

# Alfred The Great Assers Life Of King Alfred And Other Contemporary Sources Classics

The unlikely king who saved England. Down swept the Vikings from the frigid North. Across the English coastlands and countryside they raided, torched, murdered, and destroyed all in their path. Farmers, monks, and soldiers all fell bloody under the Viking sword, hammer, and axe. Then, when the hour was most desperate, came an unlikely hero. King Alfred rallied the battered and bedraggled kingdoms of Britain and after decades of plotting, praying, and persisting, finally triumphed over the invaders. Alfred's victory reverberates to this day: He sparked a literary renaissance, restructured Britain's roadways, revised the legal codes, and revived Christian learning and worship. It was Alfred's accomplishments that laid the groundwork for Britian's later glories and triumphs in literature, liturgy, and liberty. "Ben Merkle tells the sort of mythic adventure story that stirs the imagination and races the heart?and all the more so knowing that it is altogether true!" ?George Grant, author of *The Last Crusader* and *The Blood of the Moon*

Traces the life and accomplishments of the ninth-century British king

Hugh Kearney's classic account of the history of the British Isles from pre-Roman times to the present is distinguished by its treatment of English history as part of a wider 'history of four nations'. Not only focusing on England, it attempts to deal with the histories of Wales, Ireland and Scotland in their own terms, whilst recognising that they too have political, religious and cultural divides. This new edition endeavours to recognise and examine contemporary multi-ethnic Britain and

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its implications for 'four-nations' history, making it an invaluable case-study for European nationhood of the past and present. Thoroughly updated throughout to take into account recent social, political and cultural changes within Britain and examine the rise of multi-ethnic Britain, this revised edition also contains a completely new set of illustrations, including 16 maps.

The ninth-century English king Alfred the Great is perhaps best known for his military victories against the Vikings, but Asser's portrait of him also shows Alfred as a man of great personal character. In both his public and private life, Alfred sought to be just, pious, and merciful-and was the founder of Christian education in the English-speaking world. Join Asser for a glimpse into Alfred's tumultuous and inspiring reign!

About the Series: The Lochinvar Guides to Classic Works of Nonfiction are a valuable addition to your history or literature curriculum. Written from a Christian worldview and integrating Mortimer Adler's Great Ideas, each Lochinvar Guide is packed with background information, discussion questions, research assignments, and essay ideas. The structured questions guide students easily from the grammar stage to the logic and rhetoric stage, developing critical thinking skills. Pick up a Lochinvar Guide and experience the thrill of historical narratives.

Alfred the Great (848 - 899) was a king in West Saxon and then the first king of the Anglo-Saxons, king of Britain. He spent his early career fighting Viking invasions, until in 878 he won a decisive victory against them, and then personally oversaw the conversion of the Viking leader to Christianity. He left a legacy for being gracious, rational, peaceable, and generally working to improve the overall quality of people's lives. This biography was composed by Asser (d. 909), a Welsh monk and later bishop. This large print version (14 point size) of Asser's work is from, "Asser's life of King Alfred,

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translated by Albert Stanburrough Cook (1853-1927); Boston, New York: Ginn and company 1906." The original footnotes are preserved, and surviving illustrations of King Alfred on coins and in artwork are included.

The reign of 'thelred 'the Unready' (978-1016) is known to us mainly from a series of annals in the Anglo-Saxon Chrolicle, written at or after its close and accordingly conveying an impression of gathering doom as Viking armies ravaged the country and eventually, under the leadership of Swein Forkbeard and Cnut, brought about its conquest. Dr Keynes is here concerned to establish what light the royal diplomas issued in King 'thelred's name throw on this unhappy and notorious period. He first considers the general issues that bear directly on the value of royal diplomas as historical evidence for all periods of Anglo-Saxon history, discussing the circumstances under which these documents have been preserved, the techniques available for their criticism, and the arrangements that existed for their production. He then demonstrates how a detailed analysis of 'thelred's diplomas can transform our understanding of this troubled reign. On a practical level they provide invaluable evidence on the operation of royal government, and on a personal level they afford a remarkable insight into the relations between the king and his councillors, suggesting a picture of political manoeuvring and court intrigue which compensates for the chronicler's emphasis on the struggle against the marauding Vikings. By placing the familiar account of incessant warfare in the context of these domestic affairs it becomes possible for the first time to see the reign in its true perspective.

In 865, a great Viking army landed in East Anglia, precipitating a series of wars that would last until the middle of the following century. It was in this time of crisis that the modern kingdoms of Britain were born. In

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their responses to the Viking threat, these kingdoms forged their identities as hybrid cultures: vibrant and entrepreneurial peoples adapting to instability and opportunity. Traditionally, Ælfred the Great is cast as the central player in the story of Viking Age Britain. But Max Adams, while stressing the genius of Ælfred as war leader, law-giver, and forger of the English nation, has a more nuanced and variegated narrative to relate. The Britain encountered by the Scandinavians of the ninth and tenth centuries was one of regional diversity and self-conscious cultural identities: of Picts, Dál Riata and Strathclyde Britons; of Bernicians and Deirans, East Anglians, Mercians and West Saxons.

One of the most important sources of information on Alfred the Great (King of Wessex from 871 to 899) is Asser's "The Life of King Alfred." Asser was a Welsh monk who accepted a position in the court of King Alfred around 886. His work is both a translation of part of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (for the years 851-887), as well as eyewitness accounts and opinions of Alfred's kingship. Although the only copy of the manuscript was destroyed by fire in 1731, transcriptions and material from other writers ensured that the work was not lost forever. As a result, we have a revealing account of battles with Viking invaders, medieval English culture, consolidation of the seven kingdoms, and Alfred's efforts to revive religion and learning. Compared to the romantic and idealized royalty of Arthurian Legend, The Life of King Alfred gives a true, detailed portrayal of the actual kings of the Middle Ages.

This biography of Alfred the Great, king of the West

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Saxons (871-899), combines a sensitive reading of the primary sources with a careful evaluation of the most recent scholarly research on the history and archaeology of ninth-century England. Alfred emerges from the pages of this biography as a great warlord, an effective and inventive ruler, and a passionate scholar whose piety and intellectual curiosity led him to sponsor a cultural and spiritual renaissance. Alfred's victories on the battlefield and his sweeping administrative innovations not only preserved his native Wessex from viking conquest, but began the process of political consolidation that would culminate in the creation of the kingdom of England. Alfred the Great: War, Kingship and Culture in Anglo-Saxon England strips away the varnish of later interpretations to recover the historical Alfred pragmatic, generous, brutal, pious, scholarly within the context of his own age.

Presents the Anglo-Saxon period of English history from the fifth century up to the late eleventh century, covering such events as the spread of Christianity, the invasions of the Vikings, the composition of Beowulf, and the Battle of Hastings.

The essential primary-source history of the British Isles through the early Middle Ages, fully annotated and illustrated with paintings and engravings. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is one of the most important sets of historical documents concerning the history of the British Isles. These vital accounts, thought to be first set down in the late ninth century by a scribe in Wessex, illuminate events through the Dark Ages that would otherwise be lost to history. Without this chronicle, it would be

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impossible to write the history of the English from the Romans to the Norman Conquest. The compilers of this chronicle included contemporary events they themselves witnessed, as well as those recorded by earlier annalists whose work is in many cases preserved nowhere else. With nine known versions of the Chronicle in existence, this translated edition presents a conflation of passages from different versions. Relying heavily on Rev. James Ingram's 1828 translation, the footnotes provided are all those of Rev. Ingram. This edition also includes the complete Parker Manuscript.

Draws on original documents, archaeology, and other sources to share the stories of Jacquetta, Duchess of Bedford; Elizabeth Woodville, the wife of Edward IV; and Margaret Beaufort, the founder of the Tudor dynasty. The bestselling author of *The King in the North* turns his attention to the obscure era of British history known as 'the age of Arthur'. Somewhere in the shadow time between the departure of the Roman legions in the early fifth century and the arrival in Kent of Augustine's Christian mission at the end of the sixth, the kingdoms of Early Medieval Britain were formed. But by whom? And out of what? In *The First Kingdom*, Max Adams scrutinizes the narrative of this period handed down to us by later historians and chroniclers. Stripping away the more lurid claims made for a warrior-hero named Arthur, he synthesises the research carried out over the last forty years to tease out the strands of reality from the myth. He reveals how archaeology has delivered evidence of a diverse and dynamic response to Britain's new-found independence, of material and intellectual

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trade between the Atlantic islands and the rest of Europe, and of the environmental context of those centuries. A skilfully wrought and intellectually probing investigation of the most mysterious epoch in our history, *The First Kingdom* presents an image of post-Roman Britain whose resolution is high enough to show the emergence of distinct political structures in the sixth century – polities that survive long enough to be embedded in the medieval landscape, recorded in the lines of river, road and watershed, and memorialised in place names. PRAISE FOR MAX ADAMS: 'A triumph. The most gripping portrait of seventh-century Britain that I have read ... A Game of Thrones in the Dark Ages' *Tom Holland in The Times on The King in the North* 'Gripping, hugely enjoyable and deeply scholarly' *History Today, Books of the Year, on The King in the North* 'Brilliantly combines history and archaeological research ... A compelling read' *The Lady on Ælfred's Britain*

This selection of writings from the sixth and seventh century AD provides a powerful insight into the early history of the Christian Church in England and Ireland. From Bede's *Life of Cuthbert and Lives of the Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow* to the anonymous *Voyage of St Brendan* - a whimsical mixture of fact and fantasy that describes a quest for paradise on earth - these are vivid accounts of the profoundly spiritual and passionately heroic lives of Christian pioneers and saints. Both vital religious writings and a revealing insight into the reality of life at a formative time for the church, they describe an era of heroism and bitter conflict, and the rapid spread of the Christian faith.

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The first continuous national history of any western people in their own language, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* traces the history of early England from the migration of the Saxon war-lords, through Roman Britain, the onslaught of the Vikings, the Norman Conquest and on through the reign of Stephen (1135-54). The text survives, in whole or in part, in eight separate manuscripts, each reflecting the concerns of the regions and institutions in which they were maintained. These texts have a similar core, but each has considerable local variations and its own intricate textual history. Michael J. Swanton's translation of these histories is the most complete and faithful reading ever published. Extensive notes draw on the latest evidence of paleographers, archaeologists and textual and social historians to place these annals in the context of current knowledge. Fully indexed and complemented by maps and genealogical tables, this edition allows ready access to one of the prime sources of English national culture. The introduction provides all the information a first-time reader could need, cutting an easy route through often complicated matters. Also includes nine maps. Horspool sees Alfred as inextricably linked to the legends and stories that surround him, and rather than attempting to separate the myth from the reality, he explores how both came together to provide a historical figure that was all things to all men. In an era darkened by the terror of Viking invasions, England's first and greatest king was a beacon of light. "This is the story of England's birth. A great story, beautifully told." (Bernard Cornwell, author of *The Pale*



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Horseman) Alfred was England's first king, and his rule spanned troubled times. As his shores sat under constant threat from Viking marauders, his life was similarly imperiled by conspiracies in his own court. He was an extraordinary character—a soldier, scholar, and statesman like no other in English history?and out of adversity he forged a new kind of nation. Justin Pollard's enthralling account strips back centuries of myth to reveal the individual behind the legend. He offers a radical new interpretation of what inspired Alfred to create England and how it has colored the nation's history to the present day. Justin Pollard, a Cambridge-educated archaeologist, is a documentary filmmaker and the author of *Seven Ages of Britain*.

Crossley-Holland--the widely acclaimed translator of Old English texts--introduces the Anglo-Saxons through their chronicles, laws, letters, charters, and poetry, with many of the greatest surviving poems printed in their entirety. A handsome, large-format paperback edition set in elegant type with generous margins. The venerable Bede (AD 672-735) was not the first historian of the British Isles, but he was the first to list and master his documentary and oral sources. For a man who travelled little, he showed a great depth of understanding about the outside world, informing himself by commissioning others to copy documents in the Papal Regista and various episcopal and monastic archives. A history of Britain in the violent and unruly era between the first Scandinavian raids in 789 and the final expulsion of the Vikings from York in 954. In 865, a great Viking army landed in East Anglia, precipitating a series of wars that would last until the middle of the following century. It was in this time of crisis that the modern kingdoms of Britain were born. In their

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responses to the Viking threat, these kingdoms forged their identities as hybrid cultures: vibrant and entrepreneurial peoples adapting to instability and opportunity. Traditionally, Alfred the Great is cast as the central player in the story of Viking Age Britain. But Max Adams, while stressing the genius of Alfred as war leader, law-giver, and forger of the English nation, has a more nuanced narrative approach to this conventional version of history. The Britain encountered by the Scandinavians of the ninth and tenth centuries was one of regional diversity and self-conscious cultural identities, depicted in glorious narrative fashion in *The Viking Wars*. Seminar paper from the year 2008 in the subject English - Pedagogy, Didactics, Literature Studies, grade: 1,0, University of Göttingen, language: English, abstract: King Alfred, who ruled the kingdom of Wessex from 871 to 899, is the only English King, who came to be known as the Great. Today he is remembered and glorified as a great Christian king, who defeated the Vikings, who kept invading and plundering England in the second half of the 9th century. But apart from great military and political achievements, Alfred also stands for educational reform and he is credited for having encouraged the advancement of the Old English language in what was to become the Anglo-Saxon kingdom. What scholars know about Alfred and his actions today is mostly derived from four different sources. Most important is a biography of King Alfred called *The Life of King Alfred*. This text was written in 893 by Asser, a contemporary of the king. In this biography Asser states that he used to be a monk at St David's, a monastery in Dyfed in Wales, until King Alfred asked him to serve as one of his scholars and advisors. The biography deals with King Alfred's life starting with his birth, but ending abruptly, leaving out the king's actions in the 890s and his death. When dealing with Asser's biography of King Alfred, it is important to keep in mind that the text is not an

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objective and accurate work, but rather a “celebration of Alfred’s greatness for the edification of multiple audiences” . The second source is the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which was written by one or more anonymous authors. This text deals with the political and military developments during Alfred’s reign and it contains some information about the king himself. The origin of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and its role within the Alfredian translation program will be dealt with later in this work. The third source is the texts from King Alfred’s translation program, which were a very important part of his educational reforms. The translation program is a topic that has caused many debates among scholars as will be seen in the course of this work. However, the different writings of King Alfred and the scholars at his court provide a lot of useful information on the king’s thoughts and plans. Lastly, coins and archaeology provide important information about King Alfred the Great and his times as well. Since there are quite a lot of contradictory sources providing information on the life of King Alfred the Great, scholars have created quite different and controversial pictures of one and the same historical figure.

The discovery earlier this year in Winchester of human remains, almost certainly of Alfred the Great or his eldest son, has sparked renewed interest in England's most celebrated monarch. King Alfred's historical achievements, saving his kingdom from invasion by marauding Vikings and attempting both to expand and educate his realm, made him the founding mythic figure of England. The only English sovereign ever to be called 'the Great' - despite the fact that he was never even king of all England - Alfred used to be remembered as much through the stories told about him as his recorded accomplishments. This book offers a vivid picture of Alfred and his England, a place snatched from extinction at the hands of Viking invaders, but also of the way

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that history is written, and how much myth has to do with that. The book brings this story right up to date with the tale of the strange journey of Alfred's mortal remains, and their final discovery in his capital of Winchester.

Alfred the Great is a rare historical figure from the early Middle Ages, in that he retains a popular image. This book provides a reassessment of the famous ruler of Wessex, informed by current scholarship, both on the king as a man in history, and the king as a subsequent legendary construct. Daniel Anlezark presents Alfred in his historical context, seen through Asser's Life, the Anglo Saxon Chronicle, and other texts, and explores how this ninth-century king of Wessex came to be considered the "Great" king of legend.

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From the author of *The Gateway to the Middle Ages*, “a fascinating portrait of an enlightened monarch against a background of darkness and ignorance” (Kirkus Reviews). Filled with drama and action, here is the story of the ninth-century life and times of Alfred—warrior, conqueror, lawmaker, scholar, and the only king whom England has ever called “The Great.” Based on up-to-date information on ninth-century history, geography, philosophy, literature, and social life, it vividly presents exciting views of Alfred in every stage of his long career and leaves the reader with a sharply etched picture of the world of the Middle Ages

Asser's Life of King Alfred, written in 893, is a revealing account of one of the greatest of medieval kings. Composed by a monk of St David's in Wales

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who became Bishop of Sherborne in Alfred's service and worked with him in his efforts to revive religion and learning in his kingdom, this life is among the earliest surviving royal biographies. It is an admiring account of King Alfred's life, written in absorbing detail - chronicling his battles against Viking invaders and his struggle to increase the strength and knowledge of his people, and to unite his people at a time of conflict, uncertainty and war.

Collection of source material and crucial interpretations, offering a comprehensive guide to Anglo-Saxon warfare.

A major re-examination of an important period in British history

Charles, King of the Franks or Charlemagne (748 - 814), as later generations would know him by, would, in 800, become the first king of the Western Christian Empire. His rule resulted in the consolidation of a Christian Europe, and a reform of the Church in Gaul, in addition to the establishment of Christianity in Germany. His life and deeds are perhaps most famously recorded by Einhard, a French biographer and close confidant to the King. They were also recorded by Notker the Stammerer, a German monk. Notker's version includes a number of interesting monastic tales and is thought to be less accurate than Einhard's version. The source text for this edition is: *Early lives of Charlemagne*, by Einhard (770-840) and Notker (840-912); translated

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by Arthur James Grant (1862-1948), London: Chatto and Windus 1922. Illustrations from artwork throughout the centuries depicting Charlemagne and his exploits are also included in this edition.

Very few King's earn the appellation 'Great'. Alfred is the only English King honoured with this name and is credited with various successes (the foundation of a navy, English education system and religious revival). His memory looms large in the English Imagination. The medieval 'Life' of King Alfred of Wessex purports to be written by Asser, a monk in the King's service. This account of one of England's best loved and most famous kings has been accepted as offering evidence on most aspects of life in early medieval England and beyond. It was used in Victorian times to create a 'Cult' of Alfred. Alfred Smyth offers a carefully annotated translation of the 'Life' together with a long commentary. He argues that the 'Life' is a forgery which has profound implications not only for our understanding of the early English and medieval past but also for the nature of biography and history. This close scholarly rendering of the text allows the reader access to the intricacies of medieval history.

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