

FROM THE ORIGINS TO ROMAN BRITAIN

What is this lecture about?

The objective of this lecture is to provide an introduction to:

- The origins of the peoples who settled the British isles before the Romans: the Iberians, the Beaker Folk, the Celts
- The Roman invasion of Britain and its achievements (from 43 AD to 410-450 AD)

What time spans are we talking about?

- The eras/ periods under study extend from **Prehistory** (around 8000 BC) to **450 AD**
- BC: Before Christianity (Before Jesus Christ)
- AD: anno domini (after 1 BC ie. the Christian era)

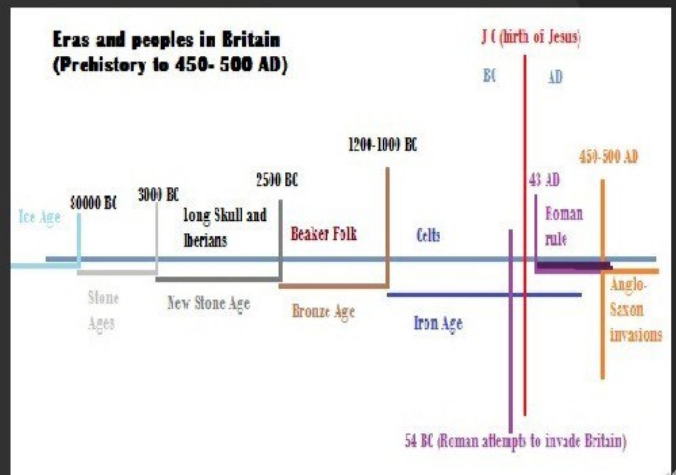
Important info

The difference between Prehistory and History?

- **WRITING** (around 5000-4000 BC)
- Prehistory: no writing. Just artefacts
- History: writing / recorded history

Introduction

- The origins of the British people can be traced back to Prehistory and then Antiquity.
- During the old eras of human history, many kinds of peoples settled and inhabited Britain
- Each brought their specific cultures and achievements



The Origins

- **The Ice Age**, during which **Neanderthals** and then **Cro-Magnons** inhabited Great Britain
- The **Ice Age** ended about 8,000 BC. The rising sea level produced the English Channel and made Great Britain an island.
- Then came the **Middle and the Late Stone Ages**

New Stone Age

- The practice of **agriculture** began.
- a stream of new people to Britain: by 3000 BC, the **Iberians**, or **Long Skulls**, inhabited England.
- They were **farming** soil of southern England

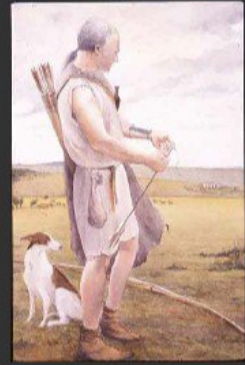
The Bronze Age and the Beaker Folk

- By **2500 BC** (during the **Bronze Age**), the **Beaker Folk** established themselves.
- Pastoral practices (breeding animals)
 - From about 1200 BC there is clearer evidence for **agriculture** in the south
 - the farms consisted of **circular huts** in groups with small oblong fields and stock enclosures.
 - characteristic **pottery**
 - **bronze tools**



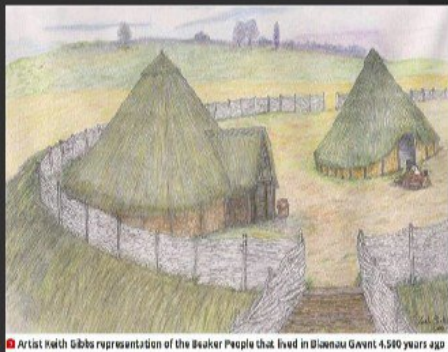
The Beaker Folk

- The Beaker folk were hunters but they also practiced agriculture



The Beaker Folk

- Beaker Folks formed tribes and clans
- They lived in circular huts



Artist Keith Gibbo representation of the Beaker People that lived in Blaenau Gwent 4,500 years ago



Beaker Folk culture



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- huge stone monuments, especially **Stonehenge**.
- These monuments attest to their **social and economic organization**
- **technical skill and intellectual ability.**



Stonehenge



Stonehenge



The Celts

- In the 1st millennium BC, the **Celts** overran the British Isles
- They settled Western Europe.
- That period also witnessed the knowledge and work of **iron** (7th century BC).
- The Celts subdued and absorbed the indigenous inhabitants of the islands.
- The Celts cultivated the soil of the river valleys with **iron weapons** and **two-wheeled, horse-drawn chariots**.
- The settlements comprised traditional round houses, the "Celtic" system of farming with its small fields, and storage pits for grain.



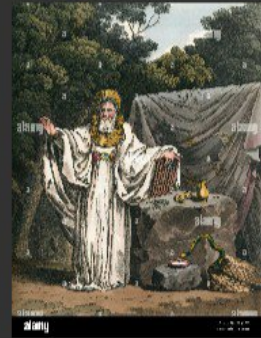
The Celts

- The **Celts** were **Indo-European people** who from the 2nd millennium BC to the 1st century BC spread over much of Europe.
- The Celtic settlement of Britain and Ireland is deduced mainly from archaeological and linguistic considerations.
- The social system of the Celtic tribe was threefold: **king, warrior aristocracy, and freemen farmers.**
- The **druids**, who were occupied with magico-religious duties, were recruited from families of the **warrior class** but ranked higher.
- As in other Indo-European systems, the family was patriarchal (the adult male, the father, dominated the family).
- The basic economy of the Celts was mixed farming.



Druids in Celtic societies

- The **Druids** were priests
- They **dominated** Celtic society.
- Druids were very important since Celts believed in magic.



In Celtic societies, warriors were also important



Period/ Age	Time span	peoples	characteristics
Ice Age	up to 8000 BC	Neanderthals and Cro-Magnons	Geographic changes and Britain became an island
Middle Stone and Late Stone Ages	up to 8000 BC - 3000 BC		
New Stone Age (Neolithic)	3000 BC	Long Skulls and Iberians	Practice of Agriculture
Bronze Age	2500 BC – 1000 BC	Beaker Folk	Agriculture Pastoral practices Pottery Bronze tools Monuments (Stonehenge) Technical skills
Iron Age	1000 BC to 100 BC	The Celts	Socio-political development Linguistic characteristics
Roman Britain	43 AD to 450 AD	Roman invasion and Roman rule	
Dark Ages	500 to 1066 AD	Anglo-Saxon Rule	



Roman Invasion and Rule of Britain
43 AD – 410-450 AD



The Romans Invade Britain

- First Roman attempts to invade and control Britain: **55 BC** and then **54 BC**
- By **Julius Caesar**
- It was a failure



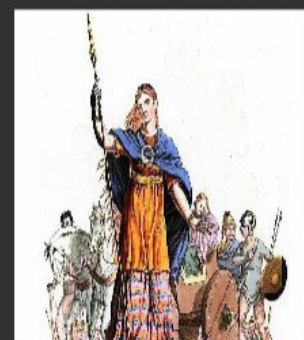
The Romans successfully invade Britain

- **Emperor Claudius I** invaded Britain in force in **43 AD**
- By 60 AD, effective control of parts of Britain

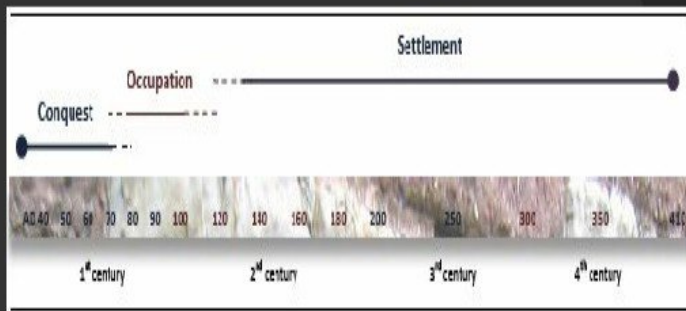


Celtic resistance to Roman rule: **Boudicca**

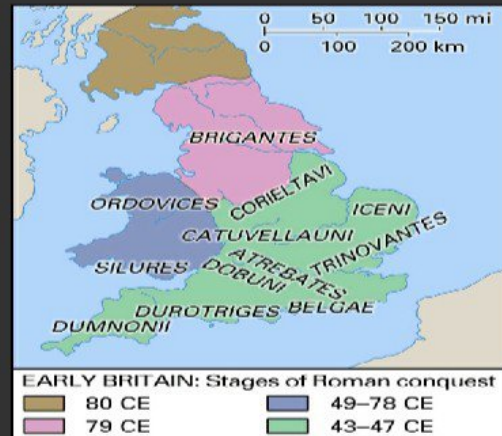
- Boudicca raised a rebellion throughout East Anglia.
- The Celts burned Camulodunum (Colchester), Verulamium (St. Albans), Londinium (London), and several military posts.
- However, Roman general Paulinus fought and won the Celts, and regained the province.
- Boudicca took poison.



Timeline of Roman Britain

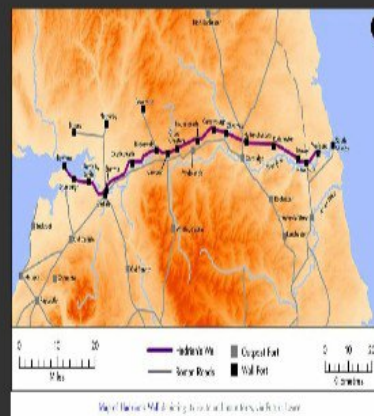


Stages of Roman Conquest



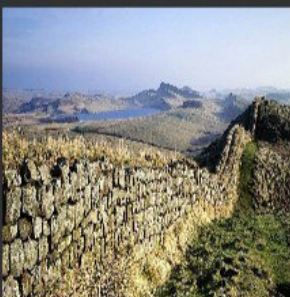
Hadrian's Wall

- 122-128 AD: the Romans build **Hadrian's Wall**, a permanent northern frontier of Roman Britain



- 73 miles or 118 kilometers long
- 15 feet high
- built of stone
- Building of the wall took 6 years.

Hadrian's Wall (nowadays)

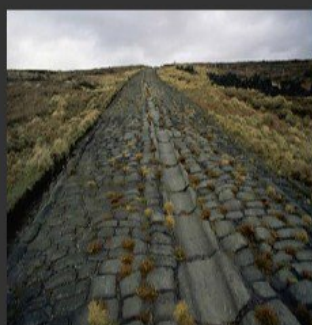


- The wall was built to protect the roman empire against

Some Roman achievements

- Architecture
- Roads
- Towns and urbanization
- Baths, sanitation
- Currency
- Administration and bureaucracy
- Political organization

- The Romans built **10,000 miles of road** across Britain.

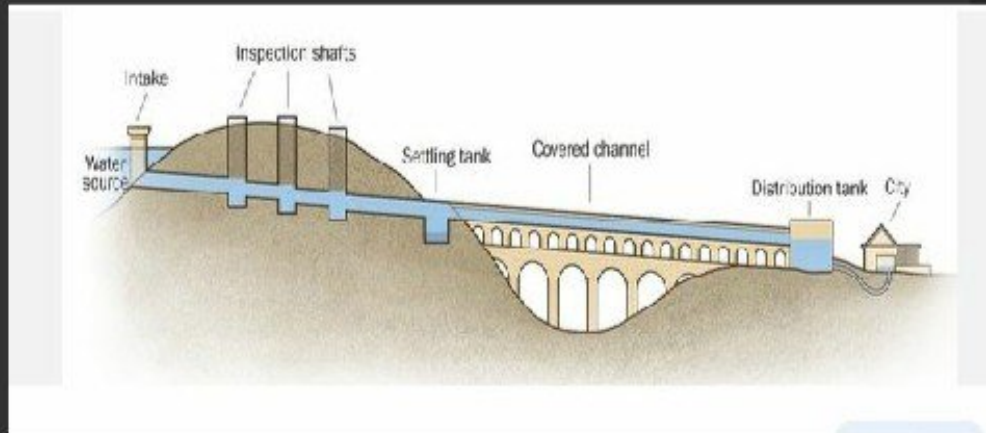


aqueducts



- The Romans constructed **aqueducts** to **bring water** from outside sources into cities and towns.

Aqueduct water supplied public baths, latrines, fountains, and private households
it also supported mining operations, milling, farms, and gardens



Why did the Romans leave Britain?

- ◎ The Romans ruled over Britain for 400 years
- ◎ During that period, new tribes coming for the North East and East of Europe started to put pressure on the Roman Empire
- ◎ The Empire was too vast and because of its size, it could not be protected efficiently.
- ◎ By 410, the Romans decided to leave Britain because their homes in Italy were being attacked by those fierce Germanic tribes and every soldier was needed back in Rome.



- ◎ That was the beginning of the decline of the Roman Empire and civilization in Britain and the rest of Europe.
- ◎ Germanic tribes started to invade and settle Europe and the Mediterranean Basin

Thank you for your attention