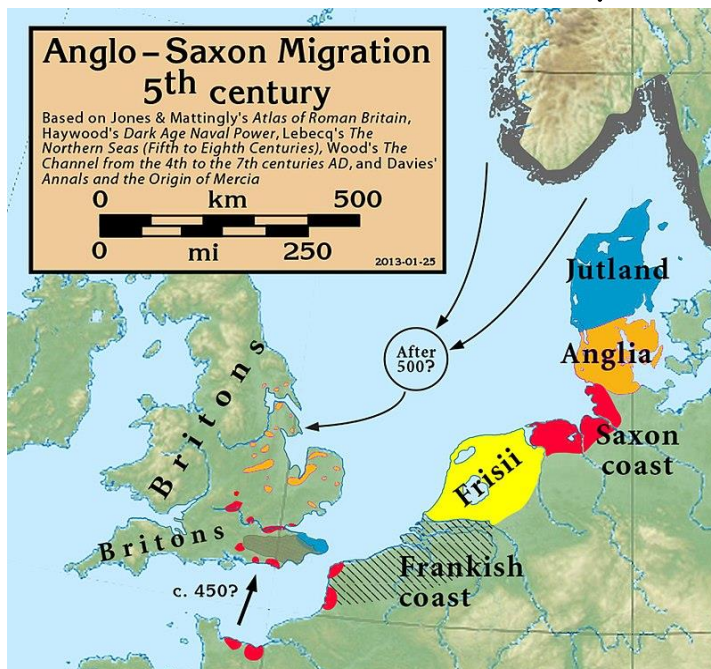




## From Yule to Christmas – the Anglo-Saxon Religious Journey

### Lesson 1 – Who Were the Anglo-Saxons?

#### Origins

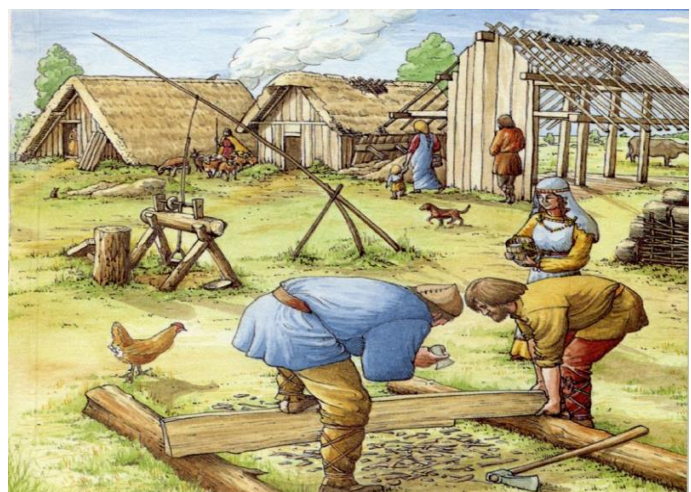


“Anglo-Saxon” is a collective name given to a number of Germanic tribes who began raiding and then settling in England after the Roman Legions left in 410 A.D. They include the Angles, Saxons, Frisians and Jutes. These were all very similar people; their languages, customs, cultures and religious beliefs all came from the same root – they were all North-western Europeans. Just like the Vikings, who began arriving on our shores nearly four hundred years later, the Anglo-Saxons were attracted by the temperate climate, abundant forests, plentiful wildlife and

rich soil that made our country such an excellent place for farming (which is how almost everyone lived at that time).

#### Way of Life

Like all North-western European people in those days, the Anglo-Saxons lived on the land in small villages and towns where everyone knew each other. If they needed something, e.g. clothes, tools, weapons, etc, they either made it themselves or traded with a neighbour. They built their own houses from



natural materials available to them from the land, using hand tools and just human and animal power. They worked hard!



All the food they ate was either grown (Crops), raised (goats, cows, sheep, chickens, pigs), caught (fish, deer, wild boar, pigeons, ducks, rabbits, etc) or gathered (wild berries, fruits, mushrooms, nuts, etc) by themselves.

Everywhere they went, they either walked or, if they were wealthier, they rode on horseback. They led very active, physical lives and, as a result, both men and women had to be strong and fit to survive.

'Education' was all done in the family and the clan. Boys were taught how to farm, hunt, fish, build and fight by their fathers and grandfathers, while girls were taught by their mothers and grandmothers how to cook, make and mend clothes, raise a family, look after animals, gather food from nature and identify and use a large number of medicinal plants to treat illnesses and injuries.

### What do You Know and What do You Understand?

- 1) Use a dictionary to look up any words on this sheet you do not understand, write down the definitions in your own "Vocabulary Book". You have just increased your word-power!
- 2) In your own words, explain when and why the Anglo-Saxons came to this country  
**DO NOT COPY FROM THIS SHEET.**
- 3) "The Angles, Saxons, Jutes and Frisians were all very different groups of people." Say whether this statement is "True" or "False" and in your own words explain what the truth is about these peoples.
- 4) Anglo-Saxon place names can be identified by their endings -  
.....stead/sted.....wick/wich.....ham....burgh/borough....ton/tun.....stow/stowe

Using a local map and an atlas of the British Isles, see how many Anglo-Saxon place names you can find in:

- i) Your local area.
  - ii) Your county.
  - iii) The rest of England (you might want to limit this last one to just the most famous places!).
- 5) Using the information on this sheet and any other research you are able to do on the internet or in your local library:
- i) Describe what would be the best thing about living in Anglo-Saxon England and explain why you chose it.
  - ii) Describe what would be the worst thing about living in Anglo-Saxon England and explain why you chose it.

