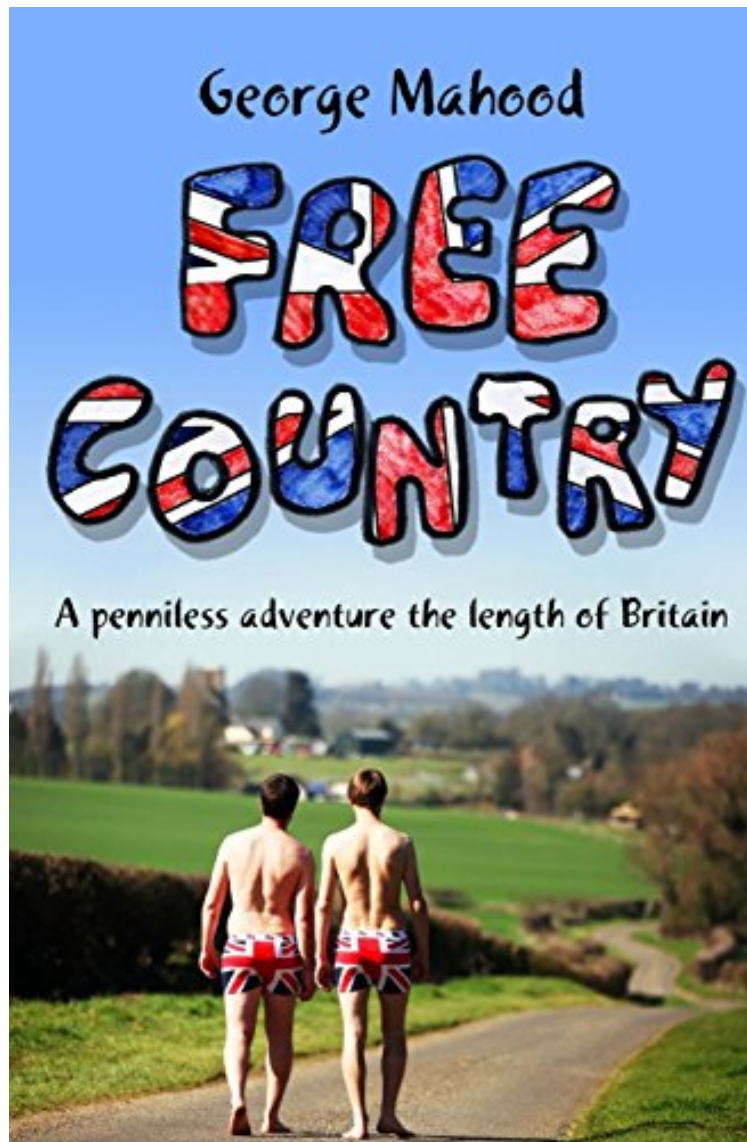


Free Country: A Penniless Adventure the Length of Britain

George Mahood

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George Mahood : Free Country: A Penniless Adventure the Length of Britain before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Free Country: A Penniless Adventure the Length of Britain:

95 of 97 people found the following review helpful. I'd like to buy these guys a beerBy Kent PetersonGeorge Mahood is the sort of chap you'd like to have a beer with. Actually, I think he's the kind of fellow you'd find yourself buying a beer for after just the briefest of conversations. I say this having never met the man but I feel like I've just had the

adventure of a lifetime with my new pal after having read his very funny and surprisingly inspirational book *Free Country*. *Free Country* tells the true story of two young men, George and his friend Ben, who decide to cycle the length of Britain from Land's End to John O Groats. While this ambitious journey has been undertaken by many others, none have done it in quite the same way as George and Ben. Because, you see, they begin with nothing. Well, not quite nothing, they each have a pair of Union Jack boxer shorts (and George later confesses, a camera, a notebook, a pencil and stack of cards containing the words "I am OFFICIALLY a very nice person.") Over three weeks in September, with a vow to spend no money they wander their way north like the maddest of monks on the most quixotic of quests. What they find along the way is a country filled with very interesting people, a great number of whom are very nice. Ben and George manage, through charm, wit, fast talking and willingness to do tasks ranging from cleaning, to loading onions to singing for their suppers, to acquire clothes, food, bicycles and someplace to sleep every night. It is a wonderful adventure and very, very funny. George is a great observer of life and a very witty writer and he and Ben bicker throughout the journey in the way that only true friends can. A few quotes will give you the flavor of this delightful book: 'Yeah. There's a place called Neilston in another ten miles.' 'Ten miles? Are you kidding me?' asked Ben. 'Err, no. It doesn't look like there's anything else before there anyway. We've done really well today. I reckon we'll have done over 90 miles.' 'WHAT? My god, you are such a slave driver. If I'd known we had done anything near that much, I would have stopped for the day ages ago.' 'I know. That's why I didn't tell you.'-----Before eating the sandwiches we tried a rendition of *Silent Night* in German that I could still remember from primary school. A guy on a bmx, in his mid thirties, approached with a small paper bag from Greggs. 'Hi guys. You can have these two donuts if you promise to stop singing.' 'You've got yourself a deal. Thanks, mate,' I said.-----The descent from Kirkstone Pass was undoubtedly the fastest I have ever been on a bike. It was possibly the fastest that man has ever travelled, in any form of transport. If *The Falcon* had had wings, I swear she would have taken off. It was one of the scariest, but most exhilarating things I have ever done. Braking wasn't really an option for me, as *The Falcon's* brakes only had any slight effect when travelling at a ridiculously slow speed, or uphill. I just gave in and let *The Falcon* do what she was best at doing - not stopping.-----We explained our challenge and asked if there was anything we could do in exchange for some free food. 'Ooooh, what do you reckon, Jan? Should we give these two strapping young lads any food?' she said to her colleague. 'Yeah, why not. If that one with the skimpy shorts shows us a bit more leg,' she laughed. 'That'll be you then, George,' said Ben. This was a new low. I was being made to flaunt my body in exchange for food. I felt used. I felt cheap. I liked it. I lifted up the side of my skimpy blue shorts, and exposed my flabby white thighs. 'Phwoooooaarr,' said both ladies.-----If a nutritionist had analysed what we ate during the bike ride, I think they probably would have concluded that we should not be alive, let alone fit enough to cycle. I read somewhere that beige food is bad for you. Almost everything we ate was a shade of beige; bread, pasta bakes, chips, pasties and bananas. Anyway, all I'm saying is that peas and carrots taste unbelievable if you only eat beige food for 17 days beforehand. Give it a try.-----*Free Country* is one of the funniest books I've ever read and it is a book that celebrates the tremendous kindness that exists in the world. George and Ben completed their journey thanks to the kindness of strangers, but after reading the tale of their journey, I feel that I owe them much more than the meager cost of this book for the laughter and wisdom I've found in its pages. George and Ben, if you ever make it to Issaquah, look me up. I'll make sure you've got a good meal and a place to stay. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Singing for their supper By DT This is the true story of George and Ben who decide to bike the End to End challenge, which is a 1,000 mile journey from the south of Britain to the north of Scotland in 3 weeks. To make it even more challenging, they set out barefoot with no money, no food or water, wearing only a pair of boxers. Oh yeah, and no bikes. They must rely on the kindness and generosity of strangers. Their first challenge is to acquire shoes and clothing. Oh yeah, and bikes. Then each day, they must find food, water, and shelter for the night. Somehow they manage to find plenty of beer and wind up at a whiskey tasting. I thoroughly enjoyed the banter between George and Ben as they bicker and disagree. George relates the story in an amusing manner while taking us through each small-town and introducing us to the people who help them along the way. They literally sing for their supper one day and someone gives them donuts to stop. I highly recommend this fun and entertaining book. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Highly Recommended By Margaret Cartwright I first read "Every Day is a Holiday" by the same author. (It was a free offer on BookBub.) I enjoyed it so much i recommended to my local library they purchase all 3 of his books. They haven't done it (yet) and being even more impatient than i am cheap, i went ahead and bought the other two for my Kindle. I almost feel like i know George and his family - It's one of the reasons i bought the books. I'd love to see him succeed as an author. Some other reasons? He's a funny, quirky guy with a wonderful British turn of phrase. If you read all 3, there is some nice continuity between them, but each stands on its own just fine. They are also very well written and well edited; so many self-published books are not. I'm looking forward to his next offering. I hope it's free on BookBub; if not i'll probably buy that one, too. :) He's good guy (seemingly) and a good writer (for sure). I hope you check him out!

****THE AMAZON #1 HUMOUR, #1 TRAVEL AND #1 SPORT BESTSELLER**** "...spent last night laughing so much my coffee came out my eyes..." "...this book is quite simply the best I've read in years..." "...a completely

bonkers challenge and a brilliantly funny read, I couldn't put it down..." "...it reminded me of some of Danny Wallace and Dave Gorman's best bits..." "...this wonderful story had me crying with laughter more often than not..."
"...inspiring, uplifting, need I say more? Quite brilliant..." "...funny, totally engrossing and actually quite moving..."
"...one of the most heart-warming, genuinely funny books I have read in a long time..." "...not many books keep me up 'till 4am, endangering my marriage in the process... Read it now..." "...for the price of half a pint of beer you'll fill at least 4 pint glasses with tears of laughter..." The plan is simple. George and Ben have three weeks to cycle 1000 miles from the bottom of England to the top of Scotland. There is just one small problem they have no bikes, no clothes, no food and no money. Setting off in just a pair of Union Jack boxer shorts, they attempt to rely on the generosity of the British public for everything from food to accommodation, clothes to shoes, and bikes to beer. During the most hilarious adventure, George and Ben encounter some of Great Britain's most eccentric and extraordinary characters and find themselves in the most ridiculous situations. Free Country is guaranteed to make you laugh (you may even shed a tear). It will restore your faith in humanity and leave you with a big smile on your face and a warm feeling inside.

About the Author George Mahood is an award-winning writer. Specifically, he was placed third in the Little Brington Village Fete's limerick competition (Under 11s category) in 1988. It was the same year that Mrs Marriott's legendary fruit loaf was beaten in the WI cake contest for the first time in six years. George studied Communication Studies and English Literature at Leeds University. After spending a year travelling in the USA (with clothes and money), he worked for several years in a variety of jobs including charity fund-raising and garlic bread making. He currently works as a photographer, specialising in weddings. George has been the lead singer and guitarist of a rubbish band and the chairman and midfielder of an awful Sunday-league football team. George has plenty more madcap ideas that will form the basis of future books. Follow him on Twitter and Facebook to keep in touch, see more photos, and to hear about future projects. <http://www.facebook.com/georgemahood> <http://www.twitter.com/georgemahood>