

The Knight's Tale



Hi! My name is the chevalier Bayard.
I'm a knight. I live in Provence, France
in the Middle Ages.





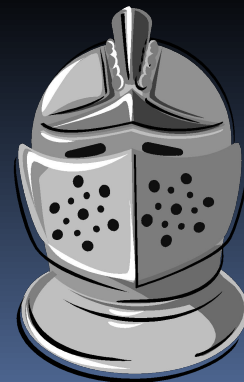
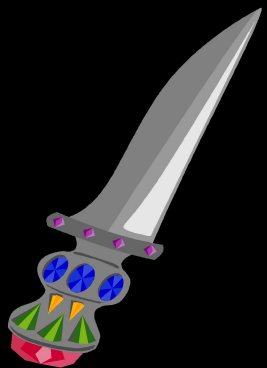
I have a sharp nose, almond shaped eyes and pinched lips. My eyebrows are dark. My hair is long and braided. I am wearing a short beard and moustache. My teeth are straight. My chin is strong. I'm medium height, muscled and lithe. I'm good at wrestling, boxing, running and hunting.



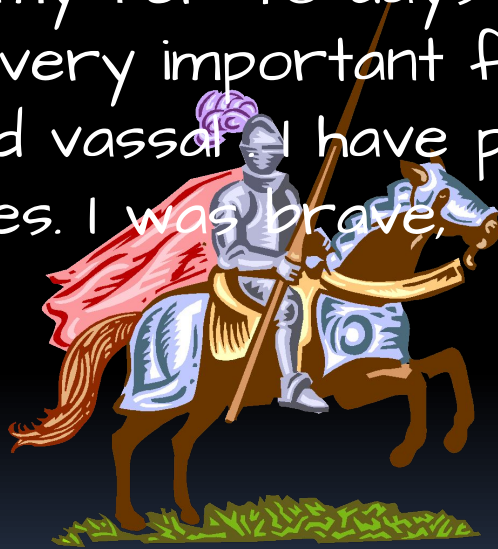
Look at me. Now I'm a warrior on horseback. I'm a successful knight, a medieval gentlemen-soldier. The military service is my occupation. I often take part in tournaments. Religion, tournaments and the love of ladies are the main things for me. I strictly follow the rules of chivalry.

I usually wear a loose wool tunic down to the knees. Under the tunic I have woven tights which did not fit very tightly. Outside, if it is cold, I wear a wool cloak. On my feet, I wear leather shoes with pointy toes. I can afford them.

I was born in a wealthy, landowning family. I am the youngest son of my parents. My father was a nobleman. Age 7 I was sent to the castle of the Lord to receive knightly breeding. My apprenticeship lasted seven years. I trained for combat practicing fighting skills and sword fighting. I also learned the rules of good manners to be chivalrous. One day I was a page to the Bishop of Grenoble, and served as his cupbearer when he dined with the Duke of Savoy.



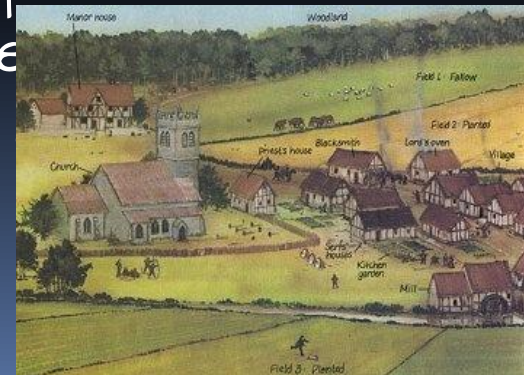
When I became an adult, I was knighted by a Lord. I'll never forget the Knighting Ceremony. I swore allegiance to my Lord and gave him the Oath of Fealty. The Lord said, "In the name of God, Saint Michael and Saint George, I dub thee knight. Be valiant." The main obligation was to serve in the Lord's private army for 40 days each year. Fealty and homage are very important for me. Now I'm my Lord's trusted vassal. I have performed well during some battles. I was brave, stout-hearted and courageous.



I own a portion of land . The large fief was granted me for maintenance by the Lord in exchange for my military service. The wealth from this land allows me to continue to go to war. I can pay for weapons, armor and warhorses . I live in a manor in the village with my family . It is in Provence. I have a wife and two sons. We live in a large house made of mud bricks. The house has the gable end decorated with carved crockets. You can see a chimney on the roof. The entrance of the house is on the ground floor, by a few steps with a wooden porch . The house has some small windows . The

are externally

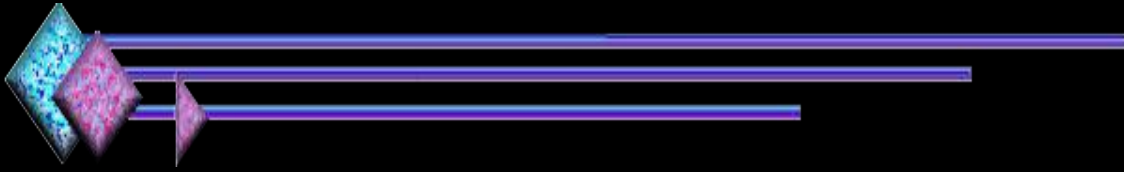
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lly.



The interior decoration of the house consist in woodwork. Gothic furniture is prevalent. A wooden table with some wooden chairs is in the middle of the room. You can find a fireplace in the corner of the room. There are some tapestries on the walls.

The bedrooms are upstairs. There is a paved floor in the yard. Some outhouses, a pump and a dry toilet are in the yard, too. I dream of becoming a Lord some day.







Now I'd like to tell you about my daily life. It centers around Lord's castle or fighting for my Lord and the King during times of war. My daily life follows a similar schedule.

I usually get up at dawn. I hear Mass and always make prayers in the church. Then I have breakfast. Food and drink generally is served between 6 -7o'clock. I have some manchet bread and cheese for breakfast. After that I engage in weapons practise at the quintain .

The weapon practice includes enhancing skills in the two-handed sword, battle axe, mace, dagger and lance. I also increase my skills in horsemanship .I spend much of my time on honing my weapons skills and keeping my levels of fitness high. Every day I train preparing for a tournament, too. I often discuss on warfare strategy with the hired soldiers increasing my knowledge of siege warfare and weapons. Then I have mid morning prayers and a meal. Dinner is served at mid-morning between 12 - 2 o'clock. I like to eat a piece of beef for dinner . Sometimes in the afternoon I accompany my lord in hunting, hawking or inspecting the estate. I talk with the lord. He is cruel, strict and smart and caring at the same time. Last week I received some land for a manor of my own.



After evening prayer I have supper in the Hall of the Lord Castle or in the Manor House. Supper is a substantial meal. Food and drink is served between 6 -7o'clock. I have mutton with some vegetables or poultry, fresh and salt water fish. After supper there may be some entertainment - music or dancing. Sometimes I join a feast in the Lord Castle. The day usually ends with bedtime prayers. I sleep in a small room in the Manor House.



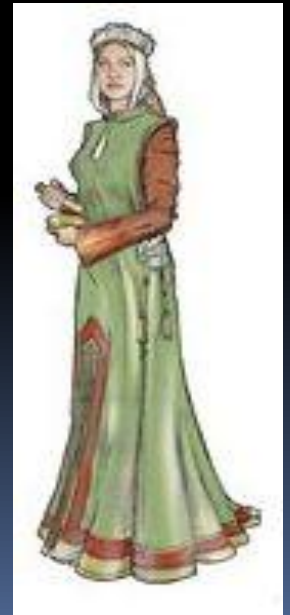


Today I'm going to tell you about my wife Eleanor. Now she is nineteen. We have been married for five years. I have told you that we have two little sons. Eleanor's father was the Knight. At a very young age she was sent away from home to receive her education in a household. She had no choice in her husband. I fell in love with Eleanor. And with parental permission she was married to me at the age of fourteen. It is a successful marriage, I





Look at Eleanor's portrait. She is a young and pretty woman. She is slim and dark haired. Her hair is long. Eleanor's hair is kept back by a silken net attached to a metal fillet. Eleanor enjoys various jewels. Her dresses are tight to display all the elegance of their form. The dress is fastened round the waist which has long bands attached to the sleeves near the wrists. Her clothing is embroidered and richly decorated. Eleanor also uses the long cloak with the clothing and closed leather shoes. The shoes are pointed. She wears



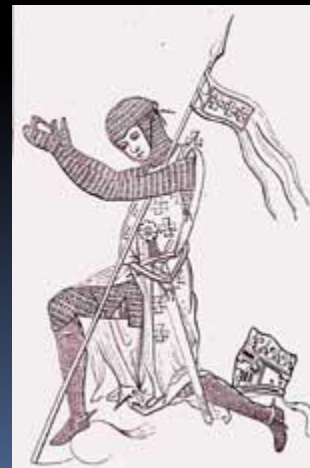


Eleanor is revered. She has elegant manners and a good taste. My wife encourages me to show my loyalty and courtesy, honor and gallantry. I usually try to protect the weak and the poor. I'm a real knight and I'm always ready to fight for Lord, God, and my Lady. My credo is "To fight for a lady, God bless us!" I take part in tournaments and display my courage and bravery. Women are worth fighting over, I think. So the knights' tournaments are inseparable from the love of lady.

My wife is interested in poetry, dancing and music. She learns to play the psaltery. It's a musical instrument which is a cross between a harp and a guitar. We like it when travelling musicians visit our manor. The troubadours travel from one village of Provence to the next. They perform romantic ballads about King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. The themes of their songs also deal with chivalry and courtly love. The assistants of troubadours are jongleurs. They are good at conjuring, acrobatics and



A day of Eleanor starts at cock crow. My wife has a lot of work to do at home. She has to take care of the household. For example she supervises the preparation of food. But her major role is to bring up the children. Her hobby is embroidery. She also enjoys discussing of tournaments, betrothals, marriages. Eleanor is excessively emotional. She gets so upset when I am gone that she cries night and day. It's a rather sad view, isn't it?



"What good would it do to spend the day
Telling you how she wept evening and morning?
For in such cases, women have such sorrow
When their husbands have gone,
For the most part, they're so sorry,
Or else they fall into such malady
That at last they certainly die"
(From "Canterbury Tales" by Geoffrey Chaucer)



My wife is a religious woman and prays in the chapel several times a day. When I am out she is in charge of everything. Eleanor has to take over the running of the manor when I am absent.

The law gives husbands full rights over wives. I love my wife . Nevertheless she is my property. I think that all women should bear children, work for the family and obey their husbands. I am a figure of authority in the family. I 'm sure that all women should just do what their husbands tell them. My word is law.





Today I'm going to tell you about a boy from the village. He will be punished by the Village Court for the theft.

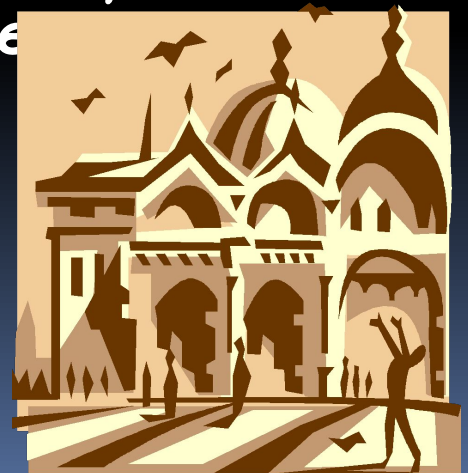
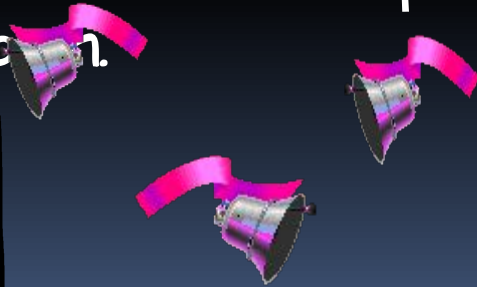
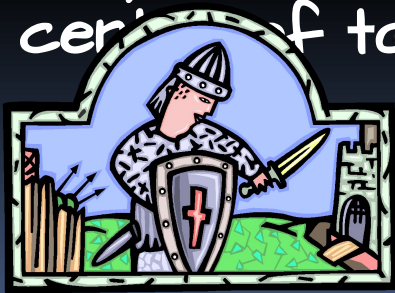


All that was stolen is just a little amount of bread. But for stealing people often have their right hand cut off. In town market thieves often go through large crowds and cut their money pouches off and get their money. They are pick-pocket people. The punishment for stealing is that you will have your hand cut off.



Crimes happen regularly nowadays. Yesterday I saw two vagabonds being whipped and chained in stocks. Vagrancy is a crime. Another common crime is poaching. To poach means to hunt or fish illegally. It's like stealing because all the forests and rivers belong to the king and his nobles. A criminal is someone who by doing something wrong, "had disturbed the king's peace".

Poaching or Property Damage will have the punishment of being put in stocks, the pillory, or you will be drawn-and-quartered in the ceremony of the gallows.



The harsher the crime the more horrendous the punishment, you understand. If a man committed Rape, Manslaughter or Robbery they will be hung up in a cage so people can see their slow death. On some occasions they are taken down just before their death and quartered (cut into four pieces) so that the pain will kill them, a most cruel way to die.

Public displays of torture are common. When Public torture is announced by the kings men, people will come from far and wide. They will bring children with them. It is a deterrent from committing crime, bringing fear to people. If you have done a crime, you will pay for it, maybe even with your life.



I am a knight so there are three principal things in my life: religion, war, and love of ladies. I am a Christian. I believe in and follow Jesus Christ. The most important and the most sacred for me is the first Commandment. The thought of God fills my heart, and the main part of my life dues to the Church. I believe all that the Church teaches, and I must observe all its directions. I'm always ready to defend the Church.





When I was born I was immersed in water as a sign that I am cleansed from sin and constituted as a member of the Catholic Church. It was baptism. At the age of 13 I took part in confirmation. In the Church I had a wedding in the estate where I live. It was a religious ceremony formalizing the union with a woman. Our union with Eleanor was blessed with two children. I have to confess my sins to a priest, and I pay money to do this. Penance also includes acts of "good" behavior. Yesterday I asked a visiting monk to dine with my family. The invitation was an act of penance, an act of kindness. Penance is done many times. If I had not done ample penance, I could not participate in communion. The Holy Communion is the most important sacrament. Each mass, when I had confessed all my sins and have not yet committed new ones, I can participate in communion. During mass, people taking communion receive a blessed wheat wafer and a sip from a specially blessed cup of wine. If I participate in communion frequently, I'll go to heaven.

I listen to the words of the mass and make prayers in the church 4 times a day. The priest says that that I have to participate in the sacraments if I want to get to heaven after my death. Miserere



Sources:

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