

The Celts – who were they?



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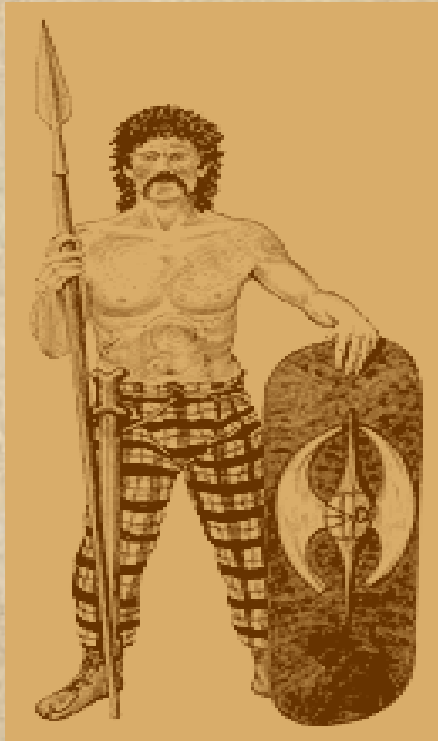
Celtic lands and the Roman Empire

3500 years ago people called Celts lived in Western Europe. They were so numerous and powerful that they contested the Roman Empire

green - Celts
red - Romans
in the year 133BC



Celts come to Britain



Around 2700 years ago, the Celts came to the British Isles and mixed with local people.

Celts could look like this, but scientists say they liked bright clothes.



Celts come to Britain



Although we don't know for sure what they looked like, scientists know something from the results of excavations.

This man was found in a bog in Lindow. He had his clothes, ornaments, and we even know what was in his stomach (a grain cake). They say he lived in the 1st century and was of a high rank.



Roundhouses



The Celts lived in roundhouses like this one. They were built from timber and plastered with mud. They had a thatched roof.



Roundhouses



Inside, the house could look like this. It was rather warm, and rain did not get through the thatched roof.



Roundhouses



Cooking and washing was done on the central fire. There was no opening over the fireplace, so smoke escaped through the thatched roof.



Roundhouses



People kept their things and slept around the inside of the wall. This is a replica of a Celtic house in Wales

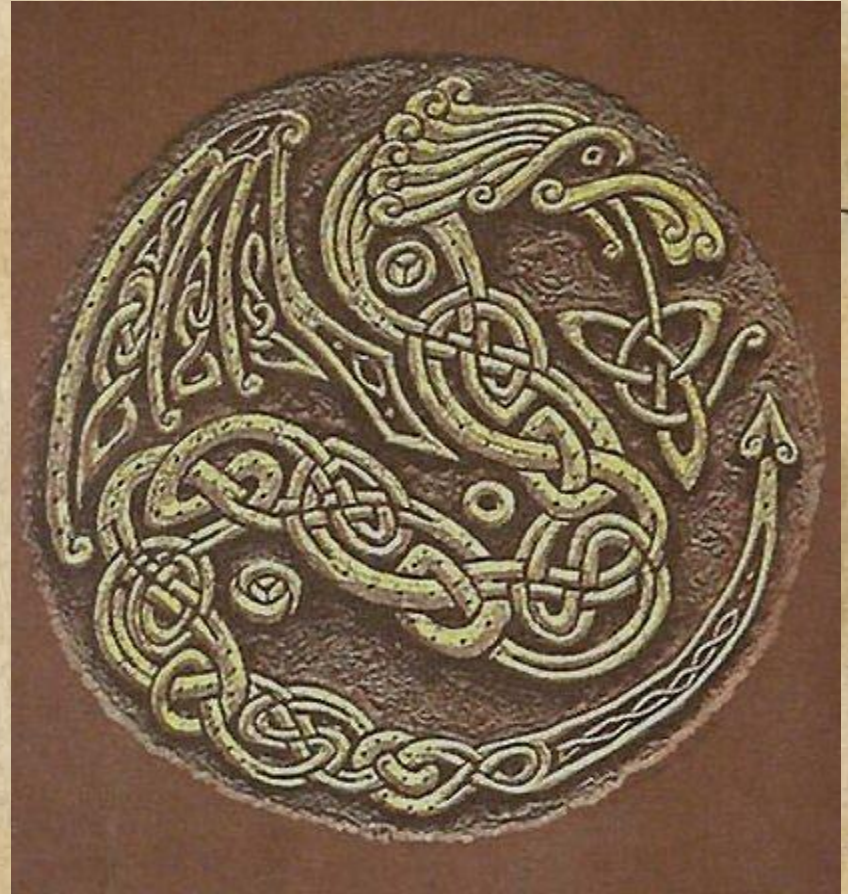


Roundhouses

Roundhouses could also be built near lakes and on riverbanks. This is a replica from a Celtic museum in Wales.



Celtic crafts



The Celts were farmers and excellent craftsmen. They made iron weapons and beautiful ornaments of gold and silver. Chiefs and high-ranking women wore beautiful gold jewellery



Celtic crafts



Cauldrons were used not only in homes, but also for rituals. This famous cauldron is made of silver and has beautiful decorations.

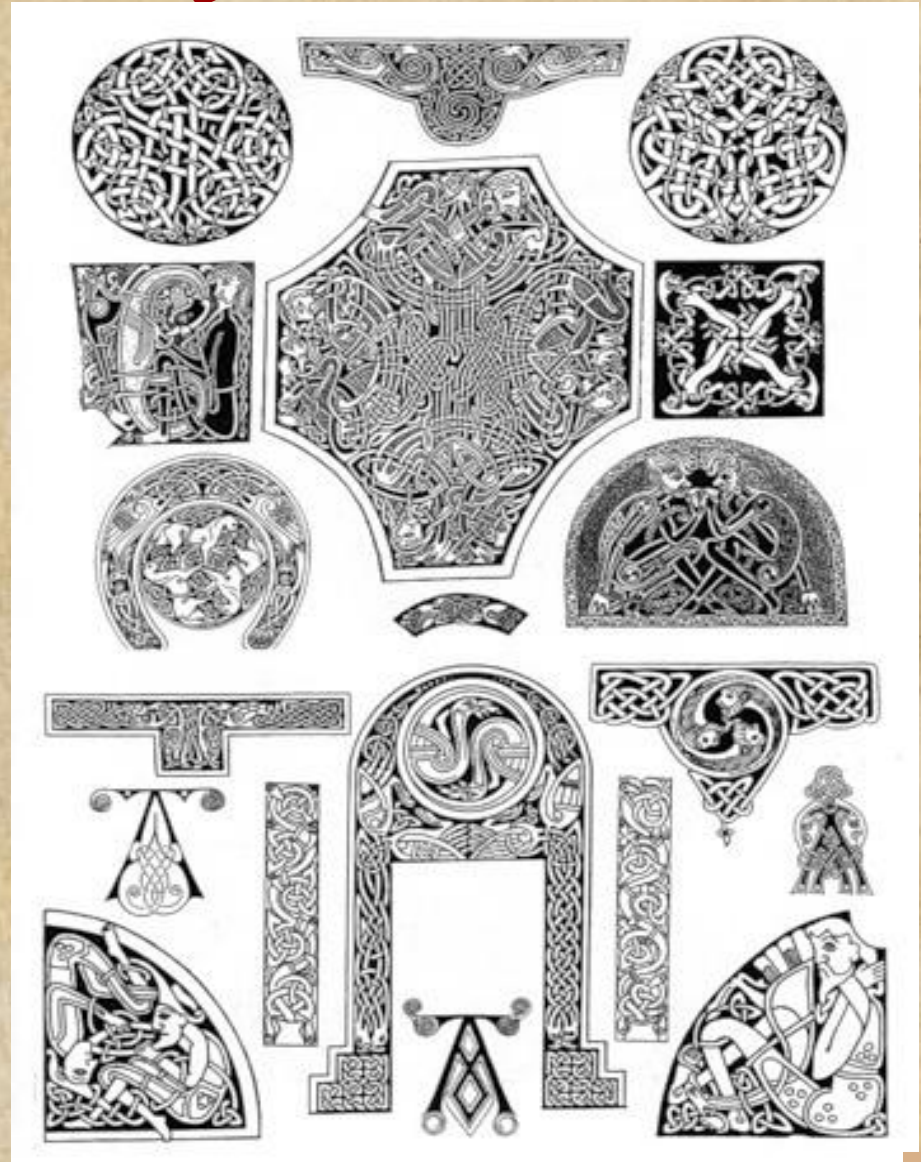


Celtic crafts

Celtic ornamentations are very famous. They remind of weaving patterns of plaits, or basketry.

Celts believed that the world was filled with energy flows, which intertwined and formed patterns that influenced everything around us.

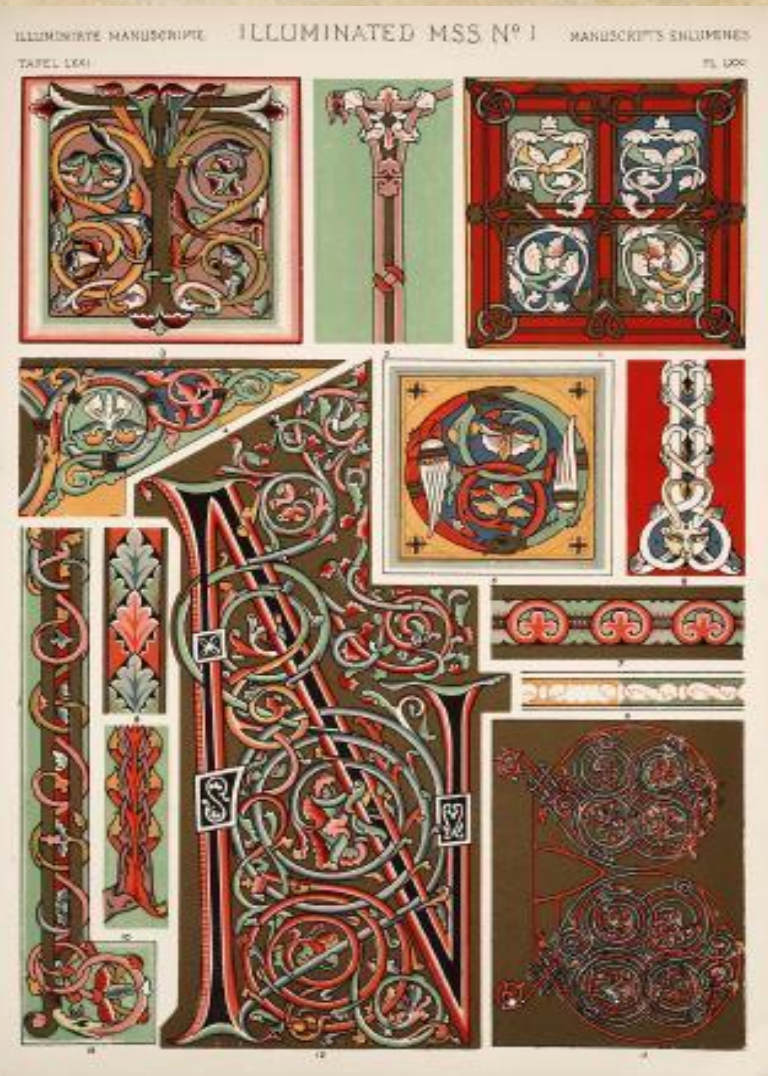
That's why most ornaments look like twisting lines that cross each other.



Celtic crafts

Celtic ornaments symbolically represented the life of a human, with energy flows twisting and even tied in knots.

It was strictly forbidden to make changes in the traditional ornaments - they were believed to have magical powers.



Celtic crafts



Other motifs used snakes and birds, as they were sacred, but also some domestic animals. Ravens were thought to be messengers of gods.



Celtic crafts

Modern artists and craftsmen often use Celtic designs and motifs nowadays.



Celtic crafts



A maze, or labyrinth was used very often.

It represents the journey through life and always leads to the central point, which symbolically shows the centre of the universe.



For wise men and druids it could show the way to understand how the world is made.

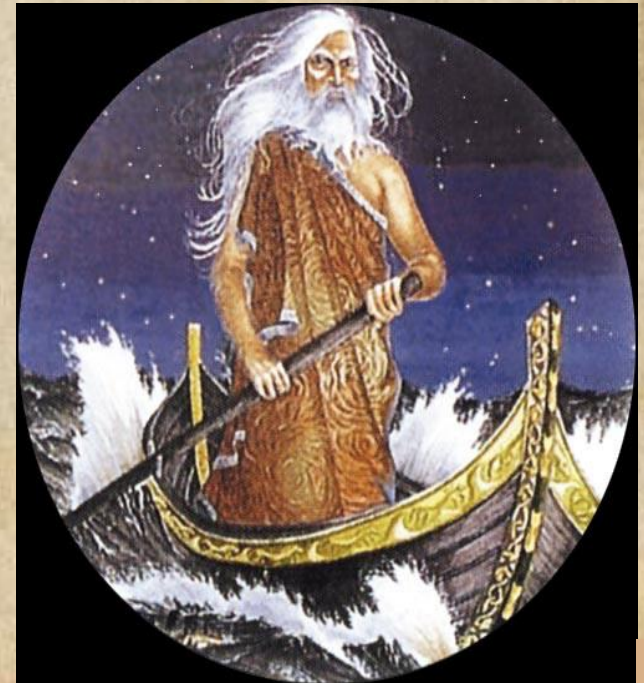
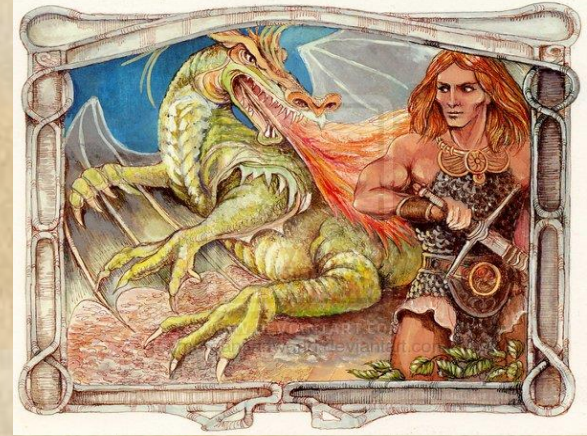


Life in tribes

The Celts lived in tribes and clans. Their chiefs were war captains, who fought and took their enemies as slaves.

Warriors sometimes wore bronze helmets and painted their faces blue. They fought with swords and spears and didn't have bows and arrows.

Druids were priests and had great power. They were wise men of great knowledge. Little is known about their religion except that they believed in many gods.



Religion



Druids worshiped nature, trees and believed that human soul lives forever. They sacrificed food and precious objects to their gods. They often put these into water. Some druids were women.



Stonehenge



It is believed that they built Stonehenge and other megalithic structures in Europe, like the menhirs in the north of France. They performed rituals there on the day of the solstice.



Religion

It is believed that druids even sacrificed humans, although it is not known for sure. Scientists think that Lindow man was also killed for sacrifice.



When Romans came to Britain, they destroyed druidic cults.



Memory and tradition

But the memory about druids still lives. There are many legends about them



They are believed to have magical powers.



Nowadays some people perform druidic rituals on the day of the solstice in some countries of Europe



The Six Celtic Languages

Today, the descendants of the Celtic people form six Celtic nations.

They speak three Gaelic languages in Ireland, Man and Scotland and Breton languages in Wales, Cornwall and Brittany in France.

Every year a Celtic Festival is held in one of these countries.



The Celts – who were they?

Cross out unnecessary words:

Ancient Celts were:

warriors,
farmers,
famous explorers,
good craftsmen,
scientists,
seamen

They lived in:

palaces,
roundhouses,
pyramids,
castles

They divided into:

tribes, nations, kingdoms, clans,



The Celts – who were they?

Cross out unnecessary words:

Druids were :

warriors,
craftsmen,
clans' chiefs,
priests,
wise men,
bards



Celtic ornaments :

are still used today,
symbolized human life,
could be changed,
could not be changed



The Celts – who were they?

Cross out unnecessary words:

People of “the six Celtic nations” live in:

Sweden

Scotland

North of France

Wales

Spain

Isle of Man

Central England

Cornwall

Italy

Germany

Russia

Ireland

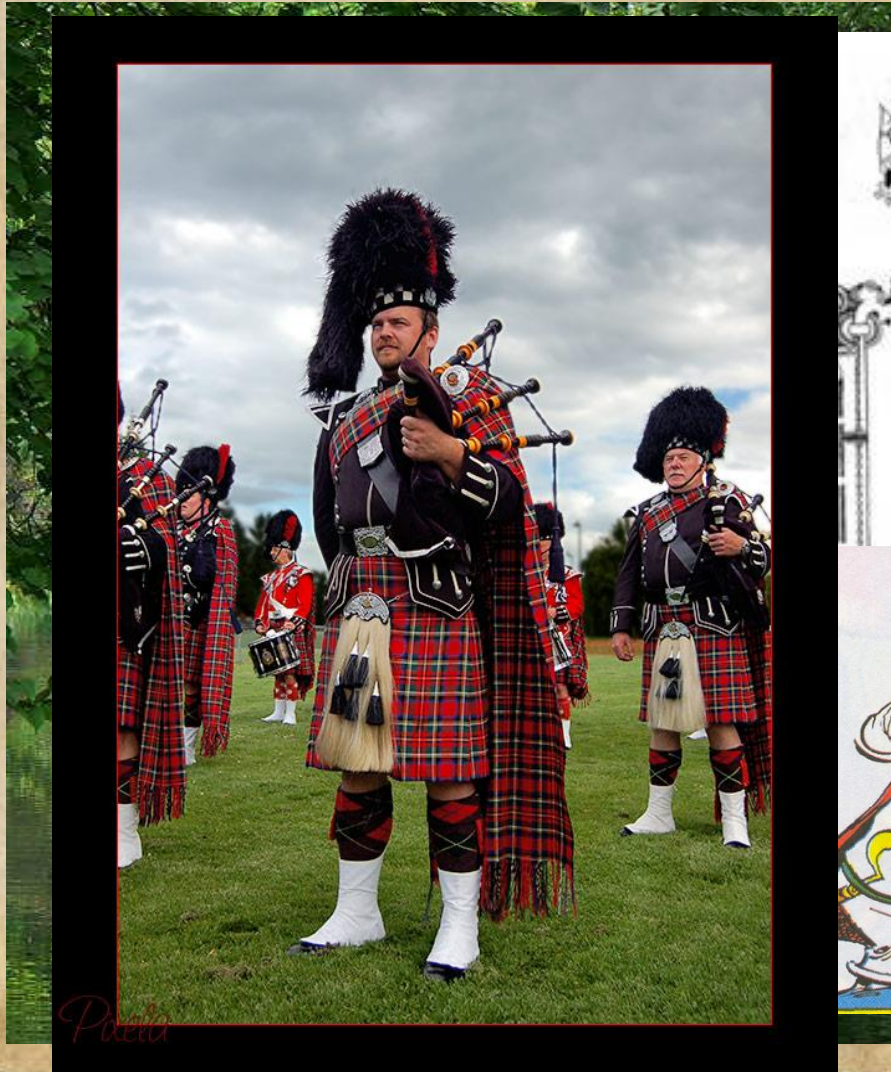
Scientists who study the past are:

historians, explorers, archeologists, astronomers



The Celts – who were they?

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