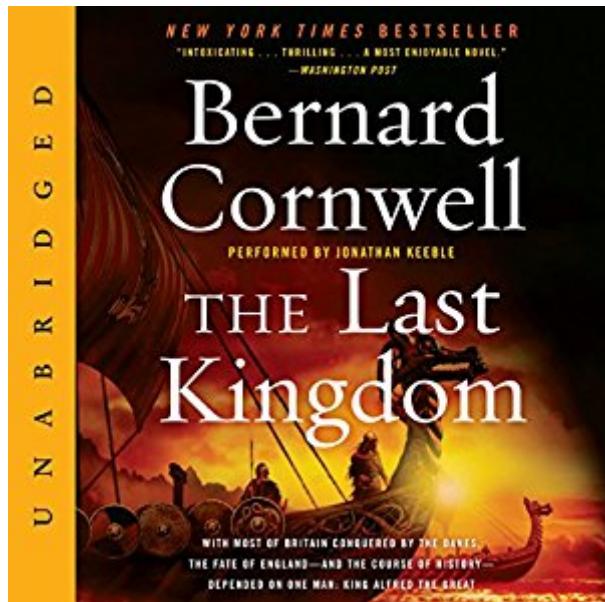


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# The Last Kingdom



## **Synopsis**

This is the exciting - yet little known - story of the making of England in the ninth and 10th centuries, the years in which King Alfred, his son and grandson defeated the Danish Vikings who had invaded and occupied three of England's four kingdoms. The story is seen through the eyes of Uhtred, a dispossessed nobleman, who is captured as a child by the Danes and then raised by them so that, by the time the Northmen begin their assault on Wessex, Alfred's kingdom and the last territory in English hands, Uhtred almost thinks of himself as a Dane. He certainly has no love for Alfred, whom he considers a pious weakling and no match for Viking savagery, yet when Alfred unexpectedly defeats the Danes and the Danes themselves turn on Uhtred, he has to decide which side he is on. By now he is a young man, in love, trained to fight and ready to take his place in the dreaded shield wall. Above all, though, he wishes to recover his father's land, the magical fort of Bebbanburg by the wild northern sea. This thrilling adventure - based on existing records of Bernard Cornwell's ancestors, depicts a time when law and order were ripped violently apart by a pagan assault on Christian England, an assault that came very close to destroying England altogether. This is the exciting - yet little known - story of the making of England in the ninth and 10th centuries, the years in which King Alfred, his son and grandson defeated the Danish Vikings who had invaded and occupied three of England's four kingdoms.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Name the Kings of England. Well, there's mad old George III, who lost the Revolutionary War. That's

one. And Henry VII, everyone remembers him. After that, there's King James, who we recall from his version of the Bible, and the one who gave up his crown to marry the American woman, and the one who got his head chopped off. After them, and maybe Richard III from the Shakespeare play, the collective memory (at least on this side of the Atlantic) goes a bit dim. But only one of those Kings of England who we really don't know or remember was named "the Great," and that was Alfred, who ruled from 871 to 900, back in the days when the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle was on the bestseller list, at least for people who could read. Bernard Cornwell thinks we should know more about Alfred and his times, which is why he has written **THE LAST KINGDOM**. That should be enough of a recommendation for anyone. Cornwell is the author of the bestselling Richard Sharpe series, which follows the adventures of a hard-charging British soldier during the Peninsular Campaign. Although Sharpe is a great character by himself, one thing he serves to do is to illustrate the greatness of Lord Wellington --- the commander of the British forces in Spain, and Sharpe's own patron. Wellington (at least as portrayed by Cornwell) is far too stiff, aloof and unlikable to ever be the hero of his own tale, and Sharpe ably stands in. The same trick is tried in **THE LAST KINGDOM**, with a twist. The first-person narrator here is Uhtred, who is the son of a minor lord of Northumbria. As a child, he is captured by a raiding pack of Danes that are "going Viking," or raiding the coast.

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