



WHO WAS THE “MAID OF ORLEANS”?

During the Hundred Years War (1337 to 1453), English kings often claimed the throne of France. In 1420, Henry V had forced the French king, Charles VI, to declare him heir to the French throne, rather than his own son, Charles VII. The English controlled all of northern France, but southern France denied the English claim.



Jeanne d'Arc, as she is known in France, was born in 1412 at Domrémy, near Nancy. She was a devout Catholic and, by the age of 13, was having visions telling her that she had been chosen by God to help King Charles VII drive out the English. In 1429, she persuaded the king, and in April of that year she led French troops to lift the siege of Orleans. A series of further wins took the French army to Reims, where all French coronations took place. There, Charles was crowned in July.

Joan was captured in May 1430 by the Burgundian army, who sold her to the English. They burned her at the stake as a heretic at the end of May 1431. She is still revered today as a national heroine in France.

FACT FILE

Medieval castles and towns were fortified to give citizens protection. Sieges could last for months. If attackers could not batter their way into a town, they would try to prevent any supplies of food or armaments reaching the defenders, forcing them to give up or starve.



TELL ME ABOUT HISTORY: WHO?



WHO DID THE ANCIENT GREEKS WORSHIP?

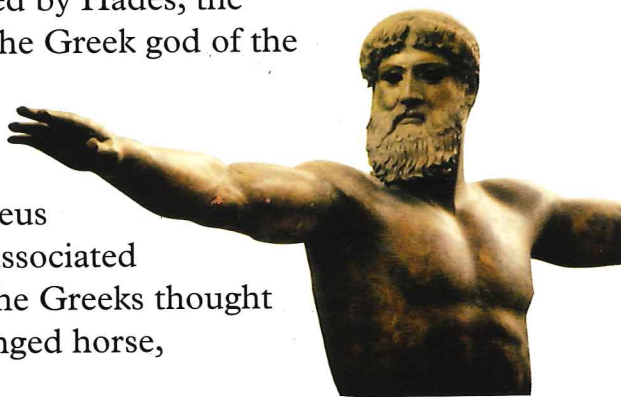


The Greeks believed in many different gods. Chief among these was a family of supernatural beings who lived on Mount Olympus and watched over humanity. Certain gods looked after the harvest; others cared for wild animals, the sea, war, and the like. The king of the gods was Zeus, whom the Romans called Jupiter. The first Olympic Games, which took place in 776 B.C., were held in his honor.

Zeus

The upper half was light and airy, the lower half dark and gloomy, and the earth was a flat disc, floating between these two halves. When people died, they went to the Underworld, which was ruled by Hades, the brother of Zeus. Poseidon was the Greek god of the sea, often shown carrying a three-pronged spear, called a trident. The Greeks believed Poseidon to be the brother of Zeus and Hades. Poseidon was also associated with earthquakes and horses. The Greeks thought that he was the father of the winged horse, Pegasus.

Poseidon



FACT FILE

The ruins of Greek and Roman temples can be seen across Europe, the Near East, and North Africa. Every town had its own temple, which was dedicated to a protector god or goddess.

