

memo

Tuesday, August 19, 2003

To: Non

From: Believer

Re: From the set of books *A Historical Personages, vol. II, Gnusprig to Myzzenmast*

Krumpl, Karlheinz: (789?—813) One of Emperor Charlemagne's *missi dominici* (personal representatives of the emperor who wielded wide powers, and regularly inspected assigned districts), he ran into a bit of financial trouble in Italy when he was unable to pay his bill at a gambling house and brothel.

Using the broad bureaucratic powers granted him by the Emperor, he extricated himself from the situation, and returned to Charlemagne's court in Aachen. However, knowing that his indiscretion would catch up with him, and wanting a more honorable way out than detection and punishment (which may have included, but was not limited to public ridicule) he concocted a complicated, and ultimately confounded suicide plan.

Knowing that one crime and one crime only would grant him the swift death he so archly desired, he acquired a piece of cloth which resembled one of the Empress' handkerchiefs, taught himself embroidery in a matter of days, and embroidered the Empress' crest in the piece of cloth. He then, at his next meeting with the Emperor, somewhat discretely allowed the handkerchief to fall from his tunic, whereupon the Emperor had him seized by the Royal Guard. The Emperor, an observant man, immediately recognized the stitchwork as a forgery, and pronounced Krumpl's punishment on the spot: Krumpl was to embroider the phrase *ego sum asinus* [I am a boob] on his tunic, and parade in front of the cathedral for 36 hours, after which he would return to the gambling house and brothel in Italy, and request (via a letter from the Emperor himself) a job as a boudoir attendant to work off his debt.