

THE ADRIAN EMPIRE ARTS AND SCIENCES

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DOCUMENTATION SUMMARY SHEET

This sheet should be filled out for each entry. Additional documentation is highly recommended. Each artisan should look at the Judges Guidelines to help determine the appropriate questions to answer for the type of entry.

Title of entry:
Leather and Silk Purse

Date: 03/26/2010

Adrian name of artisan: Mistress Nadine _____ Mundane name: Tawnni Crossman _____

Knight's List x Journeyman's List Subdivision: Terre Neuve _____

Period/Date: 1500s _____ Country of origin/Style: England _____

Description of entry: Purple leather and silk purse with silk thread sewn eyelets and a drawstring cord.

Materials used (explain period materials used and substitutions used in your entry): Purple leather, purple silk, purple silk thread, needle, sewing machine, and hole punch. _____

Processes/Techniques used (explain period techniques and substitutions used in your entry): Purple leather was not taken from animal, cured and dyed by me, but rather store bought. Purple silk was not raised and gathered from the worm by me nor spun into thread and woven into material by me but was bought much like nobles may have bought it at the market in town; also the silk thread. I used a modern leather needle comparable to a needle in period and I used a modern hole punch. I also used a sewing machine for the inside, and a modern iron. _____

References/Sources: Please see Bibliography. _____

Additional Notes (On presentation, history, etc): This was hard for me as I have never hand sewn anything in my life. What an experience! _____

How I made the bag and what materials and substitutions I used:

First, I ironed the silk and leather. In 15 century France both silk and leather were commonly used for bags of this type. The silk comes from the cocoon of the silk worm and is soaked in water to soften the natural gum or sticky stuff. Then they were unraveled, put on a reel, spun into thread, and woven into fabric. I substituted store bought silk because my mom wouldn't let me keep any silk worms. The leather would have been skinned from a cow, dried, tanned, and then smoothed. I substituted store bought leather because my mom also would not let me have a cow. Both materials could be died purple by using lichen.



Europe around the 12th century. Lichen purple dyes are not light fast but they have been identified on many patterned cloths of good quality woven in northern Europe between the 1st and 11th centuries (Taylor & Walton 1983, 15; Walton 1986, 39–40; Walton 1989B, 17–18), including three chevron twills from 10th-century London (Pritchard 1984, 58, nos 18, 20, 21, fig 6). By contrast, orcein, the active dye element in purple-producing lichens, has not been detected from the much larger quantity of wool textiles sampled from 14th-century deposits in London and it seems reasonable to conclude it was no longer as popular as it had been. Written sources, nevertheless, indicate that lichens were imported into England for dyeing in the 13th to 15th centuries from Norway and the Canary Islands (Carus-Wilson 1944, 38; Childs 1978, 107; and Appendix, p 200). While lichen purple dyes declined in importance for wool textiles outside rural areas after the 11th century, their use on silk increased, at least in Italy and, as will be described, the dyestuff was detected on threads removed from a patterned silk cloth and a half-silk velvet (pp 115, 128), both of which were recovered from a late 14th-century deposit.

(1992, Crowfoot, E., Pritchard, F., and Staniland, K.)

