



**J.B. Priestley**  
**Resident at Brook Hill House, Brook**

J.B. Priestley was born in Bradford in 1894 and after being educated at Belle Vue Grammar School, he went to work for a wool firm called Helm & Co. It was whilst working here that he started writing at night; he had some of his articles published in newspapers as far away as London and he later moved south. He served in World War I and experienced many injuries – in 1916 he was buried alive by a trench mortar after being seriously wounded. He describes many of these experiences in his autobiography, called *Margin Released*. He moved to the Isle of Wight and resided in Brook Hill House and Billingham Manor (in

Chillerton) between 1933 and 1959. Due to the fact that he loved socialising with friends and family, he hosted great

parties and was nick-named 'Jolly Jack' for his bubbly character. However, to those who did not know him, he was a very serious man. He wrote many of his works, including *An Inspector Calls*, which is one of his best known plays, and a classic of the mid-twentieth century.

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Activities:

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- ▶ Research the life of J.B. Priestley and produce a timeline of Priestley's works.
- ▶ On this timeline, you could also include some of his major, personal life-events (e.g. his involvement in the war, the birth of his children, his marriages etc.).

Despite spending many happy years on the Isle of Wight, the Priestleys left in 1959.

The reason was that living on an island meant they felt 'cut off' from friends and family.

They said "...we took pity on our family and friends and moved somewhere more accessible. But I am not sure we were right."

- ▶ Consider a time when you may have regretted a decision which you made. Think about the consequences of your actions (and why you made them in the first place).
- ▶ Produce a draft of a poem which describes your regret.









## The Long Stone Mottistone, near Brook

It is believed that there is evidence of human existence in Mottistone over 6,000 years ago (in Neolithic times, also known as the New Stone Age). On Mottistone common, you will see The Long Stone.

The Long Stone is a good name for this site. It stands 3.9 m tall and is made from a local stone called greensand. The site was excavated by C.N. Hawkes in 1956.

The results from this suggested that this stone could have been the entrance to a barrow. In the Stone Age heroes and leaders were buried in barrows. Barrows were made by arranging tall stones so that they made the walls of a narrow cave. The body was then placed inside along with treasures to help the hero in the afterlife. In the centuries that followed these barrows were often raided and their treasures stolen. Once they were opened up they often fell down.

The smaller stone by the Long Stone was put there by Lord Dillon in 1856, so it was not used for sacrifices as the

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### On site Activities

**Priestley was well travelled and wrote about the places he visited including his own impressions.**

- ▶ Walk up to the Long Stone in Mottistone which Priestley's wife, Jacquetta, worked to excavate.
- ▶ Use what you see as inspiration for a creative response.
- ▶ Write up notes on your impressions of the Isle of Wight so far. Include descriptions of locations in an entertaining style that could be published on a tourism website like [www.myisleofwight.com](http://www.myisleofwight.com) or broadcast on radio without the luxury of images.
- ▶ Sit and sketch the Long Stone.
- ▶ Photograph the monument with people alongside, showing its size.
- ▶ Invent your own myth or legend for the Long Stone (see the template on page 5).

### Other Activity Suggestions

- ▶ Look at the tradition of letter writing for airing thoughts and opinions and compare with the blogs of today.
- ▶ Write a letter to a friend or relative giving vivid descriptions and your impressions of locations on the Isle of Wight.
- ▶ Read the following quote from <http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/39110/>

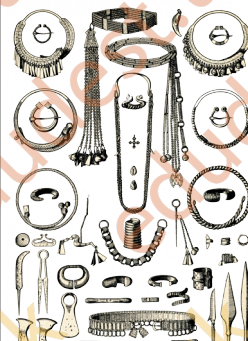
***'Focusing on the 1930s, it shows how Priestley travelled widely in the United States and came to admire the democratic and collective aspects of American culture, whilst also developing a critique of what he saw as the lack of individuality and creativity in other elements of the 'mass' society, anticipating arguments he would develop after 1945'.***

- ▶ Discuss this idea of a 'lack of individuality and creativity in a mass society'. Do you think there is a lack of individualism among the youth of today? Is this the same in Britain and overseas?
- ▶ Use the quote as a statement for a discursive essay.



Ideas for your myth or legend

Things that might be found in ancient barrows

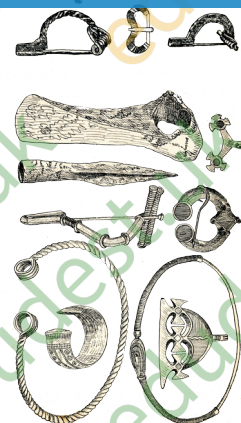


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**KEY WORDS**

knife  
sword  
brooch  
axe  
memento  
lord  
warrior  
victor  
afterlife