

Y4- Britain's Settlement by Anglo-Saxons and Scots

Anglo-Saxons & Scots



What do we know about the Anglo-Saxons?

The fall of the Roman Empire in

410 CE left England in an unprotected state which led to the Angles, Saxons and Jutes invading from Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands. These invaders settled in England and we know them as the Anglo-Saxons.

Reasons for invading: more land for farming, better & milder climate, Saxon land had flooded, there was not enough food, they could easily win battles now the Romans had gone and could set up their kingdoms.

The Anglo-Saxons were mostly farmers who lived in wooden huts made with wattle and daub. Children here would generally not go to school. Girls would help around the home and boys learned the skills of their fathers.

Vocabulary

Alfred the Great— The king of Wessex, a southern Anglo-Saxon kingdom

Angles— Main Germanic peoples who settled in Great Britain after the Roman period

Athelstan- Athelstan was the first king of all England, and Alfred the Great's grandson

Augustine— Led a mission to Britain to Christianise the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Kent

Bede— A monk at the monastery of St Peter

Convert- Change one's religious faith

Heptarchy— Seven petty kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon England

Jutes- Germanic tribe who invaded Britain in the 5th century and formed Anglo-Saxon England

Lindisfarne— Coastal island in Northumberland, England

Monk- Member of a religious community

Pagan— A person holding religious beliefs other than those of the main world religions

Wattle and daub- Wattle and daub is a composite building method

The Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy

From the 5th century up until 927 CE, England was not a united country like today and instead it was separated into many kingdoms. Historians refer to the seven largest kingdoms as the 'heptarchy'.

Each kingdom had its own king and they would often fight between each other. Sometimes the people who lived in the kingdom would rebel against the king's power. So, being in complete control of an Anglo-Saxon kingdom required power, influence, and lots of money!

Anglo-Saxon kings had so much power and control over their people that they even worked to change their religion to their own beliefs!



The coming of Christianity

Early Anglo-Saxon religion was a pagan belief system.

Gregory the Great, who was Pope from AD 590, sent St Augustine and 50 monks to England in 596 AD to convert the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity.

Hundreds of monasteries were built between AD 650 and AD 850.

The wealthy and important Anglo-Saxons were nearly all converted to Christianity within a century after St. Augustine's arrival, but the original pagan religion was kept alive by poorer people. By AD 660, only the men of Sussex had still to convert to Christianity.

The monk Bede wrote his account of the conversion to Christianity in the 7th Century from his base in Jarrow.