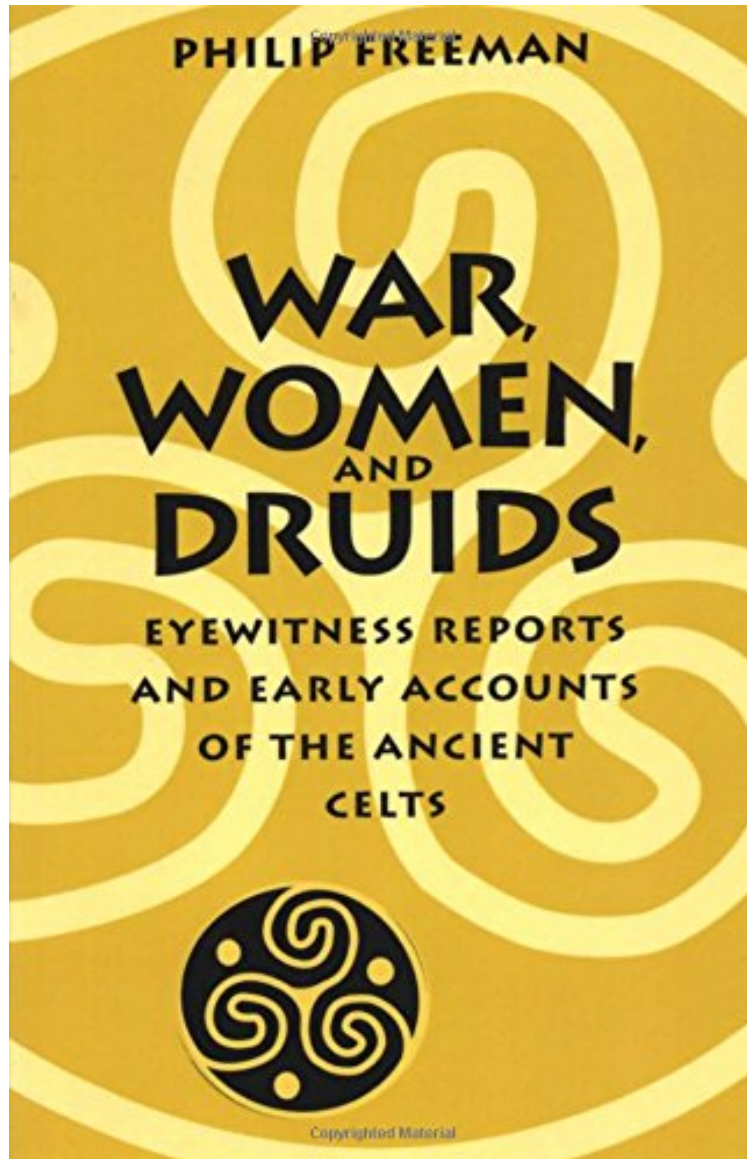


[Free pdf] War, Women, and Druids: Eyewitness Reports and Early Accounts of the Ancient Celts

# War, Women, and Druids: Eyewitness Reports and Early Accounts of the Ancient Celts

*Philip Freeman*

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**Philip Freeman : War, Women, and Druids: Eyewitness Reports and Early Accounts of the Ancient Celts** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised War, Women, and Druids: Eyewitness Reports and Early Accounts of the Ancient Celts:

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Pricey, short but very informative By Graeme Moore At 99 pages

and \$35US (at time of review), the book doesn't come cheap. That's the negative. However, if you are seeking quality over quantity and want a work where the bulk of the information is drawn from first-hand accounts, as opposed to suppositions and conjectures by present-day historians, then this is a fine work. Chapter names are: (1) War (2) Feasting (3) Poetry (4) Religion (5) The Western Isles (6) The Ancient Celts Speak. The first 5 are self-explanatory but the last is less so. The last chapter is basically overturning the old view that Druids left no written records due to their forbidding any sacred text as well as the notion that Classical Celts were illiterate. Through inscriptions carved into stone or tablets of various material the author conveys some interesting points about Celtic life and practices, particularly superstition and religion. It's full of little gems, such as first-hand accounts of human sacrifice. Usually a poor criminal was chosen. The unlucky person could be kept imprisoned for 5 years before being impaled on a pole in honor of the gods. If that wasn't enough of an indignity he/she was then tossed onto a bonfire. Then there was the Celtic habit of proudly displaying the severed heads of tribal foes in their Gallic homes that was only brought to an end by Roman rule. If that doesn't wet the appetite you get to learn about funeral rites where once tradition dictated even beloved subordinates of the deceased may be thrown into the fire to appease the Gods (hence unpopularity and a high rank were truly worthy attributes to aspire to). It was also a requirement at council meetings that a bard be present for it appears that only the soothing music of a bard could keep tempers under control. As one turns the pages, so much more one learns that both shocks and enlightens the senses. All up these images of Celtic culture above are probably not ones that readily come to mind. But they are just as much a part of Celtic society as the admirable art and craft works, peaceful images of druids wandering around prosperous villages or warriors just fending off enemies. All up, it makes for a nice informative and lucid read about all facets of Celtic life from across the regions of Gaul, Britain and Ireland. Now if only they could make it more accessible by significantly lowering the price to match the size - it would be just perfect. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. What an interesting journey! By Anglo-Saxon/Celt A more interesting and informative read on all things Celtic, I don't believe can exist now or ever. What a thorough and fascinating read. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Would recommend! By BandB Great read! Fascinating and in-depth look at the ancient Celts.

"The ancient Celts capture the modern imagination as do few other people of classical times. Naked barbarians charging the Roman legions, Druids performing sacrifices of unspeakable horror, women fighting beside their men and even leading armies these, along with stunning works of art, are the images most of us call to mind when we think of the Celts," observes Philip Freeman. "And for the most part, these images are firmly based in the descriptions handed down to us by the Greek and Roman writers." This book draws on the firsthand observations and early accounts of classical writers to piece together a detailed portrait of the ancient Celtic peoples of Europe and the British Isles. Philip Freeman groups the selections (ranging from short statements to longer treatises) by themes: war, feasting, poetry, religion, women, and the Western Isles. He also presents inscriptions written by the ancient Celts themselves. This wealth of material, introduced and translated by Freeman to be especially accessible to students and general readers, makes this book essential reading for everyone fascinated by the ancient Celts.

"I know of no other work that pulls this sort of material together and groups it by such helpful categories (war, feasting, poetry, religion, women, etc.). I will certainly value it in my library and... as recommended reading for several of my courses. It will be a nice companion to Freeman's *Ireland and the Classical World*." (Patrick K. Ford, Professor and Chair of Celtic Languages and Literatures, Harvard University) "I know of no other work that pulls this sort of material together and groups it by such helpful categories (war, feasting, poetry, religion, women, etc.). I will certainly value it in my library and... as recommended reading for several of my courses. It will be a nice companion to Freeman's *Ireland and the Classical World*." (Patrick K. Ford, Professor and Chair of Celtic Languages and Literatures, Harvard University) About the Author PHILIP FREEMAN is Assistant Professor of Classics at Washington University in St. Louis.