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Scandinavian Britain

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were new homes to be won in the weakly defended Roman diocese, and already bands of sea-rovers from among them had harried the coasts on their own account—

What time the Orkneys reeked with Saxon dead—

CLAUDIAN.

or fought over the land in the service of the hard-pressed rulers of Britain. So all along the "Saxonic shore," from the reedy broads south of the Wash to the sandy dunes about the Humber mouth, and further north up to the "Frisic Sea," the Firth of Forth, and further west into the breaks of the Southdowns,—up the Belgic plain between the marshes and the wood, into the fat meadow-lands of the Bajocasses and on the warm Islands of the Channel—Vectis and Cæsarea and the rest, they came and settled with their wives, and children, and cattle, and set up new states and flourished exceedingly.

For three centuries after this there seems to have been no further emigration east, south, or west. All we hear from Northern tradition has to do with the struggles and feuds of Swedes, Goths, and Danes, round and over the Scandian peninsula. The fifth century is accounted for by the epic cycle of Ingiald, whom Alcuinus spurns as a heathen hero, and of Beowulf; the sixth is covered by the exploits of Hrodwolf Crace and his kinsmen and champions; while the mighty deeds of Ingwar Widefathom remain from the end of the seventh century, ending with the never forgotten fight of Bravalla, won by Sigfred Ring