

What impact did migrant groups have on the development of early Britain?

TASK: Read the story of the unit, to find out more about what we're going to study in the next nine lessons. Then, answer the questions at the bottom of the page (use a separate piece of paper).

Before the invasion of groups like the Romans, Anglo-Saxons, Vikings and Normans, Britain was inhabited by the **Celts**. These people lived in Britain from around 1,000BC to 43AD (when the Romans invaded). The Celts were actually a number of different groups or 'tribes', including the **Picts** and the **Iceni** people. Lots of people think of the Celts as **violent** and **barbaric** - and the actions of **Boudicca**, an Iceni woman who led a **rebellion** against the invading Romans, probably helped to create this image. However, there is evidence that the Celts were also interested in trade, travel, religion and crafts.

In 43AD, the Romans arrived in Britain - and, as the story of **Boudicca** shows, they were not always welcome. Still, evidence from the grave of **Ivory Bangle Lady** and other Roman burial sites shows us that the Roman presence in Britain was very **diverse**: there were Black men and women from across the Roman Empire living in Britain.

Meanwhile in Scotland, a number of different migrant groups were beginning to have an impact. The **Gaels** (who came from Ireland) helped to convert people in Scotland to Christianity, whilst the **Picts** managed to fight off an invasion from the **Angles** in northern England. Later, the **Vikings** arrived and drove out existing populations. Their influence can still be seen in the place names across Scotland: names ending with 'ster' derive from the Viking word 'setr', which means 'place'.

From around the 400s, **Germanic** people (from modern-day Germany) like the **Angles** and **Saxons** began to arrive in England. The monk **Bede** (an Anglo-Saxon born in around 672) describes the Anglo-Saxon invaders as heroic and unbeatable, although in reality the Anglo-Saxons had to deal with challenges to their authority in England, and they weren't always successful in fighting these off.

One of the main groups to challenge Anglo-Saxon control in England was the **Vikings**. After 793, they began launching **raids** in England, stealing from the country's churches and religious buildings. They soon began to **settle** in larger numbers, and eventually they ruled over a huge part of north-east England called the **Danelaw**. One of the most famous Vikings was **Cnut**, who ruled as King of England from 1016 until 1035. Not only did he rule over England, but he was also King of Denmark and Norway at the same time. Cnut's wife **Emma of Normandy** deserves credit for her role in supporting Cnut's rule over England, as she helped him to make peace with the Anglo-Saxon Church by rebuilding lots of important religious sites.

TASK: Answer the questions below:

- 1: Who lived in Britain before the Romans arrived?
- 2: When did the Romans arrive in Britain?
- 3: How do we know that Roman Britain was diverse?
- 4: What kinds of groups lived in and invaded early Scotland?
- 5: Why does Emma of Normandy deserve more credit?
- 6: List some of the ways in which the different invading groups impacted on life in early Britain.

