

Historie of Ardechreag, Booke the Second

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Inscription

As it is the will of my master, Laird Colyne Stewart, to preserve the history of the Canton of Ardechreag, and as it is his wish to recapture that history that was lost, and as it is a task pleasing to myself, my master and my monarchs, do I, William Scrymgeour, brother to Stephen, set my pen to paper. It is my intent to record the events of great importance that come to pass upon the cliffs, the red bluffs and the verdant hills of my homeland, to save from obscurity deeds and actions of honour and renown. My skill is not great, but with God's aid I hope that I will be equal to the task, and that my labours will be pleasing to my master and my king and queen.

And so I begin.



Preface

The scrolls of the Histories of Ardechreag were housed in a great library, watched over by many aged monks and friars. These clerics it was whispered would oft dip into the mead and ale when the Prior was not watching. One such monk, whose name was Brother Bevitore di Birra Inglese, one night fell asleep at his desk after a bout of liquid indulgence. His capers burned down to the nub, and the hot wax flowed onto his desk and set his parchment on fire. The monk awoke to find the Ardechreag library in flames. Luckily he and the other friars managed to escape, but they could only save bits and pieces of the collection. Information from November of AS XXXI until February AS XXXV were almost completely lost.

Let this be a lesson in moderation to us all.



November-December XXXI

Little Matt hosted a canton Wassail at his keep. Lord Berus Wolfsonne became engaged to Lady Marian FitzWilliam. Ardechreag and Eoforwic gathered together to go wassailing and gather food for the needy.



At Septentrian 12th Night, hosted by Monadh, Ardchreag paid their Baronial taxes in the form of gambling supplies. Lord Blaine Sylvanus received a Bear's Heart, and Dom Nicolae Cioran became holder of the Cup of Teacht Cearta Mor.



At this time the officers were: Lord Blaine Sylvanus, Seneschal; Lord Edrick Anderson, Pursuivant; Kevin of Ardchreag, Exchequer; Lord Siegfried Brandbeorn, Knight Marshal; Laird Kenneth Macdonachy, Minister of Arts and Sciences; Lord Raffe Scholemaystre, Chronicler; Lady Calliste, Chatelaine; Arglwydd Rhys Yr Saethydd, Chirurgeon; Lord Alan atta Highcliffs, Archery Lieutenant.



January-February XXXI (*the beginning of the year mundanely known as 1997*)

At Candlemass, hosted by Skeldergate, Little Matt received his Award of Arms. Multiple members of the canton (unfortunately not named) were part of a group awarded a Purple Fretty for their efforts in organizing Coronation.



March-April XXXI

Lady Inez Rosanara (as Inez Carmen Maria de Frietas was now calling herself) received a Golden Otter at the Coronet Tourney for her bardic skills.



May-June XXXII

At this time Lady Marian of Heatherdale became Pursuivant.



Rhys Yr Saethydd and Gwynith of Ardchreag did enter into holy matrimony.



July-December XXXII

Ardchreag again answered the call to war, sending what fighters and scouts it could muster.



Lord Raffe Scholemaestre was inducted into the Order of the Silver Oak at Investiture for his research into medieval games and education.



During this six-month period of time Raffe became Seneschal, while Siegfried took over as Pursuivant; Theodora Komnena became Exchequer and Lord Luke became Knight Marshal. The Minister of Arts and Sciences position was vacant.



January-February XXXII (*the beginning of the year mundanely known as 1998*)

At Septentrian 12th Night, hosted by Carreg Y Blaidd, news came that Ealdormere was to be granted full kingdom status!



At the canton's 12th Night, Ulrich von der See of Greenhithe came with a petition and bribes to change Greenhithe's borders to include the lands mundanely known as Whitby. This request was granted. Ulrich was to become a chronic visitor to Ardchreag, and eventually a dual citizen with Ardchreag and Greenhithe.



March-April XXXII

The first Ealdormerean Crown Tourney was held, with Lord Siegfried Brandbeorn making the final six. He received a Wolf's Tooth for his skill and honour on the field that day.



May-June XXXIII

Pikeman's Pleasure in Petrea Thule was a glorious day for Ardchreag. Rhys became the Baronial Champion of Septentria and Ulrich was awarded his Award of Arms.



At this time Dom Nicolae Cioran became Knight Marshal.



July XXXIII – January XXXIII (*the beginning of the year mundanely known as 1999*)

No records from this time survived the library's fiery demise.



February XXXIII

A canton moot was held this month where many items were discussed.



March-April XXXIII

No records from this time survived the inferno.



May XXXIV

At this time Raffe was Seneschal, Lachlan MacLean was Pursuivant, Damara was Exchequer, Dom Nicolae was Knight Marshal, Anne and Grimbald Thorbjornson were the joint Ministers of Arts and Sciences, Elf was Chronicler, Eirik Anderson was Chatelaine, Arglwydd Rhys Yr Saethydd was Chirurgeon and Alan Atta Highcliffs was Archery Lieutenant.



June XXXIV

At this time Eileen LeMesurier became Seneschal.



July XXXIV-July XXXV

No records from this year (which encompassed the turning of the mundane year to 2000) survived Bevitore's folly.



August XXXV

At Pennsic XXIX, in August AS XXXV, Elspeth Fraser Dowglas became a man-at-arms to THL Sarnac Kir.



September XXXV-January XXXV *(the beginning of the year mundanely known as 2001)*

All records from this time fell victim to the Great Fire.



February XXXV

In February, A.S. XXXV Colyne Stewart and Thorfinna gra'feldr came to the Cliffs, having lived for the previous four years only a few blocks away from the keep at Clairlea. Thus began a time of great expansion for the canton, as many new members would join the Canton-upon-the-Cliffs over the following months. The officers at the time were listed as: Eileen LeMesurier, Seneschal; Eirik Anderson as her Deputy; Damara of Stonehaven, Exchequer; Lachlan MacLean, Pursuivant, Melchior the Carver, Minister of Arts and Sciences; Brandt das Lederwerker, Knight Marshal; Eirik Anderson, Chatelaine, Web Minister; Raffé Scholemaystre, Chronicler.



March XXXV

There then followed an unfortunate incident, where the populace of the Cliffs fought amongst themselves, and Brandt was no longer our Knight Marshal. The general populace of Ardchreag knew nothing of these doings, and spent their time traveling to such events as Berus' Squires' Bar Room Brawl in Skeldergate and Lady Mayor's Market Day in Eoforwic. Market Day in particular had a fair number of Chreaggers present, though unfortunately, many caught the Black Plague.



April XXXV

The canton hosted Crown Tourney, where Aaron Preslee won the Crowns for his Lady, Rustique de Sorde, besting Baron Siegfried Brandbeorn in the finals.



May XXXVI

To Petrea Thule did a small group of Chreaggers go, to once again enjoy the Pikeman's Pleasure. Battles were fought, food was et, and many new friends were made. Siegfried was called before the Baron Cynred and the Baroness Gaerwen and made Sheriff of Omemee, within whose borders all were thus employed.



June XXXVI

Tragedy then struck the canton in the new year of A.S. XXXVI, as one of its members, slated to become the next Seneschal of Septentria, passed away. Ulrich von der See, also of Greenhithe, died on June 4, A. S. XXXVI. His funeral was attended by many of the Society, and at the request of his family, garb was worn. The service was beautiful, with

Fursto, Ulrich's lady, reading from a number of poems and songs written for her Lord. A last moving touch was the playing of "Call the Names" by Marian of Heatherdale.



July XXXVI

The canton carried on and pulled together as only a group like the Chreaggers could. For Ulrich had been co-autocrat of the upcoming Ealdormere War Practice, and things had to be run now without him. Everyone banded together, and the event went off as a great success. A service was held for Ulrich, and a part of his ashes were scattered to the winds. Of winds there was much that War Practice, with tents and shades being blown free from their moorings. When the wind did not blow, the clouds wept upon those present. Still, the Galbraith party went on, rain or no. Ardchreag camped together in a circle, with a great ring of friends and compatriots expanding out behind them. Newcomers Mahault and Berend van der Eych came and impressed all present with their pavilion and Viking bed. At this event Eirik Andersen stepped up as Seneschal, while Crispinus Spellar became Chatelaine and Colyne took over as Chronicler. By this time Eanor of Amberhall had become the canton's Knight Marshal, Emma Gunter was Deputy to Damara as Exchequer, and Eirik had created the position of Quarter Master, which he himself filled. Siegfried, the Sheriff of Omemmee, was called forth at Court by the populace of that township, to answer charges of corruption. A great scroll, measuring longer than a man's body length was read, listing the crimes he had perpetrated. The Sheriff reportedly put the insurrection down quickly. Marian of Heatherdale was put on Vigil for her research into Arthurian legend, and Crispinus Spellar amused all by putting on a dress and dancing for certain gentlemen (though Baron Cynred refused a dance, hand on axe). Baroness Gaerwen was authorized as a Level 2 Scout, and Ardchreag hosted the Bardic Circle on Sunday night.



As more new folk flocked to the Cliffs, and many new fighters began to train, Brandt das Lederwerker opened his keep to all those who needed armour. Such armour workshops were to become an on-going tradition.



August XXXVI

In August the call to war came again, and the Canton sent many fighters and scouts to the cause. These included: Brandt das Lederwerker, Eanor of Amberhall, Siegfried Brandbjorn, Volodymyr (Vlad) Blahuciak, and Raffé Scholemaystre as fighters, and Lachlan MacLean, Fursto de Robyne and Colyne Stewart as scouts. The fighters of Ardchreag, and of Septentria, and of Ealdormere were in the forefront of the fighting, gaining the Middle many war points. Though the Middle lost the War, Ealdormere proved how strong they were militarily.

Off the field, at Great Court, Marian of Heatherdale was elevated to the Laurelate with much pomp and circumstance. She was ushered into the hall by brass instruments, and had her Peerage scroll sung to her by the Bards of Ealdormere in a style of one of her songs. Ardchreag had its first home-born Peer.

Also, Vlad became squired to Duke Sir Finnvarr, and Raffé was elevated to the position of Baronial Seneschal. Raffé and others were also recognized by Master Hector of the Black Height for bravery and discipline on the field. It was reported that House Fhtagn, a household reputedly sprung out of Ardchreag, held its first initiations. These reports are unsubstantiated.



At this time Damara of Stormhaven became Deputy to Eirik as Seneschal, and Lachlan became Deputy to her as Exchequer, and Marian became Deputy to him as Pursuivant. Lachlan is also listed as Scout Marshal at this time.



September XXXVI

In September many from the Chreag traveled far north to Bonfield Battle IX, the warnings of the immense cold by Lina Carville notwithstanding. Lina's warnings turned out to be true, with many a Chreagger freezing that first night. Iolanda de Albornoze was heard to comment that she was "as miserable as a Latin American in Bonfield." Ardchreag again had their own encampment, which merged with that of House Red Herring, as many from the Cliffs were Herrings as well. Many of their number participated in the battles, and those not authorized to fight became prey and hunters in the Great Hunt. Mort of Ardchreag and Blaine both survived said hunt.

Ulrich was toasted with mead brewed by Berend van der Eych, called Ulrich's Revenge.

Another House born of the Chreag, that of the Tallywhack, held their first initiations, and entered in friendly rivalry with the Herrings.

It was at this event that Crispinus performed his second and third miracle to be seen as a saint. His first miracle was that he was a man who publicly avowed that he hated everyone, and yet he became the canton chatelaine. The second miracle was this: after a night of much drinking Crispinus died and laid in state within his tent all the next day only to rise from the dead that night. His third miracle was in escaping the clutches of House Red Herring by ensorcling their minds. When they thought they were initiating Crispinus it was instead Mort they held captive. Though now avowed as a living saint by his adherents it would be a year before Crispinus was canonized. By that time he had been bodily lifted to heaven for he was not seen anymore on earth.



Later the same month our King Roak fulfilled a promise made at Pennsic War, and was removed and burned within a wicker man for the sake of the Kingdom. Princess Rustique and her frog-Prince Aaron then ascended to the Thrones at Kynges Town in Greyfells.



During this time Eirik gave the duties of the Quarter Master to Thorfinna. Berend and Mahault were named as acting Chirurgeons by the Kingdom Chirurgeon. Colyne, Thorfinna and Crispinus formed the Septentrian Performing Arts Troupe, and the Games Guild of Ealdormere. Such a Guild could only sprout out of a canton renowned for its love of gaming and gambling.



October XXXVI

The time had then come for an heir to Ealdormere to be found. In October, Skeldergate hosted the Crown Tourney of Aaron and Rustique. Members of Ardchreag arrived early, establishing their settlement, and saving space. A good thing, as over twenty Chreaggers arrived that day. Many new members made this their first event, including: Wulfgang of Ardchreag (later to be known as Wulfgang Donnerfaust), Janice of Ardchreag (later to be known as Jean-Margaret Donnerfaust), Stephen Scrymgeour and Jennifer the Younger of Ardchreag. They sat in their corner, munching on meat, cheese and bread, cheering on the fighters. As it turned out, Stephen's pick for the winner, and his lady Jennifer's, became the two finalists. In the end, Jennifer was triumphant as Sarnac Kir defeated Sergent Malik abd' al-Rahman to become Prince of Ealdormere, making his Lady Wife Joleicia of Litchfield Princess.

Brandt held a belt-making class that day, and Colyne taught a class on tafl for the new Games Guild.

The feast was the best that many of the Chreaggers had ever known. So good was it, that no bread balls were thrown. Four of their number were called up and recognized by the Queen for their skill at the Arts and Sciences, namely: Mahault van der Eych, Iolanda de Alborno, Berend van der Eych and Elspeth Fraser Dowglas.

During that day both Colyne and Thorfinna were conscripted into Royal duty; Colyne to stand spear with friend Eogan, and Thorfinna to act as Lady-in-Waiting to Her Majesty.



On the Twenty-Second day of October, A.S. XXXVI, the canton held a moot in the keep of Brandt das Lederwerker and Gailana Dunkel Pfare. Twenty good gentles did attend, and ten points were covered to the satisfaction of all within ninety minutes. It was the most enjoyable moot. It was decided there that a large warehouse, owned by Gailana,

would be available to house meetings, fight practices and possibly even archery. All agreed that once said keep was available, it should be tried, as many were tiring of having no permanent keep since leaving Clairlea for the summer. Some new officers were raised at this moot. Michaela of Ardchreag became Deputy to Eirik in his capacity as Web Minister and Iolanda was named Archery Lieutenant. Previous to this, Melchior had taken Mahault on as his Arts and Sciences Deputy.



November XXXVI

Scotchtoberfest drew a large crowd of Chreaggers to der Welfengau, numbering over twenty. For many this was their first event, and they must have liked it, for they went to others since. Colyne's Games Guild held a beginner's tafl tournament, and Colyne got to meet and talk games with Ragnarr Kennari (a veritable fount of information). Her Majesty Rustique took this opportunity to sign the Guild's charter. Five of the canton's newest members, Wulfgang (not Drac), Jennifer (later known as Katerina of Carnavarane), Michaela (later known as Tarian verch Gadarn), Randy and Janice brought with them enough food for the canton lunch that it rivaled what the event itself was serving. For dinner, the canton populace went to Sir Jack's Inn of the Donkey (known to some as Jack Astor's) to celebrate the birthday of Colyne's brother Shane, who had come out to the event. On the way, the Ardchreag standard fell from their wagon, the loss being discovered upon arriving at the Inn thirty minutes later. Undaunted, Thorfinna and Stephen Scrymgeour set out and somehow managed to find it in the gloom, none the worse for wear.



A small company of Ardchreag's artisans traveled to Rising Waters for the Kingdom Arts and Sciences Competition. Though they found the competition to be less than what they'd hoped, they nevertheless had a good time, and had the opportunity to talk with other skilled members of the populace. Mahault's article on the event in the TankArd caused a kingdom-wide stir.



Eirik traveled to Skrealing Althing for Feast of the Hare. Much socializing was done.



At this time Colyne became Deputy Seneschal. Lachlan McLean stepped down as Deputy Exchequer. Marian of Heatherdale stepped down as Deputy Pursuivant and Thorfinna gra'feldr became Deputy Pursuivant.



December XXXVI

Six Chreaggers braved the cold to travel to the newly created canton of Wesbelford (known at that time as Bellford Keep) in the Barony of Ben Dunfirth. Arriving early, they helped Baron Brand Thorwaldson hang Ben Dunfirth's banners. Foolish, foolish Baron. One of said banners fell down later in the day, braining Queen Rustique de Sorde. Ardchreag denied all knowledge of the incident. Arts and Sciences classes were held, and the fencers put on a fine show.



Bryniau Tywynogg hosted this year's Wassail, and a grand party it was. Colyne ran a gaming tourney in tafl and tabula (backgammon), which kept him bust for most of the day. Master Rufus won at tabula. Our illustrious Baron and Baroness were called into court and told that Cynred's new wives would soon be his. No one was more surprised than Gaerwen! Later, Septentrian familial love prevailed, and a carol circle grew around the Baronial presence. When it was announced that the Princess Joleicia, that day put on Vigil for the Laurel, was lonely, the entire Barony went to her aid and serenaded her with song. A Kingdom Moot was also held that day where all learned that the Kingdom was losing money. All in attendance pledged to find ways to keep our glorious Kingdom's coffers full.



At this time Berend van der Eych became the canton's Chirurgeon and the canton moved into Gailana's large keep.



January XXXVI *(the beginning of the year mundanely known as 2002)*

The winter of AS XXXVI had been a light one. Temperatures were moderate, and snow was almost unseen within Septentria. Then, in January, the gods treated the populace to their pent up winter rage. Snow fell, wind howled, rain soaked. Still, the northfolk are a hardy people and these intermittent storms could not stop them from traveling the kingdom they loved so well. Many Twelfth Night celebrations were held and many Chreaggers foraged forth to attend as many as possible.

The largest contingent descended on the Royal City of Eoforwic for the Barony of Septentria's Twelfth Night. So large was their group that they were granted permission to create a presence, though such a thing was not supposed to be done that day. Much fun was had as Ardchreag's seneschal, Eirik Andersen, was cut down by the Peasant Army; as Iolanda took part in the Fools Competition; and as Wulfgang was locked in the stocks. The taxes were paid, being a spear crafted by Brandt, a banner sewn by his Lady wife Gailana, and a container of soil from our glorious canton's lands.

Eirik, recovered from the attempt on his life, passed the Horn of Wessex on to Aeneas Oakhammer of Skeldergate. Colyne and Thorfinna were named Baronial Bards of Septentria, and Colyne also received his Award of Arms.



Baron Siegfried Brandbeorn did organize a demo at this time, which was held at a gathering of barbarians interested in fairy tales.



Another well-attended event was the yearly Brawl, sponsored by Sir Berus Jarl of Skeldergate. Chreaggers fell upon his inn in force to escape the winter doldrums and were well rewarded for their efforts. For Baron Tancred of Rising Waters was spreading his wares, which included his suit of armour. Chreaggers went home with about half of it, including the helm (which now graces Berend's head). Wulfgang and Eirik took to the boffer lists and mighty Wulfgang chased the event's host about the hall before mercilessly cutting him to ribbons. Upon learning the identity of his victim Wulfgang made a face that will live long in everyone's memories!

At court Thorfinna was granted her Award of Arms.



During this time Gailana Dunkel Pferé became Exchequer, and Wulfgang of Ardchreag became Deputy Chatelaine.



February XXXVI

On a drizzly Saturn Day morning, the Canton of Ardchreag gathered at their Inn. For later that day the populace of the Kingdom of Ealdormere were to arrive for a day of tourneys, games and merriment. The Inn was to have renowned guests that day, for not only were Their Royal Majesties to attend, but Their Excellencies Septentria, Ben Dunfirth, Skraeling Althing and Rising Waters were expected, as were knights and other champions traveling from foreign kingdoms. A Pas d'armes was planned for that day, a glorious tournament full of pomp and pageantry.

So the Chreaggers fell to work, preparing the Inn. Ivanna set up a corner for children's activities, while Vlad and Colyne set up the Lists. Elisabetta and Crispinus set to work preparing lunch while Iolanda and Michaela began supper. The Gatekeeper Mahault and her half-Giant assistant Wulfgang took up their positions by the door, Wulfgang wearing a sign about his neck that read 'Troll Komplaynt Dept'. (Wulfgang's true heritage is a matter of much speculation amongst the scholars on the Cliffs.)

The Games Guild spread its wares about the hall, and as the people arrived, they quickly took to these seats. Many engaged in a game of Glic that lasted for eight hours. Jean-Margaret set up an Arts and Sciences competition table in the rear of the hall, where many skilled artisans displayed their wares. Beside her, Gailana sold tickets for a penny raffle and a silent auction that raised much gold for the kingdom.

Though plagued by a cold, Colyne sat at his post at the List table, signing in fighters and recording their challenges. When Baron Cynred signed in, he insisted that Colyne bite his membership and fighting cards to insure that they were genuine. Thorfinna was approached by the Pas team led by Sir Evander MacLachlan, and asked to act as their Herald. She willingly consented, though she had never heralded in public before. The Company of the White Hart was led by Richard Larmer, who held the Septentrian reliquary to his chest. Many brave and noble fighters took the field that day, including Baron Brand Thorwaldson of Ben Dunfirth, Baron Sir Menken Brechen of Skraeling Althing and our Canton's own Brandt das Lederwerker (who had authorized in Great Weapon earlier that morning). The two Pas teams sent out their captains, who fought one on one, Larmer emerging as the victor. Both teams then set upon each other in force until their differences were resolved. Upon that happy note the teams held the field against all comers, including Baron Cynred, His Royal Majesty Aaron and Chreagger Elspeth Fraser Dowglas.

When the fighting was completed, Wulfgang was dragged from his position at the door, had a shield strapped to his arm and was sent out to continue his habit of battling Peers by getting a lesson in sword and shield by the King. (Later that day, he would face Cynred with boffer weapons.)

Wulfgang had a very full day indeed. Master Hector, who bought a complaint from him, began to heckle the poor giant as Wulfgang found his tongue-tied. When finally he blurted, "Well, how can you expect me to think with all that plaid in front of me!" Hector was no longer listening. He also found himself under attack by three nefarious Chreaggers who assaulted him with baguettes during supper. Sadly, he succumbed to his wounds. Happily, he miraculously revived enough to run about with a boffer and bash many good gentles that night.

When the fighting was done, and the List polls safely put away, it was time for the Septentrian Performing Arts Troupe to go on. Sickness had stopped the performance at Septentrian 12th Night, and Colyne's sickness almost cancelled it again. The Troupe pressed on, and the play went off well, with the hall stopping all activity to watch, and to interact, as it went on. Much frivolity was created by the bumbling acting, and that is all the actors could have asked for.

Supper began with a laugh as Colyne got Wulfgang to walk the length of the head table, both ways, while bowing to each set of five Peers that sat there. After poor Wulfgang had retaken his seat, Thorfinna and Colyne stood up to sing for the hall. It was the first time

Colyne had performed in public, and it nicely showed why Colyne is not a singing bard. Still, folks laughed, and that was the intent.

When the most excellent supper was over court was held. During kingdom court many Chreaggers were awarded Arts and Sciences prizes, and Mahault and Berend were both granted their Award of Arms. This was greeted by thunderous applause.

Also during court the Canton and its populace were praised by the King, Queen, Baron and Baroness. This chronicler has never heard such an outpouring of public praise before. It made me very proud to hail from the Cliffs.

After court there were many activities. There was the boffer fighting already mentioned, as well as a chess tournament. There was even some Eastern dancing and drumming which all enjoyed (except for one spode who was rude enough to actually complain to them of the noise they were making). The chess players battled long into the night until finally Streonwald Wulfesbana won the day.

At midnight the Inn closed its doors, and the populace of Ardchreag returned to their homes, worn and weary but happy in a job well done. Many thanks must go out to all those who helped that day, including the autocrats Eirik and Thorfinna, Berend (who ran many errands), Lachlan (who served as servocrat) and many, many others.



At this time Brandt das Lederwerker became Chatelaine.



March AS XXXVI

A small group of Chreaggers traveled to the annual Winter War. At this event Wulfgang Donnerfaust was sworn into HRH Sarnac Kir's entourage. Sarnac (now Sarnac Ba'adur) was knighted that day to much fanfare.



Colyne and Thorfinna attended War College, with the aim of authorizing in sword and shield. With them went Mahault, Berend, Wulfgang, Jean-Margaret and Brandt. With their support and cheering, both did indeed authorize (Colyne even managing to defeat his opponent in the Tourney round—Thegn Cynred Broccan).



At the same time, others traveled to the Barony of Skraeling Althing's 20th Anniversary. These included Eirik, Siegfried, Vlad, Kenric and Tatiiana.



The call went out for all who would be Septentrian Baronial Champion to travel to Vest Yorvik for a tournament to be held at their event Bad in Plaid. Many from the Cliffs attended (including Mahault, Berend, Teah, Ivanna, Eanor, Colyne, Thorfinna, Iolanda, Gunther, Siegfried and others), though only Siegfried took part in the battles. Though Siegfried took the day, Lady Seonag nicThomais was selected to represent Septentria due not only to her martial skills but also to her generous nature when praising the skills of her opponents. Wassail Seonag!

Iolanada and Teah were both recognized by Her Excellency Gaerwen and Her Majesty Rustique for their plaid fashions (Iolanda was dressed as a plaid Mongol) and Colyne was awarded a bracelet for the story he told during feast.

At court both Colyne and Thorfinna swore to the Isengesitha (the army of Septentria).



At this time Mahault van der Eych officially became the canton's Minister of Arts and Sciences, and Thorfinna gra'feldr became Pursuivant. At the Baronial level, Crispinus Spellar became Chronicler, and Piero di Paxiti da Vincenza became Signet.



April AS XXXVI

The end of the SCAdian year found the populace of Ardchreag extremely busy. Iolanda de Albornoiz traveled to Petrea Thule for the Late Winter Shoot while the van der Eychs, Colyne, Thorfinna, Eirik, Gunther and Eanor went to stay at the Ravenhill Farm in Flaming Sky. While there they attended Humour Us!, a most wonderful and wacky event. Colyne fought at an event for the first time, taking part in a search for the Holy Pail. While on the quest he got to battle Duke Sir Finnvarr, and learned how to dance while in armour. The feast, prepared by Eanor's mother Mistress Ragni Dzintara of Amberhall, was exceptional.



The following week many went to Ramshaven to partake in classes at Forward into the Past.



The week after was Caer Draeth's Spring Tune Up and Commissariat Fundraiser. Colyne Stewart, Thorfinna gra'feldr, Eirik Andersen, Raffe Scholemaystre, Kenric Manning,

Gunther Katzkin, Brandt das Lederwerker, Gailana Dunkel Pfare, Iolanda de Alborno, Marian of Heatherdale, Wulfgang Donnerfaust, Jean-Margaret Donnerfaust, Elspeth Fraser Dowglas and Eanor of Amberhall were in attendance (likely others as well, that this poor, distracted scribe did not see). The weather was bitterly cold and Colyne abandoned the field nursing his wrists (“Cold. And gonna rain. Yes sir.”) Classes were attended, games were played, and feast was et. At feast there was much singing, with Hector calling on Garraed to entertain Their Majesties An Tir and Middle.



News had been coming for months that our King and Queen, brave Aaron and gentle Rustique, would have to leave on a quest, and many of the people of Ardchreag traveled far to Rising Waters to see them set off. These good gentles included Colyne, Thorfinna, Mahault, Berend, Elspeth, Piero, Marian, Eanor, Gunther, Wulfgang and Jean-Margaret. It was a glorious day for traveling, and it was good. Their Majesties held their final court where special awards were given and gifts received. Baron Foote, pushing before him a monstrous cart hung with bells, told all how Aaron must leave us to fulfill a wise woman’s predictions. For their true love to remain, Aaron and Rustique must abdicate the Thrones, and set off together to return the empties (handily strung on a string by the good Foote). There was much cheering for the newly non-Royals, and they were pelted with many frogs (for Aaron was a Frog Prince when first he won Crown Tourney). As they left the keep Duke Sir Hasdrubal was heard to remark, “Preslee has left the building.”

Sarnac Ba’adur was then called to claim the Crown of Ealdormere and keep our lands safe from invaders. His Lady wife was heralded into court by drummers and dancers and much fanfare. Together they recited their pledge to protect Ealdormere and serve her people and it was well said. They then called forth the Great Officers, Barons, and the members of the three Great Peerage Orders: Chivalry, Laurel and Pelican.

When Baron Brand Thorwaldson of Ben Dunfirth took his oath of fealty he presented Sarnac with a bag containing the heads of the enemies of Ealdormere. Sarnac gave these heads to the keeping of Master Hector of the Black Height, bidding him place them on pikes so that any other enemies of Ealdormere could see the fate that awaited them. Master Hector, the ever-subtle, then shook the bag at Valharic Aurelius Caligula, King of the Middle Kingdom, who was in attendance with members of his Legions. The crowd chuckled as they realized that the whispers were likely true, that Ealdormere would fight with the East this year, should peace between the Middle and East prove impossible.

And indeed, at the evening court, it was declared that there would be War, and that Ealdormere would fight for the East Kingdom. Generals were chosen to lead the army, one of whom came from Ardchreag’s own lands, Her Grace, Duchess Eanor of Amberhall, who was also named as the new Khan’s Champion.

And so the Line of the North was secured.



May AS XXXVII

Ardchreag had been invited to put on a demonstration of its chivalric fighters by the leaders of a young person's association within the borders of Greenhithe. Ardchreag, with Greenhithe's blessing and assistance, set out on a sunny Saturn Day morn. In attendance were Mahault van der Eych, Berend van der Eych, Teah van der Eych, Thorfinna gra'feldr, Colyne Stewart, Brandt das Lederwerker, Ivanna the Oblivious, Ivanna's son Joe, Eirik Andersen, Iolanda de Albornoz, William the Younger, Sancho the Adequate and Aldred and Wulfwyn from Greenhithe. Mahault, Berend, Thorfinna, Colyne and Brandt suited up and sparred for over an hour in the woods of Camp Samac (not Camp Sarnac, as Colyne was calling it) while they awaited the Beavers. The Beavers, who were partaking in a Medieval-themed weekend-long camping trip, were on a quest, walking through the woods in search of a treasure chest. Ahead of them suddenly they could hear the sounds of combat. A score of excited youngsters ran out of the wood to see Ardchreag's fighters in action. Brandt sat them down in a row and explained about the armour and how the SCA mode of combat worked. Eirik then began to herald the battles. The Beavers would call out who they wanted to battle ("Red and Black!" "Green and White!") and then cheer their chosen champions on to victory! The unarmoured SCAdians were also called on to battle with boffers. As a finale, Berend and Mahault faced off against Thorfinna and Colyne, with Brandt prepared to come in to replace the first fighter to fall. Happily, this scribe can report that Colyne and Thorfinna emerged victorious, though it was a hard earned win. Wassail to all Ardchreag's fighters!

The Beavers then invited everyone back to their cabin. As the fighters removed their armour, Eirik, Aldred and Wulfwyn taught the young folk the SCA Maltese Bransle. Eirik and Sancho then set up a boffer field for the children. Songs were sung, armour bits were tried on, the Holy Grail was uncovered, and there was much merriment.



On May 5th, Ardchreag was honoured to host a Baronial Fight Practice at Thompson Park in Scarborough. Fighters and fencers came from Petrea Thule, Eoforwic, Greenhithe territory, and Ardchreag. Many good gentles who did not fight sat and talked and sung songs and sewed and spun. It was a very good opportunity for people from across the Barony to meet in a laid-back friendly environment. All told there were approximately sixteen people in attendance.

While the fencers fought there was some one-on-one armoured combat, followed by shield wall drills. Thorfinna, a good gentle named Hans Thorvaldsson (who would one day become Mayor of Eoforwic), and Colyne formed a shield wall while Thegn Cynred, Tiberius Brittanicus (of Petrea Thule) and Druss of DunAengus (squire to Earl Sir David) poked, prodded and pulled at the wall. (Colyne commented that all the experienced fighters were with spears, and all the newbies with shields. The Baron laughed and said, "Welcome to Pennsic!") When it was over, the shieldwall was told that if all the shield

men in Ealdormere could fight as cohesively as those three the Kingdom would be in good shape. (The more experienced fighters then looked at each other and japed that all that would mean was that House Darkyard would be sicked on them.)

The practice lasted for two hours though it was another hour before all packed up their carts for the rides home.



Wulfgang and Jean-Margaret traveled south-east again to the lands of Rising Waters to attend the Lady Mary Memorial Tournament. Both were very busy working as entourage to Sarnac and Joliecia, but they did report that Sir Roak of Ealdormere finally won the tourney.



Once again Fenris, the great wolf, swallowed the sun over the lands of Ealdormere, and many made their way to the Barony of Ramshaven. There they battled for the pleasure of the Aesir, and Fenris let light back into the land. The Chreag was represented by, amongst others, Eanor and Siegfried.



To secure the Crown of Ealdormere, a tournament was held to decide successors to the Khan and Khatun. Eirik Andersen, old-time Chreagger Megan, Wulfgang Donnerfaust and Jean-Margaret were in attendance as Count Sir Roak won his second tournament of the month to win the title of Princess for his lady, Arlette de Saules. May they protect our Lands well!



At this time Ivanna the Oblivious became Minister of Children.



June AS XXXVII

Ardchreag's populace turned out in force in Petrea Thule for the annual Pikeman's Pleasure and set up two pavilions along the lovely river that ran through the event site. Still there was not enough room to house everyone. Those from the Chreag included: Thorfinna, Colyne, Berend, Mahault and Teah van der Eych, Gailana, Brandt and little Kyle, Iolanda, Olyfia, Ivanna, Wulfgang, Jean-Margaret, Tarian, Vlad, Siegfried, Kenric, Tatiiana, Eirik and possibly others. With them were four friends from down Greenhithe way: Sof'ia Bardeva, Wulfwyn, Aldred and Colin.

The wind that day gusted and swelled like a mad creature and the van der Eych pavilion could not take the buffeting. Eirik's and Thorfinna's survived the day though Thorfinna's kept blowing out of its supports. Whenever a particularly harsh gust of wind blew everyone grabbed a leg of one of the tents to ensure they didn't blow away. (It reminded many of what happened at War Practice the year previously.)

Thorfinna took part in the Warlord Battle and ended up on Earl Sir David's team by the end of it. Thorfinna learned how to use her shield to good effect against Vlad's spear as he battled her Warlord, under the gentle words of Earl Sir David. "Push his spear, Thorfinna! Get in there! Block!" Earl Sir David led his team down to the river to face Sir Evander MacLachlan's more experienced team. With Evander stood His Highness Roak, Duke Sir Finnvarr, His Excellency Sir Menken, Sir Mordain, Aaron Jarl, Baron Siegfried and others equally skilled. Now, Earl Sir David's team was a good one, but many were still newer fighters. Still, he led them into glorious battle and they won almost as many engagements as their enemy. Still, in the end, it was Sir Evander who emerged victorious. Wassail Evander!

While the bridge battles raged, Berend and Iolanda shot the bow, Ivanna worked on a new Septentrian tabard and much conversation was had.

Later that day a Seven Deadly Sins Tournament has held, where a knight took on the part of each deadly sin. As there were only six knights on hand, Siegfried also portrayed a sin—that of Envy. The Chreaggers laughed long and hard when they heard that. Eirik almost fell off his chair.

When the battles were all over, it was discovered that Cynred had not fallen in the water. For many years past he had always fallen in, giving the shallow river under the bridge the name of Cynred's Bath. To rectify matters, Cynred walked upstream and flung himself into the water as it cascaded down a short falls and into a pool before the bridge. Not to let his Baron take a plunge he wouldn't Streonwald Wulfesbana accompanied him. Both were still in full armour.

At Baronial Court Colyne was ensnared to ensure that the Baronial banner did not fly away and was given a Septentrian baldric to wear and a Septentrian patch as token. Lady Kersteken, former entourage of Countess Rustique and now entourage of Her Highness Princess Arlette, gave everyone standing in court chocolate. Lady Seong nicThomais, wearing her Champion's collar, and Eirik stood behind the Thrones with Petrea Thule's Seneschal Lady Keja Tselbnika and Lord Tiberius Brittanicus while all awaited the arrival of the herald, Streonwold. Apparently, the bath hadn't been good enough for him and he was in the shower. Colyne suggested they have him herald court in a towel. Gaerwen engaged the crowd in conversation and Cynred regaled all with "Born on the List Field" until finally a calm, cool and casual Streonwald strode up the hill. One young man had his Lady called up into court where he proposed to her! Many awards were handed out, though court had to get up and physically move inside as many of the Thuligans who were so awarded were inside working. Amongst the awards Melchior the Carver and Eileen LeMesurier were awarded Bear's Hearts and Vlad was given a Bear's

Claw. Tempus Peregrinator was also given a Bear's Claw and the Title of Officer of Misinformation for his efforts in confusing Ealdormere's southron neighbours with tales of Wallpaper Festivals, moose hatcheries and the like. When the call came for those who wanted to swear to the Isengesitha, Mahault van der Eych swore as a Scout.

Wulfgang and Jean-Margaret were invited to sit at head table during feast at Their Excellencies Septentria's side.

While everyone feasted there was much entertainment. Earl Sir David had six roses, which he would give to those who stood and pontificated on the loveliness of their Ladies. Colyne stood and won Thorfinna a rose. (David had previously given Gailana a rose.)

Keja then called on all to come up and sing bawdy songs. Thorfinna, having written one only a few weeks earlier, was able to fulfill her obligation of opening a Septentrian hall, and sing a bawdy song at one and the same time. Although many fine songs and tales were told, at the end of the night Thorfinna's was chosen as best and she received a CD entitled, "The Art of the Bawdy Song."

Thorfinna later went to head table and told them a tale of her love for Septentria, which made many weep. Their Highnesses gave her a ring as token of her tale, and Gaerwen gave unto her a Septentrian patch and belt favour.

After dinner Eirik gathered up as many Chreaggers as he could find for group photographs. Thorfinna, Mahault, Gaerwen and Colyne linked arms and sang, "We're off to see the Wizard," as they skipped from one location to another. As everyone crammed on the bridge they hoped it would take the weight of so much camaraderie.

People began to hitch up their wagons as rain began to fall. When asked on their way out the door if they had enjoyed ourselves the Chreaggers laughed. It was one of the best events they had yet been to. For that Ardchreag will always have a special place in its heart for its sister canton, Petrea Thule.



Only a small contingent of Chreaggers braved the foul weather to partake in Murder Melee in the Meadow. They included Eirik, Thorfinna, Brandt, Wulfgang, Jean-Margaret and Colyne. Brandt, Thorfinna and Colyne fought with Septentria during the ten-man-melee (unsurprising as they were all Isengesitha). The rain held off the Saturn Day until after the fighting was done; at which point the heavens wept and those of the Cliffs scurried for home.



At this time Iolanda de Albornoz became Minister of Arts and Sciences as Mahault van der Eych became Deputy Baronial Minister of Arts and Sciences.



July AS XXXVII

Ardchreag celebrated its 10th anniversary at its 10th annual War Practice event. Colyne produced ArdX, a 10th anniversary yearbook, to mark the occasion, which premiered at EWP. The event was a great success, with record-breaking attendance and many, many activities. Iolanda organized Arts and Sciences classes while Colyne and the Games Guild hosted a very well attended night of gaming and gambling. Duchess Eanor organized a military muster that caught the attention of the local media. The armed might of Ealdormere looked glorious in heraldic tabards with banners flying, spears glinting and shields warding off the intense and searing sun.

Ardchreag had four fighters authorize that weekend. Wat of Sarum went first, followed a day later by Mahault van der Eych, Berend van der Eych and Wulfgang Donnerfaust. William the Younger also authorized, as a Level One Scout. Fursto de Robnye was raised to the rank of Journeyman within the Chirurgeonate while Wat, Berend and Mahault all swore to the Isengesitha. (Wat swore out of court, so was not officially Isen until the end of Pennsic War.) Wulfgang swore kingdom fealty with the populace to the Khan, while Gunther Katzkin was taken as one of the Khan's personal guard.

Cookies truly rained from the sky at court as no less than seven Chreaggers won awards. Brandt das Lederwerker and Ivanna the Oblivious were awarded a Bear's Heart, Luke Wulfesson received a Bear's Claw (through House Hrogn), Lachlan MacLean received a Bear's Claw, Iolanda de Albornoz and Damara of Stormhaven received their Awards of Arms, and Master Rufus of Stamford was given a Maiden's Heart. To top things off, the Canton itself was awarded with a Bear's Heart. This marked the last time Lachlan would appear on the Cliffs. He soon thereafter moved his domicile to the canton of Vest Yorvik.

Prizes followed. Thorfinna won the Ladies Viking Toss, Berend won the Mead Brewing Contest and was made the holder of the Ealdormerean Book of Mead, Eirik Andersen was presented with a horn by Garraed Galbraith and Ivanna was given a token by Colyne for her impressive work in the bardic arts.

Kingdom Seneschal, Viscountess Rylyn Buchanon, was elevated to the Order of the Pelican during afternoon court after sitting vigil most of the day, while Garraed Galbraith was caught unawares at the Galbraith 10th anniversary party and was put on vigil for the Order of the Laurel.

Many canton members went badger hunting, armed with Melibus (cocoanut rum and vanilla Coke).

It was a most tiring, but most pleasing event.



A large group from the Cliffs traveled to Bastille du Lac to pass the day in the company of a band of pirates that had made a truce with the Khan. Among them was Iolanda, the van der Eychs, Wulfgang and Jean-Margaret, Gunther, Eanor and Heloise, Tarian and Eirik. Archery was shot, battles were fought, and bread ball battles erupted at feast as Eanor led the pirating lasses of Ardchreag from table to table stealing loaves. Many games of boules were played (known to some as bocce), with even the Khan stopping to toss the balls.



At this time Colyne stepped down as Canton Chronicler to become Baronial Chronicler. Mahault van der Eych took over the Canton newsletter while Tarian verch Gadarn became Deputy to them both.



August AS XXXVII

War drums once again sounded across the lands of Ealdormere and the Canton of Ardchreag was quick to send its representatives south to Pennsic War XXXI. They supplied five fighters towards the Septentrian fyrd, being Berend van der Eych, Colyne Stewart, Mahault van der Eych, Thorfinna gra'feldr and Wat of Sarum. Colyne, Thorfinna and Wat all received Bear's Claws for their martial contributions to the War. Wat fought in all war-point battles, the friendship battle and pick-up fighting. (This was his first War, and he was said to have fought with the strength of seven men.) Berend, Colyne, Thorfinna and Eirik Andersen all took turns guarding Ealdormere Royal, Berend standing two shifts.

Berend joined the Ealdormere Engineering Corps and assisted in the building of a sedan chair for the Kha'tun.

During Septentrian court Colyne was given the byname "the Wordsmith" by Streonwald Wulfesbanna of Caer Draeth for his Bardic endeavours and Wat officially swore to the Isengesitha.

Duchess Eanor was presented with a spear by the newly-knighted Sir Vitus Litold of the Midrealm for her efforts in generaling the Woods Battle.

Alaani was awarded a Bear's Heart for her efforts as an Ambassador to House Mjолnir (which officially adopted her at War).



At this time the position of Canton Chirurgeon became vacant.



September AS XXXVII

Not having yet had their fill of camping, many Chreaggers traveled north once again to Bonfield for the yearly battle. These included Berend and Mahault, Galiana, Brandt, Kenric and Eirik. The weather was atypical for Bonfield in that it was warm, even at night. Thegn Cynred led a team of Septentrian engineers that included Berend and Brandt in the roofing of the mead hall. At Septentrian court both van der Eychs were awarded Bear's Claws for their efforts at Pennsic. Eirik shot a Royal Round while Brandt authorized in polearm.



On a pleasant sunny day, many gentles traveled into Greenhithe territory to the Disputed Border where the Ealdormerean army had so recently met before marching south to War. There the members of Greenhithe were having a feast to celebrate the completion of the harvest and to celebrate life before the cold snows came.

Colyne and Thorfinna were the first to arrive and set up their shade where two months earlier they had camped and were soon joined by others from the Cliffs: Eirik Andersen, Berend, Mahault, Rhiannon and Teah van der Eych, Brandt das Lederwerker, Raffé Scholemaystre, Fursto de Robnye, Ivanna the Oblivious, Siegfried Brandbeorn, Qadanchin Bayar and newcomer Louis Reyes. (Reyes was to leave the Cliffs shortly after.) To the left was the fencing field, to the right Vest Yorvik. In front there was laid out the List field, and across from it was the Eoforwic contingent. Our glorious Baroness this day sat with Vest Yorvik and it was in their presence that a small Baronial Court was later held.

The fighters that day numbered six, being Brandt, Lady Isotta, Lady Dwynwen, Lord Aldred Ravenshagh, Lord Tormod of Kirk Andreas and Berend. They were split into two teams, and were moved on a playing board by Gaerwen and Viscountess Kaellyn MacDermott, OP. When two pieces met they had to battle, the loosing piece removing itself from the board. Many games of this were played until Gaerwen and Kaellyn considered themselves satisfied. At the end of the day Brandt was given a drinking horn as fighter of the day, and Tormod had authorized in great sword.

A call had gone forth that this day would see a fencing tournament to decide the Fencing Champion for Septentria. Four good gentles met on the field and fought long and hard. Lord Gareth of Eoforwic, that Royal City's Sheriff, did win the tourney, though the winner of Septentrian Championship Tournies are not always those selected to actually be the Champion. When court was called all four fencers were called forth and Gaerwen delayed the announcement of her choice while the fencers fidgeted and bobbed on their feet and pleaded with her to name her choice. Finally, Gaerwen announced that Gareth,

winner of the tourney, would indeed be the Champion. He was given a gorgeous cape of office to wear to proclaim his station.

Thrown weapons were also in evidence that day thanks to Lord Gunnarr Truthsinger of Skeldergate. When it was time to eat, and for court, it was very hard to pull the thrown weapon enthusiasts away, especially Gunnarr and Thorfinna.

Those who did not fight, fence or throw spent the afternoon in pleasant conversation, sharing drinks and wandering from one shade to another. A haggling contest, an Arts and Sciences table and merchants also helped pass the time.

Many personal baronial tokens were awarded during court. At courts end, Serion d'Ivri was sworn as the newest member of the Isengesitha.

Master Hector arrived at a fortuitous time, just as the call went out that it was time to eat! The main course was a pig roasted on a spit, which had been turned all day by various attendees and event staff. In honour of our friends in Ben Dunfirth the boar was called Brand, though no one now can seem to recall just who made that suggestion. With the pork there was stuffing, roast potatoes and corn on the cob. It was truly a grand feast with none going away hungry. Lemon water was served to drink and for dessert pears in a raisin-rhubarb sauce was served to many cries of joy.

When the foodstuffs had been cleared away Eirik lit a fire (this time not lighting himself in the process) and those good gentles who still remained sat down for a most intimate and enjoyable bardic circle. As Ursine Bard, Colyne opened the circle with his poem 'Septentria at War', for which Isotta Giangliuzzi presented him with a ring that had been given to her by THL Aeneas Oakhammer in recognition of her own bardic talents. Other performers included Master Hector, Thorfinna, Brian Goodheart, Isotta, William the Younger, Ivanna the Oblivious and Gunnarr Truthsinger. Even Raffe got up and told a tale. Brian engaged us in one bardic art that is not oft performed in the SCA: that of the riddle.

During the circle, all present were treated to a true display of nature's beauty as the northern lights blazed across the night sky. It was a remarkable event and all present could not help but think that the spirits were looking down on them in approval of all the words of praise that flowed from the bards that night. Words of praise for Septentria, and for those that call it home.



On the 18th a group from Ardchreag descended upon the Canton of Skeldergate, with spear thumping, banners blowing and horn sounding They had come to pay a geld. For you see, that past August at Pennsic War they had found themselves in a dilemma. No one from Ardchreag who was staying until the last Sunday of War had room in their wagon to transport the many lengths of aqueduct that had been purchased to bring fresh water to their part of the swamp. Reluctantly, they had to ask someone outside of their

group to shoulder this burden. Lord Streonwold Wulfesbana, and Lady Seonag nicThomais, did accept this task. They did dig up the aqueduct and pack it in their wagon. They did transport it, they said, through three Kingdoms, one of whom Ealdormere was at War with. Many times were they forced to pay taxes and duties along the road. Many times did they beat off bandits intent on stealing Ardchreag's portable water relocation equipment.

Finally, they arrived home in Ealdormere. For a month did they wait for a missive from a representative of Ardchreag to arrange to pick up the aqueduct. They waited in vain.

So, Seonag did send a demand for a geld, or ransom, to Ardchreag's seneschal, who did inform Colyne Stewart of the matter. Immediately Colyne did contact the good Lady to rectify this matter, and agreed to the geld. Ardchreag members came out in force to support this venture including: Mahault and Berend van der Eych, who supplied mead, apples, cookies, a silk purse full of chocolate coins, and home made soap; Thorfinna gra'feldr and Colyne, who supplied a framed version of poems written in Seonag and Streonwald's honour, beer and cider; Iolanda de Albornoz, who supplied mead; William the Younger, who supplied a medieval teddy bear and Ivanna the Oblivious, who supplied some truly tasty brownies. Colyne decorated a box to transport the geld, which was then carried in a wicker basket. Upon the box he had written the following in Anglo-Saxon Runes:

Negligent are we
Hose forgetting we
Grateful are we
Forgiving are you
Gift accepting are you
Friends are we

Thorfinna led the way into the Skeldergate meeting, blowing on a sounding horn, while Mahault carried the Ardchreag spear and Colyne the Ardchreag war banner. Behind them came Berend and Eirik Andersen labouring under the weight of our offerings.

Seonag was taken aback by the generosity of Ardchreag, and by the talent of its members, as many of the items were hand made. The cookies and brownies were passed about and enjoyed by all. It was remarked by more than one gentle that when Ardchreag does something it doesn't stop halfway.

Unfortunately, Seonag had forgotten the hose! She offered the Ardchreag contingent one of Wat's fighting gloves, which he had left at War, as a token of the hose's return the next time they came to Skeldergate. This was agreed to, as long as if the hose was forgotten again, Seonag and Streonwald would instead transport it back to Pennsic the next year.



On Saturday, September 21, the Canton of Vest Yorvik invited those from the Cliffs to come to their lands for a feast. Six Chreaggers set out from their keeps, being Iolanda de Albornoz, Wat of Sarum, Katerina du Nord, Eirik Andersen, Colyne Stewart and Thorfinna gra'feldr. These last three were traveling in the same wagon, which broke down halfway to their destination. Colyne and Thorfinna were forced to drag their wain back towards Greenhithe where their wagonwright dwelled, whilst Eirik was rescued from the countryside by Lord Rhys ap Bledri, who took him part way, where he was then handed over to Lord Magnus Kjrr. The feast was a great success, and it is hoped that the friendship between the two Cantons would only grow stronger.



On September 28 there was a hunt held in the Canton of Caer Draeth. The Khan and his Kashek (personal guard) were hunting deer, in anticipation of feeding venison to the masses at feast that night. Good gentles from across Ealdormere, and from points beyond, gathered in anticipation. Several from the Chreag were in attendance that day, including: Wat of Sarum, Wulfgang Donnerfaust, Jean-Margaret Donnerfaust, Berend and Mahault van der Eych, Eanor of Amberhall, Siegfried Brandbeorn, Rhys ap Bledri, Vlad Blahuciak, Kennric Manning, Tatiana, Iolanda de Albornoz, Eirik Andersen, Ivanna the Oblivious, Brandt das Lederwerker, Gailana Dunkel Pfare, Katerina du Nord, Alaani, Damara of Stormhaven, Fursto de Robnye, Raffe Scholemaystre, Luke Wolfsonne, Marian of Heatherdale, Piero di Paxiti da Vincenza, William the Younger, Thorfinna gra'feldr and Colyne Stewart

The Khaton arrived and bide all sit. She said that the Khan was still on the hunt with Their Highnesses but was expected soon. Before long Prince Roak and Princess Arlette arrived on horseback and seemed surprised that Sarnac Khan was not already in court. They said he had ridden ahead of them. Her Majesty Joliecia was not concerned, for as she said, the Khan had his Kashek and his Champion with him, so his safety was assured.

The Kingdom bard, THL Gwerydd verch Rhys, then sang a song of the hunt, and as she finished Duchess Eanor of Amberhall, Khan's Champion, rode into court and threw herself at the Khaton's feet. She groveled and debased herself, for, she said, something terrible had happened. The Kashek then came into view carrying a body on a shield. The body was clad in the Khan's armour and an arrow had pierced his helm.

THL Kayla the Cheerful, Queen's Champion, chastised Eanor for failing in her duties to protect her Sovereign, and took the sheath from her axe as a repentant Eanor bore her neck for execution. Then, suddenly, Sarnac's spirit, dressed all in white, appeared from nowhere and called for Kayla to hold her hand. He said that he had died through no fault of his Champion for the arrow had been born of the darkness and no mortal could have thwarted it. His ancestors had granted him permission to come back to complete unfinished business and the last court of Sarnac and Joliecia began.

Three gentles from Ardchreag were granted their Award of Arms that day, being Wulfgang and Jean-Margaret Donnerfaust and Crispinus Spellar. (Crispinus' award was

accepted by Colyne, as Crispinus had by that time been taken bodily into heaven and was no longer seen on the Cliffs.) THL Aenaes Oakhammer presented Their Majesties with handcrafted boxes to store the Crowns of State. Lady Alyce de Sheppey was inducted into the Order of the Wain, Tabitha the Cook was given a grant of Arms, Yoshikuri Nagayo Dono, Lady Cera of the Middle Kingdom and Count Kildare Silverwolf Thorkillson were given a Scarlet Banner, THL Randwulf Widefarer, Master Hector of the Black Height, Eanor of Amberhall and Lady Rachael Catherine McLellan were given a personal augmentation of arms, THL Kayla the Cheerful was given a Queen's favour, Master Konrad Mattias Jaegar was inducted into the Order of Thorbjorn's Hammer and Trumbrand the Wanderer was inducted into the Order of the Chivalry as a Master-of-Arms.

It was not the most orderly court, as many people were quite spooked by having a shade sitting on the throne. The mammoth wandering about behind the Royal walls was also disconcerting. Earl Syr David ran into court at one point to announce that Valharic Aurelius Caligula, Caesar of the Middle, had died. As such, all agreements between Sarnac and Valharic were broken. This pleased Lady Rachael Catherine McLellan greatly as it meant her daughter, who had been claimed by Valharic as his concubine, could return home to take up her chores again. There was apparently a large pile of laundry awaiting her.

The Khan and Khaton then released their Champions. Roak and Arlette were sworn in as Their Majesties of Ealdormere, hearing the oaths of the Barons, Baronesses and Peers of the Kingdom. Sarnac Khan was then taken away to be laid to rest.

Word has a way of traveling fast, and soon Sarnac's northern cousin, a Norseman who looked remarkable like him, had arrived to investigate his kinsman's death.

Though the populace was sad to lose their Khan and Khaton they were pleased with their Majesties Roak and Arlette and the rest of the day was spent in merriment. There were equestrian activities, archery, thrown weapons, fencing, fighting and much more. Both Wulfgang Donnerfaust and Wat of Sarum made it to the final five in the newbie tournament, though the final came down to a young lord named Tarkwyn and Eogan de Moray. In the two out of three final bout Tarkwyn emerged victorious. In the ribbon tournament Baron Siegfried Brandbeorn took the day with eighteen victories.

The rest of the day was spent in visiting and talking until it was time for feast. Alaani, Berend, Mahault, Thorfinna and Colyne sat together while Her Grace Eanor served. It was an excellent meal, prepared by Lady Seonag nicThomais and Lord Streonwald Wulfsbana and was so large that no one went away hungry. The food wouldn't stop coming!

Their Majesties and Their Excellencies of Septentria had an interesting court—for a while they took turns handing out awards. Very odd. Those handed out by Cynred Thegn and Baroness Gaerwen included: personal Baronial tokens for THL Aenaes Oakhammer and Hughie of Monadh, a Bear's Claw for Charles the Clerk and a Bear's Heart for

Maggie Brodie. Those handed out by Their Majesties Roak and Arlette included: Sarnac and Joliecia's County, Count Aaron Worgansson named King's Champion, Lord Richard Larmer named Queen's Champion, Lady Chiara de Montepulciano named kingdom bard, THL Anne Grey's induction into the White Wolf Fian, Mistress AElfwyn of Longwood's re-induction into the White Wolf Fian, Sage of Ben Dunfirth given her Award of Arms, Lord Ulvar van der Nederlanden's induction into the Order of Thorbjorn's Hammer and Countess Joleicia's induction into the Order of the Rose.

Two matters of international relations occurred during these courts. Master Kiernan and William the Black, both of the new Kingdom of Lochac, brought greetings from Their Majesties Alfar and Elspeth, as well as the gift of a kangaroo. These diplomats and their words of thanks for Ealdormere's gifts and thoughts during Lochan's first coronations were treated to much wassailing and cheering. Cynred and Gaerwen gave them both tokens, for themselves and for Their Majesties Lochac. Also, Katerina du Nord read a letter from Prince Raynar of the Principality of Cynagua (of the West Kingdom) pledging his eternal friendship with Ealdormere. This was also greeted with much cheering.



October AS XXXVII

On the seventh of October the candidates to be the Heirs of Septentria were announced. Among the many worthy couples were Ardchreag's Colyne Stewart and Thorfinna gra'feldr. Also running were The Patreka Aurelia Gabraina and Lord Graem de List de Cherbourg (of Greenhithe), Lady Domhnail Galbraith and Lord Corwyn Galbraith (of Skeldergate), Lady Gabriel de Champagne and Drottin Gunnar de Blacwode (of Vest Yorvic), Lady Melusine de la Rose and Sir Evander MacLachlan (of the Shire of Bastille du Lac), Lady Seonag nicThomais and Streonwold Wulfsbana, Hlaford (of Caer Draeth), and Lady Ysabeau Herbier de Vauvert and Lord Angus Albani (of Eoforwic).



The weekend of the 11th to 14th found many good gentles from many kingdoms traveling to Ramshaven for the second Known World Bardic Congress and Cooks symposium. Ardchreag had at least four representatives, being Lady Ivanna the Oblivous, Lady Emma Gunter, Lady Thorfinna gra'feldr and Laird Colyne Stewart. (Shortly after this Emma moved her domicile to the Royal Citie of Eoforwic.) It was, from all accounts, a grand event with much storytelling, singing, and cooking. The melodious sound of singing bards floated down the hallways with the sweet scent of roasting meat. At the court on Saturday, Ivanna was awarded with a Maiden's Heart.



Several Chreagers set out for Burford, in the Barony of Ben Dunfirth for Kingdom A&S on yet another drizzly day. The autumn was wet in Ealdormere that year, the leaves soaked in rain. Thorfinna and Colyne traveled in good company, in the cart of Berend

and Mahault van der Eych, with Teah and Rhiannon in the back. The drive to Burford was longer than had anticipated, but arrive they finally did. As they drove down the street they passed Qadanchin Bayar, who bears a striking resemblance to Iolanda de Alborno, resplendent in her Mongolian garb.

Cloaks had been brought, which served the cliff dwellers well, as a chill wind blew from the north. Upon entering the hall they were soon lost in a sea of arts and sciences displays. Flabbergasted they walked about and gazed at the many talents of Ealdormereans, many of whom hailed from Septentria. Among these were: Corwyn and Domhnail Galbraith, who displayed horn carving, wood carving, the kerric made for Garraed and various other items; Graem deListe de Cherbourg's Japanese calligraphy, British royal genealogy, and Italian cooking; Ceridwen of Vest Yorvik's illumination and portrature; Wencenedl of Vest Yorvik's wood carving, pewter casting. Ardchreag only had two displays, but they were good ones: Kennric Manning's metal bowl work and Qadanchin's knuckle bones. Qadanchin's judge, Lord Gerrard Carpentarius (known as the toy maker) was full of praise for her work, and someone left her a ring as token of her skill. There were likely others, and likely more shown by the people mentioned, but in such a plethora of skill it is hard now to keep them all straight. Other displays of note included Viscount Sir Edward the Red and Viscountess Rylyn Buchanon with their slat bed and sundry goods (such as a skillet) and Baron Sir Menken Brechen, who was trying his hand at pewter casting.

Count Sir Brannos O'Iongardail, from the Middle Kingdom, had come far to teach a class on fighting. Sir Berus Wolfsson, Their Majesties Roak and Arlette, Lord Wulfgang Donnerfaust, Lord Vlad Blahuciak, Baron Siegfried Brandbeorn, THL Aelwyn of Longwood, Master Konrad Matthias Jaeger, and Lady Isotta Gianfigliuzzi were among those taking the class.

The hardy dancers of the Kingdom, many from Eoforwic, braved the chill and danced in the only available open space—the gravel parking lot.

Truly Ealdormere is the home of many skilled and dedicated artisans.



On the 21st Ardchreag was host to a moot in which all the baronial candidates gathered for a question and answer period with the populace. Ardchreag proved its hospitality for all to see as free food and drink were given to the many people who attended. Two days later Skeldergate held a similar moot, and showed just as much hospitality. After this Colyne and Thorfinna were little seen for a month as they fulfilled a promise to travel to all the other cantons in Septentria.



It was at this time that St. Crispinus was canonized.



November AS XXXVII

On the first weekend of November a few from the cliffs traveled to the land of the Skrael for their annual feasting with rabbits. Among these were Eirik Andersen, Katerina du nord, Siegfried Brandbeorn, Isotta Gianglifiazzi, Ivanna the Oblivious, Rhys ap Bledri and Tarian verch Gadarn.



On the Sunday of that same weekend, Colyne and Thorfinna (who had not been seen in Ardchreag since the baronial moot of the prior month) went to Petrea Thule for a most enjoyable fight practice. With them went Mahault van der Eych and the little seen Stephen Scrymgeour, the saviour of Ardchreag's standard.



The Ides of November saw all the candidates gather in the keep of Lord Raffe Scholemaystre to hear who from amongst their number would be put forward to the populace as the next Baron and Baroness. The announcement of Corwyn and Domhnail Galbraith was met with much applause.



That Sunday Petrea Thule held a fight practice, on the first heavy snowfall of the year. Though this did impact attendance many braved the weather to be there including the Baron and Baroness, the Heirs Corwyn and Domhnail Galbraith and Brandt das Lederwerker.



Around this time the Games Guild of Ealdormere celebrated its first anniversary.



Some members of the populace traveled to the Baronial Birthday Bash in Rising Waters, and to the Day with the Troubadours in Ben Dunfirth, though many were readying for the December hibernation and festive season. It was later reported that Baron Siegfried Brandbeorn did win the tourney at the Bru-ha-ha.



December AS XXXVII

This month was a lazy month full of celerations. A few from the Cliffs traveled to Ramshaven for the yearly wassail, including Raffé Scholemaystre and Siegfried Brandbeorn. A canton wassail was held at the keep of Eanor of Amberhall.



At the time of the winter solstice Colyne and Thorfinna threw open the doors to Drew's End and invited all to a weekend of merriment. Folk came from Ardchreag and Eoforwic to partake of medieval dishes prepared by Colyne, to wassail trees with cups of special ale, to tell tales and spend the time in commaraderie.



January AS XXXVII *(the beginning of the year mundanely known as 2003)*

At the beginning of Janaury the House de Taahe did hold a 12th Night celebration to which it invited Colyne, Thorfinna, Berend, Mahault, Isotta and Wat of Sarum. There Wat was taken as a student by Duchess Eanor of Amberhall, while the rest became retainers to Duke Sir Finnvarr for War and Tourney for a year. Isotta Gianfgliazzi was made a likewise offer but deffered until she could talk to Sir Katsu who had once offered to squire her.



On the sixth of the month, Ardchreag did have its canton 12th Night. Gift stealing was fierce as two presents in particular were coveted by most in attendance. These were a wooden box brought by Wulfgang Donnerfaust and a spear kit from Raffé Scholemaystre.



It was around this time that Brother Thomas of the Order of St. Crispinus was first seen. The good monk, who bore a striking resemblance to Colyne Stewart, was tasked by that same Laird to write a history of Septentria for the baronial taxes due to the Crown of Ealdormere at the coming Winter War.



Though the snow in Greenhithe-Ardchreag territory was truly terrible on the dawn of January 12, still did many make their way to the Septentrian Twelfth Night celebrations hosted by the canton of Vest Yorvik. From Ardchreag there was Lady Mahault van der Eych, Lord Berend van der Eych, Teah van der Eych, Rhiannon van der Eych, Lina Carville, Baron Siegfried Brandbeorn, Lady Isotta Gianfgliazzi, Duchess Eanor of Amberhall, Heloise of Amberhall, Lady Sybil of Amberhall, Dom Nicolae Cioranu, Laird

Colyne Stewart, Lady Thorfinna gra'feldr, Wat of Sarum, Lord Rhys ap Bledri and Lady Ivanna the Oblivious. Raphael, who bore a resemblance to Lord Raffe Scholemaystre, stopped by to chat. Some thought the end times were upon us for Wat was wearing new garb, as was Colyne. Garb, in fact, that they had both sewn themselves.

A game of glic ensued where small trinkets were used to gamble with instead of coins.

During the day many sheep were seen wandering through the hall, and the citizens of Eoforwic did herd them and pen them and those same citizens did rejoice.

For a time a many wondered at Hector's clothing, which could, in truth have inspired the event's theme. It was remarked that Hector has a colony of blind lepers who sew his garb for him, thus saving him from the ill effects of looking directly at the fabrics. It was wondered if these lepers were blind and leprous before they began to sew, or if their infirmaries were due to it.

A few brave souls came in costume, the most noteworthy being the life-size Punch doll, complete with hump, large club and big nose. The chin of his mask was hinged in such a way that his jaw moved when he talked and this caused Thorfinna many heebie-jeebies.

Since the Twelfth Night was held during Bad in Plaid, there was, as in the previous year, a plaid fashion show. However, before the show could begin, Lady Liadin Teach C airdeas protested on behalf of the heralds. She said that all this plaid had pushed heraldry into a corner, and so she did bestow upon Lord Normand Hauberker a heraldic plaid cloak upon which was a Wolfium, the Bear of Septentria, and markers of all the other baronies. The fashion show then began and many did strut and spin and make their plaid fashions surge and sway in ways designed to cross the eye. At its end, Baroness Gaerwen, Her Majesty Arlette and Sheikh Valizan did hand out many awards.

After the fashion show the winners of the silent auction were announced.

There then followed a baronial and kingdom court. Lord Richard Larmer had come dressed in a white shirt, heavy boots and a very short blue kilt that left little to the imagination. When he prepared for court by putting on his Queen's Champion tabard Colyne remarked that he had some lovely plaid trim, as only an inch or so of the kilt showed beneath it. He then threatened to take off the kilt and stand court in only the tabard, but Siegfried managed to dissuade him from that course of action.

To begin court the cantons were called alphabetically to pay their taxes—being a war banner. Ardchreag, though they had a finished banner, had neglected to bring it. Colyne begged their Excellencies forgiveness, stating that not paying taxes on time was an honoured Ardchreag tradition, and promised to bring the banner to either Berus' or Snowed Inn. In the meantime Ardchreag filled their cup and horn with libations. Many other cantons had also forgotten their taxes, or, as in the case of Caer Draeth, were only partly done. The most impressive completed banner to be shown that day was the one crafted by the folk of the Royal Citie of Eoforwic. It was tall, almost touching the ceiling,

and was brought into court with much pomp, preceded by musicians and followed by all Eoforings in attendance that day.

Lord Rhys ap Bledri had been given a parcel of land when he stepped down as baronial champion, and was likewise ready to pay taxes. He gave their Excellencies some of the fruit of his lands, and in return they gave him a Saxon hat.

The van der Eychs were then called into court and they presented their Excellencies with bottles of mead, in Septentrian boxes, to be used for the war effort. What is more, these bottles, when returned, will be filled in perpetuity. These bottles were then given to the Heirs for their safekeeping. Some members of Skeldergate said the van der Eychs were very trusting to give the bottles over to their Heirs' retainers—that is to say, Skeldergatians.

Many awards and tokens were then presented, including: Lord Ulvar van der Nederlanden gave an arm ring to Catharine of Eoforwic, Lady Ysabeau de Vauvert gave an arm ring to Catharine of Eoforwic, Lord Tormod of Kirk Andreas gave Drogo of the Black Forge a ring for scoring seven points in his first war shoot, Tormod was given his copper arm ring as a former member of the Isengesitha, Lady Wencenedl of Rokesburg was given her Isen arm ring (which her brother Tormod had previously worn), Lord Percival de Laroque was given his Isen arm ring, the Isengesitha as a group gave an arm ring to Cynred, Lady Keja Tselebnika was given a personal baronial token, Lord Lachlan MacLean was given a Bear's Claw for scouting, Dagr of Vest Yorvik was given a Bear's Claw for scouting, Lady Christina MacNamara and Percival de Laroque were given Bear's Hearts, Tormod was given a Bear's Heart, Grainne de Bois and Foote the Potter were given Bear's Hearts, Rosalia dei Querini and Rosalinde FitzWilson were given Bear's Hearts for their planning of the Casa Loma project, and Lord Brian Goodheart was given his Isen arm ring.

THL Aenaes Oakhammer, former Skeldergate seneschal and current baronial thrown weapons marshal, was called into court. He came bearing a handcrafted box. He explained that he had held this box for some time, and upon receiving the Horn of Wessex the year before had found that they were both of a like size. He had then painted the box and was gifting it to the barony, so it could house the Horn ever after. For this Cynred and Gaerwen gave him a token. They then took the Horn and talked of its history and its symbolism as the highest award the barony could confer. When they were about to call this year's recipient Aenaes stopped them and asked for the privilege. To this they agreed. Facing the crowd Aenaes told of how this would be the last time the Horn would be presented, as it would be retired when Cynred and Gaerwen stepped down as Baron and Baroness. As it had first been granted to a couple, so he said, should it be last granted to a couple. Then he called out for Thorfinna and Colyne. Aenaes explained that the populace should never let the Horn remain empty, and he would be the first to fill it. Corwyn and Domhnail were then called, as they had been the first to hold the Horn, and all seven drank from it.

Cynred and Gaerwen, both wearing bear pajamas, then spoke of their Heirs. They said that the Heirs would be noble, dignified and courteous. They then called back into court Corwyn and Domhnail Galbraith. Corwyn was dressed as Gaerwen, and Domhnail was in the guise of a certain bearded thegn. Their Majesties scribe then read their endorsement of Corwyn and Domhnail as Heirs and bade them attend the Snowed Inn where they would be invested as Baron and Baroness of Septentria. They were then presented to us formally, and they were met by the thunderous applause of a populace on its feet. The Cloak and Horn of Septentria were given to Corwyn and Domhnail as a sign of their status as the official and declared Heirs.

The kingdom court then began. Catrina von Gutenberg, Dagr of Vest Yorvik and Edric Elginsen were awarded their AoAs; Lady Ceridwen of Vest Yorvik, Wencenedl of Rokesburg, Lady Elena of Vest Yorvik and Christina MacNamara were all given the Award of Orion for their Arts and Sciences skills; Lady Malachi the Babe was given the Award of the Maiden's Heart and Lord Bruce son of Crim was given an Award of the Scarlet Banner.

After court, as Colyne stood by Ardchreag's table, a certain woman who bore a striking resemblance to Master Konrad Matthias Jaeger, did walk by. Colyne told her that one of his companions (being a certain Baron who shall remain nameless) had been admiring her from afar. The lady then began to flirt with this lord, touching his shoulder and cooing at him. Colyne went on to explain that his friend had told him that he wished to steal a kiss but had not the words to ask. Eyes large, and darkening dangerously, the baron did ignore the lady's proffered hand. At this point a man did arrive who bore a striking resemblance to Mistress Alyce de Sheppey. And Colyne did tell this man how the baron refused to kiss her lady's hand. This man then accosted the baron, hitting him in the shoulder, and demanding to know why he was insulting his lady by not kissing her. With murder promised in his eyes, the baron then took the lady's hand and kissed her hairy knuckles.

The sheep, previously penned by Eoforwic, had by then escaped their prison and were again wandering the hall. Colyne scooped one up under his arm just in time to come face to face with Master Hector of the Black Height, in whose unit he had recently enlisted. Hector looked at the sheep, looked at Colyne and said he had had a job to give Colyne, but did not truck with people who did to sheep what he presumed Colyne was going to do to that sheep. Colyne managed to convince him that his motives towards the sheep were pure, at which point he agreed to speak to Colyne of the proposed job in the future. Ever mysterious is Hector.

The tables were then set for feast and all were served fine Scottish fare. The meal consisted of haggis, bread, heavy oatcakes with marmalade, pears in wine, bread pudding, mint peas, roast pork and a meat pie.

Hector sang a few songs for the hall, and Eanor sang many bawdy ditties for the Ardchreag table. A special dance was performed in honour of Twelfth Night and Her

Grace began a game of oatcake bocce ball. A chorus line of large male dancers sprang up in one corner and it was remarked that men in kilts should not dance so.

After the tables had been cleared four activities took place in the hall. To one side many folk began to dance, while the bards gathered in a corner to sing. Some gentles began to battle with padded swords and a grid was laid out on the floor for live tablero. Having not ever played Tablero before, and being asked for assistance by Countess Rustique de Sorde, who is the patron of the Games Guild of Ealdormere, Colyne played tablero. For sooth, he was one of the few people still in attendance who had dice. Wat and Colyne faced each other as the players, using dice Colyne had won earlier that day from Her Grace at glic. As playing pieces they had Paitlin, Rustique, Eogan, Lachlan, Mav, Elena and one other whose name escapes this scribe at this time. The pieces would change at times over the night, and would include Count Aaron, Normand, Sarah, Delphina and Eithne. Wat would eventually retire and Colyne battled with Thorwolf Smith. The pieces would often play the game with some fluidity of the rules, and young Rhiannon was quite irate that they were cheating. Colyne tried to explain to her that the cheating was all part of the fun, then chastised the pieces for teaching youngsters such bad habits. As the pieces moved about the board under their own will, Thorwolf and Colyne abandoned the dice and began calling out arbitrary moves until they had lined up all seven pieces and the final game was ended.

The rest of the day was spent in more pleasant conversation, during which time His Majesty and Colyne discussed the authenticity of tablero. Eventually all had to depart as the hall was closing. With glad spirits everyone loaded their wagons and began the journey home.



Baron Siegfried Brandbeorn did again organize a demo held at a gathering of barbarians interested in fairy tales.



The Ardchreag meeting on the thirteenth saw the arrival of Master Hector of the Black Height and his dojo. Hector had a group of newbie fighters (including a certain Corwyn Galbraith who, it was widely whispered, would be the next Baron of Septentria). The dojo brought an influx of new blood to the canton.



Also this month Sir Evander MacLachlin and the fighters of the Shire of Bastille du Lac began to come to Ardchreag's fight practices on a regular basis. Sir Berus and his squires were also seen a few times.



On the 25th of January Sir Berus Jarl (or should that be Countess Marion FitzWilliam) invited all across the kingdom to come to their inn for a day of feasting and fighting. The day was chill but this did not dissuade the north folk and many filled the hall from all corners of the land. From Ardchreag there was: Colyne Stewart, Thorfinna gra'feldr, Eanor of Amberhall, Heloise of Amberhall, Donovan, Eirik Anderson, Ivanna the Oblivious, Rhys ap Bledri, Siegfried Brandbeorn, Isotta Gianfagliazzi, Fursto de Robnye, Katerina du nord, Lina Carville, Wulfgang Donnerfaust, Jean-Margaret Donnerfaust, Iolanda de Albornoz.

So many things happened throughout the day that no one person could see it all. There was fighting, of course, with dozens of fighters battling at one end of the hall. Fencers also practiced their art, many in exquisite green tabards. There were many merchants, offering wares ranging from swords to trim, from laquered wooden boxes to shield blanks. The Daughters of the North sponsored a raffle with prizes donated by many good gentles across the kingdom. This raffle raised over \$800 for the kingdom. A class on beading and embroidery was held in the same space where earlier young ones had been swinging boffer blades. Leif and Ymir, both of Skeldergate, were squired to Sir Berus.

Perhaps the most exciting moment was when all present were bade to pay heed to the lists. Running over it was found that Count Aaron Preslee Worganson was on his knees in front of the king, Roak II. Master Worgan McGregor had asked for a boon, that Aaron be elevated into the Order of Chivalry. Aaron was then put on vigil, first a vigil of fire where he held the field against all comers, and then a vigil of contemplation where he would hear the wisdom of the populace. This announcement was met with uproarious cheering and the clashing of sword on shield. The Frog Prince was to become a knight!

Naga-san, champion of Ramshaven, and Colyne entered into a debate. They found they could not agree on the placement of Septentria and Ramshaven upon the great chain of being. Therefore Naga suggested he would convince Colyne of his point of view on the field, where he would face him or any other Septentrian at a future event. This was agreed to.

Throughout the day everyone had been enjoying the fare of the inn's kitchens. Many members of the populace of Skeldergate were slaving in its heat, including our Heirs, Corwyn and Domhnail Galbraith. It was good, hearty fare. While eating, Ardchreag shared a table with Master Hector of the Black Height and there was—of course—singing. Hector raised his voice and soon a full bardic circle had begun with many good gentles surrounding the table.

When court was called all took their seats and were treated to a grand display. King Roak and Queen Arlette marched into the hall, followed by Prince Edouard and Princess Genvieve. Next came Baroness Gaerwen and the Heirs, Corwyn and Domhnail. (Cynred, unfortunately, was ill that day.) Roak and Arlette then invited into Their court Their Highnesses of the East Kingdom, Prince Darius and Princess Roxane. (Baron Davin and

Baroness Martya of Ramshaven were gracious, and gave the use of their thrones to the visiting royalty.)

Septentrian court was short, with only two pieces of business. First, Ardchreag paid its taxes and displayed the banner that Colyne had forgotten to take to 12th Night. House Fenrir was then called into court and given a Bear's Heart for their service to all at events across the barony and kingdom. Indeed, they were currently busy running the inn's bar.

The king and queen then opened their court by announcing Lord Gunnar Truthsinger the new kingdom thrown weapons marshal and Lady Tesla de Chardonne as the new kingdom signet. THL Rachel Katharine McLellan, the former signet, then embarked upon the writing of a history of our fair kingdom.

Sir Evander MacLachlan, newly returned from the far east, swore fealty to the Crown. He then proclaimed that while overseas he had claimed land there in the name of Ealdormere. This land he had collected in boxes, which he gave to Their Majesties and Their Highnesses Ealdormere. Previously, Evander had claimed lands in the far north and in Africa.

The announcement of a teachers travel fund was announced. This fund would help teachers travel to and from Ealdormere. It was also announced that Sir Sarnac Bahadur would be heading up the training of the unbelted champions team for Pennsic.

Their Highnesses of the East then bestowed many treasures upon Their Majesties and Highnesses Ealdormere. Most notable was a lamp that Darius had won in a torch tourney. He asked that whenever this lamp stands between Ealdormereans and the darkness, that they think of the East fondly. This was met with thunderous applause and cries of "Vivat!" Darius and Roxane were then given gifts in return.

Otto the Black, son of Baron Brand and Baroness Brianna of Ben Dunfirth, was given the Award of the Wolf's Cub. Several good gentles then received their Awards of Arms, including: Snag Blacksword, Tatiiana, Rhys ap Hart Meredin of House Fenrir, Lassarfina of House Fenrir and Mung Lo. Most notably for Ardchreag, Wat of Sarum was also made a Lord and it was remarked in court numerous times how he had fought with the strength of seven men. The queen said it had been like seven huge strapping men.

The Order of the Chivalry was then called into court, and Roak asked if Worgan still wished his squire, Aaron, to be made a member of their order. Worgan acknowledged that such was his wish. Aaron was then called into court.

At his side strode his lady, Countess Rustique du Sorde, and was preceded by his man-at-arms Eogan de Moray bearing a banner. Other good gentles followed, but all eyes were upon Aaron as the populace leapt to their feet and the hall resounded with their applause and cries of "Wassail!"

The ceremony was moving for all as Aaron received the marks of his new rank. First he received a belt. This came from Duke Sir Richard of the East. Richard said that the first time he fought Aaron he knew he would one day be a knight, and had kept this belt against that day. Naga-san then gave Aaron a second belt, a woven belt once owned by Duke Sir Thorbjorn Osis Brandson. A third belt had been crafted by Master Trumbrand the Wanderer, being a wide belt with 'Elvis' written out on it in golden rivets.

The chain of Ealdormere's knights was then bestowed upon him by Master Trumbrand, who performed the duty for Sarnac, who could not be there. For his personal chain Aaron received a grand gift. For Prince Darius came before him, and told a tale of his chain. He had, he said, never removed his chain but once. He had given his chain unto his lady and told her not to return it until he had won one thousand fights in six days. It was this same chain he now gave to Aaron.

Sir Richard then gave Aaron a new helm, for he said though Aaron was a great fighter his helm was hideous. Richard had begun the helm, intending it to be a gift for Osis. It sat unfinished until Richard's squire, Lord Cet, completed it so that it may grace Aaron's head.

Aaron's scroll was made of tooled leather, and a version of it had been made into bracers so he could wear it wherever he goes.

In all Aaron received many great gifts, and this shows the esteem he is held in, not only by Ealdormereans, but by many beyond our borders as well. He was then given the horn of the chivalry of Ealdormere, anointed by the king's sword, and given the last blow he should take unanswered. Sir Aaron Preslee Worganson then turned to face a cheering crowd.



At this time Thorfinna gra'feldr became chronicler, Wulfgang Donnerfaust became castellan and Brandt das Lederwerker became knight marshal.



February AS XXXVII

On the 15th of February the canton again held its Snowed Inn. The hall's people had put up a stage and set up chairs for court and tables for the populace so little moving of furniture had to be done. A Septentrian wall, something the canton had been working on under the guidance of Lady Gailana Dunkel Pfare, was placed on either side of the stage, with one behind the troll tables. Lord Wat of Sarum and Katerina du nord ran the troll table, while an actual troll, bearing Lord Wulfgang Donnerfaust's 'troll komplaint department' sign sat beside them. Wulfgang himself sat across from them, selling bar tickets. William the Younger and Lord Rhisiart of House Fenrir wandered the halls crying out for events and activities.

People began to arrive and Their Majesties, Their Highnesses and their Excellencies Septentria were set up on the stage. All the other Barons and Baroness of the kingdom were in attendance, and most set up presences to either side of the stage. Many banners adorned the walls and fighters in glorious kits armed for the pas d'armes.

Lady Mahault van der Eych, Berend van der Eych, Tarian verch Gadarn and Gailana toiled in the kitchen while Lady Iolanda de Alborno set up tables draped in the new Ardchreag tablecloths to house the arts and sciences competitions. At another table were laid several Septentrian relics including: the first helm of Sir Hugo Graf, the first Ealdormerean born knight; the Cauldron of Ceredwyn, an ancestor of the Horn of Wessex, and a special award handed out by Aedan and Caffa, first Baron and second Baroness of Septentria; tunics incorporating pieces of Aedan's old tunics; ancient Septentrian tabards featuring a golden rather than silver bear; and many more besides.

When all was in readiness, the royalty processed into the hall and Baron Cynred and Baroness Gaerwen presided over their last court. The first order of business was the presentation of Greenhithe's taxes, being a war banner. Their Excellencies then called up all those who led and planned the Casa Loma demo and gave them tokens for their hard work and dedication. (There were unfortunately too many of them for this poor scribe to record all their names.) The Canton of Vest Yorvik, who had many members in attendance that day, presented the barony with \$400.

Personal baronial tokens were handed out to: Lady Christina MacNamara, Lord Percival de Laroque, Lady Seonag nic Thomais, Lord Streonwald Wulfesbana, Lady Gabriel de Champagne, Lord Normand Haubercker, Lord Magnus Kjrr, Master Hector of the Black Height and Baroness Adrielle Kerrec. Lady Fursto de Robnye was recognized for her hard work in the casting of these tokens from the mold created by Lord Ulrich von der See, of beloved memory.

Lord Druss of Dun Aengus, Lord Andree mac Byrne, Lord William Stalker, Lady Tarra Jade of Monadh and Lord Kenric Manning were awarded Bear's Claws and Lady Katerina of Monadh was awarded a Bear's Heart.

Their Excellencies then called to them all their champions, martial and otherwise, and released them from their service. As they handed their regalia to the seneschal, Lord Raffe Scholemaystre, they were given tokens from Their Excellencies' hands.

Finally, the Isengesitha were all called, past and present. Those who had served in the past were acknowledged and thanked. Those still in service were released from their vows by handing their arm rings to Their Excellencies, who put them into the trust of the King and Queen. Lord Tiberius Justus Britannicus, who was the sword reeve of the Isen, was so acknowledged and thanked.

Then, Cynred and Gaerwen knealt before Roak and Arlette and were released from their vows of fealty. After clasping Gwaylor, the Sword of Ealdormere, their coronets were

taken into trust by Their Majesties. The tension of the moment, for it was an emotional event, was broken when, from out of a storage room, loomed an eight-foot high white bear wearing a trillium and Septentrian cape. The Great Bear of Septentria itself had come to bless Cynred and Gaerwen for the work they had done. The bear, being old and venerable, had a slight limp and was helped to court by Baron Halfdan Blackanvil and Master Konrad Mattias Jaeger. Upon seeing the limp Hector remarked that “he has a bad Foote.”

Cynred and Gaerwen’s families then came to claim them. Hector, Gaerwen’s Pelican, said there was much laundry and washing of dishes awaiting her, though he admonished her not to fade his plaids. Master Sylard came for Cynred and placed in his hands a giant hammer and a lump of ore. He tasked Cynred to turn that ore into a blade, to which Cynred remarked that the work would not be completely true as he was not allowed to mine the ore himself! Roak, upon seeing Sylard, asked him just how he had been faring in his forge without his dwarf. Sir Edward the Red, speaking of behalf of Earl Syr David Martin Failsworth, claimed Cynred’s sword arm. Then, to much fanfare and applause, Cynred and Gaerwen departed, followed by the giant bear.

Roak and Arlette then called for the Heirs, and Corwyn and Domhnail were processed into court, led by House Galbraith and House Hrogn, both of whom were wearing Septentrian tabards. In a short, dignified ceremony, Corwyn and Domhnail swore their fealty upon Gwaylor and were given their coronets from the hands of Their Lupine Majesties. When they were presented to the populace there was much cheering, clapping and stomping of feet.

Girding themselves with new swords that had mysteriously appeared on their thrones, Corwyn and Domhnail opened a short court as Martya, Baroness of Ramshaven, wished to present them with gifts and words of encouragement.

Their Majesties then called forward Wulfwyn of Greenhithe, and presented her with an Award of Arms for all the hard work she had done for her canton.

With their new Excellencies of Septentria now invested the hall was cleared and the list poles erected so the pas d’armes could begin. One side, led by Lord Richard Larmer, fought to defend love, while the other, led by Lord Nigel McFarlane, fought for the death of love. Nigel, though on the side of death, still always fought for the love of his lady, Baroness Adrielle Kerric, announcing that they were soon to wed, and he was to come and live in Ealdormere. Duke Sir Finnvarr acted as King of Arms and Lina Carville acted as pas herald (it being her first heralding experience). The entire pas d’armes had been spearheaded by Volodymyr Blahuciak. Both sides fought long and hard with many victories for both sides. A large scale had been erected and with each win and loss the scales were adjusted as love would move towards death, and then away. Finally, the King of Arms declared the pas over, and that love and the death of love were tied. Tiberius was given the pas’ grand prize—a sword that he was to return with the following year for the next pas d’armes.

The lists were then opened to all and many challenged the pas fighters to combat. Most notably, Her Excellency Domhnail Galbraith battled with His Excellency of Skraeling Althing, Sir Menken Brechen.

Combat of a different sort went on throughout the hall as the Games Guild, under the guidance of Raffe, and with the assistance of Lance, spread their wares for the enjoyment of all. The populace was given coins with which to gamble and at the end of the day, the person with the largest purse would win a plate painted with the Guild's badge. The plate had been decorated by Lina, and was finally won by a good gentle from Eoforwic.

A lunch counter was provided by the Canton of Greenhithe, under the guidance of Lady Nadja Kesali (formerly known as Ivanna the Oblivious). The food proved to be so popular it quickly ran out of wares.

When the pas was over the populace met for a moot in a room at the end of a long and winding corridor in which many lost their way. Many turns needed to be negotiated, and many barbarians had to be passed before the moot room could be found. One such young barbarian commented that "Those are nice clothes you got there," to which Colyne Stewart replied, "You as well."

Just before feast Colyne called together the twelve good gentles who had volunteered to slave under him as servers for feast. These included: Lina, Mistress Marian of Heatherdale, Lord Piero di Paxiti da Vincenza, Lady Wencendl of Rokesburg, Lord Gunnar skald Thorvaldsson, Nadja, Lord Rhisiart of House Fenrir, Deirdre of House Fenrir, William the Younger, Lady Lassarfina, Thorfinna and myself. They quickly discussed how feast was to be served, then entered the hall and had the populace clear the tables so they could be reoriented for feast. Etienne's booming voice and bulging muscles were of great aid in this endeavour. A large space was left in the middle of the hall, for much entertainment was planned. Each table was draped with a green Ardchreag tablecloth. And the head table was set with plates displaying the Bear of Septentria, painted by Tarian, Mahault and Berend, which were gifts for those who used them. Likewise, the bowls from the first remove were decorated, this time with trilliums, for those at head table to keep.

The menu was as follows: First Remove—Chilled Juice, Bear Borsht, Light Rye Bread and Tarragon Butter, Crustade, Capons in Salome with Potatoes, Blueberry Ice; Second Remove—Chilled Juice, Mixed Greens with Raspberry Vinaigrette, Dark Rye and Honey Butter, Smoked Salmon with Vidalia Onion Sauce, Orange Balsam Beans, Blueberry Honey'd Ham with Carrots, Calissons d'Aixm, Chocolate Hot Pot. The over all theme of the feast was food fit for a bear.

As the servers placed each course on their respective table they were congratulated on the scope, artistic display and taste of the feast—a testimonial to the talents of the chefs.

As the first course was being served, Her Grace, Duchess Eanor, presented to Their Majesties living Septentrian relics, in the form of Duke Sir Finnvarr de Tahhe, Master Sylvard of Eagleshaven, Mistress Mordreth Llanelli Colwyn and many others.

Thorfinna and Colyne opened the hall bardicly for what they thought would be the last time, as new Ursine Bards were to be named by Corwyn and Domhnail. (Little did Thorfinna know that soon she would again be the Ursine Bard!) They read to the populace a poem for Cynred and Gaerwen that showed how they embodied the Heart and the Claw, two of the baronial awards. Drottin Gunnar de Blacwode performed a true Saxon piece in honour of Cynred, told from memory and containing many kennings. Gunnar showed that day that a true scope dwells within him. A band of dancers performed many dances for the hall while Dante accompanied them musically. They even managed to drag Cynred Broccan and a kilted Sir Evander MacLachlin onto the dance floor. Many maidens in attendance were quite charmed with the plaid hip movements of the good knight.

Iolanda de Albornoiz, with the assistance of Streonwald Wulfesbana, announced the winners of the Arts and Sciences competitions. Lady Eve of Eoforwic won the advanced category for her Persian coat; Mahault and Gailana won the intermediate for their Elizabethan underclothes; and Thorfinna won in the beginner category for her illumination and nallbinding.

Some of the relics of Septentria were then brought forth for judging by Baron Siegfried Brandbeorn. Master Hector displayed a tattered Septentrian tabard complete with tokens from various gentles dating back many years, Hamish Gunn showed the reliquary of House Galbraith, Eanor had what was arguably the first mailed teddy gear and a portrait of herself and her mother, Mistress Ragni Dzintari, by THL Robert of Two Cliffs, and THL Aeneas Oakhammer displayed Cynred's spear, a relic still fresh and new. Siegfried judged the contest by the cheers of the populace and in the end Hector's rather odiferous entry won the day, earning him two goblets.

To close feast a large bardic circle gathered in the center of the hall and many great songs were sung by all.

Unseen by most, three good gentles were slaving in the kitchen with the chefs. For the chefs needed the plates of each course returned and washed so they could be reused for coming course. To be so employed did Sheikh Valizan, Lady Roselinde FitzWilson and Ymir donate their time. Each server, and these three washers, were all given shot glasses graced with the arrows of Ardchreag, also painted by Lina. Lance, who had wandered the hall serving juice, was presented with a small cup featuring a bear's paw.

When feast was finally done the populace wandered and chatted while the royalty were again closeted in meetings, just one more in a long list of them that day. Lina's cleavage did entertain several former Excellencies of Septentria, and Cynred earned the byname 'Nimblefingers' for the treasure he pulled from them. Hector and Master Garraed Galbraith entertained the crowd, sometimes together, sometimes tagging each other in

and out in the middle of a song. Then the herald's cries were heard and all took to their feet and bowed.

Their Majesties opened their court by hearing the fealty of Baroness Martya, who had not yet sworn for religious reasons. A compromise oath had been reached and all were content. The Laurels likewise swore fealty, and then Their Majesties handed the arm rings of the Isen to Corwyn and Domhnail.

Their Excellencies then began court by asking Master Rufus of Stamford to reassume his role as the baronial harpist, a role which is a long standing tradition within Septentria. House Fenrir, squatters upon Septentrian soil, entered into a contract with Corwyn and Domhnail, and Cynred passed a blade to Corwyn which Ieuan, baron before him, had entrusted to him. As Cynred said, "From grandfather, to father, to son."

More gifts followed as Ardchreag donated seventeen bear tabards and five bear baldrics, and Baron Siegfried gave them a shield which had once graced the arm of Baron Aedan. Sir Berus Wolfsonn led the Hrogn fra Osis before the coronets and told them that the Hrogn had bled for the Tygre of the East, for the Dragon of the Middle and for the Trillium of Ealdormere but never for the Bear of Septentria. Now that would change. He handed them a sword and told Their Excellencies to command them for a year and a day.

The arm rings were then brought forth and those who wished to swear to the new Septentrian army, now called the Iron Companions, were called forward. The Iron Companions was to be an army that encompassed all martial activities and was to include fighters, scouts, archers, fencers, thrown weapons and equestrian. Thorfinna and Colyne both swore to the barony's service by pledging their throwing axes.

The matter of taxes was then discussed. Their Excellencies asked that each canton should submit a new wardoor, bearing the arms of said canton, upon the arm of a new fighter who would bear it at Pennsic.

Cynred Broccan was then called into court and given a Bear's Heart, for truly none has an ursine heart such as he.

Their Majesties resumed their court, and gave gifts unto Corwyn and Domhnail, including a new basket to house award tokens.

Heloise, the daughter of Duchess Eanor of Amberhall, was called into court and given and Award of the Wolf's Cub. Yvonne of Eoforwic and Erik the Mad Mongel were give their Awards of Arms and Fursto de Robnye and Percival de Laroque were honoured with Maidens' Hearts.

Baron Brand and Baroness Brianna of Ben Dunfirth, and Their Highnesses Edouard and Genvieve bestowed more gifts upon Corwyn and Domhnail, including tokens that had once belonged to Aedan.

To much applause, Cynred and Gaerwen were called back into court and given silver coronets bearing six pearls and made a baron and baroness of Their Majesties' court.

Finally, those who had helped construct the mead hall upon the lands of Duke Sir Finnvarr were placed upon the scroll of honour and the canton of Ardchreag was thanked for hosting the event and all the baronial and kingdom activities asked of them.

At the conclusion of court Thorfinna and Colyne loaded their wagon with any alcohol that had not been sold but could not be returned to the vinter's and headed home to open the doors of their keep to the post-rev. Gentles came from Ardchreag, Vest Yorvik, Flaming Sky and points beyond. The revelry went until the wee hours of the morning as they toasted Gaerwen, who was in attendance. Finally, at some point, sleep claimed them all.



The very next weekeend A team of five good gentles from the canton of Ardchreag, within the barony of Septentria, within our glorious kingdom of Ealdormere, did set out one chill February morn for the barony of Roaring Wastes in the Kingdom of the Middle. The team consisted of Lady Mahault van der Eych, Lady Gailana Dunkel Pfare, Lady Thorfinna gra'feldr, Lina Carville and Laird Colyne Stewart. Their journey was pleasant and the guards between the borders of the two lands did not detain them. In fact, upon learning of the cause of their journey the guard looked at them in surprise and began to laugh.

For they had come to sew; and this was to be no day in the parlour either. For they were to create a complete set of garb in seventeen hours, sleep being optional.

They arrived in Roaring Wastes five hours before the site was to open and so traveled to a local book depository where they all exclaimed in joy and awe and crawled upon their hands and knees through the stacks and took home many treasures. A brief sojourn to a local eatery where the fare and service was sublime followed. They then gave their wagon into the care of a hosteller and unloaded their gear.

They were still technically an hour early, but the event staff allowed them entry on the condition that they help them set up. This they gladly did, pulling out tables and chairs and making the acquaintance of a certain Jack Russell terrier named Indy.

After setting up their area and changing into new clothing they watched as other teams began to arrive. One of them had two Ealdormerean members, being THL Anne Von Tolstadt and THL Maeve MacKellar from Ben Dunfirth. Anne was the leader of this team.

When the time came to sew they fell to and worked until four in the morning. At eight in the morn they rose to continue their work.

Their team was entered in the novice late period category, there being three categories (early, middle and late periods) and two skill levels (novice and advance). The team leaders, Mahault and Gailana, had decided on an Elizabethan outfit worn by Pfalzgräfin Dorothea Sabina Von Neuberg when she was buried in 1598. To be truthful these two did the brunt of all the work with the other three mostly doing grunt work, some hand stitching, coffee grabbing and spirit raising. They sang many songs, including a special sewing filk Thorfinna and Colyne had written with this event in mind. The other attendees found the singing unusual, in the fact that they are not used to people spontaneously bursting into song. When the autocrats later handed out their autocrat awards, the Ardchreag team was awarded for their bargain basement shopping (their dress cost about \$65 US) and for their multi-part singing. The first time they finished a song they looked up to find a number of gentles that had wandered over to hear them better. Mav also cheered them with a “wassail!”

The Ardchreag tables were swarmed with Laurels who eagerly talked with Mahault and Gailana as they debated certain points of construction or documented sources. They said they were very impressed that the Chreaggers were willing to listen to them and seriously consider their advice. One of the Laurels in attendance was Mistress Joliecia of Litchfield, who had come to the event with Lady Jean-Margaret Donnerfaust.

Much food and drink was included with the entry fee and all were given round cakes with holes in their middles, bagels, coffee, tea, bits and bites and syrupy liquids to get them through Friday night. Saturday morning they were fed fruit salad, quiche, toast and bagels. In the evening cake, chips and punch was provided. Lunch and dinner foods were available for an extra fee. The cliff-dwellers ate like the hearty northerners that they were.

They ran into only a few problems. The under dress turned out to not fit together quite right and the under sleeves sagged. With some wrangling by Mahault and Gailana the under dress was banged into shape, and upon a Laurel’s suggestion bead work was added to the sleeves which kept the lining and the sleeve proper from sagging. A hat was made and Colyne spent a good chunk of time beading it (something he had never done before). Other than that things ran relatively smoothly.

They finished with a bit of time to spare, and fell into a pile on the floor. At six pm every group sent their model up onto the stage and the Laurels and other judges critiqued them. Since the Laurels were interested in all manner of construction of the garb the models had to strip down to their skivvies. Since the Ardchreag team was in the novice category they had been allowed to sew our underclothes off site, so had brought their bloomers, chemise and farthingale (hoop skirt) with them. Some teams not only sewed their dress, cotehardie or b্লাইট on site, they even made shoes, belts, mirrored hats, sword sheathes and all many of accessories.

When the fashion show was over the judges sequestered themselves for an hour as snow began to fall in abundance outside. The autocrats handed out their awards and announced the winners of a silent auction. Special acknowledgment was made of the ‘Hoodigans’ who had sewn one hundred hoods for the Midrealm army during the course of the event.

The Chreaggers helped take down tables and Mahault vacuumed a large stretch of the hall.

When the judges came down Mistress Rebekah MacTiernan came over to tell them personally how impressed she was with the Chreaggers' work.

It was then announced that the winner in the novice late period category was the Ardchreag team! Anne's team, who had entered the advanced late period category, won first place for that category! It was like the old days of Ealdormere, when it was not much more than Eoforwic, and its artisans would win many arts and science competitions in the Middle Kingdom.



At this time Lord Brandt das Lederwerker became canton knight marshal, Herr Wulfgang Donnerfaust became Castellan and Lady Thorfinna gra'feldr took over the chronicler's duties, publishing the 50th issue of the TankArd. Lina Carville became a deputy pursuivant.



March AS XXXVII

On the first of March several Chreaggers were on hand at Winter War in Trinovantia Nova to see Herr Wulfgang Donnerfaust swear fealty to Sarnac Bahadur as that worthy's first squire.



Petrea Thule did hold a Late Winter Shoot on the eighth day of March to which many from Ardchreag had planned to go. As it was, only Lord Eirik Andersen and Lord Raffe Scholemaystre managed to make their way there to draw a bow.



The twelfth saw Lord Brandt das Lederwerker, Lord Berend van der Eych and Eirik hitching a wagon for the Shire of Bastille de Lac where Brandt taught a class on leather working.



On the last Monday of the month a group from Ardchreag set out for a keep in Vest Yorvik. Those who made the journey included: Lady Rosalinde FitzWilson, Katarina du nord, Lord Eirik Andersen, Laird Colyne Stewart, Lady Thorfinna gra'feldr, Lady Nadja Kesali and Master Hector of the Black Height. Their Excellencies Septentria, Corwyn

and Domhnail, were also present. Hector was enticed to sing and tell tales, after which Drottin Gunnar de Blacwode gave a class on Norse shoe-making. A large contingent then went out to procure provisions. A good time was had by all, and the comaraderie strengthened the bonds of friendship between Ardchreag and Vest Yorvik.



At this time Lady Jean Margaret Donnerfaust was made canton deputy royalty liaison and William the Younger was named deputy minister of children. Jean-Margaret also became acting Minister of Arts and Sciences.



April AS XXXVII

This month was a quiet time on the cliffs, as people began to shake off the winter lethargy and prepare for spring (which was late in coming).



May AS XXXVIII

To celebrate the beginning of May, Mistress Marian of Heatherdale put on a live performance of her new music for both nobles and barbarians alike at a place called St. James Gate. It was well attended by folk from all over Septentria, and drew bards from Ramshaven and Skraeling Althing as well.



The next day saw the ascension of Edouard Beausoliel and Genevieve de Rosse to the lupine thrones of Ealdormere. The crowning ceremony took place in the Shire of Trinovantia Nova, and many from Ardchreag made the trek to the land of the Marines on the Water. They included: Eirik Andersen, Colyne Stewart, Thorfinna gra'feldr, Nadja Kesali, Berend van der Eych, Mahault van der Eych, Teah van der Eych, Rhiannon van der Eych, Brandt das Lederwerker, Gailana Dunkel Pfare, Kyle Galiannasson, Siegfried Brandbeorn, Isotta Gianglifiazzi, Vlad Blahuciak and his lady, Piero di Paxiti da Vincenza, Marian of Heatherdale, Wulfgang Donnerfaust, Jean-Margaret Donnerfaust, Wat of Sarum, Brother Thomas (an old timer from Eoforwic originally, not the Brother Thomas who wrote the Septentrian history), Hector of the Black Height, Rhys ap Beldri and quite possibly others.

Ardchreag grew that day by at least two members as Gunnar skald Thorvaldsson, known as Truthsinger, and Ceiridwen of Vest Yorvik became official Chreaggers.

Though just recovering from a very bad cold, Siegfried still took part in an armoured combat tourney, where in the final two out of three bout he faced Count Sir Aaron

Preslee Worgansson (in what some saw as a rematch from the Crown final of March AS 35). This time Siegfried was victorious.

During morning court, Isotta was called to kneel before the king and queen, who bestowed upon her an Award of the Scarlet Banner.

Colyne continued his recruitment of fighters to represent the Games Guild in the tournaments to take place at the Guilds Day Festival in November. By the end of the day he had a team of three, consisting of THL Richard Larmer, Count Sir Aaron Preslee Worgansson and Sir Evander MacLachlan.



During this month Kenric Manning and Tatiiana Ivanova Belosel'skaia moved from Ardchreag to the Barony of Skraeling Althing. Colyne Stewart and Thorfinna gra'feldr became thrown weapons marshals.



The twenty-fourth day of May began wet and cold. This was not a good thing. Though the wise women and soothsayers had indeed been calling for rain everyone had been hoping they would be wrong (as they not infrequently are). For the canton of Caer Draeth was holding a revel that day, and much of the planned activities were for outdoors. Rain would ruin their plans. The canton consulted with one last prognosticator who promised thunderstorms and it was decided to ignore him. The going was slow as the wagons laboured to move through the mud, and at times the mist and fog was so thick it was like moving through foam. Many from the cliffs set out that day including: Colyne Stewart, Thorfinna gra'feldr, Gailana Dunkel Pfere, Lance Gailanasson, Kyle Gailansson, Berend van der Ecyh, Mahault van der Ecyh, Teah van der Ecyh, Eirik Andersen, Lina Carville, Pierre, Gunnarr skald Thorvaldsen, Sarah, Ceiridwen of Vest Yorvik/Ardchreag, Siegfried Brandbeorn, Raffe Scholemaystre, Isotta Giangfiazzi, Fursto de Robnye, Wat of Sarum, Wulfgang Donnerfaust, Jean-Margaret Donnerfaust, Iolanda de Albornoz, and Marian of Heatherdale.

After signing in at the gate Colyne, Thorfinna and Eirik went upstairs and delivered an illuminated thank you note to Baron Halfdan Blackanvil, for shield blanks he had donated to fighters training at Ardchreag.

A gaggle of Septentrians then went downstairs and watched as Baron Corwyn, His Excellency Septentria, donned his armour. That day he was to attempt his sword and shield authorization.

How can anyone describe the sight of the baron in armour? He was a mountain of metal, a bear in scarlet, an oak-thewed giant who will strike fear into the hearts of Septentria's enemies.

Lady Catharine of Ben Dunfiorth did him the honours of being his opponent, and all watched as their swords flashed and their shields leaped to their defense. When Master Worgan MacGregor announced that Corwyn had passed the hall erupted in cheers and thunderous applause. That however was not the end of Septentria's gains that day, for Petra Hall of Eoforwic did likewise authorize in sword and shield! Wassail to Corwyn! Wassail to Petra! Wassail to the fighters of Septentria!

His authorization over, Baron Corwyn quickly changed and rushed upstairs to sit as a judge for the Iron Chef competition. A group of Septentrians, known as Baron Corwyn's Cadre, and led by Jarla Marion FitzWilliam and Colyne Stewart, raised \$170 to secure him a seat as a judge. Even though only \$80 was needed to pay for our seat, such is the generosity of Septentrians that the full \$170 was donated to the Teachers' Travel Fund. In a like vein, Noergate donated all the money they had raised, though their seat had been secured for less. The mystery ingredient for the challenge was turkey and the competition was fierce. When it was over Mistress Alyce was judged the winner, but only by a narrow margin of 4 points! (This chronicler has been told by reliable sources that all the dishes were excellent!)

The fighting continued and by the end of the day three fighters emerged victorious. Baron Siegfried Brandbeorn won the Atlantean Speed Tourney, while Master Worgan and Duke Sir Roak tied in the bear pit tourney.

By this time the sun had appeared and burned off the ever-present mist. The archers were first to embrace the sun, followed not long after by Drottin Gunnarr skald Thorvaldsson who set up a thrown weapons range. As his newest marshals, Thorfinna and Colyne assisted him and spent most of their day at the range. The first Thrown Weapons Royal Rounds were thrown (for one brief shining moment Colyne was the best Weapons Thrower in Ealdormere—by reason of being the first person to throw a Royal Round; the next thrower, who happened to be Thorfinna, dropped him to worst), Cera of the new canton of Swan's Deep began her MIT training and much fun was had by all. A certain Lord Tim and Count Aaron Preslee Worgansson astounded all present with their skill. Lance Gailanasson, of Ardchreag, was also very adept at knives. The range was so popular that Lord Ulvar van der Nederlanden scrounged up a third stump so more people could throw at once.

Iolanda de Alborno, Ceriedwen and Sarah spent a great part of their day on the archery range.

Eventually the equestrian activities began as well and every activity that had been planned was therefore held. Gailana could be seen speeding about on horseback. Ealdormerean spirits cannot be dampened, even by weather that does dampen our clothes.

At four o'clock Thorfinna and Colyne went inside, as Colyne was to teach a class on period dice games. It started small, with just one participant, but by the end there were at least eight gentles rolling the bones.

From there Thorfinna and Colyne went behind the celtic trillium bedecked curtains to join the other servers for feast. As they had the most head table serving experience (having done it once at Snowed Inn II), they were asked to serve Her Majesty, Their Excellencies and Baron Siegfried and Lady Isotta Gianfagliazzi, who were Her Majesty's guests. The chef, Lady Seonag nic Thomais, heaped much food on the servers for their assistance and Colyne reported from first hand experience that it truly was a feast fit for a Queen! Orange pork roast, mint peas, roast chicken, mushroom soup, pound cake with berries...the food just kept coming!

While they were serving Thorfinna was called on by Their Excellencies to sing a song. Since she had been planning to ask them if they wanted to hear one she was well prepared. She sang "Septentrian Battle March", her first totally original piece where she wrote not just the words but the tune as well. Lord Normand Hauberkker, sitting by her where she stood, began to pound his table and soon many around the hall were doing so. When she was done there was much clapping of hands, and she was given tokens by Baron Corwyn and Master Garraed Galbriath. Master Hector of the Black Height also sang many songs to the enjoyment of all.

A certain plaid wearing bard who wished to stay anonymous then asked Thorfinna to find out what drink Their Excellencies would most wish to partake in. When he got his answer he came to Colyne, pointed and said, "You'll do." Colyne was given a platter with two Septentrian shot glasses full of gin, which he then presented to Their Excellencies. When asked who had generously sent them drinks Colyne kept his silence and did not betray the completely anonymous plaid wearing bard.

Feast completed, all found their seats for court. Her Majesty had only a few items to announce, and then turned court over to Their Excellencies Septentria. It was announced that a tournament to select a new baronial archery champion had been held in the afternoon, but that the winner would not be announced until Pikeman's Pleasure. The Iron Companions were then called into court and Lord Hamish Gunn pledged his sword, Gunnarr pledged his axe, and Normand and Aodhan Longshafts pledged their bows. Domhnail then called Corwyn into court to much hooting and hollering. She praised him for his authorization that day and presented him with a beautiful favour. Hans Thorvaldsen of Eoforwic was then presented with a Bear's Claw for his martial efforts. Domhnail told him she had heard of the long ship being built in his garage and was planning to sail it to War this summer!

Court completed Master Worgan and Viscount Sir Edward the Red rounded up people to act as pieces for human chess. In the variant they were playing pieces must win at paper-rocks-scissors to capture. Thorfinna held the distinction of being the first piece captured. As for Colyne, well, a grinning Domhnail glided towards him where he stood before his king and brutally slew him to win the game.

Folk pulled up the tape used to mark the board and rolled it into balls. This led to about an hour's worth of impromptu baseball and dodge ball where Peer and untitled populace stood side-by-side laughing and bonding.

It was then that all learned of brigands who had entered the hall while everyone was so occupied and stole the bag of one of the guests. Those still on site searched the grounds to see if they could find any discarded items but to no avail (other than finding his empty wallet). The authorities were called and before the last people left the site they returned with the culprits in tow and much of the stolen property. Ulvar, the autocrat, kept everyone calm in such a stressful time as he made arrangements with the authorities and helped see to the comfort of the victim of this crime. Ulvar did not find his bed until well into Sunday morning as he coordinated between witnesses, the victim and the authorities. Wassail Ulvar for his kindness and sense of duty and responsibility!

Though this was a dark moment, it too had a positive side. People who had never met each other before were working together to search the site, going so far as to go to pubs and restaurants in town and walk the streets looking for the culprits (whose appearance was known to at least one witness). From the amount of help he received the victim knows how much he is respected and just how many friends he has.

Except for this one moment it was a grand day, and Caer Draeth proved that they are excellent and generous hosts.



June AS XXXVIII

A cloudy sky, a drizzle of rain. The morning of June 7 seemed to be continuing the weather patterns of May--cold, wet and damp. However, by the time over-laden wagons rumbled into the site for Pikeman's Pleasure XIII the sun seemed to be battling the clouds. Undaunted by the threat of potential rain, several people began putting up sunshades at the top of the hill overlooking the small lake.

Ardchreaggers in attendance included (but were not limited to): Laird Colyne Stewart, Lady Thorfinna gra'feldr, Lord Berend van der Eych, Lady Mahault van der Eych, Teach van der Eych, Rhiannon van der Eych, Lady Naja Kesali Orekhov, Sophia, Lord Volodymyr Blahuciak, Lord Rhys ap Bledri, Baron Siegfried Brandbeorn, Lord Eirik Andersen, Lord Wat of Sarum and Lady Isotta Gianglifiazzi.

After getting his own shade set up, Colyne lugged his armour bag up the hill and suited up for inspection. Today was to be a very busy and--at first--nerve wracking day for the Scottish laird. He was wearing about fifty percent new armour, and he was going to try and authorize in polearm and spear (two-handed thrust) that day. When he was filling out the paperwork the marshal in charge, Lord Tiberius Justus Brittanicus, upon hearing Colyne didn't have his single-hand thrust either suggested he try for it as well.

First Colyne took the field, polearm in hand, to spar with Master Trumbrand the Wanderer. His nervousness was telling as he was not aggressive at all and his defense was next to non-existent. So, sadly, he did not pass that authorization.

Someone then took away his polearm and handed him a spear. He was aggressive with it and managed to hit Trumbrand a couple of times to show his calibration. Happily, that authorization he passed.

THLady Kaylah the Cheerful, bearing her customary two swords, then put Colyne through the paces of a single-hand thrusting authorization. His thrusts had a tendency to drift to the left or the right and the marshals said that is sometimes the case for short-sighted fighters who don't wear contacts to fight (like Colyne). Luckily, the thrusts he did land were deemed good calibration and so he passed that authorization as well.

Several Ardchreaggers then took part in a Royal Tournament and in a three-man melee tournament. Duke Sir Roak won the Royal Tournament, while a team consisting of Siegfried, Wat and count Sir Aaron Preslee Worgansson won the three-man melee.

During the fighting Thorfinna was running a thrown weapons range beside the archery range. During the course of the day she had a score of throwers and had seven people throw Royal Rounds.

A six-foot spear at the barrier tournament was held and though several from the Cliffs took part it was Count Aaron who carried the day.

Roak and Siegfried were then made captains for a grand melee, and everyone was divided into two teams. Ardchreagers were on both sides, so either way you looked at it, the canton did well in the melees.

After the battles court was held. Septentrian court was brief, with only a few pieces of business. First, Augustyn of Thule was named the baronial archery champion. Raffe Scholemaystre handed over the office of baronial seneschal to Baroness Adrielle Kerrec. In recognition of his service, Raffe was given a gold sundial and a ring made from a bone of a bear. Lord Volodomyr Blahuciak, called Vlad, was awarded a Bear's Heart and Lady Anne Tinker was announced as Petrea Thule's new seneschal.

Their Majesties then began their court, and it was lengthy as a great many were honoured that day. First THLord Dafydd ap Sion was named the new Kingdom Archery Marshal. A number of Awards of Arms were then presented to: Tim of Petrea Thule, Eileen Lemesurier, Alana of Dublin, Mahild of Petrea Thule, Savinia Queville, Augustyn of Thule, and Rembo Touloussa. A nice touch from Their Majesties was to stand and officially announce the new Lord or Lady. Lord Melchior the Carver and THLord Dafydd ap Sion were awarded with Maiden's Hearts, while Lady Anne Tinker and Lady Keja Tselebnika were both inducted into the Order of the Wain.

Those staying to dine then went inside and set up for a feast being prepared by Lady Eileen. The first course consisted of food considered unlucky and was begun with tomatoes and mushrooms (both once thought to be poisonous). Their Majesties refused to eat any until Adrielle Kerrec had tasted them and survived. Much good food then followed, with lucky foods making up the second course. During feast a story telling contest was held; prizes were handed out for the Arts and Sciences competition held that day.

Since the event fell upon their anniversary, Colyne rose and asked the hall to toast Thorfinna for though the day's theme was unlucky thirteen, he counted himself a most lucky man. Thorfinna toasted him back, to be followed by Master Konrad Matthias Jaeger who told a tale of a Pikeman's past where he first kissed the woman who would one day become his wife.

The tables were then cleared as dancers took to the floor, accompanied by live music.



On June 12, Ardchreag hosted its first Ard Troid, and a Septentrian Baronial fight practice. Fighters from Ardchreag, Eoforwic and Skeldergate were in attendance, as well as several good gentles who came by to observe. Baron Siegfried Brandbeorn and Lord Volodymyr Blahuciak were the scheduled trainers and Sir Berus Jarl also gave of his military knowledge. The fighters were run through various drills and most everyone had an opportunity to do wardoor and spear work. Siegfried put forward the idea of working and training as three-man teams that could be put together with a command to create ten-man teams easily. These three-man units would be people who train together regularly, and will be able to fight well together as a result.

These Ard Troids only lasted a fore a few months.



A call of arms had gone out for Septentrian fighters to gather in the Barony of Ben Dunfirth upon the weekend of June 12 through 15 to partake in the annual ten-man melee tournament. So many answered the call that Their Excellencies Corwyn and Domhnail were able to field not one, but two Septentrian teams. The first team, called Septentria's Might, was led by Baron Corwyn and consisted manly of members of House Hrogn and House Galbraith. The second team was called Ursus R Us and was led by Baroness Domhnail. It featured members of the Iron Companions, the Eoforwic City Guard, a good gentle from Calontir and members of House De Taahe and House Hrogn. Laird Colyne Stewart fought for one of these teams, while Lord Wat of Sarum and Baron Siegfried Brandbeorn fought for the Skraeling Althing/Rivenstar team.



The Ardchreag Jacks Guild was formed to cut wood for the upcoming War Practice. It was headed by Stephen Scrymgeour (he who saved Ardchreag's standard). Other members of the Guild included: Colyne Stewart, Thorfinna gra'feldr, Eirik Andersen, Naja Kesali, Iolanda de Albornoz, and Aurelia Gabriela and Graem deList de Cherbourg (both of Greenhithe).



Once again the canton of Ardchreag played host to Ealdormere War Practice. Due to booking issues this year the event moved from its usual grounds to a farm owned by two members of the canton of Greenhithe. Though some in the kingdom showed trepidation at the new site, the attendance was the same as in years past. Indeed, members of the population asked that Ardchreag ensure that the farm was used again in years to come.

This year saw the introduction of the *EWP Skirmisher*, which was an event newspaper that was handed out free of charge to visitors. The Skirmisher team consisted of Laird Colyne Stewart, Lady Thorfinna gra'feldr, Lord Eirik Andersen and Lord Wat of Sarum.

As this was an Ardchreag event the number of Chreaggers in attendance was extremely high, including: Eirik, Thorfinna, Colyne, Mistress Marian of Heatherdale, Lord Piero di Paxiti da Vincenza, Lady Mahault van der Eych, Lord Berend van der Eych, Teah van der Eych, Lord Brandt das Lederwerker, Lady Gailana Dunkel Pfer, Kyle Gailanasson, Herr Wolfgang Donnerfaust, Lady Jean-Margaret Donnerfaust, Lord Volodomyr Blahuciak, Lady Iolanda de Albornoz, Tarian verch Gadarn, Katerina da nord, Lady Isotta Giangliffazzi, Baron Siegfried Brandbeorn, Lord Rhys ap Bledri, Lord Luke Wolfsonne, Lina Carville, Alaani, Lady Naja Kesali Orekhov, William the Younger, Drottin Gunnarr skald Thorvaldsson (called Truthsinger), Evelyn, Sarah, Ceiridwen, Stephen Scrymgeour, Jennifer of Ardchreag, Duchess Eanor of Amberhall, Donovan and Lord Hereward the Far-Dweller.

At Septentrian court, Colyne was recognized as Ardchreag's new seneschal; Septentria appointed a new Minister of Arts and Sciences, Lord Magnus Kjrr-Thiergresson and a new Archery Marshall, Lord Geoffrey Guiscard.

Booty was awarded to the winners of the thrown weapons competition for Baronial Champion. Congratulations to Christiaan van Pietr who placed first and to Gunnarr Truthsinger who was named Baronial Thrown Weapons Champion by Their Excellencies.

William the Younger presented Toby (Son of Thomas) with a golden chalice as winner of the children's quest.

Cynred and Gaerwen lamented the tired and old regalia of Septentria they'd left to their cousins upon their investiture, and presented Melchior the Carver, who brought forth the

new thrones he had crafted for Their Excellencies. (Needless to say, they swapped chairs immediately).

Baroness Gaerwen of Trafford (archery), Lady Robyn O'Connor (archery and thrown weapons), Lord Yvon de Bois (armoured combat) and Lord Agustyn of Thule (archery) swore to the Iron Companions.

In Kingdom court, Their Majesties presented five new nobles to Ealdormere: Lady Ayla d'Ivri, Lord Serion d'Ivri, Lady Corrina de Rensealer, Lord Hans Thorvaldson and Lady Alaani.

Both Lord Graem deList de Cherbourg and Gaerwen were given the Award of the Orion for their great skills in the Arts and Sciences.

Three new warriors were added to complete the ranks of the Custos Regus—Kol for Ramshaven, Iohannes for Skraeling Althing and Eoin O'Beirne of Rising Waters—and each was given a sash and a 'good Norman spear' as a symbol of their station, along with Mistress Etoian who was named Kingdom Archery Champion.

Geoffrey Guiscard was made a member of the Order of Thorbjorn's Hammer.

Her Majesty gave her Queen's Favour to Lord Berend, Lord Konrad Matthias Jaegger and Lord Trumbrand the Wanderer (who arrived in Court in a manner that delighted many of the Lady's in the gallery!)

Once again the Canton of Ardchreag hosted a mead competition, the Second Annual Lord Ulrich von der See Memorial Ealdormerean Mead Championship. The blind taste testing took place in the Ardchreag encampment on Saturday after court. A crowd of mead and cider enthusiasts clustered about a table presided over by Lady Mahault van der Eych. Bottles were poured, cups were raised and the competition was on.

The mead and cider was judged by all present, those worthy gentles included (but not limited to): Uncle Justinian, Lady Seonag nic Thomais, Lady Iolanda de Albornoz, William the Younder, Lady Naja Kesali Orekov, Lord Hereward the Far-Dweller, and Lord Berend van der Eych.

None of the tasters were told whose entrants work they were enjoying during the judging.

When all the mead and cider had been poured Lord Berend van der Ecyh was named winner for mead (for the second year) and Lord Garth III was named the winner for the cider category.

Lord Tiberius Justus Brittanicus was squired during EWP to Sir Evander MacLachlan in the Petrea Thule encampment. Tiberius' familiar yellow boots now have silver spurs, and a silver chain graces his neck. Master Allen, who was Evander's Master-of-Arms, was on hand to witness and take part in the squiring.

At the same time, THL Anne Tinker was taken as an apprentice by Dame Helen of Greyfells. As at her own apprenticing, Helen wrote a contract with Anne, which she then tore in two. One half is in her keeping, the other in Anne's.

As in years past, House Galbraith played host to a party on the Saturday evening of War Practice. The mead flowed like rain, and food was spread out upon the groaning tables. There was singing, talking, shouting and nipple twisting galore. (The nipple twisting was started by a certain Count, and a poor fellow from Sarum ended up being the brunt of much of it. By all accounts, by the end of the party half of Ealdormere had given him a purple nurple. He would cover his chest with his hands, but the second his guard faltered a hand would shoot out of the crowd and the victim was again nurpled.)

There was again a tossing game, where a forty-pound dummy was flung by members of the population as far as they can fling it. In past years the dummy had been dressed as a Viking, or a crusader, though this year's bore a remarkable likeness to His Excellency, Baron Corwyn of Septentria. Shiekh Malik abd al-Raman won the men's category for a second straight year with a throw off over 24 feet. Likewise, Lady Thorfinna gra'feldr won her second straight year in the women's category with a throw of over 10 feet. Kyle, son of Glynnis, won the under-18 category with a throw of around 14 feet. (Please note that all numbers are close to accurate but due to mead ingestion this historian's memory may be a tad fuzzy. The heffalumps and woozles running across the field were also distracting.) Each victor was awarded a prize. Thorfinna won a carved horn, Malik won a belt and Kyle won something this historian did not see.

The Galbraiths, in a change from tradition, did not hold a scavenger hunt that year. Instead they held a treasure hunt, hiding keys about the site. Only by unraveling riddles could the true keys be found.

Lord Michel Wolffauer of the Shire of Hartshorn-dale traveled to the Ealdormere War Practice. He did so to graciously host the Games Guild tents at the event. One of the many things he did was run a day of tourneys on Sunday. Points were awarded for wins and for games played. The top seven players, their prizes and the donors of the prizes were:

In first place, Stephen Scrymgeour, who won fabric donated by Freya.

Second, Jennifer of Ardchreag, who won a combination backgammon/checkerboard set donated by Lady Iolanda de Albornoz.

Third, Piero di Paxiti da Vincenza, who won a knucklebone set donated by Iolanda de Albornoz.

Fourth, Beth (mundanely of Mississauga), who won a woman's shirt donated by A Step Aside.

Fifth, Thorfinna gra'feldr, who won a nine-man-morris set donated by Fettered Cock Pewters.

Sixth, Serion d'Ivri, who won a glic set donated by Iolanda de Albornoz.

And seventh, Wulfgang Donnerfaust, who won a rune set donated by Ivy Keep.

All of these good gentles were Septentrians, and five of them call the Cliffs home.

A religious debate exploded on Sunday afternoon between early period and late period personas. During a terrible downpour that battered tents and made the sky turn yellow, Lord Thorulfr smithr and Lady Rosalia dei Querini (both of Eoforwic) quarreled over the source of the storm. Thorulfr was convinced that Thor was showing his power by trying to flood the event site, while Rosalia asked God to forgive her pagan companion's heathen beliefs. Some folk muttered that Sir Sarnac Ba'adur had said "AElthelmarc" again. This could not be confirmed, but his squire, Herr Wulfgang Donnerfaust, had been heard mentioning that kingdom's name. Some things are genetic, and it would appear that the father has passed this peculiar gift down to his son.

Whatever the cause, there was rain. A lot of rain. To be blunt, everyone got soaked. However, the storm was short lived and the sandy soil quickly slurped up all the rain and puddles were scarce. A rainbow burned through the clouds, one end of it rising from the tent of thegn Cynred Broccan. When a group of Chreaggers ran over and demanded his gold he told them he was a gnome, not a leprechaun.

Their Excellencies Septentria returned from off site looking very dry. Lord Brandt das Lederwerker therefore gave Her Excellency Domhnail a bear hug to share the gift of being damp. When Colyne spread his arms and approached Baron Corwyn the baron stuck out his arm to hold Colyne back, but did not see Brandt who caught him from behind.

People asked if the bardic circle would still occur, and seemed eager for it to do so. Therefore work crews were set out to gather all available shades and bring them to the Galbraith encampment, which had been vacated earlier that morning. The shades were set in a semi-circle and three fires were lit. (Luckily the wood had been stored in a trailer and was dry.) As the sun sank the bards began to sing and the circle lasted well into the morning.

At least three tokens were given during the circle. The first was given to THL Eleanor Fairchild of Ansteorra (that's Texas, y'all) by Dame Tsivia bas Tamara v'Amberview. The second was given by Eleanor to THL Gwerydd verch Rhys, which consisted of three flavours of American Mountain Dew (can you say caffeine?). The third was a ring passed to Lady Thorfinna gra'feldr by Lady Emer Nic Aidan (which had originally been given to her by Lord Ivhon Thorne).

There were songs, stories and poems performed by various bards from about the known world. (Ardchreag had visitors from Aethelmarc, the East, Calontir, Ansteorra and Northshield attending EWP.) One of the most memorable moments of the night was Master Garraed Galbraith singing his song "Sons of the Dragon" which praised Calontir, Ealdormere and Northshield, all children of the Middle Kingdom. (The Principality of Northshield had recently voted to move to kingdom status and was moving through the process.) Lord Rhodri from Calontir was called on to perform many times, and Master Owen Alun pleased the crowd with renditions of "Doom and Gloom" and his Beowulf song ("He was hairy, he was scary, he was very, very tall...").

Being that the event was a practice for war, there were many fighting activates during the weekend. Fencers fenced, archers arched and throwers threw.

Upon the armoured combat lists there was an unbelted practice and a barony versus non-barony melee.

There was also a Royal Tournament and a Newbies Tournament. The winner of the Royal Tournament was Sir Aaron Preslee Worgansson, while Donovan of House De Taahe was undefeated in the newbie's tourney. Thorfinn of House Blacksword came in second place in the newbie's tournament..

Once again a military muster/review was held where the military might of the kingdom drew itself up into ranks to display themselves to Their Majesties. The Barony of Ramshaven, the Barony of Skraeling Althing, the Custos Regius and House De Taahe all had representatives upon the field, but most impressive of all was the Barony of Septentria. Due in large part to the inclusion of House Hrogn, House Galbraith and the Iron Companions, Septentria was a sea of scarlet upon the fighting field numbering into the dozens. Almost every free hand either carried an emblazoned shield or a banner and Septentria's argent bear was displayed proudly by her fighters. Their Majesties Edouard and Genevieve, and Her Highness Susannah, addressed the troops and were answered by cries of Wassail. The king then called for a Wassail to Ealdormere and the trees shook with shooting.

The muster was planned and executed by Her Grace, Duchess Eanor of Amberhall.



July AS XXXVIII

The Royal Citie of Eoforwic held an out door lunch at the end of the month that a few from the Cliffs attended.



Aug AS XXXVIII

The drums of war were pounding in Aethelmarc, and our King pointed southwards with Gwaylor and Ardchreag knew it must prepare itself to march. The weather reports that had come north for Aethelmarc had been bad, and when Ardchreag's contingent arrived at Pennsic they learned just how true they were. It had been raining for six days; the ground was a morass, mud literally ankle deep in places. Many people had abandoned their shoes as the mud and water just slopped over the tops of them. They closed the parking areas down as being unsafe, and people were forced to leave their wagons on-site, which cluttered the roads.

The rain was interminable but constant. The ground never had a chance to completely dry. The air was so damp at night it was like sleeping in a cold sauna. The creek behind the Ardchreag encampment was in danger of flooding. Indeed, the land agent had been warned that floodgates higher up the creek might have to be opened, and this would for certain flood the site.

When the rain fell it could be torrential. One such downpour was so heavy that it ripped apart a tarp set up over the common sitting area. This same downpour partially collapsed the tent of the Van der Eychs, soaking their clothes.

On the second Saturday night Lord Berend van der Eych and Lady Mahault van der Eych held a hand fasting. A large crowd of Ealdormereans went down to the water's edge at dusk, each holding a candle. Berend, Lord Brandt das Lederwerker and Laird Colyne Stewart stood in the centre of them. Then Mahault was led into the circle by her daughters Teah and Rhiannon, along with Lady Thorfinna gra'feldr and Lady Gailana Dunkel Pfer. They all read their parts, wrapping Berend and Mahault's hands in ribbons. Vows, gifts and kisses were exchanged, followed by a party in the Ardchreag encampment that lasted for many hours.

Sunday night saw a similar large party in Ardchreag (now more than ever earning its nickname of Bogchreag), though for a different reason. That night Brandt became a squire to Sir Evander MacLachlin.

The annual armoured foot race was held once again, and Ymir, the thinnest Viking, tied with Sir Ed the Red for first place. They were followed by Lord Rhys ap Bledri and Lord Wat of Sarum. THL Richard Larmer and Berend and Mahault came in last, due to Richard's bad knee. They walked up the hill slowly, Richard waving as if he was in a parade. There was a long line of wagons waiting behind him.

On Wednesday August 13, Baron Siegfried Brandbeorn was put on vigil for the Order of the Chivalry. He was elevated the next day at kingdom court. At the same court the Canton was put on the scroll of honour for its assistance in the creation of the Rede of Gersholm and Lord Eirik Andersen was also put on the Scroll of Honour for his efforts to chronicle Ealdormere's history through pictures.

Ardchreag's fighters participated in many battles and shot many arrows. Wat of Sarum honoured the canton by fighting as a member of the Unbleted Champions team. In the end the East Kingdom, Ealdormere's allies, emerged victorious.



That same month Lady Thorfinna gra'feldr was named as the baronial thrown weapons marshal.



An event had been declared in the town of Bonfield, within the Canton of Flaming Sky, to be held on the last long weekend of the summer.

Saturday was cool and overcast with a slight breeze—perfect fighting weather. (Though it threatened rain for a time none materialized.) Lord Wat of Sarum had pitched a shade on the lip of the bowl between Lord Rhys ap Bledri and House Fenrir and it became a hotbed of socializing, plotting and stinky armour bits. It was cluttered with chairs, shields, armour bags, various children, tokens, tabards, weapons and empty bottles of a local beverage called cola.

The fighters trudged into the woods until they met a large clearing, and there they were split into teams. There were seven knights in attendance, so each was made the head of a team, and each was allowed to pick three teammates from the other fighters so assembled. Thorfinna gra'feldr, Colyne Stewart and Berend van der Eych were on a team headed by Sir Finnvarr. Siegfried Brandbeorn, as a knight, captained a team, and Isotta Giangfiazzi, Rhys ap Bledri, Mahault van der Eych and other Ardchreag fighters were scattered throughout the woods. Each team took a water bottle and hiked deeper into the woods, placing their water bottle to mark their safe zone/resurrection zone.

The purpose of the tournament was to catch and ransom other fighters. To do so you had to strike them two good blows. The first blow would unhorse them (so they could not run away) while the second unarmed them. You then took them back to your rez point where they would be ransomed. After being ransomed they had to go back to their rez point before they could fight again. It was possible to be rescued by teammates or to be stolen by other teams.

This scenario ran for around an hour and a half. Some of the most memorable moments this chronicler observed included:

Duke Finnvarr's team at full strength coming across Lord Raudr Ottarsson of Calontir alone. Ruadr retreated to his nearby rez zone so they could not touch him. However, he offered them single combat. They agreed to this and Berend faced Ruadr, finally emerging victorious over the valiant Calontiri.

Finnvarr's entire team being captured at once! All four were caught and ransomed. This happened on the field north of the woods, and they saw six teams lining up to face each other after being ransomed. They quickly ran to their rez point and then returned to try to grab any stragglers. The seven-pronged battle was fierce, and many feats of arms were performed. Captives were quickly taken and then let free as lone fighters (with their captive in tow) would find three other fighters bearing down on them.

Watching as the Prince attempted to capture His Majesty in an effort to ransom him for the kingdom!

There then followed a half-hour cool down period, followed by battles at the fort. It was decided that His Majesty would defend the fort while His Highness would attack it. The King then chose his forces and barricaded the fort. (Ardchreag had fighters on both sides.) The fort was placed on top of a short hill, with an entry way dug through the centre of it. A beam was placed across the entryway to act as a door. Fighting could occur over the door, but not under it. For anyone to move through the entryway, the beam had to be removed. Fighters could freely climb over the walls however. Each side had one combat archer: Sir Roak of Ealdormere for the defenders, and Baron Padraig McNeill for the attackers. However, unknown to the defenders, Roak was an enemy agent. When the call to lay-on was called, the Prince's forces rushed the walls and Roak nonchalantly leaned over and opened the gate. He then turned and began to fire on his 'allies'. The attackers ended up winning the encounter.

In the second battle the sides stayed the same, but two jugs of water were placed outside the gates. The attackers had two resurrections, while the defenders had only one. However, if they could capture one of the water jugs they would have two. The attackers again won the day, primarily through the work of the polearms and spears.

His Majesty then asked to have the battle run one more time, for he had concocted a new strategy to neutralize the spears and poles. This battle was much longer than the first two and in the end the King's forces were victorious.

The next day was bright and sunny, warm but not hot, with a cooling breeze blowing through the site. The first tourney of the day was to face Lord Justinian Clarus at the barrier in honour of his fiftieth year upon this earth. Well and valiantly did this worthy battle against all comers until his goal was met (including battling with boffer swords against His Excellency, Sir Menken). Several Chreaggers took part in Justinian's quest.

Following this there were challenges at the barrier. Sir Finnvarr and His Highness each captained a side and asked for teammates to battle with them using six-foot spears. Colyne ended up fighting three such scenarios and though he was quickly dispatched in the first round, by the third he was somewhat improved and actually managed to land the occasional blow.

A Royal Tournament was then held; in the end, Sir Aaron Worgensson carried the day.

Next was a grand melee, where the fighters were split into two teams. The one team was anchored by those who had been fighting for over ten years, and also contained those who had been fighting under two. This was an unlimited resurrection battle.

After the melee came Mordain's Rings, which are run thusly: the marshals stood in a circle upon the field while around the circle are three rings; all fighters stood in the first ring. If you lost a fight you had to move into the next ring until you were out all together. You can also be pushed out of a ring. Treachery was the name of the game in the ring as alliances sprang up and were broken continuously. Siegfried won the first round of the rings, while Colyne was deemed to be very sneaky for his dispatches of 'allies'.

THL Richard Larmer, leader of the Company of the White Heart, then handed out some awards. Wat most cited as the most chivalrous fighter of the day, while Hoskuld was the best overall fighter of the day. Lord Kenric Manning was given an award for having the best presentation upon the field.

Ardchreag's fighters then collapsed under Wat's shade and His Highness came to sit with them, bearing a plate of fruit, cheese and crackers and Colyne quipped that they should rebel and seize his food. He then passed his plate about and ended up being given some of their food in return. They all then realized just how smart their Prince was, as he had placated the people by giving them a little when he could have lost all, and in the process received some of Ardchreag's own food in return! He will be a wise king, should he rise to the throne.

That evening Berend and Mahault prepared food in the manor for House De Taahe, consisting of sauerkraut, potatoes and seventy-five bratwurst sausages. As many of the household had left for home by then there was more than enough food, even with the legendary appetites of Finnvarr and Wat to contend with. Colyne made the observation that all nine of the people sleeping in his room had eaten voluminous amounts of sauerkraut and bratwurst. At least they would be ensured of a warm room that night!

At the Ard Yorvik encampment, where several members of Vest Yorvik and Ardchreag were camping (including Eirik Andersen, Ceiridwen, Sarah, Evelyn and Dagr) several ends of boules (bocce) were played. Plans to hold some inter-canton competitions were discussed. A very silly bardic circle later got under way and lasted for many hours.



September XXXVIII

To Rising Waters marched a small group of Chreaggers, to attend the changing of the guard, as it was widely whispered that the King and Queen were to relinquish their thrones. And indeed, Edouard and Genevieve held their last court, and Genevieve was raised to the station of countess. His Grace and Her Excellency were given a standing ovation by those so assembled for the day.

The Order of Chivalry were tasked to protect the thrones of Ealdormere, until an heir should present himself. Lo, such an heir appeared. Sir Rory Cennedi stepped forward with three attendants. The first carried his sword, the second his shield, the third his helm. He presented himself to the knights and masters-of-arms who protected his thrones. He showed his sword, and Duke Sir Hasdrubal did recognize it as the sword with which Cennedi had won a crown tournament to become the kingdom's heir. And he did show his shield to the Lord Trillium Herald, who did recognize the arms upon it as those of Sir Rory Cennedi. And he presented his helm to Sir Mordain Blackcloak who recognized upon it the insignia of Duke Sir Finnvarr, himself, and his former squire Rory Cennedi.

And so Sir Rory Cennedi was crowned as king, and he crowned his mother Susanna the Unyielding as his queen. Many in the hall were impressed by their manner and demeanour.

Sugared candy flowed from the hands of Susanna's attendants as they processed from the hall to the raised voices of those assembled singing 'Scarlet Blazing Banner'. And lo, one candy did fly through the air and landed right in the hand of Colyne Stewart.

Many fighters gathered upon the list field to partake in feats of arms. Colyne found himself facing a visiting lord from Calontir upon the field and they fought long under the sun. When this day was done these two lords had pledged friendship to each other with promises of shelter should the need ever arise.

The Order of Chivalry then held the field against all comers. Long and hard did they battle as hardy knights and masters-of-arms faced a long line of eager warriors.

The first court of Ealdormere's new monarchs was held, and those watching agreed that well would they reign.



Later that month, the Royal Citie of Eoforwic revived a long lost tradition as they held the Feast of the Bear. Not only that, they had liberated Graf Hugo's Keep, which had long been in the hands of barbarians, in which to hold the event.

A great black wrought-iron gate stood in a wall of stone. Standing smiling behind the gate was the newly elected mayor of Eoforwic, His Worship Lord Hans Thorvaldsson. With a wink the portal was opened wide and visitors entered a treed courtyard. Standing on the paving stones the entrance to the tavern beckons from ahead, whilst to the right stone lions perch above grand wooden doors leading into the main hall.

Stepping into the hall one was met by a bustle of activity as folk streamed by in all directions engaged in a multitude of activities. There around a door leading to the armoury sat a group of Vest Yorvikers, some of whom were spinning wool. Out of the door to the hall of learning, wherein those gifted in the arts and sciences teach, came Jacomo, his hat flapping as he pretended to trip and rolled across the floor.

To the left was the market, where artisans, hawkers and peddlers had set up shop in a multitude of stalls.

Straight ahead, drawing the eye was the courtroom. The walls were stone and draped with banners. The back wall was dominated by a scale model of a castle, perhaps the plaything of a former royal prince. Before this castle fighters and fencers met to test their mettle. Several fencers proved their worth that day, and advanced within the Academy of Defense. The fighters engaged in multiple tournaments, and fighters of the White Bear Fian held the field.

The Fian is a group of fighters, autonomous and self-governing, who protect the Barony of Septentria. They were formed in the days of Aedan and Kaffa, but sadly had grown inactive until late. This day three Fiana hold the field--Sir Evander MacLachlan, Sir Edward the Red and Baron Konrad Matthias Jaeggarr von Dubrau. Some remarked that none of these worthies actually resided in Septentria, and it was explained to them that the Fian accepts challengers from within and without the barony, as long as they are noble and adept at the arts of war and peace.

Finally the fighters were ushered out doors to continue their crafts, whilst the room was readied for court. Their Majesties had their loyal servants swear homage to them, whilst Their Excellencies Septentria did honour their fencers by awarding prizes crafted by Lord Gareth of Eoforwic, himself a former Sheriff of the Royal Citie. This same Gareth was then recognized as Septentria's new fencing champion--a position he also held for Cynred thegn and Baroness Gaerwen.

The Fian then entered court, and talked of their past and plans for the future. They called for those who wished to challenge for admittance to their ranks. Laird Colyne Stewart and Hlaford Streonwald Wulfesbana of Caer Draeth stepped forward, bowing their heads and stating their wish to challenge the Fian. The challenges were accepted, with the passage of arms to occur at a future date, at a time of the Fian's choosing.

The Society Laurel of Arms, Master François La Flamme, held conclave with the heralds of Ealdormere.

After court a grand feast was held in a great hall, complete with dancing and song. The feast was long, and those who waited in the courtroom for it to be completed were likewise entertained by Eoforwic's dancers.

Many were the people recognized by Their Majesties that night, to wit: Awards of Arms were presented to Pelayo of Eoforwic, Sara of Eoforwic, Eithne Briansdottir, Medb Ingen Dun Gaile, William the Younger, Margret de Morchard, Daffydd ap Piers and Brigid of Eoforwic. Unnr Hringsdottir, Geoffrey Guiscard and Magnus Kjrr received the Award of the Orion while Albrecht Stamfer was brought into the Order of Thorbjorn's Hammer, and Nicolaa de Bracton was elevated into the Order of the Pelican. The hostess of the evening, Lady Rosalia dei Querini, was given an Award of the Maiden's Heart, and a

reconfirmation of her Award of Arms, and to celebrate this she was surrounded by dancers who amazed the crowd.



Also at this time Wat of Sarum became knight marshal, Mahault van der Eyck became exchequer and Jean-Margaret and Wulfgang Donnerfaust became the canton's royalty liaisons. Thorfinna gra'feldr became the Septentrian Thrown Weapons Marshal, as well as the drop dead Deputy for the Kingdom Thrown Weapons Marshal.



Word came of the nominations for the annual William Blackfox Awards, which were Society level chronicling awards. Thorfinna was nominated for best over all newsletter for her work on the *TankArd*, while Mahault was nominated for best theme issue (her Christmas issue of the *TankArd*).



October XXXVIII

The forest in Vest Yorvik is thick, the roads labyrinthine and populated with sprites and brownies who love to misdirect travelers. So it was as several Ardchreaggers made our way to see TRMs Cennedi and Susanna's Crown Tournament. As they wound our way through the verdant thickets, looking in vain for signs stolen by faeries, the rain was their constant and incessant companion. Finally, in desperation, Colyne Stewart threw salt about their wagon and swung an iron bar about his head. Suddenly before them they saw the road they had been seeking. Quickly, Thorfinna whipped the wagon's reins and sped their horses out of the overgrowth.

Finally upon the proper road they soon found the great hall wherein the new Prince and Princess of Ealdormere were to be chosen through acts of skill and might. The combatants were:

Sir Berus Jarl for Countess Marion FitzWilliam

Viscount Sir Mordain Blackcloak for Viscountess Mistress AElflaeda FitzAlain

Sir Evander MacLachlin for THLady Melusine de la Rose

Master Trumbrand the Wanderer for THLady Kaylah the Cheerful

Baron Phaidrig McNeil for Mistress Etaoin O'Fearghail

Sheikh Sergeant Malik abd' al Rahman for Maitresse Baronne Genevieve Chastellain d'Anjou

THLady Kaylah the Cheerful for Master Trumbrand the Wanderer

THLord Tynne Duair ap Beul for Baroness Tabitha Dearval

Tiarna Eoin O'Beirne for THLady Zahra bint al-Nahr al-Ishbiiliya al-Naariya

Lord Cecil des Manches Argentes for Countess Tangwystl de Courci

Lord Kolbjorn Skatkaupandi for Lady Wencendl inigena Jagomus of Rokesburg

Grimroth Skullhammer for Countess Moria the Black

Two lists were run concurrently, in a round robin best of three format, and all those watching agreed that over all the fighting was clean and courteous. Wassail to the honourable conduct of Ealdormere's fighters!

The combatants fought long and hard and well, though in the end only two could advance to the final rounds. These two hardy warriors were Sir Berus Jarl and Viscount Sir Mordain Blackcloak. The finals consisted of three rounds. The first round was a best of three in a weapon form of Sir Mordain's choice. He chose spear and emerged the victor of that round. The second round was in a style of Sir Berus' choice, and he chose sword and shield. Like Mordain, he emerged victorious in his chosen form. The final round was likewise fought with sword and shield, and after many great feats of arms had been preformed it was Sir Berus who was victorious.

Sir Berus and Countess Marion were then brought before Their Majesties and were recognized as the right and honourable heirs to the throne of Ealdormere. Wassail to Their Highnesses!

Court was held before feast, and many people were honoured. Some of those so honoured were: Baroness Adrielle Kerrec who was given a Scarlet Banner for her past efforts on the field, Thorolfr smithr who received his Award of Arms (those watching getting much mirth from watching Her Majesty attempt to pronounce his name), as well as Lord Rhys ap Bledri and Lord Hereward the Far-Dweller being inducted into the Order of Thorbjorn's Hammer (making them both Honourable Lords).



The following is a reproduction of a letter found in a bottle floating in the inland sea below the red cliffs of Ardchreag:

My name is known only to my mother, but the men on my ship call me Cap'n Bloodfox. (At least to me ears. I'm sure they call me other names behinds me back, but they're all smart enough to know what'll happen to 'em if I hear 'em utter such names.) I am, as me name implies, the proud owner of a ship—a schooner that was

once part of Her Majesty's fleet. If you look carefully under the paint you can still see her old name of Huntress. Nowadays I calls her Interceptor.

When I was in port at a cove in Greenhithe I heard some lads talkin' about a group of raiders heading down the river from Petrea Thule. Them Thuligans were apparently aiming to put the shire of Bastille du Lac under their 'protection'. The du Lacers were rightly nervous, as the might of the Thule archers is well known (I have a few on my own paybooks.)

Well I'm always lookin' for work or booty (preferably booty that don't take too much work to acquire) and so's when one of them du Lacers comes over to my table and offers me a job, I takes it of course.

The offer was good, though I ain't gonna share with you scurvy lot jus' what was offered. Let's just saw it'll keep me in rum and parrots for a good long time.

I went to me ship and me woman, a cap'n in her own right who we calls Widow, had already got it rigged. She said she could smell profit in the air. I threw on me greatcoat and told me navigator Mr. Andersen to get us underway. Mr. Andersen's an odd one, from Norway as I understands. Thinks he's a Viking.

Our ship sailed up the Trent without running across any of Her Majesty's fleet, and we berthed in the Bastille port. Far out in the distance I could see the Thule ship approaching. Mr. Andersen told me it was a drakkar. Alls I know was it was an ugly thing with a long curved prow, and it sat too low in the water. Round shields were hung along both sides painted with Thule's star and chain.

Since we could see that it would be a few hours yet afore they arrived, the lads decided to practice with our swords and harpoons just in case the fighting came to boardin'. The first thing we did was lay out a plank over the water and took turns pairin' off and fightin' on it. If'n ya fell off the plank, well, you were good as shark food you were.

Then this fellow comes over, the local constable he is, but he thinks he's a knight or some such. I swear, the folks 'round these parts are touched in the head more of'en than not. Well this constable, he decides we should up the ante as it were, and he took down the plank and he put a small rowboat in the drink, and he says we're to stand in the itty dingy, one in the bow and one in the stern and fight it that way. All ten men and women would take a turn until they had all fought each other.

This sounded like fun to us, though the cramped fightin' conditions were a hindrance to many of us. In a fight against a Welshman named Dafydd I ended up sitting on my duff on the seat whilst we continued to trade blows. This constable, who's idea this was, ended up fallin' in the drink more than once. He was a soggy lad by the time we was done. One feller, name of Rothgar (also from Norway, gar!) came in late, so's he

fought us all in a row and did right well for himself, I must say. Over all though, it was a German name of Siegfried who come out on top.

The town bell started ringing then, and we knew it was time to pick up our bows to fight off them Thuligans. So's we line up on the shore as the drakkar draws closer and we ready our bows. Only thing is, the Thuligans are smart devils and they had sent a group of their own archers in by land. So's while we're shooting at the Thule ship, these archers are shootin' at the Bastille ship that was going out to meet the drakkar. What's more, the Iron Companions, which is part o' the army of Septentria, were marching with 'em.

The arrows flew thicker than flies on a dead man, and I am sorry to say that the Bastille ship was the one to sink beneath the waves. Ar, that was hard luck. But I had been paid already, so's it's all the same to me.

With that bit o' excitement out of the way I went back over to the lads for a bit more swashbuckling. This time they locked all us lads up in a cell and told us that we had to fight our way out if'n we ever wanted to be free men again. I swear I thought that was a ploy by the constable to keep us all locked up, but they placed only three guards and left us our weapons. So one by one we rushed the first guard. We only had to hit the guard once to get past him, while he had to hit us thrice. The first guard was that Siegfried fellow. Not many of us made it past him (including me, I am sorry to say). The second guard was a man by the name of Aaron Worgenson who chopped a good many of the lads down to size. The last guard they later told me was the King hisself! Only two managed to get past him—the Baron of Skraeling Althing, and a lad named Benedict, who is this baron's squire. The constable puts 'em both in the itty boat, and makes 'em fight it out! Well they fight long and hard, but in the end it's the baron that walks away.

We then thought we'd play a game, and so we grabbed a bunch of folk and put a bag over their heads and tied their hands in front of 'em. It was great fun to watch 'em wriggle like a worm while they tried to free themselves. The first six people to undo their bonds were then sat at a table with bowls of seaweed plunked in front of 'em. Some of those tryin' to eat that dry weed had a hard time of it, but this lass in red satin and a big furry hat name o' Iolanda just gobbles it down! That Siegfried put all the weed in his gob at once, and then couldn't swallow it as it sucked up all his spit. One o'them Thuligan archer chaps, named Augustyn, was watchin' this while quite calmly eatin' his weed little bit by little bit. In the ends, Siegfried just manages to swallow his great mass of weed at the same time that Augustyn finishes his last pinch. So's they take these three and blindfold 'em all, and make them walk through a stretch of ground strewn with debris, while a friend tries to talk 'em through it. Augustyn made it in the fastest time, as he took very long strides.

All of us are right famished by this point, so's we descend on the wharf-side inn where we is all stuffed right full of some o' the best grub I'd et in a long while. The 'chicken' though looked a lot like me parrot (who had been missing all day).

After we had all et our fill, me woman Widow is dragged off by the constable to see the king. Visions of gallows is now flashing through me head, but in a weird twist of fate they wants her to stand at court and read out charges, rather than answer them.

As luck would have it, all the charges is good ones anyways. It seems the king was in a generous mood, even with Thuligan pirates claiming one of his shires as their own. So's he calls up some folks and gives 'em their rewards, though I don't know them all. I do know that this lad name of Verenko was given an Award of the Orion, even though he didn't already have his Award of Arms (the AoA now being conferred by the Orion). Also Lord Kennric Manning and Lady Tatianna were given these Orions as well for their fine craftwork. Also, that Benedict bloke, who apparently did not die of the wounds his baron kindly gave him, was given a Scarlet Banner in recognition of his skill with the blade.

Once the court was over, me and my crew snuck out the back door to avoid that constable and we snuck outta the bay under cover of darkness. My sword was bloodied, my belly was full and my purse was jinglin', so I was a happy man.



At this time a great storm swept through the canton. Terrifying waves crashed against the cliffs, gusting winds bent the trees and rain flooded the streets. When the storm finally subsided the Middlefield Keep had been reduced to ruin. Determined to start her life over, Gailana Dunkel Pferé moved to the Barony of Ben Dunfirth, while Brandt das Lederwerker settled in the lands of Petrea Thule (though he still considered himself to be a Chreagger).



It was around this time that Sof'ia Bardeva, Lady Jean-Margaret Donnerfaust and Lady Naja Kesali began to be called the Wyrd Sisters, known for their skill at organizing lunch counters at events.



November XXXVII

The canton now found themselves without a keep in which to meet. While Colyne negotiated with the local magistrates for space, Wulfgang Donnerfaust entered into talks with his father, who opened the doors of his keep to Ardchreag. Throughout the month Ardchreag regularly meet at the Donnerfaust Manor.



On the eighth of November, several from the cliffs traveled east to the lands of the Skrael, to partake in the annual Feast of the Hare. Baron Sir Siegfried Brandbeorn was victorious upon the field that day.



In Ramshaven a gathering of the Guilds of Ealdormere was called to host the Kingdom Arts and Sciences Competition. Many from the High Cliffs were members of guilds, and many had items to display for the competition, so many were in attendance that day. Lady Naja Kesali entered the Pentathlon for the first time. Each guild could sponsor three champions to take part in a series of tournaments to be fought that day. Baron Sir Siegfried fought for the Bowyers and Fletchers, Lord Wat of Sarum and Lord Berend van der Eych fought for the Weavers and Herr Wulfgang Donnerfaust fought for the Illuminators and Scribes. Laird Colyne Stewart, heading the Games Guild, did not partake, but instead gathered to the Games Guild of Ealdormere the following team: the Honourable Lord Richard Larmer, Sir Evander MacLachlan and Count Sir Aaron Worganson. At the end of the day the Games Guild had won the most tokens and was named the Ascendant Guild of the day. Also, Aaron had won the most tokens of any in the lists (followed by Sir Siegfried). Also on this day, Elena ferch Rhys ap Gruffudd, formerly of Vest Yorvik, joined the canton.



On the 23rd of November certain Chreaggers (being Baron Sir Siegfried Brandbeorn, Laird Colyne Stewart, Lady Thorfinna gra'feldr and Lord Wat of Sarum) traveled east to the shire of Bastille du Lac. They had been invited by the du Lacers to participate in a local parade to celebrate the holiday season. Thorfinna, dressed in bright red and yellow Norse garb heralded their approach by blowing on a horn, whilst the other three, fully armoured, would battle for the watching crowd along with a local lady named Connie and the Skraeling Althing armoured combat champion Lord Baldric. At the head of the contingent strode two ladies from Petrea Thule bearing a banner, while two local lords handed out candy carried inside helms. The parade lasted an hour, and all the fighters agreed that it was one of the most tiresome workouts they'd ever had (especially the part going uphill over the bridge).



Three days later a group consisting of Piero, Wulfgang, Berend, Mahault, Lina and Naja went east again, this time to Petrea Thule. Piero went in his capacity as Baronial Signet, and a class in illumination was taught.



On the twentieth of November, the Barony of Septentria held an event to mark its twenty-fifth anniversary (though its actual anniversary would have been in May). An abundance of snow fell from the skies that morning, leading Laird Colyne to relate the following tale to Lord Magnus Kjrr:

Deep in its cave, the Great White Bear of Septentria shifted. Outside the November skies were grey and hanging heavy with clouds. Blinking, the Bear gave voice to a tremendous roar that reverberated throughout its lair, echoing out into the dawn air, making the bare trees tremble. So loud was the cry of the gargantuan beast that the very clouds shook, and from them snow began to fall. The Great White Bear watched as snow flakes fluttered to the earth and began to weave a carpet of pure white. Satisfied, it rolled over and went back to sleep.

For some the snow was a hindrance, as it made the trek to the chapel in Skeldergate difficult, if not impossible. For others it was delightful decoration for an important day. Mant from the High Cliffs were in attendance, and indeed many of them were event staff. Eirik Andersen was c-autocrat (technically the only autocrat as his partner had become queen), Lina Carville was the gatekeeper, Colyne was the Head Serf, and Thorfinna was in charge of bardic activity and entertainment. Other Chreaggers in attendance included: Wulfgang Donnerfaust, Jean-Margaret Donnerfaust, Sofia Bardeva, Lee (who officially joined that canton that day), Gunnarr skald Thorvaldsson, Rhys ap Bledri, Wat of Sarum, Ceiridwen, Evelyn, Fursto de Robnye, Raffé Scholemaystre, Rufus of Stamford, Sarah, Thomas, William the Younger and Vlad.

It was a day when legends walked again, when generations of Septentrians stood together under one roof, when songs of old days were sung, and tales of valour told.

The gathering was held in a holy place, a church dedicated to the Christian faith. In the chapel the thrones of Ealdormere's mighty king and queen were erected, as well as those of the Princess and Septentria's Baron and Baroness. Throughout the day musicians and dancers and poets filled its lofty space with the sounds of singing, music and laughter. In a large hall a list field was set, within which there was a challenge to be held, a challenge that has not been held for many years. Past the hall was a common room where the lords and ladies of House Fenrir worked tirelessly to provide mugs of frothy ale to all who thirsted, whilst beside them laboured the Wyrd Sisters of Ardchreag who made sure that no one had an empty belly. Past them was another room, in which merchants plied their wares. In this room there was also a table that groaned under the weight of relics and artifacts from Septentria's past. Upon it sat ancient banners, tattered tabards, bardic rings and gifted arm rings, hand made platters, horns and cauldrons, knives and more. Many stopped and looked upon these artifacts as Septentrian elders related at length upon their importance to our lands.

Still there was one more room--the kitchen--in which Septentria's Baron and Baroness, Corwyn and Domhnail Galbraith, toiled to ensure their people would be able to eat their fill when it came time to feast.

Many people filled the hall, from every canton within Septentria's borders, and from their cousin baronies and shires. As locals watched proud parents with their new born babes they could see the spirits of Aedan and Caffa and Gillian standing behind them, bright smiles upon their faces. The blood of our forebears runs thick in our veins; we must always remember where we came from. Both Baroness Adrielle and Baroness Gaerwen could be seen that day, benevolent smiles upon their faces.

Members of Septentria's fyrd, of the Iron Companions, could be seen walking the halls. Ensuring the peace, carrying burdens, playing at games and protecting our people. The Companions have a long history, a history built upon the history of others who came before them: of the Isen Gesitha, of the Septentrian Guard. We have been blessed to have such as they, those who filled their ranks, to be our protectors.

The prince, Sir Berus, himself a Septentrian, organized a tournament in which many participated. At times Ealdormere's great king, Sir Rory Cenedi the Kid, did hold the field against all the fighters so assembled. The king was a mighty warrior, and he displayed his skill with the sword as he tested the mettle of his subjects. Once His Majesty and His Highness deemed themselves satisfied, they surrendered the list field to Their Excellencies Septentria. Corwyn and Domhnail called to them the members of the White Bear Fian, a fighting order, under no one's rule but their own, who are dedicated to protecting Septentria and all those who dwell within it. It is a noble and ancient order, that has had no new members for many years. That day two gentles did challenge members of the Fian to combat, to attempt to gain entrance to their order. One did not succeed, but was told that he was worthy to challenge again in the future. The second, Hlaford Streonwald Wulfesbana, he who had to battle the snow for many hours to attend, faced Sir Evander MacLachlin, the Champion of His Majesty the king. And in a display of martial skill and valour, Streonwald carried the day. Later in court, surrounded by other members of the Fian--Lord Rhys ap Bledri, Baron Konrad Matthias Jaeger, Sir Evander MacLachlin--he was officially acknowledged as a Fiana.

After such dancing and fighting it was time to eat! Feasters ate from the bounties of the sea, and from the bounties of the land. Aye, they ate as the bears eat. The feast was acknowledged by many to be superb, and stands as good evidence of why later that evening both the Baron and our Baroness were recognized for their skill in the kitchen, as well as their many other skills, by being inducted into the Order of the Crucible by their Majesties. The final desert for feast was a wonderful confection formed like a bee hive, complete with candy bees.

During feast the people were entertained by many bards. By Lady Thorfinna gra'feldr, who is the Bard of Septentria. By Garraed Galbraith, Olagh, the Kingdom Bard. By Dame Tsivia Tamara bas v'Amberview, the Bard of Skraeling Althing, and former Septentrian of note. Master Rufus of Stamford, baronial harpist, strummed melodies and sung for dancers. Lord Hydro of the North, protégée of Master Hector of the Black Height, told many tales.

When feast was complete, everyone retired to the chapel to await court. Ah, what a glorious setting in which to hold a court, with stained glass windows and arched ceilings, and raised dais. The king and queen sat in splendour on the dais, with a bear lolling between their thrones. Her Highness Marion sat to one side, whilst Their Excellencies sat to the other. Many good gentles were recognized that night. Their Excellencies called forward Laird Colyne Stewart and Lady Thorfinna gra'feldr and awarded them with Bear's Hearts, and they did call Lady Wencendl inigena Jagomus of Rokesburg and gave unto her the first ever Award of the Golden Bear. This was a baronial arts and sciences award and was the first of its kind to be awarded. As well, Streonwald was called Fiana, as has already related.

Their Majesties recognized the talents and sacrifices of many, among them being: Sofia Bardeva and Rosalinde FitzWilson receiving Awards of Arms; Sage of Eoforwic receiving an Award of the Wolf Cub; William Meriic being recognized as an Ealdormerean citizen; Eoin O'Beirne and Darius the Dancer being granted the Award of the Orion; Lord Gunnar Halfdan of Lund and Countess Arlette of Ealdormere were given Awards of the Maiden's Heart.

When court was over many still danced and sung and the halls were filled with the sounds of community and merriment. It was a day to long remember.



December AS XXXVIII

On the 22nd day of December, there was a revel at Drew's End, the manor of Colyne Stewart and Thorfinna gra'feldr. It was well attended and went long into the night.



So concludes this second book of the Historie of Ardchreag. My laird and his lady have retired to their rooms to warm themselves before a fire after returning from court. The horses whiney in their stalls as grooms brush the snow from their coats. The servants bustle through the corridors and hallways, cleaning and laying down clean rushes. My brother calls for me to come outside and help him select a Yule log. I must now substitute an axe for my pen. May the Almighty keep in his favour all those who read these words.

William