



Members Handbook  
**VIKING**

Version 1  
Published January 2007

*This handbook is based on original material from the Regia Anglorum Members Handbook (1992). It was originally compiled by **Ben and Sue Levick** and **Sue Farr**, with illustrations by **Colin and Ben Levick**. It has been edited and the pictures redrawn by **Ian and Hazel Uzzell** (January 2007). It is not intended to replace the new handbook currently under construction, but to act as a stopgap until it is published.*

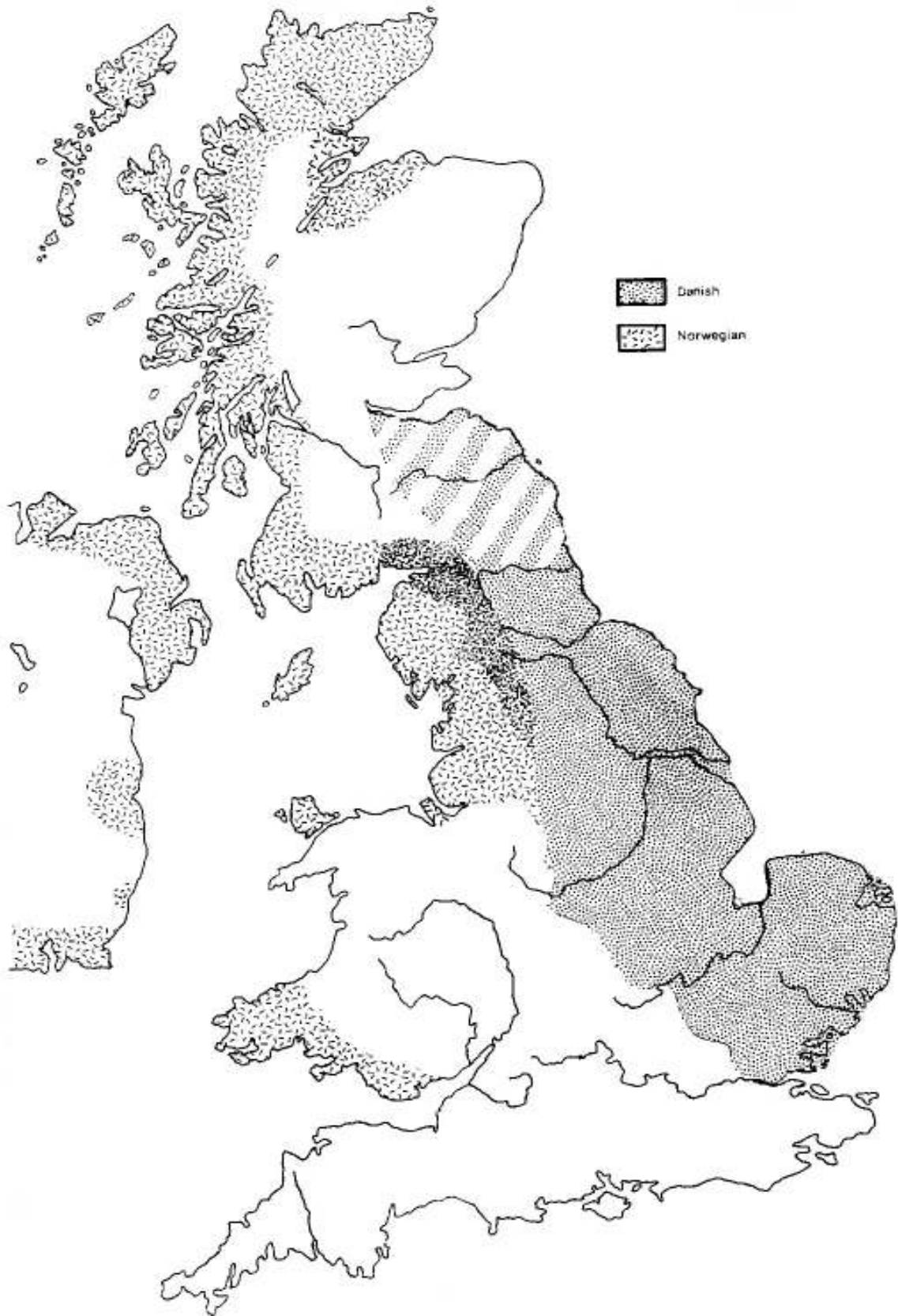
The intellectual property of this document is vested in Regia Anglorum. The whole or parts may be reproduced by paid-up members of the Society for onward transmission to other members of Regia Anglorum for use in the context of a training manual. Parts of it may be reproduced for the purposes of review or comment without permission, according to the Laws of Copyright.

Published January 2007

# The Vikings

<b>1.</b>	<b>Viking Rank and Organisation</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Who were the Vikings?</b>	<b>Page 6</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Viking Social Organisation</b>	<b>Pages 7 - 8</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>The Danelaw</b>	<b>Page 9</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Military Organisation</b>	<b>Page 10</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Clothing and Kit Requirements</b>	<b>Page 11</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Viking Dress</b>	<b>Pages 12 - 14</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Illustrations</b>	<b>Pages 15 - 19</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Viking Names</b>	<b>Pages 20 - 22</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Viking Commands</b>	<b>Page 23</b>

AREA OF VIKING INFLUENCE

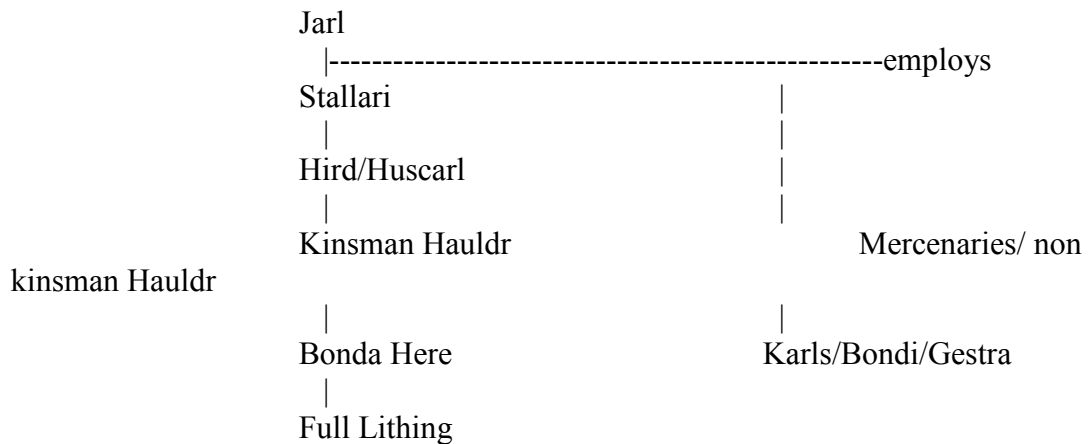


# The Vikings

## RANK AND ORGANISATION



## MILITARY ORGANISATION



## WHO WERE THE VIKINGS?

Whilst the term 'Vikings' is used throughout this handbook, it is a generic term used to mean anyone of Scandinavian descent. The word Viking has several meanings. The most usual being a pirate, and as such it could be equally well applied to any sea-going raider, even a Saxon, Frankish or Frisian one! The other common translation is 'a man of the bays or inlets' and in this sense it is generally applied to the Scandinavians.

The term Viking covers the Norse (Norwegians), Danes, Swedes, Rus (Russian Vikings), Anglo-Danes, Anglo-Norse, Hiberno-Norse, Icelanders, and Greenlanders. You should know which type of Viking you are trying to represent.

As there is such a wide variety of Vikings, this section can only deal with them in very general terms, and the rank structure/kit requirements may not be exactly what your type of Viking needs. If in doubt, research, check with the Authenticity Officer and he will advise you. Also remember that Vikings would adopt many of the local customs, fashions, religion and social structures of the areas they settled in so, for example, an Anglo-Dane would not look the same as, or act identically to a native Dane.

## VIKING SOCIAL ORGANISATION

Viking social structure conformed to the Indo-European pattern by dividing people into classes; the rulers, the free and the unfree. This situation prevailed through the Vendel and Viking periods and was only significantly altered in the 11th century with the advent of unified kingdoms in the Scandinavian homelands.

Lowest in the social order were the **THRALLS** (male-thrall; female-ambatt) or slaves. Whilst the main recruiting grounds for slaves were war, piracy and trade, their numbers also included those born into slavery and various criminals. A man who failed to discharge his debts could become the slave of his creditor until he redeemed his debt. Thralls had few rights and could hold no land, so instead of being fined for lawbreaking they were beaten, maimed or killed. However, a thrall did have some advantages over the freeman as the following laws show:

*"Now a freeman and a slave who commit theft together, it is the freeman who is a thief and the slave shall not lose by it, for the man who steals with another man's slave steals by himself."*

*"A slave has greater rights than a freeman in one matter. A slave has the right to kill on account of his wife even though she is a bondmaid, but a freeman has not the right to kill on account of a bondmaid, even though she is his woman."*

Despite these advantages, the slave was still only considered chattel, as shown by other laws:

*"If a man's slave is killed, then no leveling oath need be sworn for him anymore than for any other cattle belonging to a man, should that be killed."*

*"If a master kills his own slave, he is not liable before the law unless he kills him during legally ordained festivals or in Lent, then the penalty is banishment."*

Although thralls legally commanded no wergild it was normal in England to pay the owner the price of eight cows if you killed his thrall; in Iceland the equivalent was eight ounces of silver; in Scandinavia the killer must make *"restitution according to the value set on him (the slave) naked."*

Although unable to hold land a thrall could have possessions, money and time to do work for himself. Slaves were permitted to do business at public markets and to make private transactions if the value involved was less than one *ortug* (1/3 ounce of silver, 20 pence). In favourable circumstances he might hope to purchase, earn or be rewarded with his freedom. Marriage was permitted but the children would also be slaves. Ill treatment of thralls was regarded as an undesirable quality and most masters appear to have treated their slaves quite well. A slave was not allowed to bear arms except in the case of fighting off invaders; and the slave who killed such an enemy was to be rewarded with his freedom.

As the Viking Age wore on, and the influence of Christianity grew stronger, slavery became less common, especially with slaves of the same nationality or religion. Once released the freedman (**LEYSINGI**) was still not entirely free; he was still dependant on his former owner and family for a number of generations and could not institute legal proceedings against him. He needed a patron to protect his new found freedom and often looked to his former master to champion him. He could however gain full freedom by buying it with a larger payment than would otherwise be required. Alfred's treaty with Guthrum at Wedmore (886 AD) set the

wergild of a Danish freedman equal to that of a Saxon gebur at two hundred shillings.

Above the freedman were the **BONDI** and **KARLS**, the truly free land holding farmers. This class was a very broad one ranging from impoverished peasants to men of wealth and local authority. Whilst they could be sailors, hunters, traders or raiders they were still fundamentally farmers, even if absence and large holdings meant they required the labour of other men - both free and thrall. Their wergild at Wedmore was set as the same as English nobility, eight half-marks of pure gold.

Although in theory a bondi had a farm of his own, in practice most young men had to live with their parents, or farm the lands of a large landholder. Such men still retained their status. *"These were the men who tilled land and raised stock, bore witness and produced verdicts, said aye or no on matters of public concern at the Thing (including matters as important as the election of a king or a change of religion), attended religious and lay ceremonies, made and bore weapons, manned ships, served in levies, were conscious of their dues and worth, and so impressed these upon others that as a free peasantry they stood in a class of their own in Europe."*

One stage above the bondi were those landowners with hereditary rights to their land. In Orkney, Shetland and the Western Isles these were known as **ODALSBONDI**, in Norway as **HAULDR**, and in England as **HOLDAS**. Odal rights were fiercely maintained as they distinguished a family claim, and could not be usurped by jarls or even the crown (in Scotland odal rights survived into the eighteenth century). The wergild for a holdas was established in English courts as half that for an eolderman.

The upper levels of Viking society were comprised of the various forms of aristocracy and the kings. The lowest rank of rulers were the **LANDSMENN** (roughly equivalent to the later medieval 'baron'), known as **STYRAESMENN** in Denmark. Originally the individual ship commanders, the later qualification for this rank was the ability to field and maintain forty armed men in the levy. The position was not hereditary and was gained through an oath of loyalty to the king, on whose behalf they held their authority. In Norway their 'manbote' (wergild) was fixed at six full marks of silver.

More frequently encountered is the title of **JARL**, a semi or fully independent lordship. As with the bondi some held lands by odal right of inheritance, others ruthlessly fought their way to power. In the early period there is little clear difference between powerful jarls and the many petty kings who flourished in Denmark and Norway. Later, in the eleventh century, under kings such as Harald Hardrada, the power-broking jarls were crushed. The Viking captain with his fleet and hird was a thing of the past. The new chieftains were landed men who wished for stability and peace, members of a bondi aristocracy who supported centralised kingship. In the century after Harald Fairhair, no Norwegian king died peacefully in his bed or was succeeded by his son. Magnus became king in 1035 at the invitation of the people and came to peace with his uncle Hardrada. Hardrada's death in 1066 was not the fault of his subjects, and his sons, grandson and great-grandsons all succeeded him in due order. The power and organisational abilities of the Christian Church also aided the king, to their mutual benefit. This influence increased throughout the eleventh century. As power centralised the royal estates were left in the charge of stewards, **BRYTI**, who formed a layer of local authority balancing that of the local landsmenn.



## THE DANELAW

Although under Scandinavian influence the Danelaw was an integral part of the English kingdom. Like the rest of England it was divided into shires, some massive like Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, others far smaller. The larger shires were divided into trithings (a Scandinavian word for 'thirds') which gave us our modern 'ridings' in Yorkshire. The Midland shires and the shires of the south-east Danelaw conformed to the usual English patterns, as did the East-Anglian divisions of Norfolk and Suffolk.

Much of the Danelaw, like the rest of England, was further subdivided into hundreds, and the basic fiscal and disciplinary business of the community passed through the hundred courts. However, where Scandinavian influence was strongest, such as Yorkshire and the Five Boroughs, the equivalent sub-division was the **WAPENTAKE**. Despite the differences in nomenclature of the sub-divisions, the legal system was much the same. Even in Scandinavia the legal system was not vastly different to that in England. The only major differences were in religion and, as the Danes were converted, even this difference grew less. This does not mean that the laws were identical, however, as one of Edgar's codes permitted the Danes to exercise their rights *"according to the good laws they can best decide on."*

The wapentakes were further subdivided into the Danish **CARUCATES**, the land that could be ploughed by one plough team in a year, and **BOVATES**, the amount of land apportioned to a farmer contributing one ox to the eight-ox plough team. In Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and Norfolk, traces of a further Scandinavian sub-division are to be found -the **MANSLOT**(allotment to one free settler). Hundreds were still divided into hides.

It is not clear exactly how warriors were recruited for the **HERE** (army). It is likely that they may have been drawn on the 'one man from several basic land units' as was done in Saxon areas.

## MILITARY ORGANISATION

In the early Viking period the basis of the army was the **HIRD** (pronounced 'heerth'), the men of the lord's hearth who had sworn loyalty to him. Many would be fellow countrymen drawn by a lord's reputation for valour and generosity, but some would be professional fighters seeking the best rewards. In peacetime they acted as the lord's or king's officials, forming embassies, exacting tribute, recovering dues, and acting as messengers; in war they formed the core of his army. In addition the lord could call upon his estates to provide ships and crews (the coastal nature of Scandinavian warfare meant that armies were calculated in terms of ships' crews). The country was divided into units (hafna) each assessed at one full mark of gold, all of which were committed to manning and arming a ship. The crew would have varied from 40 - 60, and in addition to a spear, iron cap and shield for each member, one mail shirt per ship, and one bow and arrows per 6 benches were required (these figures varied slightly in different countries and times but provide a good average guide). A similar system probably continued to be used in the Danelaw where there was a large number of small land-holding bondi - a thing of the past in the manorially based Saxon England. Like the Saxon fyrd the Anglo-Danish **HERE** may have had a system of rotation for service to reduce the burden on estates, although like the fyrd it may have contained many semi-professional warriors.

The eleventh century saw a gradual shift to a more permanent professional force commencing with the assaults of Swein and Cnut upon England. In 1012 forty-five ships detached themselves from Swein's fleet and made a bargain with Aethelred to "*keep the country against its enemies*" provided the crew were fed and clothed. Later, under Cnut, a standing force of 40 ships was maintained after the disbanding of the here. Its crews were professionals, **LITHSMEN**, and were clearly distinguished from the ships manned by the levies. The men received eight full marks a year per oar. Only under Edward, free of Danish dominance, did this system decline and the ships left England with their gains.

Similarly, Cnut instituted the **THINGEMANNALITH** or **TINGLITH** better known by the English term **HUSCARL**. In many ways it formalised the earlier system of the hird. Unlike the earlier band this one was not supported by the king alone, but by taxes and fees, usually from the towns and burghs where there was much wealth but little land, hence the lack of obligation for fyrd service. In at least two cases there are references to **BUTESCARLES** being paid by a burgh whose citizens are not taking part in the king's host. These men appear to be mercenaries given garrison duties to protect towns in potential danger who had already provided men for the fyrd.

There was very little formal structure by way of military rank in Viking armies. As a rule the term **DRENG** is applied to a young warrior, and **THEGN** to a more mature member of a boat's crew. The only two specifically military posts referred to at the time were the **MERKISMATHR**, the standard bearer (an honoured position since many Viking standards were said to have magical properties), and the **STALLARI** or marshal - the king's deputy in the field.

In the eleventh century the Norse kings probably had an immediate retinue of about ninety men, excluding menial servants. These were divided into the **HIRTHMENN** (household men) and a lower class called **GESTIR** (guests), whose pay was half that of the hirthmenn. The gestir had their own leader, assembly and quarters. They acted as a kind of police force, doing errands for the king, executing his justice and collecting his taxes. They were not a popular group, and a later explanation of their name is that they were 'unwelcome guests' in many a house!

The hirthmenn were hand-picked and well rewarded. To be chosen was a great honour and meant acceptance not only by the other members, but by the king. A hirthman paid homage to the king and swore loyalty to him and the other hirthmenn. In Norway the hirthmenn maintained a hospice for their old and infirm members (a sort of early 'benevolent fund!'). These men were knit together by the personal bond they each had with their king or chieftain. "*The king and other leading men who had a hirth should show their men favour and goodwill and give them their proper pay. In return men should give their lord loyalty and service and be prepared to do all his commands.*"

## RECOMMENDED CIVILIAN CLOTHING AND KIT REQUIREMENTS

RANK	MALE	FEMALE
<b>Thrall</b>	Coarse undyed tunic of linen or wool  <b>OPTIONAL:</b> Belt, trousers, leg wraps, shoes, hood, rectangular cloak,	Coarse undyed ankle length dress of linen or wool, headcloth,  <b>OPTIONAL:</b> Waist tie, leg wraps, shoes, hood, rectangular cloak or wrap
<b>Leysingi</b>	Coarse undyed tunic of wool or linen, shoes, leather belt, trousers, hood, rectangular cloak, leg wraps  <b>OPTIONAL:</b> Undertunic, pouch, naalbinding socks, a few beads	Coarse undyed ankle length dress of linen or wool, headcloth, waist tie, leg wraps or socks, shoes, hood, rectangular cloak or wrap  <b>OPTIONAL:</b> Underdress, pouch, a few beads
<b>Karl or Bondi</b>	Wool or linen dyed tunic, trousers, hood, belt, shoes, pouch, undertunic  <b>OPTIONAL:</b> Pewter or bronze jewellery, simple woven or embroidered decoration, middle class colours	Dyed linen or wool ankle length dress, underdress, headcovering, waist tie (can be woven band), leg wraps or socks, shoes, hood, rectangular cloak or wrap, beads  <b>OPTIONAL:</b> Hangeroc with oval brooches (before 950), pewter or bronze jewellery, keys, needle case, simple woven or embroidered decoration on wrists of overdress or across top of hangeroc. Middle class colours
<b>Odalsbondi or Hauldr</b>	As above.  <b>OPTIONAL:</b> More richly decorated clothes, Richer colours, silver jewellery, gold finger rings	As above.  <b>OPTIONAL:</b> More richly decorated clothes, richer colours, silver jewellery, gold finger rings
<b>Landsmenn or Jarl</b>	As above.  <b>OPTIONAL:</b> Silk decoration on tunic, lined cloak	As above.  <b>OPTIONAL:</b> Silk bands on overdress and hangeroc, silk headcovering

**NOTES:**

**ALL** members are recommended to supply themselves with an authentic knife, bowl, spoon, and mug or horn. A jug and wooden plate are also recommended.

**ALL** eating knives, **MUST** be scabbarded

All garments **MUST** be properly hemmed and, where necessary, patched. Half finished garments must not be worn on site.

**KEY:**

**Recommended:** Clothing which would be appropriate to the rank shown

**Optional:** Additional items which may be worn if desired.

## VIKING DRESS

### *MALE DRESS*

The basic form of male dress consisted of a woollen tunic reaching somewhere between mid-thigh and the knee, a pair of woollen hose or trousers, a pair of leather turnshoes, a leather waist belt, a pouch, and a knife. Presumably some form of undergarment or loin cloth would have been worn, but no archaeological evidence of this has survived.

Tunics often had gussets at the armpits to ease movement of the arm and reduce tension on the seams. The sleeves were tight fitting on the fore-arm but were usually looser on the upper arm. Triangular gussets added to the lower part of the tunic made for a flared 'skirt' to reduce any restriction when working or fighting. In summer work could be done wearing puttee type leg bindings (but not trousers or hose), so as not to hamper the movement of the legs. Working tunics were usually undecorated and those of the poorer bondi and thralls were undyed. The richer bondi, hauldr etc., could have had tunics decorated with woven braids and linen tunics for lighter wear in summer, or to give an added layer of warmth as an undertunic in winter. The very wealthy would have been able to import silk, or like Bolli Bollason, return from the East with gold-embroidered silk tunics and 'scarlet' cloth. (Scarlet was soft well draping cloth, not necessarily red.)

Trousers came in a variety of styles, but the most common were straight, fairly tight legged down to the ankle. A gusset was frequently used below the crotch to ease movement and prevent splitting at a point where the four seams would otherwise meet.

There are several depictions of Vikings wearing very tight leg wear. These are described as being akin to ski-pants, and may be trousers or may be hose. If the legwear was hose and not trousers they would have been worn over a pair of knee breeches or longer (braies), which are sometimes depicted on carvings, apparently being worn on their own (although we must remember that much of the depicted detail on sculpture was painted on and is now lost). Burial evidence indicates that whilst the hose may well have been tied to a waistband, they were also pinned at the thighs with small pins or penannular brooches. This pinning may have been to a pair of breeches, or to connect the hose to a waistband in a similar fashion to modern suspenders.

Turnshoes followed the patterns common to northern Europe from the fourth to thirteenth century - with either a central upper seam, or a flap and toggle. Standard waterproofing measures included either a 50/50 mix of beeswax and mutton fat, or liberal doses of fish oil.

Knives were like small pocket knives generally with blades around 3 - 4 inches long. Handles were mainly wooden, although antler examples have been found. A few had blades which were hinged to fold back into the handle like a pen-knife.

Hoods were worn and these could be lined. Cloaks were usually rectangular and pinned at the shoulder (over the weapon arm). Richer folk sometimes had semi-circular full length cloaks and would line them with a contrasting colour. A peculiarly Viking cloak was the rogg, a shaggy cloak created by inserting strands of sheep's wool into the weaving of the cloak similar to rug making. Ram's fleece with its high lanolin content, brushed downwards, would create a very waterproof, if somewhat aromatic cloak. A kaftan style coat of eastern influence was also worn by some men from Sweden and possibly Denmark.

Cloaks would be fastened by a cloak pin of wood, bone, bronze, silver or gold according to the owner's wealth or status. Circular brooches of the Saxon style were sometimes used, but the most common forms of brooch were the penannular and ring headed pins. Again, the materials and decoration reflected the wealth of the wearer, ranging from plain bronze items of 2" diameter to silver rings of 6" with gold foil and filigree, garnets and enamelling, and pins of up to 12" in length!

The only other common forms of male jewellery were rings, either of twisted wire or cast design, glass beads and arm rings. Although the latter could be seen primarily as portable bullion they were sometimes highly ornate with varying twisted wires and cast terminals. Plainer bands could easily be ornamented by stamping designs onto them with an iron die.

### ***FEMALE DRESS***

Traditional female Viking dress consisted of an ankle length linen underdress, an outer woollen overdress, and a garment recently referred to as a hangeroc, or suspended skirt. For outdoors a shawl or wrap could be worn, fastened at the collarbone by a circular or trefoil brooch. After conversion to Christianity Viking women wore the same clothing as Saxon.

The linen undergarment is the basic 'T' shaped tunic style dress with round neck, which might have a slit closed by a pin. The sleeves are tight to the wrist.

The woollen overdress is basically the same shape. It could have triangular insets in the side of the skirt to facilitate walking. The sleeves are looser at the wrist. This garment can be decorated with tablet weaving at the neck and cuffs and sometimes on the chest. This dress can be worn with or without a cloth belt.

The hangeroc could be a tube of material, either woven as such or a wraparound rectangle sewn up the edge. It was suspended just above the breast by looped straps passing over the shoulder and secured by 'tortoise' brooches. Modern reconstructions depict the garment as a calf length item, but we have found no evidence to support the theory. The suspended tube would be wide enough to walk in, with excess material taken in at the top (either under the arms or at the back - but not at the front) to ensure a neat fit around the upper chest. The top seam could be decorated by the addition of braids. Some hangerocs seem to have been tailored at the waist, with vertical braids sewn on to emphasise the line of the material. Woven belts may have been worn over this garment

Rows of glass beads and amber or precious metal pendants could be hung between

the 'tortoise' brooches, with keys, needle cases and a knife hung on thongs or chains attached to a brooch. In the later period, when 'tortoise' brooches had gone out of fashion, the latter could be suspended from the waist tie of the underdress. The glass beads are usually no more than 2 rows

The shawl was a triangular piece of material, the point hanging down the back to mid-thigh. A shorter garment was probably created by folding a square piece of cloth double along the diagonal. These garments were fastened with either an elongated shawl brooch or trefoil brooch. Women's cloaks were similar to those of men and amongst the wealthy could be lined. These could be fastened with a trefoil brooch, cloak pin, or large disc brooch.

It is not known if ordinary pre-Christian Viking women routinely covered their hair. Woven sprang hair nets are known. If it was necessary to cover the hair to facilitate working, then a head scarf could have been worn. The Danelaw was converted to Christianity in the late ninth century and most of Scandinavia during the latter part of the tenth century, and the adoption of headwear took place alongside. The silk and wool caps found at Lincoln, York and Dublin all approximate to the same dimensions, 48cm by 17cm. Whilst it has been suggested that these small caps were worn by children, it would be most unusual if the only examples found were all for children. As they do not cover all the hair it is possible that they were used to secure the hair beneath some other form of head covering. There is evidence to suggest that women of high status in areas with more cosmopolitan influences, such as the Danelaw and southern Denmark, would have worn a long wimple, edged with decorative braid. In Dublin fringed scarves 70cm by 24cm may have been worn draped over the head and secured by a silk band or metal fillet or pinned to the cap.

As well as western influences, Viking dress was affected by Eastern European styles too. A long coat was adopted, which could be of quilted, felted or twill woven wool. Unlike male coats, which had buttons, the female coat was secured at the neck by a brooch, which passed through a silk loop sewn onto either side of the opening. Richer versions of the brooch were often enamelled. Rich coats could be lined with silk, faced with decorated and embroidered silk, and trimmed at the edges with fur. The wrists could also be decorated.

There is little surviving evidence for underwear, but women may have worn hose, leg bindings or ankle length socks made from naalbinding, such as the one found at York. The hose would be tied around the leg at the knee with a band or garter. Feet could have been incorporated into the hose. A loin cloth may have been worn, particularly when the woman was having a period.

Women wore turnshoes or ankle boots. Boots and shoes could be fastened by a lace around the ankle or by a flap over the top of the foot held in place by a leather, wooden or horn toggle, or a coloured glass bead.

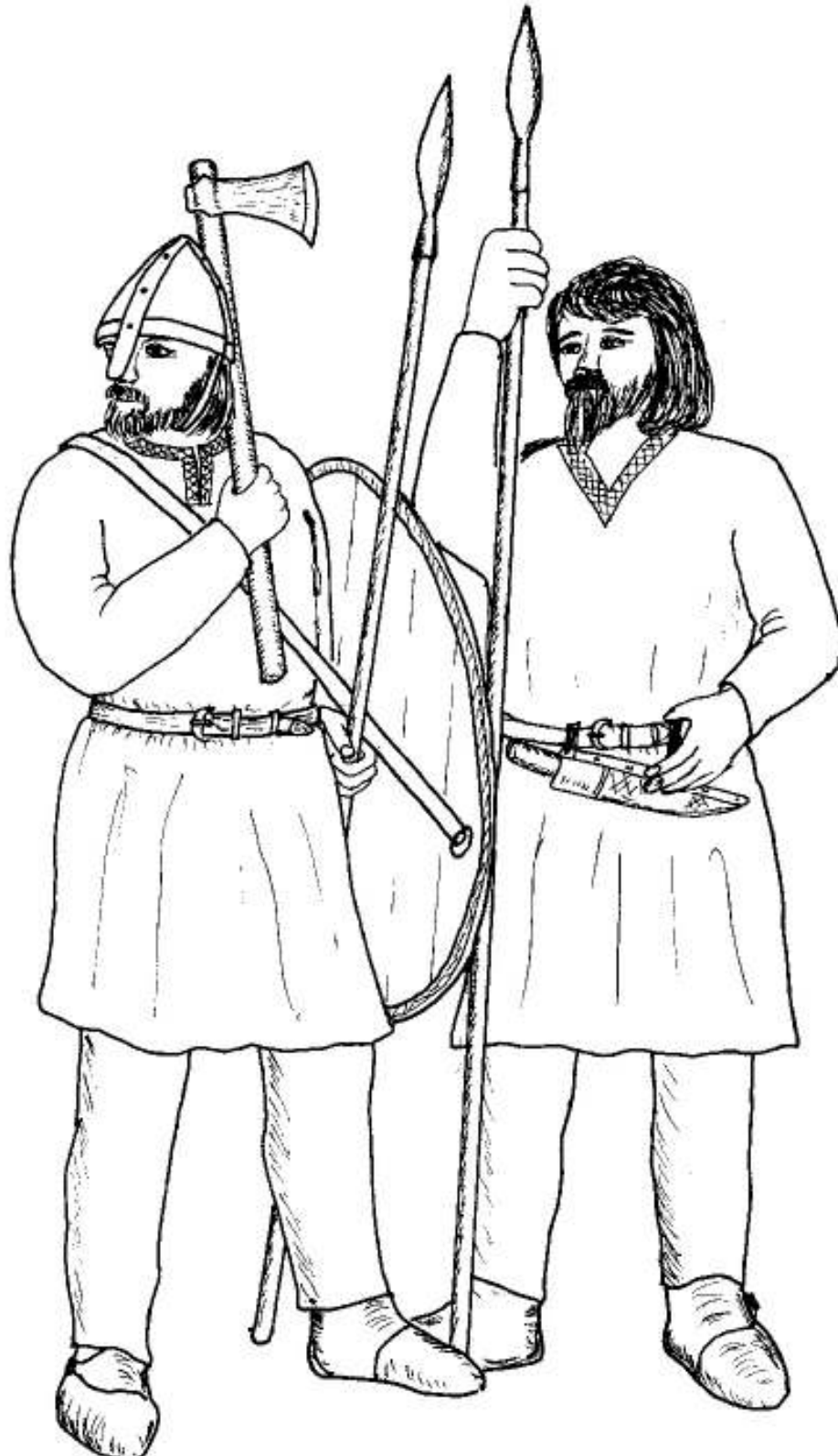
## **SOME ILLUSTRATIONS**

The following pages show some illustrations of Viking men's and women's clothing.

For information and patterns for making any of these garments, please see the "**Members Handbook Basic Clothing**" which is issued to all new members

## KARL AND BONDI

These freemen both wear the tunic, trousers and turnshoes that were the basic male clothing throughout northern Europe in the tenth and eleventh centuries. They are lightly armed with the wealthier Karl wearing a helm and carrying a shield. He also has a wood axe which he could use for fighting in addition to wood-chopping.





## TRADER AND HAULD

Both these figures wear a woollen tunic and straight trousers with turnshoes. The figure on the left has decoration at the neck of his tunic; the figure on the right has decoration at the neck and cuffs.

Both figures wear jewellery in the form of beads, finger and arm rings. The trader wears a rectangular cloak fastened at the right shoulder with a penannular brooch. He has a drawstring pouch at his waist and carries a pair of scales.



**SCANDINAVIAN WOMEN – BEST FORMAL DRESS**

Both women wear a hangeroc over a linen underdress and woollen overdress. The woman on the left wears the 'Dublin' style fringed scarf. The woman on the right wears a cap such as those found in York, Dublin and Lincoln. The left hand figure wears a triangular woollen shawl fastened with a trefoil brooch. The right hand figure wears the oval (Tortoise) brooches supporting the hangeroc. Suspended from one of them are her sewing accoutrements. Those in charge of the house might also have keys hanging from the brooch. Both wear simple turnshoes.



## JARL AND MERCENARY

The Norse jarl (left) wears a short mailshirt over his decorated tunic. His one piece helm has a mail aventail for further protection. On his back is his round shield and he carries his scabbarded sword. The mercenary's armour shows him to be well traveled. His sword is English although he also wears the long hauberk, coif and nasal helm typifying the well armed European warrior. He also carries the feared Viking broad axe.



## VIKING NAMES

Vikings had only given names. Their "last name" was usually their father's name plus 'sson' for a man or 'dotter' for a woman. If the person's mother was a prominent widow, her children might be known by her name instead plus 'rson' for a man or 'dotter' for a woman. Often families alternated the name of the eldest so that Arn Gunnarsson might be the father and son of Gunnar Arnsson and the grandfather and grandson of Arn Gunnarsson.

### NICKNAMES

Giving a nickname was like naming a newborn baby; it created a special tie between the name-giver and the name-taker. The newly named person could claim a gift from the name-giver, either a present or a favour, even if the name was derogatory.

Nicknames sometimes went by contraries: a man with swarthy skin might be called 'the fair'; an unusually tall man might be nicknamed 'the short'.

Few Viking women had nicknames; most described the woman's wisdom, beauty, wealth or speech habits.

### MALE VIKING NAMES

Adils Aevar Agmundr Aleifr Alf Alfketill Aki Ali Alrik Amundi An Anakol Anlaf  
Anund Ari Arinbjorn Armod Arn Arnbjorn Arnfinn Arngeir Arngrim Arnkel Arnketill  
Arnlaug Arnljot Arnor Arnthor Arnulfr Arnvid Aron Asbjorn Asbrand Asfrith Asgaut  
Asgeir Asgrim Askel Asketill Aslak Asmund Asulf Asvald Asvard Atli Atsur Audbjorn  
Audgisli Audolf Audun Austmathr Authgrim Authketill Authulf Auti

Balki Balli Bard Baug Beinir Berg Bergfinn Bersi Birning Bjalfi Bjarni Bjartmar Bjorgulf  
Bjorn Bjornulf Blann Bodalf Bodvar Bolli Bolverk Borgar Bork Borstig Botulf Bragi  
Brand Bretakollr Brodir Brondulf Bruni Brusi

Dag Dagfinn Dunfjall Dyri

Egil Eid Eilif Einar Eindridi Eirik Eldgrim Erlend Erling Ermmund Eskil Eydis Eyjolf Eystein Eyvald  
Eyvind

Fargrim Farmann Farthegn Fastulf Finn Finnleik Firthgest Flosi Forni Fridgeir Fridmund Frodi Frostulf

Gaetir Galti Gauti Gamal Gamli Gardar Gardi Gauk Gaut Gavtvid Geir Geirfinn Geirleif  
Geirmund Geirolf Geirstein Geirthjof Geitirgest Gellir Gilli Gisli Glam Glum Gizur  
Gnupi Gorm Grani Grettir Grim Grimar Grimkel Grimolf Grimwald Grind Gris Grith  
Grjotgard Gudbrand Gudlaug Gudleif Gudmund Gudrik Gudrod Gulli Gunnar Gunnbjorn  
Gunnhaufr Gunni Gunnlaug Gunnleif Gunnstein Gunnulf Guthhere Guthorm Guthroth  
Guthrum

Hadd Haeng Haf Hafgrim Hafliði Hafr Hagi Hakon Halfdan Hall Hallad Hallbjorn  
Halldor Hallfred Hallgrim Hallkel Hallmund Hallstein Hallvard Hamund Hanef Harald  
Hardbein Harek Hauk Havard Hedin Hegg Helgi Heming Herjolf Herlaug Hermund  
Herstein Hildiglum Hildir Hjalti Hjalkar Hjarrandi Hjor Hjorleif Hjort Hlenni Hlodvir  
Hogni Holmgavt Holmgeir Holmstein Hord Hoskuld Hosvir Hraerek Hrafn Hrafnkel  
Hrafnvartr Hranfast Hragnef Hrapp Hreidar Hreitharr Hrein Hrifla Hroald Hroar Hrodgeir  
Hrolf Hrollaug Hromund Hrossbjorn Hrosskel Hrut Hunbogi Hundolfr

Illugi Ingemar Ingi Ingifast Ingimund Ingjald Ingolf Ioketill Iorthr  
Iri Iric Isgaut Isi Isleif Isulf Ivar

Jarlabanki Jobjorn Jokul Jomar Jon Jorund

Kadal Kalf Kari Karl Kaupmann Ketil Ketilbjorn Kjartan Kjetvi Klakkr Knut Kodran Koigrim Kol  
Kolbein Kolskegg Kormak Konal Kori Kotkel

Lambi Leidolf Leif Lifolf Ljot Lodin Lodmund Lopt Lyting

Mak Mar Modolf Mord

Naerfi Nefstein Njal

Odd Oddleif Odinkar Ofeig Ogmund Olaf Oleif Olvir Ondott Ongul Onund Orest  
Orgumleidi Orlyg Orm Orn Ornulf Orri Orrin Ospak Osvif Oswald Otkel Otrygg Ottar  
Ozur

Saemund Selkollr Serk Sigbjorn Sigbrand Sigebeorht Sigferth Sigegar Sigeheah Sigehelm  
Sigehere Sigelac Sigemaer Sigemund Sigenoth Sigeræd Sigeric Sigestael Sigeward  
Sigewine Sigewulf Sigfast Sigfus Sigguatr Sighvat Sigmund Sighadd Sigtrygg Sigurd  
Sigvaldi Singasven Skamkel Skapti Skarf Skegg Skidi Skjold Skopti Skorri Skuf Skuli  
Skurfa Skuti Slothi Snaebjorn Snaekol Snae-Ulf Snorri Solmund Solvi Sorli Sod Spjut  
Starkad Starri Stein Steinar Steinbitr Steinbjorn Steingrim Steinkel Steinketil Steinmod  
Steinolf Steinthor Storolf Sturla Styr Styrkar Stykkollr Styrmir Sumarlidi Suit Svafar Svalfi  
Svan Svart Svartbrand Svartgeirr Svartkollr Svartlingr Svein Sveinbjorn Sverting Svinulf  
Swein

Teit Thidrandi Thidrik Thjodofl Thjostolf Thokodolf Thoraldr Thorarin Thorberg  
Thorbjorn Thorbrand Thord Thorfast Thorfinn Thorfrethr Thorgaut Thorgeir Thorgest  
Thorgils Thorgrim Thorhall Thorlak Thorir Thorkel Thorketil Thorleif Thorleik Thormod  
Thormothr Thometill Thorodd Thorolf Thororm Thorred Thorstein Thorvald Thorvard  
Thorvid Thrain Thrand Throst Tjorvi Tofi Toki Torfi Torrad Trandil Trygg Tumi Tyrfing  
Tyrkir

Ubbein Ufi Uglubathr Ulf Ulfbjorn Ulfrim Ulfketil Ulfjot Uni Unnulf

Valbrand Valgard Vali Valthjof Vandil Var Vathlauss Vebjorn Vebrand Vegeir Veleif  
Vermund Vertlithi Vestar Vestein Vestgeir Veturlidi Vidkunn Vifil Vigbjord Vigot Vikar

Wealglit Wengo

Yngvar Ysoppa

### **FEMALE VIKING NAMES**

Abi Aesa Aldis Alfdis Alfeid Alof Arnbjorg Arngunn Arnkatla Arnora Asa Asdis Asfrid  
Asgard Aslaug Asleif Asny Asta Astrid Asvor Aud Audbjorg Audhild

Bera Bergljot Bergthora Bjartney Bjorg Bothild

Dalla Dotta

Ermingard Estrid

Freydis Freygerd Frida Frideburg Fridgerd

Geirlaug Gerd Gillaug Ginnlaug Gjaflaug Gorm Grelod Grima Grimhild Groa Gudbjorg  
Gudfinna Gudfrid Gudrid Gudrun Gunnhild Gunnvor Gyda Gyrd Gyrid

Halla Hallbera Hallberta Halldis Halldora Hallfrid Hallgerd Hallgrim Hallkatla Hallveig  
Hedinfrid Helga Herbjorg Herdis Hervor Hild Hildigunn Hildirid Hlif Holmfrid Hrafnhild  
Hrefna Hrodny Hungerd

Ingibjorg Ingigerd Ingirid Ingirun Ingunn Isgerd

Jaddvor Jodis Jofrid Joreid Jorunn

Ljot Ljufa Luta

Kadlin Katla Ketiloy

Moeid

Nidbjorg

Oddbjorg Oddny Odindis Olof Ormhild Osk Ottkatla

Rafarta Ragna Ragneid Ragnhild Rannveig Reginleif

Saeunn Salbjorg Signy Sigrid Sigvor Solveig Solvor Steinunn Steinvor Svanlaug

Thjodhild Thora Thorbjorg Thordis Thorelf Thorfinna Thorfrid Thorfrithr Thorgerd  
Thorgunna Thorballa Thorhild Thorkatla Thorlaug Thorljot Thorunn Thorve Thorvor  
Thraslaug Thurid Tofa Tola

Ulfheid Una Unn

Valborg Vandrad Valgerd Vigdis

Yngvild Yri Yrsa

#### **NICKNAMES**

This is just a small selection to give you an idea of the sort of nicknames given.

Wise, Fox, Fool, Grey Cloak, Hairy Britches, Flat Nose, Hog-head, Broad-paunch, Short, Stout, Fair, Dark, Halftroll, Forkbeard, Hairy-cheek, Bald, Beardless, Tangle-hair, Trout, Seal, Blood-axe, War Tooth, Long Reach, Iron Sword, Skull-splitter, Hot-head, Trunk-back, Ironside, Anvil-head, Fearless, Gold bearer, Ring Giver, Grim, Silent, Smooth-tongued, Word-master, Adder-tongue, Braggart, Crow, Eagle, Healer, Trollwise, Strong-minded, Deep-minded, Boneless.

## VIKING COMMANDS

Prepare to pick up weapons	Bus til vapna
One rank facing the Jarl	En roth om Jarl
Pick up weapons	Reisa alvaepni
Turn	Snua
Left/Right	Vestra/Rett
Advance	Fram!
Attack	Geysa
Stop	Stand
Hurry	Skindra
Close up	Langr
Prepare shield wall	Hafask lind fyrir
Prepare to advance one step on command	Bua til en trotha litha
Step	Trotha
Withdraw	Brott hlaup
Stand firm	Standa Brimsker
About turn	Runt omkering
Be silent	Thegya
At ease	H'vild
Push	Hrinda
Make noise	Il ya duna
Attention	Oppmeskohmet
Go backwards	Ganga aptur
Retreat	Apra!
Take one step	Tekja eitt stig
Shove off	Snuask undan
Death to the Saxons	Dauthr til Saxa
Circle of treachery	Nith kringla
Fight	Veg (hard 'g')