

THE FENCERS, DANCERS, AND BEARBAITERS QUARTERLY

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE TRAYN'D BANDES IN NORTH AMERICA

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'Ever But in Times of Need at Hand'

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Greetings from the Trayn'd Bandes of London, **UPCOMING EVENTS**

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).

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

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'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. 'Local' Events are very small events which people are encouraged to attend only if the journey would take less than an hour.

Unfortunately I had not heard from any group but Gardiners for the upcoming calendar.

February 26-27 2000: Charlottesville, VA. Gardeners Spring Workshop. We will be working on various things in preparation for Military Through the Ages (see below). Regional. Contact Gardiners

March 17-19, 2000: Jamestown Settlement, VA. Military through the Ages. Gardiners Company will be supporting the Jamestown folks this year. We will not be competing. We will be volunteering with the Jamestown reenactors in the fort. Regional. Contact Gardiners

August, 2000: New Castle, PA. Ninth Annual Trayn'd Bandes Elizabethan encampment at the Pennsic Wars. This year should prove to be grand, as many that wimped out last year will be there this year. Come for more singing, drilling, dancing, drilling, carousing, and chocolate milk. Major. Contact Gardiners

Sept/Oct 2000: Martinsville, VA. The Raid on Mousehole. One of the TBL's largest annual events has moved to the fall in hopes of

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warmer and dryer weather! The date hasn't been set yet, but like last year will probably be a two day event with setup on a Thursday and breakdown on a Sunday. A lovely rural site offers lots of room for skirmishing, drill and carousing! Major. Contact Gardiners

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Cash Carrying
Submitted by Jeff Morgan

There seems to be a trend, in which I am primary offender, to carry more coins than one needs. I think is due, at least partially, to the fact that even though the coins are only pewter there is some sense of glee in having such a mass of them. However the "official" reason this is typically done is to provide spare change for the less fortunate at short notice during an event. A preferable system is to issue coins at the beginning of the event and though this is routinely attempted, invariably coins are passed out during events. A way to avoid the temptation of carrying excess coins is to divide up your cash and only carry as much as you would actually have. Any extra should be left elsewhere, or better yet, turned into the clerk. This article is an effort to sort out how much cash we should be carrying.

Earning Potential

So how much should we be carrying? To get some idea of how much you should have, think about what earning potential and buying power you would have. The farthing is the smallest denomination we have. However, given a wage of 8d1 per day it works out to 15

minutes of your work day assuming 8 hours (which is a short work day in period). A modern penny would be the equivalent to 3.6 seconds of your work day at a wage of 10\$/hour. So a farthing is not exactly an insignificant amount of cash. The fact that it was the smallest denomination was recognized as a problem even then, but no easy solution emerged.

While we often discuss daily wages, most people would be paid either by the week or year, and generally these rates worked out to be less than the daily rate. However the employee had the guaranty of a longer term of employment. So while the common daily wage for skilled labor is around 8d per day the yearly rate is around 5 L which works out to 3.9 d per day for a six day work week. In both cases meat and drink are given in addition to the wage. The same worker might expect 50% more, or 12d on the daily rate, if meat and drink were not provided. The following table gives an idea of wages for journeymen and other employees based on a royal proclamation limiting pay rates, and so represent an attempt at a maximum wage, not a minimum wage. The fact that similar proclamations were issued frequently during our period attests to the fact that they were probably not effective. However it does give some indication of relative pay scale.

Apprentices received little or no pay, their services being given in trade for learning their craft. Of course they had no real expenses as they were housed, fed and clothed by their Masters. Additionally, as time permitted they could make items on the side for sale to get a bit of extra change. A wage of 2 L per year has been suggested for apprentices, which would represent a better case. A figure closer to 1 L is more likely. Servants were in much the same situation as regards income and benefits, but it was a reasonable trade given the requirement to not be a "Masterless Man".

Regulated Wages in 1589

(with Meat and Drink)

Daily Weekly Yearly Profession

4d 16d 3L Girdlers

6d 2s 4L Wax Chandlers

7d 3s 4d 8L Goldsmiths

8d 3s 4d 3L 6s 8d Plumbers, Armourers,

Woolwinders

8d 3s 4d 4L Skinners

8d 3s 4d 4L 6s 8d Coopers

8d 4s 6d 5L Broderers

9d 4s 4L Painters, Stainers

Masters theoretically had unlimited income, at least in their dreams. Realistically a yearly income of 40 pounds was considered wealthy and "Income Taxes", theoretically an indicator of comfort, started at 10L per anum. The average Master Craftsman (business owner) could expect an income between 15 to 25 pounds per year and be happy about it. The Chief Engraver for the Royal Mint only made 30 L per anum. "Professionals" were

considerably better paid with Lawyers and Doctors potentially earning 100s of L per year. The Mayor of London was very well appointed with a yearly salary of 2500 L.

Money could also be gotten through loans which fall into three categories, simple loans, loans for goods and services, and loans made upon bond or specialty. The most common was the simple loan between friends and family, typically for small amounts but with no real limit and generally with no interest. Next would be loans given for goods or services which resulted to some extent from the currency shortage. It was very common for people to have such debts on account with others often in significant amounts. Finally there was money lent "upon bond or specialty" often with interest. Usury, the charging of interest, had been legalized in 1571 with a maximum rate of 10%. While it is possible that one of us would get such a loan these tended to be for larger sums among the truly important. While having gotten a loan is a good excuse to have cash (presumably for some purchase commiserate with the amount), there is also a potential for persona play in how you choose to portray repaying such loans particularly given that the second most common legal charge (after physical assault) was failure to pay a debt.

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Expenses

From the buying power perspective a few things need to be kept in mind. First the latter years of Elizabeth's reign were ones of high inflation, so the costs given are tentative at best. Next, a pence is roughly equivalent to 2\$, a shilling to 24\$, and a pound to 500\$ in modern terms. While these rates work for some items, in general manufactured and imported goods were much more expensive than the equivalent today as can be seen in the clothe prices.

Entertainment/Services: A meal at a reasonable Inn 4-6d; A play 1-3d (with cushion + 1d); A very good whore (and dinner) 40s. Crossing the Thames 1d; Crossing under London Bridge 6d; A good forged Passport 12d; A visit to a Popular Astrologer (15 minutes) 2s 6d; Swearing a warrant out on someone 1s.

Guild Fees & Fines (in the Grocers Company): To be free of your craft 6 L ; Employing a foreigner illegally 5L per day; Being late to a meeting 6d; Missing a meeting 13s 4d; Missing a Guild funeral (not yours) 20s; Failing to pay dues 10s; Swearing and Brawling (presumably at a meeting or with other Guild members) 40s; Refusing to pay Royal or Civic Assessments 10 L.

Clothing: Broad Clothe 3s 6d /yd; White Cotton 5s 6d /yd; canvas 16d/elle; a tod of yarn 7L; Shoes 1s; White silk hose 25s; A pair of scissors 6d; Needles 11d the dozen; Clothing was so expensive as to be commonly mentioned in wills (in Stratford) and had an average value of 30s which represented 10% of the total estate.

Food: Food for the day 4d; A rabbit 6d; A Capon 10d; A pound of sugar 20s (use honey); A pound of butter 3d; A pound of Cheese 1.5d; A pound of cherries 3d; A loaf of Bread 1d; A quart of wine 1s; A gallon of Ale 4d; A gallon of Small Beer 1d; A copper kettle 11s.

Military items: A Musket w Bandaler & rest 20s 8d; A Petrenell w Flask 28s; A long Pistol w Flask 30s; A Sword 6s; A Guilt Halbred 15s; A plain Halbred 4s; A Pike 3s 2d; A Black Bill 2s.

Hardware: A Shovel 20d; A Pick Ax 2s 6d; A Large Ax 14d; A sledge hammer 7s; Large Auger 30d; Whipp Saw 12s; Hand Saw 3s; A broad chisel 12d; a narrow chisel 8d; A large melting ladle 4s; Leather Buckets 41s a dozen; A large Barrel 2s 4d; A small scale 6s 1d; A large scale 20s; A Fine Brass Ring Dial 2L 6s 8d; 20 Lesser Dials 3L 3s (roughly 3s each); A large Navigation Chart 5L; An hour Glass 1s; A smiths forge complete with tools 12 L. In Stratford tradesman typically had 1-2 L worth of tools.

Consumables: Nails 4 L 3s 4d a barrel; Copper nails 16d the hundred; Horseshoes 6d; Sheep Skins 24s per dozen; Soap 4d/pound; Tallow 5d the pound; Candles 5d the pound.

Larger expenses one would be saving for include: Tools, getting married, getting your own accommodation, becoming free of your craft, setting up a shop, etc. While you would hopefully have a cache saved up for these, it is unlikely that you would have this cash on your person.

How much to carry

So how much should you be carrying for our Musters? Try the following steps. 1) Determine how much your Persona makes²³. 2) Determine if you have any major expenses coming up or any large debts. 3) Figure out how much 2-3 days (or a week at most) worth of wages would be. This is probably a reasonable amount of discretionary cash to have on your person for the Muster/Fair which after all is only a couple of times per year. Assuming of course the answer to 2 was No. If it was yes you may wish to be a bit more frugal with your coin.

Of course you may wish to play up your expenses a bit by conducting some of those large purchases at the Muster. It is an opportune time given the items which change hands there. Why not do it in persona with an appropriate cash exchange? You could even haggle over the price or perhaps make a scene over trying to collect an old debt for goods and services rendered.

At any rate once you have determined how much you will carry, put the rest away. Either in your tent or better yet leave them at home. If you run out of coins so be it. Consider it an opportunity to find out who your friends really are.

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The Bills

Submitted by Craig Lukezic

"Do not cast away bows and bills, for they may serve yet to many purposes. Pike and shot are for trained men. Everyman, or most men, can handle bowes and bills"

(Barret:1598:27)

Continental military theorists were confused, and did not know what to do with the bows and bills in Britain. To them, they were anachronistic and provincial, with little use to the modern military science. The obvious role for billmen were to employ them as halbardiers. They would surround and protect the ensign in the center of a pike block formation. The Swiss, who formalized this role 100 year previously, used the halberds to descend upon the enemy's flanks once the formations lost cohesion. But just how many halberdiers do you need, especially for such a specialized role.

Sometime, the billmen were formed in with the pike block. Almost all of the period writers detest this practice as it would interfere with the pike drill. Billmen were not trained pikemen, and the multi-pointed bill blades being handled in a pike drill would be dangerous to all! Even so, the deployment plan of the Tilbury army depicts the pike formation with up to 1/3 members as billmen.

A modified halberd role was created. This was the "short weapons", who were halberds, battle axes with short points, or long edges with short staves or men armed with sword and dagger (Sir John Smyth, 1599:45) According to Smyth, their weapons should be stout, about 5 1/2 feet long, which would be better for lunging. The concept was to provide short range melee troops who would operate with little formation or order. Or in Sir John Smyth's own words:

"in the hands of lusty soldiers that do follow the first ranks of pikers at the heels, both with blow at the head and thrust to the face, do with puissant and mighty hand work wonderful effect and carry all the ground." (Smyth:1599:46)

The short weapon concept also appears in the work of Leonard Diggs and Thomas Diggs, (1579:178). They state the short weapons should feature targetiers, halberds, and bills; even horsemen with broken lances. Other than the close-in assault group as described by Smyth, They employ the short weapons in a number of generalized tasks.

They could be used to fill in the pike block, for watch duty, as 'rescuers,' or to guard the ordinance.

The rescuer role could be to support the forlorn hope or the missile troops who skirmished in the front of the formation. Or more colorfully, "mingle with naked troupes of shot".(Barret:1598:47)

"in playne ground he should never turn out any shot to the skirmishe, with out certain sleeves of pikes to guard them upon retreat from the charge of horses, and also certaine small troops of short weapons, as swords and targets, halberts or such to back them." (Diggs and Diggs, 1579:105).

In describing the nature of an ideal "battell" or battalion, Robert Barret discusses the role of the short weapons. An ideal company should be composed of 100 men, of which 40 are pikemen, 10 halberds and short weapons, 25 musket and 25 calibre. Therefore, a battell of 11700 pike and shot would be accompanied by 1300 short weapons. They would be distributed thusly:

6 troops (of 5each) to be distributed to each flank

5 troops mingled with the forlorn hope

8 troops to be mingled with the shot in the rear guard.

More short weapons with the artillery guard. Rest of the halberds and short weapons , are with the munition.

Also in a guard with the left over pikes to guard and serve the drummers, fifers, chirurgians and wounded

Taken from Barret, :1598:74)

There were several occasion that billmen held their own though out the 16th century. In 1513, the Scots trained their infantry in the Swiss or "Almayn" pike formations. At the battle of Flodden, the fought English relying on the modern continental methods of pike and artillery. The Scots were grouped into five phalanxes, each led by French captain.

Their artillery was poorly position and could not fire and effective barrage at the English. As the ScotFencers, phalanxes advanced down a wet hill slope toward the English, their formations shifted on the soft ground. At the base of the hill, units of English Billmen penetrated the pike formations and caused massive slaughter. King James IV of Scotland died of a gash from a bill, as did many of the Scottish nobility.

The peasant revolt of 1549 may not be the best test of the feudal English bills and bows against the continental pike and shot system. However, it is one of the few we have. There is little in the records about the formations or tactical skills of the rebels, except for their surprising bravery. The mercenary forces of the Landsknect pikemen, Italian arquebusiers, and German cavalry were more highly trained and reliable than either English force; the royal army, or the rebel forces. In the beginning, at Sampford Courtenay, a rebellious force using bows and bills defeated a feudal force of on rushing horsemen from a barricaded position. Other battles are poor comparisons due to the extreme element of surprise at Norwich, or the piecemeal assault at the Fenny Bridges. At

the Clyst of Saint Mary, a royalist army and a rebel force contested a strategic bridge. The billmen and bowmen briefly succeed when they rushed the Royalist position. The billmen pushed back the trained Landskenct pikemen until the (Continued)

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arquebusiers maneuvered to pour in a flanking fire. Later, toward the end of the century, the bills proved useful in

Ireland. During the Yellow Ford Campaign in 1598, the Irish rebels under O'Neill assaulted the Blackwater Fort. Troops under Captain Thomas Williams successfully fended off O'Neill's bonnaghts with 30 scaling ladders.

As a tactical unit, the billmen had several advantages over the pike units. First, the billmen required little training, as every countryman in England would have been familiar with a billhook prior to military service. Therefore, the untrained and the "untrainable" could be immediately assigned to bill units.

The bill was a melee weapon that could be used with minimal formation over rough terrain, and in difficult weather. The

melee power of the billmen was considerable, as a billman could take down a mounted knight, (from behind a barricade) and the weapon could pierce his heavy armor. Although the bill is a good all around melee weapon, I would lose against a well-trained formation of pike on solid, even ground. As mentioned above, the billmen could serve many roles on campaign, as they supported skirmishers, assaulted or defended obstacles, guarded the flanks of pike formations and the baggage train. As billmen served so many roles on campaign and in the battlefield, it is no wonder the English retained them in the presence of pikemen for almost 100 years

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Elizabethan Fastenings: Pins

Submitted by Laura Mellin

Considering the scant historical mention of pins, it may be hard to believe how common these simple items were to the wardrobes of the Elizabethans. They were made in many sizes, from the "great verthingale pynnes" used to hold heavy skirts, to the smallest pins used to hold veils and delicate fabrics. Janet Arnold documents the pin purchases for Queen Elizabeth in a six-month period:

"Item to Robert Careles our Pynner for xvij thousand great verthingale Pynnes xx thowsand myddle verthingale Pynnes xxv thowsand great Velvet Pynnes and nyne thowsande smale hed Pynnes and xix thowsand Small hed Pynnes all of our great wardrobe" (Warrant dated 20 Oct, 1565)

While the number of pins for the Royal household seems extraordinary, considering the elaborate clothing effects required by the Queen and her attendants, one wonders that she didn't need more.

Pins were used to hold skirt flounces, farthingale boning, ruffs, cuffs, partlets, veils, jewels, and generally everything that needed to stay in place. They were carefully kept, and straightened and sharpened periodically. Pins were not left in clothing (since oxidation of the metal will stain the fabric, and if moved carelessly, the pins could also rip the fabric), but stored in pincushions.

The well-known portrait of Elizabeth Vernon, Countess of Southampton, shows her at her dressing table, upon which sits a large pin cushion, stuffed with round-headed pins. The bag and pincushion sets in the Victoria & Albert Museum suggest that pins were also carried on the person, to effect emergency alterations.

The pins on display in the Museum of London, while from the previous century, are remarkably similar to pictures and examples of 16th Century pins, so much so that it is safe to use them as a model for the pins from Elizabeth's time. The pins are identical to the pins in the Vernon portrait, round-headed and ranging in size from a hefty 4" (approx.), to tiny 1/2" pins suitable for delicate fabrics. They are constructed with a drawn wire shank and a separately attached ball head, similar to modern quilting pins. There is no consistency to the ball sizes, but smaller pins generally have smaller heads. Included in the display is a large bone (probably a cow leg) cut in half and grooved on the cut end to hold a pin for sharpening. There are horizontal rasp marks on the shaft of the bone that show the direction of sharpening.

While steel pins existed, brass pins seem a lot more common and it is reasonable to assume that the lower classes used the cheaper brass pins. A warrant for 1563 gives the prices for different kinds of pins: "Item to Robert Careles the pynner for xvjm [16,000] great verthingale pynnes at vj s [shillings] the m [1,000] ...lvij m [58,000] small velvet and hed pynnes at xx d [pence] m."

So, at twenty pence per thousand, pins were not financially out of reach for most women, who often earned the money for accessories from sales of butter, eggs, and other household produce (hence the term "pin money"). The lower classes had no need for the mass of pins required by the elaborate styles of the Court and a small handful of pins would suffice to dress a working woman.

What does this mean for us? Well, from personal experience, straight pins work very well for holding clothes in place both for male and female clothing. Pins stop shoulders from slipping, keep falling bands in place (better than safety pins), and hold up cuffs, skirts, and aprons.

Brass straight pins are hard to find (though not impossible - ECW and Civil War sutlers sometimes have flat top brass pins), but easy to make. The members of Gardiner's Company have had great success making pins from brass wire - the best is the kind designed for model railroad enthusiasts, available from hobby stores and very cheap. It

comes in several suitable weights, is strong enough to hold up to
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repeated use, and soft enough to sharpen easily. We twist the tips to make a circular top, since welding small brass balls to pins is awkward, and there are examples from the 16th Century of twisted top pins, the most popular a figure eight design.

Everyone should have a few straight pins, at the very least to substitute for modern safety pins on falling bands, and to keep cuffs neat.

Sources:

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Elizabethan Raised Embroidery Submitted by Tammy Jones

While no one knows exactly when embroiderers began using padding and wires to give their work a three-dimensional quality, there are examples dating as far back as the mid 1400's. In Hungary and elsewhere on the continent 'brodees en relief' were being created for ecclesiastical and secular use. Many "church vestments combined laid gold thread with highly padded figures with the aid of additional fabric, cardboard, leather, and hemp over which would be placed silk, satin, and couched metal thread⁴." These were always made by professional embroiderers. One example of this technique is a chasuble now housed in the Museum of Decorative Arts in Brno, Czechoslovakia, which dates to 1487. "The ground fabric is violet-coloured satin on which are applied the figures of the Virgin Mary and St. Venceslas surrounded by angels in very highly padded work⁵."

In England, at this time, there have been found no actual examples of what we know today as stumpwork that were made before 1600, however, there is some written evidence that this type of embroidery did exist. While imprisoned, Mary Queen of Scots wrote letters to her keepers asking for various embroidery supplies, and in one of these letters, she asks for 'moulds and raising needles.' This would certainly suggest that she was doing some sort of three-dimensional work.

Even if it did exist, stumpwork itself, was not popular in England until the mid 17th century. What was popular in period was the use of beads, pearls, and heavy silver and silver-gilt threads, as well as detached buttonhole stitch and some padding to make the scrolling plant and flower designs so loved by the Elizabethans. This type of embroidery was known as 'embossed work.'

The Fashion for Raised Embroidery

Raised work was a very popular form of embroidery in Elizabethan England and was used to embellish a variety of clothing and accessory items as well as furnishings.

Embosted work has been found decorating such clothing items as bodices, stomachers, coifs, forehead clothes, nightcaps, sweetbags, purses, burses, guild crowns, and even hawking gear. Furnishings using this technique include bookbindings and coronet/book cushions. Some beautiful examples of these items can be found in various private collections as well as the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, England.

In the V&A you will find among their many exquisite displays a collection of sweet bags, some of which are in raised work, as well as a coronet cushion and a coif from the Frank Ward Collection. In the British Museum is Archbishop Parker's *De Antiquitate Ecclesiae* bound in green velvet and embroidered in raised work with gold, silver, and silks. Other excellent examples of Elizabethan raised work are the Master's Crown of the Broderers' Company (given charter by Queen Elizabeth in 1561) and the 'Devereux Bodice' owned by Viscount Hereford. Even the Princess Elizabeth made a raised work bookbinding in 1545 for her stepmother, Katherine Parr, when she was only eleven years old.

MATERIALS

A wide variety of materials were used to create raised embroideries in both the continental (stumpwork) style and the Elizabethan (flying needlelace) style. Padding materials could have been anything that was handy to the embroiderer, and such materials as wool, fabric, leather, hemp, parchment, and cardboard have been found. The embroidery itself was made with silver and silver gilt threads of various kinds and silks of many colors. Raised Embroideries were often embellished with seed beads, seed pearls, and jewels (especially bookbindings), and the background fabrics were of silk, velvet, or linen. In the 'flying needlelace' technique wires were used around the edges of each individual piece to be attached so that these pieces would stand away from the background fabric when sewn on.

STICHES AND METHODS

The stitches used in embosted work are many and
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varied, however there are some which form the basis of all such raised embroidery. The first and most important of these is the detached buttonhole stitch. It is this stitch, in some form, which is used to create all of the 'flying' parts and most of the padded work. Other favourites for this type of embroidery are: chain stitch, back stitch, double running stitch, and the braid stitch. The chain stitch is used for such things as outlines, thin vines, tendrils, and flat motifs such as caterpillars, while the backstitch and double running are both used to outline areas of detached buttonhole. The braid stitch is used to create thick

vines with a raised appearance. Just this handful of stitches and a little creativity is all that is needed to create exquisite works of art in the Elizabethan style.

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Recipes

Submitted by Sandy Toscano

Artichoke pie was served at the June 5th Period Dinner. The Fritters were served at the Period Dinner and at Summer Muster/Pennsic War.

Artichoke Pie

Vegetables

1 each 9-inch unbaked pie pastry shell
2 9 ounce frozen artichoke hearts or bottoms
1/4 cup sherry
1 1/4 teaspoon sugar
1/8 teaspoon ginger; powdered
1/2 teaspoon dried orange peel
1 pinch mace
1 vinegar
3/4 cup dates; pitted, finely minced
1/4 cup raisins
2 tablespoon butter; cut into pieces

Bake pie shell at 425 degrees for 10 minutes. Reduce temperature to 375 degrees and bake for an additional 5 minutes. Let cool. Cook artichokes according to directions on package, but reduce boiling time to 2 minutes. Drain artichokes. In a bowl, combine remaining ingredients except butter. Toss artichokes in this mixture until they are thoroughly coated. Let stand for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Place mixture in pie shell, make sure that solid ingredients are evenly distributed. Dot with butter. Cover tightly with aluminum foil and bake at 375 degrees for about 30 minutes or until artichokes are tender. Yields 1 pie.

Contributor: To the Queens Taste, p 66

Yield: 1 pie

Spinach-Date Fritters

1 lb spinach, fresh
2 each egg; lightly beaten
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper; freshly ground
1/4 teaspoon brown sugar
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ginger; powdered
1/8 cup bread crumbs
2 tablespoon currants
1/4 cup dates; pitted, finely minced
1/2 cup flour
1/2 cup ale
2 tablespoon ale
1 oil; for frying

Wash and trim spinach and put in a heavy pot without draining. Steam spinach by covering pot and setting over medium heat for 1-2 minutes or until leaves begin to wilt. Drain spinach in colander, and cool to room temperature. Chop spinach finely, place in paper towels, and squeeze out excess moisture. In a bowl, combine eggs, seasoning, and bread crumbs. Mix until well blended. Add currants, dates, and chopped spinach. Stir to distribute evenly. In a bowl, prepare batter by combining flour and ale and stirring until smooth. Mixture should have the consistency of thick pancake batter. In a heavy skillet, heat about 1/2 inch oil to sizzling. Shape spinach mixture into small patties. Place spinach patties, a few at a time, in batter, and remove each with a slotted spoon (allow excess batter to drip off). Fry fritters in oil for about 3 minutes on each side or until golden. Drain on paper towels. Serve Hot. Yield, about 20 small fritters.

Contributor: To the Queens Taste, p 74

Yield: 20 each

Book Review

Submitted by Mike Tartaglio

Hugh Platt *The Jewell House of Art and Nature* London, 1594; Number 950; *The English Experience Facsimiles*; Walter J Johnson Inc.; 1979. ISBN 90-221-0950-X

Hugh Platt is a classic example of the Renaissance Man. He writes both in English and Latin, and uses this book "The Jewell House of Art and Nature " to show his variety of knowledge. He dedicated his work to no less than the Earl of Essex, and in it he covers many subjects. The first book contains "divers new and conceited experiments, from the which there may be sundry both pleasing and profitable uses drawne, by them which have either wit, or will to applie them." Within this chapter the reader is treated to recipes for powdered ink, invisible ink, a recipe for dentifrice, a recipe for the creation of

artificial malmsey, a way to catch pigeons and a cement for broken glass, to name but a few. One of my personal favorites is " a cheape lanterne, wherein a burning candle may be carried, in any stormie or windie weather, without any horne, glasse, paper, or other defensative, before it" Platt says "make....etc" Platts book is also full of other curiosities, such as the idea of drinking a " good large draught" of salad oil before going out drinking, so as to prevent drunkenness by not allowing the vapors of the wine to ascend to the brain.

I once described the pastimes of people in the Renaissance to a co-worker, who was surprised that so many adult games back then are played exclusively by children today. In much the same way, Hugh Platt described in his book many "curiosities" that are now no more than 6th grade science experiments. He tells how to use milk or lemon juice for secret writing, etches the surface of an egg with vinegar, and provides a rudimentary form of sign language using the fingers for vowels, and parts of the body to stand for consonants.

His second book is a study of "new sorts of soyle" and the manuring of grounds or husbandry. In it ,he talks about manure and the "fructifing salts" they contain as well as marls, clays and a "fifth element" which he describes as a "second water" or vapor, which he sees rising from waters and which is neither truly water or air. This, Platt believes, becomes marl when it congeals in the earth.

The third book is a book of distillation, in which Platt discusses various distillation processes which result in aquavita, essences, oils and other decoctions. He describes the equipment and processes in enough detail for this book to be banned by the BATF as encouraging the creation of illegal alcoholic beverages. This chapter is relatively free of the stifling rhetoric which generally comes from Renaissance discussion with none of the superstitions or misleading alchemical nonsense associated with some other sections, which the author with an amount of credulity passes off with the phrase " this have I had of a gentleman who warrants the same to be true" All is straight forward recipes and procedures which with the right equipment, could reasonably be expected to be reproduced today.

The next to last chapter is a brief treatise on molding and casting. Platt teaches techniques for mold making for plaster, metal (pewter and copper) and a material resembling modern wood putty (glue and sawdust). He also teaches mold making in clay and the art of lost wax casting . As a person who has done some of this work I can say that although Platt has done well in this chapter, some of his descriptions of processes could be clearer. He leaves out some steps in some activities which could lead to problems later. He does address most of the common mistakes, such as the undercutting of an item to be cast and the survivability of some mold materials. The last chapter is a sort of teaser, a message of further work, in which the author introduces some "other inventions" or "contrivances" of his, without giving details, and offering to show them to anyone upon providing of

recompense for his troubles, the title "An offer of certaine...." gives the chapter its explanation.

This book is a wonderful look into the mind of an educated man in late Elizabethan London, his beliefs, thoughts knowledge and desires for himself and his fellow English man and women. It is also the sort of publication they could start someone on the beginning of a path toward studying one or more of the arts which are mentioned in the title.

Manchet

(White Bread/For the Bread Machine)Submitted by Tammy Jones

This recipe is based on Karen Hess' notes on pages 118-120 of Martha Washington's Booke of Cookery. Although, traditionally, manchets were smaller (about one third the size of this loaf), this recipe makes an excellent loaf and is great for those for have no time for bread making or are "yeast impaired" as I am.

Ingredients: 1 1/4 cup warm water
1 teaspoon salt
3 cups unbleached white flour of which is
3 tablespoons raw wheat germ and
3 tablespoons whole wheat flour
1 teaspoon yeast

Add ingredients to the pan in the order given.

Set machine on basic cycle, medium crust.

Makes a 1-1 1/2 pound loaf.

1 "d" represents a pence, "s" a shilling.

2Bearing in mind this is only make-believe and it is better to do a poor/middle class person well than a well off person poorly.

4Best, Muriel; Stumpwork: Historical and Contemporary Raised Embroidery. (B T Batsford, Ltd; 1987). Page 18.

5Ibid.