

*Enjoy our  
Island story*



# SECRETS OF LE CATILLON HOARD II

# CELTIC TRIBES



This is a picture of the tribal structure of the Celtic Society

## CELTIC TRIBES

Can you see three different people in the picture and suggest what they do?

1

2

3

What jobs do you think that they might have done?

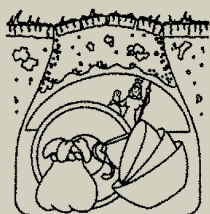
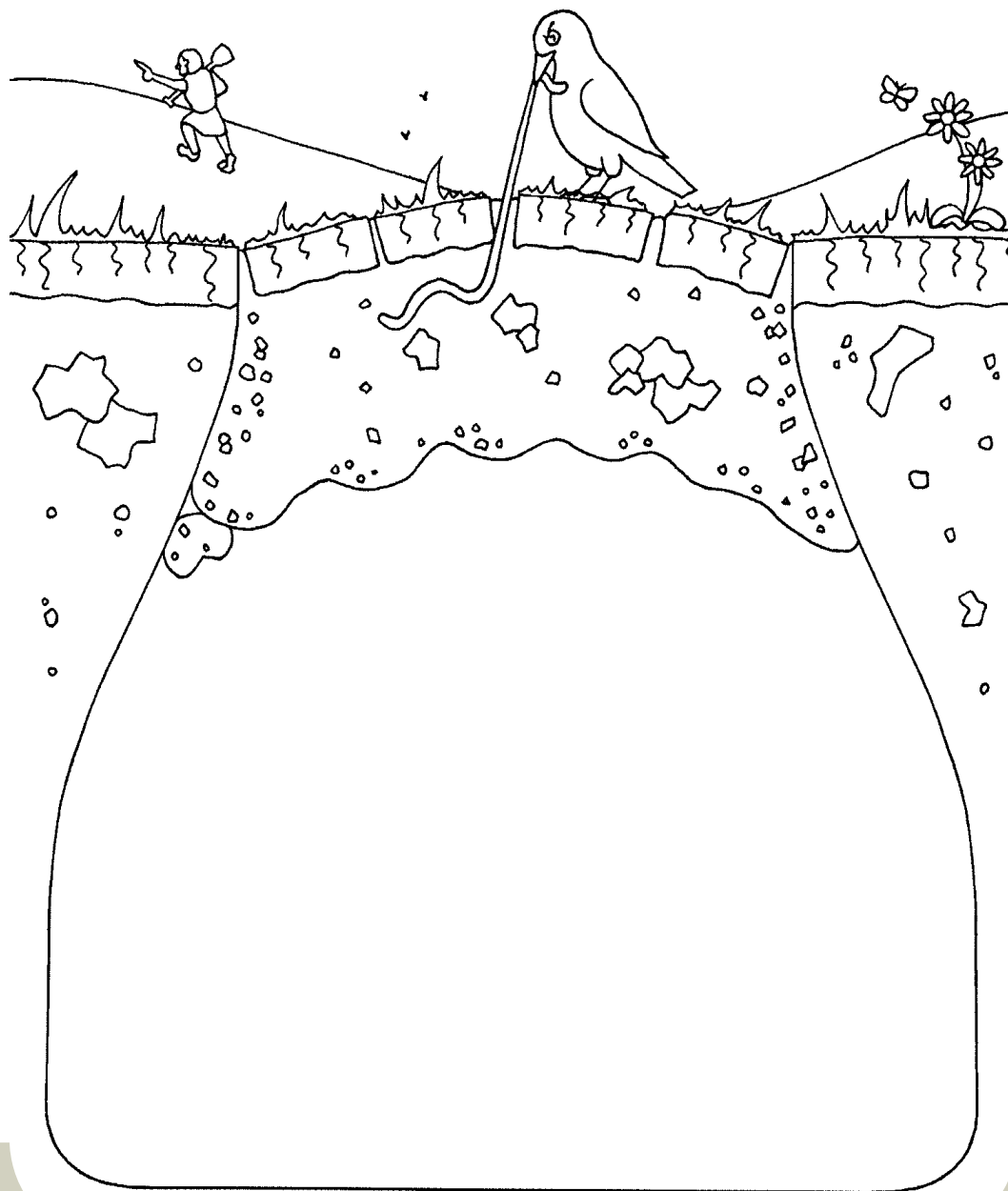
Can you describe one person's clothes and what they are wearing?

Is there anything else interesting about the picture and the people?

# BURIED TREASURE

# JH

JERSEY  
HERITAGE



See the man leaving over the hill? He has just buried some treasure in a secret hole. Draw what you think he has buried.

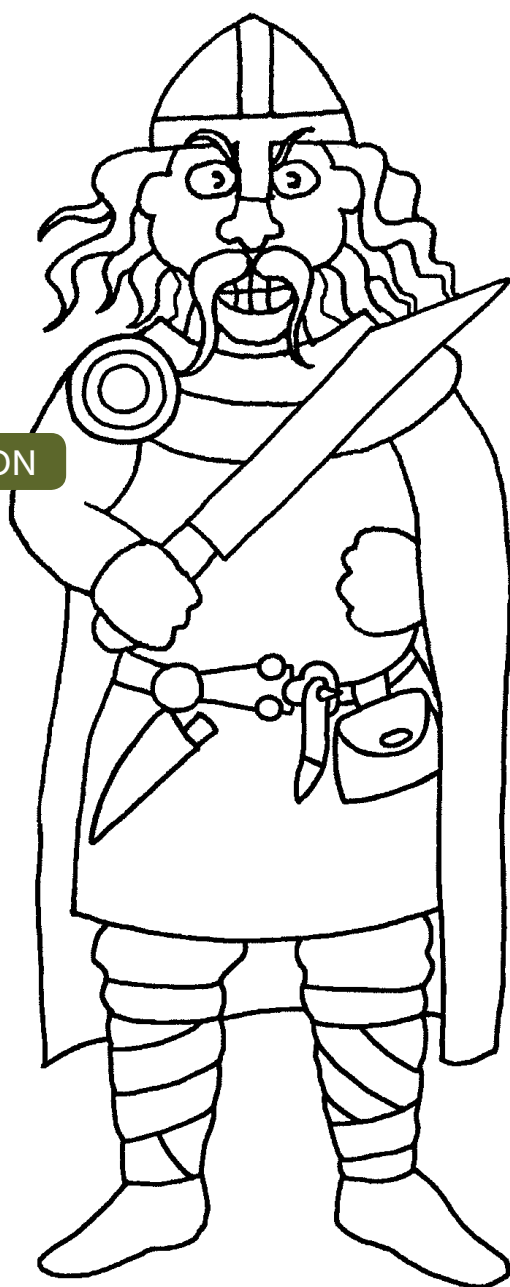
Then have a think about why he might have done this. What was happening in the island at the time that made him think the safest place for his most treasured possessions was in the ground?

## COMPARE ROMAN AND CELT

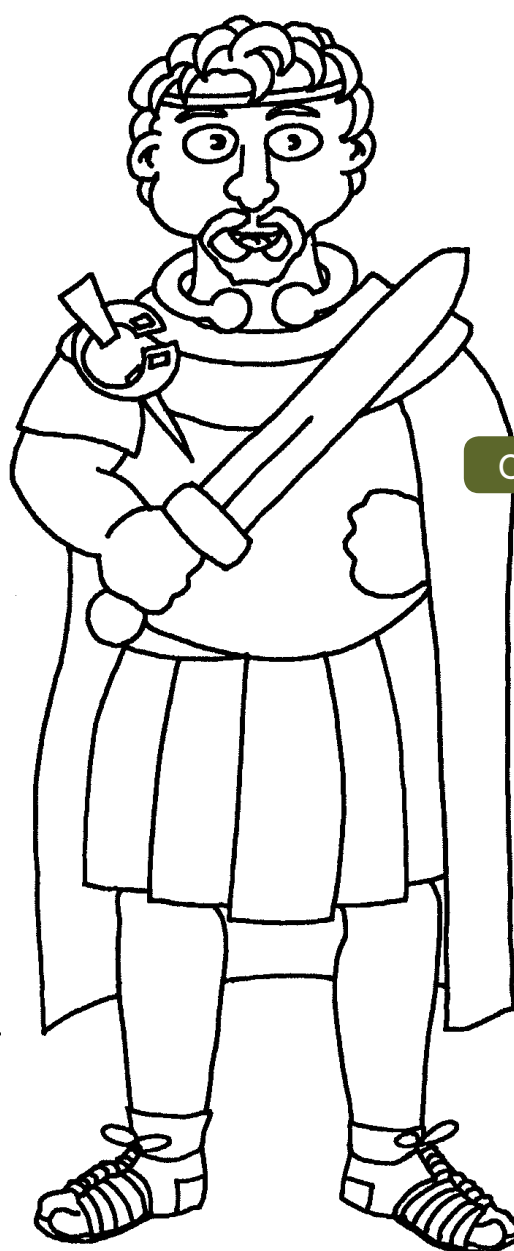
How are they dressed differently and what similarities are there?



SAXON



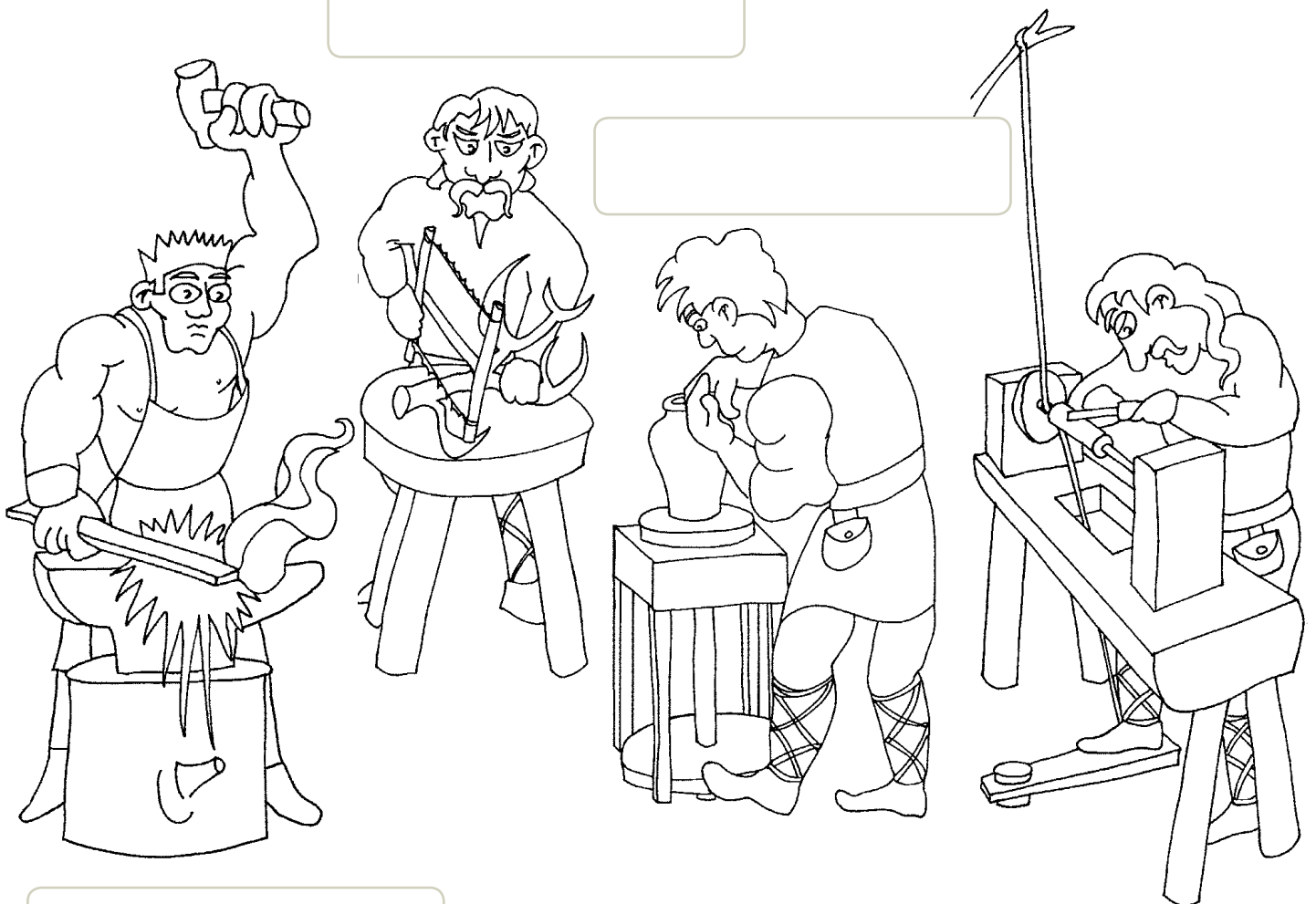
CELT



# CELT CRAFTSMEN

Here are some Celtic Craftsmen

Do you know what they are doing and what they are called?



## ARCHAEOLOGY

In which field might you go digging for things from the past?

Ring them and number your top 3

- ☐ A One with lots of broken pottery in it.
- ☐ B One with sheep in it.
- ☐ C One where someone found some old jewellery.
- ☐ D One with a new house in it.
- ☐ E One with a castle ruin in it.
- ☐ F One with a mound in it.
- ☐ G One with a pond in it.

What might you find?

BONE

LEATHER

IRON

STONE

COINS

CLOTH

BRONZE

WOOD

POTTERY

PAPER

Draw where you think  
artefacts might be found

Draw on some long grass  
and roots. How tall would  
it grow in different places?

# SECRETS OF LE CATILLON HOARD II



In 2012 two metal detectorists found the world's largest hoard of Celtic coins and jewellery in a field here in Jersey.

## THE IRON AGE

The hoard was buried about 2,000 years ago during the Iron Age - when Julius Caesar and his Roman legions were conquering Gaul and the Channel Islands were changing from being Celtic to Roman.

Most Celtic people in the islands were farmers or fishermen but burials found in Guernsey had shields and swords showing that they were warriors too. No similar burials have been found in Jersey, but forts like C  tel de Rozel suggest they were prepared to be attacked.

### OTHER COIN HOARDS

Jersey has more Celtic coins than anywhere else in Europe.

Eight other late Iron Age hoards have been found in Jersey - making it a real treasure island.

The coins tend to date from the 1st century BC - a time when the Celtic and the Roman worlds were colliding violently. The only safe way to hide wealth was to bury it in an isolated place like Jersey, separated from France by a short stretch of water.

## DISCOVERING THE HOARD

Local metal detectorists Reg Mead and Richard Miles spent more than 30 years looking for a scattered hoard.

A farmer's daughter told them that a pot of silver coins had been scattered across a field when a tree was uprooted.

In June 2012 they discovered the largest Celtic coin hoard of all time.

Once Reg and Richard realised they had found something really important, they stopped digging until an archaeological excavation could be organised.

### A FARMER'S DAUGHTER

Over 30 years ago a lady told Reg that when she was a girl, her father was removing a hedgerow between fields when he disturbed a small pot of silver coins. She remembers following the tractor after each ploughing and picking up more coins which she took to school and swapped for comics. From her description of the coins Reg knew they were from the Iron Age. The search was on.



### FINDERS OF THE HOARD

Reg and Richard have been metal detectorists for a very long time and they have always supported the recording, protection and conservation of Jersey's heritage. It was great that they got in touch with Jersey Heritage straight away as we were able to excavate the hoard allowing us to find out more about how and why it was buried.



# SECRETS OF LE CATILLON HOARD II

## EXCAVATING THE HOARD

Excavations showed that the hoard was buried at the bottom of a roughly dug pit, close to or maybe even inside a timber building. There was also evidence of Roman people living nearby. Archaeologists were amazed at the size of the hoard. It took five days to excavate. Lifting it was a real challenge, as it was a solid block weighing almost a ton (1000 kg), measuring 140x80x30cm and was very fragile.



## WHAT'S IN THE HOARD?

We started taking the hoard apart in July 2014 and this is what we have found so far:

- Coins - 69342
- Complete gold torques - 8
- Partial torques - 8
- Bracelets - 11
- Rings - 11
- Gold sheet - 1
- Copper loops - 6
- Stone - 1
- Ingots - 21
- Silver wire - 12
- Other gold bits - 22
- Glass beads - 5



## THE COINS

Most were made by Celtic tribes living in North Western France just over 2,000 years ago, in the late Iron Age. Most of them were made by the Coriosolitae tribe and are the most common coin found in Jersey hoards of this date. Excitingly there are also some very rare coins and new types of coins that have never been found before. The hoards composition is very different to any other Jersey or French mainland hoard and could change our understanding of Celtic coinage.

### CORIOSOLITAE COINS

Most of the coins were made by the Coriosolitae tribe who were based around the area of modern-day St Malo and Dinan. The larger coins are 'staters' and weigh about 5g (the same as a 20p piece).

The smaller coins are 'quarter staters' and there are lots of them in comparison to other hoards.

Another surprise is that we have found lots of tiny coins called Petits Billons some of which are completely new discoveries.





# SECRETS OF LE CATILLON HOARD II

## THE COINS

### OTHER COINS IN THE HOARD

A few coins from other neighbouring tribes including the Baiocasses, Redones, Osismii and Veneti have also been discovered within the hoard. Coins from outside the Armorican region have also been identified including earlier gold coins, known as 'globules a la croix' from an area south east of Paris.

The hoard also contains a number of coins which were made in southern Britain, probably in Hampshire. They are traditionally dated to the 40s BC which means the hoard can only have been buried sometime after Caesar's victory in Gaul.

### HOW WERE THE COINS MADE?

The coins were handmade and needed great technical and artistic skill to produce. They began as blank metal discs, formed in moulds. While still warm, a blank disc was placed between two dies and struck with a heavy hammer. The craftsmen probably worked in the dark, maybe even at night because they needed to see the colour of the metal to judge if the right temperature of around 650 degrees had been reached.

## THE JEWELLERY

This hoard contains more gold torques than any other Celtic coin hoard in Europe. Similar style torques have been found in Germany and Belgium.

Finding so much beautiful jewellery in a Celtic hoard is very rare. Jewellery is usually deliberately broken and damaged, probably so it can be melted down and recycled into new objects.

These incredible pieces of gold and silver jewellery are important because they give new clues into the lives of the people who buried the hoard.

### TORQUES

A torque is worn around the neck and was a common type of jewellery across Europe during the Iron Age. They were made of gold, silver, bronze or even iron. Only the most important people wore gold, the Iron Age equivalent of a modern king or queen's crown. They were often worn in battle and found buried in graves. They are very difficult to bend, so might have been only worn on special occasions or, like a modern wedding ring, not taken off at all.

### RESEARCHING THE HOARD

We are working with experts to help identify and understand the contents of the hoard.

Some of the gold torques have been x-rayed and we have found that they still contain an internal structure of iron. This iron 'hoop' would have been covered with wax or something similar and then the gold tubing which is about 1mm thick, was fitted over it.



## WHEN AND WHY WAS THE HOARD BURIED?

We thought the hoard was buried in Jersey by tribes living around the gulf of St Malo fleeing the Roman conquest by Julius Caesar during his campaigns in Gaul 58 to 52BC. But, the discovery of British coins dating to around 50 to 30BC suggests the hoard was buried after the conquest of 52 BC.

We can never know exactly why the treasure was buried in Jersey. We can only guess that at some point 2,000 years ago some social upheaval, danger or other threat caused these people to bury their wealth deep in Jersey's soil. Or the treasure was collected, stored and buried for recycling in order to make more coins or other objects. Whatever the truth, nobody came back for it.

# SECRETS OF LE CATILLON HOARD II

## RECORDING AND CONSERVATION

### CONSERVATION PROCESS

The majority of the coins are made of 'billon' a mixture of silver and copper.

The high copper content has resulted in corrosion, fusing the contents of the hoard into one block and hiding the detail on the coins.

The conservation team unpicked the hoard one piece at a time. They then carefully cleaned each coin and piece of jewellery so it can be identified and studied.



### CONSERVATION TREATMENT

The coins are treated by using a dilute formic acid solution which removes the green copper corrosion and reveals the original silver appearance.

Gold pieces are barely touched by corrosion and need little conservation work. We clean the gold with Berberis thorns which are about 10 to 20mm long. They work well because they are hard enough to push off the dirt and corrosion but soft enough not to scratch the gold.

### RECORDING THE HOARD

The way we recorded the position of each item to within a twentieth of a millimetre is ground-breaking – no one has done this before.

This has allowed us to create a 3D computer model showing every coin in its original position, providing us with important information about how the hoard was buried and helps future research.

### ORGANIC MATERIAL

Along one edge of the hoard was a mass of black organic material. Under a microscope we saw that this material contains remains of plant fibres, animal hairs, and the remains of insects. Looking at this material more closely will tell us what was growing at the time the hoard was buried, what season it was, what animals and insects were in the area.

