

Voices of Invocation - 1597

Francis Drake's Last Moments in 1596

by King-Palatine Thrommel Breckonridge

Francis Drake was an English explorer, privateer, and naval officer who circumnavigated the globe during his lifetime. He raided the Spanish treasure ships, played a key role in defeating the Spanish Armada in 1588, and for that he was considered an English hero and a villain to the Spanish.



Francis Drake in 1591



John Hawkins



Nombre de Dios, Panama

Drake was in his mid-fifties in late 1595 when he departed from England with John Hawkins. Their goal was to strike Spanish wealth in the West Indies with their initial target being San Juan, Puerto Rico. After being repelled by the Spanish on November 25, 1595, Drake decided to sail the English fleet to Panama. He went to the port of Nombre de Dios in Panama. Nombre de Dios was an initial major port founded in 1510 by Diego de Nicuesa for the Spanish treasure fleet linking silver from South America to Spain via the Isthmus of Panama. It had a crucial stone road, the Camino Real or King's Highway, that connected it to Panama City on the Pacific side of the Isthmus of Panama. Colonial silver mines were opened in Potosi in 1546 in what would eventually become Bolivia and the mined silver was then taken to the Pacific coast by llama or mule trains, then shipped up the Pacific coast to Panama City, and then carried by mule trains across the Isthmus to Nombre de Dios for shipment to Havana, Cuba first and then across the Atlantic Ocean to Spain. Due to Nombre de Dios' location and swampy terrain, it made it difficult to fortify which then led to frequent pirate attacks, some of which had been directed by Drake in prior years.

Drake and his second-in-command, Thomas Baskerville, were able to capture and burn Nombre de Dios, but found little treasure. Drake then called for the English to start to make their way across the Isthmus to Panama City, but they were repulsed by entrenched Spaniards who had barricaded the Camino Real. The English suffered heavy casualties and gave up the attempt. What they didn't realize was that they missed five million pesos worth of silver waiting off the Pacific coast at the time.



Portobelo Bay, Panama



Francis Drake's Burial at Sea (although buried in a coffin)

Shortly thereafter Drake contracted dysentery, also known as bloody flux. It caused the sufferer of the disease to have bloody diarrhea, fever, abdominal pain, and a feeling of incomplete defecation. Furthermore, it would lead to dehydration. It was typically caused by the contamination of food and water with feces due to poor sanitation. The English fleet sailed towards Portobelo Bay, Panama. Legend states that Christopher Columbus originally named the port, Puerto Bello, meaning Beautiful Port. Drake died on January 28, 1596 due to dysentery while anchored off the coast of Portobelo where some Spanish treasure ships had sought shelter. Before dying, Drake asked to be dressed in his full armor. Drake was placed in a sealed lead-lined coffin and buried at sea a few miles off the coast of Portobelo. He was supposedly placed where two English ships, the Elizabeth and Delight, were scuttled in Portobelo Bay. After Drake's death, the English withdrew defeated.

Aquarium Fishkeeping in the Renaissance and Before

By Empress Porcelina Apple Rowan of the Empire of the Imperial Magistracy



Early Fishkeeping Practices

Fishkeeping is a hobby that dates back thousands of years. In ancient times, people would capture fish from their local water sources and keep them in containers for various purposes. The Sumerians, who lived in Mesopotamia (around 2500 BCE), were known to have built artificial ponds to keep fish for their nutritional needs. These early fish keepers realized the importance of maintaining water quality and oxygen levels for the well-being of their fish.

Ancient Fish Ponds and Containers

As civilizations developed, so did the techniques used for fishkeeping. The ancient Egyptians, for example, constructed large fish ponds along the Nile River. These ponds served both practical and decorative purposes, as they were used to

cultivate fish for food and as a symbol of wealth and prosperity. Additionally, the Egyptians also used clay pots and woven baskets to house their pet fish inside their homes. These early containers allowed them to observe and enjoy the beauty of these aquatic creatures.



The Roman Empire's Fishkeeping Tradition

The Romans were avid fish keepers and took great pride in their elaborate fish ponds. These ponds, known as *piscinae*, were designed with intricate plumbing systems that supplied them with fresh water from nearby rivers or aqueducts. The Romans even imported exotic fish species from far-flung corners of their empire to

populate their ponds. Fishkeeping in ancient Rome was not only a form of entertainment but also a status symbol among the elite.



Fishkeeping in Medieval Times

Monastic Fish Ponds

During the Middle Ages, monasteries played a significant role in fishkeeping. Monks recognized the value of fish as a source of protein and established fish ponds within their monastic grounds. These ponds were carefully maintained and stocked with fish, providing sustenance for the inhabitants of the monasteries. Additionally, fish ponds were often used as a means to study and observe aquatic life, providing monks with a sense of tranquility and a connection to nature.



Ornamental Fish Bowls

As fishkeeping grew in popularity during the Middle Ages, ornamental fish bowls became a common sight in the homes of the wealthy. These delicate glass bowls, typically made of blown glass, were adorned with intricate designs and housed small fish species. However, the limited space and lack of filtration systems in these bowls posed challenges to maintaining optimal conditions for the fish. Despite their beautification purposes, the well-being of the fish was often overlooked in favor of aesthetics.

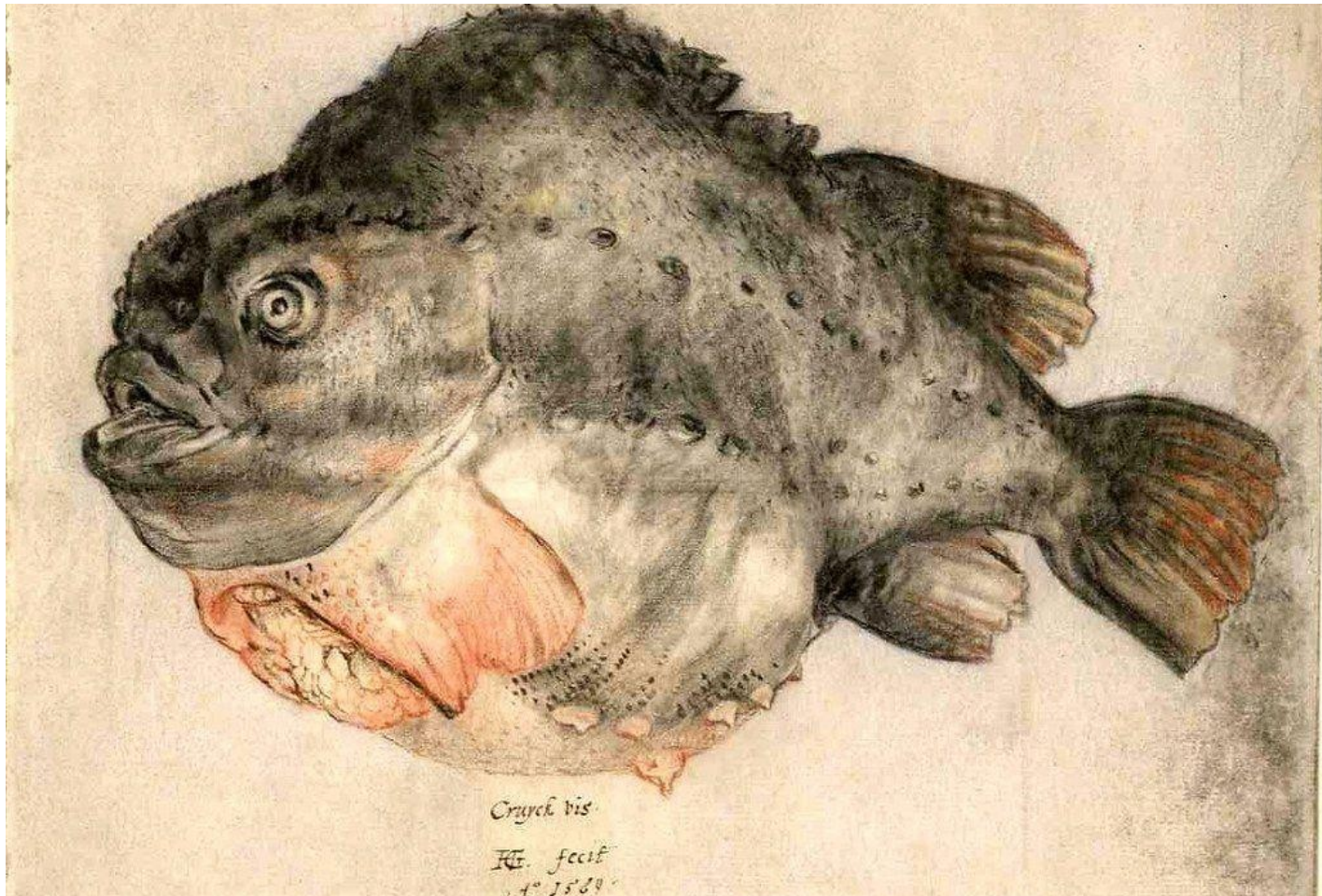


The Renaissance and the Age of Exploration

Aquatic Discoveries of Explorers

During the Renaissance, the Age of Exploration ushered in a new era of fishkeeping. Explorers like Christopher Columbus and Ferdinand Magellan embarked on voyages around the world, discovering new lands, and bringing back various marine species. These expeditions expanded the knowledge of aquatic life and brought exotic fish species previously unseen in Europe. It marked a turning point in the advancement of fishkeeping and fueled the curiosity and fascination with the underwater world.

Hendrick Goltzius, "Cruyck" Fish, 1589



The Rise of Cabinets of Curiosities

With the influx of new and intriguing specimens, the wealthy during the Renaissance period began to display their collections in what became known as Cabinets of Curiosities. These cabinets housed a diverse range of items including natural history specimens, which often included fish and other aquatic creatures. This marked a shift towards a systematic approach to collecting and studying marine life, as scholars and wealthy collectors sought to learn more about the fascinating creatures of the sea.



Sources:

<https://tropifishtales.com/a-history-of-aquarium-fishkeeping/>

<https://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images?p=keeping+fish+in+the+renaissance&fr=mcafee&type=E211US0G0&imgurl=https%3A%2F%2Fhakaimagazine.com%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2Finuit-fish-book.jpg#id=11&iurl=https%3A%2F%2Fassets.catawiki.nl%2Fassets%2F2017%2F10%2F30%2F2%2F9%2Fd%2F29d31992-605f-49ee-b504-742298df1ed3.jpg&action=click>

https://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images;_ylt=AwrEoWP9baJnavAiwWsjzbf;_ylu=c2VjA3NIYXJjaARzbGsDYnV0dG9u;_ylc=X1MDOTYwNjI4NTcEX3IDMgRmcgNtY2FmZWUEZnlyA3A6cyx2OmksbTpszYi10b3AEZ3ByaWQDOFRuYWR0WTJTTmFGdTVwTE5CNldsQQRuX3JzbHQDMARuX3N1Z2cDMARvcmlnaW4DaW1hZ2VzLnNIYXJjaC55YWhvby5jb20EcG9zAzAEcHFzdHIDBHBxc3RybAMwBHFzdHJsAzlwBHF1ZXJ5A3JlbnFpc3NhbmNIJTIwYXF1YXJpdW0EdF9zdG1wAzE3Mzg2OTgzNDg-?p=renaissance+aquarium&fr=mcafee&fr2=p%3As%2Cv%3Ai%2Cm%3Asb-top&ei=UTF-8&x=wrt&type=E211USOG0#id=128&iurl=https%3A%2F%2Fas2.ftcdn.net%2Fv2%2Fjpg%2F06%2F01%2F34%2F37%2F1000_F_601343714_G5PTJLxMLkpp8ZKTOkxWJaZyCtVo2fkJ.jpg&action=click

https://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images;_ylt=AwrNPjd7cKJnMwIA_NZXNyoA;_ylu=Y29sbwNiZjEEcG9zAzEEdnRpZAMec2VjA3Nj?p=cabinet+of+curiosity&fr=mcafee#id=2&iurl=http%3A%2F%2Fpages.vassar.edu%2Frealarchaeology%2Ffiles%2F2022%2F09%2FDomenico_Remps_-_Cabinet_of_Curiosities.jpg&action=click

https://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images;_ylt=AwrEoWP8caJnpoAj5TSJzbf;_ylu=c2VjA3NIYXJjaARzbGsDYnV0dG9u;_ylc=X1MDOTYwNjI4NTcEX3IDMgRmcgNtY2FmZWUEZnlyA3A6cyx2OmksbTpszYi10b3AEZ3ByaWQDUmpKQUVfNkdRZGVpWGITS29kQklnQQRuX3JzbHQDMARuX3N1Z2cDMARvcmlnaW4DaW1hZ2VzLnNIYXJjaC55YWhvby5jb20EcG9zAzAEcHFzdHIDBHBxc3RybAMwBHFzdHJsAzlxBHF1ZXJ5A3JvbWFuJTlwZW1waXJlJTlwYXF1YXJpdW0EdF9zdG1wAzE3Mzg2OTkzMTg-?p=roman+empire+aquarium&fr=mcafee&fr2=p%3As%2Cv%3Ai%2Cm%3Asb-top&ei=UTF-8&x=wrt#id=15&iurl=https%3A%2F%2Fbiotopeaquariumproject.com%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2022%2F02%2Fmuray.jpg&action=click

https://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images;_ylt=Awrii1DgcqJneOggdCCJzbf;_ylu=c2xrA3RleHQEaXQDQWxzb1RyeV9OBHNIYwNyZWwEcG9zAzk-?p=Ancient+Nile+River&fr2=p%3As%2Cv%3Ai%2Cm%3Ars-

top%2Cct%3Abing%2Crgn%3Atop%2Cpos%3A9&fr=mcafee#id=61&iurl=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.bible-history.com%2Fstudybible%2Fimages%2Fnile_river_painting_roberts.jpg&action=click

https://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images;_ylt=Awril_TocqJnc9oPjxaJzbf;_ylu=c2VjA3NIYXJjaARzbGsDYnV0dG9u;_ylc=X1MDOTYwNjI4NTcEX3IDMgRmcgNtY2FmZWUEZnlyA3A6cyx2OmksbTpzYi10b3AEZ3ByaWQDQzFIV1d2T0lUQ3FWU2RwYU13VWJvQQRuX3JzbHQDMARuX3N1Z2cDMARvcmlnaW4DaW1hZ2VzLnNIYXJjaC55YWhvby5jb20EcG9zAzAEcHFzdHIDBHBxc3RybAMwBHFzdHJsAzE5BHF1ZXJ5A21vbmFzdGljJTlwZmlzaCUyMHBvbmRzBHRfc3RtcAMxNzM4Njk5NjQ3?p=monastic+fish+ponds&fr=mcafee&fr2=p%3As%2Cv%3Ai%2Cm%3Asb-top&ei=UTF-8&x=wrt#id=2&iurl=https%3A%2F%2Fimage.shutterstock.com%2Fimage-photo%2Fabbey-new-clairvaux-rural-trappist-260nw-1727412514.jpg&action=click

A coin of Sigismund III Vasa AKA (Zygmunt III Waza)

by Prince-Palatine Henry Stanley

Sigismund III Vasa::

Son of John III of Sweden and Catherine Jagellon

Born on 20 June 1566 in Grisholm Castle

Died on 29 April 1632 in Warsaw

Sigismund III Vasa was King of Poland, Grand Duke of Lithuania and King of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth from 1587 to 1632, and King of Sweden from 1592 to 1599.

Much has already been written about the reign of Sigismund III and is widely available. I have chosen to concentrate on the coinage of his reign.

The Vasa dynasty in Sweden began in 1587. Sigismund III's reign heralded a time in which coin minting reached a pinnacle in his domains, which resulted in a large array of coin denominations being issued ranging from 100 Ducats in gold to the smallest silver groschens (Groszy). More than a dozen mints operated at one time or another during Sigismund III's time, producing the plethora of coins that existed at the time.

At this time, Sigismund's coins were still being struck by hand ('hammered') from silver and gold just as coinage in general had been since ancient times. Invariably they were mis-struck resulting in a variety of errors like the one in my collection. My example was overstruck more than once, resulting in a distorted sloppy appearance. A moneyer (mint worker) in these days could be fined or jailed or even worse (depending on the whims of the ruler, esp. if he /she thought it made them look bad or was an embarrassment potentially marring the reputation of the kingdom) might be executed for letting such an error escape into circulation.

On the next page, are the obverse (front) and Reverse (back) images of the 16th c. (undated) 3 Groszy silver coin of Sigismund III minted in Vilnius (Lithuania). from my collection.



The obverse (above) inscription (in Latin) reads “Sig. D.G.REX. PO. MDL.(Magnus Dux Lithuaniae). “Which translates to: “Sigismund, By Grace of God, King of Polanaie (Poland), Grand Duke of Lithuania”



The reverse (below) inscription in Latin reads “GROSZ” “TRIP.MDL” which translates to “Groszy, Triple. Grand duchy of Lithuania”

Baba Yaga

By King-Palatine Christopher Chamberlain

As with almost all of the myths and legends I bring to you, the creature, or woman, I bring to you today has many variations told of her through the Slavic region. In some tales, she is a vicious and skeletal old woman that eats children. In others, she is far gentler and offers wisdom as well as magical items to those that are willing to aid her.

Baba is a word commonly used in many Slavic languages as a diminutive of Babushka. It is less formal and can be considered more affectionate. It can also be used as insult to younger women, as an implication that they are unattractive. It is thought that her name translates as "Grandmother Witch", however there has been no official translation of the word Yaga (or Jaga in Polish folklore) that is agreed upon.



It is generally accepted that she always appears as an old woman with iron teeth and nails. In the common Polish traditions, she is depicted with a skeletal or “bony” leg. Surprisingly nimble, given her apparent age, she does prefer to use magic and have other preform her tasks for her.

As a means of transportation, she is found flying in a large mortar and using the pestle as a type of rudder. You may note that in the picture given below, she also carries with her a broom. This is made of birch and used to sweep away her tracks.

And if that is not odd enough, she also uses her hut on chicken legs as a means of traveling large distances. The hut constantly turns on the legs. It is said in the [Tale of Vasilisa the Beautiful](#) that if you wish to enter, you should say “Turn your back to the forest and your front to me”

The hut was witnessed within the Kingdom-Palatinate of Styria in October of 1593 by myself and three members of my household staff. We ran.





The recommendation I would give is that if you happen to come across her or her hut, try not to engage. While she may not always be entirely evil in legends, she is quick to anger and highly magical.

Legends and Lore: Werewolves

By Baronet Giovanni Albrizzi

For those who are regular readers of my writings and contributions, I usually include comments on speaking to the Native population regarding my research with the assistance of French traders and fur trappers near the border. However, due to recent events I have found myself possessing no desire to speak to such persons. Thankfully, I was able to speak to a few who have found enough welcome and spirit of brotherhood that we tripped along in shared language. The topic I opted to look into this year was one I thought rather well known and accepted as both historical and true, that of the lycanthrope, werewolf, or loup-garou if we must include the French which I suppose we ought to begrudgingly.

To my mild surprise and disappointment, the talk with the natives I bought drinks for did not really yield any results. None of them really HAD any tales of werewolves for me. Shapeshifters? Yes, certainly. One swore his uncle saw a boar that smoked and stomped, so he shot it with his arrows, later finding a dead witch as he suspected. Dangerous beings that eat people? Well, yes, but none were quite right. They assumed I was speaking of the Wendigo, which I covered previously. Eventually, they suggested that if such beings existed before we arrived in these lands, they might be beyond the great mountains in the far West, the Apalachee. I am told beyond is rivers and land as far as anyone could walk or ride, but they have no idea what Peoples or monsters may be among them. So please forgive me for excluding native tales on werewolves in this, but my admittedly humble conversation skills with them simply didn't yield fruit.

Perhaps in that they are fortunate, for Europe and Asia have been lousy with the deadly things. You may recall even in the poem of Gilgamesh, there is a claim the goddess Ishtar turned a former lover into a wolf. Arguably not the same thing, mayhaps, however there are also accounts

from the Roman empire of men turning into wolves at night, or dangerous wolves being killed only to turn back into naked men. Rome and Wolves have long been tied together, their legendary founding kings being raised by a wolf in legend, and precursors such as the Etruscans holding spirits and beliefs of wolf-spirits that gave the appearance of wolfmen. King Lycaon of Arcadia, according to the historian Pausanias, was cursed into wolf form for practicing human sacrifice to Zeus with a baby. Even mighty Herodotus has related tales told to him of men turning into wolves, though he doubted them. Stories have been recorded by some of the greatest historians of the ancients, and even Augustine of Hippo, where the Church starts to get interested in the existence of such beings. Now, to be sure, many of these stories blamed curses from gods, magic from witches, and other external reasons for the transformations, and many were one way, but some denoted a warrior class in certain areas, like Lykos, where male warriors would undergo such a transformation almost yearly.



a depiction found upon a plate in Tuscany, in lands once held by the Etruscans

Of course, Italy and the Persian lands are far from the only places for such writings. England and its surrounding lands have their own tales, and even laws written by the petty kings of its history regarding such beings. The Norselands, the Illyrian Peninsula up to Germania, and even into the Rus lands also have many stories of men who turn into wolves. Witchcraft is again blamed, more so than gods it seems, however you start to get stories

of men doing this by wearing wolf skins instead of clothing, donning the skin like a cloak and becoming a wolf in this manner, doffing it later. Such animal transformation is recorded in the Norselands in Scandinavia, the Rus, and Iceland especially, mixed in with tales of Berzerkers, who would also wear bear skins and might have turned into bear as well, or at least taken the seeming of such creatures in battle. Other accounts only mention the men falling into fits during battle, biting shields, foaming at the mouth, and attacking LIKE savage wolves and bears so it is uncertain if there is metaphor confusion, some kind of internal change, or pure magic. Certainly there are enough stories and accounts of people witnessing the change from one to another that it is hard to doubt it.



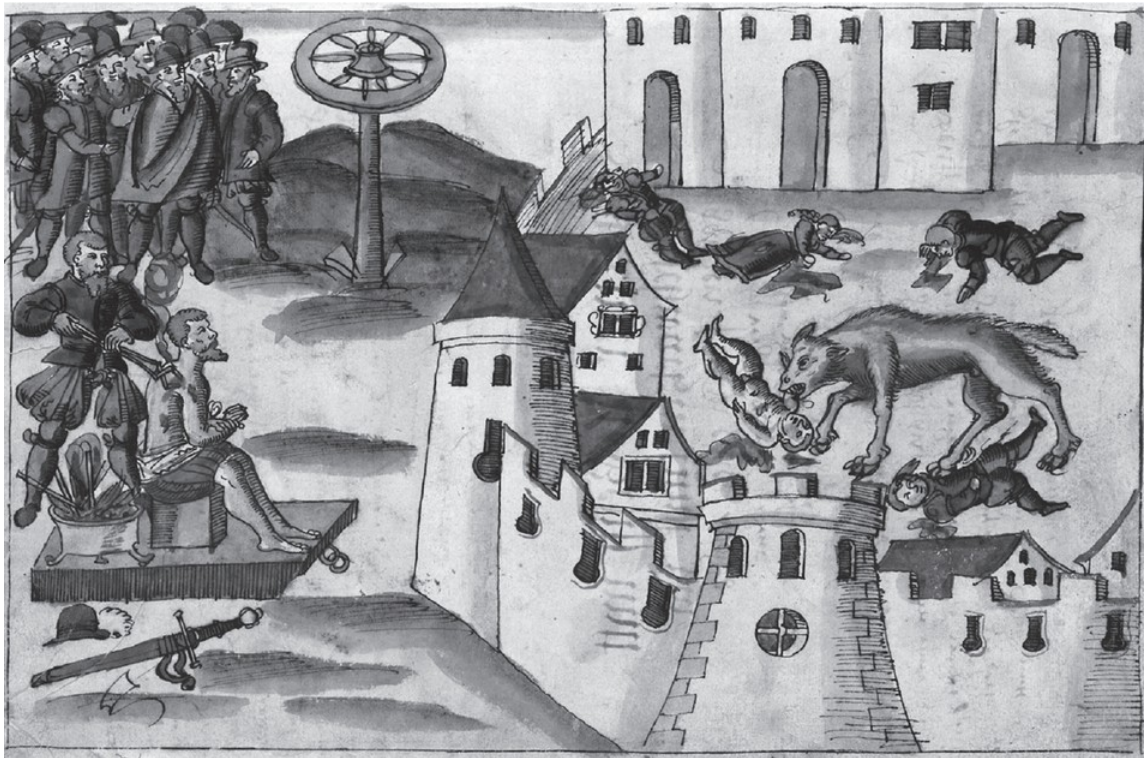
Illuminated manuscript recounting a man wearing a wolf skin and transforming back



Woodcut by Lucas Cranach der Ältere called "The Werewolf" or "The Cannibal" showing an attack created in 1512

The Church itself has written and debated werewolves, claiming no man could change his substance into another without the power of God, where others have claimed the Devil could provide means so long as that means was imperfect, as only God could create a perfect thing, while the Devil can only imitate imperfectly. The end result of this debate and I understand to be current doctrine, that werewolves being created by Satan lack tails. I do not encourage readers to take the time to verify this during a wolf attack, as there are surely more pressing matters in your immediate future. I am not a theologian, and have no desire to gainsay the bishops involved, but simply record what these luminaries of our Faith have taken the time to decide. Officially, any art showing werewolves with tails is apparently wrong within the Holy See.

This isn't an ancient problem. In France, Geneva, and other places in Europe, executions of men who became wolves and committed murder are happening currently. A man in France named Giles Garnier was convicted of being a werewolf and committing attacks and murder just 4 years ago, in 1573. A man in Geneva was executed in 1580 when he was found guilty of killing 16 children while a wolf. I often speak of older lore or more vague or esoteric topics, but this is something that has real court cases, real innocent life lost, and real consequences. So, what can one do?



Depiction of the attack in Geneva and subsequent trial.

Well, wolfsbane is a frequently noted plant to ward off werewolves, or even cure them. Indeed, prayer, wolfsbane and exorcism have all been cited as potential cures for lycanthropy. Obviously, if it IS the work of witches, finding the witch may prove a way to get such a foul curse removed. Ultimately, they HAVE been killed, in both forms of man and wolf,

if there is no better way, though the uncertainty if the werewolf is evil, mad, or an innocent burdened with a curse makes this a haunting option.

A Simple Knotted-Cord Bottle Holder

By Princess Margaret Stanley

When walking about, especially at a Festival, it is oftentimes convenient to have a means to carry drink other than in an open tankard or bottle in hand. I have several times in the past crafted hangers for various items from whatever cords I have to hand, and did think that this would be a good example of the art.

To begin, I first assemble my materials. In this case, I had a few colors of hemp cord to choose from. I do like the combination of blue with green, so that is what I chose to work with.

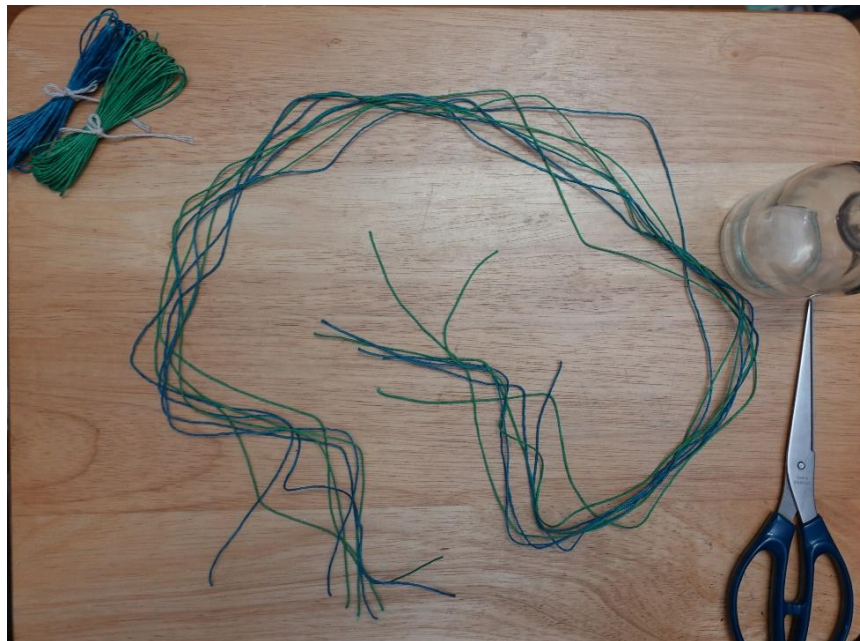


The next step is to measure the length of the cord against the bottle to be contained within. I do allow a few inches at the bottom, then three times wrapped around the bottle, then another foot or so at the top. This is likely far more than necessary, but I would far prefer to have excess to cut off

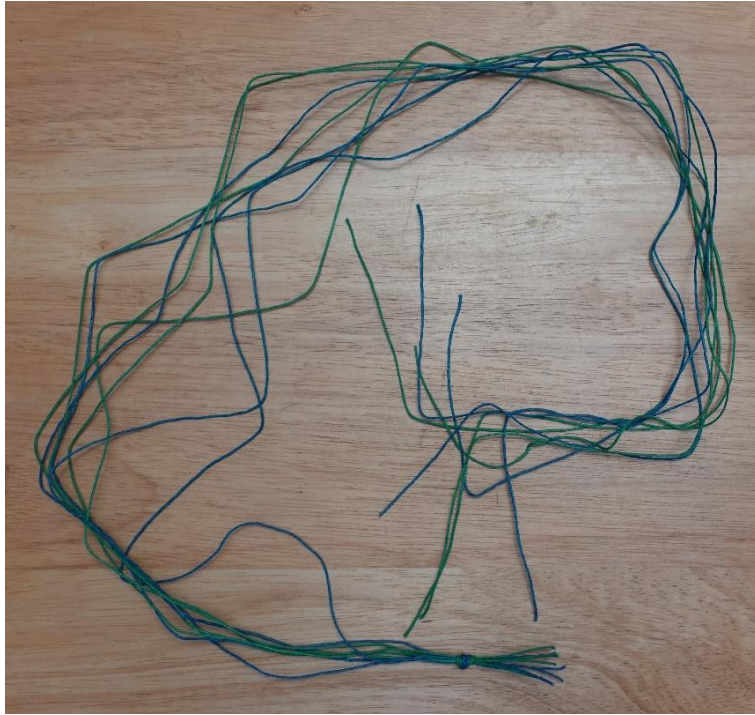
short (or braid in an ornamental design) than find that I have not allowed enough.



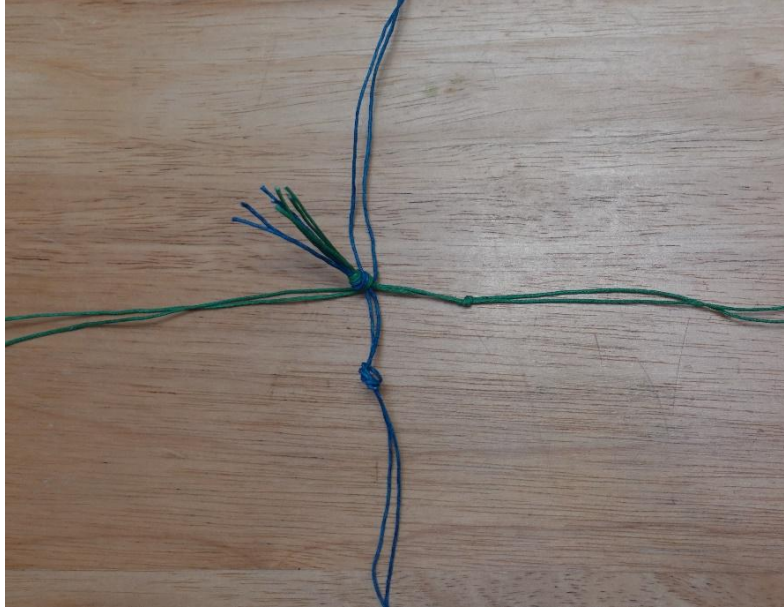
For this project, I did measure and cut 4 lengths of each color, for a total of 8 pieces of cord.



Next, I drew one end of each piece together, and tied a simple overhand knot to base my bag. I did leave a few inches hanging for a bit or ornamentation.

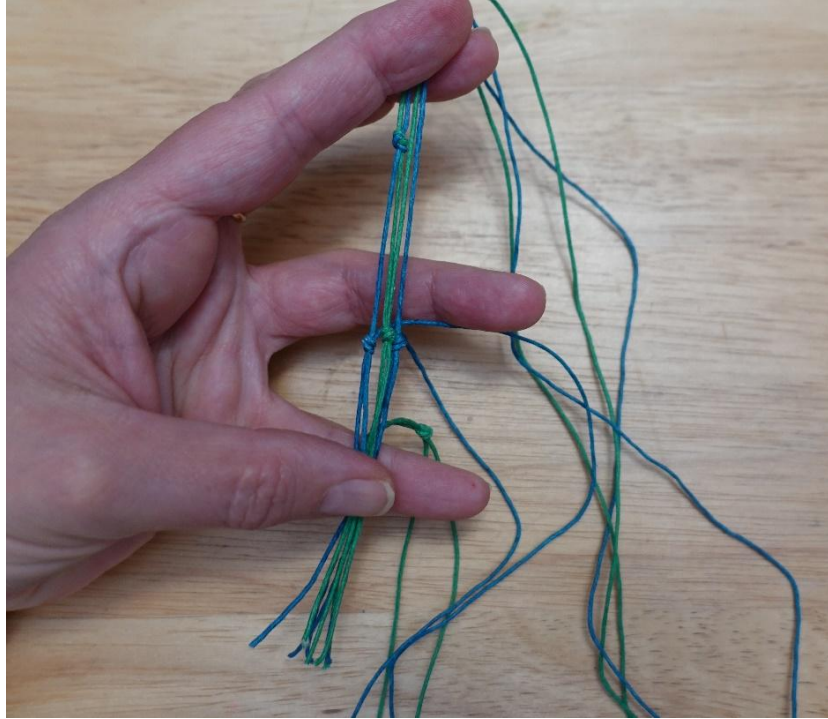


I compared the cords to the bottom of my bottle to decide where to place the first knots. For this piece, I wanted to place the knots around the edge of the bottle. This is a preference, not necessarily a decision that will make a difference in the further crafting. Once I had the first knot tied, I place the others at the same position on their cords. Again, these are simple overhand knots, as are all knots in this bag.



It is with the second set of knots that spacing becomes important. If they are tied too closely together, the bottle will not fit! If they are too far apart, the bottle may slip between and fall. I measured my cords against the bottle to choose a spacing, then tied knots at the same place for each pair of cords.

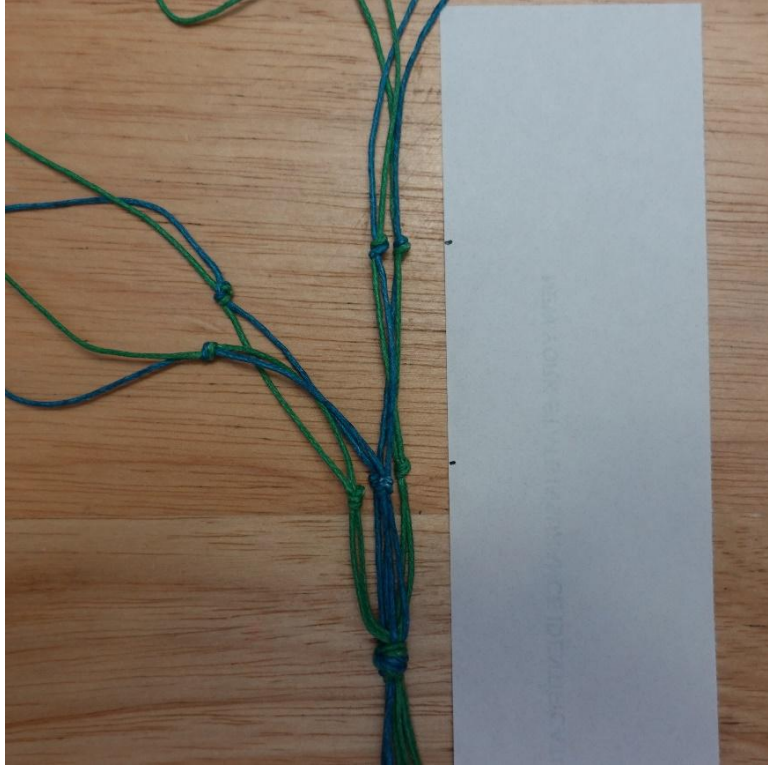
Note that I have tied my second knots in cords from different pairs in the first set. The plan is to create a network of diamond shapes around the bottle.



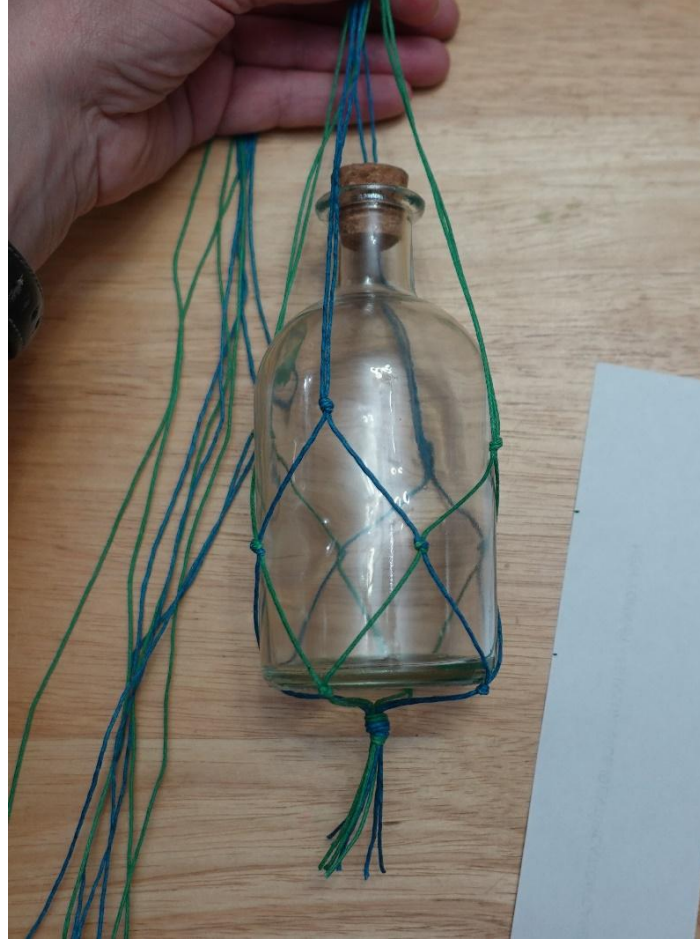
A very important step with every row of knots after the first: test for fit! The bottle should slide into the bag easily, and should not be able to slip through any of the holes.



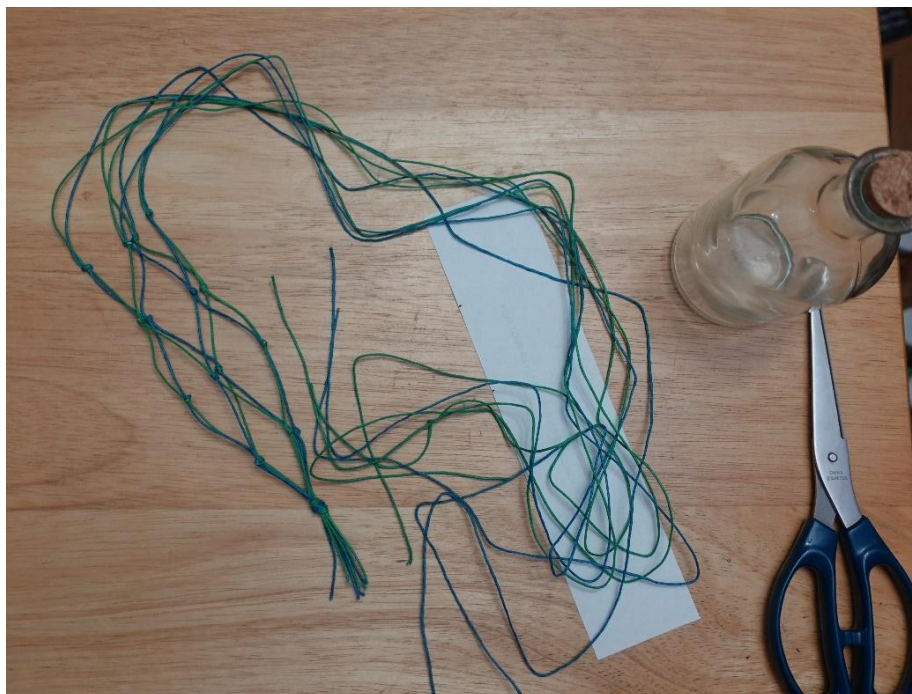
To keep a consistent spacing to the pattern, a paper strip makes a good measure. This will guide the placement of the next rows of knots.



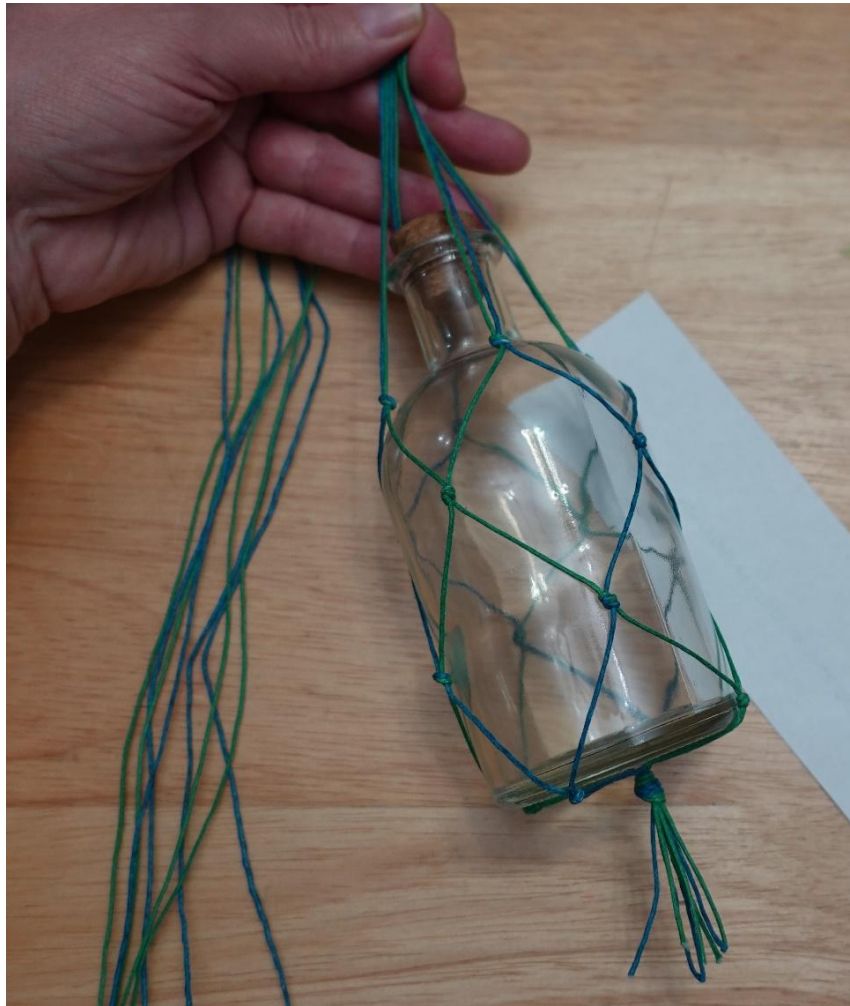
Another row is tied, and tested for fit.



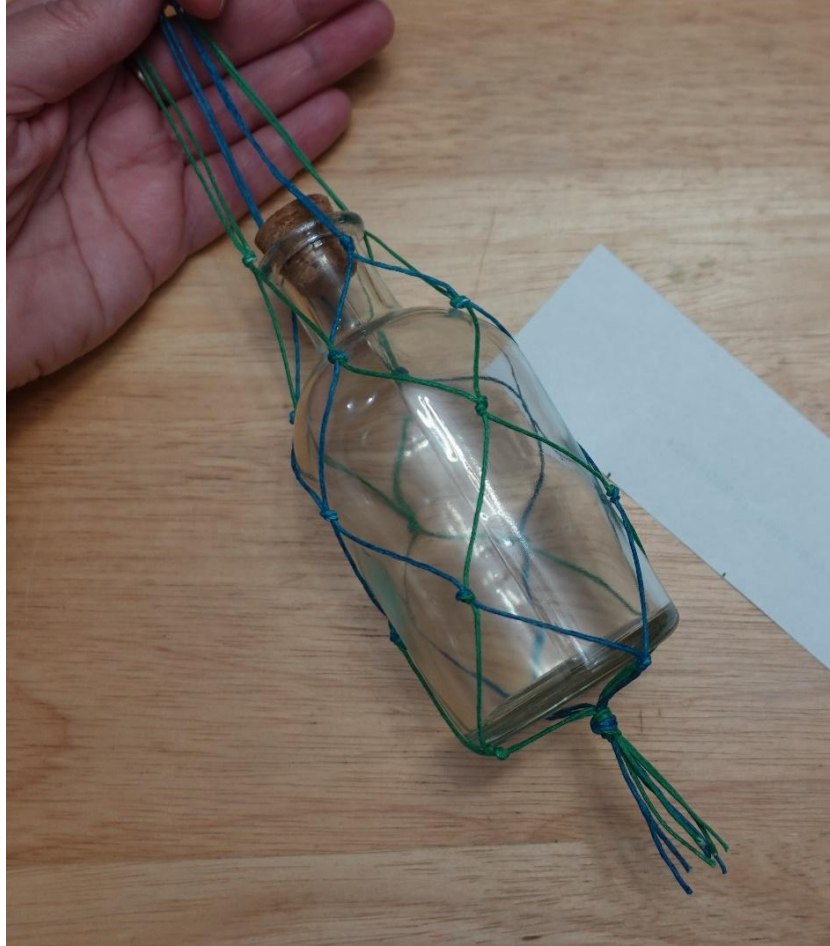
And a fourth row, to complete the bag portion of my bottle carrier.



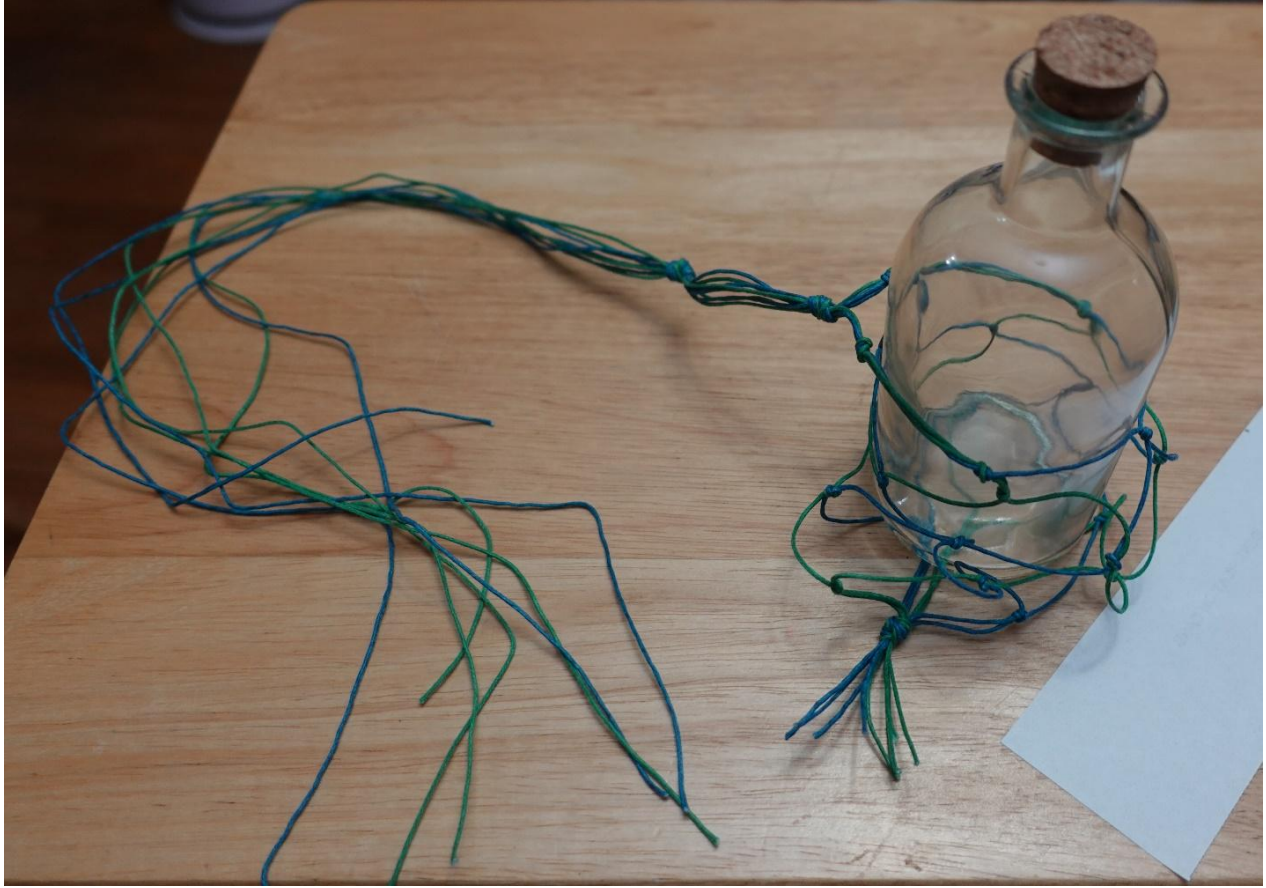
Another test for fit, this time for depth, to ensure that the bottle will be secure against slipping out of the top of the bag. This is sufficient, and the next steps will be to finish off the top of the bag.



Since my last row was knots of mixed color, for aesthetic reasons I chose to add one more row. The open side of the carrier will have a blue knot at center, a little shorter than my standard measure. The other sides will have one more knot each at the standard measure. This will create a sloping mouth to the bag.



And, with a few more knots, 'tis finished! Or rather, finished enough for immediate use. I am thinking about perhaps unpicking the final knot (which doth secure an area that a belt might pass through), and reworking the cords into a pair of four-strand flat braids before retying the knot, and then braiding the trailing cords into a decorative accent.



There are many possible ways to finish such a project. For now, I will keep a loose tail, perhaps with a knot or two to keep it in order.



As I did say above, 'tis a simple design. If any Imperial citizen doth wish my aid in crafting a similar carrier, or in adapting the technique to a different purpose, do feel free to ask me!