

The Crimson Letter

The Official Newsletter of the Shire of Crimson River ♦ December 2009 ♦ AS XLIV



Seasons Greetings from Crimson River

Kingdom Calendar

December 2009

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| 5 | Magna Faire, Barony of Iron Mountain | Blountsville, AL |
| 12 | Shire Christmas Party/Shire Work Day | Local |

January 2010

- 9 12th Night Collegium, Barony of Bryn Madoc
- 9 Glaedenfeld 12th Night, Shire of Glaedenfeld
- 9 12th Night/Youth Combat Collegium, Shire of Arenal
- 16 Menhir, Shire of Rising Stone
- 16 Collegium Event, Shire of Talmere
- 23 Diverse Pleasures VII, Canton Des Forges
- 23 Jour d'Amour V, Shire of Drakenmere
- 30 Winter Collegium, Shire of An Dun Theine
- 30 Baronial Brawl, Barony of Osprey

February 2010

- 6 Midwinter A&S, Barony of Southdowns
- 13 Event, Shire of Phoenix Glade
- 13 Glad Tydings, Shire of Vulpine Reach
- 20 Golden Lily, Shire of Beau Fort
- 20 Black Griffin, Barony of Thor's Mountain
- 27 Convivium Collegialis, Shire of Glynn Rhe
- 27 Meridian Maneuvers, Shire of Ravenwood

March 2010

- 3 Northern Regional War Practice, Shire of Esaraigh
- 14-21 Gulf Wars XIX, King's Arrow Ranch
- 27 Newcomer's Collegium, Shire of Owl's Nest

*Come to our annual Shire of Crimson River Christmas Party!
December 12th at 7pm. Shire workday starts at 10am.*

1052 Dotsonville Road
Clarksville, TN 37042



In this issue...

Christmas in France in the Middle Ages

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The Wild Rover

Munchkin's Menagerie

Christmas Facts

*Congratulations to Adam and
Isabelle on their new addition.*

Bryce Alexander Decker

Born 11/20/09 at 3:30 pm

7lbs 11ozs and 21" long.



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Christmas Facts courtesy of THL Celeste

"The Wild Rover" lyrics courtesy of Wikipedia.org

"Living the Dream" photos courtesy of Lady Ginevra and Vadoma





The Shire of Crimson River

Shire Officers



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Contact any of the officers for more
information on how to join today!





The Shire of Crimson River Shire Meetings



Populace Meetings

First Thursday of the Month @ 7pm, Northwest High School Band Room, 800 Lafayette Road, Clarksville, TN 37042

Arts and Sciences

Second Thursday of the Month @ 7pm, Doc and Vicki's House, 439 Fabian Place, Clarksville, TN 37043

Dance Practice

Third Thursday of the Month @ 7pm, Northwest High School Band Room, 800 Lafayette Road, Clarksville, TN 37042

Newcomer's Meeting

Third Monday of the Month @ 7pm, Books-A-Million, 125 South Hampton Drive, Clarksville, TN 37040

Armor Making

Every Tuesday Night @ 6pm, Sir Mordan's House, 18 Bunker Hill Road, Clarksville, TN 37042

Join us as we live the dream!



From the Seneschal's Quill



Greetings everyone from THL Celeste! I hope you are all doing well and are prepared for the busy month ahead!

This month, we will have a workday to make tunics for newcomers and we will have our annual Christmas party! I hope that all of you who can will come out for the workday and the party. We also have an Arts and Sciences class and a Newcomer's class this month.

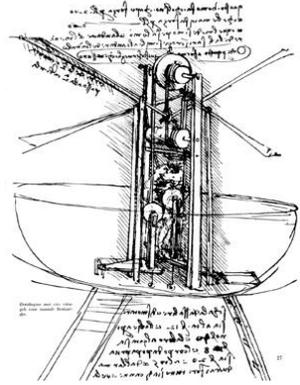
We are growing quickly and I hope that all of our regular populace will welcome the newcomers to our group. The newcomers will bring with them new ideas and new traditions. This is an exciting time of growth for our shire and I thank all of you for being part of it.

The next newsletter will be published in the new year! Until then...

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Arts and Sciences Along the Crimson River



Saluti citizens of Crimson River,

I have been so happy with the diversity of classes being taught at the shire's A&S nights. On November's night, Celeste taught bardic arts. She helped us learn to sing five popular SCA songs including the official Meridian marching song, On to Glory.

December's A&S night will be run by Dakyn. He will be teaching a class about understanding and appreciating beers. It should be an informative class for everyone, not just brewers. Stay after the class ends and we will have a beer tasting.

In January, Etienne will be teaching a class on medieval alchemy!

I know that everyone has something they can teach. It doesn't have to be complicated or particularly unique. Please, think about your talents and knowledge and find something you can share with us. Then, just talk to me and I'll add you to the schedule.

Ciao,

Lady Ginevra Brembati





The Chronicler's Corner

Seasons Greeting my Lords and Ladies!

The holiday season approaches and for the staff of The Crimson Letter, we find ourselves flooded with holiday cheer. Our very own Seneschal has gifted us a story of "Christmas in France in the Middle Ages". In her debut as Deputy Chronicler, Vadoma decks the halls with the first of her regular feature "Living the Dream". If your stocking isn't completely full of goodies yet, I've added my own personal recipe for a holiday favorite. Can't carry a tune in a bucket? Well, then you should have come to the November A&S Meeting, but in case you missed it, we've included one of the songs for you to learn yourself.

As always, our centerfold is a quick look at our wonderful populace and what's been happening around the shire.

A New Year approaches quickly and Father Time's clock is winding down. Help us ring in the New Year by contributing to the January Edition of The Crimson Letter. If it's interesting to you, it'll be interesting to the rest of the shire. Review a book...summarize an event you attended...tell the Shire about your latest project. Let's show the entire Knowne World what we already know...it FUN to be a part of the Crimson River!

Strength and Honor...

Lord Legio of Orkney



Christmas in France in the Middle Ages

By: THL Celeste Alienor Courtenay de Montmorency

In France, Christmas is called Noël. The word “Noël” is taken from the phrase “le bonnes nouvelles” which is a French phrase that translates to “The Good News”. The good news is the gospel and the phrase refers to the spreading of the good news of the birth of Jesus Christ. Although it is common around most of the Western world to celebrate Christmas on December 25th, Christmas in France varies by the region. The Northern and Eastern regions of France begin celebrating Christmas on the Feast of Saint Nicholas which is on December 6th. Others regions such as Lyon start celebrating Christmas on December 8th which is the Feast of light in honor of the Virgin Mary.

Christmas was introduced to France by the Romans. The first Christmas in France was celebrated in Reims in 496 A.D., when Bishop Remi baptized Clovis and his warriors. Baptism was a custom that was



was introduced to Romans. The first Christmas in France was celebrated in Reims. In 496 A.D., Bishop Remi baptized Clovis and his warriors. Baptism was a custom that was

derived from the Middle East. In later years, Kings would choose to be crowned on Christmas day and on November 6, 1351, The Order of the Star (*Ordre de l'Étoile*) was created in honor of the manger.

Christmas trees are a popular Christmas decoration seen in various countries around the world. However, the Christmas tree did not come to be used in France until 1605. Currently, the most popular Christmas decoration in France is the Nativity scene or the “crèche”. The crèche in most French homes has little clay figures called santons that not only represent the holy family, but also include the shepherds and the three wise men. These were introduced in the 12th Century by the family of Saint Francis of Assisi. However these apparently didn't come into popular use

until the 20th century. The Yule log was the first Christmas decoration used in France. The Yule log was originally a Pagan tradition that was later adapted for Christian use. The Yule log was traditionally a log from the previous year's fire that was used to start the current year's fire. Sources differ on whether this fire was to burn through the night on Christmas Eve or was to burn through New Year's Day. The French Embassy website supports the theory that the Yule log was burned from Christmas eve to Christmas day. Although this tradition was popular during the Middle Ages, it has fallen out of favor as more and more French homes were built without fireplaces. The actual Yule log has been replaced by the cake that is also called a Yule log or "buche de Noel".

The rest of the big meal at The French Christmas meal Réveillon. The traditionally midnight mass Eve. The menu varies greatly region but the Yule Log. It meal that the is eaten.

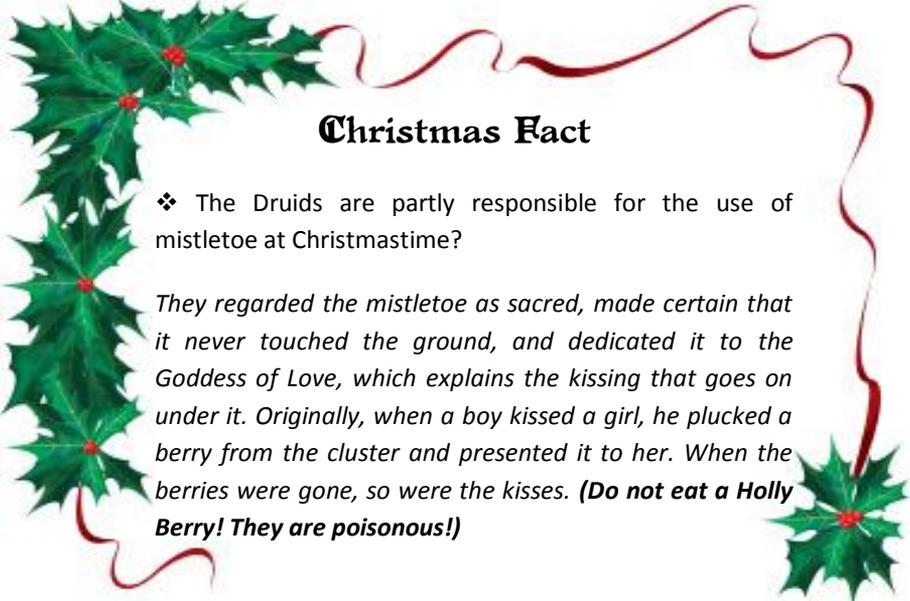


French, like the world, have a Christmas time. traditional is called le meal is consumed after on Christmas for this meal from region to always includes is during this buche de Noel

Children in France are visited by Pere Noel (Father Christmas). The Father Christmas they knew in the Middle Ages isn't the Santa Claus we know today. In the Middle Ages, Santa Claus wore a suit that consisted of robes trimmed in fur. These robes are said to have been depicted in many different colors, however the most popular color cited is green. Children in France left their shoes by the fireplace in the hopes that Pere Noel would fill them with presents. It seems that with the good, there must also be bad. The children in France who were naughty could expect to receive a visit from Père Fouettard who gave out spankings instead of gifts.

One more tradition that is said to have occurred during the Middle Ages in France is the telling of “Marveiles qui advinrent en la Sainte Nuit”. The “Marveiles qui advinrent en la Sainte Nuit” is the story of the flight into Egypt by Joseph and Mary in order to escape the wrath of Herod. This story was told by minstrels who wandered through the villages and towns of France. One of the most popular stories told around the fireplace was the story of “The Little Match Girl.” There were other stories and fairy tales that were told around the fires to the children. However, many of these have been lost.

There are many more traditions associated with Christmas in France in the Middle Ages. The ones I have covered are the ones that stuck out to me as the most important and the most popular. France has a long and varied Christmas tradition that is interesting no matter what region you happen to be studying. I hope I gave you at least a general picture of what Christmas in France was like in the Middle Ages.



Christmas Fact

- ❖ The Druids are partly responsible for the use of mistletoe at Christmastime?

*They regarded the mistletoe as sacred, made certain that it never touched the ground, and dedicated it to the Goddess of Love, which explains the kissing that goes on under it. Originally, when a boy kissed a girl, he plucked a berry from the cluster and presented it to her. When the berries were gone, so were the kisses. **(Do not eat a Holly Berry! They are poisonous!)***





Living the Dream

By: Vadoma

Lord Dakyn de Blakemere came to the SCA in 1996. Already a Civil War and World War II reenactment enthusiast, he came along with a friend to check out the SCA and although his friend went his own way, Lord Dakyn stayed with us and found a home in the past.

Starting his journey here in the Kingdom of Meridies, he found himself drawn to the 14th and 15th century in England around the time of the 100 Years War. He and his lovely wife Lady Ginevra have travelled through several kingdoms, however they have recently returned to us.



Enjoying the camaraderie and challenge of fighting, Lord Dakyn is squired to Sir Leto Darkhorse and Seconded to Sir Jean Claude Van Alderstat. He has also been honored with an Award of Arms.

Lord Dakyn is also at home with the Arts. He is a jack of all trades, but has special skills in woodworking, brewing, leatherworking, some armoring, and has even been known to be handy with a needle to help sew his own garb. He also has fine



bardic skills and is talented with both voice and guitar. Lord Dakyn admits that he has no students of his own currently, but is open to the option of teaching.

So, whether you need a champion in battle or skill in the arts, pull up a seat and share a tankard with our very own Lord Dakyn de Blakemere.



Christmas Fact

❖ The Christmas tree was first decorated with lights in the 16th century?

It is believed that Martin Luther, the Protestant reformer, was the first to add lighted candles to the tree. He was so taken with the Christmas night sky that he wished to bring "the lights of the stars" into the home of his family. From this, decorating the tree with ornaments, messages and small gifts emerged in later centuries leading to our customs today.





Eggnog: A Glass of Holiday Cheer

by: Legio of Orkney

No holiday season would be complete without a bit of Eggnog. A traditional drink, not only is Eggnog delicious, but it's also very much a period drink. Eggnog began with possets of the Middle Ages. Possets were made by boiling milk and adding alcohol and spices to it. The name itself traces it's origins to the Middle English word "noggin" which was the name given to a small cup used to serve alcohol. So the next time you are planning that Medieval holiday feast...don't forget the Eggnog!

Legio's Easy Traditional Eggnog (non-alcoholic)

6 Eggs
2 Cups of Milk
1 Cup of Heavy Whipping Cream
8 Tbsp of Sugar
3 Tsp of Vanilla Extract
½ Tsp of Ground Nutmeg

In a large mixing bowl, beat the eggs with a mixer. Add milk, cream and sugar and continue mixing until it begins to thicken. Add in the Vanilla Extract and Nutmeg. Cover and refrigerate for 3 hours until chilled and serve.





The Wild Rover

as performed by THL Celeste

I've been a wild rover for many's the year,
and I spent all me money on whiskey and beer.
And now I'm returning with gold in great store,
and I never will play the wild rover no more.

(Chorus)

And it's no, nay, never! No, nay, never, no more,
will I play the wild rover. No, never, no more!

I went to an alehouse I used to frequent,
and I told the landlady me money was spent.
I asked her for credit, she answered me "nay,
such a custom as yours I could have any day".

(Chorus)

I pulled from me pocket a handful of gold,
and on the round table it glittered and rolled.
She said "I have whiskeys and wines of the best,
and the words that I told you were only in jest".

(Chorus)

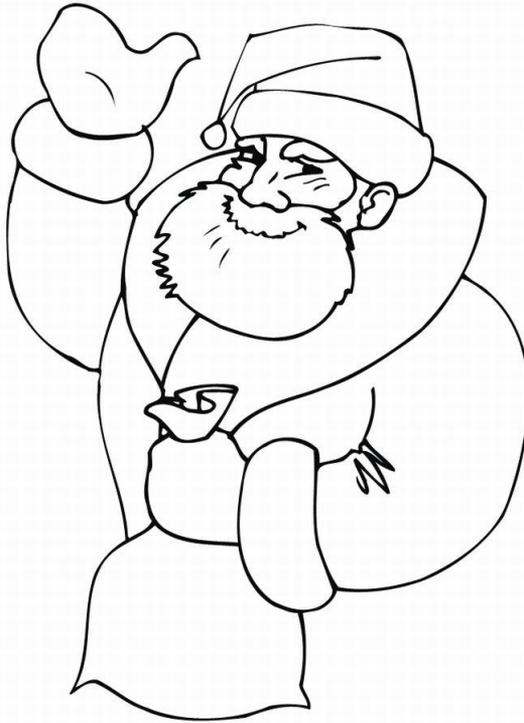
I'll go home to me parents, confess what I've done,
and I'll ask them to pardon their prodigal son.
And if they forgive me as oft times before,
I never will play the wild rover no more.

(Chorus)



Munchkin's Menagerie

by THL Celeste and Lord Legio



Saint Nicholas of Myra is the primary inspiration for the figure of Santa Claus . Nicholas was famous for his generous gifts to the poor. While Saint Nicholas was originally portrayed wearing bishop's robes, today Santa Claus is generally depicted as a plump, jolly, white-bearded man wearing a red coat with white collar and cuffs. What is Santa bringing YOU this year?

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Submissions

The Crimson Letter is prepared on a PC using Microsoft Word 2007. Submissions are preferred via email to orknevfng@hotmail.com, with the submission as an attachment to the message. Attachments must be compatible with Microsoft applications. Microsoft Word documents are preferred.

Submission Deadline

The deadline for hard-copy and email submissions is the 20th of each month. If a delay is anticipated, please contact the Chronicler. **Corrections to information in The Crimson Letter should be brought to the direct attention of the Chronicler ASAP.**



Gota hobby?

<http://crimsonriversca.org>