

The Barony



The Newsletter of the Barony of Three Rivers

Bonus Q3 Edition

Anno Societatis LVII

Table of Contents

Kingdom Calendar Calontir Page 3

Kingdom Calendar Midrealm Page 4

Gryphons Fest Wrap-Up Pages 5 and 6

Winter Court Report Page 7

A Barony Abroad: Court Reports from Fewer Rivers Page 8 and 9

Notes from the Gryphons Fest Cutting Room Floor Pages 10-12

An Introduction to Armored Combat Pages 13-15

The Dubious Astronomical Origins of Hallowe'en Pages 16-17

The Huscarls of Njorðr Pages 18-20

Sacrificial Burials in First Dynasty Egypt Page 21-23

Autumn Accolade Page 24

All photographs by Shoshanah bas Nachman or her staff, except as noted.

Pen and ink drawing, Lady Brigid Ingen Donnagaile. Used with permission.





KINGDOM CALENDAR

Calontir

January 28

Clothiers' Seminar

Shire of Cùm an Iolair

February 25

Chieftains

Barony of Three Rivers

February 2-5

War of the Phoenix

Kingdom of Atenveldt

March 11 – 19

Gulf Wars

Kingdom of Gleann Abhann

February 18

Winter War Maneuverz

Barony of Vatavia

April 1

Feed the Beasts

Shire of Westumbria



Come join us! Weekly meetings 6:30-9:00 p.m. every Wednesday at the Webster Groves Masonic Temple, 12 East Lockwood, Webster Groves, MO, 63119

Midrealm Calendar

January 21

Festival of Maidens (Shire of Caer Gwyn)

Winter Wassail (Shire of Rivenvale)

January 28th

Winter Revel (Barony of Andelcrag)

Masque of Courtly Loveb (Marche of Alderford)

February 4th

Candlemas XXXIII

February 11th

St Valentine's Day Massacre & Tournament of Chivalry



Your paragraph text

adiuuandum me festina Glo

Gryphons by the Sea



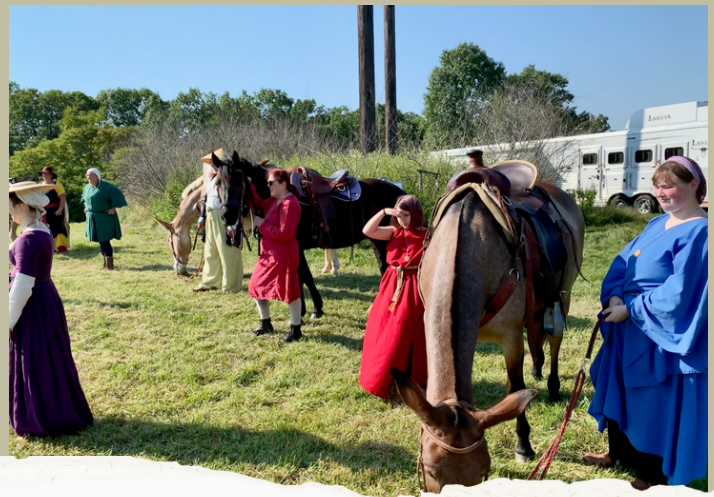
This year's Gryphons Fest rollicked a sea theme, expressed in signposts highlighting facts of medieval history involving sea travel, fight scenarios like "Walk the Plank" and "Sailors vs. Mermaids", and classes such as one on the Antikythera Mechanism (pulled from the sea a century ago, dating to ancient Greece).

The weather was magnificent, the Court spectacular with multiple peerages, including Her Highness Princess Ylva (who also graced one of the classes), the activities manifold, the Bardic outstanding, and the sky afire with stars to delight our resident quadrant-wielding Ptolemaist, Jon Chesey. Archery and equine activities complemented heavy and steel fighting.



Gryphons at Sea, in grandeur of sun:
archery, equines, feasting, and Allthing;
boisterous Bardic, with night sky ablaze,
and singing in sadness in memory soft.
Twilight of Summer: the seasons turn.





Court Report

Jon Chesey – Silver Hammer
Isabella Danielle – Torse
Gwynneth wraig Rhys – Torse
Syele Pfeifferin – Calon Lily
Nadya Helming – Calon Lily
Caitlyn Rochwensdaughter — AoA

Lord Bero von Wustenbrunner won the Baronial Archery Championship.
The boon was begged for HL Hugo van Harlo to join the Order of the Laurel.



See [below](#) for a wondrous article by Event Steward HL Jon Chesey regarding all the research you didn't see at Gryphons.





Winter Court



Eli of Three Rivers was recognized on the field with a Talon.

Lady Rivka bat Zakarriyya was awarded a Patronage

Baroness Syle Pfeifferin, Lady Jane Augusta Sinclair, Lady Dagney Ingen Mhuichada were celebrated as Tributaries

Lord Yngvarr Bjarnakarl and Lumière were awarded a Garter

Lord Eirik Thorkelsson, Lady Cara of Caer Rhudd, and Violeta Yolent Saint-Clairen von Stuttgart were awarded their patronage

Master Dammo Uttweiler was admitted to the Order of Gallantry

Lord Bero von Wustenbrunner was endowed with the
Order of Three Rivers

Avigail bat Michael ha-Cohen won the A&S competition.

Lord Öyrikr Raðúlfsón won both the Armored combat and the Cut & Thrust tournaments.

Endless thanks go to the event stewards, Lady Rivka bat Zakarriyya and Lady Eva Celensoen

Courtly Love

Wherein Members of the Barony of Three Rivers Find Honor in Courts Not Fortunate enough to Be Three Rivers

Coronation

Melchor Eichmann – Queen’s Endorsement of Distinction for Chivalry

Honorable Lord Hugo van Harlo scheduled to be elevated to the Order of the Laurel at Clothiers Seminar.

Kingdom Heraldic, Scribal, and Dance Symposium

Surprising no-one but delighting all, Lord Melchor Eichmann won day in the armored combat tournament.

Fall Crown Tournament

In Calontir court:

Duncan Mac Torquill – Eo Fyrd

Faustus Cantilius Lupus – Calon Cross



A hint!

To make wool less itchy, hand-wash it with shampoo (ideally, the stuff that involves silk), rinse, and soak in water with a dollop of conditioner (yes, hair conditioner) mixed in. Soak for two to ten minutes. Rinse again. Block and dry. Thank us later.



Toys for Tots Tournament



Scroll by Lady Violetta Sinclair. Used with permission of the scribe and Lord Melchor Eichmann



1809 total toys and \$755 in monetary donations were presented

Michael Ledger, *dictus* Redboots received his Iren Fyrd

Melchor Eichmann awarded Iren Hirth

The boon was begged for Giacomo dalla Fattoria dello Stato to join the
Order of Defense.

Sir, We Are a Lighthouse:

Notes from the Cutting Room Floor of Gryphons' Fest

by HL Jon Cheseby

At Gryphon's Fest 2021, one of the most well-received activities was visiting the shrines we erected concerning the Calontir saints. I wasn't entirely sure if this was due to the connection to Calontir's history and personas or simply because people found it fun to go on a quest about the site. This year I tried something similar to get people moving about — but this time, with information boards to learn about maritime trade. To research this topic, I ended up reading two books: *Roles of the Sea in Medieval England* and *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade Around Europe 1300-1600*, as well as several journal articles. This was an effort to collect as much information as possible and see what topics I had enough of to cover a full info board. However, this meant that a lot of interesting information didn't make the cut. In this article, I'd like to share some of the fascinating things I learned that ended up on the cutting room floor.



Source British Library: *L'estoire del Saint Graal* (ff. 1-76);
L'estoire de Merlin (ff. 76-216). Used with permission.)

Port Infrastructure

Much of the information displayed ended up being about the ships themselves and the people onboard, but ships need a place to dock and be loaded and unloaded. Thus, port infrastructure deserves a mention. As cities generally need a source of fresh water, many prominent ones were located along rivers. The trouble with being at the mouth of a river is that this can result in silting of the estuary, making the bottom too shallow for ships to pull into the port. As a consequence, dredging of ports to shift silt from the primary channels to the port originated in period. As an alternative, larger port cities would build structures that extended

into the water such as docks and quays. These and the ships they serviced would need to be protected from strong currents and thus some cities in period were already developing seawalls and breakwaters.

While it may be advantageous for ships to float higher and avoid bottoming out, a higher center of gravity also puts them at risk of tipping. Accordingly, even when not cargo-laden, ships often carried weight, known as ballast, to lower their centers of gravity. This presented a problem for port cities as ships full of ballast would need to unload this before picking up cargo: simply dumping it in the harbor could lead to problems similar to silting. Different cities had different laws. Some required ballast be dropped in deeper waters. Others recycled the ballast, as stone, typically basalt or occasionally limestone or granite, was the most common item used. Today, looking at the origin of the ballast dumped near ports or recycled into buildings gives historians clues about trade networks. {continued next page}

Financing Trade

Maritime exploration and trade was an extraordinarily expensive venture. As such, numerous ways to finance it were necessary. While you might expect that kings or governments would finance trade, this was relatively rare until quite late in period. Indeed, cities frequently prohibited loans for ventures they deemed “too risky” and these often included long-distance maritime trade.

As a result, trade was often financed by merchants themselves, using their own (often generational) wealth. For larger expeditions, merchants would sometimes join together forming a company. Each would invest in the voyage and split the profit accordingly. Some merchants would take apprentices to whom they would give some money on the condition that the apprentice then contributed an equal amount of their own funds and then divide the profit accordingly.

As ships evolved and became more reliable, the prohibitions on money-lending became less restrictive, but banks were still prohibited by the Church for charging interest. To get around this, banks would charge late fees with the understanding that those taking out loans would intentionally pay late thus guaranteeing income for the bank. Those that did not would find themselves unable to secure loans in the future.



To profit from trade, cities and crowns would often impose customs and duties on both imports and exports. Avoiding these to reduce the costs of trade was important for merchants. In many cases, merchant guilds would form to attempt to negotiate better rates for their members. This difference in rates created a strong competitive advantage for local merchants. For example, in London in 1471, the rate for foreigners exporting wool was 48% of the price paid whereas it was 25% for locals. Foreigners could sometimes get around this by establishing residency by living in the city for a certain amount of time each year. However, in some cases, the large number of foreigners coming to live in a port city for this purpose led to xenophobic pushback. *(See next page for more on maritime law.)*

More on Maritime Law

I had so much information on maritime law that it was hard to figure out how to organize it. I ultimately decided to skip the history and concentrate on particular scenarios. So here's a bit of additional background:

The first maritime laws we have in writing started appearing independently in Scandinavia, western France, and northern Germany in the 13th century. In Scandinavia, this included the *Farmanna logh* (Seaman's law) of which we have fragmented remains. It covered contracts, seaworthiness of ships, fines for overloading them, duty and chores of crew, damages to the ship and jurisdiction in event of problems, return voyages, jettison, sailing in convoys, use of timber in case of emergency, salvage of anchors, use of mooring locations, and towing of ships.

One of the sets of law that did get a mention in the boards was the *Roles d'Oleron* which were written, possibly by Eleanor of Aquitaine, sometime around 1286 to govern the transportation of wine between France, England, Flanders, and Scotland. These covered payment of freightage in case of shipwreck, reimbursement of damages to cargo and ship in cases of jettison, damages in ship collisions, loading and unloading of goods and securing both ship and cargo, duties of pilots and their payment breaches of contract with regards to the amount of time agreed upon for loading, the requirement of captains to confer with merchants as to the appropriate time to sail, authority of the captain to hire and fire crew, their responsibilities, and his responsibility to care for their injuries and provide them with food.

Such laws were often written in one location but elements that worked would often be adopted or enshrined into law elsewhere. For example, elements of *Farmanna logh* were made law by King Magnus Hakonson. Similarly, when new cities were formed that desired to join the Hanseatic league, they would be required to adopt Hanseatic laws. *The Ordinance ende insetting die de coopluden ende schippers holden mit malcander* (Ordinance and statutes which the merchants and skippers observe among themselves), a Dutch set of laws, was copied largely verbatim from the *Roles*. The concept of "general average" (all parties on a voyage sharing risk in equal proportion to their investment) was handed down from Roman times.



Source: Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des Manuscrits, NAF 159. 39. Used with permission

AN INTRODUCTION TO ARMORED COMBAT

Also called: Rattan Fighting and Heavy Fighting

by

Amba Allrasystir, Iren Fyrd, authorized fighter for 19 years and counting!

Armor Requirements

The minimum requirements for armored combat are a **helmet**, **neck protection** that includes the cervical vertebrae and the notch in the collar bone (gorget), **kidney protection** that includes the floating ribs, **groin protection**, **knee and elbow protection** covering the points of the joint, and **hand protection** (gauntlets or a combination of basket hilt and half gauntlets). That's all that's required!

Most fighters prefer to wear more armor: being hit hurts! Optional but common items include forearm (vambraces), thigh (cuisse), collarbone, chest, and shoulder (pauldrons).

All armor is required to be padded. The thickness required varies from ¼" to ½"

You provide your own groin protection (cup or equivalent for physically male; Jill or equivalent for physically female). We have loaner gear for everything else.

The first weapon system everyone is required to learn is **sword and shield**. This is the safest system for both the student and teacher, as it has more inherent defense (shield) and it's a lot harder to overpower a single-handed sword shot. After that, you can authorize in any order.

But where do the snails fit in, Amba?



WHENCE THE GASTROPODS?

from Brunetto Latini's *Li Livres dou Tresor*, France (Picardy), c. 1315-1325, Yates Thompson MS 19, f. 65r, British Library. Used with permission.



"Most fighters prefer to wear more armor: being hit hurts!"

Wound Man from Hans von Gersdorff's Feldtbuch der Wundartzney (Strasburg, 1519). Used with permission.

Other authorizations are greatsword (two-handed, 6' sword); polearm (two-handed 6' weapon with a limited striking surface, can have thrusting tips at both ends), two-weapon (any two single-handed weapons for the authorization); spear (9' fiberglass or rattan weapon. Must authorize using fiberglass: a thrust-only weapon); combat archery; and marshal. (*continued next page*)

[continued from "Armored Combat,"
previous page]

Anyone can practice without an authorization, that's the purpose of practice! You can learn any weapon system (or combination of systems), you just have to authorize sword and shield first.

How hard are we hitting?

Hard. Hard enough to bruise if we weren't in armor. We calibrate (practice) to hit at about the same force between different people and different weapon systems. It is NOT a universal calibration: some Kingdoms are known for being hard hitting. One of the more advanced skills is the ability to change your force level to match your opponent's skill and the general level of where you are fighting.

Where can you hit?

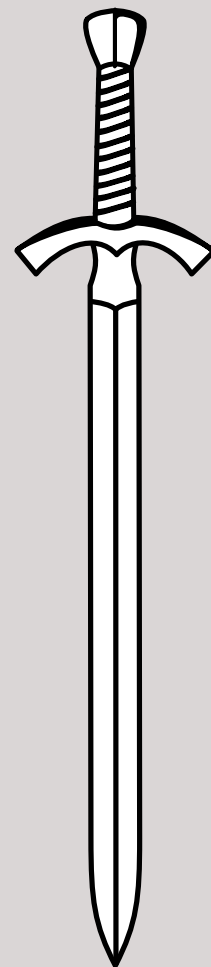
For armored combat, legal targets are from 1" above the wrist to 1" above the Knee. This is because with the force we use, it is too easy to injure the hands, knees, and lower legs. All the rules in armored combat are for safety, from the maximum gap in our helmets (1") to the maximum weight for a great sword (6 lbs). Thrusts to the body are "full force" but thrusts to the face are much softer, just enough to shift a helmet ("positive pressure"). Although the groin is considered a body shot, most people will also throw those lighter, as a courtesy to their opponents.

Authorizations are safety tests, not skill tests. When a fighter has practiced enough and wants to be able to fight at events, they go through an authorization. First, they are inspected to ensure their weapons and armor are safe and complete. Then they are asked about the rules of the list and the marshal's handbook. The actual fighting occurs in three stages. In round one, the fighter is asked to verbally acknowledge all blows (call out "good head" or "light leg").



A source close to the author claims, "We don't usually go this hard on authorizations," but she grinned with an awful lot of teeth when she said this.
Source: *La Bibliothèque nationale de France, Français 1581, f. 6v. Used with permission.*

The opponent, an already-authorized fighter, also calls out all blows. After the marshals have observed and feel the person is safe, we move to round two. In round two the authorizee acts out all blow: if you lose a leg, you fight from your knees, if you die, you fall down, & c. The opponent does not have to act out the blows. One thing we check here is if you know how to "die" safely. Fall down, curl up, shield over your torso and ribs, sword hand safe, knees and ankles not crossed. The final round is "off-hand." If you lose your arm during a tournament, you are required to switch hands. Round three is to show you can throw and block with your non-dominant hand. After a successful authorization the marshals sign off on the paperwork and it is the fighter's responsibility to turn it in to the Kingdom. A scan or photograph can be sent via email, you no longer need to send it via "snail mail"! (You can still mail it in if you prefer). *[This is a wholly inadequate explication of the snails, Your Ladyship. -- Ed.]*[continued next page]



Who decides if a blow is "good"? The person being hit. It is up to the person being hit to determine if there was sufficient force for the blow to be good. They can, however, ask their opponent and any marshals for information, such as if it was blade or flat (the blade is the “sharp” side of the sword). Marshals and opponents cannot call blows for the person receiving them. Discussion is highly encouraged, especially during tournaments.

Are our weapons padded? Thrusting tips are padded on all weapons. Mace and Ax style weapons have padded heads. Great swords are unpadded. Polearms have padding along the blade. (Some Kingdoms allow unpadded polearms. Calontir is still experimenting.)

Fighters are not separated by gender, physical size, experience or age, except that you must be at least 16 to authorize as an adult fighter. If you want to try out fighting, please do! I’m happy to show you how to swing a sword, hold a shield, or even outfit you in loaner gear.

Have a question about fighting? Send it to the chronicler, and I’ll answer it in a future edition of the Barge!



The Dubious Astronomical Origins of Hallowe'en

by HL Jon Cheseby



Like the monsters lurking in the mists of Halloween stories, the origins of this holiday are similarly shrouded. The etymological origin of the word at the very least has its origins in the Christian holiday of All Hallows Day (Nov 1) where the term “Hallows” means saints or other holy individuals. The night before (the “eve”) was also a celebration. But why were these dates chosen?

Several writers have proposed various astronomical origins for this choice. Here, we'll explore three of them looking at how plausible each is.

Cross Quarter Day

One astronomical justification I've encountered is the fact that October 31st/ November 1st is very close to a “cross-quarter day” (1). Just as there tend to be celebrations on solstices (the shortest and longest days) or equinoxes (days where the day and night are equal length), it is common to find holidays half-way between a solstice and the subsequent equinox or vice-versa. For example, Lammas Day (a harvest holiday) falls approximately halfway between the summer solstice (~June 21) and the autumnal equinox (~Sept 21).

Culmination of the Pleiades

Another proposed astronomical connection to Halloween is the cluster of stars known as the Pleiades. This small cluster is easily visible to the naked eye to the right of Orion in the winter months. During much of the medieval period, it was at its highest point (known as culmination) at midnight around the end of October. Various sources, including Neil DeGrasse Tyson's *Cosmos* series [1, 2], make this connection, but fail to explain why this should be any more significant than the culmination of any other bright object. As such, this one smacks more of coincidence than significance.

Taurid Meteor Stream

A final proposed reason for the choice of date for Halloween is that it roughly corresponds to an annual meteor shower known as the Taurids [3]. However, the Taurids are not an especially impressive meteor shower. The average rate of meteors visible to the unaided eye tends to be about five per hour. In contrast the annual Perseid meteor shower (~Aug 12) tends to have around 60 visible per hour and the Leonid meteor shower (November 17) averages about 15. While the Perseids do get a historical reference, being referred to as the “Tears of Saint Lawrence” [4] whose martyrdom was near the same date, neither of these more significant showers receive any sort of holiday. The Perseids also get a mention in period sources from China, Japan, and Korea.

The caveat I must give here is that these averages are from a modern perspective. Meteor showers are caused by the earth passing through the diffused tails of comets. The density of these tails changes over time, decreasing as they spread out, but potentially also increasing should the comet return to replenish the stream without being tugged into an orbit which doesn't cross Earth's by gravitational interactions with other planets. Thus, the modern rate may not necessarily be an accurate reflection of the historical rate. Still, I am unaware of any references to this meteor shower in period, and as such, have no reason to suspect it was more significant in the past.



Candy Corn marginalia by Lord Lawrence Withers. Used with permission.

Citations

McClure, Bruce. “EarthSky | Halloween Is an Astronomical Holiday.” [EarthSky.com](https://earthsky.org), 29 Oct. 2021.

“Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey - Sisters of the Sun.” Season 1, episode 8, 2014.

Project, The Human Origin. “The Spooky True Meaning of Halloween According to Astronomy.” [Medium](https://medium.com), 7 Dec. 2021.

Romey, Kristin. “The Grisly ‘Origin Story’ Behind the Perseid Meteor Shower.” [Science](https://www.sciencemag.org), 4 May 2021 .

THE HUSCARLS OF NJORDR

by Lynn Blackstone



sit on a beach, on a spread-out bit of rust-red oilcloth, set a safe distance from my little driftwood fire. I watch a pale-skinned and red-haired gangly teen dive into the mild lapping waves of surf, like a seal. Around him, the bigger boats bob along with the tides, at anchor in the calm harbor. I look beyond my own beached merchant boat, an aging knarr, fifteen strides long, and able to carry twenty tuns of wine and still safely traverse the oceans. She has passed across the channel, sailed the waters around Serkland, and docked in the city of Constantinople. Now, though, she harbors near to my home in the Kyles of Bute, in Dal Riata.

The day is cold and gray and at its end. The teen wades out of the water, wearing just a loincloth. I watch him squat and shiver, retrieving his coarse-woven tunic, and sliding into it. He then puts on loose breeches. He has no shoes of any kind. His feet are black on the bottom with tar. He pries open a fist to stare at some treasure in his palm, then presses his hands together and blows into them, still shivering.

“Hey there, boy!” I yell, hoping to be heard over the sounds of the beach.

He perks up and heads toward me. When he’s near, he nods his head in a faint salute of deference and boldly asks, “Taking on hands, Ma’am?” He speaks our Scots Gaelic well enough, for a sailor. I think he might be from the south of the islands.

“Maybe. I’m Lynn, mistress of this boat,” I say, gesturing toward my knarr. “What’s your name?”

He looks at the boat, and back at me. There aren’t many women commanding their own boat. I’m sure he’s working it through in his brain. “Ian,” he mumbles dumbly in response. As he works it through in his head, my nephew Cieran approaches. He, like most of my kin, is a short boxy man, compared to the long Northmen. His hair is brown, turning red on the ends, long and braided into a single tail, down the middle of his back. Likewise, his beard is braided into a single tail in the front. He is wearing a blue tunic, with silver torques around his upper arms, although fewer than he left with, I notice. He carries a clay pot with a crude rope handle, and a bulging sack of coarse cloth.



British Library, MS Add. 49598. Used with permission

Cieran eyes the boy. “Wharf rats eat into our profits,” he says unkindly. “We need a cat.” He turns toward the boat to leave the meager warmth of the fire. The boy strides forward, nearly pleading. “Can I at least stay by the fire here? For a bit? I can pay some...” He presents coins he pulled from the water.

[*Huscarls, continued from previous page*] Cieran looks at the boy, and practiced contempt turns to something else. The face of a man who has seen the rage of the ocean looks up with the dead calm of a frozen river.

“Where did you get these?” he asks with glacial malice.

“Just... out there,” the confused and frightened teen gestures toward the water, understanding he did something wrong, but having no idea what.

“You took them from the harbor?” Cieran asks with a frigid barb of accusation.

The teen nodded.

“Those were offerings to Njordr. You stole from Njordr,” Cieran sets down the clay pot he carries and unshoulders the burdensome sack.

The boy bolts off down the beach, in the growing gloom of an overcast evening.

“Sometimes, I swear there isn’t a fleck of kindness in your heart,” I say.

He gestures out toward the water. “You can just fish right off the beach! Calm waves, soft beach to cradle your knarr in low tides! And yet here’s this fool stealing our offerings to Njordr! Risking all this. Risking a God’s wrath.”

“I think you believe old tales too much.”

“I risk the wrath of Aegir for my silver, and I know that risk, but when I take harbor, that’s the kindness of Njordr, and I would not show a crumb of disrespect to one with such hospitality!”

“All right then,” I relent. “I won’t take him aboard.” I pause before adding “I have traveled the length of the Mediterranean, and the Baltic Sea. I have seen much of the world, but never have I encountered a creature more prone to superstition than a common sailor.”

“And I have seen a lot of people who are very good at scratching wax tablets and talking about philosophers of old who have yet to understand that all the things that exist aren’t all written down. Call me a ‘common sailor’ again, and I’ll say ‘thank you.’”

I smile. He doesn’t.

“Barley and fish in the kettle,” I say, hoping to calm him some.

“Thanks,” he says. He stares off into the distance as the world slowly darkens around us. Only the little fires scattered down the beach, dancing in the gusts of wind, light the gloom.

He scoops the thick soup from the pot, into a wooden bowl, huddles around its steaming warmth, and lifts his horn spoon toward his lips to blow softly on it. “Story I heard from fellows up the way is that boy has been here a few days,” Cieran offers. “He came into the harbor a few days ago, and the little boat he was on sank, not a bowshot from shore. His father died. His uncle died. Four other men. He made it to shore.”

We sit without speaking for a while, as he eats his dinner. I listen to the pops and sputters of the flames, and feed another piece of wood into the fire. I look back down the beach, and can just make out the teen boy, settled at another campfire. The guilt on my conscience eases some, knowing he’s not freezing.

Moments after, I see the vague forms of men wading out of the surf near their camp. I blink and shield my eyes from my own campfire, certain I’m seeing it all wrong.

Half a dozen or so men in heavy armor wade from the surf, water dripping from them. It’s a moment before I see the weeds tangled in their armor, before I notice the dark shade of the rusted rings on their once-glorious shirts of maille. Their shields are rotted, and the heads of their spears gnawed by rust. Barnacles encrust their helms. Beneath the coifs of maille, buried beneath beards of seaweed, there is no flesh to be seen. The skeletal and toothy grins can only be glimpsed by firelight in the starless night. Some ancient king or chief, I imagine, drowned in this water, rather than be taken hostage. Now he is a Huscarl of Njordr, come to take back what rightly belongs to his king.

I felt that I could only observe. The slightest movement might make these things from the sea believe me to be a player in whatever dark game was in progress, and I wished no part of it. If I could dare the slightest movement, I would divert my eyes, but I fear even that. Even against the sting of campfire smoke and salty breeze, I fear to blink.

So I watch, and finally hear the panicked screams of the teenage boy, who had somehow slipped Njordr’s nets once, and tested his fate a second time. Those men from the dark water seize him. The gust of wind brings with it the scent of those men, those dreadful wights of Njordr. The smell is all that I imagine crabs feast upon. It is all the things of rot and decay. [*Continued next page*]

The boy, Ian, claws at the sand as the Huscarls of Njordr drag him, kicking and flailing toward the surf. And along with the nauseating scent, the wind brings his screams, the sound of a lamb to the slaughter.

The sailors around the campfire with him flee into the shadows, away from the grim guards. One sprints recklessly toward our camp. At last the screams drown out.

Quite literally.

The shadowy men of rust and ruin wade into the water, dragging the boy under.

The paralysis which has held me frozen like a rabbit is relaxing as the sailor from down the beach finally reaches us.

I hear the other man approach before I see him, or smell him. I turn to look at another of the drowned guards approaching out of the darkness mere strides away from me. Any hope that distance had tricked my eyes is stripped away. That man of rot stands nearby. He reaches a hand forward. It is a decaying leather gauntlet, held palm up, toward the sailor.

The sailor, a man of living flesh stumbles back and fumbles for his coinpouch, producing an aged and water-gnawed coin with nearly miraculous swiftness.

“Take it! Take it!” the sailor implores, dropping the coin into the palm of the ruined gauntlet.

The huscarl seems satisfied, and with slow, heavy strides, wades into the water, and into the black of night.

Moments pass, with only the wind, the sputtering of the flame, and the sounds of the gentle waves on the beach.

I watch Cieran draw a handful of coins, and by firelight find a fat silver one. He turns toward the water and shouts, “You are a just Asir, Njordr!”

He throws the coin into the water. I gaze in wonder, as the other sailors up and down the beach that I can see all do the same, bid by no priest. The ways of the Northmen blend here with those beliefs of the Celts. I withdraw my own coin, and throw it into the bay.

“You are a just Asir, Njordr.” I keep my voice steady and give a slight nod of my head.

“Fear of the gods” isn’t something I think about much, but it consumes this night, and I suspect it will consume a number of other nights before the ocean claims me.



Author’s Note: I always wondered what kept people from scooping up the votive offerings sailors made at the start of voyages, like scraping pennies from a fountain. This is the tale I imagine they told to keep them from stealing offerings to the gods.



Sacrificial Burials in First Dynasty Egypt

by Lord Thorfinn MacDomnaill

When we think of ancient Egypt, we usually think of the Great Pyramids, Tutankhamun's golden funerary mask, and the impressive temples of Ramses the Great. We think of ancient Egypt as a sophisticated society for the time, though myths of the pyramids being built by slaves endure (not the topic of this article, but the pyramids were built by well-provisioned craftspeople - their village has been found on the Giza Plateau not far from the pyramids). Few of us know anything about the earliest centuries of Egypt, as the nation was being formed. Before even the Step Pyramid of Saqqara built by the royal architect Imhotep for the Third Dynasty pharaoh, Djoser. But before this, there was what we call the First Dynasty. The First Dynasty of Egypt began with the rule of King Aha. Aha ruled a recently united Egypt in the 31st century BCE.

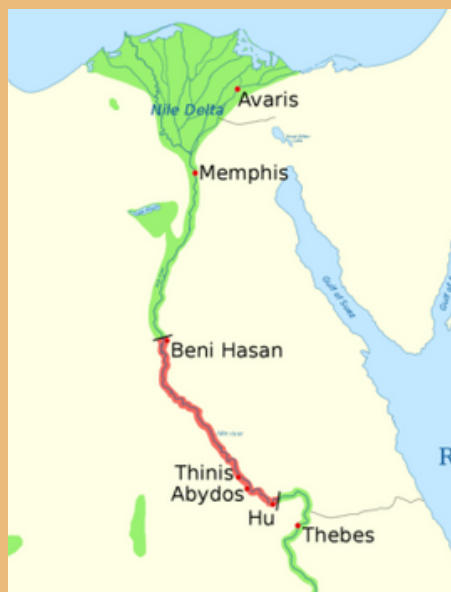


Image by Wikipedia user Iry-Hor

From Predynastic times, Egyptian rulers had been buried at Abydos. Aha was also buried there, but he didn't have an impressive pyramid, or even a mastaba (a mastaba is similar to what one level of the Step Pyramid would be on its own). Royal tombs before Aha were rock-cut tombs, essentially a hole in the ground, sometimes with extra rooms for storage of items the occupant would need in the afterlife. Aha's tomb was similar, though it had more extra rooms.

The most interesting addition to the tomb complex of Aha, and continued throughout the First Dynasty, was that of retainer burials. Retainer burials have been controversial for decades among Egyptologists. The reason for this is that the evidence tells us that the occupants of those retainer burials connected to the burial of the kings of the First Dynasty were, in fact, sacrificed at the time the kings were buried. Egyptologists did not like the idea of their “special” ancient Egyptians practicing, essentially human sacrifice.



Photo of the subsidiary burials of the tomb of King Den with subsidiary burials by Thomas Hikade and Jane Roy.

These sacrifices were largely of members of the king’s court. They were largely of the elite. We know this even though there aren’t a lot of bodies still in existence because what is there for many burials, are stelae with the names and/or titles of the occupants of the grave. Aha had 35 retainer burials around his grave, and another 10 around a building some distance away that is considered part of his funerary complex. This number, while horrifying enough, is dwarfed by that of his immediate successor, King Djer. Djer’s funerary complex altogether included 584 retainer burials. After Djer, the numbers of burials followed a generally downward trend, though still large numbers were sacrificed. Across Egypt, there were more than 2000 sacrificial retainer burials during the First Dynasty.

Retainer burials are actually found in many cultures. This tends to occur during the early development of a kingship system, as the kings are trying to secure their power over their subjects and secure the succession for their descendants. Other cultures who practiced sacrificial retainer burial include the Sumerians in the Royal Tombs of Ur, Cahokia, Sipan (in Peru), Silla (in Korea), Shang Dynasty China, and among the Scythians and the Xiongnu (in the Eurasian steppe west of China). The well-known terracotta warriors from China are likely a symbolic replacement for the sacrifice of human retainers.

(Note: This article is based on a research paper completed for a master’s program at Missouri State University.)

Sources

Bestock, Laurel. *The Development of Royal Funerary Cult at Abydos: Two Funerary Enclosures from the Reign of Aha*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2009.

Bestock, Laurel. "The Early Dynastic Funerary Enclosures of Abydos." *Archéo-Nil* 18 (2008): 42-59.

Friedman, Renee. "Hierakonpolis." In *Before the pyramids: The origins of Egyptian civilization*, edited by Emily Teeter, 33-44.. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2011.

Grajetzki, Wolfram. "Multiple Burials in Ancient Egypt to the End of the Middle Kingdom." In *Life and Afterlife in Ancient Egypt During the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period*, edited by Silke Grallert and Wolfram Grajetzki, 16-34. London: Golden House Publication Egyptology, 2007.

Kemp, Barry J. "Abydos and the Royal Tombs of the First Dynasty." *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 52 (1966): 13-22.

Morris, Ellen F. "(Un)dyling Loyalty: Meditations on Retainer Sacrifice in Ancient Egypt and Elsewhere." In *Violence and Civilization: Studies of Social Violence in History and Prehistory*, edited by Rod Campbell, 61-93. Providence: Joukowsky Institute Publications, 2013.

Muhlestein, Kerry. "Violence in the Service of Order: The Religious Framework for Sanctioned Killing in Ancient Egypt."

Van Dijk, Jacobus. "Retainer Sacrifice in Egypt and in Nubia." In *The Strange World of Human Sacrifice*, edited by Jan N. Bremmer, 135-155. Leuven: Peeters, 2007.

Wilkinson, Toby A. H. "What a King Is This: Narmer and the Concept of the Ruler." *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 86 (2000): 23-32.
Hideki and Roy

Images licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License



Autumn Accolade

by Shoshanah bas Nachman

Glory and riches: grain fully ripened,
silage and hay for swine and the herds.

Strength to the harvest to heap winter stores!
Sharpen the scythe, the summer-brand sheathe:

Famine for rat, for raven no feast.

From morn in the fields to mead by the fire,
warrior to farmer, to fare through the winter.

Days grow shorter, shadows deepen.

Missing in mead-hall, in memory bright:
kindred and kin, atheling and karl.

Father and brother, fearless and bold,
now dwell in the dirt, asleep without dream.

Mother and daughter mourn and endure.
The raven's harvest has ravaged our hearts.
The foe is vanquished from fields he invaded:
recovered, reconquered our kingdom for us.

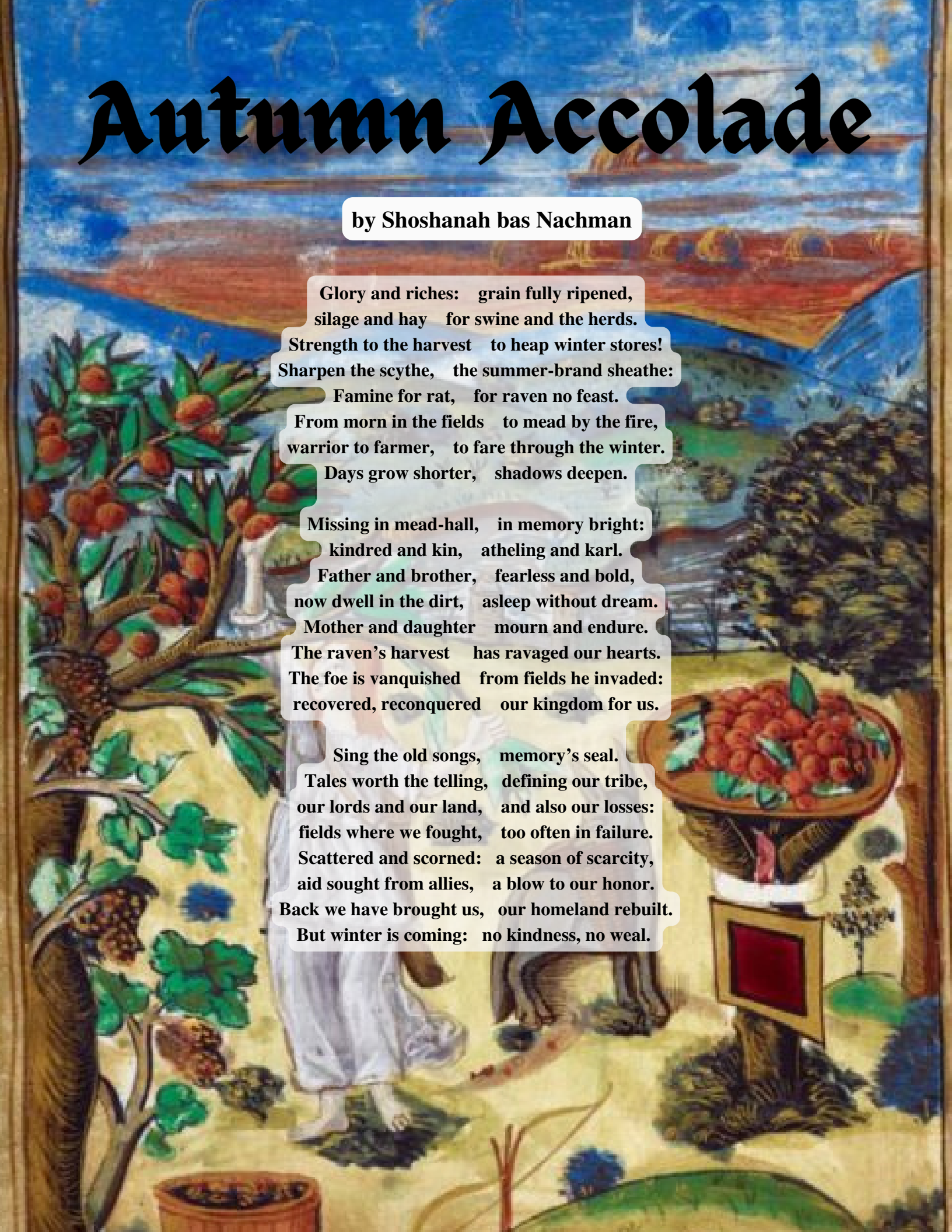
Sing the old songs, memory's seal.

Tales worth the telling, defining our tribe,
our lords and our land, and also our losses:
fields where we fought, too often in failure.

Scattered and scorned: a season of scarcity,
aid sought from allies, a blow to our honor.

Back we have brought us, our homeland rebuilt.

But winter is coming: no kindness, no weal.





Baron: <u>Giacomo dalla Fattoria dello Stato</u>	Baroness: <u>Nadya Helming</u>
Seneschal: <u>Gwynneth wraig Rhys</u>	Herald: <u>Brynjolfr Inn Eyverski</u>
Exchequer: <u>Bero von Wüstenbrunner</u>	Quartermaster: <u>Matthew Pedersen</u>
Knights' Marshal: <u>Jack Banyard</u>	Minister of Arts & Sciences: <u>Syele Pfeifferin</u>
Chatelaine: <u>Kenda Óttarsdóttir</u> -	Social Media Coordinator: <u>Fiondel Songspinner</u>
Webminister: <u>Jon Chesey</u>	Gold Key: <u>Jon Chesey</u>
Archery Marshal: <u>Emeline de Moulineaux</u>	Chronicler: <u>Shoshanah bas Nachman</u>
Minister of Youth: Yseult de Michel	Demo Coordinator: <u>Rhoda Clifton</u>





This is the Winter 2023 (A.S. LVII) issue of The Barge, a publication of Barony of Three Rivers, Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. (SCA, Inc.). The Barge is available from Chronicler, Stacey Harris 12 East Lockwood, Webster Groves Missouri, 63119. This is not a corporate publication of the SCA, Inc. and does not delineate SCA, Inc. policies. The Barge is published quarterly. Submissions must be turned in a month before the next publication, with all consent forms signed. Consent forms are provided by the Chronicler on request or at <https://b3r.org/barge.html>. Contact the chronicler at chronicler@b3r.calontir.org for deadlines, release forms, questions, submissions, or for an additional copy of the latest newsletter. (Calontir Guidelines for Branch Chroniclers, Page 8) Copyright © 2023 Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. For information on reprinting photographs, articles, or artwork from this publication, please contact the Chronicler, who will assist you in contacting the original creator of the piece. All content, including art, articles, and photographs is copyrighted by the original authors and used with their explicit permission, except as noted. Please respect the legal rights of our contributors. All attempts have been made to properly spell and title all the people mentioned in this issue. If there are errors, please let the chronicler know so they can be corrected.



The staff of the *Barge* would like to extend our heartiest thanks to *The Falcon Banner*.
We'd be lost without you.

