

Raven's Wing

14/08/2002

To the Men and Women of the Raven, Greetings

Hi all,

Since the last Raven's Wing we have been to Exeter and Kirby Hall. I missed most of the first day at Exeter but had a good time when I got there. It was a nice little multi-period show in the centre of Exeter organised by Gregg and Tony from Hrafnsliith. The combat element of the show on Sunday centred around who had stolen Thurstan's (Tony's) shoes, probably one of the thinnest excuses for eight men to try to kill each other we have had for a long time! We have now decided that Tony is Thurstan Shoeless. Once we had finished with the script we did some single combats; I used my long axe and discovered that if I give Dave a solid blow on the back with the flat of my blade he sounds like a drum. Perhaps he should be Sigurd Drum!

We had good weather for the weekend until shortly before packing up time, naturally! It rained and so all the tents had to be packed up wet.

We had a good turnout for Kirby Hall; fourteen of us were there doing various things. Em spent Saturday morning with the rest of the cavalry trying to find some horses, when they eventually did they couldn't get onto the arena because the crowd blocked their way. Maria was in the Emperors guard carrying the biggest battle standard that could be found, Les was with the archers and the rest of us were scattered about the various Byzantine units. The Battle on Saturday could have been better but most people had fun.

Once off the field we all went about looking at the other events and spending money in the market. The show was of the usual high standard but was defiantly smaller than the last couple of years. The weather was fin until we mustered for the parade when it started to rain. We all marched on and once we had formed up the rain increased. The Romans formed a testudo to protect themselves from the wrath of the gods and we went into a version of the shieldburg. Ian Grant from Cwmwd Ial was holding a standard and complaining about not having a shield to hold over his head until someone pointed out that he had a shield on his back! Those with pointy eastern helmets discovered that they didn't need to hold a shield over their heads, they just jammed the boss over their pointy bit and it stayed there as if they had an upside-down sombrero. Eventually the Romans cracked and marched off, we followed and anyone else who didn't have a fire arm did likewise. Those with fire arms stayed for the massed volley but only the American Civil War and later were able to fire; everyone else had wet powder.

The highlights of the evening were the Viking mud wrestlers, can-can girls and belly dancer. Early in the evening we had fun stealing chairs to sit on;

every time a chair was left untended a bar person took it away. Some ECW pikemen strapped themselves to their chairs a bit like suffragettes.

On Sunday we had better weather and a much better show, the cavalry even made a brief appearance! Taco came to me to get me ready to dismount a rider and then ran off to try and find one, sadly the nags wouldn't close and Taco was disappointed. Ross made the sensible decision to leave the field before they looked too silly. The rest of the battle was much better than on Saturday and everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves. A member of the public was heard to say that we had a better battle display because our archers actually shot people and the warriors really looked as if they meant it!

More shopping followed and then the parade which wasn't rained on. As I was returning to the plastic camp I saw a massive traffic queue. Apparently a departing re-enactor had decided to go the wrong way round the one way system and had hit an on coming car. It was hard enough to get out of the swamp without prats like that. EH had a couple of large tractors on hand to help people out of the mud and they saw a lot of work.

I stayed Sunday night and we had another good time in the beer tent. The game of pass the dynamite was fun; some Mexican bandit lit the fuse and passed it to a German who gave it to a GI who thought the Romans might like it and so on. I think the fuse finally spluttered out in the hands of a Union soldier, luckily it was a dud.

I think everyone who was there had a good time despite the usual problems with noisy drunks on Friday night and splitting couples on Sunday night keeping people awake. At least the Sunday night episode was more interesting than the Friday drunks.

Diary dates:

24/25/26 August. Brockhole National Park. Major. Shows on all three days, details in Runestaff.

7/8 September. Dorchester. Minor. LHE and Battle, see map enclosed. If you want to attend let me know as soon as possible as I have car passes and tickets, you will need them to get in. If you turn up on spec ring my mobile 07979 513140 if they won't let you in.

21/22 September. Seconda Priory, Gloucester. Minor. LHE and Battle, see map enclosed. Russell is hoping this will turn into something bigger for next year. Performance runs from 11am to 4pm each day.

See you all soon

Roger