

ABOUT : The Vikings

Background

'The Vikings' is a name given to invaders from Norway, Sweden and Denmark, who started to attack Britain in 790AD. They raided other countries too, including Russia, France, Spain and they even travelled as far as America, though they didn't settle there. The word 'Viking' means 'pirate raid' in the old Norse language. They were known as Danes in Britain, and they were farmers, fisherman and traders, not just warriors.

Why did they come to Britain?

It is believed that the Vikings came due to overcrowding in their homelands, poor soil or because only the first son inherited property, leaving any other sons to look elsewhere. There were easy pickings for these raiders, as Britain was by now, a Christian country and the monasteries and churches were unprotected and yet full of valuable artefacts, as well as tools and livestock. Many of the raids were repelled, but the Vikings kept coming. They settled throughout the Scottish Islands and along the West Coast as well as in East Anglia and a large part of Yorkshire, Humberside, Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire, as well as parts of Ireland and Wales.

Craft Skills, Longboats and Helmets.

Viking boats were called longboats, which were shallow and could travel up river as well as on sea. Warriors wielded axes and wore helmets with spectacle like eye holes, but not twin horns, as often depicted today. They were also accomplished in craft skills, particularly in wood which was often ornately carved.

Language and Religion

Place names ending in .by (Derby), .toft or .thorp all indicate Viking settlements. They also founded York, (Jorvik) which became the second largest city in England, after London. The Vikings were Pagans and believed in different Gods, such as Odin, Thor and Freyr.

THE VIKINGS - *more information...*

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you want to find out even more about the Viking Invasion, then use the links below.

Further information :

http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/vikings/who_were_the_vikings/

<http://www.primaryhomeworkhelp.co.uk/vikings.html>

<http://www.EnglandandEnglishHistory.com/anglo-saxon-history/the-viking-invasions-of-england-793-ad-to-900-ad->

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