

PAGES FROM HISTORY

SOME PAGES FROM BRITISH HISTORY

One of the greatest queens in British history was queen Elizabeth (1558 — 1603) who

Queen Elizabeth [ɪ'li:zəbəθ],
Francis Drake ['frɑ:nsɪs 'dreɪk],
Spitfire ['spɪtfɑɪə]

ruled England for more than forty years. During that time there were many fights between English and Spanish seamen.

The Spaniards had taken for themselves all the land of America which Columbus had found, but the English wanted a share¹ too. When they got a chance, the English sailors robbed the Spanish ships of the gold and silver which they were bringing from America to Spain.

The most famous Englishman to fight against Spain was Francis Drake.

Francis Drake was the son of a parson². He went to sea at the age of twelve, learning his craft from the master of an old ship that traded between the Thames and the ports of the southern coast. Later he became an officer at one of the English ships.

- 1** *Read the story **How Drake Sailed Round The World**. Say for what exploits³ Queen Elizabeth I made Drake a knight.*

How Drake Sailed Round The World

Once, with five small ships, Drake sailed across the seas to America. So terrible were the storms he met that four of the five ships were lost, but Drake's own ship sailed right round America into the Pacific Ocean. This ship was called the *Golden Hind*⁴.

¹ **share** [ʃeə] — доля

² **parson** ['pɑ:sn] — священник

³ **exploit** ['eksplɔɪt] — подвиг

⁴ **Golden Hind** ['gouldn 'haɪnd] — Золотая Лань



The people in the Spanish towns to which Drake now came could hardly believe their eyes when they saw the *Golden Hind*, for no English ship had ever been seen in that part of the world before. Drake robbed the towns of all their gold and silver, and stored it in the *Golden Hind*.

At one town which he robbed, Drake heard that a big Spanish treasure-ship, the *Spitfire*, had sailed away only a fortnight¹ before, full of gold and silver. Drake set out at once to chase² this ship and he sailed so fast that in eight days he caught up with it.

The captain of the *Spitfire* thought the *Golden Hind* was a Spanish ship, sent to bring him some news, so he stopped and waited. In an hour Drake drew near. What a surprise the Spanish captain had!

“Pull down your sails³, Captain,” cried Drake, “unless you want to be sent to the bottom!”

“Come and do it yourselves!” shouted the Spanish sailors. At once the guns of the *Golden Hind* roared forth⁴,

¹ **fortnight** [ˈfɔːtnaɪt] — две недели

² **to chase** [tʃeɪs] — преследовать

³ **to pull down sails** — спускать паруса

⁴ **forth** — вперед, дальше

and at the same moment the English sailors shot arrows on the Spanish decks. The English ship came up beside the *Spitfire*, the men jumped on board, and after a short fight the Spanish ship was taken.

When Drake's ship had been loaded¹ with the captured treasure, he sailed on towards the west, until at last he came back to England.

In 1577 Drake set off on a voyage that was to take him round the world. His aim was to explore the foot of the world. Some people had the idea that South America was joined to a big continent named Terra Australis Incognita (The Unknown Land of the South Wind). They thought it was rich in gold and silver beyond the wildest dreams. They and their Queen also thought that such a trip would make it possible for Drake to meet Spanish treasure-ships.

Drake's voyage to South America blew away the myth of the Unknown Land of the South Wind. There was nothing but gales of wind and an unfriendly black ocean.

But on their way back Drake and his crew seized large helpings² of Spanish treasure. *Golden Hind* returned to England in 1580. Philip of Spain had already made angry complaints about Drake's action against his South American treasure-ships. This time, the Queen of England ignored³ them completely. Instead of rebuking⁴ Drake, she made him a knight for his exploits.

The people of England were very proud of Drake, and Queen Elizabeth herself came to visit him on board the *Golden Hind*. There, in Drake's low cabin, a fine dinner was served and then the Queen commanded Drake to kneel⁵ before her on the deck. Taking a sword in her hand she said, "The King of Spain has asked for Francis Drake's head, and here I have a gilded sword⁶ to strike it off." But instead of striking off Drake's head with her sword, she

¹ **to load** [ləʊd] — нагружать

² **helping** — порция

³ **to ignore** [ɪg'nɔː] — игнорировать

⁴ **to rebuke** [rɪ'bjuːk] — упрекать

⁵ **to kneel** [ni:l] (**knelt, knelt**) — преклонять колени

⁶ **gilded** ['gɪldɪd] **sword** [sɔːd] — позолоченная шпага

touched him lightly on the shoulder, and ordered him to rise, no longer Francis Drake, but Sir Francis Drake. The bold sailor had been made a knight!

Do You Understand The Story?

- 2 *Answer the questions.*
- 1 Who was Sir Francis Drake? In what time did he live?
 - 2 At what age did Drake go to sea for the first time?
 - 3 When did Drake set off on a voyage that was to take him round the world? What was Drake to explore?
 - 4 What were the results of Drake's expeditions to South America?
 - 5 Why were there many fights between English and Spanish sailors in the 16th century?
 - 6 Did Drake act as a robber on seas? What was his aim?
 - 7 How did Queen Elizabeth react when she heard the Spanish King's complaints about Drake's actions?
 - 8 Was Drake punished for his actions?

What Do You Think?

- 3 The name of Drake is a well-known name in British history. *What do you think made it so popular?*
- 4 Francis Drake was a great explorer, of course. But he was a robber at the same time. *Doesn't it seem surprising to you that the people of England were very proud of him? What were their reasons? Give your opinion about Drake's actions.*
- 5 *Speak about Francis Drake. Exchange your opinions about his character and his exploits.*