

Year 5 History Knowledge Organiser - Anglo-Saxon Britain

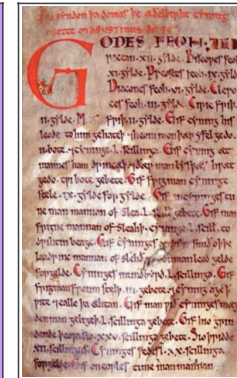
Attacks by land and sea

1. The Roman Empire was often challenged by tribes from beyond its borders.
2. Emperor Hadrian tried to stop the Picts' raids on the north of Roman Britain. He built a vast wall from coast to coast - Hadrian's wall.
3. The Picts formed an alliance with the Scots and together they pillaged Roman outposts.
4. In 367 the Saxons joined the alliance of Picts and Scots.
5. The Romans in Britain asked for help from Rome, but the Roman Empire had already fallen so could not spare any soldiers.
6. They tried to defend themselves using the nine forts they had built much earlier.
7. The Romans could no longer defend Britain from the new invaders so in 410 they had to give up and the last Roman soldiers left the island.
8. The new invaders poured into Britain - the Germanic tribes made up of Saxons, Angles and Jutes - The Anglo-Saxons.
9. There were many battles but The Anglo-Saxons were stronger than the Britons. The Anglo-Saxon age had begun!
10. The forts were left to fall apart, but Pevensey Castle was made into a military base.

Connected kingdoms

1. Different Anglo-Saxon groups took over different parts of Britain.
2. There were 7 main Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.
3. The Angles formed East Anglia, Mercia and Northumbria.
4. The Saxons moved to the south of Britain and formed Wessex, Sussex and Essex.
5. The Jutes settled and created the kingdom of Kent.
6. Kent was ruled by a King called Aethelberht who married a Frankish princess called Bertha.
7. Archaeologists found a brooch made in the sixth century with silver and garnets - materials not found in Kent. This showed that materials were imported.
8. King Aethelberht encouraged trade with the Franks in France - glass, ivory and garnet were being traded as well as slaves.
9. Aethelberht did not marry for love, he wanted to make connections with the Franks. His wife (Bertha) came from a dynasty with more land and power than he had.
10. Aethelberht claimed to be the descendent of Hengist.
11. Aethelberht wrote a law code designed to keep the peace.

Aethelberht's law code: people were to pay compensation instead of taking revenge. Women could not receive compensation and were not treated equally - the price they had to pay was higher than a man's for a worse crime!



This is the first page of the law code issued in about 602. It is the first known law code of the Anglo-Saxons and the earliest surviving document written in English.

Important People

King Arthur	Legends tell us that he led the Britons into battle with the Saxons - historians cannot prove he existed.
Hengist and Horsa	Legend tells of how they were invited to help defend Britons against the Picts in the North. Instead they turned on the King and seized his kingdom!
Basil Brown	Self taught archaeologist who excavated Sutton Hoo and found a ship. Inside the ship he found bronze pots, shields, a bronze helmet, belt buckles, silver plates and jewellery.
Augustine	The monk sent to Britain to convert the rulers of the seven kingdoms to Christianity.

Not Angles, but angels

1. There is a story that the leader of the Christians (The Pope) was one day walking through Rome when he saw fair haired, fair skinned people being sold as slaves.
2. He was told they were Angles, he named them as angels. He decided it was time that Britain learnt about Christianity.
3. The leaders of the 7 kingdoms were Pagans, so the Pope sent a monk called Augustine over to convert the rulers to Christianity.
4. It is likely that Bertha was already a Christian and that King Aethelberht had become a Christian before his marriage to her at the request of her father, a powerful, Frankish King.
5. Aethelberht was the first Anglo-Saxon King to convert to Christianity. He allowed Augustine to build a church in Canterbury - Canterbury Cathedral. King Aethelberht and his wife Bertha have statues outside.
6. Christianity gradually spread with the Pope giving orders that Pagan temples should be converted into Christian churches.
7. The Anglos-Saxons also built monasteries. They became centres of learning and scholarship. Monasteries were the only schools in Anglo-Saxon Britain.



How did the migrations happen?

1. The Roman Empire was weakening and they could no longer defend Britain.
2. The Germanic tribes were skilled fighters who were heavily armed. The remaining Britons were overcome and could not fight off the new invaders.
3. The Anglo-Saxons wanted to live in Britain because it had good soil for farming.

Vocabulary

1. The Saxon Shore	The line of nine forts built to defend Britain from the Saxons
2. Battle axe	Most feared weapon
3. Francisca	An iron axe-head used for throwing at the enemy
4. Cyning	Germanic word for King - a successful chief
5. Grave goods	Items that a person is buried with
6. Artefacts	Items that can give us information
7. High born	Born into a wealthy, high social class family
8. Amber	Hard resin material made from hardened tree sap
9. Compensation	A sum of money to be paid in recognition of loss, suffering or injury
10. Synod of Whitby	A meeting held to decide if Britain would follow Roman Christianity or Irish Christianity
11. Offa's Dyke	Barrier built to separate Mercia and Wales