

HISTORY 390I: ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND

Winter Semester 2008

Required Readings (*College Store*)

Alcock, Arthur's Britain
Campbell, The Anglo-Saxons
Crossley-Holland, Anglo-Saxon World: An Anthology
Gardner, Grendel
Bede, Ecclesiastical History of the English People

Reserve Readings (*Library*)

Gildas, Ruin of Britain, DA 135.G5413
Patrick, Saint Patrick His Writings, BX 4700, P3 A213
Nennius, British History, DA 135.H513
Ireland, Roman Britain: A Sourcebook, DA 145.I84
Stenton, Anglo-Saxon England, DA 152.574
Salway, Roman Britain, DA 145.574
Anon., Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, DA 150.A6
Whitelock, Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, DA 150.A6
Eddius Stephanus, Life of Bishop Wilfrid, BX 4700, W 5E413
Webb, Age of Bede (Life of Bishop Wilfrid), BX4654.G7A44
Webb, Lives of the Saints (Life of Bishop Wilfrid), BX4659.G7W43

Course Objectives

This seminar study concentrates on Dark Age Britain, from the arrival of the Anglo-Saxon invaders in the fifth century A.D. through the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity during the seventh and eighth centuries. The field of study is a mystery wrapped in an enigma. Ignorance and obscurity offer one advantage to students: the written sources for this period are so few that they may be sampled in a single semester. The course is designed to present typical kinds of early medieval evidence (Saints' Lives, Chronicles, Annals, Charters, Poetry, Genealogy, Archaeology), introduce you to their potentials and difficulties, and then set a series of problems that require you to apply the materials to gain an answer. Attendance is required. Some class periods will be used to conduct history "labs" designed to improve your use of evidence. In these meetings you will work in small teams. The same teams will function as small study groups and meet informally outside of class at least once a week. You will thus have a responsibility to others as well as yourself in preparing the assigned readings and questions.

Course Grades

Short Quizzes and Class Participation	30%
Papers	60%
Instructor's Discretion	10%

Attendance

Attendance is required. You have two unexcused absences without a penalty. A third unexcused absence reduces the course grade to a "C." A fourth unexcused absence results in failure for the course.

Papers

1. Why and how did the Roman's lose Britain?
2. Was Hengest a fictional or a historical character? (Use of poetic sources)
3. What really happened at Whitby? (Critique of Bede)

MEETING SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Jan.	7	Introduction to the Course	
	11	Introduction to the Literary Evidence (some key texts)	(Alcock 1-44; Dumville xerox)
	14	Historicity of Arthur	(Alcock 45-88, 351-364; reread Dumville)
	18	Scots and Picts	(Alcock 253-277)
	25	End of Roman Britain: class exercise	(Alcock 89-121; Campbell 8-27; Bede 21-36; Crossley-Holland 37; xeroxes)
	28	First Paper Due: Why and how did the Romans lose Britain?"	
Feb.	1	Introduction to Archaeology	(Alcock 142-165)
	4	Archaeology of the Britons	(Alcock 166-252)
	8	Archaeology of the Anglo-Saxons	(Alcock 278-307; Campbell 24-25, 27-44, 48-49)
	11	Anglo-Saxon Invasion/ Migration: Archaeology Quiz	(Review Alcock 98-121, 121-132; Review Campbell 23-44)

	15	Anglo-Saxon Society	(Campbell 45-69; Crossley-Holland 24-29; Alcock 314-350)
		Winter Recess	
	25	Beowulf	(Crossley-Holland x-6, 691-54)
	29	Beowulf	(Reread Beowulf)
Mar.	3	Dinner with Monsters	(Gardner, complete)
	7	Invasion of Kent: class exercise	(Xeroxes; Crossley-Holland 37, 8-9)
	10	Hengest	(Xeroxes)
	14	Second Paper Due: “Was Hengest a fictional or a historical character?”	
	17	Conversion / Anglo-Saxon Paganism	(Alcock 132-136, 307-313; review Campbell 45-53; Bede 37-84; xeroxes; Crossley-Holland 178-183)
	21	Conversion: The North	(Bede 84-163; xeroxes)
	24	Whitby	(Campbell 70-100; Bede 163-293)
	28	Tutorials	
	31	Whitby	(Xeroxes)
Apr.	4	Third Paper Due: What really happened at Whitby?”	