Wall Map of the Midrealm

By Dorothea de Beckham
Barony of Red Spears

In Process - Early July

In Process - Mid July

This currently (Summer 2024, A S. LIX) unfinished wall hanging was created at the request of Baron Leofric, Baron Red Spears, who desires more wall coverings for the Yule Feast hall. Banners, tapestries, and curtains have been prevalent in the SCA for aiding the atmosphere of our events, and are often stored and transported throughout the year for multiple uses at different sites. For this reason, modern materials were chosen for practicality that would withstand wear and tear.

Maps have been made for millennia. For a quick list of maps through the centuries see *The Shape of the World* by Iman Ghosh at https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/07/the-shape-of-the-world-according-to-old-maps/ which lists many famous maps with key details and images of the originals or reconstructions where the original no longer exists.

Another quick reference list can be found at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Early_world_maps. Although many maps were created for transport as part of a manuscript, some were wall sized. The Ebstorf Mappa Mundi (1235 CE) was painted on 30 goat skins and measured 12 ft by 12 ft (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ebstorf_Map).

The cost, volume and weight of 30 goat skins of leather is prohibitive, so a painter's tarp measuring 12 ft by 9 ft was chosen for this wall hanging. This was changed to a 6x9 ft drop cloth for easier re-use as a tent shade wall and due to the height of the hooks used for displaying it at Canton events. Eight colors of exterior latex paint were diluted 50/50 with water per class notes by Mistress Rochwen of Calontir for painted floor tarps and wall hangings for use in the SCA lifestyle. Some color mixing was done in small batches, and some overpainting was done with less diluted colors.

The first stage of planning included researching the heraldry of the active baronies of the Midrealm. After general scale and layout sketches were made it was determined that there would be room to include active shires on the map. Two shape templates were created: a large escutcheon for the home barony, Red Spears, and a smaller escutcheon for all the other groups. The heart shape promoted in Society social media as a way to display heraldry was chosen to distinguish baronies from shires and the two active Red Spears cantons at a glance. The stencil width was used to center and place the heart tip, although slight deviations occurred during drawing and painting. The rest of the drawing and painting was done free-hand.

Inspiration for the map started with the “SCA 101: Meet the Neighbors” article in the Barony of Red Spears *Spearpoint* newsletter. This map goes beyond the day-trippable groups to include the neighboring kingdoms. As former regions of the Midrealm, Calontir, Ealdormere and Northshield are given enhanced visibility with the purple border on the western edge for Calontir, the northstar emblem of Northshield and cheddar curtain border, the trillium of Ealdormere and red border. The green border represents the Debatable Lands, and shades of green background roughly follow the landscape where darker green is the mountains and lighter green the grasslands. The blue border in the southeast indicates Atlantia. The black border on the bottom represents the old boundary with Ansteorra. The banner poles host banners with colors for the current kingdoms of Glenn Abhann and Calontir in the southwest corner, and for Aethelmearc,

Atlantia, and Meridies in the southeast corner. The names for each group represented can be found here:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cB0MBho4AyAbYHp5DqZ_YJyd-DAopSVj/view?usp=sharing

Elements related to Red Spears were added such as the traditional Baronesses' ships and boar. The Lake Erie sea monster Bessie is depicted as an ice dragon swimming over to the Barony of Ryddrich Hael, Aethelmearc (not shown). The Boar Whale of Lake Michigan was discovered after sifting through sites such as http://lakemichiganwhales.com/ and a variety of articles chronicling whale sitings in Lake Michigan such as https://www.lansingcitypulse.com/stories/truth-and-myths-about-the-great-lakes-fact-or-fake,56074 and this 1985 article on Chicago's whale watching cruises https://www.chicagotribune.com/1985/06/07/set-sail-in-search-of-great-lakes-whales/ combined with news of the 17th century shipwreck of *Le Griffon*, the first European ship to travel the Great Lakes which sunk in 1679:
https://upnorthlive.com/news/local/explorers-dive-into-lake-michigan-to-identify-shipwreck-site

The Boar Whale sea monster in Lake Michigan is based off creatures in the Carta Marina (1539) by Olaus Magnus (1490-1557) and woodcut prints in Ulisse Aldrovandi's (Bologna, 1522-1605) *Monstrorum Historia* "History of Monsters" (1642). Images from scanned versions are included here for reference and potential variation since these creatures may not be as readily identifiable as whales, walrus, porpoises or with some creative license, beavers.

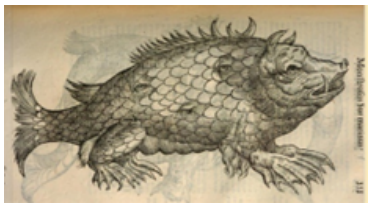
"Aper Marinus Cetaceus" Excerpt from the Carta marina, a wall map of Scandinavia created in Rome during 1527–39 by Olaus Magnus (1490–1557)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carta_marina#/media/File:Carta_Marina.jpeg (Public Domain, accessed Jan. 2024)

Aldrovandi, Ulisse. 1642. Vlyssis Aldrovandi patricii Bononiensis Monstrorum historia: Cum paralipomenis historiae omnium animalium. Bononiae (Bologna): Typis Nicolai Tebaldini

Appendix: Parallel notes (Paraliponena Historiae Omnium Animalium) page 63 "Aper Marinus Cetaceus" from Aldrovandi's 'History of Monsters' 1642

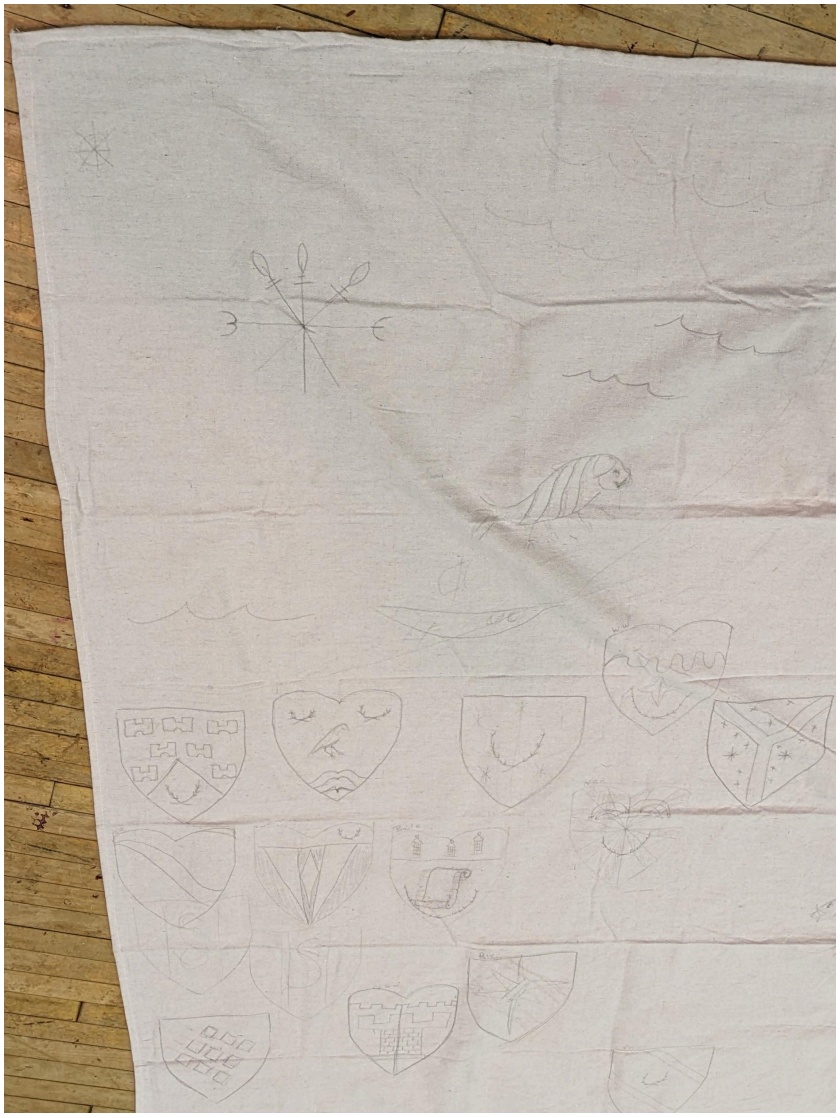
from Aldrovandi's 'History of Monsters' 1642, Parallel notes p.109.



The monstrous Sea Pig "Monstrosus Sus Marinus" from Aldrovandi's 'History of Monsters' 1642, Parallel notes p. 353

Project Stages:

1. Concept sketches and research (Fall 2023)
2. Practice sketches and layout (Winter 2023-2024)
3. Purchasing carpenters pencils, tarp and paint, and creating escutcheon stencils (Spring 2024)
4. Drawing on tarp and updates to layout in pencil



5. Drawing over final placement sketches in darker pencil before painting

6. Painting background - 3 inch brush

7. Freehand painting by color - freehand with 1 inch and 2 inch brushes
8. Outline most color borders in black (June 2024) - purchased fresh fine, medium and thick sharpies
9. Create an answer key to the heraldry of the Midrealm baronies and shires (July 2024)

10. Sew loops on back to use for hanging

11. Final Steps
    a. Touch up paint to clean up shapes and indistinct colors (overpainted or wicked) – Summer 2024 and ongoing as needed
    b. Add fine details in black – July 2024, usually completed with the sharpies, and ongoing as needed
    c. Finish answer key to group names and heraldry
    d. Add project to Dragon's Hoard for easier distribution