

BOOK FOUR



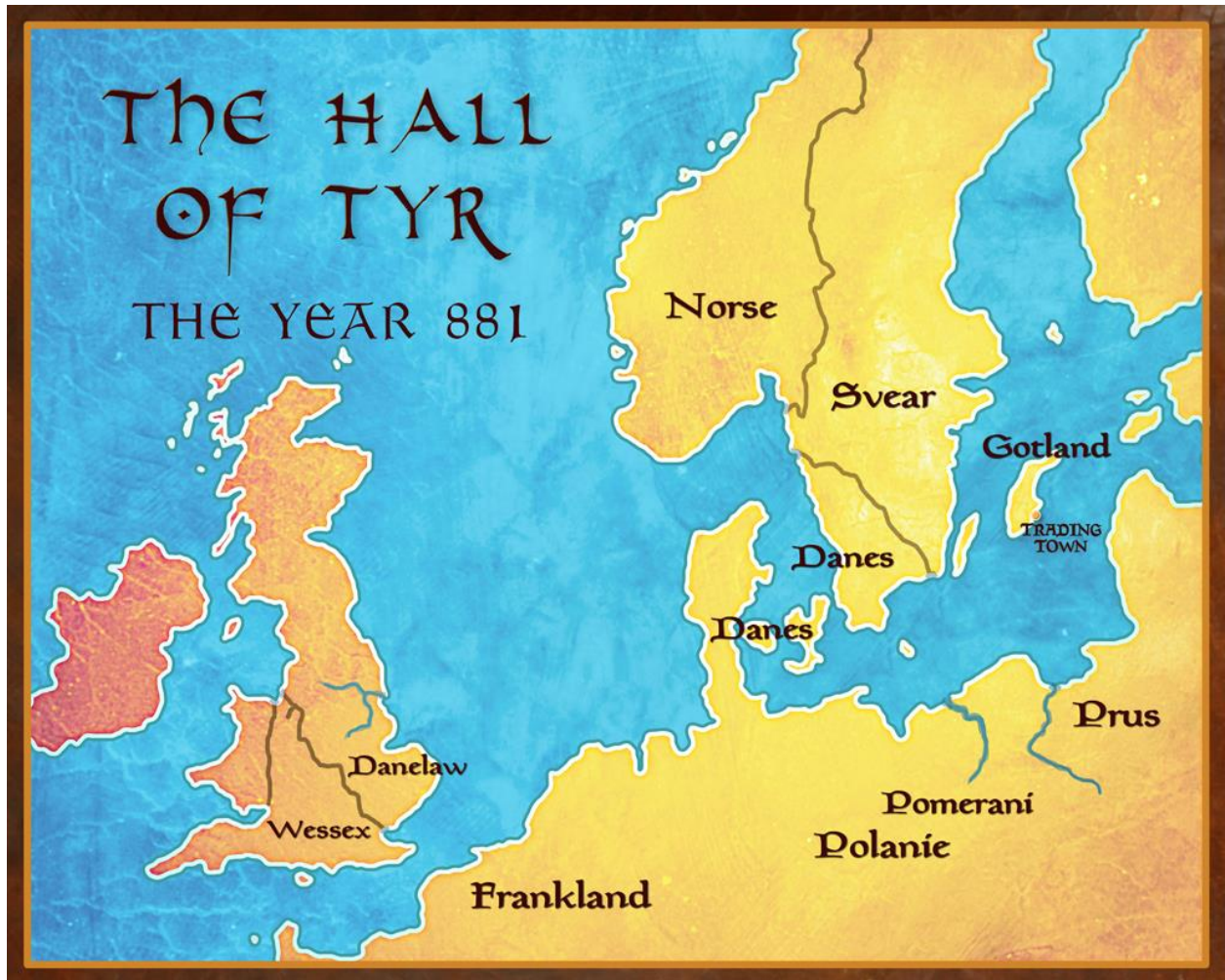
THE CIRCLE OF  
CERIDWEN SAGA

The  
HALL  
OF TYR

OCTAVIA RANDOLPH



# *The Hall of Tyr Map Year 881*



# *The Wheel of the Year*

Candlemas - 2 February

St Gregory's Day - 12 March

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

High Summer or Mid-Summer Day- 24 June

St 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

Martinmas (St Martin's) -11 November

Yuletide - 25 December to Twelfthnight - 6 January

# *Anglo-Saxon Place Names, with Modern Equivalents*

Æscesdun = Ashdown  
Æthelinga = Athelney  
Basingas = Basing  
Caeginesham = Keynsham  
Cippenham = Chippenham  
Cirenceaster = Cirencester  
Defenas = Devon  
Englafeld = Englefield  
Ethandun = Edington  
Exanceaster = Exeter  
Glastunburh = Glastonbury  
Hamtunscir = Hampshire  
Hreopedun = Repton  
Jorvik (Danish name for Eoforwic) = York  
Legaceaster = Chester  
Limenemutha = Lymington in Hampshire  
Lindisse = Lindsey  
Lundenwic = London  
Meredune = Marton  
Scaftesburh = Shaftesbury  
Snotingaham = Nottingham  
Sumorsaet = Somerset  
Swanawic = Swanage  
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*

**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...)

**blästjärna :**“blue stars”; Siberian squill, an early bright blue spring flowering bulb

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

**ceorl:** ("churl") a freeman ranking directly below a thegn, able to bear arms, own property, and improve his rank

**cooper:** a maker of casks and barrels

**cottar:** free agricultural worker, in later eras, a peasant

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

**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.

**frumenty:** cereal-based main dish pudding, boiled with milk. A version flavoured with currents, raisins and spices was ritually served on Martinmas (November 11th) to ploughmen.

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

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

**hamingja:** the Norse “luck-spirit” which each person is born with

**hvit fagningsblóma:** white wood anemones; “hvit” is white in Old Gutnish, the form of Old Norse spoken on Gotland, “fagning” is the preparation of the meadows in Spring, and “bloma”, of course, is bloom

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

**raukar:** the striking sea- and wind-formed limestone towers on the coast of Gotland; the one on the cover of *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

**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

**Sun-stone:** a piece of calcite crystal

**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.

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

**tun:** a large cask or barrel used for ale

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

**wergild:** Literally, man-gold; the amount of money each man's life was valued at. The Laws of Æthelbert, a 7th century King of Kent, for example, valued the life of a nobleman at 300 shillings (equivalent to 300 oxen), and a ceorl was valued at 100 shillings. By Ælfred's time (reigned 871-899) a nobleman was held at 1200 shillings and a ceorl at 200.

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

**vintargekko:** the yellow-flowered Winter aconite

**Witan:** Literally, wise men; a council of ealdorman, other high-ranking lords, and bishops; their responsibilities included choosing the King from amongst their numbers.

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

I would like to thank Thomas Gahm of Gotland for his generous help with Old Gutnish, the dialect of Old Norse spoken on Gotland during the Viking Age.

To the three pair of eyes that first read this novel I offer my great thanks. First Readers Tom Blair, Jennifer Joyce, and Judy Moseley, your comments and encouragement place me in your debt.

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[The Claiming: Book Three](#)

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

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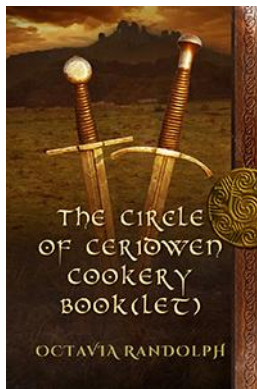
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## *About the Author*

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](http://www.octavia.net).