Historical Research – Victoria Essay, Research Paper

Historical and Social Research:

The Victorian Era

Politics (1850 1900)

The Victorian era was a prominent one for political power. It saw the rise and fall of Queen Victoria (her reign was from June 20th 1837 to January 22nd, 1901). She died at age 81 and ruled over Great Britain and Ireland after her husband and first cousin, William the IV, died. At this time, Great Britain was a world power, and had control over much of the world. Great Britain prospered during Queen Victoria s reign, and claimed many areas; most notably is Egypt (January 1883). The Victorian era was not only a prosperous era for England and Great Britain, but for the United States as well. Many US presidents were elected, but none were as influential and popular as Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln was elected on November 6th, 1860, and during his time in office he would become an important figure in the United States history. Lincoln would go as far as to announce that by January 1st 1863, all slaves would be freed. Lincoln, being in power when the Civil War broke out, decided that the best way to fund the war would be to pay a nationwide income tax. President Lincoln was also responsible for the holiday of Thanksgiving. It was to be celebrated on the last Thursday of November.

Science (1850 1900)

Creation was a very popular theory up until the mid 1800 s. Religion was very important to people. Creationists everywhere were shocked and some were even appalled when Charles Darwin published his book entitled Origin of the Species, on November 30th, 1859. Darwin s theories of humankind evolving from apes (as well as natural selection) were direct contradictions to the religious theories of creation. The theories within Origin of the Species would become very popular among evolutionists everywhere, and would offer incredible insight as to how the human species came to be. On January 10th, 1863, the world s first subway system was developed in Britain. The Metropolitan Railway was created using the cut and cover method. This would mean that the crews would cut through the street and build the tracks for the subway. They would then put up the walls for the channel, and cover the street again. Also invented during the Victorian era was the electric motor, by Michael Faraday. This was based around electro-magnetic rotation.

Arts

Art was a very popular thing in the 19th century. For the most part, it was also a very European thing. It was during the Victorian era that Paris was considered to be the world s leading art capitol, followed closely by London, Rome, and Munich. Many people in the Victorian era owned very expensive pieces of jewelry. It was very popular to own any piece of antique jewelry. For any ring, bracelet, or other piece of jewelry to be considered as an official antique , the piece would need to be as old as (if not older than) the Georgian era. This era was named after the four King Georges that ruled over England, and more specifically refers to the jewelry produced in this time. Most jewelry produced in this time is considered to be English, and was between the years 1720 to 1820. Jewelry produced during the Victorian era is considered to be antique to us now. Many of the pieces crafted included the likeness of Queen Victoria, but not all were considered to be from England.

Victorian Era Literature

Literature was an overwhelmingly popular pastime in the 19th century. Victorians were very enthusiastic about the many different types of literature. Some types included poetry, novels, romantic literature, southwestern humour, as well as gothic and science fiction. Gothic romance novels were very popular pieces of literature. They often took place in a castle, or had a dark atmosphere or tone to them. There were stories with very medieval tones to them. Bram Stoker was a very popular gothic/horror writer, who wrote such novels as Dracula and The Lair of the White Worm. Mark Twain was a writer who included southwestern humour into his stories and writings. He was a very popular writer who lived in the Victorian era (1835 1910) that wrote such classic pieces of literature as The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, The Prince and the Pauper, and A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur s Court. The popularity of romance novels was not always at the height they are now. They really grew in popularity during the 19th century, and often let readers into somewhat of a fantasy world. It was that concept that set the romance genre aside from the rest of literatures sub-genres, which focused more on character development, not action.

Social Aspects Embraced Throughout the Victorian Era

There were many different social aspects of the Victorian era. A very popular one was the bicycle. With the popularity of the bicycle came fashion designed specifically for riding the two-wheeled vehicles. A fashion designer even included that when women ride their bicycles during the evening or night they should pack a sewing kit, in a piece of writing. Proper manors was important to Victorians. Such manors for a male included not swearing or cursing, losing his temper, and offering a female acquaintance his arm (preferably his right arm), especially during the evening or night. Proper manors for a female included trying not to attract attention to her, especially through laughing or loud comments. Also, a woman should always recognize a male acquaintance first, but does not necessarily have to return the male s bow. It is considered to be a very awkward situation for a male to not receive a bow from a lady. There were many different forms of entertainment at parties. When couples could not attend the theatre or a musical performance, many games were played. Checkers, chess, and backgammon were all very popular, as well as charades, change seats (an early version of musical chairs), and hunt the slipper. Although many pieces of art portrayed Victorians as dull and unhappy people, that was not the case at all.