

# *Chronique*

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*The Journal of Chivalry*

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*Articles, Essays, Reviews*

Issue #8  
1st Quarter, 1994

*The Office of Squire*

# Chronique

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*The Editors would like to thank everyone who brought  
Chronique #8 into being--  
Thank You!*

## INTRODUCTION

*Stunning! Stunning describes the response that we have had to the brief notices on the Rialto and various kingdom nets to Chronique and to a sampling of the questions that were posted during January and part of February. We will continue to make them available over Email for those who you who want to receive them that way--it is easier for us to transfer and edit them electronically than it is to type them in manually.*

*In this issue, we look at the squire in both historical and modern guises. We will see, I think, that while there are some amazing parallels, there are also great differences both in the way that we view the office of squire and the period way(s) and the modern interpretations of a squire's duty. I have tried to include a wide variety of perspectives on the work, including the HUGE section in FORUM responding to the questions. In the future we will either have to include fewer responses or ask fewer questions. I am pleased at the response, however, and think you'll like the variety and articulation.*

*For those of you who are new to Chronique, we try to infuse more authentic material into the reenactment environment and to increase the time spent thinking about chivalry as a historical and modern ethic. We do this by presenting answers to chivalric questions (FORUM), offering articles introducing historical resources and concepts, printing essays from experienced and influential modern tourneyers, by offering "how to" articles targeted at tournaments (How to Make a More Authentic Gambeson, etc.). Using these tools, we hope to increase the quality of our tournament reenactments both in accuracy and in flavor. Back issues and subscriptions are available (See P. 76)*

*There are more pas this year--sixteen by my count. The Order of the Star and the Company of Saint Mark have now been founded along the original Company of Saint George lines.*

Welcome!



*CORRECTIONS: Mr. Ron Magin, a courteous squire standed far from his knight, Sir Steen Halverson, was kind enough to point out two glaring errors in Chronique #7: First, I made a glaring associational error when we typed 'Mr Robert Mackenzie' with Mr. Robert MacPhearson! The two are not the same, and the confusion mine. My apologies. Second, there was an objection to the inclusion of Roberto in Meistra's Niccola's bio. The claim was that it was demeaning to her (not my intention). I think, though, that Roberto's name is far more well known amongst tournament re-enactor's than Meistra Nichola's is, however, and that the connection might be helpful.*

## FORUM

### General Comments and Suggestions on and for *Chronique*

"I would like to express my appreciation for the FORUM section of *Chronique*, especially the most recent one dealing with the squire. The questions asked were enjoyable to think about, and put some perspective on how I view my role as a squire.

"The most valuable thing to come out of this, however, was the discussion between myself and my knight, Viscount Sir Colin D'Aerg, which occurred while preparing my answers. The questions began a dialog which we hadn't had before, on issues that we found were important to both of us. Thank you for an excellent forum, and thanks goes out to Colin, for sharing his insight and experience."

-Valerie R. Price

AKA SCA Josselyn Eirlav ferch Rhys, OL  
West Kingdom

*Editor:* Readers will find Josselyn and Colin's responses grouped together in a slightly different format from the rest of the responses, although they are interspersed amongst them. They provide a delightful extension of the discussion concept I like to encourage, and think you will enjoy them—let me know what you think!

"You might want to address in this issue (or sometime, if you haven't already) the differences between chivalry in literature of the time, and in practice, and which one we want to recreate."

-Cynthia Virtue

*Editor:* I think this is an ongoing mission of *Chronique*, and I hope that those with greater expertise will consent to share their knowledge, researches and musings with the rest of the readership—it is a task altogether too great for my humble abilities, and I enjoin anyone who is willing to assist!

"I am anxious to learn how others feel about all these points. Thanks again for bringing the *Chronique* to life. It's explorations of philosophy are definitely part of why I am a re-enactor!"

-Sheryl A. Knowles

"Greetings good editors of *Chronique* from Emrick von Adlerhorst:

"Allow me the indulgence of proffering some answers to the questions you have proposed for discussion in edition #8 of *Chronique*. Permission is granted to reproduce any or all of the answers so listed below, though in truth I stress that they are the views of someone with only just over three years involvement in the SCA, who is not a knight or even a squire and indeed who has not done sufficient traveling (although I have been in Drachenswald) to consider himself to have had extensive experience with a goodly number of knights and squires.

"While I am not a squire and do not know personally a large number of knights of the SCA, there is one gentle close to me who I firmly believe should be a knight, and if he were to become one, there is nothing in the world I would want more than to be his squire. He has been as if a knight to me, a close mentor and instructor in the ways of combat as well as the ways of courtesy and chivalry and honor, both on and off the list. And I have endeavored to be as if a squire to him, heeding his advice, seeking his approval and helping him in any way that I might. It is based primarily on the relationship the two of us have that I form the answers to the below listed questions."

-David Low

Emrick von Adlerhorst  
West Kingdom—Lochac

"The list above is disturbing because it suggests that *Chronique* is considering expanding its area of discussion. It is my hope that all involved with this journal will avoid the temptation to spread themselves too thin. This magazine's focus thus far has made it perhaps the most lucid and intelligent journal of its type."  
-Thomas G. Moore

Editor: *The focus of Chronique is two-fold: 1) to increase the discussion of chivalry and to make the resulting ethics more pronounced in the minds of combatants and 2) to increase the level of authenticity on the field by examining, in turn, various topics as they apply to tournament re-enactments. I think you will find that the topics on the list do not differ greatly from those we have already discussed: The meaning of the tournament of chivalry, the battle of Poitiers, points of honor, the pas d'armes, knightly orders and tournament societies, modern tournament companies (St. George, St. Michael, the Company of the Star), arms and armour. I will bear your concern in mind, however; it is my intent to change Chronique only insofar as raising the level of quality—the content should remain the same. Thank you for your words!*

"I'll open briefly by stating some general views before I address the questions. (Note: I use "he" below, but it should be obvious that in our modern recreation the role of squire or knight can as easily be played by a lady as by a gentleman).

"The purpose of becoming a squire, in my view, is to learn the knightly virtues—which, borrowing from Keen, I will summarize as nobility, gentility, loyalty, and prowess. I will add a third criterion, leadership, which one could roll in with nobility or prowess, but which I think merits discussion.

"There are a number of sticky situations which are mentioned in the scenarios presented which involve conflicting loyalties. Many of these are products of our modern naïveté, and our consequently careless tongues. The smart knight or squire would make sure that his various oaths of fealty did not conflict. In all cases, it is important to make sure that when such conflicts occur, both sides know of the conflict and can see that the actions taken were a resolution to that conflict, however unsatisfactory that resolution may be for them. In this way the knight or squire cannot be held to charges of treachery and unchivalrous conduct. I will try to address some of the issues fealty raises below."

-Jan Willem Maessen

AKA SCA Lord John de Caversham; not a squire (*I don't fight very often*)

-East Kingdom

### **Question #1—What is the meaning of the squire's belt?**

"Nothing, except to show status."

-Morgan Broman

AKA SCA Sir Morgan deGrey, King of Drachenwald, Viscount, etc.

Kingdom of Dracenwald

"It is the symbol of the squire's fealty. Just as the knight's white belt signifies he is a sworn member of the King's chivalry the squire's belt is a symbol of that squire's fealty to his knight, and through his knight, to his King."  
-David Low

"The belt of a squire is merely an outward symbol of the bond he has with his knight. I would be as happy if squires didn't wear belts; a squire does not and should not have any special power or authority. The squire who wears a belt stands as a representative for all those in service to his knight, and for those who serve as squires to any knight; his misdeeds reflect not only upon him, but also upon his kin. Thus, it can be argued that by wearing a belt a squire compels himself to a certain virtue."  
-Jan W. Maessen

"To me the squire's belt has pretty much the same meaning as the knight's belt, except that the wearer has yet to attain the ability or grace to be knighted. The belt is a symbolic representation of the wearer's desire to learn the qualities and duties of knighthood. That they are trying to perfect those attributes within themselves, but have yet to do so. It also shows that the squire has decided that the best way for them to learn how to be a knight is by having a formal mentor—the knight."

*-Ron Magin*

AKA SCA Rünolfr Audsson  
*East Kingdom*

"I believe that each knight has a different viewpoint regarding the squire's belt. I see the belt as a declaration—not of achievement nor of indentured servitude—but of intent. The person I offer the squire's belt to must desire to become a knight. There is no prerequisite achievement (e.g. attained the fourth round at a Crown Tournament or have killed a knight in tournament combat) for my squires. What I look for is someone who wants to learn and appears to be compatible with my sense of honor, courtesy, and duty. The belt then signifies the wearer as a student who has definite aspirations.

"Since for my part squires are bound by an oath of fealty, I do not think it is appropriate for a fighter who intends to 'take the baldric' rather than 'the belt' to become a squire."

*-Thomas G. Moore*

AKA SCA Sir Logan  
*West Kingdom*

"This is a more difficult question than it seems. Some squires wear it boastfully, showing that they have come under the care of a great knight. Some wear it as a token of fealty. Some knight's households don't wear them at all.

"I'd just as soon not have anyone wear one, even the traditional white knight's belt. If one wears it boastfully, that is against the medieval virtue of humility. If one wants a token of fealty, one should wear a badge or baldric with the heraldic device of your knight's house. As a costumer, not being allowed to use red (or white) as a belt makes me grumpy, although I realize that both of these have become nearly permanent due to common use."

*-Cynthia Virtue*

*Editor: I recall though that throughout most of the medieval period knights did indeed wear a military belt to signify their military, and later noble status. I believe it is a custom that goes back to the Germanic tribal roots.*

JOSELYN: "I think it signifies my duties or 'position' as a squire to others, like a white belt does for a knight. It carries with it the responsibility to act in an honorable and chivalrous manner. The arms sometimes painted on the end makes the responsibility all the more important, to me, because I don't want to bring dishonor on my knight, or my house, by unchivalrous actions."

*-Valerie Price*

COLIN: "Theoretically the status of 'squire' carries with it no formal 'rank' in the SCA. The significance of the belt is principally determined by the attributes of three parties: 1) the person wearing it (you)—and you obviously attach considerable significance to it, because it makes you want to behave in a certain manner. 2) The knight who gives it—me, and I attach considerable significance, because in effect I am making a visible statement that you and I are affiliated. Your action, whether I like it or not, will be reflected back onto me, and vice-versa (as we both have discovered!). 3) Everybody else, who may read into it more or less than really exists, because nobody really knows what the particulars are (there is no generally accepted definition of the knight/squire relationship).

"To me, the belt itself is simply a visual reminder that I have taken a direct role—and responsibility—in your training and development in the Society. Without the belt, there

is no evidence of that role—nobody but us would know, so there might be less accountability on either part. With the belt, we each realize that everyone will attribute our actions to each other—thereby providing an added incentive towards honor and glory.”

-Tim Bray

-AKA SCA Viscount Sir Colin D'Aerg  
West Kingdom

“I see a squire’s belt as a reminder. It tells both the knight and the squire that they have other responsibilities. A belt reminds the squire that his behavior now reflects on others, and that his welfare comes second after the knights’.

“It tells the knight that he has duties to teach and to train, duties that are not just about fighting.”

-Junee Elliot

AKA SCA Sir Hanno Elandris, Duke  
Kingdom of Caid

“A belt is a sign of intent to acquire a white one. It is also a squire’s sign that he has joined himself to his knight’ fealty to the crown. A squire’s belt should not be taken on by anyone who does not intend to strive for knighthood, and who would not swear fealty when that time comes.”

-Sten Jensen

“The meaning of the squire’s belt is what the knight and squire agree upon; and thus is an extension of whatever oath they swear. I personally disagree with those who believe it to be a rank, but think it more a sign of relationship.”

-John Schmidt

AKA SCA Sir John Theophilus  
West Kingdom

When I see a squire’s belt I consider a visible symbol to all the world that this person has actually sworn to accept guidance and discipline from a particular knight, and that the knight has sworn to guide and teach that squire.”

-Sheryl A. Knowles

AKA SCA Lady Teleri Tawel  
Kingdom of the West

## **2: What qualities should the ideal squire possess?**

“The squire or knight in training should possess all of the medieval virtues, at all times (not only while at an event) with modifications made for the modern life that we also all pursue. Not only should a squire have particular *qualities*, a squire should also have *skills*, such as public speaking, a good command of *formal* manners, dance, martial crafts; such as knowing how to make armor; and gentle crafts, such as sewing or leather work.”

-Cynthia Virtue

“The willingness to learn from everyone.”

-James Elliot

“This should be seemingly obvious on one hand, but then again, unclear on the other. The answer to this lies in each individual’s understanding of what it means to be a squire. In my definition, once as a starting combatant and now as a knight, a squire is an individual who wishes to go through training, both in martial and courtly aspects, to learn and strive towards becoming a knight. In this case, *the qualities a squire should possess would be those that make him a knight*. This includes a fine understanding and the ability to participate in medieval combat (tournament and war), court dance, strategic games and discussions, public interaction, and a concept of heraldic fundamentals. He should be able to lead as well as to follow, hold harsh words when they can do only harm, and teach others what he has learned. These qualities must all be augmented with a high sense of honor and chivalry--towards others, one’s inspiration, and one’s self.”

-Steve Beck

AKA SCA Duke Sir Stephen of Beckingham, OL

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"An ideal squire depends from knight to knight, as they are mirrors of the knight's virtues (and vices.) I would put respect and a desire to learn at the top of the list—but that's what I look for most."  
-John Schmidt

"Patience; openness; willingness to learn and to do; honesty; commitment to work and practice; a good eye for seeing a job needing done and doing it without having to be asked. Actually, the ideal squire has the same qualities as the ideal apprentice and ideal protégé — the attitude toward service is the same in all cases, or should be."

-Leigh Ann Hussey

AKA SCA Siobhan di hEodhusa

West Kingdom

"A good squire will not need to be taught that he must be loyal to his knight; it will be the actions he takes based on that loyalty which he will need to learn. He follow his knight in all that he does, but is not willing to behave stupidly or maliciously as a result; if his knight orders him to act in such manner, he will sooner protect his knight's good name and his own. Finally, a good squire will constantly strive to increase his prowess, broaden his knowledge of the gentle arts, and improve his comportment among all people."

-Jan W. Maessen

"I believe that the good squire must have the desire for perfection, and a willingness to learn and serve, and above all the desire to be a knight. I don't feel that a good squire should want to be 'knighted', just that they should desire to embody the essence of knighthood. In fact I feel that if a squire is to concerned with 'getting knighted' they will close their minds off to other things that they still have to learn."

-Ron Magin

"An ideal squire should have all the qualities of an ideal knight, though not a fully developed form. Those qualities are (for those of you who missed by earlier rantings) Prowess, Loyalty, Generosity, Courtesy, and Franchise. When they are fully developed the squire will be made a knight."

-Sten Jenson

"An ability to learn and talent at arms. All else should come from the combination of these virtues and the knight's own qualities. Also important is that the squire have a good upbringing and understand the need to shun dishonorable virtues such as vanity, greed and avarice. While the knight shall be the example the squire shall aspire to, the squire must already have an understanding of the qualities they seek to emulate and the need to emulate them."

-David Low

"The same as a knight—chivalry, courtesy and above all honesty. They should be a competent combatant and willing to learn. Humility is also a good aspect that most people seem to forget."

-Morgan Broman

"The ideal squire should first have a willingness to learn. Given that we live in modern times where a squire does not (usually) live with his knight, I would also expect a knight would look for other qualities. It seems reasonable to expect the knight to look for a squire amongst people who already display characteristics the knight holds appropriate or who the knight believes have personalities that would accept the knight's urgings towards those characteristics. Thus the knight and his squire must have personalities in somewise compatible (it should go without saying.) I— who am neither knight nor squire nor likely to be— would hope/believe those characteristics are what I like to think belong to the order of knighthood: courtesy, chivalry, honor, prowess, dedication, generosity of spirit ....."

-Sheryl A. Knowles

JOSELYN: "That would depend maybe on what exactly the knights wants in a squire...there are as many different knight/squire relationships as there are any other kind of relationships. Every knights 'ideal' squire might at least display unwavering chivalry on the field, courtesy off the field, and would take whatever oaths / promises sworn



to the knight seriously. The squire should also, in my humble opinion, try always to bring honor to their household by their actions. And, especially, to be at the knight's side in battle! The relationship off the field really would depend on the agreement / expectations of each different knight. Off the field I try always to help Sir Colin and his lady in any way I can, but I don't think those actions are tied to my being a squire so much as they are to my duties as a member of the house."

COLIN: "You are entirely correct, and pretty much on the mark with my thinking. The 'ideal squire' from my perspective is one which does not demand a lot of coaching in the basic SCA precepts of honor and courtesy, but wishes to obtain 'advanced' training in the subtler aspects of combat, war, and martial interaction in all forms. I cannot 'teach' honor to anyone; either they can grasp the concept on their own, or not—I don't know how to teach it to somebody. But I can help them learn how to be a better combatant, how to approach a fight, how to deal with situations that arise on the field, etc.; I can introduce them to the great nobles of high repute, so that the squire may learn more than just what I have to offer; and I can provide plenty of opportunities for honor and glory in martial settings. So an ideal squire for me is someone who is looking for those things, and doesn't expect me to make armour, explain titles, etc." ♦

"I write this as a member of the order of chivalry who was squired to a knight but ended up wearing a Master's baldric. My reasons for taking the baldric are detailed and thought out over many years. When I took my knight's squires' belt I had already felt some difficulty with certain 'requirements' of knighthood but I took his offered belt. I swore to him that I would strive to become the best fighter possible and that I would learn and uphold the best of my ability the ideals of chivalry. I took this oath very seriously and did my best to achieve the 'ideals of behavior' of a knight. The end result was that the shoe just didn't fit. I did learn, however, far more about chivalry than I expected. So what do I feel are the best qualities of a squire?

1. The ability and *desire* to learn.
2. An open mind to all the ideals of chivalry, even if you don't think they will fit.
3. The desire to do one's best despite all trials.
4. A sense of duty, loyalty, and honor.

"These are the things I think helped me overcome some of my 'bad qualities' as a squire (stubbornness, hardheadedness). When I look for a squire, I don't look for the fighter who wants to be a 'Master.' I look for the fighter who wants to learn as much as he / she can. And I won't give out red squire 'baldrics'. I shouldn't teach 'how to be a Master' but how to achieve the ideals of chivalry."

-Patty Winter

-AKASCA Viscountess Gwenllhian Rhiannon of Dragonskeep  
MSCA, OP, OLM, OTC  
West Kingdom

### **Question #3. Will all good squires make good knights?**

"I would like to say 'yes' a good squire will make a good knight. But, knowing that reality is not ideal, I would have to admit that the true answer is probably 'no'. If a knight chooses to squire someone who isn't interested in the knightly virtues, who is mainly interested in the sport, or who stands in some completely-irrelevant-to-chivalry relationship to the knight (essentially chosen more on hope than anything else) ... or, if the knight is just not a very good teacher, I can imagine that squire - no matter how well he pleases his knight in some aspect or another - may not be suitable for knighthood."

-Sheryl A. Knowles

"In an ideal sense I think that given the proper training and guidance, anyone can become a good knight. All it takes is a willingness to try to strive towards those ever-elu-

sive goals of 'chivalry'. Some people are not very athletic or coordinated, and they will find that to attain the fighting skills necessary to be knighted very difficult. Some people are lazy, and find it difficult to endure the never-ending struggle they will have to face to improve themselves and shine as an example to others. Other people will be selfish, and self-serving temperament. They will find it difficult to be more open and generous than others. The point is that it will take some people longer because everyone has different weaknesses, faults, and imperfections to correct. It just takes a certain amount of dedication and persistence. For some the cost of making the changes in oneself is just too high for their perceived gain of being knighted."  
-Ron Magin

"Not every good squire will be a good knight. Some squires will spend their time trying to increase their prowess on the field to no avail, or will be prone to outbursts of unbecoming behavior despite their efforts to curb it. In addition, it must be noted that a knight does hold a position of leadership among his peers. On the field, a knight will certainly have authority over any of his squires, and will be accorded the general respect dues his rank, for he has proved himself worthy (at least we hope!) of his station. This contrasts with the squire, who, while worthy of his knight's attention, has not received recognition as one who has proved himself. Thus, a squire who cannot lead fairly and justly does not deserve the rank of knight."  
-Jan W. Maessen

"No. I've seen some squires who can run circles around others in most aspects of squireship, but not be able to attack or defend themselves while in armour. While there are many aspects of knighthood, let's not kid ourselves, being a good combatant has a great deal to do with that recognition. And, on the other side of the question, I've seen exemplary squires receive the accolade and turn out to be total boors. Perhaps it was the stern hand of the knight that kept the squire in line, but once he was his own man, his own upbringing and attitudes came forth. One does not preclude the other."  
-Steve Beck

"In an ideal world, no knight would take a squire who was not already good knight material, (needing only a little polish)."  
-Cynthia Virtue

"It depends on how they develop under their time in their knights service."  
-Morgan Broman

"No. All good squires will make...all good squires. And 'good' is again subjective, but in some cases, a good squire must be able to submerge their personality into their knight's; and this is not a good trait for a knight. Or, said better, the habit of serving is one that must be shed at some point."  
-John Schmidt

"I have thought about this for some time and I am not certain. My instinct is to say yes as long as the elevation to knighthood is not conferred too early."  
-Thomas G. Moore

"Will all good knights *remain* good knights. Life is not constant and all things change. There are forever new tests that an individual has not yet met. Will a good learner be a good thinker? Will one who can follow be one who can lead? Not all good squires will be good knights, but it is a highly individual thing and depends on the particular situation and personalities involved. A good squire under one knight may yet have limited potential yet under another may realize their full value."  
-David Low

"I would hope that a good squire becomes a good knight, but fate (or life) often takes a hand, and steers a promising candidate away from us. If a squire remains good, and remains with us in the society [ed. the SCA], they will be made a knight. Whether they become a good knight or not is a question of their consistency."  
-Sten Jensen

JOSELYN: "That is definitely the goal, isn't it? It's hard to describe what a 'good' squire

is, to an extent. If the squire acts honorably, and learns all they can from their knight, then yes, they will be a good knight."

COLIN: "In period, squires were generally born into the knightly class and were either too young to have been knighted or too poor to afford the equipment and service required of a knight. Therefore, a squire should be 'knightly' already—displaying the noble qualities of courage, honor, courtesy, etc. that we value in the knightly class. A good squire lacks only the martial prowess that is expected of a knight. It is entirely possible, however, for a good squire to remain a squire for a very long time, if they just can't quite develop the athletic skill necessary to 'compete' at the level expected of knights. This is kind of too bad and is an artifact of the way we do things in the SCA." ♦

#### **Question #4: As a squire, you bear the honor for both your lady and your knight onto the field—how are the two related?**

"To me the two are not strongly related. A squire bears the honor of his lady because she has deemed him worthy to bear it and it is a duty for him to then maintain it. The same is true of the knight. However, while the two situations are similar, they are not necessarily related."  
*-David Low*

"Your consort inspires you, and your knight trains and corrects you. Of the results, your consort has more influence, for your mental state determines more of the outcome than else. But your knight can take pride in how well you have been trained, and joy in your victory. A winning fight is pleasing for the honor gained your consort, and the respect gained for you and your knight."  
*-John Schmidt*

The two are intimately related. If the knight has done his job properly, he has taught his squire to honor all ladies and the one whose favor he bears above all. There is no dishonor in the squire can give his consort that will not reflect twofold upon the knight who allows or—heaven forbid—encourages this behavior. Similarly, if the consort is properly graced, she will inspire the squire to emulate the best qualities of his knight, and by his actions illuminate those virtues for all to see, both in himself and in his master. There is naught that will dishonor the one but will disgrace the other; so too with the increase of honor. For in that moment when the squire takes to the field bearing tokens of both knight and lady, the renown of all three are passengers in the same vessel."  
*-Ann Marie S. Price*  
AKA SCA Mistress Anne of Alanwyck  
*West Kingdom*

"A squire who behaves dishonorably upon the field is obviously spotting the name of both his knight and his lady. In general, however, it seems that a squire's gentility and nobility reflect somewhat more upon his lady, while his prowess and loyalty reflect on his knight. It should be noted, however, that the squire acts as his lady's sole representative upon the field (unless she is able to represent herself, of course!), and his behavior there will have more effect on how others view his lady than his knight, who is able to demonstrate his own virtues in combat."  
*-Jan W. Maessen*

"This interaction and the following one are very difficult to answer. In the SCA, you do what your knight tells you to do. In medieval literature, you do what your lady tells you to do. If they are contradictory, you do what your knight says to do and understand that your lady may reasonably never speak to you again. Then you get to have unrequited love, which is very noble and honorable."  
*-Cynthia Virtue*

"Your honor lies in the hands of your consort. Duty is what is owed to your knight. You may dishonor yourself upon the field, and may be corrected by your knight, but it is to your consort that you must answer."  
*-Sten Jensen*

JOSELYN: "I believe they are the same, for any action I take which dishonors my consort would undoubtedly dishonor my knight as well. I don't think the difference of fighting for a knight's honor or a consort's honor should change anything in a squire's behavior on or off the field."

COLIN "Actually, I don't completely agree. When you fight in a tournament, you are specifically fighting for the honor of your consort, not for your knight. While I may gain some praise or reflected glory from a good showing by my squire, it is not my honor that you carry with you on the field. If you cheat, or lose your temper, or otherwise besmirch your honor (and that of your consort), I will feel badly and may be regarded as a poor teacher—but I doubt that my own honor would be affected (unless, of course, I had *laught* you to cheat!). •

"If the squire does something dishonorable, then both his lady and his knight suffer and must bear some part of the shame. This is an obvious relationship between the two. In essence, both the lady and the knight - because they have accepted those positions! - are responsible for setting standards and providing models for the squire."

-Sheryl A. Knowles

"In both cases, all you do on the field reflects not only on you, but onto your knight and your lady. Courtesy and chivalry reflect well on all three of you, though only you do the physical action thereof. Discourtesy and dishonorable conduct reflect badly on all three of you — and perhaps more on your knight (who should've taught you better) and your lady (whom you shame by behaving badly) than on yourself. You should remember that not only your personal honor is tested on the field, but also those of your knight and lady — this shouldn't be thought of as an undue burden, since if/when knighthood is conferred on you, as a knight you will bear the honor for your lady, the entire order of chivalry, the king who knighted you, the king to whom you are presently in fealty, and through that king, the entire realm."

-Leigh Ann Hussey

"I hope that my squire will remember that the belt he wears is rather like a favor. It identifies him with me and thus his actions reflect upon me as well as upon his consort."

-Thomas G. Moore

**5. As a squire, you have been given two contradictory sets of orders, one from your knight and one from your lady. Assuming that the two orders are mutually exclusive, what should you do?**

"As a knight, I would ask why one would take orders from one's lady. If both sides are giving orders, you have let some bad situation go on too long. Given that the orders are mutually exclusive, you must judge for yourself which path will be less injurious to honor and respect."

-John Schmidt

"This is a difficult position to be in. At one time or another I believe that everyone has faced similar circumstances in their lives. You should first discuss your predicament with both your lady and your knight, surely one of them will be understanding and willing to compromise. If neither is willing to do so, I believe that you must bow to the wishes of your lady. Because above all others you must protect the honor of your lady. The immediate consequences may be dire for you for making this choice, but it is just another one of the trials one must endure when striving for perfection. You must take it on faith that if you can stand up to the challenge, in time your efforts will be recognized and you will be commended for your devotion."

-Ron Magin

"Here we first see the problem of careless fealty. Remembering that the bond of love is, in effect, also a bond of fealty. You must make sure your knight and your lady are aware of

your actions, and take the one which is most reasonable; in general, a squire will want to make it clear to his knight that certain duties to his lady must come first, for the bond of love is tighter than the bond of fealty; the two are as one." *-Jan W. Maessen*

"First, talk to both of them (if there is time permitted) to find out the reason behind what they are asking. If there is no time, I would obey the request of my knight. Why? My knight's responsibility is to tutor me in the chivalric codes, I would think that an order given by my knight would probably relate in that manner. Also there is the question of verbal versus nonverbal agreements of that between Knight and Squire and Squire and Lady/Lord. I feel a verbal oath has more precedence over nonverbal. I hope, that should this ever arise, that there will be time for both parties to explain their actions and work out a reasonable solution. I should not say completely that a verbal oath takes precedence, basically if it's a life or death issue, that takes precedence." *-Julie Gavello*

"The matter will always be a difficult one to decide and will depend on the individual squire, what in their hearts is the true course of action and which personal relationship is more important. The only other factor that I can see plays on this situation is that the honor of the knight is supposed to be the one to whom they have sworn fealty. If the Knight's instructions are because otherwise would be to break his fealty, then the squire has a duty to in turn not break his fealty with his Knight. If however the squire's lady has similar fealty then once again the situation is entirely variable." *-David Law*

JOSSelyn: "First of all, the society as I participate in it does not include being given 'exclusive orders'. It is a voluntary relationship to be a squire, and while there is an amount of role-playing I would do as a squire for the sake of authenticity, I would never think that Sir Colin would ever give me such an 'order', especially off the field, which he would not allow me to talk to him about if it came into conflict with something else. Comments, Colin? I expect orders to come on the field from Colin, and follow them implicitly. My consort would not, I hope, ask me to do anything that has to do with my duties as a squire, much less conflict with them."

COLIN: "Keegan came up with some good examples: Your knight tells you to fight with Duke Nazgul's warband, but your consort can't stand him and wants you to fight with Sir Sunlight. Or your knight tells you to join him on the field for some practice on Sunday, but your consort tells you to wash the dishes. Etc. For me this is simple—obey your consort—you've met my Lady, haven't you? Seriously, I think you have to obey your Lady's desires in almost all such cases. A knight will lose honor faster by being untrue to his Lady than by missing practice [Editor—Remember Yvain?]. For lady squires, however, it is somewhat more complex; the idea of your consort giving you 'orders' is somewhat repugnant to modern sensibilities (it smacks of the old-fashioned notions that men could order women around)." ♦

"We know that modern psychological insight advises that, in such circumstances, the squire should explain the contradictions to both his knight and his lady, and hope that some compromise can be worked out between them. Otherwise, it seems to me, the squire must choose to give up one or the other relationship." *-Sheryl A. Knowles*

"You should listen to both very carefully and weigh the reasons behind each. Then decide what you think is best, be it to choose one or neither; for though you can increase or decrease their honor, each person's honor remains their own. If they vehemently disagree with your actions, they can disavow your choice by severing the ties that bind you to them. It is nigh impossible to distance yourself from your own actions." *-Ann M. Price*

"A squire owes to their knight fealty, but is bound by their consort by something more akin to homage. Practically, the squire in question should do all in his power to reconcile

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the contradiction in orders. As a wise knight will always defer to a squire's consort, I trust that the situation will never arise."  
-Sten Jensen

"I expect my squire to put the mundane bond he has with his consort before his squire's fealty. I would be disappointed if he did not."  
-Thomas G. Moore

"You love might be to your Lady, but your duty is to your knight."  
-James Elliot

"Obey your Lady, at all times. If your knight is honorable he will accept that."  
-Morgan Broman

**Question #6: In order to "guard a knight's back" would it be better to preserve life or honor? Why?**

JOSELYN: "Honor! I participate in these battles solely for the honor and chivalry, not for the victory. We can always get resurrected, or participate in the next battle. Honor is neither 'usable' nor 'expendable', and I don't think does it only depend upon staying alive in a battle."

COLIN: "In an SCA context, honor is clearly the only choice, because it alone is deathless. As you say, we can always get resurrected, or wait for the next battle. In a medieval context, life is clearly the winner because you only get one. Some of the greatest tales of glory are derived from desperate stands to guard one's liege-lord." ♦

"In the framework of the SCA it is always better to preserve honor. When 'loss of life' is nothing more than losing a game the spirit in which the game is played is always far more important. In a real situation I can only provide conjecture at how I would react. My initial guess however is that I would preserve life of my Knight, even if the expense were my honor. This however is purely personal and I would not try to influence another to my viewpoint, or against it."  
-David Lou

"In SCA terms, I would try to preserve honor. I don't think a knight would appreciate a squire doing something dishonorable. Since we are not talking actual battles where life/death is an issue, honor is part of what the knight is trying to teach the squire. If were an actual battle, preservation of life is of course the natural choice. Also this can damage your reputation. Once a person is known as being dishonorable, they are more apt to be questioned and watched. Recovering that reputation will be very difficult."  
-Julie Cavello

"In the current days it seems obvious to me that a squire's first duty is to preserve honor because that does most reflect the virtues his knight is teaching him. But in the past, when the reality was life or death? There are those for whom death is preferable to dishonor - and I was raised in such a culture - but one never truly knows how it is for himself until one comes right down to it. I have no idea whether historically the survival instinct usually prevailed over the nobler ideals."  
-Sheryl A. Knowles

"Situation dependent. 'Death before dishonor'. As a squire I would rather be killed in battle preserving my knights life than do a dishonorable deed and save us both."  
-Morgan Broman

"It depends on whether one takes the long or the short view, and which is more important. If honor is preserved and life is lost, there can be no further opportunities to magnify honor — one's name lives after one, but there is the chance it may be forgotten. If life is preserved and honor lost, one has the chance to redeem oneself — it's a hard row to hoe, but one may come out the other end *more* honorable and even glorious for having had to fight to prove honor and won that fight."  
-Leigh Ann Hussey

"You should always preserve honor. Because, chivalrically speaking, to have honor is more important than life. Life without honor is hardly life at all. If you have died well, and protected both your knight's and your own honor you will be remembered forever. If you protected your life instead of your honor, not only would you have lost your honor, but it would be an affront to your knight's honor. After that you will never be forgotten (and it won't be in a good light)."

-Ron Magin

"If you mean to 'preserve the life' of the knight, then that in itself defines honor...giving your all to protect him. There are many medieval instances where squires have come to the aid of their knights in tournament (and war)--where it was forbidden for squires to wear armour or participate in combat--and died over the knight's body while protecting him. I have seen this in modern reenactment battles as well, and is certainly was honourable, and well, too cool. If you mean to 'preserve the life' of oneself, then that means to turn your back on your knight and run, which in no way can preserve honor. Why, *Honestas Supra Omnia!*"

-Steve Beck

"I believe a medieval person would have said honor, but these days, one should definitely preserve the life of your knight first, and worry about honor later."

-Cynthia Virtue

"In order to preserve a knight's back, it is always appropriate to preserve the knight's life, for that is the duty with which the squire is charged. I cannot think of a time when a knight would be directly threatened but unaware of it, in which the squire could not honorably engage the foe in combat, and it thus seems to me that it behooves the squire to do so, despite the fact that this may put the squire's life at risk. Indeed, in our modern recreation, where everyone gets to come back again the next day, it is all the more foolish to act dishonorably in battle."

-Jan W. Maessen

"Preserve honor; for it outlasts life. Especially in this game. Again, if you must choose between the two, it is a situation of some extreme."

-John Schmidt

"Honor stands before life. What is life without honor? What is death if your memory lives on in honor? A squire must defend his knight's back, but never in a way that will bring dishonor upon his lord."

-Sten Jensen

**Question #7: A Baron in whose service your knight is sworn makes war against his King. Who should your knight follow? If he follows his Baron, is he in rebellion?**

"I think that a knight should follow the King. When a knight swears an oath of fealty, I believe that they are swearing it to the King as an agent of the kingdom. Kings will come and go but a knight's oath of fealty remains to the kingdom. I view the knight's service to the Baron as just an extension of service to the kingdom. If a knight were to follow his rebellious baron into war against the king, the knight would be making war against the kingdom, and would indeed be in rebellion, an oath breaker."

-Ron Magin

"It is important for you knight to make sure that his duties to Baron and King are well-defined and separable. It should then be clear to whom he should turn. In period it might be customary for someone in your knight's position (who would likely be a Baron of some sort himself) to divide his men among the two sides; this may be practical, though not necessarily pleasant, for the knight and his squires, since it can fulfill conflicting oaths of fealty. Avoidance is the best answer."

-Jan W. Maessen

"As a knight I am sworn to my king so the baron would not get my support. However, wars do occur in which the king joins one army or the other—generally it is assumed that

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the king so does for his enjoyment and not because he specifically supports one army's claim over the others'. I suppose that this assumption may not always be correct in which case the army the king fought against might be considered to be in rebellion."

-Thomas G. Moore

"Subinfuedation is not a period practice, I believe. You are sworn to the knight, and need not make decisions other than to follow him. Has the knight sworn to the King? If the oaths are proper, they will have precedence built in. Within the SCA, you should hope for the King, for only he may knight you (how pragmatic!)."

-John Schmid

"If a knight is sworn to his baron and can, in good conscience, follow his baron, he should do so; but he is, in my opinion, in rebellion against his king. If he cannot in good conscience follow his baron, he must ask and receive release from his oath or accept being forsworn. He is, in the latter case, in rebellion against his baron."

-Sheryl A. Knowles

"He should follow his King, otherwise he is in rebellion. It is by the King's grace that he is made a Knight and it is by the King's grace that he fights as a Knight. If a Knight's own morals indicate he must fight for his Baron, then this he must do, but not as a Knight."

-David Low

JOSELYN: "To make war on one's king is rebellion. However, whether or not this is rebellion, as a squire I have no place telling my knight who to fight for, or even suggesting, unless he specifically asks for my opinion, which in reality the medieval knight would never have done."

COLIN: "This question is so hypothetical it cannot have an answer. The principal factor would be the 'rightness' of the cause for war. Barons made war against their kings quite frequently in the Middle Ages but never in the SCA (that I know of). A close parallel might be the 'great fealty debate' a few years back surrounding the accession of a member of the Western chivalry." ♦

"If a knight is in fealty to the baron and not to the king, you follow the baron. If your knight is in fealty to the king through the baron, you follow the king (That is the classical thought). The reality is: he who has the mostest, closest, is the boss."

-James Elliot

"As a knight you are usually sworn to the Crown, NOT the King/Queen. The Crown represents the whole Kingdom, not only the person. If the King/Queen are wrong then it is the obligation of the sworn knight to help them see what is right."

-Morgan Broman

"If a baron would lead his knight against their king, it is the knight's first duty to protest in the face of the baron. The fealty that binds a knight to follow a baron also lays the duty and right upon the knight to have his say with his lord. The baron must then provide reason for why he would violate his fealty to the king [Editor: He might well claim that the king had broken fealty with him] If the argument is sound, the knight should follow the baron—the man to whom he is sworn. If he finds little merit in the argument, or if he simply disagrees, the knight must argue his case until the baron will hear him no more, and then the knight must follow his lord, trusting that the man to whom he is sworn has the better judgment. No fault can be found in this action. If the baron offers no reason for his action other than the willful disregard of his fealty to the king, the knight should feel no obligation to fulfill his vows to the baron, for the baron holds the knight only through the fealty through which he himself is tied to the king. If the baron willfully disregards his own ties to the king, he destroys as well the ties that bind him to the knight."

-Sten Jensen

"Next I put this question—The King of Spain makes war against a baron of his kingdom who is subject to the King on account of his land and barony; and the baron orders his



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men to help him make war on the King. Are they bound to help him, or not?

"And in the first place it would appear that they are, and that in so doing they are in no wise set themselves against the King. And for this reason: although the baron is the King's man, the baron's men are no means so. For we reason from law that to the effect that he who is my man's man is not mine. And—a stronger argument—it is certain that when a man does homage to his lord he swears and promises to be with him against any other person, and if a man does homage to a baron he makes no exception of the King. So for what reason should he not aid his lord against the King? Further, according to natural reason a poor man has a much right to avail himself to the help of his own as a rich man has, for every man is a lord of his own. Why, then, should the baron not have the help of his own men against the King, just as the King has the help of his men against the baron?

"But, although several other arguments might well be brought forward, and although the doctors and masters also hold this opinion, yet for my own part I should never dare to sustain it, for in truth it is not founded in law, and the opposite is founded in law, and is the true opinion. It is certain that the baron, so soon as he has arms against the King, falls into the offense of lesse-majesty. Similarly, it must be confessed that the King is prince of his Kingdom, and that all of his Kingdom who go against him commit an offense. Taking this fact into account, so soon as the men of this baron see that he is going against his lord, they can well understand that he is forsworn, and therefore they are not bound to aid him to be forsworn, or to live in such sin. As a decree says, aid is not good when one helps another man to commit sin.

"Examine the truth of the argument which says that the vassal's man has sworn to help him against all persons, and if he does not thus help him he is forsworn. I declare to you that it is void; for the oath is to be understood in the sense of aid given without blame incurred by him who takes the oath, for no oath should bind a man to do unjust or felon things, as it said in a decretal. And all I say of the King I say, too, of any other who may be a prince in his country, as is Monsignor of Foix in his land of Bearn in which he is Emperor, for he holds it only of God and the sword. Wherefore, if he made war in the land of Bearn on a baron of that land, the baron's men would not be bound to aid their lord against Monsignor de Foix."

*-Honoret Bonet*

*The Tree of Battles, 1387 Translated 1949 by G.W. Coopland*

**Question #8: As a squire, you are sent on an errand for your knight that you believe breaks his fealty with his King. What should you do?**

"The knight should follow the Baron, for it is the Baron to whom he is sworn, and the Baron would be in rebellion, but not the knights. Since the King is the one that gives land and fealty to the Baron, and the Baron gives land and fealty to his knights, the knights' positions are secure unless the Baron loses. Similarly, the knights have no direct fealty or obligation to the King, as the Baron bears that for them, although in times of peace, the knights may act as vassals of the King with no conflict.

"However, most SCA knights swear to the king, so an SCA knight should follow the king, that being the direct fealty-line."

*-Cynthia Virtue*

"Obey your knight, but ask him to explain. How are you to judge his fealty if it is not your own? Are you not the master's servant?"

*-John Schmidt*

"I trust that if I do something that my squire thinks is a breach of my oath, etiquette, or honor, that he will question my actions, privately, that I may explain myself to him."

*-Thomas G. Moore*

"Explain your concerns to your knight if you think he is breaking his oath; you must

insure that your knight does not dishonor himself. However, your first duty is to him, and if he chooses the dishonorable course you are bound to follow it if you cannot dissuade him.”  
-Jan W. Maessen

“I would explain to my knight why I thought it would be a breach of fealty. Then have him explain why it wasn’t. If my knight agreed that the errand would indeed be a breach of fealty, and still asked me to carry it out, I would ask to be released of my own oath, return my squire’s belt, etc., as difficult as I believe this would be. I believe that to carry out the errand would be a breach of my oath of fealty and trust to my knight, a breach of his oath of fealty to the kingdom, and it would bring dishonor to us both. By severing myself from my knight in this way, perhaps he would reconsider his desire for the errand to be carried out, thereby preserving as much of our honor as possible.”  
-Ron Magin

“Tell him. Argue with him and listen to his reason. If it has any merit, even if you disagree, trust to his judgment. If there is no doubt that your knight is in violation of his fealty, and he offers no reason for it, decline to perform his errand and return to him his belt.”  
-Sten Jensen

“Talk to your Knight about your concerns. If he satisfactorily explains that the errand does not break fealty with his King then do it. If not the squire should refuse to do the errand and try to think of some alternative way of dealing with the particular situation that does not break fealty with the King. If the Knight threatens to take back the squire’s belt and no longer take him as a squire, then this is not the example of honor that the squire should want to live up to in any case. If the cause is noble, despite breaking fealty with the King, the Knight should be reminded that the ends do not justify the means. If the Knight will not give satisfactory explanation then the squire must refuse to do the errand, on the grounds it appears to them to break the Knight’s fealty to his King.”  
-David Low

“Discuss it with your knight. If you can’t talk to your knight about issues such as this then you shouldn’t be his squire. Part of a knight’s duty is to instruct the squire in fealty and its obligations.”  
-James Elliot

“If the squire believes his knight is breaking fealty it is, in my opinion, his duty to ask his knight if this is so and to seek instruction of his knight as to why this would be. After that, the squire is essentially in the position described in #7. From this it must be clear that I believe each is responsible for his own actions and for his own decisions. No man should accept unquestioning an order that imperils his soul.”  
-Sheryl A. Knowles

“Talk to the knight... Since the knight is supposed to be a teacher then he should be able to explain to you why this isn’t breaking with his fealty or if it is, why he’s doing it. At that time, based upon his answer, the squire should tell the knight whether or not he’s going to go through with this or not. Although the squire is responsible to his knight, in the end a squire if he becomes a knight must be responsible to himself and do the right thing.”  
-Julie Gavello

“It depends on if the knight is also sworn in service to the king. I assume he is, if not directly, then through his fealty to the baron. That being given, then, if the baron makes war on the king, he is in rebellion, and if the knight follows him, the knight is also. I make no value judgments on this, as to whether the rebellion is bad or good, but the question of whether or not the knight is also in rebellion is clearly answered.

“As for who should the knight follow? That’s a much harder call. The modern American, drilled since childhood in the lore of the Revolution, might be inclined to say, ‘The knight should follow the one who’s not despotic and under whom life will be improved.’ But how would the medieval European answer? Well, how did the knights in fealty to the

barons at Runnymede answer? I don't, unfortunately, know, but I expect it can be looked up... I'd lay odds that the answers were mixed, that some knights broke fealty with Richard, and others broke fealty with their barons. I also suspect that in all such cases knights ended up following whoever they thought it might be expedient for them to follow — history shows us there were plenty of real life instances of wars declared on kings by men who thought those kings should be removed, or who thought they were rightly the true king.”

*-Leigh Ann Hussey*

JOSSLYN: “Same as the above. In the SCA, if I felt Colin asked me to provide a service which endangered his fealty oaths, I'd ask him about it. He would know. In a historical perspective, I would never have the stupidity to question my knight's orders in the first place.”

COLIN: “How is this possible? What sort of ‘errand’ would violate the fealty oath? (...To strike and to spare, to come and to go, to do and to let be, in such matters as concern this Kingdom...) Maybe I could have you assist me in betraying the West to Caid, say, or spread some falsehood that undermines the Crown. Your choices will depend upon the specifics of the fealty oath, if any, sworn between yourself and your knight. Which reminds me...” ♦

### **Question #9: The virtue of “faith” was an important element of medieval chivalry. Is there an equivalent in modern re-enactment societies?**

Faith is a state of mind, irrespective of what it is that faith is being maintained in. One can be of no religious alignment but still have faith in the moralistic instructions of a given religion. Without being particularly religious I still have ‘faith’ in the equality of all things and the causality of all things. I have faith in human decency. Without this faith I might be overwhelmed by what decadence and wrong doing I do see, and might see no reason to resist it and maintain my own humanity. I am fortunate that without being particularly religious to any particular ‘faith’ I have met people who were truly inspirational and who truly filled me with joy to have met them and to have known and seen things that let me realize the potential of people to give and to build great things as well as to take and destroy.”

*-David Low*

“Some would say that our faith is embodied in the favors we wear onto the field. Others would say that our faith is the dream we strive to be a part of. For my part, my consort and the favor she has given to me are symbols of faith. Faith that honor, courtesy, and trust will be demonstrated by both parties and that, if our faith in each other is sufficient, either victory or defeat will be accepted graciously.”

*-Thomas G. Moore*

“The closest parallel to faith in a secular recreation is a respect for the faiths of others. A good squire or knight should honor and respect the faiths of others, and in return should be able to expect that others will honor and respect his (or that fact that he does not have one).”

*-Jan W. Maessen*

“Yes. Faithfulness to the game, to honor, and to each other is what keeps the re-enactment groups from becoming *All-Time Pro wrestling*, although we tread close in some respects.”

*-John Schmidt*

“How about faith in the Society itself? It could be argued that the leap of faith necessary to make this game seriously is something like the leap of faith necessary for a belief in God, or for a medieval knight's belief in chivalry.”

*-Sten Jensen*

“By ‘faith’ do you mean ‘God on the side of the right’? If so, I would say generally ‘no’. We all are aware of how religion has been relegated to the intensely private sphere in

modern culture. But I would venture to guess that there is still a faith that many knights take into combat, something that might read a little like this: 'If I have trained my best and if I am true to my honor and I trust the same to be true of my noble opponent, then the best man will win - and there will be no shame to he who loses or he who wins.'

-Sheryl A. Knowles

"Though faith in a medieval context pretty much refers to religious faith, I would hazard the idea that, yes, there is an equivalent in the modern era. I would say that it is faith that each individual puts into his own level of participation in his reenactment society. Faith, in that the individual hopes and cares for his group, wishes it to continue, and actively supports and takes part in its development. Faith, in that he, and others, can benefit from what is given. Faith, in that more general sense of faith in 'mankind' and in the good things that life has to offer. Most of us became a part of a reenactment society because we found in them something different that other organizations did not offer, something that was also lacking in the modern world...coalescence of our dreams. A society that puts honor and camaraderie ahead of material gain, and one that requires faith and participation to survive."

-Steve Beck

JOSSELYN "To me, having 'faith' in the chivalry and honor of those I respect is important. If the knights I wish to become a peer to don't act in good stead, why would I wish to be knighted in the first place?"

COLIN: "Faith in the concept of honor is about the closest parallel I can think of to the Medieval idea of faith. It serves some of the same purposes—taming the innate aggressiveness and competitive natures of men and turning them towards a more noble purpose. If you have no such faith, you will eventually become 'excommunicated' by the Society. I find your answer intriguing hints at parallels to the Crusader's dream of taking his place amongst the saints in Heaven. Are all of us knights like unto saints, then?" [ed. Perhaps the Nine Worthies is a better parallel?] ♦

"Possibly, depending on how seriously (or not) one might take the question. Certainly the concept of "keeping faith with others" is as active in modern re-enactment societies as it was then. As for religious faith, I think it's possible that some people out there regard the eventual awarding of their peerage as a matter of faith. As with the "promise of eternal reward" in medieval (and modern!) Christianity, such people keep plugging on in what they deem right action, and trust that their reward will eventually come. Similarly, there are those who believe, like the Goliards, that the reward is beyond their control or influence, and that the only thing to do is to eat, drink, sing and be merry and not worry about it. (Quick, stop me before I formulate a whole sectarian theory of award-religions!)

More seriously.. Other re-enactment societies may be out of that slightly frivolous picture entirely, if they don't give awards. This leaves the principle of faith to be exercised (as it is likely also exercised in the SCA) in the form of one's private philosophies -some of which don't really allow for "faith" per se. So for the purely agnostic (or pagan, or atheist, or whatever) knight, some of the energy of faith can be directed through the fealty oath; certainly the trust and promise of the fealty relationship is analogous with that of faith."

-Leigh Ann Hussey

"I think this is more of an individual issue. I believe religion is still part of that, it's just that there are quite a few different beliefs. Although, as far as I can tell it's not as strong as other virtues are now."

-Julie Gavello

*I would say that "faith" is indeed a modern virtue, although it is no longer rooted in Catholicism. In modern re-enactment societies, like the SCA, I would argue that faith to the ideals of chivalry has replaced the religious element that was medieval, and though one can argue whether or not*

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*this is good I think that few will dispute that devotion to the chivalric virtues is a matter of faith with those who would be knights. It is hoped that this will carry over into all facets of the individual's life, and that we will all be better people for the experience.*

"To the medieval knight, being Christian was almost as important as knowing what to do with a sword. Despite this view, there are many instances where the valor of a Saracen opponent was described in great detail, for example, the *Orlando Furioso*, in which both male and female Saracen (or Jewish) knights' virtues were extolled at length. Usually their only flaw was in not accepting Christ, and sometimes at the end of the epic, they convert for a "happy" ending.

"In order to translate this view to the modern, we have to decide what role Christianity played in a knight's life, and see if there is an analog. My guess is that it helped (along with the chivalric ideals) to give guidelines to the knight's life; provided an ethical framework. On the darker side, Christianity as practiced at the time was very hierarchical, and thus it would continually assure the nobles that they were in their high places by the action of God, and the poor should stay poor because they would be rewarded in the next life; in other words, it maintained an unequal status quo.

"A modern person who was not extremely religious might find that a strong sense of ethics fills the role of such a religion quite well; other more religious persons might find that modern Christianity serves them as well as medieval Christianity served the knights. Those who know more about Jewish or Islamic religions could fill this out with alternate perspectives better than I could."  
-*Cynthia Virtue*

Faith was a commitment to an unseen, inexplicable ideal. Religion can still be as compelling, depending upon the individual. For many, your faith goes to the ideal of chivalry, and the belief that others share these ideals."  
-*James Elliot*

"Not in the SCA, where religion is taken out of the loop."  
-*Morgan Broman*

### **Question #10. What is the most common thing that blocks learning; in fighting or in anything else?**

"Impatience."  
-*Leigh Ann Hussey*  
"Disregard and a lack of willingness to teach and learn."  
-*Morgan Broman*

"Lack of humility. When we think we are the big fish in the little pond forget that there is always a bigger pond in which we are an insignificant speck then we are not ready to continue learning."  
-*David Low*

"Communications. A teacher must find the right way to explain things. A wise old knight once told me that the secret of training was to say the same thing in different ways until you found the one that the trainee understood."  
-*Sten Jensen*

"The most common block to learning is paradoxically lack of desire, or lack of inspiration. Actually, the most common block to learning is expectations—you listen to them rather than to the advice—but the worst is lack of inspiration."  
-*John Schmitt*

"In my opinion learning is most often blocked by one of two things: distrust of oneself or self-importance. In the first, one tends to sabotage oneself; in the second, one tends to gloss over ones faults. Which is which depends on the person."  
-*Sheryl Knowles*

"Frustration and equipment. If you run into a mental block (or physical block), it can be rather frustrating working past that. Also not having the right equipment or teachers can

also hinder that. Sometimes you just need one person to explain something in just the right way. It doesn't reflect badly on other teachers... It's simply a communication issue."

-Julie Gavello

*Editor: The mental barriers that you will encounter while training yourself to fight are the very things that will contribute most to your growth—by unswervingly, meeting these frustrations with an evolving ability to remain calm, in the end defeating the barriers, you will find measurable improvement and growth. It is a magical experience that if you dedicate yourself enough you will see tangible, useful benefits.*

*You are correct about the communications issue, I believe; there are many ways to get something across and not all of them will work for everyone else. However, a better teacher will know more of the techniques and thus be more effective.*

*I think the largest block to learning is saying, "I know." As soon as you do that, you kill any further acceptance for new ideas, and thus become static. Learning has stopped.*

*"An improper attitude. Yes, a physical aptitude is always necessary in SOME things, and especially in fighting, but if your head and heart and not 'into' it, then you have failed. In learning, when a student says 'I can't,' they are right. He has defeated himself. If he says 'I can!' then the door for learning is opened."*

-Steve Beck

*"Failure to understand exactly what is being taught and the inability or unwillingness to open oneself to new ideas or techniques. If you don't listen exactly to what is said (or shown) with an open mind, and then try to duplicate it, you will have a difficult time learning anything. If you hold onto your preconceived notions of how a thing should be done, or answer every instruction with 'yes, but...' you will fail to understand the true nature of the thing you are trying to master."*

-Ron Magin

*"If someone is clearly more skilled than you are, the thing that most blocks learning is questioning or arguing with the teacher. A little more medievalism in this aspect would facilitate much learning."*

-Cynthia Virtue

*"Most often learning seems to be blocked by frustration, or by falling into a routine. For this reason, it is often important for the knight to allow his squires to train with and learn from others, and not simply from himself and his household. By experiencing new situations, squires can learn new techniques in different ways, and hopefully overcome their frustrations by a change of pace."*

-Jan W. Maessen

*"The belief that you are already in possession of superior knowledge. Or, a feeling of superiority to the person who is trying to teach you something. Keep an open mind; anyone can learn anything from anybody."*

-James Elliot

*"Pride is what I believe to be the greatest impediment to learning. An over-inflated self-assessment is very easy to fall victim to and it clouds the perception and reason that learning depends on."*

-Thomas G. Moore

### **Question #11: What is glory? How is it different from honor?**

*"Glory is to be shared by others, honor is to be saved for one's self."*

-James Elliot

*"Glory equals Personal honor for a Group ? Sometimes Glory and Honor go hand in hand, sometimes glory is equaled to victory, and then winning is more important than Honor. Victory is glory, but victory is not always honorable. I have lost tournaments rather than compromising my honor. Glory is fleeting, but honor stays with you for always."*

-Morgan Broman

"Glory is received from others. Honor is given to others, and one can often acquire glory as a result of honorable actions. One cannot just go out and win some glory, though one would like to; one can be honorable any time and anywhere. DO NOT mistake glory for a virtue!!"  
-Jan W. Maessen

"Glory is public acclaim. Honor is carried inside oneself, knowing - sometimes unconsciously - that one has done and will do what is right and noble. Nonetheless, the phrase 'doing him honor' blurs the two and seems to imply a little of both. My interpretation is that when one 'does honor' to someone else it is an internal recognition of that other's worth which impels one to accord that other special treatment which - if the world is looking - is akin to public acclamation. But it can happen just as easily between two with no one else around."  
-Sheryl A. Knowles

"Glory is a thing others bestow upon you. Honor is a thing that only you can develop within yourself. If you receive an award for something, it is only an 'honor to receive it' if you are truly grateful for the reward, and I believe that you must feel somewhat undeserving of the award (however people do tell me that I'm a bit of a head-case!). If you feel that you deserved the award, it is just glorification for something you have done."  
-Ron Magin

"Glory is the fame given to you from the outside, recognition from others, and the pageantry that goes with it. Honor is the keeping of your word, and the consistency of your actions, and is with you always, good and bad. Squires and knights burn "chiv points" from honor, not glory. Glory can be bought, and is fleeting—honor can only be proven, and stands through time. Sir Steen has more honor than glory, but to name someone who is more glory than honor would be to insult them."  
-John Schmidt

"Glory is grand deeds performed and reputation gained. Honor is the truth of the matter. Glory is the show that will inspire, and honor is what ensures that it is not hollow."  
-Sten Jensen

"Glory is the praise you get from people who acknowledge your feats in battle or whatever. Honor is more of a personal issue. Glory feels to me like a lot of loud noise where Honor is more quiet and personal."  
-Julie Gavello

*Editor: I am also still thinking about the distinction—it is not yet clear to me what the differences are, but you are right that glory is "loud" and honor more quiet. I think Integrity is the proper word for personal honor, though, and the word "honor" describes the thing that people give to you when they perceive that you are virtuous. Renown is the measure of honor or dishonor, and I have said that it is the coin of the tourneyer—you earn honor on the field—and that glory is the coin earned in war. But that still does not describe the differences.*

"Honoring someone is really only recognizing the inherent quality of a person; the actual honorableness was there already, it's just that people are taking note of it. The person still would be honorable even if no one ever took notice of it.

"Glory is fame acquired by great deeds; Public honor is fame acquired by character. They both fade, and their existence does not change whether the person honored is *really* a person of honor or not. It must be judged only for oneself; 'Am I honorable or not?' is a question each of us can only answer for ourselves.

"There are cases where someone could win glory due to acting dishonorably, and this may be known to others than the person in question, or maybe only known to that person. For example, a knight of the East once won the Crown Tournament, and gained much glory. After his reign was over, he asked to give back his knighthood, as he had fought in Crown against the wishes of his lady, and had thus dishonored his belt. I be-

lieve he was persuaded to retain his knighthood and repair his honor in other ways; certainly most people who know this man consider him very honorable today—perhaps made more honorable by his admission of his error.

“Even more confusing is an example from literature where someone attempts to act honorably and is dishonored for it. Ultimately he is recognized as being honorable: Lancelot. There is a part of this story where Lancelot is trying to reach his lady, who has been captured by some evil knight (yes, I think knights could be evil and still be knights...I’ll check this detail tonight when I get to my books). In trying to reach her, he happens upon a person driving a cart, and is offered a ride. He is dog-tired due to his long search, and accepts. This seems like a pretty innocent act—I only know that this is important due to my medieval lit professor. The cart he accepted a ride in was the sort of cart that is used to take condemned prisoners to the gallows. It is the sort of conveyance that no respectable person would even get near, much less ride in. Although he was in pursuit of an honorable cause (rescuing his lady) he was greatly sullied by riding in this cart, and characters throughout the rest of the story keep bringing this incident up to reinforce that he has been dishonored in the service of his lady, and thus she is dishonored. Eventually he gains honor by doing a bunch of things that we would consider stupid, like crossing a river on the sharp edge of a giant sword on his hands and knees without his gauntlets on.”

-Cynthia Virtue

JOSELYN: “Glory is the praise and compliment one receives from acting out of honor.”

COLIN: “Honor is a virtue, and a basic requirement for all those of knightly station (including squires). Glory comes as a result of great deeds, and /or the diligent maintenance of honor in the face of adversity. Your answer is similar to mine, in that we both seem to see glory as the result of an action; whereas honor is a requirement for the action to take place. It is perhaps possible to have honor without glory, but not glory without honor. For example, I believe that we covered ourselves with glory at the West-Caid war when we charged the ravine, because we fought well and died when our time came; had we barged through the line of pikes, ignored a few blows, and won the battle, we would have obtained no glory at all, because we would not have acted honorably. Same for your ‘glorious deeds’ in the castle battle—a futile effort, but mighty glorious because of it!” ♦

Editor: *Are you sure that you cannot have glory without honor? In an ideal world, it would be so. However—suppose a knight or esquire was able to cheat without being caught and thus achieve some tangible fame? Would he not gain glory, renown and the rest so long as no one discovered the misdeed? I think perhaps the same can be said for a little of the gray areas in Crown Journey—and perhaps this is a flaw in the system: Suppose a knight or squire cheats, just a little, during the list, and ergo becomes King. There is glory in that, although some people may well remark upon it. Later, upon stepping down, they are accorded a bright coronet to commemorate their service to kingdom and populace. The coronet itself is “chivalric tender” a piece of the bright coin of renown that we all strive for. It can be taken anywhere in the known world, and will gain a certain amount of stature (as will a belt). Now, hasn’t a certain amount of glory been stolen, even though integrity and personal honor have been breached? I think to some degree renown is the check on the system, but it only works when the fault is consistent or grievous. How should this be addressed?*

“I define glory as public recognition of achievement: the fighter who wins a tournament is rewarded for his victory afterwards. Honor describes a personal code of ethics and a way of approaching life. The SCA teaches that honor is its own reward and that is can be satisfying with or without glory. Indeed honor is important enough to us in the SCA that honorable behavior is frequently rewarded.”

-Thomas G. Moore

“To me glory is more the way others see you and honor is the way you see yourself. Honor is more a moralistic thing whereas glory is more a popular thing. To be without honor is to know far greater poverty than to be without glory. Perhaps it could be said that glory is being liked by others while honor is being loved.”

-David Low



"Glory is conferred from outside; it is more or less equivalent to good repute, though perhaps more extreme. The bards of old time (and to an extent, those of the current middle ages) could confer glory, by insuring that a hero's name entered a culture's lore through song or tale.

"Honor is a quality that can only be fostered from inside. One can be honorable without being glorious — it is unlikely that one can be glorious if one is known to be dishonorable. Additionally, I don't think honor can be externally enforced; honorable behavior, perhaps, but one's personal sense of honor should be the real prompter of honorable behavior.

"Beowulf, Roland, Arthur, William Marshall, were made glorious, but there were undoubtedly honorable men and women who never made it into the tales; their deeds were surely equal in worth. Glory is gold; honor is iron."  
*-Leigh Ann Hussey*

**Question #12. Within the SCA, how long does, or should, it take to develop the skills and grace required for knighthood? What are these skills?**

"It should take as long as it takes. The West has an interesting outlook on becoming a knight...you are ready when you are ready. I've seen it take as long as 8 years and as little as 3. Some people do not have the 'natural' ability for SCA fighting and have to develop it, others take to it immediately. Some do not understand to what degree honor is essential to the SCA, while others live and breath the concept. It is the proper mix of all ingredients that make the stew, and how long it cooks before it is ready. And of course, some are prepackaged."  
*-Steve Beck*

"The length of time is determined upon each individual person. Not everyone learns everything quickly. There are several things that I feel a Knight should have. Strong/above average fighting abilities, honorable, comports him/herself well, a leader, one who listens and considers thoughts and opinions.

"An interest in arts would probably be a good thing because as a peer, he must respect other peers. If a knight doesn't understand what it takes to be a Pelican or Laurel, he might not give as much respect or thought as he should. This doesn't mean to say he should be a laurel or pelican, but at least understand."  
*-Julie Gavello*

"Everyone is different and each person has different experiences. Rather than to state a minimum time I think it is important to judge the readiness of a candidate by his accomplishments. The Order of Chivalry should seek candidates who are proficient fighters and Peers in all other respects."  
*-Thomas G. Moore*

*What are the elements, then, that make someone a Peer? How do you define "proficient fighter?"*

"I believe it takes several years at least to develop the skills for knighthood. It may be comparatively easy for someone to acquire great skill on the field; however, there are certain peculiar traditions and manners of behavior which do not occur outside the SCA, which every knight must be second nature to anyone who desires the rank of knight. I have never seen these skills acquired quickly."  
*-Jan Maessen*

"There is no answer to this question. The path to knighthood for each will be different. Generally, the minimum, to my mind, is two years; the maximum is open-ended and dependent upon the will of the individual."  
*-Sten Jensen*

"My personal opinion is about 5-6 years, though this may vary from 3-14 years. To be a pillar in the Society.

To be considered by others as Honorable, Courteous and Honest.

To be looked too for advice by others.

To be proficient in things other than swinging a stick." *-Morgan Bronan*

"I don't think there is any fixed time limit for these things. I believe it should be possible for someone to come into the SCA already possessing knightly virtues. The natural limitations are going to be getting experienced enough within the arena of SCA combat to become a good enough fighter to adequately defend the King's honor and becoming familiar with the many rules, regulations and customs, written and more importantly unwritten, of the SCA. It could be as little as 6 months and as much as 5 or 10 years."

*-David Low*

"It should take forever, because I believe that one can always learn to be better. As soon as you feel that you are there, and you stop trying to improve yourself, you will have taken a big step backwards. The skills and graces I feel that a knight should possess (in no particular order) are: courtesy and generosity towards others, a strong sense of honor, a willingness to aid others whenever possible, the ability to always tell the truth, faithfulness to your word, martial prowess, courtly manners, bearing (this one is tough to describe—its sort of like an idealized way to present oneself—the ability to show all of your abilities by just standing there.) and most importantly, the desire to strive for perfection in all of the above."

*-Ron Mgin*

"Depends upon the person. I've met people who were knights from day one and others who have tried forever but just couldn't grasp the necessities. Some people talk of 'paying dues', but that is just an easy way of saying to wait, just in case the person in mind isn't all that they appear to be.

"Skills of a knight, in particular order: courage, grace under pressure, simple courtesy, being able to articulate a thought, a modicum of fighting skill, and the ability to live in a glass house."

*-James Elliot*

"It seems to me that every different person has their own pace. If, as a squire, I constantly practice and work with Colin to develop those skills needed to become a knight, then that rank will come when I have achieved those skills. There is no placing a time limit on anyone. Skills I believe I need to have in order to become a knight are chivalry on the field, prowess, an understanding of dance, music, chess, a knowledge of period behavior and action, and courtesy. However, whether or not these things are evenly weighed when considering a candidate for knighthood, I don't know."

*-Valerie R. Price*

Editor: *Indeed they are not equal, and thus are not weighed equally. While each knight and each Monarch have slightly to very different ideas of how the requisite virtues are ranked, generally chivalry, courtesy and prowess rank near the top of everyone's list.*

"I cannot truly answer this. I have been in the SCA for three years and have met a great many wonderful, noble people. But I feel like a baby trying to guess how long it took them to grow that way. All their lives, would be my best guess. Skills: Prowess and Chivalry on the field, a manifest desire to truly recreate some appearances and skills of some aspect of the Middle Ages or Renaissance, Courage to do what one believes is right. Graces: Courtesy, a kind and honest tongue, Reliability, Generosity of spirit."

*-Sheryl A. Knowles*

"Setting a lime limit on character development is an interesting task, as SCA knighthood requires some skills and graces of maturity, some skills of a martial and technical nature, and some graces often argued (dancing, for instance.) However, I have found the longer

the period, the more satisfying the knighting for the candidate. I believe these skills should include mastery of a martial weapons form, and high skill in all the rest of the knightly forms; familiarity with the arts of the SCA, in some form; some record of service beyond fighting, which denotes interest in the organization beyond fame; and honesty, diplomacy, and maturity. The last set can lead to much discussion." -John Schmidt

***What does it mean to be a knight in our modern re-enactment societies?***

"It is fun. To some it is their entire life, to others it is a nice hobby. Many of us have a dream about King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. Others think of themselves as Crusader etc." -Morgan Broinan

"I have tried as much as I can, to tie together the role of "knight" in a modern recreation, and knighthood in the middle ages, since I think they can be approached without wildly differing outlooks. Note, however, that knighthood in the SCA is a significantly higher station—a leadership position—than it was in the middle ages, and may carry rather more responsibility as a result." -Jan W. Maessen

"To be a knight in my modern re-enactment society (The SCA) is a form of recognition. It says that a person has shown the abilities and ideals that are judged 'good and proper' for a knight to possess by the other knights and royalty in the kingdom. It is a verification by your peers that you are traveling down the right path, and that you should continue on. On a more personal level, it means striving for an idealized standard of conduct that is so often missing in our 'mundane' lives, although I suspect that most (if not all) knights within our society exhibit many of the same traits out in the real world." -Ron Magin

Trading martial prowess for costume jewelry; or, being willing to be respected as a role model in an echo of the historical leaders." -John Schmidt

"I view the estate of knighthood as a sacred trust. I have been entrusted by the Crown and by my peers to teach, to study, to lead by example, to offer counsel when needed and to remain an active, concerned member of our society so that the organization can remain healthy and true to its founding intentions." -Thomas G. Moore

"To be a knight is to be recognized as a living example of an ideal, give or take a few of the usual human shortcomings that you are trying to overcome." -James Elliot

"It is a game that should not be taken too seriously; it is an honor that should draw true tears. Tears and laughter at once." -Sten Jensen

"To seek to revive the ideals incumbent with the orders of chivalry created throughout the Middle Ages. The purpose, of providing an elite fighting class for the Kingdoms for use in battles, is rather secondary because re-enacted battles are only for enjoyment and livelihood does not depend on success in them (at least it shouldn't). The ideals are those of providing an example of human excellence, a standard or symbol to raise the spirits of those around them. The ideals are those of courage, strength, as much mental as physical, and respectability." -David Low

"To be a knight ... means to be an active part of the Pageantry of the Current Middle Ages, to accept the accolade of the Chivalry that one is a Peer, and - most importantly in my opinion - to understand and accept the responsibility to be a role model for the rest of ones life in the society." -Sheryl A. Knowles

***At what point does the fealty that is sworn to a modern "king" end? Does it or should it supersede mundane law?***

"This is, above all, a game. Anytime any King tries to supersede a 'mundane' law, I believe releases my fealty oath. The ideals of medieval fealty don't apply because, now the King is not the law. He must (I believe there's something written about this...) abide by the laws governing the State or US. I would also consider my oath of fealty ended when a King orders me 'with malicious intent to hurt someone.'  
-Julie Gavello

"Ah, where does Reality strip away our Recreation? Each person decides for himself how far his fealty goes. At this point in time and culture, Mundane Law supersedes all other law. One may argue the point of 'what to do when confronted with a bad law', but that has, to the best of my knowledge, not yet confronted the Kingdoms and the Society yet. Referring back to #8, no one has the authority to order me against what I accept as Right and Law, and I acknowledge that I accept Mundane Law (with the caveat that I have an *individual* right to confront 'bad laws' in a legally accepted manner.) Within the Society I acknowledge that, when I swear fealty, I have given my liege my permission to order me as he will with the caveat that I have the right within rules and tradition to communicate with him as I feel necessary and the additional caveat that he *will* live up to his end of the oath - amongst other things, to protect me and mine, which means he has to be considerate of my mundane life and responsibilities if he is considering an order that will seriously impinge on them."  
-Sheryl A. Knowles

"Our recreation operates within two sets of laws, those of the society and those of the world at large. We would naturally hold all participants to the laws of the society, and we should just as naturally hold them to mundane law. Fealty does not extend to crime, and I would hate to see it used in such a manner. That is the bond of the organized criminal, not of the virtuous knight."  
-Jan W. Maessen

"Your rights end where my nose begins.' Fealty ends at the bounds of the recreation; I would follow my King into battle at any odds, but would never break someone's legs for him. The re-enactment groups are subsets of society as a whole, and the punitive rules of society supersede the whimsical rules of the re-enactment."  
-John Schmidt

"Where the game of which the fealty is a part is no longer harmless recreation. Fealty sworn to a modern "King" must definitely *not* supersede the 'mundane' laws of a region. The playing of a game, in which fealty may or may not be a part, will always involve some material wealth and personal input, but the price should never exceed what the player is prepared to willingly give, and fealty should never be used to induce someone to give more. Breaking the law is definitely not a price someone should be willing to pay in the name of re-creating the Middle Ages."  
-David Low

"The fealty I offer to my king ends as soon as mundane obligations, prerogatives, or personal well-being have been compromised. It should never supersede mundane laws. Our existence as a subculture depends upon the permissiveness of many mundane laws and I believe it an extreme breach of personal honor to abuse that permissiveness."  
-Thomas G. Moore

"I believe that the oath ends at the boundaries of the society (SCA). It is an oath between the knight and their king (for example) an oath between a salesman and a computer jock. I also believe that it should never supersede the boundaries of modern law. It is even specifically stated in the Organizational Handbook of our society that all 'mundane' laws must still be abided by within the Society (The Society for Creative Anachronism Inc. Organizational Handbook 1993, P. 24 Appendix A, ¶1)."  
-Ron Magin

"It has to begin first. Some kingdoms (and individuals) believe that at each coronation the fealty is renewed, as the previous fealty ended with the Crown's departure (be it theatrical death, etc.). The knights remove their chains (the recognition of fealty) at the 'end' of the previous reign, then return it about their necks upon completion of the new fealty oath. Others believe that it is always existent, that at the coronation it is simply reaffirmed. Both are acceptable interpretations. I have found myself leaning more towards the first, as an individual upon the Throne can so overwhelmingly forsake the Crown, Kingdom, populace and the ideals and honor relevant in a reenactment society that they do not deserve respect nor the honor of fealty. It is a grievous position to end up in; however, one's support for the kingdom and its people never falters. At NO time should fealty supersede 'mundane' law. That goes directly in opposition to the articles of incorporation of the SCA, as well as any standards of morals or ethics." -Steve Beck

"I believe Corpora listed the order of authority as: Federal law, State law, County / Municipality law, and then the SCA laws." -James Elliot

"NEVER! The fealty only carries weight within the context of the game." -Morgan Broman

"Fealty to the crown ends when you leave the kingdom. Fealty does not and should not supersede mundane law. Fealty should not supersede common sense. When you play, lay hard, but when you stop, you stop. The greatest value of the society is not contained within it, but is what we can take from it into our lives. Don't confuse it with life; it is a way we do to enrich our lives." -Sten Jensen

### **QUESTIONS FROM CHRONIQUE #6 CONCERNING CONSORTS AND THE ROLE OF A CONSORT, ANSWERING DISCUSSIONS ON THE MATTER ARISING FROM CHRONIQUE #7**

"I write this as a lady who has been fought for and who has fought in both Coronet and Crown lists.

"I feel foremost that a consort, be they a fighter or not, must strive to show grace and courtesy, but also a certain attention to the arts of the Society [ed. SCA]. When I fight and my lord also fights, we have agreed in advance that whoever ends up in the position of consort should plan to spend the majority of the reign out of armour, so that the virtues of grace and of the arts can be followed full time.

"Having two fighters reign can seriously imbalance the thrones and I feel this should be avoided at all costs. Planning and discussion this in advance has removed stress from my lord & my relationship so we can attempt to support each other on the field more freely (this not always being possible as we sometimes fight at the same time!). -Patty Winter

## **Commentary on authenticity in arts, philosophy, and our modern efforts at Re-enactments**

"I think we should base our crafts (garb, armor, etc.) on history, but our outlook on honor and behavior as revealed in literature, for that was the ideal that most of the medieval knights strove toward. We will fall short, as they did (I'm sure there was lots of dishonorable stuff going on even during the height of the dissemination of the epics), but I think we'll have better results." -Cynthia Virtue

Editor: (Soapbox alert!) *I think you are right—I have always felt that in order to better communicate and understand the ideals and constraints of chivalry if we strive to be as authentic as possible. For me, this communication of the virtues we learn is the most important thing, and authenticity yields credibility in the communication process.*

*Chivalry, being one of the highest ideals to which man has striven, remains that—an ideal. While it is unreachable in our actions, we who are men, it has been achieved in our art, our literature, the expressions of our hearts. And by such manifestation do we know, I think, that chivalry can indeed inspire and create men who are not vainglorious, short-sighted, cruel or selfish; but create men who are good citizens in the classical sense of the word—men who value virtue for its own sake, men who would find comfort in the ideal world of philosophers and poets, and yet who are practical enough to meld these ideals into their actions, into their heritage, and bring forth something that is truly great. This I think we can do.*



The Questions in *Chronique* are designed to provoke thought and thus, hopefully, to increase the amount of time spent considering chivalric issues. It is the hope of the editors that this thought will translate directly onto the tournament field, and from the field into the interactions of people around the field, and from there to everyday lives.

Since this is the first time we have posted on the electronic bulletin boards, and in response we received many, many responses, we will be unable to include every response in future editions of *Chronique*. Every perspective will be represented, however, within reason. We will include what we consider to be the best responses for each question, so be sure to take some time on the ones that really matter to you so that you have a greater chance of seeing them in print.

Each issue in which you contribute something we print you will receive a free issue--that issue may either be tacked on to the end of an existing subscription (Max 2 years) or it may be sent to a friend--just send their address along with your responses!

We all hope you continue to enjoy the FORUM section of *Chronique* and we thank you for your heartfelt contributions.

-Brian R. Price, Editor

## QUESTIONS

1. Is *intention* or *outcome* more important to virtue?
2. What is nobility?
3. What is courage?
4. One day, a knight and his *conroi* were riding along a road. They came across a monk and a noble lady, obviously attached to one another, bearing a rich purse. Upon inquiry, it seems that the monk and the lady married, against both the wishes of her parents and canon law. What, according to chivalry, should the knight's party do?
5. During a tournament fight, your opponent requests a hold because he is too tired to fight well. Do you grant it?
6. As a consort, if it becomes apparent to you that your representative on the field has done something that is unpopular. The combatant thinks they are right. What should you do?
7. How would you characterize SCA "war"? How do you approach it?
8. In SCA war, how important is chivalry versus victory?
9. A king unjustly determines to slay his son, a prince. As a knight or noble of the realm, you hear of this and could stop it by taking arms against the king. What should you do?
10. Fighting in a medieval tournament, you take a noble and courageous knight prisoner. After much negotiation, it seems that he cannot pay the ransom you require. What do you do?



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**CALENDAR**

- Apr. 9, 1994            Pas d'Armes  
Davis, CA  
Laurie Cavanaugh, (916)-756-3837
- Apr. 10, 1994            Deadline for *Chronique #9*  
William the Marshal Tournaments
- Apr. 14-17              Medieval Academy of America Annual Meeting  
Knoxville, TN (615)-974-0250
- Apr. 23, 1994            Company of the Star Spring Pas d'Armes  
Titusville, FL
- Apr. 23, 1994            Company of St. Mark Pas d'Armes
- May 14, 1994            Le Passage du Printemps Pas d'Armes  
Modesto, CA  
Kevin Brink, (209)-668-4131
- May 21, 1994            Company of St. George Spring Pas d'Armes  
Berkeley, CA
- July 1, 1994             Deadline for *Chronique #10*  
Arms and Armour #2  
King Rene Tournaments
- July 9, 1994             The Seven Deadly Sins Round Table Tourney  
Modesto, CA  
Kevin Brink, (209)-668-4131
- July 21-23, 1994        Armourer's Symposium--CANCELLED
- Aug. 13-20, 1994        Pennsic War  
Slippery Rock, PA
- Sept. 24, 1994           Tournoi du Roi Rene  
Minneapolis, MN
- November 12, 1994      The Black Swan Tournament--A Helmschau  
Turlock, CA  
Kevin Brink (209)-668-4131



**T**he Company of our most noble saint, being George, slayer of the Dragon, does hereby announce their intention to defend the field against other noblemen, for the joi de combat and the love of chivalry, on the twenty-first day of May, in the year of Our Lord 1994. ¶Item: This pas d'armes shall be held in our customary manner, that being for honor and renown rather than the base spirit of victory. ¶Item: That the combat shall take place at the Barrier, between two combatants with counted blows, between two combatants in the usual fashion, and between small groups of combatants, according to the choice of the challenger. ¶Item: That each challenger shall be prepared to speak their challenge before each fight, making their intentions known and doing honor to knighthood and the high honor that is chivalry. ¶Item: That each challenger and defender shall bear with them upon the field a pennant or banner, such as they are entitled to. They should bear also the most noble armours, and weapons that pertain to knighthood only shall be used; that being the sword and shield, single sword, poleaxe, mace, and sword of war (also called the gretesword) ¶Item: That each of the Companions of our companie, being Stephen of Beckenham, Duke and Knight; Hanno von Halstern, Duke and Knight; Brion Thornbird ap Rhys, Earl and Knight; Elena of Beckenham, Countess; Fabian Arnet, Graf and Knight; Michael St. Sever, Viscount and Knight; Drew Fortesque, Viscount and Knight; Stephen of Norham, Viscount and Knight; Colin D'Aerg, Saint, Viscount and Knight; Steen Halverson, Knight; Wiglaf Wilfridding, Knight; Eichling von Avrum, Lady; Gavin Malcoeur, Lord; Chaedrych, called the innocent, Esquire; Brion of Bellatrix, Esquire; and the gentleman called Kevin; desires to test their ability in arms and the strength of their virtue at either Tilden Park or at Camp Herms. ¶Item: An especial feast will follow at which we will extoll the virtues of our most noble challengers and share the honors won that day to all assembled.

Note: This tournament is open only to those who request an invitation in advance. Like all pas, there is a limit to the number of combatants that can participate, and there are special expectations unique to these emprises. For more information, contact any Companion of the Order, or especially Brion at (415)961-2187

## WINDYMEADS PAS D'ARMES

Davis / Woodland, CA

Unto all most noble knights, esquires and other gentles who would challenge and test their prowess and chivalry does Mistress Morgan Athenry send greetings! On the Ninth day of April, year of Our Lord 94, the Shire of Windymeads will sponsor a fifteenth century pas d'armes. We will gather at the rear grove of Chestnut Park, (Davis), at the hour of 10 in the morning.

An informational pamphlet will be available at March Crown, or from Mistress Morgan at (916)756-3837.

Directions in this issue, page 74

In order to bring much glory and honor unto my  
 Lady, Baroness Brenna of Phoenix Hall,  
 and for the Glory and Honour of combat,  
 I, Baron Tristan of Phoenix Hall, will accept all  
 challenges. I will meet challengers and fight all  
 fights at Phoenix Hall, Principality of Cynunga,  
 December 27, A.S. XXXVIIII  
 through  
 December 27, A.S. XXX  
 being the 20th anniversary of our marriage.

Contests of skill shall be:

Four courses with lance at the rings, Four courses  
 with lance at the quintain, Four courses with sword

-- Or --

Single sword at the barrier, Halberds at the Bar-  
 rier, Two-handed sword, Sword and Shield,  
 any being with counted blows.

The contests of skill and courage shall be  
 the choice of the challenger.

Challenges to be made in person, or call (209)-358-0807

# Construction of the Medieval Knightly Shield

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Theodore F. Monnich

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## CONSTRUCTION

### *Wooden Base*

Through comparison of surviving examples, most medieval shields are found to be constructed of a half-inch-thick wood base. Through microscopic analysis it has been found that shields were made from various woods including beech, birch, fir, pine, and poplar. Shields of the heater-type, triangular and so called due to their similarity to the bottom of a clothes iron, generally bear a slight curve around the vertical axis, wrapping around the body of the knight. Shields made of a single panel, or plank, would be steamed, to impart flexibility to the wood, and molded to shape. Shields, as with the medieval artist's painted panel, were also, on occasion, constructed of two or more panels, or planks, pegged and glued together. A surviving shield constructed in this manner, bearing the arms of Von Nordech zur Rabenau and dating from the second-half of the 13th C., was found in St. Elizabeth's Church. This shield measures 32.35" high by 21.25" wide. (Figure 1) It is known that polyptych panels were joined together with calcium caseinate, a proteinaceous glue made from cheese, water, and lime. Planks assembled to form a shield could have been joined with casein or a rendered hide glue. Either of these glues would have been reinforced across the join with strips of linen, grass fibers, or horse hair mixed with glue. Shields constructed in this manner could not be steamed and molded to shape as successfully as those constructed of a single plank. The glued planks instead would have been of greater thickness. After gluing, the panel would then be carved to shape. The direction of the wood-grain on shields of either construction is usually found to run vertically.

### *Reinforcement and Embellishment*

After being molded, carved, and cut to shape, the wood was coated overall with size or glue, and covered on both sides with canvas, pigskin, or other leather. (Figure 2) If first covered with canvas, the shield would again be covered with glue

Very few actual knightly shields survive from the Middle Ages. Most owe their survival to being stored for the last five to seven hundred years in rather obscure, out of the way locations. Notable examples have been preserved in such places as St. Elizabeth's Church in Marburg, Germany, and Canterbury Cathedral in Canterbury, England. Such obscurity saved them from theft, vandalism and the art market. Only fourteen examples from the 13th century are known to survive, and although once brightly adorned with heraldic charges, they are now dull and worn, and in many cases damaged. Such obscurity, combined with a rather unappealing condition, have not made them the most attractive subjects for scholarly writings. Only a handful of articles have come down to us, and even these are obscure and not widely circulated. However, the relationship of knightly shields to the works of medieval painters may shed new light on their place in medieval art.

and then a covering of leather. Birch-bark may have been used as a covering for additional waterproofing. The leather covering acted as a shock-absorber, preventing the wood's splitting apart under a heavy blow. After permitting all of the glue layers to dry, the leather was then covered with a layer of gesso. Gesso is, simply, a kind of thick, white water paint with chalk, calcium carbonate, gypsum, or plaster (calcium sulphate) as the pigment and glue or gelatine as the binding medium. The gesso served as the ground, or base, for the painted heraldic design. Ten out of fourteen

of the surviving Thirteenth century shields have their gesso grounds molded in shallow relief in the form of the heraldic design or other decorative motifs. This serves to "outline and enhance the armorial charges and to enliven the surface of the field" (Nickel 1989). In 1926, at the archeological excavations of the Thirteenth century stronghold of the Teutonic Knights, Castle Montfort/Starkenberg in Palestine, a lithographic stone incised with heraldic designs was discovered. The stone, measuring 10x7x4 inches, bears the heraldic charges of the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, and was used to stamp these charges (an eagle shield and superimposed cross fleurete'e) directly into the fresh gesso of the Grand Master's shield. (Figure 3) The incised stone, now in the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, is the only known heraldic stamp of its type. Bashford Dean alternatively suggested that the

stone may have been used to mold pieces of moistened leather that were then applied to the shield. Several shields with similar molded decoration survive. The shield of Konrad II, Landgrave of Thuringia (died 1240), measuring 35.50 inches high by 29.25 inches wide, bears the arms of Thuringia: Azure, a lion Barry of gules and argent, crowned or applied in molded leather. (Figure 4) The shield of Heinrich "der Junker", Landgrave of Thuringia (died 1298), mea-

suring 30.75 inches high by 23.625 inches wide, also bears the arms of Thuringia but in molded, lacy, pierced gesso-soaked-linen overlaying a gilded background. (Figure 5) Both shields hung as funerary monuments in St. Elizabeth's Church, Marburg. Another later shield having molded leather designs is that of Edward Plantagenet, the Black Prince (died 1376). This shield, a funerary monument, hung in Canterbury Cathedral in England. Affixed to its front surface by numerous small brads are the quarterly charges of fleurs-de-lys and leopards modelled in leather in high relief. Those gesso-

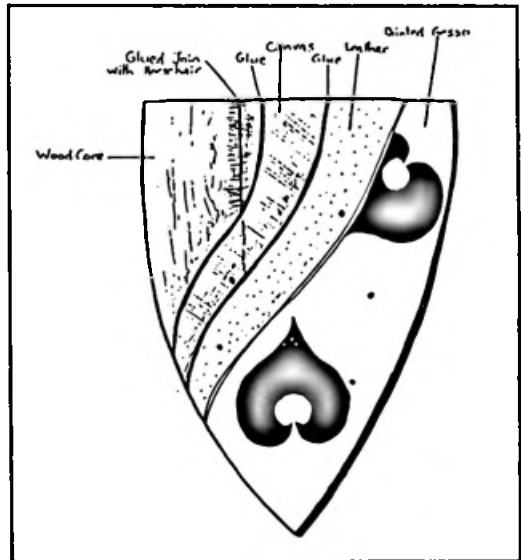


Figure 2: A diagrammatic cut-away showing superimposed layers composed of a wooden core, leather reinforcement, and molded and polychromed gesso decoration. Note that figures 1, 3-5, 7, 8 are photographs and may be found on the glossy pages.

covered shields not bearing molding, as well as most with molding, had their decorative and armorial painted surfaces delineated with lines scored into the surface of the gesso giving the artist a guide for his adornment of the shield. This technique, similar to *sgraffito*, was also used in the embellishment of polychromed carved wooden statuary in the Middle Ages. It could be suggested that the artists employed to create polytyches or painted pan-

# Raymon Lull

**C**hivalric handbooks provide us with a unique and irreplaceable insight concerning the attitudes and thoughts of the medieval knight. Three such works dominate the existing record--the *Ordene de Chevalerie* (12th or 13th C. -See *Chronique* #5 for the full text), Geoffrey de Charnay's *Livre Chevalerie* and *Livre Charnay* (see a future *Chronique*), and Raymon Lull's *Libre del Orde de Cauayleria*. The last is the most famous, the Catalan prose translated at least into French, Latin, English, and German. It was popular during the 14th and 15th centuries, becoming a model for princely courtesy books that were to follow.

In the story, a young squire loses his way and runs into an old hermit, who in his youth was a knight of great renown. The knight gives him a book to study in order that he might learn something of the charge he is about to undertake, and "this litle Boke" becomes perhaps *The Book of the Order of Chivalry*.

Raymon Lull's life fits the description of the hermit with some precision. Born *ca.* 1232 in what is today Palma de Mallorca, he was brought up as a noble at the court of James I of Aragon, becoming Seneshal to his second surviving son, Prince James, destined to become the first independent ruler of Majorca.

In his youth Lull played the role of courtier and knight quite well, bringing his considerable talents to bear writing poetry and love letters. He was an accomplished knight, partaking in tournaments and jousts. At the age of thirty, however, he underwent a mystical religious transformation. He dedicated himself single-heartedly to the conversion of the Muslims, becoming along the way a undertook many journeys to Royal and Papal curia to seek support for his missionary plans. Based on this goal he spent time in Paris, visited the popes Nicholas IV, Celestine V, Boniface VIII, securing under Clement V at the council of Vienne the creation of chairs of Hebrew, Arabic, and Chaldean in five university centers. He went to North Africa as well, to Cyprus and Asia Minor.

A popular tale tells of his death attempting conversion of Muslims in Bougie is thought to be apocryphal, and it is thought that he died in Majorica at the age of 84 in 1315. He left over 290 works of which 250 remain unpublished and the *Livre* is but one. ♦

¶ Here after foloweth the matter  
and tenour of this said Booke .  
And the fyrst chaptyer saith how  
the good Heremyte deuyled to the  
Esquier the Rule & ordre of chy  
ualrye



Contre y thyr Was  
in which it shewed that  
a wyse knyght whiche  
longe had mayntened  
the ordre of chyualrye  
And that by the force  
& noblesse of his byghe  
courage and wysedom  
and in auenturyng his body had maynte  
ned warres iustes & tornoyes / & in many  
batailles had had many noble bycturpes &  
ghorious / & by cause he salve & thowzt in his  
corage y he myzt not long lyue / as he whiche  
by long tyme had ben by cours of nature  
nyghte Vnto his ende / cithas to hym an hys  
wemytage / For nature faylled in hym by  
age / And hadde no polber ne Rectu to vse  
A 11j

The cover page to Caxton's edition of *The Book of the Order of Chivalry*, by Ramon Lull. Caxton translated the work from French, printing it alongside some of the other great chivalric works--such as Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*.

# The Book of the Order of Chivalry

Raymon Lull

Translated into modern English from the Caxton translation, C. 1494

Brian R. Price

"The Book of the Order of Chivalry or Knighthood."

**W** into the personage and divine glory of God who is Lord and Sovereign King about and over all things celestial and worldly, we begin this book of the order of chivalry to show the significance of God the Prince Almighty who has dominion over the seven planets, who makes their celestial courses, has the power and dominion in governing and ordaining the terrestrial and earthly. And like wise over the kings, princes and great lords who ought to have power and dominion over the knights. And the knights who ought to have power and dominion over the masses of people.

## Book I

Hereafter follows the matter and knowe of this said Book. The first chapter says how the good hermit deviled to the Squire the Rule and the Order of chivalry.

**A** country was there in which it happened that there was a wise knight who had long maintained the order of chivalry. By the force and nobility of his high courage, his wisdom and in adventuring, his body had been maintained in wars, jousts and courneys. In many battles had he been in which there were many noble victories and glories. Because he saw and thought in his heart that he might not live long; he who for a long time had been by course of nature nigh unto his end, caused himself to seek hermitage.

For nature failed him by age, and he had neither power nor virtue to use arms as he was wont to do, so that his heritages and all his riches he left to his children, and made his habitation or dwelling place in a great wood that had water and great trees which bore fruit of diverse types. Thus he fled the world, because of the feebleness of his body in which he was taken by old age. And that he dishonored not that which in honorable things and adventures had been long time-honored, the same knight

thought on death, contemplating the departure from this world and into the other, and of the right dedoubtable sentence of our lord in which he behooved to come to the day of judgement.

In one part of the same woods was a fair meadow in which was a tree well laden and charged of fruit, upon which the knight of the forest lived. And under the same tree was a fountain fair and clear that quenched and moistened the entire meadow. In that same place was the knight accustomed to come every day to pray and to adore God Almighty, to whom he rendered thanks for the honors he had done in the world all the days of his life.

It happened that at the beginning of a strong winter, that a very noble king, wise and full of good customs, sent for many nobles because he was to hold a great court. By the great renown of this court, it happened that a squire moved himself to go there with the intention that there he should there be made a knight.

Thus as he went all alone, riding upon his palfrey. It happened that for the travel he had done he fell asleep upon his horse. In the meanwhile he rode too long while sleeping, and his palfrey issued out of his way and entered into the forest of the Hermit-knight. And so long went he, that he came to the fountain at the same time that the knight who dwelled in the wood to do his penance was coming there and praying to God, in order to despise the vanities of the world as he was accustomed to do every day.

\* \* \*

When the squire came, he left his prayer and sat in the meadow in the shadow of a tree and began to read a little book that he had in his lap. And when the palfrey came to the fountain and began to drink, and the squire who slept alone felt that his horse moved not, he lightly awoke. And then to him came the knight who was very old and had a great beard, long hair and a feeble gown worn and broken from over long wearing. And by the penance that he daily

made was discoloured and very lean. By the tears that he had weapt were his eyes wasted and had the regard and countenance of a very holy life. Each marvelled at the other, for the knight had to be long in his honor of chivalry.

Then the squire prayed to the knight that he would say to him the order and the manner wherefore he ought the better honor and keep himself in high worship as he ought to so after the ordinances of God.

"How son," said the knight, "knowest thou not what is the rule and the order of knight hood? I marvel at how darest thou demand chivalry or knight hood until the time that you know the order. For no knight may love the order, and not know the ordinances that pertain to his order; he must know the difficulties that he does against the order of chivalry in not knowing." No knight ought to make knights unless he himself who makes the knight and can show them the order and the customs of chivalry."

The knight said these words to the squire who had demanded knight hood, yet knew nothing of chivalry.<sup>2</sup> The squire answered and said to the knight, "Sir if it be your pleasure, I beseech you, that you will say and tell to me the order of chivalry, for well to me it seems and I think that I should learn it, for the great desire that I have thereto. And after my power I shall follow it, if it please you to teach and show it to me."

"Friend," said the knight, "the Rule and the order of chivalry is written in this little book that I hold here in my hands, in which I read, and am busy with sometimes, to the end that it makes me remember or think on the grace and bounty that God has given and done to me in this world, because I am honored and maintained with all my power in the order of chivalry. For likewise as chivalry gives to a knight all that to him appertains, in like wise a knight likewise ought to give all his forces to honor chivalry." Then the knight delivered to the squire the little book.

And when he had read therein, he understood that the knight only, among a thousand persons, is chosen worthy to have a more noble office than all the thousand. And he had also understood about the little book, the **RULE AND THE ORDER OF CHIVALRY**, which he had for a long time desired. Without it he knew neither the nobility of the order nor the honor in which our lord God has set all those who are in the Order of Chivalry.

The knight said, "Fair son I am an old, feeble man and may not live much longer for you. And therefore this little book that is made for the devotion, loyalty and the ordinances that a knight ought to have in holding his order, you shall bear it with you to the Court as you go, and show it to all those who would be knights. And when you have been newly dubbed a knight, you shall return to your country, come again to this place, and let me have the knowledge of who they are who have been made new knights, and shall thus be obeisant to the doctrine of chivalry."

Then the knight gave to the squire his blessing, and took his leave of him. The squire took the book very devoutly, and after he mounted upon his palfrey, and went forth hastily to the court. When he arrived there, he presented the book wisely and ordinally to the noble king, offering it to every noble man who would be in the order of chivalry, that he might have a copy of the book, that he might see and learn of the order of knight hood and chivalry.

### Book II

#### The second chapter is of the beginning of chivalry or knight hood

When Charity, Loyalty, Truth, Justice and Mercy fell in the world, then began Cruelty, Injury, Disloyalty, and Falseness. And therefore there was error and trouble in the world in which God had created man with the intention that the man be known and loved, doubted, served and honored. In the beginning, when to the world came wickedness, Justice returned by dread in the honor in which she was wont to be, and therefore all the people were divided by the thousands. Of each thousand was chosen a man most loyal, most strong, and of noble courage; better educated and mannered than all the others. He was inquired and searched for, he who was best and was covenable most fair, most courageous, and most able to sustain trials, and the most able to serve mankind.

*Here the text speaks of why women are not knights, and of the selection of horse and armour for the knight, by reason of his nobility.*

Beware you squires who would enter in to the order of chivalry, what you will do, for if you are a knight you receive honor and the servitude that must be given unto the friends of chivalry. For in so much as you have more noble beginnings and have more honor, you are also more bound to be good and agreeable to God and to the people. And if you are wicked, you are an enemy of chivalry and are



contrary to His commandments and honors. So very high and so very noble is the order of chivalry, that knights are made the most noble persons, and should be given to them the most noble beast, and the most noble armours. But it behooves him and it must be that he is made lord over many men, for in seignory there is much nobility and in servitude much order.

The knowledge and the school of chivalry is that the knight makes his son to learn in his youth to ride, for if he does not learn it in his youth he shall never learn it in his old age. And it behooves that the son of a knight in the time that he is a squire should take on the keeping of the horse. It behooves him that he serve, and that he be the first subject of the lord, for otherwise he will not know the nobility of lordship when he should become a knight. And therefore every man who will come to knighthood should learn, in his youth, to carve at the table, to serve, to arm and to adoube a knight; for in likewise as a maid will learn to sew in order to be a tailor or a to be a carpenter it behooves them to have a master that can sew or hew. Likewise it behooves that a noble man who loves the order of chivalry and will be a knight have first a master who is a knight, for thus as a discoverable thing it should be that a man who would learn to sew should learn to sew from a carpenter; so it is a discoverable thing that a squire should learn the order and nobility of hivalry from any other man than a knight. So very high and honored is the order of chivalry that a squire should suffer himself not only to learn to keep horse and learn to serve a knight, that he go with him to courneys and battles; but it is necessary that he behold the school of the order of knighthood.

That knowledge of such should be put into books, that the art is shown and read in such a manner as other sciences have been read, that the sons of knights learn first the knowledge that pertains to the order of chivalry after that they were squires. They should ride through diverse countries with the knights and there should be no error in the clerks and in the knights under whom they study. By the clerks they should have devotion and love to God, and by the knights they should gain doubt to do wrong, to do treason, and the barating of one another. Then as the clerks have masters and doctrine to go to the schools to learn, so should squires go to learn the chivalric sciences. There have been many sciences, that are written and ordered in doctrine. Great wrong is done to the order of knighthood that it is not a written science, read in schools, like the other sciences. Therefore he that made this book beseeches the noble king and all the noble companies of great knights in this court assembled in the

honor of chivalry, of the wrong that is done to it may be amended and satisfaction done.

Book 29

Of the examination of the squire who will enter the order of chivalry or knighthood

To examine a squire who will enter the order of chivalry it behooves him well he who will examine him to be a knight. And that next after God he love above all things chivalry or knighthood. For there have been some knights who love better great numbers of evil knights rather than a little number of good knights. And not withstanding Chivalry has no regard to the multitude of numbers, but loves only they who are full of noblesse of courage, of good learning as it has before been said. Therefore if the examiner loves more the multitude of knights than the nobility of chivalry, he not covenable nor worthy to be an examiner and it should be necessary that he is examined and reprieved of the wrong that he has done to the honor of chivalry.

First the examiner asks of the squire who will be knight if he loves and dreads God, for without the love and the dread of God no man is worthy to enter the order of chivalry. And dread makes him fear the difficulties by which chivalry takes dishonor. When it happens that the squire who does not dread God is made knight, he takes the honor in receiving chivalry and receives dishonor. Therefore a squire without love and dread of God is neither deigned nor worthy to be a knight; for he loves not that which he intends to destroy by his evil nature. And he who makes a knight of vile courage by favor does against his order and charges his conscience. Such is not noblesse of courage in the mouth. For every mouth says not the truth; nor seeks it not in honorable clothing; for under many a fair habit has often been vile courage ful of baseness and wickedness. Neither seek for it in the horse, for he may not answer. Nor seek for it in the fair garments or in the harness, for within fair garments is often a wicked heart and coward. Then if you find nobility of courage, ask it of faith, hope, charity, justice, strength, temperance, loyalty and of other noble virtues. For in them is the nobility of courage; by them is defeated the heart of a noble knight from wickedness, from treachery, and from the enemies of chivalry.

Covenable age pertains to a new knight; for if the squire who is to be a knight is too young, if he is made a knight in his infancy, he may not remember that which he promised to the order of chivalry,

when he shall need to remember it. And if the squire who will be a knight is vile he does villany and injury to chivalry, which is maintained by strong men and fighters and is defiled by cowards and the feint of heart, the unmighty, those overcome, and by those who flee.

Like wise as virtue and measure abide in the middle of two extremes, that is to wit pride and vice, right so a knight ought to be made knight and be nourished in competent age and always virtuous by right measure. For if it were not thus, it should follow that contrariness was between chivalry and measure, and if it were so, virtue and chivalry should be contrary. And in the squire who is negligent and slow to be a knight, wherefore wilt you then be in the order of knighthood or chivalry? If by beauty of fashion or by a body fair and well adorned or by fair hair, by regard or to hold the mirror in the hand and by the other jolities, should a squire by dubbed a knight of villains and of people of little lineage low and vile make them knights.

And if you made them, the lineage [of chivalry] you should dishonor and err. And the nobility that God has given greater to men than to women and bring it to vileness.

By the things before said you might choose women to be knights, they who often have the mirror in their hand, by which [action] you should diminish and make low the order of chivalry in so much that only vile women or only vilany of heart might come to be put in the right high honor of the order of chivalry.

Peerage and chivalry accord together, for peerage is nothing but honor anciently accustomed. And chivalry is an order that has endured since the time in which it was begun unto this present time. And because peerage and chivalry accord together if you make a knight that is not of the peerage you make chivalry contrary to be peerage, and by the same reason, he who you make a knight is contrary to peerage and to chivalry then you may not have so much power that you make a knight a man of vile courage. For it has been seen that to the order of chivalry you will do right, Nature is much honored in trees and in beasts as touching to nature coporal, but by the nobility of the soul reasonably which so much only parts with the heart of a man because nature has greater virtue in the human body than in the beast's body. Thus in the same way the order of chivalry is more covenable and much more agreeable to a gentle heart replenished with all virtues than in a man vile and of evil life. And if it were

otherwise, it should follow that chivalry should better agree to the nature of the body than to the virtue of the soul; and that is false, for it agrees better to the soul than to the body.

Noblesse of courage pertains to chivalry. To examine a squire who will be a knight it behooves the examiner to ask and inquire of his customs and manners, for evil teaching is an occasion for which the wicked knights have been put out of the order of chivalry. A discoverable thing it is that a squire who is wicked is made a knight. And he who enters the order thusly, will be thrust out again because of wicked deeds and disagreeable customs. For chivalry casts out of this order all enemies to honor and receives those who have honor and maintain honesty.

And if it were not so, it should follow that chivalry might be destroyed in vileness and might not be repaired nor restored to nobility. And that is false. And therefore you, the knight who examines the squire, is bound more strongly to search for nobility and valor in a squire than in any other person.

The knight who has the office to examine the squire who will enter the order of chivalry ought to know what intencion the squire has for to so wish or to be honoured; without that he does no honor to chivalry and to them who honor it. And if it appears to the knight that he is not worthy to be made a knight, he should not give the order. Thus as the intencion fails and ends in clerks by Symony by which they are enhanced to be prelates, right so an evil squire who is false and sets his will and intencion when he becomes a knight, against the order of chivalry. And if a clerk has Symony in that it is against his Prelate.<sup>10</sup> Right so a squire that has false intencions to the office of chivalry is against the order of chivalry whatsoever he does. A squire who desires chivalry, it behooves him to know the great charge and the perils that pertain to those who will have chivalry and maintain it.

A knight ought to doubt the blame of the people and his dishonor more than the peril of death & ought to give greater passion to his courage than to hunger or thirst, than heat or cold give to his body.

And because all the perils ought to be shown and cold to the squire ere he be adoubed or made knight. Chivalry may not not maintained without the harness which pertains to a knight, nor without the honorable costs and dispenses which pertain to chivalry. Because a squire without harness, having no riches from to make his dispenses, if he be made a

knight, he should perhaps happen to be needy and become a robber, a thief, a traitor, liar or burgular or have some other vices which are contrary to chivalry.

A lame man, or one who is over fat or who has any other evil disposition in his body, by which he may not use the office of chivalry, is not sufficient to be a knight. For it should not be honest to the order of chivalry if she received a man for to bear arms who is stained by corruption and not mightly; for so very noble and high is chivalry that a squire lame in any member, no matter how noble, rich & born of noble lineage is not dignified nor worthy to be received in the order of chivalry.

And after ought to be asked and demanded of the squire who asks for chivalry if he ever did any falseness or treachery that is against the order of chivalry. For such a deed may have he done and yet is little set by it<sup>11</sup> is not worthy that chivalry should receive him in to his order nor should he be made a fellow of those who maintain the order.

If a squire has vainglory he is not worthy to be a knight. For vainglory is a vice which destroys and brings to naught the mighty guardians of the benefice of chivalry. A squire who is a flatterer discords the order of chivalry; for a man being a flatterer corrupts good intencion by which corption is destroyed and corrupts the nobility that appertains to the courage of a knight. A proud squire, evilly taught, full of villaneous words and of villaneous courage, who is avaracious, a liar, untrue, slothful, a glutton, perjured, or who has any other similar vices should not be accorded the order of chivalry. If chivalry might receive those who are against the order, it should follow that in chivalry ordinance and disorderance would be one proper thing, and since chivalry is known for the order of valor every squire ought to be examined before he should be made knight.

### Book B

#### In What Manner a Squire ought to be Received in the Order of Chivalry

At the beginning, it behooves a squire entering the order of chivalry to confess of his difficulties that he has done against God and ought to receive chivalry with the intencion that in the same he should serve our lord God, who is glorious. And if he is cleansed of sin he ought to receive his savior, for to make and to adoube a knight it should be the day of some great feast; Christmas, Easter, Whitsontide or on such solemn days; because

by the honor of the feast assemble many people in that place where the squire ought to be adoubed knight & God ought to be adored and prayed that he give to the squire grace for to learn well thereafter the order of chivalry.

The squire ought to fast on the vigil of the same feast in honor of the saint of whom the feast is made. That day and he ought to go to the church to pray to God. He ought to stay awake all night and say his prayers and ought to hear the word of God and things touching the deeds of chivalry for if he otherwise plays and is ribauld, hearing speak of putery and sin he should begin then to dishonor chivalry.

On the morning after the feast in which he has been adoubed it behooves him to hear a mass to be sung solemnly and the squire ought to come there after and offer to the present which holds the place of our Lord to honor of whom he must oblige and submit himself to keep the honor of chivalry with all of his power. In that same day ought to be made a sermon in which should be recounted and declared the twelve articles upon which is founded the Catholic faith; the ten commandments and the seven sacraments of the Holy Church, and other things that pertain to the faith. And the squire ought to diligently take heed and retain these things to then kept in mind the office of chivalry touching the things that pertain to the faith.

The twelve articles are such: to believe in one God only; that is the first and is behooves him to believe that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are only one God in three persons without end and without beginning which makes up the fourth article. To believe that God is the creator and maker of all things is the fifth; The sixth is to believe that God is the redeemer, that is to say that he has redeemed or brought again the human lineage from the pains of Hell to which it was judged by the sin of Adam and Eve, our first father and mother. The seventh is to believe that God gave glory to those who are in heaven.

These seven articles pertain to deity and the other following pertain to humanity.

That the son of God took in our Lady Saint Mary, is the first of the seven articles following. To believe that Jesus Christ was conceived of the Holy Ghost when Saint Gabriel the archangel gave Salvation to our Lady. The second and third are to believe that he has been crucified and died to save us. The fourth is to believe that his soul descended into Hell to deliver his friends; that is to wit Adam and

Abraham and other prophets which believed his holy coming. The fifth is to believe that he raised from death to life. The sixth is to believe that he stayed up in heaven to ascension day. The seventh is to believe that Jesus Christ shall come at the day of judgement when all shall arise and shall be judged the good and the evil and shall give to everyone pain and glory after that each deserved in this transitory world. It behooves to all good Christian men to believe these articles which bore witness to God and of his works, for without these articles no man may be saved.

The commandments of God which He gave to Moses upon the mount of Sinai are ten. The first is that you shall adore, love and shall serve only one God. Nor should you be purjuerd. Hallow and sanctify the Sunday; Honor thy mother and father; Be thou not a murderer or commit homicide; do no theft nor fornication; Nor bear false witness; nor cover the wife of thy neighbor; nor have thou no envy of the goods of thy neighbor. To all knights is behooven to know the ten commandments that God has given.

The sacraments of the Holy Church are seven. They are to wit: baptism; confirmation; the sacrament of the altar; the order of marriage; penance and unction. By these seven sacraments we hope all to be saved. And a knight is bound by his oath to honor and accomplish these seven sacraments. And therefore it pertains to every knight that he should know his office well and the things to which he is bound, since he has received the order of knighthood. And all these things before said, and of others that pertain to chivalry. The preacher ought to make mention of that preaches in the presence of the squire, who ought to pray very devoutly that God give to him His grace and His blessing by which he may be a good knight all the days of his life from then on.

When the preacher has said all this that pertains to his office, then must the Prince or Baron who will make the squire & adoube him a knight, should have in himself virtue and the order of chivalry, for if the knight that makes knights is not virtuous, how may he give that which he has not? Such a knight is of worse condition than are the plants, for the plants have the power to give their nature to one another, and of beasts and of fowles it is also a similar thing. Such a knight is evil and false who disordinately and willfully multiplies his horde, for he does wrong and villany to chivalry. He will do that which is not a covenable thing to do and that by which he ought to honor chivalry he defeats and blames. Then if by default such a knight, it happens sometimes, the squire who receives chivalry of him is not so much

aided nor maintained of the grace of our Lord, nor of virtue, nor of chivalry as he should be if he were may by a good and loyal knight. And therefore such a squire is a fool and all others similarly who receive from such a knight the order of chivalry.

The squire ought to kneel before the altar and lift up to God his eyes corporeal and spiritual, and his hands to heaven, and the knight ought to gird him in sign of Chastity, Justice, and of Charity with his sword. The knight ought to kiss the squire and give to him a palm because by that he remembers that which he receives and promises and of the great charge in which he is obliged and bound and of the great honor that he receives with the order of chivalry.

And after when the spiritual knight (who is the priest) and the terrestrial knight have done that which pertains to their office as touching and making of a new knight, the new knight ought to ride through the town and show himself to the people to the end that all men know and see that he is a newly made knight, and that he is bound to maintain and defend the high honor of chivalry. For he shall have great restraintment from doing evil, for by his shame that he shall have of the people that shall know of his chivalry, he shall withdraw himself so much the more than to act against the order of chivalry.

On that same day it behooves him to make a great feast and to give fair gifts and great dinners; to joust and to sport and to do other things that pertain to the order of chivalry. To give to kings of arms and to heralds as it is accustomed of ancient; and the lord who made the new knight ought to give the new knight a present or gift also; and the new knight ought to give to him and to others that same day, for who so receives so great a gift as is the order of chivalry honors not his order if he gives not after the power that he has to give. All these things and many others I will not now recount because of shortness of time pertaining to chivalry.



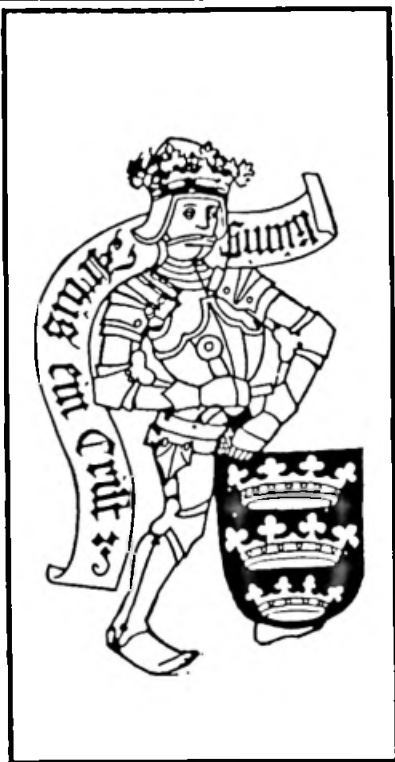
# The Company of the Knights of Saint Michael the Defender

The Company of the Knights of Saint Michael the Defender is a confraternity or tournament society patterned after similar organizations in the 14th and 15th centuries. Its purpose is to bring the conduct and appearance of SCA fighting and fighters more in line with tournaments of the high middle ages. We hope to accomplish this goal by being the example for others to follow.

The Company grew out of a deep dissatisfaction some of us felt with SCA fighting. We felt that SCA fighting was inauthentic and too concerned with victory and other modern sports attitudes. Several of us were ready to quit the SCA until we attended a period tournament sponsored by the SCA group in Ithaca, NY (the Dominion of Myrkaellin). That event, combined with the impetus and example set by the Company of Saint George in California, inspired us to try to make the SCA better instead of just taking our marbles and going home.

## Organization

Membership in the Company is limited to members of the SCA's order of chivalry. Prospective members must have a harness which meets Company standards (more on this below), must demonstrate exemplary chivalry and courtesy, must have their arms on their shield and banner, must agree to abide by the Company's charter and must receive approval from 90% of the existing members. Members of the Company may be distin-



guished by our badge, a balance scale, tipped to dexter, or. There are currently nine members of the Company, seven from the East Kingdom and two from Atlantia.

The Company recognizes that there are numerous individuals who, although not yet members of the order of chivalry, would greatly enhance the Company's activities. In order to avail ourselves of the contributions these individuals can make, we have created a group called "The Squires of the Company" (although these individuals are not necessarily squired to any of the members). The *Squires of the Company* must meet all of the Company's standards for membership except membership in the order of chivalry. They receive all of the privileges and responsibilities of membership except that they have no vote in the Company's decisions. As a further privilege, any of these individuals who receive the accolade of chivalry are accorded automatic membership in the Company. One *Squire of the Company* has already become a member in this fashion.

We also have an auxiliary composed of non-fighters who contribute to our activities in support roles, particularly as heralds. All of the current auxiliaries are peers, although that is not a requirement. The role of the auxiliary in the Company's affairs is still being developed, however it should be emphasized that some of our best ideas have come from this segment of the Company.

The three groups, the members, the *Squires of the Company* and the auxiliary are jointly called the "Companions of the Company".

The Company has a herald called the *Balance King of Arms*. This is a hired position, and need not be a companion of the Company (although the current *Balance King of Arms* happens to be an auxiliary). *Balance King of Arms* has the responsibility to act as the Company's herald whenever necessary at our tournaments or in courts.

Since any group must have a spokesman, the Company has an elected position called the *Senator* (a term taken from a period confraternity). This individual, who must be a member, is responsible for speaking on behalf of the Company whenever necessary. The senator is not "in charge"; he gets one vote like every other member.

We also have a clerk who is responsible for polling the members on voting issues, keeping the roles and membership lists and recording the minutes of meetings. The clerk may be any companion of the Company.

### Standards

Members of the Company must dress, arm, equip and deport themselves as befits gentlemen of arms. We feel that the only way to show others how to authentically recreate the middle ages is to practice what we preach.

Our standard for dress, equipment and armor is what has been called the "ten foot rule." I don't know who originated the term, but I first heard it articulated by Mr. Joseph Latta (AKASCA Sir Seosaidh of Trimaris). The ten foot rule means that all of your equipment should look like its medieval counterpart when viewed from a distance of ten feet. This means that your cloth-

ing can be machine stitched, but it should not be of noticeably modern materials and it should closely resemble medieval clothing of the same type.

Another point we are trying to emphasize is what I call "homogeneity"; this means that if you have a 14th century bascinet you should have a 14th century leg harness, 14th century gauntlets, etc. Too often we see fighters wearing a helm from one period, a leg harness from another and gauntlets from a third (that is, if any of the harness is an accurate reproduction of the armor from any period and not SCA "sporting equipment").

Our prime standard of behavior is to place behavior above victory, chivalry above reward. We believe that as the prime coin of knighthood is renown, there is no true victory in winning unfairly, for there can be no renown without honor. We also believe that there is no glory in defeating an opponent who has no chance to win. We require courtesy be shown to ladies.

I would like to point out, however, that we do not eschew victory merely because we place honor first. Renown is derived from the display of prowess, courage and chivalry. Also, SCA fighting is a martial art and should be practiced as such. We do not agree with those who feel that SCA fighting should be "lightened up" or watered down.

### Activities

In order to accomplish our goals, the Company sponsors one tournament per year (i.e., we run the tournament for the enjoyment of others) and holds at least one passage of arms per year in which we hold the field. Through these two slightly different means we can help people understand and enjoy medieval tournaments and show them how to behave in them.

Our first tournament was held Albany, NY (the Barony of Concordia of the Snows in the East Kingdom of the SCA) in June of 1993. The tournament was built around a book written by King Rene d'Anjou in the fifteenth century as translated by Dr. Elizabeth Bennett (Mistress Alys Gardner, an auxiliary). This book is a veritable cook-

book for how to run a tournament, covering everything from soup to nuts. I heartily recommend it to anyone with even the slightest interest in the subject.

Our first tournament, while not heavily attended, (I think we had twenty-something combatants) was highly praised by all. Maximum attention was paid to pomp and authenticity, and everyone was on their very best behavior. Duke Vissevald Sellirkson even showed up in disguise as the Champion of Bacchus with a crest of grapes, a bevy of beautiful female attendants and a half-naked wild man for his herald. The tournament opened with single combat between Duke Ronald Wilmot, the appellant, and Sir Hrothgar of Farley, the defendant and one of the founders of the Company. They fought until Duke Ronald shattered Sir Hrothgar's crest, which broke to disgorge gold and jewels (candy) which was thrown to the spectators as largesse. A number of combat scenarios then followed, including melees, barrier fights (which proved to be the most popular) and single combat. An opportunity was created for the combatants to fight "a Outrance" (with weapons of war) in case someone had been offended. Several individuals stood their shields to accept challenges, but no actual challenges were given. This was important, because wounds were to be retained for the remainder of the tournament—a kill would mean that the loser was out of the tournament for the rest of the day.

Our first passage of arms was held at the twenty-second Great Pennsic War at Coopers Lake Campground in August 1993. We distributed flyers and cried the camp to let everyone know what was to happen. On Tuesday, Balance king of Arms set up a booth to accept challenges. Each comer was given a card bearing the badge of the Company as a token of his challenge and was told the time his challenge would be fought the next day.

On Wednesday we set up a list area in the morning with all of our banners around it. We are greatly indebted to the Company of Saint George and especially to Sir Colin for bringing their single combat barrier all the way from California for our use. We also built a shield tree on the comers side of the

lists so that the comers could challenge us with the weapons form of their choice (although we disallowed florentine or two sword because we are unable to document it).

There was a delay in the fighting, however, because one of the members of the Company took this opportunity to come into the lists, armed, with his helm and banner carried by other members, to give his lady flowers and to ask permission to bear her favor. When she said yes, he barely managed to strangle out that he also wanted to take her as his wife, and that if she consented she was to return a single flower to him, which (amid many tears on both sides) she did.

That important business over, the fighting began with a team barrier fight against the members of the Company of Saint George. Combat continued all through that long, hot August day. Combatants could fight, as I said above, with the weapon of their choice either singly in the open or over the barrier or in teams of four over the barrier. They could also choose to fight a *plaisance* (with weapons of peace) or a *outrance* (with weapons of war). Combat a outrance was handled very much like standard SCA fighting except that face-thrusting was only permitted against grilled helmets. Combat a plaisance was fought to the first good three blows, which were not to be acted out (e.g., no going to your knees when your opponent takes your leg). Since weapons of peace were usually blunted, thrusting was not permitted except with spears which were assumed to have coronels.

We were very concerned that the combat a plaisance would be too weird for SCA fighters to appreciate, however the vast majority of comers chose that option and were unanimous in praising it. Next year we plan to change combat a outrance to be with counted blows (i.e., the challenge will be for a limited number of blows and the winner will be the one with the most good hits when each fighter has thrown the agreed upon number of shots) since that was so common in period.

CONTINUED ON P. 74

# What is a squire?

*Answering questions about what it means to be a squire in the Society for Creative Anachronism.*

Joseph Latta  
AKA SCA Sir Seosaidh mac  
Seosaidh  
Earl Claidgh Dhu  
*Kingdom of Trimaris*

And how is a squire different from a man-at-arms? Assuming that the question refers to the "current Middle Ages" within the SCA, I shall set aside that question for a moment and address another question that should be answered first. What were squires and men-at-arms in Medieval Europe?

First of all, what we in Trimaris [Florida] refer to as a man-at-arms would not have been called that in the fourteenth century. He would have been simply a soldier or guardsman in a household guard or escort. In peacetime the household guard's job would have been to guard the house or castle (surprised?). He would have had secondary duties as well, acting as an escort for travel, as a messenger, and he would have helped to maintain the weapons of the household. In wartime the guardsman was the soldier: putting up and striking tents, packing and unpacking arms and supplies, digging trenches and latrines, cooking and cleaning, and of course—fighting! Medievally the term "man at arms" would have been used to designate a warrior of great skill and prowess. Perhaps one of the soldiers or guardsmen spoken of above who had reached a level of skill such that he was the equal of the knights in all areas save one—birth. So a man-at-arms in the late middle ages was a knight in all but name. He rode at the head of a lance, commanded troops, and even had squires.

A squire was first and foremost the personal servant of a knight. Secondly he was a "knight in training." The term "servant" has negative connotations today that were not there medievally. A servant was "one who serves." And it was a high honor to serve in fealty as a squire to a knight. In the Middle Ages the relationship under the oath of fealty took precedence over and often took the place of one's family. The loyalty of the vassal to his lord was stronger than to his family (or was supposed to be so). To be chosen as a vassal was a high honor that showed that the lord had recognized the worthiness of the vassal and put his trust in him. And it is important to realize that the obligations of fealty flowed both ways. But what were the squire's duties? The best known of these duties was what the squire probably felt was high highest honor—that of fighting beside the knight and "guarding his back." The squire had personal charge of the knight's armour and weapons to see that it was kept in perfect condition. He would see to the horses and supervise the other grooms in their care of the horses. He would personally attend to any need of the knight or supervise those who did. In many ways his position in the knight's household was perhaps comparable to a mid-twentieth century butler's position in an aristocratic English household.

This brings us back to the original question. What is a squire in the SCA, and what is a man-at-arms? First, in the interest of clarity and a more medieval terminology I am going to use the term household guardsman instead of man-at-arms. In the SCA becoming a squire is recognized as a step towards knighthood, and becoming a household guard is a step towards becoming a squire. But what are their duties and privileges? These vary greatly from household to household and of course I cannot speak for other knights, but I can offer as an example the duties and privileges of these two positions in my own household, Clan Claidgh Dhu. Below is a listing of the duties and responsibilities of houseguards and squires in our clan:



## Squires

1. Fulfillment of the Oath of Fealty, including a personal loyalty in word and deed to the knight and household subject only to truth and honor.
2. Conducting himself at all times with honor, chivalry, and courtesy expected of a knight, for he is a knight in training.
3. Training himself and accepting training from his knight in the arts of war and of peace.
4. Caring for the knight's armour and arms:
  - a) Polish (and remove all excess oil) and lay out the armour, carry it to the field for every list or war.
  - b) Clean (with sandpaper, if necessary), oil, and replace the armour in the war chest, and carry it back to camp or vehicle all of the armour after each list or war.
  - c) Check the weapons (tourney and real) of the knight and care for them as needed. (Lay them out, retape or sharpen, put them away).
  - d) Assist the knight in arming and disarming before and after each bout/ battle.
5. Assist the knight and his Lady with the set-up and clean-up of camp and cabin and feast, making sure that there are tables reserved for the Clan at feast.
6. Fight with the knight at wars, "guarding his back."

## Household Guards

- 1-3 are the same as for squires.
4. Assist the set-up and clean-up of the Clan camp and feast tables, following the directions of the knight and his squires.
  5. Assist the knight in arming and disarming and in the care of his armour (This is necessary only in the absence of any squires— this is their job).
  6. Fight with the Clan (Blacksword Com-

pany) at wars, following the orders of the officers of the Company.

## Duties of the Knight to the Squires and Household Guards

1. Fulfillment of the Oath of Fealty including a personal loyalty in word and deed to the squire or guardsman of his household subject only to truth and honor.
2. Training of the squire or guardsman in the arts of war and peace (This will take place on Sundays or at other idle times during events or at scheduled practices).
3. Assisting the guardsman in acquiring and repairing the armour and weapons of Society combat.

So what is a squire and what is a household guard in our Society? They are both warriors, knight trainees, and "servants"— particularly the squire. But the knight serves as well, so that what we have is a mutually beneficial relationship patterned after a Medieval one. When both parties fulfill their portion of the agreement while in persona we have a learning situation which mirrors the Medieval and is enjoyable, which is why I think we are in the Society.

If you have any questions or comments on this or other Medieval subjects please feel free to write or call, or simply grab me at an event. ♦

*Sir Seosaidh mac Seosaidh,  
Earl Clan Dhu  
Kingdom of Trinaris*

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<sup>1</sup>Editor: Although this tradition may be a local one for the author—I have not seen this to be the case in Caid, the West, An-Tir or the Midrealm, although I have heard of it having the quasi-formal connotation is seems to have in Trinaris.

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# SQUIRES

## Some Historical Notes

"Squier n. Also Squiere, Squiar(e), squire...skuiere, skwier, scwier, skier(e), schwier, scoier, suier, swiar, swir(e), sweier, & (in surnames) scoier, scuier, scuiuer; pl. squieres, etc. & squeieres, sueieris (in comb), squiren—. Cp esquier n. [From Old French *escuier*, *esquier*, *eskuwier*, *eschuier*, AF *esqier*; also cp. AL *squiritius*, *esquierus*, *esquiritius*.]

1. (a) An aspirant to knighthood in the feudal military system; an esquire or a personal servant attendant upon a knight; a soldier below the rank of a knight; also fig. ; a person holding an analogous rank in classical society; (b) = and knight, knight and, knights and squier(es), (c) a shieldbearer of biblical times; also, an Egyptian soldier.

2. A member of the landowning class next below the rank of knight; the son of a knight; also, a young man of gentle birth...used contemptuously, a fellow.

3. A household attendant or servant; a retainer, follower; a page; also, a messenger..."

*Middle English Dictionary*, pp. 544



What did it mean to be a squire during the Middle Ages? Without being deliberately obtuse, what it meant depends upon the specific period you are trying to recreate. Just as the meaning of the Latin *miles* (knight) changed from identifying an ordinary horseman, taking on the noble rank, so too did the words for squire (*Scutifer*, *Armiger*, *Écuyer*, *Squier*, *Squire*) change, gradually creating a new level of nobility just below that of a knight, and eventually, just above that of a gentleman.

Although many scholars have created small mountains of paper in discussing the knight and the ethic of chivalry, very few have done studies pertaining to the development of the squire. Our impression of the squire as the apprentice knight, is one that pervades the practice of tournament re-enactment's today. It was well illuminated by Chaucer in the prologue of *Canterbury Tales*, written in the 14th century:

"With him there was his sin, a young squire,  
A lover and a lusty batchelor,  
With curled locks, as if they were pressed  
Of twenty years of age he was, I guessed.  
Of his stature he was of even length  
And wonderly delivered, and of great  
strength...  
Well could he sit on horse and fairly ride...  
Courteous he was, lowley, and serviceable,  
And carved beef for his father at the table."<sup>1</sup>

He appears a knight; he can sit well upon his horse, is bounding with energy, and with courtesy, with which he seems to charm the ladies. He is well-formed, powerful. He performs both as a lieutenant and personal servant for his father, at whose table he carves and at whose side he rides. He is young, however, and not completely finished in his chivalric education—during his story, he rambles and is eventually cut off by the Franklin. He is a part of the chivalric class, albeit at or near the lowest level. Yet he is of chivalric rank and acts, or tries to act, nobly. He is a knight in training.

<sup>1</sup>*Canterbury Tales* Prologue. Translation into modern English is my own (as are any errors).

It was not until somewhere during the late 13th century, however, that the meaning of the words translated loosely (often too loosely, as we will see) as squire came to mean "an apprentice knight."

If we look back to the definitions given at the opening of this article, three broad descriptions are given to describe what was called "squire" in Middle English: 1) a knight in training; 2) a landowning rank in Feudal society; and 3) a household servant or messenger. Which one is right?

Recent scholars have begun to assert, from their study of household records, accounts, and literature, that the terms which are often loosely translated as squire—Latin Armiger, French *Écuyer* often describe not a knight in training but rather a military assistant, household servant, messenger, and the like; something closer to the MED's third definition (although the earliest citation provided is 1300) would support this assertion. Although we will to some degree trace the development of the office and station of squire chronologically, it is important to remember that language transmission was uneven during the middle ages, more so than it is today, and in many places the word meant different things.

Michael Bennett has studied the literature and accounts of the earlier Middle Ages, seeking to clarify the usage of these words. He asserts that during the late 12th century and into the early 13th, usage of the words Scutifer and Armiger meant servants; military or household assistants whose duty was to support the knight in battle. He gives various sources for this, citing in particular several romance poems that portray the squire very much as a military non-commissioned officer, or sergeant, as this passage, cited from a favorite source of his, the romantic poem *Ruodlieb*<sup>2</sup>:

*"No one accompanied him except his squire, who carried a pack loaded with various things and whom he had taught from boyhood to endure labor for him. The squire carried the pack on his right shoulder and his master's pack over his left. He bore a lance in his right hand and a quiver under his shield. (He also carried provisions)."*

and later, in the same poem:

*"On entering the castle they stabled their squires and horses."*

What I can glean from the material I piled up on the subject, is that during the late 12th and early 13th century, the words used for squire were usually meant in this way. But not always, and the usage of armiger and squire continues to be broad.

A shift did occur. During the 13th century different sorts of squires were recognized, although the scholarship in this area is very rough yet, and the data incomplete, so it is difficult and indeed dangerous to make mansweeping statements. It is clear, however, that squires were slowly elevated in rank. During the period under discussion by Michael Bennett, squires were not considered to be noble rank—some of them slept in the stables! However, sometime during the 13th century, a squire was recognized as one who was in training to be a knight, one who sought the knowledge and experience necessary to build his qualifications, so that he could be made knight.

Maymon Lull, writing in the late 13th and early 14th century, identifies his squire as we will see later, in the prototypical model forwarded by Chaucer fifty or sixty years later. His squire is anxious for knighthood, and although he knows the use of his horse (and presumably other elements of prowess as well), he knows nothing of the chivalric order, something that Lull through his Hermit thinks little of.

The squire in this model, the classical one, is the lowest rank in the chivalric society of the time. He accompanies his knight in the feast halls, the training yards, perhaps to the hunt and to hear mass. He might, if he is very lucky, find some learning in letters (Lull does, after all, give the squire a book, expecting that the new knights and this squire can indeed read). He is to ac-

<sup>2</sup> Bennet, Michael: "The Status of the Squire, the Northern Evidence", *The Ideals and Practice of Medieval Knighthood: Papers from the First and Second Strawberry Hill Conferences*, ed. by Christopher Harper-Bill and Ruth Harvey, The Boydell Press, 1986

company his knight to tournament, to training, and to war.

The training is succinctly summed up by Bradford B. Broughton in his *Dictionary of Knighthood and Chivalry*<sup>3</sup>:

"Before the age of seven a boy learned to walk on stilts, to play rackets, fly kites, play bowls, marbles, and to play chess, backgammon (tables), and dice. At seven he left female tutorship and childhood things and became a page, damouseau, or valet in the household of some important lord of knight to learn the disciplines and spirit of knighthood. Such an education began at seven with learning hawking and hunting under the falconer and chief huntsman. He mastered first the four rules of hawking: how to fly a hawk, how to feed her in her mews, how to call her back when on the wing, and how to keep her when she returned. Hawks became so important to the young page that he would do almost anything to protect her. For example, Roland and Oliver, famous heroes of the *chansons de gestes* who were the closest of friends, quarreled bitterly about a hawk under the walls of Vienna. Becket nearly drowned as a youth when he dove into a mill-race to save his downed hawk. Further, he became familiar with his lord's destrier as he exercised it on a tether in the castle yard. His education was added to by his lord's private chaplain who taught him religion and courtesy in words and deeds and in actions. He was taught, for example, not to sit until asked to do so, not to claw at his body or to lean against a post in his master's presence, to be obedient to his lord, and to do instantly whatever was asked of him by his lord. He did not necessarily learn to read and write, for more important things awaited him: to be brave on the field, to endure hardship, and to be expert in the chase, because the next phase

of training built in these.

"That next phase was, at age fourteen, becoming a squire. As a squire he was allowed greater intimacy with his lord and lady than as a page. At a solemn, formal, religious ceremony, he was presented to a priest before the altar of his parents, each holding a blessed taper which they later donated to the church. Prayers and blessings then were said over a sword and belt which were to be his alone, and then he was girded with his new symbols. Then he took up additional duties while still maintaining rigorous practice in the martial arts. Squires in a lord's household were divided into different classes, the first two of which were considered most honorable: Squire of the body and Squire of the Honors. As squire of the body, he rendered personal service to the knight and his lady; he took part in courts and assemblies, learned conversation and conduct by first hand observation, and became skilled enough in elegant speech and manners, modesty, learning, and witty conversation to accompany his lord and lady frequently on visits. As Squire of Honor (honorus meant ceremonies of the court), he took part in the marshaling of ceremonies of the court: he carried his lord's sword of honor, stood by his chair or the throne of state, carried his lord's helmet of honor, led the destrier with all its glittering caparison, carried his lord's mantle of state when it was being worn. He also had the duty of carrying his lord's banner and raising the "battle cry." Sometimes he was dispatched in the place of heralds and often assumed the office of herald to cast down the gage of battle before his master's adversary.."

As a squire moved up in skill, presumably he spent more time accompanying the knight to tournament, practice and to war; gaining the first hand experience that Lull emphasizes.

<sup>3</sup>Broughton, Bradford B: *Dictionary of Medieval Knighthood and Chivalry: Concepts and Terms*. Greenwood Press, 1986

The *Statum Amorum*, Edward I's tournament rules, stated that each knight could only be accompanied by three squires, in-

dicating that tournament teams were often filled out with squires, and insinuating a possible difficulty in too many squires being brought along. Lull states that by this, and the teachings of his father, the knight would learn the use of the horse and of war; and of the things which "appertain to his office."

Frequently in literature do we see young men gaining their chivalric education in various ways. Sometimes they are acting in the role as sculifer, perhaps the original and oldest meaning, translating roughly as shield bearer. In this capacity, they accompanied their knight to battle, bearing with them their knight's extra weapons, horses, and equipment. From time to time they might have engaged in the tournament melee or in war; the records vary. The *Statulum Amorium* allows them only to be armed with a sword (no shield), and minimal armour. When the battle was done, they would marshal the horses and see that they were cared for.

When the battle or tournament was done, they might as squire of the body care for and mend the knight's armour, and help him to dress. A senior squire might serve at attaché, running errands and delivering messages.

When serving as squire of the table, they would carve the meat (the romances and instruction books are explicit on this point), pour the wine and *hypocras*, a claret mixed with honey, or a *pinet*, a claret with more wine than honey.

Some squires may have served as squire of honor, serving as attaché for the knight; delivering messages, tending to minor matters, carrying the knight's sword in procession, and the like.

During the late 14th century, it seems that squires were paid something like (7½ s = \$257) for their labors, but they were only paid according to the *Wardrobe Accounts of Isabella* for days that they were actually present. Unfortunately, nowhere in the accounts does it say what was expected for this work:

"To Thomas de Chetyngdon, squire of the above-mentioned household, receiving each day 71/2d. for his wages, from the 8th day of July beginning in the 5th year to the 7th day of July ending the same year, counting both, for 366 days because the year is a leap year, with the exception of 122 days for which he was absent, by reckoning made with him in the queen's wardrobe, at Burstwick, 19th day of June, in the present fifth year £7.12s6d

"To Matthew de Beval, squire of the above-mentioned household, receiving each day 7½ d for his wages, from the 8th day of July beginning in the 5th year to the 7th day of July ending the same year, counting both, for 366 days because the year is a leap year, and he was not absent, by reckoning made with him in the aforesaid wardrobe, at York, 12th day of July, in the sixth year £11.8s9d

"To Robert de Beval, squire of the above-mentioned household, receiving each day 71/2d. for his wages...for 366 days because the year is a leap year, with the exception of 168 days for which he was absent, by reckoning made with him at York, 12th day of July, in the sixth year £6.3s9d"

although squires horses were sometimes replaced when lost in service:

"To Thomas de Chetyngdon, as a gift of the king to replace his one black sumpter, dead in the queen's service at Doncaster, 12th day of July, by his own hands receiving money in the queen's wardrobe, at London, 21st day of August. 40s

To Matthew de Beval, as a gift of the king to replace his one bay sumpter, dead at Berwick, in the month of July in the present year, by the hands of Robert Beval, his uncle, in the same place, 26th day of August 40s"

Notice that Matthew of Beval, who lost his horse in the queen's service at Berwick

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THE OFFICE OF SQUIRE  
‡  
THE ACCOLADE OF KNIGHTHOOD

EXCERPTS FROM BRION THORNBIRD'S  
BOOK OF THE TOURNAMENT  
BRIAN R. PRICE  
1991

The two essays that follow are taken from something I wrote during 1991 when the idea of affecting the philosophy of comportment on the field first began to geminate. They are the concluding two chapters of a sixteen-chapter book of essays which, with any luck, I will publish in the coming year.

The style is modern, because I made the decision to use language that would be accessible to most of the readers; it is my contention that authenticity is important to our endeavors because it lends us legitimacy and because it attaches us closer to something that is very old, and very powerful. However, we cannot forget that what we really do is to teach and communicate rules of ethics and conduct to people who may have never come into contact with such rules systems before, and are beset by the fashionable, yet destructive "me-first" approach to life. I think modern language best facilitates this communication.

If offer these essays in humility as well, for they are indeed imperfect expressions of what I believe to be important. I thank you in advance for your indulgence with them and welcome comments both on the style and on content.



## THE OFFICE OF SQUIRE

**T**hough many pursue growth in the tournament through their own efforts, accepting guidance wherever it might be found, many who would grow to be made Knights do so by the road of the Squire.

The squire is not a rank; it carries no real enhancement to status unless the Knight is of particular fame. And this is more an aide to remembering a new person rather than status. The office of squire accords nothing in the "order of precedence", and should be sought as a path to learning rather than for status. In the words of Raymond Lull, "The squire who does not honor chivalry but for his own advantage should not be made knight".

The office of squire is the position granted to the student by the knight. There is a tangible bond between Knight and Squire, one that differs from patron to patron and between different squires in a single household. Some are expressly teacher/student, patron/client, even father/son. Most are a mix.

The bond is created by mutual contract, by the Knight offering or being approached to teach a potential squire (Knights have different philosophies concerning this), and the squire offering to assist the Knight in and around the tournament. This "barter" contract seems a bit stark for the actual warmth of a good Knight/Squire pairing, and it is. Sometimes there is an oath of fealty, sworn between the Knight and Squire, often a modified version of the one the Knight swears to the Crown. This varies from Knight to Knight, so no hard and fast rule can be made regarding it.

**T**he squire, assists the Knight to arm, to maintain his armour, and in various other responsibilities as the pair deem necessary. In war, the Squires usually fight alongside the knight, the core of what would in the fourteenth century be known as a "lance".

The Knight assists the squire to learn both the technical aspects of prowess and of the more intangible virtues. He will often assist him with the selection of armour, and should defend him and his word against all others.

As a token of the bond so made between Knight and Squire, a red belt is usually given, often at the "squiring" ceremony, if there is one. It might bear, at the tip, a painted rendition of the Knight's device, the badge which identifies that patron of the squire. The squire's belt should be defended with grace and honor, and should function as a reminder of the Knight's instruction when he and the Squire are separate.

In a few places Squires wear black or silver spurs and chains as well. The thinking (chiefly in the Middle, Calontir, and the East, I believe) is that as a Knight is in fealty to the Crown, so the Squire is in fealty to the Knight and should receive an appropriate token. To our way of thinking the belt summarizes this, but it is a matter of culture as much as anything else.

Everything the squire does reflects on the honor of his Knight, and he should strive to reflect the best qualities of the knight while exploring chivalry and learning from every aspect. And, the squire receives additional honor by association with a knight who shines in renown, and should assist the knight to bear himself with honor. There is a great pride which can be found in the serving of a great man, and in the process you should enable yourself to grow under your Knight's protection and instruction. ❖



## THE ACCOLADE OF KNIGHTHOOD

**T**he accolade of Knighthood is both an beginning and a culmination. It is the culmination of all that has been struggled towards from the beginning in the sense that the newly dubbed Knight may wear the elements of accoutrement—the belt, chain and spurs—that will serve to identify him in perpetuity as a member of the martial elite and of our romantic image of the Knight. It is but a beginning, however, of his progression upon a higher plane, a spiritual plane, much in the same manner that a black belt in Eastern martial arts is known of a badge of one who is now ready to learn.

A Knight is selected by the King acting under the advice of his Knights. Indeed, in the period fashion, only a Knight may make a Knight, and though we restrict the making of Knights to Royal authority, should the King not be a member of the Chivalry then a Knight's hand must rest on the sword for the adoubement to be accepted.

The Knightly candidate must comport himself as a gentleman in arms; that is to say that he must bear himself with nobility and with honor (which are reflections of the other virtues we have discussed), be skilled in the arts of war—of tourneying, of swordsmanship, of the rules of conduct required for all combatants. He must contribute to the chivalric tone of the tournament and must be considered an asset to the Order. As such, he must display skills and knowledge expected of a well-rounded "renaissance man". A true gentleman should know both the arts of peace and of war. As tournament fighting is the dance of war, so should he acquaint himself with the dances of peace; of bransles, of pavannes, of galliards, and even perhaps of Country dances. He should bear knowledge of Chess, of

Heraldry, and as much as he can learn about the period he is from as is possible. He would be well served to learn a Craft as well, for there is much that goes into Mastery of a craft which supports a noble and graceful demeanor. Lastly, but most importantly, he must have knowledge and practice the courtesies and procedures expected at a civilized court, and should be an example of the same.

The decision is based upon the perceptions of others about the Candidates' renown in all of these individual and yet interlinked aspects. The Knights discuss candidates, their virtues and flaws, communicating their perceptions to the Crown. As such, it is the responsibility of the candidate to communicate his own beliefs and expressions of chivalry, chiefly through action rather than word, such that many take notice. As has been said before, sincerity in the effort is a crucial element of the foundation. The accolade is afforded as a recognition of something the candidate already embodies, rather than what they might be.

Once the King has decided to offer the accolade, he will generally select one or more Knights to accompany him in notifying the candidate. If a squire, the candidate's knight will almost always form a member of the party, for he enjoys a special joy in the moment. It is indeed a solemn, and yet very powerful and joyful moment, a moment that will live forever in the heart and mind of all knights.

On the eve of the Knighting, it is custom to give the candidate a "vigil", a time for reconciliation, for speaking with each Knight present, in turn or in a group, about Knight-hood and Chivalry, about the coming responsibilities and joys of his newly acquired rank. There are many forms for this ceremony, none of which I will discuss here in deference to the impact of the experience on all concerned.

**T**he Knight bears the responsibility to defend the ideals of chivalry as he understands them, in concert with other knights. He must defend Ladies, his Sovereign (and to my mind the chief sovereign of the Land is the Country to which we have sworn allegiance a thousand times or more), and throughout all, to "fear dishonor more than death". To do this he must be a more fervent and constant example of his chivalric beliefs than others not yet accorded the accolade, for by his example do others reaffirm their belief in virtue and strive themselves to emulate the same qualities. This is a heavy burden to bear, and yet it weighs less if one is honest with one's self.

In exchange for these burdens, the Knight gains a status even more heartfelt than the "higher rank" of Royal peerages. The Knight ranks alongside other orders of peerage, the Laurel and the Pelican, and yet is more visible and possesses a firm legacy in history and romance. A part of this legacy is worn by our Knights as a sort of mantle, a cloak with a magnetic appeal that allows the Knight to put his thoughts forward with more authority. His reputation is secured with those of his order he has not met, for the belt, chain and spurs about which we will speak next proffer a certain minimum amount of renown and respect to all tournaments until the Knight proves himself unworthy in their minds. May this never happen; I would wish it upon no one.

During the "Knighting" or adoubement ceremony, the candidate is brought forth into court with great circumstance, usually escorted by those he has trained under and respects and in the presence of the gathered Knights of the realm. All are girded with swords, and the candidate approaches and is vested with the tokens of his office, the symbols of his responsibilities and his status. He is fitted spurs to remind himself of his noble lineage. This is generally done by two high ranking members of the Chivalry, one per foot,

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each affixing one spur. He is admonished to bear them with honor, and guard himself lest they be hacked off in disgrace. The King takes the sword of the candidate's choice, generally the Sword of State or that of a Knight he respects, and performs the adoubment, laying it with great emotion on each shoulder, and finally the head. It is this motion that is the element of medieval ceremony that accorded the official status of knighthood, but today the feel is extended to the entire ceremony. The candidate is vested with a sword, if one is present, and charged to bear it only with carefully chosen purpose, for it has two blades, justice and vengeance. A white belt is placed around his waist, often by the Queen or the Knight's Lady or Consort. It symbolizes the purity of purpose, and also in this case of a new beginning, of a rebirth. Lastly, he swears an Oath of Fealty to the Crown and Kingdom, to protect and defend, to the end of his days, and to continue in his Chivalric quest for excellence and virtue. As a mark of this Oath, which is renewed at the Coronation of each new Monarch, a Knight's golden chain is placed around his neck.

Now complete in accoutrement, the newly made Knight faces high expectation. He must make a sincere effort not only to advance and to show virtue to his own satisfaction but now affects others more directly by his more visible, and hopefully brilliant example. It is the beginning to a new path, a path which will still run through the tournament field but which reaches into every aspect of his life—nearly all the Knights I know personally hold the accolade of Knighthood as a precious honor that requires emulation in virtually every aspect of their lives, not simply on the tournament field. The Tournament of Chivalry has done it's job well in these instances, setting men to Virtue and thus enriching our society and our nation. We are all better for it.

*Brian R. Price*

AKA SCA Brion Thornbird ap Rhys, Earl, Knight, Laurel

# ORDINARY KNIGHTS AND ESQUIRES ENRICHING OUR CHIVALRIC RECREATION

Opinion

by

DAVID S. HOORNSTRA

Known in the Society for Creative Anachronism as Daibhid MacLachlan, Squire to Sir Thorvald the Golden, and Baron of the Dragon Court

**PART THE FIRST, IN WHICH MUCH IS  
MADE OF THE NAMES OF SUNDRY RANKS  
AND ESTATES**

The purpose of this essay is to point out avenues for more magic in our recreations of the medieval chivalric scene. Some of these avenues entail the unpleasant duty of focusing on gaps or shortcomings in the support system provided by the SCA for this re-creation, while others offer the enjoyable process of pointing out period practices we could put to good and magical use. In advance I offer the hope that the former will provoke no resentment, for no injury is intended, and that the latter might provide an enjoyable excursion even for those who have been over the ground before.

It is most emphatically labeled "opinion" because it can make no claim to genuine scholarship. The bibliography appended should be taken as a list of sources from which I have taken strong impressions rather than cited chapter and verse. They are also the volumes I most heartily recommend to all interested in tourneys, pas, and the matter of chivalry.

While individual spectators and participants have the primary responsibility for their response to and enjoyment of fantasy opportunities, the less we intrude modernity, the less of any given person's attention will be distracted from enjoyment. Conversely, the more material with a "true-to-period" ring we can lay in everyone's path, the greater the likelihood that any given person, regardless of knowledge, will

be rewarded by the event's evocation of "magick."

Thus, my first concern is to allow tourney and pas designers enough thread for their tapestries to cover up modernity - specifically, that provided by the SCA's own support system.

And it follows as day the night that my second concern is laying down more "ringing-true-to-period" material in the path of the unsuspecting but magically susceptible visitor or participant.

We're making constant progress on the visual part of our "movie."

But apart from names (thanks again to the heralds), the words that meander through our SCA experience and form our verbal "sound track" have not yet surpassed those of cheesy "period" epics from the 1950s.

## WHAT DO YOU CALL A KNIGHT?

Because SCA rules do not allow us to claim land as part of our naming practices, we have wound up avoiding the standard period manner of referring to any lord, whether to his face, to a second person, or even by the person himself.

It is one thing for a bard to refer to "Sir Bors" without mentioning his estate, and quite another for a stranger to thus familiarly "first-name" him. Formally, he is "Bors, Lord of Ban, knight;" and in order of decreasing formality, "Bors, Lord Ban;" or merely "Ban."

If he is humble of manner, he will introduce himself as simply "Bors of Ban" and let you figure out the rest. If his ego or affairs of state require you to know of his estate (both landed and chivalric), he may say "I am Bors, Lord Ban and a knight of England." (Even in the act of showing his enviable station in life, he points out that he is in service to another.) If he feels friendly and you are his social equal, may well invite you to address him as merely "Ban."

This is no fine, Miss Manners sort of point. For nobility, landedness is the whole point.

One phrase I am certain he would never use is "I am Sir Bors."<sup>1</sup> Nor would you come up and say "Er ... Sir Bors.." More likely, a semi-familiar approach would be "My Lord of Ban, ..." "Sir knight" might be used when you know the person is a knight, but not his name or lands. Apart from literary references, "first-naming" among men seems to me to be an artifact not only of our own century but even the latter half thereof. My own generation of males shifted quite uncomfortably from exclusively "lastnaming" even their closest male friends as adolescents to "first-naming" everyone, as adults, in the mid-sixties.

The SCA, born in that "gentler" era, stuck with modern male first-naming habits, in part because few knew any better, and in part because movies incorrectly reinforced them. (The principal exception: Elizabeth and Essex, starring Errol Flynn. "Essex," of course, was an earl, but does anyone remember his first name?)

First-naming Ladies is another matter. There can be a "Lord and Lady Ban," or "Lady Eleanor of Ban." "Lady Eleanor" is indeed a familiar usage, but here the difference in the sexes plays a part. Boys are supposed to "lastname," girls tend to "first-name." In intimate, private usage, boys and girls "first-name" each other.

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<sup>1</sup> Of course, custom varies with culture. I am quite convinced that a 15th century French knight would readily say "Je suis le Sieur de Coucy." On the other hand, a Swedish knight might just as well say "Just call me Lars."

Familiar usage is also used as an expression of status. A superior may "first-name" a junior with impunity if the difference is steep enough. Father to son (in the presence of staff): "Lord Thomas? to your chamber." But the butler might more safely say "If it would please my Lord of Bancroft to retire?"

#### SOLUTIONS

The thing we must ask, as we seek to enrich our chivalric re-creation, is: which is more important: the nineteen-sixties, or, for instance, the *thirteen-sixties*?

Ideally, those with chivalric personae might seriously examine the landedness issue. If you come of a rich family, even if you are not the number-one inheritor, there may well be secondary estates entailed to you. It may also be that there is an estate the name of which you are the rightful bearer, but which is held by another for various legal reasons, or devoted to the use of some abbey for the next ninety-nine years.

I believe the SCA should institute a "Landedness Registry" and allow armigerous members to register land names in the same spirit as persona names are now handled. Give the highest ranks a one-year head start; not because of privilege, but for the good of the sound track. The names mentioned most often, after all, should be the most real-sounding.

The SCA needs money? Of course you should pay for land. The higher the rank, the greater your contribution to the coffers when your land name is approved.

In the meantime, I think we all should consider estate names we might wish to use, research them, and let our close friends in on them for the purpose of a better sound track in our re-creation.

Now, on to the central theme.

#### OF "FIGHTERS" AND OTHER BARBARIANS

The term "fighter" does not bring to mind what I think we really want a gentle in our list field to be: "chivalrous person." It connotes at best "warrior" and

"combatant," or "soldier," but just as readily brings to mind "boxer," "aggressor," "quarreller," "savage," and "killer."

The term "fighter" is used because we have no catch-all phrase for the category of those authorized to participate in armored combative sports. As such, it is in constant use at events, in discussions, normal conversation, heralds' announcements, and list-field "pageantry."

Compared with the evocative terminology we could be using, this amounts to almost as serious a pollution of the event's sound track as talking about computers.

What we should be hearing called to the lists is not "all fighters" but "all Knights and Esquires." The reason we cannot is because the SCA has left a gap between authorization and knighthood sprinkled with only a small number of "squires," only so called because a knight selected them to serve them and be taught.

All the rest, as far as list-related conversation is concerned, are "fighters."

It's embarrassing. Even grade-school kids at demos know better. The SCA's image suffers. But so do the "fighters" who cannot use a better, more magical, period, or evocative term. It's not just their self-image. It's the medieval fantasy in which they cannot quite participate. It's like having your arm in a sling at the grand ball.

There are certainly plenty of "fighters" who fully accept, and even revel in this term. A former female fencing student of mine moved to the East some years ago, joining a militarily-oriented SCA group. When next I saw her, she referred to herself, with pride, as a "man-at-arms." She was also entitled to call herself "squire," but she seemed to think "man-at-arms" fit her fantasy better.

We also have plenty of "beer squires," "tough men-at-arms," and "barbarians," role-players who have no hope of ever receiving the accolade. Such persons, perhaps rightly, prefer to do a good job of what they can do rather than risk failing at what they believe they cannot. That displays more

human adaptability than a clear vision of chivalric re-creation.

But I didn't come to the SCA for its Conan the Barbarian types, nor yet for its military fantasies. Nor is such, I believe, the primary concern of Chronique. More to the point, it is not what the SCA should be encouraging. If we are supposed to be idealists, we should encourage everyone to strive for the ideal rather than settle for the mediocre.

It was surely not anticipated by the founders that SCA knighthood would evolve into such a very exclusive title, given each year to less than half of one percent of the "fighters."\* But because there are so few knights, each knight would have to take on ten or more squires to get all the "fighters" "off the street."

That's assuming that the only problem is numbers. Not every "fighter" can become the squire of just any knight who happens to live within fifty miles. I waited ten years, during which time five members of my home group became knights.

Since we cannot reasonably look to the knights to convert a significant fraction of the remaining "fighters" into something more chivalrically correct, we might consider two other avenues. But first, let us review some period models with a comparative glance at the SCA customary system.

#### THE TERM "ESQUIRE"

Since the SCA has not formalized this rank, the title "esquire" can now be used only by those selected by knights to be their squires.

Although many knights make a display of "taking" a squire at court or feast, this use is entirely unofficial, not recognized by scroll or entry into court records. It also ignores the difference in period between the role of Squire of the Body and the title "Esquire."

During the period of noble tournaments and jousts,\* "esquire" was the lowest rank of those eligible to enter the lists, but that wasn't by any means "nothing," being a

step above "gentleman." Some histories recount that, to enter a tourney, you had to show that you had at least four knights in your lineage. And DeBrett's lists being the son of a knight as one of the criteria for being an Esquire by birth.

Every combatant in the lists was either an esquire or a knight, even if that title was superseded by a higher one, such as Count, Duke, Prince, or King.

For much of the period of tourneys and pas d'armes, the gap between knight and esquire was much narrower than the SCA makes it out. For one thing, knights were not "peers." For another, squires usually came from the very same class and were the social equals of the knights in whose service they were. Any given squire might well be the heir to a lordship, in which case he would not expect to make a career of squire-service, but to take knightly vows upon the age of majority.

Because, in period, the difference between squire and knight was often purely one of age, and consequently a temporary thing, it is to be expected that it was just as often regarded as superficial. Especially when you consider that to serve a knight in war, you had to be mounted, armed and spurred very much like the knight. You had to be able to ride after him into the press of battle and fight at his side. On the field, a knight and his squire during most tourneying periods would have been impossible to distinguish in battle, as in the famous "Battle of Thirty" during a truce in the Hundred Years' War.

The SCA knight's fealty to the crown is a difference not reflected in period practice. (Even knights of the Garter do not swear fealty to the crown. Only peers do that: Peerage is, by definition, holding direct of the crown.) The knight or the squire, coming from the same background, inherited very similar conditions of land-holding, not from the crown but from any of a variety of feudal superiors.

From my own (hardly scholarly) reading, it appears very likely that there were as many "career squires" as there were "career knight-bachelors" receiving livery and

maintenance and sleeping on the floor of some lord's hall.

For much of the feudal era, "Esquire" was much more than another word for squires of the body. It was the lowest rank of the knightly class, whether born or elevated to it, and whether or not attached to a knight. Having rank-either Gentleman or Esquire-with its accompanying Arms was more likely to be a qualification for becoming a knight's squire than a result of it. The rank could be held by award, inheritance, family connection, or holding a minor appointment at a major noble's court.

#### SOLUTIONS

From the foregoing, the basic methodology for bringing "fighters" into the chivalric game should be pretty obvious: reduce the SCA's artificial gap between authorization and knighthood. Ideally, the gap should be narrowed from both ends, extending knighthood downward from its peerage pedestal while promoting the excellent role-playing possibilities in the role and title of Esquire.

Since this issue of *Chronique* features Squires, let us defer the discussion of Knights-Bachelors, Ordinary Knights, and Knights-Banneret (not to mention Knights Errant) for another time and concentrate on bringing the role of Esquire to life in our tourneying endeavors.

In an SCA already used to the difference between a Landed Baron and a Court Baron, it should be no great problem to differentiate between "a squire" (relationship) and "Esquire" (rank). "Squire Bob" does not indicate even petty-noble rank. "Bob, Esquire," does, and also implies inherited or awarded land.

Since SCA squire status neither requires nor confers an award of arms, the jump to knighthood is literally from nothing to everything. It need not be.

Often proposed is the idea of a mid-level fighters' award between "squire" (or "fighter") and "knight" to parallel the kingdom-level arts and sciences awards (Willow and Silver Oak in Midrealm). But, for me, the last thing our event sound-track



needs is another non-period title to mix in with the ones we misuse already.

If we want people to aspire to period-knightly style, we should make joining the chivalric class a normal part of becoming a respected "fighter." I believe the three-part process below, involving very little change to present custom, affords this pathway.

**1. ESTABLISH "SQUIRE" AS A FEUDAL POSITION IN PRIVATE RELATIONSHIP TO A KNIGHT.** This position is a role, granted only by knights, does not require the squire to fight, and confers no rank. The correct form of address is simply "Squire \_\_\_\_." A squire is not thereby a lord, even by courtesy, although he may be otherwise. (If he is, then the higher courtesies apply.)

The knight may designate a squire as "of the Body" or "of the Chamber."

This merely formalizes what is commonly done now. That formalization is only necessary to distinguish that role from what follows.

**2. ESTABLISH THE RANK AND TITLE OF ESQUIRE (NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH THE ROLE OF SQUIRE OF THE BODY OR CHAMBER) AS A RANK GIVEN TO ALL "FIGHTERS" UPON ACHIEVING THE COMBINATION OF AUTHORIZATION AND AN AWARD OF ARMS.** Holding such a rank does not suggest that the holder is above service to a knight; it is, rather, a strong qualification for the role.

As an adjunct to this, replace the word "authorization" with "Achievement."

This will allow us to discard the term "fighter" for most list-field participants.)

**3. REQUIRE (OR AT LEAST STRONGLY SUGGEST) THAT AN AWARD OF ARMS BE A PREREQUISITE FOR ATTEMPTING AUTHORIZATION.** This ties the privilege of combat in the lists to established service to the Society, at least to the minimal level required for most people to receive the Award of Arms. The resulting "authorization graduate" would really deserve the title Esquire, not only in the eyes of the chivalric community, but in the larger SCA world where the rank would be otherwise perceived as

yet another fighter inroad into the limited treasury of period titles and honors.

With the AoA, the presently very mundane process of authorization can become a period-like rite of passage, complete with a period rank given as a result, and the exact equivalent privilege - the right to enter tournaments being the fitting reward.

Requiring the AoA may sound a bit stiff to some, but for me, many of the shortcomings of the SCA can be traced directly to lack of any requirement tied to the privilege of combat at the center stage of the centerpiece of the SCA's pageant, whether of service, knowledge, courtesy, or even presentable costume before becoming eligible to win the highest honors the SCA can bestow.

My personal preference would be for their device and name to be passed too.

The rank and title of Esquire might also be given to non-fighters who combine an AoA with any lesser kingdom award. This would help establish the status of the title in the hierarchy and provide a genuine period title other than Baron to someone other than a combatant.

#### DETAILS

Speaking of that ugly word, our local chapter has for over a year been getting used to a new vocabulary word. We no longer have "fighter practice" on our weekly schedule but "Practice at Arms" or Arms Practice. For "all fighters" as in "we're holding a meeting" we substitute "those who practice arms" or "armored combatants."

Although deferring unto *Part The Second* the very interesting discussion of ordinary orders of knighthood, there is yet one more thread needed to make this part complete.

We mentioned several items held in common between knights and squires, but left until now the most important of them all.

In the ideal form, the essential principle distinguishing the knightly class, including all knights and squires, is not the giving of high honor unto them, but of service. A

knight is, above all else, in service to someone higher in rank or power. The service of squires is merely practice for this, and one leaves service only by leaving knighthood itself. As will be seen in a later discussion, even a knight-errant is still in service to someone.

Following the service principle, we see that the path of knighthood is chosen along with its burden of service, rather than a high honor bestowed from above. It has more parallels to a woman taking the veil and vows of a nun than to being given a peerage. Where the period knight might inherit an obligation to a lord, an SCA knight swears to serve his kingdom's crown.

Unlike an Award of Arms, the rank and title of Esquire should be seen as a mark of entry onto the path of service. This too suggests that much may be required of those desiring to take on this honorable burden.

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## REVIEWS

### *The Chaucerian Handbook:*

*A Manual for Living History, C. 1342-1400*

Vox Clamantis Monographs I

Ed. Mclean, Will & Jeffrey L. Singman

C. 1993

None of the literature I have seen about medieval history equals this work for quality, scope, and usefulness. Within a single volume, the authors and contributors have given real meat with which the re-enactor can fill out their understanding of the fourteenth century.

Written by re-enactors, the volume is of such high quality that it is currently being published by a commercial text book printing house, and will thereby be available to a wider audience. In the meantime, 100 or so copies are available either through the authors or through *Chronique*.

The monograph is long--154 pages divided into six parts plus appendices: *Chaucer's World, The Physical Setting, Clothing and Accoutrements, Arms and Armour, Food, and Entertainments*. Taken together, the manual tells how to put on an event in the 14th century style, stressing authenticity and accuracy. You can find details on cosmology, the church structure, 14th century economics and exchange rates, medieval clothes (even buttons), hair, glasses, recipes, music, songs, dances, games, tournaments, pas d'armes, making more authentic tournament weapons, and an extensive bibliography.

*Will McLean*: RD1 Box 95. Yellow Springs Rd., Malvern,  
PA 19355 (215)-827-1360

## Reading List for Squires

Posing this question of several knights known to me, but two responded. I asked for books they would recommend for their squires to further their understanding of what it would take to be a knight.

Duke Sir Paul of Bellatrix suggested *Zen and the Art of Archery*.

Duke Sir Corin du Soleil was kind enough to forward the following list:

*Beowulf*

*The Song of Roland*

Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*

Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*; Especially the *Knight's Tale* and the *Wife of the Bath's Tale*.

Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, and at least one period treatment of the Arthur legends.

Dante's *Inferno*--at least the beginning, and enough of the middle to see how it goes; enough of *Paradiso* and *Purgatorio* to see how much Dante changes and how he treats his friends. I recommend the John Ciardi translations.

Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier*

Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Taming of the Shrew*

To Inject some period reality into the romance: *The Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellino* and Machiavelli's *The Prince*

And to Inject some modern reality into the romance: Barbara Tuchman's *A Distant Mirror*

To inject some modern romance into the reality: Alfred, Lord Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*

William Morris' *The Well at World's End*

To understand some of our modern sources: J.R.R. Tolkein's *Lord of the Rings*, T.H. White's *Once and Future King*, The Boy Scout's Handbook Sections on citizenship.

For a ripping demonstration of the theory that if you treat a man like a hero, he will act like a hero: Robert Heinlein's *Glory Road*.

*From Duke Stephen and Countess Elina of Beckenham:*

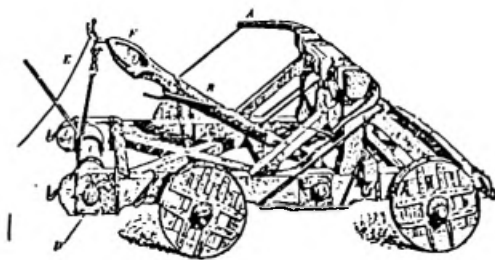
**Combat/ Self Development**

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**MORE NEXT PAGE**



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*King Rene's Tournament Book:* Translation into English of this important work. \$6 from Elizabeth Bennett 169 Sawmill Rd., Pollstown, PA 19464 (215)-948-6630

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*The Chaucerian Handbook:* 154 pp. of excellent "how-to" references from 1342-1400. Will McLean, RD1 Box 95, Yellow Springs Road, Malvern, PA 19355 (215)-827-1360

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*Froissart's Chronicles* Penguin Edition, hardcover, no marks. Chronicler of the 14th century, Froissart recounts many tales of war and chivalry: Hardcover, \$12.50

*The Book of the Courtier* Baldassarre Castiglione: *Milestones of Thought* compact edition. Paper, 100 pp. \$5.00

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-Editor-

## SQUIRES

### CONTINUED FROM PAGE 54

on 12 July, received his pay in York, and that he was not absent. Therefore, 'absent' might have meant away tending to private affairs—there is not really enough information to say. Notice also that Robert was Matthew's uncle, yet he too was a squire and was paid the same. Both of the above-mentioned squires also received a shoe allowance, 20s for a winter robe and 20s for a summer robe, paid in addition to the regular wages.

There seems to have been no general agreement upon when a squire was ready to be knighted: Lull expects that men are made knight who know nothing of chivalry, but hopes that they will learn of it. Setting aside a moment those infants who were knighted to protect lands or for some political reason, a squire was expected to have mastered the arts that would support him as a knight—the ability to handle a horse, to hunt, to fight and to know his way around the feudal and indeed the aristocratic and courtly society to which he was to become a more integral part.

During the 13th century, the social status of a squire rose—he became a member of the chivalric class, the lowest rung on the ladder of nobility. During the 14th century, he moved up further still, and a new lower rung, the gentleman, came into use. Scutifers, Armigers, Squires and Écuyers still served in the old meanings, but as the expense and obligations of knighthood increased in scope, fewer men were willing to take the honor. Indeed, during the 15th century some men had to be compelled to take up the honor of knighthood—as we can see from the letter James Paston received from the crown, ordering him to report for knighting. During this time too Armigers were awarded arms that were recorded by the heralds—the squire had arrived.

During the 15th and 16th century this trend accelerated: many men declined to take up the obligations of knighthood, and as the social and military constraints of the day changed, more men took up the office of "esquire."

The important elements here for tournament re-enactors are several. First, there were different roles for the squire that evolved during their use, ranging from simple military servant to knight-in-training. The roles were sometimes distinct and sometimes overlapping. Sometimes a squire performed in only one capacity, and at other times and in other place he might have performed in several of them, depending upon the individual circumstances and the customs prevailing in his locality. They varied wildly according to place and time.

The historical relationship of knight and squire and squire to society evolved and changed over time; or at least the use of the words usually translated as squire changed. Usage and duty varied, much as the squires in modern re-enactments have varied and differing relationships to their knights. Though this brief introduction does nothing to clarify the confusion, perhaps it will give you an idea of the range of expectations and privileges accorded the historical *squier*. ❖





COMPANY OF ST. MICHAEL  
CONTINUED FROM P. 48

Combatants who won their respective bouts against us were given a silk rose to give to their consort to remind her of their prowess and honor. Comers who lost were given a rose also, but told to take it to their Queen and to tell her that we dedicated our victory to her. Certain comers who distinguished themselves by their bearing, chivalry and prowess were invited to join the Company in accepting challenges. The entirety of the Company of Saint George was so invited, as were four or five others. All in all, the Company and its invitees faced 90 challengers.

The passage at arms was a tremendous success. People came up to us for the rest of the week telling us how much they enjoyed it and hoping that we would have another next year. Next year we will try to have some better props including a period list, more banners, an arming pavilion and shade for the spectators.

Our next tournament is planned for early spring or summer of 1994, and we also plan another passage at arms for Pennsic XXIII. I would welcome comments on this or any other topic relating to chivalry. I can be reached at:

Count Rhys of Harlech, knight  
c/o Hugh T. Knight, Jr.  
220 W. Kleinhans St.  
Easton, PA 18042

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THE KNIGHTLY SHIELD  
CONTINUED FROM T. 37

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THEODORE  
F. MONNICH

*interned in 1984 at the Royal Armouries, H.M. Tower of London after serving apprenticeships in France and the United States. After a decade of work in conservation, and with exhibits design and curation at several institutions throughout the United States, he has recently served as Assistant Armorer in the Department of Arms and Armor at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, from 1988-1991, and Conservator to the Higgins Armory Museum, from 1989-1992, He is now Chief Conservator at the South Carolina State Museum. Address: Conservation Lab, South Carolina State Museum, P.O. Box 100107, Columbia, SC 29202-3107*



## PUZZLER

*"...Then began the shouting, and noise and clamour is raised, and the armies began to draw near. Then on both sides they began to shoot and to cast; not one of them made stint therewith. Sirs, by what I heard, the noble Earl of Salisbury led the Prince's rearguard, that day he joined the battle the very first, for full of ire and wrath the Marshals came upon him, on foot and on horseback, and attacked him by force. When the Earl saw this force he turned his division towards them, and cried out with a loud voice, 'Forward sirs, for God's sake, since it pleases St. George thus that we were the hindmost and shall be the very first, let us so acquit ourselves that we gain honour thereby.' Then might you see the barons approve themselves well in battle; great pastime would it have been to behold for one that had naught there at stake, but certes it was sorely pity and a marvellous and grievous thing..." --Who is the Prince, what was the battle, and whence is the passage from?*

The puzzler from last month was from Honoret Bonet's *Tree of Battles*, the influential 14th century treatise on the laws of war. Bonet's treatise examines many aspect of medieval warfare, attempting to write down what had been a traditional set of values enforced by the Kings through courts presided over by their seneshals, constables, and marshals.

In the passage cited, Bonet seems to be railing against the chivalry for trafficking in commerce, something that according to the "three estate" school of though put forward by the church, was something for the working class. The middle classes never subscribed to this theory, however, and were as we know instrumental in destroying the economic monopoly of the aristocracy, and in so doing also brought the social stature of knights to an end.

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*Chronique* #1, Summer 1992: The Tournament of Chivalry: What does it mean and what does it accomplish?

*Chronique* #2, Fall 1992: Knightly Orders and Tournament Societies, also contains a very useful article Jacks Gambesons for the Company of Saint George.

*Chronique* #3, Winter 1992-1993: Points of Honor, The Battle of Poitiers. Discussions on the meaning of chivalry and points of honor, plus an essay by John Stuart Mill. 64 pp.

*Chronique* #4, Spring 1993: The Pas d'Armes: Contains photographs and a description of the first Saint George pas d'armes, with notes on how to prepare your own such tournament. 72 pp.

*Chronique* #5, Summer 1993: Knighting Ceremonies. Contains the text and comparative kingdom texts discussing the meaning of knightly symbols. Also features an English translation of the *Ordene de Chevalerie*. 72 pp.

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