

Alfred the Great

Alfred the Great was one of the most important kings in English history. He was born in 849 AD and became King of Wessex, a kingdom in the south of England, when he was just 21 years old. During his reign, England was under constant threat from the Vikings — fierce and fearless raiders from Scandinavia, which includes countries like Denmark and Norway.

The Vikings attacked towns and villages, stealing treasure and frightening people. At first, things were very difficult for Alfred, and he even had to hide in the marshes of Somerset to avoid being captured. But he never gave up. He gathered his soldiers, fought back bravely, and eventually defeated the Viking leader Guthrum at the Battle of Edington in 878 AD.

After the battle, Alfred made a peace agreement with Guthrum. He also built a series of well-defended towns called burhs to protect his kingdom. Alfred believed strongly in education and had many important books translated into English so that more people could read them. He even set up schools.

Alfred died in 899 AD and is remembered as a wise, brave and caring ruler. He is the only English king ever to be given the title "the Great."



Questions

1. In what year was Alfred born?
2. What was the name of Alfred's kingdom?
3. How old was Alfred when he became king?
4. What were the Vikings, and where did they come from?
5. Where did Alfred hide to avoid being captured?
6. What was the name of the Viking leader Alfred defeated?
7. What was the name of the battle where Alfred defeated the Vikings?
8. What were the defended towns Alfred built called?
9. What did Alfred do to help more people read?
10. Why do you think Alfred hid in the marshes instead of fighting straightaway?

