...

(edited from <http://www.clanntartan.org/articles/fork.html>)

The fork actually has a very long history, even being mentioned in the Old Testament: "And the priests' custom with the people was, that when any man offered sacrifice, the priests' servant came, while the flesh was in seething, with a fleshhook of three teeth in his hand, And he struck it into the pot ... all that the fleshhook brought up the priest took for himself" (1 Sam. 2:13-14) So while this claw-like fork was a fairly common cooking and fire keeping utensil and even popped up now and then on the table through the Middle Ages and beyond, the fork as a dining utensil was far from being a common item.

Forks did appear as a way to eat your meal at the table as early as the fourth century, having been introduced there from the East. But even then, it was only occasionally and at elegant dinner parties. To the west the fork remained an oddity, or worse. In the eleventh century, a Byzantine princess created a stir in Venice. The princess came to marry the future Doge, Domenico Selvo, and at one of the celebrations in her honor she dared to refuse to eat with her hands. Instead, she had one of her eunuchs cut her food into little pieces she was able to eat with a golden fork. The socialites of the era proclaimed it to be total decadence. However by the middle of the fourteenth century, it did start showing up occasionally in the inventories and wills of the nobles and the rich.

Besides being bejeweled, these forks are not like those we're used to now. The tines, usually only two, were short and straight, not curved. Forks weren't being used to bring food from the plate to the mouth, but instead were used to spear a piece of food, lift it from the serving plate or bowl and shake any excess sauce from it before grabbing it with your fingers (and just the thumb and first two fingers at that) to pop in your mouth.

Through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the use of forks slowly spread across Italy, Spain, and France. The English were quite a bit behind the French here, maybe because they were naturally suspicious of things from abroad. A book published in 1611 held the claim by a Thomas Coryate, a traveler who claimed to be the first man in London to eat with a fork. His friends would ridicule him, calling him *furciferus*, which meant, "pitchfork handler" (and is the word that also gave the fork its name). Coryate's response was, "Wait and see; one day you each will have a fork. Mark my words!" Sure enough, by the mid 1600's, eating with a fork had nearly become the norm for the upper classes and nobility of England. Then slowly the use trickled down to the craftsmen, merchants, and as styles and customs usually did, eventually reaching the poor.

Even as forks were gaining in popularity amongst those in the upper classes, many hosts, inns, and even the palaces did not provide table settings for dinner guests. By the mid-1600's cutlery centers such as Sheffield, England were not producing large number of forks along with knives and spoons. Most were either cast in molds or stamped from bars of metals such as steel or silver with handles carved of precious or semiprecious materials like rock crystal and ivory. In the upper classes, the beauty and rarity of the materials on ones utensils became a mark of social status.

By the end of the 1600's, manufacturers were adding additional tines, usually a third to denote the old custom of eating with just the first three fingers, and sometimes a fourth as we generally see now. This, along with the curving of the tines, made it much easier for diners to spear and scoop at the pieces of meats and vegetables.

Buttons

Buttons have been known to exist as far back as the Bronze age when they were worn as ornamentation. They were first used to decorate belts and other objects, rather than fasten clothing. Primitive man used thorn and sinew to hold clothing together. Bone stick pins were also used. With the introduction of metals came metal pins. The Egyptians used cloth ties and broaches or buckles to hold their clothes together. The Greeks and Romans are thought to have first worn buttons to actually fasten clothes. The 13th century saw form-fitting clothes come into vogue and buttons became necessary as common fasteners. As with all fine clothing, buttons were a status symbol and men competed to see who could have the best, the largest or the most intricate buttons. They were used by the nobility and made of silver and gold. Some buttons were made with exquisite paintings on them. They were carved, inlaid, stamped and covered. Craftsmen were even hired just to make buttons.



14th century English



Roman Button

Nails

Hand-forged nails were the first manufactured nails and they date back to Biblical times. Bronze nails, found in Egypt, have been dated 3400 BC. The Bible gives us numerous references to nails, the most well known being the crucifixion of Christ. We should also not forget that model wife in Judges who in 1296 BC drove a nail into the temple of her husband while he was asleep, “so he died.” As people first used hewn beams, timbers, planks, and whole logs to build with, the early hand-made nails were spikes. With the development of the split wood shingle, nails of about 1" long came into use. When sawyers, and then sawmills, began cutting dimension lumber, the sizes and varieties of nails greatly expanded. Thus, over time, nails developed in different sizes, shapes, and used different heads to fasten lumber and wood.

Avacal Investiture

February 22, 2003 in the Canton of Vinjar
Grande Prairie, Alberta

The Coronets of Avacal wish to invite the populace of Avacal and beyond to the Investiture of Their heirs, the Tanist and Tanista. Join us in this most festive celebration! Principality Championships of Arts and Sciences and Rapier will be held.

Site fee: \$14 non-members

\$ 8 Paid Members

Smalls under 12 free

Feast: \$15 - Deadline to register is February 12, 2003

A&S Competition:

Please contact Master James d'Orlean, (mikej@lions.com) regarding rules and regulations of the A&S competition. There are no cooking facilities on-site. Please contact A&S Champion and Autocrat if you will have need of these types of facilities.

Rapier Championship:

First Round:

- 30 min Cadet tournament. Only wins counted.
- Warmup and seating for Second round. (ie. how well you fight here determines who you face first in the Second round)
- You can use any weapon style you are authorized in.

Second Round:

- Standard double elimination tournament
- Your first bout is as follows: the person with the most wins fights the person with the least and so on.
- Weapon choice to be agreed on by opponents. Limited to what you are authorized in.
- All bi's will be fought by me and are destructive.
- Double deaths to be refought once and then are destructive for both participants.
- Final is a best 2 out of 3 with Their Highness's deciding on weapon combinations.

Autocrat:

a Bhantiarna Sadb ingen Thuathail

Vicki Foster

Box 983

Beaverlodge, AB T0H 0C0

(780) 354-3803

vfoster@telusplanet.net

-limited merchant space will be available, contact autocrat to reserve a table.

Site: D-Coy Armory at 9003 - 101 St. in Grande Prairie

Directions to Site: (opens on February 21st at 7 p.m. and closes February 23rd at 4 p.m)

North & East - take Hwy. 43 into town and follow through town (turns into 100 St.) follow SCA signs.

West take Hwy 43 into town, turn R on 100 St., follow SCA signs. South ? take hwy. 40 into town, turn R on 100 St., follow SCA sign

The Crossbow

Literary and physical evidence suggest that the crossbow first appeared in China during the 4th century BC. However, it wasn't until the 10th or 11th centuries AD that the crossbow became a significant military weapon in Europe. It passed from general military service in the 16th century with the introduction of firearms, but its use for hunting and target shooting has continued to the present day. The following chronology of the crossbow is abridged from the *GUIDE TO THE CROSSBOW* by Paterson:

- 341 BC Earliest reliable record of crossbow use at battle of Ma-Ling in China.
- 228 BC Earliest crossbow artefact, a bronze lock mechanism from the tomb of Yu Wang.
- 0-100 AD Heron of Alexandria describes gastraphetes.
- 300-700 Roman carvings of crossbows.
- 385 Vegetius mentions crossbows in *DE RE MILITARIA*.
- 1066 Crossbows introduced to England by Normans.
- 1096 Anna Comnena describes Norman crossbows.
- 1100-1200 Composite crossbow lath appears.
- 1139 2nd Lateran Council interdict forbids use of crossbow among Christians.
- 1192 Crusader victory at Jaffa aided by crossbows.
- 1314 Earliest reliable record of steel lath.
- 1346 Genoese crossbowmen defeated at Crecy by English longbow men.
- 1373 Earliest illustration of cranequin.
- 1503 First of many English laws restricting possession and use of crossbows.
- 1550-1600 Firearms replace crossbows in most Western armies.



Crossbow man in Geoffrey Luttrell Psalter (1325)

Kingdom Arts & Sciences Championship

March 1-2 , 2003 Calgary, AB

Come one, come all. Join us in the finest display of Arts and Sciences seen in many a year. The Barony of Montengarde, in the Principality of Avacal, is proud to host The An Tir Kingdom Arts and Sciences AS 37 (Calgary, Alberta, Canada, March 1 and 2, 2003). Join us for 2 days of classes, competitions, and of course the contest to select this year's new Arts and Sciences Champion. Competition and judging criteria can be found at the Kingdom A&S web site Championship page (below). Entrants must provide a letter of intent to Their Royal Majesties and to the Kingdom Minister of Arts & Sciences by Kingdom 12th Night, with email and snail addresses attached.

<http://www.currentmiddleages.org/artsci/championship.html>

Cost for the event as follows (all prices in Canadian dollars). Arts and Sciences Hall and competitions both days \$12 (Sunday only \$6)

Feast and Rapier Tourney \$12. If you preregister and prepay before February 2, 2003 we will give you a \$4 discount, for a total 2 day cost of \$20. Checks payable to MSCA.

Site Information

Arts & Sciences Hall:

Olympic Volunteer Centre

1833 Crowchild Trail NW

Hall opens Saturday March 1, 2003 at 7 am

Hall opens Sunday March 2, 2003 at 8 am

Feast (and Rapier) Hall:

Silver Springs Community Centre

5720 Silver Ridge Drive NW

Hall opens for Rapier Saturday March 1, 2003 9 am

Hall opens for feast Saturday March 1, 2003 4 pm

Autocrat:

Lady Tchaatz the Everwandering (Shannon Ralph)

402 2307 17a St SW, Calgary AB T2T 4S3

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stralph@telusplanet.net

General Reservations and Feast Reservations:

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5112 Barron Dr. NW, Calgary, AB T2L 1T6

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Crash Space Co-ordinator Oenghus (Ken Mullaney)

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oenghus@shaw.ca

(403)255-2183

Caravan Master (for directions and a possible bus)

Sir Brand, MPel (GregRobin Smith)

5932 - 37th Ave SW, Seattle, WA 98126-2836

sirbrand@yahoo.com

(206)933-8681

Championship queries:

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1052 Amphion St Victoria BC V8S 4G3

linnetkestrel@hotmail.com

(250) 595-1104

Artisans Display Coordinator

Mistress Morgan the Unknown

missym@shaw.ca

Clocks

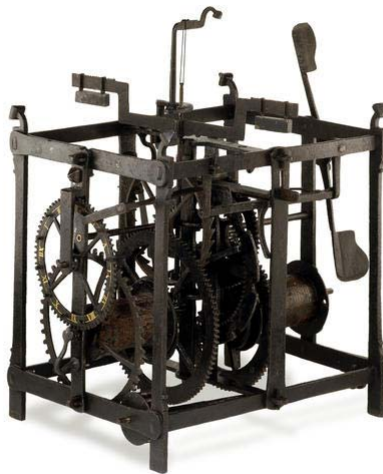
(Edited from <http://physics.nist.gov/GenInt/Time/revol.html>)

In Europe during most of the Middle Ages (roughly 500 CE to 1500 CE), technological advancement virtually ceased. Sundial styles evolved, but didn't move far from ancient Egyptian principles. During these times, simple sundials placed above doorways were used to identify midday and four "tides" (important times or periods) of the sunlit day. By the 10th century, several types of pocket sundials were used. One English model even compensated for seasonal changes of the Sun's altitude.

Then, in the first half of the 14th century, large mechanical clocks began to appear in the towers of several large Italian cities. We have no evidence or record of the working models preceding these public clocks, which were weight-driven and regulated by a verge-and-foliot escapement. Variations of the verge-and-foliot mechanism reigned for more than 300 years, but all had the same basic problem: the period of oscillation of the escapement depended heavily on the amount of driving force and the amount of friction in the drive. Like water flow, the rate was difficult to regulate.

Another advance was the invention of spring-powered clocks between 1500 and 1510 by Peter Henlein of Nuremberg. Replacing the heavy drive weights permitted smaller (and portable) clocks and watches. Although they ran slower as the mainspring unwound, they were popular among wealthy individuals due to their small size and the fact that they could be put on a shelf or table instead of hanging on the wall or being housed in tall cases. These advances in design were precursors to truly accurate timekeeping.

In 1656, Christiaan Huygens, a Dutch scientist, made the first pendulum clock, regulated by a mechanism with a "natural" period of oscillation. (Galileo Galilei is credited with inventing the pendulum-clock concept, and he studied the motion of the pendulum as early as 1582. He even sketched out a design for a pendulum clock, but he never actually constructed one before his death in 1642.) Huygens' early pendulum clock had an error of less than 1 minute a day, the first time such accuracy had been achieved. His later refinements reduced his clock's error to less than 10 seconds a day. Around 1675, Huygens developed the balance wheel and spring assembly, still found in some of today's wristwatches. This improvement allowed portable 17th century watches to keep time to 10 minutes a day. And in London in 1671, William Clement began building clocks with the new "anchor" or "recoil" escapement, a substantial improvement over the verge because it interferes less with the motion of the pendulum.



A 17th century tower clock

January Business Meeting Notes

Officer Reports:

Chronicler

– will be checking Chronicler funds

Chatelaine

-asked if we should ratify as a U of S club this year, it was decided not to, as a full years fees for 2 months use would be required

-proposed running a poster contest

Other Business:

-the Baron is the new Master of Web

-\$200 donation to Quad War site for the building of showers approved

-Myrgan Wood will try to volunteer to run Troll duty at Crown

-February will be the last Tavern in the Unitarian Center, new permanent venue to be decided by April

-a fundraising feast was mulled over as a means of raising Baronial funds

-SHEA voted that “the books” do not need to be audited

-the proposed Shire in Medicine Hat is working towards Shiredom with 12 members

Regular Events

Monthly Tavern & Business Meeting held first Wednesday of the month in the Unitarian Hall (912 Idylwyld Dr. North) at 7pm.

Fighting Practice is held:

-every Sunday at 2pm on the UofS campus, 144 Kirk Hall

-every Wednesday at 7pm, at City Park Collegiate

Other Events

February

Feast of the Evergreens in Stonewolf - Feb. 1

Avacal Investiture in Vinjar - Feb. 22-23

March

Kingdom A&S in Montengarde - March 1-2

Winter War in Borealis - March 15

April

Middle Eastern Ithra at Loch D'or - April 18-20

A&S and Rapier Champions in Myrgan Wood - April 26

Web Links

The SCA Corporate Homepage <http://www.sca.org/>

The Kingdom of An Tir's Homepage <http://www.antir.sca.org/>

The Principality of Avacal's Homepage <http://www.avacal.org/>

Myrgan Wood's Homepage <http://www.theringlord.com/mw/>

The University of Hawaii Astrolabe Page <http://www.ifa.hawaii.edu/tops/astlabe.html>

Another neat Astrolabe Page <http://www.astrolabes.org>

Myrgan Wood Officers List

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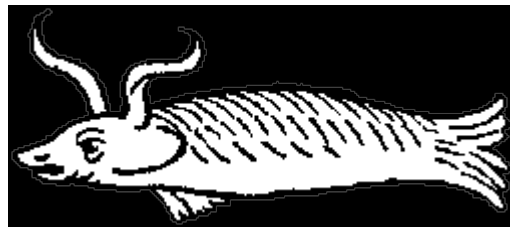
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