

WIRHALH SKIP FELAGR



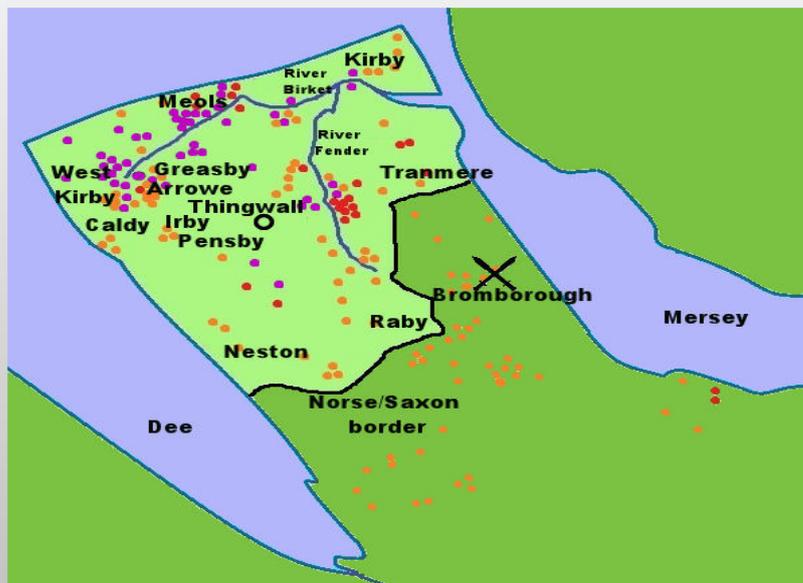
Viking & Anglo Saxon Living History

Viking place names of the Wirral.

It is probably true to say that the vast majority of the Viking heritage of the Wirral is now only relevant in a daily context to historians and archaeologists. However, many of the town, village and street names of the Wirral we are all familiar with and use routinely we owe to the Viking settlers of the tenth century with more than six hundred place names around the Wirral said to be of Viking origin. Academics will always debate exactly what the original form and origin of place names was and how they got corrupted into their modern versions but the following few examples are widely accepted as fact.

Any name including "rake" is likely to derive from "rak" a Viking term denoting a lane. Anything involving the term "carr" most likely derives from "kjar" denoting marsh whilst those names including "holm" derive from "holmr" the Viking term for the areas of raised dry land within these marshes. There can't be anybody living on the Wirral who doesn't know of a few places or streets located around them that don't include these terms in their names. Another common Viking term included in the names of small towns or villages is the suffix to a name of "...by" denoting settlement or farmstead. Raby is a particularly good example translating as village on the border being situated on the corner of the lands occupied by the Vikings. West Kirby is another example translating as the west settlement of the church, whilst Irby translates as the settlement of the Irish.

Other notable Viking names include Thingwall, derived from the meeting grounds of a Viking parliament. Meols was a very important Viking trading site and derives from the old Viking term for sand bank. Tranmere is another name believed to derive from a different corruption of sandbank of the cranes.



Viking place names of the Wirral peninsula.

- raks (rakes) "Lane"
- kjarss (carrs) "Marsh"
- holmrs (holms) "Island" or "dry land"

"...by" suffix denotes a Viking age settlement

- site of a "thing" or Viking parliament

✕ possible, maybe even probable site of the battle of Brunanburh



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