



**Otázka:** History of the United Kingdom

**Jazyk:** Angličtina

**Přidal(a):** vulcanodon

**Introduction, timeline, one of the most important turning points in the history of great Britain - The Magna Carta, conclusion**

### Introduction

- History of the United Kingdom is **full of interesting facts**.
- First, **summarize** important facts of the British history.
- Later on, I would like to talk about **my favourite historic event** from the history of The United Kingdom, The Magna Carta and about the act of Habeas Corpus that has arisen from this document

### Timeline

- Before **Celtic tribes** arrived in Britain, the area had been inhabited by **the Iberians**. They came to England about **5000 BC** and they were just **small groups of hunters and gatherers**.
- **On the other hand, Celts**, who arrived about **3000 years ago**, were well organized.
  - On the territory of the Great Britain lived around **150-200 different tribes**.
  - Each tribe had **organization** similar to the pattern of **5 leveled pyramid**. On the top there was **the King**. Second level belonged to **the Druids**, who were divided into 3 types.



- Priests – took care of the religious matters (sacrifices etc.)
  - Magicians – basically carried out the function of healers
  - Bards – poets and singers
  - Third level belonged to **the warriors**. Important role – safety and expansion
  - Fourth level belonged to **the commoners** – daily needs – food preparation etc.
  - Lowest ranked in a Celtic society were **slaves**. Usually they were captured warriors from the other tribes.
  - Celtic society had a big influence on the language. Today, they are four types of **old gaelic languages** spoken in the Great Britain – **Welsh, Irish, Scottish and Breton**.
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- It was approximately 43 BC when **the Romans** carrying **Latin** with them invaded the country and stayed there until the 5th century AC, when **the Anglo-saxons** from Northern Europe pushed them out, bringing **German** with them
  - In the **9th century Vikings** invaded the Great Britain and were fighting against Anglo-Saxons until **Alfred the Great**, originally the king of west Saxons negotiated peace with them
  - The reign of the Anglo – Saxons was ended by the **William the Conqueror**, who defeated Anglo- Saxons at the **Battle at Hastings in 1066** and negotiated peace with Vikings
  - When William the Conqueror became King of England, feudalism and the **French** language became the dominant influence
  - William the Conqueror also founded a lot of castles, for example The Tower of London and was the first to be crowned in the Westminster Abbey
  - **In 1215**, King John signed the **Magna Carta**. This document restricted the power of the ruler and recognized the rights of the barons and freemen. According to some, it is considered to be the foundation of human rights in Great Britain. The Magna Carta became an essential part of English Law. Centuries later, it formed the basis of the American Bill of Rights.
  - In the 15th century, two rival English noble houses wanted the crown. Symbol of both houses – the Lancastrians and the Yorkists – was a rose. Therefore, conflicts between them were called **the Wars of the Roses**. After **30 years** of warfare, the war was ended at the **battle of Bosworth**, where Lancastrian Henry Tudor defeated the Yorkist Richard III. However, by marrying the Yorkist princess Elizabeth, Henry brought the warring families together and brought peace to the country

- in the 16th century, Henry VIII wanted to divorce from his first wife. Nevertheless, the pope didn't allow this divorce. Therefore, Henry founded the **Church of England**, a church separate from the Catholic Church.
- In the end Henry VIII ended up with 6 wives throughout his life
- The **Tudor dynasty ended with the Elizabeth I of England** on the throne. Despite the fact that she was put on the throne to produce an heir and continue the Tudor dynasty, she never produced one and soon was known also as "**The Virgin Queen**"
- **Elizabethan Era** was famous above all for the flourishing of English drama led by playwrights such as William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe and for the seafaring prowess of English adventurers such as Sir Francis Drake.
- Thanks to **massive colonization**, global influence of Britain was increasing and the area of the British empire was getting bigger and bigger. Successful battles with France and Spain reinforced the power of the British empire. Furthermore, the industrial revolution fuelled the prosperity of Britain.
- The **Victorian Era** from 1837 (named after the reign of Queen Victoria), continued this period of stability and economic growth
- During the Victorian Era, Queen Victoria was also the Empress of India
- In the 20th century Great Britain was involved in both World Wars and in both stood on the victorious side.
- However, through World War I. Britain suffered huge economic losses and suffered major bombing damage in World War II., but held out against Germany after the fall of France in 1940.
- Nevertheless, despite the fact that **Britain lost many of its colonies and its influence declined in the 20th century** it has gained political and financial stability and it is one **of the richest countries** in the world **today**.

### The Magna Carta and Habeas Corpus

- Even though Magna Carta belongs among the publicly well known documents, only a few people know what it is really about and what is Habeas Corpus. A very important act that has arisen from this document.
- In the **13<sup>th</sup>** century, due to the **combination of high taxes, unsuccessful wars and a conflict with the Pope, King John was unpopular with his barons**. Some **barons began to conspire against him** and a few years later some of the most important barons engaged in **open rebellion**. Finally **King John** was **forced** to sign a document later known as the **'Articles of the Barons'**. In return, the barons renewed their **oaths of fealty to the King**. A **formal document** to record

the agreement was created by the royal chancery on **15<sup>th</sup> of July 1215** and this document is now called **Magna Carta**.

- This first version of Magna Carta was **valid only a few months** (when barons left London, king annulled it) , nevertheless from this document **has arisen** the act called Habeas Corpus (in Latin “you may have the body”). Habeas Corpus is very important for us, because it is a **writ, or legal action, through which a prisoner can be released from unlawful detention**. It is used in many countries today.
- It was King John’s death in 1216 which secured the future of Magna Carta. Magna Carta was later reissued in 13<sup>th</sup> century in modified versions.
- I’ve chosen Magna Carta because it is a very important historic turning-point. Since then, the king wasn’t an absolute monarch. He was bound by some certain laws that he had to abide.

**Oliver Cromwell** (If I had to talk about my favourite personality from the British history, I would choose Oliver Cromwell)

- **military and political** leader best known for his **overthrow of the monarchy**. Thanks to him, England was temporarily a republican Commonwealth. Later on, he became the Lord Protector.
- one of the most **controversial** personalities of the British history
  - **radical leader**, who overthrew the tyranny of king and the nobles
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  - tyrant, who **misused the idea of republic** to establish political and religious dictatorship

## Conclusion

- In my opinion, the topic History of the United Kingdom is very interesting even for people, who are not so much into history. It is very various and full of amusing facts. I think that we can learn a lot by studying the British history.