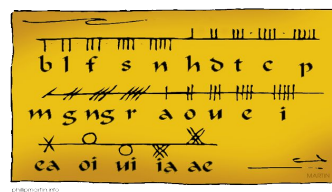




A crash course in the UK history



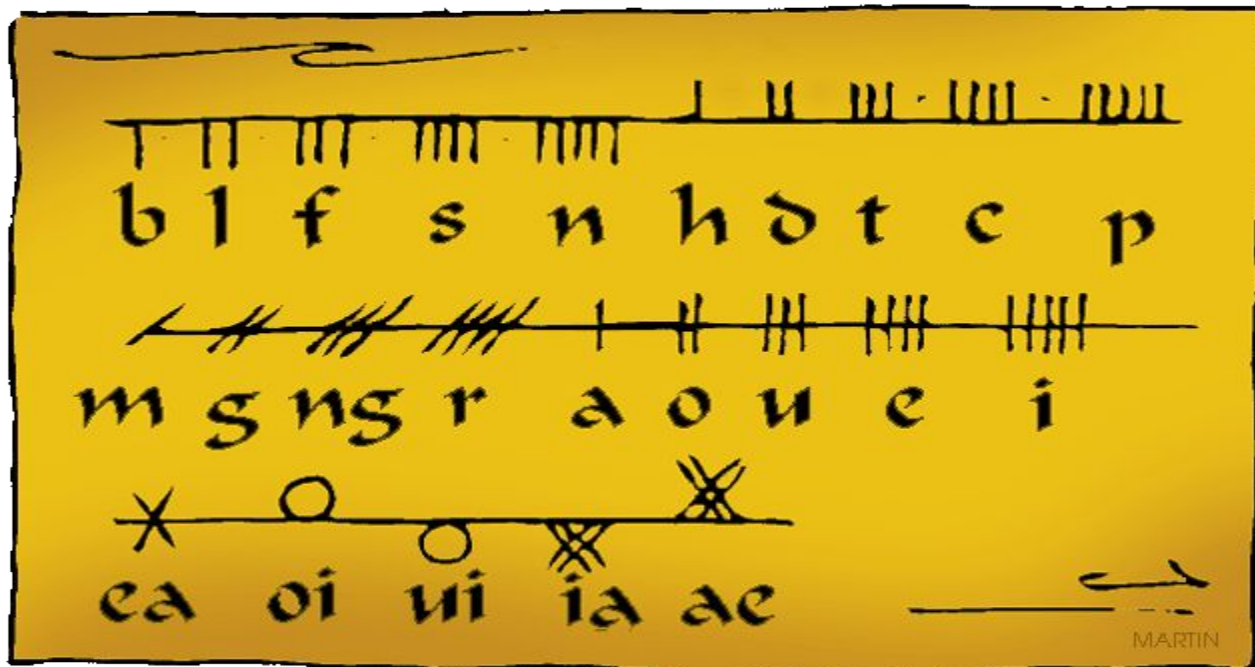
2800 BC – Stone-age humans start work on Stonehenge monument. Noone knows its true purpose but it is believed that it is a temple for sun worship.



750 BC – The Celts are coming. The Celtic people sacrifice people to their gods. But don't worry – the Celts will be soon pushed out to Wales, Cornwall, Scotland and Ireland.



Celts couldn't write because their religious leaders (druids) wouldn't let them. Those druids meant that the written word meant power. Eventually the Celts made an alphabet similar to the Vikings. It was made up of straight lines because those letters were carved onto stone or wood. Historians have been able to learn something of Celt life from those carvings.



Epona

The Celts loved horses. Celtic people bred horses both for riding and for pulling carts. They made fine leather and metal bridles for their horses and horses are pictured on much fine Celtic metalwork. In some parts of the Celtic world, herds of horses lived free in the forest. The Celts came every year to catch the best of the foals to break in for riding, pulling carts and breeding.



The name Epona gives rise to modern Welsh *ebol* 'foal'.

55 BC – Roman
Julius Caesar
lands. He came to
Britain and he
went back to
Rome.



AD 43 – Romans arrive in Britain
and they want to stay in the south
and east of the country.



AD 60 – The Britons in England revolt. They are led by Queen Boudicca. She burns down the temples and massacres every Roman she can find. But the Romans win through in the end. Boudicca poisons herself (maybe).



AD 212 – And here come the Saxons, the Jutes and those Angles who will give the south of Britain its new name.



AD 409 –The Romans go home as the Saxon attacks get stronger in the south. The Roman forces rush off home to help defend Rome against barbarians.



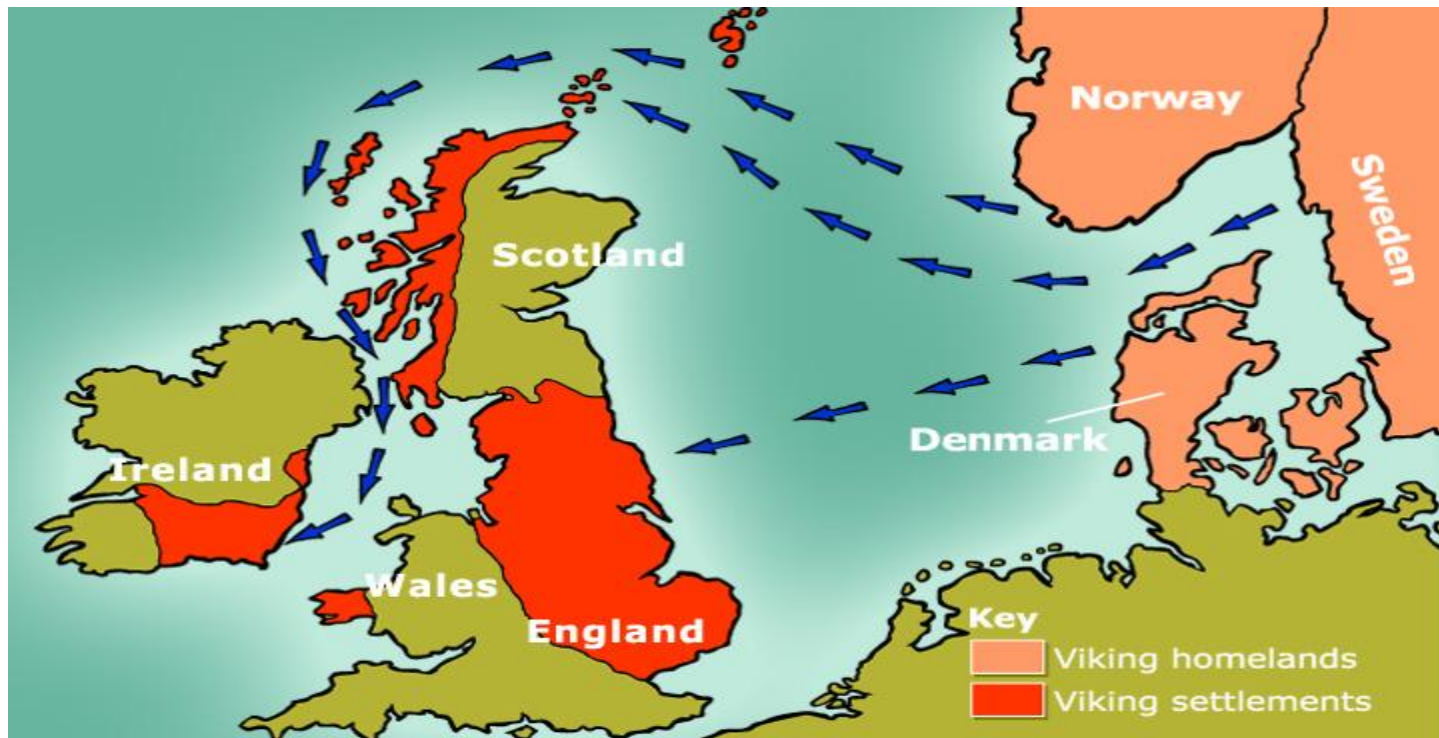
AD 500 – King Arthur leads the Celtic Britons in a fight against the Angles and Saxons. The story may be just a legend, but the Britons are certainly fighting among themselves and that lets the Saxons win. As Arthur probably never existed it's no surprise he lost. Brits believe he's sleeping and will be back when Britain is in danger.



AD 793 – The Vikings arrive. They massacre, rob and soon they will settle too. Where's Arthur when you need him? Still sleeping?



AD 878 – A Saxon leader Alfred the Great fights back against the Vikings and says: "You Vikings keep the north and east – you can call it Danelaw. My Saxons will keep the south and west. We'll call it Wessex". And they clinched a deal.



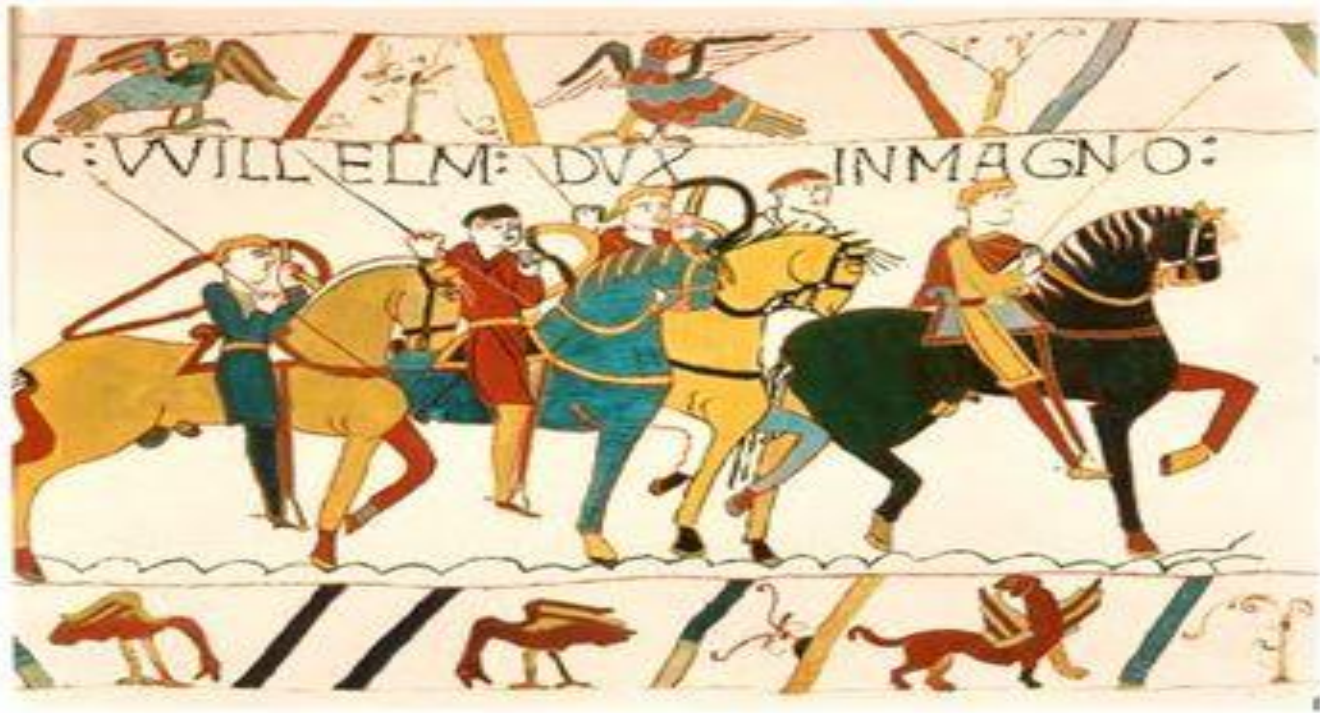
Vikings letters were known as runes. Vikings carved (scratched) their runes on wood or stone. It's easier to scratch lines than curves. So runes were made up of straight lines.

The Viking stories, sagas, weren't written in runes – they were memorised and recited by poets. They were finally written down 200 years after the Vikings attacks had finished. They were written in Latin.

Thentieth century writers such as J R R Tolkien have used the idea of runes as a secret language. In his book, The Hobbit, the runes are the writing of the dwarves.



1066 – The nasty Normans arrive from Normandy (north in France) and still Arthur doesn't show. That must be one deep sleep.



1066 – The Norans conquer Britain and 1,500,000 English are ruled by just 20,000 Normans. They rule by terror and by building castles. The King owns all the land and shares it out among his barons. Only ONE of these barons is English – the rest are Norman French. What happened to the English. They became peasants workers.



1215 – Magna Carta

King John upsets everyone in sight – the barons, the Pope, the people. In the end they force him to sign the Great Charter (Magna Carta). It gives some power to the people. John then says: "I may have signed it but I am going to ignore it!".



1534 – Break-up with Rome

Henry VIII Tudor doesn't like being told what to do by the head of the Catholic Church, the Pope. Henry wants a divorce – Pope says, "No". Henry says, "Right! I'll make my own Church of England and give myself a divorce. This new Protestant religion will cause untold misery in its struggle against the old Catholic Church. And English will kill and torture English, of course.



1485 – 1603 The Tudor Era



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- 1603 Elizabethan Era

The Tudor age is famous for its theatre. Great writers like Shakespeare created plays which are performed all around the world to this day.

Shakespeare didn't touch upon religion in his plays – doing religion could have got him hanged, burned and chopped !



Grusome Shakespearean plays



Shakespeare
touched upon his
favourite subjects
as crime and
revenge, witches
and ghosts and
tales of horror.

1688 – The Glorious Revolution

James II fights against William of Orange. The English don't want Catholic James II any more so the English lords have invited William over. It's called "The Glorious Revolution" and not-so-glamorous James runs away to France. The English have got rid of the Scottish Stuarts and now the country is run by a Dutchman.



1707 – The Act of Union

England has shared its Parliament with Wales since 1536 (when a Welsh Tudor was ruling). Now, a hundred years after having a Scottish king, it finally gets around to sharing its Parliament with the old enemy, Scotland. It was done, but it was not a popular act in Scotland. In fact it was said that the English bribed the Scottish to make a deal.

The Act of Union 1707 created one kingdom of England, Wales and Scotland – at last we have "Britain". But Britain won't be great until 1801 when Ireland joins.



1801 – The Act of Union

Ireland joins Britain and thus the United Kingdom is created.

KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN + KINGDOM OF IRELAND = THE UK



1750 – 1914 Industrial Revolution

During the Industrial Revolution many machines were invented which changed people's lives. People migrated from the countryside to towns.



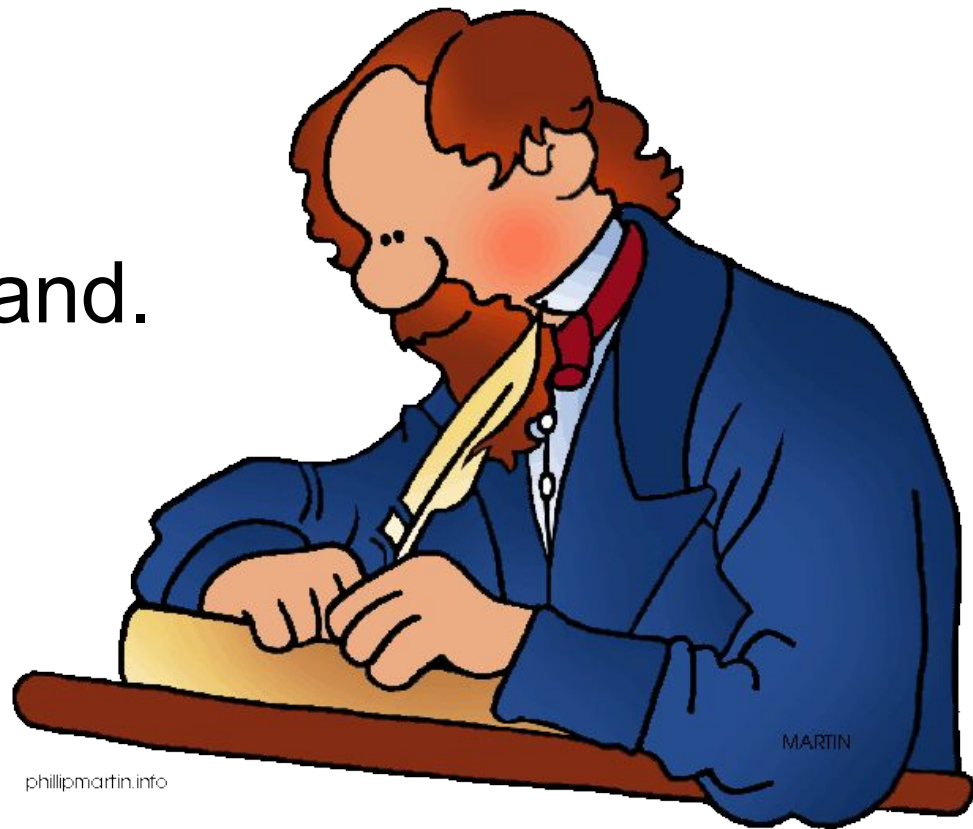
Grusome for poor people

The factory owners became very rich and lived well, but the factory workers were very poor. They lived in tiny, crowded houses with no bathroom or clean water. Children as young as 5 had to work 12 or more hours each day and life was really hard.



Charles Dickens (1812-1870)

Charles Dickens is one of the most popular writers of all time. He was a writer in the Victorian age in England. Dickens wrote about child labour and his books include Oliver Twist and David Copperfield.



1837 – 1901 The Victorian age

The Victorian period was the time of prosperity for the British people as a result of profits from overseas colonies and industrial revolution at home.



1905 - Suffrage

Women decide they want the vote. So they starve themselves with hunger strikes, set fires to buildings.



1914 – 1918 – WWI in Europe

Remembrance Day (also known as Poppy Day or Armistice Day) is a memorial day since the end of World War I to remember the members of their armed forces who have died in the line of duty.



1922 – The Irish fight for freedom

Over the time the Irish became unhappy and they rebelled and fought for their freedom. After many bloody battles, Ireland finally separated from the UK in 1922. However, Northern Ireland stayed in the union.

ENGLAND + SCOTLAND + WALES + NORTHERN
IRELAND = THE UK



1939 – 1945 – WWII in Europe

Another war against Germany. By March 1940 Britain is led by the heroic and loved Winston Churchill who promised the British "blood, toil, tears and sweat".

