PHILIP PROWSE

This is London
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The Romans

The Romans came to Britain in AD 43. They built a town on the River Thames. They called the town Londinium.

Soon, they built a bridge over the river. Londinium grew bigger. Ships came to the town from all over Europe.

The Romans built roads from Londinium to other parts of Britain. By the year 400, there were fifty thousand people living in the city.

Roman London was called Londinium
William the Conqueror

In 1066, William the Conqueror came to England. William was the Duke of Normandy in France. He won the Battle of Hastings and he became King of England.

William lived in London but he was afraid of the people of London. He built the White Tower to feel safe. Now it is the tallest part of the Tower of London.

Many tourists visit the Tower of London every year. The Crown Jewels – the Queen’s gold and jewels – are kept there.

All the Kings and Queens of England lived in London. It was the biggest town in England. By 1600, there were more than two hundred thousand people living in London.
Shakespeare’s London

Shakespeare was born in Stratford-on-Avon in 1564. Later, he lived in London. Shakespeare wrote thirty-six plays. They are still read and performed all over the world.

The plays were performed in the Globe Theatre. The theatre was destroyed by a fire in 1613. In 1997, a new Globe Theatre was built in the same place. You can learn more about the new Globe Theatre in Chapter 5.

The new Globe Theatre
The Great Fire

The houses in Shakespeare’s London were built very close to each other. They were made of wood. Sometimes there were small fires. On Saturday 2nd September 1666 there was a big fire.

It started in the house of the King’s baker, in Pudding Lane, near London Bridge. Most of London burnt down. A quarter of a million people lost their homes. But only a few people died.

![The Great Fire of London](image)

Dickens’ London

People built houses again after the Great Fire. But this time they built them of stone and brick. The city grew larger and larger. By 1830, there were more than one and a half million people in London.