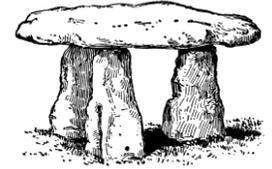


Topic: Ancient Cornwall (10,000 BC – 936 AD)

Cornwall is sometimes called the 'land of legend' and it is easy to understand why. An ancient land of cliff-top castles, stone circles and curious megaliths, survivals from a prehistoric age, with myths and legends attached to each – you may know some of them. We won't be able to answer every question posed (we may end up with more) but we do hope to explore some the more famous stories and begin to separate some of the fact from the fiction.



Ancient Cornwall Timeline:

Legendary People:

STONE AGE 10,000 to 2,000 BC	Stone Age - European hunter-gatherers migrate into what is now Cornwall.	King Arthur	Legendary King who united the ancient Britons and fought the Saxon invaders.
	Britain becomes an island after sea levels rise following the last Ice Age.	King Constantine	Murdering and adulterous cousin of Arthur. Converted to Christianity later.
	Portal Dolmens, e.g. Chun Quoit and other megalithic monuments erected.	King Cunamor	A tyrant! Named father of Tristan on the Stone. Possibly King Mark of legend.
	New Stone Age - beginning of farming and more settled tribal communities.	King Dungarth	Named on Doniert's Stone. Died in a bizarre hunting accident at Golitha Falls.
	Tin streaming begins in Cornwall - beginning early trade in metal goods.	King Gerent	A very religious man and last King of all Dumnonia. Defeated by the Saxons.
BRONZE AGE 2,000 to 750 AD	Beginning of the Bronze Age – mixing tin and copper to make bronze tools.	Saint Germanus	War leader who converted to Christianity. Defeated Saxons with an "Alleluia".
	Courtyard houses and hut circle communities, e.g. Chysauster & Carn Euny.	King Huwal	Unsuccessful minor King of Cornwall who surrendered to Athelstan in 928 AD.
	Tin trade grows between Cornwall and the rest of Europe from this time.	Saint Ia	Arrived from Ireland floating on a magical leaf. Built an oratory near St. Ives.
IRON AGE 750 to 43 AD	Beginning of the Iron Age – iron farming tools & weapons (ploughs and axes).	Saint Minver	Welsh princess, 24 children, attacked by the devil so threw her comb at him.
	Celtic culture spreads into Cornwall. Hill fort and cliff castle building peaks.	Saint Neot	Only 15 inches tall. Enjoyed bathing in a Holy Well. Brought fish back to life.
	Celtic language splits into distinct 'tongues' including Brythonic Cornish	Saint Petroc	Thirsty! Performed miracles with water. Converted Constantine to Christianity.
ROMAN 43 to 410 AD	Roman invasion of Britain. Cornwall is ruled as part of region of Dumnonia.	Saint Piran	Arrived on a millstone. Built an oratory at Perranporth. Patron saint of tanners.
	Roman Empire begins to collapse and legions withdraw from Great Britain.	Saint Sampson	Slept in a cave. He cast out devils, cured leprosy and gave sight to the blind.
SAXON 410 to 1066 AD	Anglo-Saxon invasions of the British Isles. The ancient Britons (Celts) move west into what is now Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Cornwall (and Brittany). Sometimes called the 'Dark Ages' because little is known about the period.		

450-550 AD	The legendary period of King Arthur and the knights of the Round Table.	Key vocabulary of Ancient Cornwall:	
500 AD	Around this time St. Piran and Celtic saints teach Christianity in Cornwall.	Fogou	A mysterious underground dry-stone chamber which dates from the Iron Age.
838 AD	Battle of Hengestendun – Cornish and Viking army defeated by the Saxons.	Hill top forts	A fortified hill-top settlement with ramparts and ditches, e.g. Castle-An-Dinas.
936 AD	Saxon King Athelstan sets Cornwall's eastern border at the River Tamar.	Holy wells	A sacred spring venerated by Christians and/or Pagans for worship or healing.

Key vocabulary of Ancient Cornwall:

Armorica	Ancient region of France, including modern Brittany, inhabited by Celts.	Hunter gatherer	Nomadic hunters, lived in tribes and survived through hunting and foraging.
Ancient Britons	Celtic people who inhabited and ruled Britain until the Saxon invasions.	Inscribed stone	Standing stones with ancient writing in Celtic or Latin text, e.g. the Men Scryfa.
Bronze Age	Second pre-historic period characterised by bronze tools and weapons.	Iron Age	Third pre-historic period characterised by the use of iron tools and weapons.
Brythonic	Southern group of Celtic languages including Cornish, Welsh and Breton.	Kernow	The Cornish language name for 'Cornwall' which was once part of Dumnonia.
Celts	Cultural group including Scots, Irish, Welsh, Cornish, Manx and Bretons.	Megaliths	Large prehistoric stone used in the construction of a structure or monument.
Cliff top castles	Coastal headland fortifications of which Tintagel Castle is a good example.	Portal Dolmens	Megalithic chamber tomb with sides and capstone on top, e.g. Trethevy Quoit.
Cornovii	Roman name for a south-western Celtic tribe known later as the Cornish.	Pagans	A person with religious beliefs other than one of the five main world religions.
Courtyard houses	Clusters of circular houses with conical thatched roofs, e.g. Chysauster.	Quoits	Flat capstone on top of a portal dolmen (above), e.g. Mulfra or Lanyon Quoit.
Dark Ages	Violent and chaotic period after the Romans left Britain, 410 AD onwards.	Roman Empire	Powerful civilisation of conquerors based in Rome between 27 BC to 476 AD.
Dumnonia	Roman province of south-west Britain which included modern Cornwall.	Saxons	C5 Invaders from the North Sea coast, i.e. Denmark, Germany & Netherlands.
Excalibur	The legendary sword of King Arthur – the one he drew from a big stone.	Stone Age	First pre-historic period characterised by the use of stone tools and weapons.
		Stone circles	Circle of standing stones dating from the early Bronze Age, e.g. Boscawen-Un.

