

This is an account of my bi-annual walk from Riccall to Stamford Bridge.

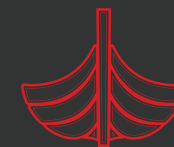
This time it was special for two reasons. The first being it marked over one hundreds miles I've walked in the same pair of hand made turn shoes. Secondly it was the first long March I've done in my set of fully hand woven gear.

I was wearing a linen under tunic, wool hedeby tunic, my pile woven cloak, linen braise, woolen footed hose, leg bindings and trusty turn shoes.

*Ant Butcher,
Wirral Vikings*



Wirral Vikings
www.wirralvikings.org.uk



IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE VIKINGS

**Riccall to Stamford
Bridge**

**A walk in fully handwoven/handmade
clothing by Ant Butcher**

About us

Wirral Vikings is Merseyside's leading early medieval Living History group.

Wirral Vikings 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.

Wirral Vikings 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.

Just a short walk...

Compared to my normal combo of naalbound socks and turn shoes the footed hose did an amazing job. Although my shoes got wet on the outside and the moisture just started to creep into the inside my feet stayed perfectly dry. I suspect this maybe down to a few things. The mixture of lard, beeswax and olive oil I use to protect my shoes. Possibly the tight weave used to make the hose. Either way dry feet is a bonus. I must admit naalbound socks have better cushioning, however I was comfortable enough in footed hose.

My leg bindings also did a great job of keeping my shins protected from foliage but also kept my shins dry. Nothing much I can say about my wraps apart from a lovely little fact of they was hand dyed in Murton Danelaw village.

Next to my braise, just basic linen with two legs and a seat construction. I've added loops to my waist band to attach my hose with leather ties.

My linen under tunic is just a basic T-shirt shaped design.

My woolen tunic was made in the hedeby style with a princess seem. Walking along the route after a fair amount of miles it became prevalent, that my left arm hole is a tad tight.

My pile woven cloak, it's a fantastic item at keeping you dry. Due to the long piles the rain runs along, the outside can feel sodden yet the underside completely dry. It's made from unspun fleece and is very light and airy.

It's of a personal preference that I like to put my kit to the test. I can honestly say, do a 20mile march in your gear and it will tell you everything you need to know.

What's nice about these walks is the plans made. My plan to make fully handwoven clothing was birthed on a previous walk. It's a nice feeling to look back on these walks as markers and see how far I've progressed. As always stated on other walks, it's also the understanding you gain of how your equipment actually works.

So, my poor old shoes. Over 100 miles cross country and a couple seasons of use. The right shoe is still fully intact. The left shoe has a hole in the pad of the foot and now a small tear in the sole seem.

What is interesting about the wear patterns of my shoes? They match exact wear patterns from the period.

My wear patterns are from neutral wear, the hole in the pad being dead centre.

The seem splitting on the inside of the heel. These can quite easily be repaired to see another walk, however I may let them retire in peace and let them become a talking point/display item.

I'm already in planning for my next walk.

Ant Butcher
Wirral Vikings

