

VIKING-AGE ENGLALOND

BATTLE OF EDINGTON 878 AD

ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLE 878 AD

Here the raiding-army stole away in midwinter after Twelfth Night to **Cippenham**, and over-rode and occupied the land of **Westseaxe**, and drove many of the people across the sea, and the greatest part of the others they overrode - except **Ælfrēd** the king with a small troop went with difficulty through woods and into swamp-fastnesses. And that same winter **Ubbe**, a brother of **Ivarr** and **Hálfðan** was in **Westseaxe** in **Defnascir**, and he was killed there, and 800 men with him and 40 men of his war-band; and there the banner which they called '**Raven**' was taken.

And the Easter after, **King Ælfrēd** with a small troop built a fortification at **Æthelingæg**, and from that fortification, with the men of that part of **Somersæte** nearest to it, was making war against the raiding-army. Then in the seventh week after Easter he rode to **Ecgbryhtesstan** to the east of **Sealhwudu**, and there came to join him all **Somersæte** and **Wiltunscir** and that part of **Hamptonscir** which was on this side of the sea - and were glad of him.

And one day later he went from those camps to Island Wood, and one day later to **Eðandun**, and there fought against the whole raiding-army, and put it to flight, and rode after it as far as the fortification, and settled there fourteen days; and then the raiding-army granted him hostages and great oaths that they would leave his kingdom, and also promised him that their king would receive baptism; and they fulfilled it. And three weeks later the king **Guðrum** came to him, one of thirty of the most honourable men who were in the raiding-army, at **Aller** - and that is near **Æthelingæg** - and there the king received him at baptism; and his **chrism-leasing** was at **Wedmore**; and he was twelve days with the king, and he greatly honoured him and his companions with riches.

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OE—Old English

ON—Old Norse

ME—Modern English

There are three letters no longer used in English that we have used here.

These are: **Ð/ð = th**

Ƿ/ƿ = th

Æ/æ=ah (as in they)

PEOPLE

Ælfrēd: King of Wessex from 871-899. Often called Alfred the Great.

Æthelflæd: Ælfrēd's daughter. At the time of the battle Edington she is only eight years old, but goes on to be one of the most remarkable women in British history. She is the ruler of Mercia from 911-918. The word *Lady* was created to describe her position.

Asser: A Welsh monk who wrote a biography of Ælfrēd.

Ealhswith: Alfred's wife and Queen.

Eanwulf: Ealdorman of Somerset.

Edward the Elder: Alfred's son and future king of Wessex. At the time of the battle Edington he is only four years old.

Odda of Defnascir: Ealdorman of Devon.

Guðrum: A Viking warlord and king of East Anglia.

Oscetel and Anwend: Guðrum's warlords and lieutenants.

Ragnarr Lóðbrök: A legendary Viking warlord. He was killed by the Mercian king Ælla.

The Sons of Ragnarr Lóðbrök: Less legendary and documented in various Anglo-Saxon texts as warlords attacking Saxon kingdoms in the ninth century. They are: **Ubbe, Hálfðan Ragnarsson and Ivarr the Boneless.**

Ohthere of Hålogaland: A Norwegian explorer who regaled Ælfrēd's court with tales of the far north.

PLACES

Æthelingæg: Athelny, Somerset

Cippenham: Chippenham, Wiltshire

Cent: (OE) Kent

Cornwallum: (OE) Cornwall

Cynuit: (OE) Cannington Hill, Somerset

Danmørk: (ON) Denmark

Defnascir: Devon

Denemearc: (OE) Denmark

Danelagh: (OE) The Dane-law

Dunholme: (OE) Durham

Dyflin: (OE) Dublin

Ecbryhtesstan: (OE) Egbert's Stone, a monument in Wiltshire.

Eðandun: (OE) Edington, Wiltshire

Eoferwic: (OE) York

Hålogaland: (OE/ON) The far north of Norway

Hamptonscir: (OE) Hampshire

Jórvík: (ON) York

Lundenberg: (OE) London

Lundebjerg: (ON) London

Mercia: (OE) An Anglo-Saxon kingdom

Norðhymbre: (OE) Northumberland

Orkneyjar: (ON) Orkney

Sealhwoodu: (OE) Selwood Forest

Snæland: (ON) Iceland

Sumorsæte: (OE) Somerset

Rēadingum: (OE) Reading

West-Seaxe: (OE) Wessex

Wiltunscir: (OE) Wiltshire

Wintancæstre: (OE) Winchester, Hampshire

MISCELLANEOUS

Æsir and Vanir: (ON) The Viking Gods.

Angelcynn: (OE) The English people.

Christ-Sworn: Christian

Crisom-leasing: (OE) Christening.

Dene: (OE) A Dane.

Denisc: (OE) Danish.

Draug: (ON) A ghost.

Ealdorman: (OE) A high-ranking royal official who governs a shire.

Englaland: (OE) England.

Fyrd: (OE) The Saxon army.

Huginn and Muninn: (ON) Óðinn's ravens called *Thought* and *Memory*. These are his eyes and ears.

Jarl: (ON) A Viking who governs a large area of land. Roughly equivalent to a Ealdorman.

Lord: Literally '*Loaf-Giver*,' from the OE Hlāford. Anyone with significant authority to govern.

Lady: From the (OE) Hlæfdige Mistress of a Household.

Mycel heathen here: (OE) Great Heathen Army

Óðinn: (ON) The Viking god Odin, the All Father. The highest Viking god.

The Raven or Raven Banner: (ME) The flag of the Vikings.

Seax: (OE) A 12" dagger or sword.

Spæwīfe: (OE) A Saxon seeress.

Sweord: (OE) Sword (ON: Sverð)

Thegn: (OE) A Saxon lord, roughly equivalent to a knight.

Thor: (ON/Porr) The Viking god of thunder and war.

Völva: (ON) A Viking seeress.

Vikingr: (ON) A Viking.

Wæhlisc: (OE) Welsh.

Waiht: (OE) Ghost.

Wicing: (OE) Viking.

White-Christ: Jesus Christ.