

The Wye's Mouth



Barony of Wyewood ~ Anno Societatis XLIX (49) ~ Issue 5

A missive from their Excellencies

The Barony of Wyewood and the Barony of Madrone once again co-sponsored the Emprise of the Black Lion. Members of both baronies once again came together and helped put on a beautiful and enjoyable event. As usual, Guillaume put together a wonderful enthusiastic event team. There is no way we have room to individually thank everyone who pitched in. But we know who you are. Thank you all.

Our next event will be the Wyewood Yule, Oak VS Holly on December 13th. If there are any individuals our populace believes is deserving of recognition, please let us and our heralds know so we can take care of that. Also, a reminder, if you wish to recommend a member of our populace for a kingdom award, please let both of us know so we can add our recommendation and support.

In service to the Crown, An Tir and Our
Populace ~ Baron Robert de la Trinitie &
Baroness Gabrielle Lepinay

Baronial Progress

Barons Ball Wastekeep Oct 4 - 5 ~ Robert & Gabrielle

Bows & Blades Oct 10-12 ~ Gabrielle

Babie Lito Glymm Mere Oct 25th ~ Gabrielle, possibly Robert

Harvest Feast BaO Nov 1st ~ Possibly both Robert and Gabrielle

Midhaven Harvest Feast Nov 15 ~ Gabrielle, possibly Robert

Oak VS Holly Wyewood Dec 13th ~ Robert & Gabrielle

12th night Jan 9 - 11 ~ Robert & Gabrielle

Ursalmas Aquaterra Jan 23-25 ~ Robert & Gabrielle

Esclarmonde Court Herald to Their Excellencies of Wyewood ~ Emprise Court Report

Lady Alianora Greymoor joined La Compaignie de la Forche of Wyewood
Robb of Wyewood received the Argent Increscent

Tokens for Martial Excellence and Service were given to Lord Tymme Lytefelow, Lady Avine de Hert, and Lady Fiona Swiftarrow
Don Thorbjorn Askni made a petition to enter Wyewood's first sergeantry trials to earn the rank of Gallant

Matillis atte hethe became a member of the Order of ambe de Leon

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A&S Articles

Bayeux and Beyond ~ Stem Stitch, Surface Couching and Laid Work

by Dame Esclarmonde de Porcairages

At recent Friday FCS nights, Wyewoodians and more have had the opportunity to learn some basic embroidery stitches. I want to especially thank our newcomer Elizabeth, who suggested doing one stitch at a time rather than one long class with all the stitches. This spreads out the preparation work for me, and also gives attendees a chance to get comfortable with one stitch instead of being overwhelmed with many at once.

For the first three classes in this series, I decided to present the three kinds of stitches used in the Bayeux Tapestry. This 70-meter embroidered wall hanging, made in the late 1000s, depicts the Norman conquest of England. Scholars debate whether it was created in England or France. What is hard to debate is that it is probably the most written-about piece of embroidery in all of human history, in any culture. The stitches in it were also used in other times in places in medieval history, but the Bayeux Tapestry gives me a framework for presenting them.

The outlines of the Bayeux Tapestry were worked in stem stitch. To make stem stitch, the embroiderer

makes a series of short, slightly overlapping stitches along a line. Stem stitch creates thin, fluent line that can work around all kinds of shapes, including the animals, people, and lettering of the tapestry.

Because of its frequent use in this manner, stem stitch is sometimes also called "outline stitch." It can be found throughout the SCA period in many times and cultures, though appears more rarely after the mid 1300s. When used in the 1400s or 1500s, it was often used only to do tiny internal detail lines on hands and faces. I have not seen any examples of period work that are only in stem stitch; it is always used in combination of other stitches.

The interiors of figures of the Bayeux Tapestry were done in laid work and surface couching. Laid work consists of long parallel stitches, which only go under the fabric a few threads' width between each stitch. The parallel threads lay directly next to each other. It's a fast, effective fill method that wastes little thread. However, because of the length of the stitches, it does not take friction well. The long stitches would be easily caught or moved out of place.

This is where surface couching comes in, at least in the Bayeux tapestry. Surface couching uses two threads: a thicker or more valuable thread that lays

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on the surface of the fabric (the couched thread), and a thinner thread (the couching thread) that only appears at intervals above the surface, appearing in tiny stitches over and perpendicular to the couched thread, holding it down. In the Bayeux Tapestry, couched threads run over the laid work and at a 90 degree angle, keeping the laid work in place.

Historically, surface couching was also used in many other times and places. It was most often used for gold work. Since gold is expensive, one doesn't want to waste it on the back side of the fabric.

Couching is the solution which allows most of it to be visible. In the opus anglicanum style of embroidery, which had its heyday from the 1200s to about 1400, couched gold served as a background to figures in split stitch. By carefully placing the silk couching threads over the many parallel gold threads, a pattern could emerge, such as checkerboard or zigzag lines.

In the 1400s a technique called or nué consisted almost entirely of couched gold thread. The pictures, including complex human figures with draping clothing, were created by changing the color and the proximity of the silk threads holding down the gold threads.

Stem stitch, laid work, and couching are just a few of the embroidery stitches and techniques available to

period embroiderers. However, with just these three, a saga that turned the fate of a nation was memorialized forever in the Bayeux tapestry.

On the Steps of the Church of San Sisto The Earliest Sidewalk Chalk Artists ~ By Lady Jorunn Aslaksdotter

Piacenza, Italy ~ October 1, 1513

A new altarpiece was unveiled yesterday morning at Piacenza's Benedictine monastery, the Chiesa di San Sisto. The nearly nine-foot-tall oil painting was greeted by sighs and murmurs of wonder by all in attendance. This Madonna is already garnering acclaim as the finest of all the works of Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino, known to many simply as Raphael. The "Prince of Painters" has worked for months on this masterpiece, commissioned a year ago by Pope Julius II himself.

Since Piacenza lies upon the Via Francigena, the pilgrim route running from France to Rome, La Madonna di San Sisto (or "the Sistine Madonna") is sure to be viewed by many travelers and its fame carried far and wide.

The larger-than-life Madonna and Child are flanked by Saint Sixtus and Saint Barbara, and a misty cloud of angels fills the background. Even young children take delight at sight of the majestic oil painting, for at the bottom loom two whimsical cupids, as bored as any child during a long service.

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Like many others, this Madonna is sure to give inspiration to the *i* Madonnari, itinerant artists who color the streets with imitations of the art within cathedrals. One of these artists has already reproduced the Sistine Madonna on the pavement beside San Sisto's steps.

Unlike Raphael, who works in oil paints of many rich hues, the *i* Madonnari have a palette of only three colors: chalk white, pottery-shard red, and charcoal black. Using pavement for a canvas, they do their best to reproduce the master's artistry out under the open sky.

Come along and see for yourself, and if you like the madonnari's work, toss him a penny or two for his labors. But hurry, before the autumn rains wash the artwork away!

Cultures and Languages Insert:

i Madonnari is pronounced "ee mah-doe-NARR-ee". In later decades and a cooler climate, sidewalk chalk artists of England will go by the name of "screevers."

Merchant's Row

Come check out the Wyewood Store where you can find everything Bubba!

www.cafepress.com/wyewood

A portion of each sale is donated to the Barony of Wyewood.

Regularly Scheduled Activities ~ Please watch the list as current times and locations are posted there...

Full Contact Social ~ Location & Dates posted to the list

Archery ~ Weather permitting; most Saturday's
Arts & Science ~ Knitting Night & Other classes as announced

Bardic ~ Music and other mischief

Culinary ~ Scribal ~ Armory

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Want to Know More? Check the website for current information ~

www.wyewood.org

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