

HISTORY OF BRITAIN
PART FIVE

By Harry
Jivenmukta

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INTRODUCTION

The History of Britain is a five pack series which in total considers 101 topics from British history. The format for pages is mostly one page one topic, with a short description of a particular event, followed by questions and exercises. It would be easily possible to have covered more than 200 topics and to have devoted several pages to each topic. This would probably have left the packs too big and difficult to use. This selection, therefore, represents 'snapshots' rather than being comprehensive. Teachers are advised to use the sheets as an introduction from which students may develop the topic in one of several different ways. They can be asked to answer one or more of the questions posed, or the teacher may direct the student in a specific way. The topics are suitable for use as classroom material, homework, or as a basis for longer project type assignments.

Teachers are advised at all times to link the topics back to the events which precede and forward to the implications and effect that the event had on related matters. It is also important to link the topics to the underlying trends in the history of the time. Many of the events happened as a result of the complicated accession claims made by the aristocracy, or as a result of religious competition between Protestants and Catholics. There is also the link between the Scottish and English fight for independence and/or supremacy.

One of the difficulties in teaching British history, especially before 1900, is the ability to keep the interest of the student in a topic which seems to have little relevance to their needs and expectations today. It is important, therefore, to try to maintain interest by direct comparisons to events today or to the historical implications that the events had which can be seen today. An example of this could be the Roman road networks which are still visible today, or the Union with Ireland, the effects of which still cause friction today. Another highly recommended tool is the building of short biographies of historical figures. A number of biographies can be built up which can then be displayed or used as a reference resource.

The History of Britain pack has been widely tested and comes highly recommended for use with students between the ages of 11 and 16. The language may be difficult for some students but in an attempt to cater for a wide ability range and in order to explain the topics fully it has been necessary to use quite complicated language at times. Teachers are reminded to assess whether their students are likely to be confused by some words. The development of a classroom glossary may be of use here.

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VIKING NORMAN MEDIEVAL TUDOR STUART GEORGIAN **VICTORIAN** 20TH CENTURY

Please note: in the date line which appears at the bottom of each page, the Victorian era is omitted except for the period for which it is relevant. This is only because in this series it features only a few times and should be noted by teachers and students as an important era in British history study generally.

EMILY PANKHURST

TOPIC
85

Emily Pankhurst was a militant champion of woman suffrage whose 40 year campaign achieved complete success in the year of her death, when British women obtained full equality in the right to vote. Her daughter Christabel Harriette (afterward Dame Christabel) Pankhurst (1880-1958) also was prominent in the women's suffrage movement.

She founded the Women's Franchise League, which secured (1894) for married women the right to vote in elections to local offices (not to the House of Commons). Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), was founded by her in 1903 in Manchester. The union first attracted wide attention in 1905, when two of its members, Christabel Pankhurst and Annie Kenney were arrested in the street for assault on the police and, after having refused to pay fines, were sent to prison.

From 1906 Emily Pankhurst directed WSPU activities from London. Her followers interrupted meetings of Cabinet ministers. In 1908-09 Pankhurst was jailed three times. A truce that she declared in 1910 was broken when the government blocked a "conciliation" bill on women's suffrage. From July 1912 the WSPU turned to extreme militancy. Pankhurst herself was imprisoned and released under the Act of 1913 (the "Cat and Mouse Act"), by which hunger-striking prisoners could be freed for a time and then re-imprisoned upon regaining their health. She was released and re-arrested 12 times within a year. With the outbreak of World War I in 1914, she and Christabel called off the suffrage campaign, and the government released all suffragist prisoners.

During the war Pankhurst, who previously had made three tours of the United States to lecture on women's suffrage, visited the United States, Canada, and Russia to encourage the industrial mobilization of women. She lived in the United States, Canada, and Bermuda for several years after the war. In 1926, she returned to England, and was chosen Conservative candidate for an east London constituency, but her health failed before she could be elected. The Representation of the People Act of 1928, establishing voting equality for men and women, was passed a few weeks before her death.



ROMAN SAXON VIKING NORMAN MEDIEVAL TUDOR STUART GEORGIAN 20TH CENTURY

Trace the history of the women's suffrage movement.

Write a letter to a friend describing what a demonstration for voting rights was like. Imagine you had a part in it.

Find out about and write a short biography of Emily Pankhurst.

DAVID LLOYD GEORGE

TOPIC
86

Lloyd George, (b. Jan. 17, 1863, Manchester, d. March 26, 1945,) was British prime minister (1916-22) who dominated the British political scene in the latter part of World War I.

Lloyd George's major achievement during the years immediately before the war was in the field of social insurance. Inspired by a visit to Germany (1908), Lloyd George decided to introduce health and unemployment insurance on a similar basis in Britain. He did this in the National Insurance Act of 1911. The measure caused bitter opposition. Lloyd George piloted his measure through Parliament with great skill and determination. He laid the foundations of the modern welfare state and, if he had done nothing else, would deserve fame for that achievement.

Lloyd George was 54 when he became Prime Minister in 1916. He immediately substituted a small War Cabinet of five, which was to be in constant session, for the body of 23 that had hitherto conducted affairs. The result was a general speeding up of decisions.

He adopted the ship convoy system to guarantee food supplies. The food shortage resulting from the submarine war was acute. Drastic action had to be taken to step up agricultural production, and eventually a system of food rationing had to be introduced (1918).

His main achievements make his place in history secure: he laid the foundations of the welfare state and led Britain to victory in World War One.

ROMAN SAXON VIKING NORMAN MEDIEVAL TUDOR STUART GEORGIAN **20TH CENTURY**



How did Liberals view the need for social reform in the first ten years of the new Century?

What were Lloyd George's greatest achievements?

Find out about and write a short biography of David Lloyd George.

SOCIAL REFORM

TOPIC
87

Social reform was not the main topic at the first general election of the new century which was fought mainly on the old issues of free trade, temperance reform, and education. In many constituencies there was evidence of grievances against an education act of 1902 that abolished the school boards, transferred educational responsibilities to the all-purpose local authorities, and laid the foundations of a national system of secondary education. Yet local and national inquiries into the incidence of poverty had pointed to the need for public action to relieve distress, and, from the start, the new Liberal government embarked upon a program of social legislation. In 1906 free school meals were made available to poor children; in 1907 a school medical service was founded; in 1908 a Children's Act was passed, along with an Old Age Pensions Act granting pensions under prescribed conditions to people over 70; in 1908 the miners were given a statutory working day of eight hours; and in 1909 trade boards were set up to fix wages in designated industries where there was little or no trade-union strength, and labour exchanges were created to try to reduce unemployment and to increase mobility. The vigour of these reforms owed much to a partnership between Winston Churchill at the Board of Trade and the "Welsh wizard," David Lloyd George, chancellor of the exchequer.



ROMAN SAXON VIKING NORMAN MEDIEVAL TUDOR STUART GEORGIAN 20TH CENTURY

List the main social reforms of the first half of the twentieth Century.

How has the attitude of people changed about helping less fortunate people in the last 200 years?

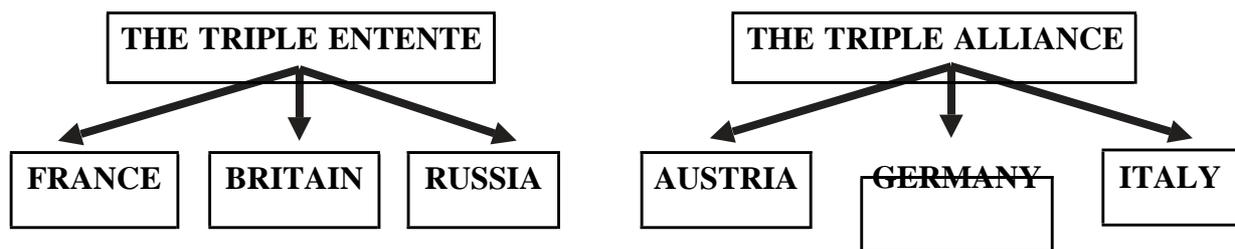
THE TRIPLE ENTENTE CAUSES OF WORLD WAR ONE

TOPIC
88

The Triple Entente was not originally conceived as a balance to German power, but that was its effect, especially in light of the escalating naval race. In 1906 the Royal Navy launched HMS Dreadnought, a battleship whose size, armour, speed, and gunnery rendered all existing warships obsolete. The German government responded in kind, even enlarging the Kiel Canal at great expense to accommodate the larger ships. As Ambassador Sir Francis Bertie put it, "The Germans aim to push us into the water and steal our clothes."

For France the Triple Entente was a continental security apparatus. For Russia it was a means of reducing points of conflict so that the antiquated tsarist system could buy time to catch up technologically with the West. For Britain the ententes, the Japanese alliance, and the "special relationship" with the United States were diplomatic props for an empire beyond Britain's capacity to defend alone. To the Germans, the Triple Entente looked suspiciously like encirclement designed to frustrate their rightful claims to world power and prestige.

When a student killed Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian throne, the powers of the Triple Entente and Triple Alliance were drawn into world war because of the agreements they had to protect each other. Germany had an alliance with Austria and Russia with Serbia. When the Austrians threatened Serbia, all the major powers were drawn in automatically.



ROMAN SAXON VIKING NORMAN MEDIEVAL TUDOR STUART GEORGIAN 20TH CENTURY

Find out about and write a report on the incident in which a Serbian student murdered Archduke Franz Ferdinand. What were the immediate consequences of this?

THE FIRST WORLD WAR

TOPIC
89

On June 28th 1914 the heir to the Austrian throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand was shot dead by a Serb, Gavrilo Princip. Austria wanted revenge and declared war on Serbia on 28 July.

Europe was locked into a series of pacts which meant that if one nation was threatened then other nations would inevitably become involved in war to defend it. Russia had a pact with Serbia and mobilised its troops. Germany which was an ally of Austria declared war on Russia and France. On August 4th 1914 Britain which was allied with France and Russia declared war on Germany. All empire dominions were automatically also at war.

The Germans quickly attacked France through Belgium and almost reached Paris before a counter attack forced them back to the Aisne river. Trenches were dug and both sides settled down to a fight which was to claim millions of lives.

The Germans were also fighting on the eastern front and stopped the advancing Russian army in 1914 at the Battle of Tannenburg in Prussia.

In 1915 on the western fronts there were battles with great loss of life but little gains. Meanwhile on the eastern front the Germans pushed the Russians back and took Poland for themselves. Italy declared war on Austria.

In 1916 tanks were used for the first time at the battle of the Somme on the western front where the German offensive was halted.

In 1917 the USA entered the war.

In 1918 on March 3rd the Russians who had been through an internal revolution signed the treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany.

Germany switched all its military strength to the western front and advanced as far as the river Marne.

The battle of Amiens marked the beginning of the end for Germany as the allies repulsed the Germans and began to drive them back.

In Germany there were uprisings in major cities. This, together with the defeat of the German navy forced Wilhelm II to abdicate.

Peace was declared on November 11th 1918.

June 28th 1914;

Archduke Franz Ferdinand shot dead

28th July;

Austria declares war on Serbia

August;

Belgium overrun

August 26;

Battle of Tannenburg starts

August 23; Battle of Mons

September 1914;

Battle of the Marne

May 23rd 1915;

Italy declares war on Austria

January 1916;

Russian Winter offensive starts

May 31st;

Battle of Jutland

April 6th 1917;

USA declares war on Germany

March 3rd 1918;

Treaty of Brest-Litovsk between Russia and Germany

August 1918;

Amiens offensive by allies

November 1918;

Germany surrenders



THE FIRST WORLD WAR

TOPIC
90

The cost of the war to the British Empire was;

mobilised forces 8,900,000
military dead 908,000
military wounded 2,090,000
civilian dead 30,000
economic cost (\$ millions) 52,000

Find out the cost of the war to the following nations;

Germany
Russia
France



ROMAN SAXON VIKING NORMAN MEDIEVAL TUDOR STUART GEORGIAN **20TH CENTURY**

Using the date guide on the previous page list other main events of the war with dates and outcomes.

Choose two battles from the first world war and write detailed reports on them.

Find out what role was played by Britain in the peace settlements after world war one.

In comparison to other nations in the war how badly did Britain suffer?

THE GENERAL STRIKE

TOPIC
91

A collapse in domestic coal prices, caused by the revival of German coal mining, produced the threat of a strike in British coal. It erupted in May 1926 with a walkout in the coal industry and a sympathy strike in the rest of Britain's organized labour. Except as a monument in the history of British labour, however, this so-called General Strike was unsuccessful. As a general strike, it lasted only nine days, from May 3 to May 12. About 3,000,000 of Britain's 5,000,000 trade-union members were involved in the strike, which was intended to force the government to intervene in the coal dispute. The strike lasted only nine days and ended on May 12, however, after the TUC realized that it was unable to prevent the government from keeping essential services running. The miners themselves held out for nearly eight months and were finally starved into returning as winter began, at lower wages and with longer hours.

Economically, the chief effect of the strike was to hasten the decay of the huge British coal industry. However, Baldwin's handling of it greatly increased his popularity; indeed, he is remembered as a peacemaker, although his government passed an act declaring general strikes to be revolutionary and hence illegal. Yet beyond that his administration, particularly the ministry of health under Neville Chamberlain, accomplished a good deal; it vastly extended old-age pensions and pensions for widows and orphans, reformed local government, and finally, in 1928, extended the vote to women aged 21 to 30 on the same terms as those for men.



ROMAN SAXON VIKING NORMAN MEDIEVAL TUDOR STUART GEORGIAN **20TH CENTURY**

List the factors which led up to the General Strike.

Why is this event important in the history of Britain?

What were the effects of this event on the social conditions of the working class in Britain?

Write a letter to a friend describing what the General Strike was like. Imagine you had a part in it.

THE KING ABDICATES

TOPIC
92

King Edward VIII of the United Kingdom reigned from Jan. 20 to Dec. 10, 1936, when he abdicated in order to marry Wallis Warfield Simpson of the United States. He was the only British sovereign ever voluntarily to resign the crown.

In 1930 the prince's friendship with Mrs. Simpson began. Mrs. Simpson, divorced from a US Navy lieutenant in 1927, married Ernest Simpson in 1928. The Simpsons were often in the company of the prince, and by 1934 he was deeply in love with Mrs. Simpson. It was at this point, before he could discuss the matter with his father, that George V died (Jan. 20, 1936) and Edward was proclaimed king.

His attempts to gain the royal family's acceptance of Mrs. Simpson, who had obtained a preliminary decree of divorce on Oct. 27, 1936, met with firm opposition, backed by the Church of England and most politicians in both Britain and the Commonwealth. His affair with Mrs. Simpson provoked much comment in American and European newspapers and journals but, until nearly the end of his kingship, was kept out of the British press through governmental persuasions and pressures.

The king made his final decision and submitted his abdication on Dec. 10, 1936 ("I, Edward, do hereby declare my irrevocable determination to renounce the throne for myself and my descendants"). The instrument of abdication was endorsed by Parliament on December 11, and on the same evening the former king spoke on a radio broadcast: "I have found it impossible to carry on the heavy burden of responsibility and to discharge the duties of King as I would wish to do without the help and support of the woman I love." That night he left for the Continent, where he lived several months with friends in Austria and discreetly apart from Mrs. Simpson until after her decree of divorce became final. On June 3, 1937, Edward was married to Mrs. Simpson by a clergyman of the Church of England at the Château de Candé, France.



ROMAN SAXON VIKING NORMAN MEDIEVAL TUDOR STUART GEORGIAN 20TH CENTURY

List the factors which led up to the abdication.

Why is this event important in the history of Britain?

What were the immediate effects of this event on the British Monarchy?

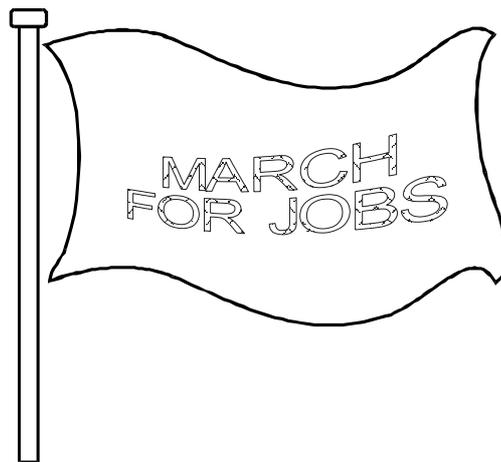
Write a letter to a friend describing what the event was like. Imagine you were a journalist reporting on the event.

Find out about and write a short biography of Edward VIII.

THE JARROW MARCH

TOPIC
93

During the depression and up to 1936 unemployment was still widespread in Britain. In the Tyneside town of Jarrow, starting point of the 1936 protest march to Westminster, almost 70 percent of the work force was out of a job. Those in work still faced long hours; dirty, noisy, and dangerous conditions; and monotonous, repetitive assembly-line tasks. Some of the workers were women, but, despite their "liberation" during World War I, many had returned to domesticity, which to some seemed drudgery. Young people had yet to acquire the affluence that later gave them such independence and self-assurance as an economic and cultural group.



ROMAN SAXON VIKING NORMAN MEDIEVAL TUDOR STUART GEORGIAN 20TH CENTURY

List the factors which led up to the Jarrow March.

Why is this event important in the social history of Britain?

What were the effects of this march?

Write a letter to a friend describing what the Jarrow March was like. Imagine you had a part in it.

CHAMBERLAIN AND APPEASEMENT

TOPIC
94

Neville Chamberlain, (b. March 18, 1869, Birmingham, Eng., d. Nov. 9, 1940), was British prime minister from May 28, 1937, to May 10, 1940, whose name is identified with the policy of "appeasement" toward Adolf Hitler's Germany in the period immediately preceding World War II.

In a futile attempt to sway Fascist Italy away from German influence, he agreed (April 16, 1938) to recognize Italian supremacy in Ethiopia and kept Great Britain out of the Spanish Civil War (1936-39), in which Italy was deeply involved. A few days later (April 25) he also undertook to abandon British naval bases in Ireland, a move opposed by some as weakening Britain's defence capability.

On three occasions in September 1938, Chamberlain went to Germany in efforts to prevent the outbreak of a general European war over Hitler's demand that Czechoslovakia cede the Sudetenland to Germany. By the Munich Agreement of September 30, he and Premier Édouard Daladier of France granted almost all of Hitler's demands and left Czechoslovakia defenceless. He returned to England a popular hero, speaking of "peace with honour" and "peace in our time." Even so, he immediately ordered the acceleration of the British rearmament program. When Hitler seized the rest of Czechoslovakia (March 10-16, 1939), Chamberlain definitely ended the policy of appeasement, and he soon published Anglo-French guarantees of armed support for Poland, Romania, and Greece in the event of similar attacks. The next month, peacetime military conscription was instituted for the first time in British history.



ROMAN SAXON VIKING NORMAN MEDIEVAL TUDOR STUART GEORGIAN 20TH CENTURY

List the factors which led up to Chamberlain's appeasement policy.

Why is this event important in the history of Britain?

What were the implications of appeasement?

Find out about and write a short biography of Neville Chamberlain.

CAUSES OF WORLD WAR TWO

TOPIC
95

The Polish crisis precipitated the war. Through the summer of 1939 German propaganda grew more strident, demanding cession to Germany of the city of Gdansk (Danzig) while gradually escalating demands for special rights in, and finally annexation of, the Polish corridor. Because the only nation able to defend Poland was the Soviet Union, a British-French mission in the summer of 1939 began negotiations for a treaty with Joseph Stalin. Poland, however, announced that it would not allow Soviet troops to enter Polish territory, even for the purpose of defending the country against Germany. Hitler put a stop to these negotiations on August 23 when he announced a nonaggression pact with the Soviet Union. On September 1 German troops invaded Poland. Britain and France declared war on Germany on September 3.



ROMAN SAXON VIKING NORMAN MEDIEVAL TUDOR STUART GEORGIAN 20TH CENTURY

List the factors which led up to the Second World War.

With hindsight, is there anything that anyone could have done to prevent war?

How did Britain try to stop the outbreak of war?

WINSTON CHURCHILL

TOPIC
96

Sir Winston Churchill, author, orator, and statesman, led Great Britain from the brink of defeat to victory as wartime prime minister from 1940 to 1945. After a sensational rise to prominence in national politics before World War I, he acquired a reputation for erratic judgment in the war itself and in the decade that followed. Politically suspect, he was a lonely figure until his response to Adolf Hitler's challenge brought him to leadership of a national coalition in 1940. With Franklin D. Roosevelt and Joseph Stalin he shaped Allied strategy in World War II, and after the breakdown of the alliance he alerted the West to the expansionist threat of the Soviet Union.

Churchill's rhetoric, his attacks on former comrades, angered many voters. But the mood in the country that gave Labour its overwhelming victory was obviously determined by the recollection of the hardships of the 1920s and 1930s; Britons voted against Stanley Baldwin and Neville Chamberlain. In the end Labour won. Churchill resigned and Attlee became prime minister.

He led the Conservative Party back to office in 1951 and remained prime minister until 1955, when ill health forced his resignation.



ROMAN SAXON VIKING NORMAN MEDIEVAL TUDOR STUART GEORGIAN **20TH CENTURY**

Was Churchill an effective statesman?

Was Churchill effective in the Second World War?

What were his main achievements?

Find out about and write a short biography of Winston Churchill.

WORLD WAR TWO

TOPIC
97

DATE GUIDE WAR IN WESTERN EUROPE
September 1939; Britain and France declare war on Germany
April 1940; Germany occupies Denmark, The Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg
May 1940; Germans swing around Maginot Line
June 1940; Italy declares war on Britain and France
July-October 1940; Battle of Britain
April 1941; Germans occupy Greece and Yugoslavia
October 1942; Battle of El Alamein
January 1943; Casablanca Conference
July 1943; Mussolini resigns after coup
September 1943; Italy surrenders
June 1944; D-Day landings
May 1945; Germany surrenders

DATE GUIDE WAR IN EASTERN EUROPE
November 1939; USSR invades Finland
March 1940; USSR peace treaty with Finland
June 1941; Germany invades USSR
July 1941; Germans enter Smolensk, USSR
December 1941; Germans only 40km from Moscow
August 1942; Germans attack Stalingrad
March 1943; Russians drive Germans back to River Donetz
August 1944; Romania joins allies
September 1944; USSR armistice with Finland
October 1944; Soviets enter Belgrade
February 1945; Soviets reach borders of Germany
May 1945; Germany surrenders

DATE GUIDE WAR IN THE FAR EAST
September 1940; Japan invades French Indo-China
December 1941; Japan attacks US base at Pearl Harbour
January 1942; Japanese take the Philippines
June 1942; Battle Of Midway
August 1943; allied offensive against Japanese in Burma starts
November 1943; US defeats Japanese navy at Guadalcanal
June 1945; Conquest of Okinawa, Japan
August 1945; Atom bombs dropped on Nagasaki and Hiroshima
August 1945; Japan surrenders



WORLD WAR TWO

TOPIC
98

The cost of the war to Britain was;

Forces mobilised 6.2 million

Military killed 397,762

Military wounded 475,000

Civilians killed 65,000

Economic cost (\$ billions) 150

Find out what the corresponding figures were for the following;

Germany

Italy

USSR

Japan



ROMAN SAXON VIKING NORMAN MEDIEVAL TUDOR STUART GEORGIAN 20TH CENTURY

Select two wars from the date guide on the previous page and write reports on them.

Select two events in World War Two which were defining moments for the British army, and say why they were important.

How did Britain fare in the war compared to other countries?

ELECTIONS OF 1945

TOPIC
99

The General Elections of 1945 were quite surprising because Churchill, who had led the British to victory in the war, lost, and the new government was set up by the Labour Party.

Considering that the leading figures in each party had been Cabinet colleagues only a few weeks before, the electoral campaign was very bitter. The Conservatives focused chiefly on Churchill himself as the man who had won the war. Churchill denounced Labour as the party of socialism and of totalitarianism while promising strong leadership and grand but measures of social reform. Labour, even though the war in the Pacific continued, concentrated on peacetime reconstruction and fair shares for all.

Churchill's attitude, his attacks on former comrades, angered many voters. But the mood in the country that gave Labour its overwhelming victory was obviously determined by the recollection of the hardships of the 1920s and 1930s; Britons voted against Stanley Baldwin and Neville Chamberlain. In the end Labour won 393 seats, almost double the Conservative total of 213 and far more than it had expected. On July 26, 1945, as soon as the results were clear, Churchill resigned and Attlee became prime minister.



ROMAN SAXON VIKING NORMAN MEDIEVAL TUDOR STUART GEORGIAN 20TH CENTURY

Why were the elections of 1945 surprising?

What reforms did the Labour Government carry out in the first few years of the Parliament?

Trace the history of the Labour Party.

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

TOPIC
100

Labour's social welfare legislation created the "welfare state." Labour enacted a comprehensive program of national insurance, based upon the Beveridge Report . It regularized the nationalization of public assistance, the old poor law, in the National Assistance Act of 1946, and in its most controversial move it established the gigantic framework of the national health service, which provided free, comprehensive medical care for every citizen, rich or poor.

The National Health Service, an organ of the central government, provides comprehensive medical services for every resident of England. Doctors, dentists, opticians, and pharmacists work within the service. Social services are provided through local authority social service departments. The services are directed toward children and young people, low-income families, the unemployed, the disabled, the mentally ill, and the elderly. Several religious organizations provide help and advice as well. The National Insurance Scheme insures individuals against loss of income due to unemployment, maternity, and long-term illnesses. It provides retirement pensions, widows' and maternity benefits, child and guardian allowances, and benefits for job-related injuries or death.



ROMAN SAXON VIKING NORMAN MEDIEVAL TUDOR STUART GEORGIAN **20TH CENTURY**

Why was the National Health Service set up?

How has the National Health Service changed since it was first created?

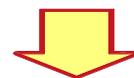
Find out about and write a short summary of the Beveridge Report.

DECLINE OF EMPIRE

TOPIC
101

Nationalist sentiment developed rapidly in many areas after World War I and even more so after World War II, with the result that, beginning with India in 1947, independence was granted them, along with the option of retaining an association with Great Britain and other former dependencies in the Commonwealth of Nations (the adjective "British" was not used officially after 1946). Indian and Pakistani independence was followed by that of Ceylon and Burma in 1948. The Gold Coast became the first sub-Saharan African colony to reach independence (as Ghana) in 1957. The movement of Britain's remaining colonies in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean toward self-government gained speed after 1960 as international pressure mounted (especially at the United Nations), as the notion of independence spread in the colonies themselves, and as the British public, which was no longer actively imperial in its attitude, accepted the idea of independence as a foregone conclusion.

By the late 20th century virtually nothing remained of the empire as such, while the Commonwealth had proved to be a remarkably flexible and durable institution.



ROMAN SAXON VIKING NORMAN MEDIEVAL TUDOR STUART GEORGIAN **20TH CENTURY**

Mark countries in different colours with dates of when they gained independence from Britain.