

ANGLO-SAXONS

The Anglo-Saxons arrived in Britain from Northern Europe around 450CE. They crossed the North Sea in wooden boats.



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England didn't become one united country until 100 years after the Anglo-Saxons arrived. Between 700CE and 800CE the Anglo-Saxons lived in seven kingdoms each ruled by a different warrior king.



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Ordinary Anglo-Saxons lived in wooden houses with a single room. They had thatched roofs and no windows.



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Many modern place names originate from the Anglo Saxons. Hastings, for example, was named after 'Haesta' the ruling chief.



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Because the water was unsafe to drink, Anglo-Saxons usually drank mead or beer, which they drank using cow horns as cups.



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Only the best Anglo-Saxon warriors had iron swords. Warriors named their swords and kept them in finely decorated scabbards.



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Anglo-Saxons hunted deer and wild boar, which they roasted over a fire in the middle of their houses.



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The Anglo-Saxons grew crops such as wheat, oats and vegetables. They also kept chickens, pigs, cows and goats.



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Plants, spices and even worms, snails, urine and ants were all used by the Anglo-Saxons to heal people who were sick!



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When the Anglo-Saxons first arrived in England, they were pagans and worshipped many gods and goddesses.



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Many of our Christmas traditions originate from the Anglo-Saxons, who celebrated Yuletide around 25th December by hanging up stockings and decorating their houses with holly.



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Anglo-Saxons wore special amulets to ward off illness and evil spirits. These objects were often carved figures which held a lucky stone or a religious object.



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Anglo-Saxon kings were buried with their treasures. One of the most significant burial sights was found in Sutton Hoo, Suffolk. The king was buried inside a wooden boat to carry him to the afterlife.



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Many modern surnames originate from Anglo-Saxon times. These surnames related to the job a person did, such as Baker, Farmer, Smith (as in blacksmith) and Hunter.



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The Anglo-Saxons did not wear underpants! They may have wrapped a linen cloth around them like a nappy, but nobody is sure!



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Anglo-Saxon toilets were just holes dug in the ground outside their houses. As toilet paper had not been invented, the Anglo-Saxons used moss to wipe their bottoms!



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In 700CE, King Offa of Mercia built a dyke (an earth wall and ditch) to keep out invaders. The dyke stretched approximately 103km and can still be seen today.



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Anglo-Saxon men were very proud of their hair and beards. Anybody who damaged them on purpose was fined a lot of money!



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The first Christian church was built in Canterbury after King Ethelbert was converted to Christianity by a monk named Augustine in 597 CE.



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In 793CE, the Vikings arrived in boats on the coast of Northumbria, where they attacked the monastery at Lindisfarne, stealing treasures and capturing monks to sell as slaves before returning home.



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