

THE BICRANIAL BEAR

JUNE 2023

Greetings to the Citizens of Adiantum!

Welcome to the second BiCranial Bear of 2023.

Now that Egil's Tourney is over I can put on my Chronicler hat again. An Tir West War is almost upon us, so here's a piece about why we fight, a filk of the Mr. Rogers theme song by Lady Beatrice Knighton, and an interview with Bantiarna Muirenn inghean Ui Cléirigh by our Baron Brynjarr. Muirenn was our Three Pillars Champion at Egil's Tourney 48 this year, a wonderful achievement one year after her first event!

Enjoy. . .

In service to Adiantum,
Yseult of Broceliande, Chronicler

The BiCranial Bear is the official newsletter of the Barony of Adiantum.

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Why We Fight: A Brief History of An Tir and the West

An article by Aesa Sigtryggsdottir, a former Chronicler of Adiantum, from The Bi-Cranial Bear June 2007, pp.11-12.

With the coming of An Tir-West War in July, we are reminded once again of An Tir's relationship to the Kingdom of the West. While the War is an opportunity for martial fun, mercantile bliss, and general mingling merriment for An Tirians and Westies alike, let it also serve as a gentle reminder of our Kingdom's ties to the West. For a good deal of our Kingdom's early history, as well as that of our barony, can be traced back and tied to the Kingdom of the West.

Only several short years after the First Tournament, small branches began to grow in the northwest. Three Mountains and Madrone were established in A.S.

IV, and in May of A.S. VIII they were officially adopted into the Kingdom of the West at an event called the Tourney of Union. The area that surrounded the two young and flourishing baronies was dubbed the Principality of An Tir.

As time passed the Principality continued to grow and prosper, and new baronies — Lions Gate and our very own Adiantum — were established. Unfortunately, it did not take long for problems to arise — weeds among the flowers, as it were.

The greatest problem extending across what was now a very sizable Kingdom was that of communication. An Tirians who wanted to become paying members often had difficulty in doing so - sometimes their dues would be received, but they themselves would not receive any official documents in return, not even the Kingdom newsletter. Sometimes even the dues got lost by the wayside. *The Crier*, which had originally been established in Madrone, had quickly become the main missive received by those in the Principality of An Tir, and it was generally perceived as being easier to keep abreast of things through that channel.

It was also difficult to get events listed in the Kingdom's newsletter — and if they were not posted there, they could not be considered official events, and court business, such as the bestowing of honors and investing of titles, could not be conducted. As a result, talented and deserving gentles were overlooked for recognition.

Compounding these issues was the unfortunate perception, if not the actual presence, of ill will of some in the West toward those in An Tir. While several of those who sat on the thrones of the West were indeed beneficent toward their northern principality, other officers did not seem nearly so kind or helpful.

As a result of all these things, by A.S. XII (1977-8), discontent had seeded itself in the hearts of many in Ari Tir, to the point where it was proposed that the entire Principality cede itself from the Kingdom of the West and strike out on its own - even if that meant having to leave the SCA, too. At the Twelfth Night celebration, when An Tir's newest Prince and Princess were to be crowned, it was planned that An Tir's independence would be declared; then-Prince Edward Zifran, who in the normal scheme of things was to crown his successor, planned instead to declare it to be his last reign as Prince, and his first as King of An Tir. (He also intended to give his successors the crowns and honors that they had rightly won, but at a later date.) This, and the plans leading up to it, became known as the An Tir Rebellion. Adiantum was a key province that had many supporters of the Rebellion, as its path through the bureaucratic gauntlet to becoming a barony had been rocky and unpleasant. It can be argued, however, that ill feelings were not the only compulsions for the Rebels...it was also sort of

fun for An Tirans. to plot and plan and dream of having a Kingdom of their very own.

Unfortunately, not all were able to see it as excitement. fun, and games. When news of the Rebellion plot was finally leaked, King Paul of the West was deeply offended by it; he had wanted to help An Tir gain its independence eventually, and had been trying to iron out the various differences that had been creating discontent in the first place_ and it is understandable that he could have seen this as affronts planned behind his back, and a slap to the face. And there were many in An Tir who were not Rebels; they may have wanted independence someday, but not in this manner. Some of these were officers who took their sworn fealty to the West very seriously. As the date to the planned Rebellion approached, it became clearer and clearer that there were large bodies of Rebels and Royalists alike, with no clear consensus of how independence should eventually be achieved. At Twelfth Night, Rebels appeared wearing gray armbands (to reflect the color of An Tir's skies, 'proper'), and Royalists were wearing purple ribbons to show their loyalty. Thus color-coded, it became obvious to all that feelings were far from unanimous. Though many of the previously prepared speeches were presented, the actual act of Rebellion was not carried through. Wisely refraining from such an act, Edward crowned his heir, and An Tir remained a Principality.

For a brief time, things were tense and sometimes ugly between the two parties. The main body of furor on both sides did subside, however. Many newcomers to the Society at this time learned stories, songs, and lore of the Rebellion from Rebels, and were taught so in the light of an amusing game - which, at its heart. in spite of all the frustrations, had been the aims of many of the Rebels in the first place. And, in A.S. XIII, the founding Baroness of Adiantum, Alyanora de Vinca, was crowned Queen of the West. Gradually, both Rebels and Royalists alike began to look for ways to establish An Tir's independence, only this time within the bounds of the various rules and regulations which had been set up by the BoD. Concessions were made In AS. XIV [1979-80], King Radnor made a law that all the Principalities of the West — including An Tir — could bid on and hold one Crown event per year. In A.S. XV, the Crown Tournament was held in An Tir, in Coeur du Val. Officers of the West became more helpful to those in the northern lands, and the Kingdom's newsletter both received and posted official events for An Tir. And, under the new regulations, An Tir attained the required number of memberships to become a Kingdom. As a result, at Twelfth Night in A.S. XV [1981], a proclamation was made, officially petitioning the Kingdom of the West to allow An Tir to become a Kingdom in its own right. Most notably, all four of those who presented the petition were Royalists.

So it was that on January 6, A.S. XVI [1982], King Radnor and Queen Esmirelda of the West crowned Manfred Kreigsteiber and Morag Campbell the first King and Queen Of An Tir.

As a Society dedicated to researching medieval history, it is also good for us to look back on our own history. and the lessons that can be learned from it. Let us always be willing to look at prior events, to remind ourselves of how previous frustrations have been overcome, at how others have upheld honor and duty as well as their own beliefs and desires. This is a dream and a game, but it can also be a great opportunity to learn about high ideals, as well.

This article is based heavily on the accounts of the An Tir Rebellion, “A Rebel’s View of the An Tir Rebellion, Part the First” and “...Part the Second”, written by Sister Guineth the White.

There’s also a short account of the Rebellion by Gerek the Far-Seeing at:

<http://www.ravensgard.org/gerekr/rebellion.html>

and in the An Tir Culturewiki at An Tir Wiki:

http://antir.sca.wiki/index.php?title=An_Tir_Rebellion



A FÍLK SONG (to the tune of the Mr. Rogers theme)

It's a lovely day at this grand event.
A lovely day for a lesson.
Won't you be mine? Could you be mine?

It's a wonderful day for some A&S
And I gotta say I love that dress.
Won't you be mine? Won't you be mine?

I have always wanted to have a Laurel just like you.
I've always wanted to learn from a talented one like you so.
Let's make the most of this lesson today.

You don't know how long I've been wanting to say.
Would you be mine? Could you be mine?
Won't you be my Laurel? Will you please?
Will you please? Please will you be my Laurel?

It's a beautiful day at this table and tent
A beautiful day for a table
Can I help you? May I help you?

It's a beautiful day to be helping out
A beautiful day for service
May I help you? Can I help you?

I have always wanted a Pelican just like you
I've always wanted serve An Tir like Pelicans do
Let's make the most of this town today

Since I'm talking to you, I'd like to say
Would you be mine, could you be mine?
Won't you be my Pelican, won't you please?
My lady, please? Please won't you be my Pelican?

It's a beautiful day for the fighting ring
A beautiful day for a battle
Please teach me how. Please teach me how

Whether it's a shiny rapier or a heavy piece for sure.
Please teach me how? Won't you teach me?
I have always wanted to learn from a Knight just like you.
I've always wanted to learn the warrior life like you do .

Let's make the most of our time today.
Since I'm talking to you, may I say?
Please, May I be! Can I be?
Let me be your Squire.
Won't you please? Please oh please?
Please can I be your Squire?

An Interview with Muirenn inghean Ui Cléirigh

By Baron Brynjarr Olfúss



Bantiarna (Lady) Muirenn with her husband Eoghan.

When did you join the SCA?

I became a member at the end of June of last year, but we had attended two events, some Egils work parties, and a few zoom A&S and archery meetings before that.

What was your first event?

The kids and I showed up to Birthday Bash last year for a few hours. The moment we got past gate we had

several different people welcome us in and explain what was happening. We felt immediately cared for. I believe it was Vesta who showed us around and introduced us to Helen in Gold Key. She found us better garb for the cold weather, then Dame Johanna got the kids started on a scavenger hunt where we met so many other amazing individuals! One of the fighters let the kids hold a sword, couple others served lunch, and we all crowded under a pavilion when the hail got bad! As homeschoolers, we were overwhelmed by the wealth of knowledge everyone was actually excited to share. It was like we had fallen into a historical treasure trove! Good memories from the very start!

Do you remember who helped you learn about our society and who is it?

While visiting and vending at Renaissance Faires, random people kept telling us about the SCA and we saw the displays. I finally remembered to look into it and

reached out. I believe Dame Johanna was our first contact when she answered my email.

Our whole family (my husband Eoghan, son Finn, and daughter Onóra) decided to camp at Egils. Dame Johanna had invited us to camp next to her, but she sadly got sick the weekend of the event. We didn't really know anyone but were immediately enveloped into the household across the path! "The Rose and Thistle" cooked amazing food for us all weekend, included the kids around camp, and we felt like instant family. William Jakes, Cyeth, Murchadh, Avina, and the rest of the Household were so gracious and patient with our endless questions. That's when we decided we were going to become members of the SCA. After Egils, they also helped us figure out our personas, names, and invited us to become official members of the household!

What is your "dream" when you go to an event?

While I'm fascinated by the history and beyond impressed with the variety of skills on display, from the very first I have been most impressed with court. Having that purposeful time to recognize and honor individuals feels almost sacred and its not something we see often enough in the mundane world. For some reason, seeing fighters, craftspeople, royalty, and incredibly dedicated workers show such genuine affection and respect for each other is so meaningful to me. And it causes us to pay attention to each other and the good qualities others bring to the table. So I suppose my dream is to see the people I appreciate acknowledged and I'm excited to contribute by nominating others and providing largess, scrolls and charters.

Can you tell us about your persona and how you chose it?

Our family chose 11th C. Irish. Many of my ancestors are from Ireland and I have been able to visit a couple times, so the place and history is dear to my



11th century sacramentary cover

heart. We chose a time that would have had Viking influence, but was experiencing a time of relative independence. It is a time we don't know a lot about, so it's given us much opportunity to research and learn! Both Eoghan and I love the outdoors so we're leaning toward rural personas.

Do you have a passion in our society? A Marshal skill, crafting, or service...etc?

I believe I'm still figuring out how my mundane passions and SCA passions align. I love foraging, gardening, and raising animals for food, medicine, clothing, and art. Now I'm learning the history connected with these things, as well as what practices are better left in the past and what can still be relevant. I love crafting and creating and just want to learn how to do everything, especially the wildcrafting skills. I really enjoy projects that I can take through the whole process (like home grown wheat, honey, and wild yeast to bread) and projects that are useful. But my biggest passion is my family. I love that we can participate in so many facets of the barony together, from archery to thrown weapons to armored combat and service. And they like to help with scribal and A&S with me!

Would you please share any roles you have filled in our Society, i.e. championships, officer positions, etc.?

I was recently asked to be deputy scribe to Victoria De Kente (formerly Jillian Fitzgilbert)! I'm so excited to have this opportunity to shadow her and see how the scribal position works!

Is there anything you would like to learn about that someone could help you with?

I want to learn EVERYTHING! Maybe someone could teach me how to prioritize? A couple things on my list are nalbinding and vellum making. I have been so impressed with how willing everyone is to share their incredibly diverse and advanced skills! I'm so glad we've found Adiantum!