

0. ANGLO-SAXON WARS - Story Preface

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Even before Rome left Britannia, Anglo-Saxons tried to invade Britain. The Romans defended against such invasions by building forts along Britain's coast. Portchester, located in southern England, was one of those forts. This illustration, from the BBC's Primary History, depicts how Portchester likely appeared during Roman times.

As Britons tried to resist their erstwhile defenders, the country was in chaos. The *Gallic Chronicles of 511* record a desperate situation (scroll down 75%) in about 440 A.D.

*The Britains, lost to the Romans, yield to the power of the Saxons.*

By the following year (441), the *Gallic Chronicles of 452* describe capitulation:

*The Britains, which to this time had suffered from various disasters and misfortunes, are reduced to the power of the Saxons.*

Gildas paints an ever-worsening scene by 455 (or thereabouts):

*Then they [the Saxons] again complained that their monthly allowance was insufficient, purposely giving a false colour to individual incidents, and swore that they would break their agreement and plunder the whole island unless more lavish payments were heaped on them. There was no delay.*

As the situation grew more and more hopeless for the Britons, Gildas relates actions of total despair by approximately 458:

*So a number of the wretched survivors were caught in the mountains and butchered wholesale. Others, their spirit broken by hunger, went to surrender to the enemy; they were fated to be slaves forever, if indeed they were not killed straight away, the highest boon. Others made for lands beyond the sea. Others held out, though not without fear, in their own land, trusting their lives with constant foreboding to the high hills, steep, menacing and fortified, to the densest forest and to the cliffs of the sea coast.*

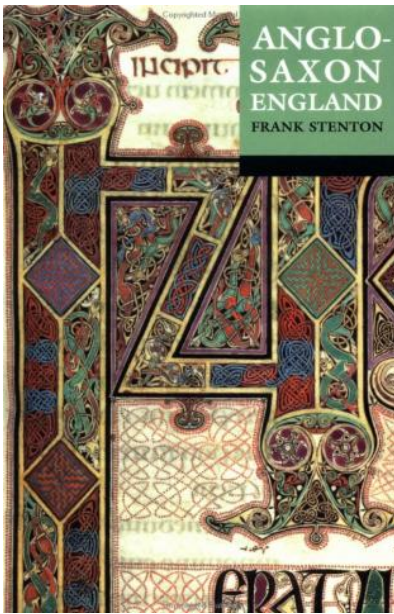
Yet...there was hope for the Britons...at least for a time. First with a remaining Roman named Ambrosius Aurelianus, then with a leader named Artorius (Arthur).

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/ANGLO-SAXON-WARS-King-Arthur)

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Anglo-Saxon England - by Frank Stenton

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