

Tudor England

John Guy

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John Guy here provides the most complete narrative history of Tudor England in more than 30 years. A compelling account of political and religious developments from the advent of the Tudors in the 1460s to the death of Elizabeth I in 1603, his authoritative study discusses the far-reaching changes in government and the Reformation of the Church under Henry VII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth, and is enriched with illuminating character studies of the monarchs and politicians of the era. Taking into account new debates on the progress of the English Reformation and the strengths and weaknesses of Tudor Government at a local and national level, the book includes contextual analyses of the Tudor English economy, society, and political culture.

Tudor England Details

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Author: John Guy

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From Reader Review Tudor England for online ebook

Joe says

Very informative, but also a touch dull. More duty and less pleasure than reading Elton, though I'm sure the scholarship is more reliable.

Jonathan says

Abandoned: I had this book hanging around for ages until one day I thought, 'I really fancy reading about the Tudors.' I only managed about 15 pages, it's dry, dull and torturous to read and it seems to be written for anyone who already knows everything about the subject.

If you want to relive the 'excitement' of reading an old school history textbook from the 1940s then read this book. We used to have books like this at school that were designed to kill off any spark of interest you could possibly have in the subject. Anyway, you get the idea, I didn't enjoy it.

russell barnes says

It's a good thing lovely Hillary Mantel didn't use this weighty tome as inspiration for Wolf Hall/Bring up the Bodies. At least I presume this isn't in her list of sources on the basis her novels are gripping, psychological studies of Tudor court populated by endlessly fascinating real-life characters, rather than two volumes of quite dull FACTS about the difference between the Privy Council and the Privy Chamber, numerous tables of information where the figures quoted don't have any context (107 what of all animal products in 1480-89?) and lots of people called 'Northumberland'. Also, people seem to 'ventilate' ideas rather than discussing them for some reason.

No wonder Mrs Barnes - whose A-Level text book this is, complete with underlinings and notes - has chosen to avoid this book like the (bubonic) plague for the last 20 years, and it stands in stark contrast to the more 'modern' style of history books, such as the Dan Jones' Plantagenets which are easier entry to knowledge, without sacrificing historical rigour.

I give it an 'F - requires more engaging ventilation of ideas'

Catherine Hurst says

This book is an exhaustive study of the politics of Tudor England, starting with Henry VII, and ending with the death of Elizabeth I. On the positive side, it's extremely thorough and scholarly, and dauntingly researched. And I feel as if I learned a lot in reading it. On the less good side, it's a bit of a tedious slog, and is too focused on politics; what social history is there is presented as statistical summary. It's hard to get a sense of the people from this book. It also suffers a bit from being 25 years old--the style is a bit fussy. It's also written for an audience that likely knows a good deal about British history--I had to keep Googling

names to find out who people were that the author obviously assumed the reader was familiar with. I read it for a 10-week learning-in-retirement class, and it really took me the entire 10 weeks to get through it.

Glad I read it, but it was REALLY HARD WORK!!

Leslie says

Not narrative or social history at all, but old-fashioned, top-down political history, with the emphasis on the institutions of governing and large-scale national patterns of economic activity. Not the book to go to if you want to get a sense of who any of the Tudors or others of the time were as people or of what daily life was like at any level of the social scale, nor the best book to start with if you don't already have a sense of the larger narrative of Tudor England, but a useful scholarly overview to fill in gaps.

Simon says

This is not a riveting read. It is an academic history that contains one of the most irritating of Oxbridge traditions: it treats the reader as an expert on the subject. In other words, the author maintains an elitist tradition that should have died out years ago. Other than that it is well-researched and very detailed. The analysis is quite good in many areas, but also quite tame—in that the author seems to have no comprehension of what it must have been like to live in a land where one's life hung on a thread. Despite the research, Tudor England still remains an alien place to this author.

Rachel says

Read this for A-level many years ago.

ej cullen says

Holy minutiae, Batman! If you have a wild passion for Tudor history and a stomach for wearisome detail, this is your book. If not, start elsewhere.

AskHistorians says

A really good introduction to the period with plenty of detailed analysis of the major events that occurred under the Tudor monarchs (Henry VIII-Elizabeth I)

Julaine says

Arjun Mishra says

The Tudor period is important in the formation of early and current England. This is the best book I have encountered on the era.

Joanna says

The essential introduction to the Tudor era (16th century England).

Andrew says

Phew! This book took me a long time to read - it's not easy but it has to be one of the best researched books for the Tudor period. It's just so incredibly detailed. It's not about personalities in the sense that we are used to reading about the movers and shakers of this period - their love lives and plotting and downfall etc. But more about their influence on the time, the religion and the law and the governance of the realm. For example, the account of Anne Boleyn is regarding her influence on the reformation of the church rather than her love life and relationship with Henry.

You also learn some really great words, such as recusancy, sacramentalisation etc etc

So if you are into stats and are interested in how many JP's and sherrifs were appointed in different Tudor reigns and how the labour market operated throughout the 15 and 16th Centuries, then this book is definitely for you. If you want to know about how many mistresses each Tudor king had, then this book isn't for you.