

History: Vicious Vikings



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General Knowledge

Key Vocabulary	
Alfred the Great	The youngest king of Wessex.
Conquest	Invasion and control gained over a place by force.
Empire	An extensive group of states or countries ruled over by a single monarch.
Invade	someone who enters the country with violence and force.
Exploitation	the action or fact of treating someone unfairly in order to benefit from their work.
Pillage	To rob a place using violence.
Plunder	Steal goods from a place or person
Vikings	Scandinavian seafaring pirates and traders who raided the north of Europe.
Danegeld	a tax raised to pay tribute or protection money to the Viking raiders to save a land from being ravaged.

The Early Vikings

The Vikings came from the modern Scandinavian countries of Denmark, Norway and Sweden. They travelled in boats called longships and first arrived in Britain around **AD 787**. The Vikings raided places such as monasteries and pillaged expensive items to trade. They were looking for valuable goods like gold and jewels, imported foods and other useful materials.

The Vikings also wanted to claim land and tried to take over much of Britain. **By AD 878** the Vikings had settled permanently in Britain.

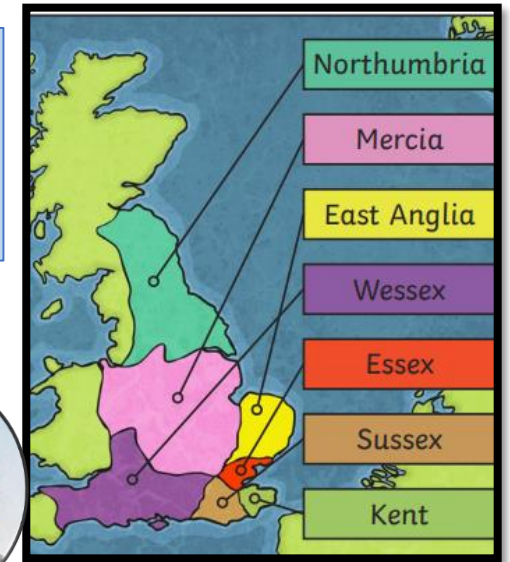


Attack on Lindis Farne

In AD793 the Vikings famously attacked a **monastery at Lindisfarne** in Northumbria, north-east England. The Vikings were pagans, not Christians like most people living in Britain at the time. They did not think twice about raiding a monastery. Christian monasteries in Britain were easy targets for the Vikings. The monks had no weapons and the buildings were filled with valuable treasures, like gold, jewels and books.

Anglo-Saxon Kings

When the Anglo-Saxons first settled in Britain, there were seven kingdoms, but by **AD 878** there was just one kingdom left (Wessex) as the others had been overrun by the Vikings. Many Anglo-Saxon kings tried to resist the Vikings and fought hard to keep control of their land. King Alfred the Great was the best known Anglo-Saxon king and the first to defeat the Vikings in battle.



Alfred the Great

There were many famous Anglo-Saxon kings, but the most famous of all was Alfred, one of the only kings in British history to be called 'Great'. He fought the Vikings and then made peace so that English and Vikings settled down to live together. He encouraged people to learn and he tried to govern well and fairly.

Alfred made good laws and believed education was important. He had books translated from Latin into English, so people could read them. He also told monks to begin writing the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.

Danelaw

After years of fighting the Vikings, Alfred made a peace agreement. But even after this agreement, fighting went on for many more years. An imaginary dividing line was agreed to run across England, from London in the south towards Chester in the north west. The Anglo-Saxon lands were to the west and the Viking lands, known as the **Danelaw**, were roughly to the east. Everything to the east belonged to the Vikings. Viking families came to settle on these lands.