

Anglo-Saxon Timeline

c.304	First Christian martyred in Britain, a Roman soldier named Alban. Other dates quoted for this event include 209 and 251.
430	Pope Celestine I sends Palladius to be bishop in Ireland.
432	Romano-British Christian, Patrick, continues mission in Ireland
449	According to Bede in 'Ecclesiastical History of the English' (c 731) Angles and Saxons begin to arrive in England
540	Gildas, a British monk, writes 'The Ruin of Britain' about the collapse of the Roman Empire and the arrival of Germanic peoples.
565	Columba founds monastery on Iona, after previously founding those in Derry and Durrow. Missionaries from Iona convert much of Scotland and England. St Columba dies 597.
597	Augustine lands in Kent, sent by pope Gregory I. The king of Kent, Aethelberht, whose wife was a Christian from France, becomes the first Christian Anglo-Saxon king and in 616 grants land in Canterbury to build a church.
627	King Edwin of Northumbria, influenced by Christian wife Aethelburh, was baptised in York by Paulinus, he was the last of the missionaries sent to England by Gregory I. In 633 Edwin was killed when the pagan Penda of Mercia invaded, Paulinus and Aethelburh fled, and the Northumbrian church was temporarily suppressed.
634	Oswald of Northumbria (c. 604 – 642) reunited the kingdoms of Bernicia and Deira under a single ruler and encouraged Aidan and Irish missionaries from Iona, where he had lived in exile. He was defeated, killed and dismembered by Penda at the battle of Maserfield in 642.
635	St. Aidan left Iona in Scotland to build the monastery at Lindisfarne
649	St Hild establishes a double monastery (for monks and for nuns) at Hartlepool which was relocated to Whitby 657.
660	Benedict Biscop and Wilfrid made numerous journeys to Rome to show that the Northumbrians were keen to develop their scholarship
664	The Synod of Whitby was called by Oswy of Northumbria to settle which form of Christianity to promote in his kingdom. The synod opted for Rome and many Irish missionaries returned home.
664	Following the Synod of Whitby Cuthbert (634–687) becomes the first prior of Lindisfarne, he initially became a monk aged 18, at the abbey founded at Melrose by Aidan.

668	Theodore, a Greek Christian from Tarsus, consecrated as Archbishop of Canterbury, previously the first English appointment Wighard had travelled to Rome, possibly for his consecration, but he died there. Although elderly Theodore held office for 21 years and provided much stability for the early church.
674	Benedict Biscop founded Monkwearmouth helped by King Oswy and the Pope.
678	Wilfred was expelled from the see of York, at that time stretching from the Humber to beyond Edinburgh. Wilfred had become bishop of Northumbria shortly after the synod of Whitby in 644.
681	Benedict Biscop founded Jarrow and received from the Pope a library of books.
690	English missionary, Willibrord, begins the conversion of the pagan Frisians. He is made bishop of the new see of Utrecht in the 690s.
698	Eadfrith becomes bishop of Lindisfarne, dying in 721. He is considered to be the scribe and illuminator of the Lindisfarne Gospels, created in honour of St Cuthbert c. 715.
722	English missionary Wynfirth (a.k.a. Boniface), educated in Exeter and Nursling, becomes bishop in Germany.
726	King Ine of the West Saxons retires, after ruling since 688, to travel to Rome to die. His predecessor, Caedwalla, had also travelled to Rome to be baptised and to die there.
731	Bede finishes his Ecclesiastical History of the British People in Northumbria.
787	Two legates from pope Hadrian I, bishop George of Ostia and bishop Theophylact of Todi, visit all of the English kingdoms and hold reforming councils.
789	First recorded Viking attack was on Portland in Dorset. After this Viking raids increased in intensity, up to the assembly of the 'Great Army' around 856, bent on conquest of the whole country.
793	Lindisfarne attacked by Vikings; a contemporary record survives from Alcuin of York.
795	Vikings attack the monastery on Iona, again in 802 and in 806 when 68 monks were killed. Survivors fled to the monastery at Kells, taking with them the manuscript that became known as the book of Kells.
829	Egbert, king of the West Saxons, conquers Mercia and forces Northumbrian submission.

867	The Viking Great Army attacks Northumbria, killing both rivals for the throne, Osberht and Aelle. Many people were slaughtered, especially in the taking of York, which became the Viking capital in England (Jorvik)
869	Edmund, king of the East Angles is defeated and then beheaded by the Vikings. Later, his head and body are reunited and buried in the royal residence, later known as Bury St Edmunds.
874	Vikings conquer Mercia, king Burhred is driven overseas and dies in Rome.
875	Monks of Lindisfarne leave Holy Island to escape to a safer place. After 7 years of searching, they settle at Chester le Street, carrying with them the coffin and remains of St Cuthbert
878	The Vikings overrun Wessex and Alfred takes refuge in the Somerset marshes of Athelney. Later he re-assembles an army and defeats the Viking king Guthrum, who is baptised. Alfred and Guthrum come to a settlement that divides the country, recognising the Danelaw.
899	Death of Alfred the Great, he is succeeded by Edgar the Elder who begins the conquest of the rest of England from the Vikings
924	Athelstan of Wessex begins reign as king of England.
937	Athelstan's army of West Saxons and Mercians defeats a large combined force of Vikings from Ireland and Scots at the battle of Brunanburh, cementing his rule over the whole of England.
939	Athelstan dies in Gloucester and is buried at Malmesbury Abbey.
954	Eric Bloodaxe, last Viking king in England, is forced out of York, driven out of Northumbria and ultimately killed as he fled North.
960	Dunstan (909 – 988) becomes archbishop of Canterbury. He was an English monk who became abbot of Glastonbury and Bishop of Worcester, then London. He brought the Benedictine Rule to the English Monasteries and insisted that monks should remain celibate and also the nuns.
c.970	Additions made to the Lindisfarne Gospel manuscript by Aldred, provost of Chester-le-Street.
995	The Chester le Street community moved to the Durham peninsula where they built a wooden church and some simple domestic buildings quickly followed by a stone church and other essential buildings (c1002). By placing the monastery high above the settlement below (near the River Wear) the monks felt safe from Viking attention.

1013	Swein Forkbeard invades and forces Aethelred the Unready into exile after taking Danelaw and then advancing to London. Aethelred flees to Normandy and England comes under Danish control.
1016	Swein's son, Canute becomes king of England, in 1019 he is also king of Denmark.
1018	Malcolm II of Scotland defeats the Northumbrians at the battle of Carham and annexes Lothian as part of Scotland.
1020	The Durham monks settled and enlarged the monastery, strengthening their boundaries and enlarging the Abbey, now being called 'the White Church'.
1035	King Cnut died at Shaftesbury and was buried in the 'Old Minster' at Winchester after a reign of 19 years.
1042	Edward the Confessor becomes king of England, with strong ties to continental, especially Norman, influences.
1050	King Edward began to rebuild Westminster Abbey which was consecrated in 1065. The new Abbey was modelled on the abbey church of Saint Jumieges and had both English and French workmen on the job. It was larger than any known contemporary Norman church.
1066	On 6 th January Edward the Confessor dies and Harold Godwinson is crowned on the same day, beginning a decisive year for English history.
1066-7	William the Conqueror, after the battle of Hastings, quickly marched to Canterbury and received the submission of Winchester (where the treasury was kept) then moved towards London ravaging Surrey, Hampshire, Berkshire, and Oxfordshire. William was crowned in Westminster Abbey on Christmas Day; Anglo Saxon England was no more. All through 1067 the Normans continued to plunder and kill male survivors of the battle. William started immediately to build, castles, stealing or burning as he met opposition. Castles were built in Lincoln, York, Nottingham and Exeter, wherever there was resistance, it would be crushed.
1068	King William gave Robert earldom over Northumbria but the local people went into Durham and killed both Robert and his 900 soldiers. Edgar the Atheling tried to broker a truce in York but the King would have none of it, he slaughtered a large group of Northumbrians and then sacked York Minster as a matter of retribution. This resulted in the Harrowing of the North which lasted for 10-15 years devastating the local people throughout York-shire and many other settlements, within a seventy-mile radius of York, under the auspices of William's brother, Odo of Bayeux.