DAVID OLUSOGA

Black AND British

An illustrated history

Illustrated by
Jake Alexander & Melleny Taylor

MACMILLAN CHILDREN'S BOOKS

For my beloved daughter.

Published 2021 by Macmillan Children's Books
an imprint of Pan Macmillan
The Smithson, 6 Briset Street, London EC1M 5NR
EU representative: Macmillan Publishers Ireland Ltd, 1st Floor,
The Liffey Trust Centre, 117–126 Sheriff Street Upper
Dublin 1, D01 YC43
Associated companies throughout the world
www.panmacmillan.com

ISBN 978-1-5290-5295-4

Text copyright © David Olusoga 2021

Illustrations copyright © Jake Alexander and Melleny Taylor 2021

The right of David Olusoga, Jake Alexander and Melleny Taylor to be identified as the author and illustrators of this work has been asserted by them in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise), without the prior written permission of the publisher. Pan Macmillan does not have any control over, or any responsibility for, any author or third-party websites referred to in or on this book.

1 3 5 7 9 8 6 4 2

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Printed and bound in Italy by L.E.G.O. S.p.A.

Design: Becky Chilcott
Editorial: Jo Foster

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise,be lent, resold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

FSC www.fsc.org MIX Paper from responsible sources FSC® C116313

Contents

INTRODUCTION 6
THE ROMANS 8
THE TUDORS 12
THE STUARTS 20
THE GEORGIANS 26
THE VICTORIANS 42
THE FIRST WORLD WAR 58
THE SECOND WORLD WAR 62
WINDRUSH TO TODAY 66
AFTERWORD 74
GLOSSARY 76
ABOUT THE AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATORS 80

INTRODUCTION

A few years ago I wrote a book for grown-ups about Black British history. Since I finished writing that book, young people and their parents have been asking me to write a version for children. That is why I have written this book. It is the book I wish I had been given at school.

When I was at school there was no Black history. None of the Black people from the past who we know about today were ever mentioned by my teachers, and my textbooks contained nothing about the role Black people have played in the story of Britain. So what I presumed was that there must not have been any Black people in British history.

It was only when I became a teenager, and was able to read grown-up history books, that I learned that there had been Black people throughout much of British history, all the way back to the Roman conquest. It was from then onwards that I learned about slavery and about the British Empire, about Black Tudors, like the trumpeter John Blanke, and Black people like Dido Elizabeth Belle and Olaudah Equiano who lived in Britain in the eighteenth century. I also learned about the Black children who lived as slaves in the houses of rich people in London, Bristol, Liverpool and other cities. I read about the enslaved people who were made to work on plantations in the West Indies and America, and learned how the sugar and cotton they grew helped make Britain rich. I discovered that there had been Black sailors at the Battle of Trafalgar and that Black soldiers had fought in the trenches of the First World War. I read about the Black pilots and navigators who served in the Royal Air Force during the Second World War and about the people who had come to Britain on the *Windrush* in 1948 to start new lives.

I wish I had been taught all of this as a child. And there are so many more stories to explore, so many other Black people who made their homes in Britain in past centuries whom historians have not yet discovered.

With each passing year, Black British history is becoming ever more personal to increasing numbers of people. Britain's population is changing. More of us than ever are members of families that include people of different skin colours and ethnicities. Black history helps explain how national history is intertwined with our family histories. It helps us make sense of the country we are today.

DAVID OLUSOGA

THE ROMANS

An empire is a large group of states or countries controlled by one powerful ruler or government.

Africans first came to Britain with the Roman Empire. Long before Britain began to build its own empire, it was invaded and conquered by the Romans. Britain became a part of the mighty empire of Rome, which stretched across Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East.

When we talk about the Romans who came to Britain, we don't just mean people from Rome or Italy. Roman citizens could come from anywhere in the empire, and they moved around it like never before. People from all over the empire travelled huge distances to trade, work, and fight in the Roman army. This included people from Africa who came to Roman Britain.

55 and 54 BC
Julius Caesar tries twice to invade Britain, but fails each time.

43 AD
Emperor Claudius successfully invades and begins Roman rule in Britain.

60 AD
Boudicca leads a rebellion against the Romans.

71 AD
The city of Eboracum (today's York) is founded.

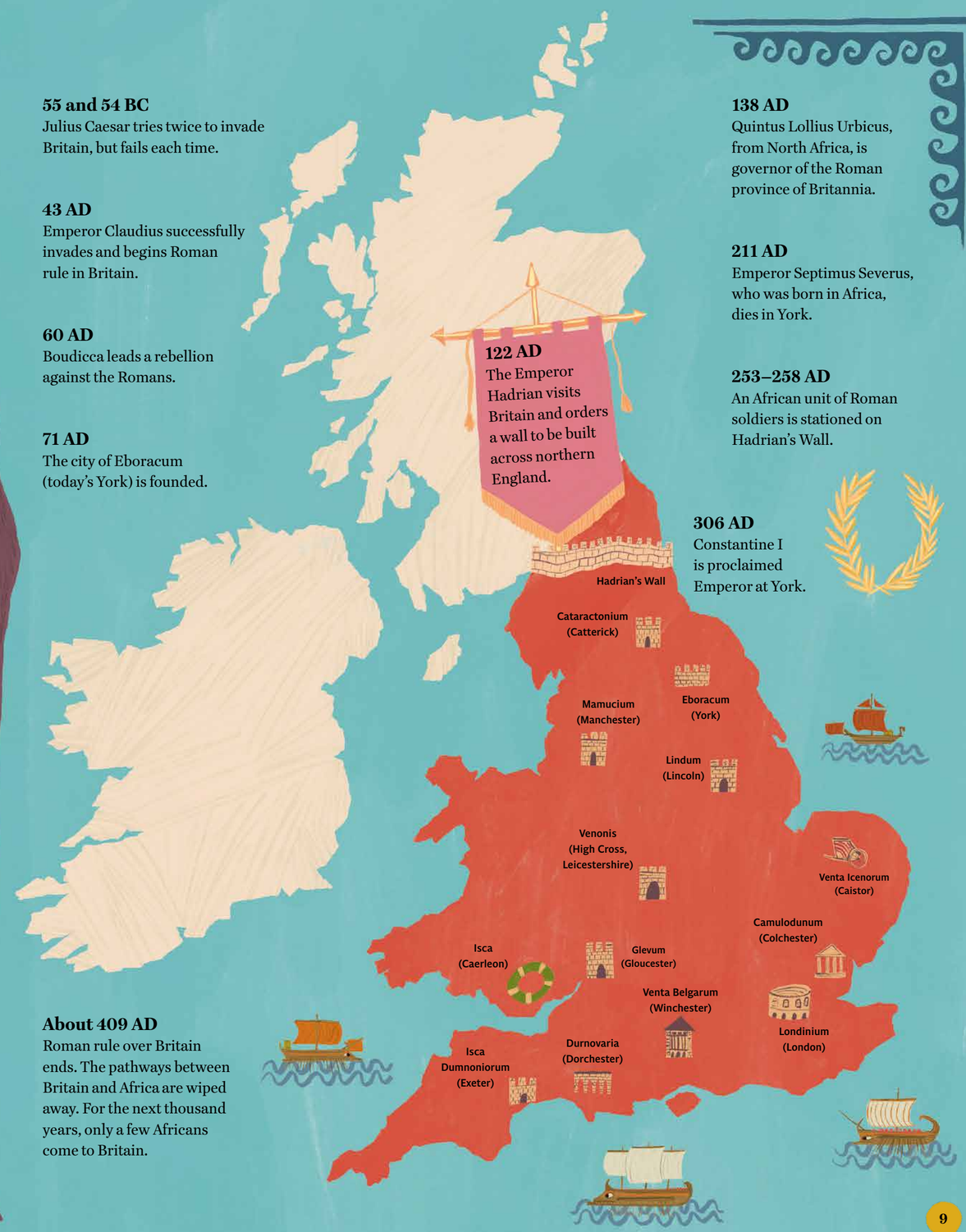
122 AD
The Emperor Hadrian visits Britain and orders a wall to be built across northern England.

138 AD
Quintus Lollius Urbicus, from North Africa, is governor of the Roman province of Britannia.

211 AD
Emperor Septimus Severus, who was born in Africa, dies in York.

253–258 AD
An African unit of Roman soldiers is stationed on Hadrian's Wall.

306 AD
Constantine I is proclaimed Emperor at York.



About 409 AD
Roman rule over Britain ends. The pathways between Britain and Africa are wiped away. For the next thousand years, only a few Africans come to Britain.