

UNIVERSITATEA „CONSTANTIN BRANCUSI” DIN TG-JIU

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ENGLISH
(FOR THE I.D. STUDENTS USE)

SHORT INTRODUCTION TO THE SEMINAR SUPPORT

The purpose of the seminar support
The objective of the seminar support
The time necessary for each activity
The evaluation

CONTENT

MODULE 1: INTRODUCING GREAT BRITAIN

pag. 9

UNIT 1: GENERAL FACTS ABOUT UK

pag. 9

1.1. Getting acquainted with the English nation

1.1.1 Introduction

1.1.2 The origin of names and national identity

1.1.3 U.K. geography

1.1.3.1 British Isles

1.1.3.2 The Orkney and Shetland Islands

1.1.3.3 The Isle of Mann

1.1.3.4 Hebrides

1.1.3.5 The Isle of Wright

1.1.3.6 The Isle of Scilly

1.1.3.7 England

1.1.3.8 Scotland

1.1.3.9 Wales

1.1.3.10 Ireland

Auto evaluation test

Basic bibliography

Answers and commentaries at the auto evaluation test

1.2. A little bit of history

1.2.1 The Royal England

1.2.1.1 Henry the VIIIth

1.2.1.2 The Elizabethan Age

1.2.1.3 The Elizabethan Theatre

1.2.1.4 William Shakespeare

1.2.1.5 Elizabethan Architecture

1.2.1.6 Elizabethan Literature

1.2.1.7 The English Royal Family today

1.2.2 The Irish conflict

Auto evaluation test

Basic bibliography

Answers and commentaries at the auto evaluation test

UNIT 2 SYMBOLS OF UNITED KINGDOM

pag. 56

2.1 Symbols associated with Great Britain

pag. 56

2.1.1 Flags

2.1.2 Double Deck Busses

2.1.3 Red Post Boxes

2.1.4 The Royal Family

2.1.5 Palaces

2.1.6 British Parliament

2.1.7 The London Eye

- 2.1.8 Beefeaters
- 2.1.9 The Black Cabs

Auto evaluation test

Basic bibliography

Answers and commentaries at the auto evaluation test

UNIT 3 THE COMMONWEALTH OF NATIONS

pag. 66

- 3.1 What is the Commonwealth of Nations?
- 3.2 History
 - 3.2.1 The origins of the Commonwealth of Nations
 - 3.2.2 The Commonwealth' activities and objectives
 - 3.2.3 Commonwealth's meetings
- 3.3 Present members of the Commonwealth
 - 3.3.1 How are the members elected?
 - 3.3.2 Member states of the Commonwealth of Nations
 - 3.3.3 The ending of a member quality in the Commonwealth of Nations
- 3.4 The Structure of the Commonwealth
 - 3.4.1 Commonwealth Business Council
 - 3.4.2 Commonwealth Secretariat
 - 3.4.3 Symbols
- 3.5 Anglo-sphere
- 3.6 Similar organizations
 - 3.6.1 Francophonie
 - 3.6.2 The Commonwealth of the Independent States

Auto evaluation test

Basic bibliography

Answers and commentaries at the auto evaluation test

UNIT 4 TEST

pag. 77

MODULUL 2: UNITED KINGDOM'S GOVERNMENT

pag. 80

UNIT 5: STRUCTURE AND POLITICS

pag. 80

5.1 Politics

- 5.1.1 British Politics
- 5.1.2 Political Parties in Great Britain

5.2. Structure of British Government

- 5.2.1 Departments in the British Government
 - 5.2.1.1 Ministerial Departments
 - 5.2.1.2 Non-Ministerial Departments
 - 5.2.2.2 No 10 Downing Street

UNIT 6: INDIVIDUAL, GOVERNEMENTAL ORGANIZATION

pag. 85

- 6.1 England
 - 6.1.1 Her Majesty' Government
 - 6.1.2 The British Constitution
 - 6.1.3 The English, local government

6.2 Scotland

6.2.1 The Scottish Government

6.2.2 The Scotland Act 1998

6.2.3 The Scottish, local government

6.3 Wales

6.3.1 The Welsh Government

6.3.2 Acts of Union

6.3.3 The Welsh, local government

6.4 Ireland

6.4.1 The Irish Government

6.4.2 The Constitution of Ireland

6.4.3 The Irish, local government

6.5 Northern Ireland

6.5.1 The Northern Irish Government

6.5.2 The Constitution of Northern Ireland

6.4.3 The Northern Irish, local government

Auto evaluation test

Basic bibliography

Answers and commentaries at the auto evaluation test

UNIT 7 FINAL TEST

BIBLIOGRAPHY

pag. 111

**FIRST YEAR OF STUDY
ENGLISH 1**

MODULE 1

**UNIT 1
UNIT 2
UNIT 3
UNIT 4**

**General Facts about United Kingdom
Symbols of the United Kingdom
The Commonwealth of Nations
Revision**

MODULE 1: INTRODUCING GREAT BRITAIN

UNIT 1: GENERAL FACTS ABOUT UK

1.1. Getting acquainted with the English nation

- 1.1.1 Introduction
- 1.1.2 The origin of names and national identity
- 1.1.3 U.K. geography
 - 1.1.3.1 British Isles
 - 1.1.3.2 The Orkney and Shetland Islands
 - 1.1.3.3 The Isle of Mann
 - 1.1.3.4 Hebrides
 - 1.1.3.5 The Isle of Wright
 - 1.1.3.6 The Isle of Scilly
 - 1.1.3.7 England
 - 1.1.3.8 Scotland
 - 1.1.3.9 Wales
 - 1.1.3.10 Ireland

Auto evaluation test

Basic bibliography

Answers and commentaries at the auto evaluation test

1.2. A little bit of history

- 1.2.1 The Royal England
 - 1.2.1.1 Henry the VIIIth
 - 1.2.1.2 The Elizabethan Age
 - 1.2.1.3 The Elizabethan Theatre
 - 1.2.1.4 William Shakespeare
 - 1.2.1.5 Elizabethan Architecture
 - 1.2.1.6 Elizabethan Literature
 - 1.2.1.7 The English Royal Family today
- 1.2.2 The Irish conflict

Auto evaluation test

Basic bibliography

Answers and commentaries at the auto evaluation test

UNIT 2 SYMBOLS OF UNITED KINGDOM

2.1 Symbols associated with Great Britain

- 2.1.1 Flags
- 2.1.2 Double Deck Busses
- 2.1.3 Red Post Boxes
- 2.1.4 The Royal Family
- 2.1.5 Palaces
- 2.1.6 British Parliament
- 2.1.7 The London Eye
- 2.1.8 Beefeaters
- 2.1.9 The Black Cabs

Auto evaluation test

Basic bibliography

Answers and commentaries at the auto evaluation test



(source: Internet. Google Images: http://europa.eu/abc/maps/members/uk_en.htm. Taken today 10.05.2012)

1.1 Getting Acquainted with the British Nation

1.1.1 Introduction

„A great number of tourists came to Great Britain not just to admire the beauty of the green hills and pastures, not even to visit the place where Shakespeare was born, or the one where the Queen lives or the place where the Beatles begin their musical career. Many tourists came here because they feel close to these islands and their inhabitants, probably because they share the same language or, simply because there are so many cultures in the world similar to the British one.

The British – this mixture of Saxons, Euro Indians, Celts, Normans, Indians, Chinese, Africans, Danes and other people – found themselves today at a turning point from cultural perspective.

They are, properly, proud of their culture, of their poets and writers, politicians, scientists and other creators of social reforms that were born on these tiny islands. They treasure the spectacle of traditions offered by history. They admire the diversity of agrarian landscapes, medieval houses half build in wood and the far ranges of mountains. The British are proud of their regional chauvinism, their local, clearly differentiated dialects, and the subtle changes in the taste of the beer or the different nuances of humour from one shire to another.

However, they see themselves as a restrictive society in a modern and competitive world.”¹

To understand the English people and the way they act and behave every day, I will present you some general characteristics that define them:

Conservatorism - is the first, most obvious characteristic. In fact, the English are one of the most conservative nations. This feature – some will call it defect – tends to become annoying for outsiders but, fully accepted by the English people. It is often seen in their behaviour, in their lives, in their politics, in their clothes and food etc. „Walter Bagehot, one of the most effective writers about the English, described this characteristic and assessed its effects on life and politics most effectively, in his *Letter on the New Constitution in France and in the Aptitude of the French Character for the National Freedom* written in 1852: I fear you will laugh when I tell you what I conceived to be the most essential, mental quality of a free people, whose liberty is to be progressive, permanent and on a large scale: it is much stupidity.”²

A perfect embodiment of this characteristic is seen in the following example: „it was suggested to the keeper of a petrol-filling station that it would be a good idea to keep a stack of pieces of paper to wipe the dipsticks of cars, used to measure the engine-oil. His look of incomprehension and obstinate hostility, as he brought from

¹ Christophe Somerville, *Marea Britanie, National Geographic Traveler*, ch. Istorie și Cultură, Marea Britanie azi, Ed. National Geographic, Washington D.C., pag 10.

² Peter Bromhead, *Life in Modern Britain*, ch. The Country and the People, Ed. Longman, pag. 1.

his pocket the same old, filthy rag which he used for this purpose, ten or twenty times every hour, day after day, expressed exactly the spirit Bagehot had in mind.”³

Another possible explanation for the English conservatism is the following: „English conservatism does not imply a high degree of conformity in attitudes; rather it is distaste, arising partly out of the laziness, for any inquiry into the validity of familiar ideas or practices. English people tend to be hostile, or at least bored, when they hear any suggestions that some modification of their habits, or the introduction of something new and unknown into their lives, might be to their advantage.”⁴

English conservatism is also closely connected, at national level, with the Monarchy. The fact that the English Monarchy is the public institution with a long and uninterrupted activity influenced directly the English people and contributed to their belief in tradition and conservatism.

If we take into consideration the English daily life we will also see many proves of conservatism. For example, although many English families recognize and accept the benefices that electricity or gas may bring in their homes the old coal-fire grate will always be preferred in spite its disadvantages.

The second characteristic of the English society is **deference**. It is in fact closely related to conservatism, to social stratification and to the Monarchy.

The belief in equality of the modern society eliminated almost completely the social stratification so the old belief that some social classes are inferior to others and they must manifest deference is considered today absolute.

In what regards the relation between reverence and monarchy the subject was presented above.

The next subject discussed in this introductory part and that will help you understand better Great Britain is **a little bit of history**.

This particular fragment from the British history refers to **the colonial era** when Great Britain was recognized as a great colonial empire with vast colonial territories. It is not indeed far fetched to say that most of the modern wealth of Great Britain and England in particular is due to the rich resources of its colonies. It is also true that, in all the colonized territories and societies the next step after the conquest was the education of the colonized people of how to regard their colonists. This education included the total replacement of their habits and way of life with that of their colonists. In the same time the English people were inoculated with phrases such as: „*The Sun never sets on the British Empire; India is the brightest jewel in the British crown; Britannia rules the waves.*”⁵

Many territories across the seas, oceans and continents have been colonized by the British Empire. The most explored were of course the exotic ones such as India that,

³ Peter Bromhead, *Life in Modern Britain*, ch. The Country and the People, Ed. Longman, pag. 2.

⁴ Peter Bromhead, *Life in Modern Britain*, ch. The Country and the People, Ed. Longman, pag. 2.

⁵ Peter Bromhead, *Life in Modern Britain*, ch. Britain and the World, Ed. Longman, pag. 199.

due to its resources, was named *the pearl in the British crown*. Other famous colonies were America, Australia and New Zealand, South Africa and so on. But, the British colonial era ended when all its colonies demanded their freedom and in the years that followed gained it.

Tasks for a better understanding:

Define in a few sentences the following British features and then give some examples:

Conservatism
Reverence

Origins of names

What we call today *the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*, the official name of the British nation has passed through numerous transformations along centuries. Here are some of them:

Britain – this name was given to the British islands by the Romans.

Great Britain – first used in 1603 for the Kingdoms of England and Scotland that were ruled by the same monarch but with separate parliaments.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain – was the official title given in 1707 for a single Kingdom with one parliament.

And, finally, a more actual, official title established in 1801 after Ireland joined England, Scotland and Wales: **The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland**.

Did you know.....

In 1921 the title changed again because only the north part of Ireland remained part of the United Kingdom and now the official title is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

However, this official title creates confusion due to the association of three names. So, it is natural to ask about the difference between UK, England, Great Britain and

the British Isles. Or, if Scotland, Ireland and Wales are independent countries with their own parliament why are they forming Great Britain?

For example, many people may use the name England when they refer to the ancient Britain or even to the United Kingdom as a whole. It is not a mean intention, being rather confusion, but it may offend people from other countries of the United Kingdom. Why? Because England is only one of the four countries in Great Britain the other three being: Scotland, Wales and Ireland. In facts, the Scots and the Welsh get sometimes angry when they are referred to as ‚English‘. They do not live in England and they have their own parliaments so why should they be called English? They have their own identity.

Tasks for a better understanding:

Answer the following questions:

Which is the official title of Great Britain?

What was Britain?

What are the transformations of the official title?

What is the official language spoken in Great Britain?

What other languages or dialects are spoken on the territory of Great Britain?

UK's Geography

1.1.3.1 Less known to many Europeans are **the British Isles**. The term British Isles refers to two large islands: Great Britain and Ireland and 5000 small islands.

On the first large island, Great Britain, there are four countries: England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

This island is separated by **the second largest island - Ireland** by the Irish Sea. Ireland is, at its turn, divided into the Northern Ireland and Ireland. The causes of this separation will be presented in a separate chapter.

The other islands belonging to the British Islands are, as mentioned above, numerous. Here are **7 main islands** and some ideas about them:

1.1.3.2 The Orkney and Shetland Islands



(source: Internet. Google Images: scotia.harta.europa.com/page_harti_scotia_insulele_orkney.html. Taken today 10.05.2012)

Orkney is an archipelago of 70 islands in the N.E. of Scotland of which only twenty are inhabited.

The main island from this archipelago is **Mainland** with an area of 523.25 square kilometres. This size makes it the six largest Scottish islands. Kirkwall is a large and important settlement being also an important administrative centre. Orkney is one of the 32 council areas of Scotland being a part of the Scottish Parliament and a former county.

(source: Internet. Google Images: scotia.harta.europa.com/page_harti_scotia_harta_insulele_shetland.html. Taken today 10.05.2012)

„The chain of **Shetland islands**, the farthest and the most northern region of Great Britain, is an archipelago which covers more than 115 km, swept by the winds and without trees. The landscapes are beautiful and wild, the hospitality is extraordinary and the music is the most entertaining one from the British Islands.”⁶

What is interesting is the fact that the largest island, named ‚Mainland’ by the locals is the third largest Scottish island as size. People who visit this island are attracted by the beautiful custom and interesting musical traditions.

The main source of venue for the inhabitants of the Shetland islands are agriculture, fishing and different types of industry such as the petroleum industry or the knitwear one. Most of the products resulted from this industry are sold on the

⁶ Christophe Somerville, *Marea Britanie, National Geographic Traveler*, Shetland, Marea Britanie azi, Ed. National Geographic, Washington D.C., pag. 333.

island but also exported. They are highly appreciated all over the world for being warmly.

1.1.3.3 The Isle of Man

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://www.vacationstogo.com/cruise_port/Douglas_Isle_of_Man.cfm. Taken today 10.05.2012)

This Island has a special statute being a *self-governing Crown Dependency of the United Kingdom* – the official title and is located, as can be seen on the map, between its two bigger sister islands Great Britain and Ireland, in the Irish Sea. And, although is a self-governing Crown Dependency it is still ruled by the Queen who has the title of Lord of Mann and whose responsible for it.

The Island's Parliament – named *Tynwald* – is very similar with the British one being a bicameral structure with a *House of the Keys* that is elected by universal suffrage and a *Legislative Council* with indirect elected members. Other important official functions in the legislative of the Island are *the Council of Ministers* headed by *Chief Minister* and *the Lieutenant Governor* who has a vice royal function. There are *two official languages* on the Island of Mann: *English and Gaelic*.

1.1.3.4 Hebrides

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://scotia.harta.europa.com/page_harti_scotia_harta_hebridele.html. Taken today 10.05.2012)

The Hebrides are an archipelago near the west coast of Scotland divided into *two groups: the Inner and the Outer Hebrides*. This Archipelago has a diverse and interesting culture with Celtic and English influences.

As in the case of other islands and archipelagos the main source of income for its inhabitants are *different types of industries* such as *the crafting industry, the fishing industry, the oil industry*. Another profitable source of income for the inhabitants of Hebrides is *the tourism*.

Each of the islands of this archipelago has its own dialect as a direct result of different occupations but the main ones are the Scottish Gaelic and the English languages.

1.1.3.5 The Isle of Wright

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://www.iwight.com/images/iow_maps/ukmap.gif. Taken today 10.05.2012)

The Island of Wright was initially part of Hampshire county separate by England by a narrow channel called Solent. It is England's biggest island and in 1890 it gained its independence being now an independent, administrative county.

Many English personalities and royal faces lived on this island like the poet Alfred Lord Tennyson and Queen Victoria.

The inhabitants of this island have as their main source of income the maritime industry being renowned as boat builders. The island is also famous for the tests of Britain's space rockets.

The Isles of Scilly

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.scillyonline.co.uk/scilly.html>. Taken today 10.05.2012)

These isles are also forming an archipelago situated at the south-western part of Great Britain. They are ruled by a unitary authority council. The economy of these islands is based on trade with the continent and different economic and politic facts have shaped the nature of this trade that ranged from algae industry, ship and piloting industry, fishing to the newest type of industry flower growing. Another important source of income for the inhabitants of these islands is tourism.

1.1.3.7 ENGLAND

England has always been, for different reasons, the most renown of the United Kingdom's four countries. It is visited in all the seasons, writers have written books about it, films were made with its history as source of inspiration and the entire planet knows at least one word or sentence in English. But not just the country is famous its people and customs too. Most of them have been adopted by other people. The famous English weather has been a blessing and a curse in the same time for both English and tourists.

England has famous neighbours: Scotland to the North, Wales to the West; the Irish Sea is to the North West, the Celtic Sea to the South West, and the North Sea to the East and the famous English Channel that separate it from the continental France. There are some beautiful and famous, white cliffs there that are named: the white cliffs of Dover.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.hotels-england.co.uk/>. Taken today 10.05.2012)

England as the history books keep telling us has always been *a kingdom*. It had good and daring kings and queens that tried to enhance by all means its power and importance on the map of the world. If we study its history we will see many interesting periods of conquest and expansion, of domination and why not of continuous wealth. It is not an unknown fact that the British Empire, with England as its hart, dominated the map of the world for long periods of time. Many of today's English speaking countries have been former colonies of this empire.

The result of **England's importance** in the world is seen today in **many fields of activity**. For example: *the English language* studied all over the world as a perfect instrument of communication between different people and a perfect business tool, *the Anglican Church* recognized by all religious institutes and, not the last one, *the English law* considered by scientists and lawyers as being the basis of many countries' common law legal systems. As famous as the building itself *the English bicameral parliamentary system* has been a source of inspiration for many other European parliaments.

England's capital, **London**, is famous all over the world for its royal charm, interesting buildings, fascinating museums and monuments. It is a metropolitan and a melting pot for the entire races, city.

A visit to England is a fascinating experience because it is a country where you can easily combine the adventure and the new with tradition. It is the proper place for both the young, offering live and active cities with clubs and many offers of entertainment day and night but also for those travellers who want to study its culture. As mentioned above **the English customs** are varied and were mostly adopted in other European countries. Here are some examples:

The English tea served at 5 o'clock with little cookies and sandwiches. Its origins are Indian a far reminiscence of the colonial period but far for raising unpleasant memories it is a ritual adopted by all English families. There are many tea shops and terraces in all the English cities which expect their customers with a wide variety of tea.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://littlepieceofbritain.blogspot.com/2010/11/history-english-afternoon-tea.html>. Taken today 10.05.2012)

Did you know that.....

The afternoon tea was called in this way because it was usually served late in the afternoon. This name is the familiar one but it also had another one: *low tea* due to the place where it was served like the sitting room or the withdrawing room. Here the tea was served on low tables near the sofas or chairs. In fact, this

entire ritual with low tables and tea had an Indian origin.

There are **three types of Afternoon tea**: ***Cream Tea*** which is tea with scones (a type of cookies with jam and Devonshire or clotted cream), jam and cream; ***Full Tea*** which is tea served with savouries (tiny sandwiches or appetizers), scones, sweets and dessert; ***Tea with Milk*** which is tea combined with a few drops of milk.

The time when the tea is served is also something traditional. The English drink their tea only between five and seven o'clock in the afternoon and if you decide to drink your tea in a tea room you should know that it is served only between three and five o'clock.

Drinking tea is something so dear and traditional for the English people that they have even *tea etiquette*. Some of these *rules* are amusing so here are some of them:

"In order for one not to spill the hot liquid onto oneself, the proper way to hold the vessel of a cup with no handle is to place one's thumb at the six o'clock position and one's index and middle fingers at the twelve o'clock position, while gently raising one's pinkie up for balance.

Tea cups with a handle are held by placing one's fingers to the front and back of the handle with one's pinkie up again allows balance. Pinkie up does mean straight up in the air, but slightly tilted. It is not an affectation, but a graceful way to avoid spills. Never loop your fingers through the handle, nor grasp the vessel bowl with the palm of your hand.

Do not stir your tea, with your tea spoon, in sweeping circular motions. Place your tea spoon at the six o'clock position and softly fold the liquid towards the twelve o'clock position two or three times. Never leave your tea spoon in your tea cup. When not in use, place your tea spoon on the right side of the tea saucer. Never wave or hold your tea cup in the air. When not in use, place the tea cup back in the tea saucer. If you are at a buffet tea holds the tea saucer in your lap with your left hand and hold the tea cup in your right hand. When not in use, place the tea cup back in the tea saucer and hold in your lap. The only time a saucer is raised together with the teacup is when one is at a standing reception.

Milk is served with tea, not cream. Cream is too heavy and masks the taste of the tea. Although some pour their milk in the cup first, it is probably better to pour the milk in the tea after it is in the cup in order to get the correct amount.

When serving lemon with tea, lemon slices are preferable, not wedges. Either provide a small fork or lemon fork for your guests, or have the tea server can neatly place a slice in the tea cup after the tea has been poured. Be sure never to add lemon with milk since the lemon's citric acid will cause the proteins in the milk to curdle."⁷

⁷ <http://littlepieceofbritain.blogspot.com/2010/11/history-english-afternoon-tea.html>. Taken today 13.05.2012

Traditional English breakfast

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.topnews.in/health/why-traditional-english-breakfast-bacon-eggs-could-soon-be-history>. Taken today 10.05.2012)

What we know today as **the traditional English breakfast** was first served for the workers in order to give them strength for the day ahead. It usually contained *fried sausages, bacon, eggs, mushrooms, tomatoes, black pudding, and fried bread and would be served with a large mug of strong tea.*

Chips and fish are also an English famous dish.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.wizardrecipes.com/recipes/fish+and+chips.html>. Taken today 10.05.2012)

This type of food is today eaten in every country but its origins are English in the early 1800s. Due to the lack of other means of wrapping the chips and fish were originally served in newspapers. Today, this mean of serving is not used anymore because it is considered unhealthy due to lead poisoning.

Its origins are uncertain but it is believed that the Portuguese were the first who eat this type of food. Served either hot or cold they are a delicious type of food or the perfect prove in this regard is their spread all over the world.

Politeness at every hour of day and in every place you go. The Englishmen are known to be the most polite people.

Nationality and traditionalism are two important features of the English people. I presented these features in the introduction part.

Sports – cricket, football – are also something characteristic for the Englishmen.

Umbrella – is also an English custom. Carrying an umbrella every day became, for the Englishmen, both an etalon for elegance and a protection against the ever changing weather.

There are many other aspects for which England is famous: **museums: *Madam Taussaud, Buckingham Palace, Westminster Palace and Abbey, the interesting Stonehenge*; the English literature.** There are many famous writers known and studied all over the world: *Shakespeare, the Bronte sisters, the Romantic writers* etc.

1.1.3.8 SCOTLAND

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://go.hrw.com/atlas/norm_hm/scotland.htm. Taken today 10.05.2012)

Scotland is England's neighbour from the North. It is a very beautiful country with a rich history and many beautiful cities. Its history is as interesting and adventurous as the English one. And, as its biggest sister England, it has been a monarchy. Its geography is a beautiful alternation of mountain, hills and plains and its major cities such as Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen etc. are living pages of history.

A visit to Scotland is an unforgettable experience, a perfect blending between the past and the present.

The official language of Scotland is *English* but there are certain areas where local dialects are preserved like *the Scottish Gaelic*. An interesting fact worth mentioning is a number of 787 islands belonging to Scotland of which the most important are presented above.

A motif of pride for Scotland is its *Parliament*. Its very own existence is a great victory for the Scottish people because they did not have one in 300 years and now its presence indicates with certitude the Scottish independence. Its location is in Edinburgh and he controls every aspect related to the Scottish peoples' lives. It is also true that important areas such as defence, foreign affairs and taxes are still the responsibility of the national parliament in London.

There are many aspects related to Scotland that are familiar to Europeans such as the flag, the pipe and the tartan, beautiful castles and the fact the Queen has a permanent residence in Scotland.

Did you know that.....

The bagpipe had a long tradition in the Scottish army. Long ago, in the harsh, wild North, each clan had a piper who was considered the landmark of that clan, composing certain music for it which was played during battles, at births, deaths and marriages. Unfortunately, the recording of this type of music began very late so many beautiful compositions were lost in time.

Today, this instrument is studied in different institutions and there are beautiful shows where entire bands of bagpipers are marching and singing.

(source: Internet. Google Images

http://blog.syracuse.com/entertainment/2010/08/dance_sports_food_and_music_at.html. Taken today 10.05.2012)

Another famous feature of the Scottish culture is **the tartan** that has also a long history.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.craftmodo.com/category/tartan/>. Taken today 10.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.freefoto.com/preview/9909-08-3110/Scottish-tartan>.

Taken today 10.05.2012)

What should we know about **the tartan**?

First of all it is a woven material in different colours and patterns often used for clothes. As in the case of the pipe this type of material was originally worn especially in the Highland region of Scotland and it was an important mean of differentiating the members of different clans in a battle. It was also worn at great occasion as an important part of the national costume. This type of cloth was appreciated because it was soft and warm.

Another interesting fact that is worth mentioning is the use of this material in the women dresses. Each dress was folded in a certain pattern and it was a real pride for that girl or women to do it with their own hand which was very difficult. Nowadays the costumes are made by machines and the folding of the dresses remained a far reminiscence of the past.

Today, it kept its importance and there are different kinds of shops that display a great variety of national costumes made exclusively of this material.

The Scottish kilt is an important piece of the Scottish national costume and refers to the skirt worn both by men and the women.

(source: Internet.

Google Images: <http://www.craftmodo.com/category/tartan/><http://www.scottish-wedding-dreams.com/200809.html>.

Taken today 13.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.euroheritage.net/traditionalcostumes.shtml>. Taken today 13.05.2012)

1.1.3.9 WALES

(source: Internet. Google Images:

<http://thejournal-postman.blogspot.com/2010/04/random-travel-destinations-wales.html>. Taken today 12.05.2012)

Wales is also part of the United Kingdom but is relatively less known as the other ones. Many people know that Wales is a title accorded to the British princes

and princesses. The most known princess that had the title was Diana who's official title was Diana Princess of Wales.

Although it seems little on the map Wales has a population of 3 million. The history of this country is as tumultuous as its bigger sisters. Many migratory populations came and go from its territory and each of them influenced the Wales' culture. Among these populations the most famous were the Celtic Briton. In spite all these influences, the Wales nation has now a clear national identity.

Although the Wales nation fight for its own independence for a long time this dream did not come true and it is still annexed to England. So, all the institutions and laws from England have their equivalent in Wales.

Wales does not have the same concentration of population on the whole territory and there are only two or three main centres where the number of inhabitants is larger as is the case of **the southern cities Cardiff, Swansea and Newport** and in the north east.

Cardiff is **the capital of Wales** and is the busiest and famous city due its position as a sea port that facilitated, in the past, the development of industries such as coal, steel and copper industries. Today this type of industries are no longer functional the accent being placed on the light industry and tourism.

In what regard the official language spoken here and due to its dependence on England, Wales is bilingual both English and Wales are officially accepted languages.

As I said before, the national identity feeling is very powerful and the entire Wealth population wants to preserve its own **culture**. There approximately 580,000 Welsh speakers the rest of the population being English speakers. Another prove of the feeling of national identity is the fact that Wales is also known as the land of song due to their struggle to preserve their oral tradition such as *the eisteddfod tradition*.

The most famous sports in Wales are *football and rugby* where the Welsh teams excel in both national and international competitions. As an interesting fact related to the Welsh national identity whenever the Welsh teams participate to major, world events such as Olympic Games the Welsh delegation is part of the Great Britain one and not an individual one.

In what regards **the traditional food the Welsh cuisine** has dishes like **laverbread** that has as the main ingredient a type of algae; **bara brith** that is a type of desert, a combination between bread and fruits; **cawl** that is cooked lamb and Welsh cakes. The Welsh breakfast may include **cockles** usually served with bacon and laverbread. As in the case of other European countries and as a consequence of outside influences, we may encounter Indian, Chinese, American and other nationalities' restaurants and influences in the Welsh cuisine and cities.

Due to the particular names of the Welsh dishes I will present some images of the traditional food so that it could be better understood.

Laverbread looks like this:

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laverbread#Laverbread>. Taken today 14.05.2012)
(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laverbread#Laverbread>. Taken today 14.05.2012)

Bara brith looks like this:

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bara_brith. Taken today 14.05.2012)

Cawl looks like this:

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cawl>. Taken today 14.05.2012)

Cockles look like this:

(source: Internet. Google Images: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cockle_\(bivalve\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cockle_(bivalve)). Taken today 14.05.2012)

The Welsh national costume is very interesting and beautiful:

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.betws-y-coed.net/Welsh%20Costume/welshcostume.htm>. Taken today 14.05.2012)
(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://tropicalmoments.wordpress.com/2010/03/01/happy-st-davids-day/>. Taken today 14.05.2012)

1.1.3.10 IRELAND

Ireland is a most beautiful country, a country where most of **its symbols** are so enjoyable that have been adopted in countries all over the world. I refer to the famous *black bier drank in pubs, Irish dances* so interesting that are adored all over the world and *the colour green* that is seen everywhere you look.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ireland>. Taken today 15.05.2012)

From **geographical point of view** Ireland is the largest island of the United Kingdom. This island is divided from political point of view into two separate

countries: the Republic of Ireland that does not recognize the English authority and the Northern Ireland that does.

It is said by the travellers who visited Ireland that this island is always green no matter the season. This is true mainly because the climate on this island is a temperate one and because the colour green is a national symbol. Ireland is separated of the United Kingdom by the Irish Sea.

The Irish culture is famous all over the world due to the Irish authors, some of them internationally praised, to the famous Irish dances and music with visible Celtic influences and to food.

The Irish cuisine is influenced by the temperate climate that permitted farming and animal growing. So, *the basic ingredients of the Irish dishes are the potato, pork meat and white meat and also the salty butter.*

There are also traditional dishes such as Irish stew, Boxty that is a potato pancake and especially in the Dublin a most enjoyed dish is Coddle that is boiled, pork sausage and of course the ever present scones eaten either as desert or with stews and other dishes.

The Irish stew looks like this:

(source: Internet. Google Images:

<http://www.thedailygreen.com/healthy-eating/eat-safe/St-Patricks-Day-recipes-44030408>. Taken today 15.05.2012)

Boxty looks like this:

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.theparsleythief.com/2010/03/boxty.html>. Taken today 15.05.2012)

Coddle looks like this:

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.recipesirish.com/IrishCoddleRecipeforDublinCoddleStew.html>. Taken today 15.05.2012)

And finally **the scones**:

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/3870/scones>. Taken today 15.05.2012)
(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.tescorealfood.com/recipes/scones.html>. Taken today 15.05.2012)

The traditional Irish clothes look like this:

(source: Internet. Google Images:
<http://www.sewwickedpatterns.com/product/bonnie-lass-irish-lady-costume-pattern-simplicity-8855-oop>.
Taken today 15.05.2012)
(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://tunbridgewellsdressmaker.wordpress.com/>. Taken today 15.05.2012)

Another traditional feature of the Irish people and also famous all over the world due to the dancers' skills and spectacular movements are *the Irish dances*:

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://www.fnal.gov/pub/today/archive_2005/today05-08-05.html.
Taken today 15.05.2012)
(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.londondancewear.com/blog/?p=1094>. Taken today 15.05.2012)

Tasks for a better understanding:

What are the British Isles?
Which are the British Isles?
What are England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland?
What made each of the islands famous?
What are the following: *five o'clock tea, scones, bagpipe, tartan, boxty*?
Enumerate some of the English customs.
Describe the traditional Scottish outfit.
Choose one of the four cultures – English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish and talk about it.

1.2 A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

As we all know Great Britain had a fascinating history and the fact that it also has been a great Empire with many territories across seas and continents enhance this fame further on. Each of the four constituent countries is unique and each has its own history with battles and proud rulers. I presented in this chapter only two episodes of history that I considered significant for the students.

England is a country famous all over the world for its history, culture, civilization and hospitality. Its capital, London, is famous for its parks, palaces, museums and especially for being the place from where the Queen rules and lives.

I started with a short presentation of some key figures and events from the English history and made my way to the present day.

The other part of this chapter brings a little light to the Irish conflict because it played an important role in the Irish history and influenced the present division of this country.

1.2.1 The Royal England

The English Monarchy has always been a source of inspiration for numerous films, documentaries and public interest due to its continuity and glamour and also because, in people minds a king or queen will always be more interesting than a president or other head of state. The simple fact that not only England but also the entire Great Britain had an uninterrupted line of kings and queens enhanced the attraction this island manifest on people.

England had many dynasties of kings and queens along time so the emphasis will be put on only the most important ones.

The presentation of the British monarchy will start with the **Tudor Dynasty** more exactly with two important characters: **Henry the VIIIth** and **Elisabeth the First**.

The Tudor Dynasty or more exactly the House of Tudor was one of the most famous from the history of the Kingdom of England.

In fact, „the Tudor dynasty was a family business, very compact formed by Henry the VIIth, his son Henry the VIIIth and three grandsons Edward the Vth, Mary the First and Elisabeth the First. The first two who initiated and ended this dynasty, the old man and the youngest of his granddaughters resembled a lot – calculated and competent, daring and skilled, fearless in assuming risks but cautiously looking over their shoulder. The Tudor dynasty ruled over a century. But what a glorious century! During this epoch peace set up in the country and a new religious movement appeared in Great Britain.

Adventurers navigated around the world, established colonies in the New World, defeated the Spanish maritime power and founded the British Empire in India.”⁸

The first monarch, the founder of this House, was Henry the VIIIth – a descendent through his mother of the royal house of Lancaster.

⁸ Christophe Somerville, *Marea Britanie, National Geographic Traveler*, Shetland, Marea Britanie azi, Ed. National Geographic, Washington D.C., pag. 29

The famous symbol of the Lancaster House – a red rose appeared everywhere during the reign of this House on churches, roofs, on walls or the bricks of the terraces.

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_Rose_of_Lancaster.
Taken today 13.05.2012)

Equally famous was **the white rose of the York House**:



(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.wilderspin.net/School%20stuff/Tudors/Wars%20of%20Roses.html>.
Taken today 13.05.2012)

Both Houses were involved in several wars that lasted many years and caused many deaths on both sides. After the end of these wars the new Tudor House (named after the new elected king) adopted as **their heraldic image a combination between the two roses**.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.wilderspin.net/School%20stuff/Tudors/Wars%20of%20Roses.html>.
Taken today 13.05.2012)

Did you know.....

The famous **Wars of the Roses** were dynastic wars that implicated two royal houses: the House of Plantagenet and the House of York. Although this name is apparently innocent, the wars were bloody involving the lost of many members of the aristocratic families of that time. The goal of these two Houses was the English throne. The final victory belonged to a Plantagenet claimant Henry Tudor who defeated the Richard III of the House of York. To bring peace and to end the everlasting conflict between the two Houses he decided to marry Elizabeth of York and in this way both Houses ruled England for 117 years.

The name of these wars was given by the heraldic signs of these two royal families: the red Rose for the Lancaster family and the white Rose for the York family.

There are **five male monarchs** from the dynasty that set on the throne of England.

Here are some historic figures that influenced, one way or another, the epoch in which they lived.

1.2.1.1 HENRY THE VIIIth

„Fashion forms kings, as it impose clothes and determines customs. During the Middle Age, a suitable king had to be gallant, chivalrous, sever and pious; during Renaissance a great prince is dissolute, educated, magnificent and often cruel. Henry the VIIIth had all these characteristics, but in an English manner, that is his license remained conjugal, his education was both technologic and sportive, his magnificence neatly, his cruelty legally faultless. So, with all his crimes, he remained a popular sovereign for his vassals. [...]”⁹

„When Henry the VIIIth became sovereign, in 1509, he was eighteen years old. He was a beautiful athlete, very content with himself, excellent archer, tennis champion, great rider who finished 10 horses in a single day of hunting. He had literary taste, studying in the same time both theology and romantic literature; he composed poems, and wrote his music of his own hymns and sang ‘Godly’ from lute. Erasmus, who knew him from childhood, noticed his precocious intelligence. [...] We must add that he was very pious and that his friends from Oxford strengthen his respect for the catholic religion.”¹⁰

Henry the VIIIth was also famous for his **six wives** – **Catherine of Aragon** was his first wife and also his first divorce, **Anne Boleyn** his beloved wife ended decapitated, **Jane Seymour** - dies during childbirth, **Anne de Clèves** – his second divorce. He did not dare to decapitate her because, during that period, the relation between England and France were good and he had no intention to break them. So he send her back to France; **Catherine Howard** – his next wife did not have the same fortune and she was decapitated too; **Catherine Parr** was his last wife and lived long after his death.

The other reason for his fame was his excommunication by the Pope. The main cause for this drastic measure was Henry the VIIIth’s decision to divorce his first wife – Catherine of Aragon – and marry his second choice as wife Anne Boleyn. The king’s argument for the divorce was that Catherine could not succeed in giving him a boy to ensure the dynasty succession. The real cause, known by everybody, but not speak loudly, was that Henry got bored of Catherine and wanted something new.

The next step after his divorce was to publicly announce a total rupture of the Pope, and in the same time, to force the English parliament to vote the so-called **Supremacy Act** that consecrated the King as the only supreme chief of the English church of England and finally the **Succession Act** which cancelled his first marriage, deprived the resulting children of their legal rights to the Crown favouring in this way the future children of Anne Boleyn and forced his subjects to accept the religious validity of the divorce.

⁹ André Maurois, *Istoria Angliei*, vol.I, Ed. Politica, Bucuresti, 1970, pag. 288-289

¹⁰ André Maurois, *Istoria Angliei*, vol.I, Ed. Politica, Bucuresti, 1970, pag. 289-290

“It is hard, when we study the reign of Henry the VIIIth to avoid a feeling of horror. In vain, it is said that he reorganized the fleet, he constructed arsenals, he annexed Welsh and silenced Ireland. Not a single worldly success can justify the scaffolds from the Tower and the piles from Smithfield. It was said, as a justification that this terrible surplises did not affected than a small minority. Anyway, this amount of cruelty could not be necessary.”¹¹

Tasks for a better understanding:

Define the English Monarchy.

Which was the most famous English dynasty?

Who was Henry the VIIIth?

Talk about him

Which were the two royal Hoses from the text above?

Which were their symbols?

Talk about the War of the Roses

Which are six wives of Henry the VIIIth and what happened with each of them?

1.2.1.2 The Elizabethan Age

“Elizabeth’s ascension on the throne was received by the English people with unanimous joy. Since the Norman Conquest, no sovereign had English blood so pure. Through her father, Elizabeth descended from traditional kings and through her mother from the nobles of the country. During her reign, she searched to win the people’s sympathy.”¹²

“[...] Elizabeth was powerful because she has been loved or at least preferred. When she was menaced by a Spanish invasion she summoned not an accountant, not the chief of the army (she did not have one), but the lord-mayor of London. She asked fifteen ships and five thousand people. He said that London would be happy to offer her majesty ten thousand people. Almost the entire Kingdom proved the same loyalty. In a time when almost all the Kingdoms of Europe were separated by religious arguments or controlled by terror, Elizabeth liked to show ambassadors that she could be certain of her subjects. She passed with her carriage in the middle of the crowd; she stood up and talked with the people surrounding her.”¹³

The Elizabethan Era remained famous for many aspects of the public life such as clothes, theatre, arts and architecture, naval expansions, developing of the mathematics and sciences.

The Elizabethan society, more exactly the upper classes, had the same tendencies as their sovereigns.

¹¹ André Maurois, *Istoria Angliei*, vol.I, Ed. Politica, Bucuresti, 1970, pag. 303

¹² André Maurois, *Istoria Angliei*, vol.I, Ed. Politica, Bucuresti, 1970, pag. 303

¹³ André Maurois, *Istoria Angliei*, vol.I, Ed. Politica, Bucuresti, 1970, pag. 317

Henry the VIIIth was one of the kings of this era, who particularly liked to wear rich materials such as silk and lace and he wore more jewelry than the court's ladies. He even enacted a set of rules regarding clothes that differentiated the Nobles from the poor.

In what regards the women clothes the dresses were as rich and embroidered as the outfits of the men. The general tendencies in dress matter referred to an overskirt that had a V shape in the middle and exposed the material beneath.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.elizabethanenglandlife.com/elizabethan-era-clothing-law-for-women.html>. Taken today 10.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://karenswhimsy.com/elizabethan-clothing.shtm>. Taken today 10.05.2012)

Another aspect of the Tudor's clothes was **the make-up**. The ones who used this make-up, more exactly white powder, were the nobles. They thought their faces looked more attractive in this way and it was the perfect solution to cover certain unpleasant features and traces of diseases. Other much-appreciated accessories, used mostly by women, were the lipstick and the strong perfumes used to cover the fact that they did not wash themselves often.

Important parts of the Tudor's outfits were **the wigs**. In the case of the nobility, the wig was much elaborated full of curls, laces, and jewelry worn both by men and women.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.bellasugar.com/History-Red-Hair-18437675?slide=5>. Taken today 10.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://aevans.hubpages.com/hub/Elizabethan-Era-Vs-The-21st-Century>. Taken today 10.05.2012)

In fact, even today, a far reminiscence of this piece of clothes, still exist and is still used, at a much-reduced scale by the English barristers.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://beo-businessenglishonline.wikispaces.com/Legal+matters>. Taken today 10.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://englishpeoplelike.tumblr.com/>. Taken today 10.05.2012)

Do you know that.....

The English noblemen had some specific devices, under the form of ivory or wooden sticks, very elaborated as shape, that were used to scratch themselves on the heads, under the wigs. The scope of these sticks was to preserve the shape and design of the wigs. It is a demonstrated fact that the upper classes, beneath their glamour were often infected with flees. The wigs were the perfect solution to hide their haircut that was short to prevent infestation.

Another characteristic of the clothes during the Tudor and Elizabethan periods were **the collars** that became more and more extended and raised towards the head that they even sustained the back part of the wigs and in this way they undertook a part of the wigs' weight. They were made from a rigid structure; the more common used material was the wale bones, covered with different fine materials such as veil and lace.

The Elizabethan clothes continued the same tradition and even took it to the extremes.

A new object of clothes appeared for the accentuation of the shoulders and hips – **the corset**.

It was made from whalebones, covered by silk and lace and ended at the back by laces.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://ladymake.hubpages.com/hub/Do-it-Yourself-Elizabethan-Corset>. Taken today 16.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images:

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Corset_droit_devant_en_lasting_de_laine.gif . Taken today 16.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.costumes.org/history/100pages/18thcors.htm>. Taken today 16.05.2012)

Did you know that.....

The Elizabethan corset had a huge success mainly because it gracefully hid the kilograms accumulated by excessive food narrowing the waist. Especially the men and women from the nobility who had at their disposal an abundance of food enthusiastically adopted it. However, it had also some negative effects especially on their health because, in their desire to prove to the rest of the society that they followed the trends of their Queen, they exaggerated and they narrowed it so much that fainting was a common phenomenon.

In fact, it was of bon ton for a high society woman to faint from time to time this state allowing the gentlemen around her to offer their assistance.

From the beauty arsenal of an Elizabethan woman a small, decorated recipient

was always accompanying field with some powerful smelling substances for this particular situation. And, in most of the cases, fainting or pretending to faint were the perfect solutions to get out honorably from different embarrassing situations.

In sharp contrast with the narrow waist the rest of the women dresses were so large and elaborated that they often need larger doors to enter a room. The accessories of such dresses, like small or bigger jewelries, pieces of lace, bows, and expensive materials, were as important and necessary as the dress itself because they showed the status and wealth of that woman. Needless to say that a woman from the high society was obligated by the customs of the society to change for different events of that day like meals, afternoon parties, or staying indoor, hunting etc. Getting dressed for a particular occasion often took half a day because the dresses were so elaborated that many persons were necessary for this situation.

A last element of torture for these dresses that conferred them largeness and elegance were some three or four rigid circles that were attached to those dresses and prevented them to lose their shape. Unfortunately, this made sitting on chairs or sofas particularly tricky.

A Victorian dress looked like this:

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://yourvintagewedding.com/elizabethanera.php>. Taken today 16.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.itraveluk.co.uk/photos/showphoto/photo/907.php>. Taken today 16.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://yourvintagewedding.com/elizabethanera.php>. Taken today 16.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.itraveluk.co.uk/photos/showphoto/photo/907.php>. Taken today 16.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images:

<http://www.elizabethanenglandlife.com/clothing-in-elizabethan-england.html>. Taken today 16.05.2012)

Tasks for a better understanding:

Who was Elizabeth the First?

Talk about the Elizabethan Era using the information from the text above.

What other fields made the Elizabethan Era famous?

Characterize Elizabeth the First using the text above.

Talk about the Elizabethan people.

1.2.1.3 The Elizabethan Theatre

(source: Internet. Google Images. <http://www.oldpuzzles.com/Examples/detail.php?id=2052&tag=25>.
Taken today 16.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.elizabethan-era.org.uk/elizabethan-theatre.htm>.
Taken today 16.05.2012)

During the Elizabethan Era, the theatre was one of the most famous forms of entertainment. Many theatre companies appeared and there was a great competition between them. Most companies started as itinerant one going from place to place, town to town and castle to castle. The actors playing in the plays constituted a special social category highly appreciated for their performance, but having a bad behavior. These companies participated to all major events of the county and they gain lots of money for their performances; their success was mainly bases on the peoples' naivety. Once a company acquired enough recognition and money, they chose a major city and established there.

Among the most famous theatrical companies and having, a huge success to the public was **the Globe theatre**.

The history of this theatre is a fascinating one. Its beginnings go back in the history and it was established that the Globe building was raised on the ruins of a much older, ruined theatre. At first, the theatre had no name being only called *Theatre*. It was called latter on the Globe because the shape of the building was round. This shape was chosen and preferred because the seats were placed in amphitheater and the spectators had a better view of the scene. The Globe was the biggest theatre of its time.

The original Globe theatre was in London and it was built in 1599 on the Southbank of the river Thames. At its construction were used materials accessible at that time and this mean wood.

In fact, the performers of the Globe theatre considered more important the clothes and the backstage that brought many visitors and finances than their safety and the one of the building itself. Therefore, the accidents and the fires more or less significant were a common feature. However, on June 29 1613, a devastating fire destroyed almost all the Globe theatre and it was abandoned.

Today, for the entertainment of the public an identical replica of the theatre was built and the spectacles begin again.

1.2.1.4 William Shakespeare

(source: Internet. Google Images:

http://www.allgreatquotes.com/top_ten_william_shakespeare_quotes.shtml. Taken today 19.05.2012)

One of the most famous names related to the Globe theatre is that of William Shakespeare.

“The family were the most skilled artisan of the words was born had nothing out of the ordinary. William’s father, John Shakespeare, married a woman of a better status than his, as he was the son of a humble peasant from Snitterfield, not far from Stratford-upon-Avon, and the mother Mary Arden, was the daughter of a farmer from Wilmcote. At the death of her father, Mary had a good material situation, with a house and land. In less than a year, John Shakespeare married her and started a trade with gloves and wool products, advancing on the social scale and prospering to become a bourgeois city Counselor and High Usher of Stratford.

William was the third child of the family’s eight children. His real birthday is unknown but since he was baptized on April 26 1564, he was celebrated on the Saint George Day - April 23, the protector saint of England. As a coincidence, this is also the date of his death in 1616. Most of his childhood remains unknown but it is believed that his love for the theatre began after he saw the performances of a strolling theatre company that visited from time to time his town.

A prolific writer

In 1582, at the age of 18, Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway, the daughter of a farmer. The two had a son and two daughters. Between 1585 and 1592, William Shakespeare left Stratford (probably with itinerant singer band) for London to become actor, producer, manager, and playwright. He progressed quickly until 1597; he was accepted at the Globe Theatre on the Southbank of the river Thames, in a poor but very active area of Southwark. Six years later already known and paid from patronages, Shakespeare himself became the main sponsor of the royal theatre’s troupe, the King’s Men.

Meanwhile, the plays flew from his pen, 37 per ensemble, poems from the overwhelming sonnets to a number of historic-classical stories written to thank the sponsors. His famous plays are *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *the Tempest* etc.

Until 1610, Shakespeare was prolific. He sold the Globe Theatre and moved back to Stratford-upon-Avon, where he died six years later. He was probably still unknown beyond the world of the theatre so only in 1623 his plays were published in a folio edition.

Almost a century later, a general interest for Shakespeare surfaced and in the second half of the XVIIIth century, the actor David Garrick raised the interest for the life and work of the best dramatist of all times.”¹⁴

Tasks for a better understanding:

Talk about the Elizabethan theatres.

What is the Globe?

How did the Globe look like? What was he made from?

How did it disappear?

Who was William Shakespeare?

How many plays did he wrote?

Where were they played?

Enumerate some of his most famous plays.

1.2.1.5 Elizabethan Architecture

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://adsl-63-195-87-212.dsl.snfc21.pacbell.net/~dev/England/part1/page8.html>. Taken today 19.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://www.shafe.co.uk/art/tudor_15_-_the_elizabethan_courtier_house.asp. Taken today 19.05.2012)

The Elizabethan Architecture was also dominated by the exact sciences so the style of the buildings is a very symmetrical and clear one. There is a current, recurrent theme in all Elizabethans homes: a long corridor from one side of the building to another. On the left and the right sides of the corridor are the family rooms: the kitchen on the left and the living room on the right. Almost all the houses from this period are painted in black and white. The gardens were usually found near the mansions and the castles of the rich families. Here too, the mathematical, geometrical rules were applied.

1.2.1.6 Elizabethan Literature

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://englishliteraturespot.blogspot.com/2011/04/elizabethan-era-literature.html>. Taken today 20.05.2012)

¹⁴ Christopher Somerville, *Marea Britanie*, William Shakespeare, Ed National Geographic, Washington D.C., pag. 188-189

Each period of history had its favorite method of entertaining. For example, during the Middle Age, the public enjoyed immensely the miracle plays and the mysteries while to the end of the Middle Age the tastes change again and the knights and ladies, kings and queens are the main actors in the minstrels' songs. As time passes by the public also changes it became more distinguished and refined so the Elizabethan authors had a difficult task that of creating fine pieces of art. The literary genres that are preferred during this period are the dramas and not any type of drama but those where the blood and violence. The field of comedy was also enjoyed especially those written by Sir Edmund Spenser and Sir Philip Sidney.

Here is a list a list of the most representative authors of this period: W. Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, Ben Jonson, Edmund Spenser, Thomas Kyd etc.

Tasks for a better understanding:

How does the Elizabethan houses look like?

How is structured an Elizabethan house?

What literary genres are preferred during the Elizabethan Era?

Enumerate some of the most representatives' authors of this period.

Chose an Elizabethan author and make a short description of his person and literary activity.

1.2.1.7 The English Royal family today

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://www.historyguy.com/worldbiography/british_royal_family.htm. Taken today 20.05.2012)

The English Royal family is among the best-known families in the world. Everybody knows something about the Queen Elizabeth, about Princess Diana or other members of the royal family.

Their lives, public or private, have always been of general interest for people all over the world.

So, let us meet **the Royal Family**:

The first member and the most important of this Family is **Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second**.

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://www.historyguy.com/worldbiography/british_royal_family.htm. Taken today 20.05.2012)

She is the supreme ruler of Great Britain and the constitutional monarch of 16 sovereign states and the Supreme Governor of the Church of England.

The year 1947 marks her Royal Wedding with Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. They have four children: Charles, Anne, Andrew, and Edward. Neither of them was happy in their private lives. Charles and Andrew were the most notorious one because both of them have pompous weddings enjoyed by millions of viewers all over the world and their divorces brought shock and scandal in the Royal Family. This sudden exposure of the royal members' private lives made Queen Elizabeth very unhappy because she always wanted to show Great Britain and the world the image of a united and happy family and this image was shattered after these unhappy events. To continue the series of misfortunes, Princess Anne also divorced and in 1997, a terrible tragedy affected the Royal Family and shook the world: Princess Diana died in a car crash in Paris.

Despite all the problems in her family, Queen Elizabeth continued to rule Great Britain with the same grace and wisdom, being an active monarch involved in the government of her country. Her reign is the second in length after that of Queen Victoria.

Being the Queen of Great Britain, Elisabeth the Second has a very busy program every day. Her work varies from public duties such as ceremonies, receptions and state visits to other important matters such as answering the people's letters, official papers and briefing notes, audiences with different personalities, state members, presidents or analyzing different laws send to her by the English parliament.

Do you know that.....

No matter in which Royal Residence or country, on the territory of Great Britain, the Queen might be she is in permanent contact with the parliament and her briefcase with different state documents permanently accompanies her.

Here is the Queen's working program

The Queen's daily program, as the one of any common person, starts at her office. The first task of the day, after being brought up to day with the English newspapers, is the checking of her correspondence. The Queen reads all the letters she receives and then she tells her staff how to answer them.

The following hours after that are dedicated to official meetings and audiences that are no longer than 10 or 20 minutes.

At lunchtime, she meets with her husband and they generally serve the lunch together. In spite, what most people might think the lunch served by Queen Elisabeth is a simple one and not the lavish banquets served by the sovereigns before her. These rather frugal meals of the Queen also apply to breakfast that is more or less a traditional English breakfast.

There are many cases when the family members are invited for informal lunches at her official residence.

Her schedule continues without a break in the afternoon.

The Queen, being a public personality and the Head of the Royal Family, often attends different public meetings. The planning of these visits is the one of her staff's duties and their main task is that everything goes smoothly so both sides be content. They include certain official inaugurations and visits to schools and hospitals.

The Queen circles often so the former carriages became uncomfortable on long distances and as the Queen is not allowed to have her own private car she often uses the RAF helicopters and aircrafts when she travels abroad. If she has to a certain place in London or somewhere near it she uses the official cars. Certain carriages are still in use but only for family events such as weddings and funerals.

The evenings or, more exactly a few hours, are generally reserved for the weekly meetings with the Prime Minister who gave her detailed information about the parliament's activity.

This meeting is a very strict one and it involves only the Queen and the Prime Minister and nobody else. It is always fixed on Wednesdays at 6.30 p.m.

The Queen's evenings do not mean only work. Many receptions more or less formal take place at Buckingham Palace in the honor of different officials or personalities.

How to salute a British sovereign

Saluting a sovereign has always been a laborious and ceremonious process especially in the past when this was the perfect way for a subject to prove his respect for his or her sovereign. It generally implied lots of steps and deep courtesies. Today, all this ceremonial simplified a lot and nothing remained from the formal ritual. There are no rules and regulation written in any protocol about how to salute or even address to the Queen. It has been settled, however, that a simple courtesy should be

enough to show Her Majesty someone's respect. This courtesy is different to men and women. For men it implies a neck bow and for women a simple curtsy. In what regards the formal address to the Queen it is used generally 'Your Majesty'.

Royal Ceremonies and Pageantry involving the Queen

England is, by definition, a country where traditions and ceremonies are strictly preserved due to its statue of monarchy. London, its capital, makes no exception. There are two major ceremonies, known and enjoyed by people all over the world due to their close connection with royalty: **The Trooping of the Color** and the famous **Changing of the Guards**.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/trooping.html>. Taken today 20.05.2012)

The first ceremony, **The Trooping of the Color**, takes place only once a year, on her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the IInd's birthday. It is an event expect with great pleasure by all Englishmen. It is in fact a military parade when the Royal Guard parade and salute their Queen in their famous red and black uniforms. It always takes place in June.

The name of this parade has its ruts in history as the flag was trooped in front of the soldiers so that they could easily recognize it during battles. The Colors are divided into two categories: **the Foot Guards** and **the Household Cavalry** that both parade in front of the Queen.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://forums.military.com/eve/forums/a/tpc/f/6011994136/m/3950048222001>. Taken today 20.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.britainexpress.com/attractions.htm?attraction=2500>. Taken today 20.05.2012)

The second ceremony is even more fatuous than the first: **the Changing of the Guards at the Buckingham Palace**.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://blog.travelpod.com/travel-photo/teresatraveler/1/1282395773/the-changing-of-the-guards.jpg/tpod.html>. Taken today 20.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/media/68685/The-changing-of-the-guard-at-Buckingham-Palace-London>. Taken today 20.05.2012)

Did you know that....

The Royal British Army has **5 regiments: the Grenadier Guards, the Coldstream Guards, the Scots Guards, the Irish Guards, and the Welsh Guards.**

Of course, people are more familiar with the so-called *Queen's Guards* the ones that permanently guard the exits and the inns of Buckingham Palace.

Each of these regiments has similar colors on their uniforms black, red and white so the only ways to distinguish them are the buttons.

At the Grenadier Guards the buttons are arranged in a single continuous row

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://armyancestry.blogspot.com/2012/03/identifying-guards.html>.

Taken today 20.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://www.northeastmedals.co.uk/british_guards_regiment/coldstream_guards.htm.

Taken today 20.05.2012)

At the Coldstream Guards the buttons are arranged in pairs with a small space between them

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://armyancestry.blogspot.com/2012/03/identifying-guards.html>.

Taken today 20.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.generalmonck.com/page3.htm>. Taken today 20.05.2012)

At the Scots Guards the buttons are arranged in groups of three with spaces between them

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://armyancestry.blogspot.com/2012/03/identifying-guards.html>.

Taken today 20.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Scots-Guards-Cap-Badge.jpg>.

Taken today 20.05.2012)

At the Irish Guards the buttons are grouped in four buttons

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://armyancestry.blogspot.com/2012/03/identifying-guards.html>.

Taken today 20.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Irish_Guards.png. Taken today 20.05.2012)

At the Welsh Guards the buttons are sets of five buttons with spaces between them

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://armyancestry.blogspot.com/2012/03/identifying-guards.html>. Taken today 20.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://www.judgeslodging.org.uk/events/freedom_of_the_county_to_the_welsh_guards/. Taken today 20.05.2012)

As we all know there are guards all the time at every exit of the Buckingham Palace. However, when the Queen is inside the Palace this place is the best-guarded place from the United Kingdom. Their uniform became an iconic image for the rest of the world: a scarlet tunic with dark, blue trousers and the famous real bearskin hats.

They have all the same height and their training is very strict. So, to the natives and visitors delight who often like to harass them, when the guards occupy their designated places at the Palace doors and exits, they stand so still that are almost like statues.

Do you know that....

The famous bearskins hats that make the Royal Guards so recognizable by everybody are made from the real bearskin of the Canadian bears are 47.7 cm in height and are very havy. Their original purpose was to make the soldiers look more intimidating and taller on the battlefields.

Other members of the Royal Family

As any other usual family, the British Royal Family has also a family name: **Saxe-Coburg-Gotha**. This named showed the German origin of the family however during the World War One due to the general hate for the Germans the Royal Family decided to change their name so they could respect the British people feelings and they adopted the name Windsor in 1917 after another royal residence.

Among the European royal families the British one is the less numerous with only eleven members closely related. Here are the main ones:

The **second as importance** in the royal family is **His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburg** more exactly **the Queen's husband**.

The **third as importance** and the future heir to the throne is **the Prince of Wales and the Duchess or Cornwall**. (Prince Charles and Princess Camilla)

The fourth as importance is **Prince William of Wales** and his wife **Princess Catherine of Wales**

The fifth as importance is **Prince Henry of Wales**.

The six is **Princess Royal Anne** – the Queen's first daughter

The seventh is **the Duke of York Prince Andrew** – the Queen's second son

The eight are **the Earl and the Countess of Wessex** – the Queen's third son

The ninth are **the Duke and the Duchess of Gloucester** –

the Queen's cousin and his wife

The tenth are **the Duke and the Duchess of Kent** –

the Queen's cousin and his wife

Finally, there is **Princess Alexandra** – the Queen's cousin

1.2.2 THE IRISH CONFLICT

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Troubles. Taken today 21.05.2012)

I chose this subject because most of the students do not understand why Ireland has two names: the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. So next, it will be presented a short and simple to understand history of this conflict.

This conflict has also the name ***The Troubles***. Unlike other conflicts it did not had a beginning and an end, a perfect prove of this being the fact that there are still problems in the area even today, and it engulfed both England and some parts of Europe.

Its **basic ruts** of this conflict were **nationalist and religious ones** but it later on implied also **political and military** dimensions.

For start, we must know that in Ireland there are two important **religions**: **the Protestant Unionist** and the **Roman Catholic one**. They soon entered into conflict because **the Catholic Irish** believed that once Ireland gained independence of the British rule they should have their own government and take their own decisions without any exterior influences. Therefore, they considered themselves as **nationalists**. On the other side of this conflict are **the Protestant Irish** who consider that the British rule in Ireland is something benefic for their people and should continue. For this belief, they were named **loyalists**.

The Irish Conflict had a **nationalist** aspect too because the Northern Ireland began to question its status in relation with the United Kingdom especially after the rest of Ireland succeeded in gaining self-governing as the Irish Free State. In 1949, it became

an independent republic. This situation further inflamed the spirits and soon the things badly degenerated into violence. The armed, paramilitary groups of the Irish republicans and Ulster loyalist began an acerb campaign against what they considered the English rule in the Northern Ireland. The most violent paramilitary group was and still is the Provisional Irish Republican Army or shortly called IRA whose bloody fame crossed the borders of Ireland and became known all over the world. Their main objective is to unite Ireland and Northern Ireland from political point of view. On the other side, the opponents of IRA are the British Army and Royal Ulster Constabulary. Unfortunately, not even today the situation is not clear.

Tasks for a better understanding:

Name some members of the royal family.
What do you know about Queen Elizabeth the second?
How do you salute and address a Queen?
What are the Trooping of the Color and the Changing of the Guard?
Name the five regiments of the Royal Guard and say something about them.
What started the Irish conflict?
What other name had the Irish conflict?
Who were the nationalists the Irish conflict? What about the loyalists?
Which were the three aspects of the Irish conflict?
What is IRA?
Find out more about it.

Auto evaluation Test Nr. 1

Time to solve the test: **15 min.**

Points: **100**

Speaking task

Why tourists are visiting Great Britain?

To speak English

To see the monuments and the buildings

Because they feel close to these islands and their inhabitants

(5p)

What is conservatorism?

A characteristic

A defect
Something to take with you

(5p)

With what is associated deference?

Politics
Monarchy
Social stratification

(5p)

Which is the official name of Great Britain?

Britain
Great Britain
The United Kingdom of Great Britain
The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

(5p)

What type of geographical forms constitutes Great Britain?

Islands
Continents
Mountains

(5p)

Who were Henry the VIIIth and Elizabeth the First?

English kings and queens
Presidents
Prime-ministers

(5p)

What were the symbols of the two House of York and Lancaster?

Thistle
Roses
Daffodils

(5p)

Who was William Shakespeare?

A scenarist
A reporter
A writer

(5p)

What was IRA?

A rock band
A paramilitary organization
A dance formation

(5p)

Chose a key figure, event, or country and make a short presentation.

(55p)

Minimal Bibliography

1. Present course
2. General knowledge

Solutions and recommendations:

Put a check mark at the correct answer at exercises 1 to 9. Ex.: 1 - ✓
At exercise number ten, the personal contributions will be marked better than the inspiration from the net.
These points will count at the final evaluation.

UNIT 2 SYMBOLS OF UNITED KINGDOM

2.1 Symbols associated with Great Britain

- 2.1.1 Flags and floral emblems
- 2.1.2 Double Deck Busses
- 2.1.3 Red Telephone Cabins
- 2.1.4 The Royal Family
- 2.1.5 Palaces
- 2.1.6 British Parliament
- 2.1.7 The London Eye
- 2.1.8 Beefeaters
- 2.1.9 The Black Cabs

UNIT 2 SYMBOLS OF UNITED KINGDOM

2.1 Symbols associated with Great Britain

When we say Great Britain immediately a web of symbols that can be found on its territory came in our minds. What I want to remember you here, in this chapter, are the most recognizable symbols related to Great Britain. Some of the symbols that will be presented here have been previously detailed so I will just mention them.

So, let's get started:

2.1.1 Flags and floral emblems

The Flag of Great Britain is known by the entire world. However, what are perhaps less known are the individual flags of each county and their names.



(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/questions/flag.html>. Taken today 12.06.2012)

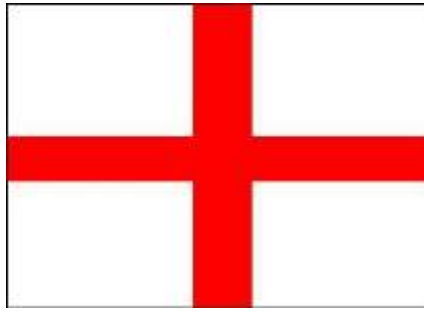
The British flag is affectionately named Union Jack. In it, we can see a combination of the three British countries: Scotland, England, and Ireland.

Scotland adopted as the Patron Saint St. Andrew. Therefore, it was natural to place on their flag the symbol of this saint: the Saint Andrew's Cross and to give his name to the flag.



(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.flagsinformation.com/scottish-country-flag.html>. Taken today 12.06.2012)

It happened many times that the British flag to be associated with England. The true **English flag** is named St George flag because this saint is the Patron Saint of England.



(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.englishsolutionsblog.com/?p=181>. Taken today 12.06.2012)

Ireland has in fact two flags: the **Flag of Northern Ireland** looks like this:



(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://wpp.greenwichmeantime.com/time-zone/europe/uk/flag/index.htm>. Taken today 12.06.2012)

and **the Republic of Ireland** flag looks like this:



(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://libraryquestions.blogspot.ro/2012/03/normal-0-false-false-false.html>. Taken today 12.06.2012)

To clarify things the Northern Irish flag is found in the British flag. The Patron Saint of both Ireland and Northern Ireland is St. Patrick.

In addition, a fourth flag does not appear in the British flag. The dragon found on the **Welsh flag** does not appear in the British flag because when the Union flag was first constituted Wales was already united with England and adopted the English one. The situation remained unchanged to the present day but the Welsh nation does have a flag and it looks like this. The Patron Saint of Wales is St. David.



(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/geography/unionjack5.html>. Taken today 12.06.2012)

Each of the four countries that constitute Great Britain also has a floral emblem:

England has as floral emblem the rose. This choice is justified by the double rose that has been the symbol of the most important dynasty from England that of the Tudors.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/questions/flowers.html>. Taken today 12.06.2012)

Scotland has in fact not one but two floral emblems. One is the thistle and the other one is the Scottish Bluebell. The thistle was chosen because its physical aspect evoked the defense against enemies.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/questions/flowers.html>. Taken today 12.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://www.botanicalcutouts.co.uk/photo_2646016.html. Taken today 12.06.2012)

Wales has as floral emblem **the daffodil** also named **leek**:

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/questions/flowers.html>. Taken today 12.06.2012)

Ireland and Northern Ireland have as floral emblem **the shamrock**.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/questions/flowers.html>.
Taken today 12.06.2012)

2.1.2 Double Deck Busses

These types of buses are seen especially in London and have two variants:
The normal double decks, as they are commonly named, are used to transport people between different locations and look like this:

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/questions/london/buses.htm>.
Taken today 12.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.onthebuses.net/forum/viewtopic.php?f=20&t=1483>.
Taken today 12.06.2012)

2.1.3 The Red Telephone Cabins

These cabins are also a symbol of Great Britain and especially of England.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/questions/symbols.html>.
Taken today 12.06.2012)

2.1.4 The Royal Family

The members of the Royal Family have been largely presented in the first chapter.

2.1.5 Palaces

Great Britain is literally covered with famous and majestic palaces. It would be too much to present all of them so here are only a few of them.

One of the most famous palaces from **England** is **Buckingham Palace** that is royal residence.

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Buckingham_Palace,_London_-_April_2009.jpg. Taken today 12.06.2012)

Scone Palace is Scotland

I chose to present this palace because it is an ancient royal residence of the Scottish kings and because here is the old coronation stone.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/perth/sconepalace/index.html>. Taken today 12.06.2012)

2.1.6 The British Parliament

Has been largely presented at the Government chapter.

2.1.7 The London Eye

This construction is a familiar view for the tourists that visit London. It sits on the banks of the river Thames.

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:London_Eye_-_TQ04_26.jpg. Taken today 12.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Eye_Pod_1.jpg. Taken today 12.06.2012)

2.1.8 The Beefeaters

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/questions/Beefeaters.htm>. Taken today 12.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://paulstott.typepad.com/i_intend_to_escape_and_co/2009/08/class-conscious-beefeaters-.html. Taken today 12.06.2012)

These guards are also a famous symbol of England because they guard the museum Tower of London. Their real name is that of Yeoman Warders. They originally guarded the prisoners found in the Tower but now their function is more ceremonial one organizing tours for the visitors of the museum.

The Beefeaters are also guarding the six ravens that are leaving in the Tower and take good care of them because an old superstition said that the moment these ravens will fly from the Tower of London the Crown and the Kingdom will disappear.

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:London_tower_ravens.jpg. Taken today 12.06.2012)

Did you know that.....

Their name has a mixed origin. On one side it is believed that the name came from the French word - buffetier which designated the people who guarded the food of the French kings. On the other side, the interpretation of this word refers to the pieces of beef meet received as payment by the ancient guards of the palace.

2.1.9 The Black Taxies

These taxies are a familiar site for the London metropolis as familiar as the yellow taxies from New York.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.ukstudentlife.com/Travel/Transport/Taxi.htm>. Taken today 12.06.2012)

2.1.10 Famous Scottish Historic characters:

The national hero Robert the Bruce:

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://www.rampantscotland.com/symbols/blsymbols_bruce.htm. Taken today 12.06.2012)

Mary Queen of Scotts:

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://www.rampantscotland.com/symbols/blsymbols_mqos.htm

Taken today 12.06.2012)

2.1.11 Irish Symbols

The Claddagh is an Irish engagement ring and looks like this:

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://pbsandwichofdoom.hubpages.com/hub/irish-Symbols-and-Their-Meaning>
Taken today 12.06.2012)

The Celtic Cross

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://pbsandwichofdoom.hubpages.com/hub/irish-Symbols-and-Their-Meaning>
Taken today 12.06.2012)

Tasks for a better understanding:

Which are the patron saints of England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland and Northern Ireland?

What are the symbols of these four countries?

What other British symbols do you know?

Auto evaluation Test Nr. 2

Time to solve the test: **15 min.**

Points: **100**

Oral Presentation and Group Work

Oral Presentation

Chose a country and present the symbols that identify it.

(50p)

Group Work

You have the following variants. Choose one of them:

Imagine you are a guide in the Tower of London. Make a presentation of what a tourist should see in the museum. Document yourself for unusual events or characters that resided there.

Make a presentation about Madam Tussauds Museum.

Make a presentation about Stonehenge.

Present some of the British, Royal residences.

Recommendations

The Presentations can be made either on the laptop or on the paper. The ones on the laptops cannot be larger than 10 slides. The points will be accorded for the extensive oral presentation and the slides will be only support. Each of the members of the group must tell a few sentences in order to receive the point that will count at the final mark.

Originality in anything you do will be better marked.

Minimal Bibliography

1. Present course
2. General knowledge

UNIT 3: THE COMMONWEALTH OF NATIONS

3.1 What is the Commonwealth of Nations?

3.2 History

3.2.1 The origins of the Commonwealth of Nations

3.2.2 The Commonwealth' activities and objectives

3.2.3 Commonwealth's meetings

3.3 Present members of the Commonwealth

3.3.1 How are the members elected?

3.3.2 Member states of the Commonwealth of Nations

3.3.3 The ending of a member quality in the Commonwealth of Nations

3.4 The Structure of the Commonwealth

3.4.1 Commonwealth Business Council

3.4.2 Commonwealth Secretariat

3.4.3 Symbols

3.5 Anglo-sphere

3.6 Similar organizations

3.6.1 Francophonie

3.6.2 The Commonwealth of the Independent States

3.1 What is the Commonwealth of Nations?

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Flag_of_the_Commonwealth_of_Nations.svg. Taken today 23.05.2012)

This type of organization is very similar one in its goals and activity with the European Union. The only difference is that, unlike the European Union, it was restricted to the British nation. In fact, all the countries that are today part of this organization are former colonies of the British Empire.

An important fact that must be kept in mind about this organization is that it is an intergovernmental one and is constituted of 54 independent members. More exactly, the member states' governs have the same goals and values. Another parallel with the European Union can be made in case of the countries of the Commonwealth. The countries of the European Union have different social, economic, and political backgrounds. In fact, it promotes this precise diversity. This is also the case of the Commonwealth of Nations.

Because the Commonwealth of Nation is not a political organization, it does not have a command structure only a secretariat that coordinates all the activities and

the Head of Commonwealth which is a honorific function detained by the sovereign of the United Kingdom in this case Queen Elizabeth the Second.

As mentioned above all countries in the Commonwealth of Nations are equal. To demonstrate this fact, High Commissions and Embassies carried out all the diplomatic relations between them.

3.2. History

3.2.1 The origins of the Commonwealth of Nations

After the British Empire began to lose its colonial territories that slowly but certainly get their independence, many prime ministers of these former colonies began to organize conferences with the special purpose of finding a common base for their countries. At these conferences was suggested for the first time the term of Commonwealth of Nations and were established its basis. During the Conference organized in 1926, the Balfour Declaration was written and in it were enumerated all the criteria the former colonies had to submit at: equality, cooperation when internal and external problems may appear and allegiance to the British Crown.

There are also former colonies that **did not entered** in the Commonwealth like **Egypt, Iraq, British Palestine, and Sudan, a part of Somalia that was British, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates**. A special case of that of **Ireland** that wanted to join the other nations in the Commonwealth but did not recognized the authority of the British Crown. The problem was discussed at the conferences and the access, in these conditions, was denied. However, the situation was not forgotten and it made the subject of discussions in the British Parliament. After many discussions, the solution offered to the Irish citizens was to be equal with the British ones by the United Kingdom legal system.

3.2.2 The Commonwealth' activities and objectives

The Singapore Declaration was the official act that placed the Commonwealth of Nations among the institutions that have as goal the world's peace and stated this organization' goals: democracy and personal freedom; the fight against racism, poverty, ignorance and maladies and human rights for every person in the world.. Later on Declarations like Lusaka Declaration further added new goals such as the permanent battle against any kind of discrimination and the accent was placed on the gender discrimination.

3.2.3 Commonwealth's meetings

As Commonwealth promotes equality among its state-members, there are necessary meetings among the leaders of these states to discuss certain important decisions that may affect the well-being of the Commonwealth organization. These meetings are **biannual meetings**.

3.3 Present members of the Commonwealth

3.3.1 How are the members elected?

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://www.dragontradeonline.com/index.php?main_page=index&cPath=74. Taken today 25.05.2012)

There are certain criteria for the selection of the states that are members of the Commonwealth of Nations. These criteria were written in different documents named Statutes. One of these criteria, underlined in **the Statute of Westminster**, stated that, in order to become a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, a **country had to be former dominion of the British Empire**. Another as equally important criterion stated in **the London Declaration**, that **other republican states might be accepted as members of the Commonwealth of Nations if they recognized the British Queen as the Head of the Commonwealth without any conditions**.

These Statutes, once materialized in a written document, set a frame of very strict conditions, for the possible candidates to the status of Commonwealth members. They had to fulfill the following criteria beside the ones mentioned above: obligatory they had to be **sovereign states** and **accept English as the official language of the Commonwealth documents**. Today, there are 54 member states in the world. The largest communities of Commonwealth members are in India immediately followed by Asia and Africa.

Did you Know that....

Contrary to what we might expect, the United Kingdom has only 61 % of the Commonwealth members.

3.3.2 Member States of the Commonwealth of Nations

Here is, on short, a list divided into three categories: **current members**, **suspended members** and **former members**.

Current members: *Antigua and Barbuda (North America), Australia (Oceania) – former dominion of the British Empire cut all links with the British Parliament in 1986, Bahamas (North America), Barbados (North America), Belize (North America), Brunei (Asia), Canada (North America) – also cut any links with the British Parliament in 1982, India (Asia), Jamaica (North America), Kenya (Africa), Maldives (Asia), New Zealand (Oceania), United Kingdom (Europe) etc.*

Suspended members: *the only suspended member accepted and suspended several times due to internal political turmoil is Fiji (Oceania).*

Former members: *Ireland (Europe).*

3.3.3 The ending of a member quality in the Commonwealth of Nations

A common situation that might appear is that of the ending of a member quality in the Commonwealth of Nations. There are no strict rules regarding this situation because the membership is voluntarily. There were, however, until 2007 some stipulations regarding the ceasing of membership in case some of the reals became republic but they were soon abandoned. As an example, **the case of India** that after becoming a republic was forced to renounce to membership unless it founded the support of other member-states. **Ireland** too renounced to membership after becoming republic and never asked for it.

3.4 The Structure of the Commonwealth

3.4.1 Commonwealth Business Council

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://hermawan.typepad.com/blog/spiritual_marketing/. Taken today 25.05.2012)

In this chapter will be discussed two important structures that organize the activity of the Commonwealth.

The first structure is **the Commonwealth Business Council**. Its activities are of economic nature because it promoted the global trade and supervises different types of worldwide investments.

3.4.2 The Commonwealth Secretariat

This service is the main operating body of the Commonwealth of Nations. Each decision taken and agreed by the Commonwealth Heads of Government is then implemented through this service. The Commonwealth Secretariat has different means of implementation at its disposal like advocacy, information sharing, analysis, technical assistance etc.

This Secretariat is a very important organism because it connects in different ways and by different means the governments of the member-states and so, it facilitates the implementation of projects, meetings, and programs.

The Commonwealth Secretariat is not an isolated organization; it is in permanent contact with other similar organizations from around the world and has cooperation relations with them.

In what regards the number of employees working here and taking into consideration that this Secretariat is an international organization there are 304 from 39 countries.

The structure of the Commonwealth Secretariat is the following:

The Head of the Commonwealth – Queen Elizabeth the Second

The Secretary-General – is a key figure in the structure of the Secretariat because he has **two important duties: the first duty** is to develop and deliver the Strategic Plan. This Plan has a length of four years and comprises the Commonwealth Secretariat's goals and programs.

The second duty is that of maintaining permanent contact with governments and civil leaders and mediating the relations with media.

The Chairperson-in-Office – also plays an important role in the Commonwealth Secretariat because his/hers job is that of mediator when there are Heads of Government Meetings or high-level international forums.

Other Secretariat Offices – refers to the structures attached to the Commonwealth Secretariat that play important roles for the welfare of this organization. Here are some of them: *The Joint Office for Commonwealth Permanent Missions to the United Nations; Commonwealth Small States Office, Geneva and different Commonwealth Youth Program Regional Canthers.*

3.4.3 Symbols

The most important symbols of the Commonwealth of Nations are:

The Head of the Commonwealth – Queen Elizabeth the Second

(source: Internet. Google Images:

http://james-fung.blogspot.com/2008/10/celebrating-my-32nd-birthday-in-beijing_07.html.

Taken today 25.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Royal_Cypher_of_Elizabeth_II_as_Head_of_the_Commonwealth.svg.

Taken today 25.05.2012).

The flag of the Commonwealth of Nations – is a globe surrounded by rays on a dark blue background.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.cpu.org.uk/page-view.php?pagename=General%20Information>.

Taken today 25.05.2012)

The English language – is the official mean of communication between the member-states of the Commonwealth.

3.5 Anglo-sphere

(source: Internet. Google Images: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Anglospeak\(800px\).png](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Anglospeak(800px).png). Taken today 26.05.2012)

Note: Dark blue represents the countries where English language is the national language

Light blue represents the countries where the English language is the official language.

Anglo-sphere is a term introduced recently in the dictionaries, the cause for this new entry being the rapid expansion of the English language in the world. Common features of the language shared by the former colonies and dominions of the British

Empire are another cause for the appearance of this term. The most famous **countries** were **English is preponderant** are **United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, New Zealand and United States**.

3.5.1 English-speaking world

Part of the wide use of English all over the world is due to the colonial inheritance of the British Empire. The British colonization had a huge impact on the colonized nations so, there is no wonder that most of them, even the colonization ended, still preserve some of the colonizer's features such as its language. There are some exceptions as in the case of Cyprus and Malaysia where English is the second language used by the population.

Of course, neither of the former colonies adopted the English language entirely but they combine it with their native dialects and this situation also applies in the case of the written form of English. The most concluding example is that of the American dialect that has as origin the English language.

Here are some local dialects combined with Standard English spoken all around the world:

Canadian English – is a dialect that derived at its turn from the American English as a direct result of the English immigrants running from the American Revolution to Canada. In time, it further combined with Irish and Scottish words so, the result is the modern Canadian English dialect.

Caribbean English – is a combination between Standard English and the Creole and African dialects.

East and West African English – is also a combination between Standard English and the local, African dialects spoken in Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia. There is also an exception in case of Kenya more precisely in its main city Nairobi where English is becoming the first language due to its frequently use in every home.

Singapore English, Malaysian English, Hong Kong English and Philippine English – are some of the dialects spoken in Asia and combination between Standard English and local dialects.

3.6 Similar organizations

3.6.1 Francophonie

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Flag_of_La_Francophonie.svg.
Taken today 26.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Map-Francophonie_organisation_2011-fr.png.
Taken today 26.05.2012)

Francophonie is the French equivalent of the Commonwealth of Nations having mostly the same structure and organizations. It has the same rule in what regards the official language as the Commonwealth that is the French language has to be considered the official language.

In addition, just in the case of the Commonwealth, the member-states had to accept and agree with the French culture and customs.

Its official name is **Organization International de la Francophonie** and its structure comprises 56 member-states, 3 states that have the status of associates and 16 observers.

In contrast with the Commonwealth obligatory condition for admission regarding the degree of English usage on a country's territory, the admission in the Francophonie does not consider it obligatory. The peaceful coexistence between the French culture and language and the one of the member-state is considered essential for an admission to this Organization.

This organization began its official duties in 1970 and it was first a simple gathering of French-speaking countries. Its creators inspired, logically, when it came to give a motto to this newly found organization from the French one so it transformed to *égalité, complémentarité, solidarité*. Slowly and due to the values that promoted and the cooperation between the member-states, Francophonie developed to an international organization to which numerous states adhered or want to adhere and which can equal the Commonwealth. Its values are the same as in the case of the Commonwealth that is global cooperation between its members and development of culture, science, economy, justice, and peace.

Tasks for a better understanding:

Make a short written presentation of the Commonwealth of Nations.

Which is the Foundation Act of the Commonwealth of Nations?

Enumerate some current, former, and suspended members of the Commonwealth of Nations.

What is the Commonwealth Business Council?

What is the Commonwealth Secretariat?

What are their main duties?

Who are the members of the Commonwealth Secretariat?

Which are the Commonwealth of Nations' symbols?

Make a list of the English Speaking Countries.

Enumerate the countries where English is the language spoken by the majority of population.

Find out what dialects are parts of the English of the Commonwealth of Nations and in which zones of the globe are spoken.

Compare, with the help of the dictionary, 5 words that are pronounced differently in English and American. (Eg.: children – English; kids - American).

Give examples of local dialects combined with Standard English around the world.

Evaluation Test Nr. 3

Time to solve the test: 1h.

Points: 100

Group and debate activity

Chose a group of maximum 5 students and then make a presentation of 2 pages with a theme at your choice related to Great Britain and the Commonwealth of Nations.

Your presentations will be presented to the other groups and there will be debated on them.

Minimal Bibliography

The present Course

Personal Materials

Recommendations:

Personal contribution, the varied materials like books, maps, dictionaries, as well as other materials at your choice, the correct citing of the authors and text from the books and a good cooperation between the team members are essential for the maximum of points.

These points will count at the final evaluation.

PAY ATTENTION!

Inspiration from the Internet sites are allowed but there will be severe penalties for the 'copy - paste' material used without references or the texts copied as such.

GOOD LUCK!

UNIT 4: TEST

Chose a theme from the module one and build up a presentation in which you can present a character either from the British history or an institution or a country.

These presentations will be sustained in front of your colleagues and if they consider them interesting and debates will start the more point you will receive that will contribute to the final mark.

Recommendations:

Personal contribution, the varied materials like books, maps, dictionaries, as well as other materials at your choice, the correct citing of the authors and text from the books are essential for the maximum of points.

PAY ATTENTION!

The more you document and find something new about your chosen theme the more points you will receive.

Inspiration from the Internet sites are allowed but there will be severe penalties for the 'copy - paste' material used without references or the texts copied as such.

GOOD LUCK!

MODULUL 2: UNITED KINGDOM'S GOVERNMENT

UNIT 5

UNIT 6

UNIT 7

STRUCTURE AND POLITICS

INDIVIDUAL,

GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

FINAL TEST

MODULUL 2: UNITED KINGDOM'S GOVERNMENT

UNIT 5: STRUCTURE AND POLITICS

5.1 Politics

5.1.1 British Politics

5.1.2 Political Parties in Great Britain

5.2. Structure of British Government

5.2.1 Departments in the British Government

5.2.1.1 Ministerial Departments

5.2.1.2 Non-Ministerial Departments

5.2.2.2 No 10 Downing Street

Auto evaluation test

Basic bibliography

Answers and commentaries at the auto evaluation test

UNIT 6: INDIVIDUAL, GOVERNEMENTAL ORGANIZATION

6.1 England

6.1.1 Her Majesty' Government

6.1.2 The British Constitution

6.1.3 The English, local government

6.2 Scotland

6.2.1 The Scottish Government

6.2.2 The Scotland Act 1998

6.2.3 The Scottish, local government

6.3 Wales

6.3.1 The Welsh Government

6.3.2 Acts of Union

6.3.3 The Welsh, local government

6.4 Ireland

6.4.1 The Irish Government

6.4.2 The Constitution of Ireland

6.4.3 The Irish, local government

6.5 Northern Ireland

6.5.1 The Northern Irish Government

6.5.2 The Constitution of Northern Ireland

6.4.3 The Northern Irish, local government

Auto evaluation test

Basic bibliography

Answers and commentaries at the auto evaluation test

UNIT 7 FINAL TEST

Auto evaluation test

Basic bibliography

Answers and commentaries at the auto evaluation test

MODULUL 2: UNITED KINGDOM'S GOVERNMENT

UNIT 5: STRUCTURE AND POLITICS

5.1 Politics

5.1.1 British Politics

5.1.2 Political Parties in Great Britain

5.2. Structure of British Government

5.2.1 Departments in the British Government

5.2.1.1 Ministerial Departments

5.2.1.2 Non-Ministerial Departments

5.2.2.2 No 10 Downing Street

Auto evaluation test

Basic bibliography

Answers and commentaries at the auto evaluation test

UNIT 5: STRUCTURE AND POLITICS

In order to understand a civilized and perfect mechanism such as England you should first understand its inner structure such as politics and government.

5.1 Politics

5.1.1 British Politics

“Of all British institutions the political system is probably the most successful. Over a very long period it has provided the British people with the benefits of orderly, stable, confident, and firm government, together with ample possibilities to choose the men to whom the power is to be entrusted, to criticize them and their policies, and to take power away from them when they have not given satisfaction.”¹⁵

5.1.2 Political Parties in Great Britain

In **England**, there are two main political parties: **the Conservatives** and **the Labor Party**.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b010v8yf>. Taken today 30.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://gordonlyew.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/labour_party1.jpg. Taken today 30.05.2012)

The Conservatives took their e mainly because they do not agree with any changes that might intervene in the government of UK and particularly in England.

¹⁵ Peter Bromhead, *Life in Modern Britain*, Ed. Longmans, Ch. Government and Politics, pag. 14

They strongly believed that the private enterprises had nothing to do with the state and most important that their country should maintain neutrality in its relation with other states.

The Conservatives promoted a certain degree of human wickedness and loyalty for the society's values such as: family, friends, institutions and especially for the Queen.

The other governing party, **the Labor Party**, had different credos: they actively pursue the social and the economic equality and unlike the Conservative party, they are more opened to the exterior influences promoting open, international relations. In what regards their political orientation the Conservatives are 'Right' while the Labor is 'Left'.

The Conservative Party is the biggest political party in the United Kingdom. In fact, this party with 306 seats mainly occupies the House of Commons. **Famous members** of the party are: **Winston Churchill, Margaret Thatcher, David Cameron** etc.

The Labor Party is the opposition party and is social democratic. **Famous members** of this party are: **Tony Blair and Gordon Brown**.

There are also other political parties in the UK but the third party as importance is **the Liberal Party**.

Their main political agenda is the creation of the Liberal Reforms and the welfare of the state.

In **Scotland**, one of the main political parties is **the Scottish National Party**. It has a social democratic orientation and its main objective is the Scottish independence. Its **leaders** are: **Alexander McEwan, Andrew Gibb, William Power, Douglas Young, Bruce Watson** etc.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://scotlandmay2011.blogspot.com/2011/04/political-matters-scottish-national.html>. Taken today 30.05.2012)

The Scottish Labor Party is part of the British Labor Party and has the same ideology.

Other significant **Scottish political parties** are: **Conservative and Unionist Party, Liberal Democrats, Scottish Green Party** etc.

In **Ireland**, the situation of the political parties is more complicated due to the separation of the Northern Ireland. There are, however, **two main historical parties: Fianna Fail and Fine Gael** that are independent as political orientation.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.gmkfreelogos.com/54138-Fianna-Fail.html>. Taken today 30.05.2012)
(source: Internet. Google Images: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/gv/1/1f/Fine_Gael_logo.png. Taken today 30.05.2012)

The First political party **Fianna Fail** – translated into English, as *The Soldiers of the Destiny* is a powerful party. Among **its important members**: **Éamon of Valera, Seán Lamoss, and Jack Lynch** etc.

The Second political party **Fine Gael** – translated as *the Family* – is the single largest party in Ireland. It is also a numerous one having approximately 35 000 members. Among **its members**, the most important ones are: **Eoin O'Duffy, W.T. Cosgrave, Richard Mulcathy, James Dillon** etc.

Political parties in Northern Ireland

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://ireland.iol.ie/~dluby/politics.htm>. Taken today 30.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/0/02/Traditionalunionistvoicelogo.PNG>. Taken today 30.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00wfy0r>. Taken today 30.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://ireland.iol.ie/~dluby/politics.htm>. Taken today 30.05.2012)

The situation in Northern Ireland is complex because, although it is officially part of the UK, it is also a quite distinct political organization different from the rest of the Irish ones. The situation complicates even more because in Northern Ireland activates **the same parties as in Britain – the Conservatives** – and in **Ireland – Sinn Fein**. **Other parties** are characteristic only to Northern Ireland: **Progressive Unionist Party, Traditional Unionist Voice, Ulster Unionist Party, and Sinn Féin**. Sinn Féin is the second as side in the Northern Ireland Assembly – translated as *ourselves* – and represents the left wing in the Irish politics. Its political leader is Gerry Adams. Important facts that should be remembered are the election of its members in both Ireland and Northern Ireland executives and that it is often association with IRA.

The following parties represent **Wales: Welsh Labor, Welsh Conservatives, Plaid Cymry, and Welsh Liberal Democrats** etc.

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/0/09/Welsh_labour.png. Taken today 30.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://www.mrflag.com/p/6536/Welsh_Conservatives_3.html. Taken today 30.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/wales/4741650.stm. Taken today 30.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://www.logotypes101.com/free_vector_logo/79497/Welsh_Liberal_Democrats.aspx. Taken today 30.05.2012)

5.2. Structure of British Government

5.2.1 Departments in the British Government

The British Government has the following structure:

Ministerial departments ruled by **Cabinet ministers**: *Attorney General's Office; Cabinet Office; Department for Business, Innovation, and Skills; Department for Culture, Media and Sport; Department for Education; Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; Department for International Development; Department for Transport; Department for Work and Pensions; Department for Energy and Climate Changes; Department of Health; Foreign and Commonwealth Office; Her Majesty Treasury; Home Department; Ministry of Justice; Northern Ireland Office; Office for the Advocate General for Scotland; Office of the Leader of the House of Commons; Office of the Leader of the House of Lords; Scotland Office; Wales Office etc.*

Her Majesty's Privy Council has legislative, judicial, and executive functions and has in its subordination the British Cabinet.

The Cabinet of the United Kingdom - plays an important function in the govern of the United Kingdom because it is a political structure that was entitled with the power of taking vital decisions regarding the internal and external activity of Great Britain.

The Prime Minister rules the Cabinet and coordinates **22 Cabinet Ministers** also called Ministers of the Crown and Secretary of State for a certain department of which they respond, elected from the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The official residence and the meeting place for the Cabinet is in a common house at No. 10 Downing Street. The current Prime Minister is David Cameron who was appointed in 2010.

The civil servants or permanent secretaries are the executive permanent employees.

Non-ministerial departments that are part of the British executive but do not have any connection with the ministerial departments. These are: *Crown Estate; Crown Prosecution Office; Food Standard Agency; Forestry Commission; Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills;*

5.2.2 NO 10 DOWNING STREET

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:2010_Official_Downing_Street_pic.jpg. Taken today 30.05.2012)

Is the most famous address in the United Kingdom mainly because it is the official residence of Her Majesty's Government. It is an old residence almost three hundred years old now it has one hundred rooms. During the reign of King George II

on this location, there were three houses. The King decided to offer them to his loyal servant Sir Robert Walpole who was his Prime Minister. However, he refused to receive them and he demanded that the three houses to enter in the possession of the Office of the First Lord of Treasury. Since then this address became known as the official location of the Prime Minister.

The most famous room inside the house is the Cabinet Room where the members of the Cabinet meet twice a week.

(source: Internet. Google Images:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Gladstone%27s_Cabinet_of_1868_by_Lowes_Cato_Dickinson.jpg.

Taken today 30.05.2012

MODULUL 2: UNITED KINGDOM'S GOVERNMENT

UNIT 6: INDIVIDUAL, GOVERNEMENTAL ORGANIZATION

6.1 England

6.1.1 Her Majesty' Government

6.1.2 The British Constitution

6.1.3 The English, local government

6.2 Scotland

6.2.1 The Scottish Government

6.2.2 The Scotland Act 1998

6.2.3 The Scottish, local government

6.3 Wales

6.3.1 The Welsh Government

6.3.2 Acts of Union

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6.5 Northern Ireland

6.5.1 The Northern Irish Government

6.5.2 The Constitution of Northern Ireland

6.4.3 The Northern Irish, local government

Auto evaluation test
Basic bibliography
Answers and commentaries at the auto evaluation test

UNIT 6: INDIVIDUAL, GOVERNEMENTAL ORGANIZATION

6.1 England

6.1.1 Her Majesty Government

In this chapter, I will present you two important parts of the English government namely the British Parliament and the English Constitution.

The British Parliament

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.insidegamingdaily.com/2011/01/06/british-parliament-to-play-video-games/>. Taken today 30.05.2012)

The British Parliament is one of the most familiar building and legislative body of London and even from UK. It is located on the banks of the river Thames and the actual building was originally a royal palace – the Westminster Palace, specially build for the Kings and Queens of England. Later on, Buckingham Palace became a much-preferred residence for the English royal faces and Westminster remained the place from where Great Britain is ruled. Its huge but in the same time gracious façade houses the British Parliament and the Royal Court of Justice. Its fame came from the tall tower that has on top the most famous clock and bell in the world: Big Ben.

Although it is mostly known for being the Parliaments official building, Westminster Palace is also a beautiful museum that can be visited in certain conditions. What many tourists do not know is that it houses a beautiful royal chapel, St. Stephens Chapel that can rival other more visited chapels from London and witnessed many memorable events from royal weddings to royal funerals.

Did you know that...

The House of Commons hides a secret? The form of the chamber and that of the furniture resembles with the ones of St. Stephens Chapel. For example, the Speaker's chair is placed exactly where the altar steps would be and the benches where the MP's sit are facing one another as the Medieval choir stalls.

The Chambers of the Parliament

The British Parliament is a bicameral structure that is divided between the two Chambers: The House of Lords and the House of Commons. Traditionally, the House of Commons occupy the south wing of the palace while the House of Lords occupy the north wing.

The House of Commons

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:UK_House_of_Commons_Crowned_Portcullis.jpg. Taken today 30.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:House_of_Commons_Microcosm.jpg. Taken today 30.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.britannica.com/blogs/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/99525-004-6C97BCF1.jpg>. Taken today 30.05.2012)

In the past, the House of Commons had less importance and its decisions counted less in the Parliaments sessions because most of its members were considered inferior to the one from the House of Lords, representing the interests of trades and lower social classes.

Now, the situation changed visibly and the House of Commons is one of the most important chambers of the British Parliament.

The House of Commons' name has its origins in the first days of the Parliament's existence. The common people, as they were usually named, wanted to have representatives in the new-founded Parliament so, their interests and preoccupations could be heard, and their problems solved correctly. The people send to the newly founded House of Commons represented all the trades of that time.

How functions the House of Commons?

When a proposal related to a subject of public interest is raised there is a debate on that particular theme. After everybody presented his or her points of view and a common solutions was agreed upon, that subject is either accepted or rejected.

At the end of every debate, the president of the House or the Speaker as he or she is named, asks, if that particular motions was either accepted or rejected and if the members of the House accept or reject it.

If the answer is negative, the members of the House who are against it are numbered. If, on the contrary, all the members of the House accepted the motion they express their agreement by saying load 'Aye' instead of 'Yes'.

The House of Commons' schedule is a very busy one. Its members have specific days of the week when they met and debate especially on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and their program usually starts at 2.30 in the afternoon and ends at 10.30 in the evening but it often happens to last to later hours of the night when there are many subjects to debate.

As in the case of the Romanian parliament, the British one has the so-called 'sessions'. These sessions end with parliamentary holidays. A new session cannot start without the official agreement of the Queen and during this period, every parliamentary activity ends.

The State Opening of the Parliament

The State Opening of the Parliament is an official ceremony that marks the opening of a new parliamentary session. It usually takes place in the House of Lords; members of the House of Commons also participate.

As the members of the two Houses are not allowed to meet, reminiscence from the past, the House of Commons members stay during the ceremony at the end opposite the Throne so, they are not technically in the room.

The ceremony starts when the Queen leaves Buckingham palace, in a ceremonial coach accompanied by the guards. Usually, the roads are blocked and the people are out on the street to see their sovereign. After she arrives at the Parliament, she goes straight to the House of the Lords, takes her place on the throne, and begin to read the so-called *Queens Speech* that is a long document containing the Parliament's activity during this new session.

The House of Lords

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/petermullen/100125233/nick-clegg-on-the-house-of-lords-this-is-a-man-consumed-by-the-politics-of-envy/>. Taken today 30.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <https://craigwhittakermp.files.wordpress.com/2012/05/house-of-lords-logo1.jpg>. Taken today 30.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://britishfreedom.org/the-house-of-lords-a-festering-insult-to-the-british-people/>. Taken today 30.05.2012)

Unlike other European countries that passed through violent changes of leaders and democracy, England's regime remained unchanged for centuries. A direct consequence of this continuity is the surviving of the aristocracy in modern England when in other countries has long disappeared.

Aristocracy, as its name states, has always governed the House of Lords. Even today, the nobler titles of the old aristocratic families are still represented in the House of Lords.

"The House of Lords has several classes of members, but the largest – about 800 out of a total of over 1000 – is that of hereditary peers. There are five ranks in the peerage; today there are about 30 dukes, 40 marquises, 200 earls, 130 viscounts, and 550 barons. All these, whatever their ranks, have the same ranks in the House of Lords.

Nearly six hundred of the peers have inherited their titles and so can be regarded as the inheritors of an aristocratic privilege of having the right to seat in Parliament. However, some new hereditary peerages are given every year to men who have distinguished themselves in some aspect of the national life. The House of Lords contains about 200 men who have themselves received peerages. Some are generals, ambassadors, great industrialists, scientists, or scholars; the others are former members of the House of Commons, many of them former Cabinet ministers."¹⁶

Another interesting fact related to the House of Lords refers to the membership divided between **two types of Lords: Spiritual and Temporal.**

The Spiritual Lords are named by the Church of England and are mostly archbishops, diocesan bishops, abbots and certain priors. Their presence in the House of Lords is limited, unlike the past when they almost govern themselves, by legislation, to a small number of only twenty-six. In their case too, some titles passed through history, as is the case of the Archbishops of Canterbury or the Archbishops of York.

All these Spiritual Lords are of either British or Irish descent. The Scottish Church decided not to send any representatives in the House of Lords.

The Lords Temporal once designated peers such as dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts and barons.

The situation changed today when only a number of 92 persons are allowed in the House of Lords. There are two significant persons from the total of 92 who, due

¹⁶ Peter Bromhead, *Life in Modern Britain*, Ed. Longmans, Ch. The House of Lords, pag. 54

to their duties within the Parliament, are important: the Earl Marshal and the Lord Great Chamberlain.

Did you know that.....

During the Victorian Age, women were submitted to numerous restrictions, one of these restrictions forbid them to have any political and administrative function in the English Parliament. In 1958, an Act was emitted that allowed women to become active members and today there are two members in the House of Lords.

“The other classes of members of the House of Lords are quite small. They are:

a. the bishops of the Church of England. The inclusion of the bishops goes back to the earliest times, back in the eleventh century. They have their seats only for so long as they remain bishops; if a bishop retires, he loses his seat. At first, all the bishops had seats, but in the nineteenth century, when some new dioceses were established in the growing industrial areas, the number of seats for bishops in the House of Lords was not allowed to increase. It was arranged that two archbishops and the bishops of London, Durham and Winchester should have seats in the Lords, together with twenty-one most senior of the other bishops.

b. The nine Law Lords. From its earliest days, the House of Lords was the highest court of law in the land, and is still the supreme court of appeal. Theoretically, when it hears an appeal, the whole House is the body that gives judgment; but in fact only a small group, usually five members of the House, sitting as ‘the House of Lords’”, hears the case.¹⁷

The design of the two Houses

The two Houses of the Parliament are different in just in structure and membership but in colors.

The House of Commons is **very simple** as design and the walls and cushions are **green**.

The House of Lords instead has **richly decorations**, its walls have intricate embellishments, and the predominant **colors** are **red and gold**.

The meaning of these two colors and the different designs of these two Chambers are clear: the simplicity of the House of Commons want to demonstrate that its representatives were simple people while the lavishness of the House of Lords was the expansion of the richness and statue of the occupants.

A Short Story of the Woolsack

¹⁷ Peter Bromhead, *Life in Modern Britain*, Ed. Longmans, Ch. The House of Lords, pag. 55

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.woolsack.org/woolsackhistory>. Taken today 31.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://www.staplesclan.co.uk/surname_history.htm. Taken today 31.05.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://helpfors.narod.ru/GreatBritain/political_system_of_GB/house_of_lords.html. Taken today 31.05.2012)

Opposite the ceremonial Throne, there is the famous Woolsack. Today, it is a large, comfortable, upholstered stool used when a new member of the Houses is invested. Its color, as seen in the pictures above, is red. The original woolsack was stuffed with sheep wool and was placed in the House of Lords as a remainder of the origin of their wealth - the wool trade.

The wool trade has a long tradition in Great Britain history and especially in that of England. Starting with the 12th century, England became the greatest exporter of wool from Europe, the results of this trade being over expectations, England starting to get rich.

6.1.2 The British Constitution

As an official act, a constitution is the backbone of a country and the rules and regulations included in it are the ones that keep that country active. There is no country in the world without a constitution and Great Britain makes no exception. However, unlike the American, the French or even the Romanian Constitutions that have entire sets of written rules and long tradition behind them, the British one is different in the sense that there is not a single document but numerous and varied ones. This structure of the British constitution is, according to the British politicians, the perfect one. They believe that the form, as a single document, of the other constitutions restricts its flexibility in what concerns some inevitable situations that may occur in time. Instead, the British varied documents cover a large palette of situations and in this way, law controls any new event that may occur. When a new amendment is made to the British Constitution, the procedure is very simple; it passes if it has majority of votes in the House of Lords and the Royal Assent.

The current British Constitution has many **sources**:

different **statutes** of which the most important one are *Magna Carta* that was written in 1215 and *the Act of Settlement* (1701);

political conventions;

laws that were adopted in the British Parliament in time;

legal matters that were solved in the courts of law;

influential, political and expert personalities that contributed to the actual form of the Constitution with their experience in different fields like *Walter Bagehot* and many other documents and situations.

The British Constitution has **four** basic **principles**:

The Rule of Law – constitutes an important part of the British Constitutions because it states the rights of the British people. Here are some of them:

The British citizens have rights that are established by law and no authority had the right to break them.

Neither British local or national authority can punish a person unless law decides this punishment.

Each citizen on the territory of Great Britain must respect and subject to the law no matter his/her position in the society.

The Supremacy of the Parliament

The British Parliament is one of the most important institutions in Great Britain. It dominates the British politics and society. Each of the laws adopted by it has serious consequences on the civil society and on the politic stage. The members of the two Chambers of the Parliament have full powers to asses, pass, or reject a law and in the same time to alter the existing ones when it is the case. Another prerogative of the members of the Parliament is that they can establish the length of their term namely 5 years. The Parliament's power is so extended that it can determine who will succeed on the British throne and even control the powers of the English sovereign.

The supremacy of the Parliament is so powerful that the House of Commons and only it can in fact demit the Government by passing a motion of no confidence in it.

All the Parliament's decisions are concretized in Acts, Decrees, and Treaties.

Unitary State

Great Britain has a special regime because it comprises four different nations each of them having its own executive and government and yet the British Parliament controls all of them and has the capability to abolish them if necessary. This situation was possible because the United Kingdom is a **union of states**.

PAY ATTENTION!

Do to the importance of this subject here are some main ideas about the Constitution and the British one in particular that should be known by the students.

A constitution:

An official document and a compendium of acts and regulations; it is the basis of the relation between a state's government, in our case the British government, and its citizens.

Establishes the type of the state – federal, federation, regional, union - **Great Britain is union of states.**

Establishes the type of government – bicameral, monarchy, parliamentary system – **Great Britain is a monarchy.**

Constitutions usually have **legal powers** as well; the Constitution of Great Britain has great legal powers – enumerate above.

Constitutions are usually written documents that are more or less flexible; **the British Constitution** is not a single, written document; it has many sources so it is very flexible.

Constitutions have various sources like legal ones, legislations, conventions, and customs of the parliament. The British Constitution is no different in this regard.

There are several legislation acts and documents in which the British Constitution found a rich source of inspiration. For example: **Magna Carta** is a medieval legislative document in which are stated the rights of different social classes such as the independence of the church or different cities etc. Another important document is the famous **Bill of Rights** a compendium of the Parliament's rights that, later on, was the inspiration for the Supremacy of the Parliament; not the last, are different **statutes** like the one of Westminster.

The British Constitution has three main branches: The executive, the Legislative and the Judiciary

6.1.3 The English, local Government

“Although the United Kingdom is a unitary state, not a federal one, a very large part of the public services is administered by the local authorities, that together employ more people than the central government. Scotland and Northern Ireland have their own systems, which are not quite the same as that of England and Wales. The most important local area is a county. England has been divided into counties for more than 1,000 years, though in very early times the counties were called ‘shires’, and most counties, like Yorkshire, still have ‘shire’ as part of their names.”¹⁸

The next division in a county is the ‘boroughs’ or the ‘city’. Unlike the rest of the Europe where the cities have local significance, in England they are simply names without any other meaning. Another significant aspect related to different boroughs is that, in the past, their importance was judged after the imposing aspect of the cathedral they built. So, today, each of the charming English villages can pride with stone, towered cathedrals each of them being fine example of their constructors’ artisanship.

¹⁸ Peter Bromhead, *Life in Modern Britain*, Ed. Longmans, Ch. Local Government, pag.64

“The really important difference among towns is that some have the status of ‘county boroughs’ – that is to say, they are entirely responsible for all their own local government services, and are quite independent of the counties in which they are geographically situated; in local government they have the status of counties themselves. The status of county borough was given in 1888 to all towns which then have a population of over 50,000, and a few other towns have been given this status by Acts of Parliament since that time. [...] There are now 83 towns in England and Wales which have county borough status.”¹⁹

The election of a local government

“Every local government area has its council, elected by the inhabitants. Any person who is entitled to vote in parliamentary elections may now vote in local elections too. The number of members of a council depends on the population of an area, but is not related to it according to any definite formula. The smallest council has fifteen members, the largest 150; the council of a medium-sized administrative county is likely to have about fifty or sixty members.”²⁰

The situation complicated in the case of the councilors’ elections mainly because the procedure differs from one county to another. In general, these elections take place once in three years while the ones for the borough councils are annual events. “The county and the borough councils do not consist only of members elected by the inhabitants, but have another element in addition. In each case, 25 per cent of the members of the council are appointed, for terms of six years each, by the whole of the rest of the council. These appointed members are not called councilors, but aldermen. [...]

Every local council has its presiding officer, and this post is filled by the vote of the whole council, for only one year at a time. The presiding officer of a county is called the Chairman, but in a borough or city is called Mayor or Lord Mayor. (The title of Lord Mayor is a special mark of distinction given to the mayors of the seventeen most important English cities, and of Cardiff in Wales. A Lord Mayor does not receive any title personally by virtue of his office.)

The mayor is the presiding officer, not only of the whole council but also of its many committees, so his duties take up much of his time during his year of office. However, he has many formal duties, too, as the first citizen of his town, and he receives entertainment allowance. In some big towns, he may be provided with an official car and various signs of importance. He has a chain of office, which he wears on official occasions, and a red robe which he wears when great pomp is required.”²¹

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.ukstudentlife.com/Ideas/Album/PancakeRace.htm>.)

¹⁹ Peter Bromhead, *Life in Modern Britain*, Ed. Longmans, Ch. Local Government, pag. 65

²⁰ Peter Bromhead, *Life in Modern Britain*, Ed. Longmans, Ch. Local Government, pag. 66

²¹ Peter Bromhead, *Life in Modern Britain*, Ed. Longmans, Ch. Local Government, pag. 67-68

Taken today 01.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/economics/2783927/Lord-Mayor-of-London-rounds-on-Chancellor.html>.

Taken today 01.06.2012)

As in the cases of Mayors' elections from other European cities the English candidates for this function, have different jobs. Their motives too are different and human in the same time a combination between the desire to serve well the community that chose him and the one for power and fame.

Today, twenty-three English towns have mayors. Here are some of them:

The Mayor of London is Boris Johnson.

(source: Internet. Google Images:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Boris_Johnson_-_opening_bell_at_NASDAQ-14Sept2009-3c_cropped.jpg.

Taken today 01.06.2012)

Lord Mayor of Canterbury – Robert Waters

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.canterbury.gov.uk/main.cfm?objectid=113>.

Taken today 01.06.2012)

Lord Mayor of Westminster – Susie Burbridge

(source: Internet. Google Images:

<http://www.westminster.gov.uk/services/councilgovernmentanddemocracy/democraticprocessesandevents/mayor/>

Taken today 01.06.2012)

6.2 Scotland

6.2.1 The Scottish Government

(source: Internet. Google Images:

<http://www.decanter.com/news/wine-news/500527/minimum-pricing-defeated-in-scotland>. Taken today 01.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://www.mitrefinch.co.uk/case_studies/the_scottish_government/index.html.

Taken today 01.06.2012)

The Scottish Government deals with all the internal problems of Scotland that are not the concern of the British Parliament. Fields like education, justice, economy, industry and others are the responsibility of the Scottish Parliament.

The Prime Minister is the one who rules the Government. He is appointed by the Queen and is assisted in his everyday activity by the Cabinet Secretaries or the Ministers. These Cabinet Secretaries are chosen by the Prime Minister and are approved by the Scottish Parliament. As in the case of the British Parliament the Ministers have decision rights in the case of legislation and law. Most of the Ministers of the Scottish Government are members of the majority Scottish National Party.

The Scottish present Prime Minister is Alex Salmond.

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Alex_Salmond,_First_Minister_of_Scotland.jpg. Taken today 02.06.2012)

In Scotland, the ministers are called **Cabinet Ministers**. Here are some Cabinet Ministers: *Cabinet Secretary for Health, Wellbeing and Cities Strategy, Cabinet Secretary for Health, Wellbeing and Cities Strategy, Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth, Cabinet Secretary for Parliamentary Business and Government Strategy, Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Language, Minister for Public Health, Minister for Parliamentary Business and Chief Whip*, etc.

Unlike the English Cabinet that meets almost every day of the week, the Scottish Cabinet only meets on Tuesday afternoon at the Prime Minister's official residence – Bute House. All the decisions taken by the Cabinet are carried out by the Cabinet's Secretariat located at St. Andrew's House.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:StAndrewsHouse-Edinburgh.jpg>. Taken today 02.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Butehouse.jpg>. Taken today 02.06.2012)

Did you know that....

The Actual building of the Scottish Cabinet's Secretariat was constructed up on a hill named Calton Hill, on the place of the Scottish largest Jail who was demolished almost entirely to permit the construction of this official building. All that remained from the old jail was the towered House of the Governor.

The Scottish Parliament

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/index.aspx>. Taken today 02.06.2012)

Unlike the English Parliament that is a bicameral structure, the Scottish Parliament is a unicameral one. It is located in Edinburgh the capital of Scotland more precisely in an area called Holyrood. The Scottish members of the Parliament or the Ministers are elected for a four year mandate and their number is of 129 MSP's.

The Parliament of Scotland has a long history as individual legislative body until the unification of the English and Scottish Kingdoms that also led to the unification of the two parliaments in a single one – the Parliament of Great Britain. However, the Scottish Parliament and implicitly the Scottish people wanted a certain degree of independence in taking decisions regarding their own country and the Scotland Act from 1998 settled the situation. The major decisions regarding different fields such as justice and legislation are still taken the British Parliament while the Scottish Parliament deals with all that characterizes the Scottish nation.

In the Scottish Parliament all the political parties have representatives. Here are some major political parties and their graphic representation in the Parliament.

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Scottish_Parliament_2011.svg. Taken today 02.05.2012)

The colours represent the number of party members in the Parliament: **yellow** are **the Scottish National Party** that is the most powerful and numerous one; **blue** is **the Conservative party**; **red** is **the Scottish Labour Party**; **green** is **the Scottish Green Party**; **grey** is **the Independent politicians** and, finally, **dark yellow** is **the Liberal Democrat Party**.

Scottish Parliamentary Proceedings

The Scottish Parliamentary Proceedings are generally held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays in two major periods: January to June and September to December. In general the debates are taking place in the afternoon from 2 pm to 6 pm an exception from this routine are the Wednesday when the debates begin at 9:15 and end at 6 pm.

All the debates are moderated by a **Presiding Officer** who decides the order of the speakers and the time for each intervention. Normally all the debates are spoken in the official language English but there are many occasions when the speakers use the Scots or the Gaelic language with the permission of the Presiding Officer.

When a bill or any other motions and amendments must be voted the first vote is oral. If the majority of MSP's agreeing the vote passes. In the case of a clear

dissent the vote will be electronic by the use of the electronic consoles at each desk.

6.2.2 The Scotland Act 1998

As the British Constitution is the main official act that governs the English nations so is the Scotland Act 1998 for the Scottish nation. This Act received the agreement of both the British Parliament and the Royal Assent of Queen Elizabeth II. In it are stated the duties of the Scottish Parliament and the boundaries of its legislative power. This Act is also important for the Scottish nation because it comprises the so-called 'devolved matters'. These matters are the ones the British Parliament agreed to direct to the Scottish Parliament and consider them its responsibility. Important fields from the Scottish life such as education, medicine, agriculture and justice are the main subject of these devolved matters. Also in this Act is stated that all the matters regarding the foreign policy are dealt only by the British Parliament and so are the ones related to civil service, finding new markets for the UK goods, any modification to the constitution, coal, nuclear energy, defence and national security, protection of borders etc.

6.2.3 Scottish Local Government

The Scottish Local Government is as important as the Scottish Government because it deals with the local problems of the Scottish counties. There are 32 councils in the Scottish Government that have as the main duty to resolve the peoples demands and in the same time to offer a large palette of services that cover all the fields in the Scottish everyday life.

Each major, Scottish county is governed by a **council** where **councillors** chosen from the members of that particularly county work. Other important members of the council are **the Leader of the Council** who presides over councillors and a **civic leader** who have more ceremonial functions and is also named **Provost**.

The local governments have different **types of powers** such as: **mandatory powers** meaning that they deal with the basic services such as schools, fire departments, jobs etc. and **permissive powers** that allow them to raise the economic level of that county.

6.3 Wales

6.3.1 The Welsh Government

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.cynnalcyrmru.com/news/welsh-government-web-survey>. Taken today 02.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.1010global.org/uk/2011/11/welsh-government-turns-it-11>. Taken today 02.06.2012)

Wales has always been associated with England a perfect proof in this regard is the title of Prince or Princess of Wales given to the heir of the British Crown.

As in the case of Ireland and Scotland, Wales too has its own form of government. It is led by the Welsh Prime Minister and its main job is to do laws in the favour of the Welsh citizens and to manage fields such as education, health, language and public services. As in the case of the other three countries, the Welsh government deals with devolved matters. Any problems and decisions that are strictly related with the Welsh people are dealt by the Welsh government while other matters that might have implications on England, Ireland and Scotland are solved by the British Parliament.

Wales too has a **Cabinet** that helps the Prime Minister govern this country. The Cabinet is formed from the Ministers and the Counsel General and has 14 members. Here is a list of the Ministers that are part of the **Welsh Cabinet**: *Minister for the Finance and Leader of the House; Minister for Business, Enterprise, Technology and & Science; Minister for Education and Skills; Minister for Health and Social Services* etc.

The current **Prime Minister**, appointed by the Queen, is **Carwyn Jones**.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/2012/04/11/carwyn-jones-and-welsh-government-to-discuss-declaring-tax-returns-91466-30739135/>. Taken today 03.06.2012)

The Counsel General

The Counsel General is a member of the Welsh Government that has the main task of representing the Welsh Government in courts and tribunals and is elected by the Queen at the Prime Minister's recommendation. To be fully legal he or she has to be approved by the National Assembly of Wales. This function also have equivalents in the other states of Great Britain being compares with the Attorney General for England&Wales, Lord Advocate of Scotland and finally Attorney General for Northern Ireland. The Present Counsel General is Theodore Huckle QC.

The National Assembly of Wales

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:NAW_logo.png. Taken today 02.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Royal_Badge_of_Wales_\(2008\).svg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Royal_Badge_of_Wales_(2008).svg). Taken today 02.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Steps_-_Senedd.jpg. Taken today 02.06.2012)

This Assembly is the legislative part of the Welsh Government and is composed of 60 members known as the Assembly Members with a four years mandate. The National Assembly of Wales legal existence began with the Government of Wales Act 1998 that combined the powers of the Welsh Office and Secretary of State for Wales.

The Members of this Assembly are elected from the four representatives of the five Welsh regions: Mid and West Wales, North Wales, South Wales Central, South Wales East and South Wales West.

Senedd or the Senate in English houses important rooms: the debating chamber and the Committee Rooms. As in the case of the Scottish Cabinet, the members of the Senedd are representative of the main political parties of the Welsh government.

Here is a schematic presentation of the places from the Senedd:

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Welsh_Assembly_2011.svg. Taken today 02.06.2012)

The colours from this scheme have the following interpretation: red is the majoritarian Labour Party; blue represents the Conservative party; green represents the Plaid Cymru Party and finally yellow represents the Liberal Democrats Party.

6.3.2 Acts of Union

Since a distant past the history of Wales was tightly noddled with that of England. The Laws in the Wales Acts 1535 and 1542 are the ones that linked the legal systems of the two countries England and Wales. The initiator of these acts was King Henry the VIII who wanted a single country with a single judicial system named England and Wales.

In these Acts were cleared all the aspects related to the merger of England and Wales. One part of these acts referred to **the religious aspect** many English territories were now parts of the Welsh dioceses to form the new Church of Wales. Other parts of these Acts treated **administrative problems** like the establishment of offices for the new Justice of Peace and Sheriffs in almost every county and the foundation of the Council of Wales.

The judicial aspects were also given a special attention and a new Court of Great Sessions was founded.

The historian that studied attentively these acts discovered that beneath the well-intended intentions hide less pleasant one. Of course, when these Acts were introduced to the Welsh population of that time, initially everybody received them greatly and considered them benefice for the well-being of the country. So, they were quickly adopted. But, after a relatively short period of time, the Welsh citizens discovered that in fact they made a mistake by accepting these Acts. The consequences of their content use in the everyday life had disastrous effects on the identity, culture and economy of Wales.

6.3.3 Local Governing in Wales

From administrative point of view, Wales has 22 regions each of them with its own major council. Their main task is to ensure the local Welsh population with all the necessary services for a comfortable and without problems everyday life. Their services include education, social services, places of work for everybody, fire departments etc. A subdivision of the county councils is the community councils that deal with more detailed aspects of the councils' activity.

Due to the merging of different fields between England and Wales, many structures are common for the both countries. As in the case of England, in Wales too the regions are named counties, boroughs and cities.

An important character in the administration of Wales is **the Lord Lieutenant** who is personally appointed by the Queen. Its function has nothing to do with the local governing but it is equally important because he is the one who respond of the military and police force in different counties.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:United-Kingdom-Lord-Lieutenant.svg>. Taken today 03.06.2012)

Wales does not have many **cities** because it is not a big country the most known are: **Cardiff, Swansea, Newport** etc.

6.4 Ireland

6.4.1 The Irish Government

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Coat_of_arms_of_Ireland.svg. Taken today 03.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Gbuildings.jpg>. Taken today 03.06.2012)

The Government of Ireland is directed by **the Constitution of Ireland**. This is the official Act in which are stated all the norms and regulation that are the base of the Irish nation. The head of the Government is the Prime Minister or as is called in Ireland the Taoiseach. He is supported in performing his job by a deputy prime minister called Tánaiste. The current Taoiseach is Brian Cowen.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.infiniteunknown.net/2010/11/22/ireland-seeks-bailout-from-eu-and-imf/>. Taken today 03.06.2012)

The Irish government has as the main instrument for applying its decisions the Irish Parliament. The Irish Parliament is a bicameral system having, as the British Government, two chambers – an upper chamber and a lower chamber. Each of the seventeen members of the government has to be active members of the Parliament. The members of the Irish Government are named Minister of the Government.

As in the case of the Welsh Government, the Irish one has an Attorney General who advises the members of the cabinet in legal matters.

Ireland is governed by a President but, as in the case of England, he does not rule the country – the cabinet does.

Another interesting fact to know is that the Irish Government has limited powers. For example it cannot declare war to another nation without the consent of the upper chamber of the Parliament. Any kind of treaties must have first the consent of the Upper Chamber of the Parliament. All the Irish Government activities, treaties or laws must respect different articles of their constitution.

An important branch of the Irish Government that does most of the activities is the Cabinet. Along time the Irish Cabinet was called either the Ministry of the Irish Republic or the Council of the Irish Free State and now it has 15 members.

From political point of view it is good to know that Ireland is a republic and also it has a president elected by the Irish people, as I said above, it is the Prime Minister who actually governs the country.

In what concerns the judicial branch of the Irish Government, it is conducted by a Chief Justice and what is more important, it has nothing to do with the government or other political parties.

The Irish politics has long been dominated by the battle between two political parties: Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael. A third as importance and also having historical significance is the Labour Party.

6.4.2 The Constitution of Ireland

The Constitution of Ireland is the most important official act of the Irish nation. It settled the basis of the Irish democracy and it states some key aspects such as the fundamental rights of the Irish people, the separation of powers, the attributes of the Irish president and those of the Parliament and some characteristics of the Irish nation.

6.4.3. Local Government in Ireland

The thirty-four regions of Ireland are also called counties or city councils. The Irish councils have members elected by local peoples' votes. Each of the councils' leaders is supported by council managers who, in order to avoid any political interpretations, are appointed by independent branches of the government and are specialized in this type of job. As in the case of the other three British countries, the Irish councils' area of expertise are the following fields: the infrastructure of that particular county, the public services, education and health. The members of the Irish councils are elected every five years.

6.5 Northern Ireland

6.5.1 Northern Ireland Government

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:StormontGeneral.jpg>. Taken today 03.05.2012)

Northern Ireland has a special governmental status because, as in the cases of the other three countries, much of the major matters are split between the British Parliament and its Parliament. The list of the matters that are strictly dealt with by the UK Parliament are civil aviation, human genetics and international affairs. All the other aspects concerning the life in Northern Ireland are dealt with by the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Northern Ireland Executive that are the main governmental bodies in Northern Ireland.

The Northern Ireland Assembly

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Northern-ireland-assembly.png>. Taken today 03.05.2012)

This Assembly is the official legislative body that has devolved powers in Northern Ireland. Its powers are quite extended from areas concerning the Northern Ireland state to the appointment of the Northern Irish Executive. It has the same location as the Irish Parliament.

The Northern Irish Assembly has a difficult task of maintaining in the balance the fragile agreement between the two communities from whom originated the Conflict – the unionists and the nationalists. This Assembly is a unicameral organization whose 108 members are the equivalent of the Irish Ministers. They are generally elected by single transferable vote. If, in extreme situations, the entire Assembly is suspended the one that will continue the governing will be the Northern Ireland Office.

The graphic representation of the political parties that are represented in the Northern Irish Assembly is the following:

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Northern_Ireland_Assembly_2011.svg. Taken today 03.05.2012)

Here are the political parties represented by the colors in the picture: dark pink – is the Unionist Party; dark green - Sinn Féin; violet – the Ulster Unionist Party; light green – Social Democratic and Labor Party; yellow – Alliance Party; blue – Traditional Unionist Voice; grey – Independent.

The Northern Ireland Executive

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Northern_Ireland_Executive.gif. Taken today 03.05.2012)

This executive branch of the Northern Irish government deals with the administrative aspects of Northern Ireland, is a devolved legislature and answers only to the Northern Ireland Assembly.

As in the cases of the other British governments, a First Minister who has as subordinate a deputy First Minister governs the Northern Ireland Executive. There are also different ministers who respond for different fields of activity and a Minister of Justice elected by the community.

The Northern Ireland Executive has the following tasks: to discuss the responsibilities of the Ministers and other legislative proposals or controversial matters; to come to a common agreement when there are controversies related to different aspects and recommend solutions. Unlike other governmental organizations

that necessitate preparations and have a fixed program for their meetings, the Northern Ireland Executive meets directly without any appointment. The ministers too have their obligations in the Executive. They have to participate to all the meetings of the Executive and, in the same time, to support and agree with the decisions taken by the two governmental structures the Executive and the Northern Ireland Assembly.

6.5.2 Northern Irish Constitution

Both the Republic of Ireland and the Northern Ireland share the same Constitution and both people respect its provisions.

6.5.3 Local Government

From geographical and administrative point of view, Northern Ireland has twenty-six districts, which, at their turn, have councils. The major difference is that not all these councils have any responsibilities for fields like education, health, roads or fire departments as the other council from UK have. What they are allowed to manage is strictly related to smaller areas of the country like economic development, entertainment, or community services.

Tasks for a better understanding:

Which are the main political parties in England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, and Northern Ireland?

Enumerate some representatives of each party.

Which is the structure of the British government?

What is 10 Downing Street?

What do you know about the British Parliament (structure, functions, ceremonies etc.)?

Which are the key figures from the British Parliament?

What is the Woolsack?

Talk about the British Constitution (sources, principles)

How are divided the four UK' countries from local governing point of view?

What are the Scottish Parliamentary Proceedings?

Chose a British government and talk about it?

Evaluation Test Nr. 4

Time to solve the test: **1h.**

Points: 100

Group and individual activity

Individual activity

Chose a political party from England, Scotland, Ireland, Wale or Northern Ireland and make a short presentation.

(50p)

Group work

You have the following **themes**:

The fire from the parliament

The Guy Fawkes Night

The House of Commons

The House of Lords

A theme at your choice

Chose a variant and, in groups, prepare a short oral presentation of the chosen theme that will be discussed with other groups.

(50p)

Minimal Bibliography

1. The present Course
2. Personal Materials

Recommendations:

Personal contribution, the varied materials like books, maps, dictionaries, as well as other materials at your choice, the correct citing of the authors and text from

the books and a good cooperation between the team members are essential for the maximum of points.

These points will count at the final evaluation.

PAY ATTENTION!

Inspiration from the Internet sites are allowed but there will be severe penalties for the 'copy - paste' material used without references or the texts copied as such.

GOOD LUCK!

UNIT 7 FINAL TEST

Chose a government or political party from the module two and build up a presentation in which you can present a character either from the British history or an institution or a country.

These presentations will be sustained in front of your colleagues and if they consider them interesting and debates will start the more point you will receive that will contribute to the final mark.

Recommendations:

Personal contribution, the varied materials like books, maps, dictionaries, as well as other materials at your choice, the correct citing of the authors and text from the books are essential for the maximum of points.

PAY ATTENTION!

The more you document and find something new about your chosen theme the more points you will receive.

Inspiration from the Internet sites are allowed but there will be severe penalties for the 'copy - paste' material used without references or the texts copied as such.

GOOD LUCK!

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ENGLISH
(FOR THE I.D. STUDENTS USE)

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SHORT INTRODUCTION TO THE SEMINAR SUPPORT

The purpose of the seminar support
The objective of the seminar support
The time necessary for each activity
The evaluation

CONTENT

MODULE 3: BRITISH LEGAL SYSTEM

pag. 131

UNIT 8: BRITISH LEGAL INSTITUTIONS

pag. 131

- 8.1. The Supreme Court of Justice
 - 8.1.1. The Supreme Court of Justice Jurisdiction
 - 8.1.2 The Structure of the Supreme Court of Justice]
- 8.2 The High Court of Justice
 - 8.2.1 The Structure of the High Court of Justice
 - 8.2.1.1 The Queen's Bench Division
 - 8.2.1.2 The Chancery Division
 - 8.2.1.3 The Family Division
 - 8.2.2 The Key Figures of the High Court
- 8.3 The Royal Court of Justice
- 8.4 The Magistrates' Court
 - 8.4.1 The Structure of the Magistrates' Court
 - 8.4.2 The Magistrates' Court Procedure
- 8.5 The Crown Court
 - 8.5.1 The Key Figures of the Crown Court
- 8.6 The Court of Appeal from England and Wales
 - 8.6.1 The Key Figures of the Court of Appeal
- 8.7 Tribunals
 - 8.7.1 The Key Figures in Tribunals
- 8.8 Police in the UK

Auto evaluation test

Basic bibliography

Answers and commentaries at the auto evaluation test

UNIT 9 Law and Justice

pag. 147

- 9.1 The English Law
 - 9.1.1 The Structure of the English Law
 - 9.1.2 England and Wales as separate jurisdictions
 - 9.1.3 The Structure of the English Court System

- 9.2 The Scottish Legal System
 - 9.2.1 The Scottish Legislation
 - 9.2.2 The Structure of the Scottish System
 - 9.2.3 The Key Figures in the Scottish Courts
- 9.3 The Welsh legal System
 - 9.3.1 The Welsh Legislation
 - 9.3.2 The Welsh Law
 - 9.3.3 The Structure of the English and Wales Courts' System
 - 9.3.4 The Key Figures in the Welsh Courts
- 9.4 The Irish Legal System
 - 9.4.1 The Structure of the Irish Courts' System
 - 9.4.2 The Key Figures in the Irish Courts

Auto evaluation test

Basic bibliography

Answers and commentaries at the auto evaluation test

Module 4 Practice

pag 164

Unit 10 Practical Applications

pag 164

Basic bibliography

Unit 11 Final test

pag.165

**FIRST YEAR OF STUDY
ENGLISH 2**

MODULE 3: BRITISH LEGAL SYSTEM

UNIT 8	British Legal System
UNIT 9	Law and Justice

MODULE 3: BRITISH LEGAL SYSTEM

UNIT 8: BRITISH LEGAL INSTITUTIONS

- 8.1. The Supreme Court of Justice
 - 8.1.1. The Supreme Court of Justice Jurisdiction
 - 8.1.2 The Structure of the Supreme Court of Justice]
- 8.2 The High Court of Justice
 - 8.2.1 The Structure of the High Court of Justice
 - 8.2.1.1 The Queen's Bench Division
 - 8.2.1.2 The Chancery Division
 - 8.2.1.3 The Family Division
 - 8.2.2 The Key Figures of the High Court
- 8.3 The Royal Court of Justice
- 8.4 The Magistrates' Court
 - 8.4.1 The Structure of the Magistrates' Court
 - 8.4.2 The Magistrates' Court Procedure
- 8.5 The Crown Court
 - 8.5.1 The Key Figures of the Crown Court
- 8.6 The Court of Appeal from England and Wales
 - 8.6.1 The Key Figures of the Court of Appeal
- 8.7 Tribunals
 - 8.7.1 The Key Figures in Tribunals
- 8.8 Police in the UK

Auto evaluation test

Basic bibliography

Answers and commentaries at the auto evaluation test

MODULE 3 BRITISH LEGAL SYSTEM

UNIT 8 British Legal Institutions

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(source: Internet. Google Images:

<http://the1709blog.blogspot.ro/2011/11/meltwater-appeal-to-go-to-supreme-court.html>. Taken today 06.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/2011/jan/27/supreme-court-parliamentary-sovereignty>. Taken today 06.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125573382497890937.html>.

Taken today 06.06.2012)

This instrument of British justice is the higher legal institution at which a British person may appeal.

It deals with all sorts of cases and matters and its jurisdiction engulfs that of England, Wales, Ireland and Northern Ireland. The Scottish law accepts it but the Supreme Court influence is significantly diminished in its case. Just as in the case of the British Parliaments, the Supreme Court of Justice solves devolved cases that are not dealt with by the English, Welsh, Irish or Northern Irish laws.

As a major, significant, British, legal institution the Supreme Court of Justice has the main headquarters in Westminster, London.

(source: Internet. Google Images:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1217459/No-breeches-Britains-modern-Supreme-Court-opens-11-new-wig-Justices-swear-in.html>. Taken today 06.06.2012)

Two important dates have to be remembered when we refer to the Supreme Court of Justice: the year **2005** – the Supreme Court of Justice was **legally**

established through a Constitutional Act and October 1st 2009 – it began its legal activity.

One of the reasons for the establishment of this Court was to release the House of Lords of all judicial situations. The main members of the new founded Supreme Court of Justice were the Lords of Appeal and 12 professional judges.

8.1.1 The Supreme Court of Justice' Jurisdiction

As mentioned above the main role of the Supreme Court of Justice is to solve the cases sent by three English and Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish legal systems that could not be solved by their own tribunals. Due to its importance as the highest court of justice the cases that are sent here are from different branches of law so there is a great diversity. The employees from the Supreme Court of Justice deal with cases of commercial law, of family law, cases where different private persons are suing public institutions, cases related to the breaking of the Human Rights and final criminal cases.

A special situation is registered in the case of Scotland that, unlike there rest of the British legal systems which send criminal cases to the Supreme Court, solves all the situation in its own High Court of Judiciary.

It must be mentioned here an important aspect related to the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom. The main reason for its establishment was a principle that had to be respected by the British Parliament and was very important for the welfare of the British nation: the separation of powers. Many members of the British Parliament believe that the judiciary and the legislation have to be totally separated matters. If this situation was respected, the people will understand better the two fields and any confusion was avoided.

8.1.2 The Structure of the Supreme Court of Justice

President → Deputy President → Justice: Acting Justices → Chief Executive

Did you know that.....

In the Supreme Court of Justice are usually acting **twelve Justices** but there are also cases that necessitate the so-called '**Acting Justices**'. These are a special group, with a long experience in legal matters and are members of the Court of Appeal of England and Wales, of the Court of Appeal of Northern Ireland and of the First or the Second Division of the Inner House of the Scottish Court of Session.

The now in function **President of the Supreme Court of Justice of the United Kingdom** is **Lord Phillips of Worth Matravers**.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/2010/jun/10/uk-supreme-court-terrorism>. Taken today 06.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://archbishop-cranmer.blogspot.ro/2008/07/lord-chief-justice-british-muslims.html>. Taken today 06.06.2012)

8.2 The High Court of Justice

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://3dsplus.info/the-royal-courts-of-justice>. Taken today 06.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://www.bushywood.com/royal_courts_of_justice.htm. Taken today 06.06.2012)

This High Court is one of the most important institutions of England and Wales. It has also a long tradition and is among the first Courts established in these two countries. As a perfect proof of its importance only certain types of cases are judged here and it unconditionally benefice of the other institutions' support. It is situated in the core of London in the same building with the Royal Courts of Justice and is headed by the Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales.

8.2.1 The Structure of the High Court of Justice

For a greater success in solving different cases, the High Court of Justice is divided into three main branches each of them having specific tasks: **The Queen's Bench Division, The Chancery Division and The Family Division.**

8.2.1.1 The Queen's Bench Division

The Queen's/King's Bench Division is a significant branch of the High Court specialized in only **two types of trials**. The first type refers to *the cases that involve personal injury and general negligence* and *the second type refers to the cases of persons who, for any number of reasons, want to challenge decisions taken by tribunals and local or governmental institutions*. All these type of cases are then filtered by a judge who decide if they are enough important or significant to be taken to a serious trial. The Queen's Bench Division also has *subdivisions: Commercial Court, Administrative Court* etc.

8.2.1.2 A second branch of the High Court is **the Chancery Division** that is also specialized in certain categories of laws. Its specialization are the business law, trusts law, land law etc.

The Chancery Division has *two subdivisions: the Patent Court and the Companies Court*.

The Chancellor of the High Court is the official title of the person who is the head of this institution. **Sir Andrew Morritt is the Present Chancellor.**

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://lincolnsinnalumni.com.my/treasurermsg.htm>. Taken today 06.06.2012)

8.2.1.3 The Family Division is the third branch of the High Court and is, as the title suggests it, specialized in family law. The cases that are presented here are generally about divorce, children, medical treatments, inheritances etc. Its decisions in certain cases are controversial and are priming over the wishes of the family. The most delicate and controversial cases are those of life and death situations: allowing medical staff to separate conjoint twins even the parents disagree; allowing that certain persons to be disconnected from the life support machines if they wishes it and so on.

The Head of the Family Division and the President of this institution is **Sir Nicholas Hall**.

8.2.2 The key-figures of the High Court

The High Court Judges are considered the best judges from England and Wales so the cases they are dealing with are complex and difficult. Their cases are usually judged in London and they belong to one of the three divisions of the High Court: The Queen's Bench Division, The Family Division and The Chancery Division.

Due to their importance they are named by the Queen on the recommendation of the Lord Chancellor.

The High Court Judges are easily identified due to the colour of their robes. The predominant colour is red so when they deal with criminal cases their robes are red and when they deal with civil cases they wear black robes with red stripes around the collar of the robe.

Here are some **key figures from the High Court**:

The Chancellor of the High Court

He is an important figure in the judicial system because this function gives him the right to be member of both the Court of Appeal as judge and of the Privy Council with the title of ‘the right honourable’. However, his or hers most important function is that of President of the Chancery Division. The current Chancellor is Sir Andrew Morritt. To be distinguished from the rest of the judicial figures, the official dressing of the Chancellor of the High Court is black robe when he/she goes to court and a golden one when there are ceremonial occasions.

The Circuit Judges

The Circuit Judges is a special category of judges that are designated to a certain region from England and Wales and are judging processes in crown and county courts. The cases they deal with are either criminal or civil cases or family case. To be distinguished easily from other judges the circuit judges worn violet robes and short wigs.

The Court of Appeal Judges

These judges from **the Court of Appeal** are also named ‘Heads of Division’ and in a formation of three judges are participating to appeals at the Civil Division which, at its turn receives them from **the High Court** and the county courts.

The Court of Appeal’ judges are also summoned for appeals **at the Criminal Division**, appeals that are sent here from **the Crown Court**.

The judges from the Court of Appeal are persons with long years of experience and they are usually named by the Queen and by the Judicial Appointments Commission.

Their official robes are different when they go to the two Divisions. So, when they are having trials at the Criminal Division their official clothes are a court coat and waistcoat trousers and two short yellow stripes at her collar and a short wig. The Civil Division requires only the usual black robe.

The President of the Queen’s Bench Division

He is appointed by the Queen at the recommendation of the Judicial Appointments Commission. An obligatory condition for a candidate to this post is to be qualified as Lord Justice of Appeal or to have the function of judge at this Court.

Their Court robes are more elaborated ones consisting of a waistcoat, Court coat, skirts or trousers, golden bands and short wigs.

8.3 The Royal Court of Justice

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Royal_Courts_of_Justice_Sign.jpg.
Taken today 07.06.2012)
(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Royal_courts_of_justice.jpg.
Taken today 07.06.2012)

The Royal Court of Justice is also one of the most important buildings in London mainly because here are **the headquarters of the Court of Appeal of England and Wales and the High Court of Justice of England and Wales**. To illustrate its importance, the architects that build it decided to place the building on a **famous street called Strand in Westminster**. Its neighbour buildings are also related to the judicial activity. There are four Inns of Court and the famous Old Bailey or as it is officially named the Central Criminal Court. The building was constructed during the reign of Queen Victoria who also inaugurated it in 1870.

The building itself is an elaborated construction full of stone carvings that have their own meaning. For example, on the northern part of the building are carved in stone two animal figures a cat and a dog that symbolise the two litigant parts from a process.

The interior of this huge building hoses different rooms each of them having its own purpose. There are *the Waiting Rooms, Arbitration and Consultation Chambers, Robing Rooms* etc.

Along time new buildings were added to the actual building of the Royal Court of Justice having different destinations such as the divorce courts or the Queen's Building. Later on there were build another twenty-four new courts for the Chancery Division and for the Civil Division of the Court of Appeal.

8.4 Magistrates' Court

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.btinternet.com/~ormcourthistory/CourtHist1.htm>.
Taken today 10.06.2012)
(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.ukcle.ac.uk/students/resources-for-students/layout/>.
Taken today 10.06.2012)

The Magistrates' Court is the type of Court characteristic only for England and Wales. The Magistrates Court is the lowest court in England and Wales and the cases judges are closely related with the police activity. In fact, its former name was the Police Court. Being the lowest court, the number of the judges that activate here is lesser than in other courts so there are only two or three justices of peace also known as the lay magistrates and a district judge also known under the name of stipendiary magistrate.

8.4.1 The Structure of the Magistrates' Court

There are some **key figures** that activate in the Magistrates' Court. Let us meet some of them:

The first important key figure in the Magistrates' Court is the **Legal Adviser or the Justices' Clerk** whose main job is to offer his legal expertise whenever it is solicited. This situation is common in the case of the lay magistrates who often solicit them due to their lack of legal training. The activity of the Justices' Clerks is a very sensitive subject and it is rigorously controlled by rules and regulations. These rules say that the Clerks must be impartial and do not attempt to influence in any way the Magistrates Court. More than that, whenever their advice is solicited by the lay magistrates, the advices must be given in from of all the participants to the trial.

An equally important key figure, already mentioned above, is **the lay magistrate**.

The lay magistracy has a long history in England and Wales and an important fact that must be mentioned is that they do not have a solid legal background of knowledge and because of that they are often solicit the help of the Justices' Clerks. If we want to date the beginning of the lay magistracy in England, the year 1327 must be mentioned because around this date the justices of peace began exercise their legal powers. The name justice of peace is the first name given to the future lay magistrates and as the name states their main duty was to maintain peace in a certain county. Their appointment did not have strict rules as it has today; the candidates had just to respect the law and to be worthy members of society so, most of the justices of peace were noblemen or squires. Today, the title of lay magistrates is not used anymore because it is believed that the public would lose their confidence in them so now there are only district judges and magistrates.

Another key figure at the Magistrates' Court is **the District Judge** or, as they were once named, the Stipendiary Magistrates. They are considered the most important characters in the Magistrates' Court and are given cases like the criminal ones, those involving youth problems and certain civil cases. Their authority allows them to involve in a variety of cases like the Family Proceedings Court' ones, the extradition cases and the cases dealing with terrorism. A single District Judge is enough to hear a case.

As in the cases of the other judges the Queen is the one who appoints the District Judges at the recommendation of the Lord Chancellor. Unlike the other judges whom mandates are of maximum four years, the District Judges have a seven years mandate.

In what regards the robes the District Judges have the liberty of not wearing one when they are in court. If there are official events they do wear black robes with blue stripes at the collar and no wig.

The last key figures in the Magistrates' Court are **the Magistrates**. They are somehow similar with the Lay Magistrates in the sense that they do not have legal

training just follow a programme that prepares them for what happens in a court of law.

Their jurisdiction is limited to the adults' criminal courts and when they judge a case it is mandatory to be three persons. Unlike the other judges from the different courts and divisions that have strict rules of appointment, the magistrates do not have such rules, the only condition imposed being a vast life' experience. Another aspect that is different from the other judges is their statue. In the magistrates' commissions can activate persons of different ages, sexes, gender and ethnicity.

The type of cases judged by the magistrates is that of less important criminal offences such as theft, damages, the disturbing of the public order and motor car offences. They also hear cases of rape and murder but they are obliged to send them further to other courts that have the legal competence to prosecute them. An important aspect of their jurisdiction deals with bails and search warrants when these ones are solicited by the police.

Magistrates are also judging cases that belong to the civil matters like the ones involving the families, children and different city taxes.

Of their appointment occupies the Lord Chancellor on the advice of local commissions and an interview is obligatory before any decision being taken.

In what regards their official outfit the magistrates must respect a decent code of dressing when they are in court but they do not have a special robe.

8.1.4.2 The Magistrates' Court Procedure

Unlike the United States where some types of the court trials cannot be judges without the jury, in England and Wales this system does not exist anymore. In the case of the Magistrates' Court the person who prosecutes the trials is a member of the Crown Prosecution Service. There are also the cases of minor offences, as those related to traffic, where the accused have two choices: either to represent himself or to hire a solicitor or barrister. Another option is available, just as in the case of the American legal system, that a duty solicitor to take the case of the persons who, from different reasons, did not hire a solicitor or barrister.

A trial can end in the case of the defendant with the option of **bail**. In this case a defendant is summoned by the court and must come to identify himself/herself to the court and to be present when he is summoned. If he chooses not to be present when he is summoned by the court there will be serious penalties. Another legal aspect of this option is the obligation of the defendant to remain in the custody of the court until the bail is settled.

A defendant in the case of a serious offence trial has the right, through his solicitor, to plea 'not guilty' to his accuses. This particular situation can end in two variants. If the defendant is found not guilty he will be acquitted that is he will be free to leave home. In the situation in which he is found guilty, his offence will be attentively analysed and, depending on its seriousness, the penalties can vary from

lighter ones **such as work in the favour of the community or drug rehabilitation to imprisonment** in which case the sentence will be immediately applied.

8.5 The Crown Court

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/1633204>. Taken today 10.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Reading_Crown_Court.jpg.

Taken today 10.06.2012)

The Crown Court is a court with tradition being considered as one of the Senior Courts of England and Wales. The cases that are judged here are criminal ones so it is also named the higher court of first instances in criminal cases being subordinate only to the High Court. This Crown Court ensures its services in the seven regions of England through HM Court Services. Wales does not use this court due to the devolved power of the Welsh Assembly Government.

The Crown Court is considered important for the services it provides: appeals that came from the magistrates' court; giving harsher sentences to the defendants of the magistrates' courts and sentences in its own processes and jury trials.

Some of these services must be explained: for example, the harsher sentences to the defendants of the magistrates' court. This court is limited in the lengths and value of its sentences. A person convicted in the magistrates' court cannot be held in the court' custody more than six months and be given a fine of 5,000 £. In certain situations the cases can be sent to the Crown Court and it has the legal power to analyse the cases and if it necessary to give a greater sentence.

8.5.1 The main figures of the Crown Court

There are usually three types of judges that are performing judicial activities in the Crown Court. These are; High Court Judges because being two almost equal courts these judges can prosecute cases in the Crown Court; Circuit Judges and Recorders. The last category defines those Barristers or Solicitors having private studies of law.

8.6 The Court of Appeal of England and Wales

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Royal_courts_of_justice.jpg.

The Court of Appeal of England and Wales is the second institution as importance after the Supreme Court from United Kingdom. Its importance is underline by the number of judges – 37 and by the extended jurisdiction that allows these judges to hear both criminal and civil cases.

The foundation of the Court of Appeal is due to the numerous appeals that were sent to the House of Lords and which occupied much of the time reserved for other matters so, a legal institution that undertook this job was opportune.

There are two divisions in the English and Welsh legal system that depend very much of the Court of Appeal for solving different aspects: the Civil Division that deals with non-criminal cases and the Criminal Division that deals with more serious offences.

8.6.1 The key figures in the Court of Appeal

As mentioned above the key figures in the Court of Appeal are the judges named **Lords Justices of Appeal**. There are 34 male judges and 4 female judges in the Court of Appeal.

8.7 Tribunals

Tribunals are the lowest link in the legal chain of the civil justice system. There are many tribunals on the territory of Great Britain. Their main duty is to solve all the legal situations that may appear in the civil society. There are **two types of tribunals in England and Wales: the First-tier Tribunal and the Upper Tribunal** and each of these two tribunals have at their turn **several Chambers** that help them resolve the volume of work.

The tribunals are ruled by chairman and several members. Together they hear different cases often detailed by witnesses and establish fines and penalties.

8.7.1 The key figures of a tribunal

A key figure in a tribunal is **the Chamber President**. This is an important job in a tribunal because he administrates all the daily activity and also is the liaison person between the Senior President of the Tribunals and the other members of this structure.

Another important figure is **the Tribunal Judge** who preside the processes and give the sentences. Their main duty is to decide in the civil cases; these cases involve different disputes at work and appeals made against the Government' decisions etc.

The next important figures that play an important role in a tribunal are **the members of the tribunals** who also participate at the process. These members are required to have a legal basis but they do not have a solid legal training. They are paid for their everyday activity.

The Senior President of the Tribunal is the absolute leader of the two branches of the Tribunal and the Chambers.

The Chief Coroner has a great responsibility because he must coordinate the activity of all coroners in England and Wales and ensure a proper training for them. He also supervises the appointments of new members and keeps a close relation with the police forces. Whenever a member of the personal dies he is the one who investigates the case. He must write an annual report that will be handed to the Lord Chancellor about the activity done by his service. This report will also be presented in the Parliament.

When it comes to the appointment of the Chief Coroner only two persons have the right to decide who will be the next Chief Coroner: The Lord Chief Justice and the Lord Chancellor.

There are some **emblems of the courts**. Here are some of them:

The Royal Coat of Arms – is mandatory in each courtroom from England and Wales. Its significance refers to the fact that the Queen of Great Britain is the only person that is entitled to provide justice. To prove this every judge and magistrate with very few exceptions are named by the Queen so their first move when they enter a courtroom is to bow in front of the Coat of Arms to prove their respect for the Queen.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.bryanrawlings.com/>. Taken today 10.06.2012)

Gavels are the typical instruments that appear in a court of law. They are used by the judges and magistrates to enhance the sentences. But, unlike in the American courts where the gavels are often used in the English and Welsh courtrooms they are no longer in use.

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://www.rockcanada.org/1/?attachment_id=1715. Taken today 10.06.2012)

The **oaths** are part of the ceremonial of investment of a new judge, magistrate or tribunal members. They are taken very serious because are considered as a confirmation of the new job. There are two oaths that are said by judges, magistrates and tribunal members: in the first that is pronounced is sworn allegiance to the Queen and the second is for the judicial activity.

8.8 Police in the United Kingdom

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.itsecurity.be/5-people-arrested-for-ddos-attacks-by-london-police>. Taken today 10.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://cantate-domino.blogspot.ro/2006/10/metropolitan-police-service.html>. Taken today 10.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mounted_police_buckingham_palace arp.jpg. Taken today 10.06.2012)

The relation between law and police is a very close one. In the case of the United Kingdom each of the three legal systems England and Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland has its own type of police organization. The official name for the British police is **constable**. Although the types of police organization vary in function of the three legal systems, the constables from United Kingdom are British citizens and they must submit to the laws just as the other citizens.

There are **six types of agencies** in Great Britain that ensure the order:

Territorial police forces are the most known ones because they are the ones that patrol the streets of the British metropolis and villages. They are organized differently because in England and Wales the supreme authority is an independent Police Authority while in Scotland they depend on a Police Board.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.itsecurity.be/5-people-arrested-for-ddos-attacks-by-london-police>. Taken today 10.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://cantate-domino.blogspot.ro/2006/10/metropolitan-police-service.html>. Taken today 10.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mounted_police_buckingham_palace arp.jpg. Taken today 10.06.2012)

Special Police Forces are the national police and have a special jurisdiction because their main objective is serious organized crime. They are also called British Transport Police and due to the nature of their activity are allowed to arrest British citizens even when these ones crossed the borders of Great Britain.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://board.gearsoc.com/viewtopic.php?f=28&t=1068>. Taken today 11.06.2012)

Miscellaneous police forces are the ones that ensure the order in parks and other public places.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.marcvallee.co.uk/blog/tag/riot-police/>. Taken today 11.06.2012)

The City of London Police is an important part of the police forces from Great Britain. A great responsibility sits on their shoulders because on one side they are patrolling in the official capital of the United Kingdom and on the other side their main duty is to protect a relatively small area named the Square Mile but very important from financial and business point of view.

Their other duties beside the one mention above is to guard some important institutions and museums found in this area and to ensure the security of the personalities that attend the State manifestations. The City of London Police can be easily identified when necessary because they wear caps with small, white and red stripes and golden plates.

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.cityoflondon.police.uk/CityPolice/>. Taken today 11.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.visitthecity.co.uk/index.php/home/police/>. Taken today 11.06.2012)

Metropolitan Police Service (Scotland Yard)

(source: Internet. Google Images:

<http://pennylibertygbow.wordpress.com/2012/04/07/ten-cases-of-alleged-racism-in-london/>. Taken today 11.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://super-injunction.blogspot.ro/2011/05/sexual-misconduct-in-police-force.html>. Taken today 11.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/mps-expenses/5331162/MPs-expenses-Scotland-Yard-chief-and-DPP-consult-on-possible-criminal-investigation.html>. Taken today 11.06.2012)

Metropolitan Police Service or as it is known as the famous **Scotland Yard** is a police service whose main task is to patrol London with the exception of the Square Mile that is protected by the City of London Police. They are an important, metropolitan police force in which attributions also enters the protection of the Royal Family and the British Government but also counter-terrorism activities. Their chief is The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis.

Three police agencies - Territorial Police Service. Special Police Service and Miscellaneous Police Forces - have the power of arrest in other countries then their own only in certain conditions. Here are some of these conditions:

The arrest of a person on the basis of a warrant when the police forces are outside their jurisdiction covers two situations:

The first situation refers to a person who is a witness and there is a warrant emitted on his/her name in England and Wales, Northern Ireland or Scotland.

The second situation refers to a person on whose name was emitted a warrant of imprisonment and who crossed the borders of the country.

The arrest of a person without an emitted warrant also covers two situations:

The first situation refers to the arrest of a person without warrant for the offences committed in his/her own country. If the police from the country where he/she committed the offence realize that he/she left this country they can arrest him/her wherever he/she is.

The police forces that arrest a person without a warrant on the territory of another British country are obliged to take him/her to the nearest police station where the offence has been committed and question him. When a person is the police custody for questioning for a possible offence he cannot be retained more than four hours.

The second situation refers to the arrest of a person without a warrant in other countries.

If a constable from Scotland wants to arrest a person that committed an offence there but is now on the territory of Northern Ireland has the same power of arrest there as in his own country.

Unit 9 Law and Justice

9.1 The English Legal System

(Internet source. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barristers_in_England_and_Wales. Taken today 14.06.2012)

There are **three important branches** of the **English Legal System**:

The Executive branch that is in fact **the English Government**.

The Legislative branch refers to **the British Parliament**.

The Judiciary branch that will be presented in this chapter.

The English law is the legal system that influenced other legal systems from both Europe, and here I refer to the Commonwealth states, and even from the American continent where the United States' law took some of the English elements.

If we study attentively the systems of law from the former colonies of the British Empire we will observe a great similitude with the English legal system and the ones found there a far reminiscence of the imposed English ruling.

The name of 'English law' applies in the cases of England and Wales and, although in Wales, as was explained in the Government Unit, the Welsh Assembly has devolved powers, many aspects of legislation are common to these two countries.

9.1.1 The Structure of the English law

As we already established the English law is equivalent with the common law. Therefore, in both England and Wales the English legal system is composed by **two major components: the judges and the courts**. The procedure of the cases the judges are dealing with is very simple: they analyse each case and using the common sense and applying the rules of legal precedents are able to solve one way or another these cases.

The rules of legal precedents are essential elements in solving different cases. Whenever the judges deal with some difficult elements of a case, they can study other solved cases that belonged to the same category and see the methods applied there. This procedure may help them in solving their current cases.

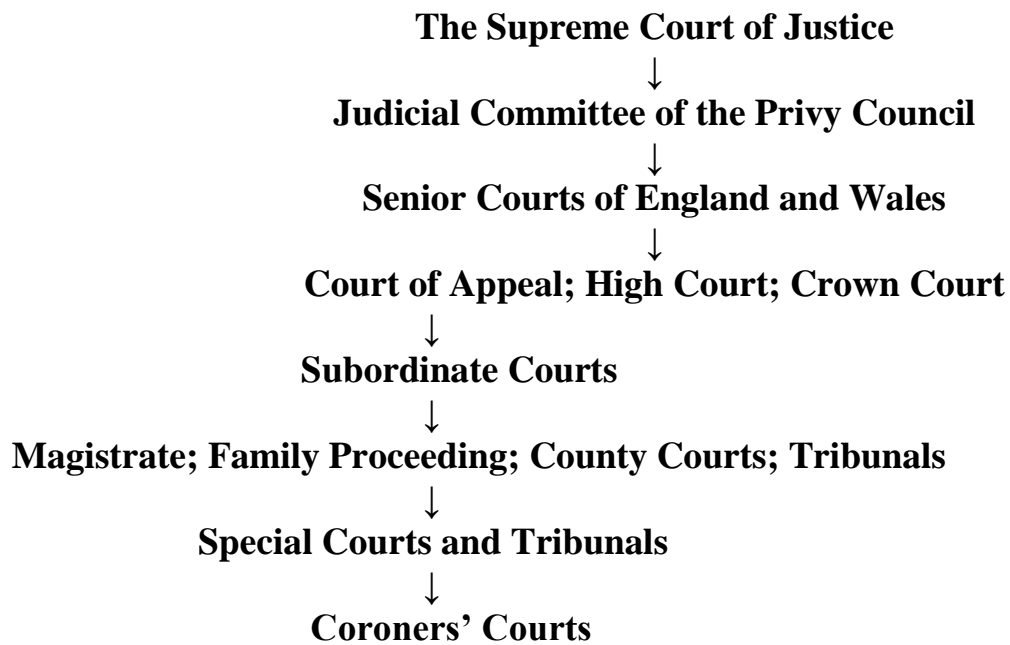
What is important to know is that in the cases of England and Wales the Supreme Court of Justice has full and uncontested jurisdiction and every other court has to obey its decisions.

Another interesting thing related to the common law is that of the criminal cases. In this type of cases is applied the rule of precedent. For example, in England and Wales the murder cases have always been dealt with a death penalty in the past and with a life sentence today.

On the other hand both England and Wales are part of Great Britain and, as such members of the European Union. Most of the European Union cases are civil ones so they also can be judged in England and Wales that have the same legislation. The European Court of Justice has legal jurisdiction in England and Wales.

IMPORTANT!

Here is a scheme that shows you all the courts from Great Britain.



9.1.2 England and Wales as separate jurisdictions

The history of the United Kingdom is, from legal point of view, full of modification of its constituent states.

One of these modifications refers to Welsh jurisdiction and was initiated by King Henry the VIIIth. He annexed Wales to the Kingdom of England and by doing this he forced it to adopt the English jurisdiction. The other member states of the United Kingdom remained from one aspect or another independent of England. For example Scotland preserved its religious and judicial system; Ireland, on the contrary lost its political independence but preserved the religious one through the Church of Ireland; Northern Ireland has a special status because, although its legal system has some roots in the old, medieval English common law system it also has a certain degree of independence in what regards the legal system.

I keep talking in this support of seminar about the political and judicial independence of the countries that constitute the United Kingdom. This independence has a name. It is named **statehood**. Modern laws of the public international law established a set of rules that defined this statehood. It is very important for a state to have the following requirements. First of all it must have a population that permanently inhabits that state. Secondly, that particular state must have well established borders. And finally it must interact with its neighbour states and establish relations with them.

Today, the Welsh state is divided between a certain degree of political and judicial independence of the National Assembly of Wales and its dependency of the English Legislation. The legislative Welsh independence is something new and it concerns the Welsh government that have the right to enact laws. But this is only a small victory because the civil and the criminal Welsh system are one and the same with that of the English one.

On all the territories of the British countries English is the official language being the one used in politics and legislation. Another small step towards a possible Welsh independence is the fact that its Parliament emitted an Act that placed the national, Welsh language on the same pedestal with the English one. So it can be spoken in courts and public sector.

9.1.3 The Structure of the English Court System

Most of **the English Courts and Tribunals** are identical with those presented in the **Law and Justice Chapter**. So, I will just enumerate them here:

1. Magistrates' Courts
2. County Courts
3. Crown Courts
4. High Court
5. The Court of Appeal
6. House of Lords or the Supreme Court

9.1.4 The key personages in the English Legal System

There are a few categories of key personages in the English Legal System. Most of them have already been presented as in the case of the courts in the chapter that presented the British legal institution. However, for a better keeping in mind here are their enumeration and some short ideas.

1. **English Judges** are the main characters of the English courts. They supervise the entire process from a court and give sentences.
2. **Barristers** – are also named lawyers and are the legal representatives that defend or accuse the parts involved in the process. The barristers have usually a solid legal training and a great experience in certain domains of the law. Their job is a diverse one, due to their experience in the field, ranging from actually participating to trials to giving legal advice to the persons involved in

certain cases. The legal advices refer to the behaviour of the persons in courts during a trial or to the validity of the case.

3. **Solicitors** – also named advocates - are less specialised lawyers dealing mostly with civil cases. Unlike the barristers the solicitors are paid for their activity in court.
4. **The parts** – are the persons involved in the process. They are named the accused and the defendant.
5. **The witnesses** – are those particular persons that help one part or another by giving detailed accounts about what happened in that particular situation.

There are some more or less subtle differences between a barrister and a solicitor.

The first difference and the most obvious one is **the way they are paid**. The barristers are paid by the state while the solicitors are paid by the person that hires them. Their payment differs in function of the number of cases they have in a day.

A second difference, underlined above, is **their different practice of law**. Both of them have studied law and have experience in the field but the barristers' legal experience is more vast and specialized. They are allowed to involve in both criminal and civil cases from the highest to the lowest courts. The solicitors are involved only in civil cases and in lower courts such as the Magistrates' Court, the County Courts or in the Tribunals. If, however, they want to advance in their carrier they must attend a period of training during which they are named solicitor-advocates.

9.2 The Scottish Legal System

9.2.1 The Scottish Legislation

(Internet source. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scots_law. Taken today 14.06.2012)

The Scottish Law is one of the third legal systems of Great Britain together with North Irish and English ones. His roots can be found in different, ancient legal documents and it is a mixture of common law and civil law documents. In what concerns the legislation in Scotland there are common features with the English law

and the North Irish law in different, major areas but, in the same time, there are distinct features too. For example, **the age of legal capacity** is different in England where the established age is of 18 years old and in Scotland where the established age is that of 16 years old. Another difference between the two countries refers to the judicial system more precisely to the number of juries in a trial. In England the allowed number is that of 12 juries while in Scotland is that of 15 juries.

There are many sources on which the Scottish law basis but the most important one is the Common Law. The Scottish Criminal Law often uses the common law elements when it deals with murder trials.

9.2.2 The Structure of the Scottish Court System

There are **three important branches of the Scottish Legal System**:

The Executive branch that is in fact **the Scottish Government** and its relation with the Scottish Legal System is intermediate by the Cabinet Secretary for Justice.

The Legislative branch refers to **the Scottish Parliament**.

The Judiciary branch that will be presented in this chapter.

The Scottish legal system is divided into two branches: **the civil one and the criminal one**. Above all dominates by the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom that has jurisdiction over the civil and the criminal cases.

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Courts_of_Scotland. Taken today 11.06.2012)

The **Criminal Courts** are the following:

The High Court of Justiciary

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_Court_of_Justiciary. Taken today 11.06.2012)

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_Court_of_Justiciary. Taken today 11.06.2012)

This Court is the supreme criminal court and it is a combination between a Court of First Instance and a Court of Appeal. When there are cases of first instance

they are judged in the former Sheriff Court but when the cases are appeals they are judged in Edinburgh.

The Sheriff Court is one of the main Scottish criminal courts and its buildings are local. The procedure in this court can be either **solemn** and in this case the trial is led by the sheriff and 15 juries or summary when the Sheriff presides alone. The main legal procedures that are judged in the Sheriff's Court are related to: different criminal cases, the division of goods after someone's death, fines, adoption cases etc.

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sheriff_Court_Edinburgh.jpg. Taken today 11.06.2012)

The District Court

This court is a local court where the Justices of Peace are ruling together with the clerks of court. The cases they judge are those of the disturbing of the public peace, drunken persons, minor assaults etc. To all these cases the Justices of Peace can impose 60 days of imprisonment.

The Justice of Peace Courts

These Courts will be a combination between the Sheriff Court and the District Courts.

The Scottish Tribunal Service



(source: Internet. Google Images: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Justice/legal/Tribunals>. Taken today 11.06. 2012.)

This service supervises the activity of all tribunals from Scotland.

The Court of Session is the supreme legal mechanism that dominates the civil court. It is a combination between a court of first instance and one of appeal and its main headquarter is in the Parliament Building from Edinburgh.

8.3.3 The key personages in the Scottish Court System

From the start we must mention the fact that the Scottish and the English key personages are similar with only some minor differences in what concern the name. So here they are:

1. **The Lord Justice General** is the highest legal character in a Scottish Court.
2. **The advocates** are the Scottish equivalent of the English barristers. They perform the same tasks and are as specialized as their English counterparts.
3. The **Solicitors** – also named advocates - are less specialised lawyers dealing mostly with civil cases. Unlike the barristers the solicitors are paid for their activity in court.
4. **The parts** – are the persons involved in the process. They are named the accused and the defendant.
5. **The witnesses** – are those particular persons that help one part or another by giving detailed accounts about what happened in that particular situation.

The Scottish legal system has two main instruments used in courts: **the solicitors** and **the advocates**. The difference between these two categories is that solicitors have clients in the Sheriff Courts and the Court of Session. All the exams a candidate to these either two categories has to pass are supervised by the Law Society of Scotland. The exam is considered successful if the candidate receives the title of Bachelor of Law. In the case of the solicitors a one year course of legal training that is finalized with a Diploma in Professional Legal Practice and two years of intense practice at a law firm are confirming this job.

9.3 The Welsh Legal System

9.3.1 The Welsh Legislation

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contemporary_Welsh_Law. Taken today 14.06.2012)

As mentioned before, the National Assembly for Wales has devolved powers and is capable of emitting Assembly Matters or in other words laws. The Welsh legislative power is controlled by the British Government so whenever a law is emitted it has to be approved by three persons: *the Secretary of State for Wales, the*

two Houses of the Parliament and the Queen in Council. The one that have the final word about any new law or Orders is the Queen of Great Britain. Once hers acceptance is obtained the law or Order is assimilated in the Welsh legislation. The link between the British Government and the Welsh one is made by a General Council for Wales.

An important person in the Welsh Government is **Secretary of State for Wales**. She is the representative of the British Government and a minister and her area of expertise is Wales. Beside all the functions above she is also a member of the Cabinet and rules the Wales Office. The present Secretary of State for Wales is Cheril Gillian.

There are **three important branches of the Welsh Legal System**:

The Executive branch is represented by the Welsh Government and its relation with the Welsh Legal System.

The Legislative branch refers **the National Assembly for Wales**. This institution was previously detailed.

The Judiciary branch that will be presented in this chapter.

As mentioned above, in the **English Law chapter**, there is a single legislation that characterizes England and Wales. It is also true that, benefiting of the devolved system of legislation, in Wales the large field of English and Common law is applied for general matter while the more specific ones referring to the everyday Welsh life are dealt with the Welsh law.

Unlike the other three British countries, in Wales does not exist criminal law because the legislation is the English one and the English law is applied in Wales.

9.3.2 The Welsh Law

(source: Internet. Google Images: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contemporary_Welsh_Law. Taken today 14.06.2012)

Starting with the moment when Henry the VIIIth decided to unite, from all points of view, Wales with England, every political, legislative or social field that characterizes the Welsh nation, took elements from the English one.

Today, the so-called Contemporary Welsh Legislation is a legal field that exemplifies everything that I said above. All that refers to the Welsh laws is associated with the National Assembly of Wales and every official decision taken by this structure bears the name of Act of Union.

Being under strict control by the British Government, the National Assembly for Wales had its first victory regarding legislation in 2007 when, after almost 500 years it had the power to emit and formulate laws.

One of the first laws emitted by the National Assembly for Wales regarded the Welsh language that was, from now on, considered equal with the English one. This was a victory for the Welsh people because it stated their identity and although English remained the official language of the Great Britain it was neglected no more.

In what concerns the field of law in Wales, the English one is still predominant and much of its elements and element of the common law can be found today in it. However, due to the devolved system much of the law cases are judged in the Welsh Courts. Another fact that must be considered important is that are certain English laws that although were adapted especially for the Welsh legislation cannot be apply there from various reasons.

9.3.3 The Structure of the English and Welsh Court System

Most of **the English and Welsh Courts and Tribunals** are identical with those presented in the **Law and Justice Chapter**. So, I will just enumerate them here:

7. Magistrates' Courts
8. County Courts
9. Crown Courts
10. High Court
11. The Court of Appeal
12. House of Lords or the Supreme Court

9.3.4 The key personages in the English and Welsh Legal System

There are a few categories of key personages in the English and Welsh Legal System. Most of them have already been presented as in the case of the courts in the chapter that presented the British legal institution. However, for a better keeping in mind here are their enumeration and some short ideas.

6. **Judges** are the main characters of the English and Wales courts. They supervise the entire process from a court and give sentences.

7. **Barristers** – are also named lawyers and are the legal representatives that defend or accuse the parts involved in the process. The barristers have usually a solid legal training and a great experience in certain domains of the law. Their job is a diverse one, due to their experience in the field, ranging from actually participating to trials to giving legal advice to the persons involved in certain cases. The legal advices refer to the behaviour of the persons in courts during a trial or to the validity of the case.
8. **Solicitors** – also named advocates - are less specialised lawyers dealing mostly with civil cases. Unlike the barristers the solicitors are paid for their activity in court.
9. **The parts** – are the persons involved in the process. They are named the accused and the defendant.
10. **The witnesses** – are those particular persons that help one part or another by giving detailed accounts about what happened in that particular situation.

There are some more or less subtle differences between a barrister and a solicitor.

The first difference and the most obvious one is **the way they are paid**. The barristers are paid by the state while the solicitors are paid by the person that hires them. Their payment differs in function of the number of cases they have in a day.

A second difference, underlined above, is **their different practice of law**. Both of them have studied law and have experience in the field but the barristers' legal experience is more vast and specialized. They are allowed to involve in both criminal and civil cases from the highest to the lowest courts. The solicitors are involved only in civil cases and in lower courts such as the Magistrates' Court, the County Courts or in the Tribunals. If, however, they want to advance in their carrier they must attend a period of training during which they are named solicitor-advocates.

9.5 The Irish Legal System

The Irish Legal System is a very active one. There are many proves in this regard starting from official acts and amendments to the Irish Constitution to different types of law. To form an opinion about the activity of the Irish Government there are almost 40 acts passed every year.

As it happened in the cases of all the other British countries, Ireland too is dominated by the English legislation and of the common law.

9.5.1 The Structure of the Irish Court System

As in the case of Wales, the structure of the Irish Court System is more or less identical with the English one.

So, the first court in the Irish Court System is **The Supreme Court** or **the House of Lords**. This court has total jurisdiction over all the cases in the Republic of Ireland. All the decisions taken here are final and are not contested by any other legal institution or person.

The next in line is **the High Court**. It also has a great importance in the Irish Legal system and its jurisdiction is also extended to criminal and civil cases.

The next as importance is **the Circuit Court**. They are only local courts that have only a few areas of activity like civil, criminal, family and jury cases.

The District Courts is a relatively important one having a President and fifty four judges. These courts' jurisdiction is limited and so the cases they are dealing with regard litigations points of view. The district courts also have areas of activity such as like civil, criminal, family and jury cases. In the District Courts are activating only solicitors.

The Court of Criminal Appeal hears appeals from the Circuit and District Courts.

The Special Criminal Court is as the name says a very restrictive court which deals with criminal organizations such as IRA and terrorist matters.

9.5.2 The Key Figures in the Irish Legal System

There are a few categories of key personages in the Irish Legal System that is almost identical with the English one. Most of them have already been presented as in the case of the courts in the chapter that presented the British legal institution. However, for a better keeping in mind here are their enumeration and some short ideas.

An important character in the Irish Court is **the Chief Justice of Ireland**.

Judges are the main characters of the English and Wales courts. They supervise the entire process from a court and give sentences.

Barristers – are also named lawyers and are the legal representatives that defend or accuse the parts involved in the process. The barristers have usually a solid legal training and a great experience in certain domains of the law. Their job is a diverse one, due to their experience in the field, ranging from actually participating to trials to giving legal advice to the persons involved in certain cases. The legal advices refer to the behaviour of the persons in courts during a trial or to the validity of the case. A young Irish barrister has two options when he finishes his legal training: either to become an active member of the Bar or to deal with different papers and expertise. The first variant implies **a period of practice** with a more experienced barrister name **devilling**.

Solicitors – also named advocates - are less specialised lawyers dealing mostly with civil cases. Unlike the barristers the solicitors are paid for their activity in court.

The parts – are the persons involved in the process. They are named the accused and the defendant.

The witnesses – are those particular persons that help one part or another by giving detailed accounts about what happened in that particular situation.

There are some **more or less subtle differences** between **a barrister and a solicitor**.

The first difference and the most obvious one is **the way they are paid**. The barristers are paid by the state while the solicitors are paid by the person that hires them. Their payment differs in function of the number of cases they have in a day.

A second difference, underlined above, is **their different practice of law**. Both of them have studied law and have experience in the field but the barristers' legal experience is more vast and specialized. They are allowed to involve in both criminal and civil cases from the highest to the lowest courts. The solicitors are involved only in civil cases and in lower courts such as the Magistrates' Court, the County Courts or in the Tribunals. If, however, they want to advance in their carrier they must attend a period of training during which they are named solicitor-advocates.

9.6 The Northern Irish Legal System

9. 6.1 The Northern Irish Legislation

Northern Ireland's Government is also dealing with devolved cases more exactly there are some categories of laws and cases that are dealt with from the perspective of the British legislation and others that are using the Northern Ireland legislation. In general, the Acts, Statutory Rule and Orders of the Council are the ones adopted by the Northern Irish Legislation because they are applied in Northern Ireland.

9.6.2 The Structure of the Northern Irish Courts System

(source: Internet. Google Images:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Royal_Courts_of_Justice,_Belfast,_July_2010_\(02\).JPG](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Royal_Courts_of_Justice,_Belfast,_July_2010_(02).JPG).

Taken today 14.06.2012)

The Courts in Northern Ireland are well organized dealing with both the criminal and the civil cases and applying justice in Northern Ireland.

Here is a **schematic structure of the Northern Irish Court System**:

The first and the most important one is **the Supreme Court of Justice** or the House of Lords. Its powers are great and the decisions are final.

The second is **the Court of Judicature** that is the next as importance after the Supreme Court. It has in its subordination *three other courts: The Court of Appeal; the High Court; the Crown Court*.

The third are **the County Courts** that are dealing with civil cases.

The forth are **the Subordinate Courts** that is *the High Courts, the Magistrates' Courts and the Coroners' Courts*.

9.6.3 The Key Figures of the Northern Ireland Court System

In Northern Ireland as in the rest of Great Britain the highest legal institution is **the Bar**. The **President of this Institution is the Lord Chief of Justice of Northern Ireland**. Currently, there are 554 barristers in Northern Ireland. From these 554 barristers 66 are found in the so called Queen's Council and have a higher reputation.

Their election is made by the Queen herself. The **Queen's Council Barristers** are named **Junior Counsels**.

The Benchers are another category that is mainly active in the four Inns of Court from London and King's Inns in Ireland. Their legal powers are those of expelling and suspending the Bar' students or interdict the practice for a certain barrister.

Tasks for a better understanding

Chose a legal system or part of it and then talk about it.

Auto evaluation test nr. 4

Time to solve the test 15 min.

Points 100

Group and Individual Work

Group Work

Initiate a civil or criminal process on roles.

(70p)

Individual Work

Present the legal system or parts of it from the British countries.

(40p)

Minimal Bibliography

The present Course
Personal Materials

Recommendations:

Personal contribution, the varied materials like books, maps, dictionaries, as well as other materials at your choice, the correct citing of the authors and text from the books and a good cooperation between the team members are essential for the maximum of points.

These points will count at the final evaluation.

PAY ATTENTION!

Inspiration from the Internet sites are allowed but there will be severe penalties for the ‘copy - paste’ material used without references or the texts copied as such.

GOOD LUCK!

MODULE 4

**Unit 10
Unit 11**

**Practical Application
Final test**

Module 4 Practice

Unit 10 Practical Applications **Basic bibliography**

Unit 11 Final test

Unit 10 Practical Applications

ATTENTION!

Due to the practical aspect of this chapter the materials will be given at the seminar.

Here is a presentation of what this unit is about

How to write a CV and other official documents?

Personal correspondence

Professional correspondence

Invitation, reservations

English in Telephonic Conversations

Unit 11 Final Test

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