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## Editorial

The social history of a very specific period has doubtless been studied many times; but the very fact that there are an almost infinite number of "very specific periods" implies that relatively few of them have been covered in detail. The rewards (and frustrations) of concentrating on the 1470's in Europe make themselves increasingly apparent as research continues. Although none of our members can boast of being a "professional historian," the very collection of references, pictorial, textual or archaeological, pertaining to this period that has been amassed by devoted individuals amongst us is proving to be invaluable. Gone are days when the great antiquarians of the last two centuries devoted their lives to researching obscure aspects of history. Today's historians need, regrettably, to earn a living; publishers have to make money; books to sell. The wretched economics of our age limit research to "popular" subjects, and we are becoming increasingly the poorer for it. Let us hope that the tradition will be carried on by today's "amateurs" in the literal sense of the word. Our research is taken on for the mere "fun" of it - a trite word indeed, but a sentiment that has inspired much of the knowledge that we now enjoy.

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Il existe certainement maints exemples de l'étude d'une "période très spécifique" de l'histoire sociale. Le fait pourtant, qu'il existe un nombre infini de "périodes très spécifiques" implique qu'il y en a peu qui ont été étudiées en détail. Les récompenses (et les frustrations) de notre concentration sur la décennie des années 1470 en Europe se révèlent de plus en plus. Aucun de nos membres ne peut se vanter d'être un historien "professionnel," mais la vaste collection de références, qu'elles soient graphiques, textuelles ou archéologiques, amassée par les quelques uns de nos membres dévoués se révèle d'une valeur inestimable. L'époque est passée où les grands antiquaires des XVIIe et XIXe siècles vouaient leurs vies entières à la recherche de sujets historiques complètement obscurs, portant un intérêt à un nombre minime d'individus. Les historiens de nos jours doivent malheureusement gagner leur vie: les éditeurs doivent rendre des comptes, un livre doit se vendre. Les lois économiques sans merci de notre époque limitent la recherche à des sujets "populaires," qui nous appauvrissent de plus en plus. Notre espoir reste dans les mains des "amateurs," pris dans le sens littéral du mot. Les recherches de notre groupe sont entreprises

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We are proud to have been allowed to reprint part 1 of an article in this issue by Dr Terence Scully, head of the Department of French at Wilfrid Laurier University, Ontario, which embodies this spirit. If our more modest contributions will be of help to future historians, or even serve to give pleasure to however small a number of individuals, that work will not have been undertaken in vain. 🐉

pour le seul plaisir - un mot léger certes, mais qui dégage le sentiment d'avoir inspiré bien des connaissances dont nous jouissons aujourd'hui.

Nous avons le plaisir d'avoir pu rééditer dans ce numéro un article du Docteur Terence Scully, professeur au Wilfrid Laurier University, Ontario, article qui symbolise cet esprit. Si nos contributions, bien plus modestes, peuvent servir aux historiens de l'avenir, nous n'aurons pas oeuvré en vain. 🐉

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## A CHILD

Children be nesh of flesh, lithe and pliant of body, able and light to moving, witty to learn. And lead their lives without thought and care. And set their courages only of mirth and liking, and dread no perils more than beating with a rod: and they love an apple more than gold. When they be praised, or shamed, or blamed, they set little thereby. Through stirring and moving of the heat of the flesh and of humours, they be lightly and soon wroth, and soon pleased, and lightly they forgive. And for tenderness of body they be soon hurt and grieved, and may not well endure hard travail. Since all children be tatched [touched] with evil manners, and think only on things that be, and reck not of things that shall be, they love plays, game and vanity, and forsake winning and profit. And things most worthy they repute least worthy. They desire things that be to them contrary and grievous, and set more of the image of a child, than of the image of a man, and make more sorrow and woe, and weep more for the loss of an apple, than for the loss of their heritage. And the goodness that is done for them, they let it pass out of mind. They desire all

things that they see, and pray and ask with voice and with hand. They love talking and counsel of such children as they be, and void company of old men. They keep no counsel, but they tell all that they hear or see. Suddenly they laugh, and suddenly they weep. Always they cry, jangle and jape; that unneth they be still till they sleep. When they be washed of filth, anon they defile themselves again. When their mother washeth and combeth them, they kick and sprawl, and "put" with feet and with hands, and withstand with all their might. They desire to drink always, unneth they are out of bed, when they cry for meat anon.

*This delightful definition is taken from The Old Book, by Dorothy Hartley (Alfred A. Knopf, London 1930). Dorothy Hartley, an otherwise admirable writer, tended to omit all references, and this book is no exception. The editor would be grateful to anyone who can tell him the source of this piece, so obviously written by a parent, so accurate (it tells us as much about adults as about children!), and so totally (and somehow touchingly) humourless! 🐉*

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## MEDIEVAL COOKERY AND MEDICINE (Part one)

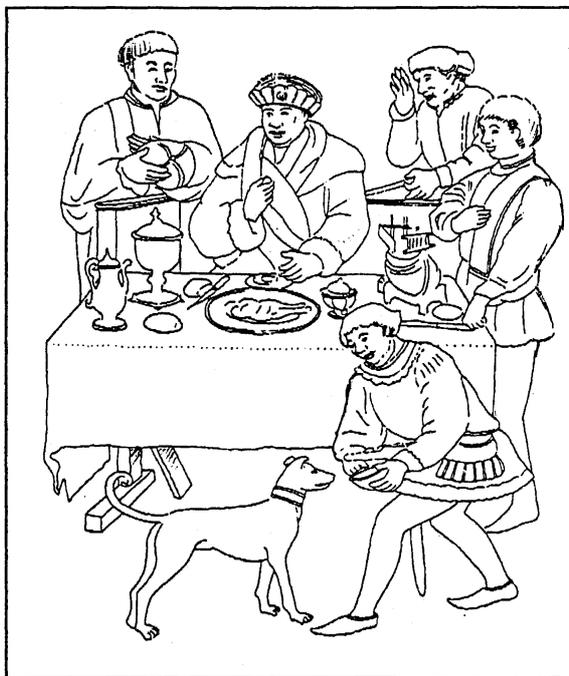
by Dr Terence Scully (© Terence Scully)

*This article was originally published in Petits Propos Culinaires no. 44 (August 1993). PPC appears about every quarter, and is published by Prospect Books Ltd, behind which may be found the well-known food expert and author Alan Davidson. PPC deals with all aspects of food and cooking, anywhere in the world, from the earliest times to the present. Many articles are delightfully eccentric and recherché, but all are very serious and are written by people eminently qualified to do so. PPC costs £ 21.50 for 6 issues (£ 26.00 outside the UK). To subscribe, write to: Petits Propos Culinaires, 45 Lamont Road, London SW10 0HU.*

Among his household retainers, Charles the Bold (1433-1477), the last Duke of Burgundy, had six physicians whose responsibilities for their master's health included in particular a surveying of everything that their master ate. As one of their most important duties they were required to be present at the Duke's mealtimes in order to examine every article of food that was served to him: "...When the Duke is at table, these Doctors are behind the bench, and they see what dishes and foods are served to the Prince and they advise him which foods in their opinion are the most beneficial to him."<sup>1</sup> As they leaned over Charles' shoulder, peering at the succession of platters of *Lamproie à la galentine* and bowls of *Comminée d'almandes*, just what were his doctors looking for? When they murmured their respectful advice into the Duke's ear ("A little of the *Lassis de blanc de chapon* will not harm you, My Lord" or "Your Grace should pass on the *Pipes farces*"), by what criteria were their judgements formed? Perhaps an obvious explanation of this peculiar function might be that the six physicians were charged with ensuring that the Duke's food was not poisoned. They might "merely" have been exercising a responsibility for identifying toxic substances in their master's food. After all, the annals of

fourteenth- and fifteenth-century European countries are full of instances where troublesome nobles were neatly disposed of by the agency of poison. Several potent drops expressed from monkshood or wolfsbane, or from hemlock - the umbelliferous plant, not our innocent evergreen tree - or black hyoscyamus, yielded by the herb henbane, could be depended upon to make quick and relatively quiet work of an enemy. Likewise the lethal effects of mercury, arsenic and antimony sulfide were well understood by the pharmacists -

and others - of the day. Besides, the chances to instill a poison in food abounded: the formal procedures followed for serving food in noble households meant that numerous individuals handled a multiplicity of prepared dishes as they made their long way between a distant kitchen and the dining hall. The determined assassin with a proclivity to poison had a remarkably good range of choice, in the areas both of means and of opportunity. It is entirely understandable, then, that the aristocrats and even royalty of the period were usually anxious about the wholesomeness of all the dishes that were set before them to eat. Yet so great was the apprehension about deliberate poisoning<sup>2</sup> that a whole system of checks and counter-checks had evolved and were continuously in place in noble households in order to ensure that none of the foods served to the high table were in any way tainted. In no other area of a prince's life did the security of his person give rise to such a complex series of formal tests than in the matter of his food. Everything he ate was subject to two sorts of assays: by a piece of unicorn horn, and by a sample being consumed by one of his trusted officers. (In the first case the presence of poison in the food the unicorn horn - usually a piece of



*This drawing is a simplified version of part of a painting in the Grimani Breviary at the Biblioteca Marciana in Venice; this was reproduced in *Le Moyen Age à Table* by Bruno Laurioux, page 96. The painting shows a nobleman's table, and it is tempting to suppose that at least one of the standing figures is a dietary advisor.*

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narwhal tusk, of dubious provenance - might change color or tremble or even exude a sort of sweat; in the second case, the poison's effect upon the "human guinea pig" would be adequately manifest.) At some courts these tests were regularly carried out several times during the process of dishing out and serving. A potentate in medieval Europe recognised the dangers of food poisoning, selected a number of defensive weapons and protected himself as well as he could against it. But to come back to our problem: what were the six doctors doing behind Duke Charles the Bold's chair while he was at his high board? Doctors had little direct role in the constant campaign against food poisoning.<sup>3</sup> The physicians attending Charles' meals were clearly there to advise him of any threat that the food itself, as naturally untainted, pure and wholesome as it could be, might pose to his health. This, their "medical" function as personal advisers on foods and prepared dishes, is recorded in other contexts. In fifteenth-century England we find that an arrangement obtained at the court of Edward IV that was similar to what we have seen at the court of Burgundy: "*Doctoure of physyque stonidith muche in the presence of the kinges meles, by the counceyng or awnswering to the kinges grace wich dyet is best accordyng, and to the nature and operacion of all the metes.*"<sup>4</sup> The physician was not immediately involved in the serious practical problem of identifying impure foods; he was employed for his learned ability to distinguish which foods, food combinations and prepared dishes would be beneficial to his noble master as an individual, and which could be harmful. The criteria by which the medieval physician formed his opinions with respect to the relative good-

ness and badness of all metes - that is, all edible substances - were well propagated and carefully studied in the period between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries. That these criteria, in their basics, dated in fact all the way back, ten or twelve centuries back, to early Greek medicine merely proved to medieval physicians and scholars that they were indeed well founded. The learning that had produced them must be sound because it was durable. Certainly it was still accepted unquestioningly by the community of physicians and their schools in the late Middle Ages. And in their practice these physicians insisted that cooks in particular should be aware of certain medical truths when they wanted to prepare food safely.<sup>5</sup> When it happened (rarely) that a cook committed his recondite knowledge to writing - allowing his private professional repertoire, as it were, to propagate more freely - the potentially grave consequences of such a publication could be seen as calling for a stamp of approval from the proper authority. The authority to grant, or withhold, this imprimatur was embodied in the medical profession. The foreword of the great English recipe collection, the *Forme of Cury* (c. 1390), states that it was "*compiled by assent and avyssement of maisters of phisik [i.e. physicians, medical doctors] and of philosophie*" dwelling at the court of Richard II.<sup>6</sup> The cook did not exercise his profession in glorious artistic isolation and independence; or rather, as he exercised his profession he had to realize how very much he and it depended upon the extensive scientific knowledge transmitted by the medical profession. What of this science must the cook know? Primarily that all human beings had a natural temperament, or humor, composed fundamentally of a unique combina-

tion of tendencies toward warmness, coolness, dryness and moistness. That all the foodstuffs that entered their kitchens likewise had a natural set of properties composed fundamentally of unique combinations of tendencies toward warmness, coolness, dryness and moistness. And, furthermore, that if you combined foodstuffs, or cooked them in certain ways, then the "complexion" of the foodstuffs would be modified; and that if, finally, these foodstuffs were consumed by a human being in certain circumstances, then the temperament of that human being must necessarily be modified.<sup>7</sup> The cook must know that in measuring the degree of each of these properties (warmness, coolness, dryness, moistness), there existed between the two pairs (warmness and coolness, dryness and moistness) an approximate zero amount (neither warm nor cool, neither dry nor moist) which in some respects was a sort of ideal equilibrium. This was a state of moderateness. In his kitchen the professional cook prepared dishes by combining and cooking certain foodstuffs. His choice of ingredients was always determined by two primary considerations: naturally he had his gastronomic goal, but he had also the need to produce salubrious food according to the definitions of healthy foods that were current at the time. In the first, he was in his own way an artist. However, for the second he was in real terms a scientist; he had to be guided by sound, scientific doctrine. While mixing and cooking should preferably create appetizing, palatable dishes, the same procedures simply must yield dishes that the were safe. One of the greatest physicians of the thirteenth century, Aldobrandino da Siena, stated the nature of the cook's role quite succinctly.<sup>8</sup> "He who would safeguard health must know three

hings about food ...: firstly, the "complexion" and nature of all foods and of the person who eats them; secondly, the quantity of each foodstuff that is safe to eat; thirdly, what foods are customarily consumed." Aldobrandino then goes on to expand upon his first subject. "We must know that all (foodstuffs) are warm and moist, warm and dry, cold and moist or cold and dry, and you must know that such are the complexions of those who are to receive them: sanguine, choleric, flegmatic and melancholic. Thus it is necessary, by the order of the authorities in physic, that to maintain good natural health" the proper foods must be given according to the natural temperament of everyone. Furthermore, he says, some foodstuffs are by nature quite dangerous for anyone to eat, such as fruit and cabbage; certain foods should not be combined; the changing seasons call for different foods, appropriate for each; and custom in usage tends to make any food, even dangerous food, not only safer but more beneficial to people. These are essentially the rules for good cooking that Aldobrandino enunciates for his age. The cook had to understand what to do with fruit and with cabbage in order to make them safe for consumption. Pears, for instance, were held to be cold and dry in the second degree.<sup>9</sup> They could be eaten safely provided they were boiled (this treatment adding both moisture and heat) in red wine (wine varying in temperament according to its color and provenance, but tending always to have some considerable degree of warmth), in sugar and cinnamon (both of these "spices" being quite warm: sugar was also moist), and stuck with cloves (which were also warm in the second or third degree depending upon the authority who was expressing his opinion). Cabbage,

as much a staple in medieval Europe as any foodstuff, is likewise cold and dry and should be forced to absorb moisture by being boiled twice, the first water being discarded; then cabbage should always be served to accompany fat meat, quite logically because fat is by its nature warm and moist. Similarly for each of the meats and fishes the cook's culinary competence was based upon a broad academic comprehension of their respective natures and the culinary treatment that was called for by these natures. Beef, being dry, should never be roasted but only boiled - beef broth was, perhaps consequently, one of the primary liquid ingredients of medieval cookery, always on hand for use in medieval kitchens. Wild animals are both drier and warmer than their domestic counterparts: domestic pork should receive one treatment in cooking and spicing in order to 'correct' its coolness and moistness; wild boar should be handled differently in ways designed to complement its warmer, dryer nature. In principle the meats of young animals are warmer and moister than those of the mature members of the same species. Male animals of a species tend to be warmer and drier than their female counterparts. Fish generally partake of the medium in which they live, water: cooking and saucing must take this cold and moist nature into account. Cookery recipes regularly require fish to be fried in a pan or roast on a grill directly over a hot, dry flame; if the fish is destined for a pottage or broth, it should undergo this drying, warming treatment first, before being put into a cooking pot to boil, and the eventual liquid mixture should always benefit from a careful admixture of warm and dry herbs or spices. In the late Middle Ages the whole question of sauces, normally the source of professional pride for

## PLAT DU JOUR

### BRUET OF LUMBARDY

*Take heenys, chickens, konyngys, or othure flesch, sodyn; do hit in a potte. Do therto mylke of almondys. Do therin pepyr, and alay hit with bredde, & do therin yolkes of eyron sodyn hard, growndyn & drawyn up withe percelye; & do therto a lytyll grece or claryfyd boture or the fat of porke, & sesyn hit up with poudyr, salt, & venyger, & make hit rede as blod.*

Another of the many 15th century "Lombard" recipes, this one from MS 163 in Yale University's Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. I have tried to find some common factor pertaining to the "Lombard" recipes, but without success. Many of them appear to contain dried fruit, but the ultimate origin seems as tenuous as our modern *Quiche Lorraine* or other "topographical" recipes.

Constance Hieatt reconstructs the recipe as follows:

Draw up an almond milk with 2 cups water or chicken broth. While it is steeping, grind or blend together 2 slices bread, 4 cooked egg yolks and parsley. Blend some of the almond milk in, then add the mixture, with pepper, to the rest of the almond milk. Put 250 g. cooked chicken, cut in chunks, in a pot, and pour this sauce over it. Simmer and stir occasionally. When the sauce has thickened slightly, which will not take long, add 100 g. butter or fat, then dissolve the spices (mace, nutmeg & ginger) in in 2 tsp. vinegar, stir it in and add salt to taste.

N. Michael

the modern cook, was fundamentally a matter of cannily combining the properties of the individual ingredients in order to create a sort of collective "complexion" that would most effectively complement the temperament of a given foodstuff and mitigate any harmful tendencies in it. A learned Italian doctor, Maino de' Maineri (died c. 1364), personal physician to Andrea of Florence, Bishop of Arras from 1331-33, summed up contemporary medical doctrine on foodstuffs and cooking in general, and on sauces in particular, when he declared that sauces came into being originally as a means of making foods more appetizing - itself a "good thing" for digestion - but latterly became, what was more important, a way to correct any bad qualities that might be present in the foods they accompany.<sup>10</sup> Following this universal precept, the learned physician carries on to elaborate a whole sequence of dishes involving meats and fishes together with the sauces most suitable for them: lamb, veal, kid, beef, pork rabbit, chicken, dove, partridge, capon, pheasant, duck, goose, porpoise, sturgeon, lamprey, eels, salmon, trout, whiting, mullet, gurnard, oysters, lobster, tench, carp, crayfish, oysters; green sauce, mustard sauce, roquette sauce, pepper sauce, white broth, boiled yellow (saffron) pepper sauce, white sauce, rue sauce, cameline sauce, plain garlic sauce, strong black pepper sauce, gelatina. (Missing, curiously, is any variant of the so-called jance sauce that, with the increasing popularity of ginger, was to become a favorite of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.) What Maino gives us, and provides as well to the culinary profession of his day, is a veritable cookbook in which the temperaments of all of the major meat, fowl or fish on the one

hand and composite sauce mixtures on the other are rationally worked out so that, in the combinations for each preparation, the pairs of elements, meat and sauce, stand in virtual equilibrium, degree of warmth, coldness, moistness and dryness against degree of warmth, coldness, moistness and dryness. The profession of cookery was indeed both an art and science in the Middle Ages.

#### NOTES

1. *Memoires d'Olivier de la Marche, Maître d'Hôtel et Capitaine des Gardes de Charles le Temeraire*, ed. Henri Beaune et J. d'Arbaumont, Paris (Renouard), 1888; vol 4, pp 16-17. My translation. See also *Charles Commeaux, La Vie quotidienne en Bourgogne au temps des ducs Valois (1364-1477)*, Paris (Hachette), 1979, p215.

2. Accidental food poisoning - for example from the generation of mycobacteria on damp grains, or from unsanitary storage or handling of foodstuffs - must have been common enough, and undoubtedly was often thought to have been the consequence of some deliberate action by an enemy.

3. One other function they clearly were not fulfilling in the dining hall was that of determining appropriate dishes for a sick person. There were indeed recipes designed for the therapeutic purpose of restoring the sick to good health, such recipes as are contained in the *Summula de preparatione ciborum et polum infirmorum secundum Musandinum* (ed Salvatore de Renzi in his *Collectio Salernitana*, 5 vols Naples (Filiatre-Sebezio, 1852-59; repr. Bologna (Fonni), 1967 vol 5, pp 254-68. Though the prescribing of dishes for invalids lay properly within the professional domain of the medieval physician, the general-purpose recipe collections of the day normally put a number of broadly useful invalid dish recipes at the disposal of the household cook so that, in cases where the physician should prescribe no more potent or specifically therapeutic diet for a particular pathology, the cook might prepare a standard such dish to "comfort" an ailing member of his employer's family.

4. *The Black Book* edited by Alexander Reginald Myers in *The Household of Edward IV, Manchester* (Manchester University Press), 1959, p 123.

"Besides consulting with the steward and master cook as to the day's menu, the royal physician would also sit at the king's table to see that he ate nothing harmful to his health." Colin Clair, *Kitchen and Table*, London, New York, Toronto (Abelard-Schuman), 1964, p 63.

5. "And comynly he [the doctoure of physyque] shuld talke with the Steward, Chambrelayn, Assewer and the Master Cooke to devyseye by counsayle what metes or dringes is best according with the kinges dyet." Idem.

6. Richard Warner, *Antiquitates Culinariae: Curious Tracts on Culinary Affairs of the Old English*, London (R. Blamire), 1791; repr. London (Prospect Books), n.d., p 1.

7. The medieval canon of medicine was itself based in its essence upon an understanding of the natural makeup & complexion of all physical substances, whether (what we would call) organic or inorganic, and the forces that these substances constantly exerted on all other substances with which they might come into contact. A human being, since he/she was merely another, though complex, natural physical phenomenon, had his/her own natural temperament as well, this was normally stable, but could be altered by the forces exerted by the properties of "external" substances. Most medical knowledge consisted of being familiar with the nature of all of these physical forces and temperaments. In a real sense the physician was literally a physicist.

8. *Le Regime du corps de maître Aldebrandin de Sienne*, ed Louis Landouzy et Roger Pepin, Paris (Champion), 1911, pp 13 ff.

9. In standard humoral measureme. there were four degrees, but the fourth was deadly.

10. "Dico igitur quod...saporibus non est utendum in sanitatis regimine nisi in pauca quantitate et ut corrigatur quorundam ciborum malitia seu saltem remittatur." The statement can be found in either the *Regimen sanitatis Magnini Mediolanensis medici fumosissimi Atrebatensi Episcopo directum*, Louvain (Johannes de Westfalia), 1482, or in the author's *Opusculum de Saporibus*, of which a modern edition by Lynn Thorndyke may be read in "A Mediaeval Sauce-Book", *Speculum*, 9 (1934), pp 183-190. See also Terence Scully, "The *Opusculum de Saporibus* of Magnus Mediolanensis", *Medium Aevum*, 54 (1985), pp 178-207. 🐉

The remainder of this article will appear in Dragon 7.

## TACUINUM SANITATIS

John Howe

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14th and 15th-century Italy is a world apart. One need only compare Donatello's David, created around 1440, with Northern European sculpture to realize that not only the Alps separate the two: fashion, architecture, science, budding humanism, all contribute to a distinct visual atmosphere. The Renaissance was to take nearly a century to cross the Alpine passes and to debark in other Mediterranean ports.

The *Tacuinum Sanitatis* (manuscript 1041 of the University Library of Liege) gives a tantalizing resumé of life in Northern Italy towards the close of the 14th century. Costume, tools, architecture, household utensils - the details of everyday life abound, rendered in lively pen and ink. Of the half-dozen copies of Avicenne's definitive treatise on health and medicine that still survive, the Liege copy is by far the most attractive and rich in detail.

The two following plates are intended to underline two aspects of amateur medieval research. Firstly, a legitimate regret that so many manuscripts sleep in archives unattainable, especially to those unable to brandish the regulation panoply of diplomas and letters of recommendation. Secondly, the advantage of summing up any category of objects in a manuscript available in its entirety - in this case the domestic furniture.

I have omitted no major category, with the exception of those which play an architectural role, for reasons previously touched upon.

As in Northern Europe, squat stools are everywhere present, as are simple benches and tables. Three-legged trestles are common, either simple or ornate, and one four-legged example is present. Of more interest are the benches p & w on plate 1, of typically Italian design. There are two armchairs (plate 1: q & u), a commoner's model and a more bourgeois version (an even more ornate sort is to be found in the famous Italian Arthurian manuscript the *Queste* (ms. fr. 393, Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris, c. 1380-1400).

Some stools are typical of Italy (plate 1: x, y, z; plate 2: j). The low stool with a backrest (plate 1: s) is the only one of its kind I have ever seen. The tavern table (plate 2: h) is equally intriguing.

A further article will deal with Italian furniture from other sources.

L'Italie de la Renaissance est un monde à part. Pour s'en convaincre, il suffit de comparer le David de Donatello, créé vers 1440, avec la sculpture de l'Europe du Nord de la même époque.

La mode, l'architecture, les sciences, l'humanisme naissante et bien d'autres aspects de la vie de cité contribuent à dépeindre une atmosphère visuelle distincte. La Renaissance, dont l'une des principales innovations fut de se démarquer et se définir elle-même par rapport à ce qui est devenu le "Moyen Âge", mettra un bon siècle à franchir les cols alpins et à débarquer définitivement dans tous les ports de la Méditerranée.

Le *Tacuinum Sanitatis* (MS 1041 de la bibliothèque de l'Université de Liège) donne un aperçu de la vie en Italie du Nord vers la fin du XIVe siècle. Parmi la demi-douzaine d'exemplaires survivantes du traité d'Avicennes, la copie de Liège est de loin la plus vivante et riche en détails. Costume, outils, ustensils, aménagement d'intérieur, architecture, les vignettes de la vie quotidienne abondent, esquissées d'une plume souple et vivace.

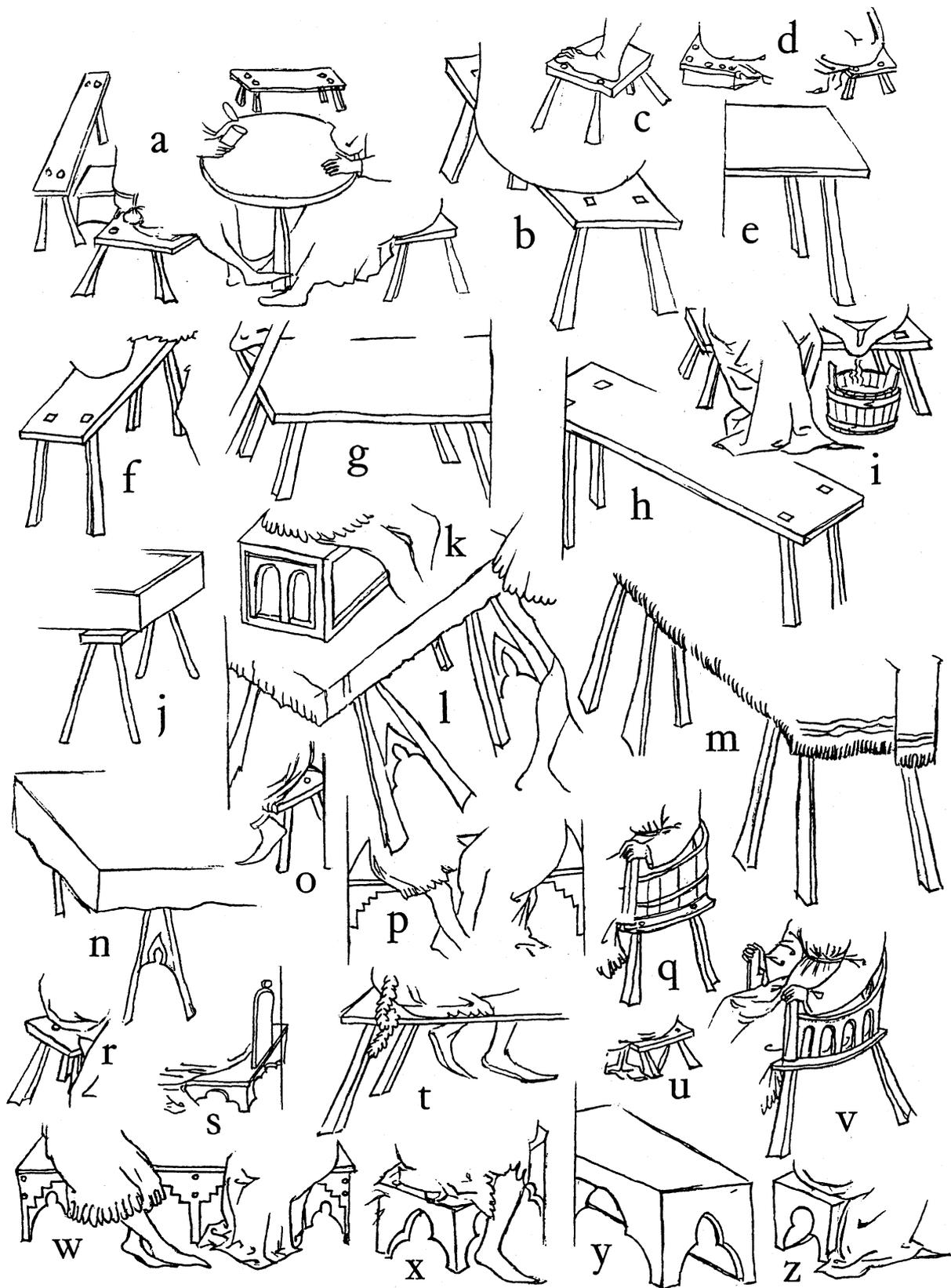
Ces deux planches ont pour but de souligner deux aspects de la recherche médiévale en amateur. D'abord, d'exprimer un profond regret pour les milliers d'illustrations qui dorment dans les archives et les bibliothèques alors que si peu est disponible, surtout si l'on ne peut arborer la panoplie requise de diplômes et de lettres de recommandation. Ensuite, de souligner l'intérêt évident de réunir sur une même feuille n'importe quelle catégorie d'objets d'un manuscrit donné - en l'occurrence le mobilier domestique.

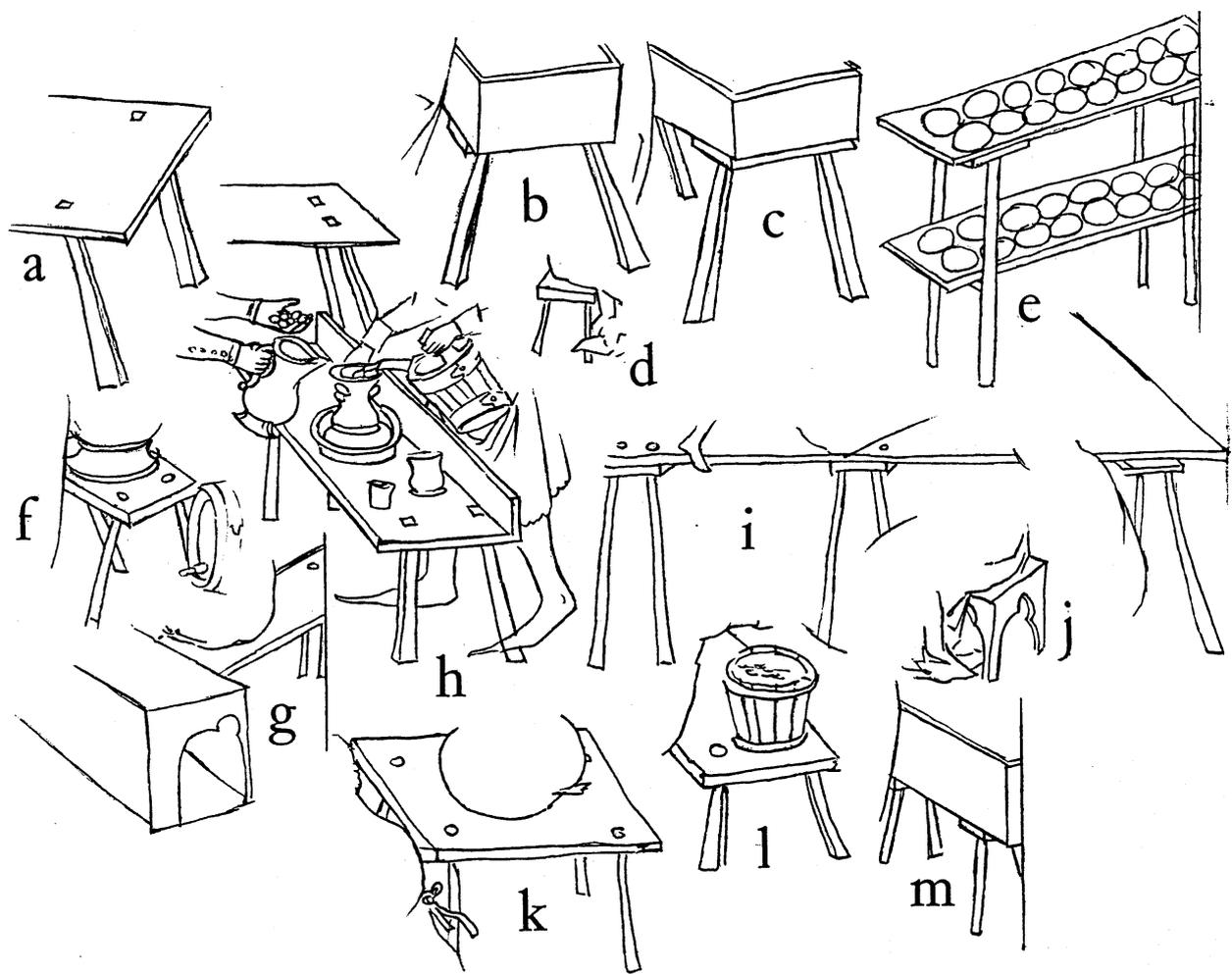
Je n'en ai omis aucune catégorie majeure, à l'exception des meubles qui jouent un rôle architecturale, pour des raisons évidentes.

Comme dans l'Europe du Nord, les tabourets bas sont partout, tout comme les bancs simples et les tables rigides. Il y a également des tables à tréteaux tripodes, ainsi qu'un exemplaire à quatre pieds. D'un plus grand intérêt sont les bancs p & w de la planche 1, qui sont typiques du style Italien. On aperçoit en outre deux fauteils demi-ronds (planche 1: q & u), l'un pour foyer modeste et l'autre nettement plus bourgeois. (Un modèle encore plus sophistiqué se trouve dans le manuscrit arthurien très connu *Queste* (ms. fr. 393, Bibl. Nat. de Paris, vers 1380-1400, école italienne)

Quelques tabourets sont typiques de l'Italie du Nord (pl.1: x, y, z et pl.2: j). Le tabouret bas avec dossier est le seul de ce genre que j'ai vu jusqu'à présent. La table - comptoir de taverne est également insolite.

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Un prochain article présentera du mobilier italien d'autres sources des XIV<sup>e</sup> et XV<sup>e</sup> siècles.

Le *Tacuinum Sanitatis* MS 1041 de la Bibliothèque de l'Université de Liège, Italie du Nord, XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle, tribué à l'atelier de Giovanni de Grassi (†1398).

#### PLANCHE 1

a) bancs, table ronde, folio 66 v. (scene de taverne) b) banc simple, folio 50 v. c) petit tabouret, folio 76 v. d) petits tabourets, folio 73 r. e) table simple, rigide, folio 40 r. f) banc simple, folio 40 r. q) banc simple servant de table, folio 41 r. h) banc simple, folio 49 v. i) banc simple, folio 11 v. (une dame assise entrain de moudre des grains de moutarde) j) bac à herbes sur tréteaux, folio 34 v. k) coffre (?) servant de siège, folio 3 r. l) table à tréteaux tripodes en A, folio 65 r. m) table à tréteaux tripodes, folio 65 r. n) table à tréteaux tripodes, folio 58 v. o) petit tabouret simple, folio 37 v. p) banc à panneaux, folio 78 r. q) fauteil demi-rond (en "tonneau"), folio 68 r. r) tabouret simple, folio 27 r. s) tabouret bas à panneaux, avec dossier, folio 82 r. t) banc simple, folio 10 r. u) tabouret bas simple, folio 73 v. v) fauteil demi-rond, folio 70 v. w) banc à panneaux à six pieds, folio 9 r. x) tabouret à panneaux, folio 25 r. y) tabouret à panneaux, folio 41 r. z) tabouret à panneaux, folio 33 r.

#### PLANCHE 2

a) table simple, folio 4 r. ( dans une echoppe de marchand de graisse et de chandelles) b) bac à herbes, sur tréteaux, folio 16 r. c) bac à herbes, sur tréteaux, folio 15 r. d) petit tabouret simple, folio 68 r. e) étagères à pain, folio 35 r. f) tabouret simple, folio 56 r. g) banc simple et banc à panneaux servant de comptoir, folio 38 v. (dans la boutique d'une fromagère) h) table/comptoir de taverne, folio 57 r. i) plan de travail à tréteaux, folio 73 r. (atelier de couture) j) petit tabouret à panneaux, folio 47 v. k) table simple, carrée, folio 1) banc simple, folio 62 r. m) bac à herbes, sur tréteaux, folio 12 v. ➤

“Nuggets” from

## THE SCHILLING CHRONICLES

by John Richards

*The Schilling chronicles are a unique and very precise source of information on the Swiss military at the end of the 15th century. Any of us without German however, have no access to Schilling: no translation is published. John Richard's knowledge of the 15th century dialect of central Switzerland (not to mention his paleographical skills) has here translated several excerpts that should be of particular interest to members.*

The Schilling Chronicles contain many fascinating insights into the military life of a Confederate soldier during the late 15th Century. I have compiled a few “nuggets” from various chapters of Schilling that may be of interest.

### Before Grandson, March 1476

The Confederates, assembling in the villages near Vaumarcus, have been billeted in the houses and are preparing to march on the castle of Vaumarcus, where the Duke of Burgundy is believed to be staying.

*Now those of Bern, Schwyz and Solothurn had come together with good comrades from all the other “places” and had mixed in with them, as is the custom, because a good comrade likes to be with another.*

Schilling refers several times to the Confederates coming together and making their “order” before advancing into battle. We

can imagine units from the guilds, mercenaries, or noblemen's households arriving from the various towns and greeting old friends or similar guilds or groups from other towns (there would have been close contacts between like guilds of neighbouring towns during this period) and joining together in the ranks.

### Before Morat (Murten), June 1476

Schilling describes the scene on the dawn of the day of the battle of Morat:

*Now it was raining heavily and still the troops had not had breakfast. And despite the heavy rain and the fact that nobody had eaten anything, the army broke camp and marched off with the whole force. As soon as the army had left camp, it stopped raining and turned into a beautiful, bright day. And as they came to the woods, they started to make the 'Order'*

(organise themselves into units). At this point, Sir Wilhelm Herter was named as one of the commanders. He now did his part, along with the other commanders, to ensure that the 'Order' was made.

### Before Nancy, February 1477

Schilling, who accompanied the Confederates to Nancy, was there when

*everybody came together in front of Bellegarde. The Confederates were there, the kings of France, the Duke of Austria and the army of the “Lower Cities” and received the news that the Duke of Burgundy was camped with a large army in front of the village of St. Nicolas-du-Port, and that he intended to storm the town of Nancy on Sunday morning, the day of Epiphany. Having received this 'intelligence' and warning, a pretty 'order' was made between Bellegarde and St. Nicolas-du-Port.*

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With this 'order', the army advanced into the village in which the Burgundians were staying and cut down or drowned many of them. Several of them ran into the tower of St. Nicolas-du-Port, from which they were thrown and met with pikes.

During this fight, a man-at-arms in full armour was thrown off the bridge into the Moselle. This same man called on St. Nicolas for aid, and the help of the Saint, managed to climb out of the river and survive. Later on, after the skirmish in St. Nicolas-du-Port, the Confederates set up camp for the night and everybody did what they could to get food. The commanders of the gentlemen of Lucerne and others, who belonged to the vennli, found a large quantity of horsemeat and bread, together with a barrel of red wine and a container of honey. Many of the comrades ate so much that they were ill - straw had to be used to rub their bellies and to get the honey off them. Everyone should therefore be warned against eating such a large amount of honey, for not everyone is used to it.

#### Unruly Soldiery

Here is one of several references to soldiers getting out of hand when confronted with sufficient supplies!

Just before the march on Nancy, there lay an assembled troop of very fine knechte from the Confederacy and elsewhere. They were told that two good new ships had been prepared, so that they could sail down the Rhine towards Brisach on Christmas Eve. And as Christmas Day, a great feast day, was very cold and many people were feasting, these same knechte also wished to feast and not leave the town in a sober state. They sat down, ate

and drank a large amount, so that they could withstand the cold and when they had become merry from the wine, they ran quickly to the ships and jumped in in a reckless manner. I, Diebold Schilling, writer of this chronicle, saw and heard what was happening in these ships, for I was standing on the Rhine bridge. They were disobedient and cared nothing for the crew and were rude to them, because everyone wanted to be first into the ship. And no matter how hard they were shouted at by the crew and others, that they should take care and behave themselves, still nothing helped, because they behaved in such a unruly way, that no one could hear themselves speak. They jumped around in the ship and on the decks in such a way that the ship broke and sadly sank very fast. As the Rhine in Basel is very deep near the Krone, around 140 fine knechte were drowned, which was a shock for everyone.

#### Deserters and strategy - an account of the Battle of Nancy 1477

The Confederates and their ally, the Duke of Lorraine are preparing their attack on the Duke of Burgundy's siege forces around Nancy.

Now (the Duke of Burgundy) still had many knechte from the Confederacy with him, who had been with him during all his battles. When these same knechte heard that the Confederate army was on the way to punish the tyrant, many did not wish to wait for retribution. Two of them from Schwyz, named Hermann Schindler von Arth and Jörg Schriber of Frauenfeld, thought up a plan how they, with cunning, could escape from him. During the night, they cut off their Burgundian crosses (livery), attached the Confederate

emblem and white crosses to themselves and thought of a way of getting free passage from the Confederates, having secured free passage from the Duke of Lorraine with the help of a middleman. At first the Confederates were not willing, although the two promised, at the risk of losing life and limb, to lead the army to the Duke of Burgundy without losses. Now the two had brothers and several other friends there, who also asked for them to receive free passage. And after they had been interrogated, a plan to attack the Duke was prepared. However, the two were placed at the front of the attack, as they knew where he was and also the layout of his guns. With these guns, the people of Nancy were under such pressure that the Duke of Lorraine received one courier after the other, begging for aid in raising the siege. Perhaps the dear Lord also wanted the same to happen and could stand the evil violence of the tyrant no longer, for otherwise the two would have stayed with him longer... The Duke of Burgundy had great, powerful cannons and many other guns at Nancy and if his Epiphany plan (i.e. the storming of Nancy) had worked, he would have tried again with the Confederates.

As the two had said, the Duke had set up and ordered his guns to point down the right-hand road, on the right-hand side if going from St. Nicolas-du-Port towards Nancy.... Following the plan and the information received, and according to the wishes of the two afore-said men, after receiving Mass and eating breakfast, the army set off early in the morning on the day before Epiphany, and left St. Nicolas-du-Port, giving the impression that they were taking the nearest, right-hand road towards Nancy, where the

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## Die Typisch süddeutsch+schweizerische Wulsthaube An examination of a typical Swiss or South-German coif

by Suzanne Hupfer

Nachdem über die passende Kopfbedeckung allgemeine Verwirrung herrscht und von ausgedienten Mullwindeln bis zu ausgefransten Putzklappen alles mögliche zu sehen ist (obendrein aus Baumwolle), habe ich es unternommen über einen typisch süddeutschen + schweizerischen Haubentypus zu recherchieren, dessen Konstruktion einigermaßen einfach nachzuarbeiten ist, und der authentisch aussieht.

Der Schnitt ist für die, die aus meinen Zeichnungen nicht schlau werden, bei mir zu haben.

Die typische Wulsthaube, in Nürnberg auch *Steuchla* genannt, setzt sich - wie der Name schon sagt - aus einem Wulst (oder falschen Zopf) und dem Haubentuch zusammen. Feinere und komplizierter gewickelte Hauben, die man auch in vielen Illustrationen sieht, wurden Schleier genannt.

Das Haubentuch besteht aus feinem Leinen und hat entweder einen glatten oder einen mehrlagigen vorderen Abschluß.

Dafür verwendet man entweder die Webkante oder einen Zierstich (ähnlich einer Deckeneinfassung), ausgeführt mit weißem Faden. (Goldfaden war zwar auch gebräuchlich, ist aber für eine Militärkompanie vielleicht doch nicht ganz passend! Die den Haubenabschluß bildenden Lagen wurden *Vach* genannt.

Die einzelnen Lagen wurden in ca. 8 cm Entfernung vom Rand mit Steppstichen aufeinander fixiert, wobei die obere Lage jeweils ca. 5mm der darunterliegenden sehen lässt, wie auf den Abbildungen gut zu sehen ist. Binde-Bänder oder die Enden des Tuches werden keinesfalls mehrmals um den Kopf geschlungen, sondern das Tuch wird nur 1 x im Nacken gebunden. Die herabhängenden hinteren Enden werden dann mit 2 Stecknadeln fixiert. Nirgends sind unter der Haube hervorlugende Haare zu sehen, es sei denn als Zopfschnecken.

Die Anzahl der *Vächer* am Haubenrand war stets Gegenstand der Kleiderverordnungen und sollte 6 nicht überschreiten. Selbstverständlich wurde dies meist mißachtet, was die Fülle von Verordnungen dagegen nötig machte.

Bedauerlicherweise ist auf den Illustrationen die Konstruktion im Nacken nie zu sehen, aber nach der Empirischen Methode bin ich zu folgendem Ergebnis gelangt, das funktioniert + richtig aussieht.

Selbst Frauen der Unterschichten hatten 2-3 *Steuchla* und eine Plättvorrichtung dafür, wie aus Nürnberger Nachlassinventaren hervorgeht.

“Es soll auch eynich weibspilde inwonerin dieser statt, hinfüro nyt/tragen eynichen schlayr, der uber sechs Vach hab, oder der/mitsambt der pleyden unnd annder zierde oder zugehörnde/desselben über sechs guldin cost oder werdt sey bey peen aines/yeden tags oder nacht drey guldin...” ~

As there seems to be some confusion about what to wear for a coif (ranging from what appear to be diapers to unseamed cotton rags), I decided to do some research on womens' coifs at the end of the fifteenth century: although we cannot know exactly how the construction was effected, this method is easy to realize and appears authentic.

The typical *wulsthaube* - called *steuchla* in Nürnberg - consists of a padded false braid and the coif-cloth. More stylish and more complicated draped coifs (as seen in many illustrations) were called veils.

The coif cloth is made from finely woven linen and has either a plain fringe or one that consists of several layers (not pleats).

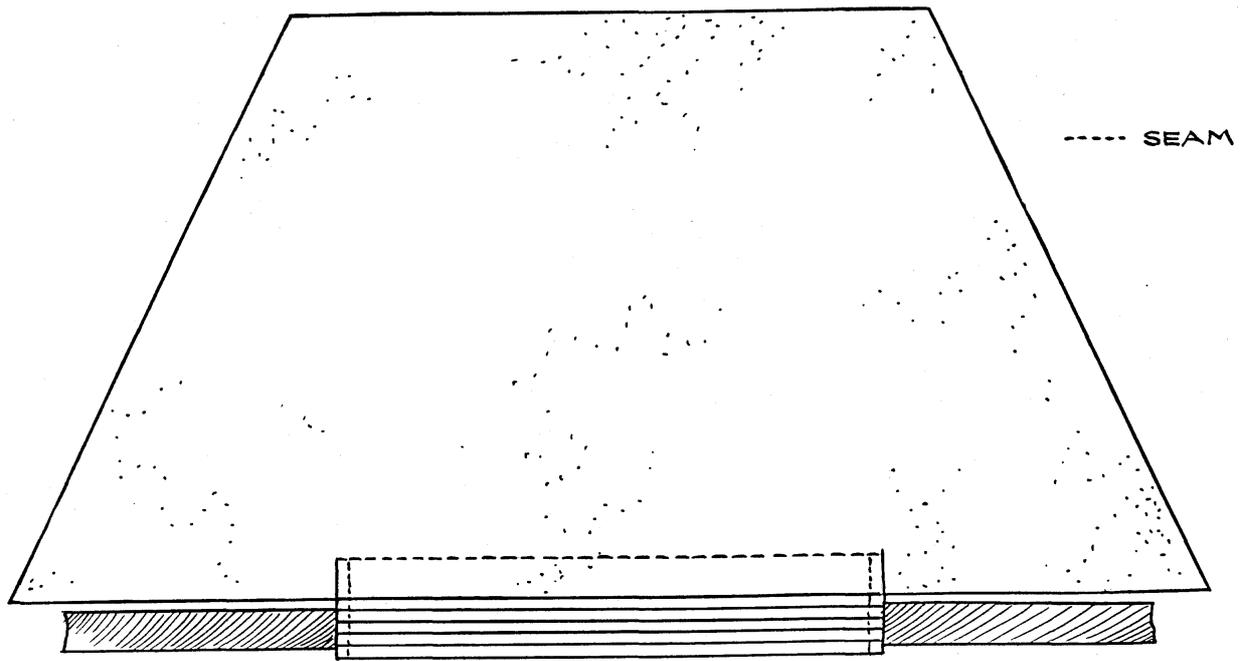
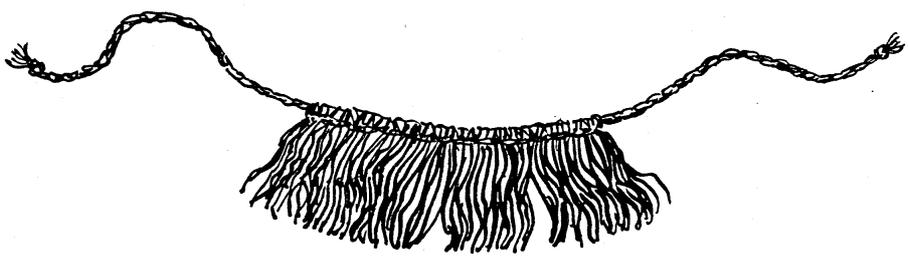
It is best to use the edge of the material or a decorative stitch (similar to blanket stitch) in white thread; there is also evidence that gold thread was used.

The layers forming the front of the coif were called *VACH*. To construct it, the different layers were fixed one on top of the other at a distance of about 8 cm from the edge (each top one letting about 5 mm of the lower show), by means of back stitches - clearly visible in most of the illustrations. There is no reference for material or ribbons wrapped twice (or more often) around the head, but the coif is tied once only at the neck. The loose ends of the cloth then are fixed with two pins. There is never any hair visible, except for braids forming a loop.

The number of layers forming the fringe was always subject to restrictions and should not outnumber six. Of course this rule was never followed, which made many issues of the same edict necessary. Regretfully the construction of the back of the coif is never seen in illustrations, but after trial and error I came up with the following which works and looks authentic.

Even women of lower classes had two or three coifs, with a wooden press to keep them neat, as is recorded in Nürnberg estate inventories.

A pattern may be obtained from the author. ~



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## RECRUITING, PAYMENTS AND PRICES IN THE REPUBLIC OF GENOA

by Bruno Chionetti

Hundreds of wars were fought in Italy during the middle ages, and it is not difficult to find accounts of them in contemporary chronicles. Since the twelfth century, the region of Liguria witnessed the struggle of Genoa to dominate, both politically and economically, the more important cities of the Riviera, such as Savona, Albenga, Finale and Ventimiglia. Wars were always fought with intricate plays of alliances and support of other Italian states and foreign powers, and cities were quick to change their allies in order to obtain financial and military backing.

Genoa was renowned for its crossbowmen, but the term *Genoese* is largely incorrect as these soldiers, as well as other men-at-arms, were recruited from the whole region. Crossbowmen proved to be extremely versatile as they were in constant training, serving as town guards, controlling city walls, strongholds and administrative buildings, in addition to serving as sailors and garrisoning country castles. Common soldiers were of course also recruited, but the crossbow was a national sport: competitions were organized, and men were bound to be in constant training from the ages of 18 to 45. Crossbowmen were recruited in both peacetime and war (when they received higher pay), and such was the demand that the Republic of Genoa had to resort to hiring them.

Mercenary soldiers were often called up in time of war to support the crossbowmen, and the state appeared to prefer numerous smaller contracts with minor *condottieri*, probably in order to avoid large-scale defections and to obtain more favourable conditions. The

*signorie* system, in which the reins of government were offered to foreigners, provided a far cheaper form of defense as the protector, or lord of the city had to provide for the garrison himself. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Liguria saw increasing numbers of mercenaries serving one town or another. These were often foreigners, and they were often billeted in a church or administrative building: it is still not rare today to find graffiti scratched on walls by English, Swiss, German or French medieval mercenaries.

Local recruitment continued however, both for crossbowmen and less-valued infantry such as *famuli* or *pavesari*. These were trained and mustered under *bandiere* (flags) units of about twenty men under the command of a *conestabile* (constable). Under the surviving feudal system *bandiere* were raised throughout the region. Since the men were not professional soldiers but practised their own trades, they were usually called up, in times of crisis, for a period of one to three months, while mercenaries were always hired for no less than three months.

These short periods of duty by no means imply that the men were untrained: drilling was held weekly in times of peace, and as stated above, competitions were very popular. Men from each valley often served as garrison, whilst small guerrilla factions were very common. The importance attached to defense (and offense) is shown by edicts in most local legislature forbidding the sequestration of military equipment in case of debt.

Soldiers were not paid directly by the state: usually individual

men, or even a whole *bandiera*, was sponsored by a noble, a rich bourgeois, or anyone with sufficient means. The Republic would subsequently reimburse them directly, provide tax relief, or give them shares in the *Banca di San Giorgio*. Foreign mercenary captains and troops were granted special licenses by the state such as freedom from tolls, gratuitous transport, supplies or lodging, and men were often not subject to the strict town regulations. This frequently caused trouble with the locals, but so vital was the support of skilled professional men-at-arms and crossbowmen that the state turned a blind eye. Captains were awarded substantial prizes if they succeeded in taking a town or stronghold, and they were permitted to keep prisoners with a view to ransom.

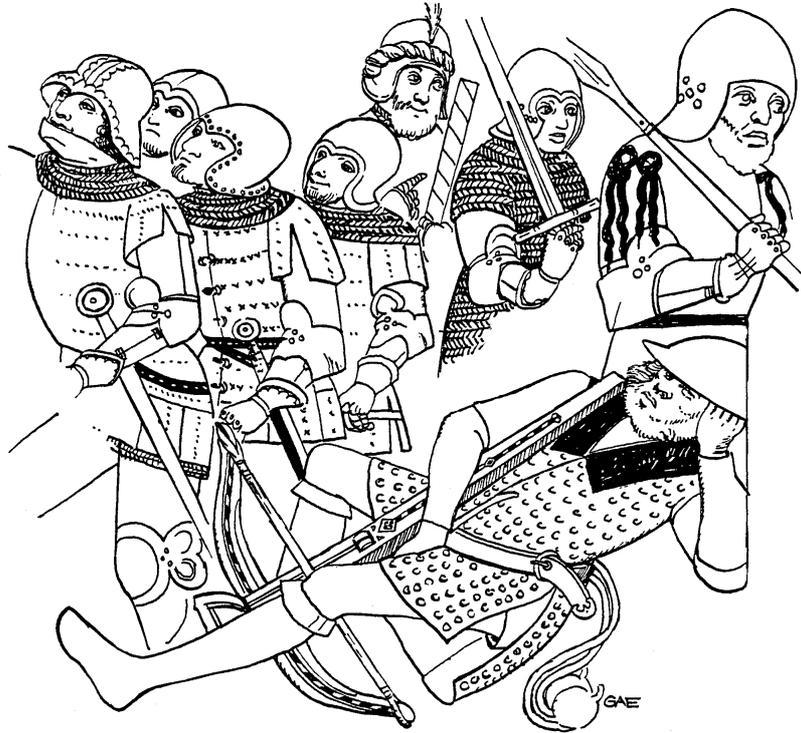
Details of payments and prices require a brief mention of currency. The *lire* was the highest denomination, but it was not generally coined. Other currency such as the *ducato* of Milan, the *florino* of Florence, or other generally accepted gold coins were comparable to the *lire*, and a modern value would be around 180 Swiss francs or £ 75,--. The *lire* was divided into twenty *soldi*, silver coins whose equivalent modern value would be some ten Swiss francs or £ 4,--. The *soldo* was itself divided into twelve *denari*, a coin made of one-third silver and two-thirds copper, with a modern value of about one Swiss franc or £ 0,50.

Constables in the fifteenth century received between ten and fifteen liras for a month's service. Crossbowmen were paid from five to eight liras, foot soldiers five liras, and *famuli* and *pavesari* about three liras.

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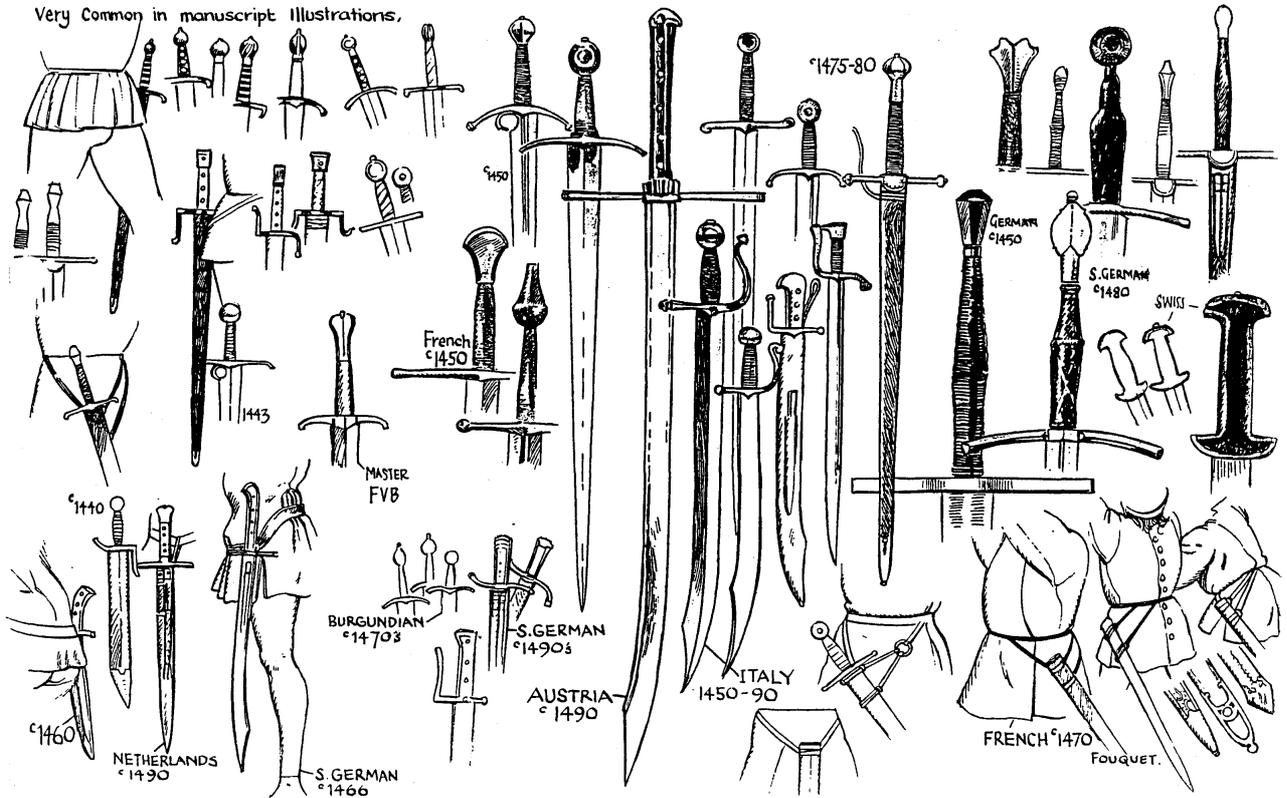
A crossbowman.  
sanctuary of Notre  
Dame des Fointaines in  
La Brique, now  
France; but in the  
1480's, when this  
painting was made,  
part of Briga, between  
Savoy and Piedmont.  
Note the decorations  
on the bow.

The other drawings are  
from the cemetery  
chapel of Castelletto  
Stura (Cuneo) c. 1488.  
And show "Italian"  
footsoldiers with  
complete plate  
protection for arms and  
egs, mail, and some  
sort of brigandines,  
which *appear* to be  
laced, rather than  
riveted together.



## Swords for the Company of St. George

Very Common in manuscript Illustrations.



Burgundian camp could be seen. Seeing this, the Burgundians thought that they were in luck and that the Confederates would stay on the right-hand road with the Moselle on their right-hand side and continue along it. They hurried to load their guns that were standing on the road and completed their 'Order' at this place and thought that they would wait here for the Confederates and their allies. Keeping in sight, so as to keep the Burgundians in their 'Order' and preventing them guessing at what the real plan was, the Confederates fell to their knees in full view of the Burgundians and prayed according to their praiseworthy old custom, saying five Paternosters and five Ave Marias. They then rose swiftly to their feet and followed Schindler and his comrade to the left along a different path. Now the Burgundians had seen the Confederates praying and thought that they would attack at that place. The Confederates however forded a deep, angry stream and having crossed an area with large rocks, arrived

on a hill. They kept the hill between them and the guns, so that the guns could not inflict as much damage as on the plain or on the road. And so they came, mounted or on foot with their feet padded against the cold, and swam the stream to arrive at the hill. The people had had a difficult time in the stream however and were freezing. It was snowing so heavily and in such quantities, that they appeared in a very miserable state. However, when the Burgundians saw them, their 'Order' was split apart and broken. Unfortunately, the Confederates were also in disorder, as the good people were all padded and had to shake the water out of their shoes. And while they were sitting, the dear Lord gave a sign and made the sun shine so strongly, that everyone was able to warm themselves as if it were a beautiful summer's day. Now everyone was able to see the enemy, who had realised what had happened and were running around in confusion and shouting loudly, trying to bring

the guns to bear on the Confederates. These were still able to inflict some casualties.

And now the god-fearing Confederates and other men that were there heard the Burgundians shouting and when they saw and realised that the guns were being turned on them, they waited no longer and ran quickly down the hill and through a thick hedge. A man of Lucerne, named Kūri Kōit arrived on his horse in the midst of the enemy before the rest of the army. He was carrying a small pennant (a "rennfennli") and was rushed by the Burgundians, who thought he was a proper ensign. He had an uncontrollable horse and was therefore brought down and killed. God save his soul, for he died in a knightly manner. Many people were also brought down at the hedge by longbow arrows. However, the pressure was so great, that the hedge was flattened and through God's help, the Burgundians were put to flight. 🐉

These rates represent salaries paid in wartime - garrisons in time of peace received no more than five lira a month for any class of soldier, and the constable of the castle only received eight lira.

Men in permanent service, or the garrisons of the most important castles, together with the state-owned fleet were equipped directly by the state. Sometimes clothing or cloth was provided as some *bandiere* were all arrayed in the same colour. A good crossbow cost around one lira; bolts were sold at one *soldo*, but there was a discount for quantity.

Breast-plates cost five liras, and a simple helmet (*cervelliera*) one lira; simple pole arms such as bills or short spears cost five *soldi*, and a *pavese* (pavise) one lira.

The state was theoretically responsible for victualling, but very often troops provided for themselves by looting and pillaging, whilst defeated enemies were usually liable for war expenses. In times of peace, local garrisons were supplied by small local communities.

Some food prices: Four eggs cost one *denaro*, a *sestario* (about one kilo) of wheat cost three *soldi*, three *denari*, bread cost one *denaro* for about half a kilo: bread is a complex subject

- in rural communities each family baked its own, while in towns a family brought its own dough to the cook, who took part of it in payment. The best Sardinian cheese cost three *denari* an ounce (25 g.); wine was sold at six *denari* per quarter-litre; one *denaro* would buy 150 g. goat meat, or 250 g. mutton, or 200 g. fresh pork, or 600 g. good beef. An average meal cost around one *soldo*, to compare with a soldier's daily salary of three to five *soldi*. These were good rates compared to other workers: wool weavers earned two *denari* for three metres, and cobblers charged two *denari* for changing a pair of soles. 🐉