

Il Tempo

Newsletter of the Barony of Ponte Alto-Volume 17, Issue 8 ☞ September 2008

Barony of Ponte Alto, September 2008, Chronicler* Lady Wulfwyn Ælfwines dothor



Danish seamen, painted mid-12th century. Artist unknown.

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From the Chronicler...

Ponte Alto once again stepped forward, our populace coming together with extra hands and efforts to present a fabulous, though unexpected event.

Due to the somewhat ill timed humor of Mother Nature in the form of Hurricane Gustav, we were not only having our Chalice of the Sun God, we also were chosen to host the Coronation of our new King and Queen, Jason Kinslae and Gerhild the Willful, at the same time. I know that when Baroness Belphoebe got her breath back after the news, she dug right in and sent out the call. Volunteers came forward, menus were increased, schedules were changed and everything fell right into line. Congratulations to everyone who participated to make this a wonderful day for Their Royal Majesties and a triumph for Ponte Alto!

Our new King and Queen at their evening court, felt it only right and just that our own Lord James de Biblesworth be made a Court Baron. Congratulations James!

The next few months promises to be exciting and event packed. On September 26-28, the Lochmere 20th Anniversary and Baronial Investiture will take place. October brings University on the 4th in Stierbach, War of the Wings III in Sacred Stone the 9th-12th, Storvic's Baronial Birthday – A Viking Raid on the 17th-19th and much more local as well as a bit of a drive. Try to support our neighboring Baronies if possible as they support us.

*Lady Wulfwyn Ælfwines Dohtor
Chronicler, Barony of Ponte Alto*

Baronial

Baron and Baroness of Ponte Alto

Baron Jurgen Göttsfurböter (Jeff French) &
Baroness Flora de Bayeaux (Jeri Lynn Mooney)
4964 Swinton Drive
Fairfax, VA 22032
(H) (703) 323-5387
baron AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org
baroness AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org
baronage AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Seneschal (President)

Lady Katharine Devereaux (Kimberly Barker)
43138 Chestwood Acres Terrace #102
Ashburn, VA 20148
(M) (571) 239-2183
seneschal AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Deputy Seneschal

Master Tirloch of Tallaght (Tom Bilodeau)
13456 Cobra Court
Oak Hill, VA 20171
(H) (703) 437-6271
GMT53 AT ravenstreet.org

Chancellor of Youth Activities (Children's Activities)

Lady Talitha of Avalon (Talitha Powell)
Lorton, VA
(H) (703) 690-2732
mom AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Chancellor of the Exchequer (Treasurer)

Lady Celia of Rosedale (Tamara Brown)
3714 Sudley Ford Court
Fairfax, VA 22033-4811
(H) (703) 378-2441
celia AT ravenstreet.org

Deputy Chancellor of the Exchequer

Lady Millicent Chandler (Melanie Cozad)
976 Holborn Court
Sterling, VA 20164
(H) (703) 430-3675
exchequer AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Deputy Chancellor of the Exchequer

Rhiannon verch David ap Madyn (Kerri Smith)
5368 Ashleigh Road
Fairfax, VA 22030
(H) (703) 815-0659
Blessed_Sin78 AT hotmail.com

Officers

Chamberlain

Lady Sian verch Gwilim ap Lewelin (Nicole Miller)
5368 Ashleigh Rd
Fairfax, VA 22030
(H) 703-815-0659
(C) 703-483-0896
chamberlain AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Knight Marshal

Lord Connor Sinclair (Kevin Houghton)
marshal AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Deputy Knight Marshal

Baroness Agnes Daunce (Nellie Miller)
14201 Arbor Forest Drive #301
Rockville, MD 20850
(H) (301) 309-0419
agnes_daunce AT yahoo.com

Rapier Marshal

Lord Geoffrey Clywd (Jeff Williams)
rapier AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Deputy Rapier Marshal

Mistress (Baroness) Greta Klusenaere (Barbara Reed)
(H) (703) 960-5388
bereed26 AT yahoo.com

Deputy Rapier Marshal

Baroness Catalina dell'Acqua (Jennifer Marsten)
akgnome AT yahoo.com

Deputy Rapier Marshal

Baron Marcellus Capozziello da Napoli (Bob Capozello)
(H) (703) 625-3883
afpopa AT cox.net

Deputy Rapier Marshal

Baroness Belphoebe de Givet (Laura Martinez)
(703) 625-3883 (H)
belfebe AT yahoo.com

Archery Marshal

Lord Miles de Locwode (Mike Emrich)
10106 Copper Court
Oakton, VA 22124
(H) (703) 242-2339, (M) (703) 395-9487
archery AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Deputy Archery Marshal

Lady Brigid O'Hara (Karen Miller)

11416 Bronzedale Dr
Oakton, VA 22124
(H) (703) 620-4945
mill3rs AT yahoo.com

Minister of Arts & Sciences

Lady Renata von Hentzau (Clare Cronin)
3304 Willow Crescent Drive, Apt. 34
Fairfax, VA 22030
moas AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Deputy Minister of Arts & Sciences

Lady Millicent Chandler (Melanie Cozad) (music deputy)
976 Holborn Court
Sterling, VA 20164
(H) (703) 430-3675

Deputy Minister of Arts & Sciences

Lady Perronelle la peintre
7588 Seabrook Lane
Springfield, VA 22153
(H) (703) 455-0298

Chatelaine (Newcomers)

Lord James de Biblesworth (James Barker)
(M) (703) 338-4057
flonzy AT hotmail.com
chatelaine AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Gold Key (Loaner Costumes)

Lord James de Biblesworth (James Barker)
(M) (703) 338-4057
demos AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Deputy for Demos

Lord James de Biblesworth (James Barker)
(M) (703) 338-4057
demos AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Herald Lady Sian verch Gwilim ap Lewelin (Nicole Miller)

5368 Ashleigh Rd
Fairfax, VA 22030
703-815-0659 (H), 703-483-0896 (M)
herald at pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Deputy Herald

Brenainn MacShuibne (Matthew Torsky)
6608 Netties Lane
Unit 1403
Alexandria, VA 22315
703-339-1273
mtorsky at hotmail.com

Minister of the Lists

Lady Delphina the Mad (Charlene Ratliff)

mol AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Deputy Minister of the Lists

Countess Denise Duvalier (Denise Hundley)
(H) (703) 339-4114
DCADenise AT aol.com

Chronicler (Newsletter)

Lady Wulfwyn Ælfwines dohtor (Patricia Cheshire)
Snoleopard4 AT aol.com
chronicler AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Deputy Chronicler

Brenainn MacShuibne (Matthew Torsky)
6608 Netties Lane
Unit 1403
Alexandria, VA 22315
703-339-1273
mtorsky at hotmail.com

Web Minister

Lord James de Biblesworth (James Barker)
(M) (703) 338-4057
flonzy AT hotmail.com
webminister AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Deputy Web Minister

Lady Brigid O'Hara (Karen Miller)
11416 Bronzedale Dr
Oakton, VA 22124
(H) (703) 620-4945
mill3rs AT yahoo.com

Deputy Web Minister

Lady Ynes Garcia (Lisa Fogleman)
(M) (202) 492-3164
ynes AT sskip.net

Members of the Baronial Guard

Mistress Cunen Beornhelm (Captain)

Baronial Notables

Baronial Warlord, Baron Maximilian Von Halstern (Max Nelson)

warlord AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Baronial Heavy Champion,

heavychamp AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Baronial Rapier Champion,

rapierchamp AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Baronial Archery Champion, Lady Brigid O'Hara (Karen Miller)

archerychamp AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Baronial Artisan, Lord Iohanna filia Iacobi (Laura Storey)

artisan AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Baronial Bard, Lady Willa Fae Dunne

bard AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

Baronial Meeting Minutes

Business Meeting Minutes – August 23rd Start Time 6:00

Seneschal

Looking for Deputy Seneschal and Deputy Herald. Please contact Katherine if interested.

Exchequer

Current balance \$10,352.77. Still waiting on receipts for fighter mantles. Please give to Celia ASAP

Heavy Marshal – not present

Rapier Marshal

Practice continues, will be moving inside beginning 9/4

Archery Marshal – not present

A&S – not present

Chatelaine

Many new people are contacting him. Hope to see new people at local events soon. No newcomers came to last meeting, but was well attended by current members. Next meeting will be posted on the list.

Herald

Pennsic-baronial report submitted. Nothing else new.

MoL - Nothing to report

Chronicler

The newsletter won the William Blackfox Award for Best Layout and Design. Thanks to everyone in the barony for your suggestions and submissions. Please send in your ideas for future issues.

Minister of Minors - Not Present

Webminister

If any changes are noted and need to be made on the website, please contact James.

Heavy Champion - Not Present

Rapier Champion - Not Present

Baron and Baroness

Pennsic was wonderful. Everyone was involved to make things happen in the camp and during the two weeks. Thanks to all the campers for pitching in when needed. Proud of barony for their showing at Pennsic. Ponte Alto took the bridge during fighting.

Baron and Baroness will be going to upcoming events but due to scheduling conflicts, they may be going to separate events: Coronation/Chalice – both, Chivalry Retreat in East Kingdom – Baron, Lochmere – Baroness, Siege of Glengary – Baron, University – both, War of the Wings – Baroness – urges everyone to go if possible, Storvic Birthday – both

Baronial Warlord – not present

Baronial Artisan – not present

EVENTS:

Pennsic wrap up will be presented at next meeting.

Our Crown bid was not accepted due to another bid at a more central location in North Carolina. Prince William Forest Park could be an excellent site for Spring Crown. Camp 5 is a possibility as a main site as is large, has showers and heated cabins. Camps open May 1st for summer activities.

Tournament of Love and Beauty – should have more information next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS - nothing new

New Business

Possible event in November or December, 11/8 or 12/13. Will be a showcase for performers, have a chess tournament, silent auction, lots of good food, dancing. Two possible sites would be either Falls Church

Presbyterian Church or King of Kings Church. To be called Winters Welcome Revel. November is the preferable time and will check on availability of sites. Voting on final budget next month.

Hopefully we will have a new dance master soon so dance classes can begin.

Meal plan at Pennsic had leftover funds of \$235, funds will be put to Pennsic camping funds for next year.

Announcements

Alle Psallite – practice on Tuesdays instead of Mondays.

Lord Connor Sinclair won the William Blackfox Award for his Squires’ website in the category of Special Interest.

Possible December meeting, information to come.

Meeting ended 6:36pm 22 attendees

Monthly Calendar

September 2008

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| 1 4:30pm Archery Practice | 2 7:30pm Alle Psallite 7pm Scriptorium | 3 | 4 6pm Heavy Weapons Practice 6pm Rapier Practice | 5 Fall Coronation | 6 Fall Coronation | 7 Fall Coronation 12-6pm Heavy Weapons Practice |
| 8 4:30pm Archery Practice | 9 7:30pm Alle Psallite | 10 7pm New Comers Meeting | 11 6pm Heavy Weapons Practice 6pm Rapier Practice | 12 Chalice of the Sun God V: Persephone's Story* | 13 Chalice of the Sun God V: Persephone's Story* | 14 Chalice of the Sun God V: Persephone's Story* 12-6pm Heavy Weapons Practice |
| 15 4:30pm Archery Practice | 16 7:30pm Alle Psallite | 17 | 18 6pm Heavy Weapons Practice 6pm Rapier Practice | 19 Journey to the Crusades Midnight at the Oasis | 20 Journey to the Crusades Midnight at the Oasis | 21 Journey to the Crusades Midnight at the Oasis 12-6pm Heavy Weapons Practice |
| 22 4:30pm Archery Practice | 23 7:30pm Alle Psallite | 24 | 25 6pm Heavy Weapons Practice 6pm Rapier Practice | 26 Lochmere 20 th Anniversary and Baronial Investiture* Siege of Glengary | 27 Lochmere 20 th Anniversary and Baronial Investiture* Siege of Glengary | 28 Lochmere 20 th Anniversary and Baronial Investiture* Siege of Glengary 12-6pm Heavy Weapons Practice |
| 29 4:30pm Archery Practice | 30 7:30pm Alle Psallite | 1 | 2 6pm Heavy Weapons Practice 6pm Rapier Practice | 3 | 4 University | 5 12-6pm Heavy Weapons Practice |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

* = Baronial Progress

Events

Baronial Progress for September 2008

| Date | Event |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| September 6 th | Coronation of Jason & Gerhild |
| September 13 | Chalice of the Sun Gods |
| September 20 | Journey to the Crusades |
| September 26 | Lochmere 20 th Anniversary |
| September 26 | Siege of Glengary |

September 2008 Calendar of Scheduled Events

| Date | Event | Group | Location |
|-------|--|--------------------------|---------------|
| 5-7 | Fall Coronation | Raven's Cove | Swansboro, NC |
| 13 | Chalice of the Sun God V: Persephone's Story | Ponte Alto | Montclair, VA |
| 19-21 | Journey to the Crusades | Canton of Caer Gelynniog | Palmyra, VA |
| 19-21 | Midnight at the Oasis | Canton of Nimenefeld | |
| 31 | Lochmere 20 th Anniversary and Baronial Investiture | Lochmere | Annapolis, MD |

Weekly Activities

| SUNDAY | |
|---|--|
| Ponte Alto Baronial Business Meeting | <p>Fourth Sunday of the month at 6 pm at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Idylwood Road, Falls Church. Baronial Business Meeting (Fourth Sunday of each month, except December) The meeting is at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 7426 Idlywood Rd., Falls Church.</p> <p>Take your best route to I-66. Get off at the exit for Route 7 West (Tysons Corner). Turn left at the first light after the interchange onto Idlywood Rd. The church is up the hill on the right about 1/4 mile.</p> |
| Sunday Social – - Heavy Weapons Practice - Arts/Sciences | <p>Lemon Road Elementary: Indoor Winter Practices for Heavy Weapons, Rapier, and an area for A&S activities are all included. Come and join the gathering and bring whatever you're working on. This is a great time to meet & socialize with other people in the barony. Activities held at Lemon Road Elementary School on Idylwood Road, 1pm-4pm. Contact the Baronial Knight Marshal for more information. Indoor Heavy Directions. This is a school location activity.</p> <p>From Southern Virginia, Maryland and Alexandria, VA Take I-495 (the beltway) to the VA-Route 7 East exit at Tysons Corner labeled Leesburg Pike/Falls Church, Exit #47B. Continue on Leesburg Pike towards Falls Church for 1.2M. Turn left onto Idylwood Road for 0.3 miles. * Turn left into the Lemon Road Elementary School front parking lot.. From Northwestern Virginia and Washington, DC Take I-66 to the VA-Route 7 West exit for Leesburg Pike/Tysons Corner exit #66B. Continue on Leesburg Pike under 0.1M towards Tysons Corner. Turn right at the first light onto Idylwood Road for 0.3 miles. Follow from * above.</p> |
| MONDAY | |
| Alle Psallite (Vocal Music) | <p>Every Monday, 7:30-9 pm in Herndon.</p> <p>Contact Mistress Anne of Carthew (anne AT ravenstreet.org) For more information or directions. Music files can be found at http://www.ravenstreet.org/ Anne/alle_psallite/alle_psallite.htm and on the Yahoo Group AllePsallite.</p> |
| TUESDAY | |
| Ponte Alto Scriptorium | <p>Meets the first Tuesday of the month at 7 pm.</p> <p>Contact Lady Brigid O'Hara (mill3rs AT yahoo. com, (703) 620-4945 (H)) for information and directions.</p> |
| WEDNESDAY | |
| Weaving Night | <p>Second Wednesdays of every month from 7-9 pm, at the home of Lord Jürgen van der Vols (Joorkin Volz) (jcfrench AT mac.com).</p> <p>Contact Lord Jürgen van der Vols for information and directions.</p> |
| Armoring Night | <p>Fourth Wednesdays of every month from 7-9 pm, at the home of Lord Jürgen van der Vols (Joorkin Volz) (jcfrench AT mac.com).</p> <p>Contact Lord Jürgen van der Vols for information and directions</p> |
| THURSDAY | |
| Rapier Practice | <p>Every Thursday at Shrevevood Elementary school from 6 pm to 9 pm. Please use the rear entrance to the cafeteria. Please contact the Baronial Rapier Marshal for more information. Indoor Rapier Directions. This is a school location activity.</p> |
| Heavy Weapons Practice | <p>Lemon Road Elementary School on Idylwood Road, 6 pm - 9 pm. Practice is geared to developing beginning and intermediate fighters through intensive hands on training with experienced instructors, as well to providing ample opportunity for more advanced fighters to sparr with knight level combatants. All are welcome. Contact the Baronial Knight Marshal for more information. Indoor Heavy Directions. This is a school location activity.</p> |
| FRIDAY | |
| Ponte Alto/Stierbach Archery Practice | <p>Fridays from 4:30 pm until 8 pm, the indoor season archery practice site is Bull Run Regional Park's shooting center. Archery Practice Directions. Practices are jointly held with Stierbach. You may also contact the Baronial Archery Marshal for carpool or other information. Contact and practice time/location information for Stierbach practices can be found at the Stierbach Archery website: http://mysite.verizon.net/vze4ks38/archery/main.html.</p> |
| Ponte Alto A&S Night | <p>May meet on a Friday during the month. Contact Lady Perronelle la peintre (dwatsonirwin AT cox.net, (703) 455-0298 (H)) for information and directions.</p> |
| Stierbach/Ponte Alto Bardic | <p>Come and share your songs and stories! Meets the fourth Friday of the month at 7:30 pm.</p> <p>Contact Baroness Briana Maclukas (darbyjanieAT hotmail.com) for information.</p> |

MONTHLY

SCA Newcomer Meetings

Newcomer Meetings occur once a month on a weeknight from 7-9 pm at the homes of various members of the Barony.

May's meeting will be Wednesday May 21st at the home of Luce Antony Venus and Miles de Locwode
Contact our Chatelaine for information and directions.

This month we will discuss Camping Events, expectations and what you need to have with you.

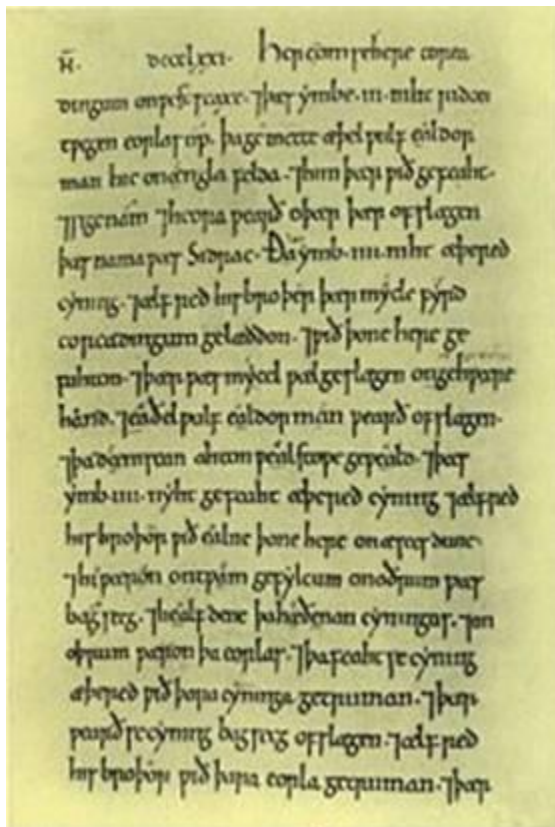
*** Note on school locations for activities:** There will be no activities at schools during school holidays or on other days when Fairfax County schools are closed or all nighttime school recreational activities are cancelled. Notification of cancellation or alternate site location will be posted on the web as soon as possible. You can visit the Fairfax County Public Schools Emergency Announcement page for school closure status: <http://fcps.edu/news/emerg.htm>

Special Thursday Night parking instructions at: We have received some complaints about lack of parking spaces from residents of the Peachtree of McClean apartment complex which adjoins our practice site. After some informal negotiations we have arrived at an agreement with the building management. We beseech those attending Thursday night practices to adhere to the following procedures from now on:

You may unload your gear from parking spaces adjoining our practice area. But then please move your car to another space either at least a block further away from Route 7 in the complex parking lot or in the library parking lot closer to Route 7. At the conclusion of practice you may once again move your car to a space adjoining the practice area in order to reload your gear before exiting the site. In this way we hope to be able to continue to use the parking facilities of the complex without inconveniencing the residents.

the Real Middle-Ages

The Viking Age



Meaning

The word Viking comes from the Old Norse word "vikingr", literally, "one who came from the fjords", from "vik", meaning a bay, creek, fjord or inlet. By the end of the Viking period, the term referred to pirates or robbers operating by sea, known as "vikingr" in West Norse, and was used as a term for sea-born warfare and harrying in the West Norse "Viking". Though mostly used as a general term for pirates there are instances of another use in some of the Icelandic sagas. There some were considered Vikings and to be "going on Viking" who sailed out to claim fame and fortune for themselves. This could involve seeking the stewardship of kings, trading in foreign parts and raiding. These names were common mainly in Scandinavia itself, however, and many other terms were generally used in the wider world. These included heathens, northmen, Lochlannach in the Irish tongue, the people from the north, the Dane, or simply the foreigners. These terms, however, were used for the Viking peoples as a whole, and thus never accounted for the class distinction between Vikings and other Norsemen nor the variety of the Nordic peoples.

The Viking Age

The period from the earliest recorded raids in the 790s until the Norman Conquest of England in 1066 is commonly known as the Viking Age of Scandinavian history. The Normans, however, were descended from Danish Vikings who were given feudal overlordship of areas in northern France — the Duchy of Normandy — in the 8th century. In that respect, descendants of the Vikings continued to have an influence in northern Europe. Likewise, King Harold Godwinson, the last Anglo-Saxon king of England who was killed during the Norman invasion in 1066, was descended from Danish Vikings. Many of the medieval kings of Norway and Denmark were married to English and Scottish royalty and Viking forces were often a factor in dynastic disputes prior to 1066.

Geographically, a "Viking Age" may be assigned not only to Scandinavian lands (modern Denmark, Norway and Sweden), but also to territories under North Germanic dominance, mainly the Danelaw, which replaced the powerful English kingdom of Northumbria. Viking navigators opened the road to new lands to the north, west and east, resulting in the foundation of independent settlements in the Shetland, Orkney, and Faroe Islands, Iceland, Greenland, and L'Anse aux Meadows, a short-lived settlement in Newfoundland, circa 1000 A.D. Many of these lands, specifically Greenland and Iceland, may have been originally discovered by sailors blown off course. They also may well have been deliberately sought out, perhaps on the basis of the accounts of sailors who had seen land in the distance. The Greenland settlement eventually died out, possibly due to climate change. Vikings also explored and settled in territories in Slavic-dominated areas of Eastern Europe. By 950 AD these settlements were completely Slavic.

From 839, Varangian mercenaries in the service of the Byzantine Empire, notably Harald Hardrada, campaigned in North Africa, Jerusalem, and other places in the Middle East. Important trading ports during the period include Birka, Hedeby, Kaupang, Jorvik, Staraya Ladoga, Novgorod and Kiev.

There is archaeological evidence that Vikings reached the city of Baghdad, the center of the Islamic Empire. The Norse regularly plied the Volga with their trade goods: furs, tusks, seal fat for boat sealant and slaves. However, they were far less successful in establishing settlements in the Middle East, due to the more centralized Islamic power. Generally speaking, the Norwegians expanded to the north and west to places such as Ireland, Iceland and Greenland; the Danes to England and France, settling in the Danelaw (northern England) and Normandy; and the Swedes to the east. These nations, although distinct, were similar in culture and language. The names of Scandinavian kings are known only for the later part of the Viking Age, and only after the end of the Viking Age did the separate kingdoms acquire a distinct identity as nations, which went hand in hand with their Christianization. Thus the end of the Viking Age for the Scandinavians also marks the start of their relatively brief Middle Ages.

Viking Expansion – The British Isles

The Vikings sailed most of the North America, reaching south to North Africa and east to Russia, Constantinople and the middle east, as looters, traders, colonists, and mercenaries. Vikings under Leif Eriksson, heir to Erik the Red, reached North America, and set up a short lived settlement in present-day L'Anse aux Meadows, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada.

Traditionally, the earliest date given for a Viking raid is 789 when, according to the *Angle-Saxon Chronicle*, three ships from Norway sailed to Portland Bay, in Dorset. There, they were mistaken for merchants by a royal official, and they murdered him when he tried to get them to accompany him to the king's manor to pay a trading tax on their goods. The next recorded attack, dated January 6, 793, was on the monastery on the island of Lindisfarne, off the east coast of England. The resident monks were killed, thrown into the sea to drown or carried away as slaves along with some of the church treasures. After repeated Viking raids, the monks fled Lindisfarne in AD 875, carrying the relics of Saint Cuthbert with them.

In 840 and 841, Norwegians raided during the winter months instead of summer, as was their usual tactic. They waited on an island off Ireland. In 865 a large army of Danish Vikings, supposedly led by Ivar, Halfdan and Guthrum, arrived in East Anglia. They proceeded to cross England into Northumbria and captured York (Jorvik), where some settled as farmers. Most of the English kingdoms, being in turmoil, could not stand against the Vikings, but Alfred of Wessex managed to keep the Vikings out of his county. Alfred and his successors were able to drive back the Viking frontier and retake York. In 886, the Treaty of Alfred and Guthrum was formalized the boundaries of their kingdoms and the Viking Danelaw territory, with provisions for peaceful relations between the English and the Vikings.

A new wave of Vikings appeared in England in 947 when Erik Bloodaxe captured York. The Viking presence continued through the reign of Canute the Great (1016-1035), after which a series of inheritance arguments weakened the family reign.

The Vikings did not get everything their way. In one instance in England, a small Viking fleet attacked a rich monastery at Jarrow. The Vikings were met with stronger resistance than they expected: their leaders were killed, the raiders escaped, only to have their ships beached at Tynemouth and the crews killed by locals. This was one of the last raids on England for about 40 years. The Vikings instead focused on Ireland and Scotland. The Viking presence in the British Isles dwindled until 1066, when the Norwegians lost their final battle with the English.

It is important to bear in mind that not all the Norse arriving in the British Isles came as raiders. Many arrived with families and livestock, often in the wake of the capture of territory by their forces. DNA analysis shows that a major part of the ancestry of English people in northern East Anglia, eastern Yorkshire and in the Lake District is Scandinavian in origin, presumably from colonists around this time. The populations then merged over time by intermarriage into the Anglo-Saxon population of these areas. Many words in the English language are from old Scandinavian languages, showing the importance of this contact.

While there are few records from the earliest period, it is believed that Scandinavian presence in Scotland increased in the 830s. In 836, a large Viking force believed to be Norwegian invaded the Earn Valley and Tay Valley which were central to the Pictish kingdom. They killed Eoganan, king of the Picts, and his brother, the vassal king of the Scots. They also killed many members of the Pictish aristocracy. The sophisticated kingdom that had been built fell apart, as did the Pictish leadership. The foundation of Scotland under Kenneth MacAlpin is traditionally attributed to the aftermath of this event.

The isles to the north and west of Scotland were heavily colonized by Norwegian Vikings. Shetland, Orkney, the Western Isles, Caithness and Sutherland were under Norse control, sometimes as fiefs under the King of Norway and other times as separate entities. Shetland and Orkney were the last of these to be incorporated into Scotland in as late as 1468. As well as Orkney and Shetland, Caithness and Sutherland, the Norse settled in the Hebrides. Some parts of the west coast were also settled, and Galloway, which got its name from the Gall-Gael or Foreigner Gael (as the mixed Norse Scots were known).

Wales was not colonized by the Vikings significantly as in eastern England or Scotland. The Vikings did, however, settle in small numbers in the south around St. David's, Haverfordwest, and the Gower. Place names such as Skokholm, Skomer, and Swansea remain as evidence of the Norse settlement. The Vikings, however, were not able to set up a Viking state or control Wales, owing to the powerful forces of Welsh kings, and, unlike in Scotland, the aristocracy was relatively unharmed.

Nevertheless, following the successful Viking alliances with Cornwall in 722 and Brittany in 865, the Britons made their peace with the Danes, and a Viking/Welsh alliance in 878 defeated an Anglo-Saxon army from Mercia, although there were still some occasional skirmishes between the Britons of Wales and the Danes.

The city of Swansea was founded by the imperialist Viking King of Denmark Sweyn Forkbeard who by 1013 was King of the Danes, Anglo-Saxons and Norwegians. Swansea is a corruption of the Norse "Sweyn's Ey", which means "Sweyn's island". The island refers to the area around the estuary of the river Tawe. The neighboring Gower Peninsula has some place names of Norse origin (such as Worms Head: worm is the Norse word for dragon, as the Vikings believed that the serpent-shaped island was a sleeping dragon). Twenty miles west of Cardiff on the Vale of Glamorgan coast is the semi-flooded island of Tusker Rock, which takes its name from Tuska, the Viking who established a settlement in the area.

The Vikings conducted extensive raids in Ireland and founded many towns, including Dublin, Limerick, Mullingar, Wexford, Waterford and Leixlip. Literature, crafts, and decorative styles in Ireland and the British Isles reflected Scandinavian culture. Vikings traded at Irish markets in Dublin. Excavations found imported fabrics from England, Byzantium, Persia, and central Asia. Dublin became so crowded by the 11th century that houses were constructed outside the town walls.

The Vikings pillaged monasteries on Ireland's west coast in 795, and then spread out to cover the rest of the coastline. The north and east of the island were most affected. During the first 40 years, the raids were conducted by small, mobile Viking groups. From 830 on, the groups consisted of large fleets of Viking ships. From 840, the Vikings began establishing permanent bases at the coasts. Dublin was the most significant settlement in the long term. The Irish became accustomed to the Viking presence and culture. In some cases they became allies and also intermarried throughout all of Ireland.

In 832, a Viking fleet of about 120 ships under Turgesius invaded kingdoms on Ireland's northern and eastern coasts. Some believe that the increased number of invaders coincided with Scandinavian leaders'

desires to control the profitable raids on the western shores of Ireland. During the mid-830s, raids began to push deeper into Ireland. Navigable waterways made this deeper penetration possible. After 840, the Vikings had several bases in strategic locations throughout Ireland.

In 838, a small Viking fleet entered the River Liffey in eastern Ireland, probably led by the chieftain Saxolb (Soxulfr) who was killed later that year. The Vikings set up a base, which the Irish called longphorts. This longphort would eventually become Dublin. After this interaction, the Irish experienced Viking forces for about 40 years. The Vikings also established longphorts in Cork, Limerick, Waterford, and Wexford. The Vikings were driven out of Ireland for a short period around 900, but returned to Waterford in 914 to found what would become Ireland's first city. The other longphorts were soon re-occupied and developed into cities and towns.

The last major battle involving Vikings was the Battle of Clontarf in 1014, in which a large force from the pan-Viking world and their Irish allies opposed Brian Boru, then the High King of Ireland and his forces, a small contingent of which were Viking defectors. The battle was fought in what is the now Dublin suburb of Clontarf on Good Friday of that year. Boru, the Irish High King had gracefully allowed the Viking King of Dublin; Sigtrygg Silkbeard, one year to prepare for his coming assault. Silkbeard responded by offering the bed of his mother to several Viking lords from Scandinavia and the British Isles. The savage melee between the heavily mailed Norse and the unarmored, yet undaunted Gaels ended in a rout of the Vikings and their Irish allies. Careful accounts were taken by both sides during the battle, and thus many famous warriors sought each other out for personal combat and glory. High King Brian, who was nearly eighty, did not personally engage in the battle but retired to his tent where he spent the day in quiet prayer. The Viking Earl Brodir of Man chanced upon Brian's tent as he fled the field. He and a few followers seized the opportunity, and surprised the High King, killing the aged Brian before being captured. Brian's foster son Wolf the Quarrelsome later tracked down and dispatched Brodir by disembowelment; Wolf watching as Brodir marched and wound his own innards around the trunk of a large tree. The battle was fairly matched for most of the day and each side had great respect for the prowess of the other; however, in the end, the Irish forced the Norse to return to the sea. Many of the fleeing Vikings were drowned in the surf due to their heavy mail coats as they struggled for the safety of their longships; others were pursued and slain further inland. After the battle, Viking power was broken in Ireland forever, though many settled Norse remained in the cities and prospered greatly with the Irish through trade. With Brian dead, Ireland returned to the fractured kingdom it had once been, but was now cleared of further Viking predation.

Other Areas – Greenland, North America, Russia, Ukraine

The Vikings settled coastal areas along the Baltic Sea, and along inland rivers in Russian territories such as Staraya Ladoga, Novgorod and along major waterways to the Byzantine Empire.

The Varangians or Varyags (Russian, Ukrainian, Varyagi) sometimes referred to as Variagians were Scandinavians who migrated eastwards and southwards through what is now Russia, Belarus and Ukraine mainly in the 9th and 10th centuries. Engaging in trade, colonization, piracy and mercenary activities, they roamed the river systems and portages of Gardariki, reaching and settling at the Caspian Sea and in Constantinople.

Two areas along Greenland's southwest coast were colonized by Norse settlers around 986. The land was marginal at best. The settlers arrived during a warm phase, when short-season crops such as rye and barley could be grown. Sheep and hardy cattle were also raised for food, wool, and hides. Their main export was walrus ivory, which was traded for iron and other goods which could not be produced locally. Greenland became a dependency of the king of Norway in 1261. During the 13th century, the population may have reached as high as 5,000, divided between the two main settlements of Eystribygo (Eastern Settlement) and Vestribygo (Western Settlement). Greenland had several churches and a cathedral at Gardar. The Catholic diocese of Greenland was subject to the archdiocese of Nidaros. However, many bishops chose to exercise this office from afar. As the years wore on, the climate shifted. In 1379 the northernmost settlement was attacked by the Straelings (Norse word for Inuit). Crops failed and trade

declined. The Greenland colony gradually faded away. By 1450 it had lost contact with Norway and Iceland and disappeared from all but a few Scandinavian legends.

A Norwegian ship's captain named Bjarni Herjolfsson first came across a part of the North American continent ca. 985 when he was blown off course sailing to Greenland from Iceland. Subsequent expeditions from Greenland (some led by Leif Erikson) explored the areas to the west; seeking large timbers for building in particular (Greenland had only small trees and brush). Regular activity from Greenland extended to Ellesmere Island, Skraeling Island and Ruin Island for hunting and trading with Inuit groups. A short-lived seasonal settlement was established at L'Anse aux Meadows, located in the northern part of Newfoundland, Canada.

The Greenlanders called the new found territory Vinland, referencing wild grapes there. It is unclear whether Vinland referred to Newfoundland (which has no grapes) or warmer areas to the south, possibly New England. In any case, without any "official" backing, attempts at colonization by the Norse proved failures. There were simply too many natives for the Greenlanders to conquer or withstand and they withdrew to Greenland.

The motives driving the Viking expansion form a topic of much debate in Nordic history. One common theory posits that the Viking population had outgrown agricultural potential of their Scandinavian homeland. For a coastal population with superior naval technologies, it made sense to expand overseas in the face of a youth bulge effect. However, this theory does little to explain why the expansion went overseas rather than into the vast, uncultivated forest areas on the interior of the Scandinavian Peninsula. Moreover, no such rise in population or decline in agricultural production has been definitively proven.

Another explanation is that the Vikings exploited a moment of weakness in the surrounding regions. For instance, the Danish Vikings were aware of the internal divisions within Charlemagne's empire that began in the 830s and resulted in schism. The Danish expeditions in England also profited from the disunity of the different English kingdoms.

The decline in the profitability of old trade routes could also have played a role. Trade between western Europe and the rest of Eurasia suffered a severe blow when the Roman Empire fell in the 5th century. The expansion of Islam in the 7th century had also affected trade with western Europe. Trade on the Mediterranean Sea was historically at its lowest level when the Vikings initiated their expansion. By opening new trade routes in Arabic and Frankish lands, the Vikings profited from international trade by expanding beyond their traditional boundaries. Finally, the destruction of the Frisian fleet by the Franks afforded the Vikings an opportunity to take over their trade markets.

Viking expansion could also have originated as a means of resistance to forced Christianization, in particular Charlemagne's persecutions against all the Pagan people, who would've had to accept "conversion, or the massacre."

Decline

Following a period of thriving trade and settlement, cultural impulses flowed from the rest of Europe to affect Viking dominance. Christianity had an early and growing presence in Scandinavia, and with the rise of centralized authority and the development of more robust coastal defense systems, Viking raids became more risky and less profitable.

Snorri Sturluson in the saga of St. Olaf chapter 73, describes the brutal process of Christianization in Norway: "...those who did not give up paganism were banished, with others he (St. Olaf) cut off their hands or their feet or extirpated their eyes, others he ordered hanged or decapitated, but did not leave unpunished any of those who did not want to serve God (...) he afflicted them with great punishments (...) He gave them clerks and instituted some in the districts."

As the new quasi-feudalistic system became entrenched in Scandinavian rule, organized opposition sealed the Viking's fate – 11th century chronicles note Scandinavian attempts to combat the Vikings from the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea, which eventually led to Danish and Swedish participation in the Baltic

crusades during the 12th and 13th centuries, and contributed to the development of the Hanseatic League, an alliance of trading guilds that established and maintained a trade monopoly along the coast of Northern Europe, from the Baltic to the north Sea, during the Late Middle Ages and Early modern period – c. 13th-17th centuries.