

British History

The first populations who lived in Britain around 3000 B.C. were pre-Celtic who had reached the first stages of civilisation. They used metals, lived in huts, introduced agriculture and they built Stonehenge (in the Salisbury plain). It was a religious temple where druids celebrated rituals in the South-West of England. It's made up of big stones put in a circle.

Britain was invaded by a first wave of Celts in 500 B.C. They came from Northern Europe and they settled in the North of the country.

Then there was a second invasion and this time the invaders called Britons settled in the South and the West of the country.

The Romans tried to invade Britain in 55 B.C. with Julius Caesar but the expedition was a failure. They tried again the following year, in 54 B.C. and this time they obtained some tributes and slaves but the country was still independent. The real conquest took place in 43 A.D. (anno Domini) under emperor Claudius. They conquered the South of the country but they couldn't invade the other parts which were more difficult to conquer because of the mountains. In 121 A.D. Hadrian built a wall along the Scottish border to defend their territory from the attacks of the Scottish tribes. The Romans left Britain in the first part of the 5th century and as some Nordic tribes invaded the South. The Romans left the center of London (Londinium, today the city), the road system and many place names (that contain -chester in their names).

Anglo-Saxon + French

Name of animals

Anglo-Saxon

French

Pig

pork

maître

calf

veal

veal

ox/cow

beef

mucca

The Anglo-Saxon names are used by the farmers who are poor and take care of the animals; the French names are used by the ruler classes and refer to the dead animals, the meat.

Anglo-Saxon Literature

It includes all the works composed before the Norman conquest (1066) and was mainly made up of poems. It can be divided into two groups: pagan and christian.

Pagan poetry contains elements common to Germanic history. It was originally unwritten and was written down only long after its composition in monasteries by monks who probably introduced christian elements absent in the original works.

According to its subjects it can be divided into two sub-groups:

- epic, a long narrative poem dealing with the deeds of legendary or historical heroes;
- lyric, originally a song to be accompanied with lyre. The term has been extended to include any short poem expressing deep feelings and emotions.

Christian poetry was adapted to Anglo-Saxon heroic ideals. Moses, Christ, God share

traits with Beowulf. They are represented
as heroes who perform great deeds.