Overview of Periods of Early English History
Pre-History—1066 A. D.

- Pre-Roman/Pre-Historical ⬜ up to 55 B. C.
- Occupation ⬜ 55 B. C. – 410 A. D.
- Period ⬜ 410 – 787 A. D.
- Invasions ⬜ 787 – 1066 A. D.
- Conquest begins in 1066

The first Englishmen were foreigners

Britons (Celts)

↓

Romans

↓

Anglo-Saxons

↓

Normans

Pre-Historical / Pre-Roman

Stonehenge
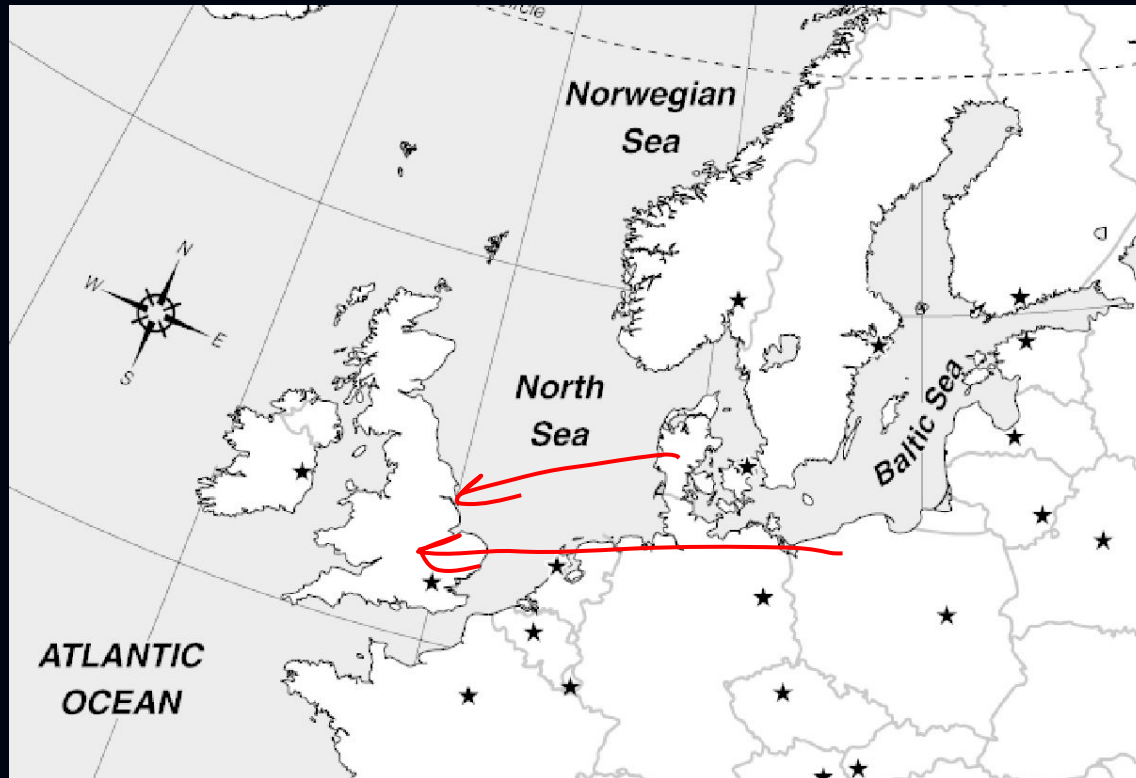
Roman Occupation

Hadrian's Wall

Important Events During Roman Occupation

- Julius Caesar begins invasion/occupation in 55 B.C.

- Occupation completed by Claudius in 1st cent. A.D.

- Hadrian's Wall built about 122 A.D.

- Romans "leave" in 410 A.D. because Visigoths attack Rome

- St. Augustine (the "other" St. Augustine!) lands in Kent in 597 and converts King Aethelbert (king of Kent, the oldest Saxon settlement) to Christianity; becomes first Archbishop of Canterbury

Important Cultural and Historical Results of the Roman Occupation

- Military—strong armed forces ("legions")
    - Pushed Celts into Wales and Ireland
    - Prevented Vikings from raiding for several hundred years: C. Warren Hollister writes, "Rome's greatest gift to Britain was peace" (15).
- Infrastructure
    - Government (fell apart when they left)
    - Walls, villas, public baths (some remains still exist)
- Language and Writing
    - Latin was official language
    - Practice of recording history led to earliest English "literature" being documentary
- Religion
    - Christianity beginning to take hold, especially after St. Augustine converts King Aethelbert

The Anglo-Saxon Period
410-787

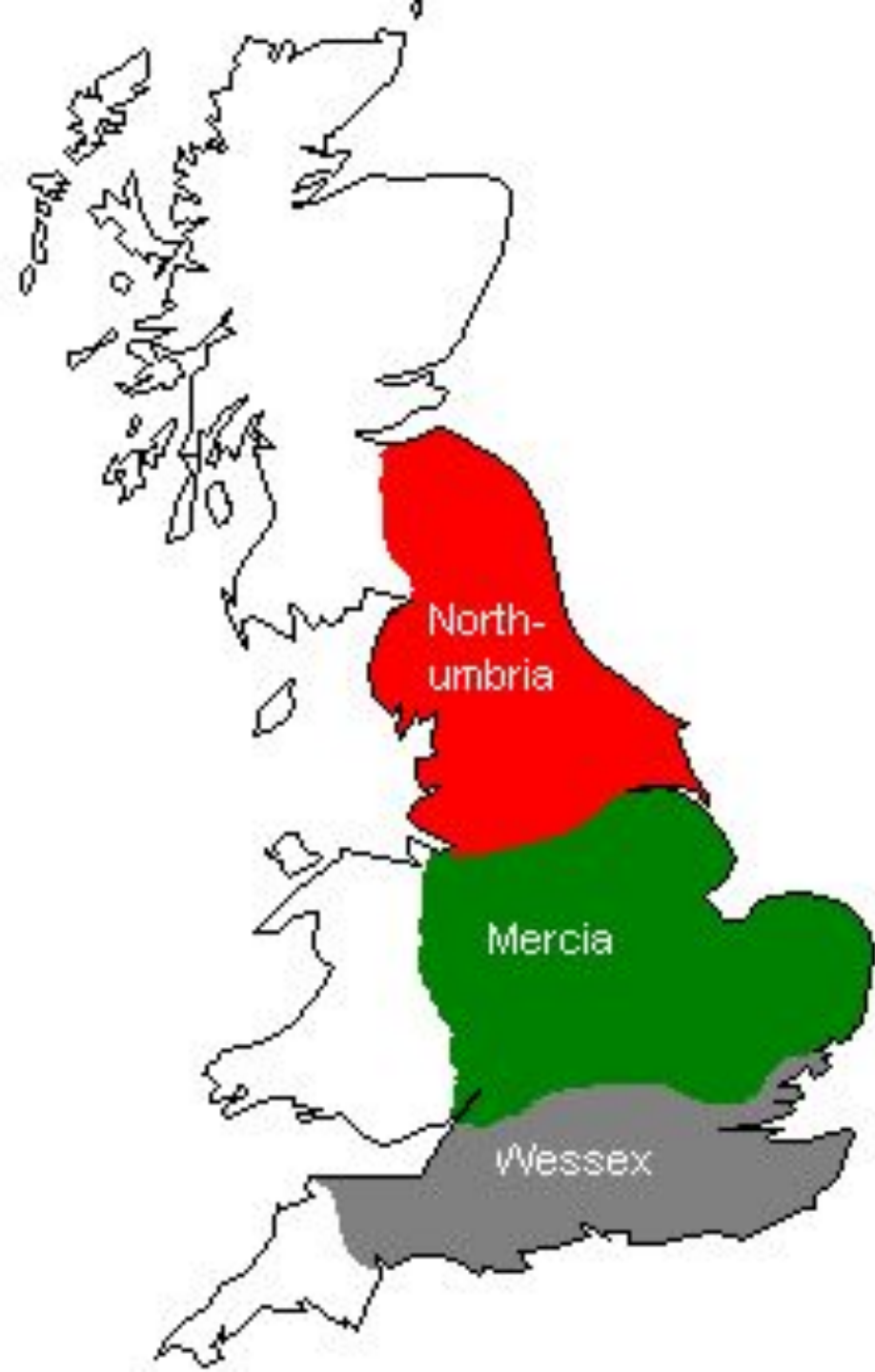# Important Events in the (First) Anglo-Saxon Period

- 410- 450 Angles and Saxons invade from Baltic shores of Germany, and the Jutes invade from the Jutland peninsula in Denmark

  - The Geats are a tribe from Jutland

- Nine Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms eventually became the Anglo-Saxon heptarchy (England not unified), or "Seven Sovereign Kingdoms"

Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy

- Heptarchy = Seven Kingdoms

  1. Kent
  2. Essex (East Saxon)
  3. Sussex (South Saxon)
  4. East Anglia
  5. Northumbria
  6. Mercia
  7. Wessex (West Saxon)

BRITANNIA SAXONICA

Old English dialects

Viking Invasions 787-1066

Alfred the Great

- Alfred the Great stops the Vikings from 871-899 by uniting all the kingdoms of southern England

- Alfred translates Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* and probably also encouraged the translation of Bede's *History and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*

Early England Created by Three Invasions

2. Anglo-Saxon and Viking Invasions 410 – 1066 A.D.

1. Roman Occupation 55 B.C.-410 A.D.

GERMAN(IC)

3. The Norman Invasion (The Battle of Hastings) in 1066 A.D.

LATIN

FRENCH

Norman Invasion

- In 1066 at the Battle of Hastings, the Normans (powerful Northern Frenchmen) defeated the English and started a centuries-long conquest of England

- Two Most Important Effects:

  - becomes official language of politics and power and exerts enormous influence on Old English

  - England begins   under a French political system, much of which is still with us (even in the U.S.) today

The Anglo-Saxon Period in Review

- Pre-Anglo-Saxon (really "pre" historical)
  - Celtic Peoples (approx 1700/400 B.C. – 55 B.C.)
  - Roman Occupation (55 B.C.-410 A.D.)

- ## <u>Anglo-Saxon/Viking</u>
  - Angles, Saxons, Frisian, and Jutes (410-787
  - Viking Raids/Invasions begin 8th c. and end 10th c.

- Norman Invasion/Occupation (really in the Middle Ages)
  - Battle of Hastings in 1066, then about four centuries of French rule

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife.

=Old English   =Middle English   =Early Modern English   =Modern English

English = ?

- Celtic (from 1700 or 400 B.C. to 55 B.C.) +

- Latin (from 55 B. C. to 410 A. D.) +

- German (from 410 A.D. to 1066 A.D.) +

- French (from 1066 A.D. to 1485 A.D.) =

<u>OLD ENGLISH and MIDDLE ENGLISH</u>

VERY DIFFICULT LANGUAGE, BUT ONE PERFECT FOR LIMITLESS AND BEAUTIFUL EXPRESSION
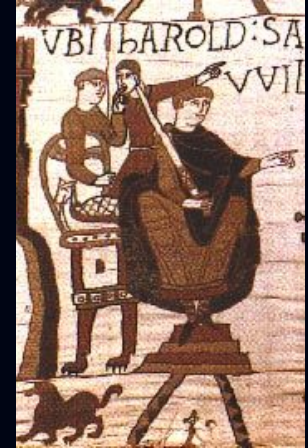
English is a Melting Pot of Indo-European Languages

Celtic   Latin   German   French