

TOASTING TRADITIONS

From Baroness Lady Genievieve de' Charbonneau*

Customarily at feasts toasts are given. Did you ever wonder how it was determined who said what and/or what to say?

In period, for many lands and places there were strict codes and laws pertaining to hospitality and guest rites. Among them were those pertaining toasting or trothing (pledging our word and faith). Not toasting your liege or their legal representatives often was considered an insult to the Crown and often was punishable by imprisonment. To NOT toast your reigning nobility (King/Queen/Prince/Princess/ Baron/Baroness) is an insult to them, the Crown and the Kingdom. To only toast one member of the reigning nobility (King/Queen/ Prince/Princess /Baron/Baroness) and not both is also considered to be an insult. One may toast the King and Queen and then later in the evening salute the Queen as your inspiration of Love and Beauty or toast to the Baron's legs. However, this is acceptable ONLY after the formal toasts have been made.

In the East Kingdom, traditionally, the first toast is to their Royal Majesties. The most senior ranking peer in the hall has this honor (determined both by awards and date of issuance).

The second traditional toast (if no other visiting monarchs/royalty are present) is to the Kingdom's heirs, the Crown Prince and Princess. This next ranking peer in the hall has this honor. If there are no ranking peers in the hall, or the ranking peer present declines; or the local territorial Baron/ess has already given a toast, then the Autocrat may give the toast.

The third traditional toast is to the territorial host/ess (Baron/ess) of the event. Remember that they hold the territory in fealty to the Crown and are responsible for the Barony. Any member of the local populace may make this toast. A Barony or Canton member should make it. If it not, implies that others recognize the value of your nobility better than you do.

Anytime during the evening you may be asked to charge (raise) your glasses in honor of someone or something (a champion to a well done deed). Depending on your locale the response may vary from Vivant, to Huzzah, to Poohba, etc.

The last toast of the evening is to the cooks and their staff for their efforts on your behalf. Any member of the populace may perform this honor.

In Bhakail, this honor is reserved as one of the final toast of the evening. I believe that the entire kitchen staff should be assembled and then toasted. In this way the group efforts of the team may be recognized as well as those of the individual chef.

Special toasts in period occurred during Yuletide festivities. This toast may take place either at dinner or during the winter court. It was customary to for the Lady of the manor to troth the season and her guests with a large ceremonial goblet filled with warm mulled wine or cider; hence the trothing cup. At Yule during my tenure as Baroness, I re-introduced this as a custom in Bhakail.

The period trothing toast at Yule followed this general formula: the first salute after toasting the high king and their heirs is for the Lord and Lady of the hall (in this case the Baron and Baroness) to salute their people on behalf of the previous year's endeavors and accomplishments.

The second salute is to thank the Lord of the hall for protecting the steadfast through strength of arms and stalwartness of his heart.

The third salute is from the Lord of the hall to the Lady for tending the hearths and hearts of the people through stewardship of fields and vineyards and the ministrations of the arts and sciences.

The last salutation is to all of the officers of the Keep (after they are assembled). They are thanked for their efforts on behalf of Keep and Kingdom and presented with a sip from the trothing cup by the honored Page in attendance.

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