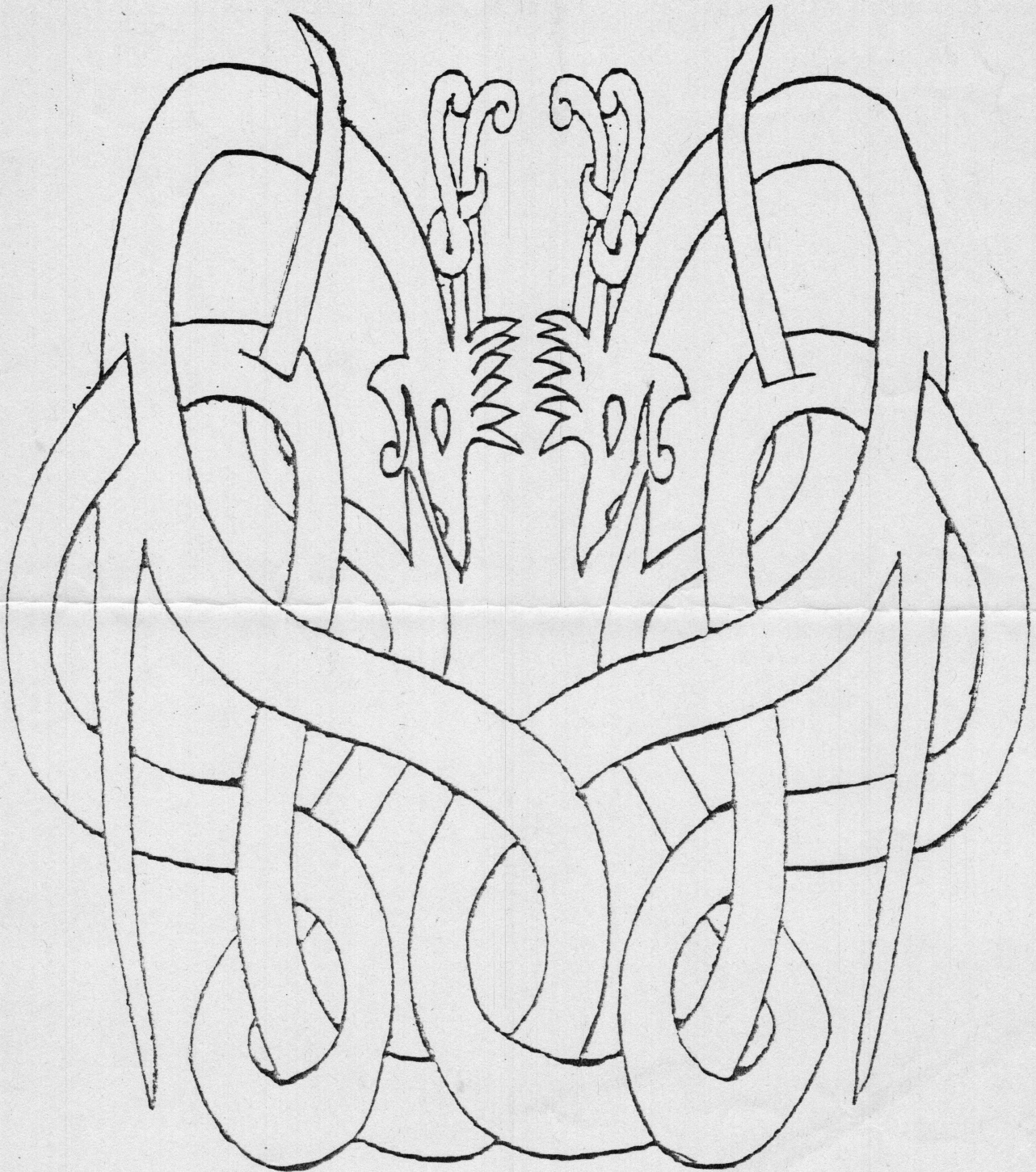


RAVENS WING

Harvest 995



THE PEN IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD !

This Ravens Wing has been assembled quickly to provide you with a costume guide for Battle Abbey. It therefore only contains this, my page, and the guide. I will be on holiday for a few days starting 5th August, so I will not be at Bordon for training.

Denice says thanks to all those who helped her over the Tamworth/Bosworth weekend. She enjoyed the wheelchair so much we have borrowed one from the Red Cross, and she is now looking for volunteers to push her back from the beer festival at Flag Fen !

SHOW ATTENDANCES. We continue to appear regularly at shows as the following summary demonstrates :

Aldershot	(Hwicce)	2 adults	4 juniors
Hillingdon	9 July	12 adults	4 juniors
Tamworth	22 July (Hwicce)	6 adults	2 juniors
Hwicce Feast	22 July	7 adults	2 Juniors
Bosworth	23 July (Tyrslith)	6 adults	2 juniors

I would like to say something about the Bosworth show. For the second battle we formed up opposite the Saxon huscarls (also known as 'The Regiment'). It is a great credit both to all those present, and Steve as training officer, that we performed so well against such daunting opposition.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL CONCERNED !

RECRUITMENT. Although our recruiting has slowed a little, we have added another member and our membership currently stands at 36, (22 Warriors/Archers, 1 non-combatant and 13 juniors). Another 7 people (4 adults and 3 juniors) have said they will probably join on 1st September.

TRAINING. It is vital for our progress to Herred status that all combatant Frihals who have not taken the Formation Combat test make it their next priority. Your last chance this year will be at Flag Fen on 26/27 August. If a few more of you can pass this test we will then be able to take our Herred test at Battle Abbey in October. Remember, you are required to take this test before progressing on to other weapon skills like Spear, Daneaxe or Florentine.

Training is scheduled at the usual venue in Bordon as follows:

6th	August
9th	September
8th & 29th	October
12th & 26th	November
10th	December

Steve is working on a batch of 10 kite-shields for Battle Abbey. They will cost approx 5.00 each (unpainted and unrimmed) and you should speak to him as soon as possible to reserve one.

Written on this 1st day of Harvest in the year 995 by
Hrothgar, scribe to Guthroth of the Manareafan.



The time has come, the Sturgesman said, to talk of many things. Of Normans and of Saxons and the show at Battle Abbey! Now, don't start saying "That's not until October, we've got plenty of time yet" 'cos you ain't. From today, 1st August, you've got exactly 10 Saturdays to go. And most of us are going to spend 2 of those at the major shows at Flag Fen and Stamford Bridge. There is supposed to be a kit guide sent out some time soon, but I think that's leaving it a bit late, so I've put together this one just for us!

I make no excuses for sticking to stereotypes. We are putting on a show and both EH and the public like to have clearly identifiable sides. Therefore, ALL Normans have kite shields, and ALL the 'Dane-axes' are on the Saxon side.

COSTUME GUIDELINE'S. We are going as a mixed unit of Norman footsoldiers and archers (see fig.1). The basic costume is the same for all warriors, with Steve and I wearing gambesons as the unit Sergeants. Items 1 - 8 below are mandatory, 9 - 11 are advisory.

1. **TUNIC.** Must be plain, knee-length, and made of wool or linen.
2. **TROUSERS.** These must be either woollen or linen and worn with leg bindings (See 'Puttees' below).
3. **HELMETS.** Helmets must be worn by all those on the field. They must either be conical with a nasal guard, hard leather or a Phrygian Cap with a steel liner. Viking style furry hats are not allowed.
4. All of the warriors at Hastings were Christians. There must be no visible Thors Hammers or other Viking Jewellery. Permissible items include a small cross or crucifix and plain finger rings.
5. **SHIELDS.** Although some of the Saxons will be using oval-shaped shields all of yours must be 'Kite' shaped. A batch of blanks is being cut by Steve. I can let the artistic amongst you have some suitable designs or just paint them one colour. **BE WARNED**, anyone with a round shield will probably be sent to join the Saxons.
6. **WEAPONS.** Only Knights and unit commanders should have Swords. The rest should have spear and sidearm (axe or scram) only. I know this is a bit awkward if you've already invested in a sword, but your co-operation in this would be appreciated. Archers should have bow and arrows and sidearm. If you haven't passed your spear test you put it down before the last charge. We may have a few to lend.
7. **Racial and Sexual Prejudice.** No women or Celts fought at Hastings. Therefore you must hide those tell-tale female lumps and bumps. Padding the waist or tying your belt on the hips works well. Although it may be possible to justify some unusual 'Breton-influenced' designs, for the reasons mentioned above your costume may not include anything with a 'Celtic' influence. (Plaids, kilts, torcs, painted knot-work on shields etc).
8. **HAIR.** While the Normans were famous for their haircuts, I will buy a drink for anyone who turns up with a proper one. The rest of you must make a serious attempt to hide any long hair. The best solution is to tuck it up into your helmet.
9. **SHOES.** These are strongly advised as Battle Abbey is a well-known thistle field. (Ask anyone from Y'Draig!)
10. **CLOAKS.** Cloaks may be of virtually any size, shape or colour but they should be discarded before the combat starts.

11. Those who already have padded jacks or may wear them but they should not be made especially for this event. Any that reach below the hip should be split front and rear.

PUTTEES. These are a strip of material, about 8ft. by 4in, wound tightly round the leg from the ankle to the knee where they are tied off or pinned. Done properly they look very effective and will keep your legs warm. Done badly, they slip down and keep just your ankles warm until you fall over them ! Woollen bindings are far less likely to slip than linen or cotton.

ORDERS. Most of the watching crowd know the history of this battle and we must recreate it accurately. In 1990 we advanced in two ranks, with those in chainmail in the front. In order to make the combat last longer, first the front rank attacked, then the second rank relieved them, then the front rank attacked again then the second rank attacked again and then the whole unit retreated back down the hill. Therefore you must listen for the commands Steve and I will be giving.

ADVANCE : move up the hill in close order. Do not engage the enemy.

CHARGE : move forward quickly (passing through friends in front if necessary) and engage the enemy.

RETIRE : fall back about 15m, reform on the standard, and let the other rank do the fighting

RETREAT : fall back to our start line in good order.

RUN AWAY: RUN back to our start line. Do not dawddle as we may be pursued by over-enthusiastic Saxons.

During the early part of the show anyone who is hit must go down 'wounded'. When we retire or retreat do your best to pick up or drag them back. When we reform they can be re-cycled. If you miss an order you may find yourself 100 yards away from the rest of us surrounded by Saxons. If this happens not only will you die but you may have to stay on the ground for up to half-an-hour !

STANDARD. We have a group standard for this battle. It is a bright green, three-tailed gonfanon about 1m by .5m with a yellow cross edged in black. When we RUN AWAY or RETREAT you must reform with the standard as your right marker.

LIVING HISTORY. The NFPS are staging a large living history exhibit at Battle. All those who wish to participate should make sure they have Anglo-Saxon costume. This means NO hangerocks or tortoise broaches, and ALL women MUST wear a head covering of some sort. (See fig.2)

That's all for now, see you at Flag Fen.

Figure 1.

Although not perfect these figures show the type of warrior you should be representing. The archer is wearing baggy breeches and short top over hose and tunic. He is also wearing a Phrygian cap. The other is a standard infantryman with a short mail shirt. Excluding the mail, this is a good example of what you should look like.

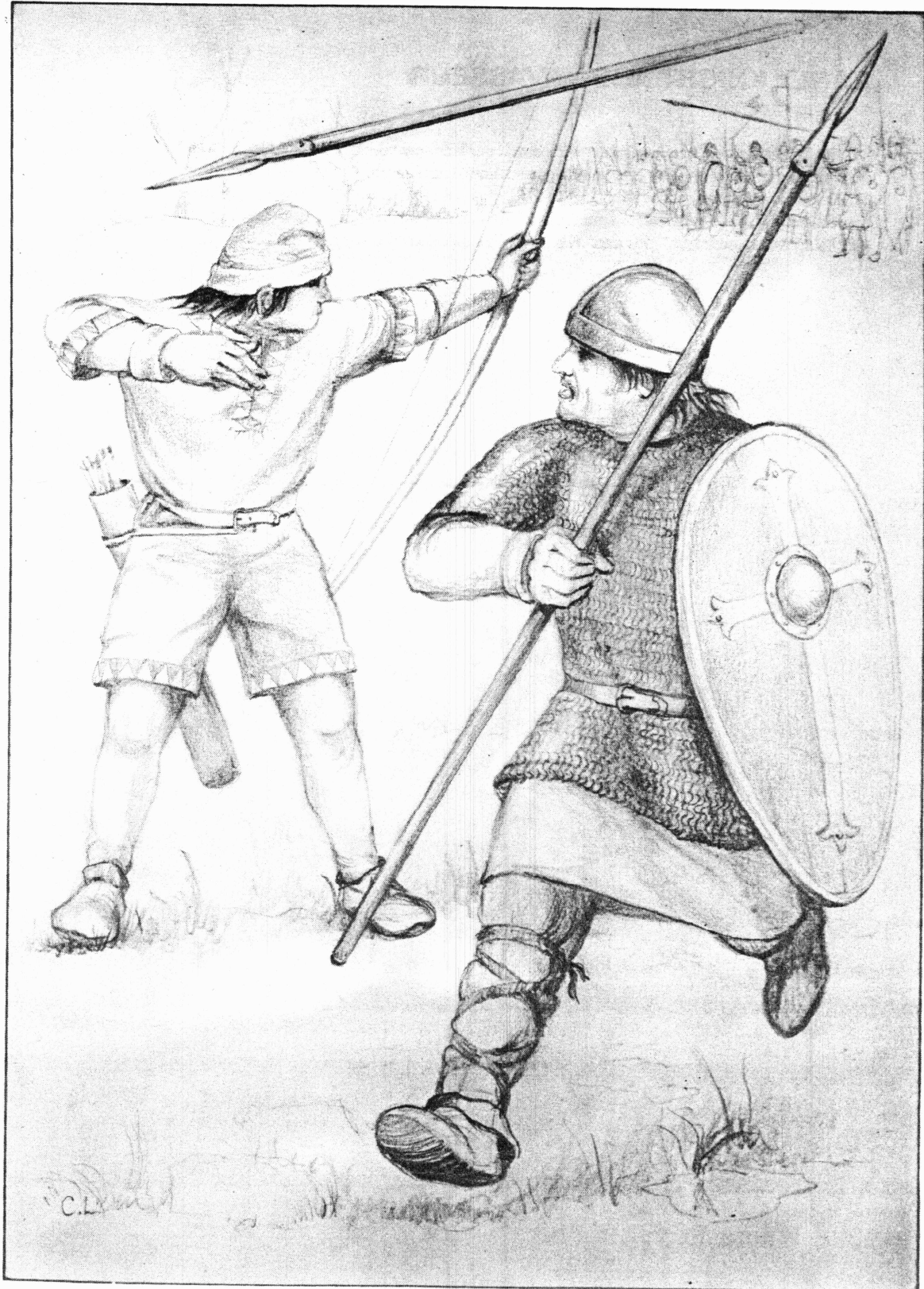


Figure 2.

- 1-2. Are ideal for warriors (with a suitable steel cap).
- 3-5. Are not suitable (too Viking).
- 6-8. Wimples must be worn by all women (and girls of marriageable age). Although only a few examples are shown here it appears there were as many ways to wear a wimple as there are hairstyles today.
- 9-10. The infamous Norman or 'Danish' haircut.

