



HIBERN Æ N Æ RSE Æ WIRRAL

WOOL CRAFT & WEAVING

The art of turning raw materials into cloth was a huge industry in the Anglo-Saxon and Viking Period.

The spinning of wool and raw flax into yarn, was a skilled job. The yarn could then be dyed if required and woven into cloth, cut and sewn into garments and other items like socks and gloves. Even sails were woven from wool.

Linen was also a widely used fibre made from flax being a member of the hemp family. It could be soaked with water and then beaten. Pulling apart the fibres and separating them from any remaining outer stems. The linen threads would be drawn through a heckle. (A series of metal spikes on a board).

Often other materials such as nettles could be turned into thread for weaving. The threads could then be dyed if required before being turned into a number of different items.

Wool would be processed to remove dirt then process via carding or combing. Then the material would be rolled into lengths. Sometimes a distaff was used (a type of forked stick) for the wool to be wrapped round. The prepared wool could be spun on a drop spindle, a tall stick with a weight at the bottom. The skill of the spinner meant the fibres could be made of different thicknesses. This wool was collected and dyed using some of the many different natural plants found in the local area.

As well as weaving, wool could be nalbinded. Nalbinding was the precursor to knitting and crochet.

