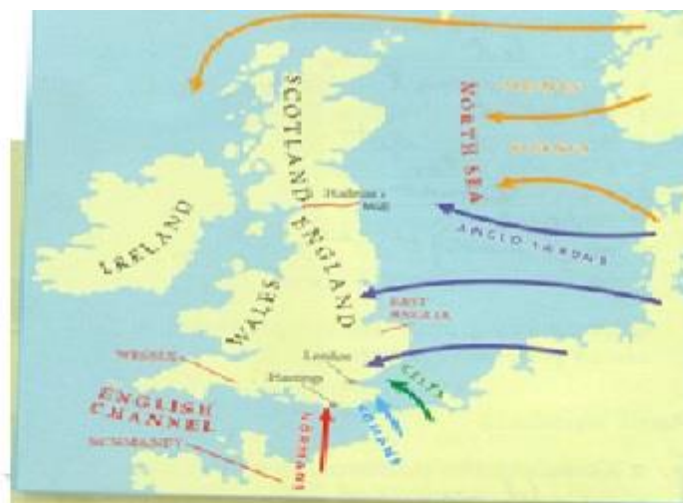


THE STORY OF ENGLAND

People have lived in the British Isles for thousands of years, but we don't know much about the first people there. About 600 BC the Celts arrived from the area which is now Belgium. They gradually settled all over Britain and Ireland. They lived as different tribes with their own kings and queens.

In AD 43, the Roman emperor Claudius sent an army to Britain. For almost the next 400 years, most of Britain, or Britannia as it was called, was part of the Roman Empire. Some British leaders, like King Caractacus in the west and Queen Boudicca in the east, tried to fight the Romans, but the Romans defeated them. However, the Romans never conquered the area which is now Scotland. The Roman emperor, Hadrian, built a wall across the north of Britain. You can still see parts of Hadrian's Wall today.

In the 4th century AD, German tribes started to attack the Roman Empire and, as a result, the Romans left Britain in AD 410. Over the next hundred years tribes from north-western Europe – Angles, Saxons and Jutes – invaded Britain. We call these people the Anglo-Saxons. They settled in the south-east of Britain and they pushed the Celts into the hills and mountains of the north and west. The Angles gave their name to a new country – 'Angle-land' or England.



At first there were seven different kingdoms, for example, East Anglia was the kingdom of the East Angles and Sussex was the kingdom of the South Saxons. They finally united under the first king of England – Alfred the Great.

The English needed to unite, because new invaders were attacking the country. These were the Vikings from Denmark and Norway. They started to attack England in the 8th century and they gradually conquered the north-eastern part of England. In the end, Alfred defeated the Vikings and united the whole country.

The Vikings also attacked France. The French king gave them some land in the north. This became Normandy – the land of the Northmen. In 1066, Duke William of Normandy invaded England. He defeated the last Anglo-Saxon king, Harold, at the Battle of Hastings. William the Conqueror, as he is called, became King William I. The Norman Conquest of 1066 was the last successful invasion of England.