

“The *Huskarlr*, the Axe, and the Calon Hus” by Gaius Aquilius Britannicus

“For I am a warrior of the King’s Huscarls,
a deep biting axe in my hand,
and as long as God grants me breath in my body,
I fight to defend the King’s land.”

-*Requiem of a Huscarl* by Master Andrixios Secarius...(how do you spell this???)

In answer to Halvgrimr’s request, I would share with you my own thoughts and feelings about what it means to be a Huscarl of Calontir. And whereas others may speak directly to what is ‘technically’ required to become a Huscarl by kingdom law, I would prefer to focus on the *spiritus* (spirit) of the Calon Hus, the symbology of our axes, and the ghosts of the legendary *Huskarlrs*. I ask only that you consider that no man may speak for an Order, nor the Order for one man. For though I may see the Huscarl’s spirit, as I know it, mirrored in the eyes of my brothers and sisters, it would be presumptuous to say that my ideas and ideals are embodied by all who wear the crossed axes. Some will agree, some will differ, but upon the field and off we are all Huscarls—the King’s men, His personal guard, and in times of war, the Axe by which He would cut down all who stand against him.

I am fiercely proud of the Order of the Iren Hirth, and I most humbly consider myself fortunate to be called Huskarlr after the great warriors of old. Men who lived their lives to serve their King, in peace and in war, placing their duty to Him above all else, securing for Him victories, fame, and wealth, and if necessary, willing to die in defense of His person or His cause. That is the Huskarlr, and their memory is ever present in our minds when we make ready for war or train in times of peace. To be a Huscarl of Calontir goes beyond the skill at arms that is the hallmark of our Order, and it reaches deep into “the Dream” which drives our Society. And we, who believe in this Dream, are able to suspend the “now,” for what once was. We become the King’s men, His personal guard, and to us is given the responsibility of safeguarding His will and His well-being in battle. I have stood at the side of strong and noble Calon kings who have wielded His Huscarls like a blade, carving by our prowess and our desire to serve, greater glory for Him, our Kingdom, and ourselves. The sense of duty that we feel towards Him is tangible and unyielding, but like Harold, who spread his Huskarlr’s over the whole of the hilltop at Hastings, the Huscarls of Calontir rarely surround our King in battle, for to do so would compromise the tradition and structure of the Calontir army. But lift the axe of a Huscarl, stride boldly into battle beside your King and your Axe brothers and sisters, and you will know forever the voice of our ancient namesakes, and you will do everything in your power to uphold the tradition which has been set down before you.

And consider well the weight of the Axe that is given you, when you are first named “Huscarl.” Swing it before you in great arcs, feeling the purpose behind its motion. The sword and the spear are weapons of great dexterity and flexibility, able to find openings and flaws in an enemy’s armor, which he never knew existed. Not so the blade of the axe. The axe seeks to crush the enemy beneath its weight, caring little for the shield or rings of mail that he offers up in feeble protection. It is the strength and spirit of the

wielder that carries the blow through the enemy's defenses, and drives into flesh and bone the iron will of a King. In ancient times when helmet and mail could turn aside pointed and edge weapons alike, the weight of the axe was something that could not easily be denied, nor wielded effectively by just any soldier. The Huskarlr carried the axe into battle as a symbol of his own strength and fierce determination. Let other men exploit the openings left by their enemies, the Huskarlr would create his own. We wear the crossed axes proudly upon our chests as the symbol of our Order, and we let them remind us, and all who look upon them, that we carry the Axe not only into battle, but everywhere our King would have His will be done.

We are the Huscarl of Calontir, and to say what that means to each of us is no small thing. To some, it may truly only be a medallion, and the recognition of a greater skill at arms than the majority of others within our kingdom. But for myself, and I believe for others, it is and will always be, much more than that. It is a part of the history of Calontir, and the embodiment of Her first great soldiers. It is the weight of the Axe in our hands, the crush of battle around our King, and the joy of laying low the foeman at His feet. It is the songs that we sing around the fires of war to remind us of who and what once was—and what is now again. And it is the memory of a banner that once burned, and the Requiem which honored its final journey