

The History of Immigration to Britain: The Romans.



‘The Landing of the Romans in Britain.’

The Romans arrived in Britain in AD43. 12,000 Roman soldiers landed about 6 miles from Dover, England. **Between AD43 and 411** Britain was part of the Roman Empire. During this 400 year period people came from all over the known world and settled in Britain as soldiers, merchants and administrators. Mostly they came from France, Germany and Eastern Europe.

The Romans were to stay for many years. The emperor Claudius sent an army of 40,000 men. Many tribes in Britain realised the incredible power of this army and made peace quickly with the Romans. For many this was an effort to keep hold of their kingdoms in Britain. However, some took on the might of the Roman army and fought against them. These clashes went on for many years and in parts of Britain, the Romans never actually gained full control. Though the Roman army has achieved fame for its effectiveness as a fighting force, the Britons were skilled and ferocious warriors.

The Romans had a huge impact on Britain. For example they built many roads and introduced the Latin language and calendar. (July is named after Julius Caesar, and August after the Emperor Augustus). The Romans also built many baths and aqueducts for Public Health.



Roman Baths—remain an extremely popular tourist site in the City of Bath today.

The History of Immigration to Britain: The Vikings



A painting of a Viking.

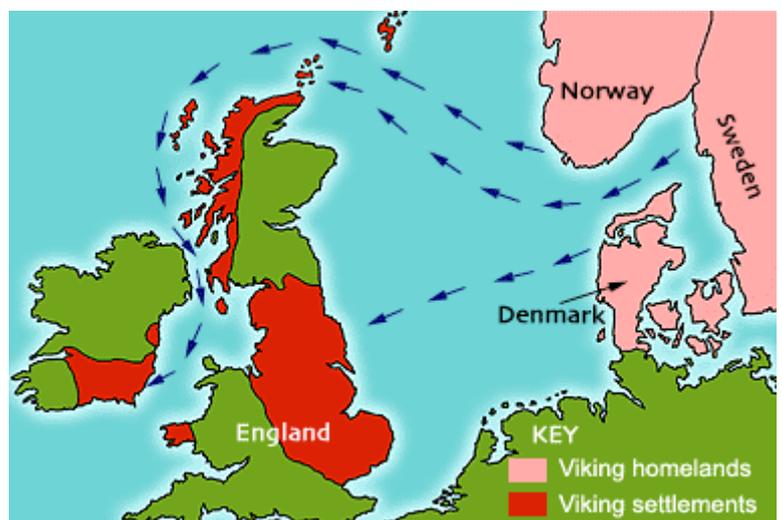
The Vikings were a group of people from Scandinavia (Denmark, Sweden and Norway). **They invaded Britain in AD800 and stayed until 1066.** By the end of the 9th century, there were large settlements of Vikings living in Britain. Early in the 11th century the King of Denmark became the King

In 865 a 'Great Army' of Danish Vikings invaded England. There were fierce battles for several years. In the end the Vikings conquered all of northern, central and eastern England, and seized much of the land for their own farms. This area was called 'The Danelaw'.

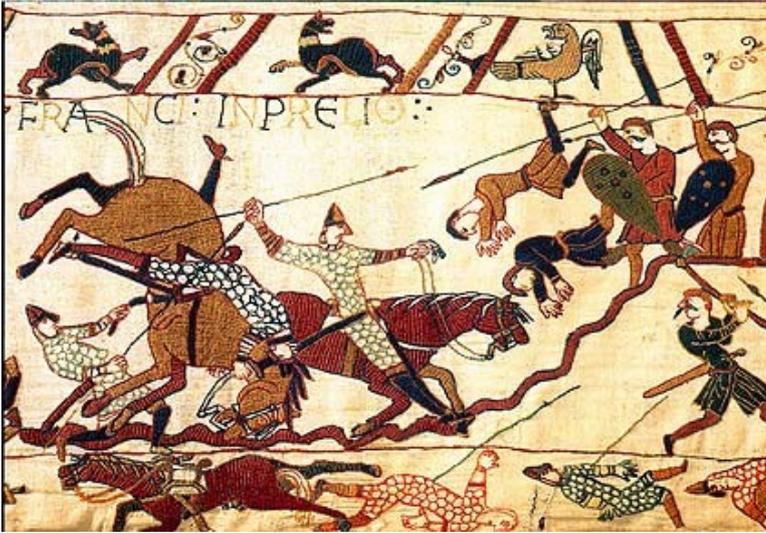
Many Vikings were great travellers and sailed all over Europe and the north Atlantic Ocean in their longships. Some went as fierce pirate raiders: they stole treasure and attacked local people. But most Vikings who sailed overseas were simply searching for better land for their farms.

Some historians argue that the Vikings did not contribute very much in a positive way to Britain. They argue that they just stole the land and treasures.

However others say that their ideas about community were important to Britain's development.



The History of Immigration to Britain: The Normans



A scene from the Bayeux Tapestry shows the Normans invading England in 1066.

In 1066 William of Normandy (Normandy is in Northern France) invaded England as he believed he was the rightful heir (next in line) to the English throne. William and his men won a huge victory known as the Battle of Hastings in 1066. After this William became King William I of England. He was also known as 'William the Conqueror'.

After William's victory thousands of Normans (from Northern France) moved to England to take money and land from the English. King William was extremely successful and gave his men what they wanted. The English had little choice but to let the Normans take what they wanted and do what they liked.

The Normans had a huge impact on English culture. During their time as rulers the main spoken language of England became French. The Normans also introduced many laws and a taxing system that would last for centuries. The Normans also built many castles and towers to protect themselves from attack. Many of these can still be seen in England today. One example is the Tower of London, which William II began building in 1086.



The Tower of London. Originally built by the Normans still stands in London today.

The History of Immigration to Britain: Jewish immigration.



A synagogue in North London today.

Many Jewish people arrived in England after the Norman invasion of 1066. They came from Normandy in France, and one of the first places they settled in was Norwich. Many also settled in London and York. Many came because they knew they could take land from the English who had just been invaded.

Once in England the Jewish people did many jobs. For example, some became money-lenders and some became doctors. Jewish people were very successful and helped to create successful communities.

There are large Jewish communities all over Britain still today. There are many in London. For example, if you look around you will find many Synagogues—places for Jewish worship.

Sadly, the Jewish people also experienced some bad feelings and actions towards them. Many people in England began to treat Jewish people unfairly because they were 'different'. Myths and lies were spread about them. Things got so bad that in 1290 King Edward I forced all Jewish people to leave England and Wales.



A cruel cartoon making fun of Jewish people during the medieval period.

The History of Immigration to Britain: Africans in the 1500s



A painting of John Blanke. The African man who was a trumpeter for Henry VIII.

During the 1500s the Tudors ruled England. Some of England's most famous Kings and Queens were Tudors. For example, King Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth I. It was also during this time that many Africans started to arrive in Britain. Many came because of the Slave Trade.

Once in Britain the Africans, sometimes known as 'Black Moors' did many different things. For example, some were sailors, some were servants, some may have been slaves. Some also worked as musicians for the King or Queen. For example, a man called John Blanke was a trumpeter for King Henry VIII.

When Elizabeth I was queen of England (1558-1603), the employment of Africans in England became even more common. We know that Elizabeth I also had black musicians and a black maidservant. However, later on during her time as queen, she suddenly decided that Africans should not live in England. Elizabeth said: "those kinde of people should be sente forth of the land." In 1596 she sent 89 black people to Spain and Portugal. Historians believe that Elizabeth did this because she partly blamed Africans in England for the problems of poverty. (Lots of people were very poor).



Jewellery from the 1500s showing Queen Elizabeth I and an African worker.

The History of immigration to Britain: Africans in the 17th and 18th Century.



A young African boy working as a servant in England during the 17th century.

During the 17th and 18th centuries Britain was part of the Slave Trade. Africans were taken from Africa to England. Once in England they were put on more boats and taken to the Caribbean islands where they were sold and forced to work as slaves. Some Africans however, were not taken to the Caribbean. Instead they stayed in England and were either sold as slaves, or worked as servants.

Adverts from London newspapers from the 17th century show us that many wealthy people in London bought and sold African slaves or servants. However, the law was unclear about the rights of Africans in England. Many ran away and tried to find freedom. But most became road-sweepers; beggars or thieves. There were no other jobs available.

One man who was forced to work as a slave in England was Ignatius Sancho. Sancho ran away and escaped slavery but later returned to his owners to work as a servant. During this time he was one of several very important Africans in London who campaigned to end slavery. This did not happen in Sancho's lifetime. Slavery was not formally made illegal in Britain until 1833.



Ignatius Sancho.

The History of Immigration to Britain: The Irish



A picture from an English newspaper in 1848. It shows the suffering of the Irish.

During the 1840s there was a huge farming disaster in Ireland. The Irish depended on potatoes for their food, but during the 1840s potatoes failed to grow. This was known as the 'Great Famine'. It is thought that over 1 million Irish people died because of this. There were also over 1 million people who left Ireland to try to save their lives. Many of them moved to England.

By 1861 the Irish-born population of England and Wales had doubled to 602,000 (3% of the total population). However not all those who left Ireland found that they were much better off in England. Some children died of starvation before their families could find jobs and homes.

Most of the Irish were able to find jobs in England. Most settled in cities such as Manchester, Liverpool and London.

Many of the Irish were very happy in England. They did not feel too homesick because so many other Irish people had also moved to England.

Some, however, did experience some problems. Some English people did not like 'different' people living in England. They accused the Irish of being lazy, drunk and criminals.

But the Irish stayed and many more came after them. Because of this there are many large communities of Irish people all over England today.



Men celebrating St Patrick's Day (The Irish National day) in London in 2008.

The History of Immigration to Britain: South Asian



A painting of Indian musicians.

Most South Asians became successful in England, and because of this they encouraged other family members to join them. The 1948 Nationality Act gave them the right to do this. By 1961 over 100,000 people from India and Pakistan had moved to Britain.

When they first moved to Britain some people from South Asia found some British people to be rude towards them. It wasn't always easy to feel welcome in their new home.

However, today there are thousands of South Asian communities living all over Britain. South Asians have brought many things from their home culture which the British now enjoy. These include food, religion, cinema, sport, festivals and the arts.

Most South Asians who live in the UK today arrived *after* India became an independent country in 1947. They came to Britain for jobs because it was harder to find work at home. Many had professional skills, such as doctors, lawyers, businessmen. But most came to work in factories.

Wolf's Rubber Factory in Southall was one of the main places in England where South Asians found work.



A poster advertising Indian dancing in Bradford, England, 2008.

The History of Immigration to Britain: Caribbean in the 20th Century.



A Caribbean family arriving in Britain on the Empire Windrush.

In 1948, the first large group of Caribbean immigrants moved to Britain. They arrived on the Empire Windrush and came for jobs, opportunities, to join the Royal Air Force, and for excitement and adventure.

However, it was between the years 1955 and 1962 that major immigration really occurred. A quarter of a million people from the Caribbean moved to and settled in Britain during these years.

People from the Caribbean moved to Britain for jobs, opportunity and a better life for their families. Most settled in London. At first it was not always easy. Many found it difficult to get good housing. Sadly, some landlords were racist and would charge very high rent for housing. Because of this many Caribbean immigrants were forced to share small houses with many others.

Despite some difficulties at first, Caribbean immigrants soon began to bring their own culture and way of life to London and the other cities they lived in. Caribbean food, art, music, literature, festivals and celebrations have become a major part of life in parts of London. The Notting Hill Carnival, for example, is a huge street festival enjoyed by thousands of Londoners every year.



Enjoying the Caribbean Notting Hill Carnival, London, August 2008.