

From Haywood's "Encyclopaedia of the Viking Age":

"Bláland: Term used by Viking Age Scandinavians to describe North Africa. Moors from North Africa and Spain who were taken prisoner during Hastein's and Bjorn Ironside's Viking raids in the Mediterranean (859-62) and who finished up on the Dublin slave market were described as blue\* men (Norse blámenn, Irish fir gorm)."

Haywood adds that sources of information about Hastein and Bjorn include 9th-century (i.e., contemporary) Frankish chronicles and the writings of two 11th-century Normans, William of Jumieges and Dodo of St-Quentin.

\*The Old Norse "blá" means both "black" and "blue." It is nearly always translated "blue" in this context (maybe that's what the Irish means???) but "black" is more similar to modern usage.

Wassail,

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