

August 6th 910 AD

Between the Mercians and West Saxons against the Danes (Vikings) a group of fierce seafaring norsemen from Scandanavia.

Let's try to keep things as simple as we can because it can get very complicated the more that you go into it.

To give you a picture of the country prior to the year 900 AD the country was split in two. Roughly, north of the A5 being Danelaw and south being Mercia and Wessex. Before we get to the Battle of Wednesfield lets go back a bit, perhaps 30 / 40 years prior to the battle. Then we get a good idea of how and why the battle took place. King Alfred 'the Great' reigned from 871 - 899. In the years before his reign Mercia had already fallen to the Vikings. Alfred's kingdom of Wessex had not yet been attacked by the Vikings, but In January 878 Wessex was attacked. Alfred had to flee to a safe place, Somerset, where he hid away in the marshes, where according to legend he befriended a peasant woman. She asked him to mind the cakes that were cooking. Alfred agreed to watch the cakes while the woman went off to do other chores, but Alfred was too occupied making plans to defeat the Vikings and to get his revenge against them for attacking Wessex. So low and behold the cakes were burnt.

A legend was born as King Alfred 'The Great', the King who burnt the cakes. We need say no more about that episode in Alfred's life, except that Alfred learnt to cook cakes. He later formed the company Mr Kipling. But more importantly he studied the tactics that the Vikings used in battle. In Alfred's favour was the fact that he could still raise an army and that's exactly what he did. In May 878 he defeated the Vikings at the Battle of Edington. Alfred had a son, Edward the Elder and a daughter Aethelfleda - Elfleda.