

# The Fencer's, Dancer's, and Bearbaiter's Quarterly

*The Newsletter of the Southwark Trayn'd Bands*

Vol. I, no. 1.

November 1992

After the escapades of our encampment at the SCA's Pennsic War this summer, we thought interested people might like some sort of follow-up letter to let them know what we have been doing, and what are planning to do (and, for some, who we really are in the first place).

For those who have not yet been filled in on the background, the Southwark Trained Bands are a rather loose (but enthusiastic) group of people involved in re-creating the world of late Elizabethan England. As a focus for our activities, we have chosen the Southwark Trained Bands. The Trained Bands were the heart of Queen Elizabeth's militia: organised into regiments and companies by locality, they were drawn from the citizenry, and given regular training and inspections to ensure the safety of the realm against foreign invasion. The Southwark Trained Bands numbered about 300 men, drawn from the Borough of Southwark, at the southern end of London Bridge—an area of London notorious as the home of theatres and other immoral institutions. As a focus for our activities, the Trained Bands allow us to indulge in the pageantry of military display while keeping us firmly in touch with civilian life.

The Southwark Trained Bands include members from Virginia, Ohio, Michigan and Ontario. As rather a loose organisation, our only formalised activity in the past has been our annual encampment at Pennsic, at which we have tried (with great success) to provide a recreated Elizabethan setting which is both authentic and fun. In addition, we have been associated with various research and recreation activities during the year: trips to Plimoth Plantation, the Elizabethan Handbook, the Virginia SCA's 'Night on the Town' event, English Civil War re-enactments, and so on.

In the upcoming year, we expect to become more heavily involved with 17th-century re-creation groups and other living history activities outside of the SCA. It is our long-term goal to foster Elizabethan living history in North America, and to increase the attention to civilian living history in 17th century re-creation groups.

The Trayned Bands welcome any interested parties to join us in our activities. Principal contacts are:

Jeff Morgan  
RFD2 Box 222D  
Afton Virginia 22920  
(703) 456-8486

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Ann Arbor Michigan 48104  
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## The Trained Bands at Pennsic

The first year of the Trained Band encampment at Pennsic (1991) was successful enough to be worth repeating; the second year, not surprisingly, proved even better. With an extra year's preparation, we were able to outfit the camp such that there were almost no visible anachronisms left—we had no less than nine period tents, so that there was quite a large period area. The kitchen and bath tent proved especially successful: with supplies stored in canvas sacks suspended from the tent poles, the overall effect was most impressive; the bath setup was improved over the previous

year; and overall, participants were able to live in comfort and convenience for two weeks without regular recourse to modernities save the porta-johns (we draw the line at period sanitation), ice-chests, and the occasional food-run.

Camp activities included, of course, the daily march. At peak, the Bands numbered 9 pike, 3 shot, a targetier, a drummer, an ensign, and a sergeant. The pageantry of our marches evidently enriched the Pennsic experience for those around us: head for head, we were probably the most photographed people on site. Civilian activities included a number of games in public—for example, camp ball (in two versions: one with kids, who obviously loved it, and a rougher version with just the men of the Bands, which resulted in one broken finger).

As we did in 1991, we hosted an Elizabethan open house. This proved to be great fun, especially when the doughty (but not overly bright) lads of the Trained Bands deduced that the guest with the conspicuous cross and particularly fashionable clothing must be a Spanish spy. Never ones to miss a chance to serve their Queen (and, they reasoned, probably receive a dukedom in reward), the lads set out to discover what mischief the spy was about—who was his contact and what information he was passing—while subtly coaxing from him crucial information on Spanish shipping and the whereabouts of the treasure fleet (and studiously avoiding offending him with any inadvertent references to the Armada).

The basic premise of the Trained Band encampment is that the year is around 1590, and members of the Trained Bands of Southwark have decided to go together to some festival occasion, equivalent to the Accession Day tilts held annually by Queen Elizabeth. They are accompanied by assorted householders, friends, and relations, creating a coherent but diverse social group who could range from the ruffianly retainer to a respected

gentleman. We are happy to have new people join us in the encampment, although naturally we would like to get to know people before we actually camp with them (two weeks together at Pennsic can be rather close quarters).

It should be emphasised here that you don't need to have an extensive collection of reproduction equipment to be a part of the Trained Bands. Our encampment is set up in such a way that the period tentage surrounds the common area, so that modern tents can be set up without detracting from the feel of the camp; and the camp is already well outfitted with period equipment. All you really need to ensure is that you have Elizabethan clothes to wear. Nor do you need to be an expert on Elizabethan England: we have an experienced core of members who are quite good at setting a period tone which newcomers almost unconsciously fall into; and we have also prepared a handbook to make the whole process that much easier.

Even if you do not camp with the Trained Bands, we encourage you to visit us and take part in our activities. One of the most colourful and pleasurable of these is the daily Drill in camp and March through the Pennsic site. Anyone interested in participating in the Drill is welcome to take part: we have equipment to loan to people for this purpose. As the March is a public demonstration, the Bands have some standards of equipment which are required of any who participate. Ideally, we would like every participant to look like the Trained Bandsmen as they appear in the Lant Roll illustration of Sir Philip Sidney's funeral. However, we only require that participants present an Elizabethan appearance. The following table should give an idea of the standards:

<u>Good</u>	<u>OK</u>	<u>Bad</u>
Wool, linen	Cotton	Polyester
High Hats	Flat Caps, Broad brims	Bare heads
Doublet	Shirt alone	Tunic

& shirt		
Falling Band	Ruff	Bow Tie
Trunkhose, Breeches, etc.	17c breeches	Trousers
Woolen Hose, Garters	Cotton Hose	Tights
16c Shoes	Chinese Shoes	Frye Boots
Swept Hilts	Cup Hilt	Fencing
Grip		

We strongly encourage participants to dress appropriately to the social status of the Bands, ie. middle to lower class, middle to upper class for officers. Women are welcome to take part in these activities: the only requirement is that every participant in the drill should be attempting to represent an Elizabethan man.

We hope that our activities at Pennsic gave others as much pleasure as they gave us, and that future years will see more guests resorting to the Trained Band encampment and its activities for a taste of Elizabethan life.

We strongly recommend to anyone interested in Elizabethan recreation *The Elizabethan Handbook. A Manual for Living History c1588-1603* (we ought to, since we wrote it). The text is c150 pp., spiral bound with b&w illuss., and includes detailed information and instructions on such subjects as clothing, song, dance, games, fencing and cuisine; extensive contemporary dialogues illustrating many aspects of daily life as well as Elizabethan speech; and a substantial bibliography, list of suppliers, etc. The cost is US\$12 plus \$1.75 postage, \$2.50 postage to Canada, \$3.25 postage overseas. Orders and inquiries may be sent to Jeffrey L. Singman (address above).

We also welcome input on the Handbook from those who have read it: we intend to produce additional information in the form of short supplements, and we hope that some

years down the line we will be able to produce a second edition.

A brief overview of upcoming events at which the Bands expect to make some sort of an appearance:

November 21-2: Jamestown Muster, Jamestown VA.

December 19-20: Jamestown Christmas, Jamestown VA.

?April: 'Night on the Town' SCA Event, VA.

June 6 (?): Drake's Raid, St Augustine FLA.

A re-enactment of Sir Francis Drake's raid on this city in 1586, featuring a battle through the narrow cobblestone streets of St Augustine's picturesque Old Town.

Contact Jeff Morgan for further information on these events.

The Bands are currently thinking about what can be done to improve their equipment. Suggested priorities at present include a drum, a more permanent arrangement for the bath tent, a cupboard for the kitchen tent, and tables and seating for the common area. Members with views on what we need, or ideas on how to obtain them, should contact the acting Clerk.

One major consideration is the acquisition of more and better military equipment. Jeff Morgan is currently getting together an order for calivers from John Buck. These regularly cost \$280, but he has said that in an order of 6 or more (not necessarily all the same item) they would be only \$240. I have seen his work: the calivers appear to be fairly plain, but a good buy at the price. His other firearms seem quite nice looking, and also well priced. Contact Jeff Morgan if you are interested in being included in the order.

For those interested in living history of the late Renaissance, I strongly urge subscribing to the *Moderne Aviso*. This admirable journal is intelligent, useful, and quite handsome. Subscriptions are an excellent buy at \$6 for 4 issues (1 year). Write to Mary Aist, 6246 Ducketts Lane, Elkridge, MD 21227-6128 [Tel. # (410) 796-8417].

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Some further bibliography which we have accumulated since publishing the Handbook:

Mechtild Flury-Lemberg, *Textile Conservation* (1988?). Apparently has detailed information on a large number of surviving 16th century clothing, including a complete Landsknecht outfit.

Jean Hunnisett, *Period Costume for Stage and Screen*. Contains patterns for specific women's Elizabethan outfits in contemporary paintings.

John Murrell, *A New Booke of Cookerie* [1615]. Reprinted by Falconwood.

*Certaine Sermons or Homilies Appointed to be Read in Churches In the Time of Queen Elizabeth I*. A Facsimile Reproduction of the Edition of 1623 with an Introduction by Mary Ellen Rickey and Thomas B. Stoup (Scholars' Facsimiles, 1968). BX 5133 A1 A3. Probably the best single source for the kind of propaganda being broadcast to the public from the pulpit every Sunday (government-sponsored, as Elizabeth was head of the Church of England). These homilies give a very good idea of the widely accepted ideas on religion, state, morality, etc.

*Christian Prayers and Holy Meditations*, collected by Henry Bull [1566]. Parker Society (Cambridge, 1842; repr. New York: Johnson Reprint Co., 1968). A collection of prayers for daily use.

Records:

*The Tale of Ale* [Free Reed Records (England)]. If you ever see this 2-record

album, get it! The album is a collection of English songs and brief recitations about ale and beer through history: the first of the two disks is essentially from the 17th century and before. The performances throughout are most delightful, well-instrumented, and full of jovial chorus songs very well suited to the living history enthusiast.

Some additional suppliers:

Cooperman Fife and Drum Co., P. O. Box 276 Centerbrook CT 06409; (203) 767-1779. Primary suppliers of military instruments to North American re-enactors—they will also do 16th and 17th century drums. Their work is all of high quality, their attitude professional.

The Mary Rose Trading Company, Ltd., No. 5 Boathouse HM Naval Base, Portsmouth, PO1 3PX ENGLAND. Credit card phone orders 070/583-9938 (VISA, ACCESS, AMERICAN EXPRESS) 9am-5pm 7 days/week. Apparently carries 16c reproductions, including spoons.

Hampton Court Palace. East Moseley. Telephone: 081/977-8441. Apparently carries reproduction spoons.

Plimoth Plantation Museum Shop; (508) 746-1622 ext. 332. Carries a number of reproductions and books on the 17th century. Prices vary; there is a discount for Plimoth members.

Black Rose Creations (Terri Marr), 7 Devonshire Dr., RD #22, Mays Landing NJ 08330; (609) 926-1297. Carries what may be the most affordable schlager-blade rapiers (lighter than full-size rapier blades, but a of a size that was apparently not unknown in the period).

Bailiff Forge: Colne Valley Workshops (J. E. Denbigh), 42 South Lane, Elland, West Yorkshire HX5 OPA ENGLAND. Apparently carries hand-forged late 16th and 17th century weaponry; prices look good.

Mikhail's Armoury, PO Box 341, Lightfoot VA 23090; (804) 565-0887. Produces some items of Elizabethan armour.

New World Arbalest, 201 West Crestland Dr., Austin TX 78752-2427; (512) 453-2628. Produces high-quality Renaissance crossbows.

Caliver Books (Dave Ryan), 26 Cliffsea Grove, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 1NQ, ENGLAND. Carries 16th and 17th century military books, as well as a do-it-yourself musketeer 'apostles' kit.

Falconwood Press, 193 Colonie St., Albany NY 12210-2501. Carries an excellent and moderately-priced series of reprints of 16th and 17th century works, especially on household and military subjects, including Kenelm Digby and Thomas Dawson.

Merchant Adventurers (Walter Nelson), 7341 Etiwanda Ave, Reseda CA 91335; (818) 342-3482. Apparently carries a variety of small items for Elizabethan recreation, as well as a manual.

Brad Spear, 1951 Dobbs Rd. #15, St. Augustine FLA 32086; (904) 797-9412. Carries a number of decent Elizabethan items, including knives, swords, powder flasks, and various knickknacks.

John Buck, RD 3 Box 129B, Floyd VA 24091; (703) 639-5330. Produces calivers and other firearms; good prices.

Other Contacts:

Historic St. Mary's City, Box 24, St. Mary's City MD 20686. An early 17c site, small, but features a handsome small oceangoing ship.

Elizabeth II State Historic Site, Box 155, Manteo NC 27954; (919) 473-1144. A visitor centre with a reconstruction Elizabethan ship representative of the type used on Raleigh's expeditions to the area.

Men of Menendez. Robert Miller Hall, 42 Spanish St., St. Augustine FL 32084; (904) 829-9792. This group is involved in

recreating the activities of the Spaniards and English in Florida in Elizabeth's day.

Renaissance Military Society. Elizabeth Pidgeon, 1129 Sutter St., Vallejo CA 94590; (707) 557-2552. Active at the California Renaissance Fairs, the military society's members are involved in 16c English, Spanish, and German living history. There is a companion group in the south: Julie Addams, 2438 Stockton, Vista CA 92084; (619) 630-6318