

OAN 1107 / BAN 1311

***LANDMARKS IN BRITISH HISTORY***

Dr. Tamás Tukacs

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**Some words about a proper Powerpoint Presentation:**

What does a good presentation look like?

- you rely on at least 3-4 different sources
- you are able to talk relatively freely about your topic for about 10-15 minutes
- you talk logically in a structured way (telling at the beginning what you are going to cover or ask a focus question at the beginning, e.g., *Why* are there so many myths about the Vikings?)
- you are able to answer questions, if any
- you know the meaning of technical terms you are talking about
- you can pronounce proper names, geographical names properly
- you use a lot of pictures and a minimal amount of text on the slides
- in the case of graphs, charts, you interpret what you have in them
- you summarise at the end

What does a bad presentation look like?

- you copy texts from one webpage and read them out in a monotonous voice (or worse, you use a ChatGPT-generated text and read it out)
- in general, reading out a text from paper or your phone is NO presentation
- you finish after about 5 minutes
- you cram the slides with small-font texts
- you use no illustrations, pictures or illustrations are irrelevant
- you don't keep the audience's attention, i.e., you pour information on them without explaining it
- there is no focus or structure in the presentation
- you don't know the meaning of any technical term you use
- you mispronounce any proper name
- in general, you don't give the impression that you are prepared
  - **if any of the above occur, I will stop the presentation and ask you to do it again for the next week**

<b>Hét</b>	<b>Előadás</b>	<b>Kiselőadások</b>
1	Introduction, orientation Antecedents: Pre-Germanic Britain	
<b>The Medieval Period (409-1485)</b>		
2	Britain in the Anglo-Saxon times	Anglo-Saxon (Germanic) Polytheism The Vikings – myths and reality
3	The Norman period and the Angevins	The Bayeux tapestry “Multiculturalism”: The English and French languages side by side
4	The High Middle Ages: The Plantagenet kings	The chivalric world The legend of Robin Hood
5	Lancaster and York: the Wars of the Roses	Eating and Dressing Habits of the 15 <sup>th</sup> century The Figure of Richard III in Literature
<b>The Road to the Constitutional Monarchy (1485-1689)</b>		
6	The Tudors	The Illnesses of Henry VIII The Pirates of Elizabeth I
7	The Stuarts and the Civil War	Life in Puritan England Cromwell’s Model Army
8	The Commonwealth, Restoration and the Glorious Revolution	The First English Colonies in North America The Great Fire and the Rebuilding of London
<b>Hannoverian Rule (1714-1901): Britain as a Global Power</b>		
9	The Long Eighteenth Century (1688-1832)	Great British Scientists and Inventors of the 18 <sup>th</sup> Century The Madness of George III
10	The Victorian Age 1	Victorian Manners and Morals Victoria and Albert
11	The Victorian Age 2	The Bizarre Side of the Victorian Times (Jack the Ripper, Freak Shows, etc.) Colonial Wars (the analysis of one conflict)
<b>The 20<sup>th</sup> century</b>		
12	The UK 1901-1945	The treatment of shell shock Edward and Wallis – the Abdication Crisis
13	The UK 1945-1979	Beatlemania and youth culture Immigration, integration and Enoch Powell
14	The UK 1979-	The UK in the 1980s (punks, new wave music, football hooliganism, etc.) Brexit: what next? Will the UK survive as a state?

# 1. THE ANGLO-SAXON AGE (409-1066)

## DATES, NAMES AND CONCEPTS

### Dates:

the Romans leave Britain (409),  
the Pope sends Augustine to convert the English (597),  
The Synod of Whitby (664),  
Viking invasion (787),  
Battle of Brunnanburgh (937),  
renewed Viking wars (991),  
Battle of Maldon (991),  
Danish house dies out (1042),  
Battle of Hastings (1066)

### Names:

Gildas,  
Bede the Venerable,  
St Augustine,  
St Ninian,  
St Patrick,  
Aidan,  
Oswy,  
Offa,  
Kenneth MacAlpin,  
Egbert,  
Alfred the Great,  
Ethelred the Unready,  
Edmund Ironside,  
Svein Forkbeard,  
Knut the Great,  
Edward the Confessor,  
Harold Godwinson

## Concepts:

Welsch,

Sassenach,

Anglo-Saxon Chronicle,

Lindisfarne,

Iona,

Danelaw,

Danegeld,

North Sea Empire

## **0. Some Prehistory**

### **A) The Celts**

- the Celts – late Iron Age; present-day Irish, Scottish, Welsh
- appeared in Europe around 500 BC
- red-haired people, men with long moustaches
- came possibly from present-day Russia
- invaded Italy and sacked Rome in 390 BC
- (1) Invasion Hypothesis: two waves of Celts arrived in Britain between 200 BC and 100 BC: Gaels (invaded Ireland and north Scotland) and Brythoni (invaded England, Wales and south Scotland)
- (2) Cultural Infiltration Hypothesis: Gaul (France & Belgium) were Celtic, and some parts of Celtic culture crossed into Britain, but the Britons were not Celtic
- (in fact, the name “Celts” turns up only in the 18<sup>th</sup> century)
- tribal organisation with a ruler above them called toisech (the title of Irish PM now is also Taoiseach) (pronounced as tee-shock)
- Some warring tribes:
  - Ulaidh (Ulster)
  - Durotriges (Dorset)
  - Brigantes (North)
  - Picti (Scotland)

- Iceni (Norfolk)
- Cantiaci (Kent), etc...



- trading with the Romans (before the Roman conquest)
- pottery and jewellery from the continent found at numerous sites
- special group of elite fighters called Fianna or Fenians – legendary Finn MacCool
- used painting on their bodies (extracted from woad)
- secret weapon: swift, light chariot > probably the origin of present-day word ‘car’



- Religion: Druids

- reverence for nature and their surroundings
- they revered over 400 gods (including animas, rivers, lakes)
- druids: priests, but also could write and read, knew mathematics, some medicine, law, and astronomy, performed sacred rituals and sacrificed people
- for example Lindow Man found in 1984 in a peat marsh: he was his head smashed in, strangled and finally drowned
- roots of the Arthurian legend

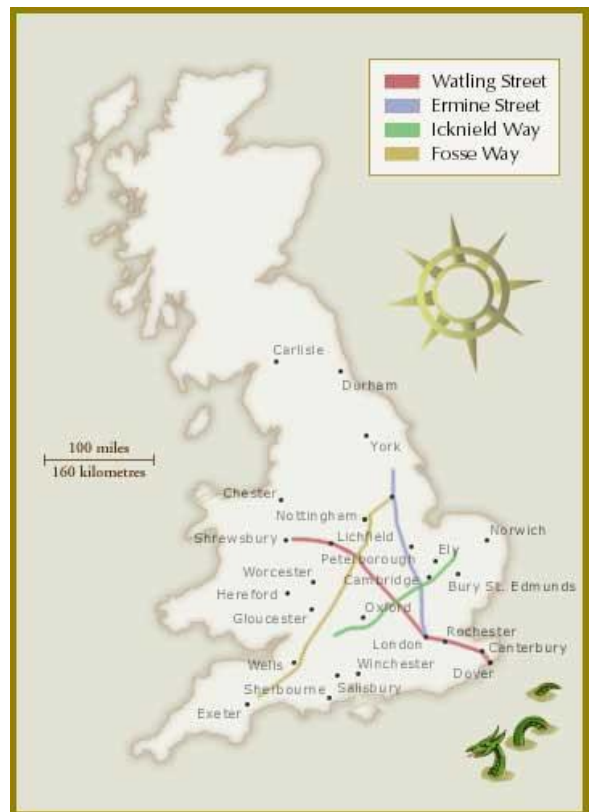
## **B) Roman Rule (43-410)**

- the Romans were first to call Britain “Britannia”
- the Romans knew of Cornish tin, and druidic religion
- 55-54 BC: Julius Caesar lands in Britain, but Claudius was the one who really conquered most of Britain from 43 AD on
- the conquest most often meant creating Celtic “client kingdoms” and making them pay tribute money
- Consolidation period:
- religion: Romans borrowed local gods; e.g. Bath was named Aquae Sulis, after the local British river god
- military weapons: ballista catapult
- waterworks system and bath houses (in Bath, for example)



- underground pipes system (“plumber” comes from the Latin for lead: plumbum)
- urbanisation
- straight roads to link the cities:

Watling Street (London to Wroxeter in Wales), Ermine Street (London to Hadrian’s Wall), Fosse Way (Exeter to Lincoln)





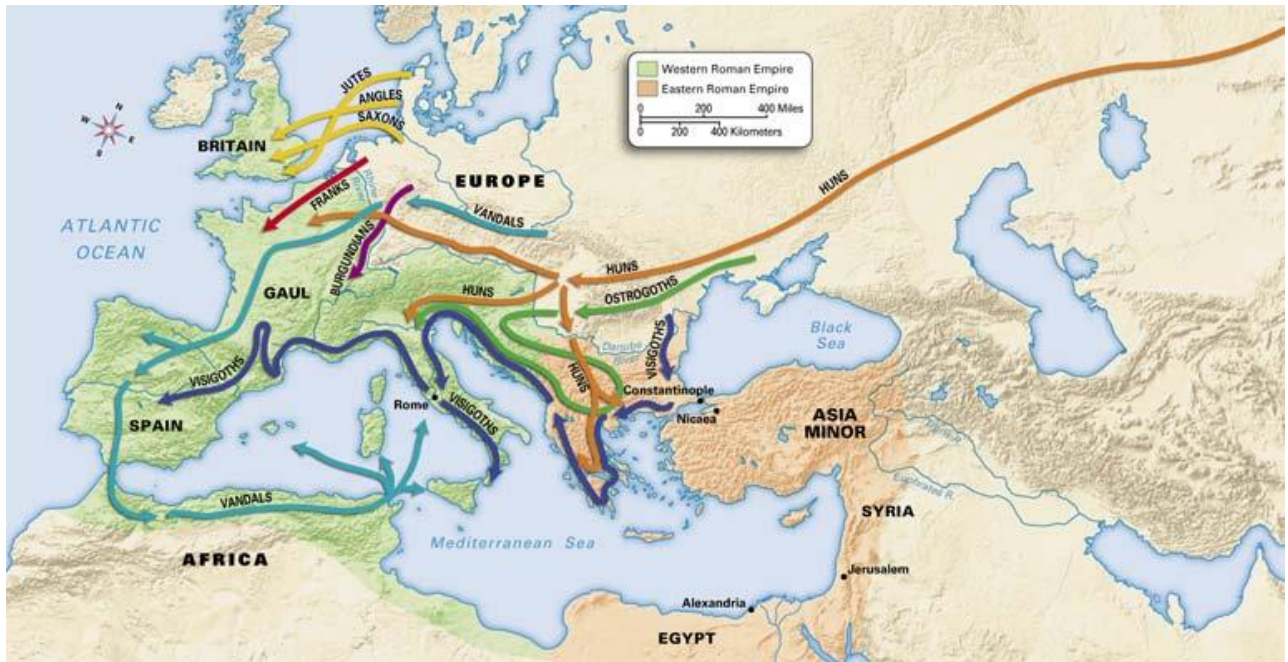


*The remains of Watling Street*

- introduction of new agricultural techniques and vegetables and fruit (cherry, mint, onion, oil, cabbage, kitchen, cup, pan, dish > these Latin words come from this period)
- chiefs of tribes began to call themselves kings
- spread of Christianity
- Constantine allows Christianity as one of the religions in 312 and Theodosius makes it the official religion of the Empire in 380
- peace and prosperity was secured for about three centuries by the **Pax Romana**

### **1. The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire**

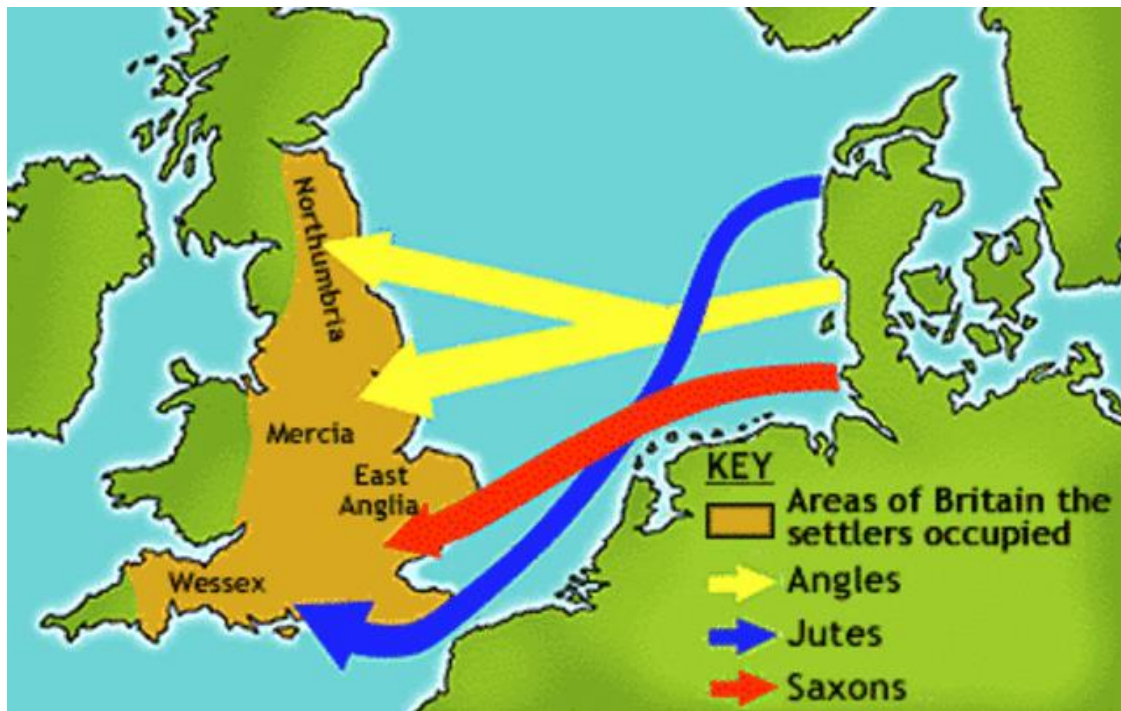
- 4<sup>th</sup> century: Roman Empire grew too big, divided into two halves, internal struggles
- migrating tribes attacking the Empire on the borders
- rise of the Brigantes tribe
- 367 - Picts and Scots also launched attacks at the northern border
- Vandals, Ostrogoths and Visigoths sacking Rome



- arrival of Angles and Saxons from Germany after 400 (before that there had been some contact)
- by 409 AD Romans left Britain to deal with the crisis on the Continent
- the leading figure of the age is Vortigern: he was a Celtic chief, and a written document survives testifying that he commissioned two Saxon chiefs, Hengist and Horsa, to help him against the Picts and the Scots
- Britain fell apart to tiny British (Celtic) kingdoms that disappeared in the 6<sup>th</sup> century

## 2. Early Period

- 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> centuries: large-scale migration of tribes in Europe: Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Vandals, Huns, Avars, Bulgars, Slavs, Franks, Lombards, Burgundians, etc. They founded “barbaric” kingdoms throughout Europe



- the Anglo-Saxons found two kinds of people in Britain: Romano-Britons (cives) – Romanised population that spoke Latin AND Celts living together with the Romans
- soon the cives and the Celts started to fight each other > helped the Anglo-Saxon invaders
- the Saxons called the Celts “strangers”, that is, Welsch, while the Celts called the Saxons Sassenach, which is still used sometimes today with a slightly ironic or derogatory meaning
- sources are scarce concerning this period, and not all of them are reliable
- British monk Gildas’s history (lived between about 500-570): *De excidio et conquestu Britanniae* (On the Ruin and Conquest of Britain)
- Bede the Venerable, a Northumbrian monk (673-735): *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* (The Ecclesiastical History of the English People) (often called the first history of the English)
- Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (9<sup>th</sup> century, commissioned by Alfred the Great)
- the Celts and Romanised Celts were gradually pushed westwards and northwards (Cornwall, Wales, Scotland)
- the Anglo-Saxons and the British did not have much in common: the AS were migrants and farmers, the British were city-dwellers; the AS believed in Germanic gods, while the British were mostly Christian

- by 600, the Anglo Saxons occupied Britain with the exception of Scotland, Wales and Cornwall

### 3. Saxon Kingdoms: the Heptarchy

- Anglo-Saxons occupied only present-day England
- Angles kingdoms: Northumbria, Mercia, East Anglia
- Saxon kingdoms: Sussex, Essex, Wessex
- Jutes (or Saxons?): Kent
- place names reflect the AS settlement:
  - **-tun** ending: ‘settlement’ > Cridiantun (settlement by a winding river) > Crediton; Kyningestun (king’s settlement) > Kingston
  - **-burh** ending: ‘fortified town’ > Gaeignesburh > Gainsborough; Eidynburh > Edinburgh (the ‘burh’ ending reflects the time of AS settlement); Maeldubesburh > Malmesbury
  - **-brycg** ending: ‘bridge’: Grantabrycg (bridge over the River Granta/Cam) > Cambridge



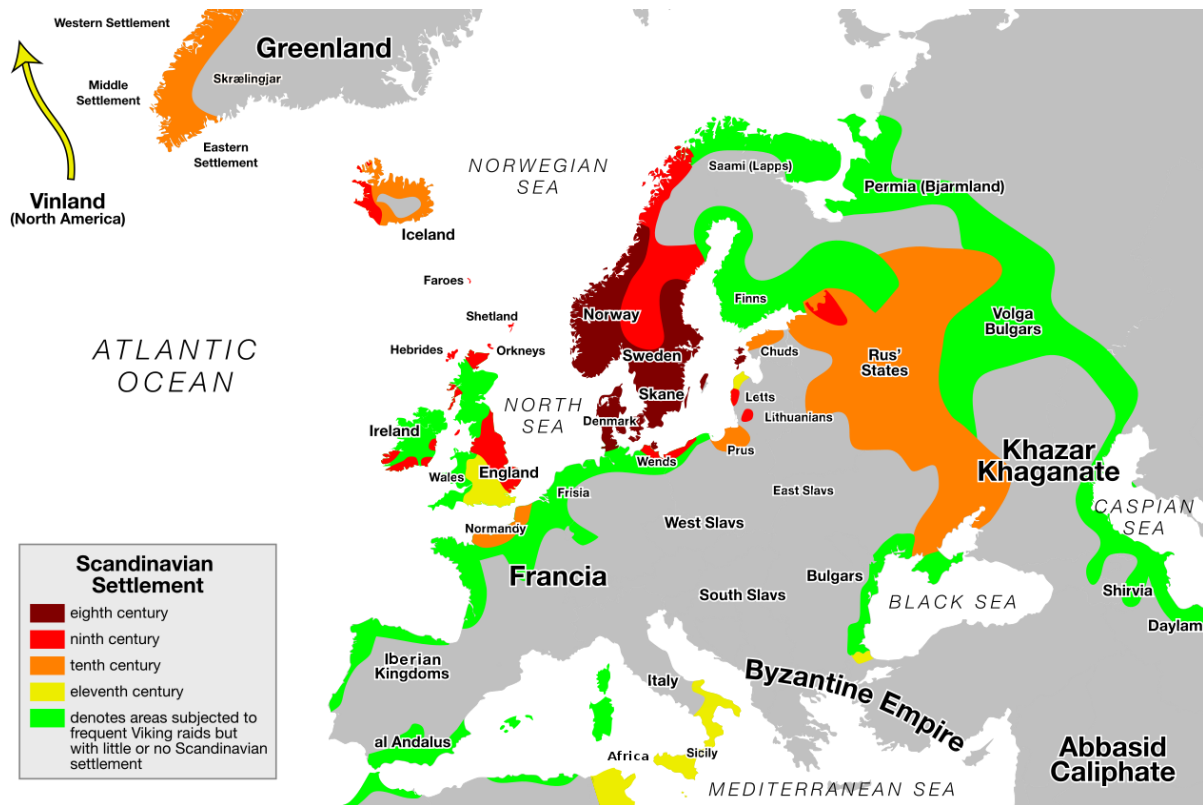
#### **4. The Conversion of England**

- Pope Gregory sent Augustine to convert the pagan Anglo-Saxons to Christianity in 597
- the British Celts had been, of course, Christian even before St. Augustine, priests and bishops were at work
- the British did not want to force their faith on the pagan Anglo-Saxons
- St Ninian converted the Picts,
- St Patrick converted the Irish
- before, Irish missionaries went all over Europe preaching
- one famous missionary was St Columba from Ireland: he managed to convert the Picts and they gave him the island of **Iona** as a base
- the abbot of Iona sent Oswald, the king of Northumbria, a monk called Aidan, and he gave Aidan the island of Lindisfarne, which was made an important religious centre
- Pope Gregory decided to extend the power of the Roman (Catholic) Church to the British Isles as well and suppress Celtic Christianity, which was less hierarchical, more democratic, and could be a rival of the RC church
- 597: Augustine lands in Britain with 40 monks
- a long argument and conflict between the Celtic and the Roman church began
- 664: Synod of Whitby – originally a ‘conference’ convened by King Oswy of Northumbria to decide the right time for Easter and on the wearing of the monastic tonsure, but the significance of the synod was that the rules of the Roman church were established in Northumbria instead of the Celtic practices of Irish monks at Iona. Slowly, other AS kingdoms accepted the Roman Catholic religion and Celtic Christianity lost its significance.

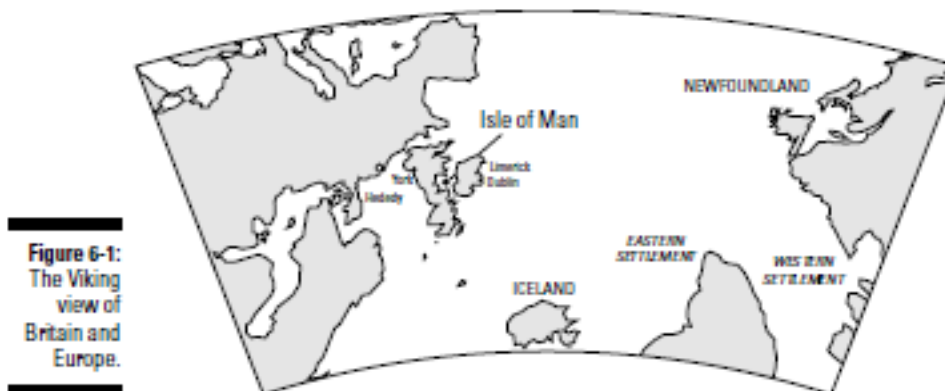
#### **5. The Rivalry of Kingdoms and the Viking invasion**

- the leading kingdom first was Northumbria (Oswy was a Northumbrian king)
- by the middle of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, Mercia became the most powerful under the leadership of King Offa (757-796)
- he captured the king of East Anglia and executed him (794), so with the exception of Northumbria, he practically ruled the whole of Anglo-Saxon empire
- built **Offa’s dyke** to keep off the Welsh

- 789: first Viking invasion
- to be more precise, the “Vikings” were Norsemen, “Viking” is a noun meaning ‘going off as a pirate’. ‘Dane’ in this context comes from the AS words thegn or thane, meaning ‘warrior’ > the words Norsemen, Vikings and Danes were used interchangeably
- from about 800 to 1000, Britain was part of the Viking world



- they were brutal invaders, raping and pillaging
- the monasteries of Iona and Lindisfarne were destroyed (790s)
- the Norsemen conquered Britain, Ireland, Iceland, some parts of Greenland, they reached North America, parts of Germany, deep into Russia (the word ‘Rus’ was the Norse word for ‘route’ – founded Kiev, Novgorod and Smolensk), and most importantly, from the aspect of British history, they went to France, raided Paris, and settled in Normandy, the starting point of the Norman Conquest in 1066
- the Vikings made the Isle of Man as their centre (a strategic point from their point of view – see the map: they always represented the world in maps ‘upside down’)



- King Offa and the Frank king Charlemagne (Charles the Great) agreed to fight the Vikings, but without much success
- the Vikings gradually invaded territories of Ireland and Britain
- one of their much-feared leader was Ivar the Boneless
- Kenneth MacAlpin in Scotland started to fight the Vikings: he eliminated the Pictish leaders to make the country stronger. He did not want to join the Anglo-Saxons against the Vikings: he wanted a strong Scottish kingdom that he named Alba. Later, however, he also joined the Vikings to force the English out of the Lowlands.
- What was happening in England? The growing importance of Wessex can be seen. In 829 **King Egbert of Wessex** was recognised as the Overlord of England.
- Meanwhile, the Vikings settled in an area of England that they called the Danelaw – because only Viking laws applied here



- 
- In 871, the Vikings launched an attack against Wessex, and King Aethelred beat them near Ashdown. But that could not stop the Vikings. He died soon after, and his younger brother, **Alfred** became the king (871-899)



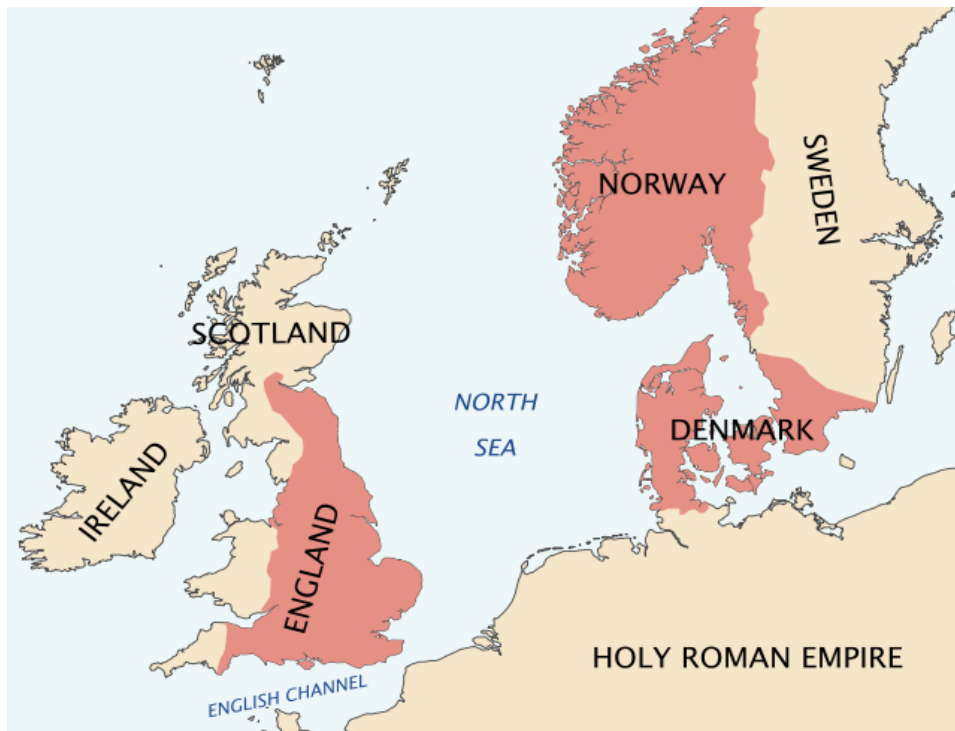
- he was the most important king of this period, and earned the name Alfred the Great
- he had another victory over the Vikings, and King Guthrum even agreed to be baptised as part of the peace settlement, Alfred being his godfather
- he organised the first proper English navy



- forced the Vikings out of London
- he drew up a proper code of law (rights, taxes, rents)
- he was also well-educated – he commissioned the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, a year-by-year account of English history from the beginnings. Its purpose was to record his name as a historical figure for posterity, but it is still an important source of early English history
- by the time he died in 899, on his coins he was called ‘the King of the English’. He is usually regarded as the first real king of a unified England
  - his son Edward, and his grandson Athelstan were just as good leaders as him
  - the Old English battle song, “The Battle of Brunnanburh” (937) recounts Athelstan’s victory over the Vikings and the allied forces of Scots and Britons
  - by the 940s, the kings of Wessex more or less conquered England and kept the Vikings at bay (they became the Wessex kings’ subjects)
  - from the 940s to 990s, England was practically free of Viking attacks
  - In 991, the Vikings launched another attack. This time they faced Aethelred (the Unready) – the sobriquet he got does not really mean that he was not ready, but the name comes from the Old English word *unraed*, meaning ‘ill-advised’).
  - He was a rather weak leader. In the Battle of Maldon (another OE poem about this), the Vikings crushed Ethelred’s army.
  - Ethelred decided to pay the Norsemen to go away: this was the Danegeld
  - In 1013, the Viking king, Sveyn Forkbeard launched a full-scale invasion, occupying London
  - Ethelred’s son, **Edmund Ironside** carried on the fight and forced the Danes to divide the kingdom

## **6. Viking Rule and the Fall of Anglo-Saxon England**

- But **Knut** (Cnut or Canute), Sveyn’s son, murdered Edmund Ironside, who was king only for one year (1016)
- Knut took the throne in 1016 (until 1035), thereby interrupting the rule of the House of Wessex
- actually, he was a strong and competent king and secured 20 years of peace for the English, making them part of the “North Sea Empire”



- Cnut's sons, Harold Harefoot and Harthacnut ruled until 1042.
- After the Danish house, the House of Wessex was restored until 1066, with Edward the Confessor ruling for more than twenty years (1042-1066)

## 2. THE NORMANS AND THE ANGEVINS (1066-1216)

### DATES, NAMES AND CONCEPTS

#### Dates:

Battle of Hastings (1066),  
the first Crusade (1095),  
the murder of Thomas Becket (1170),  
Magna Carta is issued (1215)

#### Names:

William the Conqueror,  
Harald Hardrada,  
William Rufus,  
Henry I,  
Matilda,  
Stephen,  
Henry II,  
Thomas Becket,  
Richard I (Lionheart),  
John (the Lackland)

#### Concepts:

Bayeux Tapestry,  
feudalism,  
feudal chain,  
overlord,  
vassals,  
fief / feoff,  
Domesday Book,  
Investiture Contest,

Constitutions of Clarendon,  
Crusades,  
Magna Carta Libertatum

## **THE NORMAN PERIOD (1066-1154)**

### **1. The Battle of Hastings**

- after Edward the Confessor's death (1066), there were several claimants to the throne:
  - 1) Harold Godwinson, brother-in-law of Edward the Confessor
  - 2) Edgar Aetheling, (born in Hungary), son of Edward the Exile, who fled to the Continent after Cnut became king.
  - 3) William (Guillaume) of Normandy, the first-cousin-once-removed of Edward the Confessor, the duke of Normandy (the Gallicised descendants of Norsemen, that is Vikings)
  - 4) Harald Hardrada, the Viking king of Norway
- finally, in January 1066, the Witan elected Harold Godwinson king. He was the last Anglo-Saxon king. (Edgar Aetheling was proclaimed king, but was never crowned.)
- the Anglo-Saxon period was over
- Harold Godwinson had to fight the Viking king, Harald Hardrada, and his own brother, Tostig
- 23 September 1066: he defeated them in the battle of Stamford Bridge (near York) but his health seriously deteriorated
- a few days later Harold heard the news that William landed in England
- William was waiting for a favourable moment – now everyone was up north, he began invading, Harold quickly went south but it took him 2 weeks
- Harold Godwinson died from an arrow in his eye, the English troops got confused and lost the **battle of Hastings** (1066)
- a spectacular contemporary document of the battle of Hastings is the Bayeux Tapestry (like a cartoon showing the events)



*“Harold Rex Interfectus Est” (King Harold is killed)*

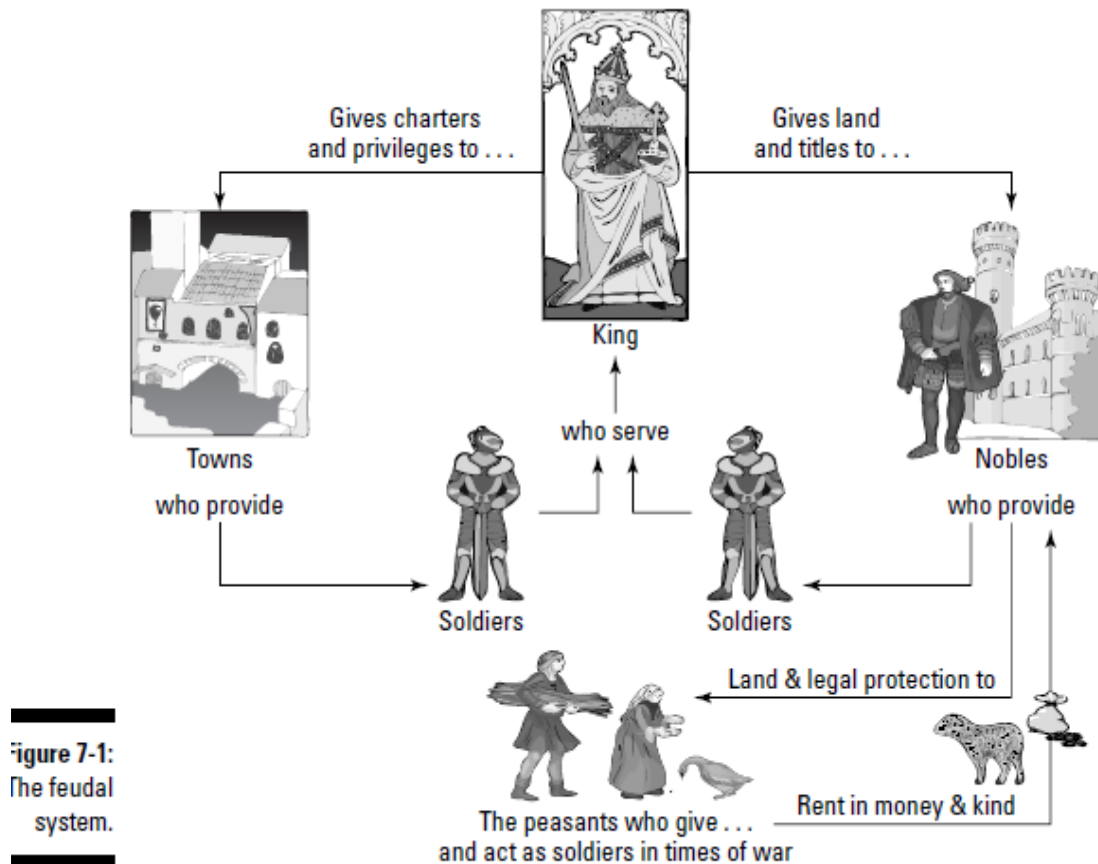
- the coronation of William took place in Westminster Abbey > William wanted to show that he was Edward the Confessor’s heir and not Harold Godwinson’s
- the coronation ended in disorder: when the people shouted “God save the King”, the nervous Norman guards thought they were going to attack William, and set the nearby houses on fire

## **2. The New System: Feudalism**

- William the Conqueror (Guillaume le Conquérant) (1066-1087)
- William first had to fight the kingdoms that did not want to accept him (Exeter, Kent), and Harold’s family, plus Edgar the Aetheling, not to mention Edwin (king of Mercia), Morcar (king of Nortumbria), Malcolm III (the Scottish king), and Sveyn, the king of Denmark

- William spent the next few years fighting with the claimants and Anglo-Saxon rebellions
- the new system he created was feudalism: (up until then, England had followed the Frankish kind of establishment)
- 0) two basic principles of feudalism: every man had a lord, and every lord had land
- 1) William declared that all the land belonged to him. William gave the Saxon lands to his Norman nobles. Over 4,000 Saxon landlords were replaced by 200 Norman ones
- 2) appointed earls / barons as tenants who had to pay him rent (in money, in work, in loyalty, in soldiers etc.)
- William was very careful to give small lands in different parts of the country, so that none of the nobles could gather soldiers easily against him
- 3) the overlord gave lands, typically called fief or feoff, in return of feudal services < the word comes from the French word feu, the root of the word feudalism
- 4) the earls also had vassals
- 5) vassals gave lands to knights and other freemen

- 6) at the bottom of the feudal chain were the peasants (the Anglo-Saxons) and serfs, who were not free to leave the land and had to work there

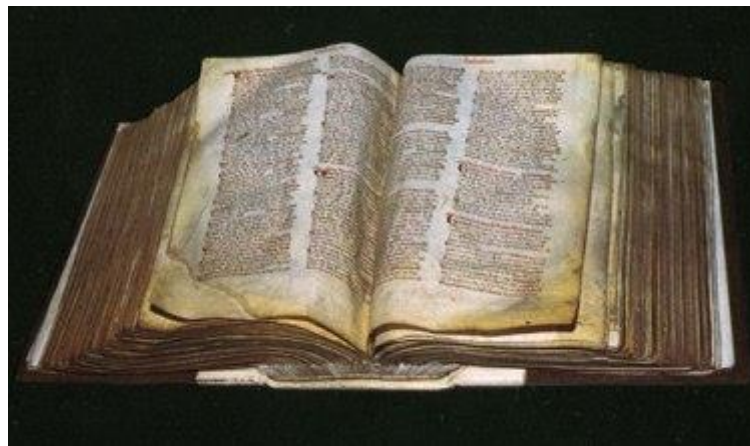


- William, naturally, wanted to know how much land he had > ordered the Domesday Book to be made, which contained a list of properties in every single village

*Æfter þisum hæfde se cyng mycel geþeaht. 7 swiðe deope spæce wið his witan ymbe þis land hu hit wære gesett. oððe mid hwylcon mannon. Sende þa ofer eall Englaland into ælcere scire his men. 7 lett agan ut hu fela hundred hyda wæron innon þære scire. oððe hwet se cyng him sylf hæfde landes. 7 orfes innan þam lande. oððe hwilce gerihtæ he ahte to habbanne to .xii. monþum of ðære scire. Eac he lett gewritan hu mycel landes his arcebiscops hæfdon. 7 his leodbiscops. 7 his abbods. 7 his eorlas. 7 þeah ic hit lengre telle. hwæt oððe hu mycel ælc mann hæfde þe landsittende wæs innan Englalande. on lande. oððe on orfe. 7 hu mycel feos hit wære wurð. Swa swyðe nearwelice he hit lett utaspyrian. þæt næs an ælpig hide. ne an gyrde landes. ne furðon, hit is sceame to tellanne. ac hit ne þuhte him nan sceame to donne. an oxe. ne*

*an cu. ne an swin. næs belyfon. þæt næs gesæt on his gewrite. 7 ealle þa gewrita wæron gebroht to him syððan.*

*“After this had the king a large meeting, and very deep consultation with his council, about this land; how it was occupied, and by what sort of men. Then sent he his men over all England into each shire; commissioning them to find out "How many hundreds of hides were in the shire, what land the king himself had, and what stock upon the land; or, what dues he ought to have by the year from the shire." Also he commissioned them to record in writing, "How much land his archbishops had, and his diocesan bishops, and his abbots, and his earls;" and though I may be prolix and tedious, "What, or how much, each man had, who was an occupier of land in England, either in land or in stock, and how much money it were worth." So very narrowly, indeed, did he commission them to trace it out, that there was not one single hide, nor a yard of land, nay, moreover (it is shameful to tell, though he thought it no shame to do it), not even an ox, nor a cow, nor a swine was there left, that was not set down in his writ. And all the recorded particulars were afterwards brought to him.”*  
(Anglo-Saxon Chronicle)



*The Domesday Book*

- Apart from the establishment of feudalism, a quarrel begins within the church: the Pope was determined that only he could appoint bishops, William – like other kings in Europe – said it was his right (the so-called “investiture contest”). Finally, an



arrangement was made that the Pope appoints bishops, but they are loyal to the king >  
source of later conflicts

- another major change was in the language > the Normans spread Norman-French, which profoundly changed the Germanic Anglo-Saxon language (today, about half of English wordstock is of French origin)

### **3. After William**

- William Rufus ('red-faced'), William's second son got the throne (1087-1100) – the first-born son, Robert, was not quick enough to make it from Normandy when William died. Rufus liked music, poetry, and he was allegedly gay. Historians call him the worst king ever. He died in a hunting 'accident'.
- the third son, Henry Beauclerc ('the clever one') seized the throne, and he became **Henry I** (1100-1135).
- then: the worst succession crisis in English history. Henry I married Edith, who was from the House of Wessex (thus made the Norman Conquest 'legal'). His son, William Adelin died in a shipping accident (1120), the daughter, Matilda, became the heir. Matilda moved to Germany as a child and became the wife of the Holy Roman Emperor Henry V.
- The barons did not like the idea of a queen.
- Her cousin, **Stephen (de Blois)** was crowned (1135-1154).
- "For nineteen long winters, God and his angels slept" – as a chronicler wrote
- a terrible civil war started, Matilda invaded England in 1139
- neither side could win – her enemy, Stephen Blois, her cousin was captured, her supporter, Robert of Gloucester, her half-brother also; later they were exchanged
- so they agreed that Stephen Blois could keep the throne if Matilda's son would follow him
- Matilda returned to Normandy in 1149 and was never crowned Queen of England
- Matilda was married to Count Geoffrey of Anjou in Normandy in 1128. Their son, Henry II (Anjou) became the king (1154-1189). He started the Angevin (Anjou) house in England.

## THE HOUSE OF PLANTAGENET (1154-1485)

- the family was originally from Anjou, France
- it gave four distinct royal houses:
  - Angevin (Anjou),
  - Plantagenet,
  - Lancaster and
  - York
- they were on the throne until 1485
- the name comes from Henry II's personal badge, a sprig of broom (rekettyeág) that he wore on his hat to provide him success when hunting. The French name was *plante à genêt*.

### 1. The Angevin kings (1154-1216)

- the Anjou house had a sort of “empire” in Europe. They controlled England and about one-third of present-day France



- in this period, English history is practically part of French history: the kings spoke French, had French names and titles
- (things at that time were not going along national lines – that is a much later idea – nationality was second in rank after the feudal system of homage and loyalty)
- when **Henry II** was crowned, he became king of England, duke of Normandy, Anjou, Maine, Touraine, Poitou and Aquitaine (through marriage to Eleanor of Aquitaine)
- meanwhile, the **Investiture Contest** was going on – between state control and church control
- for example, if a clerical person got arrested, he had the right to go before a church court, instead of a royal court
- the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Becket, wanted to stick to church privileges (although before he was loyal to Henry II)
- Henry II wanted to reduce the church's power > he had a meeting at Clarendon, and drew up a set of rules called the **Constitutions of Clarendon**
- Clerics had to be summoned by a royal court; the king could decide which cases can go to the royal court; the royal court should check church courts; the church must not protect convicted clerical persons
- eventually, Thomas Becket was murdered in the Canterbury Cathedral by the knights of Henry II in 1170
- Henry II had to pay a great price for this: he was stripped naked while the monks of Canterbury whipped him mercilessly, while Thomas Becket was canonised (became a saint) and his shire in Canterbury became a pilgrimage destination (see Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*)



- Another important ruler of the Angevins was Richard I (**Richard Lionheart**, Richard Coeur de Lion) (1189-1199)
- he was popular, although he spent hardly any time in England
- the idea of the perfect feudal king for many
- he launched several crusades
- the Crusades, were about, on the one hand, re-taking Jerusalem that had been occupied by the Muslims (Turks). On the other hand, about population expansion and a sort of early European imperialism
- the Crusades, with the involvement of several European kingdoms, began in 1095 and lasted until the late 13<sup>th</sup> century
- Richard I participated in the Third Crusade and became famous as a brave warrior
- while Richard was in the Holy Land, his brother, John tried to usurp the throne, which he did eventually (Richard I died from a septic wound caused by an arrow)
  
- Richard I was followed by John (1199-1216). As his name shows (John the Lackland, Jean sans Terre), his French politics was not as successful as that of his predecessors
- the French started attacking John's French lands, and the Holy Roman Emperor could not help him (the Duke of Austria beat him in a battle). > John lost Anjou, Poitou and Normandy. The barons agreed the John was a disaster.
- he was an unpopular king, because he taxed the lords more than before and did not protect their lands in Normandy when the French king invaded Normandy

- when John called on the lords to recapture Normandy, they would not help him
- instead they gathered outside London, at **Runnymede**
- they made King John to accept the **Magna Carta Libertatum** (1215), the Great Charter of English liberties
- after King John of England violated a number of ancient laws and customs by which England had been governed, his subjects forced him to sign the Magna Carta, which enumerates what later came to be thought of as human rights.
- besides, it was also a clear stage in the collapse of English feudalism: the lords were not behaving as vassals but as a unified class
- Among them was
  - the right of the church to be free from governmental interference,
  - the rights of all free citizens to own and inherit property and to be protected from excessive taxes
  - the right of widows who owned property to choose not to remarry
  - established principles of due process and equality before the law
  - contained provisions forbidding bribery and official misconduct.
  - Clause 39 is often cited: *“NO Freeman shall be taken or imprisoned, or be disseised of his Freehold, or Liberties, or free Customs, or be outlawed, or exiled, or any other wise destroyed; nor will We not pass upon him, nor condemn him, but by lawful judgment of his Peers, or by the Law of the land. We will sell to no man, we will not deny or defer to any man either Justice or Right.”*
  - the most radical part is **Clause 61 on lawful rebellion**: if the King or any of his clerks commit anything against liberties declared in the Magna Carta, a council of 25 barons should choose 4 members to present the case to the King. *“And if we do not have the transgression rectified, or, if we are out of the kingdom, our justiciar has not done so, within the space of forty days, counting from the time it was shown to us, or to our justiciar if we were out of the kingdom, the four barons aforesaid are to refer the case to the rest of the twenty-five barons, and those twenty-five barons and the commune of the whole land will distrain and afflict us by every means possible, by taking castles, lands and possessions and in any other ways they can, until it is rectified in accordance with their judgment, albeit sparing our own person and the persons of our queen and children.”*

- although King John asked to Pope to annul the Magna Carta right away (which he did), still, the MC became one of the basic constitutional document of England, and part of Britain's legal system

### 3. THE HIGH MIDDLE AGES: THE PLANTAGENET KINGS (1216-1399)

#### DATES, NAMES AND CONCEPTS

##### Dates:

model Parliament (1265),  
Statute of Rhuddlan (1284),  
Battle of Sterling Bridge (1297),  
Battle of Bannockburn (1314),  
Declaration of Arbroath (1320),  
Peasants' Revolt (1381)

##### Names:

Simon de Monfort,  
Edward I,  
Llewellyn ap Gruffydd,  
Robert de Bruce,  
John de Balliol,  
William Wallace,  
Edward III,  
John Ball, Watt Tyler

##### Concepts:

Stone of Scone,  
Order of the Garter,  
Honi Soit Qui Mal Y Pense

#### 1. The first Parliament

- **Simon de Monfort** was the Earl of Leicester, Henry III's (1216-1272) favourite
- the English barons persuaded the king to force Simon de Monfort into exile, and when he came back, he was no longer loyal to the king

- the king wanted to raise taxes for wars > the barons wanted something in return
- Simon de Monfort became their spokesman
- the barons forced the King to issue the **Provisions of Oxford** (1258)
- The Provisions set up a new form of government, with a 15-member Privy Council (nine baronial) to advise the king and oversee the entire administration as a standing body. They also confirmed that "there be three parliaments a year...to treat of the common wants of the kingdom, and of the king." At the parliaments, the Fifteen would be checked and monitored by another body of twelve representative barons.
- the king had the Pope annul the Provisions and this meant war
- Simon captured Henry III and Prince Edward in the **Battle of Lewes** (1264)
- in the Battle of Evesham, next year, Simon de Monfort was killed (1265)
- Monfort's parliament ('the model parliament') gathered from January to March, 1265, and discussed important matters, although it could not have real legislative power, like modern parliaments today

## **2. Edward I** (1272-1307)

- he brought together the first parliament, a representative institution which could provide the money that he needed
- this became the House of Commons, containing the "gentry", the wealthy freeman and knights, and merchants from towns
- in 1275, he commanded that each shire and town should send two representatives to the House of Commons

### Wales and Scotland

- but Edward is mostly known for his wars with Wales and Scotland
- Wales: Llewellyn ap Gruffydd, the Welsh king, attacked Henry III while he was fighting Simon de Monfort. Although Henry made peace with Llewellyn in 1267 and donated him the title "Prince of Wales" for 25,000 marks.
- However, he continued to attack the English under Edward I too. After several battles, Edward I issued the **Statute of Rhuddlan** (1284), which said that English law now applied in Wales and appointed his son 'Prince of Wales'. That is to say, Edward I annexed Wales to England.



- Scotland: the Scottish throne became vacant when Alexander III died. There were two candidates that the English could support: Robert de Bruce and John de Balliol. Eventually, Edward supported Balliol, hoping that he would help him in a war with France. Instead, Balliol refused, what is more, signed a treaty with France.
- finally, Edward captured John de Balliol and put him in the Tower Prison.
- William Wallace, a low-ranking Scottish nobleman continued the fight, and defeated the English at Stirling Bridge (1297)
- Edward retaliated next year, and captured William Wallace, hanged and quartered him
- Edward also removed the famous ‘Stone of Scone’ from under the Scottish throne and put it under his own in London



- Edward I appointed Robert the Bruce and John Comyn as governors of Scotland. Bruce killed Comyn and turned against Edward. Robert declared himself king Robert I. But when Edward went north again, he died
- his son, Edward II was a weaker leader > he was defeated in the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314 > secured Scotland’s independence for centuries > the 1320

Declaration of Arbroath declared Scotland's independence: "for as long as even one hundred of us remain alive, we will never consent to subject ourselves to the dominion of the English"

### **3. The Black Death**

- This is the time of the spread of Black Death in Europe (1346-53), resulting in a total toll of an estimated 75-200 million people in Europe
- it reached Britain in 1348/49
- killed 30%-50% of the British population



### **4. The Hundred Years' War (1337-1453)**

- Edward III (1327-1377) started a war with France on the claims that her mother, Queen Isabella was next in line, but his first-cousin-once removed, Philip VI got the French throne. Of course, Philip was unwilling to do that. That was the start of the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453).

- the war, eventually, was not about succession or territories but about **wool trade**: the only way English wool could get to Europe was Gascony and this provided a potential for English kings to blackmail the Dutch and make them allies. Moreover, if Calais had been lost, the English would have been cut from an important route of wool trade and Edward could not allow this.
  
- "Finally, one of the reasons for the outbreak of the unhappy Hundred Years' War ... became the struggle over the control of Flanders. ... the main reason being not so much the king's dynastic ambitions to the French throne but the possession of Gascony, so important for wool trade." (Dr. Róna Éva: Középkori angol irodalom, Nemzeti Tankönyvkiadó, 1993.)
  
- "War, trade and international relations were highly interdependent. Communications between England and its continental holdings were completely dependent on the sea route. As Gascony was not a very fertile area, it imported much of its grain, as well as other commodities such as wool and cloth, from England. In return, it was England's main source of sweet wine, and salt also came into England from the Bay of Biscay. Friendly relations with Brittany were thus vital in ensuring the security of the route, and Breton pirates were a major problem when relations with the duchy were hostile. Flanders was England's major trading partner, but technically part of France. It is no coincidence that Edward III began his attack on Philip VI by manipulating the wool supply in order to force alliances from the Brabanters and Flemish, nor that the Flemish cloth towns of Bruges, Ypres and Ghent, so dependent upon English wool, should pursue different policies from their count. For the English, Calais became a staple port through which exports had to pass." (Curry: The Hundred Years' War, Routledge, 2005)

"At the start of the Hundred Years War, Edward III embargoed English wool shipments in an unsuccessful attempt to detach Louis from his French allegiance. However, the resulting economic distress in the towns sparked a revolt that drove Louis from the county in 1339. The new Flemish regime, led by James van Artevelde, captain of Ghent, allied with Edward, who was recognized as king of France. English attempts to use Flanders as a base for invading France ended with the failed siege of

Tournai in 1340, but the Flemings maintained their rebellion until 1349, when Louis De Male, who had succeeded his father as count in 1346, was restored to power with French assistance." (Wagner: Encyclopedia of the Hundred Years War, Greenwood Press, 2006)

- the English were at a disadvantage, because the French had more men, knights and of course, France was a bigger country. But the English won quite many battles, especially because of the new weapon, the **longbow**. The arrows could pierce any armour like a bullet. The British archers won in the battles of Sluys, Crecy (killing 10,000 French), Calais, and Poitiers.
- According to one legend, the rude "V" sign (palm facing the cheek) comes from this time as well: "A commonly repeated legend claims that the two-fingered salute or V sign derives from a gesture made by longbow-men fighting in the English and Welsh army at the Battle of Agincourt (1415) during the Hundred Years' War. According to the story, the French were in the habit of cutting off the arrow-shooting fingers of captured English and Welsh longbow-men, and the gesture was a sign of defiance on the part of the bowmen, showing the enemy that they still had their fingers."





- the Battle of Agincourt (1415) – major English victory
- this meant the French king, Henry V's son, the Dauphin, would not be king (as set out in terms of the peace treaty) > a resistance movement started against the English
- the emergence of Joan d'Arc
- the French victory at Orleans made her popular with the French
- Joan was captured and executed as a witch
- by the end of the war, the English lost everything, except for the port of Calais
- the **Battle of Castillon** and the defeat of the English (1453) decided the war, although England and France were formally at war for another 20 years, but was in no position to continue the fight because of unrest at home: the War of the Roses
- the Hundred Years' War stimulated nationalistic sentiment on both sides and it helped to shape early modern political culture
- Edward III also introduced the idea of chivalry into his court. Once, a lady at court accidentally dropped her garter, and Edward noticed some of the courtiers laughing at her. He picked up the garter, tied it to his own leg, and said (in French): "Honi soit qui mal y pense", meaning "Let him be ashamed who thinks wrong in it". This is the story of the foundation of the **Order of the Garter** (in 1348). Edward chose 24 knights to be in the Order.
- the motto is still in use on the Royal Coat of Arms

## **5. The Peasant Revolt (1381)**

- As a result of the War and the Black Death, France lost HALF of its population, while England about 30% of it.
- What were the effects of the war and of the Black Death?
- 1) labour shortage
- 2) agricultural crisis > land was not allowed to rest one year in three, because it needed to produce more food > lands were over-used, resulting in famine and harvest failure
- 3) with labour shortage, the remaining workers could ask for more money, and the Parliament tried to control wage increases
- this led to the end of serfdom
- Richard II (1377-1399) was less fortunate than Edward III, against whom the people did not rebel
- he was only 11 when he came to the throne, and others governed for him
- his advisers suggested the introduction of tax for everyone over 15
- In 1381, this tax was introduced the third time, and increased threefold
- besides, tax evaders were arrested on a large scale by the King's men
- the richer parts of the country rebelled first
- but the landlords also tried to force the peasants into serfdom, because serf labour was way cheaper than paid labour
- the leaders of the Peasants' Revolt were Wat Tyler and John Ball
- they referred to the Christian principle of equality; Tyler said: "We are men formed in Christ's likeness and we are kept like animals." The popular revolutionary rhyme went as "When Adam delved and Eve span / Who was then the gentleman?"
- Although both leaders were caught. John Ball was executed and quartered, Tyler was publicly decapitated
- the revolt was a sign of the crisis of feudalism, and the power of the common people

## 4. THE HOUSES OF YORK AND LANCASTER (1399-1485)

### DATES, NAMES AND CONCEPTS

#### Dates:

the rise of the Lancasterians (1399)

War of the Roses (1455-1485),

Battle of Bosworth (1485)

#### Names:

Henry Bolingbroke (Henry IV),

Henry V,

Henry VI,

Henry Tudor,

Richard III

### 1. The House of Lancaster

Lancaster: Henry IV, Henry V, Henry VI

York: Edward IV, Edward V, Richard III

- **Richard II** (1377-1399) was the last monarch of the Plantagenet house, and one of the last kings we ought to think of as more French than English
- the nobles (who were by this time more English than French) did not like the way he governed the country, that is, answering nobody
- a conflict started: Richard banished two leading nobles, the Duke of Norfolk, and Henry Bolingbroke, and confiscated their estates
- when Richard II went off to Ireland to put down a rebellion, **Henry Bolingbroke** (his cousin) tried to seize the throne

- when Richard came back, it was too late: Bolingbroke was the leader of the rebellion then Richard agreed that he should be king Henry IV (of Lancaster). Within months, Richard II was dead.
- Henry IV (1399-1413) had some claims to the throne (he was Edward III's grandson and Richard II's cousin), but he could set up a worrying precedent: if he could seize the throne, everyone else could do it just as easily
- Henry V, his son (1413-1422) spent his short reign trying to get control of France. He led brilliant campaigns in France, but his death brought to an end the English kings' hopes of ruling France
- One of Shakespeare's greatest history plays, the "Henriad" plays are about Richard II and Henry IV and Henry V
- Henry VI, his son (1422-1461) was a mild, book-loving king. He was very intelligent, and founded two institutions that still exist, Eton College, and King's College in Cambridge. He was deeply religious and timid, and finally, he went mad. He had no idea of who he was or who anyone else was. (Schizophrenia, hallucinations, religious delusions).
- his impotence contributed to the fall of the House of Lancaster and the rise of the House of York, the civil war breaking out in 1455

## **2. The War of the Roses**

- the precedent set by Henry IV now was continued: the Duke of York found he had legitimate claims to the throne, with an invalid king on it
- the "**War of the Roses**" (between the York and Lancaster houses) broke out in 1455, the red rose standing for the Lancasterians, the white rose for the Yorkists
- Henry VI was deposed in 1461, when the son of the Duke of York Richard took the throne under the name Edward IV (ruled: 1461-70, 1470-83)
- the Battle of Towton (1461) was one of the bloodiest battles fought in Britain. According to contemporary reports, casualties and losses amounted to 9,000-13,000 the two sides combined
- in 1483, after Edward IV's death, his son, Edward V inherited the throne, but was never crowned (he was 13 at that time). The Duke of Gloucester, his uncle ruled instead of him as "lord protector", and as Richard III (1483-85)



- he was the very last king of the Plantagenet dynasty, and his death and the end of the civil war marked the end of the Middle Ages in England
- The war was immortalised in Shakespeare's other cluster of history plays, including Henry VI, and Richard III
- finally, after about 30 years of fights, Henry Tudor, who was distantly related to the Lancastrians by marriage, claimed the throne
- Henry beat Richard III in the **Battle of Bosworth** (1485), the War of the Roses ended with the victory of the Lancaster House, and gave rise to the **Tudor House**, which was on the throne until 1603.
- during the war, the old nobility destroyed itself, so to say. Almost half of the lords of the 60 noble families died in the wars. This made an excellent opportunity for the Tudors to build a new state.

## **5. EARLY MODERN BRITAIN, THE TUDOR DYNASTY (1485-1603)**

### DATES, NAMES AND CONCEPTS

#### Dates:

Act of Supremacy (1534)  
Act of Uniformity (1559),  
Thirty-Nine Articles (finalised 1571),  
Mary Stuart is executed (1587),  
the defeat of the Spanish Armada (1588)

#### Names:

Henry VII,  
Henry VIII,  
Catherine of Aragon,  
Cardinal Wolsey,  
Anne Boleyn,  
Thomas Cromwell,  
Jane Seymour,  
Mary Tudor,  
Edward VI  
Elizabeth I,  
Mary Stuart,  
King Philip,  
Sir Francis Drake,  
Sir Walter Raleigh

#### Concepts:

Anglican Church,  
the Defender of Faith,  
Book of Common Prayer

Merchant Adventurers Company,  
East India Company

The Tudor era is one of the greatest periods of Britain's history. Henry VII established a strong nation state, Henry VIII centralised power even more and broke away from the Catholic Church, establishing England's national church. Elizabeth I defended Britain against the Spanish, and made England the number one power of Europe. The Tudor age is also the golden age of arts, giving such Renaissance artists to the world as Shakespeare or Christopher Marlowe.

### **Henry VII (1485-1509)**

- established the foundations of the new monarchy
- avoided wars and believed in business and prosperity
- ended quarrels with Scotland in the north and France in the south
- he understood that the wealth of the country would depend on international trade
- England's biggest rivals were the German Hanseatic League, Italy and the Low Countries
- immediately after 1485, Henry made an important trade agreement with the Netherlands
- he concentrated on building a strong fleet
- when he died, he left 2 million pounds behind

### **Henry VIII (1509-1547)**



### The Anglican Church and the succession

- unlike his father, he wasted money and liked luxury, BUT:
- 1) he had to find balance between the great powers of the age, Spain, France and the Holy Roman Empire – he mostly failed to put England on the map of Europe
- 2) he spent the money saved by his father on costly wars
- 3) he tried to gain money from every imaginable source (using less silver in coins, etc)
- 4) lack of male heirs
- >> this financial crisis and succession crisis led to the Reformation / the establishment of the Anglican Church
- monasteries were powerful and wealthy, the monks lived in comfort
- the Roman Catholic church was an “international organisation”, untouchable, and the great powers of Europe could influence the Pope much more
- the taxes paid to the RC church reduced royal income
  
- Catherine of Aragon, Henry’s first wife, had no son
- Henry (and Cardinal Wolsey) tried to persuade the Pope to let Henry divorce Catherine. However, the Pope was strongly controlled by Charles V (King of Spain and Holy Roman Emperor), besides, Catherine was Charles V’s nephew

- Henry broke with Rome and founded the Church of England, of which he became head, with the **Act of Supremacy** in 1534 (and divorced Catherine and married Anne Boleyn)
- Henry VIII had no religious dispute with the Pope – earlier he was the supporter of Catholicism (got the title “**Defender of Faith**” – “Fidei Defensor” from the Pope), and he disliked the ideas of Calvin or Luther
- his motives were purely political – to keep the Church’s wealth and be independent from Rome
- with the help of his chief minister, Thomas Cromwell, he made a complete survey of monasteries, and between 1536 and 1539, closed 560 monasteries, their treasures were confiscated, the monks and nuns were dismissed, and several monasteries were just left abandoned
- Henry had 3 children from 6 wives:
  - Mary, the eldest – the daughter of Catherine of Aragon
  - Elizabeth – the daughter of Ann Boleyn
  - Edward – the only son from Jane Seymour

### **Mary I (1553-1558)**

- Edward VI was only 9 years old when his father died, so the country was ruled by a council (1547-53)
- he died at the age of 16
- first followed by **Lady Jane Grey** (his cousin) who ruled for 9 days, because Mary’s supporters captured her and executed her
- followed by Mary I (1553-1558)
- Mary had to face different problems and she was not an “easy” person, either
- She was Catholic by upbringing, and she was the first queen since Matilda
- her marriage was a difficult problem (resulting from her status as a woman ruler)
- she chose Philip, the son of Charles V
- > this was problematic for two reasons:
  - 1) he was Catholic,
  - 2) he was Spanish

- plus, she began persecuting Protestants (300 people were executed during her reign)
- all of this made her very unpopular, Protestant opponents called her “Bloody Mary”
- she died of natural causes at the age of 42

### Elizabeth I (1588-1603)

- probably the greatest queen in English history
- when she came to the throne, she basically wanted the same thing as her grandfather: peace, prosperity and harmony



### The Church establishment and religious struggles

- while her sister, Mary, wanted to revert the Reformation, Elizabeth continued the Anglican reform
- during Edward VI, a new prayer book was introduced (1549) (the Book of Common Prayer) (second version: 1552)
- in 1559, the Act of Uniformity (also known as the “Thirty-Nine Articles”, finalised in 1571), introduced the third version of the Book of Common Prayer, abolished the

system of Catholic masses and defined the Anglican Church as ultimately non-Catholic

- Elizabeth made the Church part of the state machine
- the parish (the size of a village) became a unit of state administration
- the parson or vicar was just as powerful as a village squire
- people were fined if they did not go to church on Sundays
- Elizabeth, just like Mary, was in a delicate position: she was a queen, so her marriage could decide the fate of England – she also had to fight against the Catholic powers of Europe, mainly Spain and France
- there were also Catholic nobles who wanted a Catholic on the throne and several Catholic plots were uncovered
- the danger was that Elizabeth refused to marry (“the Virgin Queen”), thus had no heir, and the closest living relative of hers was Mary Stuart, the queen of Scots (first cousin once removed). She was strongly Catholic and spent her childhood in France
- Elizabeth decided to put her in custody (kept her in various manor houses in the interior of England), and when Mary named Philip as her heir to the throne, Elizabeth decided to execute her on grounds of a planned assassination against herself in 1587

### Foreign policy

- Elizabeth also considered **trade** as very important
- basically, rivals in trade became enemies in politics – a basic principle of British foreign policy until the 19<sup>th</sup> century
- the main rival was, of course, Spain, which also possessed the Netherlands at that time (1581-1714) (later the Dutch)
- Elizabeth helped the Protestants in the Low Countries, thus “declared” war on Spain
- Besides, Spain forbade England to trade freely with the Spanish American colonies, so Elizabeth’s pirates, the “sea dogs” started to attack and sack Spanish ships (John Hawkins, Sir Francis Drake, Martin Frobisher)
- Philip decided to attack England and built the largest fleet ever
- in 1588, the English **defeated the Spanish “Armada”** (or more likely, the bad weather) > England became Europe’s leading military power
- parallel with this, England encouraged colonists to go to America and found new settlements

- these were not English territories, but belonged to “chartered” private companies:  
Company of Merchant Adventurers to New Lands, East India Company
- Sir Walter Raleigh, Captain John Smith
- > establishment of **Virginia** (named after the Queen), then Jamestown (1607)
- slave trade began with West Africa



## **6. THE STUART HOUSE, CIVIL WAR, COMMONWEALTH AND RESTORATION (1603-1688)**

### **DATES, NAMES AND CONCEPTS**

#### Dates:

accession of James I (1603),  
Guy Fawkes's plot (1605),  
the Petition of Right (1628),  
Civil War(s) (1642-49),  
Battle of Edgehill (1642),  
Battle of Marston Moore (1644),  
Battle of Naseby (1645),  
Battle of Preston (1648),  
execution of Charles I (1649),  
republican period (1649-1660),  
monarchy is restored (1660),  
Great Plague (1665),  
Great Fire (1666),  
Test Act (1673),  
Exclusion Crisis (1679-81)

#### Names:

James I,  
Guy Fawkes,  
Charles I,  
William Laud,  
Oliver Cromwell,  
Charles II,  
James II,  
Titus Oates

### Concepts:

the Short Parliament,  
the Long Parliament,  
the Rump Parliament,  
Model Army,  
Commonwealth,  
Protectorate,  
Lord Protector,  
Barebones Parliament,  
Restoration

### **1. The Stuart rule**

- After the death of Queen Elizabeth I in 1603, James VI of Scotland, the son of Mary Stuart became the king as James I, thus starting the Stuart reign in England, lasting until 1714
- compared to the glorious 16<sup>th</sup> century, the 17<sup>th</sup> century in England seems disastrous, and the Stuarts, on the whole, were less successful rulers than the Tudors
- Charles I was beheaded, James II was dethroned, a civil war broke out, monarchy was abolished for a decade, and London's population was decimated by the Great Plague, and London burned down in the Great Fire
- the 17<sup>th</sup> century also marks England's transition from an absolute monarchy to a parliamentary or constitutional monarchy
- the role of the House of Commons grew significantly – they could check the ruler's power

### **James I (1603-1625)**

- the Stuarts, in general, tried to carry on what the Tudors had done: rule with a small council instead of a parliament
- BUT: meanwhile, the social and economic circumstances changed:
- earlier, unemployment and inflation were problems because of demographic explosion
- by the middle of the century, the population stabilized:

- Reasons:
- 1) people went to the colonies (about 350,000 people)
- 2) the custom of late marriages (middle or late 20s)
- 3) many men remained bachelors (joined the Navy, for example)
- >> trade flourished, agricultural productivity improved, England became an exporter, towns became centres of distribution of goods
- this strengthened the middle class represented in the House of Commons
- the Stuarts had serious financial difficulties (inherited them from Queen Elizabeth) > they wanted to tax trade, but the Parliament always demanded something in return



### The Crown and the Parliament

- compared to the era of Elizabeth, everything seemed all right
- Spain ceased to be a threat
- European powers were preoccupied with the Thirty Years War (1618-1648)
- no religious threat (Protestants and Puritans left the country)
- BUT: there were constitutional, economic and religious differences between the Crown and the Parliament
- 1) Constitutional: the Stuarts believed in divine monarchy, thinking that their power came from God and they were only responsible to God, thus any rebellion against

them would be a revolt against God, and thus a sin. Nobody had the right to limit their powers, they assumed.

- 2) Economic: the Parliament did not agree with the selling of monopolies
- 3) Religious: the Puritans wanted to ‘purify’ the Anglican Church

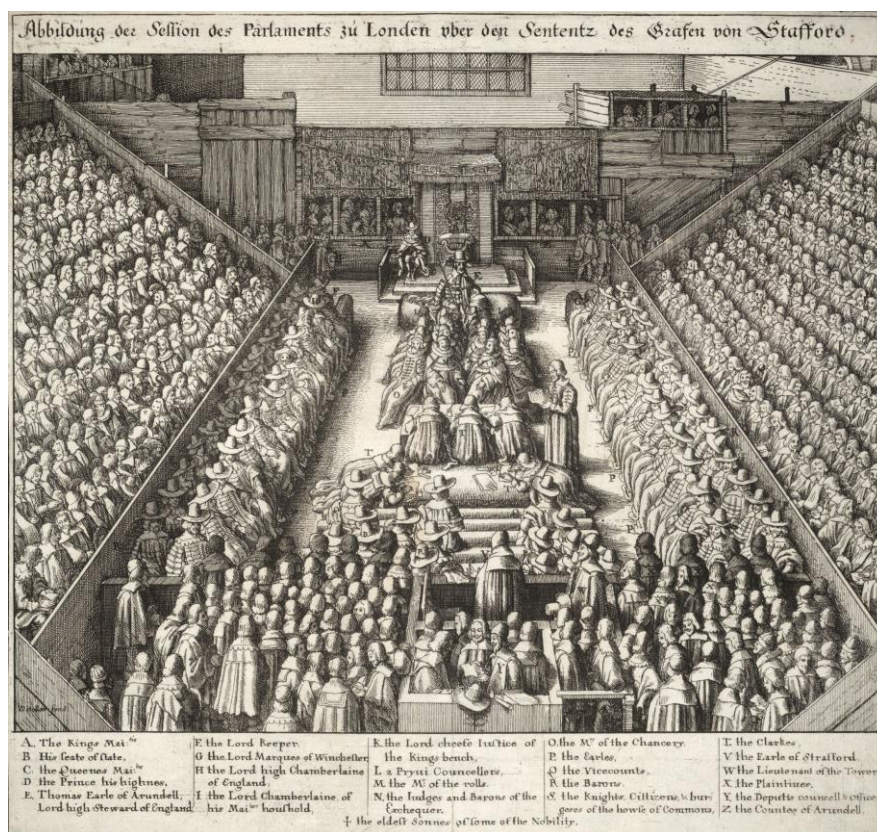
### Worrying signs

- 1605: Guy Fawkes’s plot (a Catholic plot), aiming to blow up the Parliament
- the person of James I: he was an intellectual monarch, he translated certain parts of the Bible, he wrote works on the art of government
- but:
  - 1) he was unkempt, not really a dignified monarch
  - 2) he was said to be a homosexual
  - 3) he made the wrong statements at the wrong time – the French king described him as the “wisest fool in Christendom”
- it was expected that in the Thirty Years War, he would join and support the Protestant powers, but for that, he would have had to summon the Parliament
- he dissolved the Parliament in 1611 and ruled without it for 10 years

### Charles I (1625-1649)

- in 1628, the Parliament accepted the Petition of Right, which was formally the confirmation of earlier rights detailed in the Magna Carta, but effectively the King agreed that the Parliament now could control both the state money and the national budget
- it seemed that the “divine right” of the King now did not make sense
- he decided to prevent the use of the Petition of Right, and instead, dissolved the Parliament next year
- from 1629 to 1640 he ruled without the Parliament
- by 1637, he was at the height of his power, his authority was established and unquestionable
- however, he began to make serious mistakes:
  - 1) he married a French Catholic woman

- 2) he disliked both the Scottish Presbyterian Kirk and the Puritans as well
- 3) he appointed William Laud the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was an enemy of Puritans and brought back many Catholic practices into the Anglican Church
- Laud tried to make the Kirk similar to the Anglican Church, and introduced a new Prayer Book > national resistance followed
- he faced a Scottish rebellion in 1638
- he needed money, so he was forced to summon the Parliament in 1640 – “The Short Parliament” (April-May 1640) – the Parliament was willing to support the campaign, but in return of certain concessions > Charles dissolved the Parliament
- the Scottish army invaded the North of England and occupied Newcastle and Durham
- > Charles was obliged to summon the Parliament again, which became “The Long Parliament” (1640-1653 – or 1660 according to some historians)



### The Civil War (1642-1649)

- in 1641 a rebellion exploded in Ireland against the Protestant English and Scottish settlers

- 3,000 people were killed in Ulster
- by this time, the Parliament was deeply distrustful of the King and though Charles needed an army not against the Irish but against the Parliament
- in 1642, Charles tried to arrest five MPs in Parliament
- the War broke out in August 1642
- (It is more appropriate to talk about *Civil Wars*, since what we call Civil War was a series of battles and had different phases.)
- the Royalists (“Cavaliers”) fought against the Parliamentarians (“Roundheads”)

### First phase

- Edgehill (1642) – the first battle, inconclusive
- Marston Moore (1644) – Parliamentary victory
- Naseby (1645) – Parliamentary victory
- Charles I was captured and was imprisoned

The victory of the Parliamentarians was made possible by Oliver Cromwell’s new, disciplined

Model Army, consisting of

- infantry (musketeers and pikemen)
- light and heavy cavalry
- mounted infantry (dragoons)
- artillery

### Second phase

- by 1645, most people had enough of the war, because of taxes and uncontrolled soldiers
- the Scots made an agreement with Charles and rebelled against the Parliament
- Cromwell’s army defeated the Scottish at Preston in 1648
- the question was still not decided whether to let Charles back to the throne, remove him or put him on trial for treason
- the majority was for restoration, but the army was in the hands of the Puritan republicans
- two thirds of the Parliament supported restoration and one third was for trial

- Cromwell got rid of the 2/3 of the Parliament with the help of the army and with the remaining part (“The Rump Parliament”, 60 MPs) decided to put Charles I on trial
- on 31 January, 1649, Charles I was found guilty of treason and was executed



### **The Commonwealth (1649-1653)**

- England became a republic
- now Cromwell had to fight on different fronts: against the Scottish and the Irish and the Dutch and the supporters of the Stuarts
- the Rump Parliament governed with both legislative and executive powers
- war against the Scots (1650-51) (the Third Civil War)
- the conquest of Ireland – 1649 – punishment for the support of Royalists – brutal revenge in Ireland
- establishment of control over the American colonies > navigation > conflict with the Dutch – the first Dutch war (1652-54)
- Cromwell even dissolved the Rump Parliament and summoned the “Barebones Parliament” (1653), composed of 140 men chosen by himself



### Cromwell's character

- Cromwell was a staunch, strict Puritan
- he regarded himself as a chosen man, elected by God
- as seen on the painting above, he even required the painter to leave the warts and other unpleasant details on his face, because he was honest with himself and humble
- he wanted a united, godly nation, not divided by religious differences

### The Protectorate (1653-1660)

- meanwhile, the Parliament was getting more and more radical
- different groups had earlier appeared that wanted complete equality among people, such as the Levellers and the Diggers
- Cromwell suppressed all radical groups
- Cromwell decided to abolish the parliament and govern alone
- he introduced military dictatorship and appointed himself “**Lord Protector**” (he did not want to be crowned)
- the country was divided into 11 military areas, headed by leaders of the army
- he had far greater power than Charles I, because his power was unlimited



- he was also unpopular, because people were forbidden to celebrate Christmas and Easter or play games on Sunday
- the theatres were also closed
- Cromwell died in 1658, and wanted his son, Richard, to carry on the Protectorate, but he was a weak leader
- in 1659, the Rump Parliament was recalled
- the only solution was the **restoration** of monarchy – largely at the pressure of General Monck, who had served in Cromwell’s army but became the supporter of Charles II after Cromwell’s death

### Charles II (1660-1685)



- the Stuarts returned to the throne and the monarchy was re-established
- the laws of Cromwell were abolished
- Charles II knew that he had to be much more careful with the Parliament because he knew that his neglect of the Parliament led to the execution of his father
- however, he still shared the Stuarts’ belief in divine right of a king

- Charles II, also known as “the Merry Monarch” was a witty, charming person, who encouraged liveliness, luxury and hedonism at court.
- He had a number of mistresses, including actresses, and he acknowledged at least 12 illegitimate children (his wife did not give birth to any live offspring).
- This is the time when the age was characterised by a reaction to the strict Puritan morals of the Commonwealth era: theatres reopened, where the leading genre became the bawdy and witty “Restoration comedy”



- Charles II also had to face difficulties like the Great Plague of London (1665), which killed about 100,000 people, 15% of London’s population and the Great Fire of London (1666), which destroyed the city
- However, Charles II could make compromises
- The Act of Indemnity and Oblivion was passed, which fulfilled the promises of the Declaration of Breda
- The Declaration of Breda (dated 4 April 1660) was a proclamation by Charles II of England in which he promised a general pardon for crimes committed during the English Civil War and the Interregnum for all those who recognised Charles as the lawful king; the retention by the current owners of property purchased during the same period; religious toleration; and the payment of pay arrears to members of the army, and that the army would be re-commissioned into service under the crown.
- The Act granted pardon and general amnesty, except for 30 people

- also, a number of anti-Protestant (anti-Nonconformist) acts were passed (The Clarendon Code), re-establishing the rule of the Anglican Church
- in fact, Charles II was attracted to the Catholic Church. The Parliament knew this, and passed the Test Act in 1673, which forbade Catholics to hold public offices (abolished in 1829)

### The emergence of political parties

- a group of MPs were given the name “Whigs”, a rude name for cattle drivers
- they were afraid of absolute monarchy and Catholicism, and did not want a regular (“standing”) army
- they were afraid that the Crown would go to James, Charles’s Catholic brother
- the other group was named “Tories”, an Irish name for thieves
- they were more conservative and generally supported the idea of monarchy and the royalist position

### Fear of Catholics

- In 1678, two university doctors, including Titus Oates revealed a “Catholic plot” (“The Popish Plot”). It was not true, but following this, hundreds of Catholic were imprisoned and 35 were executed
- the same year the Parliament passed an act which forbade Catholics to be members of the Parliament
- this led to the Exclusion Crisis (1679-81): the Parliament wanted to prevent James II from becoming king, they introduced the bill three times, but the plan failed

### **James II (1685-1688)**

- James had effectively no opposition at the beginning
- the Monmouth Rebellion was put down in 1685
- yet, at the end, James II was dethroned
- Why?
  - 1) He was Catholic
  - 2) He wanted to be an unquestioned ruler with absolutistic tendencies

- 3) He tried to get rid of the Tory gentry who opposed him – he removed  $\frac{3}{4}$  of Justices of the Peace and replaced them with men of lower social class

## **7. THE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY I. (1688-1763)**

### **DATES, NAMES AND CONCEPTS**

#### Dates:

Glorious Revolution (1688)  
Bill of Rights (1689),  
Act of Settlement (1701),  
War of Spanish Succession (1701-1713),  
Treaty of Utrecht (1713),  
union of England and Scotland (1707),  
First Jacobite Rebellion (1715),  
Septennial Act (1716),  
Second Jacobite Rebellion (1745),  
Battle of Culloden (1746),

#### Names:

William III (1688-1702),  
Queen Anne (1702-1714),  
George I (1714-1724),  
James III (“The Old Pretender”),  
Robert Walpole (PM 1721-1742),  
George II (1724-1760),  
“Bonnie Prince Charlie” (“The Young Pretender”),

#### Concepts:

Whigs,  
Tories,  
constitutional monarchy,  
long eighteenth century

## 1. The Glorious Revolution (1688) and the Constitutional Monarchy

- during the reign of James II, some English Protestant noblemen started secret negotiations with William of Orange
- William was the husband of Mary, James II's daughter and both of them were Protestant
- he landed in England in 1688 but James II only recognised the danger when the leaders of his army started to go over to William
- James II left the country and escaped to France
- the Parliament decided that James II had lost the right to the crown
- William invaded London but the Parliament wanted to accept only Mary as lawful monarch
- William said if he would not be the king, he would leave Britain
- William III became the king as a co-ruler with Mary as queen
- next year, the **BILL OF RIGHTS** was passed (1689) – the most important document of Britain's constitutional history
- 1) it forbade the monarch to be Catholic or to marry a Catholic person
- 2) later the Act of Settlement confirmed this (1701) and stated that if Mary died without an heir, her sister, Anne would inherit the throne (and if she died without an heir, the crown would go to the granddaughter of James I, Sophia > this is what happened and it started the reign of the House of Hannover in 1714
- 2) the monarch could not exempt anyone from the law, the law applied to everyone
- 3) non-parliamentary taxation was illegal
- 4) keeping a regular (standing) army in peacetime without the consent of the parliament is illegal
- 5) guaranteed the freedom of speech in Parliament
- 6) the monarch has to summon the parliament regularly

### Evaluation and significance

- although it is called the Glorious Revolution, it was more like a *coup d'état* organised by the elites
- the Glorious Revolution laid down the basis of constitutional monarchy
- it is often summarised like “the king rules but does not govern”

- this is not entirely true, because the king did remain powerful: he could choose his ministers, make war and peace, declare war, etc.
- what was new was that the Parliament decided who could be the king and not inheritance
- the Parliament became the new centre of power, and a kind of balance was set up between the monarch and the Parliament (they knew they could not work without each other)
- the 18<sup>th</sup> century is in fact a transitional period between absolutism and semi-democracy, that is, the Glorious Revolution (1688) and the First Bill of Rights (1689), which gave the right to vote the middle class men
- the period between 1688 and 1832 is called the “long eighteenth century”

## **2. The Act of Settlement (1701)**

The need for the Act of Settlement was prompted by the failure of William and Mary, as well as that of Mary's Protestant sister – the future Queen Anne – to produce any surviving children, and by the perceived threat posed by the pretensions to the throne by remaining Roman Catholic members of the House of Stuart.

It is an Act of the Parliament of England that was passed in 1701 to settle the succession to the English and Irish crowns on Protestants only. This had the effect of deposing the descendants of Charles I (other than his Protestant granddaughter Princess (later Queen) Anne) as the next Protestant in line to the throne was the Electress *Sophia of Hanover*, a granddaughter of James VI and I (her mother was Elizabeth Stuart). After her, the crowns would descend only to her non-Catholic heirs.

Sophia died just a few months before Queen Anne, her first cousin once removed, so Sophia's son, George succeeded to the throne in 1714.

## **3. The War of Spanish Succession and Queen Anne (1702-1714)**

- Charles II, the Spanish king died in 1700 without an heir
- Louis XIV, the French king wanted his grandson to inherit the Spanish throne

- this would have created a European superpower with the union of Spain and France
- this had to be prevented > William III organised the Grand Alliance (England, the Holy Roman Empire and the Netherlands) against France
- > the War of Spanish succession broke out in 1701
- soon, however, William died in pneumonia resulting from a horse-riding accident in which he broke his collarbone (1702)
- the war lasted almost until the reign of Queen Anne (1702-1714), Mary's sister, the last of the Stuart rulers
- the War of Spanish succession ended with the victory of the Grand Alliance, and was concluded with the **Treaty of Utrecht (1713)**, in which England obtained the following territories: Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Hudson Bay, Minorca and Gibraltar

#### **4. The Union with Scotland (1707)**

- the Scottish parliament ceased to exist, although Scotland could send MPs to the Westminster Parliament (45 seats out of 558)
- Great Britain was created
- reasons for the union:
  - England > military and political: to prevent the return of the Jacobites and to prevent Scotland's alliance with France + market and labour force
  - Scotland > obvious economic gains, protection in the seas and participation in the colonial trade
- Europe's biggest free trade market was created
- in the background, complex political and diplomatic moves happened, with economic blackmail and acts against each other
- in response to the Act of Settlement (1701), the Scottish parliament passed the Act of Security (1704) – that the Scottish crown would not be given to Anne's successor after her death, thus ending the personal union of 1603 (tried to put pressure on England – it's also the time of the War of Spanish Succession)
- England retaliated with the Alien Act (1705)
- The Alien Act provided that Scottish nationals in England were to be treated as aliens (foreign nationals), and estates held by Scots would be treated as alien property,



making inheritance much less certain. It also included an embargo on the import of Scottish products into England and English colonies – about half of Scotland's trade, covering goods such as linen, cattle and coal.

- The Act contained a provision that it would be suspended if the Scots entered into negotiations regarding a proposed union of the parliaments of Scotland and England. Combined with English financial offers to refund Scottish losses on the Darien scheme, the Act achieved its aim, leading to the Acts of Union 1707 uniting the two countries as the Kingdom of Great Britain.

Queen Anne died in 1714, at the age of 49. She had 5 children, but she outlived all of them. With her death, the Stuart House died out and the **House of Hanover** ruled until 1901. From 1707 on, technically, we have to speak about British monarchs, so Queen Anne was the last English monarch as well.

Sophia of Hanover, the granddaughter of James I, died just a few months before Queen Anne, her first cousin once removed. So Sophia's son, George succeeded to the throne in 1714, as the next Protestant ruler, as specified in the Act of Settlement.

## **5. The House of Hanover**

### **George I (1714-1727)**

- he did not even speak English, he came to the throne purely as a result of marriage
- the Whigs were in favour of his succession
- they won the general elections in 1715
- the Tories were divided – a part of them were Catholics, and some of them even participated in the **First Jacobite Rebellion** (1715)
- they wanted to replace George with Anne's half-brother, **James III** ("The Old Pretender" or "The Old Chevalier")
- the rebellion failed very quickly because of poor organisation and the lack of money

## The emergence of cabinet government

- after 1715, it was easy to argue that the Tories were Catholics and could not be trusted
- > from 1715 to 1760, the Whigs were in power
- in 1716, they passed the Septennial Act (to prevent Tories to come back to power), which said that elections had to be held every 7 years (instead of 3).
- this is the time when the powers of monarchy diminished further and Britain began a transition to a cabinet government led by a Prime Minister
- from 1721 on, the power was shared by the de facto Prime Minister, **Sir Robert Walpole** (in power until 1742)
- the basic idea of a cabinet government, which is still valid today, is that if one minister does not agree with the others, he has to resign
- this is called collective responsibility: the members of the government are responsible for the decisions together

## George II (1727-1760)

- Walpole wanted to avoid war and increase taxes so that the country could pay back the debts
- he wanted to do this reducing land tax (to win the support of country gentry) and the introduction of *excise tax* (tax on goods such as tobacco and wine) to prevent smuggling
- this measure (known as the **Excise Crisis**, 1733) greatly contributed to Walpole's unpopularity; mainly because collecting the duty would have happened not at ports but at warehouses (intruding into private property) and because instead of the landed gentry, the merchants, and ultimately the consumers would have paid the tax
- the bill had to be withdrawn before voting
- George II also had to deal with the **Second Jacobite Rebellion** (1745)
- the plan was to put "Bonnie Prince Charlie", the son of the "Old Pretender" on the throne
- the Jacobites were defeated near **Culloden** in 1746, which put an end to all hopes of Jacobite restoration, and quickened Scotland's integration in Great Britain, putting an end to the Scottish clan system

## 8. THE 18<sup>th</sup> CENTURY II. (1756-1789)

### DATES, NAMES AND CONCEPTS

#### Dates:

Seven Years' War (1756-1763).

The American War of Independence (1775-1781),  
the French Revolution (1789)

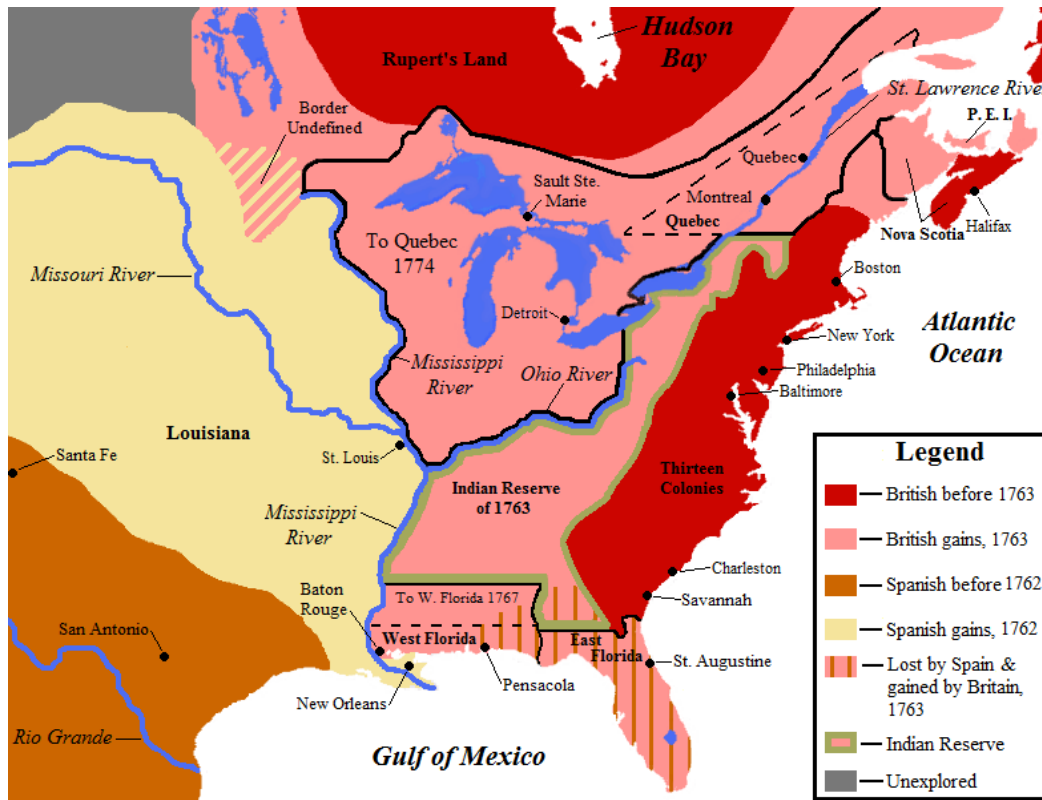
Names: George III (1760-1820)

#### Concepts:

Grand Alliance,  
cabinet government,  
Excise Crisis,  
mercantilism,  
triangular trade,  
Industrial Revolution

### The Seven Years' War (1756-1763)

- basically a war over trade against France
- but it went all over the world, in all 5 continents, in Europe and in the colonies as well (called the French and Indian war there)
- an international conflict of Great Britain, Portugal and Prussia VS. France, Spain, Russia and Austria
- sometimes described as "World War Zero"
- in the end, the British took Quebec in 1759 and Montreal in 1760
- the British also defeated the French in India
- by this time, the following territories belonged to the British Empire: West Indian territories, West African colonies, Australia, New Zealand, Gibraltar
- in the end, Britain gained all French possessions east of the Mississippi in America



- after the war GB wanted to tax the American colonies because of the high expenses on war (Stamp Act, Tea Act, etc)
- >> led to the War of Independence in the USA
- >> indirectly, the Seven Years' War led to the Revolution of 1789 in France

## George III (1760-1820)

- he was the first Hanoverian king to be born in Britain
- he did not want to continue the expensive war and made peace with France in 1763
- by this time, Britain became the leading trading country in the world
- in the spirit of mercantilism (export-driven economy), a triangular trade was evolved:
  - 1) British-made products were exchanged for slaves in West Africa
  - 2) these slaves were transported to the Americas where they grew sugar
  - 3) sugar (molasses) went to New England and the rum and other goods went to West Africa through Britain



## The Industrial Revolution

- it began roughly around 1760
- Pre-industrial world: the majority of people still lived in self-supporting villages. Many craftsmen lived here who provided the village with everything
- only the squires went to towns to buy luxury goods
- the towns were not centres of industry rather distribution centres (markets, shops)
- home industry dominated (spinning, weaving)
- no experimentation in agriculture (no need)

- Britain had a number of advantages that made the Industrial Revolution possible
- natural resources: coal, wool, water, wood
- mild climate
- no geographical barriers
- unity – Germany (the Holy Roman Empire) was composed of over 300 small kingdoms and dukedoms, there was no unity
- stability – in France, for example, there was no stability, and no personal freedom, it was still an absolutistic and feudal country
- the freedom of enterprise
- capital from trade which was invested into industry and agriculture
- labour force < large population, due to increasing birth rate and better life conditions and decreasing death rate, epidemics disappeared or could be controlled
- bank system: the Bank of England + provincial banks (> loans)
- markets: external (colonies) and internal (population growth > demand and urbanisation)
- experiments and new techniques in agriculture
- enclosures > large farms
- transportation improved: good roads (MacAdam!) and canal system
- technical innovations
- Jethro Tull's seed drill (1701) – horse drawn drill that sowed the seeds in neat rows
- Jethro Tull's 4-course rotation system that replaced the 3-course system (spring crops, autumn crops and fallow) > root crops (répafélék), grass crops (rye, clover), spring crops and autumn crops > no fallow! Every part of the land is permanently used
- Flying shuttle (1733)
- Spinning machines: 'Spinning Jenny' (1764), 'Waterframe' (1768), 'Mule' (1779)
- they produced strong and fine yarn and thread
- application of coke in iron industry: a kind of coal from which gases are removed and thus its heating power increases. It replaced charcoal (faszén)
- Watt's steam engine (1769)
- use of iron for building – Severn Iron Bridge (1781), made of cast iron (öntöttvas), the first in the world



### Effects:

- 1) enclosure movement speeding up
- 2) people losing their lands go to towns to provide cheap labour force in industry ('proletariat')
- 3) defined the North of England as an industrial area
- 4) growing demand for goods > technical revolution
- 5) social consequences > demand of middle class to be represented, workers also began to unite > government's fear of revolution (especially after 1789)

### The American War of Independence

- the American War of Independence (1775-1781) sparked various reactions in Britain, too
- many British politicians openly supported the colonists
- two new ideas appeared:

- 1) “no taxation without representation” > raises the problem of representation of the English people in the London parliament as well, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, only the rich could vote
- 2) the rights of subjects to govern themselves in the form they want without the monarch

>> gave rise to ideas of democracy and independence

*“... the people of the colonies are descendants of Englishmen. ... They are therefore not only devoted to liberty, but to liberty according to English ideas and on English principles. The people are Protestants ... a persuasion not only favourable to liberty, but built upon it. ... My hold of the colonies is in the close affection which grows from common names, from kindred blood, from similar privileges, and equal protection. These are ties which, though light as air, are as strong as links of iron. Let the colonies always keep the idea of their civil rights associated with your government—they will cling and grapple to you, and no force under heaven will be of power to tear them from their allegiance. But let it be once understood that your government may be one thing and their privileges another, that these two things may exist without any mutual relation—the cement is gone, the cohesion is loosened, and everything hastens to decay and dissolution. As long as you have the wisdom to keep the sovereign authority of this country as the sanctuary of liberty, the sacred temple consecrated to our common faith, wherever the chosen race and sons of England worship freedom, they will turn their faces towards you. The more they multiply, the more friends you will have; the more ardently they love liberty, the more perfect will be their obedience. Slavery they can have anywhere. It is a weed that grows in every soil. They may have it from Spain, they may have it from Prussia. But, until you become lost to all feeling of your true interest and your natural dignity, freedom they can have from none but you.”* (Edmund Burke’s speech in the Parliament in 1775)



## 9. THE AGE OF REVOLUTIONS (1789-1832)

### DATES, NAMES AND CONCEPTS

#### Dates:

Trafalgar Battle (1805),

Waterloo (1815),

Corn Laws (1815),

Peterloo Massacre (1819),

Six Acts (1819),

People's Charter (1838)

#### Names:

Horatio Nelson,

Duke of Wellington

William Pitt the Younger,

Charles James Fox,

Edmund Burke,

Tom Paine

#### Concepts:

Chartism

### **1. The French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars**

- there was a widespread fear that the French revolution of 1789 will be dangerous for England as well
- by this time, the bourgeoisie and the gentry became a powerful class, they were firmly established in the House of Commons
- they wanted no revolution by the “awakening” working classes
- but there were signs that the workers might get radical: poor working conditions, unemployment, low wages

- Edmund Burke – although he supported the independence of American colonies – was against the revolution, as explained in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.

Burke wrote in a letter in 1789:

*"England gazing with astonishment at a French struggle for Liberty and not knowing whether to blame or to applaud! The thing indeed, though I thought I saw something like it in progress for several years, has still something in it paradoxical and Mysterious. The spirit it is impossible not to admire; but the old Parisian ferocity has broken out in a shocking manner"*

- Tom Paine wrote an answer to this entitled *The Rights of Man*, in which he defended ordinary people > so radical that he had to escape to France (never returned)
- in 1793, Britain was at war with France that had attacked the Low Countries
- soon, most of Europe was under Napoleon's control
- Britain decided to beat France at sea
- the two heroes of the Napoleonic wars were:



- Admiral Horatio Nelson: he won brilliant victories over the French navy and destroyed the French-Spanish fleet at Trafalgar in 1805 (he also died) – became a national hero
- the Duke of Wellington: he invaded France, and Napoleon, after the defeat in Russia, had to surrender in 1814 – final defeat at Waterloo in 1815

(The Duke of Wellington also gave the name to Wellington boots and perhaps to Wellington steak as well.)

## **2. The Years of Distress and Reforms: 1815-1832**

- the years after the Napoleonic Wars were particularly tense in Britain
- the main problems were high unemployment, low wages, and poverty in general
- there were three main reasons for this:
  - 1) The effects of the industrial and agrarian revolution: unemployment because of the introduction of machines. Those who managed to keep their jobs, had to accept lower wages. > the purchasing power of the population fell. > less demand for goods
  - 2) The effects of the Napoleonic wars: about 300,000 soldiers and sailors were dismissed, they became unemployed
  - 3) The government's policies.
    - a) the costs of the war were high > although the income tax was introduced in 1798 for those who earned more than 60 pounds a year (the rich), it did not affect the poor. Now the government put a tax on goods like salt, beer and clothes that were bought by ordinary people
    - b) **the Corn Laws (1815)**: during the war, it was impossible to import corn (wheat), because of the Continental blockade that Napoleon introduced to isolate Britain. British gentry had a monopoly in growing corn that they did not want to lose. The Corn Laws said that no foreign corn could be imported until the price of British corn reached the war-time price >> it protected the interest of British landowners, but the price of corn remained high.

The reactions of the working class:

1) organising trade unions BUT it was in fact illegal because of the Combinations Act of 1799.

2) they demanded parliamentary reforms > in response, the government put a duty on paper, thus fewer people could buy newspapers

3) demonstrations and riots:

- the movement of the Luddites – they destroyed machines > destroying machines was sanctioned by death penalty
- 1819: Peterloo massacre (Manchester): 15 died, 400-700 injured
- 1819: the Six Acts were passed to prevent riots and demonstrations

the public sentiment is well reflected in Shelley's poem "Song: The Men of England" written in 1819: (A Song: "Men of England")

Men of England, wherefore plough	With your pain and with your fear?
For the lords who lay ye low?	The seed ye sow, another reaps;
Wherefore weave with toil and care	The wealth ye find, another keeps;
The rich robes your tyrants wear?	The robes ye weave, another wears;
	The arms ye forge, another bears.
Wherefore feed and clothe and save	Sow seed—but let no tyrant reap:
From the cradle to the grave	Find wealth—let no imposter heap:
Those ungrateful drones who would	Weave robes—let not the idle wear:
Drain your sweat—nay, drink your blood?	Forge arms—in your defence to bear.
Wherefore, Bees of England, forge	Shrink to your cellars, holes, and cells—
Many a weapon, chain, and scourge,	In hall ye deck another dwells.
That these stingless drones may spoil	Why shake the chains ye wrought? Ye see
The forced produce of your toil?	The steel ye tempered glance on ye.
Have ye leisure, comfort, calm,	With plough and spade and hoe and loom
Shelter, food, love's gentle balm?	Trace your grave and build your tomb
Or what is it ye buy so dear	And weave your winding-sheet—till fair
	England be your Sepulchre.

After 1822, however, there was less tension. The economic situation improved, exports were rising, trade with the USA developed, and when the South American countries (Brazil, Bolivia) became independent, they also provided new markets. Production was growing > new workers were needed > wages also improved > living standards started to rise.

Meanwhile: July revolution in Paris in 1830 – another warning sign



The workers however still continued to organise themselves and protest. It was difficult to act together because sometimes gatherings were broken up by the militia.

In 1834, six farmworkers in Tolpuddle (Dorset) joined together > the court found them guilty > 30,000 workers and radicals gathered in London to defend the “Tolpuddle Martyrs” > Tolpuddle became a symbol of the employers’ cruelty.

### 3. Chartism

In 1838, the radicals put forward the People’s Charter. It demanded:

- vote for all adults

- an ordinary person's right to be an MP
- secret ballot (vote)
- payment for MPs
- elections every year
- all of these were refused by the House of Commons

The Chartist movement collapsed by 1850, because they were divided over the issue of using violence (Fergus O'Connor) or more peaceful methods (William Lowitt).



Colorized photo of a Chartist meeting, 1848

## **10. THE VICTORIAN AGE I. (1837-1860)**

### **DATES, NAMES AND CONCEPTS**

#### Dates:

First Reform Act (1832),  
Poor Laws Amendment Act (1834),  
Opium Wars (1837-1842),  
Treaty of Nanking (1842),  
Great Irish Famine (1845-1852),  
Corn Laws repealed (1846),  
Great Exhibition (1851),  
Crimean War (1853-1856),  
Battle of Balaklava (1854),  
The Indian (Sepoy) Mutiny (1857)

#### Names:

Robert Peel,  
Earl Gray,  
Lord Palmerston,  
William Gladstone,  
Benjamin Disraeli,  
Florence Nightingale,  
David Livingstone

#### Concepts:

Rotten Boroughs,  
Pocket Boroughs

## **1. The Age of Reforms**

After George IV (1820-1830) and William IV (1830-1837), Queen Victoria came to the throne. She was queen for 64 years and defined the era so greatly that most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is identified as the “Victorian” era.

The Victorian Age is the age of **reforms**. The ruling class feared revolution more than anything else, so they wanted to better conditions by slow and gradual reforms.

Robert Peel (PM 1834-35, 1841-46) (Tory / Conservative)

- as Home Secretary, he:
- reformed the Criminal Code: less harsh punishments were introduced
- abolished death penalty for most crimes
- established the Metropolitan Police in London
- prison reform > the point is not so much punishment but correction
- legalisation of trade unions
- repeal of Test Act (1828) > Catholic emancipation!

In 1830, the Whigs came to power.

It was under Charles Grey (the Earl Grey)<sup>1</sup> (PM 1830-34) that other important reforms were introduced.

### **The First Reform Act (1832)**

- this was a revolutionary legislation, one of the milestones in modern British history
- it was an electoral reform
- there were so-called “Rotten Boroughs” with hardly any inhabitants, yet they were represented in the HofC. with two members, yet densely inhabited areas in the north (Liverpool, Manchester) had the same number of MPs

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<sup>1</sup> Earl Grey tea is named after him ☺



- there were “Pocket Boroughs” where voting was controlled by rich people and corruption
- voting was open
- the franchise was extended to middle class men<sup>2</sup>
- the Reform Act was followed by two more, in 1867 and in 1884, finally giving the right to vote to men over 21 years of age (still on the condition that they owned property worth at least £10 or an annual lease of at least £10. So, poor workers and farmers were still excluded from the franchise.
- universal male franchise was only introduced in 1918
- after the Reform Bill, a much stricter two-party system evolved, requiring discipline from party members (more people could vote)
- both the Conservatives and the Liberals had to define their image much more strongly

### Other reforms

- 1833: Slavery Abolition Act: slavery was abolished in the British Empire
- 1833: Factory Act - no children under 9 could be employed in the textile industry and it also regulated the working hours
- 1843: Mines Act – no girls could be employed in mines and boys only above 10
- 1834: Poor Laws Amendment Act: no healthy person could receive help from the parish except in a workhouse (a very controversial “reform”)
- 1846: The Corn Laws were repealed (under Robert Peel’s premiership)
- by the 1840s, there was a widespread dissatisfaction with the Corn Laws that restricted trade
- the idea behind the repeal of the Corn Laws were reflecting those of Adam Smith, who, in *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) argued that if there were no import duties, goods would become cheaper > more people would buy them > increase in demand > increase of production > more employment > improvement of wages > general prosperity
- the immediate reason for the repeal was the Great Famine in Ireland (1845-52)

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<sup>2</sup> In county constituencies, in addition to forty-shilling freeholders, franchise rights were extended to owners of land in copyhold worth £10 and holders of long-term leases (more than sixty years) on land worth £10 and holders of medium-term leases (between twenty and sixty years) on land worth £50 and to tenants-at-will paying an annual rent of £50. In borough constituencies all male householders living in properties worth at least £10 a year were given the right to vote – a measure which introduced to all boroughs a standardised form of franchise for the first time.

- between 1.1-1.5 million people died, 1 million emigrated
- the British government was hugely to blame: it did not stop food export from Ireland and refused foreign food aid
- Peel thought that only cheap foreign corn would save the Irish
- *some see the repeal of the Corn Laws as one of the 10 most important dates in British history that did away with mercantilism and established free trade*
- after 1846: Whig (Liberal) dominance in politics

### Industrial supremacy (1850-1870)

- by 1848, almost all of Europe was in revolt, Britain was safe, untouched by revolutions
- between 1850 and 1870 she was the leading industrial power in the world
- it was called “The Workshop of the World”
- 1851: **Great Exhibition** in the Crystal Palace demonstrated Britain’s advancement



- the industrial supremacy was based on:
- 1) the colonies (sources of raw materials and markets)
- 2) effective communication and transportation systems: channels, railway, cheap (one penny) postage stamp, telegraph
- 3) internal peace
- 4) urbanisation (50% in 1850)
- 5) little foreign competition
- after 1870: united Germany and USA as rivals
- 1873-1896: depression in economy worldwide >> race for colonies (Africa)

### **3. Foreign Policy**

1) “**The Eastern Question**” – the Ottoman Empire was weakening, seen as “Europe’s sick man”

- > Russia wanted to gain access to the sea routes to the Black Sea and the Mediterranean
- > Britain supported Turkey as against Russia
- > led to the **Crimean War** (1853-1856)
- > Russia lost the war, but Britain and her allies also suffered great losses
- > this was the only war that Britain had to fight against a major power in the Victorian age

#### Effects:

- the weakening of the Ottoman Empire > later the rise of nation states like Moldova, Bulgaria, Romania
- the first modern war: use of naval shells, railway and telegraph
- led to an army reform after the spectacular failure of British army tactics, as it is remembered in “The Charge of the Light Brigade” > Lord Cardigan had light cavalry charged against Russian artillery near Balaklava in 1854. 118 soldiers were killed and 127 wounded. The event became a legend after Alfred Tennyson’s poem of the same name
- but the public outcry was mainly caused by the fact that for the first time in British history, a war correspondent (Sir William Howard Russell) covered the events for the Times, reporting on the suffering and neglect of wounded soldiers
- the emergence of modern nursing (Florence Nightingale)



## 2) China: the Opium Wars (1839-1842, 1856-60)

- the use of opium as a recreational substance began to spread in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in China, though several emperors banned its use
- British tradesmen smuggled opium to China
- the Chinese authorities confiscated the opium and turned back British trading ships
- real cause: forcing isolationist China to open its ports to foreign trade
- China was forced to sign unequal trading agreements
- 1842: treaty of Nanking
- Hong Kong became British (until 1997)
- China had to open 5 ports to Western trade, including Shanghai
- the treaty also stipulated that China would pay a twenty-one million dollar payment to Britain as reparations for the destroyed opium, with six million to be paid immediately, and the rest through specified instalments thereafter
- another treaty the following year gave “most favoured nation status” to Britain and added provisions for British extraterritoriality
- The Second Opium War was waged by Britain and France against China from 1856 to 1860.



*A Chinese opium den*

### 3) The Indian Mutiny



Sepoys

- during the Crimean War, several troops were withdrawn from India
- > the so-called Sepoys, Indian native soldiers serving in the British army started a rebellion in 1857 – “The Indian Mutiny”
- they protested against the westernisation of the country (education, railroads, telegraphs)
- the pretext of the rebellion was that Sepoy officers thought the new Enfield rifle cartridges introduced were supposed to be covered with pork and beef grease, with which the contact was prohibited by their religions
- after the mutiny, the East India Company was abolished (1858)
- the company's ruling powers over India were transferred to the British Crown
- The Governor-General of India gained a new title, Viceroy of India, and implemented the policies devised by the India Office
- this is the beginning of the era of the **British Raj** (meaning rule, here: direct rule of the Crown), lasting till 1947, the independence of India and Pakistan
- in 1876, Victoria was proclaimed the **Empress of India**



*Execution of rebels by “blowing from a gun”*

## 11. THE VICTORIAN AGE II. (1860-1901)

### DATES, NAMES AND CONCEPTS

#### Dates:

Second Reform Bill (1867),  
free and compulsory elementary schooling (1870),  
secret ballot (1872),  
Berlin Congress (1878),  
Anglo-Zulu War (1879),  
invasion of Egypt (1882),  
invasion of Sudan (1884),  
Third Reform Bill (1884),  
Boer Wars (1880-81, 1899-1902)

#### Names:

Benjamin Disraeli,  
Lord Palmerston  
William Gladstone  
Florence Nightingale,  
David Livingstone

#### Concepts:

concentration camps

## 1. The great figures of the age

1) **Lord Palmerston** (Henry John Temple) (PM 1855-58, 1859-65)



- “the most characteristically mid-Victorian statesmen of all”
- first Tory, then joined the Whigs at the time of the Reform Bill (1832)
- 1859: formation of the **Liberal Party**, the leader was Palmerston
- he was a sort of “conservative liberal”
- although he was in favour of the idea of the freedom of nations and declared that his government supported the independence movements (Hungarians, Italians, etc.)
- but in practice, had to find a careful balance because of the power of Russia and Austria
- supported that Austria should remain a power (against Russia)
- but he welcomed exiled revolutionaries in Britain
- no major reforms were instituted during his premiership
- after his death in 1865, another wave of reforms started
- > 1867: Second Reform Bill extended the right to vote for better-off workers



2) **William Gladstone** (PM 1868-1874, 1880-1886, 1892-1894)



- a liberal politician
- he had been a factory owner
- also started as a Tory
- several reforms were introduced:
  - 1) 1870: free and compulsory elementary schooling
  - 2) 1871: the Universities Test Act allowed non-Conformist (non-Anglican) students to attend the universities of Oxford, Cambridge, London and Durham
  - 3) 1871: Civil Service Reform: an entrance exam was introduced – officers were no longer able to “buy” the commissions
  - 4) local government reorganised to provide good service to the people
  - 5) 1872: secret ballot (voting) was introduced
- under his second premiership >
  - 6) Third Reform Bill (1884) > extended the franchise to workers in the countryside, practically universal male suffrage was introduced
  - 7) 1881: Land Act: to protect Irish tenants from Protestant landowners in Ireland – rents had to be fixed by judges, and evictions were forbidden

- 8) plan of the Home Rule Bill (1886) > self-government for the Irish – the demand was a dominion status like Canada or Australia - the Parliament did not support this > Gladstone resigned
- under his third premiership, the second Home Rule Bill was also rejected > no solution for the Irish problem

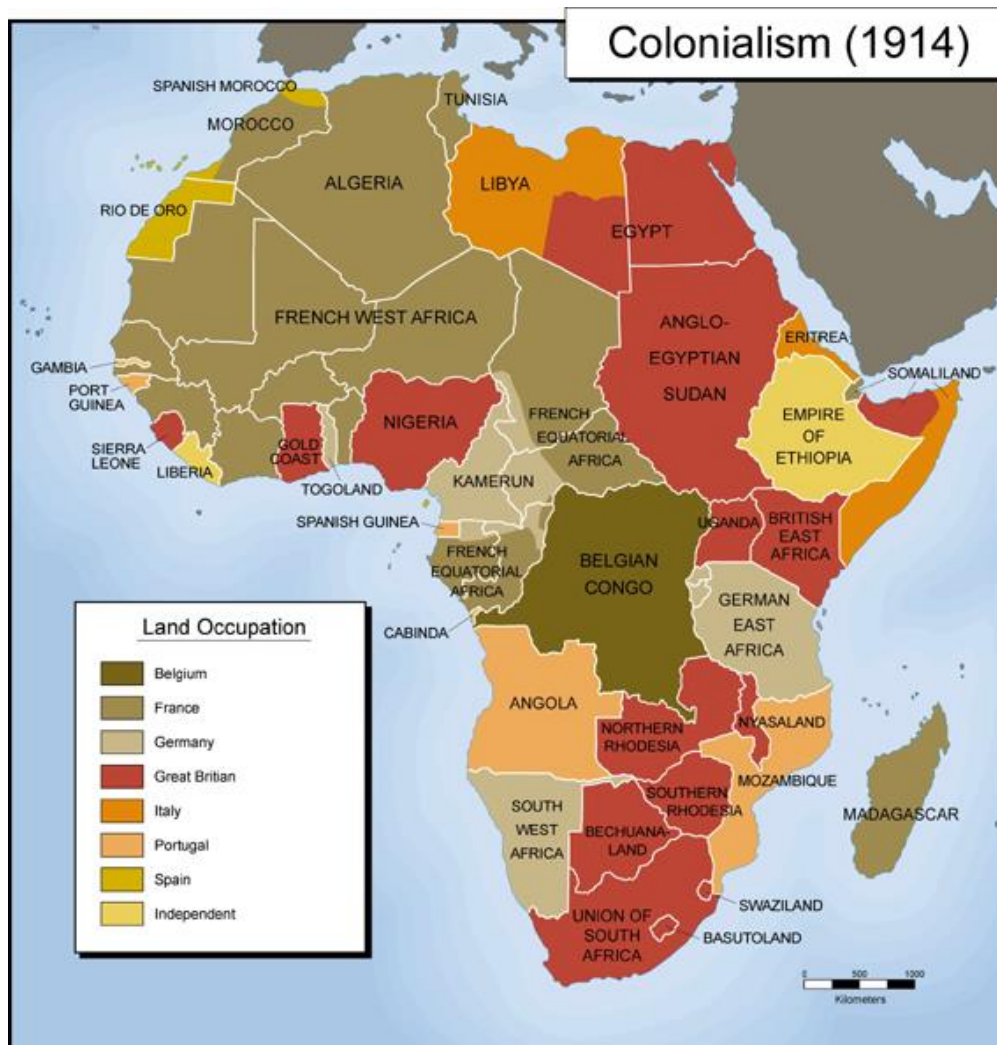
### 3) **Benjamin Disraeli** (PM 1868; 1874-1880)



- Conservative
- Jewish origin – in 1860, Jews were given equal rights with other citizens
- became Anglican at the age of 12
- changed the outlook of the Conservative Party, building on support from the middle class
- in 1877, the Bulgarians rebelled against the Ottoman rule > Russia intervened the “defend” the Bulgarians, the Ottoman Empire was defeated by Russia

- in 1878, he worked at the Congress of Berlin, an international diplomatic conference to reorganise the states in the Balkan Peninsula
- A part of Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro became independent
- Romania became fully independent, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy occupied Bosnia-Herzegovina
- Britain gained Cyprus > she could keep an eye on Russia and the Suez Canal
- the controversial wars in Afghanistan and South Africa undermined Disraeli's support
- he was not only a politician but also a novelist, writing several fiction and non-fiction works, the most well-known is being *Sybil, or the Two Nations* (1845)

## 2. The Scramble for Africa



- slave trade on the west coast
- Cape of Good Hope in the south > port to service sea-routes to India

- travels, explorers > David Livingstone (1813-1873) > one of the most popular figures in Victorian Britain, a kind of national hero, his meeting with H. M. Stanley in Africa in 1871 gave rise to the popular quotation “Dr. Livingstone I presume?”
- “civilising”, “bringing light” to the “dark” Continent
- 1870s > economic crisis in Europe > expansion > “Scramble for Africa”
- dividing Africa between European nations into “areas of interest” at the **Berlin Conference of 1884-85** (not to be confused with the Congress of Berlin in 1878)



- reasons for the British colonisation of Africa: 1) to protect trade interests and sea routes 2) overpopulation in Britain
- 1882: invasion of Egypt after a mutiny – Britain wants “to protect international shipping” (stayed till 1954)
- 1879: Anglo-Zulu war > British defeat at Isandhlwana! – shows problems in army command and organisation
- 1884: invasion of Sudan
- strange irony: ideas of freedom, liberalism <> invasion of countries in Africa

- 1880-81 and 1899-1902: **Boer Wars** in South Africa – Boers (Dutch settlers) use guerrilla tactics
- the first use of concentration camps (poorly administered, poor diet, low hygiene, diseases, epidemics, starvation) in a total of 64 tented camps



## **12. THE EDWARDIAN AGE AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR (1901-1918)**

### DATES, NAMES AND CONCEPTS

#### Dates:

Triple Entente formed (1907),  
Parliament Act (1911),  
First World War (1914-1918),  
Easter Rising in Ireland (1916),  
Battle of Passchendaele (1917),  
Armistice Day (11 November 1918),  
women over 30 get the right to vote (1918),

#### Names:

Edward VII,  
George V,  
Edward VIII,  
George VI,  
Emmeline Pankhurst,

#### Concepts:

Triple Entente,  
Triple Alliance,  
new Liberalism,  
Suffragette Movement,  
trench warfare,  
no man's land,  
shell shock,  
Cenotaph,

## 1. The Edwardian Period (1901-1910)

- Edward VII (1901-1910)
- a period of tensions, both abroad and Britain
- the sources of tensions:

### 1) Britain's weakening position

- it was clear that Britain was no longer the leading power
- unification of Italy (1866) and Germany (1871) after the Franco-Prussian war (Bismarck) + USA growing even bigger, reaching the frontier by 1890
- Britain was smaller in size
- had less natural resources
- lagging behind in science and technology (not enough schools or universities to deal with these)
- exploitation of workers > they were not interested in producing more or better
- worrying signs: defeats in the colonies (Zulu war, Boer wars)

### 2) the emergence of military powers and alliances:

- 1882: Triple Alliance (Germany + Austria-Hungary + Italy)
- 1904: British-French alliance ("entente cordiale")
- 1907: British-Russian alliance
- >> the Triple Entente, against Germany and Austria-Hungary
- arms race
- the armies of France and Germany doubled in size between 1870 and 1914
- new weapons: rapid fire guns, machine guns, tanks, aeroplanes, submarines

### 3) the constitutional conflict in Britain

- 1905-1914: Liberal government ("the new Liberals") > Lloyd George, Winston Churchill, Herbert Asquith rejected Gladstonian liberalism that favoured free trade, laissez-faire economy, and non-intervention of the state

- the new Liberals did want to reduce inequalities with state intervention and welfare measures
- introducing social and educational reforms
- old age pension, unemployment benefit (though very limited)
- national health insurance (for manual workers only)
- free school meals for children
- Labour Exchanges opened
- >> they required money, taxation had to be increased >> the House of Lords rejected the Liberal budget in 1909 (for the first time in British history)
- > the Liberals reduced the power of the House of Lords (1911), the House of Lords no longer had the right to reject budget bills + on the third occasion they had to pass any bill (The Parliament Act)

#### 4) the Suffragette movement (women's situation in general)

- in the Victorian times, middle class women were expected to stay at home ("The Angel in the House"), manage the household and were not expected to work
- they had limited control over their personal property
- about 25% of women remained spinsters < many men stayed in the colonies or died in wars
- women could not vote
- appearance of typewriters and telephones > some young middle-class women became typists and telephone operators or secretaries
- the emergence of the "new woman", independent, emancipated
- the Suffragettes, as the name shows, demanded suffrage, that is the right to vote
- wanted to draw attention to themselves, window smashing, heckling (making noise at meetings) and other "scandalous" behaviour
- several of them were arrested and imprisoned





*One of the leaders was Emmeline Pankhurst (1858-1928)*

## **2. The First World War (1914-1918)**

### The causes of the war:

- 1) economic: redistribution of colonies – imperial struggle
- 2) crisis in Africa: the great powers trying to play against each other in the African theatre (supporting the others' enemies) – Moroccan crisis (1905, 1911)
- 3) emergence of rival military camps
- 4) nationalism in the Balkans – people fighting against the Ottoman Empire – Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania
- 5) Bosnian crisis of 1908 – Austria-Hungary occupied Bosnia > Serbia threatened with war, Russia was ready to support Serbia > war almost broke out, but in fact it was only delayed
- 6) immediate reason: 1914 - assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand by a Serbian nationalist
  - > Germany and Austria-Hungary against the Serbs
  - > Russia supports the Serbs
  - > Russia in Triple Entente with France and Britain
  - > all-European war breaks out
    - irrational expectations of a short war

- trench warfare > neither side manages to advance, because of machine guns, mines and barbed wire barricades
- cavalry and infantry advance was obsolete by now, everything was replaced by machinery
- > standstill

**Instead of a complete military history of the First World War, let us see some powerful icons that have remained in collective memory:**

Trenches and terrible conditions



Poison gas attacks (Ypres)

**from “Dulce et Decorum Est”, by Wilfred Owen**

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,  
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,

Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs  
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.  
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots  
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;  
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots  
Of tired, outstripped Five-Nines that dropped behind.

Gas! GAS! Quick, boys! - An ecstasy of fumbling,  
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;  
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling  
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime ...  
Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light,  
As under I green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,  
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.



The Battle of Passchendaele (or Ypres) (July-November 1917) – one of the most horrible battles. British casualties and losses are estimated to be 300,000 and German losses 300,000.

Tanks



The “Waste Land” or “No Man’s Land”



Shell-shock (post-traumatic disorder caused by the war): panic attacks, inability to reason, walk or talk > emergence of modern psychology (it was unprecedented that the psychic

trauma of war could be converted into bodily symptoms) and led to a basic reevaluation of men's role as well, the trauma reactions being unable to be explained by "cowardice" only



*A shell-shocked soldier's frightened look*

The development of plastic surgery, prosthetics, and artificial limbs



Remembrance Day: 11 November 1918 – Armistice Day > each year on this date: one minute silence + the Cenotaph in London



The poppy as a symbol of the remembrance of the war:



## The Effects of the War in Britain

### 1) Social:

- the loss of 750,000 people, breadwinners in families died
- but: higher incomes during the war, regular employment, women had to go to work in factories because men were at the front
- > this helped their emancipation
- in 1918, women over 30 got the right to vote, then in 1928, all women over 21
- also: rise of women writers in the interwar period



### 2) Political:

- spread of socialist and communist ideas
- rise of the Labour Party (formed in 1874)
- 191 seats in 1923 in Parliament
- the Labour Party was not “socialist”, more like middle class, and wanted to develop a kind of socialism that would fit Britain’s character and traditions
- the Irish problem: 1916 Easter Rising in Dublin

3) Economic:

- emergence of new industries, electrical engineering
- decline of traditional industries
- national debt rises, inflation, poverty
- enormous rise in taxation: 6% income tax in 1914, 25% in 1918

4) Psychological: general disillusionment with political leaders, a sense of “end of the world” feeling (Oswald Spengler: *The Decline of the West* – 1922)



## **13. THE INTERWAR PERIOD (1918-1945)**

### DATES, NAMES AND CONCEPTS

#### Dates:

Partition of Ireland (1921),  
General Strike (1924),  
Great Depression breaks out (1929),  
Abdication Crisis (1936),  
Ireland becomes a republic (1937),  
Second World War (1939-1945),  
Blitz of London (1940-41)

#### Names:

Eamon de Valera,  
Ramsay MacDonald,  
Stanley Baldwin,  
Neville Chamberlain,  
Winston Churchill

#### Concepts:

Irish Free State,  
Great Depression,  
appeasement,  
Blitz

### **1. The Irish question**

- 1921: Anglo-Irish treaty > partition of Ireland, Northern Ireland remains part of the UK >
- then: civil war in Ireland (1922-23) between supporters and opponents of the treaty
- 1922-37: Irish Free State – a dominion in the Commonwealth

- 1937: Eamon de Valera declares southern Ireland a republic – two separate countries are formed and the British Crown was no longer sovereign in Ireland
- (1949: Ireland officially left the Commonwealth)

## 2. The rise of Labour

- demands of war > doubling the size of Civil Service
- increasing government control
- dissatisfaction of workers as well
- 1924: first Labour (minority) government – Ramsay MacDonald PM
- 1926: General Strike for 9 days – no services, ordinary middle class people kept up services like transport, gas and electricity
- 1924-1929: Conservative government – Stanley Baldwin PM – good leader, with fine public image, consolidation
- 1929: outbreak of Great Depression
- 1929-1931: second Labour government
- huge unemployment and poverty



*The Jarrow Hunger March (1936)*

“At the back of one of the houses a young woman was kneeling on the stones, poking a stick up the leaden waste-pipe which ran from the sink inside and which I suppose was blocked. I

had time to see everything about her—her sacking apron, her clumsy clogs, her arms reddened by the cold. She looked up as the train passed, and I was almost near enough to catch her eye. She had a round pale face, the usual exhausted face of the slum girl who is twenty-five and looks forty, thanks to miscarriages and drudgery; and it wore, for the second in which I saw it, the most desolate, hopeless expression I have ever-seen. It struck me then that we are mistaken when we say that ‘It isn’t the same for them as it would be for us,’ and that people bred in the slums can imagine nothing but the slums. For what I saw in her face was not the ignorant suffering of an animal. She knew well enough what was happening to her—understood as well as I did how dreadful a destiny it was to be kneeling there in the bitter cold, on the slimy stones of a slum backyard, poking a stick up a foul drain-pipe.”  
(George Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier*, 1937)

### **3. The era of crises**

- 1936: Abdication Crisis or “The Year of the Three Monarchs”: George V died, his son, Edward VIII, however, wanted to marry a divorced American woman, Wallis Simpson. This was not tolerated by the Royal Family, and Edward VIII chose to abdicate in December. His brother, George VI became the king (1937 until 1952).



- PM: Neville Chamberlain (1937-1941): huge role in dragging Britain into the war, because he (and the Western powers in general) took action too late to prevent Hitler's aggression. Even after the Munich conference (1938) they were confident that Hitler could be stopped with compromises and treaties ("appeasement").



*Chamberlain weaving the document that he thought guaranteed peace*

#### **4. The Second World War (1939-1945)**

- September 1939: Germany attacks Poland
- in May 1940: Chamberlain resigns, Winston Churchill becomes PM
- first: quick German advancement (1940-41)
- Dunkirk evacuation (1940), a small French port, the British army was only saved by thousands of private boats – “Britain’s darkest hour”
- Churchill’s three famous speeches in the House of Commons in 1940

“I would say to the House as I said to those who have joined this government: *I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat.* We have before us an ordeal of the most grievous kind. We have before us many, many long months of struggle and of suffering.”

“Even though large tracts of Europe and many old and famous States have fallen or may fall into the grip of the Gestapo and all the odious apparatus of Nazi rule, we shall not flag or fail. *We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be. We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender,* and if, which I do not for a moment believe, this island or a large part of it were subjugated and starving, then our Empire beyond the seas, armed and guarded by the British Fleet, would carry on the struggle, until, in God's good time, the New World, with all its power and might, steps forth to the rescue and the liberation of the old.”

“But if we fail, then the whole world, including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new dark age made more sinister, and perhaps more protracted, by the lights of perverted science. Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties, and so bear ourselves, that if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say, *This was their finest hour.*”

- 1940-41: “The Blitz” – strategic bombing of UK by Germany – people found shelters in underground tunnels





- 1943: Italy surrenders + Germans defeated by USSR > new front
- 1944: D-Day, US army landing in Normandy
- 1945: defeat of Nazi Germany
- toll: 303,000 soldiers and 60,000 civilians

## 14. POST-WAR BRITAIN (1945-)

### DATES, NAMES AND CONCEPTS

#### Dates:

India and Pakistan become independent (1947),  
National Health Service (1946),  
National Assistance Act (1948),  
ascension of Elizabeth II (1952),  
Suez Crisis (1956),  
The Troubles in Northern Ireland (1969-98),  
the UK joins the Common Market (1973),  
Oil Crisis (1973),  
Thatcher becomes PM (1979),  
Falklands War (1982),  
Miners' Strike (1984-85),  
Tony Blair's victory (1997),  
Conservative turn (2010),  
the UK leaves the EU (2020)

#### Names:

Elizabeth II,  
Clement Attlee  
Margaret Thatcher,  
Tony Blair  
Charles III

#### Concepts:

the age of austerity,  
Thatcherism,  
New Labour

## 1. The Years of Compromise and the Welfare State (1945-1969)

### The New World Order

- new world order: leading powers – USA and Soviet Union
- Britain loses its importance in the world
- 1956: Suez Crisis: obviously Britain had no role in it
- loss of former colonies (decolonisation): 1947: India and Pakistan, 1960s: African colonies, 1997: Hong Kong
- 1960s: failed attempts to join the Common Market (resistance of French, especially de Gaulle) > only possible in 1973, after de Gaulle's retirement
- troubles at home: the Northern Irish question (1969, 1973 > solved in 1998)

### The Welfare State

- the idea that the state should take an active role in social policies
- see: “new Liberals” before the First World War, Keynesian ideas during the Great Depression (employment of people in public works, infrastructure, state intervention in economy, central planning)
- > jobs should be created to increase demand and purchasing power (Roosevelt and Hitler also used this)
- nationalisation of strategic industries: coal mining, iron and steel production, railroads and banks by the new Labour government (Clement Attlee)
- > end of liberal, laissez-faire policy
- 1946: National Health Service (NHS)
- 1948: National Assistance Act (provide financial help for the old, the unemployed, the sick, mothers and children)
- 1945-50s: “age of austerity” – rations system: bread, potato, sugar, tea (until 1953)
- but: rising living standards from the mid-50s on
- 1952: accession of Elizabeth II > promise of a fresh air, a new “Elizabethan” age



- Harold MacMillan, Conservative PM in 1959: “indeed let us be frank about it – most of our people have never had it so good” – notice the simple rhetoric appealing to lower classes!

### The Youth Culture

- the first time in modern history, young people started to develop their own subculture
- < they had free time and money
- expressed their own fashion in music and clothing
- they could buy motorbikes and cars > mobility
- subcultures:
- 1950s: Teddy Boys (imitating the fashion of the Edwardian Era), 1960s: Mods and Rockers (two rival bands centred on motorcycling), Beatles-fans



*Teddy Boys and Rockers*

- general spirit of revolt, questioning the authority of older people
- the very thing that The Beatles came from Liverpool is significant > not only London-based culture
- they sang before the Queen and were decorated by the Queen in 1965 > changing role of monarchy > becoming more popular and open to the public



## 2. The End of Compromise (1969-1979)

1) the emergence of the Northern Irish “Troubles” (1969-98) powerfully marked the signs of crisis

- Although the Irish Free State which was later named Eire left the British Commonwealth in 1949 and became a fully independent republic, the hostility between the Catholics and the Protestants continued in Northern Ireland.
- The supporters of the union with England were mostly Protestant obviously and were called Unionists.
- By the 1960s, Protestants controlled state institutions, and discrimination against Catholics was an everyday experience.
- The Irish Republican Army acquired weapons and began terrorist attacks.

- The violence broke out on 12 July 1969 when, as each year before, the Orange Order marched through the Catholic-dominated districts of Belfast.
- The Orange Order got its name from the Protestant William of Orange (William III), the English king between 1689 and 1702, who defeated the armies of the Catholic James II at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690. The Royal Ulster Constabulary (police force under the control of Protestants) used guns against the Catholics.
- “The Troubles” began.



- The English sent troops to Northern Ireland to fight against the IRA and its political wing, the Sinn Fein.
- On 30 January 1972, (“Bloody Sunday”) 13 Catholics were killed in a civil rights march in Londonderry.
- In 1979, the IRA assassinated Lord Mountbatten (the uncle of the Duke of Edinburgh) and his family.
- Ten prisoners who wanted to be recognised as political prisoners died in a hunger strike in the Maze Prison in 1981.

- Approximately 275 people were killed each year in the period between 1971-76.



- In 1972, the constitution and the parliament of Northern Ireland were suspended and the Home Rule ended. Northern Ireland was directly governed from London until 1999.
- As a result of the peace talks of the 1990s, the Good Friday Agreement was signed on 10 April 1998.
- Responsibility for most local matters were devolved to an elected assembly. “The Troubles” ended.
- In 2005, the IRA agreed to a ceasefire and to dump arms, in 2006 the Sinn Fein acknowledged to Royal Ulster Constabulary and in 2007 a national government was formed with the two arch-enemies, the Unionists and the Sinn Fein.
- growing dissatisfaction in other Celtic territories too, wanting autonomy and independence > Scottish National Party wanting independence > 1979, 2014 failed referendums, 2020: Brexit > Scotland wanting to leave the UK and join (back) the EU
- the future may be the total break-up of the United Kingdom

## 2) Another sign of crisis was the 1973 oil crisis

- In October 1973, the members of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC), proclaimed an oil embargo targeted at nations that had supported Israel during the Yom Kippur War.
- The initial nations targeted were Canada, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States.

- By the end of the embargo in March 1974, the price of oil had risen nearly 300%.
- The embargo caused an oil crisis, or "shock", with many short- and long-term effects on global politics and the global economy. (Many Soviet-bloc countries also experienced inflation; this was one of the reasons why the Hungarian 1968 more liberal economic policy was stopped, ultimately driving the country to ask for loans from IMF to maintain the standard of living.)
- It was later called the "first oil shock", followed by the 1979 oil crisis, termed the "second oil shock", caused by the Iranian Islamic revolution, with a drop in oil production.

### 3. Rising tensions due to immigration

- people coming from former colonies (first wave) > formation of a multi-cultural society? (Caribbean, India, Asia)
- by the 60s: tensions between local communities and immigrants
- Conservative MP Enoch Powell's anti-immigration "Rivers of Blood" speech caused considerable tension

"As I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding. Like the Roman, I seem to see "the River Tiber foaming with much blood". That tragic and intractable phenomenon which we watch with horror on the other side of the Atlantic but which there is interwoven with the history and existence of the States itself, is coming upon us here by our own volition and our own neglect. Indeed, it has all but come. In numerical terms, it will be of American proportions long before the end of the century. Only resolute and urgent action will avert it even now. Whether there will be the public will to demand and obtain that action, I do not know. All I know is that to see, and not to speak, would be the great betrayal."

- by 1985, about 5 million immigrants

4. The 1970s is a bleak period, economic crisis, the Labour governments are unable to deal with it

- riots, fights were common, unemployment rose
- football hooliganism > no sense of future
- it was clear that the welfare state created in the 1940s-1950s did not work any longer

### 3. Conservative rule: Margaret Thatcher (1979-1990) and John Major (1990-1997)



- “The Iron Lady”
- the longest serving PM in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the only woman who held the office
- revolutionised British politics and the Conservative Party
- her party politics and government was more like 19<sup>th</sup>-century Liberal than Conservative
- emphasised middle-class values (came from a middle-class family as well) – hard work, self-help and patriotism, free trade
- started to return nationalised sectors to the private sphere – privatisation

“In our philosophy the purpose of the life of the individual is not to be the servant of the State and its objectives, but to make the best of his talents and qualities. The sense of being self-reliant, of playing a role within the family, of owning one's own property, of paying one's own way, are all part of the spiritual ballast which maintains responsible citizenship, and provides the solid foundation from which people look around to see what more they might do, for others and for themselves. That is what we mean by a moral society; not a society where the State is responsible for everything, and no one is responsible for the State.”

- the idea was that the welfare state was over and the state must not be expected to help everyone
- her famous saying, a kind of motto of the 1980s:
 

“**There is no such thing as society.** There is living tapestry of men and women and people and the beauty of that tapestry and the quality of our lives will depend upon how much each of us is prepared to take responsibility for ourselves and each of us prepared to turn round and help by our own efforts those who are unfortunate.”
- successes: 1982: Falklands War (Argentina occupying Las Malvinas) – proved that she is an able leader
- 1985-85: Miners’ Strike > did not give in > wanted to reduce the power of trade unions
- won three elections, but by 1990, she went a bit too far and lost support in the party
- the PM became John Major (Cons.) from 1990 to 1997



## 5. The New Labour (1997-2010)



- Tony Blair's victory in 1997
- remained PM until 2007
- then: Gordon Brown, 2007-2010
- generally, he also counted on "middle England", that is, middle-class people with a bit of money but who were disillusioned with the Conservatives
- also won three elections (1997, 2001, 2005)
- introduced minimum wage for employees
- passed a Freedom of Information Act
- incorporated the European Declaration of Human Rights into English law
- strengthening local governments and trade unions
- generally, a more open attitude towards Europe (as opposed to the Conservatives, who are mainly Euro-sceptics)
- but: kept privatisation, and even extended the private enterprise into schools and hospitals
- > (it was evident that old Conservative / Labour categories tended to vanish)
- solved the Scottish problem > **1999: Scottish parliament, devolution** (Wales and Northern Ireland: assemblies)



- the “special relationship” with USA was maintained: Blair was on good terms both with Clinton and George Bush Jr.
- > helped USA to fight in Afghanistan and Iraq after 2001, sending British troops
- In 2003, supported the invasion of Iraq and had the British Armed Forces participate in the Iraq War, claiming that Saddam Hussein's regime possessed weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). No WMDs were ever found in Iraq.
- terrorism became a major issue in the 2000s > 7 July 2005 – bomb attack in the London underground – 56 people were killed
- after Blair: Gordon Brown (PM 2007-2010)

### The present

- 2010: **Conservative** victory, but could only form a government with the Liberals
- July 2016: David Cameron resigns after the EU referendum (“Brexit”)
- 2016-19: Theresa May (Cons.)
- 2019-22: Boris Johnson (Cons.)
- **1 February 2020: the UK withdraws from the EU**
- 2022 Liz Truss (Cons.) (45 days)
- 2022- Rishi Sunak (Cons.)