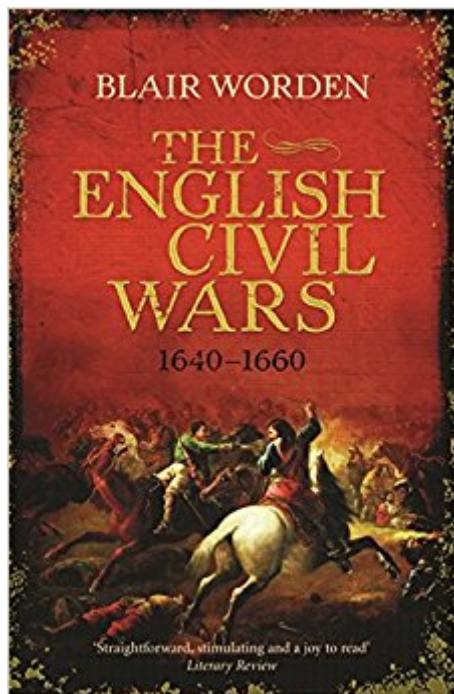


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The English Civil Wars: 1640-1660



Synopsis

One of the most renowned historians of the English Civil War has written a crisp and lucid narrative of the complicated events of 1640 to 1660; not just the war between King and Parliament of 1642-46 but the second civil war, the execution of King Charles I, the rule of Cromwell, and finally the restoration of the monarchy. Blair Worden gets behind the preoccupations of later generations and explains what contemporaries on both sides thought they were fighting for and against.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

'An exemplary piece of popular history... opening up perhaps the most important national story to the nation, passionately retold yet unadorned' •SUNDAY TELEGRAPH'Worden is a spellbinding writer... he skewers the myriad shifting issues with precision, his every sentence commanding respect for his measured judgment and the marvellous suppleness of his language' •DAILY EXPRESS'Straightforward, stimulating and a joy to read... It makes you want to know more' •LITERARY REVIEW'It is hard to imagine a better introduction to the subject' •HISTORY TODAY'As an introduction to the English civil wars, Worden's book is peerless. Brief, though it is, it is a work of exceptionally large achievement' •SPECTATOR

Blair Worden has taught at the universities of Cambridge, Oxford, Sussex and Chicago. He was Visiting Professor of Modern History at Oxford 2003-06 and is now Research Professor of History at Royal Holloway College London. He is a Fellow of the British Academy and has written widely on the political, intellectual and religious history of early modern England. He lives in Oxfordshire.

Having majored in English history at the University of Oklahoma, many, many years ago, I am always interested in a good book on some part of English History. This is definitely a good book. It is concise but full of information. It has a really good section at the end recommending other books that go into more detail on this Civil War. I am still a roundhead as they would have called me, and feel like Charles I, "that man of blood" as Oliver Cromwell called him, got everything he deserved when he got his neck chopped off. This book makes a good explanation of why the Puritan forces in the end, failed to make a republic last in England. This is definitely a good book to start with on understanding this unhappy time.

Well written and well told. Short and to the point. A great launching pad into the murky world of the English Civil War scholarships. Excellent survey course material.

Brief, and informative. Accessible even for those with very little background on the period. Naturally it won't satisfy those who want greater depth, but for an introduction to the subject it seems a wonderful place to start.

Between 1640 and 1660 the British Isles erupted in terrible armed conflict. The conflicts-in many ways different wars in different places for different reasons-are ably documented in this overview. Blair Worden writes about the conflict from a higher view. He describes the social conditions that led to the war in such a way that one understands what the driving religious concerns were, and what things were such as the "Rump" parliament and how they came about. This book is a great book if one is starting out on studying the English Civil Wars.

No sources cited... seriously??

i have been looking for a good, well written introduction to the english civil wars and this was recommended to me by a friend who thought it was "excellent." as an american with little background in 17th century religious and political (often much the same thing, it seems), i found this short book not nearly as good for my needs as i hoped. it felt almost like a "Cliff Notes" version of history: names, towns, battles everything goes by very quickly with no or very little background as to who the people are and what were the seeds of their actions. for instance, there is a lot of talk about the pilgrims but very little explanation about who they were or why they were so agitated. the feeling

i had was that if one already knew the subject (by at least studying it in school), it would probably be a good reminder, highlights book. the reviews say it's wonderful but it all went by so fast without a context that would make it memorable for me.

Blair Worden did a very good job making a complicated subject easy to understand and interesting. Great job explaining the causes to the Wars and the importance of the wars to English society.

The book jacket touts Mr. Worden as an expert scholar of this period of English history. I have no reason to doubt that, but he is not a particularly good writer. The text would have been improved by better editing. Every 2-3 pages, Mr. Worden uses some word in a way that seems slightly out of context, or uses slightly odd punctuation, or refers to events not yet described. While these defects certainly do not make his text unreadable, they are just enough to be mildly distracting. That said, even with better editing this would not be a great read, as very little of the personalities of the principal players comes through. I came away with almost no sense of what Oliver Cromwell, perhaps the key player of this period, was like as a man. In addition, the author frequently mentions Lord So-and-So in one or two sentences on page X, then next refers to him by last name only 10 or 20 pages later, leaving the reader to thumb back through many pages looking for the original mention.

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