



Notes from a Small Island

By Bill Bryson

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After nearly two decades in Britain, Bill Bryson, the acclaimed author of such bestsellers as "The Mother Tongue" and "Made in America", decided it was time to move back to the United States for a while. This was partly to let his wife and kids experience life in Bryson's homeland - and partly because he had read that 3.7 million Americans believed that they had been abducted by aliens at one time or another. It was thus clear to him that his people needed him. But before leaving his much-loved home in North Yorkshire, Bryson insisted on taking one last trip around Britain, a sort of valedictory tour of the green and kindly island that had so long been his home. His aim was to take stock of modern-day Britain, and to analyze what he loved so much about a country that had produced Marmite, zebra crossings, and place names like Farleigh Wallop, Titsey, and Shellow Bowells. With wit and irreverence, Bill Bryson presents the ludicrous and the endearing in equal measure. The result is a social commentary that conveys the true glory of Britain.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Bill Bryson is an unabashed Anglophile who, through a mistake of history, happened to be born and bred in Iowa. Righting that error, he spent 20 years in England before deciding to repatriate: "I had recently read that 3.7 million Americans according to a Gallup poll, believed that they had been abducted by aliens at one time or another, so it was clear that my people needed me." That comic tone enlivens this account of Bryson's farewell walking tour of the countryside of "the green and kindly island that had for two decades been my home."

From Publishers Weekly

Before his return to the U.S. after a 20-year residence in England, journalist Bryson (*Made in America*) embarked on a farewell tour of his adopted homeland. His trenchant, witty and detailed observations of life in a variety of towns and villages will delight Anglophiles. Traveling only on public transportation and hiking whenever possible, Bryson wandered along the coast through Bournemouth and neighboring villages that reinforced his image of Britons as a people who rarely complain and are delighted by such small pleasures as a good tea. In Liverpool, the author's favorite English city, he visited the Merseyside Maritime Museum to experience its past as a great port. Interweaving descriptions of landscapes and everyday encounters with shopkeepers, pub customers and fellow travelers, Bryson shares what he loves best about the idiosyncrasies of everyday English life in this immensely entertaining travel memoir. Author tour. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Library Journal

Bryson, who hails from Iowa, has spent the last 20 years living in England and writing about the often nettlesome relationship between his two countries, especially regarding their shared language (*Made in America*, LJ 2/1/95). His latest work is "a kind of valedictory tour around the green and kindly island" before he moved with his family back to the United States. With Paul Theroux's *Kingdom by the Sea* in hand, Bryson braves the inhospitably soggy fall weather to trudge from Dover, London, coastal villages, Wales, Scotland, and back home to Yorkshire on a helter-skelter seven-week journey that only a reader well versed in the geography of the region will follow, since there are no maps to aid the (American) reader. In fact, Bryson is writing here more for his British fans, who no doubt roar with mirth as he gently pokes fun at their excessive forbearance and fondness for Cagney and Lacey repeats. He is hilarious when transcribing a conversation with unsuspecting locals, especially in Glaswegian pubs, but merely dumb when he indulges in a curious (is it British?) bathroom humor. His portrait is certainly heartfelt, and one wonders, as he chokes up describing a stately, vanishing old England, if he will truly find happiness watching the 67 television channels in his native land. For all travel collections.

Amy Boaz, *"Library Journal"*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

James Goodman:

The reason? Because this *Notes from a Small Island* is an unordinary book that the inside of the publication waiting for you to snap it but latter it will surprise you with the secret that inside. Reading this book beside it was fantastic author who also write the book in such wonderful way makes the content interior easier to understand, entertaining technique but still convey the meaning fully. So , it is good for you for not hesitating

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