

WARRIOR SHIELDS.

Spirit shields were and are treasured warriors' allies in Native American, Celtic and other cultures, and shared common purposes when it came to spiritual connection. In many Native American traditions, a warrior was provided with a totem to paint or otherwise depict on his shield, which was generally made from leather, after a vision quest. This would represent his quest for the remainder of his life and death, and he carried it into battle for its symbolic and deeply personal protective qualities. The Celtic warrior's shield was generally an actual battle shield, made of leather-clad wood and metal, and often bore a spiritual totem animal or symbol on its front. In most cases, the shields were buried with warriors when they died.

For sure, these shields served as powerful spiritual partners, warding off the blows of seen and unseen adversaries alike, deflecting other threatening influences and helping the warrior maintain a strong connection with Spirit through right-mindedness, bravery, integrity and service. Perhaps the Native American concept best captured the essence of spirit shields by equating them with spiritual "medicine," as in the medicine wheel.

Today, spirit shields maintain a prominence for a growing number of people on a spiritual quest. Like the vision quests of old, modern life can seem to be an unending test of one's ability to survive amid an increasingly troubled world around them. And under such circumstances, it can become more and more difficult for a seeker to maintain a connection with Spirit. Thus, and as with the warriors of old, many people today find strength and comfort with their own spirit shield.

How does one prepare to symbolically represent such a personal journey, while at the same time imbuing it with spiritual medicine and power to call on when needed? Ah, that's the challenge.

The Wiccan Warrior Shield.



Celtic Warrior Shield.



Viking Shield.



6th Century to Early AD Celtic Shield.

WARRIOR SHIELDS.

The early Celts, Vikings, Africans, Mongols and just about everybody else in the known and then unknown world used some kind of Warrior (Protection) Shield.

They were made from animal, human, reptile and amphibian skins that walked, swam and flew.

When we consider ancient Celtic myths and Celtic legends, we are confronted with two rather conflicting mental images. On the one hand, there is the mighty, ferocious Celtic warrior, famed and feared throughout the Roman empire, fighting naked or painted blue, screaming like a Berserker, and cutting off the heads of the enemy.

The Irish epics replace headhunting with cattle raiding. Warriors sit around a smoky hall, feasting and drinking and telling tales - who is the mightiest? The most famous story, the Tain Bo Cuailnge, tells of such a cattle raid. The Scottish Highlanders made their living and took their entertainment from stealing their neighbours' cattle for well over a thousand years.

On the other hand, Celtic mythology is incorporated into the popular image of the druids. Merlin in his tall hat turning this and that into a fish or a squirrel. A powerful nature religion peopled with druids and bards who spent as long learning their craft as Buddha spent under the banyan tree seeking nirvana. A religion of magic and wonder with one foot in our world and the other in the land of Faery. And what did they wear or carry, a Warrior Shield.



The Winged Raven.



Raven (Because I can)



Aegis (Zeus's shield)



Flaming Dragon (Just Because)