

Ireland and Lake District walking small group tour

Reading List

Ireland

by Thomas Bartlett

Ireland has rarely been out of the news during the past thirty years. Whether as a war-zone in which Catholic nationalists and Protestant Unionists struggled for supremacy, a case study in conflict resolution or an economy that for a time promised to make the Irish among the wealthiest people on the planet, the two Irelands have truly captured the world's imagination. Yet single-volume histories of Ireland are rare. Here, Thomas Bartlett, one of the country's leading historians, sets out a fascinating new history that ranges from prehistory to the present. Integrating politics, society and culture, he offers an authoritative historical road map that shows exactly how – and why – Ireland, north and south, arrived at where it is today. This is an indispensable guide to both the legacies of the past for Ireland's present and to the problems confronting north and south in the contemporary world.

Modern Ireland 1600-1972

by R. Foster

Masterfully blending narrative and interpretation, and R.F. Foster's Modern Ireland: 1600-1972 looks at how key events in Irish history contributed to the creation of the 'Irish Nation'.

'The most brilliant and courageous Irish historian of his generation'

Colm Tóibín, London Review of Books

'Remarkable ... Foster gives a wise and balanced account of both forces of unity and forces of diversity ... a master work of scholarship'

Bernard Crick, New Statesman

'A tour de force ... Anyone who really wants to make sense of Ireland and the Irish must read Roy Foster's magnificent and accessible Modern Ireland'

Anthony Clare

'A magnificent book. It supersedes all other accounts of modern Irish history'

Conor Cruise O'Brien, Sunday Times

'Dazzling ... a masterly survey not so much of the events of Irish history over the past four centuries as of the way in which those events acted upon the peoples living in Ireland to produce in our own time an "Irish Nation" ... a gigantic and distinguished undertaking'

Robert Kee, Observer

'A work of gigantic importance. It is everything that a history book should be. It is beautifully and clearly written; it seeps wisdom through its every pore; it is full of the most elegant and scholarly insights; it is magnificently authoritative and confident ... Modern Ireland is quite simply the single most important book on Irish history written in this generation ... A masterpiece'

Kevin Myers, Irish Times

R. F. Foster is Carroll Professor of Irish History at the University of Oxford and a Fellow of Hertford College, Oxford. His books include *Modern Ireland: 1600-1972*, *Luck and the Irish* and *W. B. Yeats: A Life*.

Ireland: The Autobiography: One Hundred Years of Irish Life, Told by Its People

by John Bowman

Over the past hundred years, Ireland has undergone profound political, social and cultural changes. But one thing that has not changed is the Irish genius for observation and storytelling, invective and self-scrutiny. *Ireland: The Autobiography* draws upon this genius to create a portrait of a century of Irish life through the words of the people who lived it.

Broadcaster and historian John Bowman has mined archives, diaries and memoirs to create a remarkably varied and delightfully readable mosaic of voices and perspectives. *Ireland: The Autobiography* is a brilliantly selected, wide-ranging and engrossing take on the last century of Irish life. It gives us a portrait of Ireland unlike anything we've read before.

'Absorbing and illuminating ... John Bowman has selected a range of accounts of Irish life that do justice to what happened, what it felt like, and the personal and societal experiences alongside the "official" version.' Diarmaid Ferriter, Irish Times

'Very enjoyable' Philip Boucher-Hayes

The Ancient Paths: Discovering the Lost Map of Celtic Europe

by Graham Robb

Graham Robb's new book will change the way you see European civilization.

Inspired by a chance discovery, Robb became fascinated with the world of the Celts: their gods, their art, and, most of all, their sophisticated knowledge of science. His investigations gradually revealed something extraordinary: a lost map, of an empire constructed with precision and beauty across vast tracts of Europe. The map had been forgotten for almost two millennia and its implications were astonishing.

Minutely researched and rich in revelations, *The Ancient Paths* brings to life centuries of our distant history and reinterprets pre-Roman Europe. Told with all of Robb's grace and verve, it is a dazzling, unforgettable book.

The Lake Poets

by Gavin D. Smith

Many books have been written about The Lake Poets - those Romantic geniuses led by William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who made their homes in the beautiful north-west corner of England known as The Lake District during the first half of the nineteenth century. Some of these volumes have concentrated on their writing, others on their lives, and yet more have focused on places within the Lake District with which they were associated. Gavin D. Smith's *The Lake Poets* provides an indispensable 'one-stop shop' for anyone with an interest in the subject, offering biography, selections of work and an exploration of properties with literary associations. Gavin has also chosen to widen the traditional membership of the school of 'Lake Poets' to include William's sister Dorothy Wordsworth, Samuel's son Hartley Coleridge, and Thomas de Quincey. Apart from presenting an overview of The Lake Poets and their work, one aim of this book is to provide an opportunity for readers to discover more about writers like Robert Southey and Hartley Coleridge, who have been neglected in recent years, and whose writing is frequently difficult to find in print.

Life At Grasmere

by Dorothy Wordsworth

The beautiful and peaceful heart of the Lake District, Grasmere was an inspiration to both Dorothy and William Wordsworth. Hills, lakes and orchards, letter writing, walks and welcome visitors (including fellow poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge) provoked in Dorothy's journal great, lyrical prose, which in turn influenced her brother's unsurpassed poetry. The two - journal entries and poems - are here set side by side, a glorious celebration of life and nature around Dove Cottage, over the first year they called it home.

Generations of inhabitants have helped shape the English countryside - but it has profoundly shaped us too. It has provoked a huge variety of responses from artists, writers, musicians and people who

live and work on the land - as well as those who are travelling through it. English Journeys celebrates this long tradition with a series of twenty books on all aspects of the countryside, from stargazey pie and country churches, to man's relationship with nature and songs celebrating the patterns of the countryside (as well as ghosts and love-struck soldiers).

William and Dorothy Wordsworth: 'All in each other'

by Lucy Newlyn

William Wordsworth's iconic relationship with his 'beloved Sister' spanned nearly fifty years. Separated after the death of their mother when Dorothy was six, and reunited as orphans after the death of their father, they became inseparable companions. This is the first literary biography to give each sibling the same level of detailed attention; with Dorothy's writings set fully alongside her brother's, we see her to be the poet's equal in a literary partnership of outstanding importance. But Newlyn shows that writing was just one element of their lifelong work to re-build their family and re-claim their communal identity; walking, talking, remembering, and grieving were just as important. This rich and holistic account celebrates the importance of mental and spiritual health, human relationships, and the environment.

Green Victorians: The Simple Life in John Ruskin's Lake District

by Vicky Albritton (Author), Fredrik Albritton Jonsson (Author)

From Henry David Thoreau to Bill McKibben, critics and philosophers have long sought to demonstrate how a sufficient life—one without constant, environmentally damaging growth—might still be rich and satisfying. Yet one crucial episode in the history of sufficiency has been largely forgotten. *Green Victorians* tells the story of a circle of men and women in the English Lake District who attempted to create a new kind of economy, turning their backs on Victorian consumer society in order to live a life dependent not on material abundance and social prestige but on artful simplicity and the bonds of community.

At the center of their social experiment was the charismatic art critic and political economist John Ruskin. Albritton and Albritton Jonsson show how Ruskin's followers turned his theory into practice in a series of ambitious local projects ranging from hand spinning and woodworking to gardening, archaeology, and pedagogy. This is a lively yet unsettling story, for there was a dark side to Ruskin's community as well—racist thinking, paternalism, and technophobia. Richly illustrated, *Green Victorians* breaks new ground, connecting the ideas and practices of Ruskin's utopian community with the problems of ethical consumption then and now.
