Introduction

Robin Frame

in The Political Development of the British Isles 1100–1400

This book offers a complementary, rather than an alternative, perspective on the history of politics in the British Isles from 1100 to 1400. A view that takes in the British Isles as a whole may highlight themes and relations that otherwise are only dimly visible; it can help to pin-point similarities and differences, and prompt questions that might otherwise remain unasked; above all, it should have the capacity to set well-known features in an unfamiliar context. Two stand out. The first, inevitably, is the impact on the British Isles of the dominant power within them, represented by the Anglo-Norman aristocracy, church, and monarchy, and by their successor, the English state. The expansion of that power, the responses it encountered, and the limits that were placed upon it form an important thread in a somewhat winding story. Comparisons and contrasts between the different parts of the British Isles form a second prominent theme.

The Political Development of the British Isles 1100–1400

Robin Frame

All too often British history means English history and the histories of Wales, Scotland, and Ireland are left to scholars of the ‘Celtic Fringe’. In this clear and authoritative introduction to the medieval history of the British Isles, the four countries are viewed together, revealing the similarities and contrasts between the different regions. During the period 1100–1400, the British Isles formed a political sphere of great complexity, and were closely integrated with continental Europe.
The most dynamic power was that represented by the Anglo-Norman aristocracy, church and monarchy, and their successor, the Plantagenet state. The book traces the expansion of this power, which by 1300 had embraced the whole of Wales and much of Ireland. It examines how the Scottish kings alone sustained an extended rival orbit, and how the prolonged clash between the two monarchies eventually loosened the control of each other over its Gaelic fringes.

Introduction

R.R. Davies

in The First English Empire: Power and Identities in the British Isles 1093-1343

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Item type: chapter

Two contemporary images of the history of medieval England help establish the central theme of this book. The first image — seen in Flores Historiarum — displays the coronation of the Kings of England from Edward the Confessor to John, with the exception of Harold and the addition of Edward I in the thirteenth century. King Arthur, here, was portrayed as a significant constituent in the canonical version of English history. The second image, which is now located in the west and north windows of the antechapel at All Souls College, Oxford, shows kings who are known for either their sanctity or their contributions to history. These images raise issues regarding King Arthur and other issues that involve the history of England and the English monarchy. The study involves an Anglocentric approach in looking into the relationship between England and the rest of the British Isles.

Uniting the Nations?

Stephen Conway

in The British Isles and the War of American Independence

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This chapter considers whether the war promoted an overarching sense of Britishness. The connection between war and national identity and the timing or even the reality of the emergence of a popular identification with Britain have been hotly contested by historians in recent years, and
an exploration of these issues in the context of the American conflict should add something to the debates.

Lordship in the British Isles, c.1320–c.1360: the Ebb Tide of the English Empire?
Brendan Smith

This chapter shows that lordship in the British Isles in the middle decades of the 14th century was sufficiently flexible to withstand both famine and plague, but was most robust in areas such as central and northern Ireland, the Anglo-Scottish border, the Highlands and Isles, and the Welsh March, where, for military and economic reasons, exploitation of land was less important than lordship over men and relative judicial independence. It was a situation in which Laoighseach Ó Mordha could become a prince, and that undoubtedly signalled an ebbing of the tide of English power. The tradition of obedience to royal lordship in both England and Scotland, however, was strong, and while regional autonomy became more pronounced in the middle of the 14th century, few parts of the British Isles operated completely or for long beyond the range of royal control or interference.

British geography 1500–1900
David N. Livingstone

This chapter presents an impressionistic, and thus imprecise, sketch of the history of British geography from 1500 to 1900. Over these 400 years, British geography has assumed many different forms in many different arenas. Whether as a species of natural philosophy and mathematics, as a form of regional portraiture, as overseas lore, or expeditionary travel; whether in universities curricula or at royal courts, in school texts or learned societies; whether as a vehicle of national and local identity or as a channel of imperial desire: geography has been
inextricably intertwined with the social, intellectual, political and religious history of the British Isles.

The British Isles and the War of American Independence
Stephen Conway

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This book examines a hitherto neglected aspect of the War of American Independence, providing the first wide-ranging account of the impact of this 18th-century conflict upon the politics, economy, society, and culture of the British Isles. The book examines the level of military participation — which was much greater than is usually appreciated — and explores the war's effects on subjects as varied as parliamentary reform, religious toleration, and attitudes to empire. The book casts new light upon recent debate about the war-waging efficiency of the British state and the role of war in the creation of a sense of ‘Britishness’. The thematic chapters are supplemented by local case-studies of six very different communities the length and breadth of the British Isles.

Apologia
R. R. Davies

in Lords and Lordship in the British Isles in the Late Middle Ages

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The concept of ‘lordship’ has been more central to the historiography of medieval France and Germany than to that of England or Britain. This may be because England was a king-focused political community; the sources were for the most part produced by the royal government; and English historians have concentrated instead on such issues as state-formation. The approach of this book is thematic and analytical; it is sensitive to the chronological and geographical varieties of lordship within the British Isles. The chronological limits of the book are explained, with particular reference to the wealth of documentation available for the chosen period. The focus on the very highest element of the aristocracy is justified, as is the decision to exclude consideration of ecclesiastical lordship and the nature of power in ‘Celtic’ societies. The choice of the British Isles as the unit of investigation is defended.
Bannockburn did not determine the battle between Robert Bruce and Edward Plantagenet in spite of the scale of the Scottish victory and of the disaster that engulfed the English. The battle ended the hard struggle between Bruce and his enemies inside Scotland. However, the fighting would intensify and circulate in the years which followed. In line with this, this book explores the importance of the battle of Bannockburn and the Scottish wars of the early fourteenth century in the history of the British Isles. It specifically addresses the direct and indirect involvement of the peoples of these islands in the sustained conflict between Robert Bruce and Edward II and how the wars, and Bannockburn affected the politics and society in Ireland, Wales and England, and Scotland. It also evaluates the interaction of warfare, politics and diplomacy across the British Isles during the critical years between 1300 and 1330.

The History of British Birds
Derek Yalden and Umberto Albarella

Birds, in contrast to mammals, are thought to have fragile bones, which are difficult to identify when found, so have no useful archaeological record. This book is based on an accumulation of over 9,000 records of species identified from sites in the British Isles, which indicates that the contrary is true. The difficulties of identification are discussed, but 9,000 records is a substantial body of evidence, which is reviewed. The book summarizes the archaeological record of birds in the British Isles, and integrates this factual basis into an overview of the history of the bird fauna in these islands. It tells us much about what native birds we should have, which ones we have lost, and therefore which ones would be worth discussing for reintroduction. Recent discussions suppose that eagle owls are not native, but archaeological evidence suggests they were. White-tailed eagles were widespread up to Saxon times at least, and cranes (not the same as herons) were widespread through to mediaeval times. When did our most common bird arrive? Where from? Which species is
it, anyway? And how does the balance of wild, introduced and domestic birds compare with the similar balance of mammals, or with the balance 7,000 years ago, before farming altered the landscape?

War, Peace, and Empire
Stephen Conway

in The British Isles and the War of American Independence
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This chapter asks whether the experience of the American conflict altered British attitudes to war and to empire. In many senses the answer must be no, continuity is often the dominant impression. But in certain respects attitudes did change. The American war saw the first sustained and large-scale public criticism of the use of military force as an instrument of policy. While the criticism was directed, for the most part, at the justice and wisdom of fighting fellow subjects, rather than a genuine expression of hostility to war as such, it prepared the ground for the more clearly anti-war campaigns in the struggle against revolutionary and Napoleonic France. Attitudes to empire also underwent change. Opposition to the possession of overseas territories, while gaining converts in intellectual circles, remained very much a minority view, but the loss of America accentuated a process of change in the nature of the empire, and with this change came an important shift in public perceptions.

The Origins of Easter
Ronald Hutton

in The Stations of the Sun: A History of the Ritual Year in Britain
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Item type: chapter

This chapter discusses the origins of Easter. As the execution and resurrection of its founder were the principal events upon which Christianity has based its claims in Messianism, it was inevitable that the annual commemoration of them would be the principal festival of the Christian year. ‘Pesach’, the proper Hebrew name for that festival, forms the basis for most of the terms for the Christian Feast of the Resurrection used across Europe. The Council of Nicaea agreed upon a means of
reckoning its date, compromising between the churches in Asia's custom of calculating it according to the phases of the moon, and the practice of the Church in Rome, of fixing it upon a particular Sunday in the calendar. Not until the eighth century were all these in the British Isles agreed upon the rule that was becoming standard in Western Europe, of the first Sunday after the moon had achieved its fullness.

**Divisions within the Whole**

Stephen Conway

in The British Isles and the War of American Independence

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Item type: chapter

This chapter is devoted to the political battles within the British Isles associated with the conflict. It explores the division within Britain and Ireland, looking first to see whether a geographical pattern can be discerned, and then examining the political, social, and religious backgrounds of the two sides. Once these matters have been considered, attention can then be turned to the issues of contention themselves.

**The Sea Kings**

Michael Brown

in The Wars of Scotland 1214–1371

Published in print: 2004 Published Online: September 2012


Item type: chapter

The thirteenth-century kings of Scotland viewed the world from the core of their realm in the valleys of the Tay, the Forth, and the Tweed. Between 1214 and 1286 the kings sought to establish structures of direct and indirect rule beyond these southern and eastern heartlands by negotiation and by force. The ambitions of the kings of Scots brought them into close contact with the men of the Isles. The islands of the west, from Lewis in the north down through the Hebrides to Islay and south to Man in the Irish Sea, lay under the lordship of the king of Norway. The Isles, or the Sudreys as the Norse termed them, formed the core of a different region. Custom and language in this maritime province reflected the merging of Scandinavian and Gaelic populations and cultures since the arrival of the Norsemen in the ninth century. This distinct identity was recognised not simply by the royal titles claimed by rulers in the
region, but by the creation of a single diocese covering the Isles in the late twelfth century.

Mobilization
Stephen Conway

in The British Isles and the War of American Independence

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This chapter discusses the mobilization of manpower for the war, considering the scale and breadth of participation in the armed forces, official and unofficial. This is an important starting point, because the magnitude of mobilization, which has usually been greatly underestimated, had important and multifarious ramifications.

Rhetoric and Reality: British Migration to Canada, 1867–1967
Marjory Harper

in Canada and the British Empire

Published in print: 2010 Published Online: October 2011
Item type: chapter

This chapter examines the rhetoric and reality of British migration to Canada during the period from 1867 to 1967. The Confederation census reported in 1871 that 16% of Canada's population had been born outside the new Dominion. Following more than fifty years of continued British immigration, almost 84% of non-Canadian born citizens came from the British Isles. The influx of British immigrants continued until the points system was introduced in the 1960s.

Politics and the Nation
Robert Harris

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Item type: book

This book presents a new picture of political life in mid-18th century Britain, a period of history which is poorly understood. It argues that British politics and political culture in this period have often been
poorly understood through over-emphasis on political stability. Using a thematic approach, it reconstructs a political world in which vital issues continued to exercise the minds and emotions of those who made up the contemporary ‘political nation’, a group which included far more than the handful of politicians who competed for national political office. The book interprets its subject broadly and tells the stories of politics in the mid-18th century through the words and projects, hopes and fears, of contemporaries. It also represents an important contribution to the difficult, but important, project of writing the history of the British Isles. Developments in Scotland and Ireland are given careful attention along with those of England.

Lord of the Isles
Michael Brown

in The Wars of Scotland 1214-1371

The years of crisis and war which engulfed the Scottish realm between 1286 and 1356 altered political relationships and power structures across the north and west of the British Isles. Nowhere were these changes of greater significance than in the isles and coastlands to the west of Scotland. Though the Hebrides and Isle of Man had been brought under the lordship of the Scottish king, the Isles retained their own traditions and identities. Through the coming decades politics in the Isles would be dominated by competing magnates, especially the lines descended from Somerled, the MacDougalls of Lorn, the MacDonalds of Islay, and the MacRuairis of Garmoran, who still regarded themselves as heirs to his kingship over Inse Gall. The wars in the Isles had a strategic importance in the efforts of first the Plantagenets and then the Bruces to extend their lordship, but it would be the ambitions of the Islesmen themselves that would prove of greatest significance in reshaping structures of power in the far west.

Introduction
Stephen Conway

in The British Isles and the War of American Independence
This introductory chapter begins with a brief background of the American war. It then sets out the purpose of the book, which is to examine the impact of this war on the British Isles. It describes the approach and scope of the book and presents an overview of the subsequent chapters.

**Parliamentary Power and Parliamentary Reform**

Stephen Conway

in *The British Isles and the War of American Independence*

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Item type: chapter

This chapter focuses on the parliaments of the British Isles. The Westminster Parliament saw its authority curbed, most obviously in relation to America but also over the rest of the empire. The Dublin Parliament, by contrast, benefited to the extent that Ireland was given limited legislative independence. Both parliaments, however, faced internal challenges, in that movements for parliamentary reform, stimulated by wartime developments, emerged in Britain and Ireland. In Britain there was also a concerted and successful campaign for ‘economical reform’ — the reduction of the number of offices at the disposal of the executive — which in time was to transform the very nature of politics.