

## Anglo-Saxon Period in English Literature

### 700 B.C - 43 A.D. The Celts

- Lived in tribes.
- Were successful farmers, exported corn and animals to the European mainland.
- Were ruled over by a warrior class, of which the druids were particularly important.
- Women were more independent than they were for hundreds of years.
  - Boadicea's Revolt
    - She singlehandedly defended the mainland from the roman for a very long time.
    - She was the Queen of the British Celtic Iceni tribe.
    - She poisoned herself after her defenses were breached.



### **43 A.D. Roman Invasion**

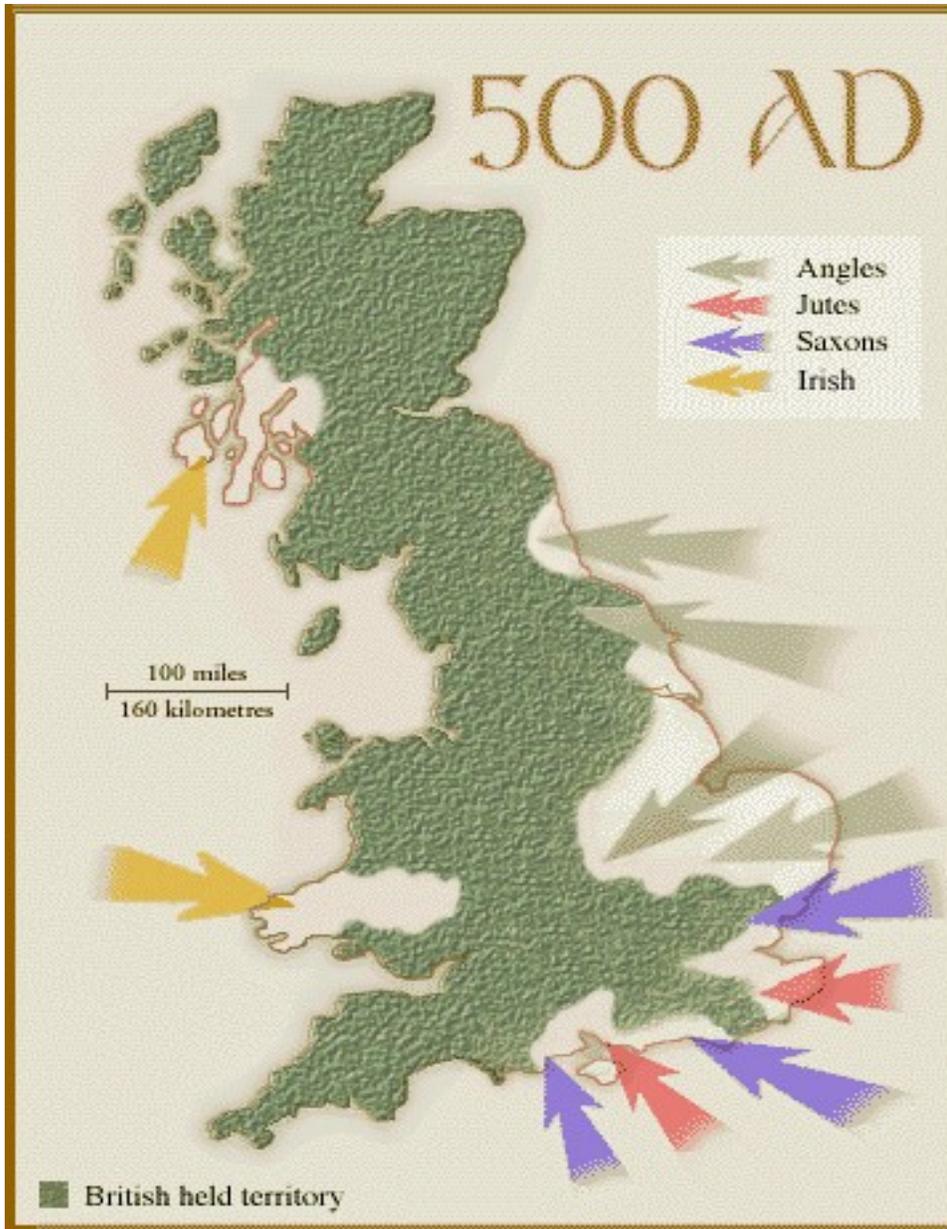
- Romans named the island "Britannia"
- Integrated Celtic villages into town-based governmental system.
- Pushed the locals to the north.
- Built forts, roads, villas, baths and Hadrian's Wall as the northern border to keep out raiders from the north. (Game of Thrones reference from the past)



- Introduced Christianity.
- Brought the skills of reading and writing.

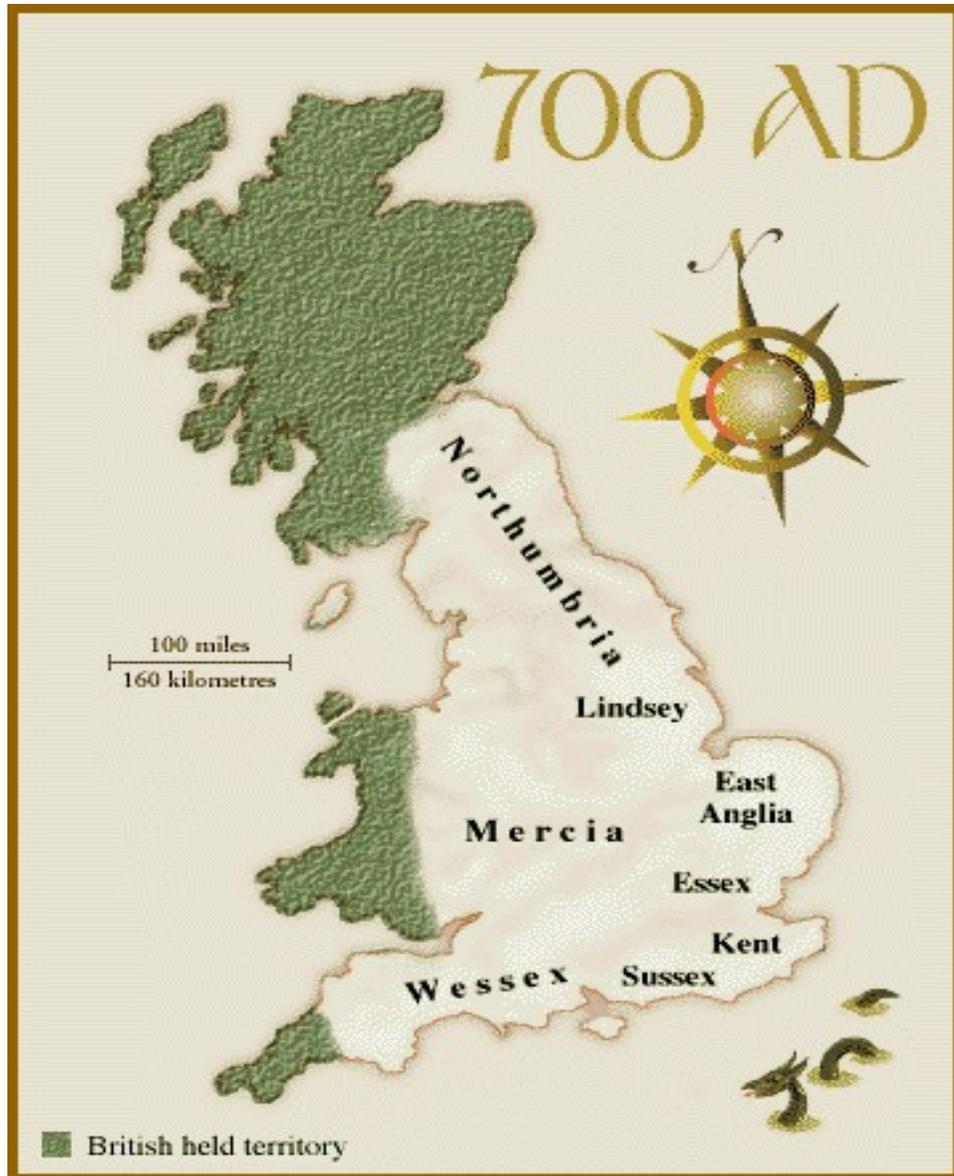
### 409 A.D. Rome Pulling Out of Britain

- Attacks by the Celts of Caledonia became difficult to stop.
- Germanic groups from European mainland started raids.
- Nearly 5 million Romano-British in 20 towns were left to fight alone against the Scots, the Irish and Saxon raiders from Germany.



## 5th Century A.D. Anglo Saxon Invasion

- The Anglo-Saxons, a collection of various Germanic peoples (Angles, Saxons and Jutes), established several kingdoms that became the primary powers in what is now England.
- The British Celts were pushed westward into the mountains and northward into what became known as Scotland.



## **The Anglo-Saxons**

- Started the class system: king, lords, soldiers, workers.
- Embedded *Comitatus*
  - The term was used especially in the context of Germanic warrior culture, for a warband tied to a leader by an oath of fealty.
  - the *comitatus* is the bond existing between a Germanic warrior and his Lord, ensuring that the former never leaves the field of battle before the latter.
- Retained fighting as a way of life (not to avenge the death of a family member was a social disgrace, so endlessly intricate blood-feuds generated perpetual excuses for going to war)
- Converted to Christianity in 597 A.D.
- Established monasteries.
- Spoke Old English which was not uniform.
- Laws started to be written.
  - The Venerable Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People emerges in 731.

## 787-865 A.D. Viking Raids

- Came from Norway and Denmark.
- King Alfred the Great (Anglo-Saxon) held out against them and captured London in 878 A.D.



## The Danelaw

- Is a historical name given to the part of England in which the laws of the Danes held sway and dominated those of the Anglo-Saxons.
- During this period several rulers attempted to unite the various Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, an effort that led to the emergence of the Kingdom of England by the 10th century.

## 1066 The Norman Conquest

- William of Normandy (France) invaded Britain.
- There was an Anglo-Saxon rebellion against the Normans every year until 1070. By 1086, only two of the greater landlords and only two bishops were Saxon.