



KING ELI AT THE BRIDGE

David Stuart MacLachlan Hoornstra
30" x 30" Oil on canvas, 2012

... And so the armées of the two kings they were brought together across from a river, and between them three bridges were set, over which the two hosts would contend. One was the width of a spear, and the second was the width of two spears, and the third was the width of three spears ...

The horns blew and the armées advanced to the bridges. As commanded, the Midrealm host did not set foot upon the bridges, but instead awaited on the near side, and waited for the men at arms of the East to come on, and receive their welcome. By this stratagem, the Midrealm could better match the superior numbers of the East, and purchase the chance to seize victory from this meeting ... it is said to have been about three hours that these men strave ...

The king Eliahu had been forced onto the center bridge by some men at arms of the East, and the two who stood beside him were hacked down ... Now the king, he mustered up his royal presence, and he bade them to bring to him the most noble peer remaining on their side, for he wished to do a little bickering with him ... And while they sought to obey the cousin of their king, some men at arms of

the king Eliahu came behind them and pressed them so, so that they turned their backs to the king,

To this the king Eliahu was much pleased, and he saw no reason that he should wait overlong for the arrival of his cousin. And the king then pushed one of the men at arms from the side of the bridge so he sore drowned, and strake such blows upon three others that they bled to their death, and so he freed himself and rejoined his host ...

And then the king brought his remaining force down upon the host of the king Hasdrubal, who some say was hurt almost to his death before this time, but some say he abided with his men to the last, but I cannot say, and the armée of the Midrealm they were victorious over the East, and held at the end the three bridges.

— from *An Account of a Deed of Arms at three Bridges in the East Marches, AS XIX*

Written by Jehan de Pellham, squire of Sir Vitus (John W. McFarlin, an officer in the US Cavalry)

The international medieval re-creation group called the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA) holds its large annual event, "Pennisic War," in western Pennsylvania. The painting is a fanciful depiction of an actual encounter during Pennsic XIII in August 1984. Begun late that year, the canvas was finally finished in 2012. In addition to King Eliahu, only two actual persons are portrayed. The artist, known in the SCA as "Daibind MacLachlan," actually fell at another bridge. He is shown, prone at lower right near his cypher and shield of arms (a medieval signature). The banner bearer at right is loosely based on the appearance of "Ian Maclean of Anuradale" (Jay Johnston), who made David's helm and gauntlets. All three lived and had their SCA participation centered in Ann Arbor, Michigan, in the chapter now known as the "Barony of Cygnabur." The armor of several other combatants is based on a photograph of the actual scene, modified to fit the period of King Eliahu's armor.

Painting and poster © 2013 by David S. Hoornstra. Story © 2009 by John W. McFarlin, published by permission. All rights reserved.