

# Cockatrice



Her Excellency Baroness Ute von Tangermunde of Stormhold modelling a *boqta* constructed by Lord Gilligan O Tomelty.

February A.S. 49

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## From the Editor

Greetings!

I have just returned from an enjoyable week at Canterbury Faire filled with a great variety of A&S activities from classes, to the display, to the fantastic puppet show to simply admiring others' garb! If you have not attended Faire before I cannot recommend it highly enough! Next year should be particularly exciting as it will include Coronation as well as the usual activities.

I have particularly enjoyed putting together this edition of Cockatrice as the

content is full of new ideas and projects. What better way to celebrate the reign of Kinggiyadai Khagan and Altani Khalighu Yeke Khatun than by making your own *boqta*?

As always keep those contributions coming in!

*En servicio*

Elisabetta Foscari

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# Sitting a book on your head does not transfer knowledge

## Introduction to transcribing and translating Middle English Early printed texts

Theophrastus von Oberstockstall

### Part 1 - On the nature of Old English texts and printers.

The first text I attempted to transcribe and translate was *The Virtuous Book of Distillation* by Master Hieronymous Brunschwig (1450-1512). The original Latin title, *Liber de arte distillandi* was in Dutch / German and printed in Strasburg in 1500. Strasburg was the birthplace of Master Brunschwig and the book met with great success being reprinted across Germany. From Strasburg printers alone examples of reprints exist from 1509, 1512, 1515, 1519, 1521, 1528, 1531 & 1532. It clearly documents the distillation technology of that time. Master Brunschwig, however, was more popularly known for his surgical texts which have many more volumes.

My interest in *The Virtuous Book of Distillation* was ignited in 2012 when looking at the history of distillation as a result of my research into distillation glassware shown in *The Ripley Scroll* attributed to George Ripley (1415 – 1490). I had long known of the popular book by John French, *The Art of Distillation*, first published in 1651 and I erroneously considered it the first published work on distillation. When searching for an original copy of French's book in *Early English Books Online* database through the University of Queensland library I found the comparatively little promoted earlier text, *The Virtuous Book of Distillation*. I was immediately shocked as the *The Virtuous Book of Distillation* includes many woodcuts that are printed in *The Art of Distillation* without the latter including any mention of this earlier work that predates it by over 150 years! French does mention an author called Baker having published an earlier work on distillation. This book is presumably George Baker's translation work in 1599 of *The New Jewel of Health* by Conrad Gesner (1516-1565) which includes chapters on distillation. Whilst *The Art of Distillation* is widely available I decided to transcribe, translate and make the lesser known *The Virtuous Book of Distillation* more widely available.



**Figure 1:** Title Page of the 1528 (3rd Edition) of *The Virtuous Book of Distillation*. Obtained from Early English Books Online database (June, 2014). Distillation equipment depicted on the cover are from the top left wood cuts of a *Pelican*, used to perform circulatory distillation; a flask in a *balneum Marie*, showing the weight and restraints to maintain submersion in the water bath; a common *distillatory*, placed over a large flask; and *distillation per filtrum*, an inexpensive approach to separate liquid from a herbal mash by meniscus flow down a linen cloth.

Fortunately for me the hard work of translating *Liber de arte distillandi* (Strasburg, 1500) from 16<sup>th</sup> Century German had been performed by Laurence Andrews (1510 – 1537) in 1527 when he had his first “English” translated text printed at London in the Fleet Street. Andrews was 17 years of age at the time of printing his *The Virtuous Book of Distillation*. In part Andrews gained from the success and reputation of the original German text. The British Library has three copies of the text; two second editions from 1527 and another from 1528 (Having additional text is an important aspect of transcribing that I’m mention later). Three print runs within 48 months is a good indicator of success. Sadly, however Andrews died eight years later at the age of 27.

In hindsight I approached my transcription project quite naively. I had thought that the project would have been a simple typing up of this early printed text so that I could digitally make it available to a modern readership to share and appreciate. I found however that I learnt a lot about transcribing and translating a Middle English text. It took eight months to complete. Some of the common encounters that I had to overcome were:

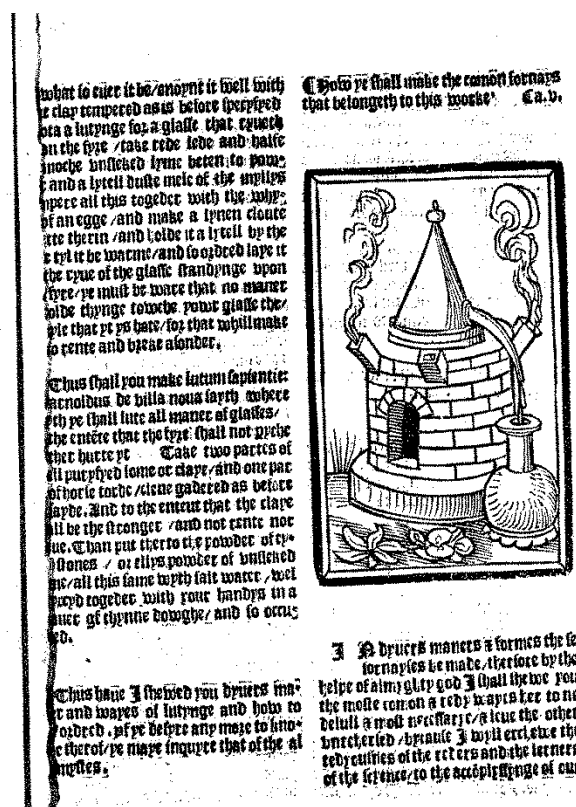
- The Middle English translation was strongly influenced by Andrews’ south London phonetics, such as *hete* = heat, *eche* = each, *fassion* = fashion, *seke* = sick, *weke* = weak, *brede* = bread, *ege* = edge, *helthe* = health, *bycanse* = because and *downge* = dung. If you read the Andrews text aloud following the phonetic style you could literally hear his accent. Finding multiply contexts throughout the original text of the difficult words were important in establishing their identity.



- The Andrews text contained words in old Latin, old German and old French. For example, *Fioles* (old French) and *Eyrubyt* (old German) were used for our modern *phial*. Further, the old German *Anhang* is used for a distillation still attachment. Of interest the remanent Continental languages are associated with technical terms which may indicate the limits of Andrews' scientific knowledge at the age of 17. For this modern transcription a broader knowledge beyond English was required. Wikitionary and iTranslate with its multiple languages assisted here.
- Printer's shorthand was used. The common ones were:
  - a line above a vowel indicated that it was followed by an 'n' that has been removed, i.e.  $\bar{a}$  = "an" in that 'instant' would appear as 'istāt'. As I was initially unaware of this period convention it took ages to 'see' it and stumbled through confusion until it dawned. Not as commonly was this line device used for 'm' as is found in other texts.
  - Symbols '&' and '/' were frequently used for punctuation. & is not surprising but the '/' in place of commas, semi-colons and in some places full stops was unexpected. I decided to leave the use of the '/' in the transcribed work where it wasn't dysfunctional to maintain a point of interest in the text.
- Printer's mistakes were surprisingly common. Identifying and correcting these mistakes was one of the big challenges in transcribing the text and having confidence with the transcription. I found examples of:
  - letters missing in words, either for no obvious reason, as shorthand for a commonly used word or pagination considerations. For example 'part' appeared as 'prte and parte'.
  - words having mis-ordered letters that may immediately result from a failure to maintain the mirror ordering of the reverse printer lettering arrangement, such as 'family' may have appeared as 'fmaliy', in that all of the letters are present just the order is wrong.
  - Inverted letters, but was mostly restricted to letters that wouldn't immediately appear wrong as was common with u and n and p and b.
  - Under or over inking of a page would make parts of letters disappear or blur respectively.
  - Whilst not the fault of the printer, page edges can be missed in the scanning or covered.
  - Finally, frequent changes in spelling were common. Whilst this may not be a printer's 'mistake' it appears that 'y' and 'i' are interchangeable. I couldn't see the exhaustion of 'i's down the page replaced by 'y's which has been suggested and 'e' word endings appear randomly or are voluntary. For example, alchemist was spelt as *Alkemists* or *alkemystes* displaying both the 'i/y' and the optional 'e'.

It cannot be advised strongly enough that having more than one copy or edition of a text that you are trying to transcribe is mandatory. To have the luxury of seeing what another

edition printed to check suspicions of printers' mistakes is invaluable! The text between editions remains near identical which allows for exposing the printer's mistakes or obtaining damaged text between the editions.



**Figure 2:** Example of type font and woodcut from the original text. Image obtained from Early English Books Online, June 2014. Points of interest on this page are: the punctuation usage of ‘/’; the ‘entēte’ in the second paragraph; lost page edge from a page stub covering the text; the spelling ‘fornays’ at the top right column for ‘furnance’; and the use of the distillatory from the front cover used on a furnace built of curved bricks.

- ‘f’ was used for ‘P’ and the same symbol without the bar is ‘s’ (you have to get your reading eye adjusted to it). In the manuscript there were examples of one letter key repeatedly used that had one side of the bar broken off so that it appeared as an ‘s’ instead of an ‘P’. The antimony amalgam metal letter keys are fragile and are susceptible to chipping especially the more susceptible letters with small cross bars. They require continuous replacing by the printer adding to the expense for the production. I suggest therefore that the printer of this text may have been financially struggling. Resorting to the repeated use of broken keys produced in the examples that I used of *The Virtuons Book of Distillation* is the primary support for this suggestion. At times it was the subtle insight such as this that enlightened and motivated the work. A good dose of Stephan Fry’s documentary on the Gutenberg press from Youtube also helped.
- Knowledge of old English words that have fallen from usage is essential to make the transcription ‘readable’. It’s an obvious insight but can at times be deceptive as the dreaded demon *Assumption* may creep in and tamper with the work. Surprisingly the

occurrences were uncommon (it was unexpected in a way how the substantial volume of the text was easily read after nearly 400 years) so I elected to use the modern word, hence calling this a work of *translation* to maintain ‘readability’. Interesting original spelling or word occurrences I placed as foot-notes throughout the final pamphlet. For example in the foot-notes of the final work are: ‘*meethly*’ means suitably or appropriately, ‘*stones*’ referred to bricks, a ‘*shive*’ is a bottle stopper, ‘*troublous*’ is turbid and ‘*severally*’ referred to separately.

- I remain greatly indebted to the online Middle English Dictionary reference provided by the University of Michigan at [www.quod.lib.umich.edu/m/med/](http://www.quod.lib.umich.edu/m/med/). I have spent hours searching this valuable database; however it should be noted that this reference does not include all phonetic usages of words. Unique phonetics can be specific to authors, printers and / or times of printing.

A pamphlet / booklet of the modern English, readable *Virtuous Book of Distillation* is available from the author.

## **Part 2 - On physically transcribing and translating an Old English texts**

My next transcription and translating project was an original 13 – 15<sup>th</sup> century urine diagnosis pamphlet titled, “*Here begins **The Seeing of Urines**. Of all the colours that Urines be of, with the medicines annexed to every Urinal much profitable for every man to know*”. The pamphlet was first printed in 1527 by John Waley, Fester Lane, London. However, it is considered to be a collection of earlier manuscripts (There is even an orphan page entirely in Latin on the discussion of Greek elements that does not relate to the surrounding text. This single page is of considerable interest both in its content and inclusion).

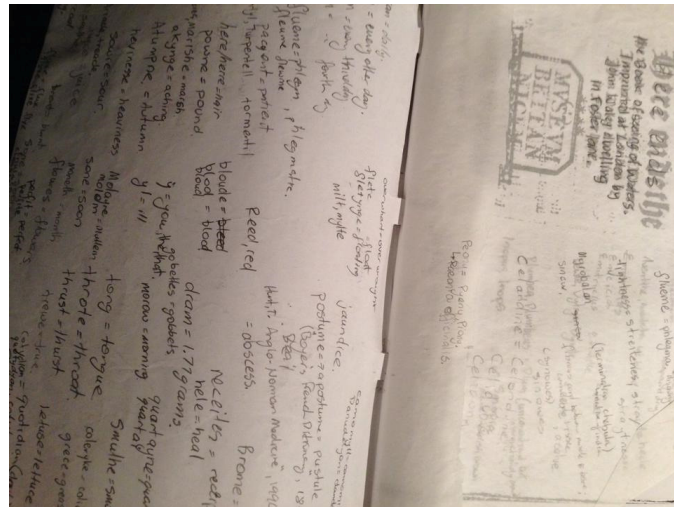
In this part of the article I will describe the physical approach I took to the transcribing work, *The Seeing of Urines*.

From the inconveniences of the previous transcribing and translating work on the *Virtuous Book of Distillation* (part I) I improved the approach to the urine diagnostic text by:

1. Printing the entire downloaded pdf as a large pamphlet on A3 paper. Conveniently a local photocopier/printer had the ability to double side and pamphlet print pdf documents. The A3 sheets were then folded in half and placed together as a large booklet.
2. A roll of non-grease, thin baking paper was purchased from a local grocery store. Make sure it's not the slippery type and the cheaper thinner paper is fortunately the best. I paid \$2.30 for a 30 metre roll. The width of the roll is conveniently near to the width of A4 paper. The roll is then cut into pieces that are slightly longer than A3, folded in half, grouped in two sheets and inserted between each printed A3 sheet. The two tracing paper sheets between the printed pages are for either facing printed page to write on.

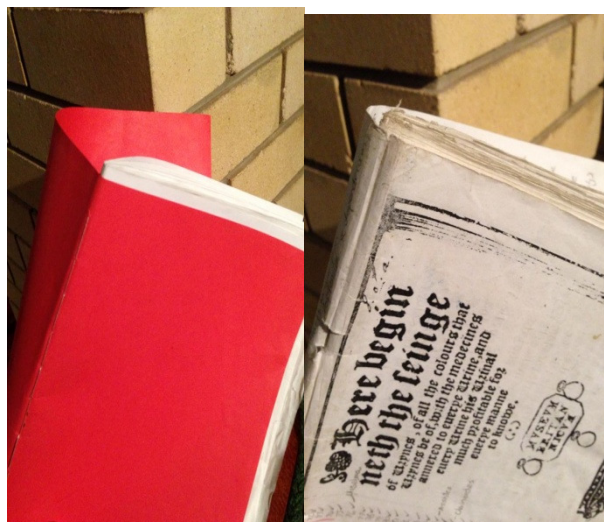


- For added valuable note making space whilst you transcribe and translate add a few extra sheets of blank A3 paper to the outside of the printed manuscript (Figure 3).



**Figure 3:** Added sheets to end of A3 pamphlet for notes. As you can see this page received some heavy note action whilst I was in the thick of the transcribing and translating frenzy. I actually ran out of space and started making notes on many blank pages within the original printed text, so adding a few papers does come in handy.

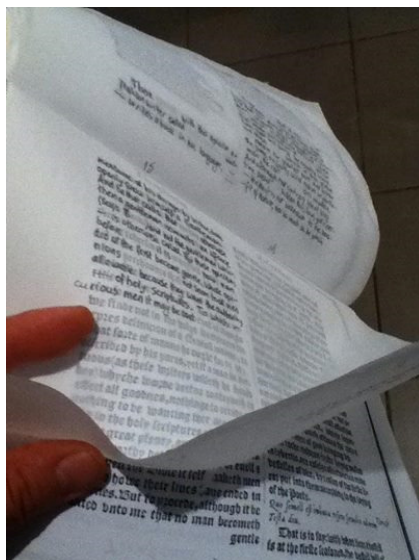
- For the long term safety of the work add a thicker card cover. You may be working on this transcription, as I did, for over six months. So by carrying it around in a pilgrim satchel, a thicker card cover will last longer than a A3 paper sheet. It doesn't have to be too thick though.
3. With this folded collection of A3 printed sheets, baking paper and cover, punch one or two staples at the spine to hold the collection together. Now, push an *odd* number of holes along the spine with an awl. Next, using a heavy, sewing or embroidery thread create a *Pamphlet stitch* along the spine. I am indebted to Isabell Winter for sharing this binding approach with me at the 2014 Great Northern War (Figure 4). Staples just don't give the support to the multiple pages along the entire stipe or hold the centre page tracing paper long term in place as will a pamphlet stitch. Remove the holding staples. This stitching doesn't take long at all to do and gives a delightful finish to the printed booklet.



**Figure 4.** Completed bound A3 transcription manuscript. Note the pamphlet stitch binding down the left edge (left image). The red cover was some card that I acquired from my children's art box. By the end of a few months of dragging *The Seeing of Urines* bound transcription booklet around (right image) with me to work on during idle moments and other fragments of time you can see that the staples have torn through the paper and the tracing paper edge is quite dirty.

Now your original text is ready for transcribing. Using a medium weighted lead pencil begin writing directly over the printed words of your original manuscript onto the tracing paper. Maintain a sharp point so as to keep the lettering precise. If you get tired of continuously sharpening your pencil have a few handy so the sharpening interruption happens less often.

The first approach to the transcribing on the tracing paper should be done via a number of *passes*. Firstly, just identifying all the easily recognisable words; the less brain-power involved the better. All the '*the*', '*and*', '*with*' etc. can be easily pencilled in. (Figure 5). This important first run-over should not involve directly reading the text or getting stuck on any words you don't immediately recognise. A surprising amount of the text may be transcribed this way. English has a few hundred frequently used words that make up the bulk of the script. Very importantly, if you don't *immediately* identify a word leave a blank space on the tracing paper over the word. Most importantly do not **assume** the identity of **any** words during this initial approach. You are still getting to know the manuscript at this stage. However, as you work through the first pencil work make a mental note of the frequency of the words you don't immediately recognise.



**Figure 5.** The tracing paper over printed text booklet held together with a pamphlet stitch threading along the spine. The initial approach to transcribing the text onto the tracing paper will leave many gaps. Don't worry, there is very good reason to avoid assumptions of the original manuscript.

Once the entire text has experienced the initial pencil treatment now return to the gaps in the text on each page. The spaces can be easily found by picking the tracing paper up from the page. To assist in identifying the missing word:

- 1) read the entire sentence that contains the gap to gain an insight into the context of the sentence and broader paragraph discussion. Can you recognise the word as an adjective, noun or verb? Is the word Capitalized?
- 2) look for other examples of the spelling within the manuscript and any close variants of the spelling. Read these sentences that share the same missing word and look for mutual context between the sentences.
  - Importantly, the first spelling of a word that you encounter may not necessarily be the most commonly used spelling within the text. This point is a good reason not to presume the first definition and then apply it to the remainder of the text.
  - A list of rarer words can be compiled with page numbers to assist finding the occurrences and later may form the basis of an index.
- 3) use a subsequent edition of the text in the case of under/over-inked or damaged letters and if you suspect any number of printer's errors (see Part I). If the word is the last or first on a page, check of the word on the previous page end. It is very common to have the word that starts the next page appear underneath the final word on the previous page to assist in reading the text as you turn the page. This word also is convenient for ensure that you have the page order correct. Surely, there is a name for this word.

- 4) visit [www.quod.lib.umich.edu/m/med/](http://www.quod.lib.umich.edu/m/med/) and type the exact spelling into the search term. The word indexes with contain multiple usages and examples of the word usage. It is an amazing resource!
  - If nothing comes up immediately type in the first few letters or part of the word and search for the position in the resultant larger list where the word should exist. This may reveal close spelling variants that are within the database due to i/e/y or c/t or any phonetic substitutions.
- 5) Try typing the word into the enormous online dictionary, [en.wiktionary.org](http://en.wiktionary.org). It has a surprising number of old English words. There is always [google.com](http://google.com) but unless it is a unique and obscure long word Google may not help. Google books search may help in finding words in their scanned book archive that at times has lead to unknown titles on similar topics. If you are working on a specific text subject such as herbals, then there is a raft of online resources to help. So look for topic specific help.
- 6) If you suspect that it is a foreign language such as old French, old German, Latin or Romanised Greek then an on-line translator can be handy for either eliminating wild guesses or confirming suspicions - [translate.google.com](http://translate.google.com) or [iTranslateapp.com](http://iTranslateapp.com) are good here and both do Latin. For example, don't assume that 'adust' is a misprinted 'a dust' as it may be Latin for 'burnt'. So it's not 'a dusty' orange colour it is a 'burnt' orange colour (Quite an important distinction when analysing urine colours).

Eventually you will fill in the gaps. They have been easily found by lifting up the tracing paper from the printed page.

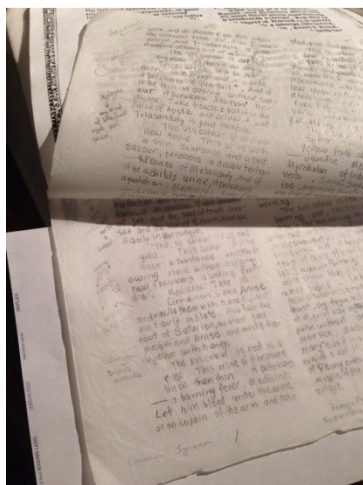
Importantly, the reason to take this approach is to break down the tasks and focus on them one at a time. Trying to type directly from the original whilst you guess \ words, leave countless XXXX marks (which you will have to find in the text again), etc. is just trying to do too much at once and will destroy your enthusiasm. Taking this approach allows you to focus on one need at a time and do it well. In the end you will have a resource that you can always check back on.

Now, take a blank white A4 piece of paper and slip it between the printed A3 sheet and the tracing paper (*Figure 6*). The pencil script can now be easily typed into a word-processor. During the typing if you need to check any aspect of your transcription removing the white A4 paper will quickly reunite your pencil work with the original script. When working on my first transcription I cut up individual tracing paper sheets and sticky taped them to each page. When I was finished the pencil work I enthusiastically removed all the tracing paper and began typing up each sheet. However, as I typed I frequently needed to check the original text and then had to remarry the tracing paper with the original page. It was recurrently annoying to say the least.

One final important tale to tell.. During the transcribing of *The Seeing of Urines* I made extensive note making of word occurrences, variant spelling, standard translated word (& etc). In the end,

these notes payed off unexpectedly. I had a number of lists that I built up to assist during the transcribing. These were:

- A list of herbs and plants mentioned within the text
- a list of uncommon words and spellings that occurred in the original text,
- a list of untranslated or unidentified words that remained in the pamphlet that I marked and maintained original spelling of. This list was a small defeat.
- a list of diseases, medicinal terms and electuaries mentioned throughout the text



**Figure 6.** By placing a sheet of white paper under the transcribing tracing paper the background magically disappears. By removing the paper sheet the transcribed words can be married back to the original for checking. The margins are heavily used for note taking.

These lists became appendices within the final pamphlet. I have received comments that these appendices alone are of great insight and value as they give a sub-section of topics within a 13<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> century urine diagnosis text. Small and specific insights can be gleamed from these appendices. The complete list of herbs that are mentioned are in one appendix which is an interesting read in itself. This herbal appendix also contains the spelling variants that I encountered within the text during transcription and a speculative Linnaean classification that I compiled where it was in agreement amongst numerous sources. Likewise the appendix of the diseases and medical terms contains variations of spelling and the translation that I applied to the original word, e.g. *Fluxe*, *Flyxe*, *Flux* appears in the original that I standardized to *Flux* within the final work. In part the reader can get an idea of the limitation of herbs used and the diseases recognised within the original text.

Thanks to everyone that encouraged this article. I hope that you enjoyed it and may find it inspirational. The next transcribing project that I am working on is an 15<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> century Etiquette book. It's amazingly concise and surprising how many of our modern manners are over 400 years old!



# 12-14<sup>th</sup> century Mongolian noblewoman's headdress - *Boqta / Boghtaq / Bog'ta / Bocca*

Gilligan O Tomelty

## Summary

Based on both textual descriptions and pictorial sources from the 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries (with additional inspiration from modern reconstructions) a plan was developed to create a boqta, the elaborate headdress of Mongolian noblewoman, for Her Excellency Baroness Ute von Tangermunde. A willow branch frame was lashed together and covered with blue silk before being embellished with trim, jewels, peacock feathers and dangling strands of pearls. All sewing was done by hand, and the only non-plausibly period materials used were tigertail jewellery wire (for strength), imitation plastic pearl beads and jewels (for cost) and PVA glue (for convenience).

## Inspiration

The Barony of Stormhold recently ran a competition for “huge and hideous hats”. In addition to the normal five A&S competition judging criteria, points would be awarded for the item's maximum dimension and ‘hideous factor’. Beauty – and ugliness – are in the eye of the beholder, but maximum dimension is measurable, and it is this parameter I set about to exaggerate.

I beseeched the Grand Omniscient Oracle of Greatly Lopsided Effectiveness on the topic of “ostentatious medieval hat”. Two of the top three results were for a Mongolian-style headdress variously called a Boqta, a Ku-Ku or a Boghtaq. The source stated that such headdresses could be five to seven feet tall, which was promising. The fact that Her Excellency Ute von Tangermunde, Baroness of the Court of Lochac (a highranking noblewoman and generous patron) had a Mongolian partner and a pre-existing wardrobe of Mongolian garb sealed the deal. I would make a Mongolian noblewoman's headdress for my local Mongolian noblewoman.

## Historical context and evidence

Armed with a variety of spellings for the item in question, I returned to the Oracle and found a variety of information. The earliest reference I found was from 1228, in the Mongolian manuscript *The Secret History of the Mongols*, which is the oldest surviving work of literature in the Mongolian language. The reference is to Chinggis [Genghis] Khan's mother, as she was abandoned following the assassination of her husband (an event that took place just after 1170):

*“Lady Ho’elun, born a woman of wisdom,*

*Raised her little ones, her own children.  
Wearing her high hat tightly [on her head]...*

In the translation by Urgunge Onon, this 'high hat' is explicitly identified as a boqta. The same work contains another reference, regarding how Temudjin [Chinggis Khan] and two others "ravished the tall-hatted women"... but perhaps it's best not to dwell on that.

In 1211, Chao Hung, an envoy from the Chinese Sung dynasty, noted that the headgear of women from the ruling strata consisted of a wire frame,

*"about three feet in length, adorned with red and blue brocade or with pearls."*

Around 1225, another Sung ambassador witnessed the construction of these hats, stating that the outer materials had changed to "red silk or... gold brocade."

The Taoist monk K'iu Ch'ang Ch'un was summoned to court by Chinggis Kahn in 1219, and started his journey a year later. His travels were recorded by a disciple, and include a description of the 'high hat' of the Mongols:

*"The married women put on their heads a thing made of the bark of trees, two feet high, which they sometimes cover with woollen cloth, or, as the rich used to do, with red silk stuff. This cap is provided with a long tail, which they call yu-yu, and which resembles a goose or duck. They are always in fear that somebody might inadvertently run against this cap. Therefore, when entering a tent, they are accustomed to go backward, inclining their heads."*

Another description of a boqta by a holy man was penned by the Franciscan monk Giovanni del Pian di Carpin around 1245, when he travelled to Mongolia as an ambassador of Pope Innocent IV:

*"On their head they have a round thing made of twigs or bark, which is an ell [distance from elbow to fingertips] in height and ends on top in a square; it gradually increases in circumference from the bottom to the top, and on the top there is a long and slender cane of gold or silver or wood, or even a feather, and it is sewn on to a cap which reaches to the shoulders. The cap as well as this object is covered with buckram, velvet or brocade, and without this headgear they never go into the presence of men and by it they are distinguished from other women."*

Another Friar, this time William of Tubuck, also described a boqta (although he spelled it 'bocca') around 1255:

*“...they have a headdress called a bocca and made of tree bark or some lighter material if they can find it. It is thick and round two hands in circumference and one cubit [distance from elbow to fingertips] or more high, and square at the top like the capital of a column. They cover this bocca with expensive silk cloth: it is hollow inside, and on the capital in the middle, or on the square part, they put a sheaf of quills or of thin reeds, again a cubit or more in length. And they decorate this sheaf at the top with peacock’s feathers and around its shaft with the little feathers from a mallard’s tail and even precious stones.”*

There is also a range of pictorial sources, dating back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. They are decorated in a variety of styles, which served as inspiration for my own ornamentation.



1. Mural from Bezeklik Thousand Buddha Caves (Xinjiang, China)
2. Cave wall painting, 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century, Xinjiang, China. From Staatliche Museum of Berlin.
3. Portrait of Empress Chabi, consort to Khublai Qan (died 1281). National Palace Museum, Taipei
4. Early 14<sup>th</sup> century, detail from illustration in the Heinrich von Diez Albums, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

5. An unnamed wife of Ayurbarvada (14<sup>th</sup> century). National Palace Museum, Taipei.
6. “Mongol Ruler and Consort Enthroned”, from Jami’ al-Tawarikh (“Universal History”), written by Rashid al-din during the Ilkhanid period (1256-1353), found in the Hazine 1653 manuscript. Stored at Topkapi Sarayı Müzesi, Istanbul.

Taken together, these images show certain trends. The height is conservative, being around 1-2 times the height of the head. Red appears to be the traditional colour, and the pronounced flare at the top going to the capital is visible in all cases, generally extending to the front more than the back. Ornamentation is more variable, with the boqta in panel 3 featuring a strip of decoration down the front while that in panel 5 has a plain column with a couple of feature points. These portraits are both of Yuan dynasty Empresses, and both have flaps on the capital - a detail unseen in the other pictures. Also seen in these two images is the black chinstrap that secures the hat on the head, which appears to be covered in pearls. Pearls are also clearly visible dangling below the cap, and white dots suggestive of the same are seen in panel 2. The boqtas in panel 6 have white dots, again possibly pearls, around the capital. The drape at the back has a variable length, from the nape of the neck in panel 1 to well past the shoulders in panel 4. The drape is hard to spot in the portraits of the Yuan Empresses, but still appears to be present.

The boqta has also been described in modern times. Jack Weatherford (in the 2010 book *The Secret History of the Mongol Queens*) describes the boqta as “the headdress of peace” (as opposed to the “helmet of war”), and “virtually the only piece of clothing that separated a man from a woman.” The construction is again described:

*“...structure of willow branches, covered with green felt, rose in a narrow column three to four feet high, gradually changing from a round base to a square top. A variety of decorative items such as peacock or mallard feathers adorned the top with a loose attachment that kept them upright but allowed them to flutter high above the woman’s head. The higher the rank, the more elaborate the boqta.”*

I also came across depictions of modern reproductions of the traditional boqta style, as below:





The style of decoration is similar to the examples seen in period, with ornamentation such as continuous patterned strips, featured visual focal points, strings of pearls and jewellery and flaps on the capital.

## Planning and Materials

Many options for construction material, fabric choice and ornamentation were available, based on the historical research undertaken. Part of the planning and design process was deciding which options to use in each instance.



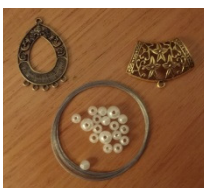
The traditional colour of the boqta appears to be red, but as Her Excellency favours blue, and had a supply of fine blue silk, a substitution was made. Blue is also a colour of Stormhold, and matches better with the Mongolian garb she already owns.



A source of willow branches was available through the generosity of Lady Annabelle Perrot, so twigs were chosen over bark for the underlying frame.



The description of feathers fluttering above the hat opened the door to extending the vertical dimension of the piece, and a trio of peacock tail feathers were procured from Dame Miriam Galbraith.

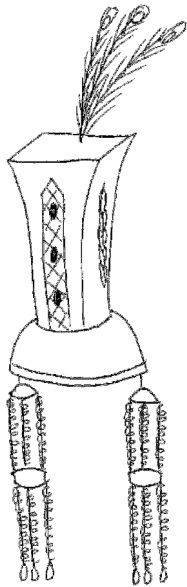


The presence of jewellery hanging below the cap in the portraits of the Yuan dynasty Empresses gave precedent for extending the hat below the head, so pearl beads and jewellery supplies were procured.

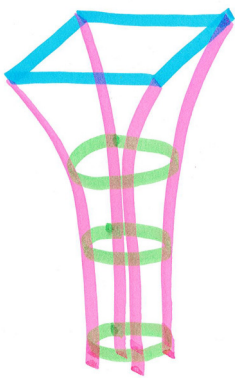


Her Excellency Ute had a variety of decorative bits and pieces she made available for my use, such as trim procured from Pennsic, and more trim composed of golden loops. I also found some shiny ornaments in Op Shops and the like. When it comes to decorating a hideous hat, more is more!





This is the concept sketch for the article, with some ideas for decoration. To simplify transportation and storage, it was decided to make the feathers and jewellery detachable. The feathers would be sewn onto a fabric sleeve, and fastened to a projection from the top of the hat. I considered using a button, but dels (the traditional costume of Mongolia) do up with fabric ties, so I decided to use a similar method here, passing cord through a pair of slits and knotting them together. To attach the jewellery to the cap I chose a toggle clasp fastener, as it is less intricate than a lobster clasp or bolt ring and appears less modern to my eye.



The plan for the frame called for three types of willow branch with differing properties:

- Long branches with some flexibility to form the corner shafts (purple in the diagram).
- Short branches (no flexibility required) to form the capital (blue in the diagram).
- Medium-length branches flexible enough to bend into a circle to maintain the circular pillar (green in the diagram).

## Construction

### *Frame construction*

When the willow branches were delivered, I was warned that they would not retain their flexibility for long. Soaking in water could alleviate this difficulty and restore some measure of flexibility, but I got to work and had my frame by the end of the evening.



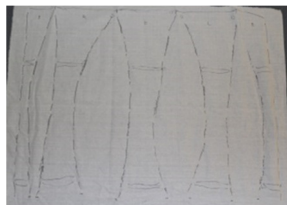
Square lashing were used to secure the corners of the capital, and round lashings to keep the circular supports in shape. Working the circles was quite difficult, and many branches broke

rather than making the required curves. Three circles had been planned, but only two were usable.



The frame was completed by square lashing the uprights in place. It was hard to judge the proper points at which to make the attachments, and the result was not symmetrical. The structure also has a tendency to twist, due to the lack of cross-bracing. It is, however, just as easy to twist back.

### Pattern drafting



The next step was to make the fabric pattern. This was achieved in much the same way as constructing a body blank for a person – a length of calico was wrapped around the form and pinned until it fit. The location of the circular support struts and protrusions from the capital were also marked, as the pattern could be expected to deform in those places. The

blank was then removed and the pattern transferred to fresh calico for a mock-up, to double-check the fitting. It needed to be tight enough to avoid appearing baggy, but not so tight that it couldn't be done up. To assist in this, the back was done in two halves. The amount of overlap could be adjusted to tweak the fit as it was sewn.



### Sewing



The final pattern pieces were transferred to the blue silk and carefully cut out. Construction seams were done by hand using backstitch. To prevent fraying, the seam allowance on one side was clipped and enfolded by the other seam – almost like flat-felling, except that I did not want a line of stitching visible on the outside. Instead I secured the seam sandwich with a running stitch.

Cunningly, the straight edge of both back pieces was placed on the selvedge, so seam treatments were not necessary. The top and bottom of the main body piece were hemmed with running stitch, as they would be hidden by the capital and the cap, respectively. The drape was cut from blue silk as a single piece and also hemmed with a running stitch.



For the capital, I decided to follow the style of the Yuan dynasty Empresses and add flaps on either side. I also used the golden loop trim to add some visual interest, in the same mode as the pearls seen around the capital of the boqtas in panel 6 above. Trapezoidal shapes were cut out and sewn right sides together with backstitch, with the trim sandwiched between on the inside. Bias binding tape was used to prevent fraying, as the seams were much thicker than those on the column covering (thanks to the trim). Half of the back was left unsewn to let the piece be turned right-side-out; this was later secured with whipstitch.



The cap portion again started in calico, being fitted to Her Excellency's head. This was then transferred to black cotton drill for the cap lining. The lining was sewn together and hemmed, after which the gold loop trim was stitched on. Having the same design element at top and bottom helped to visually unify the piece. Rather than being clipped, the fabric extensions from each piece were sewn over the bottom willow circular support, in an attempt to increase the stability of the final article. The cap would also have to take the weight of the jewellery, so strips of yellow cotton canvas (edged in blanket stitch to prevent fraying) were sewn in to ensure the heavy beading didn't tear through the fabric.



The silk upper for the cap had the top seam and edges treated as for the main body. The bottom seam was folded as if for hemming, but not stitched to itself. The silk was then slip-stitched to the lining on the fold of the unstitched hem for an invisible join.



For the chinstraps, the same fabric as the cap lining was folded and backstitched together to form a curvilinear shape that was more interesting than a plain strip. This was then cut out and used as the pattern for the second chinstrap. The straps were attached with whipstitch and backstitch to the cap lining level with the bottom circular support of the column. Further improvements to the article may include beadwork on the straps, as seen with the Yuan Empresses.



### *Decoration*



Decorations were added to the main body prior to final sewing. As evidence had been found for both continuous designs and focal design elements, I chose to use both! The Pennsic trim became a strip whipstitched down the front, with white jewels sewn on at regular intervals in the pattern and a large yellow gem in a gold setting in the focal position. This gem was initially sewn on askew, and had to be unpicked and readjusted. A couple of millimetres made all the difference.

The fabric was then pinned tightly in place and the back sewn up with slipstitch, adjusting tension as the shape of the column altered. The seam line strayed from the midline of the column to take up some of the bagginess that would otherwise have been introduced.

### *Jewellery*



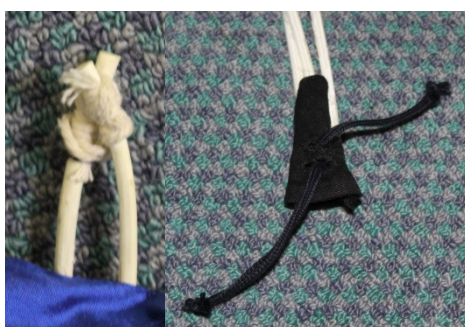
Imitation pearls were picked up cheap at the city Lincraft closing down sale. However, try as I might I couldn't find the same size elsewhere. Instead I procured slightly smaller pearl beads and used them in a 1-3-1-3-1 pattern, which I feel is actually more visually interesting than a uniform strand.



The period method for stringing pearls involves using the strongest thread you can find (usually waxed linen or silk) and tying a knot after each bead so the whole string doesn't fall off if the thread snaps. Not having the available time (or, probably, patience) to use this technique, I instead turned to modern jewellery materials and used 'tigertail' nylon-wrapped steel wire.

The plan called for a complicated arrangement of beads. Each side would have six strings, arranged in two groups of three. From the top, the toggle clasp would attach to an anchoring point that held the top three strings. These would fall to a spacer, from which the bottom strings would hang. A large bead or pendant would weight each of the bottom strings. A suitable piece was found for each element in the plan, although some modifications through clipping and filing were necessary.

The first lot of toggle clasps I acquired proved to be made of plastic, and broke far too readily for my application – the completed jewellery strands are quite hefty. A trip to a specialist jewellery store provided sturdy metal replacements.



### *Feathers*

Two short pieces of willow were used to create an attachment point for the feather arrangement at the back of

the capital. Black cotton drill was then sewn with backstitch to create a sleeve that went over this willow enclosure. Two slits were cut in the sleeve and sewn with buttonhole stitch, and fingerloop-braided cord sewn onto the inside of the sleeve. The idea was that the cords would be passed through the willow enclosure, then through the slits and then tied together, making it impossible for the sleeve to fall off. The peacock tail feathers were sewn to the sleeve. A large ring was acquired to hide and decorate the join between sleeve and capital.

## Reflection

I am proud of how this item turned out. If I was doing it again I might have made the drape larger and/or lined it or used a heavier fabric, to get more of the ruffled effect seen in the pictorial sources (particularly panels 1 and 4). To be completely authentic, I'd make Ute an entire red silk outfit, to fit with the ceremonial costumes and boqta seen in the pictorial sources. As stated, blue had been chosen to blend with her existing wardrobe.

The rest of the possible improvements are all to do with ornamentation. A spray of mallard feathers at the base of the peacock feathers; beading on the chinstraps; adding extra dangling beads to the capital. When the whole point is to flaunt your wealth, you can never have too many decorative elements!

## The Final Product





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## Making a Goffered Veil

Elizabeth Braythwayte

I first came across goffered veils on a trip to England at Christmas 2006. In St Mary's Church in Warwick there was the tomb (c. 1370-1375) of Catherine de Beauchamp with her effigy and some of the weepers around the edge of the tomb depicted wearing fretwork veils:



I was looking for the style of veil that a lady in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century would have worn in England and after looking at websites including I decided that I would feel more comfortable trying a goffered veil than wearing a crispinette or templars.

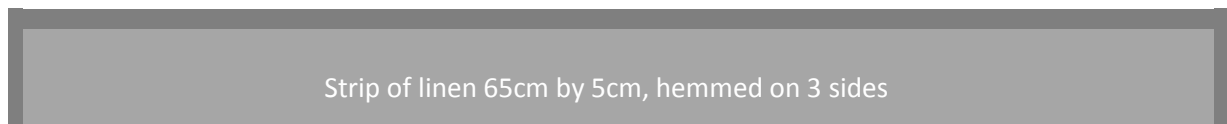
When it came to making the veil I referred heavily to the internet blog of Isis Sturtewagen and when I was working on the veil in 2009 the blog included the following photos and some instructions on making this style of goffered veil:



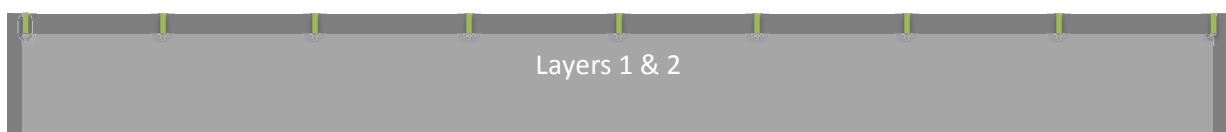
### To make the veil

Before you start – a mannequin head and 3.5 - 4cm lengths of 15mm diameter dowel will help you shape the veil once complete. The goffered edging should be attached to a semi-circular veil.

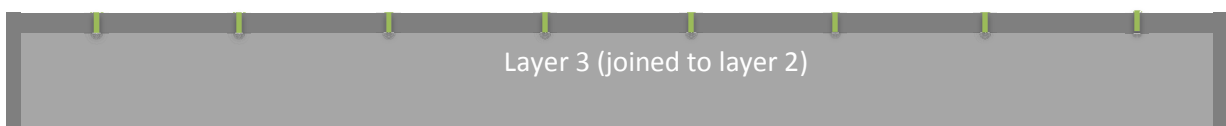
Cut 4 strips 65cm long by 5cm wide. If possible, use the selvaged edge for attaching to the veil and hem the other edge and the ends. (The following images are not to scale)



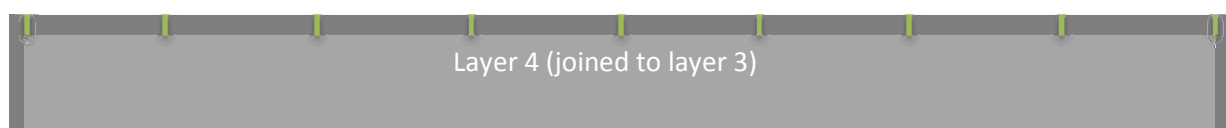
Sew the first 2 strips together through the edge hem at the ends and the middle, then in the middle of each section and so on, until the joins are about 3cm apart.



Join the next strip at the mid-point of each of the previous joins.



Join the final strip the same way as the first strip.



To shape the edging so that the fretwork opens up, slightly gather the edge that is to be attached to the veil.

Starch the fretwork edge of the veil. (I have found rice starch to be better than cornflower paste as it does not discolour the fabric nor leave a powdery residue. I use the starchy water from boiling rice and brush it on liberally).

Place lengths of dowel in each of the spaces in the veil fretwork to open them up. The dowel pieces are easier to remove if they protrude past the edge of the veil.

When the starch is mostly dry, sew the edging onto the straight side of a semi-circular veil, centering its position.

Finally, drape the veil over the mannequin head to dry fully and remove the dowels when it is ready to wear. You are likely to find that each time you plan to wear the veil you have to apply the dowels and starch again to re-shape it.



I am not an expert on these veils or 14<sup>th</sup> century garb in general, but if you want any more instructions on the making on this style of veil you can contact me by e-mail – [sue.whitby@xtra.co.nz](mailto:sue.whitby@xtra.co.nz)

#### References:

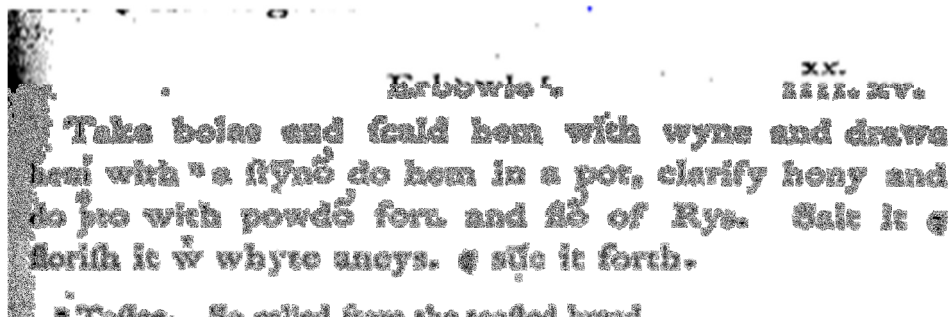
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## Erbowle (Fresh Plum Pudding)

*Helouys le Poer*



From: "A Form of Cury" <http://www.pbm.com/~lindahl/foc/>

Around December/January (summer in Lochac), I end up with a surplus of plums from my garden. So this year I decided to enter the 2015 Kingdom A&S Competition (Dessert) using my redaction of 14<sup>th</sup> century recipe for 'fresh plum pudding', or Erbowle. As wild plums, or bolas, were plentiful in medieval England (Moffatt, 2006), I figured that it would be a common dessert. I first came across this recipe in my well-thumbed (and marked) copy of *Pleyn Delit* (Hieatt et al, 1996), which includes redactions of a number of the recipes found on a 14<sup>th</sup> Century parchment penned by 'masterchefs' in the kitchens of the English king, Richard II. This list of recipes was effectively England's first cookbook (Labarge, 1965) and was published as "A Forme of Cury" – or 'the (proper) method of cookery' in the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century (Scanned facsimiles - <http://www.pbm.com/~lindahl/foc/>. Accessed 7 January, 2015).

Originally, the redactions were compiled in Hieatt and Butler (1985) "A Curye on Inglysch"- and have since been used by modern cooks, both across the Knowne Worlde and outside of it.

The modern English translation is as follows:

Take bolas and scald them with wine and draw them through a strainer. Do them in a pot, clarify honey and do thereto with powder forte and flour of rice. Salt and flourish it with white anyse and serve it forth.

There are lots of other redactions around and here is mine:

### Ingredients:

- Around 500 or 600 g of good sized plums (*Prunus sp*) (mine were probably Japanese blood plums)
- 1 cup of Sweet or Port Wine



- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of honey
- 1 **tsp** of Powder Forte (my recipe below)
- 2 tbs of rice flour
- Salt to taste

**Powder Forte** – based on a recipe from Celtnet (<http://www.celtnet.org.uk>. Accessed 5 January, 2015)

- 1 tbs ground ginger
- $\frac{2}{3}$  tbs of ground cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tbs of ground cloves
- $\frac{1}{3}$  tbs each of ground cubeb, grains of paradise and black pepper.

### My redaction:

1. Place the whole plums in a heavy bottom saucepan (non-reactive – stainless steel or stoneware) with a cup of the wine and let simmer until the skins start to split off.



2. Remove skins and seeds and press a through a strainer.
3. Blend the resultant plum “mash” with the wine (still in the saucepan).
4. In a separate pot, warm  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of liquid honey and add pre-prepared 1-2 tsp “Powder Forte.”
5. Then add the pureed wine/plum mixture, rice flour and a pinch of salt.
6. Bring to mixture to the boil and let simmer for approximately 5 minutes – or more.
7. Once the mixture appears to be an ‘applesauce’ consistency, served into small bowls – and sprinkle with aniseed confits.



## The final product:

As Lady Rosemary Willowwood notes in her redaction (see below), the resulting product is a rather pleasing and slightly spicy ‘sauce’ or fruit-custard – rather than a pudding. The redaction/recipe on Celtnet uses the wine, spice and honey mixture as a sauce over whole plums. Either way, I think it would provide a warming and healthy ‘dessert’ (or supper), as autumn gives way to winter. Therefore this recipe would be a lovely Christmas option for those in the Northern Kingdoms. Consistent with a summer harvest here in Lochac, I also think provides a nice and healthful dessert served cold, either on its own, or potentially with custard.

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## For other redactions:

Lady Rosemary Willowwood de Ste. Anne’s “Then Serve It Forth...”  
<http://terrapomaria.antir.sca.org/cooking/erbowle.htm>. This article provides a good background to the use of this item potentially for its health benefits. She also notes you can adapt it for white plums.

**Celtnet** – which has a variety of medieval recipes and includes a recipe for Powder Forte which seems to have covered most relevant spices. **Please note:** this recipe advises  
 1 Tablespoon of Powder Forte – which I **do not** advise!!!!  
<http://www.celtnet.org.uk/recipes/mediaeval/fetch-recipe.php?rid=medi-erbowle>

## Sambocade

- Lady Ellen of Wyteley

Redacted from the Forme of Cury recipe:

Sambocade<sup>1</sup>. xx.  
viii. xi.

. Take and make a Crust ī a trasi. & take a crudd  
and wryng out þ wheyze. and drawe hē þurgh a  
slynō. and put ī þ slynō crust. do þto sug the þridde  
part & fowdel<sup>2</sup> whyte of Ayren. & shake þin blom  
of eiren<sup>3</sup>. & bake is up w curole<sup>4</sup> & messe it forth.

From <http://www.pbm.com/~lindahl/foc/FoC118small.html>

This recipe is strongly informed by the *Pleyn Delit* redaction but not the same. (Heatt, C.B., Hosington, B. and Butler, S. (1996) *Pleyn Delit: Medieval Cookery for Modern Cooks*. University of Toronto, recipe 121)

### Ingredients

- 250 gm      sweet short pastry
- 4            egg whites
- 350 gms    cottage cheese or kwark, (full fat)
- 40 mls      cream
- 130 gms    sugar, a.k.a 0.5 cups
- 2 tblsp     elderflower cordial concentrate  
(Australian tablespoons used, which are 20 ml each, not the NZ 15 ml)
- 1/4 tsp      rosewater
- 23 cm pie dish

### Directions

1. Roll out pastry and line pie dish to about 3.5 cm up the sides. Make sure pastry isn't soggy because it will not be blind-baked. You may need to rub or knead in flour as well as flouring the rolling surface and the inside of the baking dish.
2. Drain any free whey from the cottage cheese. Beat cottage cheese until lump-free in a food processor. Move to a large mixing vessel.

3. Put egg whites, sugar, cordial concentrate, and rosewater in the processor and blend gently until sugar has dissolved, but stop well before it becomes foamy and meringue-like.
4. Add to cottage cheese and mix well.
5. Pour into pastry-lined dish.
6. Bake at 180 deg C for 20 to 30 min until set in middle, which may also involve top being slightly browned. It sets like a baked custard, i.e. while hot it will still quake even when set. Not-runny is what you must look for.

Serves 8. Serve at room temperature with fresh raspberries or strawberries, or fresh or cooked stone fruit, or orange slices.

### Cook's Notes

I found glass pie ties superior to tinfoil to ensure that the pastry was not soggy.

You can substitute 10 ml orange liqueur for rosewater; not quite same flavour was achieved but it was still good.

I have tried this recipe with fresh elderflowers, but it is hard to mince them fine enough so that they do not give a gritty texture to the finished dish. You also miss out on the lemon component that is usually in elderflower cordial concentrate, which I think adds something to the dish.

Personally I thought this recipe a little on the sweet side, and I will probably reduce the sugar to 100 g on the next occasion.



*Cockatrice* by Lord Quentin Maclaren

## Cockatrice FAQs

### 1. Can I write an article for Cockatrice?

Yes, you can! Cockatrice is all about sharing your research and your enthusiasm for your particular Art or Science. One of the best things about the SCA is the huge range of ‘things’ covered under the umbrella of Arts and Sciences from brewing to smithing to philosophy to music to embroidery to costuming to cookery to philosophy to carpentry to shoe-making to textile arts to book binding... Get the picture? The rationale for Cockatrice is to give the people of Lochac a place where they can share their research and passion for an Art or Science and to inspire their readers! This includes anyone interested in Arts and Sciences from Laurels to newcomer.

### 2. But what do I write and how much?

You can write an article on a particular area, like the ones in this edition. I would suggest aiming for around 1000 words as it gives you enough room to express yourself but is still short enough to hold the attention of your reader. If you don’t think you could manage writing a full article then there are a number of other ways to contribute including:

- ♣ Write a review of book you have found helpful or interesting. This could be an academic work of research or a popular history or even a work of fiction set in the SCA time period.
- ♣ Write a song or poem. This could be something that you have performed at an event or written for a contest or even for fun!
- ♣ Draw a picture – have you been experimenting with period artistic techniques then send it in!
- ♣ Redact a recipe – send in your versions of favourite period recipes.

### 3. But I don’t know *everything* about my particular area of interest!

Firstly, thank goodness! How boring SCA life would be if we did know everything. There are many stages in our research journeys in the SCA and Cockatrice is a place where you can tell other people where you are at this point in time. It doesn’t matter if you have been studying one particular area for the last fifteen years or it is something relatively new to you, the purpose of Cockatrice is to give you a platform to tell people about what you have found out so far and to provide them with inspiration in their own journeys in the SCA.



The other point about research in the SCA is that it is often impossible to know *everything* about a particular area, often due to a dearth of primary sources<sup>1</sup>. Other barriers can include difficulties with language and access to resources. One of the fun things about the SCA is the creative part of anachronism – in other words – how did you overcome these particular obstacles. Again Cockatrice is a place where you can tell others about how you have been creatively anachronistic. If you have made modern substitutes then tell us how and why you did so.

Another thing to remember is that part of research is putting our own particular interpretations on period Arts and Sciences. We come up with theories about how and why people in period did things certain ways usually based on our reading of primary source evidence. Cockatrice is a place for you to explain your ideas about an area of interest and describing how the evidence you have collected supports your theories. This may not mean you are definitively right as after your article has been published new information may come to light that may damage your argument or you may rethink what you have said. The important thing to remember is that your article in Cockatrice is a reflection of where you are at on at that stage of the journey and the exciting thing about the SCA is that we always learning new things!

#### 4. How do I reference my article?

There is nothing worse than reading an article full of interesting ideas and thinking where did they get them only to find that there are no references! If you are submitting an article to Cockatrice it is important that at the minimum you include a reference list of all the sources you have included.

##### For Referencing Websites:

Include the URL of the website and the date you accessed it. The date is important because due to website being often frequently updated this date tells us what version of the website was used.

This could look like:

French Metrology (*n.d.*). *The metre adventure*:

<http://www.french-metrology.com/en/history/metre-adventure.asp>,  
viewed 30 September 2012.

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<sup>1</sup> In case you are not sure of the terminology – a primary source is created at the time e.g. a period manuscript, tapestry, dress, embroidery, sword etc. A secondary source is a piece of research based on these primary sources e.g. examining period embroidery examples to present an article on the different stitches used.

For Referencing Books:

Book References should include the author, title, publisher, city and date of publications and look like:

Palmer, John, *How to Brew* (Brewers Publications: Colorado, 2006)

If you are including an article out of a book it should look like:

Geijer, Agnes, 'The Textile Finds from Birka' in N.B. Harte and H. Ponting (ed), *Cloth and Clothing in Medieval Europe*, (Heinemann: London, 1983), pp. 80-99

If it is an article from a magazine:

Gribbling, Barbara, 'The Black Prince: hero or villain', *BBC History Magazine*, January 2013, vol. 14, pp. 30-40

For Referencing Images:

All images used in articles must be referenced for copyright reasons. It also pays to check that the owner of the website is happy for you to use their images in your own work!

You can either include the referencing with the images in your article or create an image list at the end. This should be referenced like any other book or website.

Looking forward to see your articles!

**The Editor**



## Contributors

**Lady Elizabeth Braythwayte** was born in 1379 in Wicstun, Yorkshire. She is married to Master Edward Braythwayte, who is a Guildsman and one of the founders of the Worshipful Company of Mercers of London. They have a son, Edmond and live in York in a manor house with a moat and gatehouse. She enjoys playing the recorder and psaltery and has some basic knowledge of physick learnt from my uncle who was a Barber Surgeon.

**Lady Helouys le Poer** - Although currently residing in Waterford, Eire – where she went to live when she met her (Late) Husband) Paul de Quincey - a Crusader - She was born in Bordeaux, France and is a (Distant) relation of Her Majesty, Queen Eleanor. She and her (Late) husband established a profitable Wine Carrying business – between Bordeaux and Cork – as those Holy Men need to be kept in Christ's Blood, otherwise there will be Hell to Pay. There are two cats, Tinkerbelle and Moet d' Bordeaux, residing in her Mansion in Politarchopolis and she occupies Herself with Sewing, Archery, Goode Cookery and Comedie. One day she will cook a Greayte Pie with Snipe, Brolga and Magpie Goose (not).

**Lord Gillucan ua Tomaltaig** crossed the Irish channel to England, where the clerks recorded his name as Gilligan O Tomelty. Now an armiger of Lochac, he makes his bread in the Barony of Stormhold as a herald, an entertainer and an artisan

**Lord Theophrastus von Oberstockstall** is from the Barony of Riven haven. He pursues knowledge of a of medieval chemical nature (having transcribed the first printed distillation text 'The Art of Distillation') mixed with intriguing medical interests (witnessed in his recent transcription of 'The Seeing of Urines', a urine diagnosis text) and other fascinations (ergot poisoning in medieval European history). He is currently under Laurel apprenticeship to Mistress Filippa Ginevra Francesca di Lucignano. He dreams of holding a reenactment of Dr. John Dee's ceremonial magic in full garb, but is current working on a new readable version of 'Liber Ratzel' and planning a new transcription of a Gentleman's etiquette book. He is married to Lady Helyana van Brugge who together have created their Great Works, Hannah and George.

**Lady Ellen of Wyteley** is from England and the year is currently 1350. She resides in the Barony of Southron Gaard.