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Reviews

Booklist Reviews 2012 March #2

Goodwin chronicles England's bloodiest and most brutal battle. On March 29, 1461, the armies representing the House of York and the House of Lancaster met during a snowstorm on a field on the outskirts of the Yorkshire village of Towton, an epic clash that resulted in an estimated 28,000 fatalities. Setting the stage for the conflict, the author reaches further back into England's often fractured history, unraveling the twisted skeins of Henry VI's ineffectual and schizophrenic tenure as king. With the nobility virtually split down the middle into two factions, a cataclysmic clash on the scale of Towton was inevitable. After establishing the complex historical context, he details the battle itself, with considerably more emphasis on the gore than the glory. This tour de force political and military history vivifies a pivotal turning point in the War of the Roses. Copyright 2012 Booklist Reviews.

LJ Reviews 2012 April #1

The Wars of the Roses pitted England's royal Houses of York and Lancaster against one another in a contest for the throne. Goodwin's (fellow, Royal Society of Arts) account is not simply a description of the Battle of Towton but a narrative of the earlier phases of the civil war as well, beginning with the First Battle of St. Albans in 1455. He does an admirable job of explaining family trees that often intersect, tenuous claims to the throne, and the various factors that led people to support particular claimants. When battle arrives, Goodwin provides vivid details of weapons, armor, tactics, and combat. Too often, these battles became massacres; Towton is considered the bloodiest ever on English soil. Few prisoners were taken, and bodies of enemy lords were often mutilated. With ten percent of England's military-aged population present, Towton was a seminal event in English history and resulted in the ascent of Edward IV to the throne upon the defeat of Henry VI's Lancastrians. VERDICT With a lively narrative supported by notes, this should appeal to all readers interested in British military history, especially during the premodern era.—Matthew J. Wayman, Pennsylvania State Univ. Lib, Schuylkill

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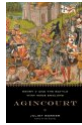
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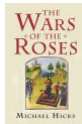
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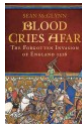
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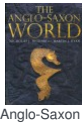
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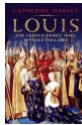
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Fatal Colours is a book about a single battle, but Goodwin takes great effort to put it in its broader context. Not only of the War of the Roses, but also the evolution of the English system of governance and military evolution are addressed. Towton occurred in the middle of a rapid evolution from a medieval England to a modern one. The Plague had destroyed the old system of feudalism and radically increased per capita wealth. The longbow and plate armor made battle an infantry affair again and changed weaponry. It may takes up to 1-5 minutes before you received it. Please note you need to add our email km0@bookmail.org to approved e-mail addresses. Read more. Post a Review. You can write a book review and share your experiences. The battle of Towton in 1461 was unique in its ferocity and brutality, as the armies of two kings of England engaged with murderous weaponry and in appalling conditions to conclude the first War of the Roses. Variouslly described as the largest, longest, and bloodiest battle on English soil, Towton was fought with little chance of escape and none of surrender. Yet, as if too ghastly to contemplate, the battle itself and the turbulent reign of Henry VI were neglected for centuries. Palm Sunday, 1461: the battle of Towton and its immediate aftermath was the day that the greatest proportion of living Englishmen ever died in one day and in one place. However, the brutal reality of the most desperate day in medieval history is strangely forgotten. Fatal Colours marks the 550th anniversary of Towton and provides a fresh and lively interpretation of the battle and its pivotal place in the Wars of the Roses. It will be based on original documents and include new research. It places Towton in its full historical context, showing how the madness of a monarch and the collapse of h The 'biggest, bloodiest and longest battle on English soil' was fought at Towton in Yorkshire on Palm Sunday 1461. Its brutality was a consequence of deep geographical and cultural divisions which persist to this day. George Goodwin | Published in History Today Volume 61 Issue 5 May 2011. In his article Barriers to the Truth, published in the December 2010 edition of History Today, Ian Mortimer elegantly explained the difficulties caused by the fragmentary nature of medieval sources. However there are some vibrant gems from the later medieval period which instantly propel you back to the age o