

a Medieval Life



written & illustrated by Linda Laforge

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**written & illustrated
by Linda Laforge**

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for

the Great Northern Medieval Fayre

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A Medieval Life

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Intro to the Medieval Era

The Medieval Era, often called The Middle Ages or the Dark Ages, began just before 500 A.D. following a great loss of power throughout Europe by the Roman Emperor. The Middle Ages span roughly 1,000 years, ending around 1450 A.D. (Medieval actually means “Middle”!)

In The Middle Ages people were busy:

- Building great Cathedrals as there was a huge rise in Christianity
- Building Great castles for local nobility
- Clearing large tracts of land by peasants and slaves for their Lords and Kings
- New towns and villages were popping up all over Europe

The period was one of human growth and development, great political upheaval and violence, resulting in the foundation of many of today’s modern European countries.

Life in The Middle Ages

The Medieval Era held for it’s people everything from lavish banquets to the cold harsh reality of working the land and sometimes living with harsh, uncertain, and often dangerous conditions.

For safety and for defense, people formed small communities around a central Lord or Master. Most lived on a Manor, which had a Castle, Church, Village, and the surrounding Farm Land. These Manors were isolated, with very few visits from peddlers or pilgrims on their way to the Crusades or soldiers from other fiefdoms (kingdoms).

Feudalism ~ The King awarded land grants to his most important nobles, like Barons and Bishops, in return for their contribution of soldiers for the King’s armies. Lords could have a variety of other official titles including Earl, Marquis or Viscount. Lords did more than fund wars. They were the local justice and held court for local matters.

Lords provided some of their land to *Vassals*, or tenants who were a little higher class than peasants. Vassals were required to serve guard duty, and later they paid a fee to get mercenaries (soldiers-for-hire).

At the lowest class of society were the Peasants, also called “serfs” or “villeins.” Peasants provided the Lord with labor or a share of the produce or livestock they got from his lands in exchange for protection, land to work and a place to live.



In The Middle Ages people were busy:

- The Village was the central place where people lived, worked, socialized, married, attended festivals and church, gave birth to and eventually died. Villagers rarely ever left their village.
- People depended on the village for protection.
- Villagers wore simple dress and lived on a limited and simple diet.
- Villagers were busy, living and working mostly outdoors.
- Villagers mostly worked the land, trying to grow enough food to survive another year. People in Medieval villages were almost entirely farmers.
- Some villages were temporary. The society would move on if they couldn't grow crops or weather made life too difficult.
- Every village had a Lord, even if he didn't make it his permanent residence. After the 1100's, castles often dominated village landscapes.
- Some villages continued to exist for centuries.

the Village People

Peasants, Serfs and Farmers

Peasants were the poorest people in the medieval era. They lived in the country. Serfs were the poorest of the peasant class, and were a type of slave. Lords owned the serfs who lived on their lands. In exchange for a place to live, serfs worked the land to grow crops for themselves and their lord. Serfs were also expected to work the farms for the lord and pay rent.

Everyday peasants could be educated and marry if they could afford it. Serfs could do neither and were not allowed to move away without the lord's permission.

Farmers were a bit better off than peasants, as some owned their own farms. Most worked the farm lands themselves or with the aid of peasants and serfs.



Medieval plowing with oxen (from a 14th century manuscript), Myers, Philip Van Ness [1885] (1905). *Growth of Nations, Mediaeval and Modern History*, Revised edition, p. 218, Boston, New York, Chicago & London: Ginn & Company.

Carpenters

Carpenters were highly skilled and were elite tradesmen. One had to be good at math, learn woodworking and how to use the tools. It was necessary to join a guild as an apprentice and learn the craft to become a carpenter.

Kings and nobles used the finest carpenters and kept them employed as specialists. After all, castles and estates needed to be decoratively furnished to show their great prestige and status. A master carpenter was always in demand and could earn high wages.

Metalsmiths

The metalsmith, sometimes called blacksmith, had to first make his tools before he could make metal parts like horseshoes, nails and door hinges. A blacksmith was named because he was a 'smith' who worked in the "black" metal, namely iron. The "white" metals were tin, silver or gold.

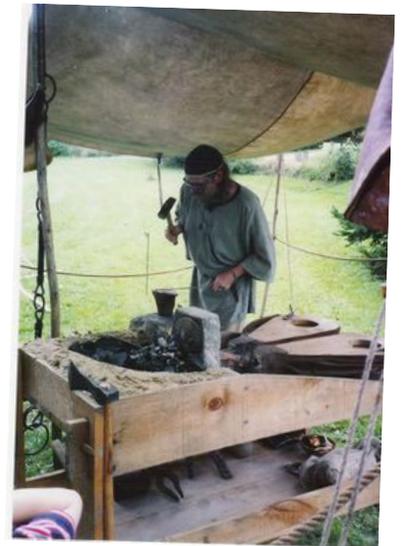
It could take a smith as much as a year to make a full suit of armour for a Knight. If everything didn't fit just right, it could be dangerous.

The Medieval Blacksmith made a huge variety of items and objects which included:

- Medieval Weapons including swords, daggers, lances & arrow heads
- Big Siege Weapons for war
- Medieval Armor and shields
- Tools
- Nails
- Church and Castle Doors - hinges, locks and keys
- Instruments of torture and chains
- Household objects including knives, light fittings & pokers
- Ornaments, Jewelry & Decorative Objects

Classroom Discussion

1. What kind of job would you like to do if you were in Medieval times?
2. Why is life better and easier for us today? Start a comparison between now and then.



The Clothes they Wore

Medieval clothing varied according to a person's social standing. Nobility and upper classes clearly wore different clothes than that of the lower class.



Young Earl, by Linda Laforge. Feel free to colour it!

A **peasant's garb** was very simple, while the clothing of nobility was fitted and had big flowing sleeves. A peasant had to be practical. They had a lot of work to do. Big draping sleeves would get in the way!

Knights wore sleeveless "surcoats" covered with a coat of arms. They wore long trousers, some with feet attached. Fine leather shoes were also worn. Imports like turbans and silks from the East were common for the more fortunate of society. Barbarian nomads wore clothing made of fur, wool, and leather.

Clothing styles of medieval men changed periodically. At the end of the 13th century, the once loose and flowing tunics became fitted and tighter to their bodies. Besides tunics, the men wore undershirts and briefs covered by a sleeveless jacket and another tunic. Old men and monks wore their tunics down to the ground, as did kings and noblemen for parties and ceremonies.

Guys wore stockings too! Knitting hadn't been invented yet, so they had to wear woven tights which didn't fit well. Men sometimes also wore wool pants under their tunics. Wearing pants was originally German. The Romans didn't like pants, but men who rode horses and who lived in colder areas did. Men's medieval clothing also consisted of cloaks with hoods. Cloaks were worn over other clothing as a type of jacket, to keep them warm.

On their feet, men wore leather shoes if they could afford them. You can tell if a medieval painting or tapestry was made before or after about 1300 AD by looking at the mens' shoes. In the earlier paintings men wear shoes with square toes, but later the shoes have pointy toes and even curve up at the toes in a kind of hook, just to be extra fancy.

The Clothes they Wore continued....

Early medieval women wore “kirtles”, which were tunics worn to their ankles. These tunics were often worn over a shirt. When the women were in public, they covered their tunics with an even shorter tunic. More affluent women wore more luxurious clothing than those of the poor. Nuns wore tunics like other women, but generally in black or white rather than colors. On their legs women sometimes wore woven tights or socks, but women never wore pants.

Women, usually if they were married, wore tight-fitting caps and nets over their hair, which was wound in a “bun”. Other women wore veils over their hair, which was left either hanging loosely, or braided tightly. Noblewomen often wore fancy tall hats, sometimes with streamers flowing out of them. They sometimes plucked the hair from their foreheads to give themselves high foreheads. People thought that was beautiful then.



Lady, by Linda Laforge. Feel free to colour it!

Most of what we know about medieval clothing comes from medieval pictures and sculptures, which have lasted. Some things, like metal jewellery or buckles have been found.

Class Project

Put some Costumes together! For girls, a long loose colored dress (to her ankles), with another long dress or robe over it, belted at the waist. She might carry a small sack, keys, and a knife hanging from her belt. She could wear leather boots, or sandals. For boys, a big colored T-shirt (it should reach to his knees), belted at the waist, with colored tights under it, and leather shoes or boots (not sneakers). You could paint a classroom or family crest on the shirt! Both boys and girls might wear a wool cloak with a hood, if it was cold.



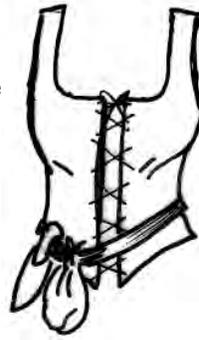
Colouring Pages

1. Colour all of these pictures.
2. Cut each of them out carefully.
3. Pace them on your Medieval Girl to dress her in different medieval clothes. For her headwear, make a slit where it would fit over her head.

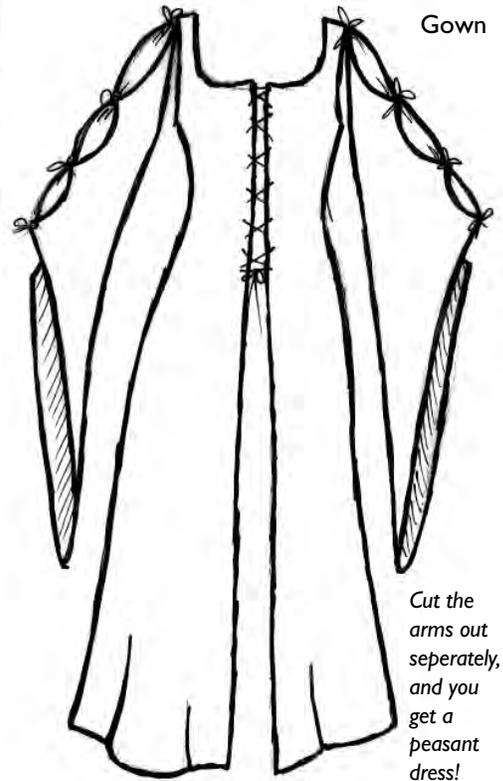
Your
Medieval
Girl



Bodice



Gown



*Cut the
arms out
seperately,
and you
get a
peasant
dress!*



Tunic

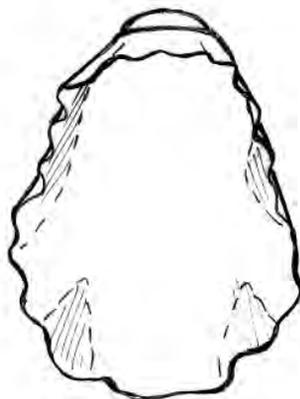
Cloak



Hat



Hat



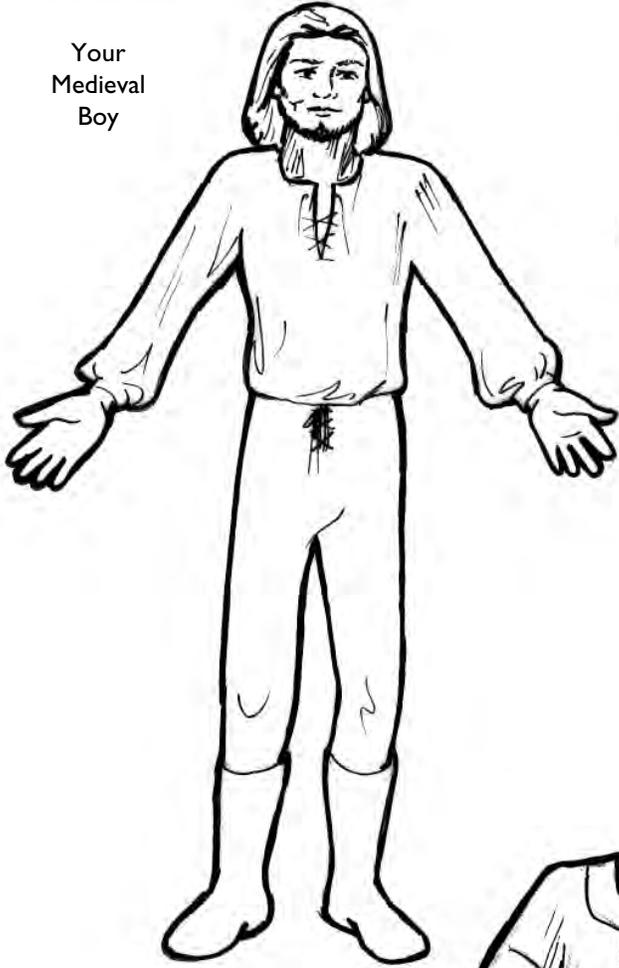
Lady's Hat



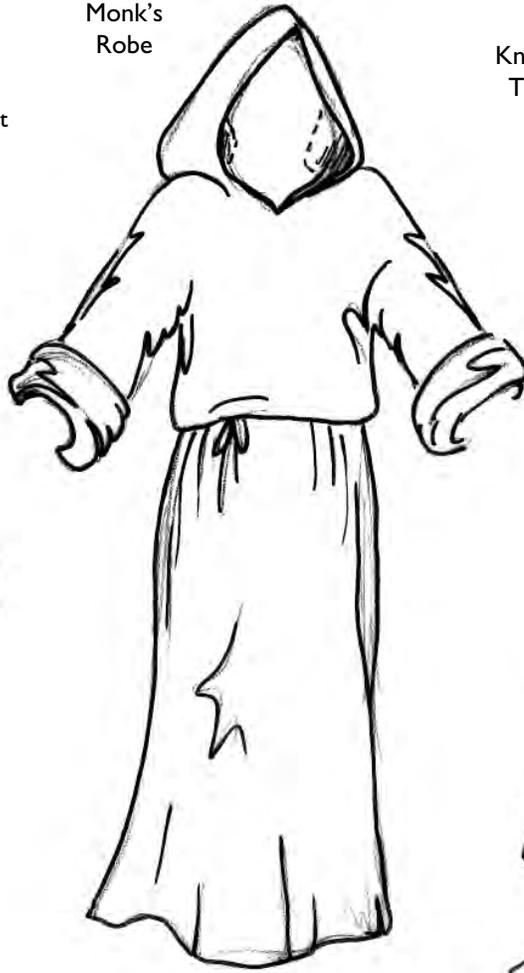
Colouring Pages

1. Colour all of these pictures.
2. Cut each of them out carefully.
3. Paste them on your Medieval Boy to dress him in different medieval clothes. For his hood, make a slit where it would fit over his head.

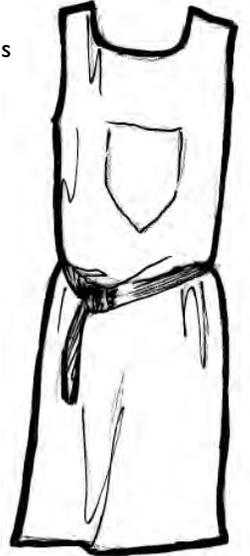
Your
Medieval
Boy



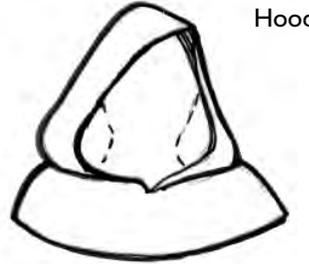
Monk's
Robe



Knight's
Tunic



Hood



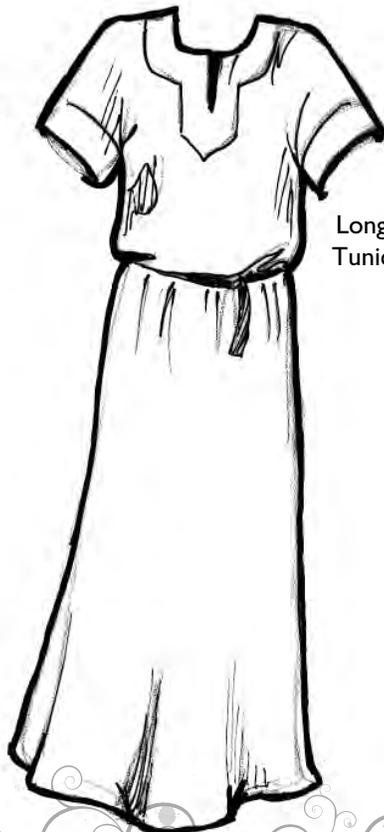
Cloak



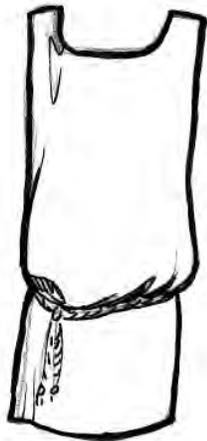
Page Cap



Long
Tunic



Tunic



The food they Ate

Food in the Medieval Ages

What people ate depended a lot on how rich they were. Poor people, almost everybody, ate mostly barley. Sometimes they made their barley into bread, and sometimes into pancakes or pizza, and sometimes into barley porridge or barley soup. But every day, breakfast, lunch and dinner, most of every meal was barley.

As much as they could, the poor people found other things to eat with their barley to make it less boring and more nutritious. They grew carrots, onions, cabbage and garlic to put in their soup. They made cheese to eat with their bread and melt on their pizza. They gathered apples, pears and mushrooms, so they could make apple pies or baked apples. They harvested honey to sweeten their treats. They grew herbs like basil and rosemary to flavor their food. Mostly poor people drank ale or beer in England and Germany, wine in France, Italy and Spain. Even the beer was made from barley!

A medieval feast generally meant roasted meat – you might settle for roasted chicken, unless you were prepared to roast a pig. With it, you could have barley bread, or a round French country bread, and grilled or stewed vegetables – leeks, onions, parsnips, and turnips especially. Turnips sliced thin and fried like potato chips might go over better, or roasted like baked potatoes. Lentil soup was also common. For lunch, people often had thick slices of bread soaked in olive oil, toasted with garlic or onions and salt. If they were lucky enough to be able to have dessert, apples (fresh or dried) or pears, or cherries if they were in season, and maybe a slice of Swiss cheese or nuts.



The feast of William the Conqueror. Detail from the Bayeux Tapestry.

Rich people ate a lot of bread too, but they made their bread out of wheat so it tasted better. They had more choices of things to eat with their bread. Rich people ate meat - pork and roast beef, stew, lamb chops, deer and rabbit. They had expensive spices that came all the way from India, like pepper and cinnamon. In fact, when you were eating in a medieval castle, the salt would be on the table in a huge fancy salt cellar. Rich people would sit near the salt so they could use it, while the poor people sat further down the long table and couldn't reach the salt. We still say, "above the salt" to mean a rich person.

The food they Ate

STORING Food

There was no electricity and no such thing as a fridge, or a cooler. Meat and fish could be salted, smoked and cured to make it last longer. Salt was the main preservative in the Middle Ages. It wasn't very tasty on fruits and vegetables though.

When in battle having enough food, water and wine was always a concern for a medieval castle. Food storage was very difficult and quite often, having too much food meant spoilage and the possibility of poisoning the castle inhabitants. While some foods could be grown inside the walls of larger castles, most had to bring in food from their farmland. Food and water supplies were guarded while a castle was under siege. Spies would try to infiltrate the castle walls and poison it to win the battle. Castles that had a well within the walls were fortunate, as the attackers would often try to cut off all water supplies to the castle. Those trapped without water would resort to drinking blood from horses and would bury themselves in damp soil hoping to absorb any possible moisture. Yuck.

How Many Bread

The first game played at Midsummer's Eve was 'How-Many Bread'. It had a hint of superstition. Lord of the manor, usually a Lord or Earl, would provide a feast for their townfolk. The Lord of the manor would first pass the 'How-many Loaf' to some one nearest him and ask a question, like "How many years will it take to build the cathedral?", or "How many children will you have?" You'd have to eat a chunk of the bread. It was baked with small, hard seeds. You would spit the seeds out into your hands and count them to answer your question. You might get a few, or a whole lot. Not everyone could count that high!

Mediterranean Food

During the Crusades the French, English and German soldiers who were fighting in West Asia ate a lot of West Asian-style food while they were there, and they got to like it. When they came home, a lot of them still wanted to have fancier food than they had had before, and they missed the oranges and lemons they had eaten in the South. So in the Late Middle Ages, European cooking became a lot more Mediterranean than it had been in the Early Middle Ages.



Peasant meal. Aristotle, "Politiques et économiques", France, 15th century. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale.

Project Idea!

Make some "How Many Bread"! Everyone in the class takes a bite, but only if someone has asked them a 'how many' question. Baking a light bread with watermelon seeds might work!

Entertainment

How to have Fun, medieval style

Songs and stories were very popular in the Medieval world. There was no TV, radio or internet, so people sang songs, danced, played their own music and told stories. Wandering entertainers called minstrels or troubadours traveled from village to village providing entertainment, particularly music—for the local people. They were paid in food and sometimes coins.

Other entertainers like jugglers, acrobats, puppeteers and those with trained animals travelled as well. These were the early origins of traveling circuses.

Music & Religion

Art and music were an important part of religious life by the end of the Middle Ages. Singing without musical instruments was an important part of church services. Monks and priests chanted prayers and the mass daily. Some churches had instruments such as organs and bells. Some churches had an organistrum or symphony, later known as a hurdy gurdy. Two people were required to play this stringed instrument - one turned the crank and the other played the keys.

Oh, The Drama...

Medieval drama grew out of the bible by the 11th century. Some of the topics were Noah and the flood, Jonah and the whale and Daniel in the lion's den. Others were stories about the birth and death of Christ. These dramas were performed with costumes and music. At first they took place directly outside the church. Later they were staged in marketplaces, where they were produced by local guilds.

Musical Instruments

Medieval Musicians & Their Instruments

The pan flute, was popular in medieval times.

Medieval music used many string instruments like the lute, mandora, gittern and psaltery. The dulcimer, similar to the zither, were originally plucked, but became struck in the 14th century, after the invention of metal strings. The hurdy-gurdy was and still is a mechanical violin using a wooden wheel attached to a crank to “bow” its strings. Early versions of the organ, fiddle and a trombone called the sackbut were also around.



A medieval drawing from the British Museum featuring kettledrums and horns, 14th century



Illustration by Linda Laforge

The Bagpipes ~ The bagpipe has been traced back to the most ancient civilizations. The bagpipe probably originated as a rustic instrument in many cultures because a herdsman had the materials at hand: a goat or sheep skin and a reed pipe. It was introduced to Persia and India, and subsequently to Greece and Rome through Celtic migration. During the Middle Ages the bagpipe was heard and appreciated by all levels of society, still scaring small children today. The Celts, and then the Irish and Scottish, were known to play the bagpipes before battle.

The Harp ~ One of the most ancient of stringed musical instruments. Harps use only open strings. The range of each is determined by the number of strings. In the Middle Ages the strings were made from twisted animal gut like sheep. Horse hair and even silk were used. It was important in pre-Christian cultures. The harp survives today in many forms worldwide.

Recorder ~ A recorder is a woodwind instrument of ancient lineage, made without a reed, with seven finger-holes in front and one thumb-hole behind, and a beak-shaped mouthpiece. The recorder is the forerunner of the flute. Have you ever played a recorder in school? Did you know it was that old?

Seeking a good mp3 music sample. Please email me if you've got one!



A celtic Queen Mary Harp, Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh, photo copyright © 2005 David Monniaux

Classroom Discussion

1. What medieval musical instruments do we still play today?
2. Which is better? TV and Video Games or making your own fun, like telling stories, playing your own music together and singing and dancing?



the Games People Played

Medieval people played in a number of games when their often harsh daily life permitted a break. Chess was popular and often a source of gambling, both in the traditional format and in a simpler version played with dice. Dice were easy to carry and were played by all levels of society, even among the clergy.

Fox and Geese was a Medieval board game in which the fox is pitted against 13 geese. Probably originating in Viking Age Scandinavia, this is a classic game of strategy. *Sailor's Solitaire* has been a favorite among sailors for centuries, and was played on the same board as Fox and Geese. *Nine Man's Morris* is one of the world's oldest and was one of the most popular board games. It's mentioned several times in the book *"The Pillars of the Earth"* by Ken Follett.

Some games played during the Middle Ages, including *bowling*, *prisoner's base*, *blind man's bluff* (also called hoodman's blind), and simple "horseplay" are still played today. *Checkers* was a popular game, as was *backgammon*. Children wrestled, swam, fished and played a game that was a cross between tennis and handball. Medieval knights would include training with gymnastics and running races.

Spectators in the Middle Ages were often drawn to *cockfights* and *bullbaiting*. Most adults enjoyed drinking in the local tavern. At harvest time, villagers would *bob for apples* and go on hunts in the local forests, if their Lord permitted. Hawks were trained to hunt game birds and every medieval castle had a falconer, assigned to train young birds for this sport.

Medieval Christmas games included *"King of the Bean,"* where a small bean would be baked inside bread or cake, and the one who found it in their portion would be crowned king of the holiday feast.



Medieval Game Pieces

Medieval Dance

The Medieval dance can be categorised into two sections: *Court Dance* and *Country Dance*.

It took a long time to learn any one dance in the middle ages. You could compare it to the folk dancing that the pioneers of the Americas did. It was very organized. Men and women had many different steps to learn, and they were to hold their heads high showing confidence, specially if they were aristocracy.

It's difficult to figure out exactly what an authentic medieval dance would have been. We have a pretty good idea, based on old writings, tapestries and paintings of people dancing. Next are just a few medieval dances we know how to do today.

May Pole Dancing

A May Pole was a tall vertical pole decorated with streamers or ribbons that were held by dancers who performed the May Pole dance to celebrate May Day. The May Pole was erected on the Village Green or an open space where May-day sports were held.

Selecting and cutting a great tree and bringing it to a village to use as a May Pole was a great event. Villages competed to have the tallest May Pole. The bark of the tree was removed, and the pole was decorated with garlands of flowers and brightly colored ribbons. The May Pole was then erected in the centre of the Village Green. This was an annual ritual.

Young girls danced circle around the tall pole. The youngest girls danced in the inner circle while the older girls danced in the outer circle. Each girls held a ribbon that was attached to the May Pole. They made circular steps while intertwining the ribbons until the pole was covered. The May pole dancers would then unravel the ribbon by retracing their steps.

The Morris Dance

The Morris dances are the oldest dances in England and remain unchanged today. Morris Dances were introduced in the time of Edward III. The name Morris or Moorish refers to the origin of the dancers, which are said to have been brought back by John of Gaunt from his travels in Spain. The Morris Medieval dances are associated with May-day, and are danced round a maypole to a lively and capering step. Some of the performers wore bells fastened to their knees. and originally dressed as characters of old English tradition, like Robin Hood, Maid Marian and Tom the Piper. The sticks carried by Morris Dancers represented swords.

The Egg Dance

The Egg dance was one of the earliest Saxon Medieval dances and was performed during the festival of Easter-tide. The egg dance comes from an Easter game, where eggs were laid on the ground or floor and the goal was to dance among them, smashing as few eggs as possible.

Class Resource

If you guys can figure out these dance steps from this SCA (Society for Creative Anachronism), then your class should give it a try. It could be fun!

<http://www.themiddleages.net/life/dances.html>

Medieval Tournaments ~ Fun for the Whole Family

Medieval tournaments were an exciting form of entertainment! Tournaments were enjoyed by both commoners and Nobles. A rich noble would sponsor a tournament and supply the purse, or money for the prizes. A Medieval Tournament was a series of mounted and armoured contests in which a number of combatants competed. The one that prevailed to the final round or that finished with the best score was declared the winner and awarded the prize.

The Kippers and The Spoils!

Medieval tournaments were a good source of revenue for a successful Knight. If they were lucky they would claim prize money. At early tournaments they were also allowed to take the armour and weapons of a fallen opponent. Later the tournaments were governed by rules of chivalry, so this right was waived. To claim the armour and weapons the knight employed a vassal, serf or peasant, as his 'Kipper'. A Kipper was expected to collect the 'Spoils of Combat'. The word 'Kipper' originated from the Scandinavian word 'Kippa' which means to snatch or to seize. Weapons and armour were expensive and a fallen knight would not give them up easily. The Kipper was therefore armed with blunt but heavy clubs with which they could knock the unfortunate Knight into an unconscious state!

The Ladies, Courtly Love and Chivalry!

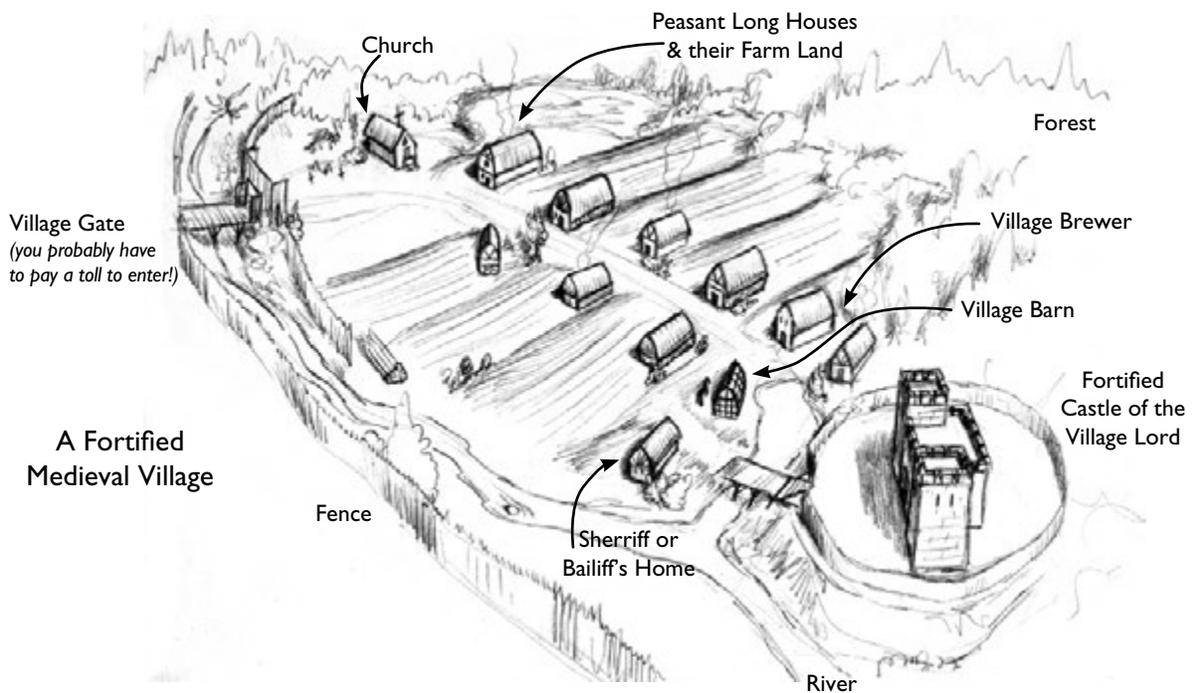
Ladies who attended Medieval tournaments watched the men during the day and attended the feasts and banquets in the evening. The ideals of courtly love were dominated by the belief that honor should be done to a lady by her champion. The Rules of Courtly Love allowed a Knight to express his admiration even for married ladies. Knights begged "tokens" from ladies. Knights took favours, like their veils, a ribbon, or the detachable sleeve of a ladies dress. The Knight attached the favour to his arm, his helm or tied it to his lance. The lady gave her favour to the knight so he would dedicate his performance to her at the tournament. If he won, he might also win the Lady.



Medieval Villages

People depended on their village for protection. Most were born, married, had children and died within their village, rarely ever leaving it. Some villages were temporary. If the land was infertile or weather made life too difficult, the villagers would move on until they found land that would support them. Some villages existed for centuries.

Medieval peasants were either free men who owed heavy labor service to a Lord, or who owned land of their own. Either way, they were bound to the land, and subject to feudal dues. Village life was busy for all classes, and equally busy for women and men. It wasn't unheard of for a woman to own and operate a business, but it wasn't common. Women did have jobs, like Washing Laundry or as a Housekeepers for a wealthy peasant or Lord.



Village houses and farmsteads were usually layed out in a repetitive design, most with the same sized plots of land. Each plot would have a single farmstead for a peasant family. We do know that longhouses were often rebuilt as they didn't weather for long.

Medieval Houses & Homes

Most people lived in longhouses for most of the medieval ages. Most built their own homes using materials close at hand.

Each long-house was divided into two areas, separated by a cross-passage in the middle of the house. People lived at one end, with the main room, often the only room, containing an open hearth. Sometimes there was a smaller room, for sleeping. At the other end of the longhouse was a byre for livestock.

City Life During the Middle Ages

In almost all of today's major European cities one can find its Medieval roots. There were few places that could have been called cities when Julius Caesar set out to conquer Europe. Lutetia, which became Paris, was probably the largest of the early cities. By the 13th century, cities were popping up all over, from the Mediterranean to northwest Europe.

Those fighting Vikings were the biggest reason for the need of cities during the early Middle Ages. Vikings often plundered more than they could carry, sold some of their loot to surrounding villages and created base camps for trading. In Ireland, Dublin's roots began as a Viking base camp. To protect themselves, villages began building walls and strengthening their positions. This led to the great medieval walled cities that can still be seen today in Europe.

These walled cities became known as bourgs and boroughs. Villagers were known as bourgeois. By the mid-900's, walled towns were found from the Mediterranean to as far north as Hamburg, Germany.



*Cleric, Knight and
Workman,*
image from the
British Library;
Manuscript number:
Sloane 2435, f.85

Medieval Castles

Who Lived in a Medieval Castle?

The life of the Kings, Queens, Knights, Lords and Ladies were made comfortable by their servants. Servants did everything, from dressing them in the morning, to cooking, cleaning the animal stalls and the privy. Yuck.

Lords

Kings, Lords and Earls liked to keep their fighting skills sharp, so when they weren't training with the squires in sword fighting and horsemanship, they hunted their lands. Of course, they had duties to their people. They had to hold court with their sheriff or bailiff. Disputes were resolved over by a Lord or Earl. Theft of a pig or chicken and land rights if there was a death in the family were put to the overlord. He made final decisions that affected all his serfs (slaves) and peasants lives. These guys weren't always fair, and could let personal grudges sway them.

Lords and Earls collected money and produce from the serfs and peasants who worked their land. The money was used to keep them in a high lifestyle, allowing their family to wear the best clothes, have a fine home or castle built and most importantly, to have knights ready for battle. Knights were expensive. They needed costly war horses, armour and weapons. The Lord or Earl without knights was frowned upon at Royal Court. Since Kings were often going to war with someone, even in their own country, they always needed knights ready to go to war.



Study for the Family Portrait of Thomas More.
Pen and brush in black on top of chalk sketch. Kratzer (1487–1550), a friend of Holbein and More, and the tutor of More's children, added the names and ages of the sitters in Latin on the sketch in brown ink.)

Medieval Castles

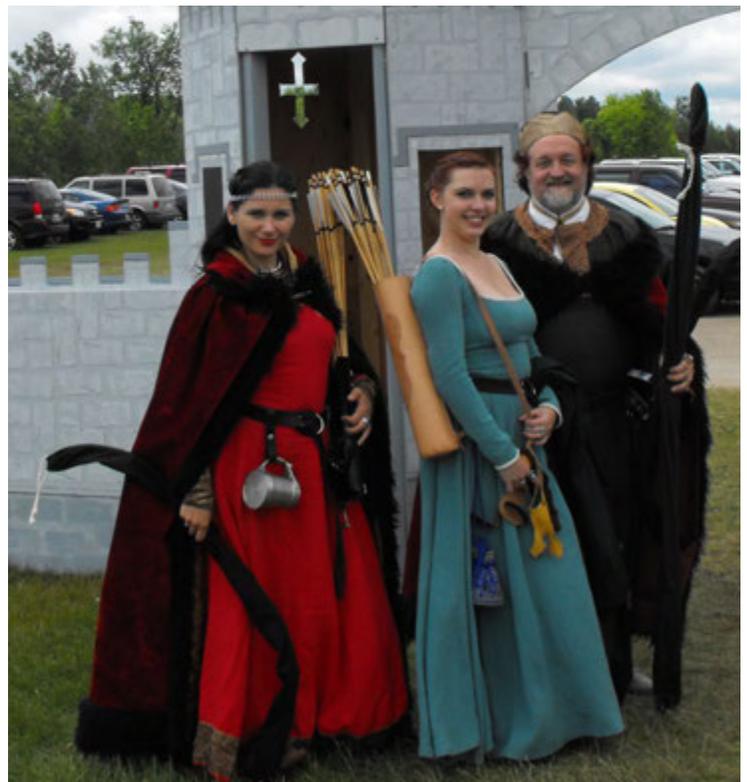
Ladies

The women of the Middle Ages were totally dominated by the men in their life, and were expected to obey not only their father, but also their brothers and any other male members of the family. Unruly girls were beaten into submission for disobedience.

Noble girls as young as seven would be sent away from their home to live with another noble family. She would be taught the rules of etiquette, including how to curtsy and how to mix with the greatest nobles in the land. They learned how to dance and ride horse and archery. High ranking young women would take on the role of ladies-in-waiting, where they were taught French. Young noble women would also be taught the principles of the Medieval Code of Chivalry and Courtly Love and would join the spectators at jousting tournaments.

A dowry was an amount of money, goods, and property that the bride would bring to the marriage. Noble women of the Middle Ages were expected to bring a dowry to their marriage. The law gave a husband full rights over his wife, whether she was a Noble woman or a commoner, making her his property. A wealthy marriage of a Noble woman was celebrated by nine days of feasting and jousting.

A woman aged quickly during this era due to constant child bearing, usually trying to have male heirs. The diet of noble women during the Middle Ages lacked Vitamin C which resulted in bad teeth and bleeding gums. To appear young a Noble woman of the middle Ages might even dye her hair yellow with a mixture of saffron, cumin seed, celandine and oil. Face make-up was applied to acquire a pale look. A pale complexion was so desirable that women were bled to achieve the desired look. Face paint made from plant roots and leaves was also applied.

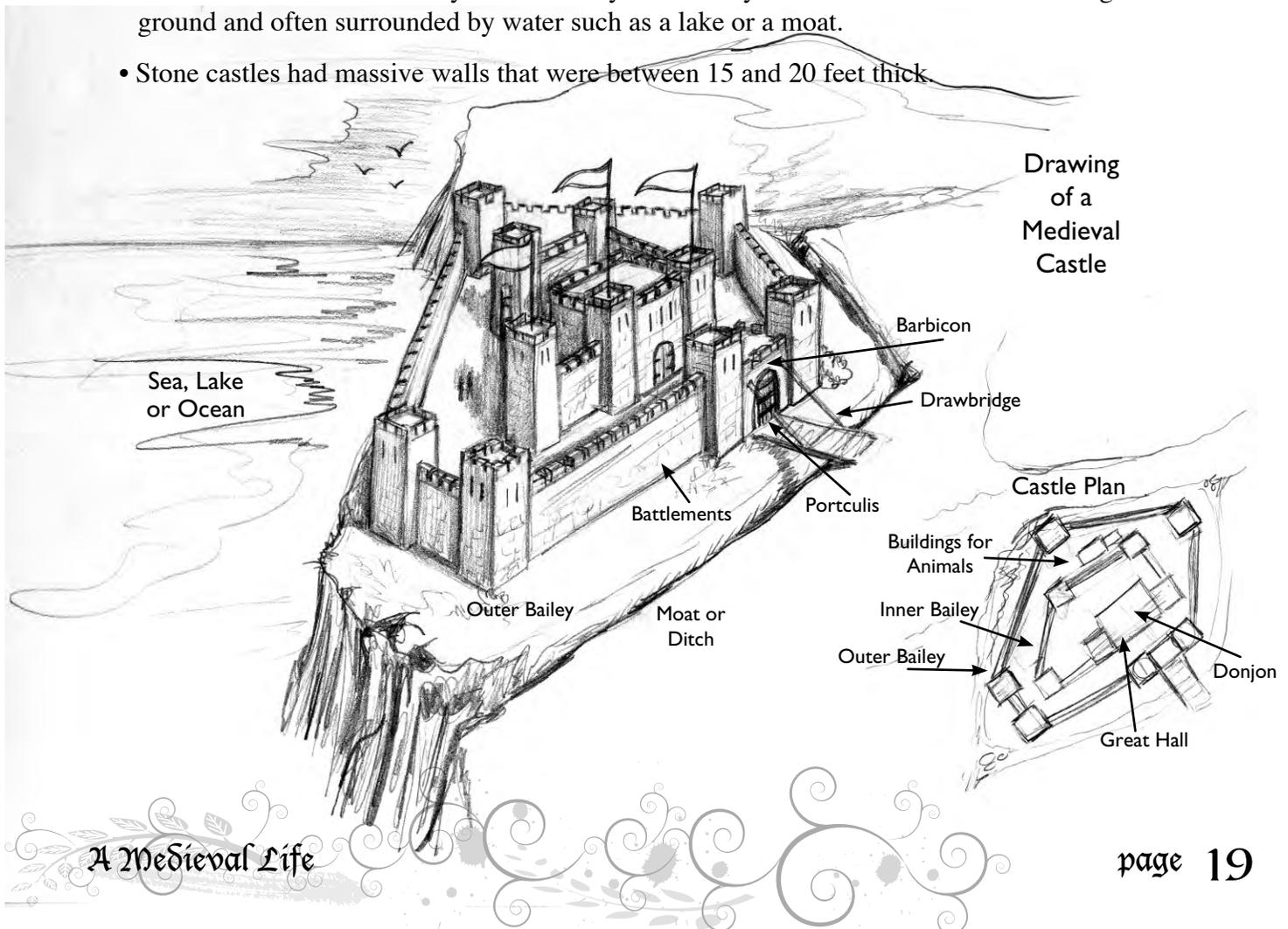


Medieval Castle ~ purpose & Design

In its simplest terms, the most accepted definition of a castle is “a private fortified residence”. The only form of government was a Monarchy where the king or queen ruled by “divine right”. That just meant the people believed that God had appointed the king or queen to rule with absolute power. That King or Queen needed a safe castle to live and rule from!

The Basics of a Medieval Era Castle

- Castles belonged to the wealthy, important, and powerful people – kings, nobles, and knights.
- Castles were designed to be difficult to attack and easy to defend. Castles protected owners from rivals, invaders and the local citizens.
- Castles were symbols of status during times of war and peace.
- Castles were the seats of local power and justice.
- Early castles were built in the 9th and 10th centuries and were constructed of earth and wood and were usually built on higher ground.
- Castles from the 11th century and later they were always built of rock and stones on high ground and often surrounded by water such as a lake or a moat.
- Stone castles had massive walls that were between 15 and 20 feet thick.



Drawing of a Medieval Castle

Inside a Medieval Castle

The rooms where the lord of a castle, his family and his knights lived and ate and slept were in the Keep that was at first, called the Donjon. It was a rectangular tower inside the walls of a castle. This was meant to be the strongest and safest place.

The outer wall of a castle was called a Bailey. This was where buildings for the castle's cattle, horses and servants lived. Some of the soldiers needed to defend the castle might live in part of the gatehouse known as the Barbican.

The Donjon (The Keep)

In medieval castles, the lord and his followers carried out most of their daily life in the Donjon. Dungeon comes from donjon as the prisoners were kept there, though down in the darkest, deepest parts way below. There were also rooms for storing food. They had to be kept stocked with food to last for a long time in case there was a siege. People in the castle would also need water, so there was almost always a well close by too. There were kitchens and pantries where food was stored for everyday preparation. *The Great Hall* and the bedchambers were there too. The Donjon could be as much as 70 metres high, and often a watchtower where sentries kept watch and where the lord's flag flew from the top.

The Great Hall

This was the most important room in a castle Donjon. All the members of the household sat down to eat at tables. It was where feasts were held for special days, or when there were guests. King Arthur's Pentecost Feast took place in his Great Hall. A lord or king carried on nearly all the business of the castle there, like running his estate, listening to reports from his bailiff or his reeve (the men who managed affairs on his land for him) and hearing complaints from one peasant about another.

The Bedchamber

Mice were a problem in the Middle Ages. There was a pole in the bedchamber for hanging clothes on at night so the mice wouldn't nibble them. People didn't wear anything in bed except a nightcap and they slept half sitting up. Nightshirts weren't worn until the 14th Century!

Kitchen

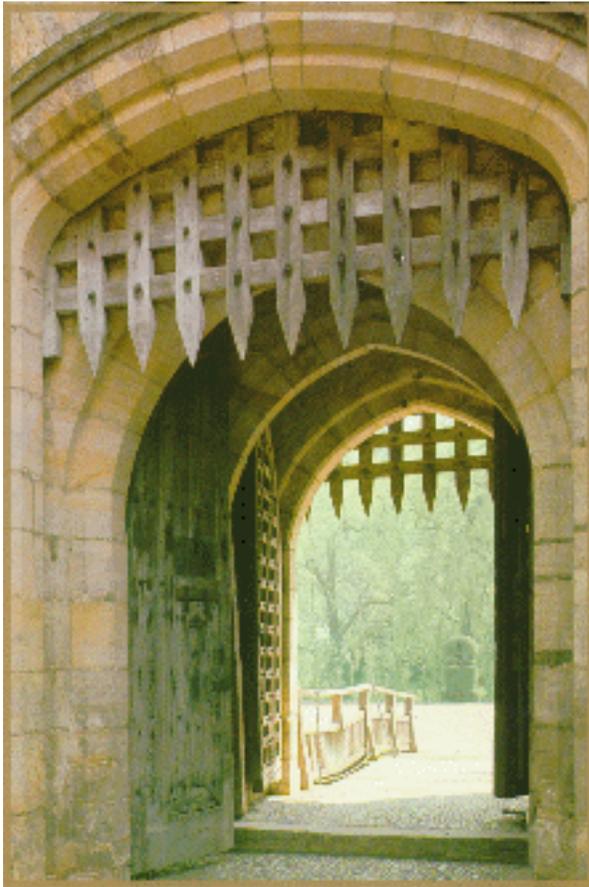
Food was roasted or boiled in cauldrons over a fire on a hearth made out of large blocks of stone. The washing was done in a tub on the stone floor nearby.

A wealthy knight, his family and guests ate well. Unlike most people, they had plenty of meat like deer, goose and rabbit. On Fridays and Holy Days meat was forbidden by the church, so they ate fish or eel. If there was a special feast, the people working in the kitchens would prepare wild boar, roast swan, or even roast peacock, served with all its feathers as decoration. Some of these would be caught by the lord of the castle and his friends while out hunting with their hawks.

Toilets & Bathrooms

Many castles had stone toilets built over holes in the outer walls. These emptied into a pit way below. The Teutonic Knights (warrior-monks) of Poland used to murder their enemies by inviting them to be guests at the castle only to hurl them down the toilet.

Medieval castles did not have running water, yet people did like to bathe at least once a year. In some castles there was a room next to the kitchen where they bathed in groups. The lord might have hot water brought to his bedchamber and poured into a big wooden tub. He sat in the tub on a low stool. The water might have perfume or rose leaves sprinkled in it. Soap was made of sheep fat with ashes and soda. Teeth were cleaned by scraping them with a hazel twig and rubbing them with a woollen cloth.



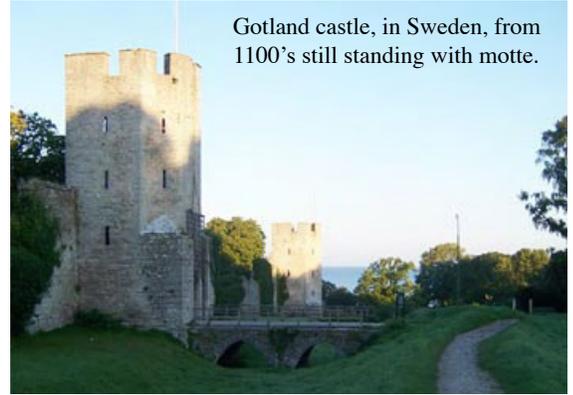
Castle
Portcullis



Viewed
from a distance
on the way to
Castelo de Vide

Outside a Medieval Castle

Ditches, ramparts, and stone walls were ancient ideas even in the Middle Ages. Raising a *Motte* for the advantage of height is a medieval innovation. A bank and ditch enclosure was a simple form of defence. When found without a motte it was called a ringwork. If the site was in use for a long time, it was sometimes replaced by something more complex like adding of a big stone wall.



Gotland castle, in Sweden, from 1100's still standing with motte.

The castle walls are very thick. Some castles had walls 5 or 6 metres thick. *Bastions* are round bits that stick out. Archers in the bastions defending the castle could fire arrows at people attacking the walls. Arrows could also be fired through narrow slits in the walls called *Murder Holes*. The battlements of castles were often made like this so the defenders could hide while firing at the attacking army.

Castle Defense

Castles were built to withstand attack. Here are five key castle structures and how they help castle defense.

The fore building was the gateway into the castle. It was usually positioned forward from the castle, on higher ground or up stairs from ground level making it tough to enter. Gateways were protected with a big iron gate, a heavy wooden door or both.

Buttresses are the extra thick part of the outer walls that help strengthen and support the building.

Towers and keeps were tall and square and allowed long distance surveillance. Originally the corners were square, but later designs were round. Squared corners were more vulnerable to damage by projectiles like boulders from catapults or trebuchets.

Spiral staircases in castles were designed to stymie right-handed invaders by forcing the attacker's balance to the left side while stonework defeated his ability to swing his sword properly.

Narrow slit windows were slim on the inside, but flared wider on the outside. This made it difficult for the enemy to hit the defenders, but helped their own archers with a wider range of motion for attacking.

Attackers used huge catapults, trebuchets, battering rams or arbalests (a kind of giant crossbow called). They climbed scaling ladders that they could throw up and hook on to the walls, holding their shields over their heads while the defenders dropped rocks or poured boiling oil on them.

Classroom projects

1. Draw a plan for your own castle based on castles from the Middle Ages.
2. Go one step further and build your own castle! You can use paper and cardboard, lego or anything else you can think of.



Kings in the Middle Ages

Middle Ages encompass one of the most exciting periods in English History. It started with the Battle of Hastings and the Norman Conquest in England, when *William the Conqueror* took all of the lands from the Saxon English and gave them to French nobles. The Kings and Queens of England in the Middle Ages included *Richard the Lionheart* and the great English Kings from *King Henry II* (1154-1189) to *King Edward III* (1327-1377). There was a Hundred Years War between England and France. The English Kings in the Middle Ages cover the periods from 1066 - 1485.

Kings and Queens of England

The Norman Kings of England

The Kings of England in the Middle Ages started with the Norman Invasion. From 1066 -1154, the Normans ruled the English after their victory at the Battle of Hastings when William, Duke of Normandy was crowned King of England, better known as *William the Conqueror*.

- William the Conqueror 1066-1087
- King William Rufus, 1087-1100 (the second son of William the Conqueror)
- King Henry I, 1100-1135 (William Rufus' brother)
- Queen Matilda (daughter of King Henry I replaced by her cousin King Stephen)
- King Stephen, 1135-1154 (nephew of Henry I)

The Plantagenet Kings of England

From 1154 - 1377 the Plantagenet Kings of England (Angevin Line) ruled the English.

- King Henry II, 1154-1189 (grandson of Henry I)
- King Richard I, 1189-1199 (third son of Henry II)
- King John, 1199-1216 (fifth son of Henry II)
- King Henry III, 1216-1272 (son of John)
- King Edward I, 1272-1307 (son of Henry III)
- King Edward II, 1307-1327 (son of Edward I)
- King Edward III, 1327-1377 (son of Edward II)

The Royal Houses of Lancaster and York

From 1377 - 1485 the Royal Houses of Lancaster and York became Kings of England in the Middle Ages and ruled the English.

- King Richard II, 1377-1399 (grandson of Edward III, son of the Black Prince)
- King Henry IV, 1399-1413 (grandson of Edward III, son of John of Gaunt)
- King Henry V, 1413-1422 (son of Henry IV)
- King Henry VI, 1422-1461 (son of Henry V)
- King Edward IV, 1461-1483 (youngest son of Edward III)
- Edward V - One of the little Princes in the Tower
- King Richard III, 1483-1485 (uncle of Edward V)

The defeat of Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth saw the emergence of a new era in English History - the *Tudors* starting with the man who claimed victory over Richard III - *Henry Tudor* who became King Henry VII on August 22, 1485.



Portrait of King Henry I

Project Ideas:

Transform a regular chair into a throne, with some gold paint and gemstones. If you would rather keep your furniture in its current incarnation, just tape some cardboard to it and decorate that! You could also build a doll-sized model out of paper towel tubes and colored paper.

Find out where the gems came from in a King and Queen's crown and sceptre! Maybe an online search would help. OR, you could write a fictional story about how a King of England Battled France and took the gems from a great castle.

The Name Game

Names in The Middle Ages

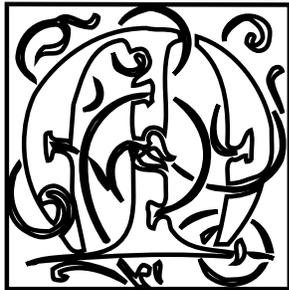
In the medieval era, most people had only a given name, such as John. To help differentiate, some were also known by the manor, or place in which they resided – John became John of Cornwall Manor. He might be called John O’Cornwall. The “O” may also have come from the Gaelic word “Óg”, which meant “young”. So “Og” would mean the son of. “Mc” or “Mac” meant “son”. McDonald meant the ‘son of Donald’.

In their own village or manor, people were also often named for their work or trade – Edward the Metalsmith, Marcus the Carpenter or Jacob the Miller. “Le” or “La” are french for “the”. Most people dropped “the”.

Classroom projects

1. What would your last name be now? Think about this one. How do you think Sir Lance-a-lot go this name? What do you think Jack Bridger did for a living?
2. What does your real name mean? Ex. My last name is LaForge, as in The Forge. That means I am related to someone who was a forger, which is a Metalsmith!)

Colour these!



C

or



d



S

‘who’?

About Heraldry

Heraldry in medieval times was important because:

- it enabled Knights to be clearly identified
- it helped to establish and symbolise a Knight's social standing
- it became a hereditary device enabling families to pass on their 'coat of arms'



Medieval Heraldry originated early in the 12th century in Europe as a means of identifying a warrior in the heat of battle. Back then, the full face helm became the more popular way of protecting one's head, making it difficult to identify armoured men in battle and in tournaments. Great lords and soon thereafter all knights decorated their shields and surcoats with distinctive designs - their "arms". Heralds became experts at identifying knights by their arms since that was part of the herald's job as a tourney official.

In addition to being displayed on shields, armorial designs were frequently enameled on breastplates and embroidered on the medieval surcoat or great-coat, where the term "Coat of Arms" and "Coat-armour" came from. The heraldic design was originally placed on a Knight's shield.

Armorial bearings, "arms", were meant only for those who bore them - the knights. Since merchants, archers or footmen couldn't wear them, it made a coat of arms a badge of social position. During battle, a son would pick up his fallen father's shield and put his armour on to continue the fight, so a Coat of Arms became a hereditary symbol.

Few laws were passed about the design of coats of arms, and even fewer were enforced.

Most European nations began requiring registration of coats of arms by the 17th century. Registration requirements were similar to modern trademark laws. They were really intended to stop people from copying each other's designs.



The Rules of Heraldry

Use this info on Heraldry Symbols to discover what a Coat of Arms symbolized!

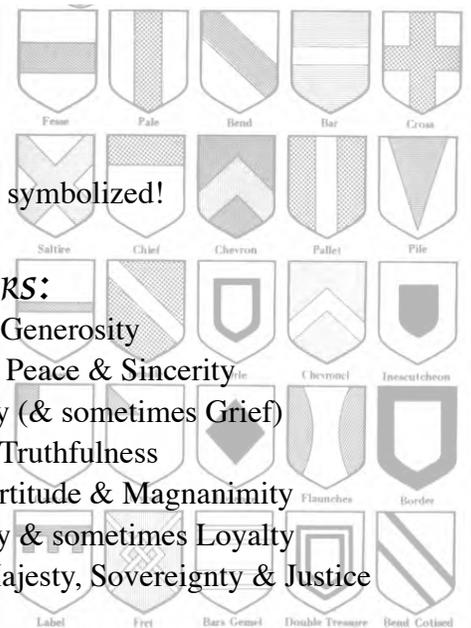
Common Design Features

(heraldic terminology):

- Bend** - a diagonal stripe
- Chevron** - an upside-down “V”
- Chief** - broad stripe across top of shield
- Dexter** - the righthand side of the shield (from its user’s perspective)
- Ermine** - a white fur pattern (with black tail tips)
- Fess** - broad horizontal stripe through center
- Pale** - broad vertical stripe through center
- Passant** - an animal shown walking
- Rampant** - an animal standing on hind legs
- Sinister** - the lefthand side of the shield (from its user’s perspective)

Heraldic Animals:

- Bear** - Protectiveness
- Bee** - Industriousness
- Camel** - Perseverance
- Dog** - Loyalty
- Double Eagle & Eagle** - Leadership & Decisiveness
- Dragon** - Defender of Treasure
- Falcon or Hawk** - Eagerness
- Fox** - Cleverness
- Griffin (part eagle, part lion)** - Bravery
- Horse** - Readiness to Serve
- Lion** - Courage
- Pelican** - Generosity & Devotion
- Raven** - Constancy
- Snake** - Ambition
- Stag, Elk or Deer** - Peace & Harmony
- Tiger** - Fierceness & Valor
- Unicorn** - Extreme courage
- Wolf** - Constant Vigilance



Heraldic Colors:

- Yellow or Gold** - Generosity
- White or Silver** - Peace & Sincerity
- Black** - Constancy (& sometimes Grief)
- Blue** - Loyalty & Truthfulness
- Red** - Military Fortitude & Magnanimity
- Green** - Hope, Joy & sometimes Loyalty
- Purple** - Royal Majesty, Sovereignty & Justice

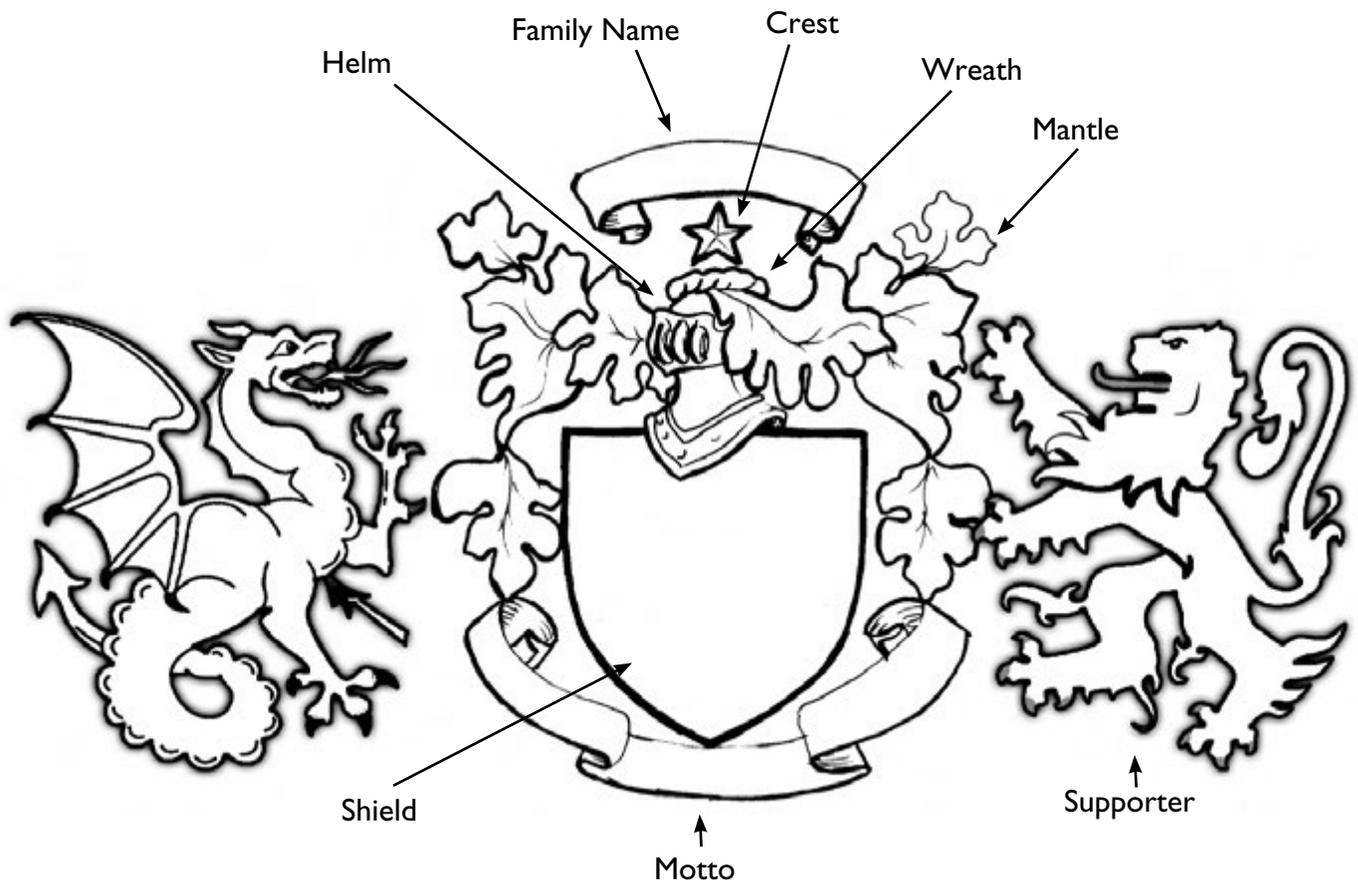
Heraldic Symbols:

- Axe** - Dutiful
- Bridge** - (signifies a governor or magistrate)
- Crescent** - Enlightenment
- Crosses** - Christian sentiments
- Crown** - Authority
- Fire** - Zeal
- Flaming Heart** - Passion
- Fleur-de-lys (stylized Iris flower)** - Purity, associated with France
- Hand** - Faith, Sincerity & Justice
- Heart** - Sincerity
- Horns & Antlers** - Fortitude
- Lightning** - Decisiveness
- Moon** - Serenity
- Oyster Shell** - Traveler
- Ring** - Fidelity
- Scepter** - Justice
- Star** - Nobility
- Sun** - Glory
- Sword** - Warlike
- Tower or Castle** - Fortitude & Protectiveness



Heraldry design details:

Besides simple fields of color, a coat of arms may contain other design motifs, such as checkerboards, polka dots, or fur patterns. One traditional design rule is that two solid-color fields shouldn't appear side by side unless one of the two is "metallic". Even this "rule" has been broken by many famous and historical coats of arms.



Project ideas!

1. Ask your parents or go online and see if you can find your own family's Coat of Arms. Once you find it, discover what each of the symbols in it represent.
2. Design your own Class Shield using the rules of Heraldry. That means you guys need to put some thought into what your class or group represent!
3. Go one step further and design a whole Coat of Arms!

Jousting About

There were three types of tournaments up until the 17th century.

They were: Melee', Individual Joust and Practice Tournament.

Melee' was popular during the 12th and 13th century when tournaments were extremely brutal and violent. Lives were lost in Melees. There were more than two competitors. The goal was to be the last one standing by unhorsing as many of the others as possible.

Individual jousting was a battle between two knights and was a lot more civilized. If a knight were to hit either his opponent or his opponents horse he would be disqualified. The goal was to hit the other knight's shield, knocking him off his horse or shattering the lance. In 1420 a wall was introduced to help prevent injury to the horses.

The Practice tournament was exactly as it implies. A quintain (wooden target mounted on a pole) was set up and if hit off center it would swing around and unseat the knight. The rings were a less dangerous. A ring was suspended from a cord and the Knight was to pick it up on the tip of his lance. It is known as "The riding of the rings" and is the longest lasting of the tournaments. It's still associated with chivalry, but not in the same adulterous sense of the past. The winning knights were awarded kisses from the ladies.



The sport of jousting came to be a test of both horse and rider's physical strength and coordination, rather than a bloody battle that often resulted in death. At the *Great Northern Medieval Fayre*, you get to see a show based on both the authentic **Medieval Individual Jousting**, as shown above from our 2010 fayre, and the **Practice Tournament**.

Why couldn't they all just get along?

Who was fighting who?

The Roman Empire was in decline and being invaded by many tribes in the 3rd to 5th centuries. These tribes waged battles and war to establish new territories and kingdoms, where the leaders were always a hero battling for land.

People fought for different reasons. Some of those reasons depended on when in the medieval ages they lived. The Medieval era was marked by four distinct periods: the Crusades, Military Orders, Secularism & the Courts.

The Crusades ~ Knights and kings attacked the Holy Lands of the Middle East in the name of God with the blessing of the Christian Church. It's sometimes called the *Golden Age of Chivalry*. The goal was to drive the Muslim tribes out of Palestine so they could control the sacred lands of Jesus and the Bible.



Crusaders attacking a castle, illustrated around 1900

The Crusades happened in waves over the centuries. Power often shifted between Christians and Muslims, who fought back and reclaimed their territories. Each crusade usually lasted for a year or more before the area was secured. Other expeditions into China or India could last two or three years. By 1291, the Crusades were at an end. The crusaders abandoned the area and went home.

Military Orders ~ After conquering Jerusalem in 1099, an army was established to keep control of the city. This led to the establishment of numerous military orders. These were a kind of association or affiliation to a particular leader, king or cause. All orders served the Christian (Catholic) Church in Rome.

Secularism ~ After the Crusades, the Age of Chivalry dwindled. The focus shifted to selfish pursuits, like the fighting of great wars—mostly between England and France. There were bickering royal houses and noble families of different nations to fight for. As these guys fought, class divisions grew. The poor were exploited to support the rich. Nobles weren't the only ones without ethics. Knights were fighting for the love of a woman or, if she was married, for another man's wife and all his possessions.

The Courts ~ By mid 1300, new orders like *the Order of the Golden Fleece* were formed by royal courts. Knighthood was once a noble profession. Now knights were less effective in battle and were mostly sporting entertainment for royal families.

Religion

Following the fall of the Roman Empire, Christianity, Judaism and Islam flourished and competed for control. Christian kings, nobles, soldiers and knights attacked Muslim cities, particularly Jerusalem, in the Holy Land (Palestine) in order to gain control of the lands at the root of Christianity. These ongoing battles, called the Crusades, began in 1096 and lasted nearly 200 years.

CHRISTIANITY ~ Christianity was the main religion throughout Europe's royal houses, nobility and most of the general working population. The religion was brought to England by a monk named Augustine in 597 A.D.

Islam ~ Established in 622 A.D., Islam was the dominant religion in the Middle East and had a sophisticated culture of religion, art, science and building cities. Islam was stronger in south and southeast Europe (Spain and Portugal) where they controlled lands until they were driven out by battle.

Judaism ~ The followers of Judaism, known as Jews, were a displaced people. While some remained in the Holy Land in the Middle East, many settled throughout Europe and established communities. Jews were largely working class tradespeople, merchants and farmers.

Paganism ~ Pagans believed that gods lived in natural things like trees, lakes, mountains and the sun. Gods varied widely from tribe to tribe. Prior to the medieval era, Paganism was the common religion. The Celts were often considered Pagans.

New waves of invasions took place in the early 9th century by tribes not previously known to invade European lands. Below is a list of the eight key tribes of the period.

Angles, Saxons, Jutes and Frisians invaded England. This is the root of the term Anglo-Saxon, which is often used to describe English people.

Arabs and Saracens invaded from the south settling in Spain, Italy, Portugal and southern Gaul (France).

Danes invaded England and settled in the northeast of the country.

Goths, whom were also called barbarians by the Romans, invaded Italy and Gaul.

Hungarians occupied lands taken in the eastern Europe.

Normans were the descendents of Vikings and their western European colonies. They invaded and captured England in 1066, eventually expanding to Italy, Sicily and the Holy Land.

Vandals invaded Spain and Africa.

Vikings swept in from the north to England, Scotland, Denmark, Germany and northern Gaul.



Croisés (XI^e-XIII^e-siècles).

When you come to the *Great Northern Medieval Fayre*, make sure you ask all these guys **WHY they're fighting!**

Medieval Health

In the Medieval Ages, faeries, trolls, hobgoblins and so on, were thought to truly exist. Superstition and ignorance reigned. Health was believed to be controlled by the stars, and affliction was a sign of impurity of the soul and a curse from God.

Disease and infection was a constant concern, though Hygiene wasn't discovered yet. The diets of medieval people were lacking in important nutrition. Today, we can get fruit and vegetables from all parts of the world, but then, people had to eat what they could grow, pick and store during the different seasons.



Tools of a Barber. Bone saw, bleeding stick with wood bowl and a sharp knife.

HUMORS ~ Natural functions, like sneezing, were thought to be the best way of staying healthy. When there was a build-up of any one humor, or body fluid, it could be disposed of through sweat, tears, feces, puss or urine. Educated Medieval doctors stressed prevention through prayer, exercise, a good diet, and releasing your humors. Not funny!

Medieval science was in it's infancy. Treatments for the sick were usually out of reach, especially for the poor. Sadly, the "Inquisition" rid medieval society of a lot of important knowledge about healing herbs and plants. Meanwhile, Barbers often doubled as surgeons, and a good bleeding was usually prescribed. Who you got your diagnosis or medicines from depended on your social status.

Who would you choose? Physician or Wise Woman?

If you were a medieval man or woman who suffered from an illness and wanted to get better you may have a choice, if you're neither very poor nor greatly rich. You could listen to the local Physician or a Wise Woman as they debate about their special skills and knowledge. The expensive and qualified physician, with his training in mathematics, music, rhetoric and astronomy, will diagnose your urine and put forward his prognoses. The wise woman is cheaper, but has gained her knowledge from years of making herbal remedies. She offers you faith in her prayers and herbal remedies that appear like magical charms. Who would you choose to heal you, if you were lucky enough to have a choice like this?

Surgeons and Barbers

Every King took plenty of surgeons when he went to battle, to treat his men. A Barber WAS usually a Surgeon! There were lots of nasty sharp bladed weapons at this time. A barber would have to amputate, with a curved knife, bone saw, hot cauteries and no pain relief for the patient. He would also have to do some tooth pulling, know the treatment of tooth worm and do a lot of arrow extraction. The medieval grasp of anatomy was very basic and they were not great surgeons.

Medieval Education

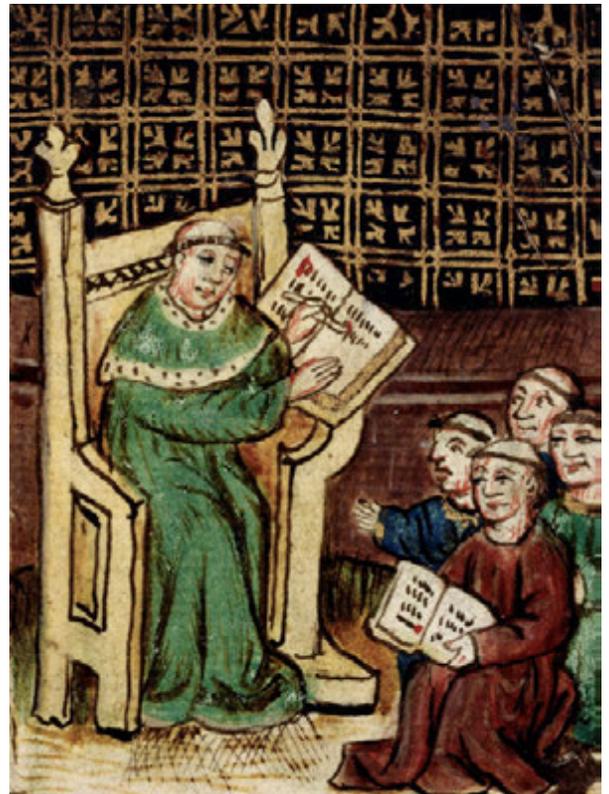
The Catholic church was charged with the duty of educating people after the French ruler Charlemagne realized his empire needed educated people. They were to provide a free education to every boy showing the intelligence and perseverance needed.

Grammar, rhetoric, logic, Latin, astronomy, philosophy and mathematics formed the core of most curriculum. Most natural science came from the ancient writings of the Romans. A boy in the medieval ages might learn things like spelling and basic math, and worldly things like an elephant's only fear is of dragons. Students learned more when they went out into the countryside to talk with trappers, hunters, furriers and poachers, who spent their time watching wildlife.

Medieval students often sat together on the floor, scrawling notes from lessons using a bone or ivory stylus on wooden tablets coated with green or black wax. Knights were also educated and looked down upon if they could not read and write. Girls were almost entirely ignored when it came to school. Only daughters of the very rich and powerful were allowed to attend. Girls were taught housekeeping and how to sew, weave, and spin.

At 14 or 15, some students would continue learning at a university. Universities were invented in the Middle Ages and could be found in only a few large cities. Wars and invasions often stopped studies, but these schools were back again during the later Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The cap and gown that graduates wear today are based on medieval academic garments.

Pope Gregory VII., in 1079, issued a decree mandating the creation of cathedral schools that would educate the clergy. This led to the spreading of schools which evolved over time into today's universities. In England, different colleges were established in Oxford between 1167-1185, and in 1209 the first college of the University of Cambridge was started.



*Detail of a miniature
of a master and scholars.
1464, British Library,
Medieval copy of a book by
Gautier de Metz,
"L'image du Mond"*

Medieval Art

The art of the ancient Celts was influenced by Persian, Etruscan, Greek, Roman and Scythian art. This developed and retained a distinct style of its own. In showing their respect for nature, the Celts most often depicted entwining plant and animal designs, such as oak trees, vines, flowers, deer, hounds, serpents, dolphins, boars, birds, lions, griffins and dragons. Few representations of humans exist in comparison. Much of their artwork was more abstract, incorporating knotwork, elliptical curves, spirals, chevrons and labyrinthine patterns. These designs were sophisticated, with complicated geometric patterns. Most of these design styles are found in Medieval Manuscripts.

Medieval Art Techniques and Tools

Centuries before realistic art and oil paint was invented, tempera artists worked with color, symbol and simple imagery to teach and inspire. Egg tempera was THE technique of painting until the Renaissance.

To produce a manuscript, medieval artisans had to get animal skins so they could make their own paper. *Vellum* was made from Calfskin. *Parchment* was made from Lambskin. These skins were cleaned, stretched, and cut to make them into 'paper'. The final stage was to line the page so the writer could produce orderly text. Empty space for illustrations was set aside. Once all the pages were detailed and coloured, the pages were bound and attached to a cover that was usually made with leather. It was closed with a buckle or rope.



Every page of an illuminated manuscript was planned out completely. Artists would first mark their positions with a light drawing using a lead/tin alloy that writes

like today's 2H pencil. The artist would draw light and fine metal point outlines of letters and knotwork designs.

Often artists designed their art on a waxed tablet. Medieval artists would perfect the designs on another parchment. Then the design would be drawn out with a metal point of lead (2H pencil), and in other places using a drypoint stylus which left only a scored line. The next step was to use ink to make a water resistant and permanent line. This was also used in some places for background fill.



Ink was often a combination of encaustum (oak gall ink) and atramentum (bone black pigment).

Next, the colors would be painted in with small brushes made from miniver hairs set into feather barrels and attached to wooden handles.

Egg Tempera Paint was kept in clam shells and used one at a time. Sometimes ink and paint was kept in animal horns too.

The final details were laid on top of the blocked in colors. In the *Lindisfarne Gospels* you see the very smallest of decorative objects outlined and then filled with colours, one on top of the other. The exceptions were dots and thin line motifs like *triskels*.



White: Chalk and lead

Black: Oak Gall ink with and without soot.

Blue: Lapis Lazuli and Woad

Yellow: Orpiment, genuine Gold

Red: Lead, English R. Ochre, Madder Lake, Cochineal.

Green: Verdigris, Vergaut (mixed orpiment + woad)

Purples & Pinks were mixed from the colours above. Do you think you know which ones?

The paint colours of this time and place came from minerals, plants, insects, and animals. Paint colours were made from material that was close to home. Yellow could be made from the galls of oxen or fish.

It's very difficult to duplicate exactly the same paints today, here in Canada or the US. Bugs and plants used to create their own unique colour used in the Mediterranean or in Europe in Medieval times aren't always so easy to find these days.

Do you know what a Cochineal insect is? Or where you'd find one? Me neither, but it was used to make a paint colour in Medieval times. Ground and mixed with water and egg in the right recipe and you've made Egg Tempera Paint!

If you ever want to learn more about this, I found most of my information from a website of artist Randy Splund. He creates illuminated manuscripts as close to the originals from Medieval Times as anyone can.
www.randyasplund.com

Colouring!



Zoomorphic Knot
Do you see the Dogs?



Celtic Triple Spiral

Triquetra with circle



Warrior Knot

