

# Claiming the Crown

*Read at the Coronation of Kenneth and Sabine,  
September 13, 2014*

When kings have fallen, who claims the crown?

They answer with blood, with blades and with spears,

a thicket of steel. Six and thirty

men of Meridies, mightiest warriors,

noble and proud, poised for the contest.

As mists of morning melt in the sunshine

the fighters clashed in a fearsome flurry

of deadly spears, like serpents striking,

seeking hot blood, 'neath burning sun.

Charging like boars, embattled warriors,

the pride of the kingdom, pounded with polearms,

bending the hafts, to bite on boards.

Swords whirled at evening, whispered of death

as they stooped like eagles, aiming for the kill.

Then silence descended, as setting sun cast

a lengthening shadow, from the last noble standing.

Now comes the boldest, who bested all others!

Will you honor his claim, and crown him your king?

– *By Dyfn ap Meurig*

Ponne cyninges wael feol, hwa cynehealm æsce?  
ácwædon mid blód, mid sweord, ond mid spereum,  
stiélegewrid. Siex ond þritig  
Meridianiscra, beaurincas breurófe,  
wyrðe ond ánmóde, ealgearue beadu.  
Ponne morgenmishelmas ámyltaþ,  
þa eorlmægen ágénurnon mid walsperen  
geniðla, onlic ofslítan  
blód áhátaþ cépedon, beneoð þa heaðusigel.  
Beadurincas, áhtedon onlic báras,  
þa rice áhafennesse forslegen mid déaþspere  
crymbing þa hæft, geslit on bordrandas.  
Sigeméceas gewunden æfynum, hwisprede lic ærdéaþ  
hwonne búgan onlic earnas, læledon ábradwian.  
Sálnesse adúneástág, wonne æfnung scópe  
scead blédhwæt, fram beorn æftemest stéapne.  
Hearding cume, hwa forhíenede gehatan!  
Árweorðende crafing ond hine cynehelme úre cyninge?

*–Translation by Mathias Blackett*