

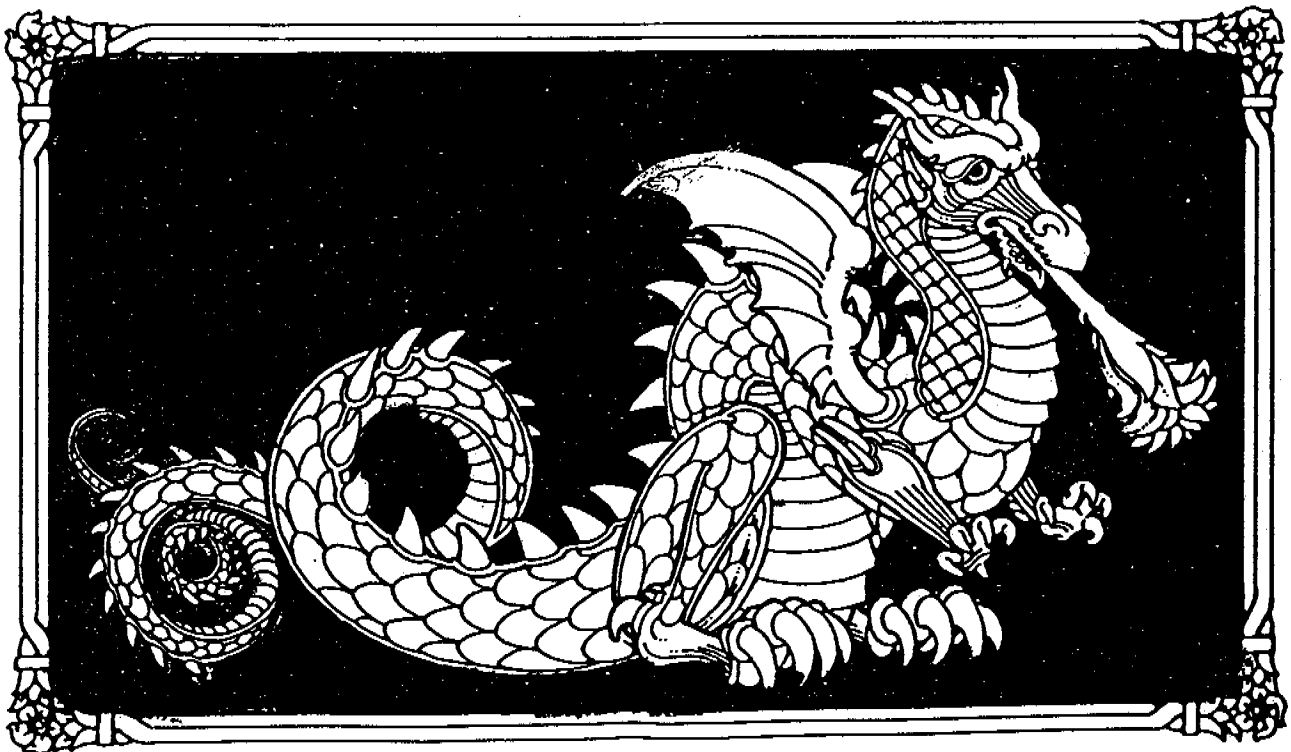


ARANGJAN



WJCE

NO 8



EDITORIAL POLICY

The "Editorship" of the Varangian Voice has changed hands, Steve has gone to the Blue Mountains for a while and so someone got landed with the job, and that was me, Stephen Wyley.

The Editorial Policy of the newsletter as such is unchanged from that which was set down by the previous editor; e.g.

- (1) The Varangian Voice is put together whenever I get the time, and enough articles together.
- (2) Where ever possible, sources are listed, and care is taken to give credit to where credit is due.
- (3) Any mistakes with names, dates, or any other errors be assured that no harm was intended.

The sending of articles to the following address would be appreciated since the Voice is a medium of expression open to anyone willing to put pen to paper (typed articles would be treasured even more).

MAILING ADDRESS : VARANGIAN VOICE
 8 COOINDA COURT
 MOUNT WAVERLEY 3149

OFFICE BEARERS :

Master At Arms Michael : 43 Victoria Road, East Hawthorn 3122
Secretary Alyson : As Above, Phone : 8826304
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 : Phone : 836 2903

ORDINARY MEMBERS : your representatives, e.g. the people you the members bring the complaints to.

Stephen Wyley 8 Cooinda Court, Mount Waverley 3149
Steve Nicoll Katoomba.
Editor Stephen, see mailing address.



Dear Readers, I hope you have all decided whether or not you are going to the Conference, and if you are going have you paid. If the people organizing it do not receive the money soon enough they will have difficulty getting everything ready in time. We know how frustrating that is from first hand experience. And if you are going have you made the necessary preparations e.g. ; costume, equipment (fighting and feasting), and goods for trading. And have you practiced the skills needed to participate in the many activities. If you have not honed your skills by now there is not long to go.

Remember the Conference is a place to meet fellow Medievalists and swap notes, compare equipment, test their style compared to yours, to trade goods and blows, to eat and drink in a feasting atmosphere, and to show off our handicrafts. The Conference is also there to discuss matters effecting the Medieval Movement as a whole, and gain some sort of consensus as to where we are headed, and how things are affecting our activities and how we going to deal with them. We have to look at problems on the local and national scale, are we succeeding in our chosen aims, if not why? And what are we going to do about it. All these things and more need to be discussed and thought about before we even get to the Althing.

Lets show how training programs have improved our skills and developed our techniques, at the last conference and even the Odin feast we showed that though we may not have large numbers of members we have the courage, to overcome any adversary. For those people not going to the Conference could you please help those who are, it doesn't take much to turn up to practice for a couple of hours once a fortnight. With sufficient numbers we can practice melees and even formation work (this sort of experience is sadly lacking). If you are willing to help but can't turn up to training maybe you could assist in other ways; costuming , equipping, every bit help.

The Guard this year should be involved in some sort of public awareness program; to gain new members , and to make the general public understand our goals. If the public is more aware of what we are on about, I think by following such a course we could obtain a more receptive audience (e.g. demos, stunts,etc.). Guard activities this year should be more varied in content, catering for all interest, for example; singing or dancing groups. With such activities the Guard would attract a greater range of new members, and give the Guard a more balanced nature. The feasts are a good introduction to what we are about to likely new members, this sort of function should be encouraged. And with the feasting we can all help in some way with the catering and running of a successful feast. The MAJOR PROBLEM at the moment is that we lack a realistic venue for our major money making feast, its hard to convince people that the feast their having is medieval when its held in a Scout Hall.

Training and practice, I'm not just talking about fight I'm referring to everything the Guard does . To master a technique it needs to be practiced and that practice has to be correct or else its not worth doing in the first place. If we don't practice how can we put on a display in public without feeling inadequate, there is nothing worse than a sloppy performance.

Lets' make it a good year for recruiting, developing our expertise in all our activities.

Editor-Stephen Wyley.

SWORD BLANKS

The Guard has obtained and completed the basic shaping of 9 sword blanks, these blanks are of quality German steel. Several of these sword blanks have already been 'claimed' so if you want one contact Michael on 882 6304 soon. Each sword blank costs \$18.00. Preference will be given to those members **not** already possessing a sword or in the process of making one.

MINI FEAST

A feast will occur on the 21st of March at 43 Victoria Rd Hawthorn This pre-training revel is a 'bring a medieval dish' and BYO drink affair. Costume, platter/bowl, spoon and goblet also required. Please contact Michael or Alison on 882 6304 if you are intending to attend as we need to know who you are and what your bringing in the way of food so that its not **all** deserts.

NEW VARANGIAN GUARD TRAINING DATES

Guard practices will be held fortnightly starting at 10.30AM at Willsmere park unless otherwise notified.

MARCH: 8	APRIL: 5	MAY: 3	JUNE: 14	JULY: 12
22		17	28	26
		31		

REMINDER

Check that your **TETANUS** injection is still **current**.

COMBAT ARCHERY

All combat archery equipment should be up to standard by the end of March.

I recomend that anyone contemplating the purchase of a bow for combat archery not buy a bow exceeding 30 pounds. The combat archery rules currently allow bows of up to 45 pounds, but they are subject to review in the next couple of months and some comments have already been made to me about reducing this poundage.



CONFERENCE

Wolf's Head and the Hackers advised of an accomodation and pick-up service for the conference in New Hedeby. We have since been advised that a new address will apply from the 13th of March for the services coordinator.

The following is a repeat of the information in New Hedeby with the new address included.

The Wolf's Head and members of the Hackers advise that they will:

1. ACCOMODATE (no expense spared) ALL overseas, interstate or long distance travellers, before and/or after the convention at "safe" houses.
2. MEET ALL and ANY planes or trains etc. if you give us some notice to pick you up, take to the conference and return to airport, railway etc.

All services FREE and GRATIS

Please write to:

Roland Dunkerley (Coordinator)
c/o 21 Cliff Rd.
EPPING
N.S.W 2121

After 13 March: 11 Homelands Ave
CARLINGFORD
N.S.W
Ph: (02) 871 7707

TRANSPORT

No club arrangements have been made for the trip to Sydney for the Conference. After the last Sydney Conference many complaints were made about "minibuses", the following alternates are therefore offered for consideration.

NOTE: If enough people are going to the Conference and can agree on a particular mode of transport and departure times it MAY be possible to arrange for a group booking discount.

AIR

ANSETT (Reservations 668 2222) Economy \$320 Return
AUSTRALIAN AIRLINES (Reservations 665 3333) Economy \$320 Return
EAST WEST AIRLINES (Reservations 653 3911) \$208 Return

Note: Schemes that reduce the costs of airfares are too numerous to list, so if its air travel for you, you'll have to check into them yourself.

RAIL

Reservations 62 0771
1st Class Sleeper \$240 Return
1st Class Seat \$174 Return
Economy Seat \$124 Return
Note: A 30% discount for early payment may apply.

ROAD

Coaches

ANSETT PIONEER (Reservations 668 2422)
Standard \$76 Return
Silver Service \$90 Return
DELUXE (Reservations 663 6144)
Standard \$76 Return
Super Decker \$86 Return

Note: In both cases the second service usually offers a shorter trip time as well as more seat room and videos.

Car

Variable depending on number of people and company's rates.

Ring me on 882 6304 if you have any questions about this information or if you would like to travel in a group.

ARROW-LOOPS AND MEURTRIERES.

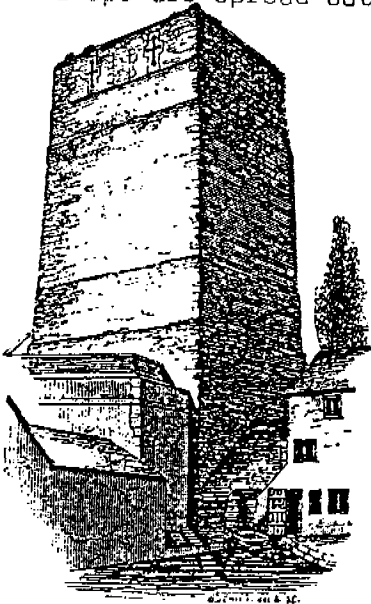
The defences of all fortifications in ancient and medieval times was principally from the battlements of the walls, gateways and towers. But arrow-loops, or meurtrieres, made in the curtain at a level below the battlements, were introduced as early as 215 B.C.. They were describe by Philo of Byzantium about 120 B.C., and were built in the fortifications of Rome in the 4th and those of Dara in the 6th century A.D.. They do not, however, appear to have been in general use in Western Europe until the 12th century, and not until the end of that century did they appear in the upper battlements.

Arrow-loops enable the defenders to shoot at the enemy outside the fortress while they themselves remained unseen and safe from attack behind its walls. When built below the wall-walk each of them consisted of a loophole (a narrow vertical slot on the outside face of the wall with deeply splayed inner jambs) and a recess in the wall behind the loophole for the accommodation of the archer. The splayed sides of the hole enabled the archer to direct his fire towards either flank as well as in front; and since the sill was deflected steeply downwards from inside to the outside, he also commanded the ground below. The recess was often provided with one or two seats.

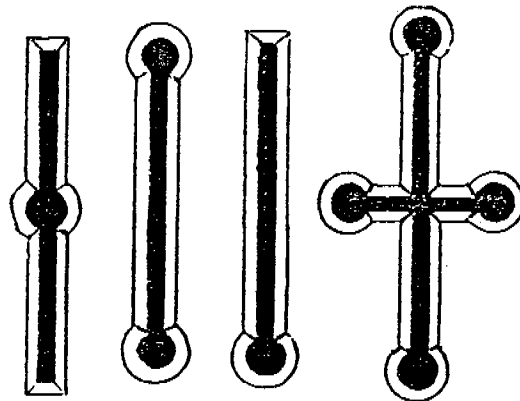
In the ancient form the outer hole was a simple vertical slot, those made at Syracuse in 215 B.C. being 4in. wide and 6ft. high; and this simple form was maintained in the earliest examples of the Middle Ages, though the width of the loop was reduced. Even after other forms were in constant use, and side by side with them, the simple slot was still employed.

Towards the end of the 12th century the holes were generally constructed with small triangular feet, and were occasionally bisected by a short horizontal slot, giving the hole the form of a cross, as at Skenfrith and Trematon, both built about 1190, that at Trematon being inserted in older work. The horizontal slots, which were widely splayed at the back, gave the archer a wide lateral sweep for his arrows and bolts, and were introduced especially for the use of the crossbows. In all cases the enlargement of the base of the loophole was made to give the archer wide range when shooting low.

During the 13th century the loopholes were usually terminated both at the base and head by circular enlargements; and if there was a cross slot that also had a similar termination at either end, as in the Water Tower at Kenilworth. Sometimes the cross slot is omitted and its place taken by a circular hole, as at the gatehouse at Trematon, built about 1250. At Barnwall there are two square cut cross slots but none at the head or the base. At Grey Mare's Tail tower, Warkworth, are arrow-loops so long that they extend through two storeys of the interior. There are three cross slots to each loop and at the foot the loops are spread out to give lateral range for attacks on sappers



Tower of Oxford Castle.



S.Wyley 2/9/86.

Reference: A History of Fortifications From 3000BC to 1700 AD. By Sidney Toy.

Better Archery by the use of Mental Rehearsal.

There are few archers who have not been in the situation where anxiety and nervousness has caused them to produce unusually bad results.

With archery ninety per cent of shooting is mental and the rest is physical. Thus the key to better results is the training of our minds which in turn controls the physical side of things, and therefore the score.

It is agreed then that this mental aspect is of great importance and while some people are aware of it even less are aware of how to go about training for it.

A Training Program should consist of the following:

1. Training of any kind should not be haphazard. It requires an organised and regular programme with a specific goal in mind.
2. All the other aspects of archery should not be neglected, for example; general fitness, quality of shooting technique and equipment.

Mental rehearsal is simply going over all the elements which go towards producing a good performance in the mind's eye. This technique should be a part of an archer's training before, during and after a competition. During shooting mental rehearsal can be used to refocus when an archer has got into difficulty. Afterwards, the archer should carry out a mental review of the positive aspects as well as the errors, and develop a plan to eliminate the errors.

Mental rehearsal can be practiced at a number of levels:

1. Imagine yourself going through the action of preparing for a shoot, from preparing the shooting position, raising the bow, the shot.
2. Imagine the feel of the perfect stance, the inner awareness of the body position and the state of muscular tension, as well as the state of the mind, confident, serene and aware.

Mental rehearsal can be practised anytime: the most effective time is just before going to sleep, especially the night before a competition; or just prior to a shot.

In addition to reinforcing all the aspects of a good shot, it will also aid in focussing the concentration and also calming pre-competition nerves.

Reference: Mental Training in Archery
By Ken Gaisford, W.A. State Coach

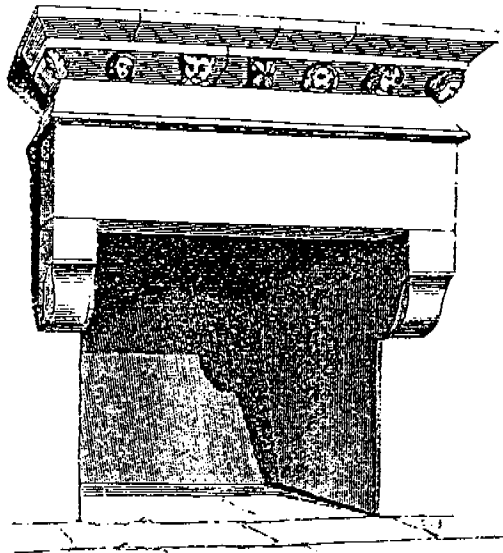


FIREPLACES:

Fireplaces of the 11th century were plain arched openings with semi-circular backs. Their flues, after rising up a short distance within the wall, passed through to the outside face, and terminated in one or two holes, the holes being generally hidden in the inner angle of buttresses. The lower courses of masonry at the backs of the fireplaces, where combustion occurred, were built of selected stones often laid in the herringbone pattern, as at Colchester and Canterbury.

Very little alteration was made in the design of fireplaces from the 11th century until about 1180. From the early part of the 12th century the jambs were enriched with small shafts and the arches with chevron moulding, as at Hedingham and Rochester, there is no real hood. Although in shell-keeps the flues were carried up through the wall to the wall-walk (a relatively short distance from the upper floors), the practice of carrying them through the wall to the outer face still persisted in rectangular keeps in the latter part of the 12th century, as at Newcastle. At Newcastle, however, there is a change in the shape of the fireplace, the semi-circular plan giving way to straight backs and splayed sides.

The fireplaces in the keep at Conisborough, built about 1190, show a marked development. The flues pass up to the top of the wall, where they terminate in a chimney, and the jambs carry a flat arch, or lintel, built of voussoirs with joggled joints. Above the lintel there is a tall hood, in this case the hood was a necessity of construction rather than an intentional development of design. For since the fireplace forms a chord across the circular chamber in which it is built any wall upon the lintel to enclose the flue must naturally fall back against the sides of the chamber as it rises. But from this period hoods, projecting well out into the chamber and were supported on either side on corbels or shafts, were built for fireplaces generally.



Aydon Castle, Northumberland, c. 1270.

S.wyley 3/9/86.

Reference: A History of Fortification From 3000 BC to 1700 Ad.
By Sidney Toy 1955.



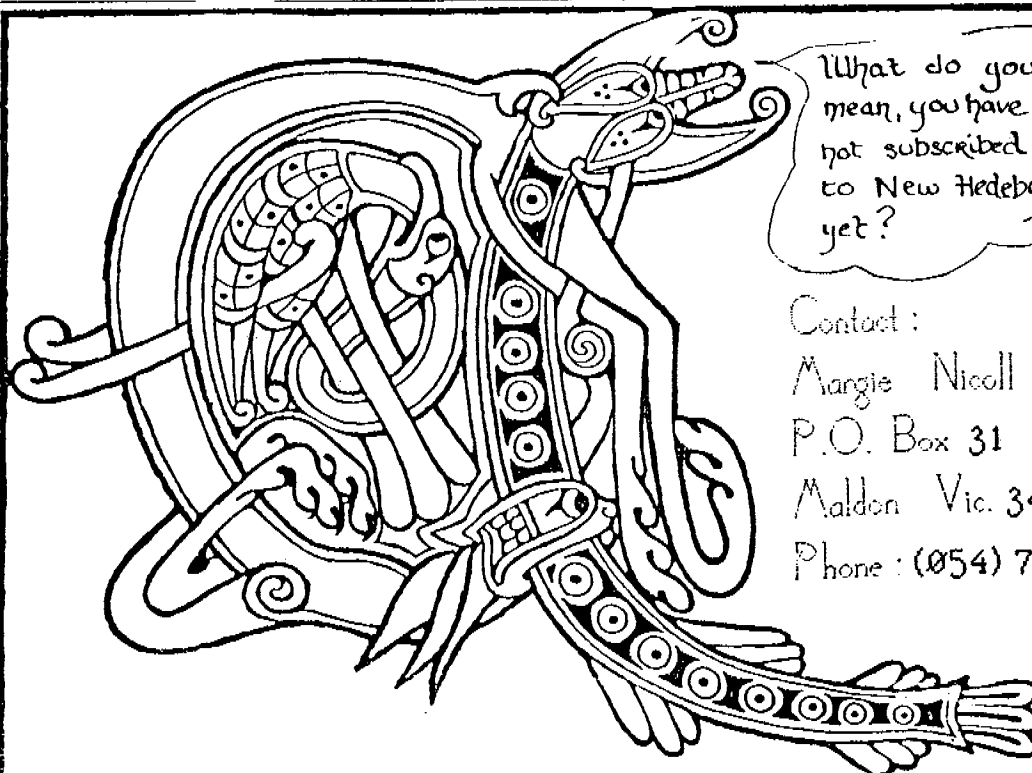
1. Free lance herald, Northern Italy, c 1450. The white staff was a symbol of their office.

2. Pursuivant, early 15th century. While the tabard of a herald consisted of front and back panels borne by heralds as a symbol of their office, the panels of a pursuivant's tabard covered the arms.

3. Herald of the Holy Roman Empire, 16th century, wearing a tabard emblazoned with the double-headed eagle of the empire charged with the arms of Austria and Burgundy ancient. The red bordure of Burgundy was often omitted in the imperial arms.

It is through the mediaeval tournament in the last decades of the 12th century, in which knights tested their skill in combat, that we meet the first heralds. They marshalled the combatants, announced them when they were entering the lists and finally proclaimed the winner of the contest. Herald's had to be well informed about all the armorial devices likely to be present at such an event, since a participant's face was hidden under the protection of his pot helm. So it is hardly surprising that the heralds compiled painted records of all the arms they encountered on such occasions, and also collected the armorial bearings of sovereign princes and their vassals. Herald's were in the service of kings and princes, they were also employed by tournament societies and towns, and sometimes even by simple knights. They were also used as official messengers in peace and war and had the immunity of ambassadors. Herald's had to perform ceremonial duties at state affairs and in several countries they were later in charge of issuing the certificates of new grants of arms.

There were three grades of herald: senior heralds called 'Kings of Arms', the actual 'Herald's', and aspirants to the office of herald called 'Pursuivants'. These grades still exist in Great Britain today. Their names of office were normally territorial designations: Romreich (Roman Empire) for the King of Arms of the Emperor, Jutland and Zealand for Danish heralds. Monjoy, named after the war-cry of the French kings. Harcourt, from the Norman noble family, Savoie from the house of Savoy. Garter is still used in England and Lyon in Scotland. Some heralds were also after the English order, the other after the lion in the arms of Scotland. Some countries have official heraldic services. Some of these are concerned only with civic arms, others with heraldic matters of the nobles (some come with both and corporate arms). A Cronista de Armas in Spain maintains a list and register burgher arms.



What do you mean, you have not subscribed to New Hedebý yet?

Contact:

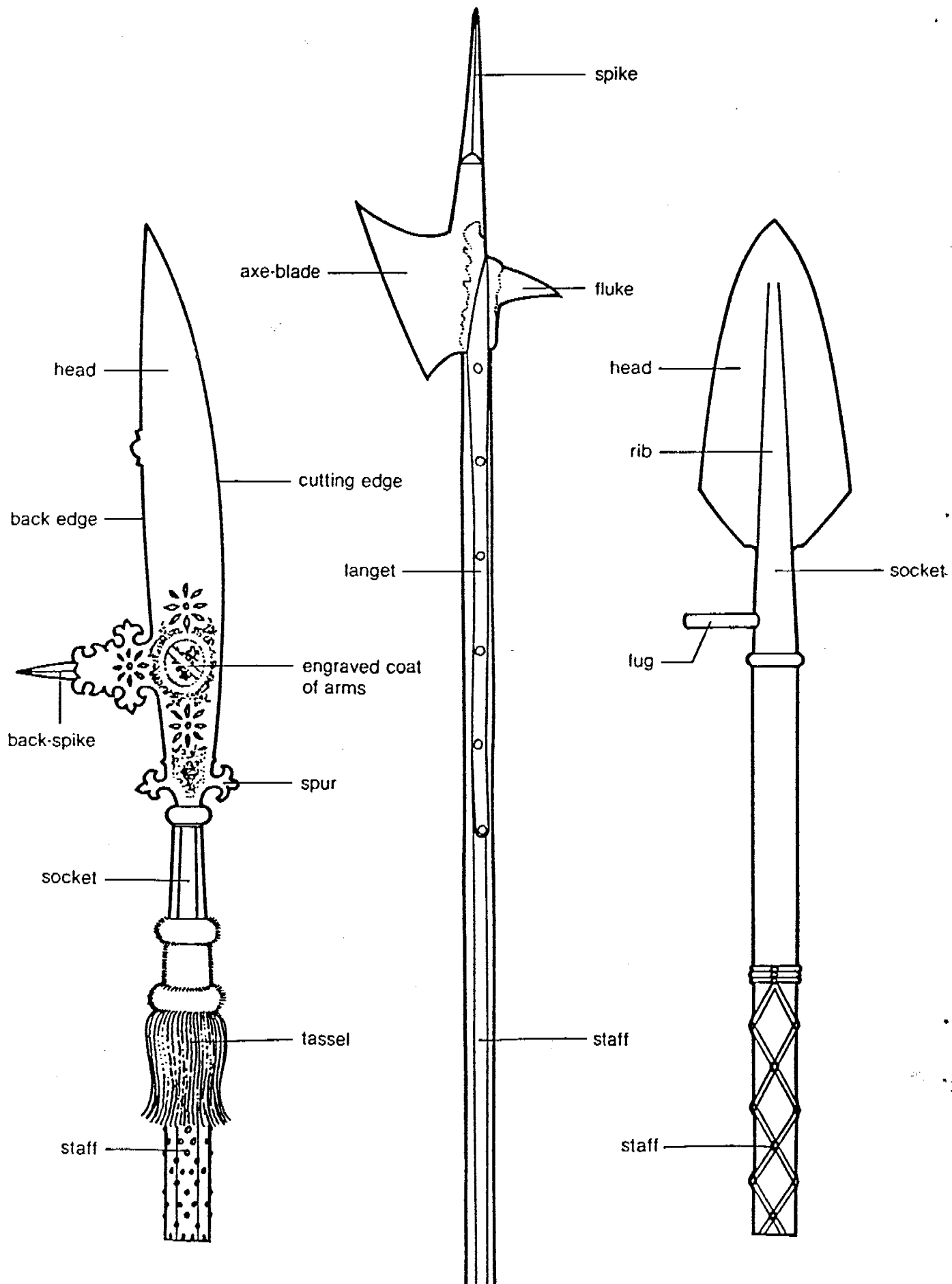
Margie Nicoll

P.O. Box 31

Maldon Vic. 3463

Phone: (054) 752 971

STAFF WEAPONS



ANNIHILATED AGAIN.

Fifteen years after Harold's defeat another body of English axemen, some of them may well have fought at Hastings, were advancing against the army of a Norman prince. They were the Varangian guard, the famous *Πελεκυφόροι*, of the emperor Alexius Comnenus. That prince was engaged in an attempt to raise the siege of Dyrrhachium (A.D. 1081) then invested by Robert Guiscard. The Norman army was already drawn up in front of its lines, while the troops of Alexius were only slowly arriving on the field. Among the foremost of his corps were the Varangians, whom his care had provided with horses in order that they might get to the front quickly and execute a turning movement. This they accomplished, but when they approached the enemy they were carried away by their eagerness to begin the fray. Without waiting for the main attack of the Greek army to be developed, the axemen sent their horses to the rear and advanced in a solid column against the Norman flank, rushing upon the division commanded by Count Amaury of Bari, they drove it, horse and foot, into the sea. Their success, however, had disordered their ranks, and the Norman prince was enabled, since Alexius's main body was still far distant, to turn all his forces against them. A vigorous cavalry charge cut off the greater part of the English; the remainder collected on a little mound by the seashore, surmounted by a deserted chapel. Here they were surrounded by the Normans, and a scene much like Hastings, but of a smaller scale, was enacted. After the horsemen and the archers had destroyed the majority of the Varangians, the remainder held out obstinately within the chapel. Sending for fascines and timber from his camp; Robert heaped them around the building and set fire to the mass. The English sallied out to be slain one by one, or perished in the flames. Not a man escaped; the whole corps suffered destruction, as a consequence of their misplaced eagerness to open the fight.

Such was the fate of the last attempt made by infantry to face the feudal array of the 11th century. No similar experiment was to be made for more than 200 years; the supremacy of cavalry was established.

REFERENCE: The Art of War in the Middle Ages.
by C.W.C Oman 1963.



BYZANTINE MILITARY REGULATIONS

Byzantine military regulations fall into three broad groupings:

- a) regulations for the troops;
- b) regulations for the commanders; and
- c) general military punishments.

It was the responsibility of the commanding officer to acquaint his troops with these regulations. The commanders were expected to be able to read and were provided with a written copy of the regulations so that they could explain them to their troops after the first formal assembly of the army.

REGULATIONS FOR THE TROOPS

- 1) If a soldier disobeys his own pentarch or tetrarch, he shall be punished. And if a pentarch or tetrarch disobeys his dekarch, or dekarch his hekatontarch, they shall likewise be punished.
- 2) If any member of the tagma shall dare to do this to his commanding officer, the count or the tribune of the tagma, he shall undergo capital punishment.
- 3) If a soldier is unjustly treated by anyone, he shall appeal to the commanding officer of his tagma, but if unjustly treated by that commanding officer himself, he shall go to the next-higher officer.
- 4) If anyone presumes to stay beyond the time of his furlough, he shall be dismissed from the army and as a civilian handed over to the civil authorities.
- 5) If any soldiers dare, for any reason whatsoever, to enter into a conspiracy, sedition, or mutiny against their commanding officer, they shall undergo capital punishment, in particular the ringleaders of any such conspiracy or mutiny.
- 6) If anyone who has been entrusted with the defence of a city or fortress shall betray the same or shall desert his post against the orders of his commanding officer, he shall undergo the extreme penalty.
- 7) If anyone be found guilty of wanting to desert to the enemy, he shall undergo the extreme penalty, not only he but anyone who knew of it, because he knew yet did not report it to the commanding officer.
- 8) If anyone after hearing the orders of his dekarch does not carry them out, he shall be punished. But if he does not do so out of ignorance of the orders, the dekarch should be punished for not having informed him beforehand.
- 9) If anyone finds a stray animal or any other object, small or large, and does not report it and turn it over to his commanding officer, he shall be punished, not only he but anyone who knows about it, as thieves both of them.
- 10) If anyone causes injury to a taxpayer and refuses to make compensation, he shall repay double the amount of the damage.
- 11) If anyone who receives an allowance for the purpose neglects his own weapons, and if his dekarch shall not force him to acquire them or not report him to the commanding officer, then both the soldier himself and the dekarch shall be punished.

REGULATIONS FOR THE COMMANDERS

- 1) Anyone who disobeys his own commanding officer shall be punished according to the laws.
- 2) Anyone who injures a soldier shall compensate him by paying back twice the amount; and he shall pay a like sum if he causes injury to a taxpayer. If, in winter quarters, or in camp, or on the march,

either an officer or a soldier shall cause injury to a taxpayer without making proper restitution, he shall pay back twice the amount.

- 3) If in time of war anyone should presume to let a soldier go off on furlough, he shall pay a fine of thirty momismata. While in winter quarters, furloughs may be allowed for two or three months, and in time of peace, the soldier may be allowed to go on furlough within the boundaries of the province.
- 4) If anyone who is entrusted with the defence of the city or a fortress should surrender it or evacuate it while still able to defend it, unless compelled by danger to life, he shall undergo capital punishment.

GENERAL MILITARY PUNISHMENT

- 1) If during the time when the battle lines are being formed and during combat a soldier shall abandon his post or his standard and flee, or if he charges out ahead of the place where he has been stationed, or if he plunders the dead, or races off to pursue the enemy, or attacks the baggage train or camp of the enemy, we order that he be executed, and that all the loot he may have taken be confiscated and given in to the common fund of his tagma, inasmuch as he has broken ranks and has betrayed his comrades.
- 2) If during a general action or battle the troops who had formed for combat should turn back - may this never happen - without good and manifest cause, we order that the soldiers of the tagma which first took to flight and turned back from the line of battle or from their own meros be shot down and decimated by the other tagmas, inasmuch as they broke their ranks and were to blame for the rout of the entire meros. But if it should happen that some of them were wounded in the battle itself, they shall be exempt from such a judgement.
- 3) If a standard should be captured by the enemy - may this never happen - without good and manifest excuse, we order that those charged with guarding the banner be punished and reduced to the lowest rank in their unit or the schola in which they are registered. If it happens that any were wounded in the fighting, they shall be exempt from such punishment.
- 4) If a meros or the whole formation is routed - may this never happen - when a camp is nearby, and if the men do not retire toward the defenders or seek refuge within the camp itself, but carelessly run off in some other direction, we order that those daring to do this be punished for disregarding their comrades.
- 5) If a soldier throws away his arms in battle, we order that he be punished for disarming himself and arming the enemy.

This list of general military punishments, unlike the preceding regulations, were read to the entire army after it had been drawn up in battle formation after its organisation. The list would be read in both Latin and Greek.

The Byzantine army was obviously one of the best disciplined armies of its time, no doubt due to its direct descent from the Roman army, and should therefore have always had an advantage on the battlefield against less disciplined opponents. Unfortunately political intrigues, weak commanders, and financial constraints often conspired to reduce the armies effectiveness in battle.

NEW VARANGIAN GUARD CALENDAR

MARCH						
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8 GUARD
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21 MINI FEAST	22 GUARD
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

APRIL						
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
		1	2	3	4	5 GUARD
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18 C O N F E R E N C E	19
20 CONFERENCE	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			