

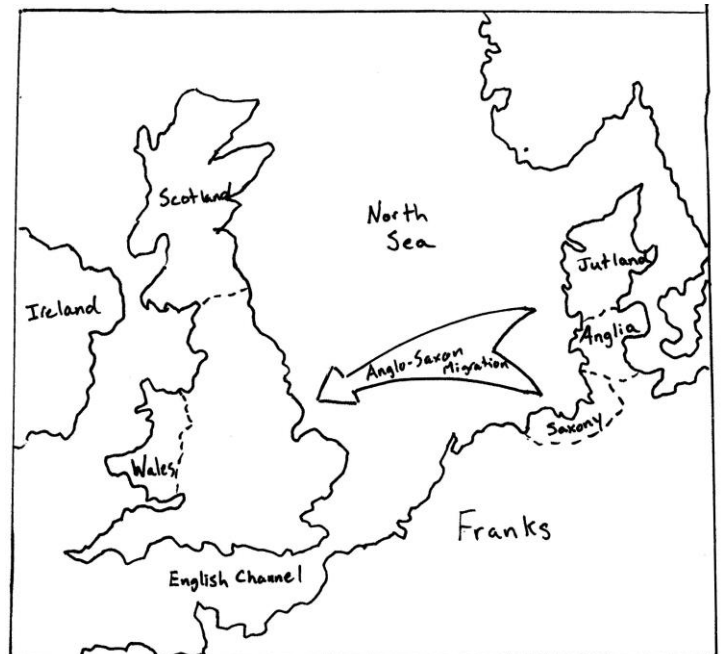
The Angles, Saxons, and Celts



With Rome in ruin and with the rise in Europe of the Franks, other Germanic Tribes such as the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes push out the Celtic tribes of Western Europe across the English Channel to Britain. But with more pressure from the Franks and a desire to expand, the Angles, Saxons and Jutes followed the Celts across the water, pushing the Celts even further into Wales, Scotland and even Ireland.

The Celts themselves were a very successful, tribal people. Known as both great warriors and artisans, and before the Romans rose to power, their influence had spread across all of Europe. The Celtic warriors were held in such high esteem, that they were often hired as **mercenaries**, even by Egyptian pharaohs.

However, the Celts would eventually be pushed out of continental Europe to Britain and they were followed shortly by the Angles and the Saxons. The Angles, Saxons and Jutes, came from Germany and the modern-day Netherlands. Resisting the Franks and especially the Frankish adoption of Christianity, the **pagan** Angles, Saxons, and Jutes migrated to the island of Britain pushing the Celts who came before them to Wales, Scotland and Ireland.



Map of the Anglo-Saxon Migration to Britain from Northwestern Europe (modern day France, Germany and the Netherlands)

The Saxons

The Saxons (or Anglo-Saxons) is the name given to those who came from Jutland, Anglia and Saxony on the European coast and migrated to the island of Britain. The Saxons quickly became the dominant tribe or people of Britain. Their time was a time of challenges with constant warring with the Celts to the west and north and eventually an even greater threat with the Vikings who came from the North and East. The Vikings were a fierce group of "Northmen" sometimes called "Norsemen" who came across the North Sea and English Channel from Northern Europe. They came from areas that now encompass Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland, and Denmark, and they terrorized the Saxons.

Mercenaries - fighting men for hire.

Pagan - those who worshiped "the old gods" that reflected the mysteries of nature rather than the Christian God.

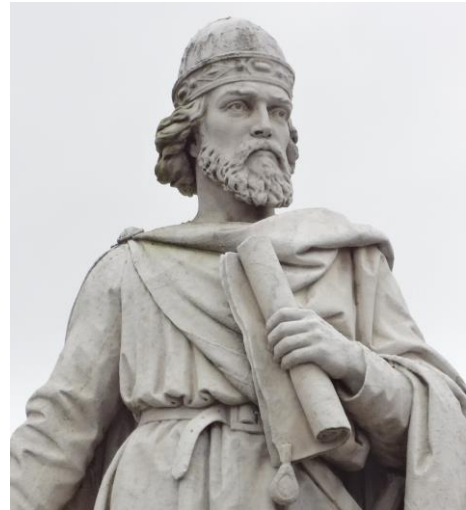
Alfred the Great

King Alfred was a Saxon King who is credited with the expulsion of the Vikings from Britain. The Vikings almost took total control of Britain. At one point Alfred was forced into the swamp lowlands of what is now coastal western England. Hiding in the marshes, he would gather strength and forces strong enough to rid himself of the Vikings. It was Alfred's success in some very major battles and more importantly, his cunning use of smaller local fortifications call **boroughs** and a quick communication system to call for help when in need, that would end the Viking conquest of England. Once England was secured, the

Saxons would either destroy, vanquish, or re-inhabit the lands that were once occupied by the Vikings.

Alfred is the only English King to be named "The Great". Alfred was more than a great leader of men who would see many successful battles against the Vikings, Alfred was also a great scholar who saw the value in education and the importance of reading and writing, especially amongst the lesser lords and kings who fought with him. Although Alfred was often described as a "sickly king" because of his constant stomach ailments, he was also described as being a very smart King who would value educated reasoning and thought. Alfred was a very practical and efficient ruler who did much to not only unite his people but provide relative peace for them to be successful.

Alfred would leave behind a much more **prosperous** and united England, but the Vikings would continue to be a nuisance until the last invader of Britain came to power. A man that came to be known as William the Conqueror.



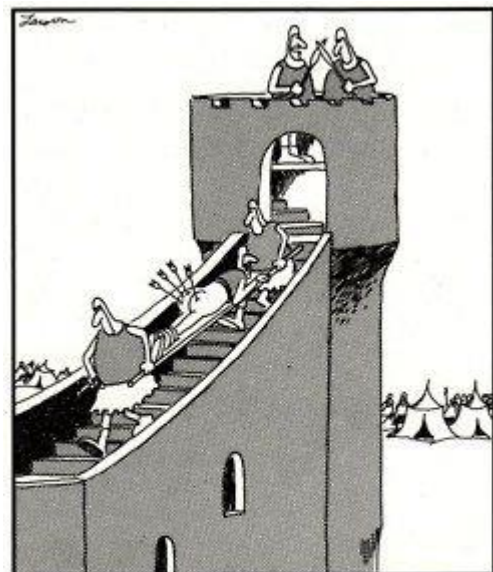
Statue of Alfred the Great. Notice that the statue depicts Alfred with a scroll acknowledging that he was a man of knowledge and writing.

Boroughs - smaller, fortified towns or villages that could be used to protect the Saxons from the Vikings until help could arrive.

Prosperous - to be wealthy or successful



The Celts were famous for their weaving art



"So then I says to Borg, 'You know, as long as we're under seige, one of us oughta moon these Saxon dogs.'"

The Angles, Saxons and Celts

Directions: READ the handout entitled: "Early Middle Ages - The Angles, Saxons and Celts" and then answer the following questions:

1. Use your handout to provide definitions for the following terms: (1 mark each)

Mercenaries

Boroughs

Prosperous

2. On a separate piece of paper, answer the following questions using **COMPLETE SENTENCES**:

- a. In your own words, describe who the Celts were and where did the Saxons finally push them to? (2 marks for quality of response and inclusion of details)
- b. In your own words, describe why the Saxons migrated to Britain. Identify two groups of peoples that they had to fight once they were there. (2 marks for the quality of your response and evidence of thought and effort)
- c. In your own words, describe why King Alfred became known as "Alfred the Great". (2 marks for quality of response and evidence of insight)

3. Saxon Migration to Britain Map - Label and Colour AS DIRECTED, the following map.

You will be marked out of 5 for quality of work, ability to colour and label as directed and evidence of effort

Total: ____ /15

Directions: Label and color the following map that outlines where the Saxons came from and where they migrated to in Britain. **Colour and label** the Saxon areas of Jutland, Anglia, and Saxony **Red** as well as the area they came to possess in Britain. **Colour and label** the Celtic areas of Wales, Scotland and Ireland **Green**. **Colour and label** the rest of Frankish Europe and modern-day Scandinavia **Yellow**. **Colour and label** the water **Blue**. Include an arrow to describe where the Saxons came from and where they ended up.

