

**Cheshire 616 AD to 1066 AD**

The Romans have now left, and new settlements were being made.

Groups of people like us here in Wheelock started clearing the woods and forests so that they could cultivate crops to feed themselves. The area of Cheshire was mostly woods and forests at that time. Many smaller villages grew in size and took over old Roman towns, we are not certain how this happened as very few records were kept.

The British Kingdoms were formed, we fall into the kingdom of "Mercia". This Kingdom was formed by those living along the river Trent, which came through to this part of Cheshire.

The other parts of Cheshire were under the Kingdom of Powys. Mercia was ruled by King Penda. The main religion at this time was Celtic Pagan beliefs, having their own monasteries and churches. In the late 7<sup>th</sup> Century all of Cheshire was under the authority of King Penda, who brought Christianity back from Northumberland on his return. Under this authority, Wulfhere, Ethelred and Wilfred created new Christian centres in Cheshire. We came under the Lichfield Christian Monastery.

874 AD. The Vikings now raided Britain, at the time of writing this I have not seen any reference that they affected our part of Cheshire. Around Chester and North Wales there are some references. We do know that a large amount of Danes did settle in Cheshire.

1066 Norman invasion.

In 1068 William the Conqueror commissioned the writing of the Domesday Book. This survey reveals that the Delamere Forest came down as far as Nantwich. The Pennine Forest came as far as Altrincham and Wilmslow.

Agricultural land in mid Cheshire was over a scattered area made up of small Manors and some private Freemen, centred mainly around the salt workings.

The Commission of the Domesday Book was to find out what was where. They asked a series of Questions.

- 1 The name of the place? Who held it before 1066, and who owns it now?
- 2 How many Hides? How many ploughs both in lordship and the men's?
- 3 How many Villagers, cottagers and slaves? How many "Freemen" and free men?
- 4 How much Woodland, meadow and pasture? How many mills and fishponds?
- 5 How much had been added or taken away? What was the total value was and is?
- 6 How much each free man or Freeman had or has? All threefold, before 1066, when King William gave it, and now? And if more can be had than at present?

A "Hide" is about 120 acres. A "Plough" (Curucate) What one man and one horse or ox can plough in the space of a year. (around 700 acres)

I have now found Wheelock's entry in the book under "The Northwich Hundred"

**WHEELOCK** Earl Morcar held it. 3 Hides paying tax. Land for 4 ploughs.

In Lordship 1; 4 slaves; 2 riders with 1 plough.

Woodland 3 leagues long and 1 wide. (a league was about 3 miles)

Before 1066 and later it was waste; value now 20 shillings.

Comparing this with Sandbach, the value of Sandbach was 8 shillings. Wheelock was bigger than Sandbach at that time.