

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE UK (Ancient Britain)



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Geographical Position



The special geographical position of Great Britain always singled it out among other European countries. Great Britain was not always an island. It became an island after the completion of the last Ice Age, when ice had melted and had flooded low lands of modern Strait of Dover and the North Sea.

Ancient Britain

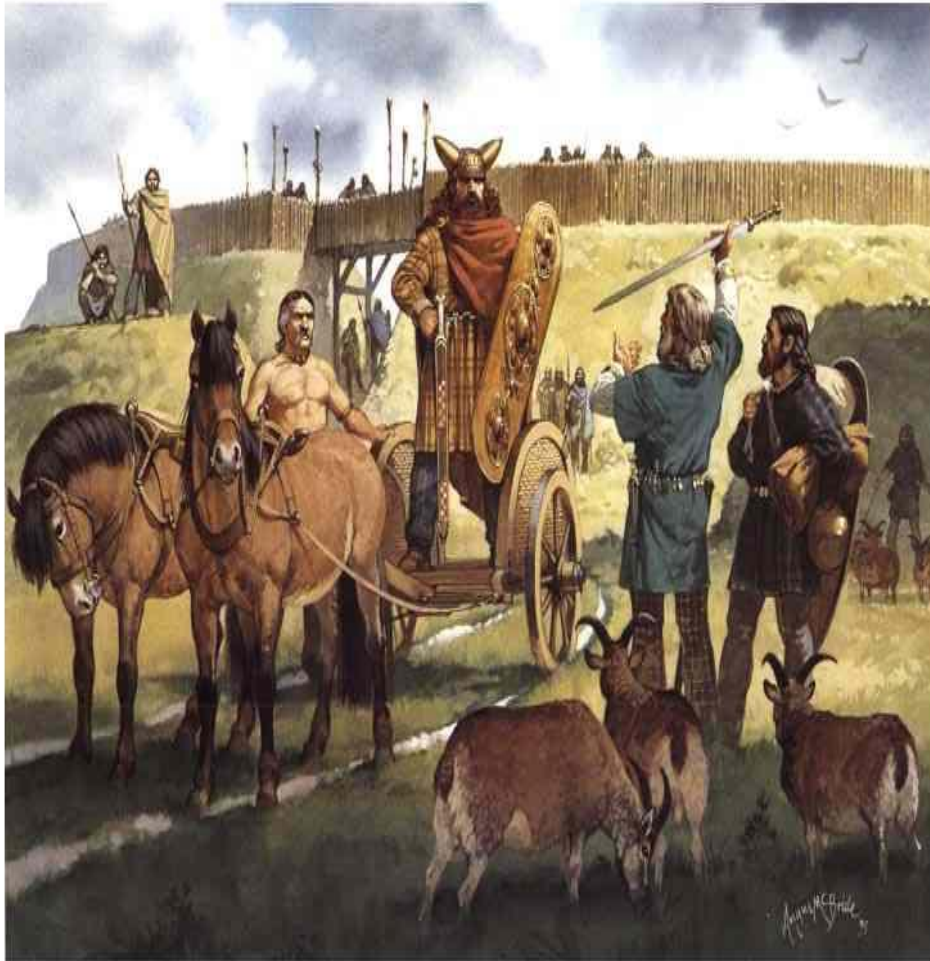
To 5000 BC the UK became an island which was occupied by small tribes of hunters and fishers.



Early Britain

- Little is known about the ancient population of the British isles.
- Like other primitive people in other parts of the world, they lived in caves and hunted animals for food. Gradually they learned to grow corn and breed domestic animals. They made primitive tools and weapons of stone.
- Later they learned to make metal tools and weapons.
- These people were religious, though we know very little about their religion.
- Some temples which they built still stand in many parts of England and Scotland.

The First Settlers



- About 3000-2000 BC the first wave of tribal groups came to the island from the Iberian peninsula (now comprising Spain and Portugal). They were called Iberians. They settled in Britain near the coasts of south and West Britain, as well as in Ireland. They grew grain, kept domestic animals and knew how to make stone weapons.

Although little is known about these Iberians of the New Stone Age, they left their mark clearly on the face of the land.

Stonehenge



IBERIANS



The Iberians lived in isolated communities Based on a tribal organization. They also had some knowledge of metalworking, Including bronze, and agricultural techniques. Among the most Important goods traded by the Iberians were precious metals, particularly tin and copper.

Celtic Tribes

- About 600-500 BC new people- the Celts – appeared in Britain.
- They were tall, strong people with long red or sandy hair, armed with iron swords and knives that were much stronger than the bronze weapons used by the native population. They crossed the English Channel from the territory of the present-day France. The Romans called these people Britons and the Islands- Britannia. In the course of centuries the Britons partly killed the native population, partly mixed with it.
- The Britons were skilful workers. They made things of iron, bronze, tin, clay and wood, and decorated them with beautifully drawn lines and patterns. They made money out of gold and silver.

Celtic Conquest



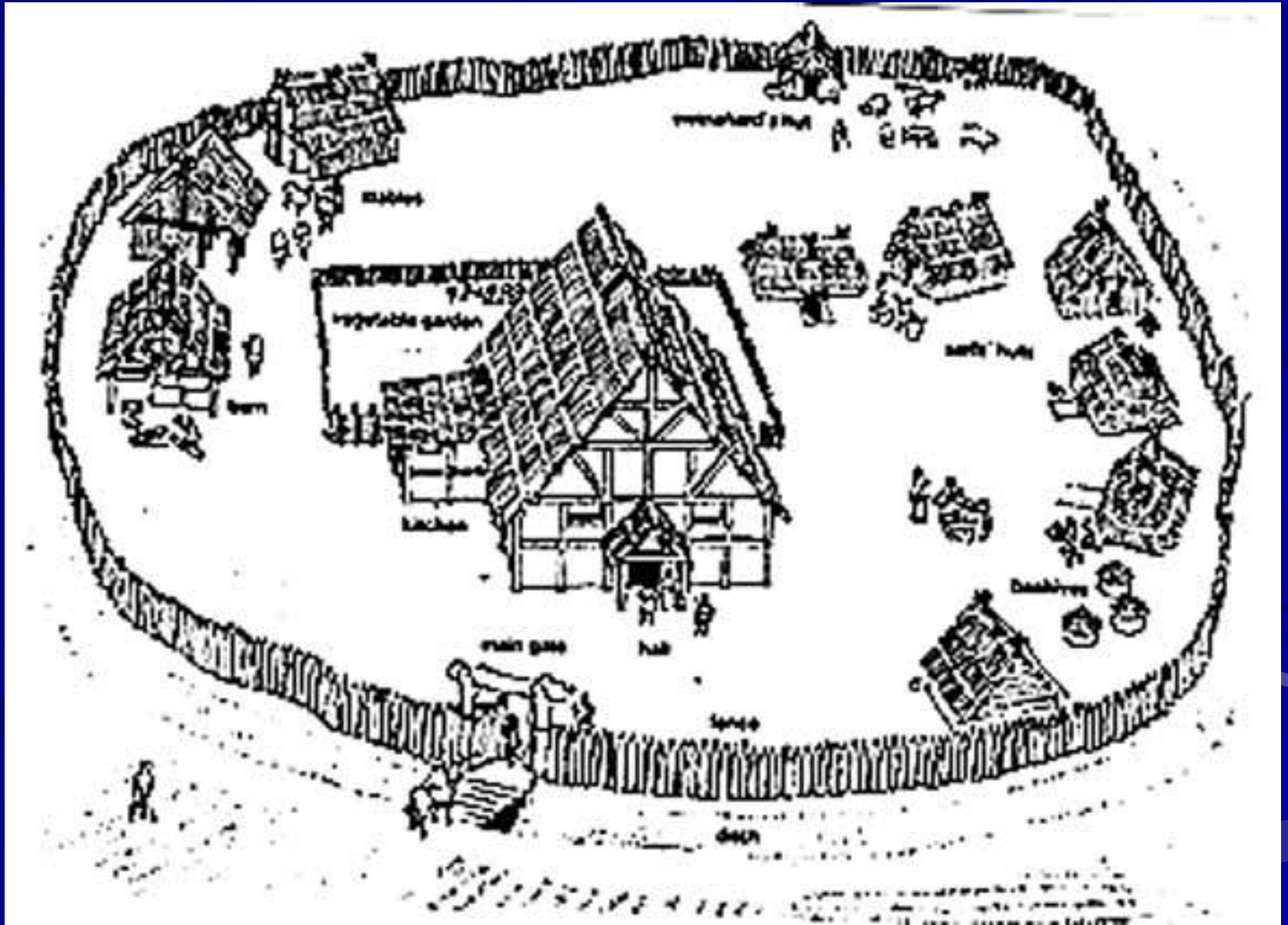
Celtic Warriors



Tattoo-Designed Pict Warriors



Celtic Village





Gaius Julius Caesar

(July 100 BC – 15 March 44 BC)



- **Caesar, Gaius Julius, Roman general and statesman, who laid the foundations of the Roman imperial system**
- **Caesar was a gifted writer, with a clear and simple style. His *De Bello Gallico* (On the Gallic War), in which he described Gaul and his Gallic campaigns, is a major source of information about the early Celtic and Germanic tribes.**

Religion

- **The Britons were polytheistic, that is they believed in many gods. They believed that different gods lived in thickest and darkest parts of the forests. Some plants such as the mistletoe and the oak-tree, were considered sacred. Some historians think that the Britons were governed by a class of priests called Druids who had great power over them.**
- **It is believed that Stonehenge was the temple of the Druids, just as it had been the temple of the primitive men before. The druids were cruel men and their ways of worshipping their gods were cruel too. They often declared that a god was angry, and to get the god's pardon the people had to offer up sacrifices of human beings.**
- **The Druids put men into huge baskets and burned them in the presence of the people.**

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Celtic Britain



Thank You

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