



# The Sons of King Ragnar (The Viking Wars Book 1)

*J Michael Reay*

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About the book

During Charlemagne's 'Holy' wars of conquest, many of the age-old trade routes from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean had been closed, causing great discomfort to the people living in the countries bordering the Baltic Sea; many of whom had relied on the trade routes for their livelihood. After years of being unable to access the former trade routes this discontent boiled over into open hostility and after the death of Charlemagne many Northern kings and Jarls led armies to France and Germany to extract plunder there that they were unable to trade for in the Mediterranean: Later they were to travel to Spain as well as England, Scotland and Ireland.

This period of history would become known as the Early Viking Age. Denmark did not have enough men to invade France proper but likewise France, which was governed by a number of different 'rulers' who were often hostile to their king Charles II, was in turn unable to drive the Danes out completely. The raids, therefore, although often isolated from one another; could actually be seen as a concerted attempt by the Danish people to make the Franks pay for blocking their routes to the Mediterranean Sea.

These 'raids' by the Danish people were so widespread and so long-lasting that they could perhaps be better described as VIKING WARS.

Elric, a young English boy is taken during a raid on Northumbria. His captor at first intends to sell him as a slave but later relents and gives him to his younger brother Hastein as a 'companion': Elric is subsequently made 'fostri'; he is fostered by the youngster's mother and brought up as a Dane. He becomes the boy's constant companion and later changes his name to Eric as it sounds more Danish.

Hastein is one of the illegitimate sons of King Ragnar Lodbrok of Jellund: Ragnar 'Leather trousers' has many sons.

As Hastein's companion Eric later relates the life story of Hastein who, in the year 896, was declared King of All England; in spite of the fact that Wessex, with its tenacious King Alfred; was still unconquered.

THE SONS OF KING RAGNAR is the first part of a modern retelling of the 'Saga of Ragnar's sons' and other stories; though perhaps with more historic detail.

The tale continues with the second book 'Hasteinsaga' available soon.

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