Welcome

This term’s edition marks 70 years of Indian independence from Britain. Signalling the beginning of the end of the British Empire, the event addressed the growing need for India’s independent control. Put your knowledge to the test by entering our competition on the back page to be in with a chance of winning some Indian history themed prizes!

Are you currently teaching the Historic Environment requirement in GCSE History? In our centre pages, Jon Cloake explains an approach to teaching the study of a historic site with the interesting example of Hardwick Hall, and how one place can reflect culture, values and fashions of the time.

Is there a topic you’d particularly like to see us cover in upcoming newsletters? We’d love to hear from you. Get in touch by emailing me at georgina.white@oup.com.

Best wishes

Georgina
History team

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70th anniversary of Indian independence

During Queen Victoria’s reign, Britain ruled 56 different colonies worldwide. But 50 years later the British Empire was breaking apart. One of the first nations to break away from British rule was India. So how and why did this happen?

Towards independence

By 1900 many educated Indians started to believe that India should be free from British control. The Indian National Congress had been formed to bring this about, but the British ignored their demands.

In 1914 Indians fought alongside British soldiers in the Great War. India gave Britain a huge amount of money, food and materials – and nearly 64,000 Indian soldiers died in the war.

In 1919 the British government set up law-making councils in each province and wealthy Indians were given the vote. However, the British government still controlled most of everyday life. While some Indians welcomed the changes, others were bitterly disappointed. A demonstration was organised in Amritsar, which quickly turned violent. The incident was a turning point for the Indian National Congress and soon to be leader, Mohandas Gandhi. They demanded an independent India more loudly than ever.

During the Second World War 2.5 million Indians fought as part of the British Empire force in what was the largest volunteer army in history. After the war it was clear that Britain would have to give India its independence, but matters were complicated by the increasing violence between Hindus and Muslims. Muslims didn’t want to be ruled by a mainly Hindu government and wanted a country of their own. The British made plans to split India into two – India for Hindus and Pakistan for Muslims. On 15 August 1947 they gained independence, and the whole subcontinent was divided into India and Pakistan.

The 70th anniversary of Indian independence is being marked in the UK by the Year of Culture festival, which celebrates the vibrant cultural history of both countries and their ongoing ties.

GCSE links

AQA: Britain: Migration, empires and the people: c790 to the present day
OCR: Britain In Peace and War 1900-1918

A Level links

AQA: The British Empire c1857-1967
‘Hardwick Hall, more glass than wall’

Teaching the Historic Environment requirement in GCSE History

Jon Cloake taught History for 35 years, and has over 30 years of senior examining experience. He has written a number of GCSE History Student Books.

In the AQA GCSE History specification, the Historic Environment element is integrated with the British Depth Study. This means that as students develop an in-depth knowledge of a British period, their understanding of that period would in turn help them to understand the historic site. It is useful to approach the study of a historic site with the overarching question: what can a study of this site tell us about the history of this British Depth period? If you are teaching the Elizabethan England unit for examination in 2018, the question to ask is:

What can a study of **Hardwick Hall** tell us about **Elizabethan England**?

To answer this question, it is helpful to understand the background of Elizabeth, Countess of Shrewsbury, who built Hardwick Hall. ‘Bess’ was a high achiever in what was very much a man’s world. She was already wealthy from her previous three marriages, and had given birth to eight children when, in 1567, she married George Talbot, the Earl of Shrewsbury. His fortune was built upon land, coal, iron, glass, and shipping. As Countess of Shrewsbury, Bess had no trouble spending his wealth remodelling the family home at Chatsworth House. However, their marriage ran into trouble after he was given the job of guarding Mary, Queen of Scots, early in 1569. This task was not only expensive, but also made Bess suspicious of the Earl’s motives.

After the Earl died in 1590, Bess put all her energies into building and furnishing a new country house – Hardwick Hall.

Hardwick Hall itself was built for Bess by the most famous Elizabethan architect, Robert Smythson. The Hall demonstrated the Elizabethan concern for symmetry and order. Nothing was allowed to spoil the external symmetry. For this reason, the chimneys were given internal flues so they did not disturb the profile of the Hall, and some windows were false, having stonework behind them. The Hall is more than testimony to the development of the English glass industry during Elizabeth’s reign. The design and height of the building models the importance of an Elizabethan belief in order and degree in society, which in turn reflected the divine order of the universe. And so, the ground floor was for servants, Bess lived on the first floor, and the second floor was reserved for potential royal visitors.
How does Hardwick Hall reflect the culture and values of the time?

When studying the Historic Environment, it is important to consider how the design of the site reflects the culture, values, and fashions of the time. Inside Hardwick Hall, the furnishings and decorations are uniquely preserved much as they were in the sixteenth century. Although Bess loved French furnishings (a taste she shared with Robert Dudley) and magnificent textiles full of classical allusions, she was not extravagant. Hardwick was also designed as a practical place to work for the 40-50 servants who lived in Bess’s household.

Tackling the historic environment exam question

In the AQA British Depth Study exam paper, the Historic Environment is tested by just one question. This evaluative question targets Assessment Objective 1 (knowledge) and AO2 (key concepts, such as change and consequence). The question uses the student’s knowledge of the historic site to test out a statement about the period. When teaching the British Depth Study units, you may find it helpful to refer to AQA’s Historic Environment Resource Packs, which provide the background history to historic sites, as well as related visual and textual sources for use in the classroom.

AQA also produced a Scheme of Work for each unit. The Elizabethan scheme of work contains lessons specifically about Hardwick Hall and indicates the way in which the site can be taught in lessons about other Elizabethan topics. For example, Hardwick Hall supports learning not just about life at Queen Elizabeth’s court, the difficulties at the time of being a female ruler, living standards, fashions and the rise of the gentry in the Elizabethan ‘Golden Age’, but also about the trouble caused by the arrival of Mary Queen of Scots in 1568. The Historic Environment of Hardwick Hall allows a unique insight into the period and the life of Bess, Countess of Shrewsbury, of whom Queen Elizabeth I said ‘there is no lady in this land that I better love and like.’
Competition!
This term’s exciting prizes are two books on Indian independence, *Modern India: A Very Short Introduction*, KS3 History: *The Rise & Fall of the British Empire* and a packet of Masala Chai tea from Tea India.

For your chance to win, simply email me at [georgina.white@oup.com](mailto:georgina.white@oup.com) with your answer to the following question by 12th August 2017.

**When was Gandhi’s Quit India Movement (a protest which demanded an end to British Rule of India) launched?**

- a. 1947
- b. 1942
- c. 1945

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Congratulations...
...To Mark Fuller from Sheffield High School for Girls. Mark is the winner of two books on the Russian Revolution, the *Revolution and Dictatorship: Russia 1917-1953* Student Book from our A Level History series and a box of chocolates, having answered our last competition question “When did Tsar Nicholas abdicate?” correctly with 15 March 1917.

We hope you enjoy them!

Free History poster!
We’re giving away copies of our Russian Revolution History Poster.

Simply email me at [georgina.white@oup.com](mailto:georgina.white@oup.com) to request your poster while stocks last!

Further reading
What resources are you using to teach about India’s Independence? Tweet us @OxfordEdHistory and let us know!

*India and the British Empire* edited by Peers and Gooptu (Oxford University Press, 2016). This text engages with new ways of thinking about the history of India and the British Empire.

*Empire: How Britain Made the Modern World* by Niall Ferguson (Penguin, 2003). This covers the rise and fall of the British Empire in great detail.

Coming soon: Revision
Look out for brand new Revision Guides for both A Level and GCSE History, written by OUP’s trusted author teams. Go to [www.oxfordsecondary.co.uk/history](http://www.oxfordsecondary.co.uk/history) to find out more about our new resources, or email [georgina.white@oup.com](mailto:georgina.white@oup.com) for inspection copies, quoting K44126.