

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

The Newsletter of the Trayn'd Bandes of London

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'Ever But in Times of Need At Hand'

April 1996

Greetings again from the FDBBQ, internationally recognized as the finest Trained Bands newsletter in North America. This issue coming from the Westminster Trayn'd Bandes. As always, the TBL welcome any interested parties to get in touch with us.

The FDBBQ is published quarterly in hardcopy and electronic formats, each issue by one of the TBL's constituent groups:

1 January: TBL
1 April: WTB
1 July: Gardeners
1 October: TIS

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If you have access to the World Wide Web,
don't miss our splendid site at:

[http://www-
personal.umich.edu/~jsingman/bandes.html](http://www-personal.umich.edu/~jsingman/bandes.html)

Upcoming Events

['Major' Events are the most important ones in the calendar, and everyone is strongly encouraged to try to make it to as many of these as they reasonably can. 'Regional' Events are smaller events which people are encouraged to attend if they are close enough to make it over a normal weekend (say, a 5-hour drive or less). 'Local' Events are very small events which people are encouraged to attend only if the journey would take less than an hour.]

12-14 April 1996: Newmarket VA. The Raid On Mousehole. One of the TBL's largest annual events, Elizabethan setting. Major. Contact Gardener's.

20-21 April 1996: Shakespeare's Birthday, Stratford, Ontario. A public demonstration of Elizabethan activities. Regional. Contact TIS.

April 1996: Austin, TX. WTB's Spring Muster. Postponed. New date TBD.

17-20 May 1996: Ethel ONT. Shapwick Whitsun Muster and Ale. An authentic (and therefore inevitably raucous) festival in the remote Oxfordshire village of Shapwick during the English Civil War. Major. Contact: TIS.

August 1996: Western PA. Sixth annual Trained Bands Elizabethan encampment at the Pennsic Wars. Major. Contact Jeff Morgan.

September - October 1996: Shapwick Michaelmas Fair and Muster, Ethel, Ontario. A harvest festival in the Oxfordshire village of Shapwick during the English Civil War. Major. Contact: TIS.

The TIS at the Association of Living History
Farms and Museums 'Union of Spirits'
Conference

On 16 March 1996, Victoria Hadfield and Jeffrey Singman gave a paper for this ALHFAM-New England conference. The theme of the conference was first-person living history; it was held, appropriately enough, at Plimoth Plantation. Jeffrey and Victoria's paper examined the experience of first-person in the amateur context of the Tabard Inn Society, and how insights derived from the TIS might be applied by professional living history organisations. The text of the paper may be found on the World Wide Web at

Tabard Inn Society, Ann Arbor :
Shrovetuesday Feast

J. Singman

On 25 February the Tabard Inn Society cell in Ann Arbor held its first Elizabethan event. TIS-AA has been holding workshops every Wednesday evening at Jeffrey and Victoria's apartment, and attended regularly by Pattie Rayl and Cal, Annie, and Zack Smith--which is pretty much a capacity crowd for the apartment. Each workshop has focused on a particular craft or skill--topics to date have included blackwork and cutwork embroidery, cheese making, and brewing; some particular activities, such as games and writing, have been repeated several times with an eye to mastering them.

Our first event was attended by the usual suspects--there was only slight effort to publicize more widely. The meeting prior to the event was spent on preparation--arranging loaner clothes, establishing the menu, and talking about the setting and personas. One of the principal goals was to ensure that the event would have a coherent and credible social framework. The scenario which evolved was a dinner hosted by Geoffrey and Victoria Cade at their home in Southwark for their neighbor Rosalind Sheffield and for the Calvill family (visiting London from Kent to sell their fruits and fine cider--it was decided that the Cades

knew the Calvills through the Tabard Inn, where Geoffrey as tapster regularly purchased cider from them). In keeping with the season, the meal would be on a Shrovetuesday theme.

The event itself began with an introduction to the setting--first a quick historical overview of the Tudor period, a brief introduction to Southwark, and a 'tour' of the Cade home to help people imagine the physical setting. The parameters of the event were also laid out--the 'in-character' portion would begin with grace at the beginning of the meal, and would end with a formal thanks to the guests. The living room had been made over to conceal modernities and display as much period look as possible; everything outside the living room was considered modern space--people could step outside for modern activities if they needed to.

The event was an astonishing success. Most of the participants had very little experience with first-person living history, but in fact the company managed to remain in character for at least two hours, with no lag in the fun or conversation. Many factors contributed to this. It certainly helped that there was at least a core of people who had done a fair bit of first-person; at the same time, those who had less experience of first-person leapt into it very willingly. It helped in particular that the Smiths, who were portraying a country family, had substantial modern country lore, and could talk quite plausibly about such topics in character--much was made of the city folk asking them questions about country life. Having a solid scenario for the event and well-defined social relationships among the participants also helped, as it allowed for a very engaged level of interaction; and one should always bear in mind that good food and drink put everyone at their ease and furnish pleasant matter for table talk.

The meal was potluck, with a variety of fine dishes furnished by all; it was accompanied by a choice of sweet or strong cider. Most of the dishes were cold, and we interpreted that they had been purchased by

the hosts from local food sellers. The Shrovetuesday theme was observed with fritters and pancakes, the traditional fare of Elizabethan Shrovetide. There was also a herring pie, which would have been more of a Lenten dish--the Elizabethans on Shrovetide would probably have avoided fish, since they would have more than enough of it during Lent (it should be noted that by this time the Lenten fast was no longer religious--it was for the political purpose of supporting English fishermen and English sea-power).

There have been numerous requests for recipes from the meal. The following were based directly on Gervase Markham, *The English Housewife* (some from the original 1615 ed., some from 1631 edition as modernized in Michael Best's edition of 1986)--the original text is followed by the interpretation. I should note that the interpretations were experimental, and might still be improved on.

How to Bake Eels. [Markham (1631 ed. Best) #107]

After you have drawn your eels, chop them into small pieces of three or four inches, and season them with pepper, salt, and ginger, and so put them into a coffin with a good lump of butter, great raisins, onions small chopped, and so close it, bake it, and serve it up.

Preheat the oven to 300x. Break into a bowl the flesh of 4 smoked herrings; season with 2t ginger and 1/2 t pepper. Chop 2 medium onions fine and fry until slightly golden; add onions, 1 c raisins, and 6 T softened butter to the fish and mix. Bake in a covered pie shell until the pastry is golden brown (c. 45 minutes).

Since not all of the participants were carnivores, but everyone ate fish, we chose to have a fish pie. Markham's eel pie is his simplest seafood pie, so it was used as the base. The result was very enthusiastically received from many quarters!

A spinach tart. [Markham (1631 ed. Best) #140]

Take good store of spinach, and boil it in a pipkin with white wine till it be very soft as pap: then take it, and strain it well into a pewter dish, not leaving any part unstrained: then put to it rose-water, great store of sugar and cinnamon, and boil it till it be as thick as marmalade; then let it cool, and after fill your coffin, and adorn it, and serve it in all points as you did your prune tart, and this carrieth the colour green.

Preheat the oven to 300x. Wash and shred 2 bunches of spinach. Boil in 2 c white wine (the spinach will eventually collapse into the liquid) until very soft. Strain off the liquid and add 3/4 c rosewater, 1 1/2 c sugar, and 1 1/2 t cinnamon. Boil until no fluid remains. Bake in a covered pie shell until the pastry is golden brown (c. 45 minutes).

The rose water gives this sweet tart a very distinctive flavour; this tart was also much commended.

The best fritters. [Markham (1615) 44-45]

To make the best Fritters, take a pinte of creame and warme it; then take eight egges, only abate fowre of the whites, and beate them well in a dish, and so mixe them with the reame, then put in a little Cloves, Mace, Nutmegge and Saffron and stirre them well together: then put in two spoonefull of the best ale-barme and a little salt and stirre it againe, then make it thicke according to your pleasure with wheate flower, which done, set it within the aire of the fire, that it may rise and swell; which when it doth, you shall beate it in once or twice, then put into it a penny pot of sacke: all this being done, you shal take a pound or two of very sweet seame and put it into a panne, and set it ouer the fire, and when it is moulten and begins to bubble, you shall take the fritter batter, and setting it by you, put thicke slices of well-pared Apples into the batter: And then taking the Apples and batter out together with a spoone put it into the boiling seame, and boile your fritters crispe

and browne: and when you find the strength of your seame decay, you shall renew it with more seame; and of all sorts of seame, that which is made of the beefe suet is the best and stongest; when your fritters are made strow good store of sugar and cinamon vpon thme, being faire disht, and so serve them vp.

Mix 1 t yeast into 2 T lukewarm water or beer. Heat 1/2 pint cream until it is lukewarm; add 2 whole eggs and 2 yolks to the cream, and season with 1/4 t cloves, 1/4 t mace, 1/2 t nutmeg, and 2 threads pounded saffron. Add the yeast mixture to the cream mixture, and mix in 1 c flour. Put in a warm place and allow to rise for half an hour. Pare and slice a dozen apples. When the batter has risen, mix in 1/2 c sherry. Heat oil to 275-300x. Dip the apples in flour, then in the batter, then drop them into the oil to fry until they are golden brown. You may need to stir the pot to cook the fritters evenly. Serve with a sprinkling of sugar and cinnamon on top.

Note that this recipe was written down after the fact--I am not entirely sure of the quantity of apples or flour.

The best pancake. [Markham (1615) 45]

To make the best Pancake, take two or three egges, and breake them into a dish, and beate them well; Then adde vnto them a pretty quantity of faire running water, and beate all well together: Then put in cloues, mace, cinamon, and a nutmegge, and season it with salt; which done make it thick as you thinke good with fine wheat flower: Then frie the cakes as thinne as may bee with sweete butter, or sweete seame, and make them browne, and so serue them vp with sugar strowed vpon them. There be some which mixe Pancakes with new milke or creame, but that makes them tough, cloying, and not so crispe, pleasant and sauoury as running water.

Lightly beat 2-3 eggs; mix in 1 1/2 c water, 1/2 t cloves, 1/2 t mace, 1 t cinnamon, 1 t nutmeg; mix in 2 c flour. Pour about 1/2 c of the mixture onto a greased griddle of medium

heat and spread it thin with a spatula; fry until there is no moisture left on top, and serve with a sprinkling of sugar.

This pancake comes out as a kind of crepe.

Activities of the Gardener's Company

J. Morgan

Our efforts over the last quarter have been divided between business as usual and getting ready for our big event of the year, Mousehole. In the usual category we have hosted a period evening which had about 20 attendees and included traditional activities such as dancing, games, and a bit of gambling. The success of the evening was insured, however, by a bout of the very Elizabethan sport "make fun of the foreigner". We had a couple of volunteers for this activity, who, it must be confessed, did score a few points back on their hosts. At any rate a good time was had by all.

We have also been working on various projects, primarily to improve individual impressions. While principally concerned with clothing (to include hats) a few other items have been developed. Grace hosted a workshop on Elizabethan shoes which has inspired several folks to have some done by Pennsic. Geoffrey finally managed to finish off a couple more sundials, though they seem to look better than they tell time. The maps and description of Southwark provided so graciously by Dr. Singman have been used in determining where you live and work" exercises. These have added considerable depth to our personas and been a very valuable teaching aid.

For Mousehole we have spruced up our pikes and converted them to the English Civil War Latex tip standard. A couple of drills have been held with these to determine how safe they really are. We have concluded that under certain circumstances they can be used safely, but adult supervision is definitely a good idea along with fencing masks and a few other pieces of critical armor (depending on your gender). More testing will be conducted

at Mousehole and hopefully a melee of a dozen or so on a side.

We have also started planning the camp for Pennsic this year. We hope to make some improvements to the kitchen tent and facilities, including once again upgrading the shower area. There is a possibility (remote) that we may have someone interested in cooking a few meals. So please let me know if folks are interested in doing more group meals. One thing we have talked about before is planting some trees at the site. Given that we have been there over five years now and intend to go on for a while, this is not an unreasonable plan. We are also considering doing a class on Elizabethan Trained Bands, which could get us some recruits among other things. Please let us know if folks would be willing to support that. Finally, as they are allowing pre-registration, I would appreciate hearing from folks as early as possible. A key to pre-registering is actually using the correct camp name, which will be the "Willow Point/Southwark Trained Bands".

Activities of the Westminster Trayn'd Bands

D. & M. Martinez

While hastily put together, a very joyful gathering was made for a 12th night celebration at New Finsbury Tavern in Westminster. In keeping with the traditions of the holiday, a good Banbury cake was prepared and served to the guests. Lord Laurent received the pea, and became Queen of the Festivities, with the fair Gabriel receiving the bean to become King. Both were crowned with wreaths of leaves and wheat stalks, and were given straw brooms for septors. The Royal Pair played their parts with great jest, commanding various deeds be done by the celebrants. They even made a few "royal appointments".

The gathering brought out some of our old friends whose company we've missed. Our old companion Richard G. gifted the tavern with a fine aged bottle of Port, which was shared by all. Late in the evening, those who were still awake gathered around the

grand old fireplace and reminisced about past adventures and celebrations. Poch was the favorite at the tables after dinner. Josephine and Jenny were quick to clean up around the tables in the morning, finding a few stray pennies that fell unnoticed by the gamesters the evening before.

A special thanks to the musicians Gerry, Ruth, and Jennifer, who played for the dancers. We were very glad that you came. More recently, the Banes participated in a local faire. William Fleetwood would have been proud to see one of his companies so smartly dressed, bearing recently completed pikes. Our ranks were increased by two new recruits -- William Wood, a local carpenter, and young Robin Marlowe, who plays the fife.

Our Sergeant, Master Trent looked most splendid in his new armor. He recently received a peascod breastplate from Master Robert MacPhearson, and with great pride, he sends his fondest thanks to this fine craftsman. The quality of this armorer's work surpassed Nicholas' expectations. For those interested in seeing the new armor in action, there should be several sets at Pennsic.

After a bit of shopping at the stalls and booths, the Sergeant ordered a drill. During the march, the drummer and fife were forced to march through part of the crowd, most of whom gave way for the company. However, there was one surly band of apprentices who only snickered and joked as the Banes approached. We feared young Robin would not get past the ruffians -- to our surprise, he pushed his way right through the crowd, and never missed a note. Good lad!

As a final note -- the Westminster Trayn'd Banes bids our fondest farewell to Henry Ames, who has taken a commission in Ireland for the next six months. We wish him well, and will spend his pay in good health.

Activities of the TIS

N. Crozier

Our event of March 16 was a success! We held it at the University of Toronto.

Sixteen people attended, 4 of whom had never attempted living history, 2 of whom have done so infrequently, and 10 of whom are core TIS members. First person interpretation went very smoothly.

The evening began with pike drill in the courtyard, as the weather was mild. Guests dropped into the Tabard Inn for delicious food prepared by members and served in period style by the Inn's servants. Food and drink was interspersed with and followed by songs. After all had eaten, we pushed back the tables and danced, Trenchmore and Sellenger's, new guests included.

New Suppliers

Hamilton Adams, Import Limited, 104 West 40th Street New York, NY 10018; (212) 221-0800. Carries a selection of high quality linen and cotton/linen blends.

Trident Industrial Products Corp., 8555 W. McNab Road, Tamarac, FL 33321-3209; (800) 327-1830). Carries a wide selection of 'industrial fabrics' including several grades of canvas; treated, and untreated. Samples available.

Ulster Weaving Company Limited, 148 Madison Avenue (at 32nd St.), New York, NY 10016; (212 684-5534) Large selection of linen; many colors, many weights.

** Note, all three companies do have a 'minimum purchase' policy of some type (usually 25-50 yards), although they may sell less yardage for a cutting fee. Ask.