



Volume 44

The Drekkar
Newsletter
of the Barony of Storvik
in the Kingdom of Atlantia,
branch of the SCA, Inc.
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Issue 12

Season's Greetings!



*Title: Angels Swinging Censers
French , ca. 1170*

"The stained glass produced for the Collegiate Church of Saint-Étienne in Troyes during the late twelfth century represents a major transition from the Romanesque to the Gothic style. None of the panels from what was once an ambitious cycle of scenes—ranging in theme from the public life and Passion of Christ and the Dormition of the Virgin to the life of Saint Nicholas of Myra—remains in its original setting, since the church was destroyed in the wake of the French Revolution."

Source via [The Metropolitan Museum of Art](https://www.metmuseum.org), under a [Creative Commons Open License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

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Upcoming Events

December 8-10: [Dun Carraig Baronial Birthday & Investiture](#) (Nanjemoy, MD). A day of tournaments, feasts, and displays of arts. Armored, rapier, cut and thrust, archery, and thrown weapons. A&S, feast, merchanting. Camping; cabins available via pre-registration only.

January 13: Atlantian 12th Night (Yadkinville, NC). (R) The theme is "Pageantry, Chivalry, and Courtly Love in the 14th Century English Court." No martial activities. Tempore Atlantia Competition (1000 – 1350 AD), feast, very limited merchant space, no camping, no open flames, service animals only.

The next [Storvik Oar and Board](#) tournament will be at the December 18th fighter practice.

Regular Baronial Activities

Locations to regular baronial activities on the last page. Well, regular during a more normal time period. **We currently do not have a site for in-person meetings.**

Populace Gathering: December 17th: Virtual only, 6:30-9 PM. Zoom starts at 6:30, meeting at 7 PM. See the [Facebook event page](#) for further information.

Storvik Fighter Practice: December 4, 11, 18 7-10PM, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church.

Archery Practice: See the [Facebook event page](#) for further information.

Equestrian Practice: All levels welcome. See the Facebook event page for further information.

Dance Practice: December, 4, 11, 18 8-10PM, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church.

Martial Related A&S: No Martial Related A&S meetings this month. See the [Facebook Event Page](#) for further information.

A&S: See the [Facebook event page](#) for contact information.

Baronial At-Home: Not at this current time.

There will be a New Year's Day Banner Painting Workshop from 1-5 PM at the Cheverly Community Center. See [here](#) for further details.

Greetings from their Excellencies!



From the field:

As this year of our journeys comes to its end, we will be traveling to Our sister Barony of Dun Carraig for one more weekend of tourneys and revelry, braving the growing chill of winter to take cheer in each other's company. If you are there, come sit by our fires. If not, raise a mug to us, as we raise one to you.

We hope that you all have a wonderful and peaceful holiday season, however you might celebrate it. This month is a traditional time for gift-giving, but we have already been bestowed the best presents of all; your support, skills, and industry in the service of the Barony of Storvik. We need nothing further than that to

be blessed.

We would not, however, say 'no' to cookies.

In Service,

John and Gracia

Thegns.

OYEZ! OYEZ!

Baronial News Highlights

Maugie Concerts: Maugie's Concerts are going on! See [here](#) for more information.

From the KM: St. Andrews Church has removed the restrictions for the indoor mask mandate for Storvik fighter/dance practice and is instead using a "personal masking preference" guideline. They ask that we open the windows during practice.

Praise the Praiseworthy: Their Excellencies welcome recommendations for awards, as always.

Upcoming Inter-kingdom A&S Events

[Known World Chatelaine Symposium](#), December 30-31, 2023, virtual (listed on Facebook)

[Known World Colour Symposium](#), January 6, 2024, Kingdom of Ealdormere virtual

[SCADEIB Collegium](#), January 20, 2024, Kingdom of An Tir virtual

[Atlantia University](#), February 3-4, 2024, Madison Heights, VA

[Kingdom A&S](#), March 2, 2024, Newport News, VA

The Unique Skills and Work of the Medieval Surveyor

By Křišť'an Věstonice of Moravia

Introduction

One important element of SCA arts and sciences that may not be intuitively known or understood is the role of a surveyor and the surveyor's value to medieval society. Surveyors existed in the Middle Ages; they were guild members given legal sanction as approved agents for their work by the King or through the military.¹ Medieval surveyors were literate and understood complex mathematics – normally the result of a long and rigorous skilled-labor apprenticeship tenure with a guild.

Unlike fine arts, entertainment, or practical craftsmanship, surveying is a skill that does not produce a product of beauty or functionality that can be appreciated in its final form. Surveying is rather like mathematics or astronomy – a tool that increases our ability to create order and improves our understanding of the world around us.

This article aims to increase our awareness of the roles, functions, and value of the surveyor's craft. In doing so, it is hoped that our lives in the Middle Ages – and our collective sense of place in it – may be more deeply and colorfully enriched.

¹Bosshardt, William and Lopus, Jane S. (2013). Business in the Middle Ages: What Was the Role of Guilds? *Social Education*, 77(2), 64-67.

Greek Mathematics Meet Roman Technology

The revival of interest in Euclidean mathematics was a direct result of the “...Renaissance in education and scientific knowledge²... providing the necessary intellectual foundation for the development of [medieval] surveying.”³ At the time, the medieval human concept of an earth-centric universe combined with Euclidean geometry provided accurate earth measurement; but without calculus, was lacking when projected into space [e.g., for maritime navigation].⁴

Medieval surveyors used crude but effective Roman tools for their work.⁵ In the hands of a capable surveyor with a firm grasp of mathematics, these tools were precise and accurate when measured against future scientific standards. There were limitations, however. Roman surveying instruments were restricted in range to the vision of the naked eye, and the equipment was unwieldy and vulnerable to the caprices of weather.⁶

Medieval surveying was – quite simply – grueling mental and physical work, frequently in difficult weather conditions. To

²The Renaissance of course would be hastened by the arrival of the printing press in 1436.

³Hughes, Sarah S. (n.d.) 16th Century Surveyors. *Backsight Magazine*, published by Surveyors Historical Society. Retrieved November 7, 2022 from http://www.surveyhistory.org/16th_century_surveyors1.htm

⁴Hughes, Sarah S. (n.d.) Roman Surveying. *Backsight Magazine*, published by Surveyors Historical Society. Retrieved November 7, 2022 from http://www.surveyhistory.org/roman_surveying1.htm

⁵A future article is planned which will discuss these Roman surveying tools and their use.

⁶*Ibid.* Roman Surveying.

accomplish the work normally required a large team of workhands, each with a specific duty to aid the surveyor.

Tax Assessment for the King

“The principal task of the surveyor in the medieval economy was assessing and recording the customary obligations and rights of tenants of the manor, not the technical business of measuring the size of tracts, or making their boundaries. [The surveyor] kept the rolls and records of rights to land, of agricultural production, of the number of trees in the forest, and of the rents, fees, fines, or days of work due from each tenant to his or her lord.”⁷ In England and throughout central Europe this tax assessment was called *taille* (Tah-LAY), or simply “aid” conducted on behalf of, and under the sanction of, the King.⁸

The scope, therefore, of the medieval surveyor was mathematical, legal, and judicial.⁹ In addition, the surveyor was required to be well versed in geology, fish and wildlife ecology, crop and timber production, animal husbandry, and topography and land measurement.¹⁰ In *taille* assessment, the mathematical and technical aspects of surveying were of secondary importance to the general span of knowledge required for accurate taxation.

⁷Ibid. 16th Century Surveyors.

⁸Encyclopaedia Britannica. (1998).

⁹Ibid. 16th Century Surveyors.

¹⁰A future article is planned which will discuss Medieval land measure and the *taille* tax system.

Public Works

In addition to legal authority for taille assessments, medieval surveyors also possessed technical expertise to support a variety of public works which benefitted public commerce, the military, and the concerns of the Crown.

- Surveying works for harbors and wharves, canals and aqueducts, and all-weather stone roads supported commercial and military needs.
- Plumbed city walls and fortifications supported military defense.
- Mapping and boundary surveys supported the sovereign interests of the Crown.

Of special note were road and city design surveys.

In laying the course for a road, the surveyor had to understand topography and carry on a fine balance between the cost of expensive road materials and construction against the shortest viable distance between two points. Horse and oxen-drawn commerce required a gentle gradient. As well, a steep road gradient risked washing out in heavy rains. The surveyor had to work with the terrain to lay out a road that could efficiently carry hundreds of years of traffic. Finally, the medieval surveyor supported the interests of organized religion. The urban layout of cities significantly changed in the mid 1300's from a random form to a configuration which conveyed

Christian symbolism. City plots and streets were straightened and paralleled through accurate surveying, providing a Euclidean aesthetic designed to reflect order, beauty, and truth – pleasing God as He looked down from Heaven.¹¹

Value to Royalty and to the People

Using Greek mathematics and Roman technology, the role and work of a surveyor spans a significant part of medieval life. Kings, Barons, and Lords relied on trusted talle assessors to assure effective yet equitable taxation from their subjects. Surveying support to public works promoted efficient commerce for economic growth and welfare to the populace; and it maximized the effectiveness of the King’s instruments of war. The surveyor’s work also reproduced mathematical order in city design that reflected medieval Christian aesthetic values designed to please God.



The author hopes that our lives and personas of the Middle Ages are enriched by a consideration of how surveying as an art and science touches nearly everything we do, and improves our medieval world.

Křišř’an Věstonice - spoken: “*Khrish TAHN Vest oh NEET seh*”, is a surveyor from Moravia (southern Czechia) in 1435. He conducts talle aid assessments on behalf of the Crown; however, his primary

¹¹Lilley, Keith, D. (2003). *Cities of God? Medieval urban forms and their Christian symbolism*. London: Royal Geographical Society.

surveying work is determining precise elevation measurements used to drain marshes and swamps, thereby securing viable farmland.

*Křišťan is currently a subject in the Barony of Ponte Alto.*¹²

¹²Křišťan has submitted his device (displayed above) through the College of Heralds of Atlantia. Final SCA approval for the device is currently pending.

Baronial Meeting Notes, November

(This month's meeting was canceled, due to scheduling conflicts and other factors. The next meeting will be on December 17th, via Zoom.)

Baronial Regnum

Baron and Baroness of Storvik

Thegn John West & Thegn Graça Esperança de Sevilla

J. Hutchings and G. Hutchings

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Knight Marshal

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Armored Deputy

Sir Carlyle Jamesson

Minister of Lists

Mistress Kunigunde von Darmstadt
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Rapier Marshal

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Web Minister

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Equestrian Marshal**Youth Minister**

Lady Astrid Spakona

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Baronial Champions**Archery**

Lady Sonya Flicker

Arts & Sciences

Lady Alicia of Cambion

Bardic

Lord Charles Alexander

Equestrian

Lord William

Ethereal

Lady Marguerite de Cheneau

Heavy Weapons

Sir Marcus de Rath

Rapier

Lady Marta de Lyon

Youth

Paul of Storvik

Populace meetings are held the 3rd Sunday of the month at 6:30pm via Zoom. Baronial business will be conducted at 7pm.

Fight practice (armored and rapier) and **dance practice** are held each Monday at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 4512 College Ave., College Park, MD 20740, at the corner of College Ave and Princeton Ave. off of Route 1, south of Paint Branch Pkwy. 7 blocks from the College Park/U of MD Metro on the Green Line.

Archery practice currently canceled: usually on Sunday 11:00am at Adelphi archery range, 2800 University Blvd E, Adelphi, MD 20783; equipment-making at Lord Cameron's during inclement weather.

Storvik Arts & Sciences Society: 9426 Canterbury Riding, Laurel, MD. Right off I-95 exit 35A. Free unassigned parking.

Baronial At-Home:



Release Forms

Want to share something in the Drekkar? Give me legal permission to do so!

Please send submissions to

Moe Lane
9426 Canterbury Riding
Laurel, MD 20723
chronicler@storvik.atlantia.sca.org

[Grant of Use Form](#): For articles, non-photograph artwork, most other contributions

[Model Release Form](#): People appearing in photographs must sign this if:

1. The image is portrait-style
2. The photograph is taken in a private space at an event (such as a personal encampment)
3. The photograph is taken at a non-public venue (such as an armor-making workshop at a home)

No model release form is needed when the photograph is taken at a public place and in a public forum

(where there is no expectation of privacy), including:

- any SCA contest or competition, merchants' row, court, class, etc.

[Photo Release Form](#): The photographer who takes a picture (of anything or anyone) must sign a release form.