

St Mark's Word of the Week



Anachronism

Are you familiar with this word?

What does it mean?

Can you use it in a sentence?



Let's see if we can work out what it means from looking at its etymology.

Anachronism



Anakhronismos



Greek for 'backwards'

From the Greek kronos meaning 'time'

So what does anachronism mean?

'Backward in time'



Anachronism (noun)

Definition

A thing belonging or appropriate to a period other than that in which it exists

Examples:

- One anachronism in Braveheart was the wearing of kilts, as people only started wearing the garments in Scotland centuries after the film was set.
- Shakespeare's inclusion of the stage direction “clock strikes” in Julius Caesar is an anachronism, as the earliest recording of a mechanical clock was around 1300 years later.
- Anachronisms may be introduced to help audiences engage more readily with a historical period.

Can you come up with your own?



Anachronism (noun)

Definition

A thing belonging or appropriate to a period other than that in which it exists

Can you think of any synonyms?

- Misplacement
- Misdate

Can you think of any antonyms?

- Appropriate
- Suitable
- Timely
- Opportune



Can you spot ten anachronisms at this medieval Christmas banquet?

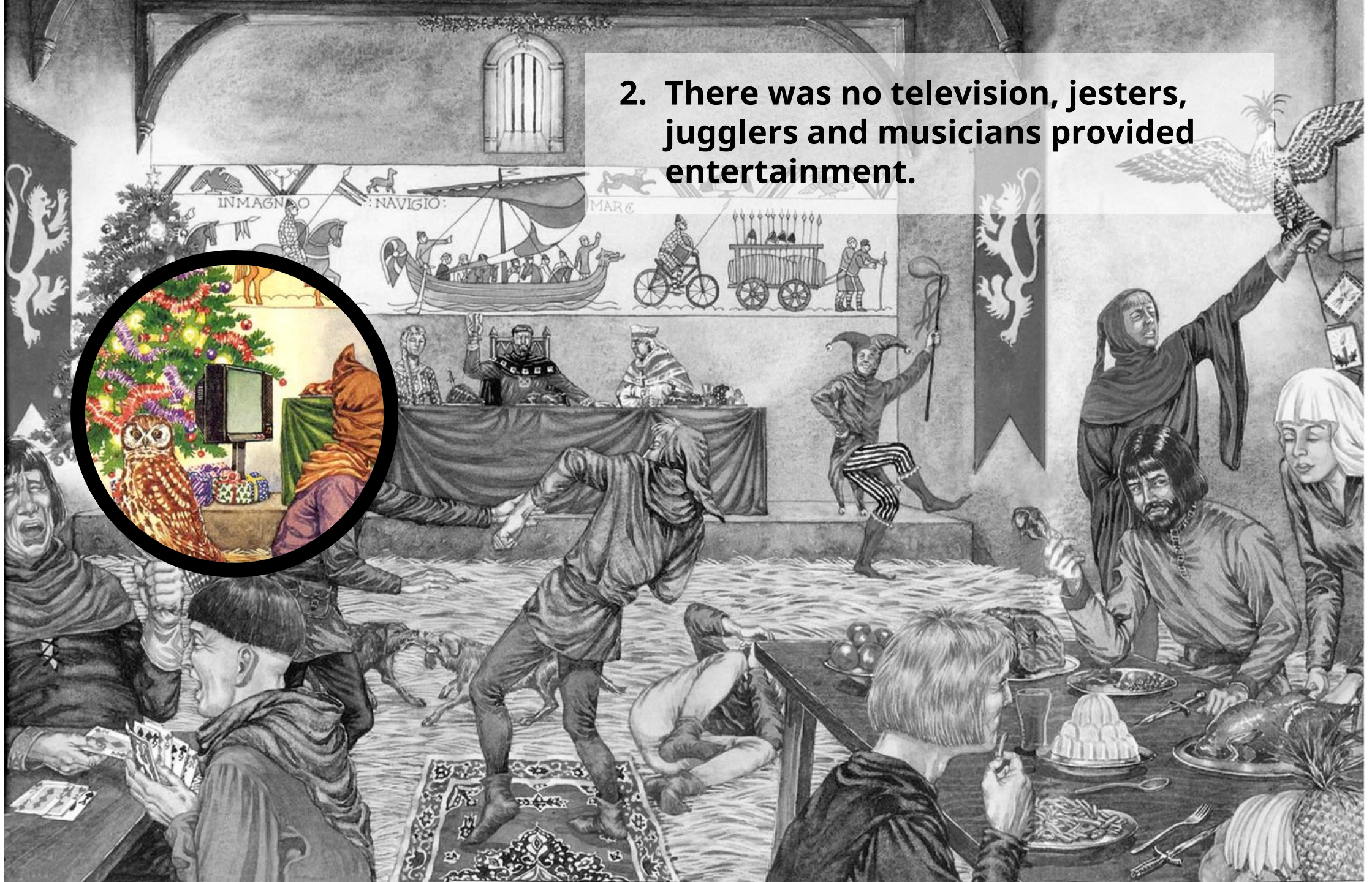
A detailed illustration of a medieval Christmas banquet. The scene is set in a large hall with a high ceiling. In the foreground, a long wooden table is laden with food, including a large roasted bird, a pineapple, and various fruits. Several people are seated at the table, dressed in medieval attire. One man is holding a large owl, and another is playing cards. In the background, a large Christmas tree is decorated with lights and ornaments. A man in a red and green jester's outfit is dancing. A banner on the wall depicts a ship and a cart. The overall scene is a mix of medieval and modern elements, creating a humorous anachronism.

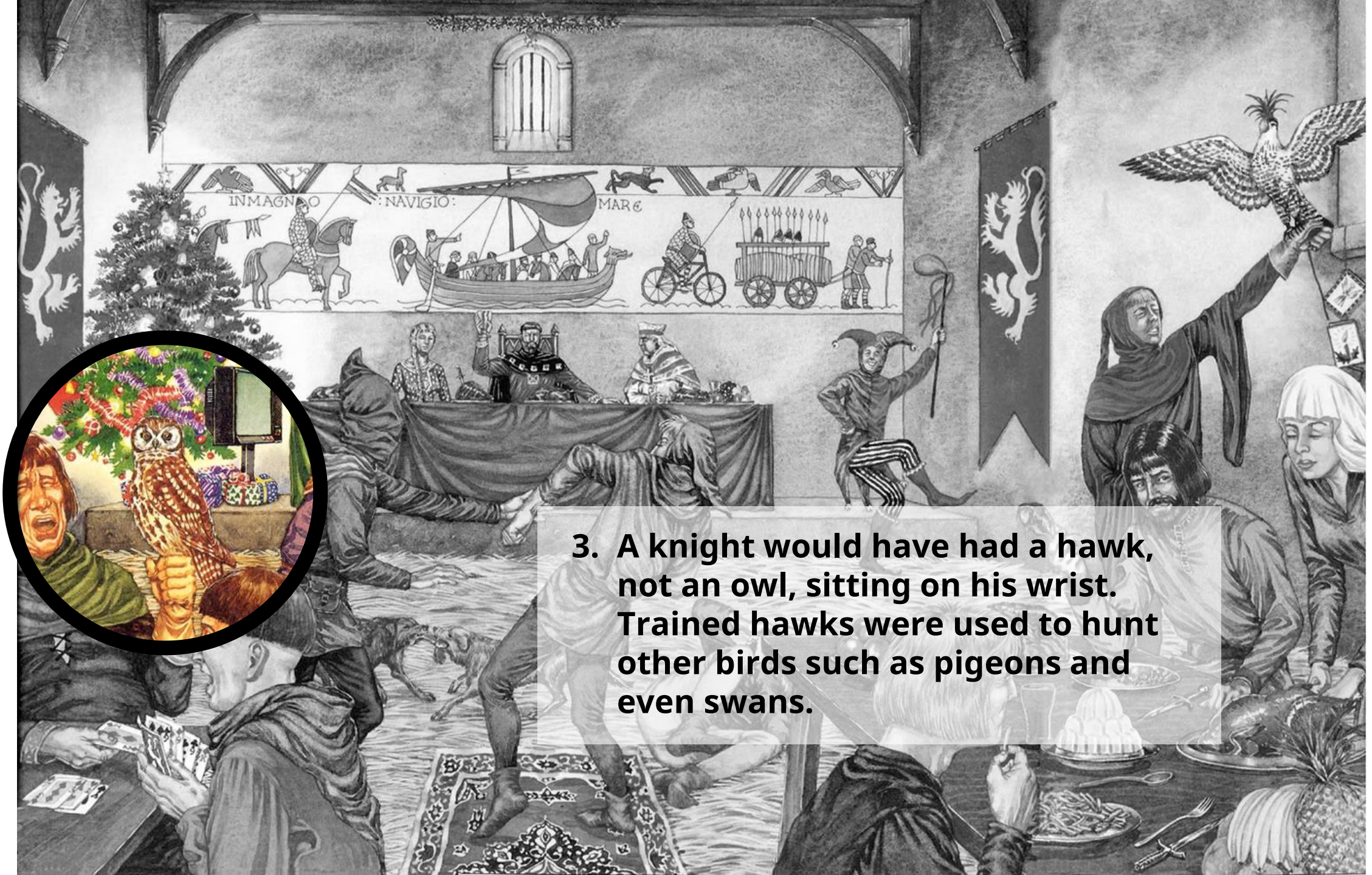


1. There would be no Christmas tree in the great hall. Christmas trees were not introduced until the early 1800s, Evergreen plants such as holly and ivy would have been used for decoration.



2. There was no television, jesters, jugglers and musicians provided entertainment.





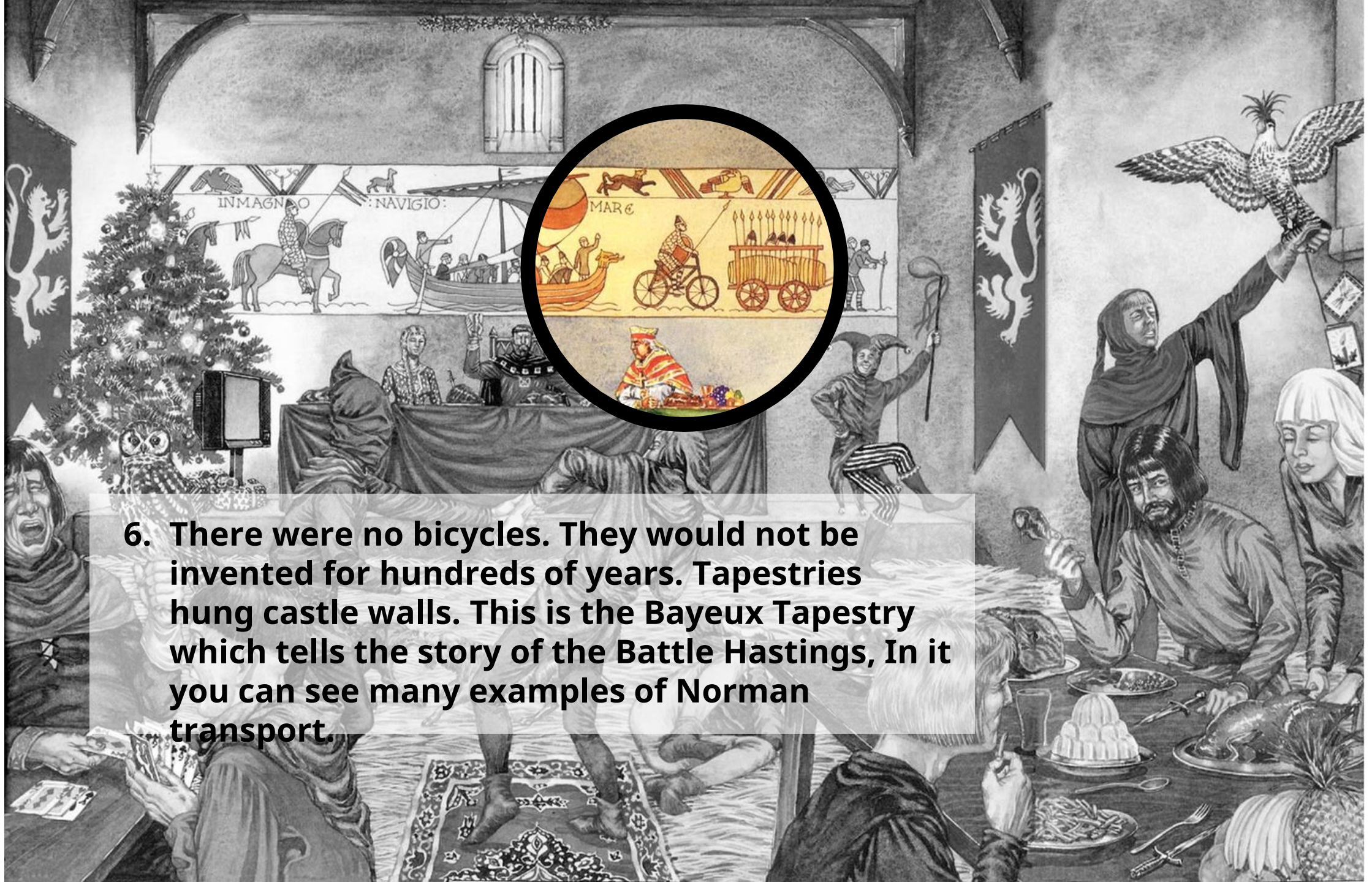
3. A knight would have had a hawk, not an owl, sitting on his wrist. Trained hawks were used to hunt other birds such as pigeons and even swans.

4. There were no playing cards. After the feast, they played games such as Hoodman's Blind (D) which is similar to Blindman's Bluff.



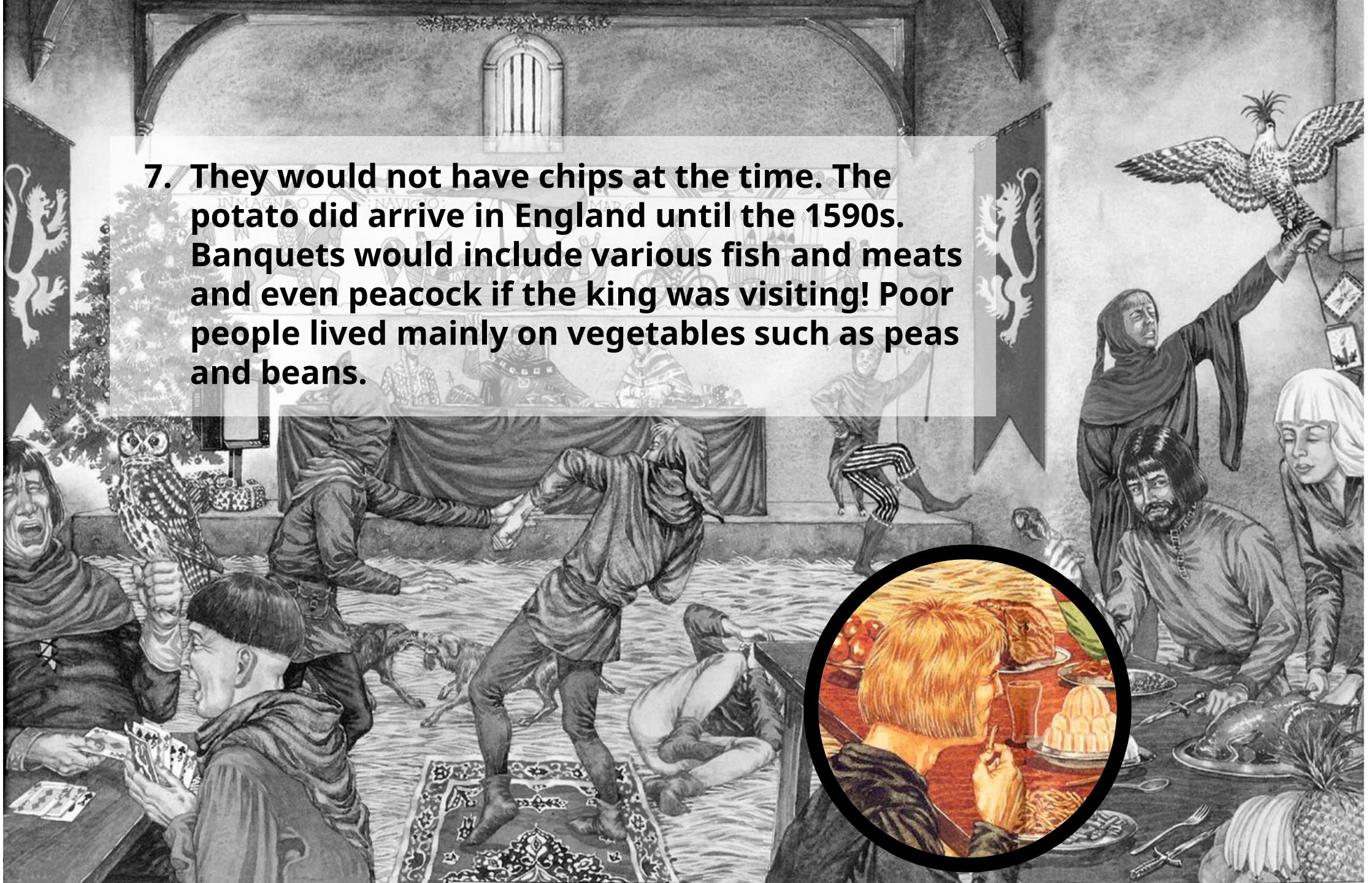


5. There were no rugs on the floors. Instead, they were strewn with straw and rushes.

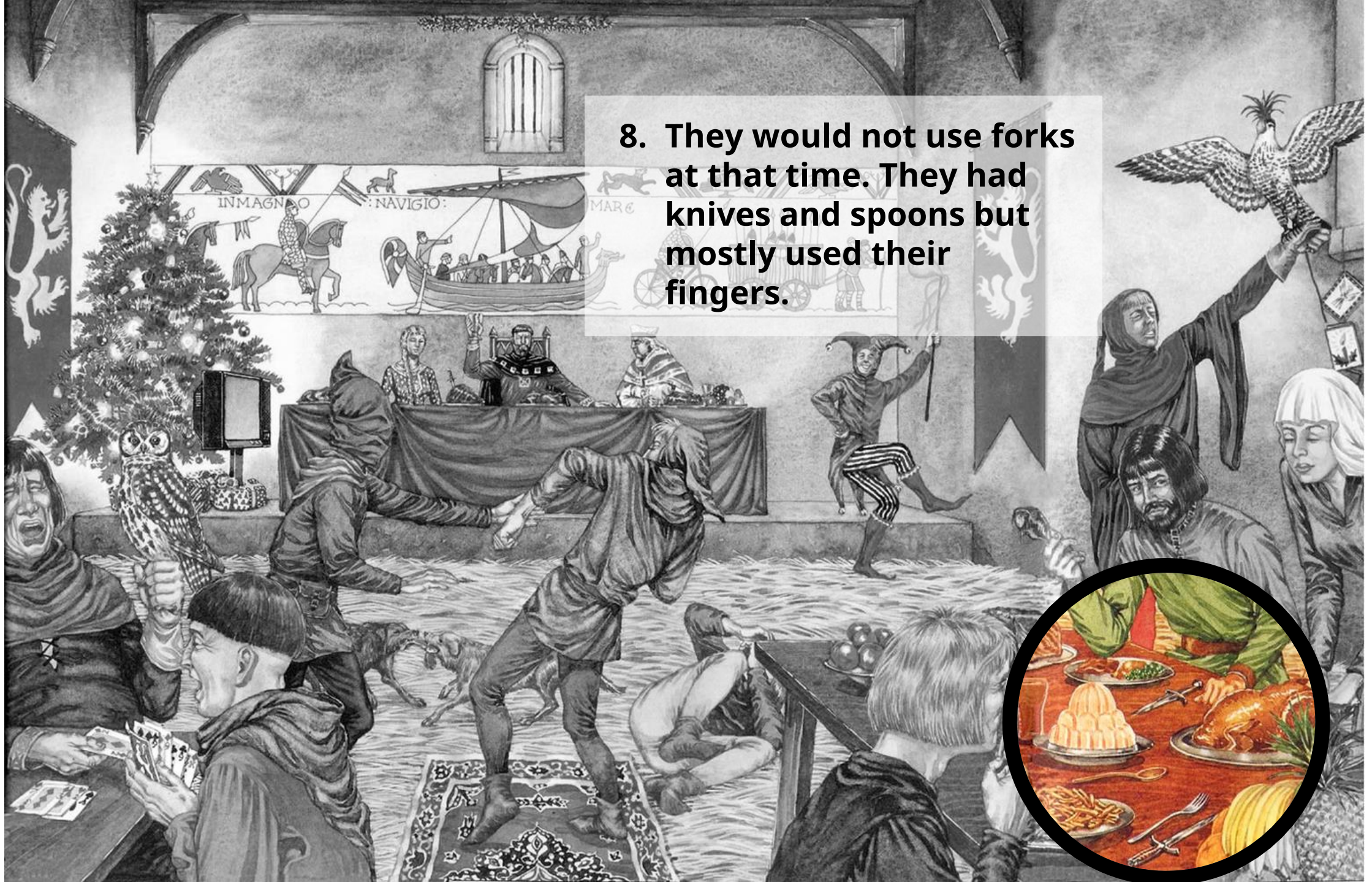


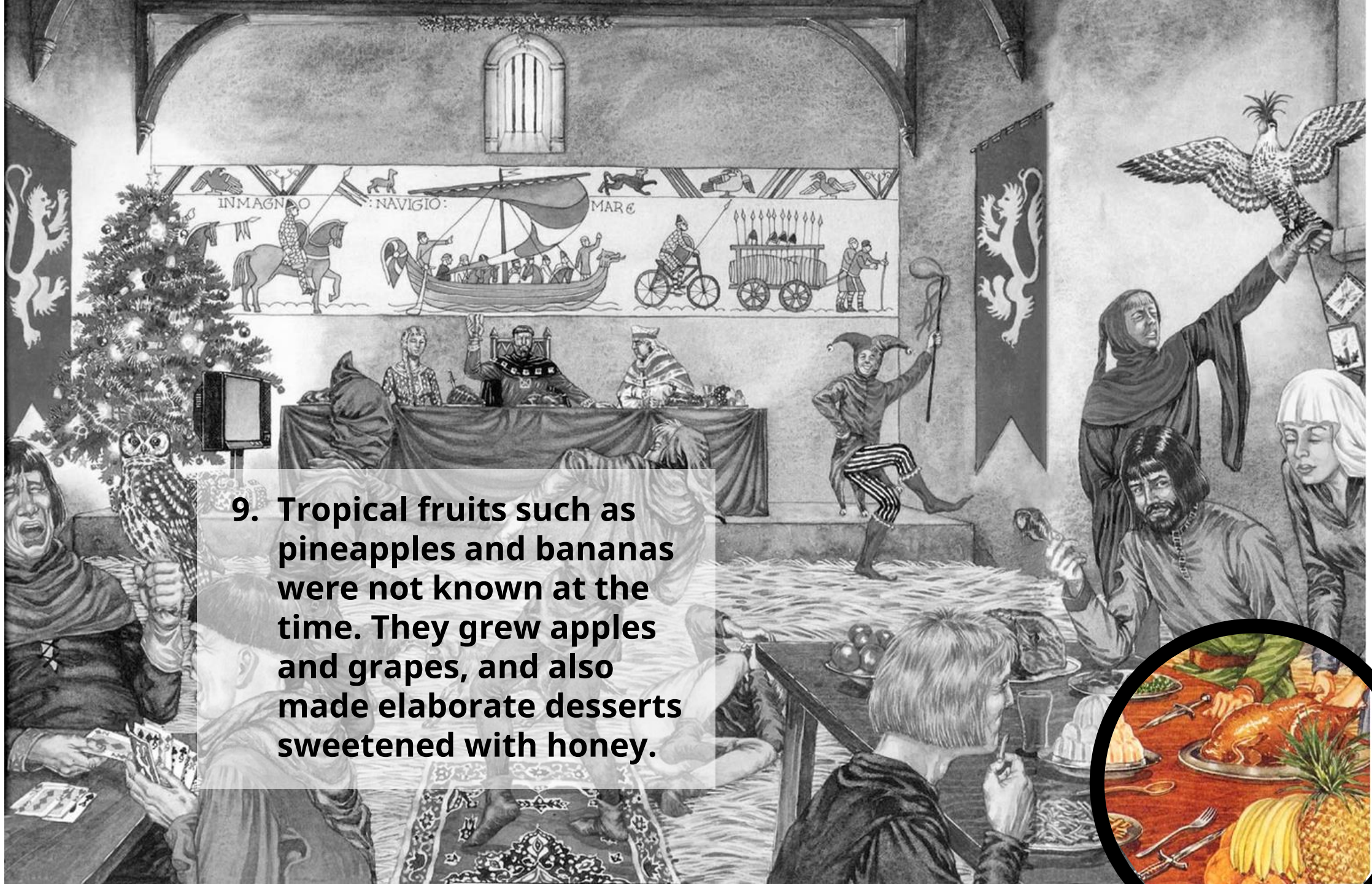
6. There were no bicycles. They would not be invented for hundreds of years. Tapestries hung castle walls. This is the Bayeux Tapestry which tells the story of the Battle of Hastings. In it you can see many examples of Norman transport.

7. They would not have chips at the time. The potato did arrive in England until the 1590s. Banquets would include various fish and meats and even peacock if the king was visiting! Poor people lived mainly on vegetables such as peas and beans.



8. They would not use forks at that time. They had knives and spoons but mostly used their fingers.





9. Tropical fruits such as pineapples and bananas were not known at the time. They grew apples and grapes, and also made elaborate desserts sweetened with honey.



10. The custom of giving Christmas cards or presents was not known at the time. Christmas was one of several holidays, along with May Day and Midsummer Eve, all celebrated with feasting, singing, and dancing.

