

Queen Victoria



Victoria was the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the first Empress of India for 63 years, longer than any other British monarch. She was so important for Britain that the period she lived in is universally known as the **Victorian Age**.

Their marriage proved to be a very happy one and the royal couple had nine children. When Albert died in 1861, Victoria was so devastated that she dressed in black for the rest of her life and avoided public appearances, especially in London, for many years.

A New Monarchy

Queen Victoria's reign also marked the change of the British political system into a modern constitutional monarchy. A series of reforms deprived the figure of the monarch of much of its real power and it became a more symbolic role. Today, tourists can admire the Queen Victoria Memorial, which stands right in front of Buckingham Palace.

The Victorian Age and the British Empire

The most crucial event of the age was the **Industrial Revolution**, which brought social, economic and technological progress. Victoria's reign was marked by the greatest expansion of the **British Empire** ever, and she was the first monarch to reside at Buckingham Palace, which was completed in 1837. Princess Victoria met her future German husband, Prince Albert, when she was just 16 years old, and immediately fell in love with him.



Speaking about herself: "The important thing is not what they think of me, but what I think of them."

Speaking about the British Empire: "We are not interested in the possibilities of defeat. They do not exist."

1 Now answer these questions.

- 1 How many years did Queen Victoria's reign last?
- 2 Did it include any Asian nations?
- 3 What was the Industrial Revolution?
- 4 How was Britain affected by it? Give a few examples.
- 5 Where did Victoria's husband come from?
- 6 Was their marriage successful?

- 7 Who was the first monarch to move into Buckingham Palace?
- 8 Where can you see the Queen Victoria Memorial?
- 9 How did the British monarchy change during Queen Victoria's reign? Was it a change for the better or the worse in your opinion? Explain your personal ideas on this subject.