

# COCKATRICE

The Arts & Sciences Journal for the Kingdom of Lochac



## AS 58 – Winter

August 2023

We're looking for photos of completed or in progress works, as well as articles, documentation, or class notes!

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## SUBMISSION SCHEDULE

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AS 59 - Winter Edition

# From the Editor

Greetings dear readers, and welcome to the Winter Edition of Cockatrice for AS 58 – August 2023! My name is Yda Plant of Politarchopolis and I am your new Editor, hoping to bring us back to a regular schedule of publications through the next couple of years. I am very excited to explore the vast set of skills and interests across our great Kingdom!

I myself am a tablet weaver, with a special focus on brocading at the moment. I've been working on replicating some patterns from the Birka finds, along with exploring how brocading patterns and techniques changed over the centuries. Over the years I have been in costuming, cooking, and have dabbled in embroidery. I am always fascinated to hear what other people have been working on and why it has sparked their interests!

In this edition we have a variety of skills and interests being displayed, from fibre craft to glassworks, costuming to cooking. The skills and breadth of knowledge of our artisans are truly wonderful to behold, and I hope that you enjoy exploring their work here.

We're always looking for new content and different ways to share the knowledge our Kingdom can bring together. If you ever have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please reach out to me, and of course please submit your work for publication! You don't need to wait for something to be perfect to bring it to us; some of the most interesting work is the steps along the way.

So come along, learn with us, and share the joy of our arts and sciences!

Yours in Service

Yda Plant  
Editor



# A Tunic for Winter in the Hallstatt Period

## Lord Kaitorix Arvernorn

### Context of the garment

The Hallstatt period of the Iron Age spans roughly 800 BCE-400 BCE, covering a large area of Europe. The epicentre of textile finds is a salt mine in Hallstatt, present-day Austria, where textiles from the period were preserved in arid conditions (Grömer, 2016, p.16).

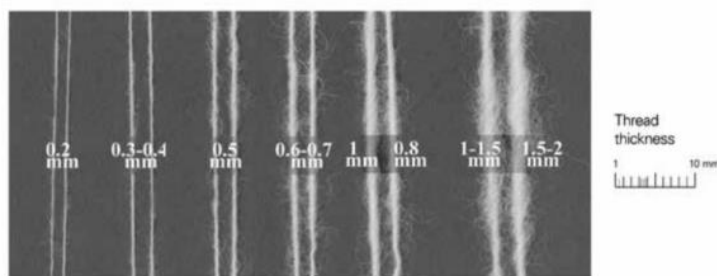
### Materials

The primary fibre used in the Hallstatt period was sheep's wool (Grömer, 2016, p.57). The fabric and thread for my tunic are both wool, both to reflect period materials and for the sake of warmth in cold weather. Although plain coloured fabrics are known from the period, checked and striped patterns were more popular and considered distinctive by other cultures (Diod.Hist.5.30). However, the fabric was given to me second hand, and I preferred to use what I already had rather than buy new fabric.

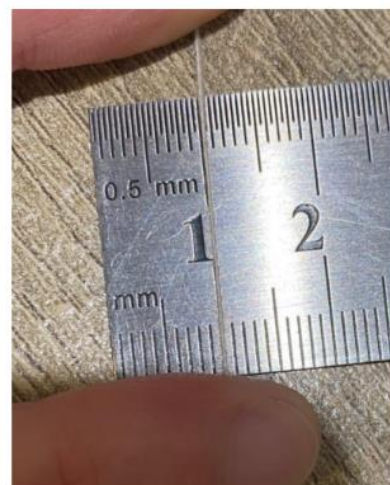
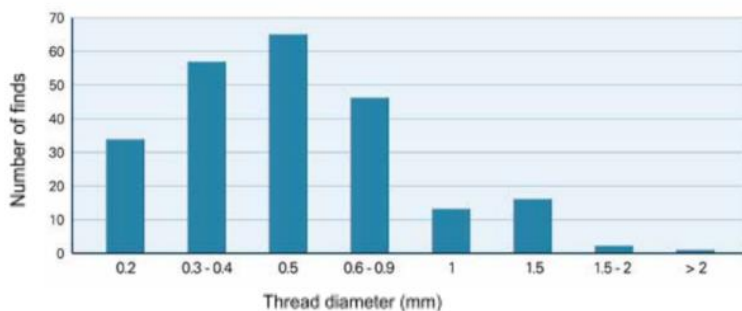
### Construction

#### Thread

I spun all of the thread for the tunic on a drop spindle. The thread weight varies from approximately 0.5mm to 1mm in diameter, a span on the higher end of normal for the period.



Hallstatt Period



My thread

(Grömer, 2016, p.89)

### *Patterning*

The tunic has minimal shaping. The body pieces are rectangular and the sleeves are trapezoidal, and gussets and gores were cut from rectangular pieces. The neckline is slightly scooped. This follows the principal of fabric conservation, and is in line with representations of clothing from the Vače Situla, a 5th century BCE Slovenian find. This shows fairly straight and loose garments, but the flare on the rider indicates some kind of gore.

(Vače Situla, 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE.  
Narodni Muzeji Slovenije)



### *Sewing*

The pieces are sewn together with back stitch and running back stitch, and the neckline is finished with overcast stitch, partially as reinforcement and partially as decoration. Running stitch and overcast stitch have been found on Hallstatt textiles (Grömer, 2016, p.220), and I added some backstitches to load bearing seams for additional security.

overcast stitch



(Overcast stitch and running stitch on Hallstatt textiles.  
Grömer, 2016, p.220)

running stitch





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Diodorus Siculus *Histories* 5.30.1 (1st century BCE).

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A2008.01.0540%3Abook%3D5%3Achapter%3D30%3Asection%3D1>

Grömer, K. (2016). *The art of prehistoric textile making: The development of craft traditions and and clothing in Central Europe*. Natural History Museum of Vienna.

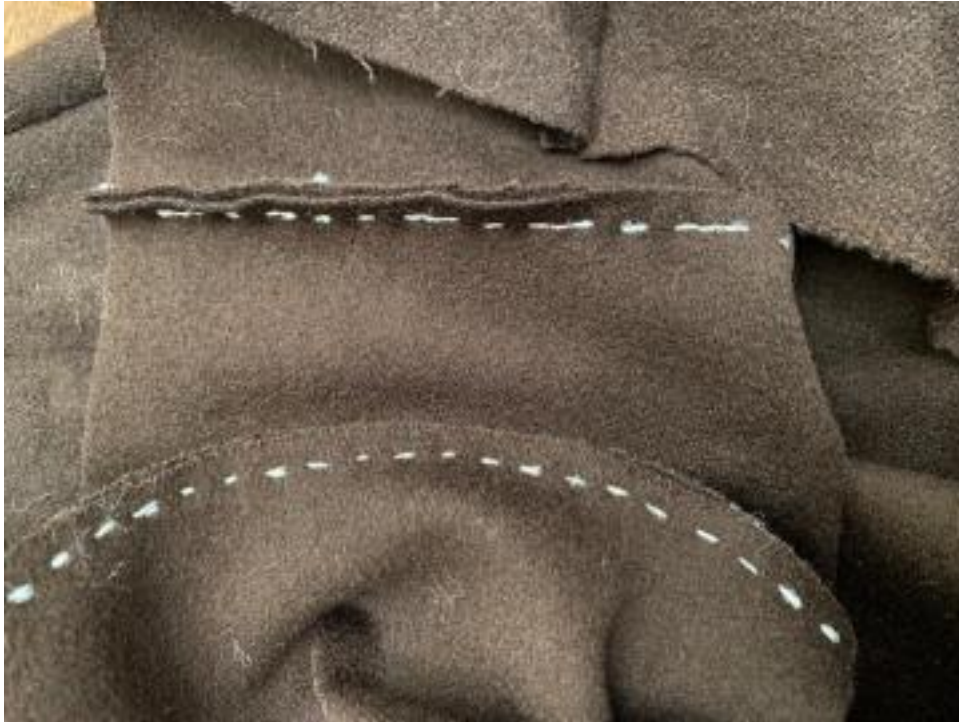
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## Gallery



Tunic laid flat



Detail of running back stitch



Detail of decorative neckline



# Reproduction and composition of Heraldic Necklaces using Viking era Beads

Baroness Ginevra Lucia Di Namoraza





**What?** A selection of Viking era beads strung together in heraldic groupings.

**Where?** Colours, sizes, and shapes based on Viking finds throughout Norway, Denmark and Sweden.

**When?** 793-1066AD

**Why?** I choose to complete a special string of beads for my husband, children and myself in our favourite colours, which also happen to be our Heraldic colours. Viking strands and necklaces have a striking variety in the way that they are composed. Some are multi-coloured, some are symmetrical, others have only one or few colours. Most Viking glass bead finds were disturbed, so the composition of necklaces may be to modern tastes, rather than the actual arrangement of the time.

**Details of the extant pieces:**

I have included images of a variety of examples that I have taken inspiration from.

**String:** There was no obvious material remaining to show what the beads were strung on, but organic material such as a leather or cotton cord would have been common. (*Holgate*) I have chosen to use bronze wire and cotton cord, though I have used silver wire for the children's necklaces.

**Working with Glass:**

I have been working on developing my skill at melting glass and shaping it over the last year. I have learnt a lot, including where in the flame certain glass must be placed so that it doesn't ruin the colour or texture. I have learnt how to steadily place my hands and rotate both glass and mandrel so that an even amount of glass, at the right temperature, is kept at the right heat to reproduce the desired bead.

The necklaces and strands presented a variety of challenges. Glass is a dangerous, sometimes fickle substance, and certain colours only work properly at a certain heat.

Some of the trickier techniques (and melting glass onto a mandrel and keeping it even is tricky to start with!) that I used for this project include:

- **Studying** each (photo of) bead in a variety of lights to get an accurate grasp of the details and finishes required.
- **Working** with tricky colours such as white, yellow, turquoise, and light blue which can be easy to "burn" or mutate colour.
- **Combining** colours and the perfect melt down spot to get a more accurate shade and shape.
- **Creating** the beads with "eye" decoration in the right size and number. The more complicated beads can have over 40 individual steps in the creation of circles and melting in of shapes.
- **Ensuring** that I copied the "flawed" beads as well, to accurately represent the extant pieces. As a perfectionist- trust me when I say this was possibly my hardest challenge!
- **Shaping** similar size beads but also recreating subtle differences such as size and shape.
- **Creating** stringers for finer detail in the small dots. One needs to carefully pull glass at a specific pace to achieve this.
- **Certain** shapes, such as the double eyes, require precise manoeuvring and shaping- the use of a knife needed to recreate the shape.
- **Using** techniques such as flattening the dots between each layer, melting them in completely before adding in the new layer, and then applying the final tiny circle.



### Details of the equipment and resources:

- I used a graphite paddle, mandrels, bead release, a knife, fire annealing and gravity. I try to use the least tools possible and authentic equipment that would have been used by the glassmakers of the time. Apart from my fire set-up, all the equipment I have used would have been used at the time as well.
- Clear broken glass was often used as well as imported blocks of coloured glass. (*Regia Anglorum*)
- The glass rods I used to recreate these beads were Effetre Murano – 104 COE soft glass rods. This is a close replica of the glass that would have been used at the time.
- Bead artisans would have created a small kiln or furnace. The broken recycled glass would be put into the furnace through holes in the side to melt in a dish inside the furnace. Air was pumped into the furnace to keep the charcoal hot. (*Guido*)
- I use a hot head torch and MAPP gas. In the future I have plans to recreate a small portable kiln but melting glass in a small kiln is very difficult as getting the heat hot enough to melt the glass is a struggle.
- Metal rods (mandrels) were dipped with a clay mixture called bead release. The molten glass is wound onto the rod until the desired shape was achieved. Once the bead size and shape were achieved, a design could be added by heating thin bits of glass and wrapping them around the bead, with a “stringer” that was heated and laid on top. (*Guido*)
- I use mandrels that would have been very similar to those used, however, mine are shorter as they don’t need to be as long to reach into a hot fire. The bead release I use has the crucial ingredients of water, kaolin and alumina hydrate, which is a composition that would have been used.
- Beads would then be moved to an annealing dish in the furnace. This would prevent thermal shock, lowering the chances of the bead cracking.
- Instead of annealing them in a furnace, I use a product called vermiculite to allow the beads to cool down slowly. I also use a kiln. In the future, I would like to try annealing them in a furnace to see what it is like.
- After the beads are finished, I remove them from the mandrels, clean them out with some bead cleaning tools and give them a quick clean with some soapy water.



### Future Projects:

- In the future, I would like to continue to practice more difficult skills, e.g., fine line work, millefiori use and making the Chinese Warring state Beads which had over 100 steps each.
- For this project, I would continue to find examples that validate the authenticity of the piece.
- I am enjoying creating pieces from different times and cultures and I will continue to develop my skills by continuing to choose challenging projects.
- I also enjoyed working with the museum and the professor when I recreated a 133 bead Phoenician necklace, and I would like to continue working with people like this. Not only was it very educational and rewarding, but it resulted in me contributing to the historical accuracy of the museum- which I thought was cool!
- I also intend to work on another historical recreation of a glass making set up.

### Resources:

#### Primary Resources:

**High-Resolution Copy** of the extant necklace: <https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010257015>

#### Secondary Resources:

**Guido, Margaret.** The Glass Beads of Anglo-Saxon England: c. AD 400-700, Boydell Press, 1999.

**Holgate, Barbara.** “The Pagan Lady of Peel”, St. Patrick’s Isle Archaeological Trust, 1987.

**Regia Anglorum:** <https://regia.org/>

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# Green and Gold Brocade 16th Century English Kirtle

## Mathilde Ficke Sitt

This is a Sixteenth Century kirtle to be worn as the base layer of an outfit that would also have had an overdress. The approximate period it fits 1560-1580 and can be accessorised to fit different fashion styles and silhouettes with increased petticoats and different styles of overdresses and sleeves. It fits both French and English fashion and my persona to whom it belongs would have been a Flemish immigrant to London in the mid 16<sup>th</sup> Century.

The outer look is primarily influenced by the tiny peek of kirtle on the woman second from the left, seen in this portrait by Lucas de Heere, a Flemish painter who lived and worked in France and England (figure 1). She has a decorative brocade kirtle in a slightly opulent colour for the period, and the fabric I chose looks similar to the swirly brocade pattern.



Figure 1 - Portrait by Lucas de Heere



Figure 2 - Sabina Doretha Neuburg Pfalzgräfin Bodies

The structure of the bodice is based on the extant bodies of Sabina Doretha Neuburg Pfalzgräfin that could have had the earliest date of 1560 (figure 3). I thought the continental pattern would be appropriate as the painting and my persona have continental connections. Also the pattern of the lack of boning breast area is more comfortable for me. I've slightly altered this pattern for use in a kirtle by adding boning across the front rather than having a separately inserted busk, and also by making it side lacing rather than back lacing. Another alteration I made was the shape of the waistline, softening the point. It's not clear in the portrait if the inspiration image had an extended pointed waistline as was coming into fashion at the time, but another image he painted of Mary I has a waistline the same as the one I chose to go with (figure 2).

As seen in the portrait of Mary, she is wearing a similar brocaded kirtle with gold. The inclusion of gold in period also had a bearing on my fashion fabric choice, backing up that it was available in period and place. As I'm not a Tudor queen, the fabric I believe is primarily made of polyester. I did use a linen lining as it is slightly more breathable and linen is a documented period choice, unlike polyester.



Figure 3 - Lucas de Heere portrait of Mary I of England



My lacing placement is backed up by period examples of side lacing in Eleanora del Toledo's burial dress as well as the bust of Cassandra Sirigatti by Ridolfo Sirigatti in 1578. Also based on this amazing bust held in the V&A Museum was the decision to cartridge pleat into the waistband and the width of non-pleated skirt in the front. Cassandra is likewise wearing a brocade kirtle. Figures 4 and 5 are images I took of the bust during a recent trip to the UK.

## References

<https://www.englishcast.com/2019/08/the-paintings-and-life-of-lucas-de-heere/>



*Completed kirtle being worn*



*Figure 5 - Bust of Cassandra Sirigatti by Ridolfo Sirigatti, 1578*



*Figure 4 - Bust of Cassandra Sirigatti by Ridolfo Sirigatti, 1578*

# Poor Knights and Toast

## Johnnae llyn Lewis, CE

In the annals of chivalry, England's King Edward III is remembered in part for his long reign, many and various military ventures in Ireland, Scotland, and France, and for establishing the Order of the Garter in 1348. The Most Noble Order of the Garter was and remains the most prestigious of England's chivalric orders. (The well-known and much discussed motto of "Honi soit qui mal y pense" is translated generally as "shame on him who thinks evil of it" from the French.) From its earliest creation, the order has been associated with Saint George, England's patron saint. New knights and lady companions of the order are still by tradition announced on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April, Saint George's Day with the actual installation ceremonies, service, and annual banquet now being held on a Monday in June during Royal Ascot week.

Also established in 1348 by letters patent was the College of St George, Windsor Castle and within those documents was a provision for the establishment of a charity to serve and maintain impoverished knights. Elias Ashmole in his 1672 book *The Institution, Laws & Ceremonies of the Most Noble Order of the Garter* would describe the founding with these words:

"First then, King *Edward* the Third, out of the great respect he bore to Military honor (of which himself had gain'd a large share) and due regard had of valiant men, chiefly such as had behaved themselves bravely in his Wars, yet afterwards hapned to fall in decay; took care for their relief and comfortable subsistence in old age, by making room for them within this his *Foundation*, and uniting them under one Corporation and join Body, with the *Custo[m]s* and *Canons*; these he called *Milites Pauperes*, and we vulgarly *Poor* or *Alms-Knights*." [Section V: page 158]

These "Poor Knights" or "Alms Knights" (described as "Poor Knights, weak in body, indigent and decayed") were first tasked to serve God in prayer.

"Their duty was to attend the Service of God, and pray for the prosperity of the *Sovereign* and *Knights-Companions* of the *Order*, to be ... every day present at high Mass, the Masses of the Virgin *Mary*, as also at Vespers and Compline, from the beginning to the end, except any lawful occasion did impede." [Ashmole. P. 159]

In return the knights received a place to live, the sum of twelve pence a day, and an annual sum of forty shillings. Should one of the Poor Knights come into an inheritance or be cured in some way of their adverse misfortune, he was to be removed from the college and replaced by another impoverished knight. The original number was twenty-six, but the number of knights varied over time. Ashmole notes the Poor Knights also performed certain ceremonial functions in connection with the Order of the Garter for which there was a ceremonial costume. “To each of these *Alms-Knights* was appointed for their Habit, a ...*Red Mantle*, with a Scutcheon of St. *George*, but without any Garter, to surround the same.”

The conditions and fortunes of the Poor Knights ebbed and flowed over time. Ashmole notes during the reign of King Henry VI, the treasurer of the College refused to pay the due annum of forty shillings due to quarrels and dissention. King Henry VIII included the Poor Knights in his will; his intent was to cap the number at thirteen and fund the order with properties and rents. Under Queen Elizabeth I, new statutes were finally drawn up in 1559 to regulate and fund the Poor Knights. Sources vary, but 1559 is also the date given as to when specific almshouses were created for housing the aged veterans. Even during the period of the Commonwealth in the 1650s, Oliver Cromwell’s government recognized the role of the Poor Knights. A 1655 ordinance states:

“*His* Highness the Lord Protector being zealous to continue and establish all Works and Foundations tending to the Advancement of Learning, or any other Charitable and Pious Use or Vses whatsoever; and more particularly the Charitable and Pious Work and Foundation of the Alms-Houses, and Alms-Men, called *Poor Knights*... belonging to Windsor Castle;” [Ordinance 29-30]

The 1655 ordinance ends with the caveat, however, that the said Charitable and pious uses were not to be “superstitious nor derogatory to the Government now established, nor repugnant to any the standing Laws of this Nation.” [p. 37] In the 1658 *The New World of English Words*, Edward Phillips would define the knights as: “poor Knights, who have no other sustenance, but the allowance of this house, and are also called poor Knights of Windsor, the site of this Colledge being the Castle of Windsor....” In 1833 King William IV changed the name of the community to the Military Knights, removing the terminology and adverse connotations of the word “Poor.” The Order as the Military Knights still exists with housing at Windsor Castle. Their current duties include attendance at royal events at Windsor, Sunday morning services, and to remember the Queen and the Knights of the Garter in their daily prayers.

Having briefly described the history of the chivalric Poor Knights, it's time to address the "Toast" part of this brief essay, and yes, that means "toast" as in bread dipped in egg and then fried. In the English medieval period this dish using up stale bread was commonly known as *pain perdu*, but strangely enough there came to be a time in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries when the French toast like dish of *pain perdu* came to be known as "Poor Knights" or "Poor Knights of Windsor." The term reappears in many modern gastronomical histories and cookery books and causes no end of amusement and comment.

What we do know is *Pain perdu* has a long culinary history in England. *The Oxford English Dictionary* describes it as dishes made of stale bread, from "Middle French, French *pain perdu*, lit. 'lost bread'." Juan José Calvo in his article on older culinary terms defines it as "The ME noun *payn purdeuz* appears ca. 1420 for the first time, in the Harleian MS 279 as *Payn pur-dew*; it is an adaptation of OF *pain perdu* (1384)."

Our *Concordance of English Recipes'* glossary defines it as "bread 'lost' in egg batter and fried." But was the bread or pain lost? Australian food historian Janet Clarkson, who blogged as "The Old Foodie" writes, "In old books it is called *pain perdu*, which is usually translated as *lost bread*, but I prefer the idea that it is a corruption of *pain pour Dieu*, or *God's bread*." She also notes, "The same idea goes by a myriad other names: Poor Knights, Golden Bread, Bread Fish, Gypsy Toast, and Gilded Slices for example." (In modern Britain from the 1960s on, the dish may be termed as "eggy bread".)

In the modern USA, the dish has long been French toast, and the *OED* helpfully includes this recognizable description from the 1844 agricultural journal *Southern Planter* (Richmond, Virginia). "From a French gentleman, of this city, we obtained the following recipe:—Take a loaf of light baker's bread..mix three eggs..Soak the bread in this custard..fry it until it is brown... The children, who are very fond of it, have dignified it with the name of *French toast*. (*Southern Planter* Aug. 192/2) The *Dictionary of American Regional English* (*DARE*) includes an entry under "lost bread" which reads: "n. 1968....Pan-pan-doux [ˌpænˌpænˈdu]—bread coated with egg and fried; stale bread is usually used. Also called lost bread. [FW: This is listed in recipe books as *pain perdu*, but the spelling is the one given by the Inf.]" French toast can be found today in Louisiana, but especially in New Orleans it may still be found on menus under the name of *Pain Perdu*.

Be it lost or not, numerous sources and blogs like to trace *pain perdu's* history as far back as to the Roman gourmet Apicius, but even without mentioning the famed Roman culinarian's recipe for soaked bread fried



in butter and eaten with honey, the recipe for *pain perdu* can be found among the earliest of English manuscripts. (The *Paynfondew* and *Payn Ragoun* recipes which appear in the earlier *Forme of Cury* (c 1390)

vary enough as to not be included here.) In our 2006 *Concordance of English Recipes*, we traced five early medieval recipes. Here are those five versions in chronological order:

From the Harleian MS 279 dated about 1435

**.xliij. Payn pur-dew. —**

Take fayre zolkys of Eyroun, & trye hem fro þe whyte, & draw hem þorw a straynoure, & take Salt and caste þer-to; þan take fayre brede, & kytte it as trounde3 rounde; þan take fayre Boter þat is claryfyd, or ellys fayre Freysshe grece, & putte it on a potte, & make it hote; þan take & wete wyl þin trounde3 in þe zolkys, & putte hem in þe panne, an so frye hem vppe; but ware of cleuyng to the panne; & whan it is fryid, ley hem on a dysse, & ley Sugre y-nowe þer-on, & þanne serue it forth [ forth ]. [Austin, p. 42]

From the Harleian MS 4016 dated about 1450

**Payñ purdeuz.**

Take faire yolkes of eyreñ, and try hem fro the white, and drawe hem þorgh a streynour; and then take salte, and caste thereto; And then take manged brede\*. or payñmañ, and kutte hit in leches; and þeñ take faire buttur, and clarefy hit, or elles take fressh grece and put hit yrf a faire pañ, and make hit hote; And theñ wete þe brede weþ there in þe yolkes of eyreñ, and then ley hit oñ the batur in þe pañ, whañ þe buttur is al hote; And theñ whañ hit is fried ynowe, take sugur ynowe, and caste there-to whañ hit is in þe dissþ, And so serue hit forthþ. [Austin, p. 83]

[Austin noted: \* Douce MS. maynche brede. Manchet.]

From MS Beinecke 163, [f.69v] dated 1460, comes this version. Constance Hieatt chose this recipe as her “epitome” version for *The Culinary Recipes of Medieval England*.

Take paundemayn or fresh bredd pare a wey the crustys cut hit in schyverys fry hem a lytyll yn claryfyd hony buture have yolkes of eyron drawyn thorow a streynour & as hote as thu may ley the brede ther yn that hit be al helyd with bature then fry in the same bature & serve hit forth & strew on hote sygure. [Hieatt. *An Ordinance of Pottage*, p. 79]

From the Holkham MS known as *A Noble Boke off Cookry* dated about 1475

To mak payn pardieu tak paynmayne or freshe bred and paire away the cruste cutt them in schyues and fry them alitill in clarified butter then tak yolks of eggs drawe throughe a strene as hot as ye may and lay the bred ther in and turn it therin that they be coueryd in batter and serue it and straw on sugur enowghe. [Recipe as printed in *A Noble Boke off Cookry*]

From the Harley MS 5401 dated 1490

50 Payne Puredew. Recipe shyves of whyte brede & toste pam; pan take pe 3olkes of egges & swyng team, & turn pe brede perin, & fry it in grece or buttur, & serof it forth. [Hieatt, *Medium Aevum*]

In the sixteenth century, the recipes trail off and are not part of the printed culinary literature. Starting in the seventeenth century, Randle Cotgrave's *A Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues*, 1611, included these definitions: "**Pain perdu** . A broath made of wine, Rose - water, and Sugar, egges, and bread" and "Le lour de **pain perdu** . Sbroueterofday." Or "the day of pain perdu. Shrove Tuesday." Numerous recipes appear in the seventeenth culinary literature. Gervase Markham included a recipe for the dish under the name "panperdy." (Hint: read the title aloud.)

#### **To make the best panperdy.**

To make the best Panperdy, take a dozen Egges, & breake them, and beate them very well, then put vnto them Cloues, Mace, Cinamon, Nutmeg, and good store of Sugar, with as much Salt as shall season it: then take a Manchet, and cut it into thicke slices like tostes; which done, take your frying pan, and put into it good store of sweete Butter, and being melted lay in your slices of bread, then powre vpon them one halfe of your Egges; then when that is fryed, with a dish turne your slices of bread vpward, and then powre on them the other halfe of your Egges, & so turne them till both sides be browne, then dish it vp, and serue it with Sugar strowed vpon it. [Markham. *The English Housewife*. 1615, 1631.]

Jos. Cooper included the following recipe in his 1654 cookery book.

#### **How to fry Toster.**

Take a stale Manchet and cut them in round slices like Tostes, and wet them in Muscadine, then beat ten Eggs very well and fry your Tostes in Butter, then pour halfe the Eggs on the Tostes as they are in the pan, and fry them browne, then turne the Tostes and pour the residue of the Eggs as before, and fry that side; then dish them, and

pour Rosewater, Butter, Sugar, and a little grated Nutmeg and Cynamon, well beat together, on them, and serve them up hot. [Cooper. *The Art of Cookery Refin'd and Augmented*. 1654. p86.]

Dating a year later, W. M.'s *The Compleat Cook* of 1655 contains two recipes of interest. The first is:

***To make Toasts.***

Cut two penny Loaves in round slices and dip them in half a pint of Cream or cold water, then lay them abroad in a Dish, and beat three Eggs and grated Nutmegs, and Sugar, beat them with the Cream, then take your frying Pan and melt some butter in it, and wet one side of your Toasts and lay them in on the wet side, then pour in the rest upon them, and so fry them; send them in with Rosewater, butter and sugar. [W.M. *The Compleat Cook*. 1655]

And here is a recipe in the same work for

***To make poore knights.***

Cut two penny loaves in round slices, dip them in half a pint of Cream or faire water, then lay them abroad in a dish, and beat three Eggs and grated Nutmegs and sugar, beat them with the Cream then melt some butter in a frying pan, and wet the sides of the toasts and lay them in on the wet side, then pour in the rest upon them, and so fry them, serve them in with Rosewater, sugar and butter. [W.M. *The Compleat Cook*. 1655, 1658]

The above recipe for Poor Knights enters the culinary canon then in the 1650s. *OED Online* defines the dish as: "Poor Knights *n.* (also with lower-case initials) orig. *Brit.* (more fully Poor Knights of Windsor) a type of dessert, typically made using stale bread and milk, and sweetened with sugar, jam, etc.; = pain perdu *n.*" According to the *OED*, French toast is also seventeenth century. It enters the culinary canon in 1660 with Robert May's masterpiece *The Accomplisht Cook*. May actually included a number of recipes for "Toasts of divers sorts." Of interest are:

**First, in Butter or Oyl.**

Take a caste of fine roles or round manchets, chip them. and cut them into toasts, fry them in clarified butter, frying oyl, or sallet oyl, but before you fry them, dip them in fair water, and being fried, serve them in a clean dish piled one upon another, and sugar between. *Otherwayes*. Toast them before the fire, and run them over with butter, sugar, or oyl.

**Cinamon Toasts.**

CUT fine thin toasts, then toast them on a gridiron, and lay them in ranks in a dish, put to them fine beaten cinamon mixed with sugar and some claret, warm them over the fire, and serve them hot.

And lastly,

**French Toasts.**

CUT French Bread, and toast it in pretty thick toasts on a clean gridiron, and serve them steeped in claret, sack, or any wine, with sugar and juyce of orange. [May. *The Accomplisht Cook*. 1660]

Hannah Woolley in *The Cooks Guide* included this more basic recipe:

**To fry toasts.**

TAke a manchet and cut off the crust, then cut it into thin round slices, soak them well in cream, then take three eggs well beaten; and when your batter is hot in the frying pan dip your slices of bread in the egges and fry them; when they are fryed a little pour the rest of the egges on them and turn them, and when they are fryed enough put some rose water, butter and sugar to them. [Woolley. *The Cooks Guide* 1664]

Randle Holme in his encyclopedic volume *The Academy of Armory* published in 1688 described the dish “*Poor Knights*, are slices of White Bread dipt in Eggs, Cream and Sugar, fryed in Rose Water and Butter.” “*Toasts*,” he wrote, “are shives of Bread, dried, and made hard and hot before a Fire.” He did not include “French toasts.”

Half a century later, in 1723, John Nott published his *Cooks and Confectioners Dictionary*. The work is a most interesting one for food historians as it was largely compiled from seventeenth century works of cookery. Nott includes both recipes for “Cream-Toasts, or Pain Perdu” and “To make poor knights.” Noted English food historian Elizabeth David created a glossary for the Rivington facsimile edition of 1980. David suggests *pain perdu* might be lost bread, but it also might be “waste” bread. In her entry on “Poor Knights” she writes, “How the venerable dish of left-over bread, steeped in cream or wine and beaten eggs, fried in butter and be sprinkled with sugar and rosewater, came to be particularly associated with the Poor Knights I have not discovered.”



Nott's mention of *Cream toasts* introduces still another name to the mix, but the name is not original to Nott. In 1710 Patrick Lamb included this recipe in his *Royal Cookery*.

To make Cream - Toasts , or Pain Perdu . TAKE two French Rolls , or more , according to the Bigness of your Dish , and cut them in thick Slices , as thick as your Finger , Crum and Cruft thro ' , lay them on a Silver or Brass Dish, put to them a Pint of Cream, half a Pint of Milk; strew over them beaten Cinnamon and Sugar, turn them frequently till they are tender soak'd, so as you can turn them without breaking; so take them with a Slice or Skimmer from your Cream; break four or five raw Eggs, turn your Slices of Bread in the Eggs, and fry them in Clarify'd Butter; make them of good brown Colour, not black; take care of Burning them in frying; Scrape a little Sugar round them, have a care you make them not too sweet. You may *serve them hot* for second Course, being well drain'd from your Butter in which you fry'd them; but they are most proper for a Plate or little Dish for Supper. (Lamb. *Royal Cookery*. 1710)

Nott's cited recipe is very like Patrick Lamb's but varies in the exact quantities being specified. Nott specifies: "TAKE a Pound of French Rolls... half a Pint of Cream... a Quarter of a Pint of Milk... strewn sugar and cinnamon... three or four raw Eggs... and clarify'd Butter. Serve them hot for a second course," he instructs. Then he includes: "Entry 193 "To make poor Knights." It calls for slices of 'penny loaves,' 'three eggs,' pint of cream or water, cream, sugar and grated nutmeg. One is instructed to fry the slices in a frying pan and then pour the soaking mixture of cream and sugar over them. Fry until done, and serve with butter, sugar and rosewater."

It's interesting to note that Hannah Glasse's 1755 fifth edition of *The Art of Cookery, Made Plain and Easy* includes almost the exact same wording as Patrick Lamb under her recipe for "Pain Perdu , or Cream Toasts." Two other cookbooks of the same era offer 'fry'd toasts.' Charles Carter in 1749 includes this recipe for

To make fry'd toasts. Chip a manchet very well, and cut it round ways into toasts; and then take cream and eight eggs, seasoned with sack and sugar and nutmeg; and let these toasts steep in it about an hour; then fry them in sweet butter, serve them up with plain melted butter, or with butter, sack and sugar, as you please. (Carter, Charles. *The London and Country Cook: Or, Accomplished Housewife*, 1747. p 246)

Elizabeth Moxon included this recipe in her cookery book of 1752.

**424.** To make fry'd Toasts. Chip a Manchet very well, and cut it round ways in Toasts, then take Cream and eight Eggs seasoned with Sack, Sugar and Nutmeg, and let these Toasts steep in it about an Hour, then fry them in sweet Butter, serve them up with plain melted Butter, or with Butter, Sack and Sugar, as you please. (Moxon, Elizabeth. English housewifery. 1752? ECCO.)

The October 2014 revised edition of the *Oxford Companion to Food* in its longer and more complete entry on “Poor Knights” says of the dish, “The origin of the curious name, sometimes expanded to ‘poor knights of Windsor’ is a puzzle, although the Danish name *arme riddere* and the German *Arme Ritter* may be earlier and may provide the explanation.” The entry ends with the assertion, “After the 1730s, the English cooks reverted to the name pain perdu.” But even here we find a later recipe. Elizabeth Cleland in 1755 offered up her recipe for Poor Knights. Correcting for the original long “s”, the recipe from 1755 reads:

Poor Knights of Windsor. TAKE a Roll, and cut it into Slices; soke them in Sack, then dip them in Yolks of Eggs, and fry them; serve them up with beat Butter, Sack and Sugar.

[Cleland. *A New and Easy Method of Cookery*. 1755]

Nothing, it seems, is clear-cut or absolute when it comes to the dish. Why, of course, would a dish like *pain perdu* with a long and established tradition of its own suddenly appear or adopt a new name, keep it for some decades, and then revert back to its previous name? Did it suddenly become a dish served to residents of Windsor Castle’s College of St. George? In actuality, it seems that in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, versions of the dish seem to have been known under a variety of names. Even in the 20<sup>th</sup> century here in America, there were versions of French toast known as German toast; they can be found in no less a source than Fannie Farmer’s *The Boston Cooking-School Cook Book* of 1918.

Perhaps John Thorne said it best when he wrote, “Why? No one knows for sure.” It is, I agree, a culinary mystery, but a delicious one to be sure!

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