

High School Level STUDENT

BRITISH HISTORY

*Observations & Assessments
from Early Cultures to Today*



James P. Stobaugh

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This book is dedicated to this new generation of young believers whose fervor and dedication to the purposes of the Lord shall yet bring a great revival. Stand tall, young people, and serve our Lord with alacrity and courage!



Using Your Student Textbook

How this course has been developed:

1. **Chapters:** This course has 34 chapters (representing 34 weeks of study).
2. **Lessons:** Each chapter has five lessons each, taking approximately 20 to 30 minutes each. There will be a short reading followed by critical thinking questions. Some questions require a specific answer from the text, while others are more open-ended, leading the student to think “outside the box.”
3. **Weekly exams:** The final lesson of the week is the exam covering the week’s chapter.
4. **Student responsibility:** Responsibility to complete this course is on the student. Students are to complete the readings every day, handing their responses to a parent or teacher for evaluation. Independence is strongly encouraged in this course, which was designed for the student to practice independent learning.
5. **Grading:** Turn in your assignments daily or weekly to your parent/teacher.

Throughout this book you will find the following components:

1. **Narrative Background:** background on the period.
2. **Critical Thinking Questions:** questions based roughly on Bloom’s Taxonomy.
3. **Concepts/Generalizations:** terms, concepts, and theories to be learned.
4. **History Maker:** a person(s) who clearly changed the course of history.
5. **Historiographies or Historical Debate:** an examination of historical theories surrounding a period or topic.
6. **World View Formation:** An overview of historical understandings of who God is. There is also a subsection where we examine important thinkers of the period/topic.
7. **History & World View Overview:** an overview of world views.

What the student will need each day:

1. **Notepad:** for writing assignments.
2. **Pen/pencil:** for the answers and essays.

About the Author

James P. Stobaugh and his wife, Karen, have homeschooled their four children since 1985. They have a growing ministry, For Such a Time As This Ministries, committed to challenging this generation to change its world for Christ.



Dr. Stobaugh is an ordained pastor, a certified secondary teacher, and an SAT coach. His academic credentials include: BA, cum laude Vanderbilt University; Teacher Certification, Peabody College for Teachers; MA, Rutgers University; MDiv, Princeton Theological Seminary; Merrill Fellow, Harvard University; DMin Gordon Conwell Seminary.

Dr. Stobaugh has written articles for magazines: *Leadership*, *Presbyterian Survey*, *Princeton Spire*, *Ministries Today*, and *Pulpit Digest*. Dr. Stobaugh’s books include the *SAT Preparation Course for the Christian Student*, the *ACT Preparation Course for the Christian Student*, as well as *American History*, *British History*, and *World History* high school curriculum.

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Preface

In American Eudora Welty's short story, "Worn Path," the elderly and slightly senile grandmother protagonist, Phoenix, has come to the doctor to obtain medicine for her grandson. But, she cannot remember why she came!

The nurse tries to tease out of Phoenix her reason for coming.

"You mustn't take up our time this way, Aunt Phoenix," the nurse said. "Tell us quickly about your grandson, and get it over. He isn't dead, is he?"

At last there came a flicker and then a flame of comprehension across the old grandmother's face, and she spoke. "My grandson. It was my memory had left me. There I sat and forgot why I made my long trip."

"Forgot?" The nurse frowned. "After you came so far?"

History is the remembering, the consideration about why we have come so far. And there are two primary points of view about the way history is formed... and thus remembered. One says that history is nothing more than arbitrary events connected by happenstance. The opposite point of view, this author's point of view, argues that there is a design, purpose, or pattern in history. As a matter of fact, history is nothing more or less than an unfolding of God's plan for the world.

The writing of history is the selection of information and the synthesis of this information into a narrative that will stand the critical eye of time. History, though, is never static. One never creates the definitive theory of a historical event. History invites each generation to reexamine its own story and to reinterpret past events in light of present circumstances.

For instance, looking back I can remember an incident in my past that is interpreted quite differently from many different people. The participants would have one interpretation; the persons affected might have another.

For the first eight years of my life I stood in front of an ancient oak tree in front of my family home on South Highway, McGehee, Arkansas, and caught a big yellow school bus to McGehee Elementary School. My buddies, Craig Towles and Pip Runyan, wickedly violated school bus riding etiquette and abandoned their boring bus stop two doors down and joined me so that we could surreptitiously deposit acorns, pretending to be "soldiers" in the middle of the road



to be squashed by speeding autos, otherwise known as German Panzer Tanks. The old oak tree liberally deposited brave acorn Wehrmacht African Korps recruits on the crab grass carpet that my grandmother had futilely tried to replace with St. Augustine grass.

We made the most of the oak's munificence. Squashed acorn armed forces made a wonderful chartreuse stain on the already steaming south highway concrete crown. This was innocent enough—no one would miss a few acorns from a stupid oak tree—but before long, you guessed it, we or more precisely Pip, who was always full of errant but terribly interesting pretend scenarios, suggested that we abandon the acorns and start throwing grenades; otherwise known as rocks at passing cars. Needless to say, we got into big trouble.

Recently I had lunch with Craig and he and I concur, in a somewhat revisionist historical vein, that Pip is/was completely responsible for the rock throwing incident. We are content with our historical interpretation, but I wonder how Pip would feel about our interpretation?

Likewise, French and the British historians may be sure they were completely justified in their harsh retribution at the ending of World War I with the Versailles Treaty. But ask a German historian and see what he or she says!

While I know that my students can never be completely neutral about history, scholarly historical inquiry demands that they implement the following principles:

1. Historians must evaluate the veracity of sources. There must be a hierarchy of historical sources. Primary source material, for instance, usually is the best source of information.
2. Historians must be committed to telling both sides of the historical story. They may choose to lobby for one view over the other, but they must fairly examine all theories.
3. Historians must avoid stereotypes and archetypes. They must overcome personal prejudices and dispassionately view history in ruthlessly objective terms.
4. Historians must be committed to the truth no matter where their scholarship leads them. At times historians will discover unflattering information about their nation/state.
5. Finally, historians understand that real, abiding, and eternal history ultimately is made only by people who obey God at all costs.

After everything is said and done, historians are only studying the past. They cannot really change the past. Theories about the past come and go, and change with each generation; however, the past is past. Historians will debate about history, but they can never alter it. Only God can change history, and God alone.

When persons are reborn in Christ, their present, future, and, yes, even their past is changed. History is literally rewritten. They are new creations. That bad choice, that sin, that catastrophe is placed under the blood of the Lamb, and everything starts fresh and new; a new history for new people.

This happened in my own life. 150 years ago my great-great-grandfather, whose passion was to kill Yankees, was a slave owner in Eastern Tennessee. With that inheritance, like most white Southerners who grew up in the 1960s, I grew to mistrust African-Americans. Like so many people captured by their history and culture, present and future became my past. However, when I was a senior in high school, I was saved. Jesus Christ became my Lord and Savior. My attitudes changed. It took time, but prejudices disappeared. Ultimately, I married my New Jersey wife, Karen, and we adopted three African-American children—whose ancestors, by the way, may have been owned by my great-great-uncle!

Three of my children are African-American. Imagine! Quite literally, my history was rewritten. It has been changed irrevocably by my decision to invite Jesus Christ to be Savior of my life. In a real sense, family prejudice and death



existing for generations ended in my generation. The destructive historical cycle that was part of my history has ended. No one, nothing can do that but the Lord. History has been rewritten!

My prayer is that if you do not know this God who can change history—even your history—this history text might encourage you to invite Jesus Christ into your heart as Savior.



Mysterious middle-age castle near Avalon (Glastonbury, UK).

Chapter 1

EARLY ENGLAND: PART ONE

First Thoughts . . .

Two thousand years ago Celt warriors visited Britain to obtain tin and copper. They liked the place, so they conquered it. A few hundred years later the Celts brought the technology of iron smelting to Britain and once again Britain was found to have plenty of iron ore. Iron revolutionized life as it made both stronger plows and better weapons. Celts were generally of darkish complexion with black straight hair. They were fierce warriors and fought with naked painted bodies. But the Celts were like other people groups who lived in family groups or larger family tribes in hilltop camps which they defended to their death.

Chapter Learning Objectives . . .

In chapter 1, we will learn about the early Britons—Celts, Picts, and Angles. Next, we will learn that the Druids were both the spiritual and secular leaders of these people groups. Finally we will look closely at a Briton family, how it loved and lived.

As a result of this chapter you should be able to:

1. Explain why the early Britons never developed writing.
2. Describe the different tribal groups that settled in Great Britain.
3. Evaluate the role that Druids assumed in ancient British society.
4. Describe a typical Briton family.
5. Discuss why Great Britain was conquered several times by different people groups and nations.
6. Analyze why English religion emerged after technology in England.



THE BEGINNING

The first inhabitants came to Great Britain from the continental European mainland. Apparently there was a land bridge between northern Europe and central Great Britain.

The term “Great Britain” (and the abbreviation ‘GB’) is really “the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,” although usage of “the UK” has increased more recently. Most of England, Scotland, and Wales are on the island of Great Britain, as are their respective capital cities: London, Edinburgh, and Cardiff.

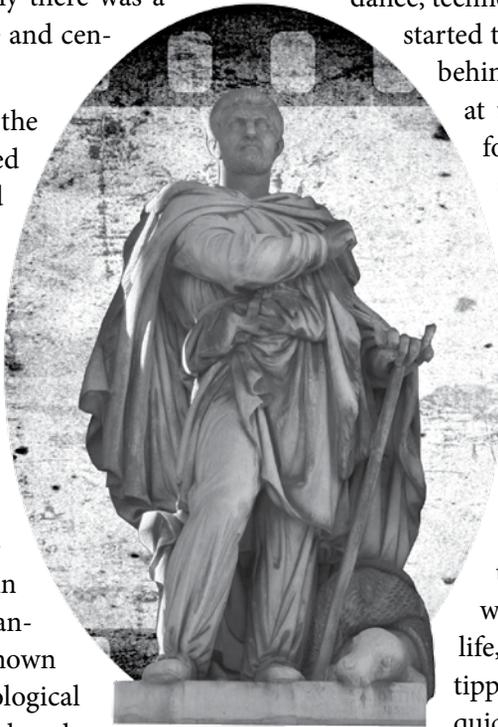
The ancient English were prehistoric—that is they did not write. None of the pre-Roman inhabitants of Britain have any known surviving written language, so ancient English history is known mainly through archaeological finds. These early English, collectively called the “Britons,” assimilated with other migrating people groups including the Celts, Picts, Angles, and Scots.

There were, however, written records about Great Britain by foreign visitors. The first significant written document about England was by the Greek navigator Pytheas (above), who explored the coastal region of Britain around 325 B.C. Ancient Britons were involved in extensive trade and cultural links with the rest of Europe, especially in exporting tin, which was in abundant supply.

While tin and other natural resources were in abundance, technology was not. Ironically, the nation that started the industrial revolution was initially far behind its continental competitors. Located at the fringes of Europe, Britain received foreign technological and cultural achievements much later than mainland areas did during prehistory. The story of ancient Britain was one of successive waves of settlers from the continent, bringing with them new cultures and technologies.

In fact, around 750 B.C. iron working techniques reached Britain from Southern Europe. Iron was stronger and more plentiful than bronze and transformed Briton weaponry. Iron working revolutionized many aspects of life, most importantly agriculture. Iron tipped plows could churn up land far more quickly and deeply than older wooden or bronze ones, and iron axes could clear forest land far more efficiently for agriculture. Successful, sedentary agriculture profoundly changed English life.

Britons lived in organized tribal groups, ruled by a chieftain. As people became more numerous, wars broke out between opposing tribes.



Assignment

Why did the early Britons never develop writing?

PICTS, SCOTS, BRITONS, AND ANGLES

By the time Christ was born, the Celts had already conquered the British Isles, as they had done most of Europe. It is at this point that our story begins. The Celts were initially from Northern Italy. They spread over most of coastline Europe, including parts of Russia. The cold Scottish coast had a particular allure. They farmed the rocky Scottish Highlands and regularly conquered indigenous Britons. They were a fierce, proud people and several Celtic groups exist even today in northern Scotland.

When people think of Celtic people they usually think of **Druids**. These priests or sorcerers ruled their society with an iron hand. The unifying bond between all the Celtic tribes was their common priesthood, the Druids. The ancient stone structures and stone circles, such as Stonehenge, have often been associated with the Druids. Scandalous tales of human sacrifice, presided over by a strange class of mystical priests, have been purported to be connected to the Druids. The truth is, however, Stonehenge was constructed long before the Druids appeared in Britain. The Druids preserved religion, history, laws, and science. They had authority over every chief, and since their office was ubiquitous, they settled disputes and stopped battles by compelling the rival parties to arbitration. They managed the higher legal system and the courts of appeal, and their colleges in Britain were famous throughout Europe. Up to twenty years of oral instruction was required of minstrels and bards before being admitted into the Druid order.

The Scots were Celtic settlers who moved into the western Highlands from Ireland in the fourth century. The Picts too were a confederation of Celtic tribes living in what was later to become eastern and northern Scotland from before

the Roman conquest of Britain until the 10th century, when they merged with the Gaels. They were fierce warriors and the Romans called them “Picti” (The Painted Ones) since most of the times they went into battle completely naked to show their tattooed bodies. The Picts were in fact Celts.

The Angles lived in **Northumbria**. The Angles invaded England and created their own kingdom, Anglia. They were tough and brave warriors. The Angles expanded their possessions into southern England.

As with most peoples in the north of Europe in Late Antiquity, the ancient Englishmen (Scots, Picts, Angles, Britons, Celts) were farmers living in small communities. Cattle and horses were an obvious sign of wealth and prestige. Cereal crops included wheat, barley, oats and rye. Vegetables included kale, cabbage, onions and leeks, peas and beans, turnips and carrots. Plants such as wild garlic, nettles and watercress may have been gathered in the wild. The pastoral economy meant that hides and leather were readily available. Wool was the main source of clothing, although flax was also common. Fish, shellfish, seals and whales were harvested along coasts and in rivers. The prevalence of domesticated animals suggests that meat and milk products were a major part of the diet of ordinary people, while wealthier Britons would have eaten a more diverse diet rich in meat from hunting.

Assignment

Describe the different tribal groups that settled in Great Britain.

Stonehenge



DRUIDS

A druid was a member of the priestly class active in Gaul (Northern Germany), and in Celtic Britain. They were priest, judge, scholar, and teacher to their Briton communities. The core points of druidic religious beliefs included reincarnation and human sacrifice.

Druids were highly educated for their culture. Yet, they wrote nothing. Some Druids spent 20 years memorizing oral traditions of druidic lore. The druid priesthood was open only to males. All instruction was communicated orally so there was no record of druid ritual or theology.

Gruesome reports of druidic practices appear in Latin histories and poetry. At a bog in Lindow, Cheshire, England was discovered a body, designated the “Lindow Man”, which may have been the victim of a druidic ritual.

Druids could punish members of Celtic society by a form of “excommunication,” preventing them from attending religious festivals. Druids, then, had both priestly and political roles and were instrumental in maintaining order.

Druid religion included rituals performed at so-called druid temples, usually stone structures built into the side of a hill. Stonehenge may be an exception.

Stonehenge is a place of pilgrimage for neo-druids, and for certain others following pagan or neo-pagan beliefs, but it was probably nothing more than a burial site.

Scholars believe that Stonehenge once stood as a magnificent complete monument. This cannot be proven since half of the stones that should be present are missing, and many of the assumed stone sockets have never been found.

One final personal message. If one asked this author, when I was an eight year old, what my favorite holiday was, he would have enthusiastically proclaimed: Halloween! Haunted houses,

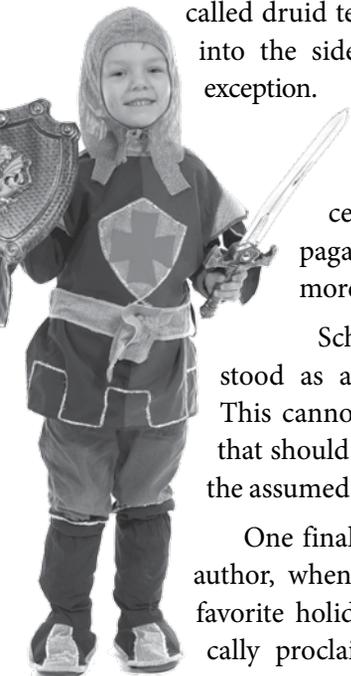
costumes, candy—it all captured his imagination. But that was 1961 and this is today.

Halloween clearly is not a Christian holiday. In fact it is anything but Christian. The origins and traditions of Halloween can be traced back thousands of years to the druids. The eve of October 31 marked the transition from summer into the darkness of winter. On this night, the spirits of the dead were purported to have been resurrected. Demons, fairies, and ghouls roamed about the town. They destroyed crops, killed cattle, soured milk, and generally made life miserable . . . unless an appropriate appeasement was offered. Namely, a human sacrifice. So, anticipating these goblins, druid towns annually, in October, chose young maidens and sacrificed them in honor of the pagan gods. This is not the same as having a Christmas tree, or believing in the Easter Bunny—Halloween is a celebration of death, destruction, and hell.

Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. He is hope and mercy and love—not death, destruction, and murder. There are alternative celebrations you know. Some parents hold costume parties and have the kids dress as Bible heroes (no trick or treat though!). Other groups hold hayrides and harvest celebrations. Halloween is a time to rejoice in the fact that “the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8)” God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7). You were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light . . . and do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them (Eph. 5:8,11).

Assignment

- What role did Druids assume in ancient British society?
- Why is Halloween a dangerous, anti-Christian holiday?



ANCIENT BRITISH LIFE

Prehistoric Britons lived in sturdy wooden roundhouses. The main frame of the roundhouse was made of sturdy timbers interwoven with wood to make wattle walls. This was then insulated with clay, soil, straw and animal manure that would weatherproof the house. One can imagine life in the roundhouse was quite a “smelly” affair in the summer! The roof was constructed from large timbers and densely thatched.

Depending on the climate, most domestic life would have occurred within the roundhouse. The main focus of the interior of the house was the central open-hearth fire. This open fireplace cooked food and provided warmth and light. The fire was maintained 24 hours a day. A bronze cauldron (large pot) was held up by a tripod and attached with an adjustable chain.

The ordinary basic cooking pots would have been made by hand from the local clay and came in varying rounded shapes, occasionally with simple incised decoration.

Bread would have been an important part of any meal, and was made from wheat and barley ground down into stone ground flour. No doubt Britons loved milk and other dairy products, but they seemed to dislike vegetables. Clearly, too, families enjoyed an occasional rabbit or deer.



A recreation of a Celtic roundhouse, National History Museum of Wales, 2007.



Reconstruction of Iron Age crannog dwelling in Perthshire, Scotland.

Everything happened inside the one-room house. The interior of the house was an ideal place for the drying and preservation of food. Smoke and heat from the constant fire smoked meat.

Life was not entirely work. Britons were already brewing beer and no doubt enjoyed a drought in front of the fire.

Occasional round stones are found that doubled as game pieces and slingshot ammunition.

Britons, even children, men and women, wore close-fitting trousers, with a long tunic of either linen or wool, held at the waist with a belt. Over this would have been a cloak that was fastened at the shoulder with a brooch. The textiles were dyed bright colors and were woven with striped or checked patterns. These colors and patterns no doubt communicated clan ties.

Both women and men grew their hair long, sometimes plaited, and the men sported either beards or moustaches, which they also grew long (British Museum).

Assignment

Describe a typical Briton family.



Roman fort, Gariannonum Burgh, Castle Norfolk Broads National Park, East Anglia, England.