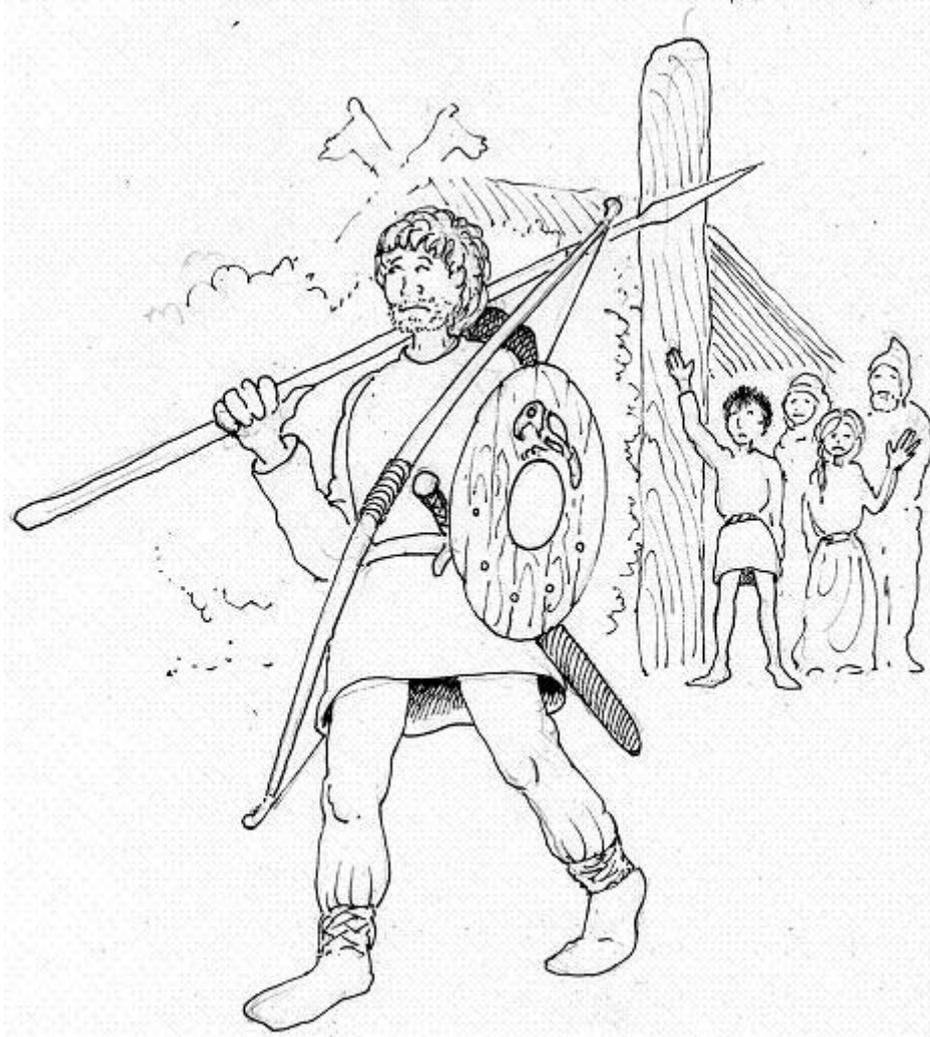


Wutha's Chronicles

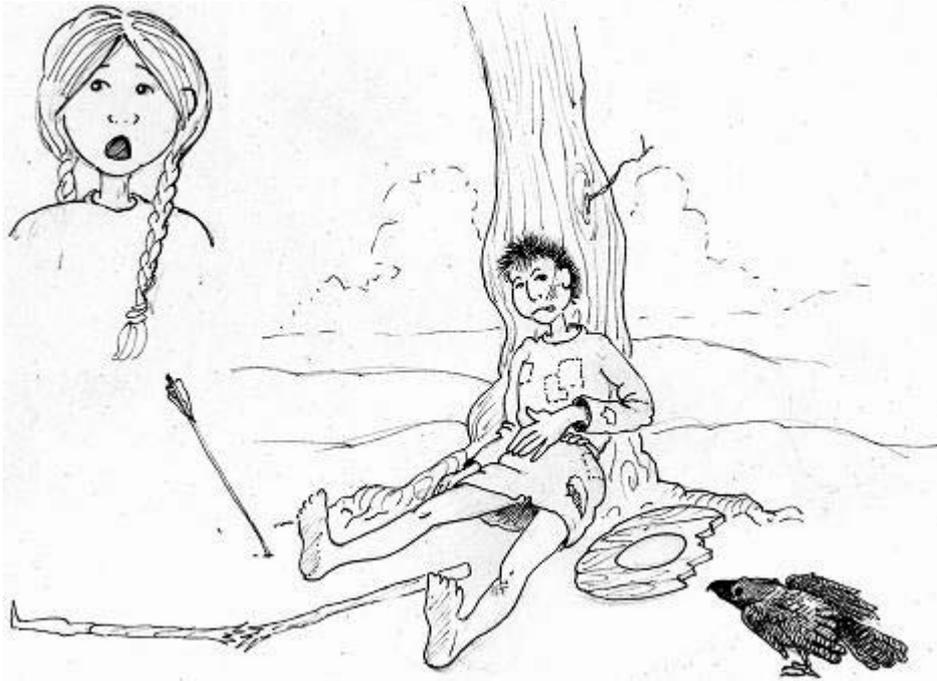
ANGLO-SAXON ADVENTURES

Eala! Hello!

Our Lord the Earl has called for Uncle to join his *fyrð*. Every freeman has to go and fight when he is called. When I am old enough, I will go too.



A fyrd-soldier is brave: he fights the Earl's enemies and keeps our land safe...

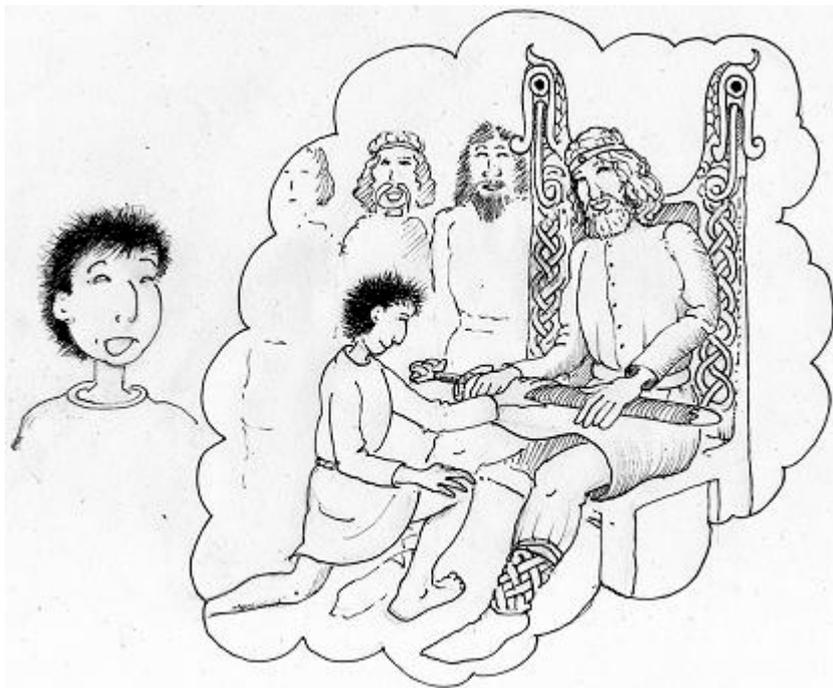


But if you go in the *fyrd* you might get hurt — or even killed!

A *fyrdsman* can capture cattle — and maybe even slaves!



But you might *get* captured
and sold as a slave yourself!



Our Lord the Earl gives
brave soldiers rich
rewards...

But soldiers who don't come back leave their
families poor...
I don't want my brother to go away too!



The Engla-land that Cutha and Cyne knew was not always a peaceful place to live: In the 5th and 6th centuries, the Angles, Saxons and Jutes were moving from their original homelands on the continent to find new places to live. Sometimes they would have to fight before they could settle down in a new home. In the 6th and 7th centuries, many new small kingdoms were taking shape. Their kings fought each other for land and power. In the 9th and 10th centuries, fierce Vikings came over the sea, some wanting to find new homes, some just wanting to rob and steal. And there were always outlaws and robbers in the woods and wild places.

There was no full-time army, though. Powerful noblemen like Cutha and Cyne's Earl would each have their own **warband** — a group of warriors who lived with them and fought for them when it was needed. If a bigger fighting force were needed, free farmers like Cutha and Cyne's uncle would be called up to join a *fyrð* — a part-time army. (*Fyrð* means something like "travelling men," because the farmers had to be prepared to travel to wherever they were needed.) Being ready to fight for your lord was one of the conditions of holding land. If a farmer refused to fight, he and his family would be turned out, and their farm given to someone else! Boys could be called up to fight when they were just twelve or thirteen.

If a farmer did not have weapons to fight with, his lord would lend him what he needed. The farmer had to look after it, and his family had to give it back when he died. If he lost anything, or if he never came back from the war, then the family had to **pay** for what was missing! The payment was called a *heriot* from the Old English words for "army gear."

In this story, Cutha thinks it would be good fun to be called up to join the *fyrð* and fight for the Earl. Cyne is not so sure. What do you think?

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BM Box 4336 London WC1X 3XX

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