Royal Mail Mint Stamps

ANCIENT BRITAIN

MEGALITHIC (MIDDLE STONE AGE) 9500–4000

MESOLITHIC (NEW STONE AGE) 4000–2200

BRONZE AGE 2200–500

IRON AGE 500 BC–AD 43

FIND SPOT:

—

IRON AGE

BATTERSEA SHIELD

AND ENGLISH HERITAGE

PUBLIC ACCESS: NATIONAL TRUST

ENGLAND

MARLBOROUGH, WILTSHIRE,

LOCATION:

—

NEOLITHIC

AVEBURY STONE CIRCLES

MUSEUM, LONDON

EXHIBITED AT:

BATTERSEA, LONDON, ENGLAND

AVEBURY, NEAR RIVER THAMES,

THE BRITISH MUSEUM, BELFAST

EXHIBITED AT:

NORTHERN IRELAND

BALLYMONEY, COUNTY ANTRIM,

LOCATION:

—

BRONZE AGE

DRUMBEST HORNS

ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND

PUBLIC ACCESS:

SCOTLAND

MAINLAND, ORKEY ISLANDS,

LOCATION:

—

NEOLITHIC

SKARA BRAE VILLAGE

BAY OF SKAILL

THE ULSTER HERITAGE

PUBLIC ACCESS:

NORFOLK, ENGLAND

BROOMHILL, NEAR THETFORD,

LOCATION:

—

NEOLITHIC

GRIME'S GRAVES FLINT MINES

MUSEUM, LONDON

EXHIBITED AT:

YORKSHIRE, ENGLAND

WEETING WITH STAR CARR,

THE BRITISH HERITAGE

PUBLIC ACCESS:

DORSET, ENGLAND

BRYN YR ELLYLLON

HERITAGE

PUBLIC ACCESS:

FLINTSHIRE, WALES

(GOBLINS' HILL), MOLD,
Prehistory is all around us. Settlements, mines, megaliths, barrows and brochs litter the landscape. Many are marked on maps, and some can be visited. Much more remains hidden, with new discoveries coming to light every day. All enrich the story of diverse cultures predating the Roman Conquest of AD 43. Knowing them is like exploring a foreign country; much is familiar, but they did things differently then.
Fierce storms in 1850 stripped away sand dunes on Orkney's west coast to reveal the settlement. Subsequent excavations uncovered ten structures arranged on either side of a subterranean alleyway. The full extent of the settlement is not known, but middens containing domestic waste date from centuries of occupation surrounding the houses. There was evidence that some houses had been replaced and the village remodeled during its long history. Each house is roughly square in plan with a single entrance, a central hearth, a dresser opposite the door and beds and storage facilities to either side. Some have small cells built into the thick walls, perhaps privies or storerooms. The houses were more elaborately decorated Grooved Ware pottery and had a rich material culture of worked stone and bone. Their diet was based on domesticated crops, wild fishes, fish, seabirds and products from sheep, goats, pigs and cattle.

When communicating with animal spirits.

which may have been worn by shamans

and weapons in prehistoric times.

A masterpiece of artistry and skilled metalworking, this shield was found in a barrow near the mouth of the River South in 1850. The bronze metal face presents a masterful piece, made from a single sheet of 0.6mm (0.02in) thick bronze. The back of the shield was decorated with bands of good-quality flint. Radiating galleries were then cut to follow the flint, and polished to a high finish. Radiating gallery designs often date to 6000 BC, with use of the site continuing through its long history. Each house is roughly square in plan with a single entrance, a central hearth, a dresser opposite the door and beds and storage facilities to either side. Some have small cells built into the thick walls, perhaps privies or storerooms. The houses were more elaborately decorated Grooved Ware pottery and had a rich material culture of worked stone and bone. Their diet was based on domesticated crops, wild fishes, fish, seabirds and products from sheep, goats, pigs and cattle.

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