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THE BATTLE OF MALDON

A Dark Age Saga for Shield Wall



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THE BATTLE OF MALDON

In July and early August 991 AD, a fleet of 93 Viking longships ravaged and plundered the coasts of Hampshire, Kent, and western Wessex before moving on to Ipswich. The coasts of England had been relatively quiet for some time in the 10th century after the successes of Alfred the Great in opposing the Vikings and then a series of strong Anglo-Saxon kings. In 980 King Edgar died and the coast became vulnerable to Viking attacks once again. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records that the leader of the 991 raid was Olaf Trygvason, who later became king of Norway.

From Ipswich, the Viking fleet headed up the River Blackwater and established a base on the island of Northey near the Essex town of Maldon. The island was an excellent choice since it offered an easily defensible position relying, as it did, on a tidal causeway for access to the mainland.

Up to that point in their raid the Vikings had met with little or no resistance. At Maldon, however, the Ealdorman of Essex, Byrhtnoth, gathered his retinue (his *heorthwerod* or hearth-warriors) and called out the *fyrð*, the muster of able-bodied men required to serve in the army when called. With this force, Byrhtnoth gathered on the shore opposite the tidal causeway to Northey and prepared to resist the Viking invaders.

We are remarkably well informed about the battle of Maldon since a near-contemporary, anonymous, poem describing the battle survives. Even though the poem is fragmentary (its unsurprising title, *The Battle of Maldon*, is modern), it is the best primary account of shieldwall warfare

that we possess from the Anglo-Saxon age. Its verses and ideology regarding heroism and resisting the enemy have echoed down the ages and its descendants can be seen in Tennyson's *Charge of the Light Brigade* and in several of Winston Churchill's inspiring speeches during World War Two. What is more, when we combine the poem with our other contemporary accounts of the battle (such as in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle), the poem seems to record a relatively trustworthy version of events. Of course, there are those who consider the poem a poetic exaggeration of the battle (complete with its speeches, heroes and villains) but its details (where we can check them) are remarkably accurate and if we have no reason to reject the other details, we should not be quick to reject them as 'mere poetry'.

The speeches may reflect what was actually said on the day and add to the evocation of the battle, the mindset of the participants, not to mention the gaming experience. For the purposes of this article, therefore, we shall follow the events of the poem. Some think that the poem was written very soon after the battle (and even by a participant or eyewitness) since the poet includes biographical details of several participants (indeed, it seems to read as a memorial to the Essex fallen) as well as implicit criticism of the idea of paying off the Vikings not to attack. This policy, the *danegeld*, was adopted immediately after the battle of Maldon by King Athelred II. Athelred is known as 'unready' even though the Anglo-Saxon *unraed* may have actually meant inexperienced or ill-advised. Nonetheless, the policy after Maldon was to pay the Vikings (ever increasing amounts) not to ravage the lands of the Anglo-Saxons.



The men of the *fyrð* eager to join battle. In truth, their morale could be broken easily if their leader fell, as Byrhtnoth did at the battle of Maldon.



The causeway from the mainland looking towards the Island of Northey at low tide. The distance would have been half that here and so the Viking army would have been easily visible massed on the island shore waiting to cross. The road is modern, but built on earlier foundations. (Author's photo).

Byrhtnoth is also criticized for actually resisting the Vikings; it seems he was outnumbered and by choosing to fight he was placing all of his eggs, and Essex's (not to mention England's) into one basket. His jurisdiction as Ealdorman covered, however, all of Essex and if he did not face the Vikings at Maldon he would have had to continue to chase them up the coast or be accused of neglecting his duty. The decision to call up the fyrd must have been made well in advance of the Viking arrival at Maldon and shows that the resolution to oppose the Vikings had been made some time before the battle. How long such a muster took is difficult to guess; we can probably safely assume a week, at the very least, for the men to be called and gather at a single point before marching off as a single body.

Maldon offered as good a place as any to stand and fight. In fact, the site offered several advantages to the landward army as well as the invader. If we assume an average crew of 40 men per ship for the Vikings, their forces numbered in excess of 3,500 men, even if we assume some losses in their expedition thus far. The Anglo-Saxons probably had between 550 and 2,750 men - the 'select fyrd' called up a number of men per 'hide' of land (a hide was traditionally 120 acres although it could vary). If the call out was one man for every five hides of land we arrive at the lower number, if one man per hide then the higher estimate. The fact that Byrhtnoth chose to oppose the Viking fleet implies that he considered that he had some kind of chance against them and so the higher estimate is to be preferred. Byrhtnoth's army was probably not the general fyrd where every able-bodied man was called up since he would have

had many more men than the Vikings did in such a scenario even if their mettle was of a lower standard. There is a case to argue that Byrhtnoth's army may have been made up of such a general muster, however.

For gaming purposes, your Vikings could have approximately one third more troops than your Anglo-Saxons if you choose to game a strictly 'historic' scenario along these lines. If you choose to have your Anglo-Saxons as the general fyrd, where every man served, they should outnumber the Vikings (the reasons for this option will become clear as you read on). In this case you should have approximately two-and-a-half times as many Anglo-Saxons as the number of Vikings (historically, at roughly 8,250 men) although their much lower quality should be reflected in their stats. This number presumes three able-bodied men per hide and the number could be much higher, perhaps up to 10,000 men.

Based on reconstructions of tidal patterns, the battle probably took place in the later afternoon, around 4.30pm. The battle occurring so late in the day also allows time for Byrhtnoth to have marched his army to the causeway. They may have been shadowing the Viking progress up the coast of Essex and so when it seemed as if the Vikings were staying put on Northey rather than moving on, Byrhtnoth saw his chance. Calendars which record Byrhtnoth's death (at Winchester and Ely) record his death as occurring on August 10th or 11th and so, remarkably, we have a relatively firm idea of the day and time of the battle. (When gaming, consider that the onset of night might have a part to play).



(Almost) the same view from the mainland towards Northey at high tide. As the poem tells us that the causeway was impassable at high tide, even its exact path is difficult to trace.

When Byrhtnoth arrived at the causeway he drew his army up on the shore facing Northey. The Viking army drew up facing them with the tidal causeway in between. The shore today is made up of treacherous marshland or saltings but in the 10th century the shore was firmer. The causeway was probably narrower too; today it is 240 yards across and estimates make it 120 yards in 991.

The poem as we have it is missing its beginning and end, but it starts with the armies facing each other at the tidal causeway. The causeway was still covered with water and so dangerous to cross to anyone unfamiliar with it. Byrhtnoth drew up his forces close to the river's edge, gave last minute instructions to his troops, dismounted from his horse, and then took up position on foot with his retinue. His last minute instructions include Byrhtnoth telling men how they should stand and hold their shields. This might suggest that his army was inexperienced in war, and could thus be a general fyrd. The literary motif of commanders' giving their men instructions on how to fight is common, however, and occurs elsewhere in Anglo-Saxon poetry. If Byrhtnoth's army was smaller (at 2,750 or 550) then we can presume they may have had some (although perhaps not much) experience of warfare.

When I visited the battlefield, my wife indulged me and allowed me to read out the speeches of the poem to her from the opposite side of the causeway. Even at today's distance the words travel across easily (an aspect of the poem which has been challenged). For that reason, the idea of the speeches or taunts before the battle proper seem, in this case, to be entirely possible, with the two armies facing each other across a flooded causeway. Of course, such speeches are a literary trope so can be rejected as 'poetic' if you wish. If you

did want to include the speeches in your game play, however, I have included them.

A Viking messenger was sent forward from the ranks and requested that the Anglo-Saxons pay them to depart:

'Valiant seamen have sent me to you, and ordered me to tell you that you must quickly send us gold rings for your safety; and that it is better for you that you buy off this spear-attack with tribute, than we deal out hard war. We need not destroy ourselves, if you are rich enough. We are willing to confirm a truce for the gold. If you will decide who is the most important here, and that you wish to save your people, then give us on our own reckoning money for a treaty, and to accept peace from us. We are willing to go to our ships with your coins, to travel across the sea, and to hold peace with you.'

This is a moment of criticism by the poet; we know that soon after the battle of Maldon the king paid the *danegeld* to the Vikings and the disdain for such an idea as expressed in the poem is a harsh condemnation of the policy. The criticism within the poem might also imply that the poem was written before the *danegeld* was actually paid as such criticism of the king is unexpected and would no doubt have proved dangerous to the poet if their identity became known. The idea that the Vikings may have asked Byrhtnoth for payment to go away is entirely plausible (since they would ask for payment to go away soon after as well). The Viking request was rejected by Byrhtnoth in the strongest terms:

'Listen, seafarer, to what this army says. They will send you spears as tribute, poisonous point and experienced sword, a

price which will not profit you in battle. Seamen's envoy, go back and tell them, tell your people a much less pleasing tale, that here stands the earl unabashed with his troop. He intends to defend this homeland, Æþelred's country, my lord's folk and land. Heathens must fall in battle. Too shameful it seems to me that you should go to your ships with our coins unfought, now that you have come this far into our country. You will not gain so soft a treasure; we must decide between point and edge, grim war-play, before we give tribute.'

The two armies were therefore left facing each other and Byrhtnoth ordered his army to come to the water's edge with their shields raised.

In the written sources for shieldwall warfare we are seldom given any details of fighting which do not adhere to the ideal of sword, shield, spear and axe in the shieldwall itself. In *The Battle of Maldon* poem, however, we do get glimpses of other forms of warfare (which we know from archaeology existed). The poet tells us that the only casualties which occurred between the two armies at this stage, separated by the tide, were those from archery: 'none of them could harm each other except those who by arrow's flight received his end.' At other points in the poem archery is also mentioned and one of the hearth-warriors, Ascerth (actually from Northumbria and called a hostage (*gysel*) which raises all sorts of interesting questions), is described later as pouring forth arrows into the Vikings. At other points in the poem we are told of spears and javelins being thrown; the poem is full of details which add to our understanding of Anglo-Saxon warfare.

The two armies stood taunting each other until the tide began to ebb. At that point Byrhtnoth sent forward three men to defend the tidal causeway. The causeway remains to this day a single-vehicle road and so thinking of it as defensible by only three men abreast in the 10th century is no great stretch of the imagination. The poet names the three men (Alfhere, Maccus and Wulfstan) and they were easily able to withstand the Viking advance across the causeway, an advance which could only be three men wide itself. We can envisage the three men on the causeway holding off the attack of their foes, the remainder of the Vikings having to keep their shields in place to defend the archery and spears of the Anglo-Saxons on the shore. Such a defence does, of course, evoke images of Horatio and the bridge from semi-mythical Roman history (where he too, with two companions, defended the bridge over the River Tiber from the invading army

of Lars Porsena). As such, several commentators have been suspicious of the story in the Anglo-Saxon poem. The imagery of the three-man defence of the causeway is wonderful, however, but can be included or excluded in your game without affecting the wider picture of the battle as a whole.

The most controversial action of the day occurred next. When the Vikings perceived that they would not easily gain access to the mainland across the causeway, according to the poet, they tricked (*lytegian*) Byrhtnoth, asking that they be granted access to the mainland so that they could have a fair fight.

Byrhtnoth acceded to their request and allowed the Vikings to cross. According to the poet this was because of Byrhtnoth's *ofermode*, usually translated as over-weening pride or hubris (it's a word only used of Byrhtnoth and the devil in Old English literature). Byrhtnoth's speech inviting the Vikings to cross is terse and to the point:

'Now the way is opened up for you. Do not delay coming to us, men into war. God alone knows who will win control of the slaughter site.'



A 19th century statue of Byrhtnoth which flanks the entrance to All Saints with St Peter's Church in the Maldon High Street today.

As we have seen, Byrhtnoth's decision may not have been such a hubristic one at all. The muster of the fyrd had already been called, presumably with the intention of facing the Vikings. And if the Vikings were allowed to depart, then Byrhtnoth and his army would be forced to pursue them up the coast. Byrhtnoth may also have considered that he had a chance against the Vikings again perhaps suggesting that he had every man available. The Vikings, however, also considered that they stood a chance against the Anglo-Saxons in open battle and so we might be wary of considering that the Vikings were massively outnumbered.

Presumably the Anglo-Saxons withdrew some distance (still drawn up in their battle line) and allowed the Vikings to cross the causeway and then drew up opposite them. Marching three abreast across the causeway, this manoeuvre will have taken some time (although not a great deal). The Anglo-Saxons did not attack until the Vikings were arrayed opposite them and both sides were ready for battle: 'The time had come when doomed men must fall. A great cry was raised, the ravens circled, the bird of prey keen for food; there was bedlam on earth.' The honour of this agreement and the fact that the Anglo-Saxons held up their end of the bargain and did not attack until the Vikings were drawn up is noteworthy (but not something your game needs to parallel if you so wish).

The two forces then advanced towards each other. The poem's terse and powerful verses on the waging of shieldwall warfare are incredibly evocative: 'then they let fly from their hands file-hard, cruelly sharpened, spears. Bows were busy,

shields received weapon-points. The war-charge was fierce. Warriors fell on either side.'

In the initial stages of the shieldwall battle at Maldon it seems as if the two sides were relatively evenly matched. We then get detail of a lull in the fighting during which combats between individuals took place. This is not an aspect of shieldwall warfare which gets emphasized but must have taken place since we know armies could not push uninterrupted for more than a few minutes without becoming exhausted. This poem and several others offer insights into such individual combats during lulls in the fighting. In the case of the battle of Maldon, they were to have disastrous results.

Byrhtnoth himself advanced towards a Viking warrior, and in the ensuing fight he was killed. Following a short fight over Byrhtnoth's body, three warriors, Godric and his brothers, Godwine and Godwig, fled from the battlefield. To make matters worse, Godric leapt onto Byrhtnoth's own horse to make his escape. The rest of the Anglo-Saxon army seeing this thought that Byrhtnoth himself had abandoned them and they too fled the battlefield en masse: 'They fled then from battle those who did not wish to be there'. From a gaming perspective, therefore, if you wished to have your Anglo-Saxon troops outnumber the Vikings but with low morale, this would be the moment where they are sorely tested. The only Anglo-Saxon warriors who remained on the field were Byrhtnoth's retainers and those who had seen him fall or did not run. Those who stood firm did so knowing they were doomed and severely outnumbered. Nonetheless,



The shieldwall: the mainstay of infantry warfare throughout the Dark Ages period. We can see here a mixture of swords, axes and spears. There must have been more open formations which allowed men to wield their weapons freely as well as 'close' formations where every shield touched its neighbour.



The Maldon shoreline today. The treacherous saltings or marshland seen here would make an impossible battlefield in the period. The 991 shoreline may have been both closer to Northey and firmer ground.

the stalwart warriors encouraged one another to keep fighting and they resolved to die fighting to avenge their lord:

‘Recall those times when often over mead we boasted, when we raised a vow on the bench, the heroes in the hall, about hard fighting. Now we may discover who is brave!’

Another cried out, ‘Now our lord lies dead, the earl on the earth. We must encourage each other, warriors into war, as long as each of us can wield his weapon, spear and sword, his hard blade. Godric has betrayed us all, cowardly Odda’s son. Too many men believed that it was our lord, when Godric rode off on our lord’s mare, his fine steed. In that moment we became an army divided here on the battlefield, our shieldwall broken. A curse on Godric for leading so many men in flight!’

The sentiments of these various speakers reflect centuries of Germanic warrior culture (just as they call to us today down the centuries) and the remainder of the poem as we have it consists of the speeches of the warriors who endured until they fell fighting the Vikings. Their sentiments have been repeated or referred to many times over:

‘Minds must be the harder, hearts the bolder, courage must be the greater as our numbers diminish. Here lies our leader, cut down, the great man in the dirt. Whoever now decides to turn away from this war-work will be forever sorry. I am experienced in life and I will not turn away but by the side of my lord I intend to lay.’

The poem breaks off at this point and our other sources are silent on the aftermath of the battle. We do get one story that Byrhtnoth’s head was hacked off as a trophy (and a headless skeleton was excavated at Ely where it was claimed

Byrhtnoth was buried). It seems sure that the remainder of the Anglo-Saxon army on the field perished and that Maldon itself was sacked. Those that had fled wither fell later or hid until the Vikings had moved on. It was usually considered the greatest shame to have survived a battle where your lord perished and so we may assume a great deal of guilt following the defeat at Maldon. It is possible that the Vikings left England after the battle of Maldon, perhaps having sustained more casualties than they were prepared to since we hear of no more towns being sacked during the expedition. The death of Byrhtnoth was a major blow to the kingdom as he was one of the senior statesmen (aged around 60) and probably one of the three most important men in the kingdom. We know that soon after the battle, the *danegeld* was paid for the first time, to purchase peace from the Vikings, just as they had asked in the poem. The first payment was £10,000; within three years that had jumped to £22,000. Given the heroic last stand of Byrhtnoth and his men at Maldon, there was an added sense of shame in buying off the Vikings, something the poet clearly expresses. The next we hear of Olaf Tryggvason is as King of Norway, in 995. He converted to Christianity, perhaps in 994 (although one tradition would have him as Christian already when he raided England in 991) and converted Norway to a Christian kingdom thereafter.

The battle of Maldon itself, not to mention the poem, is not the best known Anglo-Saxon battle although it is an incredibly evocative and intense battle which sums up shieldwall warfare. It is also one which lends itself superbly to your tabletop. The poem itself has inspired several remarkable successors: Tolkien wrote a sequel poem (*The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth*) and there was a pre-WWI invasion of Britain plan which took advantage of the terrain of Northey and the River Blackwater, just as the Vikings had in 991.

FIGHTING THE BATTLE

ANGLO-SAXON ARMY

Use the Late Saxon army list (page 10).

Your army may not contain cavalry units or Viking mercenaries. (Byrhtnoth and several high status warriors had their horses present just behind the Anglo-Saxon line (they rode to battle and dismounted, as per the *No Retreat* special rule). The presence of these horses will facilitate the rapid flight of the first units following the event of Byrhtnoth's death.

BYRHTNOTH EALDORMAN OF ESSEX

Lived: c.930-991

Religion: Christian

Leadership: 9

Fighting Value: 2



Special Rules

Byrhtnoth was an inspiring presence for the Anglo-Saxons. While he is alive, once per turn, when a unit in another division fails an order, it may be re-rolled using Byrhtnoth's leadership provided the Ealdorman has not already failed to give an order this turn. The divisional commander has still failed an order so may give no further orders, but Byrhtnoth is unaffected if the re-roll also fails.

TERRAIN

As on map (see page 9). The River Blackwater is impassable. The tidal causeway can only be crossed by units in column (three figures wide).

The riverbank has changed since 991 and we assume that the ground immediately beyond the tidal causeway is firm and not the treacherous marshland of today.

DEPLOYMENT

Anglo-Saxons

The Anglo-Saxon army deploys as on the map, facing the island of Northey across the tidal causeway on the southern bank of the river.



Vikings

The Viking army deploys as on the map, on the island of Northey facing the Anglo-Saxons across the tidal causeway.

VIKING ARMY

Use the Viking army list (page 11).

OLAF TRYGGVASON

Lived: c. 960-1000,

(King of Norway 995-1000)

Religion: Pagan

(later converted to Christianity)

Leadership: 8

Fighting Value: 3



Special Rules

Olaf was a cunning strategist and survived many encounters by quickly thinking of a tactic which outsmarted his foes. If Olaf is killed during a battle roll a D6.

On a 1 or 2 he really is killed.

On a 3 or 4 he is wounded instead of killed.

On a 5 or 6 'it was only a scratch' and the result is ignored. A wounded Olaf who suffers a further kill result and subsequently rolls a 5 or 6 is restored to full health.

SPECIAL SCENARIO RULES

If Byrhtnoth is killed, all units in the Anglo-Saxon army must take a Break Test (use the Hand-To-Hand table) to reflect Godric's flight from the field and the majority of the Anglo-Saxon army running with him.

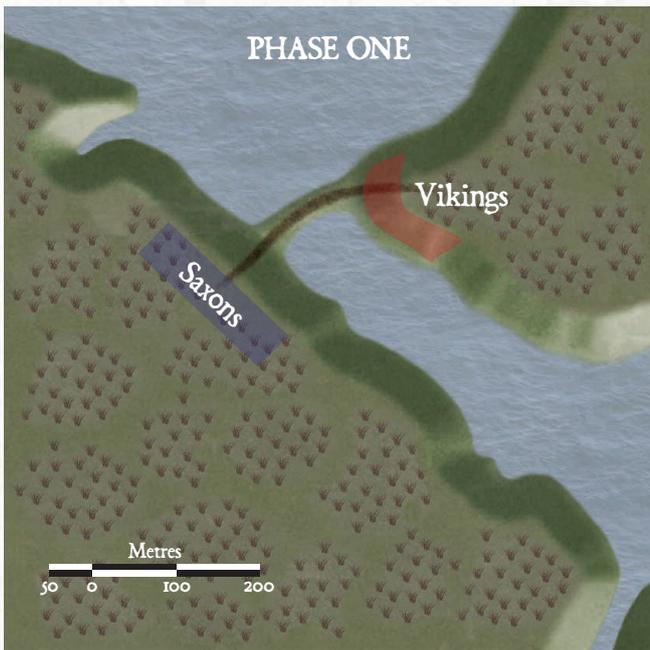
(Optional) You may, if you wish, trigger a special event of Byrhtnoth's death if he has not yet fallen in combat at the start of turn 4, in which case use the special rule above.

NOTES

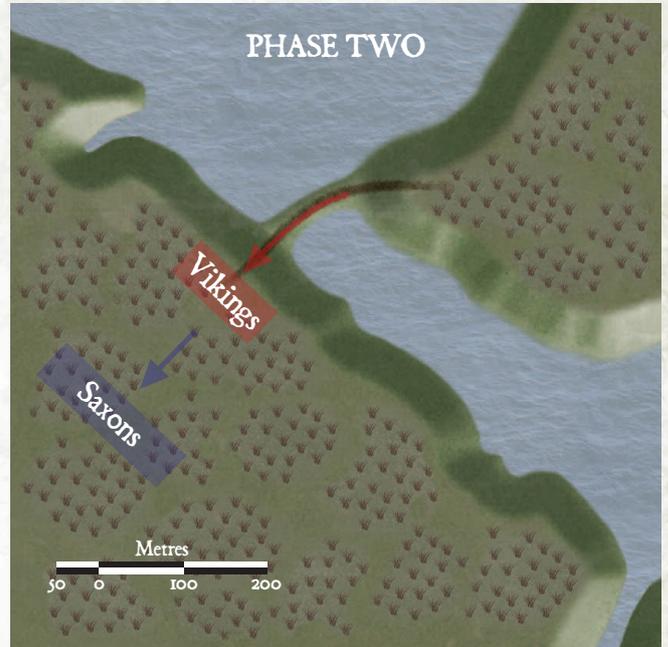
The battle may be fought at the causeway if you choose. If (as per history) the Anglo-Saxon player chooses to allow the Vikings to cross the causeway, the Anglo-Saxon player may also ambush the Viking player before he is completely deployed. Alternatively, the Anglo-Saxon player can play out the battle as per Byrhtnoth's choices.

The composition of the Anglo-Saxon Army may be modified depending on whether you consider that Byrhtnoth had the select fyrd (in which case use the Late Saxon Army list unchanged) or if he had the general fyrd callout of all able-bodied men (in which case at least 50% of your force must consist of light infantry or skirmishers).

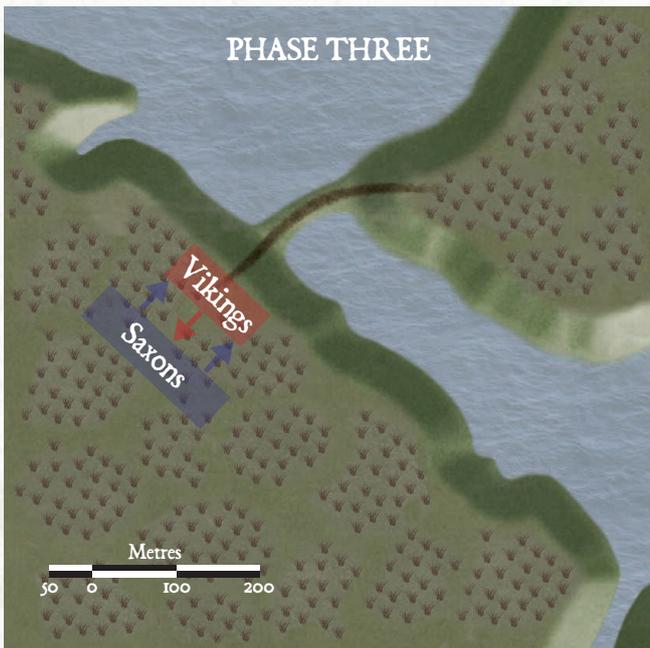
You may, if you wish, have the forces evenly matched or have the Vikings outnumber the Anglo-Saxons. If the general fyrd is chosen, however, the Anglo-Saxons should outnumber the Vikings.



◀ PHASE 1. The two armies face each other across the causeway. (This phase can include the battle on the causeway if you wish.)

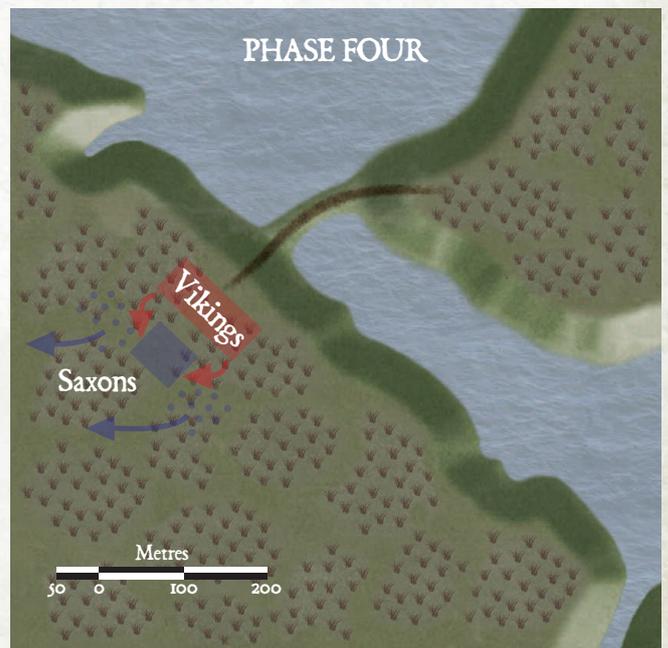


▲ PHASE 2. The Vikings are allowed to cross and the Anglo-Saxons withdraw to allow it.



◀ PHASE 3. Battle is joined.

▼ PHASE 4. Byrhtnoth falls, the Anglo-Saxons break and the end is nigh!



LATE SAXON

ARMY COMPOSITION

- At least two thirds of the units in the army must be infantry, not counting skirmishers.
- There must be at least as many medium infantry units as heavy infantry units in the army.
- Only one unit in the army may be Huscarl and the general must be attached to it, if present.
- Up to one quarter of the units in a division may be skirmishers.
- The army is Christian.



Late Saxon Troop Values

Unit	Combat				Morale Save	Stamina	Points Per Unit	Special
	Clash	Sustained	Short Range	Long Range				
Huscarl heavy infantry with assorted arms	7	7	3	0	4	6	36	Tough Fighters, Elite, Stubborn, Valiant
Thegn heavy infantry with spears <i>Extra to arm Thegns with long spears</i>	7	7	3 3/0	0	4+	6	26 +6	Phalanx
Ceorls medium infantry with spears	6	6	3	0	5+	6	23	
Gebur light infantry with spears and/or javelins	5	5	3	0	6+	6	20	
Gebur skirmishing light infantry with javelins, fielded as small units	3	2	2	0	0	4	11	
British skirmishers with bows, fielded as small units	2	2	2	2	6+	4	13	
Skirmishing light infantry with slings, fielded as small units	2	2	2	2	0	4	12	

SPECIAL RULES

- **No Retreat:** Saxon commanders must be attached to infantry units. For a Saxon leader to remain horsed indicates that he intends to flee the battlefield if necessary and hence is a weakling and coward who no true warrior will follow.
- **Shieldwall:** Late Saxon heavy and medium infantry may use a shieldwall formation.



The Anglo-Saxon fyrd would have consisted of men with a variety of arms and equipment of differing quality. Most would have had a shield and spear, axes and some swords. Armour was probably much less common. Lords' and hearth-warriors' equipment, by contrast, would have been expensive and elaborate.

VIKING ARMY LIST

There is no evidence that Viking armies or large raiding warbands differed substantially in composition from Norse royal armies, which can be thought of as simply more of the same.

ARMY COMPOSITION

- Up to one quarter of each division may be skirmishers.
- At least half the units in the army must be hirdmen.
- Up to one in five non skirmisher units in the army can be light infantry.
- Only one Royal Bodyguard Huscarl heavy infantry unit may be present in the army and the general must be attached to it, if present.
- The Army is pagan.

Viking Troop Values									
Unit	Combat				Morale Save	Stamina	Points Per Unit	Special	
	Clash	Sustained	Short Range	Long Range					
Royal Bodyguard Huscarl heavy infantry with assorted arms <i>Extra to field with heavy throwing weapon (counts as pilum)</i>	8	8	3	0	4+	6	35 +3	Tough Fighters, Stubborn, Elite, Valiant	
Veteran Warrior heavy infantry with assorted arms <i>Extra to field with heavy throwing weapon (counts as pilum)</i>	7	7	3	0	4+	6	33 +3	Tough Fighters, Stubborn, Elite, Valiant	
Hirdmen/Warriors heavy infantry with assorted arms <i>Extra to field with heavy throwing weapon (counts as pilum)</i>	7	7	3	0	4+	6	23 +3		
Saxon Gesith 'allied' medium infantry with spears <i>Reduction to make Wavering</i>	6	6	3	0	5+	6	23 -11	Wavering	
Bondi medium infantry with spears	6	6	3	0	5+	6	23		
Bondi medium infantry with bows	4	4	3	3	6+	6	21		
Bondi medium infantry with bows fielded as small unit	3	3	2	2	6+	4	15		
Thrall skirmishers with spears and javelins, fielded as small unit	3	2	2	0	0	4	11		
Local skirmishing insurgent allies, fielded as small units	2	1	1	0	0	4	6	Levy	

SPECIAL RULES

- **Berserkers:** Up to five Viking units may have a single berserker attached at a cost of +1 point. The berserker adds three attacks on the first turn that a Viking unit is in hand-to-hand combat provided that the Viking unit initiated the combat by charging. Otherwise the berserker has no effect in the game. A berserker model should be placed beside the unit so that it is clear which units are so equipped. The berserker models should be removed after use or if they become irrelevant.
- **Shieldwall:** Viking heavy and medium infantry may use shieldwall formations.



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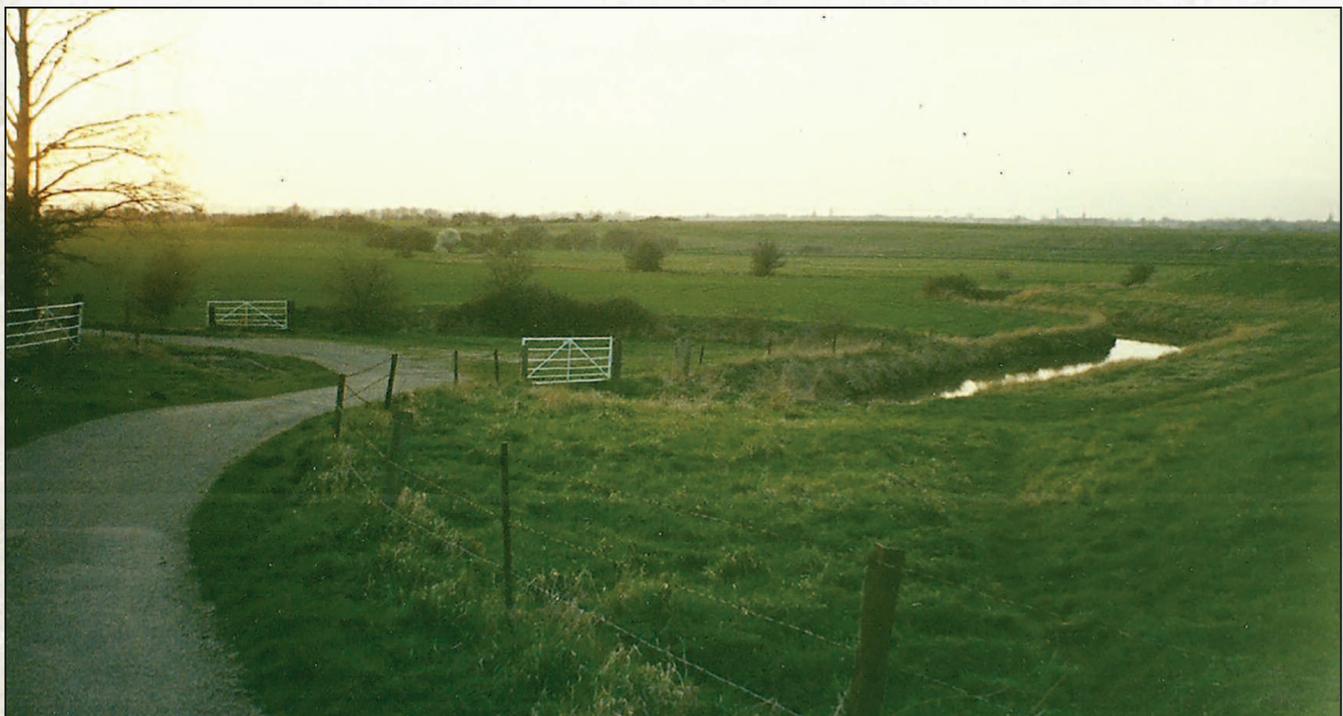
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The fields immediately behind the saltings today. Taken close to sunset, we can imagine that the battlefield consisted of similar ground and that the men of Essex fled away from the battle towards the setting sun.