UNITED KINGDOM

HISTORY

People have lived in Britain for thousands of years. Romans, Saxons, Vikings and Normans all came and left their mark. Then four countries joined to make one kingdom.



Stone Age Britain

Long ago, Britain was joined to Europe by land, and hunters walked across. When the ice melted, the sea rose, and Britain became an island about 8,000 years ago. Farmers arrived about 6,000 years ago. These **prehistoric** people, who lived before writing, raised the giant stones of Stonehenge about 4,500 years ago.



The Romans

In AD 43, a Roman army crossed the sea and conquered much of Britain. Some British tribes fought back. Queen Boudica (BOO-dih-kuh) led a big revolt around AD 60, but the Romans won. The Romans built roads, towns and baths and founded London. In AD 122, Emperor Hadrian ordered a wall built across the north to guard the edge of his **empire**. The Romans left around AD 410.

Saxons and Vikings

Next, the Angles and Saxons sailed from what is now Germany and Denmark and settled in the south and east. Their kingdoms became England, the "land of the Angles." In the late 700s, Vikings from Scandinavia began to raid and then settle, and York became a Viking town. King Alfred the Great fought the Vikings and then made peace with them.

1066 and the Magna Carta

In 1066, William, Duke of Normandy in France, sailed to England. He beat King Harold at the Battle of Hastings and became king. People call him William the Conqueror. The Normans built stone castles, such as the Tower of London. In 1215, English nobles made King John agree to the Magna Carta, a **charter** that said even the king had to obey the law.

Four Countries, One Kingdom

Wales was joined to England in the 1500s. In 1603, King James VI of Scotland also became king of England, but each country kept its own **Parliament**, a group that makes laws. On May 1, 1707, England and Scotland joined as one country, Great Britain. In 1801, Ireland joined, making the United Kingdom. In 1922, most of Ireland left to form its own country, and Northern Ireland stayed.



Factories, Empire and Today

In the 1700s and 1800s, Britain built some of the world's first big factories, steam engines and railroads. British ships sailed the world, and Britain ruled a large empire in the Americas, Africa, Asia and the Pacific. In the 1900s, most of those lands became independent countries. The United Kingdom fought in both World Wars and was on the winning side both times. Today, it is a busy country of cities, farms and science.

UNITED KINGDOM THROUGH TIME

2500 BC	AD 43	1066	1215	1707	1779	1801	1922	1945
Big stones raised at Stonehenge	Romans invade Britain	Battle of Hastings	King John agrees to the Magna Carta	England and Scotland unite	The Iron Bridge is built	Ireland joins the UK	Most of Ireland leaves the UK	World War II ends

PEOPLE TO KNOW

Boudica	Queen who led a revolt against Rome
Queen Elizabeth I	Ruled England from 1558 to 1603
William Shakespeare	Wrote plays such as Romeo and Juliet
Isaac Newton	Scientist who explained gravity
Florence Nightingale	Nurse who made hospitals cleaner

WORDS TO KNOW

prehistoric	from the time before people wrote things down
empire	many lands and peoples ruled by one government
charter	a written paper that gives rights or rules
Parliament	a group of people who make a country's laws