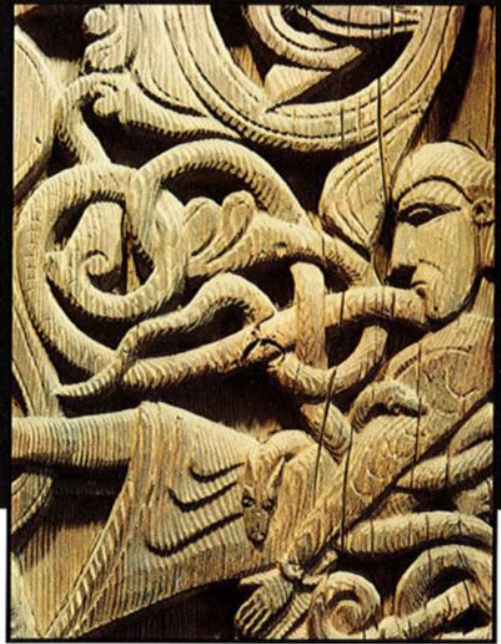


# SNAKE PIT DATE FOR HAIRY-BREEKS



Hairy-Breeks bites the dust — or rather a slithery, slimy thing bites Hairy-Breeks.

860

Ragnar Hairy-Breeks has been flung into a snake-pit by Ella, King of Northumbria. The Danish legend met his death with a smile and a cheery wink. "My sons will open your rib-cage and let your lungs flap in the wind while you die a slow and horrible death," he foretold.

### Rattled

Ella was unavailable for comment when

our reporter rattled one of the 200 padlocks on his oak door guarded by ten squadrons of trained axemen inside a fort manned by some of the

hardest soldiers in Northumbria.

"His Majesty is treating the threat with utter indifference," a palace aide announced through the keyhole.

# ELLA NOT A WELLA FELLA

## SONS OF SNAKE~PIT HERO GET NASTY

867

King Ella of Northumbria got his come-uppance when the three sons of Ragnar Hairy-Breeks came looking for revenge.

### Bleughhhh!

Ivar the Boneless, and his two brothers Halfdan and Ubbi, did just what their dad said they would. They landed in England with a huge army called the Great Heathen Horde, marched right up to York, cut open Ella's ribcage and pulled out

his lungs.

"We call it the blood-eagle," Ivar told our reporter. "It's one of our more impressive party-pieces. But you can relax. We only do it when we're really, really angry."

However, Ivar did admit that it helped their reputation. "If people think we're out-and-out savages it makes life that little bit easier. When they hear we're coming they just run away. There are all kinds of silly stories - that we drink out of enemy skulls, for example. Sheer exaggeration! But don't tell anyone I told you so."

### Pressed

On being pressed, Ivar admitted that his Great Heathen Horde was another exaggeration: "It's not great and

it's not a horde. Only a few thousand men at most. But we ARE heathens. That bit's true."

Whatever its size, the Great Heathen Horde has done pretty well. It's conquered the two Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of East Anglia and Northumbria and looks set to take over half of Mercia.\*

### Scrap

"New tactics," explained Ivar. "We're through with raiding. This time we're here to stay. But I have to say I'm very disappointed with these Anglo-Saxons. They spend so much time fighting each other that they've got no strength left for us."

"It's too easy. If you can't have a good scrap now and again, what's the point?"

\*That's in the middle of England, Geography fanst



"Heard any good sagas recently?" King Ella fails to break the ice with the sons of Hairy-Breeks.

Retrieval:

- 1) When did Ragnar Breeches die?
- 2) Where was Ella killed?

Words in context:

- 3) Find a word that means to '*predict the future or a future event*'.
- 4) Find a word that means to '*represent (something) as being larger, better, or worse than it really is*'

Text structure:

- 5) How do you know that this is a newspaper report? Give 2 features

Inference:

- 6) In the first article, how do we know that Ella was worried? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.