

Anglo Saxons

Whilst the Romans were governing Roman Britain, Rome was increasingly under threat from external invasion. Many Romans had to return to Rome to fight for their land. By 410AD, the last of the Romans had left Britain to go and defend their home territory. This meant that Britain was left to its own devices for the first time in about 400 years of Roman rule. Britain was left with no one to protect it.

Key Knowledge

Threat 1: The Scots and the Picts

The Gaelic speaking Scotti came from Ireland. Their ancestors were the Picts. They were described as 'foul' and with 'a lust for blood'. They are said to have climbed over Hadrian's Wall, killing everyone in their way. The British King Vortigern faced great difficulty organising troops to hold back the Picts and Scots who were very powerful and superb fighters. Vortigern asked two brothers called Hengest and Horsa from Jutland (in modern day Denmark) to come and fight for him.

Threat 2: Hengest and Horsa from Jutland

Hengest and Horsa were glad to help and the Picts and Scots were successfully held back. However, the men liked what they found in Britain and decided that they wanted to stay and take land for themselves as it was rich and plentiful and the Britons could be easily defeated. They brought more warriors and over time the invaders began to settle around Britain pushing the Brits further and further out.

Threat 3: The Angles and the Saxons (The Anglo-Saxons)

Other Germanic tribes had also been invading Britain for some time, and without Roman protection they proved to be a formidable force against the Brits. These invaders are known to us as The Anglo-Saxons because the two biggest invading tribes were the Angles and the Saxons. Other invaders were the Jutes, Franks and Frisians. They came from the modern places of Germany, Holland and Denmark. The Angles settled in East Anglia.

The 7 Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms

The British fought hard against the Anglo-Saxons but by about 600AD they had either been forced to escape or had been taken as slaves. Those who escaped retreated mainly to Wales and Cornwall. The rest of Britain was divided into seven kingdoms by the Anglo-Saxons.

- Northumbria
- Essex
- Wessex
- Sussex
- Mercia
- Kent
- East Anglia



Anglo-Saxon Place names

- Sussex = South Saxons
- Middlesex = Middle Saxons
- Wessex = West Saxon
- Essex = East Saxons

- burgh - means town
- bury - means fortified place
- croft - means small enclosure
- field - means open land
- ford - means river crossing
- ham/m - means village
- ley - means forest clearing
- mer/mere - means pool or lake
- ney - means island
- stow/stowe - means meeting place/holy place
- ton/tun - means farmstead
- wic/wich - means farm
- worth/worthy - means enclosure







Anglo-Saxon life

At West Stow in Suffolk, archaeologists found the remains of an early Anglo-Saxon village. They reconstructed it using Anglo-Saxon methods. They found that the village was made up of small groups of houses built around a larger hall. Each family house had one room, with a hearth with a fire for cooking, heating and light. A metal cooking pot hung from a chain above the fire. They lived as farmers and their villages were built near natural resources.

Key Vocabulary

central hall	A mead hall or feasting hall was initially simply a large building with a single room.
Franks	A group of Germanic warriors.
Frisians	Came from the coastal parts of the Netherlands and northwestern Germany.
fuel	Wood that was burned to produce heat.
Hadrian's Wall	A defensive fortification in the Roman Britain, begun in AD 122 in the reign of the emperor Hadrian.
hearth	The floor of a fireplace.
Hengest and Horsa	Brothers said to have led the Angles, Saxons and Jutes in their invasion of Britain in the 5th century.
Jutes	The Jutes settled mainly in Kent. They did not call themselves 'the Jutes', they referred to themselves as 'the Kentings', that is the men living in Kent.
King Vortigern	King of the Britons.
Livestock	Animals kept for their meat, eggs, milk, fur, leather, and wool.
natural resources	Wood and water to use in every day life.
The Saxons	A Germanic tribe that originally occupied the region which today is the North Sea coast of the Netherlands, Germany, and Denmark
village chief	Each group of Anglo-Saxon settlers had a leader or war-chief.
water source	Lake, river or stream.
weaving	A way to make fabric or cloth from threads.



												
Ancient Egypt	The Shang Dynasty	Romans and Celts	Anglo-Saxons	Riotous Royals	St Nicholas Church	Queen Elizabeth I	The Great Fire of London	Florence Nightingale	The arrival of the railways	Queen Elizabeth II Coronation	Pyrford School opened	Moon Landing
3,100BC	1766 BC	750BC	AD449	1066	1140	1559	1666	1820	1825	1953	1950	1969
Year 3	Year 4	Year 3	Year 4	Year 4	Year 2	Year 1	Year 2	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 1