

THE RUNESTONE

WIR RINNSTI



Reconstruction of small merchant ship,
From wreck in Roskilde Fjord, Denmark, c. 1000 C.E.

(Courtesy Viking Ship Museum, Roskilde, Denmark)

The Runestone is a journal of the old Norse religion and is dedicated to the revival of that religion as epitomized during the Viking Age, and to the revival of the values of courage, freedom, and personal independence which are associated with it.

The Runestone is the official publication of the Viking Brotherhood and is published quarterly. Subscriptions are \$3.00 per year. Write Stephen A. McNallen, 6587 Baumholder, Postfach 114, West Germany.

NORSE NOTES

In this issue we've devoted a lot of space to the essence of what The Runestone is all about - the preservation of our holy religion and the preservation of our unique Western culture and civilization. We are going to say again something that we have said countless times before - that our way of life is being murdered by our enemies and that our liquidation is under way. The situation is more than merely critical; we are in a crisis of unimaginable proportions and most people aren't even aware that there's a war on!

The last few months have seen the loss of Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Portugal, Mozambique, Angola, and Guinea to the enemies of the West. We reiterate that the survival of the West is directly linked to the survival of the Norse religion, or, as it has been in the last few decades, to the survival of Teutonic - Norse heathen values within the weakening influence of an overlying Christian super-stratum.

At home, the seeds of dictatorship continue to be sown as bureaucracy multiplies and the noose of tyrannical government is placed ever more tightly around the necks of a once-free people. The American Revolution Bicentennial Celebration turns into a farce, because the very issues which drove the colonists into revolt - illegal taxation and government excesses - are now tolerated, with resistance only from a brave few.

The scene is dark, but never is it hopeless. Now is the time for increased activism among our people. Live true to our ancestors, and let us together fight the forces of Utgard arrayed against us. There is much that you can do. Please - do not hesitate!

* * * * *

Send us two new subscribers - and we'll send you a free copy of Gods and Myths of Northern Europe by H.R. Ellis Davidson.

Some Second Thoughts on the Age of Aquarius

For years the hippies, astrologers, occultists, and rock musicians have been telling us that we are entering something called "The Age of Aquarius". What this is supposed to mean is that human society advances or evolves from one astrological age to another, with each transition being characterized by a greater development of peace, love, human co-operation, and the like. As an example, we are in the transition from the Piscean Age, characterized by and encompassing the rise of Christianity, and are beginning to experience the first soothing waves of the Aquarian Age, which will allegedly distill the good of the former age and build on it to attain one more step towards perfection.

To those of us who have been observing both contemporary events and human history, all of this seems more than a little suspicious. We have looked at governments and, more generally, societies as a whole and have indeed discerned what may be a principle of evolution - but it is a tendency toward greater centralization and authority and away from freedom for the individual. Is this trend in keeping with the prophecies of the Aquarian seers? It would appear to be quite inconsistent with the alleged individuality and nonconformity expressed by those who are so busily welcoming in this new era. Possibly this development or change is not strictly linear; perhaps that which is the antithesis of the coming age builds up to a certain peak, at which point it is overwhelmed by the new? Or is the true answer possibly simpler but less appetizing and less likely to soothe the apprehensions of those who must distort reality to their tastes to make it palatable?

What are we to expect once the Age of Aquarius is fully upon us, in all its psychedelic poster intensity? The average member of the subculture which most often touts the phrase does not seem to have given it much thought, which is uncomfortable. Even though the words "the Aquarian Age" have become almost meaningless in the popular mind because of overuse and commercialization, if the concept is valid, such a concept will be reflected in hard realities such as governments (or lack of them) and the physical necessities of the world. What form will the institutions of the future take, if indeed the Age of Aquarius does dawn fully upon us?

Rod Chase of the Liberation News Service (which is, of course, terribly Aquarian) states: "Orwell's 1984, an Aquarian prophecy, is likely to be fulfilled. Privacy and individuality will vanish. . . . Aquarians often see the whole world as a commune." Somehow this just doesn't seem to square with the "do your own thing" bill of goods we have been sold. But let Mr. Chase elaborate. "Aquarians can be so commune minded that they sometimes believe that the home and family should be abandoned and the children should be reared by the state." How awfully enlightened - but not very original, as testified by the existence of the centrales existing today in Castro's Cuba. It has always been the early goal of dictatorships to abolish the family. The idea was proposed in The Communist Manifesto and implemented wherever possible. Bertrand de Jouvenal perhaps understood, or at least expressed, the secret strategy behind this - when all opposing systems of allegiance, whether familial, religious, local, or ethnic are destroyed, the State becomes the winner by default and its power is increased to totality.

Parenthetically, the loyalty to the clan or extended family among the Norsemen was a great force in the daily life of these people, and served as a deterrent to dictatorship.

Casting about in Toward Aquarius by Vera Reed you will find the following: "Up to now the most valuable factor to evolve in world states is the immense fusion of peoples created by the United States of America

and the United States (sic) of Soviet Russia... The contribution of the USSR is more immediately progressive and valuable. In face of strenuous opposition from the rest of the world Russia has had the vision to create a new order more in line with the symbolism of Aquarius than any so far attempted.... From Russia the Aquarian note of hope rings crystal clear and from her may come a yet finer expression of human progress." No mention is made of the police state, the slave labor camps, the genocide and exploitation. No, if the Aquarian Age is to be a Red-tinted one it can hardly be one to be eagerly anticipated.

But, the devotee of the Aquarian cult will hasten to add, you are really being quite unfair. After all, not all of the predictions of the New Age speak of dictatorships and centralization. Many of them are rosy with promise of freedom. Look at the theme of non-violence that runs through them, the stress on the Oriental philosophies and religions.

Forgotten is the fact that the lack of violence does not necessarily imply the presence of freedom. There are many forms of manipulation much more subtle than overt violence, from propaganda to technological behavior control. The techniques of 1984 and of Brave New World may differ, but the results are both stifling tyranny. The promise that the future is a non-violent one is not especially reassuring; it may even be a hint that a lobotomized (literally or figuratively) population, one incapable of violence, will populate the future.

As for the supposedly benevolent influence of the Eastern religions on this future world of mankind, we must bear in mind that the essential core of these religions demands the total negation of the individual; the submergence of the individuality into the All. Something more collectivistic could hardly be found.

The word freedom is one that has many different meanings, depending upon who is using it. To some it means being allowed to work out your sovereign will, to others it is "the recognition of necessity". The Aquarian version of freedom does not seem to be the same as the Norse version, that much is certain. If there is any truth to all of this talk about the Aquarian Age, it is not the truth that people have been led to expect. The fact is that freedom and individualism as we know them are being placed in great danger, and as followers of the Norse religion we know where we stand. The war now being made on our system of values and all that we hold good is a cultural battle, one of books and phrases and attitudes. It is time we realized that only in counterattack can we hope to preserve the Viking Way. We must refuse to support the pro-Aquarian movements wherever they are found, and we must work to promote our philosophy of freedom for each man, our belief in the individual rather than the herd, and our conviction in the worthiness of men. The battle is joined, and has been for some time. Today the weapons are not swords but ideas, and our idea is a beautiful one. We must fight to insure its survival!

ADVERTISEMENT



The Odinist Committee
COMMITTEE FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE ODINIC RITE

10, Trinity Green,
London, E.1.

BUY NORSE!

Those who are looking for books, jewelry, or other items relating to Vikings should write to the Viking Ship Museum in Roskilde, Denmark (Vikingskibshallen 1, Roskilde, Strandengen, 4000 Roskilde).

Some of the merchandise they offer include:

1. Viking jewelry of various sorts - write for details.
2. A beautiful wooden model of the merchant ship on the cover of this issue of The Runestone, at D kr. 50, plus D kr. 17 for postage.
3. The following books:
 - a. The Skuldeler Ships, Olaf Olsen and Ole Crumlin-Pedersen, D kr. 35,80 plus postage.
 - b. Norse Greenland, Knud Krogh, D kr. 3. 50 plus postage.
 - c. The Vikings and Their Origins, David Wilson, D kr. 25 plus postage.
 - d. The Bayeaux Tapestry, D kr. 30 plus postage.
 - e. Everyday Viking Life, Ramsbo and Bojesen, D kr. 55 plus postage.
 - f. Scandinavian Mythology, H.R. Ellis Davidson, D kr. 38 plus postage.

These prices are almost a year old and may have changed by now.

A full report on this unique museum, which we have visited several times, will be presented in a future issue. In the meantime, you can take advantage of their merchandise and at the same time help support their very worthy operation.

HELP THE RUNESTONE REACH OTHERS!

Talk up The Runestone to anyone you know who would appreciate it. Try to persuade your local librarian to subscribe to it. How about the local bookshop? Send us two new subscriptions and we'll send you a free copy of H.R. Ellis Davidson's Gods and Myths of Northern Europe!

We've done a lot of talking about saving our way of life and protecting our values from extinction - let's do something about it!

ADVERTISEMENT

GNOSTICA: NEWS OF THE AQUARIAN FRONTIER is America's most respected Occult journal, a monthly paper featuring reliable, soundly researched articles, columns, and occult fiction by experts in the fields of Astrology, Witchcraft, Neo-Paganism, Magic, Parapsychology and more. Sample copies are 50¢ each, subscriptions are \$5/year for 12 issues. Write: GNOSTICA: NEWS OF THE AQUARIAN FRONTIER, P.O. Box 3383-R, St. Paul, MN 55165.

VIKING BURIALS - PART III

A number of significant Viking cemeteries have been discovered, and an introduction to them is essential to a discussion of Viking burial. The geographical range of these cemeteries testifies to the vigor and expanse of the Viking endeavor.

Birka - The Viking cemetery at this Baltic trading center boasts 2,500 graves. Most of these are of men, and are wooden chamber graves. The site was excavated in the 1870's and 1880's by the archaeologist Stolpe. One grave contained two women, one of which was found in a twisted position which indicates she may have suffocated. Most of the Birka women were buried in simple wooden coffins.

Hedeby - This trading town at the base of Jutland possesses not one, but two cemeteries. Of the 3,000 graves in the first one, about 350 have been examined. A large number of coffins lying east - west were unearthed. The second and smaller cemetery consisted of a few burial chambers. No cremations were found at either site, though none would be expected in conjunction with the chamber burials in any case. Grave goods were poor. Despite the east-west alignment of the coffins, authorities do not see a Christian influence (it was the habit of early Christians in the Scandinavian countries to bury their dead on such an alignment).

Lindholm-Høje, on northern Jutland, has about seven hundred graves, most of which are cremations. The method used was that of burning the corpse, along with the grave goods, in one location and then moving the remains to the actual burial site. The ashes were spread on the ground over an area of about a yard, and then covered with a thin layer of earth. A sacrificial vessel was sometimes placed on top. Grave goods included such things as ornaments, knives, beads, and perhaps a whetstone, but only rarely a horse or a cow. Unburned burials were also found.

Lindholm-Høje has a large number of the "stone ship" graves, in which boulders were lain around the grave to make the pointed ellipse of a ship. Besides those which were strictly ship-shaped, such patterns might also be oval, round, square, or rectangular. These stones were significant only at the interment and shortly thereafter (so we presume) and lost their importance after the spirit began its journey. Some stones, in fact, were apparently used at more than one burial.

Norse cemeteries in Russia have aroused a great deal of controversy. South and southeast of Ladoga are several large mounds of what is called the "Volkhov" type, and hundreds of the smaller "Finnish" type. Both cremations and interments are to be found, though Norse graves in Russia were usually cremations. Northeast of Moscow at Yaroslav there are two large mound cemeteries, again a mixture of cremation and non-cremation graves, containing strong Nordic traits. The largest Norse cemetery in Russia, and also Russia's largest prehistoric burial site as a whole, is at Gnezdovo, west of Smolensk. Over 3,000 mounds are at this site. Here, however, the controversy is pronounced. The Russian scholar Avdusin claims that the graves are predominantly Slav, with Swedish elements. Swedish archaeologist Holgar Arbman believes that this find marks the location of a tenth century cemetery of a colony of Swedish warriors and mercenaries. Most of the grave contents, however, are Swedish. Cremation was the predominant means of burial. In any case, there appears to have been a lot of cultural assimilation occurring in the area at the time.

Smaller cemeteries than those discussed above exist, and seem

to have been principally family cemeteries. One such seems to be the site at Valsgräde, Sweden, which has fifteen boat burials which were emplaced between about 600 and 1100 Common Era.

At the Anglo-Saxon burial site at Stapenhill in Staffordshire, five normal cremations were found along with several inhumations which had been burned in place. This phenomenon has also been discovered at Kettering, and among the Germanic tribes on the Continent.

Many foreign Viking burials were scattered and do not rank as cemeteries in the usual sense of the word, but deserve mention because of the insight they give historians and archaeologists into the Viking expansion overseas. Scotland and the islands off its west coast boast thirty Norwegian graves, most of which are those of women. Two are boat graves, but none are cremations. The Hebrides and Orkneys have about the same number and kind of burials. The Shetlands possess two women's graves; neither are cremations. Ireland's main Norse burial scene is at the destroyed site of Kilmainham and Islandbridge near Dublin. Forty swords, thirty five spearheads, twenty five shield bosses, a few axes and arrowheads, and some women's articles were found. Other-Dublin finds include eight swords and seven spearheads. Outside the Dublin area have been found two men's graves and two women's graves, none of which were cremations. The Isle of Man reveals ten non-cremation graves, all of men. England has sixteen similar burials, with three women's graves.

There are few Viking burials on the European continent. They include a man's unburnt grave near Groningen, Holland and a women's non-cremation burial at Pitres, Normandy. The only known Viking cremation grave in western Europe is a cremated ship burial in Cruguel mound, Isle de Groix, off southern Brittany.

A few words are in order concerned the Norse use of coffins. They are quite common in some cemeteries, though in competition with the burial chamber method of interment. One coffin, made from a hollowed oak tree, was found at Egtred, Denmark resting on a layer of stones within the mound. It contained an inhumed woman and the cremated bones of a child. In the 13th century, stone sarcophagi seem to have come into use. A slab in St. Paul's cathedral in London is presumably part of one such structure. It is similar to hog-backed tombstones from northern England which were laid over graves in imitation of the sarcophagus and as a dwelling for the dead.

From 13th century Sweden we have the Eskilstum sarcophagi, in the Ostergotland area. These are composed of two long walls, a roof, and two gabled ends - a total of five stone slabs. They are rich in carvings and in runic inscriptions. Similar configurations of slabs are found elsewhere in Sweden.

During the period of the conversion, when Christianity came into pagan Scandinavia bearing fire and sword in the name of Christ, the heathen ways gradually faded, but did not abruptly cease. Burial customs clearly indicate this gradual transition. Christianity forbade cremation, but placed charcoal in the grave as a symbol of purification. At Kildale, Yorkshire, among other places, Vikings were buried with grave goods in typical pagan fashion - inside the church. Carved crosses at Middleton, also in Yorkshire, show warriors lying in the grave, accompanied by their weapons.

Norse burials, as we have seen, were characterized by their variety - inhumation, cremation, combinations of both - with ships and

without ships, or with stones in the shape of ships. Mounds might be marked with memorial stones, or with posts of wood as in Denmark and the Isle of Man - or as in one Swedish case the stones might also refer to the erection of memorial posts. There might be only a thin layer of earth, or a huge mound, or a layer of heavy stone packing as over the graves at Kaupang, in the Westfold area of Norway. A body might be - often was - in a sitting position, or in a laying position. A stone cremation urn, decorated with the sign of the swastika or of the hammer, may have been used, or it may not have been. The variety is endless.

This concludes our series of articles on Viking burials. Our ancestors died - often heroically - and were buried in hopes of Valhalla. They also died believing in the immortality of the greatness of their deeds. Let us emulate them in both respects.

CONTACT SERVICE!

Want to meet other Norse pagans in your area?

Simply send us permission to release your name and address, and we'll put you in contact!

This is the first step toward forming a viable Norse network around the world.

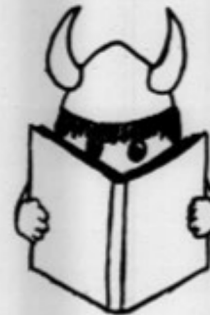
Here is your chance to take part in a project of great significance.

ADVERTISEMENT

Reformed Arthurian Order of the Soldiers
of the Light in the New World
(Arthurian Reformed Mithraists)

Chicago Mithraeum
1906 N. Mohawk
Rear House
Chicago, Illinois 60614

BOOK



REVIEW

GODS OF THE NORTH by Brian Branston

This volume is without doubt one of the best that I have ever read regarding the religion of the pagan North. Branston's book is comparable only to the classical Gods and Myths of Northern Europe by H.R. Ellis Davidson in its detail and in its approach. Gods of the North relates a tremendous amount of material on the attributes of the Norse gods according to the traditional sources such as the Eddas, but it goes beyond this and discusses the probable origin of beliefs in the particular gods and relates the Northern deities to their counterparts in early Indo-European mythology.

Subjects into which Branston delves include Norse cosmology, The Aesir and Vanir, tales of the gods and goddesses, the Norse afterlife, Ragnarok, the coming of Christianity, the origin and meaning of myth, and the history and anthropology of the Germanic-Norse peoples. His work is comprehensive and extremely scholarly, and yet the whole is presented in such a manner that it makes not merely easy reading, but actually absorbing reading.

Illustrations are adequate but hardly spectacular. I hardly missed them, however, and might almost have considered them a distraction.

The author's belief in the value of myth is one shared by myself. He writes: "Today Christianity is suffering a decline, its churches are emptying. Where then are we to look for our life-giving myths? Back to our peasant heathen ancestors lodging close to mother earth or to the great wens of cities in which we now live? These cities with their bricks and mortar, their great slabs of concrete paving stones and tar-macadam, their smog-laden air, have effectively cut us off from the soil our mother and the sky our father. Must we look for our myths to the cities, to the internal combustion engine and the atomic pile? I wonder."

Gods of the North is published by Thames and Hudson, of London and New York.

.....

ECO CORNER

This section of The Runestone is set aside for the subject of individual action to support our ecology, for two reasons. First, our religion is a religion of nature, of the free and the wild places on the Earth. Secondly, the worsening ecological crisis will result in more regulation and less freedom, unless we solve it ourselves.

Water conservation is an important part of the ecology movement. The water crisis whose edge we are riding will mean higher costs, more chemicals in the water, and less safe water. There is much you can do to help. Our hints are from Environmental Action, Inc.:

- ★ Don't let the water run while you wash dishes, shave, brush your teeth, or wash the car. Use only what you have to.
- ★ Put a brick in your toilet tank to reduce the volume of water wasted - most toilets don't use as much water as the tank will hold.
- ★ Take short showers or long baths, rather than vice versa. Share the shower or bath with a friend!
- ★ Use the dishwasher only when it is full. Reduce unnecessarily long rinse cycles.
- ★ Protest the municipal use of any fountains which do not recirculate water.
- ★ Fix leaky faucets.
- ★ Plant lawns and shrubs that can survive on a minimum of water.

We must rid ourselves of the notion that we are impotent to fight ecological disaster, to make our own destiny. Each of us can act, and we can make even so simple an act as shutting off a dripping faucet a religious act - living out the principle that religion must be immanent in life, not separated from it.

.....

“ODIN LIVES”

ADS - ADVERTISEMENTS - ADS

Earth Religion News

THE MONTHLY Pagan and Wiccan MAGAZINE

ISSUED THE 1ST OF EACH MONTH, THEN QUARTERLY.

Paganism?

WHAT IS IT? HOW DO YOU GET INTO IT? WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU?

SEND TO: **Earth Religion News**, c/o The Runestone, P.O. Box 364, Lawton, Oklahoma 73501

SEND TO: **Earth Religion News**, c/o The Runestone, P.O. Box 364, Lawton, Oklahoma 73501

SEND TO: **Earth Religion News**, c/o The Runestone, P.O. Box 364, Lawton, Oklahoma 73501

SEND TO: **Earth Religion News**, c/o The Runestone, P.O. Box 364, Lawton, Oklahoma 73501

SEND TO: **Earth Religion News**, c/o The Runestone, P.O. Box 364, Lawton, Oklahoma 73501

Amulets & Talismans - Books - Candles - Crystal Balls
Incenses & Aromatic Gums - Jewelry - Perfumes
Pipes - Records & Tapes - Spell Kits - Tarot Cards

--- and many other items can be found at

The Magick Circle
Occult Shop
747 N. LAKE AVE.
Pasadena, Calif.

The following services are also offered:
Personal Consultation - Tarot Reader
Practicing Magician & Advisor available
Classes & Instruction in several areas.

One question answered Free with this coupon, limit 1 per adult.

Phone: 794-6013 Hours: Noon to 6 PM, M-Sat.

Magical Equipment - Occult Supplies - Oils

Curtain - Fortune Telling Cards - Cliffs - Herbs

Here's another group of followers of the old Norse gods:

The Odinist Movement
Box 731
Adelaide St
Toronto 210
Ontario, Canada

A fine publication, known formerly as The Waxing Moon, which survives by donation rather than by set fee is:

The Crystal Well
Box 18351
Philadelphia, Penn.
19120

A new publication of the occult is The New Broom from Dallas. Write:

The New Broom
Box 1646
Dallas, Texas 75221

There is an occult shop in New York which is selling copies of The Runestone for us. For a catalog, write:

The Warlock Shop
300 Henry St.
Brooklyn, N.Y.
11201

Here are some other Pagan groups you may be interested in:

The Pagan Way
Box 593
Huron, So. Dakota
57350

The Central Wiccan Archives Library
P.O. Box 364
Lawton, Oklahoma
73501