

BOOK SIX



THE CIRCLE OF
CERIDWEN SAGA



SILVER HAMMER, GOLDEN CROSS

OCTAVIA RANDOLPH



List of Characters

Ceric, son of Ceridwen and Gyric, grandson of Godwulf of Kilton

Worr, the horse-thegn of Kilton

Raedwulf, bailiff of Defenas

Modwynn, Lady of Kilton, widow of Godwulf

Hrald, son of Ælfwyn and Sidroc, heir of the Danish keep of Four Stones in Lindisse

Ashild, daughter of Ælfwyn and Yrling, Hrald's older half-sister

Ælfwyn, mother to Ashild and Hrald, widowed of Yrling; marriage dissolved with Sidroc

Asberg, brother-in-law to Ælfwyn

Jari, a warrior of Four Stones, body-guard to Hrald

Gunnulf, Jari's younger brother

Sigewif, Abbess of Oundle, sister to slain King Edmund of Anglia

Sparrow, known now as **Bova**, a novitiate of Oundle

Wilgot, the priest of Four Stones

Ceridwen, Mistress of the hall Tyrsborg on Baltic island of Gotland

Sidroc, her husband, formerly Jarl of South Lindisse

Rannveig, a brewster on Gotland

Tindr, her hunter son, and **Šeará**, his Sámi wife

Ælfred, King of Wessex

Eadward, Prince of Wessex, son of Ælfred

Begu, a village woman of Kilton

Edwin, Ceric's younger brother, heir to Kilton

Edgyth, Lady of Kilton, mother by adoption to Edwin, widow of Godwin

Cadmar, a warrior-monk

Thorfast, nephew to Danish King Guthrum

Haesten, a Danish war-chief

Silver Hammer, Golden Cross Map Year 890



SILVER HAMMER, GOLDEN CROSS



He suffers that much less, who knows a number of songs. – The Exeter Book

The Wheel of the Year

Candlemas - 2 February

St Gregory's Day - 12 March

St Cuthbert's Day – The Spring Equinox, about 21 March

St Elgiva's Day - 18 May

High Summer or Mid-Summer Day- 24 June

Sts Peter and Paul - 29 June

Hlafmesse (Lammas)- 1 August

St Mary's Day -15 August

St Matthews' Day – The Fall Equinox, about 21 September

All Saints -1 November

The month of Blót – November; the time of Offering

Martinmas (St Martin's) -11 November

Yuletide - 25 December to Twelfthnight - 6 January

Winter's Nights – the Norse end of the year rituals, ruled by women, marked by feasting and ceremony

Anglo-Saxon Place Names, with Modern Equivalents

Æscesdun = Ashdown

Æthelinga = Athelney

Apulder = Appledore

Basingas = Basing

Bryeg= Bridgenorth

Caeginesham = Keynsham

Cippenham = Chippenham

Cirenceaster = Cirencester

Defenas = Devon

Englafeld = Englefield

Ethandun = Edington

Exanceaster = Exeter

Fearnhamme = Farnham

Glastunburh = Glastonbury

Hamtunscir = Hampshire

Hreopedun = Repton

Jorvik (Danish name for Eoforwic) = York

Legaceaster = Chester

Limenemutha = Lymington in Hampshire

Lindisse = Lindsey

Lundenwic = London

Meredune = Marton

Middeltun = Milton

Readingas = Reading

Sceaftesburh = Shaftesbury

Snotingaham = Nottingham

Sumorsaet = Somerset

Swanawic = Swanage

Turcesig = Torksey

Wedmor = Wedmore

Witanceaster (where the Witan, the King's advisors, met) = Winchester

Frankland = France

Haithabu = Hedeby

Land of the Svear = Sweden

Aros = Aarhus, Denmark

Glossary of Terms

Bova: a seventh century saint of Frankland, known today as Ste Beuve.

brewster: the female form of brewer (and, interestingly enough, the female form of baker is baxter...so many common names are rooted in professions and trades...).

browis: a cereal-based stew, often made with fowl or pork.

chaff: the husks of grain after being separated from the usable kernel.

cooper: a maker of casks and barrels.

cresset: stone, bronze, or iron lamp fitted with a wick that burnt oil.

dísir: female household spirits, celebrated at Winter's Nights feasts.

ealdorman: a nobleman with jurisdiction over given lands; the rank was generally appointed by the King and not necessarily inherited from generation to generation. The modern derivative *alderman* in no way conveys the esteem and power of the Anglo-Saxon term.

fulltrúi: the Norse deity patron that one felt called to dedicate oneself to.

fylgja: a Norse guardian spirit, always female, unique to each family.

hackle: the splitting and combing of fibres of flax or hemp with opposing brush-like tools.

hamingja: the Norse "luck-spirit" which each person is born with.

joik: (also, yoik) A chant-like Sámi song, evoking the essence and spirituality of a person, animal, or landscape element, and unique to each recipient.

Judith: in the Old Testament *Book of Judith*, the beautiful Hebrew slayer of the enemy Assyrian general Holofernes, who had put her town to siege.

kith and kine: kin – family members – and cattle.

Máttaráhkká: The Sámi mother Goddess, creator of human bodies, who lives under the floor boards of Sámi dwellings. She is the mother of Sáráhká, patron of female fetuses, menstruating women, and those in child-birth, whose domain was under the hearth fire; Juksáhká, guardian of male fetuses; and Uksáhká, patron of children. These last two Goddesses lived by a door.

morgen-gyfu: literally, "morning-gift"; in Angle-land, a gift given by a husband to his new wife the first morning they awake together.

nålbinding: a form of early knitting or crochet, using one's thumb and threaded needle to form interlocking loops.

rauk: the striking sea- and wind-formed limestone towers on the coast of Gotland; the one on the cover of Book Four, *The Hall of Tyr* is at Fårö, Gotland.

seax: the angle-bladed dagger which gave its name to the Saxons; all freemen carried one.

scop: (“shope”) a poet, saga-teller, or bard, responsible not only for entertainment but seen as a collective cultural historian. A talented scop would be greatly valued by his lord and receive land, gold and silver jewellery, costly clothing and other riches as his reward.

skep: a bee hive formed of coils of plaited straw, built up into a conical shape.

skeggox: steel battle-axe favoured by the Danes.

skirrets: a sweet root vegetable similar to carrots, but cream-coloured, and having several fingers on each plant.

skogkatt: “forest cat”; the ancestor of the modern Norwegian Forest Cat, known for its large size, climbing ability, and thick and water-shedding coat.

skogsrå: “Lady of the Forest”; a womanly wood spirit who protected woodland animals, and yet guided hunters she favoured.

strakes: overlapping wooden planks, running horizontally, making up a ship’s hull.

symbol: a ceremonial high occasion for the Angle-Saxons, marked by the giving of gifts, making of oaths, swearing of fidelity, and (of course) drinking ale.

tæfl or Cyningtæfl (“King’s table”): a board game of strategy.

thegn: (“thane”) a freeborn warrior-retainer of a lord; thegns were housed, fed and armed in exchange for complete fidelity to their sworn lord. Booty won in battle by a thegn was generally offered to their lord, and in return the lord was expected to bestow handsome gifts of arms, horses, arm-rings, and so on to his best champions.

thrummy: from the noun “thrum”, meaning the rough, uneven ends of the warp strings left behind on the loom when the fabric is cut free. “Thrummy hair” would then be tousled, uncombed, or uneven.

trev: a settlement of a few huts, smaller than a village.

wadmal: the Norse name for the coarse and durable woven woollen fabric that was a chief export in the Viking age.

verjuice: “green juice”; an acidic juice from unripe grapes or crabapples, much used as we would vinegar.

woad: a free-growing herbaceous perennial plant, its leaves used for its astringent, antiseptic, and blood-staunching properties, and to produce the colour blue for fabric dying.

wither: the highest point at the top of the shoulder of a horse or deer, marked by a projecting knob.

withy: a willow or willow wand; withy-man: a figure woven from such wands.

wool-wax: (also wool-oil, wool-fat) All earlier names for lanolin. Lanolin was extracted from sheep's wool by boiling washed wool in water. When the pan was left to cool, a milky white grease would be floating on top - the sheep's waterproofing. The globules were further refined by squeezing them through linen cloths. Lanolin was invaluable as a simple remedy for chapped and roughened skin. Blended with powdered or crushed herbs, it served as a medicinal salve.

The Circle of Ceridwen Saga:

[The Circle of Ceridwen: Book One](#)

[Ceridwen of Kilton: Book Two](#)

[The Claiming: Book Three](#)

[The Hall of Tyr: Book Four](#)

[Tindr: Book Five](#)

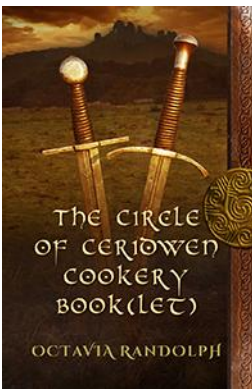
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The Glossary of Terms and other background information follow.

Acknowledgments

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About the Author

Octavia Randolph has long been fascinated with the development, dominance, and decline of the Anglo-Saxon peoples. The path of her research has included disciplines as varied as the study of Anglo-Saxon and Norse runes, and learning to spin with a drop spindle. Her interests have led to extensive on-site research in England, Denmark, Sweden, and Gotland. In addition to the Circle Saga, she is the author of the novella [*The Tale of Melkorka*](#), taken from the Icelandic Sagas; the novella [*Ride*](#), a retelling of the story of Lady Godiva, first published in Narrative Magazine; and [*Light, Descending*](#), a biographical novel about the great John Ruskin. She has been awarded Artistic Fellowships at the Ingmar Bergman Estate on Fårö, Sweden; MacDowell Colony; Ledig House International; and Byrdcliffe.

She answers all fan mail and loves to stay in touch with her readers. Join her mailing list and read more on Anglo-Saxon and Viking life at www.octavia.net.