



A Cleftlands (Middle Kingdom) Newsletter - 5/16/2021

News of the Realm

SCA News -

- SCA has clarified that a homeowner hosting an SCA activity may require proof of vaccinations: <https://www.sca.org/news/from-the-society-seneschal-site-requirements-for-vaccinations/>
- Variance was granted for kingdoms to hold Crown Tournaments and Coronations in order to crown new Royalty by January 31, 2022: <https://www.sca.org/news/from-the-society-seneschal-blanket-variance-for-reign-changes-after-june-1-2021/>
- Society has posted a quick reference spot for information on code of conduct: <https://www.sca.org/news/new-conduct-behavior-in-the-sca-page/>

Kingdom News

- Re-opening: on June 13 the Midrealm opens for meetings, and on June 19 practices open. Events are not open at this time. For information on restrictions, please see: <https://midrealm.org/reopening/>
- **If you have questions about the reopening please send them to seneschal@cleftlands.org by Wednesday, May 19 so that all answers can be sought from Kingdom.**
- Watch the May 15 Royal Court: <https://youtu.be/Mkqj04QQAVc>
- Announcing the Tri-Kingdom University Tournament - create online classes, teach, and earn points for your kingdom. Learn more: <https://university.atlantia.sca.org/tkut.php>
- Kingdom is accepting bids for Fall Crown Tournament (keeping in mind current restrictions) by July 1.

Baronial News

- Please note that information on Cleftlands meetings and practices will be decided this week after questions can be answered. Plans will be announced as soon as possible.
- Thanks to those who applied for the Chatelaine position! Officers will be meeting this week to discuss and we will announce the next Cleftlands Chatelaine soon after that.
- Congratulations to Lady Shahzada and THL Jolicia for earning degrees in RUM.

Gardening the Medieval Way

By Lady Claricia de la Mere

As you plan your gardening and landscaping this year, if you haven't already, you may be considering incorporating your hobby with your other hobby and making your plantings more medieval. Here are some suggestions on how to do just that.

Decide your goals - What do you want to get out of your garden? While nowadays we often garden for aesthetics, gardening in period usually had a purpose. Even if you don't plan to use the fruits of your labor, you may want to decide if your garden is for food, medicine, or to display status and symbolism. Do you want to stick to a specific time period and location? That will narrow down your choices too.

Plan - Next you should take a look at your space and decide how much room you want to dedicate. You don't have to use up a lot of landscape - you can create the look and smells of a medieval garden in a single planter. Look at the space you've set aside and see how much sun it gets and what the soil is like. Consider what animals might try to munch on your plantings. Your persona would do the same! You'll want this information when deciding what plants to cultivate.

Continued on page 2.



Scholars in a Garden, China, Ming dynasty, 1598-1652

Medieval Gardening - continued

Medieval era European gardens were often laid out in rectangular or square beds, with one type of plant per bed, in a checkerboard pattern. This leaves space between the beds for working, but still optimized the land used. The beds were bordered by fences of woven hazel or willow sticks to keep out animals and contain the plants. Just like today, beans and peas would have been grown up a stick. You can easily do a single bed in this style, or your whole yard! You could even divide a window box using this method for a mini-medieval garden.

Japanese gardens added other features you might also want to consider. At first they were inspired from Chinese examples and included ponds with islands of rock groupings and meandering streams. In the 12th century, the garden designs transitioned from aesthetic to spiritual, becoming more austere and used as an aid in meditation.

Gardens in Al-Andalus (Andalusia) were meant to be representations of heavenly paradise, but were also meant for enjoyment. Water was a main feature, as were linear, symmetrical design, and geometric patterns..

Pick your plants - Everything you've already decided will help determine what you plant. If you want to plant according to what would have been done historically in a time and place, there are many sources that will tell you what common plants were known. Recipe books are a great place to start as they will tell you what was being eaten, and made into medicine, in your target era. While the wealthy could afford to bring in plants that were not already in the area, or were difficult to grow in that climate, those options would not have been common.

Everyone grew practical plants, as having enough food was a concern even amongst the wealthy. For the English garden, staples included broad beans, parsnips, and leeks. Herbs grown by monasteries and lords alike might include sweet bay, rosemary, sage, thyme, savory, rue, and fennel.

There are also trees to consider. In period, many orchards were kept, so you could try to add one of the following to your yard: almond, apple, cherry, fig, hazelnut, medlar, mulberry, pear, plum, quince, or walnut.

Roses were highly prized for their beauty and medicinal use, and had religious symbolism as well. In Andalusia, fragrant flowers were very important, and gardens smelled of jasmine, myrtle, laurel, and citrus trees.

When you have your list of possibilities, check to see what their sun, soil, and care requirements are. Then compare that information to what you have available for your garden beds - and how much work you want to do! Some plants, and especially trees, may take years of cultivating to see results.

Sources:

<https://www.theenglishgarden.co.uk/expert-advice/design-solutions/design-the-medieval-garden-style/>

<https://www.samuraitours.com/history-of-japanese-gardens/>

<https://www.tessellatebytraci.com/blog/2019/5/8/the-gardens-of-the-moors>

Random Period Object - Cleveland Museum of Art



The Vicarello Goblet; Roman; Found north of Rome; 25 BCE - CE 25

Worked silver; ~5" x 3" in size - <https://www.clevelandart.org/art/1966.371>

Multiple figures are worked in relief on this goblet, which displays a master's silver-smithing work. The scene depicts a rustic shrine of Priapus, who in mythology was the son of Dionysus. A woman seems to have brought to life the god to life who sits on a column. A table with offerings and dancing satyr and maenad are also depicted. See the website for other views.

This and other cups were found when the baths of Aquae Apollinares, in Vicarello, near Rome, were torn down. In total, about 5,000 bronze coins, 880 pounds of bronze nuggets, 3 gold vessels, 25 silver vessels, and various other metal objects were found.

Several of the other cups were inscribed with travel itineraries and are shaped like milestones. Unlike this goblet, they initially do not appear to be religious, but it is thought that all objects were left as an offering.

Armored:

Duke Eik's Videos:

Pole/Dane Axe Parrying Cuts:

<https://youtu.be/mTKd7MI6h7k>

Pole/Dane Axe Parries, Cuts,
and Thrusts from Back Angle:

<https://youtu.be/rpm2k9-9yPw>

Pole/Dane Axe Advanced

Parry with Counter Cut:

<https://youtu.be/0WjBZCpWBw>

The Known World SCA Virtual Fighter Practice Page:

Backyard Basics #56 - Drive
and Balance Footwork:

<https://youtu.be/KldztUk-YVU>

Rapier:

Maestras of Defense Ep.1:

<https://youtu.be/hjjlcLRcZTE>

Maestras of Defense Ep.2:

https://youtu.be/QQ1dw_Xu1pg

Maestras of Defense Ep.3

Get Good - Get Gooder:

<https://youtu.be/3YqrYGOdkkE>

Maestras of Defense Ep.4 Get
Good - The Phantom Good:

<https://youtu.be/3YqrYGOdkkE>

Call for Content

We want to make sure there's
a central place to get information
and see posts that might
get buried, or resources that
might not be shared.

If you have info to share - an
upcoming virtual gathering,
activity ideas, or a great
website, please contact me:
clariciadlm@gmail.com.

Thank you and stay well!

5 Questions for Cleftlanders - Baron Edward Brackenburye (mka Mark Doblekar) (he/him)

1.) What was your first SCA event?

It was the Cleftlands January event of 1997. I didn't know anything about what to expect. I watched the heavy fighting, attended court, and served feast. I didn't even have feast gear and had to borrow some. I didn't know what to bring or what to expect. It was the first time out of the weekly meeting setting. I had only been coming around for 4 months at this point.

2.) What are your two main activities in the SCA?

This is a harder question. A few years ago it would have been easy; Heavy fighting and archery. I knew what I was doing at events, heavy fighting and archery. Now that I don't fight anymore I can say archery and 'arts' in general and specifically embroidery. Not all events have archery so it becomes harder to know what I will be doing at an event. I do embroidery every week and am always working on a project... slowly. I enjoy the creative part of it and seeing how a project takes form and grows to completion. I still like archery, but it is hard to practice when we are closed for the pandemic. Our backyard isn't big enough. So we have to wait for things to open to continue with archery.

3.) What's something everyone should know about being Baron?

Don't think it's a glamour position. There is a lot of 'work' involved. Yes, you get to wear the coronet of the Cleftlands and meet with the Crown, and march out at Pennsic, and do fun out front things like court. But there is a lot of the behind the scene things we did to make sure everyone was having fun and involved. In the end, we probably did some really good things for the barony, but we probably failed peoples expectations too. You can't always make everyone happy no matter how hard you try. I think the most rewarding part was being able to hand out the few Baronial awards we had to those we felt really deserved them. We also acknowledged accomplishments with tokens we handed out too. I really liked our local Baronial Champions event. We made some strong ties with our champions. That was one of the best things.

4.) How did you get into embroidery?

I sometimes come up with really far reaching, grand ideas, that I can't completed, but start anyway. I had this idea that I could grow flax, turn it into linen thread, weave it into a piece of cloth and then embroidery it. I have no idea how that came to me. Of course after growing flax and turning it into poorly made wrapping twin that could be used to tie a box shut, I saw this wasn't going to work. I had already been researching the embroidery part and was buying the silk thread needed and knew what period picture I would use as inspiration. So I bought the good linen and started to embroider a pouch. I had tried two small modern projects before to get the feel of it. The history of embroidery and trying to get better keeps me involved. I think I like the challenge to create something. You can watch it grow in front of you and take satisfaction that you did this. It can take months to complete a project but it is worth it.

5.) What was fighting in Crown Tournament like?

It was an honor and amazing. I was always nervous going in. I saw all these really good fighters; Dukes, counts, knights, all competing for the same 'prize', to make their consort queen and to become king. I was standing with them for the same reason. I felt small in that company, but still one of them. The pomp and grandeur was what made it really feel special. I remember when Eikbrandr and Runa made their crown tournament invitation only. I was invited. What an honor. That really stands out in my memory as one of the best feelings.



Medieval Archeology News

By THL Jolicica atte Northclyffe

[Early pet traders, good news for lovers of soft mattresses, and a new colonial fort unearthed is all in this issue of medieval archeology news.]

1,500-Year-Old Import Trade in Tropical Parrots Found - Between 1100 and 1450, live scarlet macaws, Amazon parrots, and other parrot species were probably transported on llamas across the Andes Mountain to reach Atacama, where they were sold for their highly prized feathers, according to a Penn State University archaeologist.

Parrot remains from five sites in northern Chile's Atacama Desert were analyzed. Many of the macaws and parrots were mummified with their wings spread wide, or with beaks open and tongues sticking out. The mummified parrots were wrapped in cloth or placed in bags, which further helped preserve them. Parrot feathers also were found in grave sites.

Source: <https://www.archaeology.org/news>

Iron Age Swedish Warriors Buried on Feather Bedding - Two Swedish warriors buried in Sweden's Valsgarde burial ground were sent to the afterlife with swords and shields — and comfy feather bedding, new research suggests. The 7th-century down bedding is the oldest discovered to date in Scandinavia, and suggests the warriors held high status in their community.

One bed cushion was stuffed primarily with duck and goose down, while the other was filled with feathers from ducks, sparrows, crows, grouse, chickens, geese, and eagle-owls. The mix of feathers may have had symbolic meaning Nordic folklore.

Wealthy Greeks and Romans used down bedding, but the practice was rare in Europe prior to the medieval period, researchers said. The study was published in the Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports.

Source: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/iron-age-swedish-warriors-laid-rest-feather-bedding-1-180977373/>

Maryland's First Colonial Fort Found - A fort at St. Mary's, the first permanent English settlement in Maryland and one of the earliest in the United States, has been discovered, archaeologists report. Researchers found the undisturbed outline of the palisaded fort built by English colonists in 1634.

Scans of the area within the fort's outline revealed buildings that may be pre-existing structures built by Native Americans, although it is not clear if Native Americans resided in the fort with the colonists. A brick cellar, part of a musket and a 4,500-year-old quartzite arrowhead were excavated at the fort.

Contemporary records suggest that colonists, many of them Catholics fleeing persecution, purchased 30 miles of land in what would become Maryland from the Yaocomaco Indians with axes, hoes, hatchets, and cloth.

Source: <https://www.archaeology.org/news/9538-210323-maryland-colonial-fort>

This Week in History

May 16 1568 - Mary, Queen of Scots, flees to England.

May 17 1395 - Wallachians defeat an Ottoman invasion at the Battle of Rovine.

May 18 1388 - A Chinese army crushes the Mongols at the Battle of Buyur Lake.

May 19 1051 - Henry I of France marries [Anne of Kiev](#), a Rus princess, who later rules as regent for their son.

May 20 1506 - Christopher Columbus dies after 14 years of fevers, bleeding from the eyes, blindness, & gout.

May 21 879 - The state of Croatia is recognized internationally for the first time as Pope John VIII gives blessings.

May 22 1246 - Henry Raspe is elected the anti-king of Germany, opposing Conrad IV - but only reigns 9 months.

Cleftlands Officers' Contact Information

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Upcoming Cleftlands Events

- Thursday, May 20 8pm EST Virtual Armorers' Guild Meeting -<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84704344487?pwd=UGJrZUxqNW5JQ05jeHBtYWdLQUl4QT09>
- Tuesday, May 25 7:30pm EST Virtual Needleworkers' Gathering - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88261643621?pwd=UGx1TTdPcVdNNWtHZFhDZkxYR0d5Zz09>
- Thursday, May 27 8pm EST Virtual Armorers' Guild Meeting -<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84704344487?pwd=UGJrZUxqNW5JQ05jeHBtYWdLQUl4QT09>

Portrait photo of Baron Edward Brackenburye credited to Lord Tarmach ben Yehuda al-Khazari.

Images of Scholars in a Garden and the Vicarello Goblet are courtesy of the Cleveland Museum of Art. As of January 23, 2019, the Cleveland Museum of Art is an Open Access institution, using the Creative Commons Zero (CC0) designation for high-resolution images and data related to its collection. This means the public now has the ability to share, collaborate, remix, and reuse images of many as 30,000 public-domain artworks from the CMA's world-renowned collection—all without asking permission. In addition, portions of collections information (metadata) for more than 61,000 artworks, both in the public domain and those works with copyright or other restrictions, are now available.

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