

The Dragonflyre  
December  
A.S. XXV



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The Dragonflyre is a monthly newsletter for the subscribers within the Barony of Vativa, and others by subscription for \$11.00 for 1 year. Submissions: Art, articles, poetry, letters etc. are gladly accepted but subject to approval by the local Baronne to curtail any rebuttals or seems in bad taste. Submissions should be on white paper, black ink for art. Letters or articles need not be typed, but it would be greatly appreciated.

91/05



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From the New Knightmarshal

Greetings Unto all Fighters, Archers & Those desiring to be such  
 From Rinaldo il Bianco Knightmarshal Vavavia-

For those of you who don't know, I am now your new Knightmarshal as of Nov. 17th. After a meeting of Fighters and Archers (those who decided to show up, anyway), it has been decided that Fighter? Archery practice will remain at Kansas Newman College but will now begin at 12 noon and end when people wish to leave or it gets dark. Hopefully this will allow those of you who were previously unable to attend to now come join us. As of this time, we do not yet have an indoor site for winter practice, any of you with an idea please contact me ASAP!

Remember a couple of hints for fighter practice:

1. If the weather is lousy, don't bother going to fighter practice. (If in doubt, call me.)
2. On the weekend of any MAJOR Kingdom events and ANY local events, there will be no fighter practice.
3. Fighter practices are NOT just for fighters. Please come out and just be social. This is something that has died out over the past few years and it is very sad. Please bring out your family and friends, come and have a nice afternoon.

Please periodically check the serf line for any messages, changes, meetings times etc. I plan on keeping you all posted this way. If you have any questions or problems, call me (but please remember: there are a lot of you and my Lady and Myself both work so please be considerate, don't call about every trivial little thing and DON'T call after 9:30 PM).

As Always-In Service,

Lord Rinaldo il Bianco

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From the Chronicler

'Tis the Season to Be Jolly!  
 HO! HO! HO!

Greetings Unto the Populace,

Yes I have returned from my trip to the East. I must say things turned out much better than what I had expected when I left. I want to thank any of the persons who helped to keep things going in my sted many thanks. It's not like the world stops when I'm not around. I have liken my life of late in these terms "As the Lynne (Gwen) Spins" the continuing saga of Lynne (Gwen) and her trials of life and the continuing quest to end all evil. HO! HO! HO!

At any rate hoping all finds you and your families well in this holiday season. Here is hoping there will be PEACE worldwide in the coming New Year.

Gwendolynn Morna O'Shaughnessey



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### The Fall of Byzantium

by Ld. Demetrius il Condottierro

The following poem is written in modern English as a trecento (14th Century) Italian sonnet. Latin or Italian would have been the period language in which such a poem would have most likely been written. Since this poem is written from the view of a Byzantine Greek now living in Venice, the poem could have been written in Greek, since spoken and written Greek were associated with learning and erudition.

The sonnets of Folgore Da San Gemignana (a 14th Century Italian) were used as the model for this work as they could have been known to a 15th Century individual living in Italy, they are among the most complex Italian type, and they have a rhyming pattern uncommon to the English language. All of Folgore's sonnets were 14 lines long, each line of 10 to 11 syllables. Rhyming was in an A, B, B, A; A, B, B, A; C, D, C; D, C, D format. (1) This form of poetry is designed for a Romance language rather than an Anglo-Saxon one, consequently scansion problems occur through the piece. I have accepted these problems rather than sacrifice rhyme pattern or meaning.

Folgore is a relatively unknown poet. English translations of a few of his poems are found in Symonds. (2) Another reference to him is reported in Hillman and Stadter. (3) I have been unable to obtain any primary references.

An Italian sonnet form was chosen to describe a Byzantine historical event because my persona is that of a Byzantine Greek who fled the fall of Constantinople (1453) as a youth to live in Italy. Venice is the location my persona called "home". A large Greek colony existed within the Venetian State since at least as early as the 11th century. (4) Renaissance Italian literature was also heavily influenced by the Hellenic Greeks, often via the Byzantine Empire which had done a much better job of preservation than the remainder of Europe or Asia. (5)

The story being told is that of the fall of Constantinople, the last significant entity of the ancient Byzantine Empire. After a long siege, Mohammed II, the Conqueror, built a road of wood over a 300 foot hill over which his men dragged some 80 ships into the Golden Horn. The Golden Horn was the harbor of Constantinople formed from an inlet of the Bosphorus. Access had been blocked by a boom across the harbor, but the placement of ships within the harbor via this road of wood allowed Mohammed to attack the city from both the seaward and landward sides. Despite this engineering miracle and the overwhelming numerical superiority of 250,000 Turkish troops to 8,000 Greeks, Constantinople held out for an additional seven weeks. Constantine, the last of the Roman Emperors, died at the hands of Mohammed's Christian troops (the Janissaries). (6)

For a displaced Greek, the opportunity to preserve a memory of the last days of Constantinople in an epic form might provide him with a source of stability not readily available in the world of shifting alliances among the Italian City-State.

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5. Tomadakes, N. Introduction to Byzantine Literature. Thomas & Sons, Ltd.: London, 1950. K. Sutton, The Byzantine Background to the Italian Renaissance. Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society. 1965, Vol. 100.

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### The Fall of Byzantium

I

The spear points are buried in shy gray dust  
Helms have been piled into hillocks of metal  
A fragment of gambeson, just a crushed petal  
Sunlight reflects the bloody color of rust  
Constantinople by Islam was trussed  
Eight thousand would show Byzantine mettle  
Grasping Byzantium, Mehmed grasped nettle  
Many would die well and stay true to their trust  
One-quarter million men by Mehmed were torn  
To make an overpowering Turkish tide  
That crashed at the gates of the Golden Horn  
But at first, victoriously swept aside  
Now little of Greece remains there to mourn  
When the life light of the Byzantine World died

II

An Ottoman Empire by Mehmed was sought  
The City of the Golden Horn was the Key  
Al Fatih vowed She would soon not be free  
Seljuks, Ottomans and Janissaries were brought  
To surround the City where the battles were fought  
A fortress was built on both sides of the sea  
A long siege begun by the cruel enemy  
The Bosphorus Jewel was now solidly caught  
Thousands of Turks fought from the land  
"Hold, we will route them," Constantine cried  
Thousands of Turks died there in the sand



More thousands were thrown from the seaward side  
They found walls both tall and well-manned  
The will of Byzantine had not yet died

III

Though far o're matched in all but honor held high  
Byzantium's defenders thrust the Turk back  
Some crucial miracle did the Sultan lack  
Until he dreamed his ships upon the sky  
And built the road which would bring the end nigh  
Miles of wooded plank were brought by mulepack  
And laid upon the ground with such cunning knack  
That they crossed a mount three hundred feet high  
The boards were well greased with animal fat  
The ships pulled by men through the Springtime night  
The next April morning in the Horn they sat  
Now rapidly began the start of the fight  
To make Constantinople less than a gnat  
Nonetheless victory was not yet in sight

IV

Arrows and spears as features studding the wall  
Fire and stones hurled up towards a pale sky  
Killing and crushing 'til only rubble did lie  
The Turks knew not that the City must fall  
Constantine rallied his men with a call  
They smote the infidel at helm and at thigh  
Forcing them backwards or making them die  
Byzantium now had given its all  
Constantine's life dripped into the dust  
The Emperor killed by a Janissary  
The Empire vanished, blown as flakes or rust  
Will anyone keep the Byzantine legacy?  
Who remains to hold the Greek trust?  
The task must fall to homeless men such as me

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A Star, A Star, Portents In The Night  
by Thomas Bacon  
(reprint from December 1982)

The Christmas star is the most celebrated celestial event in history. Speculation as to the nature of this event has ranged from comet, to supernova, to planetary conjunction. The Christmas star is hardly an isolated incident; throughout history, man has scanned the night looking for portents of the future. The idea that events in the sky influenced events on earth came from the Babylonians. This idea came about as the result of the Babylonians identifying the planets, or wandering stars, as various deities. The regular motions of the planets and the stars led eventually to the development of astrology. Instead of delving into the ordinary operations of this pseudo-science, I will explore a sidelight, the anomalous events in the sky.

Comets have the longest track record for being harbingers of disasters. Albertus Magus believed that comets could signify wars and the death of kings. A report in 1543 tells of a comet with the shape

of a dragon, larger than a millstone, raining fire, and leaving behind sickness and death. The Bayeux Tapestry records the passage of Halley's Comet in 684 accompanied by months of rain, dying flocks of sheep, withered grain, eclipses of the sun and moon, and topped by a plague. The passage of Halley's comet in 66 A.D. was thought by Jewish writers to portend the burning of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

And yet, occasionally comets present a benign side. Christian writers took the same appearance of Halley's Comet in 66 A.D. as an allegory of the star of Bethlehem. It is even thought by some that this appearance influenced Matthew, the only Gospel that mentions the star, and was written after the fall of Jerusalem. Halley's Comet makes another appearance as the Star of Bethlehem in Giotto's fresco "The Adoration of the Magi."

After comets, the next most feared event in the sky was planetary conjunctions. While conjunctions are the result of the regular motions of the planets, and therefore predictable, the astrological associations placed on them resulted in many catastrophic predictions. Europe-wide hysteria would mark these periodic occurrences.

Another regularly occurring phenomenon that could be expected to cause fear were eclipses. Yet, strangely enough, this is not the case. While such negative adjectives as "horrible," and "terrible," were often used to describe eclipses, the chronicles only record momentary fear, and panic. Eclipses were rarely taken as omens.

Novas and supernovas caused even less reaction. In fact, records of these events are rare in chronicles. There are several possible explanations for this. One hypothesis is that in the casual observation of the sky, a sky with over a thousand visible stars, the addition of one more could be easily overlooked. Another hypothesis by George Sarton is that the Aristotelian concept of the perfection of the heavens prevent the Europeans from recognizing these new stars for what they were. The problem with this hypothesis is that Aristotle did not become entrenched in European thought until around 1250 A.D.

Since the time when Galileo turned his telescope to the sky, much has been learned about these events in the sky. And yet, they still on occasion cause fear; such as the return of Halley's Comet in 1910, and the planetary alignment last spring. So, man still looks for portents in the sky.

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MEDIEVAL CHRONICLERS AND THE ROTATION OF THE EARTH, Robert R. Newton,



A Christmas Story

from the archives of December 1985

By Ld. Aelfric Fritharikksson

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The following is a Christmas legend I was told by my grandmother when I was a child, then read later as a high school student in German class. I forgot about it for many years. Just recently, I read a shortened version as I prepared a December "Frey Gabriel." Here I will attempt to re-tell this ancient Christmas tale.

The snow lay heavily upon the Bois de Noir, and all the world lay mute under its cold winter blanket. As the sun descended into a misty west, the dark sky slowly unveiled each of the uncounted brilliant stars. The air was crisp as death, and each clink of mail and creak of leather resounded in Bonchevalier's ear. The hoof beats of his great, dark beast were muffled into silence. The knight rode as quickly as he dared on his tired horse, for ahead, he knew, lay des Aguilles, the great keep of his family, and the village by the Rhine that had grown up around the keep itself. Bonchevalier was cold and the chain mail lay an icy weight on his shoulders. Since Michaelmass, he had ridden from the Northern shore which he had helped to guard against the ravages of the Norsemen. He was tired, and looked forward to food and lodging.

The warhorse suddenly winned and shook his shorn mane. Bonchevalier looked wearily down the road and urged his mount to greater speed with subtle signals of his knees. In the darkness ahead, a softly suffused light was visible through the trees. To his surprise, the beast broke into a trot despite the hours of weary road behind them.

Softly he clucked to his horse "Mon ami, you know rye and oats are waiting for you, don't you? It's almost Christmas, you know, and you deserve the treat." The horse responded to the tone of the young knight's voice and abruptly began to canter. Around the last bend in the way, the huge beast bore his master; then halted without command.

Ahead in the road, a great fir tree arose. There was no snow about its base and the tree soared twenty feet above Bonchevalier's head. This, and not his father's village, was the source of the light which had so enlivened the weary beast, for on each branch blazed candles of pure beeswax. Some of the candles hung from the branches upside down and others burned upright. The fir was festooned with ropes of holly, whose berries were red with Our Lord's Blood and Rosemary was twined into the ropes. Here and there among the needles roses bloomed, even as it had been foretold, the ancient birthright of Jesse'. Atop the high est point shone a brilliant point of light, more bright than all the fine candles on the tree. As He looked at it, it seemed to Bonchevalier that it resolved to become the face of a babe with a halo which shone like beaten gold.

The knight's hand had flared to his sword by instinct, whether to attack or defend he did not know. Now he drew it with a flourish, then sat frozen with indecision. Foes of flesh and blood, steel and iron were Bonchevalier's bailiwyk, and before them he never quailed, but manifestations of the divine were beyond his ken. Sword in hand he dismounted, strode two long steps forward, and stopped. Reversing the sword, he knelt in the snow, and bowed his head. As he grasped the blade, the hilt of his sword cast a cruciform shadow over his coiffed head. The light suddenly flared, so brightly that

Bonchevalier saw pink light within his tightly closed eye lids, then the light died altogether.

When Bonchevalier looked up, the magnificent fir was gone. Neither the Knight nor his horse felt cold any longer, and all weariness was lifted from their limbs. Down in the valley of the Rhine, the lights of des'Aguilles shone with a friendly, familiar light, and the warrior and his mount galloped down the slope into town, bonded in comradeship as never before.

Bonchevalier told his tale to the village wise men, and to his Lord Father, and the local priest, and none could say for certain what the young knight's vision had meant. Finally, Bonchevalier decided to ride to the bluffs over the river, and speak there to the anchorite who was a holy man, clothed in sack cloth, and too little of that, yet he never shivered or seemed to notice the frosty air. He eked out a living with a small garden of onions and leeks with what ever fish he could catch in the River, but he never complained of hunger and always offered guests refreshments. Bearded and dirty his eyes shone his appearance seem lordly. Bonchevalier stood to tell his tale while the old man sat on the snow-covered ground, counting his beads.

When the knight was finished the old man looked him in the eye, and Bonchevalier shivered, for it was the look of a commander of hosts, and a wise man, and it touched him.

"Did you not cut yourself, Sir Knight, when you grasped your sword so?"

"Nay, they are not, as you can see. I am in my Lord Father's own country, and we are at peace. My hands are covered only in kid."

"Remove your gloves and take forth the sword of your knighthood." The old man commanded, as he pulled a crucifix from his meager robes. "And bow before this symbol of your Lord."

Bonchevalier hesitated, for he was unused to peasants giving him orders, but the old man's self-imposed exile, seeking answers. Slowly he drew his blade, and kissing the quillions reversed it and knelt.

The old man spoke again, though he had watched in stern silence until Bonchevalier knelt, and this time his tones rang in the knights ears.

"You are blessed, Sir Knight, for I tell you that your vision was a true one. The fir was the sign of St. Wilfrid to the Norsemen, of the one true faith, and so it was here again; the tree of humanity and each candle was a person. Some are upright and burn with a holy flame, others are fallen and burn in hell. The babe upon the upper most branch was the Christ-child, the crown of humanity who watches over us all, and you have gazed upon his face. Blessed are you, indeed."

Bonchevalier looked up at the old man as he spoke. The sun blazed brightly over the rim of the bluff, and lighted his hair as it fluttered in the breeze, so that he seemed surrounded by a silver halo.

"Yet you have a task to do as well." The holy man continued, "You who have been blessed must watch over he who watches over us. Go to the holy sepulchre, and guard it, for the heathen grow ever stronger." "I shall!" Bonchevalier cried leaping up. "I shall depart at once."

"Stay, young Sir," the anchorite spoke softly, "for you are wounded. Look at your hands...they bleed."

Letting his sword fall, Bonchevalier looked in amazement, for he had cut his hands on his own blade. Bright blood dropped into the snow, but even as he watched the wounds stopped bleeding and healed in but a moment's time, leaving a small round scar in the center of each palm.





The knight stood, frozen in place by a myriad of emotions; fear, horror, delight, wonder.

"You bare the stigmata of your vision, lad. Rejoice!"

The old anchorite gathered up a handful of snow, where the young man's blood had fallen, and for each drop, a perfect teardrop garnet of deepest sanguine glittered in the sunlight, awash in the melted snow cupped the anchorites old hands. He took the younger man's hand, and poured the gems into it.

"Here, lad, this will pay your way to the holy land," he spoke softly. And turning he entered his cave, letting the door cloth fall behind him.

Dazedly Bonchevalier counted thirteen garnets into one of gloves he had dropped, and secured it to his belt. He turned to pick up his sword, which had fallen point first into the snow, and which stood upright like a roadside shrine. He crossed himself before he pulled it out and sheathed it.

With a cry of joy the knight leaped down the path toward des Agulles.

Later when Bonchevalier tried to find the anchorite, the villagers told him that the old man had packed up his few belongings and left, commanding them to erect a fir tree before the church doors and ornament it as they could. They asked the young knight what they should do.

"Do as old John told you to." Bonchevalier replied. "And do so each year at Christmas-tide to commemorate the vision and miracle given to me here. For it is your miracle, too."

And that my friends is the story of the first Christmas tree.

Bonchevalier went on to Jerusalem with his thirteen garnets and built a hospital there, to aid and protect the Christian pilgrims, and to show Christian charity to all in need, and he called it the Order of St. John.

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Something Borrowed

This is from the Dragonflyre Archives of December 1985

TRUE NOBILITY, AND NOBLESSE OBLIDGE from the 13th Century work, The Italian Guest, by Thomasin von Zirclaere, lines 3855-3926, tr. tr. by Eugene Oswald, Early English Text Society, no. 60. London. N. Trubar & Co. 1869.

Nobility also many

Make us dream. If a man

is nobler (by birth) than another

And thinks himself always of more account

He deceives himself in that:

No one is noble but the man

Who has set his heart and mind

Towards that which is really good.

If a man be well-born

And have lost the nobility of his disposition,

I may truly tell you

He quite shames his birth:

It a man be well-born

His birth demands at all times

That he act well and justly

If he do not control himself thus to act,

Then his vice is all the greater;

His birth diminishes his honor

If ye have understood me well,  
You know that it is a mistake to think  
That he is courtly at all times,  
Who is noble in the world:  
For as I have said even before this,  
To do well, that is Courtliness.  
If one has a courteous disposition  
He does justly whatever he does.  
He who acts well at all times  
Know ye that he is noble:  
Again, know ye that they are noble  
Who are wholly the children of God.



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A Byzantine Cookbook  
Number 3

A variety of roasts were common in period. Just as we frequently use some sort of sauce or gravv. sauces for roasted meats were also used in period. The following recipe. provides you with two interpretations for the same sauce. It is an interesting combination of tastes, which you can alter by changing the proportions of the ingredients until they suit you perfectly. The sauce works well at outdoor events since it is prepared in advance and simply kept cool.

Vert Sause

from A Collection of the Ordinances and Regulations for the Government of the Royal Household made in Divers Reigns from King Edward III to King William and Queen Mary also receipts in Ancient Cookery. (Fourteenth Century manuscript)

Take parsley, and myntes, and peletur, and costmaryn, and sauge, and a litlle garlek and bredde, and grinde it up smal, and tempur hit up with vynegar, and do there to pounder of peper, and of gynger, and of canel, and serve it forthe.

Modern Interpretation based on a recipe developed by Sir Nathan Adelaar and Lady Elspeth Hodlen ferch Dafydd. (Nathans and Elspeth's list of ingredients is on the right: mine is on the left.)

3 slices of bread, made into crumbs	2 slices of fresh bread, made into crumbs
2 medium leaves fresh sage	1/2 tsp dried sage
1/2 - 3/4 lb fresh thyme	1/2 tsp dried thyme
1/4 tsp fresh ground pepper	1/4 tsp pepper
2 cloves garlic, minced	2 cloves garlic, minced
8 sprigs fresh parsley, chopped	8 sprigs fresh parsley, chopped
3 sprigs fresh mint, chopped	4-5 sprigs mint chopped
1/4 tsp cinnamon	1/4 tsp cinnamon
1/2 tsp ginger	1/2 tsp ginger
1/2 cup pear wine vinegar	1/2 cup pear wine vinegar

Combine all chopped, minced, etc. ingredients in a blender and puree until as smooth as possible. Place in a container and allow to sit (in refrigerator) for at least a day. Flavor improves over time. Most common use is on meat or chicken, but try it on plain baked fish.

Differences in recipes are the fresh ingredients in mine (which severely limit when during the year it can be made), a reduction in the amount of mint, which I think gives the flavor a better balance, and the addition of more bread since fresh ingredients contribute liquid rather than absorbing it.

In Service.

DEMETRIUS



EEEE	DDD	III	TTTT	OO	RRR	III	AA	L
E	D D	I	T	O O	R R	I	A A	L
EE	D D	I	T	O O	RRR	I	AAAA	L
E	D D	I	T	O O	R R	I	A A	L
EEEE	DDD	III	T	OO	R R	III	A A	LLLL
CC	OO	M	M	M	EEEE	N	TTTT	!
C C	O O	MM	MM	MM	E	NN	N	!!!
C	O O	M	MM	M	EE	NNN	T	!
C C	O O	M	M	M	E	NN	T	!
CC	OO	M	M	M	EEEE	N	N	T

This editorial is being written soon after the conclusion of the Vataavian Champions' Tourney held on 17 November AS XXV, CE 1990. There were several instances during the tourney in which a combatant acknowledged defeat, yet did not fall down. I would like to take some space to discuss this issue.

SCA fighting has traditionally included the vanquished foe falling down momentarily after the killing blow. There are three reasons to keep this tradition:

1) SAFETY - Your victorious opponent will only know that you are dead if you fall down. You may try screaming, "Good!" or some such, but he may not hear you. If he does not hear you or you do not fall down, he will keep beating on you until you do! Locally, our fighters tend to have a brief flurry, then step back and observe each other, and then consider the blows that they have received. That is too late. You should act upon the blows as soon as safely practical. Some of our fighters are going to have a rude awakening when they are not allowed time to consider blows, and the opponent escalates the force. This is particularly true in war.

2) CONFUSION - The heralds, marshals, and assembled crowd have no idea what is going on when you simply turn and walk off the field. We do this sport not only for the fighters, but for our ladies, and lords who come to cheer us on. It simply looks like another fighter practice to people when two brutes beat on each other with sticks and then walk away. We are trying to recreate the ideals of chivalry, the glory of victory, as well as the agony of defeat. You are actively disrupting the Dream when you do not fulfill your part of the combat.

3) INSULT - Yes! It is insulting for a fighter not to fall down. You are in essence telling your opponent that he did not honorably defeat you. You are denying him the honor due his victory.

Why is this happening? We train at fighter practice to become capable fighters. We fight for long stretches and wear ourselves out; so, in sympathy for our opponents, we forgive them when they do not do us the honor of falling over. Unfortunately, we have started looking at this as the norm, rather than the exception. Perhaps it is time we practiced being more honorable fighters rather than simply better fighters. Is that not what the Dream is all about?

In future, at fighter practices, I plan to fall over and acknowledge just as in a tourney. I hope my opponents will do the same. I am one of the older fighters, and if I can put out that little extra effort to pick myself up off the ground when a fight is done, I think others can too. I certainly don't think it is too much effort, if it will keep the Dream alive.

Sir Tedrick von Wolfschatten

Child's Play in the Middle Ages  
by Victoria Cortesy Ferrara  
(reprint from January 1984)

Like Children of all ages, Medieval children spent time playing. Their games and toys, while home-made, were much like those throughout man's history before the advent of video games and television. Medieval children made toys of their own findings. Knuckle bones were makeshift dice, and clay made marbles for children who had to do without glass ones. Pine cones and twigs made figures for play, and a large stick became a hobby horse. In the Middle Ages, small animals were accepted as suitable playthings for children. Birds were tied onto strings in lew of balloons, or caged and taught to talk, while mice pulled miniature doll carriages. Children built castles and shops with mud, clay and pebbles.

Medieval boys ran through the streets bowling hoops with sticks. Sometimes the hoops and sticks were made of metal and trimmed with bells, adding to the din of streets already crowded with outdoor markets. Little girls played with terra cotta dolls and rattles made of blown-up pig bladders filled with stones.

Games like "leap-frog" and "tag" were played in the streets and courtyards without the need of toys. Blind man's bluff was called the "game of the brass fly" by Roman children. The Same game was given new meaning to French and Belgian children in the eleventh century when a warrior from Liege was blinded in battle. He continued his Knightly duties and led such a successful career that the French King celebrated him with a tournament in which one blindfolded knight fought sighted knighted with blunted weapons.

As guilds and workshops developed, indulgent parents were able to give their children more elaborate toys. Craftsmen made wooden, jointed figures which were covered with cloth and then painted. These figures, mounted on wheels or pulled by strings, were played with to act out battles or hunts. One such set of figures included six hunters on foot, seven on horseback, ten horses, twenty-four dogs, and a variety of stags, foxes, wild boars, bucks, wolves and hares. Other sets were mounted knights which were maneuvered to unhorse each other.

Doll houses filled with miniature furniture and all the household furnishings a little girl could want were made by the guilds. Since there was no guild per se for making toys, the rules for guilds allowed each guild to make only those toys which were composed of materials the guild used in other projects.

Even the hobby horse evolved with the help of Craftsmen. Fabric covered frames covered little legs and made pretend knights appear to be galloping into tournaments on graceful steeds.

Ancient board games kept children of all ages entertained, and some were tools which prepared youths for their adult responsibilities. In 1474 Caxton printed the Game and Playe of the Chesse, the second book ever to be printed in English. The author of the manuscript, a Dominican monk, stressed the duties of each chess piece on the playing board, and how they related to the duties men of rank owed to their king. "Draughts," or checkers, played on a sixty-four square board, was also popular, especially during the Renaissance.

Tables was a board game second only to chess in popularity. Learning



tables was an essential part of a youngster's education. After the Age of Chivalry was gone, tables became known as "backgammon."

Two board games which were actually introduced into the Middle Ages were Bingo and The Goose. Bingo reportedly was invented by a Genoese nobleman, Benedetto Gentile, and spread through Europe in the early sixteenth century. The Goose was a popular children's game in France.

The playing board was divided into sixty-three sections, and players moved according to the throw of knucklebones. Every sixth space was a goose. A player who landed on the goose got to double his throw. Players who landed on spaces in-between the geese landed on prisons, porcupines, churches or maybe even a child bowling a hoop.

The knucklebones, or dice, used for The Goose and other Medieval games were oblong and made from the knuckle-bones of sheep or other animals with a cloven hoof. The bones rolled to a stop on one of four sides, each of which had an assigned value. Even knucklebones were sometimes "loaded", by strategically stuffing hog's bristles into the corners of the bone.

Medieval children were also taught the sports they would indulge in as adults. Tennis was a popular sport, and was frequently banned to all but the upper class. Early tennis balls were made of leather, stuffed with feathers, human hair and wool waste. Golf, another royal pastime, is pictured in a sixteenth century book of hours. The rules of golf, like those of most other games, varied from region to region.

Football (or soccer, as Americans call it) was a rowdy and rough game played in the streets without much in the way of proper rules. In the fourteenth century it was actually banned, partly because the playing of it and other sports kept pages and squires from practicing archery, and partly because the playing of football was responsible for a lot of deaths.

Nearly all of the games, sports and toys of the Middle Ages were already centuries old, and had been handed down through the ages in pretty much the same forms, as the world of make believe prepared each generation for the reality of adulthood.

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Mills, Winifred H. and Louise M. Dunn. The Story of Old Dolls and How to Make New Ones. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1940.



The Barony of Vatavia invites one and all to the annual Yule Feast  
December 29th, 1990 XXV  
at Minisa Park  
704 W. 13th  
Wichita, KS

There will be a pot luck dinner. So make your best holiday dish.  
(Please coordinate this with Lady Gwendolynn so we have enough to go around.) There will be Bardic tales, Galic music, and much revelry.

For the fighter types we will have a Who's the best fighter in each system.

1. Great Sword
2. Forentine
3. Polearm (any)
4. Bastard Sword
5. Sword/Shield & Weapon/Shield

Each fighter may only win 1 of the initial 5 rounds. The final Round will be single sword Round Robin. The winner to win the title for the best all round Yule Warrior. A prize will be offered.

Arts and Sciences: The theme: Yule Season as seen by your Persona.  
Let the Arts & Sciences people know what you are doing so we can have judges please.

If we can obtain permission, an archery shoot & thrown weapon tourney will take place. If not a training session of safety, marshing, basic equipment, and repairing your gear will be conducted by the local Marshalls. (Only if interest is sparked.)

Site opens 10:00 AM  
Closes 10:00 PM  
Armor inspection 11:00  
Tournament to start at 12:00 no exceptions

This site is a dry site.  
No smoking in the building.

Feast: 5:00 to 7:00 PM  
Court: 7:00 PM

Volunteers for Kitchen crew and cleanup are needed.

Site fee: \$3.00 for Adults, \$1.50 for children under 12.

To preregister or to volunteer please contact your autocrat:  
Lady Gwendolynn O'Shaughnessey  
9600 E. 47th Street South #3  
Derby, Kansas 67037  
(316) 788-4698  
(make all checks payable to the SCA Barony of Vatavia Or they will not be accepted)



Announcements and CALONDAR for December

Calligraphy and illumination contact Lady Raven for more information at 529-2281.

Dance Practice: Ly. Saerlaith 687-3241

Costuming, Needleworkers etc. contact Ly. Saerlaith 687-3241

The MOS can be reached at 688-1299, 11020 E. Clark, Wichita KS 67207

The Seneschal can be reached at 524-0917.

the SCA information line can be reached at 522-7373.

Chainmail Guild: Contact Lord Tristin 686-6893

Persons coming to the Yule Feast covers dish dinner what to bring:  
Persons whose names begin with

A-E salads and vegetable

F-L cheese

M-Z fruit

There will be a contest for the best dessert. One for the best period and the best all around dessert. To be sponsored by the Baroness and the Dragonflyer.

Also the Barony will be supplying the meats and the bread. So come one come all and let's Have A Party! (more to Follow in the Fyre)

Fighter Practice and Archery Practice to be held at Kansas Newman from 12 to when ever you get tired. Weather permitting.

December 16th: Populace meeting Fighter/ Archer Practice Kansas Newman (12 noon) Populace to take place at 1:00.

December 15th is the DEADLINE for the January Dragonflyre

December 10th Costuming at Lady Phillipa's for more information 942-1045

December 16th Bardic at Lord Aelfric's the theme Faith at 4:00 for more information 267-5913

December 29th Yule Feast and Fighter Tourney at Minisa Park 704 W. 13th Wichita for more information contact Lady Gwendolynn 788-4698

Happy Holiday's from the Dragonflyre to you and yours throughout the coming year. May we all have peace throughout our world and the world around us for many more. Yours forever in the dream. Ldy. Gwendolynn

## Subscription Form

The Dragonflyre: \$11.00 per year

Make check payable to:

SCA, Barony of Vtavia

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