

# The Teutonic Plague

January 921 AH

Volume 9

Buckets, Bags, Baskets, and Barrels  
Medieval Food Transportation and Storage  
by Atilla



The following is the result of some light research and heavy thought engendered by both the storage and provisioning problems encountered in the voyages of the Longshp Company and the demand for historical accuracy engendered by the Jamestown expeditions.

Living in the late twentieth century we are surrounded by containers, most of which are disposable: plastic and glass bottles, Blister packs, paper bags, endless cardboard boxes. Outside of your ice-trays, what stays in a refrigerator or pantry from one year to the next? It may be a bit wastefull and energy intensive, but it's also convenient and sanitary. Get rid of all the paper, cardboard, plastic, tin cans, and glass, and what do you do? Can life exist?

Well, yes, contrary to our present instincts, life did exist in the past, and food was stored and transported in labor intensive, reusable, and not very sanitary containers. I sall touch upon these in ascending order of difficulty and sophistication

## 1) Basic hole in the ground.

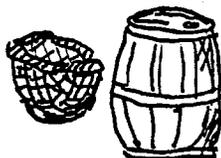
Dig a hole in the ground in a nice dry place, like inside your hut. If need be line the hole with clay. Fill it full of grain for next spring when you really need some bread to get you through the spring planting. Put a wattle work top and cap it air-tight with clay. Pray that the vermin or moisture doesn't get to it before you do.

Note: not recommended for viking ships.

## 2) Baskets.

Baskets are wonderful things! They are light, made from common materials, strong, easily made, and good therapy. Just about every culture made baskets. A loose weave gites good ventilation to keep fruit fresh. A tight weave keeps out most vermin. All sorts of sizes and shapes are available for specialized purposes. Their only fault is that they will only hold water if lined with pitch.

We can certainly use more baskets at our recreations, and remember that such items as the basket and peck are with us still.



## 3) Bags.

Bags, sacks, scrips, mad of cloth or leather, served for temporary foodstuffs. (The ubiquitous flour sack comes to mind.) They were flexible, easily transported, man-sized (meaning you can move an individual unit without risk of hernia), and relatively cheap. You could make a sack to almost any size for individual purposes, and then re-use it for something else.

The scrip was your own personal hoversack, slung from a waist or shoulder belt and made of heavy cloth or, more durable leather. Into this one might cram some hard bread, cheese, dried pork (think of bacon jerky), or if times were tough, parched grain. If the modern medievalist is a little squeamish about all of these ingredients bashing around together, saturating the scrip with various greases and fluids and oxidizing peacefully in the atmosphere, you may wish to wrap your pieces of provender in waxed cloth. (If you are

unconsonably rich, use bees wax!)

Well stitched leather bags could also be waterproofed and served as light flexible transport for many liquids while imparting their own subtleties of taste to the contents. (Flexibility: think of a leather water bottle bouncing against your side, or your horses. Now think of a bucked or crock. Ouch!!) A well sewn, fairly modern form of the leather bottle is the bold, used as a sobriety test at parties. When you can't squirt the wine in your mouth, you've had too much anyway.

## 4) Pottery.

Pots, bowels, crocks, and such were extremely common. Their shards litter many archeological sites, which points out their chief weakness, their relative fragility. (Conversely, pot shards are very, very durable!) None the less, they keep food and liquid in, and most of the vermin out. Those with multiple handles may have been designed to hang from ceiling mounts, out of reach of inquisitous rodents. Also, since they didn't burn, you could store and then cook in the same pot.

## 5) Buckets.

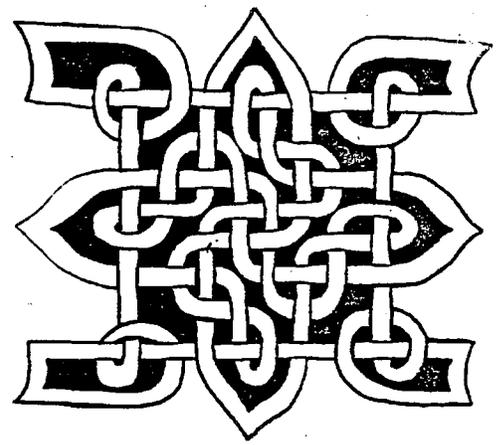
Lidded buckets full of fruits and nuts were found about the Oseberg ship. Buckets are small, handy, water-tight, decorative, relatively vermin proof with a lid, strong, and moderately sophisticated. All of the staves and the bottom must fit to extremely fine tolerances and be made out of the proper materials. One could write pages on bucket making, so I won't. Hit the books.

## 6) Barrels.

Buckets are difficult, barrels are medieval high-tech. Yet they are everywhere, from quarter firkins to tuns. They rolled, so one man could move a very large quantity in a single container. They were water and air tight, so potables would keep in them. They were strong, durable, and easily stored empty so they could be used over and over.

The image of the bold sea-raider (pirate, yankee, whatever) stoving in the end of the kask to get at its intoxicating contents is one of sinful wastefulness, like pulling the trunk off a car and punching a hole in the tank to siphon off the gas. If you don't think barrels are special, try making one. Just consider the names and varieties that have come down to us: firkin, kilderkin, barrel, hogshead, pipe, butt, puncheon, and Tun.

So there's a quick overview of a round half dozen means of storing and transporting your provisions. With a little research and creative scrounging on our parts we can expect to see some of these items show up at further recreations, putting plastic bags and ice-chests to flight in their wake.

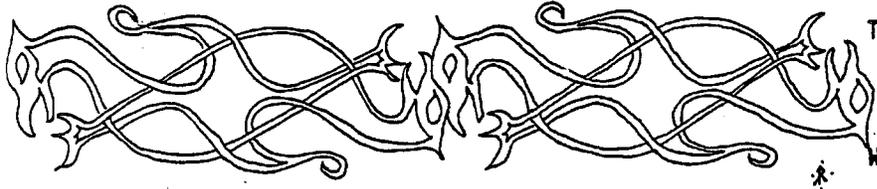


## ASHDOWN

The Battle of Ashdown will be recreated on Saturday, January 10th, at 1pm at the University of Maryland's East Chapel Field. Garb should be 10th Century Viking/Saxon or as close as you can come to it. Garb should also be Warm.

There will be a semi-provided for Feast following the battle. Tickets will be \$7 for non-Marklanders, \$5 for paid Marklanders. The Menu will include Beer, Cider, Bread, and Stew. The feast will be held at the Church of the Ascension (yes, the same old place) on Sligo Avenue, in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Tickets for the Feast will be available for sale at the Battle.



---

## Winter Althyng 921 AH

The Winter Althyng will be held at the Church of the Ascension on Sligo Avenue, in Silver Spring, Maryland at 3PM on February 7th. The Althyng will be followed by a bring your own feast. Tickets will be about \$2 to cover the hall fee.

1337

In the King's name we were called  
To put down the plow and take up the bow,  
To gather in bands and come to the town,  
Where sat the lords who counted our heads,  
When we were an army, once more we went forward,  
To stand by the sea while the ships loaded.  
When they were done, we crossed the water.  
Smelling the salt-air and sick from the waves,  
We knew no sight fairer than France's far shore.

Then there was battle for which we were paid,  
In spoils or death as fortune decreed,  
At first it was glory, and then it was mud,  
We learned of hunger, fatigue, and disease,  
We followed our lords to seige and to slaughter,  
Dreaming of Winter and ships sailing homeward,  
Our bodies obeyed but our spirits were gone,  
Longing for sight of England's Far Shore.

Time grew longer, and home was no closer,  
The lords were not weary and talked of the Spring,  
They shouted for victory, while we thought of the harvest,  
Never daring to speak of our common fears,  
But our eyes betrayed us, as did our laughter,  
When we joked that the ware would last  
A hundred years.

Come to the Althyng and find out whats going on in Markland, its your club, its your vote. [ED Note: The Althyng is the official member meeting of the corporation. Everyone who is a paid Marklander can come and vote, discuss business, or whatever. You should plan to attend if you really care what goes on in Markland.]

---

## Membership Cards.....

You will find attached to this issue of the PLAGUE, your membership cards. These cards show your status as member of the Markland Medieval Mercenary Militia. Guard them well. You will find that you will have to present these cards to obtain member discounts in upcoming events.

Please note that the membership cards have an expiration date on them, this is when your dues expire. If you pay up your dues, use the next Plague label to update your membership card.

It is this writer's opinion that group organizers should have their ticket sellers only give Marklander rates to those who show valid Markland Membership cards. If you are purchasing tickets for others, you should obtain their cards first, or you will have to pay the non-member rate.

Markland Schedule  
(as of January 1, 1987)

[Secondary, unofficial, show]

January 10, Ashdown, sponsored by Midgard, at 1PM, at the University of Maryland, East Chapel Field, Garb should be 10th century Viking/Saxon, or as close as possible, Garb should also be warm.

[Optional, unofficial, none]

January 10, Ashdown Feast, Semi-provided for feast, tickets only available at the battle, \$7 for non-Marklanders, \$5 for paid Marklanders, menu includes Beer, Cider, Bread, and Stew, to be held at the Church of Ascension, Sligo Avenue, Silver Spring, MD.

[Optional, unofficial, none]

January 11, Fenby Meeting, in Reston, 1pm.

[Optional, unofficial, none]

January 24, Cambian Muster at Igor's-Fevronia's. Call (301) 449-3004 for details around 12:00 noon.

[Optional, official, none]

February 7, Winter Althyng, Church of the Ascension on Sligo Avenue, Silver Spring, MD, starting at 3PM. BYO Feast to follow, tickets to be about \$2 to cover the hall fee only.

[Optional, unofficial, none]

February 21, Ice Axe War/Tournament, Feast. Sponsored by Jaravid. Contact John the Rymer (804) 288-9281 for details.

[Primary, unofficial, Authentic]

March 21-22, Military thru the Ages, Jamestown Festival Park, VA, Super-Authentic!!!!, contacts: 10th century Camp - Chort (301) 552-9115, or Drey (301) 888-1215; 13th Century Camp - Aelfric, or Nessa (301) 946-6665; 14th Century Camp - Thrid (703) 573-7297; people are needed! Stuff can be borrowed.

[Secondary, unofficial, show]

April 4-5, Clontarf, Graham Memorial Park, Baltimore, MD, contact Marko at (301) 668-7318, if you want to fight, be there at 12:00 for inspection, and 12:30 for battle briefing, battle at 2:00 (see article this issue).

[Optional, unofficial, none]

April 4, Clontarf Feast, Location forthcoming, contact Mary Rozics (301) 668-6811, tickets \$8 in advance for members, \$10 for non-members, \$10 for members and \$12 for non-members at the door.

[Optional, unofficial, none]

April 24-26, Markland/SCA Invitational War, More details coming soon.

[Secondary, unofficial, none]

April, Spring War, PennMed. ??????????

[Optional, Unofficial, none]

May 2, FEAST OF ABDUL, Saint James Catholic Church, Mt. Ranier, MD sponsored by Mercenary Guild. Arabian Garb Requested. Tickets will be available in February. Contact Elliot De Godervia at: (301) WAR-LORD.

[Primary, Unofficial, Show]

May 16, Barrie Day School, Demo. Markland is paid by the head.

[Secondary, Unofficial, None]

June- MAYFAIRE IN JUNE, more details coming soon.

[Primary, Unofficial, Authentic]

August 1-2, Mt. Airy Winery Medieval Faire (A la Glen Echo). We will be paid for this and it will be widely and intensely publicized. Craftspeople, support personnel, and others needed. More details to come. This is the big time...

---

Event Ratings

Primary - recommended event

Secondary - good event, usually recommended

Optional - can go, can not go

Official - event form in, insurance applies

Unofficial - no event form in yet

Authentic - Authentic!!! Get rid of the watches...etc.

Show - be reasonable, the public is watching

None - wear garb or none required.

---

Continuing Events

Sundays, Fratricidal Practice, 11:00am until 2:00pm at the University of Maryland, Peasants Park (Campus Woodlands), Contact Bek (Brett Abbott) @ (301) 434-4877.

Delaware Battle practices at Rittenhouse Park, just south of Newark, DE, Contact Bill Heath (302) 731-1832.

Recreation/Frat Practice, Rigley Creek State Park, PA, Pennsylvania Medievalists Society (PennMed).

Tuesdays, every other one, Dance practice at University of Maryland, contact Graykell (Ruth Perks) at (301) 948-4274.

Wednesdays, Medieval Study Workshop, from 8pm to 10pm, sponsored by Medieval Recreation Guild, Vienna, VA, contact the Guild Hall (703) 255-3216.

Thursdays, Sewing, Armor Making, Spinning, and Dying workshop at the PennMed Hall, in Bridgeport, PA.

Delaware meetings on first Thursday of every month.

Fridays, Tapestry Workshop, University of Maryland, contact Kate Condray (301) 779-2798.

Other continuing events welcome.

All persons wishing to schedule an event on this calendar must contact the Bocman, Beth Gaylor (301) 247-3218. Those events listed above as (unofficial events) have not gotten their official event forms in to the Bocman.

## CHEATING THE DRY CLEANERS

or

Lessons in self-sufficiency

by Nessa Donya D'Cambion

Yes, you can wear authentic woolen and silk garb and NOT have to spend a fortune on cleaning every time you spill the soup or get a muddy hem. All it takes is a little preparation before you make the garment in question.

I. Obtain the goods. Shop around and don't spend too much. If it's 60" wide, buy an extra foot; 45", get 1 and 1/2 foot; 36" - 2 feet. Also if your garment is voluminous and requires more than 5-6 yards, buy proportionately more. Disregard the label on the bolt that says "DRY Clean Only" - this is for the ignorant mundane and no longer applies to you.

II. Go home and throw it in the washer with warm water and a little liquid laundry detergent. **USE ONLY THE GENTLE CYCLE AND DON'T TRY THIS WITH A FRONT END LOADER!** What you want to avoid is harsh agitation, because that's what causes severe shrinkage. Your objective is to cause mild to moderate shrinkage. The temperature of the water is not that important, as long as you avoid extremes between the wash and rinse water - best to use a warm wash and warm rinse. Warm Water will contribute more to the cleaning action of the soap - the wool will sometimes have oils that are used during processing left in it and you will want to remove these. Using hot water will cause much more shrinkage, and cold water somewhat less.

III. Hang it on the line to dry. You'll find that the surface is fuzzier and the fabric feels slightly thicker. **WARNING!** If you think the appearance of your fabric will be ruined by fuzziness, scrap the whole idea and pay for dry cleaning! If you are not sure, try the procedure with a small sample. Silks will not fuzz up like wool but they do shrink. Your wool will probably not need ironing, but if it does use lots of steam and a gentle touch. Silks will wrinkle a bit more - be sure to use a cooler iron and go lightly or it will scorch.

IV. If you plan to use trim, wash it also, separately. Put it in a mesh bag or old nylon stocking so it won't tie itself in knots in the machine. Hand embroidery is a bit more complex problem (a later article on that as soon as I figure it out myself).

V. Put it all together. Since you've shrunken and felted the wool, you don't have to worry about ravelling and binding the raw seam edges. Silk doesn't felt, and so I suggest that you secure the edges in some way - you will have a longer lasting garment.

VI. **THE PAY-OFF!** Whenever your garment needs washing, just follow the same procedure, but use less agitation. Fill the washer as before - warm water, gentle cycle, small amounts of detergent. I prefer liquids - the powders sometimes leave undissolved granules on my wool. Toss your garments in and let them agitate for a minute or so. Turn the washer off and let it soak for an hour. When you return, switch it to spin-dry only and let it do its thing. Refill with warm water to rinse, let it agitate for a minute and then soak for a few more. Then spin-dry as before. Repeat if it needs another rinse.

If you run off and forget about your washing and when you return the water is cold, just rinse with cold water to avoid changes in temperature. The main point to remember is limiting agitation - keep it to a minimum and you will avoid shrinkage. The wool gets just as clean, really. You won't need to wash it as often as cotton garments; somehow wool doesn't seem to get as dirty or to retain odors. If you don't get overly sweaty or roll around in the dirt, then washing a garment every third wearing may be sufficient, just hang it to air for a day or two. **A NOTE TO FIGHTERS** - The above advice does not apply to you sweaty types, Authentically smelly garb is one aspect of medieval life I'd not care to see recreated.

HAVE FUN!

---

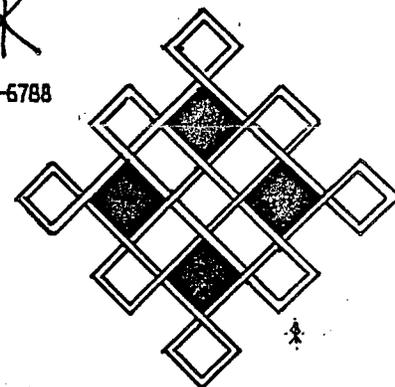
The Notorious Sir Kreiger von Hagen Dazeu Announces the formation of a **COMPANY OF PIKEMEN** after the manner of the Swiss. All interested Free Companions, Condottieri, Tuchins and Gentleman Adventureres should contact Acting Drill Master Karl Greycloake, care of the parties listed below:

Signed with my mark on the 3rd day after the feast of St. Cecilia, Anno Domine 1400:

K

Call Karl Greycloake (301) 760-6788  
Write PO Box 744  
Jessup, MD 20794

"Früzen Galceu Für Alles!"

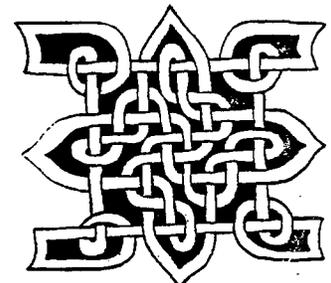


NOW AVAILABLE FROM THE WEAPONS SHOP.

Tunics! Hoods! Capes!

of sturdy material, suitable for outdoor events. Also our usual line of sword, knives, feast gear, and other Medieval personal accessories and household items. Contact:

The Weapons Shop  
c/o William C. Marlow  
8613 Pioneer Drive  
Severn, Maryland 21144



Paid Advertisement

Minutes - Council Meeting - November 22, 1986  
VCU, Richmond, Virginia

The meeting was brought to order by Vice-Aeldorman, Vuk Markovich; Vuk and Bocman, Reverend Mother Elsbeth Dechsley, G.S.A. represented the Witan. Groups represented were: Bardoom, Cambion, Jarnvid, MEAD, Midgard, OSA, PennMed, and Skraelings.

The calendar of events was discussed and updated. See the Schedule in this Plague for details.

#### OLD BUSINESS/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

It was suggested that since Markland now has as Official Saxon Guy and Official 13th Century Guy, that their numbers be published. To conspire with Aldred (Saxon) call (301) 773-0876, and to speak of the 13th century, contact Brett at (301) 434-4877.

Once again, the classification/rating system for events was discussed. Durgill suggested the following key for authenticity:

- A - Authentic, educational
- B - Battle Standards
- C - Casual, feast appropriate
- D - Garb not required

This issue will be discussed and (hopefully) finalized at The Winter Althyng. In addition to the authenticity rating, it was suggested that event co-ordinators take advantage of the Plague and various other publications for publicizing their events. This will ensure that each participant knows what to expect, and how to prepare for the event.

#### NEW BUSINESS

Dues & Whom to Pay - It is best if dues are given directly to the Bailiff, good if they are given to a Witan member. If you want to give your dues to someone whom you (may) trust implicitly in hopes that the Bailiff will receive it, it's your own risk. IED Note... mail it to the PO BOX!!! and NO I do the Plague, but I do NOT maintain the mailing list, don't give updates or money to me!!!!!!

In light of a recent clash of opinions over the role of children in our midst, it was suggested that we give thought to how to entertain those children who are too old to toddle, but too young to fight.

A new Viking unit has formed in Virginia, under the direction of one Tom Ball. They have requested official, but non-voting status. In order to be approved as official, the council deems that a representative be sent to the Winter Althyng to request official status.

Chort (301) 552-9115 wishes it to be known that he is Markland's Quarter-Master (aka Keeper of the Stuff).

Volunteers are needed to assist in the organization of the Markland Archives. At last report, Hjalti had volunteered to serve as Archivist.

WHAT FOLLOWED IN THE NEW BUSINESS PORTION OF THE MEETING WAS A BRAINSTORMING SESSION REVOLVING AROUND WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE, AND

WHO WILL BE DOING IT. RATHER THAN LISTING THESE THINGS CHRONOLOGICALLY, HERE IS A SUMMARY OF THE COUNCIL'S CONCERNS. Names in parentheses have taken it upon themselves to initiate action, or organize a group to handle the issue. Consider these people contact people for the project.

#### I. REVISING MARKLAND LITERATURE

- a. Markland Handbook (Diedre)
- b. Recreation Rules Guidelines (Durgill & Steel Qualifiers)
- c. Frat Rules Guidelines
- d. Steel Rules and Techniques (Durgill)
- e. Revamping Markland's Constitution (S. Kiefert)

#### II. NEW (and Much needed) LITERATURE

- a. New Member Handbook (Vuk Markovich)
- b. Prospective Member Information Packet (Vuk)
- c. Publicity Hand-Out/Press Kit (Vuk, Aldred)
- d. Reference Book Of Sources
- e. Markland Member Directory (MEAD)

#### III. MEMBERSHIP

- a. Membership Cards (Chort & Vuk)
- b. Lower Feast prices for paid/card-carrying MMMM Members
- c. Suggestion to event organizers to offer incentives for paid members
- d. Gift Certificates for Memberships. Great Hosen-Stufflers. (Vuk & Mary)

#### IV. REGIONALIZATION/INCORPORATION

- a. Should Markland regionalize?
  - 1. States or regions could hold Thyngs between Althyngs
  - 2. States could set up regional councils
- b. Efforts should be made to incorporate as foreign corporations outside of Maryland.
  - 1. Virginia - Virginia groups to pay half of legal fees. (John the Rymer)
  - 2. Pennsylvania?
  - 3. Delaware?
  - 4. New York?

#### V. DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

- a. Are group contacts doing their jobs?
- b. Berek and Constantia will no longer provide their monthly schedule due to a general lack of interest, and a specific lack of information from event organizers.
- c. The Markland HOTLINE has been disconnected.

#### VI. ORGANIZATION - A CLAIRIFICATION

- a. There are three classifications of groups in Markland.
  - 1. Associate (also known as Unofficial)
  - 2. Official
    - a) has "...a constitution consonant with the purpose of the corporation..."
    - b) must "...submit a roster of members at a time determined by the Witan..."
    - c) has "...the equivalent of ten (10) voting Markland members whose primary affiliation is to that group..."  
(Article XI - Markland By-Laws)
  - 3. Voting
    - a) Holds Official Status
    - b) "... the Fyrd at an Althyng shall determine if a petitioning group qualifies to sit on the Council of Representatives.." (Article V - Markland By-Laws)

The next meeting of Markland minds will be at the Winter Althyng. Details are included in this Plague.

CASTLE-works -- Wood Products Division  
 PO Box 56  
 Brentwood, MD 20722  
 (301) 699-3599

Product Price Listing, January, 1987

Please Note, all the products listed below are made of Knotty Pine. Special wood types are available at higher prices. All items listed on here may be ordered, please send in your requirements to the above address or call your order in to the above number. A check, payable to CASTLE-works, should be mailed for the required amount. Please include 5% MD sales tax on the total amount.

Questions are Welcome.

Dimensions/Desc	Plain Box *	Finished	Design /Side	Wood Handles	Poly-urathane
Boxes					
12"x12"x12" **	\$10	\$20	\$5	\$4	\$2
12"x12"x18"	\$20	\$30	\$8	\$4	\$3
12"x12"x24"	\$30	\$40	\$10	\$4	\$4
12"x12"x30"	\$40	\$50	\$13	\$4	\$5
12"x12"x36"	\$50	\$60	\$15	\$4	\$7
12"x12"x42"	\$60	\$70	\$20	\$4	\$9
12"x12"x48"	\$70	\$80	\$25	\$4	\$11
12"x8"x8"	\$8	\$12	\$5	\$3	\$1
12"x8"x18"	\$10	\$20	\$8	\$4	\$3

Tater Bins

12"x12"x36"	\$45	\$55	n/a	n/a	\$7
-------------	------	------	-----	-----	-----

Free-Standing Shelves all are 1'x1'

2 Shelf -15" high	\$20	\$30	\$5	n/a	\$2
3 Shelf -27" high	\$25	\$35	\$6	n/a	\$3
4 Shelf -39" high	\$30	\$40	\$7	n/a	\$4

Pine Bookshelves

variable \_\_\_\_\_ special order \_\_\_\_\_

Stools	\$10	\$15	\$25 ***	n/a	\$1
Rocking Horses	\$70	\$85			\$10

\* Box or item is unfinished

\*\* Standard Feast Box Size

\*\*\* indicates a covered Stool Price, padding, and upholstery covering

Order Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Description	Total Cost
1. _____	\$ _____
2. _____	_____
	Sub-total _____
MD Sales Tax x .05	_____
	Total Due _____

The Teutonic Plague January, 921AH  
 Volume 9, 921AH

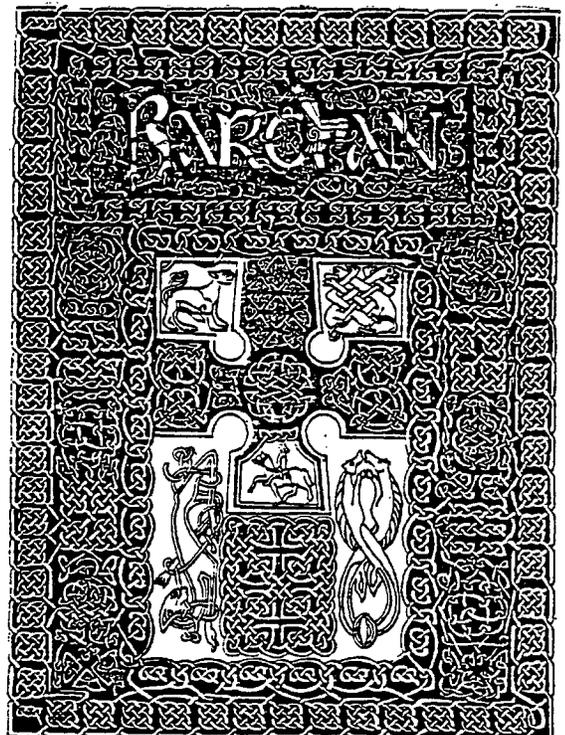
Editor.....The Old One  
 Assistant Editor.....Nihthead of Inc  
 Assistant to the Assistant...Raeadrille of Inc  
 Art.....Attila  
 .....Mary the Skraeling

The Teutonic Plague is a publication of the  
 MARKLAND MEDIEVAL MERCENARY MILITIA  
 a non-profit, educational, group.

Contributions to this publication represent the views of the author, and may not coincide with official Markland Policies. However, anyone wishing to express a controversial view should do so in writing and in a constructive manner addressed to the Editor. These shall be printed as space permits.

The Old ONE would like to express his thanks to Elliott De Godervia for his kind contribution of continuous feed paper to the Plague.

THANK YOU...THANK YOU...THANK YOU...THANK YOU



A HISTORY OF CLONTARF  
by Andrey Tarkon

The battle of Clontarf was one of the best recorded, most heroic battles ever recounted in the Sagas of Icelandic Norse. It was a fierce and fatal clash between the Vikings of the British Isles, Men of Orkney, England, Mann and even the Continent were utterly defeated by the loosely organized tribal kings of Ireland. Under the Ard Ri (High King) of Ireland, Brian Boru, the native Irish clans and their settled Christianized Norse rallied under a common religion and fear of invasion to fight Viking invaders bent on usurping the Ard Ri's title and bringing bloody domination by outsiders into the Emerald Isle.

The vikings based their claim for the Ard Ri's title on loose blood ties, sheer greed, and the offers of one Gormlaith to be the queen of the man who could defeat Brian. Gormlaith was the divorced wife of Brian Boru, a beautiful woman whose father was Sigtrygg Silk-Beard, the king of Dublin. She had strong connections. Gormlaith was a cunning woman who had once been married to Malachy, the King of Meath, but had cast him aside to marry at a still higher station. Brian finally put her aside, casting her out of power, and to reclaim her position she sent her father on trips to the Earl of Orkney, Sigurd, and to the powerful Warlord of Mann, Brodur. Neither leader knew that the other had been given the same offer of marriage and the title of High King if they beat Brian Boru. They both began gathering for the invasion from far and wide. Adventurers came from England and Flanders (Saxons), Normandy, the Danelaw, and Iceland (Norse), and there were the Irish clans with the Norse of Eire hostile to the Ard Ri and his house. Most of these adventurers were still pagan. Earl Sigurd Hlodvisson of Orkney was nominally a Christian, having been forcibly converted by the Norwegian firebrand of Ulag Tryggvason sometime earlier. Sigurd had a Magically woven Raven banner which brought victory to him whenever he carried it into battle. Alas it had the curse that such Odin given magic items had, for the man that carried it would die as its price for victory. Brodur, on the other hand was simply a renounced Christian turned to magic.

The Sagas would record this battle as a great turning point in the defeat of Nordic paganism because it pitted the powers of Christianity against the old Gods. Both sides made much of the fact that the coming battle would be a conflict of religions as well as a political struggle.

There was no shortage of portents that the battle would be of epic quality. The very nature of the conflict said as much. The conflict pitted Brodur against his brother Ospak, who had gone over to Brian's side and Christianity. The burners of Njal were there, one step ahead of Njal's avenging kin, playing out a game started generations ago. All were brought together by the fatal Irish Queen. Eire had stood many incursions in the past, but this time the Vikings sought to capture the very pinnacle of Irish culture. Both sides gathered their forces and looked for signs.

Brian was told that if he fought on the Easter holiday he would fall. The Vikings also heard this, so they forced the battle to be fought then. Afterwards, it was said that Brian heard the Banshee's cry the night before the battle. On the Viking side the portents were even more numerous. Particularly with Brodur's men there were signs of the magnitude of the coming fight. Blood

rained down upon his longships nightly, and ravens attacked the men with no cause. Finally, on the night before the battle, it was said that Odin himself appeared on a dapple gray horse, and talked for some length to Bordur and Gormlaith. The next day Sigurd again experienced high attrition of bannerbearers and finally was forced to take the deadly banner himself.

The spring morning of April 23rd in the Christian year 1014AD saw the Vikings move out of Dublin and cross the river Liffey at flood tide. They then formed up in a long line above the river's north shore. It was a strong position but it had no retreat except by ship, as the landward side to the west was blocked by dense woods preventing being flanked, but also blocking westward retreat. Advancing from the north the host of the Ard Ri Brian Boru came to meet them. The Irish themselves also formed into a long shieldwall. It was to be a very straightforward affair; and guaranteed to be decisive for either side.

The Irish host was an alliance force drawn widely from Ireland, Scotland, and Mann. They came from Munster (Brian), Connact, Meath (Malachy), Mann (Ospak), settled Christian Norsemen, and the Scotts led by the Grand Stewart of Mar, Dornhall. Contemporary accounts placed numbers on both sides as high as 20,000. However big, an important factor would be the Vikings' use of armour. The Vikings were much better armed with most of their men wearing armour, while the Irish were much more poorly armed, and except for some small contingents they had to fight unarmoured.

At first the Irish were repelled by the Vikings with heavy losses when they fell upon the Viking shieldwall and encountered the stout resistance of its heavily armed center. The battle raged on inconclusively with neither side gaining any significant advantage in charge after wearying charge. With the battle lost and Brodur missing, the remaining Vikings rallied to fight a desperate rearguard battle to reach the ships, but the Earl had fallen clutching his banner, and the tide had taken the ships out of reach. With the death of Earl Sigurd, the retreat became a rout and a massacre. The Irish swept over the disorganized, leaderless men and butchered them, winning total victory. However, in the height of their victory came two bitter losses as fate played her hand.

Brodur, alerted by an Irish traitor, broke through the Irish lines with a small body of men and sought out where Brian Boru watched the battle. While each man's personal guards clashed, Brodur of the Isle of Mann fought the Ard Ri of Ireland in single combat. Here the accounts differ in only one important point. Both accounts say that Brian was slain by Brodur, but one says that they slew each other, and the other says that Brodur was wounded by Brian and captured. Then his captors had Brodur tortured and killed in a truly ancient fashion. So ended the life of Brodur. Either way, this wasn't too untimely a death for Brian. After all, he was 73 years of age and it was a fitting way to end a long turbulent life.

The greatest tragedy was the death of Brian's son Murchadh. Murchadh had led the actual fighting in place of his father and had led his father's host to a stunning victory. He had been unharmed by all the days actions, only to die in the battle's aftermath by drowning while spearing fleeing Vikings in the fish weir of Dublin.

In their victory the Irish paid dearly. Aside from the havoc that the Viking weapons had created in casualties, the appointed heir to the Ard Ri's seat at Tara was slain. The strong dynamic line that Brian had sought to create through his eldest son was severed, leaving his other sons to squabble over a position that reverted to the traditional cycle of weak rulers fighting over a meaningless title. The next year Brian's life long rival and sometimes ally Malachy became the Ard Ri and reigned until his death in 1022. Eire again faded into the cycle of weak High Kings and great internal divisions.

As for the Vikings, Clontarf was the effective end of the Nordic religion in the west. The defeat of the militantly pagan Norse broke the resistance to conversion and marks the beginning of the end of the Viking era.

**Sources:**

The Story of the Irish Race, MacManus Seumus, 34th ED. 1981.  
Njals Saga, Penguin Classics, 1981.  
Orkneyinga Saga, Penguin Classics, 1981.

**THE BATTLE OF CLONTARF - April 4th-5th**

This is the 6th year the Skraelings will have re-enacted the glorious battle of Clontarf. Clontarf was fought in the year 1014, between the Vikings and the Irish. The Irish were quite metal poor, so they would have little. The Vikings were heavily equipped and recruited from all over. The Irish were Christian and the Vikings were pagan. It would be good to see more religious symbols on both sides. The battle was billed as a big religious conflict as well as a political one.

Last year no one was wearing blue jeans or tennis shoes at the battle and it would be really neat to do the same this year. There will be a large frat battle after the re-enactment. There will be camping on site. Fires must be off the ground, so please bring barrels. Parking is limited— we ask that you carpool if at all possible.

The battle briefing will be at 12:30. Inspection will be at 12:00, and the battle will be at 2:00. All fighters must attend the briefing.

An announcement of hall location is forthcoming. The doors will open at 6:00. The feast will be fully provided. Tickets cost \$8 in advance, and \$10 at the door for members. — non-members will be charged \$10 in advance, and \$12 at the door.

**CONTACTS:** Battle- Vuk Markovic (Marko Jankovic) (301) 668-7318.  
**FEAST:** Mary Rozics (301) 668-6811 or 665-6612, 8724 Avondale Road, Baltimore, MD 21234.

**Directions:**

From the South - Take 95 North to Baltimore, Go thru 95 tunnel (\$1 toll), Go 8 miles to 695 Junction, Go West towards Towson, Go 3 miles to Exit 31 North, Carney (Harford Road), Pass one light, Graham Memorial Park (Clontarf!) is 1.5 miles past the light on the right. Drive slowly and look for signs.

From the North - Take 95 South to 695, and then follow the directions above.

**Jamestown '87 — AKA 1010 AD**

The Viking Camp: The years between 1010-1016 were among the most exciting in the Viking era. An army of Danegeld paid mercenaries from every part of the northern world were led by the King of Norway and Denmark, Svein Forkbeard and his son Canute in a series of brilliant season campaigns. This army was mustered every spring from its winter quarters in some section of Danish-held England to ravage across the length and breadth of the country. Not only did the Danish army amass staggering sums of silver coin, (which ended up in places as far flung as Iceland to the Dnieper) but it also left the legacy of a Scandinavian Dynasty in England that lasted until the Norman Conquest.

This year at Jamestown (substituting for a suitable place in East Anglia) we will muster under our Danish commanders from our winter quarters after a winter of feasting and wenching, to start another season of warfare against those Saxons who still hold loyal to the Wessex King Aethelred (the Unraed).

What we the Vikings of Markland propose to do is portray a small camp of warriors from this famous army. All of you Vikings of every background, camp followers, and Saxon thains betrayed by a King unworthy of your loyalty, come join our camp.

Why recreate this particular bit of history? Because it is a slice of history that deserves remembering, not a mere historical footnote. These years are well commemorated in the Anglo-Saxon chronicle in a way that is both most lucid and exciting. Also, this particular event allows Markland Vikings to use their diversity to an advantage, since it encompasses the ethnic diversity inherent in the Viking experience. (Remember, Viking is a job description— not an ethnic identity) Most Marklanders who do Viking age recreation should have no trouble meeting event standards, which, though admittedly high, are also very reasonable.

How to participate: If you wish to be a part of our camp next spring, we will need to hear from you! The camp sponsors require us to provide a guest list. We on the other hand also need to see what your best effort looks like. This way we can make any suggestions for any improvements that you may want to make. We'd also like to do a "Living History" type of role playing presentation, requiring everyone involved to be briefed as to the event theme and suggestions on how to attempt to portray it.

Who to Contact: Ivan Chort, 7539 Wilhelm Drive, Lanham, MD 20706, (301) 552-9115. Andrew Mychalus, 16600 St. Marys Church Road, Aquasco, MD 20608, call between 7-8:30am, Mon-Fri. (301) 888-1215. Those needing information/research contact us and information will either be mailed to you or we can schedule a meeting if possible.

Workshops to be announced....see schedule... Andrey Inorsson



ATTENTION ALL MARKLAND MEMBERS IN VIRGINIA

THE VINLAND COUNCIL IS COMING! THE VINLAND COUNCIL IS COMING!

That's right, as of the last Markland council meeting, we the members of Markland in Virginia have recieved the official "go-ahead" to draft a charter to form Vinland as an official Markland Region ! ! !

A meeting is planned for sometime in January- sugestions for a place, date and location are needed. This meeting will be to create a rough draft of our charter to present to the council. If you would like to recieve updates on this meeting, please call the Bardooman Hotline at (703) 256-6606. (This is Olender's number) Or you can call (804) 235-1351. (This is Alvina's number)

Some things that we will need to think about are: What officers we will have, and what their duties will be, how often we need to have meetings, what our geographical boundaries will be, what powers we will be given by Markland, as well as what responsibilities we will assume as a region, and how we can best meet the needs of Markland members in Virginia. PLEASE, THINK ABOUT THESE IDEAS ANS COME TO THE MEETING. YOU AND ONLY YOU, CAN MAKE VINLAND A REALITY!

The Markland Medieval Mercenary Militia  
P.O. Box 715  
Greenbelt, MD 20770

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Greenbelt, MD  
Permit No. 5463

Current Dues:

Basic Markland Membership **\$10**

This is the basic membership fee which includes 1 years worth of Plagues, First class postage and you are covered by the group liability Insurance at official group events

Personal Accident Insurance **\$4**

Adds personal accident insurance to the basic membership - this is highly recommended especially for fighters

Contributers Fund **\$20**

This includes all the above and in addition \$6 goes into the fund.

Title **\$25**

This is your very own title. It must not already be held by someone.

Ad rates for this publications are as follows:

Full Page **\$30.00**    Half Page **\$15.00**  
Quarter Page **\$7.50**    Eighth Page **\$3.25**

Requests for less than 1/8th of a page will pay the 1/8th page rate. Groups are entitled to 1/2 page free, additional space is at the above rates.

5 2100

Expires 01-4-10-87

Newark

05 19711

Jamestown '87 — AKA 1277 AD

Military Thru the Ages — All those interested in joining the 1277 "Invasion of Wales" Camp this March should contact Aelfric at (301) 681-3010, or Nessa at (301) WHO-MONK.