

Anglo - Saxon and Viking Runes



Did you know that Anglo Saxons and Vikings used runes as their alphabet?

Historians use these runes to find out more about what happened in the Anglo Saxon and Viking eras.



Anglo - Saxon and Viking Runes

The letters of the alphabets of the Anglo Saxons and Vikings, were called runes.

Runes were letters used by the Saxons and **Vikings** to write short messages of ownership, like "This belongs to Beowulf".

They were also used to write inscriptions on gravestones, like "Here lies Alfred. We miss him".

There are 28 characters in this Runic Alphabet. Although this number seems to vary!

The Alphabet is called a 'Futhork' from the first 6 letters.

Are the letters the same as ours?

F U T H O R C G W H N I J Z

P X S T B E M L N G D Æ

A Æ Y Æ

Carving of Runes

- They were usually carved on wood or stone (not written in books).
- The runes consist mostly of vertical and diagonal marks, with notably fewer horizontal marks or curves.
- It is thought that runes were designed this way to help carving in wood.
- Runes were thought to have magical powers and Saxons thought they would protect them from illness and danger.

Where can
we see
runes?



What do runes tell us?

- Historians use runes to find out information from the past.
- The earliest surviving runes are dated to about A.D. 200.
- These early runes up to about A.D. 650 appear to all use the same "futhark".
- Most of these older inscriptions are very short and cryptic, and in most cases it is hard to translate them or even be sure what language they are.

Can we de-code this?

Þ M · H F B B I ↑

F R

Þ M R M · F † X · B F L h · F X F I †

F O P F R h X P N † I * Z
f u t h o r c g w h n i j z

C Y † ↑ B M M Γ X H Q
p x s t b e m l r g d æ

F F O Y
a æ y ea

It translates to....

The Hobbit

Or

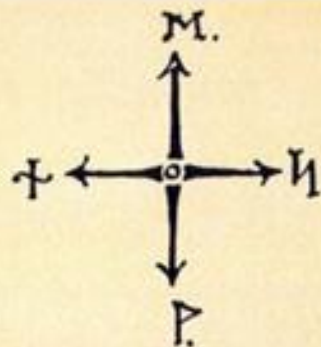
There and Back Again

The Author of this book, J.R.R. Tolkien uses a variant of the Anglo-Saxon and Viking runes for the writing on Thrór's map.

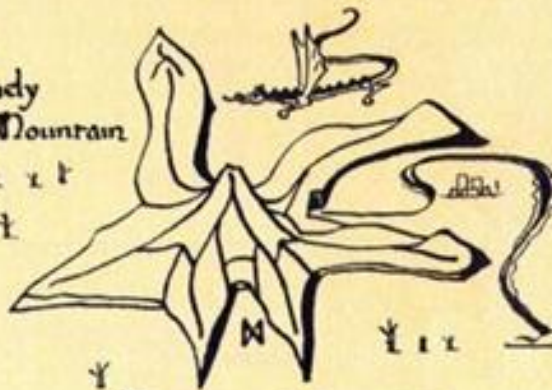
Can we translate it?

Look at the symbols on the compass points

↑ East lie the Iron Hills
where is Dain.



The Lonely Mountain
† † † †



Here was Girion
lord in Dale

the Running River

Here is
the gateway
of the Long
Lake

Here of old was Thrain
King under the Mountain

Hand-drawn script in a decorative box, likely a title or introductory text in Old Norse or Old English.

The Desolation of Smaug

Far to the North
are the Grey Mountains
the Withered Heath
whence came the



Great Worms.

Hand-drawn script in a decorative box, likely a title or introductory text in Old Norse or Old English.

In Esgaroth upon
the Long Lake
dwell Men

Here flows the
Forest River



West lies Mirkwood the Great
there are Spiders.

Thror's Map

Can you write using runes?

- Can you write your name using the runes?
- You may have to design your own rune if there is a letter missing.
- Can you write a secret message and then get someone else to de-code it?
- **Super Challenge de-code the message on the map!**

F U T H O R C G W H N I J Z

P X S T B E M L N G D Æ

A Æ Y EA