

Bezant Under Glass

A Plausible Persona

By Urbain Lebasque

I was born Immanuel Haristoi in the City of Bayonne, in the year 1171. My father was a merchant and my mother died in childbirth. Being the only son of a successful seller of trade goods gave me certain advantages. We kept a house and a shop. I had a nana. She was a portly Romany woman. My father never trusted her, but being Euskaldunak, we had few options. The Gascons thought us Gitanos anyway. Nana, she fed and raised me for much of my childhood. I had an ordinary albeit privileged life.

My father being very religious followed the Roman Church. He believed in the divine authority of the Pope. A Pope's election was "inspired by god" he would tell me, not by birthright. My father worked very hard. Though somewhat of a ruthless businessman, he taught me the trade. We had few loyalties - we would trade in anything. Spices from the east, silks, and animals; my father had connections in many facets and we capitalized on it. We dealt with everyone: the Gascons, the Dutch, and the English. We did not care just as long as we could make a profit. At home, my father would teach me about two things: business and religion. He was grooming me to become a man of the cloth. He always gave much to the church. I soon realized that he eventually wanted to give me to the church as well - his greatest gift. Nana also knew the plan. So, after a very privileged adolescence, I was sent Toulouse to live and be educated by the Cluniac Abbots at Daurade Basilica - the Golden Basilica.

The Basilica at this time was in disrepair; Toulouse was in disrepair. O how I longed to be back home in Bayonne. That was a city - bustling with trade and people from all over the world! This was a dreary life for me; the monks were mostly interested in taking my father's money, not educating me. They did "teach" me Latin, the language of the church. By teach, I mean they would scold me in Latin and beat me until I "understood." This was not the best method, but a method nonetheless. They had a daily mass that I was assigned to serve at; I was given fine clothes to wear. I liked the robes - fine materials, well made. So, my days were filled with mass and the cleaning of the Basilica. I could read, my father had taught me. I spoke the language of the trades as well as the Euskara, which we spoke at home, and some French and Catalan. Language was easy for me - an important skill when you're importing from afar. I knew the Gospels, I knew the history. The Abbots were not doing me much good. I decided to leave them. This was of course against my father's wishes, but I was not going to become one of them. I had spent three years of my life with these leeches and that was enough. So, I gathered my meager belongings and disappeared.

All roads lead to Rome, except here, all roads lead to the Compostellea - which I learned meant Burial ground. The Compostella was the burial of St. James the Apostle. Pilgrims have been traveling there forever. I head south along the route; I'll backtrack when I reach Oloron and take the road back home to Bayonne. I don't know what I'm going to do when I get there, my father will not be pleased. Maybe I'll get on a ship headed for England - have a look at the land where we send our trades. The trip from Toulouse to Oloron is uneventful. Oloron is a small, quiet country. I come across some Gitanos outside of town.

You can never trust them unless your Nana was one! I am greeted heartily by the band -apparently they have set up shop here as aides to the pilgrims. They sell food, provide entertainment, and offer advice. They are about ten miles outside of Oloron and haven't been detected by the town as of yet. I am hungry and tired and in need. I can pass as one of them, so I stay with them for a while. I am quickly put to work guiding the pilgrims. I am to

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“encourage the pilgrims to take a circumnavitous route.” Basically, to go in a big circle, in order to gather as many pilgrims as possible near our camp by nightfall and to inform any traveler that the town of Oloron and the cathedral there is either not open, or too far away to make before night falls. And of course - that there is a camp just down the road which will be happy to take you in. I happen to be really good at this less than honest way of life. My language skills make me more trusted - I could communicate with them all. I was not as dark as the Gitanos, so my rouse would hold up better. Towards the end of the day when night was about to set, I would travel with the pilgrims to the Gypsy camp. I would hear of news from the world. Pope Urban III had died and the holy lands have fallen to the heathens from the east. There was a new crusade to take back the lands. The war with King Henry and King Phillip was over and the new Pope, Gregory VIII, had proclaimed that the loss of Jerusalem was for the sins of Europe and for the people to take up the Cross. This was a great business for the people who made their trade on the pilgrim routes. I was fascinated, I now wanted to serve God, but in a different way than my father had intended. I would still be his gift to the Church, but not a dreary monk making books no one will read and copying texts all day long. No, that was not what I was going to do. I was to be a warrior for Christ. I would take up the cross - but how to go about it? I learned that there was a fleet leaving from Narbonne soon to go to the Outlands. If I hurried, I might be able to catch it. Fortunately, there is an old Roman road I can use. Heck, that's the road we had been using to reroute pilgrims to our camp, so I sort of know my way. So, this will be my destiny: to go to Outremer and be a gift to God.

I arrive in Narbonne. This port reminds me of home. Actually, my father has business partners here. He trades with them and routes goods from here to Bayonne. Maybe I can use that to my advantage. Narbonne is an ancient city. The Court of Ermengarde, Viscountess of Narbonne, is here as well. It's also very “Eastern.” There are the Jews, they have businesses here and a school. There are Moors as well. It's an important port - trade here is thriving. I go about trying to find my father's contact here. His name is Machum Minashe. He's a business man, a friend of my fathers. When I find him, he is very hospitable, very giving. He's amazed to see me. Apparently, I had met him once as a baby: he came to my father's business and struck a deal. He feels that my visit is a good omen. A “Shavua Tov,” as he says in his tongue. Apparently the ships for the Holy Land have already left, I am too late. I am disappointed to say the least, but Machum tells me there is hope. “There is always hope!” Many ships use this port he tells me, and he trades with many of them. He just might be able to get me on one of them. In the meantime, I can work for him. “I have no sons. God has blessed me with only daughters... so you will have to do.”

I am now in the employ of Machum Minashe of Narbonne. I am the stock boy, the hauler of heavy things, the fetcher. I am included in their bizarre rituals. My father told me the Jews were strange, but I never understood until now. “Wonderful businessmen, but different” he told me. I learned to be tolerant from my father so I went along with it. We kept track of the day and every 7th day was a “Shabbat” where we did nothing. I would leave the shop as it was my “day off.” I was more comfortable leaving the Jewish part of town on those days. I respected their traditions, but I just didn't get it. I explored the town of Narbonne. As I have said, this was a town with an Eastern feel to it. It had a Roman origin and the Basilica there has the columns from the Roman forum in it. This is horse land. Fine horses, fast horses. The Romans brought them here and have bred them and cultivated them ever since. Horses are what brought the fleet here. Horses are the top trade here. Machum is not in the horse business nor is my father. I would like to be in the horse business. I'll talk to Machum and see if there is a way. As he says, there is “always hope.” Months pass. I have a good life here in Narbonne. I do my work. On my day off, I go to Mass and then head out to the fields to look at the horses. After a while, I meet some Moors, they are even stranger to me than the Jews in town. Apparently, long ago, Narbonne was a Moorish town attracted here by the horses of the Romans. These people lived on the far outskirts and were horse herders. They pretty much kept to themselves. Over time, I was able to learn to handle and care for horses from them, mostly by watching from afar. They wore dark robes and turbans. I had never seen anything like them. Their skin was black and they spoke a language I had never heard before. I had a talent for language, but this was indecipherable to me. Some of them spoke Catalan and we would talk a bit. They were very guarded and I left them be and they left me in peace. From Machum, I learned that these Moors were of the same people that the Christians were fighting in Outremer. These people were scary, yes, strange, yes - but they seemed peaceful to me. I also learned that they were not supposed to be there. The Moors were banished from the area 50 years before and it's unusual to see them this far north. There were many more of them south in Aragone and especially Andalousia, which is still

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controlled by the Muslims. But by watching closely, I learned about horses. Beautiful creatures - the horses of Narbonne are spectacular. They are fast and strong - not a working horse, not a warhorse, but something in between - something special.

As luck would have it, hope was fulfilled. A ship going to the Holy Land had made port. On this ship were knights of the Templar order. Here was my opportunity. As was custom, they had come to Narbonne for horses and supplies before heading out to join King Henry and King Phillip. I took this as my chance. I approached a knight, his name was Johannes Ramiro - or so he said. I informed him that I could be of great service to him as I could read, write, and speak many languages. I was strong and could handle myself. He laughed at me said that the Holy Land was no place for a whelp. I told him I was on a mission from God, that it was my destiny to help recapture the lands from Saladin.

"For the Glory of God" I added for good measure.

He laughed again and said to me, "what do you know about horses?"

Well I thought a little lie right now was good business: "I know all about horses, I've been around horses my whole life." Which was true in a sense, I am sure there are horses in Bayonne. I had never done anything with them, but they were indeed there.

"Okay boy, find me some horses - good ones, and you can take them to the Holy Land with me."

So, I procured two horses for Johannes and became a horse handler in service to a knight of the temple. I secured the horses onboard the ship in port. Not an easy task, as horses don't like boats, but the sailors seemed to be experienced at the task. And with a goodbye to my friend Machum and his family who took me in and made a life for me these many months in Narbonne (I think he was trying to marry one of his daughters off to me), we set off on a ship to Acre. It was May 1191.

I had never sailed before and I didn't take to it. Johannes chided me. I told him I was a horse man and the sea is no place for horses or horsemen. After a few days, my stomach settled and the daily chore of looking after the horses, as was my duty, became simple: clean, water, and feed. This left much time to talk. I liked Johannes. He was an Englishman, as were his compatriots. They had gotten a late start and missed the ships with King Henry. They were nobles of little note. They had privileged upbringings like me. Somewhat sheltered, but now making their way with all the machismo they could muster. We were similar. He liked me and I liked him. We were only 5 years apart, I being around 19 years and he being 25 (ish?). He confided in me that Johannes was not his real name. He wouldn't tell me his real name - as if it meant anything to me that he and his companions all took new names for the crusade. I told him I was Immanuel Haristoi of Bayonne and I was Basque. He decided that would not do. He didn't like Immanuel or "Manny," and Haristoi would not work at all. The H with an "ar" sound he just couldn't get around. So, after some discussion and more debate, he got his friends involved. They went around in circles

"William!" "Harry!"

"No" Johannes said, "no flair."

"Santiago!"

"No, too much flair."

Finally, he asks me what I think.

"Well seeing as we are all on this crusade because of Pope Urban, who God rest his soul, is not using the name at the moment, I would like to be called Urban."

Johannes laughs about this for a moment. "True, he isn't using the name right now, but I feel it is blasphemy to usurp the name of a Pope. So we will change it to Urbain, my Basque friend."

"Yes" I said.

"Well then, we shall call you Urbain Lebasque."

Project and Gaming Nights

Do you have a project you would like help with? Do you want to help someone with a project? Do you just want to get out of the house for an evening? Well there are 4 Project Nights a month! So come out and join the fun!

- On the 2nd Wednesday of each month a Gaming and Desert Revel will be held at the home of Their Excellencies Vlachus and Una.
- On the 3rd Wednesday of each month Project Night is at the home of Braile and Bella!
- On the 4th Wednesday of each month Project Night will be at the home of Urbain and Beline.
- On the last Monday of each month Eamon and Isabella open up their home for Project Night.

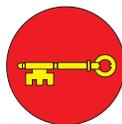
Check the Roaring Wastes web site for locations and information.



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Attention Archers

· Due to new member rules at the club. We are being asked to lock the gate behind us. If you are planning on going, please email Forester Eamon(lordeamon@aol.com) so he can give you his cell phone numbers in case you arrive and the gates are chained shut. He will come and open the gates for you. Also, due to other Club rules, it is necessary to ask people to pay \$10.00 to shoot.

Canton of Brackendelve



The Canton of Brackendelve holds its meetings the first Thursday of every month (minus August).

Our meetings take place at the UWUA Local 223 Union Hall, 15160 Commerce Drive North, Dearborn. Meetings start at 7:30pm, and all are welcome to come.

From I-75 take Schaefer North to Rotunda. Turn Right on Rotunda. Follow Rotunda to Commerce Drive North, turn right. Address is 15160 North Commerce Drive. The Union hall is the 5th or 6th building on the right.

From I-94 take the Schaefer/Greenfield exit. Follow Schaefer to Greenfield, turn Right onto Greenfield. Continue to Commerce Drive South, turn right. Commerce Drive South will turn into Commerce Drive North after you pass Rotunda. Address is 15160 Commerce Drive North.

Baronial Calendar

Sundays

Archery Practice

11:00 am - 12:30 pm

Lincoln Bowmen

Check the Baronial web site for dates

Fight Practice

Summer Sunday Fight Practice

April/May-October

1:00pm - 5:00pm

Norman J Halmich Park

3001 13 Mile Rd. Warren, MI 48092

Tuesday

Fight Practice

7:30 pm - 11:00 pm

St.. Charles Church

(November thru April)

The Keep

(May thru October)

Wednesday

First Wednesday

Baronial Meeting

8:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Cana Lutheran Church

Thursday

First Thursday

Brackendelve Canton Meeting

7:30

UWUA Local 223 Union Hall,
15160 Commerce Drive North, Dearborn

Middle Kingdom Events for July 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	July 2013 5-7 A Simple Day in the Country {Barony of Sternfeld} [Trafalgar, IN]					
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	7 Smurf Shoot {The Riding of Hawkland Moor} [Clarkston, MI] 19-4 [MOVED FROM Normal Dates] Pennsic War XLII {Kingdom of Aethelmearc}					
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Middle Kingdom Events for August 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
	August 2013 16-18 [MOVED FROM June] Swine & Roses {Barony of White Waters} [South Bend, IN]					
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	23-25 Call of the Waterhorse {Shire of Fearann Na Criche} [Oscoda, MI] 23-25 Procrastinator's Brawl and Baronial Championships {Canton of Brackendelve} [Ray Township, MI] 23-25 The Feast of St Ethyl - Baroness Wars I {Shire of Swordcliff} [Chatham, IL]					
	24 Barony of Cleftlands Standard Bearers Tournament {Barony of Cleftlands} [Chardon, OH]					
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	30-1 Middle Kingdom Academy of Defense {Shire of Ravenslake} [Manteno, IL] 30-2 Havoc in Hastings {Canton of Three Walls} [Hastings, MI] 30-2 Mounted War Games III {Shire of Shadowed Stars} [Peru, IN]					
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Middle Kingdom Events for September 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
			September 2013			
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	6-8 Harvest Days	6-8 For Hands {Barony of Shattered Crystal} [Woodriver, IL]	6-8 Tournament of Chivalry {Canton of Winged Hills} [Pleasant Hill, OH]			
		6-8 Saxon Summer 13 {Shire of Rivenvale} [Burghill, OH]	7 Foxhunt {Canton of Foxvale} [Big Rock, IL]			
		7 Reign of Arrows {Shire of Stormvale} [Flint, MI]				
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
		13-15 Melee at Roswell {Marche of Alderford} [Roswell, OH]				
		14 [MOVED FROM June 8] Clown Tourney {Shire of Narrental} [Logansport, IN]				
		14-15 Vikings Come Home XXII {Barony of Donnershafen} [Traverse City, MI]				
		20-22 Pounce XII {Canton of Catteden} [Vanlue, OH]				
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
		21 Rose Tourney {Barony of Roaring Wastes} [Howell, MI]				
		21 Shire of Dark River- 35 Year Anniversary! {Shire of Dark River} [Moline, IL]				
		21 Tournament of Rapier East II and Who Let the Dogs Out Coursing Event II - DOD XIII {Shire of Dragon's Vale} [Cromwell, IN]				
29						
	28 [MOVED FROM Oct 5th]	A Day of Archery {Barony of Andelcrag} [Hastings, MI]				

Middle Kingdom Events for October 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
			October 2013			
		4-6 Fields of Cloth of Gold {Barony of Illiton} [Metamora, IL]				
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	5 The Coronation of Cellach and Vulkan at Red Dragon {Marche of Tirnewydd} [Columbus, OH]					
		11-13 Rendezvous at the Bridge XXIV {Shire of Riviere Constelle} [Gentryville, IN]				
		11-13 What in Samhain {Canton of Three Walls} [Ionia, MI]				
		19 Reserved for Crown Tournament				
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
26 All Hallows	Revel III - Ghouls Just Wanna Have Fun {Canton of Lochmorrow} [Glasford, IL] {March of Saint Martin}	{Kingdom of Ealdormere}} [Bridgen, Ontario]				
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Come Visit the Roaring Wastes Website

The baronial website has a new look! Many changes and improvements have been occurring on the baronial website.

Visit the Discussion Forums section. This section is dedicated to news in the barony and the cantons. For general discussions, enter the Feast Hall. For happenings in the Barony or any of the Cantons, go to any of the individual news groups. There is also a section for Events and Demos

We also have a new picture gallery in the making. You can upload or view pictures from events and even artwork!

There is even a place to view our baronial newsletter!

The website can be found at
www.roaringwastes.org

If you haven't registered yet, please do!



Bezant Under Glass

The *Bezant Under Glass* is the official newsletter of the Barony of Roaring Wastes, located in the Metro-Detroit area. The Barony of Roaring Wastes is the third oldest barony in Michigan and is bordered by the Riding of Hawkland Moor and the Barony of Cynnabar.

The Barony of Roaring Wastes consists of one canton: Brackendelve (Downriver area) and one shire: The Shire of Altenburg (Mt. Clemens area).

Email article submissions, artwork, and questions, to chronicler@roaringwastes.org

This is the *Bezant Under Glass*, a publication of the Barony of Roaring Wastes of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. and is available from the publisher, Debbie Newell. It is not a corporate publication of the Society for Creative Anachronism and does not delineate SCA policies.

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