



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Wednesday 6 October 2021 – Morning

A Level History A

Y301/01 The Early Anglo-Saxons c.400–800

Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes



You must have:

- the OCR 12-page Answer Booklet

INSTRUCTIONS

- Use black ink.
- Write your answer to each question in the Answer Booklet. The question numbers must be clearly shown.
- Fill in the boxes on the front of the Answer Booklet.
- Answer the question in Section A and **any two** questions in Section B.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is **80**.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets [].
- Quality of extended response will be assessed in questions marked with an asterisk (*).
- This document has **4** pages.

ADVICE

- Read each question carefully before you start your answer.

SECTION A

Read the two passages and then answer Question 1.

- 1 Evaluate the interpretations in **both** of the two passages and explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of the nature of lordship in Anglo-Saxon England. [30]

Passage A

The organisation of the countryside into *regiones* had fundamental political consequences. Aggressive lords of regions, with a little luck and the help of a couple of dozen blood-thirsty friends, could gain control over large blocks of land, not by conquering them a single hamlet at a time, but rather by simply grabbing hold of their central places. With a single blow, a man could thus gain an entire territory, its population and its dues and services. This made victors, after a couple of successes, little superpowers within their neighbourhoods with three or four times the resources of their rivals. This brought about an even greater likelihood of future victory. Thus the power and riches of a few, so much a part of Bede's depiction of late sixth- and early seventh-century England and so evident in the costly high-status burials of the period, need not lie at the end of two and a half centuries of slow, steady evolution. Instead, they are more likely the outcome of a hard-fought generation or two.

Other actions, however, beyond raw aggression, would have led to the heavy concentration of resources into a few lucky hands. Neighbouring households, closely allied by common interests and regular interaction, by strategic marriages, may have grown to think of themselves as a single kindred and worked together from that point. Men putting together smaller or poorer territories, or entering into the game a generation late, may have been flattered when asked to join a more successful enterprise as administrators, deputies or muscle. The consolidation of resources, populations and territories was founded on cooperation as well as conflict.

Adapted from: R. Fleming, Britain After Rome, published in 2011.

Passage B

The most admired virtue of an early Anglo-Saxon king was generosity to his followers. It was probably accepted throughout the north that every member of a king's household might expect to receive an endowment in land from his lord. In England, in the very earliest times, the endowment may often have consisted of a stretch of newly conquered land, on which the recipient and his household could be maintained by the food-rents and services of subject Britons and dependent Englishmen. But the gifts which are actually on record have a different character. They were not in the strictest sense grants of land. Each of these gifts empowered the man who had received it to exact within a defined area the dues and services which the local peasantry had formerly rendered to the king himself. A king's loyal follower thus received the food-rent which the land of his endowment had previously yielded to the king – the 'tribute formerly due to kings', as Offa describes it in a charter to a Kentish follower. The public duty of repairing the buildings on royal estates was replaced with work upon the new lord's house and farmstead; he, instead of the king, had the benefit of the ancient cartage services,* and the entertainment of his servants represented that once given to the king's fowlers and huntsmen. The new lord took fines imposed for the wrongdoings of peasants. A peasant may well have reflected that, despite a new local source of power, in bad times a lord in the village would be a better protector than a distant king.

**Cartage* – the movement by carts of the king's goods: a traditional service owed to the king by certain landholders.

Adapted from: F. Stenton, Anglo-Saxon England, published in 1971.

3

SECTION B

Answer **TWO** of the following three questions.

- 2*** 'The early Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were disunited throughout the period from c.400 to 800.' How far do you agree? [25]
- 3*** 'Between c.400 and 800 the most important turning point in the development of the Christian Church in Britain and Ireland was the Synod of Whitby (664).' How far do you agree? [25]
- 4*** Assess the impact of the Anglo-Saxons upon culture in Britain and Ireland between c.400 and 800. [25]

END OF QUESTION PAPER

OCR

Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Copyright Information

OCR is committed to seeking permission to reproduce all third-party content that it uses in its assessment materials. OCR has attempted to identify and contact all copyright holders whose work is used in this paper. To avoid the issue of disclosure of answer-related information to candidates, all copyright acknowledgements are reproduced in the OCR Copyright Acknowledgements Booklet. This is produced for each series of examinations and is freely available to download from our public website (www.ocr.org.uk) after the live examination series.

If OCR has unwittingly failed to correctly acknowledge or clear any third-party content in this assessment material, OCR will be happy to correct its mistake at the earliest possible opportunity.

For queries or further information please contact The OCR Copyright Team, The Triangle Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA.

OCR is part of the Cambridge Assessment Group; Cambridge Assessment is the brand name of University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), which is itself a department of the University of Cambridge.