

## Queen Victoria's Great Britain: a small group tour

### Reading List

#### **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.

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#### **Victoria: A Life**

by A.N. Wilson

Wilson's exhaustively researched and definitive biography includes a wealth of new material from previously unseen sources to show us Queen Victoria as she's never been seen before. Wilson explores the curious set of circumstances that led to Victoria's coronation, her strange and isolated childhood, her passionate marriage to Prince Albert and his pivotal influence even after death, and her widowhood and subsequent intimate friendship with her Highland servant John Brown, all set against the backdrop of this momentous epoch in Britain's history—and the world's.

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#### **The Industrial Revolution Explained: Steam, Sparks & Massive Wheels**

by Stan Yorke

The English Industrial Revolution was a triumph of ingenuity and invention. New sources of power, better manufacturing methods and expanding transport systems brought fantastic changes affecting every walk of life. Man and machine worked side by side to produce iron, coal and cotton cloth on a scale never before imagined.

In this easy-to-follow and carefully researched book, Stan Yorke explains the machines and processes that helped to create our industrial world, using drawings and diagrams by his son, Trevor. Four major industrial areas are examined: the waterwheel as a source of power in mills and foundries; the steam engine which made power available to a variety of manufacturing industries; the mechanisation of textile production making cloth for all a reality; and iron, which revolutionised bridge construction and made the railways possible.

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## **Victoria: The Woman Who Made the Modern World**

by Julia Baird

The much-admired, critically-praised and bestselling biography of Queen Victoria, from one of Australia's most admired and respected journalists and commentators, Julia Baird.

When Alexandrina Victoria was crowned Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland on 20 June 1837, she was 18 years old and barely five feet tall. Her subjects were fascinated and intrigued; some felt sorry for her. Writer Thomas Carlyle, watching her gilded coach draw away from the coronation, said: 'Poor little Queen, she is at an age at which a girl can hardly be trusted to choose a bonnet for herself; yet a task is laid upon her from which an archangel might shrink.' Queen Victoria is long dead, but in truth she has shaped us from the grave. She was a tiny, powerful woman who reigned for an astonishing 64 years. By the time of her Diamond Jubilee Procession in 1897, she reigned over a fourth of the inhabitable part of the world, had 400 million subjects, and had given birth to nine children. Suffrage, anti-poverty and anti-slavery movements can all be traced to her monumental reign, along with a profound rethinking of family life and the rise of religious doubt. When she died, in 1901, she was the longest reigning monarch in English history. Victoria is truly the woman who made the modern world.

A fascinating, provocative and authoritative new biography of Queen Victoria which will make us see her in a new light, from one of Australia's most admired and respected journalists and commentators, Julia Baird.

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## **The British Empire**

by Stephen W. Sears

In 1815, the British controlled the seas. Before the end of the nineteenth century, they ruled Australia, India, New Zealand, half of Africa, half of North America, and islands all around the globe. Theirs was the most powerful empire the world has ever known.

Here is the story of how the English acquired their vast domain; how they ruled, maintained, and exploited it; and how, within decades, they presided over its dissolution.

Here are Britain's triumphs and also her stinging defeats, her heroes and her scoundrels. It is a full and fascinating chronicle of the growth of the British Empire and its people and of the impact that empire had on the rest of the world.

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