



## British stories and legends

On these pages, you can find out more about **King Arthur**, **Robin Hood** and **Sherlock Holmes**. Also, there's information for you about **Boudicca**, **Vivien** (the 'Lady of the Lake') and **Miss Marple**, three interesting women from British stories and legends.

### King Arthur

Everybody has heard of King Arthur, but nobody knows if he really existed. The first stories about him go back to the Middle Ages. People believe that Arthur was born in the Castle of Tintagel in Cornwall.

In the stories, Arthur becomes a powerful leader who fights the Saxons in the 6th century and creates a huge realm. Over the centuries, the legend has become more magical and mysterious. Some writers tell us that Arthur becomes king because only he was able to pull the magical sword Excalibur out of a stone. Also, the mysterious and powerful wizard Merlin plays a role, and in later stories there are more characters too: Have you heard about the knights of the Round Table?



### Robin Hood

The story of Robin Hood is another popular British legend. Just as with King Arthur, nobody is sure if he really lived, but the first stories go back to the 15th century. In the earliest stories, Robin Hood is just a thief who robs rich people, but the stories about him changed over time: The character of Robin Hood became more and more positive and today, everybody knows him as the hero who helped the poor people. People believe that he lived in Sherwood Forest with a group of other outlaws, for example Friar Tuck, Will Scarlet or Little John.



### Sherlock Holmes

After 125 years, Sherlock Holmes is still the most famous detective in the world. But he was never a real person. The author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle invented him in the 19th century. In the stories and books, Sherlock Holmes solves crimes together with his assistant Dr Watson. The stories are still popular today because of Holmes' brilliant methods. In the stories, he lives and works in 221b Baker Street in London. Today there's a Sherlock Holmes museum in Baker Street, with wax figures in famous scenes from the stories, and much more.



to exist [ɪg'zɪst] **existieren** ○ Middle Ages [ˈmɪdl\_eɪdʒɪz] **Mittelalter** ○ to be born [bi 'bɔ:n] **geboren sein** ○ leader ['li:də] | **Anführer/-in** ○ realm [reɪlm] (**Königreich**) ○ sword [sɔ:d] **Schwert** ○ thief [θɪ:f] **Dieb/-in** ○ to rob sb [rɒb] **jmdn. bestehlen** ○ to invent [ɪn'vent] **erfinden** ○ brilliant ['brɪljənt] **genial**



### Vivien, the Lady of the Lake

Vivien is an important figure in the legend of King Arthur. Different writers have given her different names, for example Viviane, Nivian, Evienne, Elaine, Nimue, or Lady of the Lake. Nobody really knows where her character comes from, but she appears in different parts of the legend. In the stories, she is the guardian of the lake from which Arthur's magical sword Excalibur comes. Other stories say that she looks after the knight Sir Lancelot after his parents died. Legends say that Merlin is her teacher and he falls in love with her. In some stories she loves him too; others say that she puts him into a tree, a stone or a cave by magic.



### Boudicca

Boudicca was a Celtic queen who died in the year 60 or 61. Her husband Prasutagus was the leader of the British Celtic tribe, the Iceni. Prasutagus said that after his death, his kingdom should belong to the Romans and his daughters. But when he died, the Romans tried to take his kingdom for themselves. Boudicca didn't want to let this happen and together with the Iceni and other British tribes, she fought against the Romans. She was able to win many battles, but in the end, the Romans won. Boudicca died – some say that she killed herself, others that she became sick. She was a brave warrior and is still an important symbol in British history today.



### Miss Marple

Jane Marple, or Miss Marple, as most people call her, is a famous character which the British author Agatha Christie invented in her crime stories. Miss Marple is an older woman who likes to solve crimes in her free time. She lives in St. Mary Mead, a small village which doesn't really exist. A lot of crimes happen there. Miss Marple is already over 65 in the first stories, but the old lady is able to solve 16 murders and many other crimes more quickly than anyone else! Miss Marple became even more famous when the actor Margaret Rutherford played her in four films.



to appear [ə'piə] auftauchen, erscheinen ○ guardian ['gɑ:diən] Hüter/-in ○ to fall in love with sb [fɔ:lɪn 'lʌv] sich in jmdn. verlieben ○ tribe [traɪb] Stamm ○ death [deθ] Tod ○ kingdom ['kɪŋdəm] Königreich ○ to die [daɪ] sterben ○ to kill [kɪl] töten ○ murder ['mɜ:də] Mord