

What changed after the Romans left?

Very Important Vocabulary:

Anglo-Saxons: The Anglo-Saxons were a group of Germanic tribes who settled in England during the early Middle Ages, forming the foundation of English culture, language, and society.

Scots: The Scots are a Celtic people native to Scotland, with a distinct cultural identity, language, and history, playing a central role in the formation of the Scottish nation.

Migration: Migration is the movement of people or animals from one place to another, often across regions or countries, typically for reasons such as economic opportunity, climate, or survival.

Settlement: Settlement is the process of establishing a community in a new area, where people inhabit and develop land for living, farming, or other activities.

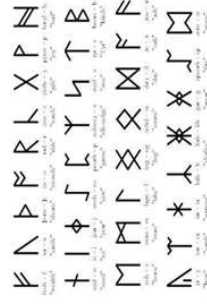
Rule: Rule is a prescribed guideline or principle that governs behaviour, actions, or procedures, often established by an authority or agreed upon within a community or system.

Runes: Runes are characters from an ancient alphabet used by Germanic peoples, including the Vikings and Anglo-Saxons, for writing, divination, and inscriptions, typically carved into wood, stone, or metal.

Anglo-Saxon settlements were characterised by small, scattered villages typically located near water sources like rivers or streams. These settlements often consisted of wooden buildings with thatched roofs, including a large communal hall that served as the social and political centre. Houses were generally simple, rectangular structures built using wattle and daub techniques, with a central hearth for cooking and heating. The layout was organic, reflecting a more pastoral lifestyle, and settlements were often surrounded by fields and pastures.



Anglo-Saxon Britain was ruled through a system of regional kingdoms, each governed by its own king. The primary kingdoms, often referred to as the Heptarchy, included Wessex, Mercia, Northumbria, East Anglia, Essex, Kent, and Sussex. Kings held the highest authority within their realms, leading in war, administering justice, and acting as patrons of the church. Their power was supported by a hierarchy of nobles, including ealdormen and thanes, who managed local affairs, collected taxes, and ensured the king's laws were enforced. The kings relied on the support of these nobles, and their rule was often solidified through councils called witan, which were assemblies of noblemen and church leaders that advised the king and consented to major decisions.



When the Anglo-Saxons first came to Britain, they used their own alphabet called the Futhorc alphabet. The letters were called runes and were all made up of straight lines. Straight lines made it easier to carve the letters onto wood, stone or metal (there was no paper then). Each rune had a name, such as 'ash tree' or 'ice'. Many of the runes look similar to some of the capital letters in our alphabet.

The migration of Anglo-Saxons to Britain following the Roman withdrawal was driven by several factors. For the Anglo-Saxons, who originated from Germanic tribes in regions such as modern-day Germany, Denmark, and the Netherlands, push factors included population pressures, political instability, and climatic changes in their homelands. This prompted groups to seek new lands and resources, and Britain, with its fertile soils and strategic location, presented an attractive destination for settlement and expansion.



We can learn a lot about the Anglo-Saxon period from the artefacts left behind.

