

An information report about Alfred the Great

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1. General information:

Alfred the Great was a King who defended the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of southern England against the Vikings. He lived from 849 to 899 and ruled from 871 to his death. After his brother's death in April 871, he succeeded to the throne of Wessex.

2. Anglo-Saxon kingdom:

In the 9th century when Alfred the Great lived, the Anglo-Saxon kingdom went through an important development. The development was the rise of the Kingdom of Wessex. At this time Alfred the Great did not just form the Kingdom of the Anglo-Saxons, he also influenced the architecture or the language of Wessex. Old English was the language spoken under Alfred the Great. The legal reform and the military structure were also modified by Alfred the Great. The 9th century was the age of the Viking as well. During the reign of Alfred the Great, the Anglo-Saxon Kingdom was attacked by Vikings. After he had defeated the Vikings, he reoccupied the city of London.

"Now as soon as that first passage had been copied, he was eager to read it at once and to translate it into English and thereupon to instruct any others." – Asser

This source, published by Asser who wrote a biography of Alfred the Great, shows that Alfred was a learned man who was eager to gain knowledge to instruct any others. Perhaps, he was inspired by the example of Charles the Great who revived learning and founded schools as well.

3. Victory and Restoration of London

From 871 to 872, Alfred the Great fled because the Vikings occupied London and other parts of England. In the year 878, people from Egbert's Stone east of Selwood answered Alfred's summons to war. Alfred's actions succeeded and he won a decisive victory in the Battle of Ethandun near Wiltshire. The Vikings left East Anglia and Alfred the Great reoccupied London. The restoration of London was between 880 and 886. Alfred made the city habitable again. Furthermore, he added fortifications in addition to the Roman walls.



4. Influence of Alfred the Great

Alfred not only brought peace to the Anglo-Saxon kingdom, he also influenced culture. People described him as a learned man who encouraged education and improved the legal system. Moreover, he founded monasteries. That's why the Catholics regarded him as a saint.

"When judged in purely military and political terms, Alfred's achievement was impressive; when judged also in cultural terms, it was truly exceptional. It is no wonder that he has come to be known as King Alfred the Great"

Finally one can say that Alfred's achievement was important for the development of England. That's why he is an important personality in the history of England.