

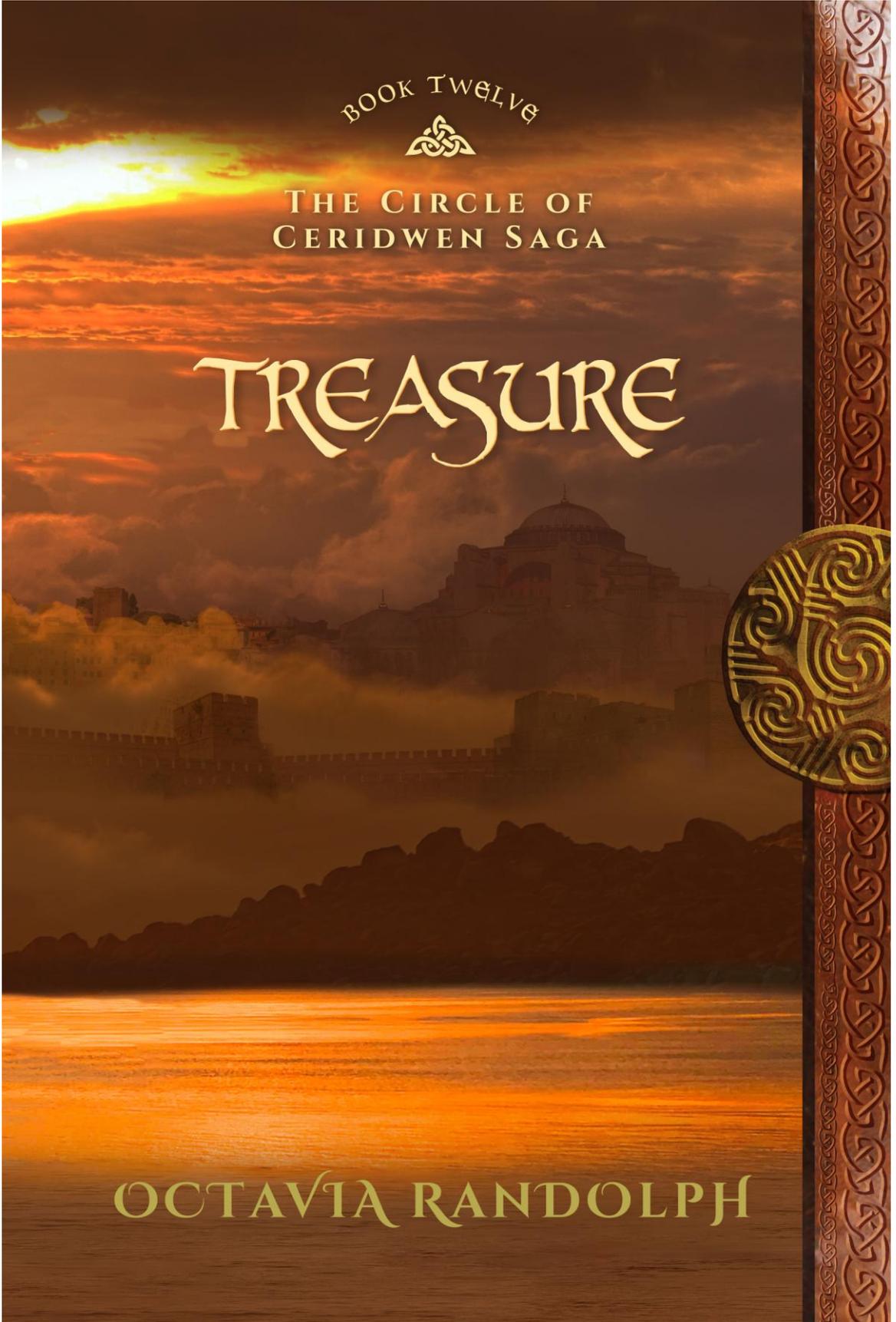
BOOK TWELVE



THE CIRCLE OF
CERIDWEN SAGA

TREASURE

OCTAVIA RANDOLPH



List of Characters

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

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

Æthelflaed, Lady of Mercia, daughter of King Ælfred of Wessex

Pega of Mercia, formerly wife to Hrald

Mealla, companion to Pega, a maid of Éireann

Dagmar, daughter of the late Guthrum, King of the Danes in Angle-land

Yrling, half-brother to Hrald, currently living at Four Stones

Ælfgiva, daughter of Hrald and Pega

Bork, an orphan and young warrior under Hrald's care

Kjeld, second in command at Four Stones

Ealhswith, sister to Hrald, daughter of Ælfwyn and Sidroc

Ashild, late sister to Hrald, daughter of Ælfwyn and the late Jarl, Yrling

Ælfred, King of Wessex

Guthrum, late King of the Danes in Angle-land

Ælfwyn, formerly Lady of Four Stones, now wife to Raedwulf of Defenas

Raedwulf, Bailiff of Defenas in Wessex

Sigewif, Abbess of Oundle

Congar, a thegn's son of Cantwaraburh

Wilgot, priest of Four Stones

Edwin, Lord of Kilton in Wessex

Ceric, son of Ceridwen and the late Gyric, grand-son of the late Lord Godwulf, God-son of King Ælfred, and older brother to Edwin

Worr, the horse-thegn of Kilton, pledged man of Ceric

Alwin and **Wystan**, captains of Edwin's body-guard

Eadward, Prince of Wessex

Plegmund, Archbishop of Cantwaraburh

Hroft, infant son of Dagmar and Hrald

Eanflad, sister to Ælfwyn, resident at Four Stones

Nelda, a village spinner at Four Stones

Ultan, stable boy in the King's stable at Witanceaster

Sister Bova, brewster at Oundle, formerly known at Tyrsborg as Sparrow

Vigmund, late body-guard of the King of Dane-mark

Edgyth, Lady of Kilton, mother by adoption to Edwin

Modwynn, late Lady of Kilton, grandmother to Ceric and Edwin

Dwynwen, Princess of Ceredigion in Wales, wed to Ceric

Cerd, grandson to Ælfwyn and Ceridwen, son of Ceric and the late Ashild

Burginde, companion and nurse to Ælfwyn

Wulfsige, son of Ælfwyn and Raedwulf

Blida and **Bettelin**, orphaned siblings of Defenas, in service to Ælfwyn and Raedwulf

Lioba, wife to the steward of Raedwulf's hall

Gunnulf, late brother to Jari, and friend to Hrald

Godwin, late Lord of Kilton, killed by Sidroc

Onund, late warrior of Four Stones, killed by Hrald

Asberg, uncle to Hrald, in command at the fortress of Turcesig

Edfrid, a priest at the cathedral of Cantwaraburh, uncle to Congar

Dunnere, priest of Kilton

Garrulf, scop of Kilton

Willehad, a priest in the train of Æthelflaed

Luned, a woman of Wales, step-mother to Dwywnwen, grandmother to Ceric and Edwin

Mul, the stableman at Four Stones

Aszur, a ship-master and trader of Jorvik, dubbed Gold Tooth by Hrald

Wite, a girl of the village of Four Stones, nursemaid to Hroft

Haesten, late war-chief of the Danes, killed by Hrald

Tegwedd, a Welsh serving girl to Dwynwen

Mindred, a serving woman at Kilton

Deorwine, a Reeve of King Ælfred

Inga, wife to Jari

Haward, a young war-chief of a small holding adjacent to Four Stones

Werburch, wife to Haward

Siggerith, daughter of the late Thorfast, a war-chief killed by Hrald

Inkera, daughter of the late Guthrum, and half-sister to Dagmar

Bodil, mother to Dagmar

Orri, a warrior of Four Stones

Steinn, half-brother to Inkera

Agmund, son of the late Guthrum

Inger, mother to Inkera

Njall, late father of Kjeld

Sidroc the Dane, formerly Jarl of Four Stones in South Lindisse, a wealthy trader on Gotland

Ceridwen, Mistress of the hall Tyrsborg on the island of Gotland, wife to Sidroc

Lifrid, a fisherman of Gotland

Hrald the Elder, father to Sidroc

Stenhild, wife to Hrald the Elder

Rannveig, a brewster on Gotland, mother of Tindr

Gunnvor and **Helga**, cook and serving-woman respectively at Tyrsborg

Ottar and **Runa**, a couple living with Hrald and Stenhild

Eirian and **Rodiaud**, daughters of Ceridwen and Sidroc

Tindr, a bow hunter

Berse, a weapon-smith of Gotland, formerly a warrior

Juoksa, a boy of Gotland, son of Tindr

Ingirith, once wife to Hrald the Elder

Toki, late nephew of Hrald the Elder, and cousin to Sidroc, killed by the same

Runulv, a Gotlandic ship-master and trader

Eskil, a Svear warrior and ship-master

Brani, a seaman guide of Eskil

The Eparch, Prefect of Miklagårdr

Arni and **Farulf**, two Gotlandic adventurers, perished en route to Miklagårdr

Sigtrygg, a Svear adventurer, perished en route to Miklagårdr

Uffa, a Gotlander resident in Miklagårdr

Belos, an agent of the Eparch

Oleg, King of Kyiv

Sava, a farmer along the River Dnieper

Karlen and **Demyan**, Princes of a river trading post, and nephews to Oleg

Efim, Prince of Gnezdovo

Vermund, King of Novgorod

Ladja, Mistress of Staraya Ladoga

Truvor, the half-Svear son of Lady Ladja

Treasure Maps



TREASURE

THE YEAR 898



TREASURE

THE YEAR 898

GOTLAND

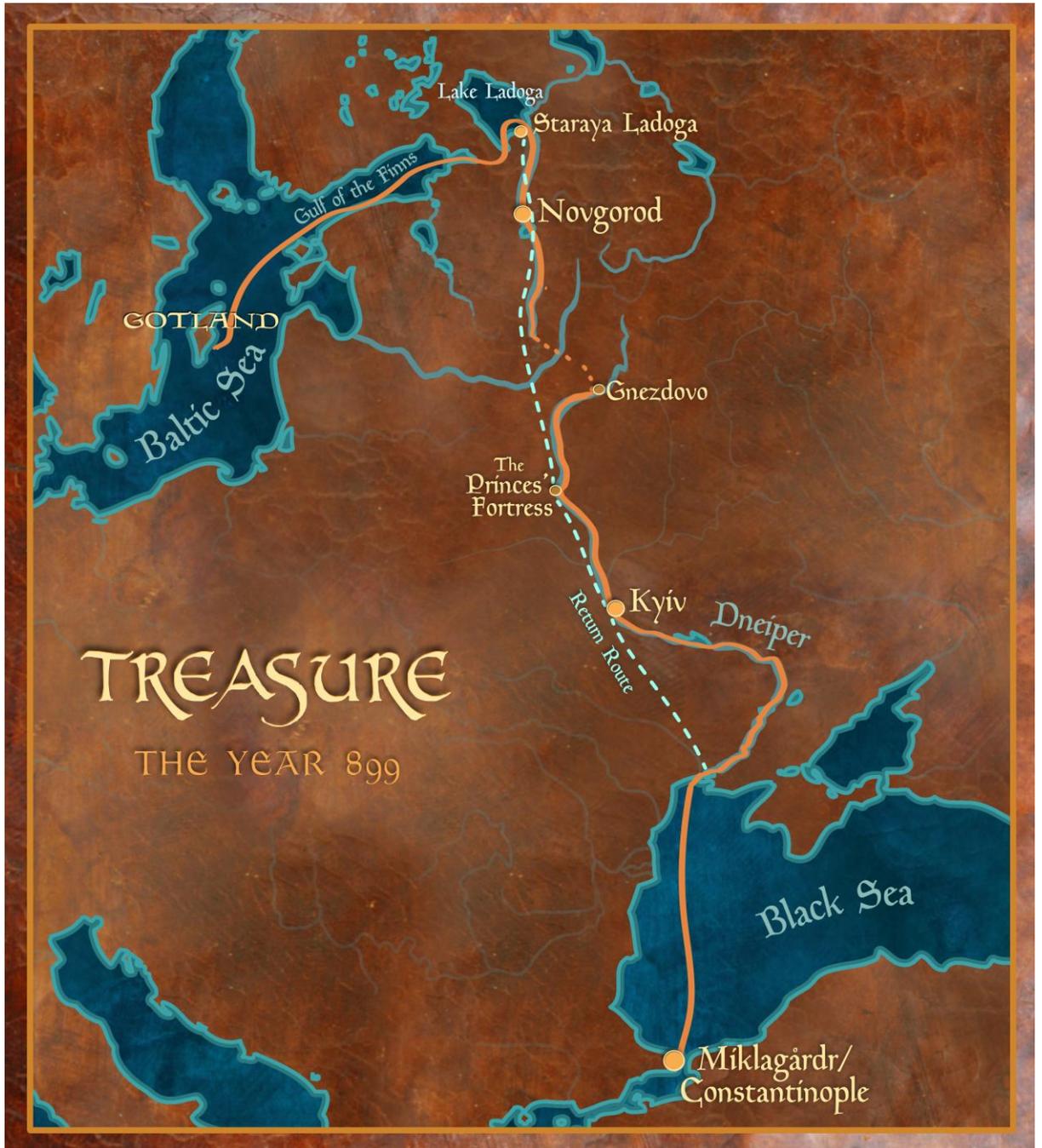
Daviken

Althing-Roma

Tyrsborg

Hrald the
Elder's farm





The Wheel of the Year

St Dwynwen's Day – 25 January

Candlemas - 2 February

St Gregory's Day - 12 March

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

St Walpurga's (Walpurgisnacht) – 30 April

St Elgiva's Day - 18 May

St Helen's Day – 21 May

High Summer or Mid-Summer Day - 24 June

Saints Peter and Paul - 29 June

Feast of the Visitation – 2 July

St Lewina's Day – 24 July

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 for followers of the Old Religions; also time of slaughter of animals which could not be kept over the coming Winter

Martinmas (St Martin's) - 11 November

Yuletide - 25 December to Twelfthnight - 6 January

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

Liturgical Hours of the Day

The Canonical Hours – special daily prayers, as practised by Oundle and other religious foundations, are as follows:

Matins, or night-watch, about 2 a.m.

Lauds, at dawn

Prime (the "first hour") about 6 a.m.

Terce (the "third hour") about 9 a.m.

Sext (the "sixth hour") about noon

None (the "ninth hour") about 3 p.m.

Vespers, the lighting of the lamps, at sunset

Compline, on retiring to sleep

Anglo-Saxon Place Names, with Modern Equivalents

Æscesdun = Ashdown

Æthelinga = Athelney

Apulder = Appledore

Arx Cynwit = site on the northern coast of Defenas (Devon)

Basingas = Basing

Beamfleot = Benfleet

Beardan = Bardney

Bearruescir = Berkshire

Bryeg = Bridgenorth

Buttingtun = Buttington

Caeginesham = Keynsham

Cantwaraburh = Canterbury

Cippenham = Chippenham

Cirenceaster = Cirencester

Colneceastre = Colchester

Cruland = Croyland

Defenas = Devon

Englafeld = Englefield

Ethandun = Edington

Exanceaster = Exeter

Fearnhamme = Farnham

Fullanham = Fulham

Geornaham = Irnham

Glastunburh = Glastonbury
Gleaweceaster = Gloucester
Hamtonscir = Hampshire
Headleage = Hadleigh
Hreopedun = Repton
Iglea = Leigh upon Mendip
Jorvik (Danish name for Eoforwic) = York
Legaceaster = Chester
Limenemutha = Lymington in Hampshire
Lindisse = Lindsey
Lundenwic = London
Meredune = Marton
Meresig = Mersea
Middeltun = Milton
Readingas = Reading
River Lyge = River Lea
Scaftesburh = Shaftesbury
Scireburne = Sherborne
Snotingaham = Nottingham
Streaneshalch = Whitby
Sumorsaet = Somerset
Swanawic = Swanage
Turcesig = Torksey
Wedmor = Wedmore
Welingaford = Wallingford

Weogornaceastre = Worcester

Isle of Wiht = Isle of Wight

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

Additional Place Names:

Aros = Aarhus, Denmark

Basra = in modern day Iraq, once known as the "Treasury of Arabs"

Byzantium = The Eastern Roman Empire, with Constantinople as its capitol

Cathay = China

Cymru = Wales

Dorestad = former trading town on the Rhône in modern Netherlands

Dubh Linn = Dublin

Éireann = Ireland

Frankland = Much of modern-day France and Germany

Frisia = modern Netherlands

Haithabu = Hedeby (formerly Denmark, now in modern-day Germany)

Hunefleth = Honfleur, France

Laaland = the island of Lolland, Denmark

Land of the Svear = Sweden

Miklagårdr = Constantinople (Istanbul)

Port Láirge = Waterford, Ireland

Sassanian = Dynasty of Ancient Persia

Serkland = General Norse name for Islamic lands

Glossary of Terms

Althing, and Thing: a regular gathering of citizens to settle disputes, engage in trade, and socialize. Gotland was divided into three administrative districts, each with their own “thing” or meeting, but the great thing, the Althing, was held at Roma, in the geographical centre of the island.

alvar: nearly barren stretches of limestone rock, typically supporting only tiny lichens and moss.

Asgard: Heavenly realm of the Gods.

aumbry: a recess built into the wall of a church, to receive and store sacred objects.

Boethius: Roman senator and consul, executed 524 CE. Author while imprisoned of the influential work *The Consolations of Philosophy*, translated from the Latin into Old English by Ælfred himself. It is this book in which Ceric seeks comfort and guidance.

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.

ceorl: (“churl”) a free man ranking directly below a thegn, able to bear arms, own property, and improve his rank.

cottar: free agricultural worker; in later eras, a peasant.

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

drekar: “dragon-ship,” a war-ship of the Danes.

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.

ell: a measure of length corresponding to a man’s forearm and outstretched fingers.

fey: possessing magical or supernatural powers; one belonging to the Land of Faery.

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

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

fyrð: the massed forces of Wessex, comprising thegns – professional soldiers – and ceorls, trained freeman.

hack silver: broken silver jewellery, coils of unworked silver bars, fragments of cast ingots and other silver parcelled out by weight alone during trade.

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

lamm: Gotlandic name for a sheep.

leech-book: compilation of healing recipes and practices for the treatment of human and animal illness and injury. Such books were a compendium of healing herbs and spiritual and magical practices. The *Leech Book of Bald*, recorded during Ælfred's reign, is a famed, and extant, example.

lur: a vertical (or curved) sounding horn fashioned of wood or brass, dating from the Bronze Age, and used in Nordic countries to rally folk from afar.

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

nard: (also, spikenard) a rare and precious oil, highly aromatic, derived from the crushed rhizomes of a honeysuckle-like plant grown in the Himalayas, India, and China. Mary Magdalen was said to have anointed the feet of Christ with nard.

philtre: a potion to excite love or lust in another.

quern: a small hand-driven mill consisting of two grind stones, the top stone usually being domed and having a hole to insert a wooden handle for turning. The oats, wheat, or other grain is placed between the stones, and the handle turned until the desired fineness is attained.

rauk: the striking sea- and wind-formed limestone towers on the coast of 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.

scrying: to divine the future by gazing into a looking glass, a crystal, or water.

shingle beach: a pebbly, rather than sandy, beach.

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.

Skuld: the eldest of the three Norse Norns, determiners of men's destinies. Skuld cuts with shears the thread of life. See also Urd and Verdandi.

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 "capture the King" strategy board game.

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.

treen: domestic objects fashioned of wood, especially tableware.

Tyr: the God of war, law, and justice. He voluntarily forfeited his sword-hand to allow the Gods to deceive, and bind, the gigantic wolf Fenrir.

Tyr-hand: in this Saga, any left-handed person, named so in honour of Tyr's sacrifice.

Urd: the youngest of the three Norse Norns, determiners of men's destinies. Urd makes decision as to one's calling and station in life. See also Skuld and Verdandi.

Verdandi: the middle of the three Norse Norns, determiners of men's destinies. Verdandi draws out the thread of life to appropriate length. See also Skuld and Urd.

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.

yealing: one the same age.

Notes to Treasure

Chapter the Seventh

Plegmund. Mercian priest who became Archbishop of Canterbury in 890. He may have been a hermit in Cheshire, before being called to greater responsibilities. He was active in converting the Heathen, and exhorting other Bishops to do so. Plegmund visited Rome at least once, was trusted by Ælfred, and much involved in matters of State with his son King Eadward. Plegmund died either 914 or 923; the record is inconclusive. Canonized as a Saint, his Feast Day is 2nd August.

Chapter the Sixteenth

Constantinople, or Miklagårdr (“The Great City”) as the Norse called it; capitol of the Eastern Roman Empire. In 330 CE Constantine the Great designated the old city known as Byzantium as the “New Rome”. Eventually the city took his name.

It likely had 600,000 to 800,000 residents when our adventurers visited, of which some 60,000 at any one time were foreign traders. With such numbers we can well understand why Runulv and Eskil would find this city astounding. A combination of strict Roman law and Greek opulence and taste combined to nurture Byzantine civilization, and the great city was its heart.

Constantinople was a vast repository of treasure, much now scattered around the world. One example is the life-size horses seen by Runulv and Eskil at the Hippodrome, which I have placed above the Emperor’s viewing stand. The four horses, commonly thought of as cast bronze, are nearly pure copper, which received a mercury gilding for brilliance. Scholars are divided as to their age; they may have been created in Rome in the 3rd or 4th century CE, or even in Greece in the 5th or 4th centuries BCE. During the Fourth Crusade they were carried off by Venetian forces in 1204 as part of the immense spoils of war, to end up adorning San Marco. These “Four Horses of Saint Mark” now reside inside for their own protection, where they may be viewed, but the copies outside are impressive indeed. (They wear horse collars now, as the heads were sawn off for ease of transport to Venice, and then reattached.) The Hippodrome itself was a wonder, holding 100,000 spectators, and adorned with obelisks and all manner of equestrian statues memorializing great horses and drivers.

The Eparch. The Prefect of Constantinople, he was second in power only to the Emperor, and held vast power in a city built on trade. His role was recorded in the 10th century *Book of The Eparch*, detailing some of this official’s responsibilities, including determining customs duties; verifying scales and weights; regulating exchange rates between a myriad of currencies and metals; setting interest rates; describing the rights and regulations to be adhered to by scores of guilds (from silk dyers to pork sellers); and establishing trading periods for foreign merchants, amongst many other duties. Stringent laws kept artisans and merchants to a narrowly defined production or trading sphere. All this worked in ensuring high quality trade, a sense of protection to both sellers and buyers, and maximum profit to the Emperor.

An excellent overview of life in Constantinople and much of the Byzantine Empire is presented in *What Life Was Like Amid Splendor and Intrigue: Byzantine Empire AD 330- 1453*. Time Life Books 1998.

Chapter the Seventeenth

Hagia Sophia, The Church of Holy Wisdom. The greatest of all Byzantine churches, Hagia Sophia was built under the reign of Emperor Justinian, in a mere five years (532–537 CE). It rose on the site of two earlier churches, both consumed by fire. Justinian lavished riches and attention on its creation, importing rare marbles from around the entire Western world for its construction. It was the largest Christian building on Earth until superseded by St Peter's in Rome (completed in 1626). Gloriously decorated with mosaics and featuring a massive dome which appears to float above a band of windows, Hagia Sophia remained the centre of the Byzantine Eastern Orthodox Church until its sack and desecration by Venetian forces during the Fourth Crusade in 1204, eventually becoming a Roman Catholic Church. It was desecrated again during the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453, and saw the slaughter of thousands who had taken refuge within its walls. This marked the end of the Byzantine Empire, and Hagia Sophia was converted to a mosque. Architectural elements appropriate to Islamic religious buildings were added, including four towering minarets outside the main structure.

In 1934, under the secular Turkish government of President Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, it became a public museum. In 2020 Hagia Sophia was again re-designated a mosque by the Turkish government. Dumbarton Oaks, a Harvard University research institute in Washington, DC maintains - amongst all their other treasures - a huge repository of information, photos, drawings, archives, and records about the history of this remarkable building, freely available online. <https://www.doaks.org/research/byzantine/resources/hagia-sophia>.

Halfdan. This runic inscription, worn now, but likely reading in full “Halfdan was here” was documented first in 1964 by Elisabeth Svärdström in “Runorna i Hagia Sofia” (The Runes of Hagia Sophia). Halfdan immortalised his visit to Miklagård in stone on the top floor of the southern gallery. I have placed our adventurers there on the scene to see him finish the deed.

The Spillings Hoard – Gotland’s Role in Viking Age World Trade, Gotlands Museum, 2009 is a detailed examination of the conditions and results of early Silk Road trading and Gotland, and as the vast silver and bronze Spillings Hoard was buried on the island in the late 9th century is particularly germane to the world of these novels.

Chapter the Eighteenth

Silk. Foreign traders were never allowed to buy the finest quality of silk; this was reserved by the Eparch for the Imperial family, honoured merchants, and given as special gifts. Still, the lustre and sheen of silk, its ability to take and hold dyes of the most vibrant hues, and its almost magical origins as the product of a humble worm, made it prized indeed. On Gotland, Viking Era silk has been found in only one grave, that of a female in the 600-grave site at Ihre (or Ire), on the island’s west coast, but lucky we are to have it. This was a fragment of samite (a heavy twill-woven silk, which often included either silver or golden thread), and a fragment of silk tablet-woven work. For a detailed examination of the silk trade and the Viking thirst for it, see *Silk for the Vikings*, Marianne Vedeler, 2014.

Chapter the Nineteenth

Arsenikon and sandaraca. The toxicity of many dyes and pigments was well known even in ancient times, but the desire for the vivid hues produced by working with them did not

prove much of a deterrent. Lead, mercury, cadmium and other hazardous heavy metals were commonly used by many artists and artisans up to modern times, and the deleterious health effects to painters, gilders, and the grinders and preparers of paints and dyes can only be imagined. (The expression “Mad as a Hatter” is rooted in the use of mercury by those fashioning hats, for example; and some scholars have suggested Vincent van Gogh’s mental illness to be at least partly derived from his extensive use of the oil paint Naples Yellow, made from lead antimonate.)

Arsenikon and sandaraca were particularly notorious. Arsenikon, or yellow arsenic sulfide, later known as orpiment, was used as a cosmetic by the Egyptians, employed by the Assyrians as a medicine, and described by Pliny in the first century. It was Strabo who described the toxicity of arsenikon as being so great that only criminals in northern Anatolia were sent to mine it. It was one of many pigments used in the illuminations of the 9th century *Book of Kells*, and continued in use right up to the Impressionists in the late 19th century. Similarly, sandaraca is red arsenic sulfide, and would yield a range of red and orange-red shades.

Chapter the Twentieth

Wilfrid Blunt’s *The Golden Road to Samarkand*, 1973, follows the footsteps of two thousand years of journeying to the sources of the fabled riches carried upon various routes of the Silk Road. Winter hardship was extreme, and Blunt writes engagingly of hardy traders attired in bearskin stockings worn fur-side in, tough horse-hide boots, and wolfskin suits to trap body warmth.

Acknowledgements

Sincerest thanks to all my readers for their devotion to the Saga series. Whether you have just discovered the series or been with me for years, know I cherish your interest and affection for the Saga Folk – the characters. I strive to be constantly worthy of your time and attention, and thank you for helping me “grow the Circle”, through reading or listening to the books, requesting them at the library, and most of all telling friends about the Saga adventure.

My thanks, always and ever, to Beth Altchek and Libby Williams for their discerning ear and dedication to these stories (and their author). Your interest in the Saga Folk and their development over many volumes speaks more than the reams these books have been printed on. I am in your debt, happily and gratefully so.

My First Readers are an enthusiastic group of discerning and articulate fans, whose input I greatly value. My warmest thanks to the following for reading and commenting on *Treasure*: Wendy Adams, Tony Allen, Judy Boxer, Liz Faulkner, Elaine MacDonald, Kristen McEnaney, Debbie Newsholme, Melinda Osman, Amanda Porath, Linda Schultz, Kristin Sponsler, Lorie Witt, and Veronica Zysk. I am fortunate indeed to have you with me, and to share the excitement of a new title.

To Uffa Nysell, builder extraordinaire here on Gotland, my thanks for allowing me to use your name and likeness for the redoubtable Uffa of this novel.

If you'd like closer engagement with the world of the Saga, the Octavia Randolph Official Circle of Ceridwen Saga Forum on Facebook awaits you, where you shall find fellowship in discussing the Saga novels and the Anglo-Saxon and Viking Era settings in which they take place. The Saga Forum is a veritable “treasure room” of information and celebration, from medieval foodways to smithing, fashion to fortress building, parchment making to rune carving, early Christianity to the Gods of the Norse, and much more. Such a welcoming home for my books and their readers would not be possible without the tireless activity, creativity, and oversight of Misi, Jessica Charboneau, and Wolf CrescentWalker. My debt to you is boundless, as is my gratitude.

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; 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. Follow her on Facebook at Octavia Randolph Author, [on Instagram](#) and for exclusive access and content join the spirited members of [The Official Circle of Ceridwen Saga Forum on Facebook](#).