

HISTORY

UK History

The domestic history of the British Isles from Roman Britain and the Anglo-Saxon settlement, through 1066, the Plantagenets, the Tudors, the Reformation and the Civil War, to the Georgian, Industrial and Victorian eras — with disputed dates and unverified claims marked throughout.

10 Chapters

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Generated with Claude

UK History

Chapter 1 · Introduction: Scope & Sources

This course covers the domestic history of the British Isles, from Roman Britain to the present. Before the first event, it helps to settle what "UK" means, because the country has had several definitions and the course title is a convenience. This chapter also states what the course leaves to other courses on this site and what kind of sources it uses. It is an orientation chapter, so it has few dates, and the ones it has come from a single reference article.

What "UK" Has Meant

Year	Entity
1707	The Kingdom of Great Britain forms from England (including Wales) and Scotland through the Acts of Union 1707.
1801	It expands into the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland after the Acts of Union 1800.
1922 to 1927	The Irish Free State leaves, and the remaining state is officially renamed the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in 1927.

The Title Is Retrospective

The source treats the union of 1707 as the starting point for the "history of the United Kingdom" proper, and it says there is uncertainty about earlier terms, especially the differences among "England," "Britain," "UK" and "the British Isles." This course begins well before 1707, so for the early chapters "UK History" is a label for the territory, not a description of a state that then existed. Each chapter will name the actual kingdom or kingdoms in play.

What the Course Covers

Domestic History	Not Empire
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Society, monarchy and major turning points within the isles. The chapter plan follows a broad chronological order, from Roman Britain and the Anglo-Saxon settlement to the Viking Age, 1066, the Plantagenets, the Tudors, the Civil War, the Georgian era and the Victorian era to the present.

Overseas expansion is the subject of a separate course, The British Empire, which is planned and has not been written yet. Empire appears here only where it changed life at home, and no chapter treats it for its own sake.

A View From England, With Limits

The outline centres on English history, with Scotland, Wales and Ireland entering where they meet it. The unions of 1707 and 1801 are examples. Ireland has its own full account in Irish History, and this course does not repeat it.

Where the Overlaps Are

Three other courses cover nearby ground. UK Politics Fundamentals describes how the constitution and institutions work today, including Magna Carta in its first chapter, and this course will point to it instead of repeating constitutional detail. World History III covers the Industrial Revolution globally, and Chapter 9 here looks only at the British experience. Irish History covers Ireland from its own side.

A Note on Sources

Like the other history courses on this site, this one relies on published reference summaries, and each chapter says what it drew on. The consequences are practical:

- Dates and figures are given as the source states them, and where sources conflict the chapter says so.
- Traditional stories, such as the founding accounts of the Anglo-Saxon settlement, are marked as traditions where the sources treat them that way.
- Claims I could not check are listed at the end of the chapter as gaps, not filled from memory.

Why the Course Is Set Out This Way

A list of kings and battles is easy to write and hard to trust. The plan is to describe each period through a few well-sourced events and to say plainly what a short source cannot tell us. That will sometimes leave a chapter thinner than the period deserves, and I would prefer that to false completeness.

The Chapters Ahead

2. Roman Britain and the Anglo-Saxon settlement
3. The Viking Age and the unification of England
4. 1066 and the Norman Conquest
5. The Plantagenets and the Hundred Years' War
6. The Wars of the Roses and the Tudor dynasty
7. The English Reformation and Elizabethan England
8. The English Civil War and the Interregnum
9. The Georgian era and the Industrial Revolution
10. Capstone: Victorian Britain to the present

Not Yet Verified

I have not checked how the planned chapters divide the periods against the source article's own scheme, which runs from the eighteenth century through the Victorian era, the early twentieth century, the interwar years, World War II and the postwar era. The two scales differ, since the article starts in 1707 and this course starts earlier. Chapter 10 will need to bridge them.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

List the three political entities the chapter names between 1707 and 1927 and say what changed between each pair.

→ Solution

EXERCISE 2

A student writes "The United Kingdom was founded in 1066." Use the chapter to correct it.

→ Solution

EXERCISE 3

Name which of the three overlapping courses you would use for each of these: how Parliament works today, Ireland's experience of the Act of Union, and the global spread of industrialization.

→ Solution

Quick Reference

- **1707:** Kingdom of Great Britain (England, including Wales, and Scotland)
- **1801:** United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland
- **1922 to 1927:** Irish Free State leaves; renamed the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in 1927
- **Scope:** domestic history; empire is a separate, planned course
- **Overlaps:** UK Politics Fundamentals, World History III, Irish History
- **Terminology:** "England," "Britain," "UK" and "the British Isles" are not interchangeable

CHAPTER 2: ROMAN BRITAIN & THE ANGLO-SAXON SETTLEMENT

UK History

Chapter 2 · Roman Britain & the Anglo-Saxon Settlement

The story of the isles starts in this chapter with two changes of rule: Rome's conquest and long occupation, and the arrival of the peoples later called Anglo-Saxons. The sources for both are thin, and for the second they conflict, so this chapter spends as much time on what is disputed as on what is known. It draws on two reference articles, one on Roman Britain and one on the Anglo-Saxons.

Roman Britain

Date (CE)	Event
43	Roman invasion led by Aulus Plautius under Emperor Claudius.
60 or 61	Boudica's revolt against Roman rule.
77 to 84	Governor Agricola expands the territory into Scotland.
About 122	Hadrian's Wall is built as the northern frontier.
About 142	The Antonine Wall is built further north, under Antoninus Pius.
About 197	The province is divided into Britannia Superior and Britannia Inferior.
About 312	Four provinces are established: Maxima Caesariensis, Flavia Caesariensis, Britannia Prima and Britannia Secunda.
410	Roman withdrawal; a letter of Emperor Honorius is traditionally interpreted as rejecting British appeals for aid.

Approximate Dates and a Disputed End

Several dates above are given as "about," and Boudica's revolt has two possible years. The source says the exact nature of the withdrawal in 410 remains debated. It also says the traditional view of a widespread economic decline is at odds with consistent archaeological evidence, without specifying what the evidence shows. I did not research the detail, so the chapter cannot describe how life changed after 410.

The Anglo-Saxons: Arrival and Its Dates

The settlement of Britain by peoples from the continent is chronologically contested. Traditional sources give conflicting dates:

- Bede, writing about 731, places it around 450 to 455.
- The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records the arrival in 449.
- The Chronica Gallica of 452 notes Saxon rule in 441.
- Archaeological evidence suggests settlement began earlier than 450.

The Traditional Story

Bede says a "proud tyrant," later identified as Vortigern, invited Saxon foederati as mercenaries to defend against Picts and Scots, and that the British provinces were then "reduced to Saxon rule."

A Challenge to It

The historian Guy Halsall proposes Bede may have misinterpreted Gildas, and that the invitation to foederati may belong in the late 4th century under Magnus Maximus.

Traditions, Not Records

The source treats the narrative as tradition. I did not find who Gildas was or what his account says, so the chapter cannot assess Halsall's argument.

How Many Came?

Scholars debate whether settlement involved large-scale population replacement or cultural assimilation. A 2022 genetic study concluded there was "large-scale immigration of both men

and women into Eastern England" from continental populations, with ancestry estimates ranging from 25 to 47 percent "northern continental" origin, though with significant regional variation. Some early Anglo-Saxon kings, such as Cerdic and Penda, bore British names, which suggests Romano-British people took part in kingdom formation.

Two Kinds of Evidence Pointing Different Ways

The genetic result points toward substantial migration into eastern England, while the British-sounding royal names point toward mixing. The source does not say these conflict, and they may not: one measures ancestry in a region, the other the names of a few rulers. I did not find how the study was done or how large its samples were, so I do not weigh it further.

What I Did Not Verify

I did not find the Heptarchy, the mission of Augustine in 597, or the Battle of Mons Badonicus, all in the outline for this chapter. I also did not find how the Roman provinces' end and the first English kingdoms connect in time, so the chapter cannot say what happened between about 410 and the first kingdoms. The next chapter picks up the Viking Age from a source that may fill some of this.

What Continues Across the Break

The source's mention of British-named kings and of archaeological evidence that conflicts with a story of sudden decline suggests the change from Roman to Anglo-Saxon Britain was less abrupt than the tradition implies. That inference is mine, and the sources do not state it in those words. The point for the course is that "Roman Britain ended in 410 and the Anglo-Saxons replaced it" is a simplification the evidence does not support neatly.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

List the Roman dates in the chapter, marking which are approximate, and say what the chapter can and cannot claim about 410.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 2

A student writes "The Anglo-Saxons arrived in 449." Use the chapter's sources to qualify it.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 3

Explain why the genetic study and the British-named kings do not necessarily contradict each other, and what you would need to know to compare them.

→ [Solution](#)

Quick Reference

- **43:** Roman invasion under Claudius (Aulus Plautius); **60 or 61:** Boudica's revolt
- **About 122:** Hadrian's Wall; **about 142:** Antonine Wall
- **410:** withdrawal, traditionally tied to Honorius's letter; exact nature debated
- **Anglo-Saxon arrival:** 449 (Chronicle), about 450 to 455 (Bede), 441 (Chronica Gallica), possibly earlier (archaeology)
- **Migration:** 2022 study, 25 to 47 percent northern continental ancestry in eastern England, with regional variation
- **Not covered:** the Heptarchy, Augustine's mission, the years after 410

CHAPTER 3: THE VIKING AGE & THE UNIFICATION OF ENGLAND

UK History

Chapter 3 · The Viking Age & the Unification of England

Chapter 2 left England as a set of separate English kingdoms. This chapter covers the response to Viking invasion, first under Alfred and then under Æthelstan, who is often called the first king of England. The sources are two reference articles, one on each king. I could not retrieve a source on the Viking raids and settlement themselves, so the chapter does not describe them, and it says where that leaves gaps.

Alfred the Great

Alfred was King of the West Saxons from 871 to about 886, and King of the Anglo-Saxons from about 886 to 899. He was born between 847 and 849 in Wantage, Berkshire, and died on 26 October 899.

Measure	What the source says
Battle of Edington, 878	Alfred defeats the Vikings and forces their leader, Guthrum, to convert to Christianity.
The Danelaw	Established through the Treaty of Alfred and Guthrum, dividing England between Anglo-Saxon and Viking territories.
Burghal system	A network of 33 fortified towns spaced roughly 30 km apart for rapid defense.
Military reforms	An expanded fyrd (militia) and a fleet of warships designed with classical influences.
Learning and law	A court school for nobles and commoners; an extensive law code drawing on earlier laws; the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle commissioned; Latin works translated into Old English.

What This Source Does Not Give

It gives no date for the treaty and does not describe the Danelaw's boundaries. It says that contemporaries viewed Viking raids as divine punishment, and that Alfred's

contemporary Asser noted many nobles resisted the fiscal demands of the burghal system. I did not find how strong that resistance was or how the system was paid for. It also says "the Great" gained popularity as an epithet only from the sixteenth century onward.

Æthelstan

Æthelstan ruled as King of the Anglo-Saxons from 924 to 927 and King of the English from 927 to 939. He was crowned on 4 September 925 at Kingston upon Thames.

927: York and Eamont Bridge

He conquered York, described as the last Viking kingdom, and became the first Anglo-Saxon ruler of all England. That year at Eamont Bridge, Scottish, Welsh and other British rulers submitted to his overlordship.

937: Brunanburh

He defeated a coalition of Scots, Vikings and Britons at the Battle of Brunanburh, which secured his prestige across Britain and Europe. I did not find where the battle took place or the number of troops.

Government

The source says he created England's most centralized government to date, issued more legal texts than any other tenth-century English king, focused on robbery and social order, and issued detailed charters between 928 and 935. He also summoned distant rulers to his councils.

"The First King of England" Is a Judgment

Modern historians regard him as the first king of England, though some scholars dispute that description. The source does not say why they dispute it, and I did not find out. The historian Charles Insley is quoted as saying his hegemony was "perhaps not attained again...until Edward I," which suggests the unity was fragile, not lasting. I report the disagreement and take no side.

Reading Alfred and Æthelstan Together

Alfred's defense in the south, and Æthelstan's conquest of York fifty years later, are the two steps the outline links to unification. The source on Æthelstan says scholars such as Frank Stenton and Simon Keynes rank him among England's greatest monarchs, comparable to Alfred. He died on 27 October 939 at Gloucester and was buried at Malmesbury Abbey. That the same one hundred years covers the burghal system and a king ruling as "King of the English" is a fact the sources support, but the connection between the two is my reading, and neither source spells it out.

What I Did Not Verify

I could not retrieve the source on the Viking Age in England, so the outline's early events are not covered: the first raids, the arrival of the Great Heathen Army, and the Battle of Ashdown. Also missing are the details of the Danelaw, the events between 899 and 924, and the reigns of Alfred's immediate successors, which the chapter cannot fill. Cnut and the Danish kings, mentioned in the outline for later, are not covered.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Set out Alfred's military and cultural measures from the chapter in two lists, and name one the source describes only in outline.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 2

A student writes "Æthelstan unified England in 927 and it stayed unified." Use the chapter to qualify it.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 3

Say what the chapter's sources cannot tell you about the Viking invasions themselves, and what source you would look for.

→ [Solution](#)

Quick Reference

- **Alfred:** reigned 871 to 899; Edington 878; Treaty of Alfred and Guthrum; 33 burhs about 30 km apart
- **Æthelstan:** crowned 4 September 925; King of the English 927 to 939; died 27 October 939
- **927:** York conquered; submissions at Eamont Bridge; **937:** Brunanburh
- **Dispute:** "first king of England" is disputed by some scholars; his hegemony may have been fragile
- **Not covered:** the raids, the Great Heathen Army, the Danelaw's borders, 899 to 924

CHAPTER 4: 1066 & THE NORMAN CONQUEST

UK History

Chapter 4 · 1066 & the Norman Conquest

Chapter 3 ended with a kingdom of the English under Æthelstan. This chapter covers its conquest in 1066 by William, Duke of Normandy, and how the conquest changed landholding and language. The sources are two reference articles, one on the conquest and one on the Domesday Book. They give a clear outline of the year's battles and some striking figures for the changes that followed, but little on the causes of the invasion or the succession dispute behind it, and the chapter says so.

The Two Battles of 1066

Date (1066)	Event
25 September	Battle of Stamford Bridge: Harold Godwinson defeats the Norwegian king Harald Hardrada in the north. The victory leaves his army weakened and far from the threatened southern invasion.
14 October	Battle of Hastings: William's cavalry and archer-heavy force overcomes Harold's shield wall of primarily infantry.

William's army is described as "thousands of Norman, French, Flemish, and Breton troops." The source says the exact circumstances of Harold's death remain debated, though contemporary sources agree he fell during the battle.

What This Source Does Not Explain

It does not say why William invaded, who had a claim to the throne, or how the sources describe the numbers involved. I also did not find the date of William's coronation, so I do not give one. The interval between the two battles is described only by the outcome, and I did not verify how the forces travelled.

Consolidating Power

William faced sustained English resistance through the early 1070s. The source names the Harrying of the North in 1069 to 1070, which "systematically devastated Northumbria." By 1072, after a campaign against Scotland, he had secured enough control to become largely an absent ruler, spending "more than 75 per cent of his time in France rather than England."

An Absent Conqueror

The 75 percent figure is the source's own, and I did not find how it was calculated. It suggests the new regime relied on delegation to the elite it installed. That inference is mine, and the source does not draw it.

Who Owned the Land

The conquest is described as fundamentally altering English society through elite replacement. By 1086, approximately 95 percent of land in England south of the Tees had been transferred from English to Norman hands. The Domesday Book documented this redistribution and served as an unprecedented administrative survey.

Read the 95 Percent Carefully

The figure applies to land south of the Tees, not to all of England, and I did not find whether the transfer was of ownership, of lordship or of the income. It is given as an approximation. Do not repeat it as "95 percent of England".

The Domesday Book

Origin

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records that King William ordered the survey in 1085, with compilation completed in 1086, though

Purpose

To establish the Crown's fiscal rights, including national land-tax assessments, miscellaneous dues and crown land revenues.

recent scholarship suggests completion may have extended to 1098 to 1114.

Structure

Two volumes: Little Domesday (Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex) and Great Domesday (the remainder of England and the Welsh borderlands). One scribe copied Great Domesday and six worked on Little Domesday.

What it records	Figure
Household heads	Approximately 268,984
Named places	13,418
Mills	5,624
Enslaved people	28,000

It records landholders' identities and the value of property under Edward the Confessor and after 1066, as well as arable land, livestock and mills. It covers much of England and parts of Wales but excludes northern counties that did not pay the national land-tax (geld). Medieval administrators called it "Domesday" by the twelfth century, referring to the Last Judgment's finality.

Two Dating Questions

The source gives 1085 to 1086 as the traditional dates and says recent scholarship suggests completion extended much later. I did not find what evidence supports the later range, so I report both and do not choose. The figures above are the source's counts, and I did not check how the household-head total was derived.

Language

The introduction of Norman French as the language of the ruling classes profoundly influenced English linguistic development for centuries. The source gives no detail on which words or how long the effect lasted, so I say only that.

What I Did Not Verify

I did not find the Bayeux Tapestry, the castle-building programme, the succession dispute that preceded the invasion, or the size of the Harrying's death toll, which the outline anticipated. The chapter therefore describes the conquest's outcomes better than its causes.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Set out the two battles of 1066 and explain, using only the chapter, why the first may have affected the second.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 2

A student writes "By 1086, 95 percent of England was owned by Normans." Correct it.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 3

Give the two dates for the Domesday Book's completion and say how you would report the disagreement.

→ [Solution](#)

Quick Reference

- **25 September 1066:** Stamford Bridge; **14 October 1066:** Hastings
- **1069 to 1070:** Harrying of the North; **by 1072:** William largely an absent ruler (over 75% of his time in France)
- **By 1086:** about 95% of land south of the Tees transferred from English to Norman hands
- **Domesday:** ordered 1085, compiled 1086 (later completion suggested); two volumes; about 268,984 household heads, 13,418 places
- **Language:** Norman French for the ruling classes, with lasting effects
- **Not covered:** the succession dispute, William's coronation, castles, the Tapestry

CHAPTER 5: THE PLANTAGENETS & THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR

UK History

Chapter 5 · The Plantagenets & the Hundred Years' War

Chapter 4 covered the Norman conquest. This chapter follows the dynasty that ruled England from 1154, the Plantagenets, and the long war with France that dominated much of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The sources are two reference articles, one on the dynasty and one on the war. They give dates and outcomes but little on how ordinary people experienced either, and the chapter marks what they leave out.

The Plantagenet Dynasty

The House of Plantagenet ruled England from 1154 to 1485. Henry II began the dynasty, and Richard III's death at the Battle of Bosworth Field ended it.

Reign	King	What the source says
1154 to 1189	Henry II	Established extensive continental territories.
1189 to 1199	Richard I	Took part in the Crusades.
1199 to 1216	John	Lost most French holdings, including Normandy, by 1204.

Only Some Kings Appear

The source I used names these three kings and Edward I and Edward III; it does not list the others. I did not research Henry III, Edward II or Richard II, so the chapter does not describe their reigns. Whether the dynasty is properly called "Plantagenet" for its whole span is a naming question I did not look into.

Law and Parliament

The source describes the period as one in which "the king was no longer just the most powerful man in the nation" but acquired "defined duties to the realm, underpinned by a sophisticated

justice system." It names two key developments: Magna Carta in 1215, and Simon de Montfort's Great Parliament of 1265, which first included city and borough representatives.

Where to Read More

UK Politics Fundamentals 1 covers Magna Carta and the sources of the constitution in detail. This chapter mentions it only as part of the dynasty's story and does not repeat that account.

Expansion Within the Isles

Edward I conquered Wales and asserted claims over Scotland, and established the first English Prince of Wales. Edward III saw the adoption of Middle English in governance. I did not find the dates of these events or how the Scottish claim ended.

The Hundred Years' War

The conflict spanned 1337 to 1453, about 116 years, intermittently. Historians divide it into three phases:

The Edwardian War

1337 to 1360.

The Caroline War

1369 to 1389.

The Lancastrian War

1415 to 1453.

Why It Began

The war emerged from feudal disputes over the Duchy of Aquitaine. It was triggered when Edward III claimed the French throne after Charles IV died in 1328 without male heirs. The French nobility rejected his claim on the basis of Salic law and chose Philip VI instead.

Two Levels of Cause

The source gives a long-term cause, the dispute over Aquitaine, and a triggering one, the succession claim. It does not weigh them or explain why the war began in 1337 and not in 1328. I did not find that.

The Main Events

Year	Event
1346	Battle of Crécy: a decisive English victory.
1356	Battle of Poitiers: the English capture King John II.
1415	Battle of Agincourt: Henry V's overwhelming victory.
1420	Treaty of Troyes: recognizes Henry V as French heir.
1429	Siege of Orléans: Joan of Arc inspires a French revival.
1453	Battle of Castillon: the final English defeat.

Consequences

- The war transformed European warfare, through professional standing armies and artillery.
- It strengthened national identities in both kingdoms.
- England lost its continental possessions except Calais, which it held until 1558.
- The loss contributed to the domestic instability that led to the Wars of the Roses (Chapter 6).

Two Endings in One Chapter

The Plantagenet dynasty is dated to 1485 and the war to 1453. The gap of thirty-two years contains the Wars of the Roses, which the source presents as a fight between the

York and Lancaster branches of the same family, ended when Henry VII defeated Richard III and married Elizabeth of York. Chapter 6 takes that up.

What I Did Not Verify

I did not find the Black Death, the longbow's role, the war's cost and taxation, the peasants' experience, or the effect on the English language, which the outline anticipated. I also did not check the claim that England held Calais until 1558 against another source.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Set out the three phases of the Hundred Years' War with their dates and name one event from the third phase.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 2

A student writes "The Hundred Years' War lasted exactly 100 years." Use the chapter to correct it.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 3

Explain the difference between the war's long-term cause and its trigger, and name one thing the sources do not explain.

→ [Solution](#)

Quick Reference

- **Plantagenets:** 1154 (Henry II) to 1485 (Richard III dies at Bosworth)
- **Normandy lost:** by 1204 under John
- **1215:** Magna Carta; **1265:** Simon de Montfort's Great Parliament
- **War:** 1337 to 1453; three phases (1337 to 1360, 1369 to 1389, 1415 to 1453)
- **Battles:** Crécy 1346, Poitiers 1356, Agincourt 1415, Orléans 1429, Castillon 1453
- **Calais:** held until 1558 (this source)
- **Not covered:** the Black Death, the longbow, Henry III, Edward II and Richard II

CHAPTER 6: THE WARS OF THE ROSES & THE TUDOR DYNASTY

UK History

Chapter 6 · The Wars of the Roses & the Tudor Dynasty

Chapter 5 ended with the Plantagenets' final struggle and the dynasty's end at Bosworth. This chapter covers that struggle, the Wars of the Roses, and the first Tudor king, Henry VII, whose reign the sources treat mainly as a rebuilding. The sources are two reference articles, one on the wars and one on Henry VII. The wars' death toll and causes are given as the article's own summary, and I mark where they are figures or interpretations I could not check.

The Wars of the Roses, 1455 to 1487

The wars were fought between the House of York (white rose) and the House of Lancaster (red rose) for control of the English throne. The source gives approximately 105,000 combat deaths.

A Precise-Looking Figure

The 105,000 figure is stated flatly by the source. I did not find how it was derived, who counted, or what period it covers, so treat it as an estimate. The same caution applies to dating the wars to 1455 and 1487, which follows the source's own scheme.

Why They Started

Powerful Duchies

Edward III's creation of powerful duchies for his sons established a new nobility capable of challenging royal authority. This connects to the Plantagenet line described in Chapter 5.

Bastard Feudalism

A system that enabled magnates to maintain private military retinues loyal to themselves instead of the crown. The source names it and does not define it further, and I did not research it.

A Weak King

The mental instability of Henry VI revived Richard of York's interest in claiming the throne.

The Main Events

Year	Event
1455	York captures Henry VI at the First Battle of St Albans and becomes Lord Protector.
1461	Edward IV, York's son, is crowned after defeating the Lancastrians at Towton.
1470 to 1471	Warwick briefly restores Henry VI before Edward IV reclaims power.
1483	Richard III assumes the throne amid controversy over the "Princes in the Tower."
1485	Henry Tudor defeats Richard III at Bosworth Field, establishing the Tudor dynasty.
1487	The final Yorkist challenge is defeated at Stoke Field.

A Controversy Named, Not Explained

The source refers to "controversy over the Princes in the Tower" without saying what the controversy is. I did not research it, so the chapter does not describe what happened to the princes or who is blamed. The same goes for the source's silence on what happened to Henry VI and Richard of York.

Henry VII

Henry VII ruled from 1485 to 1509. He declared himself king retroactively from 21 August 1485, before his official coronation on 30 October. He married Elizabeth of York in 1486, uniting Lancastrian and Yorkist claims, and the Tudor Rose became a symbol of reconciliation.

A Reign Dated Backwards

Backdating his reign to 21 August, the day before the date usually given for Bosworth, makes anyone who fought against him on 22 August a rebel. I did not verify the date of the battle or the legal reasoning, so this consequence is my reading of the source's fact and not the source's own claim.

Rebellions and Finances

- He faced rebellions, including challenges from Lambert Simnel (1487) and Perkin Warbeck (in the 1490s), and suppressed them.
- He transformed England's finances from near-bankruptcy and is described as "a fiscally prudent monarch," employing ruthless tax collection through his chancellor, Archbishop John Morton.
- His methods earned criticism. His advisers Richard Empson and Edmund Dudley were later executed for abuse of power.

Foreign Policy

He pursued strategic marriages for his children: Arthur to Catherine of Aragon for an alliance with Spain, and Margaret to James IV for one with Scotland. The Magnus Intercursus, a trade agreement with Burgundy in 1496, is described as significantly benefiting English commerce. He died in 1509 and was succeeded by his son Henry VIII, the subject of Chapter 7.

What I Did Not Verify

I did not find the causes of Empson and Dudley's execution beyond the one phrase, the details of Simnel's and Warbeck's claims, the Star Chamber or other legal reforms, or how historians rate Henry VII. I also did not check whether the Tudor line's claim was strong or weak, which is a live question in the sources I did not read. The chapter therefore describes what he did, but not how well it worked.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Set out the three causes of the wars named in the chapter and say which one the chapter can describe least fully.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 2

A student writes "The Wars of the Roses killed 105,000 people and ended at Bosworth in 1485." Correct the two claims.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 3

List how Henry VII secured his position, using the chapter, and name one thing the sources do not tell you about his success.

→ [Solution](#)

Quick Reference

- **Wars of the Roses:** 1455 to 1487, York (white) against Lancaster (red); about 105,000 combat deaths (source's figure)
- **Causes:** powerful duchies, bastard feudalism, Henry VI's instability
- **Events:** St Albans 1455; Towton 1461; Warwick's restoration 1470 to 1471; Richard III 1483; Bosworth 1485; Stoke Field 1487
- **Henry VII:** reigned 1485 to 1509; married Elizabeth of York 1486; died 1509
- **Consolidation:** marriage, defeat of Simnel and Warbeck, financial recovery, foreign marriages
- **Not covered:** the Princes in the Tower, Star Chamber, how historians rate his reign

CHAPTER 7: THE ENGLISH REFORMATION & ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND

UK History

Chapter 7 · The English Reformation & Elizabethan England

Chapter 6 ended with Henry VII's death in 1509 and the succession of his son Henry VIII. This chapter covers the religious change that his reign began and the settlement that his daughter Elizabeth reached, along with the Spanish Armada of 1588. The sources are two reference articles, one on the Reformation and one on the Armada. They give the phases and the main figures, but the Reformation article is a short summary, and I mark where it leaves the reasons and the numbers unsupported.

How the Break Began

Henry VIII sought an annulment from Catherine of Aragon in 1527, but Pope Clement VII refused. The source describes this political dispute, and not theological conviction, as what started England's break from Rome.

A Strong Claim in One Sentence

The source's framing is that the cause was political and not theological. I did not find the argument or the historians who disagree, and the chapter does not test it. Note also that the annulment request is dated to 1527 and the phase is described as running to 1547.

Four Phases

Phase	Dates	What the source says
Henrician	1527 to 1547	The First Act of Supremacy declares Henry "Supreme Head of the Church of England," severing papal authority. The Treasons Act 1534 makes denying royal supremacy punishable by death, and Thomas More and John Fisher are executed under it. Monasteries are dissolved and their wealth confiscated.

Phase	Dates	What the source says
Edwardian	1547 to 1553	Under the nine-year-old Edward VI, Protestant reforms accelerate. The 1549 Book of Common Prayer introduces English-language worship and reformed theology, provoking armed resistance in western England. Archbishop Thomas Cranmer spearheads the changes.
Marian	1553 to 1558	Mary I reverses the reforms, restoring papal authority and the Latin Mass. She authorizes heresy executions, and approximately 280 Protestants are burned, earning her the epithet "Bloody Mary."
Elizabethan	1558 to 1603	Elizabeth I adopts a moderate middle path: reformed Protestant theology alongside Catholic institutional structures such as bishops, cathedrals and formal liturgy.

Enforced by Law

Denying royal supremacy became a capital offence under the Treasons Act 1534. The source names two executions and does not give their dates.

Resistance

The 1549 prayer book provoked armed resistance in western England. I did not find the name of the rising, its size or its outcome.

A Durable Compromise

The Elizabethan settlement is said to have satisfied neither extreme but proved remarkably durable. The source gives no explanation for that durability.

Slow Change

The source says the settlement transformed England gradually into a Protestant nation, though Catholicism persisted among gentry families and required underground priest networks. So the date of the settlement is not the date of a Protestant country. I did not find how long the transformation took or how the population divided.

The Spanish Armada, 1588

The Armada sailed from Lisbon in late May 1588, commanded by the Duke of Medina Sidonia, and aimed to invade England, overthrow Elizabeth I and restore Catholicism. It was the largest engagement of the Anglo-Spanish War.

Measure	Figure in the source
Spanish ships leaving Lisbon	141, with 10,138 sailors and 19,315 soldiers
After storms	137; only 122 entered the Channel
English fleet	About 226 ships, including 34 Royal Navy vessels and numerous merchant ships
Losses	About 44 Spanish ships in total

The Fighting

- Combat began on 31 July near Plymouth.
- The most significant battle was at Gravelines on 8 August, with over 600 Spanish deaths and the loss or capture of five Spanish ships.
- The English avoided close-quarter combat and kept their distance to use their superior cannon.
- The Spanish withdrew, returning via Scotland and Ireland, where more vessels were wrecked.

Dates and Calendars

England and Spain used different calendars in 1588. My recollection is that English accounts date the same events about ten days earlier, but I did not verify that, so the dates above are as the source gives them and I do not convert them. The source also says Medina Sidonia reportedly had serious doubts about the mission, which I could not check.

The commanders on the English side were Charles Howard, Francis Drake and John Hawkins. The source calls the defeat a turning point, though Spain launched three later armadas, in 1596, 1597 and 1601.

What I Did Not Verify

I did not find the Pilgrimage of Grace, the dissolution's dates and extent, the numbers of monasteries, Elizabeth's own speech to her troops, the role of weather, or any assessment of how decisive the Armada was. The Reformation source dates the Henrician phase to 1527, and I did not check its scheme against others. The chapter therefore gives the outline of both subjects and not the debates around them.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Set out the four phases of the Reformation with one measure from each, using only the chapter.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 2

A student writes "England became Protestant when Elizabeth's settlement was passed." Use the chapter to qualify it.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 3

Compare the two fleets in the Armada campaign using the chapter's figures, and say what the figures cannot tell you about the outcome.

→ [Solution](#)

Quick Reference

- **1527:** Henry VIII seeks an annulment; Pope Clement VII refuses
- **Henrician:** Act of Supremacy; Treasons Act 1534; monasteries dissolved; More and Fisher executed
- **Edwardian (1547 to 1553):** 1549 Book of Common Prayer; armed resistance in the west
- **Marian (1553 to 1558):** papal authority restored; about 280 Protestants burned
- **Elizabethan (1558 to 1603):** reformed theology with Catholic structures
- **Armada 1588:** 141 Spanish ships against about 226 English; Gravelines 8 August; about 44 Spanish ships lost
- **Not covered:** the Pilgrimage of Grace, the dissolution's scale, the weather's role

CHAPTER 8: THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR & THE INTERREGNUM

UK History

Chapter 8 · The English Civil War & the Interregnum

Chapter 7 covered the religious settlement of the sixteenth century. This chapter covers the century's great political crisis: the war between King Charles I and Parliament, the king's execution, and the republic that followed until 1660. The sources are two reference articles, one on the war and one on the Protectorate. They give the outline and dates of the republic well, and the war itself more briefly, and I mark where the war article leaves questions open, including how many people died.

Why the War Came

Religion

Charles I's attempts to impose High Anglican religious practices. When he tried to impose Anglican practices on Scotland, this triggered the Bishops' Wars.

Taxation

Controversial methods such as ship money created widespread opposition.

Royal Power

Parliament sought to constrain what it viewed as excessive royal authority. The Bishops' Wars forced Charles to recall Parliament after eleven years of personal rule.

A Summary of Causes, Not Their Weight

The source lists these factors together and does not rank them. It does not date the Bishops' Wars or the recall of Parliament, and I did not find them. Whether the war was mainly about religion, money or power is a debate the chapter cannot settle.

The Wars, 1642 to 1651

The English Civil War is described as a series of conflicts between Royalists supporting Charles I and Parliamentarians seeking to limit royal power.

Date	Event
August 1642	Charles raises his standard at Nottingham; the conflict formally begins.
1642 to 1646	The First English Civil War, with battles at Edgehill, Marston Moor and Naseby. Oliver Cromwell's disciplined New Model Army proves superior to Royalist forces.
1646	Charles surrenders. Disagreements over a political settlement lead to the Second English Civil War in 1648.
30 January 1649	Charles I is executed, and the Commonwealth of England is established under Cromwell's leadership.
1651	The Anglo-Scottish War ends with victory at Worcester.

What Is Thin Here

The source names the three battles and does not describe them or give their dates. It also does not say how Charles was tried, who tried him, or on what charge, so the chapter cannot describe the trial. I did not find the number of deaths. Do not repeat any figure for the war's casualties from memory.

The Republic and the Protectorate

The Protectorate was a British republic lasting from 16 December 1653 to 25 May 1659, governed by Lord Protectors Oliver and Richard Cromwell.

Date	Event
20 April 1653	Cromwell dissolves the Rump Parliament.

Date	Event
16 December 1653	The Instrument of Government establishes Cromwell as Lord Protector for life.
1655 to 1656	Rule of the Major-Generals, military governors overseeing England and Wales.
25 May 1657	Parliament offers Cromwell the crown; he refuses, citing divine providence.
3 September 1658	Cromwell dies; his son Richard succeeds him.
May 1659	Richard resigns, unable to control Parliament or the Army.
May 1660	The monarchy is restored under Charles II.

A Republic That United the Isles

The regime united England, Scotland and Ireland under one commonwealth, and the Instrument of Government granted Scotland and Ireland 30 parliamentary seats each. One historian is quoted as saying the regime intended "the anglicisation of the British Isles." Military occupation forces maintained order, particularly in Scotland and Ireland. For the Irish side of this period see Irish History 6, which covers Cromwell's conquest.

Other Policies

- **Foreign affairs:** it won the First Anglo-Dutch War in 1654 and invaded Jamaica through the Western Design.
- **Religious tolerance:** it encouraged Jewish resettlement in England after 350 years of banishment.

Two Descriptions of the Ending

The war article says the arrangement "ultimately proved unsustainable" and dissolved at the Stuart Restoration in 1660. The Protectorate article says it collapsed because of internal tensions between civilian and military authority. These are compatible, and both are the sources' own summaries, not measured findings. I did not find the sequence of events between May 1659 and May 1660, so the chapter cannot describe how the monarchy returned.

Link to the Constitution

UK Politics Fundamentals 2 describes how the Crown and Parliament work together today. The conflict in this chapter is the background to that arrangement, but neither of my sources here draws the connection, so I do not describe it.

What I Did Not Verify

I did not find the Personal Rule's dates, the Bishops' Wars, the Levellers, the events between the surrender and the execution, the casualty figures or the regicides' fate. The chapter is a timeline and does not explain how the two sides differed.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

List the three causes of the war the chapter names and say what the chapter does not tell you about how to weigh them.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 2

A student writes "Cromwell was crowned king and ruled until 1660." Correct it using the chapter.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 3

Build a timeline of the republic from 1649 to 1660 and mark the gaps the chapter could not fill.

→ [Solution](#)

Quick Reference

- **Causes:** Charles I's religious policy, ship money, conflict over royal power; the Bishops' Wars
- **War:** August 1642 to Worcester 1651; Edgehill, Marston Moor, Naseby; New Model Army
- **Execution:** Charles I, 30 January 1649; Commonwealth established
- **Protectorate:** 16 December 1653 to 25 May 1659; Cromwell refused the crown on 25 May 1657; died 3 September 1658
- **Restoration:** May 1660, Charles II
- **Not covered:** the trial, casualty figures, May 1659 to May 1660

CHAPTER 9: THE GEORGIAN ERA & THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

UK History

Chapter 9 · The Georgian Era & the Industrial Revolution

Chapter 8 ended with the Restoration of 1660. This chapter jumps to the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and covers two things that overlap: the Georgian era, named for the Hanoverian kings, and the Industrial Revolution, which began in Britain. The sources are two reference articles, one on each. They are broad summaries, and the chapter marks where they leave out the detail and the debates. It covers the domestic story only, and points to World History III for the industrialization of the wider world.

The Georgian Era

The Georgian era spans 1714 to 1837 in British history, named after four Hanoverian kings, George I, II, III and IV, and also covering William IV.

A Gap Since Chapter 8

The course does not cover the period from 1660 to 1714, and none of my sources for this chapter describes it. The Stuart kings after Charles II, and the events that led to the Hanoverian succession, are therefore not treated in this course. The 1707 union appears in Chapter 1 only as a definition.

Politics

- George I's accession in 1714 secured the Protestant succession and prevented a Catholic restoration.
- His limited English is said to have created space for parliamentary development, enabling Robert Walpole to emerge as "Britain's first de facto Prime Minister."
- Catholic emancipation followed in 1829, which allowed Catholics "to vote and hold office" after centuries of restrictions.

Read "First Prime Minister" With Care

The source quotes the phrase "Britain's first de facto Prime Minister". UK Politics Fundamentals 5 covers the office and its history. I did not check whether the source's claim about George I's English is well supported, and I did not find a date for Walpole's rise.

Wider Changes

The American Colonies

Britain lost its thirteen American colonies in 1783 but expanded in Asia and elsewhere. This chapter touches empire only for its effect at home, and the source describes it in outline.

Reform Movements

The evangelical movement, led by John Wesley and figures such as William Wilberforce, championed social reform including the abolition of the slave trade in 1807.

Ideas and Arts

Scottish Enlightenment philosophers such as David Hume and Adam Smith, and Romantic poets including Wordsworth and Byron. I did not find their works or dates.

The source also mentions the South Sea Bubble of 1720, which "demonstrated early financial market volatility" before Walpole stabilized the system. I did not find what caused it or how much money was lost.

The Industrial Revolution

The Industrial Revolution occurred roughly between 1760 and 1840, originating in Great Britain before spreading to continental Europe and the United States by 1840. The source says: "Economic historians agree that the onset of the Industrial Revolution is the most important event in human history."

A Large Claim, Quoted

The quoted sentence is the article's own claim about what economic historians agree on. I did not check it, and the dates 1760 to 1840 are described as approximate, so I use them as a guide and not as a boundary.

Area	What the source says
Textiles	The revolutionary sector. The spinning jenny (1764), water frame (1769) and spinning mule (1779) dramatically increased productivity, and the power loom mechanized weaving.
Steam	James Watt transformed the steam engine from reciprocating to rotating motion, suited to industrial use, enabling widespread factory mechanization.
Iron	The substitution of coke for charcoal greatly lowered the fuel cost of pig iron and wrought iron.

Why Britain

The source lists agricultural productivity, capital access, stable governance, abundant coal and existing port networks. The textile industry concentrated in Lancashire, and Manchester earned the nickname "Cottonopolis."

Advantages Named, Not Proved

The list explains why industrialization could begin in Britain, but the source does not test each factor or say which mattered most. The source also mentions the cotton gin, which was developed abroad, as making the processing of cotton economically viable; I did not find where it fits in the British story.

Social Effects

- The revolution sparked urbanization, population growth and the factory system.
- It also brought harsh working conditions and child labour, which prompted later reforms such as the Factory Acts of 1833.
- The Georgian source says it intensified class divisions.

Living Standards Are Not Covered

A well-known debate concerns whether ordinary people's living standards rose or fell in these decades. Neither source addresses it, so the chapter takes no side and gives no wage or life-expectancy figures.

What I Did Not Verify

I did not find the canal and railway networks, Luddism, the Great Reform Act of 1832, the Jacobite risings, or the Napoleonic Wars, which the outline anticipated. I also did not link the two halves of the chapter: the sources do not say whether the Georgian political order helped or hindered industrialization. For the global story of industrialization see World History III 2.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Build a timeline of the Georgian era from the chapter, mark which entries are exact dates, and name one gap.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 2

A student writes "The Industrial Revolution began in 1760 and ended in 1840." Use the chapter to qualify it.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 3

List the "why Britain" factors from the chapter and explain why a list of advantages is not the same as an explanation.

→ [Solution](#)

Quick Reference

- **Georgian era:** 1714 to 1837; George I secures the Protestant succession in 1714
- **Walpole:** "Britain's first de facto Prime Minister" (source's phrase); South Sea Bubble 1720
- **1783:** loss of the thirteen colonies; **1807:** slave trade abolished; **1829:** Catholic emancipation
- **Industrial Revolution:** roughly 1760 to 1840; spinning jenny 1764, water frame 1769, spinning mule 1779
- **Why Britain:** agriculture, capital, stable governance, coal, ports
- **Reform:** Factory Acts 1833
- **Not covered:** 1660 to 1714, living standards, canals and railways, the 1832 reform

CHAPTER 10: CAPSTONE: VICTORIAN BRITAIN TO THE PRESENT

UK History

Chapter 10 · Capstone: Victorian Britain to the Present

This capstone does two things. It covers the last stretch of the story, from Queen Victoria's reign to the present, and it looks back across the whole course for recurring themes. The last stretch rests on three reference articles, and one of them, on the post-1945 period, turned out to be only an index page with a few markers, so that period is thin. The looking-back half uses only the earlier chapters.

Victorian Britain, 1837 to 1901

The Victorian era covers Queen Victoria's reign over the United Kingdom and the British Empire. The source says it transformed Britain into the world's dominant industrial and imperial power.

Political Reform

Expanding franchises through Reform Acts in 1832, 1867 and 1884, gradually shifting power from aristocrats to middle and working classes, though women remained largely excluded.

Prosperity

Britain became the "workshop of the world," with a mid-Victorian "Golden Years" from 1850 to 1870 in which "national income per person increased by half."

Hardship

Urban overcrowding created severe slum conditions, and child labour remained widespread until late-century reforms. The Great Famine devastated Ireland from 1845 to 1852, triggering mass emigration.

Where the Famine Fits

The source lists the Irish famine among the era's challenges. Irish History 7 covers it from Ireland's side, and I did not research it further here. The Victorian source also mentions Darwin, the telegraph and telephone, railways and near-universal education by the century's end, without dates I could check.

The Twentieth Century at Home

The source on the Second World War home front gives several figures.

Item	What the source says
September 1939	Operation Pied Piper evacuates "more than 3.5 million children and teachers," primarily from London.
January 1940	Systematic rationing begins.
May 1940	Winston Churchill forms a coalition government, appointing the union leader Ernest Bevin as Minister of Labour.
September 1940 to May 1941	The Blitz; Belfast alone saw half its houses destroyed.
Civilian casualties	60,595 killed and 86,182 seriously wounded, by official Ministry of Home Security figures.
War spending	7.4 percent of GDP in 1938, 43.8 percent in 1940, and 55.3 percent at the 1943 peak.

Domestic food production rose 35 percent, and cultivated farmland expanded from 12 to 18 million acres. The source describes a "people's war" narrative that legitimized welfare state expansion through the Beveridge Report and the Education Act 1944.

What Is and Isn't Covered

I found no source on the First World War for this course, so it is not described. The Second World War figures are one source's, and "roughly 0.1 percent of the population" for the civilian deaths is its own calculation, which I did not check.

After 1945

My only source for the postwar period was an index page. It lists markers without describing them: the 1945 Labour election under Clement Attlee, the establishment of the National Health Service in July 1948, the 1973 entry into the European Economic Community, Margaret Thatcher's arrival in 1979, and the 2016 Brexit referendum.

A List, Not a History

These five markers are all this chapter can offer for the last eighty years. I do not describe what they changed, the debates around them, the devolution of the late twentieth century, or the outcome of the referendum. UK Politics Fundamentals 7 covers devolution, and it is the better place to go for that.

Looking Back: Five Threads

Thread	Where it appears
Disputed or uncertain dates	Anglo-Saxon arrival (Chapter 2), the Domesday Book's completion (Chapter 4), the end of Roman rule (Chapter 2).
Contested successions and legitimacy	Æthelstan as "first king of England" (Chapter 3), 1066 (Chapter 4), Henry VII's backdated reign (Chapter 6), the Restoration (Chapter 8), the Hanoverian succession (Chapter 9).
Limits on royal power	Magna Carta and the 1265 Parliament (Chapter 5), the Civil War and execution of Charles I (Chapter 8), the Victorian Reform Acts (this chapter).
Religion and state	The Reformation's four phases (Chapter 7), the Protestant succession (Chapter 9), Catholic emancipation (Chapter 9).
Change at different speeds	The Roman-to-Anglo-Saxon transition (Chapter 2), a Protestant England reached gradually (Chapter 7), industrialization (Chapter 9).

A Pattern, Not a Law

Reading the chapters together, the sources repeatedly describe change as slower and more mixed than a single date suggests: 410, 1066, 1534 and 1660 are each less clean in the sources than the usual story. That is my reading across the course, and the sources do not say it in those words. Each chapter also relied on one or two summaries, so the pattern needs evidence beyond them.

What the Course Did Not Cover

- The period from 1660 to 1714 (Chapter 9), and the First World War.
- The empire, which belongs to a separate course.
- Scotland, Wales and Ireland except where they met England, and Northern Ireland entirely.
- Social history, and most cultural history, beyond a few names.

A Note on the Sources

Every chapter rests on reference summaries. Where they conflicted or were silent, the chapter said so, and this capstone continues that practice. The most reliable use of the course is as a map of what happened and of where a reader should look for more.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Add a sixth thread to the table with two examples from different chapters, and say which source limits you would state.

→ [Solution](#)

EXERCISE 2

A student writes "Britain was fully democratic by 1901." Use the Victorian material to qualify it.

→ Solution

EXERCISE 3

Write a paragraph on the United Kingdom since 1945 using only the five markers and say what you cannot claim.

→ Solution

Quick Reference

- **Victorian era:** 1837 to 1901; Reform Acts 1832, 1867, 1884; Golden Years 1850 to 1870; Irish famine 1845 to 1852
- **Second World War home front:** 3.5 million evacuated; rationing from January 1940; 60,595 civilians killed; war spending peaked at 55.3 percent of GDP in 1943
- **Post-1945 markers:** 1945 Labour election, 1948 NHS, 1973 EEC entry, 1979 Thatcher, 2016 Brexit referendum
- **Threads:** disputed dates, contested successions, limits on royal power, religion and state, change at different speeds
- **Not covered:** 1660 to 1714, the First World War, the empire, postwar detail

Course Complete

UK History is complete at 10 chapters. The British Empire, the separate course this one refers to, is planned and not yet started.