



HIBERNON ⊕ NΟRSE ⊕ WIRRAL

reaping



Sickles and scythes were used to cut the harvest. There are two main types of sickles, balanced sickles and hooked.

Balanced sickles have sharply curved, tanged blades. They usually had short, one-handed grips. The tangs went all the way through the handle and were bent over at the end of the grip.

They are usually used in the corn in harvest season, whereas scythes are normally depicted for haymaking.

Hooked sickles are slightly curved with a tang that is set in a right or flat angle to the blade. They look like mini scythes.

We do not know how the shafts of proper scythes might have looked like.

Anglo-Saxon illustrations show the type of blade found within Viking age contexts, mounted with a binding onto long, straight shafts with one protruding handle.

Frankish scythe illustrations show a more curved scythe held with two hands like modern depictions of the grim reaper.

Blades used for reaping like sickles and scythes when used all day every day during harvest season would blunt & dull quickly.

They would have to be resharpened often out on the field, meaning sharpening devices are also important items in daily usage during crops and hay harvesting.

There is proof of sharpening scythes with whetstones from early manuscript illuminations.