

Vikings

Timeline

700	789	793	865	866	876	886	1014	1066
The Viking Age begins	First recorded Viking attack	Viking raid on Lindisfarne	Viking army from Denmark invades England	Danes capture York (Jorvik)	Vikings from Denmark, Sweden and Norway settle permanently in England	King Alfred defeats the Vikings and allows them to settle in East England	King Canute (Cnut) of Denmark becomes King of England	Battle of Hastings—William I becomes King of England

Vocabulary

monastery	A building occupied by monks
settlement	A place where people establish a community
pagan	A person holding religious beliefs other than main world religions
kingdom	A country or stated ruled by a king or queen
missionary	A person sent on a religious mission
Scandinavia	A region in Northern Europe
conquer	To take control of a place or people by force
resistance	Refusing to accept or do something
longship	A long, narrow warship powered by oars and sails, used by Vikings
Danelaw	The part of England governed by Danish law
realm	A kingdom
ritual	A religious ceremony that involves several actions
treaty	A formal agreement between states
massacre	A slaughter of many people
Beserker	An ancient Norse warrior who fought wildly
Valhalla	A hall for warriors that died in battle
Viking raid	An attack that involves stealing
Knarr	A merchant ship used by Vikings
Danegeld	Gold given in an attempt to stop Vikings from invading, but they attacked anyway
excavation	Digging to uncover ancient remains

The Viking age in European history was from AD700 to 1100. During this time many Vikings left Scandinavia and travelled by longboat to other countries like Britain and Ireland.

The Vikings, people who came from Scandinavia (Norway, Sweden and Denmark) wanted new land because the places they were from did not have good farmland. It was hard to grow crops which meant there was a shortage of food as the population got bigger. The Vikings tried to claim land in other countries for themselves.

When the people of Britain first saw the Viking longboats they came down to the shore to welcome them. However, the Vikings fought the local people, stealing from churches and burning buildings to the ground. Over several years almost all of the kingdoms in northern England had fallen to the Vikings. All except for Wessex, which was ruled by Alfred the Great. After years of fighting the Vikings and Alfred made a peace agreement. An imaginary line was drawn to divide England. The Anglo-Saxon lands were to the west and the Viking lands, known as the Danelaw, were roughly to the east.

The most important city in the Danelaw was the city of York, or 'Jorvik' as the Vikings called it. Over 10,000 people lived there and it was an important place to trade goods.



Viking Life

The Vikings were farmers who kept animals and grew crops. They were also skilled crafters who made beautiful metalwork and wooden carvings. Everyone lived together in a large home called a longhouse. These were built from wood or stone and had a thatched or turf roof on top.



Clothes

These were mostly made from wool or linen. They used dyes made from plants and minerals to make red, green, brown, yellow and blue, so their clothes were very colourful.



Eric Bloodaxe (885-954)

Eric Bloodaxe was king of the Viking kingdom of Jorvik between 947-948 and 952-954. He was the last King of York who was driven out in 954. The Vikings in England then agreed to be ruled by the king of England rather than having their own king.

Leif Erikson (c.970-1020)

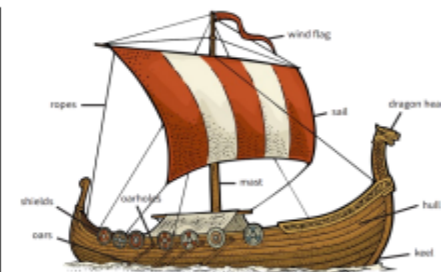
A famous Viking explorer from Iceland who sailed all the way to North America.

King Canute (990-1035)

Canute was the first Viking king of England, ruling from 1016-1035. He won a battle against Edmund II that divided their kingdoms. His sons, Harold Harefoot and then Hardocanute, ruled until 1042.

Harald Hardrada (c.1015-1066)

King of Norway who led Viking armies into England but was defeated at the Battle of Stamford Bridge in York by King Harold II.



What the Vikings left behind

There are many things that we owe to the Vikings. Some of the names of our towns and villages have a little bit of Norse language in them. Do you recognise any names with endings like '-by', as in Ferriby, Skidby or Anlaby which means 'farm' or 'town'. Or maybe 'thorpe' as in Scunthorpe which means 'village'.

There are many remains that can still be seen in York. These help archaeologists build a picture of what life was like.