

The Dancing Moon

January, 2012

Happy **N**ew **Y**ear!



By Pietro de Crescenzi [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

The Crescenzi Calendar

Agricultural calendar from a 15th century copy of a manuscript by Pietro Crescenzi
Musée Condé, Chantilly

Read about Pietro de Crescenzi in this Issue

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**The Calontir Royals
March Off to War.

Gulf Wars - 2011**

**The Calontir Army
Bravely and Loyally
Follows the King and
Queen into Battle.

Gulf Wars - 2011**



Photos by Lucy E. Zahnle (SKA Lady Dulcibella de Chateaurien). Used with permission.

Art, Article and Photo Credits

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Lord Kristoff Adler Contemplates the Upcoming Ravine Battle at Gulf Wars 2011

Local Announcements:

Happy New Year! (Just in case you didn't see the cover...)

Dulcie

If you find an error that needs correcting in the shire newsletter or the shire website, please inform your webminister/chronicler ASAP. It may make her grumpy, but she needs to know.

Please submit February announcements to the Chronicler by January 26.



Photo by Lady Dulcibella de Chateaurien. Used by permission.

Jousters at Gulf Wars 2011
(Completely out of cardboard!)

Pietro de Crescenzi: His Life and Work

By Lady Dulcibella de Chateaurien

Considering his profound influence on medieval and early modern agriculture, it is surprising how little we know about Pietro de Crescenzi. He was born in Bologna, Italy, in 1233 CE, he studied logic, medicine, and the natural sciences before settling on a career practicing law and eventually becoming a judge. In his later years, he turned his attention to agriculture, writing the foundational treatise that jumpstarted the development of medieval agriculture, one of many sciences that had floundered after the fall of Rome.

Dedicated to King Charles II of Naples, de Crescenzi's book was translated into many languages and was variously known as the *Opus Ruralium Commodorum* in Latin and the *Rustican de Labour des Champs* in French among other titles, depending on the translation. Just as the book took on different titles in different countries, de Crescenzi's name was represented in Latin in some editions, so that you may find his work under *Petrus de Crescentiis* as well as under his Italian moniker.

De Crescenzi wrote the *Opus Ruralium Commodorum* some time between 1304 and 1309. Although the date is not absolutely certain, some experts believe the date to be 1305 or 1306. The first printed edition of the manuscript was published in 1471. The fact that the book became available as printed material as well as hand-copied manuscripts aided in its rise in popularity because the information was easier and less expensive to disseminate.

Opus Ruralium Commodorum was divided into twelve segments or "books" which covered the location and layout of manors and farms, agricultural information for growing different crops, including cereals and forage, and instructions for building granaries, information on growing grapes and making wine, a guide to recognizing and growing medicinal and nutritious plants, information on the care and use of meadows and woods, the cultivation of gardens, including pleasure gardens – an new innovation that influenced the later Renaissance fashion for villa gardens, and a guide to beekeeping and animal husbandry. The last two segments, an overall summary of the book and a month to month calendar outlining the agricultural tasks required for that month, seem very progressive, something you might find in a modern how-to. Dr. Margaret Smith of Great Britain's University of Reading quotes Frank J. Anderson, in his *An Illustrated History of the Herbals*, as saying, "The contents of Crescenzi's book provided anyone who worked on the land with a well-organized manual of procedure. The [book] is divided into twelve sections, each of which addressed itself to a specific agricultural topic."

In her article, "Pietro de Crescenzi: The Founder of Modern Agronomy," Lois Olson notes that, in writing *Ruralium*, "Crescenzi began where the Romans left off." She notes that his sources included Roman writers and agriculturists such as Palladius, Cato, Varro, Virgil, and Columella, He also drew on the writings of Albertus Magnus. However, he possessed no knowledge of the advances of Moorish Spain. Any newer innovations or more progressive insights into agriculture he possessed came from his own experiences and interviews with monks engaged in farming at his local monastery in Bologna.

Crescenzi's section on pleasure gardens influenced French culture as well as Italian culture. Pamela Coombes observes that Charles V of France was so impressed with the pleasure garden at the Hôtel de Saint-Pol, the layout of which was influenced by Italian conventions and Crescenzi's book, that in 1373, he ordered it translated into French. Although Crescenzi viewed gardens primarily as a

utilitarian adjunct to a household, much as monasteries used monastic gardens to provide food for the monastery, his discussion of pleasure gardens, a concept that originated in the Far East, became, according to Coombes, “the first in a series of successive waves of Italian influence to affect French ideas.” and that it “would have far-reaching effects in the development of the French garden.” Coombes notes that fourteen French editions of Crescenzi’s book were printed between 1486 and 1540 and It grew in popularity throughout the fifteenth century reaching countries as far flung as Germany and Poland.

Crescenzi died in 1321, but his work lived on, influencing an entire continent. It did not wane in its importance until new agricultural treatises were published in the sixteenth century. However, even these works drew source information from Crescenzi’s book. He was a brilliant man who completed a distinguished career in the law and crowned his achievements with the *Opus Ruralium Commodorum*, a work that outlived him by more than a century and influenced more peoples and cultures than he probably ever imagined.

Coombes, Pamela M. “The Medici gardens of Boboli and Luxembourg: Thoughts on their Relationship and Development.” MA Thesis McGill University, 1992. Web. 7 Jan. 2012.

From Seed to Flower: Selected Books from Cornelius J. Hauck Botanical Collection: Pietro de Crescenzi. Cincinnati Museum Center - Cincinnati History Library and Archives Online Exhibit, 2006-2011. Web. 7 Jan. 2012.

Lois Olson, “Pietro De Crescenzi: The Founder of Modern Agronomy.” *Agricultural History*. 18.1 (1944): 35-40. Web. 7 Jan. 2012.

Smith, Margaret. *Petrus de Crescentius, “Ruralia commode”, 1471: Special Collections Featured Item for April 2005.* University of Reading, 2007. Web. 7 Jan 2012.

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**Armoring Up at Gulf Wars 2011
(If they’d had Duck Tape, they would’ve used it!)**

Kris Kinder Pictorial

By Lady Catin of Edington



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Not everyone can pull off a plaid reindeer antler headdress, but Lady Rose makes it look easy!



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Lady Cadlae
and
Lady Nest
kill time
between
shopping
sprees.



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Lady Cadlae looking all domestic!



January's Medieval Moments

by Lady Dulcibella de Chateaurien

In response to King James II of Scotland's request for the establishment of a "studium generale," on January 7, 1451, Pope Nicholas V issued a papal bull of foundation for the University of Glasgow.

Edward the Confessor died on January 5, 1066, having promised William of Normandy, also known as William the Conqueror, the throne in 1051 and making Harold Godwinson his heir on his deathbed. This conflict ultimately resulted in the Norman invasion of England and the Battle of Hastings in October, 1066, where Harold was killed. Interestingly, Edward did not have an heir with his queen, Edith, because, as an extremely pious man, he was determined to remain celibate.

Medieval New Year's Celebrations

By Lady Dulcibella de Chateaurien (Reprinted from January, 2002, issue of the Dancing Moon)

Throughout history, great civilizations have had different opinions as to the beginning of the new year. Ancient Mesopotamians who lived in Babylonia celebrated on the new moon nearest the spring equinox (mid-March). Those Mesopotamians who lived in Assyria set the full moon nearest the autumn equinox (mid-September) as their new year's beginning. The Egyptians, Phoenicians, and Persians also celebrated at the autumn equinox. Until the 5th century B.C., the Greeks celebrated the old year's passing during the winter solstice (around December 21st). The Romans set the date for New Year at March 1st during the festival of Calends. When Emperor Julius Caesar changed the Roman Calendar in 46BC, the official date for the first day of the new year was January 1st. During the festival, known as Saturnalia, Romans decorated their houses, exchanged gifts and allowed slaves and servants to behave as equals.

During much of the Middle Ages, most of Christian Europe viewed March 25th, Annunciation Day (the day the Virgin Mary was impregnated by Immaculate Conception) as the first day of the new year, although the Anglo-Saxons celebrated on December 25.

In 1582, when the Gregorian calendar listed the official date once more as 1 January, Roman Catholic countries immediately adopted the new holiday, but Scotland didn't accept it until 1660, Germany and Denmark until around 1700, England until 1752 and Sweden until 1773. The western world had to wait until 1918 for Russia to fall in line.

Along with other pagan practices, the custom of giving gifts to monarchs at the new year was outlawed by the catholic church in A.D. 567, but was later reinstated by English rulers sometime during the 13th century. Common gifts were gold and jewels. English husbands also gifted their wives with money on New Year's Day.

The Feast of Fools was also celebrated on around January 1st. Begun in the twelfth century by John Belet, an English liturgical writer, the festival, set on the day of Circumcision, was supposed to be a 'festival of the subdeacons' similar in spirit to other feasts held in honor of deacons, priests, choristers and mass servers.

The feast carried overtones of Saturnalia, raising those in subordinate positions to a higher station if only for a few hours. Thus, in the hands of a subdeacon, the formality and solemnity the church services became a parody, bordering on blasphemy in the eyes of Rome.

The Feast of Fools grew to be so licentious, pagan, and blasphemous in nature that it was constantly and emphatically condemned by the medieval church, but these customs were so deeply rooted that it took two centuries for the church to finally eradicate the Feast of Fools.

In 1199, Bishop Eudes de Sully imposed regulations to try to curb the abuses of the celebration at The Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. The celebration was finally forbidden under the severest penalties by the Council of Basle in 1435. This condemnation was seconded by the University of Paris in 1444 and supported by the decrees of various local councils. Under the church's pressure, the more blatant abuses slowly died away.

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Shire Calendar - January 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Happy New Year! 2 PM: Archery Practice Lord Alan's House	2	3 6:45 PM: Weekly Meeting Project Night Newburg United Methodist Church, Newburg, Mo.	4	5	6	7
8 2 PM: Archery Practice, Lord Alan's House a	9	10 6:45 PM: Weekly Business Meeting Newburg United Methodist Church, Newburg, Mo	11 Fighter Practice at St. Roberts Community Center – 6:30 PM	12	13	14 Crown Tournament, Barony of Three Rivers, St. Louis, MO
15 2 PM: Archery Practice, Lord Alan's House	16	17 6:45 PM: Weekly Meeting Project Night Newburg United Methodist Church, Newburg, Mo.	18	19	20	21
22 2 PM: Archery Practice, Lord Alan's House	23	24 6:45 PM: Weekly Meeting Project Night Newburg United Methodist Church, Newburg, Mo.	25 Fighter Practice at St. Roberts Community Center – 6:30 PM	26	27	28
29 2 PM: Archery Practice, Lord Alan's House	30	31 6:45 PM: Weekly A&S Class Newburg United Methodist Church, Newburg, Mo.				

List of Shire Events - January

1	Jan	2 PM	Archery Practice,
3	Jan	6:45 PM	Shire Meeting – Project Night
4	Jan	6:30 PM	Fighter Practice
8	Jan	2 PM	Archery Practice
10	Jan	6:45 PM	Shire Business Meeting
11	Jan	6:30 PM	Fighter Practice
14	Jan		Crown Tourney, Three Rivers
15	Jan	2 PM	Archery Practice
17	Jan	6:45 PM	Shire Meeting--Project Night
18	Jan	6:30 PM	Fighter Practice
22	Jan	2 PM	Archery Practice
24	Jan	6:45 PM	Shire Meeting--Project Night
25	Jan	6:30 PM	Fighter Practice
29	Jan	2 PM	Archery Practice
31	Jan	6:45	Shire Meeting-- Arts and Sciences Class

Driving Directions:

Archery Practice: Beaver Creek Conservation Area: No Crossbows. No Archery in freezing temperatures (32° F). From Rolla, take Highway 63 south for several miles. The range gate will be on your left, immediately across the highway from the VFW post. Drive through the gate to the top of the hill, park and take the line!

Shire Meetings: Newburg United Methodist Church: Take I-44 to the Newburg Exit. Turn south. The church will be on your right, a little past the patrol car waiting at the bottom of the hill to catch all of you scoff-law speeders.

St Robert Community Center: Take I-44 to Exit 161. Turn towards Ft Wood (South). Immediately south of the highway, turn right. Take a quick left through the median and continue towards the Skate Board park. The Center is the big building near the radio tower.

Website: <http://www.shireofcalanaisnuadh.org>

Chat group: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/calanaisnuadh/>

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