



The birth of the Nation

The PEOPLES that invaded Britain

Performer - Culture & Literature

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1. The first invaders of Britain

ca 600 BC – 50 AD



The Celts

43 AD



The Romans

5th century



The Angles and **the Saxons** from Germany and Scandinavia

9th century



The Vikings arrived from Denmark and Norway

1066



The Normans were the last invaders of the British Isles, they came from France



2. The Celts: society



- They lived in **tribes**.
- The basic unit of Celtic life was **the clan**.
- **Women** were almost **equal** to men.
- They lived in **huts** with thatched roofs.
- They built **hill forts**.



2. The Celts: economy

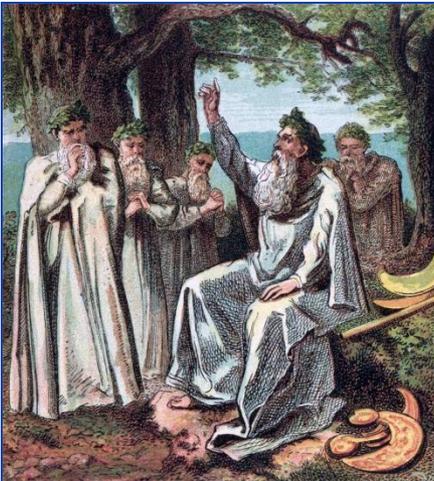
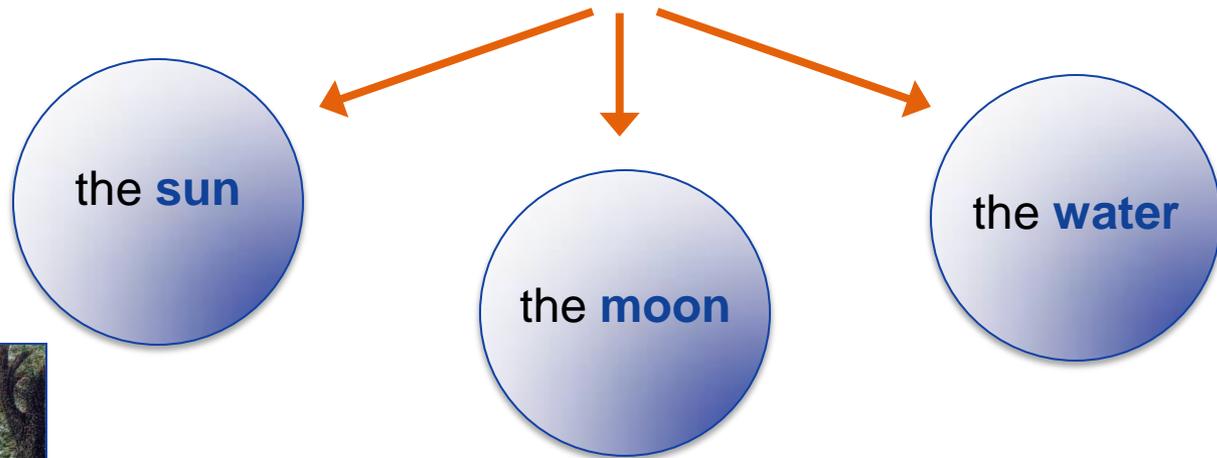


- They **worked iron**.
- They were good at making **weapons and jewellery**.
- They practised **agriculture**: they introduced the **plough**.
- They divided the field into long narrow strips.



2. The Celts: religion

They **worshipped** the natural elements



- They held religious **rites** in the **woods**.
- Their **priests** were the **Druids**.
- Their places of worship included several **stone circles**.



3. The Romans



- 55 BC: first invasion of **Julius Caesar**.
- From 43 AD: the Romans occupied Britain under **Emperor Claudius**.
- They introduced the **latin language and civilisation** into British society.
- They involved the conquered tribes in the **administration of the province**.
- Roman and Celtic gods were often fused
- They encouraged the growth of **towns, baths, fortifications**.
- **Roads** joined the towns together.
- They built **Hadrian's wall** in the north to keep the "Caledonians" out.
- They created the settlement of **Londinium**.
- They introduced **christianity**.
- By the end of the fourth century the Romans left Britain.



4. The Anglo-Saxons (5th century)



- The **Angles**, the **Saxons**, the **Jutes** came from Germany and Scandinavia.
- They destroyed the Roman British towns and took control of eastern Britain.
- They established 7 kingdoms in Britain and re-introduced **pagan values**. However, in 597 Augustine (a monk) was sent to England to re-establish Christianity. He became the first **Archbishop of Canterbury**.
- Instead of the Latin alphabet they used **runes**.
- They gave the larger part of Britain its name:

England



the *land of the Angles*



4. The Anglo-Saxons: society

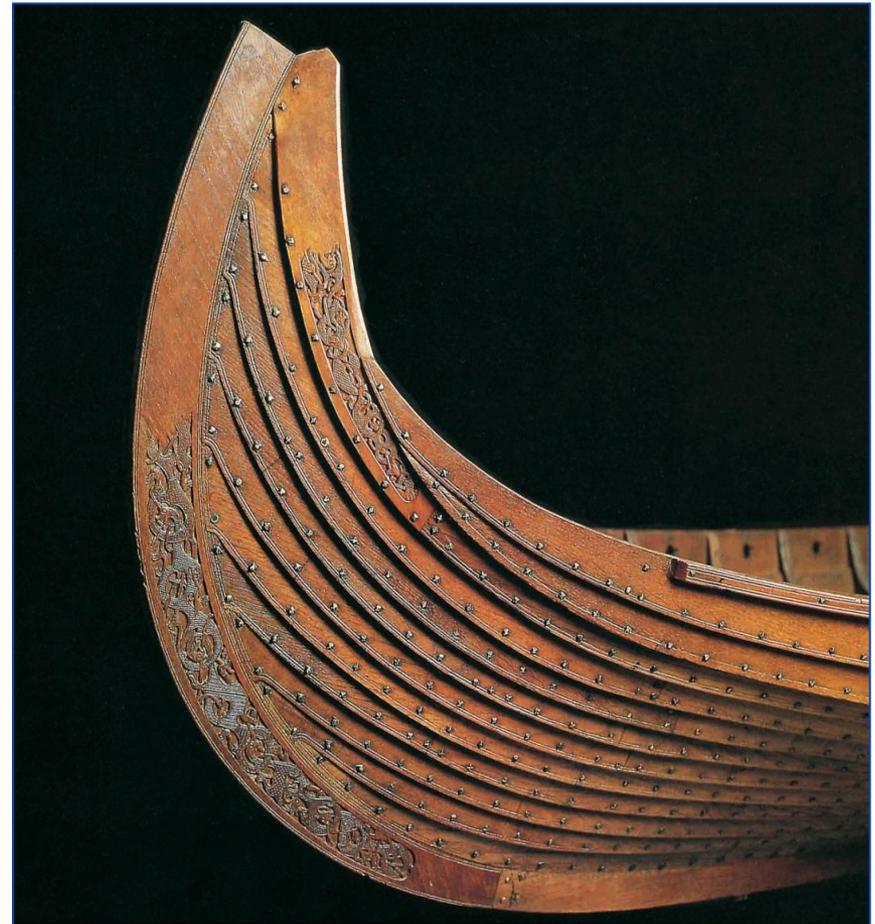


- They were **farmers** and deep-sea **fishermen**.
- They were organised in family groups or **clans**.
- **Loyalty** to family and lord was the most important value.
- They exalted **physical courage**.
- They had a great **sense of beauty**.
- They liked **feasting and drinking**.



5. The Vikings

- They came from Norway and Denmark in the 9th century.
- They **attacked the monasteries** in Northern Britain and in 15 years they **gained control of England**.
- They were **violent and cruel**.
- The Anglo-Saxons retired in Wessex, under the leadership of **King Alfred the Great**: he reconquered many lands occupied by the Vikings, but had to pay the **Danegeld** → protection money for being left alone.
- He encouraged **learning**: *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* was written.





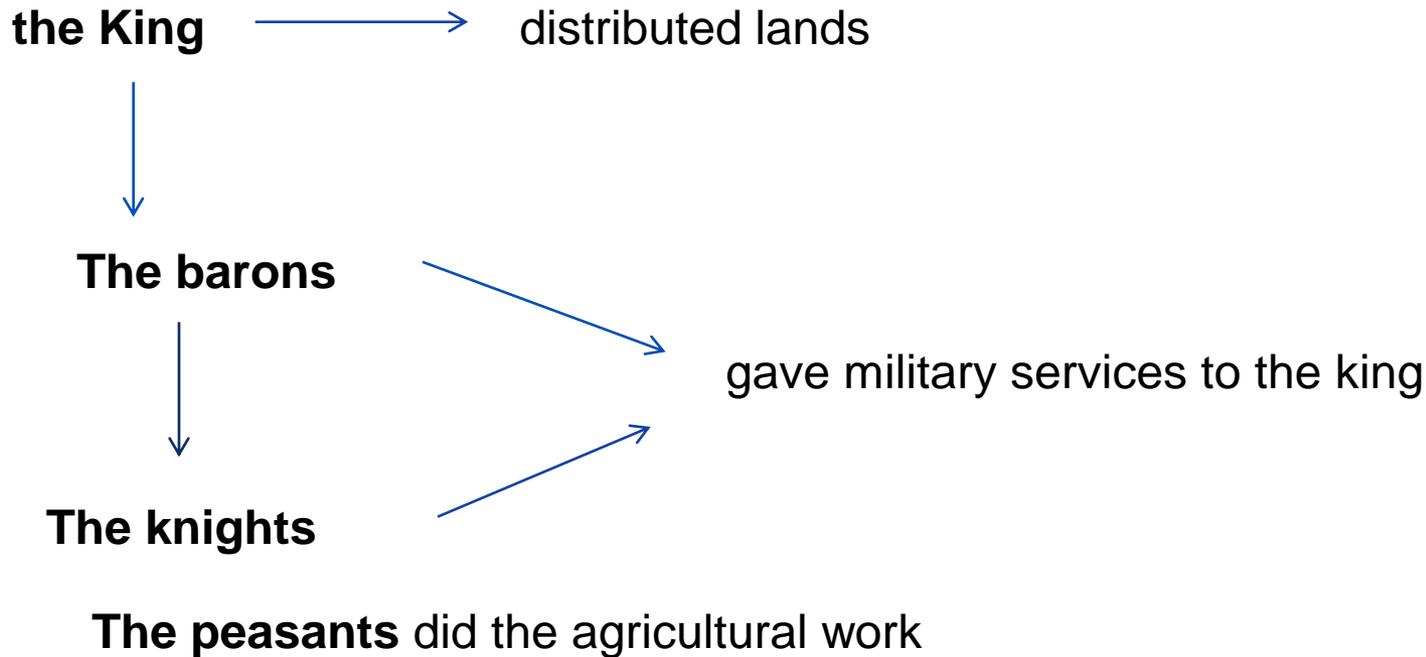
6. The Normans



- Invaded England in 1066 led by **William of Normandy**.
- Defeated King Harold at **Hastings**.
- William was crowned king in **Westminster Abbey** on Christmas Day.
- William sent his men all over England to carry out a **survey of the land** → The **Domesday Book**.
- The Normans introduced **the French language** and **the Feudal system**.



- William created a new aristocracy, which replaced the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy and he introduced **the feudal system**.





The birth of the Nation

- After the death of William I there were no laws to decide how to replace a dead monarch, so the members of the aristocracy often fought for the succession to the throne.
- Finally, in 1154 **Henry II** became the first of the Plantagenets Kings (they were kings of France and England)
- He introduced the “**Common Law**”, a new system of law based on custom, comparisons, previous cases and previous decisions.
- The king wanted to reduce the power of the Church, so there was a **clash between the king and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Beckett.**
- Beckett was murdered in Canterbury Cathedral by four knights in 1170.
- He became a martyr and pilgrims from all over England and Europe visited his shrine.



King John and the Magna Carta

- King John, brother of the King Richard I (who had joined the third crusade), became king in 1199 and was known as “bad king John” because he imposed a lot of taxes and was unpopular (see the legend of *Robin Hood*).
- In 1215 a rebellion against the king started: the barons refused to pay taxes, a war broke out and John had to sign the “Magna Carta”.
- The *Magna Carta* was a system of laws which protected all free men from illegal imprisonment and from taking their property.