

# Silk Standard Making

Mistress Giliana Attewatyr – amefinch@cableone.net - <http://myweb.cableone.net/amefinch/Giliana/>

## Supplies

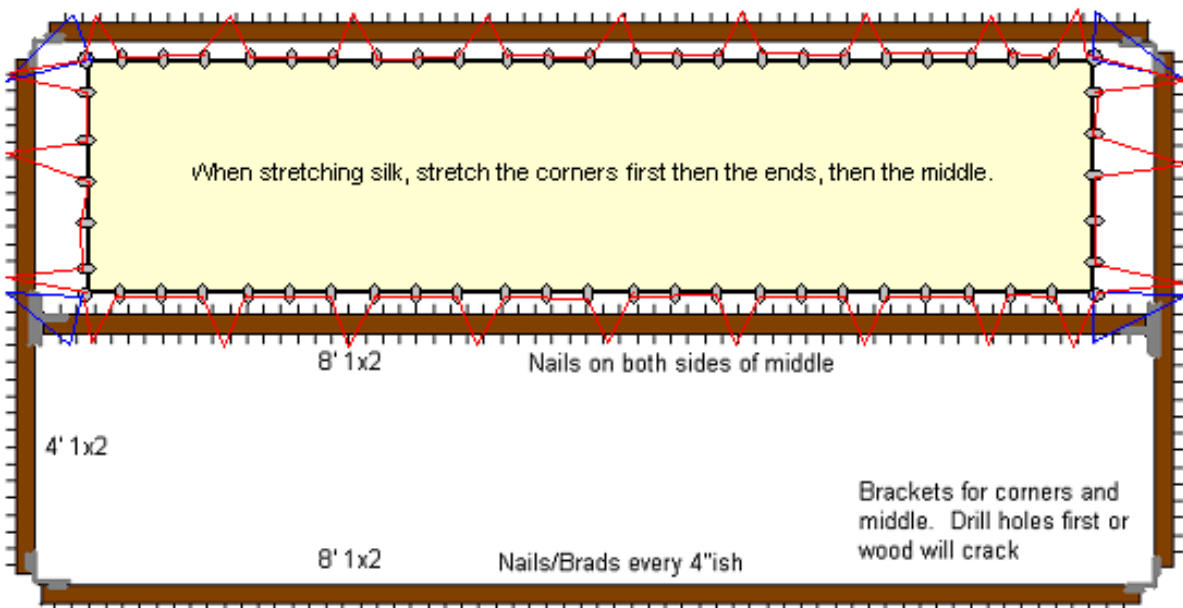
- 8mm silk Habotai scarves 22"x90" (Dharma Trading Company)
- Black Jacquard American Gutta (Dharma Trading Company):
  - Silver is also nice to have on hand.
  - Use the 4 or 8 oz cans. 32 is too unwieldy!
  - Gutta applicator bottles with #7 and/or #9 tips (Dharma Trading Company) The tips can be reused. The bottles will be thrown away
- Dupont silk dyes in various colors (Dharma Trading Company)
  - Mostly primary colors and black
  - Water – For mixing dyes
  - Isopropyl Alcohol – For mixing dyes
- Large roll of craft paper (newsprint paper)
  - For rolling up the silk for steaming
- Latex gloves
  - Your hands dye very well too!

## Tools (that can be re-used)

- Banner Frame – See Below
  - Sawhorses
  - Duct Tape
- Foam brushes
  - Good for medium to very large areas. Foam is the only way to go to paint on the dye fast!
- Small paintbrushes
  - For small areas and fine details
- Pencils
  - For sketching the design on the silk
- Safety Pins
  - 60 medium sized safety pins each
- Beading elastic
  - 5 yard length each
- Rubber bands
  - 4 rubber bands each
- Measuring cups/spoons – Non-food use!
  - For mixing silk dye
- Small Funnel – Non-food use!
  - For getting the &\$\*# gutta into the #|\$@ bottles. I use a funnel for getting fuel into lanterns and pop out the screen filter.
- Steamer pot – Non-food use!
  - Discussed below

## Stretching Frame

To construct the frame, use 4 8foot 1x2 lengths. Cut one in half. Small nails (or brads) are pounded in every 4(ish) inches. Use brackets for corners. The design below allows for a frame where two banners can be worked on at once. When using the frame, it is really best to duct tape it to the saw horses or it will jostle, slip off (and possibly break) at the worst possible moment!



## **Process**

### **Draw on Design**

The first step (after deciding on a design) is to sketch your design onto the silk using pencil. Sketch lightly as it can't be erased (but stray marks will NOT be noticeable when it is flying!)

### **Stretch Banner**

To put the banner on the frame, first put safety pins all along your banner. Space them about every 4ish inches, including in each corner. Keep the pins right at the hem of the scarf or the silk may tear when stretched. Take 5 yards of beading elastic and thread it through all of your safety pins and then tie it **to itself**. (Note, at the end of the project, do **not** cut off this knot. You need the whole length of elastic for next time!) Also put a rubberband on each corner. Work the slack fairly evenly around the scarf.

First stretch out the banner on the frame by hooking the rubberbands on the nails in the corner. Then stretch the elastic around nails on each side of the 4 corners. Then hook every other section of elastic around nails to stretch the whole scarf taut. (You may only be able to stretch every 3<sup>rd</sup> section.)

### **Gutta**

Gutta is a type of resist. It will keep the dye in one section of your design and out of the next one. With it you are tracing the lines on your scarf to create a cartoon outline of your design.

Put the gutta into the applicator bottle (use gloves, a funnel and newspaper under. This gets **messy!**)

Tips:

- All of your lines have to touch thoroughly to keep the dye from spreading. Especially at the edges/hems of the scarf!
- Do not glop on the gutta. It will always remain slightly tacky and the thicker it is the more tacky it will be.
- Gutta lines work as edge seams (infinitely better than fray check!) If you are going to cut your scarf into multiple sections, provide a thicker line (or a double line) so that, when you cut, there is a line for each edge.
- For light detail lines in darkly colored areas, black will not be helpful. Here, silver or clear gutta works well.
- Give the gutta at least 20 minutes to dry enough.. It will still be tacky!

### **Dye the Scarf**

To mix the dye, use non-food measuring spoons or cups and mix 1 part water, 1 part isopropyl alcohol and 2 parts dye.

Tips:

- Work from light to dark colors. That way, if it bleeds through you can fix the gutta and then cover up the mistake with the darker color.
- Use foam brushes for all but the very small areas. Small brushes are good for details.
- You do not need to get your brush right up to the borders. The dye will usually bleed to the edge.
- You need to keep a **wet leading edge** on your painting. This means do not allow a section to dry before you continue painting next to it. If it dries it will look splotchy. Plan your painting accordingly.
- Do NOT apply multiple layers of dye. The fabric can't hold any more dye just because you offer it more. It will just wash out in the rinse process (or in worse places!!!)
- The dye should be dry to the touch before rolling (20ish minutes.)

## Roll

The scarf must be steamed to set the dye. It is important during steaming that the scarf not touch itself or any other scarf or it will bleed like crazy! Use craft paper (or blank newsprint) and roll the scarf up in it. Then flatten the roll into a cinnamon bun shape and secure with tape or a rubber band.

## Steam

Use a NON-FOOD steam pot arrangement shown here. The important thing is that water not be able to drip down onto the rolls! Beyond that, I just do what I've been told (that seems to work!) Add plenty of water so that it won't boil dry, and steam the banner over medium/high heat for an hour. I can often fit 3-4 rolls per pot.

## Wash

I recommend washing your pennant! This removes the excess dye and helps to ensure that your pennant will not be accidentally dying itself, your tent or innocent bystanders! With this you can fly it in the rain!

To wash, set your washer level as low as it will go. Choose cold/cold and select a Short/Delicate wash cycle. Put in a small amount of detergent and your banner(s). When the cycle is done **IMMEDIATELY** remove and hang up to dry.

If I am washing many pennants I also try to separate banners with a lot of white area from those with mostly color to help keep those white areas white!

## Cut/Finish

Once you are steamed and washed, cut off any excess silk or cut apart if you have multiple pieces. You can sew on ribbon for ties as desired! I like to use about 2' of something like a grosgrain ribbon (something not too slick!). To sew it on so that it sandwiches the silk (so the ribbon is attached to more ribbon.. not just thin silk).

For writing, this can be done with some calligraphy markers or sharpie markers at this point. Some folks also like to iron their silk before using.

## Links of Interest

Silk Pennants: <http://hightowercrossbows.com/pennanhowto.htm>

Master Bartholomew's Pennant Making Instructions

Dharma Trading Company: <http://www.dharmatrading.com>

Extant Banners and Flags from the Middle Ages: <http://www.larsdatter.com/banners.htm>

Holy Crud this is a good site!

Bandiere di Borgogna Ugo Pozzati Web Site: <http://www.ugopozzati.it/Bandiere%20Borgogna.htm>

Lots of pictures of examples

Medieval Flags and Banners: <http://donna.hrynkiw.net/sca/flags/>

Atlantian A&S Links: Heraldic Banners & Flags:

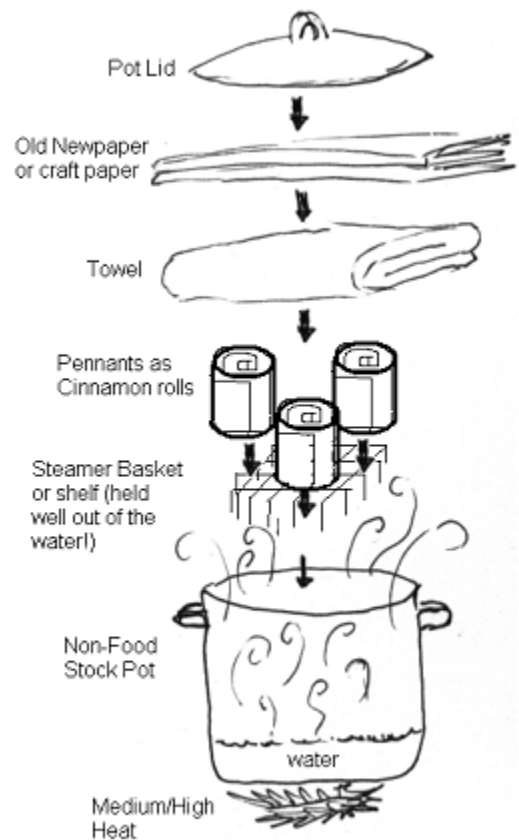
<http://moas.atlantia.sca.org/wsnlinks/index.php?action=displaycat&catid=167>

Early Banner Types: <http://www.housebarra.com/EP/ep02/01banner.html>

Roman and Byzantine styles

Lord Eldred's Armorial Display Class: <http://dragon.azure.tripod.com/UoA/ArmorialDisplay.html>

Turning your arms into a standard



Adapted from Master Bartholomew Hightower's drawing



Sewing ribbon onto silk

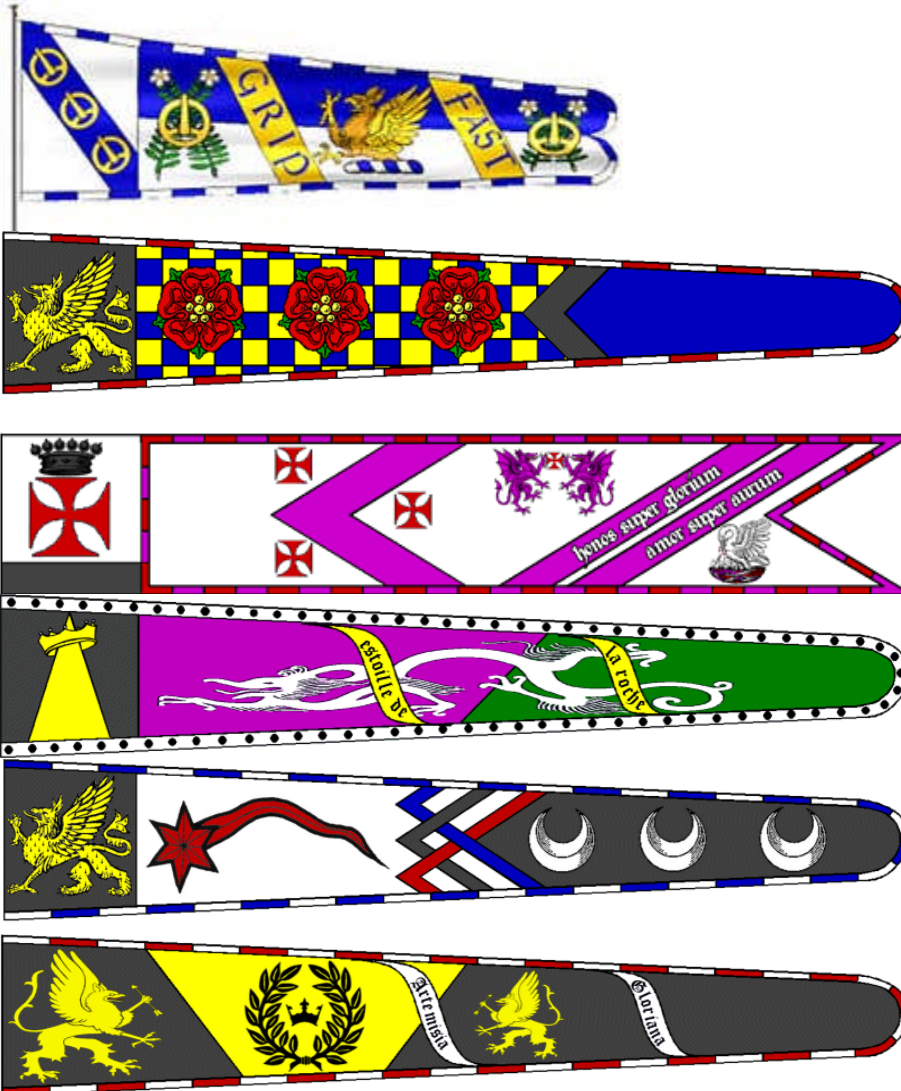
## Standard Design

Your pennant/standard/banner is not your arms. Your arms are very specific as registered with The Heralds. This is a representation of your arms. If you have passed arms then you may choose to take some or all (or none) of the elements. Elements can be rearranged, rotated or repeated. This pennant should still identify you!

Charges you might consider adding to your design:

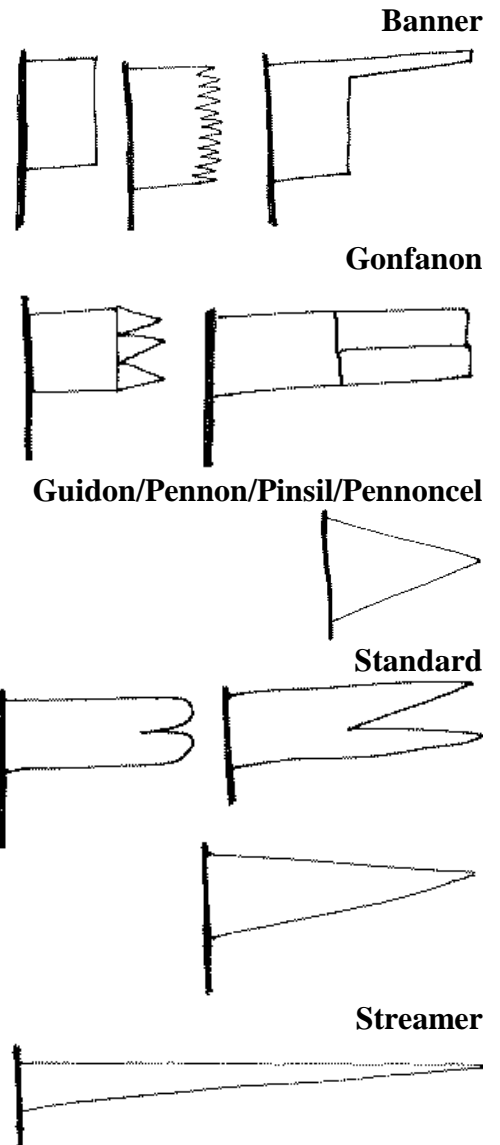
- Elements or partial elements of your device or badge (passed or not)
- Elements or partial elements of your S.O./Pelican/Knight/Laurel's heraldry
- Populace badges from your local group/kingdom are typical in the first section.
- Badges from awards that you have received
- A motto (This can be outlined in gutta/painted in.. or drawn on after with a sharpie!)
- A border (This really helps add some spark!)

### Some Examples



Pictures from Master Bartholomew Hightower's site

### Pennant Shapes



Images from Medieval Flags and Banners