

The Fencers, Dancers, and Bearbaiters Quarterly

The Newsletter of the Traynd Bandes of London

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'Ever But in Times of Need At Hand'

January 1999

Greetings from the Trayn'd Bandes of London, a federation of living history groups for the period 1585-1645, distinguished by their pursuit of both civilian and military activities, cultivation of first-person interpretation, and fanatical devotion to historically accurate mayhem.

The constituent groups are Gardener's Company (centered in Virginia-Maryland), the Tabard Inn Society (centered in Ontario), and the Westminster Trayn'd Bandes (centered in Texas).

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	TIS
1 October	Gardeners

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don't miss our splendid site at:

<http://www.mtnlake.com/~cctimar/bandes>

Upcoming Events

[Major Events are the most important 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.]

March 13 1999: Charlottesville, Virginia. Gardiners Spring Workshop. A day of classes on games, music and songs, dance, and persona development. The games and songs will be focused on ones we don't already use. Regional. Contact Gardiner's.

March 20-21 1999: Jamestown Settlement, Virginia. Military through the Ages. Gardiners will not be participating as a unit, although that have already been through Volunteer Orientation would probably be welcome to join the Fort's staff for the weekend. Contact them in advance! Many of us will be attending as tourists on Sunday as an opportunity to see what goes on before participate as a unit in the future.

April 10 1999: Toronto, Ontario. Annual Tabard Inn spring event. An Elizabethan potluck evening, with good ale, good music, and bad influences. Regional. Contact TIS.

April 23-25 1999: Martinsville, Virginia. The Raid on Mousehole. One of the TBL's largest annual events, Elizabethan setting. This has been expanded to include Friday in an effort to accommodate more civilian activities on Saturday. Set-up will begin on Thursday afternoon/evening, and Friday will be a day to get some of the skirmishing out of our systems as well as do other miscellaneous things. Saturday will include drill, more skirmishing, and numerous civilian activities which we plan to focus on more this year. Major. Contact Gardener's.

May 22-23 1999: Ethel, Ontario. Shapwick Whitsun Muster and Ale. An authentic (an therefore inevitably raucous) festival in the remote Oxfordshire village of Shapwick during the English Civil War. Major. Contact TIS.

July 4 1999: Annual Armada Re-Enactment. This year the Armada flotilla trip will be combined with a shopping trip to the annual American Civil War re-enactment in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Tentative plans are to shop on Sunday and float on Monday. Regional. Contact Gardiner's.

August 1999: New Castle, Pennsylvania. Eighth annual Trained Bands Elizabethan encampment at the Pennsic Wars. This year looks to be the best year yet with more drilling, more singing, more carousing -- you get the picture. Major. Contact Gardiners.

?September 1999: Ethel, Ontario. Shapwick Michaelmas Fair and Muster. A harvest festival in the Oxfordshire village of Shapwick during the English Civil War. Major. Contact TIS.

From the Editor

1999 looks to be a year of transition for the Banded. In Texas, David and Maureen Martinez have lately produced our newest bandsman; in Ontario, Phil Collman and Steph Diamant have begun their new sheep farm, while Victoria Hadfield and I have left the Great Lakes region; meanwhile in Virginia-Maryland, Jeff Morgan has passed on official responsibility for the group, and several of the group's key members have relocated to North Carolina. It never rains but it pours.

During the past year, I had the opportunity to attend events presented by all three TBL groups, and as a founding member of the organisation I felt very proud to have contributed to such an admirable undertaking. Each group has its own distinctive strengths, and together we have created something which I have never seen anywhere else: amateur living history in first person that combines real fun for the participants with a genuine commitment to history.

Looking at the content of this newsletter, I see several interlocking themes. Gardeners Company, having developed an outstanding tradition of military drill, is now working to develop its civilian side, and especially persona play. In Toronto, a small core of TBL participants have discovered that a solid repertoire of civilian entertainments has made it possible to put on a fun event with lively persona play requiring only a minimum of organisational effort. The chronology for 1599 shows that we are re-enacting a pivotal and exciting year in Elizabethan history, featuring Essex's notorious expedition to Ireland, and his fall from royal favour (which will eventually lead to his execution), a major invasion scare in London (coinciding with the TBL's summer muster!), the publication of George Silver's scathing attack on Italian rapier fencing, and the premieres of three of Shakespeare's most famous plays. Meanwhile, the modern world has just produced the film *Shakespeare in Love*, which presents on the big screen exactly the time, place, and spirit that we have been striving to recreate in the Banded. This could be a big year for the TBL...

Gardiners Yule Event

by Greg Glewwe

Gardiner's Company held its annual Yule event at the home of Greg and Diane Glewwe. The living room and adjoining dining room were handsomely converted into a beautiful and believable period space by the combined efforts of our members. Holly and ivy festooned the walls, chandeliers, and even the Ensign and George which were hung upon the walls! After changing clothes everyone gathered in the modern end of the house to exit in pairs and small groups through the garage and arrive at the door of Nathaniel and Katherine Sharpe on New Year's Eve 1598/9. Guests were admitted to the Sharpe's home by one of their three servants and welcomed by the Nathaniel and Katherine. When all 26 guests had arrived, everyone was seated on benches at trestle tables and dinner was served. While Fanny and Baldrick presented and served the meal, Jack Wright (Greg Gilbert, the newest member of Gardiners) served ale, cider, and beer (root) to the diners. After the meal, James Hamilton was elected King of Misrule and festooned with bells and ribbons. He wisely took his lovely wife Eleanor Hamilton as his Queen, and Merriment did ensue! The King led the guests outside to sing and make merry with the neighbors while the servants (and several volunteers) broke down most of the tables and cleared away the dishes. When the King returned with his "court" in tow, Fanny and Baldrick were dismissed for the evening and Anna and Ezekiel joined the celebration shortly thereafter.

The evening continued with games of Blind Man's Bluff, singing accompanied by Percy's fiddle, a display of dancing and falling by Gregory Blount, and visits by both a group of Wassail singers with a wassail bowl (by Mistress Hamilton) and Father Christmas bearing a bag of Yule gifts (by Mistress Beddingfield)! Late in the evening games of chance came out as various guest drifted away for the night and we finally called a halt to the festivities at midnight or so! As an interesting note, we seated everyone at table first according to sex (women and children, who stood, at two of the tables and men at the other two tables) and then by rank. This had the effect of putting most of the experienced persona players at one table or near each other. This could be seen as both good and bad, as it forced less experienced folks to interact in period fashion without the assistance of the more experienced folks. Unfortunately, the "head table" where the more experienced folks were was not in a location where it was in easy view of everyone in the room. We feel that high level of period interaction at that table would have been more useful had it been visible (and hearable) to all, allowing them to play off that activity to a degree. Still in all, it was an excellent evening and everyone enjoyed themselves immensely!

The Glewwe's front rooms will not be restored to modern use, and so will continue to be available for

impromptu period evenings and other activities. The next of which is planned for February.

A note of thanks to Chris Cox (Christopher Stockman, our Corporal of Shot) for bringing his tables and benches up a day early because the impending inclement weather kept him and his wife home the night of Yule. It sleeted and iced fairly heavily during Yule! Thanks again Chris! It wouldn't have been easy without your service!

Christmas with the Companions of the Tabard Inn

Winter is generally the off-season for events, but as in previous years, we did manage to hold a Christmas party. The occasion was hosted by Andrew and Joan Bentley at their stately Bankside residence, and attended by about a dozen of those inhabitants of Southwark who couldn't get invited to a respectable celebration. The inevitable sorts of disorder naturally ensued, although, significantly we found we had so many ordinary social merriments that we had no time for the special revelries of Christmas. Notable on this occasion was the appearance of some evil period tobacco (grown and processed at Plimoth Plantation) that made it clear that Phillip Morris' witches'-brew version has improved neither flavour nor potency. Overall, the event demonstrated that once the group has a good sense of how to have fun in the historical setting, relatively little is needed in the way of elaborate event preparations or facilities to put together an enjoyable occasion.

Current Events, 1599

The war with Spain drags on, partly in the Low Countries, partly at sea; fears of a possible Spanish invasion still arise from time to time. England's allies, the Dutch, are eager to keep Elizabeth in the war, but France has abandoned the alliance last summer, concluding a separate peace with Spain, and some of the Queen's advisors would like to see England follow suit. Elizabeth herself is troubled by the enormous expense of the war, especially now that the conflict against Irish rebels led by Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, has broken into fighting again, and more troops are evidently needed there.

Note that in England, the number of the year changes on Lady Day (25 March).

January 1598/9

3. It is expected that the Earl of Essex will be ordered to command the English forces in Ireland, and an army is being prepared for the undertaking, in part drawn from veterans in the Netherlands, who will be replaced by levies from England.

11. Thomas Nashe prints his comic praise of Yarmouth herring, titled *Nashe's Lenten Stuff*.

20. The poet Edmund Spenser dies in London, having lately been driven out of his estates in Ireland by the rebels there.

30. George Silver publishes his *Paradoxes of Defence*.

February

19. A very strange and miraculous accident is reported from Purmerend in the Netherlands, one which may indeed be taken as one of those signs and tokens in the Sun and Moon, monstrous births and strange marvellous things that betoken the coming of the latter day. In this city of Purmerend a certain virtuous woman, the wife of one John Martinson, being big with child and within eight days of her delivery, the child was heard to cry in her womb so loudly that the father, looking about thought it to be one of their other children. On New Year's Even the woman was delivered of her child, not monstrous or misshapen, but a well shaped man child and of a right human figure with all his limbs; but being a week old and above it began to grow grievous sick and at last lay with such faintness that the father, thinking it had been dead, said, 'Alas, it is done.' But being returned to itself again, at night about seven of the clock the 13th of January and casting up his eyes to heaven and thrusting out his arms and fists through anguish, it spake these words three times 'O my God; O my God; O my God'; which words were spoken with such distinction that between each time one might have spoken two or three words. This was done in the presence of the father and the mother and two other women. The child growing sicker about two in the morning mumbled certain other words, amongst which were understood that he said, 'Aye me. Aye me. Aye me'; but how often it is not remembered.

March

15. The Earl of Essex's commission as Lord Deputy for Ireland has at last been issued. The expedition has been much delayed, but the Earl is said to intend setting forth this very month.

25. There are rumours of ships being prepared at Biscay in Spain for some great expedition.

27. The Earl sets forth from London, to the great acclaim of the Londoners. Before he could get past Islington, a great storm came in from the northeast, bearing lightning, thunder, hail, and rain; the omen is not taken as propitious.

April 1598

15. Twelve new galleons are said to have been built by the Spaniards at Biscay, and there is great gathering of provisions.

20. William Shakespeare's play of *King Henry V* premieres at the Curtain with the Lord Chamberlain's Men.

26. The Earl of Essex lands in Dublin.

30. Several fishing boats are said to have been attacked by Spanish galleys off Plymouth.

May

12. There are reports of Dunkirk pirates preying on English and Flemish shipping off the Yorkshire coast.

28. It is rumoured that the Spanish expedition will join with 10,000 French soldiers at Brest for the invasion of England; the danger is all the greater with Essex and his army embroiled in Ireland.

June

7. A force under Sir Henry Harington is defeated by Irish rebels near Wicklow.

10. Essex has angered the Queen by making the Earl of Southampton his General of Horse, against her express command.

July

10. Shakespeare's play *As You Like It* premieres with the Admiral's Men.

14. A witch has been hanged at St. Edmundsbury in Suffolk.

30. The Queen is much angered that Essex has not yet marched into Ulster against Tyrone, and commands him to proceed there at once, forbidding him to return to England without her express permission.

August

1. There is great alarm in London at a rumour that the Spanish invasion fleet is now ready to sail, and ships and troops are made ready to defend the country.

3. Report arrives from Plymouth that the Spanish are expected within days, bringing 70 galleys, 100 ships, and 30,000 soldiers under the personal command of the King of Spain.

7. The Spaniards are reported to have landed at the Isle of Wight and Southampton. London is in panic, and rumours fly that the Spaniards will be aided by 100 ships from Denmark and 40,000 troops from Scotland, in order to place James VI of Scotland on the English throne.

10. The Lord Admiral's Men premiere Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday*.

12. It is said that the Spaniards are at Brest, although others rumour that the great mustering of troops is because the Queen is dead or grievously ill.

18. English troops have been defeated by Irish rebels at Carlow.

22. The Earl of Nottingham, Captain General of the Queen's forces in England, has issued orders to victuallers of the militia in and around London governing the prices of their goods. A quart of best ale or beer is to cost 1d., single ale or beer a halfpenny, sweet and new butter is to be 1d. a pound, good Essex cheese 1 1/2d. Soldiers are to be paid 8d. a day, and receive for dinner or supper good wheaten bread, drink, beef, mutton, or veal boiled, pig, beef, mutton, or lamb roasted, and on fish days salt fish, eggs, and buttered peas or beans, receiving 3 1/2d. to pay for his meal.

23. The rumours of invasion are now blown over, and the mustered troops are to be sent home.

Report has it that Essex has been creating numerous knights in Ireland, a thing much marvelled at seeing how little his expedition has achieved.

25. The Spanish are reported off the coast of France, and the troops are to be recalled.

26. Before 6 AM this morning (being Sunday), 3000 troops trained by the citizens of London are mustered in the streets in armour; there is a heavy shower of rain, and they are sent home soaking wet after 7.

27. 30,000 citizens, householders, and subsidy men are mustered in the morning at Mile End, in the east end of London, where they train all day, and are to continue to do so daily.

September

4. The training of citizens in London is ordered to cease, the scare of invasion having passed.

17. Essex concludes a treaty of peace with Tyrone, upon terms contrary to his instructions from the Queen.

21. Shakespeare's play of *Julius Caesar* is premiered at the new Globe Theatre.

28. Essex returns unexpected to London. He arrives to see the Queen at 10AM, and is graciously received by her, but returning in the afternoon he finds her cold and discontent with his conduct in Ireland.

29. Essex is placed in the custody of the Lord Keeper of England while the council deliberates on his conduct.

October

10. It is reported that Tyrone has no intention of keeping the truce he concluded with Essex.

21. The Councils deliberation's continue, and the Queen is said to be most angry at Essex's wilful disobedience. In the meantime, it is reported that Essex has grown very ill and weak.

November

27. There are rumours that preparations are in hand to commit Essex to the Tower.

28. The court of Star Chamber issues a declaration against Essex's conduct.

December

4. To-day a witch called Anne Kerke, that was arraigned before the Lord Anderson and other justices and then condemned, was executed at Tyburn. She was charged with many witcheries. At one time taking displeasure with a woman for not bidding her to her child's christening, she tormented the child twice or thrice a day in strange manner until the father with others went to Mother Gillams (that dwelleth on the Bankside), who told them that the child was forespoken, and that the witch had been (as indeed she was) twice with the mother of the child before they came home, and that for the child's recovery they should cut off a piece of the witch's coat with a pair of shears, and burn it together with the child's undercloth: which they did and the child accordingly was healed.

15. Essex continues ill, and the Queen has sent eight physicians to look to him.

Source: Harrison, *Elizabethan Journals*.

STOOLBALL

Players: 2 teams of 3 or more players each

Equipment: 1 softball-type ball; 1 stool

Source: Francis Willughby's treatise on games (c1670)

A stool is laid on its side at one end of the field, the seat facing across the field. Team A stands behind the stool, Team B faces them. Player 1 on Team A stands at the stool and 'posts' the ball toward Team B, ie. he hits it volleyball-style, either overhand or underhand:

--If no-one on Team B catches the ball before it lands, whoever stops it throws it at the stool from where he stops it, and if he fails to hit the stool, Team B scores 1 point, and Player 1 posts again. If he hits the stool, Player 1 is out.

--If Team B catch the ball, they post it back, and Team A try to catch the ball to post it back. This continues until one side fails to catch the ball. If Team A fails, Player 1 is out. If Team B fails, Team A scores 2 points, and Player 1 posts again.

Once a player is out, the next one steps up to the stool to post. Once all the players on a team have been put out, the teams change places. Play continues until one side reaches 31 points. Willughby specifies that points are literally scored, ie. nicked into a tally-stick.

Willughby says that 'if a ball be not posted fair, they must post it again.' This would be the case if the ball were posted too far off to the side, or if the team in the field did not hit it as far as the stool. The team in the field stand as far from the stool as they judge the poster can hit the ball. The ground should slope slightly downward from the stool to the field. The game can be played with two stones instead of a stool, the players trying to throw the ball between the stones.

A game called Stoolball is attested as early as the fifteenth century; in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the name seems to have been applied to a bat-and-ball game resembling Cricket. In the Elizabethan period, Stoolball was especially popular in the Spring, and often associated with Shrovetide and Easter. It was as popular with women as men, and might be played with food or drink as a stake, especially Tansies.

Book Reviews

by Jeff Morgan

Artefacts from Wrecks. Ed. Mark Redknap. Oxbow Books, 1997. This is a must have for those of you into the material culture. While most books about artefacts give a nice account of objects along with perhaps a picture, this book provides detailed analysis along with construction diagrams, and in some notable cases even

a discussion on how to make them. Articles of particular interest include "A study of chests from Henry VIII's warship Mary Rose" and "Footware and other artefacts from a 16th C Spanish Basque galleon". A little pricy (65\$) and not entirely focused on our period but well worth it. For a copy contact David Brown Books (800) 791-9354.

Gamini Salgado, *The Elizabethan Underworld*. Alan Sutton Books, 1992. This is part of the historical series from Sutton books which includes such titles as "The Tudor Housewife". It provides a good look into the other side of Elizabethan life and is extremely usefull for those wishing to recreate the period. In addition to obvious outlaws such as Highwaymen, this book also covers those operating on the margins of the law such as Astrologers, Gypsies, Beggars, and a variety of other Fakers and conmen. Lots of good detail which would be fun to use. Recommended.

Film Reviews

The Trayn'd Bandes have never been especially noted for being ahead of the curve on fashion trends, but this season it looks like the western world is catching up with what we have known for nearly a decade: Elizabethan is in! This season has seen no less than two major motion pictures on Elizabethan themes (for those of you who have spent the last six months living under a rock, the titles are *Elizabeth* and *Shakespeare in Love*).

I saw *Elizabeth* first, which is good, since I would hate to end this review on a sour note. The film was not without its high points. The portrayal of Elizabeth herself was not without merit, and the underlying struggles she faces in the film rang true, trying to cope as a woman in a man's world, as a girl in a world of very dangerous adults, as a human being thrust into a position where the public expected a kind of divinity. The dance scenes captured the energy of Elizabethan dance. But overall, the film took outrageous liberties with real people and events without actually creating a story that was stronger, clearer, or more gripping than the actual history. Elizabeth is portrayed as naive at the time of her accession, when it was her cunning that allowed her to survive Mary's reign; Sir William Cecil is a doddering old fool who was cashiered as soon as the queen wised up to him, when in fact he served well and wisely almost to the very last years of her reign; Walsingham is a Machiavellian cynic, when he was in fact a highly idealistic Puritan; and God only knows what they had in mind with Dudley's involvement in this nebulous Spanish plot--the real Dudley was certainly ambitious and hoped to marry the queen, but he remained a loyal and beloved friend until his death shortly after the Armada. All in all, you won't miss anything if you wait till it comes out on video. Or better yet, get a copy of the TV series *Elizabeth R*, which shows that real history and drama can truly go hand in hand.

Ironically, *Shakespeare in Love* tells of events that never happened in a manner very true to history; it may indeed be the most pleasing film I have ever seen. It rates high on the re-enactment geek scale: pretty good costumes, excellent settings and ambiance, and many nice details of material culture. More importantly, it captures much of the feel and spirit of Elizabethan life and literature: the business and craft of the theatre, the social hierarchy, the vitality and passion of Shakespeare's world and works. All this, plus a cracking good fight by the master himself, William Hobbs. All in all, a must-see, and from a TBL perspective, a must-emulate: this film is an imaginative fantasy of Elizabethan life firmly grounded in the historical realities, which is precisely what we are trying to do ourselves.