

Agrarian and Industrial Britain | Small Group Tour for Mature Travellers

Reading List

Iron, Steam & Money: The Making of the Industrial Revolution

by Roger Osborne

In late eighteenth-century Britain a handful of men brought about the greatest transformation in human history. Inventors, industrialists and entrepreneurs ushered in the age of powered machinery and the factory, and thereby changed the whole of human society, bringing into being new methods of social and economic organisation, new social classes, and new political forces. The Industrial Revolution also dramatically altered humanity's relation to the natural world and embedded the belief that change, not stasis, is the necessary backdrop for human existence.

Iron, Steam and Money tells the thrilling story of those few decades, the moments of inspiration, the rivalries, skulduggery and death threats, and the tireless perseverance of the visionaries who made it all happen. Richard Arkwright, James Watt, Richard Trevithick and Josiah Wedgwood are among the giants whose achievements and tragedies fill these pages. In this authoritative study Roger Osborne also shows how and why the revolution happened, revealing pre-industrial Britain as a surprisingly affluent society, with wealth spread widely through the population, and with craft industries in every town, village and front parlour. The combination of disposable income, widespread demand for industrial goods, and a generation of time-served artisans created the unique conditions that propelled humanity into the modern world.

The industrial revolution was arguably the most important episode in modern human history; Iron, Steam and Money reminds us of its central role, while showing the extraordinary excitement of those tumultuous decades.

Britain's Industrial Revolution: The Making of a Manufacturing People, 1700 - 1870

by Barrie Trinder

Barrie Trinder has been a leading expert on industrial history for many years and this is perhaps his most important book to date: a general overview of the industrial revolution across the British Isles. The industrial revolution was one of the defining changes of human history, and it happened in Britain first. It changed radically the way in which goods were made: for the first time large factories were built to house the machines and power systems that had been invented. It led to new ways of working, and living: it concentrated workers in large workplaces, often in the rapidly growing towns

and cities. Along with spectacular profits and economic benefits, it brought danger, pollution and increasing inequality between rich and poor. Alongside industry arrived canals, railways, cast-iron bridges and iron ships. The industrial revolution created the country and the society we recognise today.

Agricultural Revolution in England: The Transformation of the Agrarian Economy 1500-1850 by Mark Overton

This book is the first available survey of English agriculture between 1500 and 1850. It combines new evidence with recent findings from the specialist literature, to argue that the agricultural revolution took place in the century after 1750. Taking a broad view of agrarian change, the author begins with a description of sixteenth-century farming and an analysis of its regional structure. He then argues that the agricultural revolution consisted of two related transformations. The first was a transformation in output and productivity brought about by a complex set of changes in farming practice. The second was a transformation of the agrarian economy and society, including a series of related developments in marketing, landholding, field systems, property rights, enclosure and social relations. Written specifically for students, this book will be invaluable to anyone studying English economic and social history, or the history of agriculture.

The Making of the English Landscape by W.G. Hoskins

W.G. Hoskins was one of the most original and influential British historians of the twentieth century. He realised that landscapes are the richest record we have of the past, and with his masterpiece, *The Making of the English Landscape*, he changed forever how we experience the places we live and work in.

Where we see a picturesque scene of rolling hills, distant spires and wooded valleys, Hoskins shows us the line of a Bronze Age trackway, the ghostly impression of an open-field system, the gridiron pattern of an industrial town, or the footprint of a Roman villa. By revealing these traces of the past, Hoskins enables us to appreciate different landscapes as if they were pieces of music, a series of compositions which enrich our understanding of the symphonic whole.

While planning and building our future villages and towns, in both green and urban places, this pioneering account reminds us why we must be sensitive to the land and its past as we leave our own marks in England's historical landscape.

The Last Wolf: The Hidden Springs of Englishness

by Robert Winder

What sort of a place is England? And who are the English? As the United Kingdom turns away from its European neighbours, and begins to look increasingly disunited at home, it is becoming necessary to ask what England has that is singular and its own.

It is often assumed that the national identity must be a matter of values and ideas. But in Robert Winder's brilliantly-written account it is a land built on a lucky set of natural ingredients: the island setting that made it maritime; the rain that fed the grass that nourished the sheep that provided the wool, and the wheat fields that provided its cakes and ale. Then came the seams of iron and coal that made it an industrial giant.

In *Bloody Foreigners* Robert Winder told the rich story of immigration to Britain. Now, in *The Last Wolf*, he spins an English tale. Travelling the country, he looks for its hidden springs not in royal pageantry or politics, but in landscape and history.

Medieval monks with their flocks of sheep . . . cathedrals built by wool . . . the first shipment of coal to leave Newcastle . . . marital contests on a village green . . . mock-Tudor supermarkets - the story is studded with these and other English things.

And it starts by looking at a very important thing England did not have: wolves.
