

Dox Borealis

Ealdormere's Navy



*Supplemental Newsletter for the
Kingdom of Ealdormere, August 2023*

Anno Societatis LIV

Regnum Ealdormerensis

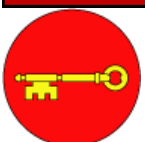


Their Royal Majesties
Prince Evander & Princess Marioun
ealdormere.crown@gmail.com



Their Royal Highnesses
Prince Chrispin & Princess Anne
ealdormere.heirs@gmail.com

Ealdormere's Officers of State



Seneschal: Magistra Lucia de Moranza
ealdormere.kseneschal@gmail.com



Trillium Herald: Herr Matthäus Lindenhayn von Schaffhausen
trilliumherald@gmail.com



Chancellor of the Exchequary: Arlette of the Rozakii,
18 Sunnyridge Rd, Jerseyville, ON L0R1R0 905-648-9743
ealdormere.exchequer@gmail.com



Earl Marshal: Sir Gannicus the Hibernian
earlmarshal.ealdormere@gmail.com



Lord Clerk-Register: Baron Penda of Glyndmere
ealdormereweb@gmail.com



Arts & Sciences: Mastyeritsa Marina Anastasia Ozeroski
ealdormere.kmoas@gmail.com



Chronicler: Baroness Lucia de Enzinas,
ealdormere.kchronicler@gmail.com

SOCIETY FOR CREATIVE ANACHRONISM INC.

Phone: 800-789-7486 or 408-263-9305, for additional information please go to: www.sca.org

Society Seneschal: Baron Aylwin Watkyns, OP (Mike Watkins), 334-744-9354 | seneschal@sca.org

Corporate Secretary and Registrar: Renee Signorotti, 800-789-7486 or 408-263-9305 (ext. 203)

Ombudsman for Ealdormere: Craig Carter (Duke Quintus Aurelius Dracontius), 817-807-5280 | ccarter@director.sca.org

This newsletter is available online at <http://enewsletter.sca.org/> for current Sustaining, Family, & International members. Membership forms available at: <https://membership.sca.org>

Event Calendar

July 2024

1 Deadline for August Tidings
4-7 Knowne World Dance & Music Symposium, Middle Kingdom (Danville, IN)
July 26- August 11 Pennsic War 51, Kingdom of Aethelmarc (Slippery Rock, PA)

August 2024

1 Deadline for September Tidings
July 26- August 11 Pennsic War 51, Kingdom of Aethelmarc (Slippery Rock, PA)
2 - 4 Murder Muster, Shire of Champcorbeau (Merlin, ON)
Aug 29-Sept 2 Gwyl y Fflam - Autumn Flames, Shire of Bastille du Lac (Havelock, ON)
Aug 30 -Sept 2 Known World Cooks & Bards Symposium, Kingdom of Aethelmarc,(NY)

September 2024

1 Deadline for October Tidings
Aug 29-Sept 2 Gwyl y Fflam - Autumn Flames, Shire of Bastille du Lac (Havelock, ON)
14 Stone the Crows, Shire of Champcorbeau (Merlin, ON)
21 Brawl in the Fall IV, Canton of Petrea Thule (Codrington, ON)
28 Fall Coronation, Barony of Rising Waters (Rockton, ON)

October 2024

1 Deadline for November Tidings
5 Huntsman's Havest, Barony of Ben Dunfirth (Binbrook, ON)
19 Crown Tournament, Canton of Bryniau Twynnog (Shakespeare, ON)
26 Step Spritely, Canton of Monadh (Missisauga, ON)

November 2024

1 Deadline for December Tidings

December 2024

1 Deadline for January Tidings
7 Wassail, Canton of Bryniau Twynnog (Shakespeare, ON)

<https://ealdormere.ca/how-to-register-your-event-the-kingdom-of-ealdormere/>

Kingdom Event Rotation

2024

2024 Spring A&S: Rising Waters
2024 Spring Coronation: Ben Dunfirth
2024 Spring Crown: Septentria
2024 Fall Coronation: Skraeling Althing
2024 Fall Crown: Ramshaven

2025

2025 Spring A&S: Shires
(assist from Ramshaven)
2025 Spring Coronation: Rising Waters
2025 Spring Crown: Ben Dunfirth
2025 Fall Coronation: Septentria
2024 Fall Crown: Skraeling Althing

2026

2026 Spring A&S: Ramshaven
2026 Spring Coronation: Shires
(assist from Skraeling Althing)
2026 Spring Crown: Rising Waters
2026 Fall Coronation: Ben Dunfirth
2026 Fall Crown: Septentria

2027

2027 Spring A&S: Skraeling Althing
2027 Spring Coronation: Ramshaven
2027 Spring Crown: Shires
(assist from Septentria)
2027 Fall Coronation: Rising Waters
2027 Fall Crown: Ben Dunfirth

From the Kingdom Chronicler



Heave Ho Readers!

As are most of the Vox issues, this one focuses on another aspect of Ealdormere Culture, sea faring individuals. The letter of Marque is a really cool award that can be given to someone whose done a lot of work on their persona of a pirate, a privateer or corsair, or someone who delighted their royal betters in someway. Its also a delightful was of exploring a persona that is a little bit rouge but well documented throughout history.

Listed ships that say they have permission to sail the Inland Seas (incomplete).

- Captain Mateo de Merida sails the Crimson Star
- Noble Captain of the Night Watch, Lord Gareth Cambell
- The trading hoy Bleek Paard, skippered by Varenko.
- The Barqueing Spider, Canadia Northern-Storm
- Katrina Prebensdottir and Iohn Spooner have letter of marque from Thescore
- Captain Widow, in her ship 'The Clever Wife',
- Captain Bloodfox in 'The Black Trillium',
- The Red Arrow, Colyne Stewart
- Albrect Stampfer captained the Gloriana
- White Rose, captained by Lady Muirghean.
- Tygershark a ship with roots in Ealdormere once captained by Princess Anne

Retired:

- Hamish Macleod became Captain of the Ealdormerian the Barqueing Spider with a letter of Marque from King Evander and Queen Marioun in 2018. Later 2021, or 2022 due to health problems, the Barqueing Spider was transferred to his first mate Canadia Northern Storm.
- Admiral Gunther.

Also part of the success of the Navy:

- Master Wilhelm von Pottruff, Naval Tailor
- Lord Robert the Blue Castellan of Boldt Castle and Hart Island
- Mistress Lucrece de Montsoreau, Governor of Port Rowan

None of these Captains are wanted at this time.

If you have ideas for the Vox Borealis please email me.

Cheerfully Yours
Lucia de Enzinias,
Chronicler



Photo of dread pirates prand archery targets
povided by Master Colyne

The Night Watch

[date blurred with age]

Unto the Good Lord High Admiral, Lord Gunther Wahlstadt of Bremen, does The Honourable Lord Albrecht Stampfer, Sergeant of the Night Watch, Bailiff and Alderman of the Royal City, send Greetings and Felicitations!

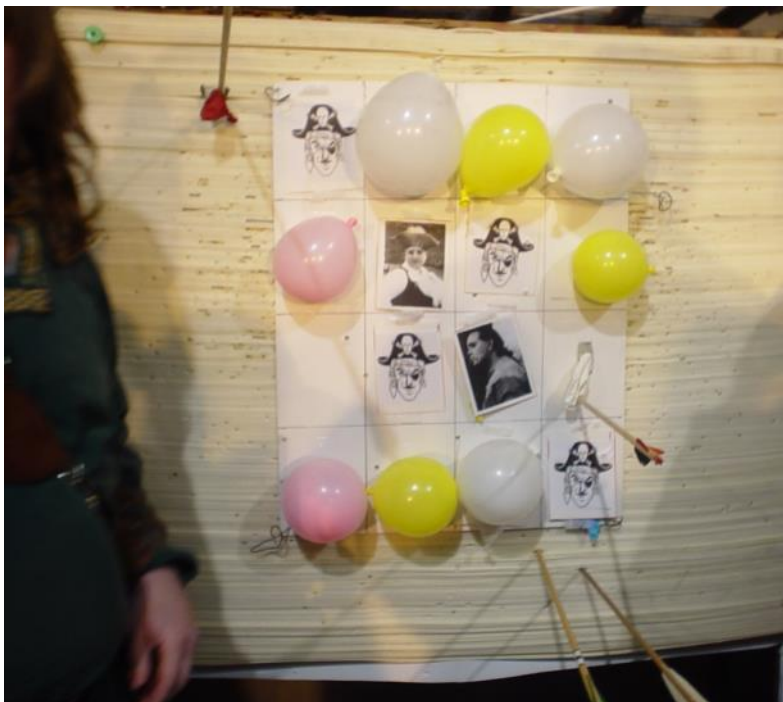
It has come to attention of the most Noble Captain of the Night Watch, Lord Gareth Cambell, that certain persons of disreputable qualities, known as Pirates, have been sighted cruising the waters of the Inland Seas. This is in violation of numerous laws and a threat to the free flow of Commerce which is so vital to the interests of the Royal City. The Night Watch has received Intelligence of a massing of said Pirates in the waters near the Barony of Ben Dunfirth, at an event referred to by the rather unsavoury title of Murder Melee.

The Night Watch wishes to seek a Commission from yourself to equip a vessel with crew and armaments in order to seek out these law breakers and deal with them through the judicious use of sword and shot. If we could gain such a Commission from you, we would enter into a discussion with His Excellency, Baron Alistair Kirk of Ben Dunfirth, seeking permission for our vessel to operate in the waters under his control, and remove this threat to Order. Baron Alistair is an old Student of mine, and I feel he would be amenable to such an arrangement.

If I could know your thoughts on this, I would greatly appreciate it as crewing and equipping a vessel may take some time, and we would like to get started as soon as possible.

Yours in Service

Albrecht



Hello;

As Castellan of Boldt Castle and Hart Island upon which it stands (which includes a harbour partially protected from the sea with a wall..), it is part of my (self-appointed...) duties to grant safe harbour to any ship bearing the Red Standard of Ealdormere, the Banner or Colours of the Kingdoms Baronies, Cantons, Strongholds, Shires, Houses and Guilds, or a Letter of Marque from the Admirals of the Inland Seas (TRM Ealdormere).

There is also an agreement with Dragon Dormant for their ships to be allowed privileged trade (a lower tax rate basically..) within the port area dating back to the days of Baron Derfel and Baroness Melisande.

Please let me know what you're looking for.. I have only one 'ship' and it's to get to the island.

Robert

Letter of Marque, Thescorre

Sadira, by the Grace of Allah, Their Majesties of Aethelmearc, & the will of her people 2nd & 8th Baroness of Thescorre, Mistress of the Laurel & Pelican, Wing Commander of Thought, Memorie, & Bob: unto all and singular to whom these presents come or otherwise apperteigne: Greeting!

Her Excellency, being credibly informed that good Gentle Iohn Spooner, havig journeyed to the coast of the great in-land sea beside which Thescorre labours industriously, & having proven both courteous and puissante, is well capable of commanding dyverse shypes for the annoyance of Thescorre's enemies. Thus Her Excellency hath resolved & determined to extend her gracious license so that the aforesaid's renown may be increased in the coming year by their honorable service as a Privateer. Moreover they shall have of Her: clemency, deepest appreciation, and zeal for theri efforts, & recognition in accordance with the counsel lof Thought, Memorie. & Bob, so that all shalt acknowledge their triumph in the Competition of Thrown Weapons.

To witness whereof She hath caused her sign and seal here to be affixed, at Thecorre's Avian Court on the XXVII day of Maye 2017, being the LII year of the Society.

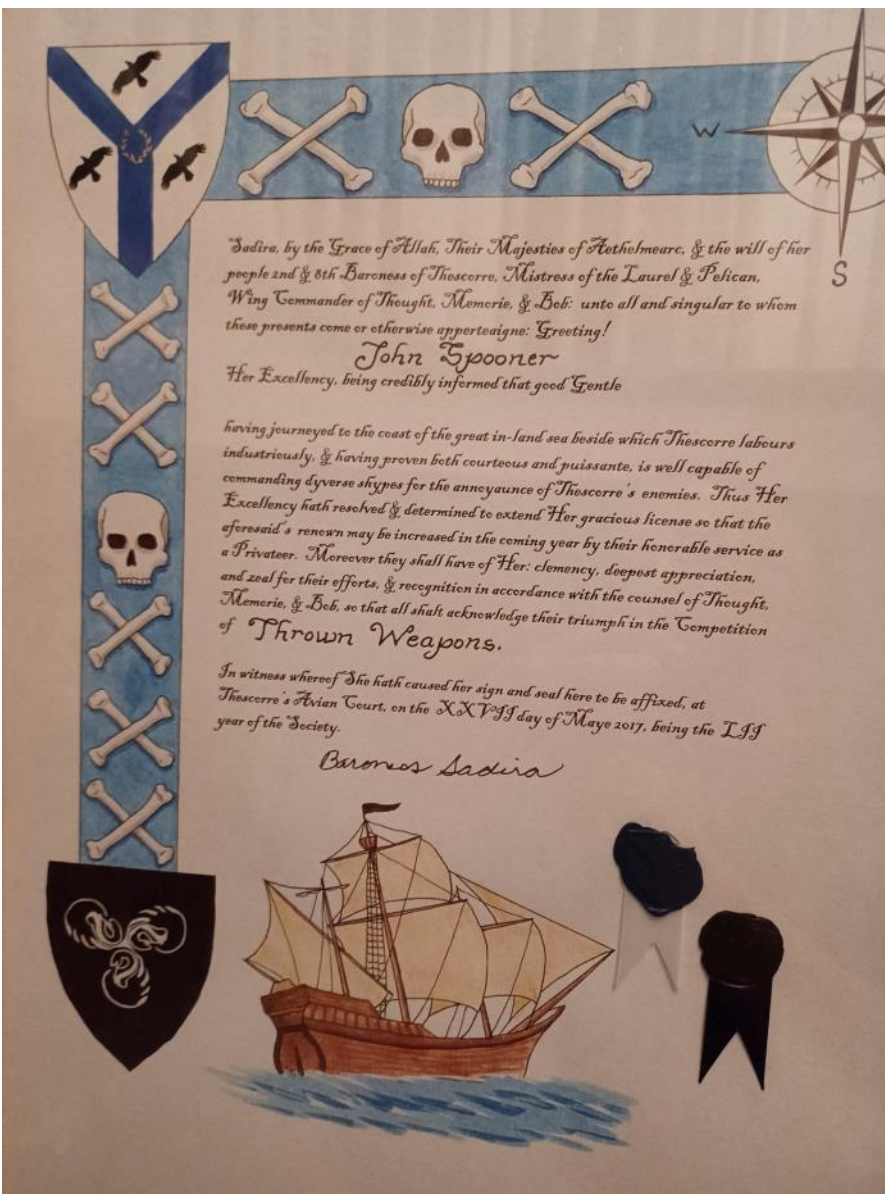


Photo provided by The Honourable Lord Iohn Spooner

Crimson Star

Captain Mateo de Merida sails the Crimson Star from the port just south of the Shire of Trinovantia Nova with her crew though he's been docked at the city of Bayonne for some number of years... preoccupied with familial duties. Some of the crew occasionally take the ship out to fish or look for sea monsters....never anything illegal, of course.

The White Rose is our sister ship, sailing from Port Huron and the March of St. Martin. Captained by Lady Muirghean. We enjoyed sailing together for a number of years.



Photo provided by Lady Cainer ingen hui Chatharnaig

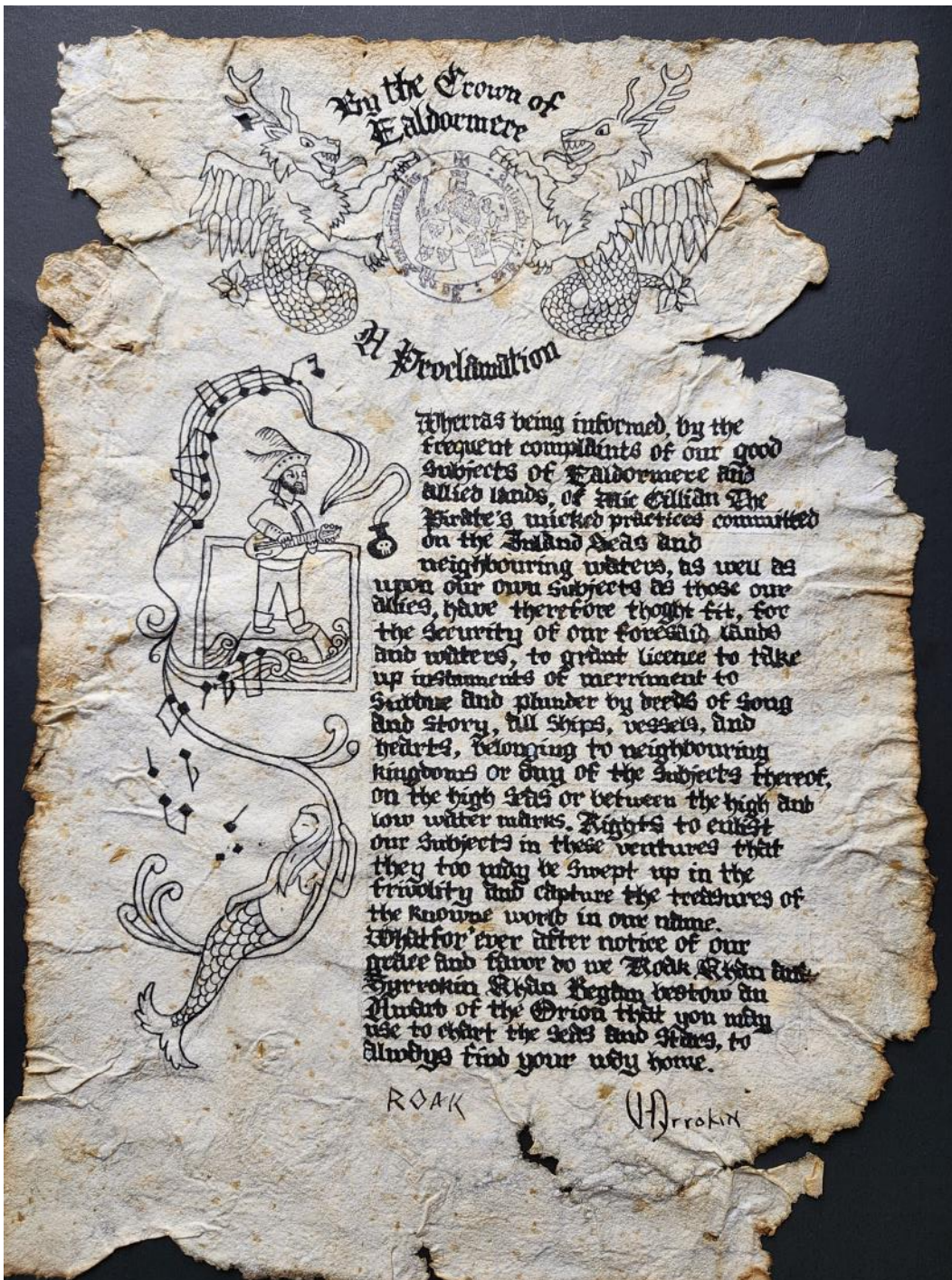
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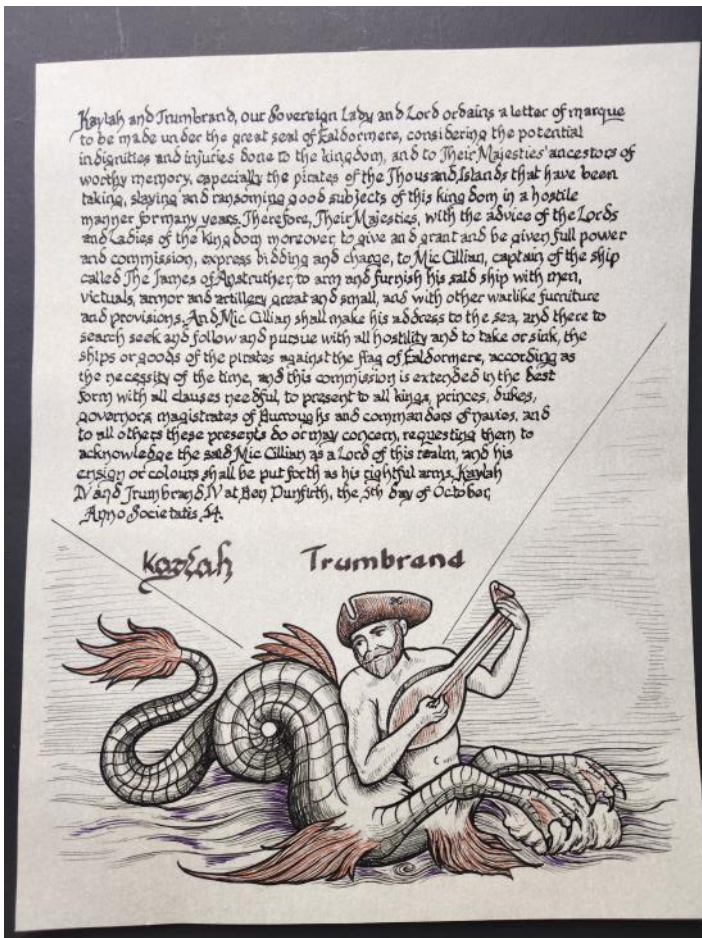
"HG Baldric was one of my pirates/privateers appointed at trillies 2017. He has a lovely letter stating his job description written up by mistress Nicola. And a pirate flag given by master Lars. Also had a small group of privateers with letters of Marque from 1990 Ealdormere principality. "

Capt'n Cillian

...I'm current without a crew. Before joining the SCA, I was a part o' a professional pirate crew that performed music and theatre aboard ships, at festivals, parades, bars, burlesque shows, special events, etc... But I broke away from them to go solo and then joined the SCA and have been solo ever since in the SCA but Captained special guest musicians backing me up for my own performances here and there outside the SCA.

Photos provided by Capt'n Cillian





Award of Arms—Mic Cillian

Kaylah and Trumbrand, our Sovereign Lady and Lord ordains a letter of marque to be made under the great seal of Ealdormere, considering the potential indignities and injuries done to the Kingdom, and to Their Majesties' ancestors of worthy memory, especially the pirates of the Thousand Islands that have been taking, slaying and ransoming good subjects of this Kingdom in a hostile manner for many years.

Therefore, Their majesties, wit the advice of the Lords and Ladies of the Kingdom moreover, to give and grant and be given full power and commission, express bidding and charge, to Mic Cillian, captain of the ship called The James of Anstruther, to arm and furnish his said ship with men, victuals, armor and artillery great and small, and with other warlike furniture and provisions.

And Mic Cillian shall make his address to the sea, and there to search and seek and follow and pursue with all hostility and to take or sink, the ships or goods of the pirates against the flag of Ealdormere, according as the necessity of the time, and this commission is extended in the best form with all clauses needful, to present to all kings, princes, dukes, governors, magistrates of Burroughs and commanders of Navies and to all others these presents do or may concern, requesting them to acknowledge the saif Mic Cillian and Lord of this realm, and his ensign or colours shall be forth as his rightful arms.

Kayla IV and Trumbrand IV at Ben Dunfirth, the 5th day of October, Anno Societatis 54.

Sic sibscribitur, Augusta et Brand

Barqueing Spider

Andrew Lewis writes:

My brother Daniel (Hamish Macleod) was given an Ealdormerian letter of marque for his ship the Barque ing Spider By King Evander and Queen Marioun in 2018. In 2019, Hamish became the Dread Pirate Hamish at Pennsic . Due to health concerns, Hamish gave his ship to his first mate Suzi Hedricks (Canada Northern Storm) in 2021. She received a letter of marque for the Barqueing Spider from King Rattanicus and Queen Isabel in either 2021 or 2022. The flag posted is the flag of the Barque ing Spider that I designed for Hamish and his ship. I have let my brother know you are looking for information and history for Ealdormerian pirates and he said he will look for his letter of marque.



The design is black, red and white for the colours we chose for our pennsic camping group, . The yellow cat eyes represent Black patch which we are both long time members of. The Rapiers are because he likes to do fencing, A skull because he was a privateer, and a spider obviously for his ship the Barqueing Spider (Ealdormerian barking spider) and the red and white for Ealdormere as well

[photo provided by Andrew Lewis]

Red Arrow, August 26 SA 42

A Day of Piracy (Aug 25, 2007)

By THLaird Colyne Stewart

From the Journals of THL Colyne Stewart, captain of the Red Arrow August 26 th , in the Year of our Lord 42, while at berth in the Rouge Port. As stated in an earlier entry, dispatches had reached my ear of a gathering of pirates, buccaneers, privateers and other knaves that were going to once again descend upon the Shire of Bastia du Lac. Having many friends in the good shire, and having a letter of mark from a previous baron and baroness of Septentria, I could not let such potential deprivation go unanswered.

Ethereal heralds were sent far and wide, and I did challenge all pirates to battle, letting them know that my crew and I would be on hand to protect the Bastia.

Yesterday, amidst a misting of rain, my good ship rolled into port, flying our colours proudly. Many pirates stood jeering on the docks, shouting challenges to us and waving their cutlasses. Most of my crew were in no condition to fight, but Lord Snæbjörn sverðsbrjótr—the ship’s cook—exchanged his apron for armour and followed me ashore.

I wore a bright new basinet helm with chain mail camaille, and we both wore surcoats in our canton’s colours.

We were quickly joined by the Shire militia, and squires of some of our Norman King’s loyal knights. Her Saxon Majesty herself and her husband (the King’s hostage) also appeared out of the mist, and the jeers of the pirates were transformed into worried mutters.

I noticed that there were no signs of Cap’n Bloodfox and his Black Trillium, nor of Cap’n Widow and her Clever Wife. I did however see the Jolly Menken lolling at anchor, though Chequey beard stood at the ship’s rail, seemingly content to watch the coming violence and not take part. Beside him stood a tall blond woman with small braids in her hair who looked both fierce and congenial. She was, so I heard later, Captain Sincerity Cadfan, Captain of the Jolly Menken.

There then followed a great battle as we loyal Ealdormereans fought with the scum of the sea. This battle ended up taking place on a rickety boat that a squire-brother of mine had left behind when he moved to the East Kingdom. In the mist and rain and fog I fear things got a bit muddled, and it felt as if we all fought alone. In the end I stood upon the deck, triumphant. ¹ Quickly I bent to tend to Her Majesty when the drizzling rain turned into a storm. The boat was torn from its moorings and cast adrift. All aboard grabbed hold of the rails to keep from being swept overboard. I lost consciousness at some point.

When I awoke it was to find myself on the shore of a small island. I could see no sign of any of my companions, and quickly set out in search of the Queen. Soon I found our boat, miraculously still afloat. However, between it and me stood four pairs of pirates, each eyeing the others and gesturing with their weapons. It appeared that each pair was from a rival crew, and none of them wanted to share rescue with the others. I knew I had to secure this vessel for myself, so I could use it to take Her Majesty, Snæbjörn, and the others back to Bastia port.

One of the pairs contained a pirate Queen, and she saw me standing at the tree line and asked for my support in the coming battle. Usually I would never agree to such a request, but since I needed to secure the boat, and had less likelihood of doing so alone, I agreed.

When the battle started I managed to fell a fierce amazon and her giant companion, only to find that the pirate Queen and her guard had both been killed. Alone I faced off against the other remaining pirates, and in the end I found myself standing with my back to the boat, one lone bull of a man staring bloodily at me. He charged me waving a mace, and I managed to gut the rogue as he thundered past. ² I quickly clambered aboard the vessel and tacked out into the now calm waters to begin circling the island. Before long I managed to find Her Majesty and the others. Luckily one of the Shire militia was an excellent navigator, and before long we were back in the Bastia.

When we returned I was taken aside by Her Majesty and asked to come up with the wordings for two awards that were to be handed out that day in court. I found myself sequestered with a knight who looked remarkably similar to Chequeybeard, who did the calligraphy for one of the wordings I came up with.

Court was soon held, and I attended Her Majesty as her herald. I was most pleased to read out scrolls for the following deserving individuals:

- Elizabeth of Bastia du Lac, Award of Arms
- Byrta of Bastia du Lac, Award of Arms
- Athena, Award of the Wolf’s Cub
- Serenity, Award of the Wolf’s Cub
- Ellie, Award of the Wolf’s Cub

Red Arrow, August 26 SA 42 con't

- Lord Leod Dubh, Award of the Scarlet Banner
- Lord Snæbjörn sverðsbrjótr, Award of the Maiden's Heart

After court I was able to sit and play at dice (without wagers) with several friends, which is a luxury I have not been able to partake of for a long time.

The Melusine and Phoenix Inn³ then presented an excellent feast, with my favourite dish being the spicy mushroom soup. All present were entertained by juggling, song, and the telling of stories. It was a most excellent day.

1. The fighters present fought a round robin where each fight took place inside a small row boat. I managed to come in first with 6 wins—winning a reign point for the Normans—followed by Her Majesty Domhnail and Quilliam of the Hrogn in second (each with 5 wins).
2. The fighters were split into teams of two, though since there was an uneven number of fighters I was a team of one. Her Majesty and my brother asked me to fight with them in exchange for some beer and Peanut Butter Cups. (This alliance ended up being in spirit only, as we never ended up actually fighting side by side.) We ran through this scenario of fighting for the boat four times; I managed to claim the boat in the first run through.
3. The feast was prepared by THL Melusine de la Rose, though since she ended up having to work that day, it was prepped on site by Sir Siegfried Brandbeorn.

Red Arrow, October 4 SA 38

Thule Takes Bastille into its 'Protection'(A Day of Piracy III, Oct 4, 2003)
By THLaird Colyne Stewart

My name is known only to my mother, but the men on my ship call me Cap'n Bloodfox. (At least to me ears. I'm sure they call me other names behinds me back, but they're all smart enough to know what'll happen to 'em if I hear 'em utter such names.) I am, as me name implies, the proud owner of a ship—a schooner that was once part of Her Majesty's fleet. If you look carefully under the paint you can still see her old name of Huntress. Nowadays I calls her Interceptor.

When I was in port at a cove in Greenhithe I heard some lads talkin' about a group of raiders heading down the river from Petrea Thule. Them Thuligans were apparently aiming to put the shire of Bastille du Lac under their 'protection'. The du Lacers were right-ly nervous, as the might of the Thule archers is well known (I have a few on my own paybooks.)

Well I'm always lookin' for work or booty (preferably booty that don't take too much work to acquire) and so's when one of them du Lacers comes over to my table and offers me a job, I takes it of course.

The offer was good, though I ain't gonna share with you scurvy lot jus' what was offered. Let's just saw it'll keep me in rum and parrots for a good long time.

I went to me ship and me woman, a cap'n in her own right who we calls Widow, had already got it rigged. She said she could smell profit in the air. I threw on me greatcoat and told me navigator Mr. Andersen to get us underway. Mr. Andersen's an odd one, from Norway as I understands. Thinks he's a Viking.

Our ship sailed up the Trent without running across any of Her Majesty's fleet, and we berthed in the Bastille port. Far out in the distance I could see the Thule ship approaching. Mr. Andersen told me it was a drakkar. Alls I know was it was an ugly thing with a long curved prow, and it sat too low in the water. Round shields were hung along both sides painted with Thule's star and chain.

Since we could see that it would be a few hours yet afore they arrived, the lads decided to practice with our swords and harpoons just in case the fighting came to boardin'. The first thing we did was lay out a plank over the water and took turns pairin' off and fightin' on it. If'n ya fell off the plank, well, you were good as shark food you were.

Then this fellow comes over, the local constable he is, but he thinks he's a knight or some such. I swear, the folks 'round these parts are touched in the head more of'en than not. Well this constable, he decides we should up the ante as it were, and he took down the plank and he put a small rowboat in the drink, and he says we're to stand in the itty dingy, one in the bow and one in the stern and fight it that way. All ten men and women would take a turn until they had all fought each other.

This sounded like fun to us, though the cramped fightin' conditions were a hindrance to many of us. In a fight against a Welshman named Dafydd I ended up sitting on my duff on the seat whilst we continued to trade blows. This constable, who's idea this was, ended up fallin' in the drink more than once. He was a soggy lad by the time we was done. One feller, name of Rothgar (also from Norway, gar!) came in late, so's he fought us all in a row and did right well for himself, I must say. Over all though, it was a German name of Siegfried who come out on top.

The town bell started ringing then, and we knew it was time to pick up our bows to fight off them Thuligans. So's we line up on the shore as the drakkar draws closer and we ready our bows. Only thing is, the Thuligans are smart devils and they had sent a group of their own archers in by land. So's while we're shooting at the Thule ship, these archers are shootin' at the Bastille ship that was going out to meet the drakkar. What's more, the Iron Companions, which is part o' the army of Septentria, were marching with 'em.

The arrows flew thicker than flies on a dead man, and I am sorry to say that the Bastille ship was the one to sink beneath the waves. Ar, that was hard luck. But I had been paid already, so's it's all the same to me.*

With that bit o' excitement out of the way I went back over to the lads for a bit more swashbuckling. This time they locked all us lads up in a cell and told us that we had to fight our way out if'n we ever wanted to be free men again. I swear I thought that was a ploy by the constable to keep us all locked up, but they placed only three guards and left us our weapons. So one by one we rushed the first guard. We only had to hit the guard once to get past him, while he had to hit us thrice. The first guard was that Siegfried fellow. Not many of us made it past him (including me, I am sorry to say). The second guard was a man by the name of Aaron Worgenson who chopped a good many of the lads down to size. The last guard they later told me was the King hisself! Only two managed to get past him—the Baron of Skraeling Althing, and a lad named Benedict, who is this baron's squire. The constable puts 'em both in the itty boat, and makes 'em fight it out! Well they fight long and hard, but in the end it's the baron that walks away.

We then thought we'd play a game, and so we grabbed a bunch of folk and put a bag over their heads and tied their hands in front of 'em. It was great fun to watch 'em wriggle like a worm while they tried to free themselves. The first six people to undo their bonds were then sat at a table with bowls of seaweed plunked in front of 'em. Some of those tryin' to eat that dry weed had a hard time of it, but this lass in red satin and a big furry hat name o' Iolanda just gobbles it down! That Siegfried put all the weed in his gob at once, and then couldn't swallow it as it sucked up all his spit. One o'them Thuligan archer chaps, named Augustyn, was watchin' this while quite calmly eatin' his weed little bit by little bit. In the ends, Siegfried just manages to swallow his great mass of weed at the same time that Augustyn finishes his last pinch. So's they take these three and blindfold 'em all, and make them walk through a stretch of ground strewn with debris, while a friend tries to talk 'em through it. Augustyn made it in the fastest time, as he took very long strides.

All of us are right famished by this point, so's we descend on the wharf-side inn where we is all stuffed right full of some o' the best grub I'd et in a long while. The 'chicken' though looked a lot like me parrot (who had been missing all day).

After we had all et our fill, me woman Widow is dragged off by the constable to see the king. Visions of gallows is now flashing through me head, but in a weird twist of fate they wants her to stand at court and read out charges, rather than answer them.

As luck would have it, all the charges is good ones anyways. It seems the king was in a generous mood, even with Thuligan pirates claiming one of his shires as their own. So's he calls up some folks and gives 'em their rewards, though I don't know them all. I do know that this lad name of Verenko was given an Award of the Orion, even though he didn't already have his Award of Arms (the AoA now being conferred by the Orion). Also Lord Kennric Manning and Lady Tatianna were given these Orions as well for their fine craftwork. Also, that Benedict bloke, who apparently did not die of the wounds his baron kindly gave him, was given a Scarlet Banner in recognition of his skill with the blade.

Once the court was over, me and my crew snuck out the back door to avoid that constable and we snuck outta the bay under cover of darkness. My sword was bloodied, my belly was full and my purse was jinglin', so I was a happy man.

* The denizens of Petrea Thule had constructed two very large Norse ships for archery targets. Each ship—complete with sail—was lined with shields. Behind the shields stuck up heads that were the actual target. Those on the Thule ship were actually painted to resemble Thuligans. To play the game, a line of eight archers for each side fired at the ship belonging to the other side. If target 1 was knocked down on the Bastille ship, then archer 1 on the Bastille line was out of the game. After each volley, the line advanced one step. Each archer only had six arrows, and did not have to fire if they wanted to try and save them until they were closer. Once the first line had shot all their arrows, secondary line archers could take the spots of any 'dead' archers. It worked very well and was a lot of fun. A rousing wassail is deserved for all the effort, energy and imagination that went into that game!

Red Arrow, March 13 SA 39

Falling Prey to Archers (Late Winter Shoot, March 13, 2004)
By THLaird Colyne Stewart

From the journals of Cap'n Bloodfox, written while incarcerated in the Illi Gaol, Petrea Thule.

So it would appear that me famous luck has run out at last.

For ya see, me and my crew had planned one more daring raid against them Thuligans what live up in the 'rocky north'. Our plan was simple, and simple plans often work the best, or so me parrot always told me. We were to sail the *Interceptor* and the *Clever Wife*--the ship of me woman, Cap'n Widow--into a channel close by a barracks, and sally to the barracks on foot. We had heard that them Thuligans stored provisions and weapons at this barracks, but that they only manned the place for one day of the week. We split up into two teams, one led by meself and Mister Andrews, the other by Widow and Mister Tibs. We reckoned we'd just sidle up to the barracks from two sides, slip in the doors, and help ourselves to some booty.

'Twas a good plan. Except for one small detail that somehow eluded us all, and has led to our current sorry state of imprisonment.

For you see, them Thuligans had gone and sent out invitations to archers from across the land to come to the barracks that day and participate in several types of shootin'. By the time we got close enough to see that the barracks was crawling with over sixty archers, they had seen us too!

Well that constable from Bastille du Lac was there, as were them Iron Companions, AND the Thuligan Guard! Well, me and me mates scampered for it. Arrows were coming in at us from all directions and me men were dropping all around me. Finally we was cornered, and a team of six archers came and captured us. And I swear by all the gods of the deep that one of them archers was Widow her own self! Captured by me own woman, posin' as a Yeoman of the White Arrow from Ardchreag way!

I tell you truth, if Ol' Barney, whose plan this was, hadn't taken an arrow in the eye and saved me the trouble, I woulda slit his gizzard for this here debacle! As for Widow, well, I been talking to the guards o' this here gaol, tellin' 'em where they is likely to find the *Clever Wife*. *Soon me woman will be sitting here beside me in this cell, and her feet will be swinging beside mine when I go.*

If I go.

For there has not yet been a prison that can hold Cap'n Bloodfox.

On March 13, the canton of Petrea Thule held the sixth annual Late Winter Shoot. Archers and cross-bowmen from across Ealdormere came to participate in several types of shoots, including Winter rounds. Many good gentles won prizes for their skill with bow or crossbow, and everyone was stuffed with food thanks to the legendary generosity and hospitality of the Thule. The highlight of the day for many (based on the giggles, grins and enthusiasm I witnessed in the participants) was the novelty shoot. The archers were split into six teams of six to compete. Each team was shooting at a board with sixteen balloons set in a grid. Behind each balloon was a picture of a pirate. Fourteen of the pictures were generic pirates. One was of a captain (either Bloodfox or Widow) while the last was a first mate (Mister Andersen or Mister Tibs). The game was much like bingo. The object was to get a completed line of four pirates that included the captain and the first mate. It was possible to get them in the same line, or you could get a separate line for each (your strategy would of course depend on what balloons you had so far managed to pop before uncovering a captain or first mate). Each member of each team shot one arrow, then they would all scamper to the targets to see what pirate they had caught. Even after the first, second and third place prizes had been handed out for the shoot, archers kept at it until every balloon one very target had been popped! It was a most enjoyable day.

Red Arrow, January 3 SA 39

"The Bear and Hare Together Again": Border Yule (Septentria - Skraeling Althing joint 12th Night, January 3, 2004)

By THLaird Colyne Stewart

From the journals of Cap'n Bloodfox:

The ice lay thick on the Trent and me ship was not going anywhere. The ice was only part o' the problem, as me fine vessel had recently taken damage from the arrows of them Thulish archers. Ever since that constable o' Bastille du Lac put a bounty on me an' my crew we've been hunted like common criminals.

But I tells ya, there ain't nothing common about me and mine.

As I said, the Interceptor weren't going no wheres. And the lads and ladies o' me crew were getting a bit of the cabin fever. So when we hears that there's to be a yuletide celebration not too fars off, well, I decide the best way to keep the crew from killing each other off is to let them let of some steam, as it were. Now, this celebration was back in that shire from which we had recently escaped, that Bastille du Lac. Luckily, as this was a 12th Night celebration, we could go in costume. Meself, I went as a grey mare, more commonly known as a Mari Lwyd* where I grewed up. A perfect disguise for I was covered by a white sheet so no one could see me face. In my hand I carried a staff covered with ribbons with the skull of a horse on the top o' it.

We had to be extra careful at this here celebration, as that Constable would not be the only king's man we had to avoid. This here 12th Night was a joint one for both the Baronies o' Septentria and Skraeling Althing. We had to avoid the forces of both sets of Excellencies as well as them Iron Companions. The Petrea Thule Guard were out in force as well.

Knowing the risks we sets out through the wet, 'cause the gods o' the sea were sore at me for some reason and decided to dump rain on us. When we got out o' the rain there was thick rolling fog everywhere. We scared a good number of locals, let me tells ya, as I come lumbering out of the fog, all draped in tattered white carrying that skull-headed staff with me band of costumed ruffians behind me. We looked like spirits o' the dead coming out to haunt the living. Well, this time o' year was a time o' the spirits, or so me old grand dam used ta tell me.

When we gets to the hall we slip in the door and try to shake the damp off. All around us we were surrounded by folk in costume or fancy dress. We could hear people singing carols and could smell fine smells wafting from out o' the kitchen. Along two sides o' the hall there were games set up for all to play. I heard tell that whichever barony could raise the most points playing these games would win the services of the shire for a year. So I sends me crew out to play these games, with a mind to getting a load o' points which I can then 'auction' off to the barony what needs 'em the most. (And I must admit that this here plan was not of my own concoction, for I heard Their Excellencies of Ramshaven doing the same thing.) So we threw blue bean bags at a poor bear with a certain spot of its anatomy cut out, we rolled blue balls at pins shaped like hares, we tossed rings at some bloke's codpiece, we shot crossbows at targets representing the baronies o' Ealdormere and flung little hares at the helm o' his Excellency o' Skrael. None of us had the courage to play Skraeling Twister.

There were other more traditional games played throughout the hall as well, and folks gambled away at Glic and Gluchaus. Many o' my crew lost great sums o' money, but a few walked away with a small treasure or two.

At one point o' the day these two wooden horses is drawn out and Sir Nigel MacFarlane is placed on one to represent Septentria, while Lord Baldric, Champion o' the Skrael, is placed on the other. Several folk then held out rings as targets and these two big lads were pushed about on their horses trying to get the rings on their lances. Poor Baldric's horse threw two of its shoes, so Sir Nigel came out far in the lead.

There was a Lord and Lady o' Misrule that day (or o' Mischief, I never got that straight). The Lady carried a thick walking stick and wore the ears of a hare upon her head. The Lord was dressed in the skin of a tiger and a

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kilt, with the ears of a bear upon his own head. These two floated throughout the hall, adding what frivolity and jocularly they could to the day. They did so through their edicts o' silliness, which had to be acted out upon their whims. Even my own poor self was targeted and I was forced to sing a ditty (and all me crew knows what a terrible wailing I can send up).

After many hours o' the games it was time to feast. Lady Olga Axehammer (who I swear must be related to that Constable) and Lord Sven (who also looked familiar, like a certain Ardchreag knight) prepared the feast, and all agreed it was delicious. Throughout the day ribbons had begun to pop up on people's clothes, and now the Lord and Lady o' Misrule began to call these folks up to entertain the populace. There were two moments which had tears running out o' me eyes, being Master Hector and Lord Hydro's interpretive dance rendition o' the Bayeaux Tapestry, and Lord Wat o' Sarum's impression of a certain chequy knight.

After feast the Barons and Baronesses held their courts. At Septentria's court the dancers o' Eoforwic performed a dance to one o' Hector's fine songs. Then House van der Eych presented Their Excellencies Septentria with two cases o' mead for use in war negotiations and House Teach Cairidas donated gold and silver trinkets to Bastille du Lac. (At this point me and me hearties almost gave ourselves away as we began to purr with pleasure at the sight o' such booty). Also Lord Berend van der Eych was called in and given a Bear's Claw for using an enemy prince as a shield at the Pennsic War, and Lord Augustyn o' Thule was inducted into the Order of the Bear's Heart. Between courts Lord Hydro brought out a cauldron filled with small buckets which had been painted by good gentles throughout the day. Using fishing gear, all four Excellencies pulled buckets out of the cauldron, and each artist was given a small trinket. Skraeling Althing then opened its court. The Canton o' Ardchreag came forward and presented the Barony with seventy-two scroll blanks, as they had heard the Barony was in need o' some. The Honourable Lady Melusine de la Rosse was recognized as a Friend of the Hare, and the Honourable Lord Robert le Sawyer was brought in and given a token o' esteem.

At the end o' the courts the winner of the Arts and Sciences bean cut was announced, and it was another o' them van der Eychs, this time young Teah. Also, they announced that Septentria had won the services of Bastille du Lac by a large margin.

There was then much discussing and merry making and there was plenty o' distraction, so me and the crew sneaked out without a one o' us gettin' caught. Ar yes, I must say, it was a fine day in Bastille du Lac.

But now I must see to the repairs o' me ship, for as soon as the ice thaws, I see us sailing back into Bastille's waters to try and get us some o' them silver and gold baubles.

* The mari lwyd, or grey mare, was (and still is) a traditional Welsh Christmas oddity. A player would drape themselves in a white sheet, and carry a staff topped by a real or replica horse skull, which was bedecked with ribbons. Either alone or with a company (many of them playing other roles, such as groom) would travel from house to house. They would knock on the door, and when the occupant answered, engage them in a contest of riddles and insults. If the occupant lost (which they usually did) they had to invite the mare and any of its party in for merriment and refreshment. When the mare and its party had had their fill, they moved on to the next house.



Photo by Master
Martin

Red Arrow, October 1 SA 40

“A beer to the person who knocks off that parrot!” (Day of Piracy IV, October 1, 2005)
By THLaird Colyne Stewart

From the Letters of Cap'n Bloodfox

I think the last the world had heard o' me and me mates was when I was captured by them archers o' Thule last year¹. Me woman, Cap'n Widow, led them right to me in a bid for her own freedom. At first I was sore at her, but when she later slunk into the gaol and set me and the lads free, well, I just had to forgive her.

That Constable² o' Bastille—name o' Evander—was after us in moments and we were forced to sail south for a year to avoid him and the ships of Her Majesty's navy. Plundering the southron kingdoms is fun and all, but home is where the heart is. As soon as we could, we sets sail for the northlands again.

As we're on our way homeward we hears that the Shire o' Bastille du Lac is holding an event, a jaunty party inland, where they figure privateers will let them be. I'm not a man to let an opportunity for revenge pass me by, so's I tell me Navigator Mr. Andersen to plot a course.

You remember Mr. Andersen I trust? This Norwegian fella who tells me he's a Viking? Yar, that's the bloke.³ Well, he manages to run the *Interceptor* aground. We beached, well and good. I almost string him up then and there, but I can be a merciful fellow and I only cut off a digit or two. The *Clever Wife*—me woman's ship—weighs anchor without incident o' course.

Gar.

So I leaves some men to try and get me ship back in the blue, and the rest start creeping through the trees towards the lodge where this here gathering is supposed to be happening.

That Constable and the shire's seneschal—Edward Fuchyn—must o' had scouts out in the woods, for they found out we were coming. Worried for the safety of his people, Fuchyn knows he needs to call fer some help, but who to call? If he calls for help to Septentria to the west, or to Skraeling Althing to the east, whose to say they'll leave having gained a foothold in his shire? So he does the only thing he can think of, and that is to send messengers to both o' them baronies begging for aid.⁴

Now me men managed to intercept most o' them messengers heading west, and Widow took most o' them heading east, but some must have managed to slip through. For when we finally reached the outskirts o' the lodge what do we see but representatives o' both them baronies.

Bah, we thinks. We just sailed and then walked all this way. Are we gonna be run off now? By gar we'd show them what for!

So me woman and me, draped in our flags, cutlasses drawn, stride outta the trees.⁵ Soon we have us a three way showdown with the forces o' Skrael, and Septentria and our crews facing off.

Now That Constable wanted to avoid bloodshed it seems, so he asked us all to sheath our weapons and take part in a contest. Out on the water he's got a boat at the end of the pier, and he wants us all to take turns fighting on it. Each person has got to face the other fifteen fighters once, to see who is the best fighter of the day. Not one to back down from a challenge we and our crew say we're in.

At the same time, on another pier, some more o' the three groups fence with blades long and short. Lady Rusalka o' the Galbraiths in fine pirate fashions o' crossed blades with THL Wilhelm von Pottruff and THL Cristabel Wensleydale of Skraeling, and Lord Robert o' Septentria.

Some o' our forces were taken through the woods by THL Dayfdd ap Sion and Lord Augustyn o' Ely to shoot

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at roving targets. (Both Thulish archers, ar!) I did not have a chance to wander the course meself, but I did hear that there were targets representing both Baron Corwyn o' Septentria and Baron Menken o' Skrael.⁶ (Me thinks from reports that Menken had a few more holes in him than Corwyn did.) Also, several folks threw axes and knives at butts on another range.

But back to the boat. Since each fighter present had to battle fifteen times it was a long way to go to the final. Some of the more memorable incidents included: me lady Widow knocking a parrot of the helm o' Lord Derfel Mallory⁷; a clankety German pirate in full metal armour who fought on the tiny dingy with a harpoon (and who fell over board at least once)⁸; and my own victory over the Constable o' Ardchreag. When all was said and done I had managed to send nine down to Davy Jones' Locker, having been sent down meself six times.

In the end a parrot-less Lord Derfel faced off with another Constable, name o' Roak who came from the east. In a well fought battle Derfel took the day. Derfel presented his parrot to Widow, and it was discovered that the poor birdie had lost his beak in the battles. He was dubbed Peckerless Pete, and plans were drawn to replace his beak with a hook.

With a maniacal glint in his eyes, that Constable Evander o' Bastille draws five circles on the ground and in each circle he places some swag, ranging in size from a small brown bag to a large wooden box. What he wants is for each barony to take a turn coming ashore in the boat and getting the swag into the boat while the other barony defends the goods. You could only carry the booty if you wore a full gauntlet, and either side could handle it. If you got yerself killed you had to run back to yer side to resurrect and rejoin the fray.

So Septentria is set to defend first, and I manage to sidle into that side fighting alongside Her Excellency Domhnail Galbraith, Mr. Tibs⁹, Argyle o' Bastille and Constable Siegfried Brandbeorn. His Excellency Menken secures the arms of Constable Roak, Lady Jocea, Lord Derfel and a bloke whose name I never did catch. Everyone else was apparently too worn out from the round robin to participate.

So Skrael comes off the boat and we all fight like madmen, and let me tell you that was one tiring ordeal! People were legged and left to crawl about on their knees until finally one of their own teammates took pity and killed them so they could resurrect and be more effective. Everytime a raider bent down to pick up a piece o' swag, he was clocked by a defender. In the end Roak, on his knees, was backing up like a scuttling crab dragging a box after him. That Constable o' Bastille declares that Skrael's time was 5 minutes and 19 seconds and we all falls over out o' breath. Evander—the bastard—wants to send us back in after five minutes, but we manage to convince him that ten would be better.

Then Septentria is placed in the boat, and we has to run ashore and grab the booty. We did well off the bat, and it all came down to this here little brown bag that kept sliding out o' our carriers' hands. Roak then manages to grab the bag and he retreats with it to the furthest circle from the boat, at which point we had exceeded Skrael's time so we stopped the pillage o' the village.

I then dropped me kit off with the lads and suited up in me finest apparel: brown pants, red and white striped socks, red sash, brown belt, black baldric, white shirt and purple and red velvet greatcoat. A hat with a black and a red feather sat atop me head. Widow dressed herself up as well: gold hoop earrings, black skirt, white blouse, black bodice, green jacket, a brown hat with white and black feathers, and a gold cross sitting upon her bosom.

We and the other lads and ladies of our crews walked about with impunity, and no force o' Septentria, nor force o' the Skrael tried to arrest us. Likely that was because That Constable's truce was still going, but I prefer to think it was our bloody reputation. Yar.

As we sauntered about we made a few small 'acquisitions' so the day was not a complete loss. In fact, though we were going to leave to see my brother Shane o' the Fish, we received a missive that he could not make the rendezvous. As such we were invited to stay and the Baroness o' Septentria herself gave us coin to reserve a

seat for supper.¹⁰

The tables for feast were all decorated with pirate flags crafted by the young' uns who had been present throughout the day, and mighty fine flags they were too! Dinner was delicious (and well it should be what with folk like Lady Melusine de la Rose in the kitchen). It was also a riotous affair, with gifts of rum being passed out by both sets of Excellencies. In the spirit of things I grabbed me a woman passing by—her name was Lady Safrida Axehammer—and I abducted her to the next room where I planned to get to know her better. Unfortunately for me I suffered a case of 'low tide'. As we walked back into the main hall I tells her, "Yar, I swear baby, that's never happened to me before," to which she replies, "That's what they all say."

Now this lady is the lady o' Dafydd ap Sion, who came and clamped a large hand on me shoulder and told me to watch meself. Now, trying to protect me honour (har, what honour?) the lady had not told him about me 'lowered sails', so's I spill the beans and it saves me life I'm sure. Mr. Andersen, who looks mightily like Dafydd's squire brother, watched the whole thing from beginning to end. Dafydd, thinking his squire-brother had just stood by and watched a pirate abduct his lady, had almost smashed poor Mr. Andersen to bits before his true identity was made known. Gar, I was looking forward to seeing a good thrashing. (One that didn't involve me, at any rate.)

The food, as I believe I've said, was excellent. We feasted on bread with honey butter, greens, mushroom and barley soup, spinach quiche, mushroom and cheese tart, ham with honey mustard sauce, lamb, mussels and a type o' cheese cake glazed in honey. We was all quite full to burstin'.

After dinner a bonfire was lit outside, while some folk danced in a side room. Downstairs a pirate who bore a striking resemblance to Derfel sang for the little 'uns and later for us big folk too. A local man, who had come to witness the happenings o' the day for a local broadsheet, played a fiddle on the front steps. It was a lovely, relaxing way to while away the evening. THL Baldric (o' the really long last name) asked us to come by his home for drinks as he was hosting a party, but we had a long walk back to ships so set off into the trees, followed by our crews.

It was then that I realized that we had spent more than we had earned on this expedition, and when we got back to our landing I found me ship still beached. And I cursed the gods o' the sea and swore that I would have my revenge!

One o' these days.

1. At Late Winter Shoot 2004 Cap'n Bloodfox and Cap'n Widow were targets for the archery contest. Since Porfinna (Cap'n Widow) was on the team that won the shoot, in my event report she had actually helped capture Bloodfox to ensure her own escape.
2. Within the context of event reports written in Bloodfox's voice, I refer to Knights as Constables.
3. Lord Eirik Andersen
4. The letters (which Fuchyn and I wrote together) read as follows (both were identical, though the one I am quoting was the one for Septentria):
Unto Their Most Ursine Excellencies, Corwyn and Domhnail Galbraith, does Edward dit Lion, Seneschal of the Shire of Bastille du Lac, send his most esteemed greetings.
Your Excellencies, I write to you to bring to your attention the plight of my poor shire, which on more than one glorious occasion has found itself under the protection of Your Might and Justice. Once again our land has been encroached upon by pirates and corsairs, flying under the flags of the Dread Pirate Captains Bloodfox and Widow. They and their men have been raiding our shores, raiding our stores and terrorizing our folk. An army from the East is currently approaching our shire. Their captains assure me that they are only coming to help us and to push the pirates back into the sea, but I am afraid that without your forces here to balance their numbers they may forget to leave.
Please, Your Excellencies, I beseech you to come to the Shire of Bastille du Lac on October 1, 2005 for A Day of Piracy and to protect us from our enemies.
Your Most Obedient Servant,
Edward dit Lion

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5. We were wearing black tabards painted with our respective skull and crossbones. Bloodfox's is a fox skull with crossbones, and Widow's is a skull with eight boney legs (forming a spider). We also were wearing black bandanas emblazoned with skulls and crossbones on our helms.
6. I honestly did not get a chance to shoot, so I didn't get to see the course, but I heard it was awe inspiring. It's not everyday I get to hear my Baron crow about shooting at an alligator!
7. And since Siegfried had proclaimed he'd buy a drink for the person who knocked it off Porfinna got herself a Smirnoff Ice out of it.
8. Lord Ludwig von Eisengard, fighting with a polearm and wearing a full suit of plate (which in real life of course would be suicidal to wear while fighting on the seas).
9. Lord Tiberius of Warwickshire
10. We were supposed to get together with my brother Shane and his new bride, but they had a memorial dinner to attend, so we were able to stay at the event after all. Since we only had enough cash on hand for one of us to eat, Domhnail not only loaned us the money for the other feast spot, but went in and talked to the cooks and event staff to ensure they could accommodate us. We don't deserve such good friends.



Photo of scary pirates provided by Master Colyne.

Red Arrow, January 8 SA 41

Red Arrow, Ardchreag's Naval Vessel

Colyne Stewart, 2006

As part of Ardchreag's experiment with building a persona for the canton, it was decided that as the group included port sites, it was necessary for them to acquire a sea vessel.

On the 8th day of January [2006], the following missive was cried from the four corners of Ardchreag.

Greetings unto the glorious inhabitants of the cliffs, quays, rivers and inlets of the Canton of Ardchreag, from Colyne Stewart, captain,

As you awoke this morning you may have heard the sounds of construction floating up from the shoreline. Some of you, walking down to the docks at the Rouge Port, may have seen the hull of a frigate rising on the sand.

To patrol the waters of Mare Ontarium, to protect the people of Ardchreag, Septentria, and the kingdom at large, construction of Ardchreag's first naval vessel is underway. This ship is to be called the *Red Arrow*, which, as some of you may know, was the name of Ardchreag's chronicle before it became the TankArd.

I am currently endeavouring to procure a letter of marque for this vessel, and will soon be posting notices for positions on the Red Arrow's crew. With luck the Red Arrow will be launched within a month or two, and can begin to hunt down those notorious pirates, the Cap'ns Widow and Bloodfox.

I wish all of you a most glorious day,

Colyne

Their Excellencies Septentria were kind enough to endorse their vessel with a letter of marque.

The Baron and Baroness of Septentria to all and singular Admirals &c., Greeting. Know ye that we have granted and given to our well-beloved Colyne Stewart, master of a certain ship called the Red Arrow, liberty to equip in the port of the Canton of Ardchreag, at his own charges, the aforesaid ship with as many mariners, men-at-arms, and bowmen as shall be necessary for its navigation and defence at sea against our enemies, whosoever they may be, and for subduing, capturing, and destroying the same; and liberty to set forth with the same ship, so equipped, upon the sea for the purpose aforesaid. And by these presents we straitly command all and singular, sheriffs, mayors, bailiffs, keepers of ports of the sea, officers, and all our lieges whatsoever, as well within liberties as without, that, as often as they are called upon by Colyne on our behalf, they be obedient and attentive, as beseems them. And we will that whatsoever he, Colyne, succeed in winning, gaining, and having by capture from our enemies aforesaid, he may have and keep for his own proper use, without claim or hindrance by or from us, or our heirs or ministers, or the ministers of any our heirs whatsoever. Provided always that under colour of this licence he, Colyne, his mariners, men-at-arms, and bowmen aforesaid, neither do nor permit to be done any violence, hindrance, or hurt to any who are in friendship with us. Witness Their Excellencies Septentria at [location and date redacted].

Known crew of the Red Arrow (a frigate):

- Captain: Colyne Stewart
- First Lieutenant: Porfinna gráfeldr
- Boatswain: Tarian verch Gadarn
- Master-at-Arms: Mahault van der Eych
- Mates: Joe of Ardchreag
- Rigging Rat: Marie de Chat Noir

Sources

English Letter of Marque issued by Henry IV in 1405 (<http://www.geocities.com/tokyo/garden/5213/engl1405.htm>)

English Letter of Marque Against Scotland, 1400 (<http://www.geocities.com/tokyo/garden/5213/engl1400.htm>)

Red Arrow, January SA 41

Porfinna and the Capture of the *Clever Wife*
Laird Colyne Stewart
Jan AS XL (2006)

It was a bright winter's day, when Lady Porfinna gráfeldr walked down to the piers at the Rouge Port. The wind was blowing strong, but it was not too chill, and the waters of the Mare Ontarium were running clear without ice. She stood on the dock gazing up at the masts of the frigate *Red Arrow*, from which streamed the banners of Ardchreag and Septentria. An Ealdormere banner flew from the aft-castle.

Today will be the day, she thought.

She stomped up the ramp onto the ship and began bellowing orders. The captain was indisposed, and so as first lieutenant the command was hers. Word had come down that the infamous pirate Cap'n Widow was currently raiding the coasts of north-eastern Skraeling Althing. Most of His Majesty's ships were on duty elsewhere, tracking another local pirate called Cap'n Bloodfox. So local ships were being asked to capture or sink Widow's ship the *Clever Wife*.

Porfinna was determined that she was the one who would bring Widow to justice.

Finally, the ship was ready to sail, and the winds were blowing favourably in their direction. They swiftly set off, following the coastline.

Before long they saw two ships on the horizon, moving towards them. Marie de Chat Noir—called Black Cat Mary when on board ship—was up in the rigging. She called down that they looked like galleys, and both were flying the Æthelmearc colours. As Æthelmearc and Ealdormere were currently at peace, Porfinna did not try to evade them, or have her gunner prime the cannons. Instead she had the sails furled as the ships came together, and she and the Æthelmearc captains had a parley.

The senior captain told her that Captain Bloodfox had run afoul of two of His Majesty Ealdormere's ships—the *Iron Duke* and the *Sea Khan*. His ship *Interceptor* had been sunk, but somehow the pirate captain had escaped the marines aboard the royal ships. He reappeared two days later in an Æthelmearc port along with Mr. Andersen and several new crewmates, and had somehow managed to steal a man-of-war called the *Great Wheel*. Redubbing her *Black Trillium*, he had shot his way out of the port, sinking two ships, and had disappeared into deep waters. The Æthelmearc admiralty were embarrassed at loosing their ship and were currently out hunting Bloodfox in force. After assuring the captains that she would send word of any sightings of the *Black Trillium*, Porfinna and the *Red Arrow* continued on their way.

The weather continued to be fair, and the ship made good time, traveling past Greenhithe and Bastille du Lac. When the ship neared the shores of Caldriithig, Black Cat Mary called out another sighting. This time she belated, "Kraken!"

Being a stout Norsewoman, Porfinna was not afraid of any creature, may it walk on land, fly through the air or swim in the depths, but several of her crew were now quaking with fear. Mahault, the ship's master-at-arms, unlocked the pistol cabinets and the crew armed themselves, though many were praying to their various gods.

Calmly, Porfinna went to her cabin and pulled out a chest from under her bunk. Opening it, she took out a woven belt that had been bestowed upon her by the Galbraiths for being the strongest woman in Ealdormere. She tied this girdle of strength about her waist and climbed onto the deck again.

Ahead of the ship great foaming waves frothed their way towards the prow. Just below the surface of the water, Porfinna thought she could just make out a gigantic eye. She called for a javelin, and Mahault placed one carved of ash in her hand. Pulling back her arm Porfinna took careful aim. The crew stood at their posts,

holding their breaths, except for Bobo the monkey who screeched from his perch in the rigging. Porfinna stood still as a statue, until suddenly she threw. The javelin streaked through the air and plunged into the turbid waters. A great bubbling scream exploded from beneath the waves, and the water churned as the kraken thrashed its many tentacles. There was a huge splash, and then the water stilled. The kraken had submerged.

Ordering the ship's quartermaster to open the rum, Porfinna allowed the crew a drink to calm their nerves and celebrate their victory over the terror from the deep. Before Mahault could lock away the weapons again, Black Cat Mary once more shouted down from the topcastle. "Ship ahoy! Pirate colours!"

The crew dropped their cups and ran back to their stations. The gunner and his mates primed and manned the cannons. Ahead of them, Porfinna could see a ship approaching, growing larger and larger. From her mast flew the skull and four crossbones of Cap'n Widow.

There was a splash astern as the *Clever Wife's* gunners opened fire prematurely. Porfinna called for her own gunners to hold. As the ships drew closer together Porfinna ordered the sails fully unfurled to catch the wind and begin to turn the ship. As the two vessels drew closer together, they each presented their sides.

"Fire!" ordered Porfinna, as a similar order was given aboard the *Clever Wife*. Cannons roared, and balls ripped through the hulls, sending exploded shards of timber and bits of crew into the lake. Grapples began to be thrown from the *Clever Wife*, and the *Red Arrow's* marines assembled on deck. Rather than wait to be boarded, the *Red Arrow's* crew threw their own grapples, and the two boats were pulled close together. As soon as they were close enough, pirates and marines began climbing, jumping and swinging onto each others ship.

Porfinna herself, armed with cutlass and pistol, and still wearing her belt, was the first to board the *Clever Wife*. She fought her way past brigands, privateers, seadogs and other such scum, seeking out the enemy captain. Soon she found her. For Cap'n Widow was herself in the thick of the fighting. She wore a black skirt and green corset, from which the ruffles of her white blouse bloomed. Upon her head perched a brown tri-corner, with black and white feathers, with a red scarf tied under it. In her hands she held a bloody sword, and her parrot flew about her head. Peckerless Pete—who had a steel hook instead of a beak—was himself attacking the *Red Arrow's* marines, scratching at eyes and ripping at ears.

The two captains' eyes locked, and suddenly nothing else existed but them, and the deck between them. They ran at each other, swords swinging. Porfinna shot her pistol, which tore a hole through Widow's hat. Their swords met, and they danced over the blood soaked boards, hacking and slashing, parrying and thrusting. Finally, Porfinna managed to knock the blade from Widow's hand, and placed the point of her cutlass at the pirate captain's throat.

The Widow yielded, and her crew, seeing that she was taken, either threw down their own arms, or jumped over board and tried to swim for shore. Most were shot in the back as they swam by the marines.

Locking the pirates in the hold, Porfinna had her corporal take command of the *Red Arrow*, while she and some of her crew took control of the *Clever Wife*. Both ships sailed back into port, where Porfinna handed her prisoners over to the local constables. Soon the tales of her exploits spread all over Ardchreg and beyond, and many a drink were bought for her in seaside pubs.

Unfortunately, Cap'n Widow did not stay incarcerated for long. Soon enough she and her remaining crew had escaped custody (some say rescued by Peckerless Pete, others by Bloodfox) and was once again sailing the Mare Ontarium aboard her *Clever Wife*.

But that's another story.



Cover Art

The photo of the borealis by his excellency Sir Shahid. Photo of memorial boat by Master Martin.

THE TIDINGS THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR THE KINGDOM OF

A few things we're required to say...

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