

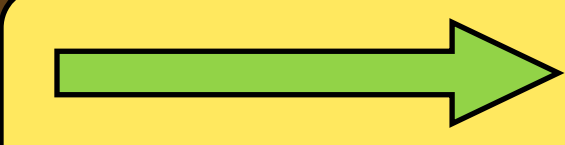
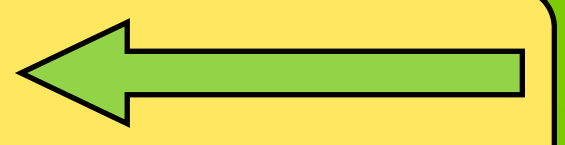
# Vikings vs Anglo-Saxons

## Learning Objective:

To find out about the Viking settlement of Britain and how this affected the Anglo-Saxons.



**What can you remember about the first Viking invasion of England?**



**The Vikings first attacked England in 793. They raided the monastery at Lindisfarne on Holy Island, off the coast of Northumberland. The Anglo-Saxons were horrified that they had attacked a holy order since it was mutually understood between all the seven kingdoms that monasteries were holy places that were to be left alone, even during times of war.**

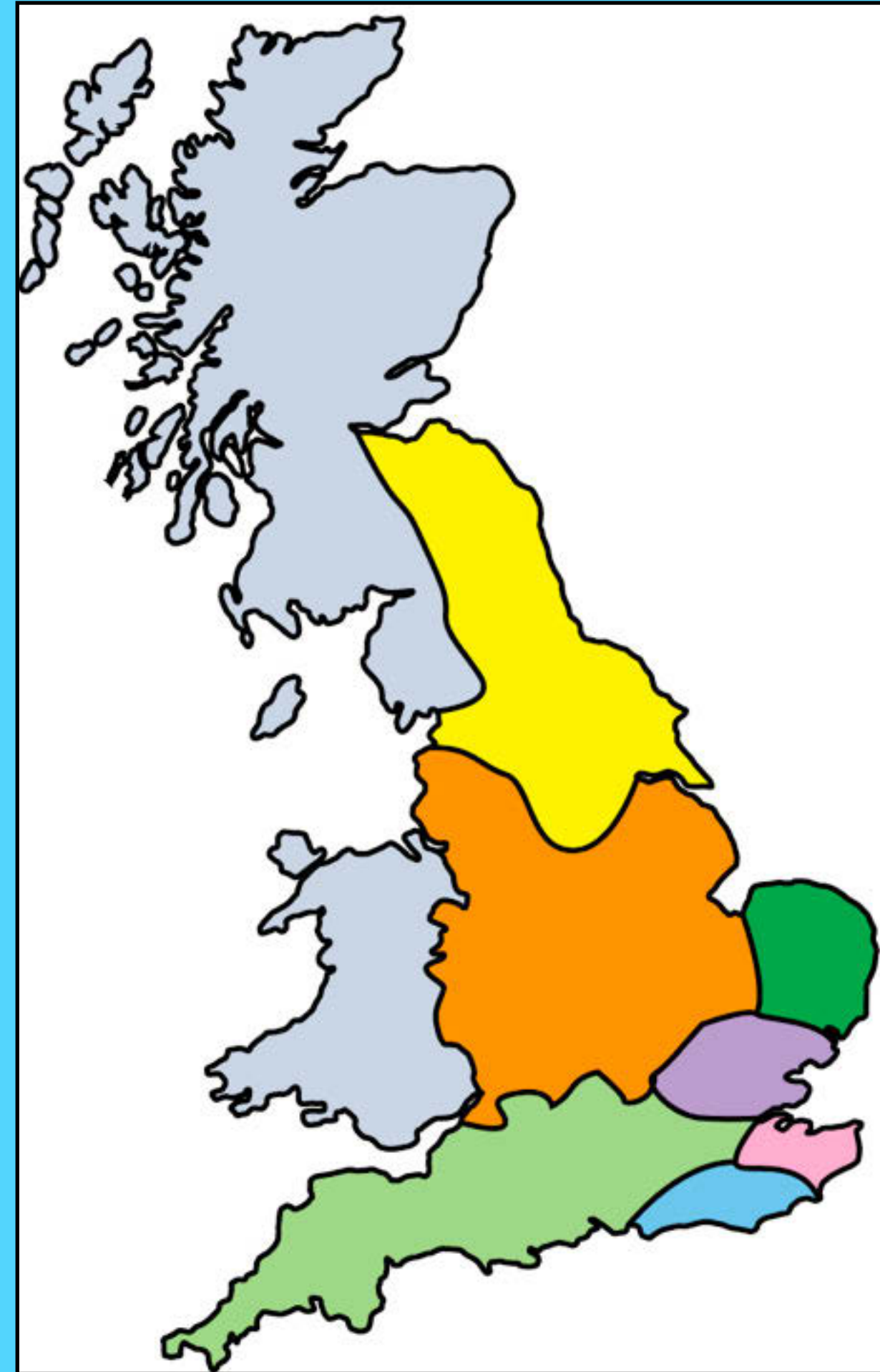


**The Christian monks of Lindisfarne were holy men who devoted their lives to God. They stood for peace. They were totally unprepared for a Viking attack and didn't stand a chance against the experienced Viking warriors.**



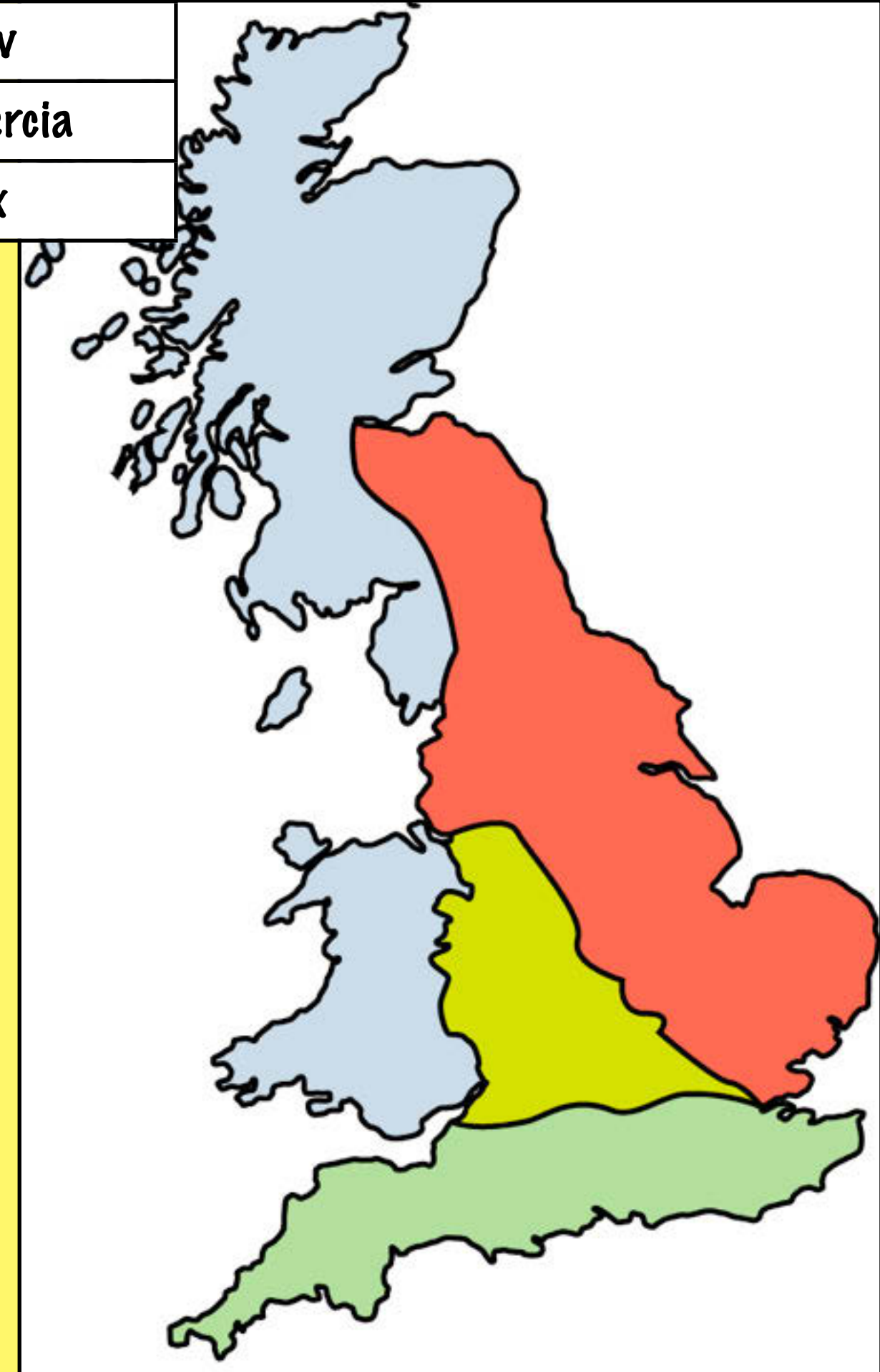
# Map of England 793

Yellow	Northumberland
Orange	Mercia
Green	East Anglia
Purple	Essex
Pink	Kent
Light Blue	Sussex
Light Green	Wessex

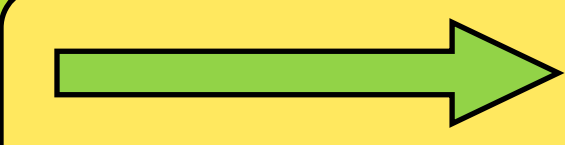
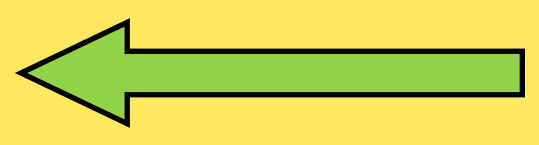


# Map of England 886

Red	Danelaw
Yellow-Green	English Mercia
Light Green	Wessex



Have a look at these two maps. How has England changed between 793 and 886? What might have happened?



**In the years following the first Viking invasion, the Vikings continued to raid Britain. As well as looting towns and monasteries, the Vikings also started to colonise Britain. This meant they started to live in Britain. The first places to be colonised by the Vikings were the islands off Scotland, but they soon began to move towards England.**

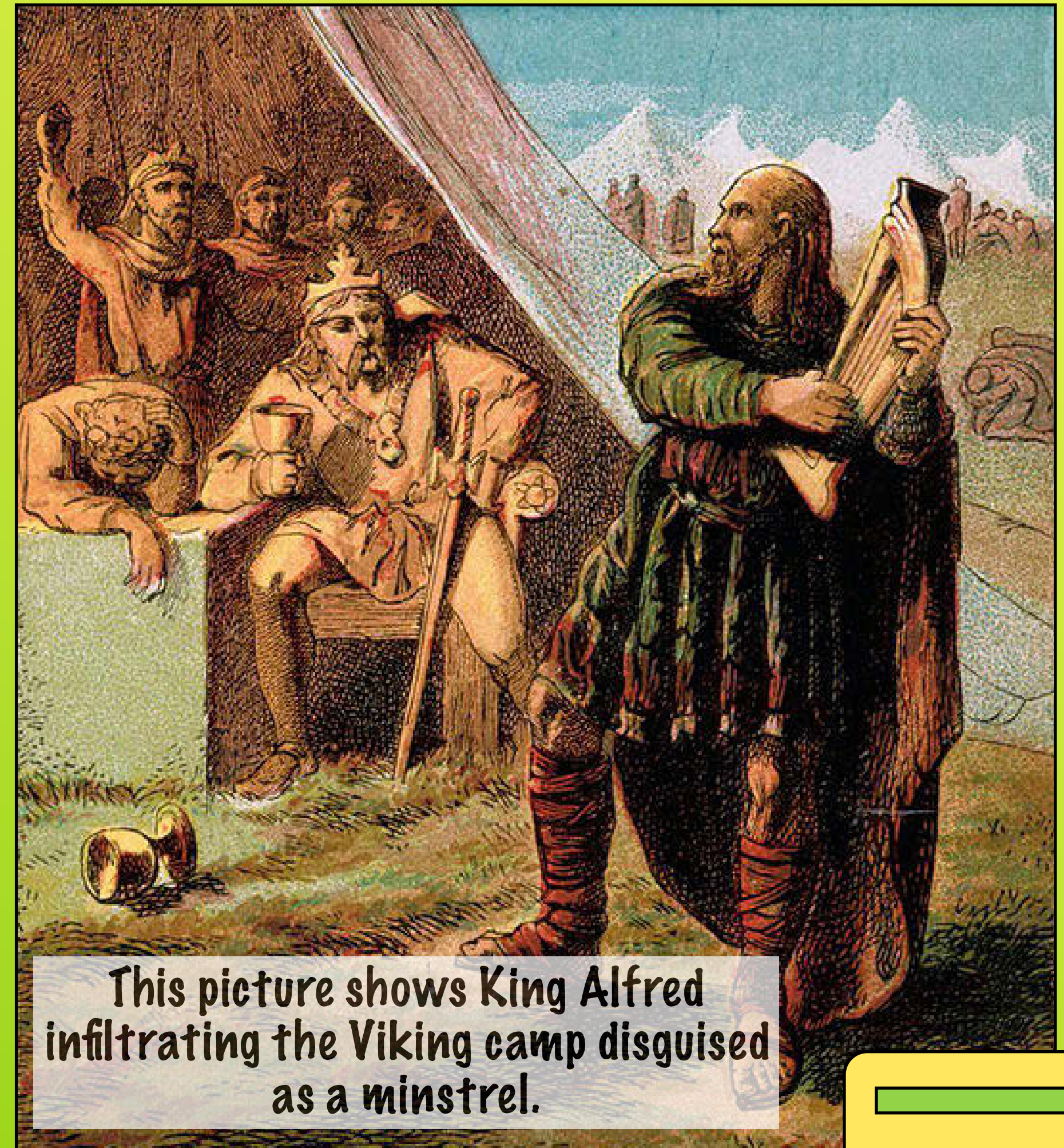


**In 865, the Danish 'Grand Army' marched into England and over the next few years conquered East Anglia and Northumberland. They set up a base in York. They also attacked and seized Nottingham in Mercia. The kings of the seven kingdoms tried to unite against the Vikings but were unable to defeat them.**



The Vikings turned their attention to the most powerful of the kingdom Wessex and the Wessex king, Ethelred. In 871 there were many battles between the Vikings and the army of King Ethelred. However, Ethelred died after becoming ill. His children were still very young so his brother, Alfred, became king.

About a month after he became king, Alfred suffered a humiliating defeat in the heart of Wessex, his own kingdom. By then, the men were war-weary and many had died from diseases or had simply deserted. Alfred decided he would try to buy peace instead of fighting for it.



This picture shows King Alfred infiltrating the Viking camp disguised as a minstrel.

Alfred paid the Vikings 'Danegeld'. This payment was essentially a bribe. He paid the Vikings to keep out of Wessex. For five years the Vikings stayed out of Wessex in exchange for the 'Danegeld' payment. In the meantime, they focused on Mercia and began to colonise more and more areas of the northeast. However, the peace between the Vikings and Wessex was not to last.

Let's read an extract from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle to see if we can find out what happened next...

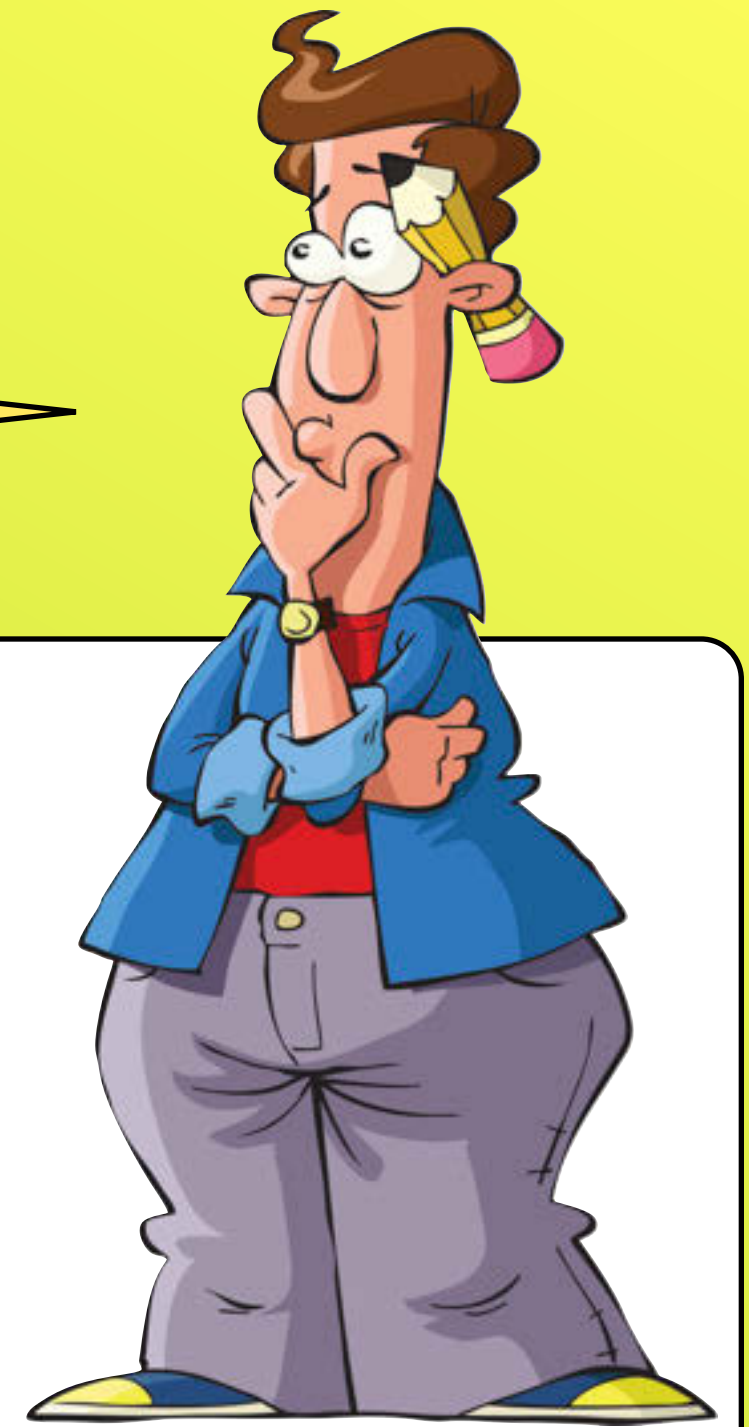


**A.D. 878.** This year about mid-winter, after twelfth-night, the Danish army stole out to Chippenham, and rode over the land of the West-Saxons; where they settled, and drove many of the people over sea; and of the rest the greatest part they rode down, and subdued to their will; -- **ALL BUT ALFRED THE KING.** He, with a little band, uneasily sought the woods and fastnesses of the moors. And in the winter of this same year the brother of Ingwar and Healfden landed in Wessex, in Devonshire, with three and twenty ships, and there was he slain, and eight hundred men with him, and forty of his army. There also was taken the war-flag, which they called the RAVEN. In the Easter of this year King Alfred with his little force raised a work at Athelney; from which he assailed the army, assisted by that part of Somersetshire which was nighest to it. Then, in the seventh week after Easter, he rode to Brixton by the eastern side of Selwood; and there came out to meet him all the people of Somersetshire, and Wiltshire, and that part of Hampshire which is on this side of the sea; and they rejoiced to see him. Then within one night he went from this retreat to Hey; and within one night after he proceeded to Heddington; and there fought with all the army, and put them to flight, riding after them as far as the fortress, where he remained a fortnight. Then the army gave him hostages with many oaths, that they would go out of his kingdom. They told him also, that their king would receive baptism. And they acted accordingly; for in the course of three weeks after, King Guthrum, attended by some thirty of the worthiest men that were in the army, came to him at Aller, which is near Athelney, and there the king became his sponsor in baptism; and his crism-leasing was at Wedmor. He was there twelve nights with the king, who honoured him and his attendants with many presents.





# What did we find out?



- ❖ **The Vikings attacked Wessex**
- ❖ **King Alfred and his army marched to stop them**
- ❖ **There was a battle and Alfred was victorious**
- ❖ **The Viking army promised they would stay out of Wessex**
- ❖ **The Vikings agreed that their king, Guthrum, would be baptised and convert to Christianity**
- ❖ **The christening was held at Wedmore and Alfred and Guthrum spent twelve days together in peace**



**In 886, a peace treaty called the Treaty of Wedmore was signed. Guthrum and the Vikings agreed to leave Wessex alone. By now, both sides were eager for peace. It was agreed that the Vikings would occupy the northeast of England which then became known as the Danelaw. Part of the agreement was that the Vikings would convert to Christianity.**










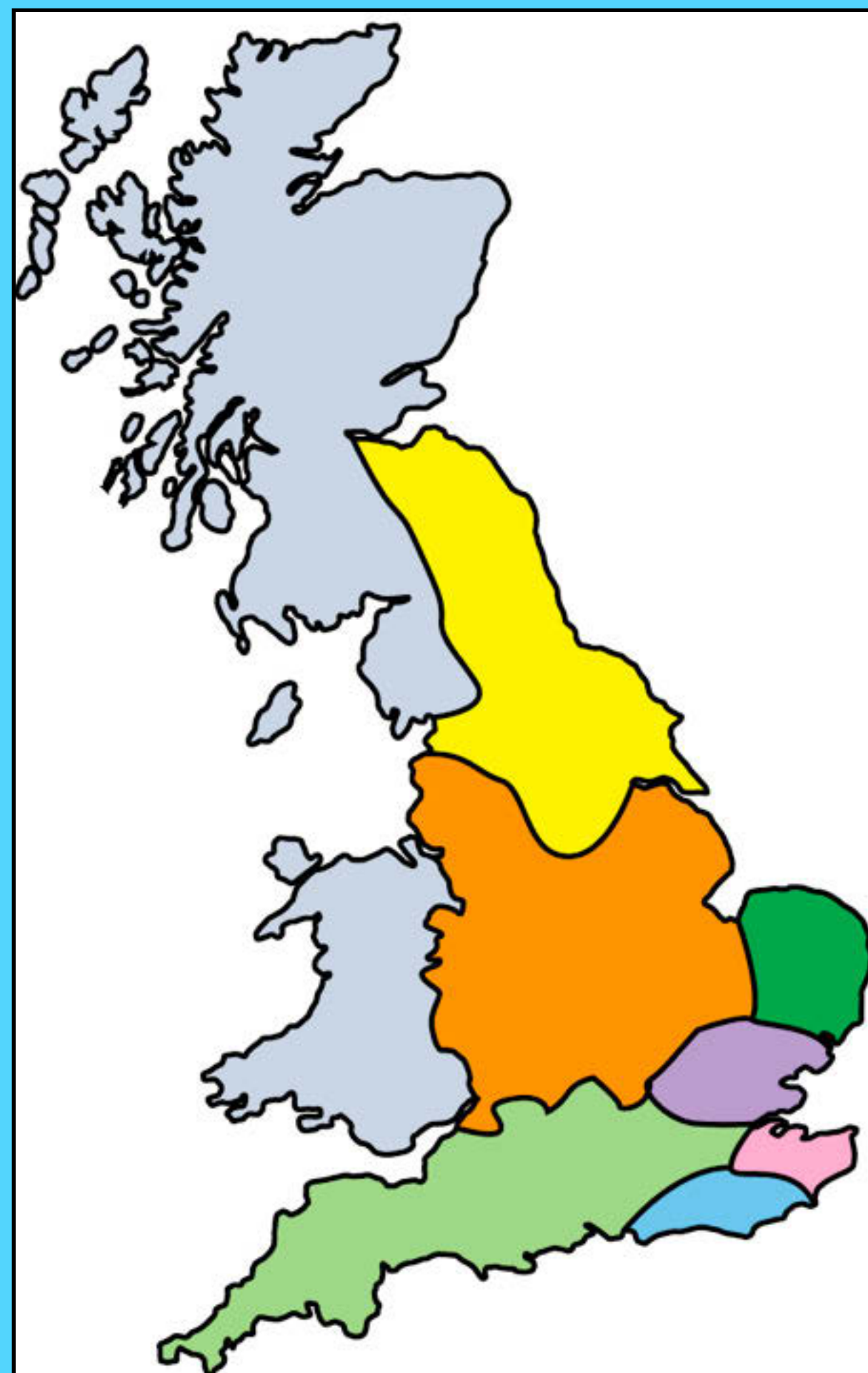
**After the treaty, it was agreed that Alfred would become king over all the lands in England apart from the Danelaw. It was after this that England started becoming more united. By the late 880s, Alfred was being called 'King of the English'. Alfred was also the first person to use the name 'Angelcynn' or 'English people'.**

Let's have another look at these maps. Can you explain now how and why England changed?






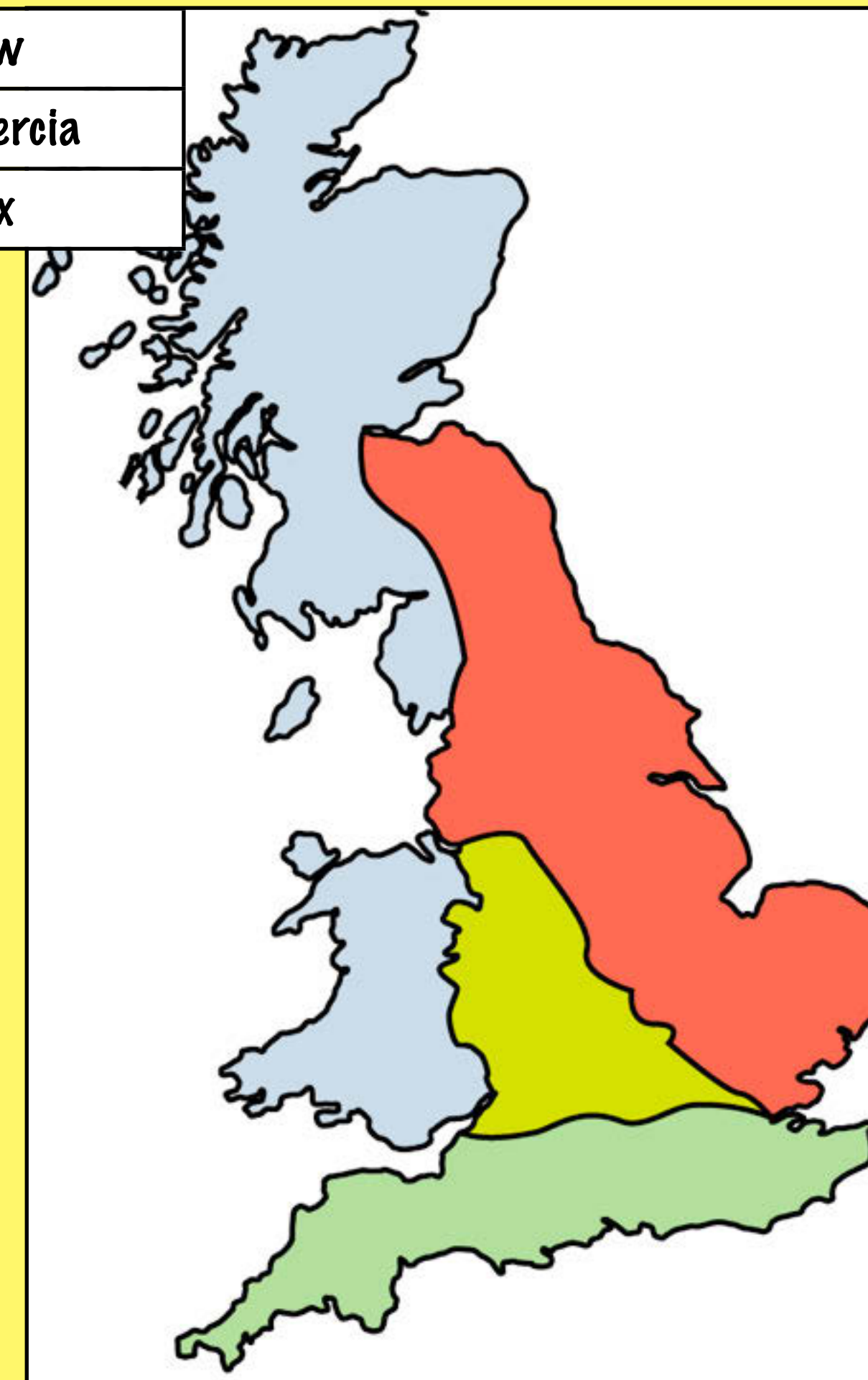
**Map of England 793**

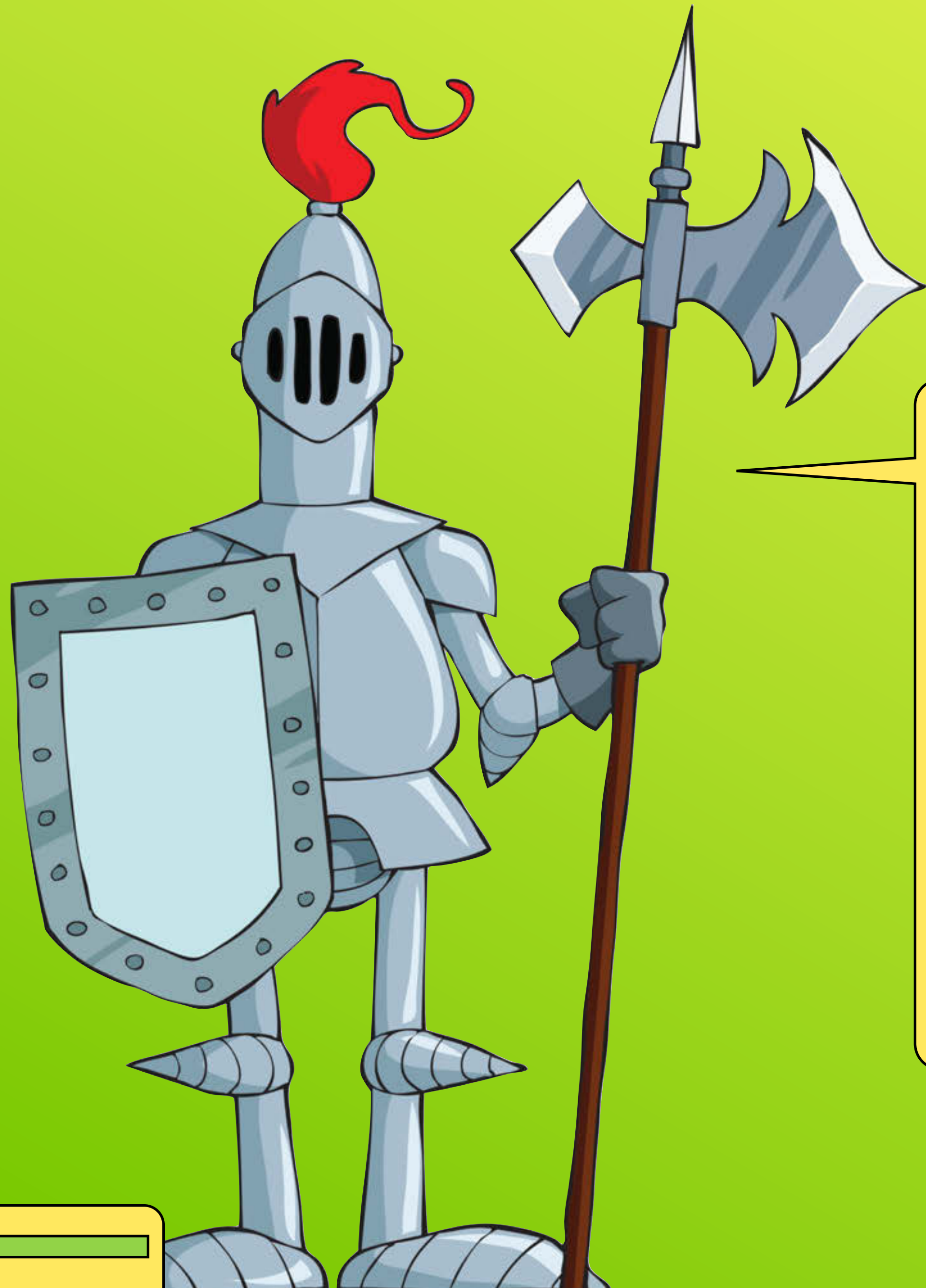
	Northumberland
	Mercia
	East Anglia
	Essex
	Kent
	Sussex
	Wessex



**Map of England 886**

	Danelaw
	English Mercia
	Wessex





**The Vikings first started colonising England in 865. It took them just thirteen years to occupy a third of Britain. Why do you think they were able to do this?**

