

Let's Explore...

The British Isles

A Geography Reader



**CAROLINE
WALKER**

...[I] hope teachers around the world will find it as valuable a classroom tool as we do.

- Jason Fletcher, Headmaster, Heritage School, Cambridge

Let's Explore...

The British Isles



Fens, fells, drumlins, and downs. Caroline Walker claims, “geography is about the way places shape the lives of the people who live there” and it would be hard to find a more engaging child’s introduction to the geography of the British Isles than the beautiful and brilliant one she shares. Guided by a warm knowledgeable storyteller—with nary a list of definitions, chart of facts, or set of questions to answer—the reader leaves on an imaginary journey to, around, and through the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland aided only by the conversational literary style of the storyteller, increasingly detailed watercolour maps, and artistic photographs, each element adding to the majesty and memorability of the story told. One can imagine that while reading through this geography, a student will eagerly reach for one of the novels noted, *Swallows and Amazons* or *Wind in the Willows* perhaps, search to learn more about King Arthur, the Spanish Armada, William the Conqueror, Captain James Cook, Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, the meadows of Runnymede or the forests of Nottingham, or even seek a recipe to make parkin. The ease with which Walker situates numerous historical, cultural, literary, and religious figures into a geography work for young children is masterful. Her gentle expansive work, in addition to finding a place on the shelves of all discerning homeschools and classrooms across the world, might most naturally find its home on the bedside table of a child enchanted by stories and adventures.

- **Reviewed by Deani Van Pelt, PhD**

Ancaster, Ontario, Canada

Charlotte Mason Institute

‘If geography is God’s artistry writ large upon the earth, then our responses should be ones of joy and wonder before His Providence, power, and creativity. Charlotte Mason venerated those very works God inscribed upon His created order and desired that children should experience the diversity and beauty of the world around them. Here is a book that unfolds a well-told story of the spaces and places that are the British Isles. Well-written prose combines with delightful illustrations to offer the reader’s mind and imagination a feast of fertile ideas.’

- **Dr. Jack Edward Beckman (Cantab)**

Professor of Education, Covenant College

The reader journeys with the traveler from land to sea and back again, receiving ideas of the rich history of places and persons in conjunction with delightful illustrations of maps and images throughout the British Isles.

- **Maryellen St. Cyr,**
Founder of Ambleside Schools International

‘Well written, age-appropriate narrative texts play a central role in our Charlotte Mason inspired curriculum. We find that attentive listening to an uninterrupted reading followed by narration helps children get in touch with knowledge -- in this case about the British Isles -- in uniquely effective ways. Read this text and I am sure you too will make many fresh discoveries! I am delighted to see this ground-breaking publication of Let’s Explore the British Isles by Caroline Walker and hope teachers around the world will find it as valuable a classroom tool as we do.’

- **Jason Fletcher**
Headmaster, Heritage School, Cambridge

“I have been using this wonderful book with my Year 4 class (8 and 9 year olds) as part of our Geography studies on the British Isles. The children have responded really well to the narrative style (it is much more engaging than a dry text book) and the pictures are inspiring too. The book covers both physical geographical information as well as some interesting details on cities and regions. It also makes reference to some historical details which helps the children to see the connections between, for example, their learning about the Anglo-Saxons and the development of regions. The book has certainly been a welcome addition to my teaching resources.”

- **Helen Eldridge,**
Teacher at Heritage School, Cambridge.



This edition published 2022
by Living Book Press

Text Copyright © Child Light Ltd., 2022
Maps and Illustrations Copyright © Gloris Smith Young, 2022

ISBN: 978-1-922919-11-3 (hardcover)
978-1-922919-10-6 (softcover)

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any other form or means – electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner and the publisher or as provided by Australian law.



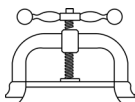
A catalogue record for this book is available from the National Library of Australia

Let's Explore
The British Isles



Written by
CAROLINE WALKER

Maps and illustrations by
GLORIS SMITH YOUNG
with map typography by
ANDREA FORCE



LIVING BOOK
PRESS



Introduction

FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS

IN HER EDUCATIONAL philosophy, Charlotte Mason didn't want children just to be seen as receptacles for facts, but rather for them to truly engage with the world and in the process, own their knowledge and understanding for themselves. One key to this, she thought, was appealing to children's imagination, particularly through stories, and this is the thinking behind this book, *Let's Explore the British Isles*. Unlike some current books that focus on facts, figures, charts and photographs, this book seeks to talk about the geography of the British Isles as a narrative, giving the reader a sense of being there, along with the illustrations of maps, pictures and photos.

As such, it can be read individually or read out loud to a class. To assist children to engage with their material, Mason encouraged them to pay careful attention to what they read or heard and then tell back what they remembered. This narration approach to learning can be very helpful.

As a children's book it tries to give only the most salient and relevant geographical information, but it does so in places with some historical context where that has real value. The maps are there to illustrate the text rather than be too detailed. For example, not all the counties of Ireland are included and none are shown for Scotland and Wales. If you live in the British Isles, we hope this book will help you to explore and know them more and if you live elsewhere, that you will be able to visit and enjoy them too.



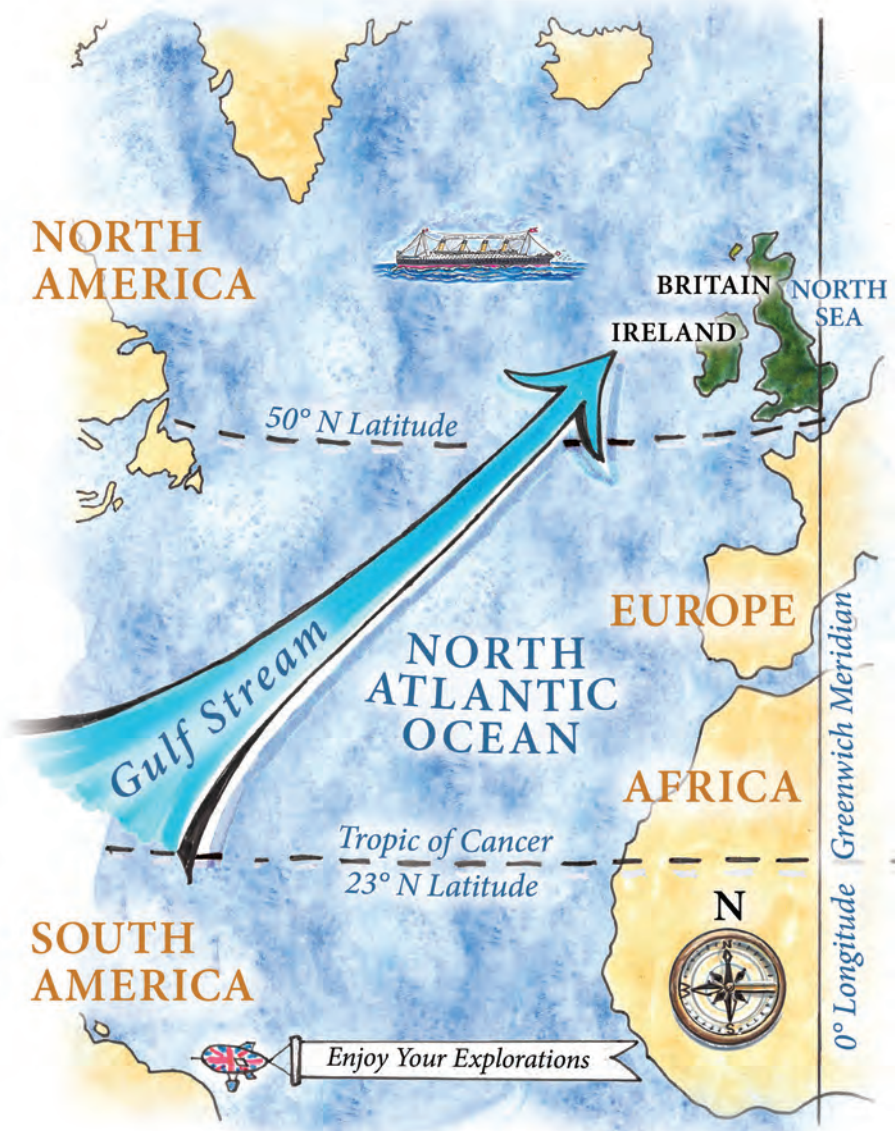


Contents

| | | |
|-----|---|-----|
| 1. | Where To Find the British Isles | 1 |
| 2. | The Countries of the British Isles | 7 |
| 3. | The Landforms of the British Isles | 11 |
| 4. | The Water Features of the British Isles | 17 |
| 5. | The Coast of the British Isles - part 1 | 23 |
| 6. | The Coast of the British Isles - part 2 | 31 |
| 7. | The Islands of the British Isles | 37 |
| 8. | The Cities of the British Isles | 43 |
| 9. | London | 49 |
| 10. | South East England | 55 |
| 11. | South West England | 61 |
| 12. | The West Midlands | 67 |
| 13. | The East Midlands | 73 |
| 14. | East Anglia | 79 |
| 15. | Yorkshire | 85 |
| 16. | North West England | 91 |
| 17. | North East England | 97 |
| 18. | Scotland - the Lowlands | 103 |
| 19. | Scotland - the Highlands | 111 |
| 20. | Wales | 117 |
| 21. | Northern Ireland | 125 |
| 22. | Republic of Ireland - part 1 | 131 |
| 23. | Republic of Ireland - part 2 | 136 |
| 24. | Conclusion | 141 |



Location of the British Isles



Where To Find the British Isles

THE FIRST THING we must find out about the British Isles is exactly where in the world they are. Look at a globe or a map of the whole world. Find the Atlantic Ocean, which is a vast expanse of waves and water. North of the Equator it is called the North Atlantic Ocean, and you will see on its western shore the continent of North America. On the eastern side you can find part of Africa and, further north, the continent of Europe. Keep your eyes travelling northwards across Europe and you will find two islands just off its north-western coast, one larger, one smaller. Now you have found the British Isles. You will see that to the south and east of the British Isles is continental Europe, and to the west is the North Atlantic Ocean. If you were to travel still further north, you would find the Arctic Circle and, eventually, the North Pole itself.

On most maps of the world, you can only see these two islands of the British Isles. The larger island is called Great Britain and the smaller is called Ireland. If you were to zoom closer, however, you would find that these two larger islands are surrounded by thousands of smaller islands. Some examples are Anglesey, the Isle of Man, the Isle of Wight, the Chan-

nel Islands, the Isles of Scilly and off Scotland, the Hebrides, Orkneys and Shetlands. Altogether, with Great Britain and Ireland, these thousands of islands are known as the British Isles.

Like all islands, the British Isles are surrounded by water. As we have already seen, to the west there is the mighty North Atlantic Ocean. The sea off the eastern coast of Great Britain is called, not the east sea, but the North Sea, as it lies to the north of much of Europe. Moving further south, the stretch of sea which separates England from France (which is on mainland Europe) is called the English Channel. The very narrowest

SATELLITE MAP OF THE BRITISH ISLES



section of the English Channel is called the Strait of Dover, where the English town of Dover is just 20 miles away from the French town of Calais. The sea which lies between Great Britain and Ireland is known as the Irish Sea.



The British Isles, like all of Europe, are in the Northern Hemisphere. This means they are north of the Equator, indeed north of the Tropic of Cancer, and relatively close to the North Pole. You can use a measure called latitude to describe how far north or south a place is. The starting line is the Equator, at 0 degrees, the furthest north you can go is the North Pole, at 90 degrees. The British Isles are found between 50 and 60 degrees North. Other lands at this latitude, in Canada and Russia have very hot summers and freezing winters. The British Isles, by contrast, have a mild climate, with warm or cool temperatures and plenty of rain and overcast weather all through the year. This is because the Atlantic Ocean, with its warm current called the Gulf Stream, brings relatively warm water and air to its shores and keeps the temperature fairly moderate. The name of this type of climate is called temperate maritime. Temperate means it is not extreme, and maritime means it is by the sea.

You can describe how far east or west a place is by using

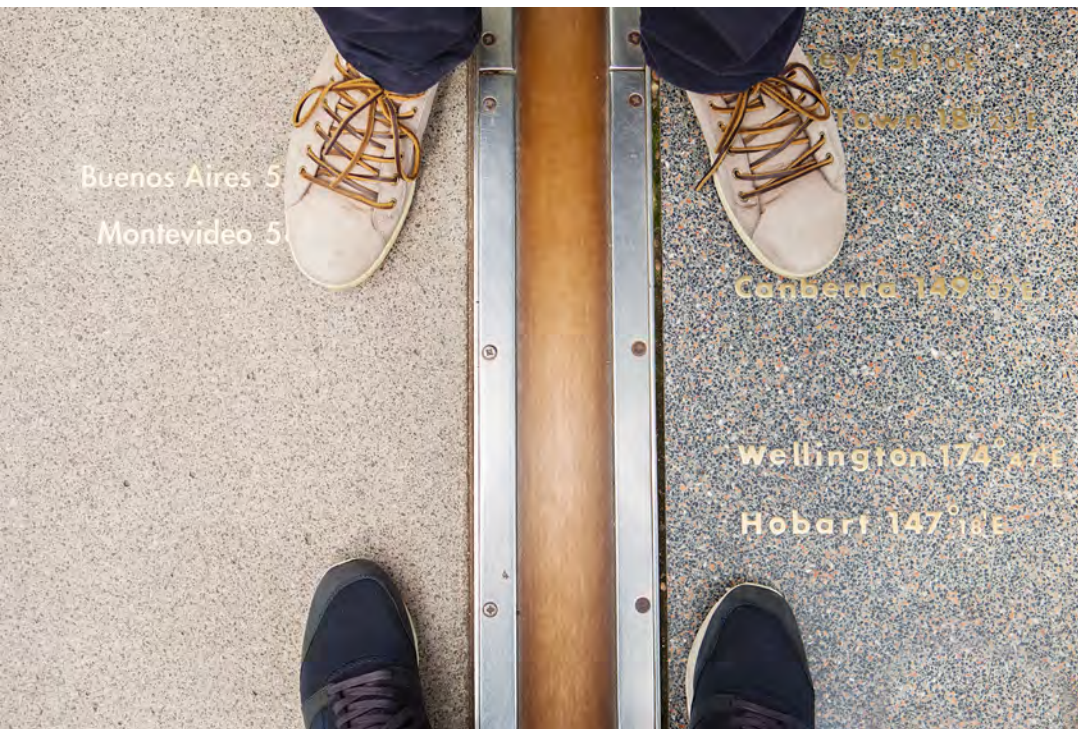


ROYAL OBSERVATORY, GREENWICH, LONDON

lines of longitude. The invisible starting line for longitude, at 0 degrees is called the Prime Meridian, and the special thing about this is that it runs right through the British Isles! In fact, the 0 degree line is often called the Greenwich Meridian, named after Greenwich, which is in London. This is because Greenwich had a Royal Observatory, where a great telescope helped people study the position of the stars, and work out their longitude. So, the British Isles range from 1 degree East to 10 degrees West, and if you go to Greenwich you can stand with one foot in the Eastern Hemisphere and one foot in the Western Hemisphere.



THE PRIME MERIDIAN.



Countries of the British Isles



Nessie is holding the **Union Jack** which is the flag of the United Kingdom, but not Ireland.



NORTH SEA



Scottish

NORTHERN IRELAND

SCOTLAND

Edinburgh

Belfast

Dublin

IRELAND (EIRE)



Irish



Welsh

WALES

Cardiff

ENGLAND

London



English



Imperial State Crown

ATLANTIC OCEAN

FRANCE