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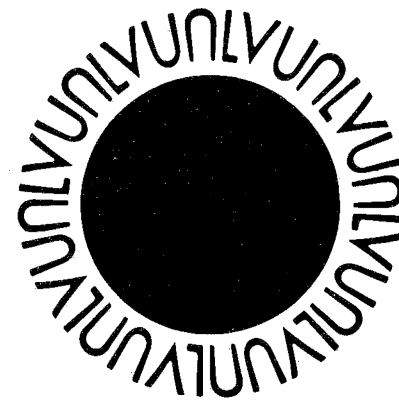
The
Fight
MASTER

JOURNAL OF THE

SOCIETY OF
AMERICAN

FIGHT DIRECTORS

ARMOURY



UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS

The Fight MASTER

JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS

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THE FIGHT MASTER

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SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS

President Erik Fredricksen
Vice President J.R. Beardsley
Treasurer David Boushey
Secretary Linda McCollum

The Society of American Fight Directors was founded in May, 1977. It is a non-profit organization whose aim is to promote the art of fight choreography as an integral part of the entertainment industry. Members of the Society of American Fight Directors serve the entertainment industry by promoting the aesthetics and safety of well-conceived fight choreography.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

There has been a sizable drop in membership due to the removal from the roster of those members whose dues were in arrears. As editor of the journal and secretary of the Society I am discouraged by the attrition, yet those who have remained in the Society are truly interested in the goals and objectives for which the Society strives. We should be interested in quality and not quantity in our membership and in the work of the fight choreographers, teachers and actor/combatants who represent the Society.

In looking over the certification tests for this issue, we again and again come across the need to integrate the acting with the fights. Yet, in the workshops and classes little time is spent training the student in how to connect the two. Society choreographers stress the use of the fight sequences as an integral part of the play and that the fights and choice of weapons must come from the characters in the play and must not be imposed on them. Yet, in the certification tests the student is allowed to construct his own scenario to fit with his own personality while using three different stage combat techniques. What the adjudicator is then evaluating is the originality and cleverness of his work as a script writer in adapting a situation for the three fights and not his work in the analysis, interpretation and realization of a character on stage in a fight sequence. Our whole approach of composing the fight choreography first and then finding a situation in which it fits is conceptually opposite of what we claim is the correct approach to staging a fight. The fight must come from the characters in the play and must not be stuck in it. Perhaps we need to re-evaluate the certification test and take a look at its intent and purpose.

I seem to hear an inconsistency in what is considered to be suitable for recommendation. I have seen work by students whose names have crossed my desk as recommended actor/combatants in a certification test whose techniques were barely passable when seen in person. I am not claiming that the student did not actually deserve the recommendation at the time of his previous test, but only that his work is apparently inconsistent, yet he permanently carries "passed with recommendation" on his certificate.

I am also hearing a great deal of emphasis being placed on being "recommended" in the certification test to the point that passing the test is not the honor it once was. If one is not "recommended" there is an element of "failure" in only passing. Is that our intent in conducting the certification tests?

Perhaps the Society is trying to do too much all at once. Our primary concern is making people aware of safety in stage combat and of the aesthetics of well conceived and executed fight choreography being done by a qualified fight director, yet we never really deal with teaching fight choreography. The aesthetics can only come with time. They cannot be force fed to a student in a few weeks. Only an awareness can be developed.

Unfortunately I am seeing a lot of mediocre work on the stage these days—and not just in fight scenes. And it is disturbing to see such poor quality being recognized and awarded as being outstanding. I hope the Society will strive not for vast mediocrity but for selected excellence.

■ Linda Carlyle McCollum, Editor

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This is probably the last time I will have the opportunity to address you in this capacity. As is evident from this issue, we are gearing up for our first membership election since the formation of the Society. Since this is the *first*, I do trust that all of you will give thought to your choices and that the entire membership in good standing will participate.

I know for many of you...indeed *from* many of you, that it has appeared that things have moved slowly. In some cases, I will have to agree. As I mentioned in my last article for instance, the election which I have wanted to institute has been a long time in coming...nevertheless, it would seem pointless to offer the membership anything less than choices of merit. For sundry reasons related to personal and professional ambitions and willingness to devote and contribute time, it is not until *now* that we have been able to muster candidates who say that they are indeed willing to contribute in this fashion and who appear to be well qualified. Yes, friends, it is indeed welcome and overdue and may it set the tone of increased interest and willingness on the parts of all of us to bear some responsibility in the Society.

As I look over the four years that I have been President I have been gratified to see the very visible and widespread growth in the awareness and appreciation of our existence. Schools and theatres across the nation have in one way or another seen the representation of our membership in all categories. Perhaps what has been most heartening is the growing solidity of our membership in the Associate status. It is perhaps fitting that it is in that category where I sense the most potential for expansion and leadership in the Society. As you know, most of these individuals are educators, and, although many of them also choreograph, their energies are of necessity involved in organization and dedication to others. From this group I hope to see continued growth in numbers and input in the Society.

It has been (sadly) in the Fight Masters that I have seen the greatest disparity in interest, willingness, and focus. Perhaps that is to some degree inevitable. Fight Masters are, after all, practicing professionals and it may only be natural that their personal and professional goals will dictate the quality of their contribution. I must state with absolutely no malice intended that members of any category and *particularly* Fight Masters who for whatever reason, feel they no longer see value and the ability to actualize their interest to the active advancement of the Society *should* officially withdraw. What I have been feeling and seeing grow little by little over the four years from this vantage point is a shifting and realigning of personal priorities among individuals. I feel this will eventually result in the greatest good for those individuals *and* the Society. For some individuals that good will be realized without the Society and that is well and good and as it should be. For others, the good will be realized within the Society and to the betterment of the Society...and that is well and good also. I would simply ask that at this time all of you give one last thought before the upcoming elections and sincerely ask in what capacity you feel *your* greatest worth can be realized and then *shared* within the Society. Perhaps it is as an *educator*...perhaps as an *advisor* WILLING to take an *active* part in instituting ideas...perhaps it is as an *actor* who by his good work and bio reflects another positive aspect of this organization... and maybe it is as a professional *choreographer* who finds the time and advertising space to bring the Society along in his or her personal career.

Although the details of this past workshop will be elaborated on by David Leong, I did want to mention pursuant to much of the above exhortations that this year we were proud to have instituted the Annual Patrick Crean Merit Award for best fight and best male and female actor. It is perhaps fitting indeed to close on this note. As many of you know, I began my serious training with Paddy in 1971. He has never been able to master pettiness and smallness because he simply is unable to see it in others. He has always found size and skill and kindness because he always spots it in others. As we "downsize" and find our individual strengths and directions, let's please as a Society continue to find that calm and stability—that *positive* outlook that goes beyond the mere personal interest in advancement—that our *first* Honorary Member continues to demonstrate. In these past four years I have tried to conduct myself as someone whom Mr. Crean would recognize. I really don't think it would be against the spirit of the Society and of growth and advancement to wish this standard for my successor.

Thank you for your support and friendship.

■ Erik Fredricksen, President

There are still a number of our colleagues who have not paid their dues for 1985. Three notices have been issued to this effect. The Society can no longer pursue those in arrears and must therefore strike them from the official Society roster. If you are aware of members who have not paid their dues, please let them know that the Society of American Fight Directors can no longer furnish them with the journal *The Fight Master*. We regret that delinquent members have to be struck but we simply cannot provide services to members who opt not to support the Society. If a delinquent member wishes to be re-instated into the Society, there will be a ten dollar reinstatement fee added to the twenty five dollar annual membership fee. This fee will be in effect as of September 1, 1985 and will remain so from that date forth.

I am pleased to announce that the Society is still in the black and managed to make a small profit on its workshop in Cedar City, Utah. We didn't have quite as many students as we had hoped but we did manage to make ends meet. What is even more impressive is that a number of workshops around the country went under this summer and again the Society managed to keep its head above water, thanks primarily to the efforts of our workshop coordinator David Leong who again demonstrated his uncanny ability to put together an effective workshop. I might add that from a teacher's perspective, I found this workshop to be the most successful one to date. The students were excellent, the surroundings splendid and over-all, a marvelous time was had by all.

I want to remind those teachers who want to get their students adjudicated in the coming academic year to contact me well in advance so that I can arrange all of the particulars. Remember that it is twenty dollars per student to take the test and that the total fee must include a hundred dollar fee for the adjudicator. Please do not make any plans with a fight master to adjudicate without first contacting me. It complicates things immensely when you strike out on your own regarding the adjudications.

We still have plenty of Society pins, cloth badges and T-shirts if you wish to purchase them. Do note the ads in the back part of the journal for prices. (You may now order T-shirts with gold print on a black shirt).

The Society is looking very healthy. You should be proud. We have nowhere to go but up!

■ David L. Boushey, Treasurer

The details of the 1985 workshop are included in this issue of *The Fight Master*. But just as we close the books on this year's workshop, we start planning for the next. Under strong consideration for next summer's annual event is the Theatre Department of Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. The spring issue will contain all the necessary information you may need if you plan to attend. If SMU proves to be the host site, we can safely say that the workshop has covered every region of the United States.

Currently the Executive Officers are looking for a location to be the permanent home of the SAFD National Stage Combat Workshop. Northern Kentucky University, because of its facilities, accessibility to an airport and low cost housing accommodations, is under consideration. If you know of other colleges or universities that may be interested, please contact me as soon as possible.

When thinking about whether or not a site is "feasible," consider the following:

1. Housing Accomodations (cost per night not to exceed seven dollars per person).
2. Classroom/Workshop Spaces (two spaces to accomodate twenty combatants at a time).
3. Accessibility to airport.
4. Central location in the United States (the cost of travel to the far west or east is rapidly rising).
5. Publicity and mailing (this is always done on a volunteer basis).

If the workshop remains permanently in one location year after year, everyone will eventually become aware of the National Stage Combat Workshop. People can plan ahead and know who to write to, where they'll be going, and how much it will cost for travel. The tedious process of training the staff of a new workshop site each year will be eliminated altogether. So once again, if you have suggestions for a permanent home please write me, but do some research first. I hope to hear from you soon.

Respectfully,

■ David Leong,
National Workshop Coordinator

Initial membership in the S.A.F.D. is \$25. Dues for Full, Associate, Affiliate Members, and Friends are \$25 annually. Students are \$15 annually. All membership dues are to be paid in January to the treasurer, David Boushey, 4720 38th NE, Seattle, Washington 98105.

Inquiries concerning new memberships, status or change of address should be addressed to the secretary, Linda McCollum, Department of Theatre Arts, University of Nevada, 4505 Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, Nevada 89154.

Application for change in status within the Society should be addressed to Erik Fredricksen, Theatre Department, California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, California 91355.

Articles for consideration in *The Fight Master* should be submitted to the editor, Linda McCollum, Department of Theatre Arts, University of Nevada, 4505 Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, Nevada 89154.

PARRYING DAGGERS AND PONIARDS Part III

By Dr. Leonid Tarassuk

Research Associate, Department of Arms and Armor, Metropolitan Museum of Art
Consulting Curator of Arms and Armor, The Art Institute of Chicago

Most of the iconographic material shows parrying daggers and poniards fastened on the sword belt almost horizontally on the back, hilts near the right elbow. This position was known since the latter part of the fifteenth century (it is seen, for instance, in the *Miracle of St. Bernardino* by Pinturicchio, in the Pinacoteca of Perugia). It must have become particularly convenient and fashionable with parrying daggers, since their hilts could embarrass movements of the hands when the weapons were fixed on the side or in front. However, an impressive number of pictures show other ways of wearing parrying daggers. Quite often they are represented on the back, with hilt to the left (Figure 5). Many such examples can be found in engravings by J. Tortorel and J. Perissin, produced by 1570,³⁶ and at least two paintings are known depicting armed left-handers.³⁷ A dagger in the Metropolitan Museum (04.3.149) has a scabbard with belt loop inclined so that it could be worn only with the hilt at the left elbow, if suspended on the back (or with hilt toward the right side if worn in front, which would have been awkward because of the horizontal position of the dagger). Parrying weapons are sometimes shown fastened vertically to the sword belt in front, as in the *Portrait of a Maltese Knight* by S. Cavagna, about 1620.³⁸

Setting about a combat, the fencer's normal first move was to disembarrass himself of the sword scabbard. Before a formal duel, he had time to do this in two different ways. He could unhook the sword hanger and supporting strap from the belt, leaving his dagger on his waist, or he could take off the belt with both its weapons and then unsheathe them. In a sudden encounter, the procedure would be quite different. Pulling back the sword scabbard with hanger, he would draw as quickly as possible, then move his free hand from the scabbard to the grip of his dagger to draw it too. The speed and ease of these movements depended not only on the weapons and accouterments but also on the person's build, particularly on the reach of his hands, a personal peculiarity that must often have determined the method of carrying the parrying dagger. A right-hander could well follow the fashion and fix his dagger on the back, its pommel protruding at the right elbow, if his left hand could reach the dagger grip without difficulty. Experiments show that a man of average build can draw a dagger fixed on his back, as this used to be done, and a man with longish arms is able to do the same even when wearing light half-armor. In this position, too, the dag-

36. J. Tortorel and J. Perissin, *Les grandes scènes historiques du XVI^e siècle*, ed. A. Franklin (Paris, 1886).

37. *A Man in Armor* by A. Moro (The J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu, California) and *Portrait of a Gentleman* by G.B. Moroni (National Gallery, London), both dating from 1560's.

38. Musco Bardini, Florence; L.G. Boccia and E.T. Coelho, *Armi bianchi italiane* (Milan, 1975) ill. 568, 569.

ger could easily be drawn by the right hand for stabbing.³⁹ The dagger on the back was unobtrusive and did not hinder movements, but, apart from that, it was convenient for either of the alternative uses that made this manner of carrying preferable. However, for stout persons, or those wearing heavy, fluffy dress, this mode could cause problems when prompt unsheathing was important. Understandably, the dagger was then fixed on the right side or even more at the front, as portrayed sometimes in paintings and engravings.

It can be surmised that some eccentric right-handed swashbucklers liked to carry their daggers fixed behind, with the hilt at the left elbow, for parrying use exclusively. But in general this was the normal position for left-handed fencers, enabling them to use the weapon in either way with the appropriate hand. When the iconographical documentation shows daggers carried this way, one may surmise that the wearer is left-handed. Among extant weapons intended for left-handers, there is a parrying dagger that simply could not be used otherwise than in the right hand (Figure 23), while another, mentioned above, could be fixed on the belt at the left side only, as clearly indicated by the loop on the scabbard.

In the literary sources, there are few direct references to the mode of wearing the dagger which was eventually used in sword fight. Domenico Angelo Malevolti Tremamondo (1716-1802), better known under his first names, was born in Livorno and lived in Italy before he left, toward the middle of the century, for Paris and London. At this time, double fencing was still practiced in Spain and Italy, particularly in the Kingdom of Naples, which had since long been under strong and all-embracing Spanish influence. Describing fencing style of his compatriots, D. Angelo gives the following valuable information that certainly reflects longstanding traditions:

Ils portent le poignard, les droitiers à côté de la hanche droite, et les gauchers à côté de la hanche gauche; ils le tirent sitôt qu'ils ont l'épée à la main. Naples est la ville d'Italie, où on s'en sert le plus adroitement.⁴⁰

Of all types of parrying weapons, only daggers and poniards with symmetric guards could be handled with equal convenience by both right- and left-handed fencers. This may have been an additional reason for the widespread popularity of parrying weapons with a straight or arched crossguard. The same handling convenience is peculiar to the Spanish-type dagger with knuckle shell and long quillons. However, the latter was too clumsy for constant carrying, while a dagger with comparatively small symmetric guard could be comfortably worn on the belt for any length of time. The only detail, in such a dagger, that had to be fixed by the sword-maker or furbisher for left-handers, was a belt loop welded to the scabbard at a proper angle.

An important question may arise here: which were those weapons that could properly fit the left-handed fencer? Apart from weapons expressly made to their orders, such swordsmen could use a large variety of two-edged swords and rapiers, as well as tucks, that had any kind

39. The use of the parrying dagger as an ordinary stabbing poniard or knife is well illustrated in Salvator Fabris, *De lo schermo overo scienza d'arme* (Copenhagen, 1606) pp. 251, 253, 255.

40. Domenico Angelo, *L'école des armes* (London, 1765; 1st edition: 1763), p. 52. Translation: "They wear the poniard on the right side of the hip, for the right-handers, and on the left side of the hip, for left-handers; they unsheath it as soon as they have the sword in hand. Naples is a city in Italy where the poniard is used in the most skillful way."

of symmetric guard, with or without a closed knuckle-guard.⁴¹ As for guards of asymmetric construction, only those without knuckle-guards were also good for left-handers who only had to grip such a sword turning its side rings to the left — in order to protect the fencer's external lines. It goes without saying that swords without a knuckle-guard did equally well for right-handers. Thus, only asymmetric hilts with knuckle-guards were to be made differently for left- and right-handers respectively.

He that would fight with his Sword and Buckler, or Sword and Dagger, being weapons of true defence, will not fight with his Rapier and Poiniard wherein no true defence or fight is perfect.

George Silver, *Paradoxes of Defence*, 1599.⁴²

These words express the approach of a leading English master to the sword and dagger, considered by him as national weapons, and to the rapier and poniard, brought to England from the Continent. This opposition is characteristic of both of Silver's known publications. With invariable disdain he speaks of "the worse weapon, an imperfect and insufficient weapon. . . that is, the single Rapier, and Rapier and Poiniard."⁴³ The main difference between the weapons, in terms of practical use, is thus explained: "The single Rapier, or Rapier & Poiniard, they are imperfect & insufficient weapons" because the rapier is "a childish toy wherewith a man can do nothing but thrust." On the other hand "The short Sword, and Sword and Dagger, are perfect good weapons. . . to carry, to draw, to be nimble withall, to strike, to cut, to thrust, both strong and quicke."⁴⁴

It is apparent that by *dagger* Silver had in mind a solid two-edged weapon resembling his favorite cut-and-thrust sword, while the name *poniard* was applied by him to a lighter weapon with a narrow thrusting blade, much like that of a contemporary dueling rapier. It was only natural to associate this light parrying weapon with Italian or Spanish rapier play. Silver's standpoint was evidently shared by other English swordsmen, for one of them, in a pamphlet published some twenty-five years after Silver's works, triumphantly describes a fight of a gentleman armed "with an English Quarter Staffe against Three Spanish Rapiers and Poniards."⁴⁵ The word *poniard* (also *puniard*, *ponyard*, *poyniard*), recorded in English from the 1580s, was an obvious Gallicism, and this fact eventually emerged in minds of educated people in appropriate context.⁴⁶ It figures, for instance, in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (act 5, scene 2) when Osric names rapier and dagger as weapons of the forthcoming contest but in a moment says that Laertes staked (against the king's wager) "six French rapiers and poniards."

The suggested connotations of *dagger* and *poniard* in English fencing terminology are verified by Jean Nicot (1530-1600), a French linguist and contemporary of Silver's. Nicot explains the word *dague*: "A kind of short sword, almost a third of normal sword length; it is not carried usually with hangers of a sword belt nor hanging on the left side (for the right-handers), as one does with a sword, but attached to the belt on the right side or on the back. Now the dagger is large and has a

41. A saber in the Metropolitan Museum (14.99.77a,b) could have been used by a left-hander only, for it has a closed guard and a thumb ring on the left side of the guard.

42. *Works of George Silver*, p. 56.

43. *Works of George Silver*, p. 30.

44. *Works of George Silver*, pp. 32-33.

45. Arthur Wise, *Personal Combat*, p. 61.

46. Oxford English Dictionary, s.v.

sword-like point, it is now forged with two ridges between the cutting edges and with a sharper point. .The dagger could be also called poniard although the poniard is both shorter and less massive."⁴⁷

Nicot describes the *poignard* as "a kind of short dagger, with four-ridge blade having a bead-like point, while the dagger has a wider blade with point like that of a sword."⁴⁸

It is sufficient to look at the actual weapons of Silver's and Nicot's period (Figures 14, 19) to be convinced of the accuracy of their descriptions. Without comprehending, naturally, all types of the weapons concerned, their basic features and respective differences are clearly outlined by Nicot's entries, which confirm the correctness of the proposed understanding of terms discussed as used by Silver.

There is a certain importance in Nicot's remark that the *dague* could be called a *poignard*, were it not for their difference in size and weight. This observation may well indicate what was happening in everyday life and language; that is, a reciprocal colloquial substitution of words whose meanings were so close that only professionals having some special purpose thought it necessary to make distinctions.

In England, *dagger*, contrary to *poniard*, had a longstanding tradition and even after the emergence of the new weapon, coming from abroad with its own name, the national term continued in common use to cover all weapon variations similar to daggers.⁴⁹ This tendency toward generalization influenced even such a discriminating specialist as George Silver, who used, in one passage, the expression "rapier and dagger."⁵⁰ Analogously, *sword* was employed as a general term and *rapier* was a more specific term, as witnessed, for instance, in the English translation of Vincentio Saviolo's treatise, in which *rapier and dagger* and *sword and dagger* are used in descriptions of fencing with rapier and poniard.⁵¹ This confusion of the general and the particular is recorded, as well, in contemporary Italian-English dictionaries, where one can find such explanations as

Daga, a short sword, a dagger.

Pugnale, a dagger, a poyniard [also ponyard, poynado].

Spada, any kinde of sworde, rapier; or blade, or glaive.⁵²

In France, *dague* and *poignard* probably had comparable traditions in ancientness, both being recorded from around 1400, and the distinction of their meanings, so well explained by Jean Nicot, was more or less preserved until the seventeenth century.⁵³ In the treatise by the Antwerp master Girard Thibault, dedicated to Spanish-style fencing with

47. J. Nicot. *Thresor de la langve françoise* (Paris, 1606/1621) s.v. Dague: "Est vne maniere de courte espée, d'un tiers presque de la deüe [due] longueur d'une espée, qu'on porte d'ordinaire non avec pendants de ceinture a espée, ne pendant du costé gauche (pour les droitiers) ainsi qu'on fait l'espée, ains attachée droite à la ceinture du costé droit, ou sur les reins. Laelle ores est large et à pointe d'espée, ores est faconnée à 2 arêtes entre les trenchans, et a pointe plus aigue. . . La dague se pouroit aussi-nommer poignard, co[m]bien que le poignard soit et plus court et moins chargé de maitière."

48. Nicot, *Thresor*, s.v. Poignard: "Est une espèce de dague courte, la lame à quatre arêtes, ayant la pointe en grain d'orge, là où la dague a la lame plus large, et la pointe en facon d'espée."

49. *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. dagger (recorded from the fourteenth century).

50. *Works of George Silver*, p. 66.

51. Vincentio Saviolo, *His practice. . . of the use of the rapier and dagger* (London, 1595).

52. J. Florio, *A worlde of wordes* (London, 1598); *Queen Anna's new world of words* (London, 1611); *Vocabolario Italiano & Inglese* (London, 1688).

53. F. Godefroy, (*Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française* (Paris, 1880-1920) s.v.s.

the thrusting rapier, the parrying weapon is always *le poignard*, and it is only this thrusting weapon that is pictured in the excellent detailed engravings illustrating the chapters on double fencing.⁵⁴ Equally, *le poignard* alone is mentioned by Marc de la Beraudière, who tried to develop the dueling code in a period when the Italian and Spanish schools of fencing with the thrusting rapier dominated France.⁵⁵ On the other hand, the treatise of Henry de Saint-Didier, dealing with the cut-and-thrust sword of the third quarter of the sixteenth century, and still favoring the cut, omits *le poignard* and indicates only *la dague* as a weapon to accompany this sword.⁵⁶

There are some revealing points, for the present subject, in the tales of Brantôme, who spent part of his life as a professional soldier and studied fencing in Milan. Some of his events, having occurred before his own time, he relates after other narrators, and he takes special care to emphasize the archaism of certain expressions in them. In a story about a duel between two Spaniards in northern Italy in the early 1500s, Brantôme says: "Leur combat fut à cheval à la genette, & à la rapière, & le poignard (ainsi parloit-on alors)."⁵⁷ However, of another duel of the same period, Brantôme writes, the adversaries received "deux segrettes et deux rapières bien tranchantes (j'useray de ces mots du temps passé pour suivre le texte & mieux observer & honorer l'antiquité) & deux poignards."⁵⁸ Thus, it can be deduced that the author did not consider *poignard* an archaism. The more accurate and trustworthy of Brantôme's tales, naturally, are those of events from his own lifetime, particularly those that he witnessed himself. Here, he uses *dague* much more often, describing it as a cut-and-thrust weapon. The story of a combat in Rome, in 1559, mentions "une courte dague, bien tranchante & bien poinctue," and referring to his sojourn in Milan Brantôme remembers a local swordsmith who made "deux pairs d'armes, tant espée que dague. . . tranchantes, picquantes."⁵⁹ A frequent use of the expression *espée et dague* by Brantôme and other French authors gives ground to think that from the second half of the sixteenth century this became a generality equivalent to the English *sword and dagger*.⁶⁰ *Rapière*, a loanword in German and English, fell out of use in France at this period, while *dague* took on a broad general meaning in everyday language. *Poignard* seems to have survived this trend toward generalization but remained in a lesser use, mostly by fencers, swordsmen, and linguists, all of whom continued to employ *dague* and *poignard* in their traditional exactness. There is a possibility that the term *dague* as well as the current *épée et dague* developed wider use and significance under the strong influence of the Spanish language, wherein *espada y daga* was the only common turn of speech to cover double-fencing weapons irrespective of their design.

In German, *Dolch* invariably appears as a general designation of any type of dagger, including different types of parrying weapons. Having adopted *Rapier* from French, the German fencing lexicon retained the ancient national term for daggers in general and thus formed a

54. Girard Thibault, *Académie de l'espée*.

55. Marc de la Beraudière, *Combat de seul à seul*.

56. Henry de Saint-Didier, *Traicté. . . sue l'espée seule* (Paris, 1573).

57. P. de Bourdeille, seigneur de Brantôme, *Mémoires. . . touchant les duels* (Leyden, 1722), p. 37.

58. Brantôme, *Mémoires*, p. 32.

59. Brantôme, *Mémoires*, pp. 66, 80.

60. Brantôme, *Mémoires*, pp. 229, 231, 233, 260, etc.

heterogeneous locution, *Rappier and Dolch*, recorded in fencing books of the latter part of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.⁶¹

The Italian military and fencing vocabulary of the sixteenth century still distinguished between *daga* and *pugnale*. In a dueling book of 1521, *daga* is listed among the principal weapons then commonly accepted in personal combats while *pugnale* is included in "altre piccole" weapons admissible for carrying by duelists in addition to their main armament.⁶² Both weapons are again specified in a dueling treatise of 1560.⁶³ Meanwhile the expression *spada e pugnale*, as a general reference to edged weapons used in double fencing, was becoming part of the vocabulary of the new fighting style.⁶⁴ The generalization of *spada* and of *pugnale* continued. By the middle of the century *pugnale* had already been used to designate any weapon of its kind, either thrusting or edged, as can be seen from a dueling code that puts in its list of weapons one should refuse to fight with "pugnali senza taglio, senza punta, ò senza schina."⁶⁵ Di Grassi's book, representing the Italian style of the third quarter of the sixteenth century, often mentions *pugnale co'l taglio* and once instructs the fencer to direct its edge toward the enemy in order to inflict a cutting wound.⁶⁶ The connotation of *pugnale* continued to widen until, in the seventeenth century, *daga* became, if surely not forgotten, at least an unfashionable word, while *pugnale* and its derivatives remained in common use, covering an array of short-blade weapons. In an English-Italian dictionary of this period one finds

A dagger, pugnale.

A great dagger, pugnalone, pugnallaccio.

A little dagger, pugnaletto.

A poniard, pugnale.⁶⁷

It is interesting to note that in Spanish and French the generalization of the terms led to the formation of identical word combinations, *espada y daga* and *épée et dague*, whereas the parallel Italian expression, *spada e pugnale*, was equivalent only in general connotation, its second part being entirely different etymologically. The Italian usage did not modify the French one, but it could well have contributed to the continuing use of the locution *épée et poignard*.

It may seem strange that parrying weapons, despite their widespread popularity over a period of one hundred and fifty years, did

61. J. and W. Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, s.v. In 1570 Joachim Meyer pointed out that the *Rappier* had been invented and brought to Germany "by other nations" (*Gründliche Beschreibung der . . . Kunst des Fechtens* [Strassburg, 1570] f. L).

62. Puteo, *Duello*, f. G[V].

63. [Ghirolamo] Mutio Iustinopolitano, *La Faustina della armi cavalleresche* (Venice, 1560) p. 32: "dagne, daghette, pugnali di diuerse maniere."

64. Puteo, *Duello*, f. G [VI]: "con spate et pugnali."

65. [Sebastiano] Fausto da Longiano, *Duello regolato à le leggi de l'honore* (Venice, 1551) p. 54.

66. G. di Grassi, p. 39: "tenendolo con il taglio uerso l'inimico si ha questo auantagio che co'l pugnale si pou ferire de taglio."

67. Torriano, *Dictionary English and Italian* (London, 1687) s. vs.

not receive special names to distinguish them from ordinary daggers and poniards.⁶⁸ This fact does not look unnatural, however, in the light of the foregoing conclusion that during the sword-and-dagger era most daggers and poniards were provided with a parrying guard that made them fit for any appropriate use. This also explains why an early special term, *pugnale bolognese*, had a regional circulation only and turned out to be short-lived, for very soon this particular form lost its novelty in the multitude of parrying weapons.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

While working on this paper, I was given invariably friendly attention by my Colleagues at the Metropolitan Museum's Department of Arms and Armor and by its Curator, Dr. Helmut Nickel. The Museum's Library was instrumental in obtaining a microfilm of Marozzo's *Opera nova* in the Library, University of Pisa. Clément Bosson and René Géroudet provided me with the photograph for Figure 8. Richard H. Randall, Director of the Walters Art Gallery, gave me the photograph for Figure 24. To all, my most cordial thanks.

68. In view of the evidence considered, it is hard to accept Bashford Dean's definition of poniards as "quillon daggers which from the early sixteenth century were used in the left hand as an aid to parrying." (*Catalogue of European Daggers*, p. 8). Heribert Seitz mentions a Spanish term, *daga de mano izquierda* (also *mano izquierda* and *izquierda*), for Spanish shell-guard daggers of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but without a reference to his source (*Blankwaffen*, II, pp. 138, 139, 192). Though the term may have been used casually, the most reliable dictionaries (J. Corominas, *Diccionario crítico etimológico de la lengua castellana* [Bern, 1954]; M. Alonso, *Enciclopedia del idioma* [Madrid, 1958]; Real Academia Española, *Diccionario de la lengua española* [Madrid, 1970]) do not mention it.

THE GERMAN TWO HANDED SWORD

by Charles Daniel

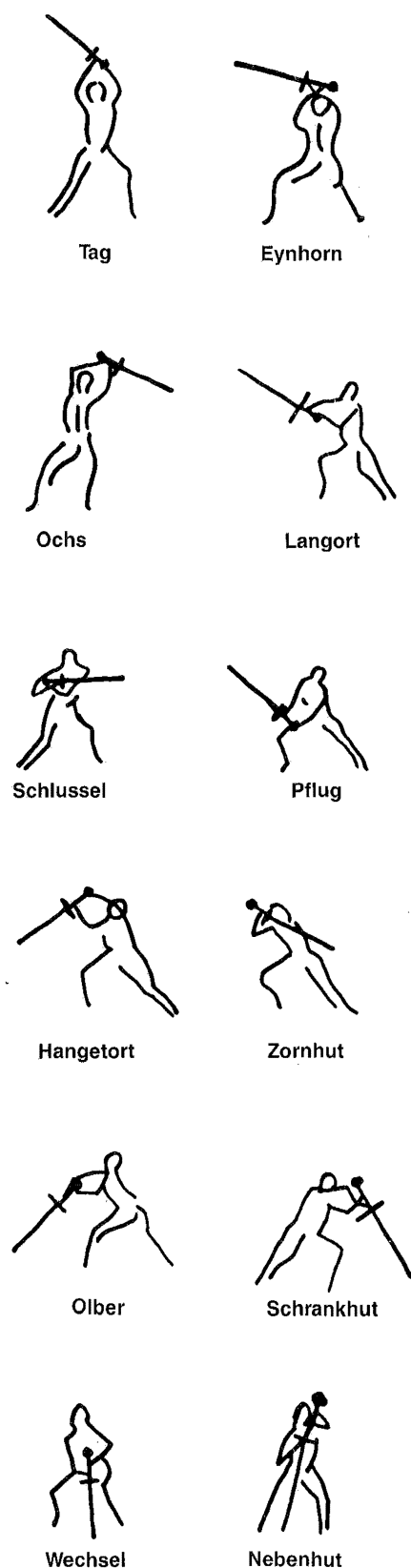
Anyone visiting the old weapons section in some of the larger European museums cannot help but be impressed by some of the giant swords preserved here. Blades up to two meters long are not uncommon. Also, incredibly complicated hand guards and blade designs are the rule of the day and not the exception. These swords are called "Zweihandiges Schwert" or "Bidenhander" in the German language. Before going into the details and usage of these giant swords, it is necessary to take a general overview of the role of fencing. This overview does not concern itself with the more modern sport, fencing, but instead, with the actual fighting (dueling) forms of fencing.

Even before the invention of the gun, the sword was not a major battlefield weapon. In fact, the sword has never been a weapon of battlefield importance in any culture. The major weapons of the world (before guns) have always been spears, bows and arrows. The reason for this is straight-forward. It takes only a minimal amount of time to train someone in the use of a spear or bow. With a spear, you just point and push, and with a bow, you just aim in the direction of the thousand or so men on the other side of the field. This is, of course, an oversimplification, but it is important to remember that battlefield weapons had to be simple because of soldier turnover. It would have been impossible to maintain a standing army if that army required extensive special training. For example, if a sixteenth century army fought a battle and had twenty-five percent losses, it could be back up to full strength in a month or so. However, if every replacement required extensive training, then that army was simply out of business. And special training is exactly what any form of fencing should be considered. In sixteenth century Europe, the two handed swordsman fell into two broad classifications. The first was the bodyguards and trainers of the nobles (aristocrats) and the second was the nobles themselves. This is about the time when the giant swords were at the height of their use and popularity.

In general, on the battlefield these weapons were reserved for the strongest and most skilled men. These men were called "Dopfelsoldner" because they received twice the pay of the ordinary soldier. These men had two main functions, (1) Protect the flag (In those days, if you lost your flag, you did not know where to look for directions); (2) Protection of the high-ranking men. Because of these duties, it is easy to see why these particular swords and swordsmen were so important.

The actual swords weighed about nine pounds and had, on the average, blades five to six feet long. The handle added another foot or two to the overall length. In Germany, it was also popular to serrate the blades to add cutting power. These particular swords were later known as the famous "Flammenschwert" or flame swords. Often there was also a heavy knob (pommel) at the end of the handle to balance the sword and various forms of hand guards. Although these swords were used throughout Europe, they seemed to have received more research and use in Germany and Italy.

The German two hander was very heavy and used only for cutting. In fact, these swords often had blunt tips. The Italian two hander was much lighter and elegant and could be used for both cutting and thrusting. These differences would have interesting implications for later sword development. While the German swords remained basically unchanged from the beginning of the sixteenth century to the end of the seventeenth century, the Italian sword and consequently fencing style, went through constant changes in this period.



(1) The Twelve Grundstellung or Sword Stances

Since the German two handed sword and its use lasted so long, it is natural that some record of its techniques would survive in written form. Three writers from this period whose works have survived more or less intact are Boeheim, Mener, and Lichtenauer.

These writers had various opinions as to the usefulness of the two handed sword. For example, Boeheim claims that these weapons were inefficient because (1) the men using them had to be stronger than normal, (2) the user was quickly exhausted, (3) it took a great deal of room to use such large weapons. In its favor, Boeheim states that these weapons were heavy and, as a result, did heavy damage when they connected. Mener, on the other hand, states his feeling clearly when he writes, "The two hander is the basis of all fencing." Lichtenauer's work is concerned mainly with the technical details of two handed sword fencing. Taken together these writers give a fairly clear description of how these weapons were used.

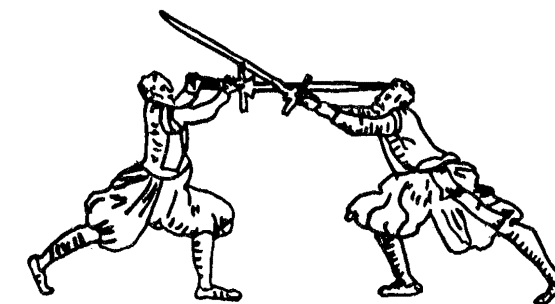
A quote deriving from the late fourteenth century states, "Know, that a good swordsman should of all things be aware of his sword and handle it very surely (skillfully) with both hands even between woods (trees)." This would indicate that even at this early date, some rudimentary form of fencing technique was developing. It also shows that medieval fencing was more than just a test of standing and hitting, devoid of technique. Another quote that derives from the fifteenth century states, "Practice every day or the sword will be dangerous to its handler."

The actual everyday training was also very interesting. As might be expected, the training of the old fencers was totally different than what passes for training today. Very little protective equipment was used. The modern fencer's mask did not exist and there was no helmet either. The main equipment used was iron gloves and special training weapons. These training weapons consisted of various wooden, blunt-edged and over-weighted heavy swords. However, even with training equipment, this type of training was very hazardous and could never be taken lightly. There is one additional point that can be noted when one examines old prints of fencing instruction of this period: the teacher is always pictured with only two students. This, of course, can lead to some rather interesting speculation on just how closed-to-the-public this type of training really was. It could also be that because of the weapons, it was not safe for more than two people to practice in an enclosed area.

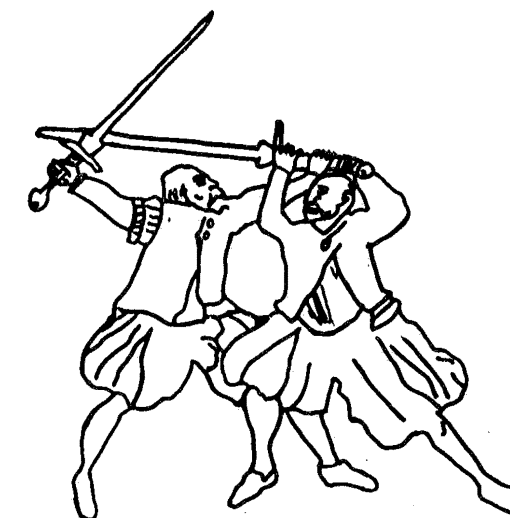
The actual fighting techniques were classified and taught according to the level of the student.

There were four basic stances: (1) Tag, (2) Ochs, (3) Olber, (4) Pflug. From these four, eight more were developed: (5) Zornhut, (6) Langort, (7) Wechsel, (8) Nebenhut, (9) Hangetort, (10) Schlüssel, (11) Einhorn, (12) Schrankhut. Thus there were twelve standard fighting postures for the two handed sword. The order of the stances depended on the position of the point of the sword. The stance with the point at the highest was Tag and at the lowest was Schrankhut. It is important to note that men did not remain in these stances a long time. One reason for this is seen in a quote from Mener: "Try to be the first on the fencing floor (area). When your opponent comes into the area, try to hit him before he gets into a stance." Mener also noted that because of this idea, fencers never greeted each other.

After the stance came, the actual cutting techniques. Most of the time the cuts were aimed at the head. Mener even divides the head into four target sections, (1) Top, (2 & 3) Sides by the ears, and (4) Chin. Cuts were of the straight type or inverted type. Straight cuts were done with the long and straight arm. The Oberhieb or straight downward cut is a good example of this type of cut. Inverted cuts were done with half the blade or were hits with the dull portion of the blade. There were twelve of these inverted cuts and they were called, "Wachsende Hiebe" because they came directly from the straight cuts.



(2) The "INDES" attack form or cutting in the middle of your opponents technique is used by the fencer on the left. The fencer on the right begins in Tag and the fencer on the left starts in Ochs. The fencer on the right attacks with a straight cut to the head. The fencer on the left "cuts through" this technique by parrying and striking his opponent's temple with the flat part of the blade. This parry and attack is done in the same motion. This illustration also gives a very clear picture of the importance of the cross-shaped hand guards.



(3) The fencer on the right begins in Ochs, while the fencer on the left assumes Tag. The fencer on the right uses a right to left cutting attack to his opponent's head. The fencer on the left parries with a direct hit to his opponent's blade and then uses a reverse sliding action with his sword. As his sword moves back, he steps in under his opponent's blade and grabs the other's handle. Having thus trapped his opponent, the fencer on the left can follow with a cut or thrust to the opponent's midsection.

From the two groups of straight and inverted cuts, derived five "Meisterhiebe" or master cuts. These were: (1) Zorn, (2) Krumm, (3) Zwerch, (4) Schleler, and (5) Scheiter. These cuts were considered the mark of a master.

Once the various stances and cuts had been mastered, then the student moved to the study of timing. This was an advanced area of study and skill and was what really separated a master from everyone else. There were four types of timing and these were called, "The Four Forms of Attack."

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| (1) VON FECHTEN | Do not leave the opponent any time but attack before he has a chance |
| (2) NACH FECHTEN | Only attack after your opponent has attacked you |
| (3) GLEICH FECHTEN | Attack at the same time that your opponent attacks. |
| (4) INDES FECHTEN | Cutting in the middle of your opponent's technique |

Of these forms of attack, Mener claims that the best is striking back or counter attacking. He also gives a strong warning against blindly hitting around because of the strength of counter techniques.

Finally, there were a number of supporting skills. Here such hand skills as connections, sliding cuts and hits on the blade were learned. Also, "Lauern" or waiting, jumping in all directions, evading, grabbing or holding the opponent's weapon, taking the opponent's sword, disrupting distance in order to hit the opponent with the handle or knob (pommel) were all studied and used. Lastingly, the skills of unarmed wrestling were learned.

As one can see from all this information, the two handed fencing of Medieval and Renaissance Europe reached a very high level of development. The fact that this type of fencing is no longer widely practiced is probably more a result of changes in fashion and style than a statement on its pragmatic value.

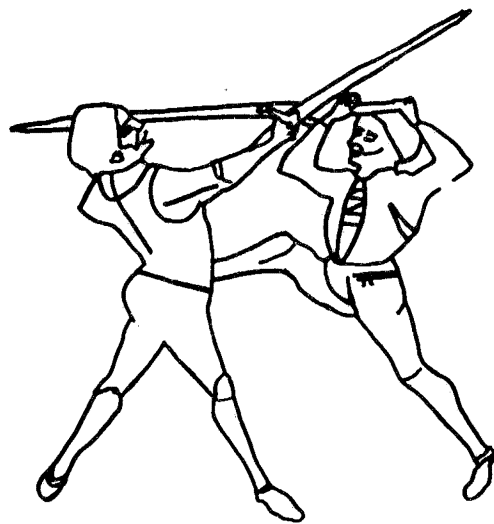
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The books quoted in this work are rare and are written in Old German. The names of the books and the year published are as follows:

Boenheim. *Kriegbuch*. Frankfurt 1573.

Lichtenauer. *Kunst des Fechten*. ca 1600.

Mener. *Grundliche Beschreibung/der frehen Ritterlichen und kunst des Fechtens*, 1600.



(4) This picture illustrates "Unterlaufen" or going under the opponent's weapon and then using whatever technique is appropriate to the situation. Here the two fencers are locked in a blade-to-blade struggle which the fencer on the right breaks out of by using an "inverted cut" to hit his opponent's temple with the flat part of his blade and at the same instant he kicks his opponent's mid-section.



(5) Here, an example of an unarmed technique against a swordsman is given. The man on the right attacks through a gap in the swordsman's guard (such a gap could be caused by shifting from Hangetort to Tag to cut to the head). The unarmed man dives low and slams his head into his opponent's mid-section. At the same time, he grabs both the swordsman's knees and picks him up. This action throws the swordsman backward so that he will land on his head.

TEACHING STAGE COMBAT, HELPFUL HINTS

by David S. Leong

In the last year, I have adjudicated students a total of twelve times. The "success rate" as expected varied considerably. A rough guess of the ratio of people that passed versus failed would be something like one hundred sixty passed to forty failed. Relatively speaking, the number of people that passed was very high; obviously attributed to good teaching. Out of the hundred sixty receiving certificates, approximately fifteen were certified with recommendation. Below is a list of suggestions to be used when teaching a stage combat class and/or preparing students for the certification test. These suggestions are based on the result of my last four certification tests.

PREPARATION

Preparation for the unlikely event of failure of the certification test is as important as the preparation for success. The students must be ready for this in the event that it happens. This is the responsibility of the instructor. Students should know that the adjudicator doesn't arrive at the certification site with sword in hand ready to "cut down" any and all who make a few mistakes here and there. Adjudicators *want* the students to pass. It's not enjoyable to watch sets of teary eyes leave the room after they hear of their failure, especially if you're told that "he really did work hard, or she was good enough yesterday but choked today." If the SAFD is to continue to maintain a minimum level of standard, then high expectations must continue to be met. Students must *act* and *fight* at the same time. . . SAFELY. They must demonstrate all of the above skills *on the day of the test*. There is a phrase I learned from Paddy Crean recently that would be most helpful in passing on to your students: THOUGHTS FAST, BLADES SLOW, POINTS LOW, FIGHT LIGHT!

STUDENT ATTITUDE

Inform them that the process of testing is exactly like that of an audition. If they don't pass, they should be encouraged to try again. Upon hearing of one's failure to pass I've heard comments like: "I'll never do this again," or "that was a waste of my time."

Sometimes they'll blame their partner for mistakes they made themselves. If a student becomes frustrated and feels that he's wasted his time I say to him: "Did you have the same reaction when you first auditioned and didn't get the part? Did you decide to quit acting? If so, you wouldn't be here now."

TEACHER ATTITUDE

Sometimes, especially when a teacher is new to this discipline, the teacher feels guilty when his or her students don't pass. If you have taught them fights that are safe and well choreographed, what more can you expect? Surely you can coach them but you cannot act it for them as well. Avoid directing their scene. It is important for the adjudicator to see what the students are capable of adding to the scenes. Let them do their job even if it means an occasional screw up here and there. That's how one learns. The adjudicators need to critique the students' work, not the teacher's.

SCENE AND CHARACTER CHOICE

You may or may not agree with this section but here it goes. In my opinion the most successful scenes are ones that are original or at best "loosely adapted from existing plays." Why? Because no play especially Shakespeare's (he probably just turned over in his grave...since I'm writing this literally within feet of the Stratford Festival...his North American home away from home) can work for three different fights, and include a strong beginning, middle and end. The scenes that we ask our students to do should be thought of as short one act plays — anywhere from five to eight minutes in length. More than that becomes unnecessary and less does not allow the adjudicator to see enough to effectively make a decision.

Also, scenes that are obviously serious, very serious in nature with no room for dynamic changes in emotional level can be real killers. I have seen few students to maintain an intense level of "heavy emotion" and play it for five to eight minutes. The scene should allow them to vary their emotional level. (An example of this is the MacBeth/MacDuff fight or the Edgar/Edmund fight. Neither allows for changes and neither can be done for that long. Of course, they work within the context of the real play but not so well for three fights, all with different weapons).

There is no need to play two to three minutes of a scene before they fight. All the adjudicators are either actors and/or directors and can tell whether or not a person can act by observing them while they fight. Start with a few lines, maybe ten or so at the most, get into the fight, and when it's over finish it...don't drag it out over fifteen to twenty lines. Of course there will be lines during the fight and between fights but these need to be kept to a minimum as well. They should choose characters that are within immediate reach of their ability. Also, ones that are plausible during the restrictions of the choreography. If you choose a character that happens to dance everything, then we won't be able to judge your fighting skills because all we'll see is a stylized dance...with weapons.

TRANSITIONS

Encourage your students to give as much attention to what happens between scenes (how they change from one weapon to another *and* the characterization and dialogue choices). Too many students drop character, put down their weapons and suddenly jump into character to start another fight. There must be a consistency of character all the way through the scene.

ACTING THE FIGHT

One could write for days on this subject but here are just a few "points to remember."

Treat the weapon with tender loving care. They are the character's personal belonging. In most instances the weapon is the character's pride and joy and often his status symbol. He kept them clean, points and edges sharp and avoided throwing them around. They would not mistreat their weapons unless they were forced to do so, or were under severe stress. (I've seen unnecessary kicking and throwing of weapons about the stage).

Respect the edge and point. Know that the points are sharp, the edges can fatally wound. They need to fight with this awareness. It will affect their vocalizations, alignment, action, reaction, and characterization.

Motivation. Unless a character becomes emotionally crazed, which happens quite often, the fight should contain a logical "thought process." It may consist of "She did this to me in the last phrase, so now I'll try this because she appears to react more slowly on this side." Combatants don't think of this, especially ones that are being tested. Sometimes, choreographers don't even think of this when they construct a fight. There *must* be a logical and strategic reason to move from one phrase to another and your job is to make them aware of these separate motivations. Go over it with them phrase by phrase, moment by moment.

Rhythm. All good fights have built in rhythms within the entire sequence as well as within each phrase. For example, phrase one may include: one two three-pause-one two-pause-one two three-pause-one two three four. Teach them the appropriate speeds within each phrase. Example: ...fast on the first three beats, then pause, then slow on the next two, then fast again. This must be done all the way through the fight. Seeing a fight sequence played at the same speed is as exciting as hearing an actor deliver lines at the same speed throughout...boring.

Anticipation. Each move within the fight sequence has a beginning and end. Before starting the next movement, the one at hand needs to be completed first. Example, One must parry first before beginning the bind: the bind must be completed before the riposte. Anticipation not only looks bad but it is unsafe as well. Another example is when an actor ducks before the cut across the head takes place. Doing so only makes the sequence look choreographed and is a demonstration of bad acting. Does one react to something in a scene before being given a reason to react?

Immediacy. Combatants need to be constantly reminded of their primary concern, that of parrying or avoiding the point or riposting/attacking at *this* precise moment, not a moment earlier or later. This sense of immediacy establishes the spontaneous nature of good stage fight scenes.

Urgency. There should always be an immediate need to do what one is doing and that need usually increases as the fight proceeds. Help your students become aware of this and incorporate it into the fight sequence.

Vocal Effects. Make sure the vocal effects do not outdo the action. Recently I saw two students that sounded like Saturday morning wrestlers when engaged in combat. This is laughable at best. Inform them that the vocal effects heard over and over again take away from the illusion of realism that they've worked so hard to create. How believable (or interesting for that matter) is it for an audience to hear an actor deliver a monologue at the same pitch level throughout? The fight scene needs to be orchestrated with the variety of pitch and tones that make the sequence believable. Finally, encourage them to be selective about when to use their voice at all. Some movements need to be accented by the voice but others do not. And an overabundance of sounds, no matter how varied they are in pitch and tone, will not be believable. Just remember: not all thrusts, cuts, punches, or kicks will force a sound out of the body.

Play the Pain. By the time the fight is finished, the characters should be "walking wounded," if indeed they're still alive. Play each hit, punch, slap, wound, and let it all add up. You may not vocalize, as I last said but you certainly would feel it. Here is a question I often ask my combatants. "Tell me where all your aches and pains are. Where do you hurt?" They should be able to answer you without thinking, but most cannot. If they in fact did receive two punches in the face, a kick in the stomach, a hair pull and a neck choke, they would be able to inform you of their aches and pains without having to stop and think about it.

Salutes. If two people are playing a scene that requires or allows for a salute of some sort, by all means they must use it. It was only common for two people to show respect to one another and those around them before they began to fight. A simple address to each other may be all that is needed. Certainly the choice of character and the moment at hand will determine whether or not some form of address can or should be done. It would be ludicrous for Romeo to salute Tybalt because he doesn't respect him and he's also angered beyond rational thinking at the time.

Similarly, MacBeth probably wouldn't salute MacDuff. Salutes are both theatrically and emotionally exciting to watch. Watching Hamlet and Laertes prepare for the fencing bout, choose the weapons and salute each other also makes us aware of the skill and expertise that these two possess. (I thank Paddy for this last comment. He is the master of many elements of swordplay, especially the salute. "Take your time!" he'd say to me, "Build the tension, make them wait!")

The remaining points are simply listed without elaboration because they need no explanation.

Make sure the choreography hides the technique and shows only the "action." Too many knaps are being seen: wounds or kills are not being executed correctly.

Inform your students that if they start too fast, they have no place to build to. It is better to start at a more moderate pace than a fast one. Most people test each other out, trying to find the other person's strong and weak points at first, anyway.

Extend before lunging! This serves as a cue for the other combatant and also points out to the audience the location of the thrust.

Eye contact is necessary for cueing and for believability.

Control the disarms. I've seen too many weapons fly into the wings totally *out of control*. An audience member is likely to say "I wonder if the next one's coming out here!"

Know your space. Adjudicators really dislike *and* distrust an actor who mistakenly trips over or falls over a weapon that happens to be "out of place." Recently I saw an actor fall off stage during a fight sequence because he didn't know where he was!

STAY AWAY FROM REAL TENSION

If gloves are not used, it must be justified by the character or scene. Otherwise use them. They are historically correct (actually they wore gauntlets made of one material or another) and necessary for safety purposes. If they can't afford even imitation suede or something similar, they shouldn't be taking the class. Would a ballet master allow a student to take class without ballet shoes on his feet? What's more, would a student dare take class from a ballet master without proper footwear?

Remind your students that certification means they have demonstrated a minimum level of proficiency on the weapons they have

tested on. To producers and directors that means they can act and fight on stage safely. Recommendation means that the combatant has demonstrated a very high level of skill and "flair" that exemplifies the highest standards one can expect from a professional actor. Inform them of the dangers of selling themselves as choreographers. Not only is it unethical to do that but there is a matter of legality that can become quite messy. If one advertises himself as a choreographer and a student becomes injured, the "choreographer" has no training in this area to justify that his methodologies and techniques are safe. Could be sticky in court. To say that one can choreograph fights after receiving his certification is as absurd as a student taking his first acting class, getting a certificate and then calling himself a director!

Above all, be honest with your students. Certification is stressful and there's no way of lessening the tension and anxiety that accompanies this process. Help them recognize this stage fright and learn to deal with it much in the same way they do when they're not fighting on stage. What they actually do on the day of the test *is* what they are capable of doing under a performance situation. So saying that "so and so's done better in rehearsal" means absolutely nothing. They may have demonstrated the skill of Errol Flynn (or his double anyway) in rehearsal, but what happens in performance is an altogether different thing. If your students have a really fine rehearsal where everything goes perfectly, tell them not to expect the same result every time they fight. It's not possible. If they begin thinking that way, they only set themselves up for failure.

A final note for beginning teachers. You'll have a lot of students pass and perhaps a few fail at first. Expect it as part of the business. Not all students enroll in the class with the same degree of physical control. But there have been times when the choreography, or lack of it, has occasionally made the fight sequence very difficult to perform. Remember the story you told your students about selling themselves as choreographers. The same holds true for teachers. Not all teachers of stage combat are choreographers. If you're in need of advice, contact your nearest Fight Master/Full Member for suggestions.

WE HAVE MET THE ENEMY, AND HE IS US

By Tony Soper

I recently had the occasion to work with Fight Choreographer B.H. Barry and his assistant Peter Nels in the Centerstage production of *Henry IV, Part I*. I worked with him extensively on the Hal/Hotspur fight, as it was rather extended for this production, and on the Hal/Douglas fight. I also had the opportunity to observe his work on the fight scenes he added to this production and to participate in the classes he and his assistant taught. I have seen his work before, both in performance and in rehearsal for other shows, have sat in on his classes at Julliard, and have fought opposite and choreographed for many of his students. I'd like to detail the major differences in philosophy and technique between Mr. Barry's work and the SAFD style. Most of the comments and notes are common to all Mr. Barry's work, although some are specifically involved only with Broadsword (parrying with the flat of the blade).

First of all, it must be pointed out that it is extremely difficult to draw comparisons between Mr. Barry and the SAFD style, since there exists no quantifiable "style" of stage combat within the Society. Different members of the Society teach the same basic stage combat movement in slightly different ways. Some Society members have different names for the same identifiable combat movement, and there is no "official" designation of the number or names of parries. But, I think it will be of interest to all Society members, to have some detailed analysis of the major differences between our "way" and that of the most commercially successful Fight Choreographer in the U.S.

TERMINOLOGY

A major problem in working with Mr. Barry is that he uses no set or common vocabulary of terms in giving choreography or fight direction. For example, Mr. Barry does not provide written notation of the fights to the combatants, which would of course demand a common terminology. He never named the parries, attack areas, or certain specialized movements. This makes communication between the combatants, or between the fighters and the fightcaptain or stage manager extremely difficult when problems or questions arise. When substitutions must be made in case of injury or sickness it takes excessive rehearsal time to teach even trained stage fighters the new fight. Mr. Barry relies on the Stage Management staff to notate the blocking patterns of the fight as he choreographs in the early rehearsals. Consequently, the only written record of the original choreography is of more use and more easily understood by the lighting and set designers than by the actors. The lack of communication was strikingly noticeable among the fighters themselves. Three weeks into the run, fighters were heard asking partners "Are you going for my thigh, my knee, my waist there, or what?" Mr. Barry added several major fight scenes to the script. If the stage management staff was not present during the first rehearsals the moves in these fights were never transcribed. Then when the inevitable time crunch came, moves that could not be remembered, or

were disputed, were simply cut. I personally dislike the practice of adding fight scenes to a script. In most cases, I think it is a needless imposition. Choreographers are generally better served to concentrate on doing justice to the scripted requirements. In this production, for example, about the only thing gained by adding an elaborate fight scene involving Prince John in ambush by Hotspur's forces, led by Douglas, was some derogatory comments from reviewers who pointed out that the imposed scenes looked like nothing more than scenes from a bad kung-fu movie.

DISTANCE

Mr. Barry never makes mention of "distance" or "fencing measure." Of course, a fighter can always tell when he is too far out-of-distance, because his partner cannot meet his blade. However, as we all know, fighting within too close distance can be very dangerous. There were many injuries on this production, most of which can be attributed to combatants being too close to safely execute a specific move. No one can guarantee a combatant entirely safe from accidents. But the list of injuries in this production included a head wound requiring eight stitches, one sliced thumb also requiring stitches, a fractured heel, a pulled back, and assorted contusions, abrasion, torn ligaments and strained muscles—in all, far too many. In the large battle scenes, when the critical timing of the fights was thrown off, very dangerous situations arose because there was no awareness of distance, either between partners, or pairs of fighters. One missed entrance in Mr. Barry's elaborately timed battles made things hazardous in the extreme for those left on stage "holding the bag."

EYE-CONTACT

Mr. Barry spends considerable effort instilling in his fighters the habit of continuous eye contact with one another. This, he explains, is the key safety factor in his method. He claims that one doesn't have to look at a target in order to hit it. He demonstrates this by standing within arm's reach of an assistant and, while maintaining eye contact, reaching out to touch various parts of the opponent's body. He claims that peripheral vision is more than sufficient to place attacks on target. One problem with this method was observed when he announced he would reach out and touch his partner's outstretched wrist but instead touched the back of his hand. A two or three inch error may be insignificant when standing without a weapon in hand, but multiply this error by three feet of sword, a moving target, and six pairs of fighters onstage at once, and this "insignificant" margin of error becomes extremely "significant."

Another problem with this technique was referred to by David Boushey in his letter (May, *The Fight Master*) as "a tendency to become mesmerized." I have noted when fighting Barry trained partners that if they forget a move, or when under extra stress, there is a tendency for the eyes to glaze over, that "far away look" much written of. Needless to say, it's distressing to have a partner who's obviously "up," trying to look for the next move somewhere on a mental screen in his head rather than making contact with you so that together you can work your way out of the situation.

PARRYING

Another striking difference is that Mr. Barry advocates parrying with the "flat" of the blade, and not edge-to-edge. Mr. Barry claims this practice is safer because the blades are less likely to break. He also claims historical justification for this practice, explaining that ancient warriors wanted to keep their edges sharp and, to save the cutting edge, would



parry with the flat. He offered no historical documentation in support of this view. Other Society-trained fighters involved in this production found little difficulty parrying with the flat when defending against thrusting attacks, but were extremely uncomfortable parrying heavy cuts in this manner. It should be noted that several of the hand injuries (some of them quite serious) sustained in this show could be attributed to the fact that when parrying with the flat the quillons offer no protection whatsoever to the fingers from an opponent's sliding blade. Mr. Barry is also fond of turning the majority of parries into envelopes or binds, and the SAFD-trained fighters had a particularly difficult time controlling an opponent's blade when required to parry with the flat. Mr. Barry also advocates using the flat when sword to shield contact is required. Attacking an opponent with the flat was the most difficult and uncomfortable movement for those of us who were SAFD certified.

Inability to adapt one's choreography to the exigencies of the actors, the costumes, and the set is a serious flaw in any choreographer. The set for this production used three inches of real dirt for the floor, offering some interesting possibilities for actors in armor to investigate "period movement," particularly in the fights. Unfortunately, one of the hallmarks of all Mr. Barry's fights is the excessive use of the reverse-pirouette movement (aikido players would recognize it as *Tenkan*). This movement is next to impossible to execute under control in armor, chain-mail, and on a dirt floor. This move was also used in the fights that took place on a three-foot wide platform, ten-feet in the air, with no railing of any kind. Much of the body contact movements (forearm smashes, flips, kicks) appeared totally ineffective in performance because of the armor. The most dangerous example of the short shrift given to the actors' problems with the armor was encountered by the hapless combatants (both Equity and Non-Equity) who were asked to jump or fall from the ten foot platform onto other armored actors.

CONCLUSION

Society members can take a good example from Mr. Barry's practice of obtaining a role for one of his most gifted and experienced students in the production. He then included his assistant in the work process of every fight, featured him in most of them, and designated him Fight Captain when he left. As long as the Fight Captain remains uninjured and avoids sickness, he can ably deal with the problems as they arise. In this case, it was only the quick thinking and professional aplomb of the Fight Captain that saved the fights from a major disaster when a Non-Equity featured fighter was discovered to be drunk at first intermission, and had to be cut from the fights.

The experience of the SAFD trained and certified fighters working in this production was that an extra level of awareness and concentration was required to adjust to the choreography and to the Barry trained fighters.

I also had a great deal of difficulty with the refusal of Barry and his assistant to work out contingency plans in the event of a lost, misplaced, or broken weapon. This accusation can also be leveled at some Society members. While, mercifully, no weapons were broken during this particular run, several did fly into the audience, and on two occasions, weapons required in the Hal-Hotspur fight didn't arrive and we were forced to improvise the end of the fight, a prospect no one relishes when dealing with broadswords!

Yet the questions remain for us in the Society. Why does Mr. Barry command the well publicized salaries and awards he receives? Is it true that he is the best-known fight choreographer working in the U.S.? What can we in the Society offer as an alternative to his method?

USEFUL SHOP BUILT SCABBARDS

by K. Reed Needles

Reprinted from the *Newsletter* of the Society of Canadian Fight Directors, Volume 2, April 1985

Often we need scabbards, both for practical and aesthetic (period, design, historical accuracy) reasons. The following two designs meet the needs of the sport epee blade and the broadsword. They have proven both in execution and service to be sturdy, quick to build and cheap.

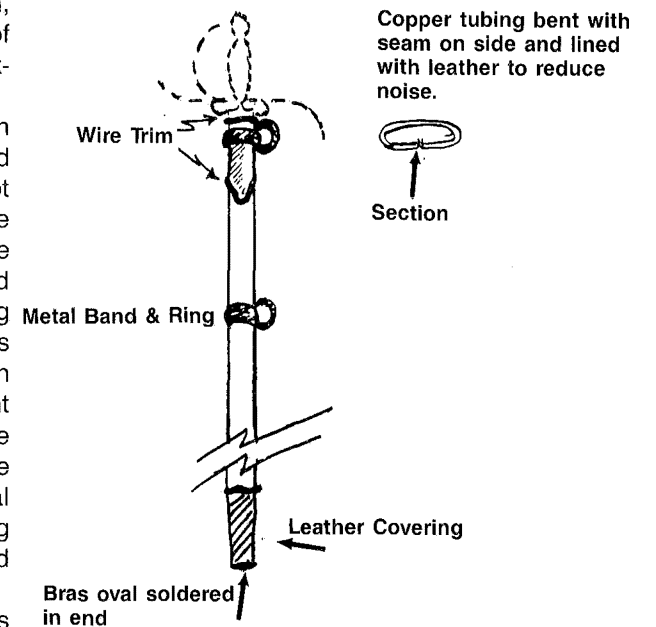
The simplest design for epee blade scabbards is an appropriate length of copper pipe or tubing, flattened around an old broken blade (seamed tubing is turned so that the seam is on the side of the scabbard and not the edge, as a bend along the seam will crack it). The chape can be simulated by soldering wire around the flattened tube in an appropriate design and then covering the area with leather or vinyl, contact cemented in place. A pointed chape is best produced by cutting the tube and folding the edges in, and then soldering again. A small oval of brass soldered across the open lower end will seal it effectively. The mouth of the scabbard can be lined with leather to minimize the rattle and provide the right amount of tension to hold the blade in place, without making it so tight as to be difficult to draw. Rings held in place by soldered bands will provide the necessary amount of support for suspension from the period belt. The final finishing can be done with black lacquer and gilt, the whole piece being varnished and broken down. This scabbard is strong enough to be used as part of a left-handed fight technique without bending or denting.

The broadsword scabbard is a touch more complicated, but the results make it worthwhile. The blade profile is traced on the inside of the two band-sawed blanks of pine, cedar or beech. The blade thickness of material is removed from the interior (be generous here as it is tricky to adjust after the piece is assembled) and then the two sides of the scabbard are glued together with waxed or heavily greased blade inside to ensure that the blanks line up correctly. When dry, the outside of the scabbard is worked down to the desired profile with spokeshave, files and sandpaper. Don't work too close to the edge of the blade area, or you will break through, with the result that your battle scarred sword edge will eventually cut through the fabric or leather casing. (It will do this eventually anyway, but we try to stave off the inevitable.) Next is to cover the scabbard with canvas or scene cotton, fixed in place by saturating it with a mixture of white wood glue and water (50/50), trimmed with a razor blade, and coated when dry with a layer of paint. The final cover can be either thin leather or fabric, contact-cemented in place and sewn up the back with a baseball stitch. The chapes can be made of light metal or heavy leather, soldered or stitched, and glued in place with epoxy. The complete unit is then ready for final paint and breakdown.

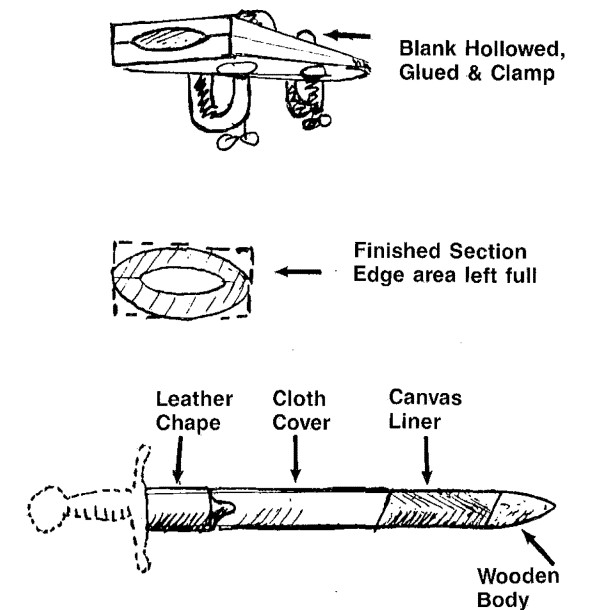
I recall seeing an article in *The Fight Director* about three years ago in which the author gave several excellent reasons for using and wearing scabbards in shows. Not only are they correct in a period design sense, but they add immeasurably to the effect of a drawn blade, and make things like sitting on benches and walking through crowds much less hazardous. A subsequent article will address other projects for the theatrical fighter who is interested in constructing his own equipment.

(K. Reed Needles is the props instructor for the Ryerson Theatre School in Toronto. Swords, daggers and accessories are turned out at a fairly regular rate in the school's fully equipped shop. Mr. Needles works with some sixty students who have been experimenting with different building techniques, as well as another sixty students to whom he teaches the basics of stage combat).

EPEE SCABBARD



BROADSWORD SCABBARD



SIXTH ANNUAL NATIONAL STAGE COMBAT WORKSHOP

by David S. Leong

"Back to basics" seemed to be the theme of this year's workshop sponsored by Southern Utah State College, the Utah Shakespearean Festival and the Society of American Fight Directors. The daily schedule of classes included the five primary styles of fighting: rapier and dagger, broadsword, quarterstaff, courtsword and unarmed combat. No classes in related areas such as Tai Chi, stuntwork, black powder were included this year.

Held in the mountains of beautiful Cedar City, Utah, the workshop attracted twenty seven people from all regions of the United States. Our only Canadian representative returned home early because a previous injury to his back prevented him from active participation in the daily schedule of classes. He assured us of his return next year so we'll look forward to his presence there.

The first week of the workshop appeared to be the most grueling for all participants. Rapier and dagger was instructed by David Boushey, broadsword by David Leong, and unarmed and quarterstaff by J.R. Beardsley. The entire workshop was divided into two groups and each class met for two hours per day. This schedule, coupled with an evening seminar on "Preparing for the Certification Test" and a lecture/demonstration by J.R. Beardsley on "Theatrical Weaponry" brought many a weary participant to the week's end. Everyone's fatigue quickly washed away (literally) under the mountain waterfalls and rocky cliffs of Zion National Park (one hour's drive from Cedar City). The entire workshop drove to this incredible park featuring breathtaking rock cliffs (some of them seven to eight thousand feet high) with panoramic views of towering rock formations. Everyone divided up and spent the day walking the trails of their choice. A pleasant surprise met David Boushey as soon as he returned to the bus that afternoon. Drew Fracher (the workshop assistant and newest Fight Master in the Society) Sally Knight, J.R. Beardsley and Doug Mumaw choreographed a short song and dance routine and presented David with a surprise birthday cake.

The arrival of Erik Fredricksen and the inclusion of court sword in the daily schedule began the second week of classes. By now, all participants had received many hours of instruction in the basic techniques of rapier and dagger, broadsword, quarterstaff and unarmed combat.

The evening seminars of the second week seemed to score a big hit. David Boushey and J.R. Beardsley conducted one on "Choreographing Stage Fights" followed by a second one on the same topic conducted by David Leong and Erik Fredricksen. The final seminar of the week was an informal question and answer session, conducted by the entire staff on "Teaching Stage Combat." Those in attendance attested to the wealth of information they received from these seminars as well as the entire workshop.

The final day of the second week was truly a "soothing" return to "life without the blade." Late Saturday evening the majority of the staff and participants drove to Hurricane, Utah (near Zion National Park) and sat in one hundred nine degree hot springs surrounded by towering rock cliffs. If you can imagine standing under a waterfall of hot water, fresh from the ground pouring on your head, coupled with a crystal clear starry night with a near full moon, you still cannot picture the sensory experience felt by all. The owner of the land was very gracious to build

us a fire by which we sat, talked, ate and, of course, drank. Pools of hot water(in sunken pits), fresh hot waterfalls and a river of hot springs seemed to be the perfect end to another week of successful classes.

A post script: The odor from the sulphur in the water did not want to wash off our bodies! Therefore you could certainly distinguish between those who went to the hot springs and those who hadn't.

As usual the third week was filled with rehearsals for the certification test fights as well as more instruction in learning technique in each class. The daytime schedule included the usual routine of classes with just a short time during class allotted to fight rehearsals. Each teacher was very aware that the "learning must go on" and that rehearsals for the certification test were to be done in the evening hours only.

A very appreciative audience comprised of members of the Utah Shakespearean Festival, SUSC faculty and staff and general public observed the fight test on the last day of the workshop.

CERTIFICATION RESULTS

Twenty three people took the certification test and all of them passed with four receiving recommendations! This is a first in the history of the National Stage Combat Workshop.

The scenes were very imaginative and well acted. They ranged from "Waiting for the Monte Cristo" and a "Tribute to Arthur Miller" to a spoof on the Twilight Zone entitled "The Combat Zone." One of the funniest scenes of the afternoon was performed by Doug Mumaw and Mark Guinn (aka "Rat"). These daring two stole into Mr. Boushey's and Mr. Beardsley's rooms in order to attire themselves with their wardrobe and impersonate them during the fight test. Mark Guinn exhibited the same whip cracking technique during this fight scene that J.R. used to keep many of the Morman community awake through the wee hours of the morning!

This year the Executive Committee decided to announce the Patrick Crean Award for Outstanding Achievement by a male and female combatant and a similar award for Outstanding Fight Scene. Matt Glave, B.F.A. student at Ohio University, won the male category for his character portrayal in Sam Shepard's *True West*. He displayed a good deal of finesse and comic timing, especially with the courtsword. Patrice Egleston, undergraduate movement teacher at Southern Methodist University was awarded the same prize in the female category. Her acting of the character and fight in *Fool for Love* was commendable.

The Patrick Crean Outstanding Fight Scene Award was presented to Chuck Conwell (recommended this year as well as last) and Matt Glave for *True West*. (Maybe we should have called the fight test a tribute to Sam Shepard!) Matt and Patrice received the new SAFD pin which was designed by Patrick Crean's wife Susan Muran for their award and Chuck and Matt received the new SAFD badge (also designed by Susan). Congratulations to the three of them for their excellent work.

John Morgan, Dan Chase and Richard Travis, members of the Utah Shakespearean Festival Acting Company took the test along with the workshop participants. The inclusion of their fight test showed how much these actors were dedicated to the art of stage combat.

A special thanks goes to Mr. Drew Fracher for his exceptional devotion to the staff and students of the workshop. His positive attitude and professional expertise will prove to make him an outstanding Fight Master.

The 1985 stage combat workshop was a great success from all angles. Recreational events, classes and seminars all combined to make it an invigorating three weeks. David Boushey's choreography in *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Twelfth Night* at the Shakespearean Festival and Drew

Fracher's and Doug Mumaw's antics in the Festival's preshow set some high standards of swordplay for the workshop participants to follow. Daphne Dalley of Southern Utah State College worked hard with her staff in preparation for this event. Thank you Daphne.

The following individuals were certified at the National Stage Combat Workshop August 2, 1985.

- 531 Tony Miller
- 532 Kerry Skalsky (rec)
- 533 John Morgan (rec)
- 534 Richard Travis
- 535 Chuck Conwell (rec)
- 536 Matt Glave (rec)
- 537 Joe Kucan
- 538 Michael Ellison
- 539 Patrice Egleston
- 540 Jeff Nordling
- 541 Doug Mumaw
- 542 Tom Dyer
- 543 Kevin Reese
- 544 Michael Cantrell
- 545 Terry Doughman
- 546 Ralph Anderson
- 547 C.J. Murray
- 548 Kathy Fredricks
- 549 Dan Chase
- 550 Sally Knight
- 551 Melissa Pacelli
- 552 Stewart Riley
- 553 Mark Guinn

SOME HISTORICAL POINTS

by Tony Soper

"I ran across these items in an old library in Canada..."

The Daily Telegraph, May 11, 1896

A few important alterations have been made in the cast of *Romeo and Juliet* to be produced next Friday afternoon at the Prince of Wales Theatre. . . But perhaps the most interesting feature of this revival to archaeologists will be the combats in *Romeo and Juliet* which have been arranged by that learned authority, Captain Alfred Hutton, and *will be given accurately for the first time in the history of the stage*. Captain Hutton has issued a very valuable memorandum on the subject, from which I extract a few interesting notes. The chief combats are fought with "rapier and dagger." The "fiery Tybalt" arms himself with a "case of rapier," which means a pair of swords kept side by side in one scabbard, and used one in each hand. They were not worn on the belt, but carried by an attendant. Tybalt kills Mercutio somewhat treacherously, but he gets his quietus from Romeo, who, "armed with a rapier and dagger, awaits Tybalt's charge, and slipping back his left foot into the position of 'under stop thrust,' a trick of considerable antiquity, receives his enemy on the point of the sword." Captain Hutton goes on to say:

The fighting of the Shakespearean era is so peculiarly adapted to stage display that it seems strange that it should not have been more cultivated; it may, perhaps, lack some of the refined elegance of the modern French school, but the loss is more than counterbalanced by the varied beauty of the weapons, and the picturesque movements of the combatants. *Romeo and Juliet*, with its five distinct duels, offers a wide field to the student of old sword-play. In the squabble which opens the play, between certain retainers of the rival houses, they are armed, after the manner of serving-men, with broadsword and hand-buckler, a shield which, from its small size and its lightness, lends itself greatly to a lively play, the vivacity of which was further enhanced by the habit of the players of "calling" each other with two little bright raps given on the buckler with the back of the sword.

It is worthy of note that at this period of the art of fence there was absolutely no "lunge;" it had yet to be invented. The movements of the feet were mainly "passes," or steps forwards or backwards and "traverses," or lateral steps. They were effected with more or less swiftness as occasion required, and an impetuous man would often, like Tybalt, actually "charge" his opponent.

* * * * *

St. James Gazette, April 2, 1891

The Manchester coroner investigated a case yesterday which disclosed an extraordinary accident on a stage. During the performance of *Romeo and Juliet* by some amateurs in the Manchester Cathedral

Schools, the scene in which Mercutio and Tybalt fight a duel with swords was reached, when Romeo, as usual, parted the combatants as Mercutio fell to the ground, saying, "I am hurt. A plague o'both your houses! I am sped; is he gone and hath nothing?" Both words and action being in the play, no notice was taken of them until blood was seen to be flowing from Mercutio's nose and mouth. He was at once taken to the hospital, but died before reaching that institution. A post-mortem examination showed that a sword had penetrated his chest to a depth of seven inches. It had passed through the lung, penetrated the pericardium, and wounded the left pulmonary vein. The deceased was Thomas Wilson Whalley, and he was nineteen years of age.

Ernest Thompson, who played the part of Tybalt, said that the duel scene was carried on in the usual way, with the exception that Mr. Bagnall, who was playing Romeo, came right in between himself and the deceased, instead of simply knocking up the swords. The witness made another lunge at the deceased, having to thrust right round Mr. Bagnall's body, but did not feel any resistance to the point of his sword. When he saw the deceased fall, he thought he must have hurt him. No one else could possibly have caused the wound. After he saw the blood flowing from the deceased's mouth, he fainted, and remembered nothing more. He had no experience with the swords of the kind used in the performance, but had frequently fenced with foils. He had not the slightest idea that he had used sufficient force to cause any wound. When he lunged behind Mr. Bagnall he did not put the weight of his body into the blow.

The coroner pointed out to the jury that with a stiff arm and a slight lunge forward they could send any of the swords used in the performance through a man's body or through a door without feeling any resistance.

Walter Bagnall said he played the part of Romeo. In the duel scene before he interfered, no unfair thrust had been given, and no wound, so far as he could see, had been caused. He could not say with certainty whether he himself caused the wound when he threw up the swords.

The coroner said he did not suppose it was anything but an accident but there had been some degree of negligence on the part of everyone who took part in the performance.

The jury returned a verdict of "Death from loss of blood from a wound received while taking part in a dramatic performance."

The Daily Telegraph, April 4, 1891

TO THE EDITOR OF *THE DAILY TELEGRAPH* "Sir, The accident mentioned in yesterday's issue, where a death occurred on the stage, reminds me of an occurrence when I was playing Romeo to the Juliet of the late Miss Nielson, in 1879. Being my first appearance in the part, I wished to make the best impression I could, and attended the dress rehearsal fully equipped with dagger and a Damascus blade sharp as a razor. I was about to commence the duel with Mercutio when Miss Neilson stopped the combat, and entreated me to proceed no further, save with a blunted weapon.

I followed her advice. But a few years later, forgetful of her counsel, I was wounded at the Lyceum, when playing the same part with Mary Anderson, in falling upon a dagger, which pierced my side.

The moral is that in stage combats no weapon should be used that is pointed or sharp enough to inflict injury. I am, Sir, your obedient servant, William Terriss. Lyceum Theatre, April 3."

INTRODUCTION TO ANCIENT CHINESE WEAPONS

Dr. Yang Jwing-Ming's *Introduction to Ancient Chinese Weapons* throws open the Eastern door to discovering a realm of weaponry for the martial artist, fight choreographer, or the historian.

Born in Taiwan, Dr. Yang trained in and mastered the arts of White Crane, Shoalin Kung-Fu, and Tai Chi Chuan. His continued work and research into these martial arts has led him to trace the evolution of five thousand years of Chinese weaponry and fighting strategies.

Dr. Yang has taken the difficult task of researching through thousands of weapons, which reflect the geographic, cultural, and physical differences of the people of China, and organized them into a concise weaponry text with over one hundred twenty illustrations. Traditional, as well as rare weapons such as the Snake-Tongued Sword, Flying Claw, Whip Spear, and the Wolf Toothed Staff are described in terms of structure and fighting technique. For instance, the Step Arrow (Tar New) is an arrow eight to twelve inches long. The arrow is placed in a spring loaded tube, and hidden in the boot or the stirrup of a saddle. The arrow is shot from the tube by stepping on the release button. Shuu Liang Chen invented this weapon during the Sung Dynasty (960-1127 A.D.) and successfully used it in surprise attacks against both humans and their horses. For further reference information, the author has compiled in an appendix a comprehensive list of each weapon written in Chinese with English pronunciation and a time table of Chinese History.

With today's continued interest in Asian cultures and martial arts films, Dr. Yang's *Introduction to Ancient Chinese Weapons* offers a rich source of virtually unknown weapons and dynamic fighting skills waiting to be utilized by today's Fight Choreographer.

NOTE: Dr. Yang Jwing-Ming's *Introduction to Ancient Chinese Weapons* is available from Unique Publications, 4201 Vanowen Place, Burbank, CA 91505 at a cost of \$8.95 plus \$1.50 for postage and handling.)

David W. Sollars

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO at VITA

The Valley Shakespeare Festival's two hour production of Alexander Dumas' *The Count of Monte Cristo* at the Paul Masson Mountain Winery above Saratoga was described by one Bay Area reviewer as a "whirl of action, impassioned hokum and poignant innovations." The production was directed by J. Steven White, the artistic director of the Valley Institute of Theatre Arts (the festival's producer) who is also the "fencing master" and assistant conservatory director of ACT. Mr. White, who has staged fights in a hundred and twenty one productions including the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Denver Theatre Center and the American Shakespeare Festival, won the Bay Area Critics Award in 1983 for his fight choreography of VITA's *Three Musketeers*.

Mr. White's swordplay technique consists of keeping the points of the blades high in the air, well off target, with a lot of cut/parry sequences ala Flynn, techniques which are safe but without any sense of excitement or danger. What could have been an exciting escape sequence when Edmund Dantes (disguised as a friar) fought off two policemen, consisted of Dantes spinning around in one spot clinking blades with his two stationary opponents. This fight sequence received a well deserved laugh, as did many others.

The hand-to-hand work had the attackers walking through the moves without involving any part of the body but their hands and arms. When the Innkeeper decked her sizable husband, she put him out with one undefined move to his stomach and a two fisted pat on the back, using only her arms while the rest of her body remained uninvolved in the action. And the victim's reactions were always too big for the initial action of the attacker.

The final sequence of sword fights was predictable, muddled and repetitious. Apparently Mr. White has a limited repertory of fight moves or little imagination. There was one exciting move when the Count ran his sword through his opponent's neck which sent gasps through the audience and then fits of laughter as the victim stood rigidly stage center with the sword held upstage in the crook of his neck.

Even with a military historian, fight choreographer and fight captain on the staff, this production which was set in the early nineteenth century, used rapiers, rapier and dagger and double rapier—flashy techniques but inappropriate for the period.

Despite these flaws in the swordplay, the audience seemed to enjoy the production, and they enthusiastically applauded the curtain call. Unfortunately, Bay Area audiences have been forced to settle for mediocrity and have learned to enjoy it.

Linda McCollum

SO MUCH FOR VERISIMILITUDE!

Tobi Tobias, in the March 1985 issue of *DanceMagazine*, describing the sword fights in the American Ballet Theatre's production of *Romeo and Juliet*, commented that the swordplay, for a change, looked like the real thing. Unfortunately his observation was all too true, for the swordplay sequences actually had the dancers improvising parts of the fight in performance.

The ABT's sumptuous production at the Metropolitan Opera House with its brooding set and heavily brocaded period costumes (which were more appropriate for opera than ballet) was the season's big production. Sir Kenneth MacMillan, England's "psychological" choreographer and ABT's newly appointed artistic associate, staged the production.

Everyone was talking about the fight scenes which involved twenty five fleet-footed adventurous young dancers slashing their way through the swordfights, sending many dancers to the hospital and unnerving the choreographer nightly. According to Jennifer Dunning in her article in the *New York Times* on April 25, 1985, most of the dancers had never seen a sword fight before nor had they any previous fencing experience. But, as Terry Orr the ballet master pointed out in the same article, a traditional fencing duel is not the most theatrical of events, and so, to capture the passions of the scenes, the fight scenes were approached as sheer, choreographed movement.

Work began on the fights in October with the arrival of David Drew of the Royal Ballet who came to assist in staging the fights. Mr. Drew spent only five days to set the fights. The work was done so quickly and involved so many themes and variations in movement for each fight that none of the dancers, including the ballet master, could pick it up at first. The sword play proved to be extremely dangerous. In one performance two dancers were injured when one of them slipped on one of the high curling staircases, designed by Nicholas Georgiadis, and fell onto another dancer. Improvised moments during the fight sequences placed not only the fighters but also the crowd of bystanders on stage in the precarious position of being accidentally slashed. But even before performances began, Victor Barbee, one of the dancers playing Tybalt, was injured in rehearsal when his artery and a tendon were cut by a dancer who mistakenly used a broken sword as a dagger. Luckily, MacMillan had cast the production by rotating the company's younger dancers in the leading roles, since Mr. Barbee was out for over two months after being stitched up.

The fights were rehearsed in the wings before each performance by the ballet master, but even he never felt comfortable with watching the scenes from out in the house. And even the choreographer worried each night about their getting through each fight scene without injury. So much for verisimilitude!

Linda McCollum

Dear Editor:

I have just read with astonishment and shock Jennifer Dunning's article (April 25, 1985 *N.Y. Times*) on the fight/dance choreography of the American Ballet Theatre's *Romeo and Juliet*, in which she describes the subjugation of the dancers of that company to extreme dangers and resulting accidents (among other atrocities, Victor Barbee's tendons and arteries being severed)—astonishment and shock that all this was allowed to happen, and that Sir Kenneth McMillan's "sweep it under the rug" attitude ("exciting, but... can we get through with this?") went unchallenged.

Had anyone with any sense of stage expertise or responsibility informed Terry Orr or the "imported" David Drew, the pair of whom were purportedly responsible for the dangerous fights, that everyone knows fighting and swordplay on any stage never should be real and should be, instead, carefully choreographed and staged so that ALL cuts and thrusts should be executed by carefully "pulling punches," then the only danger on stage would be what the audience perceives, with no danger to the artists executing the moves. Also, that Mr. Drew was given only five days to set these duels is equally appalling.

Sir Kenneth must surely know that there are many experienced and knowledgeable theatrical dueling masters throughout this country, and especially in New York, whom he could have called on for (at least) consultation, if not choreography, and who are properly schooled in the techniques of making absolute novices, with little or no fencing training, look brilliant on stage in lively and entertaining fights that are devoid of danger.

There is about as much logic for the insanity that is going on in the ABT's performances these nights as there would be in the shooting of an actor dead each night because the script says so!

Sincerely,

Rod Colbin

WHAT DO WE DO WITH THE MONSTERS WE CREATE?

I adjudicated eleven students at the St. Louis Repertory and could not pass any of them as they were unaware of adequate stage combat techniques and were unable to show enough ability to justify putting the Society's name on them. I am not saying that people who get their certification or even recommendation can go out there and teach. I think we are creating a disservice to ourselves and the art of stage combat by taking from it too soon and trying to sell it. I can see a great deal of good coming out of this art but I also see it being abused. I take this art seriously. I work at it daily and love it and it is going to be trashed before it is recognized unless all of us including myself start taking a less selfish attitude and a stronger stand on what we are producing. The name certification has to go. Certification connotes that these people are professionals with our name on them. I have a student who was recently certified and is now choreographing a production of *Macbeth* for a semi-professional Shakespeare Company because this person claims to be a "certified stage combat expert." This statement along with the Society's name was published in a large Bay Area newspaper.

How do we encourage growth without destroying ourselves? It is important to educate the public, but how do we get through to those we educate that a year or two of experience does not make a professional. We need to work with each other and keep our egos out of the way of the growth of the art of Stage Combat. I guess what I am saying is that we must recognize what we are doing with this entire training process. Yes, it is good to share our skills and just like the earlier masters of the sword we must take a stronger position as to the knowledge we are giving to others and restrict the way we share the skills of our trade. Maybe by making it clearer what we expect of our students or by demanding more of the people that are accepted into the Society we can control the abuses. People need to produce more and take less. Should we cut back on membership so that fewer people know the techniques and skills of the art and it becomes more precious? Or do we tighten the controls on those who carry our name. Or both?

The reasons I could not pass these students are because the targets were off, the fights were too slow except for one, and I feared for their safety and that of the audiences. People were getting hit in the midsection with blades. The flow of movement was choppy. There was no element of surprise in the fights and most moves were telegraphed. I don't want to discourage the instructor in his endeavors but I must remind him, as well as many people out there, that with inadequate techniques, training and teaching skills you are going to take this art and destroy it just like mime did to itself. The Society must take some sort of control. Here is a question for all of us to answer. What do we do with all the monsters we create?

J.R. Beardsley

Our Society has come a long way since its inception in 1977. Since that time there have been many hundreds of actors who have been trained in the mysteries of stage combat by SAFD members. Theatre companies across the nation recognize and respect our standards of excellence. Our membership is working constantly to foster the value of safe and exciting stage fighting. And I feel now, as do many of you whom I have spoken to, that we are on the verge of another leap in our effectiveness and influence as an organization.

This is the first general election of officers in the history of our Society, and I welcome the trend. Indeed, I think that we must expand the routine communications between all of our members. I know that the opportunity for a more consistent dialogue can be promoted between officers and members at large.

I think if I were to rank all of the possible projects I would undertake on behalf of the Society as its President, the first would be to endeavor to become affiliated with Actors Equity Association, so that each and every Equity Production in this country which included stagefighting or hazardous physical activity would be required to include a sanctioned member of the SAFD to act as consultant or choreographer.

The Society of British Fight Directors which was incorporated in 1969, now has an Equity Fight Directors Committee, which has the power to standardize fees and to look after working conditions for the Fight Director and combatants. This has produced an enormous boost in the status of the Fight Director, Fight Teacher, and Actor/Combatant as artists and technicians in their own right. Their committee has created professional agreements on conduct and safety in rehearsal and on stage that has made most of the theatrical managements in Great Britain realize that the Fight Director is a professional necessity, and that trained actors in the stage combat arts are an invaluable asset. We in the U.S. are still fighting the up-hill battle of recognition. We are indeed winning that battle through word of mouth and through the wonderful examples of excellence that you, the present and past members of the SAFD, have untiringly created. As President, my first priority would be to attempt to gain Official recognition of the SAFD by Actors Equity; SAG and AFTRA would follow.

Secondly, I believe we need a permanent training center for the stage combat arts which would operate year-round. An SAFD train-

ing center would allow every member of the Society from east and west, north and south, to have access to teachers, refresher and advanced courses, and a place to experiment with new and innovative techniques, weaponry and staging.

Thirdly, we need to strengthen our regional resources. This country is vast and somewhat expensive to travel across. Theatre companies, as well as SAFD choreographers, teachers and actor/combatants, would benefit by regionalizing access to employment opportunities and workshops. I have been involved for over ten years in developing a link between the areas of Fight Direction and the regional theatre associations beneath the umbrella of the American Theatre Association. However, much more could be done to broaden the regional activities of the SAFD.

I could continue for pages outlining suggestions for change and the challenges facing us. I am also aware that every SAFD member has constructive suggestions for improving our organization.

The Society of American Fight Directors has a very bright future. Our membership is energetic and extremely competent. I was an original member of the SAFD and I have a personal commitment to our organization's health. I also share a certain joy in having worked these past years towards its growth. I believe that I perceive our strengths and weaknesses quite clearly. So I ask you, all of the membership, for the opportunity to serve as President of the Society of American Fight Directors for the next two years. We are entering another significant cycle of change, and together we may welcome the challenges.

Joseph Martinez



JOSEPH MARTINEZ has been a professional stage fight choreographer for over ten years having staged fights throughout the United States, London, Paris and Holland. He is an expert in hand-to-hand stage fighting and in the use of weaponry for the Medieval, Renaissance, Elizabethan and Restoration theatrical eras. Joseph is a graduate of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, London, England. He has been a fight master for the Goodman Theatre, Chicago and for the Virginia Museum Theatre, Richmond. Joseph has taught at the University of Illinois and is currently teaching at William and Lee University in Virginia. Joseph is the author of the book, *Combat Mime*.

Candidates for President

The Society of American Fight Directors is a national organization modeled on the British Society, but unlike our British counterpart we encompass a vastly larger area nationally. As a national organization we are somewhat obscure and we need to be more visible to the entertainment industry. The national organization needs to be divided up regionally into manageable sections with offices in such cities as Chicago, Los Angeles and New York. Each region should have a regional head which would allow the entertainment industry easy access to choreographers, actor/combatants and combat information at the regional level. As a national society we need to make directors aware of our organization and the actors aware of the availability of training in stage combat. We should be advertising in the trade papers and establishing a hot line so that those in need of information, choreographers, stage combatants, guest artists, equipment and safety would have easy access to that information.

At the present we are deeply into the educational market, and the national stage combat workshop and certification program are of tremendous importance and should continue. But there is a need in the organization to branch out into television and the film industry. We are basically a stunt organization and as such unions are reticent to officially affiliate with stunts or action groups because of the liability involved in the case of an injury. If we take a hard look at the Society we will see that we are mostly into swords, acrobatics and gymnastics. Possibly we should be diversifying our skills.

Our best avenue of approach to the industry is to develop strong ties with producers, networks and theatres and to diversify our skills, allowing the industry to become familiar with our work through advertisements in the trade papers, public appearances and accessible regional heads.

It is an honor to be asked to be a Presidential candidate of the Society of American Fight Directors, and I look forward to leading the Society into the future.

J. Allen Suddeth



J. ALLEN SUDDETH has been a Fight Master in the Society for many years, gaining this status in 1980 and holds a recommended certificate from the Society of British Fight Directors. He received his most important fight training under Patrick Crean at Ohio University. Since then he has lived and worked in New York where he teaches in a private studio and guest lectures in colleges and universities in the northeast and midwest. He has choreographed fights for both on and off Broadway, for Shakespeare Festivals and regional theatres. Allen is the fight coordinator for ABC's *One Life to Live* and CBS's *The Guiding Light*. He has jobbed in for work on *Texas, Another World*,

Search for Tomorrow and *As The World Turns*. He was recently on the AFTRA Stunt Committee negotiating the new contract and fees for fighters and stunt people for daytime TV. Under this new contract fight directors will be covered for the first time by AFTRA.

I can make no great promises but as Vice President I would like to work for more visibility for the Society. I will be traveling in Europe for six months next year and would work for stronger connections with our European counterparts.

I am frustrated by the decision making process within the Society and feel that structurally we need more input from the members. I still dream of more visibility from the Associates both within and outside the structure of the Society.

I would push for higher quality in the membership requirements and in the certification process. We definitely need some quality control and need to get rid of the name "certification."

As interim Vice President I see the need to coordinate the application process for change in status and the need to streamline the whole procedure. During the past four years I have instructed one to two groups each year for certification and have traveled and adjudicated for the Society. The members need to have direct communication with the Fight Masters in the Society and I would continue to work to keep the lines of communication open within the Society and our organization highly visible.

John Robert Beardsley



JOHN ROBERT BEARDSLEY has been a teacher of stage combat at the Drama Studio of London at Berkeley for five years and has recently served as Associate Director. For five years J.R. has been an armorer, designer and representative for American Fencers Supply Company in San Francisco. He has co-produced two fight shows, *A Case of Raplers* and *Swordplay* and has done workshops and choreographed for colleges and universities as well as for the San Francisco Opera, ACT, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the American Theatre Association and the American College Theatre Festival. J.R. is currently actor in residence at the Pacific Conservatory of Performing Arts.

Candidates for Vice-President

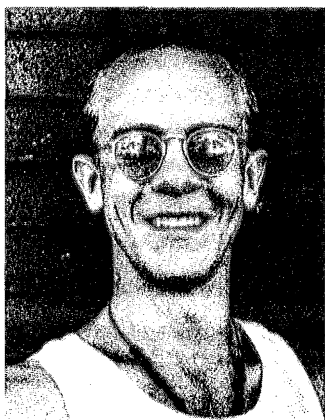
Having just been granted Fight Master status by the Society, let me first say thank you to the Fight Masters for their training and support over the years and greetings to the membership at large. I would like to take this opportunity to assure you all that I consider my new position a great honor and I will do everything in my power to uphold the ideals of the SAFD in every respect.

Assisting for the third time at the National Workshop, I was once again reminded of the high quality and superior abilities of our Fight Masters and the Society itself. I am both awed and proud to be the newest Fight Master; I am also reminded that I have my work cut out for me and I am most anxious to get started.

From what I can gather, the duties of the Vice President of the Society are varied and, I think, could stand to be more clearly defined. It is for this reason that I propose to do the following if elected. First, I would make myself available to the President to aid him in handling the volumes of paperwork that his office involves. This would hopefully enable him to concentrate on other presidential duties, particularly public relations with groups such as Actors Equity, SAG, AFTRA and theatres and training programs across the country. I would act as a sounding board for the membership at large, handling anything from suggestions to problems and grievances. I see the Vice President as a liaison between the President and the officers and the membership. In short, I would help to open and increase the lines of communication within the Society.

Second, I would concentrate energies on the Associate members and/or members involved in certification and workshop instruction. I feel that there is a need for more direct communication between instructors and the adjudicators. This would serve to let the instructors know better what is expected of them as teachers of stage combat sanctioned by the Society and perhaps also would help to further standardize the certification process. I see a strong need for further standardization and formalization of the testing process. Things such as a minimum and maximum length of time spent working on the test fights as well as on the length of the fights themselves are desperately needed. We must in some way institute more quality control measures into the certification process. If we are to command the respect as stage fighters and fight directors that we deserve we must earn it by increasing the quality in every respect among both existing and future members. This can only be done through agreement by

Drew Fracher



Ohio University, teaching movement and stage combat.

DREW FRACHER began his studies in stage fighting while an acting major at Virginia Commonwealth University where he studied under and assisted Joseph Martinez. Drew continued his studies at Western Illinois University with Martinez where he began to work as a choreographer. Since graduation Drew has been working as an actor for various theatres and touring companies throughout the southeast. In 1983 he studied with Paddy Crean and began conducting workshops and classes at many universities across the country. He has been the resident Fight Director at *The Legend of Daniel Boone* and *Lincoln* and is presently a visiting guest artist on the staff at

POINTS OF INTEREST

CERTIFICATION

DRAMA STUDIO OF LONDON AT BERKELEY

It was my pleasure to co-adjudicate with K.C. Stetson the certification fights at the Drama Studio of London at Berkeley on June 14th for seven of J.R. Beardsley's students. All of the scenes were well acted and showed a wonderful, if sometimes (in fact most of the time!) bizarre sense of humour. The weapons work was technically correct and safely executed and in one scene it was particularly exciting. Five of the seven students passed and one was recommended. The scenes presented were *Cyborg* (a hilarious send up of *Blade Runner*), *Midnight Snack* in which a vampire in black tights and a leather jacket assaults a pajama clad, little girl (some real child abuse), and *Irish Coffee* (a twisted tale of leather clad siblings in a real love-hate relationship). All of the students worked very hard as the fights were quite extensive. The audience was small but very vocal and a good time was had by all. May I add that it was a pleasure to work with K.C. Stetson. K.C.'s criticisms and encouragements to the students on their work were clear and well presented. Well done K.C. and J.R. and special thanks to Louis Lotorto for coming back to the Drama Studio after getting his recommendation earlier this year and giving Jan Bryant the fight of her life.

526 Tracy Studerus	529 Brian Terrell
527 Kathy Fredricks	530 David Walter
528 Jan Bryant	

Instructor: J.R. Beardsley
Adjudicators:
Christopher Villa
K.C. Stetson

CERTIFICATION

University of California at Irvine

It was a small turn out for this certification test but since it was the first at Irvine, I hope it will better supported in the future. I also thought the space got in the way since all the fights were performed outside on the grass—and not a very flat surface at that—which made the fights more difficult than they needed to be and also tended to spread the fights out too far, making the stage the size of a small landing field for B-52 bombers. Hey, these kids pay good money for actor training. Let's give them a stage! Chris Villa did a fine job of training these students in the time allotted to him. None of the students stood out as great fighters but all of them were right on target and knew what they were doing. They all passed.

There was only one scene that stood out in my mind and it was a parody on Clint Eastwood entitled "Dirty Harry Meets the Man with No Name," in which Clint fought himself in two time periods. I felt the weakest link in all these fights was the development of both the scenes and the fights. The sense of reality was lost because the actors did not connect the acting with the fights.

497 Drew Scott	500 Bernardo Rosa Jr.
498 Carla Sublett	501 Otto Joseph Coelho III
499 Timothy Bradshaw Yates	

Instructor: Christopher Villa
Adjudicator: John Robert Beardsley

CERTIFICATION Rutger's University

On May 5th, students at Rutgers University took the certification test. Twelve of the twenty three students taking the test passed. The instructor was Rick Sordelet. Many of the students who did not receive their certificates were MFA directing candidates. In some of these cases, they opted to test even though they knew they would be borderline pass/fail cases. But the "experience" of performing their fight before an adjudicator was considered by the students and instructor to be a valid one. I do agree with this thought, to an extent. Fortunately there were enough students meriting certificates to financially justify the cost of bringing in an adjudicator. But for those instructors who teach a smaller number of students, *make sure your students are ready for the test*. Inform them of the meaning and value of the fight test so they undertake this process with a fuller understanding of what they will gain from the experience.

I strongly suggest that this instructor seek out more stage combat training before teaching another class leading up to certification. Like the fights that were prepared for the certification test of the previous year, May '84, I still saw some evidence of choreography that was dangerous and contrived. Fencing measure was often close, there was a lack of point work on rapier and dagger, and an overabundance of tension on the blade was in effect.

Below is the list of names of those students who received their certificates. Worthy of mention are Jordan Baker and Michael Gilpin who demonstrated an exceptional ability in their acting of the fight. I encourage them to test again with hopes of receiving a recommendation.

485 Jordan Baker	491 Jo Twiss
486 Michael Gilpin	492 Valerie Leonard
487 Tom Marion	493 Jon Cavaluzzo
488 Bruce Barton	494 Steven Reisberg
489 Tonia Rowe	495 Marshall Jones
490 Patti Pelican	496 Joe Barbarino

Instructor: Rick Sordelet
Adjudicator: David Leong

RESULTS OF CERTIFICATION: Illinois State University

John Sipes, Assistant Professor of Theatre at Illinois State University had fourteen of his students adjudicated on Sunday, May 5th. Of the fourteen taking the test, ten students passed. This was the fourth adjudication conducted by me in one week and the results of these tests inspired me to write the article "Helpful hints to instructors..."

Any criticism I had was in the realm of acting the fights. I also believe that some students need more rehearsal time. Sloppy footwork and bladework, out of control disarms and unnecessary kicking of weapons were characteristic of these under rehearsed fights. I congratulate John for his first effort in preparing his students for the fight test.

The following students received their certificates:

475 Rengin Altay	480 Brad Miller
476 Renee Reeves	481 Paul Anderson
477 Margie Barrett	482 Job O'Guinn
478 Mary Hager	483 Sean Masterson
479 Guy Mount	484 Bob Petkoff

Instructor: John Sipes
Adjudicator: David Leong

CERTIFICATION

University of Washington

This was the first time seeing David Boushey in his habitat of Seattle and I am happy to report that the combat and acting at both the University of Washington and the Cornish Institute were strong. There was a great turnout for the "prize fights" and the support of the faculty and students made it a good time for all of us that were involved.

David was assisted by Jane Ridley at the University of Washington. Everyone passed and although no one was recommended there were some scenes which were close to a stage performance in this group. We must remember that safety always comes first but to gain the reality of a fight we need a believable speed and levels to make the fight truly exciting. Staging a fight takes more rehearsal time than an acting scene. The flow of the fight needs time for the audience to know what is coming next. The element of surprise is a strong factor in creating a good fight.

The scene which stood out in my mind for creativity was a final screen test for *Captain Blood* in which the two assistants (Dede Corvinus and Linda Esmond), while going over the moves of the fight, ended up "trashing" each other in the name of Flynn and Fairbanks. The best fight was a cutting of Faust by John Morgan and Ray Chapman. They made nice use of levels and added nice flips into their work. Although their sword work and staff technique were the best in the group, they lacked the polish needed to really "wow" the audience. I strongly suggest to them, and others who are interested in being truly successful combatants, that they take the test again. Special thanks to Bob McDougal for stepping in and helping on a fight at the last moment. It was also good to see Craig Turner and Tony Soper who came to give support to the people being tested.

502 Dede Corvinus	508 Tim Loughrin
503 Linda Marie Esmond	509 Joe McNally
504 Becca Rauscher	510 Mike Skehen
505 Jack Young	511 John Morgan
506 Dee Dee Lamar	512 Ray Chapman
507 Jack Cirillo	

Instructor: David Boushey
Adjudicator: John Robert Beardsley

CERTIFICATION

Cornish Institute

The group at the Cornish Institute had a great selection of scenes with some really creative use of sex and violence. Two were recommended in this group. Justin Karella and Tracy Hinkson were both excellent in their use of weapons and created a real sense of danger while still maintaining a strong through line in their action of the scene. We must all strive for this excellence in our work, even at the student level. It was obvious that they put in a great deal of time perfecting their moves and technique. Unfortunately, I also had to fail three people in this group, and I am sorry to say they were all women. There is no reason for this to have happened. In most cases it is harder and a greater stretch for women to find that reality of danger but it is attainable. In most cases it means more release and trusting of yourself and your partner and then finally just pulling the plug and going for it. On the same note there were some good female contenders and some real creative work in this group. Remember the choice of your scene can help or hinder your work. Don't let the dialogue get in your way but make it work for you just as your movement should. The movement should add to the scene and should not be just a filler.

Good work David and Bob and all the people who took the test. Remember, you do not fail. If you do have the desire

to do swordwork it is a long process of learning. You don't acquire the skills in one week. It takes years to become an artist in anything and then you realize you are just beginning. Keep working if you want it and you can attain it!

513 Kevin McCauley	520 Kassia Napiecinski
514 John Blunt	521 Peggy Mainer
515 Lynna Hopwood	522 David Zeller-Ford
516 Susan Carr	523 Gary Shubert
517 Justin Karella (Rec)	524 John Merner
518 Tracy Hinkson (Rec)	525 Deedra Ricketts
519 Mark Sticklin	

Instructor: David Boushey
Assistant: Bob McDougal
Adjudicator: John Robert Beardsley

RESULTS OF CERTIFICATION: University of Michigan

On April 29th, nine MFA students at the University of Michigan took the certification test. All students, taught by Erik Fredricksen, passed with one receiving a recommendation. Some of the characters grew out of mask work that was taught earlier in the semester by Libby Appel (California Institute of the Arts). The choice to play these characters (men played women and women played men) was certainly a justified and often inventive one but occasionally the choice prohibited the actor from demonstrating his or her full potential as a combatant. These role reversals were not done for comic effect whereby the man or woman sheds one's costume to reveal his true identity. These were straightforward, honest and convincing characterizations. The acting was solid but everyone should keep in mind that the choice of character should not minimize one's potential.

Ivan Splichal (recommendation) should be praised for his incredible body commitment, control and awareness of tension-relaxation. He displayed a special sense of fluidity and control that can rarely be taught. I'm sure a successful career lies ahead for this young man. Maggie Lally and Tim Hopper also displayed a solid understanding of movement definition and clarity that one needs for stage combat. More rehearsal and performance experience could put them within immediate reach of a recommendation.

Everyone else seemed very well trained in safety and technique even though there were tentative moments. Some started a bit faster due to their nervous energy. My congratulations to Erik Fredricksen for the fine job on preparing them for certification. The University of Michigan's Department of Theatre will sorely miss his excellent work. The following students received their certificates:

446 Jess Schneider	451 Maggie Lally
447 Steve Smith	452 Timothy Hopper
448 Marcy McGuigan	453 Gai Crawford
449 Margaret Smith	454 Ivan Splichal (Rec.)
450 Dick Smidt	

Instructor: Erik Fredricksen
Adjudicator: David Leong

RESULTS OF CERTIFICATION: University of Illinois

On May 1st, twenty students taught by Robin McFarquhar were adjudicated at the University of Illinois Krannert Fine Arts Center. I'm pleased to say that all of them passed, four received recommendations, with several others coming very close to this.

Before listing the students names I would like to applaud Robin for the thoroughness of his teaching. It was clear from

the start that these students were prepared both physically and emotionally for the test. If they did experience a case of "nerves" they certainly disguised it well. The scene work was solid, the fight technique very clean and the overall attitude highly professional. Without hesitation I feel safe to say that this group of students was the most prepared of any that I've adjudicated to date. One small suggestion for Robin: I encourage him to continue to develop his point work on rapier and dagger and incorporate this into the fight choreography. Congratulations to Robin and his students for a job well done.

The list of students:

455 Milissa Pacelli (Rec)	466 Michael Bertish (Rec)
456 Rick Barrows (Rec)	467 Brad Hoffman
457 Sheri Simpson	468 Mary Maier
458 Marilyn Rudnick	469 Michael Stevenson
459 Michael Stevenson	470 Christina Kirk
460 David Addis	471 Stacy Fisher
461 Tim Veach	472 Cindy Hartman
462 Tim Ortmann	473 Bill Mondy
463 Amy Zelh	474 Joe Dempsey
464 Michael Simon	
465 Suzanna Fleck (Rec)	

Instructor: Robin McFarquhar
Adjudicator: David Leong

NEW MEMBERS

Rod Casteel (Friend)
106 Lynnbrook
Eugene, Oregon 97404

Michael Cantrell (Affiliate)
344 Milledge Circle
Athens, GA 30606

Lisa Anne Conner (Friend)
2303 Hull Ct. G17
Tampa, Florida 33612

Tom Dyer (Affiliate)
2912 E. St. Louis Ave.
Las Vegas, NV 89104

Michael Ellison (Affiliate)
210 Briargate Road #K33
Mankato, MN 56001

David McCarl (Affiliate)
1280 Elizabeth
Denver, CO 80206

Tony Miller (Affiliate)
1209 Pennsylvania #3
Denver, CO 80203

John E. Morgan (Affiliate)
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Seattle, WA 98105

Melissa Pacelli (Affiliate)
8168 So. Kildare
Chicago, Illinois 60652

Kevin Reese (Affiliate)
3221 Benton
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Eric Hagen
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Minneapolis, MN 55404

Rob Hall
6846 Seagull Lane Apt. K
New Orleans, LA 70126

Richard Minor
c/o Dr. George Minor
803 Gilliams Mt. Road
Charlottesville, VA 22901

Sandra Neltner
510 S. University Apt. 22
Carbondale, ILL 62901

Jane Ridley
c/o Dept. of Dramatic Art
University of California
Santa Barbara, California 93106

Robert Scranton
1400 Old Forge Drive #101
Little Rock, Arkansas 72207

Richard Smith
P.O. Box 106
Rocky Hill, NJ 08553

Merideth Taylor
603 E. 14th St.
Bloomington, IN 47401

Katy Winters
1762 First Ave Apt. 5
New York, NY 10128

RICHARD ALVAREZ spent a week in January on the set of George Romero's *Day of the Dead* assisting Stunt Director Taso Stavrakis on a high fall. His company, "Pierrot Productions" produced its annual Action Theatre Festival, featuring Linda Graham and the New Mime Company in May. The black light piece was especially popular. In May Richard spent a weekend at the Scarborough Faire, auditioning talent for his stunt show. While there he was invited to ride in the "Riders of the Golden Age" questing show. This was to test the knight's skills. It was his first experience in riding a draft horse (Belgian). In June he went to Chicago and the King Richard's Faire for a second summer of jousting with the Hanlon-Lees. In August he returned to Texas and began preparations for Pierrot Production's "Musketeeer Stunt Show" to be performed at the Texas Renaissance Festival. This show featured four musketeers and four Cardinal's Guards in Period Costume. It involved high falls, a hanging, a beheading, musket fights and lots of dazzling blade work. All this was done in addition to his regular performances as "Triomphe" at the Texas Faire. In December he will be doing a weekend of Victorian duels at the Dickens Faire. And in between all this he will be producing two videos for cable release with Antares Productions and will be continuing to teach.

J.R. BEARDSLEY will be actor in residence as well as teaching stage combat and choreographing the fights for *Hamlet* at PCPA this fall.

DAVID BOUSHEY finished his summer season by teaching at the National Stage Combat Workshop. He will soon be choreographing *Robin Hood* at the Seattle Children's Theatre as well as *Hamlet* at the University of Washington. His video series *Combat for the Stage and Screen* is being very well received.

TIM and BABS CARRYER recently concluded a tour of the Southeast, performing their two person comedy show which ends with a Noel Coward style court sword fight piece called "Combat Breakfast." They performed at the N.Y.C. Clown-Theatre Festival in June and at Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors Festival on Labor Day. Tim and Babs also choreographed *Hamlet* at Bucknell University in Pennsylvania.

A. THOMAS CAVANO is preparing to take a leave of absence from his position as Theatre Arts Department Chairperson at the Alabama School of Fine Arts, where he has been teaching stage combat as well as acting and speech for six years. Before leaving, he choreographed a rapier-and-salami fight for the climax of Mollere's *The Sicilian*, and a comic battle for the poison prevention film *Count Perilous Poison Plagues a Careless Kitchen*, between "Andy Antidote" and "Count Perilous Poison." The film is being distributed internationally by the largest educational film distribution company in the United States, the Aultschel Group of Evanston, Illinois. Thomas performed with the improv theatre group "Given Circumstance" in night clubs and special performances. Included in the performances were hand-to-hand, rapier-and-dagger, and court sword routines learned at the National Stage Combat Workshop '83, as choreographed by David Leong, Joseph Martinez and Paddy Crean, along with original choreography worked into the sketches. The above projects included the efforts of SAFD members Larry Bryan and/or (depending upon the time of year) Brad Waters. Thomas choreographed and performed a rapier-and-dagger duel for

"A Madrigal Feaste" at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, for which he served as the Master of the King's Ceremonies. He also taught stage combat master classes at the U.A.B. Department of Theatre and Dance. He will be attending Florida State University as an MFA candidate in Directing and will be teaching creative improvisation on an assistantship there.

DREW FRACHER assisted at the National Workshop in Cedar City, Utah where he and his partner Doug Mumaw remained for three more weeks of performing fight scenes for the Green Show of the Utah Shakespearean Festival. Afterwards he traveled to Flathead Lake, Montana to conduct workshops at a theatre camp sponsored by the Missoula Children's Theatre. In November Drew will join the Nebraska Theatre Caravan's east coast company for a tour of *A Christmas Carol*, acting in the production. Beginning in January, Drew will return to Ohio University as a visiting guest artist to teach stage movement and conduct certification classes during the Winter Quarter. He will also be playing Eddie in a production of *Fool For Love* while at Ohio University.

DAVID LEONG traveled twenty thousand miles around the United States in four months directing fight scenes, conducting workshops and adjudicating fight tests. His fight credits during May, June and July included *Hamlet* and *Man of La Mancha* at the Champlain Shakespearean Festival and *Hatfields and McCoy's*, *Honey In the Rock* and *Oklahoma* at Theatre West Virginia. Workshops included Southwestern University and the National Fight Workshop and adjudications were conducted at Rutgers University, University of Michigan, University of Illinois, Illinois State University and at the outdoor drama the *Legend of Daniel Boone*. In between jobs David received a grant to study point work with Patrick Crean. At the ATA convention in August, David conducted a workshop on "Acting Stage Fights" with colleagues Joseph Martinez and Mr. Crean. This fall David will direct *Of Mice and Men* at Northern Kentucky University.

PETER MOORE recently choreographed the fight scene for the world premiere of Garson Kanin's *Time and Chance* at the Cricket Theatre in Minneapolis. This fall he will play Romeo at the Meadowbrook Theatre in Detroit. He continues to serve as producing director for the New Classic Theatre now entering its third equity season in Minneapolis.

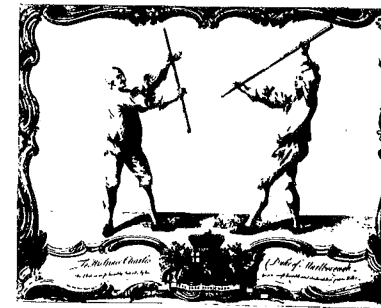
RICHARD RAETHER spent the summer jousting at the New York Renaissance Festival and playing Tybalt and being Fight Captain for their production of *Romeo and Juliet*. Richard recently choreographed the fight between the vacuum salesman and his assistant in Ralph Tate's *Beyond Your Command* at the White Barn. Richard also choreographed *King Lear* for the Riverside Shakespeare Company and may be teaching there in the fall.

JANE RIDLEY is now at the University of California, Santa Barbara teaching acting and movement as well as directing a show each year.

ROBERT SCRANTON has resigned his position as lecturer in Fencing and Stage Combat at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and is currently Maitre d'Armes at the BushinKai Dojo in Little Rock, where he teaches competitive fencing and stage combat. In August Robert will be one of two coaches at the Southeast U.S.F.A. Jr. Training Camp in Atlanta, Georgia.

J. ALLEN SUDDETH spent the summer mostly in New York, with a brief jaunt to Michigan to stage a duel in the John Phillip Sousa musical *El Capitan*. Allen continues his duties as fight coordinator for *One Life to Live* and *The Guiding Light*. In September, he will join the group "Murder to Go" on a custom mystery tour aboard the Q.E. II for a week of mayhem and murder en route to the Bahamas.

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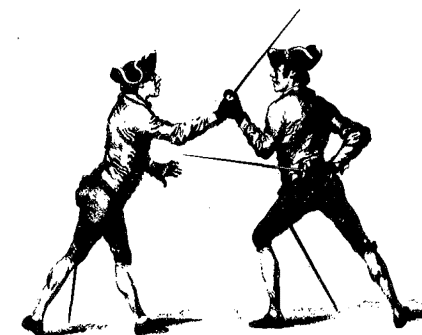
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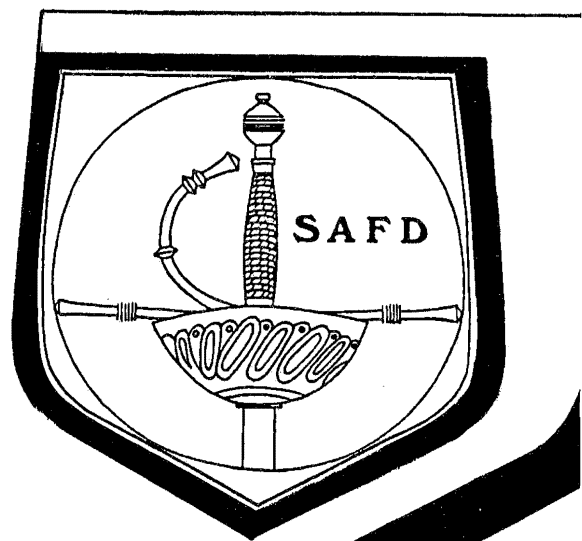
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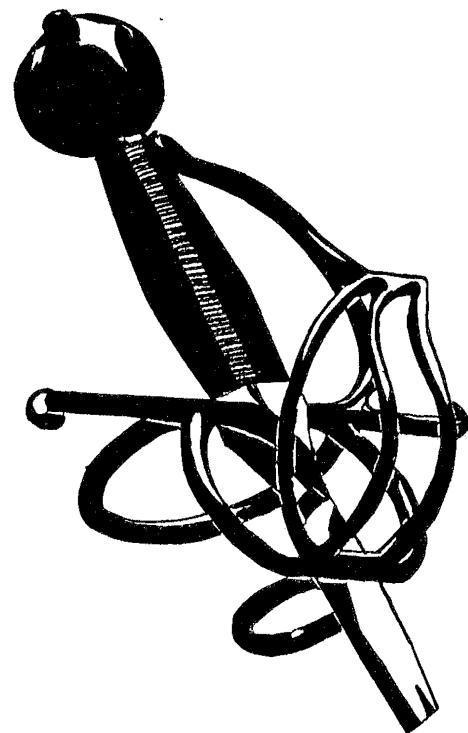
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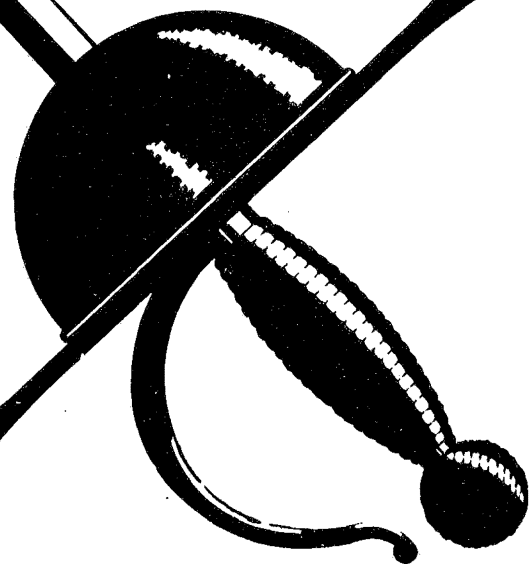
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