



## The Vikings

What follows are clippings from various sources about Vikings.

Mandy Barrow reports this about the Vikings in England. “The Vikings first invaded Britain in AD 793 and last invaded in 1066 when William the Conqueror became King of England after the Battle of Hastings. The first place the Vikings raided in Britain was the monastery at Lindisfarne, a small holy island located off the northeast coast of England. By 866 the Vikings had arrived in York. They made York (or Jorvik as they called it) the second biggest city in the country after London. No matter how many times the Vikings were beaten, they always came back, and in the end all their efforts paid off. It was the Vikings (Norsemen) of Normandy who finally conquered England in 1066 and changed British history forever.”

A BBC History, compacted in what follows, describes how “We English” share some serious Scandinavian history. The Vikings, 800 to 1066 By Professor Edward James –Last updated 2011-03-29 Edward James is Professor of Medieval History at University College Dublin.

Raids by seaborne Scandinavian pirates on sites in Britain, especially largely undefended monastic sites, began at the end of the eighth century AD. By the end of the ninth century there were large-scale settlements of Scandinavians in various parts of Britain, and they had achieved political domination over a significant territory. Early in the 11th century the king of Denmark became king of England as well. And in 1066 there were separate invasions by the king of Norway, Harald Hardrada, and duke of Normandy, William, the latter the descendant of Scandinavian settlers in northern France.

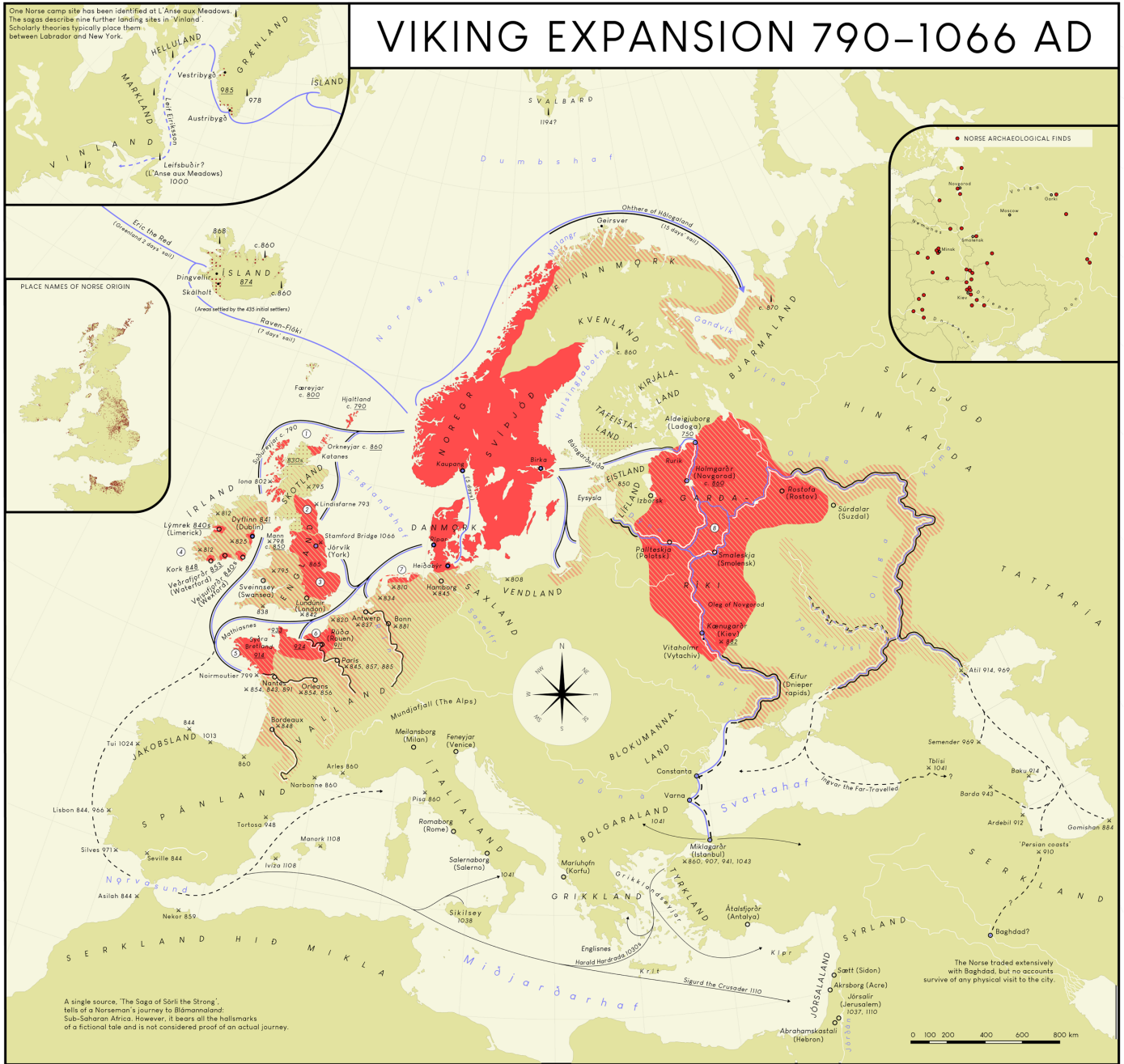
Many monasteries in the north were destroyed, and with them any records of the raids. Yet the most significant development of the period was an indirect result of Scandinavian involvement in the affairs of Britain -the emergence of two kingdoms of newly unified territories, England and Scotland. We know no historical details of the raids in Scotland, although they must have been extensive. Iona was burnt in 802 AD, and 68 monks were killed in another raid in 806 AD. The remaining monks fled to Kells (County Meath, Ireland) with a gospel-book probably produced in Iona, but now known as the 'Book of Kells'.

The Viking raids in England were sporadic until the 840s AD, but in the 850s Viking armies began to winter in England, and in the 860s they began to assemble larger armies with the clear intent of conquest. In 865 AD they forced the East Angles to help supply an army, which in 866AD captured York and in 867AD took over the southern part of the kingdom of Northumbria.

Later traditions saw Ragnar Hairy-Breeks and his son Ívarr the Boneless as the two main Viking leaders, responsible not only for killing Ælla, King of Northumbria in 867AD but also Edmund, King of the East Angles in 869AD, and for destroying Dumbarton, the fortress of the British kings of Strathclyde. The man we then see more clearly in the sources as the Viking leader, Hálfðan, was later believed to be Ívarr's brother. He led the Viking army to a conquest of Mercia in 874AD, organized a parcelling out of land among the Vikings in Northumbria in 876AD, and in 878AD moved south and forced most of the population of Wessex to submit. The Vikings had conquered almost the whole of England.

The image on the next page shows the Viking Expansion from 790-1066 AD.

# VIKING EXPANSION 790–1066 AD



## LEGEND

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|---|---|-------------------------------|
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: red; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Norse homelands   | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 1px solid blue;"></span> Main trade routes  | 793 Date of Norse arrival     |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: orange; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Military conquest establishing Norse ruling class                              | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 1px dashed blue;"></span> Occasional trade routes   | 882 Date of Norse settlement  |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: orange; border: 1px solid black; border-style: dashed;"></span> Areas of regular plundering and extortion raids          | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 1px solid black;"></span> Main raiding routes   | ● City                        |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: orange; border: 1px solid black; border-style: dotted;"></span> Areas of sporadic plundering raids                       | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 1px dashed black;"></span> Occasional raiding routes  | ● Trade hub                   |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: orange; border: 1px solid black; border-style: dotted; border-radius: 5px;"></span> Agrarian settlements, Norse majority | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 1px solid black; border-style: dashed;"></span> Expeditions by Norsemen as crusaders or mercenaries | ● Village, monastery, etc.    |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: orange; border: 1px solid black; border-style: dotted; border-radius: 5px;"></span> Agrarian settlements, Norse presence |   | ✕ Viking attack               |
|   |   | I Landfall by Norse explorers |

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| <p><b>1. KINGDOM OF THE ISLES</b><br/>Settled by Norwegians around 850, ceded to Scotland 1266.</p> <p><b>2. NORTHUMBRIA</b><br/>Conquered by Danes in 867, ruled by Anglian, Norse and Norse-Gaelic kings until 954. Also occupied by Norway for one month in 1066.</p> | <p><b>3. THE DANELAW</b><br/>Conquered by Danes in 867, who later settled and ruled until 954. All of England was later ruled by Danish kings 1015-42.</p> <p><b>4. IRISH KINGDOMS</b><br/>Founded as raiding bases, developed into urban kingdoms giving rise to a particular Norse-Gaelic culture and language.</p> | <p><b>5. BRITANNY</b><br/>Occupied by unidentified Vikings 914-939.</p> <p><b>6. NORMANDY</b><br/>Ceded by the Franks to Danish chief Rollo in 911. Settled by Danes and Norwegians, fully assimilated within two generations.</p> | <p><b>7. FRIESLAND</b><br/>Occupied by Danes 841-885.</p> <p><b>8. RUS'</b><br/>Established by Swedish traders around 850, expanded over three generations into the massive Kievan Rus' state, by which time the ruling families were Slavonised.</p> |
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**SOURCES:** Christy, Ann. Vikings in the South: Voyages to baria and the Mediterranean. Bloomsbury Academic, London, 2015. Graham-Campbell, Iain. Cultural Atlas of the Viking World. Facts on File, New York, 1994. Hayward, John. The Penguin Historical Atlas of the Vikings. Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1995. Hayward, John. Encyclopedia of the Viking Age. Thames & Hudson, New York, 2000.

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