

Mercia The Anglo Saxon Kingdom Of Central England

Recent scholarship, particularly that of Nicholas Higham, proposes that the seventh-century conversion of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms to Christianity occurred because Christianity offered methods for accessing and using power that Anglo-Saxon kings had previously lacked. A nuanced evaluation that looks at more than just political necessity is needed to account for those kingdoms that resisted conversion. Examining the conversion of the kingdom of Mercia from the perspective of its origin and development shows that what concerned Mercia's rulers - especially Penda, Mercia's last pagan king - was not the "overlordship" or sacral kingship identified by Higham and others as the Anglo-Saxon kings' primary concerns. Instead, Penda's resistance to Christianity arose from Mercia's identity as a "border" kingdom and its status among the other kingdoms of England. Penda may have resisted conversion in order to maintain and defend that Mercian identity.

The first book to gather the fragmentary sources on this dynamic 7th century warrior king, who expanded his territory with war craft and politics in a time of great upheaval. The tale is told within the context of Anglo Saxon culture: food, costume, law, housing, finance, slavery and the competing Pagan & Christian religions.

Discusses the isolation inherent in the political and geographical divisions, pagan beliefs and Christianity, the hierarchical society, and the relationships between different social classes, woman's role, the working man, the king's servants and officials, and home life and amusements at all levels of society.

Wulfstan, the Ealdorman of the Hwicce's most trusted advisor, mentor and friend, has a few secrets of his own to tell in this side story to the epic Earls of Mercia Series that returns to the beginning of the reign of King Aethelred II, the child-king who must spend his early years over coming the petty feuds that threaten to rip the Kingdom of England apart. Spanning the years from 978 to 1013, Wulfstan is a companion novella to the Earls of Mercia series.

A sweeping and original history of the Anglo-Saxons by national bestselling author Marc Morris. Sixteen hundred years ago Britain left the Roman Empire and swiftly fell into ruin. Grand cities and luxurious villas were deserted and left to crumble, and civil society collapsed into chaos. Into this violent and unstable world came foreign invaders from across the sea, and established themselves as its new masters. The Anglo-Saxons traces the turbulent history of these people across the next six centuries. It explains how their earliest rulers fought relentlessly against each other for glory and supremacy, and then were almost destroyed by the onslaught of the vikings. It explores how they abandoned their old gods for Christianity, established hundreds of churches and created dazzlingly intricate works of art. It charts the revival of towns and trade, and the origins of a familiar landscape of shires, boroughs and bishoprics. It is a tale of famous figures like King Offa, Alfred the Great and Edward the Confessor, but also features a host of lesser known characters - ambitious queens, revolutionary saints, intolerant monks and grasping nobles. Through their remarkable careers we see how a new society, a new culture and a single unified nation came into being. Drawing on a vast range of original evidence - chronicles, letters, archaeology and artefacts - renowned historian Marc Morris illuminates a period of history that is only dimly understood, separates the truth from the legend, and tells the extraordinary story of how the foundations of England were laid.

If you want to discover the captivating history of Mercia, then check out this book.

The story of the daughter of Alfred the Great, who fought against Viking invaders and ruled a kingdom in the tenth century. Alfred the Great's daughter defied all expectations of a well-bred Saxon princess. The first Saxon woman ever to rule a kingdom, Aethelflaed, Lady of the Mercians, led her army in battle against Viking invaders. She further broke with convention by arranging for her daughter to succeed her on the throne of Mercia. To protect her people and enable her kingdom in the Midlands to prosper, Aethelflaed rebuilt Chester and Gloucester, and built seven entirely new English towns. In so doing she helped shape our world today. This book brings Aethelflaed's world to life, from her childhood in time of war to her remarkable work as ruler of Mercia. The final chapter traces her legend, from medieval paintings to novels and contemporary art, illustrating the impact of a legacy that continues to be felt to this day.

The kings of Wessex understood the significance of the written word, and it is from here where most of the written records come, and these records survived the ages to tell us their stories.

The powerful and innovative King Aethelstan reigned only briefly (924-939), yet his achievements during those eventful fifteen years changed the course of English history. He won spectacular military victories (most notably at Brunanburh), forged unprecedented political connections across Europe, and succeeded in creating the first unified kingdom of the English. To claim for him the title of "first English monarch" is no exaggeration. In this nuanced portrait of Aethelstan, Sarah Foot offers the first full account of the king ever written. She traces his life through the various spheres in which he lived and worked, beginning with the intimate context of his family, then extending outward to his unusual multiethnic royal court, the Church and his kingdom, the wars he conducted, and finally his death and legacy. Foot describes a sophisticated man who was not only a great military leader but also a worthy king. He governed brilliantly, developed creative ways to project his image as a ruler, and devised strategic marriage treaties and gift exchanges to cement alliances with the leading royal and ducal houses of Europe. Aethelstan's legacy, seen in the new light of this masterful biography, is inextricably connected to the very forging of England and early English identity.

The Vikings maintain their grip on our imagination, but their image is too often distorted by myth. It is true that they pillaged, looted, and enslaved. But they also settled peacefully and traveled far from their homelands in swift and sturdy ships to explore. The Age of the Vikings tells the full story of this exciting period in history. Drawing on a wealth of written, visual, and archaeological evidence, Anders Winroth captures the innovation and pure daring of the Vikings without glossing over their destructive heritage. He not only explains the Viking attacks, but also looks at Viking endeavors in commerce, politics, discovery, and colonization, and reveals how Viking arts, literature, and religious thought evolved in ways unequalled in the rest of Europe. The Age of the Vikings sheds new light on the complex society, culture, and legacy of these legendary seafarers.

Presents the Anglo-Saxon period of English history from the fifth century up to the late eleventh century, covering such events as the spread of Christianity, the invasions of the Vikings, the composition of Beowulf, and the Battle of Hastings.

Anglo-Saxon Mercia was a great power in its day, although many aspects of it have been shrouded in myth and mystery. However, recent discoveries, such as the Staffordshire Hoard and the Lichfield Angel, have shone a fascinating light into the world of Mercia and the Mercians. In Warriors, Warlords and Saints: The Anglo-Saxon Kingdom of Mercia, author John Hunt uses this evidence to paint a vivid picture of this political and cultural powerhouse which, at the height of its influence, ruled over much of England, and reached out across Europe into the Middle East. The Mercians themselves were complex. They were a force capable of both great violence and great art, fostering the embryonic English Church and yet fighting bloody wars with the rival kingdoms of Wessex, Northumbria and East Anglia. The story of the Mercians is integral to the story of Anglo-Saxon England, from the end of Roman rule to the Norman invasion. It was a land peopled by

ruthless kings, great ladies, brave warriors and famous saints who lived at a vital and compelling time in English history with Mercia at its heart.

The kingdom best remembered for Offa and his famous dyke was not only a dominant power on the island of Britain in the eighth century, but also a significant player in early medieval European politics and culture. Although the volume focuses on the eighth and ninth centuries when Mercian power was at its height, it also looks back to the origins of the kingdom and forward to the period of Viking settlement and West Saxon reconquest. With state-of-the-art contributions from experts in palaeography, art history, archaeology, numismatics and landscape - as well as from historians - this book establishes a new baseline for Mercian scholarship, by covering the rise and fall of the kingdom, its major institutions, relations with other political entities as well as its visual and material culture.

A major re-examination of an important period in British history

Featuring the latest scientific techniques and findings, this book is the definitive account of the Viking Great Army's journey and how their presence forever changed England. When the Viking Great Army swept through England between 865 and 878 CE, the course of English history was forever changed. The people of the British Isles had become accustomed to raids for silver and prisoners, but 865 CE saw a fundamental shift as the Norsemen stayed through winter and became immersed in the heart of the nation. The Viking army was here to stay. This critical period for English history led to revolutionary changes in the fabric of society, creating the growth of towns and industry, transforming power politics, and ultimately leading to the rise of Alfred the Great and Wessex as the preeminent kingdom of Anglo-Saxon England. Authors Dawn Hadley and Julian Richards, specialists in Anglo-Saxon and Viking Age archaeology, draw on the most up-to-date scientific techniques and excavations, including their recent research at the Great Army's camp at Torksey. Together they unravel the movements of the Great Army across England like a detective story, while piecing together a new picture of the Vikings in unimaginable detail. Hadley and Richards unearth the swords and jewelry the Vikings manufactured, examine how they buried their great warriors, and which everyday objects they discarded. These discoveries revolutionized what is known of the size, complexity, and social make-up of the army. Like all good stories, this one has plenty of heroes and villains, and features a wide array of vivid illustrations, including site views, plans, weapons, and hoards. This exciting volume tells the definitive account of a vital period in Norse and British history and is a must-have for history and archaeology lovers.

This pioneering book re-examines the events of the mid-eighth to the mid-tenth centuries to provide a completely fresh and more balanced account of the period.

Women of Power in Anglo-Saxon England focuses on the lives of remarkable women: women who ruled and schemed, were peace-weavers and warriors. It explores – and restores – their reputations. Many Anglo-Saxon kings are familiar. Æthelred the Unready is one, yet less is written of his wife, who was consort of two kings and championed one of her sons over the others, or his mother who was an anointed queen and powerful regent, but was also accused of witchcraft and regicide. A royal abbess educated five bishops and was instrumental in deciding the date of Easter; another took on the might of Canterbury and Rome and was accused by the monks of fratricide. Anglo-Saxon women were prized for their bloodlines - one had such rich blood that it sparked a war - and one was appointed regent of a foreign country. Royal mothers wielded power; Eadgifu, wife of Edward the Elder, maintained a position of authority during the reigns of both her sons. Æthelflaed, Lady of the Mercians, was a queen in all but name, while few have heard of Queen Seaxburh, who ruled Wessex, or Queen Cynethryth, who issued her own coinage. She, too, was accused of murder, but was also, like many of the royal women, literate and highly-educated. From seventh-century Northumbria to eleventh-century Wessex and making extensive use of primary sources, Women of Power in Anglo-Saxon England examines the lives of individual women in a way that has often been done for the Anglo-Saxon men but not for their wives, sisters, mothers and daughters. It tells their stories: those who ruled and schemed, the peace-weavers and the warrior women, the saints and the sinners. It explores, and restores, their reputations.

The Anglo-Saxon period stretches from the arrival of Germanic groups on British shores in the early 5th century to the Norman Conquest of 1066. During these centuries, the English language was used and written down for the first time, pagan populations were converted to Christianity, and the foundations of the kingdom of England were laid. This richly illustrated new book - which accompanies a landmark British Library exhibition - presents Anglo-Saxon England as the home of a highly sophisticated artistic and political culture, deeply connected with its continental neighbours. Leading specialists in early medieval history, literature and culture engage with the unique, original evidence from which we can piece together the story of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, examining outstanding and beautiful objects such as highlights from the Staffordshire hoard and the Sutton Hoo burial. At the heart of the book is the British Library's outstanding collection of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, the richest source of evidence about Old English language and literature, including Beowulf and other poetry; the Lindisfarne Gospels, one of Britain's greatest artistic and religious treasures; the St Cuthbert Gospel, the earliest intact European book; and historical manuscripts such as Bede's Ecclesiastical History and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. These national treasures are discussed alongside other, internationally important literary and historical manuscripts held in major collections in Britain and Europe. This book, and the exhibition it accompanies, chart a fascinating and dynamic period in early medieval history, and will bring to life our understanding of these formative centuries.

The story of a medieval Boudicca, Alfred the Great's daughter, and her struggle to restore her people and reclaim their land

An exploration of Anglo-Saxon charters, bringing out their complexity and highlighting a range of broad implications.

At the end of the ninth century AD, a large part of what is now England was controlled by the Vikings – heathen warriors from Scandinavia who had been attacking the British Isles for more than a hundred years. Alfred the Great, king of Wessex, was determined to regain the conquered lands but his death in 899 meant that the task passed to his son Edward. In the early 900s, Edward led a great fightback against the Viking armies. He was assisted by the English rulers of Mercia: Lord Æthelred and his wife Æthelflæd (Edward's sister). After her husband's death, Æthelflæd ruled Mercia on her own, leading the army to war and working with her brother to achieve their father's aims. Known to history as the Lady of the Mercians, she earned a reputation as a competent general and was feared by her enemies. She helped to save England from the Vikings and is one of the most famous women of the Dark Ages. This book, published 1100 years after her death, tells her remarkable story.

A wealth of new information about lowland Britain in the Migration Period has been generated during the last 10 years, allowing a new examination to be made of the origins of Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. These essays throw new light on why and how Anglo-Saxon kingship originated and discuss processes of state formation. Distributed in the US by Columbia U. Press. Annotation copyrighted by Book News, Inc., Portland, OR

A study of the women, on all sides, who had major parts to play in the momentous year of 1066.

The extraordinary history of Mercia and its rulers from the seventh century to 1066. Once the supreme Anglo-Saxon kingdom, it was pivotal in the story of England.

Mercia was a dominant power in 8th-century Britain, and a major player in early medieval Europe. As well as focusing on the 8th and 9th centuries when Mercian power was at its height, this study also looks at the origins of the kingdom, and forward to the Viking settlement and West Saxon conquest.

In England in the eighth century, in the midst of the so-called Dark Ages, Offa ruled Mercia, one of the strongest Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. For over 30 years he was the dominant warlord in the territory south of the Humber and the driving force behind the expansion of Mercia's power. During that turbulent period he commanded Mercian armies in their struggle against the neighboring kingdoms of Northumbria and Wessex and against the Welsh tribes. Yet the true story of Offa's long reign and of the rise and fall of Mercia are little known although this is one of the most intriguing episodes in this little-recorded phase of England's past. It is Chris Peers's task in this new study to uncover the facts about Offa and the other Mercian kings and to set them in the context of English history before the coming of the Danes.

Kings and Kingdoms of Early Anglo-Saxon England provides a unique survey of the six major Anglo-Saxon kingdoms - Kent, the East Saxons, the East Angles, Northumbria, Mercia and Wessex - and their royal families, examining the most recent research in this field. Barbara Yorke moves beyond narrative accounts of the various royal houses to explain issues such as the strategies of rule, the reasons for success and failure and the dynamics of change in the office of king. Sixteen genealogical and regnal tables help to elucidate the history of the royal houses.

"The popular TV show may have popularized Ragnar's story but the real facts are not very well known. Discover the truth behind this Viking Warrior and the rich history of the Vikings."--Publisher's description.

This is the true story of Aethelflaed, the 'Lady of the Mercians', daughter of Alfred the Great. She was the only female leader of an Anglo-Saxon kingdom. It is the tale of one family, two kingdoms and a common enemy. Born into the royal house of Wessex at the height of the Viking wars, she is sent to her aunt in Mercia as a foster-child, only to return home when the Vikings overrun Mercia. In Wessex, she witnesses another Viking attack and this compounds her fear of the enemy. She falls in love with a Mercian lord but is heartbroken to be given as bride to the ruler of Mercia to seal the alliance between the two Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. She must learn to subjugate her feelings for her first love, overcome her indifference to her husband and win the hearts of the Mercians who despise her as a foreigner, twice making an attempt on her life. When her husband falls ill and is incapacitated, she has to learn to rule and lead an army in his stead and when he subsequently dies, she must fight to save her adopted Mercia from the Vikings and, ultimately, her own brother.

In these sixteen papers, from a conference held by the Manchester Centre for Anglo-Saxon Studies in 2000, some well-known names approach the reigns of Aethelbald and Offa from a range of perspectives. Archaeology, landscapes, histories and coinage are used to discuss the nature of Mercian kingship; the use of violence; the patronage of nunneries; the legends of Offa and his legacy; the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and works of literature; Mercia and East Anglia; the urban landscape; Offa's Dyke; military obligations. The final three papers focus on the iconography and historical context of 8th-century coins and recent archaeological coin discoveries. Contributors:

A fascinating introduction to the Anglo-Saxons: discover the history behind the facts

A history of Britain in the violent and unruly era between the first Scandinavian raids in 789 and the final expulsion of the Vikings from York in 954. In 865, a great Viking army landed in East Anglia, precipitating a series of wars that would last until the middle of the following century. It was in this time of crisis that the modern kingdoms of Britain were born. In their responses to the Viking threat, these kingdoms forged their identities as hybrid cultures: vibrant and entrepreneurial peoples adapting to instability and opportunity. Traditionally, Alfred the Great is cast as the central player in the story of Viking Age Britain. But Max Adams, while stressing the genius of Alfred as war leader, law-giver, and forger of the English nation, has a more nuanced narrative approach to this conventional version of history. The Britain encountered by the Scandinavians of the ninth and tenth centuries was one of regional diversity and self-conscious cultural identities, depicted in glorious narrative fashion in *The Viking Wars*.

The stories of women, famous, infamous and unknown, who shaped the course of medieval history.

A new chapter in the epic *Earls of Mercia* saga. England: The Second Viking Age To gain what he wanted, what he felt he was owed, he would do anything, even if it meant breaking his oaths to a woman he loved and the mother of his son. Swein, King of Denmark, and briefly England, lies dead, his son ousted from England as King Aethelred returns from his exile in Normandy at the behest of his Witan and the bishops. Aethelred might have relinquished his kingdom to Swein, the Danish conqueror, but with Swein dead, the men have no interest in supporting an untried youth whose name resounds with the murder of one of England's greatest bishop's, a youth known only for his savagery and joy of battle, a true Norse man who utilizes his weapons without thought. But Cnut wants a kingdom and he will do anything to gain one. As England is ravaged by a civil war between the sons of two former kings, Edmund, son of King Aethelred, and Cnut, son of Swein, the men must make personal decisions in the heat of battle as they strive to reclaim their birthrights whilst doing all they can to stay alive. Cnut: the Conqueror, is an *Earls of Mercia* side story (full length novel) to mark the millennial anniversary of Cnut's accession to the English kingdom in 1016.

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