

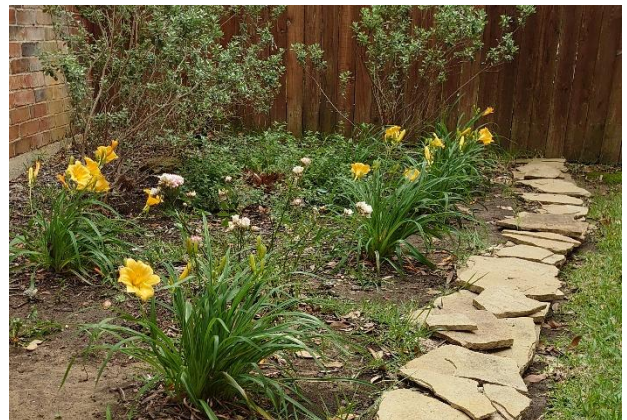


Pamela Taylor

Historical Fiction

After almost a month of heavy tree pollen, we've finally had a nice rain to clean the air and it's possible to breathe again. My neighborhood has lots of oaks, and they seemed to be more prolific pollen producers than ever this year. Even the dogs were sneezing. Imagine walking out on your patio to see your glass-topped table covered in yellow-green powder . . . and cleaning it off so it's nice and shiny . . . and coming back a couple of hours later to find it all yellow-green again. Yes, I decided cleaning was futile and just waited until the trees finished doing their thing 😊

My tulips were terribly confused by the March and April weather that couldn't decide if it was spring, summer, or winter. We actually had a few days in March that the high temps were in the low-90s Fahrenheit. Then we'd get a cold front and the highs would be in the 50s or low-60s for a few days. Then we'd get a stretch of gloriously spring-like temps before we climbed back into the mid-80s. The red tulips popped their green foliage up early in March and made some beautiful blooms. The rest were quite slow to show their heads above ground – two white ones bloomed the first week in April. The rest have slowly come up, but it doesn't look like they're going to bloom. The daylilies, though, are putting on a rather nice show.



I thought it might be fun to mix things up a bit this month, so instead of the usual categories how about a bit of this and that?

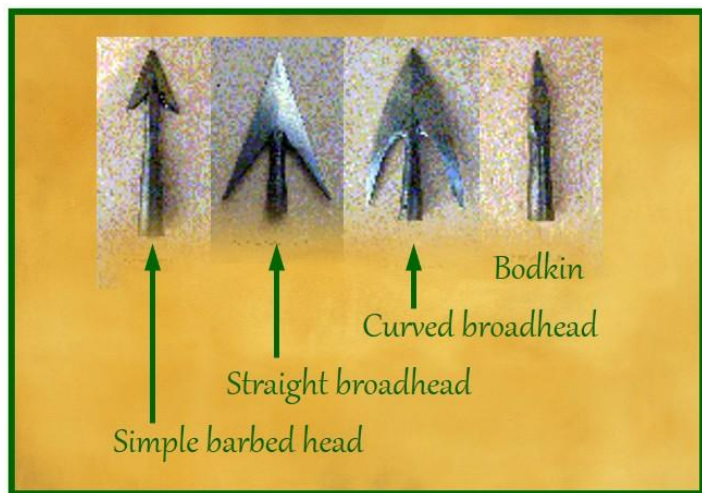
A BIT OF RESEARCH FUN

I suspect it's not uncommon when people think about arrowheads – pretty uncommon in and of itself, I also suspect – that they think of sharpened stone. Probably flint. The natural fracturing of flint produces an edge that's incredibly sharp – something I can attest to from personal experience. Several years back, when poking around on a hillside in Norfolk for a small piece of flint to collect as a souvenir, I suddenly recoiled with a sharp pain in my forefinger and looked down to find it

bleeding. My fingertip had been sliced by a broken piece of flint as cleanly as if it had been done with a chef's knife. Ever since then, I've handled flint with exceptional care.

Certainly, the earliest arrowheads would have been made of sharpened stone. By the time of my stories, in Europe at least, stone had been replaced with steel. And it wasn't just a matter of swapping out one material for another – it was also no longer a one-shape-fits-all proposition. Master forgers could create a wide variety of shapes and sizes, each designed for a specific purpose. For hunting, the size of the game dictated the choice of arrowhead. For warfare, there were even more options.

A simple barbed head might be used for hunting small game such as rabbits or squirrels.



The straight broadhead was suitable both for larger game and for warfare. The curved broadhead was often preferred for large game such as stags or boar and definitely favored in warfare, when the horses of the cavalry were often the targets. Its curved shape allowed it to penetrate more deeply into the target, and the way those barbs were formed meant that any attempt to remove it by pulling it out by the shaft would inflict even greater damage than the entry wound had caused.

The bodkin was armor-piercing. It went right through chain mail from any angle, and could even, with a straight-on hit, penetrate plate armor.

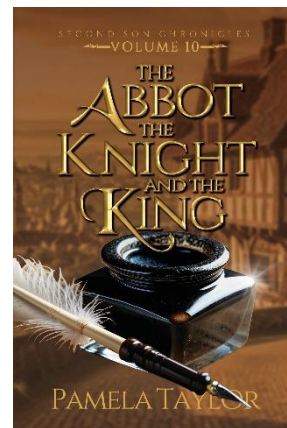
Here are some more examples of the wide variety of arrowheads available to medieval archers.



Arrowhead images used with the kind permission of The Fraternity of St George / Longbow-archers.com

In *The Abbot, The Knight, and The King* (Volume 10 of the Second Son Chronicles, coming in May), there is a hunting scene – the final hunt of autumn for meat to be dried to tide people over for the winter. To avoid any spoilers, I'll say here only that the arrowheads being used are pertinent to the events of the narrative.

Got your preorder in? There's still time to get a 15% discount on the paperback by ordering directly from the publisher. Just use code PREORDER2026 at checkout. Preorders for paperback or eBook are also available wherever you get your books. The release date is 28 May and the audiobook should become available about that time.



A BIT OF SHAMELESS SELF-PROMOTION

My publisher has a big push on to make the Second Son Chronicles the #1 best seller in one or more Amazon categories at the end of April. It's a lofty goal, going up against the titans of Historical Fiction: Gregory, Weir, Cornwell, Chadwick, O'Farrell, Marchant, and Penman, to name a few. But we can do it – I know we can.

To that end, Volume 1, *Second Son*, will be 99¢ on Kindle April 28-30. So if you know someone you think might enjoy the series – or if you haven't started it yourself –

April 28 is the big day. I'll be enormously grateful if you could help spread the word.



Here's a QR code to take you to the Amazon product page or a standard web link if you prefer that: <https://amzn.to/3QkvDHB> Save the link and save the date and share with anyone who might be interested.

A BIT OF WHAT'S NEW WITH THE GIRLS – MAGGI SAYS



This is me when I was a puppy. Mom says I was almost 7 months old then. That was about the time I started puppy kindergarten.

I'm 14-½ now, and Mom says that makes me a senior dog. I don't know if that's the same thing as an alpha dog. Maybe it is 'cause I'm definitely the alpha dog around here.

But sometimes my hip hurts. My vet took a picture of my insides and says I have arthritis and some dysplasia . . . whatever those are. So Mom got me these things she calls mussels. She says they come from New Zealand. I don't know where that is, but I don't care as long as Mom keeps getting them 'cause they're really, really good.

I get to eat two after doggie breakfast and two after doggie din-din. I'd eat more if Mom would let me, but she says this is just the right amount. The best part is, they make my hip feel so much better and I can run better and I don't get tired on walks anymore.

(Note from Mom: What Maggi's getting for her arthritis are New Zealand green lipped mussels. Her vet suggested them, and I've been quite impressed with how much more comfortably she's moving since we started. They come either in a powder or freeze-dried whole, which is what I've been giving Maggi, and you can get them from a variety of pet product providers. Just be sure they're sourced from New Zealand, where they're sustainably harvested in the wild. According to our vet, the New Zealand ones have more of the anti-inflammatory compound than those farmed elsewhere.)

A BOATLOAD OF GIVEAWAYS

Spring potpourri!

- I have two more promo codes for the audiobook of *The Last Priest of Tintagel*. If you didn't win in last month's giveaway, your entry will automatically roll over to this one.
- Two free copies of the eBook of *Second Son* – they'll come as a gift redeemable on Amazon.com so you can enter on behalf of yourself or of someone you'd like to give a gift to. Just be sure the recipient has an Amazon.com account to claim their winnings.
- Two free signed paperbacks – advance review copies – of *The Abbot*, *The Knight*, and *The King*. US mailing addresses only, I'm sorry to say. Don't know if you've ever had a need to investigate international mailing/shipping costs, but they tend to *start* around \$70 USD.

Click here to enter. A single entry form where you can select any or all of the contests.

Deadline for entry is midnight US Central Daylight Time on Monday, 27 April.

Wishing you good luck in the giveaways and happy reading!

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