

Historical trivia in Britannia

While Britannia is a fictional ship that is a Floating City, she is heavily based off the S.S “Great Eastern”, the “Great Eastern” was an iron sailing steamship designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel (1806-1859), and built by J. Scott Russell & Co. at Millwall Iron Works on the River Thames, London. She was by far the largest ship ever built at the time of her 1858 launch, and had the capacity to carry 4,000 passengers from England to Australia without refuelling. Her length of 211m was only surpassed in 1899 by the RMS Oceanic, the ship's five funnels were rare and were later reduced to four. It also had the largest set of paddle wheels. Brunel knew her affectionately as the "Great Babe". He died in 1859 shortly after her maiden voyage, during which she was damaged by an explosion. After repairs, she plied for several years as a passenger liner between Britain and North America before being converted to a cable-laying ship and laying the first lasting transatlantic telegraph cable in 1866. Finishing her life as a floating music hall and advertising hoarding (for the department store Lewis's) in Liverpool, she was broken up on Merseyside in 1889.

Britannia is national personification of the United Kingdom. The name is a Latinisation of the native Brythonic word for the island. Britannia is the name given to the female personification of the island, and it is a term still used to refer to the whole island. After centuries of declining use, the Latin form was revived during the English Renaissance as a rhetorical evocation of a British national identity. Especially following the Acts of Union in 1707, which joined the Kingdoms of England and Scotland, the personification of the martial Britannia was used as an emblem of British maritime power and unity, most notably in "Rule, Britannia!". A British cultural icon, she was featured on all modern British coinage series until the redesign in 2008, and still appears annually on the gold and silver "Britannia" bullion coin series. In 2015 a new definitive £2 coin was issued, with a new image of Britannia.

Queen Victoria (24th May 1819 – 22th January 1901) was Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland from 20 June 1837 until her death. On 1 May 1876, she adopted the additional title of Empress of India, known as the Victorian era, her reign of 63 years and seven months was longer than that of any of her predecessors. It was a period of industrial, cultural, political, scientific, and military change within the United Kingdom, and was marked by a great expansion of the British Empire.

The British Empire comprised the dominions, colonies, protectorates, mandates, and other territories ruled or administered by the United Kingdom and its predecessor states. It originated with the overseas possessions and trading posts established by England between the late 16th and early 18th centuries. At its height, it was the largest empire in history and, for over a century, was the foremost global power. By 1913, the British Empire held sway over 412 million people, 23% of the world population at the time, and by 1920, it covered 35,500,000, 24% of the Earth's total land area. As a result, its political, legal, linguistic, and cultural legacy is widespread. At the peak of its power, the phrase "the empire on which the sun never sets" was often used to describe the British Empire, because its expanse around the globe meant that the sun was always shining on at least one of its territories.

Britain emerged as the principal naval and imperial power of the 19th century. Unchallenged at sea, British dominance was later described as Pax Britannica ("British Peace"), a period of relative peace in Europe and the world (1815–1914) during which the British Empire became the global hegemon and adopted the role of global policeman. In the early 19th century, the Industrial Revolution began to transform Britain; so that by the time of the Great Exhibition in 1851, the country was described as the "workshop of the world". The British Empire expanded to include most of India, large parts of Africa and many other territories throughout the world. Alongside the formal control that Britain exerted over its own colonies, its dominance of much of world trade meant that it effectively controlled the economies of many regions, such as Asia and Latin

America. Between 1815 and 1914, a period referred to as Britain's "imperial century" by some historians, around 10 million sq mi (26 million km²) of territory and roughly 400 million people were added to the British Empire. Victory over Napoleon left Britain without any serious international rival, other than Russia in Central Asia. Unchallenged at sea, Britain adopted the role of global policeman, a state of affairs later known as the Pax Britannica, and a foreign policy of "splendid isolation". Alongside the formal control it exerted over its own colonies, Britain's dominant position in world trade meant that it effectively controlled the economies of many countries, such as China, Argentina and Siam, which has been described by some historians as an "Informal Empire". British imperial strength was underpinned by the steamship and the telegraph, new technologies invented in the second half of the 19th century, allowing it to control and defend the empire. By 1902, the British Empire was linked together by a network of telegraph cables, called the All Red Line.

The Values of the British Empire are:

1. The rule of law. Our society is based on the idea that we all abide by the same rules, whatever our wealth or status. No one is above the law - not even the government.
2. The sovereignty of the Crown in Parliament. The Lords, the Commons and the monarch constitute the supreme authority in the land. There is no appeal to any higher jurisdiction, spiritual or temporal.
3. The pluralist state. Equality before the law implies that no one should be treated differently on the basis of belonging to a particular group. Conversely, all parties, sects, faiths and ideologies must tolerate the existence of their rivals.
4. Personal freedom. There should be a presumption, always and everywhere, against state coercion. We should tolerate eccentricity in others, almost to the point of lunacy, provided no one else is harmed.
5. Private property. Freedom must include the freedom to buy and sell without fear of confiscation, to transfer ownership, to sign contracts and have them enforced. Britain was quicker than most countries to

recognise this and became, in consequence, one of the happiest and most prosperous nations on Earth.

6. Institutions. British freedom and British character are immanent in British institutions. These are not, mostly, statutory bodies, but spring from the way free individuals regulate each other's conduct, and provide for their needs, without recourse to coercion.

7. The family. Civic society depends on values being passed from generation to generation. Stable families are the essential ingredient of a stable society.

8. History. British children inherit a political culture, a set of specific legal rights and obligations, and a stupendous series of national achievements. They should be taught about these things.

9. The English-speaking world. The atrocities of September 11, 2001, were not simply an attack on a foreign nation; they were an attack on the anglosphere - on all of us who believe in freedom, justice and the rule of law.

10. The British character. Shaped by and in turn shaping our national institutions is our character as a people: stubborn, stoical, indignant at injustice. "The Saxon," wrote Kipling, "never means anything seriously till he talks about justice and right."