



Vikings



Key

Vocabulary

Danegeld	"Paying the Dane". King Ethelred paid the Vikings 4500kg of silver to go home but they kept returning and were paid 22,000kg of silver in Danegeld altogether
Exile	To be sent away
Invade	To enter or occupy land
Kingdom	An area ruled by a king
Outlawed	Having all property taken away and no longer being allowed to live in the community
Pagans	A religion where many gods and goddesses are worshipped
Pillaged	To violently steal
Raid	A surprise attack
Wergild	A payment system used to settle disputes between a criminal and the victim

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. They invaded and settled in Scotland before heading south to places such as York. By AD 878 the Vikings had settled permanently in Britain



Anglo-Saxon Kings

The kings of Anglo-Saxon Britain each ruled their own kingdom and the people in it. They fought to defend their kingdom or take control of other kingdoms. 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.

Viking life

Farms - Vikings lived on farms and kept cows, pigs and sheep

for milk, wool and meat.

Houses - Walls made of stone or wood. A straw roof.

Wattle

and daub (sticks and mud/dung) for the inside of the walls.

Jewellery - Worn to show off how rich a person was.

Pagans - Vikings arrived as pagans but eventually converted to Christianity.

Sagas - Vikings used rhyme to tell stories about adventures and battles against monsters.

Anglo-Saxon Laws and Punishments.

The Anglo-Saxon laws were very similar to some we have today, although the punishments were very different. These were often very brutal and would be carried in public to act as deterrents, to discourage others from committing such crimes. Stoning, whipping and exile were common punishments; as well as paying a fine (wergild), or receiving reparations in the form of hot or cold water ordeals.

Viking Laws and Punishments

Viking laws were not written down but passed on by word of mouth.

Punishments could include fines, being semi-outlawed, fighting to the death, or revenge on someone who has killed a family member.

