

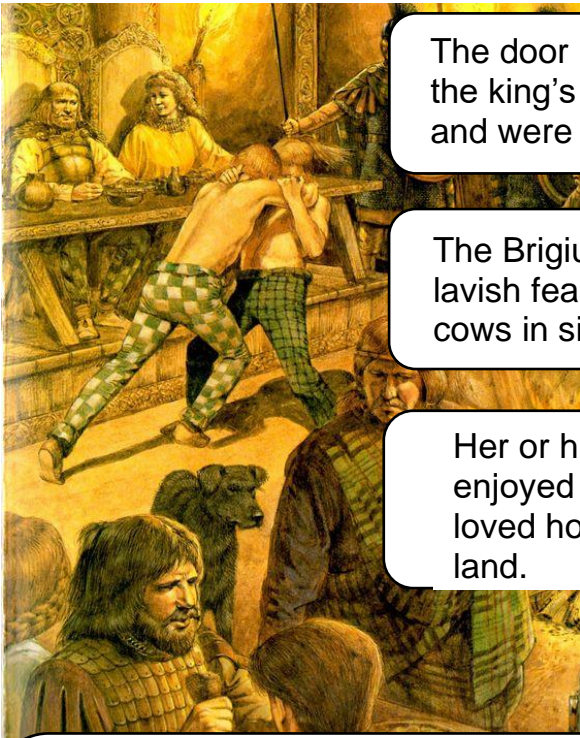
2.

Would you like to be King Fergus or Queen Mebh? They were not rulers of a whole country. There were lots of local chieftains.



Choose me for queen (or king).  
I have a high status.  
I am good looking with no injuries or blemishes.  
I am allowed to wear bright many-coloured clothes and lots of jewellery.  
I have many skilful warriors.  
I am wealthy. I can hold magnificent feasts and I can impress kings and warriors from other Tuaths.  
My story teller poets will sing many praise poems about me.

But the king or queen had some important people to help him.



The door keeper decided if you were allowed to enter the king's dun. If he said, "no", then you lost status and were no longer important.

The Brigiu helped to provide the queen or king with lavish feasts He was a wealthy man who counted his cows in six hundreds.

Her or his elite warriors were skilled athletes. They enjoyed all sorts of 'extreme' sports but particularly loved horse and chariot racing. They protected the land.

But the most important was the poet. He, or she could make the chief famous with 'praise' poems. If the ruler did something bad, the poet might make a satire, a 'blame' poem. A satire could make blotches appear on the ruler's face. Then everyone would laugh at him and he would have to stop being king or queen.