

Prehistoric Britain small group history tour including standing stones

Reading List

Prehistoric Britain (Routledge World Archaeology) 2010

by Timothy Darvill

Britain has been inhabited by humans for over half a million years, during which time there were a great many changes in lifestyles and in the surrounding landscape. This book, now in its second edition, examines the development of human societies in Britain from earliest times to the Roman conquest of AD 43, as revealed by archaeological evidence. Special attention is given to six themes which are traced through prehistory: subsistence, technology, ritual, trade, society, and population.

Prehistoric Britain begins by introducing the background to prehistoric studies in Britain, presenting it in terms of the development of interest in the subject and the changes wrought by new techniques such as radiocarbon dating, and new theories, such as the emphasis on social archaeology. The central sections trace the development of society from the hunter-gatherer groups of the last Ice Age, through the adoption of farming, the introduction of metalworking, and on to the rise of highly organized societies living on the fringes of the mighty Roman Empire in the 1st century AD. Throughout, emphasis is given to documenting and explaining changes within these prehistoric communities, and to exploring the regional variations found in Britain. In this way the wealth of evidence that can be seen in the countryside and in our museums is placed firmly in its proper context. It concludes with a review of the effects of prehistoric communities on life today.

With over 120 illustrations, this is a unique review of Britain's ancient past as revealed by modern archaeology. The revisions and updates to Prehistoric Britain ensure that this will continue to be the most comprehensive and authoritative account of British prehistory for those students and interested readers studying the subject.

Britain Begins

by Barry Cunliffe

The last Ice Age, which came to an end about 12,000 years ago, swept the bands of hunter gatherers from the face of the land that was to become Britain and Ireland, but as the ice sheets retreated and the climate improved so human groups spread slowly northwards, re-colonizing the land that had been laid waste. From that time onwards Britain and Ireland have been continuously

inhabited and the resident population has increased from a few hundreds to more than 60 million.

Britain Begins is nothing less than the story of the origins of the British and the Irish peoples, from around 10,000BC to the eve of the Norman Conquest. Using the most up to date archaeological evidence together with new work on DNA and other scientific techniques which help us to trace the origins and movements of these early settlers, Barry Cunliffe offers a rich narrative account of the first islanders - who they were, where they came from, and how they interacted one with another. Underlying this narrative throughout is the story of the sea, which allowed the islanders and their continental neighbours to be in constant contact.

The story told by the archaeological evidence, in later periods augmented by historical texts, satisfies our need to know who we are and where we come from. But before the development of the discipline of archaeology, people used what scraps there were, gleaned from Biblical and classical texts, to create a largely mythological origin for the British. Britain Begins also explores the development of these early myths, which show our ancestors attempting to understand their origins. And, as Cunliffe shows, today's archaeologists are driven by the same desire to understand the past - the only real difference is that we have vastly more evidence to work with.

Britain BC: Life in Britain and Ireland Before the Romans

by Francis Pryor

An authoritative and radical rethinking of the history of Ancient Britain and Ancient Ireland, based on remarkable new archaeological finds.

British history is traditionally regarded as having started with the Roman Conquest. But this is to ignore half a million years of prehistory that still exert a profound influence. Here Francis Pryor examines the great ceremonial landscapes of Ancient Britain and Ireland – Stonehenge, Seahenge, Avebury and the Bend of the Boyne – as well as the discarded artefacts of day-to-day life, to create an astonishing portrait of our ancestors.

This major re-evaluation of pre-Roman Britain, made possible in part by aerial photography and coastal erosion, reveals a much more sophisticated life in Ancient Britain and Ireland than has previously been supposed.

This edition does not include illustrations.

Flag Fen: A Concise Archaeoguide

by Francis Pryor

Flag Fen is one of the best-preserved Late Bronze Age sites yet found in Britain. It was discovered in 1982 and consists of many tens of thousands of timbers which were driven into the muddy waters of a fen on the outskirts of modern Peterborough, between about 1300 and 900 BC. Hundreds of valuable objects, including swords, daggers and jewellery, were dropped into the water around the timbers, as offerings.

Flag Fen was opened to the public in 1987 and is now a major visitor attraction. It was also the subject of a first-of-its-kind crowdsourced and crowdfunding archaeological dig during the summer of 2012, organised by Digventures.

This specially commissioned work, written by archaeologist and discoverer of Flag Fen, Francis Pryor MBE, provides a concise companion to anyone seeking an authoritative introduction to this remarkable site.

Stonehenge: Exploring the greatest Stone Age mystery

by Mike Parker Pearson

Our knowledge about Stonehenge has changed dramatically as a result of the Stonehenge Riverside Project (2003-2009), led by Mike Parker Pearson, and included not only Stonehenge itself but also the nearby great henge enclosure of Durrington Walls. This book is about the people who built Stonehenge and its relationship to the surrounding landscape. The book explores the theory that the people of Durrington Walls built both Stonehenge and Durrington Walls, and that the choice of stone for constructing Stonehenge has a significance so far undiscovered, namely, that stone was used for monuments to the dead. Through years of thorough and extensive work at the site, Parker Pearson and his team unearthed evidence of the Neolithic inhabitants and builders which connected the settlement at Durrington Walls with the henge, and contextualised Stonehenge within the larger site complex, linked by the River Avon, as well as in terms of its relationship with the rest of the British Isles. Parker Pearson's book changes the way that we think about Stonehenge; correcting previously erroneous chronology and dating; filling in gaps in our knowledge about its people and how they lived; identifying a previously unknown type of Neolithic building; discovering Bluestonehenge, a circle of 25 blue stones from western Wales; and confirming what started as a hypothesis - that Stonehenge was a place of the dead - through more than 64 cremation burials unearthed there, which span the monument's use during the third millennium BC. In lively and engaging prose, Parker Pearson brings to life the imposing ancient monument that continues to hold a fascination for everyone.

The Making of the British Landscape: How We Have Transformed the Land, from Prehistory to Today

by Francis Pryor

This is the changing story of Britain as it has been preserved in our fields, roads, buildings, towns and villages, mountains, forests and islands. From our suburban streets that still trace out the boundaries of long vanished farms to the Norfolk Broads, formed when medieval peat pits flooded, from the ceremonial landscapes of Stonehenge to the spread of the railways - evidence of how man's effect on Britain is everywhere. In *The Making of the British Landscape*, eminent historian, archaeologist and farmer, Francis Pryor explains how to read these clues to understand the fascinating history of our land and of how people have lived on it throughout time. Covering both the urban and rural and packed with pictures, maps and drawings showing everything from how we can still pick out Bronze Age fields on Bodmin Moor to how the Industrial Revolution really changed our landscape, this book makes us look afresh at our surroundings and really see them for the first time.

The Celts

by Alice Roberts

The Celts are one of the world's most mysterious ancient people. In this compelling account, Alice Roberts takes us on a journey across Europe, uncovering the truth about this enigmatic tribe: their origins, their treasure and their enduring legacy today. What emerges is not a wild people, but a highly sophisticated tribal culture that influenced the ancient world - and even Rome.

It is the story of a multicultural civilization, linked by a common language.

It is the story of how ideas travelled in prehistory, how technology and art spread across the continent.

It is the story of a five-hundred year fight between two civilizations that came to define the world we live in today.

The Sea Kingdoms: The History of Celtic Britain and Ireland

by Alistair Moffat

The most powerful representation yet of the race which has repeatedly changed history as we know it' - The Scotsman 'Brimming with interesting facts ... instructive and wide-ranging' - Cal McCrystal, Independent on Sunday 'The best picture of the Celtic race yet written' - South Wales Echo 'Lovingly traces the remnants of a once-powerful people through language, ancient place names, farms, fortresses, harbours and, most of all, through their connection to the sea' - Irish Times Alistair Moffat's journey, from the Scottish islands and Scotland, to the English coast, Wales, Cornwall and Ireland, ignores national boundaries to reveal the rich fabric of culture and history of Celtic Britain

which still survives today. This is a vividly told, dramatic and enlightening account of the oral history, legends and battles of a people whose past stretches back many hundred of years. The Sea Kingdoms is a story of great tragedies, ancient myths and spectacular beauty.

The Celtic Myths: A Guide to the Ancient Gods and Legends

by Miranda Aldhouse-Green

Introduces the world of the Celts, their gods and goddesses, heroes, monsters and villains.

As well as vividly exploring the tales, the author brings her expertise in the archaeology of the Iron Age and particularly shamanism to bear on the mythical worlds she describes, with evidence as diverse as the Gundestrup Cauldron and the famous bog bodies.

Starting with a discussion of how myths are transmitted and by whom, the author continues with an account of the Irish and Welsh myths and their key actors and motifs, before moving on to consider themes such as heroes, animals, women, environment and the Otherworld. Finally, the author asks how the myths survived the Christianization of Europe and looks at the influence of monastic chroniclers on the tales, which they preserved and adapted. Includes more than 80 illustrations

Iron Age Britain

by Barry Cunliffe

This revised introduction to Britain in the first millennium BC incorporates modifications to a story that is still controversial. It covers a time of dramatic change in Europe, dominated by the emergence of Rome as a megastate. In Britain, on the extremity of these developments, it was a period of profound social and economic change, which saw the end of the prehistoric cycle of the Neolithic and bronze Ages, and the beginning of a world that was to change little in its essentials until the great voyages of colonization and trade of the 16th century. The theme of the book is that of social change within an insular society sitting on the periphery of a world in revolution.

Standing Stones

by Beth Camp

In 1842, Lord Gordon claims his new estate in Northern Scotland and plans to replace farmers and fishermen with sheep. Mac McDonnell, suspicious of Lord Gordon from the beginning, leads protests – despite the impact his actions will have on his sister and three brothers. When evictions begin, a

second protest at Westness turns violent. What will Mac risk to protect his family, his sweetheart, and his livelihood?

Set in the Orkney Islands during the time of the Clearances, Standing Stones won an award from the Pacific Northwest Writers Association for historical fiction and was called “a very promising work, with appeal to a broad audience, peppered with a variety of characters the reader can identify with sympathetically or instantly distrust.”
