



they ruled with the advice of the coun-
cilors, the great men of the kingdom. In
time it became the custom to elect a
member of the royal family, and the
power of the king grew parallel to the
size and the strength of his kingdom. In
return for the support of his subjects,—
who gave him free labour and military
service, paid taxes and duties — the King
gave them his protection and granted
lands.

By the end of the eighth century the
British Isles were subjected to one more
invasion by nonChristian people from
Scandinavia.

...But the Romans left
And the Danes blew in...
That's where your history book
begins...

R. Kipling



ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND

THE HEPTARCHY (SEVEN KINGDOMS)

NORTHUMBRIA

MERCIA

EAST ANGLIA

ESSEX

WESSEX

KENT

SUSSEX

GOVERNMENT

WITAN
(KING AND WISE MEN)

SHIRES

GOVERNED BY

SHIREMOOT (SHIRE REEVE
(SHERIFF AND FREEMEN))

HUNDREDS

GOVERNED BY

HUNDRED MOOT
(KING'S BAILIFF AND FREEMEN)

TUNS

GOVERNED BY

TUN MOOT
(CHIEF OR EARL AND FREEMEN)

Note how Anglo-Saxon England was divided into Seven Kingdoms, known as the Heptarchy. The chart shows how each Kingdom was split up, and how each part had its own moot, or council, to look after its affairs. The Witan was the council for the country.

Chart 1