



Otázka: Significant Personalities and Events of the UK

Jazyk: Angličtina

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British prehistory

- First inhabitants come from Europe to British islands about 9000 BC. It was small tribes which gradually changing into small states and colonies. The biggest tribes were Iberians and Celts.
- Stonehenge – the oldest building in Britain. It is unknown why it was built.

Roman invasion (1st – 5th century)

- Conquer started about 43 CE
- Romans brought civilisation on the island. They left behind three things of importance: their roads, the sites of important cities (e.g. London) and the basis of Christianity.
- Romans left after Barbarian invasion in 5th century

Angles, Saxons and Jutes

- They came from German, Denmark and Netherlands
- emergence of 7 kingdoms: Northumbria, Mercia, East Anglia, Kent, Essex, Sussex, Wessex
- at first decline of Roman cities (disruption of trade contracts) + rejection of Christianity
- 6th century – Christianization – 2 centres
 - Canterbury (Roman Church, pope's influence)
 - Lindisfarne (Irish missionaries)



Scandinavian Invasion

- 793 – beginning of expansion
- **Alfred The Great** – resisted Viking's raids + fights with Danish Kingdom + Danegeld (land tax payed to Viking to save the lands before them)

After the **Battle of Hastings** in **1066**

- William the Conqueror: 1066 defeated Harald II. at the Battle of Hastings
 - The Domesday Book (a written record of the ownership and value of land in England)
 - French became the official language until the 14th century

The House of Plantagenet

- **Henry II.** : ruled broad territories on the Continent (Aquitaine, Normandy)
- **Richard I.** (Lion-hearted): a knight (3rd Crusade)
- **John I. (Lackland)**: lost Normandy and most of Aquitaine
 - rebellion of English nobility – Magna Carta document: limiting the powers of English kings and protecting barons against king's will → a committee of 25 barons was established

The Hundred Year war (1337-1453)

- a war between France and England – as a trigger served a fight for influence in the County of Flanders (trade centre)
- the English king was a feudal tenant of the French king but British territories on the Continent were significant and during the 14th century, the question of French royal succession arose
- though economically weaker and undeveloped in comparison with France, England was

winning at first and gained large territories in France (better army – archery, strong allies)

- both sides suffered from the plague epidemic and later general exhaustion
- French side won, England maintained only Calais
- fights in England continued in England with **The War of the Roses**: dynastic wars over the English throne between 2 fractions: the Yorks and the Lancasters

House of Tudor

- succession of Henry VII. (Tudor, Lancastrian dynasty) ended the War of the Roses (he defeated Richard III. at the battle of Bosworth Field)

Henry VIII. (1491 - 1547)

- increased the power of the English monarchy – legal union of England and Wales, kingship of Ireland
- initiated the separation of England from the Catholic church and Vatican → start of English Reformation – excommunicated by the Pope, Henry became the Supreme Head of the Church of England

Elizabeth I. (1588 - 1603) - Elizabethan era

- a daughter of Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn, successor of Mary I (Bloody Mary – her attempt to bring back Roman Catholicism lead to executions of Protestants)
- the period of peace and stability – Elizabeth returned England to the Protestant faith, however, retained some catholic traditions
- Major conflicts: with Spain (king Phillip II.) – war lasted from 1585 to 1604, the most notable event is defeat of the Spanish Armada (huge group of ships sent though English Channel to British Isles)
- beginnings of English colonialism – first colonies in North America (1st permanent colony was Virginia – named after Elizabeth “the Virgin Queen”)
- remained single – it was part of her politics, therefore childless



House of Stuart

- **James I. (James VI. as a Scottish king)**
 - personal union of the crowns of Scotland and England (unified only by the King's figure)
 - Gunpowder plot – failed plan to blow up the King and the Parliament made by disappointed Catholic clique
- **Charles I.**
 - tension between the Parliament and the King which escalated into the English Civil War

English Civil War

- a series of conflicts between the Parliament and the King
- Parliament's function was mainly advisory and could be summoned only by the monarch, however, it had a few significant power, e.g. to raise taxes
- Charles I. was suspected that he wanted to restore Catholicism which was unacceptable for majority of the Parliament members
- Parliament itself was in disagreement: Traditionalists (conservative), Purists (radicals)
- Charles I. lost with Scottish rebellion (against King's attempt to unify the Scottish and English church), so he needed more money for war and had to summon the Parliament in 1640, he did it twice, in both cases was the Parliament hostile and King was forced to compromise (e.g. promised to summon parliament at least every 3 years)
- King's activity against the Parliament members lead to Civil war → country was divided:
 - the Royal Navy and cities + southern parts of England favoured the Parliament
 - rural areas + northern areas of England sided with the King
- King was captured by Scots, later imprisoned by the Parliament and eventually beheaded
- → Commonwealth of England lead by the republican government substituted monarchy
- → the Protectorate: lead by The Lord Protector (Oliver Cromwell) who acted as a military dictator
- The Protectorate did not outlive Oliver Cromwell – Cromwell's son Richard resigned and the monarchy was restored

Charles II.



- during the Civil War, crowned as the King of Scotland
- his reign was controversial – no attempts to renew stability, bad public image, the Great Fire of London (1666)

James II.

- an attempt to introduce religious liberty for Roman Catholic and non-conformist Protestants which was unacceptable for the Parliament

Glorious revolution 1689

- William III. of Orange (a husband of James's daughter) substituted James II. on throne
- Bill of Rights was passed and England became a constitutional monarchy
 - Bill of Rights meant limitation to the royal powers (reign of monarch together with two houses of parliament), gradual increase in the power of the prime minister and parliament

Anne I.

- last of the House of Stuart
- 1707 – Acts of Union – England and Scotland joined as one kingdom (Ireland was added 1800 by the second Act of Union which formed United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland)

House of Hanover

- **George I.**
 - opposition of Jacobite fraction which consisted of former supporters of James I. and wanted restoration of Stuarts
- **Emergence of 2 main political parties**
 - Whigs: liberal
 - Tories: conservative

18th century:

- Britain became a sea power: domination in trade with India, SE Asia and China; triangular trade with slaves
- Wars in colonies: Seven Years' War (against France over American Colonies); The American War of Independence
- the beginnings of industrial revolution
 - favourable factors: enclosure and more effective composting → less people needed to be employed in agriculture → moving to the city and creating reservoir of manpower for industry
 - faster technical progress – influence of the Age of Enlightenment

Victoria (1837 - 1901) - Victorian age

- Expansion of British Empire → more power: Britain became financial capital of the world X colonial wars
- Expansion of wealth, growing population X social inequality – slums
- Chartism (1830s, 1840s) – Chartists supported the People's Charter – a document demanding improvements to the political system (enlargement of franchise, right to vote in secret, right to become a MP without owning land)
- 1880s – extension of the vote to a majority of men (males, over 30)
- → most of those demands remained unfulfilled until much later
- Industrialism: 2nd industrial revolution, growth of urbanization, rapid technical progress
- X working environment, pollution
- Alarming situation in Ireland: no industrial revolution, famine → demands for “Home Rule”
- Victorian morality: a set of values that supported a strong social ethic, low tolerance of crime, sexual repression, prudery

House of Saxe-Coburgh

- Edward VII. – less authoritative, considered as the first true constitutional monarch

House of Windsor (Saxe-Coburgh and Gotha) = current dynasty

- George V (1910 – 1936), Edward VIII (1936), George VI (1936 – 1952), Elizabeth II (1952)

20th century

- **WW1:** the UK was a member of Triple Entente = ally with the Russian Empire and France X Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy)
 - Social changes after the war – extension of vote to women; greater independence of citizens who became more interested in political issues and found their political voice; women right's movement became stronger as women proved to be able to substitute men while fighting in the war
- **1920s**
 - 1921: established the Irish Free State
 - 1926: the British Commonwealth of Nations X crisis of empire (national liberation movements in Colonies which escalated after the WW2 → process of decolonization during the 2nd half of the 20th century)
- **WW2:** during the first years of war, Britain stood alone as her potential allies did not want to interfere militarily or were occupied
 - Winston Churchill – the most important prime minister of the WW2 period (conservative)
 - *"I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat."*
- **Post-War Britain**
 - During 50s – overcoming of post-war economic struggles → age of affluence, consumerism
 - Reforms in education, Swinging 60s
 - Decline of the Empire – decolonization (e.g. Quit India Movement), fall of Britain's global political significance
 - Cold War – Suez Crisis
 - 1980s – 1st female prime minister: Margaret Thatcher
 - Falklands war with Argentina over the Falkland Isles
 - Member and co-founder of many international organizations (e.g. NATO, later EU)

Membership in International Organizations:

- United Nations (UN) – permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council
- European Union (EU)

- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) – defence policy
- World Trade Organisation (WTO) – a body charged with promoting global free trade
- The Group of Eight – regular meetings where economic problems and policies are discussed
- Council of Europe – organization that aims to protect human rights, encourages European countries to work together in areas such as culture, education, sport, health, crime and the environment
- International Monetary Fund – oversees the international financial system, assists member nations which are experiencing financial difficulties
- Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development – collaboration on economic issues, gathers statistical information, offers advice to less-developed countries