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Aladdin's Lamp by John Freely

[Aladdin's Lamp](#) Written by [John Freely](#) Trade Paperback, 320 pages | Vintage | History - Europe | **\$16.00** | March 9, 2010 | 978-0-307-27783-1 (0-307-27783-6)

Aladdin's Lamp is the fascinating story of how ancient Greek philosophy and science began in the sixth century B.C. and, during the next millennium, spread across the Greco-Roman world, producing the remarkable discoveries and theories of Thales, Pythagoras, Hippocrates, Plato, Aristotle, Euclid, Archimedes, Galen, Ptolemy, and many others. John Freely explains how, as the Dark Ages shrouded Europe, scholars in medieval Baghdad translated the works of these Greek thinkers into Arabic, spreading their ideas throughout the Islamic world from Central Asia to Spain, with many Muslim scientists, most notably Avicenna, Alhazen, and Averroës, adding their own interpretations to the philosophy and science they had inherited. Freely goes on to show how, beginning in the twelfth century, these texts by Islamic scholars were then translated from Arabic into Latin, sparking the emergence of modern science at the dawn of the Renaissance, which climaxed in the Scientific Revolution of the seventeenth century.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9780307277831>

The Book of Firsts by Peter D'Epiro

[The Book of Firsts](#) 150 World-Changing People and Events from Caesar Augustus to the Internet Written by [Peter D'Epiro](#) Trade Paperback, 640 pages | Anchor | History - Reference | **\$16.00** | March 9, 2010 | 978-0-307-38843-8 (0-307-38843-3)

The Book of Firsts is an entertaining, enlightening, and highly browsable tour of the major innovations of the past twenty centuries and how they shaped our world.

Peter D'Epiro makes this handy overview of human history both fun and thought-provoking with his survey of the major "firsts"—inventions, discoveries, political and military upheavals, artistic and scientific breakthroughs, religious controversies, and catastrophic events—of the last two thousand years. Who was the first to use gunpowder? Invent paper? Sack the city of Rome? Write a sonnet? What was the first university? The first astronomical telescope? The first great novel? The first Impressionist painting? The Book of Firsts explores these questions and many more, from the earliest surviving cookbook (featuring parboiled flamingo) and the origin of chess (sixth-century India) to the first civil service exam (China in 606 AD) and the first tell-all memoir about scandalous royals (Byzantine Emperor Justinian and Empress Theodora). In the form of 150 brief, witty, erudite, and information-packed essays, The Book of Firsts is ideal for anyone interested in an enjoyable way to acquire a deeper understanding of history and the fascinating personalities

who forged it.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9780307388438>

The Brother Gardeners by Andrea Wulf

[The Brother Gardeners](#) A Generation of Gentlemen Naturalists and the Birth of an Obsession **Written by Andrea Wulf** **Trade Paperback**, 368 pages | Vintage | Gardening; History | **\$17.95** | March 9, 2010 | 978-0-307-45475-1 (0-307-45475-4)

Bringing to life the science and adventure of eighteenth-century plant collecting, *The Brother Gardeners* is the story of how six men created the modern garden and changed the horticultural world in the process. It is a story of a garden revolution that began in America.

In 1733, colonial farmer John Bartram shipped two boxes of precious American plants and seeds to Peter Collinson in London. Around these men formed the nucleus of a botany movement, which included famous Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus; Philip Miller, bestselling author of *The Gardeners Dictionary*; and Joseph Banks and David Solander, two botanist explorers, who scoured the globe for plant life aboard Captain Cook's *Endeavor*. As they cultivated exotic blooms from around the world, they helped make Britain an epicenter of horticultural and botanical expertise. *The Brother Gardeners* paints a vivid portrait of an emerging world of knowledge and gardening as we know it today.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9780307454751>

Holy Warriors by Jonathan Phillips

[Holy Warriors](#) A Modern History of the Crusades **Written by Jonathan Phillips** Hardcover, 464 pages | Random House | History - Medieval | **\$30.00** | March 9, 2010 | 978-1-4000-6580-6 (1-4000-6580-1)

From an internationally renowned expert, here is an accessible and utterly fascinating one-volume history of the Crusades, thrillingly told through the experiences of its many players—knights and sultans, kings and poets, Christians and Muslims. Jonathan Phillips traces the origins, expansion, decline, and conclusion of the Crusades and comments on their contemporary echoes—from the mysteries of the Templars to the grim reality of al-Qaeda. Holy Warriors puts the past in a new perspective and brilliantly sheds light on the origins of today's wars.

Starting with Pope Urban II's emotive, groundbreaking speech in November 1095, in which he called for the recovery of Jerusalem from Islam by the First Crusade, Phillips traces the centuries-long conflict between two of the world's great faiths. Using songs, sermons, narratives, and letters of the period, he reveals how the success of the First Crusade inspired generations of kings to campaign for their own vainglory and set down a marker for the knights of Europe, men who increasingly blurred the boundaries between chivalry and crusading. In the Muslim world, early attempts to call a jihad fell upon deaf ears until the charisma of the Sultan Saladin brought the struggle to a climax. Yet the story that emerges has other dimensions—as never before, Phillips incorporates the holy wars within the story of medieval Christendom and Islam and shines new light on many truces, alliances, and diplomatic efforts that have been forgotten over the centuries.

Holy Warriors also discusses how the term "crusade" survived into the modern era and how its redefinition through romantic literature and the drive for colonial empires during the nineteenth century gave it an energy and a resonance that persisted down to the alliance between Franco and the Church during the Spanish Civil War and right up to George W. Bush's pious "war on terror."

Elegantly written, compulsively readable, and full of stunning new portraits of unforgettable real-life figures—from Richard the Lionhearted to Melisende, the formidable crusader queen of Jerusalem—Holy Warriors is a must-read for anyone interested in medieval Europe, as well as for those seeking to understand the history of religious conflict.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9781400065806>

Holy Warriors by Jonathan Phillips

[Holy Warriors](#) Written by [Jonathan Phillips](#) eBook | Random House | History - Medieval | **\$30.00** | March 9, 2010 | 978-1-58836-975-8 (1-58836-975-7)

From an internationally renowned expert, here is an accessible and utterly fascinating one-volume history of the Crusades, thrillingly told through the experiences of its many players—knights and sultans, kings and poets, Christians and Muslims. Jonathan Phillips traces the origins, expansion, decline, and conclusion of the Crusades and comments on their contemporary echoes—from the mysteries of the Templars to the grim reality of al-Qaeda. *Holy Warriors* puts the past in a new perspective and brilliantly sheds light on the origins of today's wars.

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From the Hardcover edition.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9781588369758>

Pauline Bonaparte: Venus of Empire by **Flora Fraser**

[Pauline Bonaparte: Venus of Empire](#) **Written by Flora Fraser** **Trade Paperback**, 320 pages | Anchor | Biography & Autobiography - Historical; Biography & Autobiography - Royalty; History - France | **\$16.95** | March 9, 2010 | 978-0-307-27793-0 (0-307-27793-3)

From acclaimed biographer Flora Fraser, the brilliant life of Napoleon's favorite sister, with color photos, paintings, and illustrations.

Considered by many in Europe to be the most beautiful woman at the turn of the nineteenth century, Pauline Bonaparte Borghese shocked the continent with the boldness of her love affairs, her opulent wardrobe and jewels, her decision to pose nearly nude for Canova's sculpture, and her rumored incestuous relationship with her brother, the Emperor Napoleon—the only man to whom she was loyal. When Napoleon was exiled to Elba, Pauline was the only sibling to follow him there, and after the final defeat at Waterloo she begged to join him at Saint Helena.

In **Pauline Bonaparte: Venus of Empire**, Flora Fraser casts new light on the Napoleonic era and crafts a dynamic, vivid portrait of a mesmerizing woman.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9780307277930>

A Tolerable Anarchy by Jedediah Purdy

[A Tolerable Anarchy](#) Rebels, Reactionaries, and the Making of American Freedom **Written by Jedediah Purdy** **Trade Paperback**, 304 pages | Vintage | History - North America | **\$16.00** | March 9, 2010 | 978-1-4000-9584-1 (1-4000-9584-0)

In *A Tolerable Anarchy*, Jedediah Purdy traces the history of the American understanding of freedom, an ideal that has inspired the country's best—and worst—moments, from independence and emancipation to war and economic uncertainty. Working from portraits of famous American lives, like Frederick Douglas and Ralph Waldo Emerson, Purdy asks crucial questions about our relationship to liberty: Does capitalism perfect or destroy freedom? Does freedom mean following tradition, God's word, or one's own heart? Can a nation of individuals also be a community of citizens? This is history that speaks plainly to our lives today, urging readers to explore our understanding of our country and ourselves, and a provocative look at one of America's cherished principles.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9781400095841>

Travelling Heroes by Robin Lane Fox

[Travelling Heroes](#) In the Epic Age of Homer **Written by Robin Lane Fox** **Trade Paperback**, 496 pages | Vintage | History - Ancient - Greece; Literary Criticism & Collections - Ancient & Classical | **\$17.00** | March 9, 2010 | 978-0-679-76386-4 (0-679-76386-4)

The myths of the ancient Greeks have inspired us for thousands of years. Where did the famous stories of the battles of their gods develop and spread across the world? The celebrated classicist Robin Lane Fox draws on a lifetime's knowledge of the ancient world, and on his own travels, answering this question by pursuing it through the age of Homer. His acclaimed history explores how the intrepid seafarers of eighth-century Greece sailed around the Mediterranean, encountering strange new sights—volcanic mountains, vaporous springs, huge prehistoric bones—and weaving them into the myths of gods, monsters and heroes that would become the cornerstone of Western civilization.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9780679763864>

The Book of Firsts by Peter D'Epiro

[The Book of Firsts](#) 150 World-Changing People and Events, from Caesar Augustus to the Internet **Written by Peter D'Epiro** **Book**, 672 pages | Anchor | History - Reference | **\$16.00** | March 2, 2010 | 978-0-307-47666-1 (0-307-47666-9)

The Book of Firsts is an entertaining, enlightening, and highly browsable tour of the major innovations of the past twenty centuries and how they shaped our world.

Peter D'Epiro makes this handy overview of human history both fun and thought-provoking with his survey of the major "firsts"—inventions, discoveries, political and military upheavals, artistic and scientific breakthroughs, religious controversies, and catastrophic events—of the last two thousand years. Who was the first to use gunpowder? Invent paper? Sack the city of Rome? Write a sonnet? What was the first university? The first astronomical telescope? The first great novel? The first Impressionist painting? The Book of Firsts explores these questions and many more, from the earliest surviving cookbook (featuring parboiled flamingo) and the origin of chess (sixth-century India) to the first civil service exam (China in 606 AD) and the first tell-all memoir about scandalous royals (Byzantine Emperor Justinian and Empress Theodora). In the form of 150 brief, witty, erudite, and information-packed essays, The Book of Firsts is ideal for anyone interested in an enjoyable way to acquire a deeper understanding of history and the fascinating personalities who forged it.

From the Trade Paperback edition.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9780307476661>

The Man Who Ate His Boots by Simon Vance

[The Man Who Ate His Boots](#) The Tragic History of the Search for the Northwest Passage **Written by** [Anthony Brandt](#)

Read by [Simon Vance](#) **Unabridged Audiobook Download** | Random House Audio | History - Expeditions & Discoveries | **\$25.00** | March 2, 2010 | 978-0-307-71229-5 (0-307-71229-X)

The enthralling and often harrowing history of the adventurers who searched for the Northwest Passage, the holy grail of nineteenth-century British exploration.

After the triumphant end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, the British took it upon themselves to complete something they had been trying to do since the sixteenth century: find the fabled Northwest Passage, a shortcut to the Orient via a sea route over northern Canada. For the next thirty-five years the British Admiralty sent out expedition after expedition to probe the ice-bound waters of the Canadian Arctic in search of a route, and then, after 1845, to find Sir John Franklin, the Royal Navy hero who led the last of these Admiralty expeditions and vanished into the maze of channels, sounds, and icy seas with two ships and 128 officers and men.

In *The Man Who Ate His Boots*, Anthony Brandt tells the whole story of the search for the Northwest Passage, from its beginnings early in the age of exploration through its development into a British national obsession to the final sordid, terrible descent into scurvy, starvation, and cannibalism. Sir John Franklin is the focus of the book but it covers all the major expeditions and a number of fascinating characters, including Franklin's extraordinary wife, Lady Jane, in vivid detail. *The Man Who Ate His Boots* is a rich and engaging work of narrative history that captures the glory and the folly of this ultimately tragic enterprise.

From the Hardcover edition.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9780307712295>

The Man Who Ate His Boots by Anthony Brandt

[The Man Who Ate His Boots](#) The Tragic History of the Search for the Northwest Passage **Written by Anthony Brandt** **Book**, 464 pages | Knopf | History - Expeditions & Discoveries; History - America (North, Central, South, West Indies) | **\$28.95** | March 2, 2010 | 978-0-307-59290-3 (0-307-59290-1)

The enthralling and often harrowing history of the adventurers who searched for the Northwest Passage, the holy grail of nineteenth-century British exploration.

After the triumphant end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, the British took it upon themselves to complete something they had been trying to do since the sixteenth century: find the fabled Northwest Passage, a shortcut to the Orient via a sea route over northern Canada. For the next thirty-five years the British Admiralty sent out expedition after expedition to probe the ice-bound waters of the Canadian Arctic in search of a route, and then, after 1845, to find Sir John Franklin, the Royal Navy hero who led the last of these Admiralty expeditions and vanished into the maze of channels, sounds, and icy seas with two ships and 128 officers and men.

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From the Hardcover edition.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9780307592903>

The Man Who Ate His Boots by Anthony Brandt

[The Man Who Ate His Boots](#) The Tragic History of the Search for the Northwest Passage **Written by Anthony Brandt** **Hardcover**, 464 pages | Knopf | History - Expeditions & Discoveries; History - America (North, Central, South, West Indies) | **\$28.95** | March 2, 2010 | 978-0-307-26392-6 (0-307-26392-4)

The enthralling and often harrowing history of the adventurers who searched for the Northwest Passage, the holy grail of nineteenth-century British exploration.

After the triumphant end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, the British took it upon themselves to complete something they had been trying to do since the sixteenth century: find the fabled Northwest Passage, a shortcut to the Orient via a sea route over northern Canada. For the next thirty-five years the British Admiralty sent out expedition after expedition to probe the ice-bound waters of the Canadian Arctic in search of a route, and then, after 1845, to find Sir John Franklin, the Royal Navy hero who led the last of these Admiralty expeditions and vanished into the maze of channels, sounds, and icy seas with two ships and 128 officers and men.

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ARP and Civil Defence in the Second World War by Peter Doyle

[ARP and Civil Defence in the Second World War](#) Written by [Peter Doyle](#) Trade Paperback, 64 pages | Shire | History - Military - World War II; History - Great Britain | **\$12.95** | February 23, 2010 | 978-0-7478-0765-0 (0-7478-0765-5)

In 1938, Britain prepared for war, and to spread the word about what should be done in the event of attack, and to distribute the gas masks that would become universal, a body of men and women were called to public service - the Air Raid Precautions, or 'ARP'. Armed initially with only a badge of appointment, they became the object of public scorn. From the declaration through to early 1940, the volunteer services honed their skills in the face of public criticism. The ARP services - now a well-oiled machine with, among other specialists, wardens, rescue workers, first aiders and messengers - waited under the blackout.

In 1940 came the 'Blitz' - and the laughing stopped. The ARP were in the frontline, assisting people to the shelters, reporting on the bombing and rescuing people from their wrecked homes. The Women's Voluntary Service was also vital at this time, providing food, shelter and sustenance to those made homeless. Alongside the ARP were the men and women of the Auxiliary Fire Service (AFS), working with the county fire services, and to coordinate and organise the public, the Police were put on a war footing, with an increase in the volunteer Special Constabulary and War Reserves. In the thick of things, the fire services and AFS battled the fires that raged through British cities throughout the War.

As the war progressed, so did the volunteer 'army' of Civil Defence. It became sophisticated, and Britons became familiar with living in the front line. The fire services were nationalized to create the National Fire Service (NFS), and in 1941 The Fire Guard was established. The ARP became truly a 'home army' of non-combatants - the Civil Defence, and this book is its story.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9780747807650>

The Felt Industry by Peter Walter

[The Felt Industry](#) Written by [Peter Walter](#) Trade Paperback, 56 pages | Shire | Technology - History; History - Great Britain | **\$12.95** | February 23, 2010 | 978-0-7478-0753-7 (0-7478-0753-1)

Felt is an amazing material, and its history, properties and uses are unparalleled among textiles. Although its origins are lost in prehistory, there is a clear record of its manufacture and use in Roman times and it has a special place in many cultures. The Mongols, in particular, were masters of felt and to them it had an almost magical importance.

Taking advantage of the unique form of wool fibers, felt is made by matting fibers together in water, producing a dense. Warm un-woven material that can be made into a million different things, from carpets to piano hammers and from hats to homes. Felt can be soft and cushioning, or hard and dense enough to be carved.

This is a history of the woollen felt industry that was developed to produce felt on a large scale using expertise and machinery and production that had been developed in the textile industry during the industrial revolution. Now virtually extinct - replaced by machines capable of artificially felting manmade fibres - the woollen felt industry remains almost solely to produce high quality felts for use in pianos. This well-researched and readable history provides long-overdue coverage of an important part of textile history.

German Battleships 1914-18 (1) by Paul Wright

[German Battleships 1914-18 \(1\)](#) Deutschland, Nassau and Helgoland classes **Written by Gary Staff**
Illustrated by Paul Wright **Trade Paperback**, 48 pages | Osprey Publishing | History - Military - World War I |
\$17.95 | February 23, 2010 | 978-1-84603-467-1 (1-84603-467-1)

Supported by official documents, personal accounts, official drawings and specially commissioned artwork, this volume is an enlightening history of the Deutschland to Osfriesland classes. Detailing the last of the pre-dreadnaught battleship classes, this book goes on to explain the revolutionary developments that took place within the German Imperial Navy as they readied themselves for war. This included creating vessels with vast increases in size and armament. This account of design and technology is supplemented by individual ship histories detailing combat experience complete with first-hand accounts. The specially commissioned artwork also brings this history to life with recreations of the battleship Pommern fighting at Jutland and ships of the Osfriesland class destroying HMS Black Prince in a dramatic night-time engagement.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9781846034671>

Maginot Line 1940 by John White

[Maginot Line 1940](#) Battles on the French Frontier **Written by Marc Romanych** and **Martin Rupp**
Illustrated by John White **Trade Paperback**, 96 pages | Osprey Publishing | History - Military - World War II |
\$19.95 | February 23, 2010 | 978-1-84603-499-2 (1-84603-499-X)

Constructed throughout the 1930s, the Maginot Line was supposed to form the ultimate defense against a German invasion of France. However, different sections of the line were built at different times and the strength of various sections varied widely. During their Blitzkrieg invasion, the Germans were able to identify these weak points and focus their attacks against them.

This book uses new maps and period photographs to tell the story of the five German operations launched against the Maginot Line. While the Germans were able to smash through the lightly defended section of the line along the Meuse River, the line held at other key points. Ultimately the Maginot Line proved a failure, but the stiff resistance put up by some of the fortresses confirms the fighting ability of the French army during the invasion.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9781846034992>

Ottoman Infantryman 1914-18 by Christa Hook

[Ottoman Infantryman 1914-18](#) **Written by** [David Nicolle](#)

Illustrated by [Christa Hook](#) **Trade Paperback**, 64 pages | Osprey Publishing | History - Military - World War I | **\$18.95** | February 23, 2010 | 978-1-84603-506-7 (1-84603-506-6)

The Ottoman Army was the first to employ the 'triangular division', starting from 1910, which contained three infantry regiments of three battalions supported by an artillery regiment of three battalions. This structure went on to become the world's standard. In the years immediately prior to the outbreak of World War I, the Ottoman Army undertook a massive retraining program to rebuild its forces following the Balkan Wars of 1912-13.

When World War I began, the Ottoman Army consisted of 36 combat infantry divisions, giving it a strength of some 200,000 enlisted men and 8,000 officers. These troops are usually described in terms of a huge amorphous mass with little to no attempt to see these men as individuals; indeed, no book has yet focused specifically upon the infantrymen, or 'Mehmets' as the Ottomans called them, who formed the backbone, and the bulk, of the Ottoman Army during World War I. This is not only a significant gap in the literature of the war, but is highly misleading, not least because such troops were recruited from the culturally and linguistically different peoples who made up what was, in 1914, still a huge and diverse empire.

This army, this period and these troops formed the immediate background to what might be called the modern Middle East. The average Ottoman soldier, or asker, was hardy, well trained and courageous and formed the solid base on which the Ottoman Army rested. Ottoman troops campaigned in astonishingly varied geographical and climatic conditions during the war, including on the Gallipoli Peninsula, in Mesopotamia and in the Caucasus. This title explores their recruitment, training, and combat experiences.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9781846035067>

Roman Battle Tactics 390-110 BC by Samuel Embleton

[Roman Battle Tactics 390-110 BC](#) **Written by** [Nic Fields](#)

Illustrated by [Gerry Embleton](#) and [Samuel Embleton](#) **Trade Paperback**, 64 pages | Osprey Publishing | History - Military | **\$18.95** | February 23, 2010 | 978-1-84603-382-7 (1-84603-382-9)

By 390 BC, the organization of the Roman army was in need of change. Fighting in the Greek-style with a heavy infantry was proving increasingly outdated and inflexible, resulting in the Roman's defeat at the hands of the Gauls at the battle of Allia. Following on from this catastrophe and in the next fifty years of warfare against Gallic and Italian tribes, a military revolution was born: the legion. This was a new unit of organization made up of three flexible lines of maniples consisting of troops of both heavy and light infantry. However, at the end of the 3rd century BC, Rome's prestige was shattered once more by the genius of Hannibal of Carthage, causing Roman battle tactics to be revised again. The legendary general Scipio Africanus achieved this, finally destroying the Carthaginian army at the climactic victory of Zama. A wholly new kind of soldier had been invented, and the whole Mediterranean world was now at Rome's feet. This book reveals these two defining moments in Roman military history and the revolution in battle tactics that was the result, examining how the Roman army eventually became all-conquering and all-powerful.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9781846033827>

The Pacific War by Daniel Marston

[The Pacific War](#) From Pearl Harbor to Hiroshima **Written by Daniel Marston** **Trade Paperback**, 272 pages | Osprey Publishing | History - Military - World War II | **\$19.95** | February 23, 2010 | 978-1-84908-382-9 (1-84908-382-7)

A new paperback edition of one of the bestselling World War II Osprey titles, The Pacific War Companion brings together the perspectives and insights of world-renowned military historians. From the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor through the release of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the conflict in the Pacific was marked by amazing tactical innovations, such as those in amphibious warfare, and horrific battles that raged in the unforgiving climate of the island jungles. Each chapter in this book focuses on a different aspect of this conflict, from the planning of operations to the experiences of the men who were there.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9781849083829>

The Tudors by G.J. Meyer

[The Tudors](#) The Complete Story of England's Most Notorious Dynasty **Written by G.J. Meyer** **Hardcover**, 640 pages | Delacorte Press | History - Great Britain | **\$30.00** | February 23, 2010 | 978-0-385-34076-2 (0-385-34076-1)

For the first time in decades, here, in a single volume, is a fresh look at the fabled Tudor dynasty, comprising some of the most enigmatic figures ever to rule a country. Acclaimed historian G. J. Meyer reveals the flesh-and-bone reality in all its wild excess.

In 1485, young Henry Tudor, whose claim to the throne was so weak as to be almost laughable, crossed the English Channel from France at the head of a ragtag little army and took the crown from the family that had ruled England for almost four hundred years. Half a century later his son, Henry VIII, desperate to rid himself of his first wife in order to marry a second, launched a reign of terror aimed at taking powers no previous monarch had even dreamed of possessing. In the process he plunged his kingdom into generations of division and disorder, creating a legacy of blood and betrayal that would blight the lives of his children and the destiny of his country.

The boy king Edward VI, a fervent believer in reforming the English church, died before bringing to fruition his dream of a second English Reformation. Mary I, the disgraced daughter of Catherine of Aragon, tried and failed to reestablish the Catholic Church and produce an heir. And finally came Elizabeth I, who devoted her life to creating an image of herself as Gloriana the Virgin Queen but, behind that mask, sacrificed all chance of personal happiness in order to survive.

The Tudors weaves together all the sinners and saints, the tragedies and triumphs, the high dreams and dark crimes, that reveal the Tudor era to be, in its enthralling, notorious truth, as momentous and as fascinating as the fictions audiences have come to love.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9780385340762>
