THE ANGLO-SAXONS
449-1066

THE GERMANIC INVASIONS

- Britons were conquered by the Romans and became part of the Roman Empire- left unattended and invaded

- Many Germanic invaders:

    - Jutes

    - Angles

    - Saxons

- Britons fought back, maybe led by King Arthur

THE GERMANIC INVASIONS

- Germanic tribes brought a common language- "Old English" or "Anglo-Saxon"

- Anglo-Saxon period lasted until around 1066- Battle of Hastings

  - Norman invasion and conquer- "two kings of England"

- England divided into several kingdoms

- Kingdoms had to unify to fight of the Danes (Vikings)

ANGLO-SAXON CIVILIZATION

- Anglo-Saxon kingdoms shared common heroic ideals and traditions

- "Comitatus"- loyalty between a leader and the tribe

- "Wyrd"- Life is short and fate determines where you will end up

- Fame and glory were the goals as a result of courage and human will

ANGLO-SAXON CIVILIZATION

- Family unit —> clan —> tribe —> kingdom

- Democratic - held lots of meetings to talk about what they thought and felt

- Held beauty and intelligence in high regard- European rulers went to England to find teachers

- Language- weekdays come from Anglo-Saxon gods

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CHRISTIANITY

- Christianity came to Britain early and spread by missionaries from mainland Europe

- St. Augustine established a monastery at Canterbury- new religious leaders

- Synod (meeting of religious leaders)- united English church with Roman Christianity

- Formed "intellectual and commercial" connections between kingdoms and to continental Europe

- What comes to Britain along with this new religion?

ANGLO-SAXON LITERATURE

- Anglo-Saxon poetry is an oral art form- poems not written down until much later

- Poems were sung and accompanied by a harp

- Professional poet= scop- historian of the tribe

- Needed to find ways to remember it- beat and alliteration

ANGLO-SAXON LITERATURE

- Two traditions of Anglo-Saxon poetry

  - Heroic tradition- tells a story of a hero or leader

  - Elegiac tradition- mourns the passing of better times

- Christian beliefs get tacked onto the pagan ones

- Riddles were popular

- "In media res"- poem begins in the middle of the action

ANGLO-SAXON LITERATURE

- The Venerable Bede (673-735)- most famous historian of the time

- Alfred the Great- king of England, protected England from Danes

  - promoted the use of written English

  - started first historical record in English

  - made connections with far reaches of the world

  - formulated a code of law
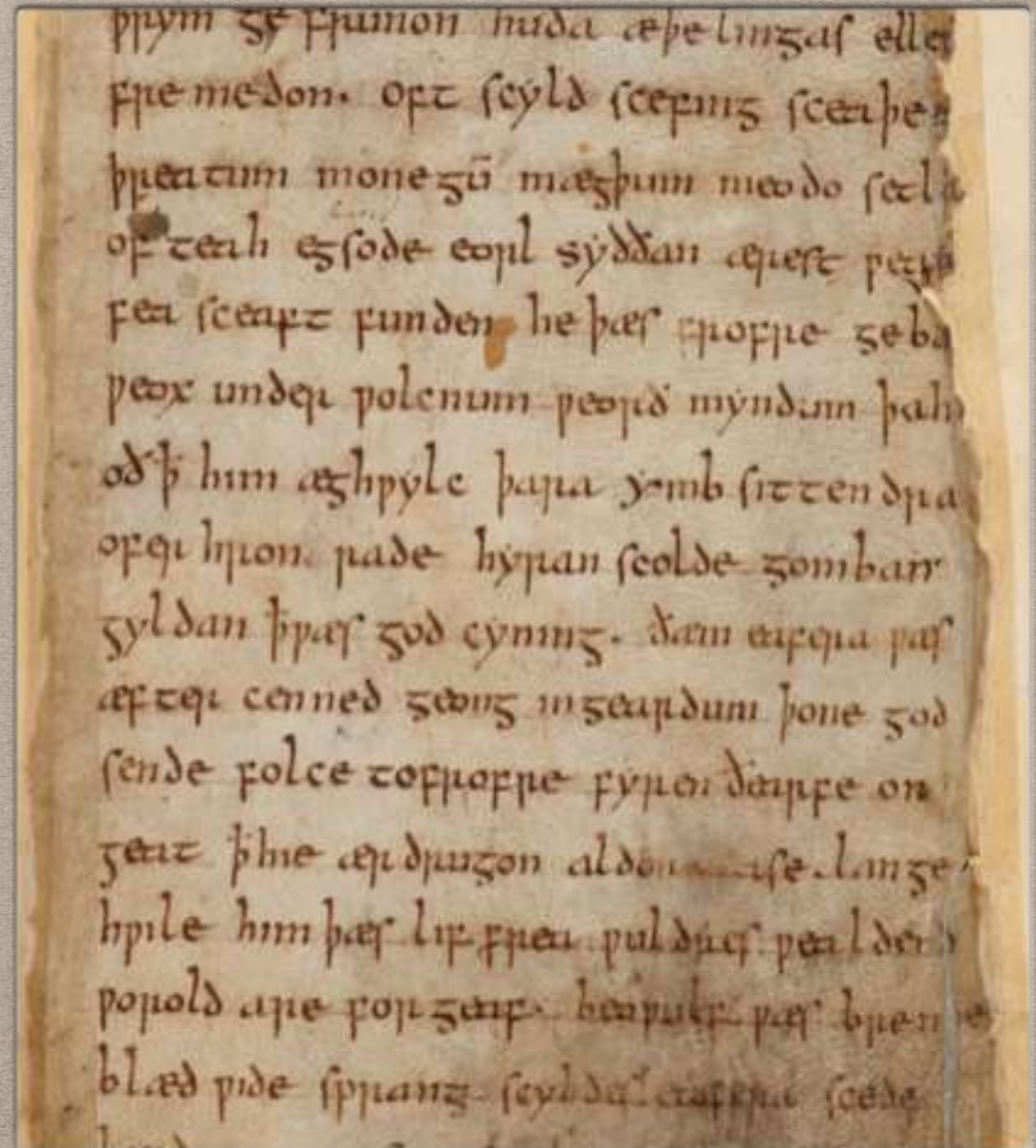
  - founded first English public schools

BEOWULF

- Written by an unknown Christian author

- Cited as the beginning of English literature

- Probably composed some time in the 8th century- only surviving manuscript comes from about 1000

- Geats vs. Danes

BEOWULF

- About a hero who becomes a leader of his people

- Traditional diction

- Translated by Burton Raffel (another translation by Seamus Heaney)

- Tone=somber

LITERARY FEATURES OF "BEOWULF"

- Meter

- Caesura

- Alliteration

- Kennings

KENNINGS

Apples are...

TEACHER CANDY