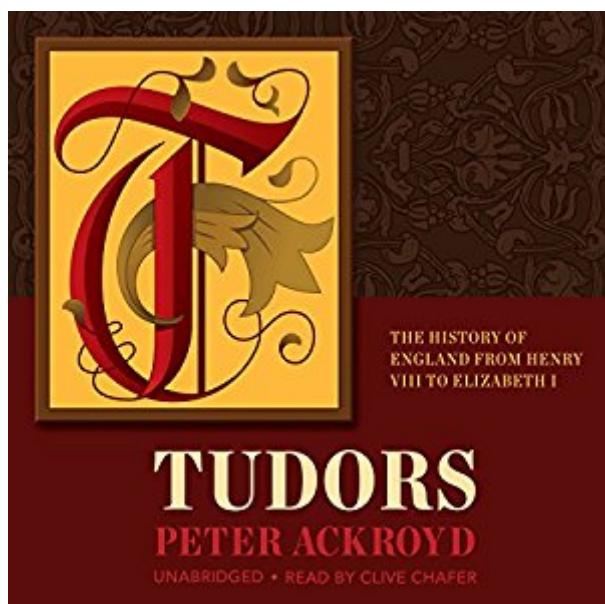


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Tudors: The History Of England From Henry VIII To Elizabeth I: History Of England, Book 2



Synopsis

From Henry VIII's cataclysmic break with Rome to the epic rule of Elizabeth I, the age of the Tudors comes to vivid life in audio. Peter Ackroyd, one of Britain's most acclaimed writers, brings the age of the Tudors to vivid life in this monumental audiobook in his History of England series, charting the course of English history from Henry VIII's cataclysmic break with Rome to the epic rule of Elizabeth I. Rich in detail and atmosphere, *Tudors* is the story of Henry VIII's relentless pursuit of both the perfect wife and the perfect heir; of how the brief royal reign of the teenage king, Edward VI, gave way to the violent reimposition of Catholicism and the stench of bonfires under "Bloody Mary". It tells, too, of the long reign of Elizabeth I, which, though marked by civil strife, plots against her, and even an invasion force, finally brought stability. Above all it is the story of the English Reformation and the making of the Anglican Church. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, England was still largely feudal and looked to Rome for direction; at its end it was a country where good governance was the duty of the state, not the church, and where men and women began to look to themselves for answers rather than to those who ruled them.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As a preliminary matter, I'll admit it: my appetite for Tudors dynasty vehicles is more or less bottomless. Whether it's historical esoterica or a popularly accessible review of the monarchs' lives and reigns --- whatever the quality of the story based on their lives in whichever medium you please -- I always have room to try one more. So, I am easy to please and difficult to impress with a real breadth of past exposure to presentations on this topic. Hopefully, my comparative knowledge

can help some of you comparative Tudor amateurs decide if this latest food for my frenzy is worth the investment of your time. To sum up my thoughts on *Tudors* by Peter Ackroyd, which is apparently part of a series surveying English history, I'd say that's it's a uniquely valuable addition to popularly available history on the Tudor monarchs due to the superlative caliber of writing as well as the number of truly interesting historical arguments the author advances. Ackroyd tells a seamless story, which is no small feat given the book's considerable length and the even more considerable range of information to select for inclusion in his discussion. The sheer fluidity of his prose is striking, and by that I mean it was so unique in its smoothness that I felt like I was being hit over the head with it beginning on the very first page -- no kidding! The history detailed is likely to slide easily into the reader's mind and lodge itself there without too much concentration on his or her own part given the author's narrative power. This is the opposite of a dry examination of the past by a stuffy academic type who cannot translate his or her insights for an amateur audience with ease.

Unsurprisingly, it turns out Peter Ackroyd is not strictly oriented to history in his Humanities scholarship. His specialty is literature and cultural history rather than political history or the study of history broadly speaking. Ackroyd's particular topical orientation combines with his great conversational writing style to bring out the range of hues in the colorful characters that people these monarchs' times to an extent pretty much unseen in serious historical nonfiction on this topic. At least I cannot remember reading Ackroyd's better or even his real equal in this respect, for what it's worth. I should say more about what I mean by "topical orientation." I refer to my observation that Ackroyd includes a number of arguments that historical change impacting the entire nation can be traced to the idiosyncrasies, temporary concerns and politically relevant abilities of the personalities in the Tudor courts. For example, early in the book the assertion is made that it is Cardinal Thomas Wolsey who critically demonstrated by his own personal example that it was possible to administer both church and state together within England's borders. It is interesting to me that *Tudors* is ostensibly intended to serve as a survey of the period in English history, given Ackroyd's character-centric, basically dramatic orientation that I observed. Speaking of drama, fans of the Anne Boleyn as a historical fiction character and/or a real personality may be incensed to learn that this survey not only presents the minority(?) historical view that Anne Boleyn was guilty of the adultery charges for which she died -- he argues that some underlying truth to these charges is actually probable! The *Tudors* installment in this series offers a lot to please the casually interested reader, the history buff, and the fan of the Showtime series. Please be advised I was able to read an electronic copy of this book via NetGalley because the publisher, St. Martin's Press (Macmillan Group) -- Thomas Dunne Books, generously granted free access.

Peter Ackroyd is one of Great Britain's most prolific authors. Ackroyd is presently at work on a history of England. "Tudors" is volume two. In nearly five hundred lively pages the author paints a portrait of the colorful family from Wales that ruled England from 1485 until the death of Elizabeth I in 1603. It was a bloody age dominated by religious controversy and persecution. The book covers the reigns of: Henry VII-Henry ended the War of the Roses when he defeated Richard III the Yorkist king at the battle of Bosworth Field in 1485. Henry VIII-The rotund king who wed six times; beheaded and burned many enemies and transformed England from a Roman Catholic to an Anglican nation. He ruled from 1509-47. Ackroyd discusses Henry's wives and his conversion to an anti-papal ruler who broke with Pope Clement VII. Edward VI-The boy king was committed to the Protestant cause but died young. His reign was from 1547-53. Jane Grey reigned for only nine days before being beheaded. She represented the Protestant cause. Mary I-(1553-58) Bloody Mary was a devoted Roman Catholic who was the daughter of Henry VIII's first wife the Spaniard Catherine of Aragon. Mary was the first reigning Queen of England. During her reign over three hundred Protestants were burned at the stake earning her the nickname of "Bloody Mary." She wed Phillip II of Spain and died childless. Elizabeth I (1558-16-3) The Virgin Queen was the daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth was a Protestant who presided over the first secular state in British history. During her reign the might of Spain was crushed when the Spanish Armada was soundly defeated in 1588. Elizabeth signed the death warrant for Mary Queen of Scots in 1587 ended Roman Catholic hopes to restore the old faith to the English crown. Ackroyd writes popular history with the skill of a novelist telling a good story. This book is an excellent introduction to the study of Tudor England. Well recommended for general readers.

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