

**Wirhalh Skip
Felagr provide
excellent living
history events
tailored to suit all
venues**

*Gina Couch,
World Museum Liverpool*

About us

Wirhalh Skip Felagr (The Wirral Ship Fellowship) is Merseyside's leading early medieval Living History group.

Wirhalh Skip Felagr focus on providing Viking & Saxon Reenactment & Living History displays of the Hiberno Norse who settled the Wirral from 902AD, but we cover all aspects of the Viking period from 793AD to 1066AD.

Wirhalh Skip Felagr are renowned for their living history displays that bring everyday viking Wirral vividly to life. Learning the skills the people used to survive life 1000 years ago in the harsh Wirral landscape.

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The Battle of Brunanburh

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Brunanburh 937

In the year 937 a great battle was fought near a place called Brunanburh. On one side there were vikings from Ireland and warriors from Scotland, Strathclyde and the north of Britain. The two main leaders of this army were Anlaf Guthfrithson the King of Dublin and Constantine the King of the Scots.

They faced an army made up of men from the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of Mercia and Wessex. This army was led by King Æthelstan who can be considered to be the first King of England. With Æthelstan there was his brother Edmund and his cousins Æthelwine and Ælfwine. The two armies were huge with Anlaf and Constantine commanding about 6000 warriors while Æthelstan's army may have had about 10,000 men.

Although we do not know for sure where the Battle of Brunanburh was fought some historians and archaeologists believe it took place on the Wirral. The name Brunanburh can be traced to the modern name Bromborough and the battle site has been suggested as being near the villages of Brimstage and Storeton.

The best description we have of the battle comes from poem in a document called the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles.

This poem tells us that Æthelstan and his brother Edmund fought bravely and alongside spearmen from Mercia they forced back the fearsome vikings, Scots and northern warriors. The battle lasted for hours but eventually the vikings and then the Scots began to retreat.

The Mercian spearmen charged forward and were joined by the men from Wessex who, from horseback, chased after Anlaf and Constantine's men. The defeated vikings and Scots were chased all the way back to where they had left their ships. Here more of them were killed trying to escape across a place called Dingsmere.

The remains of Anlaf and Constantine's army managed to escape and sail home leaving Æthelstan as the winner.

Although Æthelstan had won the battle many important men had been killed. His cousins Ælfwine and Æthelwine both died. The vikings and Scots lost even more men, the poem tells us that Constantine's son was killed along with five kings and seven of Anlaf's earls.

The Battle of Brunanburh is one of the greatest battles in the history of England; great victory for King Æthelstan and a battle that would help shape modern England.

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