Britain

James O'Driscoll

Contents

4

Introduction



I Country and people

Geographically speaking \cdot Politically speaking \cdot The four nations \cdot The dominance of England \cdot National loyalties

2 History

Prehistory \cdot The Roman period (43–410) \cdot The Germanic invasions (410–1066) \cdot The medieval period (1066–1485) \cdot The sixteenth century \cdot The seventeenth century \cdot The nineteenth century \cdot The twentieth century

3 Geography



15

 $\label{lem:continuous} Climate \cdot Land and settlement \cdot The environment and pollution \cdot London \cdot Southern England \cdot The midlands \cdot Northern England \cdot Scotland \cdot Wales \cdot Northern Ireland$

4 Identity

42

Ethnic identity: the native British · Ethnic identity: the non-native British · The family · Geographical identity · Class · Men and women · Religious and political identity · Social and everyday contacts · Identity in Northern Ireland · Being British

5 Attitudes

56

Stereotypes and change \cdot English versus British \cdot Multiculturalism \cdot Conservatism \cdot Being different \cdot The love of nature \cdot The love of animals \cdot Formality and informality \cdot Public spiritedness and amateurism \cdot Privacy and sex

6 Political life

67

The public attitude to politics \cdot The style of democracy \cdot The constitution \cdot The style of politics \cdot The party system \cdot The modern situation

7 The monarchy

77

The appearance \cdot The reality \cdot The role of the monarch \cdot The value of the monarchy \cdot The future of the monarchy

8 The government

82

The cabinet - The Prime Minister - The civil service - Central and local government - Local government services

9 Parliament

90

The atmosphere of Parliament · An MP's life · Parliamentary business · The party system in Parliament · The House of Lords

10 Elections

98

The system \cdot Formal arrangements \cdot The campaign \cdot Polling day \cdot Election night \cdot Recent results and the future

II The law

106

The police and the public · Crime and criminal procedure · The system of justice · The legal profession

12 International relations

The end of empire . The armed forces . Transatlantic relations . The sovereignty of the union: Europe . The sovereignty of the union: Scotland and Wales. The sovereignty of the union: Northern Ireland

13 Religion

121

Religion and politics · Anglicanism · Catholicism · Other conventional Christian churches · Other religions, churches and religious movements

14 Education

130

Historical background · Organization · Style · Recent developments · School life · Public exams · Education beyond sixteen

15 The economy and everyday life

141

Earning money · Work organizations · The structure of trade and industry . The distribution of wealth . Finance and investment · Spending money: shopping · Shop opening hours

16 The media

The importance of the national press - The two types of national newspaper . The characteristics of the national press: politics . The characteristics of the national press: sex and scandal. . The BBC . Television: organization · Television: style

17 Transport

162

On the road · Public transport in towns and cities · Public transport between towns and cities . The story of the chunnel . Air and water

18 Welfare

168

The benefits system · Social services and charities · The national health service . The medical profession

19 Housing

174

Houses, not flats · Private property and public property · The importance of 'home' · Individuality and conformity. Interiors: the importance of cosiness · Owning and renting · Homelessness

20 Food and drink

184

Attitudes to food · Eating out · Alcohol · Pubs

21 Sport and competition

191

A national passion • The social importance of sport • Cricket · Football · Rugby · Animals in sport · Other sports · Gambling

22 The arts

201

The arts in society. The characteristics of British arts and letters · Theatre and cinema · Music · Literature · The fine arts

23 Holidays and special occasions

208

Traditional seaside holidays · Modern holidays · Christmas and New Year · Other notable annual occasions