

WHAT THE BADGERS

SAW 3

The Anglo-Saxons Appear



Can you find out about the things in blue?

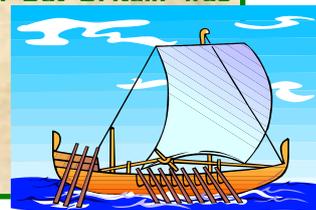
Have a read at this lot!



When the Romans left Britain, things quickly went down hill for the locals! They were attacked from every direction! They often used the Roman forts for defence, but tribes like the **Picts** were just too strong. Our region suffered very badly at this time, according to the stories told by our badger ancestors.

The east coast was attacked by Anglo-Saxon pirates! They were tall, fair-haired and blue-eyed. The Romans called them 'Barbarians'. The people along the coast called them 'Sea Wolves'.

The Anglo-Saxons came from North Germany and lived along the shores of the North Sea. A large amount of their land was marshy, sandy or covered with heather, and poor for growing crops. But Britain was fertile and that's why they invaded us.



The Anglo-Saxon pirates first landed on the Yorkshire coast, and set up the Kingdom of Deira. Another Anglo-Saxon kingdom was set up in what is now Durham and Northumberland. It was called Bernicia. The capital of Bernicia was **Bamburgh**. (A bit hard to imagine, if you visit Bamburgh today.)

There was lots of fighting between the small kingdoms in Britain at the time. At one time, the kingdoms of Bernicia and Deira were united under one Bernician King, and the Deiran royal family had to flee for their lives! (This is the first time we hear the word 'Northumbria', - North Umbria - North of the River H.....)

However, King Ethelfrith of Northumbria was attacked, and killed, in 616 AD, by a prince of the Deiran royal family, Edwin, and he became the new king of the area.



What a lot of fuss and trouble out badger ancestors saw, at this time!

Edwin fought against the Picts, and conquered the lowlands of Scotland. He built a fort on the Firth of Forth, called 'Edwin's Burgh'. **What do you think we call this city today?**

He had a fleet of ships in the Irish Sea, and took the Isle of Man and the Isle of Anglesey from King Cadwallon of Wales.

Most of the other kings in Britain thought of Edwin as their 'overlord'. In 627 BC, Edwin was converted to Christianity, after being persuaded by his wife, Ethelberga of Kent.

Just six years later, Edwin was attacked and killed by King Cadwallon. After another two years of horror, a Deiran, Oswald killed Cadwallon in a battle near Hexham and became the new king of the whole region. He brought a monk called Aidan to preach to the Northumbrians.



When Edwin was king, Oswald had lived on the Isle of Iona off Scotland. He brought Oswald to preach the Gospels to his people. He chose the Island of Lindisfarne to build his monastery. Oswald and Aidan were great friends, and did lots of wonderful things for the people and the area. Lots of monasteries and churches were built at this time, including the beautiful little church at Escomb, Bishop Auckland, near to our sett. It is the only church in the north built during the 8th Century to have survived to this day.



Actually, the church was built with stones from the Roman Fort, near to our sett. If you visit the church, you can see some Roman inscriptions in the stones of the walls.

In these times, all books were written by hand. Some of the monks spent all of their time writing them. The books were very beautiful, with lots of decoration, called illumination.

One of the most beautiful were the Lindisfarne Gospels, which were written by Bishop Eadfrith between 698 and 721 BC. (Now in the British Museum.)

None of the holy men was more loved than St. Cuthbert. When he died, he was buried at Lindisfarne. When the monks fled from Holy Island, they took his body to Chester-le-Street, Darlington, and finally, Durham. You can see his grave to this day in Durham Cathedral.

