



HIBERN ð N ð RSE ð WIRRAL

maille

In the early 10th Century making Maille was a complex process taking an individual maybe a year to complete. Historically many craftsmen would have been involved.

Each with there own specific task in the process that they would specialise in. Maille was thought to be an expensive and treasured item. Due to the expense only a few warriors might have had maille. The Jarl or Lord and maybe a close retinue, his guard. Later in the time of Cnut it was thought thousands of suits of Maille were stored in London, (Allegedly).

Making a new set of maille requires great patience and skill. The craftsman would draw a wire that requires draw plate to pull the wire through. A mandrel would be used to wind the wire to form a spring shape. The overlap would be trimmed at the end of the mandrel allowing the spring to be removed.

The rings would be snipped and annealed with heat. The the overlap is flattened and this allows holes to be drifted on a small anvil. The rings are then annealed again, then holes drilled into the rings for the rivets. Initially they were round rivets for early mail but wedge shaped for later periods.

The rings are now attached to each other to shape the mail. A full suit might have over 2.5 km of wire in it. The expert craftsmen could create mail with different sizes rings allowing the armour to flex and fit the wearer properly.

Maille comes from the Latin macula, and the French word for mesh or net. The term chain mail which is often used is incorrect and originates in the Victorian period.