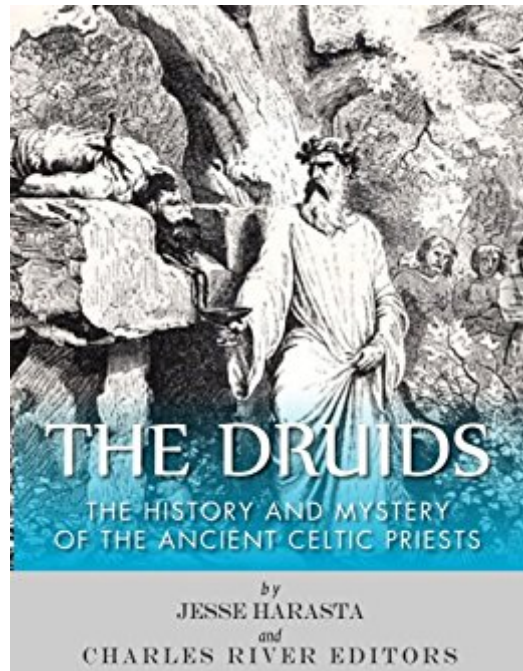


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# The Druids: The History And Mystery Of The Ancient Celtic Priests



## Synopsis

\*Includes pictures.\*Includes ancient accounts of the Druids written by Caesar, Cicero, Pliny, and more.\*Explains the modern revival of Druids.\*Includes footnotes and a bibliography for further reading.\*Includes a table of contents. “Throughout all of Gaul there are two classes of people who are treated with dignity and honor. This does not include the common people, who are little better than slaves and never have a voice in councils. Many of these align themselves with a patron voluntarily, whether because of debt or heavy tribute or out of fear of retribution by some other powerful person. Once they do this, they have given up all rights and are scarcely better than servants. The two powerful classes mentioned above are the Druids and the warriors. Druids are concerned with religious matters, public and private sacrifices, and divination.” Julius Caesar

The Celts are one of the most well-known groups in Europe and one of the least understood. Depending on which classifications are used, the Celts are also one of the oldest civilizations in Europe. In the centuries before Christ, the Celts were spread out across much of continental Europe, and though they are mostly identified with Gaul, evidence suggests they also spread as far as Portugal. However, even though they were spread out across Europe before the height of the Roman Empire, most people associate the Celts with the British Isles today, particularly Ireland and Scotland. After they had been relegated to those smaller regions as a result of the Romans and other migrations, the culture of the Celts as it is currently understood began to congeal during the Early Middle Ages, and Celtic culture, folklore, and legend have all become inextricably intertwined with Irish history and British history as a whole. The Celts have fascinated people for centuries, and the biggest fascination of all has been over the Druids, a religious class at the heart of Celtic society that wielded great power. Naturally, people have been interested in Druids for centuries mostly because they don't understand much about the Druids or their practices. The earliest meaning of the word comes from the Ancient Romans, who labeled them "Druidae" in reference to the white robed order of Celtic priests living in Gaul, Britain and Ireland. They were a well-organized, secretive group who kept no written records and performed their rituals - allegedly including human sacrifice - in oaken groves, all of which interested and horrified the Romans. The order was eventually crushed under the weight of first Roman conquest and then the imposition of Christianity, and from the remains, centuries of myths, imaginings and dreams were superimposed over the little that was known about the Druids. Not surprisingly, people have come to associate the Druids with what have been imposed. Even today, there is a revived Druidic religious movement that fuses this skeleton of knowledge about the ancient Druids with ideas such as rituals at standing stones (like Stonehenge), nature and sun worship, the carrying of ornate staves, and Arthuriana. Wider popular culture has

seen "Druids" - usually some form of secretive nature-priests - in games like Dungeons and Dragons and World of Warcraft, and films like Wicker Man (1973 and 2006) and Druids (2001). The Druids: The History and Mystery of the Ancient Celtic Priests explores the known and unknown about the Druids, from the historical evidence of their existence and practices to the evolution of Druidic concepts over time. This book also looks at the growth of Druidism since the 1700s, along with the practitioners who embrace new ideas and beliefs. Along with pictures and a bibliography, you will learn about the Druids like you never have before, in no time at all.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

I knew this book was short when I bought it, but there is a lot that can be done in even short books. This one does not. I was hoping for things like their mythology (which has survived), their lore, life during the time of the Druids, etc. Instead, I got the biased writings of Roman invaders and historians. There was some interesting information in there, but not enough to make this book worthwhile

I chose that rating because it related information about the Druids I wasn't aware of. Parts of History

that effects our life today. It was well put together. It has a place in every library

Ralph Greenberg  
Before reading this book, all I knew about the Druids I had learn from hearsay and bad movies...terribly bad movies. But the hearsay was pretty good. Many of my ancestors came from the area shaded in dark green: you'll see the map. I knew that Druids worshipped, cared for and defended nature, and wrote nothing down. All knowledge was passed from one generation to another by word of mouth. If you've read anything about the Druids, you know they practiced human sacrifice. One of their most famous sacrifices was found in a peat bog, relatively well preserved for his age. This book touches on the guy. But it doesn't go into detail!! There's so much more to learn about this fellow, and you have the internet at your command. I studied Latin for two years, so I know all about Julius Caesar trying to conquer the world. The first sentence in the first book of his Gallic Wars, letters he wrote to Rome to keep himself in the public eye, tells about the "Celts, who we call Gauls." That would be the French. Caesar found some Druids in France, then he skipped right over to England and found more. Much of what we know about the Druids was written by Romans. You'll even learn why these nature worshippers were eradicated. The Romans say there were two classes of Druids, warriors and priests. Then there's a LOT of info about war and what happens afterward, and even some speculation about Stonehenge. But, other than mistletoe, there's precious little about the Druids' legendary knowledge of the use of plants. Since mistletoe is poisonous, I found that story difficult to swallow. Since their beliefs are so poorly represented here, I think I prefer the bad movies.

An interesting read about the history but devoid of the mystery of the druids. Was hoping for a bit more insight into the lore of the druids.

Quite fascinating insight to the Druids. Some facts I didn't know. I would recommend it to anyone wanting to partially delve into the history. Not heavy reading.

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