

# British Middle Ages

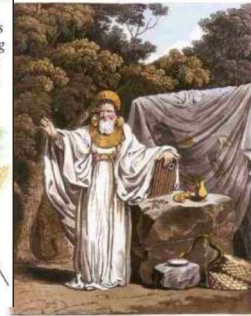
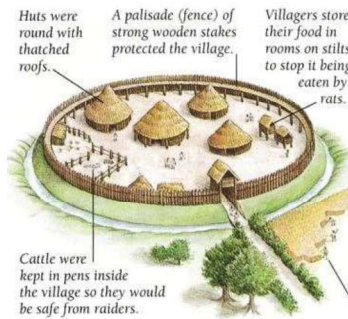
## Early Britain

### Roman Conquest of Britain to Conversion of Saxons

56 – 800 A.D.

## Ancient Britons

- Britain populated with tribes of “Celts”
  - Thought to practice Druid-Pagan rituals
  - Built Stonehedge—details of construction mysterious.
- Spoke Gaelic language (not German)
  - Welsh, Scottish and Irish are Gaelic.
  - *Llywelyn ap Gruffydd teangacha Gaelacha*



## Roman Conquest of Britain

- Invaded by Julius Caesar 54 B.C.
  - No permanent occupation
- Conquered by Claudius 43-51 A.D.
  - Boadicea's Rebellion 61 A.D.
- Roman-Britain history very sketchy after 1<sup>st</sup> century



## Roman Britain

- **Agricola** built roads, schools, aqueducts. 77-84 A.D.
- **Hadrian's Wall** 122 A.D.
- Roman citizenship to free-born Britons, 212 A.D.
- Fortifications built along “Saxon Shore”, 300 B.C.
- **Constantine** declared western emperor, 306
- Most of legions leave to fight civil wars in Gaul, 393
- **Honorius** officially withdraws Roman legions 409.



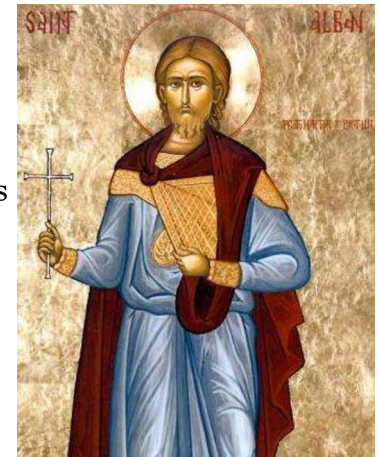
# Roman Britain

- Colonized England, Wales
  - Not Ireland or Scotland
- Major Roman Towns
  - London** Londinium
  - York** Eboracum
  - Lincoln** Lindum
  - Winchester** Belgarum
  - Canterbury** Durovernum
  - Isle of Wight** Vectis
  - St. Albans** Verulamium



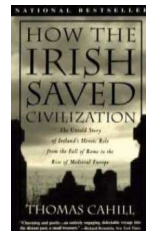
# Christianity in Early Britain

- Christian Artifacts as old as 200 A.D.
- St. Alban** martyred in 304
- Christianity became legalized in 313
- Many Christian artifacts from 400's
- St. Patrick's** mission to Ireland, mid-400's



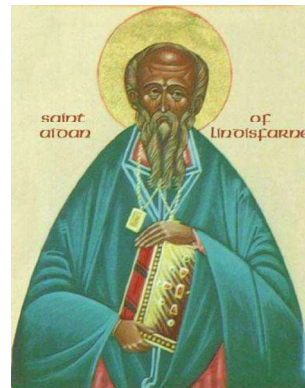
# Irish Missionaries to Britain

- Brigit** founds monastery at **Kildare**, Ireland, 500
- Columba**, apostle to Picts, founds **Iona** monastery 563
- Mungo**, apostle to Scotland founds **Glasgow**, 600
- Irish monk **Adain**, founds monastery at **Lindisfarne**, 634



# Germanic Migrations

- Germanic migration to Roman Provinces from 300 A.D.
- Many waves of Germanic invaders to Britain.
  - 300-600 Jutes, Anglos, Saxons
  - 800-1000 Danish-Vikings
  - 1066 Normans



# Germanic Migrations

- Britons couldn't resist waves of Anglo-Saxons because;
  - Peace-loving, civilized vs. savage
  - Settled, dependent on trade, vs. mobile
  - 400 years of Roman protection
  - Warrior Britons left with legions.
- Britons pushed to Scotland, Wales
- Some Britons migrated to Brittany



# Germanic Migrations

- Saxon invasion subject of many legends
  - Hengist and Horsa
  - Vortigern and Uther Pendragon
  - King Arthur
- Gildas and Bede are sources of early legends.
- Legend of King Arthur evolved as oral tradition in Wales. Written in 11<sup>th</sup> century.



# King Arthur

Fought Saxons during Dark Ages 450-550  
 May have been based on Briton hero  
 Popularized by Welsh poet in 12<sup>th</sup> century  
 Geoffrey of Monmouth—*Kings of Britain*.



# Heptarchy

- Anglo Kingdoms
  - Northumbria (North of Humber River, formerly Bernicia and Deira)
  - East Anglia
  - Mercia
- Saxon Kingdoms
  - Essex (East Saxons)
  - Wessex (West Saxons)
  - Sussex (South Saxons)
- Jute Kingdoms
  - Kent



## Famous Monasteries

- Iona
- Lindisfarne
- Jarrow
- York
- Crowland
- Winchester
- Canterbury
- Bath



## Anglo-Saxon Culture

- Evolved from **Anglo** and **Saxon** migrants intermarrying **Britons**, settling in former **Roman** territories.
- Religion—Worshipped pagan Norse gods
  - Woden (Odin) King of Gods Wednesday
  - Thunor (Thor) God of Thunder Thursday
  - Frige (Freya) Queen of Gods Friday
  - Tiw (Tyr) God of War Tuesday
- Language—Germanic with Gaelic, Latin
  - Runic Alphabets were used before Roman
  - stones bearing runes were charms



## Anglo-Saxon Names

Prefixes	Suffixes
Al-, Alf-	-bert
Aethel-	-wald, -bald, -ald
Beo-	-red
Brun-	-wig, -win
Dar-	-wulf
Ed- (Ead-)	-mund
Gar- (ger-)	-gar
God	-stan, -ston
Har- Here-	-ute
Os-	-hild
Rad-	-ward, -wart
Can-	

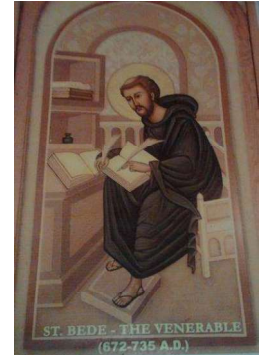
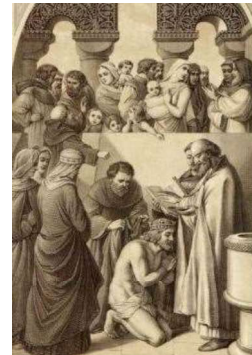
Aethelred, Aethelstan,  
Aethelbert, Aethelbald

Alfred, Albert, Alred,  
Edmund, Edward,  
Edwin, Edgar, Edred,

Darwin, Garwin,  
Hereward, Canute,  
Osmund, Oswald,  
Osborn, Harald,  
Harwin, Hagar, Godwin,  
Radgar, Beowulf,  
Brunhild, Gerber,

## Anglo-Saxon Christianity

- Saxons were pagan (Thor, Freya, etc.)
  - Despised religion of the Celts. . . Impressed by Roman Church
  - **Augustine of Canterbury** converts Ethelbert in 600
  - Most Anglo-Saxon princes convert within 100 years
- **Cuthbert** helps unite Celtic and Roman Churches, 664
- **Bede** writes Ecclesiastical History of English People in 700.
- In 712, **Boniface** undertakes conversion of German Saxons.



# Christian Kingship

- **How powerful were Anglo-Saxon kings?**
  - Presided over local tribes only. Elected for life.
  - Often warred with neighboring kings?
- **Why did kings convert to Christianity?**
  - Impressed by Christian Missionaries, Roman civilization
  - Many benefits to becoming part of Christian community. \*\*
- **Why did people convert to their kings' religion?**
  - Worship was a tribal experience.
  - Christian kings did not permit worship of idols in kingdom.
- **Why were Christian kings hereditary, not elected?**
  - King was anointed to rule by “divine right” not human election.
  - Solved difficult “succession” conflicts.
  - Upheld Christian ideals of marriage and hereditary rights.

# Christian Kingship

- What was the idea of Christian Kingship?
  - *A society of princes governed by common Christian principles; who would treat their population humanely, respect the rights of the church, and not rebel or make war without just cause.*
- What were Benefits of Christian Kingship?
  - Crown passed by hereditary right—no succession wars
  - Neighboring Christian princes could not usurp throne by force; would respect boundaries and aid in wars with pagans.
  - Christian subjects were relatively peaceful—taught to submit to lawful authority, not rebel.
  - Churchmen were educated, often served as ministers of state
  - Bishop advisors could not form dynasties so could be trusted.
  - Alliances could be made by marriage, not warfare.
  - Canon law of church more advanced than tribal laws.