

Pre-Celtic Britain



Useful words

Verbs

date back

flourish

heal

retreat

settle

withdraw

Adverbs

although

back and forth

Northward

throughout

Nouns

breeding

burial mound

cradle

farming

hunting

iron

lintel

mainland

metalwork

pottery

reindeers

settlers

signature

trade

truce ground



Let's give a look at this map! Where is Great Britain?





If you see where Great Britain is located, you will notice that it is pretty distant from what is universally considered the «cradle of civilization», that is the Mediterranean area with its flourishing trade.

Yet, that distant island far away from the commercial routes will become one day the most powerful nation in the world!

How could that happen?
Let's start from the beginning!



People from continental Europe began to settle in different parts of Britain after the last Ice Age, around 12,000 years ago

Ever since, new arrivals continuously mixed with existing residents.



Around 11,600 years ago the temperature began to rise very rapidly and the ice that had covered most of Britain began to retreat to the Arctic.

The first settlers entered Britain across Doggerland, the lowlands of what is now the North Sea, probably following animals such as reindeer, or travelled in boats along the Atlantic coast to the western parts of Britain.

As the climate continued to warm, sea levels rose, and from around 8,500 years ago Britain became an island.





When the ice finally retreated, Britain was still part of the European mainland. It was easy for people to arrive even on foot. Traces of their genetic signatures survive all over the country, but particularly in Wales.





Throughout the Neolithic (New Stone Age) and Bronze Ages, from around 6,000 to 3,000 years ago, people continued to pass back and forth across the English Channel, importing their distinctive styles of pottery and metalwork

They may have been some of the 'Beaker people', who introduced characteristic decorated pottery, developed copper working and traded metal with other parts of Europe.





On Salisbury plain there is the most famous one : Stonehenge

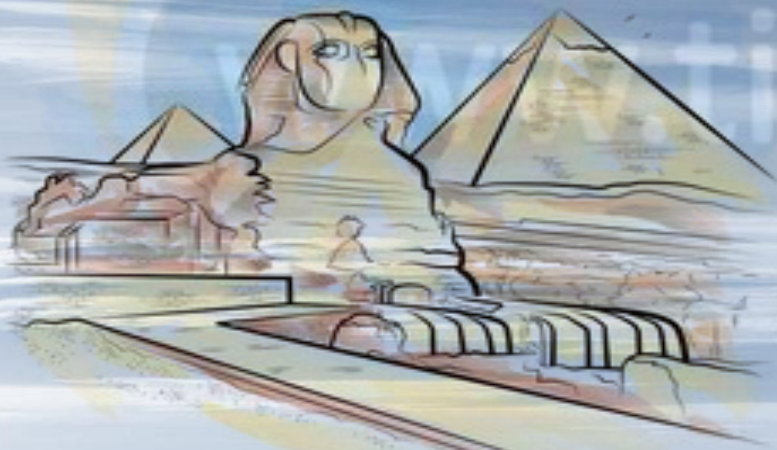
The most amazing monuments which date back to this period are located in Southern England: Silbury Hill, which is the largest burial mound in Europe

It consists of an outer ring of vertical standing stones, each around 4.0 m high, 2.1 m wide, and weighing around 25 tons, topped by connecting horizontal lintel stones.





The Pyramids and Stonehenge were erected in the same period: about 2.500 B.C.

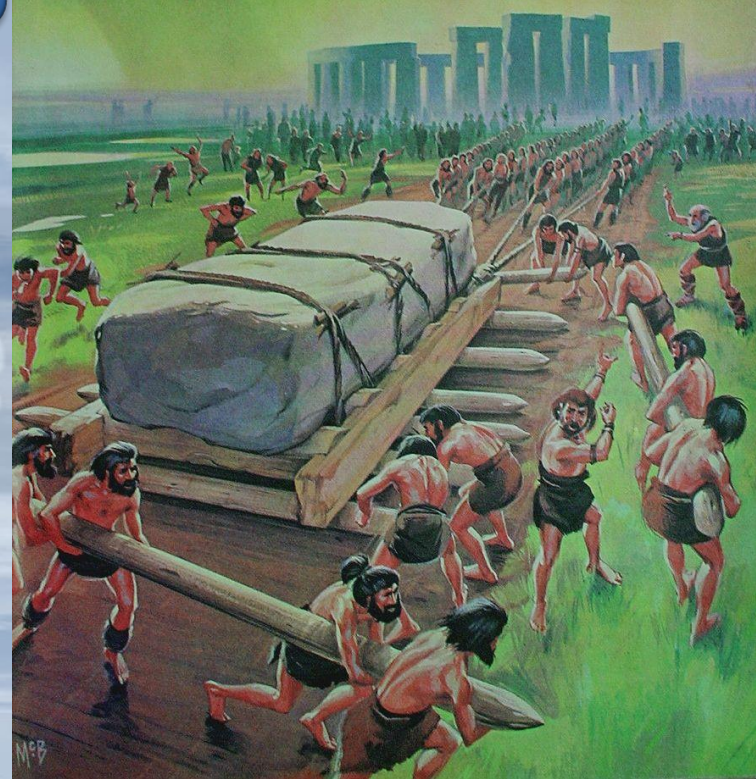




The lintels, known as bluestones, were brought 180 miles over land.

It had previously been known that 42 of these stones came from the Preseli hills in Pembrokeshire, West Wales.

What is the reason of such a huge effort?





Well, we don't know for sure, but we may imply that it was used as:

- Elite cemetery
- Market place
- Truce ground
- Observatory
- Healing site





About 2000 years B.C. new people settled in Great Britain. These were called the Iberians as they came from Spain

They had dark hair and a strong body. They lived in wooden huts and were artisans, in fact they made stone and metal object

They were also farmers and started breeding .





...around the 7th century B.C. new tribes settled in Britain :the Celts

But , let's leave this story for another day. But, you may have a glimpse of the next episode!
Bye!!!



▶ Next Episode



The Celts and Boudicca:
the Celtic Queen

