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The World Of The Vikings



Synopsis

â œ Gives the nonspecialist reader a fascinatingly detailed picture. . . . Without doubt the most attractively presented study of the Vikings currently available.â •â • Historian Here is the complete story of the Vikings from their origins in Scandinavia during the early first millennium AD, through the incredible period of raiding, trading, and settling known as the Viking Age, to the last surviving Viking settlements in fifteenth-century Greenland. Following in the footsteps of Viking merchants, raiders, and emigrants, we track their journeys from the first documented raid on the island monastery of Lindisfarne in 739 to the semi-mythical travels of individuals such as Eirik the Red and the expansive kingdoms of Viking leaders. The book explores Viking life and culture in detail: their appearances, warfare, targets, crafts, and weapons, as well as their stunning pattern-welded swords and helmets. Drawing on the latest discoveries and augmenting textual evidence with archaeological detail, this is a vivid picture of the Vikings at home and abroad in an era that laid many of the foundations of the modern world. 330 illustrations, 141 in color

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Customer Reviews

Not only did I find Hall's 'World of the Vikings' an excellent overview of a world long past but I was intrigued by the new archeologic information that he produced. The book is beautifully edited and organized with excellent photos and diagrams. It is also well written and, because I found it fascinating, I completed the book in three sittings. This book is by no means a complete history of Viking times but it leaves the reader with a desire to delve more deeply into the subject. Still, the author hints at real mysteries. Why is it that such a small group of people decided to assault the

Western World? Why is it that essentially rag-tag groups of warriors proved so successful in raiding/exploring/colonizing Russia, Byzantium, England, Normandy, Greenland, North America, Iceland, Ireland, Scotland and even Spain, Italy and North Africa? What did they have going for them? Yes, they had beautiful warships but the designs weren't inherently superior to those of German, Frisian and English manufacture. The kingdoms of the British Isles and Continental Europe weren't nearly as centralized as they were in the later middle-ages but still...they were all militarily significant places and should have been able to have fended off all significant Viking attacks. Were the Vikings--at least during the early years--more dedicated/fanatical than their opponents? I am aware that Viking motives, at least initially, are generally thought to be those of piracy but, is it possible/probable that the initial attacks on monasteries were acts of religious war? Somewhat improbably, the Scandinavians had maintained their pagan religion for two or three hundred years following the total Christianization of Western Europe.

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