

The Vikings homeland was **Scandinavia**, now known as Norway, Sweden and Denmark.

The Vikings were warriors, skilled craftsmen and boat-builders, adventurous explorers, fantastic farmers and wide-ranging traders.

From Scandinavia, they travelled great distances, mainly by sea, as far as North America to

the west,

Russia to the

east, Lapland

to the north



Farm work was perilous and gruel-

*They lived in villages in longhouses.*

Vikings began exploring Europe from around 789CE and eventually raided and settled in different areas across Europe. This is because they were in need of land or resources.

Over time, many Vikings chose to stay in Britain rather than return to Scandinavia after the raids.

# VICIOUS VIKINGS

## Lindisfarne

Lindisfarne is an island in Northumbria, England. In 635, King Oswald gave an Irish monk named Aidan the island of Lindisfarne so that he could build a new monastery. During the 670s, Cuthbert joined the monks at Lindisfarne and became the monastery's greatest monk.

In 687, Cuthbert died and in a story 11 years later it was said that his tomb was opened and his body was still like the day he was buried. The monks believed this showed purity and saintliness.

Miracles began to be reported and many people travelled on a pilgrimage to see St Cuthbert's shrine.



## Guthrum and Alfred

Guthrum and his followers battled with Alfred. Alfred paid Guthrum a danegeld but Guthrum ignored Alfred's agreement and killed, raided and spent the danegeld. Guthrum and Alfred fought at Ethandun and Guthrum signed another treaty.

Alfred retreated to the marshes of Somerset and celebrated the Twelfth Night. Guthrum stealthily attacked the celebration. Alfred mustered his men for a return. Guthrum retreated and Alfred besieged him. The Treaty of Wedmore was signed. Guthrum was baptised and became Æthelstan.

Possible Europeans who were the first to discover the Americas:

- ◇ St Brendan
- ◇ Leif Erikson
- ◇ Bjarni Herjólfsson

## Norse Gods

Odin	Chief god
Thor	God of thunder, fertility, the sky and law
Loki	God of mischief and chaos
Freya	Goddess of love, beauty, fertility and war
Frey	God of fertility (Freya's brother)

## King Cnut

A Christian who ruled England, Denmark and Norway. Cnut's time is remembered as wise and successful but this could be biased. There is a famous story where he walked out to sea and held up his hands. He told the tide to stop coming in.

