

Viking shield kerchief slide

BOB REITMEYER WITH DON SELF

RESOURCEFUL Vikings, like Captain America, often escaped serious harm by using a shield in combat. Unlike Captain America's shield, though, theirs were generally made of wood and were proportioned to their body size and fighting style — too small, the shields allowed too much exposure; too large, they were too cumbersome to carry and use.

The boss, an iron dome at the center, extended through the wood to provide a sturdy grip and protection for the hand. It was held in place by a flange nailed to the shield. I suggest using a 1/4" wood button for the boss. Leather strips rimmed the shields to bind them and to prevent wood from splitting.

These shield patterns were designed by Don Self of Galleon, Ala. One features a Celtic knot, and the other shows two dragons. The designs were outlined in black, and then painted red and white.

1. Cut 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ " diameter circle from 3/8" thick basswood or soft white pine.

2. Using the carving knife point, score stop-cuts for the three concentric circles that define the boss, the flange, and the edge of the leather backing.

3. Round outside edge and make V-cuts to define boards on the shield.

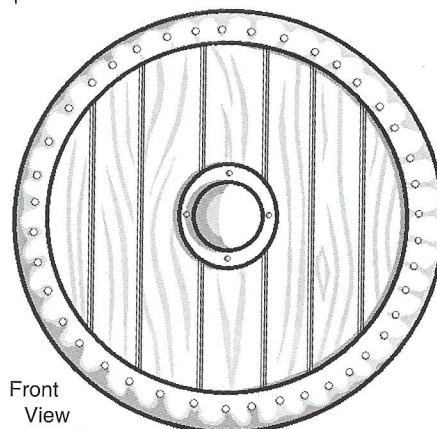
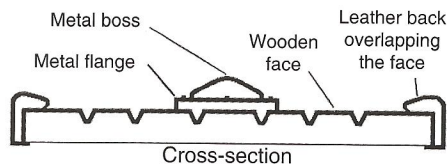
4. Use a veiner to make dimples around the edge of the shield where tacks would have held the leather back in place.

5. Still using the veiner, carve shallow grooves in the face of the shield to indicate wood grain.

6. To paint the piece, use light brown for the front, metallic silver for the boss and the flange, and tan for the leather edging. To paint the tacks, apply a dot of silver in each dimple. Place a dot of black for each rivet, and when dry, place a dot of silver atop each black dot.

7. Paint the Celtic knot, dragons, or any Viking-inspired design the colors of your choice, although red and white are more authentic.

8. Glue a back with a 5/8" opening for a kerchief slide, or add a bolo clip or pin. ■



For basswood kerchief slide carving blanks and tools, visit www.whittlerbob.com.

SEPT-OCT 2014