

Voices of Invocation

1596 Newsletter

Greetings to all. It is my honor and privilege to again share with you the passions of our guild, and those things that they have put their heart and mind towards.

A “Lantern Jar” Pendant

By Princess Margaret Clifford-Stanley

As I think is well-known by now, I do have an interest in a variety of handicrafts, including the making of simple jewelry. This time, I did wish to share the making of a piece inspired by some tiny quartz crystals that did come into my hands recently.

Henry and I did have the opportunity to visit a mining site where the crystals commonly called “Herkimer Diamonds” are found. We did find several whole crystals of good size, and I did bring home with me a partial bucket of the sand from one of the mining pockets, to see how small a crystal could be found within.

Whilst I have not yet searched through more than a fraction of the sand, I have found many small crystals, some as small as sand grains. The crystals I show here are somewhat larger, perhaps one sixteenth of an inch across, and were chosen for being all of approximately the same size and clarity. They are tiny, and well-formed.



I did think of filling a small jar with crystals, and did find this empty pendant at a local market for craft materials and jewelry findings.



It did remind me of a lantern, waiting to be filled with light.

Upon taking the “lantern” apart, I found that it was not a solid-bottomed bottle, but a glass tube open at either end. As I did not wish to lose any stones, I crafted plugs out of carved black craft foam to fit within the end caps.



Once I had my plugs carved and my crystals selected, I had only to assemble the pendant and fill it.



I say 'only'. There are 100 crystals giving light to this 'lantern', and each was placed by hand, one at a time. 'Twas time-consuming, but I do think it was well worth the time.

I plan to bring this pendant to the next Imperial gathering to show to any who wish to see it.

Battle of San Juan (November 22, 1595-November 25, 1595)

By King-Palatine Thrommel Breckonridge

In the New World, 1595 was a relatively quiet year. The Anglo-Spanish War that started in 1586 still continued on and one event that is significant is related to the continued conflict.

The Spanish West Indian Fleet had recently left Havana, Cuba on March 10, 1595 with two million pesos worth of gold and silver collected in Central and South America

on their way back to Spain. A storm in the Bermuda Channel on March 15, 1595 caused the fleet to seek the nearest friendly port for repairs, San Juan, Puerto Rico. Once the fleet arrived there on April 9, 1595, the treasure was stored at La Fortaleza while repairs occurred on the fleet. Word was sent to Spain informing the crown of the situation, but the information fell into the hands of the English as well allowing them to be aware of the vast amount of treasure being stored in San Juan.



Map of the Caribbean in 1594 Created by Theodore de Bry

Queen Elizabeth directed Sir Francis Drake and John Hawkins, English privateers, to command 27 English ships and 2,500 soldiers to attack San Juan, Puerto Rico. The goal of the attack was to take the treasure and potentially San Juan as well. They set sail from Plymouth, England on August 28, 1595. On their way, they stopped in the Canary Islands to try to attack the Spanish there and take those islands, but they were unsuccessful.



Queen Elizabeth I

Sir Francis Drake

Sir John Hawkins

Admiral Pedro Tello de Guzman, commander of five frigates, was directed to go to the Caribbean to retrieve the treasure in San Juan. Once in the Caribbean, the Spanish were able to capture one of the English ships, the Francis, near Gaudeloupe with their small fleet of five swift frigates and found out the plans of the English to attack San Juan. The small Spanish fleet then proceeded to San Juan to warn them of the impending attack and bolster their forces with troops. The Spanish sunk two vessels purposely in the harbor entrance to prevent the English from entering the harbor with their ships. The Spanish defenses consisted of 1,500 troops, 800 who manned the five frigates, and 70 land-based cannons in addition to those on the frigates.

When the English arrived on November 22, 1595, they sailed towards the Boqueron Battery on the island of San Juan. Cannons shot at the fleet and one cannon hit Drake's ship, the Defiance, and killed Sir Nicholas Clifford and Browne and potentially John Hawkins, but accounts are not sure if he died at that moment or on November 12, 1595 due to a fever. On the other hand, Drake survived the cannon shot that went through the cabin of his ship. Unable to land troops at the Ensenada del Escambron on the eastern end of San Juan Islet, they went to the other side of the

island near the Isla de Cabras where they could keep out of range of cannon fire.



El Morro Fortress in San Juan, Puerto Rico

On the night of November 23, 1595, Drake called for approximately 1,000 troops on row boats to sneak onto the Spanish frigates in the bay to catch them on fire. The fires caused one of the ship's powder kegs to explode.

Below is a first hand account by the Spanish of the battle on November 23, 1595.

“The same Thursday, 23rd, San Clement's Day, at ten o'clock at night, when it was quite dark, the enemy commenced an attack on the port with twenty-five boats, each carrying fifty or sixty men well armed, with the view of burning the frigates, as was afterwards seen, and they all entered up close to the platform of the Rock (battery), ranging themselves under the fire of the artillery...Most of the boats attacked the Capitana, the Texeda frigate, setting fire to her at the bow, and throwing into her a quantity of fire-pots and shells while ours succeeded in extinguishing the flames before they had done any damage, the fight being carried on by cannon, musquetry and stones.

At the same time they set fire to the Sta. Ysabel and Magdalena frigates, and to the Sancta Clara, which was extinguished; but the third time that the Magdalena frigate, of which Domingo de Ynsaurraga was captain, took fire, it was impossible to extinguish the flames, as the ship took fire at the stern and burned furiously; and all that could be done to maintain a footing on board, was done by the aforesaid captain and the people with him, until the ship was just burnt

down and twelve men were killed by the enemy's musquetry, besides as many more burnt...The

battle lasted for an hour, the most obstinately contested that was ever seen, and the whole port was illumined by the burning frigate in a manner favourable for the rest, who could thus see to point our artillery and that of the forts, with which, and with the musquetry and stones thrown from the frigate, they did such effect, that the enemy, after about an hour, during which the combat lasted, as I have said, retreated with the loss of nine or ten boats and more than four hundred men, besides many more wounded; while on our side, the only loss was that of the frigate and forty men killed or burnt, besides a few wounded by the musquetry.”

The fires caused the troops in the fortress to start firing at the row boats causing 400 English troops to be killed. By November 25, 1595, Drake decided the defenses were too strong at San Juan and the English retreated. Drake directed his fleet to sail for Panama. The Spanish treasure fleet finally left Puerto Rico on December 20, 1595 to return to Spain.

I Bought A Clavichord!

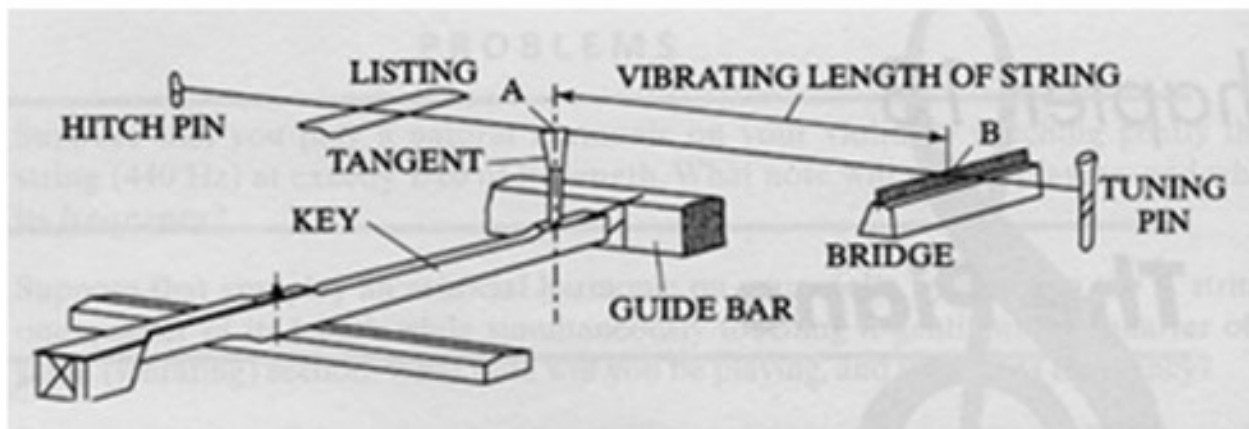
By Prince-Palatine Henry Stanley

I have recently purchased a nice addition to my collection of keyboard musical instruments. A brief history and description of the instrument with illustrations follows.

Having their origins in Italy, clavichords were built as far back as the early fifteenth century, possibly the late fourteenth century. They were one of the earliest keyboard instruments having ‘evolved’ from the medieval monochord. It has been mentioned in written and illustrated German manuscripts dating as early as 1404. They gained popularity especially in Germany and the Iberian Peninsula as a respectable instrument for both practice and composition purposes. During the 1500’s the Harpsichord was invented and was immediately more popular than the clavichord due to it having a plectrum (made of leather or quill) which ‘plucked’ the strings, producing much more resonant sound and thus being better for performances, especially when accompanying other instruments and voice. Another similar instrument to the harpsichord, called the Virginals, was popular mainly in England. Queen Elizabeth owned and played one.

The clavichord is primarily a chamber instrument, quieter and more dulcet of tone than the nearly contemporary harpsichord. Hence it was used more as a 'practice' instrument. The action of the clavichord is relatively simple: the finger depresses a key which, working as a lever, causes its opposite end to rise so that a metal tongue (or tangent) hits a metal string, causing it to resonate. When the key is released, the string is damped. A strip of cloth (felt) called a 'listing' cloth is 'woven' through the strings to provide the damping mechanism. The reason the clavichord is very quiet compared to the harpsichord is because of the inefficiency of its sound production, with the tangent hitting the string at the end of its resonating length, rather than in the middle. The tangent mechanism, however, allows a player to achieve a range, though narrow, of louder and softer tones as well as special effects like 'bebung' (from the German), a form of vibrato, so that the clavichord was and is valued for its intimate expressiveness.

MECHANISM OF THE CLAVICHORD



Earlier clavichords were fretted, that is, a single string might be used to create several different notes, depending on where a tangent struck it. Unfretted clavichords, with a single note per string, came into use in the late sixteenth century. Regular tuning is required to keep it sounding good. The clavichord has tuning pegs much the same as a hammered dulcimer or psaltery.

My instrument, illustrated below, is of the unfretted type.





The Pixie

By King-Palatine Christopher Chamberlain

As a continuation of my Masterwork that was presented to everyone last year, I wanted to share my story and background for my most recent update to my Manual Of Mythical Creatures (name is unofficial and still to be determined upon completion of the Masterwork). I will also be adding more historical information, as this is a subject I am more familiar with. I hope, in the future, that I will be able to add to existing entries as I learn more about them.

While I have not encountered this subject within the Empire, it is not unreasonable to assume that one of us may find them in our regions. My subject for this entry is the Pixie.

Pixie



(I would like to state from the start, that the above depiction is an artistic rendering and not one that can be confirmed at this time. The repeated encounters with the pixies happened with the whole nest retaining their invisibility, and were only able to be seen by the use of a Detect Magic spell.)

While related in some way to fairies, the term pixie and pixies themselves seem to originate from the Cornwall and Devon areas in the West of England. Fairies are known to have a hierarchy, with Queens and Courts to rule them, but a nest of pixies is generally a group of families keeping a community together without need for one ruler.

Interestingly, myths do not mention the wings on a pixie as opposed to the ones that were observed. Their short stature, sharp features, and penchant for pranks do seem to be extremely accurate.

I first encountered the pixies while on the diplomatic mission to the Duchy of Cambridge. When stopped at an inn, they first made themselves known by creating what turned out to be an illusion of a man on fire. There was no heat to the figure, and no damage that was done by it. I recall that it danced a jig.

There were a number of illusions this group seemed to favor. The flame man, colorful bubbles, and dancing lights were the most common.

Beyond illusions, their pranks were relatively harmless. A small piece of string used to trip your feet as you walk, lifting tankards away from the tables, stealing a deck of cards only to throw them into a fire, making braids in my hair, and (at my request) bringing some ink and quill to write with.

There is, however, another trick that they play that can be far more dangerous and even possibly deadly. It was observed several times that the pixies made those around them go dull-eyed. After this, the person either walked out of the inn for a minute or so. Worse, other times it caused the person to lash out at someone close by. I, myself, was made to not only cast a spell, but to attack a helpless woman and stab her before I was able to come back to my own control (I did heal her, so there is no worry there).

All of this is to say that this was extremely different from their behavior in myths. Pixies were generally considered guardians of the lands and forests. While fun loving and prone to pranks, they were not known for living inside of an inn in the middle of a city. This behavior seems to go against everything that was once thought to be known about them.

Now, I was able to speak with them on a couple of occasions, to see why they were there. (One thing to note, any time I wished to ask a question, they would not answer until I solved a riddle they presented me. Nothing too difficult, but I do not know what the consequences would have been if I had guessed wrong.) They had been

displaced from their original home to the south of Cornwall in the Duchy of Cambridge due to men digging for metals in the mountains. How this led to them deciding to make the inn their home is unclear.

The only other truly observable behavior is that they appear to be nocturnal. At the very least, they were never seen prior to sunset or after sunrise. It is possible they took themselves elsewhere, but it seems unlikely. This also seems to be against everything we knew through myths. Perhaps our myths mixed up fairies and pixies? Time and further encounters will tell.

Thus ends my tale of my interactions with these little people and how they defied the known myths about them. Overall, they seem to be fun-loving, carefree, and full of life. Be wary about announcing that you plan to trap or kill them. As with any other creature, they will defend themselves and they are extremely capable.

The History of Welsh Ponies and the Distinction of Variety across the Four Recognized Breed-standard Types

By Her Imperial Majesty, Empress Porcelina A. Rowan

The **Welsh Pony and Cob** is a group of four closely-related horse breeds including both pony and cob types, which originated in Wales. For brevity, a pony is an equine that is shorter and stockier than a horse, while a cob is an equine that's a bit taller than most ponies with a more light horse-like conformation. The four sections of classification are primarily distinguished by height, and also by variations in type: the smallest **Welsh Mountain Pony (Section A)**; the slightly taller but refined **Welsh Pony of riding type (Section B)** that is popular with children; the small but stocky **Welsh Pony of Cob Type (Section C)**, which is popular for riding and driving; and the tallest, the **Welsh Cob (Section D)**, which can be ridden by adults. Welsh ponies and cobs in all sections are known for their good temperament, hardiness, sure-footedness, intelligence, and free-moving gaits. Their Latin name is *Equus ferus caballus*.



Traditional native Welsh-type pony in a natural setting; such ponies have lived in Wales for centuries

The **Welsh Mountain Pony (Section A)** is the smallest of the Welsh breeds. Both the Section A and Section B ponies are more refined than those in Section C and D. They are characterized by a large eye, small head (often with a dished face from the Arabian influence), high set tail, and refined leg conformation, but retaining good bone and correctness. The Welsh Mountain Pony (Section A) may not exceed 12.2 hands high (50 inches) at the withers, or peak of the shoulder.



Welsh Mountain Pony



Section A pony in harness

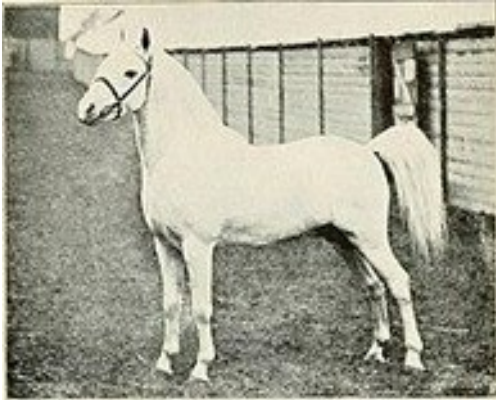


Children on Welsh Mountain Ponies



CSF Gwersy, 29 Mai 2014

Section B pony jumper



Welsh pony



Welsh Pony (Section B)



Welsh Pony of Riding Type

The **Welsh Pony of Riding Type (Section B)** is the second division within the Welsh pony registry. The Section B Welsh Pony is a larger, riding-type pony, which combines the hardiness and substance of the Section A with elegant movement and athletic ability.

Section B ponies are taller than Section A with a maximum height of 14.2 hands (58 inches).

They are known for elegant movement and athletic ability while still retaining the substance and hardiness of the foundation stock, the Section A Welsh Mountain pony. They have no lower height limit.

Section B ponies also generally have a slightly lighter build, as a result of Thoroughbred and Hackney blood. Section B ponies resemble the Section A pony, but are of a more refined "riding type". However, they should not be light of bone; they should resemble their Mountain Pony ancestors for quality of bone.

In addition to the desirable characteristics of the Section A pony, Section B ponies have a free-flowing movement. They should have a muscular neck, arching from withers to poll, and have a deep, wide chest.

Section B ponies are more commonly used as children's ponies and as pony hunter-jumpers.



A Welsh pony, showing standard type desired in most sections



Section C pony shown in-hand at a trot



Welsh Pony of Cob Type

for their strength, hardiness and gentle nature. In contrast to the Welsh pony (Section B), the Pony of Cob Type is heavier, and naturally more cob-like and compact. They have a moderate amount of feathering on their legs.

The Welsh Pony of Cob Type first resulted from cross-breeding between the Welsh mountain pony (Section A) and the Welsh Cob (Section D). Today, some Section C ponies are still produced from this cross. There were also crosses with Iberian horses, which led to the development of the Powys horse, which was also a foundation for this type. Other breeds also influenced the Section C, including the Norfolk Trotter, the Hackney, and Yorkshire Coach Horse.

The Welsh Pony of Cob Type is shown in jumping events and in harness, notably in competitive driving.



Welsh Cob

The Welsh Pony of Cob Type (Section C) may not exceed 13.2 hands (54 inches) high. They are known



A Section D Welsh Cob pulling a carriage



Welsh Cob under saddle

Cob than other types of Welsh ponies, but bold white markings are common.

Today, the Section D is best known for use in harness driving, but they are also shown under saddle and in hand. As with the other Welsh breeds, Cobs are also exhibited over fences as hunters and jumpers.

The **Welsh Cob (Section D)** is the largest size within the Welsh Pony and Cob breed registries. They must be taller than 13.2 hands (54 inches), with no upper height limit. They are used as riding horses for both adults and children, and are also used for driving. They are known for their hardiness and gentle nature.

Though Welsh Cobs are the tallest and stockiest of the Welsh sections, the head remains full of pony character, with large eyes and neat ears. The legs may be relatively short, also akin to pony proportions.

Mature stallions have somewhat crested necks, while those of mares are generally leaner. Like the Section C, they have powerful, extravagant action. Grey coloring is rarer in the Section D

Characteristics

All sections of Welsh ponies and Cobs have small heads with large eyes, sloped shoulders, short backs and strong hindquarters. The forelegs are straight and the cannon bone short. The tail is high-set. The breed ranges from 11 hands (44 inches) for the smallest ponies to over 16 hands (64 inches) for the tallest Cobs. They may be any solid color, but not tobiano or leopard spotted. Black, grey, chestnut, and bay are the most common, but there are also buckskins and palominos as well as smoky blacks and double creams.

Their movement is bold, free and characteristically fast, especially at the trot, with great power coming from the hocks. Their trot has been favorably compared to that of the Standardbred horse. They are reputed to be trustworthy, of a good disposition with even temperaments and friendly characters, but spirited and with great endurance, and are known for their stamina, soundness, and high level of intelligence.

[Display Section A]

Influence

The Welsh crosses well with many other breeds, and has influenced spotted New World ponies and the British Riding Pony. Many are also cross-bred with thoroughbreds and other horse breeds. The Welsh Pony has contributed to the founding of several other horse and pony breeds. They are crossed with Arab horses to produce riding horses, and with Thoroughbreds to produce jumpers, hunters, and eventers. Welsh mares have also been used to breed polo ponies that were agile and nimble. The Welsh Pony was used to create the Welara, a cross-breed of the Welsh and the Arabian horse.

[Display Section B]

History

Native ponies existed in Wales before 1600 BC, and a Welsh-type cob was known as early as the Middle Ages. They were influenced by the Arabian horse and possibly also by the Thoroughbred, Barb, various Trotters and the Hackney horse. Throughout their history, the Welsh breeds have had many uses, including as a cavalry horse, a pit pony, and as a working animal on farms.

Today, the modern Welsh Pony and Cob breeds are used for many equestrian competitive disciplines, including showing, jumping, and driving, as well as for pleasure riding, trekking and trail riding. The smaller types are popular children's ponies. The Welsh also crosses well with many other breeds and has influenced the development of many British and New World horse and pony breeds.

Evidence suggests that a native pony existed in Wales before 1600 BC. The original Welsh Mountain Pony is thought to have evolved from this prehistoric Celtic pony. Welsh ponies were primarily developed in Wales, and their ancestors existed in the British Isles prior to the arrival of the Roman Empire. Bands of ponies roamed in a semi-feral state, climbing mountains, leaping ravines, and running over rough moorland terrain.

They developed into a hardy breed due to the harsh climate, limited shelter, and sparse food sources of their native country. At some point in their development, the Welsh breeds had some Arabian blood added, although this did not take away the physical characteristics that make the breed unique.

[Display Section C]

The Welsh Cob existed as a type as early as the Middle Ages, and mentions of such animals can be found in medieval Welsh literature. During this time, they were known for their speed, jumping ability, and carrying capacity. Before the introduction of large, draft horse breeds, they were used for farm work and timbering. In 1485 the Welsh Militia, riding local animals presumed to be ancestors of the modern Welsh Cob, assisted Henry Tudor in gaining the English throne. During the 15th century, similar small horses were also used as rounceys, leading war horses known as destriers.

The characteristics of the breed as known today are thought to have been established by the late 15th century, after the Crusaders returned to England, with Arabian stallions from the Middle East. In the 16th century, King Henry VIII, thinking to improve the breeds of horses, particularly war horses, ordered the destruction of all stallions under 15 hands (60 inches) and all mares under 13 hands (52 inches) in the Breed of Horses Act 1535. The laws for severe culls of 'under-height' horses were partially repealed by a decree by Queen Elizabeth in 1566 on the basis that the poor lands could not support the weight of the horses desired by Henry VIII because of "their rottenness ... [they] are not able to breed, bear and bring forth such great breeds of stoned horses as by the statute of 32

Henry VIII is expressed, without peril of miring and perishing of them," and (fortunately for the future of Britain's mountain and moorland pony breeds) many ponies in their native environments, including the Welsh breeds, therefore escaped the slaughter. The Welsh Cob is considered so valuable that they paid premiums to the best stallions.

[Display Section D]

On the upland farms of Wales, Welsh ponies and cobs would often have to do everything from plowing a field to carrying a farmer to market or driving a family to services on Sunday.

The quickest mode of transport in Wales was the Welsh Cob. Tradesmen, doctors, and other businessmen often selected ponies by trotting them the 35 uphill miles from Cardiff to Dowlais. The best ponies could complete this feat in less than three hours, never breaking gait. Breeding stock is selected by such trotting tests.

A small semi-feral population of about 120 animals still roams the Carneddau Mountains in Snowdonia, Wales.

Welsh ponies and cobs can adapt easily to the terrain and climate variations they encounter in the New World.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Welsh_Pony_and_Cob

Legends and Lore: Of Ghosts, and the opinions of if they are or are not.

By Baronet Giovanni Albrizzi

Since my last few writings have been on the nature of those beings who occupy a place between the land of the living and the afterlife, it would be highly remiss of me if I did not pen something upon the nature of spirits and ghosts. I acknowledge, I am certainly at no risk of outdoing the esteemed works of Minister Ludwig Lavater of the Netherlands, and while his work in "De spectris, lemuriibus et magnis atque insolitis fragoribus" has been recently well and broadly published, translated into many languages in the last few decades, I feel I owe it to the weight of history to both acknowledge his work and opinion while giving credence to the weight of belief around known world. At the very least, the parts of it I could get translated into languages I could understand.

As further, if unusual addendum, while I will be providing opinions of the Catholic Church, know it is NOT my intent to discount the opinions of the other religions in this land. I am simply ignorant of them. We have a great many wise people with ties to deities unfamiliar to me. If they wish to opine upon the nature of the soul, I would give them the respect and attention due their learning. However, I was raised Catholic, and that is the mindset I have been exposed to in my studies. I am more than happy to acknowledge my bias.

While it may seem pedestrian, I would ask the opening question “What is a ghost?” and while the starting answer of “a deceased soul” should suffice for most, there is in fact some argument to be had. Indeed, St Augustine himself rejected that ghosts as the souls of the dead, instead being of the opinion that they may in fact be spirits, either angelic or demonic entities, attempting to sway living souls to salvation or damnation, usually the latter. St Thomas Aquinas had a more charitable view in “Summa Theologica”, and while acknowledging the viewpoint of the earlier Church, put forth that ghosts, as fleshless beings, were of pure divine energy, and subject to God’s will. Shortly put, yes ghosts were souls of the dead, given leave to act on earth in accordance with God’s plan. Still, he acknowledged demonic deception was far from impossible. St Thomas also alluded to the idea that ghosts may not visually manifest, but make themselves known in other ways. Indeed, those who study such things seriously have made multiple classifications and names, as is the want of the scholarly. As debate went on among church leadership, another growing theory that took heavy root and continues to this day was that ghosts were souls of Purgatory, given leave to come to Earth anew to warn loved ones or spread the wisdom of the suffering to those in peril of joining them. After all, the reasoning was no soul given rest among the Saints in Heaven would want to leave, and none chained to the fiery lake of Hell would be permitted, however, Purgatory is between place where most find themselves to be cleansed of those sins they did not get absolution on before death, and may carry sufficient remorse to be granted divine Grace to prevent others from repeating the sin.



St Thomas Aquinas



St Augustine of Hippo

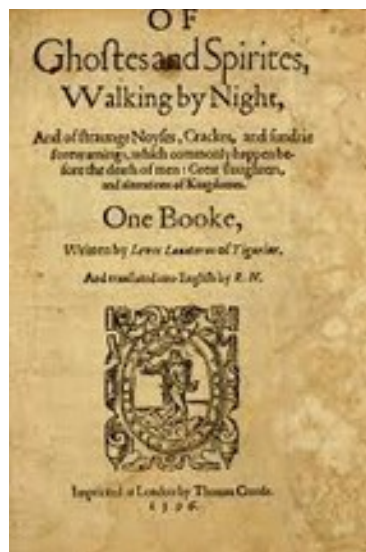
More lately, and outside the church, Reginald Scot of England, scandalized many spiritualists with his tome “Discourse Upon Devils and Spirits”, a follow up to his “Discoverie of Witchcraft” wherein he brought new learning and sciences to bear upon the subject of ghosts, dismissing them out of hand almost. Which is not to paint Sir Scot as irreligious, the man is a staunch Calvinist, but he was of the opinion only God could manifest the divine, and did so as the natural world rather than a supernatural one. Witchcraft, ghosts, and so on could, in his opinion, be debunked as fraud or ignorance by science, or were the product of deluded minds altered by strong drink or madness.



Ser Reginald Scot

Ludwig Lavater

In many ways, “De Spectris”, or “*Of Ghostes and Spirites Walking by Nyght, and of Strange Noyses, Crackes, and Sundry Forewarnings, Whiche Commonly Happen Before the Death of Menne, Great Slaughters, & Alterations of Kyngdomes,*” -as it is likely better known to our English readers, was put out in rebut to Sir Scot’s works and the works of publishers like him. I would not be... entirely surprised if any of these books may be found in at least the English translations in the better ports and markets of our fair Empire; they have been rather popular among scholars in the last decade. In “De Spectris” Lavater lays out a great deal of the history of the world from antiquity and biblical to modern, and while he does not outright refute Scot entirely as he acknowledges vagrancies of the mind may create a false apparition, he actually often sides with St Augustine in putting forth the idea many are demonic entities aping human shape to deceive, and perhaps rarely angels on discreet missions. I suppose it’s nice that occasionally, the fathers of the Catholic and Apostolic Church may get along with Protestants, if sufficiently separated by a near millennium.



What of Ghosts in our Empire? Well, I have not myself encountered one, but I would not at all be surprised to do so. From what I understand from my limited trade talk with the natives of this land, or more accurately tales recounted from tradesmen who speak the language and then talk to me over drinks locally, the land has a long tradition among the native people in seeing Spirits of ancestors who are seen as benevolent and helpful. Now let me be clear, I am well aware they are peoples of multiple internal nations and beliefs, I would largely be talking about sources among the Iroquois Confederacy, Lenape, and Shinnecock. The general overview I received was unsurprising on a certain level, as almost universally the idea of ancestor spirits, or ghosts, were taken as fact. Somewhat more surprising was the reception was almost universally positive. They were seen as beings coming back to lend aid to living family members, as opposed to any evil or dangerous spirits, which generally seem to be associated as different beings and monsters. No accounting of spirits that turn out to be demon-like beings here, at least as were related to me. While it's possible they were simply omitted, I think it's rather nice to have such an optimistic attitude of an encounter with ghosts from beyond.

What to do if you encounter a ghost? Well, that depends on what it is and where. If it seems non hostile, hearing it out may not be a bad idea, so long as you can steel your spine and keep your wits about you. Try to keep as much rational thought as possible. If it's carrying a warning all the way from Purgatory, it would be a heavy risk to your soul to let it fall upon deaf ears. If however, it seems demonic, dangerous, or confused, you may attempt to rebuke it with holy symbols, holy water, salt, or your religious equivalent. If there is anything of its former life about, that may help as well. If all else fails, and I do mean ALL ELSE, you may consider speaking to a Necromancer.

Necromancy, in its PUREST form, is not as evil as it is maligned. It is a magic for speaking to the dead, asking questions and getting knowledge, and little else. Even in legends of Arthur Pendragon, in some translations, his sister Morgan, is said to learn the skill at a convent by nuns. To those hearing the tales, this would not be shocking, as going back even unto the 1200s, multiple books were found in nunneries and among monks and priests that were about summoning angelic beings, demons, or the dead. In truth, necromancy is all too often conflated and confused with nigromancy, which is black magic, and highly dangerous. That said, such scholarly trivia will NOT save you if you find yourself dealing with a necromancer who has been trained up on a corrupted path. Nor the law, if your associations with such dangerous and malevolent persons come to light. Indeed, outside the Empire you may find yourself tied to a stake for such a slip of judgement, and they won't want to hear about nomenclature clarifications either.

Still, it is the magic of speaking to ghosts and the departed in its purest form, and oddly a study of death has at times led to greater understanding of how to prevent it. So I cannot in good faith say it's all bad. Just extraordinarily dangerous and best left to those who are wildly learned in the proper paths. I would heartily suggest a person of Faith first. Connection to a divine being will OFTEN allow training and skills that will help one deal with spirits, either to compel the truth from them, or banish them if they no longer have a mission upon this world.



Necromancy appears in a surprising number of books written by holy men and women under assumed names

As for more traditional arts mystica, I would not rely upon them too much for ghosts and similar spirits, aside from such people tending to possess a scholarly nature; which may be useful in identifying the dearly departed in question. With such knowledge gained, one may better verify if they are indeed that soul, or a deceiver, and perhaps how to give them rest.