



# The Ramshaven Herald

Anno Societatis LX (60)

Barony of Ramshaven

May 2025

## "Lencten Cyrcuyte":

### A Lenten Banquet and Ball Honouring the Royal Progress

Congratulations to the people of Afon Araf with the Barony for putting on such a fine and well-received feast on April 12!

#### Event story:

*Their Excellencies Ramshaven will join Their monarchs on tour. They leave early to reach the royal seat before the progress assembly embarks. While on route, They stop in the hamlet of Afon Araf for the night. Courtesy and custom demand the local villagers provide hospitality.*

*As the villagers wish to stay in the good graces of their Baron and Baroness, they aim to host a banquet to impress—while maintaining the decorum demanded by Lent.*

*In keeping with Lent, fish will be featured in the main dishes for the banquet. In a "modern" break from tradition, royal decree states that eggs and cheese are now permitted during Lent. Some mild entertainment is planned for guests, with a bit of modest dancing to close the night.*

**Feast dishes:** Semmel buns, Tudor "marmalade", Spiced Almonds, Mushroom and barley pottage, "Drawen" beans, Smoked trout and crackers, Stewed oranges, Salat of roots, Fish pie, Cameline sauce, Garlic-pepper sauce, Green sauce, Honey mustard dressing, closing with Marchpane, Cheese made by Laurel vigilant Penn de Moranza, and Candied fennel. Beverages included Hippocras and Barley water.

## Did you know?

### "Golden threads" in brocade

*Renaissance-era Italian silk brocades, such as surviving pieces of Venetian and Lucchese manufacture, often boasted "gold" threads. **These threads were actually made of animal parchment or paper laid with gold foil and sliced very thin.** The parchment or paper is far sturdier and much less wasteful than gold filament.*

*The same technique was also used by Japan, known as "Kinshi". Gold leaf was applied to paper using lacquer or animal glue, the paper then cut into very fine strips and used as weft threads in the brocade.*

## Upcoming Events:

### Murder Melee in the Meadow

June 5 – 8, 2025

Germania Park (Private Property),  
4221 Trinity Church Rd, Binbrook, ON  
L0R 1C0, Canada

Hosted by the Barony of Ben Dunfirth.

<https://ealdormere.ca/ben-dunfirth/murder-melee/>

### Barons Brouhaha VIII

June 13 – 15, 2025

973 Concession Rd 8, Tiverton, ON  
N0G 2T0, Canada

Hosted by the Canton of  
Northgeatham.

<https://ealdormere.ca/canton-of-northgeatham/barons-brouhaha/>

### Trillium War

June 27 – July 1, 2025

1504 Cameron Line, Hastings, ON K0L  
2G0, Canada

Hosted by the Cantons of Ard Chreag  
and Petrea Thule.

<https://trilliumwar2025.weebly.com>

**NOTE:** Although the SCA complies with all applicable laws to ensure the health and safety of our event participants, we cannot eliminate the risk of exposure to infectious diseases during in-person events. By participating in the in-person events of the SCA, you acknowledge and accept the potential risks. You agree to take any additional steps to protect your own health and safety and those under your control as you believe to be necessary.

## The Story of Ramshaven

### By Mistress Alyce de Sheppey and Master Dietrich von Sachsen

...And the Prince looked out across his wide lands.  
He saw how the Skrael held fast 'gainst the East,  
How Ben Dunfirth guarded the Inland Sea,  
And Rising Waters kept the southern strand.  
In the north ran free the wind and wild beast  
And Septentria was the heartland's key;  
But the west lay open and free.

"We have no shield to stand guard in the west,"  
The Prince said has he gathered his council.  
"And so we must therefore send someone forth.  
The foe must not see what's weak from the rest.  
We need a strong hand and strong force of will."  
One voice rose there, a voice of noble worth:  
"To the west I shall set my berth."

"I am Cordigan d'Arnot and I will go,  
I will take on the unknown and wild.  
I and mine will be your strong western hand."  
The Prince said: "Declare this so that all may know,  
If they be a man or woman or child,  
If you can tame and settle this wild land  
You and yours will it 'ere command."

And so it was the Company set out:  
Cordigan and his Diane by his side.  
Fairer was she than new fallen snow,  
Like the soft beauty of spring all about.  
Well-tempered was she in fairness and pride  
To leave old comforts of home and to go  
For a future her lord would sow.

The land was fair rich with forest and stream,  
And vast pasture for the cattle to graze.  
Yet, to tame a land unbroken before  
Called for brow's sweat and for vision and dream.  
Land yielded and a strong keep they did raise.  
They had two well guiding hands to the fore:  
Diane, and Cordigan her lord.

## Recent Awards around the Barony:

AOA – Eleanora of Monadh  
Scarlet Banner – Fritz Chesaux  
Wain – Isabella von Sachsen  
Pelican – Henry Foster

Congratulations to Baron Penn de  
Moranza, invited to sit his vigil for  
the Order of the Laurel!

*It's easy to recommend someone  
for an award, and **anyone** can do it.  
Just fill in the kingdom  
recommendation form here.*

*Please include all information you  
can, to help the Crown.*

[https://ealdormere.ca/awards-  
submission-form-the-kingdom-of-  
ealdormere/](https://ealdormere.ca/awards-submission-form-the-kingdom-of-ealdormere/)

## Tanka For May: 5/7/5/7/7

Patrikia Asa Gormsdottir

*Treading at nightfall,  
Tabi sinking in soft green,  
To hear frogs piping,  
And sleeping forsythia  
Woke, to make its own sunshine.*

The years passed and the land settled and grew.  
 In time of gentle peace it prospered well.  
 But when to war the horns called they rode forth  
 With shield, with bow, and with ranks of spears true.  
 It mattered not death, nor heaven, nor hell,  
 For whenever the prince fought on this earth,  
 Cordigan the bold proved his worth.

Came the time at last, though none thought it could,  
 When age finally catches up on the youth.  
 Cordigan did speak how through peace and war,  
 A great land was built, well, noble, and good.  
 Of a strong people with honour and truth  
 Who stood with pride in their true service sure,  
 Who kept the west border secure.

"You are Ramshaven! You built this fine land!  
 Through your brave courage and by your strong arm  
 You are Ealdormere's strength, her western shield.  
 None can break her while you stalwart do stand!  
 We know you will keep her safe from all harm!  
 We know you will make her enemies yield!  
 Only we shall not be her shield."

So passed on Diane and her Cordigan  
 Of strong Ramshaven stock they were the first.  
 Vali and Heithr stood up next to lead.  
 In peacetimes or when the wars came again,  
 Through time that saw both, the better and worst  
 Justice and valour did temper each deed.  
 Strong they stood in Ealdormere's need.

The land grew stronger still, crops bountiful.  
 The ewe lambs frolicked upon fields of green.  
 The people flourished in richness untold.  
 Season slipped by, years of linen and wool  
 And halls rang with the laughter of children,  
 Wealth in worth more precious even than gold  
 Until the dark horizon cold.

Vali and Heithr sat within their hall  
 When came the word from far ice-crusted shore,  
 Blood imperiled called for strong kindred aid.  
 Kin cannot be denied when voices call.  
 Choices came hard when for land love hearts tore.  
 Deeper roots had duty which must be paid  
 And choices no longer delayed.

Rising from night fires glowing soft light  
 Came Martya, child of the strong born new blood.  
 Amber haired and eyes of gypsy fire bright  
 Whose words were like wind born of petals of white  
 By her stood Davin, blades of steel and wood.  
 Too soon passed they both into the twilight;  
 Fealty of land passed into the night.

The land then fell silent, its loss to mourn,  
 For it could not live without one to lead.  
 The call went out: "Who will lead in their stead?"  
 Wise council sought far for new leaders born,  
 The Ram cried out loud for action and deed.  
 For the love of the land did many feet tread,  
 Came low-born and came noble bred.

Konrad stood forth, born of the elder time,  
 Of the old blood, true son of Cordigan.  
 Strong warrior, and wise, to lead the land.  
 By his side, though once from far distant clime,  
 Stood Alyce. Deep for the land her love ran.  
 Two, bound together by vows, hand in hand.  
 Two, together, bound to the land.

Fealty of land passed again into light  
 As grief, past bound, began slowly to heal,  
 In the fullness of days the land found bright life  
 And its people remembered of days bright  
 And in such mem'ry did the old wounds seal  
 And brought peace to child, to husband and wife  
 Ramshaven once more was secure and safe.

For many years lead Konrad and Alyce.  
 They drew strength from the wisdom of the past,  
 Drew hope from the shining future ahead.  
 Again the land knew the fullness of peace,  
 A part of a rich history to last  
 The tale of those who followed, those who led  
 And those who would rise in their stead.

In time the mantle they wore grew weighty,  
 Once more the call for new blood was sent forth.  
 With heavy hearts were their words then spoken,  
 A call to come forth, those who were worthy.  
 In their wisdom they knew growth came from birth,  
 That the chain, forged of old, stay unbroken.  
 The land chose again among men.



## Anno Societatis LX (60)

## Barony of Ramshaven

May 2025

One stood forth, a norseman of wide renown.  
 Land bound he, by bonds of blood and honour.  
 Sword-strong, world-wise, never standing alone;  
 Wencendl stood near with golden crown.  
 They sat and heard words of what came before.  
 They stood, and would do that which must be done.  
 For Kolbjorn had the high seat won.

The circlet was passed from father to son,  
 The land prospered in the slumber of peace.  
 With birthright secure, Kolbjorn went to the sea,  
 Raiding far shores as his fathers had done.  
 Fearful towns' Danegeld his coffers increased,  
 Yet generous and giving with spoils was he;  
 Sharing with kinsmen was his decree.

Their hall was adorned with treasures bright:  
 Silver and gold and beauteous garments.  
 The wealth of Ramshaven was well-renowned  
 No less famed their skill when called forth to fight.  
 Wencendl watched from the battlements,  
 Inspiring her lord and her men on the ground,  
 Whenever the war-horns did sound.

The passage of time marched slowly onwards,  
 And both lady and lord were themselves bound:  
 Loyal to the land, yet to their house sworn.  
 Thus they resolved to seek out from their lords  
 New stewards of Ramshaven to be found,  
 Who'd honour the land whose circlet they'd worn:  
 And responsibility had borne.

From the vastness of the great northern wood -  
 Land of stony shores where the wolf still bayed wild -  
 Came two weapon-thanes from their bright hall,  
 As bright as their honour, and will to do good  
 To serve land and people; man, woman, and child,  
 Spake Penda and Sybilla: "We have answered this call,  
 And we pledge to serve one and all."

The lords of the land deliberated for days  
 The worth of their claim to the barony's high seats,  
 In the end they accepted, for these two had impressed.  
 In promise for that circlet and their people's praise,  
 Did the new rulers agree to perform mighty feats.  
 Thus Sybilla and Penda would set out on quest,  
 And so grow the shield o'er the West.

"The lands in the south have grown mighty and well,  
 Bryniau and Der Welfengau are stoutly defended,  
 But northwards we see but an empty domain.  
 A wild expanse where honest men fear to dwell,  
 Let us turn all our labours to this task most splendid:  
 To construct mighty holds, and plant well the grain,  
 And we shall raise up worthy thanes.

To that end did the rulers return to their hall,  
 And Northgaetham grew wealthy, and joyful and bright,  
 A beacon of welcome and safety for guests;  
 And good lords and ladies had cause to stand tall  
 They brought justice and peace to the north, as was right,  
 The sovereigns saw reason that Northgaetham be blessed,  
 That in their great hall hang its crest.

The people rejoiced – Penda's quest was at end,  
 And Sybilla's as well; for through war and through peace,  
 Had strengthened the land, and brought all great honour  
 That was sung by the bards and borne by each friend.  
 But that cruel mistress Time in her path does not cease.  
 Sybilla and Penda called the folk to their manor,  
 For new leaders to take up their banner.

Now the line of brave Cordigan is well-known and famed,  
 For lords of martial skill, known for courage and daring.  
 Six generations grasped tightly the warrior's blade,  
 But now the seventh bellicose nature constrained.  
 The newest of stewards were kindly and sharing:  
 Lucia and Penn through the hall's grand arcades  
 Approached; and to the high seats they were bade.

Do not mistake this appellation for one of reproach;  
 Nor assume that on whose brows the coronets rested  
 Were lacking in courage or other noble virtues.  
 Merely the new lords took the peaceful approach,  
 And to see the land flourish, challenged their people to be  
 tested.  
 Grand were the tourneys, and new champions came to  
 The high seats in their fealty due.

The first year they held sway the two did command  
 Tales of adventures from far and from near;  
 Traveller's stories did the bardic muse inspire,  
 And next year saw poems read and songs sung in the land.  
 These patrons of bards did spread wide great cheer  
 And by their example brought new friends to fire,  
 To pass the mead-horn 'round. Much laughter was heard,  
 For now was hospitality their word.

Ramshaven embraced eagerly the Baronial will,  
 The western lands were to travellers kind;  
 But in the year by her own hand Kaylah was Queen  
 Did the great plague descend over valley and hill  
 Fierce and terrible; and thundering blew a mighty wind,  
 The sickness was sore in the land: felt but unseen.  
 And once prosperous times now grew lean.

At first the people were afraid, and not without cause  
 For the shops of the merchants had shelves plain and bare  
 But their most noble prince and princess lead the way  
 And they ascended the thrones without pause  
 The folk of the Northlands cast out doubt and fear  
 Connection became Ramshaven's word; for someday  
 This pestilence would be driven away.

Though confined to their halls, bonds were forged strong,  
 As messengers braved the plague-stricken roads,  
 Bringing knowledge and cheer and laughter well-needed.  
 Then did the bards of foreign lands with boast and song  
 Caused a great war where music stood in for blows  
 Ramshaven and Ealdormere to the East's cause heeded,  
 And to the battleground speeded.

With the passage of days the great sickness abated,  
 A new monarch reigned, and as people rejoiced,  
 Penn and Lucia did host a great masque!  
 But despite this they knew their time was now fated,  
 To come to an end; and so with a great voice,  
 They to their worthies said "This we do ask:  
 For another to take up our task."

As it was in days long since pass'd,  
 Did a pair of nobles of worth and degree  
 Stand forth in the hall to press for their claim.  
 The crown and the council did at long last  
 To the passing of coronets gladly agree.  
 Thus Henry and Brigit of Der Welfengau's fame,  
 Were the successors nam'd.

**Mistress Alyce de Sheppey  
 and Master Dietrich von Sachsen**

## **Baronial Champions:**

*Many have the opinion that a Champion is chosen for being the best at what they do. This is not always the case! Each Champion is carefully chosen by Their Excellencies with a purpose in mind.*

*Yes, it is important that the champion be skilled in his or her discipline but also that he or she be inspiring and willing to assist others in achieving a similar goal. It is Their Excellencies wish that by being a Ramshaven Champion that person will pass on knowledge and skills to others.*

*A Champion will inspire people to take part in competitions and be approachable for any questions that might arise. Of course, winning the odd competition and proudly being a member of Ramshaven is much appreciated.*

### **Armored Combat:**

*Master Dietrich von Sachsen*

### **Fencing:**

*Lord Fritz Chesaux*

### **Archery:**

*THLord Graeme de Cherbourg*

### **Arts & Sciences:**

*Lord Hrvoje Mihaljovic*

### **Bardic Arts:**

*Lady Nicole Campana*

## **Fifty Bouts for Eoforwic's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Wassail to Master Albrecht Stamper, who in addition to running several tournaments as event Marshal in Charge, fought 50 bouts in honour of Eoforwic's fifty years and won 23 of them!



## The Armour of *A Knight's Tale* By Albrecht Stampfer

### Part the Second – Knightly Helmets and Throat Protection

#### Introduction

Though originally intended to be an article in two parts, this project has taken on a life of its own, and may require three, or even four parts to cover the material. In the first part of this article, I looked at the armour worn by the guards/soldiers in the movie *A Knight's Tale* (2001) and compared it with the armour that would have been worn by such figures during the time the movie is set. In this part I will examine the armour worn by the participants in the tournaments portrayed in the movie, also comparing it to that worn in the time frame of the movie. In the first part, I established that time frame to be the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century. This part will focus on armour for the head and throat.

#### The Tournament Combatants

Over the course of the movie, we witness a number of tournaments, each with its own set of armoured combatants. There is an implication in the movie that these combatants are “knights”, and that participants are nobles, though this was not necessarily the case in the Middle Ages. In the mid-14<sup>th</sup> c. not all nobles were knights, and not all knights were of noble birth.

These knights wear a variety of armour during both combat on foot and tilting on horseback. Like in the first part of this article I will examine the armours from head to foot, or cap-a-pie. Because of the great variety of armour, I will break the armours observed down by general type, rather than examine each suit in detail.

#### Helms

- One of the most important pieces of armour for a combatant is head protection, usually referred to as a helm or helmet. A number of different types of helms are seen in *A Knight's Tale*, ranging in date from the late 14<sup>th</sup> c. into the late 16<sup>th</sup> c.
- The vast majority of the knightly helms seen in the movie are what modern scholars of arms and armour call close-helms as well as the closely related armet. In fact, the newly minted “Sir Ulrich” faces an opponent equipped with a close-helm in his first tilt.

Examples of armets are found from the early 15<sup>th</sup> c., into the 16<sup>th</sup> c. with one of the earliest from c. 1420.<sup>1</sup> They likely developed out of the earlier bascinet (cf.).<sup>2</sup> A very good example of an armet can be found in the Wallace Collection, A152

(<https://wallacelive.wallacecollection.org:443/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=60643&viewType=detailView> c. 1470-1510). Close helms seem to have developed in the last quarter of the 15<sup>th</sup> c. and became very common throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> c. and beyond. An early example, part of an armour belonging to Henry VIII, can be found in The Royal Armouries, IV.23 (<https://collections.royalarmouries.org/object/rac-object-3299.html> c. 1510).

Both types of helms had rounded skulls made from a single piece of metal, though some armets had a plate reinforcement at the front. They are often seen with a medial ridge running from the eye slit or slits to approximately half way down the back of the skull. Other examples, especially German, had multiple small ridges or “flutes”

(<https://wallacelive.wallacecollection.org:443/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=60651&viewType=detailView> c. 1530). Over the course of the 15<sup>th</sup> c. and especially into the 16<sup>th</sup> c.,

<sup>1</sup> Ewart Oakeshott *European Weapons and Armour: From the Renaissance to the Industrial Revolution*. (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2000) 118

<sup>2</sup> Kelly DeVries and Robert Douglas Smith *Medieval Military Technology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012) 89



this medial ridge developed into a comb, like those found on the burgonets discussed earlier, of increasing size. The helms seen in the movie do not have these pronounced combs, suggesting they are late 15<sup>th</sup> to early 16<sup>th</sup> c. examples.

The main distinction between the two types of helms is the way there were designed to open. "...we now regard the armet as a form of close-helm, front-opening with two hinged cheek pieces overlapping for fastening at the chin, the visor pivoting at the sides. The close-helmet itself opened entirely from the sides; the visor and bevor (the latter often fitted with gorget plates) all pivoted on the same axis from a point on each side of the helmet."<sup>3</sup> An example of the hinging mechanism for a close-helm can be seen in this image from the Royal Armouries (IV.1000) ( <https://collections.royalarmouries.org/object/rac-object-30976.html> )

The face plates of armets and close-helms had narrow vision slits or "sights" with various arrangements. Sometimes there was a single slit for vision, and others had a divided sight. Some examples, such as this early close-helm from the Royal Armouries. IV.27 ( <https://collections.royalarmouries.org/object/rac-object-6468.html> c. 1520) had multiple slits, both for vision and ventilation. For ventilation in other armets and close-helms, the faceplates were often pierced with holes or small slits called "breaths". The faceplates were also usually angled to various degrees too allow strikes to glance off them.

The movie shows us a number of examples of armets and close-helms. As noted above, our hero tilts against a close-helm equipped opponent, with an unusually long "duckface" faceplate. Count Ademar, also wears a close-helm or armet. Sir Ulrich's second set of armour is equipped with a close-helm, though with a disturbing lack of throat protection (cf.). It appears to be a 16<sup>th</sup> century version based on the strong medial crest of the skull. We also see examples of the German style armet or close helm with fluted tops and faceplates, one of which is knocked sailing through the air by a blow from Sir Ulrich. At one point we see what may be a "wrapper", an extra plate defence mounted just in front of the helm ( <https://wallacelive.wallacecollection.org:443/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=60690&viewType=detailView> c. 1580). Colville, who later turns out to be Edward, the Black Prince of England, wears what appears to be an armet. You can see his full armour here ( [https://www.icollector.com/A-Knight-s-Tale-Colville-s-Metal-Jousting-Armor-James-Purefoy\\_i21744600](https://www.icollector.com/A-Knight-s-Tale-Colville-s-Metal-Jousting-Armor-James-Purefoy_i21744600) c. 2001), and the helm appears to be based on one in the Schloss Churburg collection (Churburg CH 18 <http://myarmoury.com/talk/viewtopic.21152.html> c. 1425-1430). One author notes that the helmet is actually missing the visor, so the helmet portrayed in the movie was incomplete.<sup>4</sup> One variation of the armet is worn by Sir Ulrich when he fights on foot, but it has an open face with two metal bars which extend from a peaked brim to just above the chin.

- Another form of helm worn by a few combatants in the movie is the sallet. I briefly discussed the sallet in the first part of this article as it can be seen worn some of the soldier/guards early in the movie. Sallets had a rounded skull of varying depth, that narrowed to the rear, forming a point that projected over the neck. In some sallets it was a solid extension of the helm, while others had overlapping lames forming the "tail" of the sallet.<sup>5</sup> Some forms had a medial ridge from just above the eye slits to the start of the tail. While some were open faced, many had the skull extending over the upper part of the face, with a slit in the front for vision (IV.15 <https://collections.royalarmouries.org/object/rac-object-43966.html> c. 1480) Others had a visor covering the upper part of the face, that hinged upwards, with a sight in the visor (IV.427 <https://collections.royalarmouries.org/object/rac-object-490.html> c. 1480-90).

<sup>3</sup> David Edge & John Miles Paddock *Arms and Armour of the Medieval Knight* (London: Bison Group, 1988) 141

<sup>4</sup> Vesey Norman *Arms and Armour* London: Octopus Books, 1972; 32

<sup>5</sup> Edge & Paddock; 99-100



There were others with full faceplates extending to the chin (A83

<https://wallacelive.wallacecollection.org:443/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=60574&viewType=detailView> c. 1515) The chin and upper neck were exposed in many sallets as the helm itself came down to just past the ears. A large number of these helms were equipped with a bevor, a plate defence that extended from the chest, covering the throat and lower part of the face, interfacing with the bottom of the sallet (A193

<https://wallacelive.wallacecollection.org:443/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=60684&viewType=detailView> c.1480). In combination they would look like this example from the Royal Armouries (IV.499 <https://collections.royalarmouries.org/object/rac-object-503.html> c. 1480).

There are only a few seen in the movie, the clearest example being worn by one of Sir Ulrich's foot combat opponents, with a laminated tail and no bevor. There is also a mounted knight wearing one, again, with no apparent bevor, in the flashback scene of young William in London. Another example is a knight wearing a visored sallet with a short tail during the presentation of the combatant's scene in London at the "World Championships."

- A third type of helmet is the *barbute*, also known as *barbut*, or *barbuta* which likely developed in early 15<sup>th</sup> c in Italy. The barbute was a fairly tall helm, extending to the shoulders. They were similar in shape to the earlier bascinet, often with a medial ridge on the skull. A similar helm was the celata, an open-faced helm, which likely developed into the sallet discussed earlier. The barbute was distinguished by the t-shaped opening in the face of the helm.<sup>6</sup> Some barbutes seemed to imitate the Corinthian style of Greek helmet found in antiquity (<https://wallacelive.wallacecollection.org:443/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=60566&viewType=detailView> c. 1470).<sup>7</sup> An example found in the Royal Armouries is also referred to as an "Italian Sallet" (<https://collections.royalarmouries.org/object/rac-object-489.html> c. 1440). This type of helm was not seen past the 1470's.<sup>8</sup>

As far as I can tell, there was only one example of a barbute in the movie, where one is worn by an opponent unhorsed by our hero. If you look closely, you can see a round piece of metal acting as extra protection for the combatant's nose.

- A fourth type of helmet seen in the so-called "frog-mouthed" helm, one of the earliest types of armour designed specifically for tilting, or the "Joust of Peace" (<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/23216> c. 1500). It originated toward the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century but persisting until third decade of the 16<sup>th</sup> c.<sup>9</sup> These helms had a rounded skull, and a faceplate that swept upwards from the throat to form a narrow slit which would be difficult to see out of unless the head was tilted forward. The narrow opening and curved glancing surface of the faceplate would prevent a lance going into the wearer's face. It also guarded against splinters from broken lances hitting the eyes. An excellent example, referred to as the Brocas helm, can be found in the Royal Armouries (IV.411 <https://collections.royalarmouries.org/object/rac-object-17505.html> c. 1470-90). You can see the metal fittings that secured it to the breastplate, designed to prevent it from being dislodged.

It is possible that the first helm worn by "Sir Ulric" is an early form of this type of helm. It has a fairly narrow vision slit, though the face is fairly flat, and as demonstrated in the movie, doesn't offer much of a glancing surface. A later version of this helm can be seen worn by another defeated opponent of our hero, one that is similar to the Brocas helm shown above.

<sup>6</sup> Oakeshott; 110

<sup>7</sup> Ibid; 111

<sup>8</sup> Edge & Paddock; 106

<sup>9</sup> Ibid; 157

- One final type of helm, and one that is closest in time to when the movie is set, is the bascinet. The bascinet was discussed in Part I of this article, and will be discussed at greater length later in this article. Briefly, a bascinet is a conical helm, often seen with an open face, but later in the 14<sup>th</sup> c. seen with a variety of faceplates.

There is one example in the movie, rested by its owner on one the list field's outer barriers, during Sir Ulrich's first test in tilting. It has a faceplate that comes to a distinct point, similar to the Lyle bascinet found in the Royal Armouries (<https://collections.royalarmouries.org/object/rac-object-500.html> c. 1371-1399). It lacks the mail aventail seen on the Lyle, but then, mail seems to be absent throughout the movie.

### Throat protection

- A number of different types of throat protection can be seen in A Knight's Tale. In some cases, protection is integral with the helm, in others, there is a separate piece of armour. In a number of cases, throat protection is minimal or shockingly absent.
- Sir Ulrich's first opponent does have a plate attached to the bottom of his armet which overlaps with his breastplate, sometimes referred to as a "gorget plate".<sup>10</sup> This a feature seen on a number of armets and close-helms in the movie, sometimes with multiple lames forming the defence. On many of the armours used in the film, the lower plate does not fully cover the throat, especially when the head is tilted back.
- Sometimes protection was provided by a separate piece of armour called a gorget. The gorget (French for throat) was a piece of armour that often extended from the top of the breastplate to the base of the helm. These could be composed of one or more lames of metal (<https://wallacelive.wallacecollection.org:443/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=60722&viewType=detailView> c. 1530). They often served as anchor points for the upper arm/shoulder armour, known as pauldrons (cf.) In a few cases like Sir Ulrich's original armour and that of the Black Prince, we can see a short, leather gorget that does not extend the full way to the helmet, and leaves part of the throat exposed.
- The Black Prince does have a wrapper, mentioned earlier, which is a separate plate attached to the top of the breastplate, the pauldrons, or a separate plate, with a tall metal flange that covered the left side of the throat and face. These can be seen on a number of the armours in the movie. Count Ademar is protected by gorget plates and wrappers, which extend from both pauldrons. In some cases, the gorget is attached to the breastplate, and the base of the helm interfaces with the top of the gorget to allow movement.<sup>11</sup>
- Mentioned earlier is the bevor, which often formed the throat and lower face protection of a sallet style helm, but bevors are absent from the movie. Also absent are mail collars or "standards" which often provide throat protection in late medieval period armours (<https://wallacelive.wallacecollection.org:443/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=60500&viewType=detailView> late 15<sup>th</sup> c.).<sup>12</sup>
- As noted above, some of the armours have little or no protection for the throat. Ulrich's first armour has the short leather gorget mentioned above, but his second armour has no throat protection at all. This leaves his

<sup>10</sup> Edge & Paddock; 100

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Tobias Capwell *Masterpieces of European Arms and Armour in the Wallace Collection* London: The Wallace Collection, 2011: 36

throat vulnerable to strikes from a lance or the wooden splinters from a shattered lance, which could be lethal. Henri II of France died, when splinters from a lance struck his face and right eye. The wounds became infected leading to his death 10 days later.<sup>13</sup> Apparently, the movie doesn't address this threat as in one scene, unarmoured observers of the joust are showered with splinters to no ill effect. Oddly enough, on Ulrich's armour, there is a separate plate over the top of the breastplate to which the pauldrons are attached, but neck hole only has a small lip, offering no additional protection.

### Helmets and Throat Protection of the Mid-14<sup>th</sup> c.

From the dates of the examples provided above, we can establish that, like the armour worn by the guards and soldiers, we are looking at armour that can be dated from the early 15<sup>th</sup> c. into the 16<sup>th</sup> c. In the first part of the article, we also established the date of the film to fall somewhere in the mid-14<sup>th</sup> c. So, what helms and throat protection be available around that time?

### Helms

We've already established some types of helms worn by soldiers in the mid- 14<sup>th</sup> c., and some of these helms could also be worn by mounted knights or men at arms, including the bascinet and kettle hat. I'll also look at another form of helm, the Great Helm.

- The Great Helm or *heaume* is a type of helmet first found in the 12<sup>th</sup> c., but it persisted well into the 14<sup>th</sup> c. They usually consisted of three metal plates which fully encompassed the head, and rested on the shoulders. Early forms had a flat top, but by the mid 14<sup>th</sup> century, they had a more tapered top which made for a glancing surface.<sup>14</sup> The faceplate was integral to the helm and had two eye slits as well as numerous "breaths", holes pierced into the helm for ventilation. One of the most famous examples is the helm that belonged to Sir Richard Pembridge (died 1375) ([https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9e/The\\_helm\\_of\\_Richard\\_Pembridge\\_from\\_Hereford\\_Cathedral.png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9e/The_helm_of_Richard_Pembridge_from_Hereford_Cathedral.png))

A great helm was often worn over another helm, like a *cervelliere* (cf.) or bascinet, providing a double layer of protection. Though the great helm persisted into the 14<sup>th</sup> c., after about 1350 it was primarily used in tournaments.<sup>15</sup> It is often seen in period imagery in conjunction with other types of helms (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/4582/12928> c. 1350).

It is likely the frogmouth helms, referenced earlier, evolved out of the great helm<sup>16</sup>, as can be seen from the great helm belonging to Henry V, who died in the first quarter of the 15<sup>th</sup> c. ([https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Helm\\_from\\_the\\_tomb\\_Henry\\_V.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Helm_from_the_tomb_Henry_V.png)).

- The *chapel de fer* or kettle hat was discussed in the first article in this series, and it was found not only on foot soldiers but also on mounted troops (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/4212/9040> c. 1350-1400). As a quick recap, the kettle helm is a broad brimmed, open faced metal helmet, with a rounded or slightly pointed shaped skull. It is unlikely to have been used in mounted tournaments as it had an open face, though it could have been used in foot combat.

<sup>13</sup> Kian Eftkhari et al The last ride of Henry II of France: orbital injury and a king's demise; Surv Ophthalmol 2015 May-Jun;60(3):274-8 (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25890627/#:~:text=On%20June%2030%2C%201559%2C%20Henry,his%20face%20and%20right%20orbit.> 2015).

<sup>14</sup> DeVires and Smith; 86-87

<sup>15</sup> Edge & Paddock; 69

<sup>16</sup> DeVires and Smith; 87

- The bascinet was by far one of the most common types of helmets in the 14<sup>th</sup> c., and has been mentioned in passing previously in this series. It likely evolved out of the *cervelliere*, which was essentially a rounded skull cap, often worn under a mail coif. The bascinet covered the back and both sides of the head<sup>17</sup>, and by the mid-14<sup>th</sup> c. the skull had assumed a conical shape (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/4465/10698> c. 1325-1349, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/23238> c. 1350-1400).

Pictures from mid-14<sup>th</sup> c. manuscripts show tend to show the bascinet being worn open faced, with no visor (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/5187/16518> c. 1345-1355, <https://manuscriptminiatures.com/4693/12795> c. 1360) though there is some evidence of early visors (<https://manuscriptminiatures.com/4135/22336> c. 1275-1325). A number of different types of visors would be found in the last quarter of the 14<sup>th</sup> c. These include the slightly rounded *klappvisier*, and the pointed “hound’s skull”/ “pig-faced” versions.

### Throat Protection

- The vast majority of the throat protection in the mid 14<sup>th</sup> c., at least for those of knightly or man-at-arms status, was provided by mail. As discussed earlier, mail is composed of interlinked rings of metal, usually iron or steel, with each link being closed by a small, wedged shaped rivet. This forms a flexible defence which is resistant to cutting. In the 11<sup>th</sup> and early 12<sup>th</sup> c. often the primary form of defence for the head and throat was a mail coif worn over a padded cap. A mail coif was also worn under early helmets, giving a layered defence.

By the mid 14<sup>th</sup> c., the mail coif was associated with helmets like the kettle hat, but a different approach was taken for the bascinet. The bascinet had mail attached to the lower edge of it in the form of an *aventail*, which draped down to covered the neck and shoulders. The mail was attached to the helm using small metal pegs with holes in them called *vervelles*. You can see the holes for the *vervelles* in the example of a bascinet from the Metropolitan Museum of Art linked above. You can also just see attachment points for mail in this image: <https://manuscriptminiatures.com/4373/7032> (c. 1338-1344). There is also some evidence that extra protection could also be provided by quilted material that went over the mail aventail (<https://effigiesandbrasses.com/1087/3399> c. 1386).<sup>18</sup>

### Conclusion of the Second Part

Like seen with the armour of guards and soldiers in the first part of this article, the helmets and throat protection worn by the tournament combatants in *A Knight’s Tale* ranges from 100 to 200 years past the time the movie is set. I’ve also provided some evidence of what would actually be worn by a fighting man of the mid-14<sup>th</sup> c. At the end of this series, I will provide a summary of how such a warrior would be armoured from head to toe. Towards that goal, the next part of this series will examine how the body and arms were armoured, both in the movie and in the mid-14<sup>th</sup> c. The final element of the series will look at leg armour and will provide a list of the resources that were used to research this article.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> Edge & Paddock; 76



## Canton Der Welfengau



In December of A.S 16, Lord Tsvetan - having seen a vision of a great silvery griffon of ruby eyes and flaming tongue – gathered together with four other gentles to form the Canton. The device of Der Welfengau was registered in A.S 20.

During the summer months, fencing practice and A&S are scheduled on alternate Sundays at 12 pm. Location/dates to TBA.

Loaner equipment is available. For more information and to participate, please contact the Seneschal at [dw.guelph@gmail.com](mailto:dw.guelph@gmail.com)

Or visit the Facebook page, Canton of Der Welfengau unofficial <https://www.facebook.com/groups/266085027122/>

## Canton of Bryniau Tywynnogg



The name "Bryniau Tywynnogg" (pr: BRIN'-eeaw Te-WIN'-og ) means "Sandy Hill" in Welsh. It is a name rooted in local history.

Everyone is encouraged to attend Business Meetings and share their thoughts. These happen at the same time as Fight Practice.

Armouring Nights offer a chance to get access to tools, materials, and help in regard to building of armour and other projects.

News and group plans are shared on the Barony of Ramshaven blog

<https://bryniau.blogspot.com/p/join-us.html>

For more information, please contact Seneschal Eyrny at: [bryniau.tywynnogg@gmail.com](mailto:bryniau.tywynnogg@gmail.com)

## Canton of Northgeatham



"The northern hamlet." When written in this form, North-geat-ham, it becomes easier to pronounce.

Weekly meetings are held on Sunday afternoons from 1 to 5pm at 973 Concession Rd 8, Tiverton ON. Check current posts in advance to make sure the meeting is a go at:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/417901341666007/?ref=bookmarks>

Meetings include arts and sciences, discussion of group activities, sometimes armouring, and socializing while taking in refreshments of tea and sometimes cake.

If you wish to be notified about meetings, please send a request and you shall be added. Regularly anticipated events for the group include an annual Museum Demonstration, and Barons' Brouhaha, a bi-annual event, which is usually held in mid-July (depending on other events). For further information please contact the Chatelaine Wulfwynne of the Blackwoods at [northgaedhamchatelaine@gmail.com](mailto:northgaedhamchatelaine@gmail.com)



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Arts and Sciences are strong in our barony! Please share your photos and your enthusiasm on the gathering page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1518968168395297/>



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Please send your suggestions and check the Ramshaven website and Order of Precedence to ensure information is correct.

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