

4 PAGE
PULL OUT

NORWICH CASTLE

THE PEOPLE'S PALACE



Norwich Castle
Museum & Art Gallery



rites of passage

EDITION THREE



STARTING AFRESH

This is the third of our special pull-outs produced in partnership with the Norfolk Museums Service. Whilst the lock-down prevents you from visiting Norwich Castle, the museum's team are bringing history to you, through the pages of this newspaper.

For each pull out, we are featuring an aspect of medieval life. This week our theme is rite of passage: a ceremony marking an individual leaving one group to join another.

The Castle has seen many such occasions, although few as dramatic as a wedding in 1075, when the groom, Ralph Guader Earl of Norfolk, plotted a rebellion against William the Conqueror. William heard of the plot and had Norwich Castle besieged whilst Ralph was abroad raising an army. Ralph's wife Emma defended the castle for three months until she was granted safe-conduct out of England – phew! Read on for more entertaining insights into medieval rites of passage.



HOW TO BECOME A KNIGHT

Knights are iconic to the Middle Ages; whether they are shining examples of chivalry and justice or violent bullies oppressing the peasantry. But how did someone actually become a knight?

The long path to knighthood began at the age of seven when a knight-to-be would be sent off by their parents to work in the household of a knight as a page. A page was responsible for performing tasks such as cleaning clothes, carrying messages and serving meals. The page was expected to show good manners and would be taught how to fight with wooden swords, ride a horse and use a lance.

At the age of fifteen, the page would become a squire. Squires would have to look after the knight's horses, clean the armour and weapons, help the knight put their armour on, and sometimes they would even accompany a knight onto the battlefield! To make sure they were battle-ready, squires would train with real weapons and would stay fit and healthy by perfecting their skills. After five or six years of service as a squire, and with proven bravery in combat, a squire would finally get the title of 'knight' at a dubbing ceremony.

To prepare for the dubbing ceremony the squire would take a long bath, making sure they were completely clean, then they would pray at church all night. The following day, the squire would get dressed in white to signify their purity, over which a red robe would be worn to signify their readiness to be wounded. Finally a black robe would be worn to symbolise a readiness to die for the King or Queen.



A squire receiving spurs and a sword during a knighting ceremony (Bodmer 147 Estoire Del Graal – Fondation Martin Bodmer)

The squire would then have to recite an oath of honour, promising they would always do right and protect those who couldn't protect themselves. Then they would be presented with a sword and knight's spurs to wear before finally taking a knee to allow a knight, lord, or King to 'dub' them by tapping them on each shoulder with a sword. When the squire stood up their journey to knighthood was complete.

As a knight, they were now responsible for maintaining the peace, fighting in wars, and training the next generation of pages and squires to become knights themselves.

MORE THAN JUST SWORDPLAY

Here's the incredible Thorpe Falchion which is 700 years old! Dating all the way back to 1320, the Thorpe Falchion was found in the River Yare near Thorpe St Andrew, Norfolk, in 1833.

Despite being submerged for centuries, the sword didn't rust away as it was protected by the mud of the river. Being encased in mud helped to stop the oxidation process from rusting the sword away to nothing.

As armour became more commonplace on the battlefields of the Middle Ages, weapons needed to become more multipurpose. Falchions are a great example of how swords evolved to meet these challenges.

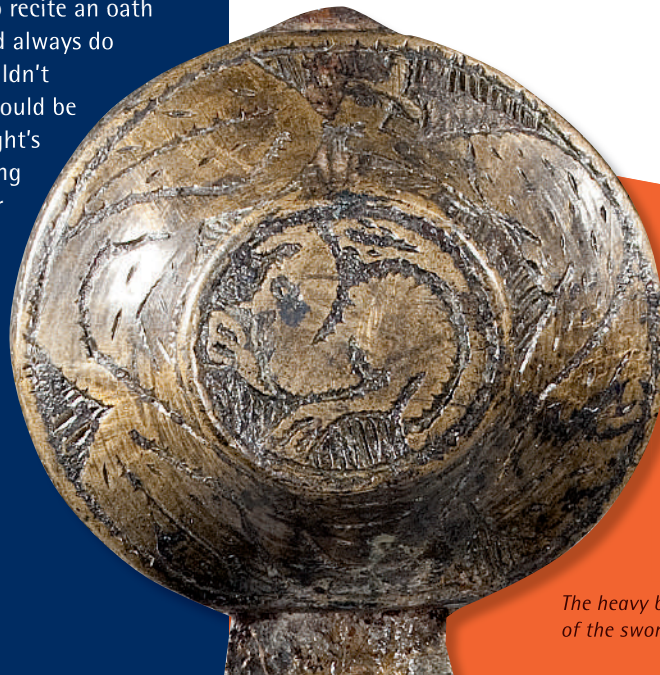
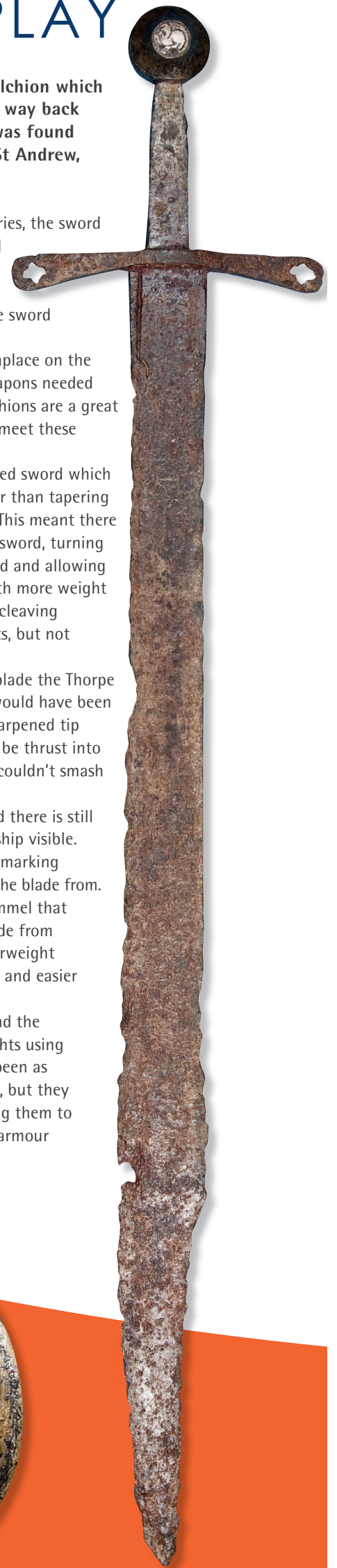
A falchion is a type of single-edged sword which broadens out towards the tip, rather than tapering off to a point like most swords do. This meant there was more weight at the end of the sword, turning the falchion into a sword-axe hybrid and allowing its wielder to swing the weapon with more weight behind each cut. It was perfect for cleaving through lightly armoured opponents, but not ideal against armour.

However, towards the tip of the blade the Thorpe Falchion's back edge narrows and would have been sharpened to create a point. The sharpened tip would have allowed the weapon to be thrust into gaps of an opponent's armour if it couldn't smash its way through.

Though the sword is 700 years old there is still an incredible amount of craftsmanship visible. Above the crossguard is an elegant marking showing where to start sharpening the blade from.

The sword also has a detailed pommel that depicts strange monsters and is made from heavy brass, which acts as a counterweight to the tip, making it more balanced and easier to swing and control.

Medieval manuscripts from around the time depict both peasants and knights using falchions. They might not all have been as well-crafted as the Thorpe Falchion, but they applied the same principles, allowing them to overcome or bypass an opponent's armour with ruthless efficiency.



The heavy brass pommel still shows the craftsmanship of the sword and depicts strange monsters

WHAT'S

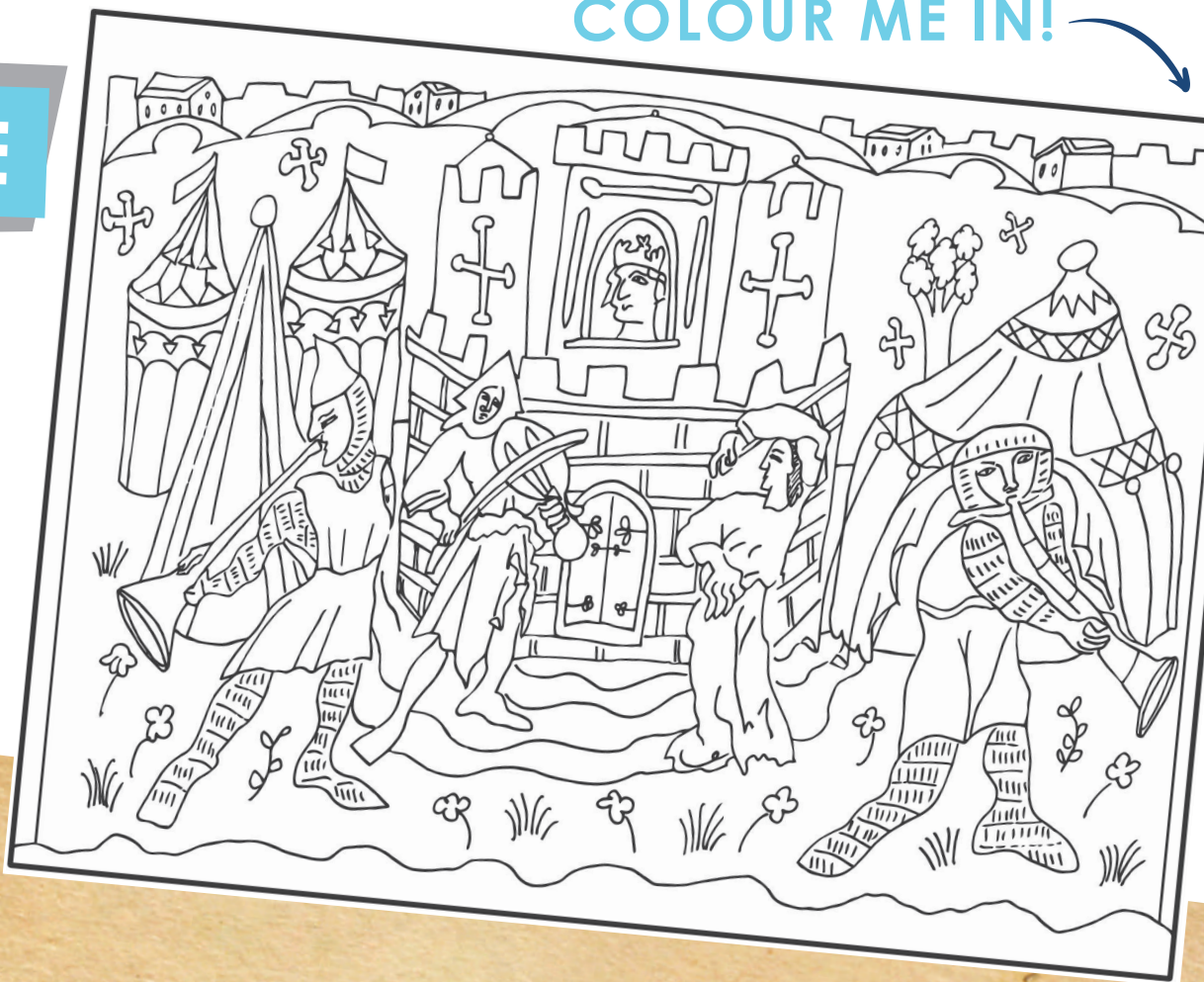
NAME

COLOUR ME IN!

An important rite of passage in the middle ages was learning a skill and becoming a professional. To become a professional you would be expected to work as an apprentice for years until you perfected all the skills needed to do the job by yourself. Your surname might relate to the job that one of your medieval ancestors used to do.

MATCH THE SURNAMES TO THE MEDIEVAL JOBS

- | | |
|-----------|-----------------------------|
| PAGE | MADE CARTS AND WAGONS |
| SQUIRE | WEAVED CLOTH |
| WEAVER | FORGED METAL |
| ARKWRIGHT | MADE CHEESE |
| WAINRIGHT | MADE ARROWS |
| SMITH | BUILT THINGS OUT OF WOOD |
| CARPENTER | SERVED A KNIGHT |
| COOPER | PREPARED A KNIGHT'S WEAPONS |
| FLETCHER | CARVED STONE |
| MASON | MADE BARRELS |
| SHEPHERD | MADE CHESTS |
| DYER | THATCHED ROOFS |
| GODDARD | HERDED SHEEP |
| SCRIVER | DYED CLOTH |
| BAKER | HERDED GOATS |
| MARSHALL | WROTE BOOKS |
| THATCHER | BAKED BREAD |
| CHEESMAN | GUARDED AND COMMANDED |



PUTTING PEN TO PAPER

Scribes were professional writers, employed to write the text of important documents and beautiful books. Could you be a medieval scribe? Have a go at writing in a medieval style by copying the letters in the alphabet below.

WORD SEARCH

FIND THE 18 MEDIEVAL WORDS

- | | | |
|------------|-----------|------------|
| BIRTH | CEREMONY | COMMUNITY |
| MARRIAGE | KNIGHT | GRADUATION |
| APPRENTICE | MASTER | SOCIETY |
| ARTISAN | BAPTISM | RELIGION |
| INITIATION | GARMENTS | PILGRIMAGE |
| BURIAL | TRADITION | SCRIBE |

Y A S C E R E M O N Y F T O Q
 F M R R E L I G I O N S C I Y
 N A P I A A C Q F I U M V E E
 C R G I J P J J K W G A G E B
 O R I R L X P A R T I S A N U
 M I B N A G W R S Y I T D O R
 M A A G I D R L E W U E F X I
 U G P A X T U I S N I R H S A
 N E T R K S I A M N T J E O L
 I B I M N C J A T A D I T C N
 T I S E I R L D T I G X C I Q
 Y R M N G I X R T I O E H E I
 O T K T H B H T S O O N S T P
 V H R S T E Z E J Q B N H Y G
 T R A D I T I O N Q I I Y C Q

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
 nopqrstuvwxyz

The letters might look complicated but each one is simply made up of lots of little strokes that come together to create angular letters. Drawing some lines with a pencil and ruler on your paper before you begin will help you to keep the letters the same size.

Upper case letters are more ornate and have added kicks and flicks.

ABCDEFGHIJKLM
 NOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Once you have practised the alphabet why not try writing out your name? You could add colour and decoration to the first letter as they would have done in medieval manuscripts.

CHECK OUT OUR INSTAGRAM PAGE @NORWICHCASTLE

GET INVOLVED

WE'D LOVE TO SEE YOUR MEDIEVAL MAKES! Post your medieval writing or colouring on Twitter and Instagram using #NCPeoplesPalace and we'll share our favourites!



FIGHT, PRAY, WORK

Through three medieval objects we explore this week's theme of Rites of Passage and take a look at some of the fascinating artefacts which will be on display in the new medieval gallery.

A major feature of the Royal Palace Reborn project will be a brand new medieval gallery created in partnership with the British Museum: the first British Museum gallery of this period outside London. Over the past three years, curators from Norwich Castle and the British Museum have been working together to identify themes and objects to tell the story of this fascinating period. Around 70 medieval treasures from the British Museum will be displayed alongside the Castle's own rich collections from this period – in total our medieval gallery will display over a thousand objects, ranging in date from the Norman Conquest in the eleventh century to the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the early sixteenth.

The vast display will be organised according to a medieval method of organising society; 'Those who fight' (the upper levels of secular society), 'Those who work' (the lower levels of society) and 'Those who pray' (the clergy and religious – and by extension the devotional life of the period). As this social structure was never clear-cut, we aim to use the objects on display as a lens to explore key themes of the fascinating world of the Middle Ages. Here we have selected three objects that showcase our three themes, while highlighting the complexity and diversity of medieval society.

THOSE WHO FIGHT

This spectacular example of a poleaxe dates from around 1470. A poleaxe was a versatile weapon on the battlefield, combining an axe, a spear and a hammer onto a long shaft to create a fearsome weapon, capable of chopping, thrusting, and smashing its way through opponents. Though the poleaxe handle could be used defensively, historically soldiers who used poleaxes were usually very heavily armoured. Because they're so big they're also pretty unwieldy, which means that when you commit to a swing you need to hope it connects, otherwise you are left open to attack.

THOSE WHO PRAY

Our second object is a Jewish marriage ring. Of course not everyone in the Middle Ages prayed to the Christian God. An important religious minority in medieval Norwich was the Jewish community. This

beautiful ring is decorated with nine gold domes, each embellished with twisted silver wire and beading. The precious metal and the intricate decoration are in line with the symbolism of the ring as an object of value gifted to the bride. Objects like these are very difficult to date as their design – rooted in tradition – changed slowly and little over time.

THOSE WHO WORK

Our third object demonstrates human ingenuity in redeploing materials to make everyday objects. These two lower jaw bones of two different horses have been filed down to create the runners for a child's sledge. The bones are broken at their front ends, which may suggest that the original owner thoroughly enjoyed their toy, at least while it lasted!

The transformed Keep will also include a special space for those who play! A place designed for early years children and their adult care-givers. Here our youngest visitors will take the lead, using their creative imaginations to explore, discover and experience the wonders of the medieval world.

With this in mind, we couldn't resist including this charming detail of a child riding a hobby horse from an object called 'The Buxton Achievement'. This early fifteenth-century painting on linen cloth was intended to communicate the status and power of a Norfolk family. Apart from the family's coat of arms, the painting includes images celebrating the stages of the human life, including this playful fellow. He features in a scene where three figures representing childhood, youth and maturity are accompanied by three allegorical Fates, who weave the thread of life.

We hope that visitors of all ages to the new Keep displays will come away inspired and excited about this colourful and dramatic period in our history.



A Jewish marriage ring



This fearsome poleaxe is just one of the fascinating medieval objects which are available for adoption at www.adoptanobject.co.uk



Runners for a child's sledge made out of horse bone

KEEP IN TOUCH:

museums.norfolk.gov.uk [NorwichCastleMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/NorwichCastleMuseum)
[@NorwichCastle](https://twitter.com/NorwichCastle) [@norwichcastle](https://www.instagram.com/norwichcastle) [#CastleReborn](https://www.facebook.com/NorwichCastleMuseum)



Norwich Castle
Royal Palace Reborn

We gratefully acknowledge the support of

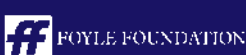


made possible by
National Lottery players



Arts Council
ENGLAND

The British
Museum



Garfield Weston
FOUNDATION



Historic England

NEWANGLIA
LIFE | SUPPORTS THE PEOPLE OF
NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK

Norfolk County Council



The Wolfson*
Foundation



A Plan Insurance, Archant, The Eaton Family, Educational Foundation of Alderman John Norman, Expert Print Management, Friends of Norwich School, The Jeffries Fund, and other funders who wish to remain anonymous