



# Cockatrice

November, A.S. 53

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### Cockatrice Calendar AS 53 (2018/2019)

Summer Edition	Submissions due	1 January
	Published	1 February
Autumn Edition	Submissions due	1 April
	Published	1 May

## From the Editor

Greetings all!

Spring is here, and with it comes changes for Cockatrice.

First of all, we have a new Deputy Editor! Master Grim of Thornby has stepped up to take charge of the Cockatrice blog, provide emergency back-up, and generally support the publication.

Second, Cockatrice has a blog! To facilitate easy access to the wonderful articles people send to us, we are now going to be publishing them in blog format after each newsletter comes out. Articles should come out once a fortnight

(more or less), and we hope you'll all be happy with this additional publication medium.

Third, in line with the survey results reported in the last issue, we're going to try to broaden our scope to showcase more kinds of A&S activities and experiences. This edition has two traditional research-based articles, but it also includes reports on A&S events, a museum exhibit review, and a wonderfully enthusiastic article by Lord Jon Huslangr on the art of getting things done. So if you'd like to try out a new kind of article, showcasing your own work or helping to share someone else's, please get in touch!

*Yours in Service,*

Gwen verch David

### Contact Us

**Editor:** Lady Gwen verch David

**Deputy Editor:** Master Grim of Thornby

**Email:** [editor@cockatrice.lochac.sca.org](mailto:editor@cockatrice.lochac.sca.org)

**Website:** [cockatrice.lochac.sca.org](http://cockatrice.lochac.sca.org)

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/cockatriceoflochac](https://facebook.com/cockatriceoflochac)



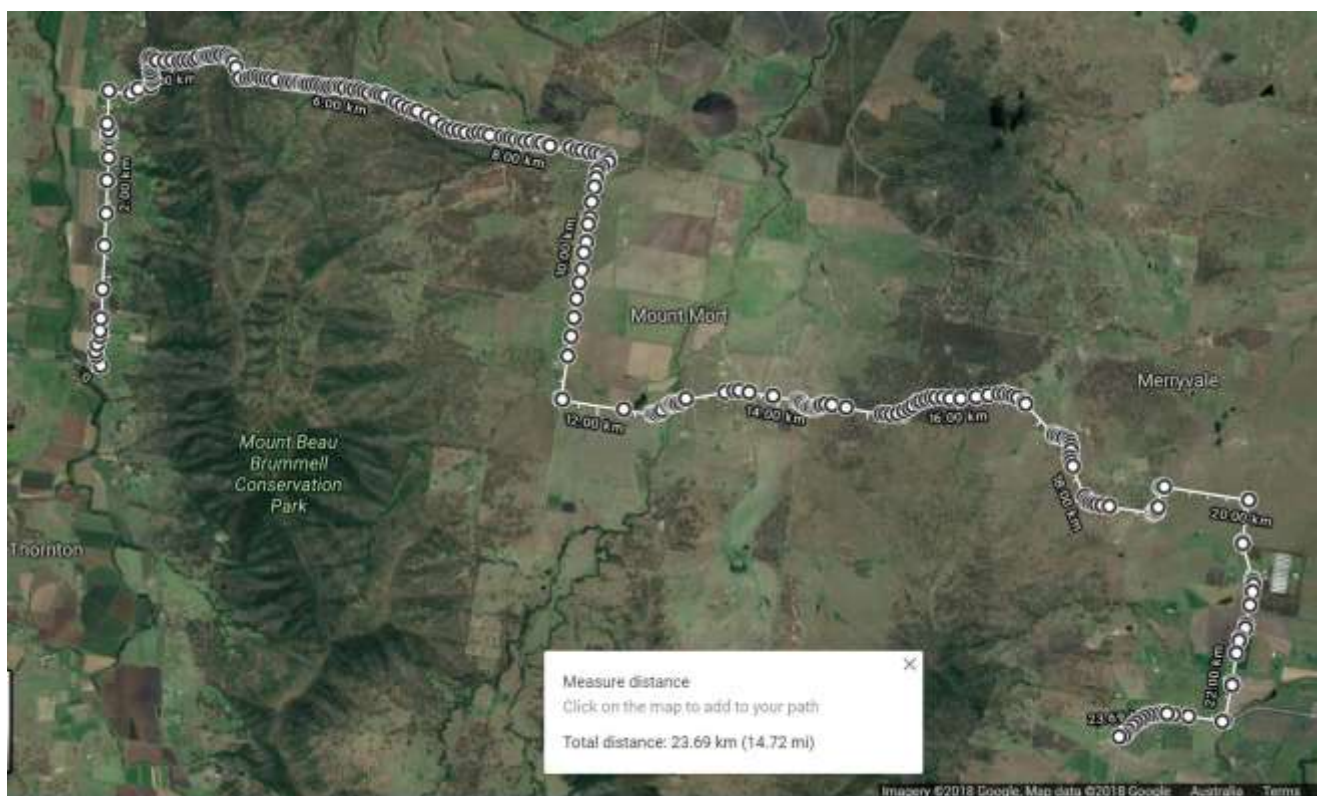


# Reflections on the River Haven Spring Pilgrimage

*Lord Theophrastus von Oberstockstall*

On Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018, River Haven held its first Spring pilgrimage. It was a walk of approximately 24 kilometres using the Bicentennial National trail between Thornton, Mount Mort, Greys Plain, and Rosevale. The pathway traversed the Little Liverpool Range and was mostly a mixture of quiet, gravel or bitumen country roads passing between open forest ridges and picturesque, pastoral grazing creek flats. As we walked we enjoyed long conversations ranging over as broad a topic selection as the valley we crossed, and the delights of a country stroll.

Travelling at the slowest walkers' pace, estimated at 3.5km/hr the pilgrimage took between seven and eight hours (including breaks). Commencing at 8 am, a luncheon stop was enjoyed at the 15 km mark after having negotiated Greys Plain. The pathway then used Mount Walker W road, and Rosevale road to arrive at St Paul's Lutheran Church ground for a late afternoon tea. A light luncheon / afternoon tea was generously arranged by four members that did not walk. This was a delightful offer, and greatly appreciated by the walkers. As the party was exhausted and considered the event enjoyable to conclude following the afternoon tea, dinner options were not taken at a nearby pub.



Members engaged in the pilgrimage for whatever reason they saw fit, as this was not necessarily a religious event. Members' attire ranged over numerous periods and cultures that they felt appropriate for the occasion. All made an honest attempt to dress in a historical period and culture appropriate to the ages of interest in the SCA. Most members chose simple garb to match the occasion with preference to earlier periods. Appropriate footwear for a pilgrimage over gravel and bitumen roads, and uneven surfaces, witnessed everybody using modern shoes and hiking boots. Whilst there was discussion of using period accurate footwear, nobody was brave enough to attempt it.



Members carried appropriate water and sustenance for the pilgrimage. A light meal was brought by each member. As we sat on a fallen tree trunk in the shade for our luncheon it was a delight to reach into our pilgrim's bags and retrieve cloth wrapped bread and hard cheeses that had become soft during the walk. Sun protection was essential – with all using sunscreen and appropriate headwear. Light linen scarfs were a

welcome reprieve for the back of the neck and tucked under the hat to hold in place.

Carpooling was used to arrive at the starting place, Thornton, (Google Maps:190 Mulgowie Road, Thornton, Qld) and Return Carriage to Thornton from Rosevale (Google Maps: 572 Rosevale Road, Rosevale, Qld) after the pilgrimage. Mobile phone reception was intermittent, however on ridgetops signals was strongest. All pathways were able to be negotiated by 4WD vehicles in the case of emergencies, though none arose.

Whilst there were potential risks, such as wildlife (snakes, ticks), domestic animals (dogs, horses), dehydration, trip/slip hazards, unlevel ground, and roadside debris, no incidents requiring medical attention occurred. Dogs that were encountered were either friendly or well fenced. One carpet snake was encountered literally guarding a gateway, and easily scared off with our pilgrimage's walking sticks. Though this is an all-weather event, as we were going to do it no matter what weather was on offer, no threatening weather events were encountered. In fact, the day was a perfect early spring day of a most pleasant temperature and breezes. A dust storm impeded some of the anticipated mountain venues, which was a disappointment.

Following the event, we reflected on the day and decided that the event could be improved with several things:

- Carpooling cost (fuel) needs to be considered and non-intrusively suggested to participants.
- The 24 km length of the walk discouraged some participants, thus whilst the length was intended to make it a meaningful challenge, the next event will have two half options, so participants may partake in the morning section or afternoon section or both.
- Rural toilet access was a pre-event concern. Adequate solutions for metropolitan members was not achieved. All available toilets will need to be identified, as public toilets were unexpectedly found at Warrell View (to the relief of travellers).
- This was a free event. Thus, afternoon tea was reliant on the generosity of members, which was how it was initiated. Future events should not expect or rely on this generosity, though may accept it if offered again.
- The pathway was initially intended to conclude at a rural pub. This was a disappointment when it was discovered that the *Rosevale Retreat* was closed. Future pathways may consider well-established pubs.
- It was generally thought that the length (24 km) and choice of seasonal timing was excellent. However, longer distance pilgrimages would likely not be encouraged. Summer and Winter seasonal walks were discussed, however seasonal temperatures are likely to be discouraging. It was suggested that the Summer walk could be held as a full moon night affair.
- A support car was not initially considered. A flu-recovering member volunteered to perform this duty. This enabled water to be carried, and an emergency car to be available (which was used to ferry a walker back to their car to retrieve it whilst they





had a rest from walking). Like the afternoon tea, this service was at the generosity of the member. Future events should not expect or rely on this generosity, though may accept it if offered again.

On a final note, readers considering holding a pilgrimage in their Baronies and Cantons may appreciate what we used to consider in selection a pathway.

Firstly, we used The Bicentennial National Trail.<sup>1</sup> It is a route from Cooktown, Far North Queensland, to Melbourne, Victoria. This pathway unites the Baronies and Cantons on the Eastern Seaboard of this grand continent and Kingdom. It would be a good starting point to research this pathway in your area.



Next, what we looked for was quiet country roads, so that traffic was minimal. Over the course of our pilgrimage of seven hours only about a dozen cars passed us. Unexpectedly of these vehicles, three stopped to ask us what we were doing. And once we explained that we were historical reenactors performing a pilgrimage, the drivers curiosity was rewarded. We suspected that the pictorial clues of simple garb, walking sticks, and pilgrim bags aided the recognition.

Of the roads to choose, we made a preference for dirt roads, as they visually aided the feel of our period pilgrimage. The sections of dirty road that wound through treed hills were delightful.

Next, a preference was given to traversing a low range so that stunning country views would reward and encourage the pilgrims, but importantly thematically we left one valley and entered another. This transition in landscape aided the feel that our pilgrimage had a change. Certainly, as we neared the end of our walk, looking back to a distant range that was the morning section of the walk on the horizon was remarkable.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bicentennialnationaltrail.com.au>



And lastly, ending the pilgrimage with an afternoon tea / late luncheon was important. This small catering event was an occasion of its own evolution, as members that couldn't walk took the arrangement of the reception. As the walkers arrived it was obvious that the afternoon tea party was already been a joy for the people there.

Our next pilgrimage is in March 2019, an autumnal event.



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## Dr Speed Build:

How I learned to stop worrying and make all the things

*Lord Jon Huslangr*

*Edited by Mistress Ceara Sionnach*

Hi, I'm Johann, (or Lord Lord Jon Huslangr if you're fancy) proprietor of the "Johann the Carpenter: an Unofficial SCA Newcomer's blog" Facebook page. I was asked a few months back to share with you the philosophy/lifestyle-choice that is Speed Building and how you too, can apply it to your SCA adventures.

I've been in the SCA for just on a year now; residing in the Barony of Politarchopolis in Canberra (rich in Peers and red fabric). Mundanely, I'm a residential carpenter; specialising in "unique" constructions, meaning my life is spent solving problems with no two tasks the same, whoop whoop!

By now you might be thinking; "Aw man, he has a mad advantage to doing arts and sciences stuff. I'd never have those skills!" I'm here to tell you that mundane skills and how they transfer into the SCA stops around about the time you start researching how to do things 'the period way'. Mundane skills and historic skills can be very different and, despite having an advantage in my craft, I still need a lot of motivation to translate my skills into SCA arts and sciences projects.



*Johann, image courtesy of Baroness Ginevra Lucia di Namoraža*

### But enough of the intro, let's talk Speedbuilding!

At my first event I was introduced to a concept of 'Doers & Sayers' - there are those that DO stuff and those that SAY they're going to do stuff. Now, whether you're of the former or feel embarrassed that you may fit better into the latter, the fact that you're thinking about it at all is a big first step. Motivation is a key factor to a lot of activities and I, too, have seen both ends of the spectrum. In fact, nothing motivates me more than the rush of a deadline... and the 'it's only ever two weeks before Festival' platitude.

Speed Building is a type of process best described by just getting in there and doing a thing in the quickest way possible; Sometimes many times over. It prioritises making a completed product quickly over making something historically accurate. For example, if I want to make a 6-plank chest reminiscent of the early Viking period, Speed Building would involve choosing the shortest path to achieving that goal.

At this point we've probably lost a few of our Laurels-readers but here's the skinny; the more you practice, the better you get. I know, I sound like one of the Knight Instructors now but seriously: THE MORE YOU PRACTICE, THE BETTER YOU GET.

### The Chest...First Attempt

So, my first 6-plank chest was patterned using Pinterest (urgh, I know right?) with the dimensions governed by the timber I had lying around (rescued pinewood shelving pieces



*Chest Mk I,  
image courtesy of Johann's FB page*

from a demolition job). Not exactly a textbook methodology of research or design but this is Speed Building so producing something is better than being overwhelmed by the hurdles of sourcing period-accurate materials on your first attempt.

So away I went: cutting, gluing, nailing, hammering, and painting. Before I knew it I had a chest, all medieval like; great for storing things, carrying things or just sitting on it (by far the most important design trait!) If I had gotten caught up in the detail of trying to perfectly recreate a Viking period chest, I may have been overwhelmed and never finished anything. But,

by engaging my philosophy of the Speed Build I had a functional chest in no time.

### The Second Building and Future Works

Having won great fame and accolades for this venture into the arts and sciences...(\*cough cough\*) sorry, got distracted there for a moment, let's try again... Thus, having finished my first project (Yay, happy dance!), I immediately began to feel the weight of "That's not period, this isn't period...etc." self-doubt. This kind of self-doubt is a trap set to demotivate you by convincing you that your fun little project isn't perfect. So now I want to tell you one of the greatest lessons I've learnt this past year:

***"There is a difference between Finished and Perfect; while we all strive for the latter, there is nothing wrong with the former."***

And to me, that's it. Speed Building isn't about perfection; it's about having a go. Having made my first chest, I then had the brain space to think about how I could do things better or "more period" next time. The second chest has better joints on the sides to direct the load-pathways and hold its shape, and I'm confident the third will be even better still.

On a sidenote, having a recently finished project sitting beside you at an event is great bait for Laurels and other people (who may know a thing or two) to come over and have a chat about the item, help direct



*Chest Mk II,  
image courtesy of Johann's FB page*



you to more information or discuss techniques you may not have previously thought of (Society-life-hacks for SCA-Noobs!)

So, go on, have a go, make all the things! Use whatever techniques you're comfortable with whether they're period or not. And if you're so inspired, go again; increase the level of difficulty and aim for more historic! Maybe even keep a record like a projects diary, photographs, or blog so you can review and improve your skills and method of producing the item (it's also great for arts and sciences competition documentation \*sly wink\*).

And, if you ever get stuck, there's always a super enthusiastic Laurel lurking nearby that would be thrilled to discuss the project and direct you to someone else that's doing similar stuff!

I'm Johann, thanks for reading, make all the things!



Is it Long Enough Yet? –  
Lady Anne Sabina Schmidt





## Making a Dark Ages Skillet

*Lord Thomas Boardmakere*  
*Edited by Lady Rína Hundadóttir*

Cooking is one of the many activities that sets humans apart from other animals. Since the dawn of man we have been heating food over flame and building tools to help us cook, from flat rocks to the ‘Tefal Harmony PRO titanium non-stick pan’. Over time, these objects have changed in construction materials, but their basic shape and function is easily recognisable. This article will discuss the reconstruction of a long-handled fry pan used to cook over an open fire or hearth in Dark Ages Norway, based on extant examples from 800-1200 AD.

The overall size and handle shape of my pan is based on C16512 from Velo Norway. Particularly, I tried to imitate the shallow ‘S’ sweep that’s forged into the handle, the slight rise above the level of the pan, and the way the handle appears to taper and thicken at the pan end.<sup>2</sup>

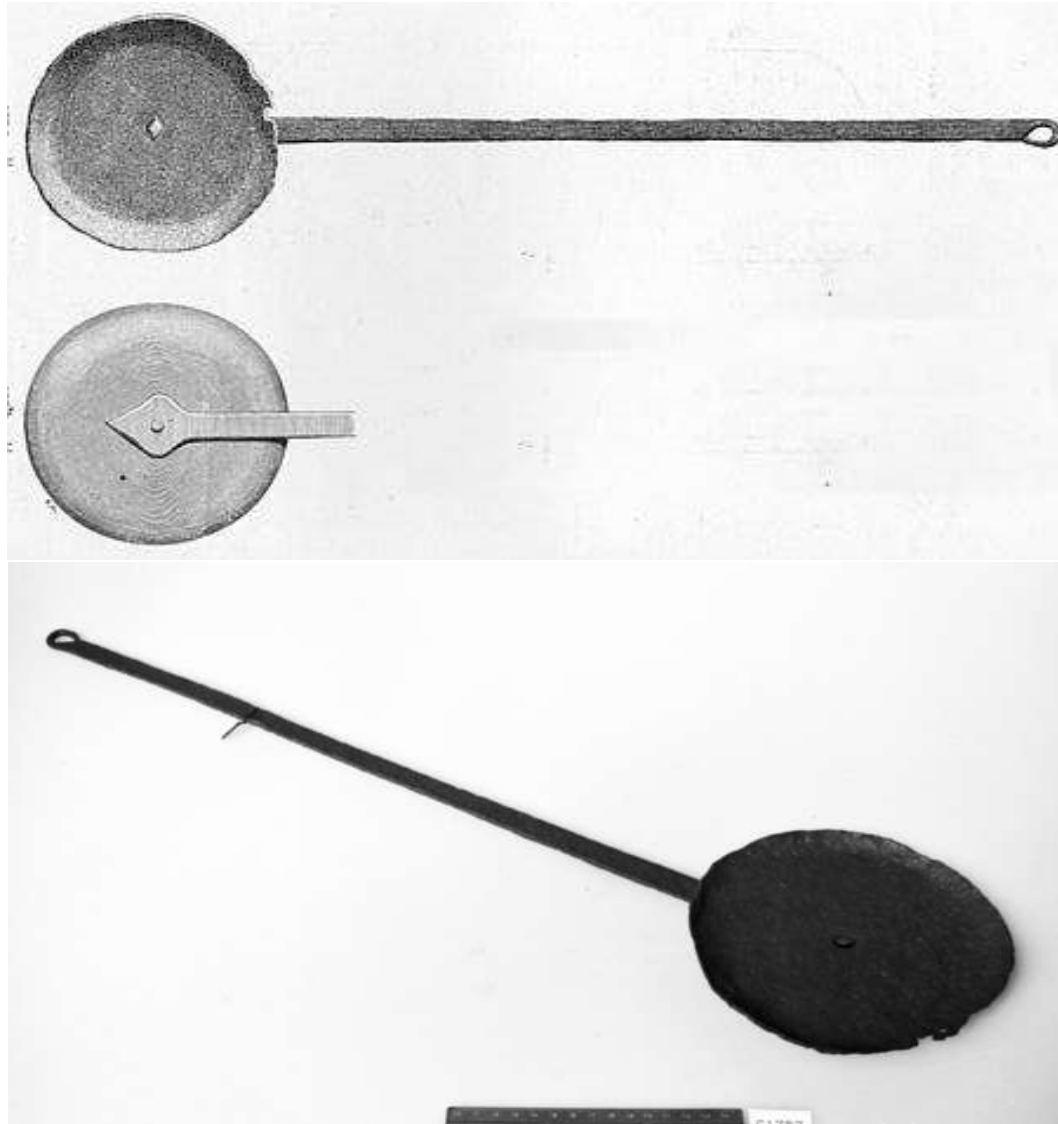


*“Panne”, C16512, Kulturhistorisk museum, UiO.*

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<sup>2</sup> For ease of understanding, in the following paper I will refer to the entire project as a ‘skillet’ and refer to the cooking surface component as a ‘pan’.

I combined this handle shape with the pan profile from C1757 from Laerdal, Akre, Telemark, Norway. This pan has a more pronounced lip dished around the edge which I felt would make a more versatile implement.



*“Steikpanne (etter R430): Diverse gjenstander (gamle glassplater)”,  
C1757, Arkeologisk museum, UiS.*

### Measurements

Working from the source photos, I chose to make a pan 260mm in diameter with a 30mm lip, dished 15mm deep. I decided to make the pan 2mm thick as I believed this would give the best balance of heat dispersal, rigidity and weight. The handle was planned to be 700 mm long and 19mm at its widest.

## Materials

- Handle: forged from a 10x10x65mm bar
- Pan: Dished from a 300x300x2mm sheet cut into a 260mm diameter circle. (The particular sheet of steel I obtained for this project was covered in zinc (not galvanized), which was easily removed with sandpaper and then burned off at 900 degrees from a safe distance.) I believe that the original pan would have been flattened from a billet but I don't have a forge large enough to work that size of a material.
- Rivet: Cut from a 5x100mm bullet head nail.
- Seasoning: Food-safe flaxseed/linseed oil, which is known to have been used on wood products in Dark Ages Scandinavia and is commonly used to treat cast iron today.

The original skillet was made from iron, but being unable to obtain or manufacture authentic Dark Ages iron, I elected to use a modern low carbon steel commonly sold as 'mild steel'. Mild steel carbon ranges between 0.05-0.25%, making it very malleable and relatively easy to forge.<sup>3</sup> Its maximum forging temperature is 1260 degrees Celsius, which is an orange yellow.<sup>4</sup> I wasn't too precise with forging temperatures, relying on maintaining a bright orange colour while working. Having a low carbon content means that mild steel doesn't harden or temper, which is fine for this project as the pan does not require a sharp edge nor does it need to flex. However, this meant parts had to be fairly robust to prevent them being bent or damaged.

## Tools

I used only hand tools for this project, most of which were available in the period.<sup>5</sup>

- |                          |                        |                  |
|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| • Gas forge <sup>6</sup> | • Thinly tapered drift | • Tongs          |
| • Ballpeen hammer        | • Hack saw             | • Leather gloves |
| • Hot Cut Tool           | • Bastard file         | • Rags           |
| • Anvil                  | • Dishing stump        | • Marking tool   |
| • Measuring device       | • Straight edge        | • Compass        |
| • Centre punch           | • Vice                 | • Clamps         |

<sup>3</sup> Total Materia, *Classification of Carbon and Low-Allow Steels* (November 2001). Accessed June 3, 2018, at <http://www.totalmateria.com/articles/Art62.htm>.

<sup>4</sup> D. Nietfield, *Heat Colours for Blacksmiths* (March 2010). Accessed June 3, 2018, at [http://www.blksmith.com/heat\\_colors.htm](http://www.blksmith.com/heat_colors.htm).

<sup>5</sup> As seen in the Mästermyr chest. See Historiska Museet (The Swedish History Museum), *Mästermyr (SHM 21592)* (2011). Accessed June 4, 2018, at <http://kulturarvsdata.se/shm/site/html/39216>.

<sup>6</sup> I don't have access to a coal forge

## Construction

### Making the Handle

1. Hot cut iron bar to 65cm by driving the heated bar onto a sharp edge with your hammer. (Here I have used a block splitter for the job.) Between each strike, roll the bar to the next face keep the cut square and deformation uniform.



2. Draw out one end of the bar to a chiselled tip. Working on the far edge of the anvil will allow clearance to land angled blows on the tapered face, but between every angled blow make sure to roll the piece 90 degrees and land a flat blow to keep the sides square. To prevent cracking be generous with heat and direct the force of each blow back towards the work piece. Once the taper is set, true the work up so the chisel is centred.



*"Panne", C16512 (zoomed in)*



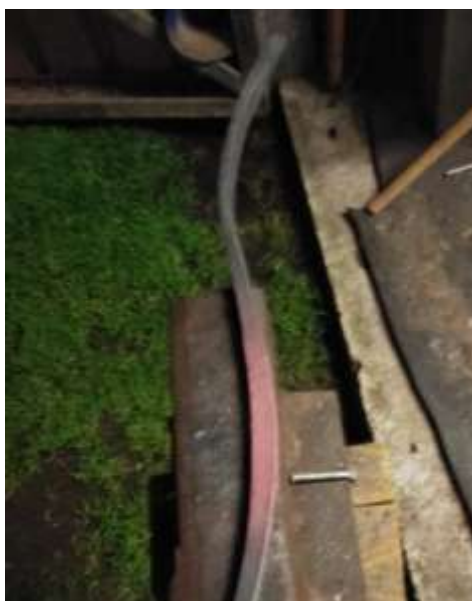
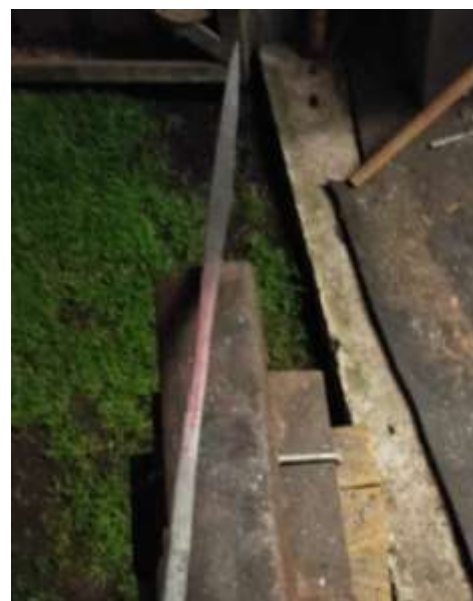
*Point in progress*



3. Trying not to disrupt the tip, create the top profile by walking flat even blows down the work piece, thus thinning and widening it. Any bulges can be trued up by rolling 90 degrees striking them back in. The piece wants curve towards the hammer blows as the material moves - this is easy to correct in later steps but here it gives us a the top and bottom face of the handle. Once happy with the shape, it's a good idea to cool this area before moving on to prevent bruising.



4. Moving to the mid-section, with an isolated heat, start shaping the side profile. As in Step 3, use flat even hammer blows and pull the piece towards you to walk the hammer along the worked area. This section will need to remain centred so flip the work after every pass. In this section the curve is in the unworked plane and so it has to be deliberately introduced by rounding over a horn or bending on an anvil. The material will thicken inside the curve and thin on the outside so this should be evened out with the hammer. Once this section is to shape, blend it with the former section, then cool.

*Side view**Top view*

5. Once it's safe to hold, heat the unworked end in the forge. Working on the near edge of the anvil with flat blows, spread the material to create an inch-wide circle. The corners can be tapped to make them round by holding the shoulder at a 45-degree angle on the rounded edge of the anvil or a horn to act as a fuller from the bottom. The flattened section should be flush with top face of piece.



*Before rounding*



*"Steikpanne (etter R430):*

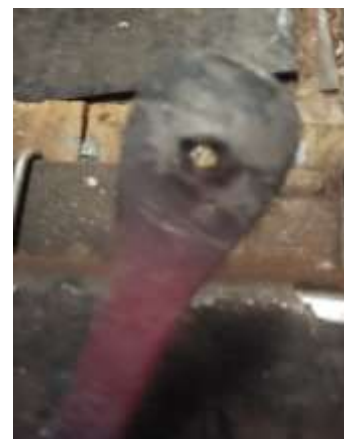
6. To mark the hole, heat the eye section till red hot and initially mark the centre with a punch against the anvil. Once the hole is started, a 'Hardy Hole', or in this case a hard wood surface, can be used as a support to drive a narrowly tapered punch through the material. Here I have used a needle file before moving to a 5mm nail to drift the hole larger. Lubricating the punches and drifts with beeswax or petroleum jelly will prevent them fusing with the work. Once hole is to size, massage the rough side of the hole flat using the ball peen hammer. If this overly deforms the hole, re-drift.



*Lubricated punch*



*Initial hole*



*Hole cleaned up*

7. Now the basic shape has been created, it's time to do a final pass to true everything up and blend all the curves together. I found my 'S' sweep profile in the photos to be too radical so I toned it down in the vice.



*Side view (above) and top view (below) of fully-shaped handle*

8. Season with flaxseed oil to prevent rust. Gently warm handle to about 100 degrees and apply oil with a cloth and continue to warm until oil polymerises. Repeat till a rich black is obtained. Allow to cool and then add a wet oil layer and let dry.



*Hemp cloth and oil*



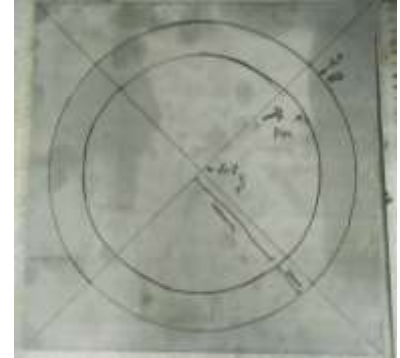
*Seasoned handle*



## Making the Pan

As explained above, in period the pan would have been flattened and dished out of a billet. This would entail a lot less wastage than cutting it out, but I feel it would still have been necessary to clean up with a file and do some trimming at times, so the method below isn't completely off track.

1. Find the centre of the plate using by marking diagonally. Then with centre punch. Use a compass on this mark to draw two concentric circles of a 100mm radius and a 130mm radius.



2. Clamp to work bench horizontally and use a hack saw to dock the square octagon. Take off the corners as close as you can to the outer circle and rotate the work piece after each cut. Support the work on the corner of the work bench to avoid flex and shudder. Once finished remove the newly created corners to make a hexadecagon.



*First round of cuts*



*Second round of cuts*



*Third round of cuts*

3. File and round off any remaining corners until it's smoothed to the outer line. Rotate the work, focusing on the high spots, then blending them as you go.





4. Place the pan blank over the hole in the dishing stump and begin dishing with the ball peen by following the inner circle with closely stacked strikes. Once back to the start, go round again closer to the edge, while holding the pan at 45 degrees to the stump to give the lip a rounded profile. Check rim level by placing upside down on a flat surface. Planish out any large bumps.
5. This time the hole can be punched cold, using the center punch and nail against the dishing stump. File bottom side of the hole till flush.
6. Use 240 grit sandpaper and burn off last traces of zinc.



I took the chance while the pan was hot to do the first few layers of flax seed oil. This was counterproductive because I had to reheat the rivet in later steps which burnt it off, but you will see the pan partially blackened in the following steps.

### Riveting the Skillet

1. Cut nail to 20mm long with the hack saw and file a chamfer on the cut end, this will help with peening the rivet and assembling the piece. Remove any obvious modern markings with file.
2. Assemble by sliding the rivet through the bottom of the handle then through the bottom of the pan. Check that it protrudes far enough for a good spread but not so far that it will just bend over before spreading. If the rivet goes wrong it would be a real struggle involving the hacksaw to get it back out for a second try.
3. Once in place, heat the rivet with the front of the forge. Then place the bottom of the rivet on the anvil and peen flat using the ball of the hammer. Use firm strikes in a spiral pattern around the top of the rivet until it's close to flush, then smooth out with flat side of hammer.



## Finishing

Season both top and bottom of pan with flaxseed oil and gentle heat.

I placed the pan face up on the ground to see how the pan sat and found it leaning to one side slightly so I placed it in the handle in the vice and gently forced it to square by pushing down on the high edge and pulling up on the other.



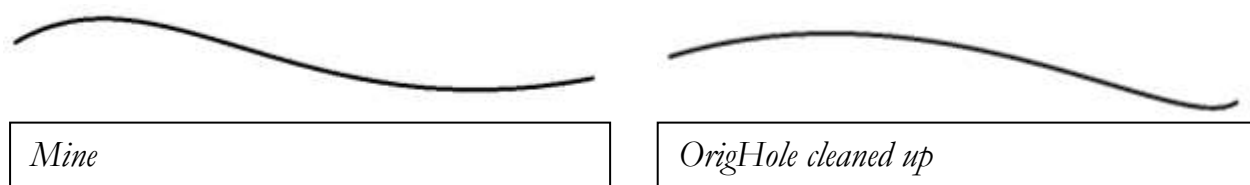
*Finished pan*

The last thing to do is cook up some tasty eats like bacon and flatbread!

## Conclusions

This project turned out well: it's not too heavy, but very robust. I wouldn't want to carry it long distances, but for an object kept next to the hearth and used every day, it's just built to last.

I can only discuss conjecture on the 'S' profile of the handle: it makes sense for clearing the edge of a fireplace or hearth, but I was surprised to find that having a lower centre of gravity makes the skillet pretty easy to balance - it naturally wants to hang level in the hand. That said, the curve in my final product doesn't quite match the museum piece and if I was to do this project again, I would try to stay more true to the original.



## Bibliography

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Ward, C, *Woodworking in the Viking Age* (December 2005). Accessed June 4, 2018, at <http://www.vikinganswerlady.com/wood.shtml>.

# Dance Report for Bal d'Argent 2018

*Lady Annabel de Swinburne*

**Host group:** Barony of Rowany

**Theme:** Venetian Masked Ball

**Date:** 8 September 2018

**Venue:** Balmain Town Hall, NSW

## People:

- Stewarding team led by Gomez De Crecy
- Menu by Marozia moglie di Basilio Bracciolini
- Dance team: Annabel de Swinburne, Anfridh I Osby, Eloise Darnell
- Music team: Jeneur le Geline, Lyssa Llewensdöttir, and Grisel Kincaid (the Rowany Scratch band), plus Fineamhain an Einigh inghen ui Chochobhair (Finn), [Jasper], and [Mouse]
- 50 people booked and paid for the event. 8 of them were under 18

## Competitions:

Rondel competitions were run similarly to 2017's competitions. The winners were:

- For courtesy: Baroness Medb ingen ind Iasachta
- For style: Mistress Katherne Rischer
- For accuracy (dance): Lady Annabel de Swinburne
- For accuracy (music): Mistress Fineamhain an Einigh inghean ui Chonchobhair

Everyone at the event received a token (small metal mask from Etsy) on a safety pin, which they wore on their clothes. Throughout the evening, the populace was encouraged to give a ribbon to someone they thought deserved recognition, and to tell them why they were giving it:

- White for courtesy;
- Red for style;
- Blue for accuracy.

The ribbon was three 20 m rolls of 10 mm grosgrain cut into approximately 10 cm lengths. The recipient could pin the ribbon to their token. At the end of the evening, those with the most of a colour received a prize for that aspect. Lady Mairi oversaw the ribbons at the front desk. I believe most people received at least one ribbon. People seemed to like both

giving and receiving the ribbons and they added to the visual pleasure of the evening and feeling of participation.

There was also a mask making competition, won by Anfridh I Osby.

**New member of the guild:**

Mistress Katherne Rischer, for dance, presented with her rondel token by Mistress Marguerite de Rada y Sylva, one of the original members of the guild.

**Rondel meeting:**

Sixteen rondels and semibreves attended an enthusiastic meeting in the afternoon. Jeneur sent minutes of the meeting to the Lochac Dance list at its conclusion.

**Daytime dance classes:**

There were four classes scheduled from 12:30 – 4pm, with Aliette, Anfridh, Annabel and Madelina as teachers for a variety of English Country, C15th and C16th Italian dances. We actually ended up doing classes that suited the people present, with some deliberate time slippage.

**Hall set-up:**

Large, square wooden floor clear for dancing. Front desk right next to single entry point (there was a second emergency exit available but not used). Musicians on the stage. Banners from Rowany's stash. Fresh variegated ivy from someone's garden. Decorative masks on tables set with white cloths around the edge of the room, lots of chairs around the edge of the room. Buffet on side tables near kitchen, drinks on tables in an L shape that made a kind of bar between the dance floor and the kitchen, creating a buffer for kitchen staff. Rubbish bin next to buffet table. Dance lists and menus stuck up around the hall, at the front desk, with the musicians.

**Dance list:**

The list of dances was published for comment a few weeks in advance on the Lochac Dance email list and Facebook group. Content was based on dances practised at Rowany Dance terms in the last year. Number of dances and sets was inspired by Flametree Ball and St Vitas. We included many styles of period dance to allow for rondel/semibreve assessment. We got through all of the dances except for Canarios and Petit Vriens. There was no time for requests except the very last dance, the Bear Dance, very popular particularly with present and past collegians of St Ursula (Be the Bear!).



**Participation at the ball:**

Dance participation was excellent. For example, I noted we had four sets of six dancers for set 2, Picking of Sticks, Grimstock, Wherligig and Gelosia – 24 dancers on the floor, despite some of these being more complex dances; and when I called for everyone to join in the Mixed/Cut Branles at the end of the first half, we had to make 2 large concentric circles, just about everyone joined in, I estimate 40 or more dancers. Dancers covered the full range from absolute beginners to highly experienced. Easily 12 dancers still on the floor for the last dance even though it was after 10 pm and we had danced for more than three hours during the ball, plus more than three hours of classes during the day. Fantastic!

**Catering:**

Great. Heaps of water and cordial in lots of pitchers. Buffet of finger food refreshed through the evening including fruit platters. Marozia based the menu as much as possible on period sources.

**Things that could have been better**

- Should have had the competition categories and corresponding ribbon colours written down prominently at the ball.
- Should have published the competition categories in advance.
- Should have printed the dance sets in larger font.

**Things that worked well**

- The order of the dance list – I put what I consider more difficult dances in the middle of the first set, before people were too tired, so lots of people joined in despite complexity. I ended the first half with the Mixed/Cut Branles, everyone joined in, then everyone was very ready for the interval at the end of Aridan.
- The competition format – people joined in willingly handing out ribbons and usually told the person why they were giving them. Stewarding/kitchen team got courtesy ribbons.
- The theme – just about everyone had a mask, there were mask making materials available at the event and a workshop during the day.
- People wore very speccy clothes and looked fantastic.

In service,

Annabel de Swinburne, dance team, Bal d'Argent 2018.

## ‘Rome: City and Empire’: An Exhibition Review

*Lady Gwen verch David<sup>7</sup>*



‘Rome: City and Empire’ is a broad, cross-sectional exhibition designed to introduce the layman to a period of archaeology they may never have had a chance to see in person before. Hosted by the National Museum of Australia, the exhibit displays a broad and diverse group of objects on loan from the British Museum, incorporating statuary, jewellery, domestic goods, coins, and other items. The exhibit attempts to provide a broad overview of life in the Roman Empire across many times and places, and explores domestic, military, state, and religious aspects of life.

For the re-enactor, the large collection of sculptures (ranging from monumental stone to tiny bronze figures) is particularly valuable. Women and men are equally well represented, and the subjects represented offer at least some insight into the dress

and hairstyles of ordinary citizens of the empire. For the most part, they are displayed so as to be viewed easily from multiple angles. People with an interest in Roman Britain will also enjoy the jewellery, cosmetic tools, and coins from that area, including several objects from the Hoxne Hoard.

The space is well designed to accommodate crowds comfortably and as much as possible the objects are exhibited to allow for multiple angles of view. Enlarged photos of some of the smaller objects are projected onto the walls for greater detail, and the captions are clear and informative. The audio tour is warm and engaging, using a mixture of historical explanations and conversations between ‘Romans’ to bring life to the collection. (Ipods are available to borrow to listen to the tour, but it can also be downloaded as free app.) The museum works hard to make the exhibit engaging for a diverse audience, including younger visitors, and a kids’ audio tour is also available.



<sup>7</sup> The author is a regular volunteer at the NMA, but was not in any way asked or encouraged to write this article, or to come to any particular conclusions.

While the exhibition may not offer enough focused attention to any particular time, place, or topic to satisfy a dedicated scholar of ancient Rome, it is a fantastic introduction to artefacts of a type that are rarely on display in Australia. I would particularly recommend it to those interested in the drape of clothing or the construction of hairstyles, due to the opportunities to examine statues in the round. For those interested in getting to know the international context of personas from late antiquity, or simply for people looking for a high-quality exhibit of pre-modern European artefacts, it's worth making plans to visit the next time you're in Canberra.

*The 'Rome: City and Empire' exhibit is open at the National Museum of Australia until February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2019. More information can be found on the NMA website at <http://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/rome-city-and-empire>.*



The Night Before –  
Lady Veronica Bellini

# The Style of Period Printing: A Very Brief Taste of Printing History

*Mistress katherine kerr*

There are many and varied claims for the invention of printing. China gets the nod, as with so many things, for the oldest printed book: the Diamond Sutra of the fifth century, made up of woodblock pages. However, as with so many of those inventions, there seems to have been relatively little knowledge transfer outside the borders of the empire. This article deals with printing in Europe from the 1400s onwards.

Block printing was well established in Europe in the 13th century, primarily for decorating cloth. It wasn't a big jump to printing on paper, once that became readily available in the 1400s and soon everything from religious images to playing cards were being produced. Carving lettering and illustrations into woodblocks was not very efficient, and the blocks didn't last too long either. When Gutenberg and others started experimenting with movable type, that caught on because of the uniformity it made possible, and the flexibility and robust nature of the technology.

The uptake of the technology was very very rapid and spread very quickly throughout most of Europe. Thanks to Gutenberg, from 1439 the Germans had the early lead, but by 1500, Venice boasted over 400 printers and had become a recognised powerhouse for elegant humanist printing which still commands attention and admiration. Aldus Manutius and Nicolas Jenson produced beautiful works in very high quality typefaces, and found a ready market in small format books and softbound covers. Printers in Paris, which eventually become a major centre, started up in 1470. Even the New World had a press operational in Mexico City by 1540, and the Spanish were printing in the Philippines in 1593.

Gutenberg had been very nervous that his new approach would not find favour with the Powers That Be. So he did his very best to try to make his printed Bibles indistinguishable from the traditional manuscript ones of the day. He initially had large capital letters filled in by hand, but quickly developed the concept of two-colour printing. Pre-1500 works by Gutenberg and others are referred to as incunabula, as they formed the "cradle" of printing. By 1500, it is estimated that 1,700 printers, operating in 300 towns, had produced around 15 million volumes.

Print houses saw a combination of artisan skills and enthusiastic marketing. Master printers were assisted by apprentices. If the latter learned Latin, they might aspire to become



compositors, setting the type; or become journeymen -- literally spreading the knowledge as they moved from publishing house to publishing house across Europe. It was strenuous work, involving preparing the new oil-based inks, dampening paper, working the hefty presses (themselves said to be adapted from olive oil presses).

Specialisation came early, with the printers working in tandem with booksellers, who always had their eye out for a successful pitch. Caxton's first print job in England was the Indulgence of 1476, which had gaps for the names of the purchasers to be written in. Like Gutenberg's Bible, it was designed to look as if it has been written in blackletter. Latin grammars and instructional books were popular, and many books had lengthy prefaces extolling the virtues of a noble (sometimes unwitting) patron. Caxton has the credit for the first printed book in England, his own translation of a history of Troy; he also printed Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

Woodcut blocks developed from fairly crude efforts into fine form, and engraving and etching allowed masters like Albrecht Durer to produce astonishingly detailed illustrations to accompany the poetry, prose and all manner of secular text that started to pour off the presses. Design aspects in use today developed early: page numbering, title pages, tabbed entries and indexes, pointy-hand or leafy dingbats. What didn't change was the technology, not for another 300 years.

Soon the presses were producing pamphlets calling for religious reformation, news stories of monsters and strange occurrences, accounts of tournaments, broadsides with the lyrics of popular or scurrilous songs. Life would never be as quiet again...

### Useful Exemplars for SCA Printing<sup>8</sup>

**Broadsides/Broadsheets:** useful approach for event announcements, flyers, advertisements etc

A broadside is printed on one side; a broadsheet on both. Sometimes a large piece of paper was folded to quarto or octavo to produce an unbound, multi-page leaflet. Usually associated with popular ballads, but they also included handbills, proclamations, advertisements and other topical information; warnings; protests or public satires

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<sup>8</sup>There are lots of examples on my website of how these have been adapted for SCA use. See <http://webcentre.co.nz/kk/printing.htm>

Format: Ranged from large proclamations (approx 1000 x 500 mm) to small handbills (200 x 150 mm); typically with a multi-sentence title header, a large woodcut illustration and a double-column, right-registered format with a large woodcut initial and smaller woodcut sidebars

Reference: English Broadside Ballad Project, <http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/>

**Chapbooks**: model for event booklet, ball cheat notebook, song lyrics

Small, cheap booklets containing reprints of popular ballads, jests, gossip, recipes, horoscopes and rude stories, sometimes illustrated with suitably racy woodcuts (a bit like the tabloid magazines of modern times)

Format: Paper; folded into 4to or 8to; limp bound and pamphlet stitched; covered with recycled paper or poor quality vellum, blue or brown paper wrappers or no covers; stab-stitched with 3/5 holes, untrimmed, not lettered on the outside

Reference: The Scottish Chapbook Project,  
<http://www.sc.edu/library/spcoll/britlit/cbooks/cbook1.html>

**Commonplace books**: model for event booklet, personalised journals, recipe collections etc

A blank or pre-printed journal with passages collected under common headings: quotes, poems, recipes, lists, laws, prayers, jokes, heraldic blazons, predictions, mathematical tables, astronomical/astrological lore etc, representing the writer's interests or whatever "noble thoughts" the education system or parents thought they should have

Format: Sizes vary (period examples: 312 x 200mm, 207 x 140mm). Usually paper, with vellum commonly used as a cover, tied with silk ties; sometimes covered in a leather wallet binding, closed with a strap and buckle.

Reference: Commonplace Books, Yale,  
<http://www.library.yale.edu/beinecke/compb.htm>

**Festival book:** possible model for an event booklet, especially for Crown events

Festival books were the souvenir programmes of the day, listing who had attended important events, eye-witness accounts of what happened (sometimes even by actual eye-witnesses!), reports of sporting competitions, and ballads and poems in honour of the higher-ups; usually produced after the event

Format: 1520 Cloth of Gold Festival Book: 18 cm x 11 cm, in blackletter, some woodcuts, single or double column

Reference: British Library Festival Book collection,  
<http://www.bl.uk/treasures/festivalbooks/homepage.html>

**Music:** for your singing groups

Single-page woodcuts of music were printed from the latter part of the 1400s. Moveable type used multiple pulls off the press to first print the staves, then the notes and lastly the lyrics. By the 1520s, individual type had a note, or other musical symbol, along with its section of stave, to allow compositing and single-impression printing.

Format: Song books were printed in separate parts, or with four different parts laid out at 90 degrees for the singers to stand around. Church music sometimes had double-impression printing to print the staves in red and the rest in black. Lines often start with large plain caps or initial woodcuts.

Reference: Musicke of sundrie kindes, University of Glasgow,  
<http://special.lib.gla.ac.uk/exhibns/music/musicdex.html>

**Playbills:** for theatre and other entertaining activities, advertisements or flyers

Period playbills were too ephemeral to survive. It seems reasonable to base them on title pages, as these often referenced theatrical performances, including woodcuts from scenes; lists of characters and players; even song lyrics.

Format: typically vertical with a longer aspect ratio (height to width) than standard paper size (eg three bills on A4 landscape); mixed sized fonts, woodcuts, performing company attributions

Reference: Shakespeare and the Book: The Playhouse in Printing House  
<http://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/projects/shakespeareandthebook/studyenv/play01.html>

**Vade mecum** (aka girdle book, belt book, folded book): for ball cheat sheets, event information

A period filofax (ie paper diary/calendar etc), consisting of sheets folded into a small size and bound together so as to be readily tucked into a belt for ready reference; used for astronomical almanacs and doctors' manuals with each sheet holding a different topic

Format: main feature is the stab-stitch binding of a series of folded single sheets

Reference: Boston College example,  
<http://at.bc.edu/slideshows/dualpurpose/8.html>

**Roundels**: for use at feasts, High Table

Placemats made of thin wood, pasteboard or varnished paper, usually in boxed sets of 6-12, printed and/or painted with songs, riddles, illustrations or heraldry

Reference: Nine sycamore roundels with Aesop's Fables paintings and morals,  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/ahistoryoftheworld/objects/2zOySn2OQxKXmHpkJmJv1A>

## Making Something Look Period

Much of what we print for SCA events would be regarded as ephemera – short-term forms of communication which are not designed to stand the test of time. This creates some interesting problems in researching period usage of such materials as they, too, tend to have



been thrown away or recycled once their initial utility had passed. Many examples have only been found because of they have been recycled as pasted endpapers in books or some such. Consider the kind of document you want to produce – an event announcement, a playbill, a Ball cheatsheet. See if you can find examples, and get a feel for the impression they give in terms of layout and design.

### **What kind of font/typography is used?**

Is it blackletter? (Sometimes thought of as German or Gothic, but used across much of Europe for printed materials from the late 1400s on.) Or does the period example use a basic Roman font? Is there use of mixed font sizes, or the inclusion of italic lettering? Are there large initial capital letters at the beginning of the paragraphs, and what sort of style are these?

While blackletter is the more common in period materials, for SCA use, it is probably better to go with a Roman font as many people have problems reading the more complex letter forms, especially in candlelight! There's good reason why period printers quickly developed Roman typefaces or even imitations of humanist handwriting! There are lots of free fonts available. I highly recommend Geoffrey Shipbrook's font set as a great late-period printing typeface. Pia Frauss has excellent fonts for a more handwritten look. Early printing in italic text often used non-italic capitals. It took a while for the idea of matched typefaces – and even capitals – to catch on.

### **What orientation is the page? Is it landscape (horizontal) or portrait (vertical)?**

You need to bear this in mind if you are wanting to do a multi-page print on one leaf. Folding an A3 page in half will give you two leaves or four pages of A4 area to play with; use an A4 page and you have a smaller, more portable work. A single fold like this is a folio fold and is usually the largest size produced (typically over 13 inches tall in period). Make two folds, and you have a quarto (4to), with four leaves and 8 pages; fold again and you have an octavo (8to) of 8 leaves; 16 pages. Some of the folds will be on the edges, requiring cutting. Start with a big enough sheet and you can have a 64to as with some period printed miniatures. For our purposes an octavo from A4 is about as small as you'll probably want to go.

You can also change the familiar look and feel of modern page sizes simply by going for a different aspect ratio (the height to width proportions) – trim the page to make it narrower or, if you're doing playbills or menus, lay out three copies across an A4 landscape page.

**What characterises the layout of the content?**

Are titles centred? Does the lettering reduce in size? Is the text right justified (i.e. does it line up on the right margin)? How wide are the margins? Are there notes in the margin (termed a scholar's column)? Early printers played about with their typefaces, mixing them up and often going for a reduction in size as your eye moves down the major title. They sometimes liked to arrange the text to fit shapes, such as reverse triangles or even outlines of things like goblets.

In period printed books, typically you'll see large margins at the outside and bottom edge of the page; narrower margins towards the spine and often jammed tight up against the top. It can take a while to get used to this, as the modern eye is more familiar with a more symmetrical layout. The gutters (the internal white space between columns of text) tend to be narrower than we are used to, even filled with woodcut foliage.

**What characterises the graphic material?**

Are illustrations used? How are they placed within the page? Do they have frames around them? A reasonable amount of copyright-free woodcuts are online (see resources below). They range from the very rough to the exquisite. It's a good idea to match the quality of the font you use to the illustrations.

**What is the paper like? What are the edges like?**


Choosing a suitable paper makes a difference; keep away from the bright white bleached modern copy paper if you can. There are cheap papers available which are off-white and comparable to period paper; you don't have to print on vellum! A laid finish can be useful to give the look of a handmade paper – they can be identified by the parallel lines running against the grain of the paper, used to simulate the handmade output (or, easier, check the label of the ream). Some people like the feathery deckle edging as a Ye Olde Worlde effect; but early bookbinders and printers tended to trim the edges of their pages cleanly. The same holds for fake foxing or the tea-stain-type antiquing beloved of things such as maps to pirate treasure. The latter is traditionally done by splashing tea across a page, or the use of printed marbled paper – it's really not necessary, as period paper was better quality than ours and has tended to stand up to the test of time.

**Main things to remember:**


You can go a long way to making something look more period with a suitable font, a couple of woodcut-style images, and some non-bleached paper stock.

### An Example (see end of article for full size)

This announcement is based on the late-period proclamations typically published for the Crown to let the populace know about something important. It has the centred headline with fullstops/periods, with the text based on 15th century sources appropriate to the subject matter while still getting across the practical logistics and information that needs to be imparted. Like most proclamations, it finishes with a form of cheer or exhortation (more usually "God Save the King"), and a printing and publishing attribution.



## Oyez! Oyez! A *Great Hunt* for Canterbury Faire.



Let all who would travel to Canterbury  
Faire next know that on the 22nd day of Ianuary / being a Tuesday /  
there will be a *Very Great Hunt* in honour of Saint Eustace.

And that said Hunt will require the Gathering of Hunt Parties & Hounds on the aforesaid Tuesday at 9 of the bell sharp and ante meridian: in the environs of the Great Hall where the Huntmasters will inspect and record the said parties that are to quest forth / providing all who gather with a stirrup cup and a copy of the *Book of the Hunt* that they may travel on their quest. And all that who come should bring thither all that they need / every one in their role well and plenteously / and that these parties should include those who wish to take up the many diverse challenges as modelled after ancient custom. Thus each party should have:

- two combatants in suitable gear and with rebated weapons ready to take up Challenges of the Field & Fencing Grounds and the Fearsome Beasts to be found within
- one or two archers with a set of no more than six target arrows and likewise a set of six blunted arrows held separately so they may participate in the Bow Challenge
- at least one Hound (being a sturdy chuld of seven to fourteen years) / hound packs are to be welcomed but must be under the active supervision of an Houndsmaster
- as many hunt followers or banner bearers or beaters or gamesfolk as be enow: bearing in mind that some challenges will require artisanal or scholarly skills or both

To make this better known the Huntmasters ask that these words be carried far & wide so that the aforementioned parties may arrange themselves before Faire if of a mind to do so and present themselves in good time on the cited day. For there shall be Certain Advantages in being first to do so. And certain advantages in honouring the Beasts of the field & forest in one's gear & garb & gauds. And certain advantages in the knowledge of Venerie.

And at this Hunt there will be Noble & Rich Prizes to be presented at the Menee.

## Tallio! Hoix! Hark! Forward!

*Printed by and for katherine kerr: Mistress of the Hunt*

It could be improved further in terms of period practice by having a multi-line drop capital letter and doing away with the modern spacing by setting it with no line breaks (the choice to use such is a compromise for comprehension and readability). The font is 1470 Jensen, but could readily have been a blackletter; another choice based on making the proclamation readable.

## References and Resources

### **General Info and Background**

Weisner-Hanks, Merry; *The World of the Renaissance Print Shop*,

<http://www4.uwm.edu/libraries/special/exhibits/incunab/incmwh.cfm>

*Technologies of Writing in the Age of Print*, Folger Shakespeare Library,

[http://www.folger.edu/Content/Whats-On/Folger-Exhibitions/Past-](http://www.folger.edu/Content/Whats-On/Folger-Exhibitions/Past-Exhibitions/Technologies-of-Writing-in-the-Age-of-Print/Technologies-of-Writing-in-the-Age-of-Print.cfm)

[Exhibitions/Technologies-of-Writing-in-the-Age-of-Print/Technologies-of-Writing-in-the-Age-of-Print.cfm](http://www.folger.edu/Content/Whats-On/Folger-Exhibitions/Past-Exhibitions/Technologies-of-Writing-in-the-Age-of-Print/Technologies-of-Writing-in-the-Age-of-Print.cfm)

*The Dawn of Printing: Incunabula (pre-1500 printing)*,

<http://www.ndl.go.jp/incunabula/e/chapter1/index.html>

*Making the Book*, Bryn Mawr,

<http://www.brynmawr.edu/library/exhibits/BooksPrinters/making.html>

*Grand Gargantua Project* (Scans of period typefaces, fonts, illustrations),

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/bookhistorian/>

*An Introduction to Printing*, <http://www.britaininprint.net/introtoprint/intro.htm>

*The Typographics Archives*, <http://www.typographia.org/>

### **Fonts and Typography**

Some period fonts would be perfectly acceptable today, and common everyday fonts like Times Roman, Caslon, Bembo, Granjon and others closely resemble what was used 400 years ago, even though they look very modern to our eyes. To avoid that issue and get the Ye Olde look, it helps to have a slightly more “distressed” font to work with.

Geoffrey Shipbrook fonts (Jeff Lee), <http://www.shipbrook.net/jeff/typograf.html>

Free JSL Ancient (Roman), JSL Blackletter, and a handy converter to provide ligatures, short and long s etc; based on fonts from the 1680s, but absolutely fine for period use.

Dieter Staffman, <http://moorstation.org/typoasis/designers/steffmann/index.htm>

A large selection of fonts, including many in medieval style, blackletter/fraktur, Caslon Antique, and initial caps; free to download; sadly no info on the origins/source or inspiration for the fonts:



Pia Frauss fonts, <http://www.pia-frauss.de/fonts/fonts.htm>

Lovely freely downloadable fonts based directly on analysis of period manuscripts (rather than printing) such as 1275 Hapsburg, Italian 1490, Danish 1597, using exemplars ranging from a Borgia, Tycho Brahe, Gaston's Book of the Hunt and German chancery materials. Great for personal handwriting projects such as correspondence, journals, licenses, patents, without the need to learn the script.

Typography Amsterdam, <http://www.flickr.com/photos/bookhistorian/>

Includes scanned collections of works by printers from Italy, Germany, Iberia and more.

An overview of European Typography 1470-1501:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/bookhistorian/sets/72157623268349996/>

Milestones in Typography, [http://www.designhistory.org/type\\_milestones.html](http://www.designhistory.org/type_milestones.html)

A good overview throughout Europe with brief biographies and examples.

Shakespeare's Sonnets, <http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/titles>

Title pages and links to other printed materials.

### **Illustrations: Woodcuts**

There are lots of possible sources, online or in the various Dover collections, ranging from exquisite to very crudely produced. You can also approximate with scanned hand-drawn material.

*The Booke of Good Cookery Woodcut Clipart Collection,*

<http://www.godecookery.com/clipart/clart.htm>

*A Heavenly Craft - The Woodcut in Early Printed Books,*

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/heavenlycraft/>

*Woodcut Book Illustration in Renaissance Italy: The First Illustrated Books,* The Metropolitan

Museum of Art, [http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/wifb/hd\\_wifb.htm#thumbnails](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/wifb/hd_wifb.htm#thumbnails)



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- as many hunt followers or banner bearers or beaters or gamesfolk as be enow: bearing in mind that some challenges will require artisanal or scholarly skills or both

To make this better known the Huntmasters ask that these words be carried far & wide so that the aforementioned parties may arrange themselves before Faire if of a mind to do so and present themselves in good time on the cited day. For there shall be Certain Advantages in being first to do so. And certain advantages in honouring the Beasts of the field & forest in one's gear & garb & gauds. And certain advantages in the knowledge of Venerie.

And at this Hunt there will be Noble & Rich Prizes to be presented at the Menee.

# Tallio! Hoix! Hark! Forward!

*Printed by and for katherine kerr: Mistress of the Hunt*