



Bronze Age Britain

Life in Bronze Age Britain was very different to life in Britain today. It was an important time in history. Before the Bronze Age, people were using tools and weapons made of stone. Every development happens at different times across the world. The Bronze Age in Britain began somewhere around 2500 BCE.

Back then, England, Scotland and Wales weren't countries. People had lived in small tribes that moved around a lot. This is called a "nomadic" life. They didn't settle down and build towns. By the Bronze Age, they had started to form small villages. This made it easier to grow crops on small farms.

Farming was very hard work. Using stone tools wasn't very efficient. What was needed was something stronger and sharper. Metal allowed them to make exactly that.

The people of Britain didn't discover how to make bronze. Around 2500 BCE, a group of people nicknamed Beaker people arrived from Europe. They were already making bronze, and they brought the skills with them. They taught the native Britons how to make bronze.

These travellers were called Beaker people because they carried pottery beakers with them. Without them, it might have taken a long time for Britons to learn how to make metal.

Bronze is made by melting copper and tin together. This creates an "alloy" with the best qualities of both metals. Britain had lots of copper and tin underground. This was one of the reasons why the Beaker people arrived in the first place.

Bronze Age Britons dug mines into the ground to get at the metal "ores". That's what the metal is called when it is in its raw form. These were very dangerous and uncomfortable jobs, but the metal ores could be traded with other people in Europe.

Once bronze tools were made, everything was easier. Farming was more efficient, and more crops could be grown. This meant that more



people could be fed. The population of Britain increased a lot during the Bronze Age.

The Beaker people also brought their traditions with them. They lived in clans ruled by a powerful leader. This idea became popular with native tribes as well. Tribes being commanded by a powerful leader led to the idea of kings hundreds of years later.

Bronze wasn't the only thing Britons traded. They were very good at making wool and woollen cloth. This was especially important because their houses weren't great at keeping them warm. Sheep were also kept for their milk.

Bronze Age Britons believed in spirits and Pagan gods. They built stone circles to measure the movements of the moon and Sun. These were probably places to worship their gods.

The Bronze Age marked a big change in British history. It was the first time that people had used metal, and it meant that life would never be the same again.

RETRIEVAL FOCUS

1. When did the Bronze Age start in Britain?
2. What was the nickname of the people who taught the Britons how to make bronze?
3. What is the name given to two different metals blended together?
4. What is the raw form of a metal called?
5. What did they build to measure the movement of the moon and the Sun?

VIPERS QUESTIONS

S

Why were bronze tools better than stone tools?

V

What is meant by the term "native Britons"?

V

Which word is used to describe a group of people who move around rather than settling in one area?

S

How did the new arrivals change how tribes were organised?

I

Why were wool clothes important?