

History of Great Britain. First Arrivals

1. Look at the picture? Do you know what it is? Do you have any ideas why people built it?

Watch the video and try to answer these questions:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=em-P7MUt5Bk&ab_channel=Half-AsleepChris

Stonehenge is a mysterious group of huge standing stones.

Archaeologists believe that it was built around 2500 BC, although the first work at the site was done even earlier, in 3100 BCE. That



is 5000 years ago! The builders used two types of stone, the ‘bluestones’ and ‘Sarsen’ stones. The Sarsen stones come from near Stonehenge and each one weighed twenty-five tons. However, the bluestones came from nearly 400 kilometres away. But how did they transport the bluestones so far and how did they lift the stones into a standing position?

A third mystery is: what was the purpose? Many people believe that the stones were placed in this way to look at the movement of the stars and the sun and moon. It was probably also important for the religion of the people who built it.

There is another famous ancient monument near Stonehenge — the stone ring at Avebury, about 60 km east of Bristol. This is the largest stone circle in the world and it is near Silbury Hill, the tallest man-made hill in Europe. There are also standing stones in many places in Ireland.

THE CELTS

The Celts lived in Britain in the Iron Age from around 600 BCE. They came from Central Europe and we know about the Celts from the objects which archaeologists have found and from some Greek and Roman writers, who tell us that the Celts loved gold and fighting. Their priests were called Druids and had great power in Celtic society.

We also know about the Celts from the ‘bog bodies’. Bogs are areas of wet land; if a body is buried in a bog, it is kept in good condition, perhaps for centuries. In

England in 1984 some workers discovered 'Lindow Man'. Lindow Man was killed in the first century CE, so it is a 2000-year-old murder mystery. Some people think that he was killed by the Druids for religious reasons. You can see Lindow Man in the British Museum in London.

Watch the video about Lindow Man:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGV402Z1KNY&ab_channel=SmithsonianChannel

2. Answer the questions below:

1. How many years ago did this man die?
2. Why is he in this state?
3. What is it about the bog that preserves human flesh?
4. How did this man die?
5. Why did he die?

A WARRIOR QUEEN

In 55 BCE, Julius Caesar invaded Britain. The Celts were great warriors but the Romans had better organization and defeated them. Caesar returned in 54 BCE. This time, the Roman army crossed the River Thames but Caesar left after the Britons agreed to give money to the Romans.

In CE 43, nearly a hundred years later, the Roman Emperor Claudius sent another army of about 50,000 men to Britain. This time the Romans stayed and Britain became part of the Roman Empire. Camulodunum, now called Colchester, in the East of England was the first capital. But in CE 60 there was a revolution against the Romans. Boudicca was queen of the Iceni tribe and a warrior too. She hated the Romans because they were very cruel to her and her daughters. Her army attacked and destroyed Colchester and then burnt Londinium (now London). But the Romans won the next battle and Boudicca killed herself. The Romans later controlled most of Britain.

THE ROMAN OCCUPATION

Londinium now became the new Roman capital. The Romans also created many other towns. If a modern British city name ends in *-cester* or *-caster* or *-Chester*, it was originally a Roman camp because the Romans called them castra. Chester, Manchester, Leicester, Lancaster and Gloucester are all examples of Roman cities. The Romans improved the services in the country, and built straight roads such as Watling Street, which runs from Dover in the south-east of England to Wales. Today it is still an important road in Britain.

In CE 410, the Romans left Britain. They went to defend Rome against the barbarians, who were not in the Roman Empire, and left Britain without any protection. Soon, invaders arrived from north-west Europe and took control of the country. These were the Anglo-Saxons and the Jutes. We know a lot about them because archaeologists have found many objects from their times. In the 7th century, a king was buried at Sutton Hoo in the south-east of England. His people pulled a long wooden ship up a hill and buried him in it. They buried many gold and silver objects with him (including a helmet). The ship was discovered in 1939

More recently, in July 2009, another collection of Anglo-Saxon objects was found in Staffordshire in north-west England. These objects are known as the 'Staffordshire Hoard' and are the largest discovery of objects from the time of the Anglo-Saxons. The British Art Fund bought them for £3.3 million.

3. Fill in the sentences with the appropriate words from the list (bluestones, stone circle, bog, invaded, warriors, tribe, defend, barbarians, invaders, discovery)

1. The Celts were great _____ but the Romans had better organization and defeated them.
2. Boudicca was queen of the Iceni _____ and a warrior too.
3. Britain has the largest _____ of objects from the time of the Anglo-Saxons.
4. If a body is buried in _____, it is kept in good condition, perhaps for centuries.
5. In 55 BCE, Julius Caesar _____ Britain.
6. In CE 410, the Romans left Britain to _____ Rome against the _____.
7. Soon, new _____ arrived from north-west Europe and took control of the country.
8. Stonehenge is the largest _____ in the world.
9. To build Stonehenge the builders used two types of stone, the _____ and 'Sarsen' stones.