IRON AGE TRIBES IN BRITAIN – SCRIPT

Picture 01 – Opening Screen and preamble.

The Battersea cauldron, dated to between 800 and 650 BCE, recovered from the River Thames at Battersea, London. On display at the British Museum.

The British Iron Age followed the British Bronze Age and lasted in theory from the first significant use of iron for tools and weapons in Britain to the Romanisation of the southern half of the island. The Romanised culture is termed Roman Britain and is considered to supplant the British Iron Age.

Picture 02 – Iron Age Roundhouse reconstruction.

So, the time we are talking about before Romanization is:

Earliest Iron Age	800–600 BC
Early Iron Age	600–400 BC
Middle Iron Age	400–100 BC
Late Iron Age	100–50 BC
Latest Iron Age	50 BC – AD 100

The names of the Celtic Iron Age tribes in Britain were recorded by Roman and Greek historians and geographers, especially Ptolemy. Information from the distribution of Celtic coins has also shed light on the extents of the territories of the various groups that occupied the island.

Picture 03 – Iron Age Farmhouse reconstruction.

Some historians have suggested that it might be possible to distinguish the distributions of different tribes from their pottery assemblages for the Middle Iron Age.

However, no names are available for these tribes (except perhaps "Pretanoi"), and most of the tribes apart from in the South did not use pottery to a significant enough extent for this methodology to be applied to them.

Picture 04 – Bed and Breakfast!

Vegetable dyes were used to colour the woven woollen material.

The fire would have been used for cooking and for warmth on this carved log seating, and the smoke would permeate through the thatched roof rather than escaping through a hole since introducing oxygen would be a fire risk.

Picture 05 – The Southern Tribes of Britain.

ATREBATES

An offshoot of the Belgic tribe probably entered Britain before 54 BC, where it was successively ruled by kings Commius, Tincommius, Eppillus and Verica.

After 43 AD, only parts of the area were still controlled after which they fell under Roman power.

The Belgic Atrebates dwelled in the present-day region of Artois, in the catchment area of the Scarpe river. They commanded two hill forts: a large and central one near Arras, and a frontier one on the Escaut river.

In the mid-first century BC, an offshoot of the tribe lived in Britain, where they occupied a region stretching between the Thames, the Test, and West Sussex.

Picture 06 – Belgae

The Belgae were a large confederation of tribes living in northern Gaul, between the English Channel, the west bank of the Rhine, and the northern bank of the river Seine, from at least the third century BC.

They were discussed in depth by Julius Caesar in his account of his wars in Gaul. Some peoples in Britain were also called Belgae.

The Belgae gave their name to the Roman province of Gallia Belgica and, much later, to the modern country of Belgium; today "Belgae" is also Latin for "Belgians".

Caesar conquered the Belgae, beginning in 57 BC. He writes that the Belgae were conspiring and arming themselves in response to his earlier conquests; to counter this threat, he raised two new legions and ordered his Gallic allies, the Aedui, to invade the territory of the Bellovaci, the largest and fiercest of the Belgae tribes.

Caesar asserts they had first crossed the channel as raiders, only later establishing themselves on the island. After the Roman conquest of Great Britain, the civitas of the Belgae was bordered to the north by the British Atrebates, who were also a Belgic tribe, and to the east by the Regni, who were probably linked to the Belgae as well.

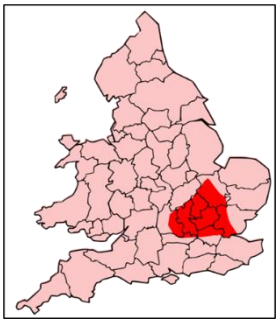
The arrival and spread of Aylesford-Swarling pottery across the south-eastern corner of Britain has been related to the Belgic invasion.

Picture 07 – Cantiaci (Kent)

The Cantiaci or Cantii were an Iron Age Celtic people living in Britain before the Roman conquest, and gave their name to a civitas of Roman Britain.

They lived in the area now called Kent, in south-eastern England. Their capital was Durovernum Cantiacorum, now Canterbury. They were bordered by the Regni to the west, and the Catuvellauni to the north.

Picture 08 – Catuvellauni



The fortunes of the Catuvellauni and their kings before the conquest can be traced through ancient coins and scattered references in classical histories.

They are mentioned by Cassius Dio, who implies that they led the resistance against the conquest in AD 43. Their name derives from "Excellent in Battle"

They appear as one of the civitates of Roman Britain in Ptolemy's Geography in the 2nd century, occupying the town of Verlamion (modern St Albans) and the surrounding areas of Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and southern Cambridgeshire.

Their territory was bordered to the north by the Iceni and Corieltauvi, to the east by the Trinovantes, to the west by the Dobunni and Atrebates, and to the south by the Regni and Cantiaci.

Picture 09 – The Durotiges

We have chosen to include these as they ranged over a wide area with many hill-forts identified today.

Maiden Castle - Maiden Castle, Dorset was in the territory of the Durotriges.

Cadbury Castle (on the St. Michael Ley Line)

Ham Hill Fort

Picture 10 – Bradbury Rings.

In the Roman era a temple was located immediately west of the fort, and there was a Romano-British town known as Vindocladia (Shapwick Dorset) a short distance to the south-west.

Five Roman roads formed a complex junction on the north side of the fort.

The Roman Conquest of Britain began in 43 AD. It is likely that the Legio II Augusta campaigned in Dorset under the command of the future emperor Vespasian.

Four kilometres (2.4 mi) southeast of Badbury Rings, at Lake Farm near Wimborne, a fort was established. A military road from the Lake Farm fort was created which passed by the northeast side of Badbury Rings.

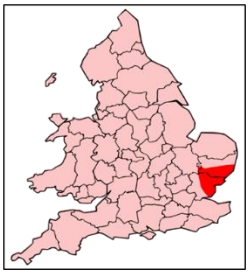
Picture 11 - Regnenses

The Regni, Regini, or Regnenses were a Tribe which occupied modern West Sussex, East Sussex, south-west Kent, eastern Surrey, and the eastern edges of Hampshire.

Their Tribal centre was at Noviomagus Reginorum (Chichester in West Sussex), close to Trisantona Fluvius (the River Arun) which joined the English Channel at Littlehampton, a little way to the east of Noviomagus Reginorum.

The tribe was bordered to the west by the Belgae, to the north by the Atrebates, and to the east by the Cantiaci, while much of their northern border was filled by the vast and near-impenetrable Weald Forest. Nevertheless, they were thinly scattered on either side of the Weald, and there were safe paths through the forest.

Picture 12 – Trinovantes.



They were bordered to the north by the Iceni, and to the west by the Catuvellauni.

Their name possibly derives from the Celtic intensive prefix "tri-" and a second element which was either "nowio" – new, so meaning "very new" in the sense of "newcomers", but possibly with an applied sense of vigorous or lively ultimately meaning "the very vigorous people".

Their capital was Camulodunum (modern Colchester), one proposed site of the legendary Camelot.

The Trinobantes reappeared in history when they participated in Boudica's revolt against the Roman Empire in 60 AD. Their name was given to one of the civitates of Roman Britain, whose chief town was Caesaromagus (modern Chelmsford, Essex).

Picture 13 – Iceni.

In the Roman period, their capital was Venta Icenorum at modern-day Caistor St Edmund.

Julius Caesar does not mention the Iceni in his account of his invasions of Britain in 55 and 54 BC, though they may be related to the Cenimagni, whom Caesar notes as living north of the River Thames at that time.

The Iceni were a significant power in eastern Britain during Claudius' conquest of Britain in AD 43, in which they allied with Rome.

Increasing Roman influence on their affairs led to revolt. Roman encroachment after Prasutagus' death led his wife Boudica to launch a major revolt from 60–61.

Boudica's uprising seriously endangered Roman rule in Britain and resulted in the burning of Londinium and other cities. The Romans finally crushed the rebellion, and the Iceni were increasingly incorporated into the Roman province.

Picture 14 – Roman Britain in 150AD.

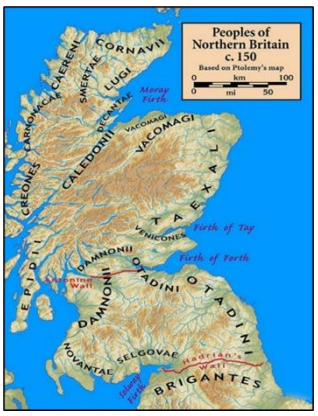
The Roman client kingdoms in Britain were native tribes which chose to align themselves with the Roman Empire because they saw it as the best option for self-preservation or for protection from other hostile tribes.

Alternatively, the Romans created (or enlisted) some client kingdoms when they felt influence without direct rule was desirable.

Client kingdoms were ruled by client kings. In Latin these kings were referred to as rex sociusque et amicus, which translates to "king, ally, and friend". The type of relationships between client kingdoms and Rome was reliant on the individual circumstances in each kingdom.

The beginnings of the system are to be found in Caesar's re-enthroning of Mandubracius as king of the Trinovantes, who had been dethroned by Cassivellaunus and then aided Caesar's second invasion of Britain in 54 BC.

Picture 15 – Caledonii.

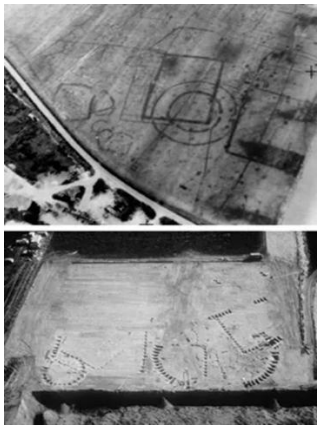


The Caledonian Britons were enemies of the Roman Empire, which was the state then administering most of Great Britain as the Roman province of Britannia.

The Caledonians, like many Celtic tribes in Britain, were hillfort builders and farmers who defeated and were defeated by the Romans on several occasions.

The Romans never fully occupied Caledonia, though several attempts were made. Nearly all of the information available about the Caledonians is based on predominantly Roman sources, which may be biased.

Picture 16 – Mucking Hill Fort



Thanks for listening ....