

- When was the Commonwealth formally constituted by the London Declaration?
- What is recognized as a symbol of the members' heritage?
- What elements does the Commonwealth flag comprise?

(B) *Find out about:*

- the number of the member countries;
- the most widely-used definition of the Commonwealth;
- if membership is entirely voluntary;
- if there is some restriction of membership.

2.2 GEOGRAPHY, NATURE AND NATIONAL SYMBOLS OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES: THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

OBJECTIVES

This unit provides factual information and assignments on the geography, nature and cultural symbols of Great Britain. It also sheds light on the history of the country through the history of its place-names.

IN THIS UNIT, YOU WILL LEARN

- about the origin of the place-names in the UK;
- what national symbols and floral emblems are used in the UK.

OUTLINE

- Geography of the UK.
- National symbols and emblems.



COMMENTARIES

Britain /'brɪtən/ and the *British* are often called *Brythonic*, from Welsh *Brython* "Briton". The Brythonic is one of two groups of the modern Celtic languages, the other being Goidelic. The Brythonic languages are or were spoken on the island of Great Britain and consist of Welsh, Cornish, and Breton.

The names *United Kingdom*, *Great Britain*, and *England* are often confused, even by U.K. inhabitants. *England* is just one country within the kingdom. Great Britain comprises England, Wales, and Scotland, while the

United Kingdom also includes Northern Ireland (although the name Britain is sometimes used to refer to the United Kingdom as a whole).

The Angles gave their name to *England*, as well as to the word *Englisc*, used even by Saxon writers to denote their vernacular tongue. In 1536, the name *England* as the name of the state also included Wales because Wales and England were unified politically, administratively, and legally by the acts of union of 1536 and 1542.

In 1707 Scotland joined England and Wales in forming a single parliament for Great Britain, although the three countries had previously shared a monarch. That was how the name *United Kingdom* originally came from a union between *the Kingdom of England and the Kingdom of Scotland*.

When in 1800 the Kingdom of Ireland joined the union the long name was changed to *the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland*, to represent the union between the island of Great Britain and the island of Ireland. Disputes within the Ireland over time eventually led to a division of the island. The United Kingdom's name was again changed, this time to *the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*.

London /'lʌndən/ is believed to have taken its name from the site of a Roman outpost. When in 43 AD, the Roman armies under Emperor Claudius gained control of the southeast Britain and established *Londinium* in the marshy valley of the Thames. The first mentioning of *London* occurs in the year of 60 AD in the work of the Roman historian Tacitus, who described it as a celebrated centre of commerce filled with traders.

The word **Scotland** /'skɒtlənd/ was the name for the Scots, who settled there from Ireland between the 5th century and the 6th century. Their name *Scots* is of unknown origin. In Old English the plural form *Scottas* “inhabitants of Ireland, Irishmen” was a borrowing from Late Latin *Scotti* (c400). *Scotti* might have been borrowed into Latin from Celtic /'keltik/. Although the name answered to no known tribal name, until the 10th century *Scotia* /'skɔʃə/ denoted “Ireland”, and *Scotti* were the inhabitants of *Scotia*.

Latin *Scotia* began to appear in the 9th century as the name for the region, replacing older *Caledonia* /,kæli'dæʊniə/, also named for the inhabitants at the time, whose name likewise is of unknown origin.

The union of the lands of modern Scotland began in 843, when Kenneth I MacAlpin, king of the Scots, became also king of the Picts and, within a few years, joined *Pictland* to *Scotland* to form the kingdom of Alba /'alba/. By 1034, by inheritance and warfare, the Scots had secured

hegemony over the territory of modern mainland Scotland. In the 14th century *Scotland* came to be the name for the whole land, and all its inhabitants were called *Scots*, whatever their origin.

Edinburgh /'ɛdɪnbərə, -brə/ “the capital of Scotland” is Scottish Gaelic /'geɪlɪk, 'gæl-/ *Duneideann* /dʌn'ɛɪdɪn/. King *Edwin* of Northumbria is often credited as the source of the name. Yet, the Celtic name *Din Eidyn* literally “fort on a slope” seems much older. Later the first element was trimmed off and substituted with Old English *-burh* “fort”. *Dunedin* /dʌn'ɛɪdɪn/ in New Zealand represents an attempt at the original form.

In **Wales** /weɪlz/, the Welsh use *Cymru* / *Cymry* /'kəm.rɪ/ “comrade, or friend” refer to themselves whereas the Welshmen living in England are often nicknamed *Taffies*. This may come from the River *Taff*, which runs through the capital Cardiff. Or it may come from *Dafydd*, a corruption of the Welsh form of *David*, representing a supposed Welsh pronunciation of the given name coined during the wartime in order to dehumanise the Welsh by ascribing a singular name to them all (Cf. such historic English pejoratives as *Paddy* and *Jock*).

Different forms of the Old English word *Wielisc* (*Wylisc* (West Saxon), *Welisc*, *Waelisc* (Anglian and Kentish)) were used in the meaning of “foreign; British (not Anglo-Saxon), Welsh; not free, servile”. They are derived from *Wealh*, *Walh* “Celt, Briton, Welshman, non-Germanic foreigner”.

Cardiff /'kɑːdɪf/ “the capital of Wales” is from Welsh *Caerdyf* (Modern Welsh *Caerdydd* /kair'diːð/), which is made up of Welsh *caer* “fort” + *-Taf* “River Taff” to mean “fortified city on the River Taff”.

Not until the 10th century AD was there a king of all **Ireland** /'aɪələnd/ (*ard ri Eireann* /'eːrʲəɲˠ/). A division of the *country into five groups of tuatha* /tu'aθə/, known as *the Five Fifths* (*Cuig Cuigi* /'kuːɟə/), occurred about the beginning of the Christian era. One of these was **Ulster** /'ʌlstə/ (*Ulaidh* /'ulʲəi /), the name by which Northern Ireland is often referred to.

Belfast /'bɛlfɑːst, bɛl'fɑːst/, the capital of Northern Ireland, is Irish *Beal Feirste*. The city's name is derived from the Gaelic *Béal Feirste* /'beːl'ferʃtə/ “Mouth of the Sandbank”, or “Crossing of the River”.

Eire /'eːrʲə/ stands for **Ireland**, the country occupying most of the island of Ireland. It was established as the *Irish Free State* in 1922. Although the new constitution did not proclaim an independent republic in 1937, it replaced the title of *the Irish Free State* with the word *Eire*

(Ireland) which is derived from the old Irish word *Eriu*, which is the name of the matron goddess of Ireland. The poetic name for Ireland is *the Emerald Isle* for the colour of its fresh bright green grass.

The name of the capital of Ireland **Dublin** /'dʌblɪn/ developed from Irish *Dubh Linn* /du lin/, or Norse *Dyfflin* (“black pool”) and is also called *Baile Atha Cliath* /blɪə: 'klɪəh/ (“Town of the Ford of the Hurdle”).



RECOMMENDED READING

- Леонович О. А. В мире английских имен. – М. : Изд-во Астрель, 2002. – С. 62-99.
- Ощепкова В. В. Язык и культура Великобритании, США, Канады, Австралии, Новой Зеландии. – М., СПб : ГЛОССА, 2006. – Р. 126-135, 136-147.
- Ощепкова В. В. Britain in Brief. – М. : Лист, 1999. – С. 22-56.
- Window on Britain. An introduction to Britain (a video course). – Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q7Aq50-fuZg>

Assignment 1. Fill in the fact file:

The United Kingdom of Great Britain And Northern Ireland

washed by	
the most important river/s	
the largest lake/s	
the longest mountain range/s	
the highest peak	
the key representatives of flora	
the key representatives of fauna	
natural disasters	

Assignment 2. What historical and cultural forces motivated the following place-names, their poetic and jocular equivalents?

Scotland, Caledonia; Edinburgh, Edin, The Burgh; England, Albion; London, Cockney (East End); Northern Ireland, the North; Belfast, Mouth of the Sandbanks; Ireland, the Emerald Isle.

Assignment 3. Answer the following questions:

- What is the Union Jack?
- What is the Welsh Dragon?
- What crosses are included into the Union Jack?

- What floral emblems are the UK countries represented by? What events contributed to their choice?

Assignment 4. Read the lyrics of the anthem and do the following tasks:

***God Save the Queen* (standard version)**

God save our gracious Queen!	O Lord our God arise,
Long live our noble Queen!	Scatter her enemies,
God save the Queen!	And make them fall:
Send her victorious,	Confound their politics,
Happy and glorious,	Frustrate their knavish tricks,
Long to reign over us:	On Thee our hopes we fix:
God save the Queen!	God save us all.

Thy choicest gifts in store,
 On her be pleased to pour;
 Long may she reign:
 May she defend our laws,
 And ever give us cause,
 To sing with heart and voice,
 God save the Queen!

- In what countries is the song performed as the national and/or royal anthem?
- Why are there two alternatives of the song? What nouns and pronouns are replaced with their equivalents?
- Which members of the Royal Family are saluted with the entire anthem? Which of them receive just the first several bars?
- What is the meaning of *knavish*?
- What are the words *gracious*, *noble*, *victorious*, and *glorious* associated with? What concept do they manifest?
- How can you explain the use of capitalization (*God*, *Lord*, *Queen*, *Thee*)?
- Consult *Online Etymology Dictionary* (<http://www.etymonline.com/>) and find out what etymons the archaic forms *Thee* and *Thy* are derived from? What is their function in the song?
- What effect is achieved by the repetition “*O Lord our God*”?
- What structure is used in the lines “*God save the Queen!* / *Send her victorious,* / *Happy and glorious,* / *Long to reign over us*”? Is it an

example of the imperative clause or the Present Subjunctive? May the structure be considered analogous to ‘*Let the king live long!*’ or ‘*May the king live long!*’? What pragmatic function is realized by the use of that structure –

- (a) a command or request;
- (b) (an unreal) wish or something imaginative and desired;
- (c) an emotional attitude to real facts;
- (d) a strong volition of the speaker?

• Discuss the form and function of the imperative “*God save our gracious Queen!*”. Is the addressee (*God*) identified by a subject or a vocative? What can you say about its position in the structure? Does the word occur in a fixed initial position or can it be movable? What effect is achieved by that?

- Does the song sound like a pray (‘solemn appeal to deity’)?
- What does the national anthem ‘God Save the Queen’ imply about the national character and values of the British people?

2.3 GEOGRAPHY, NATURE AND NATIONAL SYMBOLS OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES: THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CANADA

OBJECTIVES

This unit provides factual information and assignments on the geography, nature and cultural symbols of the English-speaking countries in North America. It also sheds light on the history of the countries through the history of their place-names.

IN THIS UNIT, YOU WILL LEARN

- about the origin of some place-names in the USA and Canada;
- what national symbols and emblems are used to represent the USA and Canada.

OUTLINE

- Geography of the USA.
- Geography of Canada.
- National symbols and emblems of the USA.
- National symbols and emblems of Canada.